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West-Wide Energy Corridor Peis Public Scoping Meeting

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WEST-WIDE ENERGY CORRIDOR
PROGRAMMATIC ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING

COPY

REPORTER'S TRANSCRIPT OF MEETING

On Wednesday, November 2, 2005

At 2:03 p.m.

At Tuscany Suites Hotel

Las Vegas, Nevada

Reported by: Deborah Ann Hines, CCR #473, RPR

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1 SCOTT FLORENCE: If I can have everybody's
2 attention, I'd like to welcome you to this meeting,
3 this scoping meeting for the West-Wide Corridor Study
4 Project. My name is Scott Florence. I'm the
5 District Manager, relatively new district manager
6 from the Arizona strip district which is
7 headquartered in St. George, Utah. And I'm sort of
8 filling in for Juan Palma who is the local BLM field
9 manager here in the Las Vegas field office.

10 I just wanted to welcome you all to the
11 meeting. Thank you for coming out. And this is the
12 eighth I believe of eleven similar meetings
13 throughout the Western United States to take public
14 input and provide an opportunity for us to have some
15 dialog with you, hopefully be able to answer some of
16 the questions you have so you can provide some
17 informed comments during the scoping period. And it
18 also will be an opportunity for you to provide oral
19 comments, oral testimony at this meeting.

20 So I'm going to turn the meeting over to
21 Jerry Pell from the Department of Energy, and he's
22 going to be the moderator for the meeting. He's
23 going to explain how the meeting is going to be
24 conducted. So, Jerry, I'll turn it over to you.

25 JERRY PELL: Scott, thank you very much.

1 I'm not going to make this so formal. I'm just going
2 to talk from here and keep it a nice, relaxed, casual
3 meeting.

4 As Scott mentioned, I'm Dr. Jerry Pell. I'm
5 with the Department of Energy in Washington, D.C.,
6 and the office I'm with is the Office of Electricity
7 Delivery and Energy Reliability, or OE as we call it
8 in Washington. Everything has an abbreviation in
9 Washington.

10 It's a pleasure to be in Las Vegas. I've
11 been here several times before and I always enjoy
12 coming back. It's never the same city twice, is it?
13 So we always do find new and exciting things to see
14 and do.

15 Speaking of Vegas, this is one of those rare
16 occasions where what's done in Vegas will not stay in
17 Vegas. We do have a court reporter, and the point of
18 that is to make sure that your comments and remarks
19 today are recorded faithfully so that we can study
20 them later and consider them in the course of
21 preparing the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

22 Before I proceed with introducing the panel,
23 let me just tell you how I plan to conduct this so
24 that you know what to expect. First thing I'm going
25 to do is read some introductory background remarks

1 that I've been asked to share with you on the reason
2 why we're here, what this is all about, then I'm
3 going to introduce the remainder of my panel from the
4 Fish and Wildlife, I'm sorry, from the Forest Service
5 Office Department of Agriculture and from Bureau of
6 Land Management Department of the Interior. I said
7 Fish and Wildlife Services because I'm involved with
8 them on another project and I've been exchanging
9 e-mails and so I guess it sticks in the mind.

10 After having done that I will ask the
11 audience whether does anybody here that's politically
12 elected, any congressmen, senators, governors, people
13 of that nature that would like to speak, and if there
14 are none I will then continue with people who have
15 preregistered, and after their remarks I will then
16 ask you all if anybody would like to speak from the
17 audience.

18 Once we've exhausted all our commenters, we
19 will close out the formal record and those of you
20 that would like to stay and engage in informal
21 conversation with us, we're going to stay here as
22 well, because we have another meeting as 7:00 so
23 we're not going anywhere, and we'd be delighted to
24 chat with you.

25 So having said all that, let me tell you why

1 we're here. The three agencies that I mentioned
2 before, Energy, Land Management Department of the
3 Interior and the Forest Service Department of
4 Agriculture together are going to prepare what's
5 called a Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement.
6 And that terminology stems from the National
7 Environmental Policy Act, or NEPA, N-E-P-A as many of
8 you know it.

