

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION IX
75 Hawthorne Street
San Francisco, CA 94105

December 4, 2006

John Kalish
Bureau of Land Management
c/o Aspen Environmental Group
235 Montgomery Street, Suite 935
San Francisco, CA 94104

Subject: Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the Devers-Palo Verde No. 2
Transmission Line Project (CEQ# 20060447)

Dear Mr. Kalish:

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has reviewed the above referenced document pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508), and Section 309 of the Clean Air Act.

EPA reviewed the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) and provided comments to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) on August 17, 2006. We rated the DEIS as Environmental Concerns - Insufficient Information (EC-2) because of concerns regarding indirect and cumulative impacts to the desert ecosystem as well as cumulative air impacts. We also suggested the FEIS more clearly evaluate the potential need for a Clean Water Act (CWA) Section 404 permit, and commented on the need for a clearer description of the proposed project and alternatives.

We appreciate the additional clarification of project alternatives in the FEIS. With this additional clarification, it is clear that the Harquahala Junction Switchyard Alternative and the Alligator Rock - North of Desert Center Alternative avoid impacts to a greater extent than the proposed action segments, and we are pleased that these segments have been designated as the BLM agency preferred alternative.

EPA also appreciates the additional discussion of Section 404 of the CWA in the FEIS, as well as the additions to the cumulative impacts section describing the extreme growth in Maricopa County. Regarding the mitigation measures for air quality impacts, the FEIS indicates that the proposed measures are equivalent or more stringent than the measures EPA recommended. We commend BLM for including stringent mitigation measures and recommend they be applied to all portions of the project, in Arizona as well as California.

We appreciate the opportunity to review this FEIS. When the ROD is available, please send one copy to the address above (mailcode: CED-2). If you have any questions, please contact me at (415) 947- 4184 or Karen Vitulano, the lead reviewer for this document, at (415) 947-4178 or vitulano.karen@epa.gov.

Sincerely,

/s/

Paula Bisson, Manager
Environmental Review Office
Communities and Ecosystems Division