

July 23, 2009

Mr. Jensen Uchida
San Joaquin Cross Valley Loop Transmission Project
C/O Environmental Science Associates
225 Bush Street, Suite 1700
San Francisco, CA 94104-4207

Dear Mr. Uchida,

As a farmer, I want to address some concerns about the impact on agriculture by choosing route 2, through Antelope Valley and Elderwood, for the new transmission lines. We farm 100 acres of oranges and olives in the area affected by route 2, and we have just built a home facing the Sierras, west and south of route 2.

I am concerned about the lack of depth in the EIR regarding agricultural practices such as wells and irrigation, pest control, crop dusting, and growing and harvesting during construction and in the future.

It is my understanding that we must abandon existing wells which fall in the right-of-way. New wells cannot be drilled with the certainty of hitting water, or of sufficient water to irrigate the crop. The cost of drilling a new well is prohibitive, especially when considering the uncertainty of getting a successful water supply. I also understand that irrigation lines under the lines must be 3 feet underground. Water lines often develop leaks which must be repaired, and they are now buried in shallow trenches to make them easy to access. I have spoken with a number of farmers who feel they will lose their farms if they cannot continue to use the wells they have now. We own 27 acres of oranges directly in the path, with water supplied by the Sentinel Butte Water Company, and we stand to lose our water supply, and therefore our ranch.

Many crops grown in the path of line 2 use crop dusting as a means of delivering pest control and fertilizer. The power lines would interrupt this.

Growing and harvesting crops is not adequately addressed in the EIR. This area is part of the "Bread Basket of the World", a large variety of crops are grown here. We cannot afford to lose the land, or even one year's harvest, in the path affected by route 2. There are taxes paid to the county and state, as well as the federal government, on income from these crops.

High-voltage transmission lines in the path of Route 2 will have lower appraisal values. Homes and agricultural land will be worth less, which will also lower the tax base.

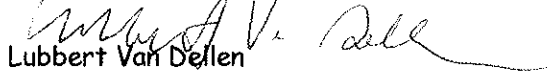
Route 2 goes over Indian and historical pioneer sites which cannot be replaced.

Tourism is a source of revenue for the area and would be affected by the sight of 150-foot-tall transmission lines going through the valley.

We are concerned about farm workers laboring under the lines. Studies have questioned the safety of long-term working under high-voltage transmission lines.

I understand the need for new electric transmission lines and upgrading existing lines, and there is a viable alternative. Route 3 through the foothills affects no agricultural land, does not obscure the view of the Sierras from the valley. It has fewer negative environmental and agricultural impacts to the communities and the people. It is a viable alternative, especially with a minor adjustment to the route to avoid the vernal pools, and I strongly encourage you to reconsider your decision of the choice of routes. Choose a route that affects fewer people and fewer crops, with less economic impact.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.


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