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Office of Electricity Delivery and Energy Reliability
Room 8H-033
U.S. Department of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, DC 20585

The California Energy Commission (Energy Commission) appreciates the opportunity to provide additional comments on the preparation of a programmatic environmental impact statement (PEIS) to designate energy corridors on federal land in the 11 western states, including California. On November 10, 2005 Secretary Chrisman of the California Resources Agency asked the Energy Commission to represent California in this effort by acting as a Cooperating Agency with the Department of Energy (DOE), the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the United States Forest Service (USFS), to ensure that the state's energy needs, renewable generation policy goals, and environmental concerns are considered in the PEIS. This letter was forwarded from Secretary Chrisman to Mike Poole, California State BLM Director, on November 15, 2005.

As noted in the Energy Commission's November 1, 2005 scoping statement, it is critical that broad stakeholder input be solicited and considered in the formulation of the PEIS. State government, local agencies, industry, environmental organizations, and other groups and associations representing specific segments of the public can provide valuable information that will help define the scope of the PEIS. Although the PEIS was appropriately noticed in the Federal Register on September 28, 2005, the Energy Commission is concerned that many of these stakeholders do not review the Federal Register on a regular basis and therefore only recently learned of the PEIS. Consequently, they will not be afforded an adequate opportunity to participate and provide comments prior to closure of the scoping period on November 28, 2005. Although the Energy Commission notified by letter or email several state agencies, 48 municipal and investor owned utilities, California's 58 counties, and 148 cities within two miles of federal lands, the Energy Commission requests DOE, BLM, and USFS consider extending the scoping period to ensure adequate stakeholder participation. Additional scoping meetings and workshops throughout the state should also be considered to allow direct stakeholder input before preparation of the Draft PEIS. We believe discussions on the contents/outline of the document, the scope of the alternatives analysis, and the criteria to be used to designate corridors are issues that would benefit from discussion and vetting in a public workshop or workshops.

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The Energy Commission is continuing to work closely with the BLM and USFS by facilitating meetings of the PEIS interagency working group. Agency participation has expanded to include representatives from the California Public Utilities Commission, the California Department of Parks and Recreation, the California State Lands Commission, and the Department of Defense. Additional agencies are expected to participate in the future, and we are confident that our combined efforts will contribute to a more informed and robust PEIS. Finally, on November 21, 2005, the Energy Commission adopted the 2005 Integrated Energy Policy Report (*Energy Report*) and the Strategic Transmission Plan (*Strategic Plan*), both of which contain important energy-related information that will be useful in developing alternatives and designating corridors on federal lands in California. Copies of these reports have been distributed to members of the interagency working group and will also be provided electronically to the DOE. The Energy Commission requests that these documents be posted on the PEIS website and be considered as part of the PEIS record.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "T. O'Brien", is written over the typed name below.

TERRENCE O'BRIEN, Deputy Director
Systems Assessment and Facilities Siting Division