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## LETTERS

### Wertz comments 'appalling'

I am appalled at the comments made by Cody Wertz, spokesman for Louis Bacon, owner of the Trinchera Ranch, in the Denver Business Journal. ("Xcel may cut solar-power buy as powerline debate drags on" 5/4/2010).

Mr. Wertz blamed the utilities involved and accused them of not having the interests of the San Luis Valley at heart. He also stated that it was the utilities' responsibilities to study the best alternatives for the transmission line and to properly inform and involve the public.

I take exception to his accusations as Action 22 and its members learned of the utilities' intent way before it was proposed in May of 2009. The utilities — Xcel Energy and Tri-State Generation and Transmission — have been keeping our organization updated on the progress, provided dates for public open houses (dialogs on the proposed project), and provided citizens with as much detailed information on the project. Many of our members also attended citizen/resident public meetings and dialogs.

The Action 22 territory consists of 22 counties of which 14 have the highest poverty levels, 13 with the lowest median household incomes, high unemployment, and no east-west four-lane highways — to name a few concerns. Our organization has been a champion in promoting renewable energy supporting the wind industry in the southeast part of our territory as well as the up-and-coming solar energy efforts in the San Luis Valley.

There are two or three at-capacity lines coming into the valley from Poncha Springs. These lines are not too far from each other and should a catastrophe occur (forest fire, etc.), these lines could go down, cutting all power to the San Luis Valley. The project being proposed in the San Luis Valley is to create more capacity and a "loop" that would go from Pueblo, Walsenburg and to the San Luis Valley. If any of the other lines go down, the loop is still in place providing power to the Valley. This loop concept has been used in many areas of the state.

However, without transmission lines, these renewable "green" energy efforts will not materialize.

As I understand, Trinchera Ranch is fighting the proposed route through the ranch. Well, it is his ranch. It is his property. He owns all of it. I believe only 10-20 miles are needed from his 170,000-acre (about 265 square miles) ranch for the line. It is too bad he does not consider the citizens and future economy of the valley. Whatever happened to what is best for the greater good?

Who really does not have the interests of the San Luis Valley at heart?

**Cathy Garcia**  
President/CEO  
Action 22 Inc.