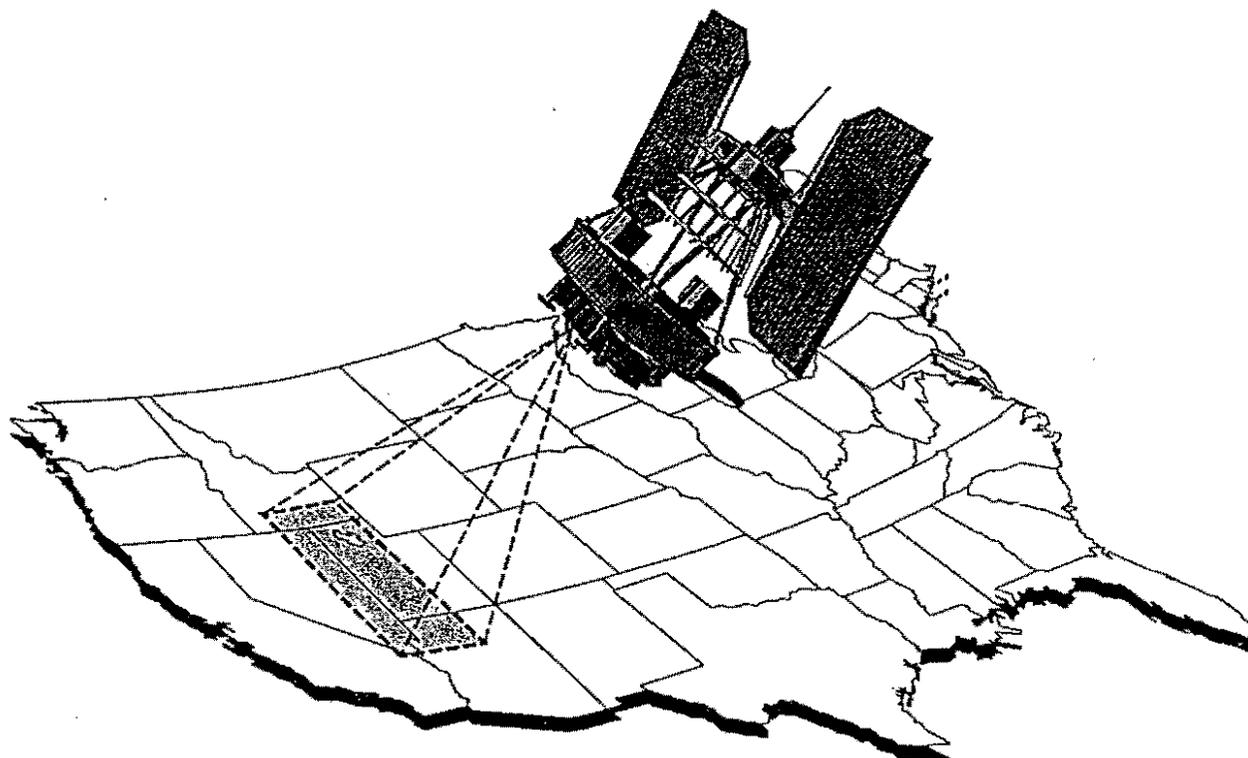


SOUTHWEST INTERTIE PROJECT

RECORD OF DECISION and APPROVED LAND USE PLAN AMENDMENT



Prepared by the:

U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Burley, Shoshone, and Boise District Offices, Idaho
Elko, Ely, and Las Vegas District Offices, Nevada
Richfield District Office, Utah



In Cooperation with:

U.S. Department of Agriculture
Forest Service
Intermountain Region, R-4

U.S. Department of Interior
National Park Service
Pacific Northwest, Rocky Mountain,
and Western Regions

U.S. Department of Interior
Bureau of Indian Affairs
Cedar City, Utah

U.S. Department of Interior
Bureau of Reclamation
Pacific Northwest, Upper Colorado
and Lower Colorado Regions

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SOUTHWEST INTERTIE PROJECT RECORD OF DECISION

SUMMARY

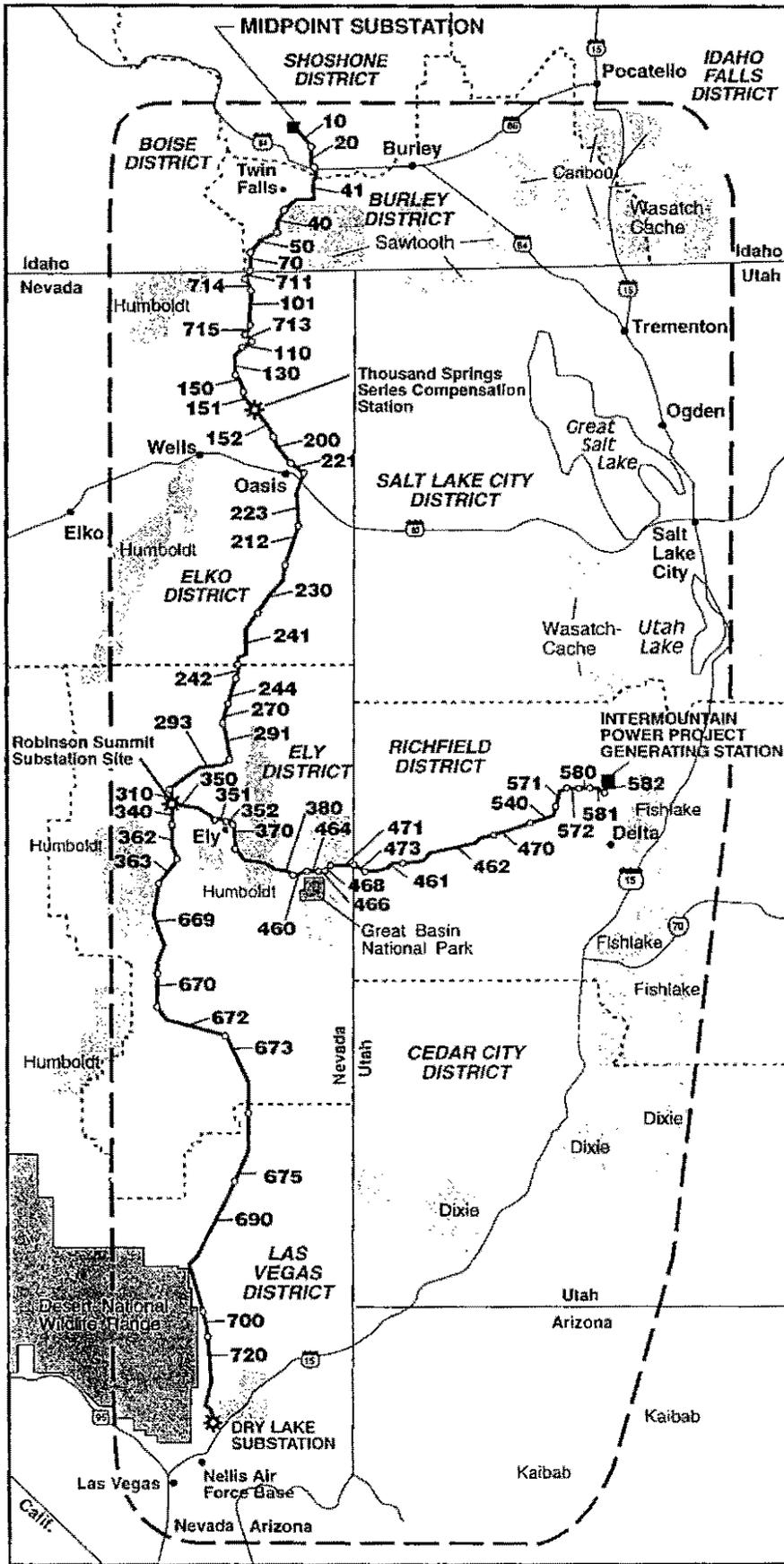
The Southwest Intertie Project (SWIP) Record of Decision (ROD) permits the granting of a public land right-of-way (R/W) to **Idaho Power Company, Boise, Idaho** for the construction, operation, maintenance, and termination of the Southwest Intertie 500 kilovolt (kV) electrical transmission line project (SWIP). The entire R/W on public land includes a 200 foot wide (100 feet each side of center) by approximately 540 mile long linear R/W, three substation sites, each approximately 80 acres in size, two series compensation station sites, each approximately 15 to 20 acres in size and 8 microwave communication sites, each approximately 1/4 acre in size (refer to the Location Map on the following page). Within the 200 foot wide transmission line R/W, the ROD allows the installation of a fiber optic communication cable within the grounding shield wires on top of the transmission line towers.

