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February 28, 2012

Docket Control
Arizona Corporation Commission
1200 W. Washington
Phoenix, AZ 85007

RE: Arizona Public Service Company TS-5 to TS-9 500/230kV Transmission Line Project, Docket No. L-00000D-08-0330-00138

On February 17, 2012, the Bureau of Land Management provided a newsletter updating interested parties, stakeholders and residents in the study area on Arizona Public Service Company's proposed transmission line project from Sun Valley to Morgan (Line Siting Case No. 138, previously named TS-5 to TS-9). Attached please find a copy of the provided newsletter.

If you have any questions regarding this information, please contact me at (602)250-2661.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey W. Johnson

JJ/cd

Arizona Corporation Commission
DOCKETED

FEB 28 2012

DOCKETED BY

Proposed APS Sun Valley to Morgan Project
ATTN: Joe Incardine, National Project Manager
BLM Phoenix District Office
21605 North 7th Avenue
Phoenix, Arizona 85027

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Project Update Inside!

PROPOSED APS SUN VALLEY TO MORGAN

500/230kV TRANSMISSION LINE PROJECT & PROPOSED RMP AMENDMENT

Opportunities to Learn More

Website: ***http://www.blm.gov/az/st/en/prog/energy/aps-sunvalley.html***

Project Information Line: 1-800-578-4133

Mailing List: Watch for further project updates in your mailbox, including notice of the publication of the draft EIS.

You can get more information about the Proposed APS Sun Valley to Morgan Transmission Line Project by writing to:

Proposed APS Sun Valley to Morgan Project
ATTN: Joe Incardine, National Project Manager
BLM Phoenix District Office
21605 North 7th Avenue
Phoenix, Arizona 85027

Or by e-mail to: *SunValley-Morgan@blm.gov*

You can also use either of these methods to ask that your name be removed from the mailing list.

Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other person identifying information in your correspondence, be advised that your entire correspondence – including your personal identifying information – may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your correspondence to withhold from public review your personal identifying information, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so. Please note that any correspondence submitted will be considered informal and may or may not receive a response from the BLM.

PROPOSED APS SUN VALLEY TO MORGAN

500/230kV Transmission Line Project & Proposed RMP Amendment

FEBRUARY 2012

BLM

IMPORTANT UPCOMING DATES

Summer 2012
Publish Draft EIS/
Draft RMP Amendment

Fall 2012
Draft EIS/
Draft RMP Amendment
Comment Period

Spring 2013
Publish Final EIS and
RMP Amendment

Summer 2013
Record of Decision

INTRODUCTION

This is an update from the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) on the status of the Proposed Sun Valley to Morgan 500/230kV Transmission Line Project. The proposed transmission line would span approximately 38 miles and would connect Arizona Public Service's (APS) planned Sun Valley Substation near the Town of Buckeye with the existing Morgan Substation near the City of Peoria.

The BLM has identified a range of alternatives, as required by Federal law, to consider as it prepares an environmental impact statement (EIS).

BACKGROUND

APS submitted their original proposal to the Arizona Corporation Commission (ACC) in July 2008. In March 2009, the ACC certificated a route that modified the original APS proposal to include public lands north of State Route (SR) 74. APS subsequently filed a right-of-way (ROW) application with the BLM. The BLM rejected APS's original ROW application in April 2010 because the Bradshaw-Harquahala Resource Management Plan (RMP) did not include a BLM-designated utility corridor along SR 74. APS appealed the decision and in December 2010, the BLM State Director agreed to initiate an EIS to consider an amendment to the RMP to include a utility corridor.

The BLM, as the lead agency, is responsible for making a decision on whether to amend the RMP, and if amended, whether to issue a ROW grant for the project proposed by APS, another action alternative or the no action alternative. Cooperating agencies who are involved in the decision are Arizona State Land Department, City of Peoria, City of Surprise, Luke Air Force Base, Maricopa County Association of Governments, and the Environmental Protection Agency.

PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES TO BE EVALUATED

Proposed Action

Would follow the ACC-designated route beginning at the planned Sun Valley Substation and follow the CAP canal before turning northwest to follow an existing transmission line. The route would then turn north at Happy Valley Road before paralleling the south side of SR 74 for approximately 2 miles before crossing and paralleling the north side of SR 74 for approximately 5 miles and then crossing back to the south side of SR 74 for 3 more miles. The route then connects to the Morgan Substation. An RMP amendment would be required to establish a utility corridor.

Alternative 1:
Proposed Action with Additional Corridor

Amend the land use plan to establish a half-mile corridor north of SR 74. The route would be the same as proposed. However, it would be expanded to allow other utility uses, such as additional transmission lines or pipelines.

Alternative 2:
Right-of-Way South of SR 74

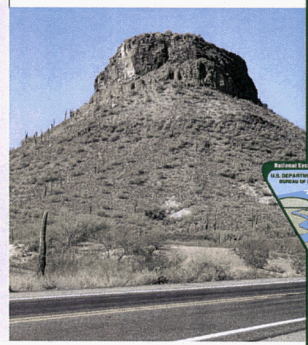
A 5-mile segment on private land south of SR 74 from 163rd Avenue to just west of the El Mirage Road alignment would be substituted for land north of SR 74. The right-of-way width would remain at 200 feet. A land use amendment would designate all BLM lands south of SR 74 as a multi-use corridor. BLM land use would be reduced to about 4 miles along SR 74. Other segments of the corridor would remain as proposed by APS.

Alternate 3:
Carefree Highway Route

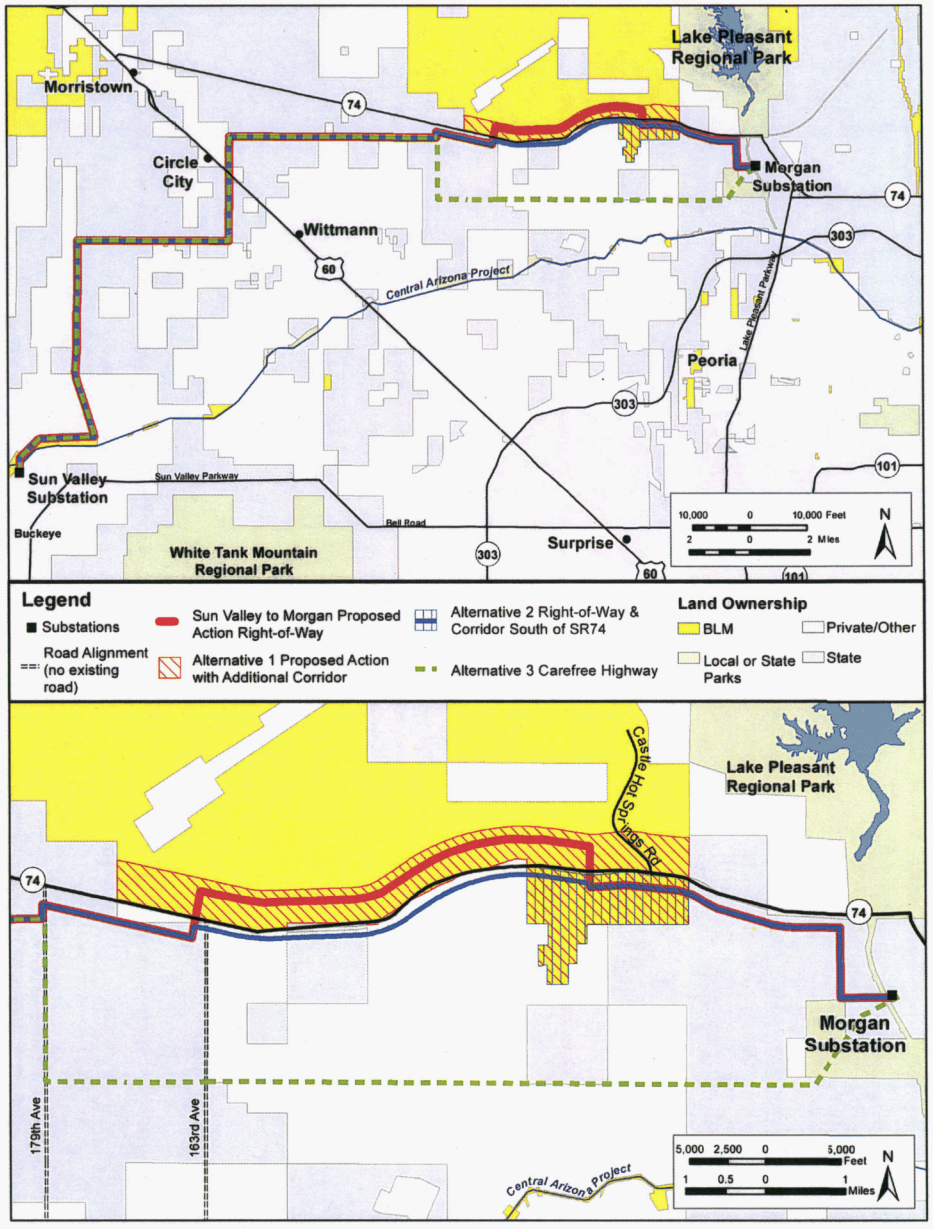
A 9-mile segment north of SR 74 from the 179th Avenue alignment to the Morgan Substation would be replaced by using the Carefree Highway alignment. Under this alternative, use of BLM land would be limited to about 2 miles. No new corridors would be designated on Federal land and no land-use plan amendment would be required.

