

Final Environmental Impact Statement

for the
**Montana Alberta Tie Ltd. (MATL)
230-kV Transmission Line**

**VOLUME 2
COMMENT RESPONSE DOCUMENT**

September 2008



United States
Department of Energy



State of Montana
Department of Environmental Quality

COVER SHEET

Responsible Agencies: U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) and Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) are co-lead agencies; the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), U.S. Department of the Interior, is a cooperating agency.

Title: Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Montana Alberta Tie Ltd. (MATL) 230-kV Transmission Line (DOE/EIS-0399)

Location: Cascade, Teton, Chouteau, Pondera, Toole, and Glacier counties, Montana.

Contacts: *For further information about this Final EIS, contact:* Ellen Russell, Project Manager, Office of Electricity Delivery and Energy Reliability, U.S. Department of Energy, 1000 Independence Ave., S.W., Washington, D.C. 20585, (202) 586-9624, or Ellen.Russell@hq.doe.gov. *For general information on DOE's National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process, contact:* Carol Borgstrom, Director, Office of NEPA Policy and Compliance, at the above address, (202) 586-4600, or leave a message at (800) 472-2756.

For general information on the State of Montana Major Facility Siting Act process, contact: Tom Ring, Environmental Science Specialist, Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), PO Box 200901, Helena, MT 59620-0901, or (406) 444-6785. *For general information on the State of Montana Environmental Policy Act process, contact:* Greg Hallsten, Environmental Science Specialist, at the above address, or (406) 444-3276.

Abstract: MATL proposes to construct and operate a merchant 230-kV transmission line between Great Falls, Montana, and Lethbridge, Alberta, that would cross the U.S.-Canada border north of Cut Bank, Montana. The transmission line would transmit 300 megawatts (MW) of electric power south and 300 MW north. In order to build and operate the line, MATL must first obtain a Presidential permit (Permit) from DOE to cross the U.S.-Canada border, a Certificate of Compliance (Certificate) from the Montana DEQ to construct the line in Montana, and a right-of-way grant from the BLM to cross any BLM-administered lands.

In March 2007 DOE and DEQ published a joint document (referred to herein as the March 2007 document) that was a Draft Environmental Assessment for DOE and a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for DEQ. Based largely on the public comments received on the March 2007 document, DOE determined that an EIS was the appropriate level of review. For the same reasons, DEQ decided to prepare a supplement to its Draft EIS. In February 2008 the agencies published a document (referred to herein as the Draft EIS) that was a Federal Draft EIS and a State of Montana Supplemental Draft EIS. A 45-day comment period began with publication of a Notice of Availability in the *Federal Register* on February 15, 2008 (73 FR 8869), and ended on March 31, 2008, during which the agencies held three public hearings to obtain comments. The Final EIS contains the agencies' responses to comments and revisions to the Draft EIS. Text changes to this Final EIS from the Draft EIS are identified by underlining for corrected or added text and a mark along the left margin.

The EIS analyzes the "No Action" alternative and three alternative transmission line alignments with 11 Local Routing Options and other minor variations to the alternative alignments. The agencies will use the EIS to ensure that they have the environmental information needed to render informed decisions.

An accompanying compact disc contains electronic copies of the Final EIS, including the appendices, which are not included in the paper copy, along with Volume 2 from the Draft EIS, which provides responses to comments received on the March 2007 document. The EIS will be available on DOE's NEPA website at www.gc.energy.gov/NEPA/DOE_NEPA_documents.htm and at DEQ's website at <http://deq.mt.gov/MFS/MATL.asp>.

VOLUME 2

Introduction 1
Part 1. Consolidated Responses 3
Part 2. Individual Responses..... 23
Part 3 List of Commenters 370
Part 4. Attachment 382

All references are in the Reference section of Volume 1.

