

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Federal Energy Corridor Designation
EIS Scoping Process
Public Meeting

Thursday, November 3, 2005
7:00 p.m.

Hilton Garden Inn
4000 North Central Avenue
Phoenix, Arizona 85012

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REPORTER'S TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

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APPEARANCES:

Paul Johnson, USDA Forest Service
Jeff Holdren, U.S. Department of Interior
Jerry Pell, Ph.D., CCM, U.S. Department of Energy
Carl Rountree, Arizona Bureau of Land Management

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P R O C E E D I N G S

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3 MR. ROUNTREE: Good evening. My name is Carl
4 Rountree. I'm the Associate State Director for the Arizona
5 Bureau of Land Management here in Arizona. I want to take
6 the time to thank you all for coming out this evening and
7 sharing your time us with to attend I think one of the last
8 public scoping meetings for the energy corridor designation
9 of corridors on federal lands in the 11 contiguous United
10 States. Those lands are managed by BLM and the U.S. Forest
11 Service.

12 As many of you may know, the Energy Policy Act
13 was passed this year and one of the stipulations in the Act
14 requires the Secretaries of Energy, Agriculture, and
15 Interior to designate corridors for oil and gas and
16 hydrogen pipelines and electricity transmission and
17 distribution facilities on the lands managed by federal
18 agencies in the 11 contiguous western states.

19 The Act further directs the Secretaries to
20 incorporate these designations within the land use plans or
21 resource management plans that each of the agencies relies
22 on in management of the many uses on their lands, and it
23 also requires equivalent studies to be done in helping
24 perform any environmental analyses that are necessary to
25 complete the designation of the corridors.

1 For these purposes, the Department of Energy,
2 Bureau of Land Management, and the Forest Service are in
3 the process of preparing the West-wide Energy Corridor
4 Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement. Currently
5 when we go about considering rights-of-ways, it's usually
6 done on a case-by-case basis, often without the benefit of
7 prior analysis and certainly in many cases without the
8 designation of corridors that cross jurisdictional
9 boundaries.

10 The Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement
11 is going to be taking a look at these things and evaluating
12 programmatic-type issues with energy corridor designation
13 as well as the first step in amending the land use plans or
14 the existing land use plans of the federal agencies that
15 manage those lands.

16 The designation of the corridors will
17 facilitate processing of energy-related rights-of-way,
18 applications, and the associated site-specific types of
19 analyses. The Argon National Laboratory is assisting the
20 Department of Interior Bureau of Land Management and U.S.
21 Forest Service in the preparation of the Programmatic
22 Environmental Impact Statement.

23 Representatives from the Department of Energy,
24 the U.S. Forest Service, and Bureau of Land Management, as
25 well as representatives from Argon are here this evening to

1 receive your comments. We certainly appreciate you taking
2 the time to come out and share your thoughts us with and
3 look forward to your continued involvement in the
4 Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement process.

5 The three gentlemen on the panel are going to
6 be conducting the scoping session this morning -- excuse
7 me, evening, it's been a long day. To my immediate right
8 from the Department of Energy is Jerry Pell; next to him is
9 Paul Johnson, a representative from the Forest Service, and
10 on his right is Jeff Holdren from the Bureau of Land
11 Management Washington office. With that, I will turn it
12 over to Jerry.

13 DR. PELL: Thank you very much, Carl, I
14 appreciate that. As Carl mentioned, my name is Dr. Jerry
15 Pell, I'm with the Office of Electricity Delivery and
16 Energy Reliability in the Department of Energy in
17 Washington, we abbreviate it to just OE. As you know, in
18 Washington everything is either an abbreviation or acronym
19 or both. I'd like to give the microphone over to my
20 colleagues on my right first before we start, give them a
21 chance to make any introductory remarks they might like to
22 share with you.

23 MR. JOHNSON: Thanks, Jerry. Again, my name is
24 Paul Johnson and I'm representing the Forest Service here.
25 Normally back in Washington, I head up all the energy

1 initiatives for the agency and so, again, we're pleased to
2 be here in Phoenix and welcome to the last scoping session
3 meeting here, so we are looking forward to your comments.

