

U.S. Department of Energy  
Public Meeting on  
Draft National Interest Electric Transmission Corridor Designations  
*Las Vegas, NV*  
*June 20, 2007*

## Meeting Transcript

David Meyer:

Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. I'm David Meyer from the Department of Energy. I will be chairing this public meeting this afternoon. I'm accompanied by Mary Morton from DOE's Office of General Counsel and Mary and I will be here receiving, listening to the public comments. But there are others from DOE who are here with us if you want to engage them in sidebar conversations; there'll be that opportunity as well.

The way we will operate here, first I will give a PowerPoint presentation about the Draft National Corridors, the rationale for them, what the effects of designation would be, what some of the things that would not happen as a result of designation as well. After that presentation then we will first hear statements from elected officials or public officials if they want to speak, and then we'll hear statements from private individuals who want to speak.

And since we -- it appears that we're going to have a whole lot of time, we will give -- we'll be generous in terms of the -- more generous than we have been able to be in other meetings in terms of allowing people ample opportunity to make their presentations. In some of the other meetings we've had to ask people to just sort of give us the headlines of their point of view and provide -- if they wanted to provide supporting detail to do that in written form. But here we have a little more time so we can relax that rule a little bit.

So let's start with the PowerPoint presentation. First I want to give you some of the background concerning transmission -- the transmission infrastructure background to the Energy Policy Act of 2005.

In the several years prior to the enactment of the law, the Congress became increasingly aware of underlying problems in the transmission area. In particular, there has been a period of protracted underinvestment in the transmission sector going back for perhaps 25 years. During this period, demand growth increased very substantially, in the range of 60%. There was comparable increase in generation capacity but there was no comparable increase in transmission capacity and so the result of this sustained underinvestment in transmission means that the wholesale buyers or wholesale electricity sellers are not able to use the transmission system to move the volume of power that they would like to from the generation sources to the load centers to the urban areas where the power is used.

So this means that people -- that the buyers in the urban areas have to turn to alternative sources that are typically higher priced, or beyond a certain point protracted underinvestment leads to a greater -- to reliability problems, a greater risk of blackouts, undue dependence on a relatively narrow range of local suppliers. And it -- another major point that the Congress was concerned about was the fact that electricity markets, wholesale electricity markets, are now regional in size, multi-state in size, and the

transmission networks have to be planned and developed and operated on a regional basis.

And finally, yes, we're all becoming increasingly concerned about the carbon aspects of our electricity infrastructure; but nonetheless much of the new generation capacity that will be needed is going to be sited distant from load, whether it's renewables, or new nuclear, or clean coal that's sited at the mine mouth area. And so it means that under a wide range of possible electricity supply futures, transmission will continue to be an essential part of the infrastructure that that we're going to need.

So with these considerations in mind, the Congress enacted the transmission components of the Energy Policy Act of 2005; the Act has several provisions in it that are related to transmission. And I won't go through all of these, but the major ones. The Congress was very much aware of the need for a multi-pronged approach to our electricity's supply problems, starting with the need for increased emphasis on energy efficiency, enhanced demand response, and demand management, so that the Act requires -- the Act respects state sovereignty with respect to a lot of basic electricity policy matters. So it requires the states to consider adopting policies directing utilities to strengthen their energy efficiency and related kinds of programs. It also requires DOE to set efficiency standards for a wider range of consumer products.

But in terms of our meeting here today, the important components of the Act were that the Act requires DOE to conduct a national study on transmission congestion every three years, and then it authorizes DOE to designate certain areas if the Secretary finds it appropriate to do so, designate certain areas as National Electric Transmission Corridors.

Now let me go back to the congestion study element for a moment here and tell you what congestion is in a technical sense. That is, transmission congestion occurs when wholesale buyers or wholesale sellers can't put the volume of electricity on the system that they would like to safely. That is, the people who are responsible for operating the grid in real time from time to time have to tell the users of the system, "Sorry, you can't do that transaction. You're going to have to go somewhere else or we will have to try the route the power that you're trying to buy through some alternative route. But if we can't do that, you're going to have to turn to another source."

