

The Deming Headlight

Report says over 530 jobs to be created in Luna County

For the Headlight

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The study concluded that construction of the SunZia Southwest Transmission Project's two 500kV transmission lines and five electrical substations will create substantial job, salary and tax revenue benefits for both states.

The study analyzed two key areas of economic impact: Construction and operation of the lines and substations, and, construction and operation of renewable generation projects that could develop as a result of SunZia. It concluded that SunZia itself will create an estimated 6,200 jobs during a four year construction period and over 120 permanent jobs during operation. Within Luna County, 530 jobs are expected to be created within Luna County. The study concluded that SunZia could enable renewable energy projects creating over 36,700 jobs during a 2-year construction period and over 480 permanent jobs.

"Construction of the SunZia system alone generates considerable and quantifiable economic impacts," said Co-Author Anthony Popp of New Mexico State University. "But what really propels the job and salary numbers are the wind and solar generation projects that SunZia enables."

"What we found most striking from the data we compiled was the positive economic effect SunZia would have on rural economies in Arizona and New Mexico, many of which are struggling with extremely high unemployment rates," said Co-Author Alberta Charney of The University of Arizona. Luna County's unemployment rate frequently hovers near 20 percent.

The universities estimated that the construction cost of SunZia's transmission lines and substations represents a capital investment of approximately \$1.5 billion. They also found that if the configuration of the project were to include a DC line in place of one of the two AC lines, job, salary and tax revenue impacts all would increase. The full study, which includes a county-by-county analysis of Arizona and New Mexico, is available online at:

http://www.sunzia.net/project_information.php?show_tab=economic.

The SunZia Southwest Transmission Project is an extra-high-voltage transmission system that will deliver clean renewable energy to customers in the southwest and enhance the reliability of the existing electrical grid. The system will span 500 miles between Arizona and New Mexico. It includes two new 500kV transmission lines and five new electrical substations that will provide 3,000 megawatts of new capacity. Once all local, state and federal permits have been obtained, construction is scheduled to begin in 2014, with initial operation scheduled for 2016. For more information, go to www.SunZia.net.