As the right-of-way decision routes the SWIP in some locations that are outside of BLM designated or planning corridors, the ROD amends affected land use plans to show the new or modified transmission line corridors. No amendments are necessary in Idaho as the Proposed Action is in conformance with the present land use plans. In Nevada and Utah, the ROD amends the appropriate land use plans.

Two public land right-of-way grants will be issued to Idaho Power Company for the SWIP. One grant will be for the Midpoint, Idaho to Dry Lake, Nevada segment (approximately 406 miles long) and one grant will be for the Ely, Nevada to Delta, Utah segment (approximately 134 miles long). This will be done to facilitate the assignment of the Ely to Delta right-of-way segment from Idaho Power Company to the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power. The Los Angeles Department of Water and Power will construct, operate, and maintain this segment of the SWIP (See page I-1 of the SWIP Final Environmental Impact Statement and Proposed Plan Amendment).

The ROD identifies the Agency Preferred Alternative as the route that the transmission line will follow. It describes this route by link designation as identified in the Southwest Intertie Project Final Environmental Impact Statement and Proposed Plan Amendment (FEIS/PPA) document dated July, 1993. The substation sites, series compensation station sites and microwave communication sites, are also identified in the ROD. The transmission line route and associated facilities are described for each segment of the project, the Midpoint to Dry Lake segment and the Ely to Delta segment.

The ROD identifies the various alternatives, including the Proposed Action, that were assessed, outlines the management considerations that were made in making the decision, and summarizes the public involvement during the EIS process. In addition, the mitigation measures identified as part of the Proposed Action are discussed. These measures include generic mitigation measures that would be incorporated throughout the SWIP route as well as selectively committed measures that Idaho Power Company would implement to mitigate adverse impact in specific instances. The terms, conditions, and stipulations that will be included in the right-of-way grants are also identified.



LEGEND

	SELECTED ROUTE
462	Link #'s (see EIS)
	BLM District Boundaries
	USFS Boundaries
	Selected Substation Site

Note:
Selected microwave communication sites are not shown on this illustration

Southwest Intertie Project

SOUTHWEST INTERTIE PROJECT RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION

Right-Of-Way Grant

The Decision is to grant a public land right-of-way (R/W) to **Idaho Power Company, Boise, Idaho** for the construction, operation, maintenance, and termination of the Southwest Intertie 500kV electrical transmission line project (SWIP). The entire R/W on public land includes a 200 foot wide (100 feet each side of center) by approximately 540 mile long linear R/W, three substation sites, each approximately 80 acres in size, two series compensation station sites, each approximately 15 to 20 acres in size and 8 microwave communication sites, each approximately 1/4 acre in size. The ROD also allows the installation of a fiber optic communication cable within the grounding shield wires on top of the transmission line towers.

Use of the fiber optic ground wire by a commercial communications company(s) would be allowed upon completion of all appropriate environmental requirements and upon obtaining a R/W grant from the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). A separate R/W application would be required and a separate, site specific, environmental document may be required to analyze impacts that would be associated with the construction, operation, maintenance, and termination of the associated regeneration stations, electrical service lines, or other ancillary facilities that would be associated with the fiber optic communication system.

Two public land right-of-way grants will be issued to Idaho Power Company for the SWIP. One grant will be for the Midpoint, Idaho to Dry Lake, Nevada segment (approximately 406 miles long) and one grant will be for Ely, Nevada to Delta, Utah segment (approximately 134 miles long). This will be done to facilitate the assignment of the Ely to Delta segment right-of-way from Idaho Power Company to the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power. The Los Angeles Department of Water and Power will construct, operate, and maintain this segment of the SWIP (See page 1-1 of the Southwest Intertie Project Final Environmental Impact Statement and Proposed Plan Amendment, July 1993 (FEIS/PPA)).

The two public land rights-of-way will be issued simultaneously with the ROD. The decision to grant the rights-of-way is an appealable action. The decision, unless a petition for a stay is approved, remains in full force and effect pending the completion of the appeal process (43 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 2804.1(b)).

Should an appeal be taken, it must be made in accordance with the regulations contained in 43 CFR Part 4. The appeal must be filed with the Idaho State Director within 30 days from the date of this decision. The appeal must identify which SWIP right-of-way, Midpoint to Dry Lake, Ely to Delta, or both, is the subject of the appeal.

The SWIP transmission line will follow the Agency Preferred Route described below by Link designation as identified in the SWIP FEIS/PPA document dated July, 1993. The substation sites, series compensation station sites, and microwave communication sites, also described in this document, will be constructed in the locations noted below. The transmission line route and associated facilities are described separately for each segment of the project, the Midpoint to Dry Lake segment and the Ely to Delta segment.

Midpoint To Dry Lake Segment

Transmission Line Route

Beginning at Idaho Power Company's Midpoint Substation near Shoshone, Idaho, the SWIP transmission line, Midpoint, Idaho to Dry Lake, Nevada Segment, will follow the route shown on the attached map and identified as links 10, 20, 40, 41, 50, 70, 711, 714, 101, 715, 713, 110, 130, 150, 151, 152, 200, 221, 223, 212, 230, 241, 242, 244, 270, 291, 293, 310, 340, 362, 363, 669, 670, 672, 673, 675, 690, 700, and 720.

Substation Sites

The following substation sites have been selected as part of the decision for the Midpoint to Dry Lake Segment:

- Midpoint Substation site near Shoshone, Idaho (existing substation on private land - no public land R/W required)
- Site 10 at the Robinson Summit Substation siting area northwest of Ely, Nevada
- Site 17, 18, or 20 at the Dry Lake Substation siting area, northeast of Las Vegas, Nevada

The final site selected from either sites 17, 18, or 20 may depend on the final routing decision for the Marketplace-Allen Transmission (MAT) Project. If the MAT is routed south through the Apex Industrial Area, the proposed site would be either Site 17 or 18. If the MAT is routed south and east of the Dry Lake Mountain Range, the proposed site would be either Site 18 or 20.

