

Wendi Maez

From: Loren Buss <cropcareinc@hotmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 26, 2012 9:53 AM
To: wmaez@saguachecounty-co.gov
Subject: Proposed tower objection

To Whom it May Concern:

As a pilot and owner and operator of Crop Care, Inc., I feel the proposed tower is a great hazard to all of the aerial applicators (crop dusters) in the Valley. This tower is in the heart of the farming community. The 106 Road is a major landmark for pilots who are ferrying to and from fields. The height of any tower over 100 feet poses a danger to the crop dusters, but most especially these with a height of over 650 feet. I would encourage you to look at sites east of Highway 17. The presence of any tower, regardless of height, poses a danger to the flying community. I strongly object to this location and suggest that it should be moved to a location that does not create a flight hazard. This is a major flight safety issue. What has the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) involvement been with this tower?

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 852-5480 or cropcareinc@hotmail.com.

Thank you
Loren Buss
Crop Care, Inc

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<http://www.eset.com>



Fact Sheet on the Dangerous Effects Towers Pose to the Aerial Application Industry

Construction of towers on or near agricultural cropland throughout the U.S. is an area of concern to the aerial application industry. The number of telecommunications, wind energy and other towers erected in agricultural regions throughout the country has increased significantly over the past several years and the demand for these towers will only continue as wind energy development is projected to grow considerably across the country. These vertical obstacles are a major safety concern to aerial applicators and can significantly hamper their access to cropland, in turn detrimentally affecting agricultural production.

Towers are a safety concern to our nation's aerial applicators because they are sometimes constructed on or near agricultural land and are not properly marked with lights or other devices denoting their presence. Sadly, in the last 10 years, 5.6 percent of aerial application fatalities were the result of collisions with towers and 16.9 percent were the result of collisions with wires. Wire accidents are included in these statistics since the wind developments must install wires to connect the output of the turbines to the electrical power grid. These collisions are almost always fatal. Wind energy towers pose the greatest safety and accessibility threats to agricultural aviators not only because of their size, but also because they are expected to become more widespread in the coming years. These towers are often clustered closely together, creating ominous obstacles for pilots.

Without sensible placement and proper marking of towers in agricultural areas, farmers may be at risk of losing important aerial application services performed on their cropland. Towers erected directly in the flight path of aerial applicators' landing strips and/or hampering the accessibility of treatable cropland could literally shut down aerial application operations. This would detrimentally affect, in some instances, the only method farmers have available to them when the time comes to apply seeds, fertilizers and crop protection chemicals, necessary to foster crop growth. Aircraft help in treating wet fields when crop foliage is too dense to allow ground rigs to enter. Aerial application also results in no soil compaction. An aircraft is by far the most rapid form of application.

NAAA is concerned that as the demand for communication, wind energy and other towers increases—as projected—farmers will enter into leasing agreements with tower construction companies to erect these obstacles on their land without taking into account the safety and agricultural production issues of the aerial applicator. In 2010, NAAA launched a special towers section of its website, www.agaviation.org/towers.htm, which provides tools to educate the public on the dangers of unmarked testing towers to pilots of low-flying aircraft; and addresses the safety and accessibility concerns associated with wind turbines. The tools illustrate how poor tower marking and improper wind turbine siting put pilots' lives and farmers' livelihood at risk.

NAAA advocates the erection of these towers should be away from prime agricultural land. It has urged federal agencies that help to subsidize and promote wind energy, such as the USDA and DoE, to help in its campaign to inform the public that improper placement of wind towers may pose significant dangers to low-level aviation operations and may negatively affect agricultural production. NAAA worked to draft language within the FAA Reauthorization Bill to establish a study on the feasibility of developing a central tower database where all tower locations could be stored and searched before low-level flight activity. While variations of such legislation is something NAAA has sought in earlier Congresses, during the 112th Congress the Association has been working closely with the office of Congressman Randy Neugebauer's (R-TX) in drafting the current language. NAAA was pleased Representative Neugebauer's amendment was included in H.R. 658, the FAA Reauthorization Bill that the House of Representatives passed at the beginning of April. We are now working with the Senate and House to see that this language is included in the conference version of the FAA Reauthorization bill and voted into public law.

NAAA has established the following safety guidelines that it requests are met before constructing towers (including wind turbines and the associated meteorological towers) so they will pose a reduced risk for aerial applicators:

NAAA Tower Safety Guidelines

- Towers should not be erected on prime agricultural land in a manner that may inhibit aerial applicators' access and ability to treat the land.
- Petitions for constructing towers should be provided to the local government zoning authority, landowners and/or farmers and aerial applicators within at least a one-half mile radius of a proposed tower, as well as the state or regional agricultural

(See reverse side for more information)

aviation association, no later than 30 days before tower construction permits are considered for approval. This information should include the proposed location of:

- each turbine generator
- each meteorological tower including the height to be associated with the wind farm
- the distribution sub-station and any connecting power lines from the generators
- power lines connecting the sub-station to the existing electrical power grid.

- If a proposed tower is to be constructed on prime agricultural land or in the vicinity of such land in a way that may inhibit an aerial applicator's access, person(s) that own and/or farm such land should be made aware by the entity responsible for that tower that it may result in the land no longer being accessible to aerial applicators, and in the event of a pest outbreak or plant disease a crop on such land may be put in jeopardy of not being treated.
- In the event that a proposed tower is constructed on prime agricultural land or in the vicinity of such land, towers should be freestanding and without guy wires. Furthermore, towers should be well lit and properly marked so they are clearly visible to aerial applicators.
- Towers erected with guy wires, including meteorological testing towers, should be marked with aviation orange / white stripes with strobe lighting with four high-visibility cable balls on the outer guy wires (one on each at 37m [approximately half way up the tower] with a diameter of 53 cm). In addition, these towers should be equipped with 16 foot high-visibility sleeves, one per each anchor on each of the outer guy wires. These marking mechanisms must be maintained frequently to ensure their visibility and attachment to the wires.
- In the event that a number of proposed towers are to be constructed on prime agricultural land or in the vicinity of such land, the towers should be constructed in a linear pattern, rather than a random, clustered pattern that would make an area completely inaccessible by air.
- During construction and upon completion, the operator of the wind farm should provide detailed field layout information to the local government zoning authority and make this information available to those working in close proximity to that area.

