

To Whom It May Concern USDA: February 12, 2025

**In response to Climate Change this is from Appendix B Response to Comments....**

The proposed project is based on needs from changing conditions resulting from climate change and is expected to make the existing power grid more resilient to increasing severity and frequency of these disturbances. For example, climate change is expected to increase the size and severity of large wildfires. In addition, studies have found summer monsoon season to include more violent destructive storms, including more microbursts and localized flooding. These disturbances have in the past and will take out parts of the power grid. Under future conditions with climate change, we can expect an increase in the frequency and severity of these events. At this time, communities such as Oak Creek, McGuireville, and Cornville are vulnerable to this increasing risk. Connecting the currently unattached ends of the existing power grid together and creating improved connectivity would help address the increasing power grid disturbances expected with upcoming climate change in north central Arizona.

YOU ARE SAYING THERE ARE EXPECTED INCREASES IN SIZE AND SEVERITY OF WILDFIRES. Kel Fox Trail and Table-Top Mesa form a WIND TUNNEL with winds blowing daily down into the homes in VOC. Any work to put larger poles and roadways will not only scour the beauty of this landscape but be A SERIOUS THREAT TO HUMAN LIFE, HOMES, WILDLIFE AND VEGETATION. NO AMOUNT OF IMPROVED CONNECTIVITY, when there are very few outages, will serve any purpose. The decision makers on this project obviously have not been on this trail or mesa and cannot understand the harm they are doing by pushing this project. It is unconscionable to do so much harm to the environment of such beauty, and to put people and animals in a perilous harmful condition simply for 'improved connectivity.' We have had very few storms, in fact since June of 2023 to present, there has been very little rain and EXTREMELY HIGH TEMPERATURES making the vegetation like a 'tinder box.' The construction and activation of new electric transmission lines could instigate a catastrophic fire such as occurred both on Maui and in California. The VOC would be destroyed as it is in the path of a virtual WIND TUNNEL coming down from the mesa.

Fire Risk Link (<https://wildfiremitigation.tees.tamus.edu/faqs/how-power-lines-cause-wildfires>)

The strongest magnetic fields are usually emitted from high voltage transmission lines — the power lines on the **big, tall metal towers**.

A 30-40 ft easement will mean many trees will have to be cut and now instead of a hiking trail it will be a roadway for vehicles, and spraying of herbicides will be necessary which will affect vegetation and wildlife. Because of increased spring rains and the ground elevation of Forest Service Land, which is much higher than the homes below, the mud flow from the torn up land will flow downward to the homes below, along with any possible added herbicides in the soil. All of this will affect the health of residents and the natural beauty of the Forest and the natural habitat of the wildlife.

Logistics and supplies: The movement of heavy equipment on rugged terrain has been a major challenge to the vendors of transmission line projects. For a long stretch of transmission route

traversing across mountainous areas which requires the use of both land and helicopter transport, the construction of temporary base camps at strategic locations, storage yards for material in transit, and the provision of batching plants for concrete mixing are essential requirements.

All work to be done for proposed power lines, or underground will both affect the natural drainage of the mountain.

When an interference “substantially and unreasonably affects the use and enjoyment of a single or small group of properties it is considered a private nuisance, however, when an activity unreasonably interferes with a right common to the general public, it is considered a public nuisance”.

The Proposed Transmission Line on Forest Service land would interfere with citizens’ use of land frequented because of its beauty for hiking. The project could also be seen to unreasonably interfere with a right common to the general public—that of enjoying the splendor of the National Forest and its views of major landmarks such as Bell Rock, Cathedral and Thunder Mountain etc.

The very destructive Environmental Impact of this proposed project, on specifically the Kel Fox Trail route, should not be done. In no way should there be above ground lines or any lines in this very Environmentally Sensitive area. If this new sub transmission line is needed, then the most conscious environmentally friendly route would be to follow Beaver Head Flat Road to Highway 179 to the sub station, and should be completely buried because of the scenic byway. From the "USDA Letter File Code: 1950 Date: January 2, 2020", it is stated "Guidelines for special uses, as outlined in the forest plan, that apply to this APS project include: Utility lines should be buried to maintain scenic values.”

Whoever is making the decision to spearhead this Project is not considering the many very intelligent and conscious objections outlined in Appendix B. You have quoted such organizations as the WHO, which has nothing to do with, and in fact is not concerned with, the health and well being of the Village of Oak Creek, its residents, and wildlife. Always there are those in such organizations and the government and APS who are concerned with money. The Forest Service is supposed to be about PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT. In every case you refute or negate all alternate ideas that would better serve our community and keep it safe and free from harm. To go forward with this project when the community is clearly not in favor, never asked for, and does not want, is to violate all fairness and consideration. It is not for a few bureaucrats to make decisions for an entire community. It is for a community to decide if a project is harmful and entirely unnecessary - and by all objections over these past years it has been deemed so.

We ask you once again to do the ‘right action’ and stop this project which will cause irreparable harm to VOC and area, and to all those who live here.

Shareall Stillwater Mailing: [REDACTED]

Owner of [REDACTED]