So transmission congestion means almost automatically higher prices for consumers. It also means, as I've noted before, an increasing likelihood of -- if the congestion goes uncorrected for a period of time, continues to worsen and increase, it does lead to reliability problems and a greater risk of blackouts.

So let me turn now to the effects of the designation of National Corridors, that is, we have Draft Corridors, which I'll talk about the one affecting this area in a moment. But if any such designation were to be made final, the first effect would be that it would signify that the federal government has concluded that the transmission congestion problem in the particular area is significant, is a matter of national concern, and it needs to be attended to promptly. Secondly, final designation of the Corridor would enable the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, under certain circumstances, to assert jurisdiction to site transmission facilities in these corridors, or in such a corridor.

However, there are certain preconditions that -- at least one of which would have to be met before FERC could exercise that jurisdiction, and I'll go through those preconditions here. There are some states where the states simply -- there is no state agency that has the authority to approve the siting of transmission lines. That's only a few states, but there are a few where this is the case. Or, in some cases, there is an agency that has that kind of

authority, but its authorities are still limited in the sense that the agency is not authorized to take benefits outside the state into account as it makes its decision. Or there may be other provisions concerning whether the entity serves end-use customers in the state, things of that kind. But most of the states that have those kinds of provisions are actively considering new legislation to amend their authorities to, in effect, eliminate these options.

It's the fourth one that has attracted the most attention, that is, if the state has withheld approval for a proposed facility for more than a year, then the applicant could petition FERC to assume jurisdiction. Whether FERC would elect to assume jurisdiction or not is uncertain, and even if it did assume jurisdiction, there are certain findings that it would have to meet before it could approve the project. It would have to find that it would be in the public interest to authorize the siting and construction of the project. And if the state had previously ruled that it was not in the public interest, you can see how then the challenge before FERC would be do they have a solid, sufficient basis to, in effect, overturn the state decision? So that's not something that any federal agency would undertake lightly. It would have to conclude that it had a very sound reason for doing so.

Now I want to turn to some of the effects that designation would not have because there is considerable confusion about the effects of the designation. First, the designation -- it recognizes and underscores the existence of a major congestion problem but it is entirely silent on how that problem should be resolved. And in the draft descriptions of the corridors and the rationale for the corridors, we have sought to emphasize that there are alternative ways to deal with these congestion problems.

Brad, if you can go ahead to the next slide; the next one.

In our congestion study that we published in August of 2006, we identified two areas of the country as critical congestion areas. They were: in the west this orange area, Southern California from the Los Angeles area down to the San Diego. And this area is -- and there's a comparable area on the east coast, a larger area, that stems from the area north of New York City, south along the Atlantic Coast through the cities -- the areas where -- Philadelphia, Baltimore, Wilmington, Washington D.C., down close to the Richmond, VA, area as one continuous critical congestion area.

And sort of the definitive feature of these areas is that demand in these areas is very high, it is continuing to grow, the available generation capacity in these areas or even out in some of the outlying areas is not able to meet that demand, not sufficient to meet that demand, and the transmission capacity outside the region to move electricity in is also very limited. So that from the perspective of the grid operators who have to operate this system from hour to hour, the question is what are they going to -- how are they going to keep the lights on in this area, because they've got these three different options to work with but they still don't necessarily add up to enough to reliably meet demand.

So in terms of ways to solve the congestion problem, you can site more generation close to the load, maybe. But you've got to take into account air quality problems, water requirements for generation, the problems of siting something like a power plant in an urban area or very close to a densely-populated area. Yes, you can do things like rooftop solar, or there is technology called distributed generation which is very small generation; that's typically natural gas-fired systems that you could site in, say, shopping centers or something like that. So there are some of those kinds of options but applying them on a massive scale is not an easy thing to do.

