



U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management

Talavera Substation and Distribution Project

SCOPING REPORT

October 2017

SCOPING REPORT FOR THE TALAVERA SUBSTATION AND DISTRIBUTION PROJECT

Prepared for

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS LIST

BLM	Bureau of Land Management
CEQ	Council on Environmental Quality
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
EA	environmental assessment
EIS	environmental impact statement
EMF	electromagnetic fields
EPE	El Paso Electric Company
FONSI	Finding of No Significant Impact
kV	kilovolt
LCDO	Las Cruces District Office
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
ROW	right-of-way
SWCA	SWCA Environmental Consultants

1.0 INTRODUCTION

El Paso Electric Company (EPE) has submitted six Applications for Transportation and Utility Systems and Facilities on Federal Lands (Standard Form 299) to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Las Cruces District Office (LCDO) for the issuance of new and amended right-of-way (ROW) grants to construct, operate, and maintain a new permanent substation (Talavera Substation) and associated distribution lines on BLM-managed public land 3 miles east of Las Cruces in Dona Ana County, New Mexico. Section 368 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 requires federal agencies to consider the need for upgraded and new infrastructure, and to take actions to improve reliability, relieve congestion, and enhance the capability of the national grid to delivery electricity. Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, the BLM will prepare an environmental assessment (EA) to analyze the potential impacts from the proposed project and assist in the determination as to whether any “significant” impacts could result from the analyzed action (“significance” is defined under NEPA in 40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] 1508.27).

1.1 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

EPE has identified a need to add an additional permanent substation to the electrical power grid that supports the city of Las Cruces and surrounding communities in southern New Mexico. The new substation would convert 115-kilovolt (kV) electricity to 24-kV electricity for distribution into the power grid for consumption and will support future load demand and economic growth. To meet current and future demand, EPE proposes to construct a new Talavera Substation and make improvements to the distribution feeder line grid.

EPE’s Proposed Action is located on BLM-managed public land, 3 miles east of Las Cruces in Dona Ana County, New Mexico. The proposed six-position ring bus Talavera Substation would be built adjacent to an existing temporary substation located off Dripping Springs Road. The project would also include maintenance on 10.4 miles (with a 50-foot-wide ROW) of existing 24-kV distribution line to replace and/or add infrastructure to upgrade these lines and construct 2.2 miles of new 24-kV distribution lines. The proposed Talavera Substation would be connected to the existing Salopek to Arroyo 115-kV transmission line and the existing distribution lines associated with this project.

1.2 PURPOSE OF SCOPING

Two primary principles of the NEPA are full disclosure of potential environmental effects and open public participation throughout the decision-making process. Through the public involvement process, the public is able to participate in the NEPA process. NEPA requirements for public involvement are set forth in Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations 40 CFR 1500–1508. Additional BLM guidance and direction for public involvement is provided in the BLM NEPA Handbook (BLM Handbook H-1790-1).

While not always required under NEPA for an EA, public scoping is often used to develop additional alternatives or mitigation measures and identify environmental issues to be considered in the NEPA analysis. The scoping process has three parts: 1) coordinating with cooperating

agencies, 2) providing information to community members about the proposed project, and 3) soliciting information about the interests and concerns of the community.

This scoping report addresses all aspects of the scoping process, including correspondence, notifications for comment opportunities, dates and locations of public meetings, and all comments received as a result of these efforts, either at the meetings or through other submission methods. This report follows the guidance of the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations for Implementing the Procedural Provisions of NEPA (40 CFR 1500–1508) and BLM Handbook 1760-1. All comments have been given equal consideration regardless of method of transmission.

Although the BLM encourages commenting on the project throughout the preparation of the EA, the range of issues summarized in this report is based on the comments received during the public scoping periods.

2.0 PUBLIC SCOPING PROCESS

The BLM administered two separate scoping periods for the Talavera Project. Scoping Period 1 was 30 days long and was held from February 3 to March 3, 2017. This scoping period resulted in 45 comment letter submissions. The letters primarily focused on objections to the proposed Talavera Substation location, and suggested multiple other potential locations for the substation. Section 2.1 below presents a full summary of Scoping Period 1. Appendix A includes the BLM's letter inviting the public to comment during Scoping Period 1. Appendix B contains the full text of comments received during Scoping Period 1. Following Scoping Period 1, the BLM reviewed the public's input and suggested alternatives, and identified several other substation locations for consideration.

The BLM then initiated a second scoping period to identify issues related to the additional alternatives under consideration. Scoping Period 2 was 60 days long and was held from June 17 through August 17, 2017. This scoping period resulted in 63 comment letter submissions. Section 2.2 below presents a full summary of Scoping Period 2. Appendix C contains the BLM's letter inviting the public to comment, and attend an informational public meeting, during Scoping Period 2. Appendix D contains the full text of comments received during Scoping Period 2. The following sections describe both scoping periods, including the methods by which BLM informed the public about the project, the methods of commenting afforded to the public, and the results of that outreach process.

2.1 SCOPING PERIOD 1

2.1.1 DIRECT MAILING

On February 3, 2017, the BLM mailed scoping invitation letters to 98 recipients from the BLM's interested party mailing list. The letter provided a brief description of the project and project map, identified the initiation of the 30-day public scoping period with an end date of March 3, 2017, and provided the following methods of commenting:

- Emailing comments to: BLM_NM_LCDO_Comments@blm.gov, with an email subject line of “Talavera Substation EA.”
- Mailing comments to: BLM Las Cruces District Office, Attention: Talavera Substation EA, 1800 Marquess Street, Las Cruces, NM 88005

The invitation letter also provided a telephone number and email for the BLM Project Lead, Paula Montez, in case of questions or requests for mailing list additions or removals (see Appendix A).

2.1.2 COMMENT SUMMARY

During Scoping Period 1, the BLM received a total of 45 individual letter submittals. One submission was from a business; the remaining submissions were all from individuals. Most comments were submitted via email to the BLM.

Upon receipt, all sender information was entered into the comment database and project mailing list (unless there was a specific request for that information not to be included), along with the submittal method and entity/affiliation of each sender. Each submittal was labeled with a numeric identifier, and was reviewed to capture specific thoughts and ideas. These comments were then sorted into resource area topics that will aid BLM to identify specific issues to be addressed in the project’s forthcoming EA.

The 45 letter submissions were reviewed for content and were then parsed into comment excerpts for coding to relevant resource area or topic. The parsing exercise resulted in 95 individual comments to be coded to one or more resource area or topic. The coding structure and results of the coding exercise are provided in Table 1 and indicate 192 mentions of different resource areas or topics.

Table 1. Scoping Period 1 Comment Coding Structure and Results

Resource Area or Topic	Comment Coding Results
Purpose and Need	12
Process, including Public Involvement	8
Alternatives	44
Cultural Resources	1
Human Health and Safety	6
Recreation	3
Socioeconomics	40
Special Designations	10
Transportation	3
Visual Resources	34
Wildlife	3
Other (requests for information or to be added to the project mailing list)	1
Opinion-only statements	26
Out of scope (referenced another project)	1
Total	192

Resource area or topics of primary concern to the public during the scoping period were summarized as follows:

1. **Purpose and Need:** questions about the need for the project / additional power for the Talavera area; statements that additional power is needed.
2. **Process:** clarifications regarding the NEPA process; request that the BLM consider other sites, and provide more informative materials to assist with scoping comments. Comments also stated that EPE should have worked with local residents to address local concerns prior to submitting their plan to the BLM.
3. **Alternatives:** requests for another location farther away from the Talavera area. Multiple suggestions for other potential substation locations including:
 - to the south of the Talavera area
 - near the Vado quarry
 - north or northeast side of Dripping Springs Road; 0.5 mile or more to the north along the transmission line corridor
 - near the informal shooting range, north of Dripping Springs Road
 - east of the existing temporary substation on either the north or south side of Dripping Springs Road;
 - private lands near Sonoma and Dripping Spring Road
 - near the Centennial High School, either on private land or BLM land
 - the gravel pit near A Mountain
 - “in a more industrial location”
 - away from Organ Mountains Monument entrance area and the National Monument in general
 - empty land east or south of Las Cruces; Las Alturas Boulevard
4. **Cultural Resources:** concerns about impacts to a nearby archaeological site.
5. **Human Health and Safety:** concerns about health impacts from electromagnetic fields (EMF), potential for substation explosions/fires.
6. **Recreation:** impacts to recreation in the Organ Mountains/Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks National Monument.
7. **Visual Resources:** concern about impacts to residential and other viewsheds, including the entrance to and key areas within the Organ Mountain-Desert Peaks National Monument; suggestions about fencing and landscaping plans to minimize visual impacts; concern that the Proposed Action location (on a hill) and fencing design will not mitigate visual impacts, particularly within the immediate neighborhood.
8. **Socioeconomics:** general concerns about impacts to Talavera residents, concern about impacts to property values, quality of life, and recreation/tourism. Concern that the Proposed Action was developed with only consideration of the project cost, and requests that other factors important to residents be considered since all project costs will be passed on to residents as rate increases anyway.
9. **Transportation:** concerns about traffic, potential for road damage, particularly to the recently improved road that is an entrance to Organ Mountain-Desert Peaks National Monument.

10. **Wildlife:** general concerns about impacts to wildlife.
11. **Special Designations:** concern about impacts to the objectives and values of the Organ Mountain-Desert Peaks National Monument (particularly viewshed/aesthetic values).
12. **Other:** requests for more information or to be added to the mailing list, or comments unrelated to the Talavera project.
13. **Opinion-only statements:** This category included statements of opposition to the Proposed Action or opposition to the Proposed Action substation location only, that did not also identify a resource area of concern. Also included were statements of general support for the project or proposed substation location.
14. **Out-of-scope:** statements unrelated to the Proposed Action.

Appendix B provides a summary table of all written comments received and resource areas or topics identified during Scoping Period 1. Each comment is included with the associated commenter identification number, submission ID number, and comment issue category in tabular format for organization and cross-referencing purposes.

2.2 SCOPING PERIOD 2

As a result of the public comments received during the first scoping period, the BLM identified and considered the applicant's proposed site as well as 12 additional sites. The BLM first vetted if the options would meet the BLM's purpose and need and land use planning goals; and then vetted these options with EPE engineers to determine feasibility of carrying them forward as an alternative to be analyzed in the EA. The BLM then identified four additional substation locations to present to the public for further analysis, and identified eight locations that would likely be dismissed from further consideration based on major constraints, feasibility, or inability to meet the purpose and need. All locations were presented to the public for identification of concerns during Scoping Period 2.

2.2.1 DIRECT MAILING

On June 6, 2017, a second letter was mailed to 344 recipients from the project-specific mailing list and additional addresses gleaned from county parcel data. The scoping letter indicated that as a result of the earlier scoping effort, the BLM had identified alternative locations for the substation and invited public feedback on the locations via an informational public meeting to be held on July 17, 2017, in Las Cruces, New Mexico. The scoping letter provided a map of alternative substation locations and the same methods of commenting as provided in the first letter, plus an option to submit a comment form at the public scoping meeting. The BLM requested receipt of all comments by August 17, 2017. A copy of this letter is included in Appendix C.

2.2.2 SCOPING MEETING

On July 17, 2017, the BLM hosted a public scoping meeting from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at the New Mexico Farm and Ranch Heritage Museum at 4100 Dripping Springs Road in Las Cruces. The meeting was attended by approximately 160 members of the public.

The meeting was composed of an open house, presentation, and question-and-answer period with panel. Attendees were greeted, asked to sign in, and given a project-specific Frequently Asked Questions handout, and a comment form. Attendees were informed about the meeting format, the general flow of information (display boards) in the room, and ways to submit a completed comment form to the BLM.

Informational display stations positioned around the meeting room identified all 13 substation locations that had been considered by the BLM and EPE, including the five sites proposed to be analyzed in the EA. Representatives from the BLM, EPE, and the third-party contractor (SWCA Environmental Consultants) were available to answer questions about the materials.

At 6:00 p.m., the BLM facilitated a PowerPoint presentation that described an overview of the purpose and need for the project, the NEPA process, the project timeline, and methods by which the public could provide scoping comments. The BLM presentation was followed by a presentation by EPE that described the existing electrical grid and projected growth, the proposed Talavera substation, and the five proposed locations under consideration: the proposed action, one site proposed by EPE, one site proposed by the BLM, and two sites proposed by the public. EPE also presented photographs of other existing substations in the Las Cruces area.

The presentation portion of the meeting concluded with a question-and-answer session. Meeting attendees posed questions to the BLM and EPE staff regarding the NEPA process, the rationale for alternatives eliminated from detailed analysis, feasibility of relocating or undergrounding proposed distribution lines; expressed concerns about impacts to viewsheds, dark skies, human health and safety, property values, and other issues; and offered location preferences or additional location suggestions.

Copies of the scoping meeting materials are provided on the BLM's project website,¹ including the display boards, PowerPoint presentation, and an example of the comment form. Appendix C includes a copy of the Frequently Asked Questions handout, the comment form, and the list of questions that were discussed during the meeting.

2.2.3 COMMENT SUMMARY

Comments were received and processed as indicated in Section 2.1.2. The BLM received a total of 63 submittals. One submission was from a business; the remaining submissions were from individuals. Most comments were submitted through emails sent to the BLM, but some meeting attendees filled out comment forms and others mailed in comment forms after the meeting. The parsing exercise resulted in 200 comments to be coded to one or more resource areas or topics. The coding structure and results of the coding exercise are provided in Table 2 and indicate 559 mentions of different resource areas or topics.

¹ BLM project website available at: <https://eplanning.blm.gov/epl-front-office/eplanning/planAndProjectSite.do?methodName=renderDefaultPlanOrProjectSite&projectId=68992&dctmId=0b0003e880db2b12>.

Table 2. Scoping Period 2 Comment Coding Structure and Results

Resource Area or Topic	Coding Results
Purpose and Need	12
Process, including Public Involvement	41
Alternatives	34
Human Health and Safety	22
Recreation	1
Socioeconomics	129
Special Designations	17
Visual Resources	86
Wildlife/Ecosystem	5
Other (requests for information or to be added to the project mailing list, or to change the project name)	4
Opinion-only statements	208
Total	559

Resource area topics of primary concern to the public during Scoping Period 2 are summarized as follows:

1. **Purpose and Need:** questions about the need for the project or need for additional power or reliability specifically for the Talavera area; statements that additional power is needed for existing and future growth.
2. **Process, including Public Involvement:** clarifications regarding the NEPA process and requests to evaluate multiple alternatives as part of that process rather than eliminating them prior to the analysis; statements that the rationale for eliminating eight alternatives presented at the public meeting is inappropriate/insufficient; concerns that some impacts will not be analyzed in the EA; suggestions that the EA process must be upgraded to an environmental impact statement (EIS); statements indicating legal actions may be taken; and statements of support for BLM as an impartial decision-maker who must evaluate all resource impacts. Comments specific to public outreach stated that the public meeting was “not objective,” BLM and EPE meeting staff did not appear to be concerned about attendee’s concerns, and that scoping information and maps were not detailed enough.
3. **Alternatives:** requests for BLM to identify an additional alternative located away from residential areas or analyze fully Site #8, suggestions that topography be used to hide the substation. Other comments contained suggestions or concerns that were pertinent to specific alternatives including:
 - Sites #1 and #2
 - Suggestions that the lower-lying area for Site #2 would be preferable to #1, and create more distance from the nearest residence.
 - Sites #3 and #3A:
 - suggestions that the distribution line on Soledad Canyon Road be placed underground or that existing distribution lines be used, possibly concurrent with the upcoming improvements planned for that road.

- Suggestion that #3A be located on the west side of the transmission line corridor, or that the needed distribution be routed along the existing transmission corridor rather than along Soledad Canyon Road.
- Site #8:
 - Suggestions that the elimination of the informal shooting range site from further analysis requires additional detail or clarification, disagreement that there is a safety risk.
- Site #11:
 - Comments that #11 is the only acceptable site of the five proposed for analysis because it is farther from residences and the Talavera area.
 - Comments that #11 would be extremely costly because of the necessary transmission infrastructure and would in turn impact the community to the east.
- 4. **Human Health and Safety:** concerns about health impacts from electromagnetic fields (EMF); potential for substation explosions/fires, and lack of egress; and impacts from substation and electrical line noise. Some comments stated that concerns about vandalism at more remote alternative sites were unwarranted.
- 5. **Recreation:** concern about impacts to recreation activities in the Organ Mountains.
- 6. **Socioeconomics:** concerns about impacts to property values, quality of life, recreation/tourism. Comments requested an economic analysis to the values of any existing homes as well as impacts to any undeveloped lots and resale ability and values of those homes and lots. Some comments stated that project costs seemed to be more heavily considered than other impacts and indicated that the project costs should not be a primary consideration because the costs would be passed on through rate increases anyway. Other comments acknowledged the increased cost of more remote sites.
- 7. **Special Designations:** concern about impacts to the objectives and values of the Organ Mountain National Monument (particularly viewshed/aesthetic values) and monument entrance.
- 8. **Visual Resources:** concern about impacts to the viewshed of residences and other areas (such as Dripping Springs Road) from both the substation and the distribution lines; concerns about light pollution and impacts to dark skies; requests for other mitigation to minimize visual impacts and concern that no design features would be able to sufficiently mitigate the visual impacts; requests for viewshed analyses and disclosure of visual resources impacts of each potential site.
- 9. **Wildlife/Ecosystem:** concerns about general impacts to wildlife, specifically Swainson's hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*), a protected species; concern about floodplains.
- 10. **Other:** requests for information; a suggestion that the Talavera Substation name be changed to Dripping Springs, since it is technically not in the Talavera area.
- 11. **Opinion-only statements:** Many of the submissions included statements of opposition to, or preference for, one or more of the 13 sites that were presented in the second scoping meeting (the five sites that were proposed for analysis in the EA [the original proposed action plus four additional proposed sites], and the eight sites that were considered and proposed to be eliminated from additional analysis). The public input on these sites was generally accompanied by rationale regarding the presence/absence of

potential impacts to various resource areas, which were also coded to those resource areas or topics.

Appendix D provides a summary table of all written comments received and resource areas or topics identified during Scoping Period 2. Each comment is included with the associated commenter identification number, submission ID number, and comment issue category in tabular format for organization and cross-referencing purposes.

3.0 NEXT STEPS

The BLM LCDO will direct the third-party contractor, SWCA Environmental Consultants (SWCA), to develop the Draft EA analysis according to the BLM's NEPA Handbook H-1790-1 requirements. The EA will describe the BLM's Purpose and Need and decision to be made; public scoping and resulting issues; the Proposed Action and Alternatives (including the alternatives that were considered but eliminated from detailed analysis); the affected environment and environmental consequences of each alternative; and the consultation and coordination efforts undertaken in support of the project. SWCA will coordinate with EPE and BLM to identify and develop any mitigation measures that will align the project's design and construction with the BLM's agency obligations, land use stipulations, and management objectives.

