

1 BEFORE THE ARIZONA POWER PLANT LS-534

2 AND TRANSMISSION LINE SITING COMMITTEE

3

4 IN THE MATTER OF THE)
APPLICATION OF STEELE ENERGY) DOCKET NO.
5 CENTER, LLC, IN CONFORMANCE) L-21424A-26-0431-00271
WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF)
6 A.R.S. SECTION 40-360, ET SEQ.,) LS CASE NO. 271
FOR A CERTIFICATE OF)
7 ENVIRONMENTAL COMPATIBILITY)
AUTHORIZING THE STEELE ENERGY)
8 CENTER LOCATED IN PINAL COUNTY,)
ARIZONA.)
9 _____)

10

11 At: Phoenix, Arizona

12 Date: October 9, 2026

13 Filed: October 23, 2026

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15 REPORTER'S TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

16 (Pages 1 through 13)

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25 By: Janet Hauck, RPR
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INDEX TO EXHIBITS

Exhibit	Description	Identified	Admitted
PFC 1	Project Overview Map Depicting Sign Locations	4	5
PFC 2	Draft Notice of Hearing	5	5
PFC 3	Black and White Project Map	5	5

1 BE IT REMEMBERED that the above-entitled and
2 numbered matter came on regularly to be heard before the
3 Arizona Power Plant and Transmission Line Siting Committee,
commencing at 2:00 p.m., on October 9, 2026, with all
participants attending via videoconference.

4
5 BEFORE: Adam Stafford, Chairman

6
7 APPEARANCES:

8 For the Applicant:

9 Bert Acken, Esq.
10 ACKEN LAW
11 111 East Dunlap Avenue, Suite 1-172
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12
13 Also present:

14 Raina Johnson, Southwestern Power Group
15 Jack Ford, Southwestern Power Group
16 Gabriella Glener, KP Environmental, Inc.
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1 CHAIRMAN STAFFORD: Let's go on the record. Now
2 is the time set for the prefiling conference for Steele
3 Energy Center.

4 Let's start with appearances, Mr. Acken.

5 MR. ACKEN: Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman.
6 Bert Acken on behalf of the applicant Steele Energy Center,
7 LLC. With me is Rain Johnson and Jack Ford of the
8 applicant, and hopping on as I speak is Gabi Glenner of KPE.

9 CHAIRMAN STAFFORD: Has there been much public
10 interest in this case so far, or do you expect any
11 intervenors?

12 MR. ACKEN: Not anticipating intervenors. This
13 team has done multiple rounds of public outreach, open
14 houses, and there's been some interest from the local
15 community, but this is a really remote location, and I
16 think there's maybe 15 residences within two miles of the
17 project location. So it hasn't drawn the kind of interest
18 that would lead to opposition or intervention.

19 CHAIRMAN STAFFORD: Now, you have three prefiling
20 exhibits, correct?

21 MR. ACKEN: That's correct. Would you like me to
22 go through them?

23 CHAIRMAN STAFFORD: Yes, please.

24 MR. ACKEN: The first one is the project overview
25 map and it also shows our sign locations. So that's PFC 1.

1 PFC 2 is the Word version of the draft Notice of
2 Hearing.

3 Then PFC 3 is what would be the black-and-white
4 map to accompany the Notice of Hearing.

5 CHAIRMAN STAFFORD: Those are admitted.

6 (PFC Exhibits 1 through 3 were admitted.)

7 CHAIRMAN STAFFORD: For publications for the
8 Notice of Hearing, where and when are you publishing those?

9 MR. ACKEN: We're going to publish in the
10 Casa Grande Dispatch and The Arizona Republic. Casa Grande
11 Dispatch publishes, I think, three days a week. So in
12 order to meet our twice in ten days we need to publish in
13 both.

14 Ideally, if we could have the Notice of Hearing
15 in the final version back by Friday the 16th, that would be
16 great. The last day we could have a Notice of Hearing and
17 to make our timeframe would be the 19th.

18 CHAIRMAN STAFFORD: Okay. And then you've got
19 the Word version to us already. So you're doing two signs?

20 MR. ACKEN: Yes, that's the proposal, two signs
21 on the one road in. This site, on three sides it's
22 surrounded by state land and it's got the CAP and the
23 canal. So the only access to it is from the west. And so
24 that's why we propose two signs there.

25 CHAIRMAN STAFFORD: Okay. And then you have a

1 project website, I'm assuming, correct?

