



# United States Department of the Interior

## BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Wyoming State Office  
P.O. Box 1828  
Cheyenne, Wyoming 82003-1828

In Reply Refer To:  
2800 (920George)  
WYW-174598  
IDI-35849  
NVN-089270  
Gateway West Transmission Line

**JUL 5 2011**

Dear Reader:

Enclosed for your review and comment is the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (Draft EIS) for the Proposed Gateway West Transmission Line Project and accompanying land use plan amendments for several Bureau of Land Management (BLM) areas and National Forest units. The BLM prepared this Draft EIS in consultation with cooperating agencies and in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended; the Council on Environmental Quality, Department of Agriculture, and Department of the Interior regulations implementing NEPA (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508 (for CEQ), 43 CFR Part 46 for the BLM, and 36 CFR Part 220 for the Forest Service) to analyze the effects of authorizing the Proponents (Rocky Mountain Power and Idaho Power) to construct and operate the Gateway West Transmission Line Project. The Proponents submitted applications for right-of-way (ROW) grants to utilize portions of the National System of Public Lands and Special Use Permits to utilize portions of National Forest System Lands in southern Wyoming, southern Idaho, and possibly northern Nevada. The Wyoming State Office of BLM is the lead BLM office for this project.

The Proponents are requesting the BLM ROW Grants and Forest Service Special Use Permits for the construction and operation approximately 1,103 miles of new 230-kilovolt (kV) and 500-kV electric transmission system consisting of 10 segments between the Windstar Substation at Glenrock, Wyoming, and the Hemingway Substation approximately 30 miles southwest of Boise, Idaho. The proposed transmission line would supplement existing transmission lines and relieve operating limitations, increase capacity, and improve reliability in the existing electric transmission grid. This would allow for the delivery of up to 3,000 megawatts (MW) of additional energy for the Proponents' larger service areas, principally in Utah and Idaho, and to other interconnected systems. The Project includes three proposed substations, an expansion at one planned substation to be constructed for other purposes, and expansions at eight existing substations. Other associated facilities include communication systems, optical fiber regeneration stations, and substation distribution supply lines.

The Draft EIS assesses the environmental impacts of the Proposed Action, Route Alternatives, Schedule and Structural Variations, and includes an analysis of the No Action Alternative. The BLM has not identified a preferred route alternative for the project. The BLM preferred route

alternative will be identified in the Final EIS. The BLM and the Forest Service have identified preferred plan amendments for each of the amendments that would be required if a particular Proposed or Alternative Route were selected.

Because the BLM has not identified a preferred route alternative at this time, we encourage comments on the full suite of route alternatives. Comments will be most valuable if they also address the proposed land management plan amendments for each of the route alternatives where applicable.

The Draft EIS is not a decision document. Rather, its purpose is to inform the public and interested parties of impacts associated with implementing the proponent's proposal as associated with granting right-of-way to construct, operate, maintain, and decommission transmission facilities across federal lands, and in some cases amending underlying land management plans. This Draft EIS also provides information to other regulatory agencies for use in their decision making process for other permits required for implementation of the project.

The BLM will host public meetings to discuss the Draft EIS. Dates, times, and locations of these meetings will be distributed in newsletters, announced in the local news media, and posted on the project website at [http://www.wy.blm.gov/nepa/cfodocs/gateway\\_west](http://www.wy.blm.gov/nepa/cfodocs/gateway_west).

The comment period for the Proposed Gateway West Transmission Line Project and accompanying land use plan amendments Draft EIS will close 90 days following the date the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) publication of the Notice of Availability in the Federal Register. The BLM can best use your comments and information if received within the review period. You may submit written comments on the Draft EIS by hand delivery, U.S. Postal mail, or electronic mail. You may also submit comments electronically at [www.gatewaywesteis.com](http://www.gatewaywesteis.com). Written comments will also be accepted at the public meetings.

Written comments may be hand delivered to any of the following BLM offices during normal business hours:

Idaho State Office	Wyoming State Office
Boise District Office	Casper Field Office
Owyhee Field Office	Rawlins Field Office
Twin Falls District Office	Rock Springs Field Office
Burley Field Office	Kemmerer Field Office
Shoshone Field Office	
Idaho Falls District Office	
Pocatello Field Office	

Comments submitted by U.S. postal mail can be sent to:

Project Manager  
 Gateway West Transmission Line Project EIS  
 Bureau of Land Management  
 P.O. Box 20879  
 Cheyenne, WY 82003

Electronic comments must be submitted to Gateway\_West\_WYMail@blm.gov. Please include "Gateway West Transmission Line Project" in the subject line of the comments. E-mails submitted to email addresses other than the one listed or containing viruses will be rejected.

It is the BLM's practice to make comments, including names and addresses of respondents, available for public review. Before including your address, phone number, email address, or other personal identifying information with your comments, be advised that your entire comment, including your personal identifying information, may be made publicly available at any time. Although you may ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so. All submissions from organizations and businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses, will be available for public inspection in their entirety.

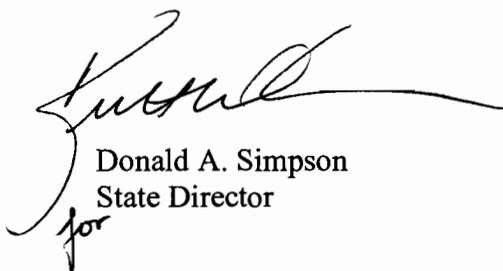
To be most helpful, comments on the Draft EIS should be as specific as possible, mentioning particular pages, sections, or chapters. All comments will be reviewed; however, only substantive comments will be utilized during the preparation of the Final EIS. For a comment to be substantive, it should:

- Provide new information pertaining to the Proposed Action, an alternative, or the analysis;
- Identify a different way to meet the underlying need;
- Point out a specific flaw in the analysis;
- Suggest alternate methodologies that should be used, including reasons why;
- Make factual corrections, or
- Identify a different source of credible research, which, if used in the analysis, could result in different effects.

For additional information, contact Walt George, Project Manager, Wyoming State Office at (307) 775-6116, or visit the website at: [http://www.wy.blm.gov/nepa/cfdocs/gateway\\_west](http://www.wy.blm.gov/nepa/cfdocs/gateway_west)

Thank you for your interest and participation in this analysis.

Sincerely,



Donald A. Simpson  
State Director

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