

Scoping Report (Revised December 2009)

Gateway West Transmission Line Project

Prepared for:

Bureau of Land Management

*5353 Yellowstone Road
PO Box 1828
Cheyenne, WY 82003-1828
(307) 775-6116
Fax (307) 775-6203*

Prepared by:

Tetra Tech

*3380 Americana Terrace, Ste. 201
Boise, ID 83706
Phone: (208) 389-1030
Fax: (208) 389-1183*

Tetra Tech Project No. 106-3594

December 22, 2009

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0	INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1.	Brief Project Description	1
2.0	SCOPING PROCESS	3
2.1.	Scoping Announcements	3
2.2.	Public Scoping Meetings	4
3.0	COMMENT ANALYSIS	5
3.1.	Comment Analysis	5
3.2.	Processing Comments.....	5
3.3.	Purpose and Need for the Project.....	7
3.3.1	Comments Related To The Agencies' Purpose and Need (Code 10)	7
3.3.2	Comments Related To The Proponents' Purpose and Need (Code 11).....	7
3.4.	Alternatives (Code 30)	8
3.4.1	Co-Locate With Other Facilities.....	8
3.4.2	Generation.....	8
3.4.3	Specific Routing Requests	8
3.5.	Mitigation Measures and Monitoring (Code 40).....	18
3.5.1	Water	19
3.5.2	Noxious Weeds	19
3.5.3	Fish and Wildlife	20
3.5.4	Reclamation.....	21
3.5.5	Vegetation	21
3.6.	Effects Analysis	21
3.6.1	Social Issues (Codes 100-107)	21
3.6.2	Economics (Codes 200-204).....	24
3.6.3	Noise (Code 300)	29
3.6.4	Visual Quality (Code 400)	29
3.6.5	Historical, Cultural Resources, Native American Interests and Paleontological (Code 500).....	30
3.6.6	Air Quality (Code 600).....	32
3.6.7	Water (Code 700).....	33
3.6.8	Wildlife (Codes 800 - 809).....	34
3.6.9	Recreation (Code 900).....	38
3.6.10	Access (Code 1000).....	39
3.6.11	Vegetation/Weeds (Code 1100).....	40
3.6.12	Fish (Code 1200).....	41
3.6.13	Special Designations (Code 1300).....	41
3.6.14	Land Use (Codes 1400)	42
3.6.15	Agriculture (Code 1402)	47
3.6.16	GHG/Climate (Code 1500).....	47
3.6.17	Road Construction (Code 1700).....	47
3.6.18	Cumulative Effects (Code 1800)	48

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Legal Notices in Newspapers of Record..... 3
Table 2. Community Calendar Notices in Newspapers 4
Table 3. Public Scoping Meeting Dates, Locations, and Attendance 4

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Gateway West Transmission Line Project Map 2

LIST OF APPENDICES

APPENDIX A SCOPING PACKET

1.0 Introduction

This report describes the public scoping process for the Gateway West Transmission Line Project Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). It documents outreach efforts, summarizes the comments received, and identifies any issues raised and suggested alternatives to the proposed action. Comments will be addressed in the Draft EIS rather than in this summary. The document has been prepared for the public, decision-makers, and EIS team members to easily see the common themes in scoping comments and issues. While writing the DEIS, the individual comments will be evaluated more in depth. Additionally, the comment tracking database will include a brief description of how each comments was handled during development of the DEIS.

BLM conducted scoping initially in 2008. In the summer of 2009, BLM and the Companies (see below) announced that additional routes would be considered, and asked for additional comment. This report includes the original scoping comment and additional scoping comments received on or before September 4, 2009. Scoping is an ongoing process, comments received after September 4, 2009 will be considered in the DEIS when it is feasible due to the timing, however, those comments have not been summarized in this report.

Brief Project Description

Idaho Power Company and PacifiCorp, collectively known as the Companies, applied to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) for a Right-of-Way (ROW) Grant to use public lands for portions of the Gateway West Transmission Line Project (Gateway West of Project) on April 18th, 2007. The original application was amended to reflect changes in Project facilities. BLM is the lead federal agency under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and is coordinating the preparation of the environmental analysis and related environmental consultations with cooperating agencies. The BLM will consider these applications in accordance with 43 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 2800, and decide whether to issue the ROW Grant.

Activities in the project include construction or reconstruction (increasing capacity) of a transmission line, substations, access roads, and communication sites. The transmission line would be built to 230 or 500 kilovolt (kV) standards, although some of the 500kV system would be energized at 230 kV initially. The support structures would generally be steel lattice structures, with possible use of steel H-frame structures where needed to minimize effects on land uses or natural resources.

The route for the proposed line is divided into 10 segments, with a substation at the end of each segment. Figure 1 shows the general route of the proposed transmission line and locations of the substations and access roads.

Figure 1. Gateway West Transmission Line Project Map

2.0 Scoping Process

This section provides a description of the public scoping process, the techniques that were used to notify the public about their opportunity to be involved in scoping, and a brief summary of the public scoping meetings. The scoping comment period occurred from May 16 to July 3, 2008.

On July 16, 2009 the BLM and the Companies announced that additional routes would be analyzed and encouraged the public to comment. BLM asked that additional comments suggesting route alternatives be submitted by September 4, 2009.

This revised scoping report includes summarized comments received through September 4, 2009, including all the comments received after the original scoping period.

Scoping Announcements

Initiation of the EIS process and the public scoping meetings were announced through the *Federal Register*, press releases, paid advertisements in the media, the BLM Wyoming project web site (http://www.wy.blm.gov/nepa/cfodocs/gateway_west/), as described below.

Federal Register

The Gateway West public scoping process began with the publication in the *Federal Register* of BLM's NOI to (1) prepare an EIS to support BLM's consideration of the Proponents' application for a ROW grant to use public lands for portions of the Gateway West Transmission Line Project; and (2) conduct public scoping meetings. The NOI was published on May 16, 2008 (Volume 73, Number 96, Pages 28425-28426). The NOI is presented in **Appendix A, Exhibit A-1** and on the project web site, referenced above).

Web Site

BLM prepared news releases to introduce the project, announce the scoping period, and publicize the scoping meetings and their respective locations. The news releases were posted on the Wyoming BLM project web site (see BLM News Releases contained in **Appendix A, Exhibit A-2**).

Media Releases and Public Service Announcements

Announcement regarding the public scoping meetings and scoping process were issued as news releases to local and regional newspapers, radio stations and TV stations in Idaho and Wyoming. Legal notices were published in the newspapers of record. **Table 1** shows the newspapers that printed the legal notice.

Publication	Publication Location
<i>The Times News</i>	Twin Falls, Idaho
<i>The Casper Star Tribune</i>	Casper, Wyoming
<i>The Idaho State Journal</i>	Idaho Falls, Idaho
<i>The Idaho Statesman</i>	Boise, Idaho
<i>The Rocket-Miner</i>	Rock Springs, Wyoming
<i>The Rawlins Daily Times</i>	Rawlins, Wyoming
<i>The News Examiner</i>	Montpelier, Idaho
<i>The Owyhee Avalanche</i>	Murphy, Idaho
<i>The Little Chicago Review</i>	Kemmerer, Wyoming

In addition to legal notices, meeting notices were also published in community calendar listings in local newspapers. This list of publications is listed in **Table 2**.

Publication	Publication Location
<i>The Times News</i>	Twin Falls, Idaho
<i>The Casper Star Tribune</i>	Casper, Wyoming
<i>The Casper Journal</i>	Casper, Wyoming
<i>The Idaho State Journal</i>	Idaho Falls, Idaho
<i>The Idaho Statesman</i>	Boise, Idaho
<i>The Owyhee Avalanche</i>	Murphy, Idaho
<i>The Rocket-Miner</i>	Rock Springs, Wyoming
<i>The Rawlins Daily Times</i>	Rawlins, Wyoming
<i>The News Examiner</i>	Montpelier, Idaho

Public Scoping Meetings

BLM hosted nine public meetings in June 2008 to provide planning and NEPA information to the public and agencies and allow them to identify issues and concerns to BLM. Public scoping and the scoping meetings were advertised on the BLM project web site, and through the local media. As summarized in **Table 3**, a total of 140 members of the public attended the various public meetings.

Meeting Date	Meeting Location	Attendance
June 3, 2008	Twin Falls, ID	20
June 3, 2008	Murphy, ID	13
June 4, 2008	Pocatello, ID	11
June 4, 2008	Boise, ID	22
June 5, 2008	Montpelier, ID	7
June 9, 2008	Casper, WY	22
June 10, 2008	Rawlins, WY	12
June 11, 2008	Rock Springs	16
June 12, 2008	Kemmerer, WY	17
Total		140

Several meetings were attended while additional routes were developed to provide information and listen to concerns, including Cassia County, Twin Falls County, Elmore County, Power County, Gooding County, Bannock County, Oneida County, Owyhee County, Wheatland, Medicine Bow, Laramie, Douglas, American Falls, Kemmerer, Twin Falls, Mountain Home, and Kuna.

A scoping packet was provided to all who attended the public meetings and is also available on the BLM's web site and in **Appendix B**.

3.0 Comment Analysis

Comment Analysis

The Council on Environmental Quality regulations for implementing NEPA define scoping (1508.7) as a way to determine the scope, significant issues to be analyzed, and not significant issues.

To accomplish this, all comments submitted were reviewed by a team of analysts. The team was instructed to look for comments that could be defined as the following types of comments:

- Purpose and Need for the Project.
- Alternative Development Comments – These are comments that indicate another alternative needs to be reviewed.
- Alternative Description and Mitigation Measures – These comments suggest modifications to already defined alternatives that reduce or avoid potential impacts.
- Effects Analysis – These comments specify concerns over the effects on resources or suggest effects that need to be considered and disclosed.

Processing Comments

Communications reviewed for this report were received by the BLM in a variety of ways – directly from the commenter, as part of the submittals from Rocky Mountain Power and Idaho Power, or through intermediaries such as project staff and elected officials. All communications received were saved electronically, stored in the communications management system, assigned a NEPA number and available information about the commenter was captured (e.g. name, address, e-mail). If multiple versions of the same communication were received, the original communication was assigned a NEPA number and added to the communications management system. Although subsequent versions were not added to the database in order to prevent duplication, all contributing commenters were documented and assigned to the original communication.

A comment database was established to help track comments received throughout the life of the NEPA process. This database received each comment, note, letter, email, or recorded oral communication. Each is assigned a unique number, which is associated both with the one or more comments identified within that communication falling into the above categories and with the commenter name and address. Each identified comment is entered verbatim into the database together with its proposed disposition in the Draft EIS.

Once a comment was identified that met the criteria listed above, the comment was given a code that corresponded with a category listed below. Some comments fit into more than one category. The coding structure was established before analysis began, so not all of the codes listed were used. Due to the way that scoping comments are managed during the EIS development, comments that indicated both a potential alternative or mitigation and a specific resource subject were coded for the alternative proposed. This method was used so that additional alternatives and mitigation could be easily identified.

Codes

10 = Purpose and Need

11 = Company's Purpose and Need

20 = Proposed Action – flaws, more info needed.

30 = Alternative that should be considered.

- 40 = Mitigation measures suggested
- 50 = Data request
- 100 = Social Issues
 - 101 = demographics
 - 102 = public services
 - 103 = housing
 - 104 = education
 - 105 = community safety
 - 106 = transportation
 - 107 = Environmental Justice
- 200 = Economics
 - 201 = Employment
 - 202 = Income
 - 203 = Taxes/Taxpayers
 - 204 = cost to land owners
- 300 = Noise
- 400 = Visual Quality
- 500 = Historical/Cultural Resources, Native American interests
- 600 = Air Quality
- 700 = Water
- 800 = Wildlife
 - 801 = winter range
 - 802 = sage or sharptailed grouse
 - 803 = water fowl
 - 804 = passerine birds
 - 805 = bats
 - 806 = amphibians and reptiles
 - 807 = raptors
 - 808 = small mammals
 - 809 = large mammals
- 900 = Recreation
- 1000 = Access
- 1100 = Vegetation/Weeds
- 1200 = Fish
- 1300 = Special Designations
- 1400 = Land Use
 - 1401 = Eminent domain
 - 1402 = irrigation
 - 1403 = mining
- 1500 = GHG/Climate
- 1600 = EIS content/Focus
- 1700 = road construction
- 1800 = cumulative effects
- 2000 = comment associated with maps, noted by a sticker on the comment.

Scoping continues throughout the DEIS writing process. Comments that come in later than the requested date will be reviewed to determine if new issues were raised that need to be included in the EIS, but the specific comment was not identified in this summary. All comments received were included electronically in the comment database, along with a copy of the comments after the analysis which indicated how comments were coded.

Data requests were noted during comment analysis, but are not included as scoping comments in this report.

In the following sections, comments have been grouped, consolidated, and edit to highlight the specific concerns and make it easier to locate issues. The EIS team will use these comments in development of the EIS, and the individual comments will be evaluated more in depth if needed to understand the concern. Additionally, the comment tracking database includes a brief description of how each comment was handled during development of the DEIS. In most cases, they are not direct quotes from comments. Comments that are not addressed in this summary will nonetheless be addressed in the Draft EIS.

Purpose and Need for the Project

The proposed project has a purpose and need developed by the proponents and one developed by the agencies.

Comments Related To The Agencies' Purpose and Need (Code 10)

- Consider the need to meet energy needs versus supplying environmental amenities/needs
- Where is energy development appropriate and inappropriate and why?
- It is inappropriate to define the purpose and need as allowing electricity to be transferred from point A to point B.
- Could the need for the power lines be avoided altogether with conservation and efficiency?
- Capturing renewable resources along the route should be given greater attention.

