

NEWS RELEASE

Transmission Proposal Promises to Harness Southwestern Clean Energy

Conservationists Applaud SunZia Power Project, Bureau of Land Management Seeking Public Comments

For Immediate Release:

May 29, 2009

For More Information Contact:

Alex Daue, Renewable Energy Coordinator, The Wilderness Society, (303) 650-5818 x 108

Jeremy Nichols, Climate and Energy Program Director, WildEarth Guardians, (303) 573-4898 x 1303

Santa Fe, NM—Conservation groups are applauding a proposal by SunZia to responsibly develop a power transmission system that would harness clean, renewable energy in New Mexico and Arizona.

“We support responsible development of renewable energy and hope this transmission line will help bring new wind and solar online in New Mexico and Arizona,” said Alex Daue, Renewable Energy Coordinator for The Wilderness Society. “We look forward to continuing to work with the project developers, agencies, and local communities to ensure the line supports renewables while protecting the Rio Grande, wildlife, and wilderness values.”

The support comes as the Bureau of Land Management today formally announced its intent to prepare an environmental analysis supporting the proposal and to seek public comment. The announcement, published in today’s Federal Register, starts a 45 day public comment period that includes numerous public meetings in New Mexico and Arizona.

The SunZia transmission project would construct a 460 mile long high voltage power transmission line across southern New Mexico and Arizona. The project would primarily transport electricity generated from renewable energy to western power markets.

“Clean, renewable energy is the key to confronting global warming and safeguarding the American West,” said Jeremy Nichols, Climate and Energy Program Director for WildEarth Guardians. “The sooner the SunZia transmission project can help bring more renewable energy online, the better.”

Although the proposal was formally announced by the Bureau of Land Management today, SunZia has spent the last year working with conservationists and other groups to craft a proposal that both harnesses renewable energy and safeguards wildlife and wild places in the southwest. The Bureau of Land Management’s Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process will study likely impacts from the project and identify ways to avoid and minimize them. Once the EIS is complete, SunZia will be able to move forward to construct its transmission line.