



March 18, 2010

Dear Arizona Corporation Commission;

Today is March 18, 2010 exactly 9 months since the Decision telling SSVEC to stop working on the proposed 69kV Power Line Corridor. Once again our high desert fragile grassland is being threatened by Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative.

Our local Rotary worked very hard to get a \$750,000 Grant from ADOT to beautify the Downtown of Sonoita with landscaped walkways. The next plan is to have a round-a-bout at the intersection Hwy 82 & Hwy 83 with a larger than life bronze by Cowgirl Hall of Fame Artist Debra Fellows. Preserving the beauty of this historic ranching country is more than a high priority it is a responsibility we take seriously.

The header of this letter says MEEP – Building a model rural community for renewable energy. We have had very little time to work on this goal because our utility won't leave us alone. They continue to actions through the ACC, costing all cooperators hundreds of thousands of dollars after being ordered to work with our community to come to a solution.

The economic effects of this line will hit this area hard. As you know Tombstone was filmed on the Babacomari Ranch and if this line goes in there will be no more films made in this area, just as they stopped making films in Rain Valley after TEP put a power line to the Fort.

If you read the Feasibility Study closely there are suggestions for alternatives that will satisfy our power needs without construction of the 69kV Power Line. The Study also correct misstatements that have been made by SSVEC, for example:

1) SSVEC presently serves our communities with a 7 megawatt-capable power line. The feasibility study states: "Most of this feeder load is less than 5 megawatts." The study shows our communities at the very most will need only 1.5 additional megawatts by 2019 and 3.5 megawatts by 2029. We don't need the added capability for 60 or more megawatts of coal fired energy, that this line will bring in..

2) **There is no electric emergency here.** We averaged three hours of customer outage each year for the past decade. The study shows this area's performance was better than the appropriate national standard.

- 3) Other options described by the Feasibility Study include **locally generated renewable energy; distributed energy from natural gas generators whenever peak loads are approached; effective time of use rates and demand side management programs.** These options are significantly more economical than the proposed and more expensive high voltage power line. Once a power line is constructed, it can't be undone.
- 4) A recent "60 Minutes" program showed futuristic Bloom Boxes providing clean renewable energy without power lines to EBay's California headquarters. Ebay has saved \$100,000 in lower utility bills in the past six months. Renewable energy saves us money.

SSVEC wants to tie us to increasingly expensive coal-fire generated electricity. Why install a 69kV power line today, when new technologies can perfect small alternative energy devices for our homes tomorrow?

Our last SSVEC rate increase did NOT include the \$14 million for the 69kV line plus expenses. And the March Currents magazine from SSVEC, describes another 27.6-percent rate increase they are asking for along with the other members of the Southwest Transmission Cooperative. That's approximately \$7.65 million per year. Unless we find another solution for our energy future, our rates will continue to go up every year. The 69kV is just the first step to locking us into dependence on expensive coal-generated energy, energy when less expensive renewable energy is a viable alternative.

What is the real reason for constructing a system capable of 60 megawatts when we will never need more than 10 megawatts total? What is the motivation?

Is it because they want to provide power to the mine in Harshaw?

What is hurting our local businesses and residents is the high cost of electricity not the lack of reliable power.

