



# Gateway West Transmission Line Project

March 2016

## Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement Released

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has released the Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for segments 8 and 9 of the proposed Gateway West Transmission Line Project. Comment on the analysis of the route alternatives (map inside), associated environmental effects, and required mitigation measures is open until June 9, 2016.

The BLM will review and respond to all substantive comments on the Draft Supplemental EIS in the Final Supplemental EIS. The BLM encourages you to review the document and provide comments. The Final Supplemental EIS is planned to be released by the end of the year.

### How to access the Draft Supplemental EIS:

- View or download a copy online at <http://on.doi.gov/1sExPBP>
- Review a copy at a BLM office or public library (list of locations online)
- Request a CD version at [blm\\_id\\_gateway\\_west@blm.gov](mailto:blm_id_gateway_west@blm.gov) or 1-800-380-5828
- Attend an upcoming open house public meeting (schedule inside)

### About the project

In May 2007, Idaho Power Company and Rocky Mountain Power, collectively known as the Proponents, applied for a right of way (ROW) grant to use BLM-managed public lands for portions of the Gateway West Project Transmission Line Project. The BLM published the Final EIS for this Project in April 2013, and a Record of Decision (ROD) in November 2013. In that ROD, the BLM deferred offering a ROW grant for segments 8 and 9. The Supplemental EIS assesses new information that has become available since the Final EIS and ROD were published.



## Navigating the document

The Executive Summary provides a stand-alone overview of the Draft Supplemental EIS, including route descriptions and the potential effects of the alternatives. Because the detailed effects analysis in Chapters 3 and 4 refers to analysis related to segments 8 and 9 presented in the 2013 Final EIS for the original Gateway West project, it may help to have a copy of the Final EIS open alongside the Draft Supplemental EIS as you read. There is a link to the Final EIS on the project website, or you may request a version of the Final EIS on CD.

The Draft Supplemental EIS evaluates the revised proposed action for Gateway West segments 8 and 9 as presented in the August 2014 revised ROW application, including environmental protection measures. It also examines the environmental impacts of four other route alignments and two route variations, in a total of seven action alternatives. The BLM has identified two of these seven as Co-preferred alternatives (Alternative 2 and Alternative 5).

Granting a ROW for the Revised Proposed Routes or other route alignments would require amendments to BLM resource management plans and BLM management framework plans. Proposed amendments are identified in the Draft Supplemental EIS, according to the alternative(s) that would require them, if selected.

Significant impacts from construction and operations of the transmission line on historic trails, visual quality, and cumulative impacts on several resources based on past and present levels of disturbance are identified and analyzed. The Draft Supplemental EIS presents a framework for determining required compensatory mitigation.



## How to comment:

- **Online** at <http://on.doi.gov/1sExPBP>
- **Email** [blm\\_id\\_gateway\\_west@blm.gov](mailto:blm_id_gateway_west@blm.gov)
- **Mail** to: BLM, Gateway West Project  
1387 S. Vinnell Way, Boise, ID 83709
- **At an open house public meeting**  
or visit the online open house  
[gatewaywest.publicmeeting.info](http://gatewaywest.publicmeeting.info)

**Comments postmarked by June 9, 2016,  
will be accepted.**



**BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT**

March 2016

# Public involvement schedule



When evaluating projects like this, the BLM highly values public involvement. There are a number of unique, complex issues involved with this proposed project, and we will continue to rely on public engagement and substantive comments to help us reach a decision on whether to grant a ROW on BLM-managed lands for segments 8 and 9 of Gateway West. We look forward to your comments and invite you to attend a public meeting during the comment period.

## Public meetings

The BLM will host four public open houses during the public comment period for the Draft Supplemental EIS, to provide more information on the project, answer questions, and take comments. The open house format will feature stations staffed by resource specialists familiar with the impact analysis and with the environmental review process. There will also be a station with printed, large-format and online maps, as well as multiple ways to submit comments.