9 And the point that document is to evaluate
10 environmental and cultural issues associated with the
11 designation of energy corridors on federal land in
12 the eleven western states. And based upon the
13 information and analyses that are developed in this
14 Programmatic EIS, the Bureau of Land Management and
15 the Forest Service would amend their respective land
16 use plans by designating a series of energy
17 corridors.

18 And it is that program that's referred to
19 when we call it a Programmatic Environmental Impact
20 Statement, I should clarify, as opposed to what some
21 of you may be more familiar with the project specific
22 environmental analysis, or EIS, where you actually
23 study an actual project that has an actual geographic
24 location and that can be considered specifically with
25 regard to a specifically proposed energy path or

1 corridor. This is a Programmatic EIS that precludes
2 and precedes practice specific environmental
3 analysis.

4 Your participation is very important because
5 we're counting on you to give us the input we need to
6 define the scope of the analysis, and that's why this
7 is called a public scoping meeting. It literally is
8 exactly that. The development, preparation of this
9 PEIS stems from the Energy Policy Act that was just
10 signed on the 8th of August. It's public law 109-5A,
11 also known as House resolution 6.

12 Section 368 of that Act directs the
13 secretaries of Agriculture, Commercial, Defense,
14 Energy and the Interior to designate under their
15 respective authorities corridors on federal land in
16 the eleven western states: Arizona, California,
17 Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon,
18 Utah, Washington and Wyoming for oil, gas and
19 hydrogen pipelines and electricity transmission and
20 distribution facilities. These are the energy
21 corridors.

22 And the three agencies together have
23 determined that designating these corridors
24 constitutes a major federal action which may have a
25 significant impact upon the environment within the

1 meaning of, as I mentioned before, the National
2 Environmental Policy Act, hence the requirement to
3 prepare a Programmatic EIS.

4 DOE and Bureau of Land Management are
5 co-lead agencies, and Agriculture is participating as
6 a cooperating agencies. The three of us together are
7 working as a team, and the other part of that team,
8 the fourth leg of this four legged chair, if you'd
9 like, is the public.

10 There are four ways to submit comments, and
11 whichever way you choose is entirely in your
12 convenience. It does not make any difference which
13 way you comment. All comments will be considered to
14 the same degree whether they come in electronically
15 through the web or by mail or by facsimile or by
16 speaking here or by FedEx or UPS or what have you.

17 So do not hesitate after today to submit
18 comments if you have any in writing or
19 electronically, and also through our website, which
20 you may not be able to see because it's at the very
21 bottom of this chart, but let me please bring to your
22 attention the address of that website is corridor
23 EIS, one word, c-o-r-r-i-d-o-r-e-i-s, dot ANL.
24 That's Argon National Laboratory. This is the
25 national lab of the Department of Energy that's

1 preparing the actual EIS for us, dot gov, as in
2 government.

3 So please become familiar with that website.
4 It will get updated as the project continues.
5 Transcripts of these eleven days of scoping will be
6 available on that website.

7 The actual public scoping comment period
8 ends on November the 28th, but we always make sure
9 that we note that if we can get any comments after
10 that date they will be considered to the extent
11 practicable. And that means that if we haven't
12 gotten to the stage in the document where it's to
13 late to make changes, we will consider late comments,
14 but I would still encourage you please help us or
15 work with us by getting your comments in by
16 November 28th if at all possible.

17 I discourage you from using regular mail to
18 send comments to the Department of Energy, and the
19 reason for that is we go through anthrax screening
20 which has two marvelous effects. One, it delays our
21 mail by a couple of weeks. Two, when it does arrive
22 it's quite often damaged.

23 The anthrax screening process has a tendency
24 to fuse together the pages, and I've received more
25 than one package that I've opened and immediately

1 disposed of because I couldn't separate the pages.
2 So please use the regular mail as your last resort.
3 If you do want to use mail, I encourage you to use
4 one of the overnight services light FedEx or Emery
5 Air Freight or what have you.

6 I want to thank you for being here. I'm
7 gratified by the number of you that have chosen to
8 join. And at this point I would like to introduce
9 our panel. First on my right is Scott Powers with
10 Bureau of Land Management, and then Paul Johnson with
11 the Forest Service. I will let these gentlemen speak
12 for themselves. I understand Scott has a few remarks
13 he wants to share with you as well.