Series Compensation Station Sites

The following series compensation station sites have been selected as part of this decision:

- Nevada - Site 4 at the Thousand Springs Series Compensation Station Siting Area as shown on the Alternative Routes Map, Panel 2, found in the Map Volume that accompanied the SWIP Draft Environmental Impact Statement and Draft Plan Amendment.
- Nevada - Delamar Valley Series Compensation Station Siting Area

If a series compensation station facility is required in the Delamar Valley, the specific location will be determined later and a separate environmental assessment, tiering from the SWIP EIS, would be prepared prior to construction.

Communication Sites

The selected communication sites include

- Idaho - Hansen Butte and Cottonwood sites
- Nevada - the Ellen D (L&D), Rocky Point, Six Mile, Spruce Mountain, Long Valley, Copper, Cave Mountain, Mount Wilson, Highland Peak, and Glendale sites
- Utah - Beaver Dam Mountain site

Ely To Delta Segment

Transmission Line Route

Beginning at Site 10 of the proposed Robinson Summit Substation site, the Ely, Nevada to Delta, Utah segment of the SWIP transmission line will follow the route shown on the attached map and identified as links 350, 351, 352, 370, 380, 460, 464, 466, 468, 471, 473, 461, 462, 470, 540, 571, 572, 580, 581, and 582. Links 350 through 471 describe the Nevada portion of this segment. Links 473 through 582 describe the Utah portion of this segment.

Substation Sites

The following substation sites have been selected as part of the decision for the Ely to Delta Segment:

- Site 10 at the Robinson Summit Substation siting area northwest of Ely, Nevada
- Site 14 at the Intermountain Substation siting area near Delta, Utah

Series Compensation Station Sites

No series compensation stations are required for the Ely to Delta segment.

Communication Sites

No new communication facilities are required for the Ely to Delta segment.

Land Use Plan Amendments

As the right-of-way decision routes the SWIP in some locations that are outside of BLM designated or planning corridors, the Decision is to amend the following land use plans as indicated below.

Idaho

Shoshone District

There is no land use plan amendment required. The public lands crossed by the proposed SWIP transmission line route in the Shoshone District are managed in accordance with the Monument Resource Management Plan (RMP) which was approved on April 27, 1985. This plan, while not specifically designating R/W corridors, provides that public lands may be considered for the installation of public utilities, except where expressly prohibited by law or regulation.

The proposal is determined to be in conformance with the existing management plan and no amendment to that plan is necessary.

Burley District

There is no land use plan amendment required. The public lands crossed by the SWIP proposed transmission line route in the Burley District are managed in accordance with the Twin Falls Management Framework Plan (MFP) which was approved on January 21, 1988. This plan states that future transmission lines are to be confined to corridors where existing transmission lines are located. The proposed SWIP transmission line would parallel the Midpoint-Valmy 345kV transmission line route in the Burley District.

The proposal is determined to be in conformance with the existing management plan and no amendment to that plan is necessary.

Nevada

Elko District

The public lands crossed by the SWIP proposed transmission line route in the Elko District are managed in accordance with the Wells RMP which was approved on July 16, 1985. This plan states that new transmission facilities will be placed in designated corridors on existing rights-of-way whenever possible, or located in identified planning corridors.

The proposed SWIP transmission line either overlaps, adjoins, or parallels numerous existing rights-of-way within Designated and Planning corridors throughout its length in the Elko District except for portions of links 150, 152, and 200 as shown on Figure 1-2 of the FEIS/PPA. In these areas, site specific environmental considerations for this large transmission facility guided its location to the least visually intrusive area. In these three areas, the SWIP transmission line required a location outside the boundaries of existing corridor designations.

The plan amendment involves adding to the existing designated corridors system and map (Wells RMP/EIS Record of Decision - Map 3) the strip of land 1/4 mile on each side of the "assumed centerline" as drawn on the project maps for the above described portions of links 150, 152, and 200. These lands will become Designated corridors and will be considered for future right-of-way dedications as provided for in the Wells RMP.

Ely District

This amendment includes Links 293 and 362 as amendments to the corridor designated in the Egan RMP and Links 468, 471, 672, 673, and 675 as amendments to the corridor designated in the Schell MFP. As these are amendments to existing designated corridors, plan amendments are required by the selection of these Links as the Agency Preferred Route.

With the signing of the SWIP ROD, the Egan RMP (dated February 3, 1987) and the Schell MFP (dated June 1, 1983), will be amended to include Links 293 and 362 as parts of the Egan RMP corridor and Links 468, 471, 672, 673, and 675 as parts of the existing Schell MFP corridor.

Las Vegas District

The land use plans that would be affected by this action are the Caliente Resource Area MFP dated February, 1982, and the Clark County MFP dated September 16, 1983.

For the Caliente MFP Lands Recommendation 3.1, the decision states that: "Major utility systems (69kV [+] powerlines, pipelines, etc.) should follow the corridors shown on the MFP 3 overlay when possible. It is recognized that due to engineering problems and project design that deviations would probably be necessary to allow the construction and maintenance of future facilities. However, every effort should be made to utilize existing corridors to limit disturbance."

The inference in the existing Caliente MFP is that although a planning corridor exists and should be used, there is the caveat that consideration will be given to any necessary deviations resulting from engineering problems and project design. The segment of the SWIP 500kV powerline outside the existing planning corridor from Milepost 20 in Township 1 North, Range 65 East, Section 8 to Milepost 10 in Township 2 South, Range 65 East, Section 8, was analyzed and is determined to be an acceptable location. Selection of the Agency Preferred Route is in conformance with the Caliente MFP.

The SWIP transmission line route along Link 720 was analyzed and determined to be an acceptable location. The Clark County MFP did not designate any utility corridors. However, the selection of

the Agency Preferred Route is in conformance with the Clark County MFP Lands Objective 3.0 and subsequent decision: "Provide public lands in Clark County for transportation, energy transmission, communications, related facilities and systems through appropriate authority."

Utah

Richfield District

The land use plans in the Richfield District that would be affected by this action are the Warm Springs RMP (April, 1987), and the House Range RMP (October, 1987). The selection of the Agency Preferred Route includes the Sacramento Pass Subroute 3 (refer to the SWIP FEIS/PPA) which leaves the 230kV corridor route for only a few miles until it crosses into Nevada. This subroute would be under the Warm Springs Resource Management Plan which states that new rights-of-way will be restricted to designated utility corridors wherever feasible. Since the proposed SWIP transmission line route does not totally meet this condition, the Warm Springs RMP is amended as shown on Figure 1-2 of the SWIP FEIS/PPA.

ALTERNATIVES INCLUDING PROPOSED ACTION

Six alternatives were evaluated to meet the Southwest Intertie Project's need to provide economical energy to the west and to increase transmission and system reliability. The alternatives that were considered but eliminated included general system alternatives as follows: 1) energy conservation and load management, 2) new generation sources, 3) alternative transmission systems, and 4) alternative transmission technologies. These alternatives, discussed on pages 2-2 through 2-10 of the SWIP Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Draft Plan Amendment (DEIS/DPA), were considered, but eliminated because they do not meet the purpose and need for the proposed action. The no-action alternative and the proposed action to construct a transmission line on one of several routing alternatives was discussed and analyzed in detail.

