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PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING
WEST-WIDE ENERGY CORRIDOR PROGRAMMATIC
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
October 26, 2005
Afternoon and Evening Sessions
MCM Elegante Hotel
2020 Menaul Boulevard, N.E.
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87107

BEFORE:

RONALD A. MONTAGNA, BLM Chief of Rights of
Way, DOI-BLM
JULIA SOUDER, Office of Electricity Delivery
and Energy Reliability, Western Regional
Coordinator, DOE
BOB CUNNINGHAM, Assistant Director of Lands,
DOA-USFS

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P R O C E E D I N G S

AFTERNOON SESSION
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3 MR. SINGLETON: Good afternoon. My name is
4 Ed Singleton and I'm the district manager for the
5 Albuquerque District BLM office here in Albuquerque.
6 And I want to welcome you to a presentation on the
7 West-Wide Energy Corridor designation and Programmatic
8 Environmental Impact Statement.

9 Thanks for coming to this public scoping
10 meeting about this energy corridor designation on
11 federal lands administered by the BLM and Forest
12 Service.

13 The Energy Policy Act of 2005 requires the
14 Secretaries of Energy, Agriculture, and Interior to
15 designate corridors for oil, gas, and hydrocarbon
16 pipelines and also electricity transmission and
17 distribution facilities on the 11 contiguous western
18 states.

19 The Act further directs the Secretaries to
20 incorporate the designated corridors into the relevant
21 agency land use plans and resource management plans or
22 their equivalent and to perform any environmental
23 review that may be required for the completion of the
24 designation of the corridors.

25 For that purpose DOE, BLM, and the Forest

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1 Service are preparing a West-Wide Environmental Energy
2 Corridor Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement,
3 the impact statement corridor designation as well as
4 the amendment of individual land use plans on BLM and
5 Forest Service administered lands in the west
6 excluding Alaska.

7 The designation of these energy corridors
8 through the land use plan amendments on Forest Service
9 and BLM lands will facilitate the energy related
10 rights of way applications in associated site-specific
11 analyses.

12 We appreciate your interest in this project
13 and value your comments and look forward to your
14 continued involvement in this important effort.

15 What I would like to do now is introduce the
16 panel that's going to be doing the presentation.
17 Julia Souder from Department of Energy.

18 MS. SOUDER: Good afternoon.

19 MR. SINGLETON: Bob Cunningham from the
20 Forest Service and Ron Montagna from BLM Washington
21 office. Thank you.

22 MR. MONTAGNA: Again good afternoon to all.
23 We appreciate you taking time out of all your busy
24 schedules to come here today.

25 Again my name is Ron Montagna and I'm with

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1 the BLM Washington office. And, as just kind of a
2 brief introduction, several years ago in my career I
3 actually worked here in Albuquerque. And I have
4 processed a lot of the power lines actually coming
5 into town. So I'm glad to see the lights are still
6 on.

7 And a good colleague of mine, Ed, just walked
8 in the door. And I want to thank Ed for hosting the
9 meeting here and having the Albuquerque district and
10 the New Mexico state office support us with some of
11 the facility management we have here.

12 Ed is a dedicated and much valued BLM public
13 servant. And, in addition to that, he's a long-time
14 friend. And again, Ed and folks, we appreciate the
15 efforts on behalf of our effort.

16 As Ed said earlier, the United States
17 Department of Energy and Department of Interior and
18 Department of Agriculture are going forward with this
19 West-Wide Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement.
20 And we'll kind of get into the details of what we hope
21 to accomplish.

22 But the important thing for the land managers
23 is that we need to do an analysis that will allow us
24 to amend our land use plans. And, as Ed had
25 mentioned, you know, the question we've been getting

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1 is why are we doing this. And as Ed mentioned Section
2 368 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 enacted by
3 Congress in August of this year directs our
4 Secretaries to conduct this study. And we're to do it
5 for the 11 Western states.

6 The agencies determined that designating the
7 corridors as required by Section 368 constitutes a
8 major federal action which may have significant impact
9 upon the environment within the meanings of the
10 National Environmental Policy Act.

11 Consequently, we have to generate an
12 environmental impact statement to study and to analyze
13 those anticipated impacts. And what we are going to
14 do in this statement is to identify energy corridors
15 and then designate them.

16 And I guess the immediate question is what is
17 an energy corridor. And, for the purpose of this
18 project, an energy corridor is a parcel of land either
19 linear, and I think we're familiar with those, or
20 areal in character which is basically a site type
21 facility that has been identified through the land use
22 planning process, and I think this is important for
23 us, as the preferred location for existing and future
24 rights of ways and suitable to accommodate one or more
25 rights of ways which are similar in purpose.

6

1 So, when we go about this process, the
2 federal agencies are going to look at our public lands
3 and our landscape and try to identify those energy
4 highways that we need to designate to encourage the
5 transportation of energy from source to load.

6 Now, the agency folks here today, we're here
7 to listen. This is not a question and answer format.
8 We will try our best to not discuss the specifics of
9 this process. What we're here to do is to gain input
10 and insight from our publics on what we need to
11 address in this process.

