

BLM begins scoping for segments 8 and 9 in southwestern Idaho

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) will conduct additional environmental review of segments 8 and 9 of the Gateway West Transmission Line Project in southwestern Idaho. The BLM released a Record of Decision (ROD) for other segments of the project in Wyoming and eastern Idaho (1 through 7 and 10) in November 2013, but deferred a decision on segments 8 and 9 to allow for further discussion of routing alternatives for these segments and additional coordination focusing on conservation and enhancement of resources in the Morley Nelson Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area (NCA).

See inside for more information about public scoping meetings, the supplemental EIS, and next steps.

Discussions led by the BLM Boise District Resource Advisory Council (RAC) resulted in new route options for segments 8 and 9 and proposed mitigation and enhancement measures for resources in the NCA. This is substantial new information that has not been previously analyzed, and the BLM has determined that a supplemental EIS analyzing this new information is needed to support a decision on authorizing these two segments.

About the project

The Gateway West Transmission Line Project is jointly proposed by Rocky Mountain Power and Idaho Power to build, operate, and maintain approximately 1,000 miles of new 230 kilovolt (kV) and 500 kV electric transmission lines across southern Wyoming and southern Idaho.



Segments 8 and 9 update

On August 8, 2014, the proponents submitted a revised application for segments 8 and 9, which incorporates some routing options evaluated by the RAC. The proponents also formally submitted the Proposed MEP as part of the updated plan of development for segments 8 and 9.

NEPA process for segments 8 and 9

EISs are prepared under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) to identify and disclose the environmental impacts from federal actions that may significantly affect the human and natural environment. An EIS offers citizens the opportunity to learn about and be involved in the federal decision-making process for projects like Gateway West. A supplemental EIS builds on information and analysis presented in an earlier final EIS.

The NEPA process is complete for segments 1 – 7 and 10 in Wyoming and eastern Idaho, and a decision has been issued for these segments.

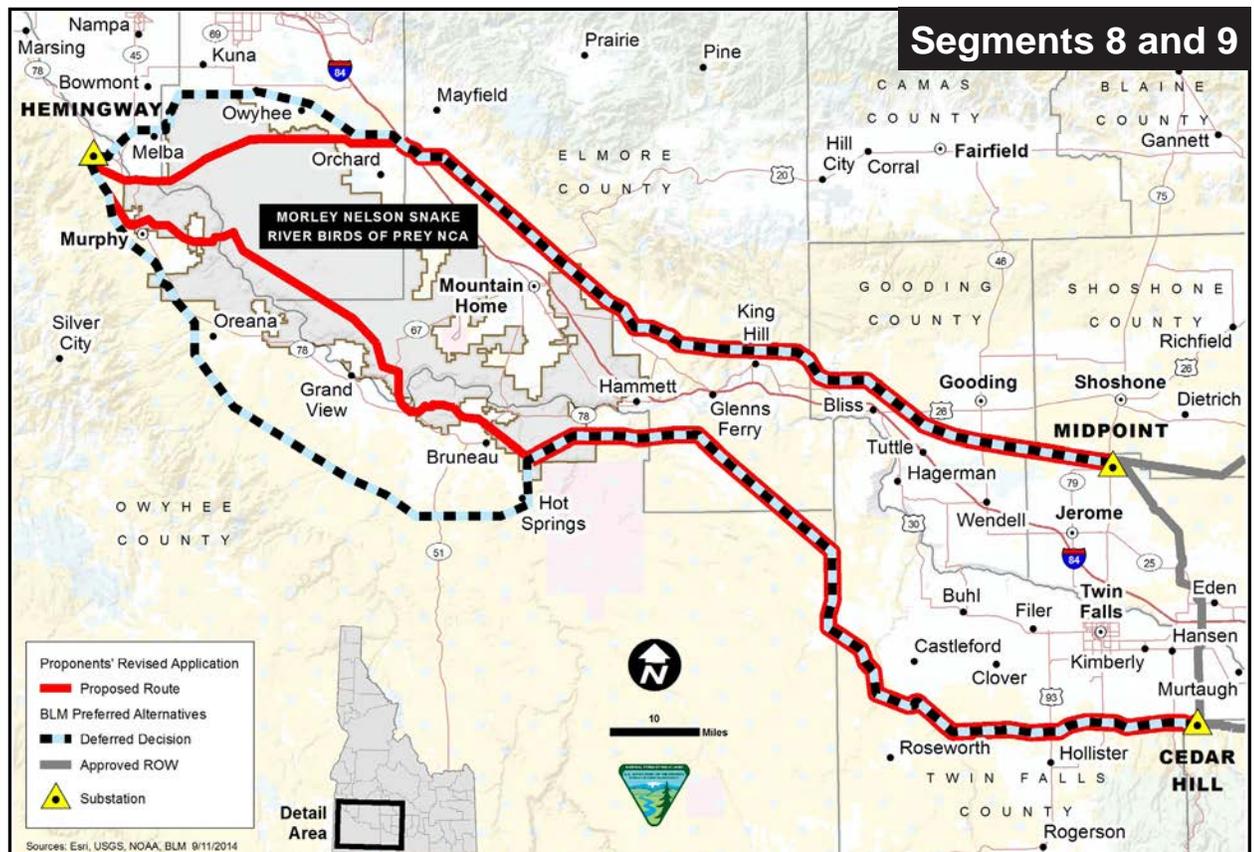
New proposed routes and final EIS BLM preferred routes for segments 8 and 9 in southwestern Idaho. The BLM will evaluate routes in this area in a supplemental EIS.