Obviously you could increase energy conservation efforts to dampen down demand, but California has had a very energetic, very active, ambitious energy conservation/energy efficiency program in place for several years. So to ramp that up yet higher is, again, not an easy trick. Or you can build new transmission to some reliable -- or some sufficient sources, generation sources, outside this area. Now DOE in drafting the Corridor, we wanted to stay totally away from this question of how this problem needs to be solved. The Act did not authorize DOE to select solutions or to favor solutions. On the contrary, there are existing authorities, typically states, and now, under certain conditions, the FERC, that have those kinds of responsibilities and it would have been totally inappropriate for DOE to insert itself and start advocating solutions to the problem. Our role has been to identify the problem, call attention to it.

So now go back to one -- keep -- right. So we -- the designation would not determine how the affected areas congestion problems should be resolved. The designation would not propose, direct, or order anyone to do anything. It certainly would not endorse particular transmission projects. There are--in some areas, both east and west--there are some active proposals that have been put forward for new transmission, but we're not endorsing those projects in any way. And certainly designation would not alter or circumvent the need for compliance with any existing federal environmental requirements with respect to transmission or other kinds of electricity infrastructure.

So we're not here today to debate the merits of the Energy Policy Act. There are -- such debates are active now before the Congress, which is the appropriate place for those kinds of discussions. But that's not on the table here. The DOE is -- our responsibility is to implement the Act as written. And similarly, we're not here to debate the merits of particular transmission projects or of non-wires alternatives to those projects. We want to hear your views about whether designation of a National Corridor in this general area is appropriate, and if so, where should the boundaries be drawn?

So let me give you a little more information about how we got to this particular map. That is, this area here is what we are proposing as the Draft National Corridor and we bounded this area in the following way; that is, we identified some major wind resources up here that are actively being considered for development to serve this area. There are also renewables down in this area that are actively being considered. There is generation capacity here that could serve this area if additional transmission were available. And there are a lot of generation resources being talked about for development out in here, but our thinking was that if we designate this area as a corridor, in effect we're telling the prospective developers of this capacity if they get their product to this area or to this area, that that would then -- those are the kinds of portals to this electricity market here.

So we wanted to make the Corridor big enough to enable any of those kinds of options to go forward. And the actual boundaries of the Corridor are coincident with county boundaries; that is, we selected Clark County in Nevada, three counties in Arizona, and seven counties in California, and the boundaries of those several counties then determine the boundaries of the Corridor. And we realized that everyone was going to know exactly what bound the Corridor. We couldn't have a vaguely-defined boundary. We didn't want to send surveyors out into the field to set out some arbitrary line that we had selected, so we went with pre-existing, known boundaries, namely county boundaries.

So I've covered most of these decisions except -- or most of these concerns about the Corridor map. I want to emphasize this one here, though, that is that -- the problems that have led us to propose the designation of these corridors. The problems are real. They're not going to go away. They demand attention in some fashion. And so there is a time to debate the options, most notably before state officials and local officials. But those

discussions and debates can't go on indefinitely. We have to keep an eye on the calendar and stay ahead of the problem.

This is a graphic that illustrates the transmission system in California and the Southwest. This orange area corresponds to, in a sort of notional way, to the congestion area that I showed in the previous map. This encompasses the major transmission feeds into that area from out of state, some of them from Nevada, some from Arizona. There is this one that comes all the way down from the Pacific Northwest. But these are all interrelated in that if one of these is heavily loaded, it has effects on how much you can deliver from these alternative approaches. It's the nature of the electricity system that these are so interactive that, say, this one here is heavily loaded you cannot just casually start moving additional power across this area because it will tend -- because of the way the system works some of that electricity is likely to feed down here and overload this line whether you want it or not.

And so you have to be very careful about keeping these things balanced. So that alone says that in coming up with solutions you have to look at the big picture in terms of your thinking; you can't just look at one particular solution, you have to be very concerned about how your proposed solution is going to affect this broader area.

