



Kofa National Wildlife Refuge - Statement

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Southwest Region (Arizona • New Mexico • Oklahoma • Texas) <http://www.fws.gov/southwest/>

Background:

The Southwest Regional Director reconsidered Southern California Edison's request for a right-of-way permit to construct a second transmission line abutting an existing line (Dever Palo Verde (SCE-DPV) #1) that crosses the northern portion of Kofa National Wildlife Refuge and decided on May 18, 2007, to grant the right-of-way permit. (See link to permit on website at <http://www.fws.gov/southwest/refuges/arizona/kofa.html>.)

SCE had appealed the denial of the right-of-way permit. The Regional Director carefully considered the history of the powerline project, the Arizona Desert Wilderness Act, documents from the 1985 decision, information in the EIS and compatibility determination and other information that was important in forming his decision. The transmission line will not cross into designated wilderness and will be restricted to the area that has an existing transmission line as well as gas line.

Statement from Benjamin N. Tuggle, Ph.D.
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Southwest Regional Director

"I am approving Southern California Edison's right-of-way permit for constructing a second transmission line across Kofa National Wildlife Refuge in Arizona. This decision finalizes a request that dates back to 1985 and was recently reconstituted. Our historical records show the powerline was anticipated – in fact the Arizona Desert Wilderness Act excludes this area.

The line will run parallel to an existing line that skirts the northern border and impact about 100 acres. No portion will cross into designated wilderness on the 665,400 acre rugged refuge.

I appreciate the professionalism and the excellent advice my staff has given me. They counseled me on how to best decrease the footprint, minimize impacts to sensitive species and identify the seasons when construction will be least disruptive. Their guidance was folded into the permit's special terms and conditions as tangible conservation measures and modifications that amount to more than \$9 million. The refuge manager at Kofa National Wildlife Refuge and his staff will actively participate and advise on the development of research needs that the \$4.5 million fund could best address.

The granting of the permit is contingent upon SCE fully complying with these terms."

May 22, 2007