12 However, do note that we'll probably have a
13 break during this afternoon session. And then, at the
14 end of the session, there will be federal agency
15 people here that will be able to the best of our
16 ability to address any questions and answers that you
17 have. But those will be off-the-record Qs and As.

18 For the commenting, for the information that
19 we request, in addition to the remarks that you
20 present today, we really encourage you to avail

21 yourselves to comment on this Programmatic
22 Environmental Impact Statement using any one of four
23 methods that we show here on the posters and on the
24 comment cards that we handed you in your packet.

25 So we will take comments at the scoping

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1 meetings, through our web site, we will take written
2 comments, and we will take faxed comments. Let me
3 offer a word of caution. If you send written
4 comments, and the address is provided in your packet,
5 they will go through traditional snail mail to DOE.
6 And that's a time-consuming process.

7 And also, because of the security measures
8 that have been enacted to ensure that correspondence,
9 hard correspondence is free of anthrax and other
10 things, the correspondence is treated. So many times
11 the letters are actually damaged.

12 So we accept snail mail. It's a way to
13 comment. But I think it really would be much more
14 efficient to provide your comments either via fax or
15 really through our web site.

16 Before I go to our first speaker, I just want
17 to bring up these points again. And I hope I'm not
18 redundant. The scoping process is designed to do
19 three things. And that's why you're here. The
20 scoping process is designed for you, the public, to
21 tell us the issues that affect you with regards to
22 this project.

23 We also request in scoping that you provide
24 us any information that you think is relevant to the

25 process and that is information that you may have.

8

1 And the third critical part of the scoping is to have
2 the public help us refine the alternatives to be
3 examined in the PDEIS.

4 So we're going to request your comments,
5 we're going to analyze that when we go over the
6 scoping comments. And it is conceivable that we would
7 probably contact you all for further clarification of
8 those comments. And any time up to the issuing of the
9 draft document, if you want to provide additional
10 information to us, you can do that.

11 Three more quick points. Will the agency
12 folks that are here please stand up that will be
13 around for the duration. And our friends in the back,
14 during the breaks or after the meeting, we encourage
15 you to discuss any of these issues you have with our
16 agency folks. Each speaker will be allotted
17 approximately ten minutes and then I'll kind of notify
18 you with a two-minute warning.

19 And again the on and the off the record,
20 everything that we say from the podium is basically on
21 the record. And, for Qs and As and for opinions and
22 clarification, we can do that either at the breaks or
23 at the end of the session.

24 So with that my introductory remarks are
25 over. And I would like to invite our first speaker to

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1 the podium. And that's Ms. Lynda Lovejoy,
2 Commissioner for New Mexico Public Regulation

NM01

3 Commission. Thank you.

4 MS. LOVEJOY: Wow, that was quick. I've
5 never been given the floor this soon in a meeting.

6 And I don't -- I'm not here to speak, I'm
7 just here to present a couple of issues on this. And
8 Julia, right? Nice to see you again.

9 I represent District 4 which is the northwest
10 area of the State of New Mexico on the New Mexico
11 Public Regulation Commission. And I would like to
12 just say to Department of Energy, as you're doing your
13 scoping meeting, that from the New Mexico point of
14 view, there are 21 tribes here in New Mexico.
15 Probably New Mexico and Arizona have the largest
16 tribal membership -- members rather in their states.

17 And I would just like to caution the
18 Department of Energy, although you will not be
19 directly dealing with tribes in siting and application
20 issues because that responsibility greatly lies with
21 the Secretary of Interior, however, I think there will
22 be times when you will have to coordinate on these
23 matters.

24 And I would just like to state to DOE that I
25 hope that what little land base the tribes have, that

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1 their small land base does not become an energy
2 corridor because a lot of lands, tribal lands -- or
3 rather a lot of the transmission lines and gas lines
4 go through tribal lands. And so that's just a bit of
5 information for you to keep in the back of your mind.

6 The other issue that I just want to state is

7 how many corridors are needed in your scoping plan I
8 guess for the western region and specifically the
9 southwest area, whether the plans were placing
10 multiple utilities in these corridors in consideration
11 with their -- with their interdependence
12 characteristics or independent characteristics. And
13 so those are just things that I want to state. Thank
14 you.

NM02

15 MR. MONTAGNA: Our next speaker is David
16 Eubank from the Public Service Company of New Mexico.
17 Thank you.

18 MR. EUBANK: Okay. Thank you and good
19 afternoon. My name is David Eubank. I hold the title
20 of professional engineer in the transmission
21 development and contracts department at PNM. And
22 thanks to everybody from D.C. who came out, I
23 appreciate you putting on this meeting.

24 who is PNM. For those of you who don't know,
25 PNM is the largest utility company in New Mexico. We

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1 serve -- we've brought electric service to about
2 400,000 customers and gas service to about 470,000
3 customers.

