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BLM, NMSO
SANTA FE

June 30, 2021

Adrian Garcia
SunZia Project Manager
Bureau of Land Management
301 Dinosaur Trail
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87502

Re: SunZia Southwest Transmission Project Environmental Impact Statement

Dear Adrian Garcia:

I am writing to support the SunZia Southwest Transmission Project's Right-Of-Way (ROW) amendment that was originally issued in 2016. I appreciate that the National Environmental Policy Act is a very detailed and thorough process. However, I am concerned this critical infrastructure project is taking too long to build. Permitting should never be so difficult that vital energy projects take decades to complete.


I learned about SunZia while serving in the New Mexico State Senate from District 35, which includes three counties (Hidalgo, Luna and Sierra) impacted by the SunZia project. I am very familiar with SunZia representatives and the SunZia project, having followed its progress since 2008. From my personal experience, SunZia has worked hard to keep officials apprised of their progress, address stakeholder concerns, and gone above and beyond to treat landowners in a fair and honest manner.

SunZia will bring huge financial benefits for New Mexico, which don't come around very often, especially to rural areas. It is my understanding that a recent economic impact report conducted by Moss Adams estimates that SunZia will create thousands of jobs in construction and operations while enabling even more wind and solar generation employment throughout New Mexico.

I am also pleased to learn that SunZia has identified alternative routes that parallel existing transmission corridors and are highly responsive to military and environmental issues. In my opinion, the alternative routes and modifications are another example of how SunZia has not taken any short cuts, but spends additional time and money on establishing the most environmentally responsible and efficient route through New Mexico and Arizona.

I encourage a most expeditious and timely completion of BLM's public review period and want to thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Arthur Smith". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J".

John Arthur Smith

New Mexico State Senator 1989-2020

Ex. 6 Personal Info.

