

Searchlight Meeting Transcripts

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

REPORTER'S TRANSCRIPT
OF
PROPOSED SEARCHLIGHT WIND ENERGY PROJECT
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
PUBLIC MEETINGS

Held at Searchlight Community Center
200 Michael Wendell Way
Cottonwood Cove
Searchlight, Nevada

Wednesday, February 22, 2012
6:00 p.m.

Reported by: Angela Campagna, CCR #495

1 IN ATTENDANCE:
2 MARY JO RUGWELL
District Manager for the Southern Nevada District
3 Bureau of Land Management
4 ROBERT B. ROSS, JR.
Field Manager
5 Bureau of Land Management
6 GREGORY L. HELSETH
Renewable Energy Project Manager
7 Bureau of Land Management
8 STEPHANIE LOCKE
Senior Environmental Scientist
9 New Fields

10 PUBLIC COMMENTS BY

11 JOHN WEAVER
12 LAURA CUNNINGHAM
ELLEN ROSS
13 WAYNE BUNDORF
JON PALMER
14 ELEANOR SHOOK
KEVIN EMMERICIA
15 BRUCE DOBBIE
VERLIE DOING
16 KIMBERLY MCCOLERY
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

1 FEBRUARY 23, 2010

2 SEARCHLIGHT, NEVADA

3 * * * * *

4 MS. LOCKE: Good evening everybody. We're
5 going to start the program in just a second. Can
6 everybody hear me clearly in the back? Little
7 louder, okay.

8 MR. ROSS: Welcome everybody. I'm Bob Ross.
9 I'm the field manager for the BLM Las Vegas field
10 office. Thank you for coming tonight and welcome to
11 tonight's public meeting on the draft environmental
12 impact statement for the Searchlight Wind Energy
13 project.

14 This portion of the meeting is your
15 opportunity to provide formal comments on the record
16 to the Bureau of Land Management. I want to make it
17 very clear that your comments are very important to
18 the BLM. We have not made a decision on this
19 project yet. So the public comment period on this
20 draft environmental impact statement will continue
21 until April the 18th. So you want your comments to
22 be postmarked by that date and but your comments
23 will be very helpful to us in making a decision on
24 this project. And, in fact, we'll respond to every
25 one of your comments in the final environmental

1 impact statement.

2 And the format of tonight's meeting is we have
3 a short presentation and then we'll kind of go over
4 some of the rules for the public comment period and
5 your testimony and your opportunity to comment to
6 us. And then we'll get right into your comments.

7 First I want to make some introductions. I
8 don't think there are any elected officials or
9 representatives of elected officials tonight. I did
10 want to recognize any that might be here. Not
11 seeing any, we'll kind of go on. We'll do some BLM
12 introductions. I want to introduce my supervisor,
13 Mary Joe Rugwell. And Mary Jo is the district
14 manager for the Southern Nevada District office in
15 my field office, Las Vegas field office is part of
16 that district and these lands here are BLM
17 administered lands that we both administer. Also
18 with me is Greg Helseth, and Greg is the project
19 manager for this environmental impact statement.
20 Stephanie Locke is our contractor for the
21 environmental impact statement, and Stephanie will
22 also be facilitating the meeting tonight and calling
23 people up to provide testimony.

24 So, once again, your comments are extremely
25 important to us. We have not made a decision and

1 really what you have to say to us tonight will be
2 carefully listened to and be very important for our
3 process. If you haven't turned off your cell phones
4 yet, please do that just out of respect to everyone.
5 And with that, I'm going to turn it over to Greg
6 Helseth who will do our presentation.

7 UNIDENTIFIED WOMAN: I want to make a comment.
8 He asked about elected officials. I'm very proud of
9 my brother. We do have one elected official. This
10 is Judge Hill. He's the judge here in Searchlight.

11 MR. ROSS: Okay. Judge, thank you.

12 MR. HELSETH: Okay. Can everybody hear me all
13 right? All right. My name is Greg Helseth on the
14 Wind Energy project manager for the Southern Nevada
15 district for the BLM. We're going to go ahead and
16 get started with our presentation here on the draft
17 environmental impact statement. We're in our second
18 public meeting. Last night we were in Laughlin, so
19 tonight here, tomorrow we're in Boulder City. So
20 we're going -- we'll go ahead and get started.

21 So what is the proposed project. It's
22 approximately it's a proposed approximate 200
23 megawatt wind energy facility by Searchlight Wind
24 Energy, LLC which is a wholly owned subsidiary of
25 Duke Energy. This project will provide electricity

1 to approximately 50,000 homes. Is this thing
2 cutting out? The project will produce electricity
3 to about approximately 50,000 homes. There would be
4 a switching station so the turbines produce -- is
5 this going to be all right? Yeah, okay. Feel so
6 much better. So the turbines would produce the
7 energy. They would send that energy through
8 underground cables to substations. From there the
9 substations would carry the power with overhead
10 transmission to the interconnect station. The
11 interconnect station would capture the power and put
12 on the lines, the Western Area Power lines that you
13 see south of Cottonwood Cove there.

