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Transcript Exhibit(s)

Docket #(s): L-00000YY-15-0318-00171

LS Case No. 171

Exhibit #: Committee 1-7, PIN 1, ROB 1-5

Volume 8

Arizona Corporation Commission
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United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Arizona State Office
One North Central Avenue, Suite 800
Phoenix, Arizona 85004-4427
www.blm.gov/az/

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EXHIBIT
Committee 1
Public Comment

Mr. Thomas Chenal, Chairman
Arizona Corporation Commission
Power Plant and Line Siting Committee
1275 West Washington Street
Phoenix, AZ 85007-2926

Re: SunZia Transmission Line Project

Dear Chairman Chenal:

Please accept this correspondence as a summary regarding the extensive cooperation between the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the respective Arizona State agencies and other Federal cooperators on the SunZia Transmission Project. At a July 22, 2015, meeting with SunZia Transmission, LLC (SunZia) a request was made to the BLM, Arizona State Land Department, Arizona Department of Transportation, and Arizona Game and Fish Department to author a joint letter summarizing the process for the selected route for the project in the BLM's Record of Decision (ROD) dated January 23, 2015, as well as to outline the cooperation that occurred between all the parties involved in the project.

On September 11, 2008, SunZia submitted an application for a right-of-way for an electric transmission line process consisting of two parallel 500 kilovolt overhead transmission lines, approximately 515 miles in length. The proposed line originates in Lincoln County, New Mexico and terminates at the Pinal Central Substation, in Pinal County, Arizona, northwest of Tucson.

As the lead Federal agency, the BLM was responsible for completing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) under the authority of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) that analyzed and disclosed the effects of the proposed project on both the natural and human environment. The analysis incorporated valuable input from the public as well as Federal, State, and local agencies having related jurisdiction or special expertise.

Some of the agencies elected to become "Cooperating Agencies", which afforded them the opportunity to participate in the BLM's interdisciplinary team process. The Cooperating Agencies were able to inform the BLM of resource and socio-economic impacts, policies, regulations, and laws of which they may have specific local knowledge. In the SunZia planning process, this cooperation and the significant

public input through the public comment period resulted in the identification of four main alternatives and various sub-alternatives in Arizona. Federal agencies participating in this EIS process included the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service; National Park Service; Fort Huachuca Army Base, AZ; White Sands Missile Range, NM; Holloman Air Force Base, NM; and Fort Bliss Army Base, TX. Arizona State agencies participating as Cooperating Agencies included the State Land Department, Game and Fish Department, and Department of Transportation.

The EIS thoroughly analyzed and disclosed the effects to the natural and human environment on Federal and non-Federal lands. The involvement of local and Federal agencies with jurisdiction and/or special expertise in the analysis was critical in analyzing those impacts to non-Federal lands, as the selected route in Arizona was comprised of a total of 198 miles (crossing 130 miles of State Land, 18 miles of private land, and 50 miles of BLM managed land).

Through this collaborative effort, the route that was ultimately selected resulted in mitigation development that reduced the resource impacts; and

- Optimized the use of existing utility corridors and infrastructure
- Minimized impacts to sensitive resources
- Minimized, to the extent practical, impacts at river crossings

The routes evaluated but not chosen would result in greater impacts to natural, cultural, and sensitive resources. For example, the other routes crossed the San Pedro River at points with critical habitat designated by the Fish and Wildlife Service. Also, those crossings and routes have lower levels of existing disturbance. The construction of a line of this scope and size would introduce new disturbance by aiding access to previously un-fragmented land. Additionally, the northern routes traverse through rugged terrain that contributes to the habitat and ecological function of the Aravaipa wilderness. Other concerns with the northern routes near Mount Graham included Native American Tribal areas of religious and cultural significance. These are a few resources that factored into making the decision of the selected route. While further details are in the Final EIS and the ROD, the BLM in Arizona, along with the State Agencies engaged as Cooperators, stand prepared to answer any questions regarding the NEPA process and the cooperative engagement that resulted in a Record of Decision.

If you have questions, please call me at 602-417-9500.

Sincerely,

Raymond Suazo
State Director

Lisa Atkins
Commissioner
Arizona State Land Department

Larry D. Voyles
Director
Arizona Game and Fish Department

John S. Halikowski
Director
Arizona Department of Transportation

cc: Mr. Aden Seidlitz, Acting State Director
Bureau of Land Management
New Mexico State Office
Attention: Adrian Garcia
301 Dinosaur Trail
Santa Fe, NM 87508

ORIGINAL

The Nature Conservancy

Protecting nature. Preserving life.

The Nature Conservancy in Arizona
Phoenix Conservation Center
7600 N. 15th Street, Suite 100
Phoenix, AZ 85020-4330

Tel (60:
Fax (60:

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October 6, 2015

Thomas Chenal, Chairman
Arizona Power Plant & Transmission Line Siting Committee
Attorney General's Office
1275 West Washington Street
Phoenix, Arizona 85007

Re: SunZia Transmission, LLC, application for Certificate of Environmental Compatibility
Docket Number L-00000YY-15-0318-00171

Dear Chairman Chenal,

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the SunZia Transmission Line Project. We recognize that new transmission lines are integral to managing energy supplies in Arizona, and welcome the chance to participate in their siting.

The mission of The Nature Conservancy is to conserve the lands and waters on which all life depends. We have invested considerable resources in developing science-based tools to help site infrastructure that meets the needs of project proponents while minimizing impacts to natural resources. In previous comments on BLM's Environmental Impact Statement we offered our support for the development of this project along existing infrastructure corridors such as the I-10 corridor.

Given the size and nature of the SunZia project, there will inevitably be significant environmental impacts if built. We appreciate that several potential routes were dropped during earlier phases of this process to avoid some sensitive areas, but remain concerned about the predictable impacts this project will have on the San Pedro River Valley. From a natural resource perspective, the San Pedro Valley is a poor choice for siting large infrastructure projects. Over the last 20 years a number of local, county, state, federal, and private entities have made considerable investments in conservation of the valley to offset the impacts of other infrastructure projects done for the public good. In total, over $42 million has been spent to protect approximately 192,000 acres. With such a large footprint, a project such as SunZia would jeopardize the long-term viability of those investments, and potentially increase the financial burden placed on those entities to maintain the original intent of their investment. We believe the best alternative would be to route it through other areas with higher levels of existing disturbance. For that reason, we recommend denial of this application.

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Should you choose to approve this application, we suggest you include conditions that require explicit mitigation measures that would increase the project's environmental compatibility. We provide some recommendations and rationale below. One point we wish to emphasize is that without mitigation to offset unavoidable impacts, the project increases the likelihood that additional species would receive protection under the Endangered Species Act, which increases costs for all and makes future infrastructure projects more challenging to plan for and implement.

Resources affected in the San Pedro River Valley

The Nature Conservancy and many others have long identified the Lower San Pedro River Valley as a top priority for biological conservation in the Southwest. It supports more than 300 bird species and provides important habitat for millions of migratory birds. The San Pedro River Valley has higher recorded bird species richness (number of species) and density (number of birds per acre) than the Rio Grande Valley. It has been identified by the National Audubon Society as a Globally Important Bird Area. It includes designated Critical Habitat for Southwestern Willow Flycatcher and Yellow Billed Cuckoo. More than 750 plant species have been identified in the riparian corridor and adjacent uplands. The watershed supports more than 80 mammal species, 12 amphibians, 55 reptiles, about 100 butterfly species, and 250 bee species. Historically it supported 13 native fish species, though several have been lost.

Tributary streams with perennial or intermittent flow have similar values to the mainstem San Pedro River. One study found that more species of migrating birds along the San Pedro Valley use isolated wetlands than sites along a continuous riparian corridor, and the relative abundances of most migrating birds were similar. The proposed SunZia route would cross an intermittent reach of Buehman Canyon, which supports a significant riparian community.

Over the last four decades The Nature Conservancy and many other agencies and organizations have been working steadily to protect the Lower San Pedro Basin. Partners in this effort include the Arizona Game & Fish Department, Arizona State Parks Department, Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Reclamation, Pima County, Saguaro Juniper Corporation, Salt River Project, and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. The Resolution Copper Company has offered to protect additional lands in the valley through a Congressionally-approved land exchange. Together, these partners and other private landowners have protected approximately 192,000 acres and invested over $42.5 million in acquisition of conservation lands and appurtenant water rights. That investment required 70 separate land transactions, beginning in 1970 and continuing through 2014, and does not include adjustments for inflation.

The majority of those investments – about 144,000 acres – were made to satisfy mitigation requirements for habitat losses elsewhere in Arizona that were the unavoidable by-product of projects important to economic development. Jeopardizing the integrity of these conservation projects by construction of the SunZia transmission lines could trigger the need for additional and possibly less-successful mitigation. In particular, the proposed SunZia route would cross

through state trust lands managed by Pima County to provide a mitigation bank as part of their Habitat Conservation Plan; construction of the lines would reduce the conservation credit they receive for those leases.

Habitat loss and fragmentation

Vegetation management under transmission lines has become a major impact due to recent regulatory changes, and contributes to both habitat loss and fragmentation. With the SunZia project, we are particularly concerned about areas where the routes cross riparian areas. Recent construction of other transmission lines in this region has created large openings in previously-continuous riparian forests, which will likely be maintained for the life of those lines. We applaud BLM and the project proponents for designing an alternative that generally avoids perennial stream reaches, but note that several riparian crossings are still proposed. There are currently no required mitigation measures to offset vegetation clearing and maintenance associated with the crossing of riparian habitat. The limited distribution and high biological value of these habitats in the Southwest warrant compensation in cases where sensitive, high value habitat cannot be avoided.

We are very concerned about the direct and indirect effects of new access roads for construction and maintenance of transmission lines. There is direct habitat loss from the footprint of the roads. Where routes cross steep, rocky terrain, road length will be significantly more than the length of the line because construction will require bulldozing circuitous access routes to individual tower sites. We expect these access roads will become permanent features of the landscape to simplify line maintenance, unless their closure and restoration is an explicit mitigation requirement.

Indirect effects of access roads are harder to measure, but no less significant. Roads become vectors for invasive species and sources of soil erosion, especially with frequent use. We anticipate that these access roads will be frequently used by the general public, regardless of structures built to control use. Our experience with managing utility corridors in large landscapes has been that fences and locks are cut, and gates are knocked down or removed on a regular basis. Anything that resembles a road becomes an attractive nuisance and an ongoing management challenge. Those roads then become entry points for further incursions into undeveloped landscapes. The resulting use creates ground disturbance, soil erosion, and noise, fragmenting lands that were formerly continuous habitat for wildlife.

There is a large and growing body of scientific literature on the negative effects of landscape fragmentation. As described in the 2011 Arizona State Wildlife Action Plan, the Arizona Game and Fish Department "has identified the importance of maintaining unfragmented habitats as a critical component in the conservation of wildlife and wildlife habitat as well as addressing existing and predicted global climate change (i.e., protecting blocks of habitat across an elevational and vegetation gradient)."

The construction and maintenance of the SunZia lines would fragment portions of several large intact landscape blocks. The western side of the Lower San Pedro River Valley includes arms of two large blocks: Rincon Mountains (approximately 235,000 acres) and Santa Catalina Mountains (116,600 acres). This route would sever about 31,000 acres off the Rincon block and 17,000 acres off the Santa Catalina block, while reducing the elevation gradient of both.

The ADOT/AGFD Wildlife Linkages Assessment in 2006 identified the portion of the San Pedro River Valley between the Catalina/Rincon Mountains and the Galiuro Mountains as a potential linkage zone and the river corridor as a riparian habitat/linkage zone. It also identified areas south of the Galiuro Mountains. All of these are crossed by the route under consideration. These are areas where protecting the ability of wildlife to move should be considered in the design of fencing and other infrastructure.

The Bureau of Land Management's Final Environmental Impact Statement implies that the impacts of the project extend only to construction and operation of the SunZia lines, but the possibility remains for construction of additional substations and associated development. These could have significant additional impacts by enabling new generation facilities or new load centers such as residential developments, which would merit their own mitigation measures. As part of the cumulative effects analysis and development of mitigation measures, we suggest the Line Siting Committee should preclude placement of interconnections in the most ecologically sensitive segments of this alignment, such as the San Pedro River valley.

Potential for Mitigation

The Nature Conservancy supports a systematic approach to use mitigation for maintaining or enhancing environmental values in situations where development is being planned, despite detrimental environmental impacts. As currently described in federal statute (40 CFR § 1508.20) mitigation includes:
(a) Avoiding the impact altogether by not taking a certain action or parts of an action;
(b) Minimizing impacts by limiting the degree or magnitude of the action and its implementation;
(c) Rectifying the impact by repairing, rehabilitating, or restoring the affected environment;
(d) Reducing or eliminating the impact over time by preservation and maintenance operations during the life of the action; and
(e) Compensating for the impact by replacing or providing substitute resources or environments.

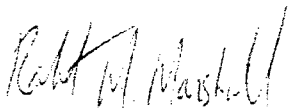
In the BLM's evaluation process, they identified a series of standard and selective mitigation measures (FEIS Tables 2-10, 2-11), but we see those as largely consisting of Best Management Practices. Most notably, they do not include any description of compensation to offset unavoidable impacts.

If avoidance of the San Pedro River Valley is not possible, we recommend the following as a minimum set of mitigation measures that should be required as conditions of the certificate.

- Minimize bird mortality through use of the best available technology to prevent bird collisions with the transmission lines, overhead ground wires, and guy wires. Use tower designs that minimize the need for guy wires.
- Minimize damage to riparian forests along the San Pedro River by requiring the alignment to cross at an ephemeral reach and using sufficiently tall towers to span the riparian trees without vegetation clearing and maintenance.
- Minimize damage to riparian forests in Buehman Canyon by using hilltop placement of towers or sufficiently tall towers to span them without vegetation clearing and maintenance. Avoid construction of roads that would create new access into the canyon.
- Minimize impacts to Paige Canyon by not running parallel down the canyon. This would avoid opening the length of the canyon to recreational off-road driving impacts.
- Minimize the effects of fragmentation by not creating a continuous maintenance road along the route. Use landscape features such as cliffs to maintain permanent barriers to continuous travel.
- Compensation should be required for the loss of mitigation and conservation lands, and for direct and indirect impacts to wildlife habitat.
- Additional substations should not be allowed in the San Pedro Valley, to prevent this project from facilitating major new land development that would alter the rural character of the landscape.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this application. We look forward to your decision.

Sincerely,



Robert M. Marshall
Director, Center for Science and Public Policy
The Nature Conservancy, Arizona Chapter

ORIGINAL and 25 COPIES of the foregoing mailed to:

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Docket Control
1200 W. Washington Street
Phoenix, AZ 85007

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6431 N. Cascabel Road
Benson, Arizona 85602

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October 2, 2015

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Power Plant and Transmission Line Siting Committee
Arizona Corporation Commission
1200 West Washington Street
Phoenix, Arizona 85007

Re: SunZia Transmission, LLC, Docket Number L-00000YY-15-0318-00171

To Whom It May Concern,

I am new to Cascabel. I moved here just over a year ago. Every day I look out on this beautiful valley, I thank my lucky stars for my good fortune. I landed in an exceptional area. As time goes by, I learn more about the rare and precious environment surrounding me. This valley is one of the most biologically diverse in our nation and a major migration route for birds, in addition to being the site of extensive archeological resources.

I am shocked that a plan is in the works to run huge electrical lines through this part of the state. I am also very puzzled. I regularly travel to Las Vegas to attend classes. I make the trip four or five times a year. Mostly I drive, and I look for new and interesting routes. I have come across many vast solar arrays in my travels. There are several in the southeast corner of Nevada that are so enormous that, when I first saw them, I thought they were a series of lakes in the distance. There is another large one not far from I-10 on the back way to Wickenburg, Arizona. There are several very extensive solar arrays along I-8 on the way to California. I'm sure there are many, many more that I know nothing about. Why, when there are so many already existing generators of solar energy close to Phoenix and California, did SunZia plan an extremely costly, controversial (I understand there have been many objections from various quarters) installation to carry alternative energy to Phoenix and California all the way from New Mexico? We have abundant sun and wind in this state, and so does California. What am I missing here?

I would like to understand. It seems to me that there are opportunities to erect solar and wind installations much closer to where the energy they generate is needed. I cannot fathom why we don't invest the massive amounts of money

involved in this plan in locally produced alternative energy, both wind and solar, and develop local systems of distribution, hiring local folks to do the work of installing and maintaining the equipment. This is a much more secure option, develops Arizona economies and eliminates the need for huge towers which are not only unsightly, but will also have an unknown ecological impact. The construction will be disruptive and destructive to plants, wildlife and archeological sites. Once access has been created for construction and maintenance, inevitably off-road traffic increases. The off-roaders I know are respectful, but there are always a few rotten apples, who spoil it for everyone, by leaving their trash and spent cartridges over large areas of the desert (the off-road folks I know acknowledge - and decry - this problem). The plants and wildlife along SunZia's proposed route which have lived undisturbed for centuries have the most to lose, and they have no voice in these hearings. I wonder what they would say.

I implore you to reconsider the SunZia project, and take a very close look at what will be damaged, should this venture go forward. The San Pedro Valley is home to more plants, animals and birds than any other place in the southwest, and it has been home to humans for over ten thousand years. I have only been to White Sands once and it is magnificent. I don't know if this is still something that is being considered, but I understand at one time Aravaipa Canyon was going to be the site of proposed power lines. I have never been there, but the photographs I have seen and the stories I have heard from those who have been there make me cringe at the thought of tall power lines in that environment. I am saddened that plans like these are even considered, as they reflect a grievous disregard for the special beauty of these places.

Also, I am concerned about the unexpected consequences of this project and the corridor it would create on the life already present in this valley. I friend recently sent me an article that links the survival rate of hummingbird babies with the proximity of hawk and eagle nests. This news surprised even the researchers studying the birds (right around the corner in the Chiricahua Mountains). How can we know what the impact of these power lines - not only constructing the towers, but also maintaining them - will have on the local wildlife here? We are largely ignorant of the delicate but powerful interconnections within our environments. The San Pedro is the last free flowing river in the state. The Sonoran and Chihuahuan deserts interdigitate here, creating an exceptionally diversified population of plants, which attract a wide variety of insects, birds and other critters. Add close water and you have an astonishing array of life. This unique environment is beautiful, diverse and

fragile. Is it worth the risk of endangering the precarious balance of this one-of-a-kind ecosystem, when there are other options?

I am sure that our ingenuity and creativity can come up with strategies to generate and distribute alternative energy in ways that are not only more respectful of the environment, but also more secure and efficient. By mobilizing our intelligence and creativity, we can surely come up with something to create energy independence that is far superior to the SunZia plan. I am no expert and only have common sense to work with, but from what I know, this project seems so disconnected from what is and so inefficient (and therefore, unprofitable), I suspect an unacknowledged motive is involved in creating this corridor.

Lastly, I want to suggest that there is a special power in the precious spots on this beautiful earth, and I maintain the San Pedro Valley is one of those spots. It may not be a power that can be carried on electrical lines, measured in kilowatts or be profitable to a stockholder or owner of a corporation. These beautiful areas uplift our spirits with their mysterious power, and that is something that, in my opinion, needs to be protected and preserved, not just for us, who are in the autumn of our lives, but for future generations.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my thoughts with you.

Sincerely,

Dorothy Motheral

Dorothy Motheral

Power Plant and Transmission Line Siting Committee
Docket Control
Arizona Corporation Commission
1200 W. Washington Street
Phoenix, AZ 85007.

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Re: Docket # L-00000YY-15-0318-00171

September 30, 2015

Dear Friends,

I propose two reasons why the SunZia project should be a no-go: First, it exploits Arizona's natural resources, in particular, and most significant to me personally, being a resident of Cascabel, by tearing up pristine, ecologically irreplaceable land in the San Pedro River Valley, location of the last free-running river in the state, opening it by creating access roads and power line throughways to further exploitation. The thought of heavy equipment gouging the land here is nightmarish. Have any of you visited? Experienced the deep quiet? Watched the hummingbirds and vermillion flycatchers darting around? Heard eerie coyote song at dusk? According to Audubon, the San Pedro is *one of the most important avian fly-ways in the world!* What if some of the proposed towers and lines kill migrating birds? What if some of the gouging the heavy equipment does makes it impossible for animals to maintain their territories?

I'm not naive enough to believe that these environmental, ecological, and aesthetic concerns have much sway in the business world, but there is a second, business and political reason to quash this: It seems to be a ridiculous plan from the get-go, utterly speculative, costly, and purporting to deliver renewable energy to Arizona, which we don't need, having our own massive actual and potential solar energy production, with the likely market being California. How can this be thought of as a good idea for our state? What are the financial costs of the project—it seems they would be massive. Are we going to be paying for something that ultimately rips us off? It seems that way. I even wonder if there's an ulterior motivation here, a way to get the permit, scuttle the project because it's so impractical and costly, then sell off the acquired land to parties who might have little motivation to preserve its unique natural value. (I know, I've just shifted back to the first objection. It's just that the proposed project makes so little sense that one suspects other motivations.)

That's my piece. Please consider it. I'm grateful for the hearings.

Fred Weiner
6432 N Cascabel Rd
Benson, AZ 85602
fw1948@gmail.com

Fred Weiner

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ATTORNEY GENERAL - PHOENIX
AGENCY COUNSEL SECTION

Mr. Thomas K. Chenal, Chairman
Arizona Power Plant and Transmission Line Siting Committee
1275 W. Washington Street
Phoenix, Arizona 85007
thomas.chenal@azag.gov

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Main Office
300 E. University Blvd., #120
Tucson AZ 85705
TEL 520.629.0510
FAX 520.623.3476

Tucson Audubon's Mason Center
3835 W Hardy Road
Tucson AZ 85742

Karen Fogas
Executive Director
TEL 520.209.1801

kfogas@tucsonaudubon.org

Regarding: SunZia Transmission, LLC, Docket No. L-00000YY-15-0318-00171

09/15/15

Dear Chairman Chenal:

Established in 1949, the Tucson Audubon Society (Tucson Audubon) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit conservation organization. We are the third largest local Audubon chapter in the nation and write to you on behalf of our membership of approximately 4,000 citizens. Tucson Audubon promotes the protection and stewardship of southeast Arizona's biological diversity through the study and enjoyment of birds and the places they live.

Tucson Audubon has been actively engaged with the review of the proposed SunZia Southwest Transmission Line (SunZia) since it was first proposed. Tucson Audubon's focal region is southeast Arizona, where a significant portion of SunZia is proposed to be constructed.

Tucson Audubon supports the legal memorandum submitted to you by the Cascabel Working Group (CWG) on 09/14/15. This memorandum was submitted in response to your solicitation for memoranda related to whether or not qualifying non-profit organizations can participate as an interveners without being represented by an attorney (see: Item #31 of your 9/11/2015 Procedural Order).

Item #31 of your Procedural Order sets a deadline of 10/09/15 for responses to this important outstanding issue. Given that the response deadline is also the deadline for filing to intervene, we advocate that resolution of this issue should be expedited. If this issue is not resolved well before October 9th, it will put our organization (and other organizations) at a major disadvantage.

The 9/14/15 CWG Memorandum cites the Arizona Supreme Court Rule 31(d)(28), which provides for certain exemptions to R14-3-208(F) for nonprofit corporations or associations. This is also affirmed by the Corporation Commission's instructions to potential intervenors.

We appreciate your consideration and prompt resolution of this important matter.

Sincerely,

Karen Fogas

Karen Fogas
Executive Director
Tucson Audubon Society

CENTER FOR BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

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Delivered by U.S. mail and email September 15, 2015

Mr. Thomas K. Chenal, Chairman
Assistant Attorney General
Arizona Power Plant and Transmission Line Siting Committee
1275 W. Washington Street
Phoenix, Arizona 85007
thomas.chenal@azag.gov

Dear Chairman Chenal:

The Center for Biological Diversity has engaged with the SunZia Transmission project for several years. We've participated in the NEPA process, submitted comments, attended public hearings, etc. We are a potential party to the consideration by the Arizona Line Siting Committee and the Arizona Corporation Commission of the application by SunZia Transmission, LLC for a Certificate of Environmental Compatibility, Docket No. L-00000YY-15-0318-00171.

We—and our several thousand members here in the state of Arizona, who share our concerns about this proposal—appreciate the communication we've received on this matter and the opportunity to participate as members of the public. We wish to communicate our support for the efforts of Cascabel Working Group to clarify the matter of representation when intervening in the Line Siting Committee process in particular. We're very concerned that any delay in deciding on this matter will prejudice the process against participation by our organization and others.

The Cascabel Working Group has submitted a letter and a legal memorandum re: Item 31 of your Procedural Order for the SunZia case, re: the issue of whether non-profit conservation organizations can designate a representative to participate in the hearing that is not an attorney. We think that this should be allowed, and indeed it seems that the relevant statutes make this clear.

Moreover, regardless of how this matter is decided, it is imperative that it be decided as promptly as possible, in order to allow the numerous organizations and individuals concerned with this application to make arrangements and participate in the process as fully as they wish. The confusion that currently exists is an untenable situation that has the potential to squelch public participation in this critically important process.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Randy Serraglio
Southwest Conservation Advocate

Alaska • Arizona • California • Florida • Minnesota • Nevada • New Mexico • Oregon • Vermont • Washington, DC
P.O. Box 710 • Tucson, AZ 85702-0710 • tel. (520) 623-5252 • fax (520) 623-9797 • www.BiologicalDiversity.org

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September 16, 2015

Mr. Thomas K. Chenal, Chairman
Arizona Power Plant and Transmission Line Siting Committee
1275 W. Washington Street
Phoenix, Arizona 85007
thomas.chenal@azag.gov

ORIGINAL

Regarding: SunZia Transmission, LLC, Docket No. L-00000YY-15-0318-00171

Dear Chairman Chenal:

Sierra Club's Grand Canyon (Arizona) Chapter submits these comments on behalf of our 35,000 members and supporters in Arizona.

Sierra Club's mission is "to explore, enjoy, and protect the wild places of the earth; to practice and promote the responsible use of the earth's ecosystems and resources; and to educate and enlist humanity to protect and restore the quality of the natural and human environments." Sierra Club and our members have a significant interest in the proposed siting of the SunZia Transmission Line and in ensuring that the process to consider it is inclusive and provides the Arizona Power Plant and Transmission Line Siting Committee ("Committee") with a full picture pf the proposed line and the best information possible.

Sierra Club supports the memorandum submitted by Cascabel Working Group dated September 14, 2015 in response to your solicitation for memoranda related to whether or not a qualifying non-profit organization can participate as an intervenor without being represented by counsel (see Item 31 of Chenal Procedural Order dated 09/11/2015). It is impractical and could create a considerable hardship for smaller organizations to be required to have an attorney in order to participate in the Committee's process. We appreciate you moving up the deadline for a response to Item 31 of the Procedural Order.

We ask that you allow organizations to be represented by designated individuals rather than require that they engage counsel. Limiting the intervention to organizations with counsel will likely limit the amount and the quality of information presented to the Committee and mean the Committee will not get a comprehensive view of the proposal and it will limit the Committee's ability to make an informed decision.

As was noted by the Cascabel Working Group, the Arizona Supreme Court Rule 31(d)(28) makes it clear that lay representation for qualifying organizations is allowed in order to accommodate legitimate groups in the public review process and should only be restricted if the Commission or presiding officer "...determines that lay representation is interfering with the orderly progress of the proceeding, imposing undue burdens on the other parties, or causing harm to the parties represented." In this case, allowing it will help facilitate the proceeding, not impede it.

Please allow organizations to participate as intervenors in this proceeding without counsel.

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Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Sandy Bahr
Chapter Director
Sierra Club – Grand Canyon Chapter

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Friends of the Aravaipa Region

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Arizona Corporation Commission
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SEP 16 2015

DOCKETED BY

Mr. Thomas K. Chenal, Chairman
Arizona Power Plant and Transmission Line Siting Committee
1275 W. Washington Street
Phoenix, Arizona 85007
thomas.chenal@azag.gov

ORIGINAL

Regarding: SunZia Transmission, LLC, Docket No. L-00000YY-15-0318-00171

Dear Chairman Chenal:

The Friends of the Aravaipa Region, a non-profit association of conservation activists that has actively participated in reviewing the SunZia transmission project proposal, supports the legal memorandum submitted by Cascabel Working Group (CWG) on September 14, 2015. This CWG memorandum was composed in response to your solicitation for memoranda related to whether a qualifying non-profit organization can participate as an intervener without being represented by an attorney (Item 31 of your Procedural Order of 9/11/2015).

With the deadline for filing an application to intervene falling on the same date as your deadline for response to Item 31 of your Procedural Order, October 9th, we request that Item 31 be resolved much earlier than that date, as requested by CWG. Agreeing upon the rules for participation is a critical path issue, and not resolving this well before the deadline for applying to intervene will put our group and others at a substantial disadvantage. Knowing that our participation as an intervener could be revoked after it is too late to make other arrangements will significantly hamper our ability to solicit potential witnesses in good faith, and to subsequently share this information with other parties in accordance with Items 10 and 11 in your recent Procedural Order.

We also note that Arizona Supreme Court Rule 31(d)(28) makes it clear that lay representation for qualifying non-profit organizations is allowed in order to accommodate legitimate stakeholder groups in the public review process and should only be restricted if the Commission or presiding officer *"...determines that lay representation is interfering with the orderly progress of the proceeding, imposing undue burdens on the other parties, or causing harm to the parties represented."* We request that such a determination not be made in a pre-emptive manner.

Respectfully submitted on September 15, 2015,

Peter Else, Chair, Friends of the Aravaipa Region
P.O. Box 576
Mammoth, AZ 85618

BigbackyardFAR@gmail.com
phone 520-487-1903

ATTACHMENT: Email distribution list for this letter and statement of Docket submission.

The preceding emailed letter with this Attachment will be submitted to Docket Control via courier. The email distribution list for the preceding letter includes all parties and potential parties known by me as of 9/15/2015:

Thomas Chenal <thomas.chenal@azag.gov>

CC: <Gregory Stanley <Gregory.Stanley@pinalcountyaz.gov>, Chris Keller <chris.keller@pinalcountyaz.gov>, Charles Hains <chains@azcc.gov>, Tim Hogan <thogan@aclpi.org>, Cedric Hay <cedric.hay@pinalcountyaz.gov>, Redington NRCD <redingtonnrcd@gmail.com>, Linda Pollock <Linda.pollock@azag.gov>, Bill Dunn <dunnranches@yahoo.com>, Elna Otter <elna.otter@gmail.com>, Peter Else FAR <bigbackyardfar@gmail.com>, Rob Peters <rpeters@defenders.org>, Dorothy Hallock <halgros@hallockgross.com>, Pearl Mast <cpearlmast@gmail.com>, Sandy Bahr <sandy.bahr@sierraclub.org>, Peter Steere <peter.steere@tonation-nsn.gov>, Matt Clark <mclark@tucsonaudubon.org>, Christina McVie <cmcvie@tucsonaudubon.org>, Karen Fogas <kfogas@tucsonaudubon.org>, Peter Gerstman <peter.gerstman@robson.com>, Albert Acken <aacken@rcalaw.com>, "tubaclawyer" <tubaclawyer@aol.com>, Sam Lofland, <SLofland@rcalaw.com>

ORIGINAL

Power Plant and Transmission Line Siting Committee
Arizona Corporation Commission
1200 W. Washington Street,
Phoenix, AZ 85007

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AZ CORP COMMISSION
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October 12, 2015

Re: SunZia Transmission, LLC, Docket Number L-OOOOOYY-15-03 1 8-001 7 1

I ask the Power Plant and Line Siting Committee to closely examine the purported need for the SunZia Transmission Project. The stated purpose of the project is to deliver wind power from central New Mexico to Arizona and California.

Arizona has abundant renewable energy resources of its own. There is no need for bringing wind power from New Mexico to Arizona, and in fact doing so could actually displace development of Arizona's solar resources. Californians are also concentrating on developing their own renewable resources. They have expressly stated that they are not expecting to import renewable energy.

The SunZia Transmission Project would cut a 30-mile swath of new transmission corridor up the west side of the San Pedro River. As you have heard from other commenters, the San Pedro River Valley is an environmentally unique place that deserves to be protected from a new utility corridor, which would then be a magnet for other infrastructure.

This is especially true when there is an alternative proposal that makes use of already-existing infrastructure corridors. This is the Southline Project, which is in final stages of the federal review process. If you compare the maps of the SunZia Project with those of Southline you will see that the two projects would do essentially the same thing in southern Arizona, except that Southline avoids paralleling the San Pedro Valley, uses transmission corridors that are already in place, and provides at least 10 substations to upload southern Arizona renewable power compared to SunZia's one substation in southern Arizona. The Southline Transmission Project would preserve the potential of the middle San Pedro Valley to provide the economic benefits of tourism, while encouraging the development of renewable energy resources in southern Arizona.

Please consider denying the Certificate of Environmental Compatibility for the SunZia Project.

Thank you,

Pearl Mast

Pearl Mast
6146 N Canyon Rd
Benson Arizona 85602

Arizona Corporation Commission
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AZ CORP COMMISSION
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Peter M. Gerstman
Executive Vice President
General Counsel
(480) 895-4297
Email: Peter.Gerstman@Robson.com

September 8, 2015

Arizona Corporation Commission
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SEP 10 2015

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ORIGINAL

Environmental Planning Group
4141 North 32nd Street, Suite 102
Phoenix, AZ 85018
Attention: Mickey Siegel, Project Manager

Re: SunZia Southwest Transmission Project
ACC Docket No. L-00000YY-15-0318-00171

Dear Mr. Siegel:

I am writing this letter on behalf of Robson Ranch Mountains, LLC ("Robson") in response to your August 12, 2015 letter concerning the SunZia Southwest Transmission Project. As I discussed with Tony De Luca of your company and as I explained in my letter dated August 13, 2012, to the Bureau of Land Management, New Mexico State Office, a portion of the BLM's preferred routing for the proposed SunZia Southwest Transmission Lines goes right through SaddleBrooke Ranch, which is a master planned active adult community. SaddleBrooke Ranch is located north of Oracle Junction in Pinal County, Arizona, between Arizona Highway 77 and Arizona State Highway 79. An aerial photo of the area at issue is attached. The BLM's proposed route in this area is part of the sub-route identified in the BLM's draft environmental impact statement for this project as sub-route 4C2c.

As the developer of SaddleBrooke Ranch, Robson has already invested tens of millions of dollars in the community. The SaddleBrooke Ranch property encompasses more than 2500 acres and upon build-out will include more than 5,000 homes. The vast majority of the SaddleBrooke Ranch property, including the portion of SaddleBrooke Ranch that the BLM-preferred route crosses, has been zoned, is subject to a planned area development overlay district, and is subject to a Phased Protected Development Right Plan with Pinal County.

SaddleBrooke Ranch currently includes, among other things, a sales and design center with 11 furnished models, an 18-hole championship golf course with putting green and driving range, an extensive pickleball complex with 24 courts, a fitness center and spa with over 40,000 square feet that include indoor and outdoor swimming pools, men's and women's hair salons, massage rooms, aerobics and yoga facilities, a learning center, a creative arts room, billiards, and lighted tennis courts. In addition, a Robson affiliate has invested millions of dollars to construct a wastewater treatment facility that treats raw sewage to drinking water standards for recharge to the aquifer and for golf course irrigation. Construction of a large clubhouse is imminent, as is a new Creative Arts Center. Land development work for these new amenities is underway, and vertical construction should begin within a few months. The master plan provides for additional amenities and facilities, including golf and homes, in the vicinity of the area that would be

traversed by the BLM-preferred SunZia route. And, of course, there are hundreds of people living in SaddleBrooke Ranch who have invested significant amounts in their homes for their retirement years.

The addition of two 500 kv transmission lines in the northerly portion of SaddleBrooke Ranch has the potential to significantly affect and impair future development of the project. We understand the general need for appropriate infrastructure to support future development and we support efforts to meet that need. Affiliates of Robson have cooperated fully in the past in the location of electric transmission lines through other Robson Resort Communities when necessary and where appropriate. This, however, is a different case. Without commenting on the vast majority of the BLM's preferred route, there are relatively small adjustments that could be made to the route in the vicinity of SaddleBrooke Ranch that would have significant and positive effects for SaddleBrooke Ranch and for Pinal County.

We understand that there are many considerations and interests the BLM must balance when choosing a route. However, the BLM appears not to have given sufficient consideration to the effect of its preferred route on the SaddleBrooke Ranch master plan, the huge investment being placed at risk by Robson in this project, and the employment considerations relating to SaddleBrooke Ranch. Because of our belief in the long-term potential of the SaddleBrooke Ranch location, as demonstrated by the success of the SaddleBrooke community, which is approximately 7 miles from SaddleBrooke Ranch, Robson made a huge investment in SaddleBrooke Ranch even as other homebuilders were closing shop. Studies performed in the past by the Center for Business Research at the Arizona State University College of Business and by the Center for Economic Development and Research at the University of North Texas have confirmed the tremendous economic benefits of a Robson Resort Community for the local economy. The study prepared by ASU in June, 2000 of the economic contributions of SaddleBrooke and SaddleBrooke Ranch estimates that the combined effects of spending for consumer goods and services by households in these two projects upon build-out and the ongoing operations of the homeowners' associations will generate $1.9 billion in expenditures and $1 billion in earnings *per year* in 1999 dollars, and support 27,500 jobs. This is in addition to all of the direct construction and other jobs during the course of development.

The zoning for the entire SaddleBrooke Ranch master plan is vested by virtue of the golf course, streets, infrastructure, amenities and homes already constructed in the community. Zoning vests for the entire master plan because a developer would never start a project as massive as SaddleBrooke Ranch without some assurance of the ability of completing it. For similar reasons, we believe it is incorrect to think of real property within the SaddleBrooke Ranch master plan as "undeveloped" in the same sense as the neighboring State land and agricultural land. Development has not yet reached the location of the BLM-preferred route in SaddleBrooke Ranch, but the location is part of a large and ongoing construction and development project in accordance with a master plan.

A relatively small adjustment in the routing in the vicinity of SaddleBrooke Ranch, taking the line to the north of SaddleBrooke Ranch before converging with the BLM-preferred route could have a tremendous economic effect, not only for Robson, but also for the County. An example of just one potential change that could have tremendous advantages is indicated in pink in the second attachment to this letter. This change would not have any effect on the route in the

vicinity of the San Pedro River. This adjustment would affect only a very small portion of sub-route 4C2c, meaning that the vast majority of sub-route 4C2c could remain the same. We would appreciate the opportunity to work with the BLM, Pinal County and others to effect this minor modification. Of course, the SunZia-preferred route, as well as many sub-routes in Route Group 4, would avoid SaddleBrooke Ranch entirely.

Sincerely,

Peter M. Gerstman

cc: Edward J. Robson
Pinal County Board of Supervisors
Arizona Corporation Commission
Arizona Power Plant and Transmission Line Siting Committee

Google earth

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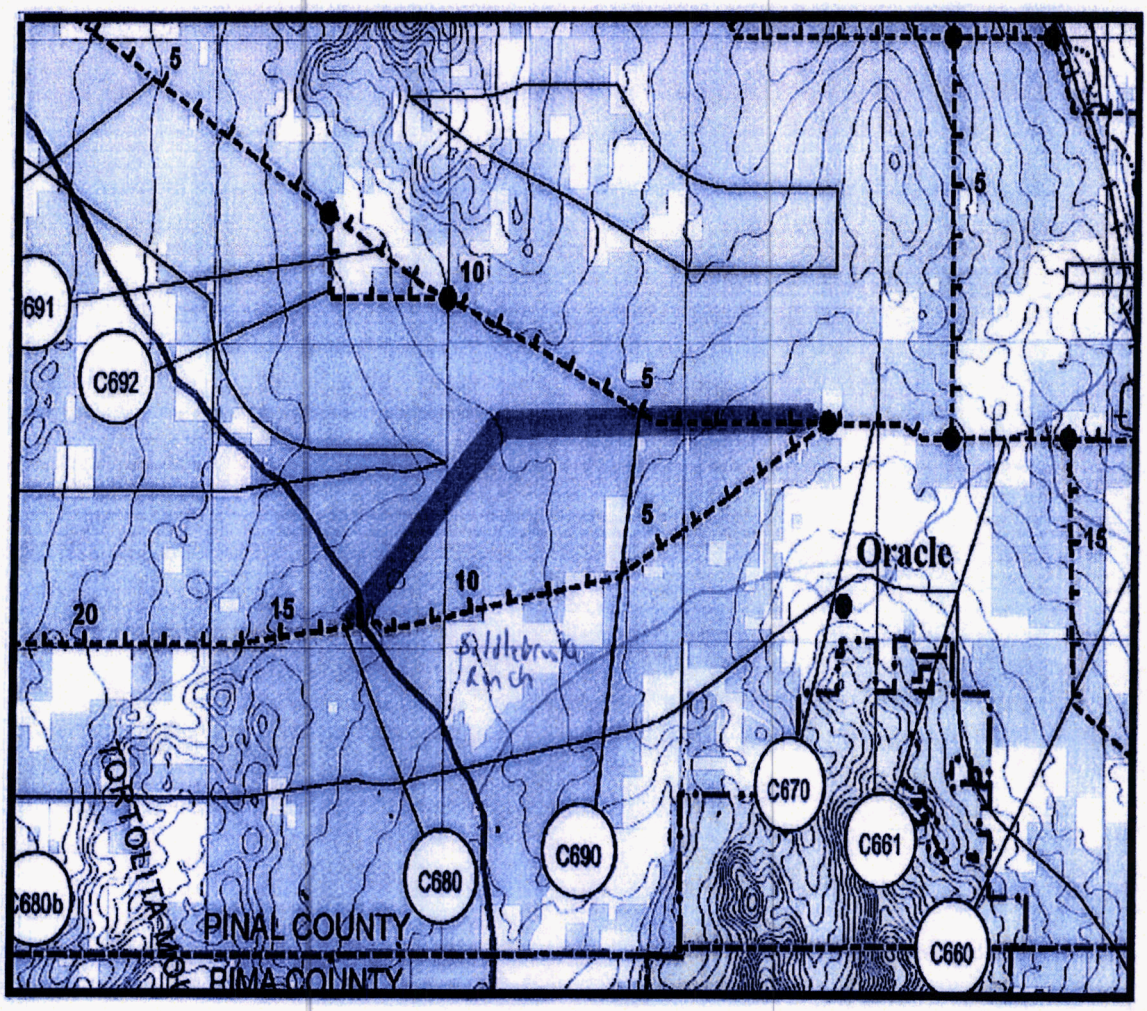
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PINAL COUNTY
PIMA COUNTY

ORIGINAL

CASCABEL CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION

SUPPORTING CONSERVATION, COMMUNITY AND CONTEMPLATION IN THE MIDDLE SAN PEDRO RIVER VALLEY

6146 N. Canyon Road, Cascabel, AZ 85602
(520) 212-5862 / www.cascabelconservation.org

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Docket No. L-00000CV-15-0318-00171

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October 5, 2015

Arizona Power Plant and Transmission Line Siting Committee
Arizona Corporation Commission
1200 W. Washington
Phoenix, AZ 85007-2996

To the Arizona Power Plant and Transmission Line Siting Committee and Corporation Commission,

The Cascabel Conservation Association (CCA) is a community-based conservation organization dedicated to the collaborative stewardship of the middle San Pedro River watershed by promoting the health, stability, and diversity of vegetation, waters, and wildlife as well as supporting a sustainable human community. I serve as Conservation Director for the organization, which has over 150 members concerned with the conservation of this area, as well as the broader watershed. Since its founding in 1997, our organization has had a long successful history in regards to achievements in collaborative conservation, land protection, advocacy, environmental education, providing desert sojourning, and community events. To date, we have protected over 1900 acres of land through fee title acquisition and facilitating conservation easements in the Cascabel area of the San Pedro valley.

I am writing you regarding our position against the proposed SunZia transmission line in Arizona, and specifically its route through the middle/lower San Pedro valley. I have worked as a conservation biologist in the (broader) lower San Pedro valley, between Benson and Winkelman, Arizona, from 2002 to present (14 years). Additionally, I completed a master's of science research project through the Desert Southwest Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit at the University of Arizona, 2013-2014. My research focused on the ecological and cultural values of this lower watershed. I conducted an ecosystem conservation assessment and provided a landscape conservation design for the watershed (thesis submitted/accepted August 2014). My research was supported by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Desert Landscape Conservation Cooperative. From this background, and now as Conservation Director for CCA, I have a thorough knowledge of this watershed's natural resource values, ecosystem processes, agency and non-governmental organization conservation efforts, and community concerns and investment.

The lower San Pedro Valley is a rare, mostly ecologically intact valley, the only one in southern Arizona without a major transportation artery or large-scale transmission corridor (notably the least developed, highest landscape integrity section is the region north of Benson to San Manuel where SunZia line siting is proposed). Hence, the valley still supports large wildlife that traverse the

valley, such as black bear, mountain lion, white-tailed deer, mule deer, and big horn sheep (sheep populations are both in the Catalina and Galiuro Mountains), as well as other medium size species, such as gray fox, coati, and javelina, and rare reptile species, such as the Sonoran desert tortoise. Larger raptors also traverse the valley in their foraging, including golden eagle, Swainson's hawk, zone-tailed hawk, red-tailed hawk, Harris's hawk, gray hawk, common black-hawk, and other migrants.

The proposed two single-circuit 500 kV transmission lines at 135 feet height and designated 400-1000 foot "vegetation-managed" rights-of-way will significantly damage the landscape connectivity capacity for many of these species. The alignment corridor will inevitably be lessened of its vegetation density and height, and diversity (as seen from other transmission lines projects throughout Arizona). Access roads will be needed for construction of the lines and for maintenance thereafter. These roads will bring unauthorized vehicles of all types into previously remote wilderness quality backcountry of the Rincon and Catalina Mountain foothills, canyons, and slopes. These access and alignment roads will result in a new entry area for erosion of silt and coarse materials and downslope deposition into the San Pedro River basin. The vehicles that traverse these roads will potentially introduce non-native invasive plant species (e.g. buffelgrass), which has compromised the native biological richness of the Sonoran desert throughout this region (through non-native plant competition) and, in the case of buffelgrass, has raised the risk for catastrophic high intensity/high temperature unnatural wildfire (or human-caused fire, directly or indirectly). Additionally, these roads will increase the potential for unauthorized use by all-terrain vehicles (i.e., OHVs), and raise the risk for wildlife poaching (see AZ Daily Star 10/1/15, p. A6), as well as looting of previously unreachable archaeological and historical sites for which the valley is well known for harboring.

At least five major wildlife corridors for dispersing animals likely occur in the cross-valley landscape linkages provided by paired canyon/wash systems within this lower watershed. These landscape linkages will be significantly degraded by the construction and continued maintenance of these paired transmission lines crossing these canyon and washes. The impacted landscape linkages, include: 1) Paige Canyon-Hot Springs Canyon, 2) Soza/Youtcy Canyon Creeks-Soza Canyon, 3) Buehman/Edgar Canyon-Redfield Canyon, 4) Alder/Stratton Washes-Kielberg Canyon, and 5) Peppersauce Wash-Whitlock Wash (AZGFD 2012, Wilbor 2014; see attached map).

These key drainage pairs (or complexes) will be seriously affected by the SunZia transmission lines bisecting them, or in worst cases by traveling parallel with them for some distance (i.e., by removal or reduction of vegetation, placement of large towers, overhead wires, cleared roadways, and new human intrusion disturbances for required on-going vegetation maintenance and by unauthorized OHV use). As a result of this project, larger mammals (see above) would find these important corridors with altered vegetation, new human infrastructure, and new human disturbance. These factors would combine to make these corridors less functional as linkages in terms of suitable habitat for their movement needs. These species would be more likely to not attempt to use them (thus not disperse/migrate) or may prompt them to take more difficult travel routes, exposing them to higher stress conditions that diminish their reproductive fitness or expose them to higher mortality risk. Other canyons would also be impacted by SunZia transmission line crossings, including: Redrock, Roble, Catalina, and Smelter. All these drainages (including the drainages mentioned above) are notable for their upslope to down basin hydrological and ecological connections, which provide

seasonal water to the river basin, nutrient transport, and facilitate wildlife connections to the San Pedro River corridor.

Large and small conservation organizations have worked for over 40 years to protect and conserve the environment of the San Pedro watershed, including the lower San Pedro watershed where the proposed SunZia transmissions line would traverse. The Nature Conservancy calls the San Pedro River one of its "Last Great Places" known for its rich riparian habitat, birds, and other wildlife. Nearly $50 million dollars as been invested by various conservation groups to protect more than 200,000 acres in the lower valley. The National Audubon Society and Tucson Audubon Society have worked together to scientifically document the lower San Pedro River corridor's importance to bird populations (2006-2015). The San Pedro valley is a principal hemispheric migration pathway and nesting area within the North America Pacific Flyway for Neotropical birds (>250 migrating bird species and >100 breeding bird species) (BLM, San Pedro RNCA website).

In 2007 the lower San Pedro was identified as an Arizona Important Bird Area (IBA), and in 2008 it was identified as a Global Important Bird Area by the National Audubon Society (NAS IBA Science Technical Committee). The upslope-downslope connection within bird populations has been documented by Audubon's bird studies in the watershed (TAS 2011). Additionally, the transmission lines would cross the San Pedro River where federally designated critical habitat for the yellow-billed cuckoo (USFWS Endangered Species Act- Threatened species) is present. Beyond the San Pedro River, SunZia would cross Buehman and Edgar Canyons, which also have high potential to support this threatened species. Local raptor species populations, particularly zone-tailed and red-tailed hawks, and golden eagles (as well as turkey vultures and ravens), which are known to use the many canyon systems of the Rincon and Catalina ranges, would have a higher potential to be impacted from transmission lines placed within their foraging range, resulting in line collisions and electrocutions, thereby increasing their overall mortality rate (Loss et al. 2014, Rollan et al. 2010).

As a conservation biologist working in the valley from 2002 up to the present, I have listened and worked with many diverse groups and individuals in the lower San Pedro valley, including the Natural Resource Conservation Districts (Redington and Winkelman), comprised primarily of ranchers and farmers, as well as met with many individual landowners. Residents of the lower San Pedro, including ranchers, farmers, small property landowners, and local community residents alike, overwhelmingly oppose the loss of landscape condition integrity that these transmission lines would bring to the lower San Pedro valley. Ranchers know they will experience impacts to their operations through fragmentation of their grazing ranges, increased erosion, introduction of invasive vegetation, and unauthorized motorized vehicle use that will follow new transmission line access and alignment roads. Environmentally concerned residents are concerned about loss of wildlife connectivity, habitat loss, direct and indirect impacts to species, increased erosion and effects on the San Pedro River, invasive species incursion (increased fire potential from new species), increased unauthorized vehicle users (who will find new routes by word of mouth and the internet), new access points that will open up previously remote backcountry leading to Sonoran desert ecosystem degradation (e.g., trash, trails, erosion, vegetation destruction), wildlife poaching, and cultural resource impacts and looting.

Of particular concern is the impact to the Conservation Land System of Pima County. Pima County has purchased, with over $14M dollars of voter approved bond money, three large ranches within the lower San Pedro valley for conservation purposes to further its Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan and meet the mitigation requirements for its Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (i.e., Six Bar, M Diamond, and A-7 ranches, total approx. 66,000 acres in conservation management). All these ranches would be ecologically compromised by the SunZia transmission lines and its corridor. Working ranch and land management operations would be impacted. Cultural resources (both archaeological and historical), which are extensive throughout the transmission line sited route, would be compromised, both at the time of construction and later through increased access roads and the potential for looting. Two of these ranches are bisected in half causing severe management impacts to the ecological values and management potential of these conservation reserves. The conservation, operation, and economic impacts to these and other valley ranches could be avoided by an alternative placement of the SunZia route outside the lower San Pedro valley if the project proceeds (see below).

The eco-tourism/outdoor recreation sector of the valley economy is just developing in this valley (and in the Aravaipa valley as well). Outdoor recreationists, pursuing many activities such as birding, biking, hiking, nature identification, photography, and wildlife watching, are beginning to find this valley a destination close to the urban centers of the Sun Corridor where many reside. The SunZia project could lessen this opportunity for small-scale, low-impact economic development for some of the economically depressed local communities in the valley, just as this sector of the valley's economy is poised to grow. The "ecosystem services" provided by an undisturbed, unfragmented, and undeveloped watershed, include: unimpeded mountain front and in-tributary groundwater recharge, nutrient transport from highlands to lowlands, natural fire cycles, clean air and water provisioning, support of high biodiversity, ecological trophic function and population regulation, livestock grazing, wildlife-based recreation, dark sky values for astronomical viewing, and desert solitude values for personal rejuvenation. These "services" would be compromised by varying extents by the routing of the SunZia project through the lower San Pedro watershed.

The need for this project at all is highly questionable, both in terms of providing renewable energy and conventional energy. The Southline Project is much better designed and sited to meet any such energy needs in southwestern New Mexico and southeastern Arizona, and a more northerly route along existing extra-high-voltage lines through Springerville to Phoenix would result in far fewer environmental impacts if delivering New Mexico's wind energy to the western grid is the objective. The Southline Project uses an existing corridor through Tucson rather than opening up an entirely new corridor in the San Pedro Watershed. The Southline project's multiple connections with the southeastern Arizona grid also make it much more utilitarian for Arizona's citizens. Co-location with existing infrastructure should be the selected placement for the SunZia lines if this project proceeds. Co-locating this project makes sense for efficiency and permitting (through fewer access and alignment road needs, and fewer cultural resource reviews and avoidance measures needed), cost (less cost for access, construction, and maintenance of infrastructure), and most importantly ecologically (less loss of the desert landscapes, less impact to riverine/wash/creek natural resources, less potential for introducing non-native species, and less disturbance to ecological systems and wildlife populations).

In sum total, SunZia transmission line siting through the lower San Pedro valley would result in damaging ecological impacts in numerous ways. It would degrade ecological systems (upland impacts transferred to lowlands), increase erosion, impact wildlife habitats, impact wildlife populations, disrupt migration linkages, compromise species climate adaptation potential (through impacting wildlife species movement), and increase greatly the potential for the introduction of non-native species such as buffelgrass, increasing wildland fire potential in the non-fire adapted Sonoran desert ecosystem. Socially, valley landowners, ranchers, farmers, tourism operators, and community residents overwhelmingly oppose the siting of this major transmission line in the undisturbed desert landscape of the San Pedro valley. Such a strong and united local sentiment needs to be respected.

The Cascabel Conservation Association strongly advocates against siting new infrastructure, whether this project or a future project, through the lower San Pedro valley. Arizona's special rural, unfragmented, and undeveloped landscapes are our most ecologically valuable places, conserving the natural resources we so highly value, and providing for the many ecosystem services that benefit us all. Places like the lower San Pedro River and its associated tributaries (the many mentioned within this letter, along with the Aravaipa Canyon area), are too important to people and nature to defile. We have a responsibility to future Arizona citizens to protect the environment and landscapes that have been essential to nature and people through time up until this 21st century, and should remain so long into the future. Please find an alternative to the SunZia Project and avoid siting *any* major infrastructure projects through this remote, sensitive, ecologically and culturally important watershed.

Sincerely,

Scott L. Wilbor, Lower San Pedro Conservation Director
Cascabel Conservation Association

Literature Cited:

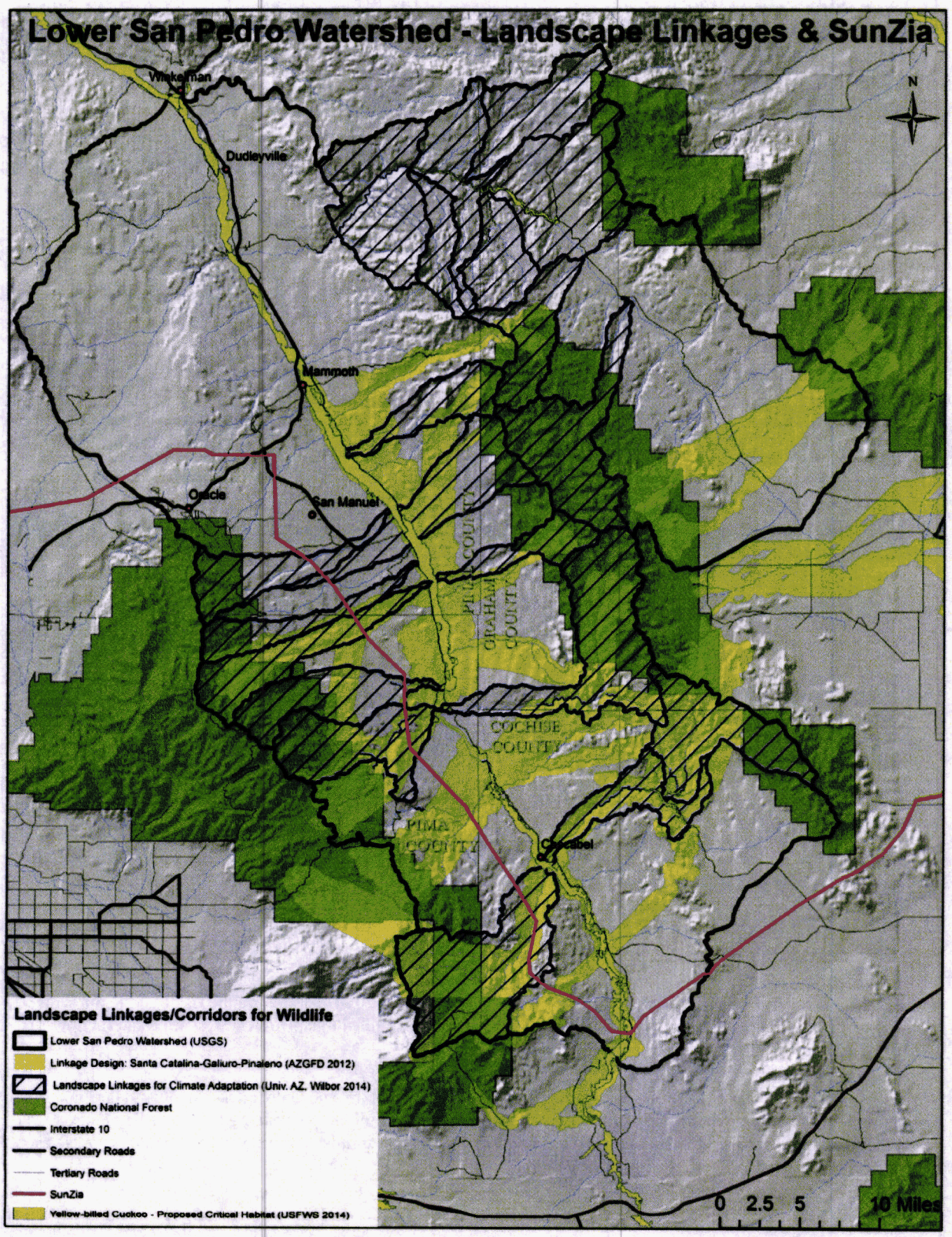
Arizona Game and Fish Department (AZGFD). 2012. Pima County wildlife connectivity assessment: detailed linkages. Santa Catalina/Rincon – Galiuro Linkage Design. Report to the Regional Transportation Authority of Pima County. 120 p.

Loss, S., Will, T., and P. Marra. 2014. Refining estimates of bird collision and electrocution mortality at power lines in the United States. PLoS ONE 9(7): e101565.

Rollan, A., Real, J., Bosch, R., Tintó, A., and A. Hernández-Matías. 2010. Modelling the risk of collision with power lines in Bonelli's Eagle *Hieraaetus fasciatus* and its conservation implications. Bird Conservation International 20: 279-294.

Tucson Audubon Society (TAS), Important Bird Areas Program. 2011. Studies to assess the upland bird community, nocturnal bird community, and gray hawk nesting with the BHP Billiton property along the lower San Pedro River, San Manuel, Arizona, in 2011. Report by the Arizona IBA Program co-administered by Audubon Arizona and Tucson Audubon Society. 68 p. (submitted to BHP Billiton).

Wilbor, S. 2014. An ecosystem conservation assessment of the lower San Pedro watershed in Arizona. Master's thesis. School of Natural Resources and the Environment, University of Arizona. 131 p.


Lower San Pedro Watershed - Landscape Linkages & SunZia
Winkelman
Dudleyville
Mammoth
Oracle
San Manuel
PIMA COUNTY
GRAHAM COUNTY
COCHISE COUNTY
PIMA COUNTY
Cascabel
N
Landscape Linkages/Corridors for Wildlife
Lower San Pedro Watershed (USGS)
Linkage Design: Santa Catalina-Galiuro-Pinaleno (AZGFD 2012)
Landscape Linkages for Climate Adaptation (Univ. AZ. Wilbor 2014)
Coronado National Forest
Interstate 10
Secondary Roads
Tertiary Roads
SunZia
Yellow-billed Cuckoo - Proposed Critical Habitat (USFWS 2014)
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Arizona Corporation Commission
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AZ CORP COMMISSION
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Cheryl Morgan

7830 Chippewa Drive

Hereford Arizona 85615

12 October 2015

Docket No. L-00000YY-15-0318-00171

Dear Sir/Ma'am:

I want to take this opportunity to talk about the proposed Sun Zia transmission lines running along the San Pedro River. I am not certain I understand the reasoning behind this approach; I am assuming it provides some type of accesses to existing pathways which in fact exist to enhance the environment of the San Pedro River and Riparian areas itself. I frankly do not see this as the best use of such native "Infrastructure". The purpose of the Riparian area along this river is to sustain and improve the wild life corridors, protect the native plants and animals and provide access for the enjoyment, and protection of these by Arizonans.

First, the power lines will have to be constructed, and that will significantly, for a length period, disrupt the environment, and impact Arizonans accessing the area for pleasure. Second, there will be a ground footprint left behind by the insertion of the power lines. Third, the transmission lines will also create a "footprint" in the sky which has to affect birds not only living along the river/riparian area, but as well the migratory birds.

While improvised infrastructure is welcome and necessary to enhance our day to day living, there has to be consideration for that intangible portion of our olives that deals with being able to see, and access nature.

I request your consideration in not supporting placing the transmission lines along the San Pedro River.

I thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Cheryl Morgan

Colonel, US Army (Retired)

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OCT 15 2015
ARIZONA CORP. COMM
800 W CONGRESS STE 2 18 TUCSON AZ 85701

ORIGINAL

Lynwood (Woody) Hume
5819 North Cascabel Road
Benson, Arizona 85602
October 11, 2015

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Power Plant and Transmission Line Siting Committee
Arizona Corporation Committee
1200 West Washington Street
Phoenix, Arizona 85007

Arizona Corporation Commission
DOCKETED
OCT 16 2015
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RE: SunZia Transmission Towers in San Pedro Valley
Docket Number L-00000YY-15-0318-00171

Dear Committee Members,

Some years ago when we in Cascabel had a meeting with the representatives of BLM New Mexico and the hacks & suits (only they were dressed down, so's to come across more as one of us I guess) of SunZia and the powers-that-beam, I was one of the people who stood up and gave forth on what we really thought of a double line of high tension towers being pushed through this valley of the Rio San Pedro. I had no time to change out of my ranch work clothes, didn't care much about how dusty I was, either SunZia has changed my mind about what I'll ask of the Almighty. When a horse has pitched me off his back and I start dropping back down to Earth from orbit, my thought has been, "No ... please ... later, maybe." When horses have reared straight up and then over backwards and taken me with them crashing as likely into the rocks as into the sand, I've thought, "No ... please ... later, maybe." I make the mistake of relaxing, and horses drop down for a nice roll to get me and that saddle off their backs or they just want to loll in the cool water of the stock tank we're standing in--again, "No ... please ... later, maybe." I'm leading my horse and another into a corral of a moonless cow camp night, he bumps a rotted beam and brings it down onto his back, and in the mayhem I'm pulled under all those sets of hooves invisible in the dark and they trample me from neck to ankle. "No ...please ... later, maybe." Or of an instant the world becomes naught but pink incandescence near impossible to bear as a finger of lightning lifts me out of the saddle. That Great Power that animates the Universe has really upped the ante this time--the usually more plaintive begging be spared, now it's time for an angry demand: "No! Not *now*! I have more to do!" No proof, of course, that it was why I was dropped back into that saddle as the last of the electricity jumped off the fingertips of my left hand. Such events can only kill the body. These powerlines will kill my *soul*. Their possibility has changed my mind about asking the Great Power to preserve my life a little longer. I don't write here to facts and figures or to suggest alternatives (and they do exist) to your alternative energy. No, I write here a prayer: *Oh Lord! Be Thou merciful! Don't let me live to see this greenwashed abomination, for I have no interest in walking upon Thy creation so desecrated. Amen.*

Sincerasmente,
Lynwood (Woody) Hume
Working Vaquero and Foreman
(520) 212-7638
paniolowoody@hotmail.com

RECEIVED
OCT 15 2015
ARIZONA CORP. COMM
[illegible] CONGRESS STE 218 TUCSON AZ [illegible]

ORIGINAL

ROBERT M. MCCLURE, 9994 E VOGEL AVE, SCOTTSDALE, AZ 85258 480-939-2916

October 11, 2015

Arizona Corporation Commission
DOCKETED
OCT 16 2015
DOCKETED BY

Power Plant and Transmission Line Siting Committee
Arizona Corporation Commission
1200 W. Washington Street
Phoenix, AZ 85007

Dear Power Plant and Transmission Line Siting Committee:

This letter, in regard to Docket Number L-00000YY-15-0318-00171, is to express my opposition to the proposed Sunzia transmission line through the San Pedro River Valley. My interest is both personal and professional. I am a property owner on North Cascabel Road. For 15 years I was a resident until my wife's health deteriorated and we had to move closer to medical facilities. I am also the holder of a Doctorate in Electrical Engineering and am professionally qualified to express an opinion as to the technical merits of the Sunzia project.

The Sunzia project seems to have been launched during the peak of the push for renewable energy, which even some of the most devoted environmentalists are beginning to question due to the adverse impacts of wind farms and solar arrays. The need to reduce carbon dioxide emissions to prevent a climate calamity seems now to have been greatly exaggerated due to inadequate or defective computer models of the atmosphere.

Climate change aside, however, there is, at present, no economic justification for either wind power or solar power except under very unusual conditions. The experience in Europe is testimony to this. Without large and increasing government subsidies, the project in New Mexico that is expected to provide the source power for the Sunzia project will not come to fruition. Current government mandates for renewable energy are the sole justification for this project, and taxpayers are expected to support them.

From an environmental standpoint, it is not even clear that wind and solar is as friendly as one would like. Recent studies have cast considerable doubt on total lifetime impacts. There are significant environmental costs to producing wind turbines and solar panels, and the issues of replacing them at the end of their yet unknown lifetimes have not been addressed. For that matter, the adverse impact on wildlife which cannot be measured in dollars and cents would undoubtedly be substantial.

I would urge the commission to review carefully the experience in Germany (especially), Britain, and in Spain before agreeing to the Sunzia project. Germany, in particularly, made an unfortunate decision to decommission several nuclear power plants and now finds itself in the embarrassing position of having to build more coal-fired plants to provide the back up generating capacity that unreliable wind resources require.

Sincerely,

Robert M. McClure, PhD

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ARIZONA CORP. COMM
400 W CONGRESS STE 216 TUCSON AZ 85701

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AZ CORP COMMISSION
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2018 W. Los Reales Rd.
Tucson, AZ 85746
October 11, 2015

Power Plant and Transmission Line Siting Committee
Arizona Corporation Commission
1200 W. Washington Street
Phoenix, AZ 85007

Re: SunZia Transmission Line Project.
Docket Number: L-00000YY-15-0318-00171

Dear members of the committee,

We oppose putting the SunZia transmission lines along the San Pedro River Valley. Placing the lines in the roadless area west of the San Pedro River severely fragments a wild area. The transmission lines and associated service roads will badly damage wildlife linkages between the sky islands crucial to southeastern Arizona environmental quality. The project will create a band of disturbed soil that could easily lead to a buffelgrass invasion that would be difficult to impossible to manage. Buffelgrass can flourish in disturbed areas near roads. Note the buffelgrass along I-10 between Tucson and the state route 83 turnoff. Buffelgrass and its associated fire risk is but one example of the many possible unintended consequences of the construction. Not only would the environmental damage be severe, but it is unnecessary because the proposed Southline Project will accomplish all that SunZia would in Arizona with far fewer environmental impacts and greater benefits.

The San Pedro River Valley is a gem of great value to Southern Arizona. As you consider the line siting and its adverse environmental consequences, please also consider the possibility that the project is not sound economically.