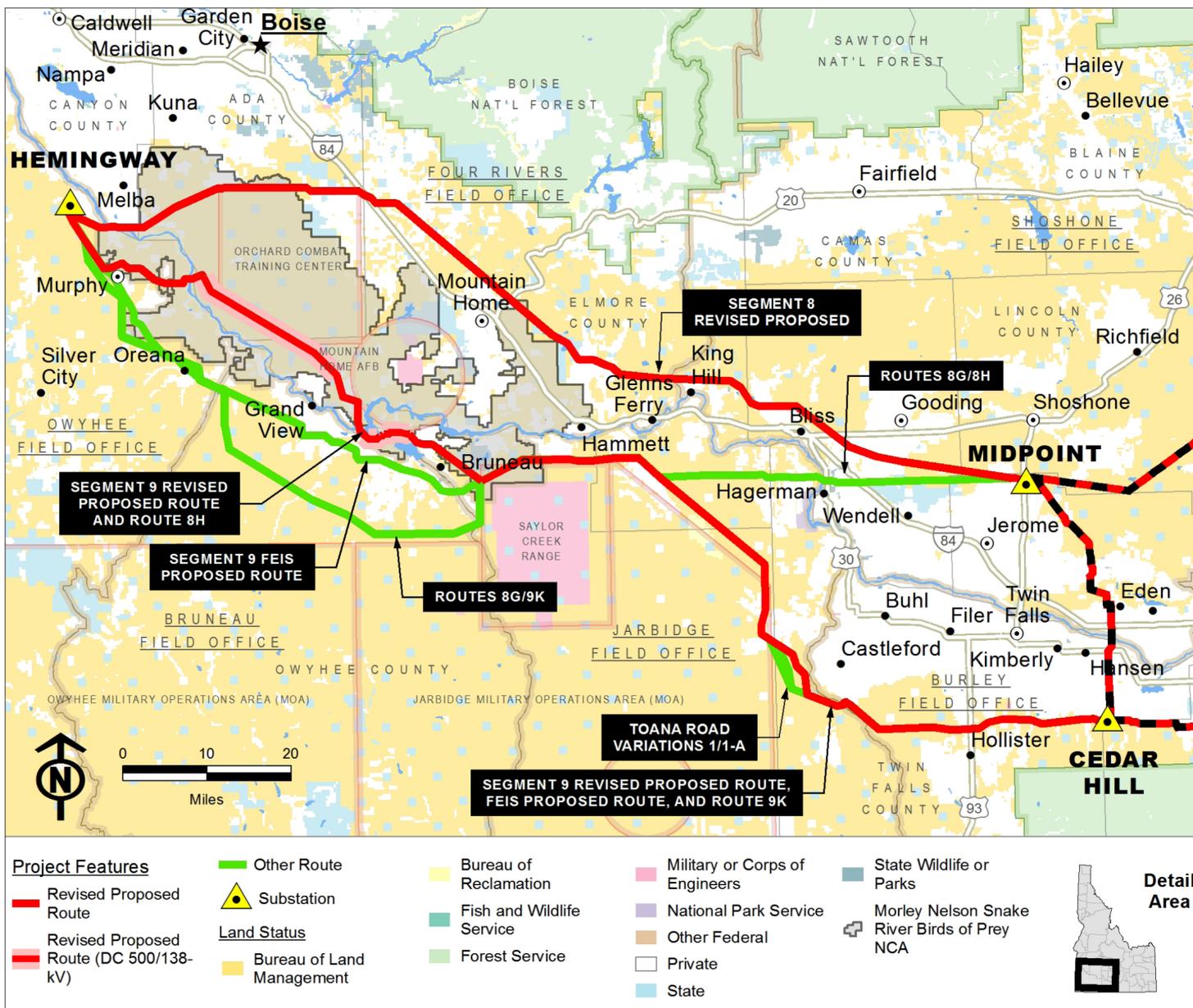
## Online open house

Beginning April 4, you can also visit the project's online open house. Visit [gatewaywest.publicmeeting.info](http://gatewaywest.publicmeeting.info) to view project information, displays, handouts, and submit comments.

## Questions now?

If you have questions now or at any time during the process, you can call the toll-free project information line, 1-800-380-5828, or send an email to [blm\\_id\\_gateway\\_west@blm.gov](mailto:blm_id_gateway_west@blm.gov).