14 SCOTT POWERS: They'll be very brief. Thank
15 you for coming on behalf of BLM. We've been talking
16 about doing this for a long time. And there are
17 several familiar faces in the crowd that are going to
18 help us get it done, and I'm glad to see you here.

19 I wanted to say something briefly about the
20 map, because all maps draw attention in these kind of
21 processes, and I just wanted to make sure people
22 understand what it is and what it is not.

23 What it is is a bunch of lines on a map
24 drawn by a bunch of people that would like to see
25 corridors in those locations some day. And we

1 provided that just to illustrate the point that
2 there's a lot of interest in this out there. Nothing
3 more, nothing less. There's been no analysis done on
4 any of those proposals. So, you know, take it for
5 what it's worth. It clearly demonstrates how
6 interested people are in this project.

7 Also we'll be glad once the recorder is
8 turned off to answer any questions you may have. A
9 lot of times, especially in the beginning of the
10 scoping process, you need clarification in order to
11 help you provide, you know, valid comments, and we'll
12 be glad to do that and then you can come back on the
13 record and provide comments that way if you want
14 afterwards. But as Jerry mentioned, there's several
15 other ways to provide those comments. So thanks
16 again for being here.

17 PAUL JOHNSON: Again, my name is Paul
18 Johnson. I'm representing the Forest Service from
19 the Washington office. And again we are thankful and
20 appreciate that you are here to garner your input
21 into helping us move forward in meeting the challenge
22 that Congress laid on us when the President signed
23 the bill.

24 And we recognize that this is an important
25 piece of work and also it will -- your input is

1 valuable in helping us as the five agencies: The
2 Department of Energy, Interior, Commerce and Bureau
3 of I guess Defense and Agriculture in coming up with
4 some valid corridors that would be very useful to the
5 people out here that are going to be serving in the
6 future. So we look forward to your comments, and
7 again thank you for coming.

8 JERRY PELL: Thank you, Scott and Paul,
9 appreciate that.

10 As I said earlier, let me now ask is there
11 by any chance an elected official amongst the
12 audience that would like to speak, either state,
13 federal or local?

14 Is there anybody from one of the government
15 agencies, again federal, state or local, that would
16 like to speak that's with us this afternoon?

17 Okay, seeing that there are none I have
18 three preregisterants that I will start with, and I
19 will then ask if anybody wants to say something to us
20 from the audience. Let me start first with Kris
21 Hohenshelt with Kern River Gas Transmission Company.
22 And, Kris, forgive me if I pronounced that.

23 KRIS HOHENSHELT: No, you did fine.

24 JERRY PELL: Thank you. Come up to the
25 podium please and make sure that our court reporter

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1 has your name, first and last spelled properly.

2 KRIS HOHENSHELT: Good afternoon. My name
3 is Chris Hohenshelt. I'm the manager of Land and
4 Environment for Kern River Gas Transmission Company.

5 Kern River Gas Transmission Company owns and
6 operates 1,679 miles of interstate natural gas
7 pipeline through the states of Wyoming, Utah, Nevada
8 and California. Approximately 850 miles are located
9 on federally managed lands. Kern River transports a
10 design capacity of 1.7 billion cubic feet of natural
11 gas per day.

12 Kern River appreciates the opportunity to
13 participate in this important endeavor being
14 undertaken as mandated in the Energy Policy Act of
15 2005.

16 The study, hopefully resulting in the
17 establishment of better defined and expanded energy
18 corridors, is critical to the economy and well being
19 of the western United States.

20 I spoke in Salt Lake City, presented some
21 comments regarding some of the principles that we
22 would hope to be used in looking at corridors,
23 establishing corridors and I will not repeat those
24 comments today.

25 The proposed Programmatic Environmental

1 Impact Statement should assess corridors with
2 traditional multiple use principles and evaluate any
3 constraints or restrictions that could impede this
4 initiative. More specifically many corridors are
5 restricted by competing land use designations. Here
6 in the Las Vegas area there is a corridor that is
7 used for electric transmission through the Sunrise
8 Mountain Instant Study Area. This area supposedly
9 has the same protections as a Wilderness Study Area,
10 but through congressional actions electric
11 transmission has been allowed through the Sunrise
12 Mountain Instant Study Area. This corridor can only
13 accommodate what congress has specifically allowed.
14 This position has been affirmed by the Department of
15 Interior's Solicitor through correspondence with the
16 Bureau of Land Management and Kern River.

