

NV06-NV10

Page 1

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

ORIGINAL

REPORTER'S TRANSCRIPT OF MEETING

On Wednesday, November 2, 2005

At 7:04 p.m.

At Tuscany Suites Hotel

Las Vegas, Nevada

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

1 Appearances:

2
3 JERRY PELL, Ph.D., CCM
4 Project Manager
5 Office of Electricity Delivery and Energy
6 Reliability
7 U.S. Department of Energy
8 1000 Independence Avenue, SW
9 Washington, DC 20585
10 (202)586-3362
11 jerry.pell@hq.doe.gov

12
13 SCOTT POWERS
14 Project Manager
15 Bureau of Land Management
16 5001 Southgate Drive
17 P.O. Box 36800
18 Billings, MT 59107
19 (406)896-5319
20 spowers@blm.gov

21
22 PAUL JOHNSON
23 U.S.D.A. - Forest Service
24 1601 N. Kent Street, RPC Building
25 Arlington, VA 22209
 (703)605-4793
 pjohnson02@fs.fed.us

1 JERRY PELL: I would like to start first by
2 introducing myself and my panel and then tell you a
3 little bit about why we're here and take public
4 comments in the order in which I receive the request.

5 Typically what we do is ask if there are
6 people here from the government and then people who
7 submitted their requests prior to the meeting and
8 then anybody who would like to speak from the
9 audience.

10 I'm Dr. Jerry Pell. I'm with the Department
11 of Energy in Washington with the office of
12 Electricity Delivery and Energy Reliability. We call
13 it OE for short. And on my right is Scott Powers
14 with BLM, Bureau of Land Management, Department of
15 Interior. And to his right is Paul Johnson of the
16 U.S. Forest Service and the U.S. Department of
17 Agriculture. And I'll let them talk for themselves
18 in just a minute or two.

19 First I want to mention why we're here. The
20 United States Department of Energy, Department of the
21 Interior, Bureau of Land Management and the
22 Agriculture, Forest Service, are preparing a
23 Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement, or EIS
24 as we call it, to evaluate environmental and cultural
25 issues associated with the designation of energy

1 corridors on federal lands in eleven western states.

2 And based upon the information and analyses
3 that result from the programmatic EIS, Bureau of Land
4 Management and the Forest Service intend to amend
5 their respective land use plans by designating a
6 series of energy corridors. And your input through
7 this process is especially important because we're
8 depending on you to help us define the scope of this
9 study, and that's precisely why they're called
10 scoping meetings, since that's exactly what they are.

11 The basis for preparing the programmatic EIS
12 stems from the Energy Policy Act that the President
13 signed into law on the 8th of August which directs
14 the secretaries of Agriculture, Commerce, Defense,
15 Energy and Interior to designate on their respective
16 authorities corridors on federal lands in the eleven
17 western states for oil, gas and hydrogen pipelines
18 and electricity transmission and distribution
19 facilities. These are the so-called energy
20 corridors.

21 And designating these corridors has been
22 determined by the agencies as constituting a major
23 federal action under the National Environmental
24 Policy Act, or NEPA as it's known for short, which
25 triggers the preparation of an Environmental Impact

1 Statement. And in this case it's programmatic in the
2 sense that it will address the overall program being
3 undertaken here rather than project specific level
4 analysis which is done when you know precisely what
5 energy project is being proposed for a specific
6 location.

7 DOE and BLM are co-lead agencies.
8 Agriculture's Forest Service is participating as a
9 cooperating agency. And let me make sure that I am
10 very clear about how to submit comments. You'll
11 notice on the front we have a website that we refer
12 you to: Corridor EIS dot ANL, as in Argon National
13 Laboratory, dot gov, as in government. We will be
14 updating that website as the meetings -- as the work
15 progresses and as the new material is developed that
16 can be shared with the public.

17 The proceedings -- the transcripts of these
18 public meetings will be on the website. And we want
19 your comments either through the website or by mail
20 or by facsimile or by e-mail. And the one method I
21 would discourage the most is that you do not -- I
22 discourage you from using regular postal mail to the
23 Department of Energy because all the mail now goes
24 through anthrax screening, and that delays the mail
25 by two weeks and also in many instances has damaged

1 the mail. So if you're going to submit written
2 documents, please do so using one of the overnight
3 services like FedEx or UPS or Emery Air Freight or
4 similar.

