

**ESTES TO FLATIRON TRANSMISSION LINES REBUILD
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

SCOPING SUMMARY REPORT

December 2012

**Prepared for
Western Area Power Administration**

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Western Area Power Administration (Western) is preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Estes to Flatiron Transmission Lines Rebuild Project, in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 USC §4321 et seq.), the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations implementing the procedural provisions of NEPA (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508), and the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) NEPA Implementing Procedures (10 CFR Part 1021).

This Scoping Summary Report describes the public involvement activities conducted as part of the NEPA scoping process for the proposed project, and summarizes public comments that were received during the scoping period.

1.1 Project Description

Western proposes to rebuild approximately 32 miles of double wood-pole structure 115-kilovolt (kV) transmission lines that exists between Estes Park and Flatiron Reservoir in Larimer County, Colorado. The proposal would remove approximately 16 miles of transmission line, and modernize approximately 16 miles to steel-pole double-circuit 115-kV transmission line. The removal and modernizing of transmission lines would occur on Federal, state and private lands. The Federal lands are administered by the Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forest, which is a cooperating agency for the project.

The proposed project would:

- Rebuild aging and deteriorating transmission lines
- Reduce the number of linear miles of transmission rights-of-way and the associated environmental footprint
- Ensure that the transmission lines comply with applicable codes and requirements
- Reduce potential for disruption of customer service due to wildfire hazards
- Improve access for maintenance and emergencies

1.2 Project Background

On August 23, 2011, Western's Rocky Mountain Regional Manager signed a determination to prepare an environmental assessment (EA) for the Estes to Flatiron Transmission Lines Rebuild. Western's proposal was under a class of actions in the DOE NEPA Implementing Procedures that normally requires the preparation of an EA: "Reconstructing (upgrading or rebuilding) existing electric power lines more than approximately 20 miles in length or constructing new electric power lines more than approximately 10 miles in length". The U.S. Forest Service (Forest Service), a cooperating agency on the EA, also required NEPA review to grant Special Use Permits for parts of the transmission line located on Forest Service lands in Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forest.

After the EA determination, Western held public scoping meetings at two locations: Loveland and Estes Park, Colorado. Western received many written and oral comments from the public and agencies on the project during the scoping period, expressing several concerns regarding the impacts of the proposal. Some stakeholders requested evaluation of additional alternatives. Therefore, Western determined that an EIS is the more appropriate level of NEPA review, with the Forest Service acting as a cooperating agency for the EIS.

2.0 SCOPING ACTIVITIES

Public involvement activities undertaken during scoping included publication of the Notice of Intent; stakeholder interviews; public outreach through a project website, display ads, press releases, project newsletters, and email notifications; public scoping meetings; and public alternatives development workshops. Each of these are described in more detail below.

2.1 Notice of Intent

A Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare an EIS was published in the Federal Register on April 17, 2012 (Attachment A). The NOI invited public participation in the EIS scoping process and solicited public comments on the scope of the EIS during a 90-day scoping period initially set to expire on July 16, 2012. An extension of the scoping period to August 31, 2012 was subsequently announced on the project website, through a press release, email notification, and direct mailing of a project newsletter. In response to public requests to extend the scoping period beyond the August 31, 2012 deadline, Western further extended the scoping period to October 19, 2012. All comments received through October 19, 2012 are considered in defining the scope for the EIS, including comments received during the EA scoping period between November 29, 2011 and January 31, 2012.

2.2 Stakeholder Interviews

In-person or telephone interviews were held with key stakeholders to gather information relevant to improving the expanded public involvement process, and to obtain additional suggestions regarding stakeholder groups that should be contacted during scoping for the EIS. In person interviews were held at the Estes Park Public Library on July 30, 2012 between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m.. Kimberly Krohmer of Responsible Lines attended the July 30, 2012 sessions as an interested member of the public. Telephone interviews were conducted on July 31, 2012.

Stakeholders that participated in interviews are listed below:

July 30, 2012 – In-person Interviews (Estes Park Public Library)

- Reuben Bergsten, Utilities Director
- Sandy Lindquist, Estes Park resident
- Frank Lancaster, Town Administrator
- Tom Adams, Crocker Ranch
- Jeffery Boring, Larimer County Natural Resources
- Chris Bieker, Upper Thompson Sanitation District
- Gordan Pedersen, Park Hill Subdivision
- Mark Tabb, President, Meadowdale Hills POA

July 31, 2012 – Telephone Interviews

- Pam Shaddock (Senator Udall), Jill Ozarski (Senator Udall), Dan Betts (Representative Gardner) & James Thompson (Senator Bennet)
- Robert Helmick, Larimer County Planning
- Paul Jonjak, landowner

2.3 Public Outreach

2.3.1 Project Website

Western maintains a project website at <http://go.usa.gov/rvtP>. Public announcements, project updates, project documents, background and contact information are posted to the project website. The website is updated as new information becomes available.

2.3.2 Display Ads

Display ads announcing public scoping meetings to be held in Loveland and Estes Park, CO were published in the Estes Park Trail-Gazette and Loveland Reporter-Herald on July 20, 2012. The layout for the display ad is provided in Attachment B.

2.3.3 Press Releases

A press release announcing Western's intent to prepare an EIS for the Estes to Flatiron Transmission Lines Rebuild was distributed March 29, 2012. Press releases announcing extensions to the scoping period were distributed on June 27 and September 13, 2012. A press release announcing the dates and locations for public scoping meetings was distributed July 16, 2012 (Attachment C). Press releases were also posted on the project website.

2.3.4 Newsletters

Two newsletters (Attachment D) were distributed to the project mailing list via the U.S. Postal Service or via email from the project email account (RMR_estesflatironeis@wapa.gov). Volume 1 (July 2012) was distributed 15-days prior to public scoping meetings. Volume 2 (September 2012) was distributed 15-days prior to public alternatives development workshops. The project mailing list includes contact information for stakeholders identified during EA and EIS scoping, and is included in the administrative record for the EIS.

2.3.5 Email notifications

Public notices regarding scoping period extensions, and public meeting dates and locations (Attachment E), were sent to contacts listed in the project email account. Email addresses receiving the notifications are included in the administrative record for the EIS. Email and other contact information is updated with new contact information as it is identified.

2.4 Public Scoping Meetings

Western held public scoping meetings for the Estes to Flatiron Transmission Lines Rebuild EIS on August 6, 2012 from 10 a.m. - 7 p.m. at the Loveland Public Library Gertrude Scott Meeting Room (300 N. Adams Avenue, Loveland, CO) and on August 7, 2012 from 10 a.m. - 7 p.m. at the Rocky Mountain Park Inn & Estes Park Conference Center (101 S. Saint Vrain Avenue, Estes Park, CO). The dates, times, and locations of public scoping meetings were announced on the project website, through a press release, via email notification, and through direct mailing of a project newsletter.

Scoping meetings utilized an open house format. Large-format informational displays provided information about the project. A large aerial-based map showing parcel boundaries and depicting the

existing transmission lines facilitated discussion with landowners and interested individuals to identify specific property issues and concerns. Two display boards invited meeting participants to write their scoping comments and identify siting considerations on the display boards. Comment forms were also available for meeting participants to provide their written comments.

Western and U.S. Forest Service representatives were present at the scoping meetings to respond to public comments and answer questions. A total of 52 meeting attendees signed in at the public scoping meetings, including 13 at the meeting in Loveland, CO and 39 at the meeting in Estes Park, CO. Meeting materials (i.e., display boards, comment form) are included as Attachment F.

2.5 Alternative Development Workshops

As part of Western's expanded public involvement process for the Estes to Flatiron Transmission Lines Rebuild EIS, Western held three public alternatives workshops in Estes Park, CO and Loveland, CO. The purpose of alternatives workshops was to solicit public input on route options and design features to be considered during the alternatives development process. Workshops were held on October 2, 2012 from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. at the Bison Visitor Center (1800 S. County Road 31, Loveland, CO), and at the Estes Park Museum (200 Fourth Street, Estes Park, CO) on October 3, 2012 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., and October 4, 2012 from 2:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. Western contacted key stakeholders to gauge stakeholder interest in hosting satellite workshops for small groups at local venues. As a result, a satellite workshop for the residents of Newell Lake Subdivision was held at the Bison Visitor Center from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. on October 2, 2012.

Alternatives workshops utilized an open house format, and sought to engage meeting attendees in interactive exercises to identify route options. Large-format informational displays provided information about the public involvement process, siting considerations, and context-sensitive design options. Maps depicting steep slopes, park and open space parcel boundaries, and viewsheds were on display, as well as large-format composite opportunity and constraint maps, to assist meeting participants with making informed suggestions on potential route options. Map booklets with detailed maps showing existing and proposed rights-of-way in relation to parcel boundaries and structures were also available for public review. A total of 49 meeting attendees signed in at the public alternatives workshops, including 27 at the meeting in Loveland, CO and 22 at the meetings in Estes Park, CO. Meeting materials (i.e., display boards) are included as Attachment G.

3.0 COMMENTS RECEIVED

Approximately 800 comments from over 360 comment letters were received during scoping for the EA (November 29, 2011 to January 31, 2012); EA scoping comments are provided in the EA Scoping Summary Report.

Western received 301 comment forms, letters, and emails during public scoping for the EIS. Comments were delineated and coded in CommentPro© and exported to an Excel spreadsheet. Comments received during the scoping period for the EIS (April 17, 2012 through October 19, 2012) are provided in Attachment H, and summarized below.

3.1 Unique Comment Letters

Fifty-two unique comment letters were submitted during scoping for the EIS. Six submissions were from Federal, state, or local government representatives including the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, National Park Service, Larimer County, Town of Estes Park, and Upper Thompson Sanitation District. Twelve submissions were from other organizations or stakeholders such as the Association for Responsible Development, Meadowdale Property Owners Association, Ravencrest Chalet Bible School and Retreat Center, Crocker Ranch, and Responsible Lines. Thirty-four submissions were from individuals.

3.2 Form Letters

Comment letters with the same content that were received by five or more individuals were designated as form letters. Eleven unique form letters were submitted by 76 individuals via 249 email submissions. Each unique form letter was coded for incorporation into the comment summary and entered once into the comment summary spreadsheet. The content of form letters and number of emailed submissions are summarized in the table below.

Letter No.	Form Letter Topic	No. Received
1	Opposed to any re-route to site the transmission line rebuild based on eight points and requests.	9
2	Hazards and health effects of electric and magnetic field (EMF) radiation	41
3	Extend the scoping phase of EIS (beyond August 31, 2012)	40
4	Proposed rebuild is costly, has no public benefit, and is a waste of public funds	12
5	Public safety - forest fires and low flying helicopters are a significant hazard to the human environment	41
6	Recommends ten siting criteria for the transmission line rebuild and itemizes six areas where information has not been disclosed to the public	12
7	Identifies seven criteria for siting the transmission line rebuild and repeats concerns regarding use of public funds and EMF as stated in Form Letters No. 2 and No. 4.	14
8	Consistency with Forest Service plans and policies - rebuild the transmission line within the Forest Service designated utility corridor	6
9	Rebuild the transmission line within the Forest Service designated utility corridor and complaints regarding lack of information or intent to misinform the public	21
10	Western's proposed reroute on the western end of the project area has unacceptable visual and recreational impacts, and is not consistent with Forest Service scenic integrity objectives	46
11	Site the transmission line rebuild within the Forest Service designated utility corridor to eliminate excess cost and prevent unnecessary environmental damage	5

3.3 Comments by Topic

Two hundred and twenty four unique comments were extracted from the 52 unique comment letters and 11 form letters. Comments were coded with both a resource code and an action code. The frequency of comments assigned to each of the resource or action codes is summarized in the table below. Some comments were assigned more than one resource code, and therefore, the total number of coded comments exceeds 224.

Resource Code	No. of Comments	Action Code	No. of Comments
Air Quality and Noise	1	Provide Additional Information	29
General Ecological	2	Scope/Scale of the Analysis	16
Human Health and Safety	22	Purpose and Need	2
Infrastructure	4	Alternatives	79
Legal and Regulatory (Incl. Process)	30	Connected Actions	2
Land Designation and Management	15	Mitigation/BMPs	5
Recreation	7	Decisionmaking Philosophy	6
Socioeconomics	26	Public Involvement Process	12
Site Specific	48	NEPA Process	12
Transportation	1	Previous NEPA Related to the Project	2
Vegetation	4	Other Planning Processes	4
Visual Resources	26	Federal Rules, Regulations, Plans	5
General or Other Resource	48	Other Action Codes or Unassigned	50

3.4 Key Issues from Scoping

A summary of all topics and issues raised during scoping for the EA are summarized in the EA Scoping Summary Report. Key issues identified during EA scoping include:

- Potential effects to visual resources and rural aesthetics
- Alternative routing options
- Issuance of special use permit through USFS
- Adherence to USFS Land and Resource Management Plan
- Effects on property values
- Effects on social and economic conditions in the tourist economy of Estes Park
- Human health effects and electromagnetic field effects
- Pole height, pole placement, type of poles used, and undergrounding options
- Effects on access roads and construction standards
- Vegetation management
- Effects on biological and ecological environments
- Cost comparison of alternatives and project costs

Key issues identified during scoping for the EIS are summarized below:

3.4.1 NEPA Requirements/Process (Purpose & Need; Connected Action)

- Is the Windy Gap Firming Project a connected action?
- Include the following concepts in the purpose and need statement: (a) The project is needed to improve the reliability of the transmission system. (b) The project must minimize the cost to the consumer and meet Western's obligations under the Reclamation Project Act of 1939, 43 U.S.C. § 485h(c). (c) The project is needed to update facilities to meet current electrical and operational standards. (d) The project must provide for both emergency and maintenance access to the

entirety of the lines. That maintenance access should provide for traditional bucket-truck access, and eliminate the need for helicopter inspections.

- Western's purpose and need statement needs to include "while minimizing adverse impacts on communities our infrastructure transits"
- Concern raised that negotiations with private landowners is in conflict with the procedural requirements of NEPA.

3.4.2 Public Involvement

- Hold public meetings in town hall format.
- Expand scoping to include public stakeholders in Denver, Boulder, Lyons, Fort Collins, other Front Range communities and Rocky Mountain National Park.
- Make requested information available to the public so that individuals can make informed scoping comments.

3.4.3 Requests for Additional Information

- Provide all notes, memos, meeting minutes, documents, emails, and other communications within the Forest Service staff and to outside consultants that were created during the development of the 1984 and 1997 Forest Plans and Environmental Impact Statements for Roosevelt National Forest.
- Provide a high-resolution aerial map of the Estes-Flatiron Rebuild Project area.
- Provide a GIS map with critical features identified. Include features such as roads, existing transmission lines, mountain peaks, the USFS Designated Utility Corridor, the Xcel Energy gas line defined by the USFS special use permit, locations of Bureau of Reclamation Olympus and Pole Hill Tunnels and Penstock, and land ownership boundaries.
- Provide the full 1939 Estes-Flatiron transmission line special use permit issued to the Bureau of Reclamation and the Excel Energy Gas Line Special Use Permit granted to the Public Utility Company of Colorado.
- Complete Meeting Minutes of Publicly and Privately Held Meetings.
- Supporting Documents for USFS Letter April 23, 2012 to Steven Webber.
- Document the entire Colorado Big Thompson Project and Windy Gap Firing Project systems.
- Provide all planning documents, maps, and information leading up to EIS-0483.

3.4.4 Alternatives Development

Siting Criteria

- Site the line in the Forest Service designated utility corridor.
- Site to co-locate with other large scale utilities.
- Site to correspond with other municipal and Federal utility land uses.
- Site away from residential and recreational areas to reduce land use conflict.
- Site to avoid recreational access points such as Pole Hill Trailhead.
- Site to avoid scenic travel corridors such as US Highway 36.

- Site to eliminate unnecessary habitat loss.
- Site to minimize total overall footprint.
- Site to improve public safety and avoid residential areas
- Site to minimize human hazards due to Western's low helicopter flights.
- Site to reduce wildfire hazard in populated residential areas.
- Site to eliminate health risks due to electro-magnetic radiation.
- Site to minimize total length of transmission line and maximize reliability.
- Site to minimize cost that does not directly benefit the public.
- Site to reduce waste of public funds.
- Site transmission line along the shortest and most direct route.
- Site in low areas.
- Site to avoid the Upper Thompson Sanitation District expansion area.

Design Options

- Underground key sections of transmission line to reduce visual effects. Investigate joint Western and Town of Estes Park (or other) funding options.
- Support transmission structure types that blend in with their surroundings. Ideally structures will be installed below the height of the surrounding vegetation.
- Preference for larger structures to maximize the ruling span and reduce the number of towers needed.
- Preference for shorter structures through subdivisions and along US 36.
- Support context sensitive design approach. To reduce visibility of the towers, recommend the use of weathering steel (also known as COR-TEN steel) for the towers and low-reflectance wire and conductors.
- Use poles that blend into the environment (e.g., painted green, brown/COR-TEN, or camouflage).
- To reduce the visibility of the ROW, request that understory vegetation be retained to the maximum extent possible, and design and build to avoid straight line cuts through the forest. Prefer to see the edges of the right-of-way feathered to look less man-made. If a pre-existing ROW will be reused for the rebuild project, only the minimum amount of vegetation should be removed to site the towers.
- Use same pole locations and same height using a wider structure H-frame with six lines.

3.4.5 Land Designation and Management

- Demonstrate consistency with Forest Service plans and policies, including Section 8.3 (Utility Corridors) and Section 4.2 (Scenic Management Areas) of the Forest Plan.

3.4.6 Public Health and Safety

- Disclose potential adverse health effects of electric and magnetic fields from high-voltage power lines.

- Analyze risks to public safety resulting from Western's use of low flying helicopters to inspect their transmission lines.
- Analyze the risk of forest fires being ignited in populated areas by installation and maintenance activities, helicopter use or crashes, and lightning strikes.
- Address constraints on firefighting within transmission line ROW.
- Disclose the indirect health effects of continued exposure to pesticides and other fire-suppression chemicals to be used within the future ROW.

3.4.7 Recreation

- Analyze impacts to recreation (hiking, camping, horse-back riding, Jeep, ATV and motorcycle) at the public access point to the National Forest at the Pole Hill Road trailhead and along Pole Hill Road.

3.4.8 Socioeconomics

- Analyze socioeconomic effects related to tourism, outdoor recreation, real estate, and property investment industries that front range communities and the regional economy rely upon. Impacts should include economic impacts for landowners, businesses, and investors.
- Prepare an itemized cost analysis of rebuilding along the current centerline of the USFS Designated Utility Corridor, as opposed to any proposed re-routes.
- Include itemized costs for the Estes-Flatiron Rebuild project incurred thus far, since the project began in early 2010.
- Provide realistic cost estimate for undergrounding key route options, not the cost of full underground. Underground ROW needs are different, subtract ROW acquisition difference from underground cost.

3.4.9 Visual Resources

- Focus not only on the visual impacts of the new power line, but on the visual benefits of removing old power lines.
- Analyze effects to scenic travel corridors (e.g., Highway 36), residential, and recreational viewsheds in vicinity of Estes Park and Pinewood Lake.
- Consider views from Estes Park (the valley is most visible) and Rocky Mountain National Park.
- Underground lines to reduce visual impact.

3.4.10 Infrastructure

- The Upper Thompson Sanitation District's treatment plant is located on Bureau of Reclamation land west of Mall Road, with Western utility easements along the northwest portion of the parcel. The transmission line also travels across the lower portion of District property east of Mall Road. The District's Master Plan identifies expansion of the treatment facility. Future District expansion would be severely encumbered by existing overhead transmission lines and dedicated utility easements. The proposed re-route of the transmission line would, therefore, allow the District to utilize available vacant areas of both parcels and eliminate any potential encroachment of the easement.

3.5 Summary

The EIS will evaluate impacts of the proposed project and a range of reasonable alternatives that achieve the purpose of and need for the project. Issues identified from the EA and EIS scoping processes will help Western refine project alternatives, define the scope of the EIS, and identify mitigation measures.

**Attachment A
Notice of Intent**

The Commission encourages electronic submission of protests and interventions in lieu of paper, using the FERC Online links at <http://www.ferc.gov>. To facilitate electronic service, persons with Internet access who will eFile a document and/or be listed as a contact for an intervenor must create and validate an eRegistration account using the eRegistration link. Select the eFiling link to log on and submit the intervention or protests.

Persons unable to file electronically should submit an original and 14 copies of the intervention or protest to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First St. NE., Washington, DC 20426.

The filings in the above proceedings are accessible in the Commission's eLibrary system by clicking on the appropriate link in the above list. They are also available for review in the Commission's Public Reference Room in Washington, DC. There is an eSubscription link on the web site that enables subscribers to receive email notification when a document is added to a subscribed docket(s). For assistance with any FERC Online service, please email FERCOnlineSupport@ferc.gov or call (866) 208-3676 (toll free). For TTY, call (202) 502-8659.

Comment Date: 5 p.m. Eastern time on Wednesday, April 18, 2012.

Dated: April 10, 2012.

Kimberly D. Bose,
Secretary.

[FR Doc. 2012-9121 Filed 4-16-12; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6717-01-P

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Western Area Power Administration

[DOE/EIS-0483]

Estes to Flatiron Substation Transmission Lines Rebuild Project, Larimer County, CO

AGENCY: Western Area Power Administration, DOE.

ACTION: Notice of Intent To Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement and To Conduct Scoping Meetings; Notice of Floodplain and Wetlands Involvement.

SUMMARY: Western Area Power Administration currently owns and operates two 115-kilovolt transmission lines on two separate rights-of-way (ROW) located between Flatiron Reservoir (near Loveland, Colorado) and the town of Estes Park, Colorado. Each transmission line is approximately 16 miles long. Western is proposing to

remove one transmission line and abandon the ROW. The remaining transmission line would be rebuilt along the existing ROW with taller steel monopoles and would be double-circuited (i.e., six conductors per pole).

Western determined that an environmental impact statement (EIS) is the appropriate level of NEPA review. Therefore, Western will prepare an EIS on its proposal to upgrade and co-locate two existing separate transmission lines on a double-circuit transmission line on one ROW in accordance with NEPA, the DOE NEPA Implementing Procedures, and the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations for implementing NEPA. Portions of Western's proposal may affect floodplains and wetlands, so this Notice of Intent (NOI) also serves as a notice of proposed floodplain or wetland action in accordance with DOE floodplain and wetland environmental review requirements.

DATES: This notice initiates a 90-day public scoping process to solicit public comments and identify issues, opportunities, and concerns that should be considered in the preparation of a Draft EIS. The scoping period will end on July 16, 2012, or 15 days after the date of the last public scoping meeting, whichever is later. In order to ensure consideration in the Draft EIS, all comments must be received prior to the close of the scoping period. Western will provide additional opportunities for public participation upon publication of the Draft EIS. The public will be notified in advance of future opportunities for participation as the EIS is prepared.

To provide the public with an opportunity to review the proposal and project information, Western expects to hold two public meetings: One meeting in Estes Park, Colorado and one meeting in Loveland, Colorado during the public scoping period. Western will announce the dates and locations of the public scoping meetings through local news media, newsletters, and posting on the Western Web site at <http://ww2.wapa.gov/sites/western/transmission/infrastructure/Pages/Estes-Flatiron.aspx>, at least 15 days prior to each meeting. Western will consider all comments on the scope of the EIS received or postmarked by the end of scoping. The public is invited to submit comments on the proposal at any time during the EIS process.

ADDRESSES: Comments related to the proposed Project may be submitted by mail to Tim Snowden, Western Area Power Administration, 5555 E. Crossroads Blvd., P.O. Box 3700,

Loveland, CO 80539-3003, fax (970) 461-7213, or email, RMR_estesflatironeis@wapa.gov.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For additional information on the proposed project, the EIS process, or to receive a copy of the Draft EIS when it is published, contact Tim Snowden by the methods noted above. For general information on the DOE's NEPA review process, contact Carol M. Borgstrom, Director of NEPA Policy and Compliance, GC-54, U.S. Department of Energy, 1000 Independence Avenue SW., Washington, DC 20585-0119, telephone (202) 586-4600 or (800) 472-2756, fax (202) 586-7031.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Western is a Federal power marketing agency within the DOE that markets and delivers Federal wholesale electric power (principally hydroelectric power) to municipalities, rural electric cooperatives, public utilities, irrigation districts, Federal and State agencies, and Native American tribes in 15 western and central states.

Western initially began preparation of an environmental assessment (EA) for the Project. Western's proposal was under a class of actions in the DOE NEPA Implementing Procedures (10 CFR part 1021) that normally requires the preparation of an EA. Subsequent to the EA determination, Western held public meetings and received many written and oral comments from the public and agencies on the proposal during the scoping period. The public expressed several concerns regarding the impacts of the proposal and some of the stakeholders requested evaluation of additional alternatives. Based on these factors, Western determined that an EIS is the more appropriate level of NEPA review.¹ Therefore, Western will prepare an EIS on its proposal to upgrade and co-locate two existing separate transmission lines on a double-circuit transmission line on one ROW.

Western will coordinate with appropriate Federal, State, and local agencies and potentially affected Native American tribes during the preparation of the EIS. The U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forest (Forest Service) will be a cooperating agency on the EIS since it requires NEPA review to support its decision on whether or not to grant a Special Use Permit for parts of the transmission line located on National Forest Service System lands. Western will invite other Federal, State, local, and tribal agencies with

¹ On November 16, 2011, DOE's Acting General Counsel delegated to Western's Administrator all EIS authorities.

jurisdiction by law or special expertise, with respect to environmental issues, to be cooperating agencies on the EIS, as defined in 40 CFR 1501.6. Such agencies also may make a request to Western to be a cooperating agency. Designated cooperating agencies have certain responsibilities to support the NEPA process, as specified in 40 CFR 1501.6(b).

Purpose and Need for Agency Action

Western's purpose and need for agency action is to ensure its facilities are up to current safety and reliability standards, accessible for maintenance and emergencies, protected from wildfire, and cost effective for its customers.

Proposed Action

Presently there are two transmission lines on two separate ROWs located between Flatiron Reservoir (near Loveland) and the town of Estes Park. The Estes-Lyons line segment is approximately 16 miles long and was built in 1938. The Estes-Pole Hill and Flatiron-Pole Hill line segments combined are approximately 16 miles long and were built in 1952 as part of the Colorado-Big Thompson Project. The vast majority of wood pole structures on both transmission lines are the original poles and are 60 to 72 years old.

Western's proposed Federal action (proposal) is to combine portions of both transmission lines onto a single ROW between Flatiron Reservoir and Estes Park, Colorado. Portions of both transmission lines would be removed and those portions of the ROWs abandoned. In the remaining ROW, the transmission line would be rebuilt with steel monopole structures replacing the existing wood H-frame structures, in a double-circuit configuration (i.e., six conductors per structure). In some areas, the ROW would be slightly wider than it is at present to accommodate the double circuit transmission line. There would be two short segments of new ROW, located on private land, to connect portions of the existing transmission line segments into a single ROW. There are no new substations or proposed changes to existing substations.

Presently, vehicle access is required along the entire 32 miles of existing ROW for maintenance and wood pole replacement. Most of the existing wood pole structures would need replacement in the near future and some are in need of replacement at this time. With Western's proposal, approximately 16 miles of the existing ROW would be

eliminated along with the associated access roads.

Currently, the two transmission lines cross Roosevelt National Forest System lands. Approximately 1.65 miles of transmission line and ROW would be removed and 2.16 miles of transmission line would be rebuilt on National Forest System lands, under Western's proposal.

Alternatives

Under the No-Action (i.e., baseline) alternative, the two transmission lines would continue to operate on the existing and separate ROWs. Records indicate that 70 to 80 percent of the 32 miles of transmission lines would require replacement within the near future. This would require replacing transmission line structures along both existing ROWs. Access to the transmission lines is limited and replacement of structures would require additional or improved access on both ROWs. The No-Action alternative would require that the existing 30-foot ROW on the Estes-Lyons section be widened to meet current safety standards. Other alternatives may be identified through the EIS scoping process. Comments received during the EA scoping process and comments provided in response to this NOI and the EIS scoping meetings will be considered in defining the scope of the EIS.

Floodplain or Wetland Involvement

Floodplains and wetlands are in the project area. Since the proposal may involve action in floodplains or wetlands, this NOI also serves as a notice of proposed floodplain or wetland action. The EIS will include an assessment of impacts to floodplains and wetlands, and, if required, a floodplain statement of findings following DOE regulations for compliance with floodplain and wetlands environmental review (10 CFR part 1022).

Environmental Issues

Western's proposed Project area is located between Flatiron Reservoir and Estes Park, Colorado in a fairly mountainous territory and crosses open and developed areas. The area is characterized by rugged terrain with scattered developments set against the backdrop of Rocky Mountain National Park. The EIS will review relevant environmental information and will analyze the potential impacts on the full range of potentially affected environmental resources.

Public Participation

Interested parties are invited to participate in the scoping process to help define the scope of the EIS, significant resources, and issues to be analyzed in depth, and to eliminate from detailed study issues that are not pertinent. The EIS scoping process will involve all interested agencies (Federal, State, county, and local), Native American tribes, public interest groups, businesses, affected landowners, and individual members of the public.

Western has previously consulted with potentially affected or interested tribes to jointly evaluate and address the potential effects on cultural resources, traditional cultural properties, or other resources important to the tribes in the proposed Project area. Western will contact previously identified interested tribes and inform them that an EIS is planned. Any government-to-government consultations will be conducted in accordance with Executive Order 13175, Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments (65 FR 67249), the President's memorandum of April 29, 1994, *Government-to-Government Relations with Native American Tribal Governments* (59 FR 22951), DOE-specific guidance on tribal interactions, and applicable natural and cultural resources laws and regulations.

Western will announce public EIS scoping meetings through local news media, newsletters, and posting on the Western Web site at <http://www2.wapa.gov/sites/western/transmission/infrastructure/Pages/Estes-Flatiron.aspx>, at least 15 days prior to each meeting. Attendees will be able to speak directly with Western and the Forest Service at the EIS scoping meetings about Western's proposal. The public is encouraged to provide information and comments on issues it believes Western should address in the EIS. Comments may be broad in nature or restricted to specific areas of concern. After gathering comments on the scope of the EIS, Western will address those issues raised in the EIS. In addition, Western will use the results of the EA scoping process to help define the scope of the EIS. Comments on Western's proposal will be accepted at any time during the EIS process, and may be directed to Western as described under **ADDRESSES** above. Comments received outside of the designated comment periods may be addressed in the Draft EIS, otherwise they will be addressed later in the process, such as in the Final EIS, if practicable.

The EIS process will include this NOI, local EIS scoping meeting notifications,

public scoping meetings; consultation and coordination with appropriate Federal, State, county, and local agencies and tribal governments; involvement with affected landowners; distribution of and public review and comment on the Draft EIS; a formal public hearing or hearings on the Draft EIS; distribution of a published Final EIS; and publication of separate Records of Decision in the **Federal Register** by Western and the Forest Service.

Dated: April 6, 2012.

Timothy J. Meeks,
Administrator.

[FR Doc. 2012-9179 Filed 4-16-12; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6450-01-P

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

[FRL-9514-9]

Agency Information Collection Activities OMB Responses

AGENCY: Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: This document announces the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) responses to Agency Clearance requests, in compliance with the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.*). An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. The OMB control numbers for EPA regulations are listed in 40 CFR part 9 and 48 CFR chapter 15.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Rick Westlund (202) 566-1682, or email at westlund.rick@epa.gov and please refer to the appropriate EPA Information Collection Request (ICR) Number.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

OMB Responses to Agency Clearance Requests

OMB Approvals

EPA ICR Number 1686.09; NESHAP for the Secondary Lead Smelter Industry; 40 CFR part 63, subparts A and X; was approved on 03/02/2012; OMB Number 2060-0296; expires on 03/31/2015; Approved without change.

Comment Filed

EPA ICR Number 2452.01; NESHAP for Pulp and Paper Production; in 40 CFR part 63 subparts A and S; OMB filed comment on 03/02/2012.

EPA ICR Number 2457.01; NESHAP for Group IV Polymers and Resins; in 40

CFR part 63 subparts A and JJJ; OMB filed comment on 03/02/2012.

EPA ICR Number 1811.08; NESHAP for Polyether Polyol Production; in 40 CFR part 63, subparts A and PPP; OMB filed comment on 03/06/2012.

Withdrawn and Continue

EPA ICR Number 2258.02; PM_{2.5} NAAQS Implementation Rule (Renewal); Withdrawn from OMB on 03/22/2012.

EPA ICR Number 2313.02; Ambient Ozone Monitoring Regulations; Revisions to Network Design Requirements (Final Rule); Withdrawn from OMB on 03/20/2012.

John Moses,

Director, Collections Strategies Division.

[FR Doc. 2012-9107 Filed 4-16-12; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE P

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

[EPA-HQ-OECA-2011-0250; FRL-9515-8]

Agency Information Collection Activities; Submission to OMB for Review and Approval; Comment Request; NESHAP for Wet-Formed Fiberglass Mat Production (Renewal)

AGENCY: Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: In compliance with the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.*), this document announces that an Information Collection Request (ICR) has been forwarded to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for review and approval. This is a request to renew an existing approved collection. The ICR which is abstracted below describes the nature of the collection and the estimated burden and cost.

DATES: Additional comments may be submitted on or before May 17, 2012.