4 we've been around about 90 years. And today
5 PNM is the largest subsidiary of PNM Resources and
6 energy holding company based here in Albuquerque. We
7 operate about 2,700 miles of electricity transmission
8 facilities and about 1,500 miles of gas pipeline.

9 PNM's interest in this process, why we
10 support this process, is significant amounts of land
11 in New Mexico are federal land. And portions of many

12 PNM facilities are on federal land. And portions of
13 any new energy corridors will also be on federal land.
14 And the future energy supply to PNM including the
15 major Albuquerque area could be blocked without
16 appropriate land management practices.

17 Depending on what the meaning of the no
18 action alternative is, the no action alternative as
19 set out in the notice might not allow PNM to meet its
20 future energy needs or to allow PNM to meet the future
21 energy needs of its customers.

22 The capacity of the Northern New Mexico
23 system, and here speaking from the perspective of the
24 electric transmission system, has been maximized
25 through various improvements over the last 15 years.

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1 And so, to further increase the capacity of our
2 system, PNM will have to construct new facilities.

3 So, at some point in time, sir, as you
4 mentioned, you processed new facilities for PNM. That
5 process will probably have to be engaged in again.

6 As far as the corridor concept, as set out in
7 the PEIS, we believe that DOE should interpret that as
8 to cover, you know, three broad concepts. First, and
9 it's not clear in looking at the map, recognizing that
10 it's caveated as, you know, not being dispositive as
11 to what corridors might be designated, perhaps viewed
12 as an example, right, but many existing corridors are
13 not on that map.

14 And so the question is, if any energy
15 corridors or rights of way on federal land that exist

16 today in agency land management plans, will they as a
17 matter of process become energy corridors within the
18 meaning that Section 368 legislation.

19 That's a concern or just something that as I
20 read it, as a utility planner, it's not clear to me.
21 And hopefully the PEIS process could clarify that or
22 other materials associated with the process as we
23 proceed could clarify that.

24 So the first broad concept would be
25 designation of corridors for existing facilities or

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1 energy corridors for existing facilities.

2 The second would be to designate corridors
3 for planned facilities. Clearly, in any particular
4 plan, there are going to be defined end points of it,
5 of a facility, and some notion, whether it be a broad
6 corridor or a narrow corridor, of a specific picture
7 of land use. And so there's existing and then
8 planned, plans that are on the books, plans that are
9 perhaps made public but are specific.

10 And then third would be conceptual corridor
11 designation and the thinking there from the
12 perspective of meeting broad policy objectives; for
13 instance, development of wind resources. The concerns
14 or questions -- I know you mentioned this is not a Q
15 and A session at this point.

16 But sometimes it's easiest to express a
17 concern by just asking a rhetorical question. Again
18 it would be helpful to seek clarification now as to
19 whether existing rights of way are or are not
20 designated by the process, just as a matter of

21 process, that they're going to be considered to be
22 energy corridors automatically. Okay. Or if PNM or
23 other transmission providers or facility owners need
24 to go through this process and specifically designate
25 them.

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14

1 we'd like to see the procedural benefits
2 within the siting process that attach to designations
3 of energy corridors be made clear. I mean what's that
4 really mean. You hear automatic categorical exclusion
5 or whatever. Just to see that clarified would be
6 helpful.

7 we think that designation of corridors, when
8 corridors are designated, there should be sufficient
9 space between them so as to avoid reliability impacts.
10 If one contingency or one unfortunate event can damage
11 one corridor, let's separate them far enough so that
12 that event doesn't impact two corridors.

13 And then, for uses within corridors that are
14 designated -- and maybe this goes to how wide a
15 corridor should be designated. But, if we're going to
16 set up energy corridors so that multiple energy uses
17 are contained within that corridor, then the corridor
18 width should be specified sufficiently widely enough
19 so that those facilities can be operated safely and
20 reliably within the corridor.

21 Just in terms of an example of policy
22 objectives, one I'd like to mention is the proposition
23 of wind energy development in New Mexico. New Mexico
24 is rich in wind resources that have yet to be

25 developed. PNM has a 200 megawatt plant that it

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1 purchases power from.

2 There are many other proposals to develop
3 wind in New Mexico. And the government and
4 governmental interests, business interests,
5 environmental interests have strongly advocated
6 development of those resources.

7 However, they're located in the eastern
8 portion of New Mexico where there are very few
9 transmission lines, it's a weak transmission system
10 there. And so the large-scale development of wind
11 that many interests support will also require
12 development of significant transmission facilities,
13 electric transmission facilities. And this process,
14 we would like to see it address that concept and cope
15 with that in the EIS.

16 Presently PNM is a jurisdictional electricity
17 utility. We have four projects totaling approximately
18 650 megawatts in our interconnection queue today. And
19 PNM is required under its Federal Energy Regulatory
20 Commission open access tariff to integrate those
21 resources into its system and provide transmission
22 service, develop transmission resources to meet their
23 needs in a manner comparable in which we provide
24 transmission service to our own load and customers.