Comments Related To The Proponents' Purpose and Need (Code 11)

- Demand-side management may reduce or eliminate need for new transmission.
- What existing or proposed lines could be upgraded to eliminate the construction of parts or the entire Project?
- Has investing in local wind projects been considered rather than the transmission line?
- From a social and economic standpoint, why are this line and all the other existing proposed and foreseeable corridors needed?
- Describe the structure of the industry and parties involved in transmission and power and large and small projects.
- Western Area Power Administration may require a contractual agreement to ensure the integrity of the Federal power system.
- Why is segment 1E necessary for redundancy when most of the project is in a single corridor?
- The reason for constructing two parallel transmission lines instead of a single line needs to be justified.

- How have the economy and demands for electric energy changed since the project's inception and scoping period?

Alternatives (Code 30)

In addition to comments summarized below, comments in this category included statements for or opposed to the Proposed Action as described in the scoping material.

Co-Locate With Other Facilities

- The route should closely follow existing highway corridors or other transmission line/utility corridors.
- The power line should more closely track Interstate 80.
- Coordinate with the new alignment and ROW for the Kuna Mora Road in such major long-range planning efforts in the Treasure Valley and use the same ROW where possible.
- Evaluate the road and transportation network to avoid impacts to sage-grouse habitat where feasible and close or decommission unneeded roads and corridors.
- Follow the freeway to Salt Lake and then head north along existing routes.
- Include a fully-considered alternative aligned directly adjacent to the existing transmission line corridor throughout Segment 4.
- Consider an alternative that follows the existing PacifiCorp 500kV line from Midpoint to Hemingway north of the Snake River.
- The route should be placed on BLM lands, where an easement already exists

Generation

- Consider a "renewables-only" alternative that would result in the transmission of energy coming solely from renewable, non-carbon emitting sources with little to zero carbon emissions.
- Consider placement of the transmission line in such a manner to enhance the broader development of alternative energy sources.

Specific Routing Requests

- Route corridors to avoid direct impacts or visual impacts to the settings of these sites to the greatest extent possible.
- Consider a route that avoids the FMC mining area.
- Located south of Kemmerer, the alternative corridor would avoid many, if not all, of the visual effects on the setting of the Sublette Cutoff, Emigrant Springs and the emigrant gravesites.
- Require the power line to follow existing roads and power line corridors, closely parallel I-80 through its entire route in Wyoming, and on into Salt Lake City, Utah. There it could turn north and follow the 1-15 corridor north to I-86 and then run west from there.
- Take a more conservative approach to routing and constructing power lines within this segment (Bates Hole Management Area).
- Consider a route that follows the existing power line ROW to Dempsey Ridge; follow ridgeline north to Coke Mountain; turn westerly and follow Sublette Canyon west-

northwest; proceed northwesterly to Quealy Reservoir; follow Quealy Canyon westerly to the existing corridor.

- From Kemmerer, proceed westerly-northwesterly across the Elko Mine and along the existing pipeline corridor to Fossil; proceed westerly in the bottom of the Twin Creek drainage to T21N; R118W; Sec. 10; turn southwesterly at this location to the extreme southern boundary (center section) of T21N; R118W; Sec. 9; proceed due west to the extreme southeastern corner T21N; R119W; Sec 12; proceed generally westerly to Sage Junction; proceed northwesterly across Wyoming Highway 89; proceed northerly to the existing pipeline corridor (T22N; R120W; Sec 26); proceed northwesterly to a point .25 mile west of Lincoln County Road 7; follow this road northerly to the existing power line ROW.
- Route the Hammett to Hemmingway section north of the Snake River, through the Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area (NCA) to limit visual obstructions. This route might positively impact the Snake River Birds of Prey (NCA) by providing compatibility with the NCA principle mandate to "enhance raptor nesting populations".
- Consider a route on the east side of U.S. 30 to the lines South of Cokeville to avoid Cokeville Meadows National Wildlife Refuge.
- Follow Demsey Ridge up to Sublette Canyon then NW to Quealy Reservoir instead of the green lines south of Highway 30.
- Avoid the Shirley Basin and Bates Hole, and pass to the west of the Shirley Mountains following east of the Kortess Dam and Hanna-Leo Roads.
- In Rawlins, consider the solid red line to avoid impacts on wetlands.
- Route the line between Hammett and the Hemmingway substation north of the Snake River, through the Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area (NCA).
- Consider route alternatives in the Populus to Cedar Hill segment to minimize sage grouse leks and associated habitat.
- Avoid the proposed irrigation water storage reservoir on Sublette Creek southeast of Cokeville, Wyoming.
- Consider a route farther south, indicated by the green line near Kemmerer to avoid impacts on the Sublette Cutoff, Nancy Hill and Alfred Corum gravesites, and Emigrant Springs.
- Move the line completely away from the (historical) trails.
- Route away from sage grouse habitat.
- What other areas, close to cities and close to existing grids, would provide suitable sites?
- North Kemmerer Alternative. The red line that begins at Point C and extends to Point F. This alignment is north of the existing transmission corridor and it is our understanding that this is currently the proponent's preferred alternative.
- Avoid OCI leases because of potential conflicts with future trona extraction and possible subsidence concerns.
- Allow transmission lines to be co-located.

- A corridor on the north side of the Snake River would be the least expensive route. It would also benefit birds of prey, create less damage to resources, and reduce conflicts with landowners.
- A new eastern loop is not necessary - the western loop can be upsized to accommodate all the new capacity. The new services near Medicine Bow can be accessed by a line direct from Aeolus.
- Specific routing suggestion in the Walcott/Sinclair/Hanna/Rawlins area to avoid residences, wildlife and viewsheds
- Specific routing suggestion in the Oreana/Sinker Creek/Murphy Flat/Hemmingway Substation area, utilizing BLM land.
- Build the transmission line on BLM-administered land, where an easement already exists and would not impact private land.
- Cassia County's policy is generally that infrastructure serving the public interest, such as this Gateway West Transmission Line Project, should be located on public lands. The northern route complies with this policy. The northern route would not pose serious impact on agricultural grounds or interests in Cassia County, as would other proposals you have delineated.
- Concerning an alternate route away from the Fort Steele community that travels south of Interstate 80, you previously stated that such an alternate route would not be cost prohibitive or greatly add any additional costs. We have also been assured by State Wildlife Biologist, Greg Hiatt, that there are no significant sage grouse leks in the area and any claims to the contrary are disingenuous.
- Congressional delegates should proceed with legislation allowing use of the Craters of the Moon southern portion for the powerline corridor.
- From ground and map study, the green alternate route is much less populated and would be a choice we could support for the new line.
- General routing suggestion in the 1000 Road area.
- General routing suggestion to move the line away from agricultural areas.
- General routing suggestion to move the line away from residential areas.
- General routing suggestion to use corridors already owned by Rocky Mountain Power.
- General routing suggestion to use BLM land instead of crossing through populated areas in the Murphy/Walters Ferry area.
- The "alternative corridor" indicated on Map 43 in green, makes more sense since it appears to be the one already used as a power transmission line corridor for the two existing transmission lines currently crossing the Snake River just to the north of Riverbend Estates.
- Specific routing suggestion in the Windstar/LaBonte/Fort Fetterman Road/ Medicine Bow area regarding year-round access, favorable terrain and riparian areas.
- Why not go across the desert in Minidoka and other counties on BLM land?
- I feel the best route would be along the existing corridor and to stay on public lands and in the hills as much as possible. This route would keep it away from existing and new subdivisions as much as possible.

- Please add the original route down Fetterman Road as an alternative in the DEIS.
- Support for the approved alternative route to the east of Water Canyon where there are no homes.
- Specific routing suggestion in the Fort Fetterman Road for much of the way (near existing access) building and maintaining the corridor should be much easier. The amount of time required to build the project would be reduced because of a nearby public road. Future power corridors could follow the same Fort Fetterman Road route since the same route could be widened as needed.
- Specific routing suggestion in the Fort Fetterman Road area. This road is used by campers, hunters, ranchers and sightseers and it is already well established.
- Specific routing suggestion in the Marshall Road area, which connects to the Fort Fetterman road in the northeast and connects to Mule Creek Road to the south, and is larger area to expand.
- If the line is moved to the south side of Interstate 80, that should leave at least five two-mile-wide corridors in which to run the power lines.
- If you stay to the north side of the Bonneville Power Line, the impact to the area would be minimized. Also, the less private property you bisect the lower the cost of the project. Also, if you could use the H frame towers that lower the overall height, it would have less impact on the environment.
- If you would study the topography of the proposals you would see the LFF proposal would be the most convenient, economical and certainly the most feasible plan for the present as well as future energy corridors, unless the federal and state agencies want to take on the minority of the burden and move it over more federal land instead. It is relatively flat and smooth rolling hills, fewer streams and marshes, easier accessed for construction, maintenance and fire-safety purposes. The LFF proposal will have fewer mitigation problems because of fewer landowners and past mitigation for already existing easement. There is some heavily forested land that will be involved but a small amount as compared to the proposed 1E corridor. The LFF route is closer to future wind generation areas on eastern Albany County, and most important of all -already down a much used public transportation corridor with easy access.
- In order to minimize adverse environmental effects, the co-location of the proposed energy transmission corridors with other existing and previously analyzed utility corridors (including, but not limited to, roads, pipelines, power lines, etc.) should be given fair consideration. In an effort to minimize the required footprint of the proposed facilities, I request that an alternative be analyzed that restricts the proposed transmission corridors to either existing or previously designated corridors.
- In order to reduce impact to landowners, I suggest that the proposed line be located on the far north side of the corridor (BLM land), or north of the current 500 KV line. Also, use of the shorter H-frame towers would also minimize impact, provided they are compatible for use in our area. Use of the north side of the corridor would mean that the line transits BLM property, thus minimizing current and future exposure and residential encroachment issues.
- Initially, Segment IE was aligned adjacent to Fetterman Road. This alignment was provided to the public for comment during scoping. At some point following the close of scoping, the alignment was modified because of perceived potential conflicts with historical resources. Based on comments received from the public, and as a cooperating

agency, we request BLM add the original applicant-proposed Fetterman Road alignment as an alternative to the Draft EIS for Segment IE.

- It has been our observation that land to the south of the existing transmission line is open range land. There appears to be little vegetation, other than range grasses, and no building structures other development. We request that the Gateway West Transmission Line be built parallel to and south of the existing lines rather than through the Bear Lake Ranchette properties.
- It makes more sense to keep these power lines down by the road networks such as Old Fetterman Road or better yet Cold Springs Road. These roads have already affected the area and at least this way both the road and transmission line can be together as much as possible and cause the least amount of disturbance to the environment.
- It would be better received with the affected owners if this project were moved to less populated parcel to the west, away from the calving area in the Indian Creek headwaters and drainage.
- Moving the line to the base of the mountain range on BLM ground alleviates the problems for farmers and power companies.
- I would like to see an alternate route on the 1E segment in the Douglas, Wyoming area that runs along a existing public corridor. This will reduce maintenance costs in the long run. I feel that it is wasteful and irresponsible to spend so much money and time building a power line over some of the roughest, private terrain in all of Wyoming. I would like to see the power line ran along the Labonte Fort Fetterman Road or an alternate route that uses more public land.
- My recommendation would be to utilize the "Feasible Alternative" route designated in green on the maps provided on your web site. I believe "Segment 5, Figure 4 - 7" identifies an alternative route that would be shorter, and thus, less expensive to construct.
- Please do not bring the transmission line through the community of Fort Steele, WY. There is plenty of open range land both north and south of Fort Steele.
- Possible alternate route that goes north of Casper, west of Alcova, through Muddy Gap and across the desert to Rawlins.
- Preferably, as urged by the Wyoming Game and Fish, there should be a single corridor from the Windstar substation (Glenrock) to the Aeolus substation (Medicine Bow), following the existing corridor now designated Segment IW. If a second corridor from Windstar to Aeolus is absolutely necessary, it should use an existing transmission and/or transportation corridor, such as the alternative previously proposed and rejected for Segment 1E.
- Question why the project requires two power line routes from the Windstar substation to the proposed Aeolus substation, and dispute the need for such. As both routes end up at Aeolus, why not run lines from the wind-powered generating sources near Medicine Bow, south of the mountains, directly west to Aeolus, as you are doing from Windstar?
- Require the power line to follow existing roads and power line corridors, closely parallel Interstate 80 through its entire route in Wyoming, and on into Salt Lake City, Utah. There it could turn north and follow the 1-15 corridor north to I-86 and then run west from there.
- Route corridors to avoid direct impacts or visual impacts to the settings of these sites to the greatest extent possible.

- Routing request to stay to the south of the Snake River through southern Idaho.
- Routing suggestions to avoid mountainous areas to reduce construction and maintenance costs.
- Since careful routing along the southern route could avoid impacts to both paleontological and historic trail resource, the NPS asks BLM to ensure that that route is fully evaluated.
- Specific routing and study area suggestion in the Mystic Saddle/Eagle Creek area.
- Specific routing suggestion at Highway 93 at 2800 N.
- Specific routing suggestion between the National Guard and the Hemingway Substation.
- Specific routing suggestion between Windstar and Dave Johnston Substations so as to avoid the Platte River Estates subdivisions 1 and 2.
- Specific routing suggestion for line co-location from the Midpoint Substation south of Shoshone to Gooding/Shoshone, then west to the Gooding area.
- Specific routing suggestion for the Gateway West Transmission Line to parallel the existing PacifiCorp line north side of the Snake River.
- Specific routing suggestion for the Gooding County area.
- Specific routing suggestion in Cassia County.
- Specific routing suggestion in the American Falls/Thiokol area.
- Specific routing suggestion in the Big Onion Range/Harrington area
- Specific routing suggestion in the Bixby Fishing Access area and nearby subdivisions.
- Specific routing suggestion in the Cassidy River Ranch area.
- Specific routing suggestion in the Fetterman Road area.
- Specific routing suggestion in the Fort Steele area.
- Specific routing suggestion in the Fort Steele/Sinclair area to avoid residences.
- Specific routing suggestion in the Fossil Ridge/Como Bluffs area.
- Specific routing suggestion in the Glenrock/Muddy Mountain/Casper Mountains area, then southwest to Bates Hole, then south to Medicine Bow.
- Specific routing suggestion in the Glenrock/Shirley Basin mine site area so as to reduce impact to the local elk herd and mountain range.
- Specific routing suggestion in the Gooding/Midpoint area so as to utilize public lands.
- Specific routing suggestion in the Hat Six/Wheatland Power Plant area.
- Specific routing suggestion in the Hemingway substation area.
- Specific routing suggestion in the Hogback Ridge area.
- Specific routing suggestion in the Medicine Bow/Glenrock/Deer Creek Road area.
- Specific routing suggestion in the North Platte River/Laramie Wind Farm/Clark's Corner area. Such a route would be more serviceable in the winter.
- Specific routing suggestion in the Riverbend Estates subdivision area.