In late June, the FAA released its long-awaited guidance for marking MET towers less than 200 feet above ground level (AGL) in remote and rural areas. The Agency concurred with almost all of NAAA's recommendations, except for those requesting lighting on the tower and the creation of a national database. The FAA has indicated the Advisory Circular referenced, AC No. 70/7460-1, will be revised within the next six months. Additionally, while the FAA did not recommend establishing a national tower database, NAAA continues to pursue a Congressional mandate within the FAA Reauthorization bill that would conduct a study of what would be required to feasibly have a database cataloging all guy-wired and free-standing tower locations. NAAA urges you to support Congressman Neugebauer's efforts requiring such a study to be included in the House FAA Reauthorization bill.

NAAA represents over 1,700 members in 46 states. NAAA member operator/pilots are licensed as commercial applicators that use aircraft to enhance food, fiber and bio-fuel production, protect forestry, and control health-threatening pests. Furthermore, through its affiliation with the National Agricultural Aviation Research & Education Fund (NAAREF), NAAA contributes to research and education programs aimed at enhancing the efficacy and safety of aerial application.

For more information please contact Andrew Moore, NAAA Executive Director, or Danna Kelemen, Manager of Government & Public Relations at 202-546-5722.

Updated January 2012

Wendi Maez

From: Ceal Smith <ceal@theriver.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 26, 2012 1:45 PM
To: Ceal Smith
Subject: 90 MINUTES LEFT to comment on Solar Reserve

Dear SLV lover,

With only 90 minutes left to comment on the Solar Reserve power tower project, we are recommending that if you haven't already submitted, please take 1 min to send the following request (or your own) to the BOCC.

Email (or forward) to: wmaez@saguachecounty-co.gov

Please postpone approval of the massive Solar Reserve Saguache Power Tower proposal until after the similar Crescent Dunes, NV project is up and running and more studies have been conducted on the actual impacts of this new technology.

Sorry, we have had neither the time or funding to watchdog this project to the degree that we know is needed. But hopefully, this will buy some time to do more educating and outreach on the relative costs and benefits of the proposal.

