CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

This environmental impact statement (EIS) documents and summarizes the environmental analysis of a proposal (Proposed Action) by Sierra Pacific Power Company (SPPCo) to construct, operate and maintain a new 120 kV overhead power line and two new electrical substations to improve the reliability and increase the capacity of the power supply to customers in the Spanish Springs valley and Stead areas of Nevada.

The proposed transmission line would originate at the Tracy Power Plant and would extend approximately 34 miles, through the Spanish Springs Valley to the Silver Lake Substation in the Stead area of Reno. The Proposed Action also includes constructing two new electrical substations, one in the northern Spanish Springs Valley (the Proposed Sugarloaf Substation) and a second at the Reno-Stead Airport (Proposed Reno-Stead Airport Substation). Distribution lines could be constructed in the future to distribute power from the proposed 120 kV line and substations, but construction of these lines is not considered part of the Proposed Action. The project would be implemented in two phases. The first phase includes constructing about 17 miles of transmission line from the Tracy Power Plant to a new substation in the north Spanish Springs area. The second phase would extend the line and construct a substation in the Stead area (Chapter 2 provides a detailed discussion of the proposed action).

The Proposed Action and all the alternatives are wholly within Washoe County, Nevada (the project area) and would involve public lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Carson City Field Office, lands owned by the Airport Authority of Washoe County, and private lands within Washoe County and in the cities of Sparks and Reno (Figure 1-1).

The BLM is the lead agency preparing this EIS, which has been conducted in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, the Council on Environmental Quality regulations implementing NEPA and the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) of 1976. In addition, this EIS is consistent with the BLM's Carson City Field Office Consolidated Resource Management Plan (CRMP) (BLM 2001a). Agencies that have agreed to participate in the preparation of the EIS as cooperating agencies are the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony, Truckee Meadows Regional Planning Agency (TMRPA), Airport Authority of Washoe County, Washoe County, City of Reno, and City of Sparks. These agencies have special expertise and administrative responsibilities related to the project.

This EIS describes the components of, reasonable alternatives to and environmental consequences of constructing, maintaining, and operating the proposed 120 kV transmission line and associated substations. Chapter 1 describes the purpose of and need for the action, authorizing actions, and public participation in the EIS process. Chapter 2 provides the proposed action and alternatives to the proposed action. Chapter 3 describes the existing environmental conditions in the project area. Chapter 4 details potential direct and indirect impacts associated with the proposed action and alternatives, and possible mitigation measures that could be selected to minimize impacts. Potential cumulative impacts of the proposed action and alternatives as related to other projects in the region are also discussed in Chapter 4. Chapter 5 identifies the consultation and coordination with state and federal agencies that occurred during preparation of this EIS, along with a list of preparers. References cited in the EIS are provided in Chapter 6 and a glossary of terms and acronyms is in Chapter 7.

PROJECT HISTORY

In 1999, SPPCo submitted a right-of-way (ROW) application to BLM for a 120 kV transmission line from the Tracy Power Plant to a new substation (the Proposed Sugarloaf Substation) in the Spanish Springs Valley. The alignment proposed by SPPCo attracted substantial opposition from residents in the area. In addition, the BLM expressed concern that SPPCo would likely require additional gas and electrical facilities in this area and, as it was already reviewing the Tuscarora Gas Transmission Company's Hungry Valley lateral and Oil-Dri project applications, BLM review would be more effective if all SPPCo projects in the area were presented at the same time. SPPCo subsequently withdrew this application and began developing a utility master plan for the Truckee Meadows area. As a result, SPPCo determined that the projected utility needs in the Truckee Meadows area through 2009 consisted only of a 120 kV transmission line to the Spanish Springs and Stead areas, with substations in each location, and several unconnected substations on private land to the south of the project area. At the request of BLM, SPPCo contracted an independent electrical system evaluation to assess the need for the Spanish Springs system enhancements (ECI 2002). Based on this assessment, SPPCo and BLM agreed to move forward with a Tracy to Silver Lake transmission line, concurrent with SPPCo continuing to develop a Truckee Meadows utility master plan for utility needs beyond 2009.

PURPOSE OF AND NEED FOR PROPOSED ACTION

The purpose of the Proposed Action is to provide reliable electrical capacity to the Spanish Springs Valley and Stead areas. Residential and commercial growth in these areas continues to increase, resulting in an increased demand for electricity beyond the capacity of the existing electrical supply systems. The need for the Proposed Action is to accommodate normal and projected peak period demands and to avoid loss of service to a substantial number of customers in the event of an outage to any of the power lines or transformers serving these areas.