17 The Programmatic EIS should specifically
18 address this situation and hopefully through ultimate
19 approval of the corridor PEIS, specific congressional
20 action will no longer be necessary. Kern River
21 supports the actions the Bureau of Land Management
22 has taken to date. The BLM, through its Resource
23 Management Plan, EIS and Record of Decision
24 identified the need for a corridor through the
25 Sunrise Mountain Instant Study Area and recommended

1 it to be utilized as a multiple use corridor.

2 However the BLM also recognizes that congressional
3 action is necessary before its resource management
4 plan proposal can be implemented.

5 It is essential that a multiple use corridor
6 be established in this area for energy transportation
7 through the Las Vegas metropolitan area. Kern River
8 supplies approximately 75 percent of the natural
9 consumed in the Las Vegas area and nearly 25 percent
10 of the natural gas that enters the state of
11 California, and that's through its existing pipeline
12 system. Expansion of energy transportation systems
13 to meet the growing natural gas demands in these
14 areas becomes more difficult without the
15 establishment of effective corridors. The opening of
16 the Sunrise Mountain corridor will allow growth and
17 supply of Rocky Mountain natural gas as well as other
18 energy sources to Las Vegas and California.

19 As we all know, the Las Vegas Valley is
20 rapidly being developed to the point that placement
21 of interstate energy transmission systems is a
22 challenging proposition. Kern River has studied
23 numerous corridor scenarios in this area and has
24 concluded that city infrastructure and the Red Rock
25 National Conservation Area to the west are

1 constraints that must be overcome if a corridor is
2 not developed to the east of Las Vegas in the area of
3 the Sunrise Mountain Instant Study Area.

4 In closing, Kern River supports your efforts
5 in studying and hopefully establishing effective
6 energy corridors in the west and would specifically
7 urge you to address the Sunrise Mountain corridor
8 issue.

9 JERRY PELL: Thank you very much.

10 KRIS HOHENSHELT: Thank you.

11 JERRY PELL: I appreciate your remarks.
12 We'll certainly consider them. And I also want to
13 thank you for giving us a written copy of your
14 remarks. And if there are any additional remarks you
15 care to submit in writing, we'd certainly appreciate
16 that.

17 KRIS HOHENSHELT: Kern River will submit
18 formal copies.

19 JERRY PELL: Thank you. I'd now like to
20 call on our second preregistered speaker, Pat Arons
21 of Southern California Edison. And, Ms. Arons, I'd
22 like to ask you, I had as a preregistrant Nat Nguyen.
23 Are you replacing Nat Nguyen this afternoon?

24 PATRICIA ARONS: Yes, I am.

25 JERRY PELL: Okay. Thank you. Miss Arons,

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1 would you make sure please that we have your first
2 name, first and last name properly spelled for the
3 court reporter.

4 PATRICIA ARONS: My name is Patricia Arons,
5 P-a-t-r-i-c-i-a, A-r-o-n-s. That's one A.

6 Edison would like to commend the joint
7 agency approach to undertaking designation of
8 corridors. I believe it's a very important process
9 for ensuring and preserving our ability to build
10 energy infrastructure into the future, so my
11 compliments undertaking this. And I believe that
12 you'll find that it's going to have a very enduring
13 impact on the energy industry.

14 I'd like to begin my comments by suggesting
15 that you think about some expected outcomes of
16 designating energy corridors. From Edison's
17 perspective as we look at increasing load growth in
18 Southern California and increasing transmission
19 related services to new market based generation and
20 new renewable regeneration what we see is that
21 there's tremendous pressure to build new transmission
22 to meet these obligations for the future.

23 So the expected outcomes that we would like
24 you to begin to focus on would be to expedite
25 environmental permitting for new projects as they

1 cross federal land. And in helping that, interagency
2 protocols would be useful so that as you have a
3 single project that involves use of different federal
4 lands under different agency jurisdiction, having a
5 set of protocols would greatly ease the burden on
6 utilities in accomplishing and developing a
7 particular project.