RESPONSES TO COMMENTS, INTRODUCTION

Volume 2 contains the comments received on the Federal Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and State of Montana Supplemental Draft EIS for the Montana Alberta Tie Ltd. (MATL) 230-kV Transmission Line issued in February 2008 (DOE/EIS-0399), referred to herein as the Draft EIS, and the agencies' responses to those comments.

Three hundred fifty-two individuals and organizations submitted comments on the Draft EIS, either orally at public hearings or in writing. The agencies identified 931 individual comments in the hearing transcripts, comment letters, and e-mails received. The agencies read and considered each comment, whether submitted orally or in writing. Because large numbers of comments addressed similar topics or themes, the agencies developed consolidated responses to address many of those related comments in one place.

There are four parts in Volume 2: **Consolidated Responses** (Part 1), **Responses to Individual Comments** (Part 2), a **List of Commenters** (Part 3), and **Duplicate Comments** (Part 4). Part 1, **Consolidated Responses**, presents the agencies' consolidated responses to address topics and themes that were raised in multiple individual comments. Part 2, **Responses to Individual Comments**, provides the scanned images of letters and other written comments submitted to the agencies, and transcripts of the public hearings in which comments were recorded. The agencies' responses are shown beside each comment or on the following pages, with the responses numbered to match the comments. All comments received by the agencies are included. Part 2 presents comments in the order in which they were received and logged by the agencies. An alphabetical index to individual commenters is provided in Part 3

Because some comments were submitted as letters and also read into the record at the public hearings, there are duplicates of some comments. In these instances, Part 2 contains the comments provided at the hearing, together with agency responses, and the original letters are in Part 4, **Duplicate Comments**.

Because many comments raised similar issues and concerns, and to present clear and consistent responses, the agencies grouped comments by major topic in Part 1, **Consolidated Responses**. The agencies prepared these consolidated responses for the convenience of the reader; to avoid repeating the same, often lengthy, responses for multiple comments on the same or similar issues; and to highlight the public's principal issues. If an individual comment is grouped with one (or more) of these major topics, the response to that comment in Part 2 directs the reader to the relevant consolidated response topics. As needed, additional discussion of these major topics has also been provided in some of the individual comment responses.

The agencies wish to thank all those who submitted comments and testimony regarding this project. All comments received – whether a letter, email, or oral comment presented at the hearings are part of the administrative record for the EIS.

Part 1. CONSOLIDATED RESPONSES

Introduction to Consolidated Responses

Many comments on the Draft EIS raised similar issues and concerns. The agencies have grouped comments by major topic and provided consolidated responses to those topics. This part of the document presents these responses. If an individual comment is grouped with one (or more) of these major topics, the response to that comment in Part 2 directs the reader to the relevant consolidated response topics in this section.

The Consolidated Responses categories, arranged alphabetically for the convenience of the reader, are:

Avian and Wildlife Issues
Economic Issues
Farming Issues
Legal and Regulatory Issues
Line Capacity Issues
Line Issues
Safety Issues
Socioeconomic Issues
Soils Issues
Tax Issues
Vegetation, Wetland and Weed Issues
Visual Issues
Wind Farm Issues

Avian and Wildlife Issues

A number of comments were related to impacts on birds, other wildlife, and their habitats. Specific topics included the quality of field surveys for wildlife, impacts on wildlife habitat, habitat fragmentation, possible collision mortality from the transmission line and potential future wind farms, and flyways.

Several commenters expressed concern that the field surveys for wildlife were not sufficient to verify the presence or absence of certain birds or other animals; one commenter suggested that one or two full years of data gathering would be needed. MATL has carried out field studies using censusing protocols including call back surveys. Call back surveys involve playing a recorded call of a selected species and recording the number of individuals that respond to the call. These are species specific surveys and can provide population estimates and indicate trends in the population. Field surveys for wildlife often identify suitable habitat for birds or other animals that are not actually observed during the survey period. Where potential habitat is present but uncertainty exists about whether the habitat is actually used, the EIS assessment of potential impacts conservatively assumes that wildlife is present and could be affected. Similarly, where uncertainty exists, appropriate mitigation would be implemented to avoid or reduce impacts to wildlife that might be present.

