

TRANSWEST EXPRESS TRANSMISSION PROJECT

January 2011

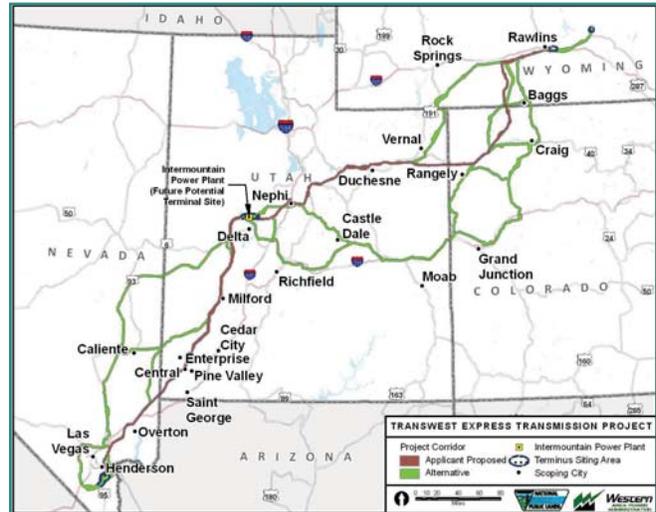
Introduction

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) in Wyoming received an application for right-of-way across federal land from TransWest Express, LLC (the company). The company proposes to construct and operate a 600-kilovolt (kV) direct current transmission line from south-central Wyoming to southern Nevada (the project). The BLM has determined that this is a major federal action that 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).

The company and Western Area Power Administration (Western) have entered into a non-binding term sheet through which they are evaluating each holding a 50% joint ownership in the project. The company and Western are developing the terms of their joint ownership, such as construction, operation, and maintenance of the project.

Under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), Western was granted authority to borrow funds from the U.S. Treasury to (among other things) plan, finance, and construct new or upgraded transmission facilities that deliver renewable energy. Western would use this authority for its participation in the project.

The BLM and Western are serving as joint-lead agencies in preparing the EIS.



Working with other government entities

BLM in Wyoming is designated the lead agency for EIS preparation for the BLM. Fifty federal, state, and county governments were invited to participate as cooperating agencies. To date, 33 agencies have accepted the invitation. BLM and Western also notified 45 tribes and pueblos. A list of cooperating agencies is shown below.

Cooperating Agencies

Federal

- Intermountain Forest Service Region, Ogden, Utah
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service representing:
 - Mountain Prairie Region, Lakewood
 - Pacific Southwest Region, Sacramento
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
 - South Pacific Division
 - Northwestern Division
- Navy Region Southwest, San Diego
- Bureau of Reclamation Lower Colorado Region
- U.S. Army Environmental Center, Western Region
- BIA Western Region, Phoenix, representing:
 - Rocky Mountain Region, Billings
 - Southwest Region, Albuquerque

- Saratoga-Encampment-Rawlins Conservation District
- Sweetwater County Conservation District

State

- State of Wyoming
- State of Colorado
- State of Utah
- State of Nevada

County

- Carbon County, WY
- Garfield County, CO
- Mesa County, CO
- Moffat County, CO
- Rio Blanco County, CO
- Beaver County, UT
- Duchesne County, UT
- Emery County, UT
- Iron County, UT
- Juab County, UT
- Millard County, UT
- Piute County, UT
- Sevier County, UT
- Uintah County, UT
- Wasatch County, UT
- Washington County, UT
- Clark County, NV
- Lincoln County, NV

Other

- Little Snake River Conservation District
- Medicine Bow Conservation District

The joint-lead agencies also will lead consultations with:

- American Indian tribes (Government-to-Government)
- State Historic Preservation Officers in Wyoming, Colorado, Utah, and Nevada 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.

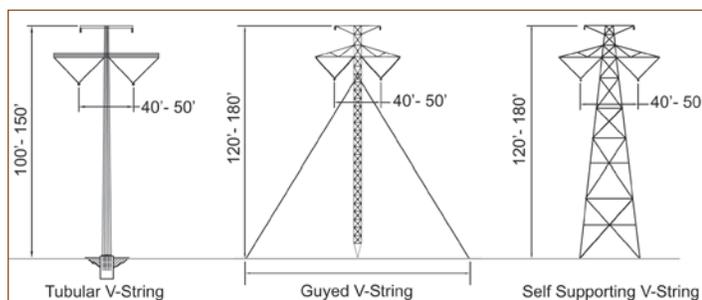
AECOM is the third-party environmental consultant helping the BLM and Western with their responsibilities.

Where would the project be located?

The transmission line would be approximately 725 miles long and may cross 4 states and 24 counties, depending on the alternative route selected (see map, page 1). The line would originate in south-central Wyoming, cross northwestern Colorado, traverse Utah with the potential to connect to the Intermountain Power Plant near Delta, Utah, and terminate in southern Nevada near the existing Marketplace substation. As part of the project, substation/converter stations, a fiber optic network communications system, two ground electrode facilities, and access roads would be constructed. When complete, the project would provide capacity of up to 3,000 megawatts of electricity.

What would the transmission line look like?

The type of transmission line structure to be used depends on the engineering design and on constraints posed by land uses. Typical structures are illustrated in the diagrams below. The transmission line may range in height from 120 to 180 feet, transmission line spans average between 900 and 1,500 feet; a right-of-way width of 250 feet; and construction and maintenance access roads approximately 30 feet wide.



How were the alternative corridors developed?

