

**PROPOSED SUN VALLEY TO MORGAN 500/230kV
TRANSMISSION LINE PROJECT AND PROPOSED
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN AMENDMENT**

**ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
PUBLIC AGENCY SCOPING REPORT**

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND TERMS

AAC	Arizona Administrative Code
ACC	Arizona Corporation Commission
AFB	Air Force Base
APS	Arizona Public Service
ASLD	Arizona State Land Department
BHRMP	Bradshaw-Harquahala Resource Management Plan
BLM	Bureau of Land Management
CAP	Central Arizona Project
CEC	Certificate of Environmental Compatibility
CEQ	Council on Environmental Quality
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
DNR	Department of Natural Resources
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
EMF	Electromagnetic Fields
FLPMA	Federal Land Policy and Management Act
IBLA	Interior Board of Land Appeals
kV	kilovolt
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NHPA	National Historic Preservation Act
NOA	Notice of Availability
NOI	Notice of Intent
Reclamation	Bureau of Reclamation
RMP	Resource Management Plan
RMPA	Resource Management Plan Amendment
ROW	Right-of-Way
ROD	Record of Decision
Siting Committee	Arizona Power Plant and Transmission Line Siting Committee
SR	State Route

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background Information

Arizona Public Service, the proponent of the proposed Sun Valley to Morgan 500/230kV Transmission Line Project (Project), filed an application with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) for a right-of-way (ROW) grant to construct an aboveground electric transmission system, consisting of a single series of tower structures holding two high voltage circuits: a single-circuit 500-kilovolt (kV) transmission line and a single-circuit 230kV line. The total project would span approximately 38 miles and would connect APS' Sun Valley Substation near the Town of Buckeye with the Morgan Substation near the City of Peoria, crossing approximately 10.5 miles of federal public lands in two separate locations. One area of about 3.5 miles is near the Sun Valley Substation in the Town of Buckeye. It is north of the Central Arizona Project (CAP) canal and northwest of the White Tank Regional Park. The other area is about 7 miles of public land parallel to State Route 74. Part of the land is in Peoria and part is in unincorporated Maricopa County.

To comply with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the BLM is preparing an environmental impact statement (EIS) to disclose the potential environmental impacts associated with the project's construction and operation, and to consider alternatives to the APS proposal. This EIS process will inform the public and agencies about the potential impacts the project may have on human and natural resources.

Additionally, management decisions for these federal public lands are subject to the 2010 Bradshaw-Harquahala Resource Management Plan (BHRMP). The APS proposal to use 7 miles of federal public lands near Peoria along State Route 74 (SR 74) is inconsistent with the recently completed BHRMP because there is currently no designated utility corridor in this area. Therefore, the BLM must make two separate decisions: (1) whether to amend its land use plan to create a utility corridor in the vicinity of SR 74, and (2) whether to approve the APS application and any adjustments to the proposed transmission location or design. The BLM can approve the application, approve with revisions, or reject the application.

As part of NEPA requirements, a notice of intent (NOI) to prepare the EIS was posted for public inspection on the *Federal Register* website on April 8, 2011 and published in the *Federal Register* on April 11, 2011 (Appendix A). Posting of the NOI initiated a 45-day formal public and agency scoping period, during which the BLM solicited comments regarding the project and its potential impacts. The BLM held public and agency scoping meetings for the EIS in Phoenix Arizona, and public meetings in Wittmann and Peoria, Arizona, to provide information on project planning activities to date and to give agency personnel and members of the public the opportunity to ask questions of the BLM's Hassayampa Field Office Manager, Steve Cohn; National Project Manager, Joe Incardine; as well as staff from the project proponent, APS. Meeting attendees were also able to provide comments on the issues and alternatives that will be included in the EIS.

1.2 Purpose

This scoping report is intended to aid in clarifying preliminary issues, concerns, and opportunities, determining the appropriate scope of environmental analysis, and gathering new input on alternatives development from comments received in response to the April 8/11, 2011 NOI (see Appendix A). It summarizes public and agency comments received during the scoping period, describes the analysis of those comments, and provides a preliminary list of issues, concerns, and opportunities for analysis in the EIS. All substantive issues raised by respondents within the scope of the BLM's decisions will be included in the EIS, as will other resource categories and issues that are required by BLM but that were not mentioned specifically by respondents.