The discussion of impacts in the EIS, Section 3.8.3 acknowledges that there might be impacts on wildlife due to disturbance during construction, but that the impacts would be short-term and concentrated within the action area. Also, at crossings of the Marias and Teton rivers the transmission line would span the river, so the impact on bat habitat and bats at those river crossings would be minor.

Several commenters were concerned about the Project fragmenting wildlife habitats. Habitat fragmentation from wind farm development could be a concern if the wind farm were to be sited on undisturbed land, especially if the surrounding landscape had been altered by large-scale disturbances such as conversion to crop land. During operation, presence of a transmission line in grassland habitats could contribute to habitat fragmentation for those grassland species such as grouse that are reported to avoid areas where there are overhead objects that may serve as perches for raptors.

Potential bird and bat mortality from the Project were issues highlighted by several commenters. The analysis of potential bird and bat mortality from wind turbines in Section 4.9 is based on mortality data at wind farms that have modern wind turbine technology. Tables 4.9-1 and 4.9-2 indicate ranges of bird and bat mortalities at wind turbines. Section 4.9 has been revised in the EIS to include data on bird and bat mortality at the Judith Gap Energy Center in Montana. An estimated 100 million to over 1 billion birds are killed each year in the United States due to collisions with human-made structures, including vehicles, buildings and windows, transmission lines,

communication towers, and wind turbines (Erickson et al. 2001). Wind farm-related bird collisions are estimated to represent about 0.01% to 0.02% (i.e., 1 out of every 5,000 to 10,000 fatalities) of the annual bird collision deaths in the United States. While the rotation speed of newer model wind turbines is slower than older models, the blade tip speed is still 140 – 200 mph due to the longer blades on newer turbines (National Research Council 2007).