Sincerely,

Ceal

~~~~~  
Ceal Smith, Director  
San Luis Valley Renewable Communities Alliance  
P.O. Box 1241  
Alamosa, CO 81101  
tele: 719.256.5780  
web: <http://slvrenewablecommunities.blogspot.com>



**Join the Solar Done Right Call to Action for Energy Democracy**

**at:** <http://slvrenewablecommunities.blogspot.com/2011/12/call-to-action-for-energy-democracy.html>

## Wendi Maez

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**From:** Becky English <beckyrep@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 26, 2012 1:59 PM  
**To:** wmaez@saguachecounty-co.gov  
**Subject:** POSTPONE Solar Reserve Saguache Power Tower decision

Dear Saguache County Commissioners,

Please postpone consideration and potential approval of the Solar Reserve Saguache Power Tower proposal until after the similarly large Crescent Dunes, NV project has been up for one year, giving time for more studies to be conducted on the actual (as opposed to hypothetical) impacts of this new technology.

It is not clear that the Valley's viewshed and conservation values must be sacrificed in order to provide the region with clean, renewable energy. There is great progress being made on SLV energy master planning. Please do not put the cart before the horse.

Thank you for your consideration!

Becky English  
Rebecca English and Associates, LLC  
Chair, Energy Committee, Sierra Club Rocky Mountain Chapter (state of Colorado)  
303 733 4064

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## Wendi Maez

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**From:** Suzanne Ewy <suzanne@olt.org>  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 26, 2012 2:01 PM  
**To:** wmaez@saguachecounty-co.gov  
**Subject:** Solar Reserve Saguache Power Tower

### To Whom it May Concern:

**Please postpone approval of the Solar Reserve Saguache Power Tower proposal until more studies have been conducted on the actual impacts of this new technology such that such approval can comport with legal requirements and a more certain determination of the actual costs and benefits to Saguache County can be made.**

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Suzanne Ewy, Executive Director  
ORIENT LAND TRUST  
PO Box 65, Villa Grove, CO 81155-0065  
Office: [719-256-5212](tel:719-256-5212), Cell: [719-298-0674](tel:719-298-0674)  
[www.olt.org](http://www.olt.org)

Look for [Orient Land Trust on Facebook!](#)

**Orient Land Trust is a nonprofit land trust dedicated to the preservation of natural and biological resources, agricultural lands, wildlife habitat, open space, and historic and geologic features of the northern San Luis Valley for the enjoyment of current and future generations.**

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**Wendi Maez**

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**From:** Gussie Fauntleroy <gussie7@fairpoint.net>  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 26, 2012 2:00 PM  
**To:** wmaez@saguachecounty-co.gov  
**Subject:** power tower proposal

**Please postpone approval of the massive Solar Reserve Saguache Power Tower proposal until after the similar Crescent Dunes, NV project is up and running and more studies have been conducted on the actual impacts of this new technology.**

**Thanks,  
Gussie Fauntleroy  
Crestone, CO resident**

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1-20-12 From Biosphere Coalition.

## Public Comment $\Delta$ Solar Reserve Proposal

To whom it may concern: Saguache County Land Use POB 326 81149

Such large-scale project would seem out-of-place in SLV. its visual impact; its production scale; its many potential impacts on current ag. economy & nature. It would be better placed in an urban ~~area~~ industrial area that already ~~is~~ is toxic and has major viewshed impediments and existing nite-sky intringement, and bedrock factors.

The fact that new and smaller projects (solar) are liable to occur at proposed BLM sites and which would be a better match for SLV

The impacts to SLV natural heritage; whereby much of local economy derives could be massive. Tourist go to GSDNP for its connection to unimpeded nature and openly rare ~~experience~~ experience.

Bird migration; both crane and other must be studied. Also what soil types are involved and their percolation rates. How much cement is required

How will roads be impacted. Where is water available; And regulations for massive cement production? What engineering and design is involved; There should 2-3 expert consultations from various engineers concerning: pads, containment, tower; stabilization, earthquakes, faults, materials, groundwater, high winds, mirror impacts, affects on near-by neighbors and climate alteration.

Saguache County  
Land Use

JAN 26 2012

PO Box 326  
Saguache, CO 81149

Cont P. 2

There is the question of quickly obsolescence occurs. Using SLV as prototype for this type of project seems unwise? Its location makes it feasibility doubtful.

Who will receive the electricity generated and what likely industrial changes to the county and SLV are likely to occur; ~~thus~~ ~~may~~ reducing the historic agric. economy

What methodology is proposed to stabilize such a large and heavy tower - what the potential <sup>seismic</sup> impacts to the groundwater + its strata; both in terms of depth of incursion; materials used both short term and long-term - what materials and chemicals ~~will~~ be used during construction period of pads, pilons, etc. Is there an existing site as a reference?

What containment methods are planned during ~~construction~~ and ~~long-term~~: what flood - ~~salts~~ → mitigation is planned.

How will ~~be~~ transported and ~~How~~ what is total projected weight?

What ~~is~~ vs toxicity levels of salts - how will be placed in tubes

What are noise factors during & after production

How long is construction time; How do mirrors move?

What decay factors occur in long-term; Water use;

What are potential impacts to people + wild life; economic; cultural; and natural heritage?

Biospherecc@gmail.com

Thank you 

## Wendi Maez

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**From:** Christine Canaly <slwater@fairpoint.net>  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 26, 2012 10:39 AM  
**To:** wmaez@saguachecounty-co.gov  
**Subject:** Solar Reserve Public Comment

Hi Wendy;

Happy New Year, I hope you are well. This is notice to let you know that SLVEC will be submitting comments and will plan on attending the hearing on February 2nd. Due to our crunched time schedule, we will be submitting comments at that time, on February 2nd. Thanks for your time and consideration in this matter. Please let me know you received this e-mail, thanks.

Sincerely,  
Christine Canaly

--  
Christine Canaly, Director  
San Luis Valley Ecosystem Council  
P.O. Box 223  
Alamosa, CO 81101  
(719) 589-1518 (office)  
(719) 256-4758 (hm office)  
[slwater@fairpoint.net](mailto:slwater@fairpoint.net)  
slvec.org

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## Wendi Maez

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**From:** Christine Canaly <slwater@fairpoint.net>  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 26, 2012 11:04 AM  
**To:** Wendi Maez  
**Subject:** Re: Solar Reserve Public Comment

I'm sorry Wendy, I won't be able to have them for review. I just need more time to study and won't have time until this weekend. Sorry, hopefully my comments will be useful when I get them completed. Thanks, Christine

On 1/26/2012 10:54 AM, Wendi Maez wrote:

> Chris it would be best if we had the comments by 3pm today if possible  
> so the commissioners have time to review them prior to the meeting.

> wm

>

> -----Original Message-----

> From: Christine Canaly [<mailto:slwater@fairpoint.net>]

> Sent: Thursday, January 26, 2012 10:39 AM

> To: [wmaez@saguachecounty-co.gov](mailto:wmaez@saguachecounty-co.gov)

> Subject: Solar Reserve Public Comment

>

> Hi Wendy;

> Happy New Year, I hope you are well. This is notice to let you  
> know that SLVEC will be submitting comments and will plan on attending  
> the hearing on February 2nd. Due to our crunched time schedule, we  
> will be submitting comments at that time, on February 2nd. Thanks for  
> your time and consideration in this matter. Please let me know you  
> received this e-mail, thanks.

> Sincerely,

> Christine Canaly

>

> --

> Christine Canaly, Director

> San Luis Valley Ecosystem Council

> P.O. Box 223

> Alamosa, CO 81101

> (719) 589-1518 (office)

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> [slwater@fairpoint.net](mailto:slwater@fairpoint.net)

> [slvec.org](http://slvec.org)

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## Wendi Maez

