Outlook

Fw: Proposed solar array

From Hank Hughes <hhughes@santafecountynm.gov>
Date Fri 6/20/2025 2:10 PM
To Dominic J. Sisneros <djsisneros@santafecountynm.gov>; Gabriel C. Bustos <gcbustos@santafecountynm.gov>

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From: Daniel Drobnis <drobnisd@comcast.net>
Sent: Friday, June 20, 2025 1:37:39 PM
To: Hank Hughes <hhughes@santafecountynm.gov>
Subject: Proposed solar array

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Dear Hank--

I understand that a vote on the AES solar array installation may be coming soon. After considerable thought and research, I urge the BCC to deny approval.

I served for three years on the CDRC, the immediate predecessor to the Planning Commission, including one year as Chair, so I am very familiar with the latitude that the BCC enjoys with Conditional Use Permits. In addition I have degrees in Electrical Engineering and am a Registered Professional Engineer, so I have familiarity with electrical power generation, storage, and distribution.

I believe in renewable energy--we have invested in a solar array on the roof of our home in Eldorado, and whole-house battery backup in our garage. But large-scale solar arrays with volatile battery storage are best located well away from populated areas. Since the County's SLDC contains little or no guidance for utility-scale solar/battery installations, the BCC must provide common sense through the Conditional Use Permit process.

While solar zealots would have us believe otherwise, it is now known that solar power is a mixed blessing. The recent blackout in Spain on April 28, 2025 has been traced to too much solar power feeding the grid!

With solar accounting for ~55–60% of generation at the time, the grid had minimal spinning reserves. Inverter-based systems lack the inertia needed to absorb sudden fluctuations, making the network fragile. For more info consult Spain's Solar-Fueled Grid Collapse: Aftermath and Lessons Learned, from the *Digital Wind* website--a proponent of renewable energy!

Digital Wind concludes: "The future isn't just about adding more renewables. It's about building the systems that can handle them." And I would add, engineering them with grid-forming inverters (which the AES design lacks), and locating them appropriately away from dwelling areas.

Daniel Drobnis

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