I want to speak very briefly about the duration of National Corridors. Any of these solutions to the congestion problem, whether the development of more effective energy efficiency programs or the development of generation close to load or the development of new transmission, any of those options takes several years to put in place. And what this means is that in order for a designation of a National Corridor to be relevant it has to be in place for a period of several years. So the Act did not specify a term for corridors, it left that decision to DOE; we have proposed a default period of 12 years for these designations. But we have also said in our notice that we would reserve the option of designating for some alternate period in particular cases if there appeared to be reason to do so. So we welcome comments from commenters on that particular subject, on the duration issue.

I mentioned blackouts and I want simply to reinforce that this problem is real. This graphic illustrates two blackouts in relatively recent memory. This one is the most recent; this is the August 2003 blackout in the Northeast. This one was the largest ever blackout in the United States, or in North America for that matter, in terms of the number of people affected and the amount of generation and amount of demand that was blacked out. Now this is an earlier one from 1996 that affected obviously a much larger area geographically. And there have been other, more localized blackouts, rolling blackouts, in Southern California since that time.

I've talked about these points; I won't go over them. Next steps for DOE, the comment period closes on July 6 and after that -- after the close of that comment period we will review all comments received and then we will prepare recommendations to the Secretary concerning possible designation of National Corridors in these areas that are under discussion now. If a final designation is issued there would be a 30 day period, an automatic 30 day rehearing period and without -- unless DOE were to decide otherwise, the rule would become -- or the designation would become final at the end of that 30 day period.

So we welcome your comments, either oral comments here or written comments by the 6th of July, or both. If you have questions, you can direct them to me at the contacts shown here. I'll be happy to talk with you this afternoon if there's opportunity to do that.

Mary, would you tell people what the procedure and requirements are concerning the filing of written comments?

Mary Morton:

Sure. Good afternoon. I just wanted to point out David has done a good job of giving a high-level overview of the Draft Designation we put out, but we actually have an 80-page Federal Register notice that we published that gives a great deal of additional detail and explanation, responds to most of the comments we've received on the congestion study. And for those of you who haven't had a chance to look at this and who are considering filing comments, I would strongly urge that you take a look at it. It's available on the DOE website; it's listed up there.

The first page of that notice there's also a description of how to go about filing written comments. It's not that complicated but there are just a couple little jots and tittles we need you to do to make sure it gets in the correct docket. Conversely, if you've written comments that you've brought with you today and you want to just leave them in the box outside, that will suffice as well. But I urge you folks who haven't had a chance to look through this document, because this is really the document that folks need to be responding to. Thanks.

David Meyer:

Okay. I'm going to turn things over now to Jody Erikson. Jody is a facilitator that has been helping us with these public meetings. Jody is not a DOE employee. She works for an organization called The Keystone Center in Colorado, also an office in Washington D.C., but I'll let you Jody tell you more about Keystone and what they do and how they do it.

Jody Erikson:

Yes, my name is Jody Erikson with the Keystone Center. The mission of The Keystone Center in broad is improving public policy collaborative decision making, and we have two arms of our organization. One is the Environmental Conflict Resolution Mediation Facilitation work, which is the part I'm in. We also have an arm that is working on public policy decision making for future generations. So we have a science camp and we also develop curriculum for teachers and train teachers in science and deliberative processes.

So as an independent my job here is about process. So I'm going to talk quickly about what the process is going to be. Everyone has two minutes; that has been the same for all these meetings. Because there are so few folks here I'm going to give you your two minutes and your second two minutes all together. So I'm not going to be holding up my - - I have warning cards that are orange and red but because this meeting there's so few speakers we're not going to hold you quite as strictly.

DOE, just so you know, is not a siting organization. So I know that some of you are here for specific line issues, on a line that's proposed in your community. And although DOE doesn't do siting issues, talking -- helping them make the connection between the specific issue that you are concerned about and how the designation will impact that, helps DOE make that connection between the specific line and this policy.

There's lots of different opinions on these issues, so be respectful of each other. Sticking to your time and not oing would be great.