Sincerely,

Tom Orum and Nancy Ferguson
520-573-1679
torum@email.arizona.edu

Arizona Corporation Commission
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OCT 14 2015
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2015 OCT 13 P 2:07
AZ CORP COMMISSION
DOCKET CONTROL

Regarding Docket Number L-00000YY-15-0318-00171

5819 N. Cascabel Road
Benson, AZ 85602
elna.otter@gmail.com
October 11, 2015

Power Plant and Transmission Line Siting Committee
Arizona Corporation
1200 W. Washington Street
Phoenix, AZ 85007

Dear Committee Members:

I first heard about the SouthWest Power Group (SWPG) in the summer of 2007, and I and spoke to the Cochise County Board of Supervisors against their proposed Bowie Power Plant. SunZia was already part of the picture -- it was said to be coming along "just in time" to transport the energy produced by the Bowie Plant -- as if it were a gift from afar -- a rare but welcome coincidence. I met Tom Wray, the major proponent of Bowie, although he was listed merely as "The Electrical Interconnection Manager." My first notes about him concerned his proposal to obtain "clean coal" (involving carbon capture and sequestration) by passing CO2-laden exhaust from the Bowie plant over tomato plants or evergreen seedlings to improve their growth. (Note: this is extraordinarily far from what most people understand to be clean coal.) He also mentioned looking for a $133 million tax credit (for producing "clean coal"). However, the Bowie Power Plant was not viewed as a specific threat to local environmental or community values, particularly since Bowie is east of Cascabel. -- except in the sense that coal plants are generally bad, polluting entities, causing asthma and other health problems in the population. The Bowie clean coal idea was rejected by the supervisors, and SWPG requested the reissue of a permit to use natural gas which was approved. We heard that their permit to produce electricity with natural gas was restored, and then that it was renewed.

Our community started hearing about SunZia as an independent entity that would affect our Valley in 2009. We have been working against it since then. SWPG, along with the Environmental Planning Group, LLC, has apparently convinced a large segment of the government that its plans for SunZia have nothing to do with the fact that SWPG also owns Bowie, despite the fact that all the routes pass by the proposed Bowie site. They talk at length about wind from New Mexico, although no wind power seems to be developing there even now, years later. They have gone to great pains to maintain the notion that their project's goal is to support clean power, even going so far as agreeing to bury the power

lines North of White Sands Missile Range, which if they actually do so will require a great deal of money and which will be a technological first given the amount of power to be transmitted. Why do I think there is a fairly good chance they will elect not to build those lines into New Mexico?

Of course, if they don't build the lines into New Mexico, then they would only have the Arizona section. It could go from Bowie to the electrical distribution hub in Casa Grande. At the moment there are no renewable energy sources for it to carry, so, if they are lucky, power will be produced by the Bowie plant 'just in time.' We all know that transmission lines are obligated to carry power from any source on a first-come-first-served basis, and we all know they'd prefer to use power from a renewable source. But fortunate anyway!

All of this would be somewhat wryly entertaining were it not for the fact that this project will do real damage to the environment. The San Pedro Valley has been called one of the Last Great Places. The Upper San Pedro is protected by being a National Riparian Area. What a pity that no such protection exists for the Middle and Lower San Pedro! This transmission line will initiate the destruction of the Valley. Along with its support roads, it will cause fragmentation, and fragmentation leads to the disappearance of wildlife. All the new support roads and damage to the surface will change the hydrology, so what will happen to the flow of the river itself is anybody's guess. There are no other viable rivers flowing North-South; they have largely been drained by agriculture and development. Indeed the San Pedro is well on its way to being drained dry. But when it is gone, so will be the last major avian corridor leading to the entire Western half of the United States and Canada. It will be a silent spring.

There is enough solar and wind power in Arizona to meet Arizona's needs. California is independent of other states and intends to remain so, and it would cost Arizona taxpayers money to take the power delivered to Casa Grande to the California state line. There is enough solar and wind power in New Mexico to meet New Mexico's needs. I believe we have no need of fossil fuel power plants. Southline, if built, will provide much more connectivity than SunZia ever envisions.

No sacrifice of environmental values should be allowed because none is needed to move toward renewable, local energy.

Sincerely yours,

Elna L. Otter

Elna L. Otter

ORIGINAL

Power Plant and Transmission Line Siting Committee
Arizona Corporation Commission
1200 W. Washington Street,
Phoenix, AZ 85007

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2015 OCT 13 P 2: 10

AZ CORP COMMISSION
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Arizona Corporation Commission
DOCKETED

OCT 13 2015

DOCKETED BY

October 12, 2015

Re: SunZia Transmission, LLC

Docket Number L-OOOOOYY-15-03 1 8-001 7 1

To Whom it may concern:

For a host of reasons, it is not in the State of Arizona's best interests to permit the SunZia transmission project. From its inception, SunZia has been promoted as a renewable energy project to transmit "stranded" wind-generated power from eastern New Mexico to the supposedly lucrative energy markets of California. For reasons that have become obvious as the project has dragged on, SunZia is at best a pipe dream and at worst a scam that is not in the best interests of the State of Arizona.

1) As promoted from its inception until the project achieved a NEPA permit, Arizona was little more than an obstacle on the way from New Mexico wind fields to supposedly insatiable energy markets of southern California. Over and over again, the proponent declared that California, not Arizona, was the primary destination of this project.

2) Arizona meanwhile has been developing its own renewable energy sector based on solar energy. It is not in Arizona's best financial interests to permit out-of-state energy projects to compete with its own burgeoning solar energy industry. That industry provides in-state construction and operational jobs that dwarf those that would potentially be provided by SunZia.

3) Wind energy technology has stalled, with only greater turbine size offering greater efficiency, and this limited by transportation logistics from turbine factories to wind fields. Solar energy technology, by contrast, continues to become more efficient and cost effective. That trend is expected to continue for the foreseeable future.

4) Conflicts with DOD in New Mexico have required undergrounding portions of the project which have driven up the potential costs to levels that will be unlikely to be financed by private investors. The only hope is that what was billed as a merchant line will, in the unlikely event that it is ever built, become just another federally subsidized pork barrel project.

5) This project would cut a new infrastructure path through Arizona's diminishing and irreplaceable wild lands, degrading Arizona's spectacular landscape and environmental gifts, both of which are an increasingly important priority for its current citizens and a significant reason why people desire to move here.

6) If the renewable energy aspect, which was the primary reason the project was granted NEPA approval, is not financially viable, then the only logical conclusion is that the project has, from its inception, been little more than a ruse to build transmission capacity from the proponent's permitted,

though as yet unbuilt, Bowie power plant.

7) Finally, powerline security is compromised when routed across long stretches of unpopulated wildlands. Arizona is in the fortunate position of having its primary solar energy sites located in the southwestern quadrant of the state, in relatively close proximity to the state's major energy markets along the Sun Corridor.

For the same reason, since the El Paso Natural Gas Pipeline bisects the southwest quadrant, it affords an opportunity to co-locate natural gas power plants with solar energy facilities in relatively close proximity to Arizona's energy markets. The proposed SunZia Transmission Project does not do this.

For the above reasons, the proposed SunZia Transmission Project is not in the best interest of Arizona and I ask you to deny approval of this project.

Thank you for your consideration,

David Omick

David Omick
6146 N. Canyon Road
Benson, AZ 85602

ORIGINAL

THE WILDERNESS SOCIETY

Arizona Corporation Commission
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OCT 13 2015
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AZ CORP COMMISSION
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October 12, 2015

Docket Control Center
Arizona Corporation Commission
1200 West Washington
Phoenix, AZ 85007

RE: DOCKET NO. L-00000YY-15-0318-00171, Case No. 171, SunZia.

Dear Arizona Corporation Commission Line Siting Committee,

Please accept this letter and the attached document (these originals and 25 copies submitted) as comments by The Wilderness Society as you consider the issue of potential line siting for the proposed SunZia electrical transmission line.

The attached document is a Letter for Protest of Final Environmental Impact Statement and Proposed Resource Management Plan Amendments for the SunZia Southwest Transmission Project which The Wilderness Society and partners submitted to the Bureau of Land Management.

We would like to highlight for you that:

- The Wilderness Society supports the environmentally responsible development of renewable energy and associated infrastructure, including transmission lines, on public and private lands as a means to reduce threats from climate change and achieve a clean energy future. This type of development is not appropriate everywhere, however, and places with sensitive and important natural and cultural resources should be protected from development of any kind. (pages 2-3)
- In the case of the SunZia project, there are a number of other transmission lines proposed in the same geography that may, or may not, serve some of the same renewable energy benefits, and may or may not have lower impacts. It is not possible to make an informed comparative judgment about the multiple projects at this point in time due to the different timelines of the projects and the amount of information currently available for each proposal. (page 3)
- The Wilderness Society opposes the Aravaipa Canyon route for SunZia. (page 9)
- The Wilderness Society opposes the San Pedro routes for SunZia. (page10)

Thank you for your consideration of these comments as you study the SunZia project.

Sincerely,

Mike Quigley
Arizona State Director
The Wilderness Society

P.O. Box 18404, Tucson AZ 85731 | ph 520-334-8741 | wilderness.org

July 15, 2013

Delivered by email and Regular Mail postmarked 7/15/13

Director (210)
Attn: Brenda Hudgens-Williams
P.O. Box 71383
Washington, D.C. 20024-1383
Brenda_Hudgens-Williams@blm.gov

Re: Protest of Final Environmental Impact Statement and Proposed Resource Management Plan Amendments for the SunZia Southwest Transmission Project

Dear Ms. Hudgens-Williams,

This correspondence constitutes a formal protest of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) proposed action and Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) and proposed Resource Management Plan Amendments (RMPA) for the SunZia Southwest Transmission Line Project, Bureau of Land Management.[1] BLM/NM/PL-13-04-1610 (June 2013) (hereafter "SunZia FEIS/RMPA"). BLM prepared this FEIS and proposed RMPA document to analyze and disclose potential effects of the proposed SunZia Southwest Transmission Project (SunZia). The proposed SunZia Project would include two 500-kilovolt (kV) transmission lines traversing over 500 miles of federal, state, and private lands between central New Mexico and central Arizona.

The FEIS for SunZia included three alternatives for the amendment of Resource Management Plans (RMPs) that would be affected by the proposed action (see Section 2.6 of the FEIS). They include the No Action Alternative, a 400-foot corridor alternative, and a 2500-foot corridor alternative. The BLM selected the 400-foot corridor as its preferred plan amendment alternative to be included as an amendment to RMPs for conformance with visual resource management and right-of-way management objectives. The resource management plans addressed include the following:

> Socorro RMP, Socorro Field Office (2010) – BLM preferred alternative
> Mimbres RMP, Las Cruces District Office (1993) – BLM preferred alternative
> Final Safford District RMP and EIS, Safford District Office (1991)

This protest is made on behalf of members and supporters of The Wilderness Society and the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC). Our groups participated in the planning process and submitted public comments to BLM. The names, addresses, and phone numbers of contact persons representing our groups are contained in Section I of this letter. We incorporate by reference the comments submitted to the BLM on the Draft

[1] We believe that BLM's actions justify a protest and appropriate response; however, we would note that BLM's Land Use Planning Handbook (H-1601-1, Appendix E) also provides for BLM to respond to comments submitted on an FEIS, even if they are submitted as a protest.

Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Proposed SunZia Transmission Project submitted by these respective groups.[2]

A Notice of Availability (NOA) of the Final Environmental Impact Statement for the SunZia Southwest Transmission Project in New Mexico and Arizona and Proposed Resource Management Plan Amendments was published in the Federal Register by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) on June 14, 2013. Publication of the NOA by EPA began a 30-day protest period for the SunZia FEIS/RMPA. According to the EPA Federal Register notice the deadline for timely submittal of protests with the Director of BLM is July 15, 2013; therefore the submittal of this protest is timely.[3]

BLM planning regulations (43 CFR 1610.5-2) provide for any person who participated in the planning and environmental analysis process and who has an interest that is or may be adversely affected by the BLM planning decision, may protest the approval of the planning decision within 30 days from the date that the EPA publishes the NOA of the FEIS in the Federal Register.

Protests must be filed with the Director of the BLM in Washington, D.C., and must meet filing requirements prescribed in 40 CFR § 1610.5-2(a). According to this federal regulation, a protest must include: (1) the name, mailing address, telephone number, and interest of the person filing the protest; (2) a statement of the issue or issues being protested; (3) a statement of the plan amendment being protested; (4) a copy of all documents addressing the issue or issues that were submitted during the EIS process by the protesting party or an indication of the date the issue or issues were discussed for the record; and (5) a concise statement explaining why the State Director's decision is believed to be wrong.

This protest letter is organized to meet these filing requirements. Section II of the letter states the interests of the protesting parties and includes the name, mailing address, and telephone number of each contact person representing the groups filling this consolidated protest. Section III of the letter includes statements of the issues being protested by the parties. Section III also contains cross-references to comment letters or portions of the administrative record where the issues being protested were addressed during the planning process. Section III also contains citations to the SunZia FEIS/RMPA being protested where applicable. Section IV contains a summary of the reasons why protesting parties believe that the State Director's decisions with regard to BLM's preferred alternative and proposed plan amendments are wrong.

I. Introduction

Our groups support the environmentally responsible development of renewable energy and associated infrastructure, including transmission lines, on public and private lands as

[2] Comments of protesting parties incorporated by reference are found in Appendix J of the SunZia FEIS/RMPA. These comments are identified as Comment ID Number 1614 (p. J-292).
[3] *Available at:* http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2013-06-14/pdf/2013-14195.pdf

a means to reduce threats from climate change and achieve a clean energy future. This type of development is not appropriate everywhere, however, and places with sensitive and important natural and cultural resources should be protected from development of any kind.

The Need for Better Models of Transmission Planning

Some of the West's best renewable energy resources are located in geographically remote areas that are not yet connected to the grid, and consequently some amount of new transmission infrastructure will be needed to help meet clean energy and climate goals at state, regional and national levels. The development of any large infrastructure project in the West must address many environmental and cultural resource constraints in order to obtain the necessary permits. Transmission lines are no exception, and may face greater hurdles than other projects because they have prominent visual impacts, typically cross numerous ecological zones, and often involve multiple administrative jurisdictions.

The difficulties in finding acceptable routes for the proposed SunZia project highlight the need for better transmission planning processes. Efforts are underway in the Western Interconnect to develop better processes where agencies, developers and stakeholders can engage in pro-active, coordinated regional transmission planning that will connect renewable resources to the grid and to load centers with the least amount of new infrastructure and lowest environmental and cultural resource conflicts.

Key principles of this kind of improved planning include:

- improved operation and expansion of the grid to better take advantage of existing infrastructure,
- early and meaningful engagement of stakeholders,
- better coordination among regulatory bodies, and specific strategies to reduce risks of environmental and cultural-resource conflicts – including designating corridors with lower resource conflicts
- designating appropriate low-conflict corridors at regional planning levels that correspond to energy market dynamics

In the case of the SunZia project, there are a number of other transmission lines proposed in the same geography that may, or may not, serve some of the same renewable energy benefits, and may or may not have lower impacts. It is not possible to make an informed comparative judgment about the multiple projects at this point in time due to the different timelines of the projects and the amount of information currently available for each proposal. Proactive planning that identifies new infrastructure needs at a regional level and guides them to the lowest conflict corridors would help avoid situations like this and help prevent un-necessarily redundant infrastructure with avoidable impacts. Engaging fully in these sorts of regional planning efforts will enable agencies and stakeholders and developers to make more informed decisions about what infrastructure is needed and where it is most appropriately sited.

II. Interests of Protesting Parties

The members of our groups have interests that will or may be adversely affected by BLM's proposed action regarding SunZia. Protesting parties have an interest in ensuring that BLM proposed action complies with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), 42 U.S.C. § 4321 et seq., the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA), 43 U.S.C. § 1701 et seq., and BLM's 15-Year Strategy for the National Landscape Conservation System, BLM Manual 6320, and other federal laws and policies. The protesting parties have members who use public lands affected by the proposed action for activities such as hunting, hiking, camping, bird watching, nature viewing, and other forms of outdoor recreation and enjoyment. Protesting parties:

The Wilderness Society
1660 Wynkoop St Suite 850
Denver, CO 80202
Phone: (303) 650-5818
Contact person: Alex Daue, Renewable Energy Associate

The Wilderness Society's mission is to protect wilderness and inspire Americans to care for our wild places. On behalf of our over 500,000 members and supporters we contribute to better protection, stewardship and restoration of our public lands, preserving our rich natural legacy for current and future generations.

The Wilderness Society has participated in the planning process for SunZia since it started in 2008. Staff have participated in public meetings and we submitted scoping comments in 2009 and 2010 as well as comments on the DEIS in June 2012.

The Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC)
111 Sutter Street, 20th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94104
(415) 875-6100
Contact person: Helen O'Shea, Director, Western Renewable Energy Project

NRDC is a non-profit environmental organization with 1.3 million members and online activists. NRDC uses law, science and the support of its members and activists to protect the planet's wildlife and wild places and to ensure a safe and healthy environment for all living things.

NRDC has participated in the planning process for SunZia since it started in 2008. Staff have participated in public meetings and we submitted scoping comments in 2009 and 2010 as well as comments on the DEIS in June 2012.

New Mexico Wilderness Alliance
142 Truman St. NE #B-1
Albuquerque, NM 87108
(505) 843-8696
Contact person: Judy Calman, Staff Attorney

New Mexico Wilderness Alliance (NMWA) is dedicated to the protection, restoration, and continued enjoyment of New Mexico's wild lands and Wilderness areas. NMWA represents more than 5,000 members and supporters who are concerned about the preservation of open spaces and public lands in New Mexico, as well as the wildlife which depends on them.

NMWA has participated in the planning process for SunZia since it started in 2008. Staff have participated in public meetings and NMWA submitted scoping comments in 2009 and 2010 as well as comments on the DEIS in June 2012.

III. Issues Being Protested

a. The SunZia FEIS/RMPA purpose and need description is inadequate

The final environmental impact statement (FEIS) fails to adequately describe or justify the need for the SunZia Transmission project. The FEIS Appendix J provides some commentary on the key issues that were raised in DEIS comments submitted by TWS and partners on August 22, 1012, but the commentary and analysis in the FEIS still falls short of fully addressing the following key issues:

- Meeting energy needs in New Mexico, Arizona and California
- Addressing grid reliability and congestion
- Evaluating factors that may influence the energy mix that runs on SunZia

The shortcomings of the analysis of these issues in the FEIS are summarized below.

1. Meeting energy needs in New Mexico, Arizona and California

The FEIS primarily discusses how SunZia will meet specific states' energy demands, relying on data provided by utilities in October 2010. This information has been subsequently updated through various integrated resource plans that detail what new energy resources utilities will likely pursue and factors influencing their mix of these resources.[4]

The FEIS does not adequately discuss how SunZia could facilitate the delivery of electricity products that would meet California's energy needs. Two important issues for SunZia are whether the line would help generators meet California's deliverability requirements for out-of -state renewable energy resources and whether the products shipped on the line would be cost-competitive. This discussion should explicitly consider how ongoing transmission planning and permitting efforts affect SunZia's linkages to

[4] For example: APS, http://www.aps.com/_files/various/ResourceAlt/2012ResourcePlan.pdf PNM, http://www.pnm.com/regulatory/pdf_electricity/irp_2011-2030.pdf; SRP, http://www.srpnet.com/about/pdfx/ResourcePlanFY2011.pdf; TEP, (http://files.shareholder.com/downloads/UNIS/2014411930x0x557199/806B57DB-06CF-4E46-BB16-124E53DCAC74/2012_TEP_IRP_1.pdf).

California balancing areas, especially given the prioritization of critical congestion issues in this region.[5]

2. Addressing grid reliability and congestion

The FEIS does not clearly substantiate current congestion and reliability issues that SunZia will address. To document current or potential future reliability and congestion issues in a clear, credible fashion, the BLM should incorporate the most recent assessments conducted by Western Energy Coordinating Council (WECC), and Southwest Area Transmission planning group, looking only at state level assessments is not sufficient to determine larger, regional dynamics related to grid reliability and congestion.[6] It would be helpful to compare available transmission capacity with potential demand in two regions: New Mexico and Arizona, and Arizona and California.

While the FEIS touches upon the issues of how distributed generation, energy efficiency, demand-side management, or proposed line enhancements and additions may modify or shape congestion and reduce the need for new transmission lines like SunZia, it does not fully and comprehensively address these important factors.

3. Evaluating factors that may influence the energy mix that runs on SunZia

The FEIS does an inadequate job of describing short- and long-term factors that may influence the energy mix delivered by SunZia. Simply citing the speculative nature of many of these factors in the FEIS Appendix I does not provide relevant information for stakeholders participating in the NEPA process, and there are sources of relevant information identified below that should be included in the analysis in order to provide as much information as possible, acknowledging that it is not possible to have complete certainty on this issue at this point in time.

The FEIS primarily relies on the status of interconnection requests in SunZia's project area as of September 2011, which provides a "snapshot" of potential SunZia customers. However, a fuller picture could be provided that gives the public a better understanding of the factors that may influence SunZia's financial viability as a transmission project and its ultimate energy mix. Given the current uncertainties and volatility surrounding energy markets, the FEIS should describe, at a minimum, the following factors:

- The forecast demand for new natural gas generation in relevant IRP documents and what, if any, transmission capacity would be needed to accommodate it;

[5] The last completed national transmission congestion study was completed in 2009, available on line: http://congestion09.anl.gov/documents/docs/Congestion_Study_2009.pdf. The 2012 study is underway, and information on pre-study workshops and comments can be accessed: http://energy.gov/oe/services/electricity-policy-coordination-and-implementation/transmission-planning/2012-national.

[6] WECC's 10-year plan at: http://www.wecc.biz/library/StudyReport/Wiki%20Pages/Home.aspx. SWAT reports and presentations at: http://www.westconnect.com/planning_swat.php.

- Planned coal plant retirements in the region and potentially available transmission capacity;
- A description of federal and state policies that could stimulate development of wind and solar energy resources that might access SunZia;
- Trends in the cost and pricing of renewable and non-renewable resources that may influence development of these resources proximate to SunZia; and
- FERC's May 2011 order regarding SunZia's allocation of ownership rights and capacity to negotiate rates.

The BLM's initial characterization of the SunZia project conveyed the incorrect impression that SunZia would exclusively provide for the transmission of renewable energy power—a claim that few, if any, transmission lines could ever make. In this rapidly-changing energy market, exact assessments about the clean energy merits of a proposed transmission project are not possible. However, the FEIS could do much more to incorporate readily available information to create a more credible picture of the demand for renewable energy resources, how available transmission capacity constrains their development, and the degree to which SunZia is a viable solution to this issue in the context of region-specific infrastructure policy and market factors. In educating the public about this project's purpose and need, it is incumbent upon the BLM to provide as much information as possible to enable the public to arrive at a thoughtful conclusion about the project's merits.

Finally, to provide increased confidence that the line will principally carry renewable energy, BLM and SunZia should provide continuous, transparent updates on potential subscribers to the line and explicit statements of generation intent for the line in a manner that does not violate the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) open access rules. This recommendation was adopted by developers of the Gateway West transmission line who are now posting updated subscriber information online.[7]

Requested remedy: The BLM should include in the ROD for SunZia a purpose and need description that addresses the issues above.

b. The SunZia FEIS/RMPA does not include a Final Plan of Development (POD)

The FEIS states that a Final POD would be required to be approved by the BLM prior to construction activities. The FEIS (p. 2-48) states that:

> "The Final POD would include detailed engineering, mitigation, and environmental mapping upon approval of the final and approved route alignment. The POD would detail the methods and procedures that would be used in construction of the Project and serves as a reference for contractors,

[7] Available at: http://www.pacificorp.com/tran/tp/eg/gw.html

construction crews, agency personnel, resource inspectors, and environmental compliance monitors. In addition to a detailed
Project description, the POD would contain BMPs and mitigation measures; specify environmental compliance field activities; and include a number of plans developed to achieve regulatory compliance and resources protection, including:

- Construction Plan and Program
- Flagging, Fencing, and Signage Plan
- Transportation Management Plan
- Fire Protection Plan
- Blasting Plan Methodology
- Erosion, Dust Control, and Air Quality Plan
- Hazardous Materials Management Plan
- Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan Guidelines
- Environmental Compliance Management Plan
- Biological Resources Protection Plan
- Avian Protection Plan
- Noxious Weed Management Plan
- Cultural Resources Historic Properties Treatment Plan (HPTP)/Monitoring and Discovery Plan/NAGPRA Plan of Action/PA
- Paleontological Resources Treatment Plan (PRTP)
- Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan Methodology
- Right-of-Way Preparation, Reclamation, and Monitoring Framework Plan

An Avian Protection Plan and migratory bird conservation strategy would be approved by the USFWS prior to the BLM's Notice to Proceed. The vegetation management plan will be included in the Final POD as part of the Biological Resources Protection Plan."

The Final POD will clearly contain a huge amount of information relating to the impacts and mitigation measures for SunZia, yet the BLM has provided no commitment to provide an opportunity for public review and comment on the Final POD prior to issuing a Notice to Proceed. This effectively makes it impossible for the public to fairly evaluate the proposed action, and is unacceptable.

Requested remedy: The BLM should make the Final POD available for public comment for 90 days prior to approving the Final POD and making a decision on whether or not to issue a Notice to Proceed for SunZia.

c. The BLM-proposed action and alternatives in the SunZia FEIS/RMPA would unduly and unnecessarily impact resources

1. Arizona routes

Aravaipa Canyon: Aravaipa canyon is a remote area with significant environmental resources that could be impacted by SunZia. Aravaipa is part of a significant set of roadless areas running from the Apache Reservation down to Cochise County in a 100 mile long swath. An analysis by The Nature Conservancy found that the Aravaipa Canyon region is the second largest unfragmented area in the Arizona and New Mexico region, second only to the Grand Canyon. The Aravaipa Canyon route is not the BLM-preferred alternative. However, SunZia would unduly and unnecessarily impact these resources and the Aravaipa Creek watershed should BLM select the alternative route through this region as its preferred alternative in the ROD for SunZia. **The Wilderness Society and NRDC oppose the Aravaipa Canyon route for SunZia.**

As stated in our comments on the DEIS, specific impacts that SunZia would cause if the Aravaipa Canyon route is selected as the BLM-preferred alternative in the ROD include:

- *Direct habitat fragmentation* caused by installation of the transmission line and any associated roads and infrastructure.
- *Indirect habitat fragmentation* caused by:
    - *Increased access.* The creation of an infrastructure corridor of any kind (even with helicopter installation of transmission towers) is likely to increase human access and use, especially through off-road vehicle use, including illegal off-road vehicle use. If a road or trail is built for construction, operations and maintenance of the line, these impacts will likely be increased greatly. Experience with access along other Rights of Way has shown that controlling human access is extremely difficult.
    - *Invasive species.* Disturbance is known to provide increased spread of invasive species and associated habitat impacts.
    - *Preventing use of fire as a habitat management tool.* Natural fires and controlled burns are critical to maintaining the habitat in the Aravaipa Canyon region. However, fire is generally suppressed as both a reliability and health and safety risk near existing transmission lines. There are federal, state, and local regulations and plans that require projects to comply with fire suppression and prevention around power lines. The North American Electric Reliability Council standards and Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers standards apply to all transmission lines that are critical for electrical reliability in the region. The Sunrise Powerlink project has mitigation measures (BIO-APM-9, Sunrise Powerlink FEIS B-110) that involve brush clearing around the transmission tower structures for fire protection that adheres to those national standards as well as to US Forest Service land management plans and California Code of Regulations. (Sunrise Powerlink FEIS D.15 47-52) SunZia plans to suppress fire through buffer zones of at least 100 feet around conductors and vegetation treatment. (SunZia DEIS 4-107,108).
- *Erosion and other watershed impacts to Aravaipa Creek and its tributaries, as well as the San Pedro River.*

The FEIS states in response to these comments, "The DEIS acknowledges the potential impacts as discussed." (FEIS p. J-299) Despite acknowledging these serious impacts, the SunZia FEIS/RMPA fails to address them through avoidance (which could be achieved by eliminating this route alternative) or through impacts minimization and mitigation efforts (as detailed in Section III (c) of this letter).

San Pedro Valley (BLM-preferred alternative)

The San Pedro Valley has significant habitat value for avian and mammal species and has been a conservation priority for both public agencies and NGOs for several decades. The biological resources in this valley are particularly rich due to the convergence of the Sonoran and Chihuahuan deserts and the presence of numerous Sky Islands which act as connectors between the temperate Rocky Mountains and the semi-tropical Sierra Madres. Impacts to these resources and the San Pedro River and watershed are of serious concern. **The Wilderness Society and NRDC oppose the San Pedro routes for SunZia.**

As stated in our comments on the DEIS, specific impacts of concern include:

- *Direct and indirect habitat fragmentation.* Many of the same impacts described for the Aravaipa Canyon route would occur with the San Pedro Valley route. The overall fragmentation impacts would be worse for the Aravaipa route because the Aravaipa region is currently the second largest unfragmented area in the Arizona and New Mexico region.
- *Erosion and other watershed impacts to the San Pedro River.*
- *Impacts to the recently proposed Lower San Pedro National Wildlife Refuge.*
- *Impacts to parcels of land that are currently being managed protectively to mitigate for impacts from other development.*

The FEIS acknowledges that "Habitat fragmentation, erosion, and other direct or indirect impacts that may occur are discussed in the DEIS throughout Section 4.6 for each affected resource, and noted in the discussion of alternatives (Section 4.6.5)." (FEIS p. J-299)

The FEIS also acknowledges that SunZia would impact the proposed Lower San Pedro National Wildlife Refuge, a potential component of the Lower San Pedro River Collaborative Conservation Initiative which is currently being developed. "All alternatives for SunZia would cross portions of the Collaborative Conservation Initiative study area. The BLM preferred alternative would cross the study area approximately 0.5 miles north of The Narrows, near the southern boundary of the study area. After crossing the river, the BLM preferred alternative is located more than 2 miles from the river, with the exception of a brief approach to 1.9 miles near the town of Redington."

Citizen-Proposed Wilderness units:

In our comments on the DEIS, we noted that subroutes B153a and B153b intersect the corner of the Pinaleños Citizen-Proposed Wilderness (CPW) unit. In response to our

comments on the DEIS, BLM states that "Subroute 4A (links B153a and B153b) would not cross any portion of the Pinaleños CPW unit according to GIS data provided." (FEIS p. J-299) Based on our analysis, a 400' Right of Way (ROW) would intersect the Pinaleños CPW unit. BLM should not approve a ROW that intersects the Pinaleños or other CPW units.

The FEIS also notes that as part of the SunZia NEPA process, the BLM conducted an inventory of Lands with Wilderness Characteristics (LWC) as required per guidance in Conducting Wilderness Characteristics Inventory of BLM Lands Manual (MS6310). This inventory found that "The only potentially affected LWC inventory units in Arizona that were identified based on the manual (MS-6310) are within the Muleshoe area and would be crossed by Subroute 4C1 (not the BLM Preferred Route)." (FEIS p. J-299) The FEIS further details that "Link C361 of Subroute 4C1 crosses Inventory Unit 4-90 (Muleshoe), which was found to have characteristics meeting each of the three criteria noted in Section 3.12.3." (FEIS p. 3-301) The BLM should not approve a ROW that crosses the Muleshoe LWC Inventory Unit or any other LWC Inventory Units that have wilderness characteristics.

Despite acknowledging these serious, undue and unnecessary impacts, the SunZia FEIS/RMPA fails to address them through avoidance (which could be achieved by eliminating the route alternatives in the San Pedro Valley) or through impacts minimization and mitigation efforts (as detailed in Section III (c) of this letter).

Requested remedy: The BLM should not approve a ROW for SunZia through the Aravaipa Canyon region or the San Pedro Valley. In the ROD, the BLM should either select the No Action Alternative or find a different, appropriate route which does not unduly and unnecessarily harm resources. In the ROD, the BLM also should not approve a ROW which intersects CPW units or LWC inventory units that have wilderness characteristics. If the BLM does approve a ROW through the Aravaipa Canyon region or the San Pedro Valley, or that impacts CPW or LWC units, the BLM should require a comprehensive mitigation program as detailed in Section III (c) of this letter.

2. New Mexico routes

Rio Grande River Corridor: the Rio Grande River corridor, and in particular the Middle Rio Grande, is a critical flyway for migrating birds and many other species. For this reason, we recommended in scoping comments that BLM use an alternative that would run down the east side of the White Sands Missile Range (WSMR) and cross the Rio Grande River near Las Cruces, where impacts would be much lower. The routes east of the WSMR have been dropped from consideration in the DEIS. All of the remaining alternatives would cross the Rio Grande in the Middle Rio Grande region between the Bosque del Apache and Sevilleta National Wildlife Refuges, an area that is particularly important for wildlife. Audubon New Mexico has significant expertise on these issues and is submitting detailed comments including information on the importance of this area for wildlife habitat and the likely impacts of SunZia. Though these impacts may be impossible to fully mitigate, Audubon New Mexico's comments also include

recommendations on mitigation measures that should be employed if SunZia is approved and built in this area. We support the information and recommendations in Audubon New Mexico's comments and ask that BLM fully consider and address them.

Citizens' Wilderness Inventory units: many of the potential routes would intersect Citizens' Wilderness Inventory (CWI) units inventoried by the New Mexico Wilderness Alliance (NMWA). These areas have been found by NMWA to have "wilderness characteristics," including naturalness, solitude and the opportunity for primitive recreation. Beyond these core values, these lands also provide important wildlife habitat, cultural and scientific resources, invaluable ecosystem services including clean air and water, important economic benefits, and many other resources and values. The sensitive nature of these lands and their resources and values makes protection critical and transmission development on them inappropriate. The CWI units intersected by the SunZia routes in New Mexico (by SunZia subroute number) are:

- E101: Cibola Canyon, Stallion, Sierra de la Cruz
- E133: Veranito
- A111 and A112: Padillo Gonzales
- E90 and A90: Stallion
- A160: Chupadera Wilderness Addition
- E211: Magdalena Mountains 2
- A161B: Magdalena Mountains 3
- A270: Penasco Canyon
- A430: Sierra de las Uvas
- A361 and A400: Nutt Mountain
- A481: Goodsight Mountains
- A430 and A500: Massacre Peak
- B150a: Lordsburg Playas North

The FEIS acknowledges that the BLM-preferred route would cross the following CWI units: Cibola Canyon, Stallion, Sierra de la Cruz, Lordsburg Playas North, Veranito, Magdalena Mountains (2 and 3), Nutt Mountain, and Massacre Peak. (FEIS p. J-297)

The FEIS also notes that as part of the SunZia NEPA process, the BLM conducted an inventory of Lands with Wilderness Characteristics (LWC) as required per guidance in Conducting Wilderness Characteristics Inventory of BLM Lands Manual (MS6310). According to the FEIS, "Within the SunZia study corridors, the Nutt Mountain LWC unit in New Mexico was identified based on the manual (MS-6310), and would be crossed by one of the SunZia transmission line alternative routes (not the Preferred Route)." (FEIS p. J-297) Further, the FEIS states that "According to the current inventory conducted in *September 2012, the Preferred Route would cross an LWC unit that was identified, located adjacent to the Stallion WSA.*" (FEIS p. J-297)

The BLM should not approve a ROW that crosses CWI units or LWC Inventory Units that have wilderness characteristics.

Despite acknowledging these serious, undue and unnecessary impacts, the SunZia FEIS/RMPA fails to address them through impacts minimization and mitigation efforts (as detailed in Section III (c) of this letter).

Requested remedy: In the ROD, the BLM should follow the Audubon New Mexico recommendations for minimizing and offsetting impacts to the Rio Grande River corridor. The BLM should not approve a ROW which intersects CWI units or LWC inventory units that have wilderness characteristics. If the BLM does approve a ROW that impacts CWI or LWC units, the BLM should require a comprehensive mitigation program as detailed in Section III (c) of this letter.

d. Efforts to avoid, minimize and mitigate impacts in the SunZia FEIS/RMPA are inadequate

The scale and intensity of likely impacts from SunZia demand a robust and comprehensive approach to mitigation if the project is approved and constructed. These efforts must include all the steps in the mitigation hierarchy, including avoiding impacts wherever possible, minimizing unavoidable impacts through the use of best management practices on-site, and off-setting remaining impacts through off-site, compensatory mitigation.

As part of its NEPA analysis, BLM must evaluate the direct, indirect and cumulative impacts of the SunZia project, regardless of whether those impacts occur to federal lands or lands owned by states. "Case law interpreting NEPA has reinforced the need to analyze impacts regardless of geographic boundaries." Council on Environmental Quality Guidance on NEPA Analyses for Transboundary Impacts (July 1, 1997), citing, Sierra Club v. U.S. Forest Service, 46 F.3d 835 (8th Cir. 1995); Resources Ltd., Inc. v. Robertson, 35 F.3d 1300 and 8 F.3d 1394 (9th Cir. 1993); Natural Resources Defense Council v. Hodel, 865 F.2d 288 (D.C. Cir. 1988); County of Josephine v. Watt, 539 F.Supp. 696 (N.D. Cal. 1982). BLM is also obligated to evaluate mitigation for such effects. 40 C.F.R. § 1502.16 Accordingly, in evaluating mitigation measures, BLM should evaluate how to mitigate impacts on these other lands. The mitigation measures required for the Desert Sunlight solar project approved by BLM in 2011 provide an example of mitigation for both air quality and water quality impacts to non-federal land and landowners.

BLM has recently published new draft guidance for regional mitigation.[8] President Obama also recently issued a Presidential Memorandum on improving siting, permitting and mitigation for transmission development.[9] Both of these documents offer valuable tools for continuing to improve the conservation outcomes for mitigation for project impacts, and should be used to help determine mitigation requirements for SunZia.

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[8] *Available at:* http://www.blm.gov/pgdata/etc/medialib/blm/wo/Information_Resources_Management/policy/im_attachments/2013.Par.57631.File.dat/IM2013-142_att1.pdf

[9] *Available at:* http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2013/06/07/presidential-memorandum-transforming-our-nations-electric-grid-through-i

The mitigation measures in the SunZia FEIS/RMPA are wholly inadequate. We recommend a suite of mitigation measures that may apply in numerous places along SunZia below. **However, we want to emphasize that given the very significant impacts from SunZia along some parts of the route, it will be impossible to fully mitigate some impacts. Further, while mitigation measures can address some of our concerns, there is no set of mitigation measures that would win our support for the San Pedro and Aravaipa Canyon routes.**

Avoidance

- **Route selection:** If the BLM approves a ROW for SunZia in the ROD, the BLM should select a route that avoids as many impacts as possible. As noted above, avoiding impacts may be impossible in some areas where limited viable route options remain (such as in the Tucson area). Based on the information we have now, and among the routes included in the FEIS, we have identified the following subroutes that would have (relatively) lower impacts:
    - *San Pedro Valley:* The BLM should not approve a route through the San Pedro Valley (including the BLM-preferred route in the FEIS). The Wilderness Society and NRDC oppose routes in the San Pedro Valley
    - *Aravaipa Canyon:* The BLM should not approve a route through the Aravaipa Canyon region. The Wilderness Society and NRDC oppose routes in the Aravaipa Canyon region.
    - *Avoidance of CPW units in Arizona:* SunZia should not cross CPW units. The BLM should adjust subroutes B153a and B153b to avoid intersecting the Pinaleños CPW unit.
    - *Avoidance of LWC in Arizona:* SunZia should not cross LWC units which have wilderness characteristics. Link C361 of Subroute 4C1 crosses Inventory Unit 4-90 (Muleshoe), which was found to have characteristics. The BLM should not approve a ROW through the Muleshoe or other LWC units.
    - *Rio Grande River crossing:* Audubon New Mexico submitted detailed comments regarding the Rio Grande River crossing on the DEIS and we support their recommendations on this issue.
    - *Avoidance of CWI units in New Mexico:* SunZia should not cross CWI units. In some cases all of the routes in the DEIS would cross CWI units, increasing the importance of minimizing and off-setting impacts if they cannot be avoided. Among the routes presented in the DEIS, the BLM should select the following subroutes as the BLM-preferred route in the FEIS:
        - I-25 crossing north of Truth or Consequences: the BLM should select subroute A260 to avoid intersecting the Penasco Canyon CWI unit (subroute A260 is the BLM-preferred route in the FEIS).
        - Subroutes north of the proposed Midpoint Substation: the BLM should select subroutes A400, A440, A530, and A520 to avoid intersecting the Nutt Mountain, Sierra de las Uvas, and Goodsight

Mountains CWI units (subroutes A400, A440, A530, and A520 are the BLM-preferred route in the FEIS). The BLM should also adjust subroute A400 to avoid the Nutt Mountain CWI unit (subroute A400 currently runs along the edge of the Nutt Mountain CWI unit). The BLM should also adjust subroutes A440 and A530 to avoid the Massacre Peak CWI unit (subroutes A440 and A530 run along the edge of the Massacre Peak CWI unit).

    - Lordsburg Playa area: the BLM should select subroutes B160a and B160b to avoid intersecting the Lordsburg Playas North CWI unit (subroutes B160a and B160b are in the BLM-preferred route in the FEIS).

  - *Avoidance of LWC in New Mexico:* SunZia should not cross LWC units which have wilderness characteristics. The BLM should adjust the routes to avoid the Nutt Mountain LWC unit and to avoid the LWC unit adjacent to the Stallion WSA.

- **Route micro-siting:** The BLM should include detailed maps of the BLM-preferred route in a Final Plan of Development (POD) for SunZia. The BLM should analyze specific impacts along the BLM-preferred route in the Final POD and adjust the route through micro-siting to avoid impacts to sensitive resources. The Final POD should be made available for public comment for 90 days.

Minimization

- **Helicopter installation:** Helicopter installation has been used to limit impacts in construction of numerous transmission lines, including the Sunrise Powerlink. The American Electric Power Company was the first to use helicopters in large-scale transmission line construction in 1960, and the use of this approach has continued in other projects. Helicopter installation can provide the benefit of eliminating the need to build roads or trails and eliminating the need to use vehicles or off-road vehicles to access tower pad sites for construction, operation and maintenance of the transmission line. In the Sunrise Powerlink project, helicopters, specifically the Erickson air crane, were used to install the transmission tower structures for an estimated 70% of the transmission route, which eliminated the need for cranes and road construction. In addition, the use of micropile foundations to drill holes for the tower structures and reduce the use of cement greatly reduced impacts to the site locations. The BLM should require helicopter installation with no construction of roads or trails and no use of vehicles or off-road vehicles to access tower pad sites in areas where habitat fragmentation is major concern. Specifically, the BLM should require the use of helicopter installation for all subroutes going through the Aravaipa and San Pedro watersheds if SunZia is approved and the final route traverses these areas.
- **Minimizing road and trail construction:** where significant impacts exist but do not require helicopter installation, the BLM should require that road and trail construction be minimized, and that any temporary roads be fully reclaimed. Best practices for limiting spread of invasive species should be used.

- **Limiting access to any roads and trails that are constructed:** where roads and trails are constructed, aggressive measures should be taken to limit access, including fencing, locked gates, use of natural terrain features to limit access, and security patrols.
- **Use of bird diverters:** The BLM should require the use of bird diverters and other mitigation measures to decrease the likelihood of bird strikes in areas of known heavy bird use. These include, but are not limited to:
    - The Rio Grande River crossing
    - The Aravaipa Canyon region
    - The San Pedro Valley

Off-site, compensatory mitigation

The compensatory mitigation plan for the SunZia project should include, but not be limited to, the following elements:

- **Purchase and permanent protection of private or State Trust lands:** the BLM should require the applicant to purchase land of high conservation value and protect it through a conservation easement or another mechanism that affords permanent protection from development of any kind. This should be required for impacts to numerous areas along the routes, including but not limited to:
    - *CWI and CPW units intersected by SunZia routes in New Mexico and Arizona:* if the BLM-preferred alternative in the FEIS includes any routes that intersect CWI or CPW units, the BLM should require purchase and protection of lands as mitigation.
    - *The Aravaipa and San Pedro watersheds and region:* There are nearby state trust lands that have been previously identified as having significant conservation values, including approximately 36,000 acres in the Catalina-Galiuro corridor, which could be subject to conservation acquisition as part of a mitigation strategy. Another potential opportunity would be to fund acquisition of lands which could be added to the proposed San Pedro National Wildlife Refuge.
    - *Lands managed by Pima County as a mitigation bank through the Pima County Multi-Species Conservation Plan:* the BLM-preferred alternative crosses a Pima County mitigation bank. Additional lands with equivalent resources and values should be purchased and protected to off-set these impacts.
    - *Establishment of a land acquisition or conservation easement fund to be administered by a council of local environmental organizations in consultation with county, state and federal officials.*
    - Another off-site mitigation opportunity would be conservation acquisition of lands at high risk of development that would draw down groundwater upon which the region's last remaining perennial rivers depend.
- **Administrative protection of BLM or Forest Service lands:** the BLM and Forest Service should amend relevant land use plans to add administrative protective designations to land of high conservation value. The management

prescriptions for these protected areas should preclude development of any kind. These protections could include:

- *Area of Critical Environmental Concern designations*
- *Managing BLM-identified lands with wilderness characteristics to protect those characteristics*
- *Special Recreation Management Area designations with a focus on non-motorized use*

In response to our comments on mitigation, the FEIS states that helicopter installation, limiting road construction and access, and use of bird diverters "would be a requirement in specific areas as defined in the final POD." (FEIS p. J-302) The FEIS also states that "Off-site compensatory mitigation may be considered in addition to mitigation measures identified in the DEIS." (FEIS p. J-302) While we appreciate the BLM's conceptual commitment to these minimization and mitigation measures, without specific information about where and how they will be required it is impossible for the public to evaluate their effectiveness.

Requested remedy: As stated in Section III (b) of these comments, the BLM should make the Final POD available for public comment for 90 days prior to approving the Final POD and making a decision on whether or not to issue a Notice to Proceed for SunZia. The Final POD should include the mitigation measures suggested above.

IV. Summary: Why the State Directors' Proposed Action and Preferred Alternative Selection is Wrong

1. The SunZia FEIS/RMPA purpose and need description is inadequate. The BLM must adequately address meeting energy needs in New Mexico, Arizona and California, address grid reliability and congestion, and evaluate factors that may influence the energy mix that runs on SunZia.

2. The SunZia FEIS/RMPA does not include a Final Plan of Development (POD). The Final POD will include a huge amount of information regarding the impacts and mitigation measures for SunZia, and the public cannot evaluate the proposed action without this information.

3. The BLM-proposed action and alternatives in the SunZia FEIS/RMPA would unduly and unnecessarily impact resources. The proposed action and alternatives for SunZia would unduly and unnecessarily impact sensitive and important resources including the Aravaipa Canyon region, the San Pedro Valley, the Middle Rio Grande River corridor, and wilderness-quality lands.

4. Efforts to avoid, minimize and mitigate impacts in the SunZia FEIS/RMPA are inadequate. The mitigation measures in the FEIS/RMPA are wholly inadequate, and it unacceptable to delay commitment to specific measures until the completion of the Final POD.

Thank you for your full consideration and response to this protest. We request the opportunity to discuss our requested remedies at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,

Alex Daue, Renewable Energy Associate
The Wilderness Society
1660 Wynkoop St., Suite 850
Denver, CO 80202

Helen O'Shea, Director, Western Renewable Energy Project
Natural Resources Defense Council
111 Sutter Street, 20th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94104

Judy Calman, Staff Attorney
New Mexico Wilderness Alliance
142 Truman St. NE #B-1
Albuquerque, NM 87108

Cc: Adrian Garcia, BLM project manager
adrian_garcia@blm.gov

Audubon ARIZONA

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ATTORNEY GENERAL-PHOENIX
AGENCY COUNSEL SECTION

Nina Mason Pulliam
Rio Salado Audubon Center
3131 South Central Avenue
Phoenix, AZ 85040
Tel: 602-468-6470
az.audubon.org

October 15, 2015

Thomas Chenal, Chairman
Arizona Power Plant & Transmission Line Siting Committee
Attorney General's Office
1275 West Washington Street
Phoenix, Arizona 85007
Re; SunZia Transmission LLC, application for Certificate of Environmental Compatibility
Docket Number L-00000YY-15-0318-00171

Dear Chairman Chenal,

We greatly appreciate the opportunity to comment on the SunZia Transmission Line Project. We have been supportive of wise development of green energy in Arizona and consider the siting of transmission lines to be a critical component of energy delivery in Arizona.

The mission of the National Audubon Society is to conserve and restore natural ecosystems, focusing on birds, other wildlife, and their habitats for the benefit of humanity and the earth's biological diversity. Audubon Arizona is the state office of the National Audubon Society and as such we submitted previous comments to the BLM's Environmental Impact Statement where we supported routing of the line along existing corridors and avoidance of the San Pedro River Valley and watershed. Audubon remains on record as preferring avoidance of impacts by selecting alternative routing.

The final Environmental Impact Statement selected the San Pedro River route as the preferred, and it is that route now before your committee for certification of environmental compatibility. We remain very concerned that the route through the lower San Pedro River valley and adjacent upland Sonoran desert and grasslands will have significant environmental impacts. Our overall concern is that the project is lacking in specifics for mitigation of construction, design, and land disturbing impacts related to surface access for construction and maintenance.

The San Pedro River is a unique and extremely important biological asset in the arid southwest. As one of the few undammed and flowing rivers the San Pedro functions as a vital corridor and refugia habitat for a wide diversity of plants and animals and exhibits a remarkably intact riparian system including extensive stands of Fremont cottonwood (*Populus fremontii*), Goodding's willow (*Salix goodingii*) gallery forest and large mesquite (*Prosopis velutina*) bosques. Duncan and Slagle (2004) describe the San Pedro River as one of the most significant perennial undammed desert rivers in the United States. Species that are listed or proposed for listing under the Endangered Species Act are represented in significant numbers within this corridor.

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The National Audubon Society has recognized the San Pedro River corridor from north of Benson to the confluence with the Gila River at Winkleman as a globally Important Bird Area (IBA). The values that earn this recognition include some of the highest nesting densities of riparian obligate birds in the western United States and a critically important fall and spring migration corridor for thousands of neotropical migrants. Identified as an IBA in January of 2007, the lower San Pedro River was scientifically peer reviewed and subsequently designated as a **Global Important Bird Area** in January of 2008. http://aziba.org/?page_id=461 IBA designation is particularly relevant to protecting critical habitat utilized by birds during some part of their life cycle (breeding, feeding, nesting, and migrating) as well as conserving the general biodiversity of wildlife species.

The lower San Pedro River supports a substantial part of the population for the federally endangered southwestern willow flycatchers (Empidonax tralli extremis) and the western population of the federally threatened Yellow-billed Cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus occidentalis*). Over 100 species of breeding birds and another approximately 250 species of migrant and wintering birds occur in the area, representing roughly half the number of known breeding species in North America. The San Pedro River serves as a migratory corridor for an estimated 4 million migrating birds each year. Notably, 36 species of raptors, including the gray hawk (*Asturina nititda = Buteo nitidus*), Mississippi kite (*Ictinia mississippiensis*), common black hawk (*Buteogallus anthracinus*), and zone-tailed hawk (*Buteo albonotatus*) can be found within the San Pedro River watershed. Land birds occurring in significant numbers/density and/or diversity include Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii*), Lucy's warbler (*Vermivora luciae*), and Yellow warbler (*Setophaga petechial = Dendroica petechial*).

The Lower San Pedro River IBA's southern boundary begins at The Narrows in Cochise County and follows the San Pedro River downstream, north, through Pima and Pinal counties to Winkelman. The majority of the 51.2 square mile, 32,762 acre IBA is privately owned and includes lands under conservation easement or management. Major tributaries that have been identified as having high riparian habitat values in the San Pedro River watershed include Paige Canyon, Redfield Canyon, Hot Springs Canyon, Buehman Canyon and Aravaipa Creek. The riparian habitats in these and similar drainages are of critical importance to the ecological health of this region.

The **Arizona Partners in Flight *Bird Conservation Plan*** states, "Riparian woodlands comprise a very limited geographical area that is entirely disproportionate to their landscape importance, recreational value, and immense biological interest (Lowe and Brown 1973). It has been estimated that only 1% of the western United States historically constituted this habitat type, and that 95% of the historic total has been altered or destroyed in the past 100 years (Krueper 1993, 1996)... Riparian woodlands are among the most severely threatened habitats within Arizona.... Maintenance of existing patches of this habitat, and restoration of mature riparian deciduous forests should be among the top conservation priorities in the state". http://www.azgfd.gov/pdfs/w_c/partners_flight/APIF%20Conservation%20Plan.1999.Final.pdf.

The lower San Pedro River valley has been identified as second only to the Grand Canyon ecosystem for intact fish and wildlife habitats as reported in the "Arizona Wildlife Linkages Assessment Document" conducted by Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) and Arizona Game and Fish Department (AGFD) with involvement by FHA, BLM, USFS, USFW, Northern Arizona University. Un-fragmented landscapes are key indicators developed by biologists in assessing the conservation value of regions and sites and the imminence of the threats they face (Baker, 2010). Large blocks of habitat have the potential to sustain viable species populations and they permit a broader range of species and ecosystem dynamics to persist. Studies have shown that even riparian specialized bird species are using the entire watershed, not just the "green ribbon" created by the lower San Pedro River valley (LSPRWA, 2006). The SunZia route will introduce a linear disruption to a largely un-fragmented habitat block that has been successfully recovering from past human impacts for over 40 years. The road that parallels the San Pedro River from Cascabel to San Manuel is unpaved and has low traffic volume, minimizing the linear impacts to wildlife movement.

NatureServe and The Nature Conservancy has identified conservation protected lands either by fee simple acquisition or conservation easement that the SunZia route will cross. The power line diminishes the value of these lands for ecological conservation. The final mitigation package for the SunZia line fails to consider mitigation and compensation for lands impacted by the route, as by example state trust lands managed by Pima County for conservation values.

The Nature Conservancy, in their October 6, 2015 letter to you, summarized a good deal of these conservation efforts:
"Over the last four decades The Nature Conservancy and many other agencies and organizations have been working steadily to protect the Lower San Pedro Basin. Partners in this effort include the Arizona Game and Fish Department, Arizona State Parks Department, Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Reclamation, Pima County, Saguaro Juniper Corporation, Salt River Project, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife. The Resolution Copper Company has offered to protect additional lands in the valley through a Congressionally-approved land exchange. Together, these partners have protected approximately 192,000 acres and invested over $42.5 million in acquisition of conservation lands and appurtenant water rights."

Willcox Playa/Cochise Lakes IBA

This IBA was identified as a **Global Important Bird Area** in October, 2011 and encompasses the 74 square mile, 47,343 acre Willcox Playa, a broad alkaline lakebed fringed with semi-desert grassland (primarily saltgrass and sacaton) and mesquite. **(attached map)**

The playa is seasonally flooded to a shallow depth. Outlying this playa are the satellite lakes/wetlands of Cochise Lakes (or aka Lake Cochise), alkali flats, and Willcox Playa Wildlife Area containing Crane Lake. The Playa itself is administered by the Department of Defense and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and is posted no trespassing. On the upper east side of the playa is the Arizona Game and Fish Department managed Willcox Playa Wildlife Area, consisting of 555 acres. The significant avian values are over-wintering Sandhill Cranes and

migratory and wintering shorebirds, waterfowl, and waterbirds. The Wildlife Area (Crane Lake) and Cochise Lakes provide habitat for roosting and resting. Sandhill Cranes depend heavily on the surrounding agricultural lands of the broader Sulphur Springs and Bonita Valleys for feeding, particularly in fields of waste corn.

Willcox Playa and environs supports the second largest over-wintering concentration of Sandhill Cranes (Grus canadensis) in Arizona, typically 4,000 to 9,000 birds (White Water Draw Wildlife Area to the south over-winters 10,000 to 22,000 cranes). There are occasional years when crane numbers spike when a large number of birds (>13,000) from White Water Draw switch to roosting in this area (using either the Playa or Crane Lake). The site is also important to special status avian species such as Swainson's hawk, scaled quail, chestnut-collared longspur and Cassin's sparrow, and significant concentrations of shorebirds.

Most significantly both in spring and late summer shorebirds can stop-over in very substantial numbers (400-800 individuals at Cochise Lakes). These in-migration shorebird species include: Wilson's Phalarope (April, May, July, Aug., Sept.), Willet (April), Least Sandpiper (April, Aug., Sept.), Western Sandpiper (April, Aug., Sept.), Long-billed Dowitcher (May, Sept.), Black-necked Stilt (July, Aug., Sept.), and American Avocet (July, Aug., Sept.), plus lesser numbers of other shorebird species (Killdeer, Marbled Godwit, Spotted Sandpiper, Solitary Sandpiper, Greater Yellowlegs, Long-billed Curlew, Baird's Sandpiper, Pectoral Sandpiper, Stilt Sandpiper, and Red-necked Phalarope).

Ducks over-winter on the lakes in large flocks, primarily composed of American Wigeon, Northern Shoveler, Ruddy Duck, Lesser Scaup, Ring-necked Duck, Cinnamon Teal and Green-winged Teal. In rare very wet winters, waterfowl in huge numbers (>15,000, half or which are Green-winged Teal) come to feed and rest within the Playa.

In a 2005 USDA Forest Service Technical Report, Manville said that collisions with power transmission and distribution lines are estimated to kill as many as 175 million birds annually, and an additional tens to hundreds of thousands more birds are electrocuted. The difficulty with quantifying the impact of these utilities is that due to the great expanse of area they cover both strikes and electrocutions are poorly monitored for (Manville 2005). In the San Luis Valley of Colorado, collisions with transmission lines were one of the contributing mortality factors to the experimental whooping cranes population. On certain sections of transmission lines in the San Luis Valley where wetlands and agricultural fields are bisected by transmission lines, Sandhill Crane collision events have been as high as 75 birds a night (Mark Smith pers. comm.).

Line siting in the Sulphur Springs Valley segment of Arizona should consider these factors and obtain information about the major Sandhill crane and avian flight corridors north to south across Interstate 10 between the Willcox Playa and Bonita valley to the north. The SunZia lines ideally should be buried through identified Sandhill crane movement and migration corridors. Research at diverse locations reveals that Sandhill crane collisions with powerlines are most prevalent for birds moving to and from feeding and roosting locations. Although buried lines are

initially more expensive, there is significant cost recovery over the life of the project because of lower maintenance expenses. An inferior solution to buried lines is installation of avian collision averters as recommended by Murphy, etal. 2009.

An over-arching concern we have about the decision process for selecting the SunZia route is the complete lack of design specifics. Many of our concerns and the concerns voiced in earlier public comment periods are about the details of construction and maintenance, details that are not addressed in the BLM Final EIS. Of particular concern is the accidental introduction of invasive plant species including but not limited to African buffelgrass (*Pennisetum ciliaris*), blue panic (*Panicum antidotale*, a Federal Noxious Weed), bermuda grass (*Cynodon dactylon*), Sahara mustard (*Brassica tournefortii*), and another African grass, Lehman's Lovegrass (*Eragrostis lehmanniana*). The highest risk of invasive species spread is by being carried on vehicles and equipment during construction and also during post-construction maintenance. Spread of these species increases the risk of catastrophic fire and degradation of the upland Sonoran desert biotic communities.

Of concern to Audubon is the fact that the BLM final EIS has no required mitigation or specifics to compensate or offset for unavoidable impacts.

Audubon recommends the following mitigation measures be required conditions for a certificate of environmental compatibility;

- Minimize bird mortality using best available technologies to prevent bird collisions
- Minimize impact to riparian forested habitats by selecting crossing points of streams where water flows are ephemeral and riparian forest is minimal or absent.
- Minimize impacts to riparian forests by using towers with enough height to eliminate future maintenance that would require cutting down or topping trees.
- Use hill top placement of towers to facilitate spanning streams and canyons.
- Compensate for direct and indirect impacts to wildlife habitats.
- Do not locate new sub-stations in the San Pedro River valley.
- Cleaning equipment and vehicles (including tire treads) of mud, debris, and seeds prior to use at project sites.
- Limit the degree of impact by using methods that reduce the construction footprint, such as helicopter rather than constructing access roads.
- Restore impacted construction sites.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this application.

Sincerely,

Vashti "Tice" Supplee

Interim Executive Director and Director of Bird Conservation, Audubon Arizona

ORIGINAL and 13 COPIES of the foregoing delivered to:

Arizona Corporation Commission
Docket Control
1200 W. Washington Street
Phoenix, AZ 85007

Cited Resources

Avian Collision at Transmission Lines Associated with the Hells Canyon Complex; January 8, 2000 report by Science Applications International Corporation and Spatial Dynamics to Idaho Power Company; FERC Report No. 1971.

Manville, A.M., II. 2005. Bird strikes and electrocutions at power lines, communication lowers, and wind turbines: state of the art and slate of the science — next steps toward mitigation.). C.J. Ralph and T. D. Rich.. ed (PDF). *Bird Conservation Implementation in the Americas: Proceedings 3rd International Partners in Flight Conference 2002*. U.S.D.A. Forest Service. GTR-PSW-191, Albany. CA..
http://www.abcbirds.org/abcprograms/policy/towers/manville05.pdf. Manville 2005.

Murphy, Robert K.; Shelly M. McPherron; Gregory D. Wright; Kimberly L. Serbousek.30 September,2009. Effectiveness of Avian Collision Averters in Preventing Migratory Bird Mortality From Powerline Strikes in the Central Platte River, Nebraska. Department of Biology, University of Nebraska-Kearney, Kearney, NE 68849

L-00000YY-15-0318-00171

Arizona Corporation Comm

Utilities Complaint Form

Investigator: Al Amezcua **Phone:** <<< REDACTED >>> **Completion Date:** 10/2/2015 3:40 PM

Opinion Number: 2015 - 125713 **Priority: Respond within 5 business days**

Opinion Codes: Rate Case Items - Opposed **Opinion Date:** 10/2/2015

First Name: Lon **Last Name: Brehmer** **Account Name: Lon Brehmer**

Address: <<< REDACTED >>>

City: San Manuel **State:** AZ **Zip Code:** 85631

Home: <<< REDACTED >>> **Email:** <<< REDACTED >>>

Company: SunZia Transmission, LLC

Nature Of Opinion

Docket Number: L-00000YY-15-0318-00171 **Docket Position:** Against

I am writing to oppose the planned localization of SunZia's transmission lines in the San Pedro Valley. I am a resident of the area, and I am amazed at the uniqueness and beauty of this remote and pristine area. It is one of the only wildlife corridors still intact. I have hiked and seen many of the areas being considered for placement of SunZia's transmission lines. Many are extremely fragile and will not easily recuperate for many hundreds of years after a significant disturbance such as the placement of power lines and the maintenance roads associated with them. I also question the need for the placement of a power line in this location. There are many other utility corridors which are already functioning, but which may initially appear to cost more. The problem is that the true cost of disturbing this very pristine area is not included in these calculations. Many people and government agencies have worked hard to try to protect this area, and I believe this area will prove to be

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EXHIBIT
Committee Public Comment

L-00000YY-15-0318-00171

Arizona Corporation Commis

Utilities Complaint Form

ORIGINAL

Investigator: Deborah Reagan **Phone:** <<< REDACTED >>> **Completion Date:** 9/22/2015 11:08 AM

Opinion Number: 2015 - 125509 **Priority: Respond within 5 business days**

Opinion Codes: Rate Case Items - Opposed **Opinion Date:** 9/22/2015

First Name: Ralph **Last Name: Waldt** **Account Name: Ralph Waldt**

Address: <<< REDACTED >>>

City: Benson **State:** AZ **Zip Code:** 85602

Home: <<< REDACTED >>>

Company: SunZia Transmission, LLC

Nature Of Opinion

Docket Number: L-00000YY-15-0318-00171 **Docket Position:** Against

Docket number: L-00000YY-15-0318-00171

I and all of my family members are opposed to the construction of the proposed SunZia powerline in the San Pedro River Valley. This power line will damage Arizona's ability to develop and export its own solar power by using vitally important Arizona transmission capacity to deliver New Mexico's energy to another state, namely California. No other valley in all of southern Arizona is as important to wildlife as the San Pedro River Valley. This valley is one of the most important songbird migration routes in the entire nation, and it is also the last large, undeveloped valley in southern Arizona. The area hosts one of the richest populations of wildlife found anywhere in North America. The construction of the SunZia power line will unquestionably have strong detrimental effects to the birds and other wildlife of this one-of-a kind area. Our entire community of valley residents is almost unanimously opposed to the SunZia project.

Investigation

Date:	Analyst:	Submitted By:	Type:
9/22/2015	Deborah Reagan	Telephone	Investigation

Comments entered for the record and filed with Docket Control.

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L-00000YY-15-0318-00171

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Arizona Corporation Comm
Utilities Complaint Form

Investigator: Deborah Reegan **Phone:** <<< REDACTED >>> **Completion Date:** 10/14/2015 10:06 AM

Opinion Number: 2015 - 125910 **Priority:** Respond within 5 business days

Opinion Codes: Other - misc line siting **Opinion Date:** 10/14/2015

First Name: Leslie **Last Name:** Maynard **Account Name:** Leslie Maynard

Address: <<< REDACTED >>>

City: benson **State:** AZ **Zip Code:** 85602

Home: <<< REDACTED >>> **Email:** <<< REDACTED >>>

Company: SunZia Transmission, LLC

Nature Of Opinion

Docket Number: L-00000YY-15-0318-00171 **Docket Position:** Against

To whom it may concern, There are those with much more eloquent wording, who have presented more than enough reasons for Sunzia to be stopped from destroying the wildlife habitat of the San Pedro River Valley riparion area, by the construction of their proposed power lines through the region. Sunzia must be stopped once and for all. Just because they continually search for loop holes, does not change the fact they will destroy one of the last great ecological areas of the southwest. We cannot put a price on such a valuable natural reduce just because Sunzia wants to save money on construction. Please save our San Pedro River Valley from destruction. Thank you.

Investigation

Date:	Analyst:	Submitted By:	Type:
10/14/2015	Deborah Reegan	Telephone	Investigation

Comments entered for the record and filed with Docket Control.

Arizona Corporation Commission
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Opinion 125910 - Page 1 of 1

L-00000YY-15-0318-00171

ORIGINAL

Arizona Corporation Commiss

Utilities Complaint Form

Investigator: Deborah Reagan | Phone: <<< REDACTED >>> | Completion Date: 10/14/2015 2:28 PM

Opinion Number: 2015 - 125934 | Priority: Respond within 5 business days

Opinion Codes: Other - misc line siting | Opinion Date: 10/14/2015

First Name: Michael K. | Last Name: Henderson | Account Name: Michael K. Henderson

Address: <<< REDACTED >>>

City: Tucson | State: AZ | Zip Code: 85701

Home: <<< REDACTED >>> | Email: <<< REDACTED >>>

Company: SunZia Transmission, LLC

Nature Of Opinion

Docket Number: L-00000YY-15-0318-00171 | Docket Position: Against

The San Pedro River Valley is one of the last great riparian areas in the Southwest and is guaranteed to be adversely affected by the Sun Zia project. The route and scale of the project are completely outlandish and unnecessary. In the words of the Cascabel Working Group (whose completely sound and sober assessment is at http://www.cascabelworkinggroup.org/SZHighRisk.html), "Policy makers must decide which is more practical and secure: (1) building 500- or 1000-mile-long extra-high-voltages transmission lines to deliver distant-generated power, inevitably across sensitive lands in some areas, or (2) building needed generation closer to load, much of it on a smaller, more distributed scale, and using shorter, more local transmission lines to deliver power. This choice depends strongly on economic and security considerations, not upon the need for power generated at great distances." Please consult their excellent report. Oppose this expensive and environmentally insane project. -MKH

Date:	Analyst:	Investigation Submitted By:	Type:
10/14/2015	Deborah Reagan	Web Submission	Investigation

Comments entered for the record and filed with Docket Control.