- Specific routing suggestion in the Rock Creek/Fort Fetterman Stage area.
- Specific routing suggestion in the Rockland area to reduce impacts on city residents and to avoid crossing fields.
- Specific routing suggestion in the Rockland/Cold Water/Borah area so as to utilize public lands and avoid visual impacts.
- Specific routing suggestion in the Salmon Falls Canyon/Balanced Rock area.
- Specific routing suggestion in the Salmon Falls Creek area, regarding wildlife and archaeological impacts.
- Specific routing suggestion in the Sharon/North Canyon Road area.
- Specific routing suggestion in the Twin Falls County area.
- Specific routing suggestion north of the Snake River.
- Specific routing suggestion south of an existing transmission line in the Elmore/Ada County border area, near Regina.
- Specific routing suggestion south of the Snake River.
- Specific routing suggestion through the area of Devil Creek/Kinyon Road/100 Road area.
- Specific routing suggestion to avoid master planned communities being developed by Nevid, LLC, or other master planned communities.
- Specific routing suggestion to avoid most NHTs, Fossil Butte National Monument, and most of the sage grouse leks identified on the latest map.
- Specific routing suggestion to avoid para-gliding activities and reduce visual impacts in the Albion/Highway 77 area.
- Specific routing suggestion to co-locate the line south of Melba.
- Specific routing suggestion to go south of Cassidy River Ranch, and thereby avoiding the group of sage grouse leks and the considerable sage grouse activity in the Greasewood Flats.
- Specific routing suggestion in the Salmon Falls Creek/Owyhee County/Blue Gulch area, in order to stay out of the viewshed of Balanced Rock Park.
- Specific routing suggestion to go south of the Birds of Prey Area on federally owned lands that are unfit for agricultural or residential use.
- Specific routing suggestion to shift the placement of the proposed transmission lines onto public lands near existing lines to the extent possible through the Snake River Birds of Prey Conservation Area.
- Specific routing suggestion to stay to the south of Lilly Grade on BLM land and then heading northwest behind a ridge west of a proposed dairy site.
- Specific routing suggestion to use existing route across Indian reservation follow line down to Borah Substation.
- Specific to the view shed affected by proposed corridor 1E, further consideration should be given to the location of proposed segment 1Ea. Rationale for this request is in part due to the fact that it follows (or is in very close proximity to) an existing utility route. Utilities that are presently located within the previously established corridor/ route

include at least one (if not more) buried pipeline(s) and Fort Fetterman Road. Since the approximate location of 1Ea has already been encumbered by linear features, it seems reasonable that an additional utility would not affect the view shed to the same extent as corridor segment 1E. Furthermore if the proposed transmission line was located within corridor segment 1Ea, the amount of motorized access needed for construction, repair and maintenance activities, could be minimized.

- Suggest that an increase in carrying capacity for power be confined to the existing easement corridor along the existing line through Sensebaugh Canyon, without expanding the width.
- Support for following the proposed route and avoid any routes that cut through the Grindstone Project.
- Support for increasing Rocky Mountain Power's western route capacity and reliability, making route 1E unnecessary.
- Support for the alternative route developed and proposed by the Cities of Kuna and Melba, Idaho.
- Support for the Brackett Alternative (mile 8-16 on Segment 9) so as to avoid residences and CAFOs.
- Support for the Downey Park route, which already has an oil line and a road through it.
- Support for the Fort Fetterman Road alternative for the 1E route.
- Support for the Gateway West line to go through the R7 area.
- Support for using the existing Shirley Basin area route, with a spur constructed to Medicine Bow.
- Support of Feasible Alternative Route (8g-11), which passes through NCA, and which was an "Alternative" to the "Proposed Route" in 2008 siting study prepared by Rocky Mountain Power and Idaho Power Company. The benefits are numerous, and include the elimination of: extensive private land use, interruptions of agricultural activities and irrigation systems, citizen fear factors, city impact area interference, and the destruction of viewsheds.
- Support of Segment 7r because it would have the least disruption on private property.
- Support of the 7x route.
- Support of the northern route between Borch and Midpoint.
- Support of the original 1W route.
- Support of the proposed Alternative to the Midpoint-Hemmingway Route.
- Support of the western route that utilizes the existing line from Glenrock to the old Shirley Basin mine because it would be more cost effective and less destructive of wildlife habitat.
- The existing corridor has been in existence for some 85 years. Land use has adjusted to that corridor. Property in that corridor has historically been undervalued and farming operations under compensated. The proposed corridor parallels public lands and could be shifted to that area, minimizing the impact to farm ground.
- Support for routing the transmission line to the north of Fort Steele and Interstate 80.

- The southernmost proposed route for the Gateway West Transmission Line, originally proposed by the BLM Kemmerer Field Office, warrants full evaluation. This route places the power lines in the vicinity of the Bear River Divide and about seven miles south of Fossil Butte National Monument. Surficial deposits on the divide are comprised of the Bullpen Member of the Wasatch Formation and the Angelo Member of the Green River Formation, both of which are sparsely fossiliferous in this area. If the lines are routed on the ridge tops, the Bullpen Member is sufficiently thick to protect underlying Green River Formation rocks from disturbance during installation. The Angelo Member contains highly fossiliferous beds north of this area but has a low probability of fossils this far south. The southerly route prevents negative impacts to abundant fossil resources near the surface on BLM land along the alternate route adjacent to US Highway 30. The southernmost route also protects the view shed of Fossil Butte National Monument which are negatively impacted by routes in proximity of US Highway 30.
- The State of Wyoming requests that BLM develop an additional route variation in the Draft EIS for the Gateway West Transmission Project. As you are well aware, numerous parties including affected landowners, residents of the Fort Steele community, the Carbon County Commission and the Wyoming Department of Parks and Cultural Resources have expressed concerns about PacifiCorp's current alignment north of Interstate 80 in the vicinity of Fort Steele. We believe most of the concerns raised by the parties listed above can be mitigated by routing the transmission line south of Interstate 80 between Walcott Junction and Sinclair, Wyoming.
- Suggest routing the transmission line south on Boxelder Road T75WR31N continue down the division between R76W and R75W until you hit Forest Service Land and go over the top to the Little Medicine Road then continue south to Medicine Bow along Little Medicine Road. This would put the impact of public corridors on mostly public land; Forest Service, State and BLM; and would also continue down an existing public corridor. The land owners would not have to bear the brunt of a public corridor, the state and federal agencies could shoulder the load.
- Support for relocating the proposed transmission line to avoid the Fort Steele area. While a route south of Fort Steele is not currently being considered, I encourage you to include this southern route as an alternative in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. As discussed at the landowners meeting on January 23 in Sinclair, there is a route south of Interstate 80 that would avoid sage grouse leks (Greg Hiatt, WGF) and would be preferred by residents of the Fort Steele area.
- General routing suggestion in the Aardema/Mirkin area.
- Use of the indicated "alternative corridor", where it crosses the Snake River, which is already used by two power lines, will avoid these negative impacts. Use of the alternative corridor to cross the Snake River will reduce the overall impact of the project.
- Use the Governor's proposed route which parallels the existing transmission lines instead of the preferred route which was shown at the landowner meeting.
- Utilize existing transmission corridors to avoid greenfield development and improve cost-effectiveness.
- Utilize the 500K power line corridor running through the Snake River Birds of Prey.
- We are dismayed that an alternate route south of Interstate 80 has neither been proposed nor studied.

- We are requesting that the Gateway West transmission line project be routed further east of this area and then south of the corridor so that our home and the homes of our neighbors will remain livable and we can continue to raise our livestock safely.
- We do not wish to have the line going through our 30+ acres. It seems north of Fort Steel would be more reasonable.
- We respectively request that BLM and Idaho Power take the necessary action to relocate the proposed route so that it parallels to the existing 500kV PacifiCorp line as identified as a feasible alternative in the Idaho Power Siting Study and as proposed in the enclosed report prepared by ECSI. That route would be 3.8 miles shorter; would follow an existing transmission line for a considerable greater distance than the proposed route; and would traverse much less private and agricultural land. From just a cost perspective, the alternate route would be much more cost effective since it would reduce construction costs by eliminating nearly 4 miles of transmission line. It would also significantly decrease costs by reducing the amount of private property easement purchases, 6 miles of which would be within Kuna city limits where some areas are actively pursuing entitlement and development.
- We strongly encourage you to abandon the alternate corridor and move the proposed corridor northward 2 miles where there is more open land closer to the freeway.
- We would like to ask that you run the new Gateway West line about three miles south of the Interstate 80 near Sinclair, WY. Exit 221. There are several houses right beside the interstate.
- We would like to encourage BLM to realign the transmission line to an alternate route by guiding the line away from the Fort Steel community and south of Interstate 80.
- Move the proposed PI near Walcott Junction at MP 2-31 to the south side of Interstate 80 and then turn west and run on the south side of Interstate 80 past Fort Steele until you pickup the current route on the south side of Interstate 80 near Sinclair at MP 2-42.
- Why can't the lines cross the river and I-25 near the power plant exit and keep these lines away from people's lives? The existing line with steel towers does this very thing except it heads easterly after crossing the interstate.
- Please consider an alternative route north of the Snake River going from Borah to Midpoint.
- Why go east of Windstar substation when the main objective is to connect to transmission lines directly south of the substation?
- Why is underground not an option? Why can't people who want the power pay to mitigate the impact on the human environment?
- Why not just follow the Fetterman Road all the way to Laramie. Other easements already follow this road. Even if it's a historic trail, people are already use to seeing power lines along County and State roads. It's a natural corridor to Medicine Bow. Or you could follow the highway from Casper to Medicine Bow. It is not a straight line but it is already a flat area with power lines and easements already in place.
If you just have to go through the mountains go to the west of our property and west of the proposed route by 4 or 5 miles. This would be west of the Fackler Pass range. Then instead of affecting 20 landowners, you would only cross one landowner and maybe some Federal land. The area to the west is not as steep and rugged and would not be noticed as much by the public. A route west of our property would be easier, cheaper, involve less damage seen by the public and involve less land owners. It just makes more

sense.

if you must go through our mountains, move to the west away from public and our view, and where the least damage would be seen. Except for a few hunters, the route farther to the west would only be visible from the air.

- Would you consider moving the substation at Creston on to private land in Echo Springs LLC (in the T19N area)?
- Specific routing suggestion to locate the transmission line as close to the freeway as possible.

Mitigation Measures and Monitoring (Code 40)

- Detail mitigation steps that will be taken to minimize air quality impacts.
- Bury the lines where practical or feasible and locate the line where burying it is feasible.
- Design the proposed project to include an effective feedback element, including implementation and effectiveness monitoring.
- Define, and prevent, unnecessary or undue degradation in an equally direct, positive fashion.
- The southern route crosses various buried pipelines (e.g., tailings, natural gas). Locate support structures to avoid being directly over these lines.
- Mitigate conflicts with other uses of public lands.
- Require that project proponents set aside significant sums for purchase of private lands with important biological values and grazing permits and permanent permit retirement (including plan amendment) for the specific region where the corridor or linked new development is located.
- A structural review will be required and accepted by Western for excavation within 100 feet of any Western Area Power Administration transmission line tower foundation or the structure itself.
- Western will prepare a license agreement to address safety and other provisions related to construction, operation and maintenance activities associated with the new 230 and 500-kV transmission lines and to ensure no activities will interfere or conflict with Western's transmission lines.
- Construction work needs to be coordinated with Western Area Power Administration
- In its assessment of project siting, it is recommended that the BLM utilize the Council on Environmental Quality's mitigation hierarchy as a useful policy framework for assessing proposed route alternatives. The mitigation hierarchy seeks first to avoid environmental impacts, then minimize, rectify, and reduce environmental impacts, followed by compensating for unavoidable impact by providing replacement habitats or biodiversity offsets. See 40 C.F.R. §§ 1502.14 & 1508.20.
- Regardless of the route chosen, project-specific and cumulative impacts on biodiversity values that cannot be avoided or mitigated onsite are anticipated. The analysis of alternatives in the DEIS is the appropriate place to develop the mitigation framework for these impacts, including off-site mitigation.
- The BLM should minimize negative impacts by avoiding areas of critical habitat for species of concern, establishing siting criteria to minimize soil disturbance and erosion on steep slopes, utilizing visual resource management guidelines, avoiding significant

historic and cultural resource sites, and mitigating conflicts with other uses of the public lands.

- Request for substantive mitigation. Commenter wants to see Idaho Power purchase and retire grazing permits and restore the habitat. Quickest way to restore habitat is to remove grazing and this will also improve water quality.
- Specific vegetation abatement actions to be included within the environmental analysis undertaken should include: the use of herbicides, the use of target specific biologic pathogens, seeding and plantings, mechanical control, and cultural control. I recommend that seeding mixes for disturbed areas be done with native species (preferably those harvested from areas that are in close geographic proximity to the proposed power line right of way) in order to avoid dilution of local genetic material.
- A comprehensive long term maintenance plan must be disclosed as part of the environmental process. Private property re-entries for repairs, maintenance, and right-of-way clearing will continue for decades, if not centuries. As such, comprehensive planning is necessary to ensure proponents and agencies with jurisdiction are clear on acceptable entry levels, timing of entries, and utilization of residuals created through periodic maintenance. Additionally, catastrophic events (e.g. wildland fire events, blow downs, earthquakes, floods, etc.) that can adversely affect a utility should all be considered.
- Fire management and suppression activities may be severely hampered by the Transmission Line construction and operation and result in loss of Endowment Land productivity. Specific fire management plans should be a pre-construction requirement.

