



CHAPTER 2
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INTRODUCTION

In response to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) and the Council of Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations (1978) for implementing the NEPA, an extensive coordination program was developed for the Southwest Intertie Project (SWIP) to ensure that all the appropriate members of the public and federal, state, and local agencies were contacted, consulted, and given an adequate opportunity to be involved in the process. Chapter 5 (Consultation and Coordination) in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Draft Plan Amendment (DEIS/DPA) describes the public and agency scoping process, the public participation program, the issues and concerns identified from the public and agency comments, and the environmental planning process. This section describes activities of this process that have occurred during the review of the SWIP DEIS/DPA and the preparation of the Final Environmental Impact Statement/Proposed Plan Amendment (FEIS/PPA).

PUBLIC INFORMATION

During the course of the project 12 newsletters, fact sheets, and project updates were published to inform the interested parties about the environmental process, the project status, and opportunities to participate. Publications were sent to the individuals, organizations, and agencies on the project mailing list. The mailing list included names and addresses from the lead and cooperating agencies and Idaho Power Company's (IPCo) existing mailing lists, as well as all potentially affected public and federal, state, and local agencies and environmental organizations. The mailing list was expanded to over 3,000 interested parties during the process. Copies of the newsletters, fact sheets, and project updates sent out prior to the release of the SWIP DEIS/DPA are located in the Volume I - Objectives, Procedures, and Results technical report.

A Project Update was published in May 1992 announcing the release of the SWIP DEIS/DPA to the public for review and comment. Information regarding the comment period for the SWIP DEIS/DPA was also given. The Formal Public Meetings were announced indicating where and when the public could comment on the accuracy or adequacy of the SWIP DEIS/DPA.

A Project Update was released in June 1992 notifying the public concerning an error in the SWIP DEIS/DPA on Panel 4 in the Map Volume. A map inset was shown to correct the error. Meeting times and places for the formal public meetings were also announced again.

A Project Update was released in June 1993 announcing the release of the SWIP FEIS/PPA with information regarding the protest and appeal period for affected agencies. A summary of the comments received on the SWIP DEIS/DPA was also included.

STEERING COMMITTEE

A Steering Committee was established at the outset of the project to guide Dames & Moore through the EIS preparation and to review data and decision criteria. The Steering Committee was comprised of representatives of:

- Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
 - Burley District (Idaho)
 - Boise District (Idaho)
 - Shoshone District (Idaho)
 - Elko District (Nevada)
 - Ely District (Nevada)
 - Las Vegas District (Nevada)
 - Richfield District (Utah)
 - Utah State Office
 - Idaho State Office
 - Nevada State Office
- Forest Service
 - Humboldt National Forest (Nevada)
- National Park Service
 - Great Basin National Park (Nevada)
 - Western Region (California)
- Bureau of Indian Affairs
- Dames & Moore
- IPCo
- Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP)

Eleven Steering Committee meetings were held throughout the SWIP to discuss the status and issues of the project and to provide review and input:

- first meeting (February, 1989) - discussion of the coordination between the agencies, the progress of the regional study, and the selection of alternative corridors
- second meeting (May, 1989) - public meetings, responses, and letters from the first fact sheet were reviewed, wildlife was the major topic of discussion
- third meeting (August, 1989) - discussion and review of the BLM actions on the SWIP including record requirements, right-of-way applications, and plan amendments
- fourth meeting (November, 1989) - discussion of a new alternate route from the North Steptoe area, Hill Air Force Base conflicts, and the impact assessment/mitigation planning process