ADDRESSES: Submit your comments, referencing docket ID number EPA-HQ-OECA-2011-0250, to: (1) EPA online using www.regulations.gov (our preferred method), or by email to: docket.oeca@epa.gov, or by mail to: EPA Docket Center (EPA/DC), Environmental Protection Agency, Enforcement and Compliance Docket and Information Center, mail code 28221T, 1200 Pennsylvania Avenue NW., Washington, DC 20460; and (2) OMB at: Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget (OMB), Attention: Desk Officer for EPA, 725 17th Street NW., Washington, DC 20503.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Learia Williams, Monitoring, Assistance, and Media Programs Division, Office of Compliance, Mail Code 2223A, Environmental Protection Agency, 1200 Pennsylvania Avenue NW., Washington, DC 20460; telephone number: (202) 564-4113; fax number: (202) 564-0050; email address: williams.learia@epa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: EPA has submitted the following ICR to OMB for review and approval according to the procedures prescribed in 5 CFR 1320.12. On May 9, 2011 (76 FR 26900), EPA sought comments on this ICR pursuant to 5 CFR 1320.8(d). EPA received no comments. Any additional comments on this ICR should be submitted to both EPA and OMB within 30 days of this notice.

EPA has established a public docket for this ICR under docket ID number EPA-HQ-OECA-2011-0250, which is available for public viewing online at <http://www.regulations.gov>, or in person viewing at the Enforcement and Compliance Docket in the EPA Docket Center (EPA/DC), EPA West, Room 3334, 1301 Constitution Avenue NW., Washington, DC. The EPA Docket Center Public Reading Room is open from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, excluding legal holidays. The telephone number for the Reading Room is (202) 566-1744, and the telephone number for the Enforcement and Compliance Docket is (202) 566-1752.

Use EPA's electronic docket and comment system at <http://www.regulations.gov> to either submit or view public comments, access the index listing of the contents of the docket, and to access those documents in the docket that are available electronically. Once in the system, select "docket search," then key in the docket ID number identified above. Please note that EPA's policy is that public comments, whether submitted electronically or in paper, will be made available for public viewing at <http://www.regulations.gov> as EPA receives them and without change, unless the comment contains copyrighted material, Confidential Business Information (CBI), or other information whose public disclosure is restricted by statute. For further information about the electronic docket, go to www.regulations.gov.

Title: NESHAP for Wet-formed Fiberglass Mat Production (Renewal).

ICR Numbers: EPA ICR Number 1964.05, OMB Control Number 2060-0496.

ICR Status: This ICR is scheduled to expire on June 30, 2012. Under OMB

**Attachment B
Display Ad**



Western Area Power Administration

Estes-Flatiron Transmission Line Rebuild Project

Western will host open house public scoping meetings August 6 and 7, 2012, to share information about the proposed Estes-Flatiron Transmission Line Rebuild Project. After listening to public comment during the initial meetings for the project, Western determined that an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) would be appropriate for the proposal to upgrade and co-locate two existing separate transmission lines to a double-circuit transmission line on one right-of-way. Learn about the EIS process and how alternatives will be selected, meet with project team members from Western and the Forest Service, ask questions and make comments at the informal open house meetings.

PUBLIC SCOPING MEETINGS

Monday, August 6, 10am-7pm

Loveland Public Library
Gertrude Scott Meeting Room
300 N. Adams Ave, Loveland

Tuesday, August 7, 2012, 10am-7pm

Rocky Mountain Park Inn & Estes
Park Conference Center
101 S. Saint Vrain Ave, Estes Park

Drop in at any time to learn about the project and participate in several interactive exercises. Forest Service staff will be available from 4-7 pm at each meeting.

For more information on the project, visit <http://ww2.wapa.gov/sites/western/transmission/infrastructure/Pages/Estes-Flatiron.aspx>

PROJECT VICINITY MAP



**Attachment C
Press Release**



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: March 29, 2012

CONTACT: Lisa Meiman or Randy Wilkerson, 970-962-7050, CORPCOMM@wapa.gov

MORE DETAILED ANALYSIS PLANNED FOR ESTES-FLATIRON REBUILD

LAKEWOOD, Colo. – The Western Area Power Administration has decided to analyze the environmental impacts of the proposed Estes Park-to-Flatiron Reservoir 115-kilovolt transmission line rebuild project in Larimer County, Colo., through an environmental impact statement rather than an environmental assessment.

Western proposes to upgrade and co-locate two aging transmission lines in the area onto one right of way. Upgrading these lines is necessary to comply with safety standards; ensure reliable and cost effective electricity in Estes Park, Loveland and along the Front Range; and provide accessibility for maintenance and emergencies.

The lines in question are essential for the delivery of power to the Town of Estes from a variety of generation sources along the Front Range.

Before any project begins, Western conducts an environmental review on its proposals. Normally, the first step in an EA is the public scoping process, which allows the public and other agencies to learn of the proposal and inform Western of their issues and concerns.

Western received many written and oral comments from the public and agencies on the project during the EA scoping period from November 2011 through January 2012. The public expressed several concerns regarding the environmental impacts of the proposal, and some of the stakeholders requested evaluating additional route alternatives. Therefore, Western determined that an EIS is the more appropriate level of National Environmental Policy Act review.

An EIS is a more detailed and thorough evaluation of a proposed action and alternatives than an EA. All comments received during the EA scoping period will be carried through to the EIS scoping process and be addressed in the draft EIS.

The Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forest will also be a cooperating agency on the EIS.

Currently, Western has not determined the dates for the EIS scoping comment period and meetings. Western will initiate the public EIS scoping process through a Notice of Intent to Prepare an EIS, which is published in the *Federal Register*. EIS scoping meetings will be announced at least 15 days prior to each meeting through local news media, newsletters and posting on the Western website at <http://ww2.wapa.gov/sites/western/transmission/infrastructure/Pages/Estes-Flatiron.aspx>. No action will be taken on the project proposal until after the final EIS is completed, although routine maintenance will continue.

For more information on the project, visit

<http://ww2.wapa.gov/sites/western/transmission/infrastructure/Pages/Estes-Flatiron.aspx>. To learn more about NEPA's environmental processes, visit <http://energy.gov/nepa/office-nepa-policy-and-compliance>.



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: June 27, 2012

CONTACT: Lisa Meiman or Randy Wilkerson, corpcomm@wapa.gov, 720-962-7050

Western extends the scoping comment period for Estes-to-Flatiron Substation Transmission Lines Rebuild environmental impact statement

LAKEWOOD, Colo.—Western is extending the Estes-to-Flatiron Substation Transmission Lines Rebuild Project environmental impact statement (EIS) public scoping process through Aug. 31.

Western had initiated a 90-day public scoping process in Larimer County, Colo., April 17 by publishing a notice of intent in the Federal Register (77 FR 22774). The extension provides additional opportunities for the public to provide comments and identify issues, opportunities and concerns that should be considered in the draft EIS.

Western proposes to upgrade and co-locate two aging transmission lines in the area onto one right of way. Upgrading these lines is necessary to comply with safety standards; ensure reliable and cost effective electricity in Estes Park, Loveland and along the Front Range; and provide accessibility for maintenance and emergencies. The lines in question are essential for the delivery of power to the Town of Estes Park from a variety of generation sources along the Front Range.

Comments received will be considered in defining the scope of the EIS. In order to ensure consideration in the Draft EIS, all comments must be received prior to the end of the scoping period. Western will provide additional opportunities for public participation when the draft EIS is published.

To provide the public with an opportunity to review the proposal and project information, Western will hold two public meetings in August 2012: one meeting in Estes Park, Colo., and one meeting in Loveland, Colo., during the public scoping period. Western will announce the dates and locations of the public scoping meetings through local news media, newsletters and posting on the Western website at <http://ww2.wapa.gov/sites/western/transmission/infrastructure/Pages/Estes-Flatiron.aspx>, at least 15 days prior to each meeting.

The public can submit comments on the proposal at any time during the EIS process by mail to Tim Snowden, Western Area Power Administration, 5555 E. Crossroads Blvd., P.O. Box 3700, Loveland, CO 80539-3003, fax (970) 461-7213 or e-mail, RMR_estesflatironeis@wapa.gov.

For additional information on the proposed project, the EIS process, or to receive a copy of the Draft EIS when it is published, contact Tim Snowden by the methods noted above.

The Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forest will also be a cooperating agency on the EIS. Portions of Western's proposal may affect floodplains and wetlands, so this notice also serves as an extension of the notice of proposed floodplain or wetland action in accordance with Department of Energy floodplain and wetland environmental review requirements (10 CFR part 1022). The EIS will include an assessment of impacts to floodplains and wetlands, and, if required, a floodplain statement of findings following DOE regulations.

For more information on the project, visit <http://ww2.wapa.gov/sites/western/transmission/infrastructure/Pages/Estes-Flatiron.aspx>. To learn more about NEPA's environmental processes, visit <http://energy.gov/nepa/office-nepa-policy-and-compliance>.



P R E S S R E L E A S E

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: July 16, 2012

CONTACT: Lisa Meiman or Randy Wilkerson, CORPCOMM@wapa.gov, 720-962-7050

Western schedules scoping meetings for Estes-to-Flatiron Substation Transmission Lines Rebuild environmental impact statement

LOVELAND, Colo. – Western has scheduled scoping meetings for the Estes-to-Flatiron Substation Transmission Lines Rebuild Project environmental impact statement (EIS). The scoping meetings are part of the EIS scoping process that will expire Aug. 31.

Western proposes to upgrade and co-locate two aging transmission lines in the area onto one right of way. Upgrading these lines is necessary to comply with safety standards; ensure reliable and cost effective electricity in Estes Park, Loveland and along the Front Range; and provide accessibility for maintenance and emergencies. The lines in question are essential for the delivery of power to the Town of Estes Park from a variety of generation sources along the Front Range.

To provide the public with an opportunity to review the proposal and project information, Western will hold two open house public scoping meetings between 10 a.m. and 7 p.m. on:

August 6, 2012 at:

Loveland Public Library
Gertrude Scott Meeting Room
300 N. Adams, Loveland, Colo.

August 7, 2012 at:

Rocky Mountain Inn & Estes Park Conference Center
101 S. Saint Vrain Avenue, Estes Park, Colo.

Members of the public may attend at any time to learn about the project and to participate in interactive exercises. The objectives for scoping include introducing the objectives of the proposed project; describing the project schedule, the key milestones and opportunities for public involvement; identifying issues for analysis in the EIS; presenting the purpose and need and project description; ensuring that we have reached key stakeholders and obtained their perspectives; and identifying transmission line siting opportunities and constraints for consideration in the alternatives screening analysis.

The Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forest is a cooperating agency on the EIS. Forest Service staff will be available from 4-7 p.m. at each scoping meeting.

-more-

Western Area Power Administration annually markets and transmits more than 10,000 megawatts of power from hydroelectric powerplants owned and operated by the Bureau of Reclamation and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in 15 western and central states. It is part of the Department of Energy.

P.O. Box 281213 • Lakewood, CO 80228-2802 • Phone: 720-962-7050 • Toll Free: 1-800-982-4523
Fax: 720-962-7059 • E-mail: CorpComm@wapa.gov • Web site: <http://www.wapa.gov>

Serving the West with Federal hydropower

Comments received before the close of the scoping period will be considered in defining the scope of the EIS. In order to ensure consideration in the Draft EIS, all comments must be received prior to the end of the scoping period. Western will provide additional opportunities for public participation when the draft EIS is published. The public can submit comments on the proposal at any time during the EIS process by mail to Tim Snowden, Western Area Power Administration, 5555 E. Crossroads Blvd., P.O. Box 3700, Loveland, CO 80539-3003, fax (970) 461-7213 or e-mail, RMR_estesflatironeis@wapa.gov.

For additional information on the proposed project, the EIS process or to receive a copy of the Draft EIS when it is published, contact Tim Snowden by the methods noted above or leave a voicemail at (720) 962-7213.

For more information on the project, visit

<http://ww2.wapa.gov/sites/western/transmission/infrastructure/Pages/Estes-Flatiron.aspx>. To learn more about NEPA's environmental processes, visit <http://energy.gov/nepa/office-nepa-policy-and-compliance>.

-30-

Western Area Power Administration annually markets and transmits more than 10,000 megawatts of power from hydroelectric powerplants owned and operated by the Bureau of Reclamation and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in 15 western and central states. It is part of the Department of Energy.

P.O. Box 281213 • Lakewood, CO 80228-2802 • Phone: 720-962-7050 • Toll Free: 1-800-982-4523
Fax: 720-962-7059 • E-mail: CorpComm@wapa.gov • Web site: <http://www.wapa.gov>

Serving the West with Federal hydropower

Press Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: September 13, 2012

CONTACT: Lisa Meiman or Jen Neville, corpcomm@wapa.gov, 720-962-7050

ESTES-FLATIRON PROJECT SCOPING PERIOD EXTENDED TO OCT. 19

Western extends the scoping comment period for Estes-to-Flatiron Substation Transmission Lines Rebuild environmental impact statement to accommodate alternative development process

LOVELAND, Colo. – Western Area Power Administration is extending the public scoping period of the Estes-to-Flatiron Substation Transmission Lines Rebuild Project environmental impact statement (EIS) process through Oct. 19 based on public requests and to allow the public an opportunity to provide input on the project alternatives.

"Western extended the EIS comment period once already to provide additional opportunities for the public to identify issues, opportunities and concerns about the project," said Tim Snowden, from Western's Natural Resources office. "Public comments received thus far requested more time to submit comments. Western wants to make sure interested participants have every opportunity in our expanded public participation process to provide informed comments before the draft environmental impact statement is developed."

Western proposes to upgrade and co-locate two aging transmission lines in the area onto one right of way. Upgrading these lines is necessary to comply with safety standards; ensure reliable and cost effective electricity in Estes Park, Loveland and along the Front Range; and provide accessibility for maintenance and emergencies. The lines in question are essential for the delivery of power to the Town of Estes Park from a variety of generation sources along the Front Range.

Public workshops set for early October

To provide the public with an opportunity to provide input on the alternative development process for the draft EIS, Western will hold three public workshops in October 2012:

- Oct. 2 in Loveland at the Bison Visitor Center between 4 and 6 p.m.
- Oct. 3 in Estes Park, Colo. at the Estes Park Museum between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.
- Oct. 4 in Estes Park, Colo. at the Estes Park Museum between 2 and 7 p.m.

In addition, Western will arrange accompanying satellite alternative development sessions with key stakeholder groups during the same days scheduled for the alternative development workshops. The results of the satellite alternative development sessions will be posted at the workshop locations as results become available. The locations, dates, and times for the satellite sessions will be announced on Western's Estes-Flatiron webpage at: <http://go.usa.gov/rvtP>.

Comments from the workshops, as well as comments received since the scoping process for this EIS began April 17, 2012 will be considered in defining the scope of the EIS and alternative development process.

In order to ensure consideration in the draft EIS, all comments must be received before the end of the scoping period. Western will provide additional opportunities for public participation when the draft EIS is published.

The public can submit comments on the proposal at any time during the EIS process by mail to Tim Snowden, Western Area Power Administration, 5555 E. Crossroads Blvd., P.O. Box 3700, Loveland, CO 80539-3003, fax (970) 461-7213

or e-mail, RMR_estesflatironeis@wapa.gov.

For additional information on the proposed project, the EIS process, or to receive a copy of the draft EIS when it is published, contact Tim Snowden by the methods noted above.

The Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forest is a cooperating agency on the EIS.

For more information on the project, visit <http://go.usa.gov/rvtP>. To learn more about NEPA's environmental processes, visit <http://energy.gov/nepa/office-nepa-policy-and-compliance>.

**Attachment D
Newsletters**

Estes to Flatiron Transmission Line Rebuild Project

Environmental Impact Statement Initiation

Western Area Power Administration

July 2012, Volume 1

Next Steps: Scoping Meetings

Western has extended the Estes-Flatiron Transmission Line Rebuild Project EIS public scoping process through August 31, 2012. Western will hold two public meetings:

- August 6, 2012: 10am - 7pm**
 Loveland Public Library
 Gertrude Scott Meeting Room
 300 N. Adams Avenue, Loveland, CO
- August 7, 2012: 10am - 7pm**
 Rocky Mountain Park Inn & Estes Park Conference Center
 101 S. Saint Vrain Avenue, Estes Park, CO

Drop in at any time to learn about the project and participate in several interactive exercises. Forest Service staff will be available from 4-7 pm at each meeting.

Contact

For more information, contact Tim Snowden, Western Area Power Administration, 5555 E. Crossroads Blvd., P.O. Box 3700, Loveland, CO 80539-3003, fax (970) 461-7213 or e-mail, RMR_estesflatironeis@wapa.gov. Or, if you would like someone to contact you, please leave a voicemail at (720) 962-7213.

Additional Information

For more information on the project, visit <http://ww2.wapa.gov/sites/western/transmission/infrastruct/Pages/Estes-Flatiron.aspx>

To learn more about NEPA's environmental processes, visit: <http://energy.gov/nepa/office-nepa-policy-and-compliance>

We Have Heard You

On August 23, 2011, Western Area Power Administration (Western) began the preparation of an Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Estes-Flatiron Transmission Line Rebuild. After listening to public comment during the initial meetings for the project, Western determined that a more intensive Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) would be appropriate for the proposal to upgrade and co-locate two existing separate transmission lines on a double-circuit transmission line to one right-of-way. The EIS has an expanded public involvement process. The Forest Service, as a cooperating agency on the EIS, will be making a decision regarding actions on National Forest System land.

Expanded Public Involvement Process

Western initiated the EIS public scoping process April 17, 2012, to give the public and agencies another opportunity to identify new issues or route options. The scoping period has been extended to August 31, 2012, to provide more opportunity to comment.

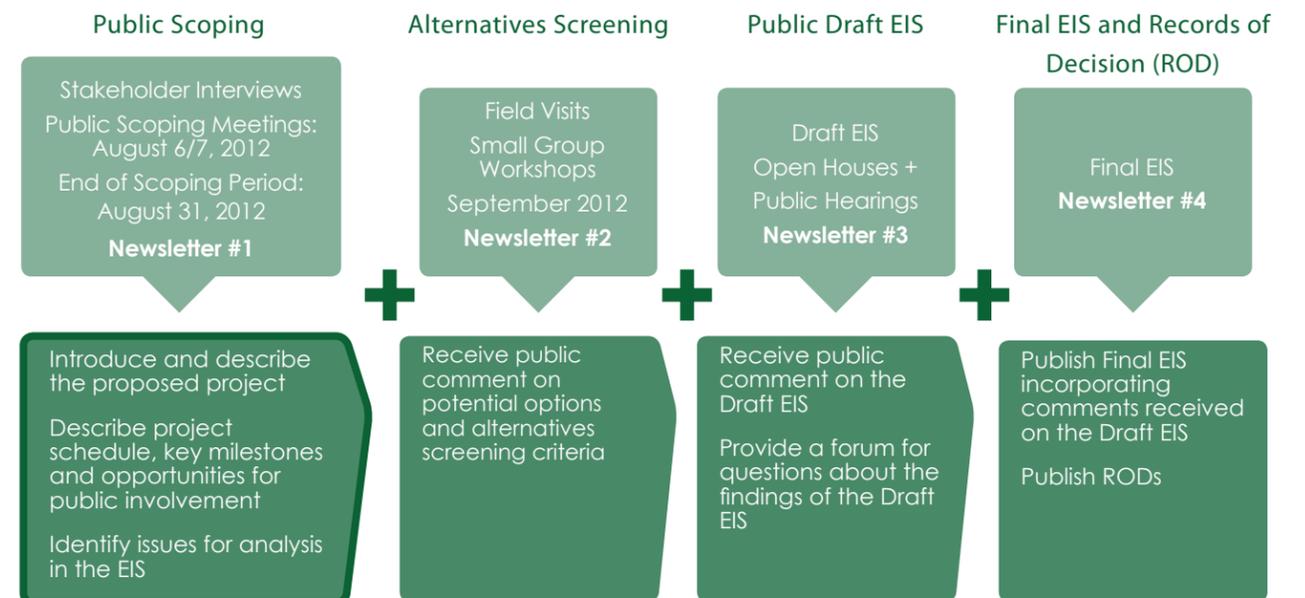
By regulation, the EIS process requires two distinct opportunities for the public to provide input and comment: 1) during the scoping phase of the EIS, and 2) after publication of the Draft EIS. For this EIS, Western is providing additional public involvement activities to solicit input on the EIS. Information received during the expanded scoping period and the alternatives screening analysis will help Western identify reasonable alternatives for the EIS. The full public involvement process for the EIS is shown below.

Goals for the Expanded Process

Public involvement is critical to the development of the EIS. The goals for the expanded public involvement process are to:

- Engage a diverse group of public and agency participants.
- Provide information to Western concerning the views expressed by the public about the proposed project.
- Identify public and agency concerns so they can be addressed at appropriate stages of the EIS process.

Expanded Public Involvement Process



Public Scoping

Western has extended the Estes-Flatiron Transmission Line Rebuild Project EIS public scoping period through August 31, 2012. The extension provides opportunities for the public to provide additional comments and identify issues, opportunities and concerns that should be considered in the Draft EIS. Interested parties can submit comments through the end of the scoping period.

As part of the scoping process, Western will hold day-long drop-in meetings on August 6, 2012 (Loveland, Colorado) and August 7, 2012 (Estes Park, Colorado). Attendees can drop in at any time to learn about the project and participate in several interactive exercises.

Objectives for Scoping

- Introduce the objectives of the proposed project.
- Describe the project schedule, the key milestones and opportunities for public involvement.
- Identify issues for analysis in the EIS.
- Present the purpose and need and project description.
- Ensure that we have reached key stakeholders and obtained their perspectives.
- Identify siting opportunities and constraints for consideration in the alternatives screening analysis.

The comments received from agencies and the public during scoping will be used to guide the alternatives screening analysis in the next phase of the EIS.

Alternatives Screening Analysis

Once scoping is complete, Western will begin the alternatives screening analysis phase of the EIS. Options that meet the project purpose and need will be developed during this phase.

Western will host a series of field visits and small group workshops to solicit input about options to consider and potential issues or impacts. Western will seek input from the public and interested Federal, state, and local agencies, and Native American tribes.

Objectives for Alternatives Screening Analysis

- Identify routing opportunities and constraints.
- Develop alternatives screening criteria.
- Participate in exercises to review and refine routing options.
- Provide a forum for the public to comment on routing options and ask questions about the process.

The comments received from agencies and the public during this phase will be considered during the alternatives screening analysis, resulting in the alternatives considered in the Draft EIS.

Draft EIS Review

Following the alternatives screening analysis and workshops, a Draft EIS will be prepared to assess the environmental impacts of the alternatives carried forward in the EIS. Once the Draft EIS is released, agencies and the public will have an opportunity to comment on the EIS during a 45-day review period. Western will hold public hearings and open houses to provide information on the Draft EIS analyses and gather public input.

Objectives for Draft EIS Review

- Receive public comments on the Draft EIS through formal public hearings.
- Provide a forum for the public to ask questions about the findings of the Draft EIS.

Final EIS and Records of Decision

The Final EIS will include responses to all substantive public comments received on the Draft EIS. Western will not issue its Record of Decision until at least 30 days after the issuance of the Final EIS. The Forest Service will be using the information in the Final EIS to write its Record of Decision.

Objectives for Final EIS and Records of Decision

- Publish Final EIS incorporating comments received on the Draft EIS.
- Publish RODs.

Technology Spotlight

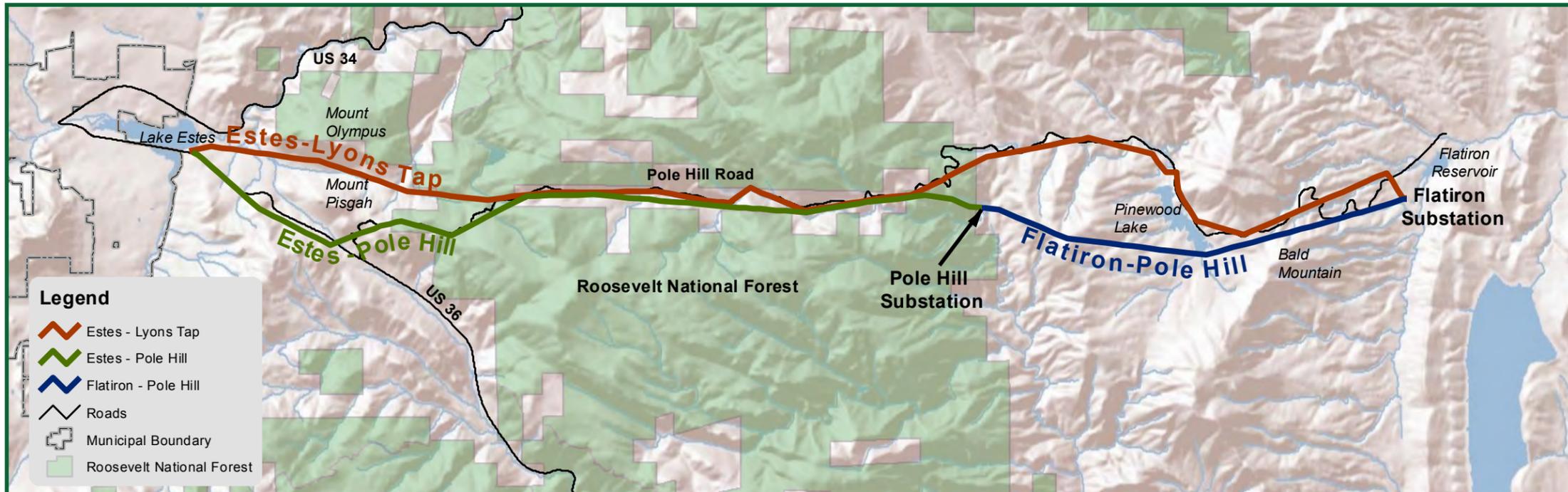
Electric and Magnetic Fields (EMF) on the proposed rebuilt double-circuit transmission line would be lower than on the existing single-circuit line as a result of the following design elements:

- Rebuilt conductors would be slightly higher above ground, reducing the EMF at ground level.
- The rebuilt line would be constructed with vertical single poles and short crossarms, known as a vertical geometry, which yields some cancellation and shielding effects.
- The rebuilt line would generally carry the same load, or current flow, and combined with the vertical geometry, would yield some overall reduction of the magnetic field.

Focus on Design

Context Sensitive Design is an approach to decision-making and design that takes into consideration the communities and lands that the transmission line passes. This concept will be incorporated into the alternatives development process for the Estes-Flatiron Transmission Line Rebuild. Context sensitive design concepts could:

- Optimize transmission structure design, heights, and locations to reduce landscape and visual effects.
- Identify opportunities to consolidate or share rights-of-way and parallel linear features.
- Identify opportunities to screen or back-drop structures and reduce skylining.
- Engage stakeholders and communities in the development of project-specific design criteria.



Existing Transmission Lines



The proposed project would consolidate existing transmission line rights-of-way.

Next Steps: Alternatives Development Workshops

Western will be hosting public workshops to develop alternatives from October 2-4, 2012:

- **Bison Visitor Center**
1800 S. County Road 31, Loveland, CO
Tuesday October 2, 4:00 - 6:00 pm
- **Estes Park Museum**
200 Fourth Street, Estes Park, CO
Wednesday October 3, 10:00 am to 2:00 pm
Thursday October 4, 2:00 to 7:00 pm

Drop in anytime during workshop hours to learn about and suggest route and design options.

Contact

For more information, contact Tim Snowden, Western Area Power Administration, 5555 E. Crossroads Blvd., P.O. Box 3700, Loveland, CO 80539-3003, fax (970) 461-7213 or e-mail, RMR_estesflatironeis@wapa.gov. Or, if you would like someone to contact you, please leave a voicemail at (720) 962-7213.

Additional Information

For more information on the project, visit <http://go.usa.gov/rvtP>

To learn more about NEPA's environmental processes, visit: <http://energy.gov/nepa/office-nepa-policy-and-compliance>

Estes-to-Flatiron Transmission Line Rebuild Project Environmental Impact Statement Newsletter

Western Area Power Administration

September 2012, Volume 2

Public Scoping Period Extended

Western initiated a 90-day public scoping period for the Estes-to-Flatiron Transmission Line Rebuild Project with publication of a Notice of Intent in the *Federal Register* (77 FR 22774) on April 17, 2012. The scoping period was subsequently extended to August 31, 2012 to allow the public an opportunity to provide comment following scoping meetings held on August 6 and 7 in Loveland and Estes Park, CO, respectively. Western has now extended the scoping period through October 19, 2012 to allow the public an opportunity to provide input on the alternatives for the draft EIS.

Alternatives Development Workshops

Public alternatives development workshops will be held at the Estes Park Museum, the Bison Visitor Center near Flatiron Reservoir, and other satellite locations over three days to identify route options and design features to be considered during the alternatives screening process.

The purpose of the satellite workshops is to provide a more convenient, local location for small groups of attendees to meet with the project team. The locations, dates, and times for the satellite sessions will be announced prior to the workshops on Western's website at <http://go.usa.gov/rvtP>.

The same information and activities available at Estes Park Museum will also be presented at the satellite workshops. The Estes Park Museum will serve as the repository for all information collected during the three days of public workshops. This will allow attendees to stop by the Estes Park Museum on October 3rd and 4th, 2012 to brainstorm route options and review information gathered from the satellite locations.

Objectives for Alternatives Workshops

Objectives of the alternatives development workshops are to:

- Present opportunities, constraints, and other considerations that may influence potential transmission line routes.
- Suggest, review, and refine route options and design features.
- Provide a forum for the public to comment on or ask questions about the alternatives screening process.

In preparation for alternatives workshops, Western has compiled map data related to key siting considerations in the project area. Mapped resource data will be available for public review and comment at the alternatives workshops and the public will be invited to propose route options that are responsive to these siting considerations. Input on transmission line design features such as structure type and finish, and method of construction, will also be requested.

Following the alternatives workshops, Western will complete its alternatives analysis to determine which alternative routes will be carried forward for full analysis in the draft EIS. The alternatives analysis will also address which alternative design treatment and construction methods will be carried forward for segments of the alternatives routes where siting sensitivities have been identified.

What is being proposed?

Western proposes to rebuild the electric transmission lines between Estes Park and Flatiron Reservoir. The transmission line rebuild is needed to:

- **Ensure reliable and cost-effective electricity** is provided to Estes Park, Loveland and other Front Range communities.
- **Improve transmission safety** by updating facilities and rebuilding 60-70+ year-old transmission lines to be compliant with current standards.
- **Improve emergency and maintenance access** to the lines.

No decisions on alternatives have been made.



How will EIS Alternatives be Developed?

Route options identified by the public, Forest Service, and Western will be screened to identify those options that best meet the project purpose and need while minimizing adverse project effects. The alternatives screening analysis will consider project requirements, environmental effects, and input from the public received during scoping.

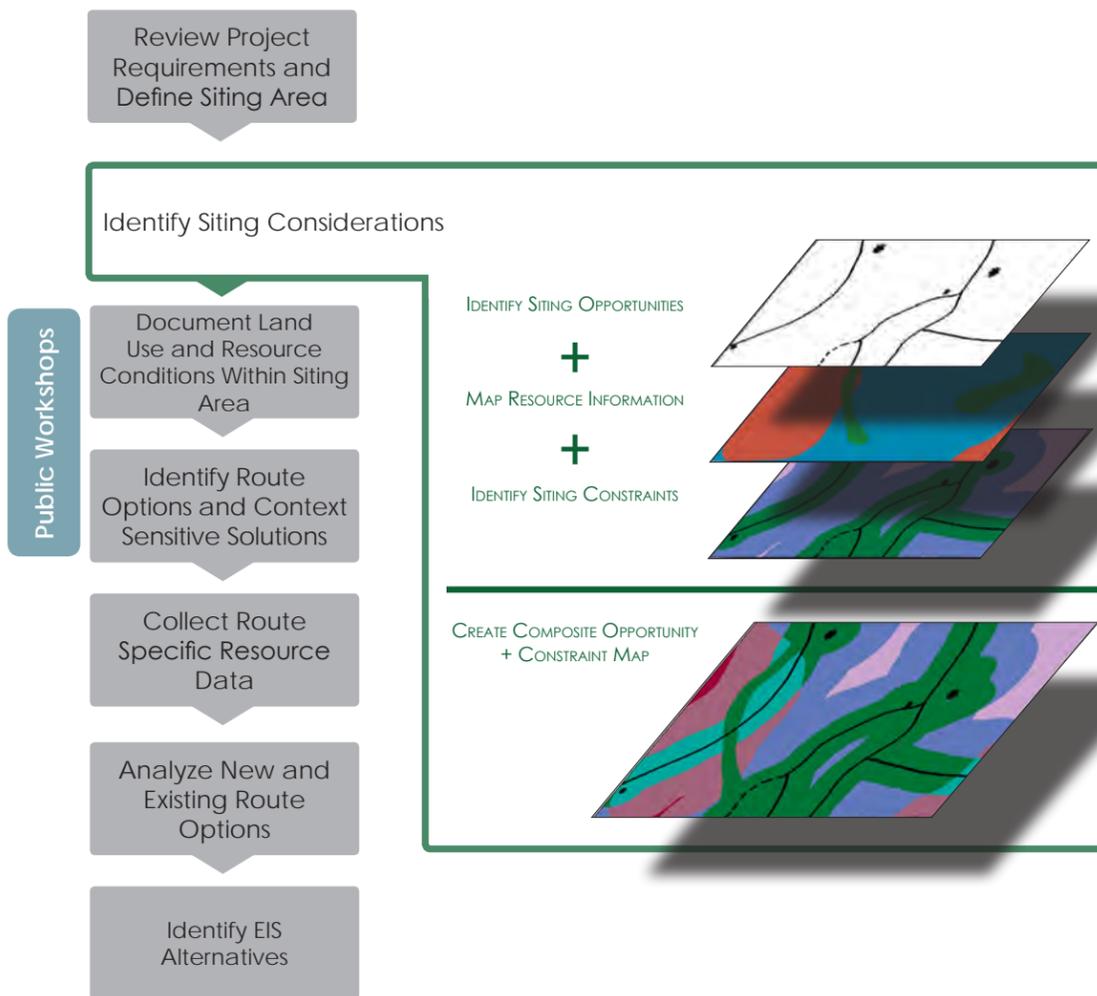
Comparative matrices will be used to rank route options with regard to:

- Whether the route option meets the project purpose and need.
- Environmental effects of each route option on key resources.
- Engineering considerations such as total length, number of structures, topography, and access.
- Relationship to Western's existing rights-of-way.
- Technical and financial feasibility of the route option.