Once the EA is reviewed and approved by the BLM, the BLM will make a determination as to whether or not the selected alternative will have significant environmental effects. If the selected alternative will have significant environmental effects, the BLM will not approve the action unless it is either analyzed in an EIS or modified to avoid significant effects. If the selected alternative is found not to have significant environmental effects, the BLM will prepare a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI). The BLM will release the EA and unsigned FONSI for a 30-day public review period.

After addressing public comments and revising the EA and FONSI as necessary, the BLM will prepare and issue a decision record based on the analysis in the EA and information in the FONSI. The decision record will explain how the selected alternative addresses the purpose and need for action and why it was selected over other alternatives, and include a discussion of comments received on the EA and FONSI and their disposition in the decision record.

**APPENDIX A.
PUBLIC SCOPING PERIOD 1
NOTIFICATION LETTER**



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Las Cruces District Office
1800 Marquess Street
Las Cruces, New Mexico 88005
www.blm.gov/nm/lascruces



In Reply Refer To:
1792 (L0310)

Dear Interested Party,

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Las Cruces District Office (LCDO) invites you to participate in a public process to gather input regarding the preparation of an Environmental Assessment (EA) for right-of-way (ROW) applications submitted by El Paso Electric (EPE). This letter initiates the external 30-day public scoping period for the project. The BLM LCDO received a Plan of Development (Plan) and associated new and amended applications for ROWs for a proposed new permanent substation and maintenance of 10.4 miles of existing distribution lines (Talavera Substation Project, or project) in Doña Ana County, New Mexico. The BLM has determined that preparation of an EA is necessary under the National Environmental Policy Act. The proposed EA will analyze the potential effects from the construction, maintenance, and operation of the substation, distribution lines, and associated infrastructure.

Project Overview

EPE has identified a need to add an additional permanent substation to the electrical power grid that supports the city of Las Cruces and surrounding communities in southern New Mexico. This new substation will convert 115-kV electricity to 24-kilovolt (kV) electricity for distribution into the power grid for consumption and will support future economic growth. To meet current and future demand, EPE would construct the new Talavera Substation and make improvements to the distribution feeder line grid.

The Proposed Action is located on BLM-managed public lands 3 miles east of Las Cruces in Doña Ana County (see attached map). The proposed six-position ring bus Talavera Substation would be built adjacent to an existing temporary substation located off Dripping Springs Road. The project would also include maintenance on 10.4 miles (with a 50-foot wide ROW) of existing 24 (kV) distribution line to replace and/or add infrastructure to upgrade these lines and construct 2.2 miles of new 24-kV distribution lines. The proposed Talavera Substation would be connected to the existing Salopek to Arroyo 115-kV transmission line and the existing distribution lines associated with this project.

Applicant-committed measures and the restoration plan, included in EPE's Plan, are part of the proposed project design. The applicant-committed measures incorporate applicable best management practices and environmental protection measures, which are industry- or agency-recommended construction methods that are routinely implemented to minimize impacts to resources. The proposed project would continue to consolidate utility infrastructure and reduce

additional resource impacts. Further project details (including acreages and miles of proposed ROW and surface disturbance) are available in the Plan, which can be requested from the BLM. The total proposed surface disturbance is 106.5 acres with 90.8 acres located on BLM-managed public lands.

How to Comment

Public comments on this proposed project will be accepted until March 3, 2017. Comments can be submitted by one of the following methods:

- File your comments electronically by sending them to:
BLM_NM_LCDO_Comments@blm.gov. Please include “Talavera Substation EA” in the subject line of your email.
- Mail your comments to: BLM Las Cruces District Office
ATTN: Talavera Substation EA
1800 Marquess Street
Las Cruces, NM 88005

For all comments submitted, please identify whether you are submitting comments as an individual or as the designated spokesperson on behalf of an organization.

Before including your address, phone number, email address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, be advised that your entire comment—including your personal identifying information—may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold from public review your personal identifying information, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

If you have questions regarding the proposed project, or would like to be added or removed from the mailing list, contact Paula Montez, Project Lead at 575-525-4387 or via email at pmontez@blm.gov.

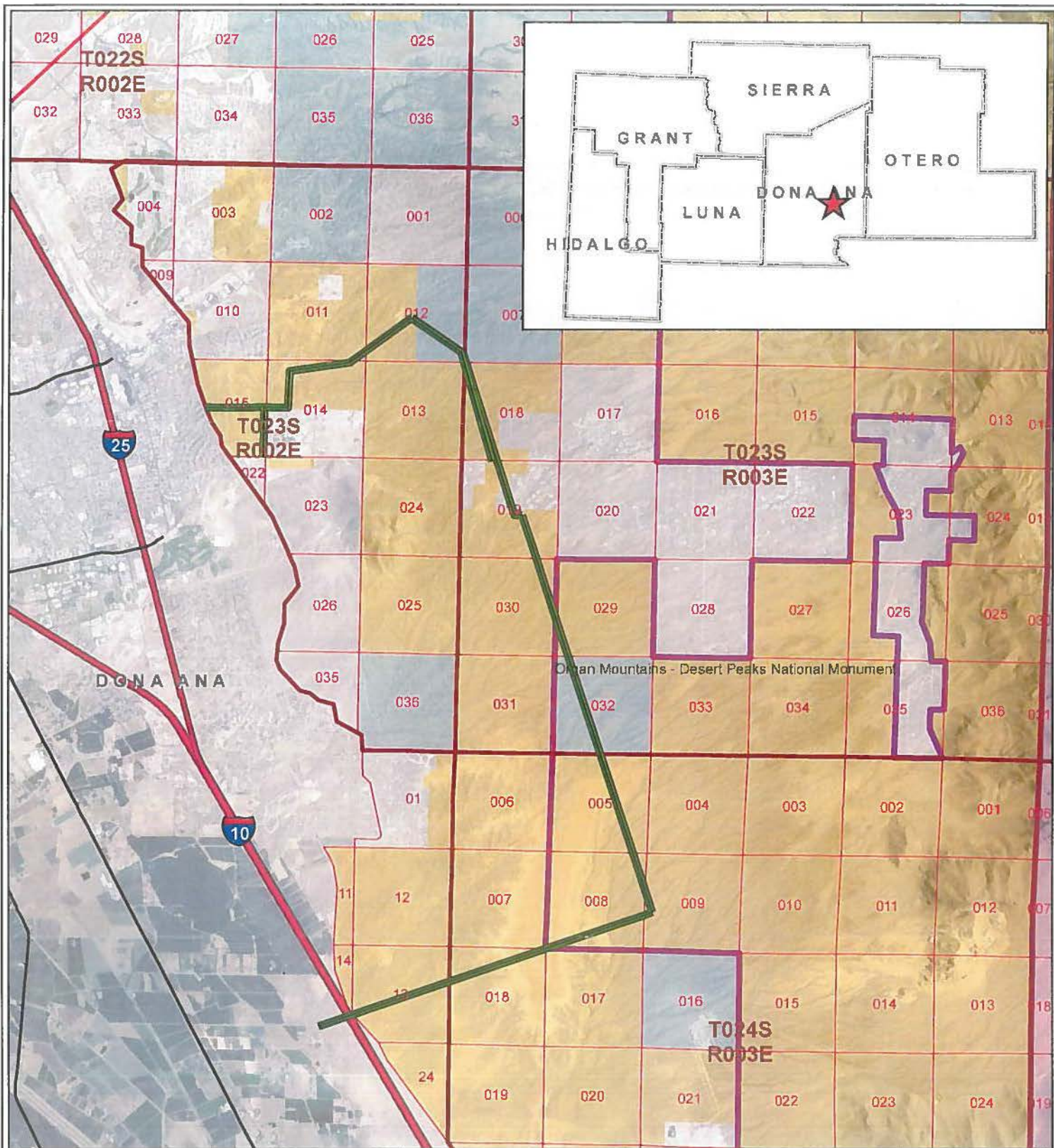
Thank you for your interest in the management of public land.

Sincerely,

/s/ Bill Childress

Bill Childress
District Manager

1 Enclosure



EPEC Project Area

BLM GIS

Las Lunas District Office



No warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management as to the accuracy, reliability, or completeness of these data for individual use or aggregate use with other data, or for purposes not intended by the BLM. Spatial information may not meet National Map Accuracy Standards. This information is subject to change without notification.

Project Area
Counties

Transportation
Interstate Highway
US Highway
State Highway

Townships (static)
Sections (static)
National Monument

Surface Ownership
BLM
Dept. of Defense

Private
State

0 1.5 3 Miles

1:85,000



**APPENDIX B.
PUBLIC SCOPING PERIOD 1
COMMENTS**

Appendix B. Scoping Period 1 Comments

Submission ID	Entity Type	Submittal Method	Comment No.	Comment
1044-R1-1	I	E	1	We are writing as concerned residents of Talavera with regard to the proposed El Paso Electric power station. The current proposal will negatively impact property values for the residents of the Organ Mesa subdivision & further obstruct/destroy the beauty of the Organ Mtns with a massive power station.
1044-R1-1	I	E	2	In addition to being residents, we are local Realtors & fully understand the impact of this proposal. If the new substation is required, we respectfully suggest it be built on the north side of Dripping Springs Rd (across from proposed location) where no residential housing currently exists. Ideally, it should be pushed back as far as possible from the road. Thank you for the opportunity to voice our concerns.
1272-R1-1	I	E	1	I have been trying to find a link to maps and other information regarding the proposed 3.7 acre substation project. Could you advise us of a link that would allow us to see the footprint of the proposed project and perhaps some images such as renderings of the installation?
1341-R1-1	I	E	1	Wondering if this can't go up further from the mountains.....where it isn't so obtrusive for the view of our beautiful mountains.
1348-R1-1	I	E	1	WHY do you think you need to build a substation there, near the entrance to the Organ Peaks National Monument? I understand it is BLM land, so it is not as though it is already yours and you have to figure out something to do with it.
1279-R1-1	I	E	1	IF this project stays within the footprint that is shown, the only problem we see is the damage to Dripping Springs Road due to the heavy equipment. We would hope that the repairs to the road be made as needed - NOT at the end of the project.
1345- R1-1	I	E	1	Locating it where it is proposed (on the other side (West) of the existing gas line, abutting the new Organ Mesa subdivision) would lower property values for the new subdivision and be an eyesore for our entire Talavera area and for all the visitors going to the Organ Mountains.
1345- R1-1	I	E	2	would like to suggest that it be located across the street where there is no development going on or at least locate it to the East of the existing power substation.
1346-R1-1	I	E	1	Would it be feasible to move the proposed sub station to the north side of Dripping springs about 400 yds on the other side of the hill so it won't be such an eyesore.
1347-R1-1	I	E	1	As a resident of Organ Mesa Ranch Subdivision Phase 1, I have no problems or plan to file any protests in regards to the proposed new El Paso Electric Substation, planned for Dripping Springs Road.
1347-R1-1	I	E	2	The building of the 1600 ft wall around the new substation is a good idea. I see no reason for El Paso Electric to make any proposed construction changes for 1 or 2 residents.
1347-R1-1	I	E	3	The substation will benefit future growth for both residential and commercial properties.
1347-R1-1	I	E	4	Since my home will have some visibility of the new substation, the new substation will "not" cause any of residents in the Organ Mesa Ranch Phase 1 any problems or speculation over the loss of home values. As a resident of Las Cruces for 42 years, El Paso Electric has always been progressive in planning for future growth for our City and County.
1349-R1-1	I	E	1	Some of you reading this may wonder why the American people are so terribly angry at government - at all levels. This is a good example. Aren't you people capable of seeing? Can't you reasonably judge that a large substation such as proposed will certainly reduce property values in the immediate area? The old (small) substation was bad enough.
1349-R1-1	I	E	2	Does the county have access to land a half mile north of Dripping Springs Rd. on which to build? This would be just as close to the high voltage transmissions lines as the old substation now is. Is it too much to ask that the county planners use a little common sense in their planning, or are you just seeing what you can get away with?
1350-R1-1	I	E	1	Please help. Please consider taking action to prevent the Dona Ana County Government's consideration to allow El Paso Electric to put a monstrosity of a power plant sub-station on the only paved road leading to our beautiful state treasure, the Organ Mountains Desert Peaks National Monument! Imagine this: the excitement of visitors as they finally close in on the Monument they've been seeing on their drive towards for the last hour(s), when suddenly, as they round "A Mountain" , finally passing the last barrier between them and the magnificent and powerful beauty of the mountains, when they are affronted by a dystopian-like erector-set of steel, wires and transformers. They won't be gasping at the beauty; they'll likely be gasping in disbelief that the people who live here could allow such total disregard for the natural beauty of the place in which they live. First impression set.
1350-R1-1	I	E	2	Please help us citizens who so love the blessing of this beautiful place to demand El Paso Electric to locate that sub-station off somewhere where humans don't live or recreate (off on the West Mesa?). Surely they can find a better location of we only pressure them to think smarter and consider the residents and visitors. They can do better.

Appendix B. Scoping Period 1 Comments

Submission ID	Entity Type	Submittal Method	Comment No.	Comment
1350-R1-1	I	E	3	Southern New Mexico is struggling enough with trying to bring in recreational tourists and active retirees to relocate here.
1350-R1-1	I	E	4	The country seems bent on destroying the quality of life out in the more affluent active retiree areas of Las Cruces, particularly the Talavera area. Recently us citizens have had to fight the Country planning commission from allowing trailer/mobile homes out here as well as an effort to put a gas station/fast food business out here. The fight has been pretty relentless, but enough citizens rally and speak at public hearings to veto it...for a while. The Commissioners seem to come around to believing that there is a uniqueness to the neighborhood's quality of life and the proposed zoning would affect that enough to disallow it. But it only takes the majority vote to shift and things could start going another way. We continue to fight to keep our community unique and out home values stable. It's tough, though.
1350-R1-1	I	E	5	Please help us protect this national treasure and "gem" of Southern New Mexico. And thank you for all your work for our beautiful state.
1351-R1-1	I	E	1	I'm opposed to El Paso Electric's proposal to build a substation on BLM land off Dripping Springs Road. We often hike and run in the Organ Mountains Desert Peaks National Monument and there is already more than enough development in the surrounding area. I'm sure they can find some private land somewhere else.
1350-R1-1	I	E	1	Oh, please don't put a Substation in Talavera. That would be terrible for my family. There are plenty of places available AWAY from where people live.
1352-R1-1	I	E	1	I wanted to share some information about the process and timing of BLM's consideration of El Paso Electric's proposal to build a new substation out beyond Tortugas Mountain. (Under current plans, it would stand south of Dripping Springs Road, a little southwest of the location of the current and smaller substation; the new one would be about the same height as the old one but about 400 by 400 square feet.) The current public comment period will end March 3rd. However, BLM plans to send out a second letter, which will include a better map and a little more information, and a comment period will follow that letter, although that period may not be a full 30 days. This is EPE's proposal. It does not yet have BLM's approval. EPE will need to submit an Environmental Assessment. Once the EA has been submitted, there will be a further 30-day period for public comment; in addition, a variety of BLM experts (realty, range, cultural, biological) will comment before BLM makes a final decision. The purpose of the current comment period, as well as the further period following the next letter, is to inform EPE so that public concerns may be addressed in the EA and possibly affect the project's final design. Further, if BLM ultimately approves the new substation, it can require mitigation measures and/or stipulations.
1352-R1-1	I	E	2	Comments so far have concerned the view. BLM personnel this week went to various points in various neighborhoods and other vantage points and concluded that it will not be visible from most points; but it will abut a residential neighborhood. The hilliness of the immediate area helps mitigate the visual impact somewhat from many areas, but not from the immediately adjacent neighborhood.
1352-R1-1	I	E	3	Dripping Springs Road is the gateway to the Organ Mountains, now part of a National Monument. For those concerned about how the new substation will affect the view as folks approach the mountains, I'd note that since (under the current plan) the substation is south of Dripping Springs, and a little further from the road than the current one, it would not impact the view or the ambiance nearly so much as if it were north of Dripping Springs and near the road.
1352-R1-1	I	E	4	There is much I don't know about this proposal, including whether or not the need is sufficiently strong and immediate to justify the impact, particularly to folks living right near it.
1352-R1-1	I	E	5	I will certainly submit a brief comment suggesting that to the extent technically feasible, EPE should excavate so that this thing is recessed into the ground to minimize the visual impact.

Appendix B. Scoping Period 1 Comments

Submission ID	Entity Type	Submittal Method	Comment No.	Comment
1353-R1-1	I	E	1	This proposed location is a complete disaster as far as its effects on the community of homeowners living in the Talavera/Desert Mirage/Organ Mesa Ranch neighborhoods. It is a completely unacceptable location, and there is no reason to locate it in this spot. It will destroy views for many homeowners who have invested their life savings in their dream retirement homes. Not only will it block or intrude on precious views of the Organ Mountains, which are rare and to be treasured and protected, but it will turn a beautiful quiet and well-designed residential desert neighborhood into an industrial looking blight. The covenants and zoning of the residential home sites East of A Mountain were carefully written for each neighborhood to enhance property values and quality of life. A three to five acre electrical substation on the main road into this area which directly adjoins and butts up against existing homes is an arrogant plan which does not take into account the damage it will do to homeowners.
1353-R1-1	I	E	2	I am pro-growth, and a developer and builder. I understand the need for El Paso Electric to plan for the future to be able to serve all of us with power. I understand that the utility company will need a new sub-station. It is the proposed location which is completely unacceptable.
1353-R1-1	I	E	3	There are a number of areas adjoining or near to the transmission lines which are not near existing homes that could be used. Commissioner Rawson has suggested several sites which would be more hidden and not affect homeowners, and would still meet electric company needs.
1353-R1-1	I	E	4	I would also like to mention that the letter that went out inviting comments on the proposed location was very vague. It did not locate the proposed substation on the map, did not give a good description of what the substation would look like, and did not show its size or height or mention similar substations which interested parties could go and inspect.
1353-R1-1	I	E	5	Mr. Childress, Mr. Haywood, and Ms. Montez, I urge you in the strongest language possible to reject this proposed location. El Paso Electric needs to work harder to locate their new substation in an area that will not harm so many people and destroy their property values and quality of life.
1354-R1-1	I	E	1	The El Paso Electric Company has applied for a lease of additional land adjacent to the "Temporary" substation that they installed adjacent to Dripping Springs Road and the residential subdivision called Organ Mesa Ranch, Phase 3. I am protesting their lack of planning and rudeness in placing this substation adjacent to current residential development when there are so many other options available.
1354-R1-1	I	E	2	I am a partner and developer of the Organ Mesa Ranch Subdivisions and I understand the need for additional electrical capacity for this growing area. The EPEC is a company that does not consult with the neighborhood stakeholders when they make their plans. As developer of a 440 acre tract of land called Organ Mesa Ranch we initiated community meetings and invited all the stakeholders in Talavera to attend and comment before we did our planning and development. When we applied for our permits for the subdivision we received no resistance from the stakeholders because we had already incorporated their 20 item concern list into the plans and accommodated their needs and concerns. EPEC has done none of that and assumes that the opinions of the residents are of no value.
1354-R1-1	I	E	3	I am requesting that the BLM DENY their easement for the permanent substation because they are going to be 1) damaging the area economically by building an ugly substation right in people's back yards and 2) building the substation next to a major highway and building a noxious and ugly station adjacent to a sensitive archaeological dig site and 3) building a large substation with additional electrical fields adjacent to existing residential homes. They are building this site on the top of a hill and a 6' fence will not hide the wires from view.

