



Alternative Ways to Request the SVS EIS or Contact Western . . .

- ◆ **Toll-free hotline:** 1-877-913-4440
- ◆ **Visit the website:** www.wapa.gov/SN
- ◆ **E-mail us at:** mcmahon@wapa.gov
Please include:
"SVS Comments"
in the subject line
- ◆ **Mail us at:**
Loreen McMahon
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Sacramento Area Voltage Support EIS News

A periodic publication of Western Area Power Administration, Sierra Nevada Region—Issue 4, November 2002

The Project Manager's Corner

I am pleased to announce the publication and availability of the Sacramento Area Voltage Support (SVS) Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The Draft EIS evaluates the potential environmental effects of alternatives identified for improvement of electric system reliability and voltage support for the Sacramento area. Findings from the Draft EIS will provide a basis for decisions on whether to proceed and, if so, how to proceed.

In our last SVS EIS News, published in April 2002, we presented a summary of the Proposed Action and alternatives that Western carried forward for analysis in the SVS Draft EIS. This SVS EIS News again describes the Proposed Action and alternatives in more detail. It also provides information on the availability of the Draft EIS, how to obtain a copy, notice of public hearings, and options for providing comments.

Public scoping meetings, workshops, meetings with agencies, and earlier studies by Western and area utilities helped to develop a range of alternatives for analysis (see page 2 for a description of each alternative). The activities associated with the alternatives that were carried forward involve:

- ◆ **Reconductoring**—The process of installing larger or better conductors (wires) and may include replacement of some insulators and structures.
- ◆ **New Construction**—Constructing new structures and transmission lines.
- ◆ **Realignment**—Relocating transmission line as part of an overall strategy to optimize the use of the Right-of-Way (ROW).
- ◆ **No Action**—Continued maintenance and operation of existing transmission lines.

I encourage you to complete the mail-in coupon that is part of this SVS EIS News to request an electronic or hard copy of the Draft EIS. I believe that public involvement is a vital part of our *National Environmental Policy Act* (NEPA) process and welcome your comments.

Cordially,
Loreen McMahon
Environmental Project Manager
Sacramento Area Voltage Support EIS
Western Area Power Administration
Sierra Nevada Region

Public Hearings

Western invites you to attend public hearings on the Draft SVS EIS. The hearings are scheduled December 9, 11, and 12, 2002, as follows:



Monday, December 9, 2002—City of Lodi Council Chambers, Carnegie Forum Room, 305 West Pine Street, Lodi, California, from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Wednesday, December 11, 2002—City of Folsom Council Chambers, 50 Natoma Street, Folsom, California from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Thursday, December 12, 2002—Yuba County Board of Supervisors Chambers, Third Floor, 215 Fifth Street, Marysville, California, from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

The public hearings will be held prior to the conclusion of the 45-day public comment period, yet sufficiently after the availability and distribution of the Draft EIS to allow ample time for interested persons to review it. The public may submit oral or written comments at the public hearings or written comments at any time during the 45-day comment period. Comments on the Draft EIS are encouraged and should be sent to Ms. Loreen McMahon (see alternative ways to contact Western on page 4). Comments must be received by December 30, 2002.

Request for the Draft SVS EIS

Due to heightened security, the Draft SVS EIS will not be available on our SVS Website. You may order an electronic or hard copy of the Draft EIS by completing the mail-in coupon that is part of this newsletter and mailing the coupon back to Western. If you previously sent in a request coupon, you need not do so again, unless you would like to clarify your selection.



Call toll-free: 1-877-913-4440 for more information about the SVS EIS, or visit us at: www.wapa.gov/SN



Draft SVS EIS Overview

Western's Sierra Nevada Region (SNR) operates and maintains numerous substations and more than 1,200 miles of transmission lines. These transmission lines are interconnected to other Sacramento area utilities and the California Independent System Operator (ISO) grid.

Population growth and development in the Sacramento area have steadily increased demand for electric power. The increased demand has reduced the security and reliability of the interconnected transmission system.

The Draft EIS evaluates the potential environmental impacts of alternatives identified for improvement of electric system reliability and voltage support for the Sacramento area.

The Draft EIS identifies and describes the Proposed Action, three action alternatives, and the No Action alternative, summarized below. Figure 1 (on page 3) details the Proposed Action and alternative route segments.

The Proposed Action would consist of 1) reconductoring the existing double-circuit, 230kV transmission line (72.6 miles) from the Elverta Substation to the Tracy Substation; 2) constructing a new double-circuit, 230-kV transmission line (26.6 miles) from O'Banion Substation to Elverta Substation; and 3) realigning the transmission line near Pleasant Grove Cemetery between the O'Banion Substation and Elverta Substation (2.8 miles) and realigning a portion of the Cottonwood-Roseville single-circuit, 230-kV transmission line (5 miles). The Proposed Action increases the import capability into the Sacramento area, reducing the demand on the existing parallel transmission system. Together, it would result in higher voltage profile and voltage support for serving the growing area loads.

Alternative 1 would consist of reconductoring the existing double-circuit, 230-kV transmission line from O'Banion Substation to Tracy Substation without constructing a new line from O'Banion to Elverta. The activity would require reconductoring 99.2 miles of the double-circuit, 230-kV transmission line on 820 structures from O'Banion Substation to Tracy Substation.

Alternative 1 would provide relatively less voltage support than the other action alternatives, but the increased capacity would help the system especially during periods of high load demand.

