The Lower San Pedro Valley and Aravaipa: Worthy of Protection
The Cascabel Working Group

• The Cascabel Working Group (CWG) is composed of residents and landowners of the Lower San Pedro Valley who voluntarily joined together to successfully oppose routing of an I-10 bypass through the San Pedro Valley.

• The CWG works to educate governmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, and the public about environmental, archaeological, cultural, recreational, agricultural, economic and other features of the San Pedro River Valley and its tributaries with a focus on the Lower San Pedro River Watershed.
SunZia –
Today’s Challenge
SunZia
Project Description

- Proposed Route Length is 460 miles
- Proposed Route is primarily on public lands
- Typical right-of-way width is 200 ft per line and up to 1,000 ft for both lines
- Typical span between structures is 1,400 to 1,600 ft (3-4 structures per mile)
- Typical tower heights are 100 to 170 ft, depending on span and terrain

SunZia Southwest Transmission Project

March 28, 2012
Right of way plan
Service Road

TRANSMISSION LINE NUMBER 2 (AC OR DC)

TRANSMISSION LINE NUMBER 1 (AC)

200'

GUY WIRE

PERMANENT STRUCTURE BASE AREA

ANCHOR

NEW PERMANENT ACCESS ROAD

STAK LENGTH: 1,000-1,500'

PROJECT REFERENCE CENTER LINE

20' ACCESS ROAD

FIBER OPTIC COMMUNICATION STATION (OCCURS EVERY 75 MILES BETWEEN SUBSTATIONS)

TEMPORARY STRUCTURE WORK AREA

12' WIDE PERMANENT ACCESS

ILLUSTRATION SHOWS CONDITION WHERE NEW ACCESS IS REQUIRED.
Erosion from much smaller power lines.
• Person standing next to transmission line.
• There really is a person there!
II. Project Description

Construction of approximately 150 miles of 500kV line from the proposed 600 MW IGCC Bowie Power Station near Bowie Arizona, to the proposed Pinal South substation, located near Coolidge Arizona.

Construction of approximately 185 miles of 500kV line from the proposed Bowie Power Station to the existing Newman substation near El Paso, Texas.
2007 SunZia Purpose and Need

SunZia is initially envisioned to provide an additional interconnection opportunity for the proposed Bowie Power Station (proposed as a 600 MW IGCC) as well as significant renewable energy resource potential.
As stated at the beginning of the Scoping period in 2009, the purpose “..is to transport electricity generated from power generation resources, including primarily renewable resources, to western power markets.”
The purpose of the proposed project is to transport electricity generated by power generation resources including renewable resources to western power markets and load centers.
Pictures speak louder than words.

“including primarily renewable resources,”

“development of renewable energy resources,”
ROUTE GROUP 4: Willow-500 kV Substation to Pinal Central Substation
ROUTE GROUP 4. Willow-500 kV Substation to Pinal Central Substation

SunZia
Preferred Alternative
San Pedro River Crossing
Looking southeast from Redrock Creek
Lower San Pedro River Valley Environmental Values

- One of the Nature Conservancy’s “Last Great Places”
- Last free-flowing river in the Desert Southwest
- Part of the largest unfragmented landscape in Arizona outside the Grand Canyon region
- One of the three principal desert life corridors in the Southwest (along with Colorado and Rio Grande Rivers)
- Exceeds the Rio Grande River Valley in biological richness
BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Wildlife and Wild Lands

Birds: Southwest willow flycatcher, yellow-billed cuckoo, along with 305 other species.

Mammals: 87 species
BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

- Fish: loach minnow, spikedace,
- Reptiles/Amphibians: Sonoran Desert Tortoise
- Native Plants and Invasives
- Highly Erodible Soils
- Large, unfragmented landscape
- Strong national & local support for conservation & conservation easements
• Hosts the **largest mammal species diversity** in North America
• Recognized as a **Globally Important Bird Area** by the American Bird Conservancy
• **Principal north-south migration corridor** for Central and South American birds
• Habitat for numerous **threatened and endangered species**
• Hosts one of the largest remaining **intact mesquite forests** in the world
• **Rich archaeological history**
  dating from earliest North American human occupation (Clovis)
Major Impacts

- **Opens entirely new corridor** for 30 miles parallel to the river, 45 miles total
- **New road** the full length of the project
- **Access roads** to each transmission tower
- Multiple San Pedro River **tributary crossings**
- Future co-location of **additional utilities**
- Collision hazard for **migratory birds**
- Bisects Pima County’s **A-7 Ranch**
Erosion from much smaller power lines.
Issues to Consider

• Impact upon a unique and sensitive environmental resource

• Misleading statement of purpose and need

• Use by renewable generation is speculative
More Issues to Consider

• Conflicting government aims
• Lack of consideration of better alternatives
• Insufficient project partners
• Lack of financial viability and high financial risk
• Lack of a market for the power
Even More Issues to Consider

- Lack of sufficient transmission capacity to deliver power to California
- Unquestioned endorsement of the project by Obama administration officials
- Economic damage to current residents ignored, inflated estimates of economic good from the project.
- Remote power lines inherently vulnerable to easy sabotage.
BLM needs to hear from you!

DEIS comments are due August 22 and go to:
Adrian Garcia, BLM SunZia Project Manager
P.O. Box 27115, Santa Fe, NM, 87501
NMSunziaProject@blm.gov

Contact the Secretary of the Interior:
Secretary Ken Salazar, Dept. of the Interior
1849 C Street NW, Washington, DC 20240
Feedback@ios.doi.gov
Please join the many organizations and agencies in protecting the Lower San Pedro River Valley and the Aravaipa Watershed.