



John Villyard, CEO

San Luis Valley Rural Electric Cooperative

Over the next few years, you might get tired of hearing about the proposed transmission line to serve the San Luis Valley. Why do I say that?

First, even if everyone were in agreement about needing the line, the process of completing the required Environmental Impact Statement, evaluating possible route alternatives, and then engineering and building it will take up to four years.

Second, as much as we need power and as important as it is to create a loop feed power delivery system for the Valley, many oppose this line. Detractors are not going to keep quiet about it. As long as they are

pointing out why they believe we shouldn't build the line, I am obligated to speak up on behalf of the cooperative's members to explain why we must build it.

And, let me make this clear, I sincerely believe we must build it. I'm not making this statement from a profit or earnings perspective. SLVREC is a cooperative. We are run by the members we serve. Our rates cover costs with no profit motive.

One reason why I believe we need this line is to create a loop feed for our distribution network. Right now, with our existing radial feed, all the Valley's power comes over Poncha Pass. There are three transmission lines along that route: a 69 kV, a 115 kV and a 230 kV line.

Both Xcel Energy customers and SLVREC members depend upon those lines. Xcel owns the 69 and 115 kV lines. The 230 kV line is jointly owned by Xcel and Tri-State Generation & Transmission Association, the cooperative

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who provides SLVREC's power. Xcel and Tri-State have agreements allowing SLVREC to use power from the 115 kV line.

With a radial feed system, the power flows in one direction into our system. That doesn't mean it couldn't flow in a different direction if there were another source. But right now there isn't. So, if there are problems on any one of the three lines that serve the Valley, we can't switch to an alternate delivery path. Instead, the other two lines must pick up the load—if they can.

You don't have to be an electrical engineer to see that the 230 kV line can probably carry the load shed from a failure on the 69 kV line. On a day when the load is light, it might be able to carry load shed by the 115 kV line. On the other hand, if the 230 kV line goes down, the 115 and 69 kV lines can't make up for the capacity loss. Outages would result.

If we had another 230 kV

line delivering power to the Valley from another location, we could reroute the power path. Yes, there would be some blips and outages. But, with the safety net of a loop feed, in a few moments, your power would resume.

Developing a loop feed system isn't the only reason why I believe we need this line. I would be glad to discuss with you or your group why the proposed line from the east side of the Valley is the best option.

Meanwhile, I encourage you to be patient with all the articles, editorials and community meetings over the next few years. I encourage you to speak up in support of this project. The more who speak out in support, the faster we can get things moving.

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

Serving the Valley Since 1937
3625 US Hwy 160 W
P.O. Box 3625
Monte Vista, CO 81144