25 And so we'd like to see this process find a

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1 way to accommodate those other mandates that we are
2 under. And that concludes what I have to say. We

3 will file more extensive written comments by the
4 deadline. And we'll propose corridor designations at
5 that time. Thank you.

NM03

6 MR. MONTAGNA: Thank you, David. We
7 appreciate your suggestions. Our next speaker is
8 Mr. Jack Maddox with Western Water and Power.

9 MR. MADDOX: Thank you. I appreciate the
10 opportunity to speak here today. Western Water and
11 Power production is a limited liability partnership
12 developing biomass power plants in several states in
13 the West including New Mexico, Arizona, and Colorado.

14 The development of these biomass power plants
15 is under various stages at this time. But we have a
16 number in New Mexico that are fairly far along. And
17 I'll talk about one of the concerns we have in
18 transmission access, but let me give you a little
19 background.

20 Biomass power plants have the potential in
21 the West to reduce forest fires and allow for better
22 management of the forest areas by thinning out forest
23 areas as well as BLM rangeland areas and state
24 rangeland areas, crest lands in the West because of
25 the overgrowth of forested area, trees as well as the

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1 rangeland area, pinon juniper.

2 New Mexico has one of the largest growths of
3 pinon juniper in the West. The U.S. Department of
4 Agriculture estimated that, at the turn of the
5 century, there was about 1.25 million acres of pinon
6 juniper land. The rest was grassland in the state.

7 USDA now estimates that there's almost 12 and
8 a half million acres of prairie it's abbreviated as, in New
9 Mexico that's greatly reduced the grassland which is
10 not only necessary for wildlife habitat improvement
11 but also for improved grazing in the state of New
12 Mexico and other western states.

13 I've been in the energy business for 30
14 years. I've been developing various projects
15 including wind projects for various clients in Texas
16 and New Mexico, doing siting work and transmission
17 interconnection work for several projects that have
18 been completed, particularly in Texas.

19 wind projects I'm speaking of now. And also
20 worked on many solar projects and in several states
21 for another client. And then we're developing these
22 biomass projects ourselves independently of that.

23 Let me talk now briefly on transmission
24 problems that we have in developing these projects.

25 This is one of the most critical hindrances

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1 to the developing of renewable projects in the west as
2 it is in New Mexico, is transmission access and being
3 able to get the power out to a market. We, therefore,
4 support this effort by the DOE and the various federal
5 agencies in developing the energy corridors to assist
6 in being able to interconnect with transmission and
7 get the power to a market somewhere.

8 As I say this is one of the most difficult
9 problems we have, particularly in rural areas where
10 there is limited transmission, there's limited access
11 to that transmission because of constraints in both

12 federal and state law that don't allow easy access to
13 that transmission.

14 Particularly in the state of New Mexico, a
15 lot of the rural areas are served by associations
16 let's just say. Their broad designation actually --
17 they have a designation. But that's a broad
18 designation for the various associations that supply
19 the various rural cooperatives in the states.

20 And they control the access to their
21 transmission with very little regulatory oversight.
22 That's one of the concerns that we have and one of the
23 problems we have in developing these projects.

24 The other concern that I have in the process
25 is that it should include access to transmission

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1 without regard to where it's located. In other words,
2 not just looking at the metro areas in the various
3 states and the major transmission access routes, but
4 it also needs to take into consideration and try to
5 accommodate corridors that are going to also lead to
6 development of wind projects, major wind projects, and
7 biomass projects and other renewable projects.

8 In particular I am speaking about in the
9 western states which have a tremendous market
10 potential for these projects. And they have all kinds
11 of potential in improving environmental -- including
12 environmental benefits and improving the forest and
13 rangeland, habitat and water retention in those areas,
14 as well as providing critical energy for the United
15 States instead of relying on foreign energy.

16 The other concern I have is access should
17 provide a quick process that allows these companies
18 that are developing these projects like ours,
19 independent power projects, if you will, to have
20 quicker access approval, if possible, and limited
21 bureaucratic processes.

22 It's very critical in the development of
23 these projects that they be done as quickly as
24 possible so that you know if you're going to have
25 improvement or not and a fairly quick process, where

20

1 you don't have to go through years and years and years
2 which costs a lot of money in trying to develop these
3 projects. That's my limited comments today. Thank
4 you.

5 MR. MONTAGNA: Thank you, Jack.

6 The three folks who registered to speak have
7 spoken. So at this time we'll invite anyone else who
8 would like to speak on the record to come up and
9 speak, have the same ten-minute time frame, but they
10 will have to identify themselves by name and hopefully
11 provide spelling, if a little bit of an odd spelling.

12 So, if there's anyone here that would like to
13 speak on the record at this time, we just invite you
14 to come forward.

NM04

15 MR. SCOTT: My name is Jack Scott. And I
16 figured there would be more time and I just haven't
17 really made many notes here. But I do have a couple
18 things and will add future written comments.

19 But one of the problems involved with the
20 designation of any energy corridor is that, where it

21 comes off federal land, it goes onto private or Indian
22 land. And this basically becomes a taking of that
23 land because, especially with the private land, we as
24 private citizens are not afforded the same
25 protections, environmental or otherwise, that are

21

1 afforded to federal properties.