1.3 Document Organization

This document contains summary descriptions of the following:

- Scoping meetings, including advertising leading up to the meetings and opportunities for public and agency comment during the scoping period;
- Scoping content analysis process, including how individual letters and comments were processed;
- Scoping comment summaries organized by resource; and
- Appendices containing copies of the NOI, meeting advertising and outreach materials, meeting sign-in sheets, meeting presentation materials and handouts, scoping comment respondent contact information, and all comments received during the scoping period (April 8, 2011 to May 27, 2011).

As part of the NEPA process all comments are given equal consideration, regardless of the method of their transmittal.

2.0 DESCRIPTION OF FORMAL SCOPING MEETINGS

Three public scoping meetings and one agency scoping meeting were held for the project (Table 1).

Table 1. Formal Scoping Meeting Dates, Times, Locations, and Attendees				
Date	Time	City, State	Address	Attendees
Public Scoping Meetings				
April 26, 2011	5:30-9:00PM	Phoenix, Arizona	Ramada Plaza Phoenix Metrocenter 12027 N 28 th Dr	29
April 27, 2011	5:30-9:00PM	Wittmann, Arizona	Nadaburg Elementary School 21419 W Dove Valley Rd	66
April 28, 2011	5:30-9:00PM	Peoria, Arizona	Peoria Community Center 8335 W Jefferson St.	249
Agency Scoping Meeting				
April 26, 2011	2:00-4:30PM	Phoenix, Arizona	Ramada Plaza Phoenix Metrocenter, 12027 N 28 th Dr	23

2.1 Meeting Advertising

Pursuant to NEPA requirements, the scoping meetings were advertised in a variety of formats at least 15 days prior to their scheduled dates. In each format, the advertisements provided logistics, explained the purpose of the scoping meetings, gave the schedule for the public and agency comment period, outlined additional ways to comment, and provided methods of obtaining additional information. A summary of the advertising for the formal public and agency meetings is found in Table 2. Documentation of meeting advertisements and public outreach can be found in Appendix B.

Table 2. Advertising of Formal Public and Agency Meetings
Newspaper Advertisements
Newspaper display advertisements were placed in the Arizona Republic, state wide coverage, on April 12, 2011.
Newspaper display advertisements were placed in the Arizona Republic, NW Valley zones 1 and 20 on April 13, 15, 16, 20, 22, and 23, 2011.
Newspaper display advertisements were placed in the Arizona Republic, Peoria zone 2, on April 13, 15, 16, 20, 22, 23, and 27, 2011. ¹
Newspaper display advertisements were placed in the Arizona Republic, Glendale zone 9, on April 13, 15, 16, 20, 22, and 23, 2011.
Newspaper display advertisements were placed in the Arizona Republic, North Phoenix zone 21, on April 13, 15, 16, 20, 22, and 23, 2011.
Newspaper display advertisements were placed in the Peoria Times on April 15 and 22, 2011.
Newspaper display advertisements were placed in the Sonoran News on April 13 and 27, 2011. ¹
Newspaper display advertisements were placed in the Surprise Today on April 13, 20, and 27, 2011.
Newspaper display advertisements were placed in the West Valley View on April 12, 15, 19, and 22, 2011.
Newspaper display advertisements were placed in The Wickenburg Sun on April 13 and 20, 2011. ²
Media Notices and Other Forms of Advertising
A news release was posted April 12, 2011 on the BLM website.
A news release was issued by the City of Peoria on April 19, 2011.
Email notifications were sent to agencies, government officials, special interest groups, and other interested parties on April 14 and 25 and May 24 and 26, 2011.
A project information hotline was launched on April 7, 2011 and updated on May 3 and 19, 2011.
Meeting information was posted on the BLM's website, http://www.blm.gov/az/st/en/prog/energy/aps-sunvalley.html on April 12, 2011.
Letters and Postcard Invitations
A total of 538 invitational letters were mailed April 12, 2011 to a mailing list comprising government agencies, elected officials, special interest groups, individuals who commented during the ACC process, mining claimants, and other interested parties.
A postcard was mailed the week of April 12, 2011 to the same mailing list as well as 12, 002 interested parties and members of the public identified based on mail carrier routes within the parameters of the project study area.
Neighborhood Outreach and Flyers
On April 14 and 18, 2011, staff from Galileo Project visited various community outlets, such as community centers, libraries, grocery stores, city offices, and recreational outlets in Surprise, Peoria, Circle City, Wittmann, Buckeye, and other areas along the project route to distribute 400 flyers announcing the public meetings and to encourage attendance. ³

Table 2. Advertising of Formal Public and Agency Meetings

Staff from Galileo Project posted 12 18-by-24-inch signs at locations in the project area.³

¹Advertisement included rotating web tile with link to the BLM website, which ran April 11-30, 2011.