In 2001, the BLM directed an independent third party to determine if the electrical system in the Spanish Springs area had adequate capacity to accommodate current and projected electrical demands (Electrical Consultants, Inc. [ECI] 2002). The study considered the electrical system capacity in the area and evaluated its capacity to handle electrical loads under low- and high-growth scenarios (2.4 percent and 6 percent annual growth for five years). This analysis determined that, without immediate system improvements, the system is likely to experience sustained overloads. Based on system planning criteria, it was determined that by 2005, under the low-growth scenario, the system's transformers and conductors would experience unacceptable loading, and there would be an unacceptable drop in voltage.

The study further considered system capacity under contingency conditions; that is, the loss of an element of the system, such as a power line or other circuit element, such as a transformer. Contingency conditions may be single (loss of one element) or multiple (loss of two or more elements). During a contingency event, it was determined that the current system was not capable of handling a transfer in power loads. Further, because many elements of the power grid in Spanish Springs lack a second connection to the electrical system, loss of a system element that feeds these areas would result in power outages. Loss of certain critical elements of the system, such as the main distribution line near the Spanish Springs Substation (SPA 273), was found to result in widespread power outages.

The study considered two options to address the system deficiency:

- Option 1—Improve distribution, including adding a transformer at the existing Spanish Springs Substation and 25 kV lines; and
- Option 2—Constructing a new 120 kV transmission line and associated substation to the area.

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The study determined that both options may address the immediate shortcomings of the existing system, but Option 1 would still result in high loading of system transformers under the low-growth scenario and would not result in a system capable of handling peak period demand. In addition, the improvements associated with Option 1 would only defer the need for larger system upgrades, including a new substation, such that these improvements would become unnecessary. Option 2 was determined to better meet the long-range needs of the area and to be more cost effective.

To service the area with the 120 kV transmission line, a substation is needed. Substations are generally located in the central part of a service area, defined by the level of customer demand, or load, in order to permit efficient distribution of power to customers. Taking into account a variety of factors, including growth projections, land use planning, property ownership, and transmission line routing, SPPCo developed two possible locations for the substation, one just west of Pyramid Highway and north of Calle de la Plata (Proposed Sugarloaf Substation site) and one near Pyramid Highway and La Posada (Alternative Sugarloaf Substation site). Chapter 2 discusses these locations in detail. In response to public input during the scoping process ECI prepared an independent load center evaluation. In this report ECI determined that for the most efficient distribution, the load center would be approximately one mile north of La Posada Road and 0.40 mile east of Pyramid Lake Highway. The theoretical location of this load center is within an existing subdivision, making this precise location impractical; however, it correlates well with both of the feasible locations identified by SPPCo, the first being about 2.4 miles to the northwest of this location and the second being about one mile to the south (ECI 2003).

SPPCo has identified that the electrical system supplying power to the Stead area (including the North Valley) lacks capacity to accommodate long-term growth and adequate contingency reliability. The Silver Lake Substation in the Stead area is supplied with power via a 120 kV line that extends from the south. The substation is also served by a second 60 kV line from the east. This line constitutes the system loop to provide service backup to the area but lacks the capacity to meet customer demand in the area in the event of an outage on the primary 120 kV line. In addition, the 60 kV line is old and, as such, lacks adequate reliability and sufficient capacity to serve as a contingency backup. The proposed 120 kV extension from the Proposed Sugarloaf Substation (south of Sparks) to the Silver Lake Substation (in the Stead area) would fortify the system by providing a power connection to the area that has adequate capacity to accommodate prevailing and anticipated demand in the area and to improve system reliability for contingency situations.

The Reno-Stead Airport Substation is needed to support the future developments planned in the area by the Airport Authority of Washoe County, which identifies this growth in its Airport Development Plan for the Reno/ Stead Airport, and the area is appropriately zoned (Coffman Associates Inc. 1994).

AUTHORIZING ACTIONS

Actions proposed on BLM-administered lands must comply with FLPMA, whose statutes require the BLM to analyze the Proposed Action to ensure the following:

- Adequate provisions are included to prevent undue or unnecessary degradation of public lands;
- Measures are included to provide for reasonable reclamation of disturbed areas; and
- Proposed actions would comply with other applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations.