Nine routing alternatives including an utility and an agency preferred alternative were evaluated. The Midpoint to Dry Lake segment included alternative routes A through G, the Utility Preferred Route and the Agency Preferred Route. Alternative A was identified in the SWIP DEIS/DPA as the environmentally preferred route. The Ely to Delta segment included the Direct Route, Cutoff Route, 230kV Corridor Route, and the Southern Route. The 230kV Route was identified in the DEIS/DPA as the environmentally preferred route. These various routing alternatives are discussed below by state and district.

Idaho

Shoshone District

In addition to the No Action Alternative, two basic routing alternatives were evaluated in the Shoshone District. One route, Route F (Link 61 in the Shoshone District) went west toward Hagerman, Idaho and one route went south along the Midpoint-Valmy 345kV transmission line route (Links 10, 20, and 30). The Midpoint-Valmy route (Links 10 and 20), with the exception of link 30, is selected as the Agency Preferred Route. This route is also the environmentally preferred route.

There are no deviations from the environmentally preferred route in the Shoshone District.

All practicable methods to reduce environmental harm have been adopted. This includes the adoption of the Generic Mitigation Measures as well as the Selectively Committed Mitigation Measures listed in Table 1-5 and Table 1-6 of the SWIP FEIS/PPA (See Attachment 1) and the decision to require the preparation and approval by BLM of a detailed Construction, Operation and Maintenance (COM) Plan prior to granting a notice to proceed with construction.

Burley District

In addition to the No Action Alternative, three basic routing alternatives were evaluated in the Burley District. One route (Link 64) parallels the Upper Salmon to Wells 138kV transmission line which is on the extreme western edge of the district and also parallels Salmon Falls Creek. Another route parallels the Midpoint-Valmy 345kV transmission line (Links 40 and 41) to a point northeast of Rogerson, Idaho where it splits off and goes south through Shoshone Basin (Link 81). The third route, which is also the environmentally preferred route (Links 40, 41, 50, and 70), parallels the Midpoint-Valmy 345kV route in its entirety through the Burley District. This route is selected as the Agency Preferred Route.

There are no deviations from the environmentally preferred route in the Burley District.

All practicable methods to reduce environmental harm have been adopted. This includes the adoption of the Generic Mitigation Measures as well as the Selectively Committed Mitigation Measures (Table 1-5 and Table 1-6 of the SWIP FEIS/PPA and Attachment 1) and the decision to require the preparation and approval by BLM of a detailed COM Plan prior to granting a notice to proceed with construction.

Nevada

Elko District

Nine routing alternatives, including the agency and environmentally preferred alternatives, were analyzed. The alternatives typically included routing options through the various north-south trending valleys in the Elko District. Alternatives traversed areas with designated corridors, such as Goshute Valley, with minimal existing facilities (Nevada Northern Railroad) and Salmon Falls Creek Drainage, with extensive existing facilities (345kV, 138kV, U.S. Highway 93) as well as, areas with no existing facilities or corridors such as Trout Creek Valley, the east flank of the Goshute Mountains, and Thousand Springs Valley. See page 2-36 to 2-44 of the SWIP DEIS/DPA for a complete description of the specific routes.

The Agency Preferred Alternative and the Environmentally Preferred Alternative (as described in the SWIP DEIS/DPA) for the Elko District segment of the SWIP are the same, with a few minor variations, and both are environmentally sound. Differences occur where the Agency Preferred Alternative considers the BLM's specific knowledge of localized situations.

The first difference occurs in the area of Jackpot, Nevada where Link 72 is part of the environmentally preferred alternative because it parallels the Midpoint-Valmy 345kV transmission line across Salmon Falls Creek, minimizing visual impacts to recreational users on the creek. The Agency Preferred Alternative would use Links 711 and 714 to reduce visual impacts by crossing Salmon Falls Creek at a narrower portion of the canyon roughly parallel and to the west of the existing 138kV transmission line. These links would also cross a smaller portion of the Salmon Falls Creek Special Recreation Management Area.

A second difference occurs in the vicinity of Contact, Nevada where Link 102 is part of the environmentally preferred alternative because it would parallel the Midpoint-Valmy 345kV transmission line reducing visual impacts associated with structure contrast, and would minimize visual impacts to residences in the Contact area. The Agency Preferred Alternative in this area utilizes Links 715 and 713 because terrain at the crossing of U.S Highway 93 would better screen towers adjacent to the highway from the views of highway travelers. However, one tower on Link 713 would cause high visual impacts to views to a nearby residence.

A third difference occurs in the vicinity of the Winecup Ranch northeast of Wells, Nevada. Links 160, 161, 162, and 1612 are environmentally preferred because they would parallel the existing Upper Salmon to Wells 138kV transmission line (except Link 1612) which would minimize potential predation impacts to sage grouse. The Agency Preferred Alternative would utilize Links 150 and 151 because they would minimize visual impacts to highway travelers. Further, it would cross the California National Historic Trail near the Winecup Ranch minimizing visual impacts to the trail due to existing visual contrasts of the ranch operations and shorter duration of visibility from the trail.

A fourth difference occurs in the vicinity of Oasis, Nevada. During the formal public meetings for the SWIP DEIS/DPA in Wells, Nevada on August 4, 1992, residents of Oasis opposed the preferred

alternative in the SWIP DEIS/DPA that would pass west of Oasis along the base of the Pequop Mountains (Link 211). Their opposition was based on proposed development plans by Northern Holdings, Inc. and CSY Investments. Link 211 had been preferred because it would be a less visually intrusive crossing of Interstate 80. Interstate 80 generally forms the centerline of a low visibility corridor designated by the Elko District of the BLM and is managed as Visual Resource Management (VRM) Class II (refer to Visual Resources section in Chapter 3 and 4 of the SWIP DEIS/DPA). With the dark colors of the Pequop Mountains as a backdrop, Link 211 would result in weaker visual contrast to travelers on Interstate 80.

In response to the public comments and in consideration of the planned developments of CSY Development and Northern Holdings, Inc., the Agency Preferred Alternative through this area was revised to use Links 221 and 223 along the railroad corridor through the center of Goshute Valley. These links would avoid future potential conflicts with the planned developments for Northern Holdings properties and would minimize impacts to significant portions of the planned developments of CSY Investments.

The last difference occurs at the Elko-White Pine County line. In this area, Links 250, 259, and 260 are environmentally preferred because they would avoid a known cultural site and cause fewer miles of moderate impacts to pronghorn antelope, long-billed curlew, and sandhill crane habitat. The Agency Preferred Alternative would use Links 241, 242, and 245 because they are within the BLM designated utility corridor in accordance with the Wells Resource Management Plan and would provide the least visually intrusive means for this and future projects to traverse the area.

All practicable methods to reduce environmental harm have been adopted. This includes the adoption of the Generic Mitigation Measures as well as the Selectively Committed Mitigation Measures (refer to Table 1-5 and Table 1-6 of the SWIP FEIS/PPA and Attachment 1) and the decision to require the preparation and approval by BLM of a detailed COM Plan prior to granting a notice to proceed with construction.