Alternative 2 includes construction of a new double-circuit, 230-kV transmission line, 26.6 miles between O'Banion Substation and Elverta Substation and realigning 2.8 miles near the Pleasant Grove Cemetery and five miles of the

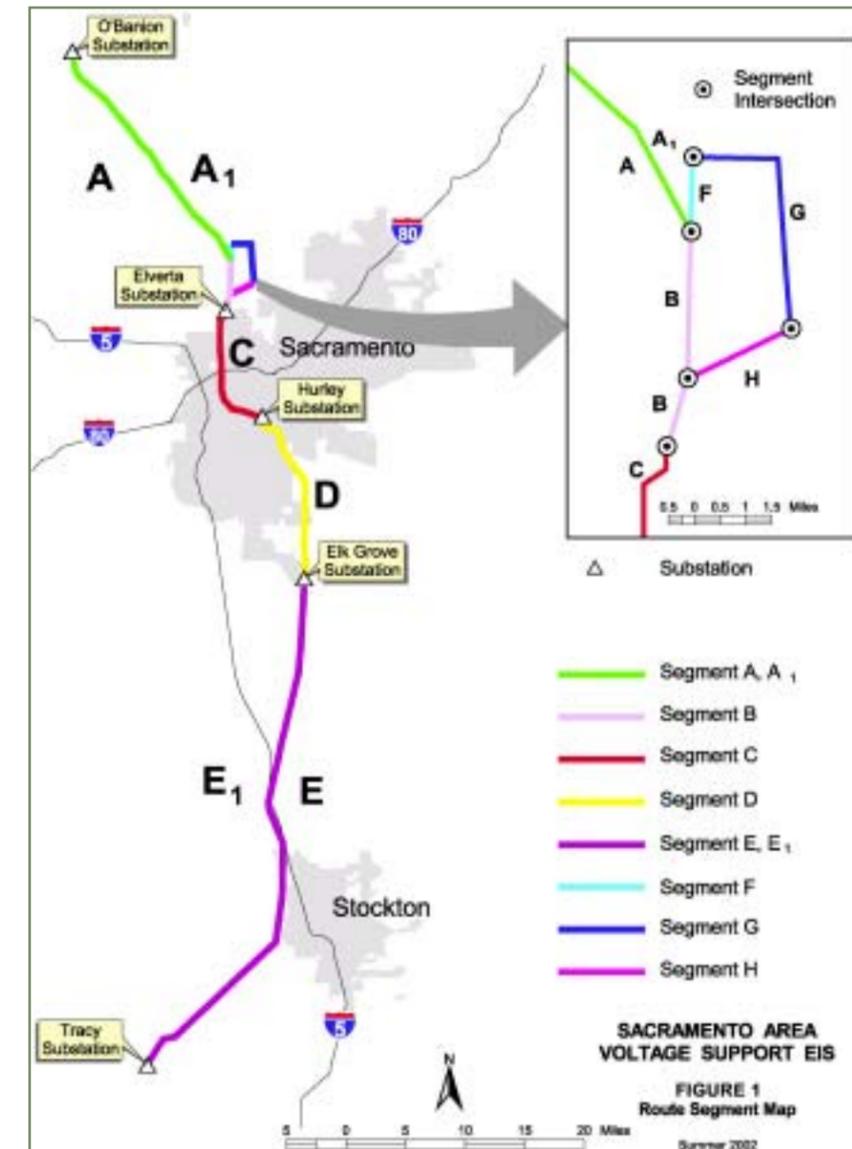
Cottonwood-Roseville transmission line. Alternative 2 would increase voltage support to the Sacramento area.

Alternative 3 would require new construction of 46.2 miles of double-circuit, 230-kV transmission line from Elk Grove Substation to Tracy Substation. The route would parallel the existing Western transmission lines (Hurley-Tracy No. 1 and No. 2) to the west. A new 125-foot-wide ROW adjacent to existing transmission line ROWs would contain about 225 new structures. Alternative 3 would require an estimated 85.5 acres of access roads. Alternative 3 would increase voltage support to the Sacramento area.

Under the No Action Alternative, operation of the existing transmission line system would continue unchanged. Western would not develop or build additional transmission lines or substation facilities in the area relative to voltage support. Implementing this alternative would preclude most short-term environmental impacts associated with construction and reconductoring activities.

Notice of Availability and Comment Period

The Notice of Availability for the SVS Draft EIS is scheduled to be published by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in the *Federal Register* on November 15, 2002. This begins our 45-day comment period. Additional notices will be advertised in the Lodi News Sentinel, Marysville Appeal-Democrat, and Sacramento Bee newspapers on or prior to the *Federal Register* notice. The comment period will end on December 30, 2002. Comments may be presented verbally or in writing at the public hearings or submitted, in writing, to Ms. Loreen McMahon. Please see page 4 for the address for submitting comments. All comments must be received no later than December 30, 2002.



Upcoming Events

Draft EIS **November 2002**

The Draft EIS will document Western's Proposed Action and Alternatives.

Public Hearings **December 2002**

The public hearings are the public's opportunity to comment on Western's Proposed Action.

End of Comment Period **December 30, 2002**

The public comment period is the public's opportunity to comment on Western's Proposed Action.

SVS EIS News Issue 5 **February 2003**

The newsletter will provide details on the comments received at the public hearings and on the selection of a preferred alternative, if applicable.

Final EIS **May 2003**

The Final EIS will be revised based on the public comments received on the Draft EIS.

Please look for these upcoming events and opportunities to participate. In addition, you may contact us by telephone, fax, e-mail, or U.S. mail at one of the addresses on the back of this SVS EIS News.