8 We'd also ask that this process take into
9 consideration planned projects that utilities are
10 beginning to look at. At Edison we have our
11 transmission grid under the control of the California
12 Independent System Operator. And through that
13 process of working with ISO related staff we look at
14 a planning horizon that is generally a ten year
15 planning horizon but we also try to incorporate into
16 our thinking long-term needs as to what we think the
17 growth requirements would be out for 20 years. So
18 begin to think about the time horizon in which you're
19 designating corridors for the future.

20 And I think one other point in terms of a
21 designated outcome to be thinking about is those
22 federal policies that will preserve our ability to
23 build energy infrastructure through federal corridors
24 is going to be very important. And I get into that
25 later on in my talking points.

1 We've got some comments included here on the
2 importance of a sufficient corridor width, and I talk
3 a little bit about how wide that should be. A single
4 transmission line might require right-of-way width of
5 200 feet. And if you're talking about multiple
6 transmission lines, you don't always site those
7 transmission lines immediately adjacent to each
8 other, as I discuss, because of the liability
9 vulnerabilities that you can actually build into the
10 system.

11 But we're suggesting that from the
12 perspective of electric infrastructure you think
13 about corridor widths that are about a mile wide.
14 And that would give us opportunity to put two lines
15 adjacent to each other with a third line having about
16 a 2,000 foot separation for liability reasons.

17 And we have, at Edison we use a 2,000 foot
18 separation as kind of a benchmark that came out of
19 the planning of the California/Oregon transmission
20 project. It was an activity that was undertaken in
21 the mid '80s I believe where we looked at separating
22 a third 500 KV line from the Pacific Northwest which
23 was the existing two 500 KV lines had a capability of
24 transporting 3200 meg watts from the Oregon area down
25 into California, and the project was the third 500 KV

1 line.

2 And in the course of doing the studies we
3 found that if there were a common event that could
4 effect all three lines simultaneously, that we had
5 some very adverse consequences that we were dealing
6 with. So separation of those electric facilities
7 became a critical issue. And as we look at energy
8 corridors for building transmission, you really do
9 need to incorporate in your thinking some sort of
10 standard for separation so that you do not build in
11 vulnerabilities into what you're doing.

12 And I do have a copy of that corridor
13 separation report that was prepared for the
14 California energy -- I'm sorry, for the
15 California/Oregon transmission project that will give
16 you some background and thinking. Actually discussed
17 in that report was very -- I'm going into this
18 elaborate because I actually wrote the report for the
19 committee and spent a lot of time researching
20 reliability and where it really came from.

21 But stemming from the 1965 blackout there
22 was a great report that was written by the Federal
23 Energy Regulatory Commission as a report to the
24 President, and it really talked about one of the
25 recommendations was getting adequate separation for

1 reliability reasons. So I would direct you or
2 suggest that you perhaps include that in your
3 comments. I think another --

4 JERRY PELL: Excuse me, Miss Arons, will you
5 be able to provide us with a copy of that report for
6 the record?

7 PATRICIA ARONS: We'll attach it to our
8 formal comments that we plan on filing.

9 JERRY PELL: Excellent. Thank you.

10 PATRICIA ARONS: I may actually be able to
11 get my hands on the original 1965 report to the
12 President that was published by the Federal Energy
13 Regulatory Commission. That would be another useful
14 document to refer to.

15 The other suggestion that we included here
16 in our talking points is that security of course
17 today is a big concern. And as you go about
18 publishing information, making it generally
19 available, I think you want to be somewhat guarded
20 about designating corridors for specific energy uses.
21 In fact, I would suggest you don't even designate an
22 energy corridor, that you designate it as a corridor
23 and deal with the issue of what it is used for on a
24 case-by-case basis.

25 I think also coordination with state, local

1 and tribal government agencies are very important.
2 In California we have adopted -- the state has
3 adopted a renewable portfolio standard that requires
4 utilities to purchase up to 20 percent of their
5 energy needs from renewable resources by 2017,
6 although they're talking about accelerating that to
7 2010. I don't know if that's happened yet. I
8 haven't really followed that that closely.

9 But what's important about that is renewable
10 resources tend to be remotely located. They require
11 substantial transmission to connect to the utility
12 grid, and they're going to in all likelihood go to
13 federal land.