Water

- Require affirmative steps toward reducing that impaired water quality status, regardless of whether the State has made a specific allocation of pollutant load to BLM lands.
- Implement accepted best management practices to ensure that all sediments and other pollutants are contained within the boundaries of the work area.
- Promptly re-vegetate disturbed areas that are contributing sediment to surface waters as a result of project activities to maintain water quality.
- Service and fuel equipment away from streams and riparian areas.
- Locate equipment staging areas at least 150 feet from riparian areas.
- Identify measures to protect the drinking water protection areas.
- Identify measures necessary or beneficial in reducing adverse impacts to water quality.
- If dredged or fill material would be discharged into the waters of the U.S., then discuss alternatives to avoid those discharges.

Noxious Weeds

- Prohibit wind energy development along in the Hams Fork, Commissary Ridge and Dempsey Ridge areas.
- Monitor to ensure a weed problem does not develop.
- Wash off the tires and undercarriage of access vehicles prior to site access to dislodge noxious weeds.

Fish and Wildlife

General

- Avoid habitat for sensitive species such as mature to overmature, dense sagebrush stands and other habitats required by the pygmy rabbit as well as dry, gravelly ridges that appear to be the obligate habitat for the Wyoming pocket gopher.
- Avoid prairie dog colonies.
- Avoid sage grouse and Columbian sharp-tailed grouse and other galliform lek areas.
- Avoid areas of critical habitat for species of concern, minimize soil disturbance and erosion on steep slopes,
- Avoid construction activity within big game crucial ranges from November 1 through April 30 to minimize disturbance to wintering wildlife.
- Protect habitat potentially occupied by raptors, such as previously utilized nests.
- Implement protective measures for all winter range areas (not just critical winter range)
- Restore crucial habitat for fish and wildlife populations and mitigate negative effects of the project.
- Mitigate impacts on important wildlife species from construction (including travel and housing) from Lander Region-Ft. Steele to Wamsutter.
- Monitor the effects on fish and wildlife resources and habitats
- Detail mitigation steps that will be taken to minimize or eliminate adverse impacts on listed species.

Sage Grouse

- Within the BLM BHMA, restrict surface activities from March 15 through July 15 within 4 miles of occupied sage grouse leks and avoid surface disturbing activities within sagebrush stands of greater than 10 percent canopy cover. Within this 4-mile buffer, install raptor deterrents on power poles and other high profile structures to help reduce predation on sage grouse.
- Route the powerline to avoid crucial habitat for this species. This includes core areas identified by the State of Wyoming. All surface activity should be prohibited within 5.5 km (3.3 miles) of active Sage Grouse leks. No surface occupancy is preferred to simply limiting use of areas to specific periods, as the latter does not appear to benefit Sage Grouse.
- Roads should not be placed within 5.5 km (3.3 miles) of active leks. If roads are present, they should be seasonally closed during the sage-grouse breeding season from 1 March to 20 June.
- In addition to these practices for protection of active leks, BLM should implement standards for protection of areas used by Sage Grouse in winter, spring, summer, and fall and throughout the lifecycle of the birds.
- To minimize disturbances to wildlife and wildlife habitats...avoid construction of power lines in occupied sage-grouse habitat, especially within 1/4 mile of leks.
- Avoid construction activity within 1/4 mile of sage-grouse leks from March 1 through May 15

- Avoid activities in known nesting habitat (within a 2-mile radius of leks) until after the breeding season (July 15).
- In areas where the line must be constructed in Sage Grouse habitat, require the utilities to design towers and install perch deterrents to make the structures less attractive to ravens and raptors.
- Implement on and off-site habitat mitigation to offset any impacts to sage grouse.
- Design overhead power lines to prevent perching by raptors within 1/4 miles of sage-grouse leks. To prevent electrocutions, power lines and conductors should be constructed in accordance with raptor-safe design criteria.

Reclamation

- Recognizing the difficulty of restoring vegetation on disturbed sites in areas with low precipitation, require more than simply "work to minimize surface disturbance."
- Some disturbance is unavoidable. Evaluate a full range of disturbance area, reclamation techniques available to ensure disturbed sites are quickly and properly reclaimed, and mitigate for unavoidable impacts.
- Replace trees close to where the loss occurred. Native saplings should be used, if practicable.
- Reintroduce and protect from grazing riparian canopy or bank stabilizing vegetation until well established (typically rested for a minimum of two grazing seasons).

Vegetation

- Prohibit disturbance in riparian areas and wetlands to ensure these critical resources are fully protected.
- Leave a buffer strip at least 150 feet wide on each side of streams and water courses undisturbed where healthy riparian vegetation is present.
- Prepare a vegetation management plan to address noxious weeds and exotic plants.

Effects Analysis

In addition to the comments listed below by resource, a few comments provided instructions on how to conduct NEPA.

Social Issues (Codes 100-107)

- In Idaho, there have been several wildfires caused by raptors being electrocuted on transmission lines and the carcass falling to earth, igniting cheatgrass or other vegetation.
- The proposed route is not suitable because of the cultural, social, environmental or economical impacts to our lives and businesses.

Public Services

- In preparation of this accelerated growth, the city (of Kuna) has updated its wastewater management plan to identify how sewer discharges will be directed to the city property subject to the transmission easement encroachment. In response to recommendations found in that plan, all public sewer works projects reliant upon the city's sewer farm are being directed to this city property. The wastewater management plan took two years to formulate and was completed in 2007 at an expense of nearly half a million dollars. Considerable revenue has been expended since that time acquiring public easements or

constructing sewer facilities that will flow to the city property where the transmission easement is proposed and consistent with the management plan. The public sanitary sewer planning and construction process could be disrupted by placement of a transmission easement through the city's treatment plant and sewer farm. The city property would likely be impacted by its severance. These impacts should be acknowledged, evaluated and mitigated as part of the DEIS process.

- The placement of a transmission alignment through city owned property will pose considerable harm and injury to the city's ability to accommodate long term public infrastructure demands (like sewer) as well as the ability to meet the city's cultural and recreational needs.
- Landowners in this area do not have electricity. They have chosen this area because of the lack of infrastructure. So I feel it would be tragic for them to have to pass by this transmission line on the remote drive to their properties or worse yet have the transmission line passing through their properties.
- AM-FM radio service will be so noisy it will be disrupted.
- There will be no new power furnished to Power County to eliminate some of the brownouts.
- Concerns over the proximity of the transmission line to other buried utilities, proximity to subsurface resources (including domestic/livestock/industrial water wells, pipelines, septic fields, fiber optic lines, etc)
- Concerns over the possibility that these towers would interfere with the radios the Melba Quick Response use when they go out on an emergency call. They need to be in constant contact with the dispatcher and if they are too close to a high voltage tower there could be interference with the radios.
- Concerns over radio transmission for Owyhee County Sheriff Department and other emergency responders. Is it imperative that we have reliable communication within our EMS system.
- This will also disrupt our cable TV, internet, and cell phones, whose infrastructure and broadcast points are located atop ridges and mountains throughout the project area.
- This proposed transmission line goes right though a large area of the State of Wyoming that does not offer electrical services of any kind to the land owners. If the transmission lines come though this area the residents and land owners will be somewhat bitter knowing that it is carrying electrical service to people in other states. A substation there out of the question.
- An electro-magnetic emitted by transmission line field will affect future communication systems dependent on electro-magnetic waves.
- Will the Federal Communications Commission require Structure Registrations? If so, please provide the FRN, FCC Registration Number.
- How will this project affect two-way radio repeaters and systems including Cassia County 911 as well as other 450 MHz repeaters, Cellular base site with microwave links, Cassia County Sheriff Department's 900 MHz low power data system with links to other sites and backhaul system, GPS base station, low power wireless Internet systems with microwave back haul and a 800 MHz LTR system, all located at this communication site. Have the owners and operators of these systems received specific written notice of this

project? What efforts are being made so that this project does not interfere with Internet access points and telemetry systems though out the study area?

- We currently use three two-way radio systems to assist with required farm communications. One of the systems we use will not work while under the high voltage power lines north of Rupert. This existing power line, we're told, is 138,000 and/or 345,000 volts, and renders our system useless. What would 500,000 volts do? We believe that a high voltage transmission line will cause detrimental disruptions of wireless communications. The proposed Gateway route could affect our farm's three two-way 450 MHz communication systems. Licensed frequencies are extremely difficult and time-consuming to make changes. Our oldest system is now 35 years old and our newest is 10 years old. The newest two-way system has the problem north of Rupert. New FCC requirements of splitting the bandwidth narrower for new frequencies, and will make the problem worse.

Education

- This proposed route passes within 200 yards of the local grade school. This is too close.

Community Safety

- Address the adverse health risks of living in close proximity to high voltage transmission lines, particularly those effects on children, those with underlying health conditions, and the elderly.
- My daughter has an inoperable benign brain tumor. What affect will living this close to the powerlines have on her tumor?
- Mr. Todd Adams was very adamant that the new line could not be any closer than 1300 ft. from the existing lines in the basin. This was for safety reasons that had to do with downed wires and power outages for clients down the line. I am also very concerned about downed lines as it relates to my house, family and livestock.
- After moving to such a remote area, I would not like to be affected in any way by power lines that create a magnetic field. It would interfere with electronic reception, not to mention the effect on our health.
- Concerns over risk of high voltage transmission lines in close proximity to diary operations, including effects on livestock (irritability, nervousness, changes grazing habits, and reduced milk production).
- Concerns over safety, such as lightening strikes and tower failure.
- Concerns over fire hazards posed by the towers and lines. Is there a plan in place to mitigate the risk of fire? If so, what is it and where can it be found? Fire stations are sparse in the project area. Existing fire fighting rules are 2 hour cut-offs. Is this sufficient for big fires, there is no place to reroute power??
- Concern over the transmission line being a potential terrorist target.

Transportation

- The devastating impacts of off-road vehicles (ORVs) on terrestrial ecosystems are well documented. ORVs degrade water quality, spread noxious weeds, fragment habitat, disturb wildlife, increase fires, and displace non-motorized recreationists. The EIS needs to analyze the impacts of ORV use along transmission corridors and describe the ability for the BLM to monitor and control ORV use as permitted by land management agencies.

- One point to be considered by the Applicant, contractors, landowners and other government agencies is that just because a map or air photo indicates a road, it doesn't validate that travel with the type and class of equipment proposed is appropriate. As such, a complete transportation analysis with field verification of all routes analyzed is reasonable, prior to completing the draft analysis and issuance of a final document with associated decision. Items to be considered as part of the transportation analysis and the warranted field verification should include, but are not limited to: status, capacity, and weight restrictions for individual roads, road segments, overland routes, and their associated structures (culverts, fords, creek crossing, dams, and/or bridges).
- Avoid planned subdivisions and roads that have heavy traffic.
- We have an airport in Murphy and several small private landing strips throughout Owyhee County. Power lines are a hazard to aircraft. This would not be an issue north of the river.
- Huge transmission lines would be near the Murphy airport and several private runways. Power lines are a hazard to aircraft. Lines would also have a negative impact on aerial spraying of agricultural lands. Please do what you can to avoid getting close to our little private airstrip 2 miles east of Murphy, ID.
- How many private landing strips are in this area? How will they be affected? Have you given notice to Idaho Aerial Applicators Association of this project? What will be required by the Idaho Division of Aeronautics for this project to proceed? What will the FAA, Federal Aviation Administration, require for this project to proceed? Please provide the Aeronautical Study Numbers.

Environmental Justice

- Evaluate environmental justice populations within the geographic scope of the project.

Economics (Codes 200-204)

General

- As our nation's energy needs continue to grow, Wyoming can address some of those needs, which is good for Wyoming's economy.
- Wyoming is endowed with abundant wind resources, and this transmission project will allow the state to take advantage of that endowment through low-impact energy development that brings jobs and tax revenue.
- To widen a corridor that runs through the most useful agricultural land would definitely impact many residents. With uncertain economic pressure of unreliable income and increased expenses it is important not to add another negative impact.
- The ADEIS acknowledges the transmission easement may encumber the affected right-of-way (ROW) with land use limitations in that it may diminish the utility of a portion of property if the line effectively severs this area from the remaining property. This action may lead to severance damages to ameliorate the separation of lands resulting from the final line route and this may be resolved by appraisal analysis (see 3.4-45 lines 1-10). It should be noted the city (of Kuna) has a zoning designation known as the planned unit development (PUD) whose application requires the developer to provide certain public amenities as a condition of development approval.... This zoning overlay severance issue should be identified as factors needing further ADEIS review.

