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Reviewing Official, Michiko Martin, Regional Forester

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New Mexicans have suffered at the hands of the NNSA, the Department of Energy and the US forest service, agencies which pay little heed to environmental justice mandates. The transmission line approved by the Forrest Service which would pass through the Caja del Rio is a case in point. Sacred to the Pueblo nations, important to traditional Hispanic Culture, essential as a wildlife corridor, no matter, the Forest Service has offered it as another sacrifice to the gods of nuclear proliferation, sacrificing once again the cultures of northern New Mexico to the rapacious appetite of the nuclear industry.

Not only are the concerns of northern New Mexicans tossed aside with this decision, the legality of the decision is highly questionable. No mention is made in the EA of the deal cut with PNM to transport the electrical energy, said to be needed by Los Alamos Labs and County, by existing transmission lines. No alternatives are explored in the EA, even though current NEPA regulations require an exploration of alternatives.

How can the federal government expect our support while acting illegally against our interests? My family is from the downwind community of Dixon, NM. Like most of the communities surrounding the labs, the population of Dixon is, for the most part, working class people of color. We generally lose our friends who work at the labs when they are in their late forties or early fifties. According to the state Environment Department, Dixon was contaminated by the Cerro Grande fire. Cancer is rampant in our community. Our aquifer has been contaminated by LANL. There are billboards in our area recruiting young people to work at the labs. No one mentions that those who choose to work at LANL, will face early deaths or that their DNA is at risk.

The Biden administration touts their work on environmental justice issues, but where is the environmental justice for our communities surrounding the labs? Aren't we already sacrificing enough? We object to the Forest Department's decision to support transmission lines across the Caja del Rio because the lines would violate federal regulations and mandates. Also, this decision supports Los Alamos labs and county's (mostly white) interests while once again treating the surrounding communities, their people and cultures, as collateral damage. The forest service's recent decision seems to reflect the draconian attitude of an earlier age where people of color and their cultures were pro forma sacrificed to white 'progress' and privilege.

Sincerely,

Janet Greenwald

Coordinator, Citizens for Alternatives

To Radioactive Dumping (CARD)