



September 29, 2011

Carl Sodeberg

Director EPA

Puerto Rico Office

(soderberg.carl@epa.gov)

San Juan, Puerto Rico

Mr. Carl Sodeberg:

I urgently request you withdraw your agency's endorsement of the Vía Verde Project, issued and signed by you on April 1, 2011. I sustain my claim in the face of a revealing document sent by PREPA to USACE on March 7, 2011 (*Re: Additional Information Requested for Via Verde Project regarding Natural Gas Availability SAJ 2010-028811P-EWG*).

In said document PREPA admits that the Vía Verde project lacks sufficient gas to operate its three plants at their intended capacity, contrary to their proposal, proving that the project's aims will not be attained, undisputedly demonstrating that that this is not a unique nor complete project but rather a different and fragmented one, and that PREPA's project is neither practical nor reasonable and will result in higher energy costs for Puerto Rico.

I will point out, according to PREPA's own document, the amount of gas available, its provenance, and the generating capacity that the three Vía Verde plants will have.

In the third and fourth paragraph it is stated that the available volume of gas will be **93 MM scf/day**. Said amount will be received in compliance with FERC's 2009 approved modification for EcoEléctrica to supply natural gas to the **Costa Sur plant**. PREPA holds that that amount of natural gas will be used to operate the Vía Verde generating plants as well as units 5 and 6 of the San Juan plant and, on occasions, units 5 and 6 of Costa Sur. They further explain that **they will be deciding on a daily basis which plants will be receiving the natural gas**. This means that:

- PREPA acknowledges that they will only be able to supply **93 MM scf/day** of gas, which accounts for less than 30% of the Vía Verde capacity, contrary to their stated proposal that EcoEléctrica would provide all of Vía Verde's need of natural gas.
- PREPA acknowledges that they cannot provide sufficient natural gas to produce **1519 MW**, which is the operational capacity of the three Vía Verde plants. Their **93 MM scf/day** of gas amounts to a generating capacity of **less than 507 MW**, which is what EcoEléctrica is able to generate with the same amount of gas.
- It is unacceptable, economically not viable and foolish that over 70% of the capacity of the generating plants of the Vía Verde project will lack natural gas to operate. The Vía Verde project natural gas generating capacity will fluctuate between 0% (whenever Costa Sur is operating with natural gas) to less than 30% at its maximum. This is certainly not the project that was presented for evaluation but rather a different one: a part-time gas pipeline.
- PREPA will decide on a daily basis where natural gas will be sent, whether to the Vía Verde project or the Costa Sur project. Whenever Costa Sur is operating with gas Vía verde will have zero generation with natural gas. This alternative is economically unfeasible, unpractical and unreasonable according to NEPA and USACE.

- PREPA's alternative is sharing the scant amount of natural gas available between Vía Verde and Costa Sur, which are two distinct projects. The Costa Sur project is an economically viable and environmentally acceptable alternative. The Vía Verde project is the opposite and merging both projects renders both of them unacceptable.

Mr. Carl Sodeberg, in your April 1, 2011 letter of endorsement you stand on several absolutely unequivocal facts, among them that:

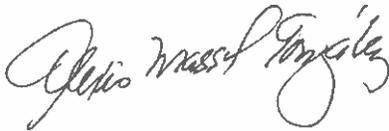
“On the other hand, Via Verde would provide natural gas and an increase in PREPA’s operational capabilities to a total of 1,519 MW.”

I urgently request that you withdraw your endorsement of the Vía Verde gas pipeline (*Permit Application No. SAJ- 2010-02881 (IP-EWG)*), and that you immediately call Col. Pantano of the US Army Corps of Engineers in order to stop the project’s assessment. Should the project be approved you will bear responsibility for not acting promptly. The irregularities in the assessment process are evident; do not allow them to continue unimpeded.

I request that this letter be incorporated and made part of the project’s assessment record.

Thank you for your attention; I would appreciate if you could please acknowledge receipt of this petition.

Cordially,



Ing. Alexis Massol-González, Director
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