14 The state of California actually is,
15 stemming from their renewable portfolio standard, is
16 considering undertaking an activity to do corridor
17 designation on state land. And one of the things
18 that would be a useful outcome from a utility
19 perspective is to have some sort of alignment so that
20 you can coordinate use of federal corridors with
21 state corridors and assure access between the two.
22 You don't want to see a north/south corridor across
23 federal lands and an east/west corridor immediately
24 adjacent over state lands that make it almost
25 impossible to make access to the two readily

1 available.

2 Tribal governments I think are looking at --
3 first of all, they have extraordinary energy
4 resources that are beginning to be developed. And I
5 believe that it's really important to incorporate
6 tribal energy development and tribal meetings into
7 this process.

8 Federal policies that I think were
9 particularly interested is that as we develop energy
10 corridors at the federal level, access across private
11 lands to be able to access those corridors become
12 critical. And growth as developed in more and more
13 remote areas tends to close off corridors. And so we
14 have policies both at the state and federal level
15 that limit our ability to carry property in rates
16 unless they're associated with a particular project.

17 And I think that if we had a federal policy
18 that was in alignment with a corridor designation
19 process that would say that incorporates in
20 particular you could hold right-of-way in rates in
21 order to access those federal corridors for the
22 eventual development of a transmission facility. So
23 federal policy that would encourage and preserve that
24 ability would be particularly important.

25 Your schedule is very optimistic. In

1 California spring bloom is critical in any
2 environmental assessment that we do. And any new
3 corridors that are developed included in your Draft
4 PEIS for the spring of this year won't have spring
5 bloom data in all likelihood. And you might want to
6 think about data adequacy and valid designation of
7 these corridors as being an important part of what
8 your goals should be.

9 We own extensive transmission facilities,
10 and it's important to us to preserve our ability to
11 use our existing corridors through federal lands.
12 And we think it might be a sensible thing to do to
13 define corridors around existing facilities that
14 would at the very least allow us to site new
15 transmission adjacent to existing facilities, or at
16 least within some reasonable separation for
17 reliability.

18 I've listed on my talking points some
19 particular federal lands that we had major
20 transmission through where we're particularly
21 concerned about our ability to build in the future as
22 well.

23 And finally I would suggest that we consider
24 a periodic review of this. This is going to be a
25 very valuable process as time goes by and the world

1 changes. I'm a transmission planner and I can tell
2 you every year I deal with a new set of facts as I do
3 my work. And so you need some sort of periodic
4 update, and I would suggest perhaps a five to ten
5 year cycle that would ensure that the designated
6 corridors are consistent and meet or satisfy the
7 energy development needs in the west.

8 So I thank you for allowing me to perhaps go
9 over my five minute limit by a few minutes, and I
10 appreciate the opportunity to comment.

11 JERRY PELL: Thank you. Thank you very
12 much. Very valuable comments. I especially
13 appreciate the comments on corridor width because
14 this has been a technical issue we've been struggling
15 with at DOE in previous NEPA documents as to what
16 constitutes an appropriate corridor for study. So
17 your remarks and whatever information you bring to
18 bear on that subject will certainly be available.

19 And thank you again for that corridor
20 separation report in advance for when we get it. And
21 I also want to thank you for enlightening me about
22 Indian tribes. I did neglect to ask whether there
23 were any Indian tribal representatives present that
24 wish to speak, for which I apologize. Are there any?

25 Okay. Thanks again, Ms. Arons.

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1 We now move on to our third speaker, Mike
2 Avant, is it? And, Mr. Avant, I'm not quite sure the
3 name of the company. Is it Garkane Energy?

4 MIKE AVANT: My name is Mike Avant here for
5 Garkane Energy. Garkane Energy is a small electric
6 cooperative in contrast to the two previous speakers.
7 It represents large multistate, or within a state,
8 organizations.

9 Garkane serves about 10,000 customers in
10 south central Utah, north central Arizona. We have
11 about 2,000 miles of line, and we have the dubious
12 distinction of serving more state and federal parks,
13 monuments, forest service installations than any
14 other utility in the country. Approximately 90
15 percent of our service area of lands are controlled
16 by one form of government or another. We serve Bryce
17 Canyon National Park, north rim of the Grand Canyon,
18 Zion National Park, Dixie National Forest, Fish Lake
19 National Forest. So we're neck deep in this issue.