2 The companies have the right to come in and
3 under the guise of eminent domain and condemnation
4 basically steal the property. Currently, under court
5 systems here, sometimes we're allowed environmental
6 protections. But, if you look at the environmental
7 statutes, basically the bottom line is you have to
8 prove damages to your property which is very expensive
9 and time-consuming.

10 And condemnation, state and national, can
11 sometimes go on for ten years, at which time the
12 private citizen is trying to fund, pay lawyers. First
13 off, in many areas like Northwest New Mexico, you
14 can't even find lawyers who will take issues dealing
15 with oil and gas because they're all basically bought
16 and paid for by the oil and gas companies or are on
17 some form of retainer so it's a conflict of interest.

18 So that's an issue that definitely is going
19 to have to be addressed. And rights given to private
20 property owners in this. The width of the corridors
21 are very, very critical to private property owners. I
22 haven't had a chance to look at the map.

23 But there was virtually no notice of this
24 meeting in local newspapers here, in the Four Corners

25 region anyway. I would request that there be an

22

1 additional scoping meeting scheduled for that area. I
2 think it would be very fair and very needed.

3 To have to drive 200 and some miles to
4 Albuquerque or 400 miles to Denver, and that was the
5 very first that I heard, through the Durango Herald,
6 and first availability of time and location after
7 calling BLM and everything over the last three or four
8 days.

9 Apparently there is stuff in the mail to me
10 this is addressing this issue now, but it wasn't
11 received. But virtually nobody knows that up there.
12 So I do request an additional scoping meeting be held
13 either in Farmington or Durango, Colorado. I
14 understand the map does have a possible corridor that
15 stretches south of Durango. That came out of the
16 Durango Herald this morning.

17 With a scope as broad as is being proposed, I
18 think in a sense part of it is going to be futility or
19 else a lot of issues will be looked over, because it
20 is just way too broad to cover under one EIS. And the
21 whole process, I mean we're talking probably thousands
22 of miles of corridor designation or justifying current
23 corridors.

24 I'd like to point out also that many of the
25 so-called current corridors were established --

23

1 pipeline, transmission line locations were established
2 before NEPA came into effect. And it's more or less

3 been a rubber stamp since because there was one
4 existing line. They were allowed to go in and put in
5 additional existing lines.

6 I think that we need to change that and we
7 need to go back and evaluate whether these lines are
8 in the right location to begin with environmentally as
9 if -- looking at them as if they hadn't already been
10 there and looking at it from the new NEPA, and I say
11 new meaning the seventies and stuff, NEPA standards
12 because many of these existing lines didn't meet NEPA
13 and will never meet NEPA.

14 And it costs the companies a tremendous
15 amount to go in and try to put them in locations where
16 they shouldn't be just because of topography. Some
17 examples, in the Durango area, where it's extremely
18 expensive, where they're forced into an area because
19 there was an existing line.

20 I'm sure there are lots more things that I
21 won't bring up. But that's currently what I have.
22 Thank you.

23 MR. MONTAGNA: Thank you.

24 Once again are there any other speakers that
25 would like to speak for the record? Okay. What I

24

1 propose is that we'll take a maybe 15-minute recess.
2 And then I'll announce that we go back on the record.
3 It's 2:41 now. So let's break until three. We'll be
4 off the record.

5 If anyone has any questions or would like to
6 chat about what we're proposing, we'll do that. And

7 then at three o'clock, if there are other folks that
8 are coming in because it is a three-hour session,
9 we'll reconvene and go back on the record. Is that
10 acceptable to everyone?

11 Okay. Thank you. We are off the record.

12 (Break)

13 MR. MONTAGNA: Good afternoon, folks. It's
14 three o'clock. And we previously agreed we would
15 reconvene to accept any additional on-the-record
16 comments. So, if we can have folks seated or at least
17 standing to the sides, we'll reconvene.

18 Again my name is Ron Montagna and I'm with
19 BLM. We thank everyone for attending this afternoon.
20 We will again open up the scoping session for
21 on-the-record comments to anyone who may have arrived
22 during our break and during the off-the-record
23 discussions.

24 Has anyone either arrived since our last
25 on-the-record session or decided during the break to

25

1 present comments for the record?

2 MS. SOUDER: During the off-the-record, there
3 was a gentleman from an electric company who gave me a
4 map and a card, Dennis Malone. And we will take any
5 products from you right now, if you would like to give
6 them to us on the record, and we could submit that
7 too. So anything you want to give us today is greatly
8 appreciated. Thank you.

9 MR. MONTAGNA: Well, folks, it is three
10 o'clock. We'll go off the record and reconvene at
11 3:30. If anyone comes in or if anyone decides they

12 want to go on the record before that, just let us
13 know. We're here until five. Thank you.

