



Control Number: 37448



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Kenneth W. Anderson, Jr.  
Commissioner



37448

## *Public Utility Commission of Texas*

December 18, 2009

Mr. and Mrs. Michael Spear  
17121 Simonsville Road  
Mason, TX 76856

Dear Mr. & Mrs. Spear:

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.



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.

Monday November 16, 2009

Kenneth W. Anderson  
P.O. Box 13326  
Austin, TX 78711-3326

Dear Mr. Anderson,

I am writing regarding the potential routes that are under review by the LCRA, specifically regarding the route through Mason County. This route is contrary to the originally recommended route through the Junction area. This route, promoted by the Clear View Alliance, runs through some of the most scenic hill country in Mason County, and passes directly through the city of Mason, with 150 – 200 foot high steel lattice towers. This will cause irreparable damage to the city and surrounding hill country. We do not want a 345-kilovolt-power line, supported on massive towers twenty stories tall, running through one of the most beautiful towns in Texas. Furthermore, officials familiar with the transmission line study say this proposed route would add \$75 million dollars to the cost of the electrical transmission project. It simply makes sense to use the original LCRA routing which takes advantage of the wide open, relatively undeveloped countryside that already exists along the I-10 corridor and directly merges with the population the transmission line is intended to serve. ✓

I question the reason for the possible change after the LCRA made their evaluation and decided on the best route, which was not this one that circles the City of Mason. If the lines are routed as recommended by the Clear View Alliance, our family's land would be completely changed with exceedingly negative effects on the landscape, wildlife and hinder our ability to work with the land and make it profitable, as our ancestors have for the last 5 generations. I want my sons to enjoy and experience this land as my family has since the 1850's. Installing these towers across the hills and over the rivers would significantly damage this land. Protecting our natural resources should be a key factor in deciding transmission line placement. Our wildlife, water and natural beauty are the reasons we live here and other people visit. Recreation is very important to our economy.

While I do not agree with the suggested route, wherever the lines go I am opposed to the lattice towers compared to the single pole lines. There's no reason why we can't find a way to transmit clean energy without leaving a path of destruction. I respectfully request that the Public Utility Commission of Texas support the route presented by the original study for the transmission line, and the one that LCRA had announced as its preferred route (from Schleicher County, to Junction, running parallel to Interstate 10, culminating at the Kendal Station near Comfort). ✓

Sincerely,

Michael and Christina Spear  
17121 Simonsville Road  
Mason, Texas 76856

cc: Barry Smitherman, Jerry M. Bearden, Texas Hill Country Heritage Association, Donna L. Nelson, Sara Morgenroth, Steve Dyer, Rep. Harvey Hilderbran, Senator Troy Fraser

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