PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING OF THE WEST-WIDE ENERGY CORRIDOR ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

OCTOBER 25, 2005, 7:00 P.M.
MEETING 1-B

HELD AT:
COLORADO CONVENTION CENTER
700 - 14TH STREET
DENVER, COLORADO
RUST: Welcome to the new Colorado Convention Center. It kind of fooled me that with the finishing of the new addition part, though, they changed some of the entrances around and when I came here this afternoon, I had to wander around quite awhile before I finally, accidentally found my way in here.

My name's Lynn Rust. I'm the Deputy State Director for Energy, Lands and Minerals for Colorado-BLM, and it's my pleasure to welcome all of you to this first public scoping meeting of the West-Wide Energy Corridor Environmental Impact Statement. Actually, this is one-B. One-A was this afternoon, and one-B is this evening.

This environmental impact statement for this study is required by the Energy Policy Act, which was passed by the Congress this summer and signed by the President into law August 8th. This joint effort involves five federal agencies and covers land in eleven western states. And it will be on-going for the next couple of years.

Additional scoping meetings will be held throughout the west over the next couple of weeks, totaling eleven different hearings. This is really one of the most comprehensive pieces of energy
legislation to come out of the Congress in a very long time. And for the federal agencies involved and the wide variety aspects of the energy bill, there is a lot that the Congress and the administration is expecting out of the federal agencies, and this is one of the big ones.

Please use this opportunity to give your comments and suggestions on this important project. The agencies will use all comments collected during the scoping period, which ends November 28th to formulate the draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement — or as often referred to, the PEIS, because it takes so long to say it the other way.

When the draft is released, there will be additional opportunity for public review and comment on the various alternatives that are developed, which those comments will be incorporated into the final EIS and Record of Decision.

Comments will be accepted in a variety of forms: through your verbal and written testimony today; in written form through the mail, on the web and by fax. One aspect in terms of mail, sending mail into Washington -- because of the anthrax
scare, there are special security measures in
place, actually for when mail goes to federal
agencies and Congressional folks in Washington,
D.C. They pass through special screening and,
actually, sometimes it is -- I've seen evidence
where it will destroy CDs, it will destroy
videotapes, and, also, there's quite a bit of
delay. So, I think usually it's best to send it by
FedEx -- that doesn't have to go through that and
why, I do not know that.

The importance of energy transportation
corridors really can't be over-stated. It's
something that I've been talking about for some
time, as have others. Scott and I have been talking
about it. You can explore and develop energy,
minerals energy, resources, all you want in certain
areas, but if you can't get it to market, it's not
going to do you any good. And, so therefore, with
the country's growing energy needs, this is a very
-- the Congress and the administration recognize
this to be a very critical issue to be addressed.

At this time I'd like to address our panel
members for today's meeting. Your moderator will
be Scott Powers of the Bureau of Land Management;
Julia Souder with the Department of Energy -- who,
she is the National Project Manager for this EIS; and Paul Johnson with the Forest Service. All three of them are out of Washington, D.C., which I've managed to avoid. So, Scott. Go ahead and take it away.

POWERS: Thank you. Before we commence, we were each just going to briefly say a couple of words about our agency and why we're here. And, I am the BLM Project Manager of this project. I'm fortunate enough to get paid like I work in Washington, but I don't have to live there. I live and work out of Billings, Montana.

BLM's been looking at doing this corridor project for a number of years. We see a lot of benefits in it. It's going to have a significant impact on our workload because it will result in a land-use plan amendments, which is pretty serious. And I'll talk -- I'll give a little bit more background information just briefly, but I want to let Julia tell you a little bit about DOE.

SOUDE: Thank you all for coming here, tonight. It's really important that we hear your comments and that you take part in the process. I'm Julia Souder from the Department of Energy in Washington, D.C., within the office of Electricity.
Delivery and Energy Reliability and the Western
Regional Coordinator and will be working on this,
as well as other pieces of the energy bill. This
is really important to help streamline the process
that makes it easier for all the applicants to
actually better understand and to help each other
make sure that [inaudible] long arduous process.
So, we're looking forward to making [garbled].

P.JOHNSON: Good evening, and welcome to
Denver, which is our [garbled]. My name is Paul
Johnson. I'm with the Forest Service, working in
minerals and geology and facilitate the
implementation of the Energy Act for the Forest
Service. Again, we welcome you and we are looking
for your comments to help us as we move forward in
developing this Programmatic EIS.