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L-00000YY-15-0318-00171

Arizona Corporation Commission
Utilities Complaint Form

Investigator: Deborah Reagan **Phone:** <<< REDACTED >>> **Completion Date:**

Opinion Number: 2015 - 125939 **Priority:** Respond within 5 business days

Opinion Codes: Other - misc line siting **Opinion Date:** 10/15/2015

First Name: Helen Leslie **Last Name:** Hall **Account Name:** Helen Leslie Hall

Address: <<< REDACTED >>>

City: Tempe **State:** AZ **Zip Code:** 85282

Cell: <<< REDACTED >>> **Email:** <<< REDACTED >>>

Company: SunZia Transmission, LLC

Nature Of Opinion

Docket Number: L-00000YY-15-0318-00171 **Docket Position:** Against

We purchased land 10 years ago in the San Pedro River Valley (SPRV). The land has extensive conservation easements that protect six miles of the river from development and significantly limit water usage. We bought the land as a part of conservation efforts to protect the river and animals, including thousands of migratory birds that use the river as a natural pathway. Sun Zia power lines in the SPRV will diminish this conservation effort as well as diminish the value of our property. A project of this magnitude causes direct and indirect habitat fragmentation to the detriment of the land. Construction work, access roads and the power lines will cause erosion and negatively impact the San Pedro River's watershed. The FEIS acknowledges this, FEIS p. J-299. Our requested remedy is that Sun Zia should not be approved through the SPRV. The San Pedro River Valley is unique. Birds, mammals and reptiles depend on the river habitat. This habitat should not be despoiled by this project.

Investigation

Date:	Analyst:	Submitted By:	Type:
10/15/2015	Deborah Reagan	Web Submission	Investigation

Comments entered for the record and filed with Docket Control.

L-00000YY-15-0318-00171 ORIGINAL

Arizona Corporation Commiss

Utilities Complaint Form

Investigator: Deborah Reagan | Phone: <<< REDACTED >>> | Completion Date: 10/15/2015 10:42 AM

Opinion Number: 2015 - 125940 | Priority: Respond within 5 business days

Opinion Codes: Other - misc line siting | Opinion Date: 10/15/2015

First Name: Enriqueta | Last Name: Flores-Guevara | Account Name: Enriqueta Flores-Guevara

Address: <<< REDACTED >>>

City: Benson | State: AZ | Zip Code: 85602

Home: <<< REDACTED >>> | Email: <<< REDACTED >>>

Company: SunZia Transmission, LLC

Nature Of Opinion

Docket Number: L-00000YY-15-0318-00171 | Docket Position: Against

I am strongly opposed to the siting of the proposed transmission lines through the San Pedro River Valley. This is a pristine critical habitat and should not be disturbed for power lines. Much effort and money has been expended to protect this valuable area, and there are better routes for the power line which would not be nearly as damaging. The greater public benefit should be respected leaving this area as it is, and not permitting a private company to make a large profit while damaging our lands.

Investigation

Date:	Analyst:	Submitted By:	Type:
10/15/2015	Deborah Reagan	Web Submission	Investigation

Comments entered for the record and filed with Docket Control.

Arizona Corporation Commission
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Opinion 125940 - Page [illegible]

BARBARA LAWALL
PIMA COUNTY ATTORNEY
CIVIL DIVISION
Michael LeBlanc, SBN 028418
Deputy County Attorney
32 North Stone Avenue, Suite 2100
Tucson, Arizona 85701
Telephone: 520-740-5750
Michael.LeBlanc@pcao.pima.gov
Attorneys for Pima County

BEFORE THE ARIZONA POWER PLANT AND TRANSMISSION LINE SITING COMMITTEE

IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION OF SUNZIA TRANSMISSION L.L.C., IN CONFORMANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF ARIZONA REVISED STATUTES 40-360, ET SEQ., FOR A CERTIFICATE OF ENVIRONMENTAL COMPATIBLITY AUTHORING THE SUNZIA SOUTHWEST TRANSMISSION PROJECT, WHICH INCLUDES THE CONSTRUCTION OF TWO NEW 500 KV TRANSMISSION LINES AND ASSOCIATED FACILITIES ORIGINATING AT A NEW SUBSTATION (SUNZIA EAST) IN LINCOLN COUNTY, NEW MEXICO, AND TERMINATING AT THE PINAL CENTRAL SUBSTATION IN PINAL COUNTY, ARIZONA. THE ARIZONA PORTION OF THE PROJECT IS LOCATED WITHIN GRAHAM, GREENLEE, COCHISE, PINAL, AND PIMA COUNTIES.	Docket No. L-00000YY-15-0318-00171 Case No. 171 **STATEMENT OF PIMA COUNTY**

EXHIBIT
Committee 3
Public Comment

Under the authority of A.R.S. § 40-360.05(B) and A.A.C. R14-3-204, Pima County makes a limited appearance in this proceeding before the Arizona Power Plant and Transmission Line Siting Committee by filing the County's statement for the record,

BARBARA LAWALL
PIMA COUNTY ATTORNEY
CIVIL DIVISION

attached as exhibit A, and which was previously mailed to the SunZia Project Manager on August 28, 2015.

In addition, should the Committee decide to issue a Certificate of Environmental Compatibility, Pima County requests that the Committee, as required by A.R.S. § 40-360.06(D), condition the issuance of the Certificate on compliance with Pima Prospers, Pima County's 2015 Comprehensive Plan Update[1]. Pima County also requests the Committee to impose the following specific conditions:

1. Re-route the planned transmission corridors to avoid Pima County's land holdings in the San Pedro River Valley.
2. Impose the following conditions to mitigate the impacts of the SunZia Project:
   - No new access or maintenance roads.
   - Employ aerial techniques to construct towers, tower sites, and powerline stringing and tensioning.
   - Establish the Project's crossing at the San Pedro River at a location where the stream flow is ephemeral.
   - Increase tower height at Buehman Canyon and San Pedro River crossings to span trees such that vegetation maintenance and clearing is not necessary.
   - Re-align the Project to avoid the right-of-way from paralleling Paige Canyon.
3. If the planned transmission corridor is not re-routed to avoid Pima County's land holdings in the San Pedro River Valley, then compensate Pima County for its loss

[1] Pima Prospers is available online at:
http://webcms.pima.gov/cms/One.aspx?portalId=169&pageId=35831

of publicly funded Section 10 Mitigation Bank lands and for the Project's impact to the County's Conservation Lands Systems[2].

4. Include Pima County in the development and execution of the Plan of Development for the Project.

Respectfully submitted October 12, 2015.

By: _____

Michael LeBlanc
Deputy Pima County Attorney
32 N. Stone Avenue, Ste. 2100
Tucson, Arizona 85701
(520) 740-5750

BARBARA LAWALL
PIMA COUNTY ATTORNEY
CIVIL DIVISION

Original and 25 copies submitted on
October 12, 2015 with

Docket Control
1200 West Washington Street, Room 108
Phoenix, Arizona 85007

In accordance with A.C.C. R14-3-204(B) and
the Notice of Hearing filed on on September 4, 2015,
1 original and 3 copies were submitted on
October 12, 2015 with

Thomas Broderick
Director of Utilities

---

[2] The Project's impacts on the County's Section 10 Mitigation Bank and Conservation Lands Systems is fully discussed in exhibit A.

Arizona Corporation Commission
1200 West Washington Street
Phoenix, AZ 85007

In accordance with A.R.S. § 40-360.05(B),
a copy was emailed on October 12, 2015, to:

Thomas K. Chenal, Chairman
Arizona Power Plant and
Transmission Line Siting Committee
Assistant Attorney General
thomas.chenal@azag.gov

In accordance with A.C.C. R14-3-205(B),
copies were mailed on October 12, 2015 to:

Case No. 171 Master Service List

BARBARA LAWALL
PIMA COUNTY ATTORNEY
CIVIL DIVISION

Exhibit A

COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR'S OFFICE
PIMA COUNTY GOVERNMENTAL CENTER
130 W. CONGRESS, FLOOR 10, TUCSON, AZ 85701-1317
(520) 724-8661 FAX (520) 724-8171

C.H. HUCKELBERRY
County Administrator

August 28, 2015

Mr. Mickey Siegel, Project Manager
Environmental Planning Group
4141 N. 32nd Street, Suite102
Phoenix, Arizona 85018

Re: **Your letter of August 12, 2015 Regarding the SunZia Southwest Transmission Project**

Dear Mr. Siegel:

Thank you for your letter notifying Pima County that SunZia LLC (SunZia) plans to file an application for a Certificate of Environmental Compatibility (CEC) for the SunZia Southwest Transmission Project with the Arizona Power Plant and Transmission Line Siting Committee by mid-September 2015. The SunZia project application will be brought before the Siting Committee to request approval of a CEC for the approved route in Arizona. We understand the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) approved SunZia's application for right of way across federal property in January 2015. The 'Preferred Alternative' identified by the BLM in its Record of Decision approves 515 miles of two, single-circuit 500 kV transmission lines and is comprised of 185 miles of federal land, 220 miles of State Trust land and 110 miles of private land in Arizona and New Mexico. This selected route will impact the San Pedro River Valley, including some 20 miles in Pima County, from just north of Benson in Cochise County and running north along the west side of the San Pedro River in Pima County to the San Manuel area in Pinal County.

Construction requirements include right of way corridors for both lines up to 1,000 feet in width, depending on terrain conditions, and towers will be approximately 135 feet in height. The distance between towers will be approximately 1,400 feet, suggesting that approximately 75 towers would be constructed in Pima County. Because of the remoteness of the valley and lack of existing roads, access for construction of the line and tower locations could require up to 75 new access roads that will greatly impact and fragment the landscape and habitat and invite unwanted traffic and uses into this virtually pristine river valley. We have opposed selection of this route and have continuing concerns regarding the ability to mitigate impacts of the selected route on County lands.

In this area, Pima County purchased three ranches in the San Pedro Valley area, investing just over $14 million in voter-approved bond funds for this purpose; we own 12,800 acres in fee and hold 54,100 acres in associated State lease lands; essentially creating a 66,000-acre management unit. The SunZia Transmission line would cross through the County-held State lease lands.

In light of the Bureau of Land Management's decision, we request the following:

- Pima County will have equitable status with landowners/land management agencies in the development and execution of the Plan of Development.
- When the alignment crosses lands where Pima County is not the landowner, but is the active, on-the-ground land manager, Pima County requirements for and recommendations on suitable locations for application of Standard and Selective Mitigation Measures will be accommodated.
- The project proponent and Pima County will seek mutual agreement on additional accommodations necessary to preserve the County's ability to rely on lands the County manages for purposes of accomplishing our Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan objective and providing mitigation for our Section 10 Incidental Take Permit from the United States Fish and Wildlife Service where those lands are crossed by the SunZia Transmission Line. Any agreements reached must be codified and enforceable.

We request that you, as the Project Proponent, support this request and recommend same to the Arizona Corporation Commission.

Sincerely,

C.H. Huckelberry
County Administrator

CHH/mjk
Attachment

c: The Honorable Chair and Members, Pima County Board of Supervisors
John Bernal, Deputy County Administrator for Public Works
Suzanne Shields, Director, Regional Flood Control District
Chris Cawein, Director, Natural Resources, Parks and Recreation
Linda Mayro, Director, Sustainability and Conservation
Diana Durazo, Special Staff Assistant to the County Administrator

PIMA COUNTY COMMENTS PER ARIZONA ADMINISTRATIVE CODE RULE R14-3-219

You have requested in your letter of August 12, 2015 that Pima County provide information under **Arizona Administrative Code Rule R14-3-219 related to Exhibit H** of the application: *To the extent applicant is able to determine, state the existing plans of the state, local government and private entities for other developments at or in the vicinity of the proposed site or route.* And you have requested that we identify any existing plans or future plans that may have changed. We offer the following information regarding our land use and conservation plans for inclusion in Exhibit H as well as other Exhibits required by the ACC Siting Committee under this Rule.

Pima Prospers Comprehensive Plan: Pima County Development Services Department

The proposed SunZia Southwest electrical transmission corridor, Sub-route 4C2c, is west of and roughly parallels the San Pedro River in far northeastern Pima County, about halfway between the river and Coronado National Forest (Santa Catalina Mountains) to the west. A major update to the Pima County Comprehensive Plan, Pima Prospers, was adopted by the Pima County Board of Supervisors in May, 2015. Minor changes to the land use map legend and technical corrections to mapped plan designations on developed or entitled property did not change the intent of planned uses over the previous (2001) Comprehensive Plan in this area (Table1).

Table 1. Selected Land Use and Zoning Designations
San Pedro Valley / Proposed SunZia Corridor Area August 2015

Pima County Comprehensive Plan – Pima Prospers

Low Intensity Rural (LIR)

a. Objective: To designate areas for residential uses at densities consistent with rural and resource-based characteristics.
b. Residential Gross Density: Residential gross density shall conform to the following:
   1) Minimum – none
   2) Maximum – 0.3 RAC.
c. Residential Gross Densities for Developments Using Transfer of Development Rights (TDRs): Projects within designated Receiving Areas utilizing TDRs for development shall conform to the following density requirements:
   1) Minimum – none
   2) Maximum – 0.3 RAC.

Resource Conservation (RC)

a. Objective: To designate publically-owned lands that are public resource lands and preserves that protect sensitive and high-value biological, resource value, cultural, recreational, and other sensitive resources lands. These do not include private or State Trust lands, whether or not they are leased by the County for open space purposes. If these lands become privately held during the lifespan of this plan, they will be treated as Resource Sensitive unless otherwise designated through a plan amendment process.
b. Residential Gross Density: None, other than allowances for life estates, ranch caretakers and similar uses.

The existing zoning east of the Coronado National forest boundary is all RH-Rural Homestead, which is the dominant rural zoning on private and Arizona State Trust lands in Pima County. The RH zone allows rural residential and other related uses including agriculture on at parcels least 4.13 acres and larger (Table 2).

Table 2. Pima County Zoning Code

Chapter 18.13 - RH RURAL HOMESTEAD ZONE (Excerpt)
Sections:
18.13.010 - Purpose.
A. Purpose: This zone is intended to preserve the character and encourage the orderly growth of rural areas in the county. It is intended to encourage rural development in areas lacking facilities for urban development and to provide for commercial and industrial development only where appropriate and necessary to serve the needs of the rural area.
(Ord. 1985-187 § 1 (part), 1985)
18.13.020 - Permitted uses.
A. Uses permitted:
1. Single detached dwelling;
2. Manufactured or mobile home or trailer;
3. Guest dwelling: In accordance with Section 18.09.020(G) (General Residential and Rural Zoning Provisions) [proposed];
4. Accessory structures;
5. Crop production, used only for the purpose of propagation and cultivation and not for retail sales, including field crops, truck gardening, berry or bush crops, tree crops, flower gardening, nurseries and aviaries;
6. Reserved;
7. The raising and grazing of livestock;
8. The raising of hogs: In accordance with Section 18.12.020(A)(9) (IR Institutional Reserve Zone);
9. Hog raising projects, which exceed the permitted number of hogs, sponsored by the 4-H Club, Future Farmers of America or other similar nonprofit organization: In accordance with Section 18.12.020(A)(11) (IR Institutional Reserve Zone);
10. The raising of poultry and other small animals;
11. Private stable;
12. Commercial stable or riding school, provided:
    a. There is a minimum site of ten acres, and
    b. That all buildings be set back a minimum of one hundred feet from any property line;
13. Community stable, provided:
    a. The site is a minimum of ten acres,
    b. The stable shall be located within and not closer than two hundred feet from the boundary of the site or subdivision to be served,

c. All roads and parking areas shall be surfaced with a dust-proof material to minimize the creation of dust, and

d. There shall be no outside audio amplification on the site;

14. Farm products stand, provided:

a. The stand does not exceed seven hundred fifty feet, and

b. All other requirements of Section 18.12.020(A)(15) (IR Institutional Reserve Zone) are met;

15. Animal hospital, provided no structure, shelter, animal run or fenced area be within one hundred feet of any abutting property in a rural or residential zone, and animal runs enclosed within the buildings;

16. Governmental uses;

17. Public park;

18. Public school;

19. Child care center;

20. Group foster home: In accordance with Section 18.09.020(E) (General Residential and Rural Zoning Provisions);

21. Church, provided there is a minimum eighty-foot setback from any property line;

22. Health clinic, provided:

a. There is a minimum one hundred-foot setback from any property line, and

b. The clinic has access onto a paved public road with "collector" classification or higher;

23. Home occupation;

24. Temporary real estate office: In accordance with Section 18.17.020(A)(8) (SR Suburban Ranch Zone);

25. Raising of ratites, subject to the following requirements:

a. Animals shall be confined within minimum six-foot-high, stock-tight corrals;

B Minimum setbacks for ratite corrals and shelter structures within corrals: Fifty feet from front property line and property lines which abut public maintained roads and ten feet from side and rear property lines;

26. Nature reserve.

The pattern of adopted planned land uses on the Pima Prospers planned land use maps (San Pedro Planning Area) for all of the area east of the Coronado National Forest is based on and follows the distribution of Pima County preserve lands generally as depicted on the attached map *SunZia Transmission Route in the San Pedro Valley and Conservation Lands*. Properties identified as preserve lands and owned in fee by Pima County are designated Resource Conservation (RC) on the land use plan, while the remainder, which are predominantly owned by the State of Arizona, are designated Low Intensity Rural (LIR). The RC designation furthers the conservation goals of the County-owned preserve system, while the LIR designation allows very low-intensity rural uses generally consistent with the RH zone.

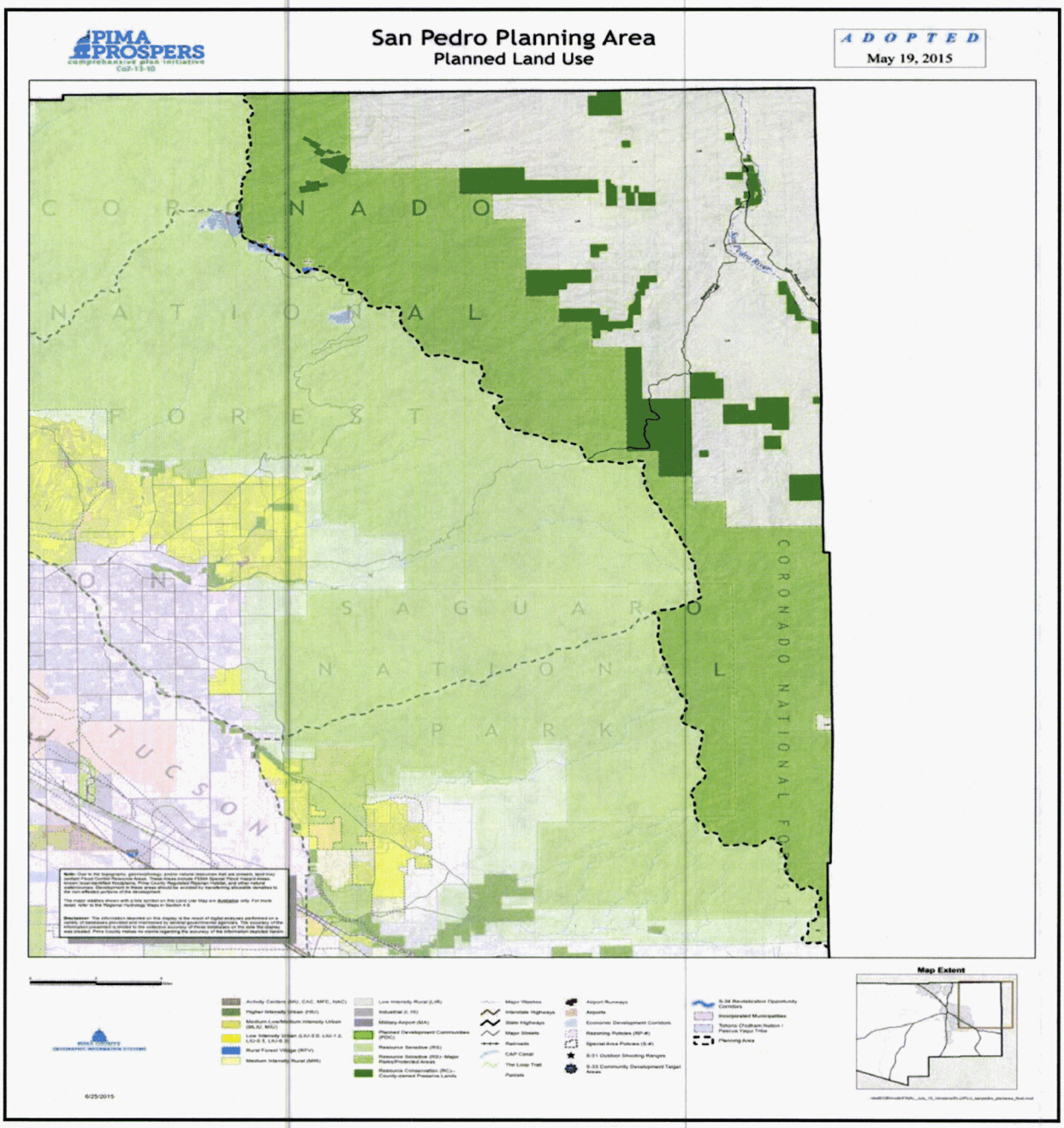

Figure 1. Pima Prospers – San Pedro Planning Area.

Pima County controls ownership or grazing rights essentially over the entire proposed SunZia route in this segment of the San Pedro River valley. East of the SunZia corridor

there is mixed ownership, with State of Arizona and privately-owned property following the San Pedro River, much of it floodplain with partly developed agricultural uses.

The Pima County portion of the San Pedro River Valley has remained among the most purely rural areas in eastern Pima County, with ranching being the dominant land use. Over time there has been an increasing role by Pima County in preservation-related land stewardship as envisioned in the Comprehensive Plan and the Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan (SDCP). Given the ownership, zoning, planned land use patterns and County conservation goals, current patterns are likely to remain the trend for many years to come. See www.pimaprospers.com for the complete Comprehensive Plan.

Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan: Wildlife Habitat Conservation and Ranch Conservation

The SDCP identified the San Pedro Valley as highly valuable for habitat and riparian area conservation, preservation of wildlife corridors, cultural resource protection, and ranch conservation, and we have expressed previously our serious concerns regarding impacts from the SunZia Project to County owned and managed lands as show below.

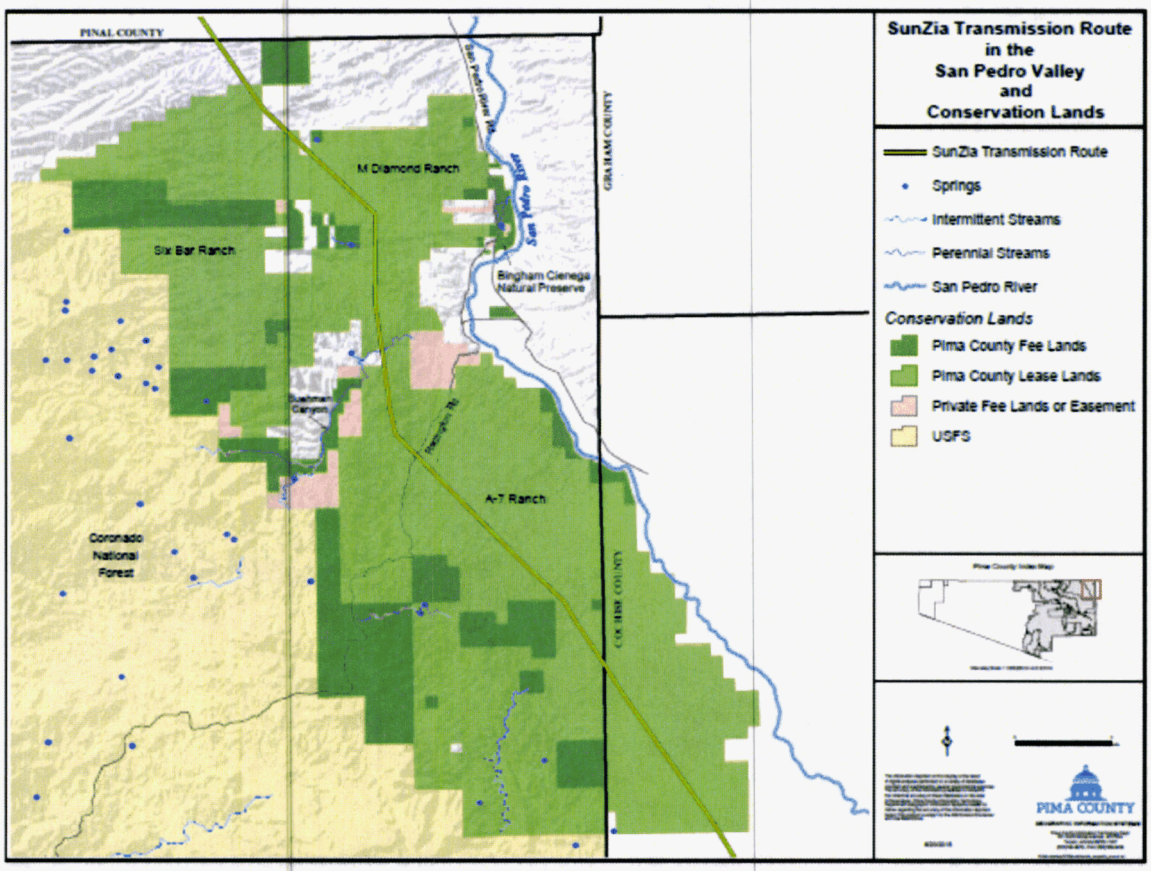

Figure 2. Pima County Conservation Lands in the San Pedro River Valley.

These lands were acquired with voter-approved bond funds with the expressed intent to protect and preserve the natural and cultural values of the San Pedro River Valley for present and future benefit to the citizens of Pima County. To date, Pima County has acquired the Six Bar Ranch, the A-7 Ranch, and the M Diamond Ranch fee lands and grazing leases. Since the date of our 2012 comments, Pima County has become aware of an area of unique biological wealth that lies near the transmission line. Springs and intermittent and perennial streams in the area are shown on the map.

As noted above, the SunZia transmission line passes through an area covered by the Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan. Guidelines that impose conservation standards for development in biologically important areas including the San Pedro Valley have been in place since 2001 when they were adopted into the County's Comprehensive Plan. These standards continue to be implemented and the most current iteration of these conservation standards – the Maeveen Marie Behan Conservation Lands System (CLS) Conservation Guidelines - can be found in the Environmental Element of Pima Prospers – Pima County's Comprehensive Plan 2015 Update.

Since the adoption of the CLS in 2001, Pima County has been acquiring land in the San Pedro River Valley. Since the date of our 2012 EIS comments, Pima County has acquired an additional 620 acres in fee and the associated 8,500-acre State grazing lease at M Diamond Ranch, essentially creating a 140,000-acre County management unit that consists of M Diamond, A-7 and Six Bar Ranches. These lands are complemented by other existing protected lands along the San Pedro and Buehman Canyon as shown on the Conservation Lands map above.

The County manages fee lands and grazing leases as part of its efforts to conserve and protect biological and ecological values of the lands. The stewardship given to the fee-owned land as well as the state grazing leases associated with each ranch will comprise the mitigation area proposed under Pima County's Multi-Species Conservation Plan as required under Section 10 of the Endangered Species Act. This Permit will cover incidental take by activities authorized by Pima County or carried out by Pima County Regional Flood Control District.

Since the date of our 2012 comments, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service has commenced a programmatic consultation with U. S. Army Corps of Engineers for issuance of a permit under Section 10 of the Endangered Species Act to streamline certain 404 permits for activities covered under Pima County's Multi-Species Conservation Plan. Neither the County's Section 10 nor the programmatic consultation will cover SunZia's activities

The Maeveen Marie Behan CLS classifications given to the route of the transmission are depicted in the map below. The SunZia Project passes through areas of Biological Core, Multiple Use and Important Riparian Areas located largely on State Trust Land. If the County regulated development in these areas, the mitigation required to offset impacted

land would range from four acres per acre for impacts in the Biological Core and Important Riparian Areas, to two acres per acre impacted in the Multiple Use area.

With their adoption of Pima Prospers on May 19, 2015, the Pima County Board of Supervisors established a County policy to seek compensatory mitigation for all activities that impact the CLS, including transmission lines, such as the SunZia Project. See Pima Prospers Environmental Element – Goal 1; Policy 1.a.

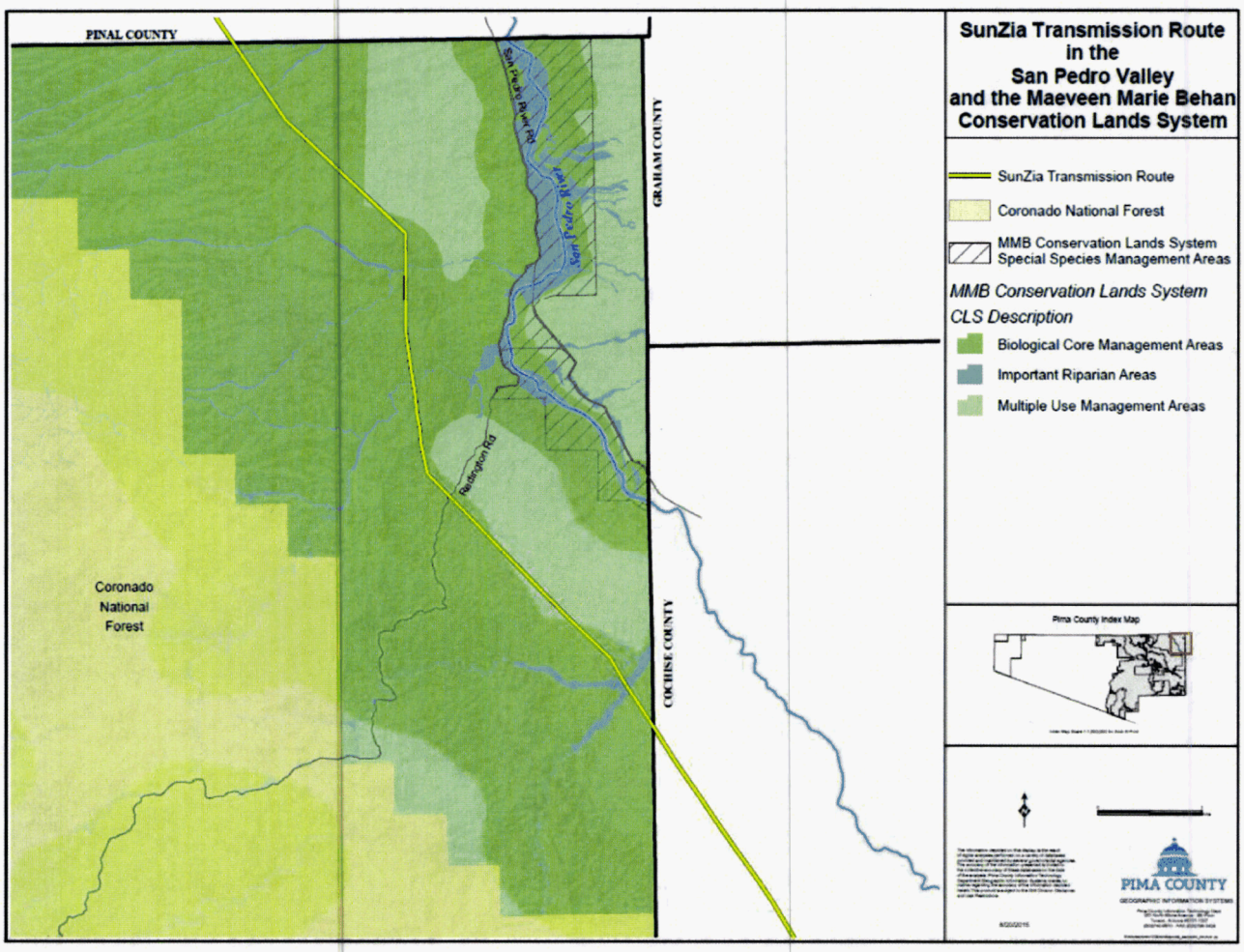

Figure 3. Pima County Conservation Lands System Impacted by the SunZia Project

Since the date of our 2012 comments, the Wildlife Linkages study sponsored by Arizona Game and Fish Department and the Pima County Regional Transportation Authority has been completed. This study was referenced in our letter, and was a basis for our request that direct and indirect impacts to wildlife linkages be considered not only for construction but also vegetation management along the transmission line.

Expected Impacts to County Conservation Planning: A great diversity of significant impacts to County conservation planning efforts are anticipated. Impacts to surface water and riparian areas are likely to result from placement of 75 or more tower structures, construction of access roads, cable pulling and tensioning stations and temporary work areas. Direct impacts to perennial, intermittent and ephemeral surface waters include sedimentation from fugitive dust, access road construction and subsequent erosion, removal of riparian vegetation during construction, or later from "vegetation management" under the constructed line, bank alteration, and contamination due to accidental spills, damage to wetlands, and introduction of invasive species either from vehicular traffic or through re-seeding efforts.

Impacts to uplands would be similar, and would include direct impacts to species covered in Pima County's Multi-species Conservation Plan such as Needle-spined Cactus, Lesser Long-nosed Bat and Desert Tortoise, as well as indirect impacts such as those resulting from vandalism and intrusion into habitat areas by of off-road vehicles. Placement of a new transmission line inevitably results in increased public access across a landscape. No matter the steps taken, the lands become much more accessible and remain open because of the need to manage and repair the transmission lines. Other impacts can include poaching of wildlife and plants, and theft of archeological resources, as well as damage to water sources that are important for wildlife and livestock.

It has been our experience that disturbances during construction that are never fully mitigated. A prime example has been the Kinder-Morgan pipeline project's ongoing impacts to the County's Cienega Creek Natural Preserve and Bar V Ranch management and protection and in the Altar Valley. Despite mitigation efforts by the company, impacts such as erosion of soil continue for the County to address with no long-term support or ability to reconfigure the impacts due to the constraints now placed by the location of the utility infrastructure corridor.

A less well-known factor that may affect our lands and waters is the need for construction water. Leo Smith, P.E. for many of our County construction projects, estimates that there is a rule of thumb that 50 gallons of water are needed per cubic yard of material to compact soil and conduct dust suppression activities during construction. It is likely that construction water needs for this project will be drawn from local sources along the route of the pipeline with certain impacts to groundwater-dependent ecosystems.

The Energy Policy Act of 2005 designated an electric reliability organization to develop and enforce compliance with reliability standards. North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC) is an industry organization, whose authority was conferred by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. NERC does not require vegetation clearing *per se*; it requires power companies to prepare, and implement, a formal transmission vegetation management program to prevent outages.

A reportable outage is caused by "grow-ins" and "fall-ins" or "flashover" which is the movement of electricity across air (see www.nerc.com). Grow-ins are outages caused by vegetation growing into lines from vegetation inside and/or outside of the right-of-way; fall-ins are defined as outages caused by vegetation falling into lines from inside or outside the rights-of-way.

Rather than selective removal, TEP and other utilities are removing woody vegetation that would never grow or fall into the lines, in order to reduce risks of fire and electrical arcs affecting the performance of transmission lines. There is no written policy requiring fuel loads to be reduced, nor are fuel loading calculations or standards used to determine the amount of clearing.

In short, more vegetation is being cleared as each utility begins implementing its plan. In practice, utilities remove far more vegetation than the minimum needed to meet NERC rules, to minimize the need for repeated mobilization of field crews. Inadequate field supervision of contractors has, at times, contributed to the expansion of the footprint of maintenance activities on the landscape.

All trees, woody shrubs and saguaros may eventually be removed along power transmission lines rated at 200kV or higher, whether situated along public or private lands, along with impacts to plants and animals associated with repeated use of mechanical or herbicide treatments. Mechanical clearings may result in significant degradation of archeological resources. The cleared areas will alter fire behavior. In montane areas, the new clearings may serve as fire breaks. In some lower elevation areas, invasion of non-native plants in the disturbed areas may actually increase the fire risk. In all locations, vegetation management will more or less permanently alter the characteristics of wildlife and vegetation habitat under power lines.

Using 2004 voter-approved bond monies, the County acquired Six Bar Ranch, M Diamond and the A-7 Ranch in the San Pedro River Valley. The BLM Preferred Alternative passes right through the County-held State grazing lease for A-7 and M Diamond Ranch and cuts through a number of important conservation areas, wildlife travel corridors and cultural resources sites on the property that are large enough that minor adjustments to the line footprint will not adequately mitigate potential impacts. This alignment would cut across nearly all of the major ranch roads, pastures and key use zones, which can hamper our operation and conservation ranching approach.

Riparian Area and Floodplain Protection Planning: Regional Flood Control District

The Pima County Regional Flood Control District (RFCD) is a regional agency whose mission is to protect the health, safety, and welfare of Pima County residents by providing comprehensive flood protection programs and floodplain management services.

These services emphasize fiscal responsibility, protection of natural resources and riparian areas, and a balanced multi-objective approach to managing regional watercourses, floodplains, and stormwater resources.

Moreover, as a co-applicant with Pima County for issuance of a Section 10 Permit under the Endangered Species Act, RFCD has been fully engaged in the development of the Multi Species Conservation Plan and is actively involved in the preservation of riparian areas and habitat as defined by the Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan Maeveen Marie Behan Conservation Lands System described above.

The depicted floodplains in Figure 4 are the regulatory floodplains as identified by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and are subject to regulation under the National Flood Insurance Program including administrative policies and guidance issued by FEMA. It should be noted that critical facilities which include electrical substations are required to be protected from the 500-year flood.

The riparian habitat map in Figure 5 depicts major watercourses and local tributaries and the associated riparian habitat. Disturbance in these areas should be limited and biological surveys should be conducted prior to any disturbance to avoid any impacts to threatened and endangered species. The District discourages construction of a permanent access road along the entire route. In addition to direct disturbance of riparian areas and floodplains, where access roads cross watercourses there is a potential for head-cutting and other erosion problems off of the ROW. There is evidence of this on other linear projects that have been constructed in Pima County. Furthermore, construction activities should be suspended during rainy periods.

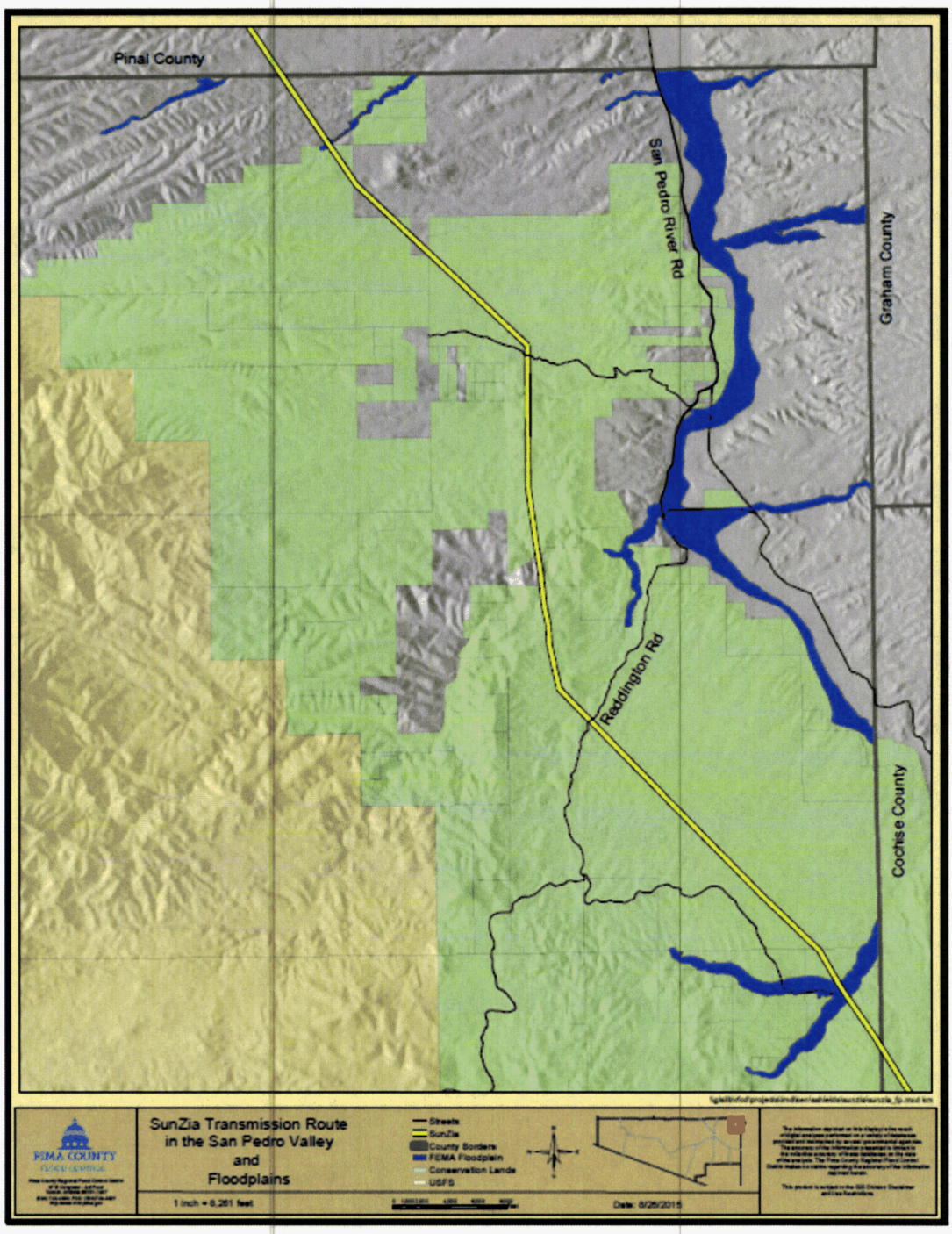

Figure 4. Regulated Floodplains in the San Pedro Valley

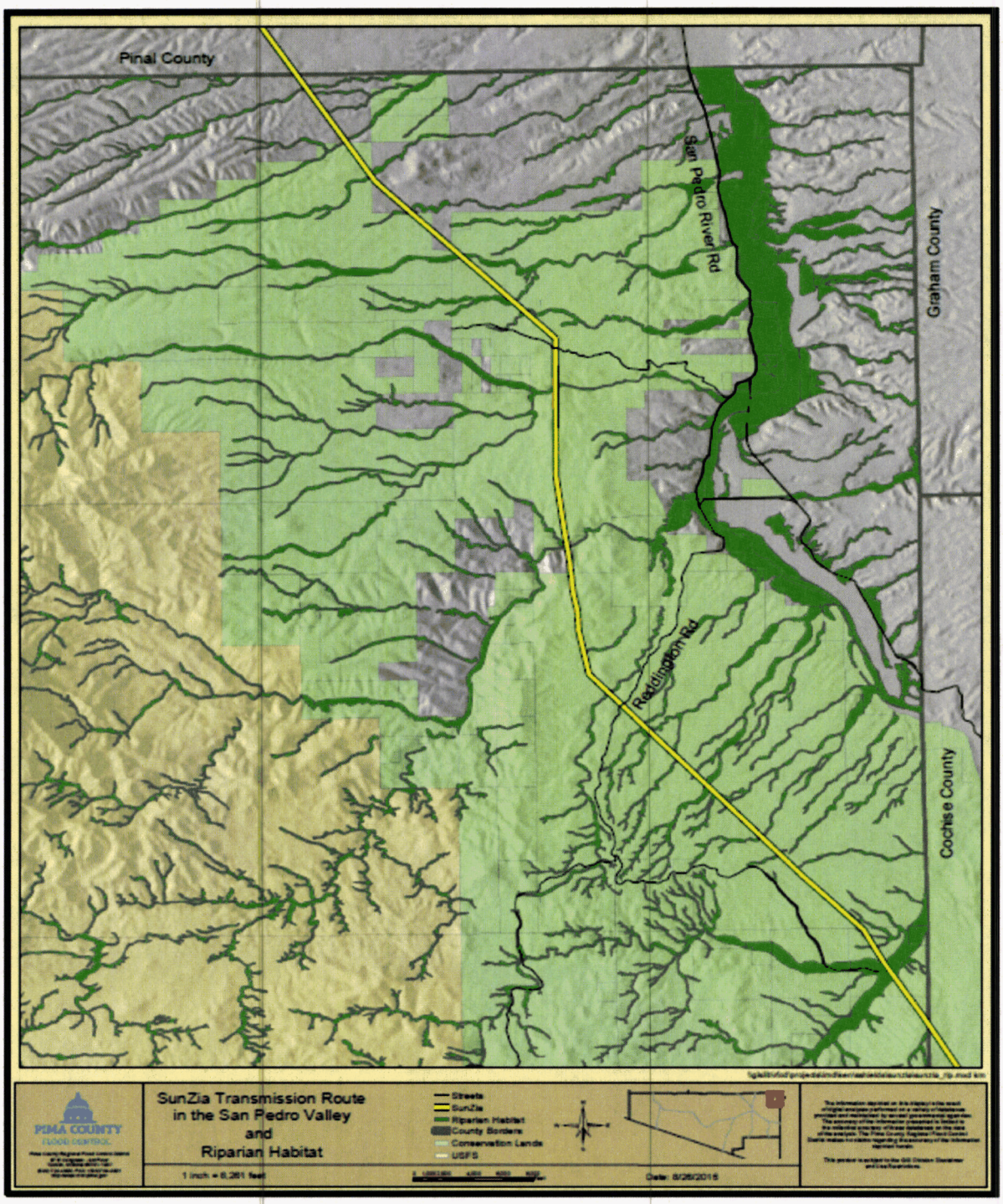

Figure 5. Riparian Habitat in the San Pedro Valley

While electrical transmission lines are not required under Arizona statutes to receive written authorization from county flood control districts, Arizona Revised Statute 48-3616.C, requires that construction plans must be submitted for review and comment. The review would focus on avoiding the placement of transmission towers in FEMA floodplains and erosion hazard areas and minimizing the disturbance of riparian habitat. The exception to this regulatory exemption is that permits will be required for both temporary and permanent access roads to construct and maintain the SunZia Project.

Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan: Cultural Resources & Historic Preservation

Perennial rivers, such as the San Pedro, are major loci of prehistoric and historic human occupations in Pima County, where the site numbers are highest and the distribution of sites is most dense. The San Pedro Valley has been long recognized for its many significant prehistoric and historic sites, many of which are in excellent condition given their remoteness from large modern population centers.

The San Pedro Valley in Pima County is essentially undeveloped. It retains the character of landscapes in the prehistoric and historic past. As such the valley is a place where a sense of history is present today. Tohono O'odham, Apache, Hopi, and Zuni cultural advisors who have visited ancestral villages and gathering areas in the San Pedro Valley have remarked on the sense of history that is embedded in the natural and cultural landscapes. Dalton Taylor of Hopi has stated of the San Pedro Valley and ancestral archaeological sites that, "the only thing I ask for is protection, because this place is like our history books". Other cultural advisors have made similar pleas to protect and preserve the San Pedro Valley and its unique history.

Because of these high cultural values in addition to its diverse and valuable habitat for many species, the San Pedro River Valley was defined in the Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan (SDCP) as having high value for conservation. This high density of cultural resources has been identified in the SDCP as the "Redington Cultural Resource Complex" shown on the map below and is identified as such in Pima Prospers. Unfortunately, the proposed SunZia route along the west side of the San Pedro Valley in Pima County has great potential to impact significant archaeological and/or historic resources resulting from construction of the SunZia Project and from indirect impacts such as looting of sites that will result from much greater access to these heritage resources from the many new access roads that will be required for the construction of the Project.

The high archaeological sensitivity of the San Pedro valley is well documented and reflects important prehistoric occupations as well as historic homesteading and ranching. There are dozens of recorded sites in the valley near this corridor, with excellent potential for additional, as yet undiscovered resources. Well-known sites in this area include the prehistoric Reeve Ruin, Redington Ruin, and Bayless Ranch Ruin, as well as an historic cemetery near the river. Many sites are located on County-owned lands that were acquired and are managed specifically to protect and preserve the natural and cultural resources for present and future benefits to the citizens of Pima County.

The proposed SunZia alignment will irrevocably scar the San Pedro Valley, cutting a swath of destruction through many archaeological sites, diminishing cultural and traditional values held by Native American tribes, and scaring the pristine visual character of the valley, predominantly through lands that Pima County is committed to protect in accordance with the Pima County Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan and Pima Prospers.

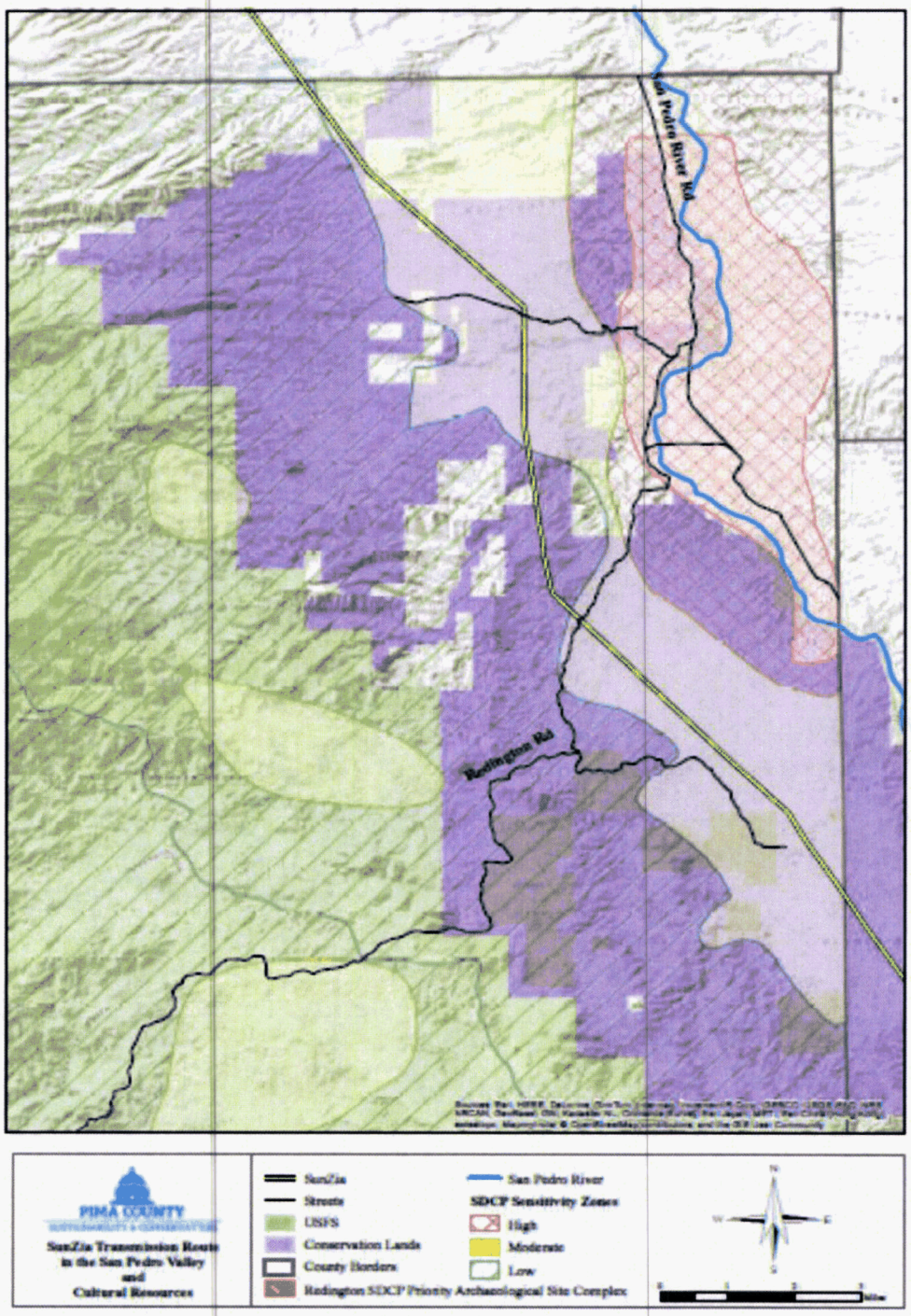

Figure 6. Cultural Resource Sensitivity in the San Pedro Valley.

In summary, Pima County has made significant investment in conservation planning and land acquisition on behalf of its citizens since 2001 to ensure that the San Pedro River Valley and its abundant natural, riparian, and cultural resource values are protected for the benefit of present and future generations. The County's holdings in the area total approximately 140,000-acres under County management that supports ongoing ranching operations, while conserving and protecting biological and ecological values of the lands.

In acknowledgement of the public's mandate, Pima County has adopted an ongoing and long-term commitment to conservation planning espoused in the Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan and Multi-Species Conservation Plan. Moreover, these lands under the County's Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan and Multi-Species Conservation Plan are intended as mitigation lands under that will serve to meet the requirements of the Section 10 Permit of the Endangered Species Act that will be issued to Pima County by the US Fish & Wildlife Service. This Permit will cover incidental take of listed species by activities authorized by Pima County or carried out by Pima County Regional Flood Control District.

These conservation goals have also been recently reaffirmed and adopted by the Board of Supervisors in its 2015 Comprehensive Plan "Pima Prospers."

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October 9, 2015

Mr. Thomas Chenal
Chairman, Arizona Power Plant and Transmission Line Siting Committee
Office of the Attorney General
1275 W. Washington St.
Phoenix, AZ 85007-2926

Re: **Limited Appearance Request Withdrawal; Docket No. L-00000YY-15-0318-00171**

Dear Chairman Chenal:

Assuming that your hearing agenda (dated October 7, 2015) will not become more specific, I withdraw my request for a limited appearance, which I made in my 28 September 2015 letter. Lower back problems prevent me from attending a meeting that doesn't provide an estimated time interval, within two hours, during which I could expect to speak.

I apologize for my unfamiliarity with hearing procedure, and for the time this has cost you in considering my request. I do hope to speak during the public comment session in Tucson, after 6:00 p.m. on October 22.

Thank you again for your time.

Sincerely,

Jon C. Sjogren

110 W. Meadowbrook Dr.
Tucson, AZ 85704-6712
(520) 297-8582
sjogren.jc@comcast.net

ORIGINAL

September 28, 2015

Mr. Thomas Broderick
Director, Utilities Division
Arizona Corporation Commission
1200 W. Washington
Phoenix, AZ 85007-2996

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2015 OCT -9 A 8: 30

AZ CORP COMMISSION
DOCKET CONTROL

DOCKETED

Re: **Limited Appearance Request; Docket No. L-00000YY-15-0318-00171**

Dear Director Broderick:

Pursuant to A.R.S. § 40-360.05(B), and A.A.C. R14-3-204(B), please allow me to make a limited appearance at the Arizona Power Plant and Transmission Line Siting Committee hearing to be held in Tucson beginning October 22, 2015.

I have an interest in these proceedings as an Arizona-educated engineer; a forty-year Arizona resident and taxpayer; and landowner of a quarter-section near the San Pedro Valley segment of SunZia.

Please grant me the opportunity to speak briefly (7 minutes) with regard to material in my 14 and 21 September 2015 letters submitted to the Arizona Power Plant and Transmission Line Siting Committee via the Docket Control Center.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Jon C. Sjogren, Ph.D.

110 W. Meadowbrook Dr.
Tucson, AZ 85704-6712
(520) 297-8582
sjogren.jc@comcast.net

P.S. Pursuant to A.R.S. § 40-360.05(B), I have also mailed the above request to Chairman Thomas Chenal (Office of the Attorney General, 1275 W. Washington St., Phoenix, AZ 85007-2926).

Enclosures: 3 copies of this letter

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SEP 30 2015

ATTORNEY GENERAL-PHOENIX
AGENCY COUNSEL SECTION

September 28, 2015

Mr. Thomas Chenal
Chairman, Arizona Power Plant and Transmission Line Siting Committee
Office of the Attorney General
1275 W. Washington St.
Phoenix, AZ 85007-2926

Re: **Limited Appearance Request; Docket No. L-00000YY-15-0318-00171**

Dear Chairman Chenal:

Pursuant to A.R.S. § 40-360.05(B), please allow me to make a limited appearance at the Arizona Power Plant and Transmission Line Siting Committee hearing to be held in Tucson beginning October 22, 2015.

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P.S. Pursuant to A.A.C. R14-3-204(B), I have also mailed the above request to Mr. Thomas Broderick (Director, Utilities Division, Arizona Corporation Commission, 1200 W. Washington, Phoenix, AZ 85007-2996).

ORIGINAL

September 21, 2015

Docket No. L-00000YY-15-0318-00171

Arizona Corporation Commission
DOCKETED
SEP 22 2015
DOCKETED BY

Arizona Power Plant and Transmission Line Siting Committee
Arizona Corporation Commission
1200 W. Washington
Phoenix, AZ 85007-2996

Subject: **Local Transmission and Use Instead of SunZia**

SunZia touts four main benefits: more power; access to renewables; increased transmission reliability; and, jobs. Considering these benefits, why not local transmission and use instead of SunZia? Attached is a BLM map that shows the Obama-expedited SunZia plan, and solar and wind resources. To show a local plan, I modified that map by crossing out SunZia and by adding the arrows and cities.

First, let's consider the benefit of more power: Arizona exports about one third of the electricity it generates, so it doesn't need SunZia's power.

Second benefit, access to renewables: The Arizona portion of SunZia accesses a distant solar patch, surrounding a proposed gas power plant that would use a third of SunZia's capacity. The local plan accesses abundant solar resources close to Phoenix, Tucson, and the Pinal Substation, where spent farmland is ideal for planting solar collectors.

Third benefit, increased transmission reliability: You don't increase transmission reliability by running 500-mile transmission lines from completely unreliable wind-energy sources. And you don't do it by running those lines through an extremely challenging and insecure environment. You increase reliability with the local plan of short-distance lines, over flat terrain, from reliable solar sources.

Fourth benefit, jobs: With SunZia, Arizona gets a few line-construction jobs. With the local plan it gets a solar industry, drawing from the resources and workforces of Tucson and Phoenix.

Along with the advertised benefits, some have claimed that SunZia could be used to export Arizona's solar energy eastward. But SunZia has specified westward transmission only. More importantly, it's premature to plan the exportation of a product that remains undeveloped. Arizona has to walk before it can run with its solar power, and by generating less than one percent of its electricity from solar, Arizona is just starting to crawl.

SunZia should not be built. Arizona should go local instead.

Jon C. Sjogren

110 W. Meadowbrook Dr.
Tucson, AZ 85704-6712
(520) 297-8582
sjogren.jc@comcast.net

Attached: Single page displaying maps and cited references.

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2015 SEP 22 P 12: 08
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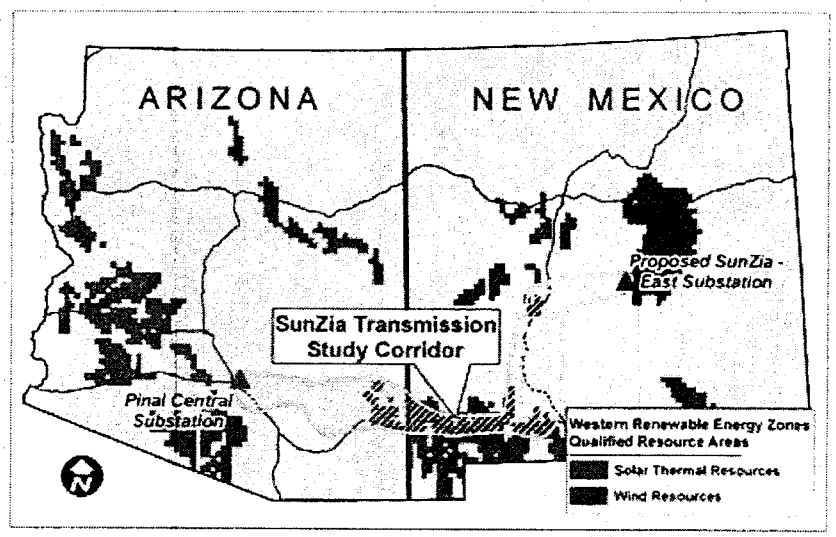
"SunZia Line Earns Obama Recognition"

"SunZia ... selected to undergo a fast-track permitting process by the federal government." [1]

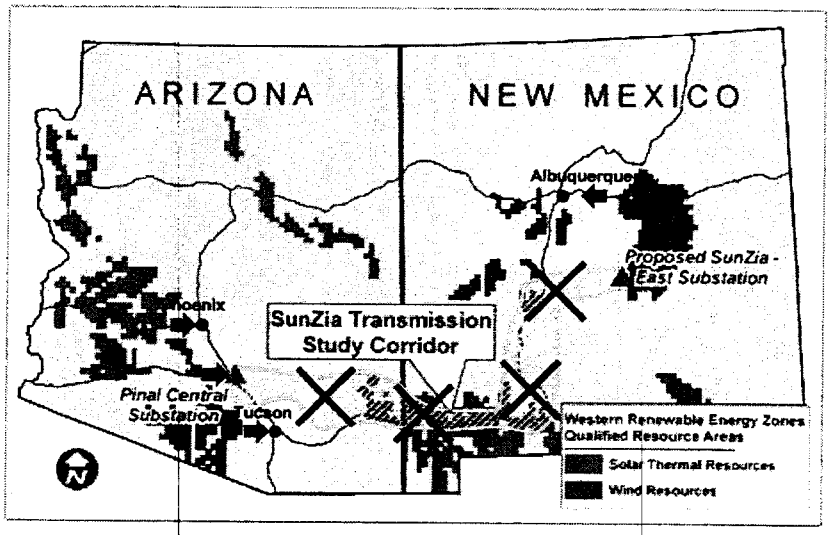
SunZia-Obama Plan [2]:



Why Not Local Transmission and Use Instead of SunZia?

Less than 1% of Arizona's electricity is solar generated, and only 5% of New Mexico's electricity is wind generated. [3]

Non-Political Local Plan:



1. http://www.snl.com/InteractiveX/ArticleAbstract.aspx?id=13414962
2. http://www.blm.gov/pgdata/etc/medialib/blm/nm/programs/more/lands_and_realty/sunzia/sunzia_maps.Par.41410.File.dat/WREZ-sunzia-corridor-map.pdf
3. http://www.eia.gov/

- This page is attached to Sjogren's 21 September 2015 letter to the Line Siting Committee, AZCC. -

September 14, 2015

Docket No. L-00000YY-15-0318-00171

Arizona Power Plant a...
Arizona Corporation Commission
1200 W. Washington
Phoenix, AZ 85007-2996

ORIGINAL

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2015 SEP 15 A 11: 42

AZ CORP COMMISSION
DOCKET CONTROL

Subject: **SunZia Should Not Be Built**

I am a research engineer who began my professional education studying energy systems. Confident in the capabilities of solar energy, I later devised a way to destroy waterborne viruses using a solar-activated semiconductor [2]. The sun is our greatest resource, and Arizona's unique assets and talented residents can readily be engaged to create valuable technologies that utilize it. The SunZia transmission project would jeopardize these economic prospects by marring our renowned landscape and subsidizing non-Arizona interests - SunZia is tailored to the solar and wind energy ambitions of New Mexico [3]; a Florida company owns New Mexico's largest wind farm [4]; Colorado, Wyoming, and Mexico (accessed at El Paso) would profit, at Arizona's expense, from SunZia's expansion of the territory of their coal energy sales [5].

In response to Project Zia, SunZia was conceived in 2006 to sell power from New Mexico and the Bowie Power Station to western markets such as Phoenix, Los Angeles, and Las Vegas [5,6,7]. The gas-fired billion-watt Bowie station will emit a daily amount of carbon dioxide equal to that produced by burning more than a million gallons of gasoline [8]. Not surprisingly, SunZia and Bowie are promoted, managed, and financed by the same group, and they petitioned the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to permit SunZia to transmit the non-renewable power of Bowie and other generators [9,10]. In effect, their petition also asked that 86% of SunZia's transmission rights be allocated to a New Jersey-California equity firm, a Louisiana construction company, a major foreign-based oil company, and a Colorado-New Mexico-Wyoming-Nebraska electric cooperative [11]. Only 14% was requested for Arizona electric utilities [12]. Thus, it seems the name "SunZia" was selected, and the renewable energy option was included, to muster public support by wrapping this otherwise unmarketable project in a green package. This scheme also enables New Mexico to unload the costs of its wind-generated electricity onto Arizona [13].

The expense and unreliability of wind-farm electricity is evidenced by New Mexico's desire to export this energy rather than consume it. When New Mexico proposed their exportation of wind energy in 2005, they were generating 97% of their electric power from coal (86%) and gas (11%), and only 2% from wind [14,15]. Wind power is a highly inefficient use of transmission line capacity, and it must be fed into a transmission system that predominately carries power from stable sources (such as coal and gas) that can compensate for its unpredictable variability. Ironically, not only do wind farms depend on coal and gas plants, but the carbon emissions benefit of wind power is substantially nulled by the increased emissions of the inefficient compensatory duty of the fossil-fuel generators [16]. Having these unacceptable flaws, wind farms exist only because state and federal taxpayers are forced to pay for them [17,18]. Furthermore, with Arizona's abundant solar energy, it would be foolish to subscribe to New Mexico's wind endeavors. The best wind farms produce about 5 kilowatts per acre, or 0.03 kilowatt-hours per square meter per day [19]. As a SunZia map shows, the sun offers at least 233 times more power to Arizona land at 7 or more kilowatt-hours per square meter per day [20].

The future belongs to innovations that give us full use of sunlight's tremendous potential. Ill-conceived ventures like SunZia should remain in the past. Instead of serving that harmful project, Arizona should focus on originating the technology needed to tap the wealth of solar resources with which it is blessed.

Jon C. Sjogren

110 W. Meadowbrook Dr.
Tucson, AZ 85704-6712
(520) 297-8582
sjogren.jc@comcast.net

Attached: Single page listing cited references

Arizona Corporation Commission
DOCKETED
SEP 15 2015
DOCKETED BY

Cited References:

1. University of Arizona: BS Mechanical Engineering, MS Civil Engr, PhD Chemical/Envr Engr
2. http://aem.asm.org/cgi/content/abstract/60/1/344
3. http://www.blm.gov/nm/st/en/prog/more/lands_realty/sunzia_southwest_transmission.html
4. http://www.nexteraenergyresources.com
5. http://www.westconnect.com/filestorage/swat_project_zia_081706.pdf
6. http://www.westconnect.com/filestorage/swat_mtg_min_101806.pdf
7. http://www.westconnect.com/filestorage/swat_sun_zia_status_101806.pdf
8. Estimate is based on 24-hr operation of 1000 MW gas-fired power plant, 1135 lb CO_2 per MWh (http://www.epa.gov/cleanenergy/energy-and-you/affect/air-emissions.html), 19.4 lb CO_2 per gallon of gasoline (http://energy.gov/eere/vehicles/fact-576-june-22-2009-carbon-dioxide-gasoline-and-diesel-fuel): $24 \times 1000 \times 1135 \div 19.4 = 1.4$ million gallons of gasoline per day.
9. http://www.southwesternpower.com/southwestern_power_group_project_listing.html
10. http://elibrary.ferc.gov/idmws/common/opennat.asp?fileID=12258815
11. 40%, Energy Capital Partners (founder and partners formerly of Goldman Sachs), Short Hills, NJ, and San Diego, CA; 40%, MMR Group, Baton Rouge, LA; 5%, Royal Dutch Shell, The Netherlands; 1%, Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association, Westminster, CO.
12. 13%, Salt River Project, Tempe, AZ; 1%, Tucson Electric Power, Tucson, AZ.
13. http://www.wind-watch.org/news/2010/11/09/the-great-transmission-heist/
14. http://www.westconnect.com/filestorage/swat_az_nm_status_082305.pdf
15. http://www.eia.gov/electricity/
16. http://www.power-eng.com/articles/print/volume-113/issue-7/features/calculating-wind-powerrsquos-environmental-benefits.html
17. http://www.wind-watch.org/documents/true-cost-of-electricity-from-wind-is-always-underestimated-and-its-value-is-always-overestimated/
18. http://www.wind-watch.org/documents/two-oil-companies-use-wind-farm-tax-breaks-to-shelter-profits-from-income-tax/
19. http://news.heartland.org/newspaper-article/2008/11/01/pickens-plan-fails-account-limitations-wind-power
20. http://www.blm.gov/pgdata/etc/medialib/blm/nm/programs/more/lands_and_realty/sunzia/sunzia_maps.Par.41410.File.dat/WREZ-sunzia-corridor-map.pdf

- This page is attached to Sjogren's 14 September 2015 letter to the Line Siting Committee, AZCC. -

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Economic and Human Dimensions Research Associates ::..
5751 North Kolb Road, Suite 40108
Tucson, Arizona 85750-3773

OCT 14 2015
ATTORNEY GENERAL-PHOENIX
AGENCY COUNSEL SECTION

October 14, 2015

Chairman Thomas Chenal
Arizona Power Plant and Transmission Line Siting Committee
Attorney General's Office
1275 West Washington Street
Phoenix, Arizona 85007

Re: Limited Appearance Request; Docket No. L-OOOOOYY-15-0318-00171, Case No. 171

Dear Chairman Chenal:

Pursuant to A.R.S. § 40-360.05(B), and the Notice of Hearing issued on September 4, 2015, I respectfully request the opportunity to enter a limited appearance in the Matter of the Application of SunZia Transmission LLC for a Certificate of Environmental Compatibility before the Arizona Power Plant and Transmission Line Siting Committee..

