

Clark, Lincoln and White Pine Counties Groundwater Development EIS

Bureau of Land Management
Newsletter #1, January 2007

The SNWA Project

The Southern Nevada Water Authority is proposing to construct and operate a groundwater transportation and development project on public lands in rural Clark, Lincoln and White Pine counties to convey up to 200,000 acre-feet per year of groundwater resources to the Las Vegas and Coyote Spring valleys. The BLM is preparing an environmental impact statement (EIS) to analyze the potential impacts on environmental and human resources of the proposal. BLM is the lead federal agency for the project because rights-of-way on public lands are necessary for pipelines to transport the water. BLM selected ENSR/AECOM as a third-party contractor to assist in the preparation of the EIS.

Public Scoping Summary Available

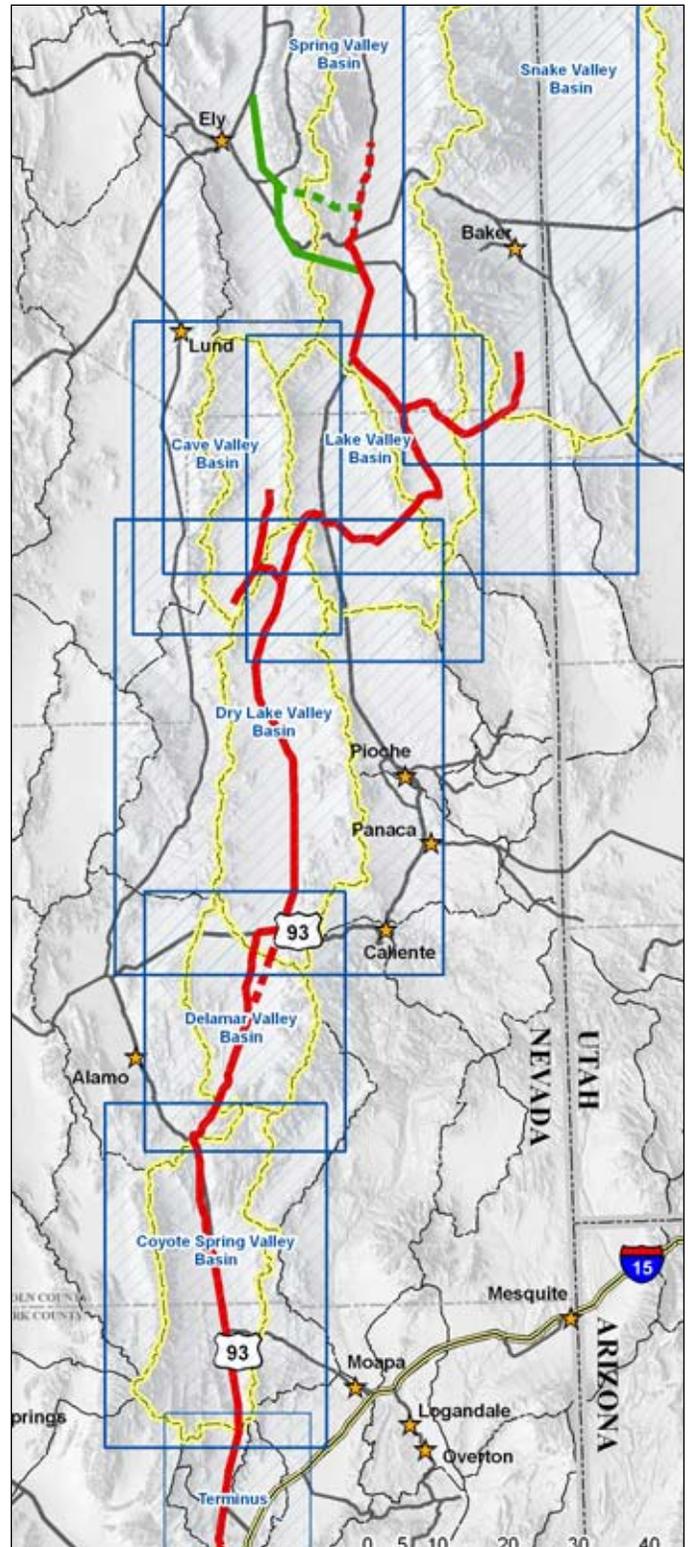
Summary reports of the comments received during two rounds of public scoping are available. During the first scoping period, April 8 through Aug. 1, 2005, 954 substantive letters were received along with 4,958 form letters, mainly email from non-governmental organizations. Because two substantive changes were made in the original proposed project, a second public scoping was offered from July 19 to Oct. 18, 2006. A total of 256 substantive letters and no form letters were received. Based on both scoping periods, 1,210 substantive letters were received. Of this, 597 were from Nevada, 459 from Utah and 154 from other states or countries.