Results of this comparative analysis will be used to determine whether each route option should be analyzed in detail as an alternative in the EIS or be eliminated from further consideration. Public input on design treatments including structure type and finishes will also be addressed in the comparative analysis and alternative development process.

How to Participate

Western is now soliciting input about alternative transmission routes and structure options from the public; interested Federal, state, and local agencies; and Native American tribes. You can suggest route and design options by participating in an upcoming Alternatives Development Workshop or by sending your comments in writing. Public input received by October 19, 2012 will help Western and cooperating agencies identify alternatives to be analyzed in the draft EIS.

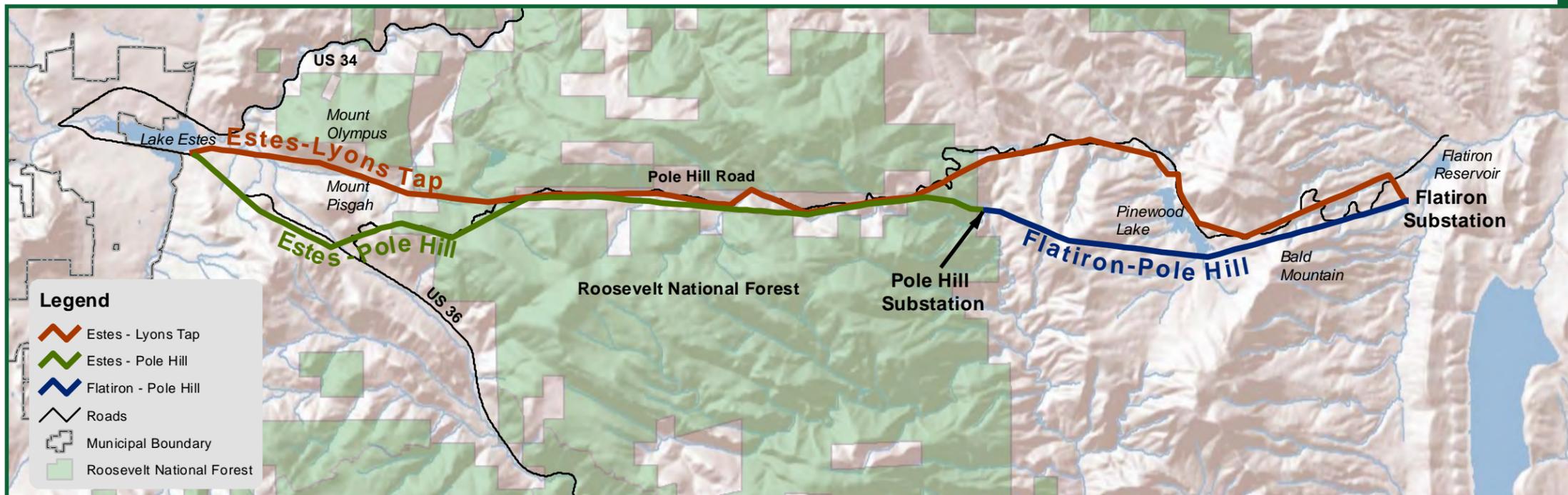


Technology Spotlight: Undergrounding

Common questions heard during scoping were: "Can the transmission line be placed underground? What are the environmental, engineering, and economic trade-offs of undergrounding?" Western's Alternative Development Process will address whether or not undergrounding portions of the proposed transmission lines rebuild would be technically and economically viable. Western's draft EIS will include the results of Western's analysis addressing the cost, construction and maintenance requirements for undergrounding portions of the proposed transmission lines rebuild. The Wisconsin Public Utilities Commission has prepared an overview that contains information about electric transmission lines which are installed underground, rather than overhead on poles or towers (see <http://psc.wi.gov/thelibrary/publications/electric/electric11.pdf>). A copy of this overview is available on Western's web page for the proposed Estes-to-Flatiron transmission lines rebuild.



Example of transmission lines installed in concrete-encased duct banks



Existing transmission lines proposed for rebuild for the Estes-to-Flatiron Transmission Line Rebuild Project

Focus on Design

Western is evaluating a range of transmission structure types to determine their suitability for the Estes-to-Flatiron Transmission Line Rebuild Project. Potential structure designs, profiles, heights, and finishes will be presented at alternatives workshops for public input. Structure selection will be limited to the family of structures that meet the engineering and electrical load requirements for Western's 115-kV transmission lines.

Submit Your Comments by:

- Email: RMR_estesflatironeis@wapa.gov
- Fax: (970) 461-7213
- At the public workshops: October 2, 3, and 4, 2012
- Mail:
 - Tim Snowden
 - Western Area Power Administration
 - 5555 E. Crossroads Blvd.
 - P.O. Box 3700
 - Loveland, CO 80539-3003

Attachment E
Email Notifications

From: RMR_estesflatironeis [RMR_estesflatironeis@wapa.gov]
Sent: Tuesday, July 03, 2012 3:25 PM
To: RMR_estesflatironeis
Subject: Scoping Comment Period Extended for Estes-to-Flatiron Substation Transmission Lines Rebuild EIS

On June 27, 2012, Western Area Power Administration announced that it is extending the public scoping process through August 31, 2012 for the Estes-to-Flatiron Substation Transmission Lines Rebuild Project environmental impact statement (EIS) .

Western had initiated a 90-day public scoping process in Larimer County, Colo., April 17 by publishing a notice of intent in the Federal Register (77 FR 22774). The extension provides additional opportunities for the public to provide comments and identify issues, opportunities and concerns that should be considered in the draft EIS.

For more information on the project or to view the News Release for extending the scoping period, visit <http://ww2.wapa.gov/sites/western/transmission/infrastruct/Pages/Estes-Flatiron.aspx>.

To provide the public with an opportunity to review the proposal and project information, Western will hold two public meetings in August 2012: one meeting in Estes Park, Colo., and one meeting in Loveland, Colo., during the public scoping period. Western will announce the dates and locations of the public scoping meetings through local news media, newsletters and posting on the Western website at <http://ww2.wapa.gov/sites/western/transmission/infrastruct/Pages/Estes-Flatiron.aspx>, at least 15 days prior to each meeting.

The public can submit comments on the proposal at any time during the EIS process by mail to Tim Snowden, Western Area Power Administration, 5555 E. Crossroads Blvd., P.O. Box 3700, Loveland, CO 80539-3003, fax (970) 461-7213 or e-mail, RMR_estesflatironeis@wapa.gov.

From: RMR_estesflatironeis
To: RMR_estesflatironeis
Date: 9/17/2012 2:46 PM
Subject: ESTES-FLATIRON PROJECT SCOPING PERIOD EXTENDED TO OCT. 19 -- WORKSHOPS PLANNED OCT. 2-4
Attachments: Estes-Flatiron Newsletter #2 Sept 2012.pdf

Western Area Power Administration is extending the public scoping period of the Estes-to-Flatiron Substation Transmission Lines Rebuild Project environmental impact statement (EIS) process through Oct. 19 based on public requests and to allow the public an opportunity to provide input on the project alternatives.

"Western extended the EIS comment period once already to provide additional opportunities for the public to identify issues, opportunities and concerns about the project," said Tim Snowden, from Western's Natural Resources office. "Public comments received thus far requested more time to submit comments. Western wants to make sure interested participants have every opportunity in our expanded public participation process to provide informed comments before the draft environmental impact statement is developed."

Western proposes to upgrade and co-locate two aging transmission lines in the area onto one right of way. Upgrading these lines is necessary to comply with safety standards; ensure reliable and cost effective electricity in Estes Park, Loveland and along the Front Range; and provide accessibility for maintenance and emergencies. The lines in question are essential for the delivery of power to the Town of Estes Park from a variety of generation sources along the Front Range.

Public workshops set for early October

To provide the public with an opportunity to provide input on the alternative development process for the draft EIS, Western will hold three public workshops in October 2012:

Oct. 2 in Loveland at the Bison Visitor Center between 4 and 6 p.m.

Oct. 3 in Estes Park, Colo. at the Estes Park Museum between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.

Oct. 4 in Estes Park, Colo. at the Estes Park Museum between 2 and 7 p.m.

In addition, Western will arrange accompanying satellite alternative development sessions with key stakeholder groups during the same days scheduled for the alternative development workshops. The results of the satellite alternative development sessions will be posted at the workshop locations as results become available. The locations, dates, and times for the satellite sessions will be announced on Western's Estes-Flatiron webpage at: <http://go.usa.gov/rvtP>. Please see the attached newsletter for further information on the alternative development workshops.

Comments from the workshops, as well as comments received since the scoping process for this EIS began April 17, 2012 will be considered in defining the scope of the EIS and alternative development process.

In order to ensure consideration in the draft EIS, all comments must be received before the end of the scoping period. Western will provide additional opportunities for public participation when the draft EIS is published.

The public can submit comments on the proposal at any time during the EIS process by mail to Tim Snowden, Western Area Power Administration, 5555 E. Crossroads Blvd., P.O. Box 3700, Loveland, CO 80539-3003, fax (970) 461-7213 or e-mail, RMR_estesflatironeis@wapa.gov.

For additional information on the proposed project, the EIS process, or to receive a copy of the draft EIS when it is published, contact Tim Snowden by the methods noted above.

The Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forest is a cooperating agency on the EIS. For more information on the project, visit <http://go.usa.gov/rvtP>. To learn more about NEPA's environmental processes, visit <http://energy.gov/nepa/office-nepa-policy-and-compliance>.

From: RMR_estesflatironeis [RMR_estesflatironeis@wapa.gov]
Sent: Monday, October 01, 2012 10:22 AM
To: RMR_estesflatironeis
Subject: REMINDER: WORKSHOPS SET FOR ESTES-FLATIRON REBUILD PROJECT OCT. 2-4

Western Area Power Administration (Western) proposes to upgrade and co-locate two aging transmission lines in the area onto one right of way. Upgrading these lines is necessary to comply with safety standards; ensure reliable and cost effective electricity in Estes Park, Loveland and along the Front Range; and provide accessibility for maintenance and emergencies. The lines in question are essential for the delivery of power to the Town of Estes Park from a variety of generation sources along the Front Range.

Public workshops set for October 2-4

To provide the public with an opportunity to provide input on the alternative development process for the draft environmental impact statement (EIS), Western will hold three public workshops in October 2012:

- Oct. 2 in Loveland, Colo. at the Bison Visitor Center between 4 and 6 p.m.
- Oct. 3 in Estes Park, Colo. at the Estes Park Museum between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.
- Oct. 4 in Estes Park, Colo. at the Estes Park Museum between 2 and 7 p.m.

In addition, Western has arranged accompanying satellite alternative development sessions with the Pinewood Community on Oct. 2 at the Bison Visitor Center between 7 and 9 p.m., and the Meadowdale Hills Property Owners Association on Oct. 4 at the Estes Park Museum between 7 and 8:30 p.m. The results of the satellite alternative development sessions will be posted at the workshop locations and Western's Estes-Flatiron webpage as results become available. The locations, dates, and times for any additional satellite sessions will be announced on Western's Estes-Flatiron webpage at: <http://go.usa.gov/rvtP>.

Western is extending the public scoping period of the Estes-to-Flatiron Substation Transmission Lines Rebuild Project EIS process through Oct. 19 based on public requests and to allow the public an opportunity to provide input on the project alternatives. Comments from the workshops, as well as comments received since the scoping process for this EIS began April 17, 2012, will be considered in defining the scope of the EIS and alternative development process.

In order to ensure consideration in the draft EIS, all comments must be received before the end of the scoping period on Oct. 19. Western will provide additional opportunities for public participation when the draft EIS is published.

The public can submit comments on the proposal at any time during the EIS process by mail to Tim Snowden, Western Area Power Administration, 5555 E. Crossroads Blvd., P.O. Box 3700, Loveland, CO 80539-3003, fax (970) 461-7213 or e-mail, RMR_estesflatironeis@wapa.gov.

For additional information on the proposed project, the EIS process, or to receive a copy of the draft EIS when it is published, contact Tim Snowden by the methods noted above.

The Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forest is a cooperating agency on the EIS.

For more information on the project, visit <http://go.usa.gov/rvtP>. To learn more about NEPA's environmental processes, visit <http://energy.gov/nepa/office-nepa-policy-and-compliance>.

From: RMR_estesflatironeis [RMR_estesflatironeis@wapa.gov]
Sent: Tuesday, October 02, 2012 9:29 AM
To: RMR_estesflatironeis
Subject: CORRECTION: WORKSHOPS SET FOR ESTES-FLATIRON REBUILD PROJECT OCT. 2-4

Please note that the Meadowdale Hills Property Owners Association satellite session as announced in yesterday's reminder will not be held. All other workshop and satellite sessions are still scheduled as announced and described below.

Public workshops set for October 2-4

To provide the public with an opportunity to provide input on the alternative development process for the draft environmental impact statement (EIS), Western will hold three public workshops in October 2012:

- Oct. 2 in Loveland, Colo. at the Bison Visitor Center between 4 and 6 p.m.
- Oct. 3 in Estes Park, Colo. at the Estes Park Museum between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.
- Oct. 4 in Estes Park, Colo. at the Estes Park Museum between 2 and 7 p.m.

In addition, Western has arranged accompanying satellite alternative development sessions with the Pinewood Community on Oct. 2 at the Bison Visitor Center between 7 and 9 p.m. The results of the satellite alternative development session will be posted at the workshop locations and Western's Estes-Flatiron webpage as results become available. The locations, dates, and times for any additional satellite sessions will be announced on Western's Estes-Flatiron webpage at: <http://go.usa.gov/rvtP>.

Western is extending the public scoping period of the Estes-to-Flatiron Substation Transmission Lines Rebuild Project EIS process through Oct. 19 based on public requests and to allow the public an opportunity to provide input on the project alternatives. Comments from the workshops, as well as comments received since the scoping process for this EIS began April 17, 2012, will be considered in defining the scope of the EIS and alternative development process.

In order to ensure consideration in the draft EIS, all comments must be received before the end of the scoping period on Oct. 19. Western will provide additional opportunities for public participation when the draft EIS is published.

The public can submit comments on the proposal at any time during the EIS process by mail to Tim Snowden, Western Area Power Administration, 5555 E. Crossroads Blvd., P.O. Box 3700, Loveland, CO 80539-3003, fax (970) 461-7213 or e-mail, RMR_estesflatironeis@wapa.gov.

For additional information on the proposed project, the EIS process, or to receive a copy of the draft EIS when it is published, contact Tim Snowden by the methods noted above.

The Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forest is a cooperating agency on the EIS.

For more information on the project, visit <http://go.usa.gov/rvtP>. To learn more about NEPA's environmental processes, visit <http://energy.gov/nepa/office-nepa-policy-and-compliance>.

From: RMR_estesflatironeis [RMR_estesflatironeis@wapa.gov]
Sent: Wednesday, October 17, 2012 3:18 PM
To: RMR_estesflatironeis
Subject: Estes-Flatiron Transmission Lines Rebuild Project Workshops help define EIS Alternatives

[Estes Park, Loveland citizens share ideas during alternative design workshops for Estes-Flatiron transmission project](#)



Neighbors, local government officials and Western representatives gathered around a large map during workshop meetings, Oct. 2 to 4, where they discussed options for an upgrade to combine two transmission lines into one right of way. Both lines feed the Town of Estes and other nearby communities in Colorado with energy.

Drawing alternative routes with colored markers, neighbors talked about how different paths for the power line could impact the environment, their neighbors and the scenic views of their town and surrounding national forests. For some participants, it was an educational experience in the complexity of differing views and issues that came up regarding their ideas.

The collective thoughts and considerations of these engaged citizens will help Western Area Power Administration determine the alternatives it will review in its draft environmental impact statement for the [Estes-Flatiron Transmission Line Rebuild Project](#).

Western is preparing to analyze how different alternatives for rebuilding or maintaining the transmission system will provide reliable power and impact the environment, landowners and surrounding communities. With high public interest for this project, Western extended the scoping period through Oct. 19 to work with the local communities to:

1. Identify transmission line route options
2. Gather input on design/structure features
3. Understand the many issues and impacts with any alternative route

Get involved

If you would like to provide input on route alternatives or structure design, take the time to [examine the scoping and alternative development materials](#) and [reply to Western](#) by Oct. 19. The input will help Western and cooperating agencies identify alternatives to be analyzed in the draft environmental impact statement.

Attachment F

.....**Gcoping AYYib['A UYf]Us**

Submit Your Comments by:

- Email: RMR_estesflatironeis@wapa.gov
- Fax: (970) 461-7213
- Mail: at the mailing address below
- At the public scoping meetings: August 6 and 7, 2012

For More Information, Contact:

Tim Snowden
Western Area Power Administration
5555 E. Crossroads Blvd.
P.O. Box 3700
Loveland, CO 80539-3003

Email: RMR_estesflatironeis@wapa.gov

Or, if you would like someone to contact you, please leave a voicemail at (720) 962-7213.

COMMENTS MUST BE RECEIVED OR POSTMARKED BY AUGUST 31, 2012

FOLD HERE

Western Area Power Administration
5555 E. Crossroads Blvd.
P.O. Box 3700
Loveland, CO 80539-3003

Place
Stamp
Here

Tim Snowden
Western Area Power Administration
5555 E. Crossroads Blvd.
P.O. Box 3700
Loveland, CO 80539-3003

TAPE HERE (DO NOT STAPLE)

WELCOME!



Estes to Flatiron Transmission Lines Rebuild Scoping Meetings

(Drop In anytime from 10 am to 7 pm)

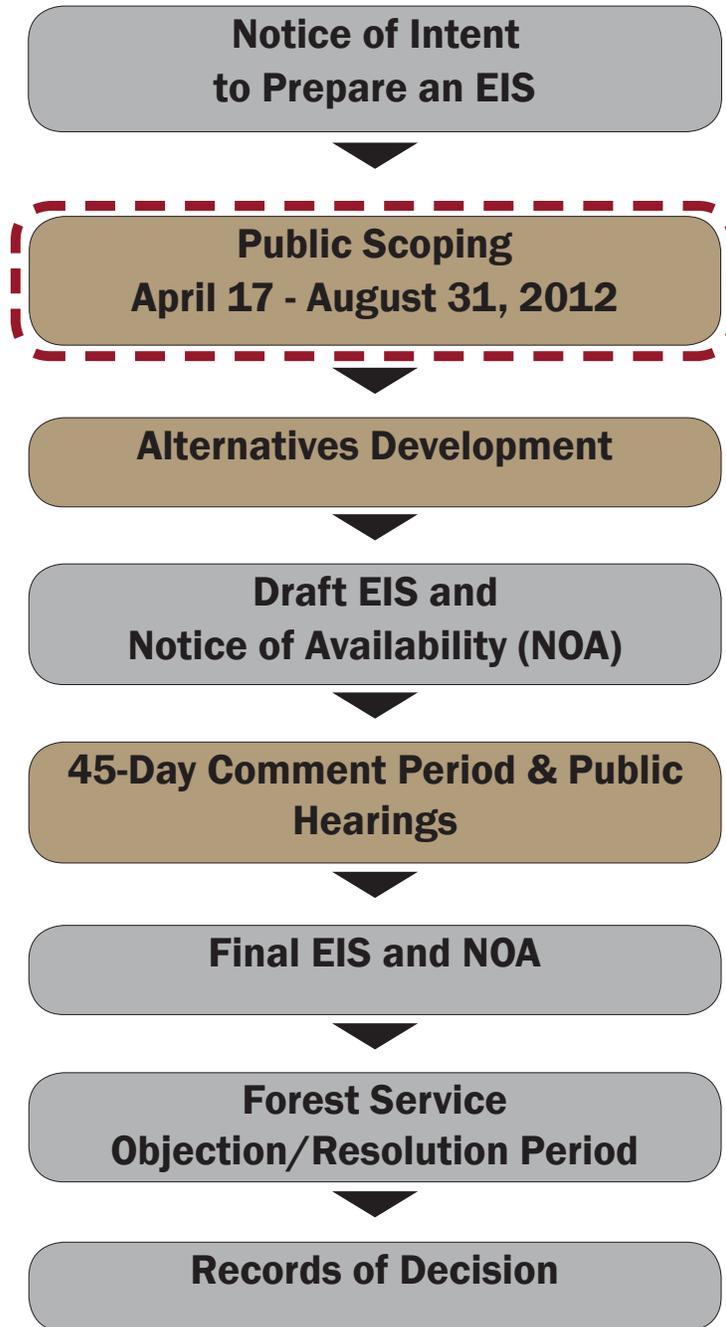
August 6, 2012

Loveland Public Library
Gertrude Scott Meeting Room
300 North Adams Avenue
Loveland, CO

August 7, 2012

Rocky Mountain Park Inn &
Estes Park Conference Center
101 South Saint Vrain Avenue
Estes Park, CO

EIS PROCESS



WE ARE HERE
"Starting from the beginning, but capitalizing on what we have learned to date."

 Opportunities for Public Input

HOW TO PARTICIPATE



- **Sign in** and join the project mailing list in order to stay informed on the project's progress.
- **Visit** stations and read materials.
- **Ask** questions and give comments to Western and US Forest Service representatives.
- **Record** your comments with our staff at a computer station.
- **Write** your comments on the comment sheet, or send written comments by mail or email.
- **Stay informed** by visiting the project website at <http://ww2.wapa.gov/sites/western/transmission/infrastruct/Pages/Estes-Flatiron.aspx>

HOW TO PARTICIPATE



At this meeting:

1. Learn how to engage in the process;
2. Ensure your issues have been recorded; and
3. Learn about upcoming alternatives workshops.

After this meeting, send comments to:

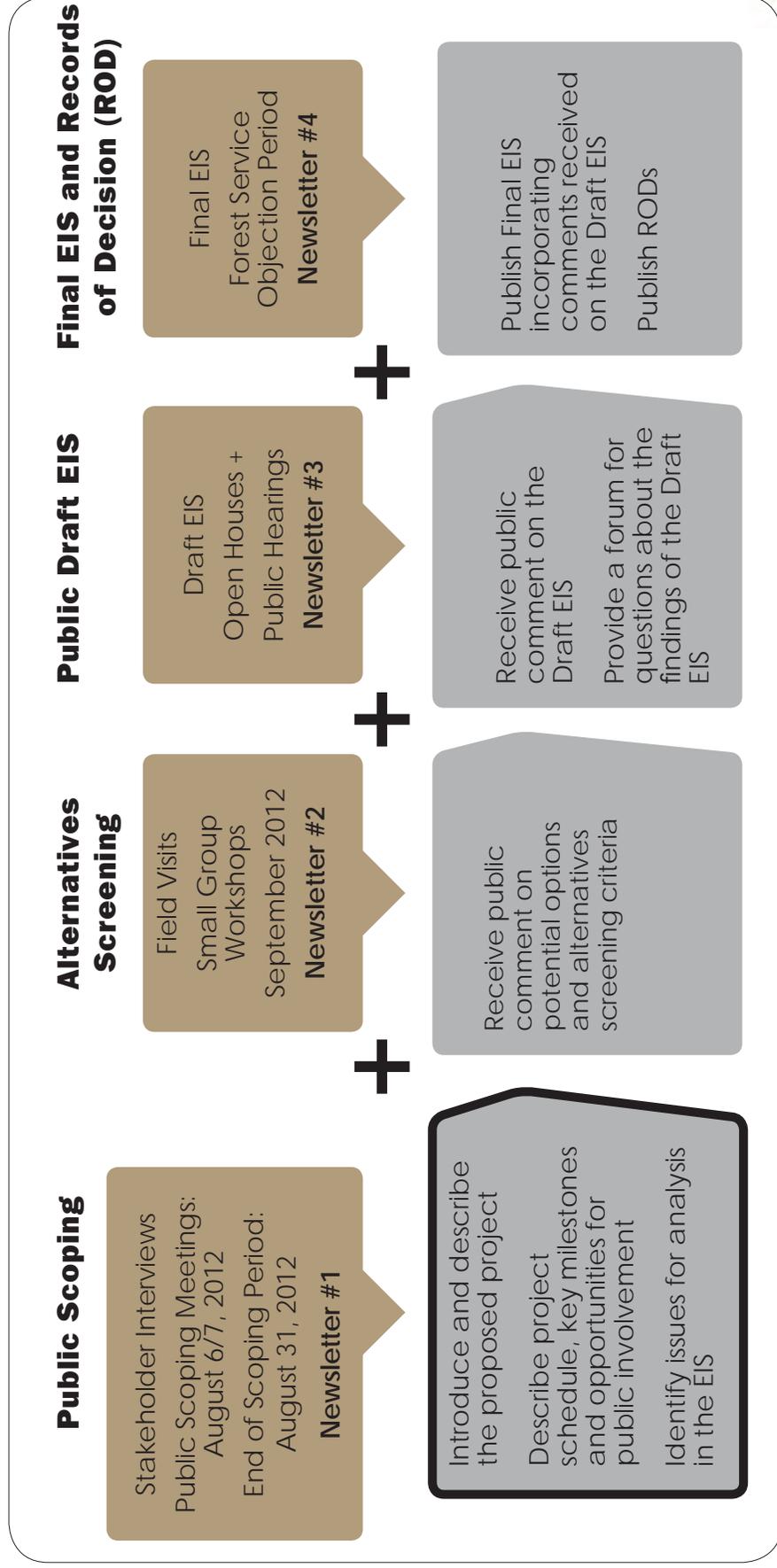
Tim Snowden
Western Area Power Administration
5555 East Crossroads Blvd.
PO Box 3700
Loveland, CO 80539-3003
RMR_EstesFlatironEIS@wapa.gov
Fax: 970-461-7213

**Scoping comments must be postmarked
or received by August 31, 2012**

EXPANDED PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT



Western is providing an expanded public involvement process for the Estes to Flatiron Transmission Line Rebuild, as detailed below.



PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT:



Scoping

- Provide an overview of the project purpose and need.
- Identify siting opportunities and constraints for consideration in the alternatives screening analysis.
- Identify issues for analysis in the EIS.
- Ensure that we have reached key stakeholders and obtained their perspectives.

The comments received from agencies and the public during scoping will be used to guide the alternatives screening analysis and development of the Draft EIS.

Alternatives Development

Route options that meet the project purpose and need will be developed during this phase. Western will host a series of field visits and small group workshops to solicit input about options to consider and potential issues or impacts.

OBJECTIVES FOR ALTERNATIVES DEVELOPMENT

- Engage the public in workshops and field trips to identify and refine routing options.
- Provide a forum for the public to comment on routing options.

The comments received from agencies and the public during this phase will be considered during the alternatives screening analysis, resulting in the alternatives considered in the Draft EIS.

Draft EIS Review

Agencies and the public will have an opportunity to comment on the Draft EIS during a 45-day public review period. Western will hold public hearings and open houses to provide information on the Draft EIS analyses and gather public input.

OBJECTIVES FOR DRAFT EIS REVIEW

- Provide a forum for the public to provide comments on, or to ask questions about, the findings of the Draft EIS.

Final EIS and Records of Decision

The Final EIS will include responses to all substantive public comments received on the Draft EIS. Western's Record of Decision will not be issued until at least 30 days after the issuance of the Final EIS. The Forest Service will be using the information in the Final EIS to write its Record of Decision, which would not be issued until 45 days after the issuance of the Final EIS.

PROJECT OVERVIEW



Western proposes to rebuild two existing H-frame wood-pole 115-kV transmission lines, totaling about 32 miles long, between Flatiron Reservoir and Estes Park. These lines are over 60 years old. The rebuild would consolidate the two existing 115-kV lines onto a single right-of-way (ROW) using double circuit structures.

The proposed project would rebuild aging and deteriorating transmission lines, and reduce the linear miles of transmission line by half. Western's proposal includes:

- Approximately 16 miles of the existing transmission line would be removed.
- The transmission line would be rebuilt with steel monopole structures replacing the existing wood H-frame structures, in a double-circuit configuration (i.e., six conductors per structure).
- Utilizing existing ROW, if possible.
- Structure height would increase from 70 feet to up to 105 feet.
- ROW would need to be expanded to 110 feet in areas with inadequate ROW.

PURPOSE AND NEED



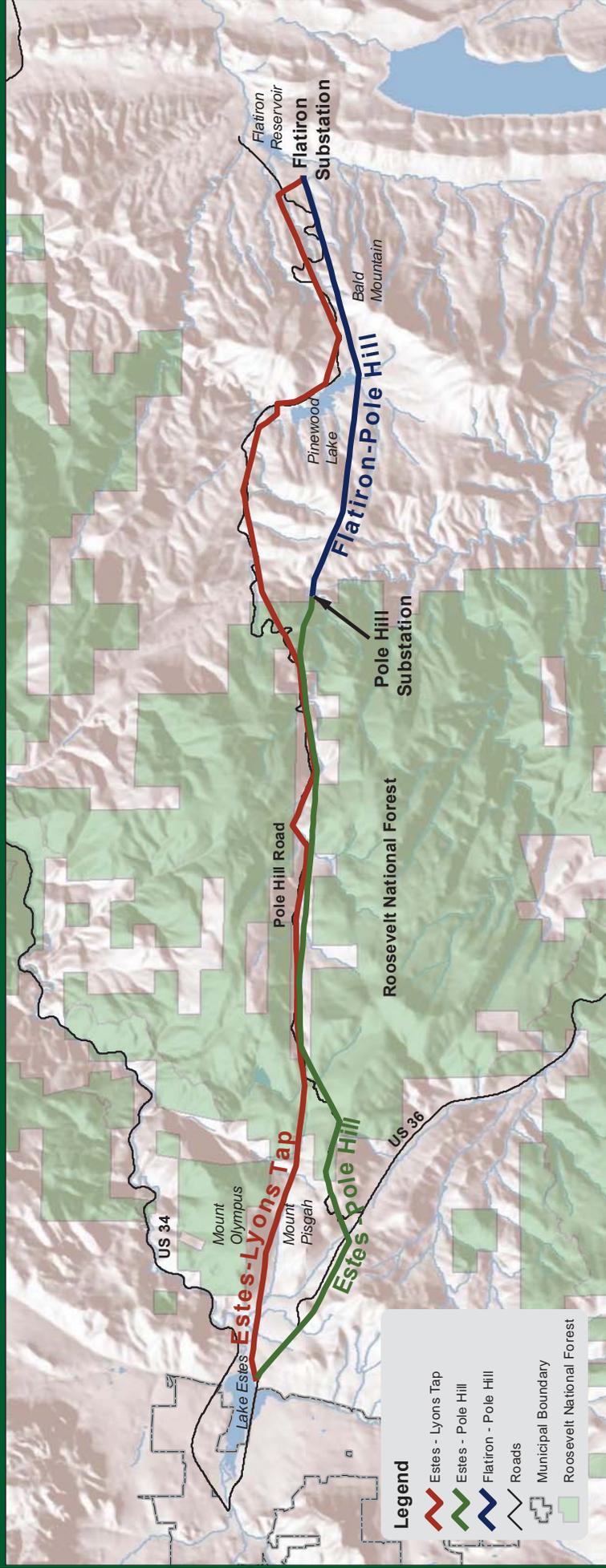
Western Area Power Administration proposes to rebuild the electric transmission line between Estes Park and Flatiron Reservoir.

The transmission line rebuild **is needed to:**

- **Ensure reliable and cost-effective electricity** is provided to Estes Park, Loveland and other Front Range communities.
- **Improve transmission safety** by updating facilities and rebuilding 60-70+ year-old transmission lines to be compliant with current standards.
- **Improve emergency and maintenance access** to the line.

U.S. FOREST SERVICE IS A COOPERATING AGENCY ON THE EIS AND WILL BE MAKING A DECISION REGARDING ACTIONS ON NATIONAL FOREST SYSTEM LAND.

PROJECT MAP



Existing Transmission Lines



KEY ISSUES



Key issues raised during public scoping for the EA include:

- Potential effects to visual resources and rural aesthetics;
- Electric and Magnetic Fields (EMF);
- Alternative routing options;
- Effects on property values;
- Recreation impacts on Forest Service land;
- Effects on social and economic conditions in the tourist economy of Estes Park;
- Conflicts with other utilities;
- Human health effects and electromagnetic field effects;
- Pole height, pole placement, type of poles used, and undergrounding options;
- Watershed effects;
- Effects on access roads and construction standards;
- Vegetation management;
- Effects on biological and ecological environments;
- Feasibility of undergrounding; and
- Cost comparison of alternatives and project costs.

Comments received during the EA scoping period will be carried over into this EIS process.

