



Union County

DOCUMENT #202500173
03/11/25 04:46:58 PM
1 of 3
BY Kim Mitchell

RESOLUTION 2025-46

A RESOLUTION IN OPPOSITION OF THE PROPOSED NATIONAL INTEREST ELECTRIC TRANSMISSION CORRIDOR IN UNION COUNTY, NEW MEXICO

WHEREAS, the United States Department of Energy (DOE) has designated a significant portion of land stretching along the eastern side of Union County, New Mexico as a proposed location for the Southwestern Grid Connector National Interest Electric Transmission Corridor (NIETC), without clear benefit to Union County, its citizens, or the State of New Mexico; and

WHEREAS, this proposed corridor spans approximately eighty-seven (87) miles in length and between three (3) to fifteen (15) miles in width along the eastern portion of Union County, this corridor seeks to pave the way for private transmission developers to build infrastructure for energy delivery and storage;

WHEREAS, while the designation of this corridor is intended to enhance the nation's energy grid and support renewable energy growth, many local landowners are raising concerns about the potential risks to our communities and the environment; and

WHEREAS, while Union County has become a prime location for utility-scale renewable energy projects with potential for local economic growth and sustainability and transmission lines would need to be constructed as part of any utility-scale renewable energy project, the designation of the NIETC corridor in Union County will threaten the preservation of agricultural land and rural character of the county; and

WHEREAS, heavy industrial transmission infrastructure and dangerous battery storage for renewable energy could be developed within this corridor and nearby areas; and

WHEREAS, the DOE has failed to adequately notify local officials, landowners, and stakeholders in Union County regarding the scope, purpose, and potential impact of this project, and has not ensured transparency through proper publication of public comment periods in local newspapers or other local means; and

WHEREAS, the DOE has failed to respond to requests from local governments and stakeholders within the proposed NIETC to provide public meetings for local landowners and governing bodies; and

WHEREAS, the DOE has not addressed the potential long-term, negative financial impacts of this corridor to landowners and Union County as the designation of this corridor equates to a form of federal zoning with an undefined period of time, likely resulting in a decrease in land values within the corridor as sellers and real estate brokers of land within the corridor would have a legal obligation to disclose the NIETC designation as an adverse material fact; and

WHEREAS, farming and ranching operations rely heavily on the land for grazing, crop productions, water access and infrastructure. The establishment of electric transmission lines, towers, and associated infrastructure on private agricultural land could pose a serious threat to soil health, water resources, and the ability to conduct business in a way that aligns with sustainable practices, leading to long-term financial damage, and ecological harm; and

WHEREAS, the use of eminent domain to acquire land for the construction of transmission lines would force farmers and ranchers to give up valuable land that has been passed down through generations, potentially disrupting long-established operations, displacing family-run businesses and diminishing economic security for hundreds of families in our rural community; and

WHEREAS, the use of eminent domain for transmission projects resulting from the designation of a NIETC along the eastern side of Union County could potentially benefit large corporations and government agencies at the expense of local communities and private landowners, with minimal direct benefit to those who are most impacted; and

WHEREAS, while Union County understands that eminent domain is a possibility for any transmission line, there is a need for comprehensive and fair alternatives to eminent domain that would balance the need for infrastructure development with the protection of local economies, landowners' rights, and sustainable agricultural practices; and

WHEREAS, farmers, ranchers, and small business owners are the backbone of Union County's economy and should be supported in their efforts to maintain their businesses, protect their land and contribute to the continued success and prosperity of the county; and

WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioners of Union County is committed to protecting the rights of its residents, preserving the county's agricultural heritage, and ensuring that any major infrastructure projects are conducted with full transparency, proper environmental assessments, and fair compensation to affected property owners.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Board of County Commissioners of Union County, New Mexico that:

1. The Board of County Commissioners strongly opposes the Southwestern Grid Connector National Interest Electric Transmission Corridor in Union County, New Mexico due to its lack of transparency, the overreach of federal authority, failure to properly notify local officials and residents, its potential to cause economic and environmental harm, and the use of eminent domain and to instead seek alternate solutions that respect landowners' rights while meeting energy infrastructure needs through collaborative, noninvasive means that do not jeopardize local livelihoods or cultural heritage.

PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED this 11th day of March, 2025.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF UNION COUNTY, NEW MEXICO

ATTEST

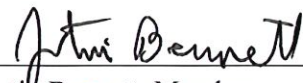
SEAL

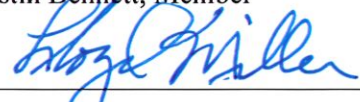

Devian Fields, County Clerk



By:


Clayton Kiesling, Chairman


Justin Bennett, Member


Lloyd Miller, Member