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Submission ID	Entity Type	Submittal Method	Comment No.	Comment
1354-R1-1	I	E	4	I am requesting that the BLM give them a easement on property a half of a mile to three fourths of a mile to the North of the highway adjacent to their high voltage right of way where the substation will not be within the public view. It may not be quite as economically feasible for them but they do have plenty of money and they can afford it.
1355-R1-1	I	E	1	I am a Talavera resident and want to express my opinion about the placement of the Talavera Substation as proposed in the EA. It will be an eyesore unlike no other in the Talavera area. It will impact the view of the Organ Mountain National Monument as one drives toward it. It will lower property values in the adjacent neighborhoods. There must be an alternate proposed site that will satisfy the needs while impacting the Organ Mountain viewshed.
1356-R1-1	I	E	1	Having gone through three meetings regarding possible changes in the CDC codes that could have altered the appearance and value of my beautiful home in Talevera, I am horrified to learn of this new threat to where I live. Again we moved from Florida to get away from congestion, & industrial areas close to home... we struggled to achieve living in this beautiful wilderness that has the perfect balance of community & wildlife. We worried for months you would take this away with home trailers, smaller parcels of land & prefab homes. Now this! A substation would be catastrophic for this area.. I cannot even believe I have to send this email. Home values would plummet.. I cannot imagine the impact on wildlife and visually this is a nightmare...
1357-R1-1	I	E	1	Please listen to Organ Mt residents and Talavera residents about where you build the new substation. Across the street to the east where no development is going on would make so much more sense. Please be sensitive to existing homes and residences and land values.
1358-R1-1	I	E	1	I appreciate the job El Paso Electric performs in supplying electricity every day. The consistent provision of power to everyone in the county is a huge job and is done very well and very professionally. I appreciate the necessity of having substations as growth requires and appreciate that we cannot have growth without them.
1358-R1-1	I	E	2	With that said, it would be much better to locate the Talavera substation at some location where future development would be aware of it's presence before developers and homeowners invest in view corridors and premium properties rather than after. Locating a substation in an area that will degrade property value should only be done in cases where alternative locations are not available. It would seem to an electrically uneducated layman that this may not be the current case. It would be much appreciated by those people with property value to lose if EPEC could locate the substation somewhere out of the way where the substation location could be clearly foreseen and planned for in future development plans.
1359-R1-1	I	E	1	I am writing as a concerned resident who lives in the Talavera community in Las Cruces, NM. We were informed that El Paso Electric has proposed a substation to be erected on 4 acres off of Dripping Springs road. I am concerned about the location of this substation. This is directly adjacent to residential homes. Besides the aesthetic annihilation of this strikingly beautiful natural area, I am concerned about the safety of the residents who live right there as well as the neighbors up the road. No one knows for certain what the ramifications of living near these high energy emitting structures, but we do know that they can sometimes explode. Dripping Springs is a high traffic road
1359-R1-1	I	E	2	There are other locations that would work for the substation that are safer for the community. I would ask that you please consider and direct El Paso Electric to go out into the desert, off the main road and away from the homes of families living nearby. I don't know if the current location is being proposed because of cost or ease of transportation, but El Paso Electric needs to protect the very people who are required to purchase their electricity from them. Please work with them to find a better location.
1360-R1-1	I	E	1	One of our Organ Mesa residents has already been to the BLM office and suggested that it be located across the street where there is no development going on. I would concur with that suggestion, or at least locate it to the East of the existing power substation.
1360-R1-1	I	E	2	Locating it where they are proposing would lower property values for the new subdivision and be an eyesore for our entire area.

Appendix B. Scoping Period 1 Comments

Submission ID	Entity Type	Submittal Method	Comment No.	Comment
1361-R1-1	B	E	1	have a substitute idea that I would like to run by you. Could you please call or email me. There are a few larger pieces of land available on Las Alturas Blvd that are zoned Industrial that I can present for your consideration. Please do not push this through in our Talavera neighborhood without considering other possibilities. I have heard that you like Highway 10 visibility for your projects, so you maybe pleased with these possibilities. These could be for your consideration for a future solar farm or for this Talavera project.
1165-R1-1	I	E	1	I believe that the Talavera substation should be placed on the north side of Dripping Springs Road, where there is currently no development, rather than on the south side. On the south side it will be an eyesore for residents. If the substation is placed south of Dripping Springs Road, there will be long term resentment against both El Paso Electric and the BLM for a bad choice of placement. It is in the best interests of all involved to maintain good relations between the residents, the electricity supplier, and BLM.
1363-R1-1	I	E	1	This letter is to voice my opinion regarding the proposed expansion of the El Paso Electric Substation in Talavera. I am the most affected property owner by an expansion of the station in Talavera because it is literally in my back yard. Three years ago, I built a home near the corner of Sheep Springs and Dripping Springs, not two weeks after I completed the home the first substation started construction directly to the east of my house. It reduced the value of my brand-new home by \$50,000 and I was forced to drastically reduce the asking price because of the huge eye sore that sprung up in the view line of the Organ Mountains. I of coarse did not want to live in that home anymore because of the terrible obstruction to the view of the mountains that the station created so I built another home further to the South in the same subdivision to live in where it would only cause minor visual impact to my new property. I sold my home and moved because of the last station that sprung up, now my new home which I thought had a protected view will have the same obstructions showing up in my view. I lost \$50,000 with the first station and now I am facing a reduction of at least another \$50,000 on my new home if this station expands as planned.
1363-R1-1	I	E	2	am not against development however isn't there another location that El Paso Electric could build this station that wouldn't affect tax payer's neighborhoods, property values and their views?
1363-R1-1	I	E	3	My ideas for location of the substation: Near Centennial High School- The school already looks like a prison it would barely even be noticed.
1363-R1-1	I	E	4	My ideas for location of the substation: The gravel pit near A Mountain- put it in a hole.
1363-R1-1	I	E	5	My ideas for location of the substation: Eddie Binns has 160 acres with ridges and hills near Sonoma and Dripping Springs, could the station be built there and hidden behind some of the natural terrain? Buy land from him I am sure he would sell 5-10 acres.
1363-R1-1	I	E	6	My ideas for location of the substation: North of the proposed location? If the station was built on the North side of Dripping Springs it would not be in the direct view line of the Organ Mesa Ranch neighborhood. The further North the better.
1365-R1-1	i	E	1	My wife and I built and own a home at 5084 Silver King Road. We previously built a home on Lost Padre Mine Road. The attraction that the Soledad Canyon area holds for us, and many others, is the open desert and tremendous mountain views. I understand that growth of this neighborhood and the City of Las Cruces require infrastructure improvements, like the proposed new substation. However, I am frequently amazed at where utilities are permitted to place such improvements, with seemingly no regard for existing property owners. The utilities concerns are cost and proximity. The current land and home owners concerns are land values, views and health.
1365-R1-1	I	E	2	Please put the interests of the people who live here (Soledad Canyon, Desert Mirage, Organ Mesa Ranch and Miner's Ridge) before the interests of the utility. The pass the costs on to us anyway.
1366-R1-1	I	E	1	The proposed location of the EA substation will seriously impact property values in the Organ Mesa 3 subdivision.
1366-R1-1	I	E	2	There are numerous locations in the general area that would accomodate such a project without damaging property values or causing distractions for visitors to the monument.

Appendix B. Scoping Period 1 Comments

Submission ID	Entity Type	Submittal Method	Comment No.	Comment
1367-R1-1	I	E	1	Just looking at your Substation on Lohman Ave, here in Las Cruces keeps me the creeps. Are you planning to put something like that in Talavera? You will destroy the neighborhood pricing structure. People won't buy, and people won't be able to sell. I thought you folks had better common sense than that. I am going to tell all my neighbors to be at the next planning meeting, and voice their objections in unison. It is a crime what you are doing. You need to come up with another plan that is landscaped and is pleasing to the eye. It will be a sad day in Talavera if you put a Lohman like Substation up. You will never hear the end of it.
1289-R1-1	I	E	1	I believe a less conspicuous, less intrusive location could be found for this substation. I oppose the proposed location on Dripping Springs Rd. There is a lot of open land north of Dripping Springs that would be far less intrusive to the residential areas along the road.
1369-R1-1	I	E	1	As a property owner in proximity of the proposed Talavera Substation, I am opposed to its construction in a residential area. Surely there is a less impactful location.
1369-R1-1	I	E	2	If construction must considered at the proposed location, there needs to be significant aesthetic shielding to minimize impact on the community.
1253-R1-1	I	E	1	The location of the proposed construction of a new much larger substation, just south of Dripping Springs Road and east of "A" Mountain, appears to be very close to a current residential sub-division. A large power substation would be better located to the east of the current substation on either the north or southern side of Dripping Springs Road.
1253-R1-1	I	E	2	Will the maintenance funding which is discussed in your letter to local residents in anyway be used to repair damage to Dripping Springs Road caused during the construction of the new substation?
1371-R1-1	I	E	1	I'm sure we need this large substation for future growth and I support the construction of one but I think the planned placement is a travesty for residents, landowners and developers of Organ Mesa Ranch Phase Three (OMR3) which lies just west of the proposed site. Let me say that I do not live in OMR3 and will not be able to see the new facility from where I live. Therefore I'm not directly affected. However, the planned placement would be devastating to the property values of those in OMR3. This facility which would be three times the size of the small unit currently adjacent to Dripping Springs Road would be an eyesore right in the face of houses in OMR3. It would create a serious drawback to selling houses or lots in that development and greatly reduce the value of the investments property owners have made.
1371-R1-1	I	E	2	I have heard the proposal to locate the new substation across Dripping Springs Road to the North. This should not involve significant additional expense as it is close to the existing substation and power lines.
1371-R1-1	I	E	3	An even better solution in my opinion would be to locate the new substation along the power lines several miles south of the existing substation where it would be in the desert completely away from residential areas and the approach to the new national monument. I don't think the Vado quarry would be similarly impacted with a large substation nearby. Certainly not to the extent that the proposed location would injure property owners in OMR3.
1371-R1-1	I	E	4	Finally, the newly designated national monument has been touted as a major tourist draw bringing significant revenue into Las Cruces. Millions have been spent on a beautiful new paved section of Dripping Springs Road to make the monument more accessible and attractive to tourists. The sight of a huge power substation adjacent to the main access route to the monument creates an eyesore detracting from our new tourist attraction. For the sake of OMR3 residents and property owners as well as Las Cruces' efforts to increase tourism revenue, I urge you to seriously consider relocating the new substation as suggested in red above.
1372-R1-1	I	E	1	I vehemently object to the proposed site of El Paso Electric's new substation. With all the miles and miles of empty BLM land out there why place this eyesore right along side the road near the entrance of the entire Talavera community? We work hard up here to preserve the natural look of the area and pride ourselves with being the steward of the Organ Mountains Monument entrance area. Please help us preserve this area and place this industrial site somewhere out of sight.
1373-R1-1	I	E	1	While I understand the need for the new electrical substation, the members of the Talavera community have concerns. Specifically, the substation being located so closely to housing developments. We are requesting that the location be changed to across the street of Dripping Springs, where there is no development going on. Please look into this possibility and weigh the costs. The people of Talavera have invested time and money in their housing so that we may enjoy the natural beauty of our area. To mar this would be devastating to our community and would have a considerable effect on the economics of the area.

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Submission ID	Entity Type	Submittal Method	Comment No.	Comment
1374-R-1-1	I	E	1	I realize the need for El Paso Electric to expand and upgrade their equipment to meet increasing demand.
1374-R-1-1	I	E	2	However I fail to see the need to build this proposed substation at the proposed location.
1374-R-1-1	I	E	3	The power lines that run through that area have a service road, could not this substation be located off the north side of Dripping Springs and some distance from the roadway and subdivision?
1375-R1-1	I	E	1	Please place it across dripping springs on the north side, or east of organ Mesa development. Thanks.
1375-R1-2	I	E	1	Please do not allow proposed expansion of existing substation as it will negatively impact the environment for residents, animal life, and visitors.
1376-R1-1	I	E	1	am opposed to the current location proposed and do not understand why this station can not be put on the north side of Dripping Springs road due north of the existing station.
1377-R1-1	I	E	1	I very much dislike the value of my property--home and land-- being substantially reduced by a highhanded corporation, EP Electric in this case, that is determined to needlessly destroy the beauty of this area for its own selfish purposes.
1378-R1-1	I	E	1	I don't think my husband and I are in the minority when I say that we do NOT want a substation in the Talavera neighborhood. Not only would it be an eyesore in this beautiful area near the Organ Mountains, but would probably have an environmental impact on the birds and wildlife in our area.
1378-R1-1	I	E	2	Many people come to enjoy the unspoiled vistas in this area and use it for recreation. Please protect the natural beauty of this area.
1379-R1-1	I	E	1	While I understand that upgrades to the substation are necessary and will be a good thing for the El Paso Electric customers in the area I find the plan to site it directly adjacent to an existing residential development to be a very poor choice.
1379-R1-1	I	E	2	I'm sure the property owners in Organ Mesa were not expecting to have a new substation with a huge fence plopped down directly behind their homes. Surely with the thousands of acres of empty land east of Las Cruces in the general vicinity of the proposed new substation a better location could be found. One that would work for El Paso Electric AND not have a negative effect on the residents of the area along the accompanying reduced property values the substation will cause.
1379-R1-1	I	E	3	I have every confidence you can make a better choice for all parties involved.
1380-R1-1	I	E	1	Talavera area using less electric now than it did 5 years ago, just drive around the area a you will see more than 50% of the home are solar powered.
1380-R1-1	I	E	2	We the expansion of the substation is also a bigger fire hazard and we do not have a part time fire department that can handle that, the area doesn't have enough fire hydrants to even protect the homes that here now, closest one to my home is 3/8 of a mile away and none ate the substation location.
1380-R1-1	I	E	3	First the county tried to put an RV park here and now your trying to cram a new substation in on the Talavera residents. We do not need the power here.
1381-R1-1	I	E	1	I would like to express my concerns with the newly proposed substation for El Paso Electric on Soledad Canyon Road. In my opinion, this is not the correct location for that substation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - creates a hazard in the community - creates an eyesore for all residents - disrupts the viewscape for the National Monument - reduces property values throughout the area - especially for those near the site.

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Submission ID	Entity Type	Submittal Method	Comment No.	Comment
1381-R1-1	I	E	2	I would suggest it is relocated either to a more industrial location (near the high school)? or further from the National Monument and the Talavara area.
1382-R1-1	I	E	1	We are residences of Organ Mesa Ranch Phase 3. We constructed our home in 2008 and it currently has the highest assessed value in phase 3. The thought of having an unsightly commercial appearing proposed substation in close proximity of our home and distorting our view of the Organ Mountains is highly distressing.
1382-R1-1	I	E	2	It appears to me that El Paso Electric has selected this site as the most convenient site for them to develop and service resulting in the least economic effect to their earnings.
1382-R1-1	I	E	3	The project could be relocated either to the north or south on the transmission line without negatively effecting a high density upscale residential development, resulting in reduced property values and lower property tax revenues for the public sector.
1382-R1-1	I	E	4	Mr. Childress, Mr. Haywood and Ms Montez, we urge you to reject this proposed location.
1383-R1-1	I	E	1	No to the Lohman electric facility.
1384-R1-1	I	E	1	Along with many of my neighbors, my husband and I oppose an ELP substation near our homes. Please do not allow this to happen.

APPENDIX C.
PUBLIC SCOPING PERIOD 2
NOTIFICATION LETTER AND MEETING MATERIALS



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Las Cruces District Office
1800 Marquess Street
Las Cruces, New Mexico 88005
www.blm.gov/nm/lascruces



In Reply Refer To:
1792 (L0310)

JUN 06 2017

Dear Interested Party:

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Las Cruces District Office invites you to participate in a public process to gather input regarding the preparation of an Environmental Assessment (EA) for right-of-way (ROW) applications submitted by El Paso Electric (EPE). The BLM Las Cruces District Office received a Plan of Development (Plan) and associated new and amended applications for ROWs for a proposed new permanent substation and maintenance of 10.4 miles of existing distribution lines (Talavera Substation Project, or project) in Doña Ana County, New Mexico.

This letter invites you to attend an informational public meeting and initiates an additional external public scoping period for the project. The BLM initially held a scoping period in the Spring of 2017 and based on feedback from the public, identified additional alternative locations for the substation. This second scoping period is to invite public feedback on the additional alternative substation locations. The BLM will host an informational public meeting at the following date and location:

Date: Monday, July 17, 2017
Time: 5:30-7:30 p.m.; Presentation at 6:00 p.m.
Location: Ventana Room
New Mexico Farm and Ranch Heritage Museum
4100 Dripping Springs Road, Las Cruces, NM

Project Overview

EPE has identified a need to add an additional permanent substation to the electrical power grid that supports the City of Las Cruces and surrounding communities in southern New Mexico. This new substation will convert 115-kilovolt (kV) electricity to 24-kV electricity for distribution into the power grid for consumption. To meet current and future demand, EPE would construct the new Talavera Substation and make improvements to the distribution feeder line grid.

The Proposed Action is located on BLM-managed public land 3 miles east of the City of Las Cruces (see enclosed map). The proposed six-position ring bus substation would be built adjacent to an existing temporary substation located off Dripping Springs Road. The project would also include maintenance on 10.4 miles (with a 50-foot wide ROW) of existing 24-kV distribution line to replace and/or add infrastructure to upgrade these lines and construct

2.2 miles of new 24-kV distribution lines. The proposed Talavera Substation would be connected to the existing Salopek to Arroyo 115-kV transmission line and the existing distribution lines associated with this project.