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**From:** ronald briggs <unaffiliated@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 26, 2012 12:04 PM  
**To:** wmaez@saguachecounty-co.gov  
**Subject:** Saguache County: response to solar reserve certified letter

This is an enquiry e-mail via <http://www.saguachecounty.net/> from:  
ronald briggs <[unaffiliated@hotmail.com](mailto:unaffiliated@hotmail.com)>

Saguache County Land Use Department:

I own 2 acres of Cool Valley Estates subdivision located at NW1/4 11-41-9 directly connected to the east side of the proposed Solar Reserve project/SSS Farms (10-41-9).

I bought these 13 residential lots approximately 13 years ago from Saguache County, and have been paying the higher residential property tax rate. I purposely bought them in a rectangular shape so residences could be built meeting the 50' setback required from property lines to meet all zoning, well and septic system requirements. I have been financing Saguache County by paying my residential property taxes all these years.

What is the residential property buffer zone distance to existing experimental Concentrated Solar Projects (CSP's)?

It never crossed my mind that the Saguache Land Use Department would now consider changing zoning to an Industrial site from hell. Is this appropriate? 10 square miles of heavy Industrial zoning next to 800 residential city lots. This project is very dangerously located next to residential property. This is definitely inappropriate!

If this is considered or approved by the Land Use Department, why even have a Land Use Department?  
What wouldn't this Land Use Department approve?

This proposed project will completely block my view (except for itself) to the west, northwest and southwest and I will no longer be able to see the La Garitas or the sun setting over the mountains.

Will the 1000 degree blob of potassium nitrate (salt peter) raise the ambient temperature of my residential and surrounding property?

Will the 12 million gallon blob of potassium nitrate rupture a pipe and contaminate the water table?

Will the 12 million gallon blob of potassium nitrate ever dry out, crystallize and become the largest conventional explosive device the world has ever known?

In November, Google announced that they would not invest further in CSP projects due to the rapid price decline of photovoltaics. So, I am worried that I will have a massive 650 tower abandoned and deteriorating right next to my

property! I want a performance bond issued to cover damages or the eventual demolition and restoration of this albatross.

I see sandhill cranes fly over the property from the west to the east all the time. This project must be stopped for them too.

This proposed project violates my right to quiet enjoyment of my property.

This proposed project will absolutely damage my residential property value and must be stopped.

Ron Briggs  
115 East Moffat Way  
Moffat, CO 81143

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## Wendi Maez

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**From:** Leslie Griffith <old-mags@centurytel.net>  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 26, 2012 9:36 AM  
**To:** wmaez@saguachecounty-co.gov  
**Subject:** Solar Reserve Project

To the Saguache County Commissioners:

Please follow the BLM's lead and allow NO power towers in the San Luis Valley.

Make any final approval contingent on observation of an operational Crescent Dunes project to validate Solar Reserve's claims. Please remember TESSERA had MANY unsubstantiated claims!

Make any final approval contingent on an independent study on visual impacts.

This project will saturate the grid, making a distributed energy network impossible.

Thank you,

Rick Barandes  
[old-mags@centurytel.net](mailto:old-mags@centurytel.net)

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## Wendi Maez

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**From:** Leslie Griffith <old-mags@centurytel.net>  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 26, 2012 9:35 AM  
**To:** wmaez@saguachecounty-co.gov  
**Subject:** Solar Reserve Project

To the Saguache County Commissioners:

Please follow the BLM's lead and allow NO power towers in the San Luis Valley.

Make any final approval contingent on observation of an operational Crescent Dunes project to validate Solar Reserve's claims. Please remember TESSERA had MANY unsubstantiated claims!

Make any final approval contingent on an independent study on visual impacts.

This project will saturate the grid, making a distributed energy network impossible.

Thank you,

Leslie Griffith  
[old-mags@centurytel.net](mailto:old-mags@centurytel.net)

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## Wendi Maez

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**From:** Emsden, Chris <Chris.Emsden@dowjones.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 26, 2012 9:59 AM  
**To:** 'wmaez@saguachecounty-co.gov'  
**Subject:** Observations on Towers project

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am a home owner in the San Luis Valley area and a long-term stakeholder in its future, where I expect to live upon retirement or if possible earlier.

I am not at all against large-scale renewable energy projects and have spent a lot of time in Spain where large windmills dot many a horizon atop mountains.

That said, this project proposal by Saguache Solar Energy doesn't make too much sense to me.

First, there's no real convincing evidence that it is superior, on economic grounds (jobs, capital expenditure, the works), in providing renewable energy needs of the local population than a more distributed system would.

Second, the above makes me assume that ultimately the goal is to produce energy for export. By export I mean out of the region. I have no problems with an export orientation. Indeed, it's what SLV farmers already do! But if that's the agenda, then the project should not be exempt from any taxes, and should be subject to covenants or binding rules on what it's long term commitment to the local area is.

Third, I've traveled a lot of the world and the one thing I would probably say I'm certain I learned is that it's very easy to disturb long-term viable ecosystems and social systems, but practically impossible to fix them. The SLV doesn't have to be considered the most beautiful place on earth but nobody can deny that it has its own special and attractive features. There are ever fewer such places. Alcoa, the aluminum factory, aims to build a huge smelter in Iceland, benefiting from the massive amounts of hydro energy available there. All very clever but let's keep in mind that the area it wants to build in is the second-largest open area (aka wilderness type) in all of Europe. Do we really need to ransack and ruin that for a smelter?

Fourth, as SLV is a farming community and food production is one of the most overcompetitive, unsustainable, resource-strained sectors in the modern world, why add to the injury by making a relatively poor population sacrifice its area to provide energy for people who live elsewhere, in cities, and already don't pay enough for food production done by others?

Fifth, the advantages of a more distributed renewable energy approach in the SLV, and many other places, is that resources are not overconcentrated in one project. Otherwise there will ineluctably emerge a "too-big-too-fail" tendency and we will all be beholden to the project even if it doesn't work out as planned.

Sincerely,  
Christopher Emsden  
(La Veta)

### Christopher Emsden | Wall Street Journal

Via Santa Maria in Via 12, 00187 Rome Italy  
T: +39 06 6976 6921 M: +39 348 861 9789 F: +39 06 6780 531  
[chris.emsden@dowjones.com](mailto:chris.emsden@dowjones.com)

Dow Jones & Company's global news network comprises around 1,900 news staff. The company, now owned by News Corp., was founded in 1882 and today publishes the Newswires, Wall Street Journal and Barron's.

Check out The Source: <http://blogs.wsj.com/source/>

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## Wendi Maez

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**From:** Kathleen Ochs <k\_h\_ochs@me.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 25, 2012 10:42 PM  
**To:** wmaez@saguachecounty-co.gov  
**Cc:** Kathleen Ochs  
**Subject:** Comments on SolarReserve

Dear Ms. Maez,

I am attaching portions of two letters to the editors of local newspapers that contain some considerations about the SolarReserve project. In addition, I have included Kate Vasha's excellent summary of the inadequacies of the proposal.

In summary, the project is inappropriate technology, better suited to the 20th than the 21st century. At the portion of the BOCC hearing I attended, the SolarReserve representative was unable to answer questions even to an issue as important as human safety, much less the impact on nature, technical details about the design, etc.