14 (Break)

15 MR. MONTAGNA: Again, folks, good afternoon.
16 It's 3:42. I'm just a little bit late on getting back
17 on the record. As we mentioned previously, there's an
18 opportunity to present comments for the record. And,
19 if anyone is interested in doing so, please step
20 forward at this time.

21 Step to the podium, give us your name and who
22 you represent, if anyone, and make your comments to
23 the record. If there's no one here, we'll close. It
24 is 3:42. We'll close the record until 4:30. Is that
25 okay? We are now off the record.

26

1 EVENING SESSION

2 MR. ELLSWORTH: Good evening, everyone. My
3 name is Don Ellsworth, I'm the field manager for the
4 Bureau of Land Management, Socorro field office. And
5 I want to take this opportunity to thank you all for
6 coming to this public meeting on energy corridor
7 designation on federal lands administered by BLM and
8 the Forest Service.

9 The Energy Policy Act of 2005 requires the
10 Secretaries of Energy, Agriculture, and Interior to
11 designate corridors for oil, gas, and hydrogen
12 pipelines and electricity transmission and
13 distribution facilities on federal land and 11
14 contiguous western states.

15 So with that thank you very much for coming

16 and I'm going to turn it over to the panel that
17 consists of Julia Souder with the Department of
18 Energy.

19 MS. SOUDER: Thank you for coming.

20 MR. ELLSWORTH: Bob Cunningham with the
21 Forest Service and Mr. Ron Montagna with the Bureau of
22 Land Management. And at this time I'm going to go
23 ahead and turn it over to Ron to moderate this
24 session.

25 MR. MONTAGNA: Thanks a lot, Don, we

27

1 appreciate it.

2 The session we will have this evening will be
3 real similar to the one we had this morning, and I see
4 a lot of the same familiar faces. So pardon the
5 redundancy, but that's the script we have for these
6 meetings.

7 As Don introduced me, my name is Ron Montagna
8 and I'm with the BLM out of the Washington office.
9 And it's just a real pleasure for me to be back in
10 Albuquerque to participate in these scoping meetings
11 for the West-wide Regional Energy Corridor
12 Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement. And we
13 will refer to it during the course of the meeting as
14 the PEIS effort.

15 This is the second of 11 scoping meetings
16 that the team will hold throughout the western United
17 States. Yesterday we had our first series of meetings
18 in Denver, today we're having them in Albuquerque and
19 in Salt Lake; and, over the course of the next two
20 weeks, we will have them in the rest of the 11

21 contiguous Western United States.

22 This effort is an interagency PEIS. And it's
23 being conducted by the Department of Energy, the
24 Department of the Interior, the Department of
25 Commerce, Defense, and the Forest Service.

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1 Tonight the representatives here are from
2 the Department of Interior being represented by BLM,
3 the Department of Energy, and the Department of Ag by
4 the United States Forest Service.

5 The EIS we're endeavoring to develop over the
6 next two years is designed to evaluate those issues
7 associated with the designation of energy corridors on
8 federal lands in the 11 western states. And the first
9 question we get most of the time is why are you doing
10 this. And the reason is fairly simple. We're being
11 directed to do it pursuant to Section 368 of the
12 Energy Policy Act of 2005.

13 And that section directs the secretaries of
14 the agencies I just identified to designate under
15 their respective authorities corridors on federal
16 lands in the 11 western states for oil, gas, and
17 hydrogen pipelines and electricity transmission and
18 distribution facilities. And collectively we're
19 referring to those as energy corridors.

20 The agencies involved at this time have
21 determined that designating corridors required by
22 Section 368 of the act constitutes a major federal
23 action which may have a significant impact upon the
24 environment within the meaning of the National

1 For this reason it's the agencies' intent to
2 conduct this Programmatic Environmental Impact
3 Statement. DOE and the BLM are co-leads for this
4 effort. And the Forest Service is a cooperating
5 agency.

6 The second question that usually comes to us
7 is what is the energy corridor. And the definition
8 that we're using for this effort is an energy corridor
9 is a parcel of land either linear or areal in
10 character that has been identified through the land
11 use planning process as being a preferred location for
12 existing and future rights of ways and is suitable to
13 accommodate one or more rights of ways which are
14 similar in purpose.

15 And, for those BLM'ers that are here or folks
16 that have worked with BLM over the years will
17 recognize that, because that has been -- that's very
18 similar to the traditional definition of a corridor
19 found in both BLM regulations and in our manuals.

20 The reason the federal agencies are here
21 today are to listen to what the public has to say
22 about the project we're about to start. This is not a
23 question and answer format. We are going to try to
24 avoid -- which gets to be fairly difficult, we are
25 going to try to avoid discussing the specifics of this

1 project.

2 what we need and what we request from the
Page 25

3 public is your concerns and your interests with
4 respect to the assignment we have been given pursuant
5 again to Section 386.

6 Having said that please note that, during the
7 course of the evening, we'll probably have several
8 breaks and then we'll be around at the end of the
9 session. And, during these breaks and at the end of
10 the session, we will go off the record and we will try
11 to entertain any questions you may have to help kind
12 of set the parameters on how we can all participate in
13 this effort in the most efficient way possible.

