

Appendix D

Responses to Comments on Final EIS and Governors' Consistency Review

Table D-1 Comments Received on the Final EIS

Agency/Organization	Type	Summary	Region of Concern
Corporation of the Presiding Bishop of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (CPB)	Comment	Recommendations on routing in Fruitland and Nephi, opposition to specific areas of APA and support of the applicant proposed route.	Region II, Utah
<i>BLM Response</i>	<i>Your recommendations have been received. The Agency Preferred Alternative was selected by the joint-lead agencies based on their review of the disclosure of impacts that would be incurred by the alternatives in the Environmental Impact Statement, along with consideration of input received from cooperating agencies and the public. The route authorized by the respective land-managing and jurisdictional agencies, along with the rationale for the selection, are in the Project's Records of Decision.</i>		
Defenders of Wildlife; also Sierra Club	Protest	Desert Tortoise - Increased number of Field Contact Representatives (FCR), route preference, increased mitigation within desert tortoise habitat, and compensate loss at a 5:1 ratio. Greater sage-grouse - Conduct further analysis of existing disturbance in GSG habitat, compare alternatives based on crossing undisturbed and degraded habitat, develop robust analysis of direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Project on greater sage-grouse in the ROD.	All regions, all states
<i>BLM Response</i>	<i>Your recommendations were received. Please see TWE ROD Section 7.1 Conformance with BLM Land Use Plans for response information.</i>		
Duchesne County commission, Utah	Protest	Protesting the findings of the Final EIS, the joint-agency Agency Preferred Alternative (APA), issuance of a ROW permit, and "any amendments of BLM land use plans needed..." County is not willing to consider line following APA; prefer the southern routes (II-B and II-C).	Region II, Utah
<i>BLM Response</i>	<i>Your recommendations were received. Please see TWE ROD Section 7.1 Conformance with BLM Land Use Plans for response information.</i>		
Kern River Gas Transmission Company	Comment	Additional clarification to DEIS comments per the responses provided in FEIS. Including concerns over pipeline crossings and stray current, request for mitigation related to protect pipelines, restoration of ROW, vehicle and equipment crossings, and coordination with Kern River re: all the above items.	Regions II, III, IV; Utah, Nevada
<i>BLM Response</i>	<i>The joint-lead agencies require that TransWest coordinate with landowners or holders of valid existing rights crossed by the Project. This requirement applies to Kern River ROW crossings, and pertains to potential studies to determine effects to pipeline systems, mitigation, final routing and micro-siting, and construction techniques as required by Kern River.</i>		
Private Landowner	Comment	Clarified his private land holding boundary has been updated by BLM cadastral in Nevada.	Region III, Nevada
<i>BLM Response</i>	<i>Thank you for your comment.</i>		

Table D-1 Comments Received on the Final EIS

Agency/Organization	Type	Summary	Region of Concern
Millard County, Utah	Comment	Recommendations on routing in Millard County, Utah.	Regions II, III; Utah
<i>BLM Response</i>		<i>Your support of the Agency Preferred Alternative and the Terminal Siting Area in Millard County is noted. The Selected Alternative will be located on the west side of Highway 6 and parallel the railroad ROW for approximately 2.3 miles. The Selected Alternative parallels the Magnum Gas line for approximately 7 miles and will be located west of the UNEV pipeline. Segment 1460 is adjacent to and west of the IPP So. Cal. Line. Design Option 2 would include an AC/DC converter station and a 500-/345-kV AC substation in Millard County; Design Option 3 would require a 500-/345-kV AC substation during Phase 1 of that option.</i>	
National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA)	Protest	Opposes Tuttle Ranch Micro-siting Options #3 and #4. Encourages Tuttle Ranch Micro-siting Option #1.	Region 1 and IV in Colorado and Nevada
<i>BLM Response</i>		<i>Your recommendations were received. Please see TWE ROD Section 7.1 Conformance with BLM Land Use Plans for response information.</i>	
Questar Pipeline Company	Comment	Concerns with proximity of tower foundations, heavy equipment crossing pipeline, electrical interference, and required coordination between TransWest and Questar.	Region II, Utah
<i>BLM Response</i>		<i>The joint-lead agencies require that TransWest coordinate with landowners or holders of valid existing rights crossed by the Project. This requirement applies to Questar ROW crossings, and pertains to potential studies to determine effects to pipeline systems, mitigation, final routing and micro-siting, and construction techniques as required by Questar.</i>	
Sweetwater County Commission	Comment	Edits to Sweetwater County Permits listed in Table A-1.	Region I, Wyoming
<i>BLM Response</i>		<i>This information has been provided to TransWest for incorporation into the Project Plan of Development.</i>	
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints	Comment	Support APA, specifically avoidance of Mountain Meadows Massacre Site National Historic Landmark.	Region III, Utah
<i>BLM Response</i>		<i>Thank you for your comment.</i>	
The Wilderness Society (TWS); also Conservation Colorado and Audubon Rockies	Protest	Issues related to BLM fulfillment of FLPMA and NEPA with the EIS. Specific to lands with Wilderness Characteristics (LWC) and greater sage grouse in Colorado and Nevada.	Region I, III in Colorado and Nevada
<i>BLM Response</i>		<i>Your recommendations were received. Please see TWE ROD Section 7.1 Conformance with BLM Land Use Plans for response information.</i>	
TransWest Express LLC (TWE)	Comment	Issues with LWC mitigation in FEIS Addendum; issues with Cultural mitigation in FEIS Addendum; issues with SDA-14 in addendum; issues with tower-type requirements and other mitigation because of lack of scientific rationale.	All Regions, All States
<i>BLM Response</i>		<i>The BLM Authorized Officer held face to face meetings with the Applicant to discuss and resolve comments received.</i>	