As a resource economist, ratepayer and taxpayer, I have an interest in these proceedings. I ask that my attached comments, addressing the suggested needs and benefits of the proposed transmission line as highlighted in the September 2, 2015 application, be made a formal part of the hearing record now convened in this case.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely yours,

John A. "Skip" Laitner
5751 North Kolb Road, Unit 40108
Tucson, Arizona 85750
cell: (571) 332-9434
email: EconSkip@gmail.com

Attachment: Comments of John A. Laitner

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OCT 14 2015

ATTORNEY GENERAL-PHOENIX
AGENCY COUNSEL SECTION

BEFORE THE
ARIZONA POWER PLANT AND TRANSMISSION LINE SITING COMMITTEE

IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION OF SUNZIA TRANSMISSION LLC, IN CONFORMANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF ARIZONA REVISED STATUTES 40-360, ET SEQ., FOR A *CERTIFICATE* OF ENVIRONMENTAL COMPATIBILITY AUTHORIZING THE SUNZIA SOUTHWEST TRANSMISSION PROJECT, WHICH INCLUDES THE CONSTRUCTION OF TWO NEW 500 KV TRANSMISSION LINES AND ASSOCIATED FACILITIES ORIGINATING AT A NEW SUBSTATION (SUNZIA EAST) IN LINCOLN COUNTY, NEW MEXICO, AND TERMINATING AT THE PINAL CENTRAL SUBSTATION IN PINAL COUNTY, ARIZONA. THE ARIZONA PORTION OF THE PROJECT IS LOCATED WITHIN GRAHAM, GREENLEE, COCHISE, PINAL, AND PIMA COUNTIES.	DOCKET NO. L-00000YY-15-0318-00171 Case No. 171 COMMENTS OF JOHN A. LAITNER

PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND

I am an international energy and resource economist employed by my own firm, Economic and Human Dimensions Research Associates. In a career that spans 45 years, I have authored more than 320 reports, journal articles, and book chapters. My expertise includes benefit-cost assessments, resource costs and constraints, and the net employment and macroeconomic impacts of energy and climate policy scenarios. I previously served as the Director of Economic and Social Analysis for the American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy (ACEEE) as in the years 2006 through 2012. Before that, I served 10 years as a Senior Economist for Technology Policy with the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). In 1998 I was awarded EPA's Gold Medal for my work with a team of economists to evaluate the

economic impact of strategies that might assist in the implementation of smart climate policies. I also work and lecture extensively in international policy arena with clients and colleagues in France, Luxembourg, New Zealand and elsewhere; and I hold the position as senior research associate of the Russian Presidential Academy of National Economic and Public Administration (RANEPA). I have a 1988 master's degree in resource economics from Antioch University.

OVERALL CONCLUSION

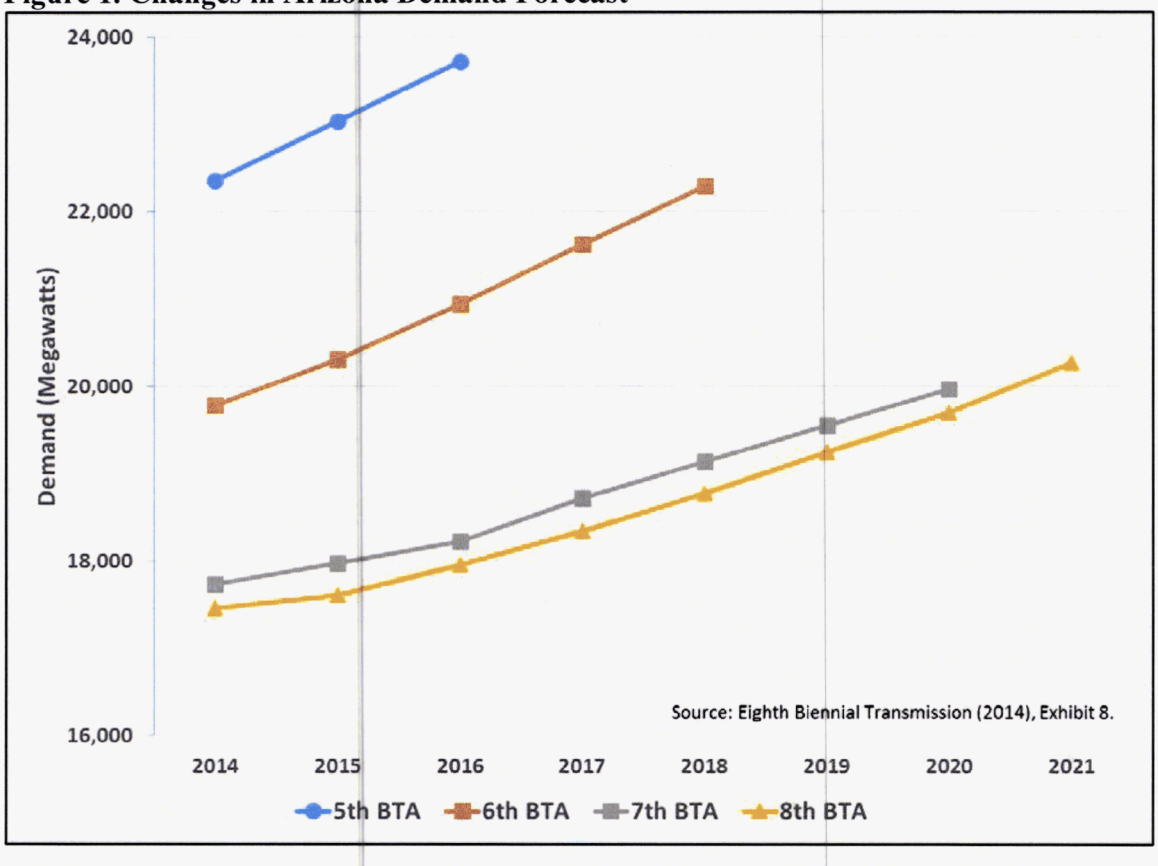
The available evidence suggests: (a) there is every reason to believe the SunZia project may neither be useful nor cost-effective, (b) that awarding a certificate will redirect resources away from a more prudent and less costly development of energy efficiency and renewable energy resources; and (c) while it may provide a few short term jobs in constructing and operating the transmission line, it will likely result if a net loss of jobs overall.

EVIDENCE ON COST-EFFECTIVENESS

The applicant notes that in 2006, the Southwest Area Transmission Subregional Planning Group (SWAT) "identified the need for significant transmission expansion between southern New Mexico and southern Arizona to serve growing electrical loads." In fact, the applicant notes that the "Project was conceptualized as a result of SWAT's findings." (Application for Certificate of Environmental Compatibility, SunZia Transmission LLC, September 2, 2015. Page ES-3). The project could provide up to 4,500 megawatts (MW) of additional transfer capability. (SunZia Southwest Transmission Project Final Environmental Impact Statement and Appendices, Bureau of Land Management, June 2013, Page E-2). Yet, as Figure 1 shows on the following page, there have been huge changes in the forecasts of load demand in the Arizona market (Eighth Biennial Transmission Assessment 2014-2023, Staff Report, Docket No. E-00000D-13-0002, Decision No. 74785, October 29, 2014). The 5th Biennial Transmission Assessment (BTA 2008) suggested

an anticipated 2016 capacity demand of 23,716 Megawatts (MW). By the 8th BTA (2014) the 2016 forecasted demand was down to 17,962 MW (See Exhibit 8). This is a 5,724 MW (24%) drop in forecasted demand over a very short 6-year period. And it is significantly larger than the maximum capacity that might be provided by SunZia.

Figure 1. Changes in Arizona Demand Forecast



At the same time the market continues to shift. Tucson Electric Power Company, for example, has filed a notice for a proposed rate increase citing "a reduction in usage per customer and retail sales volumes due to various factors, such as the increasing deployment of net metered solar photovoltaic rooftop distributed generation ("rooftop PV") and the adoption of energy efficiency measures." (Notice of Intent to File a Rate Case Application, Tucson Electric Power, September 4, 2015). Moreover, an intended California market for power is moving aggressively on its own to provide greater energy efficiency and renewable energy resources. On Wednesday,

October 7th, California Governor Jerry Brown signed into law SB 350 which, among other things, sets 2030 targets of 50% utility power provided by renewable energy sources and a 50% increase in energy efficiency in existing buildings by 2030. ("California makes history with new package of climate-change laws." Local Government Commissions. Sacramento, CA 95814). In effect, California does not need resources that might be provided by either Arizona or New Mexico. This and many other trends only weaken the need for new transmission line capacity and cast significant doubt about the ability of such projects to pay for themselves.

As a further indication of the trend we can compare the 2006 and the 2015 Annual Energy Outlook (AEO) electricity demand forecasts published by the Energy Information Administration (EIA). Table 1 below shows a trend that is comparable to the market shift highlighted in Figure 1.

Table 1. Electricity Sales in the EIA Annual Energy Outlook 2006 and 2015

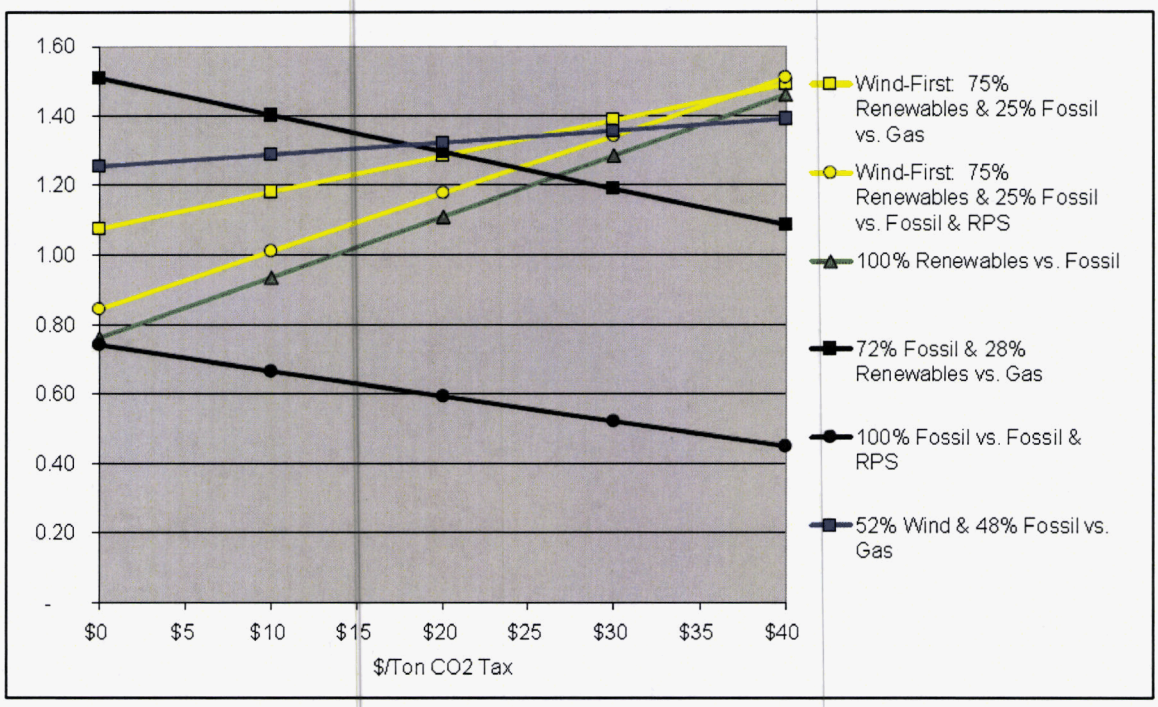
Billion Kilowatt-hours	2012	2030	Index
AEO 2006	4,114	5,338	1.30
AEO 2015	3,695	4,205	1.14
Delta	-10.2%	-21.2%	

Source: Energy Information Administration, Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Energy.

The AEO 2006 projected electricity sales of about 4,114 billion kilowatt-hours (KWh) in 2012, rising 30% to 5,338 billion KWh by 2030. The actual 2012 sales documented in AEO 2015 was about 10.2% less than projected in 2006 with the new 2030 projection about 21.2% smaller. Again, the market is shifting away, with a growing emphasis on local resources including energy efficiency and distributed energy resources.

We can take another look at the economic feasibility by looking at a benefit/cost assessment, the High Plains Express Transmission Project Feasibility Study Report (June 2008). Figure 2 below provides the summary of that analysis as pulled from page 37 of 42 of the report.

Figure 2. HPX Benefit/Cost Analyses Results.



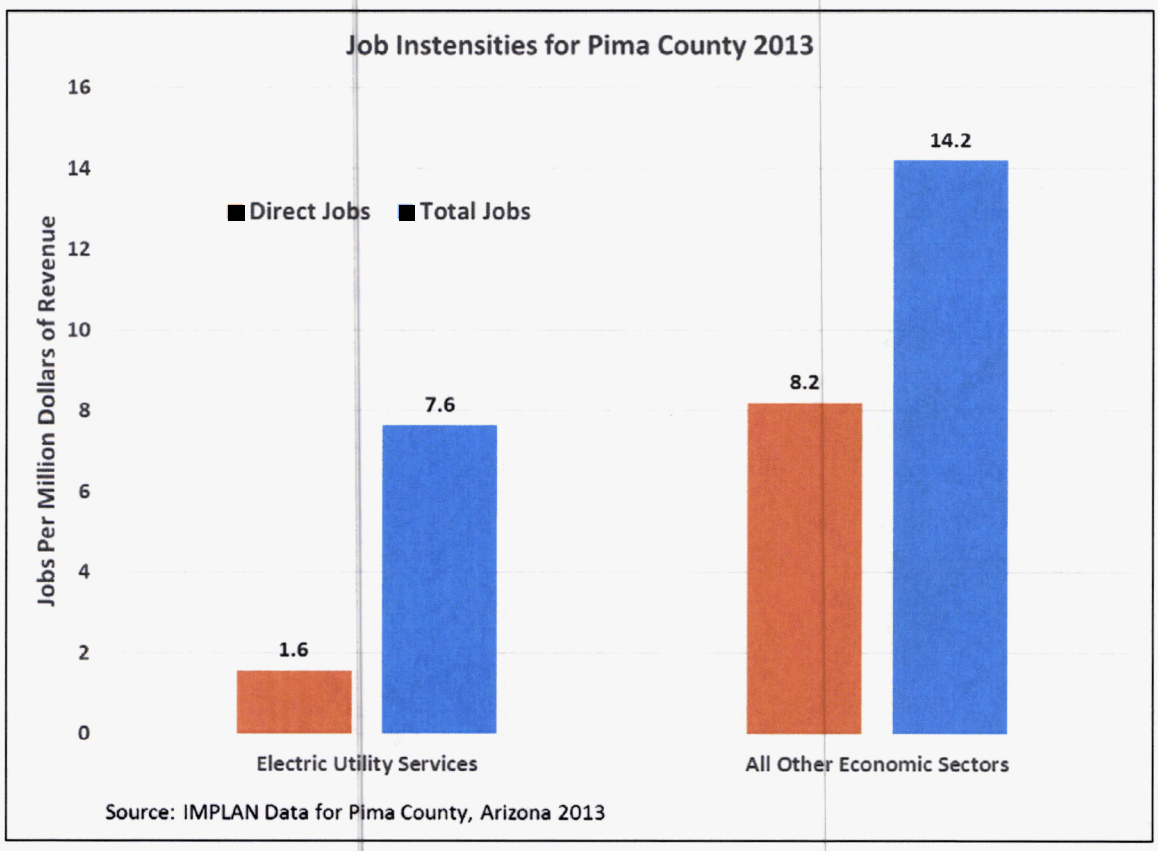
The Y axis shows the benefit-cost ratios of a variety of scenarios that are consistent with the proposed SunZia project. A value of less than 1.0 suggests a project that is not at all cost-effective. Generally one would expect investments to emerge for projects which have a benefit-cost ratio that is larger than 1.2. The two scenarios reasonably comparable to SunZia are shown in yellow and those values are either less than 1.0, or don't reach the critical threshold of 1.2 unless there is a carbon tax close to $25 per ton of carbon dioxide – a highly unlikely outcome in the near term. And since this study was done, costs have increased even as market demand is shifting away from these large transmission projects.

ECONOMIC IMPACTS

The applicant cites an analysis suggesting significant macroeconomic gains for Arizona, in terms of increased jobs and governmental revenues. Yes, any expenditure will creates jobs, whether for upgrades for industrial energy efficiency, improved commercial lighting, or

transmission lines. The question is which set of expenditures might create the larger number of jobs. Figure 3, using actual 2013 data for Pima County data, shows that there are many more jobs created for almost all other expenditures in the economy compared to jobs associated with revenues associated with electricity generation. While the Pima County numbers will differ from state or national level data, the relationship continues to hold. This is also true at the international level.

Figure 3. Job Intensities for Pima County 2013



Electric utilities, on average, supported about 1.6 direct jobs in 2013 for every million dollars of revenue. When we include supply-chain jobs as well as jobs induced by the spending of local wages, the total rises to 7.6 total jobs per million dollars. On the other hand, all other expenditures in Pima County tend to support an average total of 14.2 jobs. In effect, if electricity

costs increase by one million dollars, yes, there will be a total of 7.6 total jobs. But if those rising costs pull money away from all other sectors, 14.2 jobs will be lost. In short, rising electricity costs will actually lose a total of 6.6 jobs (14.2 less 7.6) for every million dollars in higher expenditures for electricity in Pima County. This parallel also holds for governmental revenues and local incomes.

Edith Stokey and Richard Zeckhauser noted in 1978 that economic and environmental evaluations require "systematic enumeration of all benefits and all costs, tangible and intangible, whether readily quantifiable or difficult to measure, that will accrues to all members of society if a particular project is adopted" (See, A Primer for Policy Analysis. New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company, Page 134). In addition, they note the *Fundamental Rule* of benefit-cost assessments and project evaluation is to select the alternative that produces the greatest net benefit(s) (page 137). In other words, merely because a project produces some benefit is not the same as suggesting it is the best alternative for society. As we have already demonstrated, yes, there will be some jobs from an investment, but paying for it over time and comparing it to other alternatives – in this case, a greater reliance on energy efficiency and local renewable energy resources – is likely to lose a total number of jobs. I have seen no information to date which suggests that SunZia is the best option to promote both the economic and the environmental well-being of Arizonans.

IMPLICATIONS FOR CERTIFICATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL COMPATIBILITY

As I have suggested in the opening of my remarks there is every reason to believe the SunZia project may be neither useful nor cost-effective. This conclusion is only strengthened when we consider the dramatic changes in the electricity market since the project was first proposed in 2006. In short there does not appear to be any real benefit to this project compared

to other available alternatives and emerging market trends. Hence, the Committee must conclude that any project that cannot clearly show net economic benefits cannot be deemed environmentally compatible.

A FINAL THOUGHT

There is an unfortunate lack of time to develop a more robust analysis than is now before the Committee. At the same time, a deeper and more complete assessment would only strengthen the conclusion that the project – without any redeeming economic benefit – cannot be deemed environmentally compatible.

Party/Potential Party Which Attended the September 23, 2015, Meet and Confer	Segment 1 Arizona Border to Willow 500-kV substation	Segment 2 Willow 500-kV substation to, but not including, the San Pedro River Crossing	Segment 3 San Pedro River Crossing through the San Pedro River Valley (near Oracle)	Segment 4 Oracle area to the western terminus (Pinal Central)	Overall/Global Issues with the Project or Proposed Route
INDIVIDUALS OR ORGANIZATIONS WHO HAVE SOUGHT INTERVENTION					
SunZia. Albert Acken, Samuel Lofland, Lawrence Robertson, Cindy Freeman, Mark Etherton, Paul Trenter, and Devin Petry were the representatives at the September 23, 2015, meeting.	(1) Identified the following as reasons in support of this segment: (a) Maximizes use of existing corridors. (b) Minimizes impacts to sensitive resources, including biological resources (sensitive, threatened and endangered species), migratory birds, riparian areas, cultural resources, visual resources, water resources, and existing and planned land uses. (c) Minimizes impacts at the San Pedro River Crossing. (d) Was subjected to approximately six years of detailed environmental study, which also included comprehensive stakeholder input and involvement. (e) The Proposed Route was selected after the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Arizona State Land Department (ASLD), AGFD, Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT), and Fort Huachuca collaborated as cooperating agencies. (f) The Proposed Route is the preferred route of the two largest land-management agencies traversed by the same, BLM and ASLD.	(1) Identified the following as reasons in support of this segment: (a) Maximizes use of existing corridors. (b) Minimizes impacts to sensitive resources, including biological resources (sensitive, threatened and endangered species), migratory birds, riparian areas, cultural resources, visual resources, water resources, and existing and planned land uses. (c) Minimizes impacts at the San Pedro River Crossing. (d) Was subjected to approximately six years of detailed environmental study, which also included comprehensive stakeholder input and involvement. (e) The Proposed Route was selected after the BLM, ASLD, AGFD, ADOT, and Fort Huachuca collaborated as cooperating agencies. (f) The Proposed Route is the preferred route of the two largest land-management agencies traversed by the same, BLM and ASLD.	(1) Identified the following as reasons in support of this segment: (a) Maximizes use of existing corridors. (b) Minimizes impacts to sensitive resources, including biological resources (sensitive, threatened and endangered species), migratory birds, riparian areas, cultural resources, visual resources, water resources, and existing and planned land uses. (c) Minimizes impacts at the San Pedro River Crossing. (d) Was subjected to approximately six years of detailed environmental study, which also included comprehensive stakeholder input and involvement. (e) The Proposed Route was selected after the BLM, ASLD, AGFD, ADOT, and Fort Huachuca collaborated as cooperating agencies. (f) The Proposed Route is the preferred route of the two largest land-management agencies traversed by the same, BLM and ASLD.	(1) Identified the following as reasons in support of this segment: (a) Maximizes use of existing corridors. (b) Minimizes impacts to sensitive resources, including biological resources (sensitive, threatened and endangered species), migratory birds, riparian areas, cultural resources, visual resources, water resources, and existing and planned land uses. (c) Minimizes impacts at the San Pedro River Crossing. (d) Was subjected to approximately six years of detailed environmental study, which also included comprehensive stakeholder input and involvement. (e) The Proposed Route was selected after the BLM, ASLD, AGFD, ADOT, and Fort Huachuca collaborated as cooperating agencies. (f) The Proposed Route is the preferred route of the two largest land-management agencies traversed by the same, BLM and ASLD.	(1) Identified the following as reasons in support of this Proposed Route: (a) All the reasons identified for each segment. (b) Minimizes impacts to residential and commercial uses. (c) The Project will have the following benefits and address the following needs in Arizona: (i) reduces existing transmission congestion; (ii) supports the development and transmission of renewable energy resources, such as solar and wind energy, currently located within areas of undeveloped renewable resource potential; (iii) provides power to help meet future electricity demand in Arizona; (iv) provides a strategic option for Arizona, and its utilities, to comply with increasingly burdensome federal air quality standards; and (v) provides needed jobs and state and local revenues.
Pinal County. Detrick Denton and Cedric Hay were the representatives at the September 23, 2015, meeting. Following the meeting and circulation of the Matrix, Pinal County provided no additional responses or comments, other than to note that as of September 30, 2015, the Matrix reflected the County's "(non) position" correctly. Pinal County moved to intervene on October 2, 2015. The NOI did not specify any information which would require an update to this Matrix.	No position offered.	No position offered.	No position offered.	No position offered.	No Position Offered.
Norm Meader. Previously, on September 11, 2015, Norm Meader moved to intervene on behalf of the Cascabel Working Group and sought to be their nonattorney representative. On September 25, 2015, the Chairman held that an organization must be represented by an attorney. Thereafter, on September 28, 2015, Norm Meader moved to intervene in his individual capacity. In his individual capacity, Mr. Meader provided comments on the Matrix on October 6, 2015, which have been incorporated herein.	(1) Identified the following as reasons for opposition to this segment: (a) Potential impacts to the visual resources of the Peloncillo Mountains Wilderness. (b) Segment opens an entirely new 35-mile long corridor across the Peloncillos Mountains Wilderness.	(1) Identified the following as reasons for opposition to this segment: (a) Impacts of the Project to wildlife. (b) Impacts of the Project to migratory birds. (c) Ground-disturbing impacts of the Project allowing for invasive species. (d) Creation by the Project of roads in previously undisturbed areas. (e) Habitat fragmentation caused by the Project.	(1) Identified the following as reasons for opposition to this segment: (a) Impacts of the Project to resources at the San Pedro River Crossing. (b) Impacts of the Project to resources associated with crossing various, unidentified, washes in the San Pedro River Valley. (c) Impacts of the Project to resources associated with crossing various, unidentified, canyons. (d) Impacts of the Project to lands managed under Pima County's Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan ("SDCP"). (e) Impacts caused by access roads and the resulting trespass by Off Road Vehicle (ORV) users. (f) Ecosystem fragmentation and degradation of recreational resources, in particular their future economic value. (g) Impacts to migratory birds. (h) Impacts specific to Buehman Canyon (largely overseen by Pima County and the most protected canyon on the east flank of the Catalina Mountains). (i) Impacts to cultural resources (one of the largest archaeological sites that SunZia impacts is at the SunZia San Pedro River Crossing). (j) Impacts to wildlife linkages between the Galiuro, Rincon, and Catalina Mountains. (k) Impacts to Arizona State Trust Lands proposed for permanent conservation status in State Trust Land reform measures.	No position offered.	(1) Identified the following as reasons for opposition to entire length of the Proposed Route: (a) Impacts of the Project on the environment (see reasons identified in Segments 2 and 3). (b) Lack of need for the Project. (c) Does not believe that Arizona and California need to import any renewable energy to meet projected demands. (d) Does not necessarily believe congestion is a serious problem. (e) Believes that the need to increase reliability, transfer capability and reduce congestion is greatly overstated. (f) Believes SunZia duplicates the Southline Project's function from Las Cruces west to Pinal Central Substation. (g) Concerned about conflicts with central Arizona's transmission system in delivering large blocks of power to California. (h) Concerned about the lost transmission capacity in central and western Arizona needed to develop and export Arizona's solar resources (related to the above). (i) Concerned about the negative impact that large New Mexico renewable energy sales to California will have on Arizona renewable energy development and potential sales to California. (j) Believes that the project is not economically feasible.
ACC Staff. ACC Staff moved to intervene on September 14, 2015. Charles Hains and Bob Gray were the representatives at the September 23, 2015, meeting. Following the meeting and circulation of the Matrix, the ACC Staff provided no additional responses or comments.	No position offered.	No position offered.	No position offered.	No position offered.	The ACC Staff indicated that it had issued two data requests to SunZia on the issue of need for and reliability of the Project. The ACC Staff indicted that it neither supports nor opposes the Project, but is requesting additional information regarding need and reliability.

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Peter Else. Peter Else did not participate in the September 23, 2015, meeting. On October 6, 2015, Mr. Else provided comments on the Matrix, which have been incorporate herein. On October 7, 2015, Mr. Else filed a Motion to Intervene.	No position offered.	(1) Identified the following as reasons for opposition to this segment: (a) Impacts of the Project to wildlife. (b) Impacts of the Project to migratory birds. (c) Ground-disturbing impacts of the Project allowing for invasive species. (d) Creation by the Project of roads in previously undisturbed areas. (e) Habitat fragmentation caused by the Project.	(1) Identified the following as reasons for opposition to this segment: (a) Impacts to the ecological integrity of a watershed that supports existing and pending critical habitat designations. (b) Impact to the ecological integrity of a watershed that has multiple federally-sanctioned mitigation designations intended to compensate for impacts elsewhere in Arizona. (c) Future cumulative impacts, due to federal co-location policies, to 30 miles of previously undisturbed high-value conservation land. (d) Impacts of the Project to natural and cultural resources and migratory birds at the San Pedro River Crossing. (e) Impacts of the Project to resources associated with crossing various washes and canyons in the San Pedro watershed. (f) Impacts of the Project to lands managed under Pima County's SDCP and associated loss of mitigation value. (g) Impacts caused by new access roads and subsequent vehicular traffic. (h) Impacts to wildlife linkages between the Galiuro, Rincon, and Catalina Mountains.	No position offered.	(1) Identified the following as reasons for opposition to the entire length of the Proposed Route: (a) Impacts of the Project on an important high-value conservation/mitigation corridor (San Pedro watershed, Segment 3 in this matrix). (b) Applicant has not adequately demonstrated the economic practicability of completing the Project as a whole, potentially affecting the Project's ability to achieve Applicant's stated needs/benefits in Arizona. (c) Project was not planned adequately to promote renewable energy development in Arizona, a need and benefit identified by the Applicant. (d) Applicant has not demonstrated that the Project cost would facilitate cost benefits to Arizona customers for delivered electrical energy. (e) Applicant has not demonstrated that their referenced energy development mix would provide reliable delivery of electrical energy. (f) Applicant's five stated needs/benefits in Arizona would be achieved with less impacts by the planned Southline transmission proposal.
Christina McVie. Christina McVie did not participate in the September 23, 2015, meeting. On October 6, 2015, Ms. McVie provided comments on the Matrix, which have been incorporate herein. On October 7, 2015, Ms. McVie filed a Motion to Intervene.	Identifies the following as reasons for opposition to this segment: (a) Impacts of the Project to resources associated with crossing washes. (b) Impacts of the Project to the Peloncillo Mountains Wilderness, including fire management. (c) Creation by the Project of roads in previously undisturbed areas. (d) Habitat fragmentation caused by the Project. (e) Ground-disturbing impacts of the Project creating dust and allowing for establishment/increase of invasive species. (f) Impacts of the Project to resident and migratory wildlife. (g) Impacts of the Project to regional wildlife linkages. (h) The Project will allow increased vehicular access (authorized and unauthorized) to previously inaccessible areas.	Identifies the following as reasons for opposition to this segment: (a) Impacts of the Project to resident and migratory wildlife. (b) Ground-disturbing impacts of the Project creating dust and allowing for establishment/increase of invasive species. (c) Creation by the Project of roads in previously undisturbed areas. (d) Habitat fragmentation caused by the Project. (e) Impacts of the Project to resources associated with crossing washes. (f) Impacts of the Project to regional wildlife linkages. (g) The Project will allow increased vehicular access (authorized and unauthorized) to previously inaccessible areas.	(1) Identifies the following as reasons for opposition to this segment: (a) Impacts of the Project to resources at the San Pedro River Crossing. (b) Impacts of the Project to resources associated with crossing numerous washes in the San Pedro River Valley. (c) Impacts of the Project to resources associated with crossing numerous canyons. (d) Impacts of the Project to lands managed under Pima County's SDCP. (e) Impacts of the Project to resident and migratory wildlife. (f) Ground-disturbing impacts of the Project creating dust and allowing for establishment/increase of invasive species. (g) Creation by the Project of roads in previously undisturbed areas. (h) Habitat fragmentation caused by the Project. (i) Potential adverse impacts to San Pedro River Valley Global Important Bird Area migration corridor and biodiversity "hotspot" of hemispheric importance. (j) Potential for impacts of infrastructure co-located with the Project in the future. (k) Impacts of the Project to Pinal County Comprehensive Plan identified lands and planned management regimes. (l) Impacts of the Project to fire management. (m) The Project allowing increased vehicular access (authorized and unauthorized) to previously inaccessible areas. (n) Impacts of the Project to surface and groundwater resources associated with water usage during construction of the Project. (o) Impacts of the Project to regional wildlife linkages.	(1) Identifies the following as reasons for opposition to this segment: (a) Creation by the Project of roads in previously undisturbed areas. (b) Habitat fragmentation caused by the Project. (c) Impacts of the Project to resources associated with crossing washes. (d) Impacts to old growth vegetation communities. (e) Ground-disturbing impacts of the Project creating dust and allowing for establishment/increase of invasive species. (f) Impacts of the Project to Pinal County Comprehensive Plan identified lands and planned management regimes. (g) The Project will allow increased vehicular access (authorized and unauthorized) to previously inaccessible areas. (h) Impacts of the Project to fire management. (i) Impacts of the Project to regional wildlife linkages.	Identified the following as reasons for opposition to the entire length of the Proposed Route: (a) Adverse impacts including direct, indirect and cumulative impacts of the Project on the environment (see reasons identified in Segments above). (b) Potential adverse impacts to ecosystem services. (c) Potential adverse impacts to recreational watchable wildlife. (d) The Project only provides two substations as opportunities for "off-ramps" in Arizona for uploading or downloading electrical energy. (e) Lack of evidence that the Project will benefit Arizona utilities, producers, or consumers. (f) Potential adverse impacts to existing and planned cultural and environmental conservation investments. (g) There are other routes throughout Southern Arizona with fewer impacts to the environment, because they do not traverse sensitive areas, which can achieve SunZia's purported goal, provide far more "off ramp" opportunities, and better serve the utilities, producers and consumers in Arizona.
Robson Communities. Peter Gerstman was the representative at the September 23, 2015, meeting. Following the meeting and circulation of the Matrix, Robson Communities provided no additional responses or comments. On October 8, 2015, Robson Communities moved to intervene through counsel. Robson Communities was provided copies of the Matrix on September 30, 3015, and then again on October 9, 2015.	No position offered.	No position offered.	No position offered.	(1) Identified the following as reasonsfor opposition to this segment: (a) Impacts of the Project to the Saddlebrook Ranch Community. (b) Inconsistencies between the Proposed Route and the master plan for the Saddlebrook Ranch Community. (c) Inconsistencies between the zoning for the Saddlebrook Ranch Community and the Proposed Route.	No Position offered.

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Redington Natural Resource Conservation District (Chris Fletcher, Andrew Smallhouse, Jess Berry). The NRCDs, although invited, did not participate in the September 23, 2015, meeting . The NRCDs received a copy of the Matrix for review and comment on September 30, 2015, with a request for comment, feedback, or additional contributions by October 6, 2015. The NRCDs moved to intervene on September 29, 2015. An additional copy of the Matrix was provided to counsel for the NRCDs on October 9, 2015. The NRCDs provided their own Matrix to the Chairman on October 13, 2015, the contents of which are incorporated herein.			Opposed for the following reasons: (1) There are currently no major above ground utility corridors in the Lower San Pedro River Valley. (2) Electric utilites and gas line utilities have created issues of erosion and exacerbated off highway vehicle use along their access routes. (3)Within segment C276 is critical habitat for Threatened and Endangered Species. (4) All San Pedro River segments (276, 201, 441, 450) contain highly erodible soils and vegetation which does not respond well to distrubance or rahabilitation in this arid environment. (5) Erosion from roads which contribute sediment to the river and results in habitat loss was identified as a top priority issue within the Redington District since 2006. (6) There are very few roads in the District which would be able to accommodate the machinery needed for construction and therefore the need for disturbance will be high unless towers are installed with aerial assistance. (7) There are no public water sources available for dust abatement within the valley. (8) This area qualifies as a Reclamation Zone 1 requiring "many" treatments due to high visual, biological, land use impacts with a low to moderate recovery potential. (9) Buffelgrass, Lehman's lovegrass, fountain grass, and cockelbur occur in areas where the line may be sited and disturbance in these areas is likely to spread these invasive species.(10) Diminishment of long term conservation investments in the valley - mitigation purchases related to the Southwestern willow flycatcher.(11) All concerns will be magnified in the future due to co-location of future lines and utilities if this action results in the San Pedro River Valley becoming a major utility and transportation corridor. Soil Erosion: New construction of major utility corridors would further aggravate substantial erosion issues already present within the district due to the existence of smaller utility lines constructed along severely erodible soils and cross-cutting natural water movement from the uplands. The area is exceptionally dry, making reclamation of disturbed lands very difficult. Erosion was a topic of considerable concern in the Lower San Pedro River Watershed Assessment (LSPRWA). Soil conservation is a basic objective for all natural resource management. Soil erosion on uplands can reduce soil depth and therefore reduce soil moisture holding capacity and rooting depth. Soil erosion can result in the loss of nutrients from the watershed especially since these nutrients are most abundant in the surface soil. In addition, soil erosion contributes to sediment accumulation and lower water quality in drainages and reservoirs. Soil compaction can also reduce infiltration rates and soil moisture holding capacity, thus increasing runoff and erosion hazard. The LSP Assessment indicated that roads associated with recreation and		
Winkelman Natural Resource Conservation District (William Dunn, Steve Turcotte, Francie Meyer, Carol DuBoise, Gary Vinson). The NRCDs, although invited, did not participate in the September 23, 2015, meeting . The NRCDs received a copy of the Matrix for review and comment on September 30, 2015, with a request for comment, feedback, or additional contributions by October 6, 2015. The NRCDs moved to intervene on September 29, 2015. An additional copy of the Matrix was provided to counsel for the NRCDs on October 9, 2015. The NRCDs provided their own Matrix to the Chairman on October 13, 2015, the contents of which are incorporated herein.	No position offered.	No position offered.	(1) Identified the following as reasons for opposition to this segment: a. Impacts to transition zone, including wildlife and plants. b. Ground disturbing impacts of the project allowing for invasive species. c. Creation by Project of roads in previously undisturbed areas. d. Habitat fragmentation e. Erosion from roads and site pads. a. Impact of access roads on environment, maintenance of access roads on State and private lands. It has been the experience of the districts that roads are the major cause of new erosion. Even older roads that were properly engineered, without regular maintenance, become sources of erosion. Therefore the applicant should be required to maintain the construction and maintenance roads for the life of the project per district guidelines and post a bond that will insure this occurs. b. Access roads relating to ongoing maintenance. See previous. c. Use of trucks and heavy equipment placement of structure. Pinal County is a non-attainment county for PM 10 particulates. During construction, all roads, new and existing must be watered to keep down dust. The gathering sites also must be watered to keep down dust. All equipment should be cleaned with high pressure water upon arrival to district in order to remove any invasive seeds brought form other places the equipment was previously working. Also, equipment must be inspected for fuel and oil leaks and all leaks repaired before use, re: Ranching and Sonoran Desert Tortoise Working Group. Best Management Practices for Ranching in Sonoran desert tortoise (Gopherus morafkai) habitat in Arizona. 41 pp. plus appendices. Redington road is to be chip sealed being inning this year by Pinal County to help address E.P.A. pm10 dust non compliance concerns. It will not withstand the construction impacts of the heavy equipment required for the power line construction. Applicant must mitigate this. d. Removal of riparian vegetation and adverse impacts by riparian species in the desert. This doesn't affect route through the WNRCD for the riverine portion, if any riparian vegetation is encountered outside of the river bottom, they should contact affected landowner or district to see how to mitigate.	(a) Impacts to the ecological integrity of a watershed that supports existing and pending critical habitat designations. (b) Impact to the ecological integrity of a watershed that has multiple federally-sanctioned mitigation designations intended to compensate for impacts elsewhere in Arizona. (c) Future cumulative impacts, due to federal co-location policies, to 30 miles of previously undisturbed high-value conservation land. (e) Impacts of the Project to resources associated with crossing various washes and canyons in the San Pedro watershed. (g) Impacts caused by new access roads and subsequent vehicular traffic. (h) Ecotone destruction all through the valley. (a) Impacts to the ecological integrity of a watershed that supports existing and pending critical habitat designations. (b) Impact to the ecological integrity of a watershed that has multiple federally-sanctioned mitigation designations intended to compensate for impacts elsewhere in Arizona. (c) Future cumulative impacts, due to federal co-location policies, to 30 miles of previously undisturbed high-value conservation land. (e) Impacts of the Project to resources associated with crossing various washes and canyons in the San	1. New segments where line is not co-located will disturb all resources. 2. Impacts of the Project to resources associated with crossing various washes and canyons 3. Future cumulative impacts, due to federal co-location policies, to 30 miles of previously undisturbed high-value conservation land 4. Impacts caused by new access roads and subsequent vehicular traffic

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Jon C. Sjogren. Mr. Sjogren was neither invited to, nor did he participate in, the September 23, 2015, meeting. At that time, he had expressed no intention of becoming a party to the process. Consequently, prior to October 12, 2015, Mr. Sjogren did not have an opportunity to review the Matrix. **On September 14, 2015, and September 21, 2015, Mr. Sjogren submitted public comments in opposition to the SunZia Project. Neither comment letter reflected an intention to intervene or become a party in the process. On October 9, 2015, Mr. Sjogren filed a letter requesting the ability to make a limited appearance to provide up to seven minutes of testimony regarding his submittals on September 14, 2015, and September 21, 2015. Included herein, as of October 11, 2015, is a summary of the issues contained in his two comment letters to Docket Control, both of which are summarized under the Overall/Global Issues column, as now specific portions of the Proposed Route were identified by his comment letters. On October 13, 2015, Dr. Sjogren indicated that he would not be seeking limited intervention status, and had advised the Chairman of the same.**					(1) Identified the following as reasons for opposition to to entire length of the Proposed Route (any quotes are from Mr. Sjogren's September 14 and 21 comment letters): (a) "Arizona exports about one third of the electricity it generates, so it doesn't need SunZia's power." (b) The SunZia Project does not enable access to renewables in Arizona. (c) The SunZia Project does not effectively increase transmission reliability. (d) The SunZia Project only provides a few line-construction jobs, and does not provide the economic benefits it is advertising. (e) "SunZia should not be built. Arizona should go local instead." (f) SunZia is designed to provide transmission for Bowie Power Station and wind energy to California industries. (g) Local solar development is a better alternative to wind energy from New Mexico and the SunZia Project but will be damaged by the SunZia Project.
ORGANIZATIONS OR INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE NOT SOUGHT INTERVENTION					
Sierra Club. Sandy Bahr was the representative at the Septemeber 23, 2015, meeting. Following the meeting and circulation of the Matrix, Sierra Club provided no additional responses or comments. As of October 11, 2015, Sierra Club has not sought intervention.	No position offered.	(1) Expressed general opposition to the overall impacts of the Project, referenced past submittals to the NEPA process as outlining their concerns. (2) Identified the following as reasons for opposition to this segment: (a) Impacts of the Project to wildlife. (b) Impacts of the Project to migratory birds. (c) Ground-disturbing impacts of the Project allowing for invasive species. (d) Creation by the Project of roads in previously undisturbed areas. (e) Habitat fragmentation caused by the Project.	(1) Identified the following as reasons for opposition to this segment: (a) Impacts of the Project to resources at the San Pedro River Crossing. (b) Impacts of the Project to resources associated with crossing various, unidentified, washes in the San Pedro River Valley. (c) Impacts of the Project to resources associated with crossing various, unidentified, canyons. (d) Impacts of the Project to lands managed under Pima County's SDCP. (e) Impacts of the Project to wildlife. (f) Impacts of the Project to migratory birds. (g) Ground-disturbing impacts of the Project allowing for invasive species. (h) Creation by the Project of roads in previously undisturbed areas. (i) Habitat fragmentation caused by the Project.		(1) Identified the following as reasons for opposition to entire length of the Proposed Route: (a) Impacts of the Project on the environment (see reasons identified in Segments 2 and 3), which Sierra Club identified as significant and negative impacts. (b) Lack of need for the Project.
Tucson Audubon. Matt Clark and Karen Fogas were the representatives at the September 23, 2015, meeting. Following the meeting and circulation of the Matrix, Tucson Audubon Society provided no additional responses or comments. As of October 11, 2015, Tucson Audubon Society has not sought intervention.	(1) Identified the following as reasons for opposition to this segment: (a) Overall impacts of the Project. (b) Impacts of the Project to Peloncillo Mountains Wilderness, which Tucson Audubon representatives claimed are ecologically sensitive.	(1) Identified the following as reasons for opposition to this segment: (a) Impacts of the Project to wildlife. (b) Impacts of the Project to migratory birds. (c) Ground-disturbing impacts of the Project allowing for invasive species. (d) Creation by the Project of roads in previously undisturbed areas. (e) Habitat fragmentation caused by the Project. (f) Impacts of the Project to raptors.	(1) Identified the following as reasons for opposition to this segment: (a) Impacts of the Project to resources at the San Pedro River Crossing. (b) Impacts of the Project to resources associated with crossing various, unidentified, washes in the San Pedro River Valley. (c) Impacts of the Project to resources associated with crossing various, unidentified, canyons. (d) Impacts of the Project to lands managed under Pima County's SDCP. (e) Impacts of the Project to wildlife. (f) Impacts of the Project to migratory birds. (g) Ground-disturbing impacts of the Project allowing for invasive species. (h) Creation by the Project of roads in previously undisturbed areas. (i) Habitat fragmentation caused by the Project. (j) Identified the San Pedro River Valley as a "globally" and "hemispherically" important area, and as "pristine." (k) Potential for impacts of infrastructure co-located with the Project in the future. (l) Impacts of the Project to the Sonoran Desert Tortoise. (m) Impacts of the Project to Pinal County lands and management regimes. (n) Impacts of the Project to fire management. (o) The Project allowing increased vehicular (authorized and unauthorized) to previously inaccessible areas. (p) Impacts of the Project to groundwater resources associated with water usage during construction of the Project.	No position offered.	(1) Identified the following as reasonsfor opposition to entire length of the Proposed Route: (a) Impacts, including cumulative impacts, of the Project on the environment (see reasons identified in Segments 2 and 3). (b) Lack of need for the Project. (c) Does not believe the Project is needed for renewable energy. (d) The Project only provides two substations as opportunities as "off-ramps" in Arizona for transmitting or delivering energy. (e) Lack of evidence that the Project will benefit Arizona utilities, producers, or consumers. (f) Impacts to cultural resources. (g) There are other routes throughout Southern Arizona with fewer impacts to the environment because they do not traverse sensitive areas and that can achieve SunZia's purported goal. Tucson Audubon Society identified the High Plains Express as an example of another project and route.

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Defenders of Wildlife. Robert Peters was the representative at the September 23, 2015, meeting. Following the meeting and circulation of the Matrix, Defenders of Wildlife provided no additional responses or comments. As of October 11, 2015, Defenders of Wildlife have not sought intervention.	No position offered.	No position offered.	(1) Identified the following as reasons for opposition to this segment: (a) Impacts of the Project to resources at the San Pedro River Crossing. (b) Impacts of the Project to resources associated with crossing various, unidentified, washes in the San Pedro River Valley. (c) Impacts of the Project to resources associated with crossing various, unidentified, canyons. (d) Impacts of the Project to lands managed under Pima County's SDCP. (e) Impacts of the Project to wildlife. (f) Impacts of the Project to migratory birds. (g) Ground-disturbing impacts of the Project allowing for invasive species. (h) Creation by the Project of roads in previously undisturbed areas. (i) Habitat fragmentation caused by the Project. (j) Identified the San Pedro River Valley as a "globally" and "hemispherically" important area, and as "pristine." (k) Potential for impacts of infrastructure co-located with the Project in the future. (l) Impacts of the Project to the Sonoran Desert Tortoise. (m) Impacts of the Project to Pinal County lands and management regimes. (n) Impacts of the Project to fire management. (o) The Project allowing increased vehicular (authorized and unauthorized) to previously inaccessible areas. (p) Impacts of the Project to groundwater resources associated with water usage during construction of the Project.	No position offered.	(1) Identified the following as reasonsfor opposition to entire length of the Proposed Route: (a) The same reasons identified by the Cascabel Working Group, the Sierra Club, and the Tucson Audubon Society. (b) Impacts of the Project to areas of high conservation value. Specifically identified the concern that the conservation value of the lands traversed by the Project outweigh the benefits and need of the Project.
Arizona Game and Fish Department (AGFD). Kristin Terpening, Joyce Francis, and Linda Pollock were the representatives at the September 23, 2015, meeting. Following the meeting and circulation of the Matrix, AGFD provided no additional responses or comments. As of October 11, 2015, AGFD has not sought intervention. On September 28, 2015, the BLM, ALSD, ADOT, and AGFD sent a joint letter in support of the NEPA process and selection of the Proposed Route in the EIS for the SunZia Project.	No position offered.	No position offered.	Did not express support or opposition to this segment, but noted that the AGFD strongly encourages SunZia to minimize construction of new permanent roads in the San Pedro River Valley.	No position offered.	No Position offered.

L-00000YY-15-0318-00171

ORIGINAL

Arizona Corporation Commissi

Utilities Complaint Form

Investigator: Richard Martinez | **Phone:** <<< REDACTED >>> | **Completion Date:** 10/19/2015 8:58 AM

Opinion Number: 2015 - 125979 | **Priority:** Respond within 5 business days

Opinion Codes: Rate Case Items - Opposed | **Opinion Date:** 10/19/2015

First Name: James | **Last Name:** Callegary | **Account Name:** James Callegary

Address: <<< REDACTED >>>

City: Tucson | **State:** AZ | **Zip Code:** 85719

Home: <<< REDACTED >>>

Company: SunZia Transmission, LLC

Nature Of Opinion

Docket Number: L-00000YY-15-0318-00171 | **Docket Position:** Against

The construction of the sons of transmission line through the San Pedro Valley should not be allowed to go forward for several reasons. First, it is unnecessary because it is already possible to add additional lines to transport power through existing roots or on existing structures. This would waste money by constructing an entirely new line. Second, it would destroy important habitat for native Arizona animals and hundreds of species of bird that use the San Pedro River as a migration corridor. It is one of the most significant migration corridors in all of North America. It would also spoil the natural beauty of the valley that is the least developed in all of southeast Arizona.

Investigation

Date:	Analyst:	Submitted By:	Type:
10/19/2015	Richard Martinez	Telephone	Investigation

Opinion entered for the record and filed in Docket Control.

Arizona Corporation Commission
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Consumer Protection

TOHONO O'ODHAM NATION
OFFICE OF THE
CHAIRMAN AND VICE CHAIRMAN

EDWARD D. MANUEL
CHAIRMAN

VERLON M. JOSE
VICE CHAIRMAN

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Arizona Corporation Commission
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OCT 29 2015

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October 13, 2015

Director of Utilities
Arizona Corporation Commission
1200 West Washington Street
Phoenix, Arizona 85007

RE: Docket No. L-00000YY-15-0318-00171 – In the Matter of the Application of SunZia Transmission LLC

Director of Utilities:

The Tohono O'odham Nation ("Nation") hereby makes a limited appearance in this matter by filing these comments on the Application of SunZia Transmission LLC. The Nation is a federally recognized Indian tribe located in southern Arizona. The Tohono O'odham have lived in the region known as the Papagueria since time immemorial. The Papagueria includes the lands proposed for SunZia Southwest Transmission Project in Arizona ("Project"). For several hundred years, the Tohono O'odham have used areas proposed for the Project for living, hunting, gathering, and for the creation of sacred sites. Cultural resource sites which are O'odham or ancestral to the O'odham are likely to be disturbed or destroyed by the Project. The proposed route will likely have an adverse impact on hundreds of Archaic, Hohokam, Sobaipuri, and Tohono O'odham cultural sites, many which will contain the burials of ancestors.

The fact that the proposed route impacts the San Pedro River Valley is particularly troubling for the Nation. The San Pedro River Valley is a significant place for the Tohono O'odham, not only for its cultural significance, but also for its ecological importance. A significant Sobaipuri site that may be adversely impacted by the Project that is located in the San Pedro Valley was likely visited by Father Kino in the late 17th century and may have been a refuge for Sobaipuri during the 1752 Pima revolt against the Spanish. The San Pedro River Valley is home to sensitive wildlife habitats and hosts a wide variety of migrating birds. The Nation's urges the Certificate of Environmental Compatibility be denied for the reasons set out herein.

The Nation has serious concerns with the adequacy of the cultural work performed to-date for the Project. First, despite a request by the Nation, a cultural landscape study has never been performed to fully evaluate the impacts on the cultural landscape. Second, no detailed cultural resource surveys have been completed in order to understand the full impacts of the proposed route. Instead, Class I and very limited Class II surveys have been completed for the Project.

P.O. BOX 837, SELLS, ARIZONA 85634 PHONE:520.383.2028 FAX:520.383.3379

The Nation requests that Class III cultural resource surveys be completed for the proposed route before a Certificate of Environmental Compatibility is issued for the Project.

However, if the Project does move forward, it is the Nation's strong preference that the Project be located along existing disturbance corridors to minimize impacts to the environment and cultural resources. Additionally, if the Committee decides to issue a Certificate of Environmental Compatibility, the Nation requests that the Applicant engage the services of Tohono O'odham Nation cultural monitors that will be present during all construction activities associated with the Project.

The proposed transmission line with right-of-way widths of 500-1000 ft. will have an adverse effect on many cultural resource sites that are regarded as ancestral by the Tohono O'odham Nation. In addition the cultural landscape of the project area, particularly the San Pedro Valley that was traditionally used by the Tohono O'odham would be severely degraded.

Sincerely,

Edward D. Manuel
Chairman

Cascabel Clayworks
5360 N Teran Road
Benson, Arizona 85602

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Thomas Chenal, Chairman
Arizona Power Plant and Line Siting Committee
Arizona Corporation Commission
1200 West Washington Street
Phoenix Arizona 85007

October 14, 2015

RE: SunZia transmission, LLC application for Certificate of Environmental Compatibility
Docket Number L-00000YY-15-0318-00171

Dear Chairman Chenal and Committee;

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the SunZia application before the Committee and the Commissioners. I do not believe this project will benefit the people of Arizona, and will briefly explain why I hold this opinion in the hope that the Committee members are listening to perspectives from the voice of a rural Arizonan citizen.

I have lived in Cascabel, Arizona for 45 years. I moved here to operate a cottage industry making pottery and a farmstead to produce food, which I continue to do. I have been a cooperator in the Redington Natural Resource Conservation District for 38 years, and served for over 20 of those years as a board supervisor. I have also worked from my home for The Nature Conservancy for the past 16 years. I currently serve on the board of directors for the Cascabel Community Center, and am a member of several other community organizations. This letter and the opinions expressed are my own and are based on an appreciation for the San Pedro Valley gained while raising a family, running a business, being an active community member, and watching how the river flows and what lives around it.

My comments pertain specifically to the area between Willcox and Oracle, AZ, and especially to the eastern flank of the Rincon-Catalina mountain ranges, the western boundary of the middle San Pedro River watershed.

This region is still largely unfragmented, part of one of the two largest left in the state. It has the highest biodiversity of animal species in our nation. It has several ecotones of varying plant communities that support this unique species diversity and abundance. It has been used since the 1980's as a mitigation site for ecological damages done in other parts of the state to support development in the Sun Corridor; millions of dollars and thousands of acres of conservation lands will be diminished in value and function by the long-term consequences of building this project here.

As responsible Arizonans, we need to look at the long term viability of our state's resources. This valley represents a place where ecologic functioning should be taken care of, not sacrificed to a transmission corridor of questionable need and predictable future negative consequences. The economic values inherent in keeping this valley at work as a wildlife corridor and a source of clean water recharge far outweigh the value of creating yet another corridor for inappropriate development.

Planning for future energy sources to support the wise placement of urban development is integral for Arizona's future. There are more appropriate sites for solar, wind, and natural gas development closer to existing and expanding urban load centers. We must take responsible steps to conserve the remaining watersheds and areas which act as places for our native flora and fauna to thrive, since we depend on those ecologically functioning systems to provide services that support everything from surface and groundwater levels to the open land vistas so unique to our state.

The San Pedro Valley is an Arizona asset, deserving of respect and protection by her citizens, for their long-term benefit. It is a place in our great state that should not be sacrificed by the distant halls of Washington DC which "fast-tracked" the SunZia project based on the questionable premise that it would bring renewable energy from New Mexico to California.

Many opponents of the SunZia proposal submitted comprehensive comments during the NEPA process. State and federal agencies, some as cooperating agencies, detailed the impacts to the valley's natural and cultural resources at great length. Conservation non-profit groups presented evidence during the federal process. Fort Huachuca objected to the impacts it would have on their electronic testing area. I hope you all have had opportunity to review at least some of those well-documented and detailed points of concern submitted during the federal Environmental Impact Statement process. I understand that more comments are being brought to you now as you research the impacts this new transmission corridor will have on the landscape, and weigh the benefits to the state.

The BLM chose to issue a decision that the western San Pedro Valley route was the "best" alignment for the proposed project. The pressure of "fast tracking" to fulfill quotas for renewable energy set at the federal administration level has negative impacts on the local landscape that are not appreciated from distant desks. It is my sincere hope that officials and decision-makers at the state agencies and offices will better understand that the SunZia project will only detract from our state's assets and that there are better choices to secure future energy needs.

Your's is an awesome responsibility: long-term planning for a sustainable future. Thank you again for the opportunity to write to you.

Sincerely,

Barbara Clark

Barbara Clark

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Docket No. L-00000YY-15-0318-00171

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ARIZONA CORP. COMM
100 W. CONGRESS, STE 218, TUCSON AZ 85701

October 15, 2015

Arizona Power Plant and Transmission Line Siting Committee
Arizona Corporation Commission
1200 W. Washington
Phoenix, AZ 85007-2996

Arizona Power Plant and Transmission Line Siting Committee and Arizona Corp. Commission:

I wish to comment on the SunZia Transmission Line proposal [Docket No. L-00000YY-15-0318-00171], especially with regard to its routing through the San Pedro River Valley. I have lived in Cascabel, Arizona for over twenty years and have been active in conservation concerns here ever since. I helped found the Cascabel Conservation (formerly Hermitage) Association in 1996 and serve on the board of directors. I have been a director of the Cascabel Working Group and was the Cascabel Community Steward for The Nature Conservancy for several years. I have also been a Supervisor for the Redington NRCD, have an interest in the Saguaro-Juniper ranch, and own or have financial interests in several properties in the valley. While I have been active in resisting the SunZia proposal, this letter represents my personal comments as a resident landowner.

I support the conclusions of the Cascabel Working Group that the SunZia project is unnecessary and does not represent the financial, energy or environmental interests of the state of Arizona and its citizens.[1] Arizona's solar and wind projects can supply its renewable energy needs without the conflict from these out of state interests. The Southline proposes to provide sufficient grid connectivity while being more considerate of existing utility corridors. Above all, the SunZia project seriously compromises one of Arizona's environmental gems and diminishes its economic generative benefits for the state and its citizens.

The Cascabel Working Group produced a 140 page book documenting and detailing the local, state, national, continental, hemispheric and global environmental importance of the San Pedro River Valley and the detrimental impacts of the proposed Sun Zia routes through it.[2] These and similar concerns, which were addressed by nearly every local conservation group including state BLM agents, were so summarily dismissed through the NEPA review process that resources were the only impediment to lawsuit by several parties. SunZia's lobbying expenditures paid off with the Washington administration which listed it for fast track approval and it sailed past objections unimpeded. Washington's agenda met opportunistic speculators, neither of whose interests are those of the state of Arizona and its citizens.

The SunZia proposal would detract from rather than enhance the flourishing of the state's economy, not only on the energy front, but especially with regard to the San Pedro River Valley as a financial resource. The project's mile-wide right of way and double-track powerlines, not to mention the unmanageable developments that inevitably follow, will effectively divide and impede a majority of wildlife species and reduce the sustainability of many populations. That has enormous environmental consequences, for there are two noteworthy aspects of the impacted area.

First, a study by The Nature Conservancy demonstrated that a large portion of the lower San Pedro River Valley and eastward encompasses largest unfragmented area in AZ besides the Grand Canyon.[3] That calculation is by the strictest metric of no dirt road throughways, but a more commonly employed measure expands the area tremendously. Basically between Tucson's Catalina and Rincon foothills to near Safford, and from Interstate 10 to Hwy 77, there are no paved road throughways or major wildlife inhibiting barriers. That may be the largest unfragmented area in the American Southwest, a condition recognized to be a necessity for

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wildlife population sustainability. This unfragmented area contains six Sky Islands and allows them to remain connected by their surrounding semi-desert grassland and desert scrub seas.

The 2012 Arizona Wildlife Linkages Assessment notes of the area that "most of these roads are currently gravel and easily passable by wildlife."[4] It also finds that,

> *"The current utility infrastructure that exists within the linkage design may have little effect on the wildlife species that occur here. However, future large-scale utility infrastructure projects, like the proposed SunZia Southwest Transmission Project, may have numerous negative impacts on wildlife in the San Pedro Valley."*[5]

Second, largely because of the San Pedro River Valley's fecundity and this northern extent of the Madrean Archipelago, this area is party to the highest biological diversity in the American Southwest.[6] Biological diversity and unfragmented habitats are the two shining stars in identifying conservation priorities and policy recommendations. Here they overlap in what is likely the largest unfragmented landscape with the highest species diversity in the American Southwest. That likely explains the enormous investment of conservation monies by numerous agencies and NGOs in the lower San Pedro River Valley. The SunZia project will divide and seriously compromise this tremendous environmental resource.

That which has enormous environmental consequences has enormous economic consequences, as was demonstrated not long ago in the BP Gulf oil spill. Maintaining unfragmented landscapes not only contributes to the land's ecological health but can also be a significant investment in contributing to the diversity and vitality of an area's economy. This area already functions well as a working landscape, and it is clear from the inhabitants' near unanimous objection to the SunZia project that this remains their wish.

Beyond negatively impacting ranches and rural lifestyles, the prospects for exploiting recreationists in the adjacent Sun Corridor will be severely diminished. The economic benefits of this wildland resource to the growing recreation sector in southern Arizona should not be discounted. A national survey of fishing, hunting, and wildlife-associated recreation conducted in 2006 reported that state resident and nonresidents spent $2.1 billion on fishing, hunting, and watchable wildlife related recreation in Arizona (U.S. Department of the Interior 2006). In Pima County alone the survey found in 2001 that:

> *"...watchable wildlife activities generated a total economic effect of $327 million, supporting 3,196 jobs, providing residents with $91 million in salary and wages, and generating $2.3 million in state tax revenue (Southwick Associates 2003). Fishing and hunting recreation generated a total economic effect of $105 million for the County, supporting 1,187 jobs, providing residents with $18 million in salary and wages and generating $5.4 million in state tax revenue (Silberman 2003)."*[7]

The SunZia project demonstrates the meeting of a sweeping federal agenda with opportunistic financial interests whose primary concern is not for the state of Arizona and its citizens. It would be refreshing to see the Arizona Corporation Commission stand-up for our own interests over those of a heavily lobbied Washington bureaucracy and energy industry speculators. I sincerely implore you to do so.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Daniel Baker

6640 N. Cascabel Rd. / Cascabel, Arizona 85602 / (520) 212-5862

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[1] <http://www.cascabelworkinggroup.org>

[2] Cascabel Working Group, "Draft Environmental Impact Statement Contributions for Proposed SunZia Transmission Line Routes Traversing the San Pedro River Valley", July, 2010 <http://www.cascabelworkinggroup.org/downloads/DEIS_final.pdf>

[3] "Cumulative Effects Analysis for Proposed Sunzia Transmission Line" by Rob Marshall, Dale Turner, and Dan Majka, The Nature Conservancy, June 18, 2012.

[4] Arizona Game and Fish Department. 2012. Pima County Wildlife Connectivity Assessment: Detailed Linkages. Santa Catalina/Rincon – Galiuro Linkage Design. Report to the Regional Transportation Authority of Pima County, p. 21.

[5] Ibid., p. 31.

[6] Biodiversity Metrics, William G. Kepner, David F. Bradford, Anne C. Neale, Kenneth G. Boykin, Kevin Gergely, EPA/600/F-11/006, May 2011.

[7] Arizona Game and Fish Department, op. cit., p. 3.

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555 W CONGRESS STE 270 TUCSON AZ 85701

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Squaw Creek Ranch
Matt and Anna Magoffin
34625 W. Klondyke Road
Willcox, AZ 85643

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Power Plant and Transmission Line Siting Committee
Arizona Corporation
1200 W. Washington Street
Phoenix, AZ 85007

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October 15, 2015

Line Sitting Committee, Docket Number, L-00000YY-15-0318-00171

As hard is it seems for many to believe, land that is not developed is not worthless until a giant foot print is placed on it. Instead, these lands need to remain a working landscape that both preserves open space and allows for range and wildlife management in such a way that it both preserves the western life style Arizona is known for and allows for the public to be a part of this practice. What I would like for you to do is truly form one single reason to destroy one of Arizona's greatest gems when other routes already compromised by technology are much better options.

Sincerely,

Anna Magoffin

Anna Magoffin

BEFORE THE ARIZONA POWER PLANT
AND TRANSMISSION LINE SITING COMMITTEE

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OCT 26 2015
ATTORNEY GENERAL-PHOENIX
AGENCY COUNSEL SECTION

IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION OF SUNZIA TRANSMISSION LLC, IN CONFORMANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF ARIZONA REVISED STATUTES 40-360, ET SEQ., FOR A CERTIFICATE OF ENVIRONMENTAL COMPATIBILITY AUTHORIZING THE SUNZIA SOUTHWEST TRANSMISSION PROJECT, WHICH INCLUDES THE CONSTRUCTION OF TWO NEW 500 KV TRANSMISSION LINES AND ASSOCIATED FACILITIES ORIGINATING AT A NEW SUBSTATION (SUNZIA EAST) IN LINCOLN COUNTY, NEW MEXICO, AND TERMINATING AT THE PINAL CENTRAL SUBSTATION IN PINAL COUNTY, ARIZONA. THE ARIZONA PORTION OF THE PROJECT IS LOCATED WITHIN GRAHAM, GREENLEE, COCHISE, PINAL, AND PIMA COUNTIES.	DOCKET NO. L-00000YY-15-0318-00171 **NOTICE OF FILING SIERRA VISTA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION COMMENTS**

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Written Public Comment
SunZia Southwest Transmission Project

October 19, 2015

Dear Siting Committee Members,

I apologize I am unable to participate in person. I am currently on an executive mission to Washington DC - Please view this response as my indication of support for the SunZia project.

As you know, Cochise County and the entire region has been in an economic downturn. This project has a positive impact on our region by not only providing needed infrastructure and increased reliability of the existing transmission systems, but jobs.

The county benefits during construction $1.2 million in local tax revenues just from the solar PV and during operations close to $12 million in property taxes.

In terms of jobs during construction we look towards over 3,000 employees and during operations close to 70.

Thank you so much for seeing the value of this much needed economic engine. Should you have further questions for me, please feel free to reach me directly.

Mignonne Hollis
Executive Director
Sierra Vista Economic Development Foundation
520-458-6948

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ARAVAIPA PROPERTY OWNERS ASSOCIATION
c/o Richard Choate, President
88180 East Aravaipa Road
Winkelman, AZ 85292
(rchoate@wyoming.com)

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Power Plant and Transmission Line Siting Committee
Arizona Corporation Commission
1200 West Washington St
Phoenix, AZ 85007

Re: Docket Number L-00000YY-15-0318-00171

Dear Commissioners:

The Aravaipa Property Owners Association (APOA), organized in 1973, consists of about 60 landowners on the west side of Aravaipa Canyon whose properties lie along Aravaipa Creek, the major tributary of the San Pedro River. As fellow residents of the San Pedro River watershed, we share the concern of our neighbors about the potential location of the SunZia Transmission Line along the west side of the San Pedro River Valley.

We (APOA) are writing you to express our **strong and unanimous opposition** to the granting of a Certificate of Environmental Compatibility for the SunZia Transmission Project.

The San Pedro River is the last undammed river in the desert southwest and its rare riparian habitat supports a crucial migratory bird route and a multitude of wildlife species. This project would open an entirely new corridor in the valley, fragmenting wildlife linkages, and inviting further development. The relatively intact ecosystem in the valley has attracted important conservation investments in order to mitigate development elsewhere. This project would not only devalue those investments but it would make the valley less valuable for future mitigation investment. Future projects requiring mitigation would find it more difficult, if not impossible, to locate the necessary properties required for approval without an intact San Pedro Valley.

There is no justification for the potential environmental damage this project would inflict on the San Pedro River Valley. Arizona's capacity to develop its own renewable energy exceeds our need by several orders of magnitude. Importing it from New Mexico is not only unnecessary, but harmful to in-state renewable

energy development for our own use and even for export. Nor do we need to harm our environment in order to transmit energy from New Mexico to California. That state is also poised to meet its own renewable energy needs.

Finally, the SunZia Transmission Project competes with a far better and much preferred alternative, the Southline Transmission Project, which should be coming up for your consideration in the near future.

For these reasons, we strongly urge you to reject the Certificate of Environmental Compatibility for the SunZia Transmission Project.

Sincerely,

Richard Choate
President, Aravaipa Property Owners Association (APOA)

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Comments Regarding SunZia Project

Re: Docket #L-00000YY-15-0318-00171

Power Plant and Transmission Line Siting Committee
Arizona Corporation Commission
1200 West Washington Street
Phoenix, AZ 85007

To the Committee and Commissioners:

Until February of this year, I had never heard of Cascabel, of the San Pedro River Valley, of this beautiful desert wilderness. Through a remarkable set of circumstances, we found it, and having found it, we could not ever be content with merely dreaming about it. We found a spot on the river, and we bought it, and now this unexplored place is our home.

