



NORTHERN LARAMIE RANGE ALLIANCE

May 18, 2009

Mr. Don Simpson
State Director, Wyoming
Bureau of Land Management
U.S. Department of the Interior
5353 Yellowstone Road
Cheyenne WY 82009

Re: Citizen Petitions Concerning PacifiCorp/Idaho Power “Gateway West”
Transmission Line Project, Segment 1E

Dear Mr. Simpson:

Our organization was formed last month to provide a focal point for the extensive public opposition to the “proposed” and “alternative” routes for a second, eastern transmission corridor in Segment 1 of the Gateway West project. Our concern, and that of our fellow citizens, is that construction of a “greenfield” transmission corridor through the heart of the Northern Laramie Mountains would both impair the landscape, wildlife and historical values of the region and attract development that would lead to extensive industrialization there. This concern has been validated and exacerbated by an industrial-scale wind project (involving hundreds of 2.5 mw turbines and the associated infrastructure) that a Utah-based entrepreneur is trying to promote in the high country between Casper Mountain and the La Prele/La Bonte areas further west and south.

We have to emphasize that our organization is not opposed to wind development or an upgrade of the national transmission grid system *per se*. Indeed, Albany, Converse and Natrona Counties are hosting a number of major wind projects and we fully expect that these will be accompanied by increased transmission capacity. But there are tens of thousands of square miles of much more suitable ground for wind development in the high plains areas of these counties. And there are numerous existing transmission and transportation corridors (including Segment 1W of Gateway West) enhancement of which would avoid “greenfield” development of the kind proposed for Segment 1E while producing a more cost-effective grid configuration overall.

Our group held an organizing meeting in Douglas on May 7. Far more citizens attended than we expected – more than 200 formed a standing-room-only gathering in the ballroom of the Best Western. One of the purposes of that meeting was to kick off a petition drive as a way to provide tangible evidence of the depth of public concern. The drive is still underway, but in the meantime, given the urgency of this matter, we wanted to make sure you and your colleagues are aware of the scale of the returns. Accordingly, please find attached copies of the 205 citizen petitions gathered to date.

P.O. Box 3215 • Casper, Wyoming 82602
(307) 436-9147 or (307) 258-1713

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We very much hope you and your colleagues will urge the applicants, PacifiCorp and Idaho Power, to withdraw the proposed and alternative Segment 1E routes and use instead the existing-corridor alternatives to achieve required capacity and reliability in the grid. And if the applicants persist in seeking use of federal land for either of these routes, we will be pleased to assist the BLM in every way we can to ensure that it has all of the information it needs to properly assess the extensive impairment of natural, historical and scenic values that would result on the federal lands applicants seek to cross.

Thank you very much, in advance, for your consideration.

Sincerely,

The Northern Laramie Range Alliance

Kenneth G. Lay
White Creek Ranch
1351 Boxelder Road
P.O. Box 1985
Glenrock, WY 82637

Tom E. Swanson
Echo Mountain Ranch
P.O. Box 3215
Casper, WY 82602

Sharon Rodeman
11700 West Zero Road
Casper, WY 82604

Diemer True
Diamond Ranches
350 B Big Horn Road
Casper, WY 82601

Attachments: Citizen Petitions

cc: Honorable Dave Freudenthal, Governor of the State of Wyoming w/attachments
Aaron Clark, Special Advisor to the Governor on Energy Infrastructure w/attachments
Walt George, Gateway West Project Manager, Bureau of Land Management w/attachments
Tamara Gretsche, BLM National Project Manager, w/attachments