I am going to have an elected official speak first, and then pre-registered and then people who signed up to speak today. We have so few folks so if you -- when we're done with those folks if you're inspired to get up and say what your concerns are or what you see as benefits of this following those folks, feel free. We just need you to make sure you say your name for the record, so to speak. This meeting is being transcribed or recorded and then will be transcribed and posted on the website.

So Chris Munhall? Great, I'm going to have you speak first. And then Ed Legge and then Jeff Gordon. So come on up right to this mic right here.

Chris Munhall:

Thank you. My name is Chris Munhall. I work for Clark County in the County Manager's office. I appreciated the presentation. Really didn't have a lot of background but I wanted to come here and hear it and took some comfort in I guess your role in terms of being a siting authority and establishment of the corridor.

But nevertheless did want to share with you an issue that we have in terms of a siting. And just to, I guess, give you a little background, back in 1998 the BLM adopted the Southern Nevada Resource Management Plan as a part of that established utility corridor along the highway 95 alignment, and some time after that it was formally recognized. And Clark County was fully supportive of that, recognized the need to centralize all the utilities in a central corridor and kind of went under the radar in terms of maybe some future issues.

And that kind of all came to light in the middle of 2006 when Valley Electric, which is a transmission company out of Pahrump Nye County, Nevada and wanted to tap into a transmission line in northwest Las Vegas and run it over to some existing facilities they had in Nye County. And what they wanted to do was establish a 230kb transmission line, some pretty large poles.

The utility corridor that was established in the Resource Management Plan ran right through the southern portion of a small community called Indian Springs, which is about 45 miles northwest of Las Vegas. BLM owns currently land on the east and west of the community. That land has been designated for future disposal.

When we heard about that we had some meetings and we got Congressman John Porter from the third district of Nevada involved, Juan Palma, who's head of the Las Vegas Field Office of the Bureau Land Management, and we talked about whether or not that really was the best place for that corridor to run, recognizing that Las Vegas is growing, starting to move out to the outlying areas. We're expecting some growth in Indian Springs and some of our other outlying communities and just wanted to make sure that that really was the best place to have a utility corridor.

And so we had some meetings and I think the consensus was that there really was a better place and that it was not too late to try to do something about it. Right now we have in that existing corridor that runs through Indian Springs, there's a Nevada power transmission line which are just those small wooden poles. And then the thought of this 230kb line and whatever might else come through that corridor, gas, water, other kinds of things, really just seemed like it was going to be a huge impact to that community, go through one of their precious resources which is Fisher Ranch, they have a natural artisan spring. Didn't want to see that go up; didn't want to see those huge power poles every couple hundred feet through the community.

So we're all working right now and Valley Electric's on board to move that transmission line, and actually the entire corridor, to the south side of what we call Grandpa Mountain, and that's just further south of the community of Indian Springs, also in BLM land. Valley Electric went through their EIS and that alternate corridor was recommended and looking to move forward with that. And then ideally we'd like to see the Southern Nevada Resource Management Plan amended to actually designate a new corridor, again further south, outside of the community of Indian Springs.

Thank you.

Jody Erikson:

Ed Legge.

Ed Legge:

Good afternoon. I'm Ed Legge. I'm here on behalf of the Edison Electric Institute. We are the Washington D.C.-based association that represents the nation's investor-owned utilities. They account for about 75% of the electricity produced and delivered in the United States. I'm going to read our prepared comments that give our opinion on the corridor designation process.

The geographic areas encompassed by the designations in this process are experiencing persistent congestion. They are of long-standing concern having been previously identified in the DOE's 2002 National Grid Study, the 2006 Congestion Study, and other analyses completed to support state reasonable and utility planning efforts. The proposed designation served notice to all stakeholders, states, and utilities that it is well past time for them to settle on appropriate solutions to resolve the identified congestion, whether through new generation, new transmission, conservation, or a combination thereof.