- City of Kuna expressed concerns regarding lost tax revenue as a result of the Project. Thus, regional communities would be denied tax dollars to provide services for their citizens as a direct result of property devaluation and diminished future development.
- In the June correspondence we noted the sub-segment route alignment 8g to 11 poses significant and direct adverse economic impacts to private land owners, the citizens of Kuna, Melba, Ada County, Canyon County, and Owyhee County, as well as Idaho Power. Based on relatively conservative financial estimates associated with reduced property use (agricultural, development, etc.), devaluation of private lands, tax revenue losses, potential costs and revenue loss to Idaho Power Company from private land acquisition, legal expenses (eminent domain process), and project delays, which will be passed to the consumer, all told - the proposed alternative would result in economic impacts to all parties ranging between one-half and one billion dollars over a 10 to 15 year development period.
- Although the Applicant(s) assert that there is an increasing need for energy resources throughout the west, economic downturns and changes in demographic conditions may prove otherwise.
- Concerns that the project will harm or destroy private businesses in the Project area.
- The resulting adverse impact to private property owners and the community will likely be in the hundreds of millions of dollars and include countless intangible and incalculable impacts. It will also needlessly and unreasonably increase easement acquisition and construction costs that Idaho Power will have to recover from consumers with increased rates.
- The transmission line should not be built on private land, further hindering the local economy. Right now is exactly the wrong time to decrease property values, hinder farmers and ranchers to the point that they may go under. These things always have a ripple effect on the economy affecting other business owners: store owners, restaurant owners, Agri Lines and similar businesses. The ripple effect would affect the county at large as the tax base shrinks making it near impossible for our County Commissioners to produce a viable budget.
- Risk of financial failure or premature project termination incurred by allowing the Gateway West project in its current form include: This type of activity is heavily subsidized by tax incentives; political winds of tax subsidy change quickly, resulting in suddenly unprofitable, unfinished or unneeded projects. Leases provide the opportunity to subvert, assign or cancel leased corridors and areas at investors' whim. Investors do not have the cash to fund this entirely; they are considering federal funding as a source of cash.
- We understand that it is difficult to find the best route for a corridor of this size; but we also believe that the imposition of a large energy corridor of this type would be very hard on the taxpayers and the economy of Owyhee County. Our taxes have come up this year and property values have dropped drastically. Why burden the taxpayers by devaluing their property further?
- Concerns over loss of property value, financial harm to individuals, farmers and business owners.
- The unsightly transmission lines will detract from the value of this mountain property and the aesthetic value will be greatly diminished.

- I question how this project will really benefit Wyoming. The contractor, Tetra Tech, is not a Wyoming company. Employing Wyoming workers and most of the money related to construction will leave the State.
- Concerns over impact to regional tourism. Out of state hunters not only help the G & F, but will spend large amounts of money while visiting Wyoming (lodging, gas, meals, etc).
- The potential of financial instability and liquidity of the proponent(s) may at some point in the future lead to their demise. This is certainly a realistic scenario as evidenced in companies (Enron, Montana Power, Pacific Gas and Electric, Touch America, etc.) that also had linear transmission capabilities. As such, I request that a full economic analysis of project be undertaken and disclosed to the public at large. Aspects to be addressed should include but are not limited to, cost! benefit analysis for construction/ long term maintenance, effects to under-represented populations, and effects to private landowners property values.
- We are on the alternate route and border the Indian Reservation. If the route is chosen by you the easement should be renegotiated after 10 years and given the same deal as the Indian Reservation gets. If a wind turbine site is removed from our land by the new power line we should be compensated in the amount of what the generator would produce for the life of our wind contract. I think it would be no more than right for Idaho Power or Rocky Mountain Power to give our wind company a power purchase agreement.
- Our property has a wind development lease on it. As such, we are prohibited from placing structures that would interfere with the wind potential on our land. We will not be compensated for this loss of potential wind income, and would be prevented from entering future wind energy development leases.
- Economic growth requires carefully planned infrastructure where all mitigating circumstances are resolved. The western part of the state needs additional power but it is not our obligation to provide it with no compensation. In the Rockland Valley the Brady Substation is maxed out, preventing further growth. We are happy for the growth taking place in western Idaho. However, the benefits of this proposed line only apply to the people of the Treasure Valley and negatively impact the farming of southeast Idaho.
- How do the proponents plan to finance this project? I have been told they plan to increase the cost per kilowatt so the users in Wyoming will help pay for the construction costs through our monthly bill. Also, Wyoming should take a page from the State of Alaska: when oil, gas and wind power are developed, a trust fund should be established to pay the local Wyoming people for the loss of wildlife, scenery and the influx of people.

Income

- Construction of a transmission line would help maintain those open spaces and a viable income through wind energy development.
- Concerns that the proposed transmission line would adversely affect and even destroy livelihoods and would seriously jeopardize business and community growth potential.
- Wasatch Wind has engaged in deceptive sales practices in promoting this project, misrepresenting to landowners the intentions of their neighbors and promising large sums of income without full disclosure.
- Concerns regarding the impact of high-voltage transmission lines on livestock, especially dairy cows. Dairy cows are much more sensitive to electrical current than humans. The loss of milk production and cow health problems would be catastrophic.

Taxes

- The project will not lower the taxes of our local taxpayers because the utility only pays to the state and we will see none of it.
- The BLM land is public land bought and paid for with taxpayer money and maintained by taxpayer. It is the shortest and most direct route. Routing the transmission line on BLM land would save money for everyone.
- The project would leave Owyhee County with a smaller property assessed tax base from which to generate revenue.
- Rocky Mountain Power stated that they will only pay property taxes on the facilities and do not pay severance taxes on power generated.
- As a result of the project, landowner's property value would go down but property taxes will likely rise. Would landowners be compensated this increase in property taxes?

Cost to Land Owners

- Consider the impacts of destroyed cattle guards, increased number of vehicles in the area causing death or impairments of livestock, cut fences, opened gates, damaged range improvements, decreased AUMs and pastures for grazing, decreased palatability of vegetation and forage from road dust and development activities, unsuccessful reclamation of disturbed areas, introduction and spread of noxious weeds; and other detrimental social and economic impacts on livestock operators and livestock management operations.
- Concerns over the financial impact of transmission towers being sited on agricultural land. Specifically, the increased management costs associated with working around such a transmission corridor. Transmission lines that run diagonally through farmland, causing small fields to be irrigated and managed separately –an increased expense to the farmer.
- For those landowners who already have one transmission line crossing their land, a second transmission line makes land improvements impossible or cost prohibitive.
- As a result of the transmission line, farmer's yields will decrease and costs will increase. This will markedly reduce the net worth of impacted operations and the value of the land.
- It is unfair that the cost of the power companies doing business be passed onto the landowners.
- Regarding the economic impact on people along the corridor, Idaho Power reimburses people only for an easement directly under the power line or for a relatively short distance from it. Thus the majority of the costs in property value to owners along the corridor will not be reimbursed. These "hidden" costs to the property owners will be in the devaluation of their property as a direct result of this project. The project will all but destroy the value of the land along the corridor for future residential or commercial development, and retard the future growth of Melba itself as a community. People who currently own homes along the corridor will find that their home values will decrease.
- Planned parcel subdivisions would be adversely impacted, as property values would decrease, and even make selling the subdivided parcels impossible. Equity in existing homes or lots would be lost.
- Concerns over the further reduction in property values in an already bad economic situation.

- I currently have ten power pole settings on my farmland from previous power lines. I know from experience that these settings that cut through agricultural ground add to the workload and expense in a farming operation. Every operation on my farm has to be performed around these structures, from ground preparation, seeding to harvest. This extra cost cuts down on my profit margin and has an adverse effect on my livelihood.
- The Gateway West Transmission Line Project, as it was still being proposed in early May of 2009, guts the small historic homesteads of at least eleven native Idaho families residing between just east of Lilly Grade Crossing and when the line crosses Salmon Falls Creek below Balanced Rock Park.
- Please identify how the proposed easement will compensate the land owner for access, damage, etc. once the transmission lines are built.
- Also, it would be very unlikely that any lending institution would loan money for home or cabin construction since the desirability of that particular lot would be totally diminished as compared to other unblemished lots in the subdivision.
- The three parcels of land that I own are considered recreational property and taxed accordingly by Albany County. The proposed transmission line would devalue my holdings of recreational properties that were established in 1976 by Betzing Realty Co. of Fort Collins, Colorado.
- The location of the proposed transmission corridor could encumber my private land and greatly diminish its marketability and value as a semi primitive/unimproved parcel of land.
- According to neighbors who already have lines on their property, the disturbances and costs from maintenance have heretofore been an uncompensated item.
- We are not going to be willing sellers for a one time price that forever devalues many times the acreage of the easement.
- The Riverbend subdivision will be adversely effected if the new line is placed on the south side of the existing easement as the noise and closer presence of the lines will greatly devalue my residence and surrounding property. Coincidentally, this area has recently been re-zoned as residential and a subdivision is currently being developed. I believe that this area beneath and around your proposed route will be inhabited with residential structures in the very near future. The presence of these transmission lines will also have similar adverse effects on these properties.
- The easement does not just devalue land in the corridor, it devalues entire farms. The USDA Soil Conservation Service monitors farmers closely for erosion. The tower placements and roads will impede contour paths, and increase erosion. All field operation costs from seeding to stubble management will increase dramatically.
- The economic impact of the project and the expense in compensating landowners will be much greater than if the towers followed or expanded existing routes. The value of dwellings and recreational areas adjacent to a large transmission line will be profoundly diminished to a much greater degree than that of land that has already been set aside for power transmission.
- The appraisal method applied in the ADEIS is widely recognized as a means for addressing before and after land valuation impact(s) resulting from transmission easement placement. This appraisal is intended to resolve the potential harms to a property owner with an eye toward making them financially whole. However, this land valuation process does not address the impact upon a municipal operation and its

financial wherewithal that may be lost resulting from a transmission easement extending through its jurisdiction and thus impacting its lands that have been specially benefited through public land use action. Thus, the noted ADEIS method of valuation does not take into account the socioeconomic impacts arising to a city when a developer cannot fulfill their land use development contract with the city that was arrived through public negotiations because the land use commitments are voided by a third party (in this circumstance by Idaho Power's actions).

Noise (Code 300)

- Concerns over the humming or buzzing noise that would be generated by the transmission lines, the noise of wind blowing through the transmission towers, and noise from wind turbines that may also be constructed in the project area.

Visual Quality (Code 400)

- Use visual resource management guidelines.
- Sweetwater County has a large percentage of historic trails.
- What view sheds are affected?
- Conduct a viewshed analysis in each [monument] area create alternatives for areas where visual resources have the potential to be compromised.
- Lincoln County urges BLM to reconcile the proposed and alternative routes' feasibility in light of the VRM Class IT designations in the Proposed Kemmerer Resource Management Plan (RMP) and Final Environmental Impact Statement. The Proposed RMP classifies significant portions of the Kemmerer Resource Area as VRM Class II.
- Based on my understanding of the project and through discussions with our Forest Landscape Architect, the issues related to partial retention would also be a concern in modification and in some cases even maximum modification. The project may meet a VQO of maximum modification or unacceptable modification, but would be dependent upon further scenery analysis. The project would not be in compliance with the Sawtooth forest plan and a significant forest plan amendment would be required.
- There is no way to cross these mountains and peaks without changing the shape or the natural color of them.
- The poles and lines will obviously be an eyesore and will greatly diminish the attractiveness of our rural setting--a setting that is a large part of our resort's attractiveness and success. We already suffer visually and operationally from the transmission lines that run along the foothills west of our property.
- The adverse effects to the scenic integrity should be fully disclosed, analyzed in detail, and mitigated to the greatest extent possible. Adverse effects to scenic integrity to be addressed include: clearing associated with drilling rig mobilization, clearing associated storage and laydown areas, limbing and removal of vegetation (including merchantable sized timber) associated with drilling and overland access and the construction of temporary roads.
- At night, it used to be dark and quiet, but now you will see the aircraft warning lights that each tower and windmill will have on them and these will be seen for miles. The size of the windmills is equal to the ST Louis Gateway Arch or the Washington Monument. That is what will be covering the landscape of some of the most scenic country the State of Wyoming has to offer.

- Concerns over the visual impacts of the transmission lines on tourism and wine production industry.
- Urge proponent to locate the transmission lines behind ridges as not to affect the scenic quality of the desert
- Urge burial of the transmission lines.
- Please provide any precedent for compensation to landowners who will have visual impact as a result of this transmission line existing on neighboring lands.
- Please identify what material the towers will be made of and a digital simulation of what our private lands will look like after the transmission line is built. Contact us for permission to access our land to take necessary pictures for the simulation.
- Object to the power lines disturbing my family's history and current beautiful scenery. I want our piece of land to remain untouched by the unpleasant city atmosphere that power lines are going to provide.
- The Board of Directors of the Snake River Canyon Scenic Byway are opposed to any placement of transmission lines or towers within sight of the Byway route. We hope Idaho Power will understand the mutually exclusive nature of a "scenic byway" and a high voltage transmission line stretching 1,200 to 1,500 feet between towers 190 feet tall. We will oppose the placement of this transmission line within sight of the Byway in any forum available to our organization.
- To avoid adverse visual impacts, substations should be designed to modern, compact, insulated standards. They should not be illuminated at night.
- Thirdly, we are concerned about the aesthetic degradation of Fort Steele residences, Fort Steele Historical Site and Fort Steele Rest Area if these massive transmission towers radiate in the near distance. Fort Steele is near interstate 80 which brings a wide variety of travelers to and near this beautiful area by the North Platte River that harbors an abundance of wildlife.
- The National Park Service is also concerned about the potential of the proposed Gateway West Transmission Line to impact national historic trail and setting managed by BLM and administered by NPS. The proposed route of the project would create visual impacts to trail setting near Emigrant Springs, White Hill, the Alfred Corum grave site, and the Nancy Hill grace on the California National Historic Trail. Trail setting in this area is very good, despite the proximity of the existing Jim Bridger transmission line. Constructing the Gateway transmission line here would introduce a new, permanent visual intrusion to trail setting and would establish a major utilities corridor that incurs cumulative impacts as future projects are routed through this sensitive area.
- Support for the Agencies' interest in protecting wildlife habitat and scenic views.

Historical, Cultural Resources, Native American Interests and Paleontological (Code 500)

Comments in this category indicated a concern about the potential effects on historical features (mainly trails), treaties, and preserving historical and cultural features.

- Avoidance would seem to be the appropriate method for resolving effects in this case, give the practical difficulties of mitigating or minimizing the effects of the 170 foot steel towers and several hundred miles of transmission lines on a linear historic feature.
- Avoid significant historic and cultural resource sites.

