

ENERGY GATEWAY SOUTH TRANSMISSION PROJECT

March 2011 - Newsletter 1

This is the first in a series of newsletters from the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to keep you informed about the Energy Gateway South Transmission Project (project).

Introduction

BLM Wyoming received an application for right-of-way across federal land from PacifiCorp (doing business as Rocky Mountain Power). Rocky Mountain Power (the company) proposes constructing and operating a 500-kilovolt (kV) alternating current transmission line from south-central Wyoming to central Utah. The BLM has determined that this is a major federal action, which requires an environmental impact statement (EIS) in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) and Council on Environmental Quality regulations (40 CFR 1500-1508).

Working with other government entities

Because the transmission line would cross federal land—most of which is administered and managed by the BLM—the BLM will serve as the lead agency responsible for overseeing EIS preparation. BLM Wyoming is designated the lead office. A total of 24 federal and state agencies and local governments are participating in the preparation of the EIS as cooperating agencies, as shown below.

Cooperating Agencies

- USDA Forest Service, Intermountain Region
- USDI Bureau of Indian Affairs, Western Region
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, South Pacific Division
- U.S. Army Environmental Center
- U.S. Navy Region Southwest
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Mountain Prairie Region
- States of Wyoming, Colorado, and Utah
- Counties:
 - Carbon County, WY
 - Mesa County, CO
 - Moffat County, CO
 - Rio Blanco County, CO
 - Carbon County, UT
 - Duchesne County, UT
 - Emery County, UT
 - Grand County, UT
 - Juab County, UT
 - Sanpete County, UT
 - Uintah County, UT
- Wyoming Conservation Districts:
 - Little Snake River Conservation District
 - Saratoga-Encampment-Rawlins Conservation District
 - Sweetwater County Conservation District
 - Medicine Bow Conservation District

The BLM also will lead consultations with:

- American Indian tribes (Government-to-Government);
- State Historic Preservation Officers in the states of Wyoming, Colorado, and Utah in compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966; and
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in compliance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973.

Environmental Planning Group, Inc. (EPG) is the third-party environmental consultant helping the BLM with its responsibilities.

Why is this project needed?

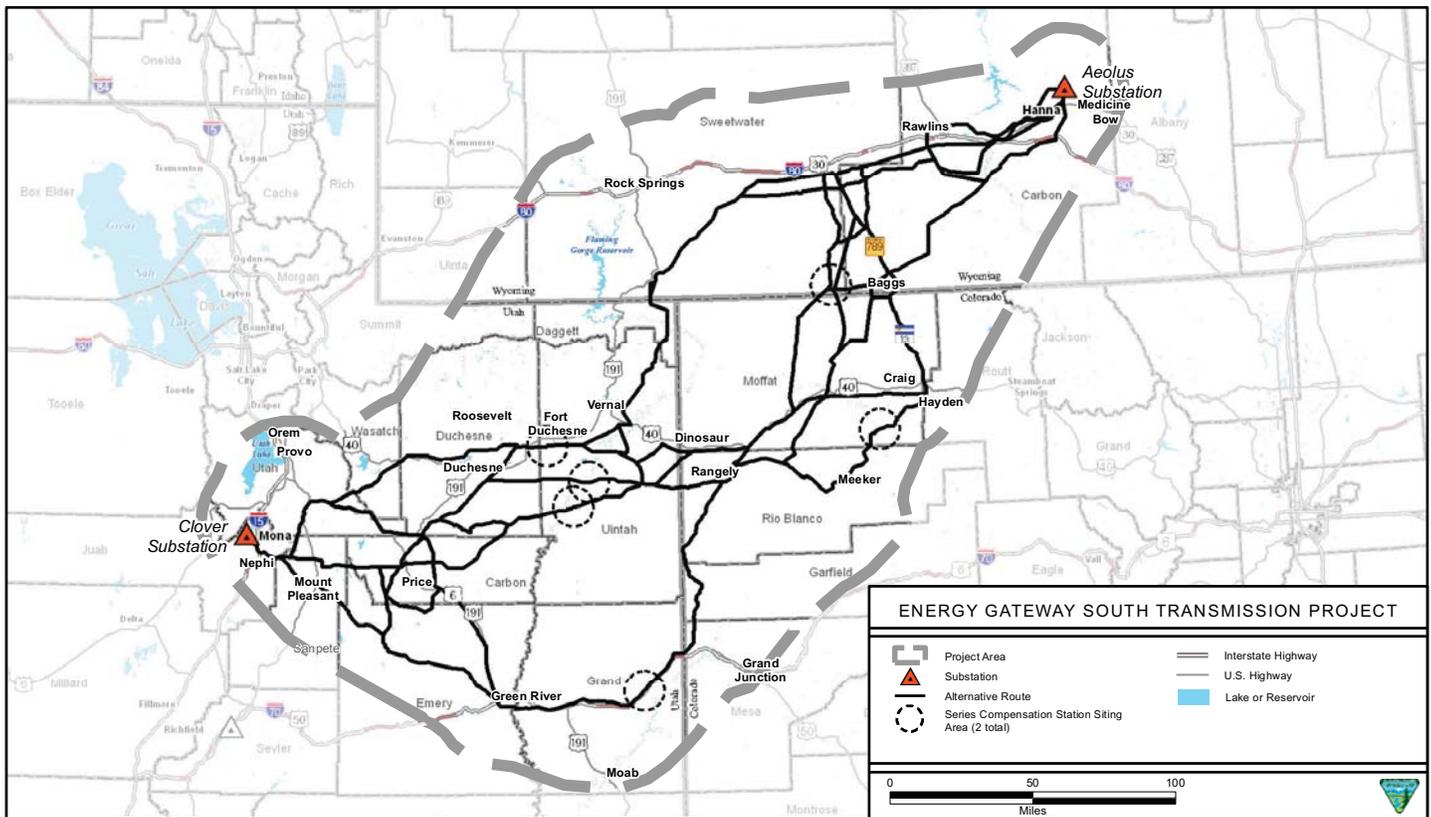
Through planning studies analyzing the electrical power system, Rocky Mountain Power determined that its existing system, last upgraded about 25 years ago, is fully used and needs to be upgraded. In 2007, Rocky Mountain Power committed to expanding its transmission network to ensure sufficient capacity would be available to meet the needs of its new and existing customers. The Energy Gateway South Transmission Project would increase capacity and service reliability for its customers in the region now and into the future. When completed, the line would transmit up to 1,500 megawatts of electricity.