The BLM ROW program is designed to coordinate the actions of individuals, government, and business, to promote the sharing of ROWs, to prevent unnecessary environmental damage to lands and resources, and to protect the holders' investments in

improvements on the ROW. BLM's authority to grant a ROW is limited to that portion of the route that is on public land. In addition, because most of the project would be constructed on private land, the Proposed Action would be subject to permit approvals from the affected local jurisdictions, including Washoe County, the cities of Reno and Sparks, the Airport Authority of Washoe County, and subject to a finding of conformance with the Truckee Meadows Regional Plan by the Regional Planning Commission. As described previously, these are all Cooperating Agencies for the preparation of the EIS, which is intended to support the decision-making and permitting process for all affected jurisdictions. Nevertheless, the Proposed Action would be subject to the approval process for each jurisdiction.

SPPCo also would be required to submit applications for a special use permit (SUP) to the cities of Reno and Sparks, and Washoe County. As part of the SUP process, each of the jurisdictions would determine if the Proposed Action is consistent with the plans and policies of the jurisdiction and whether any additional controls or modifications to the project are required. The SUP would be reviewed by each jurisdiction's planning authority and would be submitted to the planning commission for approval.. As a project of regional significance, the proposal would be submitted to the Regional Planning Commission by Reno, Sparks, and/or Washoe County before receiving final approval from those entities. Should the final alignment cross the Reno-Stead Airport, the Airport Authority of Washoe County also would be required to grant approval for use of its property.

Because the Proposed Action is subject to the approvals of several jurisdictions, the EIS process, including the cooperating agency roles played by the affected jurisdictions, would facilitate the definition of a transmission alignment that is acceptable to all jurisdictions. Through the EIS process and associated public involvement, the affected jurisdictions are expected to forge a consensus on a preferred alignment. The Regional Planning Commission should make a finding of conformance for a project of regional significance, before BLM issues a record of decision, so that BLM's decision reflects consensus among all affected jurisdictions.

Specific approvals, permits, and regulatory requirements will be required for constructing, operating, and maintaining the proposed transmission line. For example, in addition to receiving a special use permit (RMC 18.061110.C) from the City of Reno, the project must meet a series of conditions outlined in the Reno Municipal Code (RMC 18.06.304.14). Table 1-1 lists additional federal, state, and local permits, policies, and actions that may be required and lists the agencies that may use the information presented in the EIS to make decisions about issuing permits or approvals.

Relationship to BLM and Non-BLM Policies, Plans, and Programs

Southern Washoe County Urban Interface Plan Amendment

The Southern Washoe County Urban Interface Plan Amendment (Plan Amendment) supercedes the BLM Consolidated Resource Management Plan and provides BLM policy for the management of utilities/corridors in the project area (BLM 2001d). The Plan Amendment states "The Regional Utility Corridor Report [RUCR], adopted for inclusion in the Truckee Meadows Regional Plan, will be utilized as a guideline for future utility corridor and facility proposals on public lands for the southern portion of Washoe County. New overhead electrical transmission corridors and facilities (60 kilovolts or greater) proposed on public lands will be discouraged in favor of using existing corridors; routing on private land; or undergrounding in visually sensitive areas." Land use master plans of the cities of Reno and Sparks, Washoe County, and the Washoe County Regional Open Space Plan, all of which are discussed below, designate natural, visual, and cultural resources important to the community; these are major considerations in analyzing utility proposals (BLM 2001d).

Table 1-1
Potential Regulatory Responsibilities

Regulatory Agency	Authorizing Action
BLM	Cultural resource use permits: (1) survey/recordation permit, (2) survey and limited testing permit, and (3) excavation and/or removal permit
BLM	EIS and ROD pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act
BLM; Nevada Division of Historic Preservation & Archaeology	Section 106 compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act
BLM	Cultural Resource Permit pursuant to the Native American Graves Protection & Repatriation Act
BLM	Cultural Resource Permit pursuant to the American Indian Religious Freedom Act
BLM	Right-of-way grant – transportation and utility systems and facilities on federal lands
BLM	Temporary use permits for construction-related activities
Federal Aviation Administration	Federal Aviation Administration Notice of Proposed Construction Permit (FAA Form 7460-1)
US Army Corps of Engineers	Nationwide Permit 14, 404/401 Permit
US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)	Endangered Species Act
Nevada Bureau of Water Pollution Control	Temporary rolling stock permit
Nevada Bureau of Water Pollution Control	Stormwater general permits for construction, National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES)
Nevada Bureau of Water Quality Planning	Section 401 Water Quality Certification
Nevada Department of Transportation	Occupancy or encroachment permits
Nevada Division of Environmental Protection-Bureau of Air Quality	Surface area disturbance permit
Nevada Division of Environmental Protection	Air quality operating permit
Nevada State Lands	Aerial crossing permit
Washoe County	Special use permit, grading permit, and surface area disturbance permit (dust control plan)
Truckee Meadows Regional Planning Agency	Review for conformance with the Truckee Meadows Regional Plan
City of Reno	Special use permit and grading permit
City of Sparks	Special use permit and grading permit