Scoping for segments 8 and 9

The supplemental EIS for segments 8 and 9 will begin with scoping to gather public input on issues to be analyzed in the supplemental EIS. The supplemental EIS will consider information that was not available when the final EIS was developed and additional, relevant information gathered during scoping. Information on segments 8 and 9 from the final EIS, including route analysis, will be carried forward into the supplemental EIS. Authorizing routes for segments 8 and 9 on public lands may require amendments to one or more BLM land use plans.

Some of the new information already available involves:

- Changes in the regulations on the required distance separating parallel transmission lines: the Western Electric Coordinating Council now allows closer distances (a minimum of 250 feet).
- Revisions to the proponents' proposed routes for segments 8 and 9, including double-circuiting of power lines in some areas and adjusted proposed alignments based on information developed by the RAC.
- Proponents formally submitting the MEP, which includes measures proposed to meet statutory requirements for enhancing resources in the NCA.



The BLM published a Notice of Intent (NOI), which initiated the scoping period for the supplemental EIS. During scoping, the BLM invites comments on issues, potential impacts, mitigation measures, and alternatives associated with granting rights-of-way on public lands for segments 8 and 9 that were not addressed in the final EIS.

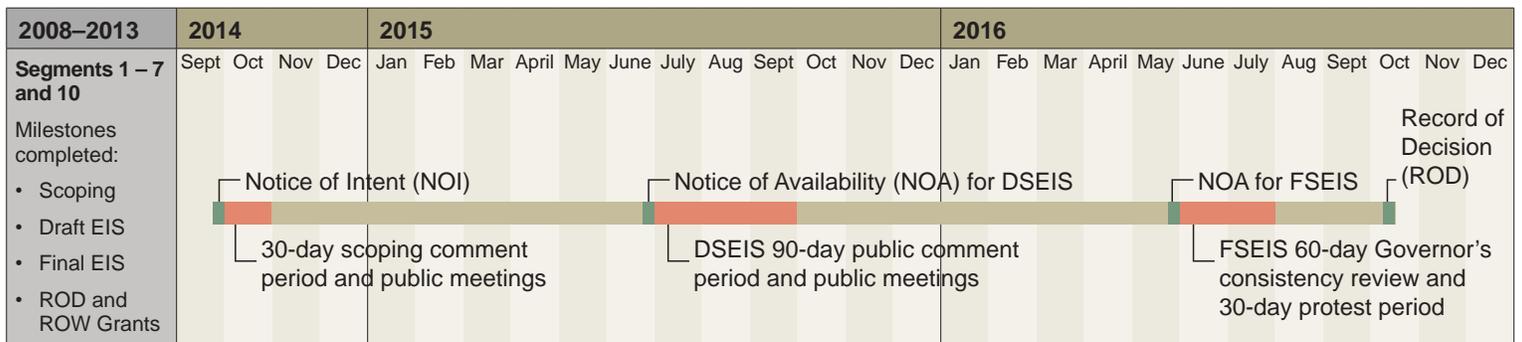
At present, the BLM has identified the following issues and concerns, which will be addressed in the supplemental EIS:

- Effects to the objects and values for which the NCA was designated
- Land use conflicts and inconsistency with existing land use plans
- Effects of the project on local and regional socioeconomic conditions
- Effects on wildlife habitat, plants and animals, including threatened, endangered and sensitive species
- Effects to visual resources and existing viewsheds
- Effects to historic and cultural resources
- Effects to Indian trust assets
- Effects to State and private lands, and local government interests

Calendar of public open houses

The BLM will host a series of public open houses in the areas of segments 8 and 9 to take public scoping comments and provide information on the project and the next steps. You may stop by an open house anytime during the times listed to the right. There will be no formal presentation during the open houses.

Schedule



How to provide scoping comments

The BLM encourages comments on the proponents' new proposed routes for segments 8 and 9, routes previously analyzed in the final EIS, feasible alternative locations, possible mitigation and enhancement measures, and any other information relevant to the proposed action. You may submit comments in writing to the BLM at any public scoping meeting or using one of these methods:

Submit comments online at http://www.blm.gov/id/st/en/prog/nepa_register/gateway-west.htm

Email blm_id_gateway_west@blm.gov

Send written comments to:

Bureau of Land Management, Gateway West Project
1387 S. Vinnell Way, Boise, ID 83709

Attend a public scoping open house (see calendar)

Scoping comments should be submitted or postmarked by October 24, 2014.

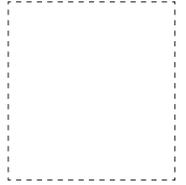
BLM Idaho State Office will lead the supplemental EIS process for segments 8 and 9. All comments and questions related to segments 1 through 7 and segment 10 should be directed to the BLM Wyoming State Office at Gateway_West_WYMail@blm.gov or Bureau of Land Management, Gateway West Project, P.O. Box 20879, Cheyenne, WY 82003.

Meeting Date	Time	Location
Tuesday, October 7	10 a.m. – 1 p.m.	BLM Boise District Office 3948 Development Ave., Boise, ID
Tuesday, October 7	4 p.m. – 7 p.m.	Kuna Senior Center 229 N. Ave. B, Kuna, ID
Wednesday, October 8	4 p.m. – 7 p.m.	Gooding Fairgrounds 201 Lucy Ln., Gooding, ID
Thursday, October 9	4 p.m. – 7 p.m.	Owyhee County Historical Museum 17085 Basey St., Murphy, ID

Gateway West Transmission Line Project

950 W. Bannock Street, Suite 800
Boise, ID 83702

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



BLM begins scoping for supplemental EIS for segments 8 and 9 in western Idaho

Gateway West Transmission Line Project

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has begun scoping for segments 8 and 9 for a supplemental environmental impact statement. Look inside for information about:

- Project update
- Scoping public meetings and comment period
- Project status and next steps in the NEPA process



For more information

- Go online to http://www.blm.gov/id/st/en/prog/nepa_register/gateway-west.htm.
- Email blm_id_gateway_west@blm.gov.
- Call our information line for up-to-date information at 1-800-380-5828.