The reports summarize the primary issues and identify preliminary issues and the proposed level of treatment in the EIS. The scoping comments will be used to develop the draft EIS.

The scoping summary can be accessed from the BLM Nevada website <http://www.nv.blm.gov/GWProjects/index.htm>. To have a copy mailed to you, call Kim Dow at 775-861-6681 or email nvgwprojects@blm.gov.

Public Participation

There will be other opportunities for public comment during the EIS process. When the draft EIS is released, BLM will hold a series of public meetings to review the document and make comments. The comments to the draft will be used to develop the final EIS.



The red line is the proposed pipeline and powerline alignment.
The green line is the proposed powerline alignment.

**National Environmental
Policy Act (NEPA)
PROCESS**

Conduct
scoping
and identify
issues

Collect
inventory
data

Formulate
alternatives

Prepare
analysis

Project Schedule

Public scoping is finished and preparation of the draft EIS is beginning. The next step is to conduct biological surveys of the project area and complete the groundwater model. Technical specialists with the cooperating agencies group will review and provide comments on the adequacy of the data and begin to formulate alternatives and impact analyses. This will lead to the development and review of internal draft documents. The goal is to have the draft EIS available for public review in mid-2008, with the incorporation of the public comments into a final EIS and Record of Decision in mid-2009.

January 2007
Publish Scoping Report

Scheduled for
summer 2008

Select
preferred
alternative;
issue
draft EIS

Hold
comment
period on
draft EIS

Cooperating Agencies Group

A group of federal, state and local agencies will assist the BLM in preparation of the EIS by reviewing and providing comments of the adequacy of data, formulation of alternatives, impact analyses, internal draft documents, and responses to public comments. The group was assembled in 2005 to provide direction to the EIS contractor. The group consists of 13 agency representatives that bring a wide variety of expertise to the process:

- State of Utah
- Nevada's White Pine, Lincoln and Clark counties
- Utah's Millard and Juab counties
- Central Nevada Regional Water Authority
- Bureau of Indian Affairs
- Bureau of Reclamation
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- Nellis Air Force Base
- National Park Service
- U.S. Forest Service

The group met in October 2006 for an update on the project status, to discuss the roles of the cooperating agency members during the EIS process, and to discuss agency Memoranda of Understanding agreements.

Beginning in 2007, the group will hold monthly conference calls and meet every 90 to 120 days.

Scheduled for
spring 2009

Respond to
comments;
issue
proposed
final EIS

30-day
appeal
period

**Do you want to continue to
receive information on the
Project?**

You have been included in this newsletter mailing because you contacted BLM about this project during the two scoping periods.

To continue to receive updates on the project, please print your name and address on the postcard included with this newsletter.

You must attach a stamp and return the postcard to BLM by **March 1, 2007**.

The old mailing list will be discarded and a new mailing list will be developed from the returned postcards.

Appeal:
resolve and
modify EIS
if needed

No appeal:
Sign
record of
decision to
approve EIS

Sign
record of
decision to
approve EIS

Implement
project

Monitor
and
evaluate
project

BLM Groundwater Projects Office

phone: 775-861-6681
fax: 775-861-6689
email: nvgwprojects@blm.gov

Penny Woods, project manager
Dan Netcher, deputy project manager
Kim Dow, project analyst