Applicant-committed measures and the restoration plan, included in EPE's Plan, are part of the proposed project design. The applicant-committed measures incorporate applicable best management practices and environmental protection measures, which are industry- or agency-recommended construction methods that are routinely implemented to minimize impacts to resources. The proposed project would continue to consolidate utility infrastructure and reduce additional resource impacts.

Alternatives

The BLM has considered several other options for the location of the substation, based on public feedback from the initial scoping period (see enclosed map). The BLM vetted if the options would meet the BLM's purpose and need. The BLM then vetted these options with EPE engineers to determine feasibility of carrying them forward as an alternative to be analyzed in the EA. After this screening process, in addition to the applicant's proposed site, the BLM has identified four other potential substation locations.

How to Comment

Public comments on this proposed project will be accepted until August 17, 2017. Comments can be submitted by one of the following methods:

- § File your comments electronically by sending them to:
BLM_NM_LCDO_Comments@blm.gov. Please include "Talavera Substation EA" in the subject line of your email.
- § Mail your comments to: BLM Las Cruces District Office
ATTN: Talavera Substation EA
1800 Marquess Street
Las Cruces, NM 88005
- § Comments will be accepted at the public meeting on designated comment forms which will be provided.

For all comments submitted, please identify whether you are submitting comments as an individual or as the designated spokesperson on behalf of an organization.

Before including your address, phone number, email address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, be advised that your entire comment—including your personal identifying information—may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold from public review your personal identifying information, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

If you have any questions regarding the proposed project, or would like to be added or removed from the mailing list, contact Paula Montez, Project Lead, at (575) 525-4387 or via email at pmontez@blm.gov. Thank you for your interest in the management of public land.

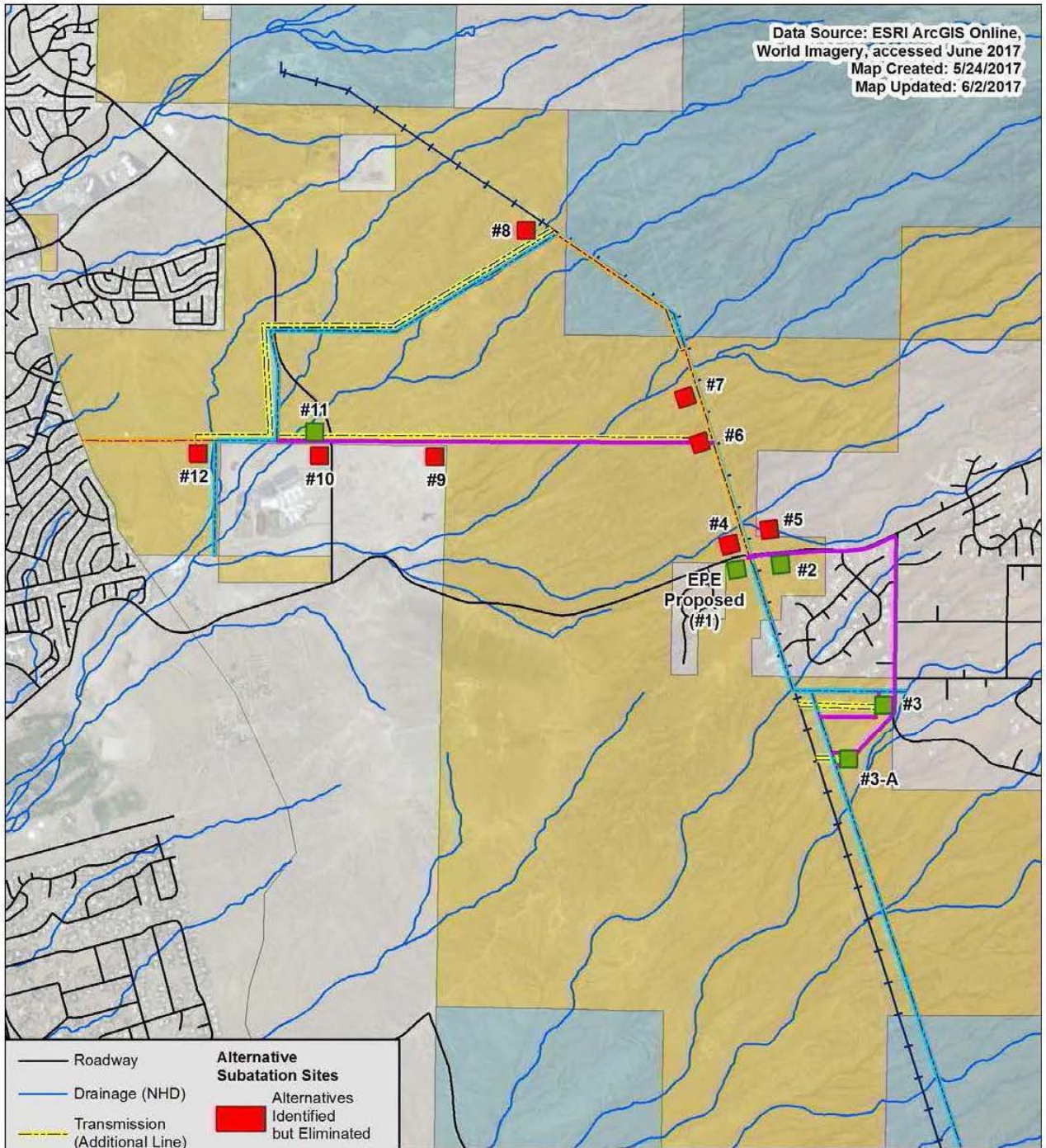
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bill Childress".

Bill Childress
District Manager

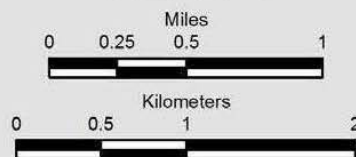
1 Enclosure

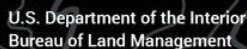
Data Source: ESRI ArcGIS Online,
World Imagery, accessed June 2017
Map Created: 5/24/2017
Map Updated: 6/2/2017



- Roadway
— Drainage (NHD)
— Transmission (Additional Line)
— Salopek to Arroyo 115kV
— Distribution (Additional Line)
Project Distribution Lines
— Existing Line
— New Line
- Alternative Substation Sites**
Alternatives Identified but Eliminated
Alternatives to be Analyzed Further
- Land Ownership**
BLM
Private
State

Substation Locations Considered



This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

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BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
ATTN: Paula Montez
LAS CRUCES DISTRICT OFFICE
1800 MARQUESS STREET
LAS CRUCES NM 88005



BLM's Frequently Asked Questions

1. ***What is the Talavera Substation and Distribution Project?*** The proposed ***Talavera Substation and Distribution Project*** (Project) is a request by El Paso Electric to construct a new, permanent substation adjacent to the existing temporary substation located 3 miles east of the City of Las Cruces, off Dripping Springs Road. The substation would be built on 3.7 acres (400 x 400 feet). The Project also includes constructing 2.2 miles of new 24-kV distribution lines and would rebuild/upgrade 10.5 miles of existing distribution lines. The entire project is within Dona Ana County, New Mexico.
2. ***Who is proposing the project?*** El Paso Electric is the project proponent. In the fall 2016, El Paso Electric submitted right-of-way applications and a Plan of Development to the BLM Las Cruces District Office i.e., the BLM forms and project information required from applicants requesting to use and/or cross BLM managed lands. The right-of-way applications and Plan of Development describe El Paso Electric's request to utilize BLM lands for constructing the proposed project.
3. ***Why is BLM involved with this Project?*** A majority of the Project is located upon or crosses BLM-managed lands. The BLM has a responsibility under the Federal Land Policy Management Act to respond to an application for right-of-way across BLM lands. Additionally, the BLM's policy is to make public land and its resources available for use and development in order to meet national, regional, and local needs, while concurrently applying the principles of sustained yield for all resources it manages (BLM 1993). The proposed Project would be owned and developed by El Paso Electric and would utilize the public lands under a right-of-way grant of easement.
4. ***Will the BLM analyze the environmental impacts of the Project?***
Yes. Under the National Environmental Policy Act, the BLM is required to study the environmental impacts of the proposed Project. The environmental impacts associated with the proposed Project will be analyzed and disclosed in an Environmental Assessment. The public is encouraged to let the BLM know about any concerns that should be addressed in the Environmental Assessment (See #9 below). The BLM's process for assessing right-of-way applications is open and public, and designed to keep all parties informed.
5. ***Would all of the project be constructed on BLM lands?*** No. Some of the existing distribution lines are proposed for upgrades cross State and private lands, in addition to BLM-managed surface. The substation is proposed on BLM-managed lands.
6. ***Does the BLM have authority to grant a right-of-way across non-federal lands?***
No. El Paso Electric's application is for a right-of-way across BLM-managed public lands only. Although the Environmental Assessment will analyze the potential impacts of the entire proposed project (including

impacts on state and private lands), El Paso Electric will work with other landowners directly for easements across non-BLM lands.

7. ***How have residents adjacent to the Project and the general public been made aware of the Project?*** Per the public scoping recommendations of the National Environmental Policy Act, the BLM has released announcements about the Project and public scoping comment period via the BLM Las Cruces District Office website; letters mailed to interested parties and parcel owners in the vicinity of the project, agencies, non-governmental organizations and elected officials within the project vicinity and to those that have expressed an interest in the subject area; and a press release was published in local newspapers and distributed to local media contacts.
8. ***How is this comment period different than the earlier comment period?*** The BLM initiated a formal 30-day public scoping period in January-February of 2017. A majority of the comments received during the initial public comment period were related to the location of the proposed substation. Based on these public comments, the BLM has identified alternative locations for the substation for public consideration. Hence the purpose of this second scoping period is to invite the public to review and comment on the additional alternative substation locations.
9. ***How can the public give comments or concerns about this Project to the BLM?*** The public is encouraged to submit comments by or before the end of the comment period on August 17, 2017. Comments can be submitted at the public scoping meeting, by hand delivery to the BLM Las Cruces District Office, or by email or regular mail, addressed to:

Email: **BLM_NM_LCDO_Comments@blm.gov**
Mail: BLM Las Cruces District Office
 ATTN: Talavera Substation EA
 1800 Marquess Street
 Las Cruces, NM 88005
10. ***When will the Draft Environmental Assessment be released and how can the public stay up-to-date and informed about this Project?*** The Draft Environmental Assessment is scheduled to be released for public review and comment in late 2017. Signing in at one of the public scoping meetings or sending in a comment will add you to the mailing list for this Project. You can also request to be added to the mailing list by contacting the BLM at the above email or mailing addresses or by calling Paula Montez, BLM Project Lead at 575-525-4387.

#	Questions posed at the Public Scoping Meeting
1	How many year of growth will the substation and distribution wire serve?
2	Have "non-wire" solutions been considered?
3	What role did the BLM have on the elimination of formerly proposed sites? I.e. was cost to build the only concern without any consideration of environmental impact?
4	Regarding site H3/3A - Due to the scenic beauty of the organ mtns it is a shame the current transmission lines run through the area diminishing the views. If new lines are to be run it is my opinion they need to be under ground despite higher cost. What are your thoughts on this?
5	What is the basis for eliminating Alt sites 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 & 12? Does it relate to maximizing return to EPE shareholders at the public's expense?
6	Can other use this same corridor later?
7	Why don't you build it by the dump?
8	Does this establish a boundary on the east side of Las Cruces?
9	Which proposed substation sites would result in the installation of the new distribution lines along Dripping Springs and Soledad Canyon? Why are they needed? It has been noted that EPE installed buried lines elsewhere in the Las Cruces area. Where was this?
10	Will the EPEC site increase in size and profile as the load increases?
11	Why can't the temporary substation be upgraded to permanent?
12	Map shows both "new lines" under "project distribution lines" and "distribution (additional lines)." What is the difference if both are for distribution?
13	What is wrong with location #8?
14	Why was location 8 deleted?
15	Who pays for the repairs to the Dripping Springs road after construction equipment, trucks, etc. tear it up?
16	How big a part will cost play in the overall selection? Is there a budget?
17	Why can European utilities buy their transmission lines and EPE refuses to do so?
18	Will EPEC acquire title to any BLM land?
19	Option #3 & 3A - Why do you need to build new lines along Soledad Canyon Rd north of Fire Station fort these options?
20	Who is doing the EA? When will the Environmental Impact be done? Is there an assumption Talavera is growing? Label the road on your overheads.
21	With proposed alternative sites 3 or 3A - Why have you chosen and alternative that already is developed and will have homes almost directly underneath the lines?
22	None of the substations you showed had homes next to them. Yet, you propose to put a large substation right in the middle of a residential area. Property values will be permanently affected. What is your comment regarding property value?
23	Has the loss of property values been considered in all of the implied assessments?
24	Biological criteria for locating substation in vicinity of homes?
25	Concerns: 1) about view scape and safety. 2) How other area will affect rates
26	Why are sites 3 & 3A showing the transmission lines down Soledad Canyon vs down the existing infrastructure?
27	From 3 & 3A, why can't the new power lines go down the existing large lines?
28	How large will the lines running on Soledad Canyon Rd be? Which side of the road will they run on?
29	Why can't site 3A be on the west side of the transmission lines?
30	On which side of Soledad Canyon do you propose to put the feeder lines?
31	The homes in the Sonoma Ranch subdivision that would have power lines surrounding it if proposed site 3 or 3A are chosen. These are beautiful homes built to take advantage of the views of the Organ MTNS. The property values of those homes will be reduced dramatically. Is it not the responsibility of EPE to be respectful of the homes that are already there?
32	There is inconclusive evidence that high voltage power lines can have negative effects on human health/ Primarily childhood leukemia. In CA the CA Department of Education doesn't allow power lines to be within 100 ft of a school site property. So CA believes there to be a possible negative effects on children's health. With homes already built on Alt 3 and 3A this is a concern for those of us with children. Please have any of the panel members from EPE respond.

#	Questions posed at the Public Scoping Meeting
33	Dave Wallace stated that no decisions have been made, but there were other alternative sites that were discarded. (that was a decision) The site at the junction of the Salopek Line and the transmission line should be resurrected for consideration as an alternative. El Paso Electric dropped the site because of concerns over shooting. If the BLM were to impose a shooting restriction, wouldn't EPE find this site suitable?
34	We have worked several years to get the unified development code (UDC) passed to preclude commercial and industrial building in Talavera. EPE and BLM will crush the concept. Why?
35	What side of Soledad Canyon is your easement? East or West?
36	Why #1 and #2 was presented as alternative? You just said that can not be expanded.
37	Would EPE be willing to reconsider site 8 (the shooting issue site) instead of having to prepare an EI statement?
38	We understand the need for future lines in the area, despite the arroyos, north of Dripping Springs would be better for the residents.
39	How will this substation fit into the flood zone?
40	You're proposing to raise the line right in back of our home which you (EPE) do not care if you ruin out property values. I already have blood related cancer, what are the health implications to us? Do you even know?
41	Alt#11 appears to be most central to your present and future users. Is this accurate? Is the present boundary of the Organ Mtn NP central to your planning?
42	Can the BLM describe - Finding of no significant impact vs decision to prepare and environmental impact statement? How an EI statement would include socioeconomic impact analysis and change the timeline?
43	Will the BLM assessment study consider the negative cost impact of our house values and quality of life? We moved there first. Will you repay us for our declined home values?
44	In deciding on other EPE substation locations decisions, has EPE ever chosen a more expensive option? Please give an example.
45	How or will BLM take into consideration the monument?
46	Wouldn't closing the BLM shooting range clean up the desert by moving shooters to the range off of Rt. 10? Which is kept clean and safe by the city.
47	What percentage of the substation power capacity is directly for Talavera area, and what percentage is for the city of Las Cruces?
48	Can you describe the visible elements and impacts of the 3A option?
49	Did EPE take into account homeowner's property value drops as a result of their chosen sites?
50	For sites 1-3 - Can you provide cost breakdown: 1)How much for new substation? 2)How much for roads/access? 3)How much for added transmission and access lines?
51	Why isn't this information available via the internet?
52	What is the increase in voltage that will be moved down Soledad canyon?
53	Most comments note the additional cost to build. The "low cost" alternatives essentially transfer the cost to residents in lost/reduced home values and degraded views. Why is a cost not assigned to the financial impact to residents?
54	Why is fiscal responsibility more important than people's health? Do you want your family living under/ near these lines?
55	What will EPE do to compensate for ruining our neighborhood? Views/property value. So you can maximize shareholder stock value? And reduce loads from neighborhoods outside of Talavera.
56	Photos of existing substation are noticeably different than the proposed sites. Existing do not have housing in the immediate area. Does fiscal responsibility also apply to your stockholders?
57	Organ Mesa Properties sell for 400K and up. Residents paid a premium for views and underground electric.
58	The last 3 or 4 similar undertaking in El Paso - north west, north east areas - How many were installed underground and how many above?
59	What kind of night lighting will there be?
60	What is the difference between the cost of #1 -#2 sites vs the 4th site #11?
61	The remote sites would suit the community. Why don't you consider the Talavera community and not just your bottom line?
62	To Clay & Bryn - Do you want the concerns you are hearing from residents? They are angry and scared. Address their concerns please.
63	Can you do a combination of underground & above ground lines to be less intrusive?
64	Is there anyone opposed to using site 11 as only site?
65	What are major objections to site #11?
66	Obviously EPE does not understand the Talavera way of life. Had you considered building the power plant near the dump off Sonoma Ranch Blvd?
67	If you choose #2 do you have to have distribution lines down Soledad Canyon? If #11 is chosen is there any distribution lines or transmission line on Soledad or Dripping Springs?
68	With the clear displeasure of residents for a substation that is close to homes, why not have a substation next to the existing power line far away from homes?