We have yet to even walk the perimeter of our property, it is so huge. And it is huge because it was land set aside by The Nature Conservancy some years ago to protect the integrity of the river, the habitat of the native flora and fauna, and the wholeness of the place itself. This wilderness has somehow been permitted to remain a more or less intact ecosystem despite this culture's appetite for capturing the pristine places of this country and without much thought at all to what a place means (to the wildlife, the soil, the resources, the people who call it home, and the long history it has enjoyed without encroachment), plant upon it the most unnatural things.

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Derrick Jenson and George Draffan wrote in *Strangely Like War:*

What is your relationship with the future?

....Those in power won't stop deliberately. Never forget Red Cloud's warning: "They made us many promises, more than I can remember. But they never kept but one. They promised to take our land and they took it."

What, then, can you do if you are of good heart? You can fight to keep this particular tree standing, this particular forest functioning. You can help open your friends' and coworkers' eyes to the wonder and intrinsic value and legitimate standing of forests and forest-dwellers.

We don't need to stop the forest crisis. Nature will stop it. As the global economy becomes more chaotic and the societies addicted to it become more impoverished, the best we can do is to keep some doors open, prevent those in power from causing those we love to go extinct. ***Defend what is important, undermine what is superfluous, and destroy what is destructive.*** (Emphasis mine.)

Jenson and Draffan were speaking specifically of global deforestation, yet they also speak for wilderness everywhere. Every place that is threatened with the profound changes that human interests (be they economic or political) invariably bring is worth defending. Change is good, but not all change. Change happens in nature at every level and without ceasing. This SunZia proposal will bring large and unnecessary changes to this sensitive landscape which will *absolutely* interfere with the natural processes of this ecosystem. There are some who say that the environmentalists' concerns are overblown. God, I hope so. But even if what this SunZia project brings is less than the worst it can be, make no mistake, it will never improve this remarkable place, it can only diminish. How much are we willing to lose, even if we don't lose it all?

The residents of my community have a job to do, and it is one which they (we) take very seriously. We mean to defend what is important and to undermine what is superfluous. What is important is protecting the wholeness of this place with everything we do, whether that is trivially small and mindful lives here, or resisting those who would diminish that which we love. We mean to help prevent the fractionalization of a land that contains ant freeways and bear trails, very private and even invisible connections that traverse this desert dust everywhere. None of what SunZia is proposing will come with minimal impact, because there is no such thing as minimal impact when every thing matters.

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And we mean to undermine what is superfluous. It is neither warranted nor necessary to transmit energy (clean or otherwise, and I have heard some rumbling that it just may be otherwise) to the state of California which has made it very clear that they are capable of generating ample clean energy of their own, enough to serve the entire state with some to spare. And even if SunZia persists with this initiative, it does not have to run roughshod over a pristine wilderness in order to do so. It can reduce the amount of environmental harm done simply by utilizing the I-10 corridor. The destruction they intend to bring to this place is superfluous.

The Nature Conservancy has called the Middle San Pedro one of the last great wild places on earth. This makes me think of something Jared Diamond said in an NPR interview I heard one time. He wondered what might have been going through the mind of the person who cut down the very last tree on Easter Island. We're not there yet, but I wonder what is going through the minds of these individuals that are willing to sacrifice one of the last great wild places on earth to transmit energy to people who may not even buy it. It begs the question, *What is really going on here?*

Deb Longley
4712 N. Cascabel Road
Benson, AZ 85602
deblongley@gmail.com

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Thomas Chenal, Chairman
Arizona Power Plant & Transmission Line Siting Committee
Attorney General's Office
1275 West Washington Street
Phoenix, Arizona 85007

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Main Office
300 E. University Blvd., #120
Tucson AZ 85705
TEL 520.629.0510
FAX 520.623.3476

Tucson Audubon's Mason Center
3835 W Hardy Road
Tucson AZ 85742

Karen Fogas
Executive Director
TEL 520.209.1801

kfogas@tucsonaudubon.org

Re: SunZia Transmission, LLC, application for Certificate of Environmental Compatibility
Docket Number L-00000YY-15-0318-00171

Dear Chairman Chenal and Members of the Committee:

The Tucson Audubon Society (Tucson Audubon) appreciates the opportunity to submit comments on the line siting case (ACC Docket No. L-00000YY-15-0318-00171) for the SunZia Southwest Transmission Line project (SunZia). Tucson Audubon has submitted previous comments on the Bureau of Land Management's Draft Environmental Impact Statement for SunZia[1], as well as a joint protest letter on the project's Final Environmental Impact Statement, Record of Decision and Resource Plan Amendments [2]. Please refer to these detailed comments for Tucson Audubon's previously stated concerns, issues and recommendations. In addition, we refer the Committee to the "issue matrix for parties and potential parties" for Tucson Audubon's position and concerns related to both the project as a whole, and our position and concerns specific to the route segments.

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In summary, Tucson Audubon is opposed to SunZia because our research indicates there is not a demonstrated need for it, and the extensive negative impacts to vital conservation lands and bird life in our focal region of southeast Arizona far outweigh the project's purported benefits. The Tucson Audubon Society is opposed to SunZia's proposed route because of its unacceptable direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts to intact wildlife habitats, including riparian areas, Sonoran desert uplands, grasslands, bird migration corridors, and numerous wildlife habitat linkages. In Arizona, SunZia would significantly and negatively impact the San Pedro River Valley – a globally significant bird migration corridor and biodiversity hotspot -- opening up an entirely new 30-mile-long, major infrastructure corridor on the west side of this currently pristine river valley. If permitted and built, SunZia would inevitably invite other proposals for co-located infrastructure, resulting in unacceptable cumulative impacts to this unique and sensitive landscape.

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The proposed alignment would adversely impact mitigation lands protected by Pima County as part of the Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan, which Tucson Audubon, our membership and the broader community is highly invested in. Tucson Audubon does not see how SunZia can be deemed "environmentally compatible" with this landscape in particular, which is widely

acknowledged as an ecologically and culturally rich region; one that has attracted significant public and private investments in conservation, sustainable development and enterprise, scientific inquiry, tourism and successful land stewardship cooperatives. SunZia would be deleterious to these enormous investments.

Should the route under consideration be permitted, we request that stipulations be required that **no new access roads will be constructed** in previously undisturbed grasslands, Sonoran Desert uplands and riparian areas. In order to avoid the construction of new access roads, and the numerous deleterious impacts associated with them, segments of the line that are not already co-located with other infrastructure and existing access roads should be constructed and maintained using helicopters.

Collision hazard for birds is a serious concern, especially with the proposed alignment. Stipulations to avoid, minimize and mitigate for avian mortality should be required. Implementation of the best available science and technology, to include best management practices, monitoring and adaptive management, can help to prevent and reduce bird collisions and electrocutions with transmission lines, towers, guy wires, overhead ground wires, and other infrastructure [3]. The use of bird diverters should be required, particularly within proximity to bird migration corridors and designated and proposed Important Bird Areas. Tucson Audubon recommends selecting tower designs that eliminate or minimize the need for guy wires, which can pose an unnecessary collision risk to birds.

Tucson Audubon suggests there should be a stipulation for **total avoidance of riparian forests**. Complete avoidance will also obviate the need for any vegetation clearing or maintenance. If permitted, there should be a stipulation that requires sufficiently tall towers to span riparian areas, canyons, and wildlife movement linkages / migratory corridors for birds and terrestrial species.

The attached map depicts the proposed SunZia route in relation to publicly available spatial data for the threatened Western Yellow-billed Cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus*). Tucson Audubon partners with the Arizona Game and Fish Department (AZGF) to exchange survey data for WYBC and other birds in the Mid and Lower San Pedro River through the Heritage Data Management System. Tucson Audubon works jointly with Audubon Arizona and AZGF to house and manage the AZ Important Bird Area Bird Survey Database.

We refer the Committee to Tucson Audubon's recent comments on the draft Western Yellow-billed Cuckoo Critical Habitat Designation[4]. Our research of the scientific literature and compilation of available survey data demonstrate that in addition to the classic riparian gallery habitats WYBC have been associated with historically, WYBC are utilizing higher elevation habitats in sky island mountain ranges during the breeding season, where we have consistently documented them displaying breeding behaviors.

During the summer of 2015, Tucson Audubon conducted a focused, yet intensive WYBC survey in eight sky island mountain ranges under a contract with the Coronado National Forest. We found that while surveyed drainages occasionally included cottonwoods and willows, they rarely presented a typical gallery forest, which does not match the Primary Constituent Elements as described in the August 2014 Draft Designation of Critical Habitat. Most survey routes were dominated by oak, juniper, and mesquite trees with the

immediate riparian zone interspersed with sycamore, hackberry, and other mesic species. Our 2015 survey documented 19 breeding territories and 24 occupied territories for a total of 43 territories. Surveys documented recurring individuals and territories with evidence of breeding in seven of the eight mountain ranges surveyed. Multiple territories were documented in five of the eight mountain ranges surveyed. This survey demonstrates that cuckoos can and do utilize the Madrean pine-oak woodland habitat type within the sky islands of southeastern Arizona during the breeding season (final survey report is pending review).

On 08/03/2015, a WYBC pair was documented by a Tucson Audubon survey team in Peppersauce Wash / Canyon of the Santa Catalina Mountains (see attached map). This highlights the importance of this elevation gradient, and connection for WYBC between the San Pedro River and habitats located higher in the watershed along its major tributaries. This recent WYBC detection is located approximately 5.24 miles to the west of SunZia's proposed alignment, upstream in this tributary of the San Pedro River. We hypothesize that during migration and breeding, some WYBC likely travel up and down-gradient between major riparian corridors located in the valley bottoms, such as the San Pedro River, into higher elevations that contain suitable habitat, especially along major drainages of sky island mountain ranges and intervening valleys.

SunZia is clearly located between high quality riparian gallery WYBC habitat astride the San Pedro River and higher elevation sky island habitat, such as that found in Peppersauce Wash. This is an issue of concern as it relates to the proposed alignment of SunZia – particularly through the San Pedro River Valley, where there is a remarkably high concentration of this threatened species. The San Pedro River is an internationally significant riparian corridor that is a vital stronghold for the cuckoo, and provides vital habitat and passage for millions of birds that depend upon the river valley for their annual migrations.

We appreciate the Committee's careful review of the scientific evidence and information provided herein, and hope that the Committee will arrive at the same conclusion that Tucson Audubon has: SunZia is incompatible with the ecologically and culturally rich and sensitive lands it proposes to traverse in southeast Arizona.

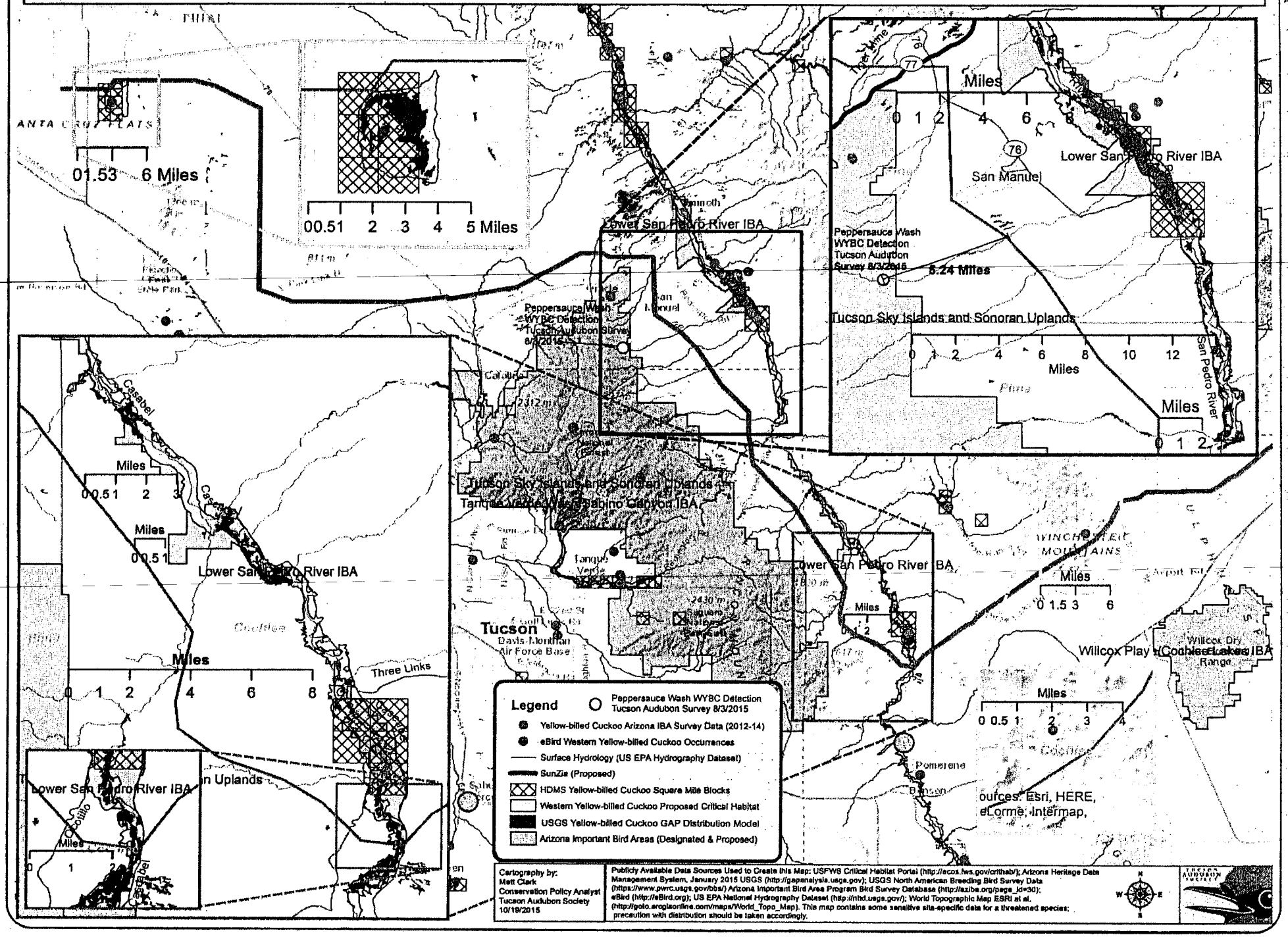
Sincerely,

Karen Fogas
Executive Director
Tucson Audubon Society

Matt Clark
Conservation Policy Analyst
Tucson Audubon Society

[1] Tucson Audubon Society comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the proposed SunZia Southwest Transmission Project: http://tucsonaudubon.org/images/stories/conservation/SunZiaTAS%20Wed.pdf
[2] SunZia Protest Letter from Tucson Audubon, et al (July 12, 2003): http://tucsonaudubon.org/images/stories/conservation/Sunzia_Protest_Letter_Final_07-12-2013.pdf
[3] Suggested Practices for Avian Protection On Powerlines, The State of the Art in 2006, Avian Power Line Iteraction Committee: http://www.dodpif.org/downloads/APLIC_2006_SuggestedPractices.pdf
[4] Tucson Audubon Society comments on the Proposed Western Yellow-billed Cuckoo Critical Habitat Designation (March 13,2015): http://tucsonaudubon.org/images/stories/conservation/2015-3-13_TAS_WYBC_CHD.pdf

Proposed SunZia SW Transmission Line Alignment in relation to: USFWS Draft Critical Habitat for the Western Yellow billed Cuckoo (YBC), Arizona Important Bird Areas & IBA Bird Survey Database YBC Detections, HDMS YBC Blocks, USGS Bird Surveys (YBC), e-Bird YBC Locations, & USGS GAP YBC Distribution Model



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Shaping the Future of the West
www.sonoraninstitute.org

October 19, 2015

Thomas K. Chenal
Chairman-Power Plant & Transmission Siting Committee
1275 W. Washington
Phoenix, AZ 85007
United States of America

Re. Docket # L-00000YY-15-0318-00171; Case No. 171; SunZia Transmission, LLC.

Dear Mr. Chenal:

In 2010, the Sonran Institute and Headwaters Economics published a report, *Evaluating the SunZia Transission Line Proposal: A Guid for Stakeholders and Decision Makers.* The report concluded that:

> "the financial viablity of the SunZia transmission project, as currently proposed, is dependent on the ability of potential customers of transmission service on SunZia (generators) to exploit market opportunities to export New Mexico wind resources to Arizona and California (and, to a lesser extent, solar resources)."

The Sonoran Institute believes that this conclusion remains valid, despite ongoing market and policy changes in the energy sector—many of which favor renewable energy development in the long term. One policy development is worth noting as it may specifically impact the proposed SunZia transmission line.

California's new 50% renewable energy requirement further reinforces the likelihood that all or most of the capacity on SunZia will be dedicated to transporting wind and solar energy. (Given California's greenhouse gase reduction requirements (80% below 1990 levels by 2050), it is also highly unlikely that California will be able to accept new gas-fired generation from out of state.) California utilities have firm offers for out-of-state wind energy at prices lower than the state's average system costs. These prices take into account the cost of transmission. In order to realize their 50% renewable energy requirement, California will necessarily have to accept a substantial amount of wind and solar power from out of state, including New Mexico. To help chart this course, the California Public Utilities Commission and California Energy Commission have initiatied the Renewable Energy Transmission Initiative 2.0, to develop resource portfolios that will include renewable power imported from other states.

Moving away from fossil fuels will require new transmission to share clean resources across state lines. Transmission lines, like SunZia, can play an important role in realizing a regional clean energy future.

Sincerely,

John Shepard
Senior Director of Programs

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Archaeology Southwest Exploring and protecting the places of our past

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October 20, 2015

Arizona Corporation Commission
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Thomas Chenal, Chairman
Arizona Power Plant & Transmission Line Siting Committee
Attorney General's Office
1275 West Washington Street
Phoenix, Arizona 85007

Re: SunZia Transmission, LLC, Docket Number L-OOOOOYY-15-03 18-00171

Dear Mr. Chenal:

Archaeology Southwest, a nonprofit organization based in Tucson Arizona, has been working for the past thirty years exploring and protecting the places of the past. As a result of our work across large parts of Arizona and New Mexico, it has come to light that the San Pedro and the Aravaipa watersheds remain one of the least impacted and relatively intact landscapes in southern Arizona. As such they contain a near-complete record of 12,000 years of past human activity, both Euro-American and Native American. This scale of regional preservation provides an opportunity to interpret sites as part of a broad cultural and economic landscape rather than as isolated phenomena. The great time depth allows us to study changes in this landscape since humans first inhabited the New World. Such opportunities are no longer available in valleys such as Phoenix, Tucson, and Safford, where early development destroyed much of the archaeological record without adequate documentation.

Considering the non-renewable character of cultural resources, we highly recommend that this landscape be preserved for current and future stakeholders, including Native Americans, archaeologists, and the interested public. Construction of a large, electric transmission facility through the lower watershed would have severe detrimental effects on this landscape. These corridors become magnets for a number of levels of system-wide perturbations, including increased motorized public access along the power line roads, increased soil erosion from the construction activities and new permanent roads can serves as dispersal

300 N. Ash Alley Tucson, AZ 85701
phone 520-882-6946 fax 520-882-6948
email info@archaeologysouthwest.org
www.archaeologysouthwest.org
William H. Doelle, Ph.D.
President and CEO

corridors for invasive plants who thrive on newly disturbed lands. The ultimate outcome from these direct and indirect consequences of the proposed Sunzia Power Transmission facility is significant degradation and fragmentation of a very important minimally impacted natural and cultural landscape. It is important for the Committee to consider whether there are any valleys where, collectively, we can seek to minimize the level of human intrusion or is everything essentially up for grabs?

Archaeology Southwest and previous researchers have identified over 500 archaeological sites on the terraces above the floodplain in the lower San Pedro valley (Benson to Winkelman). About one third of these sites are associated with architecture and are likely to contain human burials. At least 40 sites were villages inhabited by 75-250 people and associated with large cemetery areas. Many of these villages were occupied for centuries, generating considerable archaeological deposits. While, the information in these locations is very valuable for scientific research, the human burials and the cultural values that these sites represent are of great concern to Native American communities. Our previous studies have established that there are strong historical connections and strong cultural interests in the San Pedro valley by the Hopi Tribe, the Pueblo of Zuni, the Western Apaches of both the San Carlos and White Mountain Apache reservations, and the Tohono O'odham.

An element of our preservation work also includes acquiring real property or interests in real property to protect significant archaeological resources. A little bit of putting our money where our mouth is so to speak. In the lower San Pedro River we have protected cultural resources on 4 properties totaling 162 acres. Our small contribution mirrors a much greater level of investment by a number of other agencies and organizations that include the the Arizona Game & Fish Department, Arizona State Parks Department, Bureau of Land, Management, Bureau of Reclamation, Pima County, Saguaro Juniper Corporation, Salt River Project, The Nature Conservancy and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. The Resolution Copper Company has proposed to protect additional lands in the valley through a Congressionally-approved land exchange. Together, these partners and other private landowners have protected nearly 200,000 acres and invested over $42.7 million in acquisition of conservation lands and appurtenant water rights. That investment required 74 separate land transactions, beginning in 1970 and

continuing through 2014. The value of these public and private investments is diminished by this project which remains speculative at best with respect to transmission of renewable energy.

We seriously question the value of this project and the proposed alignment through the lower San Pedro River valley, particularly in light of the proposed Southline project that will soon be before this Committee. It is our recommendation that the proponents be denied a Certificate of Environmental Compatibility by the Committee. Nonetheless, with respect to the proposed alignment there are two specific areas that we draw your attention to and propose that specific conditions be included in the Certificate of Environmental Compatibility should the Committee be so inclined to issue one to this project.

The first area of concern is where survey efforts by the project proponent's consultants identified archaeological remains which are associated with people referred to as Sobaipuri. Historical accounts of Eusebio Kino's travels down the San Pedro river in 1697 indicate that a Sobaipuri village was encountered . The significance of this protohistoric habitation site cannot be underestimated as it remains one of two largest Sobaipuri habitation sites known in the lower San Pedro River valley and its likely specific association with Eusebio Kino suggest that its eligibility on the National Register of Historic Places would qualify under Criterion B as well as Criterion D. In addition, the Sobaipuri were an O'odham speaking people and of direct ancestral heritage to O'odham people who now reside on the Tohono O'odham Nation and the Gila River Indian Community. The Tohono O'odham Nation has expressed strong concern regarding the current alignment in this area.

Archaeology Southwest proposes specifically that explicit measures be identified that would avoid any disturbance or additional public access to this site.

. We do not believe that moving the towers in the existing corridor location will accomplish the protection we recommend. In addition, new access routes must avoid this area and following construction we recommend complete road removal for any access and maintenance routes within a half mile of the site. If necessary, the project proponent should be prepared to construct towers

and run the power lines using a helicopter to avoid any new road construction.

The second area is the crossing of Edgar Canyon. It is essential that any towers span the breadth of the canyon and that any new construction and maintenance routes be located so that access to the canyon bottom by motorized vehicles is not enhanced. At a minimum any new roads should be located at least one mile from the canyon bottom. If necessary the project proponent should be prepared to construct towers in this vicinity and string the lines by helicopter to avoid any new road construction. This canyon is now protected by Pima County in part and includes a significant archaeological site that at present has received limited public visitation and remains largely undisturbed. As we have previously stated, new access roads associated with construction and maintenance open up many areas to unauthorized public use and can facilitate off road vehicle travel which would threaten this fragile archaeological site.

In summary, the San Pedro valley is the last well-preserved cultural landscape in southern Arizona. There are scientific values, cultural values, and interests of the general public that would all be severely harmed by constructing the Sunzia power transmission line. Considering the tremendous impact (direct and indirect) of the proposed project alignment, Archaeology Southwest strongly recommends that the Arizona Corporation Commission Power Plant and Transmission Line Siting Committee deny the current Certificate of Environmental Compatibility or re-locate this segment of the proposed alignment to avoid entirely the lower San Pedro River valley.

Sincerely,

Andy Laurenzi
Southwest Field Representative

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Sonoran Desert Protection

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October 23, 2015

Mr. Thomas K. Chenal, Chairman
Assistant Attorney General
ARIZONA POWER PLANT AND
TRANSMISSION LINE SITING
COMMITTEE
1275 W. Washington Street
Phoenix, AZ 85007
thomas.chenal@azag.gov

Arizona Corporation Commission
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OCT 23 2015
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Re: Docket No. L-00000YY-15-0318-00171, SunZia Transmission Line Siting

Dear Chairman Chenal and Members of the Committee:

Please accept these comments on behalf of members and supporters of Sierra Club, Center for Biological Diversity, Huachuca Audubon Society, and Coalition for Sonoran Desert Protection. All of these groups participated in the planning process and submitted public comments to the Bureau of Land Management. The names, addresses, and phone numbers of contact persons representing each of these groups are contained in Section 9 of this letter. We incorporate by reference the comments submitted to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Proposed SunZia Transmission Project submitted by these respective groups.[1]

According to ARS § 40-360.06, there are several relevant criteria to consider before issuing a Certificate of Environmental Compatibility (CEC). You must consider a number of factors relative to the proposed including, but not limited to, the following.

- Existing plans of the state, local government and private entities for other developments at or in the vicinity of the proposed site.

[1] For ease of reference, comments of protesting parties incorporated by reference are found in Appendix J of the SunZia Project FEIS / RMPA. Sierra Club –Grand Canyon Chapter comments are identified as Comment ID Number 1600 (p. J-159); Center for Biological Diversity comments are Comment ID Number 2221 (p. J-475); Tucson Audubon Society are Comment ID Number 1601 (J.-209); Cascabel Working Group submitted multiple comments identified by Comment No. 1604 (J-272), No. 2160 (J-390), No. 2161 (J-391), No. 2162 (J-402), No.2164 (J-406) and Comment No. 2392 (J-526). Defenders of Wildlife comments are Comment No. 2100 (J-356); Sky Island Alliance comments are identified as Comment No. 1912 (J-330) and Comment ID No. 2100 (J-356). Coalition for Sonoran Desert Protection comments are identified as Comment No. 1830 (J-324) and Comment No. 2100 (J-356).

- Fish, wildlife and plant life and associated forms of life upon which they are dependent.
- Existing scenic areas, historic sites and structures or archaeological sites at or in the vicinity of the proposed site.
- The total environment of the area.
- Any additional factors which require consideration under applicable federal and state laws pertaining to any such site.

The statute states, "The committee shall give special consideration to the protection of areas unique because of biological wealth or because they are habitats for rare and endangered species."

The Arizona Power Plant and Transmission Line Siting Committee (Committee) can deny, approve, or approve with conditions this CEC based on these factors. The Committee can determine that the harm far outweighs the need. The BLM looked at more than 500 miles of the proposed transmission line across Arizona and New Mexico and, in our opinion, the real and significant impacts to the San Pedro got lost in the mix. The Committee can and must consider those. The Committee can and should deny approval of this line siting.

The Proposed Route:

From the Willow-500 kV Substation, the route heads southwest and crosses the Sulphur Springs Valley 7 miles north of the Town of Willcox, and continues along a 345 kV transmission line corridor, generally parallel to and north of the I-10. The route crosses the San Pedro River approximately 11 miles north of Benson, turns northwest, and it continues at a distance ranging from 2 to 6 miles west of the San Pedro River through portions of Cochise and Pima counties. The route continues northwest along a pipeline corridor into Pinal County, turns west at a point 5 miles northwest of San Manuel, then proceeds westerly, north of Oracle and the Santa Catalina Mountains, and along portions of 115 and 500 kV transmission line corridors, north of the Tortolita Mountains. The route turns north from a point near the Tortolita Substation toward SR 79, and then west, north of the Picacho Mountains, to its termination at the Pinal Central Substation located 8 miles north of Eloy, in Pinal County.

A portion of the route cuts northward through the Lower San Pedro River Valley. The Lower San Pedro River Valley supports one of the last major free-flowing rivers in the desert Southwest and, as such, provides important habitat for many species. The San Pedro River Valley provides habitat for a great diversity of avifauna and is a hemispherically-important migratory flyway, providing a key migration corridor for neo-tropical birds. It is internationally recognized as a globally important birding area and an important tourist destination.

The Lower San Pedro River is an Important Bird Area of Global Significance as recognized by BirdLife International. The San Pedro River Valley provides habitat for a great diversity of birds, including nesting raptors such as gray hawk (*Asturina nitida=Buteo nitidus*), Mississippi kite (*Ictinia mississippiensis*), common black hawk (*Buteogallus anthracinus*), and zone-tailed hawk (*Buteo albonotatus*). Western yellow-billed cuckoos (*Coccyzus americanus occidentalis*), a federally-listed threatened species with critical habitat designation pending, including areas proposed along the

SunZia route, nest in numbers on the lower reaches of San Pedro River. The high importance of the lower San Pedro River for the recovery of the southwestern willow flycatcher *(Empidonax traillii extimus)* contributed to its designation as critical habitat for the species. The Lower San Pedro is important to State Species of Conservation Concern, including western yellow-billed cuckoo, belted kingfisher, red-naped sapsucker, southwestern willow flycatcher, tropical kingbird, thick-billed kingbird, western purple martin, gray hawk, common black hawk, zone-tailed hawk, and Mississippi kite.

This hemispherically-important migratory flyway provides a key migration corridor for neo-tropical birds. During spring migration the riparian zone of the San Pedro provides food and cover for birds and is one of the most important pathways in the region for passerines on their journey north. The Lower San Pedro River is a globally important destination for ecotourists.

The San Pedro River Valley also supports one of the greatest diversity of mammal species in North America, including mountain lion, black bear, coatimundi, javelina, fox, coyote, badger, four skunk species, mule and white-tail deer, ringtail, raccoon, bobcat, beaver, porcupine, black-tailed prairie dog and 24 species of bats, as well as many other lesser known mammal species.

During the last 20 years, the high quality, unfragmented riparian habitat of Lower San Pedro River Valley has resulted in many lands being acquired for biological mitigation purposes. Recently, the lower San Pedro River Valley has been proposed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) for the establishment of a new National Wildlife Refuge and Collaborative Conservation Initiative. This is a proposal that involves "... interested landowners, land managing agencies, local communities, nonprofit organizations and the pubic who share a vision of a healthy river system contributing to people's livelihoods and a functioning, hydrologically healthy riparian corridor that supports a diverse and rich nature flora and fauna." The BLM preferred alternative (subroute 4C2c) would bisect the lower San Pedro River Valley and would negatively impact the lands and habitat values in this proposed new wildlife refuge.

1. Issues Related to the Need for the SunZia Project

When new transmission lines are proposed such as the SunZia Project, they must serve a true need and be appropriately located to prevent unnecessary and undue degradation to lands and to avoid or minimize harm to wildlife, wildlife habitat, wilderness values, and other important natural and cultural resources. The proposed SunZia Transmission Line is neither justified by demonstrated need nor located so as to sufficiently avoid or minimize negative impacts to sensitive wildlife habitats and resources. The numerous negative environmental impacts of the SunZia Project to areas of high conservation value outweigh the need and the purported benefits of the project. We therefore request that the Arizona Power Plant and Line Siting Committee deny approval of a Certificate of Environmental Compatibility for the SunZia Transmission Line.

The purpose of the SunZia Project has been repeatedly framed by the Applicant as meeting a need for increased capacity for the transmission of electricity generated from "renewable energy sources." When the Southwestern Power Group (SWPG), the principal investor in the SunZia

Project, originally proposed the project, they made clear that the purpose of the SWPG proposal was to provide needed transmission capacity for its own proposed 1,000 megawatt (MW) natural gas-fired power plant located in Bowie, Arizona. Although the original SWPG proposal mentioned providing transmission capacity for renewable energy, SWPG's personal reason for proposing the SunZia project was to permit transmission of power generated at the Bowie power plant westward to Phoenix and California. SunZia's Willow Substation, described throughout the planning process and included as an integral part of the proposed action, would be sited with the already-permitted Willow switchyard for the Bowie power plant, allowing nearly direct power exchanges between the power plant and SunZia.

In addition, the proposed route connects with existing substations in southwestern New Mexico and the SunZia Project, potentially supplying transmission capacity for several natural gas plants near these substations, thus enabling their future expansion. The preferred alternative route does not go through the Afton generation site and substation which is in the same location as BLM's Afton Solar Energy Zone, despite the fact that the proposed SunZia Transmission Project is in relatively close proximity (20-30 miles) to this area where future large-scale solar energy plants will be incentivized on BLM lands. This supports the view that the SunZia Project intends, as a major component of its design, to provide new transmission capacity for natural gas development, rather than focusing on renewable energy.

2. Issues Related to Environmental Impacts

a. Issues Related to Air Quality

We are concerned that there would be adverse air quality impacts associated with an increase in fossil fuel-generated electricity associated with the SunZia Project. The SunZia Project could encourage development of natural gas-fired power plants like the Bowie Generating Station, and the likely result will be increased nitrogen oxide emissions, toxic air emissions, and other pollutants. This would make it more difficult for Arizona to meet its obligations relative to the new ozone standard and could also affect Arizona's Clean Power Plan State Implementation Plan.

b. Water Resources

The San Pedro River is one of only two major rivers that flow north out of Mexico into the United States, and it is one of the last generally undammed rivers in the entire Southwest. The San Pedro River Valley is a globally Important Bird Area. The riparian forest and adjacent Sacaton grasslands provide critical stopover habitat for millions of migrating birds each year. The San Pedro River Valley contains one of the planet's most significant Fremont cottonwood/willow gallery forests. Because of the hemispheric significance and importance of these riparian areas, the upper San Pedro River watershed was designated as the first Riparian National Conservation Area in the United States in 1988.

The San Pedro River basin is home to more than 80 species of mammals, including jaguar, black bear, coatimundi, bats, and beaver. Fourteen species of fish, including imperiled native

species such as Gila chub, longfin dace, desert sucker, roundtail chub, Sonora sucker, and speckled dace, may be found here. The diverse habitats are also home to 41 species of reptiles and amphibians, including the Sonoran tiger salamander and lowland leopard frog. There are more than 100 species of breeding birds, including the imperiled and federally listed yellow-billed cuckoo, and, seasonally, more than 250 species of migratory birds moving through the San Pedro River Valley.

Impacts to surface water resources, including the San Pedro River and its tributaries, could result from the placement of structures and the construction of access roads and temporary work areas. Direct impacts to the San Pedro River and its tributaries include sedimentation from project-related disturbances, fugitive dust deposition, temporary and permanent fill associated with the construction of roads and access routes, removal of riparian vegetation, bank alteration, accidental contamination associated with spills of environmentally harmful material, damage to wetlands, and introduction of non-native species of plants and animals.

The construction of access roads would likely require crossing many intermittent and ephemeral stream channels in the lower San Pedro River Valley. These crossings could require the placement of temporary or permanent fill into stream channels, as well as structures that support the crossing and protect water resources (e.g., bridge pilings, culverts, wing walls, etc.). Temporary impacts would result from temporary crossings or fill used to cross intermittent or ephemeral tributaries with little to no stream flow or on temporary access roads.

Ephemeral and intermittent waters can be just as important as perennial waters and were not given proper consideration by the BLM or the applicant. These waters are often more important in the Southwest because of the relative absence of perennial waters. Eighty-one percent of streams in the arid and semi-arid Southwest are ephemeral and intermittent streams. They provide important functions and values:

> "These streams provide landscape hydrologic connections; stream energy dissipation during high-water flows to reduce erosion and improve water quality; surface and subsurface water storage and exchange; ground-water recharge and discharge; sediment transport, storage, and deposition to aid in floodplain maintenance and development; nutrient storage and cycling; wildlife habitat and migration corridors; support for vegetation communities to help stabilize stream banks and provide wildlife services; and water supply and water-quality filtering." Because of their significance, it is recommended that these streams not be looked at individually, but that "[c]onsideration of the cumulative impacts from anthropogenic uses on these streams is critical in watershed-based assessments and land management decisions to maintain overall watershed health and water quality."

Modification of stream banks could result in the removal of vegetation that could take many years to recover. Sedimentation potential would increase, depending upon the extent of disturbance and the amount of re-contouring needed. Permanent impacts would result from stream channel crossings, into which structures would be placed in the streambed, potentially

causing an irreversible loss of riparian vegetation on either side of the crossing. The removal of unique riparian habitat, increased sedimentation, and reduced water quality are among the primary adverse environmental effects on surface water resources associated with the Sunzia Project.

Direct impacts to intermittent surface water features are similar to those for perennial waters, although intermittent streams typically have less associated riparian vegetation and, subsequently, are more prone to erosion. Indirect impacts include increased soil erosion due to removal of vegetation. The construction of access roads would likely require stream channel crossings. These crossings could require the placement of temporary or permanent fill into stream channels, as well as structures that support the crossing and protect water resources (e.g., bridge pilings, culverts, wing walls, etc.).

Temporary impacts would result from the construction of temporary crossings or the placement of fill used to cross intermittent or ephemeral tributaries with little to no stream flow or the construction of temporary access roads. These crossings would have the potential to impact stream morphology and ecological function. The modification of stream banks could result in removal of vegetation that could take many years to recover. Sedimentation potential would increase, depending upon the extent of disturbance and the amount of contouring needed. Storm water discharge and quantity of sedimentation to the San Pedro River and its tributaries are correlated to project-related disturbances. Permanent impacts would result from permanent stream channel crossings, into which structures are placed in the streambed, potentially causing an irreversible loss of riparian vegetation on either side of the crossing.

Transmission line access roads typically cross, or are close to, perennial and intermittent streams. It has been well-documented that construction of new access roads increases erosion and sedimentation of water resources. All construction activities within the lower San Pedro River watershed could result in increased sedimentation to the San Pedro River or its tributaries. Periodic vegetation removal or repair to access roads could have indirect effects because of soil erosion, further increasing sedimentation.

3. Issues Related to Biological Resources

The proposed route for SunZia includes unacceptable impacts to sensitive wildlife habitats and wild lands. We have consistently maintained that proposed transmission lines through the Lower San Pedro River Valley were unacceptable due to high levels of ecological sensitivity of these areas. The San Pedro River Valley is a globally significant area that is a well-documented migratory corridor for birds and other wildlife, and it contains designated critical habitat for several endangered species.

Substantial public and private conservation investments have been made in the Lower San Pedro River Valley. It is an area so special and ecologically valuable that it has recently has been proposed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for the establishment of a new National Wildlife Refuge and Collaborative Conservation Initiative, an effort "involving interested

landowners, land managing agencies, local communities, nonprofit organizations, businesses and the public who share a vision o f a healthy river system contributing to people's livelihoods and a functioning, hydrologically healthy riparian corridor that supports a diverse and rich nature flora and fauna" The route would run astride this new wildlife refuge. This is not an appropriate area through which to route a major new energy corridor.

Construction of a large transmission line involves developing temporary construction roads as well as a permanent road under the line. This causes significant habitat fragmentation and invites off-road vehicles. Roads and motorized uses can have serious detrimental effects on habitats and wildlife.[2,3,4] These effects include direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts, ranging from mortality from collisions with vehicles, modification of animal behaviors, altered use of habitats, facilitation of the spread of exotic, invasive, and parasitic species, adverse genetic effects, and fragmentation of connected habitats.

Further road-building, construction, and improved off-road vehicle access in this area will also contribute to erosion and sedimentation that could travel downstream through tributaries and impact threatened native fish populations and other species[5,6]

a. Specific Concerns about animal and plant species. (We have included some specific concerns about certain species, but it is not a comprehensive list.)

i. Wildlife

a) Mammals

American pronghorn (Antilocapra americana)

The management of pronghorn and their habitat represent an important conservation issue for North American grasslands, as pronghorn are an indicator of grassland ecosystem health and are valued as a wide-ranging, native game animal. Because pronghorn range widely to access the most succulent forage available at different locations and at various times of the year and often return to specific fawning grounds, they are a landscape-connectivity dependent species. This means that their life history requirements necessitate an ability to move freely between resource patches, which are often spread out across large landscapes.

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Pronghorn have declined in Arizona over the past two decades. In 1987, the statewide population of pronghorn was estimated at nearly 12,000, but by the year 2000 the population estimate had declined to less than 8,000. Grassland habitats in Arizona and New Mexico continue to be subjected to extended drought, habitat conversion and fragmentation from urban and agricultural development, and woodland encroachment. Therefore, the conservation and restoration of remaining viable pronghorn summer and winter ranges, as well as seasonal migration corridors, is even more important if pronghorn populations are to recover. Pronghorn are especially sensitive to development and habitat fragmentation.

Bats

Because many bat species are highly specialized and can be difficult to locate within their roosts, it is critical that highly trained and qualified biologists conduct any bat surveys. Likewise, the surveys should be conducted at different times of the year and at various times during the night. Bats use different roost sites during different times of the night and in different seasons. Just because a roost is not occupied at the time of the preconstruction survey does not mean that it is not utilized or of importance.

Impacts to tree-roosting bat species, such as the western red bat (*Lasiurus blossevillii*) or western yellow bat (*Lasiurus xanthinus*), are of concern. Note that both of these species are special status and have a high likelihood of being present or are present (respectively) in the project area. Vegetation removal is a primary threat to these species. When roosting, these species can be very difficult to locate.

b) Birds

This project poses a significant threat to many avian species. Habitat loss, degradation, and fragmentation; direct mortality from construction, operation, increased recreation use, and collision with transmission line structures; disturbance resulting in altered behaviors, reduced nest success, etc.; reduced water quality due to erosion and sedimentation; and much more all have the potential for significant impacts to these species. Mitigation measures have the potential to reduce some of these impacts, but many avian species will still be negatively affected by this proposed action.

Raptors

Will disturbance of nesting raptors be limited by constructing outside of nesting season? If so, when would such construction occur to ensure that disturbance will be avoided? Also, many raptors use the same nest each year. Will existing nests be avoided? Further analysis is needed in order to adequately understand these impacts.

Snow geese (Chen caerulescens)

At various times of the year, the snow goose can be found in almost every state or province of North America. Migrating snow geese concentrate in large numbers at many sites along traditional flyways across the continent. Always near water, snow geese breed on open, coastal tundra dominated by grasses and sedges. During migration they use both fresh and

saltwater marshes, ponds, lakes, streams, meadows, and agricultural lands. Wintering snow geese inhabit a variety of marine and freshwater wetlands, including grassy marshes, wet fields, rice plantations, farm fields with waste grain, and open pastures.

This proposed line should have avoided migratory flyways and important habitats for this species in order to prevent collisions and population-level impacts. We recommend avoiding spanning bodies of water or placing lines between heavily-used bodies of water and landscape contexts in which the overhead static wire is obscured or hard to see.

c) Amphibians

Typically, it is assumed that amphibians will be affected in areas where perennial water occurs. However, as discussed in the section on special status species, intermittent and ephemeral waters can be very important to a variety of species, including various amphibians.

d) Reptiles

There is potential for construction related activity to cause direct mortality to reptiles, plus there are impacts related to fragmentation caused by road construction. Additional access created by the proposed lines could result in greater mortality to snakes as some people purposefully kill snakes.

e) Fish

Many fish species utilize ephemeral waters for dispersal, etc.

f) Invertebrates

Information regarding invertebrate species is, unfortunately, completely lacking, as was acknowledged in the FEIS. As noted above, without an understanding of what species occur in the project area, it is impossible to know the full extent of impacts caused by this project. Many invertebrate species are highly endemic and may only occur in relatively small areas. If such species occur within the project area, this project has the potential to disrupt the required habitat and have significant negative impacts on the species, including impacts at both the population or species level.

g) Special-status wildlife species

The project would affect special status species and traverse and potentially negatively affect habitat for the southwestern willow flycatcher.

The most prudent and cost effective way to achieve these objectives is close consultation with the USFWS and the Arizona Game and Fish Department (AZGFD), avoidance through

robust screening, monitoring, effective mitigation, and application of the precautionary principle.

The Final Environmental Impact Statement for the project stated that a "significant impact on biological resources could result if any of the following were to occur from construction or operation of the proposed action." [*See* SunZia Project FEIS / RMPA at 4-68] One of the impacts listed is "[f]ragmentation resulting from the addition of new infrastructure to large, currently intact blocks of habitat." As such, we anticipate that habitat fragmentation associated with the construction and/or improvement of roads, as well as disturbance from maintenance activities associated with SunZia and subsequent disturbance associated with increased public access, would have a significant impact on the following terrestrial special status wildlife species with relatively large, intact habitat blocks in the affected region: jaguar, ocelot, jaguarundi (if present), Mexican gray wolf, desert bighorn sheep, New Mexico meadow jumping mouse, Arizona striped whiptail, Sonoran desert tortoise, Tucson shovel-nosed snake, northern Mexican garter snake, northern aplomado falcon, cactus ferruginous pygmy owl, and Sprague's pipit, among others. Most, if not all, of these species have been documented to be sensitive to habitat fragmentation and human disturbance.

Should the project move forward to construction, the project proponent must consult with the USFWS and Arizona Game and Fish to determine site-specific and/or off-site mitigation measures to avoid, minimize, and offset impacts from fragmentation and disturbance to these species. A crucial mitigation measure that should have been included and implemented globally is to tightly restrict vehicular access to transmission line access roads, so as to avoid an increase in human-related impacts that are facilitated by access, such as direct mortality from vehicle collisions and poaching and disturbances that affect habitat quality such as noise, pollution, accelerated erosion, and the accidental introduction and spread of non-native species. Additional information about some of these species follows.

Chiricahua leopard frog (Lithobates chiricahuensis)

Ephemeral and intermittent drainages can be of great importance to this species. With regards to this species, with reference to both perennial and ephemeral waters, the USFWS states that, "for Chiricahua leopard frogs, defining the action area of a proposed project must consider the reasonable dispersal capabilities of the species, and the likelihood/extent of any downstream or upstream effects that might arise from the proposed action."
Other amphibian species are likely to be similarly affected.

Lesser long-nosed bat (Leptonycteris curasoae yerbabuenae)

The lesser long-nosed bat is listed as endangered under the Endangered Species Act. Because it migrates long distances and is one of the nectar-feeding bat species, it must time its travel to coincide with the flowering or fruiting activity of its food plants. The floral resources they depend upon have been threatened by wildland habitat conversion and fragmentation, and maternity roost sites (located in caves and abandoned mines) are sensitive to human disturbance. The proposed SunZia Transmission Line is located at the

northern limits of the range of the lesser long-nosed bat. However, there is also a significant possibility that additional, undocumented roosts could exist within the study area, as it contains concentrations of agaves that could be used as food sources by this species. The lesser long-nosed bat is known to be capable of traveling long distances, in the range of 30 to 60 miles, in a single night to forage. The proximity of the study corridor to other known roosts makes it likely that these populations forage within the study corridor occasionally.

Lesser long-nosed bats are likely to use different roosts in different years to be closer to better foraging areas. If an important roost site is disrupted or destroyed as part of this project, it could have significant impacts on this species.

Agave and saguaro that would need to be removed should be transplanted near the removal site, and additional plants should be planted for mitigation (and to account for possible unsuccessful transplants) at a minimum of a 3:1 ratio.

Mexican long-nosed bat (Leptonycteris nivalis)

Thorough surveys must be done for species such as this.

Mexican gray wolf (Canis lupus baileyi)

The Mexican gray wolf does not currently occur in the project area, but this area does include suitable and historic habitat for this critically endangered species and USFWS revised the rule to allow wolf dispersal in this area. The Mexican gray wolf is a subspecies of the gray wolf, and is the most endangered type of wolf in the world. After being extirpated in the United States and with only a few animals remaining in Mexico, Mexican wolves were bred in captivity and reintroduced to the wild in Arizona beginning in 1998. The goal of the reintroduction program, which is only a first step toward full recovery, was to restore at least 100 wolves to the wild by 2006, but that did not occur and is certainly not the number that scientists recommend. At the end of 2014, there were still only about 110 wolves in the wild in Arizona and New Mexico. This species remains critically endangered.

A wolf reintroduction effort is also underway in Sonora, Mexico. If a strong population of wolves is established there, it is quite likely they would range northward, including into areas affected by the proposed project. Much of the proposed corridor borders the southern boundary of the 10j reintroduction area for the species and so may particularly affect dispersal and genetic exchange between populations now being established in Mexico and those in the US. The entire SunZia planning area is within the Sky Islands region, which could be identified as a key recovery area in the revised recovery plan that is now underway. North/south habitat linkages for this species are particularly important to protect. New access roads associated with SunZia could provide new access into wolf habitat. The level of vehicular access is directly related to the relative level of habitat security for this species as these wolves are particularly at risk to illegal killings.

Even with the current low numbers in the wild, Mexican gray wolves have ranged across various portions of the proposed SunZia project planning area in search of new territory. Such occurrences will likely occur more often as the population grows and disperses. The Five-Year Review of the Mexican gray wolf recovery program found that movement distances for lone wolves averaged 87 ± 10 km (54 ± 6 mi). In addition, introduced Mexican wolves in northern Sonora, Mexico, could also range into the SunZia project planning area.

Jaguar (Panthera onca)

The United States portion of the jaguar's range coincides with the proposed transmission route in Cochise and Pima counties, making it essential that SunZia planning limit habitat fragmentation and preserve movement corridors for this species. Areas with moderate to high quality jaguar habitat should be given particular consideration, including the area in and surrounding Steins Pass at the Arizona/New Mexico border, the area within approximately 25 miles east of Willcox, Arizona, and between Tucson, Arizona, in the west and State Highway 191 in the east. North/south habitat linkages for this species are particularly important to protect, and tend to coincide with areas with riparian corridors, lands with moderate to high vegetation cover, and rough terrain.

Ocelot (Leopardus pardalis)

Ocelots have been positively identified in Arizona and may travel through the study corridor. A new recovery plan is being developed by the USFWS for this species. According to the draft recovery plan for the ocelot:

> [the species] is listed as endangered throughout its range in the western hemisphere where it is distributed from southern Texas through Central and South America into northern Argentina and Uruguay. No critical habitat has been designated for the ocelot. Currently the U.S. population has fewer than 100 ocelots, found in 2 separated populations in southern Texas, at the northern limit of the species' distribution. A third and much larger population of the Texas ocelot occurs in Tamaulipas, Mexico, but is geographically isolated from ocelots in Texas. The Sonoran ocelot was last documented in southern Arizona in 1964, and presently occurs in northwestern Mexico but little is known about its abundance and distribution.

Until more field research is conducted to study and determine ocelot habitat selection in this northern portion of its range, all vegetation types with dense cover and an adequate prey base should be considered potential ocelot habitat.

The Committee must also consider that changing habitat – due to drought, climate change, and other factors – will shift the range and movement patterns for a variety of species, including the ocelot. The fact that five ocelot have been identified in Arizona in the last four years may indicate that such incidences may be increasing.

Golden eagle (Aquila chrysaetos)

This wide-ranging and broadly-distributed species, protected by the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (BGEPA), is likely to be impacted by transmission development to some degree, but because knowledge of their distribution and habitat use is so vague, the impacts of potential development in any particular area cannot be quantified with any accuracy and precision. This does not mean that population-level impacts do not need to be examined, but it does make filling information gaps for this species crucial, both at the local scale through sufficient study of the proposed project area as well as the landscape scale through population level surveys and monitoring.

The Applicant should consult with USFWS regarding what surveys should be conducted to predict potential eagle mortality and, if warranted, consider applying for an eagle incidental take permit. Although fatalities most often occur at smaller (≤ 69 kV) distribution lines, electrocution and collision are known causes of mortality for the golden eagle. The design and layout of SunZia's towers, transmission lines and guy wires should minimize risk to eagles. We recommend SunZia develop an Avian Protection Plan (APP) and follow best practices laid out by USFWS and the Avian Power Line Interaction Committee (APLIC).

Bald eagle (Haliaeetus leucocephalus)

Much of the information regarding the golden eagle provided above also applies to the bald eagle. While it is true that bald eagles are most often found in areas with open water, they can be seen in areas without these permanent sources, especially during non-nesting or migration periods. In fact, some bald eagles spend a significant amount of time in areas far from water.

Yuma clapper rail (Rallus longirostris yumanensis)

While Yuma clapper rails infrequently use the project area, infrequent use does not automatically signify that impacts will be low. Picacho Reservoir and similar areas may become increasingly important as habitat changes occur in other areas of this species' range. Such impacts must be recognized and analyzed.

Cactus ferruginous pygmy-owl (Glaucidium brasilianum cactorum)

The cactus ferruginous pygmy-owl was listed as endangered under the ESA in 1997, but was delisted in 2006 "for reasons unrelated to recovery." In 2011, the USFWS determined that listing was not warranted, but clearly the species is in imperiled and as such is listed as sensitive by the BLM. Habitat for the cactus ferruginous pygmy-owl is located throughout the project corridor area.

Threats to pygmy-owls include loss habitat including that in riparian areas and the spread of invasive species such as buffelgrass that cause unnaturally hot fires to burn, destroying saguaros and other native vegetation.

Pygmy-owls are currently found primarily in Sonoran desert scrub vegetation and riparian drainages and woodlands, as well as palo-verde-cacti-mixed scrub associations. It primarily nests in saguaro cacti cavities, so additional loss of saguaros associated with this project could negatively impact this imperiled species. To improve habitat for this species, it is important to both maintain and restore "woodland vegetation along drainages and tall upland vegetation with saguaros." The BLM should avoid, salvage, and relocate saguaros of transplantable size is important to reduce impacts to pygmy owl habitat. Any activities should also avoid mesquite bosque habitat.

Because pygmy-owls generally fly short distances a minimal distance above the ground when they seek to cross vegetation openings during natal dispersal and when flying across their home ranges, so consideration should be given to this and creating much wider opening devoid of perching areas should be avoided.

Sandhill crane (Grus canadensis)

Sandhill cranes are primarily birds of open freshwater wetlands, but the different subspecies utilize habitats that range from bogs, sedge meadows, and fens to open grasslands, pine savannas, and cultivated lands. Sandhill cranes occur at their highest breeding density in habitats that contain open sedge meadows in wetlands that are adjacent to short vegetation in uplands. A portion of three distinct populations of sandhill cranes winters in Arizona. Cranes from both the Rocky Mountain (RM) and mid-Continent (M-C) populations winter in the Sulphur Springs and Gila River valleys of southeastern Arizona.

Areas of concern for sandhill cranes in the project area include the Willcox Playa in southeastern Arizona, which supports the second largest over-wintering concentration of this migratory bird.

The USFWS estimates that 174 million birds die each year as a result of colliding with transmission lines. The project should have avoided spanning bodies of water or placing lines between heavily-used bodies of water and landscape contexts in which the overhead static wire is obscured or hard to see.

Southwestern willow flycatcher (Empidonax traillii extimus)

The endangered southwestern willow flycatcher is found at various locations in the project area, with designated critical habitat along numerous riparian corridors (the species' breeding habitat) in the region. They are threatened by habitat loss, particularly in these riparian areas.

Avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures consistent with the recovery plan (and implemented in consultation with USFWS) may be warranted for any instances in which the transmission corridor crosses a floodplain or other riparian habitat area. Engineering of structures to span over flycatcher habitat is the preferred avoidance method, and vegetation

preservation and/or restoration actions should be implemented where SunZia interacts with flycatcher habitat.

Sprague's pipit (Anthus spragueii)

Sprague's pipits could be significantly affected by this project. This species is very sensitive to habitat fragmentation, and it also avoids areas with structures such as those proposed in this project. "Postconstruction restoration in areas of habitat suitable for Sprague's pipit may not be an effective mitigation, since the birds would likely not occupy areas near tall structures" (FEIS, pg. 4-84).

Sonoran desert tortoise (Gopherus morafkai agassizii)

As its common name denotes, it is found in the Sonoran Desert. Sonoran desert tortoises are most closely associated with the Arizona Upland and Lower Colorado River subdivisions of Sonoran desertscrub and Mojave desertscrub vegetation types. They occur most commonly on rocky, steep slopes and bajadas, and in paloverde-mixed cacti associations. Core, higher density populations of this species tend to be "island like" and associated with steeper terrain and aspects, making the species very vulnerable to connectivity disruptions, especially as associated with the development of roads and other infrastructure. Also, additional perches for ravens can increase the mortality for desert tortoises as ravens use transmission lines as a means to scout out and prey upon young tortoises.

Sonoran desert tortoises are very susceptible to the construction and maintenance activities related to this project. The BLM proposes limited mitigation measures to address this problem and provides inadequate information to determine if these measures are even suitable. For example, preconstruction surveys will only be useful if conducted just prior to construction by a qualified biologist in order to determine if tortoises are in the path of construction. Even then, tortoises can be extremely difficult to locate, and direct mortality will still occur. Indirect effects, including habitat loss and degradation, increased recreation, and road effects, will greatly increase the impacts to this species.

Tucson shovel-nosed snake (Chionactis occipitalis klauberi)

This small, 10–17" shovel-nosed snake is primarily restricted to sand dunes and sandy-silty flats on creosote-mesquite floodplain valley floors, but they can also be found in washes and on rocky hillsides with pockets of sand. The geographic range of this subspecies is currently confined to the most arid areas of Pima and Pinal counties. Tucson shovel-nosed snakes burrow as well as crawl and are adapted for "swimming" rapidly through loose sand. The species is nocturnal/crepuscular, typically staying underground during the heat of the day and foraging for insects above ground at night. While this species was removed from the Endangered Species list in late 2014, they are threatened throughout their entire range by habitat loss and fragmentation due to development, roads, potential solar power facilities, agriculture, wildfires, and lack of adequate management and regulation.

Gila chub (Gila intermedia)

This endangered minnow species is primarily threatened by habitat degradation on the banks of the streams that they inhabit and from upstream runoff in their watersheds. Limiting watershed impacts (erosion, sedimentation, etc.) from construction and preserving riparian corridors will be essential in avoiding impacts upon this species. The mitigation impacts described in the FEIS do little to adequately address threats to this species.

b. Special-status plant species

When populations of special status plant species are found, they must also be avoided. For example, when discussing the Acuña cactus (*Echinomastus erectocentrus acunensis*), in the FEIS states that, "where possible, destruction of plants would be avoided" (FEIS, pg. 4-89). Additional details on how this would be accomplished should have been provided.

c. Biological Resource Conservation Areas

The proposed project would have impacts to wildlands, wildlife, and conservation areas in both Arizona and New Mexico. This project would affect several conservation areas that are managed for biological resources, as well as several Important Bird Areas. These lands support a wide variety of plant and animal species, including numerous special status species. Many of them are relatively undeveloped and provide increasingly important refuges for the species they support.

The proposed SunZia project and related energy development projects will harm these conservation plans and areas and compromise the integrity of the following areas and the surrounding landscapes, as well as others:

- Pima County's Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan Conservation Lands System (Pima County)
- San Pedro River Valley and migration corridor (Globally Significant Important Bird Area, USFWS proposed National Wildlife Refuge and numerous private land conservation easements)
- Pima County preserves (Pima County, State of Arizona)
- AZGFD-identified wildlife linkages (Arizona)
- Willcox Playa

The above list is not exhaustive, but merely highlights some of the areas most affected by the proposed project.

I) Wildlife linkages and habitat fragmentation

"Habitat fragmentation and loss are currently recognized as the principal threats to biodiversity" (FEIS, pg. 4-96). We are concerned about the effects of the linear fragmentation (from the transmission line and associated roads and other features), the potential effects

that may radiate outward (e.g., increased recreation, illegal spur roads, etc.), and the edge effects associated with these. Natural, undeveloped areas are critically important to a variety of species that will be affected by this project; natural, undeveloped corridors between these areas are just as important. Any source of fragmentation in these areas – whether new development or additive to other development – should be avoided.

4. Issues Related to Cultural Resources and Tribal Concerns

There are numerous cultural resources located along or in close proximity to the route. Direct impacts to these resources come primarily from ground disturbance. Indirect impacts include erosion and increased sedimentation from construction related activities. Another concern relates to the fact that the transmission line corridor will open up miles of previously unfragmented landscape with the likely result of increased vandalism and illegal artifact collecting due to increased public access.

According to the Center for Desert Archaeology and the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the route will have enormous negative impacts on the significant cultural resources in the Lower San Pedro River Valley. CDA and the National Trust indicated that the route that traverses the lower San Pedro Valley was of particular concern.

CDA and the National Trust identified over 500 archeological sites in the lower San Pedro River Valley with approximately one third of them containing architecture and probable human remains. Given this uncertainty and the high value of these resources, CDA and National Trust stated that these important cultural resources were further reason for BLM to select a No Action Alternative and to instead evaluate the use of existing transmission and transportation corridors with less harmful effect. The Committee has also received a comment letter from the Tohono O'Odham Nation outlining significant concerns about cultural and natural resources.

5. Issues Related to Visual Resources

In Arizona, the utility corridor would have high to moderate-high impacts to views observed by hikers using the Arizona National Scenic Trail and the Buehman Canyon Trail. Again, the reason given for the high to moderate-high impacts on visual resources is because the SunZia Project would be viewed in the lower San Pedro River Valley, described as a "landscape with few modifications." [FEIS, p. 202].

The SunZia Project would have high to moderate-high impacts on visual resources to travelers on other scenic roads and byways that don't have official scenic byway designations but which traverse relatively unmodified landscapes like the Cascabel Road and Redington Road in the lower San Pedro River Valley [See FEIS, p. 202].

It is difficult to visualize the impact of the construction of 135 foot transmission line towers and access roads cutting a 1,000 foot-wide swath through unmodified landscapes. There is a huge difference between scenery destruction as described by the dry bureaucratic language of the SunZia Project FEIS and in the materials provided by the applicant and the real world impacts seen by residents and visitors to the desert. For example, Mr. Peter Edgell wrote, "On a Sunday morning in 1974 my wife and I were awakened by the sound of a helicopter across the San Pedro River from us.

We walked outside and saw to our horror this helicopter was raising a behemoth electrical tower and more were lying in wait to be raised. We had bought our ten acres because of the beautiful views of hills and mountains on all sides of us. Now, almost 40 years later those towers are still upsetting. Several years ago I found a photo taken in 1973 of those hills. They had been so beautiful before the towers were there." Mr. Edgell and his wife will be treated to more towers should the Committee grant the CEC for SunZia.

6. Issues Related to Social and Economic Concerns

The economic analysis related to this proposed transmission line does not consider the impacts on the significant investments in areas that would be affected by the proposed project. Most of the economic benefits would be short-term and associated with construction of the transmission lines, while the negative economic impacts would be long-term, irreversible, and unmitigable.

a. Ecotourism

Many of the areas that would be most significantly affected by this proposed project – the San Pedro River and its tributaries, and the Willcox Playa – are well-known ecotourism attractions. Birders, hikers, and wildlife watchers come from all over the United States and the world to enjoy this region. Birders are particularly drawn to these areas due to the amazing diversity of birds that inhabit and migrate through these ecologically significant lands. Willcox hosts an annual "Wings Over Willcox" event that focuses on the birding in the area. In 2015, it celebrated the 20th anniversary of this event, an important component of the local economy.

The project will affect ecotourism including direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts. The economic role of public lands, river valleys, playas, and natural open space, plus the wildlife these support for the local communities and existing research documenting the economic importance of protected public land resources should be considered. Income from tourism is a sustainable source of income, but requires that the resource is managed and protected. The proposed SunZia transmission line has the potential to forever damage sustainable regional resources for a questionable purpose and need.

b. Watchable wildlife

Watchable Wildlife programs play an increasing role with state wildlife agencies and land managers. As other forms of wildlife recreation continue to decline, watchable wildlife programs are more popular than ever. In Arizona, the Arizona Game and Fish Department is seeking to "Identify, assess, develop and promote watchable wildlife recreational opportunities." In a 2006 study, the Outdoor Industry Foundation reported that all outdoor wildlife-related recreational activities generated $730 billion annually for the United States economy and, of that, watchable wildlife generated $43 billion annually. They reported 66 million Americans participated in wildlife viewing, which supported 466,000 jobs. Estimated economic returns included retail sales averaging $8.8 billion, trip related expenditures of $8.5 billion, and state and federal tax receipts of $2.7 billion. There are some aspects of outdoor recreation not captured by these numbers as well, including visitors who come for sight-seeing, family gatherings, and for educational benefits.

A 2011 study by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation estimated the combined value of outdoor recreation, nature conservation and historic preservation at creating more than 9.4 million jobs, generating $107 billion in local, state, and federal tax revenues resulting in a minimum total economic impact nationally of $1.6 trillion. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service contributed about $4.2 billion in economic activity and supported over 32,000 jobs through its management of 553 National Wildlife Refuges and thousands of smaller natural areas throughout the country.

According to a 2004 study of National Wildlife Refuges, there were 36.7 million visitors who generated $1.64 billion of economic activity in regional economies. About two-thirds of the total expenditures were generated by non-consumptive activities, meaning it was neither fishing (27 percent) nor hunting (5 percent). The authors of this study also conducted willingness-to-pay research to determine the value of these refuges beyond what it actually cost to visit. They found that visitors showed a consumer surplus of more than $1.3 billion, with $816 million of this amount attributed to non-consumptive visitation.

8. Issues Related to the Impact of Roads

Roads pose significant threats to the land and resources, including impacts on wildlife through direct and indirect mortality and habitat fragmentation. In addition to creating new roads in already disturbed areas, many of the subroutes would cross currently roadless areas. We are strongly opposed to construction of roads in these areas.

Roads inflict a horrific toll on wildlife, with an estimated one million vertebrates killed daily on America's highways. Roads, paved or primitive, facilitate inadvertent or deliberate disruption of wildlife. According to prominent conservation biologists, habitat fragmentation is the most serious threat to biological diversity and is the primary cause of the present extinction crisis."

Roads fragment habitat by carving otherwise large patches into smaller ones resulting in negative impacts to interior habitat. Roads also directly eliminate wildlife habitat by occupying space within the ecosystem and by altering adjacent habitat. Roadside habitats experience increased temperature extremes and solar input and pollution from exhaust, herbicides, garbage, dust, and noise. These conditions increase habitat disturbance by a minimum of 500-600 meters on either side of a small rural road and a much larger distance for highways.

Wildlife is affected directly and indirectly by roads. Mule deer frequently harassed by all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) may alter their feeding and spatial-use patterns, and produce fewer offspring the following year. Mountain lions avoid improved dirt and hard-surfaced roads and select home range areas with lower densities of these road types.

In the Southwest, roads and associated activities are the primary cause of extensive arroyo cutting during the last century. Severe gully formation negatively affects soils, vegetation, and archaeological resources. Vehicular traffic directly destroys biological resources by crushing vegetation and microbiotic soil crusts. The resulting soil compaction retards the recovery of

vegetation. In addition, off-road vehicle (ORV) use can cause unsustainable erosion rates, exacerbate the spread of non-native invasive plants, cause user conflicts, and damage cultural sites.

9. Groups Interested in the SunZia Transmission Project.
Our groups have members who use public lands affected by the proposed action for activities such as hunting, hiking, camping, bird watching, nature viewing, and other forms of outdoor recreation and enjoyment. These groups and their interests are described in more detail below:

Sierra Club – Grand Canyon (Arizona) Chapter
514 W. Roosevelt St.
Phoenix, Arizona 85004-4536
Phone: (602) 253-8633
Contact person: Ms. Sandy Bahr, Director

Sierra Club's mission is "to explore, enjoy, and protect the wild places of the earth; to practice and promote the responsible use of the earth's ecosystems and resources; and to educate and enlist humanity to protect and restore the quality of the natural and human environments." Sierra Club has more than 2.4 million members and supporters nationwide, including more than 35,000 members and supporters of the Grand Canyon Chapter. Our members have significant interests in the proposed SunZia Project and its impacts on natural resources. Many of our members enjoy watching wildlife, hiking, backpacking, and other outdoor and educational activities on lands that may be adversely affected by the Sunzia Project. Some of our members live near the affected lands.

Sierra Club is committed to helping reduce greenhouse gas emissions and limiting global climate change and disruption. Three of the four Sierra Club priority campaigns, Beyond Coal, Beyond Oil, and Beyond Natural Gas are related to transforming the nation's electricity sources from polluting fossil fuels to clean renewable energy and reducing energy use through efficiency and conservation are all essential to meeting our carbon reduction goals. Sierra Club members are working to rapidly increase our nation's energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy resources by advocating for improved appliance and building efficiency and standards to promote them, as well as a rapid ramp-up of distributed generation (mainly rooftop solar), community scale and large-scale renewable energy projects, including solar, wind, and geothermal generating plants. All of these will be necessary to meet our greenhouse gas reductions goals. In the short term, some proposals for large-scale renewable and associated transmission lines will be needed. We seek to minimize any impacts of that proposed transmission on wildlife, air and water quality, and other important environmental values.