²Advertisement included website advertisement, which ran April 13-27, 2011.

³A table summarizing the locations and photographic documentation of the posted flyers and signs can be found in Appendix B.

2.2 Meeting Set-up

The scoping meetings provided a formal project presentation, a question and answer period, a group mapping activity, and an open-house period. Attendees were greeted at the entrance and asked to provide contact information on meeting sign-in sheets. Attendees were informed about the meeting format and given an informational handout, scoping comment form and a question card, on which they could submit written questions to be answered during the question and answer phase of the meeting (Appendix C). Attendees were also informed about ways to submit comments to the BLM (including the location of comment boxes around the meeting room).

After meeting sign-in and seating, the meeting facilitator introduced key BLM personnel as well as the BLM and APS meeting presenters. A Microsoft PowerPoint overview of the project was presented (see Appendix C). The presenters were as follows:

- BLM Hassayampa Field Office Manager, Steve Cohn
- Project Proponent APS Project Manager, Richard Stuhan

Following the presentations, the meeting facilitator read off the questions that had been submitted on question cards, and the questions were answered by the appropriate BLM or proponent staff. Attendees were also encouraged to seek out appropriate staff for answers to their questions during the group activity and open-house portion of the meeting.

At the conclusion of the question and answer session, attendees were invited to take part in a group mapping activity. Maps were located on tables throughout the room and attendees were invited to record their ideas for project alternatives, as well as any alternative advantages and disadvantages, on the maps. At the conclusion of the activity, a representative from each table presented the group's collective ideas to the attendees at large.

Twenty one BLM informational display boards (see Appendix C) were arranged in stations around the meeting rooms in the following order for review during the open-house portion of the meeting:

1. "Welcome" to the public scoping meeting
2. BLM Mission
3. Bradshaw-Harquahala Resource Management Plan
4. Proposed Resource Management Plan Amendment
5. Arizona Public Service's Proposed Route
6. BLM's Purpose and Need
7. Arizona Corporation Commission Process
8. What is NEPA?

9. Preliminary Environmental Considerations
10. Study Area Communities
11. Land Ownership
12. Existing Features
13. Planned Developments
14. SR 74 Virtual Tour Station
15. Interactive Photo Point Map Station
16. Google Earth Station
17. Submit Your Comments
18. Agenda
19. BLM in Arizona
20. Hassayampa Field Office
21. NEPA Process and Timeline

Fifteen proponent informational display boards were also included (see Appendix C):

1. Rationale for the Project
2. Conceptual Connection and Jurisdiction
3. Project Description
4. Representative Monopole Structures
5. Representative H-frame and Lattice Tower Structures
6. APS Opportunities and Constraints for Siting Transmission Lines
7. APS Project Siting Considerations
8. APS Project History and Milestones
9. Certificate of Environmental Compatibility Process Summary
10. Certificated Corridor
11. Near the CAP canal and 287th Avenue, Viewing North
12. Near existing Mead-Phoenix Transmission Line (North of CAP), Viewing Southwest
13. Lone Mountain Road and 235th Avenue, Viewing East
14. US 60 near 235th Avenue, Viewing East
15. Thunder Ridge Airpark West of 235th Avenue, Viewing East

There were three interactive visual stations available to the public. Each of these stations was attended by a project team member to assist the public in viewing the information and to answer any questions.

1. Google Earth Station: This station consisted of a computer monitor and Google Earth software. Members of the public could view project area features on the Google Earth map such as the proposed project route, nearby developments, land ownership, roads, etc. Areas of interest could be magnified to gain a better understanding of the physical relationship between the project area and the area of interest.
2. Interactive Photo Map: This station consisted of a map displayed on a projection screen. Photos were imbedded in the map for 32 locations throughout the project study area. Once a photo location was chosen, a panoramic photo from the point was displayed.
3. Virtual Tour: This station consisted of a computer monitor showing a computer generated “fly-over” of BLM land along SR 74.