POWERS: Just to make sure we're all on
the same page, I want to just give a little bit of
background information. Lynn touched on quite a
bit of this, but the Energy Policy Act of 2005
requires Secretaries of Energy, Ag, Interior,
Commerce and Department of Defense to consider the
designation of corridors for oil, gas and hydrogen
pipelines and electricity transmission and
distribution facilities on federal lands in eleven
contiguous western states.

The key component of this is that, in order to
designate corridors, we have to do that through the
land-use planning process, which is, as I mentioned
briefly a minute ago, that's a major resource
allocation decision for land managing agencies.
And, so to consider this on such a wide scale is
going to be an extremely complex process.

What we wanted to do in these scoping meetings
is to gather as much input as to how we should be
doing that as we possibly can. We are not putting
together the alternatives for the Programmatic EIS,
yet. They're all going to be developed once we have
received all the input during the scoping period.

I just want to elaborate a little bit on the
importance of scoping. I assume that most people
understand a little bit about scoping, but it
really helps give us a direction on what the scope
of the project should be, and it raises those
issues to the forefront that we need to consider in
that plan. And, we really need to find out what
those needs and concerns of, not only the industry,
but anybody else that has an interest in this
project. And I suspect we'll be getting quite a
bit of input related to that.
There's four ways to submit comments in this process, and we have them here identified in the poster. We also have an up and running website and the address is over here. You probably received one of these summary statements when you checked in, and that has some additional information about scoping and those addresses I mentioned before.

We're going to ask those people that wish to give formal comment tonight that we will record, to come up here and provide their comments. And if you have a hard copy of them which to leave with us, that's fine. You're comments will be entered into the official record for scoping. And, at the conclusion of those formal comments, we'll turn off the record and have more of an informal discussion during that time frame. So, we have at this point, two people that have signed up and we might as well go ahead and kick it off.

So, Heath Nero, with the Wilderness Society.

Just re-state your name and who you're representing, we'll appreciate it.

NERO: Hello, my name is Heath Nero.


First, I'd like to thank the Bureau of Land
Management, the Department of Energy and the U.S. Forest Service for the opportunity to comment here tonight.

The Wilderness Society, founded in 1935, strives to deliver to future generations an unspoiled legacy of wild places. Our 250,000 members nationwide are dedicated to ensuring that the remaining wild places remain wild. In that vein, I would like to offer our initial public comments on the West-Wide Energy Corridor Programmatic EIS.

Earlier today, you heard a number of comments from the energy industry urging for categorical exclusions to the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act -- NEPA. Further, these energy industry representatives asked for streamlined processes to expand the energy corridor network that this EIS will identify in the end.

The Wilderness Society urges you to focus on stewardship of our public lands and not provide for broad categorical exclusions or streamlining of important environmental policy requirements that protect our water, air and wild places. While the Wilderness Society applauds your efforts to identify energy corridors and to view their...
1 location in a broad landscape context, we ask that
2 you adhere to the following three guidelines.
3 First, the EIS must ensure that no energy
4 corridor is located in a designated wilderness
5 area, wilderness study area, area of critical
6 environmental concern, roadless area, citizen
7 proposed wilderness area, or national landscape
8 conservation land.
9 Secondly, the EIS must ensure that visual
10 resource management is considered and factored in
11 with designating corridors.
12 Third, the EIS must ensure that best
13 management practices are explicitly detailed and
14 mandated to ensure that impacts on natural
15 resources are limited.
16 The Bureau of Land Management recently
17 undertook a Programmatic EIS for wind energy
18 development. Although we did not support every
19 part of the EIS, overall, this Programmatic EIS did
20 accomplish the three criteria I listed above. Those
21 working on the West-Wide Energy Programmatic EIS
22 should, likewise, consider and use these three
23 criteria to help formulate the Record of Decision
24 for this EIS.
25
26 The Wilderness Society, along with our
conservation partners across the west, will continue to monitor this process and will provide written comments in advance of the November 28th deadline.

Again, thank you, very much, for your time.
The Wilderness Society looks forward to working with you to develop a PEIS to ensure that energy can be transported safely, without comprising the west's greatest resource, it's wild and [garbled] lands.