- Identify areas where cultural sites are at risk, and employ measures to protect these resources.
- Discuss effects on historical or traditional cultural places of importance to the area's Native American communities.
- Assure that treaty rights and privileges are addressed appropriately and consult with all affected tribal governments, consistent with Executive Order (EO) 13175 (Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments).
- Evaluate the potential to impact the setting of significant national historic trail resources in the vicinity of Emigrant Springs, White Hill, the Alfred Corum grave site and the Nancy Hill grave site.
- Corridors could degrade the viewsheds of sites and trails like the Cherokee trail, Overland Trail, and Oregon Trail.
- Evaluate the impact on historic trails and other known sites on or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.
- The trail is a long, linear progression of road from the Missouri River to the west coast and the transmission line would wipe it out where it intersects the trail.
- The Historical Sublett Trail crosses the Dempsey Ridge and must be preserved for future generations.
- Conduct a full inventory of paleontological and geological resources.
- Inventory and avoid impacts on cultural resources in parks.
- State agencies have raised serious concerns about paleontological resource conflicts associated with a southern alternative (south of Kemmerer) is warranted.
- We are concerned that portions of this project area will be placed in cultural or historic areas that should be preserved. National Historic Trails and Native American traditional cultural properties are two examples that we feel the BLM should be respectful and sensitive towards by avoiding constructions in these areas.
- Concerns about lack of negotiations with the Sho-Ban Tribe. If the Fort Hall Reservation were not present, would you consider this land as a feasible route?
- The school house on Hawkins Road has been completely renovated at great expense to preserve the legacy of the old one or two room schools. Built in 1939, this is an historic building and has been preserved as such. Currently in the process of getting the building recognized as an historical site.
- The California or Oregon Trails and some of the alternates are considered as Historic Trails. As a member of the Oregon California Trails Association, I am concerned that the equipment, trucks, towers and service roads needed for your project, may impact segments of the remaining ruts and routes.
- The analysis associated with the proposed geotechnical dilling lacks site specific data and inventories of Prehistoric, Historic, and Culturally Significant Sites; yet a finding will be made (as stated on page 5 of EA) that there are no significant impacts (FONSI Statement). As stated previously, the use of GIS and other remote sensing analysis are valuable as course filters for locating utilities, but they should not solely be considered adequate for conducting a "site specific analysis." Likewise, concurrence from the appropriate State Historic Preservation Officer (SHIPO) should be obtained, prior to issuance of a decision.

- All of the dinosaurs in the New York City Museum came from this ranch and its immediate neighbors!! Fossils are so sensitive that we as developers deeded and gave a perpetual easement in excess of 1,000 acres covering the geologic formations containing these fossils. We wish to protect these unique fossils in perpetuity.
- Certain area properties contain historic homes, 100 year old fields, and a legacy of land preservation practices.
- There are known Native American campsites on the ranch and tipi rings are still visible on the ridges. Several small Class III cultural resources surveys have been conducted
- The LFF route will not minimize the historical significance of the Fort Fetterman Road. This is already a highly traveled public corridor and the historic trail is still there. The idea to move an energy corridor onto basically untouched wild forest areas in order to avoid going close to a public historic trail does not make much sense. The trail is already greatly used by the public with vehicles
- We are trying to restore the Fort so tourists can visualize the life the soldiers and their families endured. The tourists will not be able to fully understand the significance of the rural setting if they are being towered over by power lines on poles over 100 feet tall.
- Historical preservation. On the northeast front of the Laramie Mountains, as it rises from the North Platte River, the route traverses areas that contain caves in which have been found numerous prehistoric artifacts. The corridor crosses, among other things, the Fort Fetterman Wood Reserve and the historic Olin homestead with its extraordinary old stone house. To the best of our knowledge, the proposal has not taken into account these characteristics of the proposed route. At the very least, before any decision is taken to use this route, there should be a thorough historical survey of the area.
- To the greatest extent possible, all known prehistoric, historic and culturally significant sites that would be adversely affected by the proposed power transmission line corridors, no matter what the location and/or landownership, should be inventoried, avoided, and/or LV preserved. Only when avoidance and/or preservation of prehistoric, historic and culturally significant sites is unavoidable for proposed construction activities, should mapping, excavation, and removal/archiving be considered. Furthermore, a determination of eligibility for listing on the National Register of Historic Places should be documented for all sites encountered during required cultural resource inventories.
- I appreciate the concern shown for the Historic Trails sections, but there exists four transmission lines already. A fifth transmission line would have negligible impacts.
- Hudspeth's Cutoff which is part of the California National Trail crosses the same area that Alternative B proposes to cross. Significant other trails of national significance that cross this same area is the "Old Bannock Mountain Wagon Road – Salt Lake to Fort Hall" that was marked out in 1849 by Captain Howard Stensburg who was commissioned by the War Department. Also, the 1843 Trail taken by John C. Fremont who was commissioned by the US Army crosses the proposed Alternate B Route.

Air Quality (Code 600)

- Include detailed plans for addressing dust control for the project.
- Disclose the types of fuels to be used, increased traffic during operations, and related VOC and NOx emissions and the effects on air quality and human health evaluated.
- Detail mitigation steps that will be taken to minimize air quality impacts.

Water (Code 700)

- Evaluate the change in road miles and density that will occur as a result of the project and predicted impacts to water quality by roads.
- Ensure all components of State water quality standards are met, not just numeric standards.
- Disclose potential impacts on water including which pollutants are likely
- Include waterbodies listed on the States and Tribes' most current EPA approved 303(d) list.
- Consider impacts on drinking water.
- Require consistency with applicable storm water permitting requirements
- Concerns over loss of water rights through disuse. In this day and age, water rights might be as valuable or more valuable than the land.
- Potential destruction of a spring and cistern on our property: Water was piped to the site of my grandparent's original home site where a replica of their original home is in development and will serve a small retirement home. Consider, as well, the fact that destroying the spring will be eliminate water currently provided to the historic school house.
- Concerns over crossing Marsh Creek where proposed. This is a very sensitive ecological area. We are currently working with the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality to upgrade our cattle feeding facilities in order to reduce or eliminate possible contamination to the creek from the waste from the cattle.
- The analysis associated with the draft EA has failed to analyze potential effects to shallow aquifers associated with the proposed action. Specifically, the analysis fails to consider the reality that a certain proportion of the bore holes will encounter shallow aquifers; thereby, elevating the potential for dewatering and/or adversely effecting subsurface water quality. The effects associated with the proposed action may have significant effects to shallow water wells used for agriculture, livestock, industrial, and/or domestic purposes. As such, I propose that an analysis be conducted that considers effects to all existing wells (including those for agricultural, livestock, industrial, and/or domestic consumption) located within 1/2 mile of a proposed drilling location. Once an analysis of potential effects to subsurface water resources has concluded, I strongly advise that mitigation specific to subsurface water quality, including but not limited to procedures for plugging and abandoning bore holes that encounter water and drilling exclusion zones around existing wells be proposed.
- Appears to be a discrepancy between requirements for hazardous materials handling in proximity to public wells and private wells. Suggest that all wells, both private and public, be buffered to the greatest extent possible, in this case, 400 feet.
- The draft analysis is somewhat unclear in that it discloses water depletion for the proposed project by river basin. Yet, it is stated elsewhere that water would be taken from municipal or public water supplies and not from surface waters? As such I am confused if the intent is that drafting from surface water sources would be allowed? If so, further analysis and disclosure is warranted.
- Other elements to be considered and documented as part of the transportation analysis include proximity to permanent and ephemeral and water bodies (lakes, reservoirs, streams, wetlands, etc.)

- The total number of wells in disclosed Table 2-2 is misrepresented.
- Our claim for water right (on file with the State of Wyoming) also lies near or within the path of the proposed line expansion, and any blasting, drilling or disturbance of area rock formations, which we are sure would have to occur, would most likely upset the flow of that shallow water formation. We have concerns that the fragile water source which has supplied our home and domestic livestock for over forty years may be diminished or destroyed.
- What happens to the water rights under the lines? What happens to water/animal rights along these corridors?
- Methane gas present and dangerous. Dangerous methane gas is found in the ground and in our well water.
- We are concerned that construction and continuing maintenance of power lines will create erosion problems due to the steep slopes that drains into wetlands.
- A new transmission line route within the riparian zone of Warm Creek should be avoided in favor of an existing transmission line route which avoids this sensitive feature.
- In addition, it would also negatively impact the quality of our water well, because our water table is shallow, so much so, that in the spring, there is an abundant amount of surface, water that is slowly absorbed back into the table.
- Concerns over the transmission line making difficult or impossible to build a proposed reservoir in the area. Existing transmission lines now border the reservoir site. We support the reservoir to store water for the area.

Wildlife (Codes 800 - 809)

- Inventory migration routes and provide sufficient tracts of contiguous habitat.
- There are significant sage-grouse, migratory gamebird, and wintering mule deer concerns with the green line (or any line south of US 30).
- New construction and infrastructure will also change crucial habitat for pygmy rabbits, sage thrasher, sage sparrow, birds of prey, and so forth.
- Consider effects on sensitive, threatened, and endangered species and their key habitats such as migration corridors, critical winter range, calving grounds, rearing habitat and similar critical life-cycle habitats.
- Evaluate impacts on rare and/or sensitive wildlife habitats including kipukas, lava tubes, caves (natural and man-made), permanent and seasonal wetlands, riparian areas, sensitive and listed plant species, and old growth forest stands.
- Analyze the effect on fire occurrence, frequency, and severity; especially as it relates to important shrub-steppe and forest habitats.
- Evaluate expected losses of bald eagles due to collisions with the power lines.
- Analyze effects on prairie dog colonies
- Analyze effects on sage grouse and Columbian sharp-tailed grouse and other galliform lek areas.
- Analyze effects of fragmentation of habitat for sagebrush obligate species.
- Analyze effects on interior forest species.

- Consider displacement of big game.
- Concerns over habitat loss, fragmentation and degradation
- Consider effects on biological resources, including birds; sandhill crane, wild turkey, bald eagle, golden eagle, sage chickens, pheasants, songbirds, Canada geese, great blue heron, pelican, wood ducks, American widgeon, trumpeter swans, cormorant, kingfisher, grebe, owls, hummingbirds, sharp tail grouse, Hungarian partridge, hawks; and mammals such as mule, fox, white-tailed deer, antelope, mink, fox, coyote, skunk, raccoon, moose, mountain lions, badgers, bobcat, big horn sheep, bear, ferrets, porcupines, white mink, wolf and weasels; fish including trout.
- Analyze effects on habitat for sensitive species (such as mature to overmature, dense sagebrush stands and other habitats required by the pygmy rabbit as well as dry, gravelly ridges that appear to be the obligate habitat for the Wyoming pocket gopher).
- Recommend using landscape-scale analyses and planning tools to locate transmission lines in places that avoid key wildlife habitats and natural features.
- The power lines or the poles will not hurt the wild habitat, and Idaho Power can find some rehabilitation for far less than they can condemn our properties.
- Biologists who studied the effects of power lines in the Birds of Prey area concluded they are actually beneficial to the birds of prey.
- BLM has discussed with Idaho Power the potential for doubling up the existing 500kV line that runs east west in the northern portion of the NCA. This would reduce impacts to private lands and reduce potentially adverse impacts to sagebrush steppe and wildlife habitat that could be associated with a parallel line.
- Desire to retain pristine, undeveloped character of the area. Visitors come from far and wide to enjoy the beauty of the land and the wildlife that lives there.
- Once installed there would be little disruption on the wildlife of the area.
- Consider impacts to riparian areas and floodplains
- A new transmission line corridor will also threaten resident and migratory native birds protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. Preference should be given to locating the new lines along the already established transmission line corridor. Flight diverters should also be installed on the current and new lines to make the lines more visible to eagles, waterfowl, and other birds.
- An Avian Protection Plan approved by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service needs to adequately address the threats to local resident and migratory bird species.
- Are there any Bruneau dunes tiger beetles left?
- Consider impact of transmission line noise (humming) on wildlife.

Winter Range

- Evaluate blocking or eliminating migratory corridors for elk, mule deer, moose, and pronghorn antelope.
- Evaluate possible negative impacts on elk, mule deer, moose and pronghorn winter range due to habitat loss and degradation.
- Analyze increased motorized access to winter ranges, especially big game winter ranges and its effect on wildlife and wildlife use of habitats.

- Situating the route to the north of the Snake River would impact less large game winter habitat
- As noted by the Wyoming Game and Fish Department, in its letter of July 3, 2008, to Mr. Walter George of the BLM, the proposed transmission line would cross crucial winter-yearlong ranges for pronghorn and mule deer and crucial winter ranges for mule deer and elk.

Sage or Sharp-tailed Grouse

- Consider impacts on sage-grouse and sharp-tailed grouse populations and habitats.
- Effectiveness of anti-perching devices on the towers needs further study.
- Evaluate impact of construction of overhead power lines on concentration of raptor predation on sage grouse.
- New transmission through the core area southwest of Kemmerer is incompatible with the core area designation and should be avoided if feasible.
- Request that the BLM work with the states wildlife management agencies to complete the analysis of Greater sage-grouse core habitat areas in Idaho and to incorporate the Wyoming Core sage-grouse habitat areas. For Idaho, this analysis should use observed data, habitat-models, and expert interviews to map significant sage grouse habitat, including key wintering, nesting, brood rearing, migration, and elk areas. This core area analysis should be utilized in route selection.
- Both routes on the east and west sides of the Cassia Division go through extensive areas of brood rearing habitat. The sensitivity of these areas could intensify depending on the listing decision in February. Additionally, The Idaho Sage-grouse Conservation Plan recommends that new above ground major power transmission lines should be sited in a manner that avoids sage-grouse habitat.
- Depending on location and design specifics, the construction of transmission lines within sage grouse habitat could constitute “nonlinear infrastructure” under the Conservation Plan for the Greater Sage-grouse in Idaho (Idaho Sage-Grouse Advisory Committee 2006). Nonlinear infrastructure is defined as “human-made features on the landscape that provide or facilitate transportation, energy, and communications activities...including wind energy facilities.” The Conservation Plan lists infrastructure such as this as the second greatest threat for sage grouse, with wildfires as the greatest risk. Road construction and use associated with transmission line maintenance represents high risk for loss of lek areas, nesting locations, and brood-rearing habitats (Braun 1986, Connelly et al. 2004). In addition, sage-grouse have been shown to avoid transmission lines, presumably because of potential predation. Based on the habitat guidelines for sage-grouse management presented in Connelly et al.(2000). We recommend siting the transmission line in such a way to avoid impacts to sage-grouse.
- We believe that an integral part of conserving and recovering sage-grouse will be relying on the guidance from local stakeholder groups. As such, we recommend that the BLM coordinate further efforts more closely with the US Fish and Wildlife Service, the local Sage-grouse Working Group, the Idaho Department of Fish and Game, and the Governor’s Office of Species Conservation. Conservation groups to consult include the Audubon Society, the Idaho Chapter of the North American Grouse Partnership, the Idaho Falconer’s Association, the Nature Conservancy, the Wood River Land Trust, the Western Watersheds Project as well as the Idaho Conservation League. With the additional comments received from many organizations, the BLM should design the

transmission line to minimize the potential impacts described above. We recommend reducing roads and trails in identified sensitive areas to preserve existing habitat. Where impacts are unavoidable, the BLM should implement on and off-site habitat mitigation to offset any impacts to sage grouse.