14 So where is the project located. We're right
15 here in this yellow square. That is Searchlight.
16 The project application boundary is that red area,
17 looks like a pretty large area, that is -- you're
18 correct. That is about 19,000 acres. If the
19 project is approved, that the project actual acreage
20 of the project would be 163 acres combined. So that
21 is roads, pads, turbines, the whole nine yards. So
22 the rest of the land would be returned back to the
23 BLM just to make that clear.

24 We'll take comments right after the
25 presentation. Thank you. This land has been

1 segregated for mineral entry. What we've had in the
2 past is while we're doing these applications for
3 renewable energy, we've had mining claims filed on
4 the site, so we segregated the land for mineral
5 entry for two years only while we have time to do
6 the studies to look at what this is about and then
7 to come up with a final decision. So once there is
8 a decision made on this project with recorded
9 decision, it goes to a right of way grid, the
10 mineral station would be lifted or at two years it
11 would be lifted, whichever comes first. So just
12 letting you guys know.

13 What laws authorize the BLM to grant right of
14 ways. We've got the Federal Land Policy Act. We've
15 got Section 211 of the Energy Policy Act and we've
16 got the Secretarial Order 3283. Just had to look at
17 it because numbers are jumbled up. Those are the
18 laws that authorize the BLM.

19 So what is the BLM considering here. We're
20 responding to an application submitted by
21 Searchlight Wind, LLC. We are directed, we have
22 direction from the Federal Land Policy Act and we
23 have a Secretarial Order that I mentioned, 3283, the
24 secretary of interior wants to see at least 10,000
25 megawatts of renewable energy, non-hydro, by the

1 year 2015 in the United States. So non-hydro
2 electric renewable electricity, wind, solar,
3 geothermal, those are the four that would constitute
4 for that category.

5 So what is the decision to be made. The BLM
6 will either decide to approve the right of way
7 grant or not approve the right of way grant. It's
8 pretty much the decision that we have. If we do
9 approve the right of way grant comes with
10 stipulations. Those stipulations would be things
11 like reclamation of roads, replanning, replanting
12 vegetation, any color pallet decisions that need to
13 be taken care of. There is tortoise mitigation
14 fees. There is a lot of different things that could
15 come with a right of way grant. You would have to
16 meet all of those stipulations before you get what
17 is called a notice to proceed. So first you would
18 have a recorded decision and then you would have a
19 right of way grant. You would have stipulations at
20 the very end, you get what is called a notice to
21 proceed. The notice to proceed is what gives you
22 permission to go ahead and do what it is that we
23 granted, if we grant it.

24 So the project components are either 96
25 turbines underground, electrical collection systems,

1 a couple of substations, 8.7 miles of overhead brand
2 new transmission line. I mentioned all of that
3 prior. A switching station by Western Area Power is
4 down on Cottonwood Cove. That is by the entrance
5 station of the park service. You probably seen the
6 new entrance station down Cottonwood Cove, if you
7 traveled that way. And they would be permitted also
8 up to four meteorological towers. Currently there
9 is three towers up in this area. There is a couple
10 when you go down to the lake you would see one on
11 the left, see one on the right, and then there is
12 one far south of town. They are about 198 feet tall
13 and those are for collecting wind data. They have
14 been up for close to three years now or a little bit
15 longer than three years. And what they do is they
16 give the applicant the data they need to see if
17 there is a good wind resource here. Operation
18 maintenance building, obviously, and some access
19 roads like I mentioned. Were you able to see all
20 right? Okay.

21 So a typical turbine generator for this
22 project, typical turbine generator would be the
23 Siemens 2.3. There is different companies that make
24 wind turbines. GE is a manufacturer. Siemens is a
25 manufacturer. Vestel is a manufacturer. The

1 applicant in this case is looking at the Siemens
2 2.3. That is what they mentioned in the DEIS. That
3 model is 427 feet tall from the tip of the blade to
4 the ground. Up to the tip of the nasal it's 262
5 feet tall and a rotor swept diameter is 331 feet.
6 Typically when turbines are constructed they need to
7 clear or excavate out about a 40 foot area and
8 that's filled with rebar for reenforcement, and they
9 pour the concrete in there and then they reclamate
10 [sic] over the top or they backfill over the top so
11 all they have left is a stub sticking out at the
12 top. And these come in erector set kind of fashion.