2.3 Methods for Public and Agency Comment

Members of the public and representatives of agencies were afforded several methods for providing comments:

- Comments could be recorded on comment forms at the scoping meetings. Comment forms (see Appendix C) were provided to all meeting attendees and were also available throughout the room. Comment forms were also available on the project website to be printed and mailed.
- Individual letters and comment forms could be mailed via United States (U.S.) Postal Service to Sun Valley to Morgan Project, Attn: Joe Incardine, National Project Manager, BLM Phoenix District Office/Hassayampa Field Office, 21605 N. 7th Ave, Phoenix, AZ 85027.
- Emailed comments could be sent to a dedicated e-mail address: SunValley-Morgan@blm.gov.
- Comments could be faxed to 623.580.5580.

3.0 SCOPING COMMENT ANALYSIS

3.1 Substantive Comments

Per CEQ NEPA regulations (1501.8), it is through the scoping process that the lead agency will (a) determine the scope and significant issues to be analyzed in depth in the EIS; and (b) identify and eliminate from detailed study the issues that are not significant, narrowing the discussion of such issues to a brief presentation in the EIS as to why they will not have a significant effect on the human environment. In brief, the scoping comments must be reviewed to determine the significant issues in the context of NEPA and conducting an EIS.

Substantive comments were solicited during the scoping meetings. In accordance with the BLM NEPA Handbook, H-1790-1, page 66, substantive comments do one or more of the following:

- Question, with reasonable basis, the accuracy of information in the EIS or EA
- Question, with reasonable basis, the adequacy of, methodology for, or assumptions used for the environmental analysis
- Present new information relevant to the analysis
- Present reasonable alternatives other than those analyzed in the EIS or EA
- Cause changes or revisions in one or more of the alternatives

Comments that are not considered substantive include the following:

- Comments in favor of or against the proposed action or alternatives without reasoning that meet the criteria listed above (such as “we disagree with Alternative Two and believe the BLM should select Alternative Three”)
- Comments that only agree or disagree with BLM policy or resource decisions without justification or supporting data that meet the criteria listed above (such as “more grazing should be permitted”)
- Comments that do not pertain to the project area or the project (such as “the government should eliminate all dams,” when the project is about a grazing permit)

- Comments that take the form of vague, open-ended questions

3.2 Comment Processing Methodology

All comments received during the scoping period were entered and managed in a comment tracking database system. Each comment was entered, reviewed for content, and then coded by issue category. A list of issue categories for the proposed Sun Valley to Morgan Transmission Line Project is presented in Table 4 below. Key issues per category are summarized in section 4.2 of this document.

4.0 SUMMARY OF SCOPING COMMENTS

4.1 Scoping Period

The official scoping period for the Sun Valley to Morgan Transmission Line Project occurred April 11 through May 27, 2011. However, the BLM continued to accept written comments for inclusion in the scoping process until June 2011 and has continued to accept comments for general consideration in accordance with NEPA guidelines. As of June 7, 2011, the following comments were submitted to the BLM and were included in the scoping process:

Table 3. Number of Comments Received by Source	
Source	Comments Received
Scoping meeting submittals	86
Mailed comment form/letter	138
Electronic submittal	65
TOTAL	289

4.2 Comment by Issue

Substantive scoping comments fell into the following broad disposition categories described in Table 4.

Table 4. Comments Received by Issue	
Issue Category	Comments Received
Air and Climate	1
Biology	93
Health and Safety	103
Mitigation and Alternatives	27
Need and Reliability	6
Process and RMPA	61
Recreation	11
Socioeconomic	
Property values	101
Environmental justice	1

Table 4. Comments Received by Issue	
Issue Category	Comments Received
Quality of life	5
General community	28
Scenic/Visual	103
Transportation and Traffic	52
Unclassifiable (general comments – non substantive)	343
TOTAL	935

Comments are summarized below in narrative form for each resource issue area (e.g., all comments specific to recreation are included under the Recreation category; all comments specific to visual resources are in the Scenic/Visual Resources category). This section represents a summary of the formal comments received during public and agency scoping. A scanned copy of all letters received during the scoping period can be found in Appendix D.

4.2.1 Air and Climate

Respondent expressed concern that the project is located within a nonattainment area and the potential for a *de minimus* impact on air quality. Respondent attached a copy of Maricopa County Code Rules 310 and 310.01 for BLM’s reference.

4.2.2 Biological Resources

Respondents expressed concern regarding the potential effects of the proposed project on local wildlife, especially special status species. Respondents noted that opening access to the area north of SR 74 will open sensitive habitat area to degradation. The proposed route along SR 74 is in an area known to have a desert tortoise population. Responses were mixed in terms of how much weight the desert tortoise issue should be given against the human issue.