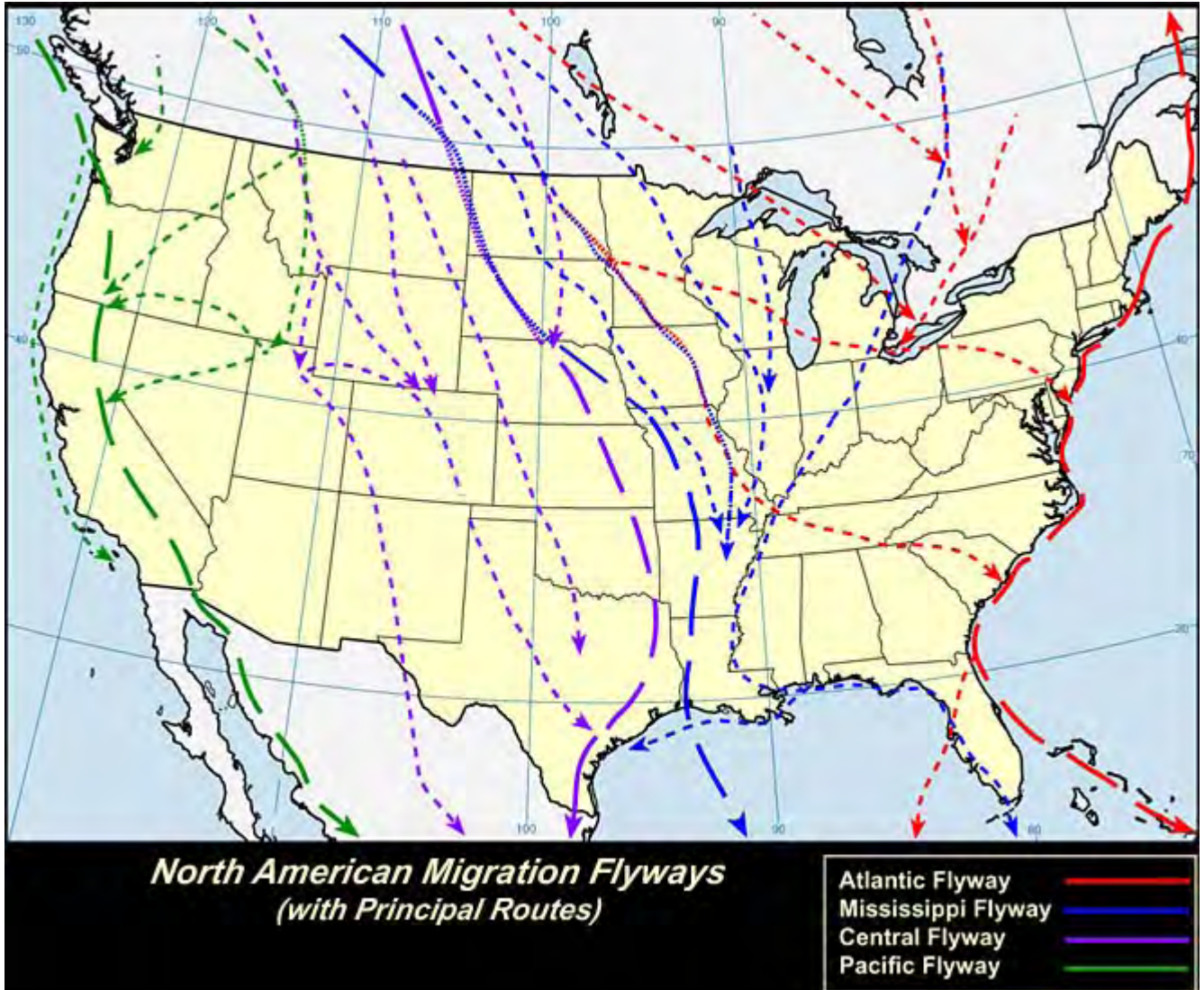
The map on the next page shows bird migration corridors through Montana. Exact migration routes vary from year to year depending on weather patterns and availability of habitat. Biologists from the local Fish Wildlife and Parks and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service who were contacted had no knowledge of fine scale flyway maps for the study area, and the agencies are not aware of any finer scale delineation of migration routes within the study area. Within the study area the transmission line would cross portions of the Central and Pacific flyways.

Migrating birds do not all fly at low elevations, and most birds will migrate at heights far above the transmission line (Bellrose 1971). Some birds will, however, migrate at much lower elevations within a zone where they may collide with the transmission line. Although a few passerines collide with transmission lines, researchers generally suggest that larger, less maneuverable birds that fly at low elevation are more likely than passerines to collide with transmission lines. In North America it has been estimated that collisions with transmission and distribution lines may kill anywhere from hundreds of thousands to 175 million birds annually (Manville 2005).

Within the study area more collisions would be expected where the line would cross streams, lakes, and wetlands and where higher densities of larger, less maneuverable transient birds such as pelicans, swans, geese, and ducks are expected. To a lesser extent mortality may also occur in upland areas where smaller more maneuverable passerines would be expected. To reduce avian mortality from collisions, MATL has proposed, and the agencies are likely to require, as appropriate (See Appendix A, Sensitive Areas for the MATL Transmission Line Project, in Appendix F of the EIS.), installation of line marking devices on overhead ground wires within ¼ mile of streams, lakes, and wetlands and within ½ mile of the Benton Lake National Wildlife Refuge boundary.

Following construction of Western Area Power Administration's Great Falls to Conrad 230 kV transmission line, a study was undertaken to determine avian collision mortality from the line at the crossing of Lake Creek (4.85 miles of line about 4 miles west of Benton Lake National Wildlife Refuge), Bole Bench (5.6 miles of line not far from Freezeout Lake, an important waterfowl stopover during migrations), and the Teton River (roughly 1/3 mile of line). That study found an estimated 0.05 to 0.35 waterfowl collisions per 100 flights and concluded that there was no significant impact to waterfowl, shorebirds, or raptors. Authors of the study stated that the lack of

significant impact resulted from routing the line to avoid high collision areas, construction design, and the placement of orange globes on the line at the river crossing. The authors did note, however, that the loss of threatened, endangered, or rare species, if it were to occur, may be biologically significant (Hugie, et al. 1993).