14 However, when I'm on the record and I think
15 when my colleagues are on the record, we will not be
16 responding to questions or try to provide answers at
17 this time.

18 As you came in, you were given package
19 materials. And we request that you avail yourselves
20 to the comment cards. It's important for all of us
21 that we get as good as information to go forward with
22 this effort as possible.

23 In addition to the comment cards, there are
24 three other ways to respond or to provide input to
25 this Programmatic EIS effort. And we provide those

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1 both in your handout and on these poster boards. And
2 the first method is to participate in the scoping
3 meeting.

4 The second method is to provide comments
5 through our Internet site. And we have the location
6 there. The third method are written comments. And we

7 have an address provided for you in the packet. And
8 the fourth method is through fax.

9 As a general note, let me state that,
10 although written comments are permitted and, of
11 course, we encourage them, they're probably the least
12 efficient way of getting information to us. They're
13 slow. And secondly, all correspondence we get via
14 snail mail, through hard letters, goes through a
15 security process in Washington. That really slows
16 down the process and it also often damages the
17 documents themselves.

18 So, although that method is permissible and
19 we encourage it, we really encourage the submission of
20 comments through the Internet. That's really the most
21 efficient way to get them in.

22 Before I go on any more, we need to probably
23 discuss what scoping really means. And that's why you
24 guys are really here. The scoping process starts with
25 these meetings and then continues through written

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1 comments and then face-to-face meetings, if requested.
2 But what we need in the scoping process are basically
3 three things.

4 One is we need to have you, the public, tell
5 us the issues that you think are going to affect you
6 by the designation of these corridors.

7 Secondly is to have you provide us, the
8 federal agencies, information that you think is
9 relevant to us to generate good land use decisions on
10 the identification and designation of these corridors.
11 And third is to help us identify and refine the

12 alternatives to be examined in the Programmatic EIS.

13 Again this information is provided both in
14 the notice of intent and the information sheet that
15 you received in the packet.

16 Before I open this up for public comments,
17 again there are just three short points. Let's see.
18 As I mentioned during the breaks and after the
19 session, the agency folks will be around to provide
20 some insight into the process. So those agency people
21 other than us three, if anyone is here that is
22 familiar with what we're doing, if you would just
23 identify yourselves, we can have folks more easily
24 chat with you during breaks. Come on, Bob Suitcamp.
25 That's what you're getting all these good overtime

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1 hours for.

2 The second item I just want to finish off
3 with is, when speakers come to the mike, they need to
4 identify themselves and they need to, if they
5 represent any organization, state who they represent.
6 And the third point is again just to reiterate the on
7 the record, off the record process.

8 When we're at the podium, all comments from
9 the podium are on the record. The folks here at the
10 front table will again refrain from question and
11 answer format. However, when we have our breaks at
12 the end of the session, we'll go off the record and
13 we'll be more than happy to entertain these Qs and As
14 at that time. So that ends my prepared remarks.

15 And, since no one presented a card

16 identifying themselves as a speaker, I will invite
17 anyone who would like to speak on the record to come
18 forward at this time and state their name and present
19 their remarks to us on the record.

20 One last point they asked me to make. If
21 everyone that's here came past the desk and didn't
22 sign in, we would request that you do sign in sometime
23 during the evening. Thank you.

24 To parallel the procedure we used earlier
25 today, this afternoon, we'll wait a few minutes for

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1 any walk-in comments. And then we'll take a recess
2 for a period of time and then we'll reassemble and
3 then go back on the comments until the nine o'clock
4 end of the meeting.

5 MR. WENTZ: Good evening. My name is Chris
6 Wentz. I'm the director of the Energy Conservation
7 and Management Division of the New Mexico Energy,
8 Minerals, and Natural Resources Department. We're the
9 renewable energy division for the State of New Mexico.

10 And we likely will be supplementing these
11 comments. These are pretty much off-the-cuff right
12 now. We just found out about this recently. But we
13 will probably be putting in comments either from the
14 governor's office and/or from the Energy, Minerals,
15 and Natural Resources Department.

16 I guess first I would just like to thank you
17 for holding this scoping meeting. I think the
18 Programmatic EIS is very important as far as the
19 future of energy transmission in the United States and
20 particularly in New Mexico.

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21 I think, looking forward, it's important to
22 look at both the short-term impacts but especially the
23 long-term impacts of the different alternatives in the
24 Programmatic EIS. The EIS will be used to facilitate
25 siting and significant investment in energy

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1 infrastructure such as oil, gas, hydrogen, pipelines
2 as well as electricity transmission and distribution
3 lines.

4 And, because this infrastructure tends to be
5 around for multiple decades, because of the
6 significant investment, it is particularly important
7 that you take kind of a long-term planning, long-term
8 vision approach. And towards that end I think it's
9 important that you particularly look at the renewable
10 energy resources, the clean energy resources that are
11 out there.