Thank you for your consideration.

Peace, Kathleen Ochs

Letter 1:

### **Solar Energy and the Future of the Economy in the San Luis Valley**

American historians' ideas about Hamiltonian and Jeffersonian economics might help SLVers decide on solar energy in the Valley.

Over two centuries ago, Alexander Hamilton argued for a hierarchical, industrialized, factory-based production system as the best direction for the young American economy. Thomas Jefferson argued for the plantation model, believing that the only way to have a true democracy was if voters were financially and politically independent.

The Hamiltonian system is now made up by the factory, transportation, financial, and free-trade institutions. The Jeffersonian is found in the sustainable, locally-oriented, nature-preserving methods. Each of these two has many variations. And both are needed.

The question for those living in the San Luis valley is which will be the dominant model.

The various big projects--Lexam drilling for oil or water, the large scale solar plants, one using 100 Wankel engines, another proposing a 12 story high tower that could explode--are centralized technologies that follow the Hamiltonian approach.

The decentralized Jeffersonian approach is being pursued by the Solar Garden Project and other solar entrepreneurs, several ranching and agricultural producers, and services for tourism and hunting, and many small businesses.

I think that the decentralized approach is the best solution for a democratic society as well as for the economic, physical, and mental health of people living in the Valley. As Jim Hightower wrote in the recent *Progressive Magazine* (December 2011/January 2012):

[R]esearchers at the Pew foundation found that clean energy jobs grew nearly two and a half times faster than those produced by all other sectors Green energy is labor intensive, employing not only engineers and scientists, but also huge numbers of skilled steel workers, machinists, electricians, pipe fitters, operating engineers, sheet metal workers, carpenters, and laborers. This new energy can create a full-employment economy, including training and work programs for unemployed and low-income folks in our inner cities and rural areas. (Dec/Jan2012, pg.76)

Not only will the decentralized approach create more good jobs for people living in the Valley, it will protect animals who rely on the valley to survive, the Sandhill Cranes being the best example. Loss of this habitat may well drive these amazing creatures and others to extinction.

Finally, In *The Real World of Technology*, Ursula Franklin reminds us that in most myths, giants are stupid. There are many examples of the big centralized system being stupid. An apt one for the SLV is that the potatoes grown here are shipped to Texas where they are prepared for sale, and then shipped back to be sold in local stores. That's a lot of extra cost and loss of local jobs.

K. Ochs, Saguache resident and Associate Professor Emeritus, LAIS, Colorado School of Mines

Letter 2:

### **Solar Energy in the San Luis Valley: The Envelope of Ignorance**

In the best discussion of technology available, *The Real World of Technology* (The Massey Lectures. Canada, CBC, 1999) , Ursula Franklin writes about the "envelope of ignorance" around new technologies.

I saw many examples of ignorance when observing the discussion of the Solar Reserve project at the BOCC in December. Several questions were ignored or glossed over. One is the issue of safety because the 12 story high tower can explode. As one commissioner commented, the Valley does not have the infrastructure to deal with a large scale industrial accident for people, much less the cattle and wildlife in the area.

The envelope of ignorance around this technology also included the impact on nature in the Valley, on animals, on the quality of water and air, and on tourism and hunting.

One issue that was not discussed when I was there was that of increasing the toxic chemicals in human and animals in the SLV. According to writer and reporter Florence Williams, about 200 industrial chemicals course through the bloodstream of the average American child (*Progressive Magazine* December 2011/January 2012). Do we want to add to whatever load our children currently carry? And ourselves? How much cancer, diabetes, autoimmune diseases and so on do we want to subject ourselves to?

Franklin has several thoughtful, common sense guidelines for life-affirming technologies so that the "real world of technology [becomes].. a globally liveable habitat.". They include:

- Make all people part of the decision making process;
- Promote justice, fairness and equality among living people and future generations, favoring technological systems that promote accountability;
- Promote workplaces that encourage a culture of autonomy not of compliance, favoring people over machines, and being clear about who benefits and who pays;
- Restore reciprocity and communication, promoting community;
- **Minimize disaster rather than maximizing gains, proceeding with caution around domains of ignorance, favoring reversible consequences over irreversible;**
- **Consider nature, and favor conservation over waste**

The SolarReserve project does none of these and is not the way to go.

K. Ochs, Saguache resident and Associate Professor Emeritus, LAIS, Colorado School of Mines

Addendum: I am in agreement with Kate Vasha's reasons for denying SolarReserve's 1041 permit application

1. Degradation of quality of life and loss of our rural character/visual impacts. The concentrating solar project SolarReserve is proposing would make the center of the San Luis Valley an industrial zone--destroying the view shed of a wilderness area, a wildlife refuge and a national park--not to mention the views for residents and visitors alike all across the area. The site would include two concrete towers, each taller than the Washington Monument. SolarReserve's depiction of visual impacts in their submittal are laughable--a picture of the one tower at the Crescent Dunes site in Nevada gives a much more accurate idea of what the towers would look like once they were built. As the SolarReserve front man has said, "There is nothing we can do about the visual impacts."

2. Wildlife impacts. SolarReserve's wildlife study submitted with the application is woefully inadequate and has no predictive value when it comes to the impacts the towers and surrounding huge field of heliostats would have on sandhill cranes, raptors, bats and other wildlife.

3. Engineering questions. SolarReserve's SAYING that they can build the two giant towers by sinking "pylons" 50-70 feet into the valley floor's alluvial soils is not the same thing as that plan being sound engineering. At the very least, the county should require an independent engineering review **before** issuing the permit.

4. Impacts to water resources. SolarReserve touts the fact that the industrial facility will use less water than the current agricultural use. What they are silent about is (just to give one example) the burying of monstrous tanks of molten salts in the alluvial soil. What could an accidental breach or spill do to water quality in the Confined Aquifer, which not only supplies our drinking water but also water for irrigation--and the water that is used to fulfill our interstate compact requirements for delivering water downstream to New Mexico and Texas?

5. County oversight. Saguache County does not have the expertise to oversee a project that would reportedly be the largest construction undertaking in Colorado since the building of DIA. Where would the needed oversight come from to ensure that construction standards and health and safety requirements were met? And if SolarReserve were paying for this oversight, how good would it be? Industrial solar is just what its name implies--big "bid'ness" along the model of the oil industry. The whole point is to erode local control; the end result would be to turn the Valley into a third-world country for solar production.

6. Transmission issues/industrial solar. Transmission of the electricity generated using just one of the SolarReserve towers would take up all remaining capacity on the transmission lines over Poncha Pass, thereby forestalling any other solar projects, including the solar garden initiatives underway in the Valley. We should be focusing on our local needs first, letting the Front Range and other highly populated areas come up with their own solar solutions in **their** backyards.