While about 6.5 miles of the Proposed Action route would follow existing power line routes on public lands, about six miles of the proposed line would be outside designated corridors on public land. Although use of existing corridors is encouraged, rights-of-way may be approved outside existing corridors when justification exists. Approval of a right-of-way does not establish a corridor on public lands. While designating new corridors on public lands is discouraged in the Plan Amendment, it is not prohibited as long as the stated conditions are met, including following RUCR guidance (see below). As discussed below, SPPCo would adopt mitigation measures to comply with the RUCR.

Truckee Meadows Regional Plan & Regional Utility Corridor Report

The purpose of the TMRPA is to develop a comprehensive regional plan for developing and managing regional growth (TMRPA 2002a). The Truckee Meadows Regional Plan covers all of the project area and identifies planning principles, goals, and policies for public services and facilities. For example, planning principles state that the planning agency will work with entities regulated by the Public Utilities Commission and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, as well as with local, state, and federal agencies, such as the BLM, to coordinate the provision of public services and facilities. The Truckee Meadows Regional Plan does not identify specific land uses for parcels in the project area, but rather outlines land use guidelines for local governments to incorporate into their land use plans.

In response to significant growth and increased public concern over utility projects in the Truckee Meadows region, the Truckee Meadows Regional Planning Governing Board authorized formation of the Regional Utility Corridor Citizen's Advisory Committee in 1997 to develop a long-range regional utility plan. In 1999, the Advisory Committee submitted the RUCR. The purpose of the RUCR is to provide the governments of Reno, Sparks, Washoe County, and other affected entities with a set of policies and guidelines to meet their responsibilities in implementing the Truckee Meadows Regional Plan. An update of the regional plan was adopted May 9, 2002. That update required that the RUCR be reviewed for conformance with the updated plan and, once found to be in conformance, be adopted by reference. On February 25, 2004, the RPC held a public hearing and determined that the RUCR, as updated and reformatted in February 2004, conforms to the Comprehensive Regional Plan (CRP) (TMRPA 2004). The TMRPA will use the RUCR in reviewing the conformance of the proposed transmission line. As with any project of regional significance, the project would be evaluated for conformance with the goals and policies of the regional plan and consistency with all applicable federal, state and local laws pertaining to natural resource management.

The City of Sparks and Washoe County use the RUCR as a guidance document with respect to their local land use and management plans during the decision-making process. The City of Reno and the BLM Carson City Field Office have adopted the RUCR into their respective land management or master plans. The above referenced plans are incorporated by reference into this EIS and include the Washoe County Comprehensive Plan (Washoe County 2003a), the 1994 Washoe County Regional Open Space Plan (Washoe County 2003c), the City of Reno Master Plan (City of Reno 2000), and City of Sparks Master Plan (City of Sparks 1991, 1999).

The policies and guidelines of the RUCR are implemented through the local agency discretionary or administrative review of development applications.

The following RUCR policies and guidelines apply only to "utility corridors," which are defined in the report as electrical transmission lines 60 kV or greater and facilities, natural gas lines greater than 100 psi, water lines greater than 30 inches in diameter and five miles long, geothermal lines and facilities, communication facilities, and cable television facilities. Existing regional utility corridors are also defined in the report (RUCR Sections B.2-B.6). There are two existing regional utility corridors

in the project area. One travels southeast from the existing Stead substation to the Golden Valley area. The other travels south from the Stead substation to Highway 395, then along Highway 395 to the northwest and also to the southeast to the Spanish Springs Substation in Sparks and beyond (see Figure 1-2) (Regional Utility Corridor Citizens Advisory Committee 2004).