5 And any comments, no matter how they're
6 received, will be given equal weight. It really
7 doesn't matter how the comments are obtained by the
8 agencies, whether they're obtained orally here or
9 through an e-mail message or through the web.

10 Comment period ends officially on
11 November 28th, but if the work is still in progress
12 and if we are in a position to consider your
13 comments, late comments will still be considered to
14 the extent practicable.

15 And on that note let me proceed to pass the
16 mic down to my colleague on my right, Scott Powers of
17 BLM.

18 SCOTT POWERS: Thank you, Jerry. I don't
19 have much to say other than I'm the BLM project
20 manager for this project. I work for the Washington
21 office but I don't have to live there. I live and
22 work out of Billings, Montana. My contact
23 information is in the packet that you were handed.

24 Don't hesitate to send me an e-mail or give
25 me a call if you have some questions about how this

1 project pertains to BLM. It's a very complex,
2 massive undertaking that Congress has tasked us to do
3 and to do it within 24 months of enactment of the
4 legislation, so it's a very ambitious schedule.

5 I encourage you to ask any questions tonight
6 after we finish taking formal testimony. We're
7 keeping track in those questions and we're going to
8 try to build information like that into the website
9 too so, you know, from each type of meeting. Thanks
10 for coming.

11 PAUL JOHNSON: My name is Paul Johnson. I'm
12 representing U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest
13 Service. And my job back in Washington is heading up
14 the energy program for the agency dealing with all
15 the aspects of the efficiencies, the renewable, the
16 oil and gas and the right-of-way corridors. And so
17 welcome tonight, and we look forward to hearing all
18 your comments.

19 JERRY PELL: Thank you. Let me first start
20 by asking whether there are any elected federal,
21 state or local officials with us this evening that
22 would like to speak? Any representatives of Indian
23 tribes that would like to speak? Any representatives
24 of federal, state or local government that would like
25 to speak or be recognized this evening?

1 Okay. On that note then I will proceed. I
2 have preregistration from Mr. Jim Burris of Pacific
3 Corp. Is he with us this evening?

4 Okay. That being the case then I only have
5 one other individual who's indicated a desire to
6 speak from our registration outside this evening,
7 Rita Ransom. If I may call Miss Ransom to the podium
8 please. And let me ask you please to spell your name
9 for the benefit of the court reporter and tell us
10 what your affiliation might be.

11 RITA RANSOM: My name is --

12 JERRY PELL: From the podium here please so
13 that the recorder can get it, and also let me just
14 mention that we'd like to keep remarks to about five
15 minutes verbal, and anything you want to submit
16 written can be whatever magnitude you wish.

NV06

17 RITA RANSOM: My name is Rita Ransom spelled
18 just like kidnap money, R-a-n-s-o-m. And I'm not
19 affiliated with any organization, I'm a private
20 citizen.

21 I just have a couple of questions. One
22 question is were the local utility companies in
23 Southern Nevada invited to this scoping meeting or
24 have their comments, opinions, thoughts been
25 solicited separately? Because obviously they have a

1 different interest than perhaps the general public
2 would.

3 And the second question I have is what is
4 the timetable, the expected time when the final
5 results, I know there's a name for it but it escapes
6 my memory, after you've gone through the comment
7 period, developed the PEIS, gone through all the
8 necessary reviews and approvals, what is the
9 timetable for issuing a final order?

10 JERRY PELL: Are you through, Miss Ransom?

11 RITA RANSOM: Yes. That's it.

12 JERRY PELL: Sure. By all means, thank you
13 very much. I appreciate your remarks and your
14 questions. Normally I would defer responding, we
15 don't typically respond to testimony, but your
16 question is posed in such a way that it's of such
17 importance I think I should respond. And that is
18 that utilities are being asked for their views
19 identically to the public. There's no special
20 consideration being given. They've received the same
21 notices that everybody else has received, and their
22 testimony is considered at exactly the same degree of
23 importance or concern as anybody else's.

24 And there are no private channels in the
25 NEPA process for preparation of an environmental

1 impact study. Everything is very much a public open
2 process, as for example the court reporter being here
3 this evening. There are no provisions for anonymity
4 or secret meetings of any kind. But I do appreciate
5 the question because it afforded me the opportunity
6 to provide the answer.