No Action

BLM would not approve a right-of way for use of lands it manages. No land-use plan amendment would be required. APS could choose to seek a different route for the transmission line that did not require Federal lands.



ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED ACTION

In addition to fully analyzing the Proposed Action, the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires Federal agencies to consider and evaluate a reasonable range of alternatives. The range of alternatives must meet the BLM's purpose and need for the Proposed Action while also minimizing or avoiding environmental impacts. Reasonable alternatives are defined by the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) as those that are technically, economically, and environmentally practical and feasible. NEPA does not require analysis of an alternative that is determined to be unreasonable, with the rationale for eliminating an alternative from detailed analysis explained in the EIS. The following table provides a brief description and comparison of the Proposed Action and Alternatives being analyzed in the EIS.

Proposed Action	Alternative 1: Proposed Action with Additional Corridor	Alternative 2: ROW South of SR 74	Alternative 3: Carefree Highway Route	No Action Alternative
200-foot wide ROW and single-use BLM corridor within the ACC-certificated route	200-foot wide ROW within a BLM multi-use corridor (1/2 mile wide) immediately north of SR 74, includes the entire block of BLM land south of SR 74	200-foot wide ROW within a BLM multi-use corridor immediately on the south side of SR 74; includes entire block of BLM land south of SR 74	200-foot wide ROW parallel to the Carefree Highway alignment	BLM would not approve the ROW grant and the RMP would not be amended
BLM RMP amendment required	BLM RMP amendment required	BLM RMP amendment required	No BLM RMP amendment required	No BLM RMP amendment required
No additional ACC action would be needed by proponent	No additional ACC action would be needed by proponent	Further ACC action would be needed by proponent	Further ACC action would be needed by proponent	Further ACC action would be needed by proponent
• Follows the ACC-certificated route • Impacts visual and recreational values prescribed in BLM RMP	• Follows the ACC-certificated route • Allows BLM consideration of additional future utility development • Allows for alternate placement of the eastern-most crossing of SR 74 • Impacts visual and recreational values prescribed in BLM RMP	• Eliminates two proposed crossings of SR 74 • Responds to public comments to avoid impacts to BLM lands north of SR 74 • Allows BLM consideration of additional future utility development • Preserves visual and recreational values prescribed in BLM RMP	• Eliminates need for RMP amendment • Reduces amount of potentially impacted BLM lands • APS's originally proposed route in their ACC certification process • Preserves visual and recreational values prescribed in BLM RMP	• Proposed Action would not be adopted • Does not satisfy APS's 10-year plan. The 500/230kV transmission line would still be needed • Preserves visual and recreational values prescribed in BLM RMP