



Control Number: 38354



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Smitherman, Barry

From: Pamela Thornton [wildpalomino1@aol.com]
Sent: Sunday, August 08, 2010 12:28 AM
To: Smitherman, Barry; Nelson, Donna; Anderson, Kenneth; troy.fraser@senate.state.tx.us; doug.miller@house.state.tx.us; harvey.bilderbran@house.state.tx.us
Subject: I want my letter posted on Docket# 38354

August 08, 2010 1:27 AM

Wind energy is green, but its transmission infrastructure is not. It is imperative the State of Texas exercise due diligence in the placement of all proposed CREZ transmission lines. As the PUC begins to question the need for one of the transmission lines, it is time to carefully examine the need for all of them. We cannot afford to sacrifice the natural beauty, the unique heritage, and the irreplaceable environment of the Texas Hill Country in an ill-planned effort to bring wind energy to urban consumers. One example of poor planning by LCRA is Docket # 38354: McCamey D to Kendall to Gillespie route.

Since this massive project was first approved, the economic landscape has changed dramatically. Because Texas is currently facing a huge budget shortfall, now would be an appropriate time to amend the arbitrary timeline established by the Legislature. It is projected that natural gas will be a more economical alternative than wind energy for the next 10 years. Surely better results can be achieved by allowing agency personnel to more thoroughly review and improve the current process used for siting the transmission lines and arbitrating disputes. We can use this time to our advantage by creating a transmission system for wind energy that doesn't destroy the very environment it purports to protect.

In the end, if we must construct these massive transmission lines, please help ensure the natural treasures of the Texas Hill Country are protected. Please instruct the Public Utility Commission and the Lower Colorado River Authority to:

1. Site the transmission lines along existing highway and utility rights-of-way instead of slashing new corridors through virgin open space land.
2. Use monopoles, which offer aesthetic, economic and environmental benefits, instead of out-dated unsightly lattice towers.
3. Justly compensate affected landowners and use the power of eminent domain judiciously, if it must be used at all.

Right now, we have an opportunity to make important changes that will allow urban consumers to enjoy the benefits of wind energy while protecting the Texas Hill Country from the unintended consequences of hastily-planned, sprawling transmission infrastructure. Please help us inject common sense into this process before it's too late. Remember, we only have one chance to get this massive construction project done right. When the untouched natural beauty of the Hill Country is gone, it's gone forever.

Sincerely,
Pamela Thornton

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