Priority is given to using existing corridors over the establishment of new corridors (RUCR Sections F.12-F.13). Expanding existing corridors or establishing new corridors requires development to minimize the environmental impact by adhering to four principle guidelines, as follows:

1. **Avoidance—**New corridors shall not be developed in proximity to the Truckee River Corridor, Peavine Mountain or other significant viewsheds, Mt. Rose Highway, Pyramid Highway, or other scenic corridors designated in local master plans, or in national, state, regional, community, or local parks (RUCR Sections F.1-F.2).
2. **Separation—**New 120 kV utility corridors shall not be located within 150 feet of schools, day care centers, hospitals, or residences (RUCR Section F.4).
3. **No net increase in electric and magnetic fields (EMFs) and minimal net increase in visual impacts—**For expansion of existing corridors, there shall be no net increase in EMFs and a minimal net increase in visual impact (RUCR Sections F.5 and G.1). EMF is a term used to describe electric and magnetic fields that are created by electric voltage (electric field) and electric current (magnetic field).
4. **Mitigation—**When it is technically or financially prohibitive to comply with the avoidance and separation guidelines, as described in Sections F.1, F.2, and F.4, certain types of mitigation are allowed to address the impacts of new overhead utilities and facilities. Mitigation measures to ensure no detrimental residual impact include underground construction, low-EMF designs, low-visibility designs, and off-site mitigation (RUCR Section F.5).

Section E of the RUCR outlines the requirements an applicant must meet before expanding or upgrading a utility corridor or establishing a new one. Local jurisdictions are required to consider new corridors as part of the special use permit process. As part of the permit application review, the local jurisdiction must determine that the new corridor is consistent with the local master plan and the policies and guidelines of the report. The RUCR stipulates that it should be amended to include any new corridors that are established. Any new utility corridor, such as the proposed 120 kV line evaluated in this EIS, can be designated as a new corridor and is considered an existing utility corridor on the date of commercial operation.

The report also defines possible mitigations for residual impacts, including development of community assets along corridors, underground construction, routing changes, screening, use of materials and colors that blend with surrounding environment, low-profile design and engineering, and collocation or reconfiguration of existing facilities (RUCR Section F.6).

The Proposed Action and all alternatives would not comply with the policy direction of the RUCR because the project would require development of a new corridor and the corridor would be within 150 feet of residences. However, mitigation measures, as outlined in Chapter 4 of this EIS, would promote compliance with the requirements of the report.

Reno-Sparks Indian Colony Comprehensive Plan

The Reno-Sparks Indian Colony is a federally recognized Indian tribe near Reno and Sparks. The Colony has five land parcels within the project area, the dominant parcel being the 1,930-acre Hungry Valley parcel, located 19 miles north of the downtown colony. The 24-acre Spanish Springs parcel, slated for commercial development, is located along the Pyramid Highway near the proposed

transmission line route. The Reno-Sparks Indian Colony Year 2000 Comprehensive Plan and Parcel Master Plans (Nevada-Sierra Planners 2000) was issued in March 2000. The plan established a rectangular "sphere of influence" extending a mile in each direction from the Hungry Valley parcel and 660 feet from the Spanish Springs parcel. The sphere of influence "…will serve as a master plan for the future organization of local governments and agencies with the cities and county. The sphere shall be used to discourage concentration of heavy industry on residential boundaries, retain open space, the proliferation of local governmental agencies, and to encourage efficiency, economy and orderly changes in local government…"(Nevada-Sierra Planners 2000). The Year 2000 Comprehensive Plan and Parcel Master Plans generally seeks "…to discourage urban sprawl, direct development away from residential land and open-spaced lands, and encourage the orderly formation and development of local government agencies…" (Nevada-Sierra Planners 2000). The Proposed Action would be located within the sphere of influence. The plan envisions Hungry Valley to be free of visual clutter to the maximum extent possible. Powerlines are considered to be a development, so the Proposed Action is inconsistent with the comprehensive plan for the Hungry Valley. All alternatives, including the Calle de la Plata Alternative, would be consistent with the RSIC master plan because they would be outside of the RSIC sphere of influence.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

NEPA requires an early and open process for determining issues that should be addressed and analyzed in the EIS to help decision-makers decide to implement the Proposed Action or an alternative. The EIS process, as mandated by NEPA, is designed to involve and inform the public and federal, state, and local agencies as to the environmental consequences of a federal agency's actions and to provide the lead agency with important information and analyses to promote better decision-making. To formally solicit public input, the BLM has conducted the following activities:

- The scoping period for the proposed action officially began on June 25, 2002, with the publication of a notice of intent (NOI) in the *Federal Register* (Volume 67, Number 122, Page 42795-42796). The NOI notified the public of BLM's intent to prepare an EIS for the Tracy-Silver Lake project and to solicit its input. The scoping period was from June 25 through August 30, 2002, although BLM did consider comments received beyond the official period of scoping in defining the analysis to be presented in the EIS. This public scoping process helped to determine the range of issues and alternatives to be addressed in the EIS. Comments raised during the scoping period are summarized in Table 1-2.
- As part of the scoping process, the BLM, with support from SPPCo staff, conducted a public open house (July 17, 2002) and four presentations (August 6, 12, 14, and 26, 2003) within the project area. The Tracy-Silver Lake Transmission Line Project Final Scoping Report provides a detailed overview of all scoping activities and input received (BLM 2003f).
- The BLM invited local agencies and municipalities that could be affected by the Proposed Action to be Cooperating Agencies in the preparation of the EIS. The agencies that agreed to participate are Washoe County, TMRPA, City of Reno, City of Sparks, Airport Authority of Washoe County, and the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony. Representatives of these agencies signed a memorandum of agreement (MOA) with BLM and SPPCo on November 13, 2002, to clarify all participants' responsibilities and to specify conditions, schedules, and procedures to be followed in developing and preparing the EIS.
- The BLM distributed the draft EIS for public review in October 2003. All individuals who participated in the scoping process, who have expressed interest in the project, or who reside adjacent to the possible transmission line routes were notified about the availability of the draft EIS (see Chapter 7 for the distribution list).

Additionally, availability was published in local newspapers and the *Federal Register,* and the public had 60 days to review and comment on the EIS.

- The BLM presented the findings of the Draft EIS and solicited comments at the following meetings:
  - Silver Lake Property Owners, October 8, 2003
  - Warm Springs CAB, November 3, 2003
  - Sun Valley CAB, November 8, 2003
  - North Valley CAB, November 10, 2003
  - BLM Public Open House, North Valleys High School, November 10, 2003
  - Spanish Springs CAB, November 12, 2003
  - BLM Public Open House, Spanish Springs High School, November 12, 2003
  - North Valleys NAB, November 17, 2003
  - Red Rock Property Owners, November 18, 2003
  - Reno Sparks Indian Colony, December 1, 2003
  - Reno City Planning Commission, December 2, 2003
  - Reno City Council, December 3, 2003
  - Regional Planning Commission, December 10, 2003
  - Sparks Planning Commission, December 18, 2003
  - Washoe County Planning Commission, January 6, 2004
  - Sparks City Council, January 12, 2004
  - Washoe County Commission January 13, 2004
  - Lemmon Valley Association, April 21, 2004
- The BLM will distribute the Final EIS for public review in July 2004.
- The BLM continues to consult with relevant agencies and Native American interests. Consultation and coordination is discussed in Chapter 5.

The BLM has received and will continue to receive public input throughout the EIS process.

During the public review period for the Draft EIS 130 letters were received containing 585 specific comments. Additionally, people commented at the public meetings, providing additional verbal comments on the DEIS. Appendix H (see Volume 2) contains all public comments and BLM responses.

This Final EIS incorporates public input, including the addition of clarifying statements, updated analysis, and improvements to the route alignment for the Calle de la Plata Alterative (Chapter 2 discusses the Alternatives). The BLM involved the cooperating agencies in selecting a Preferred Alternative. Some agencies voiced concerns related to impacts from certain segments of the alignment. Specifically, the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony was concerned about impacts to cultural resources in the Griffith Canyon area, visual impacts in Hungry Valley, and inconsistencies with the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony Year 2000 Comprehensive Plan and Parcel Master Plans (Nevada-Sierra Planners 2000). The Airport Authority of Washoe County noted potential impacts to the Reno National Championship Air Races. To address these and other public concerns three segments of the Calle de la Plata Alternative were revised. These changes are discussed in Chapter 2. In consultation with the cooperating agencies, the BLM identified the Calle de la Plata Alternative as the Preferred Alternative.

Table 1-2
Issues and Concerns Raised During the Tracy-Silver Lake EIS Scoping Process

