



Control Number: 38354



Item Number: 49

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*Public Utility Commission of Texas*

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PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION  
FILING CLERK

July 8, 2009

William Renfro  
Save Our Scenic Hill Country Environment, Inc.  
10212 Ranch Road 965  
Fredericksburg, Texas 78624

Dear Mr. Renfro:

Thank you for your recent letter on the LCRA CREZ transmission project. Because much the renewable energy transmission effort involves a contested case, I will file your letter in Docket No. 37049 along with my response.

The determination of which route to use in granting a CCN, for the siting of high capacity transmission lines necessary to deliver wind energy from West Texas to the major load centers of our state, is governed by both statute and PUCT rules. The Commission is charged with choosing the ultimate route location, though 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 the criteria used by the Commission in deciding to grant the CCN, and with it the ultimate location of 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 CNN on the state's ability to meet its renewable energy goals. Our rules also list routing criteria, such as whether the proposed routes utilize or parallel 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.

The siting of high capacity transmission lines is of critical importance to our state, as the reliability of the transmission system ensures that the lights always stay on. Also, our state has made a commitment to renewable energy and most of that must be transported from West Texas and the Panhandle to the I-35 corridor and beyond. However, the process can be difficult and emotional for landowners. Therefore, it very important that we follow the criteria listed in both statute and Commission rule. When the LCRA files its application, the Commission will take all these factors into account when making its decision.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Barry T. Smitherman".

Barry T. Smitherman



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JUL 02 2009

SAVE OUR SCENIC HILL COUNTRY ENVIRONMENT, INC. Chairman's Office

10212 Ranch Road 965

Fredericksburg, Texas 78624

June 30, 2009

Public Utility Commission of Texas

1701 N. Congress Avenue

Austin, Texas 78707

Re: Project # 37049

Mr. Chairman and Commissioners:

On behalf of Save Our Scenic Hill Country Environment, Inc., an organization of more than 475 landowners, business people and others concerned about the uniqueness of the Texas Hill Country, we request that you take the leadership role in minimizing the impacts of the CREZ transmission lines that will come through Gillespie and surrounding counties.

We specifically request that you support the use of existing electric right-of-ways when LCRA TSC submits its' preferred and alternative routes. We believe that you should also be particularly sensitive to the impacts on developed, populated, historical and recreational areas. While impacts will be significant in any case, we request that you support the use of underground transmission lines in these areas. In addition, the use of monopole structures elsewhere is essential.

The use of monopoles, including rural areas, is consistent with the following precedents.

- (1) The utilization of monopoles by LCRA for the 345-kV transmission line from the Kendall Substation to the Cagnon Substation which is predominately located in rural areas.
- (2) The utilization of monopoles by an affiliate of NextERA Energy Resources on the transmission line that is currently under construction from the Horse Hollow wind farm near Abilene to the Kendall Substation.

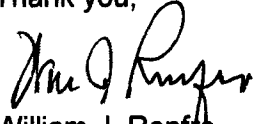
We also request that you ensure at this time that LCRA TSC retains the flexibility to use monopoles. It is our understanding that they are already in the process of ordering lattice tower materials for this project. It is likely that they will argue that the use of monopoles will not only increase cost but will also extend the schedule, particularly at later stages in the process.

We also request that you take into consideration the transmission structure-related resolutions that have been adopted by the County Commissioners in Gillespie, Kerr and Kimble Counties;

the Gillespie County Economic Development Commission and the Fredericksburg Convention and Visitors Bureau.

Your actions are essential to minimize the dramatic consequences that will affect the uniqueness of this area for residents and visitors alike.

Thank you,



William J. Renfro

Vice President/Director

cc: Gillespie County Judge Mark Stroeher, Kimble County Andrew Murr, Kerr County Judge Pat Tinley

cc: LCRA Board Chair Rebecca Klein; LCRA Corporate Services Siting & Certification Manager Lance Wenmohs; LCRA Senior Regulatory Case Managers Sara Morgenroth, Dennis Palafox

## **JEAN and BILL RENFRO**

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