Sierra Club has participated in the planning process for the Sunzia Project since BLM initiated the process in 2008. Members and staff have participated in public meetings; we, along with many of our conservation partners, submitted several sets of scoping comments on the project in 2009 as well as a final set of scoping comments in 2010, and comments on the Draft EIS/RMP in 2011 [*See* SunZia Project FEIS/RMPA, Appendix J, Comment ID Number 1600, Page J-159], and also objected to the Final Environmental Impact Statement in late 2014, along with several other parties.

Center for Biological Diversity
P.O. Box 710
Tucson, Arizona 85702-0710
Phone: (520) 784-1504
Contact person: Mr. Randy Serraglio, Southwest Conservation Advocate

The Center for Biological Diversity (CBD) is a national non-profit conservation organization headquartered in Tucson, Arizona. CBD has more than 900,000 members and supporters, tens of thousands whom reside in Arizona. CBD is dedicated to the protection of threatened and endangered species and their habitats. CBD members have a keen interest in the SunZia Project because of its impacts on endangered and threatened species and habitats that CBD's members work to protect.

The development of renewable energy is a critical component of efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and avoid the worst consequences of global warming. CBD strongly supports the development of renewable energy production, however, like any project, proposed renewable energy transmission projects should be thoughtfully planned to minimize impacts to the environment. In particular, renewable energy transmission projects should avoid impacts to sensitive species and habitats, and should be minimized to avoid the efficiency loss associated with extended energy transmission. Only by maintaining the highest environmental standards with regard to local impacts, and effects on species and habitat, can renewable energy production be truly sustainable.

CBD has participated in the planning process for the SunZia Project by submitting scoping comments and joining in comments submitted by the Sierra Club – Grand Canyon Chapter [*See* SunZia Project FEIS/RMPA, Appendix J, Comment ID Number 1600, Page J-159] and submitting separate comments on the draft Sunzia Project FEIS / RMPA by letter dated August 22, 2012 [See SunZia Project FEIS / RMPA, Appendix J, Comment ID Number 2221, Page J-475]. In its separate comment letter, CBD supported comments submitted by the Coalition for Sonoran Desert Protection, Cascabel Working Group, Defenders of Wildlife, Tucson Audubon Society, and Friends of the Aravaipa Region.

Huachuca Audubon Society (HAS)
P.O. Box 63
Sierra Vista, AZ 85636
Phone: (520) 378-4937
Contact Person: Ms. Tricia Gerrodette, President

The Huachuca Audubon Society (HAS) is an Arizona chapter of the National Audubon Society and Audubon Arizona, representing approximately 300 members who reside primarily in Cochise County, Arizona and in the San Pedro River Valley. The mission of the HAS is to "conserve and restore ecosystems so that birds and other wildlife can flourish and enrich the Earth's diversity" [*See* HAS website at http://www.huachuca-audubon.org/index.php].

The HAS participated in the planning process by joining in the comments submitted by the Tucson Audubon Society by letter dated August 22, 2012 [*See* SunZia Project FEIS / RMPA, Appendix J, Comment ID Number 1601, Page J-209].

Coalition for Sonoran Desert Protection (CSDP)
300 E. University Boulevard, #120
Tucson, AZ 85705
Phone: (520) 388-9925
Contact Person: Ms. Carolyn Campbell, Executive Director

The Coalition for Sonoran Desert Protection was founded in 1998 and is comprised of 41 environmental and community groups working in Pima County, Arizona. Its mission is to achieve the long-term conservation of biological diversity and ecological function of the Sonoran Desert through comprehensive land-use planning, with primary emphasis on Pima County's Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan. They achieve this mission by primarily advocating for: 1) the protection and conservation of Pima County's most biologically rich areas, 2) directing development to appropriate land, and 3) requiring appropriate mitigation for impacts to habitat and wildlife species. [See SunZia Project FEIS / RMPA, Appendix J, Comment ID Numbers 1830, Page J-324.]

Thank you for considering our comments.

Sincerely,

Sandy Bahr
Chapter Director
Sierra Club – Grand Canyon (Arizona) Chapter

/s/
Randy Serraglio
Southwest Conservation Advocate
Center for Biological Diversity

/s/
Carolyn Campbell
Executive Director
Coalition for Sonoran Desert Protection

/s/
Tricia Gerrodette
President
Huachuca Audubon Society

ORIGINAL

Willcox Chamber
of Commerce & Agriculture
1500 N. Circle I Road
Willcox, AZ 85643

AZ CORP COMMISSION
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Arizona Corporation Commission
Docket Control
1200 W Washington St
Phoenix, AZ 85007

Arizona Corporation Commission
DOCKETED
OCT 26 2015
DOCKETED BY

Re: L-00000yy-15-0318-00171
Sun Zia Transmission Line

Dear Arizona Corporation Commission;

Greetings, The Willcox Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture wants to thank you for having a public hearing regarding the Sun Zia Transmission Line Project in Willcox, AZ. It allowed for rural citizens and local governments to voice their concerns or support for the project without traveling a great distance to do so.

The Willcox Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture has a concern about one person who spoke about the Sun Zia Project and the Chamber would like to clarify who can officially speak for the Willcox Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture to include Wings Over Willcox which is wholly owned and operated by the Willcox Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture. There is a concern that a Mr. Homer Hansen may have insinuated that he had a connection to Wings Over Willcox. Mr. Hansen is a former volunteer who has never had any authority to speak on behalf of Wings Over Willcox. Only the Executive Director or the Chamber President may speak on any issues related to Wings Over Willcox or the Willcox Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture.

The Willcox Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture is requesting that the record reflect that Mr. Hansen is not nor has been an official to speak about Wings Over Willcox and any ornithological, conservation, environmental, or any other way related to Wings Over Willcox. Thank you for your careful consideration of our request.

Sincerely,

Alan Baker, Executive Director

COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR'S OFFICE
PIMA COUNTY GOVERNMENTAL CENTER
130 W. CONGRESS, FLOOR 10, TUCSON, AZ 85701-1317
(520) 724-8661 FAX (520) 724-8171

C.H. HUCKELBERRY
County Administrator

November 13, 2015

Thomas Chenal, Chairman
Arizona Power Plant and Transmission Line Siting Committee
Office of the Arizona Attorney General
1275 W. Washington Street
Phoenix, Arizona 85007

Re: **SunZia Transmission, LLC, application for Certificate of Environmental Compatibility Docket No. L-00000YY-15-0318-00171**

Dear Chairman Chenal:

As a principal landowner and land manager in the San Pedro Valley, Pima County provides these additional comments to reiterate those factors that Pima County continues to be greatly concerned about. Our core issues are preserving the biological integrity of our Conservation Lands System, protecting the public's significant investment in the Valley, and our ability to fulfill our long-term mitigation obligations for our Section 10 Incidental Take Permit from the US Fish and Wildlife Service. We are also compelled to provide greater detail on those measures we believe are absolutely necessary to avoid, minimize, and mitigate impacts from this project should the requested right of way alignment through Pima County be recommended for approval by the Arizona Power Plant and Transmission Line Siting Committee and approved by the Arizona Corporation Commission.

<u>Avoid the San Pedro River Valley</u>

Starting with the pre-scoping phase of the Bureau of Land Management's environmental review process (2010), Pima County has consistently opposed an alignment through the San Pedro River Valley. As I have previously communicated, our community has made remarkable investment in securing property (fee title) and property interests (grazing leases, conservation easements, etc.) to conserve the biological wealth of these nationally and internationally significant lands. Furthermore, possession of these Conservation Lands

(See Pima County's *Statement of Limited Appearance* – Figure 2) allows us to protect a unique land and aquatic resource base that will provide important mitigation lands for our Section 10 Incidental Take Permit from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. For two very important reasons, we will be hard pressed to provide substitute mitigation lands if we are not able to make full use of our Conservation Lands in the San Pedro River Valley. First, these lands and resources have no match elsewhere in Pima County and second, voters earlier this month did not replenish the funding source that would be used to secure replacement lands. Rerouting the alignment to avoid Pima County's Conservation Lands in the San Pedro River Valley is paramount.

Regarding the subject of re-routing the alignment, Pima County's August 22, 2012 comments on the SunZia Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) criticized the insufficient range of alternatives presented for analysis. It is distressing that this tendency continues with SunZia's presentation of a single alignment to the Line Siting Committee. The very recent release of the Southline Transmission Project's Final EIS is telling in that the analysis of the selected route documents a lesser degree of environmental impact than was originally expected and strongly suggests that there is likely a Tucson route, perhaps along Interstate 10, that could be a viable alternative route for transportation of energy, including renewable energy derived from southern Arizona. That said, there are aspects of a potential Tucson route that we have consistently opposed: the far west Tucson route, the Rillito River/Pantano Wash alignment, and the alignment through the Cienega Valley. Our present position on these elements has not changed.

Minimizing Impacts

Several measures are listed In Pima County's *Statement of Limited Appearance* which would significantly minimize impacts to County interests. There are repeated here with some slight amendment (the fourth item is amended to address all riparian crossings) for your convenience. Again, I would request that these measures be applied as conditions should the project be recommended for approval and should rerouting of the right of way alignment not avoid the San Pedro River Valley.

- No new access or maintenance roads.
- Employ aerial techniques to construct towers, tower sites, and power line stringing and tensioning.
- Establish the project's crossing at the San Pedro River at a location where the stream flow is ephemeral.
- Elevate the tower height at all regulated riparian habitat crossings as mapped the by Pima County Regional Flood Control District to span trees such that vegetation maintenance and clearing is not necessary (See *Statement of Limited Appearance* - Figure 5.).
- Realign the project to avoid the right of way from paralleling Paige Canyon.

Mitigating Impacts

If re-routing the alignment out of the San Pedro River Valley does not occur, we expect compensation for impacts to the Conservation Lands System and loss of publicly funded Conservation Lands and Section 10 Mitigation Bank lands. It is imperative to apply both Mitigation Measures as they address separate issues and are not interchangeable. The following clarifies our expectations.

As previously disclosed in the county's *Statement of Limited Appearance*, the entire requested alignment crosses County Conservation Lands. Given the route of the alignment as portrayed today and assuming a minimum right of way width of 1,000 feet, the impacted area is approximately 2,400 acres. The Conservation Land System ascribes a 4:1 mitigation ratio (4 acres conservation for every 1 acre impact) which results in a minimum mitigation requirement of approximately 9,600 acres of comparable high value habitat. Should the right of way width expand, this estimate will increase proportionately.

> *Mitigation Measure #1.* The current owner(s) of the right of way will provide Pima County with ownership or a property interest in a minimum of 9,600 acres of undeveloped natural open space lands that have the same Conservation Lands System designation or better than those lands within the right of way. Mitigation land will be located within the San Pedro River Valley lying within Pima County or adjoining counties. Ownership or property interest will be conveyed to Pima County on all mitigation lands within 2 years of the Arizona Corporation Commission's approval of the right of way. Alternatively, if property interest to all 9,600 acres of mitigation land has not been provided at the conclusion of the 2-year period, the current owner(s) of the right of way will make in-lieu fee payment to Pima County in a sum sufficient for purchase or lease of the mitigation acreage balance. The final determination as to whether mitigation lands are acceptable for that purpose rests with Pima County.

History demonstrates that the construction and operation of linear infrastructure projects (e.g., transmission lines, pipelines, etc.) within Pima County leave behind enduring resource impacts whose adverse consequences are left for the local community to grapple with. To address such deficiencies, Pima County and community stakeholders have successfully collaborated with infrastructure owners in the development of long-term monitoring and adaptive management plans that address solutions for long-term impacts.

> *Mitigation Measure #2.* Work with Pima County to collaboratively develop and implement a Long-Term Monitoring and Adaptive Management Plan that includes, but may not be limited to, the control and eradication of invasive species, proliferation of off-road vehicle impacts, effective habitat restoration and vegetation management, and protection of cultural resources. The Long-Term Monitoring and

Adaptive Management Plan will be effective for no less than 20 years and will be codified through an enforceable means. Development of the Long-Term Monitoring and Adaptive Management Plan will be completed within one (1) year of the Arizona Corporation Commission's approval of the right of way or initiation of construction within Pima County whichever occurs first.

I strongly encourage the Line Siting Committee to incorporate these conditions into your recommendation to the Arizona Corporation Commission. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

C.H. Huckelberry
County Administrator

CHH/mjk

c:

Albert H. Acken
Samuel L. Lofland
Ryley Carlock & Applewhite
One North Central Avenue, Suite 1200
Phoenix, Arizona 85004
aacken@rcalaw.com slofland@rcalaw .com
Counsel for Applicant

Lawrence V. Robertson, Jr.
Of Counsel to Munger Chadwick, PLC
P.O. Box 1448
Tubac, Arizona 85646-1448
tubaclawyer@aol.com
Counsel for Applicant

Lat J. Celmins
Margrave Celmins, P.C.
817 1 E. Indian Bend Road, Suite 101
Scottsdale, Arizona 85250
lcelmins@mclawfirm.com
Counsel for Winkleman and Redington

Cedric I. Hay, Deputy County Attorney
Pinal County Attorney's Office
P.O. Box 887
Florence, Arizona 85132
cedric.hay@pinalcountyaz.gov
Counsel for Pinal County, Arizona

Peter Gerstman
Executive V.P. and General Counsel
Robson Communities, Inc.
9532 E. Riggs Road
Sun Lakes, AZ 85248-7463
Peter.Gerstman@Robson.com
Co-counsel for Robson Ranch Mountains, LLC

Norm Meader
3443 E. Lee Street
Tucson, Arizona 85716
nmeader@cox.net

Peter T. Else
P.O. Box 576
Mammoth, Arizona 85618
bigbackyardfar@gmail.com

Christina McVie
4420 West Cortaro Farms Road
Tucson, Arizona 85742
Christina.McVie@gmail.com

Marta T. Hetzer
Coash & Coash, Inc.
1802 N. 7th Street
Phoenix, Arizona 85006
mh@coashandcoash.com
Court Reporter

SHAPIRO LAW FIRM, P.C.
Jay L. Shapiro (No. 014650)
1819 E. Molten Avenue, Suite 280
Phoenix, Arizona 85020
Attorneys for Robson Ranch Mountains, LLC

Janice Alward, Chief Counsel
Legal Division
Arizona Corporation Commission
1200 W. Washington Street
Phoenix, Arizona 85007
jalward@azcc.gov

Charles Hains
Legal Division
Arizona Corporation Commission
1200 W. Washington Street
Phoenix, Arizona 85007
chains@azcc.gov
Counsel for Utilities Division Staff

Dwight Nodes
Assistant Chief Administrative Law Judge
Hearing Division
1200 W. Washington Street
Phoenix, Arizona 85007

Thomas Broderick, Director
Utilities Division
Arizona Corporation Commission
1200 W. Washington Street
Phoenix, Arizona 85007

COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR'S OFFICE
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C.H. HUCKELBERRY
County Administrator

November 13, 2015

Thomas Chenal, Chairman
Arizona Power Plant and Transmission Line Siting Committee
Office of the Arizona Attorney General
1275 W. Washington Street
Phoenix, Arizona 85007

Re: **SunZia Transmission, LLC, application for Certificate of Environmental Compatibility Docket No. L-00000YY-15-0318-00171**

Dear Chairman Chenal:

As a principal landowner and land manager in the San Pedro Valley, Pima County provides these additional comments to reiterate those factors that Pima County continues to be greatly concerned about. Our core issues are preserving the biological integrity of our Conservation Lands System, protecting the public's significant investment in the Valley, and our ability to fulfill our long-term mitigation obligations for our Section 10 Incidental Take Permit from the US Fish and Wildlife Service. We are also compelled to provide greater detail on those measures we believe are absolutely necessary to avoid, minimize, and mitigate impacts from this project should the requested right of way alignment through Pima County be recommended for approval by the Arizona Power Plant and Transmission Line Siting Committee and approved by the Arizona Corporation Commission.

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I strongly encourage the Line Siting Committee to incorporate these conditions into your recommendation to the Arizona Corporation Commission. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

C.H. Huckelberry
County Administrator

CHH/mjk

c:

Albert H. Acken
Samuel L. Lofland
Ryley Carlock & Applewhite
One North Central Avenue, Suite 1200
Phoenix, Arizona 85004
aacken@rcalaw.com slofland@rcalaw .com
Counsel for Applicant

Lawrence V. Robertson, Jr.
Of Counsel to Munger Chadwick, PLC
P.O. Box 1448
Tubac, Arizona 85646-1448
tubaclawyer@aol.com
Counsel for Applicant

Lat J. Celmins
Margrave Celmins, P.C.
817 1 E. Indian Bend Road, Suite 101
Scottsdale, Arizona 85250
lcelmins@mclawfirm.com
Counsel for Winkleman and Redington

Cedric I. Hay, Deputy County Attorney
Pinal County Attorney's Office
P.O. Box 887
Florence, Arizona 85132
cedric.hay@pinalcountyaz.gov
Counsel for Pinal County, Arizona

Peter Gerstman
Executive V.P. and General Counsel
Robson Communities, Inc.
9532 E. Riggs Road
Sun Lakes, AZ 85248-7463
Peter.Gerstman@Robson.com
Co-counsel for Robson Ranch Mountains, LLC

Norm Meader
3443 E. Lee Street
Tucson, Arizona 85716
nmeader@cox.net

Peter T. Else
P.O. Box 576
Mammoth, Arizona 85618
bigbackyardfar@gmail.com

Christina McVie
4420 West Cortaro Farms Road
Tucson, Arizona 85742
Christina.McVie@gmail.com

Marta T. Hetzer
Coash & Coash, Inc.
1802 N. 7th Street
Phoenix, Arizona 85006
mh@coashandcoash.com
Court Reporter

SHAPIRO LAW FIRM, P.C.
Jay L. Shapiro (No. 014650)
1819 E. Molten Avenue, Suite 280
Phoenix, Arizona 85020
Attorneys for Robson Ranch Mountains, LLC

Janice Alward, Chief Counsel
Legal Division
Arizona Corporation Commission
1200 W. Washington Street
Phoenix, Arizona 85007
jalward@azcc.gov

Charles Hains
Legal Division
Arizona Corporation Commission
1200 W. Washington Street
Phoenix, Arizona 85007
chains@azcc.gov
Counsel for Utilities Division Staff

Dwight Nodes
Assistant Chief Administrative Law Judge
Hearing Division
1200 W. Washington Street
Phoenix, Arizona 85007

Thomas Broderick, Director
Utilities Division
Arizona Corporation Commission
1200 W. Washington Street
Phoenix, Arizona 85007

RESIDENTIAL UTILITY CONSUMER OFFICE

www.azruco.gov

1110 WEST WASHINGTON · SUITE 220 · PHOENIX, ARIZONA 85007 · PHONE: (602) 364-4835 · FAX: (602) 364-4846

Douglas A. Ducey
Governor

David P. Tenney
Director

November 10, 2015

Mr. Thomas Chenal, Chairman
Arizona Corporation Commission
Power Plant and Transmission Line Siting Committee
1275 West Washington Street
Phoenix, AZ 85007-2926

Re: SunZia Southwest Transmission Project
ACC Docket No. L-00000YY-15-0318-00171

Dear Chairman Chenal:

In regards to Case No. 171, concerning an Application for a Certificate of Environmental Compatibility ("CEC") for the SunZia Southwest Transmission Project ("SunZia", or the "Project"), the Residential Utility Consumer Office ("RUCO") supports the issuance of a CEC by the Line Siting Committee and the Arizona Corporation Commission.

RUCO represents the state's residential utility ratepayers in regulatory proceedings at the Arizona Corporation Commission and is an advocate for their interests. We are aware of and support the SunZia Southwest Transmission Project, which will provide Arizona's electric utilities with additional transmission capacity to procure adequate, reliable and economic sources of electrical power for the state's residential customers. In addition, because the SunZia Project is a merchant transmission project, Arizona ratepayers stand to benefit without bearing the risks associated with development and construction of the project.

I appreciate the opportunity to support the issuance of a CEC for the SunZia Project. RUCO looks forward to the successful completion of SunZia as an integral component to the state's EHV transmission system.

Sincerely,

Jordy Jones, for

David P. Tenney
Director

ORIGINAL

BEFORE THE ARIZONA CORPORATION

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AZ CORP COMMISSION
DOCKET CONTROL

COMMISSIONERS
SUSAN BITTER SMITH - CHAIRMAN
BOB STUMP
BOB BURNS
DOUG LITTLE
TOM FORESE

IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION OF SUNZIA TRANSMISSION, LLC, IN CONFORMANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF ARIZONA REVISED STATUTES 40-360, ET. SEQ., FOR A CERTIFICATE OF ENVIRONMENTAL COMPATIBILITY AUTHORIZING THE SUNZIA SOUTHWEST TRANSMISSION PROJECT, WHICH INCLUDES THE CONSTRUCTION OF TWO NEW 500KV TRANSMISSION LINES AND ASSOCIATED FACILITIES ORIGINATING AT A NEW SUBSTATION (SUNZIA EAST) IN LINCOLN COUNTY, NEW MEXICO, AND TERMINATING AT THE PINAL CENTRAL SUBSTATION IN PINAL COUNTY, ARIZONA. THE ARIZONA PORTION OF THE PROJECT IS LOCATED WITHIN GRAHAM, GREENLEE, COCHISE, PINAL AND PIMA COUNTIES.	**DOCKET NO. L-00000YY-15-0318-00171** Arizona Corporation Commission DOCKETED NOV 13 2015 DOCKETED BY **COMMISSION STAFF'S NOTICE OF FILING ADDITIONAL EXHIBIT**

During the November 4, 2015 session of the Arizona Power Plant and Transmission Line Siting Committee ("Committee") meeting regarding the above captioned matter, the Committee questioned Arizona Corporation Commission ("Commission") Utilities Division Staff ("Staff") regarding the status of utility compliance with the Commission's Renewable Energy Standard Rules. In response, Staff hereby provides notice of filing the attached Staff Memorandum that describes the current state of utility compliance by Arizona Public Service Company, Tucson Electric Power Company, and UNS Electric, Inc.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED this 13th day of November, 2015.

Charles H. Hains
Attorney, Legal Division
Arizona Corporation Commission
1200 West Washington Street
Phoenix, Arizona 85007
(602) 542-3402

Original and twenty-eight (28) copies of the foregoing filed this 13th day of November, 2015, with:

Docket Control
Arizona Corporation Commission
1200 West Washington Street
Phoenix, Arizona 85007

Copy of the foregoing emailed this 13th day of November, 2015, to:

Chairman Thomas Chenal
Arizona Power Plant & Transmission
Line Siting Committee
Attorney General's Office
1275 West Washington Street
Phoenix, Arizona 85007
Thomas.chenal@azag.gov

Albert H. Acken
Samuel L. Lofland
RYLEY CARLOCK & APPLEWHITE
One North Central Avenue, Suite 1200
Phoenix, Arizona 85004-4417
aacken@rcalaw.com
slofland@rcalaw.com
Counsel for Applicant

Lawrence V. Robertson, Jr.
Of Counsel to MUNGER CHADWICK, PLC
P.O. Box 1448
Tubac, Arizona 85646-1448
tubaclawyer@aol.com
Counsel for Applicant

Jay Shapiro
Shapiro Law Firm
1819 East Morten Avenue, Suite 280
Phoenix, Arizona 85020
jay@shapslawaz.com

Lisa Atkins
ARIZONA STATE LAND DEPARTMENT
1616 West Adams Street
Phoenix, Arizona 85007
latkins@azland.gov

Norm "Mick" Meader, Co-Chair
CASCABEL WORKING GROUP
3443 East Lee Street
Tucson, Arizona 85716
nmeader@cox.net

Peter Gerstman
Executive V.P. & General Counsel
ROBSON COMMUNITIES
9532 East Riggs Road
Sun Lakes, Arizona 85248-7463
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Lat Celmins
MARGRAVE CELMINS, P.C.
8171 East Indian Bend Road, Suite 101
Scottsdale, Arizona 852050
lcelmins@mclawfirm.com
Counsel for Winkelman and Redington NRCDS

Christine McVie
4420 West Cortaro Farms Road
Tucson, Arizona 85742
Christine.mcvie@gmail.com

Cedric I. Hay, Deputy County Attorney
Pinal County Attorney's Office
P.O. Box 887
Florence, Arizona 85132
Cedric.hay@pinalcountyaz.gov
Counsel for Pinal County, Arizona

Peter T. Else
P.O. Box 576
Mammoth, Arizona 85618
bigbackywardfar@gmail.com

Michael LeBlanc
Deputy Pima County Attorney
32 North Stone Avenue, Suite 2100
Tucson, Arizona 85701
Michael.LeBlanc@pcao.pima.gov

Linda Pollock
Linda.pollock@azag.gov

Greg Stanley
Gregory.Stanley@pinalcountyaz.gov

Chris Keller
Chris.Keller@pinalcountyaz.gov

Matt Clark
mclark@tucsonaudubon.org

Karne Fogas
kfogas@tucsonaudubon.org

Tim Hogan
thogan@aclpi.org

Rob Peters
rpeters@defenders.org

Sandy Bahr
Sandy.bahr@sierraclub.org

Peter Steere
Peter.steere@tonation-nsn.gov

Elna Otter
Elna.otter@gmail.com

Hallock & Gross
halgros@hallockgross.com

Pearl Mast
cpearlmast@gmail.com

Copy of the foregoing mailed this 13th day of November, 2015, to:

Joe Goodman
GRAHAM COUNTY
General Services Building, 2nd Floor
921 Thatcher Blvd.
Safford, Arizona 85546

Mary Gomez
COCHISE COUNTY
1415 Melody Lane, Bldg. E
Bisbee, Arizona 85603

Steve Abraham
PINAL COUNTY
31 North Pinal Street, Bldg. F
Florence, Arizona 85132

Chuck Huckleberry
PIMA COUNTY
130 West Congress Street, 10th Floor
Tucson, Arizona 85701

Rick Miller
CITY OF COOLIDGE
131 West Pinkley Avenue
Coolidge, Arizona 85228

Phillip Ronnerud
GREENLEE COUNTY
253 Fifth Street
P.O. Box 908
Greenlee, Arizona 85533

Roseann Osorio

MEMORANDUM

TO: Arizona Power Plant and Transmission Line Siting Committee

FROM: Tom Broderick
Director
Utilities Division

DATE: November 13, 2015

RE: STAFF RESPONSE TO COMMITTEE REQUEST FOR INFORMATION ON ARIZONA UTILITY COMPLIANCE WITH COMMISSION RENEWABLE ENERGY STANDARD AND TARIFF REQUIREMENTS (DOCKET NO. L-00000YY-15-0318-00171)

At the November 4, 2015 session of the Arizona Power Plant and Transmission Line Siting Committee ("Committee") meeting, Arizona Corporation Commission ("Commission") Utilities Division Staff ("Staff") presented its testimony and answered questions from the Committee and various parties. During the proceeding, the Committee asked Staff to provide information regarding Commission Renewable Energy Standard and Tariff ("REST") rules compliance by the three largest jurisdictional utilities, Arizona Public Service ("APS"), Tucson Electric Power Company ("TEP"), and UNS Electric, Inc. ("UNS"). Potential renewable generation carried over the proposed SunZia transmission project could qualify for consideration under the portion of the REST rules utility scale requirement, that is, that portion of renewable energy that is normally not met by distributed generation ("DG"). The utility scale requirement comprises 70 percent of the overall REST requirement at this time and in future years. Staff would note that a utility can use DG to help the utility meet the 70 percent requirement, but the utilities typically have not done so. Thus, Staff's response focuses on the 70 percent of the REST requirement that can be met by utility scale renewable generation.

For TEP[1] and UNS[2], their July 1, 2015 REST plan filings with the Commission each include a graph showing their utility scale resources and how that compares to their annual target for the non-DG portion of the REST requirement. The July 1st filings also include a table showing the current and future utility scale generation facilities. The graph and table for TEP's and UNS's filings are provided in response to the Committee's request. In both cases the utilities are projected to have enough utility scale generation to meet the 70 percent of the REST requirement that can be met by utility scale generation through approximately 2020, after which they would need additional renewable energy resources to meet this portion of the REST requirement.

---

[1] *See* TEP's REST Plan filing made on July 1, 2015 in Docket No. E-01993A-15-0239
[2] *See* UNS's REST Plan filing made on July 1, 2015 in Docket No. E-0424A-15-0233

APS also filed its REST Plan on July 1, 2015.[3] APS's plan has an exhibit (Exhibit 1A) that shows the RES Generation Targets and the existing and planned renewable generation that will meet the RES Generation Requirement (provided by utility scale generation). The exhibit shows that APS will produce excess MWh in each of the five years of the Plan period (2016-2020). Since APS will produce "excess" MWh each year, those MWh can be "banked" by APS for use in future years, after 2020. APS's Exhibit 1A is also attached to this memorandum.

Thomas M. Broderick
Director
Utilities Division

TMB:RGG:RTW:red\CHH

ORIGINATORS: Robert Gray and Ray Williamson

[3] *See* APS's REST Plan Filing made on July 1, 2015 in Docket No. E-01345A-15-0241.

Exhibit 1A: APS 2016 - 2020 RES Program Summary

Line No.	APS RES Targets (MWh)	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Line No.
1							1
2	APS Estimated Retail Sales	28,521,089	28,996,597	29,558,195	30,140,948	30,599,406	2
3	APS RES Target - % of Retail Sales	6.0%	7.0%	8.0%	9.0%	10.0%	3
4	**APS Total RES Requirement**	**1,711,265**	**2,029,762**	**2,364,656**	**2,712,685**	**3,059,941**	4
5							5
6	**RES Generation Target**	**1,197,886**	**1,420,833**	**1,655,259**	**1,898,880**	**2,141,958**	6
7							7
8	Distributed Energy % of RES Requirement	30%	30%	30%	30%	30%	8
9	**Distributed Energy Requirement**	**513,380**	**608,929**	**709,397**	**813,806**	**917,982**	9
10	Residential Distributed Energy (50%)	256,690	304,464	354,699	406,903	458,991	10
11	Non-Residential Distributed Energy (40%)	205,352	243,571	283,759	325,522	367,193	11
12	Wholesale Distributed Energy (10%) [1]	51,338	60,893	70,940	81,381	91,798	12
13							13
14	**Renewable Generation (MWh)**						14
15		**2016**	**2017**	**2018**	**2019**	**2020**	15
16	RES Generation Target	1,197,886	1,420,833	1,655,259	1,898,880	2,141,958	16
17							17
18	Existing/Planned Generation Owned/Contracted	2,561,160	2,541,191	2,527,614	2,513,660	2,506,575	18
19	**Energy Applied To/(Withdrawn From) APS Bank for RES**	**1,363,274**	**1,120,357**	**872,355**	**614,781**	**364,617**	19
20	**(line 18 - line 16)**						20
21	**Customer Sited Distributed Energy (MWh)**						21
22		**2016**	**2017**	**2018**	**2019**	**2020**	22
23	RES Distributed Energy Requirement	513,380	608,929	709,397	813,806	917,982	23
24							24
25	Estimated Existing Distributed Energy [2]	807,469	816,475	825,975	835,872	845,748	25
26							26
27	**Energy Applied To/(Withdrawn From) APS Bank for RES**	**294,089**	**207,546**	**116,578**	**22,067**	**(72,234)**	27
28	**(line 25 - line 23)**						28
29	Non-Incented DE Installations	327,008	398,747	464,711	530,675	596,639	29
30	**Total RES Energy (MWh)**						30
31		**2016**	**2017**	**2018**	**2019**	**2020**	31
32	Total RES Requirement	1,711,265	2,029,762	2,364,656	2,712,685	3,059,941	32
33							33
34	Total Expected RES Production	3,368,629	3,357,666	3,353,589	3,349,533	3,352,324	34
35	**(line 18 + line 25)**						35
36	**Energy Applied To/(Withdrawn From) APS Bank for RES**	**1,657,363**	**1,327,904**	**988,933**	**636,847**	**292,383**	36
37	**(line 34 - line 32)**						37
38	Non-Incented DE Installations	327,008	398,747	464,711	530,675	596,639	38
39	**APS RES Budget Summary ($ M's)**						39
40		**2016**	**2017**	**2018**	**2019**	**2020**	40
41	Total Renewable Generation [3]	$ 98.2	$ 75.8	$ 42.6	$ 43.2	$ 44.1	41
42	Total Distributed Energy [3]	49.6	46.7	44.4	43.7	43.4	42
43	**Base RES Program Budget**	**$ 147.9**	**$ 122.5**	**$ 87.0**	**$ 87.0**	**$ 87.5**	43
44	Base Rates	$ (6.0)	$ (6.0)	$ (6.0)	$ (6.0)	$ (6.0)	44
45	Production Tax Credits	(8.0)	(7.4)	(6.8)	(5.9)	(4.3)	45
46	Estimated Green Choice Revenue Credit	(1.7)	(1.7)	(1.7)	(1.7)	(1.7)	46
47	Previous Years Rollover Funds and Other Credits	(14.0)	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	47
48	**RES Adjustor Collection[4]**	**$ 118.2**	**$ 107.4**	**$ 72.5**	**$ 73.4**	**$ 75.5**	48
49							49

Notes:

[1] Per AAC R14-2-1805.

[2] Does not include non-incentive installations from residential and non-residential energy sources towards compliance. Non-incentive installations defined as installations made by customers without taking a direct cash incentive and without transferring REC ownership to APS.

[3] Assumes July 2017 rate case adjudication.

[4] See Exhibit 1B for RES Adjustor Schedule.

Graph 2. Renewable Energy Standard Targets

Note: Graph 2 does not include carryover credits

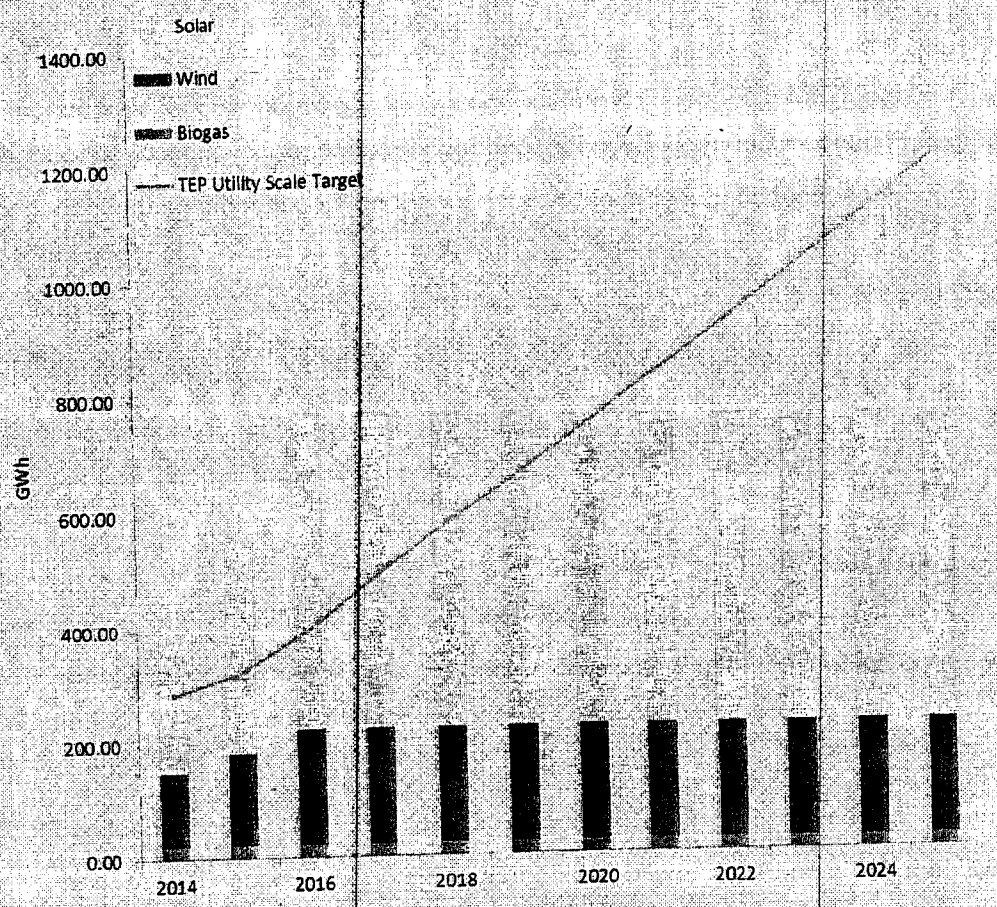

Table 1. Utility Scale Generation

Project	Capacity MW	Annual MWh	Technology	Expected In-Service Date	TEP Owned
Existing Renewable Generation					
SGS (4.6 + 1.81)	6.40	7,265	Fixed PV	Operational	Yes
UASTP I	1.60	2,981	SAT PV	Operational	Yes
* Macho Springs	50.40	130,244	Wind	Operational	No
Picture Rocks	25.00	57,372	SAT PV	Operational	No
Avra Valley	34.41	75,930	Fixed PV	Operational	No
Avalon Solar	35.00	82,563	Fixed PV	Operational	No
UASTP III	5.00	7,835	Fixed PV	Operational	Yes
Solon Prairie Fire	5.00	7,835	Fixed PV	Operational	Yes
Gatos Montes	6.00	10,303	Fixed PV	Operational	No
Cogenra	1.38	2,650	LCPV	Operational	No
Amonix UASTP	2.00	4,049	CPV	Operational	No
E.On Tech Park	6.60	15,300	SAT PV	Operational	No
Valencia Solar	13.20	26,768	SAT PV	Operational	No
White Mountain Solar	10.00	19,947	Fixed/LCPV	Operational	Yes
* Sundt Augmentation	5.00	14,310	Steam Aug	Operational	Yes
Fort Huachuca PHI	17.20	38,635	Fixed PV	Operational	Yes
SunPower (OH & HQ)	0.62	2,076	Fixed PV	Operational	Yes
* Sundt Landfill Gas	4.00	21,100	Biogas	Operational	Yes
Total Existing	**228.81**	**527,164**			
Bright Tucson Solar Buildout Plan					
Project	**Capacity MW**	**Annual MWh**	**Technology**	**Expected In-Service Date**	**TEP Owned**
Fort Huachuca PHII	5.00	11,231	Fixed PV	15-Nov	Yes
Total Future - BTSBP	**5**	**11,231**			
Future Renewable Generation					
Avalon Solar II	21.00	49,787	SAT PV	15-Dec	No
* Red Horse (Wind)	30.00	70,956	Wind	15-Aug	No
* Red Horse (Solar)	41.00	120,610	Solar	15-Aug	No
Total Future – Pending (Contracts)	**92.00**	**241,353**			
Total Planned Generation (Contracts)	**326**	**779,748**			
Total Planned Generation thru 2016	**326**	**779,748**			

* Notes AC Capacity

Graph 1. Renewable Energy Standard Targets

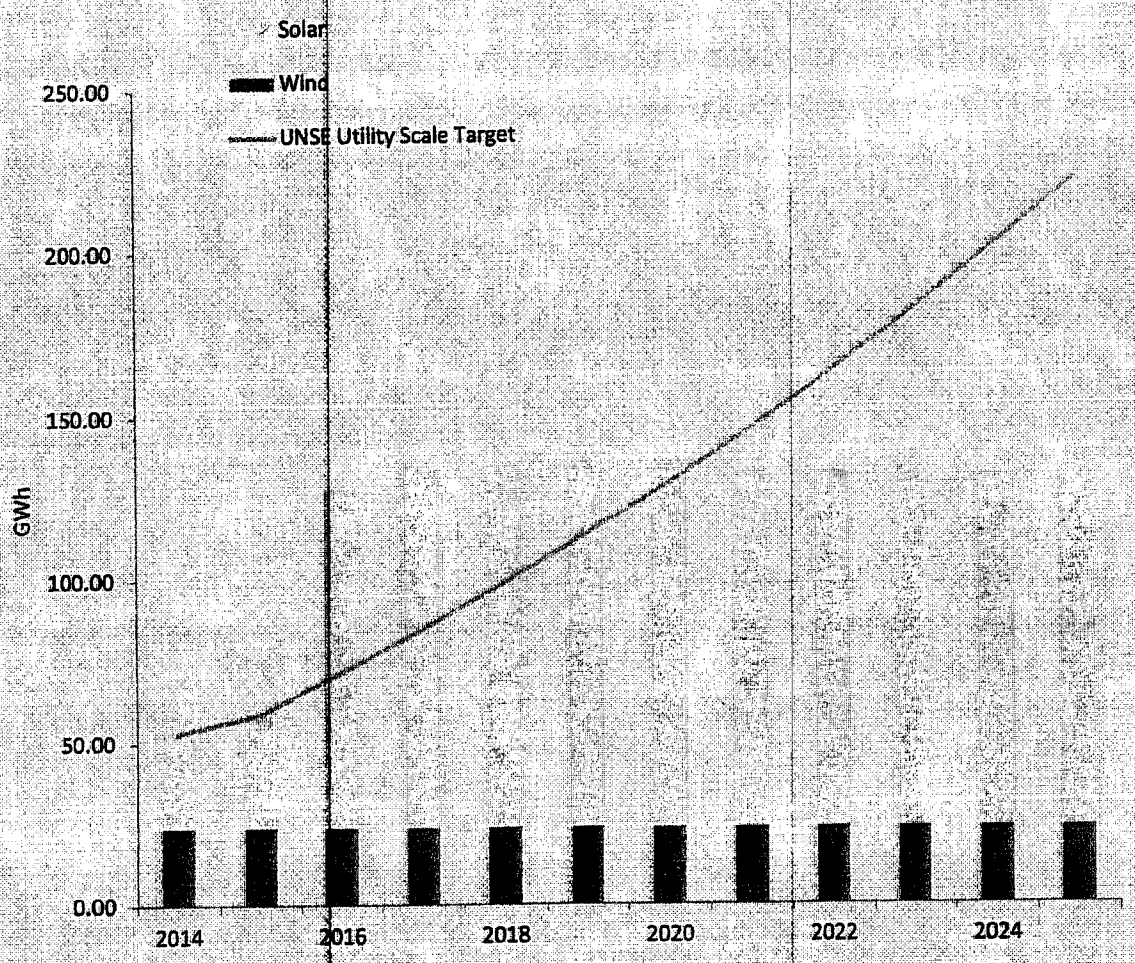

Table 1. Utility Scale Generation

Project	Capacity MW (DC)	Annual MWh	Technology	Expected In-Service Date	UNSE Owned
Existing Renewable Generation					
* Kingman Wind Farm	10	23,652	Wind	Operational	No
Kingman Wind Farm (Solar)	0.3	692	Fixed PV	Operational	No
Black Mountain Solar	9.9	22,881	SAT	Operational	No
La Senita	1.2	2,095	Fixed PV	Operational	Yes
Rio Rico	7.2	11,427	Fixed PV	Operational	Yes
Total Existing	**28.6**	**60,747**			
Project	**Capacity MW**	**Annual MWh**	**Technology**	**Expected In-Service Date**	**UNSE Owned**
Bright Arizona Solar Buildout Plan					
UNSE 5 MW	5	9,152	TBD	2016	Yes
Total Future - BASBP	**5**	**9,152**			
Future Renewable Generation					
* Red Horse II (Expansion)	30	65,345	Fixed PV	Jan-16	No
Total Future – Pending (Contracts)	**30**	**65,345**			
Total Planned Generation (Contracts)	**63.6**	**135,245**			
Total Planned Generation thru 2016	**63.6**	**135,245**			

*Note Capacity reported in AC value

B. Bright Arizona Solar Buildout Plan

In Decision No. 74877 (December 23, 2014), the Commission approved $5 million each for 2015 and 2016 for the UNS Electric Buildout Plan. Under the Buildout Plan, the Company will complete a procurement solicitation to build a new solar PV facility in 2016. This process will reduce design, engineering, and procurement costs, allow the use of a single interconnection, and create an opportunity to satisfy the minimum 5 MW requirement to qualify for a state production tax credit. The UNS Electric Buildout Plan has been an essential component of the Company's renewable energy strategy; however, as shown in Table 2 below, the Company will

Native-born Arizonans and hopefully "transplanted" residents as well, will relate to my reasons for opposing the SunZia transmission lines thru the San Pedro River Valley.

I fully support the documentation presented by the CWG in opposition to the SunZia project. To these points, I want to add my four personal reasons for my opposition to the Valley-destroying project ...a project that opens the door to further destruction of our valley in the future.

At the beginning of this SunZia Power Lines process my family, the Araiza family, submitted a letter in opposition to the power lines. That letter, in part, speaks to our "orgullo hispano"-- our ethnic pride. Quote: "There is a wealth of historical value in the Valley with regard to the early settlements by Hispanic and early American Settlers. Many of the Valley's residents live on the same land their families pioneered and settled generations ago. Evidence of this history will be lost and no longer be retrievable if the SunZia power lines begin the destruction of the Valley." ****

So as you tour the San Pedro River Valley on Wednesday on your way to Cascabel, think about these early settlers. But in particular, my Hispanic ancestors who left a wealth of "historical value" for us to acknowledge, preserve and protect as their contribution to this beautiful place that we present-day residents call "home" or as my family would say it, "nuestro valle hermoso y nuestro hogar."

Think about my paternal great-grandparents, Blas and Dolores Sanchez who in the 1880's sold their modest dairy operation at the foot of "A" mountain in Tucson, traveled over the Redington Pass in the Rincon mountains by wagon; the same Redington Pass the SunZia power lines will cross and undoubtedly, damage and change forever. My great-grandparents were following their dream of homesteading land in the SPRV. They wanted a special place where they could farm and ranch and raise their family of 10 children in this beautiful Valley –the valley we present-day residents call "home".

Think about my maternal grandparents, Miguel and Maria Gamez who traveled from the Tanque Verde and Fort Lowell area in Tucson in 1897 to pursue their similar dream of ranching, farming and raising their 8 children in this rich, beautiful Valley-- the valley we present day residents call "home".

Think about my father, Alfredo Sanchez Araiza, born in 1900 in Mammoth, Az., the little town situated at the northern end of this beautiful San Pedro River Valley. He became a cowboy for the Mule Shoe, Hooker Hot Springs Ranch at the age of 17 years. **** He was a fence and trail builder, a "roust-about" ranch hand and a cook on the cattle drives from Cascabel to Willcox and beyond.

Think about my mother, Isabel Diaz Gamez, born in Cascabel in 1910 and who out of necesssity, became caretaker of her 2 younger siblings at the age of 10 when her mother passed away. And while my mother completed only 3 years of schooling at the Soza School, which at that time was located on the present day C-Spear Ranch, she taught herself to read and write in English and Spanish. This was fortunate for her father, my grandfather Miguel Gamez. You see, he could neither read nor write but even so he was a successful rancher and farmer in this beautiful SPRV.--this valley we present-day residents call "home".

As the 4th generation of my family to reside in the SPRV, I want my children, my grandchildren and my 2 year old great-grandson, to experience a place that is valued for it's natural beauty, a place that is cared for and protected; a place that is appreciated for its rich history --the place in the SPRV we present-day residents call "home".

In closing, IF the SunZia Power Line project becomes a reality, regrettably, my birth place "mi valle hermoso y mi hogar" (my beautiful valley & my home) will never be the same.

Power Plant and Transmission Line Siting Committee
Arizona Corporation Commission
1200 W. Washington Street,
Phoenix, AZ 85007

October 12, 2015

Re: SunZia Transmission, LLC

Docket Number L-OOOOOYY-15-03 1 8-001 7 1

To Whom it may concern:

For a host of reasons, it is not in the State of Arizona's best interests to permit the SunZia transmission project. From its inception, SunZia has been promoted as a renewable energy project to transmit "stranded" wind-generated power from eastern New Mexico to the supposedly lucrative energy markets of California. For reasons that have become obvious as the project has dragged on, SunZia is at best a pipe dream and at worst a scam that is not in the best interests of the State of Arizona.

1) As promoted from its inception until the project achieved a NEPA permit, Arizona was little more than an obstacle on the way from New Mexico wind fields to supposedly insatiable energy markets of southern California. Over and over again, the proponent declared that California, not Arizona, was the primary destination of this project.

2) Arizona meanwhile has been developing its own renewable energy sector based on solar energy. It is not in Arizona's best financial interests to permit out-of-state energy projects to compete with its own burgeoning solar energy industry. That industry provides in-state construction and operational jobs that dwarf those that would potentially be provided by SunZia.

3) Wind energy technology has stalled, with only greater turbine size offering greater efficiency, and this limited by transportation logistics from turbine factories to wind fields. Solar energy technology, by contrast, continues to become more efficient and cost effective. That trend is expected to continue for the foreseeable future.

4) Conflicts with DOD in New Mexico have required undergrounding portions of the project which have driven up the potential costs to levels that will be unlikely to be financed by private investors. The only hope is that what was billed as a merchant line will, in the unlikely event that it is ever built, become just another federally subsidized pork barrel project.

5) This project would cut a new infrastructure path through Arizona's diminishing and irreplaceable wild lands, degrading Arizona's spectacular landscape and environmental gifts, both of which are an increasingly important priority for its current citizens and a significant reason why people desire to move here.

6) If the renewable energy aspect, which was the primary reason the project was granted NEPA approval, is not financially viable, then the only logical conclusion is that the project has, from its inception, been little more than a ruse to build transmission capacity from the proponent's permitted,

though as yet unbuilt, Bowie power plant.

7) Finally, powerline security is compromised when routed across long stretches of unpopulated wildlands. Arizona is in the fortunate position of having its primary solar energy sites located in the southwestern quadrant of the state, in relatively close proximity to the state's major energy markets along the Sun Corridor.

For the same reason, since the El Paso Natural Gas Pipeline bisects the southwest quadrant, it affords an opportunity to co-locate natural gas power plants with solar energy facilities in relatively close proximity to Arizona's energy markets. The proposed SunZia Transmission Project does not do this.

For the above reasons, the proposed SunZia Transmission Project is not in the best interest of Arizona and I ask you to deny approval of this project.

operation circuit breaker

Thank you for your consideration,

David Omick

David Omick
6146 N. Canyon Road
Benson, AZ 85602

Comments on the SunZia Transmission Line Proposal to the Arizona Power Plant and Transmission Line Siting Committee

Marshall Magruder
22 October 2015

Good evening, my name is Marshall Magruder, a resident of Tubac, who has intervened in several line siting cases before this Committee and others including various rate cases before the Commission.

My comments concern several areas, with the "need" for this system being severally doubtful, the new corridors having extreme environmental damages, and the entire project not beneficial for the state of Arizona.

Before I begin, let me remind the Committee of the First Law of Transmission Line siting, that is, to use what is there first before using something new and undeveloped. Modifying an old easement is preferred of a new one.

First, this company tried to bypass this Committee with an attempt to have the state legislature "skip" the Committee and going directly to the Commission since they had a Final EIS and ROD. They only cover the federal lands and NOT the state and private lands. That is your responsibility and where you have complete authority.

From your view, this is not a federal project but a private venture to place a transmission line with the goal of collecting "wheeling charges" and FERC rebates. This is not a line designed to support the electric utilities in this state. For example, there is only one substation along its Arizona route, specifically for the Bowie Generation Station. There are substations, thus no service for Pima County and service for other Arizona location is not an objective for this project.

Second, there is another project, called Southline, sponsored by DOE's WAPA, that will use an existing corridor to upgrade a single 115kV line to a two circuit 230kV lines that will provide two-way transmission nearly parallel to the SunZia route that will be much less expensive to build, less environmental impacts, and meets the needs of Pima and Cochise Counties, especially the cooperatives, for many years. This is a planned project authorized by the Energy Policy Act of 2005, Section 1222, and must be considered as a viable alternative to the SunZia project. I fully support this project as it will improve reliability and capacity in southern Arizona while SunZia does nothing.

Third, the goal of the SunZia project is to provide renewable electricity (RE) from eastern NM to a Pinal County substation and thence to California. This was to provide renewable electricity so California could meet its RE requirements. There are no problems with CA meeting these goals, which have been increased since initiation of the SunZia project. This "need" does not exist, and furthermore, there are no lines with additional capacity to take this electricity to CA from Pinal County.

Fourth, there are two projects in the SunZia proposal, one is for an AC transmission line and a possible AC or DC second transmission line in the future. There are prior cases where changing from DC to AC have required a new CEC, thus you must not approve an unknown second transmission line at this time and have a second CEC approved for the

second line, whenever, if ever, it is "needed" that is doubtful. Since this second line will probably not be required within five years of the ROD, a Supplemental EIS will be required, so granting this CEC during these hearings is giving a premature approval when additional EIS with public comments will be required for the federal part of this project. Thus, recommend only approve the AC line during these hearings.

Fifth, the Bowie Generation Station substation interconnection is the only potential benefit for Arizona; however, this is a "new" project sponsored by the SunZia sponsor and one if its main reasons for being here today. This generation station needs to be moved to be co-located near the coal-powered Apache Generation Station near Willcox to replace the coal with natural gas. This will use the existing corridors and provide access to the grid by the Southline system. This resolves the ongoing environmental challenges at Apache, gives the "Bowie" station its interconnection and does not require a new SunZia transmission line.

Sixth, one original goal for SunZia was to remove "congestion" on path 49, northeast of El Paso, who receives electricity from the Palo Verde Nuclear Generation Plant. If this line going East is near capacity, and a new Southline will carry WAPA electricity East, then why do we need another SunZia line to carry power going west. Power flows to the demand, thus less power is required and SunZia large capacity is a waste. Why have one line going one way and another going the other way, nearly between the same points? This is in the dumb category of waste.

Seventh, the US Army Electronic Test Range in Cochise County is a national treasure and any interference from this project will harm national security. Based on my decades of military experience with such issues, I would not consider having this project with bare lines, radiating electric and electromagnetic energy near this Test Range.

Eight, further, the electromagnetic radiation from the 500 kV lines will induce electricity any natural gas, water, or petroleum ferromagnetic pipelines and even cattle fences. The complex process used to determine these impacts is very challenging and must be verified by the Committee as to not damage the lifecycles of these pipelines. The consequences of induced electricity can be explosive or life-threateningly shocking. The conductivity of the underground soil in the vicinity of the lines must be taken into account.

Ninth, and my final point, is these structures should be coated with dulled, galvanized plated poles to reduce their visibility, a major complaint concerning transmission lines, especially in rural areas and valleys. Also, a cap should be placed on top of any monopole, so that raptors do not have a new perch and thus change the ecology of the areas near these lines.

Sincerely,

Marshall Magruder
PO Box 1267
Tubac, AZ 85646

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22 October 2015

Good evening, my name is Marshall Magruder, a resident of Tubac, who has intervened in several line siting cases before this Committee and others including various rate cases before the Commission.

My comments concern several areas, with the "need" for this system being severally doubtful, the new corridors having extreme environmental damages, and the entire project not beneficial for the state of Arizona.

Before I begin, let me remind the Committee of the First Law of Transmission Line siting, that is, to use what is there first before using something new and undeveloped. Modifying an old easement is preferred of a new one.

First, this company tried to bypass this Committee with an attempt to have the state legislature "skip" the Committee and going directly to the Commission since they had a Final EIS and ROD. They only cover the federal lands and NOT the state and private lands. That is your responsibility and where you have complete authority.

From your view, this is not a federal project but a private venture to place a transmission line with the goal of collecting "wheeling charges" and FERC rebates. This is not a line designed to support the electric utilities in this state. For example, there is only one substation along its Arizona route, specifically for the Bowie Generation Station. There are substations, thus no service for Pima County and service for other Arizona location is not an objective for this project.

Second, there is another project, called Southline, sponsored by DOE's WAPA, that will use an existing corridor to upgrade a single 115kV line to a two circuit 230kV lines that will provide two-way transmission nearly parallel to the SunZia route that will be much less expensive to build, less environmental impacts, and meets the needs of Pima and Cochise Counties, especially the cooperatives, for many years. This is a planned project authorized by the Energy Policy Act of 2005, Section 1222, and must be considered as a viable alternative to the SunZia project. I fully support this project as it will improve reliability and capacity in southern Arizona while SunZia does nothing.

Third, the goal of the SunZia project is to provide renewable electricity (RE) from eastern NM to a Pinal County substation and thence to California. This was to provide renewable electricity so California could meet its RE requirements. There are no problems with CA meeting these goals, which have been increased since initiation of the SunZia project. This "need" does not exist, and furthermore, there are no lines with additional capacity to take this electricity to CA from Pinal County.

Fourth, there are two projects in the SunZia proposal, one is for an AC transmission line and a possible AC or DC second transmission line in the future. There are prior cases where changing from DC to AC have required a new CEC, thus you must not approve an unknown second transmission line at this time and have a second CEC approved for the

Power Plant and Transmission Line Siting Committee
Arizona Corporation Commission
1200 W. Washington Street,
Phoenix, AZ 85007

October 12, 2015

Re: SunZia Transmission, LLC, Docket Number L-OOOOOYY-15-03 1 8-001 7 1

I ask the Power Plant and Line Siting Committee to closely examine the purported need for the SunZia Transmission Project. The stated purpose of the project is to deliver wind power from central New Mexico to Arizona and California.

Arizona has abundant renewable energy resources of its own. There is no need for bringing wind power from New Mexico to Arizona, and in fact doing so could actually displace development of Arizona's solar resources. Californians are also concentrating on developing their own renewable resources. They have expressly stated that they are not expecting to import renewable energy.

The SunZia Transmission Project would cut a 30-mile swath of new transmission corridor up the west side of the San Pedro River. As you have heard from other commenters, the San Pedro River Valley is an environmentally unique place that deserves to be protected from a new utility corridor, which would then be a magnet for other infrastructure.

This is especially true when there is an alternative proposal that makes use of already-existing infrastructure corridors. This is the Southline Project, which is in final stages of the federal review process. If you compare the maps of the SunZia Project with those of Southline you will see that the two projects would do essentially the same thing in southern Arizona, **except** that Southline avoids paralleling the San Pedro Valley, uses transmission corridors that are already in place, and provides at least 10 substations to upload southern Arizona renewable power compared to SunZia's one substation in southern Arizona. The Southline Transmission Project would preserve the potential of the middle San Pedro Valley to provide the economic benefits of tourism, while encouraging the development of renewable energy resources in southern Arizona.

Please consider denying the Certificate of Environmental Compatibility for the SunZia Project.

Thank you,

Pearl Mast

Pearl Mast
6146 N Canyon Rd
Benson Arizona 85602

Power Plant and Transmission Line Siting Committee
Arizona Corporation Commission
1200 W. Washington Street,
Phoenix, AZ 85007

November 2, 2015

Re: SunZia Transmission, LLC, Docket Number L-OOOOOYY-15-03 1 8-001 7 1

Last Friday after sitting through the hearings all day, I had difficulty sleeping that night. One of the words that kept echoing through my mind was one that I heard from the proponent's side—probably from their cultural resources expert witness. That word was "spiritual." I know that's not a concept that usually is considered in siting transmission lines, unless it relates to Native Americans. I'm not Native American, and not even a religious person, but as a current resident of the San Pedro Valley, spiritual is the only word that comes to mind to describe how I feel when I look across the valley up to the Rincon Mountains. Last week we listened to Mr Schwartz earnestly ascribing Classes A, B, and C landscape qualities to the various parts of the route. I would assert that my use of the word spiritual in this context is just as relevant and just as valid as his pseudo-scientific designations. It's not just a beautiful landscape and it's not one that is completely untouched by humans—but it's a place that is still essentially whole. All the elements of the full interrelated living system are still in place, including water. I feel so incredibly grateful to live in such a place, and try to the best of my ability to live there in such a way as to keep that wholeness intact. Would you help us do the same?

I applaud the committee for requesting a visit to the "Tucson route" on your tour tomorrow. I would ask you to consider as you look at sites along that route that although the SunZia project proponent has declared that route not feasible, the Southline project, which I mentioned to you before, and which you will no doubt be holding hearings for before long, has figured out a way to use a Tucson route by upgrading existing transmission lines. Doesn't that seem like a much better idea than cutting a new corridor through the San Pedro Valley?

And finally, I would like to again encourage you to approach this with an open mind. As I sat here last week, I noted that some of you seemed interested and alert to what was being presented, while others did not at least openly express as much interest. I sincerely ask you not to just rubberstamp this CEC, but to listen this week as the intervenors make their presentations and to deeply consider whether this project is needed. Even if you conclude that it would have some usefulness, does it justify such a grievous wound to the San Pedro Valley?

Thank you again for your consideration.

Pearl Mast

Pearl Mast
6146 N Canyon Rd
Benson, AZ 85602

Power Plant and Line Siting Committee: Public Comment

2/11/2015

David Omick
6146 N. Canyon Rd.
Benson, AZ 85602

Mr. Chairman, members of the Committee, thank you for this opportunity to speak.

I'd like to expand on a comment that I made previously to the committee concerning vulnerabilities of the electric grid system as it relates to the case before you. I referenced a website I published several years ago on the subject of grid vulnerability.

That website has since been adopted as part of the curriculum of a consulting company specializing in emergency management and critical incident response for law enforcement personnel and critical incident responders from around the country.

Unbeknown to me, 8 years before I researched and published that website, the Department of Homeland Security had commissioned the National Research Council to conduct a study of those vulnerabilities. Their study was published in 2007. Against the wishes of the experts who wrote the study, Homeland Security immediately classified the report. Interestingly, just 1 month after I published Operation Circuit Breaker in July of 2012, Homeland Security finally declassified the report.

Although there were differences between the National Research Council's assessments and mine, our conclusions regarding the potential consequences of well planned terrorist attacks on the electric grid were substantively the same. I'd like to read a few sentences from that report.

"While the inconvenience and cost of...disruptions of the nation's transmission and distribution system have been large, they pale in comparison with the impacts ...from a large, well planned, terrorist attack." (P. 7)

"A systematically designed and executed terrorist attack could cause disruptions considerably more widespread and of much longer duration than the largest power system disruptions experienced to date." (P. 16)

"If large, extended outages were to occur during times of extreme weather, they could also result in...thousands of deaths due to heat stress..." (P. 16)

Eventually it is likely that another A-team of terrorists, like the one that brought us 911, will strike again. When and if they do, they will most likely target the soft underbelly of American infrastructure.

A strong argument can be made that the softest target in the nation is the Phoenix metro area due to the combination of its large population, its dependence on electric supply across vast stretches of remote terrain, its propensity to extreme heat waves and finally to its close proximity to a porous foreign border.

Approving a permit for one more extra high voltage transmission line across a remote, sparsely populated landscape does not serve to increase the energy security of the metro area to nearly the extent that it simply adds one more easy target.

If this seems alarmist, if you think that the authorities are engaged in preventing or planning for such a scenario, you are dead wrong. I encourage you to watch the interview that aired just last week with Ted Koppel on PBS. Koppel, the well known veteran of ABC News, has authored a book titled Lights Out. In the interview and in his new book, he emphasizes out how great the threat of terrorism is to our electric grid system and how abysmal our preparedness for such an event is.

Our current electric grid system is antiquated. Instead of continuing to pour more of our nation's wealth into this technological dinosaur, we have an obligation to future generations to supplant it with a far more resilient system based on distributed generation, on micro grids and on generation located in close proximity to end use.

As I pointed out in my comments to the committee on October 22, despite the vulnerabilities that make the Phoenix metro area such a vulnerable target, the Sun Corridor is ironically placed to become one of the nation's most resilient in terms of electric infrastructure.

But to permit the SunZia project is to take yet another step in the wrong direction.

I'd like to end with a brief appeal on another level, one that may not have much traction in this setting, but one that I feel obligated to express. Since we began this struggle 6 years ago, it has been extraordinarily one-sided. We pay our expenses out of our own pockets, out of proceeds from bake sales and raffles, we measure our resources in hundreds of dollars.

Against us are the millions upon millions of dollars available to the proponent and its hirelings, its lobbyists, its lawyers, its consultants. We have done our best to make our case, but this is not our milieu. The hired professionals are smooth and self confident, this is their terrain, it's what they're paid to do. We on the other hand are ill-at-ease here, this is not familiar ground to us. Our presentations are understandably hesitant and unpolished, our friends pull all nighters to prepare for something like this.

We are not motivated by money. We are motivated by love. Love of place, love for the natural beauty of this amazing part of the earth, and finally out of love of wild and remote lands and of respect for their right to remain so.

This might appear to be a David and Goliath story. But these are not biblical times. This is the modern world. Again and again in this world, love is crushed by profit. We appeal to you to make this a different outcome for the sake of future generations, for the sake of the natural beauty of this state and for the sake of wild places that cannot speak for themselves.

Thank you.

References:

--Operation Circuit Breaker

https://operationcircuitbreaker.wordpress.com

--Terrorism and the Electric Power Delivery System

National Research Council

http://www.nap.edu/read/12050/chapter/1

--PBS NewsHour, October 27, 2015

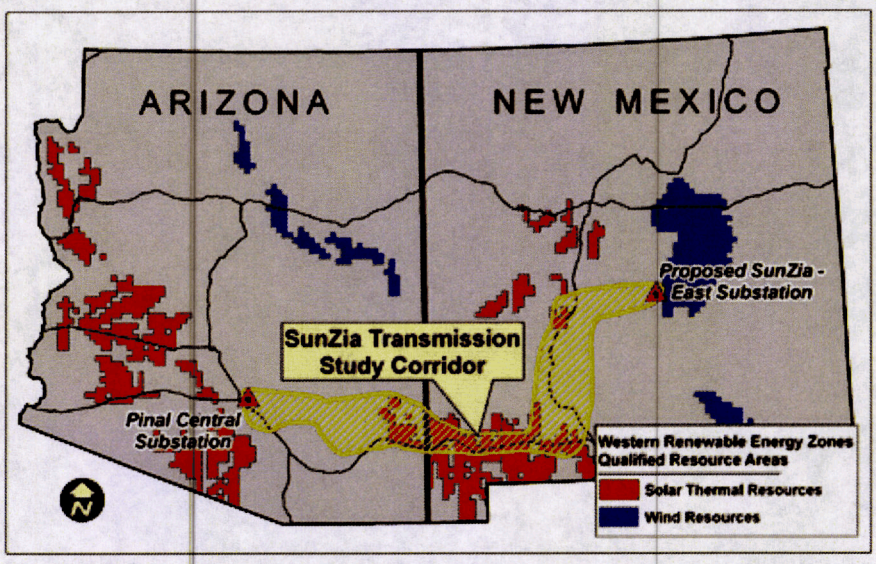
Interview with Ted Koppel on his new book Light's Out

http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/america-completely-unprepared-power-grid-cyberattack/

"SunZia Line Earns Obama Recognition"

"SunZia ... selected to undergo a fast-track permitting process by the federal government." [1]

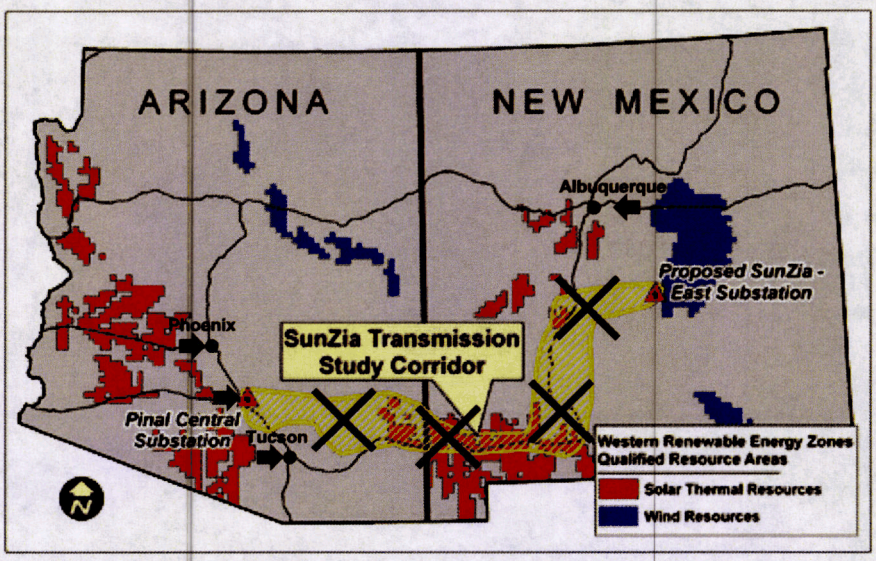
SunZia-Obama Plan [2]:



Why Not Local Transmission and Use Instead of SunZia?