Comments	Location in Document where Addressed
Purpose and Need	
Develop a clear statement of the purpose and need for the Proposed Action.	Chapter 1
Address the need for North Valley Substation (aka Proposed Reno-Stead Airport Substation).	Chapter 1
Address who would benefit from increased service and what benefit this project would be to North Valley residents.	Chapter 1
Alternatives-General Issues	
Evaluate objectively, and in comparable detail, a full range of alternatives.	Chapters 2 and 4
Examine the No Action Alternative.	Chapters 2 and 4
Alternatives should include installation of underground power line in sensitive or residential areas (e.g., La Posada, Rockwell, Pyramid Highway, near the Reno-Stead Airport).	Chapter 4, as mitigation
Construct the transmission line along existing roadways.	Chapters 2, 3, and 4
Construct the transmission line along existing power line easements.	Chapters 2, 3, and 4
Construct the transmission lines in developed and soon to be developed areas.	Chapters 2, 3, and 4
Construct the transmission lines in less developed areas.	Chapters 2 , 3, and 4
SPPCo must address alternative installation of power lines.	
Locate telephone and cable lines underground or beneath the new line.	Chapter 2
Specific Alternatives Alignments	
Opposition to construction of transmission line along La Posada.	Chapter 2
Transmission line should run due west from Tracy to the Sparks, should be placed underground through Sparks, and then should proceed north, along the west side of Pyramid Highway, to the proposed substation location.	Chapter 2
Consider the ten alternative routes identified as part of SPPCo's route identification process in 2000.	Chapter 2
Transmission line should follow the existing 120-kV/345 kV corridor from Tracy to Spanish Springs.	Chapters 2, 3, and 4
Transmission line should be on public lands, such as Granite Hills, and should access Stead through industrial lands at the south end of Swan Lake.	Chapters 2, 3, and 4
Transmission line should run due west from La Posada and Pyramid Highway to the Silver Lake Substation.	Chapter 2
SPPCo should upgrade existing lines.	Chapter 2
Transmission line should run farther to the west of Pyramid Highway, along the drainage ditch, then into Hawco's Business Park.	Chapter 2

Table 1-2
Common Issues and Concerns Raised During the Tracy-Silver Lake EIS Scoping Process *(continued)*

Comments	Location in Document where Addressed
Transmission line could run parallel to, but south of, La Posada to a new Spanish Springs Substation located along the Tuscarora pipeline, then run south to the existing regional utility corridor from Tracy to Sparks.	Chapter 2
Transmission line could follow the existing regional utility corridor from Tracy to Sparks, then run north between the Pyramid Highway and Sun Valley on public land to a new Spanish Springs Substation west of Calle de la Plata and north of Eagle Canyon Road, then run west.	Chapter 2
Transmission line should cross the sandpit north of Chickadee Drive to Matterhorn Blvd., then proceed north to Oregon Blvd.	Chapter 2
Transmission line should be placed underground along La Posada, across Pyramid Highway, and partially up Eagle Canyon, then overhead to the proposed substation.	Chapter 4, as mitigation
Transmission line should extend west from La Posada to north end of Sun Valley, through Golden Valley, northwest along Military Road, and east to the Silver Lake Substation, using underground construction where necessary to avoid residences.	Chapter 2
Consider alternative route to Stead area from the south that would permit double circuiting of lines.	Chapters 2, 3, and 4
Transmission lines should extend north of Reno-Stead Airport to accommodate future need in this area.	Chapters 2, 3, and 4
Transmission line should be placed along Enconto, instead of La Posada, and should be placed underground.	Chapters 2, 3, and 4
Transmission line should follow the Tuscarora gas line corridor.	Chapters 2, 3, and 4
Transmission line should follow the existing Rocketdyne line.	Chapters 2, 3, and 4
Transmission line should follow Pyramid Highway.	Chapters 2, 3, and 4
Substation Alternative Issues	
Identify proposed and alternative substation sites.	Chapters 2, 3, and 4
Substations should be located in industrial areas.	Chapter 2
Substations may be incompatible with residential uses.	Sections 3 and 4
Size of Silver Lake Substation should be increased to avoid need for northern loop.	Chapter 2
Spanish Springs Substation should be in Hawco's Business Park.	Chapter 2
Spanish Springs Substation should be near the old Rocketdyne plant.	Chapter 2
Spanish Springs Substation should be at the granite pit off Highland Ranch Parkway.	Chapter 2
Spanish Springs Substation should be along the Tuscarora pipeline, south of La Posada.	Chapter 2, 3, and 4
Spanish Springs Substation should be west of Calle de la Plata.	Chapter 2, 3, and 4

Table 1-2
Common Issues and Concerns Raised During the Tracy-Silver Lake EIS Scoping Process *(continued)*