POWERS: Thank you. Our next commentator is Bud Anderson with Northern Lights Transmission.

ANDERSON: Again, my name is Bud Anderson, representing the Northern Lights Projects.

TransCanada Corporation is one of North America's leading infrastructure companies, with more than $18 Billion in assets. That's U.S. Dollars. Out of that $18 Billion, we have approximately $15.3 Billion in natural gas assets, natural gas pipelines, etc. The power end of that is about $2.5 Billion. As you can see, we're a pretty substantial company throughout North America.

Although TransCanada is best known for our
natural gas pipeline business, we're also a very quickly emerging player in the field of power generation and transmission. TransCanada's financial strength and experience in linear facilities positions well to pursue opportunities within the pipeline and electrical and natural gas transmission areas.

Northern Lights Project is TransCanada's initiative to facilitate the development of new, inland generation by providing new electrical transmission capacity to the west coast and to the southwest states.

Northern Lights is currently developing two 500,000 volt, high voltage, direct current projects. The inland project, being the first one, provides a path to interconnect low cost, renewable and other energies in Montana, Wyoming, Nevada and Idaho, with grown loads to the southwest. Energy will be moved to southern Nevada, southern California and, potentially, Arizona.

The Soleilo [phonetic] Project provides a path to bring in low cost, high efficiency, low emission co-generation from Canada, Montana, eastern Washington, eastern Oregon, to the Pacific Northwest and, potentially, on to California.
Northern Lights hereby submits a number of interregional transmission and pipeline corridors for development through the Programmatic Environmental EIS, PEIS, process under Section 3.68 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005. A 30-year planning horizon is proposed. Again, a 30-year planning horizon is proposed -- along with transmission planning, organization, consultation, approaches to permitting that will facilitate a much-needed development of new energy corridors in the western United States.

I'd like to take a minute on the corridor that we have identified, we've taken in very much consideration the areas of critical environmental concern in the selection of our routes, along with the national and wilderness study areas. We have used and utilized existing corridors throughout the two different projects and their auxiliary routes. Northern Lights is supportive of the initiative created by Section 3.68 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 and will assist the Department of Energy, Department of Interior, Department of Agriculture and other federal agencies -- [garbled] new set of lips and I'm trying them out the first time tonight -- fulfilling their legal and
legislative mandate.

I'd like to take the opportunity to thank you on the panel for providing us the opportunity to participate in this very important endeavor, and I offer any assistance that we can have and can give to you in the endeavor.

Thank you, very much.

POWERS: Thank you. The next presenter would be Linda Grace McBryde with Spring Grace Ranch.

McBRYDE: Thank you for letting me speak tonight. My name is Linda Grace McBryde, and I operate a non-profit in Mesa, Colorado, a town of 300 near Grand Junction. The program that I've had there has been for children to learn about environmental science, and then they do an art project to remember that lesson.

We've had like 6,000 children, many of them have been slow learner or from backgrounds where they do not get to a pristine environmental setting, such as the ranch in Mesa.

The reason I'm here is, two weeks ago I found out that my old farmer neighbor has leased out ten acres to create a 4,000 hp compression station directly across the street, which will be the
largest compression station in Mesa County. The
decibel level I believe our county allows is 85,
and it will put me completely out of business. My
property value has gone down the tubes with this
person's decision to go ahead with a lease to
Momentum Energy Group. They're now trying to buy
right-of-ways for the pipeline so they can get to
the TransColorado pipeline.

We are very concerned in Mesa, because we know
that we have a lot of natural gas in our area and
realize it's an important resource at this time.
But, to have people come in and at your expense and
your cost wipe you completely out to create this
kind of scenario in your own backyard is shocking
and disheartening and financially very cruel, for
lack of a better term.

We found out about this study just in time,
and we're very glad to hear about it. We know
things are just going to begin to happen in our
little valley, called Plateau Valley. If there's
any way that these can be put in corridors so that
people don't experience what I'm personally
experiencing and my immediate neighbors, we all
really want to support that. So, I've driven down
from Mesa tonight to let you know what happens to
people who own land in rural areas who are already
very challenged to take care of land, that
something like this can cause this much hardship.
I'm not sure that the man who gave the
permission for this compression station to be on
his land really knew what he was doing, and it's
just really been very shocking. Momentum is trying
to work with us, but we understand that this size
of a compression station that's ten acres will be
heard for miles. So, we would really, really like
to see it go on a BLM corridor and I am very
grateful for the energy and forethought to try to
put things of this nature in one area that,
unfortunately, will have to have an industrial tone
in our beautiful wilderness. But to have things
scattered here and there and running rough-shod,
both in the wilderness on the BLM or in people's
backyards, is really a major problem, I think, in
Collard.

