

July 23, 2009

To the board of Public Utilities,

I recently became aware of a proposed High voltage electrical power line that is to run across a portion of productive agricultural land and feel I should be concerned for the following reasons. Agricultural land is more than the small mom and pop farmsteads of the past. Small acreages have been combined to become efficient farms of larger acreages and more efficient in production. This means better use of resources, available space, energy and water. I work for just such a company. Our use of these resources has allowed us to farm better, producing a better crop that is marketed domestically and internationally. The loss of this productive farming land would greatly diminish our endeavor to produce a crop. We are farming as a livelihood and as a public service. We employ hundreds of people, both in the cultural and farming portion of our farm and also indirectly through marketing sales and distribution. Many people depend on the kind of intense farming we do so that they can support their families and lifestyles.

Having a background in the science community, formerly working in the Dept of Land Air Water resources, I am very aware of the limited resources that are available to farm these days. Water quality, Soil quality and Air quality issues affect all of us. The efficient use of these limited resources means those farming operations that can farm intensely will be the farms of the future.

The water we use isn't a stream or a river. Our water flows in a meandering underground stream that can be found at different depths and is of different qualities throughout the foothills and surrounding valleys. Efficient use of this water is the backbone to our success. Your placement of large cement pads that may or may not interfere with this water that flows from the Sierra foothills is of vital concern. I am concerned that inadequate studies have not taken into account the impact of such a disruption of this water flow or aquifer recharge. The water resource is of the greatest concern of the farming community. The loss of this resource due to negligence of the land would potentially harm future farming in this productive valley.

I feel we need to have an intensive, extensive environmental study done before you consider route two. We need this because it would impact the future as well as the present use of our valuable resources water and its routes below ground.

Chris Corbett,  
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