Table D-1 Comments Received on the Final EIS

Agency/Organization	Type	Summary	Region of Concern
Utah Public Lands Policy Coordination Office (UPLPCO)	Governors' Consistency Review	Adoption of mitigation framework from Conservation Plan for Greater Sage-Grouse in Utah.	Region II, Utah
BLM Response		<p><i>Your letter of May 29, 2015, raises a number of issues regarding the proposed Project vis-à-vis conservation of greater sage-grouse in Utah. The following points address these comments in the general order that they are presented in your letter:</i></p> <p><i>Project Siting within the Strawberry SGMA. In selecting the Agency Preferred Alternative (Alternative II-G) through Project Region II, the BLM and Western Area Power Administration (Western) sought to select the alternative with the least overall impact considering a variety of resources. Beyond this broad route selection, when identifying which of several options to carry forward in the Strawberry SGMA area, BLM and Western coordinated with the BLM Utah State Office, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Utah Ecological Services Field Office, and the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources to identify a more specific route that would have the least impact to greater sage-grouse as it crossed this area. Alternative II-G was selected over the Applicant-proposed Alternative II-A precisely because it would avoid or minimize potential impacts to greater sage-grouse associated with the North Fruitland and Lower Red Creek leks, would avoid impacts to UDWR-held conservation easements in the area, and would to a large extent be co-located with the existing Mona-Bonanza Transmission Line, thus confining Project impacts to an existing transmission corridor.</i></p> <p><i>Mitigation for Impacts to Greater Sage-Grouse Habitat. As specified in FEIS Section 3.8.6.3, page 3-103; Appendix K of the Plan of Development (included as Appendix D to the FEIS); and Appendix I of the EIS, a compensatory mitigation plan for impacts to greater sage-grouse habitat is being developed through the use of habitat equivalency analysis (HEA). This process will ensure that Project-related impacts to greater sage-grouse habitat are offset through specific, on-the-ground mitigation projects specifically designed to compensate for impacts to greater sage-grouse habitat services. Mitigation projects will be identified by an Oversight Committee with representation from agency biologists and local sage-grouse working groups.</i></p> <p><i>Consistency with the Conservation Plan for Greater Sage-Grouse in Utah. The consistency of BLM land use plans with state and local plans is addressed during the land use planning process; this is evident in the agency's planning regulations. However, the BLM recognizes that coordination of management across the landscape is important for successful conservation efforts. In light of this, the BLM notes that Section 5.6 of Utah's Conservation Plan provides a threat assessment and management provisions for transmission corridors through greater sage-grouse habitat. This section states that research completed to date has not shown that transmission lines have immediate impacts on greater sage-grouse nest or brood success and that management stipulations and conditions should therefore focus on direct disturbance during construction. FEIS mitigation measure SSWS-5 is consistent with this in that it provides multiple impact avoidance and minimization measures for greater sage-grouse habitat during project construction. Moreover, the project is consistent with the management provisions provided under the Conservation Plan's Sections 5.6.1 – 5.6.3.</i></p> <p><i>Assurance of Compensatory Mitigation. As noted above, both the FEIS and Plan of Development commit TransWest to implementing avoidance and minimization measures as well as compensatory mitigation for impacts to the greater sage-grouse and its habitat. These commitments will be enacted in the action agencies' records of decision for the project and in the associated BLM right-of-way grant. It is anticipated that both on-site and off-site mitigation will be implemented and that, though exempt from the Utah LUPA's disturbance cap provisions, the Project will be constructed, operated, and maintained in general accordance with the Utah Conservation Plan's provisions.</i></p>	

Table D-1 Comments Received on the Final EIS

Agency/Organization	Type	Summary	Region of Concern
WildEarth Guardians (WEG)	Protest	Concern with impacts to greater sage-grouse, sensitive species requirements, FLPMA and NEPA requirements.	Region II, Utah
<i>BLM Response</i>	<i>Your recommendations were received. Please see TWE ROD Section 7.1 Conformance with BLM Land Use Plans for response information.</i>		
Wyoming Game and Fish Department (WGFD)	Governors Consistency Review	Indicated that document is consistent with discussions and Wyoming Greater Sage-Grouse EO.	Region I, Wyoming
<i>BLM Response</i>	<i>Thank you for your comment.</i>		