Ely District

Ely to Delta Segment

While the Direct Route would be shorter, the 230kV Route would be almost entirely within an existing transmission line corridor. This alternative best satisfies Section 503 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) of 1976 mandate to utilize existing corridors when feasible. Although the transmission line would extend for many miles across Snake Valley, visual impacts to views from within the Great Basin National Park would be insignificant because of the great distance between the transmission line and the viewpoints. Utilizing non-specular conductors and the proposed dulling of the galvanized metal towers would mitigate visual impacts.

Construction of the project along the Direct Route would impact a previously undisturbed landscape. The existing 230kV corridor, as amended, is the selected route, the environmentally preferred route, the Agency Preferred Route and the Utility Preferred Route.

Privately owned lands are located between the east side of the Snake Range and the Utah border, and are crossed by the existing 230kV corridor. Concern has been repeatedly expressed by local property owners about having yet another major transmission line across the private lands. As it is possible to route the SWIP line totally upon the public lands without additional adverse impacts, an amendment to the Schell MFP to include Links 468 and 471 is required to allow for a distance of greater than one-quarter mile from the highway center line or the existing 230kV rights-of-way.

The Southern Route is the longest route and has higher impacts than the other routes. It is therefore the least environmentally preferred route.

Midpoint to Dry Lake Segment

In addition to the No Action Alternative, three routing alternatives were evaluated within the Ely District.

- Route A, the environmentally preferred route, including the Goshute Valley-Lages Station-Steptoe Valley-Dry Canyon Range-Dry Lake.
- Route B, Wendover-Lages Station-Steptoe Valley-Antone Pass-Egan Range-Dry Lake.
- Route G, the Utility Preferred Route, Goshute Valley-Steptoe Valley Antone Pass-Egan Range-Dry Lake.

The Agency Preferred Route is a combination of routes A and G, bypassing Lages Station and crossing the Egan Range south of Antone Pass at Dry Canyon.

The Agency Preferred Route deviates from the environmentally preferred route near the Elko-White Pine county line. In this area Links 250, 259, and 261 are environmentally preferred because they would cause fewer miles of moderate impacts to pronghorn antelope, long-billed curlew and sandhill crane habitat. The Agency Preferred Route would use Links 241, 242, and 244 because this route is within a designated corridor, will avoid most private residences at Lages Station, and will have less visual impact on the Highway 93 corridor. Links 672, 673, and 675 will reach the Utah-Nevada Transmission Project corridor by the shortest route thus lessening impacts to private lands and visual impacts to Highway 93. This route avoids conflicts with military flight operations within the existing Military Operating Areas (MOA) of Nellis Air Force Base. The rest of the Agency Preferred Route within the Ely District does not deviate from the environmentally preferred route, including the proposed plan amendments.

All practicable methods to reduce environmental harm have been adopted. Mitigation measures included in the SWIP FEIS/PPA will be made a part of the detailed COM Plan. Actual construction may not proceed until after the completion of the COM Plan and the issuance of a notice to proceed. The actual construction will be closely monitored by the Agency or its designated representative.

Las Vegas District

As outlined on page 8 and in the SWIP DEIS/DPA, six general alternatives to meet the SWIP system needs were evaluated:

- Energy conservation and load management
- New generation sources
- Alternative transmission systems
- Alternative transmission technologies
- Proposed action
- No action

Idaho Power Company developed and implemented energy conservation and load management programs in the past. Conservation could not be considered an alternative action that would meet the stated need for the project.

The first four of these alternatives were eliminated from further consideration because they did not meet the system requirements or the stated purpose and need.

Alternative generation sources were eliminated because they would not meet the goal of deferring new generation, providing for seasonal exchanges, diversifying fuel resources, and the other stated purposes of the project. Other alternative routes were eliminated for a number of reasons, including environmental conflicts, public and agency opposition, and system planning/performance criteria.

To minimize the public issues and management concerns to visual resources; biological resources, cultural resources, Wilderness Study Areas, to maximize the use of public lands, and to use existing transmission line corridors where possible, the Agency Preferred Route was selected. The Agency Preferred Alternative and the environmentally preferred route are the same.

All practicable methods to reduce environmental harm have been adopted. This includes the adoption of the Generic Mitigation Measures as well as the Selectively Committed Mitigation Measures (refer to Attachment 1 and Tables 1-5 and 1-6 in the SWIP FEIS/PPA) and the decision to require the preparation and approval by BLM of a comprehensive COM Plan prior to granting a notice to proceed for construction.

Utah

The following are the routing alternatives evaluated in the SWIP FEIS/PPA:

- Direct Route
- Cutoff Route
- 230kV Corridor Route
- Southern Route

The Direct Route would be the shortest route for the Ely to Delta segment. One major concern for this route is that it would cross lands with restricted military airspace. There are also concerns for protecting the undisturbed landscape and a sensitive wetland area (Leland Harris Spring Complex). Because of these concerns, it is one of the least environmentally preferred route.

The Cutoff Route would utilize the 230kV corridor for about half of its length. The remainder would be in an area of undisturbed landscape without other existing transmission lines. There would be a restriction of tower height due to the location in a military operating area (MOA) of the Utah Training and Testing Range.

While the Direct Route would be shorter, the 230kV Corridor Route would be almost entirely within an existing transmission corridor. This route best satisfies Section 503 of the FLPMA mandate to utilize existing corridors when feasible. This route also crosses the MOA. Although the transmission line would extend for many miles across Snake Valley, visual impacts to views from within the Great Basin National Park would be insignificant because of the great distance between the transmission line and the viewpoints. Utilizing non-specular conductors and the proposed dulling of galvanized metal towers would mitigate visual impacts. Privately owned lands are located between the east side of the Snake Valley and the Utah border. However, they are avoided by the selected 230kV corridor with the Sacramento Pass Subroute 3 modification (refer to the SWIP FEIS/PPA). Concern has been repeatedly expressed by local property owners about having yet another major transmission line across the private lands. The 230kV Route is the environmentally preferred route, the Agency Preferred Route, and the Utility Preferred Route.

The Southern Route is the longest route and has higher impacts than the other routes. It is the least environmentally preferred route.

All practicable methods to reduce environmental harm have been adopted. This includes the adoption of the Generic Mitigation Measures as well as the Selectively Committed Mitigation Measures (Table 1-5 and Table 1-6 of the SWIP FEIS/PPA and Attachment 1) and the decision to require the preparation and approval by BLM of a detailed COM Plan prior to granting a notice to proceed with construction.

MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

Idaho

Shoshone District - The primary management consideration within the Shoshone District is to be in conformance with district land use plans. In addition, consideration was given to the various natural resources to determine if they are either not present, or, if present, that the impacts caused from the Proposed Action would be adequately mitigated. One minor routing alternative, Link 30, was dropped from further consideration so that the transmission line would not cross a private livestock feedlot and some metal buildings. The selection of Links 10 and 20 within the Shoshone District constituted conformance with the Monument RMP, and the selection is consistent with the environmentally preferred route.

Selection of the No Action Alternative would result in no change in the current situation, but would reduce the capabilities to meet expanding demands for electricity and increased economic growth opportunities.