- Tetra Tech prepared a scoping report dated August 29th, 2008 for the BLM advising throughout the report to route these transmission lines away from Sage Grouse habitat: making yet another case to route this line north of the Snake River.
- Increased raptor and raven populations south of the river could cause problems for sage grouse.
- Project would promote raven populations, which are major predators for gallinaceous birds like greater sage grouse and sharp-tailed grouse. In addition, ravens are major predators on grouse nests. Therefore your new lines will provide a negative swath across the West for these grouse that are already showing drastic population declines.

Waterfowl

- Analyze impacts on waterfowl and shorebird high-use areas and migration routes, wildlife management areas, national wildlife refuges, and areas of high and concentrated use during spring and fall migration, nesting and brood rearing seasons.
- the proposed route of the proposed transmission line crosses directly over the old Bear River Channel which is now fed by springs and have become a tributary to the Bear River. This is important because the old Bear River Channel is now and has been for the last 70+ years been composed of four large ponds which are vital to numerous migratory water fowl, including ducks, migrating geese and most importantly 10 to 12 trumpeter swans who spend several months from early October to late January on those ponds. The site of the proposed power line will be directly in the flight path of these very large, beautiful and protected birds.
The old Bear River Channel which is now completely on private property are vital wetlands to not only the trumpeter swans but also other migratory water fowl. The ponds are open almost all year long as they are fed by artesian springs and thus freeze over completely very rarely if at all.
- Wintering Waterfowl
20,000 waterfowl, including up to 16,000 Canada Goose and 4,000 Mallards winter along the Snake River in the vicinity of the proposed river crossing. Thousands of additional birds use the river for roosting, feeding, and as a flight corridor during migration. These birds will be threatened by new lines along the proposed route as they use the river as a flyway and as they forage in agricultural fields along the proposed route. The new lines should be placed in the current line corridor to avoid creating an additional hazard to these birds.
- I have personally observed flocks of Trumpeter Swans flying the river corridor and negotiating the existing transmission lines. This effort seems to be accomplished with great difficulty at times due to their inability to clearly see the transmission lines during storms and the presence of prevailing winds which are frequently high velocity. On one such occasion, I watched a flock of several Trumpeter Swans flying off of the river. In this process they spiraled up while fighting a strong wind. As they reached the transmission line one made a fatal turn and struck the line. It appeared to suffer a broken wing as it crumpled and fell back into the river. While this is an isolated incident I have to believe that it could possibly occur in the future, especially with the introduction of another series of transmission lines.

-

Passerine Birds

- Consider impacts on seasonal passerine bird migration routes.

Bats

- Evaluate bat populations and habitats.

Amphibians and Reptiles

- Evaluate effects on reptile and amphibian populations and habitats, particularly hibernacula.
- An unusual, fairly large, iridescent blue-backed lizard is seen on occasion.

Raptors

- Evaluate effects on resident and migratory raptor populations and habitats.
- Evaluate effects of noise on raptors during nesting season or near to occupied nests.
- Consider avian mortality due to collisions with high tension lines.
- Consider impacts to bald and golden eagles, great horned owl, American kestrel, Sharp-shinned hawk, Cooper's hawk, Rough-legged Hawk, Osprey, Red-Tailed Hawk, Screech Owl, Northern Harrier, Ferruginous Hawk
- Biologists have discovered that the towers are a benefit to raptors, acting as staging areas for the birds in their hunting and nesting areas.
- Concerns over wintering eagle range. Up to two dozen adult and young bald eagles currently winter along the Snake River at the proposed river crossing of the substation segment. Young inexperienced eagles are especially prone to collisions with lines, and the proposed route creates a new hazard. The new lines should be placed closer to the current river crossing in order to consolidate this threat.

Small Mammals

- Evaluate loss and fragmentation of pygmy rabbit habitat from disturbance and habitat fragmentation.

Large Mammals

- Consider effects on large carnivore (i.e., grizzly bear, wolf, and wolverine) populations and habitats, including linkage corridors and genetic interchange.
- Effects on crucial wildlife habitats and wildlife corridors.
- Elk, mule deer and moose use this area as calving grounds and/or migration routes.

Recreation (Code 900)

- Analyze the impacts of ORV use along transmission corridors and describe the ability for the BLM to monitor and control ORV use as permitted by land management agencies.
- Impact of noise on hunters/fishers and the hunting/fishing experience.
- Will access for hunters be impeded?
- Will this project close any area campgrounds?
- Concern over loss of recreational opportunities such as camping, hiking, horseback riding and boating.

- Concern over impacts to paragliding opportunities in the project area.
- Access to public lands, especially in Eastern Wyoming, is a primary concern to the Department. Wildlife oriented recreation opportunity and management ability is relatively limited. This is especially true in this portion of the Laramie Range. Any increase in public access for hunting and fishing in this portion of the state is an obvious benefit to both the public and the Department. From a hunting perspective, the Department's report views this proposed acquisition as an opportunity to provide the public with quality hunting for deer, elk, pronghorn, wild turkey, and blue grouse. There would also be some opportunity for black bear and mountain lion hunting. Also, because hunting is the primary tool to manage wildlife populations, increased access to the Duncan Ranch would positively influence the Department's ability to meet population management objectives.
- Hunting and other outdoor activities are major revenue generators for the State, and Wyoming has gone to great lengths to obtain lands for public access – including, notably in the proposed Segment 1E corridor – to promote hunting and other outdoor activity.
- The devastating impacts of off-road vehicles (ORVs) on terrestrial ecosystems are well documented. ORVs degrade water quality, spread noxious weeds, fragment habitat, disturb wildlife, increase fires, and displace non-motorized recreationists. The EIS needs to analyze the impacts of ORV use along transmission corridors and describe the ability for the BLM to monitor and control ORV use as permitted by land management agencies.

Access (Code 1000)

- How many of the lands in or near the corridor are Forest Service roaded, or potentially suitable for BLM WSA status?
- Western Area Power Administration needs continuous, uninterrupted access to its facilities.
- Winter conditions render some mountainous locations completely inaccessible.
- Wetlands that should be protected inhibit access to portions of the route.
- Rugged terrain makes access and construction very difficult.
- Project construction vehicles might need to use the road that cuts through the middle of my parcel to access the existing transmission line. If that is so, my only concern would be the potential affect that heavy trucks and other equipment might have on the surrounding land. I am not opposed to either the project, per se, nor to access through my land if the need arises.
- Consider an alternate route that does not take the line over the North Laramie Range which is still relatively pristine, not to mention rough country for construction and maintenance of the transmission line.
- Accessibility for private wind generation development is very limited in this corridor due to the inaccessibility and terrain. Rocky Mountain Power would be better served to build this line in an area with great accessibility if they really intend to promote private wind generation.
- Please identify how the lands will be accessed to get materials in for building purposes and how lands will be accessed to maintain the transmission lines once built.

- Concerns over soil erosion and steep terrain being damaged by construction and maintenance vehicles.
- Opening roads and right-of-ways will give trespassers access to private land.
- Fires would be a concern for the project so keeping the lines away from timber stands and nearer to a publicly accessible road is preferable.
- In order to control theft, vandalism, and protect against contamination of our farm produce, we control access to our property. The increased traffic involved with study, construction, and maintenance of this project would frustrate many of our efforts to control access to our property.
- Transmission line construction and maintenance road densities would increase exponentially. With very few exceptions, motor vehicle access to each and every tower location would be necessary. Request that access routes, both temporary and permanent, be identified, fully analyzed and their effects disclosed as part of the environmental analysis.
- There is no way to cross these mountains and peaks without changing the shape or the natural color of them.
- There is absolutely no road access in the agricultural lands area. Any additional road means additional erosion, additional obstacles to farm around and encourages public trespass.
- Potential loss of access to Endowment Lands.

Vegetation/Weeds (Code 1100)

- Analyze the effects on noxious weeds and exotic plants.
- Evaluate effects on rare plants.
- Analyze full disturbance effects on sagebrush.
- Large blocks (>5,000 acres) of contiguous intact landscapes considered to be of high ecological quality are present in the project area. These include lands with limited non-native species and within the natural range of variability for ecological processes such as fire or flooding. These large, intact areas should be avoided.
- The grasslands area is a very profound and fragile ecosystem that has been preserved for centuries. Strongly recommend that every action be taken to protect and preserve this grasslands area in the interest of future generations.
- Highly productive freshwater meadows exist in the project area. These meadows are home to abundant wildlife and native plant species. Concerns that the project construction activities could drain these wetlands.
- The most cost-effective way to deal with noxious weeds is to protect strongholds of native vegetation from activities which either spread noxious weeds directly or create suitable habitat by removing native vegetation and disturbing the soil. BLM activities should limit road use and the exposure of mineral soils where weeds may become established. Roads, trails, and rivers serve as the primary routes for noxious weed species expansion. Special care should be taken to safeguard ecologically intact areas that are not currently infested. The EIS needs to analyze the effects of noxious weeds in transmission corridors and describe BLM management of weeds in these areas. For example, management strategies may include ensuring the tires and undercarriage of access vehicles are hosed down prior to site access to dislodge noxious weeds.

- Concerns over the amount of vegetative clearing and/or ground disturbance required for individual overland routes and drill locations.
- Although an analysis was conducted with regard to noxious weeds, further consideration should be given to the washing of heavy equipment using a high pressure washer with a fully self contained catchment system that allows for the effluent to be transported from the wash site and disposed of in compliance with State regulations. In an effort to further combat the introduction of invasive botanical species, commenter recommends that mitigation require the application of seeding mixes for disturbed areas be done with native species, preferably those harvested from areas that are in close geographic proximity to the proposed transmission line right of way.
- We are dependent upon an adjacent stand of trees for the wood with which we heat our home. It is our understanding that, according to the safety requirements for the power company, those trees would probably be removed underneath the path of the lines.
- There are weeds that grow around transmission line towers that cannot be controlled with conventional farming practices.
- In the spring the hillsides are thick with dozens of types of wildflowers. How will these be impacted by the project?
- Concerns over high fire danger because of a great deal of mature timber in the study corridor.
- What will be done to protect old growth forest during construction and subsequent maintenance of the proposed power line route?
- Concerns about impacts to slickspot peppergrass. This species has been impacted by fire and grazing. Too often the BLM spends millions to reseed after a fire and then reopens the area to grazing within a few years. Plants don't get established or grow and is a waste of money.
- How many trees—which are scarce in some locations along the route—and other vegetation must be removed to install the lines and how far from the lines must remaining trees be kept?
- A comprehensive (preconstruction, construction, maintenance, and decommissioning) noxious weed prevention and abatement plan for the proposed power transmission line corridors must be required by all agencies with jurisdiction.

Fish (Code 1200)

- Use best management practices to protect perennial and fish bearing waters.
- Restore disturbed instream habitats.

Special Designations (Code 1300)

- Analyze effects on citizen-proposed wilderness areas roadless areas.
- Evaluate impacts on the Bates Hole Sage Grouse Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC).
- The U.S. Forest Service lands adjoining this property on the South and West sides have been mandated to be roadless by the U.S. Forest Service.

Land Use (Codes 1400)

- Consider effects on livestock grazing from increased off- and on-road traffic, increased number of speeding vehicles, construction of new roads, and modifications to existing roads.
- Consider effects on food and habitat for domestic animals.
- Transmission line construction contractor will need to ensure that all electrical safety clearances are maintained (including proper grounding).
- Wildfires can be started from raptor electrocutions on lines, falling to earth, and igniting cheatgrass or other vegetation.
- Concerns for existing protected areas, or areas already recognized by local, state and federal governments as important for biological, visual, recreational and other values. Existing protected areas should be avoided. These areas include, but are not limited to: Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs), Research Natural Areas (RNAs), parks including local, state and Idaho parks, wildlife preserves and wildlife management areas, national monuments, national conservation areas, TNC preserves, lands under conservation easement and other similarly protected lands.
- Several segments of the proposed and alternative routes also do not follow the proposed West-Wide Energy Corridor or the Proposed Kemmerer RMP Right-of-Way and Corridors, and they must be modified to identify the extent to which they run through Right-of-Way avoidance areas such that a Plan Amendment may be necessary. This is also the case for several other shorter segments across Wyoming.
- As required by NEPA and the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA), BLM needs to consider the full spectrum of the affected environment, including impacts to livestock grazing and the range resource. 40 C.F.R. §§1508.13, 1508.14; 43 U.S.C. §1702(c). The proposed and alternative routes, therefore, must be revised to address and consider livestock grazing impacts. This could be accomplished by the inclusion of a detailed mitigation plan developed in consultation with the Coalition and affected livestock grazing permittees that will address their concerns and recommendations.
- Under FLPMA, BLM must analyze the proposed Gateway West Project to determine if it IS consistent with local land use plans and policies. 43 U.S.C. §1712(c)(9). BLM has acknowledged as much in its scoping notice. 73 Fed. Reg. at 28426 ("Land use conflicts and inconsistency with land use plans").
- The city of Kuna is likely the most affected municipal area located along the proposed transmission alignment due to the length of transmission line passing through the city as well as due to the concentrations of urban population. A map has been inserted in the ADEIS illustrating Kuna's municipal boundary. This map provides a visual means of assessing the transmission line's impact upon Kuna. Yet, the map relies on Kuna's municipal boundary as it existed circa 1995, rather than as it currently exists. This map should be substituted in the ADEIS with a city map reflecting the city's current municipal boundary for purposes of illustrating it has increased approximate eight-fold since 1995 and now encompasses the transmission easement route.
- The Kuna subdivision referenced in the ADEIS document, known as Osprey Ridge is actually a planned unit development (PUD) that encompasses more than 1,500 acres of land. Information about the Osprey Ridge PUD and its placement in a transmission easement should have been identified in the ADEIS scoping process and given information about this PUD was well publicized before the ADEIS evaluation occurred.