7. Taxation issue. SolarReserve has reportedly given the county a value of \$6.5 million for the facility if it were built--meaning tax revenue of as little as \$139,000 for the county--out of which we would have to supply services to a huge industrial site. Yet the company just received a Department of Energy loan guarantee of \$737 million for their Crescent Dunes site, which has only one tower. Something is wildly wrong with the math. The county should commission an independent valuation before a permit is issued.

8. Experimental or not experimental technology? Although Solar Reserve touts the concentrating solar technology as proven and safe, the fact is that the project proposed for Saguache County is by far the largest ever to be built in the U.S. Grave questions exist about its safety and about its cost-effectiveness in relation to photovoltaic technology. In fact, a number of concentrating solar projects proposed for the Mojave Desert have either been abandoned or converted to photovoltaic technology.

One more thing: Although SolarReserve does not call the technology experimental in its permit application, it IS calling it just that when it comes to what the power generated at the plant would cost end-users. A loophole would allow power generated by experimental technology to be priced above the 2% rate cap. This would mean that a price tag of more than \$1 billion would be passed on to Colorado consumers.

I have listed only a few of the grave issues surrounding this ill-conceived project--I haven't touched on glare, noise, safety, bonding etc. etc.

The Bureau of Land Management's PEIS for Solar in the San Luis Valley found that concentrating solar technology is inappropriate here. The Saguache County commissioners signed the PEIS. Why are they not standing by their signatures? Are a few jobs worth the risk--especially since SolarReserve has not committed in any legally binding way that I can find the number of jobs will actually be created, or that if they do they will be filled by Saguache County residents?

Kathleen Ochs  
[k\\_h\\_ochs@mac.com](mailto:k_h_ochs@mac.com)

Time--the most precious non-renewable resource. (U. M. Franklin)

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<http://www.eset.com>

## Wendi Maez

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**From:** Bryan Hammond <bhammond@gclsolarenergy.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 25, 2012 11:50 AM  
**To:** wmaez@saguachecounty-co.gov  
**Subject:** CSP Solar Reserve Project

I hope that Solar Reserve has been asked why this project cannot benefit from transferring from CSP to PV modules as have 5 of 9 similar projects in California. Here is the December 2011 link to the article in the San Jose Mercury newspaper-  
[http://www.mercurynews.com/business/ci\\_19498442](http://www.mercurynews.com/business/ci_19498442) PV, as you know is more benign with less water use and very low profile. And scalable and cheaper. If they ever get a PPA, using PV technology they can have many options as to how large to build. No 600 ft towers and very little water usage at best with PV. And quite possibly, would be cheaper for the utility ratepayers to pay for. I hope this has been discussed already but if not, this is a very important question for Solar Reserve. Thank you for your time and consideration.

thanks  
Bryan Hammond  
Salida

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<http://www.eset.com>

## Wendi Maez

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**From:** sig nups <sgnups21@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 25, 2012 10:14 AM  
**To:** wmaez@saguachecounty-co.gov; space@saguachecounty-co.gov;  
ljoseph@saguachecounty-co.gov; mspearman@saguachecounty-co.gov  
**Cc:** crestonetribe@yahoogroups.com  
**Subject:** The Bigger SR Question: Not "if" but "who"?

Dear Linda, Sam and Mike,

I hope this greets you all well. After due consideration, I'm writing to add my voice to the growing number of communities, organizations and individuals in favor of the SolarReserve (SR) project. Like all such projects of course, SR has great strengths and weaknesses. Unlike Tesseria though, it has many more strong points that overwhelmingly outweigh its few shortcomings, quite possibly making it one of the greatest gifts our county and valley could receive today.

I've written an article in February's Crestone Eagle entitled: *Global Interdependence: The Case for Large-Scale Green-Energy*, that presents the crucial "bigger-picture" perspective behind this position. I hope you'll all take a few moments to read it before the hearing (which I regrettably can't attend).

Many of us solar "old-timers" have long envisioned the day when "100% Genuine SLV Solar Power" would become our county's greatest renewable-energy product, perhaps even our greatest commercial export. Looking down the road, the more important question is not "if" SR should happen (because, in the bigger picture, such things must), but "who" will claim its massive green-power prize first and retain it over the long-term? A recent chat with Adam Green revealed this question remains unanswered today.

Likely SR PPA suitors include front-range cities such as Boulder (with its recent green-power-municipalization mandate), Colorado Springs, or the U.S. military. I say: Why not us? Although I'm no expert on the intricacies of such fare, it doesn't take a rocket scientist to realize that the most energy-efficient, least expensive end-use of SR power would be claimed by those closest at hand, due to the minimization of transmission (and associated line-loss/expenses) required. Why bother going to the trouble, aggravation and expense of sending this precious "electric gold" away, when it could cleanly and cost-effectively power the entire SLV, and single-handedly wean us of our dependence on carbon-massive distant coal-fired power generation, with a minimum of effort?

An offer made by a consortium of existing SLV power providers (like a huge "SLV solar garden") might thus have a significant, competitive, "buy local" edge over these distant rivals. Although it could well take gathering a group of high-level stakeholders to provide the political, environmental, utility-industry and economic persuasion/incentives necessary to make such a unified valley PPA happen, it's not reinventing the wheel. But it would have to be done quickly, as such a golden opportunity surely won't linger long. Will you good folks seize the initiative to help make it happen?

Well enough pie-in-the-sky musing! I truly hope SR will be permitted, built and brought online as quickly as possible (the article explains why timing really matters here), and that it will provide clean, reliable, local, full-cycle solar power and lots of it for the SLV for many decades to come. Many thanks for considering my views, and for all you're doing to help our county become a stronger and more powerful participant: in its own right, in the valley, and in the greater healing of our world.

Very Best Wishes,

Lee Temple  
(719) 256-5620

## Wendi Maez

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**From:** Kate <vasha710@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 25, 2012 8:14 AM  
**To:** Wendi Maez  
**Subject:** comments on SolarReserve  
**Attachments:** Solar Reserve Project\_12-20.doc; SolarReserve\_continued.doc; SolarReserve\_1-22.doc

I am attaching the three letters to the editor that I have written on the subject of SolarReserve's 1041 permit application; they and their comments become part of my comments on the SolarReserve permit proposal thereby.

I wish to reiterate a few of my major concerns:

1. Degradation of quality of life and loss of our rural character/visual impacts. The concentrating solar project SolarReserve is proposing would make the center of the San Luis Valley an industrial zone--destroying the view shed of a wilderness area, a wildlife refuge and a national park--not to mention the views for residents and visitors alike all across the area. The site would include two concrete towers, each taller than the Washington Monument. SolarReserve's depiction of visual impacts in their submittal are laughable--a picture of the one tower at the Crescent Dunes site in Nevada gives a much more accurate idea of what the towers would look like once they were built. As the SolarReserve front man has said, "There is nothing we can do about the visual impacts."
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4. Impacts to water resources. SolarReserve touts the fact that the industrial facility will use less water than the current agricultural use. What they are silent about is (just to give one example) the burying of monstrous tanks of molten salts in the alluvial soil. What could an accidental breach or spill do to water quality in the Confined Aquifer, which not only supplies our drinking water but also water for irrigation--and the water that is used to fulfill our interstate compact requirements for delivering water downstream to New Mexico and Texas?