ADDITIONAL ISSUES



List Other Issues Below:

NEXT STEPS: ALTERNATIVE SCREENING PROCESS



PROCESS FOR DETERMINING ROUTE ALTERNATIVES

Review Project Requirements and Define Siting Area

Identify Siting Considerations

Document Land Use and Resource Conditions Within Siting Area

Identify Route Options and Context Sensitive Solutions

Collect Route Specific Resource Data

Analyze New and Existing Route Options

Identify EIS Alternatives

Public Workshops

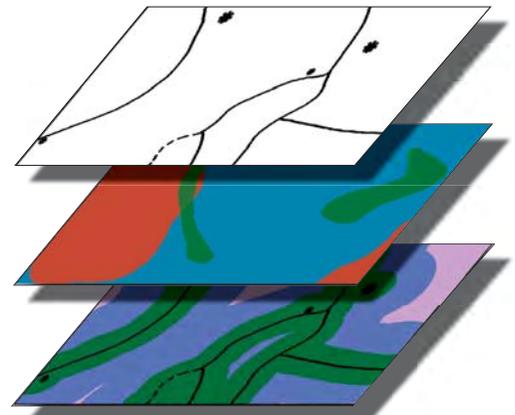
IDENTIFY SITING OPPORTUNITIES



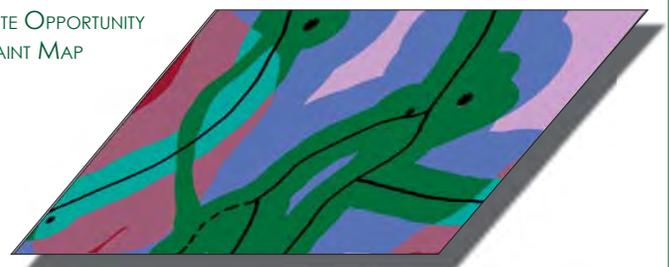
MAP RESOURCE INFORMATION



IDENTIFY SITING CONSTRAINTS



CREATE COMPOSITE OPPORTUNITY + CONSTRAINT MAP



NEXT STEPS: SITING



Example Siting Considerations:

- Conflicts with residential structures
- Geologic hazard areas (e.g., flood hazard zones)
- Protected areas (e.g., recreation areas)
- Scenic areas or routes
- Special management areas such as open lands and camping areas
- Lack of existing adequate access
- Steep rocky terrain
- Sensitive wildlife areas
- Use of existing ROWs
- Cultural resources

NEXT STEPS: SITING

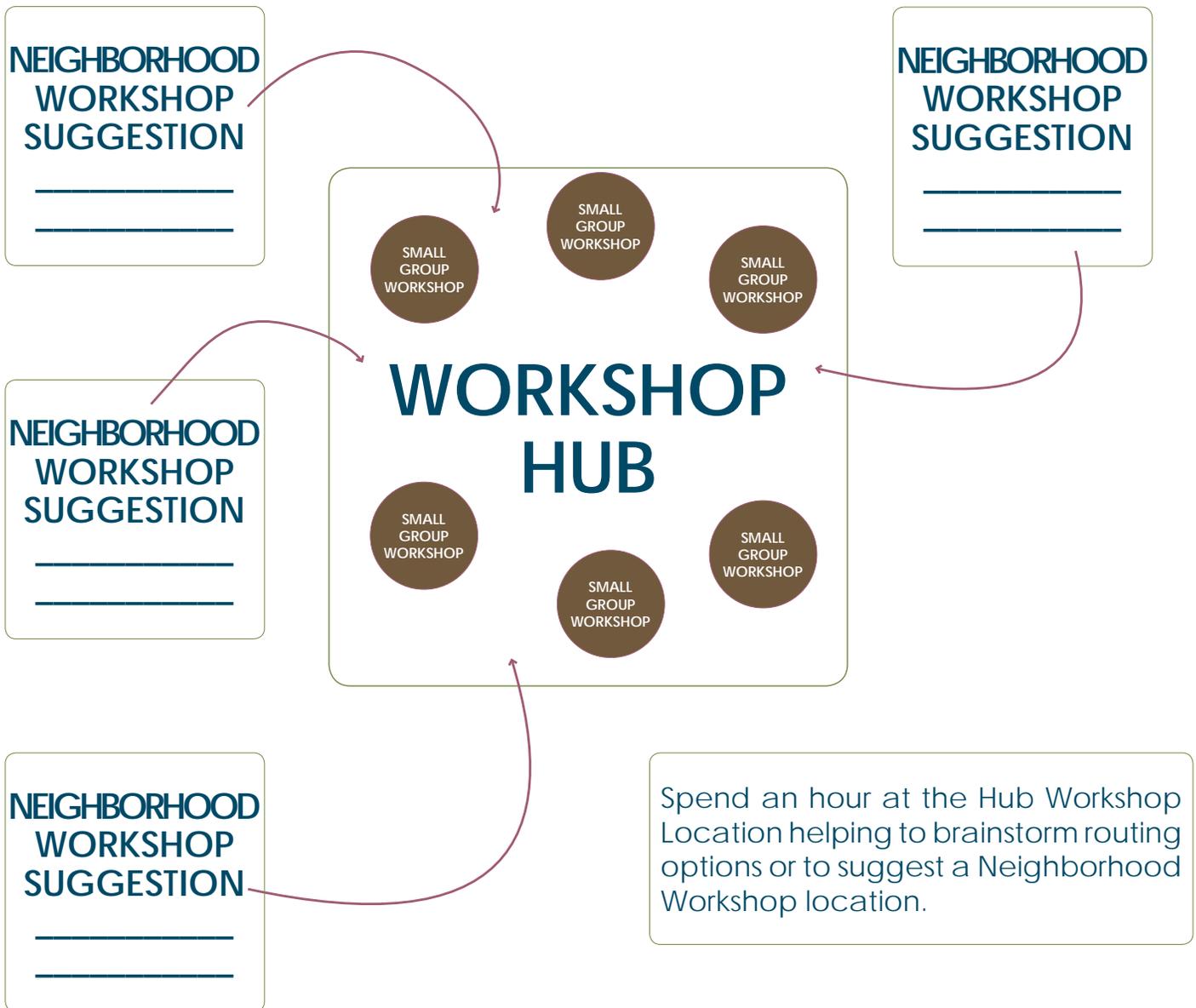


List Other Siting Considerations Below:

NEXT STEPS: WHAT TO

EXPECT AT ALTERNATIVES WORKSHOPS

"No decisions on alternatives have been made."



Attachment G

.....**Alternative Workshop Materials**

WELCOME!



Estes-to-Flatiron Transmission Lines Rebuild Alternatives Development Workshops

**October 2,
2012**

4:00-6:00 pm
Bison Visitor
Center
1800 South
County Road 31
Loveland, CO

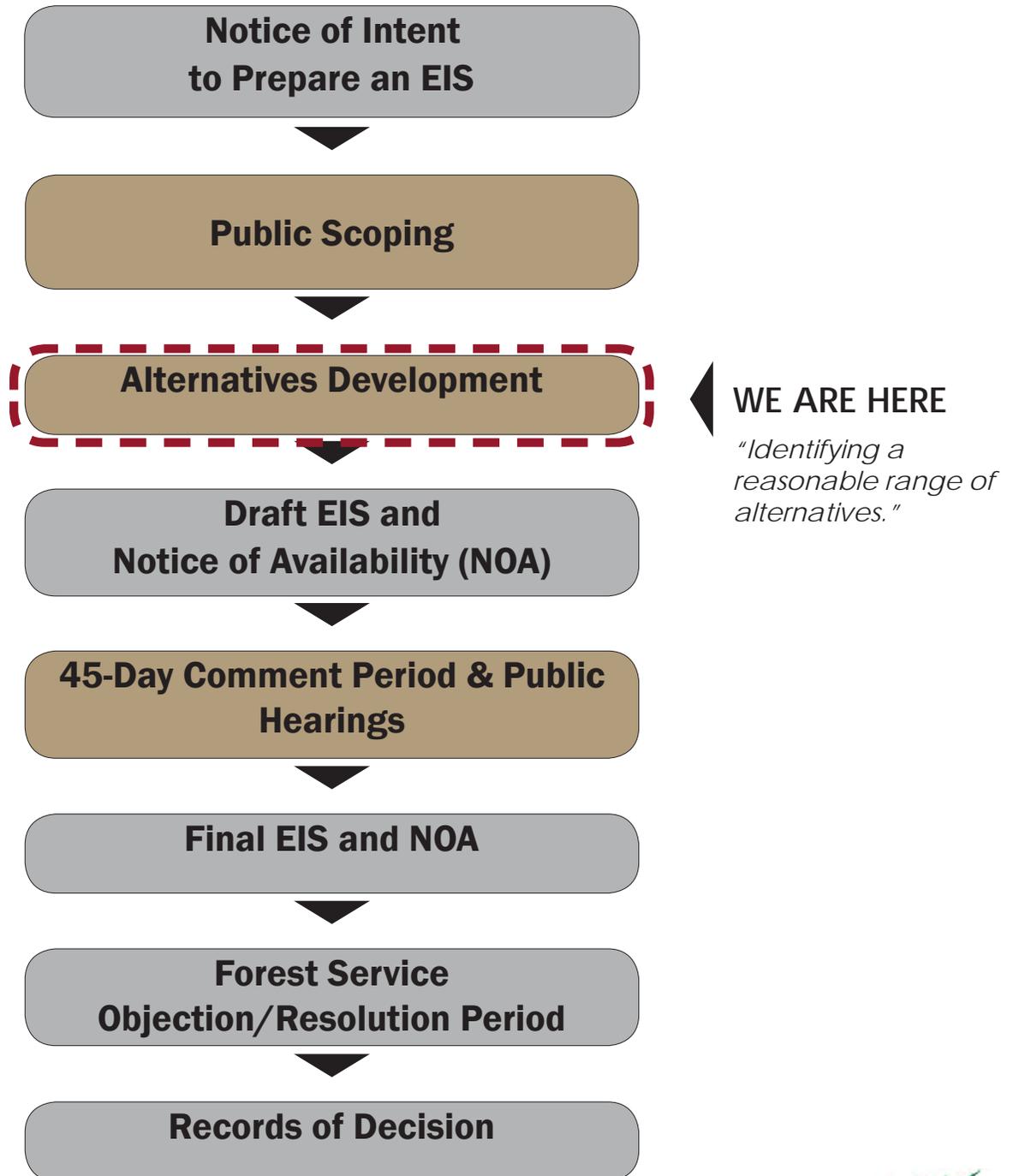
**October 3,
2012**

10:00 am-2:00 pm
Estes Park
Museum
200 Fourth Street
Estes Park, CO

**October 4,
2012**

2:00-7:00 pm
Estes Park
Museum
200 Fourth Street
Estes Park, CO

EIS PROCESS



 Opportunities for Public Input

HOW TO PARTICIPATE



1. **Sign in** and join the project mailing list in order to stay informed on the project's progress.
2. **Visit** stations to review design options and routing consideration maps. Review siting considerations that influence the development of potential transmission line routes.
3. **Join** a small group workshop. You will be asked to first identify route options and then discuss tower design, color, and height options.
4. **Ask** questions/continue a dialogue on the project.
5. **Stay informed** by visiting the project website at <http://go.usa.gov/rvtP>.

Thank you for attending!

Activities will take about an hour to complete.

WORKSHOP

GROUND RULES

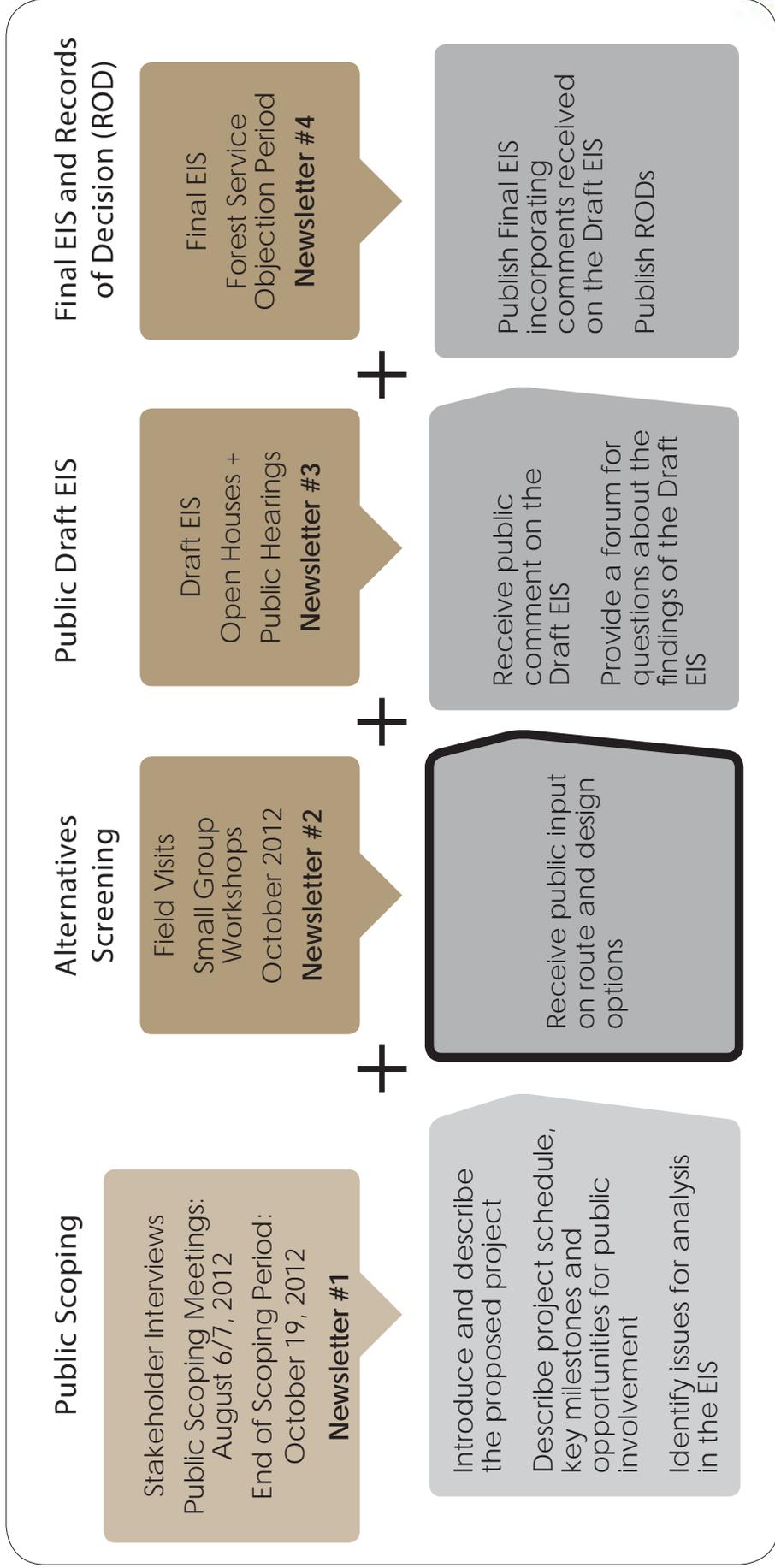
Ground Rules

1. Be respectful and courteous to other participants and staff.
2. Help maintain an atmosphere where everyone feels comfortable and welcome, regardless of his or her position on the project.
3. Allow others to speak without interrupting.
4. Please turn off cell phones and pagers, or set them to vibrate, and leave the room for side discussions.
5. Give everyone an opportunity to participate. If you have additional comments, you may submit them in writing during or after this meeting.

EXPANDED PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT



Western is providing an expanded public involvement process for the Estes-to-Flatiron Transmission Lines Rebuild, as detailed below.



PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT:

THE FOUR PHASES



Scoping

- Provide an overview of the project purpose and need.
- Identify siting opportunities and constraints for consideration in the alternatives screening analysis.
- Identify issues for analysis in the EIS.
- Ensure that we have reached key stakeholders and obtained their perspectives.

The comments received from agencies and the public during scoping will be used to guide the alternatives screening analysis and development of the Draft EIS.

The comments received from agencies and the public during this phase will be considered during the alternatives screening analysis, resulting in the alternatives considered in the Draft EIS.

Draft EIS Review

Agencies and the public will have an opportunity to comment on the Draft EIS during a 45-day public review period. Western will hold public hearings and open houses to provide information on the Draft EIS analyses and gather public input.

OBJECTIVES FOR DRAFT EIS REVIEW

- Provide a forum for the public to provide comments on, or to ask questions about, the findings of the Draft EIS.

Alternatives Development

Route options that meet the project purpose and need will be developed during this phase. Western will host a series of field visits and small group workshops to solicit input about options to consider and potential issues or impacts.

OBJECTIVES FOR ALTERNATIVES DEVELOPMENT

- Engage the public in workshops and field trips to identify and refine routing options.
- Provide a forum for the public to comment on routing options.

Final EIS and Records of Decision

The Final EIS will include responses to all substantive public comments received on the Draft EIS. Western's Record of Decision will not be issued until at least 30 days after the issuance of the Final EIS. The Forest Service will be using the information in the Final EIS to write its Record of Decision, which would not be issued until 45 days after the issuance of the Final EIS.

ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

Review Project Requirements and Define Siting Area

Identify Siting Considerations

Document Land Use and Resource Conditions Within Siting Area

Identify Route Options and Context Sensitive Solutions

Collect Route Specific Resource Data

Analyze New and Existing Route Options

Identify EIS Alternatives

Public Workshops

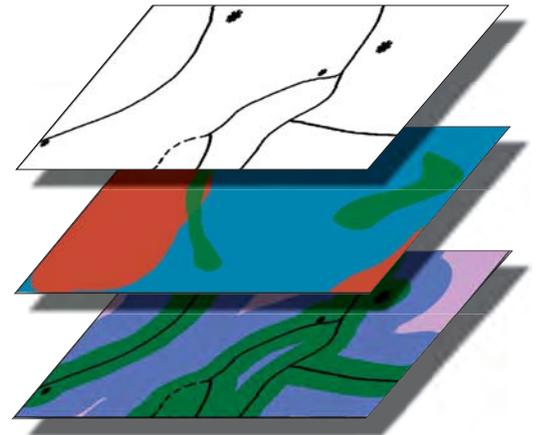
IDENTIFY SITING OPPORTUNITIES



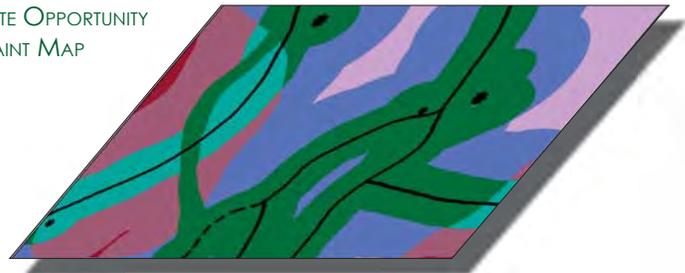
MAP RESOURCE INFORMATION



IDENTIFY SITING CONSTRAINTS



CREATE COMPOSITE OPPORTUNITY + CONSTRAINT MAP



DESIGN TREATMENTS AND CONSTRUCTION METHODS

The alternatives analysis will address which design treatments and construction methods will be carried forward for segments of the alternative routes where siting sensitivities have been identified.

SITING CONSIDERATIONS



Siting Considerations Identified to Date:

- ROW conflicts with residential structures
- Geologic hazard areas (i.e., steep slopes)
- Protected areas (i.e., land trusts, protected open space, conservation easements)
- Scenic areas and sensitive viewsheds
- Recreational use areas (i.e., day use areas, trails)
- Lack of existing adequate access
- Historic structures

Siting Opportunities Identified to Date:

- Use of existing ROWs
- Use of existing access roads

DESIGN

CONSIDERATIONS

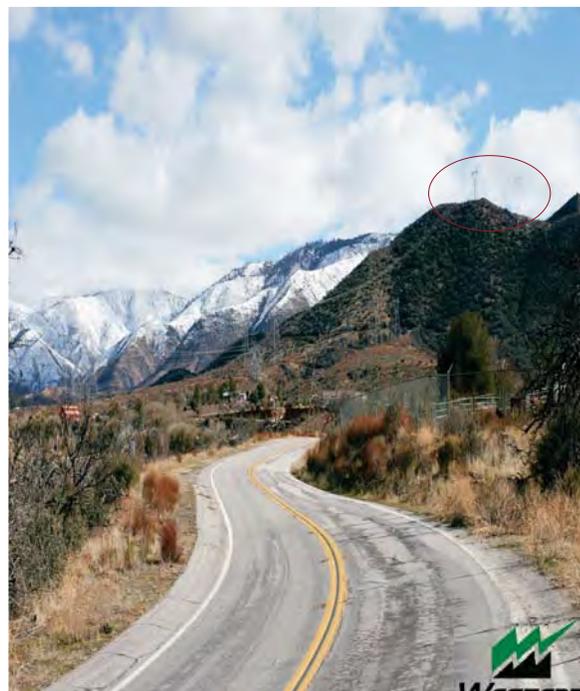
- Avoid placing transmission lines on ridgelines or other locations where they will be silhouetted against the sky, where feasible.
- Use non-reflective or low-reflective materials or coatings whenever possible.
- Leveling and benching of structure sites will be the minimum necessary.
- Consider using low-profile structures to reduce visibility where height is an important consideration, e.g. where greater height would result in structures being visible above surrounding vegetation.
- To the extent practical, cuts through trees or other vegetation would be irregularly shaped to soften the edges of the right of way.
- Site transmission lines to take advantage of topography and vegetation to restrict views from sensitive viewpoints.
- Site transmission lines to follow the edges of clearings (where they will be less conspicuous) rather than passing through the center of clearings.



Minimization of benching, ground disturbance



Use of darkened, low reflectivity materials



Avoid skylined structures where possible

DESIGN FEATURES: STRUCTURE TYPES

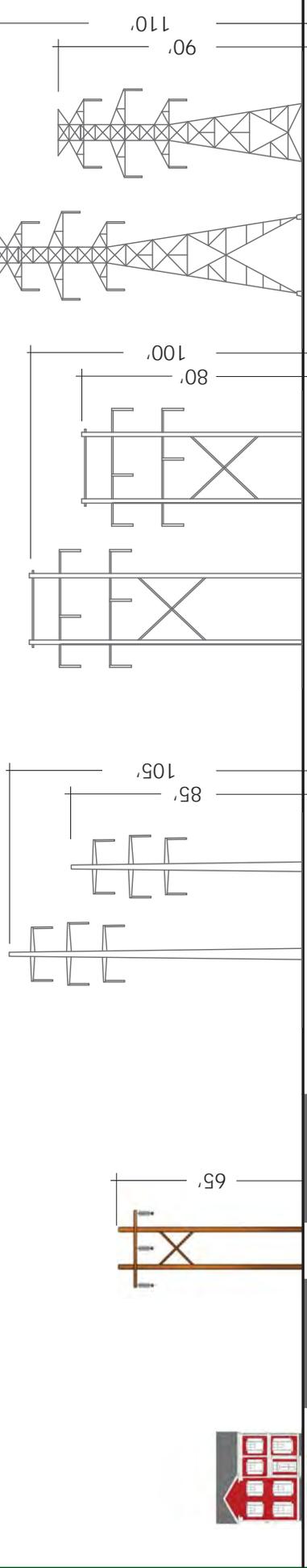


Wood Pole H-Frame

Option A: Steel Monopole

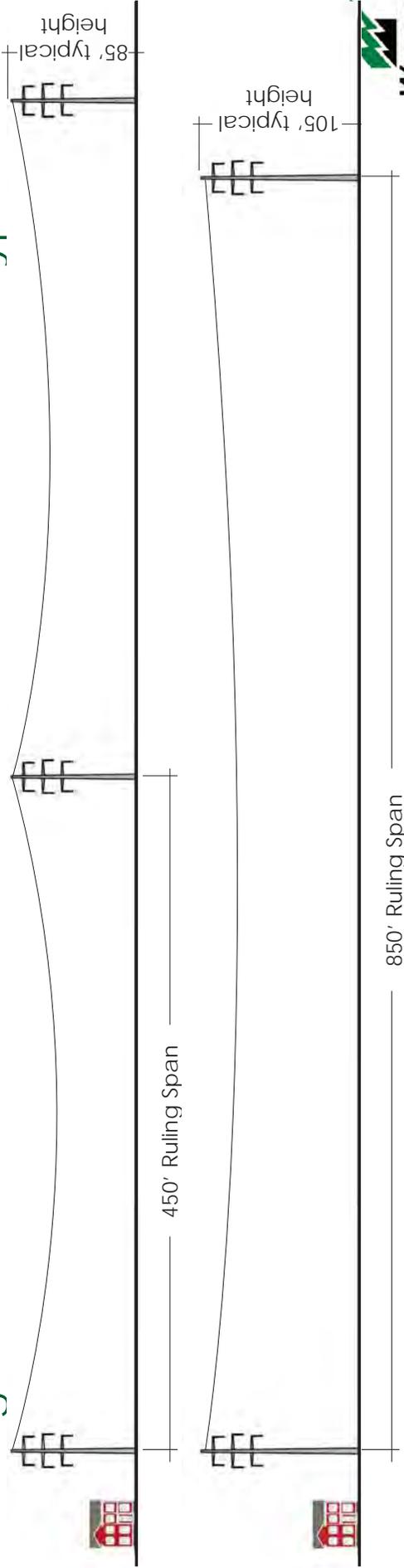
Option B: Steel H-Frame

Option C: Lattice



Existing Structure

Potential Structure Types



DESIGN FEATURES:

STRUCTURE FINISH

Material/Color Selection Process

1. The primary selection of the structure's color or finish will be based on best engineering material practices, such as durability, maintenance requirements, and manufacturing methods.
2. The second criteria is the cost of manufacturing and long-term maintenance of a structure finish.
3. Where requested for aesthetics, structure finishes will be selected based on:
 - Viewshed Models - GIS analyses can quantify the potential visibility of the transmission structures from public viewpoints, such as roads, trails, parks and other sensitive areas.
 - Compatibility With the Background Environments - Through site visits, the structure's potential contrast or compatibility with the natural backdrop (forests, grasslands, or urban environments) will be documented to help refine the final color selection.



**ATTACHMENT H:
EIS SCOPING COMMENTS**

Comment

Estes Park is not a typical community. Of particular note is the fact that for a century and a half the economic engine of the community has been, and remains, anchored in tourism. No small part of its attractiveness as a tourist destination lies in its close proximity to Rocky Mountain National Park, its abundance of native wildlife, and the natural aesthetics of the Estes Valley. It is therefore of utmost importance to all who live and visit here that these intrinsic assets be guarded and, whenever possible, improved. Given this historic context, the modernization and upgrading of the power distribution lines represents an opportunity to either detract from or improve the aesthetic qualities (and the economic base) of our community.

We respectfully request that W.A.P.A not acquire and cut a path through a new easement for the proposed consolidated power transmission lines, but use the existing combined utilities easement. In addition, we request that W.A.P.A. take the "non-business as usual" approach of concealing the segment of the transmission lines from the top of Pole Hill into and through the Estes Valley. Rather than being detrimental to the economic health of the region this approach would be an asset to the region for generations into the future. The opportunity for such responsible stewardship is not likely to occur again in the lifetimes of the literally millions who regard Estes Park as one of Americas last best places.

Suggest putting the line on the north (red line) up to Pole Hill Substation, or underground line, or leave the two lines "as is".

I live at 16235 West County Road 18 E/Pole Hill Road. I currently have two power line poles on the south side of my property. I was under the impression that those were to be removed and the new power lines would be installed further south of me but have been recently told that there is a change of location and it may remain in the same place. In looking at the map on the website, locations of the proposed power lines seem to be in the existing locations. Please advise as to whether the power poles on my property, 16235 WCR 18 E, will be removed or are to be replaced with the single steel poles, double circuit structures?

I have a copy of Michael Clingans letter addressed to Mr. Snowden regarding the installation of these high power transmission lines. Among the obvious issues he stated, I too am concerned about the issue of fire protection.

I am a stakeholder in the Estes-Flatiron Rebuild Project, and wanted to clarify my earlier comment during the Environmental Assessment. When I stated that I preferred the route to follow the Estes Flatiron Line, I specifically meant the power line at the eastern end of Lake Estes that travels through the valley between Mt Olympus and Mt Pispah, and that follows the CENTERLINE of the USFS utility corridor as it is outlined in their 1984 and 1997 Forest Plans. WAPA has confusingly called the Pole Hill Line the original Estes-Flatiron Line, which is false.

Please also inform me of all meetings and communication during the EIS.

I am writing in opposition to the proposed re-route and new ROW acquisition by Western Area Power Administration (Western) in the course of rebuilding the Estes-Flatiron Transmission Line in Colorado. While I fully support the re-build of our electrical infrastructure in order to bring reliable power from Estes Park to the Front Range cities, I believe it must be done in a manner which preserves the landscape, the Estes Valley, the populated communities, the foreground views of Rocky Mountain National Park, the highly travelled and scenic corridors such as US Highway 36, the foreground of the heavily visited and enjoyed Pole Hill trailhead into Roosevelt National Forest, and the publicly owned Roosevelt National Forest itself, for the benefit of the general public and for the good of future generations.

What began as an un-controversial and timely recognition of the need for a re-build of the Estes-Flatiron Transmission Line has turned into an unnecessary and costly re-route proposal of the new line up Highway 36 which will have significant visual, social, and environmental impacts for this and future generations.

The proposed re-route on the west end would be for the sole benefit of a single property holder, APC Crocker Ranch LLC, and would be a significant detriment to the general public. It is critical that this Estes-Flatiron Rebuild project is sited along the existing Estes-Flatiron Transmission Line (referred to by Western as the Estes Lyons Tap) as it was intended by the extensive planning and management documented in the Roosevelt National Forest Plan, along the Designated Utility Corridor for the good of the general public. Westerns newly proposed re-route of the transmission line out of the pre-existing utility corridor and away from the private residence on the APC Crocker Ranch LLC property will have overwhelming negative effects for visitors along the scenic US Highway 36 "Gateway to Rocky Mountain National Park". It will negatively impact highway scenic turnouts, populated residential neighborhoods, the foreground of one of the most popular National Forest access points in the Estes Valley where no utility corridor exists, only to re-route back into the Estes-Flatiron line and into the Designated Utility Corridor after making it conveniently beyond the view of the APC Crocker Ranch LLC property residences. Through these actions, Western is effectively asking the Forest Service to circumvent the protections provided to the public in federal projects through an abuse of a special use permit process and an Environmental Assessment (EA) that is completely unnecessary.

While I support the re-build of the Estes-Flatiron Transmission Line Infrastructure itself, I entirely oppose Westerns proposed re-route of this project. I ask that they instead rebuild the Estes-Flatiron Transmission Line along its pre-existing, already clear-cut Estes-Flatiron footprint as it is sited within the USFS Designated Utility Corridor for the following reasons: 1) Excluding the public until after decisions have been made is contrary to the public good. The real scoping phase for this project started in the Spring of 2010, almost two years ago, yet Western representatives say we have just begun the scoping phase. The deliberate exclusion of the public from this process for almost two years serves to completely circumvent the protections set forth by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). In March of 2010, Western had already completed extensive survey maps which depicted the final-solution route they currently seek today. Western negotiated behind closed doors with APC Crocker Ranch LLC for at least six months to a year prior to informing the public of the project. Estes Park town officials knew of the project since May of 2010, yet excluded the public from the actual scoping phase. According to Westerns spokeswoman, Western is actively pursuing land swaps and re-routed easements with APC Crocker Ranch LLC for the route they say is just a proposal. Western is wasting public funds to pursue a siting re-route solution most preferable to one influential land owner, to the exclusion and detriment of the general public. Western had the final-solution route map completed by January of 2011, just shy of a year prior to their first public scoping meeting. Western submitted this map and a detailed application for a Special Use Permit to the US Forest Service in April 2011, seven months prior to the first public scoping meeting. The public has been told that it is just the beginning of the process and nothing has been decided, yet Western has already submitted this application, not just for the rebuild project itself, but for the specific route they seek to construct. At the November 29, 2011 open house meeting in Estes Park, the public was told Western will not start construction until Spring of 2013, yet the permit application states a start date of Spring of 2012, just four short months away. Lastly, Western opted to start the public scoping phase spanning the holidays from Thanksgiving to New Years while many people are not even available to find out what is happening.

While I support the re-build of the Estes-Flatiron Transmission Line Infrastructure itself, I entirely oppose Westerns proposed re-route of this project. I ask that they instead rebuild the Estes-Flatiron Transmission Line along its pre-existing, already clear-cut Estes-Flatiron footprint as it is sited within the USFS Designated Utility Corridor for the following reasons: 2) Circumvention of US Forest Service established policy is contrary to the public good In 1938, the Bureau of Reclamation built the first transmission line out of Estes Valley where they determined to be the most practical location, the Estes-Flatiron Transmission Line. In 1984, through an effort to consolidate large-scale utilities into corridors, the Roosevelt National Forest studied all existing transmission lines, gas lines, and phone lines and incorporated into their Forest Plan a new management area designation, 8.3 Utility Corridors. After a well-researched and lengthy EIS, the Forest Service determined the Estes-Flatiron Transmission Line as the most practical choice to be the Designated Utility Corridor. Again, in 1997, the Forest revised their Forest plan, accomplished another comprehensive EIS, and reaffirmed the Estes-Flatiron line as the most practical location to be the Designated Utility Corridor. Further, in 2006, Roosevelt National Forest published what is today their most recent Amendment 9 to the Forest Plan, which re-iterated a policy of preserving the scenic integrity of public lands for the good of the public, and "[p]rohibit management activities that are inconsistent with the scenic integrity objective". The Highway 34 and 36 travel corridors and the Forest Service Road #122 trailhead (Pole Hill) are categorized as "high" scenic integrity. By attempting to re-route the Estes-Flatiron Transmission Rebuild Project along the existing Estes-Flatiron Transmission Line and within the Designated Utility Corridor, Western has unnecessarily disregarded seventy-four years of land-use precedent and two comprehensive Environmental Impact Studies which all point to preserving the scenic corridors along US Highway 36 and US Highway 34 and protecting the designated high scenic integrity in the foreground of the heavily used and enjoyed National Forest trailhead at the Pole Hill Road gate. This type of use is not compatible with the Scenic Integrity Objectives as defined by the current 1997 Revised Roosevelt National Forest Plan. As such, the proposal cannot be permitted unless the Forest Service alters the Forest Plan guidance to fit this project. Altering vetted National Forest policy and precedent that protects these natural areas in order to accommodate the re-routing of a power line away from one influential private residence is a waste of public funds and an affront to three-quarters of a century of National Forest policy and management. Further, siting an industrial scale project up a nationally recognized scenic highway and across the entry point of a scenic national forest access trailhead poses significant adverse impacts to the general public.

While I support the re-build of the Estes-Flatiron Transmission Line Infrastructure itself, I entirely oppose Westerns proposed re-route of this project. I ask that they instead rebuild the Estes-Flatiron Transmission Line along its pre-existing, already clear-cut Estes-Flatiron footprint as it is sited within the USFS Designated Utility Corridor for the following reasons: 3) Significant adverse impact to the foreground views of RMNP Highway 36 is a heavily used scenic travel corridor with some of the most spectacular views of Rocky Mountain National Park, and the rural character of the area should be maintained for future visitors. Re-routing the original Estes-Flatiron Transmission line and placing industrial scale towers and lines along this heavy use, Category 4.2 Scenic travel corridor will result in a degradation of the foreground views of Rocky Mountain National Park and the Continental Divide. Degrading the landscape of an area of such national interest will result in significant long-term impact on a national scale.