The fact that this publicly available information was missed in the scoping process suggests the review was not performed with sufficient due diligence.

- A privately owned structure (such as an Idaho Power 500kV transmission line) intended to transmit electricity is considered a public service facility, which requires Idaho Power to seek and procure a special use permit from Kuna (see Kuna City Code 5-1-6-2). This action (to obtain a permit) must occur in order to validate any land use action that may transact between the utility and the property owners subject to the transmission easement. This fact and its consequences has not been addressed in the ADEIS. The ADEIS regulatory framework, noted in 3.17.1.3, does not include recognition of municipal comprehensive land use plans as a regulatory process that is to be relied upon when evaluating land use matters. Nor does the ADEIS acknowledge Kuna's comprehensive plan and its associated goals and policies
- As currently routed, the 500kV transmission line would affect approximately 19-miles of private lands in Ada County, resulting in substantial social and economic impacts to the residents and businesses of the region, as well as infringing on the ability of our jurisdictions to maintain the quality of life for its citizens who are affected by this action.
- The proposed corridor along Melba Road is less than a half mile from the center of town and will place the transmission line in the area of Melba's future growth. The project will have severe impact on the future growth and development of Melba and devaluation of home and land values.
- Impact of the equipment, road building, traffic, noise, etc. would amount to a drastic change in the land use.
- Oppose the sacrifice some of the most fertile and beautiful land for agricultural or residential use for a transmission line.
- A large portion of the western states—including Idaho and Wyoming—is comprised of state and federal land. Power companies need to utilize as much government land as possible in the routing of public utilities and avoid placement of transmission lines next to towns such as Rockland, Idaho. Routing the transmission line through irrigated farmland is inappropriate.
- The transmission line might affect the Minidoka National Historic Site.
- The routing should follow the existing powerlines on public lands—particularly the Birds of Prey area controlled by the Bureau of Land Management. Keep the massive powerlines as far away from privately-owned lands as possible. Since there are already nearby large Idaho Power powerlines, parallel that route.
- Power County recently adopted a new Comprehensive Plan, which deals with Utility Corridors. The Idaho Code specifically requires an element of a County's Comprehensive Plan to deal with Utility Transmission Corridors. The Power County Comprehensive Plan requires a Special Use Permit process for Utility Transmission devices, such as gas pipe line or electric power lines. The Power County Comprehensive Plan, which governs the future land use in Power County contains the strategies that are to be followed for any request to site utility transmission facilities in the County.
- The residents of Platte River Estates subdivisions will suffer significant personal impact if 1Eb is allowed as proposed. It is irresponsible to run a transmission line through the rural residential Platte River Estates I and II subdivision when alternatives exist nearby that wouldn't negatively impact others. RMP states in their project data that they will

'avoid impact to communities' with this project, yet it is shown to running through a community.

- Many of the land owners are also pleased to hear that local officials from BLM and/or Idaho Power are talking with Wyoming and Washington about a potential amendment to the NCA Resource Management Plan to allow transmission lines to pass through the NCA.
- Concerns over negative impacts to Wilderness Areas and Canyon Lands and Air Force Base activities.
- The project affects this county as the proposed transmission lines will pass through Power County, in a multitude of optional routes. Those routes will heavily impact the citizens and residents of Power County and their livelihood. Agriculture is one of the mainstays of the Power County economy and if not properly sited, those lines could have a very detrimental impact on the agricultural industry in Power County. Certain of the Gateway West proposed transmission routes will cross some of the highest valued and most productive farm land in Power County. In addition certain of the proposed routes will greatly interfere with the county's residential development. It does not appear that the impact upon Power County, its agricultural land and its citizens, has been considered in any of the proposed routes.
- Power County will insist that they be allowed input and information concerning the proposed power line routes before they will agree or authorize their location. The Idaho Code authorizes Power County's Comprehensive Plan to govern the location of utility transmission corridors.
- It would trigger the industrialization of one of the most pristine agricultural and natural areas remaining in our part of the state
- The alternative route would go through many prime, agricultural and scenic areas that would decrease agricultural production and reduce enjoyment by the public as far as hunting, and scenic byways.
- The lines should not be placed on private property, nor within a quarter mile of any building.
- We fully understand the Siting Study stated several alleged disadvantages to "Possible Alternative Segments" and that the alternative routes we are proposing may require new right-of way (ROW) through the national conservation area (NCA) and this would require an amendment to the current Resource Management Plan. It appears the current regulatory and administrative climate would not hinder the consideration of a new ROW through the NCA.
- The Turner Ranch is a 680-acre ranch was the last IPC land purchased in 2007 to mitigate the C.J. Strike dam. The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) approved the Turner Ranch acquisition in August of 2007 that ordered IPC to develop a habitat management plan for the purpose of protecting and enhancing the riparian areas. The impact of an enormous transmission line would not be consistent with the license granted to IPC by FERC.
- The Building Administrator for Power County states that once "every thing is in place and decided a special use permit will be required".
- Interferes with current land use and approximates farming and dairy facilities and a residential neighborhoods.

- Many new houses and developments exist near the proposed route. The area adjacent to the Snake River serves as the highest priority development area in Power County. New power transmission lines destroy the potential of this area. The proposed line is inconsistent with the long-term planning and zoning wishes of the community.
- The land involved along the proposed alternate route is some of the best agriculture land available today and this route would go right through many ranches that are involved in the production of food, thus reducing production and creating a devastating financial burden for the people involved.
- By putting the power line through our area will only disrupt our community, farm land and livestock.
- The power lines should be kept on BLM and other federal lands and not on good farm ground. Our farm ground are small fields and a large power line coming through would really disrupt farming and access in those areas.
- She wants to make sure that we know the “Area of Impact” boundaries provided by the City of Kuna to us have not yet been approved by Ada County and she does not believe they will be.
- I am very upset that you are allowing Idaho Power to put towers and lines so close to my property and our subdivision! You are destroying our property value not to mention the view
- Concerns for property designated as a National Grasslands Reserve, want future generations to experience the natural state of what our ancestors experienced.
- Some property being routed over has been annexed into the City of Kuna in the early spring of 2008. Kuna's new comprehensive plan will be adopted soon and this property will be zoned mixed use.
- Concerned about impacts in the Deep Creeks (Pocatello BLM FO area). Once of the last intact portions of BLM land.
- The Jarbidge BLM needs to restore landscape. WW is involved with them regarding livestock and want us to purchase and retire grazing permits and restore habitat.
- Impacts to winter feeding ground and well for livestock.
- Request to see environmental impact study.
- CAFO permits are very difficult and costly to obtain to the point of legal actions and court rulings. If this project negatively affects this permit and we are not able to fully utilize this current permit, are you prepared to obtain a similar permit to replace our existing permit? Our main dairy is currently near capacity with some animals at our second facility. As this second facility fills we will need to begin construction at the permitted CAFO.
- Will the cattle be able to safely graze the right-of-way area? If not, will they be fenced out? Who will maintain the fence? What accommodations will be made to cross the right-of-way? If this project involves BLM property on which we currently have grazing rights, how will we be compensated for the loss?
- This project will reduce prime agricultural acreage therefore conflict with the Cassia County Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinances. How can this be justified?
- What applications, permits, hearings and other requirement will be required by Cassia County?

- How many current or permitted animal units are involved in this 2-mile study area?
- The CAFO permit was very difficult and costly to obtain to the point of several appeals, finally resulting in a district court ruling approving the permit. If this project negatively affects this permit and we are not able to fully utilize this current permit, are you prepared to obtain a similar permit to replace our existing permit? Our main dairy is currently near capacity with some animals at our second facility. As this second facility fills we will need to begin construction at the permitted CAFO.
- Will the cattle be able to safely graze the right-of-way area? If not, will they be fenced out? Who will maintain the fence? What accommodations will be made to cross the right-of-way? If this project involves BLM property on which we currently have grazing rights, how will we be compensated for the loss?
- There is no room for an easement or power line anywhere on this property. It would destroy our 7 acres.
- Most of the land we are associated with is made up of several small cabin sites. This size of right-of-way and just the equipment used for the building of such a project could totally destroy these sites as we know them. There are approximately 20 land owners in a small area around the Camel Back drainage.
- We favor the transmission lines, but like everyone in a community do not want them to run over or by our houses.
- Concerns over planned residential developments in the newly annexed areas of Kuna, Idaho.
- The red corridors identified on maps include portions of the Birds of Prey NCA (Fossil Creek, Murphy, etc.). These areas are more environmentally sensitive than the portions of the NCA north of the river where the line has been excluded.
- Easements may include multiple uses in some locations. Final location of any easements should be placed, wherever possible, in locations that will result in minimal negative impact to the function and productivity of Endowment land.
- If the Power line goes thru this area, the Power Company employee's responsible for this decision, will be directly responsible for destroying this area for ever. Not only the physical appearance will be destroyed but also affected will be the wetlands, the numerous creeks, increased erosion, destroyed timber, this area is used for elk migration and calving, and numerous other wildlife and birds call this area home. There are over 20 cabin sites tucked away in these mountains. This area would never be brought back to the way it is now.
- Want to see all energy projects collocated (gas, pipelines, other transmission).
- The Operators have indicated that, as a last resort, they could use the power of eminent domain to acquire private land parcels for the Gateway West project. Condemnation of private land is a matter of serious local concern, and the Operators and BLM must fully disclose the potential for eminent domain proceedings along the proposed and alternative routes.
- If Idaho Power relies upon its eminent domain authority for purposes of acquiring the city property - the city of Kuna will respond with legal action(s) to preserve the city's treatment plant capabilities and other uses these city lands are intended to accommodate. The potential for lawsuit should be evaluated as part of the ADEIS.

- Are there going to be land seizures, and how does one determine the likelihood of such a proceeding?
- The process of eminent domain would have to be instituted to acquire the necessary private land to accommodate the current proposed line. This would not be an issue on public lands.
- There is already a west route that was originally proposed which at least is going in the right direction, where they have easements without further invoking imminent domain. Rocky Mountain Power owns land on at least two sides of the subdivisions - isn't there some way to utilize their own property?

Agriculture (Code 1402)

- Towers will interfere with wheel lines and center pivots, both by physical location and/or due to electronic interference from the voltage. Hand irrigation lines are not cost effective.
- Farmers and ranchers will be unable to aerial spray crops, greatly increasing pesticide application costs to farmers.
- Land currently farmed will be no longer be available for use.
- Any tower bases placed in a corrugated field will prevent the water from flowing on down the field below the tower base.
- Changing irrigation would create the need to amend and change water rights granted by Idaho Water Resources. This would be very time consuming and expensive.

Mining

- The southern route crosses an area that is subject to surface subsidence from underground mining activities.
- Consider the potential impact of subsidence on any surface structures that would be placed within the mining area.
- Evaluate restrictions an overhead powerline may place upon future drilling activities associated with the mine (to avoid clearance problems that a drill rig may encounter with an overhead powerline).
- Consider that the location of a support tower in the immediate vicinity of two impoundment ponds may interfere with line maintenance or impoundment cleaning activities.

GHG/Climate (Code 1500)

- Analyze greenhouse gas emissions from associated power generation sources and impacts of climate change in the West.
- Analyze impacts from greenhouse gasses emitted by the transmission line and the fossil fuels that will be mined.

Road Construction (Code 1700)

- Evaluate effects of any proposed road improvements, new road construction, and general ROW construction and operation activities on the area.
- Evaluate the road density, and close or decommission unneeded roads and corridors.
- Construction of access roads and the setting of the foundations for the poles will cause damage to resources such as drinking water and visual resources.

- New roads would increase trespass activity.

Cumulative Effects (Code 1800)

- Take into consideration the possibility that whatever route is chosen may eventually carry more transmission lines and pipelines when choosing this route.
- Clearly depict and evaluate reasonably foreseeable direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts to groundwater and surface water resources.
- For groundwater, identify the potentially affected groundwater basin and analyze any potential for subsidence and impacts to springs or other open water bodies and biologic resources.
- Consider cumulative impacts of developments upon livestock grazing that affect the livelihoods of grazing permittees.
- BLM must fully examine new corridors/lines/disturbance-including natural gas (Ruby, Bronco), DOE corridors, and others in the region of Idaho, Wyoming, and Utah.
- Analyze the impacts of developing wind, geothermal, fossil fuel, etc. in the path of this line.
- Will this line be related to nuclear power plants? INEEL? If so, how might nuclear energy here endanger human health and the environment?
- Consider cumulative impacts including the costs of long-term litigation associated with the exercise of eminent domain and related negative public relations; visual impacts; quality of life impacts – as measured in terms of health issues, noise, property values, as well as other intrinsic impacts.
- Proposed construction of wind farms and additional coinciding transmission lines in the area.
- The environmental impact of reactivating existing power plants, such as the plant at Glenrock, or the construction of new fossil fuel power plants should be considered at this time.

**APPENDIX A
SCOPING PACKET**