7 And as far as timetable is concerned, all I
8 can really tell you at this point at this early stage
9 in the process is that we hope to have a Draft
10 Environmental Impact Statement ready for your
11 consideration sometime in the latter part of the
12 summer of '06.

13 And I would now like to inquire as to
14 whether anybody else would like to speak, especially
15 those people that arrived. Oh, we do have two more
16 names here, thank you. John Hiatt of the Red River
17 Audubon Society. And, John, as did the previous
18 speaker please spell your name for the court
19 reporter.

NV07

20 JOHN HIATT: John Hiatt, H-i-a-t-t, and
21 that's actually Red Rock Audubon Society. We don't
22 have any rivers here. We wish we did.

23 Nevada is kind of unique in the country
24 because of the very large amount of public land we
25 have and our wide open spaces. And so when we talk

1 about designating corridors, of which we already have
2 quite a significant number, we naturally are
3 concerned about where these corridors might go, these
4 new corridors which will significantly affect our
5 open spaces, our wildlife habitat and the way of life
6 or quality of life for people in Nevada.

7 As you probably are aware, the Sage Grouse
8 almost made the endangered species list, and was
9 really only not put on the endangered species list
10 because of the efforts of the states, particularly
11 the state of Nevada, in coming up with conservation
12 plans that will do something for the Sage Grouse.

13 Power lines are a very significant hazard to
14 Sage Grouse. Within a couple of miles either side of
15 the power line there will essentially be no Sage
16 Grouse because of the opportunities provided for
17 perch sites for raptors. So power lines do have a
18 very negative impact on Sage Grouse.

19 They also have a negative impact on many
20 other birds. If you go to any big power line here in
21 town or out in the country, you walk along that power
22 line in spring or fall you'll find dead birds
23 underneath it all the time just because they collide
24 with those wires. They're thick. So these power
25 lines are killing thousands of birds all the time.

1 Most people are not aware of that because predators
2 pick up those bodies and we don't ever see them, but
3 they're there.

4 And so the impacts on wildlife and on
5 unfragmented habitat really need to be considered.
6 I've heard it said that we really need to have a lot
7 more corridors so that we're protected in case
8 terrorists want to do something to it. Well,
9 terrorists can take down power lines and can
10 interrupt power supply whether they're close together
11 or far apart. And for our people so that we are not
12 the victims of terrorists of our own terrorism, we
13 need to minimize corridors, make those corridors as
14 efficient as possible and minimize the impact on the
15 landscape. Thank you.

16 JERRY PELL: Thank you very much, Mr. Hiatt.
17 We appreciate your thoughts. They're not dissimilar
18 from comments we've heard in previous locals, and we
19 will certainly consider them during the course of
20 preparing the PEIS.

21 I should mention, by the way, just for the
22 record, I hope I mentioned it earlier, but we're
23 looking at not just electricity but we're also
24 looking at oil, gas and hydrogen pipelines and the
25 entire spectrum of energy corridors.

1 I have another speaker here that has
2 requested to speak, Don Malisani of Vista
3 Corporation. Did I pronounce that correctly?

4 DON MALISANI: Yes, you did.

5 JERRY PELL: Thank you. If you'd be kind
6 enough to just clarify the spelling for our court
7 reporter.

8 DON MALISANI: Sure. My name is Don
9 Malisani. I'm the manager of the real estate
10 department for Vista Corp. Malisani is
11 M-a-l-i-s-a-n-i.

12 Vista Corporation is a natural gas and
13 electric utility, more distribution orientated. We
14 do have generation and transmission facilities and
15 look at this opportunity to establish new corridors
16 as being something of need, great need to the country
17 and see this as being a timely measure. Very
18 concerned that, you know, we do meet the federal
19 process and identify corridors and locate them in the
20 best spots to protect wildlife and whatnot.

21 So with that said, there's many corridors
22 that exist, and it's our hope that all those are
23 identified. The western utility group has supplied
24 maps of existing corridors and priority corridors.
25 Hopefully those will be considered.

NV08

1 We're finding that there's a lot of need to
2 tie into systems in Canada and look at that as being
3 a source of energy, both gas and electricity. And so
4 some of those may not be identified yet, but
5 hopefully will come out of this process.

