



United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Las Cruces District Office
1800 Marquess Street
Las Cruces, New Mexico 88005
www.blm.gov/nm/lascruces

2800 (03100)
In Reply Refer To:
1792 (L0310)

Dear Interested Party,

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Las Cruces District Office (LCDO) is seeking public comments on the Talavera Substation and Distribution Project Draft Environmental Assessment (EA). The EA analyzes potential environmental effects from the construction, operation, and maintenance of a proposed new permanent substation and associated transmission and distribution lines in Doña Ana County, New Mexico. The EA was prepared in response to right-of-way (ROW) applications submitted by El Paso Electric Company (EPE). The Draft EA is now available and can be found on the BLM's eplanning website (see instructions and link below).

The BLM will host an open house style informational public meeting at the following date and location:

Date: Thursday, April 5, 2018
Time: 5:30-7:30 PM – Open House
Location: New Mexico Farm and Ranch Heritage Museum
Ventana Room
4100 Dripping Springs Rd, Las Cruces, NM 88011

Project Overview

EPE has identified a need to add an additional permanent substation to the electrical power grid and make improvements to the distribution feeder line grid that supports the city of Las Cruces and surrounding communities. EPE received permission from the BLM in July 2013 to construct and operate the existing temporary Talavera Substation off Dripping Springs Road. The temporary substation was installed to provide immediate load relief on the Salopek distribution feeder electric line for the area until a permanent substation could be located, permitted, and constructed. This temporary facility is not sufficient to meet load growth in the near or long-term future.

The new permanent substation would convert 115-kilovolt (kV) electricity to 24-kV electricity for distribution into the power grid for current consumption and to meet future demand and support future economic growth in the area. The project would also include rebuilding of approximately 10.5 miles of existing 24-kV distribution line to replace and/or add infrastructure to upgrade these lines, and to construct approximately 2.2 miles of new 24-kV distribution line to connect existing distribution circuits.

The BLM LCDO administered two separate scoping periods for the project (February 3–March 3, 2017 and June 17–August 17, 2017) to assist in preparation of the EA. Based on public input from these two scoping periods, the BLM LCDO identified five alternative substation location sites, in addition to the

Proposed Action, that would meet the agency's purpose and need. The EA analyzes six action alternatives (the Proposed Action and five alternative sites) and the No Action alternative.

The EA will remain available for public review and comment until April 30, 2018. Electronic copies of the Draft EA can be viewed and downloaded from the project website.

How to Access Documents

- Access documents online at: <https://eplanning.blm.gov> [Follow these instructions: select "NEPA" for the Type of Project, click on the "Text Search" tab, click on "Advanced Search" enter NEPA #: DOI-BLM-NM-L000-2017-0008-EA. Note: requires all CAPS. Click "Search".]
- In Electronic Letter Click: [DOI-BLM-NM-L000-2017-0008-EA](https://www.blm.gov/foia/DOIBLMNM-L000-2017-0008-EA)

How to Comment

- File your comments electronically by sending them to: BLM_NM_LCDO_Comments@blm.gov. Please include "Talavera Substation EA" in the subject line of your email.
- Mail your comments to: BLM Las Cruces District Office
ATTN: Talavera Substation EA
1800 Marquess Street
Las Cruces, NM 88005
- Comments will be accepted at the public meeting, on designated comment forms which will be provided.

For all comments submitted, please identify whether you are submitting comments as an individual or as the designated spokesperson on behalf of an organization.

Before including your address, phone number, email address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, be advised 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 from public review your personal identifying information, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

If you have questions regarding the proposed project or would like to be added or removed from the mailing list, contact Paula Montez, Project Lead at (575) 525-4387 or via email at pmontez@blm.gov. Thank you for your interest in the management of public land.

Sincerely,



Bill Childress
District Manager - Las Cruces District Office