From:	Grow, Allison
To:	Amy Defreese
Subject:	RE: meeting minutes from February BRTG call
Date:	Wednesday, March 27, 2013 2:12:30 PM
Attachments:	BRTG_Draft_Meeting Summary_022713.docx

Hi Amy!

Here you go.

Allie Grow
Fort Collins **D** 970.530.3391 **M** 970.420.0463
Denver **D** 303.228.3048
allison.grow@aecom.com

From: Amy Defreese [mailto:amy_defreese@fws.gov]
Sent: Wednesday, March 27, 2013 2:09 PM
To: Grow, Allison
Subject: meeting minutes from February BRTG call

Hi Allie,
I somehow misplaced the meeting minutes AECOM sent for the February BRTG call. Would you mind resending those to me?

Thanks!
Amy

Amy Defreese, Ecologist
Utah Field Office
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
2369 W. Orton Circle, Suite 50
West Valley City, Utah 84119

Email: amy_defreese@fws.gov
Phone: 801-975-3330 x 128

AECOM

TransWest Express Transmission Project EIS
Biological Resources Task Group Call Summary (Draft) February 27, 2013

PURPOSE: Biological Resources Task Group Conference Call

DATE AND TIME: February 27, 2013; 2:00 to 3:00 pm (MST)

ATTENDANCE:

- **AECOM** – Rollin Daggett, Erin Bergquist, Andrew Newman, Allie Grow, Spencer Martin, David Fetter, Melanie Martin, Julie Barraza
- **Bureau of Land Management (BLM)** – Sharon Knowlton, Frank Blomquist, Robin Naeve, Mark Slaughter, Amelia Savage, Carla Wise, Renee Chi
- **Bureau of Reclamation (BOR)** – Jessie Stegmeier
- **Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA)** – Amy Heuslein
- **EPG** – Reid Persing
- **U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)** – Creed Clayton, Julie Reeves, Amy Defreese
- **U.S. Forest Service (USFS)** – Jenna Jorgensen
- **Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (UDWR)** – Doug Sakaguchi
- **Western Area Power Administration (Western)** – Misti Sporer
- **Wyoming Coalition of Local Governments** - David Allison
- **Wyoming Game and Fish Department** – Matt Fry

SUMMARY:

1. Introductions/Roll Call

Roll call was completed.

2. Project Update

a. DEIS Activities in January and February

- The Preliminary Draft EIS (PDEIS) Version 2 (v2) was posted to the proposed SharePoint site for review by all cooperating agencies. The PDEISv2 included the preliminary agency preferred alternatives therein. AECOM is in receipt of comments on the PDEISv2.
- A series of comment response meetings between the BLM, Western, cooperating agencies, and AECOM were conducted in Henderson, Nevada; Price and Cedar City, Utah; and Craig, Colorado. A comment response meeting between the BLM, Western, USFS, USFWS, and AECOM was conducted in Fort Collins, Colorado on January 15-16th.
- A Region III Agency Preferred Alternative Workshop between the BLM, USFS, Western, and AECOM was conducted on February 4th. The meeting resulted in a new agency preferred alternative in Region

III determined to be Alternative III-B with a slight reconfiguration. The reconfigured Alternative III-B will now follow the West-wide Energy Corridor (WWEC) instead of the IPP existing transmission line within Millard County. The revised agency preferred alternative focuses on impact minimization to land use and cultural concerns including military operating lands within central NV and western UT, and the avoidance of impacts to the Mountain Meadows Massacre National Landmark and area. Impacts to desert tortoise habitat were noted as a "push", replacing a decrease in habitat disturbance in one location with an increase in habitat disturbance in another location. As a result of the change in agency preferred alternative, the configuration of Alternative III-D is no longer needed, and will not be presented in the DEIS.