13 The first part would be this part right here
14 up to about halfway and that is what goes on that
15 base right there where all those bolts are. So
16 basically it sets down, they put big bolts on it and
17 that is how they are constructed. The temporary
18 components are some lay down areas because obviously
19 you need to park the equipment somewhere. This also
20 includes the analyzation or we've analyzed lay down
21 areas. We have concrete batch plant that would be
22 needed for making the concrete obviously, and then
23 the portable rock crusher because as you excavate,
24 you come up with rock and you can use that rock for
25 aggregate or to backfill. If there is any left over

1 rock, it does not leave site. They would have to
2 work with our minerals group then to determine
3 whether or not that rock could leave site or if it
4 just stays on site.

5 So the alternatives that are being considered
6 are a 96 and 87 and a no action. If any of you were
7 here back in 2008 when we first started scoping on
8 this project, I think it was December of 2008 maybe.
9 It was, yeah. It was December of 2008. The initial
10 scoping period consisted of 161 wind turbines and
11 then that has since been pared down to 140 which was
12 pared down to 96 and 87. So obviously the wind
13 resource in the area is good for wind turbines, but
14 placement of the wind turbines was partially for the
15 reason and partially for the scoping comment. The
16 reason why those numbers were pared down to what the
17 applicant chose which is 96, 87 and no action
18 alternative. And I might note that the 87 wind
19 turbine is the BLM preferred alternative.

20 This is what the map looks like of 96 wind
21 turbines in the Searchlight area. You have
22 Searchlight there in the white and all those dots
23 are positions of wind turbines with roads and a
24 little blow out pictures. There is also picture,
25 big poster boards of this back here so that people

1 can see, and you can ask questions or whatever later
2 on after the meeting. We can explain the detail and
3 map. So there is the 96.

4 The 87 looks a a lot like the 96. It's only
5 nine turbines fewer, less acreage and most of the
6 turbines that the difference there are down
7 Cottonwood Cove, that is where nine turbines would
8 not be between the alternatives.

9 No action alternative is a possibility. We
10 could deny the application and say there is too many
11 environmental consequences and it's not a viable
12 project. So that is an option for the BLM also.

13 The location is being considered, why is this
14 area being considered. We received an application
15 for the area from the applicant. It has good to
16 excellent resources which is what the data has been
17 saying. The area is close to existing close
18 transmission lines. There is transmission lines
19 over this way and that way. The applicant actually
20 took about a year and did interconnect studies to
21 make sure of where the best lines are for connecting
22 to the power. And think of the transmission lines
23 as freeways and sometimes those lines have enough
24 power, you can't put anymore power on it. So you
25 have to do the interconnect study to figure out

1 which power lines have accessibility or space for
2 your power.

3 And the area topography is suitable for wind
4 turbine generators. There were concerns raised
5 during the public scope, as I mentioned, in 2008,
6 water supply issues, air quality impacts, land use,
7 affects on tourism. Those are the page numbers
8 where you will find that information in the DEIS.
9 We have DEIS hard copies. They have thumb drives,
10 CD's. We have a bunch of knowledgeable people. If
11 you have any questions, we have resource folks in
12 the audience. After this portion of the meeting if
13 anybody has any questions on any particular subject,
14 either this is in the DEIS or one of the specialists
15 can try to answer that as best as possible.

16 So where are we in this process is what we
17 called the natal NEPA process. We're currently
18 we're right there. We might be a little to the left
19 of the arrow, but either way, we're starting at this
20 process. On January 20th of this year we came out
21 with a notice of viability for the DEIS. The actual
22 project started in 2008. Now we're in 2012. We've
23 come out with the DEIS which I told you about back
24 here. Public comments are good until April 18th as
25 Mr. Bob Ross had mentioned previously, they have to

1 be postmarked by that date if you send them into us.
2 They have court reporters today, one in the back, if
3 you want to make a comment in the back or one out
4 here if you want to make comment out here, whatever
5 it takes to get your input on this process.

6 After the public comment period, we analyze
7 those comments, we look at our DEIS, and we start
8 creating a final environmental impact statement.
9 That final environmental impact statement goes
10 through a series of reviews. Again, eventually it
11 gets published with a notice of viability and there
12 is a 30 day window before a recorded decision,
13 whatever that decision may be is produced. Now, in
14 this case with renewable energy project being the
15 secretary of the interior has considered these
16 highly important. So the secretary of interior is
17 signing all records of decisions. So basically the
18 recorded decision goes back to Washington, gets
19 signed and the right of way grant is signed at our
20 district level by Mary Jo and Bob Ross on a right of
21 way grant, if the recorded decision produces a right
22 of way grant. So that is it for the public for my
23 speech. Hopefully I was loud enough and you can
24 hear me and then we'll begin shortly.