The Edison Electric Institute strongly supports the proposal to designate these two corridors. We support the DOE's decision in this case to draw geographic boundaries that are extremely broad and inclusive. The use of these broad geographic boundaries ensures that states will have maximum flexibility to craft the appropriate solutions for the congestion consistent with their policy preferences and local priorities. Such broad boundaries also assure that the DOE is not favoring one solution over another or endorsing particular proposed transmission projects at the expense of others.

We at EEI appreciate the challenge and the challenges that state siting authorities face when addressing transmission problems whose impacts are both local and regional. We support the state siting authorities and believe that the states typically are the best place for decisions to be made regarding new transmission infrastructure. However, the National Interest Corridor designations are essential for encouraging states to make timely decisions, inasmuch as the backstop siting authority of the Federal Regulatory Commission is available to an applicant if the state cannot or will not act to resolve these critical congestion problems as identified by the DOE.

We also recognize the need to consider alternatives to building transmission and to weight the impact of proposed projects on affected parties. We agree with DOE that because a National Interest Corridor does not embrace any particular solution, does not endorse any specific proposed project or compels any particular action by any party, these evaluations are best left to the states and to FERC should its backstop authority be accessed. Should the DOE undertake these evaluations, a result would constrain the options available to the states and FERC.

Finally, EEI believes that the nation needs a robust electricity grid that is reliable, efficient, and capable of delivering as much reasonably priced electricity as need to meet existing and future demand for electricity. The National Interest Corridor Designations are important for assuring this can be accomplished.

Thank you.

Jody Erikson:

Thank you. Jeff Gordon?

Jeff Gordon:

Good afternoon. I'm Jeff Gordon and I represent myself and my family. I definitely support designation of the Southwest area as a National Interest Electric Transmission

Corridor. Furthermore, I recommend expanding the proposed area to include areas of Nevada and California north of the areas presented in maps and slides and viewgraphs today.

Why do I say these things? Well I love our country and our way of life. I also love the environment. To keep America competitive worldwide, effective national transmission of electricity is definitely necessary. I think it's a critical requirement and absolutely essential.

As a person concerned about the environment and renewable generation products such as solar and wind generation of electricity, I recognize that many of the sources and potential sources of that renewable electricity are outside areas that we currently have power lines in and currently where we have corridors for electric power. They're far from existing power lines in some cases. Newer power lines will definitely be needed and they'll have to be constructed, they'll have to be put somewhere, somewhere where that renewable source is helping to generate the electricity that will help power our country.

For example, it was proposed to build wind-powered electrical generators on the Nevada test site. Currently there's no way to deliver that electricity if it's generated there. There's no way to deliver it without new power lines coming from areas in -- many of the areas in the Southwest where we would use solar energy as well. The same applies to areas all throughout the Southwest where wind and solar power generation will occur in the future. We know it's coming. It's going to happen. There are advances in technology that are great right now.

New power lines are desperately needed, therefore I support designating the Southwest area as a National Electrical Transmission Corridor.

Thank you.

Jody Erikson: Thank you. That's it. Having heard the three speakers this morning, why don't you come on up. I've got one taker and just say your name so we know who you are.

Peter Konesky: My name is Peter Konesky. I represent the Office of the Governor, the Nevada State Office of Energy.

Mary Morton: Excuse me, could you spell your name?

Peter Konesky: K-O-N-E-S-K-Y.

Mary Morton: Thank you.

Peter Konesky: The Governor has established a transmission commission, or task force, to look at renewable energy corridors, of delivering renewable energy into the grid. This task force had its first meeting last week. It will be issuing a report by December as to what the recommendations from the State of Nevada are. The Public Utility Commission of the State of Nevada and the Energy Office will be consolidating comments from state agencies and we will be submitting them at the appropriate time before the 6th of July.

One other consideration to be looked at is the impact that the military has on this state, both in training route designations -- and this is one of the difficulties we are having right now with wind as a renewable energy source, with the flyovers that the military has in some cases down to ground zero. This has been the thing that has kept the state wind

resources from being developed; we are working with the military. Also their radar issues, their long-range radar, is significant impact also.