Where would the transmission line be located?

Depending on the route selected, the transmission line would traverse portions of Wyoming and Utah, and possibly northeastern Colorado. It would interconnect the planned Aeolus Substation near Medicine Bow in Carbon County, Wyoming, with the planned Clover Substation near Mona in Juab County, Utah; a distance of approximately 400 miles depending on the alternative route selected (refer to map).

Sites of the Aeolus and Clover substations are located on privately owned lands.

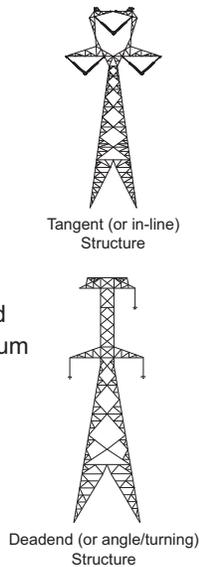




What would the transmission line look like?

The type of transmission line structure to be used depends on the engineering design, on constraints posed by land uses, and other factors. The typical structures are illustrated in the diagrams to the right. The transmission line structures may range in height from 140 to 190 feet. Spans between transmission line structures average between 1,000 and 1,500 feet (4 to 5 structures per mile), have a right-of-way width of 250 feet, and construction and maintenance access roads would be a minimum of 14 feet wide.

Rocky Mountain Power will develop more detailed engineering and design information for the transmission line and associated facilities as the project progresses.



How were the alternative routes developed?

The company conducted studies to identify potential alternative routes for the transmission line. The alternative routes were identified based on the following:

- paralleling existing linear features such as lower-voltage transmission lines, roads, railroads, and pipelines;
- using corridors designated by federal land-management agencies and identified in local planning documents to contain linear facilities;
- using approved corridors identified in the recent federally sponsored West-wide Energy Corridor Programmatic EIS; and
- avoiding areas such as Wilderness or Wilderness Study Areas, critical habitat, urban areas, irrigated farm land, and others. In some areas, new corridors may be needed.

Currently, there are approximately 2,200 miles of alternative routes being considered. Public comments gathered from scoping meetings will further refine the alternative routes prior to BLM selecting a preferred route.



What is the purpose of preparing an EIS?

The EIS will disclose the effects of implementing the project and measures needed to mitigate the effects. The EIS will be prepared in compliance with NEPA; Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations; and other regulations including, but not limited to, the Endangered Species Act, National Historic Preservation Act, policies, and guidelines. Existing agency land-use plans may need to be amended. Plan amendments would be completed in compliance with the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 and regulations, policies, and guidelines of the land-management agencies requiring the plan amendments.

As the EIS is being developed, the company will be conducting geotechnical testing to obtain information sufficient for preliminary project engineering and design. The BLM will prepare an environmental assessment (EA) to address the effects of the testing. The results documented in the EA also will be incorporated into the EIS; thereby comprehensively addressing the effects of all actions associated with the project.

What is the process for preparing the EIS and plan amendments?

Preparing an EIS has a number of steps, as shown in the diagram at the bottom of the page and described below.