Less than 1% of Arizona's electricity is solar generated, and only 5% of New Mexico's electricity is wind generated. [3]

Non-Political Local Plan:



1. http://www.snl.com/InteractiveX/ArticleAbstract.aspx?id=13414962
2. http://www.blm.gov/pgdata/etc/medialib/blm/nm/programs/more/lands_and_realty/sunzia/sunzia_maps.Par.41410.File.dat/WREZ-sunzia-corridor-map.pdf
3. http://www.eia.gov/

- This page is attached to Sjogren's 21 September 2015 letter to the Line Siting Committee, AZCC. -

Case No. 171

SunZia Southwest
TRANSMISSION PROJECT
New Mexico State Line to Pinal Central Substation

SunZia

REQUEST TO COMMENT

LOCATION	Willcox
DATE	Oct 19, 2015
NAME/AFFILIATION	Tricia Gerrodette

TOPIC potential damage to Lower San Pedro

Case No. 171

SunZia Southwest
TRANSMISSION PROJECT
New Mexico State Line to Pinal Central Substation

SunZia

REQUEST TO COMMENT

LOCATION	Willcox, AZ.
DATE	
NAME/AFFILIATION	Ann English - Cochise County

TOPIC

Thank You for taking into consideration the Ft. Huachuca Electronic Range and the effects to the San Pedro Riparian area.

Case No. 171

SunZia Southwest
TRANSMISSION PROJECT
New Mexico State Line to Pinal Central Substation

SunZia

REQUEST TO COMMENT

LOCATION	Willcox
DATE	10/19/15
NAME/AFFILIATION	Elna Otter, self

TOPIC Why I live in San Pedro Valley
Comments about Merchant Lines
Observations about disparities.

Case No. 171

SunZia Southwest
TRANSMISSION PROJECT
New Mexico State Line to Pinal Central Substation

SunZia

REQUEST TO COMMENT

LOCATION	Willcox
DATE	10/19/15
NAME/AFFILIATION	Anna Lands / Cascabel Working Group

TOPIC utility corridor in the San Pedro Watershed

Case No. 171

SunZia Southwest
TRANSMISSION PROJECT
New Mexico State Line to Pinal Central Substation

SunZia

REQUEST TO COMMENT

LOCATION	Willcox
DATE	10/19/15
NAME/AFFILIATION	Homer Hansen / self

TOPIC

Power lines along riparian corridor.
(San Pedro River)
impact to birds + tourism economics

Case No. 171

SunZia Southwest
TRANSMISSION PROJECT
New Mexico State Line to Pinal Central Substation

SunZia

REQUEST TO COMMENT

LOCATION	Willcox
DATE	10-19-15
NAME/AFFILIATION	George Scott

TOPIC SunZia transmission Line location Cochise County

Case No. 171

SunZia Southwest
TRANSMISSION PROJECT
New Mexico State Line to Pinal Central Substation

SunZia

REQUEST TO COMMENT

LOCATION Willcox

DATE 10-19-2015

NAME/AFFILIATION María Araiza Trowtner

TOPIC Personal history in the San Pedro River Valley.

Case No. 171

SunZia Southwest
TRANSMISSION PROJECT
New Mexico State Line to Pinal Central Substation

SunZia

REQUEST TO COMMENT

LOCATION	
DATE	10-20-15
NAME/AFFILIATION	Alan Baker - Exec. Director - Willcox Chamber of Commerce

TOPIC Chamber position on Sun Zia

Case No. 171

SunZia Southwest
TRANSMISSION PROJECT
New Mexico State Line to Pinal Central Substation

SunZia

REQUEST TO COMMENT

LOCATION	TUCSON
DATE	10/22/2015
NAME/AFFILIATION	Cyndi Tuell self

TOPIC Sunzia

Case No. 171

SunZia Southwest
TRANSMISSION PROJECT
New Mexico State Line to Pinal Central Substation

SunZia

SPEAK

REQUEST TO COMMENT

LOCATION	Tucson
DATE	10/22/2015
NAME/AFFILIATION	Kevin Dahl, self

TOPIC SunZia

Case No. 171

SunZia Southwest
TRANSMISSION PROJECT
New Mexico State Line to Pinal Central Substation

SunZia

REQUEST TO COMMENT

LOCATION	TUCSON CONVENTION CENTER
DATE	10-22-2015
NAME/AFFILIATION	JON SJOGREN

TOPIC SUNZIA IS NOT NECESSARY.

Case No. 171

SunZia Southwest
TRANSMISSION PROJECT
New Mexico State Line to Pinal Central Substation

SunZia

REQUEST TO COMMENT

LOCATION Tucson Convention Center

DATE 10/22/2015

NAME/AFFILIATION David Omick - Cascabel Conservation Association

TOPIC Why the SunZia Transmission Project is not ~~g~~ in Arizona's best interests.

Case No. 171

SunZia Southwest
TRANSMISSION PROJECT
New Mexico State Line to Pinal Central Substation

SunZia

REQUEST TO COMMENT

LOCATION Tucson

DATE 10/22/2015

NAME/AFFILIATION Pearl Mast / Cascabel Working Group

TOPIC Why SunZia is not needed and a better alternative.

Case No. 171

SunZia Southwest
TRANSMISSION PROJECT
New Mexico State Line to Pinal Central Substation

SunZia

REQUEST TO COMMENT

LOCATION	TCC
DATE	10/22/2015
NAME/AFFILIATION	Self MARSHALL MAGRUDER

TOPIC SunZia "Need" and other issues

Marshall Magruder

Case No. 171

SunZia Southwest
TRANSMISSION PROJECT
New Mexico State Line to Pinal Central Substation

SunZia

REQUEST TO COMMENT

LOCATION	Tucson
DATE	10/22/2015
NAME/AFFILIATION	Sandy Bahr Sierra Club - Grand Canyon Chapter

TOPIC Opposition to siting SunZia due to environmental concerns

Case No. 171

SunZia Southwest
TRANSMISSION PROJECT
New Mexico State Line to Pinal Central Substation

SunZia

REQUEST TO COMMENT

LOCATION	
DATE	
NAME/AFFILIATION	Greg PAtterson AZCPA

(AZ competitive power alliance)

TOPIC FAVOR

Case No. 171

SunZia Southwest
TRANSMISSION PROJECT
New Mexico State Line to Pinal Central Substation

SunZia

REQUEST TO COMMENT

LOCATION Tucson

DATE 10/22/15

NAME/AFFILIATION Anna Lands
Cascabel Working Group

TOPIC

Conservation
mitigation
disclosure
lobbying

Case No. 171

SunZia Southwest
TRANSMISSION PROJECT
New Mexico State Line to Pinal Central Substation

SunZia

REQUEST TO COMMENT

LOCATION	Tucson
DATE	10/22/2015
NAME/AFFILIATION	Dan Millis / Self

TOPIC

Case No. 171

SunZia Southwest
TRANSMISSION PROJECT
New Mexico State Line to Pinal Central Substation

SunZia

REQUEST TO COMMENT

LOCATION Tucson Convention Center

DATE 11/2/2015

NAME/AFFILIATION David Omick Cascabel Conservation Association

TOPIC

Transmission Line security as it relates to SunZia.

Case No. 171

SunZia Southwest
TRANSMISSION PROJECT
New Mexico State Line to Pinal Central Substation

SunZia

REQUEST TO COMMENT

LOCATION	Tucson
DATE	11.2.15
NAME/AFFILIATION	Edward DePalma

TOPIC Comments against proposed SunZia transmission line

Case No. 171

SunZia Southwest
TRANSMISSION PROJECT
New Mexico State Line to Pinal Central Substation

SunZia

REQUEST TO COMMENT

LOCATION	Tucson
DATE	11/2/15
NAME/AFFILIATION	Pearl Mast - Cascabel Working Group

TOPIC Spiritual value of San Pedro

Case No. 171

SunZia Southwest
TRANSMISSION PROJECT
New Mexico State Line to Pinal Central Substation

SunZia

REQUEST TO COMMENT

LOCATION	Casa Grande SunZia Hearing
DATE	11/5/15
NAME/AFFILIATION	Randy Serraglio, Center for Biological Diversity 378 N. Main Ave Tucson
TOPIC	Issuance of CEC is not justified at this time.

Case No. 171

SunZia Southwest
TRANSMISSION PROJECT
New Mexico State Line to Pinal Central Substation

SunZia

REQUEST TO COMMENT

LOCATION Tucson Community Center

DATE 10/23/15

NAME/AFFILIATION Maria Araiza Troutner

TOPIC My concern ~~over~~ re: tax dollars being used for construction of SunZia lines.

Case No. 171

SunZia Southwest
TRANSMISSION PROJECT
New Mexico State Line to Pinal Central Substation

SunZia

REQUEST TO COMMENT

LOCATION Florence

DATE 11/17/2015

NAME/AFFILIATION Alicia Bristow - Pres. of O.W.N.'s Tri-Community Visitor Center, ORACIO

TOPIC SunZia

Case No. 171

SunZia Southwest
TRANSMISSION PROJECT
New Mexico State Line to Pinal Central Substation

SunZia

REQUEST TO COMMENT

LOCATION Florence

DATE 11-17-2015

NAME/AFFILIATION Bud Bindaw

TOPIC Location of line

Case No. 171

SunZia Southwest
TRANSMISSION PROJECT
New Mexico State Line to Pinal Central Substation

SunZia

REQUEST TO COMMENT

LOCATION	Florance
DATE	Nov. 16, 2015
NAME/AFFILIATION	DAVID HODGES - Natural Allies

TOPIC Route Selection

Case No. 171

SunZia Southwest
TRANSMISSION PROJECT
New Mexico State Line to Pinal Central Substation

SunZia

REQUEST TO COMMENT

LOCATION	Florance
DATE	11/14/15
NAME/AFFILIATION	Paul Unger

TOPIC Type Structure, Location of Right A-way.

EXHIBIT PIN001

Greg Stanley
County Manager

PINAL • COUNTY
wide open opportunity

November 4, 2015

Mr. Thomas Chenal, Chairman
Arizona Corporation Commission
Power Plant and Line Siting Committee
1275 West Washington Street
Phoenix, Arizona 85007-2926

Re: SunZia Transmission Line Project Case #171

Dear Chairman Chenal:

On behalf of Pinal County and the Pinal County Board of Supervisors, I would like to take this opportunity to convey the County's support for the SunZia Transmission LLC's application for a Certificate of Environmental Compatibility, Case #171, with the exception noted below regarding that portion of the route which transverses Saddlebrooke Ranch.

Specifically, Pinal County has a concern about the portion of the route which passes across Saddlebrooke Ranch in the area of State Routes 79 and 77. That portion of the route has the potential to negatively impact future development and enjoyment of the area by current and future Saddlebrooke/Pinal County residents. Therefore, it would be in the best interests of all involved that a continuation of the negotiations among SunZia, Robson Communities and the Arizona State Land be pursued and a mutually agreed upon alternate route be developed for that portion of the line.

Pinal County looks forward to the employment opportunities, tax revenue and renewable energy that the power line will bring and we hope that an alternate route which will lessen the impact to Saddlebrooke Ranch can be established.

Sincerely,

Greg Stanley
Pinal County Manager

PENGAD 800-631-6989
EXHIBIT
PIN-1
ADMITTED

COUNTY MANAGER

135 North Pinal Street, Administrative Complex, PO Box 827 Florence, AZ 85132 T 520-866-6212 FREE 888-431-1311 F 520-866-6355

www.pinalcountyaz.gov

EXHIBIT
R013-1
ADMITTED
PENGAD 800-631-6989

SHAPIRO LAW FIRM, P.C.
Jay L. Shapiro (No. 014650)
1819 E. Morten Avenue, Suite 280
Phoenix, Arizona 85020
Telephone (602) 559-9575

Attorneys for Robson Ranch Mountains, LLC

BEFORE THE ARIZONA POWER PLANT AND TRANSMISSION LINE SITING COMMITTEE

IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION OF SUNZIA TRANSMISSION LLC, IN CONFORMANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF ARIZONA REVISED STATUTES 40-360, ET SEQ., FOR A CERTIFICATE OF ENVIRONMENTAL COMPATABILITY AUTHORIZING THE SUNZIA SOUTHWEST TRANSMISSION PROJECT, WHICH INCLUDES THE CONSTRUCTION OF TWO NEW 500 KV TRANSMISSION LINES AND ASSOCIATED FACILITIES ORIGINATING AT A NEW SUBSTATION (SUNZIA EAST) IN LINCOLN COUNTY, NEW MEXICO, AND TERMINATING AT THE PINAL CENTRAL SUBSTATION IN PINAL COUNTY, ARIZONA. THE ARIZONA PORTION OF THE PROJECT IS LOCATED WITHIN GRAHAM, GREENLEE, COCHISE, PINAL, AND PIMA COUNTIES.	DOCKET NO: L-00000YY-15-0318-00171

DIRECT TESTIMONY OF

STEVEN SORIANO

October 13, 2015

TABLE OF CONTENYS

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III. THE IMPACTS OF THE SUNZIA PROJECT ON THE SADDLEBROOKE RANCH DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNITY 5

I. INTRODUCTION, PURPOSE, AND SUMMARY OF TESTIMONY.

Q. PLEASE STATE YOUR NAME AND BUSINESS ADDRESS.

A. My name is Steven Soriano. My business address is 9532 E. Riggs Road, Sun Lakes, Arizona 85248.

Q. BY WHOM ARE YOU EMPLOYED AND IN WHAT CAPACITY?

A. I am employed as a Vice-President for Robson Communities, Inc. I also hold the titles of Vice-President and Assistant Secretary for Arlington Property Management Company ("Arlington"), the manager of Robson Ranch Mountains, LLC ("RRM"). RRM is the developer of SaddleBrooke Ranch, a master planned adult active community.

Q. WHAT ARE YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES FOR RRM?

A. As Vice-President of Arlington, I manage acquisitions, entitlement, product development, lead engineering and development, pricing and budgeting, sales contracts, and financial reporting. I perform these tasks as part of a larger team of professionals.

Q. WHAT WAS YOUR EDUCATIONAL AND EMPLOYMENT BACKGROUND BEFORE ROBSON?

A. Before joining Robson Communities in 1995, I was employed as an auditor and a CPA with Kenneth Leventhal/Ernst and Young in Phoenix and New York. In 1991, I received my degree in business administration and accounting from State University of New York at Buffalo.

Q. WHAT OTHER POSITIONS HAVE YOU HELD WITH ROBSON?

A. During my employment with Robson Communities, I have, at times, managed the various affiliated companies' construction, engineering, marketing, finance and mortgage operations. Currently, in addition to my role in connection with our development activities, I am also responsible for the day-to-day operations of eight

public service corporations providing water and wastewater utility services throughout central and southern Arizona.

Q. HAVE YOU PREVIOUSLY TESTIFIED IN TRANSMISSION-RELATED REGULATORY PROCEEDINGS?

A. No. But I have testified before the Arizona Corporation Commission in rate and financing proceedings for other Robson affiliates including Lago Del Oro Water Company, Pima Utility Company, and Quail Creek Water Company.

Q. WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF YOUR DIRECT TESTIMONY IN THIS DOCKET?

A. To express RRM's concerns about the portion of the Bureau of Land Management's ("BLM") preferred routing for the SunZia Southwest Transmission Project (the "SunZia Project"). The route for these two 500 kV power transmission lines passes directly through SaddleBrooke Ranch, essentially altering the configuration and viability of our development. Fortunately, it is possible to move the portion of the proposed line intended to traverse SaddleBrooke Ranch to lands owned by the Arizona State Land Department ("State Lands") not far away geographically but significantly distant in terms of the detrimental impacts.

II. OVERVIEW OF THE SADDLEBROOKE RANCH DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNITY.

Q. WHERE IS THE SADDLEBROOKE RANCH COMMUNITY LOCATED?

A. SaddleBrooke Ranch is located north of Oracle Junction in Pinal County, Arizona, between Arizona Highway 77 and Arizona State Highway 79. The SaddleBrooke Ranch development encompasses more than 2500 acres and, upon build-out, will include more than 5,000 homes.

Q. WHEN WAS THE SADDLEBROOKE RANCH COMMUNITY ESTABLISHED?

A. The land was acquired in 1995. Final entitlements were obtained in February 2000. The first home was closed in 2008 after construction of a water system, a golf course, model homes, a clubhouse, and many other amenities.

Q. WHAT IS THE STATUS OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SADDLEBROOKE RANCH COMMUNITY?

A. The vast majority of SaddleBrooke Ranch, including the portion bisected by SunZia's requested route, has been zoned, and is subject to a planned area development overlay or PAD. In addition to nearly 400 occupied homes, SaddleBrooke Ranch currently has, among other things, a sales and design center with 11 furnished models, an 18-hole championship golf course with putting green and driving range, an extensive pickleball complex with 24 courts, a fitness center and spa with over 40,000 square feet that include indoor and outdoor swimming pools, men's and women's hair salons, massage rooms, aerobics and yoga facilities, a learning center, a creative arts room, billiards, and lighted tennis courts.[1] A new pro shop is under construction. Construction of a large clubhouse and Creative Arts Center is also imminent. In fact, land development work for these amenities is already underway, and vertical construction should begin in a few months. The master plan provides for the construction of additional amenities and facilities, including golf and homes, unfortunately in the vicinity of the area that would be intersected by the SunZia Project.[2]

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[1] A Community Overview is attached as **Exhibit SS-DT1**.

[2] **Exhibit SS-DT2** shows the details of the planned future amenities for SaddleBrooke Ranch.

Q. IT SOUNDS AS IF RRM HAS ALREADY MADE A SIGNIFICANT INVESTMENT IN SADDLEBROOKE RANCH.

A. Yes, absolutely. RRM has always believed in the long-term potential of SaddleBrooke Ranch, and was making a huge investment back when other homebuilders were closing shop. Tens of millions of dollars have gone into developing the SaddleBrooke Ranch community. RRM's affiliate, Mountain Pass Utility Company, has also invested millions of dollars to construct a wastewater treatment facility that treats raw sewage for recharge to the aquifer and for golf course irrigation.

Q. DOESN'T SUCH A SUBSTANTIAL INVESTMENT BENEFIT PROVIDE A BROAD ECONOMIC BENEFIT?

A. Yes. In fact, studies performed by the Center for Business Research at the Arizona State University College of Business and by the Center for Economic Development and Research at the University of North Texas have confirmed the tremendous economic benefits of a Robson Resort Community. The study prepared by ASU, in June 2000, of the economic contributions of a Robson Resort Community estimated that the combined effects of spending for consumer goods and services by household, upon build-out, and the operations of the various homeowners associations would generate $1.9 billion in expenditures and $1 billion in earnings *per year* in 1999 dollars, and support 27,500 jobs. This is in addition to the direct construction and other jobs during the course of development. Respectfully, we do not believe that the BLM gave sufficient consideration to the effect of the SunZia Project on SaddleBrooke Ranch and the investment being placed at risk, not to mention the employment considerations relating to SaddleBrooke Ranch.

III. THE IMPACTS OF THE SUNZIA PROJECT ON THE SADDLEBROOKE RANCH DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNITY.

Q. DOES RRM AGREE WITH SUNZIA THAT THE TWO PROPOSED 500 KV TRANSMISSION LINES ARE NECESSARY?

A. We do not know if the entire 199-mile transmission line project is necessary. I am not qualified to offer an opinion on that issue and we will leave that up to the Line Siting Committee and other governmental agencies with jurisdiction to make those decisions. Our position is that if this major transmission line project is necessary, the portion planned to bisect our community should be moved where it will have far less impact.

Q. WOULD YOU PLEASE DESCRIBE EXACTLY HOW THE PROPOSED TWO, 500 KV TRANSMISSION LINES TRAVERSE THE SADDLEBROOKE RANCH PROPERTY?

A. The requested route crosses the upper third of SaddleBrooke Ranch as shown on the map on page 13 of SunZia's Application for Certificate of Environmental Compatibility ("CEC Application") and the map attached to my testimony as **Exhibit SS-DT3**.

Q. BUT ISN'T THIS PORTION OF SADDLEBROOKE RANCH UNDEVELOPED?

A. We believe it inaccurate to consider any of the real property within the SaddleBrooke Ranch master plan as "undeveloped" in the same sense as the neighboring State Lands and agricultural land. This is land that currently is not sold but is still part of a large and ongoing construction and development project in accordance with the master plan. The zoning for the entire SaddleBrooke Ranch master plan is vested by virtue of the golf course, streets, infrastructure, amenities, and homes already constructed. A developer would never start a project as massive

as SaddleBrooke Ranch without the assurance of the ability to complete it. Now, at a minimum, the SunZia Project, as planned, threatens our ability to complete our development in accordance with the vested master plan.

Q. HOW EXACTLY WILL THE PROPOSED TRANSMISSION LINE IMPACT THE DEVELOPMENT OF SADDLEBROOKE RANCH PER THE VESTED MASTER PLAN?

A. I think the starting point is to look at the substantial scope of the proposed SunZia Project. This project involves two 500 kV transmission lines passing through one mile of our property in a 2,500 foot corridor with 200 foot easements on either side of the transmission line.[3] In addition, there will be 3-4 "transmission structures" ranging from 100 to 175 feet.[4] Obviously, this major transmission project would impact anything we have planned for this portion of the community, and will detrimentally affect the marketability of other portions of the SaddleBrooke Ranch project.

Specifically, projects in the northwest section of the SaddleBrooke Ranch community that would be directly impacted by the proposed SunZia Project include approximately 200 home sites, 18 holes of golf, and a clubhouse site. Beyond those direct impacts, the proposed line will impact the views and property values of other portions of SaddleBrooke Ranch.

Q. WERE THE IMPACTS ON SADDLEBROOKE RANCH CONSIDERED IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROPOSED SUNZIA PROJECT?

A. The CEC application itself does not discuss the specific impacts on SaddleBrooke Ranch, though our development is referenced in some of the exhibits included in the 300+ page filing by SunZia. I do know that we sent a letter to the BLM in 2012

[3] CEC Application at ES-1 – ES-2.

[4] *Id.*

raising concerns with the portion of the line planned to go across SaddleBrooke Ranch.[5] Obviously, given the result, our concerns were given inadequate consideration.

Q. SO WHAT YOU'RE REALLY SAYING IS "NOT IN OUR BACKYARD"?

A. Yes. We have a 199-mile proposed project, less than 10 percent of which will be located on private lands. The SaddleBrooke Ranch community is private property that is paying a disproportionate price for the proposed SunZia Project, if it is in fact necessary.

Q. WHAT DOES RRM PROPOSE THE LINE SITING COMMITTEE DO?

A. Not approve the requested CEC Application if the line is going to continue to bisect SaddleBrooke Ranch.

Q. IS THERE AN AVAILABLE ALTERNATIVE?

A. We believe there are alternative routes for the portion of the line that would traverse SaddleBrooke Ranch. Three possible alternatives are shown on the map attached to my testimony as **Exhibit SS-DT3**. These alternative routes would bypass SaddleBrooke Ranch primarily by crossing State Lands, leaving almost all 199 miles of the two proposed 500 kV transmission lines on public lands.

Q. WON'T THAT IMPACT THE VALUE OF THE STATE LANDS?

A. Possibly, someday. But we are talking about an existing master planned community already with nearly 400 homes and numerous improvements. RRM has invested tens of millions of dollars in bringing the SaddleBrooke Ranch community to its full potential. The surrounding community is already benefitting from the existing jobs and tax revenues that SaddleBrooke Ranch is already

[5] **Exhibit SS-DT4**. RRM recently raised similar concerns to the Environmental Planning Group. *See* **Exhibit SS-DT5**.

generating. SunZia touts the jobs and tax revenues its project will bring; we are already delivering these benefits to the community.

And, I'm sorry, we fully support the efforts of our State Land Department. But there is simply no comparison between the current and near-term value of lands in SaddleBrooke Ranch and the impact of this proposed project on those lands and our continued development plans, and the alternative routes over State Lands. Those State Lands might one day have uses that might be impacted by what would be an existing transmission line project. We are here now, with current and continued development plans, and it will cost much more to condemn the SaddleBrooke Ranch property than it will the State Lands, demonstrating the marked difference in the value of the properties.

Q. DOES THIS CONCLUDE YOUR DIRECT TESTIMONY?

A. Yes.

EXHIBIT SS-DT1

An Abundance of Clubs, Classes & Activities

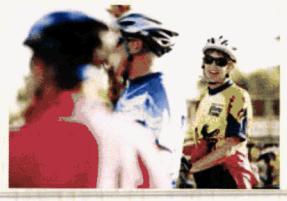
With well-established groups and the freedom to create new ones, you'll find an intriguing variety of activities, classes and events all around you…each offering satisfying ways to make life even better.

Parties & Social

- Board Games
- Duplicate Bridge
- Euchre
- Happy Hours
- Ladies' Birthday Lunch
- Line Dance
- MahJongg
- Mexican Train
- Monday Night Football
- Party Bridge
- State Clubs
- Trivia

Creative Arts

- Beading Group
- Paper Crafts
- Quilters
- SaddleBrooke Ranch Artists
- Scrapbooking
- Stitching



Wellness/Fitness

- Bicycling
- Cardio Classes
- Meditation Classes
- Pickleball
- Stretch Classes
- Tennis
- Volleyball
- Water Aerobics
- Yoga
- Zumba

Lifelong Learning

- Book Club
- Genealogy
- Seminars
- Writing Group

Golf

- Lady Niners
- Lady Putters
- Men's Golf Association
- Ranchette Women's Putters
- Women's Golf Association

SaddleBrooke Ranch residents can also join clubs at SaddleBrooke. Membership in the listed clubs and organizations at SaddleBrooke is at the discretion of the individual clubs and organizations.

For a more extensive list of current groups, clubs, and organizations, please visit the HOA website at: www.saddlebrookeranchhoa.org

All clubs, classes and organizations are formed and operated by the individual homeowners and are not endorsed or sponsored by the developer or the Homeowners Association. Homeowners are always welcome to form a new club, class or organization if one is not represented here.

SaddleBrooke Ranch™
A ROBSON RESORT COMMUNITY™

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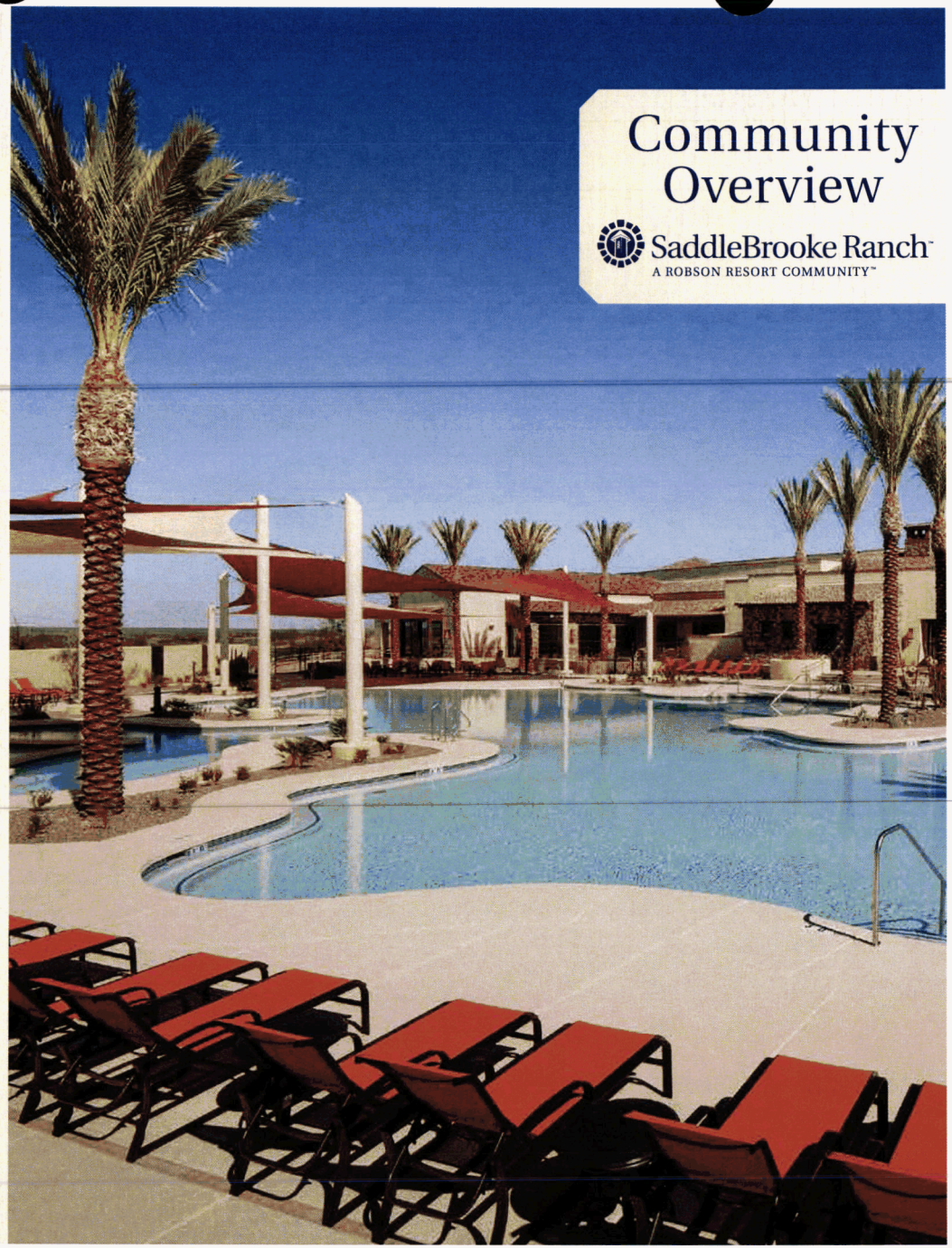
866.818.6068 • 520.818.6000

Take a closer look at www.robson.com/saddlebrookeranch

The housing at any Robson Resort Community™ is intended for occupancy by at least one person 55 years of age or older per dwelling unit, although the occupants of a limited number of dwelling units may be younger. One person must be at least 40 years old in each unit. No one in permanent residence under 19 years of age. Homes are offered and sold by SaddleBrooke Development Company, broker for Robson Ranch Mountains, LLC, owner. Robson Ranch Arizona Construction Company, general contractor, ROC 192584. No offer for sale or lease may be made or accepted prior to buyer's receipt of an Arizona subdivision public report. A public report is available on the state real estate department's website. Some amenities not included in community service fees. For a limited time, SaddleBrooke Ranch residents have access to the amenities and facilities at SaddleBrooke and The Preserve at SaddleBrooke. SaddleBrooke Ranch residents may also join certain clubs at SaddleBrooke. Membership in the clubs and organizations at SaddleBrooke is at the discretion of the individual clubs and organizations. Shared use of SaddleBrooke Ranch and SaddleBrooke Phase I and Phase II amenities is subject to reciprocal agreements and is subject to change. The golf course, pro shop and practice facility are open to the public and will be owned by the developer or its assignee(s). Availability of these facilities for use by owners of interests in the development is at the pleasure of the owners of the facilities. The Shack and Bistro Veinte currently are open to the public. All photos/pictorials are artist's conception. Information is subject to change without notice. This shall not constitute an offer in any state where registration is required or if in violation of law. © 2015 Robson Communities®, Inc. All rights reserved. 14RC211 4/15



Community Overview

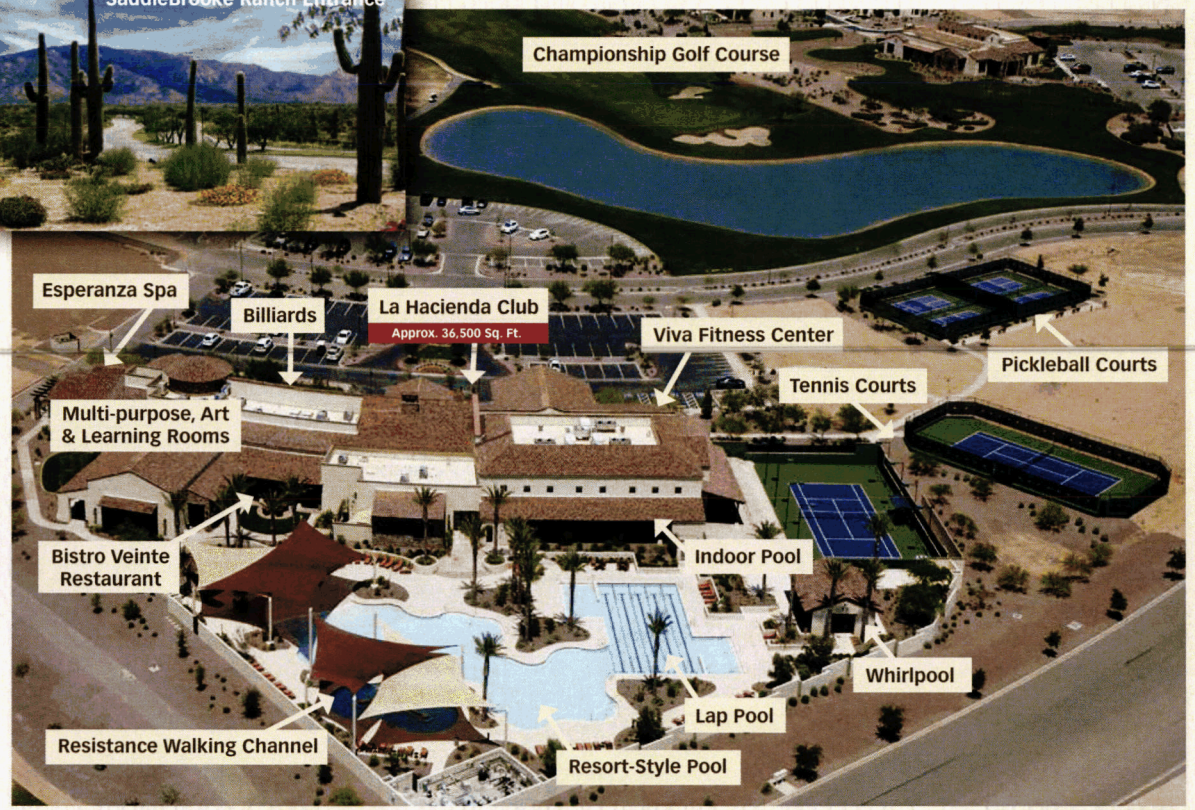
SaddleBrooke Ranch™
A ROBSON RESORT COMMUNITY™

Wake up with nothing to do or everything to do.

When searching master-planned communities/homebuilders for your new home, compare the amenities, activities & classes offered **for active adults**. At SaddleBrooke Ranch, you'll find extensive multi-million dollar amenities and activities rivaling world-class resorts **available today . . . not in a few years**. There's simply no comparison.

Compare Our Amenities

	AMENITIES OFFERED AT SADDLEBROOKE RANCH	OTHER MASTER-PLANNED COMM./HOMEBUILDERS (AMENITIES FOR ACTIVE ADULTS)
CHAMPIONSHIP GOLF COURSE		
18-Hole Golf Course	☑	☐
Driving Range	☑	☐
Fully Stocked Pro Shop	☑	☐
LA HACIENDA CLUB		
Bistro Veinte Restaurant	☑	☐
Fireside TV Lounge	☑	☐
Billiards Room	☑	☐
Multi-purpose Room/ Creative Arts/Learning Center Room	☑	☐
Indoor Pool with Lap Lanes	☑	☐
Espirito de Vida Meditation Room	☑	☐
RESORT-STYLE POOL COMPLEX		
Pool with Shade Sails & Beach Access	☑	☐
Lap Pool	☑	☐
Resistance Walking Channel	☑	☐
Whirlpool with Ramada Covering	☑	☐
ESPERANZA SPA & SALON		
Salon del Sol	☑	☐
The Hombres Barber Shop	☑	☐
Treatment Rooms & Spa Lounge	☑	☐
VIVA ATHLETIC FITNESS CENTER		
Cardio & Weight Machines	☑	☐
Aerobics/Dance/Yoga Room	☑	☐
Steam Rooms	☑	☐
Men's & Women's Locker Rooms	☑	☐
THE GREAT OUTDOORS		
Dog Park	☑	☐
Walking Trails	☑	☐
Tennis Courts	☑	☐
Pickleball Courts	☑	☐



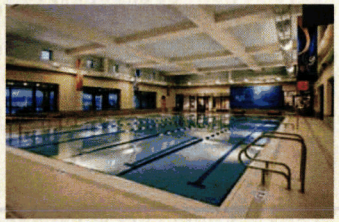
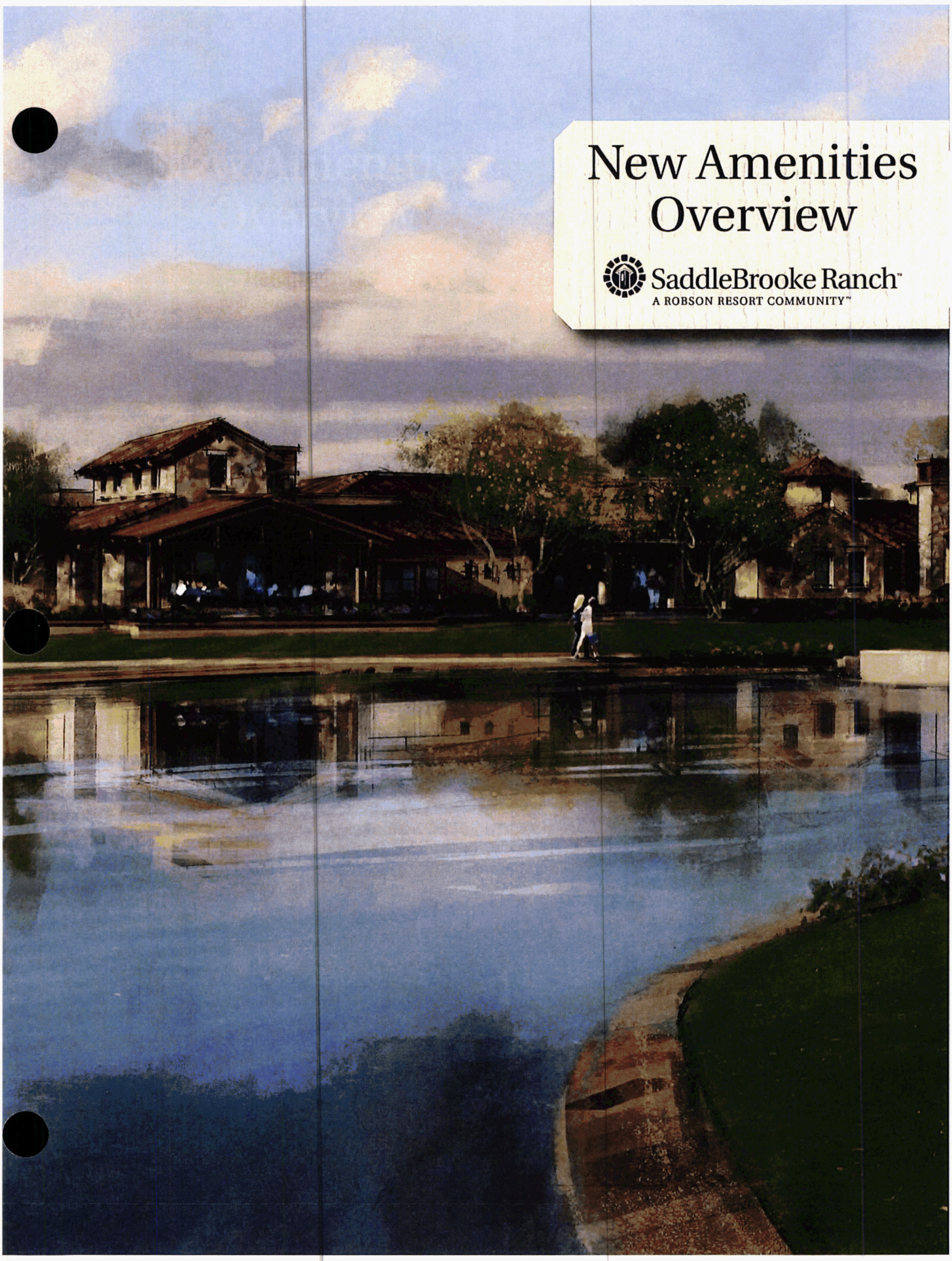


EXHIBIT SS-DT2

New Amenities Overview

SaddleBrooke Ranch™
A ROBSON RESORT COMMUNITY™



Visionary resort design is coming to life

Pursuing our mission to exceed expectations, SaddleBrooke Ranch is continuing to add to the amenities that make life so special in this exclusive community. From a 24 court Pickleball complex to a well appointed pro shop, SaddleBrooke Ranch's extensive amenity expansion is well underway and will provide the ultimate in active adult resort-style living. Every detail of the new SaddleBrooke Ranch amenities has been thoughtfully considered to furnish residents with an abundance of dining, recreational, and social opportunities that are trademarks of living within a Robson Resort Community.

"There are a lot of reasons to love SaddleBrooke Ranch, but we basically fell in love with it...we feel like we live in a resort."

— Jeff S., SaddleBrooke Ranch Resident

OPENING IN LATE FALL 2015

- **A** Pickleball Complex - 24 Courts
- **B** NEW Pro Shop
- **C** Dog Park
  Currently under construction

OPENING IN EARLY WINTER 2016

- **D** The Shack

2016 AMENITY PLANS

- **E** Clubhouse & Restaurant
  - Ballroom/Auditorium with Stage -Banquet/Meeting room spaces
  - Full-Service Grille and Bar with Patio overlooking the Lake
  - Private Dining Room
  - Relaxing Fireside Lounge Area
  - Outdoor Terraces
- **F** Event Lawn/Stage
- **G** Creative Arts Center
  Anticipated construction commencement - 2016

ADDITIONAL FUTURE AMENITIES

- **H** Additional Tennis Courts
- **I** Bocce Courts
- **J** All Faith Chapel

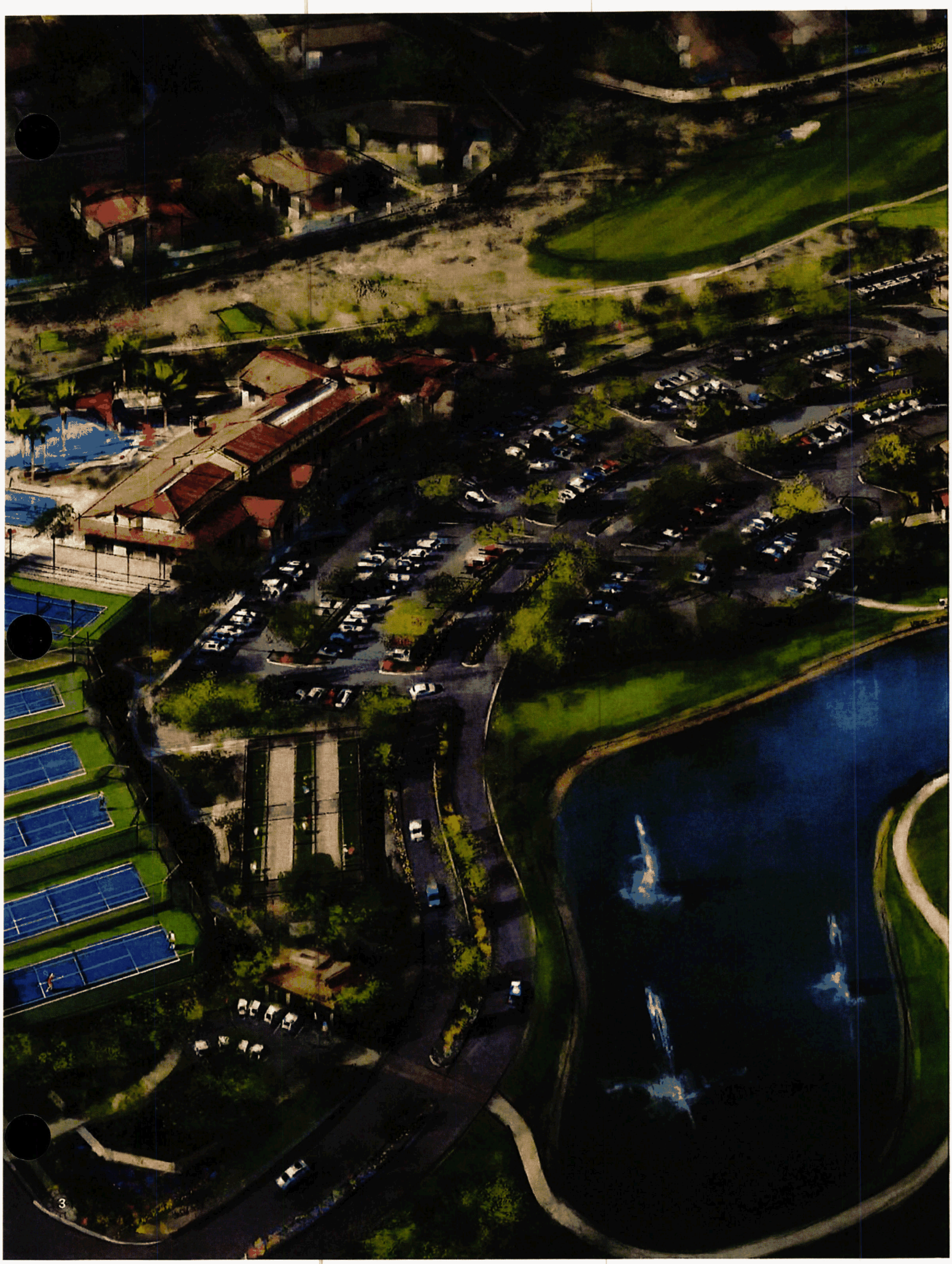
This Proposed Concept Plan for the clubhouse, creative arts center, chapel additional tennis courts & bocce courts is subject to change at any time without notice. No warranties are given or implied that all improvements shown on this Proposed Concept Plan will be built.

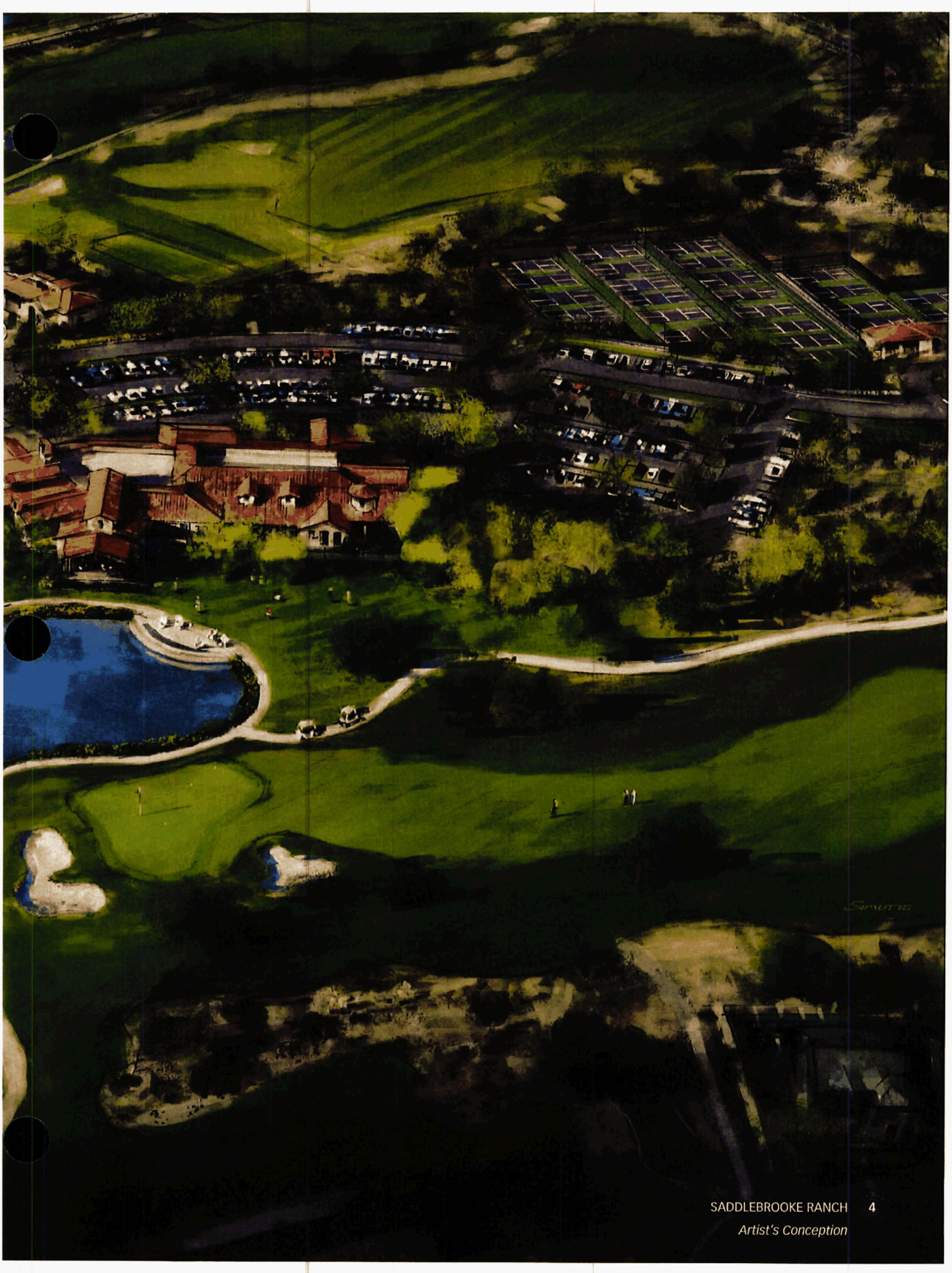
CURRENT AMENITIES

- **K** La Hacienda Club
  Indoor Lap Pool, Outdoor Pool, Lap Pool, Whirlpool, Viva Fitness Center, Tennis & Pickleball Courts, Esperanza Spa, Hombres Barber Shop, Bistro Veinte, Multi-purpose Rooms
- **L** 18-hole Championship Golf Course
- **M** Tennis Courts
- **N** Nature Trail

Plan Updated 7/15

Illustration is an artist's conception, not intended to show specific details and is subject to change without notice.



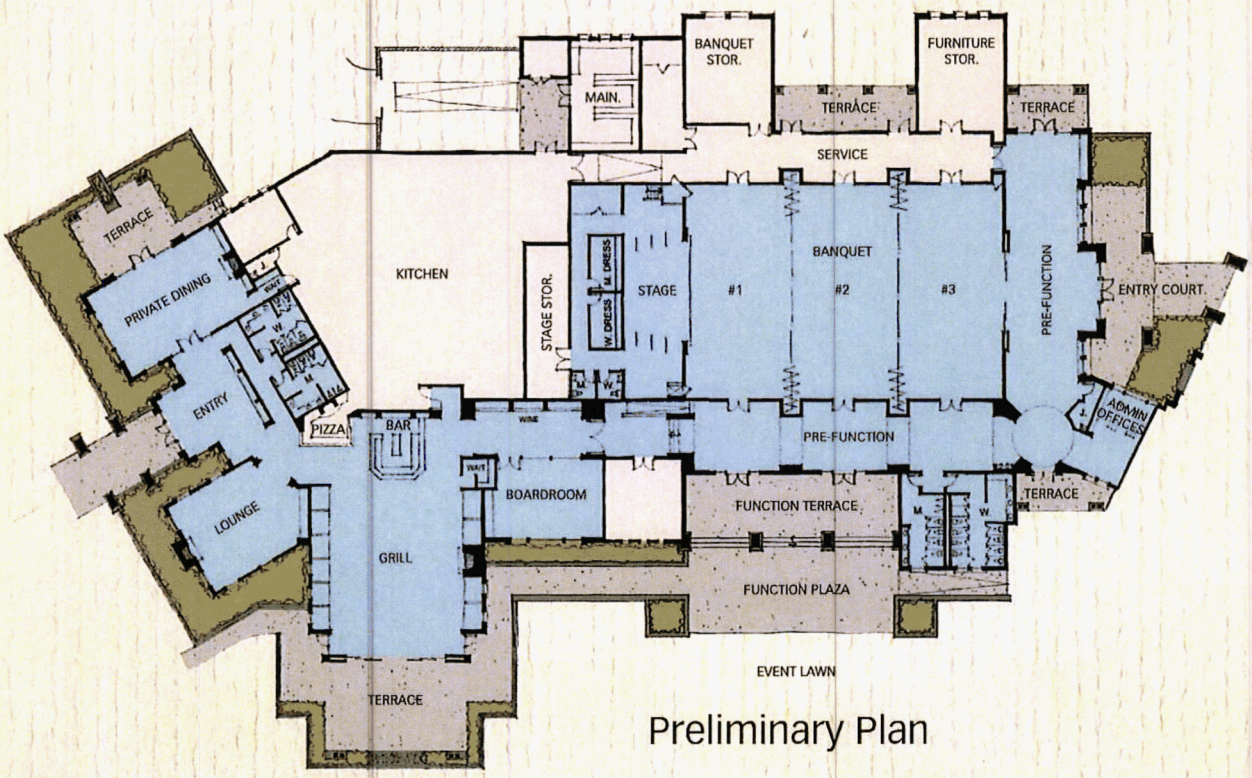


SADDLEBROOKE RANCH 4

Artist's Conception

The heart and hub of your community

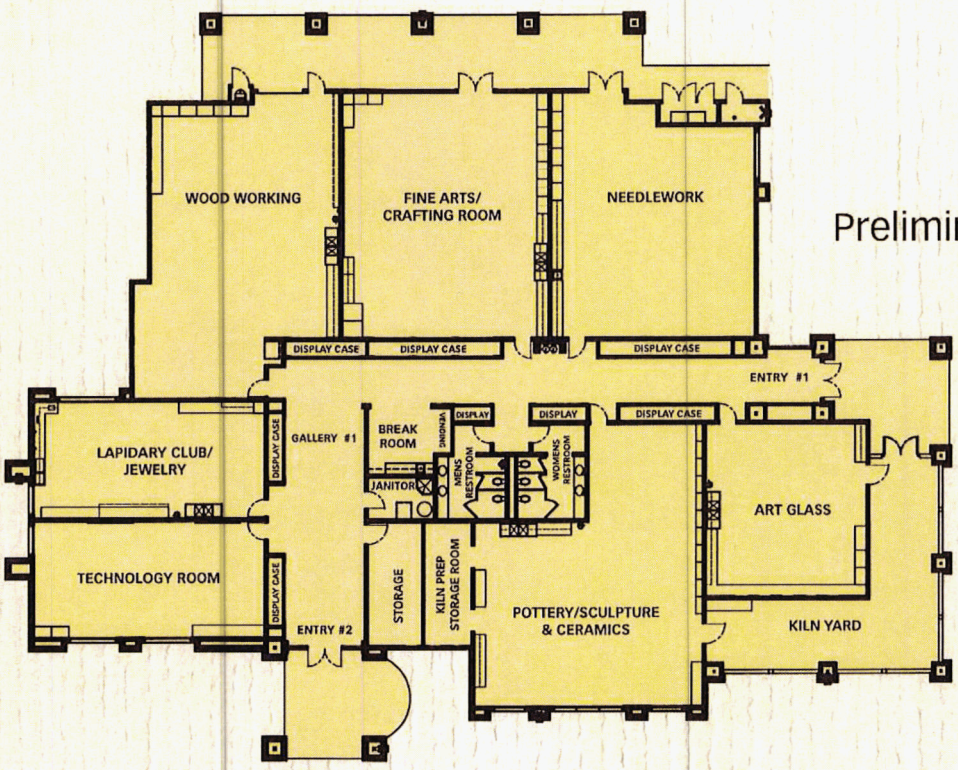
At the heart of SaddleBrooke Ranch are plans for a new clubhouse. This outstanding facility will be infused with a casual elegance and will feature well-appointed amenities. This will be a place where neighbors will gather, friendships will flourish, and new adventures will be planned.



Preliminary Plan

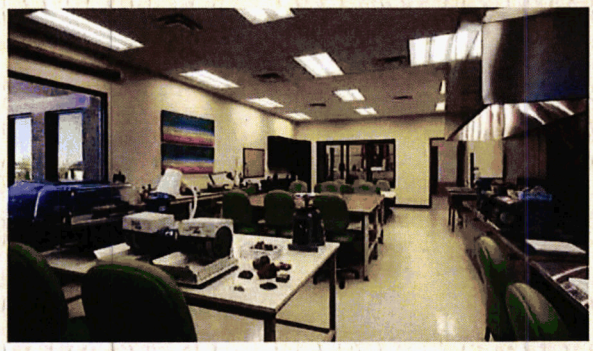
Anticipated construction commencement - 2016. Illustrations for the clubhouse and creative arts facilities are artist's conception and are not intended to show specific details. These Proposed Concept Plans for the clubhouse and creative arts facilities are subject to change at any time without notice. No warranties are given or implied that all improvements shown on these Proposed Concept Plans will be built.

Explore your artistic side

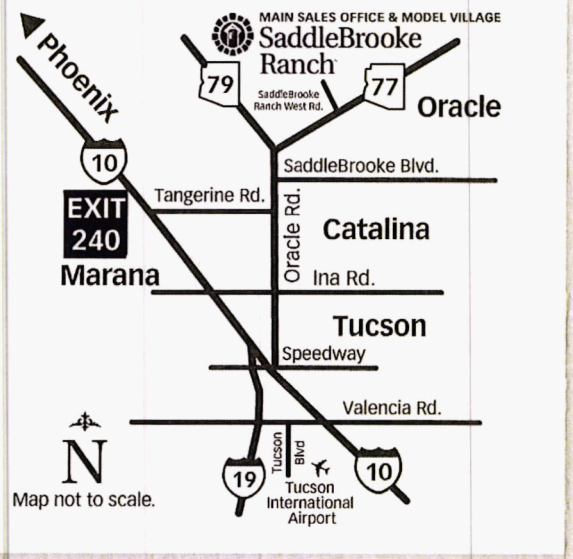


Preliminary Plan

At SaddleBrooke Ranch, the Creative Arts Center have been designed to express your artistic talents. It will be the ideal place to reach your creative potential while making new friends.



Images shown above are from Quail Creek's Creative Arts Center. Exterior & interior design, equipment, furnishings and other interior details will vary for the Creative Arts Center at SaddleBrooke Ranch.



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using at any Robson Resort Community™ is intended for occupancy by at least one person 55 years of age or older per dwelling unit, although the occupants of a limited number of dwelling units may be r. One person must be at least 40 years old in each unit. No one in permanent residence under 19 years of age. Homes at SaddleBrooke Ranch are offered and sold by SaddleBrooke Development Company, for Robson Ranch Mountains, LLC, owner. Robson Ranch Arizona Construction Company, general contractor, ROC 192584. No offer for sale or lease may be made or accepted prior to buyer's receipt of an Arizona subdivision public report. A public report is available on the state real estate department's website. Some amenities are not included in community service fees. Restaurants and golf courses currently are open to the public. The golf courses, pro shops and practice facilities at SaddleBrooke Ranch will be owned by the developers or their assignee(s). Availability of these facilities for use by owners of interests in any of the developments is at the pleasure of the owners of the facilities. Shared use of SaddleBrooke Ranch and SaddleBrooke Phase I and Phase II amenities is subject to reciprocal agreements and is subject to change. SaddleBrooke Ranch residents may also join certain clubs at SaddleBrooke. Membership in the clubs and organizations at SaddleBrooke is at the discretion of the individual clubs and organizations. All photos/pictorials are artist's conception. Information is subject to change without notice. This shall not constitute an offer in any state where registration is required or if in violation of law. © 2015 Robson Communities®, Inc. All rights reserved. 15RC147 9/15

NEW AMENITY EXPANSION

Anticipated Completion Dates: Pickleball complex, pro shop & dog park - late Fall 2015. The Shack - early Winter 2016. Clubhouse - anticipated commencement of construction - 2016. This Proposed Concept Plan for the clubhouse, additional tennis courts & bocce courts is subject to change at any time without notice. No warranties are given or implied that all improvements shown on this Proposed Concept Plan will be built. Illustration is an artist's conception, not intended to show specific details and is subject to change without notice.

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NEW Resort-Style Amenities **Expansion Plans**

OPENING IN LATE FALL 2015

- **A** Pickleball Complex - 24 Courts
- **B** NEW Pro Shop
- **C** Dog Park

Currently under construction

OPENING IN EARLY WINTER 2016

- **D** The Shack

2016 AMENITY PLANS

- **E** Clubhouse & Restaurant
  - Ballroom/Auditorium with Stage - Banquet/Meeting room spaces
  - Full-Service Grille and Bar with Patio overlooking the Lake
  - Private Dining Room
  - Relaxing Fireside Lounge Area
  - Outdoor Terraces
- **F** Event Lawn/Stage
- **G** Creative Arts Center

Anticipated commencement of construction - 2016

ADDITIONAL FUTURE AMENITIES

- **H** Additional Tennis Courts
- **I** Bocce Courts
- **J** All Faith Chapel

This Proposed Concept Plan for the clubhouse, additional tennis courts, bocce courts, all faith chapel and creative arts is subject to change at any time without notice. No warranties are given or implied that all improvements shown on this Proposed Concept Plan will be built.

CURRENT AMENITIES

- **K** La Hacienda Club
  Indoor Lap Pool, Outdoor Pool, Lap Pool, Whirlpool, Viva Fitness Center, Tennis & Pickleball Courts, Esperanza Spa, Hombres Barber Shop, Bistro Veinte, Multi-Purpose Rooms
- **L** 18-hole Championship Golf Course
- **M** Tennis Courts
- **N** Nature Trail

[illegible]lated 8/15

[illegible]ration is an artist's conception, not intended to show specific details and is subject to change without notice.

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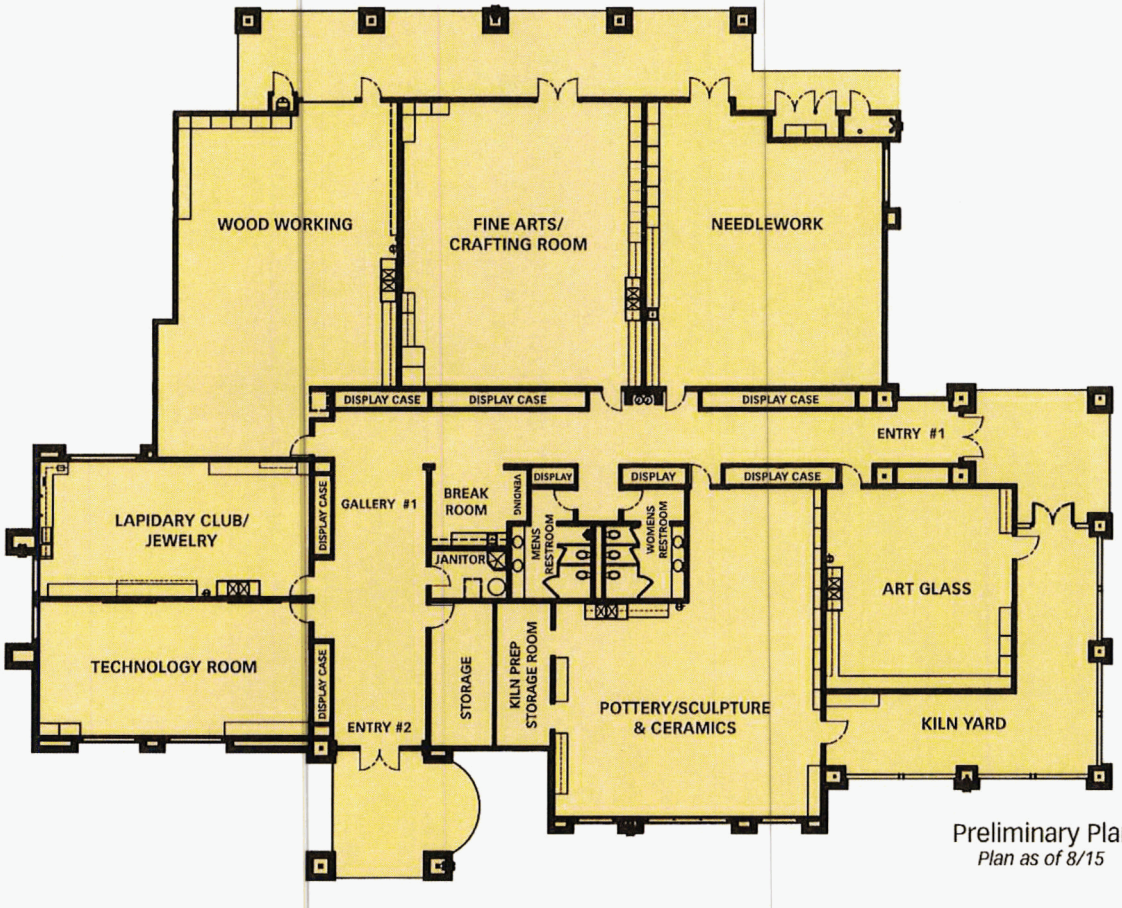
New Creative Arts Center Plan



Preliminary Plan
Plan as of 8/15

Images shown above are from Quail Creek's Creative Arts Center. Interior design, equipment, furnishings and other interior details will vary for the Creative Arts Center at SaddleBrooke Ranch.

SaddleBrooke Ranch™
A ROBSON RESORT COMMUNITY™

Anticipated commencement of construction - 2016. The Proposed Concept Plan for the Creative Arts Center is subject to change at any time without notice. Illustrations are artist's conception and are not intended to show specific details. Plans subject to change without notice. No warranties are given or implied that all improvements shown on this Proposed Concept Plan will be built.

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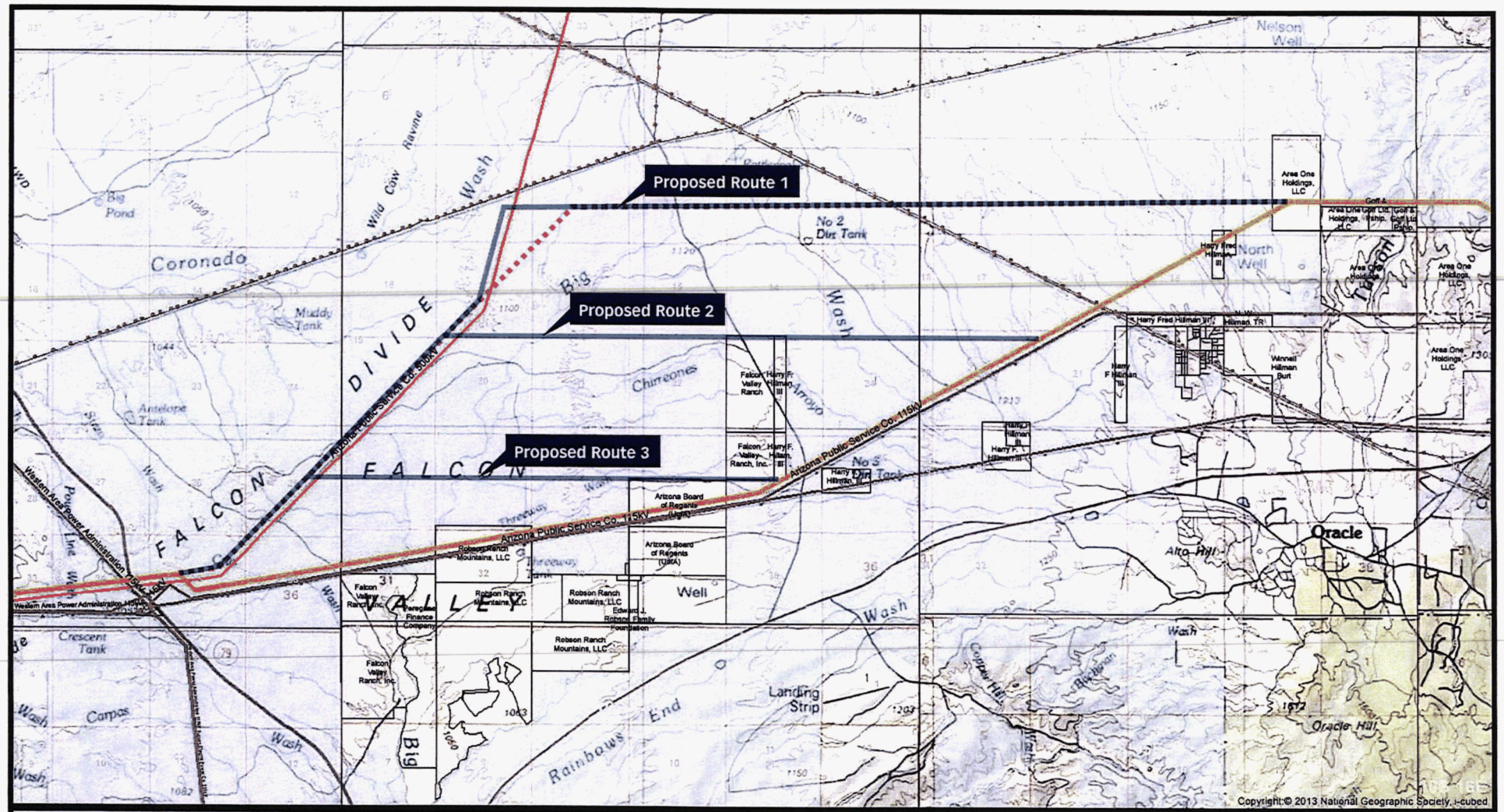
EXHIBIT SS-DT3



LEGEND

Preliminary SunZia Project Features

- Proposed Substation Interconnections
- Study Corridor
- BLM ROD Preferred Alternative Route
- Robson Proposed Route Modification

Utilities

- Existing Substation
- 500 kV Transmission Line
- 345 kV Transmission Line
- 230 kV Transmission Line
- 115/138 kV Transmission Line

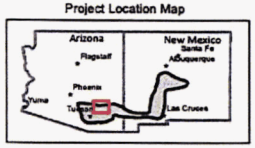
Surface Management

- Bureau of Land Management
- U. S. Forest Service
- Indian Reservation
- Local or State Parks
- Military
- National Park Service
- Other
- Private
- State Trust Land
- U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- Wilderness/Conservation Area
- Electronic Proving Grounds (Ft. Huachuca)

Reference Features

- Railroad
- Major Roads
- Pipeline
- County Boundary

Project Location Map



N

0 0.5 1 2 Miles

SunZia Southwest Transmission Project
BLM Preferred Alternative Route
Robson Ranch Vicinity Proposed Modifications

Rev.: September 2015

Property of: SunZia

EXHIBIT SS-DT4

Robson
COMMUNITIES

Peter M. Gerstman
Executive Vice President
General Counsel
(480) 895-4297
Email: Peter.Gerstman@Robson.com

August 13, 2012

Via e-mail and US Mail

Bureau of Land Management, New Mexico State Office
P.O. Box 27115
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87502-0115

Re: SunZia Southwest Transmission Project

Dear Sir or Madam:

I am writing this letter on behalf of Robson Ranch Mountains, LLC ("Robson") to object to the Bureau of Land Management's preferred routing for the proposed SunZia Southwest Transmission Lines as that routing is set forth in the proposed Environmental Impact Statement. The portion to which we object is located north of Oracle Junction in Pinal County, Arizona, between Arizona highway 77 and Arizona State highway 79. An aerial photo of the area at issue is attached to this letter. The BLM's proposed route in this area is part of the sub-route identified in the BLM's draft environmental impact statement for this project as sub-route 4C2c.

