



In support of CUP - case #24-5200 Rancho Viejo Solar

From Justin Garoutte <garoutteju@everyactioncustom.com>

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To Public Comments AES/BESS Permit Hearing <publiccomment@santafecountynm.gov>

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Dear Santa Fe County Commission,

As a public health professional and resident of Santa Fe, I'm writing to express my support for the Rancho Viejo solar and storage project. Rancho Viejo is an exciting opportunity to supercharge Santa Fe's clean energy transition, protect our environment, and boost our economy. This is also a tangible way for us to continue the energy transition regardless of what is happening at the national level.

Rancho Viejo will produce more than 200 construction jobs, landowner payments, and more than \$10 million in tax revenue for the county over the life of the project—money that can help fund our roads, first responders, schools, and other county needs.

Rancho Viejo will also be a big step in helping us transition away from fossil fuels to fight climate change and preserve our natural environment here in Santa Fe. Solar and storage don't pollute, and this project will reduce carbon emissions equal to taking 42,364 gas-powered cars off the road each year. The project will also conserve water—solar farms use 140 times less water than gas power plants per MWh generated and battery storage systems also use minimal water—a key factor in our dry area.

The project will be a safe, clean, and quiet neighbor, blending into our rural neighborhoods and built with public health in mind. AES, the developer, has ensured the project will follow strict safety standards, using non-flammable materials for the solar farm that can withstand extreme conditions, and equipping the storage installation with fire suppression and cooling systems. They have already worked with emergency responders to ensure communities are prepared to handle rare safety issues.

It's clear that Rancho Viejo, CUP - case #24-5200, is a good choice for Santa Fe County. I and many of my neighbors are excited to see the county approve this project and more like it in the near future so we can unlock the economic and environmental benefits.

Sincerely,
Justin Garoutte
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