

**From:** [corridoreiswebmaster@anl.gov](mailto:corridoreiswebmaster@anl.gov)  
**To:** [Corridoreisarchives;](#)  
**CC:**  
**Subject:** Energy Corridor Programmatic EIS Comment 80067  
**Date:** Monday, November 28, 2005 4:51:41 PM  
**Attachments:**

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Thank you for your comment, Sarah Hamlen.

The comment tracking number that has been assigned to your comment is 80067. Please refer to the tracking number in all correspondence relating to this comment.

Comment Date: November 28, 2005 04:51:28PM CDT

Energy Corridor Programmatic EIS Scoping Comment: 80067

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Privacy Preference: Don't withhold name or address from public record

Comment Submitted:

To Whom It May Concern:

Section 368, and specifically subsection 368(d), of the Energy Policy Act of 2005, stipulates that Federal agencies are to designate energy corridors, taking into account the "need for upgraded and new electricity transmission and distribution facilities" in order to:

- Improve reliability,
- Relieve congestion, and

- Enhance the capability of the national grid to deliver electricity.”

In response to the West-Wide Energy Corridor Programmatic EIS public scoping, I propose a corridor which accomplishes these three objectives in Wheatland and Meagher Counties in Montana.

First, I propose upgrading the existing 100Kv line from the Harlowton auto-substation to the Loweth substation from 100Kv to 230Kv, constructing a 230/500Kv substation near Ringling, and interconnecting Loweth to the new substation. Second, I propose constructing a 230Kv line from the new 230/500Kv substation to either the Wilsall or Three Forks substations. Finally, I suggest upgrading the existing line from Rainbow Dam near Great Falls to Two Dot from a 100Kv to a 230Kv line. The existing 100Kv lines from Rainbow Dam to Two Dot and from Harlowton to Loweth were originally constructed in the 1920's. These lines need to be modernized. All of these proposed upgrades and/or modernizations could be accomplished within existing rights-of-way with the exception of the optional 230/500Kv substation to Wilsall 230Kv line.

I believe it is essential for you to maintain and retain all existing rights-of-way as you attempt to identify new ones. Prior to the forest fires in 2000, a 100Kv transmission line ran from Loweth to Three Forks. That line was damaged by the fires and has not been replaced. It would be foolish to abandon this right-of-way into the Bozeman area where electricity loads are growing rapidly. Regardless of whether a 230Kv line is constructed from the Ringling 230/500Kv substation to Wilsall or not, this transmission corridor should be preserved.

#### Improve Reliability:

Meagher County, Montana, consists of several small communities including White Sulphur Springs, Ringling, Checkerboard, Martinsdale, and Lennep. These communities are served by an antiquated 100Kv line which runs from Harlowton to the Loweth substation. At Loweth power is stepped down 100Kv to 69Kv and two 69Kv lines split to provide service to northern and southern Meagher County. This service is provided by NorthWestern Energy. Until 2000, when the Loweth to Three Forks 100Kv line was burned Meagher County had a redundant electricity feed from the Gallatin Valley in the event of a power outage on the line from Harlowton to Loweth 100Kv line. Since this redundant feed was damaged by wildfires in 2000 and has not been replaced, most of Meagher County depends on a radial feed. A single contingency outage can disrupt electricity service to Meagher County.

As an example of how this radial feed impacts the County, I would like to reference the events of November 13-14, 2005. Initially, a piece of equipment regulating frequency was damaged during an ice storm. The frequency fluctuation caused digital equipment in the county to appear as though it were functioning normally, however, functionality had been impaired. The 911 Switchboard was lit up, but calls did not come through. Boiler

systems in most public buildings did not operate, and private televisions and computers were damaged, some beyond repair. In order to repair this problem, electricity for the entire county was shut down from approximately 11:30 am until 12:45 pm on November 14. During this time, restaurants could not prepare meals, businesses could not complete transactions using electronic registers, fuel could not be pumped, etc. These problems would not have occurred if a redundant feed were available to the communities. The proposed upgrades would provide that redundancy.

#### Relieve Congestion:

The proposed increase in energy generation in Canada and Montana provides corridor strategies for getting power to Great Falls. However, in order to get that energy to growing load centers and prevent Great Falls from becoming a transmission bottleneck, existing transmission lines must be upgraded or established south of Great Falls. Upgrading the lines from Rainbow Dam to Two Dot and from Harlowton to Loweth and on to either Wilsall or Three Forks could provide capacity necessary to carry this power to load centers in Montana or elsewhere.

#### Enhance Capability of the National Grid to Deliver Power:

The Western Area Power Administration is constructing a 230Kv substation just above Rainbow Dam and a 230Kv transmission line along the Hi-Line of MT which will terminate at Rainbow Dam. In addition, proposed transmission from Canada would terminate at Rainbow Dam in the Great Falls area. The upgrades I'm proposing would create an integrated 230/500Kv system along the northern, central, and southern portions of Montana. They would also relieve congestion in the Great Falls area. This could be accomplished without opening any new corridors.

In addition to providing access to the national grid for existing and proposed projects, the potential exists for additional wind and alternative energy projects to be developed in Wheatland and Meagher Counties. These areas are suited to wind and geothermal power generation, but require adequate infrastructure in order to serve potential markets.

The proposed upgrades to transmission lines between Great Falls, Harlowton, and Three Forks or Wilsall increases reliability in transmission to an impoverished area of Montana, reduces congestion which will be amplified by proposed energy projects terminating in the Great Falls area, and provides increased capability for energy produced in Alberta and Montana to reach the national grid.

Thank you for considering my comments regarding the West-Wide Energy Corridor Programmatic EIS.

Sincerely,  
Sarah A. Hamlen

Questions about submitting comments over the Web? Contact us at:  
corridoreiswebmaster@anl.gov or call the Energy Corridor Programmatic EIS  
Webmaster at (630)252-6182.