Robson is the developer of SaddleBrooke Ranch, a master-planned active adult community that, upon full build-out, is expected to encompass in excess of 2500 acres and more than 5,000 homes. The vast majority of the SaddleBrooke Ranch property, including the portion of SaddleBrooke Ranch that the BLM-preferred route crosses, has been zoned, is subject to a planned area development overlay district ("PAD") and is subject to a Phased Protected Development Right Plan with Pinal County, and a substantial portion of the project has already been developed. We only just became aware of the SunZia project.

Robson has invested tens of millions of dollars in the SaddleBrooke Ranch project, which currently includes, among other things, a sales and design center with 10 furnished models (plus an additional model under construction), an 18-hole championship golf course with putting green and driving range, and a fitness center and spa of over 40,000 square feet that include indoor and outdoor swimming pools, men's and women's hair salons, massage rooms, aerobics and yoga facilities, a learning center, a creative arts room, billiards, and lighted tennis courts and pickleball courts. In addition, a Robson affiliate has invested millions of dollars to construct a wastewater treatment facility that treats raw sewage to drinking water standards for recharge to the aquifer and golf course irrigation. The PAD and master plan provide for additional amenities and facilities, including golf and homes, in the vicinity of the area that would be traversed by the BLM-preferred SunZia route.

The addition of two 500 kv transmission lines in the northerly portion of SaddleBrooke Ranch has the potential to significantly affect and impair future development of the project, particularly within the northerly portion of the master plan. Although we have not made any attempt to evaluate the need for the SunZia project, we understand the general need for appropriate infrastructure to support future development and we support efforts to meet that need. Affiliates of Robson have cooperated fully in the past in the location of electric transmission lines through other Robson Resort Communities when necessary and where

appropriate. This, however, is a different case. Without commenting on the vast majority of the BLM's preferred route, there are relatively small adjustments that could be made to the route in the vicinity of SaddleBrooke Ranch that would have significant and positive effects for SaddleBrooke Ranch and for Pinal County.

We understand that there are many considerations and interests the BLM must balance when choosing a route. However, the BLM appears not to have given sufficient consideration to the effect of its preferred route on the SaddleBrooke Ranch master plan, the huge investment being placed at risk by Robson in this project, and the employment considerations relating to SaddleBrooke Ranch. Because of our belief in the long-term potential of the SaddleBrooke Ranch location, as demonstrated by the success of the SaddleBrooke community, which is approximately 7 miles from SaddleBrooke Ranch, Robson made a huge investment in SaddleBrooke Ranch even as other homebuilders were closing shop. Studies performed in the past by the Center for Business Research at the Arizona State University College of Business and by the Center for Economic Development and Research at the University of North Texas have confirmed the tremendous economic benefits of a Robson Resort Community for the local economy. The study prepared by ASU in June, 2000 of the economic contributions of SaddleBrooke and SaddleBrooke Ranch estimates that the combined effects of spending for consumer goods and services by households in these two projects upon build-out and the ongoing operations of the homeowners' associations will generate $1.9 billion in expenditures and $1 billion in earnings per year in 1999 dollars, and support 27,500 jobs. This is in addition to all of the direct construction and other jobs during the course of development.

The zoning for the entire SaddleBrooke Ranch master plan is vested by virtue of the golf course, streets, infrastructure, amenities and homes already constructed in the southerly portion of SaddleBrooke Ranch. Zoning vests for the entire master plan because a developer would never start a project as massive as SaddleBrooke Ranch without some assurance of the ability of completing it. For similar reasons, we believe it is incorrect to think of real property within the SaddleBrooke Ranch master plan as "undeveloped" in the same sense as the neighboring State land and agricultural land. Development has not yet reached the location of the BLM-preferred route in SaddleBrooke Ranch, but the location is part of a large and ongoing construction and development project in accordance with a master plan.

A relatively small adjustment in the routing in the vicinity of SaddleBrooke Ranch, taking the line to the north of SaddleBrooke Ranch before converging with the BLM-preferred route could have a tremendous economic effect, not only for Robson, but also for the County. This change, which is indicated in pink in the attachment, would not have any effect on the route in the vicinity of the San Pedro River. This adjustment would affect only a very small portion of sub-route 4C2c, meaning that the vast majority of sub-route 4C2c could remain the same. We would appreciate the opportunity to work with the BLM, Pinal County and others to effect this minor modification. Of course, the SunZia-preferred route, as well as many sub-routes in Route Group 4, would avoid SaddleBrooke Ranch entirely.

To the extent there is a mailing list or email list of interested parties with respect to the SunZia project, please add my name. Please let me know if you need any additional information in order to assist you in evaluating Robson's request to adjust the proposed route. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Peter M. Gerstman

EPG Web Viewer - Windows Internet Explorer

http://mapviewer.epgaz.com/epg.web.host/SunZia.asp

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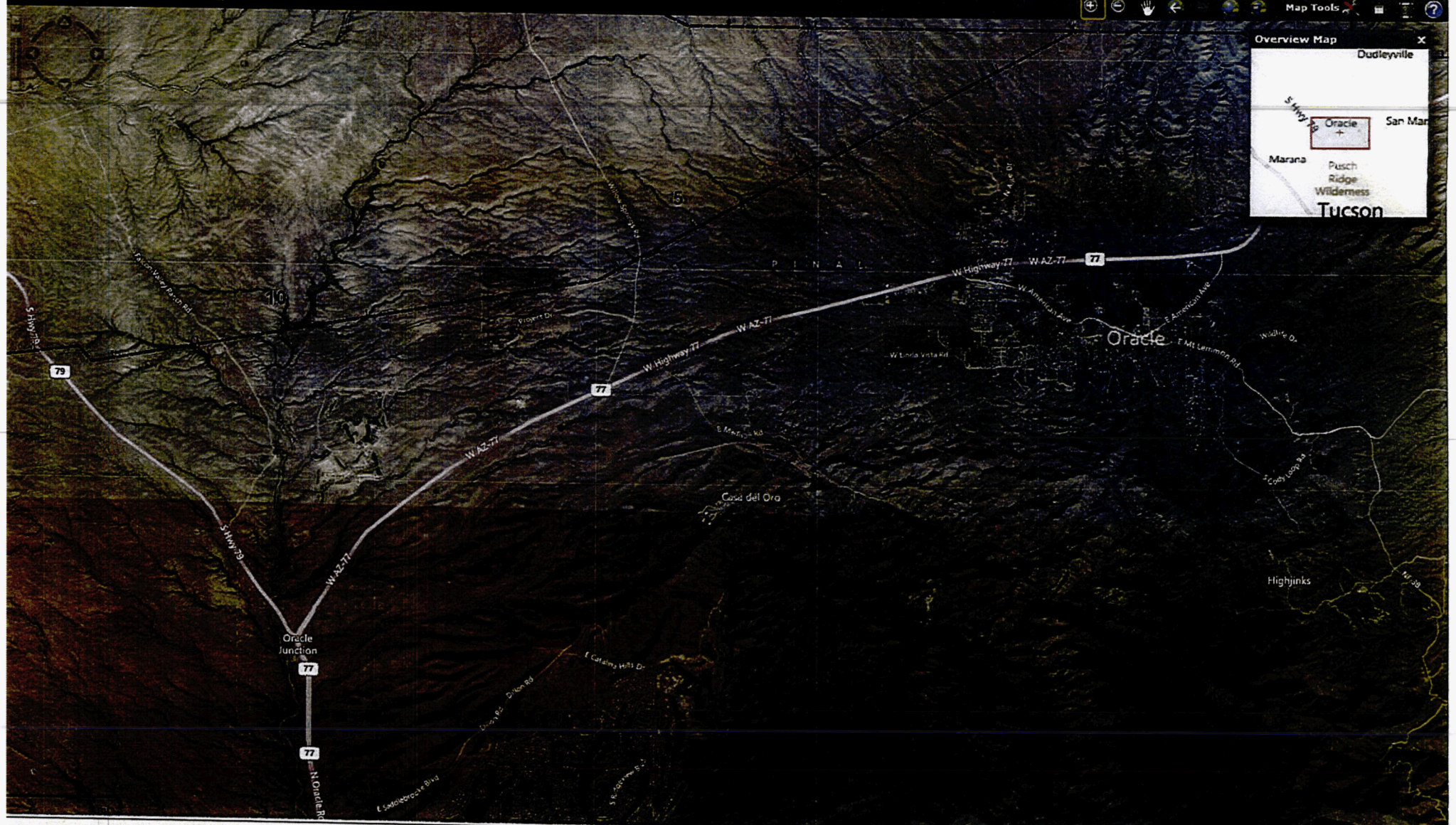
SunZia epg **SunZia Southwest** TRANSMISSION PROJECT

About Map

Base Map | Project Information | Map Tools



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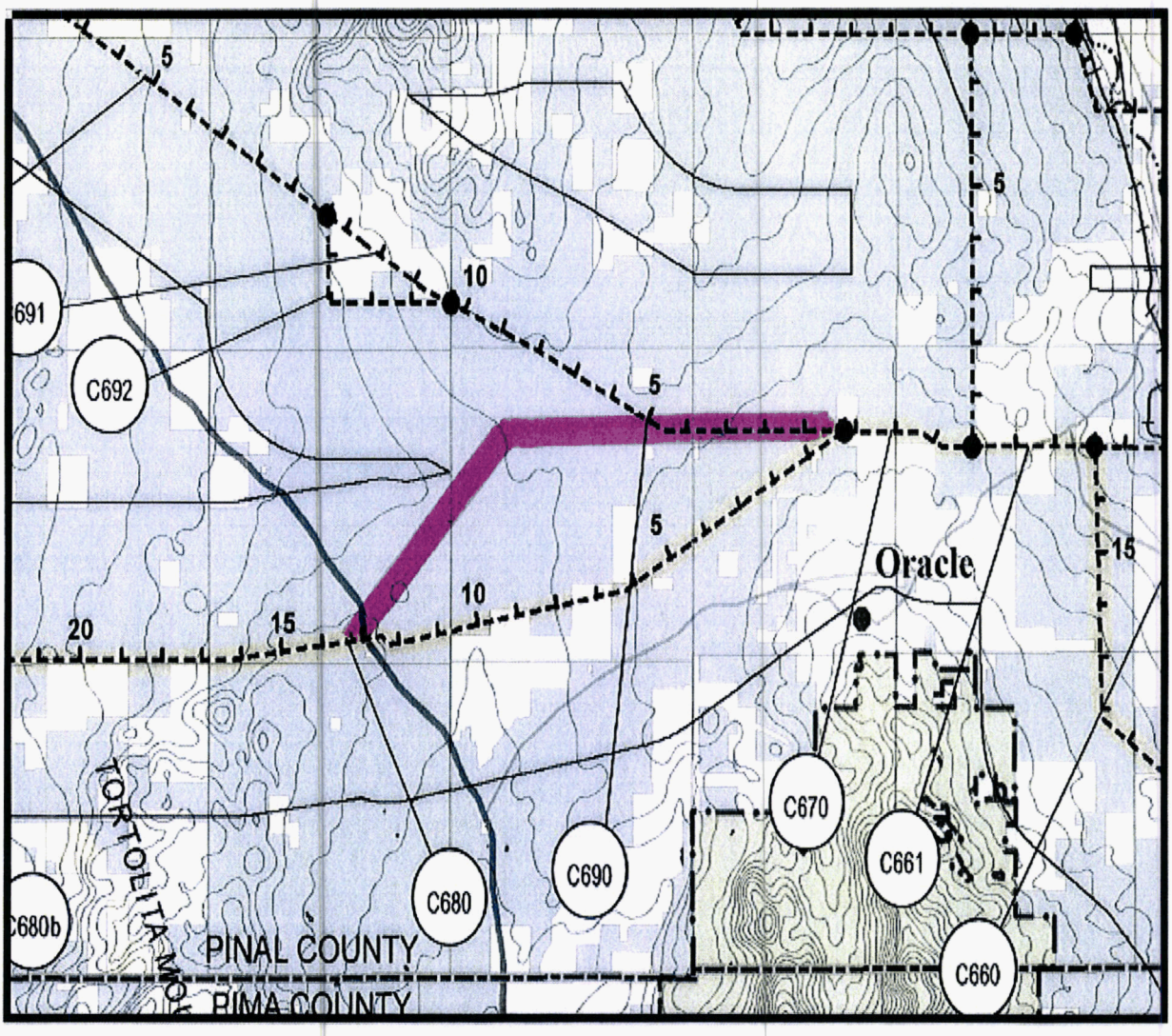
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EXHIBIT SS-DT5

Robson
COMMUNITIES

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AZ CORP COMMISS.
DOCKET CONTROL

Peter M. Gerstman
Executive Vice President
General Counsel
(480) 895-4297
Email: Peter.Gerstman@Robson.com

September 8, 2015

Arizona Corporation Commission
DOCKETED

SEP 10 2015

DOCKETED BY

ORIGINAL

Environmental Planning Group
4141 North 32nd Street, Suite 102
Phoenix, AZ 85018
Attention: Mickey Siegel, Project Manager

Re: SunZia Southwest Transmission Project
ACC Docket No. L-00000YY-15-0318-00171

Dear Mr. Siegel:

I am writing this letter on behalf of Robson Ranch Mountains, LLC ("Robson") in response to your August 12, 2015 letter concerning the SunZia Southwest Transmission Project. As I discussed with Tony De Luca of your company and as I explained in my letter dated August 13, 2012, to the Bureau of Land Management, New Mexico State Office, a portion of the BLM's preferred routing for the proposed SunZia Southwest Transmission Lines goes right through SaddleBrooke Ranch, which is a master planned active adult community. SaddleBrooke Ranch is located north of Oracle Junction in Pinal County, Arizona, between Arizona Highway 77 and Arizona State Highway 79. An aerial photo of the area at issue is attached. The BLM's proposed route in this area is part of the sub-route identified in the BLM's draft environmental impact statement for this project as sub-route 4C2c.

As the developer of SaddleBrooke Ranch, Robson has already invested tens of millions of dollars in the community. The SaddleBrooke Ranch property encompasses more than 2500 acres and upon build-out will include more than 5,000 homes. The vast majority of the SaddleBrooke Ranch property, including the portion of SaddleBrooke Ranch that the BLM-preferred route crosses, has been zoned, is subject to a planned area development overlay district, and is subject to a Phased Protected Development Right Plan with Pinal County.

SaddleBrooke Ranch currently includes, among other things, a sales and design center with 11 furnished models, an 18-hole championship golf course with putting green and driving range, an extensive pickleball complex with 24 courts, a fitness center and spa with over 40,000 square feet that include indoor and outdoor swimming pools, men's and women's hair salons, massage rooms, aerobics and yoga facilities, a learning center, a creative arts room, billiards, and lighted tennis courts. In addition, a Robson affiliate has invested millions of dollars to construct a wastewater treatment facility that treats raw sewage to drinking water standards for recharge to the aquifer and for golf course irrigation. Construction of a large clubhouse is imminent, as is a new Creative Arts Center. Land development work for these new amenities is underway, and vertical construction should begin within a few months. The master plan provides for additional amenities and facilities, including golf and homes, in the vicinity of the area that would be

traversed by the BLM-preferred SunZia route. And, of course, there are hundreds of people living in SaddleBrooke Ranch who have invested significant amounts in their homes for their retirement years.

The addition of two 500 kv transmission lines in the northerly portion of SaddleBrooke Ranch has the potential to significantly affect and impair future development of the project. We understand the general need for appropriate infrastructure to support future development and we support efforts to meet that need. Affiliates of Robson have cooperated fully in the past in the location of electric transmission lines through other Robson Resort Communities when necessary and where appropriate. This, however, is a different case. Without commenting on the vast majority of the BLM's preferred route, there are relatively small adjustments that could be made to the route in the vicinity of SaddleBrooke Ranch that would have significant and positive effects for SaddleBrooke Ranch and for Pinal County.

We understand that there are many considerations and interests the BLM must balance when choosing a route. However, the BLM appears not to have given sufficient consideration to the effect of its preferred route on the SaddleBrooke Ranch master plan, the huge investment being placed at risk by Robson in this project, and the employment considerations relating to SaddleBrooke Ranch. Because of our belief in the long-term potential of the SaddleBrooke Ranch location, as demonstrated by the success of the SaddleBrooke community, which is approximately 7 miles from SaddleBrooke Ranch, Robson made a huge investment in SaddleBrooke Ranch even as other homebuilders were closing shop. Studies performed in the past by the Center for Business Research at the Arizona State University College of Business and by the Center for Economic Development and Research at the University of North Texas have confirmed the tremendous economic benefits of a Robson Resort Community for the local economy. The study prepared by ASU in June, 2000 of the economic contributions of SaddleBrooke and SaddleBrooke Ranch estimates that the combined effects of spending for consumer goods and services by households in these two projects upon build-out and the ongoing operations of the homeowners' associations will generate $1.9 billion in expenditures and $1 billion in earnings *per year* in 1999 dollars, and support 27,500 jobs. This is in addition to all of the direct construction and other jobs during the course of development.

The zoning for the entire SaddleBrooke Ranch master plan is vested by virtue of the golf course, streets, infrastructure, amenities and homes already constructed in the community. Zoning vests for the entire master plan because a developer would never start a project as massive as SaddleBrooke Ranch without some assurance of the ability of completing it. For similar reasons, we believe it is incorrect to think of real property within the SaddleBrooke Ranch master plan as "undeveloped" in the same sense as the neighboring State land and agricultural land. Development has not yet reached the location of the BLM-preferred route in SaddleBrooke Ranch, but the location is part of a large and ongoing construction and development project in accordance with a master plan.

A relatively small adjustment in the routing in the vicinity of SaddleBrooke Ranch, taking the line to the north of SaddleBrooke Ranch before converging with the BLM-preferred route could have a tremendous economic effect, not only for Robson, but also for the County. An example of just one potential change that could have tremendous advantages is indicated in pink in the second attachment to this letter. This change would not have any effect on the route in the

vicinity of the San Pedro River. This adjustment would affect only a very small portion of sub-route 4C2c, meaning that the vast majority of sub-route 4C2c could remain the same. We would appreciate the opportunity to work with the BLM, Pinal County and others to effect this minor modification. Of course, the SunZia-preferred route, as well as many sub-routes in Route Group 4, would avoid SaddleBrooke Ranch entirely.

Sincerely,

Peter M. Gerstman

cc: Edward J. Robson
Pinal County Board of Supervisors
Arizona Corporation Commission
Arizona Power Plant and Transmission Line Siting Committee

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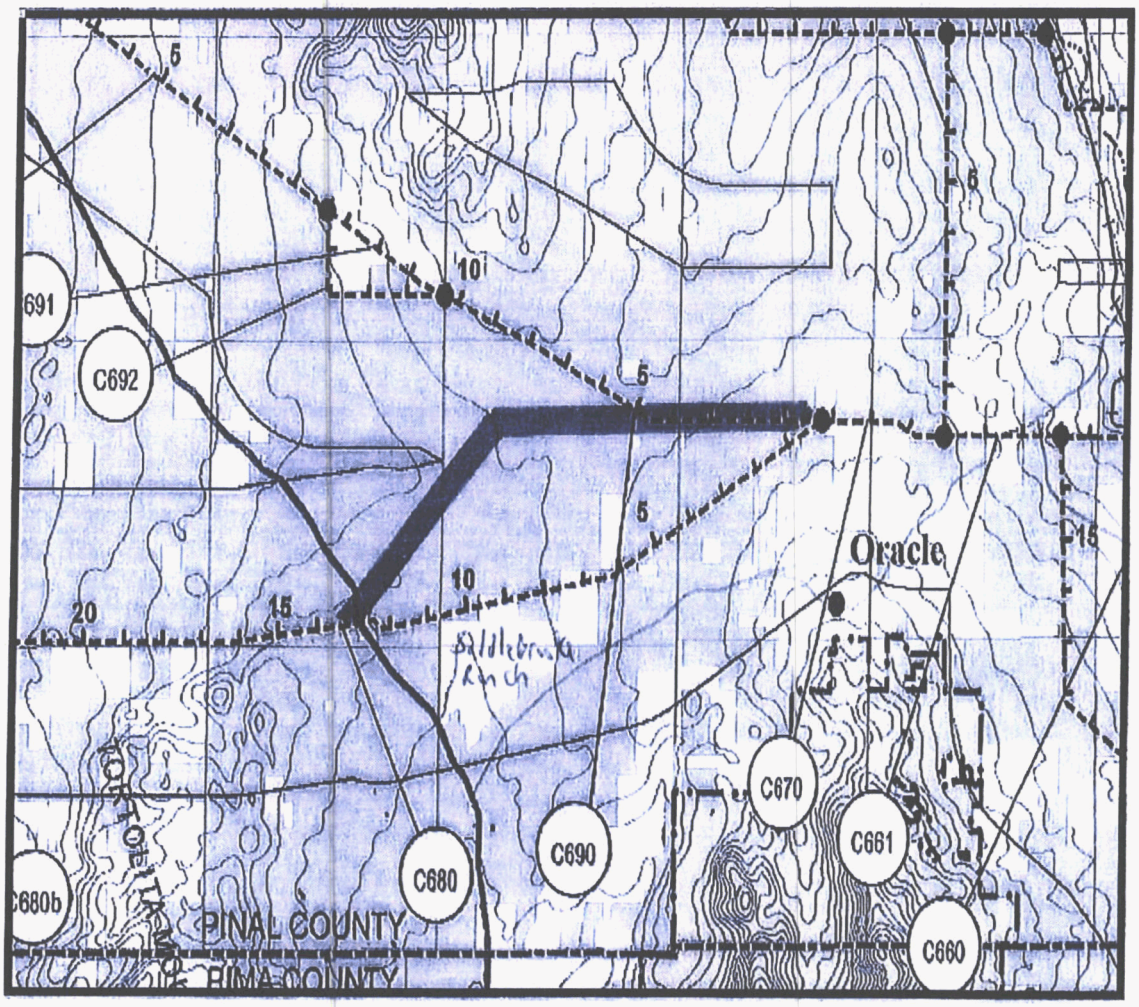
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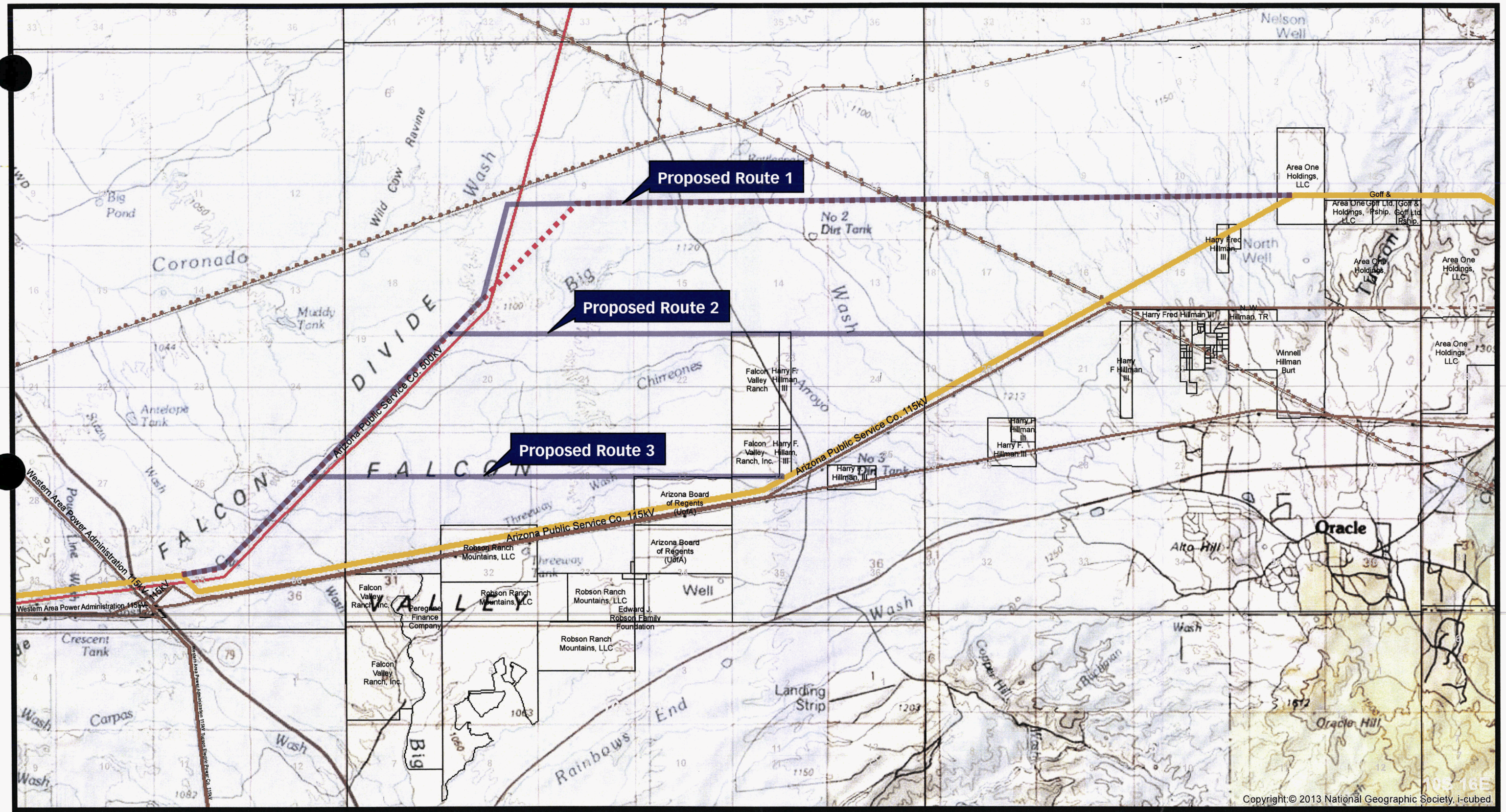
SUNZIA SOUTHWEST TRANSMISSION PROJECT
L-00000YY-15-0318-00171

ENLARGED VERSION OF

EXHIBIT SS-DT3



LEGEND

Preliminary SunZia Project Features

- Proposed Substation Interconnections
- Study Corridor
- BLM ROD Preferred Alternative Route
- Robson Proposed Route Modification

Utilities

- Existing Substation
- 500 kV Transmission Line
- 345 kV Transmission Line
- 230 kV Transmission Line
- 115/138 kV Transmission Line

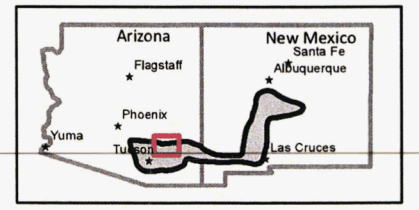
Surface Management

- Bureau of Land Management
- U. S. Forest Service
- Indian Reservation
- Local or State Parks
- Military
- National Park Service
- Other
- Private
- State Trust Land
- U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- Wilderness/Conservation Area
- Electronic Proving Grounds (Ft. Huachuca)

Reference Features

- Railroad
- Major Roads
- Pipeline
- County Boundary

Project Location Map



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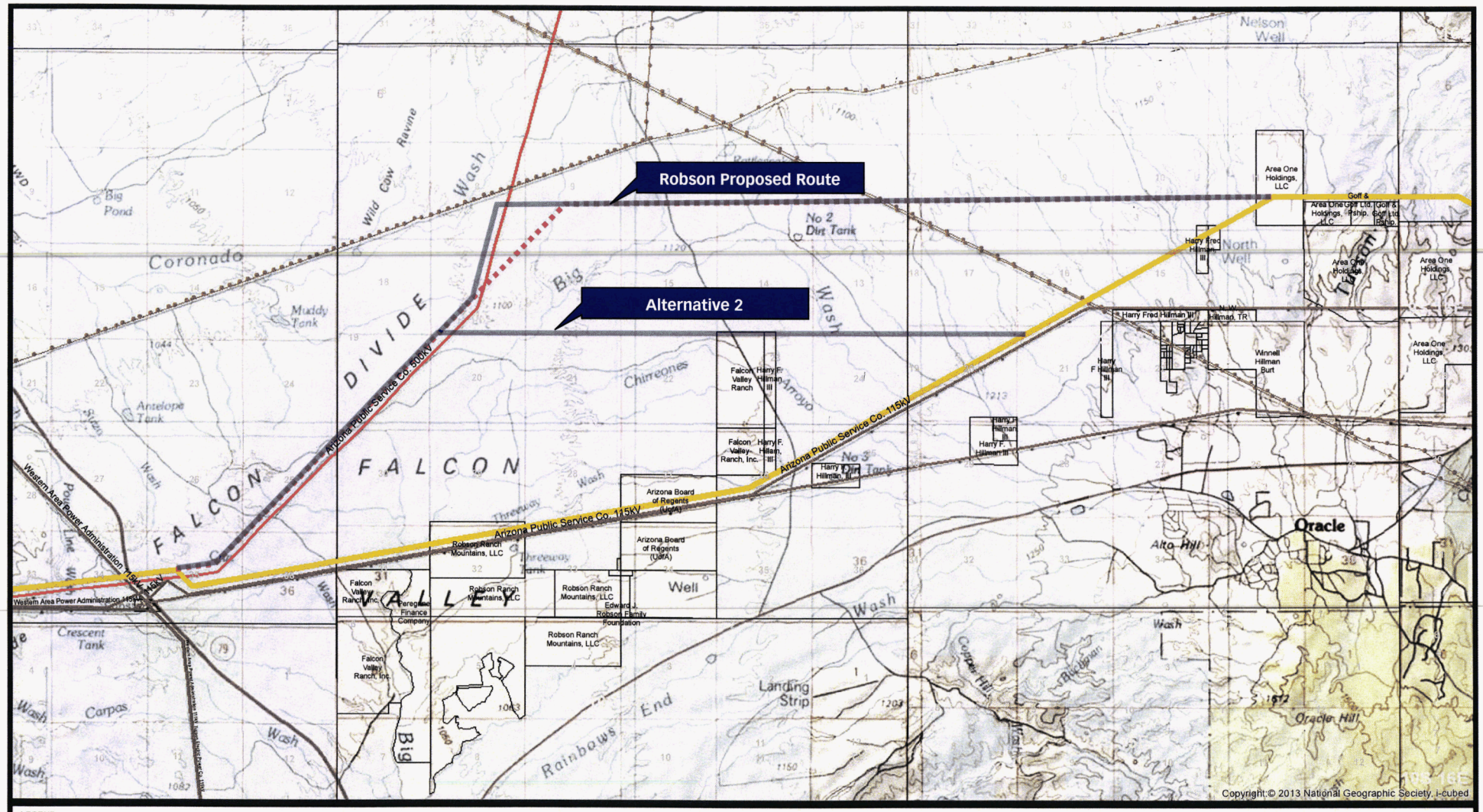
SunZia Southwest Transmission Project
BLM Preferred Alternative Route
Robson Ranch Vicinity Proposed Modifications

Rev.: September 2015

Property of:

SunZia



LEGEND

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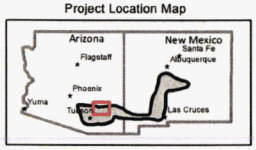

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SunZia Southwest Transmission Project
BLM Preferred Alternative Route
Robson Ranch Vicinity Proposed Modifications

Rev.: September 2015

Property of:

SunZia

PENGAD 800-631-6989

EXHIBIT

ROB-1A

ADMITTED

RYLEY CARLOCK
& APPLEWHITE
Attorneys

A PROFESSIONAL CORPORATION
One North Central Avenue, Suite 1200
Phoenix, Arizona 85004-4417
P 602.440.4800 F 602.257.9582

Offices in Arizona & Colorado
www.rcalaw.com

Albert H. Acken
Direct Line: 602-440-4874
Direct Fax: 602-257-6974
Email: aacken@rcalaw.com

October 16, 2015

Via Email and U.S. Mail

Robson Ranch Mountains, LLC
c/o Jay Shapiro
Shapiro Law Firm, P.C.
1819 E. Morten Avenue, Suite 280
Phoenix, Arizona 85020

Re: SunZia Transmission, LLC Responses to Robson Ranch Mountains, LLC's **First** Set of Data Requests; Docket No. L-00000YY-15-0318-00171

Dear Mr. Shapiro:

Robson Ranch Mountains, LLC ("Robson") provided the First Set of Data Requests to SunZia Transmission, LLC ("SunZia") on October 14, 2015. Herein are the responses from SunZia. Tom Wray and Mark Etherton provided the information that forms the basis for the response. Their addresses are:

Tom Wray
Project Manager
SunZia Transmission, LLC
3610 N. 44th Street, Suite 250
Phoenix, AZ 85018

Mark Etherton
Engineering Manager
SunZia Transmission, LLC
3610 N. 44th Street, Suite 250
Phoenix, AZ 85018

Should you have any questions regarding these responses, please contact the undersigned.

Sincerely,

Albert H. Acken

cc: Peter Gerstman

Enclosure

3894175.1
10/16/15

EXHIBIT
ROB-2
ADMITTED

**RESPONSES FROM SUNZIA TRANSMISSION, LLC
TO ROBSON'S FIRST SET OF DATA REQUESTS
DOCKET NO. L-00000YY-15-0318-00171
OCTOBER 16, 2015**

GENERAL OBJECTION: SunZia objects to the extent that the requests are overbroad, open-ended, make certain commercial and operational assumptions, and are irrelevant to the proceeding, and because SunZia lacks information to fully answer the request.

1.1. Admit that the portion of the SunZia Project proposed to cross SaddleBrooke Ranch could alternatively be located on State Land property. If you deny, please explain the basis for your denial.

SunZia incorporates its General Objection. Additionally, SunZia objects because this Request for Admission (RFA) is vague and ambiguous, as it asks whether the SunZia Project "could" be located on State Trust Land property. It is unclear whether this RFA is requesting that SunZia admit that it is possible, from an engineering perspective to locate the Project on State Trust Land, or whether the RFA is asking, from a legal perspective, if it is possible to locate the Project on State Trust Land. Subject to the forgoing objections, without waiving the same, SunZia answers as follows:

SunZia Denies the Request For Admission. The Proposed Route was identified and selected, by the BLM, during the NEPA Process with the input and consensus of the Arizona State Land Department (ASLD). *See* SUN-7. SunZia has previously met with ASLD to inquire whether it would be willing to grant a ROW on State Trust Lands in the area north of SaddleBrooke Ranch. ASLD has, repeatedly, indicated that it would not be willing, at this time, to grant a right-of-way on State Trust Lands in this area. SunZia has likewise expressed to Robson that it would support efforts to work with ASLD for approval to modify the Proposed Route, subject to the timing and notice requirements of the CEC Process. To date, Robson has not asked SunZia to actively participate in any discussion with the ASLD. Because the ASLD has jurisdiction over State Trust Land, and has indicated that it would not support a route north of the Proposed Route in the portion traversing SaddleBrooke Ranch, the SunZia Project cannot legally, at this time, be routed on State Trust Land to avoid SaddleBrooke Ranch.

1.2. To what extent did SunZia consider the impacts of the SunZia Project on SaddleBrooke Ranch? In responding to this data request, please provide copies of any and all documents regarding the SunZia Project that reference SaddleBrooke Ranch. If such documents have already been provided, please identify by specific reference the location of documents and pages responsive to this data request.

SunZia incorporates its General Objection. Additionally, SunZia objects because this Request is vague and ambiguous, as it is a compound and string series of questions and requests, which cannot be meaningfully understood without breaking-up the same in constituent parts.

Additionally, it requests all documents "regarding" the SunZia Project that "reference" the SaddleBrooke Ranch." The terms "regarding" and "reference," as used in this context, are confusing, vague, ambiguous, and potentially misleading. Subject to the forgoing objections, without waiving the same, SunZia answers as follows:

Please see the following portions of the *Final Environmental Impact Statement and Proposed Resource Management Plan Amendments for the SunZia Southwest Transmission Project in New Mexico and Arizona* 3-232 (June 2013), Exhibit B-1 to the Application, SUN-1, all of which consider the impacts of the SunZia Project on SaddleBrooke Ranch:

- Bureau of Land Management, *Final Environmental Impact Statement and Proposed Resource Management Plan Amendments for the SunZia Southwest Transmission Project in New Mexico and Arizona* 3-232 (June 2013) "SaddleBrooke Ranch Golf Club was identified to have moderate concern recreation viewers . . ."
- Bureau of Land Management, *Final Environmental Impact Statement and Proposed Resource Management Plan Amendments for the SunZia Southwest Transmission Project in New Mexico and Arizona* 4-186 (June 2013) "Low impacts are anticipated for high sensitivity viewers at Oracle State Park and SaddleBrooke Ranch Golf Club because the Project would be viewed within 1 mile; however, terrain and vegetation would screen the Project, thereby reducing contrast."
- Bureau of Land Management, *Final Environmental Impact Statement and Proposed Resource Management Plan Amendments for the SunZia Southwest Transmission Project in New Mexico and Arizona* 4-279 (June 2013) (SaddleBrooke Ranch is a residential subdivision, partially constructed, approximately 9 miles west of Oracle (Pima County) and is a past, present, future, and reasonably foreseeable future activity within the cumulative area of analysis).
- Bureau of Land Management, *Final Environmental Impact Statement and Proposed Resource Management Plan Amendments for the SunZia Southwest Transmission Project in New Mexico and Arizona* 4-337 (June 2013) (SaddleBrooke Ranch is a specific project that would alter landscape scenery within the study area. "Th[is] development when added to the direct effects of the proposed Project, would incrementally convert natural landscapes into industrial landscapes, which overtime would adversely affect landscape scenery.").
- Bureau of Land Management, *Appendix C – Previous Cultural Resource Surveys: FEIS and Proposed Resource Management Plan Amendments for the SunZia Southwest Transmission Project in New Mexico and Arizona* C-60 (June 2013) (there was a previously conducted survey in Arizona titled "A Cultural Resources Survey of a 5.0-acre Parcel and 2.6 Miles of Access Road for the Proposed SaddleBrooke Ranch Substation, Pinal County, Arizona.").

- Bureau of Land Management, *Appendix D4 – Viewing Locations: FEIS and Proposed Resource Management Plan Amendments for the SunZia Southwest Transmission Project in New Mexico and Arizona* D4-7 (June 2013) (the SaddleBrooke Ranch Golf Club has overall a moderate viewing concern level).
- Bureau of Land Management, *Appendix J.02 – Comments and Responses on Draft: FEIS and Proposed Resource Management Plan Amendments for the SunZia Southwest Transmission Project in New Mexico and Arizona* J-141 (June 2013) (Robson Ranch Mountains, LLC, sent a letter objecting to the BLM's preferred routing for SunZia.).

In addition, the CEC application, SUN-1, specifically references SaddleBrooke Ranch in the following locations:

- Application Exhibit B, p. B-11
- Application Exhibit E, pp. E-4 to E-7
- Application Figures G-4-3 and G-4-6 in Exhibit G
- Application Exhibit A-2, Panels 2-e and 2-f.
- Application Exhibit A-3, Panel 3-e and 3-f.
- Application Exhibit H, pp. H-5 and H-8.

Hearing Exhibits SUN-13 and SUN-14 also reference SaddleBrooke Ranch.

Because Robson has access to these documents, online, and a copy of the same, only the citations have been provided herein.

1.3. Describe any and all mitigation proposed for the portion of the SunZia Project proposed to be located on and/or with the SaddleBrooke Ranch development. In responding to this data request, please provide copies of any and all documents referencing mitigation efforts relating to SaddleBrooke Ranch. If such documents have already been provided, please identify by specific reference the location of documents and pages responsive to this data request.

SunZia incorporates its General Objection. Additionally, SunZia objects because this Request is vague and ambiguous, as it is a compound and string series of questions and requests, which cannot be meaningfully understood without breaking-up the same in constituent parts. Subject to the forgoing objections, without waiving the same, SunZia answers as follows:

Mitigation measures associated with the SunZia Project, which will include mitigation measures proposed for the portion of the Proposed Route "located on and/or with [sic] the SaddleBrooke Ranch development" are identified in the *FEIS and Proposed Resource Management Plan Amendments for the SunZia Southwest Transmission Project in New Mexico and Arizona* (June 2013) and Record of Decision (January 2015) regarding the same, at Appendix E thereof. The contents of the same are incorporated by reference, as though they are fully stated herein. The proposed mitigation measures which may apply to the portion of the Proposed Route "located on and/or with [sic] the SaddleBrooke Ranch development" have been previously provided to, or otherwise readily available to, Robson at the following:[1]

- Standard and Selective Mitigation Measures would be utilized. The Standard and Selective Mitigation measures are identified at http://www.blm.gov/style/medialib/blm/nm/programs/more/lands_and_realty/sunzia/sunzia_docs.Par.89255.File.dat/SunZia_ROD_Appendix%20E-Mitigation%20Measures.pdf (last visited October 16, 2015).
- SunZia has agreed that modified tower design or alternate tower type would be used to minimize ground disturbance, operational conflicts, visual contrast, and/or avian conflicts.
- SunZia has agreed that at highway, canyon, and trail crossings, structures are to be placed at the maximum distance practicable from the crossing to reduce visual impacts.

SunZia expressed to Robson, on October 14, 2015, a willingness to support efforts to coordinate with the ASLD to adjust the Proposed Route, subject to the notice requirements of the LSC. In addition, SunZia continues to be willing to work with Robson to identify additional mitigation measures within SaddleBrooke Ranch, subject to the notice requirements of the LSC.

[1] Please note that hardcopies can be provided, if requested, but to expedite our response we have included hyperlinks herewith. Please advise if hardcopies should be mailed.

Arizona tribes that participated in general Project consultation and the Section 106 process include: Tohono O'odham Nation, Gila River Indian Community, Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community, Ak-Chin Indian Community, San Carlos Apache, and White Mountain Apache.

Consultation with appropriate land management agencies, tribes, and State Historic Preservation Offices is ongoing. A Programmatic Agreement, which establishes a project-specific procedure for complying with the NHPA, including procedures to follow during the execution of the Project, has been executed by all requested parties.

Visual Resources

Changes to views from sensitive public viewing locations and modifications that would alter the landscape character (scenery) of natural lands were the primary factors considered for identifying and characterizing impacts related to visual resources. Impacts to scenery and views from residential, travel routes, and recreation areas were assessed. Additionally, compliance with visual resource management objectives and adherence with resource management plans for federal lands were also assessed. Standard and selective mitigation measures and Best Management Practices (BMPs) would reduce impacts to scenery and viewers.

Visual impacts that may occur with construction and operation of the Proposed Route include the following:

- Moderate-High impacts to Class A landscapes are anticipated at the San Pedro River Crossing. Moderate-High impacts are anticipated where the Project would cross Class B lands where modifications to the landscape introduce strong contrast to scenery (e.g. new access roads over rolling hills and no existing structures). Moderate to Low-Moderate impacts would occur on Class B lands where modifications to the landscape are moderate as a result of project construction. Low-Moderate to Low impacts are anticipated for Class B and C landscapes where modifications to the landscape as a result of project construction are minimal.
- Limited areas of Moderate-High impacts are anticipated for residences north of Willcox, north of Eloy (near the Pinal Central Substation), and dispersed residences south of San Manuel and west of Oracle. Moderate to Low impacts were identified for residences associated with the following communities: Cascabel, Redington, San Manuel, and Oracle (including Saddlebrooke Ranch), and Eloy.
- High impacts to recreation viewers associated with the Arizona National Scenic Trail are expected to occur. Moderate and Moderate-high impacts are anticipated for Hot Wells Dune OHV Recreation Area and the recreation area access road, respectively. Recreation viewers would also have moderate-high impacts associated with the Buehman Canyon Trail and the A7 Ranch. Moderate to Low impacts are anticipated for Oracle State Park and associated trails.
- High impacts would occur for viewers along Pima County designated Scenic route Redington Road. Moderate-high impacts are anticipated for Cascabel Road, SR 77, Muleshoe Ranch Road, Black Hills Mine Road/Catalina Ridge, Webb Road, North Redington Road, and Park Link Drive.

Class B lands that exhibit a unique agrarian setting in the arid southwest. Cultural modifications that have locally modified these landscapes include HVTLs (500 kV and 345 kV), Pinal Central Substation, local transportation routes, unpaved roads, and development associated with the agriculture processing facilities north of Eloy.

Class C landscapes crossed by the Proposed Route are associated with the San Simon and Sulphur Springs Valleys and plains south of the Galiuro Mountains (links B160b, B170, C110 and C260, respectively), and in the creosote dominated Upland Sonoran Desert north of the Picacho Mountains (links C670 to C830). Cultural modifications that have locally modified landscapes associated with Class C include HVTLs (500 kV and 345 kV), pipelines, and paved and unpaved roads.

A limited area of Class A landscape crossed by the Proposed Route is associated with the San Pedro River (link 201). These landscapes are characterized by the meandering form of the San Pedro River and the diverse riparian vegetation that is adjacent to and interwoven within the river itself. Cultural modifications that have locally modified landscapes associated with Class A scenery include HVTLs (345 kV), local transportation routes, and unpaved roads.

Sensitive Viewer Inventory

Visual Sensitivity reflects the degree of concern for change in the scenic quality of the natural landscape or existing conditions from a sensitive viewpoint in the study area. Sensitive viewers identified within the study area include residential, recreation, and travel route viewers as described below.

Residential

Concentrations of residential viewers, which are associated with a high sensitivity level, are located north of Willox in the San Manuel and Oracle area (including Saddlebrooke Ranch), and north Eloy along links C110, C450, C670, C680, and C880a. In these locations, there are residences that occur in close proximity to existing HVTL corridors. Smaller residential concentrations are located in Cascabel along links C261 and C201, Redington (Link C441) and west of Oracle (Link C680). Dispersed low-density rural residences are located in proximity to the aforementioned towns.

Recreation

Sensitive recreation viewers associated with the Project include Wilderness Areas, Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC), National Forest Lands, state park, trails, golf courses, OHV areas, and dispersed recreation. High sensitivity level recreation viewers include portions

of the Peloncillo Mountains Wilderness (including Peloncillo Mountains Wilderness Study Area [WSA] (Link B160b), the Hot Wells Dune OHV area (Link B160b), the Rincon Mountains Wilderness (Links C201 and C441), Oracle State Park (including Bellota Trail Loop, Granite Overlook Trail Loop, Manzanita Trail, Mariposa Trail, Nature Trail Loop, Wildlife Corridor Trail, and the Historic Kannally Ranch House) (Link C670), and the Arizona Trail Trailhead (Tiger Mine) and associated trail (Link C661). Moderate sensitivity level recreation viewers include the Northern Peloncillo Mountains ACEC (Link B160b), portions of the Coronado National Forest (Link C441), A7 Ranch (C441), San Manuel Golf Club, Saddlebrooke Ranch Golf Club, and Pinal County Fairgrounds near links C441, C450, C680, and C880a, respectively.

Travel Routes

Travel routes with associated scenic, historic, and/or auto tour route designations include Redington Road (Link C441), Control Road (Mount Lemmon Highway FR 38) (Link C661), SR 77, and SR 79 (Pinal Pioneer Parkway). Moderate sensitivity level travel routes include portions of I-10 and US Routes 191 and 287, Fort Grant Road, Three Links Road, Cascabel Road (Link 261), Ocotillo Road, and SR 76 (San Pedro River Road) (Link C441). Moderate sensitivity level recreation access/four-wheel drive roads include Muleshoe Ranch Road (link C260), Black Hills Mine Road/Catalina Ridge (Link C450), and Buehman Canyon Trail.

Impact Methodology

The purpose of the visual impact assessment was to identify and characterize the level of visual change to the landscape and views from sensitive viewers that would result from the construction and operation of the Proposed Route. The following text describes the process used to measure visual contrast and associated visual impacts in context with landscape scenery and sensitive viewers.

Impacts to scenery were assessed based on the scenic quality of the landscape in conjunction with the proposed project's anticipated visual contrast. Visual contrast is defined as the degree of perceived change that would occur in the landscape as a result of the construction, operation, and maintenance of the Proposed Route. In the context of the Project, visual contrast was assessed considering (1) landscape contrast – removal of vegetation (i.e., agricultural crops, orchards, and riparian) in order to prepare the right-of-way for Project access, and to construct and maintain Project facilities, and (2) structure contrast – the introduction of aboveground facilities into the landscape.

Impacts to sensitive viewers were assessed based upon (1) level of visual contrast as previously described (i.e., new line, co-located, or parallel existing linear features), (2) distance from the Project, (3) viewing condition, (4) visibility (screened or backdropped views), and (5) viewer

sensitivity (high or moderate). Generally, for sensitive viewers, as distance from the Project increases, the perception of visual contrast decreases. For this study, Project-specific distance zones were established based on visibility thresholds specific to 500 kV transmission line facilities. Visibility is the perception of form, line, color, texture, and other visual elements in the landscape. These elements become less detailed and obvious as distance from a viewpoint increases.

Impacts are anticipated to be highest where new structures are introduced into the landscape for residential viewers with unobstructed views of the Project within the immediate foreground distance zone. Residences with similar viewing conditions would have reduced impacts where the Project would be co-located with or parallel existing transmission lines, because structure contrast is reduced.

Impact Results

Scenery Impacts

Scenery impacts for the Proposed Route are predominantly Moderate to Moderate-High for Class B landscapes, Low for Class C, and Moderate-High for approximately one mile of Class A landscape associated with the San Pedro River crossing.

Moderate to Moderate-High impacts for Class B landscape were identified in the San Simon (links B160c), the San Pedro Valleys (links C201, C441, and C450), and the Tortolita Foothills (Link C680, C818). These impacts are anticipated to occur within the bajada landscapes where the terrain is moderately dissected and does not parallel existing transmission lines.

Low-moderate impacts are anticipated to occur within Class B scenery where the Project parallels existing transmission lines (Links C71, C110, C212, C260, C680, and C880a). Low-moderate to Low impacts would also occur within Class C scenery associated with valley plains (Links B160b, C110, C260, and C860). Low impacts to Class C scenery are anticipated where the Project would parallel existing transmission lines or pipeline facilities.

Residential

The majority of impacts for residential viewers range from Moderate to Low where the Project is located adjacent to existing transmission lines. In these locations, contrast would be reduced because existing access roads would be used for construction. These residences are located north of Willcox, in the San Manuel and Oracle area, including Saddlebrooke Ranch (refer to simulation Figures G-4-3 and G-4-6 in Exhibit G), and north of Eloy along links C110, C450, C670, C680, and C880a. Moderate to Low impacts were also identified for the smaller

residential concentrations associated with Cascabel and Redington (along links C261 and C201 and Link C441, respectively) and west of Oracle (Link C680). In these locations, the Proposed Project is located over two miles away with partially screened views.

Moderate impacts are anticipated for dispersed residences south of San Manuel (Link C450 and C441).These impacts are based primarily on distance from the Project to the viewer in context with rolling hills which would partially screen the Project. Moderate-High to Moderate impacts are anticipated in limited areas where residences are within 0.5 miles of the Project with partial screening based on topography and vegetation (Rosendo Road residence).

Dispersed residences in agricultural lands north of Willcox and Eloy would have level foreground views of the Project (links C110 and C880a, respectively). However, the Project would be seen in context with existing transmission lines, resulting in Moderate impacts. Moderate-High impacts would occur in limited situations where residences are located between the Proposed Route and existing facilities.

Future Residences

The Saddlebrooke Ranch subdivision is expected to expand with an ultimate build-out north of the Proposed Route. Effects are anticipated to be Moderate for high-sensitivity viewers in the future expansion.

Recreation

High impacts are anticipated for users of the Arizona National Scenic Trail near the Tiger Mine Trailhead northeast of Oracle (refer to simulation Figure G-4-5 in Exhibit G, Link C670). The Project would cross the trail in rolling terrain with unobstructed views of the Proposed Project. Moderate-high to moderate impacts are anticipated for recreation viewers using Buehman Canyon Trail (Link 441) and nearby A7 Ranch. In this location, the Project would be visible within one mile of the trail in a landscape with few modifications. High to Moderate impacts are also anticipated for recreation access and dispersed users of the Hot Wells Dune OHV Recreation Area, respectively (Link B160b). Impacts are anticipated to range from Low-moderate to low for dispersed recreation users associated with portions of the Peloncillo Mountains Wilderness (including Peloncillo Mountains WSA (Link B160b), the Rincon Mountains Wilderness (Links C201 and C441) and Coronado National Forest (and associated trails/trailheads) (Link C450). For this region of the Project, views would occur in the background (beyond two miles) and would be screened and backdropped by local topography and vegetation, further reducing visibility. Low-moderate to low impacts are anticipated for high sensitivity viewers at Oracle State Park (and associated trails/visitor areas) and Saddlebrooke Ranch Golf Club (refer to simulation Figure G-4-3 in Exhibit G). For these locations (links C661

trust lands, whether or not they are leased by the County for open space purposes. If these lands become privately held during the lifespan of this plan, they will be treated as Resource Sensitive unless otherwise designated through a plan amendment process.

- Residential Gross Density: None, other than allowances for life estates, ranch caretakers and similar uses.

Pinal County

The *Pinal County Comprehensive Plan (2009) updated (2014)* was reviewed in order to identify planned land use and growth areas located in the vicinity of the Proposed Route. The Proposed Route enters Pinal County on Arizona State Trust Land along Link C450 (milepost 5) and continues through and near multiple areas designated in the plan as "Moderate Low Density Residential," in and around the communities of San Manuel and Oracle (Link C670). Existing homes in areas surrounding San Manuel and Oracle are widely dispersed and located within the area designated "very low residential" according to the plan.

The Proposed Route crosses the Tri-Communities and West Pinal Growth Areas as described in the Growth Area Plan of the Comprehensive Plan.

- **Tri-Communities Growth Area:** The SR 77 corridor extending from the Tucson metropolitan area through Oracle Junction to the Town of Mammoth is the spine of the Tri-Communities Growth Area. Growth is anticipated to occur in this area due to its proximity to Tucson, state highway access and environmental resources. The Tri-Communities Growth Area identifies High and Mid-Intensity Mixed Use Activity Centers at Oracle Junction, a Mid-Intensity Activity Center in San Manuel and Low Intensity Activity Centers in Oracle and Mammoth.
- **West Pinal Growth Area:** The West Pinal growth area encompasses much of the cities of Casa Grande, Eloy, Coolidge, Florence, and Maricopa. Within this growth area, the plan identifies a mix of High and Mid-Intensity Mixed Use Activity Centers and numerous large parcels of employment land identified by the municipalities. The development of these activity centers and employment areas will significantly add to the job base of Pinal County. The residential development planned within the activity centers will also change the development pattern considerably within this Growth Area.

The Proposed Route (Link C680) crosses the Saddlebrooke Ranch Planned Area Development (PAD) Overlay District, parallel to the existing APS 115 kV transmission line near the northern boundary of the district. Land uses described in the PAD, as approved by Pinal County, include single family and multi-family residential, commercial, resort, golf course, open space, industrial, and a utility corridor.

PAGE – THROWBRIDGE RANCH

LOCATED IN SECTION 32, A PORTION OF SECTIONS 33 AND 34,
TOWNSHIP 9 SOUTH, RANGE 14 EAST, AND
A PORTION OF SECTION 4, SECTION 5, AND PORTIONS OF SECTIONS 7 AND 8,
TOWNSHIP 10 SOUTH, RANGE 14 EAST
G&SRB&M PINAL COUNTY, ARIZONA

LEGEND

- CONTROLLED ACCESS POINT
- WATER PLANT
- OVERHEAD POWER LINE EASEMENT
- 404 WASHES
- POTENTIAL PURCHASE/EXPANSION
- ABANDONED UNITED STATES MISSLE SITE (PROPERTY OF SADDLEBROOKE RANCH)

N

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EXHIBIT
ROB-3
ADMITTED

SaddleBrooke Ranch

Resort Community

CONSISTING OF SECTION 32, AND A PORTION OF SECTIONS 33 AND 34,
TOWNSHIP 9 SOUTH, RANGE 14 EAST, G&SRM, AND
A PORTION OF SECTION 4, SECTION 5, AND PORTIONS OF SECTIONS 7 AND 8,
TOWNSHIP 10 SOUTH, RANGE 14 EAST, G & SRM.
PINAL COUNTY, ARIZONA

SADDLEBROOKE RANCH - UNTI SUMMARY				
UNIT NUMBER	PRODUCT TYPE			
	PREMIER	TRADITIONS	MULTI-FAMILY	TOTAL LOTS
1		61		61
2	75			75
3		63		63
4		166		166
5		188		188
6	79			79
7	127			127
8		70		70
9	89			89
10	116			116
11	149			149
12	158			158
14	172			172
15	115			115
16	165			165
17	146			146
18	187			187
19		73		73
20		103		103
21			269	269
22	124			124
23	110			110
24	110			0
25	148			148
26		125		125
27		75		75
28		133		133
29		92		92
30		100		100
31		122		122
32	166			166
33	82			82
34	140			140
35	79			79
36	132			132
37	90			90
38	152			152
39	69			69
*40		61		
*41		68		
*42		67		
*43		59		
*44		90		
45			330	
46	171			
47	28	7		
TOTALS	3007	1723	599	5329

TOTAL DWELLING UNITS IN UNITS 1 THROUGH 47: 5329

PRODUCT TYPE / PERCENTAGE		
PREMIER	LUXURY	MULTI-FAMILY
54.5	31.4	14.1

* INDICATES PRODUCT TYPE YET TO BE DETERMINED DUE TO POSSIBLE FUTURE LAND PURCHASE.

LEGEND

- CONTROLLED ACCESS POINT
- WATER PLANT
- ABANDONED UNITED STATES MISSLE SITE
- 404 WASH
- STOCK POND

N

GRAPHIC SCALE
800 400 0 800
SCALE: 1"=800

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OCTOBER, 2004

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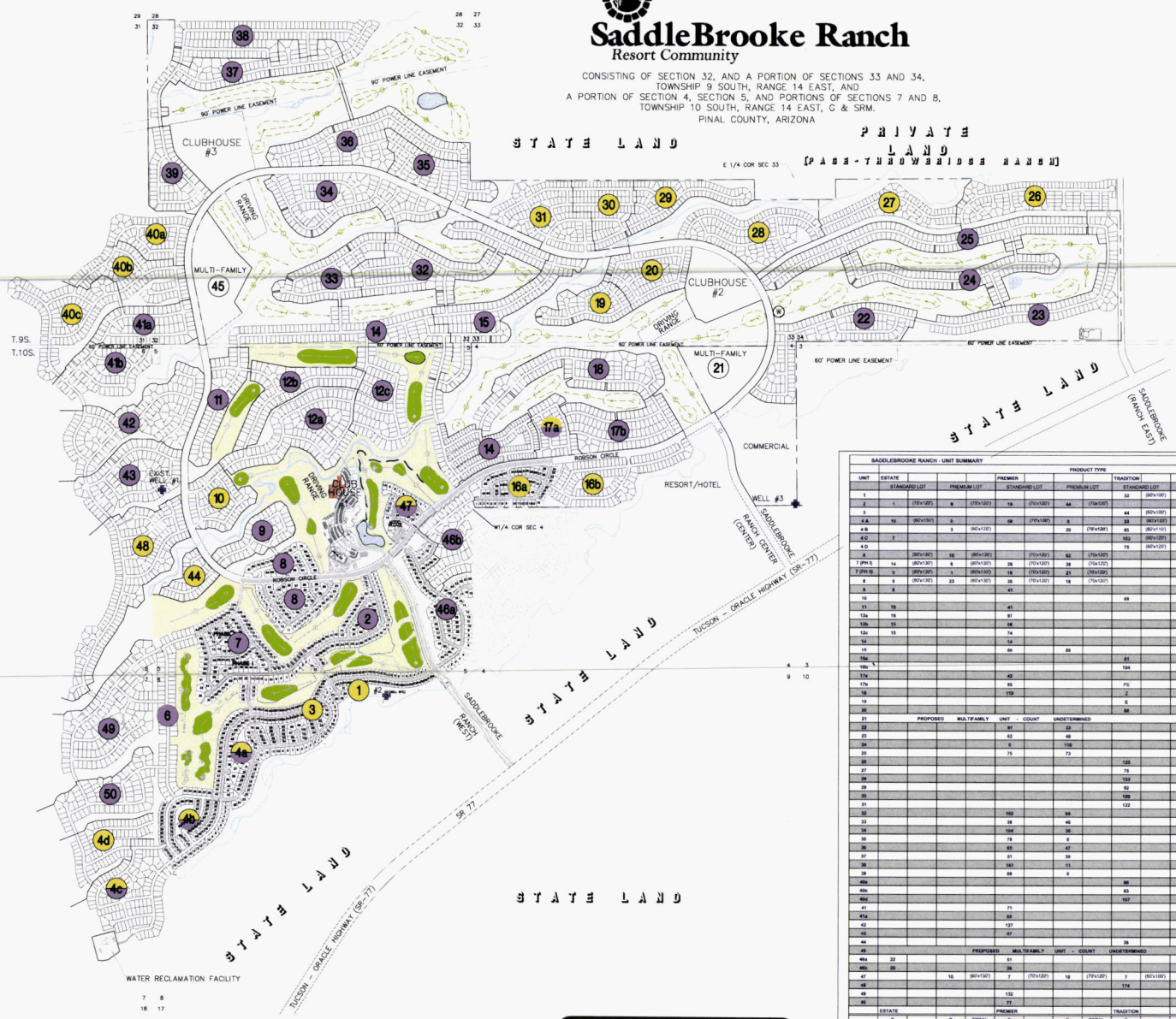
EXHIBIT
R013-4
ADMITTED

SaddleBrooke Ranch MARCH 2015

SaddleBrooke Ranch
Resort Community

CONSISTING OF SECTION 32, AND A PORTION OF SECTIONS 33 AND 34,
TOWNSHIP 9 SOUTH, RANGE 14 EAST, AND
A PORTION OF SECTION 4, SECTION 5, AND PORTIONS OF SECTIONS 7 AND 8,
TOWNSHIP 10 SOUTH, RANGE 14 EAST, G & SRM.
PINAL COUNTY, ARIZONA



SADDLEBROOKE RANCH - UNIT SUMMARY															
	PRODUCT TYPE														
UNIT	ESTATE				PREMIER				TRADITION				VILLAS	TOTAL LOTS	UNIT STATUS
	STANDARD LOT		PREMIUM LOT		STANDARD LOT		PREMIUM LOT		STANDARD LOT		PREMIUM LOT				
1									32	(90'x100')	26	(80'x100')		58	FINAL PLAT
2	1	(70'x120')	8	(75'x120')	19	(70'x120')	44	(70x120')						73	FINAL PLAT
3									44	(90'x100')	32	(80'x100')		96	FINAL PLAT
4 A	10	(80'x130')	0		68	(70'x120')	6		33	(80'x120')		(80'x120')		102	FINAL PLAT
4 B			3	(80'x120')			20	(70'x120')	65	(80'x110')	0			88	NO PREPLAT
4 C	7								103	(80'x120')	0			110	NO PREPLAT
4 D									75	(80'x120')	0			75	NO PREPLAT
5		(80'x130')	10	(80'x130')		(70'x120')	62	(70x120')						72	PREPLAT
7 (PH I)	14	(80'x130')	6	(80'x130')	29	(70'x120')	38	(70x120')						89	FINAL PLAT
7 (PH II)	0	(80'x130')	1	(80'x130')	16	(70'x120')	21	(70'x120')						38	FINAL PLAT
8	5	(80'x130')	23	(80'x130')	35	(70'x120')	18	(70x120')						81	PREPLAT
9	8				41									49	NO PREPLAT
10									69					69	NO PREPLAT
11	16				41									57	NO PREPLAT
12a	16				97									113	NO PREPLAT
12b	15				58									73	NO PREPLAT
12c	15				74									89	NO PREPLAT
14					14								152	166	NO PREPLAT
15					66		50							116	NO PREPLAT
16a									61					61	NO PREPLAT
16b									104					104	NO PREPLAT
17a					43									43	NO PREPLAT
17b					95				PS					95	NO PREPLAT
18					119				Z					119	NO PREPLAT
19									5		26			26	NO PREPLAT
20									88		15			103	NO PREPLAT
21		PROPOSED	MULTIFAMILY		UNIT	- COUNT	UNDETERMINED							0	NO PREPLAT
22					81		33							114	NO PREPLAT
23					62		48							110	NO PREPLAT
24					0		110							110	NO PREPLAT
25					75		73							148	NO PREPLAT
26									126					126	NO PREPLAT
27									75					75	NO PREPLAT
28									133					133	NO PREPLAT
29									92					92	NO PREPLAT
30									129					129	NO PREPLAT
31									122					122	NO PREPLAT
32					102		64							166	NO PREPLAT
33					36		46							82	NO PREPLAT
34					104		36							140	NO PREPLAT
35					79		0							79	NO PREPLAT
36					85		47							132	NO PREPLAT
37					51		39							90	NO PREPLAT
38					141		11							152	NO PREPLAT
39					69		0							69	NO PREPLAT
40a									68					68	NO PREPLAT
40b									93					93	NO PREPLAT
40c									107					107	NO PREPLAT
41					71									71	NO PREPLAT
41a					60									60	NO PREPLAT
42					127									127	NO PREPLAT
43					97									97	NO PREPLAT
44									38					38	NO PREPLAT
45			PROPOSED	MULTIFAMILY	UNIT	- COUNT	UNDETERMINED							0	NO PREPLAT
46a	22				51									73	FINAL PLAT
46b	20				39									59	PREPLAT
47			16	(80'x130')	7	(70'x120')	10	(70'x120')	7	(80'x100')	0	(80'x100')		34	FINAL PLAT
48					48				126					174	NO PREPLAT
49					132									132	NO PREPLAT
50					77									77	NO PREPLAT
	ESTATE				PREMIER				TRADITION						
	S		P	TOTAL	S		P	TOTAL	S		P	TOTAL		TOTAL	
TOTALS	145		64	212	2387		779	3136	1806		89	1895		5395	
														5395	

SCALE: 1"=800

LEGEND

- 17 SUBDIVISION UNIT NUMBER TRADITIONS
- 12 SUBDIVISION UNIT NUMBER PREMIERS
- 4 SUBDIVISION UNIT NUMBER MIX PREMIERS & TRADITIONS
- 45 SUBDIVISION UNIT NUMBER MULIFAMILY
- 404 WASH
- STOCK POND

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