6 Hopefully there will be some flexibility in
7 the program to allow for new corridors in the future.
8 And so with that said, we would look forward to
9 receiving maps and whatever you have identifying the
10 corridors that are under consideration. Thank you.

11 JERRY PELL: Thank you. And by the same
12 token we look forward to any written material or maps
13 or what have you from you that you may wish us to
14 considered.

15 I have another gentleman here that would
16 like to speak. If I may ask you to tell us who you
17 are and spell your name for the court reporter
18 please.

NV09

19 STEVE HALL: My name is Steve Hall. I'm
20 with Western Renewable Energy. Spelling of my name
21 is S-t-e-v-e, H-a-l-l.

22 I work in distributed generation. I have a
23 small energy plant myself. I burn wood generally
24 from beetle kill or forest fires. We do watershed
25 work for evasive species. And we're confident that

1 distributed generation is a good fit in these energy
2 corridors. We can serve rural communities at a
3 really substantial manner.

4 We've put a lot of time and effort into
5 this. We're looking at waste energy so that we can
6 increase the needs for rural communities to create
7 jobs and of course maybe reduce the waste going to
8 our land fills and things like that.

9 With the current corridors that we have,
10 siting some utilities with them and having other
11 pipelines with those energy corridors, we think
12 that's a good idea and maybe we would need less
13 corridors because we located those utilities
14 together.

15 We're thankful that the DOE and the U.S.D.A.
16 are working together. We're part of the national
17 fire plan. That's how a lot of this distributed
18 generation is working and we appreciate the efforts
19 that U.S.D.A. and the DOE are providing for
20 distributed generation and we appreciate the fact
21 that you're working together.

22 We often thought that the DOE, since they're
23 in charge of our energy needs, and the U.S.D.A. maybe
24 has too much wood to deal with that it was a logical
25 step that we all work together towards the common

1 good of everybody out there. And in that we think
2 we've improved the landscape for the naturalists, the
3 conservationists, and recognize that people need
4 electricity to be able to work, and how do we go
5 about that in the smartest ways we can. And I
6 appreciate your efforts. Thank you.

7 JERRY PELL: Thank you very much, Mr. Hall.
8 I should mention that, you know, the agencies do work
9 together outside of requirements from legislation.
10 We typically work together, this three group of
11 Bureau of Land Management, Forest Service, DOE have
12 been known to work together on a fairly routine basis
13 on energy projects that are all federal, and so it's
14 really not an exception by any means.

15 Yes, sir?

16 BOB HENNKENS: I thought you were going to
17 ask for the next speaker.

18 JERRY PELL: Yes, I certainly am. Would you
19 like to speak?

20 BOB HENNKENS: Yes.

21 JERRY PELL: Thank you.

22 BOB HENNKENS: Thank you. Good evening.
23 I'm Bob Hennkens, H-e-n-n-k-e-n-s. Like Steve I'm
24 out of Arizona. We're very interested in the concept
25 of corridor. It seems to be the least invasive for

NV10

1 our natural resources for our 700 million acres of
2 public lands that we feel is a national asset. We
3 don't like to see it burn. We don't like to see
4 anything happen to any of the species because it's no
5 good. I want my grandkids, my kids haven't figured
6 out how to make any yet, but when they do I promise
7 you that I want them to go out and be able to see the
8 same wildlife and species that I see.

9 But I also understand and have, in fact,
10 worked on a similar corridor to connect the city of
11 Druzhba, Kazakstan to Urumchi, China and the PRC.
12 And what we found was when you work with nothing,
13 nothing was there, it was just country, the only
14 asset that we really had was the railroad corridors.
15 And if we followed the corridors with the rail with
16 the checkerboard that's already in place, seems to me
17 you'd be very noninvasive.

18 We also not only had pipelines, gas pipeline
19 from the Tingies field in Kazakstan to the big
20 refinery in Urumchi, China, but also it had the
21 rails, and subsequently they're building a commercial
22 corridor for the highways and also an interstate
23 along these things as well as a communication system
24 all in one basic corridor that is very noninvasive in
25 my viewpoint.