25 So Stephanie is going to go over some ground

1 rules and then we'll adjust the podium so that any
2 speaker comes up there, they are addressing their
3 comments here to the BLM, and then we'll go from
4 there. So Stephanie, thank you.

5 MS. LOCKE: I know you guys can hear me
6 without the microphone, right? Okay. We're going
7 to take a little break before we do the comment
8 period. We have to turn the podium around and set
9 up some things. I'm going to tell you how it's
10 going to work.

11 If you would like to make a public comment
12 during this time with the audience listening, you're
13 more than welcome to do so. If you have not done
14 so, please fill out one of these speaker
15 registration cards and you can find those up front
16 with my colleague Sean. And he'll run them up to me
17 and that way we can call your name correctly. We
18 are going to call people in the order that we
19 received these. So if you would like to speak, get
20 them in early. If you would like not to speak in
21 front of everybody but still would like to make a
22 comment on the record, we have a court reporter in
23 the hallway and you can go make your comment to her,
24 and she'll put it down and it will be addressed in
25 the final EIS.

1 Also, to let you know, if you prefer not to
2 make a comment by speaking, we have comment forms
3 and those are also on the front desk with Sean.
4 You're welcome to write your comment down and leave
5 them here or this is handy dandy, you can fold them
6 up, the BLM address is on here, just stick a stamp
7 on there and you can send them to the BLM office.
8 The fax number is on here also. One other thing we
9 have up front is we have the e-mail address so you
10 can e-mail your comment in. And then there is a
11 whole information sheet on ways to get your comment
12 to the BLM. And also stapled to the back of this
13 just for your reference is a couple of FAQ's,
14 frequently asked questions you might have and the
15 answer just in case I know I always forget to ask
16 questions, so that might help.

17 Give me one second to collect my thoughts,
18 okay. So this portion of the meeting is for you to
19 comment. Every commenter who chooses to come up
20 here and address the BLM will have three minutes.
21 This is so everybody has enough time and the same
22 amount of time. In order to ensure that, the BLM
23 will not be answering questions during this portion.
24 All of your questions or comments will be addressed
25 in the final environmental impact statement. I've

1 gone over the rest of these. If you would like to
2 make a comment, please see Sean at the back table.
3 And do we have any elected officials that would like
4 to comment first? We're going so to call the
5 elected officials if they'd like to speak, and then
6 we'll start with the public comments. Please be
7 respectful and courteous. By the way, this
8 microphone does work fine. You just have to get
9 close. But that might be helpful if you're facing
10 them to make your comments. And, like I said,
11 written comments must be postmarked if you're
12 sending them by US Postal Service by April 18th.
13 Okay. So give me a second.

14 One other thing to help you with the three
15 minutes, I have another colleague, Andy. He's the
16 tall gentleman standing back here. He's going to be
17 sitting right in this chair here and he'll help you
18 out with some cards. There is a green card, you
19 have two minutes; yellow card when you have one
20 minute left; and he'll flash a red card when your
21 time is up just to give you -- I know I lose track
22 of how long I talk. Go figure. And also we'll have
23 a timer up on the screen. So give us about five
24 minutes to set everything up and then we'll start
25 taking public comments.

1 (Short break.)

2 MS. LOCKE: All right. If everybody would

3 take their seats again, we're going to start the

4 comment period. So Mr. John Weaver.

5 MR. WEAVER: My concern is that in the other

6 wind energy generated areas, Palm Springs and

7 Tepachi, they have put eight foot chain link fence

8 with razor wire on top of it. That prevents any

9 accident. I just want to know what they are going

10 to do with the whole acreage. Are they going to

11 close it all down and put chain link fence and razor

12 around it and deny us access?

13 MR. ROSS: Let me reiterate what Stephanie

14 said, this is your time to comment. We can talk to

15 you after the meeting.

16 MR. WEAVER: I'm finished. You answer that,

17 I'm happy.

18 MR. ROSS: I've got cards if you would like to

19 call me or e-mail me too.

20 MR. WEAVER: Thank you.

21 MS. LOCKE: Just to reiterate what Bob said,

22 at this point in time we only have eight speakers,

23 so we should have time left after this public

24 comment period, and there are BLM people here

25 available to answer questions. But as Mr. Weaver

No fencing is proposed for the entire project area, only around the proposed western switching station and O&M facilities. Refer to Section 4.11-Recreation Impacts for a discussion on impacts to recreation.

1 just did, we'll answer his questions additionally in
2 the FEIS specifically, okay. Next speaker is Laura
3 Cunningham.