**APPENDIX D.
PUBLIC SCOPING PERIOD 2
COMMENTS**

Appendix D. Scoping Period 2 Comments

Submission ID	Entity Type	Submittal Method	Comment No	Comment
1058-R2-1	I	C	1	I strongly believe that the substation should be placed next to the temp substation- the original site propsoed. We need the energy and this would be the most economical and have minimum impact on our electric rates. To route substation away from main power lines is expensive and only means addion[al] power poles and powerlines that are unnecessary if substation is close to [where] it is now.
1151-R2-1	I	C	1	This project will at its current proposed site be directly in my backyard. It's bad enough I have to see the existing switchyard/substation and hear the transformer but I definitely don't want to see a 3 acre site out my back windows.
1151-R2-1	I	C	2	There are several alternative areas available that would not impact me or my neighbors. The proposed site will adversely affect our property values in a negative way. There is BLM land and suggested areas north of our subdivision that would not affect us.
1151-R2-1	I	C	3	I strongly object to the current proposed site and urge BLM to direct El Paso electric to select one of the alternative areas.
1151-R2-1	I	C	4	My wife already has health issues and there are documented studied on high voltage power lines and public health.
1151-R2-2	I	C	1	We are absolutely and totally against this project!! We live directly in front of where you plan to make changes to this substation. We bought our house knowing what was already behind us but did not know or agree to this project.
1151-R2-2	I	C	2	You will also hurt our views by building this substation larger.
1151-R2-2	I	C	3	You will also destroy our property values by completing this project and no one would ever buy our house.
1151-R2-2	I	C	4	I am already dealing with a form of cancer (blood-related) and there are studies showing how lines (power) that are close to houses can cause leukemia and other cancers.
1151-R2-2	I	C	5	You have the ability to build this project somewhere else and that's exactly what you need to do!! This is unacceptable to my health and welfare and we are prepared to take legal action if you do this.
1165-R2-1	I	E	1	First of all I note that most of the growth of Las Cruces is near Highway 70, well to the north of the proposed location of the Talavera Substation. The Talavera district is growing more slowly, and many of the residents are installing solar power, so that the electrical demand of Talavera will increase very slowly. The substation should have been located near highway 70, where the anticipated future growth of electrical demand is greatest.
1165-R2-1	I	E	2	If a site near highway 70 is ruled out, then certainly the most northerly location 11 should be selected. Location 11, near the Centennial High School, is also a more suitable location than locations 1, 2, 3, or 3a, near Dripping Springs Road, because Centennial High School uses more electric energy, especially at night with vast lighting, than all the residences of Talavera.
1165-R2-1	I	E	3	Site 8 should be reconsidered because it is close to the existing high voltage distribution lines and will require construction of fewer feeder lines.
1165-R2-1	I	E	4	All of the suggested locations 1, 2, 3, and 3a involve considerable negative environmental impact. At any location the substation will have a high risk of lightning strikes, with the steel bolts anchoring the substation to the ground being a conduit into the ground for the lightning. Sites 1, 2, and 3 are near an existing oil pipeline. There will be substantial risk of fire in the pipeline following a lightning strike, with the resulting conflagration causing great damage to the substation and perhaps to the main distribution lines, as well as to nearby private homes. This would constitute a public relations nightmare for El Paso Electric. Wisdom suggests it should not be given a chance to happen.

Appendix D. Scoping Period 2 Comments

Submission ID	Entity Type	Submittal Method	Comment No	Comment
1165-R2-1	I	E	5	Any new substation should be built away from existing structures, especially homes. The substation alone will create an eyesore for the residences, and lower their combined property value by millions of dollars. I know of one prospective buyer of an existing home who withdrew because of the threat of the substation eyesore. I expect the permanent loss of value to the owner, because of increased difficulty of sale, is more than one hundred thousand dollars. The standard practice of electric utility companies is to build new facilities well away from existing structures. El Paso Electric certainly exhibits bad ethical behavior by violating standard accepted procedure and building at sites 1, 2, 3, or 3a.
1165-R2-1	I	E	6	There is also a severe negative environmental impact in the form of increase in light pollution. The Organ Mesa Ranch community closest to sites 1, 2, 3, and 3a has an existing requirement that night lighting be in compliance with the standards of the International Dark Sky Association (IDA). Any substation will have a large number of lights on all night long. At sites 1, 2, 3, and 3a this will greatly increase light pollution in a community which was developed with the expectation of minimum light pollution and sky glow. At site 11 the environmental impact of increased light pollution will be less severe. Centennial High School already has many all night outdoor lights, and the additive effect of the substation lights will be less noticeable.
1172-R2-1	I	E	1	We oppose the current chosen location. It is in the middle of homes already built or under construction and would damage our view of the mountains, and, of course our property values.
1172-R2-1	I	E	2	Across the road to the north of Dripping Springs there is open land where such a large substation would be out of the view of those of us living here. After discussion with neighbors who did attend the meeting, we feel like Site 11 would be much preferred.
1178-R2-1	I	E	1	It never ceases to amaze me how items of import to one person can so easily be dismissed and denigrated by another person or organization. Such is the case with respect to the quoted position of the president of EPE in regard to the view of the Organ Mountains and the proposed EPE substation in the Talavera area: "I don't care about the view". One of life's lessons I have learned is that before forming and verbalizing an opinion, it is highly advised to put yourself in the position of the affected party(ies). If, for example, the study involved stringing high voltage and utility lines across the EPE president's view or property, I am confident that his position would be much less cavalier and totally different. The view at any site is a critical component of any environment and should be considered in any environmental review. This is true in spite of the jaded "view" of the EPE president. My position—and I hope that of the BLM and its subcontractor performing this study—is that every mitigation should be considered toward preserving the view of the Organ Mountains as it currently exists. Limiting the ultimate recommendation to one of the sites that do not require running new lines through the view or by installing any required distribution lines underground would both be acceptable and preferred mitigations to other alternatives that spoil the view of these majestic mountains. I hope you agree and hope you will consider the existing view(s) as a critical <u>determinant in your study and conclusions</u> .
1265-R2-1	I	E	1	The only acceptable site for new substation is site 11. Sites 2, 3, and 3A are unacceptable!!!!!!!

Appendix D. Scoping Period 2 Comments

Submission ID	Entity Type	Submittal Method	Comment No	Comment
1272-R2-1	I	E	1	however, with the public meeting scheduled for July 17, 2017, it would be beneficial if more clarity on the options/alternatives could be provided so that members of the public attending the meeting could be better prepared to participate. Would it be possible to access more detailed project descriptions that have been provided to your office by El Paso Electric? Having previously worked on environmental assessments for high-voltage transmission facilities and a number of 425- to 550-MW generating units for other electric utilities, we found that timeliness and clarity of advance information resulted in more informed discussion and questions being asked at public meetings and helped build public confidence and trust. That is why I would appreciate an opportunity to clarify the apparent confusion and not wait to bring it up at the July 17 meeting. Please let me know if, as the June 6 letter seems to indicate, proposed locations #1 and #2 would also trigger the installation of the 2.2 miles of the 24-kV distribution lines on Dripping Springs Road and Soledad Canyon 2 Road and if alternative #1.1 is the only option being considered that would avoid the installation of the distribution lines along Dripping Springs Road and Soledad Canyon Road.
1272-R2-3	I	E	1	Moving the red and blue line symbol under the “Project Distribution Lines” heading would help clarify the applicability of the two closely related symbols since both are project distribution lines but triggered by different circumstances that are not clarified in the June 6 BLM letter. Since the questions I have do not relate to trade secrets or proprietary information, could you provide me with contact information for an EPE engineer familiar with the project. I believe a brief phone conversation could clarify the specifics of the additional distribution line alignments that would apply to alternative sites #3 and #3-A that are of primary concern. Applying the bar scale on the map distributed with the June 6 BLM letter yields an approximate 1.75 mile alignment rather than the 2.2 mile reference in your email and the BLM letter (the new line section between proposed site #1 and the eliminated alternative site #8). That is a significant variation that should be corrected by adjusting the bar scale or the cited distances. Please advise which distance is correct.
1272-R2-5	I	E	1	Can you differentiate between two apparently similar symbols on the map distributed with the June 6 letter? There is a red and blue line symbol referred to as “Distribution (Additional Line)” and what appears to be two sections of an orange line symbol referred to as “New Line” under the heading “Project Distribution Lines.” What is the difference between lines designated as “Distribution (Additional Line)” and “New Line” under the heading “Project Distribution Lines”? Are they possibly distribution lines that differ in voltage? If there is no difference, why not have one consistent symbol to eliminate confusion?
1272-R2-5	I	E	1	the A scoping meeting held in Las Cruces on 7/17/17, it was noted that the current plan is to have SWCA conduct an environmental assessment for the applicant – El Paso Electric Company. It is my understanding that the Swainson’s Hawk (Buteo swainsoni) may be in a protected status. I have attached an image taken on 6/22/17 of what we believe is a Swainson’s Hawk that frequents our small pond. It appears about once a week, drinks and bathes at the edge of the pond and then soars over the general area of Organ Mesa Ranch, Miners Ridge, Talavera and Desert Mirage in search of food. Our pond is located in Organ Mesa Ranch Phases IA and IB, a few blocks southwest of the intersection of Dripping Springs Road and Soledad Canyon Road. We believe the environmental assessment for the Talavera Substation may need to be upgraded to an EIS if the Swainson’s Hawk is in a protected status. The flight paths we have observed for the Swainson’s Hawk that frequents our pond is in the immediate area of the proposed EPE distribution lines associated with potential substation sites 3 and 3-A and the distribution lines and poles could pose a significant threat to the Swainson’s Hawk/Hawks.
1350-R2-1	I	E	1	Yesterday I attended the public forum at the New Mexico Farm and Ranch facility. I had read over the materials prior to attending the forum. Two things are of serious concern to me. One, it seems that an environmental impact study has not yet been done. This study should be done prior to presenting a site location or proposing site locations, not after determining site location.

Appendix D. Scoping Period 2 Comments

Submission ID	Entity Type	Submittal Method	Comment No	Comment
1350-R2-1	I	E	2	Two, it seems that El Paso Electric has as its primary concern to keep the financial costs at a minimum. Although this is any important factor, the financial cost is not the only cost, nor is it primary. There has clearly been public outcry regarding the negative aesthetic effect of both the power lines and the substation. Likewise, we heard at least one mother (who works in the medical profession incidentally) speak of the negative health effects of having power lines next to her home. I did not hear a level of concern expressed by the El Paso Electric representatives for either of these concerns. When a number of attendees attempted to speak to El Paso Electric in terms of financial costs beyond the installation of the substation, that is the negative financial impact due to the reduction of property values, this concern appeared to be dismissed by the El Paso Electric representatives.
1350-R2-1	I	E	3	I did not detect a majority of those in attendance at the public forum to be opposed to the idea of having a substation in the Talavera area, but there was a significant amount of concern for having a substation and power lines that are in such close proximity to existing homes. Those who live in Talavera have chosen to pay extra 2 costs in order to live where we do, and the home are of the upper scale in Dona Ana county. Those costs include the extra financial cost of the homes themselves, the extra commute time, and the inconveniences that occur from living in the desert. It is my suggestion that the BLM refrain from giving a lease for a substation or power lines to El Paso electric for any area in close proximity to existing (or planned) homes. One of the areas that had been considered by El Paso Electric was site #8. Although this site was rejected, perhaps for good reason, I think that it's distance from existing homes would make a similar site something to consider. We have ample open safe in the area that is a distance from the existing homes, and certainly an such an area can be identified. Perhaps after doing an environmental impact study, a new group of proposed sites can emerge that will offer less ire from residents.
1362-R2-1	I	E	1	When I first saw the house in which we currently reside, the thing that impressed me most was the unobstructed view of the Organ Mountains. No high tension lines, no transmission lines, no visible lines in the Organ Mesa Ranch neighborhood whatsoever. The developer had gone to the expense and effort of burying all the utilities and feeds. Now all of this is jeopardized if certain of the sites under consideration for the expanded EPE substation are approved.
1362-R2-1	I	E	2	The case, though, for a new and expanded substation has been adequately made. I cannot and will not argue against it. If environmental concerns are to be considered, however, the view should be a significant criterion. What I would ask is that preference be given to those options that do not result in the routing of additional transmission and/or distribution lines. The view should be preserved at all costs. If other options survive that involve running any lines along Soledad Canyon and Dripping Springs, those lines should be buried at the expense of EPE. My hope is that my opinions as well as those of my neighbors are considered in your final decision.
1370-R2-1	I	C	1	I am submitting my objection to the substation location for El Paso Electric on or near Dripping Spring Rd. A Structure of that nature should not be placed in a residential area. All other substations in Las Cruces are in remote places. Health and quality of life issues exist. Home values will go down. The ease of placement and cost are the main drivers of the option.
1370-R2-1	I	C	2	Total arrogance of El Paso Electric and lack of concern for the individuals that live here was evident. No empathy or interest in meeting to understand the gravity of this decision. BLM must step-up and protect the Talavera area.
1385-R2-2	I	E	1	I urge the BLM to reject the Electric Company's proposed sites # 1, 2,3, 3a, 4 and 5. Those of us who live in the Talavera area do so because of the beautiful Organ Mountain views and the natural desert terrain. Many of us are retired or close to retirement and have invested substantial amounts of our savings in our homes. As a licensed Realtor in New Mexico, I can state unequivocally that the substation and power lines will destroy our property values. These values will never recover, because unlike market forces that ebb and flow, the unsightly substation and high voltage lines will be forever. In addition to the financial turmoil that we will incur, our enjoyment of the Talavera Area will also be ruined.

Appendix D. Scoping Period 2 Comments

Submission ID	Entity Type	Submittal Method	Comment No	Comment
1385-R2-2	I	E	2	I would like to further point out that after finally having the Organ Mountains designated as a National Monument, the thought of viewing a metal jungle substation and miles of high voltage lines on the way to the Monument is abhorrent.
1385-R2-2	I	E	3	I have heard that NMSU is willing to use some of its land for the substation, but that El Paso Electric has not considered that idea. Also, El Paso Electric does not seem interested in sites further away from the residential areas because of the additional installation costs. It is not surprising that El Paso Electric is only concerned with 2 its bottom line, and not with the effect of the substation on a large, beautiful residential area.
1385-R2-2	I	E	4	However, my understanding is that BLM balances the energy needs of our communities with responsible management of the land in order to maintain its natural beauty. Please do not let El Paso Electric ruin the beauty of the Talavera Area and by extension, the Organ Mountains National Monument. There are other options available to El Paso Electric. There are no other options for hundreds of homeowners whose quality of life and financial security are threatened by the El Paso Electric plans.
1166-R2-1	I	E	1	I believe that the orginal site (#1) is a poor choice as it would highly impact the view residents in the OMR phase 3 develop. This is especially the casw given that site #2 have virtually all of the cose benefits for EPE os Site #1 but will have much less impact.
1166-R2-1	I	E	2	Personally, i do not want to see transmission lines outside my window which would apprear to be necessitated by Sites #3 and #3A. Given the needs for so many additional transmission lines, these sites would appear to be very costly as well.
1166-R2-1	I	E	3	I'd say Site # 11 is optimal for the Talavera neighborhood although it certainly appear to be quite cost.
1357-R2-1	I	E	1	As a resident of Talavera, I would prefer that the propsed EPE substation be located next to the currently existing one. That would mean less impact on homes and the environment.
1389-R2-1	I	E	1	My wife and I have a contract on a house on Organ Mesa Loop in the Talavera community of Las Cruces. The primare reason we wanted this particular house was because of the unobstructed view of the Organ Mountains, along with the promise of a quiet neighborhood and dark sky. We attended the meeting tonight at which El Paso Electric laid out their proposals for a substation to be built at one of several sites near the home we just bought. Frankly, we were appalled not only by the prospect of losing the unobstructed view, the quiet and the dark sky but by the callousness of El Paso's representatives to the concerns expressed by virtually all of the many Talavera residents who came to the meeting.
1389-R2-1	I	E	2	El Paso had one concern, and one concern only, and that was selecting a location that was convenient and inexpensive, regardless of the consequences to the people in the community.
1389-R2-1	I	E	3	We left the meeting reconsidering whether we should buy the property, on which we have yet to settle.
1389-R2-1	I	E	4	We are lucky the BLM has decision making authority as to which of the proposed sites El Paso will be permitted to use. BLM has a public trust to all the citizens of the country and is not beholden to the profit motive or the desires of El Paso Electric to make as much money as possible for shareholders.
1389-R2-1	I	E	5	When you are assessing the impact of this substation on the citizens of Talavera, consider that many, if not most of the residents, bought their preoperties for many of the same reasons we wanted to buy in Organ Mesa. Many, if not most residents, have invested their life savings in the community because of its unique location. All of the residents will lose much of the value in their homes, not just the monetary value, but the value that comeswith an intimate connection with nature. There was tremendous distress at the meeting, but there was also tremendous determenation to protect that value. We ask that you take the humanity of the Talavera community into consideration as you deliberate the environmental impact of the substation. Humans are, after all, part of the environment.

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1389-R2-1	I	E	6	Thank you for taking the time to listen to our concerns. El Paso has options to where to put the substation, but if they are permitted to devalue the community, the residents will not have the luxury to move their homes and make no mistakes those homes will lose value. We are perfect example, as we are reconsidering our decision to buy a home whose attributes are now in jeopardy. If we decide against buying the property, we will have wasted a lot of time and money, not to mention the heartache of seeing a very nice dream go up in smoke. And we are just two people, among many others in Talavera, who very likely feel much worse because the homes they already own are now under threat.
1391-R2-1	I	E	1	In the matter concerning the siting of the El Paso Electric Talavera Sub-Station as an individual I support the original geographic site for this critical infrastructure. It is the most financially sound choice with no additional transmission lines need to be constructed for the original geographic location. Thank you for your consideration of this issue.
1392-R2-1	I	E	1	With the new locations proposed on the latest map I prefer location 1.1. I could also live with positions 3 and 3-A if the connector line WAS UNDERGROUND. If the connector line could not be underground then I would prefer 1.1.
1393-R2-1	I	E	1	As a property owner in Talavera I object the proposed sub-station on grounds that it will hurt property values in the area and have negative repercussions on the natural scenery.
1394-R2-1	I	E	1	Utilities create investor value by making capital investments. The BLM appears to accept at face value that El Paso Electric has identified a need for an additional substation and distribution improvements. Knowing EPE's past history of favoring new power plant construction instead of maintaining old plants, the first question to ask is whether EPE really is justified in this infrastructure work at all, especially in light of the rapid growth of distributed, custom-owned renewable energy.
1394-R2-1	I	E	2	That said, it appears that the NMSU proposal site #8 are better alternatives if the substation is allowed.
1395-R2-1	I	E	1	With regards to the environmental impact my vote goes to either site #1 or #2 and not sites #3 and #3A. Since sites #1 and #2 are next to the existing infrastructure construction is contained in a smaller area which equates to less disturbance to the environment. Additional power lines would not be erected on Dripping Springs and Solidar Canyon roads which would greatly minimize wildlife disturbances and residential aesthetic concerns. The overall cost to EPE to build would be less which translates to less payback cost for the consumer.
1395-R2-1	I	E	2	Site #11 would be my last choice. Again, the cost to erect power lines which come back to the existing infrastructure would be higher to EPE and customers. Environmental disturbances would be high due to the much larger construction foot print. In addition, aesthetically, a very large group of residents around the site would be negatively impacted.
1395-R2-1	I	E	3	If, however, sites #3 and #3A are chosen for the substation I would like to request that EPE engineering erect the poles on the road easement such that they are located at the property lines versus in the middle of the property. I do have a "house with a view" and would prefer not to see a pole situated in the center of my property.
1396-R2-1	I	E	1	The public waited 10 years to get the Organ Mountain Desert Peaks Monument. It was resulted in increased traffic to visit the Monument by out of state visitors as well as the local. They come to enjoy the scenic vistas and beauty of the monument. I ask that you place the substation as far away from the views of the Organ Mountains. Please don't ruin this iconic landmark! This means Site #11 is the only option presented tonight.
1386-R2-1	I	E	1	Although the above statement refers to the second scoping is to review alternative locations the only one you are doing the environmental study and refer to with regard to the actual lines is for only the preferred EPE site. Are other sites really being considered? Why do we not have the same breakdown of what these sites will entail and reference to those environmental studies?

