

Out of scope issues raised, too

A number of other issues and concerns were also raised during the scoping process for the proposed San Luis Rio Colorado Project, but for a variety of reasons they will not be addressed in the project EIS. These issues and a brief explanation of why they are “out of scope” are listed here:

Air quality

- How can the Federal government ensure compliance with the “promised” air quality standard?
 - An overview of the generating facility’s permitting requirements and the associated environmental impact analysis performed by the Mexican government will be included as an appendix to the EIS. Emissions data will be reviewed and used to determine impacts within the United States.

Cultural resources

- Impacts to cultural resources in Mexico
 - Action on Mexican land is outside U.S. jurisdiction and will not be addressed in the EIS.

Generation plant

- What is the potential for Mexico cutting off power to the United States?
 - DOE will perform an electric reliability study to ensure the existing U.S. power supply

system would remain operational upon a sudden loss of power, regardless of the outage cause.

- Concern about a generation facility in Mexico
 - Action on Mexican land is outside U.S. jurisdiction and will not be addressed in the EIS.
- Consider a solar component, photovoltaic, as part of the portfolio
 - The Federal action to be evaluated in the EIS is not what kind of power plant to build, but rather for Western to determine whether to grant an interconnection request and for DOE to determine whether to grant a Presidential permit.
- A Mexican plant site does not provide benefits to Yuma
 - The Federal action to be evaluated in the EIS is not whether to build the generating plant, but rather for Western to determine whether to grant an interconnection request and for DOE to determine whether to grant a Presidential permit. Arizona Public Service could contract to purchase power from the proposed project for local use. The applicant could construct the San Luis Rio Colorado Power Center and supply power only within Mexico.

How can I learn more?

Call or write:

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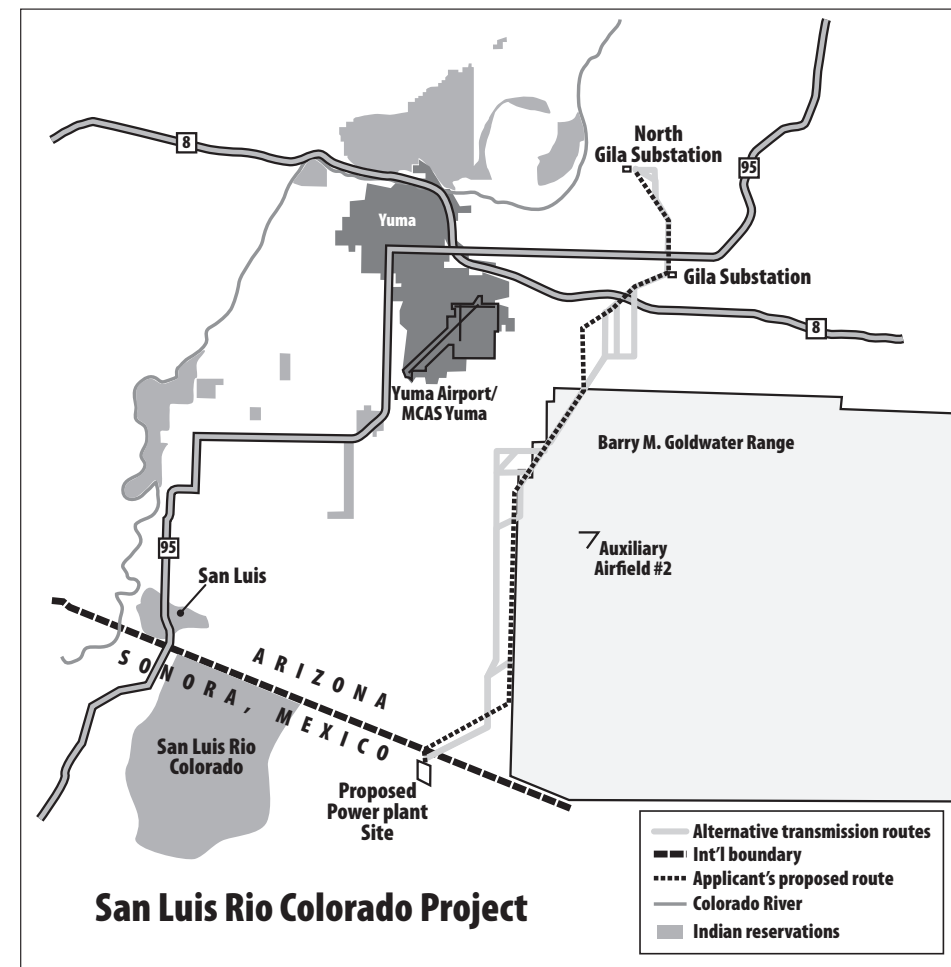


San Luis Rio Colorado Project

June 2006

Range of issues raised during project scoping

Informal, open-house scoping meetings were held in Yuma, Ariz., on Feb. 28 and March 9 and in San Luis, Ariz., on March 1 and 10, 2006, on the San Luis Rio Colorado Project, a proposal to interconnect a new 550-MW, natural gas-fired power plant near San Luis Rio Colorado, Sonora, Mexico, with the high-voltage transmission system near Yuma, Ariz.



Western Area Power Administration and the U. S. Department of Energy are preparing an environmental impact statement on the proposed project to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act. The scoping meetings provided interested parties the opportunity to view proposed project and information about the planned EIS process, ask questions and make comments. Western, DOE and cooperating agency representatives were available to answer questions and provide additional information to attendees.