Comments	Location in Document where Addressed
Spanish Springs Substation should be on the eastern side of valley.	Chapter 2
Impact Issues	
Evaluate potential hazards from electromagnetic radiation.	Chapter 4 – Public Health and Safety
Evaluate potential visual impacts of the transmission line and substations.	Chapter 4 - Aesthetics
Evaluate potential visual impacts along the Pyramid Highway.	Chapter 4 - Aesthetics
Evaluate potential visual impacts of double-circuited power lines.	Chapter 4 - Aesthetics
Evaluate potential impacts to recreational uses.	Chapter 4 - Recreation
Evaluate potential risks to public safety from downed power lines restricting access/egress, especially along La Posada, which is the only access/egress road for residents in the area.	Chapter 4 – Public Health and Safety
Evaluate potential growth-inducing impacts.	Chapter 4 – Socioeconomics and Environmental Justice
Evaluate potential impacts from lightning hitting the transmission poles.	Chapter 4 – Public Health and Safety
Evaluate potential for interference with flight paths and air races at local airports.	Chapter 4 – Public Health and Safety
Evaluate potential impacts from public use of transmission line maintenance roads.	Chapter 4 - Recreation
Evaluate potential impacts to scenic corridors.	Chapter 4 - Aesthetics
Evaluate potential impacts to biological resources, including species listed under the Endangered Species Act.	Chapter 4 – Wildlife; Special Status Species
Evaluate potential conflicts with local master plans or general plans, including requirements for underground construction in Spanish Springs and North Valleys area plans and encouragement of underground construction in Sparks Master Plan.	Chapter 1 - Relationship to BLM and Non-BLM Policies, Plans, and Programs
Evaluate potential conflicts with BLM's Comprehensive Resource Management Plan.	Chapter 1 - Relationship to BLM and Non-BLM Policies, Plans, and Programs
Evaluate potential conflicts with Reno-Sparks Indian Colony Comprehensive Plan.	Chapter 1 - Relationship to BLM and Non-BLM Policies, Plans, and Programs
Transmission line should be considered as a utility corridor, as defined by the Regional Utility Corridor Report, including potential for expanding the line (for example to 320 kV) or potential use of the corridor by other types of utilities.	Chapter 1 - Relationship to BLM and Non-BLM Policies, Plans, and Programs
Evaluate potential noise impacts from the transmission lines.	Chapter 4 - Aesthetics
Evaluate potential impacts to public health and safety impacts from fire associated with lightning or arcing.	Chapter 4 – Public Health and Safety
Evaluate the potential effect on property values.	Chapter 4 – Socioeconomics and Environmental Justice
Evaluate potential public health and safety impacts from earthquake damage to transmission line.	Chapter 4 – Public Health and Safety

Table 1-2
Common Issues and Concerns Raised During the Tracy-Silver Lake EIS Scoping Process *(continued)*

Comments	Location in Document where Addressed
Evaluate use of water during project construction and water rights.	Chapter 4 – Water Resources
Evaluate potential impacts to cultural resources, including consultation with Indian tribes and survey of all federal lands, pursuant to NHPA.	Chapter 4 – Cultural Resources and Native American Religious Concerns
Evaluate potential impacts to Native American religious sites.	Chapter 4 – Cultural Resources and Native American Religious Concerns
Evaluate potential impacts related to environmental justice.	Chapter 4 – Socioeconomics and Environmental Justice
Evaluate potential impacts to soil erosion from construction, reclamation, or maintenance.	Chapter 4 – Geology and Soils
Evaluate potential for reclamation of affected land.	Chapter 4 – Vegetation; Appendix B
Evaluate potential impacts from increased vehicle use during project construction.	Chapter 4 – Land Use and Realty
Evaluate potential cumulative impacts, including cumulative impacts related to environmental justice.	Chapter 4 – Cumulative Impacts
Evaluate potential impacts to communications (e.g., radio, cell phones).	No effect.
Miscellaneous	
Project should be delayed until SPPCo's Master Plan for the areas has been completed.	Chapter 1-Project History
Need to use updated maps that reflect growth in the area and changes in roadways.	Chapters 1, 2, and 3
Maps should show existing substations and power lines, as well as proposed or alternative locations.	Chapters 1, 2, and 3
Information regarding the costs of undergrounding transmission lines should be provided.	Chapter 2
Should address potential compensation of property owners for negative impacts to private property.	Chapter 4 – Socioeconomics and Environmental Justice
Project should be evaluated for consistency with the Regional Utility Corridor Report, including the following concerns: refer to the Proposed Action as a "utility corridor," rather than a transmission line; describe how the Proposed Action and alternatives meet the guidelines.	Chapters 1 and 2
Information on the load center in Spanish Springs should be provided.	Chapter 2
Consider whether new power lines are development generated and the cost should be borne by the developers and passed on to purchasers of new development.	Chapter 2