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1386-R2-1	I	E	2	I attended the July meeting and presentation of the proposed sites for the expansion of the temporary substation. Considering the statement above, I found this meeting to be quite misleading and disingenuous. It would appear the meeting /first presentation of the expansion of the current temporary station was met with considerable opposition and request that other locations be considered are being disregarded. Although they were discussed per your provided information, it appears the only site addressed on your website is the breakdown of what the environmental study entails is tied only to the expansion of the temporary substation. This would indicate that in fact the only site really being considered by the BLM is El Paso Electric's first choice.
1386-R2-1	I	E	3	Additionally the other locations discussed briefly at the July presentation also do not meet the requests of the local residents. A site that resembles the photos of current substations presented clearly showed those stations in open areas with no residential housing near the sites or a negative visual impact on a national monument. A site that meets those guidelines would undoubtedly be met with unanimous approval.
1386-R2-1	I	E	4	It is unfortunate that the BLM did not consider the future expansion of the temporary site when that location was originally approved. The homesites that will be negatively impacted as well as the visual impact to our National Monument, were present at that time. With any fore thought or planning it would not be hard to imagine the eventual need to change the "temporary facility" to something permanent would be met negativity. Other sites were available at that time and I think the BLM could have better served the public if more thought had been put into the decision for the location. We would not be having the discussions we are having today if those making that decision had the interest of the public as a priority.
1386-R2-1	I	E	5	I would also express my concern that the BLM appears to be more interested in accommodating to El Paso Electric and their stockholders rather than the public both then and now. I understand the basis of the BLM making land available for services that will benefit the public.
1386-R2-1	I	E	6	El Paso Electric has other sites that in fact will allow an expansion of power from other locations that would provide the additional power needed without the visual impact to our monument and the negative impact on the property values of current residents and homesites not yet sold. Again if more thought had been put into the location of the current temporary substation these issues would not be relevant. Although other locations are not as cost effective for El Paso Electric, it is unfortunate if that becomes the number one priority
1386-R2-1	I	E	7	The response by the BLM to moving the current free range gun area was disingenuous and insulting. How many residents use the gun facility and are they all from the Las Cruces area? Do you really think you would have the overwhelming opposition to moving this gun facility as you are experiencing to the expansion of the current substation or the two other locations El Paso Electric is suggesting? There is also the location next to the high school. I realize this gun facility location also has other factors that would need to be addressed. Factors not impossible to work out. Again El Paso Electric is going to build a substation that will provide the power needed.
1386-R2-1	I	E	8	I walked away from the July meeting with the impression that the BLM will do their token Environmental Study and allow El Paso Electric to select the location that is most cost effective, brings the biggest profit to their company and stockholders. As you said the environmental study does not include the impact on property values or the visual impact to the access to our monument. When the BLM does this study you are not obligated to look at the impact to the monument beyond a certain distance and the negative impact on property values is also not a concern or a factor used when deciding the location. As I looked into other states and their process, I realized there are processes used that seem more in line with an effort to really consider the public. Ex. "Environmental Studies" TEP will consider several environmental factors prior to making any recommendations for building the proposed transmission line. The primary environmental factors to be studied include existing and future land uses, as well as visual, cultural/archaeological, and biological resources. Evaluation of these environmental factors is a key component of the CEC application..This electrical company prior to suggesting sites made extreme efforts to get local input for acceptable sites. A process that was brought up by Paul Curry as an effective way of finding a site with a goal for a win /win outcome.

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1386-R2-1	I	E	9	Also a suggestion for future when approval of land use involving BLM property. Make an effort to assure all parties involved making a presentation for land use request as well as those making the final decision are prepared and do not respond with less than sincere or ill informed answers. One example, when asked if El Paso Electric and the BLM was aware of the negative impact on property values, the response was “we are not appraisers and that would be difficult to estimate”, the response was an indication of either being total unprepared, lack of knowledge or an indication that there was in fact a total disregard or concern for those impacted by the sites suggested. It would be hard to imagine that anyone was surprised with that question.
1386-R2-1	I	E	10	Maybe it is worth looking into decisions made by the BLM in other surrounding states for the value of our environment and natural beauty of our open space and national parks and monuments. Although disheartened by the meeting and the attitude of those making the presentation, I continue to hope as you go through your process you will be more discerning about the use of BLM land “our land”. Have you looked at the Department of Interior Website description of our monument. A total of 496,330 acres has been set aside. A national beauty described on the Federal Website “The Organ Mountains are a steep, angular mountain range with rocky spires that jut majestically above the Chihuahuan Desert floor to an elevation of 9,000 feet. This picturesque area of rocky peaks, narrow canyons, and open woodlands ranges from Chihuahuan Desert habitat to ponderosa pine in the highest elevations. You would like to take the main access to this National Monument and add a visual impact that can’t help but mar the landscape. Why would you do this when other locations are available.
1386-R2-1	i	e	11	The group that handled the presentation filtered questions and comments at the July meeting. Another indication the EPE who paid their fee may not have had the best intentions of providing an objective format for the public.
1387-R2-1	i	e	1	I oppose the building of said substation as I sat in on hearings when they built the new facility in El Paso near the Sunland Park Racetrack of which there is much particulate matter pollution and according to the regulations meets EPA standards?
1388-R2-1	I	E	1	After attending the informational meeting last night it seems to us that the best choice of location for the Talavera Community Substation should be #11. The proximity to the biggest user, Centennial High and not having to run poles along Dripping Springs and Soledad Canyon road would please the greatest majority of Talavera Residents, ourselves included.
1389-R2-1	I	E	1	My wife and I have a contract on a house on Organ Mesa Loop in the Talavera community of Las Cruces. The primary reason we wanted this particular house was because of the unobstructed view of the Organ Mountains, along with the promise of a quiet neighborhood and a dark sky. We attended the meeting tonight at which El Paso Electric laid out their proposals for a substation to be built at one of several sites near the home we just bought. Frankly, we were appalled not only by the prospect of losing the unobstructed view, the quiet and the dark sky but by the callousness of El Paso’s representatives to the concerns expressed by virtually all of the many Talavera residents who came to the meeting. El Paso Electric had one concern, and one concern only, and that was selecting a location that was convenient and inexpensive, regardless of the consequences to the people in the community. We left the meeting reconsidering whether we should buy the property, on which we have yet to settle.
1389-R2-1	I	E	2	We are lucky that BLM has decision making authority as to which of the proposed sites El Paso will be permitted to use. BLM has a public trust to all the citizens of the country and is not beholden to the profit motive or the desires of El Paso Electric to make as much money as possible for shareholders.

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1389-R2-1	I	E	3	When you are assessing the impact of this substation on the citizens of Talavera, consider that many, if not most of the residents, bought their properties for many of the same reasons we wanted to buy in Organ Mesa. Many, if not most of the residents, have invested their life savings in the community because of its unique location. All of the residents will lose much of the value in their homes, not just the monetary value, but the value that comes with an intimate connection with nature. There was tremendous distress at the meeting, but there was also tremendous determination to protect that value. We ask that you take the humanity of the Talavera community into consideration as you deliberate the environmental impact of the substation. Humans are, after all, part of the environment. Thank you for taking the time to listen to our concerns. El Paso Electric has options as to where to put the substation, but if they are permitted to devalue the community, the residents will not have the luxury to move their homes and make no mistake those homes will lose value. We are a perfect example, as we reconsidering our decision to buy a home whose attributes are now in jeopardy. If we decide against buying the property, we will have wasted a lot of time and money, not to mention the heartache of seeing a very nice dream go up in smoke. And we are just two people, among many others in Talavera, who very likely feel much worse because the homes they already own are now under threat.
1390-R2-1	I	E	1	I am writing to express my strong objection to El Paso Electric Company's preferred location for its new substation in the Talavera area.
1390-R2-1	I	E	2	I am a Talavera resident, having moved into the area in 1991. Every day, as I round the base of A Mountain heading home, my view is filled with the beauty of the Organ Mountains. How beautiful is this view? Sufficiently beautiful that it is now enclosed in the Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks National Monument. Sufficiently beautiful that Las Cruces has already seen positive economic impact in the three years since the monument was designated. So, the location of the substation matters to me and my community. El Paso Electric Company proposes to place an industrial installation adjacent to the road I drive home on. The same road that visitors to Las Cruces will drive to get to the national monument. Such an eye sore could negatively impact the economic improvement the Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks National Monument has brought.
1390-R2-1	I	E	3	Substations produce significant noise, so placing a substation near residential housing can create constant invasive noise in nearby housing. Substations are also inherently dangerous installations and Talavera residents have only one paved exit out of the area. So, Talavera residents would drive past the installation every time they go into town. We all have reasons to be concerned.
1390-R2-1	I	E	4	I have read that alternative sites have been identified for the substation that provide a significantly improved environment for the community at reasonable extra cost. I state that cost should not be the only deciding factor. Quality of life is important – in fact, that is the particular reason many Talavera residents moved to the area – and I request that quality of life be an important component of this decision. But, much, much more important are concerns about safety. Some of these alternative locations are not along major roadways. It seems stupid to me to place such a dangerous installation on the only road from my house to either hospital in town, when there are alternates not on a major (or even a paved) road.
1395-R2-1	I	E	1	With regards to the environmental impact my vote goes to either site #1 or #2 and not sites #3 and #3A. Since sites #1 and #2 are next to the existing infrastructure construction is contained in a smaller area which equates to less disturbance to the environment. Additional power lines would not be erected on Dripping Springs and Solidad Canyon roads which would greatly minimize wildlife disturbances and residential aesthetic concerns. The overall cost to EPE to build would be less which translates to less payback cost for the consumer.
1395-R2-1	I	E	2	Site #11 would be my last choice. Again, the cost to erect power lines which come back to the existing infrastructure would be higher to EPE and customers. Environmental disturbances would be high due to the much larger construction foot print. In addition, aesthetically, a very large group of residents around the site would be negatively impacted.

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1395-R2-1	I	E	3	If, however, sites #3 and #3A are chosen for the substation I would like to request that EPE engineering erect the poles on the road easement such that they are located at the property lines versus in the middle of the property. I do have a "house with a view" and would prefer not to see a pole situated in the center of my property.
1397-R2-1	I	L	1	We are concerned that the proposed projects could have significant adverse impacts to Organ Mesa Ranch residents if certain alternatives are selected. Now allow me to return to potential impacts to Organ Mesa Ranch. The Bureau of Land Management has done an excellent job of protecting the scenic quality of the Organ Mountains for the American people. The Mimbres Resource Management Plan of 1993 designated much of the Organ Mountains as a Scenic Area of Critical Environmental Concern, which as you know is managed as a Visual Resources Management Class I area, the highest level of administrative protection to a scenic landscape that the BLM can afford. The Mimbres RMP acknowledges the Organ Mountains as the scenic backdrop of Las Cruces. Actually this is a little erroneous, the Organ Mountains constitute the scenic focal point of Las Cruces and Dona Ana County. Homes and businesses throughout the City and outside of the city limits are planned and situated to capitalize on views of this magnificent mountain range. The Organ Mesa Ranch subdivision was planned with the Organ Mountains Scenic ACEC as a foreground focal area. Many custom homes have been built, and additional custom homes are being built as I write this, all with majestic views of our incredible Organ Mountains. The proposed substation and power lines have the potential to seriously degrade these views if the wrong alternative is selected. For a simple simulation, you could tape a 8 ½ by 11 photograph of a substation over your television or computer screen and just leave it there forever.
1397-HR2-1	I	L	2	We are also concerned that adverse impacts from the decision could be exacerbated by El Paso Electric Company's elimination of certain alternatives prior to analysis. Allow me to address this second concern first. It is my understanding that County Commissioner Ben Rawson has approached New Mexico State University concerning their position on allowing the proposed substation to be constructed on NMSU property. The NMSU Board of Regents apparently is willing to allow construction of the substation on NMSU property yet this alternative was eliminated from analysis based on El Paso Electric Company's assumption that NMSU would not be amenable to construction on that site. I ask that the NMSU site be included in further analysis of alternatives.
1397-HR2-1	I	L	3	1. A reevaluation of proposed site # 8 with the inclusion of a BLM shooting restriction. This site is at the junction of the Salopek line and the main transmission line, east of the Sonoma Ranch Road. This site seems ideal, there is already a disturbed area, the substation would be visually unobtrusive by being nestled into a depression, and the adjacent transmission lines are already on the hilltops so visual resources would not be significantly impacted. It is also over a mile from any existing homes, so if the area is developed in the future, people will know just what they can expect.
1397-HR2-1	I	L	4	Impacts of views of the Organ Mountains from each affected lot by construction of the substation at each alternative site. This should include not only a viewshed analysis and Visual Resources impacts of each potential site, but an Economic Impact analysis to the values of any existing homes as well as impacts to any undeveloped lots and resale ability and values of those homes and lots.
1397-HR2-1	I	L	5	An alternative of putting any new or replacement transmission lines underground. I believe the precedent has already been set when El Paso Electric put another transmission line underground to protect Organ Mountains views in northeast Las Cruces.
1397-HR2-1	I	L	6	An analysis of noise impacts of each site on nearby lots. The hum of a substation would cause a permanent, full time impact to homes and lots nearby
1397-HR2-1	I	L	7	I believe that site #8 would be ideal.

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1397-HR2-1	I	L	8	of the existing alternatives, alternative site 11 would be preferred over any other. That site would have the least impact to people's views of the Organ Mountains. El Paso Electric has said in their previous reasons for rejecting certain sites is that substations are generally not built near schools. The school grounds are actually vacant over 70% of the time including nights, weekends, and summer and winter vacations. There is a temporal reduction in impacts to people when they are not nearby. Electric substations have significant impacts on neighbors and neighborhoods. If you look around town at existing substations, several of them are next to cemeteries, because dead people do not care. Most living people care.
1398-R2-1	I	C	1	I'm unsure why a different site wouldn't be more appropriate. Why have such a large site just in sight of a National Monument... Would we place such a site in front of the Lincoln Memorial, entrance to Yellow Stone National Park?? We only ask that we really be smart and methodical about such a decision. Because this will not only impact the citizens of our city (Las Cruces) but the many tourist that come to visit.
1368-R2-1	I	C	1	It would seem that the area next to Centennial High School would avoid all the concerns of homeowners in the neighborhood of #1, #2, #3, and would gain goodwill for both EPE & the BLM. While this costs EPE more today, the ability to expand functions in the future would be more plausible instead of putting the substation in a crowded residential area. From the comments given at the open meeting I would hope that both entities would realize the animosity that #1, #2, #3 have aroused and the real concern that housing markets would fall in those areas. Please be good neighbors, EPE!
1379-R2-2	I	E	1	While I understand that upgrades to the substation are necessary and will be a good thing for the El Paso Electric customers in the area I find the proposed sites, with exception of #8 & #11, to be terrible choices. #1, #2, #3, #3a, #4 & #5 would impact all the residents of the area and add ugly, visual pollution the magnificent area we have chosen to build and live in. Additionally these choices would have a significant negative impact on property values. We don't want or need additional above ground power lines and a sub-station plopped down in a site directly adjacent to existing residential developments. And since there are other far better choices available which would have little to no impact on the residents of the area I can't imagine that the BLM would permit this to happen. Please help us preserve what we all moved to the area for. I am currently building my retirement home in the area which is bringing several hundred thousand dollars of economic impact to builders, trades, businesses and tax base of Las Cruces and Dona Aña county. Additionally, since this is a life long commitment on my part the money will keep flowing in the area as I live out my retirement. If things like the new substation and more power lines are allowed to be built in the area whose greatest attraction is the beautiful views I have little doubt it will have a negative impact on the current residents as well as the potential new residents. I know it would have influenced my decision if I had known about it. Unfortunately, I am currently living out of state and will not be able to attend the meeting on July 17 but please accept this email as my voice in strong opposition to the proposed sites (#1, #2, #3, #3a, #4 & #5) which are being considered.
1385-R2-1	I	E	1	Regarding the proposed El Paso Electric Substation on Dripping Springs Road in Las Cruces, I would like to know what plans are included to camouflage the view of the substation from the road and from existing residential areas nearby in order to protect the property values in the residential areas.
1386-R2-2	I	E	1	Please add us to the mailing list for any information on this potentially environmentally disastrous corporate project.
1386-R2-3	I	E	1	It is our understanding that a far better site is available near NMSU and that The Board of Regents is very willing to work with you and El Paso Electric. We are baffled that this solution is not being vigorously pursued or even considered by you and El Paso Electric.
1386-R2-3	I	E	2	We built our new home in Las Cruces and specifically in this magnificent area believing that, of course, the BLM would always protect our environmental right to pristine views with no intrusive sight pollution. We have had many visitors who have commented on the gorgeous views and the comforting ambiance of the natural setting.