20 There again I think you have a very, very
21 aggressive schedule and I hope very much that you
22 hold to it. We have right-of-ways for existing
23 transmission lines on the Dixie National Forest that
24 we filed for renewal of those transmission lines in
25 December of 2002. The right-of-ways expired in

1 December of 2003. This is almost December of 2005.
2 No action has been taken on those renewals. Forest
3 Service tells us that they have no budget for
4 handling right-of-ways. So I hope you can seriously
5 fix that problem.

6 In looking at your website I see nothing on
7 it that tells me how to submit or get corridors that
8 I think should be designated put onto your map. Your
9 map is I think primarily a project or product of the
10 WSEC and is looking at large multistate projects, but
11 I represent the exact opposite: The small local
12 projects, the distribution type projects that bill
13 also intended this process to cover. And we need
14 some way that's relatively easy and straightforward
15 to get our desired corridors onto this map so that
16 they can get equal consideration with the large Kern
17 River and multistate type projects.

18 We have previously submitted desired
19 corridors to other federal agencies during land use
20 plan preparation, most recently the Grand Staircase
21 National Monument when their management land was
22 developed over the last few years. Not only did the
23 information we present on corridors that needed to be
24 looked at get ignored, they also ignored and don't
25 recognize existing 230 and 500 KV transmission lines.

1 So I hope in this process that at least we can
2 recognize existing facilities and designate corridors
3 along these existing facilities.

4 But we need to be very careful in putting
5 all of our lines into single corridors in an area as
6 has been demonstrated in the Southeast United States.
7 A single storm can wipe out all of the facilities
8 serving large areas if they're all in the same
9 corridor together.

10 So I sincerely urge you to break with the
11 existing Forest Service philosophy if there's an
12 existing line, any new lines will be right next to
13 that existing line and separate them so that a single
14 tree falling over won't wipe out all of the power to
15 Southern Utah. Thank you.

16 JERRY PELL: Mr. Avant, thank you very much.
17 I appreciate that. I would invite you to chat with
18 us after we go off the record and discuss all your
19 concerns and perhaps we can help you help us with
20 your proposed corridors. But I would just say in
21 general, use the comment process just as described on
22 that poster at the back of the room and let's talk
23 after the formal --

24 MIKE AVANT: Okay. Thank you.

25 JERRY PELL: -- part of the meeting.

1 Mr. Avant was the last individual that had
2 preregistered to speak, and we're now at that stage
3 where I would invite anybody joining us this
4 afternoon that would like to speak to please just
5 raise your hand, come up here and join the party.

6 Madam?

7 THALIA DONDERO: Just brief remarks from
8 listening.

9 JERRY PELL: Sure. That's what we hope is
10 that when you hear what's being said, even though you
11 may not have intended to speak, that it will inspire
12 you to greatness. Please tell us your name for the
13 court reporter. NV04

14 THALIA DONDERO: My name is Thalia Dondero.

15 JERRY PELL: Could you spell that for us
16 please.

17 THALIA DONDERO: T-h-a-l-i-a, Dondero is
18 D-o-n-d-e-r-o. I've spent a lot, over 60 years in
19 Nevada, so I have been on the parks department and
20 also county commissioner for 20 years and now I'm a
21 regent for the university system. I also serve as
22 chair of your outside Las Vegas program which deals
23 with all of the federal agencies.

24 But I noticed that in the map and where it
25 comes across and there are a lot of concerns that I

1 have. Of course I like the fact that you have
2 somebody that talks about designating a corridor.
3 And through the Ely area there's a lot of mines, a
4 lot of caves, a lot of state parks. And I think
5 hopefully you've taken those into consideration when
6 you're doing that.

7 Also Sunrise Mountain was an old dumpsite,
8 and hopefully you know that. But I think that the
9 corridor is needed and that we need to proceed with
10 it as quickly as possible because the growth in the
11 area has been so tremendous.