Respondents noted that the proposed project could result in injuries to birds and bats. There was also concern about potential effects to the Agua Fria River and its riparian vegetation.

Respondents suggested that access roads be designed to minimize impacts to wildlife. Other respondents noted that the BLM must follow the BLM manual, which establishes objectives and policies for the management of Special Status Species (SSS/6840) and Fish and Wildlife (FW/6500) on BLM lands.

4.2.3 Health and Safety

Respondents expressed concerns about effects to human and animal health from the electromagnetic fields (EMFs) emitted from the proposed transmission lines. Respondents noted that effects to human health from electromagnetic fields may include sudden infant death, childhood leukemia, changes in brain chemistry, suppression of the immune system, and

inhibition of melatonin production, which may lead to certain cancers. Other respondents requested further information on the effects of EMFs on animals such as dogs, cats, and horses.

Respondents were concerned about weather induced incidents, including fires caused by lightning, especially during the monsoon season. One respondent noted that the risk of a wildfire bringing down the line should be relatively small. Respondents from the Thunder Ridge Airpark noted that there were special safety concerns regarding the proximity of the proposed project to the community's airstrip.

4.2.4 Mitigation and Alternatives

Respondents suggested that fencing be used to protect tortoises along the SR 74 corridor. Other respondents suggested that access roads be designed to minimize impacts to wildlife in the project area. Respondents stated that the BLM must consider the potential impacts to the river and any riparian vegetation, and noted that any mitigation associated with this issue must be on a 3-to-1 ratio. Others suggested that the proponent consider alternative structures to minimize visual impacts.

Respondents suggested that the proposed project be placed underground, in whole or in part. Others suggested that the proposed project be placed along the south side of SR 74. Some respondents suggested the project be sited along the CAP canal, while others stated that there was not adequate room in this area for this type of project. Some of the respondents did not wish to see any alternatives to the proposed action, and others requested that the project avoid subdivisions regardless of the route. Respondents also suggested the West Wing Corridor, the use of existing transmission lines, or a route under the Luke Air Force Base auxiliary field. One respondent noted that the BLM must evaluate whether alternatives across non-BLM lands are compatible with approved land plans south of SR 74.

4.2.5 Need and Reliability

Respondent stated that the proposed right-of-way is in the public interest, because it will strengthen the Metropolitan Phoenix area high-voltage transmission system, thereby improving the reliability of power. Other respondents requested further assurance that the power lines are truly needed in light of the economy. Respondents noted that the area along SR 74 was once part of the Lake Pleasant Resource Conservation Area (RCA). The central idea of the RCA was to retain and consolidate lands for ease of management and protection. While these efforts have had mixed results, they underline the significance of the area. If this project is not truly needed, BLM should continue to conserve these lands.

4.2.6 Process and RMP Amendment

Respondents expressed confusion regarding the differences between the ACC process and the BLM NEPA process. Other respondents expressed frustration that the proposed route was still being debated after being approved by the ACC. Respondents were concerned that any changes to the proposed route would send the process back to the ACC, thereby delaying a needed transmission connection.

There were mixed views expressed by respondents on the necessity of the RMP Amendment. Some respondents felt that approving the amendment would cause adverse effects to the land

north of SR 74, while others felt that the route would cause fewer effects north of SR 74 than other possible routes. One respondent suggested that an amendment would not be necessary for the proposed route regardless. Another noted that it would be inappropriate for the BLM to approve the RMP amendment to benefit developers. Respondents were also confused as to why the issue of a utility corridor along the north side of SR 74 was not discussed further during the RMP stage, especially if the BLM knew that this project was a possibility in this area. A respondent noted that land use plans should be elastic in their ability to make allowances for planning - present and future. Another suggested that if the RMP is revised, omissions and inconsistencies should be resolved.

Respondents requested more advance notice for meetings and longer comment periods in the future; some respondents were concerned that the comment period for the proposed project closed prior to the Economic Strategies Workshop.

4.2.7 Recreation

Respondents suggested that the NEPA analysis examine the impacts of the proposed transmission line on recreation and resource values, especially to the Hieroglyphic Mountains Recreation Area, Castle Hot Springs Special Recreation Area and the Boulders OHV area, one of the most scenic and popular recreation areas in Maricopa County. The trails could be cut up by the access roads built for the power line and thus be very expensive to maintain. These access roads would also open access to currently undisturbed lands on the north side of SR 74 resulting in significant degradation of the area if not properly closed. Proper closure and repair of current trails would be costly. Respondents also noted that the impacts to the viewshed would impact their enjoyment of the recreational experience.

