

State of New Mexico

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May 1, 2012

Department of Interior
Secretary Kenneth Salazar
1849 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Secretary Salazar:

I write to express my support for your Department's continued and thorough review of the Sun Zia Southwest Transmission Project's application to build up to two major high-voltage transmission lines in southern and central portions of New Mexico. The Sun Zia Project would enable New Mexico to continue our strong heritage of supplying energy resources to our Nation while also strengthening the region's vital electricity infrastructure.

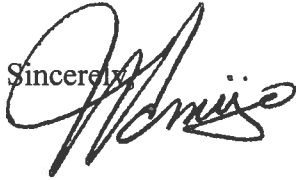
The Bureau of Land Management is conducting a complete environmental review, while the Pentagon has determined that the Sun Zia Project is compatible with military missions in the Project area. An area of concern is the time the BLM is taking to release the draft Environmental Impact Statement, as we understand the draft was due to be released last year.

We need the jobs that New Mexico State University estimates that Sun Zia will bring to New Mexico during the construction and operation of the Project. Additionally, Sun Zia will enable thousands more jobs as it attracts electricity generators to New Mexico. Electricity generation enabled by Sun Zia will contribute new property tax dollars to depleted county treasuries.

The Project will help New Mexico's school children since much of the Project will be located on New Mexico State Trust Lands. Lease revenues generated on those lands are dedicated to public education.

The Sun Zia Project would enable needed jobs and revenues, strengthen the region's electricity grid, maintain military mission, and open-up electricity markets to new electricity generation projects inside New Mexico.

I would like to ask your assistance by encouraging the BLM to move the review process ahead to enable us to benefit while there are still renewable energy prospects looking in our area to build. I thank you in advance for understanding the positive potential impact this project will have on our small New Mexico County

Sincerely,


Walter C. Armijo
Sierra County Commission Chairman