

to help meet growing demand in the western United States, and enhance domestic energy security.

The Southwest Area Transmission Group—a regional transmission planning organization—identified a need for the project. Its importance is demonstrated by the abundance of proposed projects that have submitted interconnection requests to transmission owners within the proposed project area, and the potential for renewable energy sites within the SunZia project area. Additional transmission would be required to support development of potential renewable energy projects in Arizona and New Mexico. In addition, the requirement of each State to meet Renewable Portfolio Standards (RPS) and national interests in energy, demonstrate the need for the proposed project.

The proposed transmission line route and alternatives developed through the NEPA process would cross BLM lands in Arizona and New Mexico, as well as State and private lands. To the extent feasible, the proposed route would use existing transmission line corridors and designated utility corridors located on Federal land. One of the 500 kV transmission lines would be constructed and operated as an alternating current (AC) facility. SunZia may construct and operate the other proposed transmission lines as either AC or direct current (DC). The SunZia transmission lines would interconnect with planned substations along the route. Equipment additions and modifications would be required at each of the interconnecting substations. Engineering studies would determine those requirements as part of the project. A right-of-way of up to 1,000 feet in width and a lease-term of 50 years would be required to construct, operate, and maintain the transmission lines, structures and appurtenances. If constructed, the project would be in operation year-round, transporting electrical power to major substation hubs in Arizona and New Mexico. The project would have a bi-directional transmission capacity of approximately 3,000 megawatts or greater of electrical power.

The proposed project would take approximately three years to construct and would likely be constructed in phased segments with an in-service date of 2013. Specific acreages of access roads and temporary work areas would be determined through the NEPA process and project design.

In Arizona, approximately 43 miles of the proposed route would cross public land administered by the Safford and Tucson BLM Field Offices. In New Mexico, approximately 128 miles of the

proposed route would cross public land administered by the BLM Las Cruces District Office and BLM Socorro Field Office. The proposed route would pass in the general vicinity of the following locations:

Arizona: Coolidge, San Manuel, Safford, Willcox, Bowie, and San Simon; and New Mexico: Lordsburg, Deming, Hatch, Derry, Arrey, Truth or Consequences, San Antonio, Bingham, Ancho, and Carrizozo.

The BLM is the lead Federal agency for the NEPA analysis process and preparation of the EIS. Cooperating agencies identified at this time could include: The Bureau of Reclamation, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the New Mexico State Land Office, and the Arizona State Land Department. Other State and local governments will be invited to participate in the process, and consultation will occur with local, State, and tribal governments.

The purpose of the public scoping process is to determine relevant issues that will influence the scope of the environmental analysis, including alternatives, and guide the process for developing the EIS. At present, the BLM has identified the following preliminary issues: The potential effects of the proposed action on wildlife habitat, plants, and animals including threatened, endangered, and sensitive species, visual resources, National Historic Trails and related viewsheds; Native American traditional cultural properties and sacred places; soils/water from surface disturbing activities; local and regional socioeconomic conditions; consistency with local government land use plans; and future reclamation/mitigation from transmission line construction or location. The BLM encourages the public to send comments concerning the project as proposed, other feasible alternative locations, possible mitigation measures, and any other information relevant to the proposed action.

Authorization of this proposal may require amendments to one or more RMPs. By this notice, the BLM is complying with requirements in 43 CFR 1610.2(c) to notify the public of potential RMP amendments, predicated on the findings of the EIS. If RMP amendments are necessary, the BLM will integrate the RMP process with the NEPA process for this project.

Your input is important and will be considered in the public scoping process. All comment submittals must include the commenter's name and street address. Comments including the names and addresses of the commenter will be available for public inspection at

the above offices during business hours (7:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.), Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or any other personal identifying information in your comment, be advised that your entire comment, including your personal identifying information, may be publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold from public review your personal identifying information, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

**William Merhege,**

*Acting Deputy State Director, Lands and Resources.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### National Park Service

#### Notice of Intent To Prepare a Feasibility Study and Environmental Impact Statement for Everglades National Park (Park) To Evaluate Modifications to the Tamiami Trail

**SUMMARY:** Notice is hereby given, in accordance with the provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*), that the NPS is preparing a Feasibility Study and EIS to “evaluate the feasibility of additional bridge length, beyond that to be constructed pursuant to the Modified Water Deliveries to Everglades National Park Project (16 U.S.C. 410r-S), including a continuous bridge, or additional bridges or some combination thereof, for the Tamiami Trail (United States Highway 41) to restore more natural water flow to Everglades National Park and Florida Bay and for the purpose of restoring habitat within the Park and the ecological connectivity between the Park and the Water Conservation Areas” (2009 Omnibus Appropriations Act). The NPS is the lead agency on this federal action; however, the NPS has requested the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACOE) be a cooperating agency on this effort, with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) providing technical assistance.

**DATES:** Written comments regarding the proposed project must be postmarked no later than 30 days from the publication of this Notice of Intent (NOI) in the **Federal Register**. As part of this process, public workshops will be held to solicit public input about the proposed project. The date, time, and location of the public workshops will be

announced in the newspaper Miami Herald and through the NPS Planning, Environment, and Public Comment (PEPC) Web site <http://parkplanning.nps.gov>.