Burley District - The primary management consideration in the Burley District is to minimize environmental impact by routing future transmission lines within existing utility corridors. The selection of Links 40, 41, 50, and 70 accomplished conformance to the land use plan by confining future lines to existing R/W corridors, maintained the Shoshone Basin as an area free of transmission lines, and routed the line away from close proximity to the Salmon Falls Creek Wilderness Study area. This route selection best meets the mandate of Section 503 of the FLPMA to utilize existing utility corridors when feasible. The selection of this route is also consistent with the environmentally preferred route.

Selection of the No Action Alternative would result in no change in the current situation, but would reduce the capabilities to meet expanding demands for electricity and increased economic growth opportunities.

Nevada

Elko District - The primary management consideration in the Elko District is to minimize environmental impacts including those caused by the proliferation of rights-of-way through the utilization of Designated and Planning corridors. Long term visual concern was the overriding factor for all corridor deviations as well as most deviations from the Environmentally Preferred Alternative. The one exception to this was the selection of links 221 and 223 in the vicinity of Oasis, Nevada. The change was made to minimize impacts to significant portions of the planned developments of CSY Investments and Northern Holdings, Inc.

Selection of the No Action Alternative would result in no change in the current situation, but would reduce the capabilities to meet expanding demands for electricity and increased economic growth opportunities.

Ely District - The primary management consideration of the Ely District is to keep total cumulative environmental impacts to a minimum. This is best accomplished by the selection during the planning process and utilization of utility corridors wherever practicable and feasible. This is also required by Section 503 of the FLPMA. Links 293, 362, 468, 471, 672, 673 and 675 are adjustments to existing corridors and are being adopted to meet specific management objectives. Links 241, 242, and 244 are required to avoid private residences and impacts to the visual resource along Highway 93. Link 293 is required to avoid a sage grouse lek, and Link 362 is required to avoid a ferruginous hawk nesting area. Links 468 and 471 adjust the Ely to Delta segment to avoid needlessly crossing private land. Links 672, 673 and 675 are required to attach to the Utah-Nevada Transmission Project by the shortest route thus lessening impacts to private property and visual impacts to highway 93. Impacts to raptor nesting areas and crucial deer winter range and migration corridors will be mitigated to insignificant levels. The placement of new lines in existing corridors will minimize adverse impacts to specific resource values while maintaining the open space values of previously undeveloped areas.

Other alternative routes were eliminated for a number of reasons, including environmental concerns relating to biological, cultural, land uses, visual resources, public and agency opposition, and system performance criteria.

Selection of the No Action Alternative would result in no change in the current situation, but would reduce the capabilities of the industry to meet expanding demands for electricity and increased economic growth opportunities.

Las Vegas District - The segment of the SWIP 500kV powerline outside the existing planning corridor in the Caliente MFP described as being from Milepost 20 in Township 1 North, Range 65 East, Section 8, to Milepost 10 in Township 2 South, Range 65 East, Section 8, was analyzed and was determined to be an acceptable location. There were no environmental conflicts along this segment; it meets the purpose and need of the SWIP 500kV powerline project since it extends from the Ely District portion of the project to intersect the existing planning corridor and onto the Dry Lake Valley substation site to be determined as part of the Marketplace-Allen Transmission Project study. Therefore, due to the potential of engineering problems and overall project design, this segment was determined to be an acceptable location.

Utah

Richfield District - The selected routing alternative is the 230kV Corridor Route, with the Sacramento Pass Subroute 3 modification (refer to the SWIP FEIS/PPA). As stated, this is the environmentally preferred route, the Agency Preferred Route, and the Utility Preferred Route. This route selection best meets the mandate of Section 503 of the FLPMA to utilize existing utility corridors when feasible. It would utilize an existing utility corridor in accordance with BLM policy and the Warm Springs RMP which encourage efforts to utilize existing corridors, whether designated or not, for new linear right-of-way construction whenever practical and feasible.

Other selection criteria were based on the total potential cumulative environmental effects, which were less significant than in the other alternative routes. Comments from the public generally expressed favor for placement of new lines in existing corridors to minimize adverse impacts and to maintain open space values in previously undeveloped areas.

Other alternative routes were eliminated for a number of reasons, including environmental concerns relating to biological, cultural, land uses, and visual resources, public and agency opposition, and system/performance criteria.

MITIGATION AND MONITORING

The committed mitigation measures and related monitoring and enforcement activities included in the SWIP FEIS/PPA are identified below.

The Generic Mitigation measures found in Table 1-6 of the FEIS/PPA and Attachment 1 of this document will be implemented via incorporation into the COM Plan. Preparation and approval of this plan by BLM will be required before a notice to proceed with construction will be issued.

The Selectively Committed Mitigation measures found in Table 1-5 of the FEIS/PPA and Attachment 1 of this document will be implemented via incorporation into the COM Plan. Preparation and approval of this plan by BLM will be required before a notice to proceed with construction will be issued.

The SWIP may be built in phases. The R/W holder, however, must obtain a notice to proceed from the authorized officer before construction on any phase may begin. The portion of the SWIP from Midpoint Substation to Ely, Nevada (Midpoint to Dry Lake segment) may be the first phase constructed. The Ely to Delta segment may be another phase, and finally, the Ely to Dry Lake segment may be the final phase.

The SWIP will terminate at the new proposed Dry Lake Valley Substation site northeast of Las Vegas, Nevada. From this substation, Idaho Power Company would connect the SWIP with the proposed Marketplace Allen Transmission Project. This project would connect the proposed Dry Lake Valley Substation to the McCullough Marketplace Substation. The Marketplace Allen project is not dependent on the SWIP nor is the SWIP dependent on the Marketplace Allen project. If the Marketplace Allen project is not constructed, the Ely to Dry Lake segment of the SWIP transmission line would be operated at a lower capacity and/or voltage. Energy transactions among several regional utility companies would occur at the Dry Lake substation.

The terms and conditions and stipulations that will become part of the right-of-way grant are identified below.

The right-of-way will be granted subject to the preparation and approval by the BLM of a detailed COM Plan. This plan will include, but will not be limited to, performance bonding requirements, tower siting specifications, access plan, cultural resource clearances, Threatened or Endangered plant and animal species inventory, and site specific reclamation, mitigation and monitoring measures. It will use the mitigation measures identified above as well as the standard R/W stipulations found in BLM's Right of Way Plans of Development & Grants Handbook, H-2801-1. The COM Plan may include new stipulations or mitigation measures that would be developed on a site specific basis and need. The COM Plan will direct the construction, operation, maintenance and termination of the SWIP. The COM Plan will also have appropriate monitoring measures to track the success of the various mitigation measures in minimizing environmental impacts and to monitor rehabilitation measures. Only after the approval by the BLM of the SWIP COM Plan will a notice to proceed with construction be issued.

The mitigation measures listed in the formal Section 7 Consultation and Biological Opinion document prepared by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service dated May 12, 1993, and subsequent Biological Opinion document for Mojave Desert Tortoise Critical Habitat dated March 23, 1994 will be incorporated into the COM Plan. Approval of this plan by BLM will be required before a notice to proceed with construction will be issued.