While I support the re-build of the Estes-Flatiron Transmission Line Infrastructure itself, I entirely oppose Westerns proposed re-route of this project. I ask that they instead rebuild the Estes-Flatiron Transmission Line along its pre-existing, already clear-cut Estes-Flatiron footprint as it is sited within the USFS Designated Utility Corridor for the following reasons: 4) Significant adverse impact to one of the most popular National Forest trailheads in the Estes Valley The National Forest trailhead off US Highway 36 and Pole Hill Road is used by thousands of people per year for hiking, camping, horse-back riding, Jeep, ATV and motorcycle access. It is one of the most heavily enjoyed recreational areas in the Roosevelt National Forest; and it is a major attraction drawing outdoor enthusiasts to Estes Park. Westerns proposed re-route of the original Estes-Flatiron Transmission Line and proposed construction of industrial-scale towers and lines through the foreground of this high use National Forest trailhead will result in significant adverse impact to the overall experience of the area by its many visitors. The placement of the line in this area is incompatible with the Scenic integrity Objectives of the Roosevelt National Forest for recreation, where this area is designated as Category 4.2 Scenic, and will significantly impact the foreground views of the trailhead and experience of all trailhead visitors. The scenic integrity of this National Forest access must be preserved for us all, today and for future generations.

While I support the re-build of the Estes-Flatiron Transmission Line Infrastructure itself, I entirely oppose Westerns proposed re-route of this project. I ask that they instead rebuild the Estes-Flatiron Transmission Line along its pre-existing, already clear-cut Estes-Flatiron footprint as it is sited within the USFS Designated Utility Corridor for the following reasons: 5) Eliminating a non-renewable resource is contrary to the public good: Scenic highway lost forever Routing industrial-scale transmission towers and lines up the Highway 36 travel corridor out of Estes Park and into Roosevelt National Forest will forever transform this scenic route into an industrial zone with 110 foot towers and a web of lines that will permanently break the sky-line and alter the landscape. Western proposes to site this project through the precise location where visitors catch their first glimpse of the Continental Divide and Rocky Mountain National Park. This promises to result in significant adverse visual impact to the enjoyment of the over three million visitors to the Estes Valley and Rocky Mountain National Park every year. No amount of non-reflective lines or rusted color towers will stop them from continuously breaking the sky-line or from dominating the view. This industrial transformation will be permanent, and it will result in significant, long-term, local, regional, and national adverse impacts to the general public. The scenic integrity of this federal scenic highway must be preserved for us all, just as the Roosevelt National Forest Plan ensured, today and for future generations.

While I support the re-build of the Estes-Flatiron Transmission Line Infrastructure itself, I entirely oppose Westerns proposed re-route of this project. I ask that they instead rebuild the Estes-Flatiron Transmission Line along its pre-existing, already clear-cut Estes-Flatiron footprint as it is sited within the USFS Designated Utility Corridor for the following reasons: 6) Adverse impact to tourism economy The visual impact of the proposed transmission line re-route will be a significant detriment to the local tourism economy. Among other forest users, guides, jeep tours, hunters, hikers, bikers, and horseback riders will all be affected by the inappropriate industrial-scale towers in the foreground of their views of Rocky Mountain National Park, along US Highway 36, on the way to the Pole Hill trailhead, at the gate, and along the recreational use trails and primitive campgrounds within Roosevelt National Forest. Since the APC Crocker Ranch LLC property blocks access to the Roosevelt National Forest on the eastern side of Estes Park, visitors use the Pole Hill trailhead exclusively to access this portion of the National Forest and would be highly affected by the proposed transmission line re-route.

While I support the re-build of the Estes-Flatiron Transmission Line Infrastructure itself, I entirely oppose Westerns proposed re-route of this project. I ask that they instead rebuild the Estes-Flatiron Transmission Line along its pre-existing, already clear-cut Estes-Flatiron footprint as it is sited within the USFS Designated Utility Corridor for the following reasons: 7) Significant real property loss for residents The visual impact for residents in populated areas along Westerns proposed re-route would cause real property value loss, loss of quality of life, enjoyment of their homes, and possibly detrimental health effects. Such a significant financial burden should not be placed on residents when there has been a long-standing pattern of use along the existing Designated Utility Corridor.

While I support the re-build of the Estes-Flatiron Transmission Line Infrastructure itself, I entirely oppose Westerns proposed re-route of this project. I ask that they instead rebuild the Estes-Flatiron Transmission Line along its pre-existing, already clear-cut Estes-Flatiron footprint as it is sited within the USFS Designated Utility Corridor for the following reasons: 8) Potential significant adverse health effects There is ongoing debate about the adverse health effects of electro-magnetic fields from high-voltage power lines, however the World Health Organization International Agency for Research on Cancer concluded that power-frequency magnetic fields are Class 2B possible carcinogens. The US Environmental Protection Agency prepared a report suggesting a causal link between the vicinity to power lines and higher rates of leukemia, lymphoma, and cancer of the nervous system. In this particular case, the proposal by Western to route industrial-scale high voltage transmission lines and towers through populated residential neighborhoods is contrary to their stated policy: "Until conclusive or more specific research results are obtained, Western will continue to take prudent actions regarding EMFs...Western will continue to...pursue and implement alternative design and siting approaches for new and upgraded transmission facilities to reduce the public exposure to EMFs...". Western needs to apply their policy of Prudent Avoidance and keep the project away from populated areas, along the existing Designated Utility Corridor via the Estes-Flatiron Transmission Line.

While I support the re-build of the Estes-Flatiron Transmission Line Infrastructure itself, I entirely oppose Westerns proposed re-route of this project. I ask that they instead rebuild the Estes-Flatiron Transmission Line along its pre-existing, already clear-cut Estes-Flatiron footprint as it is sited within the USFS Designated Utility Corridor for the following reasons: 9) No understanding Many affected people don't even know this proposed re-route is happening, and many of those that do have yet to fully understand the scale or long term impact of the project. Western had the route for this project picked out in early 2010, and worked with the private APC Crocker Ranch Limited Liability Corporation on re-routing this project outside the Designated Utility Corridor and to the south away from Crocker residences by rather sending it through a scenic travel corridor and populated areas, only to re-route the line back into the existing utility corridor beyond the APC Crocker Ranch LLC property. This re-route was coordinated with the APC Crocker Ranch LLC at least six months to a year prior to notifying the public. Western has omitted the fact that a Designated Utility Corridor exists along the current Estes-Flatiron Transmission line, leaving the general public with little understanding of the process or the impact. Omitting real options from the discourse from the beginning excludes the public from being able to actually comment and rules out reasonable options prior to the NEPA process being initiated.

While I support the re-build of the Estes-Flatiron Transmission Line Infrastructure itself, I entirely oppose Westerns proposed re-route of this project. I ask that they instead rebuild the Estes-Flatiron Transmission Line along its pre-existing, already clear-cut Estes-Flatiron footprint as it is sited within the USFS Designated Utility Corridor for the following reasons: 10) No need 36 CFR part 219 allows Categorical Exclusions for "Reconstructing a power line by replacing poles and wires." Rebuilding an aging infrastructure is clearly a good thing, but unnecessarily re-routing the project, taking new ROW corridor, and cutting new scars into the land when a utility corridor is already designated, clear-cut, and in use is a waste of taxpayer money to no benefit to the public. The Estes-Flatiron route was chosen as the most practical route in 1938, long before any other lines ran out of the Estes Valley, and it has been designated as the main utility route by the Roosevelt National Forest in their 1984 Forest Plan, in 1997 during their Forest Plan revision, and it was again re-affirmed in 2006. The Direct Route along the Estes-Flatiron Transmission Line is already established, less populated, shorter, and is currently co-located with other large-scale utilities such as a gas line. It avoids the view corridors along Highway 36, high use trailheads, scenic overlooks, and populated areas.

While I support the re-build of the Estes-Flatiron Transmission Line Infrastructure itself, I entirely oppose Westerns proposed re-route of this project. I ask that they instead rebuild the Estes-Flatiron Transmission Line along its pre-existing, already clear-cut Estes-Flatiron footprint as it is sited within the USFS Designated Utility Corridor for the following reasons: 11) No public benefit Seeking to re-route and establish a new ROW on what is now only a "transmission facility" is contrary to a well established Forest Service policy of not issuing new utility corridors if there is no need and no benefit. The existing Estes-Flatiron Transmission Line is shorter and more direct. It avoids the heavily used, public National Forest access trailhead at the Pole Hill gate. It avoids the most populated subdivisions and follows the only Designated Utility Corridor in the current Roosevelt National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan for this area. The proposed re-route only benefits a single influential property owner, and is a detriment to the public. The entire nation has a stake in this project because the re-route Western seeks to execute poses a significant adverse impact to the scenic byways, mountain landscapes, residential communities, and the preservation and public enjoyment of Rocky Mountain National Park and Roosevelt National Forest.

Western has transformed a much-needed, Categorically Excluded re-build project into a costly, complicated, and convoluted re-route proposal. Western has omitted the most practical, most direct, already clear-cut, and established Estes-Flatiron Transmission Line which currently sits within the bounds of the USFS Designated Utility Corridor. By doing so, Western has unilaterally staged an unneeded and costly Environmental Assessment to circumvent genuine public involvement and the protections afforded to the public as set forth in the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). For this, there is no need, no public benefit, and the process itself points to a single, pre-determined project end-goal re-route which serves to benefit a single influential private land-owner, to the exclusion and detriment of the general public. This project cannot be undone, and it will have long-term, significant adverse impacts on the landscape, on the Estes Valley, and on the enjoyment of our national public lands.

I fully support re-build of the Estes-Flatiron Transmission line where it currently sits, within the Designated Utility Corridor, and I oppose the additional cost and subsequent significant adverse impacts that a re-route would unnecessarily pose to the general public. Re-build. Do not re-route. This solution is a win-win for Western and for the citizens and many visitors of Estes Park, CO.

Strongly prefer that the "Northern" line thru the Newell subdivision be abandoned due to concerns regarding property easements, line maintenance, and fire concerns (firefighters can't operate directly under lines). "Straight" line is preferable, views are not as large a concern as might be assumed by visitors and other non-residents.

I write you today to request your immediate oversight into what appears to be an unnecessary waste of public funds, an apparent disregard for established policies and law dealing with streamlining transmission projects within utility corridors, and a lack of meaningful public disclosure in the course of rebuilding the Estes-Flatiron Transmission line out of Estes Park, Colorado (poles 0-1 to 4-7). I fully support developing and maintaining renewable, PUBLICLY OWNED water and power infrastructure while managing federal lands for the good of the general public, and this may be one of those rare cases where fiscal restrictions align so closely with environmental protections and public sentiment. Despite this, WAPA staff in Colorado have already made decisions and taken actions to circumvent the protections provided to the public through an abuse of a special use permit process and costly Environmental Impact Statement that potentially doesn't apply, and that will permanently and irreversibly alter the Estes Valley, the foreground of Rocky Mountain National Park and Roosevelt National Forest for generations to come.

You need to know that there's a virtual information blackout going on in Estes Park during the scoping phase of this project. People don't even understand which line is which anymore, because the Estes-Flatiron line has been renamed the Estes-Lyons line, while the Estes-Pole Hill line has falsely been referred to in WAPA's initial letters as the Estes-Flatiron line. Meanwhile, the Forest Service continues simultaneously to refer to the Estes-Flatiron line by its original name. Maps used in the scoping meetings have been altered such that critical details such as the existing impacted clear cuts and the existing road along the Estes-Flatiron Line has been deleted. To date, WAPA has even gone so far as to completely omit the very existence of the USFS Designated Utility Corridor from their presentations and maps.

If allowed to continue, this EIS will ultimately continue to waste public funds, raise energy costs for rate-payers, hinder the Colorado tourism-based economy, destroy the public's enjoyment of and access to federal public lands, needlessly expose populated residential areas to close range EMF radiation, and set a precedent for the proliferation of future major industrial-scale projects subsequent to the re-designation of the entire eastern end of Estes Park and into Roosevelt National Forest as a FIVE MILE WIDE ENERGY CORRIDOR.

Please consider no action as an option. We understand that some construction roads will be necessary for maintenance purposes. This option should minimize WAPA's costs, keeping electric costs lower for the consumer.

Should the use of new poles become necessary sometime in the future please consider the type of poles to be used. I would like to suggest the use of corten steel poles keeping them at a height similar to the system currently in place on Crocker Ranch and in Meadowdale Hills subdivision. Corten steel will insure a maintenance free system for the next century. Again keeping your transmission costs as low as possible for your customers.

We strongly oppose the proposed plan to co-locate the two transmission lines through the existing corridor with the proposed widening of the corridor up to 110 feet. This proposal would greatly affect our property in various ways. We have various properties of staff homes and residential lodging for our college students and guests that would drastically lose surrounding trees, aesthetic beauty, majestic views and property value. The transmission line goes right through the backyard of our personal home and property on Pole Hill. Your proposed plan would devastate our property! I strongly support alternative routes to preserve the existing majestic views, student and guest revenue and residential property value of Ravencrest Chalet on Pole Hill Rd. Please consider the future livelihood of historically existing landmarks and properties of the Estes Valley.

A great opportunity to increase community safety will be lost if the current transmission right of way is left in place or expanded. Instead, a fire, possibly wind driven, would be allowed to burn rapidly into the heart of the Pinewood Community where it could then spread uphill into residential areas difficult to service by common fire and rescue equipment while simultaneously cutting off the primary means of residential evacuation. Getting the right-of-way out of this community and allowing firefighters free access to fight fires could avoid a potential disaster.

Under any alternative we have heard proposed, the Crocker Ranch will continue to bear the burden of power lines. We would prefer no power lines at all. But, provided the power lines are sited in a sensible manner, we are willing to do our part to support the modern infrastructure necessary to bring reliable electricity to the Estes Valley. Base Your Decision on the Facts. More than anything else, we urge you to base your ultimate decision on the facts and not to bow to special interest pressure. Certain individuals have waged a public relation campaign against WAPA and the Crocker Ranch in an attempt to get a sweetheart deal that moves power lines from existing easements along the Estes Pole Hill route and onto the Crocker Ranch. We recognize that the rhetoric has veered toward vitriol. The EIS is a great tool to produce detailed, analysis of the cost, access issues, visual effects, land use authorizations, and other issues related to the Project. We urge you to make your decision based on the facts as developed in the EIS, and not based on outside pressure.

Under any alternative we have heard proposed, the Crocker Ranch will continue to bear the burden of power lines. We would prefer no power lines at all. But, provided the power lines are sited in a sensible manner, we are willing to do our part to support the modern infrastructure necessary to bring reliable electricity to the Estes Valley. Support for EIS. We support WAPAs decision to evaluate the project in a full EIS. We believe the additional effort will pay off in a fact-based analysis that evaluates all relevant aspects of the Project.

Under any alternative we have heard proposed, the Crocker Ranch will continue to bear the burden of power lines. We would prefer no power lines at all. But, provided the power lines are sited in a sensible manner, we are willing to do our part to support the modern infrastructure necessary to bring reliable electricity to the Estes Valley. Adopt the Southern Route as the Preferred Alternative in the EIS. We strongly urge WAPA to adopt the "southern route" across the Crocker Ranch, and to reject the alternative "northern route" (aka the "Estes-Lyons Tap") that would locate the line squarely in a viewshed at the base of Mt. Olympus. The southern route is preferable to the Northern Route for numerous reasons, including:

- a. Cost and Impact: there is limited access along the northern route at the base of Mount Olympus where the line is exposed to rock slides. As the line leaves the Ranch to the east, it climbs through rugged terrain with no vehicle access. A northern route would require substantial road construction, grading, and tree removal which would be incredibly costly and destructive.
- b. Safety and Maintenance: the northern route runs through rugged terrain that is not easily accessible. The southern route runs along existing roads for long stretches, is easily accessible, and will create a more reliable and protected power grid.
- c. Visual Impacts: The northern route traverses Mt. Olympus, is visible from numerous key observation points – including the Highway 36 turnout east of town and from various points within town. The southern route sites the line in a draw, blocked from view at many of these same observations points. For example, the southern route places the lines in a draw that is approximately 200 vertical feet below Highway 36 at the site of the "Estes Park Welcome Sign" turnout, shielded by trees below the sign. While no alternative will have zero visual impact, we believe the southern route will be visually preferable.
- d. Inadequate ROW: WAPA has indicated that it requires a 110 foot wide right-of-way. WAPAs current right-of-way along the northern route on the Crocker Ranch does not meet this test as it is far narrower than 110 feet.

Under any alternative we have heard proposed, the Crocker Ranch will continue to bear the burden of power lines. We would prefer no power lines at all. But, provided the power lines are sited in a sensible manner, we are willing to do our part to support the modern infrastructure necessary to bring reliable electricity to the Estes Valley. Adopt the Southern Route as the Preferred Alternative in the EIS. We strongly urge WAPA to adopt the "southern route" across the Crocker Ranch, and to reject the alternative "northern route" (aka the "Estes-Lyons Tap") that would locate the line squarely in a viewshed at the base of Mt. Olympus. The southern route is preferable to the Northern Route for numerous reasons, including:

- Visual Impacts: The northern route traverses Mt. Olympus, is visible from numerous key observation points – including the Highway 36 turnout east of town and from various points within town. The southern route sites the line in a draw, blocked from view at many of these same observations points. For example, the southern route places the lines in a draw that is approximately 200 vertical feet below Highway 36 at the site of the "Estes Park Welcome Sign" turnout, shielded by trees below the sign. While no alternative will have zero visual impact, we believe the southern route will be visually preferable.

Small Group Workshops. The Crocker Ranch understands that WAPA is proposing to host certain small group workshops in September 2012. We are interested in participating in that process. Please contact the Crocker Ranch manager to schedule the workshop.

Purpose and Need Statement. It is critical for WAPA to craft an accurate and detailed purpose and need statement for the EIS. The purpose and need statement drives the entire analysis because it contains the goals that the alternatives are designed to achieve. 40 C.F.R. § 1502.13. Only those alternatives that meet the purpose and need must be considered. See, e.g., Citizens Com. To Save our Canyons v. Forest Service, 297 F.3d 1012, 1031 (10th Cir. 2002). We urge WAPA to include the following concepts in its purpose and need statement: a. The Project is needed to improve the reliability of the transmission system. b. The Project must minimize the cost to the consumer and meet WAPAs obligations under the Reclamation Project Act of 1939, 43 U.S.C. § 485h(c). c. The Project is needed to update facilities to meet current electrical and operational standards. d. The Project must provide for both emergency and maintenance access to the entirety of the lines. That maintenance access should provide for traditional bucket-truck access, and eliminate the need for helicopter inspections.

Visual Resource Analysis. We were happy to hear that WAPA plans to prepare detailed visual impact simulations of various alternatives. We urge WAPA to focus not only on the visual impacts of the new power line, but on the visual benefits of removing old power lines. We are confident that such an analysis would show that, on balance, the southern route is preferable.

As we have stated before, the Crocker Ranch would prefer no power lines to be sited on the Ranch. But we also expressed willingness to do our part to support the modern infrastructure necessary to bring reliable electricity to the Estes Valley, provided the power lines are sited in a sensible manner. Because of this, we previously expressed support for a route that locates part of the western portion of the line in a draw along the southern boundary of the Ranch, north of Highway 36 (we previously referred to this as the "Southern Route."). We supported the Southern Route across the Ranch because we believed a route located south of Highway 36 in the existing Estes-Pole Hill right-of-way was not viable. We have now reviewed the maps WAPA provided at the early October alternative development workshops. Those maps show that the Estes-Pole Hill route has sufficient 110 right-of-way and appears to be a viable alternative. We strongly support the use of the existing Estes-Pole Hill route south of Highway 36 for this project. Given that "use of existing ROWs" was identified by WAPA as a key siting consideration, we urge WAPA to adopt the Estes-Pole Hill route as its preferred alternative, and to fully evaluate the alternative of placing the line south of Highway 36 in the upcoming EIS.

The Estes-Lyons Tap route is a far superior route for this rebuild than the proposed Estes-Pole Hill route for a number of significant reasons. The Estes-Lyons route is a shorter and more direct route for the rebuild. An argument has been made that the right of way for this route is inadequate and will require significant work to widen access for construction equipment. While Pole Hill Rd. provides access, significant right of way work will also be required to allow construction access along this route. Estes Park has several wild land and forestry construction companies which could perform the work required along the Estes-Lyons Tap route. Cost for the shorter Estes-Lyons Tap route should be a stand alone factor for choosing this route.

A more compelling reason for the Estes-Lyons Tap route is the impact the proposed route will have on the incredible scenery of the Estes Valley. Installation of 110 ft. steel monopoles to replace the existing 50 ft. wood H-poles would be a major eyesore along the primary entrance corridor to the Estes Valley. In addition, as a property owner in Meadowdale Hills, my property (and many of my neighbors) would be adversely effected by these unsightly poles obstructing the views. Homeowners in my subdivision chose this area primarily because of the pristine views from their properties. Installation of new poles over twice the height of the existing poles negatively impacts the value of almost every homeowner in Meadowdale Hills and creates an eyesore for every vehicle passing our subdivision on Highway 36. The Estes-Lyons Tap route goes through a relatively undeveloped area - through lower elevations where the taller monopoles are not nearly as visible. The route also moves the lines away from the scenic Highway 36 entrance corridor to the Estes Valley. As a corporate citizen, WAPA should be invested in enhancing the beauty of the Estes Valley. Some discussions have been made about burying these lines to eliminate the eyesore completely. I realize the cost may be prohibitive for the entire project. While it is outside the scope of the current project, WAPA should consider partnering with the Town of Estes Park to remove the transmission towers from the power plant to the beginning of the Estes-Lyons Tap (poles 0-1 through 0-7) and bury those lines. Again, I realize the cost involved, but this is a distance of less than one mile. These transmission towers are highly visible from almost everywhere in Estes Park and their removal would greatly enhance the natural beauty of the valley.

Lastly, there have also been discussions about possible political influence being applied to influence the decisions made on this project. I have heard speculation that the Crocker Ranch, where much of the ROW for the Lyons-Estes Tap runs, has somehow influenced the decision made during the original EA. The original proposal appears to have been made quietly with little notification or input from many of the Estes-Pole Hill stakeholders. I do not know if this is true but I certainly hope the decision process has been and will be fair to everyone impacted.

First, I was expecting contact from WAPA over the past month. When I attended the meeting in September, I was told WAPA would be reaching out those who came to the meeting and who left their contact information. I have not received anything, and I was hoping WAPA would provide more information to those concerned. This may seem small to you, but there is a lot of information circulating, and very little from WAPA.

My request is for an extension, as many people have not had opportunities to weigh in on the discussion. My primary concern is that I do not have enough information from WAPA to weigh in on the issue. Many questions have been raised, and a lot of information is out there. I have not, however, seen any type of response to these concerns addressed by WAPA. Perhaps you can respond to the issues raised, and allow us to evaluate the facts from all perspectives prior to closing the door on our input?

Our neighborhood consists of approximately 60 homes. Many of these homes have children. If the new lines were to come through our neighborhood, they would be a bigger health hazard than they already are. Mainly due to the increased voltage over the years. We in this neighborhood would feel more comfortable knowing that our health would not be in jeopardy.

The new poles that would be used would detract from the beauty of our area. Every time we look out our windows or sit on our deck we would be staring at these unsightly poles and lines. One of the reasons for moving to this area was the beauty and serenity of the area. We would ask that you consider running the transmission lines to the Southern existing right-of-way. There isn't a neighborhood of 60 homes, and the area is mostly on open space where the current right-of-way is.

I am very concerned about the transmission lines that currently run through the neighborhood and the possibility that the new lines would be installed here. By joining the south bound transmission lines with the north lines, the increased voltage running through a neighborhood is a much larger hazard than it is at the present time. The construction and installation of new, much larger poles would certainly detract from the beauty of this area, one of the reasons I chose to live here. It seems there would be people forced from their homes also, with the safety area near the lines to be increased. It seems construction costs would be much greater in a neighborhood of homes than in the open areas across from Pinewood Lake. Please consider running the transmission lines to the southern existing right-of-way in the Pinewood Lake area, an open area with few homes, not many trees or other construction obstacles, and space to place the lines away from homes.

Why not use Rt. 34 option - less visual impact Expand project to underground lines across Lake Estes to Sub-station - Improves visual opportunities for Estes Park visitors and residents.

What WAPA is proposing is a blatant lie and a moral outrage. As bad, it is a blight on the scenery that people come from all over the world to see. Yes, we've gotten their attention, but plainly, that's not enough. If it requires the bludgeoning of a full-on public protest, and further, ah, monitoring (read: holding to honesty) by the USFS, so be it. That's what WAPA has asked for with their sleazy tactics.

WAPA held meetings, all right, but sort of conveniently forgot to tell Jane Q. Public about it. I think this is illegal; at the very least it's obnoxious, arrogant and hopeful that nobody will notice. Well, we did. And now we are demanding to be invited to this party that's being held literally in our back yard. So open up that public scoping period for several more months. There's a much more eloquent comment to that effect appended to my little note.

From their wording, it certainly seems like they've decided on the route they want for their line, and nobody else better get in the way. And if anybody does notice, who cares? People will still spend money up in Estes Park. Right? Well, not if they don't come here, they won't. You, USFS, can perfectly well make WAPA put this powerline where they're supposed to, maybe with the use of the Categorical Exclusion or maybe those 1984 and 1997 Forest Plans.

As far as the condescending belief that the only people who'll be near those power lines are just those smelly muscle-powered types, or maybe the ones four-wheeling, all I can hope is that they get wind of this, too, and respond in kind. There's more than enough research, long-standing, carefully reviewed research, that proves that the emanations from power lines are just plain bad for you. Like cancer bad. I am a rock climber and backcountry lover, have been since age 13. The prospect of looking at those powerlines from my Lumpy Ridge belay perch absolutely enrages me. And the idea of helicopters flying right over my head as I stand atop the Book, Sundance or other formations - well, I won't stoop to language like that. It's windy up there, rocky, and oh yes, populated. Aren't you supposed to be at least 1000 feet above the ground in populated areas? And 500 in unpopulated?

Come on, Forest Service, do the right thing and do it quickly! You dropped the ball back in April, thanks to some careful neglect, perhaps, and we-your-public noticed. It's time for you to stand up and do your job. Now, please. Employ that Categorical Exclusion, or whatever it takes, and tell WAPA to build their line on the corridor that's already in place. If they can't see it on Google Earth, everybody else can. Do it now. You may already be too late.

How long is the project approximately going to last? How will road closures be handled to avoid Estes Park businesses losing business from closed roads? Upgrades are great, only if they don't effect local business and our only source of winter income (to pay our bills and feed our children).

The Western Area Power Administration Estes-Flatiron Rebuild Project proposes to remove the existing Estes-Flatiron Transmission Line (also labeled as the Estes-Lyons Tap) through Crocker Ranch to the east of Estes Park, and to create a new 110 foot Right of Way that parallels US Highway 36 and continues through the Meadowdale Hills and Ravencrest Heights subdivisions. I entirely oppose this option, and ask that Western uses its route along the existing Estes-Flatiron Transmission Line for the following reasons: 1) Routing industrial-scale transmission towers and lines up the Highway 36 travel corridor out of Estes Park and into Roosevelt National Forest will create significant visual impact for residents and visitors to the area and Rocky Mountain National Park. The visual impact for residents in the Meadowdale Hills and Ravencrest subdivisions would cause real property value loss, a financial burden that should not be placed on residents when a preferable route via the Estes-Flatiron Transmission Line is available. This amounts to a significant impact on the human environment.

The Western Area Power Administration Estes-Flatiron Rebuild Project proposes to remove the existing Estes-Flatiron Transmission Line (also labeled as the Estes-Lyons Tap) through Crocker Ranch to the east of Estes Park, and to create a new 110 foot Right of Way that parallels US Highway 36 and continues through the Meadowdale Hills and Ravencrest Heights subdivisions. I entirely oppose this option, and ask that Western uses its route along the existing Estes-Flatiron Transmission Line for the following reasons: 2) The visual impact of the line will be a detriment to the local tourism economy. Guides, jeep tours, hunters, hikers, bikers, and horseback riders will all be affected by the inappropriate industrial-scale towers on their way up to the Pole Hill trailhead and along the Forest Service Roads. The placement of the line in this area is incompatible to the Visual Quality Objectives of the Roosevelt National Forest for recreation, where this area is designated as Category 4.2 Scenic, and would be detrimental to the foreground views of all trailhead visitors. Likewise, Highway 36 is a heavily used scenic travel corridor with some of the most spectacular views of Rocky Mountain National Park, and the rural character of the area should be maintained for future visitors.

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The Western Area Power Administration Estes-Flatiron Rebuild Project proposes to remove the existing Estes-Flatiron Transmission Line (also labeled as the Estes-Lyons Tap) through Crocker Ranch to the east of Estes Park, and to create a new 110 foot Right of Way that parallels US Highway 36 and continues through the Meadowdale Hills and Ravencrest Heights subdivisions. I entirely oppose this option, and ask that Western uses its route along the existing Estes-Flatiron Transmission Line for the following reasons: 4) There is ongoing debate about the adverse health effects of electro-magnetic fields from high-voltage power lines, however the World Health Organization International Agency for Research on Cancer concluded that power-frequency magnetic fields are Class 2B possible carcinogens. The US Environmental Protection Agency prepared a report suggesting a causal link between the vicinity to power lines and higher rates of leukemia, lymphoma, and cancer of the nervous system. I suggest Western adopts a policy of Prudent Avoidance and runs the line away from populated areas, along the existing Estes-Flatiron Transmission Line to the north. I also suggest that in the interest of economics that all public and private lines that carry electricity, water and fuel in and out of Estes park be placed underground. Such projects would cost hundreds of dollars per foot. Given what is at stake for current and future residents of this valley this would be a bargain.

I received a call from the below gentleman who wishes to be on the Estes-Flatiron mailing list. Miles Graham 600 17th St Suite 2020 South Denver CO 80202 milesgraham@gbsm.com

The re-route of the western end of the Estes to Flatiron re-build project proposed by Western Area Power Administration will cause an unacceptable level of visual impact for the public and as a resident of the Estes Valley, I oppose this re-routing completely. Please consider the negative visual impacts of this project and their affect on the key economic driver in this region of which my business is dependent: tourism.

I completely oppose the re-route, but am in favor of the new lines route being placed in the Forest Service designated utility corridor that runs below Mt Olympus. The very important investment should be made of running these lines underground as they traverse between the Estes Lakes and into town. Currently they are very ugly and an ancient idea and to have these poles above ground in a world-class recreation and tourism area should be eliminated during this project. In particular, by routing the line up Highway 36, the millions of visitors to Rocky Mountain National Park will forever be impacted as they travel this scenic highway. Instead of coming to the crest of the hill and being in awe of the snow-capped peaks in front of them, they will instead be shocked to see 110 steel industrial transmission towers with stacks of wires blocking their view. The lines will affect their experience of this national treasure all the way into the Estes Valley.

For those of us who visit the National Forest at the Pole Hill trail head regularly, these industrial towers will accompany us all the way up the backcountry road and across our spectacular views of RMNP. The noise pollution and negative health consequences from the buzzing transmission lines alone will completely and negatively alter our forest experience.

As a resident of Pole Hill Rd., these lines would ruin our neighborhood, affect land and house values negatively, and the scenic hiking adjacent in the national forest would be ruined by these new lines. Please do not create such a travesty of a mess in this area. I'm requesting that Western withdraw this Environmental Assessment and streamline this re-build in the already designated utility corridor, and that the Forest Service work with Western to keep the project in the utility corridor (not proliferate new ones). If the EA and re-route were to continue, a full social-economic impact analysis will have to be done, along with a full visual-impact analysis on the human environment, including our community adjacent to and within the administrative boundary of the National Forest.

If its feasible given access and constraints, use the most direct route possible from Estes Lake to Flatiron Substation. Prefer to use Estes-Lyons Right of way on western half of project area and the Flatiron - Pole Hill right of way on the eastern half of the project area.

I demand that you start the scoping process over, extend it such that public meetings are held in town hall format, and all information regarding the Utility Corridor extents is truthfully provided to public stakeholders. I want you to provide all notes, memos, meeting minutes, documents, emails, and other communications within the Forest Service staff and to outside consultants that were created during the development of the 1984 and 1997 Forest Plans and Environmental Impact Statements for Roosevelt National Forest. Make these available on both the WAPA and USFS websites for everyone to freely download and inspect.

I demand that you hold public meetings in Denver, Boulder, Longmont, Lyons, and Fort Collins in order to truly scope the affected populations. Likewise, Rocky Mountain National Park is a national treasure set aside close to a century ago from these types of ill-thought industrial projects, and it sees on the order of three million visitors per year come from places around the world. I want you to hold public meetings at Rocky Mountain National Park, and ensure that the affected population (all National Park pass-holders) are informed of this meeting, the regional meetings, and of the EIS in general. Excluding these groups in the process is only a means of biasing the outcome toward a predetermined route selection. Please work closely with RMNP Supervisor Vaughn and Interior Secretary Salazar to ensure that all pass holders are fully informed.