Thank you.

POWERS: Thank you, very much. Robert
Gulf? InterTribal?
GOFF: [inaudible].
POWERS: Thank you. Would you mind
repeating that?
GOFF: Sure. Thank you, very much. My name is Robert Goff. I'm the secretary of the InterTribal Council on Utility Policy, and while we're headquartered in Rosewood, South Dakota, a state not in your -- on your map -- we have affiliate tribes in Montana, Wyoming, Arizona, New Mexico, Nevada, Utah, Oregon and California. So, we've been involved with energy issues in the Great Plains and transmission corridors, as well, in the Great Plains.

Most of the tribes in this country -- well, I think if you live on an Indian reservation, you're ten times more likely not to even have electricity, than if you live anywhere else in this country. The un-electrified population is ten times higher than anywhere else in the country. Yet, tribes are more likely to have transmission lines going over their heads. Very often federal, put in by the Bureau of Reclamation and now operated by Western Power Administration in Bonneville.

We, the tribes in the Northern Plains and other tribes around the country, are very much concerned about energy development, and this round of development, perhaps participating as more than just land owners who have their rights-of-way used,
I have the honor of representing tribal interests on the Western Governors Clean and Diversified Energy Advisory Committee that I'm sure you're aware of, but we certainly call for the record -- call it to your attention that we also have a transmission study going on, and I would recommend that you certainly consult the work that the Governors and tribes throughout the entire west, some eighteen states, have been looking at in terms of the opportunities of moving renewable energy from world sources, basically, to loads. The tribes in the Northern Plains would be very interested in corridors that run through the northern tier, especially through the west, because you are looking at the farm-to-market highway for tribal renewable energy production to the west coast, to the load centers that are out there. Tribes are very concerned about new right-of-ways. Many of the old right-of-ways are coming up for renewal in the next ten years. These are issues that are on the table and before the tribes now. I would be here tonight to urge you and, under the new law, you are, the federal government has required for direct consultation.
with the tribes on many of these issues. And so, in
no way is my speaking here to be considered as
having performed consultation, so the record is
clear on that.

The corridors that you will be examining --
many of the existing corridors do come near or
across tribal lands. The opportunity for access to
them have been extremely limited. We would want to
recommend that in any of these new opportunities
that are being developed -- these new transmission
corridors -- to the extent that they can follow
existing corridors, and to the extent that the can,
grant access to tribes for projects on the
reservation to be able to utilize that
farm-to-market road.

Tribes have a variety of interests in these.
Everything from right-of-way concerns, sovereignty
concerns to taxation concerns and revenue concerns.
So, I would advise you to make sure that you are in
contact with each of the tribes along the way and,
perhaps tribes outside of this region. I'm not
sure of why the cut-off is for Montana and Wyoming
and not the Dakotas, other than the relative dearth
of BLM lands in some of those areas. Tribes in
those areas are also looking at corridors north and
south for moving power.

The idea of a Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement or something of this order is to be congratulated, and we would hope that this can be shared amongst your sister agencies in the Department of Interior, particularly when it comes to some of the siting requirements for renewable energy projects, such as those in the Great Plains.

I will leave my comments at that for the moment, but will certainly reserve the right to submit different comments within the appropriate time period.

Thank you, very much.

POWERS: Thank you. Is there anybody else that did not fill out a card or indicate that they wanted to speak? Would they like to come up and make or offer any comments now?

Well, with that, I guess we'll conclude our formal comments period and we'll turn the recorder off and we're available -- there's several other members of the planning team representing the different agencies that are here -- and I would ask them to stand up, in addition to the three of us up here. So, we're going to be here and will be glad to try to answer questions or any kind of
discussions you like.

Thank you, very much.

[END OF MEETING]
STATE OF COLORADO  
)  
) ss.  CERTIFICATE  
COUNTY OF DENVER  
)

I, William W. Pace, Notary Public within  
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