Respondents stated that the RMP was developed in part to protect the recreational uses and should not be amended to allow destruction of scenic recreational land to support private development. An OHV respondent noted that the BLM is currently considering applications across the state of Arizona that could take away hundreds of miles of OHV multiuse trails, which will be costly to replace.

4.2.8 Socioeconomic

Respondents suggested that the proposed project could result in decreased property values, which have already declined due to the economy. These lower property values would affect tax revenues and lower school funding, which would prevent economic growth and recovery. Other respondents suggested that the proposed project would not result in long term reduction of property values. Respondents noted that a decrease in property values for a few residents should not be an excuse for locating the proposed project on BLM lands. Some of the respondents requested further information on the compensation procedure for any homes that would be taken by the project.

There was one respondent who noted that the lower income communities are at a distinct disadvantage because they lack the resources to fight these types of actions.

Respondents expressed concerns related to the cost of the process and the cost to the taxpayer. One respondent noted that OHV recreation is a \$4.3 billion industry in Arizona, and that this

project has the potential to impact that figure. Another respondent noted that the economic benefits to the region from the proposed project would accelerate the creation of jobs through construction, transmission, and potentially the development of renewable energy generation sites.

4.2.9 Scenic/Visual

Respondents expressed concern regarding the potential effects to scenic views along the SR 74 corridor. Respondents noted that while travelers enjoy temporary views while traveling along SR 74, homeowners enjoy a permanent view. Interruption of views of nearby communities therefore, is a more pressing issue for BLM to consider. Some respondents noted that SR 74 is not a scenic corridor, and that there is precedence for co-locating power lines and roads. Other respondents suggested that the transmission line would ruin desert scenic views, noting that a major issue of the RMP was visual vistas associated with Hieroglyphic Mountain and the southern Bradshaws. A few respondents related concerns that allowing the project to be built along the north side of SR 74 would result in significant degradation of the land and in a diminished viewshed, especially as the project, as proposed, would actually cross SR 74 twice. This could potentially nudge development further into BLM lands and could result in a subsequent loss of interest by BLM to manage these lands for conservation.

4.2.10 Transportation and Traffic

Respondents suggested co-location of the proposed utility corridor along the existing transportation corridor, noting that the BLM has a policy of co-locating transportation and utility corridors. This would be consistent with federal policy of siting renewable energy projects on public lands and using joint use corridors whenever necessary. Some respondents suggested that to be consistent with federal and state policy regarding joint use corridors, any preferred alternative for the ROW should be located within the ACC certificated route.

4.2.11 Other Comments

There were many comments that offered support or opposition for the proposed project, the RMP amendment, or a specific aspect of the project without offering substantive reasons or rational.

4.3 Summary of Informal Comments from the Public and Agency Scoping Meetings

In addition to formally submitted comments, informal comments and input were received from agency officials and members of the public during the question and answer sessions and general discussions at scoping meetings. Those comments and questions were noted during the meetings and are included in the table below.

Table 5. Informal Comments and Questions from Scoping Meetings
April 26, 2011 Agency Scoping Meeting
Comment Summary
Luke Air Force Base needs to continue flight activities along the auxiliary field.
Buckeye has no issues with the proposed project as the RMP is not being amended in the Buckeye portion.
As the BLM moves forward into alternative routes, CAP is not in agreement with placing the route along