The communities listed above all participate in the tourism, outdoor recreation, real estate, and property investment industries, and the regional economy hinges on these sectors. In Estes Park, the views are considered the currency, and any projects that alter the views here have wide-reaching consequences. From bus tours from Denver, fishing, climbing, and back country outfitters in Boulder, Lyons, and Estes Park, to real estate investment firms in Fort Collins, Longmont, and commercial investors in the greater Rocky Intermountain West, all are affected by the quality of the experience of their clientele, customers, and future buyers. The placement of this industrial installation will have economic and social impacts for the next century, and for that reason, I want you to use forethought during this process. I want you to perform a complete socio-economic analysis of the impacts of routing this line out of the Utility Corridor and up scenic Highway 36, as opposed to routing it along the original 1938 Estes Flatiron Transmission Line along the CENTERLINE of the Utility Corridor defined in the 1984 and 1997 Forest Plans. This socio-economic study should include a baseline assessment and impact analysis that quantitatively and qualitatively characterizes the context and consequences of the land management decisions being made during this EIS. It will require a cooperative effort by experts in multiple disciplines, including economics, sociology, cultural anthropology, history, archaeology, and geography/GIS. I request that you include experts from academic arenas who can truly conduct this assessment, not just industry-based consultants. The baseline assessment should include a review of the relevant published literature on the history, economy, and social systems of the study area (Northern Front Range and mountain communities), a characterization of the economic structure and activities in these communities and the groups that are affected by the management decisions, and a characterization of the social structure, activities, and values of these communities that rely on the mountain economies for their livelihood. The impact analysis should quantitatively and qualitatively characterize direct, indirect, and cumulative effects to existing economic and social conditions and trends for all alternatives that route the line up Highway 36, up the Utility Corridor centerline of the 1938 Estes Flatiron line, or other alternatives such as line burial or routing the line through the Olympus tunnel. Impacts should include economic impacts for landowners, businesses, and investors. It should also include the financial and social burden of the long-term adverse health effects (cancers, lymphoma, etc.) caused by EMF radiation from the line in communities and high use recreation areas along the line. Long term, peer-reviewed studies on EMF radiation in mountainous terrain must be included to fully characterize the impacts on human health. And lastly the impacts should include economic and social impacts on public recreation and tourism along the proposed routes, with a quantitative comparison of the effects over the time frame of the serviceable life of the transmission line. I also want you to compare the economic conditions in Estes Park to other towns in the Rocky Intermountain West that have had to make similar decisions on land use and management. For instance, Jackson Hole, WY is a town adjacent to a National Park whose population relies on tourism and property investments for its livelihood. In this socio-economic analysis, I would like a comparison performed of towns like Jackson Hole, what policies they have made in siting utilities, and what the total economic and social impacts of these policies are in comparison to those found in Estes Park, given the industrial installations found here.

Ultimately, by claiming that the Utility Corridor is five miles wide and that WAPA can route the line anywhere in this area, they are claiming that, for the length of the line across Roosevelt National Forest, 25,600 acres of public land are now designated as a corridor for energy and utilities, as opposed to the 725 acres as depicted in the 1997 Forest Plan assuming a width of 750 feet. This amounts to the Forest Service and WAPA stating that an area 35 times as large as the area depicted in the 1997 Forest Plan is now under a new land use management designation, and that the scenic integrity objectives of that entire area fall to the lowest expectations listed in the Forest Plan (highly modified). This claim is ludicrous, and if the Forest Service wants to rewrite both history and twenty five years of land management vetted by two comprehensive Environmental Impact Statements, I demand that they do so by initiating, as the Lead Agency, a full Environmental Impact Statement to alter their Forest Plan to this degree. All of the experts, stakeholders, and members of the public did not approve any such claim in 1984, nor in 1997. This change in designation would be so vast that even the Hells Canyon Roadless Area would be engulfed by it - a situation that would never and was never approved by the staff, experts, and stewards of the publicly-owned Roosevelt National Forest. From a socio-economic perspective, this area constitutes a huge departure from the current conditions, and I demand that all aspects of this management decision are thoroughly analyzed and reported such that the general public and all stakeholders truly understand how this major change will affect the region.

Given this claim, it looks as if this entire area is planned for industrialization, energy production, and resource extraction. Since the Department of Energy is tiering with the Bureau of Reclamation on the Windy Gap Firing Project, I want you to also report to the public and all stakeholders how these projects are related and to what extent any plans have been made to alter land resource use in this region. The Windy Gap Firing Project EIS mentions the Estes Flatiron Transmission Rebuild Project, and although the two projects are being performed by separate agencies, there is a larger regional plan that the public should be apprised of before making any decisions. For instance, how will these projects, when complete, ultimately affect the volume and flow of water from the Western Slope, and how will energy production at the Estes Power Plant change? Will it increase, and therefore require more transmission lines being built in this newly-designated 5 mile wide Energy Corridor? How will these projects affect the ecosystems of the Colorado River Basin in western Colorado and the south west United States? The public on the Front Range need to understand how the decisions made during this rebuild project relate to long term and large scale environmental and socio-economic impacts on both sides of the continental divide.

Specifically, note how the proposed project runs completely cross-grain to your stated management directives and standards. Your policies state that utilities will be consolidated into Utility Corridors. They state that "the allocation of utility corridors does not change by alternative...Corridor management shall be compatible with adjacent management objectives including visual, recreation and travel management...Expansion and other activities and actions that would not meet these (visual quality) requirements would not be approved." They state that the proposed project must be "consistent with the laws, regulations, orders, and policies governing National Forest System Lands" (36 CFR 251.54). The re-route aspect of this proposal conflicts with most of the rules you have put in place based on years of management legislation. It does not meet the minimum requirements for an approval. Ultimately, the statutes state that the proposal must be made consistent with the management plan, NOT that the management plan be made consistent with the proposal.

History will tell you that the route along the Designated Utility Corridor is plenty practical from an engineering standpoint. It is the location of one of the first public roads into Estes Park dating back to 1877 (the "Loveland Road"). It was the preferred route for the 1938 Estes-Flatiron Transmission Line. And it was and the preferred route for the more recent natural gas line. The point is that the pressure exerted by the Pew/Crocker Ranch prior to the public scoping period has pushed Western into a position of rationalizing the re-route rather than embracing the tenets that are put in place for the greater public.

While I fully support the wise use of tax-payer funds leveraged to improve our publicly owned transmission infrastructure, I stand with an ever-increasing number of citizens in wholehearted opposition to the proposed re-route of this project from its original line.

In your own testimony before the Congress on March 15, 2011 regarding Spending Priorities and Missions of Western Area Power Administration, you cited a goal of delivering, "hydropower allocations in a timely, reliable, and cost-effective manner." You went on to cite a number of factors that drive your costs up, many of which are out of your control. "Increased environmental regulatory compliance costs" was number one on your list of factors which you say, "have had the net effect of increasing expenses, while reducing the quantity and reliability of the hydropower product." Than being the case, there seems to be a major disconnect between federal policies to cut costs and the reality of local execution. As rate-payers, we watch our our electric bills increase through tacked-on fees 5% year-over-year, most of which is in the form of an exclusive tax to pay the regional, Platte River Power Authority. At the same time, we watch Western pursue an unnecessary re-route which is both 33-36% more costly to the public and inestimably more devastating to our federal public lands. Are these increased fees being passed on to the public actually paying for your increased costs of "environmental compliance"? If so, how does the public benefit from paying Western staff to transform an uncontroversial re-build from Estes to Flatiron into an unnecessary and costly re-route already bloated 33-36% beyond Westerns original 2010 projections?

As American Citizens, we are heading into a time where there will be a continued and increased assault on our national public assets, and a continued effort for private interests to seize control of our public lands, our government, and our public infrastructure for private benefit under the guise of public-private partnerships. But for today, the project at hand involves a public agency using public funds to rebuild our public infrastructure through our federal public lands. Therefore, as one of countless citizens who have a stake in preserving Roosevelt National Forest, Rocky Mountain National Park, and the Estes Valley for the public good, I respectfully request that you withdraw this wasteful EA, withdraw this damaging and unnecessary re-route, and proceed without haste to streamline the Estes to Flatiron Rebuild through a CE and by way of the long-established USFS Designated Utility Corridor, for the good of the general public.

Design Considerations. We support all the design considerations proposed at the public meeting, including:

- Avoid placing transmission lines on ridgelines or other locations where they will be silhouetted against the sky, where feasible.
- Use non-reflective or low-reflective materials or coatings whenever possible.
- Leveling and benching of structure sites will be the minimum necessary.
- Consider using low-profile structures to reduce visibility where height is an important consideration, e.g. where greater height would result in structures being visible above surrounding vegetation.
- To the extent practical, cuts through trees or other vegetation would be irregularly shaped to soften the edges of the right of way.
- Site transmission lines to take advantage of topography and vegetation to restrict views from sensitive viewpoints.
- Site transmission lines to follow the edges of clearings (where they will be less conspicuous) rather than passing through the center of clearings.

Corridor Alignment. To minimize resource impacts we recommend either using existing rights-of-way on protected parks and open spaces, or acquiring new easements on property not owned or managed by Larimer County. Regardless of the route selected, we recommend using existing roads where appropriate and limiting vegetation removal and pruning. Best management practices to control erosion and stormwater will be essential. We are also concerned about the visual impacts of the poles from Chimney Hollow Open Space. Ideally, a visitor would not see poles from the interior of the open space. Therefore, we prefer the poles near Chimney Hollow Open Space to be near CR 18E, where they can be buffered visually, by the penstock ridge. The route alignment proposed through Chimney Hollow Open Space will also cross the future access road for this open spaces trailhead. We suggest working closely on the placing of any poles near the penstocks to ensure future access isn't blocked and that poles don't provide a visual nuisance as visitors enter the open space. Further, the Larimer County Open Lands Master Plan delineates a proposed regional trail between Carter Lake and Estes Park. Therefore, if new utility easements are acquired, we suggest that public access is legally secured as well.

Structure Type and Size. Protecting scenic views of natural features like valleys and mountainsides is critical to our mission. Therefore, we support transmission structure types that blend in with their surroundings. Ideally structures will be installed below the height of the surrounding vegetation and we prefer using larger structures to maximize the ruling span and reduce the number of towers needed. We also prefer the steel monopoles. We would like to delay a recommendation on the color of the structures, until we know where they are proposed and if the viewshed background is forested, grassland or open sky.

Im writing this evening to request your help in stopping the re-routing of the Estes to Flatiron Transmission Line out of Estes Park, CO. As a long time resident of Colorado I strongly value the mountains and the beauty they provide. At the same time I understand the need for power. That is why utility corridors exist - to provide power to the mountains. Minimizing the impact of the corridors and keeping the number of corridors to a minimum is paramount to maintaining the beauty of the mountains. The re-routing which is being proposed is to the benefit of one land owner (the Pew Crocker Ranch) and does not benefit the public. In fact it takes away from the public by destroying scenic viewsheds and possibly hindering tourism. I demand that Western be required to recognize and follow the established land protections as laid out in the Arapaho-Roosevelt Natural Resource Management Plan as it stands today. Arapaho-Roosevelt National Forest management must give notice to Western that the special use permit can not be granted based on the fact that there is NO need, and NO public benefit. As I understand it, the deadline for action is April 22nd, 2012. I strongly urge you to stop the further progression of this unnecessary re-route and pursue a categorical exclusion for a rebuild in the Designated Utility Corridor. Do not allow this waste of public funds. Stop Westerns abuse of their position. And stop the appearance of favoritism to benefit of one influential land owner with obvious political clout! Im asking for accountability.

I remain concerned about the proposed routing for the Estes-Flatiron rebuild. I have not yet heard an adequate response offered by WAPA to the numerous questions that have been raised about such important issues as the propriety of the process leading up to the proposal, the disproportionate influence exercised by a few powerful interests, the advisability of moving outside of the designated utility corridor through public lands, and the potential for the proposed routing to cause environmental damage and harm public health and safety. In addition, it appears that the possibility of "undergrounding" the lines, a solution that would seem to resolve many of the issues raised in this debate, has received scant attention thus far. In view of the decision process to date, I must admit to a substantial degree of skepticism that this possibility will truly receive full consideration. I implore the decision-makers in this process, both public and private, to weight most heavily the views of the people who will be most directly affected by this process. This needs to be done right.

Fundamental to the study of economics is the idea that the costs of products should be entirely borne by the consumers of those products whenever possible. Costs of production not paid by product buyers but paid by others are called externalities, as you undoubtedly know. The Estes-Flatiron rebuild construction costs will undoubtedly be passed on to regional electricity consumers. I am asking that the costs of environmental damage, property value losses, Estes Valley tourism industry losses, and recreation value losses to tourists be internalized and paid by electricity consumers as well. Applying this principle, I am asking that WAPA look very carefully at undergrounding the Estes-Flatiron lines within the Town of Estes Park and through Crocker Ranch. Some relevant factors include: 1) The distance from the end of the causeway past the buildings on Crocker ranch appears to be 1.0 - 1.5 miles, depending on route specifics. In addition, should rectifying the past failure to internalize the readily apparent external costs be considered, the distance from the power station across the causeway to Mall Road of about 1.0 mile, could be buried as well. 2) The U.S. Energy Information Agency has indicated that the cost of building power lines in rural areas has a range with an upper limit of about \$1.1 million per mile. Interestingly, the article noted that the upper end might be the result of undergrounding through Colorado granite. Therefore, I assume that the relevant cost per mile is about \$1.1 million. <http://www.eia.gov/todayinenergy/detail.cfm?id=7250> 3) 30-year, grade A municipal bonds currently have a yield to maturity of about 4.40% and by some forecasts, that is expected to fall. Thus, should a regional municipal government or government consortium choose to issue bonds to cover the cost of burying the lines, their interest rate should be near this 4.40% but, to be conservative, perhaps 5% is better. http://www.fmsbonds.com/Market_Yields/index.asp

4) The Colorado Public Utilities Commission can and has granted Colorado utility providers with the ability to recover such costs from customers through rate increases. These rate increases can be used to retire bonds. 5) The amortized monthly payment for \$1.1 million over 30 years at 5% is \$5905. Once fees are included, this monthly cost might be slightly higher, say \$6000. 6) If the sum of "housing units" (2011) and "firms" (2007) is used as a proxy for number of customers, then the estimated number of customers for regional service areas potentially advantaged by the project follow: Larimer County -- 167,097 Larimer, Boulder, and Weld Counties -- 457,957 Larimer, Boulder, Weld, and Metro Denver -- 1,631,749 <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/08000.html> 7) Putting these together, the cost per customer per month of burying a mile of power lines for the various service areas is about Larimer County only -- \$0.036 Larimer, Boulder, and Weld Counties -- \$0.013 Larimer, Boulder, Weld, and Metro Denver -- \$0.004 Obviously you have better information on your costs, your customers, and public utilities regulations than I do. I am providing these estimates to make a general point. For a very small monthly cost paid by the actual users of your product, the anticipated sizable damages to a few could be avoided. And it would be done by following the best of economic theory and legal practices. Using the numbers above, if the service area is only Larimer County and if the project included the longest distance -- from the power plant through the buildings area of Crocker Ranch, the cost per customer would be only about a dime per month. Even if these estimates are low, such that the cost is four, five or ten times as much, you'd still have done the right thing without really hurting anyone. Nobody would be being asked to do any more than pay all the costs of the utilities they use; homeowners, ranch owners, and shopkeepers would not be being asked to suffer an undue loss so that someone else could get their utilities at below cost rates.

WAPA should bury the visual-impact portion of the Estes-Flatiron power lines. Not doing so will force losses on the businesses, homeowners, and visitors of the Estes Valley. Burying the lines will cost WAPA more. Being environmentally and socially responsible often costs more. Integrity has a price tag; is this really a surprise? Not burying the lines will allow WAPA to avoid costs by externalizing the losses resulting from its actions. It would be using its power as government agency to force losses on a small group of citizens while proclaiming its efficiency to others. The additional costs of the under-grounding could be covered in a variety of ways. For example, the people who are the users of the additional power could be charged a surcharge of a few cents per month for a few years. Internalizing these externalities by burying the lines then using a process like the surcharge would make the people who get the product pay its cost. This simple and rational approach can be found in any principles of economics book. Do we really need an EIS for this?

Working together the Western Area Power Administration (WAPA), the Platte River Power Authority (PRPA), Larimer County, the Town of Estes Park, the owners of Crocker Ranch, and the people of the Estes Valley could reach a solution that would represent a dramatic improvement over both the status quo and the draft power line proposal initially offered by WAPA. For example, tax-exempt bonds might be sold by an appropriate bonding authority whose proceeds would cover the additional cost of burying the lines from the power plant down the causeway and through the scenic and populated stretches of the route. These bonds might be repaid by a surcharge on electric utility bills and/or a limited-term, designated-purpose sales or excise tax. The Crocker Ranch family might show leadership by joining capable community members and the general public in buying the bonds. Local and state government officials could join with our federal representatives in working with PRPA and WAPA to assure that the public-private partnership becomes a showcase for responsible government action that provides needed electric power, environmental stewardship, local jobs, and the protection of the values and safety of private homes and ranches. Similar examples undoubtedly exist and have been discussed. I ask that as an agent of one of the entities involved, you work with the others to find a community solution. Any such community betterment solution is likely to be more complex and harder to implement than the original draft solution. But it will also be one that would, when the work is done, allow you to look back at what's been accomplished with the thought that you have contributed lasting value to the families affected, the Larimer County communities, and the Estes Valley as a national treasure.

Im concerned about the scenic impacts of the larger converted metal structures. So much of CO is uglified by wires across public land. Please enhance, not degrade, scenic quality.

However, after the meeting, I decided to scan the medical literature to get a sense of where the scientific community currently stands on this issue. Here is what I found:

- Between 2002 and the present, a number of additional epidemiological studies focusing on childhood leukemia have been conducted in various countries. Despite attempts to account for various confounding factors (such as socioeconomic status and population mixing) -- and despite improved or alternative methods of estimating EMF exposure -- a positive association persists in most studies. In some of them, the association is statistically significant; [1-3] in others it is not. [4-6] One study found a statistically significant increase in leukemia among adults who had prolonged exposure to ELF-EMFs during childhood.
- A few studies have suggested a possible association between ELF-EMFs and other cancers, including melanoma (especially in women), [8-10] breast, [11] lung, [12-14] and testicular cancer. [15] This evidence is much weaker than that for leukemia; nevertheless, a causal relationship has not been entirely ruled out.
- One review found that ELF-EMFs were not related to cancer risk, but were associated with an increased risk of amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS, also known as Lou Gehrig disease) [16] -- a disabling and ultimately fatal neurological disease. Exposure to high voltage power lines has also been associated with increased rates of depression and suicide. [17] One study suggested a possibility that ELF-EMFs may, under some circumstances, interfere with cardiac pacemakers. [18]
- One of the abovementioned leukemia studies [1] is considered particularly well designed to avoid bias. [19] It found that the zone of significantly increased risk actually extends further away from power lines than can be accounted for by direct ELF-EMF exposure. [1] Corona ionization has been proposed as an alternative (or additional) explanation:
 - o Corona ions emitted by power lines may be carried through the atmosphere for variable distances. Such ions may attach to carcinogenic air pollutant particles and be deposited on the skin and/or inhaled, where they have an increased likelihood of being retained in the lungs because of their electric charge. The inhaled pollutants may then be absorbed into the bloodstream and carried to all parts of the body. [17][19][20]
 - o Corona ionization may create electrical field disturbances, distant from the direct power-frequency EMFs, that could disrupt the normal nighttime secretion of melatonin. In recent years, there has been increasing evidence that melatonin has anti-cancer effects -- and that disruption of melatonin secretion may increase the risk of various cancers, including leukemia. [20]
- The US Environmental Protection Agency currently considers the evidence for or against ELF-EMF health effects to be inconclusive (<http://www.epa.gov/radtown/power-lines.html>)

To summarize: it is still unclear whether high voltage power lines cause cancer or other health effects. Although the risks, if any, are probably small, there is a general consensus that further research is needed to resolve these issues. Meanwhile, the safest course of action is to keep high-voltage transmission lines as far away as possible from neighborhoods where people live, work, and attend school. If the melatonin hypothesis is correct, then avoiding exposure at home would be most important of all -- because most people are home at night, when melatonin would be affected. Finally, I would like to point out that, even if ELF-EMFs are perfectly safe, the public perception that they have adverse health effects could impact property values.

Where will it cross Reclamation lands?

Shared power pole agreements- How will the project affect those?

What color will the poles be?

I have to take this opportunity to voice my extreme concern about the possible placement of a new consolidated high voltage power line through the Newell Warnock housing area at Pinewood lake, west of Loveland. This is a residential area that would be negatively impacted by the choice of this route for the power line. Plus, there is an alternate route, where the line would not have to pass through a housing area. The route on the south side of Pinewood Lake would pass by only a few residences and could be placed on the southernmost part of the valley, where there are no homes in the immediate area.

The unknown health risks of placement of this type of high voltage line close to homes is of great concern to those that live in this area. Not to mention what 100 ft high power poles would do to the property values in this small community.

I have felt, as a homeowner in this area, that we should do our best to keep this area as undisturbed as we can, and to not interfere with the wildlife on the hill. What impact will this expansion have?

And my last, but ever present concern, is of the increase in the risk of fire in this wooded community. We do our best to work with the county to keep this area safe from fire. These lines will only increase our concern. I feel that this project would better meet the needs of the community and decrease homeowner concern, if it were routed on the southernmost side of the valley at Pinewood Lake.

On Friday, September 30, 2012, the Meadowdale Hills Property Owners Association (MHPOA) met with interested residents regarding WAPAs request for a meeting on Thursday, October 4 to discuss alternatives to their power line proposal. We heard the same comments repeatedly from residents that insufficient notice has been provided for the meeting, and that residents felt that they could not make informed comments during the scoping period because WAPA and the USFS have to date failed to provide adequate information, in some cases outright stonewalling the release of requested documents. As a result, the board voted to refuse the meeting request. We would be pleased to have a meeting with the following gating criteria:

- Advance Notice. Three weeks advance notice needs to be allotted, as many residents need to be contacted by mail.
- Meeting Agenda. The meeting agenda needs to be properly matched to the current phase of the EIS. Alternative workshop discussions have been slated to occur after the end of the scoping period. Any meeting during the scoping period should be centered on issues related to that. In particular, steps WAPA needs to take to properly inform the public regarding the details of their plan.
- Public Information. People cannot make informed comments during the EIS scoping period until essential information has been made available so that the public can properly understand the details and ramifications of the proposal. In particular:
 - o WAPA initially proposed to rebuild the transmission line through Crocker Ranch and a USFS utility corridor. This initial plan was shown to several government agencies, but has not been released to the public. Subsequent to that, over one year of private meetings occurred between WAPA and Crocker Ranch, after which the public version of the plan was released, which involved a change in routing to bypass most of Crocker Ranch and the utility corridor. Both the initial plan, as well as details of these private meetings should be released to the public.

o During the initial EA, many groups pointed out that the proposal was illegal, as federal regulations clearly require that projects such as transmission lines be placed within existing utility corridors whenever feasible. In response, the USFS on April 23, 2012 issued a letter declaring both routes to be within the utility corridor, without contesting the location of the centerline being along the initial route. Such a definition implies a corridor width of at least 4 mi., and WAPA representatives have since repeatedly proclaimed that "the corridor is five miles wide." This would make the proposal legal, but also would result in reclassifying nearly 21,000 acres of national forest as utility corridor. Nearly all of this area is currently given high protection status under prior forest service plans, as it includes the scenic Highway 36 corridor, Kruger Rock, the public portion of Mt. Olympus, and numerous elk and other wildlife migration corridors. Utility corridor designation is essentially the lowest protection grade that can be given. It represents land that is preferentially a dumping ground for all manner of undesirable industrial projects, and such projects can be fast tracked to go forward without any public review. This would represent a massive change to the forest service plan in the Estes Valley, and WAPA has completely failed to educate the public during the scoping period as to the ramifications of their proposal. The current forest service plan states that the utility corridor width is determined by the special use permits of the utilities within it. Three existing utilities coincide directly with the utility corridor centerline: an existing transmission line, a gas line, and a water tunnel access. In December, a FOIA request was placed asking, among other things, for the special use permits for these three utilities. This information has not yet been made available to us, or anyone in the public. It is essential, pertinent information, and we believe the special use permits show the utility corridor to be 75 feet wide. When asked why they have not provided the public with maps depicting the utility corridor, WAPA has stated, "We do not want to provide information that might bias people." This attitude does not comport with the spirit of an EIS scoping process.

Regardless of the location of the right-of-way (ROW) proposed for the project, some of the towers and the transmission lines themselves will be visible :front locations within Rocky Mountain National Park. Therefore, we endorse the context sensitive design approach. To reduce visibility of the-towers, we • recommend the use of weathering steel (also known as COR-TEN steel) for the towers and low reflectance wire used for the transmission lines. To reduce the visibility of the ROW, we request that understory vegetation be retained to the maximum extent possible, and design and build to avoid straight line cuts through the forest. We would prefer to see the edges of the right-of-way feathered to look less man-made. If a pre-existing ROW will be reused for the r build project, only the minimum amount of vegetation should be removed to site the towers.

To minimize visual impact of any temporarily cleared workspaces and any required ROWs, NPS suggests mitigation and monitoring protocols similar to those established in the Ruby Pipeline Final Environmental Impact Statement (2009). Post-construction goals for minimizing the visual impact of temporary workspaces and of a maintained ROW include short term stabilization of soil, and long term permanent vegetation cover with similar species densities and compositions of adjacent undisturbed lands. In selected areas, as agreed upon by the proponent and the affected land management agency, consider decreasing the width of the ROW. These areas will be based on safety and constructability and upon discussions with the appropriate land management agency or landowner. To minimize fragmentation impacts, clear vegetation along the edge of the construction workspace using a zigzag clearing pattern ("feathering") to reduce the creation of hard edges along the construction workspace; or, if possible, implement measures to create shrub patches within the ROW corridor as agreed to by landowners and land-managing agencies. Transplant container-grown shrubs and bare-root conifer trees in appropriate locations within the temporary construction work areas. These measures reduce fragmentation effects of abrupt edge created by construction and operation practices. ROW restoration should begin promptly after final construction cleanup. In visually sensitive areas, the ROW alignment should have an uneven edge by either leaving shrubs in place when clearing or randomly seeding/planting clumps of shrubs along the ROW perimeter. Extra workspace restoration should follow similar steps as ROW restoration including contouring, preparing the seedbed, and seeding. This restoration should occur within a few days after construction in the area is complete. Access roads should be reclaimed according to landowner directions. Access road restoration should include grading, preparing the seed bed, and seeding. Road restoration should occur within a few days after the road is no longer needed. We support establishing re-seeding and planting protocols based on knowledge of existing surrounding vegetation, using NRCS (Natural resource Conservation Service) Ecological Site Descriptions or a similar knowledge base to identify vegetation that will blend with surrounding undisturbed areas.

We suggest that the agency or proponent should quantitatively document reclamation success in extra workspaces and within the ROW. Parameters can include a species list and estimates of species density and percentage of plant cover, vegetation litter, rock, and bare ground. Observations of soil disturbance, occurrence of noxious and invasive weeds, plant growth stages, and animal use should be documented. Qualitative analysis methods should be incorporated at established monitoring locations to provide visual documentation of all quantitative data.

Reseeding or replanting efforts, including supplemental mulching, if necessary, should occur in agreement with the landowner or management agency in any area where monitoring during the third growing season identifies a restoration failure, particularly where accompanied by observed increases in water or wind erosion. Noxious weed control is also included in maintenance and should be performed in accordance with a Noxious Weed Control Plan included in the Plan of Development. Upland reclamation should generally be considered successful when vegetation within the extra workspaces and the reclaimed ROW supports non-noxious plants that are similar in forb, graminoid, and woody plant density and cover to those growing on adjacent undisturbed lands. Where initial reclamation and plant establishment efforts fail to meet plant establishment standards, reseeded may be necessary on portions of the ROW. If successful plant establishment is not achieved within ten years, appropriate compensatory mitigation should be discussed with the lead agency. A quantitative vegetative monitoring program should document the reclamation progress in the ROW. Monitoring plots should be established randomly within different vegetation types along the ROW and control plots on adjacent undisturbed lands. The monitoring and control plots should be similar in aspect, slope, and soils. The control plots should have similar dimensions as the ROW monitoring plots and be established in undisturbed vegetation adjacent to the ROW. Vegetation monitoring should occur for a minimum of five years, documenting the presence of noxious weeds, erosion, plant success and any additional seeding requirements. Additional monitoring could occur as necessary and agreed upon by the proponent and the land managing agency or landowner. The National Park Service Intermountain Region office and Rocky Mountain National Park would like to participate with Western Area Power Administration to avoid or minimize potential visual impacts as the planning and design process proceeds for the transmission line.

Representing Park Hill Subdivision, including Mall Rd. residences, and residences in adjoining Joel Estes Drive, encompassing approximately 25 homes, I would say that after all the meetings and workshops, our opinion has not changed. We remain strongly in support of the Dept. of Energy proposal to relocate the three power lines from this area.

Representing Park Hill Subdivision, including Mall Rd. residences, and residences in adjoining Joel Estes Drive, encompassing approximately 25 homes, also strongly support the views of Crocker Ranch in this matter, recognizing that they are very good neighbors and will bear the brunt of the relocation, including many easements on their land. We would ask that you give high priority to their requests versus the vocal and mis-leading assertions from local homeowner groups that are virtually un-affected. A handful of homes in Ravencrest might be affected and, to be constructive, we did recommend at the last two workshops that consideration be given to moving the lines near the top of Pole Hill somewhat further north, if feasible.

I've been discussing this transmission line project with environmental quality folks here and staff at Rocky Mountain National Park. Would you, or someone that you can recommend, call me to discuss a potential visit to areas of the proposed project close to the park? We have some questions that we could discuss prior to returning comments to your office in July.

In particular, many people have requested that you expand scoping to include all public stakeholders. During our conversation on October 2, 2012 at the Estes Park Museum, you confirmed that you have not expanded scoping by including notices in papers in Denver, Boulder, Longmont, Fort Collins, etc., despite the fact that these communities are identified as stakeholders in the USFS 1997 Land and Resource Management Plan for the Roosevelt National Forest.

Likewise, we requested that you make critical information available to the public during the scoping period, and to date you have not. These include a baseline aerial photo map, a GIS map with critical features such as the USFS Estes-Flatiron Designated Utility Corridor, the Xcel Energy gas line defined by the USFS special use permit, and the full 1939 Estes-Flatiron transmission line special use permit issued to the Bureau of Reclamation. We have requested the detailed map sheets that are expressly part of this permit via a FOIA request, but instead received an altered version dated in 1994 with critical information overwritten. We still await to receive the original, as well as the other missing information listed in our previous letter.

For instance, you have omitted the multiple impacts from your recreational analyses at the public access point to the National Forest at the Pole Hill Road trailhead.

VIII. Site to Minimize Total Overall Footprint WAPAs special use permit application clearly states they only need 110 for this project, yet now during the EIS they have falsely stated the Utility Corridor is Five miles wide. During the EA-1899, the USFS and WAPA realized that there is no Utility Corridor designation along the Estes-Pole Hill transmission line where WAPA already sought a publicly damaging re-route. Now, during the EIS WAPA and the USFS have sought to re-write history and seek a major expansion of the Utility Corridor by anywhere from one mile to five miles wide in order to circumvent the existing Forest Plan which does not include the Estes-Pole Hill Line within the existing Utility Corridor. This seems to completely undermine the mandates of the existing USFS Forest Plan, and it is an abuse of the special use permit process itself. I request full disclosure to the public regarding the placement and current width of the USFS Designated Utility Corridor as it stands today. I further request you site this transmission rebuild along the current USFS centerline, and along the existing 1938 Estes-Flatiron line, in order to minimize the overall width of the parcel of land to no more than 110. WAPA has a purpose to rebuild aging infrastructure, but they do not have a need to expand the existing Utility Corridor beyond 110 to do so.

XV. Site Transmission Line to Reduce Waste Two-and-a-half years have already been wasted and countless public tax dollars paying WAPA staff and USFS staff to run in circles trying to accommodate the private APC Crocker Ranch LLC, when they already have what they need in front of them. What started as a straightforward, Categorically Excluded \$14M Estes-Flatiron re-build has transformed into a costly and unnecessary EIS, which has so far bloated in cost to the tune of \$19M and dragged on now for 2 1/2 years. Several costs have been tacked onto the Estes to Flatiron Rebuild project since it began in 2010 which are neither necessary nor in the public interest. The difference of five million dollars in budget costs from 2010 to now translates to approximately \$250,0000 per mile in sheer waste. I request that you perform an itemized cost analysis of rebuilding along the current centerline of the USFS Designated Utility Corridor, as opposed to any re-routes you may propose. Further, I demand that you reveal to the public the itemized costs incurred thus far for the Estes-Flatiron Rebuild project since the project began in early 2010.

I request that you perform an itemized cost analysis of rebuilding along the current centerline of the USFS Designated Utility Corridor, as opposed to any re-routes you may propose. Further, I demand that you reveal to the public the itemized costs incurred thus far for the Estes-Flatiron Rebuild project since the project began in early 2010.

To date, the DOEs EIS-0483 is following a trend of strategically delaying public meetings and outreach and withholding information from the public in direct conflict with NEPA statutes. Although the Estes-Flatiron Rebuild has been elevated to the level of a more comprehensive EIS, there has been a reduction of actual information regarding the basic facts on the ground. What we, along with the general public, have received thus far has been inconsistent, missing, and even completely reversed references and terminology, coupled with posters showing little significant content and maps missing basic information. The net effect of the lack of meaningful information is that the our ability to effectively comment or fully participate in the scoping phase of this EIS has been severely stunted.

The announcement to "extend scoping" in July of 2012 was actually due to a failure to meet the minimum public meeting requirements as stipulated by federal law under NEPA. In fact, no public meetings were held until almost four months later, on August 6th, leaving only three short weeks for the public to participate or comment on what they learned from the meetings. By the end of July, invitationonly meetings were held without informing or inviting the public. While we appreciated the invite, we still couldnt effectively participate, because we were (and are) still waiting for basic information requested as early as December of 2011. Further, the format of these "stakeholder interviews" were for all intents and purposes, private, closed-door meetings. Times, locations, and dates were not disclosed to the public. Meeting minutes have not been made publicly available. We believe everyone would benefit by learning from the content of these meetings which discussed, among other things the 2010 proposal which pre-dated the 2011/2012 EA.

