

*Submitted to: ACC February 2, 2016*

My name is Maria Araiza Troutner. I live at 6590 N. Cascabel Rd., in Cascabel, Arizona

I agree with all the valid reasons for not building the SunZia power lines that others have mentioned such as the negative impact it would have on the San Pedro River Valley. I also believe there is no need for this project and SunZia's claim that the power lines will carry "green" energy has no legal requirement that they do so.

But I have yet four other reasons to oppose the SunZia project. You see, I'm the 4<sup>th</sup> generation of my family to live in the San Pedro River Valley. I have a certificate from the Arizona Council of Professional Genealogists that states I am an Arizona Pioneer Descendant; a direct descendant of an Arizona Pioneer family who resided in the Arizona Territory prior to February 14, 1912.

**The first generation:** In the 1880's, my paternal great-grandparents, Blas and Dolores Sanchez sold their dairy located at the foot of "A" Mountain in Tucson, packed their belongings and 6 children in a wagon and traveled east over the Redington Pass in the Rincon mountains. (This is the same Redington Pass where the SunZia powerlines, if constructed, will cross and destroy for ever.) Blas and Dolores Sanchez were following their dream of homesteading land in the San Pedro Valley. They homesteaded 160 acres in an area called Pool. Pool, AZ. was a small settlement a few miles south of Cascabel around mile marker 17, just a few miles north of where the SunZia powerlines, if permitted, will be built. My great-grandparents farmed the land, ranched and raised a family of 10 children. They were also granted a government contract to carry the U.S. mail from Benson to Redington, Arizona.

**The second generation were** my maternal grandparents, Miguel and Maria Gamez. They traveled to the San Pedro Valley from the Tanque Verde and Fort Lowell area of Tucson in 1897. My grandfather homesteaded 640 acres in Cascabel where he and my grandmother raised 8 children. He, too, became a successful rancher and farmer inspite of not being able to read nor write. Gamez road, located near mile marker 28 on Cascabel road, was named for the family.

**The third generation** were my parents. My father, Alfredo Sanchez Araiza, was born in 1900 in Mammoth, Arizona, a small town at the northern end of the San Pedro River Valley. My father was 17 years old when he began working for the Mule Shoe Cattle Company. His first assignment was working at their Pool ranch located at mile post 22 in Cascabel. My father was a fence builder, a cowboy and a cook on the many cattle drives from Cascabel to Willcox and beyond.

My mother, Isabel Diaz Gamez, was born in 1910 in Cascabel. With only a third grade education, my mother taught herself to read and write English and Spanish. As a result, she was able to help my grandfather with his ranching and farming business.

**Fourth generation:** I'm the youngest of 5 children. In September of 1937 (79 yrs. ago) because there was no midwife available, my mother traveled from Cascabel to Tucson for my birth. I was 10 days old when I was brought home to Cascabel to the Kelly Ranch, now known as the River Ranch at milepost 26 on Cascabel road. A year later, our family moved to the Hollow T Ranch located at the entrance to Paige Canyon, just a few miles from the proposed SunZia power lines.

During WWII our family moved to Tucson. From then on, visits to my Cascabel relatives were many and often. After retiring, as a teacher, I returned to live in Cascabel 17 years ago. This move was fully supported and encouraged by my husband. I love all of Southern Arizona but the old saying really is true: **there is no place like home.** Cascabel is both my personal home now and the home I am rooted in through four generations of my family.

I am proud of and passionate about my family history. I have a high regard for the land and for its legacy that is in my care. A responsibility was passed on to me by my family to be a steward of this land, to care for our family's historical sites, to restore and maintain our family cemeteries, to record and to pass on the rich and vibrant history which was created by my Mexican ancestors.

While I have passion and pride, you, members of this Commission, have **power!** You have the **power to determine the future history of our Valley.** Do not allow SunZia to desecrate and destroy authentic and important Arizona history. Use your **power** to keep Arizona and the San Pedro River Valley unfragmented, unique, beautiful and a historical treasure for endless generations to come.