

MT07-MT08

WEST-WIDE ENERGY CORRIDOR  
PROGRAMMATIC ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

TRANSCRIPT OF THE PUBLIC HEARING  
EVENING SESSION

Heard at the Holiday Inn  
22 North Last chance Gulch  
Helena, Montana

October 27, 2005

7:05 p.m.

REPORTED BY:

CHERYL ROMSA  
CHERYL ROMSA COURT REPORTING  
P. O. BOX 1278  
HELENA, MONTANA 59624  
(406) 449-6380

ORIGINAL

1 most effective tool to keep you in the loop, if we could.

2 So that's basically it. Any questions about what  
3 we're going to do here tonight? Let me clarify that. we  
4 are going to ask those that want to to come up and make  
5 formal testimony. Once that is over with, we'll turn the  
6 recorder off, we'll throw it open to a general discussion  
7 about the project, maybe answer some clarification  
8 questions you might have. Then after that, if somebody  
9 wants to come back up and make additional comments for the  
10 record, we'll be glad to do that.

11 So before we get started, Governor, why don't you come  
12 up and tell us what you think about what we're doing here.  
13 we appreciate you coming tonight. Thank you.

14 GOVERNOR SCHWEITZER: well, thank you. ■ see you  
15 dressed for Montana. That's a good start.

16 MR. POWERS: well, ■ live in Montana.

MT07

17 GOVERNOR SCHWEITZER: ■ appreciate the  
18 opportunity to comment for the people of Montana.

19 And as you know, Montana has the potential of being  
20 the energy center of the west, not only because we have  
21 the potential of producing a great deal of energy with  
22 ■GCC clean coal and wind power, but most of the ideas that  
23 private industry has been bantering about for energy  
24 transmission lines includes lines running through Montana.  
25 we think that we are an important place because we've

1 demonstrated that energy corridors work if they're done  
2 right. As you know, we've been moving a lot of megawatts  
3 to the west coast for some period of time.

4 Before we get started down the road of new corridors,  
5 let us begin by saying that we already have a corridor,  
6 and with increased utilization, we could get another  
7 750 megawatts to the coast using the BPA corridors that we  
8 already have and the lines that we have. So it's just a  
9 matter of updates.

10 Now, as to the Federal Government telling the states  
11 what to do, we've had it, all the way up to the top of our  
12 ears. we don't need the Federal Government to tell us how  
13 we're going to run transmission lines in Montana and  
14 western states. You've already been told by the western  
15 Governors Association that we take an unkind opinion of  
16 the Federal Government coming out and telling us how we  
17 ought to do our corridors. we think that we've got it  
18 right. The western governors are working together, we're  
19 working with private industry. we think that, for  
20 example, Northern Lights and Northwestern have got it  
21 about right. we're working with several states. we think  
22 that we've got a great opportunity to move electrons out  
23 of the Powder River Basin down to California.

24 But we're a little concerned when the Federal  
25 Government gets involved and it starts to tell us how we

1 ought to do **it** in Montana. As you know, the Federal  
2 Government would love to tell the private citizens in  
3 Montana that eminent domain will be run by the Federal  
4 Government and we'll no longer use states' laws and  
5 states' rights. The Federal Government is very good at  
6 telling the states how to run our own business. we think  
7 that we can get **it** right. we think that we can do **it** in  
8 Montana and the rest of the western states. we think that  
9 western governors are working with private enterprise, and  
10 if you gives us an opportunity, we'll get **it** right.

11 But if the western governors are going to be involved  
12 in **it**, there's going to be a serious consultation and  
13 collaboration with local communities. we're not going to  
14 tell local communities, "well, we've got seven miles of  
15 federal land blocked up, so now that we've got these seven  
16 miles blocked up, the line is going to go straight through  
17 them"; and the local community shows up and says, "You  
18 know, ■ understand this is federal land, but we've lived  
19 here our whole life, and that's a doggone poor place to  
20 put **it**. If you were just three miles over to the east or  
21 three miles over to the west, **it** would be a lot smarter to  
22 put **it** for a lot of reasons and would be cheaper and  
23 vistas would be better and the community would like **it** a  
24 lot more." And of course, when the Federal Government  
25 says, "well, we're just talking about corridors on federal

1 land," well, okay, then I guess we'll be talking about a  
2 section here and a section there and maybe three sections  
3 over here, and sometimes you'll have three or four  
4 sections right in a row. The nature of western land  
5 ownership with checkerboard ownership makes it very  
6 difficult for the Federal Government to come in and say,  
7 well, we've locked up a bit of territory here. you've got  
8 it on both sides of it, and we've got to get the corridor  
9 all the way to the market.

10 So we are ready to do our part in Montana. we are  
11 ready to provide clean energy, both wind power and IGCC  
12 liquefaction and other things. we are ready to work with  
13 the Federal Government, we're ready to work with the other  
14 states and private industry. But most Montanans and most  
15 of the western governors have already been on the record  
16 as taking a dim view of the Federal Government telling us,  
17 once again, that they know what's best for us in Montana.  
18 we know that we need corridors, but we want to have a say  
19 in how those corridors are run. we think that working  
20 with the western governors, we think that working with  
21 private industry, and, most important, working with local  
22 communities, we can get it right.

23 So we would just ask that any decisions that we make,  
24 any discussions that we have, that we fully understand the  
25 needs of local communities. And let's first give a chance

1 to the western governors, who have committed ourselves,  
2 time and again, recently, and we will continue to do so,  
3 of putting together corridors that make sense, but taking  
4 into consideration local communities.

5 So again, thank you for the opportunity of visiting  
6 with you today, and I look forward to working with you in  
7 the future. Thank you.

8 MR. POWERS: Thank you very much, Governor.

9 okay. Any questions about the process for tonight  
10 before we call our -- I think only one person has signed  
11 up to give a presentation.

MT08

12 (NO response.)

13 MR. POWERS: Thomas Schneider, a commissioner of  
14 the Montana PSC.

15 COMMISSIONER SCHNEIDER: First of all, I guess  
16 I'd like to thank the agencies for conducting a scoping  
17 session in Montana, as you have been directed and are in  
18 the other 10 or 11 states in the west. That's essential.  
19 It's necessary, but it's not sufficient in economic terms.

20 You have received limited comment this afternoon from  
21 a subset of interested people in Montana. But I'd like to  
22 emphasize at the outset that the lack of participation by  
23 environmental and public interest groups in this  
24 high-level programmatic EIS does not reflect, in any way,  
25 what you will face and what siting entities will face in