As part of the public record, we have asked for town hall style meetings at the Denver, Boulder, Lyons, Fort Collins, and Loveland public libraries at the beginning of scoping. These communities are explicitly identified as members of the "affected environment" in the Arapaho Roosevelt National Forest (ARNF) Land and Resource Management Plan EIS. We have requested public meetings at Rocky Mountain National Park, which is expressly linked "geographically and visually" to Roosevelt National Forest and Estes Park in the same Plan. We have asked for you to hold town-hall style meetings, as opposed to "open houses" with billboards and talking points where WAPA staff have made misleading statements such as, "The Utility Corridor is five miles wide". In short, we have (and do) continue to request that you not just "extend", but "expand" public scoping. For everyone to fully understand whats at stake here, these private meetings need to end.

WAPAs July newsletter shows a clear distinction between the scoping period and alternatives screening and indicates that all scoping will be complete before alternatives development" screening has commenced. Although youve stated that public scoping has been extended to October 19th, youre still moving forward with an agenda that screens out alternatives. WAPAs September newsletter assures us that, "locations, dates, and times for satellite sessions will be announced on Westerns website", but most of the these satellite session details are not posted.

When entire groups of people who will no doubt be directly and indirectly affected by this project are still being left out of the discourse and when the public still does not have critical information necessary to make informed scoping comments, transitioning to the alternatives screening phase of the project is entirely premature. Entire groups of public stakeholders identified in previous analyses (such as the "regional recreationists" and "businesses" in the Boulder and Denver-Metro areas), still do not even know this project exists. Keeping this in mind, it has become clear that the scoping phase for this project has only just begun. Any meetings or discussions regarding alternatives screening will only serve to produce ill-informed alternatives, as well as an incomplete set of reasonable alternatives. Another potential outcome of this tainted process would be to steer alternatives development toward the pre-determined re-route originally promoted by WAPA staff during the EA. The official newsletter of the EIS clearly outlines a distinct scoping phase and a distinct alternatives development phase. Therefore, we respectfully request you cancel all private, closed door meetings, and postpone any pre-decisional alternatives development meetings until after you've fully completed the scoping phase such that all affected agencies, decision-makers, and members of the public are sufficiently notified and informed as to the full impact of this project. Pursuing "alternatives development" to the exclusion of entire groups by WAPA staff, or their contractors prior to the completion of scoping may compromise the legality of this EIS at the outset.

Please expand scoping to include all public stakeholders. Regional Recreationists - Denver, Boulder, & Front Range Cities. Business Owners Please hold well advertised (in Denver and Boulder and other newspapers) presentation-style format meetings in Denver, Boulder, Lyons, and other Front Range cities. Please allow plenty of time for questions and answer sessions and post meeting minutes on your website for public benefit. All business people in Estes Park whose revenue is directly or indirectly related to a tourism/recreation based economy. Businesses applying for special use permits within Roosevelt National Forest dating back to 1997 and within the five mile wide section of potentially affected public land, 2.5 miles either side of the USFS Designated Utility Corridor centerline between Estes and Flatiron. Business people along the Denver, Boulder, and Front Range cities whose income is derived from tourism/recreation based economy in (or to) Roosevelt National Forest, Estes Park, and RMNP. Part-Time Residents, Second-Homeowners, Former Urban Residents. We request you mail formal notice to all people owning property within the five mile wide section of potentially affected land centered along the USFS Designated Utility Corridor between Estes Park and Flatiron. These stakeholders must be notified and given the opportunity to define the scope of this EIS.

I. Aerial Photo Map Please provide a high-resolution, detailed aerial photo map of the Estes-Flatiron Rebuild Project area so that the public is fully aware of the existing landforms, modifications, and land alterations. This map should be made available on WAPA's website as a high resolution PDF, and WAPA should make it viewable in large scale printed format in all public meetings during the scoping period.

II. GIS map with critical features Please provide a high-resolution, detailed GIS map of the Estes-Flatiron Rebuild Project so that the public is fully aware of the geography involved, of the existing utilities, existing roads, and of the existing Utility Corridor. This map should be made available on WAPAs website as a high resolution PDF, and WAPA should make it viewable in large scale printed format in all public meetings during the scoping period. The map should include: 1. High resolution aerial photography as the background image Highways 34, 36, County Roads 63 and 122, Forest Service Road 122, Mall Road extending to the Olympus tunnel entrance, and the roads along the 1938 Estes Flatiron Transmission Line between Mt Olympus and Mt Pisgah. WAPA had shown the roads on a map during the Environmental Assessment, and then subsequently removed the roads between Mt Olympus and Pisgah during meetings of the Environmental Impact Statement. 2. Labeled mountain peaks within the area such that the public can orient themselves. 3. The centerline of the Designated Utility Corridor along the 1938-1939 Estes Flatiron Transmission Line as it is defined in the USFS 1997 Land Management and Resource Plan (Forest Plan). USFS GIS Specialist Mary Hattis can provide this exact line to WAPA. 4. The existing 1938-1939 Estes Flatiron Transmission Line. The line and pole symbols should be a width as to not block the aerial imagery of the surrounding vegetation or clearings. Symbol colors of all transmission lines should be the same. 5. The existing 1951 Pole Hill Transmission Line. The line and pole symbols should be a width as to not block the aerial imagery of the surrounding vegetation or clearings. Symbol colors of all transmission lines should be the same. 6. The existing Public Utility Company of Colorado (Excel Energy) Natural Gas Line that parallels the 1938-1939 Estes Flatiron Transmission Line. The line symbol should be a width as to not block the aerial imagery of the surrounding vegetation or clearings. 7. The existing Bureau of Reclamation Olympus and Pole Hill Tunnels and Penstock, and Power Plant substation. The symbols should clearly show the entrances and underground route of this existing utility. 8. The Administrative Boundary of the Roosevelt National Forest. 9. The boundaries and colored areas of publicly owned lands within the Administrative Boundary of Roosevelt National Forest. 10. The boundaries of privately owned lands within the Administrative Boundary of Roosevelt National Forest. 11. If privately owned land is labeled, all parcel ownership must be labeled, not just selected parcels.

I. 1939 BOR Estes Flatiron Transmission Line Special Use Permit The special Use Permit granted to the Bureau of Reclamation was requested from the USFS on December 16, 2011, and it has not been provided to the public. The USFS has only provided an incomplete version of this document that defines the bounds of the Designated Utility Corridor. Please provide this entire Special Use Permit to the public on WAPAs website and at all public meetings, including map Sheets #3 (245-D-586) and #10 (245-D-593).

II. Excel Energy (Public Service Company of Colorado) Gas Line Special Use Permit The Special Use Permit granted to the Public Utility Company of Colorado was requested from the USFS on December 16, 2011, and it has not been provided to the public. This Special Use Permit should be made available to the public on WAPAs website and at all public meetings.

III. Copies of the USFS 1984 and 1997 Forest Plans WAPA is required to consider all prior analyses and decisions during this EIS, including the USFS 1984 and 1997 Land and Resource Management Plans and supporting EIS, Summaries, and Records of Decision, Appendices, etc. Please make these publicly available in digital format (searchable PDF) on WAPAs website so that the public is fully informed of these prior analyses.

IV. Complete Meeting Minutes of Publicly and Privately Held Meetings The public has not been informed about what meetings have occurred during the originally proposed rebuild in 2010, the Environmental Assessment in 2011-12, and currently in the Environmental Impact Statement in 2012. Please post to the WAPA website meeting minutes and/or audio recordings, including: 1. Ongoing schedule (dates, times, and locations) of all prior and future meetings 2. Stakeholder meetings 3. Congressional briefings 4. Town Hall-style Public Meetings with question and answer sessions Meetings

V. Supporting Documents for USFS Letter April 23, 2012 to Steven Webber WAPA posted a letter dated April 23, 2012 to the EIS website addressed to Steven Webber, Lands Team Lead, from the USFS. The letter has Glenn Casamassa as the author, although he did not sign the letter. The letter makes contradictory statements about the width of the Utility Corridor, and references supporting documents. Given a single letter is being used to rationalize the potential re-designation of 21,000 acres of public land, we request that these supporting documents be made available on the Estes-Flatiron website for public review. The following sources of information are referenced in their letter: 1. Data Dictionary for Utility Corridors (searchable PDF format) 2. December 28, 1993 Memo from the Regional Office Planning Director 3. Book #46, Utility Corridors (searchable PDF format) 4. A copy of the "Documentation from a utility corridor meeting on October 14, 1994" 5. A copy of the Desk Guide Addition entitled Utility Corridor Analysis Direction 6. Documentation of the exact criteria used in 1997 for Utility Corridor designation as referenced on page 418, Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Arapaho Roosevelt National Forest 1997 Revision of the Land Management and Resource Plan, which states, "The allocation of utility corridors does not change by alternative. Corridor management shall be compatible with adjacent management objectives, including visual, recreation, and travel management. Expansion and other activities and actions that would not meet these requirements would not be approved. The corridors are set in width as identified by the special use permit issued ... Our analysis reviewed all existing electrical, telephone, gas, and oil lines meeting criteria for corridor designation."

I prefer that you use the southern route for Flatiron Substation to Pole Hill substation because of the lower population and infrastructure along that route.

I attended your workshop last week and would like to summarize my thoughts on the various options. Although I hate to see larger transmission lines on the south side of Pinewood Lake, to put them on the north side of Pole Hill Rd. would concern me even more because it would reduce the value of our homes, and increase our concerns over health issues related to EMFs. Also, many trees would have to be removed, which would further reduce the value of our homes. At the meeting we discussed how expensive the northern route would be with its steeper terrain, trees, homes and land that would need to be purchased, along with "corners, which are also very expensive to erect. This would mean additional expense to taxpayers. I hope consideration will be made regarding burying the line along the "bowl" south of the lake since the area is beautiful and treeless and those towers will be especially ugly there. Pinewood Reservoir is popular as a place people from all over the area can camp, fish, hike, boat, and bike in a still pristine area. It will no longer be pristine with the addition of these large towers. I would also prefer the straight towers of Option A. The shorter the better unless it means twice as many (as we were told).

I oppose the routing of the Estes - to - Flatiron Transmission lines through the Northern option that crosses over Green Mountain and Greenwood Drives. This area bounded by CR 18E on the South and West, Newell Dr on the North, and James Park on the East has the highest concentration of homes in the Pinewood Lake Community area and running Transmission Line here would impact the most homes. In my opinion the Southern option is the best option presented for the following reasons: 1. Concern over the impact to the view in our community. Lets face it most people in our neighborhood moved here because of the beauty of the surrounding area and power lines do not add to that.

In my opinion the Southern option is the best option presented for the following reasons: 2. Lowering of the property values for many of the neighborhood homes thus lowering all property values in our community.

In my opinion the Southern option is the best option presented for the following reasons: 3. We have health concerns with High Voltage Power Lines and the EMF field that will be generated. This could be of special concern since there is a slope to the mountain and those higher up the mountain may be exposed even more (one neighbor has indicated they will move due to health concerns if the lines follow the Northern route).

In my opinion the Southern option is the best option presented for the following reasons: 4. There are a lot of trees that would have to be removed on the Northern Route as opposed to the Southern Route thus degrading the environment.

In my opinion the Southern option is the best option presented for the following reasons: 5. With over 60 homes in the area I described in the first paragraph there would be more homeowners impacted by choosing the Northerly route. The Southerly route has only a few homes impacted in the area.

In my opinion the Southern option is the best option presented for the following reasons: 6. The Southerly Route is classified as a lower fire risk than the Northerly Route where much of the land on Green Mountain has been identified as at a Very High Risk for wildfire. This of course puts both the Power lines and Homes at a greater risk for fire damage if the Northerly route is chosen. Homeowners are always concerned with trees coming in contact with power lines and starting a fire. In fact a fire started here a couple of years ago when a tree hit a power line. Luckily it was quickly seen and put out. With the increase of Pine Beetle Trees in the area it is even a greater concern.

In my opinion the Southern option is the best option presented for the following reasons: 7. The Southerly Route has got to be a much cheaper alternative than the Northerly Route with flatter terrain, larger Right of Ways, and less obstacles such as trees, rocks, homes, etc. With the Northerly Route, homeowners would have to be displaced as they are within the 110 width needed for the larger lines, and more right of way would need to be purchased along the route costing taxpayers a lot more. 8. The flat terrain in the Southerly Route on the South and West side and the SE end of Pinewood lake is much more conducive to burying power lines as it is flatter and less rocky than the Northerly route. I believe burying the lines would make all residents, no matter which approach is favored, happier.

With more people being impacted and greater costs associated with the Northerly route it seems obvious to me that the Southerly Route is the one that should be chosen. I would also favor the use of the Option A Tower as it not as ugly or large as the other options.

My mother, Donna Shay, owns property on Highway 36 just southeast of Mall Road. The official address is either 2031 North St. Vrain or 2031 Highway 36. My mother is concerned about the impact of the Estes to Flatiron Substation Transmission Lines Rebuild Project on her property. Her property includes a (non-functioning) well house that may or may not be on the right-of-way line, and her concern is that she might have tear down the well house at her own expense in order to allow for the rebuild project. Can you perhaps direct me to someone who could (a) confirm whether or not the well house is on the right-of-way line, and (b) tell us whether or not we will have to make any changes to her property in order to facilitate the project? Any guidance will be appreciated.

We are writing you to communicate our opposition to a proposed construction of a double-circuited transmission line on 105 feet steel monopoles wheeling 230 kilovolts of electricity across our property (" the Project"). Our current land easement provides for a 55 feet easement on either side of the current transmission centerline. Our opposition to the Project is based on the following concerns: • HEALTH EFFECTS. By combining two individual transmission lines into one line, the new transmission line will be radiating twice the electromagnetic fields (EMFs). To accommodate this double-circuited line, the area width surrounding this line will also be increased and will radiate more EMFs than currently existing. The long-term health effects to those families who will live near this double-circuited transmission line are unknown. None of the information on EMFs provided by your company at the scoping meetings address these specific realities. An NIHS report dated April 4, 1999 states that "The NIHS concludes that ELF-EMF exposure can not be recognized at this time as entirely safe". On the incidence of breast cancer, this report states that further investigation is warranted. In light of uncertain and conflicting information, we require that WAPA undertake a complete and comprehensive study on the long-term health effects on individuals exposed to the increased EMF radiation caused by this double-circuited transmission line. This study should prove beyond a reasonable doubt that this Project is not harmful to humans and should be peer reviewed.

We are writing you to communicate our opposition to a proposed construction of a double-circuited transmission line on 105 feet steel monopoles wheeling 230 kilovolts of electricity across our property (" the Project"). Our current land easement provides for a 55 feet easement on either side of the current transmission centerline. Our opposition to the Project is based on the following concerns: • LEGAL AUTHORITY. We do not believe that the special use permits authorized in 1939 and 1951 for the construction of the northern Estes-Flatiron transmission line and the southern Estes Pole transmission line, respectively, allow for the utility corridor to be widened to accommodate this double circuited transmission line on National Forest Land. We hereby request that a nationally recognized law firm review all pertinent documents and information and issue an opinion on the permission to increase land use in the National Forest for this Project.

We are writing you to communicate our opposition to a proposed construction of a double-circuited transmission line on 105 feet steel monopoles wheeling 230 kilovolts of electricity across our property (" the Project"). Our current land easement provides for a 55 feet easement on either side of the current transmission centerline. Our opposition to the Project is based on the following concerns: • ALTERNATIVE ROUTE. WAPA can avoid all of the above mentioned health risks plus all of the expenses to be incurred for developing an EIS by constructing the new combined transmission line on the Estes Lyons Tap route. This parcel of land already has an existing transmission line and inhabits no families. By removing the ROW on both the Estes Pole Hill and Flatiron Pole, this would significantly improve the quality of life for the people living along the current route.

Another detrimental effect of the proposed high voltage electric transmission lines ("HVTL") to be located in the Estes – Pole Hill Line area is the negative impact on future property and land values. Studies performed by reputable real estate and appraisal firms indicate a significant negative effect on property values ranging from a 10 to 30 % decline due to the presence of HVTLs. (See attached study) Residential homes in this area will be significantly impacted, as these homes will be more difficult to sell. Potential buyers come to Estes Park for its lifestyle and scenic views, not to see 100 feet poles and HVTL. These HVTLs will be viewed as ugly with associated health risks such as EMFs and stray voltage. NO Buyers would want to move into this area. Since these structures will remain for many generations to come, current owners will be unable to sell their homes. With no new buyers coming into the area, economic decline will also set in. We would like to see a thorough study addressing these issues in the EIS.

Our preference (and the most logical) is to reroute this Line to the existing Estes-Lyons Tap Line, where there is already an existing utility corridor with no homes. The other option is to bury the HVTL. It has been suggested that underground lines will initially cost more, however maintenance costs for underground lines over the life of the HVTLs will also be less. Since these HVTLs will be around for more than 60 years, these additional costs, if any, should be amortized over the economic life of the HVTLs.

it is my understanding that WAPA is not increasing the capacity of the Estes Flatiron transmission system, simply consolidating two divergent ploe lines. Please consider No Action as an option. We understand that some construction roads will be necessary to access poles that need to be replaced. This option should minimize WAPAs costs, keeping electric costs lower for the consumer.

Should the use of new poles become necessary sometime in the future please consider the type of poles to be used. I would like to suggest the use of corten steel poles keeping them at a height similar to the system currently in place on Crocker Ranch and in Meadowdale Hills subdivision. Corten steel will insure a maintenance free system for the next century. again keeping you transmission costs as low as possible for you customers.

Hello. I am Andrea Thorne and I live at 77 Lone Elk Road, Loveland, CO 80537. I have a power line that runs just South of my house, like 40 feet. I currently have an easement of 30. The new proposal says that 110 feet will be required which is not at all possible due to the house.

I am also very concerned about the health effects, I know the original one was there before me but my concern now is the increase in power running through the lines. Since my house is right there I really dont want everyone living there to "glow".

The District strongly supports the Estes-Flatiron Rebuild Project, identifying a proposed re-route location of the WAPA transmission line. As you are aware, the District's treatment plant is located on Bureau of Reclamation land west of Mall Road, with WAPA utility easements along the northwest portion of the parcel. The transmission line also travels across the lower portion of District property east of Mall Road. The District's Master Plan identifies expansion of the treatment facility, installation of additional piping and concrete structures or basins (covered or uncovered). As shown on the enclosed Figure 1 - District Facility Map, future District expansion would be severely encumbered by existing overhead transmission lines and dedicated utility easements. The proposed re-route of the transmission line would, therefore, allow the District to utilize available vacant areas of both parcels and eliminate any potential encroachment of the easement. It is the desire of the District to partner with WAPA in support of the Estes-Flatiron Rebuild Project, identifying strategies and solutions which provide mutual benefit. Through careful examination of current and projected needs, equitable solutions may be identified, benefiting the entire Estes Valley and enhancing environmental protection efforts. Upper Thompson Sanitation District fully endorses the proposed re-routing of WAPA transmission lines, as described in the Estes-Flatiron Rebuild Project. We look forward to continued cooperation of our respective entities and collaborative efforts in delivering exceptional service to customers of the Estes Valley, both now and in the future.

The massive steel towers and clear cuts in Fort Collins open space are a negative impact to our open space philosophy. In addition to the estetic disruption there is a coninuous buzzing... dont make the same mistake in Estes Park. Think before you act.

I write today to submit comments for the public record for the Estes Flatiron Rebuild (DOE EIS-0483) in the hopes that I can help prevent in Estes Park the havoc wrought by the Platte River Power Authority here in Fort Collins, CO this year.

I request that you extend and broaden your public scoping for this project. I am a stakeholder, and I was not invited or notified that you were holding private stakeholder interviews for this project. I was not notified that you were holding congressional briefings for this project. I was not given the opportunity to become more informed by what was discussed during these closed-door meetings. I request that you re-do stakeholder interviews during the public scoping phase of this EIS, whereby the general public is invited and given the opportunity to be informed by what is being covered in these meetings. I request that you allocate time for the public to participate by asking questions at the end of the interviews and by commenting formally in writing during the official public scoping phase of this EIS. You announced this EIS in April of 2012, yet you held no public meetings until August, the last month of your stated public comment period. Furthermore, the "open house" format failed to allow for a true public forum at the beginning of this EIS. I request that you hold public, large-group meetings in plenary format at the beginning of the scoping phase, not at the end of the EIS after youve executed a pre-determined discourse. By allowing for town-hall style meetings, members of the public will be able to hear the opinions of other members of the public. Youve overlooked several groups of stakeholders, myself included, during the public scoping phase of this project. I request well advertised town-hall style public meetings, (not "open houses") at the Denver, Boulder, Fort Collins, Lyons, Loveland, and Estes Park public libraries. Additionally, this project will have long-term, far-reaching impacts on the foreground of Rocky Mountain National Park and Estes Valley. I request a well-advertised public meeting during the public scoping phase to be held at Rocky Mountain National Park. I further request that every National Park pass-holder in the United States be notified and given the opportunity to comment during the scoping phase of this EIS.

Low Flying Helicopters in populated, mountainous, and windy terrain pose a significant hazard to the human environment. WAPA has already been photographed putting the public at risk by skimming roof-tops as witnessed by flying below 100 feet above the ground in populated areas along the Estes-Pole Hill transmission line. It is clearly safer to follow the centerline of the Designated Utility Corridor along the Estes-Flatiron transmission line (WAPAs re-named Estes-Lyons line) as outlined by the USFS Forest Plan which already sited to minimize exposure to populated areas. Its common sense to not have to fly and maintain a route which crosses congested populated areas in mountainous terrain. The Estes-Pole Hill line is much more mountainous and populated, as compared to the Estes-Flatiron line(which WAPA has confusingly re-named the Estes-Lyons line). The Ravencrest and Meadowdale Hills subdivisions sit on a high ridge with rocky terrain, hundreds of people, high winds, and a populated public trailhead, with objective hazards that are not found along the original Colorado Big-Thompson projects Estes-Flatiron Transmission Line(the line WAPA has re-named the Estes-Lyons Line) which follows the centerline of the USFS Designated Utility Corridor through the valley between Mount Olympus and Mount Pisgah. I want you to provide a thorough analysis of the hazards involved with low flying helicopters as related to the human environment along every pole from Estes Park to Flatiron. Prove that it will not be less safe flying over these congested populated areas, where in the event of an engine failure and helicopter crash, that less people will die in the populated areas than in the unpopulated areas. I want a full analysis evaluating the risk of a helicopter crash flying through the valley between Mount Olympus and Mount Pisgah as opposed to the high mountain ridges along Highway 36, the Meadowdale Hill subdivision, and the USFS trailhead at the Pole Hill Road gate.

The risk of Forest fires in populated areas increases immensely with installation and maintenance crews flying below the Federal Aviation Administrations 500 foot limit in unpopulated areas, and 1000 foot limit in areas of congestion (like the scenic travel corridor along Highway 36 and the residential neighborhoods of Meadowdale Hills and Ravencrest). In the event of a crash, the likelihood of a forest fire is extreme, putting hundreds of lives in danger, causing millions of dollars in property damage, and causing inordinate amounts of environmental damage. In this EIS, I want you to perform a full analysis of the environmental, financial, and human risk posed by forest fires in populated areas as compared to unpopulated areas such as the centerline of the designated utility corridor. This analysis should evaluate risk over the full serviceable lifetime of the transmission line and should include but not be limited to both installation and maintenance activities. I want you to prove with certainty that it isnt less safe to re-route the transmission line through populated, mountainous terrain. Likewise, the route proposed during the Environmental Assessment up Highway 36 and across the Pole Hill trailhead is on a mountain ridge. Because of this, and due to the scale of the towers (many times taller than most trees in the area), the risk of lightning strikes along Pole Hill Road would be significantly higher, and thus the risk of forest fires is higher than a route in the adjacent unpopulated valley. I want you to perform a full analysis of the climate and weather conditions along mountain ridges compared to valleys, and compare the risk of lightning strikes in those areas. This study should include the risk of strikes to terrain and trees at each individual proposed tower location. Even though the towers will be grounded, the risk of nearby strikes is much higher.

I request that WAPA require the Pew-Crocker Ranch to open their gates and allow you to do what is in the best interest of the general public: Re-build the transmission line along the centerline of the USFS Designated Utility Corridor through the valley between Mount Pisgah and Mount Olympus as outlined in the Roosevelt National Forest Plan maps of 1984 and 1996 and as outlined on the 2012 GIS data map.

There is clear evidence linking Electric and Magnetic Field radiation to significant detrimental health effects in humans. The World Health Organization International Agency for Research on Cancer currently designates power-frequency magnetic fields as Class 2B possible carcinogens. Additionally, the US Environmental Protection Agency prepared reports suggesting a causal link between the vicinity to power lines and higher rates of leukemia, lymphoma, and cancer of the nervous system. I reject claims from WAPA, the DOE, or the power industry which assert that there is not enough evidence to say that adverse health effects and EMF exposure is strongly linked, and so it is acceptable to site high voltage transmission lines through populated areas. I won't accept pamphlets or agency grey literature as evidence. I won't accept out-of-date studies. I won't accept industry studies because they have a high chance of being biased. I won't accept studies that don't include mountainous terrain. I wholeheartedly reject any theoretical study or model which asserts in hypothetical terms that when you stack lines all Electronic and Magnetic radiation is canceled out. I request that you conduct and reference only current, academic, peer-reviewed, long-term, empirical studies. I will accept long-term studies that specifically address electronic and magnetic radiation within the context of long-distance power transmission in mountainous terrain through populated areas as opposed to unpopulated areas. The public has a right to know the potential significant adverse health effects for people living, attending school, and recreating within or near these lines. I demand that you do a full analysis of the electro-magnetic radiation hazards at each pole as it relates to the human environment. The analysis must include terrain information in order to calculate true distances from each conductor. I want you to prove with absolute certainty that the electronic and magnetic fields do not pose any risk to people in and around their vicinity. If you want to put this route up highway 36, through a highly populated area which includes a school, and over a heavy use trailhead, you must provide definitive evidence that it will pose no health risk.

WAPA's own informational pamphlet regarding EMFs states, "Until conclusive or more specific research results are obtained, Western will continue to take prudent actions regarding EMFs ... Western will continue to ... pursue and implement alternative design and siting approaches for new and upgraded transmission facilities to reduce the public exposure to EMFs." The previous proposal by Western during the Environmental Assessment to route industrial-scale high voltage transmission lines and towers through populated areas is contrary to their own stated policy, especially when the Estes-Flatiron line (that is again, the one WAPA renamed recently to the Estes-Lyons line) is already sited along the centerline of the USFS Designated Utility Corridor, is already established, less populated, and more direct. I suggest Western follows its own policy of Prudent Avoidance and runs the line away from populated and scenic areas, siting it along the centerline of the USFS Designated Utility Corridor.

I am a stakeholder in the Estes Flatiron Rebuild Project, and I oppose any proposal which attempts to re-route the original 1938 Estes-Flatiron transmission line out of its rightful place along the centerline of the USFS Designated Utility Corridor. To clarify, I comment here primarily on the western portion of this project that will impact the Estes Valley, scenic Highway 36, the foreground of Rocky Mountain National Park (RMNP), the National Forest Pole Hill trailhead, and Roosevelt National Forest itself. This section of the line consists of poles 1-1 through 4-7 of what has been confusingly renamed by WAPA as the Estes-Lyons Tap, but referred to here by its original name, the Estes-Flatiron transmission line. As a side note, but of ultimate significance, this project is named the Estes-Flatiron Rebuild. The transmission line which takes the most direct route from Estes Park to the Flatiron Substation, not surprisingly, was named the Estes-Flatiron Transmission Line. The USFS Utility Corridor centerline follows precisely this footprint from the administrative boundary of Roosevelt National Forest, across the north side of APC Crocker Ranch LLC (Pew-Crocker Ranch), due east between Mount Olympus and Mount Pisgah, and across the publicly owned Roosevelt National Forest. This is also the portion of the project that WAPA (after working privately with the Pew-Crocker Ranch since 2010 and more than a year prior to notifying the public) controversially sought to remove and re-route away from the Pew-Crocker residence during the initial 2011/2012 Environmental Assessment (EA).

In creating the Roosevelt National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan) in 1984, and again in 1997, the Forest Service team (with several experts and armed with consent from the general public) generated two independent Environmental Impact Statements (EISs), both of which clearly and purposefully excluded the valley up scenic US Highway 36, the populated areas leading up to the heavily used and publicly enjoyed National Forest Trailhead at the Pole Hill Road gate, and into Roosevelt National Forest from any designation as a Utility Corridor. This is easily confirmed through detailed analysis of the Utility Corridor maps generated from the EISs, which clearly show a single Designated Utility Corridor (DUC) following the Estes-Flatiron Line, due East between Mount Olympus and Mount Pispah. Two power lines depart the Estes Valley, yet only one line, the Estes-Flatiron Line coincides with the CENTERLINE of the USFS Designated Utility Corridor. The US Forest Team in 1984 and again in 1997 took it even a step further to designate the land up US Highway 36, across the Public Pole Hill trailhead, and through National Forest as High Scenic Integrity. In sections that address issuing special use permits, they included a clarification statement in the Forest Plan that directs Forest Service Staff to reject permits for uses in conflict with the adjacent scenic management area objectives. They even gave an example of a case where there were two lines, and yet they chose to designate one line specifically over another for utility corridor designation.

The Forest Service team in 1984 was clearly and purposefully trying to consolidate utilities. They created a corridor that was up the center valley rather than up US Highway 36, because it minimized the impact by consolidating utilities away from public areas. Today, the most up to date GIS data from the Roosevelt National Forest GIS Specialist confirms this. But today, the current Roosevelt National Forest staff tasked with this Estes-Flatiron Rebuild Project are in the process of attempting to re-write history, re-write the designated utility corridor, and re-define the entire eastern end of the Estes Valley along with the publicly owned Roosevelt National Forest itself as a major industrial corridor.

Since many members of the public stood together in opposition to this publicly damaging re-route during the Environmental Assessment(EA), the USFS, WAPA staff and their third-party representatives have taken additional deliberate actions to further limit information, control the discourse, and confuse the issue for this EIS. In transitioning from a less rigorous EA to a full-blown EIS, I would expect WAPA to provide more information, not less. To the contrary, they have misrepresented some information while completely eliminating other critical facts that the public has a right to know. In their initial announcement of the EIS WAPA switched terminology completely and referred to the Estes-Pole Hill line as the Estes-Flatiron line. Detailed information was deleted from the project map such as the existence of roads along the actual Estes-Flatiron line. They re-named the actual Estes-Flatiron line to the Estes-Lyons Tap, further adding to the confusion. The project map was reduced in resolution so that it was almost impossible to see any details. They omitted the very existence of the USFS Designated Utility Corridor from any maps.

The Forest Service received written requests for information such as a copy of the special use permit for the 1938 Estes-Flatiron transmission line in December of 2011. Now, more than nine months later, the Forest Service continues to withhold this information. As a result, many public stakeholders (that is rate-paying, tax-paying American citizens from across the country) have no idea where the utility corridor is or that it actually already clearly coincides with the very transmission line WAPA has previously proposed to re-route. Apparent consent born out of a lack of information or intentional dis-information violates the intent of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and is nothing less than defrauding the public.

At open house meetings the public has been misled by WAPA staff in saying that the Utility Corridor is 5 miles wide, when in fact, its not. As outlined in the Roosevelt National Forest Forest Plan and by the most recent letter posted on WAPAs website, the width of a utility corridor is strictly defined by the special use permit. Where is it? Because information has been misrepresented by WAPA and omitted by the USFS, the public has been left in the dark regarding any information that would validate a justification for an expansion of the Utility Corridor and an industrial transformation of the Estes Valley.

You have a purpose: to update the power infrastructure. You DONT have a need to expand the entire footprint of the current Utility Corridor in order to justify a publicly damaging re-route when you already have a major gas line, a major water tunnel penstock, established clear-cuts, and a major power line, already consolidated for you along the CENTERLINE of the current Designated Utility Corridor.

Now, through a single letter not even signed by the Forest Supervisor, WAPA and certain Forest Service staff are attempting to rewrite Forest Service policy without public involvement or scrutiny. I stand with others in saying this is unacceptable. I demand a full analysis of the two prior EISs that shows the intention of the team in siting Utility Corridors over the last three decades be made available to the public. I further demand that you to make all daily notes, detailed research, meeting minutes, and other USFS staff correspondences available to the public that were created during the planning years prior to and during the 1984 plan development, and the planning years prior to and during the 1997 plan development. I also want both complete Forest Plans, corresponding EISs, Records of Decision, etc. dating back to 1984 and 1997 made publicly available for review. I want you to prove without a doubt that the authors of the 1984 and 1997 Forest Plans originally didnt intend to protect the highly scenic public use areas along Highway 36 and Pole Hill Road by consolidating large-scale utilities, but rather intended to promote proliferation of utilities in the Estes Valley.

Lack of information coupled with inadequate maps and documents give the appearance that the public scoping phase of this EIS is merely a charade used to justify a pre-determined route, not unlike WAPAs original EA. I request that the public scoping be extended such that there is sufficient time after all requested information is provided for people to comment in an informed, intelligent manner.

I am a stakeholder in the Estes-Flatiron Rebuild Project, and wanted to clarify my earlier comment during the Environmental Assessment. When I stated that I preferred the route to follow the Estes Flatiron Line, I specifically meant the power line at the eastern end of Lake Estes that travels through the valley between Mt Olympus and Mt Pispah, and that follows the CENTERLINE of the USFS utility corridor as it is outlined in their 1984 and 1997 Forest Plans. WAPA has confusingly called the Pole Hill Line the original Estes-Flatiron Line, which is false.

