

PUBLIC SCOPING NOTICE

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Carlsbad Field Office is initializing public scoping for Xcel Energy's Hobbs-China Draw 345kV Transmission Line Project. The BLM is the lead federal agency for the undertaking.

Xcel Energy is proposing to construct, operate, and maintain an approximately 85-mile, single-circuit alternating current (AC), 345 kV overhead transmission line from the existing Hobbs Generation Substation to the planned China Draw Substation as well as an approximately 33-mile, single-circuit AC, 345kV transmission line from the Eddy County substation to the proposed Kiowa substation. One new substation would be constructed and the Hobbs Generation, North Loving, and Eddy County Substations would be expanded. The transmission lines and associated substations are referred to as the "project" or "Proposed Action." The transmission line would help serve the increased electrical demand in southeast New Mexico from oil and gas development and other electrical loads in the region.

The project would be located in Lea and Eddy Counties. Xcel Energy is seeking a permanent 150 feet right-of-way for the length of the project. Approximately five to six temporary use areas would be located outside of the permanent right-of-way to construct the project. The locations of these sites have not been determined. Access roads would also be built within and outside of the transmission line right-of-way for construction and maintenance purposes.

Specific details about the project, including description of the proposed project elements, a legal description of the preliminary corridor, and a map are available on the Carlsbad Field Office webpage at: http://www.blm.gov/nm/st/en/fo/Carlsbad_Field_Office.html

Scoping gives the public a chance to tell the BLM what issues and concerns they think should be addressed in an Environmental Assessment. Comments concerning the proposed action, alternatives, and identification of environmental issues are most helpful. BLM is requesting comments from the public within 30 days from the date of this notice. Written comments should be addressed to:

BLM, Carlsbad Field Office
Attn: Tessa Cisneros
620 East Greene St.
Carlsbad, NM. 88220
Phone: (575) 234-5980
Fax: (575) 885-9264
E-mail: tcisnero@nm.blm.gov