2 MR. ACKEN: That's right. It's up and running.
3 Steele.energy.

4 CHAIRMAN STAFFORD: Okay. And for social media
5 outreach, what's the plan for that after the hearing?

6 MR. ACKEN: We'll use Google advertisements, as
7 we have done for the open houses, which does a great job of
8 outreach. So four ZIP codes for the Google advertisements.
9 We'll also mail notices to landowners/residents within
10 about two miles of the site.

11 CHAIRMAN STAFFORD: Okay. And then for the
12 public locations for the application and the transcripts,
13 that's going to be -- there's two public libraries you're
14 going to put those at?

15 MR. ACKEN: Correct. Coolidge library about 11
16 miles from the project and the Eloy library -- Eloy
17 Santa Cruz about 14 miles. Those are the two closest.

18 CHAIRMAN STAFFORD: Okay. And then what are the
19 affected jurisdictions?

20 MR. ACKEN: So the only affected jurisdiction is
21 Pinal County. There is state land adjacent and city of
22 Coolidge municipal boundary is adjacent, but this project
23 sits exclusively on Pinal County.

24 CHAIRMAN STAFFORD: This project is a gas plant,
25 correct?

1 MR. ACKEN: Correct. This is a combined cycle
2 gas plant approximately 1400 megawatts, net nameplate of
3 about 1420, but approximately 1400 combined cycle.

4 CHAIRMAN STAFFORD: And there's no transmission
5 line associated with this project?

6 MR. ACKEN: Correct, no jurisdictional
7 transmission line. It is adjacent to a transmission
8 corridor that includes a TEP line, the permitted RioSol
9 line, and also the SunZia line, although of course it can't
10 connect to SunZia, given the nature of that one.

11 CHAIRMAN STAFFORD: And then we're going to do
12 the hearing at the Radisson in Casa Grande; is that the
13 plan?

14 MR. ACKEN: We are.

15 CHAIRMAN STAFFORD: Okay. It looks like we've
16 got it set starting on November 30th and going through
17 December 4th, correct?

18 MR. ACKEN: That's correct.

19 CHAIRMAN STAFFORD: And we're starting at 10 a.m.
20 on that Monday, correct?

21 MR. ACKEN: That's what I put in the Notice of
22 Hearing. I think that makes sense for people from Phoenix
23 to get down by 10 and get started. Obviously, if you feel
24 differently, let us know, but we'd like to get started and
25 take advantage of that day if we can.

1 CHAIRMAN STAFFORD: I agree. And so you'll have
2 rooms for the members, including myself and the court
3 reporter?

4 MR. ACKEN: Yes, we will.

5 CHAIRMAN STAFFORD: And then we would be able to
6 check in that Sunday night before the hearing starts,
7 correct?

8 MR. ACKEN: That's correct.

9 CHAIRMAN STAFFORD: Okay. Because members tend
10 to travel the day before. So there's no point in starting
11 at 1 if they're already there. We could start at 10.
12 Since it's a combined cycle gas plant I assume it will take
13 the whole five days.

14 MR. ACKEN: Yes. We're anticipating -- there's
15 a lot to talk about.

16 CHAIRMAN STAFFORD: For a tour, let's plan on
17 having a plan for the tour by the time of the prehearing
18 conference. If we do the tour we'll do it that Tuesday
19 morning. How far is the venue from the site?

20 MR. ACKEN: Thirty minutes. So a tour is quite
21 doable. It's going to be a one-stop tour, right, but it
22 can be done. So you drive a half an hour, spend some time
23 at the site, look around, and then drive back.

24 CHAIRMAN STAFFORD: It should be cooler by then.

25 MR. ACKEN: Let's hope so.

1 CHAIRMAN STAFFORD: Okay. And then it looks like
2 we're doing the prehearing conference on November 24th at
3 11 a.m. There's no litigation or disputes pending for this
4 project?

5 MR. ACKEN: Correct.

6 CHAIRMAN STAFFORD: And the anticipated file date
7 for the application is what, October 16th?

8 MR. ACKEN: We're looking to file on the 15th.
9 So next Thursday.

10 CHAIRMAN STAFFORD: And you'll want the Notice of
11 Hearing ready to be published by the 16th -- or the 19th,
12 you said?

13 MR. ACKEN: The 16th ideally, 19th is the -- have
14 to have it in order to make our window.

15 CHAIRMAN STAFFORD: Okay. I'll do the procedural
16 order. You'll have a draft CEC for me by the time of the
17 prehearing conference. The public comment, we'll do that
18 on the first day at 5:30, standard practice. Are you
19 anticipating much public comment?