The rebuild itself seems very straightforward, and I support the effort to upgrade these transmission lines. That said, after spending five minutes looking at a property map, any reasonable person can see that the re-route of the line up scenic Highway 36 and through Arapaho-Roosevelt National Forest where no Utility Corridor currently exists is an accommodation to the single private residence of the APC Crocker Ranch LLC (Pew Crocker Ranch).

Over the past quarter century and through two comprehensive Environmental Impact Statements, the Forest Service has designated the route below Mt Olympus as the Utility Corridor for consolidation of large scale gas lines, transmission lines, and other future utilities that will benefit the public. The proposed route disregards this established policy, and puts you in the unfortunate position to violate your own rules to the detriment of the public and the land that is your duty to protect. The proposal must be consistent with the laws, regulations, orders, and policies governing National Forest System Lands (36 CFR 251.54). This proposal does not meet the minimum requirements and conflicts with your Land and Resource Management Plan. Your management plan states The allocation of utility corridors does not change by alternative...Corridor management shall be compatible with adjacent management objectives including visual, recreation and travel management...Expansion and other activities and actions that would not meet these (visual quality) requirements would not be approved. The statutes state that the proposal must be made consistent with the management plan, not that the management plan be made consistent with the proposal. I request that you work with Western to approve a route within the confines of the USFS Designated Utility Corridor rather than proliferating corridors. The original USFS Designated Utility Corridor wont be moving, as it already consolidates a major gas line, a power line, and two major Bureau of Reclamation water tunnel access points and penstocks. Along the proposed re-route, there is only a single transmission line, but no Utility Corridor. I request you make this decision prior to April 22, 2012 when your authority to do so is expired(one year from the application date according to the EP Act of 2005).

Although some Western staff have claimed that the route in the Utility Corridor is too difficult, history will tell you otherwise. It is the location of one of the first roads into Estes Park dating back to 1877, the preferred route for the 1938 Estes-Flatiron Transmission Line, and the preferred route of the more recent gas line. The pre-public scoping negotiations with the Pew Crocker Ranch have unduly influenced Western to re-route the line. Although you represent a Cooperating Agency as described in the 2009 FERC Transmission Siting Memorandum of Understanding among federal agencies and the DOE, the MOU explicitly states that it does not limit your legal authority or responsibilities (Section IX.A). Rather, you have both the power and the duty to uphold your mission. Please stick to your policies and work with Western to site the line rightfully in the Utility Corridor. I further request that WAPA, the USFS, and any third-parties cease any contracting, clear cutting, excavation, or other related pre-decisional actions on either transmission lines until this is resolved (see DOE/EIS-0442 and USDA 1950-1/2700/2720) This will be in the best interest of the Arapaho-Roosevelt National Forest environment, the Estes Valley, and the American tax-payer.

A re-route of the western end of the Estes to Flatiron re-build project proposed by Western Area Power Administration will cause an unacceptable level of visual impact for the public. Because of this, I entirely oppose any route up Highway 36, through the Ravencrest and Meadowdale Hills subdivisions, and across the National Forest Pole Hill Road trailhead, but am in favor of the route being placed along the CENTERLINE of the Forest Service designated utility corridor that runs between Mt Olympus and Mt Pisgah. This is the proper routing for the project.

[B]y routing the line up Highway 36, the millions of visitors to Rocky Mountain National Park will forever be impacted as they travel the scenic highway. Instead of coming to the crest of the hill and being in awe of the snow-capped peaks in front of them, they will instead be shocked to see 105 foot steel industrial transmission towers with stacks of wires blocking their view. The lines will affect their experience of this national treasure all the way into the Estes Valley.

For those that are adventurous and want to get into their National Forest at the Pole Hill trail head, these industrial towers will accompany them all the way up the backcountry road and across their campsites. The monstrous scale of the towers and the noise pollution from the buzzing transmission lines will completely and negatively alter their forest experience.

It is the duty of the US Forest Service to protect public lands under their stewardship for the benefit of public, not influential private ranches. However, during the Environmental Assessment for this project, the US Forest Service failed to perform their duty by rejecting WAPAs proposed route when it clearly conflicted with the policies established in their 1984 and 1997 Forest Plans. In fact, when the Forest Service did take action, they waited until one day (23 Apr 2012) after their authority to stop the re-route was legally revokable (1 year from the special use application being received). By waiting until after this date, they failed to be stewards of public land, but rather succumbed to undue influence of a single influential land owner.

Its reasonable to say that you cant simultaneously designate an area as high scenic integrity while also designating it as an industrial-scale utility corridor. In fact, the special use permit for the Pole Hill line identifies the area it passes through as a heavy recreational use area. Redefining the utility corridor without first completing an independent EIS is an unacceptable undermining and disregard for comprehensive analyses already accomplished through two prior EISs and a quarter of a century of land use precedent to date. In both the 1984 and 1997 Forest Plans, the areas along US highways 36 and 34 were designated as Highly Scenic, as well as the publicly accessible areas all the way up Pole Hill Road and to the National Forest Trailhead. This was purposeful, as was limiting the Utility Corridor to the area following the original 1938 Estes Flatiron transmission Line up the publicly inaccessible valley between Mt Olympus and Mt Pisgah. You cant argue that it the original intention of the 1984 and 1997 Forest Plan authors would be to allow for US Highway 36 to be part of an industrial utility corridor at the same time you designated it as high scenic integrity. You also cant argue that the Pole Hill Trailhead and the stretch of Roosevelt National Forest thereafter is already within a utility corridor, when it is currently designated by the Forest Service as an area of High scenic integrity and also designated on the special use permit as an area of heavy recreational use as early as 1954.

A re-route up Highway 36 would ignore these carefully applied designations, and is contrary to the Forest Plan policies. First, the poles are two to three times taller than any tree in the area, are made of steel, and will be accompanied by a 110 foot wide clear cut. Visually, this represents an unacceptable modification in Forest Service terms, especially in the areas designated as 4.2 Scenic Management Areas (up Highway 36 and in the residential communities to the Pole Hill trailhead).

A landscape architect could take a myopic view of the situation, hike up Mount Vida near the heavy recreation use area of Pole Hill Road and claim that there is little visual impact (looking down on the lines from that perspective). However, the real impact is for all of the Forest travelers hiking, skiing, horseback riding, jeeping, and four-wheeling on along the rough dirt road.

These lines and towers will dominate the foreground views for these people, and will be a lasting eyesore. Specifically, the scale of the poles and lines are not consistent with the form, line, color, or texture that would be expected in such a highly scenic recreational area. For these reasons, a re-route proposed through this area is incompatible with the Scenic Integrity Objectives of this area developed by the Forest Service.

In this EIS, I demand that you prove that a route up Highway 36 and along Pole Hill Road will not have more impact on the general public than a route that follows the centerline of the Designated Utility Corridor between Mt Olympus and Mt Pisgah. I want you to perform a full visual impact analysis of all publicly accessible locations along Highway 36, County Road 122, the Ravencrest and Meadowdale Hill subdivision roads, at the trailhead gate for the Pole Hill Road, and at all primitive campsites, roads, trails, and publicly accessible areas in the vicinity of Pole Hill Road. WAPA representatives have said that tweaking the line is possible to mitigate visual impact. This assumes that 1) a route has been predetermined, and 2) that a full analysis is not needed. This is not the case. Prove that the public will not see more impact if the line is routed along Pole Hill road compared to the adjacent valley.

I write today as a member of a growing number of residents and citizens to request your help in investigating what appears to be a gross waste of public funds in the course of rebuilding the Estes to Flatiron Transmission Line out of Estes Park, CO and crossing Forest Service lands. We are being asked to participate in an Environmental Assessment (EA) with a pre-determined outcome that in effect, violates the six basic tenets of NEPA, while unnecessarily wasting public funds. Money is needlessly being wasted on environmental impact study redundancies, such as the DOE EA-1899, slated to reverse rigorous prior analyses and outcomes in EISs already completed by the Arapaho-Roosevelt National Forest to date. I stand with others in opposition to this EA, and the re-route it is designed to rationalize. What started in 2010 as an uncontroversial \$14 million dollar rebuild of the Estes-Flatiron Transmission Line has been transformed into an unnecessary and costly \$19 million dollar re-route, all prior to any knowledge or consent from the public.

On a larger scale of what you see every day, this might not sound like much; however, if a 36% increase in total project cost due to waste were applied to Westerns current \$3.25 billion dollar Congressional borrowing authority, this would translate to \$1.17 billion dollars in public funds potentially wasted. Furthermore, this unnecessary and costly re-route detrimentally affects hundreds of people on the ground. It affects every business owner who depends on the Estes Valley landscape to draw people to Rocky Mountain National Park, and it affects the three million visitors who bring much needed revenue to Colorado as they travel here to spend their hard-earned dollars visiting the Estes Valley and Rocky Mountain National Park every year.

Further review of the situation reveals that Western is specifically disregarding their own mandates to streamline siting of the Estes to Flatiron Transmission Line away from the single private residence of the Pew Crocker Ranch, away from the USFS Designated Utility Corridor, only to route it back again into the Utility Corridor after making it safely out of the Pew Crocker view. This proposal is longer, more costly, more environmentally damaging, and it makes a mockery of Federal law put in place to facilitate cooperation among agencies to promote efficient transmission siting through Federal lands. There seems to be a major disconnect between Federal policies to cut costs and the reality of local execution of those policies. In his own testimony before the Congress, Western's Tim Meeks said it is Western's goal to establish hydropower allocations in a timely, reliable, and cost-effective manner. He, along with many others before Congress, testified that increased environmental regulatory compliance costs was a major factor contributing to a net effect of increasing expenses, while reducing the quantity and reliability of the hydropower product. That being the case, it doesn't stand to reason why Western's Rocky Mountain Region staff have continued such an environmentally and fiscally wasteful pursuit. This raises serious questions as to why federal policies for streamlining are not being implemented at the regional and local level.

Concerning the Special Use application to the USFS, I request Western be required to recognize and follow the established land protections as laid out in the Arapaho-Roosevelt Natural Resource Management Plan as it stands today. Arapaho-Roosevelt National Forest staff must give timely notice to Western that their proposed special use permit cannot be granted based on the fact that there is no need, no public benefit, and the use request itself is in conflict with their current USFS management area directives. Time is of the essence. If the Arapaho-Roosevelt National Forest fails to act until after the one-year deadline has passed on April 22nd, 2012, they will have forfeited their authority to do so once project approval falls to the FERC backstop. Worse yet, if the USFS re-writes or amends twenty-five years of Forest Policy to fit one project, they will have neglected their duty as custodians of public lands for the good of the general public.

You have the power to oversee how our public funds are spent and to ensure that our federal public lands are not unnecessarily damaged. I request that Western halt any further progression of this unnecessary re-route and pursue a categorical exclusion for a rebuild in the Designated Utility Corridor. Today, I am not asking for more transparency. I'm not asking for more open houses and outreach. I would have asked for that two years ago when the project truly began behind closed doors. Finally, I'm not asking for another EIS, when Western already has two of them at their disposal. I'm asking that you get to the bottom of this waste of public funds, Western's abuse of their position as the lead agency in disregarding Forest Service policy, and the possible undue influence relating to the circumvention of NEPA to the apparent benefit of one influential land owner with obvious political clout, the Pew Crocker Ranch. I'm asking for accountability.

WAPAs Estes-Flatiron Rebuild has so far dragged on for 2.5 years and bloated in additional costs by approximately \$5,000,000. Several perks have been tacked onto the Estes to Flatiron Rebuild project since it began in 2010 which are neither necessary nor in the public interest. Below are just a few: 1) Increase in project length from 16 to 17 miles (approximate \$1,200,000). 2) Increase in total number of poles by 12 (6 for re-route of steel towers away from private residence view and 7 shorter poles leading to Pew Crocker private residence (poles 1-1 to 1-7) along original Estes-Flatiron footprint) (\$ TBD) 3) Added new fiber-optic cable to be run out to private Pew Crocker residence (\$70,000) 4) Additional cost of land to be unnecessarily acquired where WAPA currently has no right-of-way in order to accommodate a re-route. (\$ TBD) 5) Added cost of EIS which is not required if the project remained sited along the existing Utility Corridor centerline (\$400,000) The difference of five million dollars in budget costs from 2010 to now translates to approximately \$250,000 per mile in sheer waste. This may not sound like much, but if this pattern of unchecked waste were translated to WAPAs 17,000 miles of high voltage transmission lines, it would total \$4.25 billion dollars in potential waste. Today, the Estes-Flatiron Rebuild is no closer to creating jobs, re-building aging infrastructure, or creating renewable energy independence than it was when the Recovery Act funding was announced in late 2009.

Concerning the Special Use application to the USFS, I request Western be required to recognize and follow the established land protections as laid out in the Arapaho-Roosevelt Natural Resource Management Plan as it stands today. Arapaho-Roosevelt National Forest staff must heed their own Forest Plan which indicates that this special use permit cannot be granted based on the fact that there is no need, no public benefit, and the use request itself is in conflict with their current USFS management area directives. If the USFS re-writes or amends twenty-five years of Forest Policy to fit one project, they will have neglected their duty as custodians of public lands for the good of the general public.

Add me to your list of stakeholders, and include me in all updates and correspondence in the future. Also, please send me a digital copy of the draft EIS (in a searchable PDF format) via email. If you need to mail the draft EIS, please contact me for a physical address. Additionally, I request you cease and desist any further pre-decisional clear-cutting of the Pole Hill line until this EIS is resolved.

I request you cease and desist any further pre-decisional clear-cutting of the Pole Hill line until this EIS is resolved.

Please do what is best for the millions of Americans who have a stake in preserving our national public lands, while cutting waste. It is not too late to reverse and correct this course of federal action by withdrawing the decisions and proposals of EA-1899 and EIS-0483 which have lead WAPA staff at the Rocky Mountain Region so far from the mandates of the Department of Energy and from the interests of the American people.

Site Transmission Line in order to Consolidate Large Scale Utilities Along a Single Line: The original Forest Service teams in 1984 and again in 1997 were clearly and purposefully trying to consolidate utilities. They created a corridor that was up the center valley due east of Estes Park rather than up US Highway 36, because it minimized the impact by consolidating utilities away from public areas. Today, the most up to date GIS data from the Roosevelt National Forest GIS Specialist (Mary Hattis) confirms this. I request that you clearly document the entire Colorado Big Thompson Project and Windy Gap Firing Project systems, and site the Estes-Flatiron Transmission line along the most impacted footprint. I request that you fully analyze and reveal to the public the existing clear-cuts, the existing Xcel Energy major gas line, the Bureau of Reclamations Olympus Dam, Olympus Siphon and water tunnel, along with all other Estes Park and Larimer County Municipal facilities within the project area.

Site Transmission Line to Minimize Overall Utility Corridor Width: WAPAs special use permit application clearly states they only need 110 for this project, yet now during the EIS they have falsely stated the Utility Corridor is Five miles wide. During the EA-1899, the USFS and WAPA realized that there is no Utility Corridor designation along the Estes-Pole Hill transmission line where WAPA already sought a publicly damaging re-route. Now, during the EIS WAPA and the USFS have sought to re-write history and seek a major expansion of the Utility Corridor by anywhere from one mile to five miles wide in order to circumvent the existing Forest Plan which does not include the Estes-Pole Hill Line within the existing Utility Corridor. This seems to completely undermine the mandates of the existing USFS Forest Plan, and it is an abuse of the special use permit process itself. I request full disclosure to the public regarding the placement and current width of the USFS Designated Utility Corridor as it stands today. I further request you site this transmission rebuild along the current USFS centerline, and along the existing 1938 Estes-Flatiron line, in order to minimize the overall width of the parcel of land to no more than 110. WAPA has a purpose to rebuild aging infrastructure, but they do not have a need to expand the existing Utility Corridor beyond 110 to do so.

Site Transmission Line to Minimize Overall Estes-Flatiron Length: Site this line such that you minimize the total length and use the most direct route between the Estes switchyard and Flatiron switchyard. Confining this transmission line re-build along the shortest, most direct line will place less financial burden on the tax-payer and rate-payer in the short term. In the long term, less overall length results in a more dependable system in that there is less overall infrastructure to maintain, and thus less to fail.

Site Transmission Line To Reduce Wildfire Hazard in Populated Residential Areas: The Ravencrest and Meadowdale Hills subdivisions sit on a high ridge, above 8,000, with steep and rocky terrain, hundreds of people, homes, high winds, and a populated public recreational trailhead. Objective hazards exist in this area that are not found along the original Colorado Big-Thompson projects Estes-Flatiron Transmission Line which follows the centerline of the USFS Designated Utility Corridor through the valley between Mount Olympus and Mount Pisgah. The route proposed during the earlier Environmental Assessment (EA-1899) up Highway 36, through populated residential areas, and across the Pole Hill trailhead is on a mountain ridge. Because of this, and due to the scale of the towers (many times taller than most trees in the area), the risk of lightning strikes along the Pole Hill line would be significantly higher as compared toasting the line through in the adjacent sparsely populated valley. I want you to provide a complete peer-reviewed statistical analysis which addresses siting transmission towers through lightning-prone windy, steep, mountainous and populated areas as opposed to siting them through lower sparsely populated valleys. This study should include the risk of strikes to terrain and trees at each individual proposed tower location. Even though the towers will be grounded, the risk of nearby strikes is much higher.

Site This Line to Eliminate Unnecessary Health Risk in Populated Residential Areas due to Electro-Magnetic Radiation: There is no need to site high voltage industrial scale transmission lines through the heart of populated residential areas such as Ravencrest Heights and Meadowdale Hills, when there is clear evidence linking Electric and Magnetic Field radiation to significant detrimental health effects in humans.

I request that you perform an itemized cost analysis of rebuilding along the current centerline of the USFS Designated Utility Corridor, as opposed to any re-routes you may propose. Further, I demand that you reveal to the public the itemized costs incurred thus far for the Estes-Flatiron Rebuild project since the project began in early 2010.

Excluding the public until after decisions have been made is contrary to the public good. The real scoping phase for this project started in the Spring of 2010, two and a half years ago, yet Western representatives say we have just begun by entering the scoping phase. The deliberate exclusion of the public from this process for 2.5 years serves to completely circumvent the protections set forth by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). In March of 2010, Western had already completed extensive survey maps which depicted the final-solution route before notifying the public the project even existed. Western negotiated behind closed doors with APC Crocker Ranch LLC for over a year prior to informing the public of the project. Estes Park town officials knew of the project since May of 2010, yet excluded the public from the actual scoping phase. According to Western's spokeswoman, Lisa Meiman, Western was actively pursuing land swaps and re-routed easements with APC Crocker Ranch LLC in November of 2011. Western has already wasted public funds to pursue a siting re-route solution most preferable to one or two influential land owners, to the exclusion and detriment of the general public. Western had the final-solution route map completed by January of 2011, just shy of a year prior to their first public scoping meeting. Western submitted this map and a detailed application for a Special Use Permit to the US Forest Service in April 2011, seven months prior to the first public scoping meeting. The public has been told that it is just the beginning of the process and nothing has been decided, yet Western has already submitted this application, not just for the rebuild project itself, but for the specific route they seek to construct.

I request that you site this line along the USFS Designated Utility Corridor centerline such that you avoid public areas of heavy recreational use at the Pole Hill trailhead into Roosevelt National Forest (FS-122).

I request that Western reveal to the public all planning documents, maps, and information leading up to EIS-0483. I further request that Western provide detailed and accurate maps showing the project baseline for EIS-0483, such as the existing Designated Utility Corridor Footprint as it is today, prior to any changes incurred through Estes-Flatiron EA-1899 or EIS-0483.

I request that Western complete a comprehensive socio-economic analysis for the entire project area, to include the "affected populations", environment, Front Range communities, and the tourist and recreation based economies in Estes Park, Denver, Fort Collins, Boulder, and other Front Range cities which are supported by Roosevelt National Forest.

I demand that the two prior EISs from Roosevelt National Forest be fully taken into account, and that the Utility Corridor depicted on their project maps be adhered to in this rebuild.

I request that you site the Estes-Flatiron rebuild project away from the Roosevelt National Forest public access trailhead at the Pole Hill gate.

I demand you complete a full socioeconomic analysis of this area for the full range of its uses, to include running, hiking, hunting, camping, and general recreation as it applies to the affected populations listed in the ARNF 1997 Forest Plan.

I request you take into full account the direct and indirect impacts a project re-route out of the existing utility corridor will have on local and regional tourism. This must include the long-term cumulative impacts involved with re-designating scenic public travel corridors and scenic recreational public federal land as open to further industrial development in the future.

I request you site this project rebuild away from residential, populated, and recreational public areas. I further request you reveal to the public the indirect health effects of continued exposure to pesticides and other fire-suppression chemicals to be used within the future ROW. I also request you complete a comprehensive study regarding hazards associated with low helicopter flights along transmission lines in high, steep, gusty, and rocky terrain through populated and congested residential areas.

Please provide a high-resolution, detailed GIS map of the Estes-Flatiron Rebuild Project so that the public is fully aware of the geography involved, of the existing utilities, existing roads, and of the existing Utility Corridor (as a parcel of land to include location and width). This map should be made available on WAPAs website as a high resolution PDF, and WAPA should make it viewable in large scale printed format from the beginning of scoping.

Site the line based on only what is needed: 110 along the current Designated Utility Corridor centerline. Eliminate costs that do not benefit the public. Site the line to eliminate unnecessary length and number of poles. Site this project such that you eliminate this unneeded and wasteful EIS. An Extra \$400,000 is currently being spent on redundant environmental compliance which could be avoided if the project is streamlined along the current USFS Designated Utility Corridor centerline.

Western has omitted from all scoping maps the most practical, most direct, already clear-cut USFS Designated Utility Corridor along the Estes-Flatiron transmission line. By doing so, Western has unilaterally staged an unneeded and costly EIS to circumvent genuine public involvement and the protections afforded to the public as set forth in the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). For this, there is no need, no public benefit, and the process itself points to a single, pre-determined project end-goal re-route which serves to benefit a single influential private land-owner (or possibly two), to the exclusion and detriment of the general public.

Site the Estes-Flatiron Rebuild by Thoroughly Taking Into Account Prior Analyses: Site this line such that it is consistent with the existing Arapaho Roosevelt National Forest, Land And Resource Management Plan of 1997 as well as with existing land use precedent. In 1984 and in 1997, the ARNF analyzed and reviewed all existing electrical, telephone, gas and oil lines meeting the criteria for corridor designation. They designated a single Utility Corridor centerline along the Estes-Flatiron transmission line footprint (WAPAs Estes-Lyons Tap). Careful review of the Forest Plan and its maps confirms this. After thorough analysis of all existing transmission lines, the ARNF team did not designate the Estes-Pole Hill line for future large scale utilities. Today, it remains a "transmission facility" only and not a Utility ROW Corridor. The Estes Flatiron line, in contrast, directly correlates with the USFS Designated Utility Corridor centerline, consistent with USFS maps dating from 1984 to 2012.

Site the Estes-Flatiron Rebuild to Co-Locate With Other Large Scale Utilities: Site this line such that it is co-located with other large-scale utilities including the Xcel Energy Gas Line (also known as Public Service Company of Colorado) and the Bureau of Reclamations Olympus Water Tunnel siphon. Additionally, the Windy Gap Firming Project EIS currently underway will no doubt require the use, duplication, or expansion of the carrying capacity of these lines. It too follows the footprint of the original Colorado Big Thompson project system infrastructure such as the Estes-Flatiron(WAPAs Estes-Lyons) transmission line itself.

Site the Estes-Flatiron Rebuild to Minimize Total Length and Maximize Reliability: Site this line such that you minimize the total length and use the most direct route between the Estes Switchyard and Flatiron Switchyard. Confining this transmission line re-build along the shortest, most direct line will place less financial burden on the tax-payer and rate-payer in the short term. In the long term, less overall length results in a more dependable system in that there is less overall infrastructure to maintain, and thus less to fail. Siting this project along the Designated Utility Corridor centerline will eliminate an entire mile of transmission line, approximately 13 poles and towers, and significantly reduce overall project cost.

Site the Estes-Flatiron Rebuild to Improve Public Safety by Avoiding Populated Residential Areas of Meadowdale Hills and Ravencrest: The populated residential areas within the administrative boundary of Roosevelt National Forest should not have to bear the burden of decreased property values, diminished quality of life, increased wildfire hazard, increased noise pollution, dangerous helicopter low flights, increased lightning strikes, or even diminished health due electro-magnetic radiation from living in close proximity to high voltage transmission lines and 10-story steel towers. Given that the USFS Designated Utility Corridor is already sited through Roosevelt National Forest away from heavy recreational public areas and away from highly populated residential areas, there is no need to re-locate the Estes-Flatiron transmission line out of its existing 1938 footprint.

Site the Estes-Flatiron Rebuild to Improve Maintenance Access, Reduce Congestion, and Reduce Conflicting Land Use: The most practical, shortest, and direct road between Estes Park and Flatiron runs between Mount Olympus and Mount Pisgah along the Estes-Flatiron transmission line. This public road was clearly documented on the original 1938 C-BT survey maps as a continuous Stage Road, and it dates back to approximately 1875, predating the current owners of the APC Crocker Ranch by more than a quarter of a century. Restoring this road will result in a safer, more accessible transmission line system with access which is independent of the congested tourist traffic on US Highway 36 much of the year. During a time when fire hazard is a major issue throughout Colorado, this would allow for better fire management throughout a wider range of Roosevelt National Forest, while not placing an undue burden on populated public areas or areas of "heavy recreational use" such as the Pole Hill public access trailhead.

Site the Estes-Flatiron Rebuild to Correspond With Other Municipal and Federal Utility Land Uses: Site this line such that its use most closely correlates with other existing industrial and municipal land uses. Some examples of this include, siting the line through or along side the Estes Park Sanitation District and Larimer County municipal land. Another example would be siting it in the vicinity of the Bureau of Reclamations Olympus Dam and Olympus siphon leading into the Olympus tunnel. These City, County, and Federal installations are well established, and co-locating this project within their vicinity would allow you to protect and restore scenic and "heavy recreational use areas" such as Roosevelt National Forest at the Pole Hill trailhead in the foreground of Rocky Mountain National Park.

Site the Estes-Flatiron Rebuild to Avoid the Public "Heavy Recreational Use" Areas at Pole Hill Trailhead Into ARNF: Site the Estes-Flatiron transmission line rebuild such that you avoid heavy recreational use public access points into Roosevelt National Forest, such as the public access trailhead at the Pole Hill gate. Due to the majority of Roosevelt National Forest being obstructed from public access by the Pew Crocker Ranch on the east end of Estes Park, this EIS must give significant weight to the multi-use, highly scenic trailhead at Pole Hill. This trailhead must be analyzed over the full range of its uses. It is clearly demarcated with signage by the USFS as a hiking, skiing, biking, recreational vehicle, and horseback riding trail. Additionally, the Estes-Pole Hill transmission line special use permit explicitly stipulates that this line passes an "area of heavy recreational use". Constructing 80-105 foot steel towers through this area would dominate the foreground views of the public's National Forest and constitute an unacceptable modification of the landscape.

Site the Estes-Flatiron Rebuild to Avoid US Highway 36 "Gateway To RMNP": Site this line away from scenic travel ways such as US Highway 36. Millions of people drive scenic US Highway 36 every year, and siting 10 story, or even 8 story, steel towers and lines along (or in view of) this nationally recognized scenic byway would dominate the landscape and constitute an unacceptable modification to the public's experience as they enter Estes Park and catch their first views of Rocky Mountain National Park and the Continental Divide. Additionally, avoid the south flank of Mount Pisgah. It is a waste of tax-payer dollars and a waste of the environment to acquire unneeded right-of-way and to make new scars upon the land when you already have a cleared path along the Estes-Flatiron (WAPAs re-named Estes-Lyons) transmission line.

Site the Estes-Flatiron Rebuild to Eliminate Unnecessary Habitat Loss: Site this line along the existing Designated Utility Corridor to prevent needless habitat loss. A proliferation of utility corridors is disruptive to biodiversity because it causes habitat fragmentation which may lead to increased predation, parasitism, disease transmittance and vagrant species while decreasing migration rates, gene flow and genetic diversity. For example, the Estes-Pole Hill line traverses critical lynx habitat, elk severe winter range, and home to the pygmy nuthatch. The Pygmy Nuthatch in particular is a sensitive species within the Elk Ridge Geographic Area which also serves as an indicator species for old Growth Ponderosa forest prevalent along the Pole Hill trailhead.

I demand that you complete a full analysis and disclose the potential negative impacts to the flora and fauna living in the areas of a new and/or expanded utility corridor vs. going along the current, USFS Designated Utility Corridor centerline and limited to no more than the 110, as originally required by WAPA EA-1899 documents.

Site the Estes-Flatiron Rebuild to Minimize Cost, Especially when Added Cost Does Not Directly Benefit the Public.

Fragmentation of Estes-Flatiron Rebuild from the Windy Gap Firming Project: I have not been informed as to how WAPAs plan to rebuild these transmission lines serves the Windy Gap Firming Project. WAPA appears to be gaming the NEPA statutes by stating the Estes-Flatiron line does not "touch" Flatiron (WAPAs Carey Ashton), when in fact they are the only transmission lines between Estes and Flatiron. Although they are both part of the same hydro-power system, to date, it is not clear why the public has not been informed as to how the Windy Gap Firming Project and the Estes-Flatiron Transmission rebuild relate to one another. It is also unclear as to why the rebuild of this line was not incorporated into the larger Windy Gap Firming Project EIS in the first place. One thing is clear. Fragmentation of the original Colorado Big Thompson Project (and its original headquarters at the Estes Switchyard) will no doubt expose one of our nations largest (publicly owned) federal water and power infrastructure systems to manipulation and control by private and regional interests such as Xcel Energy and the Platte River Power Authority (PRPA). This runs contrary to the interests of the United States and to the American citizen who will no doubt pay the price through rate pancaking, increased fees, and overall higher utility bills.

Maps Missing Co-Located Large Scale Utilities: Critical map information necessary for good sound siting practices has been omitted. The major gas line owned by Xcel Energy, also co-located with the Estes-Flatiron transmission line along the centerline of the designated utility corridor is missing. Information regarding the Bureau of Reclamations Olympus Tunnel siphon, also located in line with the Estes-Flatiron transmission line, has been omitted from scoping maps.

Maps Missing Roads Mislead the Public: WAPA has said they need to site the line for road access, yet they have omitted the existence of Larimer County Road 63. The GIS maps provided by WAPA during EA-1899 clearly depicted the original road (as surveyed and used for the original Estes-Flatiron 1938 construction) along the Estes-Flatiron line. EIS scoping maps have now omitted all indications of this road. Deliberate omission of such critical information along the Estes-Flatiron line, is a precise example of how WAPA and their contractors such as Bruce Meighn have actually mislead the public and prevent us from being able to make informed scoping comments based on the basic facts on the ground. Ironically, EIS-0483 is supposed to be more thorough than its predecessor EA-1899, and yet less information is being made available to the public.

The fine print of the USFS letter on WAPAs website, states clearly that Utility Corridor width is defined by the special use permit. Ironically, The USFS in three pages of self-contradictory text fail to ever actually provide the single defining document for the utility corridor to the public. The special use permit itself along with the map sheets which are expressly included (dated in the year 1938) have not been made available to the public or depicted on a single map during scoping.

Terminology Obscured, Confusing, and at Times Even Reversed: At the outset of this project, WAPA referred to the original 1938 Estes-Flatiron transmission line as the Estes Lyons Tap. Then they actually sent falsified Fact Sheets which named the Estes-Pole Hill line as the Estes-Flatiron line. The USFS continues to refer to the Estes-Flatiron line by this name, while WAPA refers to the same line by a different name. This has had the effect of making accurate scoping comments difficult to impossible without extensive clarification. Many people still remain uninformed as to which is which.

The current special use permit for the Estes-Flatiron line expressly includes two survey maps which document the width of the USFS Designated Utility Corridor. The two suppressed map sheets are referred to on the Bureau of Reclamations Colorado Big Thompson key map (dated 1938), section 2, as numbers 245-D-586 (dated 1938) and 245-D-593 (also dated 1938). Nonetheless, USFS and WAPA staff deliberately chose to suppress this information for almost an entire year since members of the public began asking for it in writing at the beginning of EA-1899. To date, they have not provided the original map sheets expressly referenced by the 1938 special use permit at the time it was issued for the Estes-Flatiron Line, 1938.

WAPA RMR staff and third party contractors like Bruce Meighn and Susan Greenely have intentionally withheld information the public has a right and a need to know. Such omissions and obfuscations violate the intent and spirit of NEPA, and prevent decision-makers and public stakeholders from participating in an informed manner.

So far, there has been a continued pattern of declaring public openness while actually setting the stage for decisions made long ago in private. WAPA RMR staff and their third party contractors have put a lot of time into presenting what Rachel Carson calls "sugar-coated half-truths" whereby the public is "handled" rather than provided with the basic facts on the ground. This has served to obscure relevant facts necessary to informed public participation.

Undergrounding: (1) underground key sections (e.g., 1 mile); (2) cost of underground; (3) provide realistic cost estimate of underground options - not cost of full underground; underground route could be different and ROW needs are different; not all the line would be underground - just a couple of miles; subtract ROW acquisition difference from underground cost; (4) investigate joint WAPA - Town of Estes Park funding options

Public Health and Safety: (1) safety of transmission lines; (2) emergency access; (3) fire prevention (woodland fire)

Infrastructure: (1) expand to E.P. substation; (2) leach fields and other infrastructure; (3) wells -blasting/fragmented; (4) don't improve roads for removal

Wildlife: (1) wildlife and livestock impacts; (2) minimal impact during removal - leave some structures for avians

Other: (1) expand economic analysis: alts/property values/tourism; (2) Highway 36 visual effects; (3) Alternative route 34 option; (4) vested parties must have a voice that is heard and acknowledged; (5) purpose and need statement needs to include "while minimizing adverse impacts on communities our infrastructure transits".