5. County oversight. Saguache County does not have the expertise to oversee a project that would reportedly be the largest construction undertaking in Colorado since the building of DIA. Where would the needed oversight come from to ensure that construction standards and health and safety requirements were met? And if SolarReserve were paying for this oversight, how good would it be? Industrial solar is just what its name implies--big "bid'ness" along the model of the oil industry. The whole point is to erode local control; the end result would be to turn the Valley into a third-world country for solar production.
6. Transmission issues/industrial solar. Transmission of the electricity generated using just one of the SolarReserve towers would take up all remaining capacity on the transmission lines over Poncha Pass, thereby forestalling any other solar projects, including the solar garden initiatives underway in the Valley. We should

be focusing on our local needs first, letting the Front Range and other highly populated areas come up with their own solar solutions in **their** backyards.

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The Bureau of Land Management's PEIS for Solar in the San Luis Valley found that concentrating solar technology is inappropriate here. The Saguache County commissioners signed the PEIS. Why are they not standing by their signatures? Are a few jobs worth the risk--especially since SolarReserve has not committed in any legally binding way that I can find the number of jobs will actually be created, or that if they do they will be filled by Saguache County residents?

Kate Vasha  
Saguache

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# Solar Reserve Project:

## The Eyes of Sauron

*The evil Sauron in "The Lord of the Rings" only got one tower and one eye.*

Imagine it if you can: Right in the heart of the Valley rise two 82-story (656-foot) towers, taller than the Washington Monument, taller than the Saint Louis Arch, 40-some times higher than the tallest building in Saguache County. The towers loom eight miles from the Baca Wildlife Refuge and dead-center in the view of the Great Sand Dunes National Park--and of anyone living in the foothills of the Sangres or San Juans. Each tower is to be topped by huge industrial-strength beacons and lit at night by lots of flashing red lights.

That's the Solar Reserve project currently being considered by the Saguache County commissioners—and the towers are only the ugly tips of the iceberg.

The towers would sit on a site of 6,200 acres—nearly 10 sections of what is now private farm ground four miles west of Highway 17 between county roads G and C. There would be 1,500 acres of giant mirrors (heliostats) aimed at the top of the towers to create temperatures upwards of 1,000 °F and heat nitrate salts to power giant generators. Solar Reserve consistently downplays visual, noise, climate and other impacts.

The towers and the mirrors are only the first two items in a long list of reasons why the Solar Reserve Project is a monstrously bad idea. I'm going to outline a few of my (least) favorites below—but I urge you to check out Hooper residents John and Erica Keyes' website, [friedcranes.org](http://friedcranes.org). The Keyes' lampooning of Solar Reserve's estimate of the project's visual impacts alone makes their site worth a look.

Some other issues to consider:

**Wildlife.** The site lies in the flight path of sandhill cranes and other migratory birds. The proponents did one short-duration survey and report they did not see any cranes land on the property. First of all, this survey predicts nothing about year-to-year behavior. Second, it does not address the giant towers' and mirrors' effect on cranes and other birds. And what about other creatures who live in the area? They use the same small survey to speculate that impact would be low.

**Water.** Solar Reserve has said it's in the process of working through water court to change agricultural water rights into industrial ones. While it's true that the facility does not require huge amounts of water, what will construction and operation do to groundwater quality? The methods that can be used to sink caissons to bedrock to anchor the towers without damaging the Valley's water resources remain a mystery.

**Industrial solar.** The Solar Reserve project is based on the oil industry model: big facilities, big "bidness," big clout—virtually no control by locals. Saguache County citizens would be much better served by smaller-scale solar photovoltaic projects and by solar gardens like the one being planned in the Saguache area. ***Output from just one of the towers would eat up all remaining capacity on the transmission lines over Poncha Pass, leaving no way to transmit power created by other projects.***

The power would leave the Valley, making us a 3<sup>rd</sup>-world country for solar. And you can be sure that Solar Reserve would be pushing to reopen the issue of a new transmission line over La Veta Pass....

**Lack of adequate scrutiny and oversight.** It's surely no accident that Solar Reserve picked a site on private land in a poor and sparsely populated county. The county does not have the expertise to negotiate terms or to keep tabs on a project of this scale—

reportedly the biggest construction project in Colorado since Denver International Airport. Yet I can find no discussion of how they would find that expertise—or how it would be paid for. (If Solar Reserve paid for it, how good would the oversight really be?)

**Taxes and jobs.** Yes, the project would generate tax revenue (reportedly a little over \$400,000/year—seems **very** low given the \$1.5 billion announced value of the facility).

But since the assessor is currently under a court order to reassess all property in the county, which includes getting many residential properties on the rolls for the first time, it's unclear what the county's revenue needs will really be.

Jobs are an important issue. The permit application estimates there will be many temporary construction jobs, though it doesn't commit to hire all or even most of those locally. A table in the application shows 47 permanent jobs created, a number of which are technical or high-level managers. Let's take them at their word and be very optimistic: Say 70 percent of those permanent jobs are filled by locals. That's 31 jobs in return for changing our Valley forever into an industrial zone.

**One last point:** The commissioners signed the Bureau of Land Management's Solar Energy Development Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement, which reportedly states that concentrating solar projects like Solar Reserve are inappropriate in the Valley. If the commissioners had stood by their signature, they would have told Solar Reserve when it first showed up that the project would not be considered.

## **WHAT CAN WE DO?**

1. Get familiar with the project. Go to the Saguache County website ([www.saguachecounty.net](http://www.saguachecounty.net)) and follow the instructions for accessing the 1041 permit application and other information.

2. The commissioners have set a single public hearing on the application on Feb. 2, 2012, from 2- 8 p.m. in the auditorium of the Center School. Show up and let them hear your voice in person. Also ask them to schedule additional hearings.
3. Send comments. Written comments will be taken until 3 p.m. Thursday, January 26, 2012 and can be either emailed to Wendi Maez at [wmaez@saguachecounty-co.gov](mailto:wmaez@saguachecounty-co.gov) or mailed to: Saguache County Land Use, PO Box 326, Saguache, CO 81149.
4. If you know one or more of the commissioners, tell them directly what you think about this project.

Thanks for getting involved.

Kate Vasha

Saguache

## Eyes of Sauron Part Deux

On January 4<sup>th</sup>, Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar held a public meeting at Adams State College that was attended by several hundred Valley residents—everybody from environmentalists to local officials and ranchers. Also at the head table: Governor John Hickenlooper, U.S. senators Mark Udall and Michael Bennett, the bosses of both the Fish & Wildlife Service and the National Parks Service and county commissioners from Alamosa and Rio Grande counties. I don't think there's been a time when this many bigwigs came calling all at once.

***The San Luis Valley has been selected as an area of focus for the America's Great Outdoors initiative. A main topic of discussion at the meeting: How we can conserve and promote the Valley's rich heritage and our great outdoors to increase tourism and boost our economy?***

I saw Linda Joseph—I'm assuming the other two commissioners were there too, since it seems like just about every local government type showed up.