4 MS. CUNNINGHAM: Yeah. I've been following
5 some of the solar power tower projects in California
6 and on some of those teleconferences Wallace service
7 has been asking them to do a minimum of three years
8 of gold and eagle surveys for things that can kill
9 eagles and he's also asking not just to do nest
10 surveys but surveys for what they call floaters that
11 individuals that don't have a territory to come
12 through and also ground point surveys to look for
13 juveniles. So that is just a comment that would be
14 a really good idea to get an idea of what
15 territories are here. Because he pointed out that
16 in inactive nests cannot be used for several years
17 and then they will be used again. So whether or not
18 a nest is inactive may not give the number of
19 territories, so thanks.

20 MS. LOCKE: Thank you for your comment. Ellen
21 Ross.

22 MS. ROSS: Good evening. I am opposed to any
23 wind turbines. I do not want to see that in the
24 Searchlight area. It's an outlying bedroom
25 community of Las Vegas. It's a historic community.

At the time baseline surveys were completed for the project, Nevada had no official policy or protocols for avian pre-project surveys so protocols were developed between BLM and NDOW.

Comment noted. Refer to Chapter 4-Environmental Consequences of the EIS for an evaluation of impacts to environmental resources.

1 It's one of the alternative routes to the Spanish
2 Trail. There are archaeal sites, pictograph sites.
3 It's also the fourth largest park, Lake Mead
4 Recreational area, this Cottonwood Cove is one of
5 the major entries and it's also the entry that most
6 of the Californians take to come down to the river
7 to go boating, hiking, canoeing, fishing, hunting.
8 And they prefer this route from what my real estate
9 clients tell me because they don't have to go into
10 the hubbub of Lake Mead. They like the fact that
11 there is a pristine area. It has not been polluted
12 like Southern California and it is a major draw for
13 people in also the Las Vegas area, point number one.

14 Number two, people want to buy property out
15 here. Wasn't that long ago that the BLM had
16 sections of land that they were going to dispose of
17 because the economy was strong. We've been
18 discussing this, this project four years just as
19 long as this recession is going on. It's not going
20 to help the property values for the people who have
21 already purchased property here. And I'm one of
22 those people along with several of my clients, I
23 like Searchlight, and I do want to live here at some
24 point and have a desert retreat. And right now we
25 have a wind turbine plant 800 feet from the edge of

Section 4.12-Socioeconomic Impacts has been updated to include Impacts on Property Values. A literature review on property value impacts has been added in Appendix F: Literature Review of Socioeconomic Effects of Wind Project and Transmission Lines.

1 my property. And don't tell me that it's justified
2 that you can measure to the center of the mining
3 claim and that the property that goes to the edge of
4 the property doesn't matter. My property is private
5 property just like anybody else, and I'm incensed
6 that the BLM would allow a wind turbine project to
7 be this close to a bedroom community which has so
8 much to offer to Las Vegas and the people in the
9 other regions.

10 The other thing, where is the concern, you
11 talk about desert tortoises. We talk about the
12 birds. What about the communities and the people
13 that live here? I think that people have to come
14 first. If you want to start building solar projects
15 and wind projects, you start your discussions here,
16 not in Washington where it's just a tabled
17 discussion. It's very important that you have
18 respect for these outlying communities. Thank you.

19 MS. LOCKE: Thank you for your comment. Wayne
20 Bundorf.

21 MR. BUNDORF: Good evening. I'm glad she
22 talked about Searchlight, the Cottonwood Cove road.
23 What I would like to talk about is the Oregon trails
24 access to the Gasline Road. We have a gas line
25 there that has been built in the early 60's. I was

Southwest Gas Corporation holds a ROW grant from BLM for an existing gas line within the project area. The grant is non-exclusive, i.e., the BLM reserves the right to authorize other actions within a ROW area for compatible uses. The Applicant will be required to coordinate with Southwest Gas should there be any pipeline crossings, e.g., roads, underground electrical collection systems, etc. The result of the coordination would be a legally binding agreement that such crossings would meet Southwest Gas-provided standards for engineering and applicable material requirements to ensure the safe and continued operation of the gas line.

1 here in 1958. I didn't work on it. I was in the
2 Air Force. It was built in the early 60's. You're
3 going to have heavy trucks pulling double trailers
4 with 100 foot blades cutting into that area. You'll
5 have construction scrapers going across it. If you
6 break a pipe, a gas goes up in the engine
7 compartment, you'll have one of your biggest
8 explosions you can ever dream of. We'll go back to
9 it can happen. It happened on September 11, 2010 in
10 the San Francisco suburb of San Bruno on a Thursday
11 evening. I'll read a small paragraph here. Sudden
12 blast occurred leaving a crater measuring 30 feet in
13 diameter and 15 feet deep. According to one
14 estimate, the explosion fire zone of approximately
15 15 to 20 acres of the neighborhood in flames
16 throughout the evening, and following morning by
17 Friday afternoon reports indicated the blaze was 75
18 percent contained. Reports indicate 35 to 50 homes
19 were completely destroyed and several more severely
20 damaged with some of the injured and critical
21 injured, the death toll from the blast could rise,
22 the death toll was four people killed and 52
23 injured. This should never happen. This to me is
24 -- I am in construction all my life and when you see
25 something is bad, you just don't go there.