4 MR. HOLDREN: Yes, I'm Jeff Holdren, Bureau of
5 Land Management, and this meeting is about corridor studies
6 and doing an environmental Environmental Impact Statement.
7 For BLM, corridors aren't new to us; we've been doing
8 right-of-way corridors through our planning systems since
9 the early 1970s. However, there's not a connect between
10 some of our own BLM offices, corridors may not line up,
11 plus a lot of the other federal agencies haven't been
12 involved in corridor planning, so there is a lot of work to
13 be done which hopefully through the scoping meeting,
14 eventual publication of the EIS, and doing our planning,
15 we'll be able to resolve some of these issues.

16 DR. PELL: Thank you both. I should mention
17 I've been to Arizona a number of times, both Phoenix and
18 Tucson, it's always a pleasure to come back, so thank you
19 for this opportunity to enjoy the climate here yet another
20 time.

21 I want to review a little bit of the
22 background. I know that Carl mentioned some of what I'm
23 about to say, forgive me if there's overlap, but I just
24 want to make sure we have this on the record. By the way,
25 as a housekeeping matter, if anybody had to pay for parking

1 this evening, we do have a validation stamp out front at
2 our registration desk. So if you did pay for parking, get
3 your parking ticket validated and you shouldn't be charged.

4 As Mr. Rountree mentioned, there are three
5 agencies that are directly involved primarily in the
6 preparation of this Programmatic Environmental Impact
7 Statement, which are the Department of Energy, the Interior
8 Office, the Bureau of Land Management, and Department of
9 Agriculture Forest Service. The Bureau of Land Management
10 and the Department of Energy are co-leads on the
11 preparation of the Programmatic Environmental Impact
12 Statement and the Forest Service is a cooperating agency.

13 We're evaluating environmental cultural issues
14 associated with the designation of energy corridors on
15 Federal lands in the 11 western states and, based upon the
16 results of the Environmental Impact Statement, the Bureau
17 of Land Management and the Forest Service would amend their
18 respective land use plans by designating a series of energy
19 corridors, which is what the Energy Policy Act legislation
20 specified.

21 Your participation, as Carl said, is very
22 important because we depend on you to help us define the
23 scope of the study, and that's precisely why we call it
24 public scoping, because we really do use your input to
25 define what should be within the scope of the report.

1 The specific portion of the Energy Policy Act
2 that's involved here is Section 368, and that particular
3 language specifies the 11 western states, federal land, and
4 they also specify oil, gas, and hydrogen pipelines and
5 electricity transmission and distribution facilities. And
6 in reviewing the Congressional language, the agencies have
7 determined that designating corridors constitutes a major
8 federal action which may have a significant impact upon the
9 environment within the meaning of the National
10 Environmental Policy Act, or NEPA as it's better known by
11 many of you.

12 And that's what led to the initiation of this
13 Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement. And I will
14 emphasize it is indeed programmatic as opposed to what many
15 of you may be more familiar with, which is a
16 project-specific EIS. This will not get down to the level
17 of specificity that you would in a project-specific
18 document.

19 There are four ways for you to participate in
20 the process and to submit your comments. It makes no
21 difference which way you elect to use; all comments will be
22 given equal weight. It's just a question of whichever is
23 the more convenient and easiest for you. The four ways are
24 coming here tonight and speaking before us, submitting your
25 comments electronically either by e-mail or through the

1 Internet, regular mail, or by facsimile.

2 The one method I do discourage is regular mail
3 because, as a result of the Anthrax scare that we went
4 through in D.C., all mail coming into DOE now goes through
5 Anthrax screening, which has two detrimental effects; one
6 is it delays the mail about two weeks and the other is,
7 when you get it, it often is destroyed because it uses a
8 thermal process, I believe it's an X-ray process, and if
9 it's a Xerox document, it tends to fuse the carbon
10 particles, and when you take it out of the envelope, it's
11 one big fused lump. So if you're going to send mail to us,
12 please do so using one of the overnight services like
13 Federal Express or Emery Air Freight or United Package
14 Service.

15 MR. JOHNSON: UPS.

16 DR. PELL: UPS, you know what I mean. As Carl
17 said, it's been a long day, it's been a long two weeks,
18 this is my 13th day of being on the road for these
19 meetings. So the comment period closes officially on
20 November 28. We do take comments that come in late to the
21 extent that they can be considered. In other words, if the
22 analysis is still in progress, we will consider late
23 comments, but I would encourage you to please assist us by
24 getting your comments in by the deadline so we have benefit
25 of your thoughts as early as possible.