The R/W will be granted subject to the stipulations identified in the Cultural Resources Programmatic Agreement accepted by the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation on June 13, 1990.

Use of the fiber optic ground wire by a commercial communications company(s) would be allowed upon completion of all appropriate environmental requirements and upon obtaining a R/W grant from the BLM. A separate R/W application would be required and a separate, site specific, environmental document may be required to analyze impacts that would be associated with the construction, operation, maintenance, and termination of the associated regeneration stations, electrical service lines, or other ancillary facilities that would be associated with the fiber optic communication system.

The holder shall not initiate any construction or other surface disturbing activities on the R/W without the prior written authorization of the authorized officer. Such authorization shall be a written notice to proceed issued by the authorized officer. Any notice to proceed shall authorize construction or use only as therein expressly stated and only for the particular location or use therein described.

Appropriate performance bonds would be required of the R/W holder to assure compliance to the terms and conditions of the R/W grant.

In accordance with 43 CFR 2803.4(c), failure of the R/W holder to use the R/W for the purpose for which the authorization was issued for any continuous five-year period shall constitute a presumption of abandonment. If the holder fails to prove to the satisfaction of the authorized officer that his failure to use the R/W was due to circumstances not within his control, the R/W could be canceled.

Prior to the issuance of a notice to proceed, Idaho Power Company will, to the satisfaction of the BLM, show that SWIP would be placed in a location along Links 700 and 720 which will allow sufficient room for the construction of anticipated future transmission lines identified in the SWIP FEIS/PPA (two 500kV White Pine Power Project Lines and the 500kV Utah-Nevada Transmission Project transmission line).

Except where the SWIP transmission line parallels the approved Utah-Nevada Transmission Project 500kV transmission line (Links 675, 690, 700, 720), the centerline of the SWIP will be located within 200 feet of the centerline of any other transmission line it parallels. Because of reliability requirements, where the SWIP parallels the Utah-Nevada Transmission Project transmission line (Links 675, 690, 700, and 720), a maximum 2000 foot separation, centerline to centerline, between the two lines will be allowed, subject to the same restraints identified previously.

When the SWIP is constructed, Idaho Power Company will furnish the BLM an "as built" survey of the transmission line route, substation sites, series compensation station sites, communication sites, and any related facilities. The "as built" survey will become the official right-of-way grant map.

The right-of-way will be granted subject to the condition that the BLM will notify the holders of existing rights-of-way, leases, or permits that would be impacted by the SWIP. Idaho Power Company must resolve, to the holders satisfaction, any conflicts or concerns about their authorized uses related to the construction, operation and maintenance of the SWIP.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

The public involvement process in the SWIP EIS and land use plan amendment process has been extensive. The process included extensive public affairs work, public scoping meetings, public workshops, and formal public meetings. 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. The mailing list, including individuals, organizations, and agencies included over 3,000 entities. The notice of all the public meetings and availability of the DEIS/DPA and the FEIS/PPA were published in the Federal Register and in local newspapers that served the various communities along the various routing alternatives in Idaho, Nevada, and Utah.

Public scoping meetings were held during the initial stages of the project. These meetings were held in March of 1989. Meetings were held in the communities of Twin Falls, Idaho, Wells, Ely, Caliente and Las Vegas, Nevada, and Delta, Utah. The purpose of the scoping meetings was to:

- inform the public of the project and solicit their participation in the project planning process
- obtain public and agency input on significant issues of concern that should be addressed
- obtain public comment on concerns about adjustments to alternatives being considered
- focus the scope of the future detailed environmental resource studies for the DEIS/DPA

As a result of the expansion of the SWIP south to an endpoint in the vicinity of Las Vegas, Nevada, three additional public scoping meetings were held in June 1990. These meetings were held in Ely, Caliente, and Las Vegas to inform the public of changes to the project description and to solicit comments on issues of concern in areas affected by the expansion.

Public workshops were held in January and February of 1991 in the same locations as the scoping meetings to give the public an opportunity to review and discuss inventory data and environmental assessment work prior to writing the DEIS/DPA. These workshops were held to:

- report results of the environmental studies for the various routing alternatives
- present the preliminary alternative transmission line routes
- gain public input on the acceptability of the preliminary alternative transmission line routes

Meetings were also held with the various county commissioners of each of the potentially affected counties in Idaho, Nevada, and Utah. The purpose of the meetings was to disseminate information regarding the project, including issues and the location of alternative routes and substations, and to discuss any county permitting requirements. Agencies and organizations having jurisdiction and/or specific project interest within the study area were contacted to inform them of SWIP, to verify the status and availability of existing environmental data, and to solicit their input to the study process.

When the SWIP DEIS/DPA was completed, it was mailed to the mailing list of 675 interested parties who had requested a copy. In addition, formal public meetings were held in the same communities noted above during August of 1992. The purpose of these formal meetings was to receive public views and comments regarding the accuracy and adequacy of the SWIP DEIS/DPA.

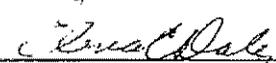
Testimony was recorded verbatim at these meetings. The public was also invited to submit written comments on the DEIS/DPA during a 90 day comment period.

In July, 1993 the SWIP FEIS/PPA was mailed out to the mailing list of 675 individuals, organizations, and agencies who had requested a copy. The public was informed of the 30 day protest period for the plan amendment portion of the EIS and the Governor of each affected state (Idaho, Nevada, and Utah) were allowed 60 days for the required consistency review. Notice of the availability of the document was also published in the Federal Register and in local newspapers serving the communities within the affected areas of Idaho, Nevada, and Utah. A protest to the SWIP FEIS/PPA was received from five organizations that had participated in the EIS and land use plan amendment process. The protests involved concerns about visual impacts to the California National Historic Trail and the Great Basin National Park, impacts to desert bighorn sheep, impacts to desert tortoise, concerns about the SWIP R/W corridor being used for future water projects, concerns about the procedures used in preparing the SWIP FEIS/PPA, as well as concerns about the purpose and need for the project, mitigation measures, economic feasibility, regional impacts of the SWIP, and the relationship between the SWIP and the Marketplace Allen Transmission Project. These protests were reviewed, analyzed, and a response to each issue prepared. On June 28, 1994, a decision letter was sent by the BLM Director to each protesting party. The BLM Director concluded that the BLM Idaho, Nevada, and Utah State Directors followed the applicable planning procedures, laws, regulations, policies, and resource considerations in developing the SWIP FEIS/PPA and that the protests did not warrant a change to the SWIP FEIS/PPA.

This extensive public participation program was done in an effort to seek and obtain public views throughout the Environmental Impact Statement process.

SIGNATURES

The Decision and supporting information as presented above constitutes our Record of Decision for the Southwest Intertie Project Final Environmental Impact Statement and Proposed Plan Amendment.



State Director, Idaho

12/8/94
Date



State Director, Nevada

11-23-94
Date



State Director, Utah

12/5/94
Date

ATTACHMENT 1

Selectively Committed Mitigation Measures

Note: These selective mitigation measures apply only to specific impact locations that were identified in the EIS or during field investigations.