- A Region II TransWest-Agency call was conducted on February 15th. The meeting resulted in a new agency preferred alternative in Region II, including the addition of multiple reference line segments and Alternative II-F reconfiguration in the Emma Park area north of Price, Utah. The revised agency preferred alternative focuses on impact minimization to greater sage-grouse leks (i.e., 3 to 4 mile buffer applied), while avoiding the Argyle Creek area. The trade-offs are visual, recreational, and land use effects. Alternative II-F generally follows a scenic backway with developed and dispersed camping, and also cross a portion (approximately 1 mile) of USFS Inventoried Roadless Area. Other potential routes have also been added for consideration in the area. Region I and II management team discussion was conducted on February 22nd to discuss the incorporation of the Tuttle Easement micro-siting options within DEIS analysis and AECOM's revised public DEIS deliverable date.
- Mark Slaughter (BLM) addressed his concern about the off-set distance of the proposed TWE transmission line in relation to other existing utilities within the WWEC in Nevada. AECOM noted that the current agency preferred reference line is within the designated utility corridor and offset approximately 1,500 feet from the existing lines through Lincoln County (BLM Ely District), and then follows the offset of the existing lines in Clark County (BLM S. Nevada District) out of the WWEC-designated corridor towards the Moapa Reservation (which is the BLM Las Vegas RMP-designated corridor). Mark indicated that based on the new WWEC guidelines, the proposed TWE transmission line can approach as close as 250 feet "for short distances" to an existing utility. David Fetter (AECOM) will provide a screenshot of this route to Mark for review.

b. DEIS Activities Planned for March and April

- AECOM has begun the process of analyzing the new alternative segments for the public DEIS. Based on the aforementioned route modifications, delays to the overall project schedule have been incurred in order to incorporate new information into the EIS analysis.
- Revised overview figures and associated project shapefiles will be posted to the project SharePoint site, pending the verification of the agency preferred alternative from the BLM Utah State Office.
- Based on the current schedule, the public DEIS will be submitted to the Washington Office and the lead agencies on April 19th for final approval to print. It is anticipated that the Draft EIS will be printed

and distributed on June 28th; a 90-day comment period will follow. *Please note that the next opportunity to comment will occur within the DEIS public comment period currently scheduled to begin on June 28th.* Comment responses on the PDEISv2 will be distributed to the BRTG and all cooperators via the SharePoint site prior to release of the public DEIS.

c. Project Route Changes

- See Section 2a above.

d. Data Requests for Game Fish and Special Status Species Pending for New Segments in Utah

- AECOM will coordinate with Doug Sakaguchi (UDWR) to ascertain if the existing data within the PDEISv2 is sufficient or if new data needs to be incorporated based on the route reconfigurations.

e. Field Survey Planning and Updated Habitat Models

- Species-specific surveys will begin in April 2013 focused within a 500-foot-wide right-of-way within the agency-preferred alternative for federally listed species.
- Survey protocols are currently being finalized in consultation within the USFWS, BLM, and USFS. AECOM is requesting final concurrence on the modeling approaches used to determine the areas of potentially suitable habitat.
- AECOM will coordinate with the USFWS, Western, BLM, and UDWR to verify Mexican spotted owl survey protocol (March mandatory) and survey locations based on quality of modeled habitats identified.
- Desert Tortoise - To date, the current strategy is to conduct presence/absence surveys to be used within the EIS and Biological Assessment (BA). Western has advised TWE that project impacts to desert tortoise and their habitat will be a concern. The USFWS protocol allows for either a 100% coverage survey or probabilistic sampling form projects of this size. AECOM will coordinate a meeting with the USFWS, BLM, and NDOW to discuss this issue further.
- The Ute ladies-tresses' orchid habitat model was revised in fall 2012 based on agency feedback. AECOM is awaiting confirmation from TWE regarding riparian avoidance.

f. Misc.

- The applicant has identified three potential transmission line structure types to be used by the proposed project: guyed steel lattice tower, self-supporting steel lattice tower, and tubular lattice tower. Although the guyed structure is preferred, site-specific engineering has not been performed. As the Plan of Development is developed, TWE will work with the agencies to identify which structures can be used on a site-by-site basis.
- AECOM will coordinate with Robin Naeve regarding clarification on BMPs (specific to Utah).

- Request for EGS to communicate outstanding biological-related Requests for Information with AECOM's management team.

3. Action Items

Item Number	Item	Responsibility	Completion Date	Complete? (Y/N)
1	Coordinate with EGS EIS biology team regarding mitigation measures and buffer distances for wetland and aquatic resources.	AECOM, EPG	3/8/13	N
2	Send project shapefiles; coordinate with UDWR re: game and fish species data	AECOM	2/29/13	N
3	Coordinate BMP discussion with BLM	AECOM	3/2/13	N
4	Facilitate further discussion regarding the Desert Tortoise with USFWS, BLM, and NDOW	AECOM	3/14/13	Y

4. Next Call: March 27, 2013 (2 – 3 PM, Mountain Time)

Link to the Project SharePoint site: https://extranet.aecom.com/sites/twe/Pages/Default.aspx

For SharePoint troubleshooting questions, contact Chris Dunne at 970-530-3487 or chris.dunne@aecom.com.