



# Petition:

## Stop the AES Rancho Viejo Solar Lithium-ion Battery Project

To: Santa Fe County Board of County Commissioners (BCC):

**We, the undersigned residents, age 18 and older, of Santa Fe County, New Mexico (includes the City of Santa Fe), respectfully petition the Santa Fe Board of County Commissioners to reject the proposed AES Rancho Viejo solar lithium-ion battery project application for a CUP (Conditional Use Permit). We believe this project will not benefit the residents of Santa Fe County and poses significant risks and challenges that have not been adequately addressed and it represents an effort by an out-of-state corporation to extract wealth and value from our county while leaving residents to absorb all the risk.**

**These risks and challenges include the following:**

- 1. Water and Air Contamination:** The construction and operation of the proposed facility will lead to water and air contamination causing hazards to the health and safety of our community. From toxic PFAS (known as forever chemicals) contained in batteries, fire suppression systems, and the herbicides used to reduce vegetation, these toxic chemicals will seep into the ground and aquifers that feed our wells.
- 2. Increased Fire Risk:** Lithium-ion battery storage facilities are known to pose fire hazards that can cause evacuations and sheltering-in-place orders. The increased risk of fire endangers lives, property, and our local environment, from toxic plumes, explosions, thermal runaway events, and potential wildfires, and these come with the potential for panic, and other dangers. (There have been three documented fires at AES battery facilities in the last five years that resulted in evacuations and injuries to first responders.)
- 3. Lack of Comprehensive Evaluation:** The County has never evaluated a project of this size and complexity before and lacks specific land use regulations and standards for the safe siting and operation of such facilities.

THE AES APPLICATION DOES NOT MEET THE CRITERIA FOR A CUP (Conditional Use Permit) application, per the SLDC (Sustainable Land Use Development Code) 4.9.64.

A 100% DESIGN APPROVAL SHOULD BE REQUIRED for the County to assure the health, safety, and well-being of residents and the environment, now and in the future.

4. **Hidden Costs to Residents and Homeowners:** Much of the ongoing testing, mitigation, risk management, and losses to property, environment, and health — throughout the life of the project and for future generations — will be at the expense of residents, government and local services — and paid directly or indirectly through taxes, bonds, grants, rebates, medical insurance and deductibles, or by other means. The presence of a large facility may also negatively impact home values and insurance rates in the surrounding areas.

5. **Numerous Additional Concerns, including but not limited to:**

EMERGENCY RESPONDERS: Santa Fe County does not have a sufficient number of first responders. Those we have are not properly trained and do not have the necessary hazmat equipment.

EFFECT ON LOCAL SOLAR PROJECTS: Residential and community solar projects, and the businesses that serve them, will be adversely effected, possibly for decades due to the AES project's impact on the power grid.

NOISE POLLUTION from inverters, transformers, ventilation/cooling systems, LIGHT POLLUTION, potential hazards from new above-ground HIGH-POWERED ELECTRICAL LINES, impact to WILDLIFE and corridor locations, CONSTRUCTION issues, independent MONITORING and ALARM SYSTEMS, and CYBERSECURITY concerns.

6. **Due Process Rights:** While AES has been consulting with the County for a number of years, individuals and community groups have often been denied the privilege of access to and communication with our County officials. This has led to a disenfranchisement of Santa Fe citizens and a growing concern that our voice is less important than that of a multinational corporation.

**By signing this petition, we, the residents of Santa Fe County,** express our opposition to the AES project and our commitment to protecting our community from its potential dangers. We urge the County Commissioners to reject the proposed AES Rancho Viejo solar lithium-ion battery project application and to consider better renewable energy alternatives that are smarter, safer, and more equitable for Santa Fe.

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*Petition signatures will only be shared with the Santa Fe County Board of County Commissioners. CEC will email updates from time to time about this petition, upcoming hearings, etc., and you'll always have the option to opt out.*

**The Clean Energy Coalition for Santa Fe County (CEC)** is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization run by volunteers and can be reached by email at [info@cleanenergycoalitionsfc.org](mailto:info@cleanenergycoalitionsfc.org) or [cleanenergycoalitionsfc@gmail.com](mailto:cleanenergycoalitionsfc@gmail.com).

**Please sign petition online at [www.CleanEnergyCoalitionSFC.org](http://www.CleanEnergyCoalitionSFC.org).**