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1386-R2-3	I	E	3	We will attend the meeting on July 17, 2017 and urge you to do your duty to help the citizens of the community and not fall victim to expedient and callous corporate interests.
1283-R2-1	I	C	1	I'm not in "support" of this project. Unless EPE can and will be able to put the power line underground?
1283-R2-1	I	C	2	If (EPE) has identified a real need to add an additional "sub-station and powerline in our area. This would block my view on two sides of my property. To the north which is BLM Land and to the east which is the mountains. The main reason that I bought a house in the Organ mesa recreation area was that there was know (no) powerlines. Also at one time before I got the property Carry and Company at that time, told me there will most likely be no more power lines in my view. My property is at 7828 Waterfall Canyon, Las Cruces, NM 88011.
1321-R2-1	I	E	1	The construction of this substation on the above mentioned site will create an eye sore and target for community protest for years to come.
1321-R2-1	I	E	2	The concept that placing the substation in a more remote location will make it the target of shootings is ludicrous. Placing the sustation on the corner that is regularly passed and viewed by the residents of 400 homes makes it an easy target for the vandalism and drive bys generated in protest against the government for ignoring the welfare and wishes of that community.
1321-R2-1	I	E	3	It is my understanding that selection of sites 8 or 11 would also allow use of some existing transmission lines and would help to eliminate some of the costly poles and lines necessary for this project.
1321-R2-1	I	E	4	The site selection based on "convenience of construction" demonstrates a very short sited approach on the long term repercussions of this project. Additionally, selection of this site tends to ignore the legal rights of the community to maintain the integrity and beauty of their community by subsequently halting the process indefinitely through legal recourse.
1426-R2-1	I	C	1	The proposed locations south of Dripping Springs Rd, while logical for ELP Electric, are wrong for the residents of Talavera and the visitors to Tortugas Mountain and the Organs.
1426-R2-1	I	C	2	Location 8, which you've already dropped from consideration is best. Barring that, the location nest to (north) of Centennial High School makes the most sense. There are already large metal power poles there and and intersection of various lines. My child goes to CHS. I am not concerned with the school being close to the substation.
1426-R2-1	I	C	3	Finally, the ELP Electric briefing implied Talavera is the prime beneficiary of the substation. This is false. The new development north of Talavera Sonoma Ranch and north of Hwy 70 are the drivers for the substation need. Ideally, it should be built in their neighborhood, not ours.
1459-R2-1	I	E	1	El Paso Electric really doesn't care. If it costs them more, those costs are placed in rate base, and they recover those costs, along with an allowed regulatory profit, over the life of the substation.
1459-R2-1	I	E	2	Placing a huge industrial electric substation at the cheapest site near Organ Mesa Ranch will devalue the entire Talavera development, not just Organ Mesa Ranch. No one wants a huge industrial substation as the gateway to their community. Even if the loss in value is only two or three percent of the Talavera homes, that loss would be in the millions, justifying spending more for an alternative site. The point is that BLM should choose a site that minimizes the loss in value to homeowners.

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1460-R2-1	I	E	1	As Talavera property owners we oppose in the strongest possible way the siting of a substation and dangerous, view - destroying stanchions and power lines anywhere near our neighborhood. As a taxpayer funded organization, BLM's first responsibility is to the public, your bosses, when deciding on the location of such an eyesore that also has the potential to lower property values. Other workable sites have been presented. There is absolutely no justification for BLM to disregard our community's wishes. The finances and wishes of a profit-making corporation should never take precedence over the desires and benefit of tax paying citizens, whose Talavera property likely represents their greatest financial asset. Your decision to site the substation in our neighborhood wrecklessly and needlessly puts those assets, and potentially, the health of the residents at risk. You must do the right thing, or go to work for the private sector, where your work orientation and your employer will be congruent.
1461-R2-1	I	E	1	At the community meeting for this project, both the BLM and El Paso Electric declined to address the impact of the proposed project on the appraisals of nearby lots and residences. However, some possible impacts can be analyzed by professional appraisers. Examples include:
1461-R2-1	I	E	2	A substation may have an impact on the safety of nearby property, residences and residents in the event of extreme weather or sabotage. Such safety consideration may also affect premiums for insurance against damage to property.
1461-R2-1	I	E	3	A substation may change the comparability of various properties. The characteristic "view" is amenable to appraisal and comparison. This characteristic is already appraised for many of the lots near the various sites. An expert appraiser can assess how a proposed substation would or would not change the evaluation of "view."
1163-R2-1	I	C	1	After attending the 17th July meeting it would appear that option 3 or 3A would be the best option for residents, BLM and EPE. If and only if the distribution lines going along Soledad Canyon Rd/Dripping Springs Rd are underground lines. While more expensive than option 1 or 2, which would be an eye sore, it is a less expensive alternative to 8, 10 or 11 and would, I think, be acceptable to the majority of residents.
1163-R2-1	I	C	2	If it cannot be underground lines, then option 8, 10 or 11 need to be weighted more heavily as acceptable locations or new options for locations need to be brought forward.
1163-R2-1	I	C	3	P.S. With the reconstruction of Soledad Canyon Rd coming up the trenching work to put underground lines in would appear to be easier to do at that time.
1166-R2-2	I	E	1	Obviously, the ideal site from the resident's perspective would be #11 since it would not impact our area in any manner. I do understand, however, that that site has the highest cost by fairly wide margin.
1166-R2-2	I	E	2	My main comments are with respect to sites #3 and #3A. While the sites themselves would not impact us significantly, the proposed transmission line along Soledad Canyon Road WOULD: it would cut directly across our view of the Organ Mountains. We, along with others in Organ Mesa Ranch, payed significant premiums for lots with unobstructed views of the mountains, and having power lines prominently positioned within our views would certainly reduce the value of our houses. While the reduction in value for a single property owner might be relatively small, it should be noted that relatively large number of property owners would be affected by this distribution line. Specifically, at least 12 lots in OMR currently have unobstructed views of the Organ Mountains across the north-south section of Soledad Canyon Road--the proposed route of the new distribution line. A number of houses in the interior of OMR also have largely unobstructed views of the mountains across Soledad Canyon. Thus, even if each property owner's home was reduced in value by only 5%, the combined loss in value to all 12+ of these owners would be considerable!

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1166-R2-2	I	E	3	If the distribution line were instead routed along the existing transmission line easement (rather than along Soledad Canyon Road), however, I would have no particular problem with sites #3 or #3A: while we would likely see substations at these sites in the distance from our house, they would not detrimentally affect our cherished view of the Organ Mountains.
1253-R2-1	I	E	1	We live in a very active flood plan, if the substation is constructed on the #1 site how is this going to affect this flood plan mapping, nothing was said concerning this issue
1253-R2-1	I	E	2	Although we were told that no final decision had been made before this meeting several for the substation site have been ruled out based on EPE engineering studies, either due to location unsuitability, or cost of construction, where site decisions already made?
1253-R2-1	I	E	3	Understanding that distribution lines to and from the substations is necessary, are the new lines using the existing structures?
1253-R2-1	I	E	4	What steps are being taken to insure that the current petroleum pipeline and the future natural gas line located under or within feet of site #1 will not be damaged?
1253-R2-1	I	E	5	If as stated cost is not in the decision making elements of the BLM why did BLM talk about it all night.
1253-R2-1	I	E	6	Understanding that a substation must go somewhere in this distribution area, would it not seem that site #11 might fit the title that EPE used for the substation all night "Centennial High School/Talavera Substation?"
1263-R2-1	B	E	1	It was made clear during the recent panel presentation and discussion at the New Mexico Farm and Ranch Museum by El Paso Electric representatives that there are no plans in the decision making matrix to consider quality of life issues or economic impact on property owners. These include the effect of new transmission and distribution poles and lines on the view shed and how the loss of unobstructed views of the Organ Mountains will hurt homeowners who have spent their life savings to have a home with spectacular views of the mountains. It was made very clear that the impact of the substation and poles and lines on the value of surrounding homes would also not be considered.
1263-R2-1	B	E	2	One of the homeowners overheard a discussion between two of the electric company's consultants employees at the Farm and Ranch hearing that indicated during the pre-planning strategy meeting held by the electric company before the public meeting, it was determined that any discussions regarding property values being damaged would be completely avoided by the panel and not discussed at the public meeting!
1263-R2-1	B	E	3	As I stated at the public hearing, I have worked as a developer and general contractor with the electric company for over 40 years in the Mesilla Valley and have had generally good relationships with the company and its employees. I am pro-growth and pro electricity. Our company has constructed almost a thousand new residences, commercial buildings such as banks, apartments, offices, and hotels, and has developed hundreds of new homesites. I have found El Paso Electric employees to be skilled, competent, and caring. But in this case, El Paso Electric Company's leadership team has shown an amazing lack of community concern for the quality of life and property values of the residents and property owners of the Talavera/Organ Mesa Ranch community. <u>bordering on actual arrogance.</u>
1263-R2-1	B	E	4	There appears to be no corporate conscience, and no concern for people, and this attitude starts at the top with leadership. There were no meetings or reaching out by El Paso Electric to meet with the Talavera Homeowners Association to discuss a solution that everyone could live with before their proposal was made. Mr. Clay Doyle specifically told me that when they decided to propose plopping down a 4 acre substation right on Dripping Springs Road in the middle of an existing residential neighborhood that the issues for the electric company were ease of access for construction and maintenance, close proximity to existing transmission lines, picking the least expensive site for the company, and that no consideration of the property owners views or values or quality of life were even entertained!! He said that those issues are the responsibility of the Bureau

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1263-R2-1	B	E	5	Panel members publicly stated that they were not appraisers and could not say what affect the proposed substation together with its attending 50-85 feet high poles and wires would have on homeowner values and quality of life. This attitude is an affront to common sense, and their decision to pick the cheapest solution for the company shareholders, while not evaluating the costs to others in both quality of life and damaged values is unbelievable. Sites 1,2,3,3a,4, and 5 all will hurt people. If one of these sites is still being considered, there should be a full-blown Environmental Impact Statement for each one, with a complete economic analysis done addressing the socio-economic impact on each of the property owners nearby or in the view shed. The desert is huge, and largely uninhabited.
1263-R2-1	B	E	6	Why not pick a site that is away from residential neighborhoods such as 8 or 11? There is plenty of land in which to do so, and the need for an Environmental Impact Statement would be eliminated, with the easier and cheaper and faster Environmental Assessment done instead.
1263-R2-1	B	E	7	Panel members also stated repeatedly (and falsely) that no decisions have been made on which site would be best for all concerned. Then they told us that several sites, such as number 8, have been thrown out for various reasons, mainly cost, without any discussion with or input from the property owners. So the statement that no decisions have been made is just not true. Site number 8 was eliminated because it “was too remote” and “someone might shoot at it”. That reasoning of fear of shooting could be made with any of the sites. Number 1, which is El Paso Electric’s preferred site, would be the easiest site of all to shoot by someone driving by. A more remote location, away from people’s homes, would be by far preferable to homeowners, even if El Paso Electric does not like it. It would appear that several of the various sites which have been eliminated by El Paso Electric prior to the hearing process were superficially rejected because of “arroyos and flood fears” without consideration of moving them to adjacent higher spots, because of higher costs to the electric company. The shooting concern is obviously manufactured to eliminate certain sites for benefit of El Paso Electric Company (because these sites are more remote and more expensive for the company) , because we know that all of the sites are exposed to potential shooting incidents. Finally, why were sites that potentially face flood problems submitted in the first place for consideration? There is a lot of high dry remote land out there close to the transmission lines that would be more suitable for a sub-station, and not affect property owners.
1263-R2-1	B	E	8	ounty Commissioner Rawson has worked tirelessly on this matter and recommends site 11 be chosen. It is flat, easily accessible for maintenance, and will have minimal impact on homeowner values and views. Site 8 is also a good solution.
1263-R2-1	B	E	9	Sites 1,2,3,3a 4,and 5 all will have a very negative impact upon the homeowners and neighborhood. They would be disastrous in their effect on the people who live there.
1263-R2-1	B	E	10	All Realtors know that when selling real estate, the rule is Disclose, Disclose, Disclose! El Paso Electric officials told us that they have been aware of the need for a new substation in this area for over five years, and have been making plans for it. Why was this not disclosed to developers, realtors, property owners, and the Talavera Homeowners Association years ago so that the various interest groups could be aware of the need and work together to find a good solution for all concerned? Instead, the electric company kept this vital information to itself and waited until many homes and home sites were built and sold right where the company wants to put their substation. Indeed, a new home was constructed and sold just weeks before the announcement by the company that it wanted to put the 4 acre substation on site 1, just over the new home’s back wall and right in its field of view of the mountains. If site 1 is selected, I personally believe that El Paso Electric will be liable to the homeowners for damages, and to my company, Organ Mesa Development LLC, for withholding vital information that directly lowers property values.
1263-R2-1	B	E	11	Please choose sites 11 or 8, or come up with another new location for the station and poles away from residences that will address all of the concerns listed above.
1272-R2-2	I	E	1	Could you please let us know which of the proposed sites #1, #2, #3 and #3-A would trigger the installation of the distribution lines on Dripping Springs and Soledad Canyon Road? Also, could you identify the details on the planned distribution lines such as number of distribution lines, types of poles, spacing of poles, height of poles, etc?

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1272-R2-2	I	E	2	The proposed distribution lines, unless buried, could have significant negative visual and property value impacts for property owners in Organ Mesa Ranch. What areas would benefit from the additional distribution of power? Are alternative routes available that could serve those areas to receive the power without creating the potential negative impacts on Organ Mesa Ranch property owners?
1272-R2-4	I	E	1	Will EPE and/or their consultant have available separate and distinct maps showing the actual scope elements for each substation site at the meeting this evening? The overview map that was circulated by BLM is fine for an overview, but it makes it difficult to sort out the specific scope for each alternative site. We should not have to make assumptions as to what portions of the scope elements shown on the map will be associated with each of the sites. For environmental assessments, it is important that the public and reviewers have available precise scoping information on separate maps for separate substation sites being considered in order to draw informed conclusions regarding the perceived impacts for each proposed substation site.
1288-R2-1	I	E	1	I writing to express my opposition to the building of the so called proposed Talavera Substation and Distribution Project request by El Paso Electric in and around residential area of Talavera. First of all I can't understand why BLM Management would even allow this proposal to come up. They should have rejected the idea on behalf of the residences and the fact power line are unsightly and harmful. I attended the community meeting and am greatly disappointed to learn notes were not taken or nor recorded of the residents vocal opposition to this project. It seemed to be a dog and pony show and I left there with the sense the decision had already been made and the gathering of local residences was something of a show to say a meeting had been held. Being there is not record of the vocal oppositions expressed to build the station in a residential area, the project goes on. My concerns are the negative and adverse health affects from EMF. There have been studies supporting adverse affects from all over the world. The only EMF studies that don't show any adverse affects are those conducted by the Electric and Communication Companies. The meeting conducted exposed El Paso Electric was concerned with saving themselves money than being concerned for the health of any residents or the reduction of home values in the area.
1152-R2-1	I	E	1	We are 10 year residents of 4355 Organ Mesa Loop. We purchased this specific property, over many other properties, for one reason. The view and the surrounding area. Yes, a 5 acre substation and high voltage power lines would destroy the serenity and the beautiful view as you come around A Mountain and drive east towards the mountain.
1152-R2-1	I	E	2	my concern is the value of my property and the properties in the Talavera/Organ Mesa Ranch area. We purchased our home in 2007 at the peak of the real estate market. By the beginning of 2009, our property value had dropped by \$50,000. Due to the declining housing market and recession, we watched numerous homes go on the market for \$100,000 to \$200,000 dollars less than they had been purchased for. Which continued to bring down the value of the homes around us. Between the short sales and bankruptcies that are now included with real estate comps, I believe the value on our home has decreased by approximately \$110,000. You may not be sympathetic to our situation. My husband and I are lucky to be able to afford the home we are in, but we both work full time, and work very hard. We live comfortably, because we are careful with our money,. spend it wisely and our home is by far our biggest investment. After 7 or so years, the housing market behind A mountain is just starting to come back to life. Homes may never be back to 2007 highs, but homes are selling and comps are more realistic. Economy is picking up, people are spending money, the area is booming with new construction. And now, BLM wants to allow EPE wants to drop a 5 acre substation right in our front yard.

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1152-R2-1	I	E	3	can understand the need for the substation. I can understand why Dripping Springs would be the first choice due to easy access. I get it. But, what I don't understand is with miles and miles of vacant BLM property between Dripping Springs towards Vado, running along the existing power lines, why you would choose Option #1 or Option #2, or Option 3 to drop it right in the middle of a residential area. Any location between A Mountain and the Organ's will drop our values. So, in theory, you and EPE will be taking away the investment, retirement, hard earned money of every individual who has purchased a home in that area.
1152-R2-1	I	E	4	One of our long time neighbors has tried for about 5 years to sell their home. Finally, finally for about \$200,000 less than they paid for the house, it goes under contract. They are finally going to get to move so they can take care of her elderly parents and a few nights after the meeting at the Farm and Ranch, the buyer walks away. They lose a sale, the realtor loses a commission, the buyer loses a house they put an offer on the day after they looked at it. Everyone loses. I have to assume other contracts will start falling through. We have to refinance our loan next year and I was feeling pretty good about the comps, but now, I have no idea where we will come out. We know we will never break even, but if that substation goes in at option 1, 2, 3 or 3A, we will lose even more.
1152-R2-1	I	E	5	BLM has no skin in the game. EPE is still going to make their money regardless of where the substation is built. We can't fire EPE or BLM or change providers to get back at either of entity.
1152-R2-1	I	E	6	But there has to be some human factor to the decision. Would a BLM Employee or an EPE Employee want a 5 acre substation dropped in their front yard when there are good other options available. No, no one would want that and no one would wish it on another person. Not only for my own personal benefit, but for the benefit of all of us who have made a choice to live at the foot of the Organ Mountains. As a homeowner and resident of Organ Mesa Loop, I beg of you to find another suitable location on BLM property.
1181-R2-1	I	E	1	We are writing as individuals to express our fervent opposition to the placement of the new El Paso Electric substation at their proposed site adjacent to Dripping Springs Road and the construction of above ground power lines along Dripping Springs and Soledad Canyon Roads. For all the reasons cited at the July 17th public meeting including property values, views of our national monument, EMFs etc; it is ridiculous to put this eyesore and potential danger in a residential area when there are so many other alternatives.
1181-R2-1	I	E	2	Our understanding is that EPE has rejected proposed sites 8 and 11 and that their ONLY consideration in locating the substation and above ground power lines is cost. Clean, safe environments do not come without cost.
1181-R2-1	I	E	3	EPE is a monopoly. In return for that privileged status our government functions to protect the public's interest against their otherwise unfettered power. For example EPE cannot simply raise their rates without government review and approval. Likewise they need BLM's review and approval for substation placement and power line right of way on BLM land.
1181-R2-1	I	E	4	conducting your Environmental assessment we urge you to give great weight to the environmental concerns brought up by ourselves and hundreds of other Talavera area residents. It seems that only the BLM can bring balance to a decision that otherwise is focused solely on cost and not the environment. We believe the sites with the least impact on the environment are 8, 11 and 3a in that order and urge you to let EPE select from those three and those three only.
1181-R2-1	I	E	5	The construction of additional above ground power lines along Dripping Springs and Soledad Canyon Roads would also create an eyesore defiling our beautiful national monument that we worked so hard to get and are relying on to attract tourists to our fair city. Any new power lines of such magnitude should be located under ground as most power lines throughout Las Cruces are.