1 When these started I asked them will my home
 2 depreciate. They said it will be a viewing area.
 3 Cars will come here to view. This isn't true.
 4 Also, will they make noise. I was told the blades
 5 sound like rain drops hitting leaves. This is
 6 ridiculous. This between the Cottonwood Cove road
 7 situation, the access road over Gasline Road there,
 8 it's just not a good plan. The thing with this gas
 9 line out here, this local gas line is old, and I
 10 don't know how deep it is. The dirt ground I was
 11 told in some areas it's very shallow because of the
 12 hard rock. So this could happen here. If it does
 13 it would be bad. It would be real bad. Very
 14 briefly I would say 96 windmills, no 87, no, just no
 15 action on this project. And I would like to ask you
 16 one question but you won't answer. Have you ever
 17 voted no action.

18 MS. RUGWELL: Yes.

19 MR. ROSS: We can talk afterwards.

20 MR. BUNDORF: I'm done. Thank you.

21 MS. LOCKE: Thank you for your comment. Jon
 22 Palmer.

23 MR. PALMER: Good evening, Jon Palmer. I'm a
 24 resident of Searchlight. In fact, I live right
 25 behind us here. I've been coming down to the river

The potential impacts identified in the comment are described in the DEIS in the following sections: Section 4.12-Socioeconomic Impacts Section 4.9-Visual Resources Impacts, Section 4.11-Recreation Impacts, and Section 4.10-Noise Impacts. Additionally refer to Appendix F: Literature Review of Socioeconomic Effects of Wind Project and Transmission Lines, which has been added to the EIS.

Refer to Section 4.10-Noise Impacts for a discussion on noise effects. Noise levels would not exceed the Clark County Noise Ordinance at residences.

The BLM has selected the No Action Alternative when evaluating prior NEPA documents.

Comment noted.

1 for about 30 years and after living in California,
2 retired, decided I wanted to come out here. And I
3 could honestly tell you if there were wind
4 generation out here, I would never have bought
5 property here and totally against this.

6 Next comment, I'm a volunteer firefighter.
7 I'm the fire chief for station 75 Clark County in
8 Searchlight. Past several years Las Vegas Valley
9 Water District has been working to upgrade our water
10 system. Some of our projects though expanded have
11 been cancelled due to funding. We are on limited
12 water supply here and I have made some inquiries
13 into Las Vegas Valley Water about what the needs
14 would be from our public source. And I would like
15 to know what has been done as far as water
16 requirements, where it is coming from and can
17 Searchlight even provide the water to construction
18 and building of this project. Thank you.

19 MS. LOCKE: Thank you for your comment.
20 Eleanor Shook.

21 MS. SHOOK: Eleanor Shook. Good evening. My
22 name is Eleanor Shook and I'm on the town board. I
23 have been -- this is my third term, so I have
24 listened to all of this from the very, very
25 beginning. And I left California 16 years ago and I

The Applicant will coordinate with the Las Vegas Valley Water District to support the water needs for the project. If sufficient resources are not available, the Applicant will procure water from local willing sellers.

Comments noted.

1 know Palm Springs area and the wind out there and I
2 know what they have done to Palm Springs. I just
3 was there not more than a year ago. They have
4 destroyed Palm Springs with windmills. Palm Springs
5 used to be the most beautiful green area you could
6 go to in California, lots of golf clubs and golf
7 carts and lots of country clubs. And when I was out
8 there a year ago, the stores have been boarded up.
9 I don't know what has happened to Palm Springs. But
10 as you drive into Palm Springs, they are on both
11 sides of the highways as far as you can see. It's
12 the most awful thing I've ever seen. We moved up
13 here to get out of Orange County, out of the smog,
14 out of the traffic. We bought a boat for that lake,
15 that beautiful lake and from my front porch which is
16 right down the street, I look straight at Spirit
17 Mountain. And the year that we moved up here the
18 indian tribes had trucked out here to Spirit
19 Mountain as kind of a special thing they do now.
20 And then I can't imagine windmills between me and
21 that view. It just can't happen here.

