

Energy Gateway South Transmission Project Project Update

Draft EIS: The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) released the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Land Use Plan Amendments (LUPAs) on February 21, 2014, which were available for review for 90 days; ending May 22, 2014.

In December 2013, the BLM sent a postcard to all parties on the project mailing list announcing availability of the Draft EIS and LUPAs for public review in February 2014 and asking people, interested in receiving a copy of the document, to respond to the BLM. DVD copies of the document were sent to interested parties and paper copies were sent to BLM and U.S. Forest Service (USFS) offices in the project area (Newsletter 4 on this website provides a list of the locations).

The availability of the Draft EIS and LUPAs and the dates and locations of open-house meetings were announced in local and regional newspapers and on this website in a calendar and Newsletter 4, which was mailed to all parties on the project mailing list.

In March and April 2014, the BLM conducted a series of 12 open houses in various locations in the project area: Rawlins and Baggs in Wyoming; Craig, Rangely, and Grand Junction in Colorado; and Vernal, Fort Duchesne, Roosevelt, Price, Green River, Mount Pleasant, and Nephi in Utah. A total of 279 people attended the open houses; 72 in Wyoming, 31 in Colorado, and 176 in Utah. During the open houses, 25 people submitted comments on the Draft EIS and LUPAs. Other comments were submitted to the BLM via letters and emails.

The BLM received a total of 603 comment submittals (that is, letters, emails, comment forms), of which 427 submittals were a form letter or postcard and 176 unique comment submittals as follows: 5 from federal agencies, 6 from state agencies, 11 from counties, 2 from municipalities, 10 from corporations, 9 from specials-interest groups, and 133 from individuals. In all, there are a total of about 995 comments that BLM is reviewing.

Colocating Transmission Line Alignments: In January 2014, the BLM and USFS met with the Applicants of the Energy Gateway South Transmission Project (Rocky Mountain Power) and TransWest Express Transmission Project (TransWest Express LLC) to discuss colocation of the transmission line alignments. Since the two projects are studying the same or similar study corridors and, at present, the path of the agency-preferred alternative route for the two projects is the same, the BLM and USFS requested the two companies to work together to identify transmission line alignments, within the study corridor of the agency-preferred alternative route, that parallel approximately 250 feet from any existing linear facilities and approximately 300 feet from one another. The two companies completed the colocated alignments in late Spring 2014. The adjusted alignment along the path of the agency-preferred alternative route will be analyzed and the results documented in the Final EIS.

Final EIS: Once the comment period ended on May 22, 2014, all comments received are being reviewed and analyzed to determine whether the alignments of the alternative routes require adjustment and whether information, data, and/or analyses need to be updated for the Final EIS. Responses to the commen1ts will be



prepared for inclusion in the Final EIS. Release of the Final EIS to the public is anticipated for late winter 2015.

Resource Task Groups: Task groups of resources leads from participating agencies continue to meet regularly to focus on solutions for resource-specific issues. The *Cultural Resources Task Group* (CRTG) continues to draft the Programmatic Agreement to outline the stipulations that will be followed for identifying, assessing, and treating cultural resources in accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. The CRTG reviewed the draft Programmatic Agreement with participating agencies and interested parties in June 2014. The completed Programmatic Agreement will be included as an appendix in the Final EIS. The *Biological Resources Task Group* continues addressing issues of key biological resources that could be affected by the project and developing mitigation and conservation strategies to reduce effects of the project. The *Visual Resources Task Group* continues addressing potential effects of the project on views and landscape character as well as compliance with visual management objectives designated in agency resource management plans.

Tribal Consultation: In addition to preparing the EIS and efforts in compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, the BLM continues efforts to engage American Indian tribes through Government-to-Government consultation. The BLM will be meeting with the Ute Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation in early August 2014.

Searchable Landowner Website: The Applicant has made available a public website for landowners to search and determine the relationship of the transmission line alternative routes to their properties. This web tool proved useful at the open houses in March and April, and is available at: http://gis.paragon-partners.com/FlexMaps/GWS_Website.

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