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PUC Docket No. 60319

PUBLIC COMMENT OF GREAR WILSON

I am writing about proposed Link 1R of El Paso Electric's Pine to McCloud 345 kV transmission line in El Paso County.

I oppose any route that uses Link 1R.

I am writing in the strongest possible opposition to Link 1R of El Paso Electric's proposed Pine to McCloud 345 kV transmission line. I urge you not to approve any route that includes this link.

For twenty years I have traveled to Hueco Tanks every year. It is the place most dear to my heart in the world, and I am far from alone. People come from across the country and around the globe to experience this landscape. Link 1R would not cross the park itself, but that does not make it harmless. Hueco Tanks is not an island. Its value depends on the open, quiet and largely undeveloped land around it, and that is the land this project would damage.

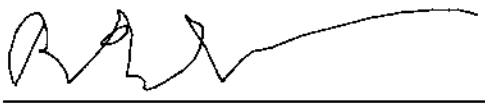
The area surrounding Hueco Tanks is environmentally sensitive desert terrain and is rich in cultural history. It is part of the same living landscape that has sustained people for thousands of years, and it remains deeply significant to Native American communities whose ancestors lived, gathered and held ceremony here. Tribal nations with ties to this place, including the Mescalero Apache, the Kiowa and the Ysleta del Sur Pueblo, have a connection that does not end at the park boundary. A 345 kV transmission corridor, with its towers, access roads, cleared right-of-way and permanent industrial footprint, would disturb ground where the cultural record is dense and fragile. It would also fundamentally change the character of the land and horizon around one of the most significant places in West Texas. Once that ground is disturbed and that view is altered, no mitigation plan can restore it. The damage would be irreversible.

The people who would bear the cost most directly are those who live there. Local residents chose to make their homes in this quiet, open country. They would live with the visual impact, the construction disruption, the loss of land value and the permanent alteration of their surroundings, for decades to come. The Native American community would see yet another culturally significant landscape compromised. And the worldwide climbing community, which has revered Hueco Tanks as a world-class destination for decades, would see the setting that makes the experience so special permanently diminished. Climbers, hikers, photographers and families all travel here because the whole area feels wild and untouched, not just the land inside the park gates. Those visitors also support the local economy.

What makes this proposal especially egregious is that it is unnecessary. Other route options exist for this project. The Commission is charged with weighing community values, cultural and historical resources, parks and recreational areas, and environmental integrity in selecting a

route. When viable alternatives avoid this sensitive area and the community that lives in it, choosing Link 1R cannot be justified. Utility convenience or marginal cost savings should not outweigh the permanent loss of a place like this.

I respectfully ask the Commission to reject Link 1R and to approve a route that keeps this project well clear of the Hueco Tanks area and the people who live around it. Once this landscape is damaged, it cannot be given back.



Grear Wilson
October 6, 2026