

Cassia County Gateway Transmission Line Task Force Regular Meeting Minutes July 13, 2009

Opening:

The fifth regular meeting of the Cassia County Gateway Transmission Line Task Force was held at 2:00 P.M., July 13, 2009, in the City Hall Council Chambers, Burley, Idaho. The meeting was recorded in digital format and is available on the county website at www.cassiacyounty.org. Time stamps are included in these abbreviated minutes for reference purposes.

Present:

(See Attached List)

A. Call to order/Approval of Minutes/ Introduction of speakers

[2:02:53 PM](#) The meeting was called to order by Chairman Brent Stoker. A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes from the July 6, 2009 regular meeting, with voting on the matter unanimous in the affirmative. Stoker then introduced Walt George, BLM; Lisa Grow, Idaho Power; and John Cupparo, Rocky Mountain Power, as speakers for this meeting.

B. Financial Institution Comment

[2:07:52 PM](#) Stoker introduced Bob Blakeslee, Northwest Farm Credit Services. Stoker referenced comments received from Farm Credit in a letter in April, regarding expressed shared concerns for the proposed placement of the transmission line. Blakeslee commented to the group regarding the letter of concerns, and proposed to the power companies to consider alternate routes which would maximize the use of Public Lands and minimize impact on private agricultural grounds.

C. Power Company Comments/Discussion

[2:11:38 PM](#) Lisa Grow, Idaho Power, commented to the group that they are wanting to collaborate and find a solution that will work with the purpose and intent of the project, and stated that they are listening to the concerns. Grow stated that they have agreed to delay the Draft EIS to allow extra time to seek input on alternative routes, noting that September 4th will be the deadline for submitting alternative routes. Grow noted that the Stateline Alternate route is a problem for the companies, but stated their willingness to consider the 7-R Alternate Route. [2:18:14 PM](#) Alan Lloyd, Elba asked the question of the protocol for provide comment. [2:18:36 PM](#) Walt George, BLM, responded to the question and made general comments regarding September 4th as a target date for the groups to aim for, to bring the development of an alternative to a conclusion. He clarified that this date would not be a “deadline”, as comment is taken throughout the process. He provided the contact information to submit comments, to the project website or to the Cheyenne mail box. [2:23:07 PM](#) Lloyd gave additional comment in opposition of the 7-R proposed Alternate Route. [2:25:47 PM](#) George noted the EIS processes take time to formulate reasonable alternatives objectively, and discussed the EIS process. [2:30:15 PM](#) John Cappero, Rocky Mountain Power, addressed the group noting their interest in working through the alternative proposals, and also stated that it would be difficult for them to support the Stateline Alternate Route, and that they would be supportive of the 7-R route. [2:32:25 PM](#) Stoker asked the power companies how long it had been since they had reviewed the alternate route map. Grow replied last week. He further asked if either company had contacted Utah or Nevada. Grow replied that they did not. Stoker then reported that the Task Force did contact the states and reported to the group and the power companies the result of the conversations, noting that Nevada responded that by proving no harm along with benefit, it may prove to be possible. He also indicated that Box Elder County, UT, was willing to talk openly regarding the proposals, if the five area southern Idaho counties would stand united in a similar plan for a common corridor. Dialogue then occurred regarding the Task Force’s efforts to continue to investigate the Stateline Route, with Stoker requesting the power companies to continue to support the task force questions. Grow responded that they couldn’t stop the task force efforts, but that they could only support routes located within Idaho.

[2:54:14 PM](#) Kent Searle provided information on activities that have occurred regarding contractors conducting research on private ground on the proposed 'red' line route, and expressed frustration that work is proceeding for this route, when an official route hasn't been selected yet. The power companies and BLM responded that work will continue on all viable alternative routes being considered. [3:01:25 PM](#) Ina DiGrazia, Albion, asked if they were all collecting the same type of information on the Stateline route as on the red line route. George responded that they are not working on the Stateline route as it is not a proposed or firm alternative. [3:02:53 PM](#) Vicki Meadows of Power County commented regarding the Borah Substation. [3:12:40 PM](#) Bill Meadows, Power County, commented regarding clarification of the property owners in Power County meeting with the power companies. [3:15:42 PM](#) Clay Handy, Cassia County, commented regarding moving the Cedar hill Substation closer to Hollister, and working with the other counties on agreements with a corridor. [3:16:15 PM](#) Dave Angel, Idaho Power responded, and provided comment on the issues with Nevada. [3:21:31 PM](#) Von Gibby asked questions of the BLM regarding the task force's efforts to remove the constraints, and the BLM authorization of right-of-ways on public lands. George responded with the responsibilities and objectives of the BLM to disclose the gathered information, and where the line should be placed on public BLM lands. [3:33:02 PM](#) Bill Brockman, Kimberly, provided comment regarding frustration with lack of complete information, regarding potential multiple lines through the region, and sage hen habitation. Discussion occurred regarding the power company's awareness and knowledge of several proposed projects. [3:38:35 PM](#) Alan Lloyd asked a question regarding how wide a corridor has to be to accommodate multiple lines. [3:40:34 PM](#) Dave Angel responded with information, with general discussion continuing regarding the process including comments from Heather Wathen of Kimberly, regarding her frustration with this process and lack of sufficient information.. [3:55:45 PM](#) Bill Meadows commented regarding Power County's willingness to work with other counties and that they want to be treated the same as the environmental studies are. [3:57:25 PM](#) Joe Tugaw Jr. thanked the power companies and BLM coming to participate in this discussion today, and commented on the heavy emotional costs this process has placed on his family, and the effects that the 7-R route would place on his property and way of life. [4:02:01 PM](#) Stoker concluded with comments regarding utility and merchant service providers, and pointed out to the members of the task force the difficulties that may be experienced with working with merchant projects, and expressed appreciation of Idaho and Rocky Mountain Power attendance today. Joe Cupparo asked if the task force felt the September 4th date was possible to submit an alternate route. Clay Handy responded that the counties will be meeting on Thursday, July 23rd, to determine if that would be possible. Grow thanked the group for their efforts, and expressed their willingness to continue to work with this group. Cupparo echoed the same, and noted their obligation to meet power demands, and appreciation for this group's efforts.

Adjournment:

Meeting was adjourned at 4:05P.M. A special task for meeting is scheduled for Monday, July 20, 2009 at 1:00 P.M., with the regular meeting scheduled for 2:00 P.M. on the same date, in the Burley City Hall Council Chambers, 1401 Overland Ave, Burley, Idaho.

Minutes submitted by: Susan M. Keck, Deputy Clerk, Cassia County

Approved by: Gateway West Transmission Line Task Force 07/20/2009