12 Our current electricity transmission and
13 distribution system really has been around for over 50
14 years, a lot of it, some longer, and hasn't been
15 upgraded in a long time. So there's no reason to
16 think that this next round of investment isn't going
17 to be around a long time.

18 So largely a lot of the corridors that you'll
19 be designating are going to be used by those future
20 energy resources, a lot of ones right now that are
21 either becoming economic or are going to be economic
22 over the next 20, 30, 40 years or so.

23 To that end you need to look particularly
24 close at the renewable resources of wind and biomass.

25 This is particularly important in New Mexico. We have

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1 a lot of world class wind resources in Eastern New
2 Mexico that are largely transmission constrained and
3 are going to need additional capacity if we're to
4 benefit from those resources economically.

5 The same holds true for biomass. We've got a
6 lot of different resources out there as far as forest
7 thinnings, a lot of unhealthy forests. We've got a
8 very large dairy industry now, seventh in the nation
9 in milk production, a lot of manure, a lot of
10 livestock that could be turned into productive energy.
11 But it's going to take new capacity to get that out.

12 so also looking at what's out there, as far
13 as renewable resources and when they might become
14 economic and where they're located, it is really
15 important that the federal agencies and your
16 contractors avail themselves of as much existing
17 expertise and experience that's out there right now.
18 A lot of great planning, a lot of great assessments
19 are going on right now. And I just would like to
20 mention a couple of them.

21 One is that the Western Governors
22 Association, as you probably know, have a clean and
23 diversified energy initiative for the West. This
24 initiative really evolved out of a resolution that our
25 Governor, Bill Richardson, had teamed up with Governor

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1 Schwarzenegger of California and ultimately got the
2 unanimous approval of all 18 Western governors to go

3 after some clean energy goals for the future. And
4 these goals are out quite a few years.

5 And so I think this PEIS really figures
6 prominently into developing the resources to meet
7 those goals.

8 I would also encourage you to look at the
9 Western Governors Association resolutions. There's a
10 number of existing policy resolutions that have been
11 in place for a number of years now that represent the
12 collective position of the Western Governors.

13 And I understand that this is going to be
14 largely a Western PEIS or at least this scoping
15 hearing is addressing that. And so you should look at
16 those policy resolutions because it establishes a lot
17 of the principles that the Western Governors believe
18 need to be addressed in siting and development of new
19 transmission capacity.

20 Also you should avail yourselves of the
21 expertise of such regional groups as the Western
22 Interstate Energy Board. They've got a committee on
23 regional electric power cooperation that has been
24 active for over a decade and is very intimately
25 involved in looking at especially electricity

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1 transmission corridors and electricity transmission
2 issues throughout the West.

3 And then finally the role of the states is
4 very important in this process, the state energy
5 offices, our office as well as the other Western state
6 energy offices, but also the public utility

7 commissions that largely have the existing siting
8 authority for transmission and other energy
9 infrastructure.

10 So with that I would close and thank you very
11 much for being here.

12 MR. MONTAGNA: Thank you.

13 what I'll do now is recess this meeting.

14 It's now 7:30. I'll recess this meeting until let's
15 say 7:45. And, if other folks arrive during that time
16 period, then we'll open the meeting again, take
17 comments, and go to the nine o'clock close period. So
18 we'll recess for the next 15, 20 minutes. Thank you.

19 (Break)

20 MR. MONTAGNA: Good evening, folks. It's
21 7:45. And as we mentioned we'll go back on the record
22 and again invite anyone here that would like to
23 present information for the record to come to the
24 podium, give us your name, and who you represent and
25 present your comments to the record.

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1 And we'll wait a few minutes and, if no one
2 shows up, we'll again have a recess until later in the
3 evening before we close down for the night.

4 (Break)

5 MR. MONTAGNA: Good evening, folks. It's
6 eight o'clock. And we're going back on the record to
7 see if there's anyone who would like to present
8 information. Again we'll wait a few minutes and go
9 back on the record at 8:15.

10 (Break)

11 MR. MONTAGNA: Good evening, everyone. It's
Page 33

12 8:15. And, as we said before, we would open this up
13 again for any comments on the record. And, since
14 there is no one identifying themselves as wanting to
15 speak on the record, we will go ahead and close this
16 evening's meeting on behalf of BLM, the Department of
17 Energy, the United States Forest Service.

18 Thank you all for attending. We look forward
19 to your comments and suggestions for our Programmatic
20 Environmental Impact Statement. Thank you and good
21 evening.

22 (At 8:15 p.m. the hearing was adjourned.)
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1 REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE
2

3 I, JAN A. WILLIAMS, New Mexico CCR #14, DO
4 HEREBY CERTIFY THAT ON October 26, 2005, the
5 proceedings was taken before me, and that I did report
6 in stenographic shorthand the proceedings set forth
7 herein, and the foregoing is a true and correct
8 transcription of the proceedings had upon the taking
9 of this hearing.

10 I FURTHER CERTIFY that I am neither employed
11 by nor related to any of the parties or attorneys in
12 this case, and that I have no interest whatsoever in
13 the final disposition of this case in any court.
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