1 It was the least invasive but also the most
2 productive relative to one very important commodity,
3 which was security. And when you're dealing in less
4 than stable parts of the world, it's one of the
5 things that you always have to, in fact, think about.

6 And I think when the FBI warned me, I worked
7 with technologies basically and advised the federal
8 laboratories on technologies, we were briefed by the
9 FBI. They said that just in the state of Arizona we
10 have 2200 miles of power grid, and they were
11 concerned that it could be taken out with Molotov
12 cocktails basically between 2:00 and 4:00 in the
13 morning with nothing but people in pickup trucks.

14 It's not high tech at all, but it's very
15 efficient because our fires are just destroying too
16 much of our asset. Our nation's assets are not based
17 on gold, they're based on our ports, they're based on
18 our ability to, in fact, have cash flow and our
19 ability to maintain the population.

20 It's very important that we understand that
21 the efforts of the DOE and DOA, the rest of the
22 people in the national bureaucracy are very much
23 interested in what's not only happening today with
24 cost of fuels, etc., it's very important that we know
25 that we've got something for the future.

1 I had one technical question. This has to
2 do with ultra low sulfur in the oil componentry, if
3 that's going to, in fact, be addressed because we're
4 having some difficulties now trying to get pipelines
5 to carry the ultra low sulfur diesel product if they
6 carry jet fuels as well. And that is a little more
7 technical than probably you guys care about, but it's
8 very important. We may have to have a separate
9 pipeline for that. Thank you.

10 JERRY PELL: Thank you very much,
11 Mr. Hennkens. If you would do me a favor please,
12 when we adjourn if you'd be kind enough to meet with
13 Debbie, our court reporter, and give her spellings of
14 some of these names in Kazakstan and China I'd
15 appreciate it, because I certainly didn't catch the
16 spelling.

17 Who else do we have here that would like to
18 speak this evening? Nobody else would like to speak?
19 We have no other comments from the public? Going
20 once. Nobody? Okay. Going twice.

21 SPEAKER: Can we ask more questions?

22 JERRY PELL: We'll go off the record. We'll
23 be glad to chat with you and answer questions off the
24 record once I get through the formal part of the
25 evening.

1 If there are no other requests to speak, I
2 will consider the formal portion of this meeting with
3 the transcript portion as adjourned. Thank you. I
4 would like to ask, by the way, is there anybody here
5 from a federal agency that would like to stand up and
6 be recognized?

7 SPEAKER: Nellis Air Force Base, U.S. Air
8 Force.

9 JERRY PELL: Super. Department of Defense
10 is one of the five agencies that's working together
11 on this project, as is the Department of Commerce.

12 Yes, sir?

13 SPEAKER: Bonneville Power Administration
14 out of Portland, Oregon.

15 JERRY PELL: Especially glad to see you
16 here, sir. Bonneville Power is one of the Department
17 of Energy's independent power producers. We're glad
18 to have you with us. These are organizations we will
19 be working with in the course of preparing the
20 document. Okay, on that note -- yes?

21 SPEAKER: I'm with the Bureau of Land
22 Management, Nevada state office.

23 JERRY PELL: Super.

24 SPEAKER: Reno.

25 JERRY PELL: Thank you very much. Is that

1 it then? Okay. I'm going to call this formal
2 portion of the meeting concluded. Thank our court
3 reporter, thank you all for joining us. It's been a
4 pleasure having you this evening. I think Scott
5 would like to say something.

6 SCOTT POWERS: I was going to answer your
7 initial question about the time frames of when this
8 is going to be implemented. The legislation states
9 that we'll have our affected land use plans on both
10 Forest Service and BLM have to be amended by record.
11 And the process to do that is the Record of Decision
12 that will come from the Programmatic EIS. And we
13 have to have those plan amendments in place
14 implementing legislation within two years of passage
15 of the legislation, so by August 7th, 2007.

16 JERRY PELL: So we can open it up to
17 questions now or if there's not any further group
18 we'll be glad to hang around for a while and do
19 one-on-ones.

20 (Thereupon the proceedings
21 were concluded at 7:29 p.m.)

22 * * * * *

CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

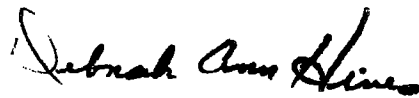
STATE OF NEVADA)

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