22 I'm not sure who requested it to come to this
23 area. I think I heard you say that somebody
24 requested it. I would like to know who requested
25 it, because I can't imagine in 85,000 acres of open

BLM disclosed that streets could receive wear from equipment and deliveries and has required a mitigation measure to address the effect, specifically: MM TRAN-2: Repair Damaged Streets. Before construction, the Applicant, a BLM representative, and a local representative will document the condition of the access route, noting any preconstruction damage. After construction, any damage to public roads will be repaired to the road's preconstruction condition, as determined by the local representative and BLM.

Comments noted.

1 BLM land in the State of Nevada that you would pick
2 this one tiny little town that is still that is just
3 so beautiful all on its own and the lake right down
4 the road. And if you bring trucks down our little
5 road out here on Cottonwood Cove, its only this wide
6 and they surface it every now and then because the
7 people with boats kind of tear it up, but can you
8 imagine bringing trucks down that road carrying that
9 weight and whatever it is they have in mind, I don't
10 know, but I can't imagine. And I'm just a citizen
11 here, and I don't want them. And I just like that
12 lady back there, I don't want them here in my
13 backyard. That's all. Thank you.

14 MS. LOCKE: Thank you for your comment. Kevin
15 Emmericia.

16 MR. EMMERICIA: Thank you. I'm sorry. I'm
17 having an allergy problem. Bear with me. My name
18 is Kevin Emmericia. We have a small group called
19 basin and range watch and we like to monitor big
20 renewable projects on this. And we're concerned on
21 the impact they have on the environment and small
22 communities like this. First of all, I'll just say
23 I'm disappointed that I didn't see another
24 alternative in there. I would like to request that
25 you have not to just no action alternative, but a no

1 action alternative that designates this area
2 inappropriate for wind energy because it's a
3 visually stunning area. Everybody is saying that
4 this project will be highly visible from not only
5 Lake Mead National Recreation area and local
6 wilderness areas but also in the Mojave National
7 Preservation you will be able to see this both in
8 the daytime and nighttime. Your visual simulations
9 in the draft DEIS are not adequate. They don't have
10 enough contrast to them and they don't really do the
11 negative justice that will actually do to the view
12 of this area that this project will do to the view
13 of this area.

14 I'm also concerned about wildlife. You found
15 a lot of desert tortoises in this area and this is
16 not a solar project. It won't be like the Ivanpah
17 project and totally remove the habitats. The very
18 large road will fragment the habitat and cause
19 invasive like Heron mustard to come in that causes
20 fire hazards and whatnot. That is not good for the
21 wildlife. You found big horn sheep here and this
22 will actually fragment the habitat for them, and
23 over the long period of time people come here to see
24 the wildlife. There is Austrian big bird you found,
25 golden eagle about five miles from the project that

Visual simulations were evaluated at the recommended size; therefore, the contrast ratings were correctly evaluated. BLM visual resources specialists reviewed these evaluations. The visual simulations in the EIS have been updated and scaled to appropriately and accurately compensate for the use of the wide-angled panoramic view.

Comment noted. Impacts to wildlife are discussed in Chapter 4.4-Biological Resources Impacts.

1 is going to create a problem for you. You'll have
2 bird kill here and that is going to be sad.

3 So aside from that, I would like to point out
4 what this project will do to the community. They
5 will bring a lot of construction jobs basically from
6 somewhere and it will employ a lot of people for
7 maybe two years. People will go away and you'll
8 have maybe five full-time jobs for this project,
9 maybe five to ten. And is this worth it to do that
10 because somebody like myself, I like to come to the
11 Cottonwood area. It's a beautiful place. I don't
12 think I'm going to come back if they build their
13 project. The view for me is going to be ruined and
14 I don't think I'm going to spend my money in this
15 community. And I think this community has a better
16 future with tourism than it does with the very large
17 wind project. So I'll leave it at that and bear
18 with me with my allergy attack but bye.

19 MS. LOCKE: Thank you for your comment. At
20 this time we have no other participants that filled
21 out a speaker request card. I am going to point out
22 again that we have this court reporter will be
23 available after the session to take your comments.
24 We also have another court reporter in the hall. We
25 do have time left, so BLM staff will be available to

Section 4.12-Socioeconomic Impacts under Economic Impacts
address employment effects. Section 4.12-Socioeconomic Impacts
has been updated to include a discussion on Impacts on Recreation
and Tourism.

1 answer questions and they are wearing name tags.
2 And I would like to turn it back over to Bob Ross.
3 And if you still would like to make a comment during
4 the rest of this meeting, we can do that, fill out a
5 speaker registration card and let me know.

