

TIMELINE

- 2009-05-15** LCRA Open Houses Landowners notified
- 2009-06-01** CVA goes live on world wide web
- 2009-09-24** Motion to Delay & Expand Study Area
- 2010-02-15** 1/4 scale model lattice tower tours region
- 2010-02-15** LCRA Open Houses second round
- 2010-04-19** LCRA / Fish & Wildlife Scoping Meetings
- 2010-07-28** Filing of CCN
- 2010-09-01** Hearing on the Merits, Austin Conv. Center
- 2010-12-17** ALJ issued PFD recommendation to PUC
- 2010-12-23** CVA filed Exceptions to PFD
- 2011-01-13** PUC routing deliberations / Final Order

TERMS

- PFD** Proposal for Decision
- ALJ** Administrative Law Judge
- CVA** Clear View Alliance
- LCRA** Lower Colorado River Auth
- PUC** Public Utilities Commission
- CCN** Certificate of Convenience & Necessity
- TPWD** Tx Parks & Wildlife Dept.
- PURA** Public Utility Regulatory Act
- CREZ** Competitive Renewable Energy Zones
- CTO** CREZ Transmission Optimiz

Wildlife Management www.ClearViewAlliance.org



Wildlife Management

Many landowners have a desire to see their land restored and/or conserved for its natural values – and this trend also provides huge benefits to local rural economies through increased nature-based tourism, hunting, bird-watching, canoeing and kayaking, and other forms of outdoor recreation. The wildlife and scenic resources of the Texas Hill Country are its greatest assets, and these are just as much a part of agricultural land use as is raising sheep and goats.

WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT



Wildlife Management

The ALJs did not address the agricultural uses of the land that is within the study area, but the way this land is being used and the basis for its value are reasons for rejecting the Preferred Route and avoiding routes that cut through the center of the Hill Country. The EA inaccurately assumes that the principal land use is for livestock grazing; instead a primary use for the native rangeland in much of the Study Area is wildlife management.

There are now over 1 million acres of Wildlife Management lands in the Texas Hill Country – by comparison, this exceeds the area of improved pastureland. In the counties impacted by McCamey D to Kendall alone, landowners declared Wildlife Management as the primary land use across some 300,000 acres, by 2007. Ranches with Wildlife Management officially declared as the primary land use in this area now exceed the combined area of cropland, pastureland, and orchards in the study area considered for McCamey D to Kendall. While this alone is an impressive statistic, it does not include the other millions of acres where landowners have demonstrated that wildlife management is a major determinant in their land use decisions.

On well-managed properties, the revenue from hunting leases can exceed revenue from livestock – but this is not the only factor driving land use decisions. Grazing, wildlife and recreation are all part of that, but there is an authentic motive of land stewardship behind many of the land use decisions in the area. Dr. Wilkins testified that many landowners have a desire to see their land restored and/or conserved for its natural values – and this trend also provides huge benefits to local rural economies through increased nature-based tourism, hunting, bird-watching, canoeing and kayaking, and other forms of outdoor recreation.





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Across the counties impacted by McCamey D to Kendall, the appraised market values for agricultural lands increased by almost 4-fold during 1997-2007. Land values have similarly increased even in the extremely rural four-county area in the western part of the study area.

The Preferred Route (and all of the proposed links located in the center of Hill Country) cut through the middle section of the lands managed by the Doss-Harper Wildlife Management Association (WMA). Having been formed in the early 1980s, the Doss-Harper WMA is one of the oldest such cooperatives in the state, and has served as a template for state agency efforts that have resulted in several million acres under cooperative wildlife management in more than 140 wildlife management associations. Preferred Route MK13 would run through the center of the Doss-Harper WMA for approximately 12 miles. The right-of-way and its maintenance would create permanent challenges to wildlife management across those lands that have been intentionally managed and conserved for wildlife as an integral part of the ranch and agricultural operations in the area.

The ALJs reached the right result—rejection of the Preferred Route—but failed to include analysis of this important environmental consideration.