



Control Number: 37448



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37448

Kenneth W. Anderson, Jr.
Commissioner



Public Utility Commission of Texas

December 18, 2009

Ms. Sheila Durflinger
P.O. Box 1808
Mason, TX 76856

Dear Ms. Durflinger:

Thank you for your recent letter regarding LCRA's proposed CREZ transmission line certificate for convenience and necessity (CCN). Because much of the renewable energy transmission effort involves or will involve a contested case, I will file your letter in the appropriate docket (Docket No. 37448), together with my response.

Determining which route to use when granting a CCN for high capacity transmission lines is governed by both statute and Commission rules. The Commission is charged with choosing the ultimate route. Although the utility, in this case LCRA, will recommend a preferred route and numerous alternative routes.

The Public Utility Regulatory Act (PURA Section 37.056) sets out some of the criteria used by the Commission in deciding where to site the transmission route. Those factors include, among other things, community values, recreational and park areas, historical and aesthetic values, environmental integrity, and the effect of granting the CCN on the state's ability to meet its renewable energy goals. Our rules also list routing criteria, such as whether the proposed routes use existing compatible rights-of-way, whether the routes parallel property lines or other natural or cultural features, and whether the routes conform to the policy of prudent avoidance.

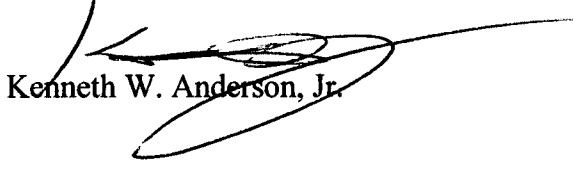
LCRA filed their application on October 28, 2009. I suggest that you remain in contact with LCRA to receive the latest information on their proposal. Please note that the intervention deadline for this proceeding was November 30, 2009. The CREZ CCN proceedings have shorter intervention deadlines than normal CREZ CCN cases, because the CREZ transmission lines are scheduled to be in service by 2013.



3611

I appreciate you bringing your concerns to the attention of the Commission. One of the hardest decisions made by the Commission concerns the routing of transmission lines. The Commission faces many challenges in deciding this case and others resulting from the competitive renewable energy zones transmission plan.

Sincerely,


Kenneth W. Anderson, Jr.

6:30

See me

w/ response

12/2/09

12-24

November 21, 2009

Kenneth W. Anderson - Commissioner
Texas Public Utility Commission
P.O. Box 13326
Austin, TX 78711-3326

37448

Re: PUC Docket Number 37049
Menard - Mason - Gillespie Route

Commissioner Anderson,

I am a business owner in Mason and know the importance of drawing customers from out of town. This last week we had customers from San Antonio, Austin, Houston, Dallas, San Angelo, Lampasas, and Gainesville. In 2006 our new customers came from 70 different cities and our product was exported to 4 adjoining states.

People come because of the quality of our product and because of the historical nature of our 150 year old two story barn and historical rock homes near our business and around town. They are looking for a small town experience. Mason is a beautiful preserved historic town. Having huge electrical transmission lines nearby is a potential detriment to our business. ✓

comp? Texas Parks and Wildlife has designated Mason County as one of the 10 most beautiful and naturally scenic areas in the State of Texas. Mason is also one of the more popular deer hunting areas in the state. The impact of large electrical transmission lines represent a permanent scaring of more than 100 miles of unspoiled Texas Hill Country landscapes. People come to Mason to get away from the construction clutter of the larger cities. Once we bring this construction clutter, accompanied with heavy construction damage, people in cities who want the electricity will not have this beautiful scenic area to enjoy. The electrical transmission lines will have a substantial negative effect on tourism and our business. How can you measure the economic loss to the entire county of Mason. Add to that, the extra cost to build the Menard - Mason - Gillespie transmission line. This is not a win-win situation for the people of Texas.

We own land in Mason County and the City of Mason. The negative impact on property values will be substantial for generations and impact our retirement income today. There will be fewer people to rent our Bed and Breakfast. Mason has a unique history. Robert E. Lee was in command of Ft. Mason at the time he resigned his commission to join the Confederacy. We ✓

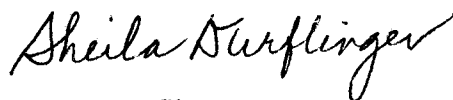
could write volumes about the History of Mason. The unscarred landscape and the history draw many people to Mason.

Our decision to move from San Antonio to Mason was encouraged by the unique culture of families who have lived here since the early settlement of the county. We think fondly of the early families. Their heritage is important to us.

Thank you for considering other route options. The Menard – Mason – Gillespie Route is not an acceptable route. It will effect tourism, recreation, our business and property values. We will lose historic structures and alter the atmosphere of our town. Mason is an escape destination for people in the city. We all stand to lose one of the most beautiful and naturally scenic parts of Texas. Mason should be treated like a National Forrest.

Please call or write if you have questions.

Sincerely,



Sheila Durflinger

12/19/09