1. No widening or upgrading of existing access roads would be undertaken in the area of construction and operation, except for repairs necessary to make roads passable, where soils and vegetation are very sensitive to disturbance.
2. There would be no blading of new access roads in the area of construction and operation. Existing crossings would be utilized at perennial streams, National Recreational Trails, and irrigation channels. Off-road or cross-country access routes would be used for construction and maintenance. This would minimize ground disturbance impacts. These access routes must be flagged with an easily seen marker and the route must be approved in advance of use by the authorized officer.
3. The alignment of any new access roads or overland route would follow the designated area's landform contours where possible, providing that such alignment does not additionally impact resource values. This would minimize ground disturbance and/or reduce scarring (visual contrast).
4. All new access roads not required for maintenance would be permanently closed using the most effective and least environmentally damaging methods appropriate to that area with concurrence of the landowner or land manager (e.g., stock piling and replacing topsoil, or rock replacement). This would limit new or improved accessibility into the area.
5. Modified tower design or alternate tower type would be utilized to minimize ground disturbance, operational conflicts, visual contrast and/or avian conflicts.
6. In designated areas, structures would be placed so as to avoid sensitive features such as, but not limited to, riparian areas, water courses, and cultural sites, and/or to allow conductors to clearly span the features, within limits of standard tower design. This would minimize amount of sensitive feature disturbed and/or reduce visual contrast.
7. Standard tower design would be modified to correspond with spacing of existing transmission line structures where feasible and within limits of standard tower design. The normal span would be modified to correspond with existing towers, but not necessarily at every location. This would reduce visual contrast and/or potential operational conflicts.
8. At highway, canyon, and trail crossings, towers are to be placed at the maximum feasible distance from the crossing, to reduce visual impacts.

Attachment 1, (Cont)

9. Nonspecular conductors would be used, where specified by the authorized officer, to reduce visual impacts.
10. "Dulled" metal finish towers would be used to reduce visual impacts.
11. With the exception of emergency repair situations, right-of-way construction, restoration, maintenance, and termination activities in designated areas would be modified or discontinued during sensitive periods (e.g., nesting and breeding periods) for candidate, proposed threatened and endangered, or other sensitive animal species. Sensitive periods, species affected, and areas of concern would be approved in advance of construction or maintenance by the authorized officer.
12. Helicopter placement of towers would be used to reduce ground disturbance impacts (e.g., soil erosion).

Generic Mitigation Measures Included In The Project Description

1. All construction vehicle movement outside the right-of-way would normally be restricted to predesignated access, contractor acquired access or public roads.
2. The areal limits of construction activities would normally be predetermined, with activity restricted to and confined within those limits. No paint or permanent discoloring agents would be applied to rocks or vegetation to indicate survey or construction activity limits.
3. In construction areas where recontouring is not required, vegetation would be left in place wherever possible and original contour would be maintained to avoid excessive root damage and allow for resprouting.
4. In construction areas (e.g., marshalling yards, tower sites, spur roads from existing access roads) where ground disturbance is significant or where recontouring is required, surface restoration would occur as required by the landowner or land management agency. The method of restoration would normally consist of returning disturbed areas back to their natural contour, reseeding (if required), cross drains installed for erosion control, placing water bars in the road, and filling ditches.
5. Watering facilities (e.g. - tanks, natural springs and/or developed springs, water lines, wells, etc.) would be repaired or replaced if they are damaged or destroyed by construction activities to their predisturbed condition as required by the landowner or land management agency.

Attachment 1, (Cont)

6. Towers and/or ground wire would be marked with high-visibility devices where required by governmental agencies (Federal Aviation Administration).
7. On agricultural land, right-of-way would be aligned, in so far as practical, to reduce the impact to farm operations and agricultural production.
8. Prior to construction, all supervisory construction personnel would be instructed on the protection of cultural and ecological resources. To assist in this effort, the construction contract would address: (a) Federal and state laws regarding antiquities and plants and wildlife, including collection and removal; (b) the importance of these resources and the purpose and necessity of protecting them.
9. Cultural resources would continue to be considered during post-EIS phases of project implementation in accordance with the programmatic agreement that would be developed in conjunction with preparation of the EIS. This would involve intensive surveys to inventory and evaluate cultural resources within the selected corridor and any appurtenant impact zones beyond the corridor, such as access roads and construction equipment yards. In consultation with appropriate land managing agencies and state historic preservation officers, specific mitigation measures would be developed and implemented to mitigate any identified adverse impacts. These may include project modifications to avoid adverse impacts, monitoring of construction activities, and data recovery studies.
10. The Project Sponsors would respond to complaints of line-generated radio or television interference by investigating the complaints and implementing appropriate mitigation measures. The transmission line would be patrolled on a regular basis so that damaged insulators or other line materials that could cause interference are repaired or replaced.
11. The Project Sponsors would apply necessary mitigation to eliminate problems of induced currents and voltages onto conductive objects sharing a right-of-way, to the mutual satisfaction of the parties involved.
12. The Project Sponsors would continue to monitor studies performed to determine the effects of audible noise and electrostatic and electromagnetic fields in order to ascertain whether these effects are significant.
13. Roads would be built as near as possible at right angles to the streams and washes. Culverts would be installed where necessary. All construction and maintenance activities shall be conducted in a manner that would minimize disturbance to vegetation, drainage channels, and intermittent or perennial streambanks. In addition, road construction would include dust-control measures during construction in sensitive areas. All existing roads would be left in a condition equal to or better than their condition prior to the construction of the transmission line. Towers will be sited with a minimum distance of 200 feet from streams.

Attachment 1, (Cont)

14. All requirements of those entities having jurisdiction over air quality matters would be adhered to and any necessary permits for construction activities would be obtained. Open burning of construction trash would not be allowed unless permitted by appropriate authorities.
15. Fences and gates would be repaired or replaced to their original predisturbed condition as required by the landowner or the land management agency if they are damaged or destroyed by construction activities. Temporary gates would be installed only with the permission of the landowner or the land management agency; and would be restored to its original predisturbed condition following construction.
16. Transmission line materials would be designed and tested to minimize corona. A bundle configuration (three conductors per phase except for the Ely to Delta segment would be two conductors per phase) and larger diameter conductors would be used to limit the audible noise, radio interference (RI), and television interference (TVI) due to corona. Tension would be maintained on all insulator assemblies to assure positive contact between insulators, thereby avoiding sparking. Caution would be exercised during construction to avoid scratching or nicking the conductor surface which may provide points for corona to occur.
17. During operation of the transmission line, the right-of-way would be maintained free of non-biodegradable debris.
18. The primary focus of paleontological mitigation efforts should be areas of greatest disturbance and areas likely to have significant fossils.
19. Mitigation measures that will be developed during the consultation period under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (1974) will be adhered to as specified in the Biological Opinion of the USDI Fish and Wildlife Service.
20. Hazardous materials shall not be drained onto the ground or into streams or drainage areas. Totally enclosed containment shall be provided for all trash. All construction waste including trash and litter, garbage, other solid waste, petroleum products, and other potentially hazardous materials shall be removed to a disposal facility authorized to accept such materials.
21. Pre-construction surveys for plants and wildlife species designated as sensitive or of concern will be conducted in areas of known occurrence or habitat as stipulated by the land-administering agency during the development of the Construction, Operation, and Maintenance Plan once the transmission line centerline, access roads, and tower sites have been located and staked in the field.