



AES Project Will Harm Our Communities- Please help!

From Judy Walker <judywalker87508@gmail.com>

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To Dominic J. Sisneros <djsisneros@santafecountynm.gov>

Warning:

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Please include this letter in the AES casefile and on the Santa Fe County Website. It is greatly appreciated.

STOP THE SCAM! The AES project planned for the Rt 14 corridor, including Rancho Viejo, and extending toward Eldorado, is not a solution for clean energy. While lithium-ion batteries play a vital role in storing and enabling clean energy technologies like electric vehicles and renewable energy storage, their production and disposal raise significant environmental concerns. We must acknowledge that these processes are not entirely clean.

Fortunately, safer technologies are emerging, such as Sodium-ion and Solid-state batteries, which offer promise as cost-effective alternatives. However, these solutions have not yet been widely adopted due to challenges like lower energy density, shorter cycle life, and an incomplete industrial supply chain. Until these safer technologies are ready for mainstream use, we must prioritize the placement of lithium-ion battery storage projects much farther from homes and communities. This is a matter of common sense.

Moreover, the NM State Legislature has classified PFAS, known as “forever chemicals,” as toxic hazards. Both the lithium-ion batteries and the fire suppression systems proposed by AES contain substantial amounts of PFAS chemicals. It raises a critical question: what rationale exists for situating a facility with known toxic hazards so close to our communities that rely on clean air and water from aquifers, which provide well water for nearly all surrounding residents?

The NM State Land Office has identified at least 9 million acres in our state as safe and suitable for solar and battery projects like the proposed AES Rancho Viejo Project. So, why is AES adamant about constructing their hazardous lithium-ion battery storage facility so near to three communities comprising over 10,000 residences, just a few miles south of Santa Fe city itself?

From their own statements during the Santa Fe County Hearings, it is clear that AES did not explore any alternative sites for this project. Given the evident risks highlighted by the recent lithium-ion battery fires at Moss Landing, we must ask: why should the health and safety of our residents, if not their very lives, be jeopardized to save money for an out-of-state corporation with a troubling environmental track record? Our community deserves better, and we must stand together to demand safer and more responsible energy solutions.

This is not a NIMBY(not in my backyard) situation. This is a matter of keeping our communities safe.

Thank you!

Kindest Regards,

Judy Walker

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