1 And I will now lead into the presentation
2 portion of the meeting. I would first like to ask the
3 audience if there's anybody here that's an elected official
4 that would like to be recognized or speak before us this
5 evening, either federal, state, local, or Indian tribal.

6 Okay. Since I don't see anybody rising to the
7 occasion, to date I have one preregistrant from this
8 evening's meeting that indicated a desire to speak,
9 Mr. George Fischbach with the US Army Yuma Proving Ground.
10 If you'd care to come to the podium, please, and assist the
11 court reporter by spelling your name for her, I'd
12 appreciate it. AZ09

13 MR. GEORGE FISCHBACH: My name is Fischbach,
14 F-I-S-C-H-B-A-C-H, George. I'm the Director of Public
15 Works at the US Army Proving Ground in Yuma, Arizona. I'm
16 here representing my garrison manager, who is in Washington
17 D.C. and couldn't be here this evening. I have just a few
18 short comments.

19 First of all, we are currently blessed and/or
20 cursed, depending on how you look at it, with four
21 electrical corridors running through Yuma Proving Ground
22 and two gasline corridors running through Yuma Proving
23 Ground. We are blessed because our relationship with the
24 agencies who have those corridors has been very, very good,
25 they've been most cooperative, and I expect to continue to

1 see the cooperation as this goes forward.

2 We are cursed in that the corridors are tending
3 to crowd together to one another right now, so there isn't
4 a whole lot of room for expansion. Our biggest thing that
5 we wish to express here at this meeting this evening is
6 that we are very concerned that, when these corridors are
7 designated, that they continue to avoid interfering with
8 our basic mission, which is to support all of the troops
9 that are fighting the wars in various places.

10 Yuma Proving Ground is the place where
11 everything that goes overseas gets tested, and we do have
12 corridor locations that will avoid the test ranges and, if
13 they are used, we would be happy to entertain another
14 corridor through there, but putting corridors through
15 places that destroy our ability to test is
16 counterproductive. That's all I need to say. Thank you.

17 DR. PELL: Thank you very much, Mr. Fischbach.
18 You may wish to note that the Defense Department and, for
19 that matter, also the Department of Commerce, both of these
20 agencies are working with us and hopefully they will
21 represent your concerns to us as the work progresses. But
22 I very much appreciate your being us with here this
23 evening.

24 Mr. Fischbach was the only one who registered
25 outside. Is there anybody here that didn't register that

1 would like to speak? This is your occasion to share with
2 us your thoughts and to forever immortalize your name in a
3 federal document. So I would certainly encourage you to
4 avail yourself of the opportunity to wax poetic.

5 Nobody wishes to speak? I tell you what we'll
6 do then. If you're sure you really don't want to come to
7 the microphone, we'll go off the record, we'll close out
8 the official public transcript, and we'll just engage in Q
9 and A or just friendly conversation. We'll be with you for
10 a little while anyway and you're welcome to stay with us
11 and share your thoughts off the record. So with that,
12 having said that, I will thank my court reporter for her
13 assistance and we are now officially off the record.

14 (Adjourned at 7:15 p.m.)

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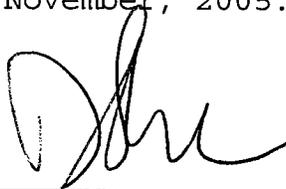
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4 CERTIFICATE

5 I, Deborah Moreash, RPR, Certified Court
6 Reporter for the State of Arizona, certify:

7 That the proceedings had upon the foregoing
8 public meeting are contained in the shorthand record made
9 by me thereof and thereafter reduced to print by
10 computer-aided transcription under my direction; and that
11 the foregoing 12 pages constitute a full, true, and correct
12 transcript of said shorthand record, all done to the best
13 of my skill and ability.

14 I FURTHER CERTIFY that I am in no way related
15 to nor employed by any of the parties hereto nor am I in
16 any way interested in the outcome hereof.

17 Dated this 4th day of November, 2005.

18 

19 _____
20 DEBORAH L. MOREASH, RPR
21 Certified Court Reporter #50294
22 For the State of Arizona
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