

# United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS  
Navajo Region  
P. O. Box 1060  
Gallup, New Mexico 87305



MAY 11 2007

Dear Reader:

Enclosed for your review and comment is the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Desert Rock Energy Project. The project consists of the construction and operation of a coal-fired power plant and associated facilities on land leased from the Navajo Nation and extension of surface coal mining within the BHP Navajo Coal Company lease area within the Navajo Indian Reservation. The proposed project is approximately 30 miles southwest of Farmington, San Juan County, New Mexico. This document provides an evaluation of this proposed project in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 and associated regulations.

The purpose of this document is to assist the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and the cooperating agencies in their decision-making processes. As the lead Federal agency for this EIS, BIA welcomes your comments on the Draft EIS. Comments on this document may be submitted orally or in writing at the scheduled public meetings or in writing by e-mail at the website address listed below.

Written comments sent by first-class or priority U.S. Postal Service mail should be sent to:

Harrilene Yazzie, Regional NEPA Coordinator  
Desert Rock Energy Project EIS  
Bureau of Indian Affairs, Navajo Regional Office  
P.O. Box 1060  
Gallup, New Mexico 87305

Written comments sent by U.S. Postal Service express mail or by courier service should be sent to:

Harrilene Yazzie, Regional NEPA Coordinator  
Desert Rock Energy Project EIS  
Bureau of Indian Affairs, Navajo Regional Office  
P.O. Box 1060  
Gallup, New Mexico 87305

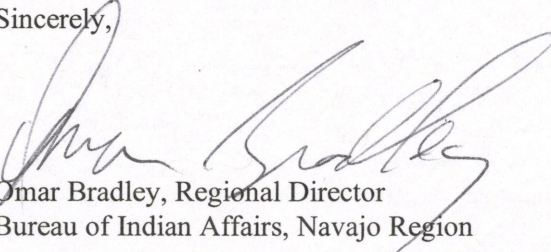
Since the BIA currently lacks email access, comments can also be submitted electronically via the project website at [www.desertrockenergy.com](http://www.desertrockenergy.com).

To ensure consideration in the Final EIS, **all written comments must be received by the end of the public review period, which ends 60 days after the publication of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Notice of Availability in the *Federal Register*.** BIA will continue to consider comments received after that date, as practicable. Where possible, include in your comments, references to the specific pages and paragraphs on which you are commenting.

The public meetings will be held on the Navajo Indian Reservation; in San Juan County, New Mexico and LaPlata and Montezuma Counties, Colorado. Dates and addresses for these meetings will be announced in the *Federal Register*, advertised in the local news media, and listed on the Website: [www.desertrockenergy.com](http://www.desertrockenergy.com). During the meetings, information will be displayed to explain the environmental process and the document. Oral comments will be transcribed for consideration in the Final EIS.

Comments, including names and street addresses of respondents, will become a part of the public record and may be published as part of the Final EIS. Individual respondents may request confidentiality. If you wish to withhold your name or street address from public review or from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act or any other law, you must state this prominently at the beginning of your written comment. Such requests will be honored to the extent allowed by law. All submissions from organizations or businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses, will be made available for public inspection in their entirety. Oral comments received at the meetings and written comments received by BIA during the public review period will be considered fully and evaluated in preparing the Final EIS.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Omar Bradley", is written over the typed name and title.

Omar Bradley, Regional Director  
Bureau of Indian Affairs, Navajo Region

Enclosures



U.S. Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Indian Affairs

# Desert Rock Energy Project

**Draft Environmental Impact Statement**  
DOI DES 07-23

May 2007

Type of Action: Administrative

Prepared by the  
Bureau of Indian Affairs

In cooperation with the  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement  
Bureau of Land Management  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Navajo Nation  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Omar Bradley  
Regional Director, Navajo Region  
Bureau of Indian Affairs

## **BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS**

*The Bureau of Indian Affairs is responsible for administering Federal Indian policy; fulfilling its Federal trust responsibilities to American Indians, Tribal Governments, and Alaska Natives; and promoting tribal self-determination and self-governance.*

**DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT  
FOR THE DESERT ROCK ENERGY PROJECT,  
NAVAJO NATION, NEW MEXICO**

**Draft (X)                      Final ( )**

**LEAD AGENCY:**                      U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs

**COOPERATING AGENCIES:**    U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
   Navajo Nation  
   U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
   Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement  
   Bureau of Land Management

**JURISDICTION:**                      Navajo Nation

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**        Correspondence on this Draft Environmental Impact Statement should be directed to:

**Harrilene Yazzie**  
Bureau of Indian Affairs, Navajo Regional Office  
PO Box 1060  
Gallup, New Mexico 87305  
(505) 863-8286

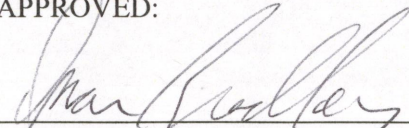
**ABSTRACT**

This Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) evaluates the environment impacts of the proposed project that would result from the construction and operation of the Desert Rock Energy Project. The proposed project would include a coal-fired power plant with a capacity of generating up to 1,500 megawatts (two units), transmission lines, a water-supply system, access roads, extension of surface coal mining within the BHP Navajo Coal Company lease area, coal preparation facilities, and other associated facilities.

Several alternative actions are evaluated in this EIS as No Action, Proposed Action with Alternative locations. The No Action Alternative is a no-build scenario. The Proposed Action Alternative includes the implementation of the proposed project. Alternative locations for the transmission lines, well fields, and access roads also are evaluated. A second action alternative that is considered in this EIS is to construct and operate a single-unit, 750-megawatt coal-fired power plant and associated facilities that would be located on the same area as the Proposed Action Alternative.

This Draft EIS is available for public review in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 and associated regulations. To ensure consideration for the Final EIS, comments on this Draft EIS must be received within 60 days following the date that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Notice of Availability is published in the Federal Register.

APPROVED:

  
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Omar Bradley, Regional Director  
Bureau of Indian Affairs – Navajo Region