20 MR. ACKEN: No, Your Honor, we are not.

21 CHAIRMAN STAFFORD: Are there any public
22 officials who are planning on making public comment?

23 MR. ACKEN: Not at this time. The project is
24 going to be going through the county entitlement process
25 concurrently. So I wouldn't expect someone from the county

1 to speak because it will be in front of them, as well.

2 CHAIRMAN STAFFORD: Okay. So pending permits are
3 going to be -- there's going to be an air permit, I assume,
4 from Pinal County?

5 MR. ACKEN: That's correct, and that may have
6 been or may be filed today.

7 Jack, can you speak to that just briefly if it's
8 been filed?

9 MR. FORD: Not yet, but it will be filed today.

10 CHAIRMAN STAFFORD: Would the air permit
11 application accompany the certificate application?

12 MR. ACKEN: It will.

13 CHAIRMAN STAFFORD: Okay, good. And then you
14 said there's another county entitlement. Is it a use
15 permit? What is it, a special use permit?

16 MR. ACKEN: I'm going to turn that over to Rain
17 to talk about the county entitlement process. Again, I'm
18 not handling that. I should know that by now.

19 Rain, if you could just speak at a higher level
20 to what you're going to be obtaining in the time frame.

21 MS. JOHNSON: Yeah. So if everyone can hear me,
22 we are going to be rezoning the parcel. We already had a
23 pre-app filing in early August. We had the pre-app meeting
24 late August. We plan on filing the application early
25 November. From there we will have a county planning and

1 staff review, a comment resolution period, and then we'll
2 have, hopefully, a planning and zoning commission meeting,
3 and then board of supervisors will be after that.

4 CHAIRMAN STAFFORD: Okay. Thank you. Now, for
5 the hearing itself we assume we will have Peaks Audio
6 attending to our audiovisual needs?

7 MR. ACKEN: That's correct.

8 CHAIRMAN STAFFORD: Okay. We'll do the tablets
9 for the exhibits for the members?

10 MR. ACKEN: We will.

11 CHAIRMAN STAFFORD: Okay. Since this is a plant,
12 I'm assuming the filing fee is \$10,000?

13 MR. ACKEN: Yes, and we've coordinated -- we've
14 actually already paid it and received the confirmation from
15 the ACC.

16 CHAIRMAN STAFFORD: All right. The Commission is
17 obligated by statute to pay the cost of reporting and
18 transcribing any application hearing as well as the actual
19 and necessary expenses incurred by the members in
20 connection with the participation of said hearing from the
21 filing fee. The cost and fees exceeding the amount of the
22 applicant's fee may, with the applicant's consent, be
23 incurred by the committee and charged to the applicant.

24 Does the applicant consent to pay the Commission
25 those costs in excess of the filing fee?

1 MR. ACKEN: It does.

2 CHAIRMAN STAFFORD: In your case it won't come up
3 until later probably because usually it's a \$1,000 fee for
4 these transmission lines, and those will only cover one day
5 of hearing.

6 All right. We'll do the standard turnaround time
7 for three days on the transcripts.

8 Are there any other issues we need to cover
9 today?

10 MR. ACKEN: No. I guess maybe I'll just note as
11 far as other permits, there may be a federal action or two
12 associated with off-site access for canal crossings. I
13 know that's something you like to know about, but there's
14 no NEPA documentation at this time. That would probably be
15 handled through their CATEX, just so you know about other
16 authorizations.

17 CHAIRMAN STAFFORD: Well, have some witness
18 prepared to address that because I'm sure we'll get
19 questions from the members.

20 Are you all set there, Janet?

21 (Clarification by reporter.)

22 CHAIRMAN STAFFORD: With that we are adjourned.

23 (The proceedings adjourned at 2:12 p.m.)

24

25

1 STATE OF ARIZONA)
2 COUNTY OF MARICOPA)

3 BE IT KNOWN that I took the foregoing
4 proceedings; that said transcript is a full, true, and
5 accurate record of the proceedings; that the proceedings
6 were taken down by me in shorthand and thereafter reduced
7 to print under my direction; and that I have acted in
8 compliance with ACJA 7-206.

9 I CERTIFY that I am in no way related to any of
10 the parties hereto nor am I in any way interested in the
11 outcome hereof.

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Dated this 12th day of October, 2026.

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Janet Hauck, RPR
Certified Reporter
Arizona CR No. 50522

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