The company identified potential alternative corridors for the transmission line. Corridors were submitted to the BLM in a right-of-way application. BLM, Western and U.S. Forest Service reviewed the corridors, which were identified based on:

- Following existing linear features such as lower-voltage transmission lines, roads, railroads, and pipelines;

- Using utility corridors designated by federal land management agencies and identified in local planning documents;
- Using approved corridors identified in the West-wide Energy Corridor Programmatic EIS; and
- Avoiding specially designated areas such as Wilderness Management/Study Areas, critical habitat, urban areas, irrigated farm land, and others.

Public comments gathered from scoping meetings will further refine the alternative routes prior to BLM and Western selecting a preferred alternative.

What is the purpose for preparing an EIS?

An EIS is prepared for major federal actions that may have a significant effect on the environment. The effects of a proposed project are analyzed in an EIS to determine potential environmental impacts and methods needed for mitigation. Along with the EIS, existing agency land use plans may need to be amended. Plan amendments will 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.

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

Preparing an EIS has a number of steps, as shown in the diagram to the right. The EIS begins with publishing a *Federal Register* Notice of Intent to prepare an EIS, which commences a 90-day public scoping period. BLM and Western will complete data collection for each of the resources and their uses potentially affected in the project area. In coordination with the cooperating agencies, BLM and Western will assess the impacts that the project may have on each of the resources and their uses and apply measures to mitigate the impacts. Alternatives will be compared and a preferred alternative(s) will be selected. The process will be documented and the impacts disclosed in the Draft EIS and plan amendments when a 90-day public review and comment period will be held. Comments will be analyzed and responses to the comments will be included in a Final EIS and proposed plan amendments.

How can you participate in the EIS process?

BLM and Western encourage you to attend a scoping meeting to learn about the project and submit your comments, questions, and concerns. In addition to scoping, you are encouraged to stay informed by using the following information tools:

- BLM's project website (<http://www.blm.gov/wy/st/en/info/NEPA/documents/hdd/transwest.html>); and Western's project website (www.wapa.gov/transmission/TranWestExpress.htm).
- An extensive mailing list to send newsletters and updated information.

- An email address and post office box to receive your comments and concerns:
 - TransWest_WYMail@blm.gov
 - TransWest Express Project
Bureau of Land Management
P.O. Box 20678
Cheyenne, WY 82003

BLM and Western also will keep you informed through regional and local newspapers, radio and television stations, and conduct open house meetings at key milestones during the EIS process.

Environmental Impact Statement Process (NEPA Process)



Tips for Providing Effective Comments

Your participation is an important part of the decision-making process!

- Submit your comments on potential impacts and ideas for project alternatives.
- Review the BLM and Western websites, monitor local newspapers, attend public meetings, and become familiar with the proposed project development.
- Provide substantive and concise written comments.
- Learn about the NEPA process and when in the process agencies will receive comments.
- Keep your comments focused on the proposed project being analyzed.
- Submit your comments within the timeframes announced. This helps the agencies include all concerns in the NEPA document.
- Make sure that you are on the EIS mailing list to receive notification of public meetings or project information, or both.

How to Submit Comments

- Written comments may be submitted at the public scoping meetings, or
- You may mail your comments to:
Bureau of Land Management
TransWest Express Project
P.O. Box 20678
Cheyenne, WY 82003, or
- You may email your comments to:
TransWest_WYMail@blm.gov



Bureau of Land Management
P.O. Box 20678
Cheyenne, WY 82003

Please join us at any of TransWest Express Scoping Meetings.

Date	Location	Address	Date	Location	Address
January 25, 2011	Uintah High School	1880 West 500 North, Vernal, UT	February 17, 2011	St. George Branch Washington County Library	88 West 100 South, St. George, UT
January 26, 2011	Moffat County School District Administrative Building	775 Yampa Avenue, Craig, CO	February 22, 2011	Pine Valley Fire Station	860 East Main, Pine Valley, UT
January 27, 2011	Northwestern Community College Weiss Activity Center	500 Kennedy Drive, Rangely, CO	February 23, 2011	Central Fire Station	155 East Center Street, Central, UT
January 31, 2011	Central High School Library	550 Warrior Way, Grand Junction, CO	February 24, 2011	Enterprise High School	565 South 200 East, Enterprise, UT
February 1, 2011	Helen M. Knight Elementary	505 N. Mi Vida, Moab, UT	February 28, 2011	Caliente Elementary School	300 Lincoln Street, Caliente, NV
February 2, 2011	Castle Dale Elementary	195 East 600 North, Castle Dale, UT	March 1, 2011	Clark County Community Center	320 N. Moapa Valley Blvd., Overton NV (Moapa Valley)
February 7, 2011	Duchesne High School	155 West Main Street, Duchesne, UT	March 2, 2011	Heritage Park Senior Facility	300 S. Racetrack Road, Henderson, NV
February 8, 2011	Juab County Court-house Cultural Hall	160 North Main, Nephi UT	March 3, 2011	Desert Breeze Community Center	8275 Spring Mountain, Las Vegas, NV (Spring Valley)
February 9, 2011	Millard School District Office	285 East 450 North, Delta, UT	March 8, 2011	Jeffrey Center	315 West Pine, Rawlins, WY
February 14, 2011	Richfield High School	510 West 100 South, Richfield, UT	March 9, 2011	Rock Springs High School	1375 James Drive, Rock Springs, WY
February 15, 2011	Milford Elementary School	450 South 700 West, Milford, UT	March 10, 2011	LSRV Higher Education Center	360 Whippoorwill, Baggs, WY
February 16, 2011	Cedar City High School	703 West 600 South, Cedar City, UT	All Scoping meetings will be held from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m.		