Thank you very much.

Jody Erikson: Thank you. Anyone else feel something needs to be passed along to DOE today? Concern, benefit?

Okay. What we're going to do is -- what we've done in previous meetings is we're just going to take a quick break and we will be here -- DOE will be here and available until 6:30, so if folks come in and sign up and want to speak they'll let us know and we'll sort of reconvene the meeting, so to speak, and have them speak into the mic. But as of now, folks who have wanted to speak who are in the room have already spoken. And one more chance, anyone who else want to add something?

Okay. We're just going to take a little break and see who joins us later.

Peter Frigeri: Just give me the high-sign when everybody's ready.

Mary Morton: Sure.

David Meyer: Whenever you're ready.

Peter Frigeri: Thanks for the opportunity to address the issue of the new National Corridor Designations. I'd just like to lodge my opposition of running them through anywhere that's a National Park, National Forest, or National Wildlife Refuge as designated by Congress to protect the environment. I don't think exceptions should be made for power transmission lines, pipelines, roadways, or any of that nature just due to the unique environment that they'd be going through. And as more and more of this pristine wilderness is lost, you can't replace it.

And in the future these lines may not be needed any longer but the damage will already have been done and the desert takes a very long time to heal. So just -- that's pretty much all I have to say. Thank you.

Mary Morton: Thanks. We have received a lot of very similar comment that we should exclude them from the corridors. We will take that under consideration. We will make one observation which may not be completely apparent from some of the materials that we handed to you, but it is made clear in the larger notice. The -- in the event the Department does designate a Corridor, and in the event that a project developer winds up going to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to get a permit for that project, and in the event that FERC actually issued a permit, the permit would not grant the right to go across any state or federally owned land. So that would only happen if the state or federal agency that owns that land granted that permission.

Peter Frigeri: Gave its permission, okay. That wasn't made clear to me. So something like a desert, the Wildlife Refuge is off limits as it is right now?

Mary Morton: This wouldn't change -- they would still have to get that permission.

Peter Frigeri: They would have to get the permission from --

Mary Morton: From the --

Peter Frigeri: -- from the state or from the --

Mary Morton: -- federal agency that actually owns and manages the land.

Peter Frigeri: Which is Department of Agriculture?

David Meyer: It varies.

Mary Morton: Right.

Peter Frigeri: It varies.

Mary Morton: If it's a Wildlife Refuge it's Fish and Wildlife. If it's a park, it would be the National Park Service. But --

David Meyer: If it's a National Forest it would be --

Peter Frigeri: [inaudible] Okay.

Mary Morton: But nonetheless, even with that understanding we have received comments from others that notwithstanding that --

Peter Frigeri: It shouldn't be left up to them either, because that can also be administrative -- administration biased from one administration to another to determine whether or not that would go through. And based on a four-year term, you could have a hundred year decision made to run it through an area like a Desert Wildlife Refuge, and it just should really be completely off the table. If this is so important then they can either go around it or make other arrangements. In this day and age where I know that the need for power is increasing so fast, but there still is so little at a national level for conservation before we go and disturb these areas that really can't be replaced.

A power line can be moved, a power plant can be relocated, but you can't -- if you've ever been out there you just can't replace the views. And as Las Vegas just becomes increasingly, increasingly more crowded and overbuilt, our ability to get into nature is becoming harder and harder. And right now that's just a treasure. It's an underused resource for the valley and it's really a very special place and there are many places like that throughout the country and I just think they should be off the table.

Mary Morton: Thanks. Could you just state your name and spell it so we have it in the record?

Peter Frigeri: It's Peter Frigeri. Last name is F-R-I-G-E-R-I, and I'm a resident of Las Vegas.

Mary Morton: Thanks. And just so you know, we have a web service so this will then be transcribed and will be included in our proceedings.

Peter Frigeri: Okay. Thanks.

Mary Morton: Thank you.

Peter Frigeri: Thanks, Mary. Thanks, David.