Map and  
preferred alternative  
info inside



## Route alternatives

Each alternative analyzed in the Draft Supplemental EIS includes one routing option for segment 8 and one routing option for segment 9. The table below shows the route pair that makes up each alternative.

	Segment 8 Route	Segment 9 Route
<b>Alternative 1</b>	Revised Proposed Route for segment 8 <i>As presented by the Proponents</i>	Revised Proposed Route for segment 9 <i>As presented by the Proponents</i>
<b>Alternative 2</b> <i>Co-preferred alternative</i>	Revised Proposed Route for segment 8 <i>As presented by the Proponents</i>	Final EIS Proposed Route for segment 9
<b>Alternative 3</b>	Revised Proposed route for segment 8 <i>As presented by the Proponents</i>	Draft Supplemental EIS route 9K <i>Developed as a result of scoping for the Draft Supplemental EIS</i>
<b>Alternative 4</b>	Draft Supplemental EIS route 8G <i>Developed as a result of scoping for the Draft Supplemental EIS</i>	Final EIS Proposed route for segment 9
<b>Alternative 5</b> <i>Co-preferred alternative</i>	Draft Supplemental EIS route 8G <i>Developed as a result of scoping for the Draft Supplemental EIS</i>	Draft Supplemental EIS route 9K <i>Developed as a result of scoping for the Draft Supplemental EIS</i>
<b>Alternative 6</b>	Draft Supplemental EIS route 8H <i>Developed as a result of scoping for the Draft Supplemental EIS</i>	Final EIS Proposed route for segment 9
<b>Alternative 7</b>	Draft Supplemental EIS routes 8H <i>Developed as a result of scoping for the Draft Supplemental EIS</i>	Draft Supplemental EIS route 9K <i>Developed as a result of scoping for the Draft Supplemental EIS</i>

Portions of all route alternatives would cross the Morley Nelson Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area (NCA). **Co-preferred alternatives:** The agency has identified Alternative 2 and Alternative 5 as Co-preferred alternatives for purposes of public review and comment.

## Mitigation

Mitigation measures for proposed actions are a key component of the Draft Supplemental EIS analysis for segments 8 and 9. Section 2.6 in Chapter 2 describes the types of mitigation being considered for effects to resources from construction, operation, and maintenance of the Project, including Greater Sage-grouse, migratory birds, and waters of the U.S. Each of these mitigation plans was analyzed in the 2013 Final EIS.

Mitigation for cultural resources will be covered by a Historic Properties Treatment Plan (HPTP) and site-specific Segment Plans being developed through the Programmatic Agreement for compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). Mitigation under the National Environmental Policy Act will address those resources that are not "historic properties" as defined in the NHPA.

To authorize a ROW through any portion of the Morley Nelson Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area (NCA, shown on map), the BLM must demonstrate that:

1. the use is compatible with the enabling statute for the NCA;
2. impacts to the NCA have been avoided to the greatest extent possible; and
3. enhancement will result in a net benefit to the NCA for the duration of the ROW permit.

The Proponents developed a Mitigation and Enhancement Portfolio (MEP) aimed at mitigating the effects of project related impacts to resources and values found in the NCA that includes both compensatory mitigation and enhancement components which collectively are analyzed as design features of their ROW application.

The MEP lacks detail or specifics on how its goals would be achieved. Because current policies require the BLM to determine the measurable environmental benefit of mitigation, the agency is developing a model that can be used to calculate compensatory mitigation requirements in the NCA. Appendix K of the Draft Supplemental EIS contains the BLM's current Conceptual Mitigation Model for determining required compensatory mitigation for NCA raptors and habitats.

The BLM will also develop compensatory mitigation requirements for other protected NCA resources that would be impacted by the project that are not covered in the mitigation plans mentioned above.





## Draft Supplemental EIS released on March 11, 2016:

- Review the document
- Public meetings in April 2016
- Comment period open until June 9, 2016

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# Gateway West Transmission Line Project

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## 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.



## For more information

- Go online to <http://on.doi.gov/1sExPBP>
- Email [blm\\_id\\_gateway\\_west@blm.gov](mailto:blm_id_gateway_west@blm.gov)
- Call our information line for up-to-date information at **1-800-380-5828**