6 MR. ROSS: Thank you very much for attending,
7 and I do have my cards here and I do answer my
8 e-mails and my phone number is on here as well. And
9 I will be available to talk after -- well, right now
10 and so will the other BLM people. And there is a
11 lot in the back there. We didn't introduce them,
12 but if you have an interest, we can find the right
13 person to answer your question. So thank you again
14 for coming. Your comments are very important to us.
15 April 18th is the deadline and, please, send us
16 every bit of your thoughts and ideas on this
17 project. Thank you very much.

18 MR. DOBBIE: Bruce Dobbie. Well, I am a
19 resident here for the past 12 years. I have been
20 coming to this area primarily for boating purposes.
21 I love the desert. I love this area. It's so clear
22 and clean and wonderful. My big concern is in hard
23 rock country especially putting in these pedestals
24 for these windmill projects, each individual
25 windmill will require 100,000 tons of cement. A lot

The Applicant will coordinate with the Las Vegas Valley Water District to support the water needs for the project. If sufficient resources are not available, the Applicant will procure water from local willing sellers.

1 of water is required. We're not sitting on the
2 Pacific ocean here. These are aquifers. It is
3 limited. And where are they going to get the water?
4 I don't know. But if they take out of this ground
5 here, we're already seeing our aquifers going down
6 as it is over the past 10 years, I've noticed it.

7 Another area of concern of mine is blasting.
8 They are going to have to be doing blasting. This
9 is hard rock mining country. They have to blast to
10 put these pedestals in. They are going to start
11 destroying peoples' homes, damaging windows, God
12 knows what, what other form of damages will be done
13 because of it. I think that is it.

14 MS. DOING: Verlie Doing. We came here in
15 1967, 44 years, developed our family and raised our
16 family and now we're raising great grandchildren.
17 It's a peaceful nice community, wonderful place to
18 live and ideally situated for recreation and
19 everything you can do. We're only since the new
20 highway is in we can get the Searchlight and we do
21 Henderson or Boulder City in 45 minutes on the road.
22 But, anyway, the Cottonwood Cove is the most
23 beautiful spot on the Colorado River and there are
24 more people who come there to fish and they live in
25 the trailers around there.

MM-NOI-1 updated to include that blasting will be limited to 8am to 5pm weekdays only. Areas will be quarantined prior to blast activity.

Comments noted.

Section 4.12-Socioeconomic Impacts has been updated to include Impacts on Property Values. A literature review on property value impacts has been added in Appendix F: Literature Review of Socioeconomic Effects of Wind Project and Transmission Lines.

1 We built when we first came a very small
2 business here, and after 10 or 12 years we built
3 this Searchlight Nugget that is on the corner as you
4 come into town. And it's just a really good place
5 to live. We have survived the turtle thing through
6 the years and other things that have happened, but
7 this is something that I do not feel that we'll
8 survive. And we've bought a great deal of property
9 here which we have sold at reasonable prices through
10 the years when somebody wanted to live, and we
11 expected that to go on for even my children and
12 grandchildren.

13 Now, I have made up my mind, I have a lot of
14 undeveloped property and I'm not going to pay taxes
15 on that property for three years if the county
16 commission votes for this project, I'm going to give
17 it back to the county. I don't want it anymore. It
18 will not be worth a quarter to people who have come
19 to Searchlight for reasons that they have always
20 come, for peace and quiet and recreation and clean
21 air and nice people. The tax thing is only on the
22 undeveloped property. I have several properties of
23 houses and they are the ones I'm not going to pay
24 taxes on, businesses and that.

25 MR. HELSETH: I will analyze the effects of

1 magnetic fields from the turbines in the DEIS and
2 there will be a transcript then. We'll read that
3 transcript and that will be analyzed in the FEIS.

4 MS. MCCOLERY: Kimberly McColery. I have just
5 my main issue is the hazard of, you know, our
6 health, physical, mental, you know, anything that is
7 going to happen, I want to make sure that it's
8 something that is not going to cause health problems
9 later on for my children that will go to be living
10 next to this. When I pass away they get the
11 property. Is this going to, you know, what I mean,
12 years down the road, I want to make sure that stuff
13 like that is not -- also want to know how they
14 decide after the many years that they are going to
15 have this project. Say they are leasing this
16 property for 20 years, how are they going to replace
17 the floral that we lost, you know, the trees,
18 everything. You've got the eagles. We do have
19 them. We have pictures that we have sent to them,
20 sent to him so he knows we do have them. But that
21 is more of my concern. I want to know what is going
22 to happen with the floral. You know, is it going to
23 stay the way it is? How long are they wanting to
24 have this project? You know, are they only leasing
25 it for so long, or are they going to have it, is it

1 an unconditional forever, forever will they be able
2 to build on, this kind of thing. Thank you.

3 * * * * *

4
5 Attest: Full, true, accurate transcript of
6 proceedings.

7
8
9 ANGELA CAMPAGNA,
CCR #495

10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25