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First name: James

Last name: Mosher

Organization:

Title:

Comments: February 20, 2025

Reviewing Officer

Regional Forester

333 Broadway Blvd SE

Albuquerque, NM 87102

Subject: APS Oak Creek to McGuireville 69kV Transmission Line Project

Dear Reviewing Officer:

This letter is submitted in opposition to the subject transmission line project as currently proposed. As a homeowner in the Village of Oak Creek I am deeply concerned about sections of the high voltage transmission line that are to be built above ground in a high wildfire risk area.

\*Our region is prone to high winds that have reached destructive velocities that can knock down above ground transmission lines.

\* Thunderstorm activity often produces lightning strikes hazardous to transformers.

As a former resident of San Diego County, California, I witnessed the massive destruction caused by the wildfires of 2003 and 2007 that were caused by downed high voltage lines. The devastating fire that destroyed the town of Paradise, CA in 2018 was also sparked by above ground transmission lines. The resulting inferno, spread by wind speeds similar to what we have experienced here in the Verde Valley area, killed 85 people.

In light of the historically high number of wildfires caused by above ground high voltage lines across the western United States, the Western Fire Chiefs Association advises communities to "underground," or bury, their power lines. APS contends that it is far too expensive to bury the lines for this project. I would ask them how much more expensive it would be to pay for astronomical damages resulting from a wildfire that destroyed an entire community.

Last night I attended a community meeting with about 300 other residents in the Village of Oak Creek at which APS and Forest Service officials were scheduled to appear to listen to concerns from residents. For some reason not explained, the officials canceled. That was very disappointing. I remain opposed to this project. Legitimate concerns about public safety need to be addressed.

Sincerely,

James Mosher