**Here's my question: Were our commissioners listening?** It seems wrong-headed in the extreme that at a time when we have a once-in-a-lifetime chance to use what is special about Saguache County to grow our economy, the commissioners are entertaining a project like Solar Reserve, which not only would turn the heart of the Valley into an industrial complex, but would destroy the view from our foothills and the Great Sand Dunes—and of anyone driving through the Valley. (At a December commissioners meeting I attended, the Solar Reserve rep listed two things as possible mitigation for the visual impact of two towers taller than the Washington Monument: "a fence and signs.")

I'm not going to recap all the reasons why Solar Reserve is wrong for our county and for the Valley. You can visit [www.friedcranes.org](http://www.friedcranes.org) for a full—and funny—running commentary on the project courtesy of Hooper-area residents John and Erika Keyes. But I will say again:

**The clock is ticking...**

1. Get familiar with the Solar Reserve project. Go to the Saguache County website ([www.saguachecounty.net](http://www.saguachecounty.net)) and follow the instructions for accessing the 1041 permit application and other information.
2. The commissioners have set a single public hearing on the application on Feb. 2, 2012, from 2- 8 p.m. in the auditorium of the Center School. Show up and let them hear your voice. Also ask them to schedule additional hearings.
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4. If you know one or more of the commissioners, tell them directly what you think about this project.

Kate Vasha

Saguache

## SolarReserve: A Few More Questions

The PR machine for SolarReserve's project near Center (I think of it as the "Eyes of Sauron") chugs on, with a front man who smiles blandly and keeps proclaiming how good this will be for the Valley and for the country. . .trust him.

Sorry, but I don't. Beyond the fact that SolarReserve's project will damage our wildlife, turn the center of the Valley into an industrial zone and ruin our views and our rural lifestyle forever, a lot of big questions remain. ***Here are just a few:***

- 1. How are they going to keep two concrete towers taller than the Washington Monument standing when the nearest bedrock is 10s of thousands of feet below the site?** SolarReserve CEO Kevin Smith blandly asserts that they will be supported by "pilings 50-70 feet below the surface." Voodoo engineering—or do they have a new method of supporting skyscrapers that the rest of the world isn't privy to? *Our county commissioners should require an independent engineering study.*
- 2. What about contamination of groundwater?** SolarReserve proposes to bury four huge 8-story-tall tanks filled with molten salts (potassium nitrate and sodium nitrate) deep enough to create a retention pond. What will they do to prevent leaching into our groundwater? *The commissioners and the Division of Water Resources should demand an independent evaluation of the feasibility of employing this "concentrating solar" technology above the Confined Aquifer, which not only gives us our drinking water but also is used to fulfill interstate compact requirements to New Mexico and Texas so that our farmers can continue to irrigate their crops.*
- 3. What about fair taxation for the project IF it's built?** SolarReserve's "professional economist" has put a value on the project of \$6.5 million...which might mean annual property taxes of as little as \$135,000, with the county responsible for providing services to a huge industrial complex out of that sum. BUT SolarReserve just received \$737 million in Department of Energy loan guarantees (taxpayer money, folks) for its concentrating solar project near Tonopah, Nevada—which has only one

tower. Something seems wildly wrong with the math. (By the way, one of SolarReserve's "investment partners" is Argonaut Private Equity, which helped stick us poor taxpayers for \$535 million in loan guarantees when Solyndra went belly-up in August and lost 1,100 people their jobs.) *The commissioners should value the project independently and not rely on SolarReserve's assertions.*

4. **Who is held responsible if the project fails to roll out as promised, or an accident occurs?** On January 12, SolarReserve announced that PIC Group Inc. will be operating the Tonopah project. They have also formed a limited liability company to "own" the project—classic ways American corporations use to try to limit exposure to liability. *The commissioners need to explore bonding requirements and other ways to ensure that the promises made by SolarReserve are kept, and that we don't just end up with an environmental disaster and a giant eyesore on our hands and no money to deal with problems.*

I could go on—but I hope you get the idea.

What can you do? **Let your voice be heard.** (The SolarReserve front man has said that the county has received some 500 comments in favor of the project—no word on whether that's an accurate figure, or on how many were anything more than boilerplate....)

1. If you can meet the deadline of 3 p.m. on Jan. 26<sup>th</sup>, email comments to Wendi Maez at [wmaez@saguachecounty-co.gov](mailto:wmaez@saguachecounty-co.gov) or hand-deliver them to her in the Land Use office at the courthouse.
2. Show up in person at the single public hearing the commissioners have set on the application on Feb. 2, 2012, from 2- 8 p.m. in the auditorium of the Center School. Show up and let them hear you in person. Demand that they set additional hearings.

Kate Vasha  
Saguache

## Wendi Maez

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**From:** William Porter <wporter@fairpoint.net>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 24, 2012 11:54 AM  
**To:** wmaez@saguachecounty-co.gov  
**Subject:** solar salt towers

to whom it may concern:

i wish to register my opposition to the proposed solar salt-water tower permit application being considered by the saguache couny commisioners.

the technology used for this type of power generation is already antiquated. (i have very well informed sources to validate this statement). the letter to the editor from john keyes describing the transfer of liability from solarreserve to 'affiliates' has merit.

the taxpayers here in saguache county would be paying for the cost of cleaning the mess left by the need to 'decommision' this project.

there are also very valid concerns regarding lifestyle/aesthetic impact and potential adverse impact on wildlife and birdlife.

there are much preferable alternatives to this type of alternative-energy power production. the cogentrix pv project, the meridian pv array project, both in alamosa county are good examples.

in addition to these pv arrays, there is currently in production a new technology for salt-water battery storage ([www.aquionenergy.com](http://www.aquionenergy.com)) which, when added to the pv arrays enables 24/7 reliable power production with far less adverse environmental impact.

say no to solarreserve and yes to projects that are truly sustainable.

william h porter (b.s. environmental conservation/cuboulder, resident saguache county 26 years)

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<http://www.eset.com>

January 24, 2012

Saguache Board of County Commissioners  
Saguache, CO

Dear Commissioners,

Please consider my comments on the Solar Reserve proposal being reviewed currently.

We have a unique landscape in the San Luis Valley; a landscape admired by locals and visitors alike; a landscape that has been recognized by the Interior Department as appropriate for in America's Great Outdoor initiative. We have a natural landscape that cannot be "built".

The San Luis Valley has two valuable resources, the landscape of its agricultural heritage and solar energy capture potential. An 82 story industrial structure would sell one for the other. There will be better ways to benefit from our solar resources. I urge you to wait for a better proposal than that of Solar Reserve. Let future generations remember you as the BOCC whose vision protected the agricultural heritage of this valley. Too often these "great deals" for small rural communities in need of economic development are rushed through on the hopes of promised benefits. There are many examples in the west of boom and bust abandoned projects. Places harmed beyond repair.

We must protect the natural beauty of this valley. It is too fragile to be repaired once it is harmed. I feel strongly that the BOCC is responsible for protecting the overall welfare of the citizens of Saguache County. Some things shouldn't be for sale.

Thank you for reading my letter.

Sincerely,

May Engquist  
Saguache, CO