1. The EIS begins with publishing a *Federal Register* Notice of Intent to prepare an EIS, which commences a 90-day public comment period.
2. The BLM will complete data collection for each of the resources and resource uses potentially affected in the project area.
3. The BLM, in coordination with the cooperating agencies, will assess the impacts the project may have on each of the resources and apply measures to mitigate the impacts.
4. The alternative routes will be compared and a preferred alternative will be selected.
5. The process will be documented and the impacts disclosed in the Draft EIS and plan amendments that will be released for a 90-day public review and comment period.
6. Comments received will be analyzed and responses to the comments will be included in a Final EIS and proposed plan amendments.
7. A minimum 30-day comment period will conclude with the issuance of a Record of Decision. The BLM would issue a right-of-way grant and the U.S. Forest Service would issue a special-use permit. At that time, Rocky Mountain Power will

acquire all required federal, state, county, and local permits before beginning construction in 2016.

The project is estimated to be in service 2017 to 2019.

How can you participate in the EIS process?

We value your input; your comments are important to the project. The BLM wants to hear from you throughout the EIS process, and encourages you to attend one or more of the upcoming scoping meetings to learn about the project and provide comments. Comments are very helpful at this early stage of the project when the BLM is determining the issues to address in the EIS. The BLM will be hosting 12 scoping open-house meetings from 4:30 to 7:30 p.m. on the dates and locations listed in this newsletter. The meetings will be informative and representatives from the BLM and Rocky Mountain Power will be available to discuss the project with you.

You may submit comments ...

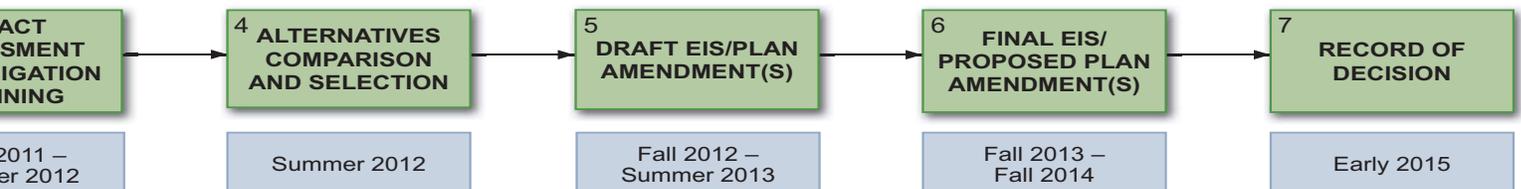
- at the scoping meetings;
- by email at GatewaySouth_WYMail@blm.gov; or
- by regular mail to the following address:

Energy Gateway South Transmission Project
P.O. Box 21150
Cheyenne, Wyoming 82003

Comments should be received by the end of the scoping period to be included in the Scoping Report. The Scoping Report will be prepared to describe the scoping activities, summarize the comments received, and identify the issues derived from scoping. When completed, the Scoping Report will be posted on the BLM's project website for review. The BLM will not be responding to individual scoping comments; however, all comments received will be reviewed, considered in the EIS process, and included in the project record.

The BLM encourages you to stay informed by visiting the BLM project website (www.blm.gov/wy/st/en/info/NEPA/documents/hdd/gateway_south.html) and ask to be on the project mailing list to receive newsletters providing updates on the project.

Also, the BLM will mail newsletters at key milestones of the project, submit periodic news articles and announcements to regional and local newspapers and other media outlets, and will conduct additional open-house meetings at key milestones of the EIS process.



Energy Gateway South Transmission Project
P.O. Box 21150
Cheyenne, WY 82003



Public Scoping Meetings – Please attend!

Baggs, WY

May 10, 2011
Valley Community Center
255 West Osborne

Rock Springs, WY

May 11, 2011
Rock Springs High School
1375 James Drive

Rawlins, WY

May 12, 2011
Rawlins High School
1401 Colorado Street

Craig, CO

May 17, 2011
Craig Holiday Inn
300 South Colorado Highway 13

Rangely, CO

May 18, 2011
Western Rio Blanco
Recreation Center
611 South Stanolind Ave

Grand Junction, CO

May 19, 2011
Central High School
550 Warrior Way

Roosevelt, UT

May 24, 2011
Union High School
135 North Union

Fort Duchesne, UT

May 25, 2011
Ute Indian Tribal Office
988 South 7500 East

Nephi, UT

May 26, 2011
Juab High School
802 North 650 East

Price, UT

May 31, 2011
Carbon High School
750 East 400 North

Mount Pleasant, UT

June 1, 2011
North Sanpete High School
390 East 700 South

Green River, UT

June 2, 2011
Green River High School
745 West Pirate Avenue

All meetings will be held from 4:30 pm to 7:30 p.m.

ENERGY GATEWAY SOUTH TRANSMISSION PROJECT