Western has the lead for the EIS and has responsibility to approve or deny the interconnection request. DOE’s Office of Electricity Delivery and Energy Reliability has the lead for approving or disapproving

the Presidential permit. Both organizations will use the same EIS in their separate decision processes.

Scoping raised a number of concerns and potential issues that will be addressed in the EIS. Preliminary consideration of these comments also helped to identify several additional transmission line routing alternatives. Topics and issues raised during scoping included:

Agriculture

- Pest control compromises because of the structure height, resulting in reduced crop yields
- Food safety because the line will attract larger bird populations
- Increases to ground preparation and cultivation costs due to structures

Air quality

- Air quality impacts on the city and county of Yuma
- Impacts to human health from particulate matter smaller than 10 microns

Aviation safety

- Impact of the proposed project on future development of the existing Rolle Airstrip
- Impacts to military aviation operations on the Barry M. Goldwater Range
- Impacts to flight safety at Marine Corps Air Station—Yuma's Auxillary Airport

Cost

- Interest in the commercial costs and rates for the power and energy from this proposed project

Cumulative impacts

- Impacts to Wellton-Mohawk Title Transfer lands near North Gila Substation
- Relationship of this project to Arizona Public Service's proposal for the Palo Verde-North Gila Transmission Project and cumulative impacts, including growth-inducing impacts or the need to expand North Gila Substation
- Cumulative impacts related to the Area Service Highway proposal and the Arizona Clean Fuels pipeline and refinery proposal
- Cumulative impacts to the flat-tailed horned lizard

Environmental process

- Concern that the National Environmental Policy Act compliance process does not apply to activities that occur in Mexico
- Interest in understanding how the analysis is being conducted

Health and safety

- Impacts of the proposed project on radio, television, cell phones and satellite dishes
- Impacts to human health from electric and magnetic fields
- Potential for cancer caused by high-voltage transmission lines
- Electromagnetic interference with existing Marine Corps operations, particularly at Cannon Air Defense Complex

Land use

- Compatibility of the proposed project in a one-mile buffer zone along the Goldwater Range
- Impacts to population along the transmission line alignment, including residential development between the Goldwater Range and Gila Substation
- Impacts to use at the Goldwater Range
- Impacts to existing live-fire small arms and demolition ranges
- Impacts to a planned road in the vicinity of the A Canal
- Impacts to future development and land use plans as outlined in Yuma's General Plan, the city and county Joint Land Use Plan and the County 2010 Comprehensive Plan

Paleontology

- Impacts to paleontological resources

Power marketing

- Western's role, if any, in marketing the power from Mexico to Yuma area residents
- If not Western, who will market the power from Mexico?

Power supply

- Source of natural gas
- Interest in a full discussion and assessment of electric power needs and supply within the EIS purpose and need section

Project description

- Replacement of both lines between Gila and North Gila substations
- Need for the Gila to North Gila line
- Scope of the proposed project—transmission lines or generating facility?
- Potential for transmission of electricity into Mexico

Safety

- Concern about the potential for increased risk of electric shock
- Need for transmission lines crossing roads to have orange bell markers

Threatened, endangered and special status species

- Impacts to the flat-tailed horned lizard management area from the proposed project route
- Concern that the flat-tailed horned lizard should be treated as a listed species
- Concern that route alternatives should avoid the flat-tailed horned lizard management area
- Concern that route alternatives should avoid big-horn sheep habitat in the Gila Mountains
- Propose evaluating impacts to the Sonoran population of the desert tortoise from the proposed project
- Impacts to rare plants within five miles of the proposed project including sand food, Schott's wire lettuce and Pierson's milkvetch
- Recommend obtaining species lists from Arizona Game and Fish Department, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the U.S. Bureau of Land Management

Transmission line route and configuration

- Yuma Proving Grounds accepts the proposed transmission line route
- City of Yuma opposes the proposed route
- Recommend the use of 3E as a north-south corridor because 4E is too sandy for equipment; soil is more compact on 3E
- Recommend the line from Gila Substation move east to the mountains

- Propose evaluating alternate routes that cross the international border immediately north of the proposed generation facility, turn northeast to the Goldwater range boundary, proceed north paralleling County 4E to the intersection of East County 14th ½ then turn northeast paralleling A Canal where the line would resume the currently proposed route
- Request a 230-kV alternative be considered
- Recommend routing transmission line through barren, unusable land and avoiding developed areas
- Concerns about a utility corridor adjacent to the proposed Area Service Highway; an overpass is required at County 19th
- Consider a Fortuna Wash alignment
- Recommend avoiding high-value land north of the Goldwater Range; state lands are not a favorable location for power lines; don't disproportionately place lines on state land
- Route transmission lines along gas lines for the generating facility
- Avoid the A Canal; use the Area Service Highway alignment and move east along the MCAS boundary
- Consider an alternative around development at North Gila Substation
- Consider a 230-kV alternative that would tie into the existing Sonora Substation
- Recommend the existing ASH to A Canal alignment because it would have the least impact to the Ocotillo Master Plan

Visual

- Impacts to intrusions on views of the Goldwater Range and Gila Mountains from private property
- Propose evaluating impact of using single pole structures instead of lattice steel towers to reduce physical footprint and visual impact

Water

- Request a letter for Comisión Nacional del Agua and the Mexican International Boundary and Water Commission verifying the approved legal use of water for the generating facility