



John Villyard, CEO

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Recently, I've seen articles on the proposed transmission line into the Valley that have included information that could be misleading. I would like to clarify a few points.

This proposed line is not a "new" project. In 1999, SLVREC began working with Tri-State Generation & Transmission Association to investigate options for providing more power to the Valley. Even then, it was apparent that existing delivery routes could not keep up with the Valley's ever-growing appetite for power.

In spite of the economic slow-down and increased energy efficiency of many new house-

hold appliances, demand for power has increased. Computers, cell phones, satellite receivers and other devices are more common now than they were a decade ago. Average power consumption per household has increased, not decreased.

In dry years, when irrigation is at its peak, SLVREC runs precipitously close to our limits on power delivery. In 2002, we hit a record peak demand of 76 megawatts (MW). We worried then that increased demand would cause rolling brownouts in summer months.

Several wet summers with lower irrigation demand followed. This year, at 75 MW, we are close to our 2002 record. Fortunately, since 2002, we rebuilt several miles of line to address power delivery concerns. But, we can only do so much with line upgrades. Sooner—rather than later—we will need more power to meet demand.

Since 1999, Tri-State has studied many alternatives to our

Transmission Line Facts

power supply issues. They chose to pursue the transmission line project, with the line coming over La Veta, because this solution addressed more concerns for a longer time than any other proposal. So far, the exact route has not been determined. Public meetings will be held once alternative route locations are identified.

Equally important as solving demand concerns, a new line would also allow for the development of solar generation within the Valley. That was the primary reason why Xcel Energy partnered with Tri-State on this project.

Some recent articles suggest Xcel backed off on this project because they decided to cut back on solar development. However, in their most recent resource plan, Xcel said they have not been able to develop renewable resources as fast as they hoped. They are not reducing the amount of solar they will build; it will just take

longer to get the job done.

Already, two solar companies have sought permits to build plants in the Valley. Additional solar development will require increased transmission capability.

Some have suggested we could get by without new transmission lines if we relied on distributed generation, or small solar installations located at strategic points, instead of large solar facilities. It would be nice if distributed generation systems provided reliable power delivery 24/7. Unfortunately, we're still a few years away from that reality—and we don't have a few years leeway on our power supply. I encourage you to find out all the facts for this project before you come to a judgement on its merits.

**SAN LUIS VALLEY
RURAL ELECTRIC CO-OP**

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