**ADDRESSES:** Written comments should be addressed to: National Park Service, Attention Pat Kenney, Denver Service Center, Planning Division, P.O. Box 25287, Denver, Colorado 80225-0287. Comments may also be submitted via the PEPC Web site using the links provided below. General information about the proposed project is available at the office of the Superintendent, Everglades National Park, 40001 State Road 9336, Homestead, Florida 33034. Additionally, interested persons may view the PEPC Web site: <http://parkplanning.nps.gov>, then select "Everglades NP" from the drop down box.

Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment—including your personal identifying information—may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so. We will always make submissions from organizations or businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives of or officials of organizations or businesses, available for public inspection in their entirety.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Dan B. Kimball Superintendent, Everglades and Dry Tortugas National Parks, 40001 SR 9336, Homestead, FL 33034 or by telephone at 305-242-7800.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

a. *Authorization:* This project is authorized under the 2009 Omnibus Appropriations Act.

b. *Project Scope:* The 2009 Omnibus Appropriations Act directs the Secretary of the Interior, acting through the NPS, to immediately "evaluate the feasibility of additional bridge length, beyond that to be constructed pursuant to the Modified Water Deliveries to Everglades National Park Project (16 U.S.C. 410r-S), including a continuous bridge, or additional bridges or some combination thereof, for the Tamiami Trail (United States Highway 41) to restore more natural water flow to Everglades National Park and Florida Bay and for the purpose of restoring habitat within the Park and the ecological connectivity between the Park and the Water Conservation Areas."

Specific Objectives include:

- Provide for substantial increases in flows under the Tamiami Trail to Northeast Shark River Slough in the Park in order to restore the natural resources and processes in the park.

- Remove obstructions to sheet flow between Water Conservation Area 3 and the Park.

- To the extent practicable, restore ecological conditions in Park.

- Ensure compatibility with other pre-Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP) and future CERP projects.

- Identify seepage management requirements associated with the recommended plan.

c. *Preliminary Alternatives:* The previously examined alternatives in the 2005 Revised General Reevaluation Report will be reevaluated and modified. In addition, the environmental, engineering, real estate, and cost estimates will be revised.

d. *Issues:* The Integrated Feasibility Study/EIS will consider impacts on health and safety, aesthetics and recreation, cultural resources, socio-economic resources, hydrology, water quality, ecosystem habitat, fish and wildlife resources, threatened and endangered species, and construction costs.

e. *Scoping:* In order to develop a realistic plan, NPS will seek input from other resource and technical agencies and stakeholders, including the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida, Seminole Tribe of Florida and Seminole Tribe of Oklahoma, the South Florida Water Management District, the Florida Department of Transportation, Florida Department of Environmental Protection, State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and the FHWA. The final recommended plan will take into consideration the Integrated Schedule developed with the policy guidance of the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force and will be consistent with the National Academy of Sciences recommendations for Incremental Adaptive Restoration. The Park, as the project lead, will be responsible for completion of the final report, including all technical analyses and NEPA requirements. This scope may be amended by the agreement of the parties.

f. *Public Involvement:* Public scoping meetings and workshops will be held over the course of the study; the exact locations, dates, and times will be announced in public notices and local newspapers. Public meetings will be held after release of the Draft EIS; the exact locations, dates, and times will be announced in a public notice and local newspapers.

g. *Coordination:* The proposed action is in accordance with the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act of 1958 and the Endangered Species Act of 1973. The coordinating agencies include the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Florida Department of Environmental Protection, South Florida Water Management District, Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida, Seminole Tribe of Florida, Seminole Tribe of Oklahoma, USACOE, and FHWA.

h. *Other Environmental Review and Consultation:* The proposed action would involve evaluation for compliance with guidelines pursuant to Section 404(b) of the Clean Water Act, the National Historic Preservation Act, and any other applicable law.

i. *Agency Role:* As a cooperating agency, the USACOE will provide extensive information and assistance updating the environmental, engineering, real estate, and cost/benefit analyses for all alternatives.

j. *EIS Preparation:* The draft Integrated Feasibility Study/EIS is currently estimated for publication in March 2010.

**Authority:** The authority for publishing this notice is contained in 40 CFR 1506.6.

Dated: May 5, 2009.

**Art Frederick,**

*Acting Regional Director, Southeast Region, National Park Service.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Bureau of Land Management

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#### State of Arizona Resource Advisory Council Meeting

**AGENCY:** Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

**ACTION:** Notice of Arizona Resource Advisory Council Meeting.

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**SUMMARY:** In accordance with the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 and the Federal Advisory Committee Act of 1972, the U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Arizona Resource Advisory Council (RAC), will meet on June 25, 2009, at the BLM National Training Center located at 9828 North 31st Avenue in Phoenix from 8 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. Morning agenda items include: Review and approval of the March 26, 2009, meeting minutes for