

Communities and landowners affected by new transmission and electric infrastructure are not represented on the EAC. It may be that when the committee was formed, no one considered affected communities and landowners would have the expertise required to help guide the DOE's involvement in transmission planning. However, many do become true experts on issues of necessity and environmental impacts when their way of life is threatened. Their opposition is then successful because the evidence is on their side.

I believe the burial of new transmission on existing rights of way would meet with less resistance provided it is necessary. The IJA provision that allows, and the committee's consideration of, making the DOE an anchor tenant on merchant projects does raise a red flag as to necessity. Are these merchant projects roads to nowhere built to deliver electricity that no one wants? This could end up being a bill taxpayers get stuck with for up to 40 years in exchange for nothing.

Again, the burial of new transmission on existing rights of way will meet with less resistance provided it is truly necessary. Siting and permitting could then happen much faster.