Table 5. Informal Comments and Questions from Scoping Meetings
the canal. CAP is receptive to utilities crossing the canal.
The description of the ACC process does not sound truthful. BLM said that the state made the determination to move the line from private to public land. The state was aware that it was moving the route from “planned land to unplanned land.”
Suggest that APS go into further detail on the alternatives considered in the ACC process.
Question Summary
If the 8 mile portion along SR74 is not approved, what is the likelihood that the rest of the corridor would change?
When discussing the possibility of separating the lines, will APS consider routing options not presented to the ACC in the initial application?
If the area along SR 74 is a Class III, are we not displacing ADOT with this proposal?
Is the BLM limited to only public land?
April 26, 2011 Public Scoping Meeting
Question Summary
Did APS’ original preferred route go along SR 74?
Can the 500kV and the 230kV go on the same pole on the original preferred route that did not affect BLM land?
Why couldn’t this line go along with the other power line south of the Carefree Highway that intersects Lake Pleasant road a mile or two south of the area shown on the map? If there’s already an existing corridor, why not put this line in that corridor?
BLM created a transportation corridor at ADOT’s request. Why was this corridor requested?
Does the distinction between a transportation corridor and a utility corridor go back to old statutes? Why would BLM make a distinction given the number of co-located corridors?
The transportation corridor goes half a mile in each direction. What is the aggregate footage between the utility and transportation corridors in a best and worst case scenario?
Is it reasonable to assume that it was political opposition that caused the ACC to throw out the preferred route APS selected?
How narrowly is BLM looking at a potential RMP amendment? If BLM adds a utility corridor, could BLM also remove one from elsewhere?
Area growth has slowed since the 2003 APS study determining the need for this line, so why is this line still needed? Are there no other ways to build reliability into the system?
SR 74 was designated as a scenic corridor in 1994. What type of mitigation will be implemented along this road to preserve the view?
When the ACC held hearings on this project, was the BLM involved and if so, what was the BLM’s position?
What effect would this project have on endangered species and desert tortoises becoming endangered and surrounding habitat?
What would the impact be from construction?
Are there any plans to include research assessing actual impacts from the project such as movement studies?
The substation is on the south side of the road, so it seems odd to take the line across to the north side of the road then back down to the south side. Is it possible to run the line down the south side only?
April 27, 2011 Public Scoping Meeting
Comment Summary
A lot of information was received by property owners a couple of years ago, but nothing was received after that time. Now the project is back again only much closer to our homes.
Question Summary

Table 5. Informal Comments and Questions from Scoping Meetings
If the Resource Management Plan (RMP) amendment is not approved, would the line be moved to an alternative route? Is the line going in no matter what?
Why is this line being put in the middle of a scenic area if there are existing corridors already?
How many homes will be affected by this line? How close will the line be to the homes?
Why can't APS use the smaller poles instead of the larger poles?
Why can't the line be placed underground or underground along the CAP canal?
Has a line along the CAP been considered?
In Alaska high voltage power lines have been placed under water. Could that be done here – perhaps in the CAP canal?
The RMP was approved a year ago with no utility corridor in this area. What has changed that would now warrant approval of the amendment? Why was this utility corridor not included when the RMP was approved?
When will BLM make their decision? Who is the decision maker?
How long ago did the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) study the tortoise range?
BLM is protecting the tortoise, but who is protecting the homeowners?
Does the certificated corridor mean that the decision has already been made?
How does the location of the line less than half a mile away affect animal and human health? Why should the public be worried about the tortoise if this is the case?
Are federal funds being used for this project?
Will APS pay taxes on the corridor?
What happens if lightning strikes on BLM lands?
If vegetation is ruined regardless of placement above- or under- ground, why not bury the line?
Why was the route not kept south of SR 74?
How many homeowners would be affected by the line?
Does APS have any statistics or information on how this line could affect home values?
Why are we talking about a corridor on SR 74 in Wittmann?
Is the BLM insane to put this through one of the most beautiful corridors in Phoenix?
Why can't the line use the Hassayampa route?
Are there any restrictions on how far lines have to be from private property?
Would APS be allowed to put the lines next to the Luke AFB no fly zones?
April 28, 2011 Public Scoping Meeting
Question Summary
Has ADOT determined the compatibility of this project with plans to construct a freeway?
How legitimate is the APS study today given the lack of growth and development?
Has APS considered putting these lines underground?
Did APS communicate that SR 74 was a potential route in 2003? If so, what did BLM do with that information at that time?
Doesn't the BLM work for the public?
Why would BLM consider moving this project onto pristine/native desert instead of an existing corridor?
Why are we here after everyone has already agreed to placement of the line on the north side of SR 74?
If the desert tortoise is added to the red list would it be considered endangered or threatened?
Will the proposed line cause health issues in the Vistancia community?
Why ruin more desert to run transmission lines? SR 74 should be set up as a utility corridor.
Aren't major utilities expected along this area?
As a part of the process, will BLM try to correct other inconsistencies in the RMP?
Why wasn't this corridor included in the RMP?
Doesn't the CAP board and the Bureau of Reclamation support this application?