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1250-R2-1	I	E	1	As a resident of Organ Mesa Ranch, I am opposed to the new electric substation in our neighborhood. I feel there would be health risks associated with the electrical fields emitted from the high voltage lines. Also, putting an electric substation in a residential area will bring our property values down. A home sale in our neighborhood was recently lost due to the proximity of these power lines and towers. I have observed other substations in Las Cruces and none of those I visited were in residential areas. For these reasons, I feel the only feasible location is adjacent to Centennial High School. If there is extra cost involved to build in this location, I'm sure El Paso Electric will secure the funding and will pass it along to it's customers.
1272-R2-7	I	E	1	two potential substation sites identified by EPE are Sites 3 and 3-A. If either of these locations is selected, EPE will install electrical distribution lines along Soledad Canyon Road and Dripping Springs Road. EPE indicated the poles for the distribution lines would be wood poles 55 feet in height. At the 7/17/17 scoping meeting many participants noted the direct negative impacts the distribution lines would have on property values. The greatest negative impact would be on properties located in Organ Mesa Ranch Phases 1A and 1B. When multiple participants asked that the EA scope include an evaluation of the negative impacts the distribution lines would have on property values, Mr. Dave Wallace, with the BLM Las Cruces District, shrugged his shoulders and said BLM would be unable to evaluate that because they are not appraisers. Actually, EPE should be the entity charged with including that in the EA as they are the applicant.
1272-R2-7	I	E	2	Throughout the BLM and EPE presentation, it was difficult to see where there was any separation between BLM and EPE. It appeared that BLM was the "sponsor" for EPE and BLM seemed more concerned about the cost impacts that alternative sites would have on EPE. EPE reps noted throughout their presentation and during the Q&A sessions that costs and returns on investments for their shareholders were their primary concern. EPE reps followed Mr. Wallace's lead and echoed his statement that they are not appraisers and they would be unable to address property value impacts in the EA.
1272-R2-7	I	E	3	Mr. Wallace had earlier noted in his presentation that costs to EPE would not be considered when BLM was evaluating the EA. To help be sure this is the case, EPE should not include any cost information in the EA
1272-R2-7	I	E	4	Please be advised that the potential installation of distribution lines along Dripping Springs Road and Soledad Canyon Road has already had a negative impact on property values and sales in Organ Mesa Ranch. A property in the 4400 block of Organ Mesa Loop that backs up to Soledad Canyon Road had been listed for sale on 2/1/17 and a pending sale was posted on 6/6/17. We have been advised the prospective new owners attended the 7/17/17 scoping meeting and immediately took action to cancel their purchase because of the potential for the distribution lines to become the main feature to be viewed from that property. This should leave no question about the negative impacts the potential distribution lines pose for owners living in Organ Mesa Ranch 1A and 1B.
1272-R2-7	I	E	5	It is requested that BLM Las Cruces take specific steps to direct EPE to include potential property value reductions in the EA. As Mr. John Curry stated near the end of the 7/17/17 meeting, there are a number of property valuation resources available to EPE to address these important factors.
1272-R2-7	I	E	6	In addition to the negative impacts on property values, potential Sites 3 and 3-A would have negative visual impacts on the Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks National Monument due to the installation of the distribution lines.
1272-R2-7	I	E	7	Proposed Sites 1 and 2 would also have negative visual and property value impacts for adjacent property owners and negative visual impacts to the currently open vista to the Organ Mountain-Desert Peaks National Monument that exists beyond the current transmission and distribution lines located near the existing Talavera Temporary Substation.
1272-R2-7	I	E	8	The only proposed site that seems suitable for EPE's substation and transmission/distribution lines appears to be Site 11. It is in an undeveloped area that already has established distribution line corridors and they set back well to the north of Dripping Springs Road to minimize the visual impacts and property value impacts. The additional advantage of selecting Site 11 would be that, given the absence of developed properties, any one undertaking future development would be aware of the existence of the substation and developers/owners would be investing with the knowledge of any negative impacts.

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1272-R2-7	I	E	9	Sites 1, 2, 3 and 3-A all pose negative impacts to heavily developed areas. We recommend Site 11.
1289-R2-1	I	E	1	First of all, the need for additional power capacity is not being driven by growth in the Talavera area, but by growth further north. Perhaps there are engineering reasons for locating the substation in Talavera, but it's not obvious to us why it should be located in our area. Why not put it further north closer to the demand growth?
1289-R2-1	I	E	2	Options 1,2, 3, and 3A are unacceptable to us as residents of Organ Mesa. They place the substation in a very visible position in close proximity to residences. This close proximity damages the ambiance of the area and will drive down real estate values.
1289-R2-1	I	E	3	We chose our lot specifically because it offered a great view of the Organ Mountains unobstructed by power lines. Options 3 and 3A would place distribution lines along Soledad Canyon Rd at the back of our property, between us and the Organ Mountains. These lines will detract from our view and negatively influence our property value. Already, one home sale in our neighborhood has been cancelled because of the possibility of view degradation caused by this project. If option 3 or 3A is selected the negative financial impact will be very real, not hypothetical.
1289-R2-1	I	E	4	If the substation must be located in the Talavera area, only options 8 and 11 make sense from an aesthetic standpoint. Option 8 would be the least visible choice and therefore least detrimental to the scenic beauty of the Organ Mountains not only for the residents, but for people passing by or on their way to the monument. We believe the objection raised by BLM regarding the shooting range could be easily resolved at minimal cost. Option 11, north of the high school, is more visible than option 8, but far more suitable than placing the station in a residential area. The surrounding land uses are non-residential and the sub-station would not stick out like a sore thumb.
1299-R2-1	I	E	1	As a home owner along Soledad Canyon Road, I cannot support the #3 locations for the substation. This would require wires & poles ruining the view of the Organ Mountains from my home. We paid for a premium lot and built our dream house oriented for the beautiful view of the Organ Mountains. I am a photographer & enjoy the awesome opportunities to photograph the sunsets, sunrises, lightning & cloud formations over the Organs. I cannot fathom the loss of this view. I know my property value would take a huge hit also. Who would want to buy a luxury home with a grand view of poles & wires?
1299-R2-1	I	E	2	I would not like to see a station on Dripping Springs Road either. That road is the gateway to the Organ Mountain Monument & represents Las Cruces as a destination, why add even more obstruction to the view?Also, any future home builds in the proximity of that area would come to a screeching halt. Why deny any future home owners of this wonderful area?
1299-R2-1	I	E	3	I would favor location 11 or near 11, as this would definitely cause less visual impact and loss of property value.
1299-R2-1	I	E	4	I also think site 8 should be revisited & hope that the BLM will not be strong armed by El Paso Electric.
1299-R2-1	I	E	5	It was apparent at the meeting last week that EPE had very little, if any interest in the home owners decreased property values or blocked views of the mountains.
1299-R2-1	I	E	6	We are in contact with a lawyer to see if any legal measures can be taken to prevent wires from obstructing our view.
1299-R2-1	I	E	7	Please do the right thing and preserve our wonderful views & property value. That is the reason we all live in this community.

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1347-R2-1	I	E	1	I am a resident of Organ Mesa Ranch and live in one of the closest homes located by the proposed location. I have "no" opposition to the building of the substation. As a resident of Las Cruces of 42 years, I have witnessed the growth of both Las Cruces, and Dona Ana County. I understand and support the need for additional strategic power to serve our community. I have seen many El Paso Electric substations and all have been professionally designed to blend into the geographical areas they are located. I am sure the Dripping Springs location will have the same professionally designed facility as others I have seen.
1347-R2-1	I	E	2	I do have a suggestion. I would change the name of the project from Talavera Substation to Dripping Springs Substation #1. The location of the proposed site (next to the temporary substation already in place #1) is not located in, or a part of the Talavera area.
1347-R2-1	I	E	3	<p>t is my understanding that Talavera residents are complaining and do not support the proposed location along Dripping Springs Road Their reasoning is "unreasonable". The talk is, the residents of Talavera do not want to drive past the site and see the substation. This is a poor excuse to impede growth to the City of Las Cruces and Dona Ana County. These same residents who are complaining about driving past the site of the proposed substation #1 to their residences east or workplace west along Dripping Springs Road are the same group of people that opposed the new Centennial High School. Their complaints of increased traffic flows, increased crime from students, and other issues, have never happened. The Talavera and Desert Mirage subdivisions are located 1/2 mile to many miles away from the proposed site. The proposed location will have no immediate or long term effects or impact to the Talavera, or Desert Mirage subdivisions. The proposed location #1 could not in any way reduce property values due to the construction of the substation.</p> <p>Over the past 42 years, I have seen residents move into the city or county who want to dictate and make rules for the benefit themselves and not the long term growth of our city or county. There should be no reason other than a self-serving reason to halt the construction of the proposed substation #1 by Talavera residents especially along the power lines on Dripping Springs Road. The proposed substation #1 will pose no immediate threats to the Talavera residents. The only residents that might complain are the residents located immediately in the specific construction area which totals about 5 homes (Organ Mesa Ranch Phase 1 and Phase 3). As stated I am one of those residents who does not oppose the construction.</p> <p>Neither El Paso Electric or the BLM should halt construction of the substation due to these petty complaints. Residents of our community need to consider the long-term power needs to serve the City of Las Cruces and Dona Ana County. Increased power will lead to more community development which is welcomed. Dona County and the City of Las Cruces will continue to grow, and there is no need to stop progress for the future. Once again, as a residence located in the immediate area (Organ Mesa Ranch Phase 1) of the proposed substation, I fully support the construction project as designated in the letter and map of the project.</p> <p>El Paso Electric should be allowed to continue and move forward in the construction of the project.</p>
1411-R2-1	I	E	1	On July 17, 2017, the BLM and representatives from EPEC held a meeting with the residents of Talavera, Organ Mesa, and Desert Mirage subdivisions. The stated intent was to present various options for placement of a new four-acre substations, and attending transmission lines, with "supposedly" no predetermined course of action having been set. Several options were presented, with cost of development and implementation seemingly the overriding consideration of where to place this new substation. Apparently, decisions had already been made, again, with cost being the overriding factor.
1411-R2-1	I	E	2	While I have zero objections to having sufficient power for the foreseeable future to power lights, computers, heating, cooling, etc, I have serious objections on placing a four-acre substation near the entrance or access to Organ Mountains Desert Peaks National Monument, or the surrounding subdivisions. The National Monument was defined and created to protect the area from development. A four-acre substation is clearly inconsistent with protecting the natural beauty of the area.

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Submission ID	Entity Type	Submittal Method	Comment No	Comment
1411-R2-1	I	E	3	With nearly 1,000 residences in the area, placing a four-acre substation anywhere near those residences will obscure the spectacular views they currently enjoy. Not only do most of the subdivisions tout "underground utilities" as a selling point, numerous residents will take a substantial financial loss to the values of their property values when power lines and/or substations are put in near their property.
1411-R2-1	I	E	4	On a personal note, my spouse and I specifically turned down the purchase of an exceptionally nice home in North Jornada when we discovered major transmission lines were running through the easement behind the property. Not only did it destroy the view of the Organ Mountain, but the humming and buzzing was disconcerting at best. We purchased in Talavera instead to avoid these types of lines and infrastructure.
1411-R2-1	I	E	5	My request is simple. Please place this proposed substation well away from any from any residents in the Talavera / Organ Mesa subdivisions. There were several options near Centennial High School, south of the landfill / dump, and to the east of Sonoma Ranch Blvd, that have zero residential presence.
1411-R2-1	I	E	6	While it may be more expensive to place a substation in one of those locations, EPEC should not be placing the difference in cost of locating the substation on the backs of residents that have chosen to build their homes in an area currently unobstructed by commercial utility and infrastructure.
1444-R2-1	I	E	1	It seems most unfortunate that the best location (least expensive for ELP) for the new substation is along Dripping Springs Road at site #2. We feel that the location close to the high school would be more appropriate (least obtrusive). There are no homes close enough to be impacted like in the Talavera community.
1444-R2-1	I	E	2	We drove by the Arroyo Substation and it's nicely hidden behind the hills at the end of Lohman. No home views are affected and the height is mostly hidden by the hills.
1444-R2-1	I	E	3	Site #2 dramatically affects some of the homeowners of Organ Mesa and would not be pleasing to drive by daily for the thousands of residents east of Organ Mesa. Night lights at the site would further diminish our night sky views here.
1444-R2-1	I	E	4	site #3A could be a good spot since it sits so close to the existing transmission lines and could be connected directly behind the site. There was talk about having to buy private land to access the lines from there. How much land could that be? Have the owners been contacted? What cost difference would there be in buying land to run from #3-A directly back to the existing transmission lines vs running new lines all around? Question – isn't there an access road that runs under the power lines already? Why couldn't it be upgraded to access #3-A?
1444-R2-1	I	E	5	Transmission lines along Soledad Canyon and Dripping Springs roads cannot be tolerated. Those homeowners purchased in neighborhood that offered underground utilities (which those fees were passed along to each homeowner). We see the installation of huge transmission lines severely hurting the resale/home values of the homes along Soledad and impacting those homes further from the road because of the diminished views. Too bad this issue wasn't pursued further when the smaller substation was put in place a few years ago.
1444-R2-1	I	E	6	What can be done to minimize the impact of the substation to our community?
1462-R2-1	I	C	1	BLM stand by us! Protect Dripping Springs Road and Soledad Canyon! It is area we dearly love!! We support Area III!

Appendix D. Scoping Period 2 Comments

Submission ID	Entity Type	Submittal Method	Comment No	Comment
1463-R2-1	I	E	1	<p>I would like to add my comments to the El Paso Electric Company's request regarding sites for their new electric substation east of Las Cruces. My husband and I have lived in the Talavera area for over 25 years, moving to Las Cruces in 1990 and choosing our homesite on Ladera Canyon Road because of the beautiful and peaceful conditions that exist here. We knew at that time that things would change over the years - there was no way that the area would remain undeveloped and certainly that has been the case. When we built our home there were about 30 homes total here and now they must number over 400. There have been some changes we have enjoyed - a paved road all the way from town as well as mail and newspaper delivery. We have not been as thrilled with the increased traffic but there is certainly one thing that all our neighbors can agree on and speak to with a single voice - we all love the views and the natural beauty of the area.</p> <p>It is a given that increasing area population and development demand increased infrastructure. There are always some compromises that have to be made. There was a huge change in the region when the new high school and Sonoma Ranch Road extension were proposed and built. Having the new cell phone tower erected next to the fire station was necessary but we appreciate the fact that it was made as unobtrusive as possible. We all want the latest technology and would not be happy if our electricity needs were unmet but since there are options for sites that do not so negatively impact our area visually I would propose that one of those sites, #8 or #11, be chosen. Even the small, temporary substation that was built along Dripping Springs Road is an eyesore that detracts from the drive home. There is really no way to mitigate the visual impact of a major substation. The beauty and challenge of the desert is the unobstructed (hopefully) views for miles around. Not only would homeowners in Talavera, Organ Mesa and Desert Mirage be impacted by the visual pollution of the electrical substation, visitors to the Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks National Monument would have to drive by it on their way to the park. It seems that the BLM would be very interested in keeping the corridor to the Monument as beautiful as possible <u>considering how much money was spent in improving access to the area</u></p>
1463-R2-1	I	E	2	<p>Las Cruces is blessed with the natural beauty of the Organ Mountains and the desert areas that surround them. It is a major reason we chose to relocate to this area in 1990 and certainly the reason that led us to build our home and live our lives here. It is a sight we never tire of and never stop commenting on whether we are in town looking out towards the mountains or sitting on our patio looking at the valley or foothills in our backyard. Our three daughters who grew up here and now live around the country all have large photographs of the Organ Mountains up in their homes because they are such a symbol of their childhoods. Please do not allow El Paso Electric to visually pollute those views in order to save some construction dollars. As the steward of our public lands we trust you to make the decision that best protects those lands and by proxy views of those lands for everyone in the community. You have the power to speak for all of us.</p>
1463-R2-1	I	E	3	<p>Thank you for the opportunity to express my views and I hope that you will not allow El Paso Electric to negatively impact so many people by allowing them access to a site which would forever change the landscape around our homes.</p>
1464-R2-1	I	E	1	<p>Please go with options #8 or #11 and keep this stuff away from existing residential areas.</p>
1465-R2-1	I	E	1	<p>The purpose of this email is to voice opposition to the proposed permanent Talavera substation adjacent to the existing temporary substation along Dripping Springs Road.</p> <p>Building the substation at this location will have a seriously negative impact on residents in the surrounding area as well as everyone else who travels along Dripping Springs Road to partake in activities in the Organ Mountains. The substation would negatively affect both property values and scenery.</p>
1465-R2-1	I	E	2	<p>Building the substation in a more remote location would have less impact on the residents in the area.</p>
1466-R2-1	I	E	1	<p>Locating a substantially larger substation near its current location in Talavera would create an unsightly structure which would disrupt the views of surrounding mountains and landscape for current residents regardless of how it would be disguised.</p>
1466-R2-1	I	E	2	<p>The elevated electric lines running between the current subdivisions would also create an unsightly and disruptive view of the Organ Mountains for those homeowners west of the proposed power lines. There are current home owners who consider <u>the beauty of the landscape as their most valuable asset</u>.</p>

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Submission ID	Entity Type	Submittal Method	Comment No	Comment
1466-R2-1	I	E	3	Home owners currently living near all other proposed substation sites, and with the accompanying views of elevated power lines, would have less desirable property resulting in lower property values.
1466-R2-1	I	E	4	In light of the above, I advocate construction of the substation near the high school (site #11) where it would not impact the vistas of the Organ Mountains or affect property values of the Talavera subdivisions. Site #11 is currently less developed and, as such, provides additional landscape avenues to future land owners and homesite developers, thereby providing them the opportunity to decide how to best orient their domicile and structures in order to minimize the effect of the substation and its accompanying overhead power lines.
1467-R2-1	I	E	1	The allure to the area are the Organ Mountains, which serve as a beautiful, scenic backdrop for all the property owners.
1467-R2-1	I	E	2	As I mentioned to you before, if BLM would work with EPEC in securing adequate access to the proposed sites # 6 or 7, that would keep the new substation approximately 3/4 mile north of Dripping Springs Road with no NEW transmission Lines.....only the distribution lines that are proposed in sites 1 and 2.
1467-R2-1	I	E	3	It would devastate the property values if sites 3 or 3A were selected, thereby running distributions lines along Soledad Canyon Road and west along Dripping Springs Road. As you pointed out, there are many overhead lines throughout the city but they are not as visible as they would be on these major roads.
1467-R2-1	I	E	4	Please talk to Bill Childress about my suggestion of sites 6 or 7. I would be happy to help out if BLM would move in that direction. Thank you.