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William Hughes Seewald

6 December 2010

Chairman Barry Smitherman
Commissioner Donna L. Nelson
Commissioner Kenneth W. Anderson
Public Utility Commission of Texas
1701 Congress Avenue
Austin, Texas 78711

Subject: Seewald Ranch – DOCKET 38290

Dear Chairman Smitherman and Commissioners Nelson and Anderson:

A heart-felt thanks from our family for hearing our concerns last week and for taking the time and effort to understand the challenging context of this CREZ project.

Canadian Basin ranchers are part of the Panhandle's oldest abiding economic foundation, agriculture. We are also stewards of a unique part of Texas. Man's 14,000-year history on this continent, held in trust within our fragile soils, is writ large across the extensive watershed of the Canadian River.

Potter County landowners could be asked to sacrifice land and watershed to benefit wind development in adjacent counties as well as future real estate speculation south of Amarillo. No doubt routing through Potter County could create short-term benefits elsewhere; but given other more direct routing options that are demonstrably less expensive, we urge a final selection that spares the Canadian irrevocable, long-term damage.

On-going erosion and the grassland degradation the construction and maintenance of these lines will precipitate obviously worries us. But we are joined by over 1400 who wrote in opposition to the northern routes based at least in part on the added cost of almost a third more mileage north of Amarillo through 30 miles of some of the most rugged, roadless terrain in the entire study area. The utility's cursory evaluation done from afar cannot remotely account for the challenges and additional cost of crossing 10-12 major Canadian tributaries.

Some of the short-term damages could be remedied through effective restoration efforts. But those who access the (BLM) Cross Bar Ranch, a 34,000 acre wildlife research preserve less than 1.5 miles from the "preferred" line will see encroachment on a national wilderness resource particularly valued by archeologists, ornithologists, wildlife scientists and botanists.

We urge judicious deference for historic trails, the ancient artifacts yet uncovered, the Canadian's easily erodible riparian landscape and our region's only renewable water supply, Lake Meredith in the heart of the Canadian Basin.

We are profoundly grateful to all who help conserve this unique part of Texas and honor your service to our great state.

Respectfully,



William Hughes Seewald
Seewald Ranch

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