Table 5. Informal Comments and Questions from Scoping Meetings
Aren't there existing lines near Black Canyon City?
Have there ever been amendments approved for areas that were not originally utility corridors?
How much of the savings from this combined line project will be passed along to APS' customers?
Isn't BLM required to study other entities' plans when re-working RMPs?
Can the BLM look at other alternatives?
Will the power lines be detrimental to the tortoise population? Shouldn't the BLM be equally concerned with human health?
The map only identifies transportation and multi-use corridors, but there isn't there a utility along the CAP canal?
How will BLM ensure that the alternatives are compatible with the City of Peoria's plan?
Are all variables weighted equally?
The City of Peoria has been involved in the planning process that set the certificated corridor to the north for years. Peoria approved this corridor, the ACC approved this corridor, does that matter?
Was there a specific timeline on the 11 year RMP? If not, then why wasn't this project considered before finalizing the RMP? Was there a specific legal date for signing the new RMP?
Who designated SR 74 as a scenic corridor?
Is the 2003 APS study really relevant? Has the study been updated?
Will BLM take the people's needs into consideration in the EIS?
Will these lines be integrated into the smart grid?
Who is responsible for making the final decision on the RMP amendment?
Isn't the highway more detrimental to the tortoises than a transmission line?
Why did the BLM give the APS line request a level 3 ranking?
How close is the nearest power line to homes?
Was the City of Peoria involved in the RMP process? Why didn't the City make comments on the Draft RMP?
How did APS not foresee the need for power lines in this area?
There were a number of communities involved in the RMP process. How was the community response then v. now? What was the general reaction of other communities at the previous public meetings?
Is there a physical deterrent that is preventing the line from running along the south side of SR 74?
How does BLM weigh the effects to someone just driving by v. someone who has to see the lines from their backyard?
Why will it take 2 years to make this decision? This seems like an unnecessarily long time and a waste of time and money.
What is the use of the 500kV line? Will it take power through here but not service this area?
Are there any other significant entities that are opposed to the use of the SR 74 corridor?

5.0 PRELIMINARY ISSUES, CONCERNS, AND OPPORTUNITIES

The following is a preliminary list of issues, concerns, and opportunities for the BLM to address in the EIS process. The list was developed from comments received during the public scoping meetings, internal scoping comments from agency officials, and additional input from agency resource specialists. These issue statements will be used to inform the data collection and analyses for the EIS.

5.1 Purpose and Need

Issue: Define the Purpose and Need for the proposed action

5.2 Project Description and Alternative Technologies

Issue: Consider mitigation or adjustments to the project description. Suggestions during scoping included:

- Undergrounding transmission lines
- Tortoise fencing
- Off-site mitigation

5.3 Transmission Line Routing Alternatives

Issue: Consider alternatives to the proposed action. Alternatives suggested during scoping include:

- CAP canal route
- Consider putting the line underwater in the CAP
- Route as far north of SR 74 as possible
- Route south of SR 74
- Route following SR 74 from Morristown to Morgan Substation
- Utilize the Carefree Highway alignment (the APS original proposal to the ACC)
- Consider alternatives that avoid residential communities
- Underground the line(s) near Luke Auxiliary Field #1

5.4 Resource Inventory and Impacts

5.4.1 Air and Climate

Issue: Consider effects to particulate matter emissions during construction and operation.

5.4.2 Biological Resources

Issue: Consider effects to coyote, bobcat, javelin, roadrunner, wild burrow, quail, rabbit, squirrel, desert tortoise, mule deer, and kit fox populations and habitat.

Issue: Consider wildlife connectivity in the area.

Issue: Consider impacts from increased predation of wildlife from increased perching.

Issue: Consider impacts to Agua Fria River and riparian environments.

5.4.3 Health and Safety

Issue: Consider health effects from high voltage transmission lines to both humans and animals.

Issue: Consider air space hazards.

5.4.4 Recreation

Issue: Consider conflicts with recreational areas and users.

5.4.5 Socioeconomic

Issue: Consider impacts to low income communities.

Issue: Consider economic benefits from increased electricity source for northwest valley.

Issue: Consider impacts/benefits to renewable energy development.

Issue: Consider impacts to property values from transmission line location.

Issue: Consider impacts to recreation and tourism (recreational outfitters, county parks, etc.)

Issue: Consider impacts to the quality of life of residential developments near the proposed transmission line.

5.4.6 Scenic/Visual

Issue: Consider impacts to residential viewers.

Issue: Consider impacts to transportation viewers.

Issue: Consider impacts to recreational viewers.

Issue: Consider impacts to views of public lands.

Issue: Consider the scenic nature of SR 74 and the surrounding areas.

5.4.7 Transportation

Issue: Consider impacts/benefits of co-location of transmission line with existing SR 74 roadway.