- fifth meeting (April, 1990) - discussion of scope expansion, right-of-way application amendments, and draft purpose and need statement; Dames & Moore presented the substation site selection, the subroute analysis process, and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) processing for resource impacts
- sixth meeting (June, 1990) - the draft purpose and need statement, results of GIS impact assessment modeling, the subroute analysis process and the feasibility of expanding the SWIP south of Ely were the main points of the meeting; the dates for additional scoping meetings were also announced
- seventh meeting (September, 1990) - opening discussion began with the Clark County desert tortoise Conservation Plan and how this plan should be addressed in the SWIP; the route selection process, Dry Lake alternative, and mitigation commitments were also discussed
- eighth meeting (December, 1990) - the SWIP DEIS/DPA outline, purpose and need statement, and the effects of the impact assessment results on the routing alternatives were discussed; the desert tortoise issue as well as the cumulative effects of the SWIP and the visual effects to Great Basin National Park and Interstate 84 were discussed
- ninth meeting (July, 1991) - a preliminary SWIP DEIS/DPA was submitted to the Steering Committee for review; the addition of several new routing alternatives were discussed as well as the issue of potential visual impacts to Wilderness Study Areas (WSA)
- tenth meeting (March, 1992) - discussion included final review of comments on the preliminary SWIP DEIS/DPA; the Stateline Resource Area of the BLM's Draft Resource Management Plan (RMP) and the on going desert tortoise consultation and Habitat Conservation Plan
- eleventh meeting (December, 1992) - discussion included comments and responses on the preliminary SWIP FEIS/PPA, content of the Purpose and Need, and the findings of the field review of Leland Harris Spring Complex.

FORMAL PUBLIC MEETINGS

The purpose of the Formal Public Meetings was to receive views and comments regarding the accuracy and adequacy of the SWIP DEIS/DPA. Six Public Meetings were held in August 1992 in Idaho, Nevada, and Utah at six locations:

<u>City</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Date</u>
Twin Falls, Idaho	Weston Plaza	August 3rd, 1992
Wells, Nevada	Wells High School	August 4th, 1992
Ely, Nevada	Bristlecone Convention Center	August 5th, 1992
Delta, Utah	City Council Chambers	August 6th, 1992
Caliente, Nevada	Soil Conservation Service Center	August 19th, 1992
Las Vegas, Nevada	BLM District Office	August 20th, 1992

The meetings were announced in the May and June 1992 SWIP Update and distributed to the approximately 3,000 people on the mailing list. Press releases were sent out in July and August, 1992 to 17 newspapers serving the communities in the area to announce the meetings:

<u>Location</u>	<u>Paper</u>	<u>Insertion dates</u>
Boise, Idaho	<u>Idaho Statesman</u>	Wed 7/29
Caliente, Nevada	<u>Lincoln County Record</u>	Week 7/27
		Week 8/3
Cedar City, Utah	<u>Daily Spectrum</u>	Wed 8/5
St. George, Utah	<u>Daily Spectrum</u>	Wed 8/5
Delta, Utah	<u>Millard County Chronicle Progress</u>	Thurs 7/27
Elko, Nevada	<u>Free Press</u>	Wed 7/29
		Fri 7/31
Ely, Nevada	<u>Times</u>	Fri 7/31
		Mon 8/3
Filmore, Utah	<u>Millard County Gazette</u>	Week of 8/3
Las Vegas, Nevada	<u>Sun</u>	Wed 8/5
Las Vegas, Nevada	<u>Review Journal</u>	Thurs 8/6
Nampa, Idaho	<u>Press Tribune</u>	Wed 7/29
Reno, Nevada	<u>Gazette Journal</u>	Wed 7/29
Richfield, Utah	<u>Reaper</u>	Week of 7/27
Salt Lake City, Utah	<u>Deseret News</u>	Wed 7/29
Salt Lake City, Utah	<u>Tribune</u>	Thurs 7/30
Twin Falls, Idaho	<u>Times News</u>	Wed 7/29
		Fri 7/31
Wendover, Nevada	<u>High Desert Advocate</u>	Week of 7/27

Meeting information flyers were also posted in the community at and around public establishments.

Each meeting began with introductions and a presentation given by a BLM representative with project personnel from the BLM, the IPCo, LADWP and Dames & Moore present. The presentation addressed the project description, purpose and need, the SWIP DEIS/DPA planning process, alternative routes identified, and the project schedule. The meeting then opened up for comments from the public.

A total of 75 people attended the six formal public meetings held in August, 1992. All comments and questions concerning the SWIP DEIS/DPA at the meetings were recorded and have been responded to in Chapter 5 of this document.

Frequently voiced comments included:

- visual impacts to residences
- health and safety
- minimize land use impacts
- property values
- need for the transmission line
- alternatives to the project