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

OCTOBER 25, 2005, 2:00 P.M.

MEETING 1-A

HELD AT:

COLORADO CONVENTION CENTER
700 - 14TH STREET
DENVER, COLORADO

1 Again, when you come up -- I'll call your name, but
2 if you would repeat your name for the recorder,
3 that will help.

4 Did I leave anything out? Okay, with that --
5 any questions before we get started? Okay. Well,
6 I'm going to call on an old friend to come up
7 first. Mr. Lowery? Rick Lowery with EEI.

8 We'd appreciate it if you'd try to keep your
9 comments to about five minutes.

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10 LOWERY: Thanks, Scott. I'm Rick Lowery
11 with the Edison Electric Institute in Washington,
12 D.C. The Edison Electric Institute, or EEI, thanks
13 the federal agencies for the opportunity to make
14 comments on the West-wide Energy Corridor
15 Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement or, as
16 I'll say from now on, PEIS, and that's hard enough
17 to say.

18 EEI is the association of United States
19 shareholder-owned electric companies. A number of
20 EEI's member companies generate, transmit and
21 deliver electricity in the contiguous eleven
22 western states covered by the PEIS. EEI applauds
23 the Departments of Energy, Agriculture and Interior
24 in proceeding forward to identify endemic corridors
25 for energy linear facilities across federal land in

1 the west. We also applaud the Western Utility
2 Group, Western Governors Association, and other
3 groups that have been addressing the need for
4 energy corridors in the west.

5 Because of the predominance of federal land
6 ownership in the west and the location of such
7 lands, the federal land agencies must be a partner
8 in helping meet the energy infrastructure needs for
9 the west. At least six of the fastest growing
10 states are located in the west.

11 The corridor initiative will provide, at least
12 from the EEI perspective, a dual benefit. One, it
13 will allow consideration of the infrastructure
14 needs on a source-to-market basis. Something that
15 is very important to EEI and it's member companies.
16 And, two, it will allow for better or more careful
17 planning to conserve and protect natural resource
18 values on federal land while meeting these energy
19 infrastructure needs.

20 **EEI** believes that the corridor designation
21 process as proposed will enable the public to
22 better appreciate and evaluate the basis for energy
23 infrastructure decisions. The context of the
24 decisions will be more readily apparent. EEI
25 supports the legislative provisions that are the

1 basis of this corridor designation effort, Section
2 3.68 of EPA, and we look forward to working with
3 the agencies to fulfill Congressional intent.

4 EEI would like to offer the following six
5 recommendations in the designation of western
6 energy corridors.

7 First, consider a long-term planning horizon.
8 Federal land-use planning horizons and utility
9 horizons are not easily reconciled. We encourage
10 the agencies to take a long view and anticipate
11 what the transmission needs will be, and designate
12 corridors accordingly. Utilities and other
13 participants in the western regional transmission
14 planning are very willing to assist the agencies.

15 Second, define now a future process for
16 designating additional corridors, as needed,
17 recognizing that it may be impossible to anticipate
18 what those transmission needs will be ten, fifteen
19 or even twenty years down the road. EEI strongly
20 recommends the agencies develop now a process for
21 designating additional source-to-market corridors
22 once this process is complete. This may usefully
23 include a [skip-over] process where the critical
24 feature is to allow for an integrated,
25 multi-jurisdictional evaluation and decision

1 regarding corridor designation.

2 Third, define now the stream-lined procedures
3 available to electric companies abiding within a
4 designated corridor. EEI strongly urges the
5 agencies to develop sound and effective
6 stream-lined procedures for siting facilities
7 within a designated corridor. The procedures should
8 recognize that much of the environmental analysis
9 and review will have already taken place and, as
10 long as facilities are consistent with the
11 parameters set for a corridor, that work should not
12 have to be repeated. At a minimum, we encourage
13 you to establish a rebuttable presumption that will
14 be a categorical provision for NEPA that will be
15 consistent with Section 3.90 of EPAC for pipelines.

16 Transmission should not be treated differently
17 than pipelines, in our opinion. EEI recommends the
18 agencies to consider an alternative, streamlined
19 consultation process under the Threatened and
20 Endangered Species Act.

21 Fourth, flexibility should be a consideration
22 of the process. This can be accomplished through
23 careful consideration of what [garbled] set for
24 corridors. This should be based on a technical and
25 engineering requirement, and vegetation management

1 needs. But, also taking the decision to look at
2 all existing rights- of-way containing 69KB and
3 above transmission lines, and convert the corridors
4 to expanded width and purposes.

5 This will allow either for the expansion of
6 facilities within the corridor, or upgrading the
7 facility to improve reliability in a band-grid
8 capacity.

9 Fifth, protect corridors from incompatible
10 uses. EEI urges the agencies to protect designated
11 corridor against the entry of incompatible uses, or
12 the location of incompatible uses near the
13 facilities. In deciding what may or may not be an
14 incompatible use, the agencies should consider how
15 a transmission facility must be managed and
16 operated to meet public safety and reliability
17 requirements and concerns. And what will be needed
18 to reduce fire hazard.

19 If the management requirements for another use
20 conflict with the requirements for the transmission
21 facilities, that other use should be clearly
22 regarded incompatible.

23 [inaudible comment].

24 LOWERY: Okay. And sixth, carefully
25 consider where and how public lands are disposed.

1 EEI recommends that land disposal or land swaps
2 that would allow lands subject to a corridor
3 designation to be transferred to private ownership
4 generally be construed as an incompatible use.
5 Should such a transfer be allowed, the transfer
6 should be made subject to the designation, and with
7 stipulations that protect the use of the land as a
8 corridor, assure adequate management authority to
9 meet reliability with respect to any facilities
10 that might be located in a corridor, and does not
11 allow the facility owner or operator to be charged
12 rental fees different from those that would have
13 been charged if the land had remained in federal
14 possession.

15 Again, thank you for the opportunity to
16 address you today. EEI believes through this
17 process electric facilities operating in the west
18 will be able to provide substantial assistance in
19 identifying transmission needs throughout the
20 region. EEI will submit written comments on or
21 prior to the November 28th deadline specified in
22 the Federal Register notice.

23 Thank you.

24 POWER: Thank you, Rick. Ron Lehr with
25 the American Wind Energy Association.