12 But I thank you for having the comment
13 period. Thank you.

14 JERRY PELL: Thank you.

15 Who else would like to join us this
16 afternoon with some remarks? This is your chance to
17 be heard, folks. We came a long way, some of us from
18 D.C. to be with you so don't hesitate to please, as
19 this gentleman is doing, take advantage of the
20 opportunity. NV05

21 JUAN PALMA: For the record my name is Juan
22 Palma, spelled J-u-a-n, P-a-l-m-a. I am the field
23 manager for the Las Vegas field office here in Las
24 Vegas.

25 JERRY PELL: I'm sorry, the field office of?

1 JUAN PALMA: Field office manager for the
2 BLM here in Las Vegas.

3 JERRY PELL: Thank you.

4 JUAN PALMA: I was supposed to be here
5 earlier but the traffic was a little terrible. Just
6 when I thought I was going to be on time, I got cut
7 off in traffic. But welcome to Las Vegas. Welcome
8 to this part of the country.

9 A couple of comments that I'd like to make
10 on the conversation thus far is we consider this
11 corridor and right-of-way is a tremendous workload
12 for us in Las Vegas. We have literally hundreds and
13 hundreds of right-of-ways. Right now on deck we have
14 about 1300 right-of-ways of different sizes, maybe
15 not as big as what we're talking about here for Las
16 Vegas.

17 We have tremendous workload in our BLM field
18 office when it comes to RPP leases, which is called
19 recreation public purposes leases. As we consider
20 the larger right-of-ways, the larger right-of-ways
21 that we're talking about here, I would like for the
22 group and the body to consider also our wilderness
23 areas to make sure that those corridors in the
24 wilderness areas are accounted for.

25 The second thing is what we in the BLM call

1 the areas of critical environmental concern, or ACECs
2 for short. You probably ought to consider where
3 those things may be. We have those ACECs, and
4 especially on the Sunrise Mountain area and other
5 parts of the BLM. So we probably ought to consider
6 some of those areas as well as we're looking at the
7 map and looking at the corridors.

8 Those are some of the comments I have. Our
9 recreation areas, we, the BLM, serve a broad spectrum
10 of public. And one of those public that we serve is
11 our recreationists out there. BLM is continuing to
12 expand our recreation programs. Whatever we do in
13 terms of corridors, I think we need to account for
14 the services that we provide to our recreationists
15 out there on the BLM lands, especially a lot of our
16 recreationists use the right-of-ways. They actually
17 use the roads under the power lines for their
18 recreation activities. So keep that in mind as well.

19 We continue to expand the city, especially
20 Las Vegas. As the city continues to expand, then we
21 continue to encroach on some of the recreational
22 sites that many people have used for years. Perhaps
23 we can marry up some of those right-of-ways with some
24 recreational activities. I think that would be a
25 good thing to have.

1 Always continue to look for ways that we can
2 provide recreational sites for our clients and
3 customers. So keep that in mind as you consider the
4 various widths of the right-of-ways, the various
5 locations of the right-of-ways, how can we marry
6 those recreational activities with those
7 right-of-ways. Those are a few of my comments and
8 thank you for listening.

9 JERRY PELL: Thank you for addressing us. I
10 would mention, by the way, that recreation is one of
11 the areas within the scope of the document.

12 I see some other people looking like they
13 are very interested in chatting with us. Would you
14 come up here and share your views, anybody? No
15 takers? Going once. Nobody? Going twice.

16 Okay. If you insist on keeping your remarks
17 secret, we will dismiss the court reporter, go off
18 the formal record and just engage in congenial
19 chitchat with you if you'd like to stay and talk with
20 us informally.

21 And Scott has just asked me to open it up to
22 questions, and he's more than willing to discuss Q
23 and A with you. And let's just do that right now.
24 So let me thank Debbie for helping us today with the
25 record, and the record will now close. Thank you.

1 (Thereupon the proceedings
2 were concluded at 2:45 p.m.)

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CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

STATE OF NEVADA)

SS:

COUNTY OF CLARK.)

I, Deborah Ann Hines, certified shorthand reporter, do hereby certify that I took down in shorthand (Stenotype) all of the proceedings had in the before-entitled matter at the time and place indicated; and that thereafter said shorthand notes were transcribed into typewriting at and under my direction and supervision and the foregoing transcript constitutes a full, true and accurate record of the proceedings had.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto affixed my hand this 16th day of November, 2005.



Deborah Ann Hines, CCR #473, RPR