Map from <http://www.birdnature.com/allflyways.html>

As discussed Section 3.8.2.2, several waterfowl and shorebird species are known to occur in the analysis area. While most knowledge of these species' nesting and foraging habitat is specific to the Benton Lake National Wildlife Refuge, additional use is known for several outlying water bodies including Hay Lake, Grassy Lake, several Waterfowl Production Areas, and a few of the larger, undisturbed prairie potholes. There are no available data on specific migratory pathways or low-level flight feeding pathways. Additional nesting and stopover habitat is likely provided by area wetlands, stock ponds, and the Marias and Teton rivers. This additional information and discussion, including the map above, have been added to Section 3.8.2.2 to further describe the

areas of potential impact associated with migration and daily feeding pathways in relation to area water bodies.

Economic Issues

Some comments addressed economic issues related to the MATL proposal. Commenters were concerned about the distribution of the benefits and costs of the line and the line's effect on the cost of electric power.

The economic benefits and costs of the MATL line are discussed in Section 3.13. Some benefits from the MATL line would go to the owners of the line in the form of returns on investment, and some would go to stockholders in the company. There are some benefits that may be felt by a large number of Montana residents in the form of a possibly more robust transmission grid, and more opportunities for rerouting power during outages. These transmission-related benefits are discussed in Section 3.17. Small increases in tax revenues and worker income as a result of MATL could benefit residents of several Montana counties. Also, Section 1.2.1 states, "Additional expected benefits to Montana generators and consumers include: additional connection with markets that demand energy from sustainable sources, such as electricity generated from wind power; additional wholesale electricity purchasing options for Montana utilities, which could result in lower rates due to an increase in supplier competition; and increased opportunities for western grid system optimization during high Montana export and low Alberta-BC export scenarios." Currently, generators in Montana export approximately 1,400 average MW of electricity. MATL applied to have the capacity to deliver up to 300 MW in each direction and has current contracts for 300 MW in each direction on the line related to new generation not yet built (also see Line Capacity Issues).

There is a possibility that the MATL line could increase electricity prices to Montanans, but there is no hard evidence to support this.

Laws governing siting are different on each side of the United States–Canada border. The benefits and costs to stakeholders will be taken in account when DEQ and DOE make their decisions.

Farming Issues

Numerous commenters were concerned with the issues farmers would face in having to farm around structures, the types of structures, their location, and how they would be compensated for their costs and inconvenience.

Potential impacts to farming and farmers are addressed in several areas of the EIS: Section 3.1 addresses impacts to land use, including farm uses. Table 3.1-4 has been revised to provide revised estimates of the amount of land that would be permanently

removed from production due to support structures under each alternative. Section 3.1 also discusses the short-term disruptions of farming and other land uses that could occur during construction. Potential economic impacts to farmers are presented in Section 3.13, and a detailed study of costs to farmers per transmission structure is provided in Appendix N. Sections 3.1 and 3.13 and Appendix N have been revised. Since the publication of the Draft EIS, MATL has revised its proposal regarding the type of structures that would be placed on diagonal crossings of cropland and Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) land and has proposed a new compensation plan for farmers. The EIS has been revised to reflect these changes and to include analysis of potential impacts of the revised MATL proposal. Additionally, because there were large changes in commodity prices and costs of fuel and fertilizer since development of the Draft EIS, the agencies updated the assessments of costs and benefits for farmers to reflect more current cost and price data.

MATL currently proposes to use monopoles wherever the transmission line crosses cropland or CRP land diagonally, totaling about 56 miles of the line for Alternative 2. The majority of the structures would not be guyed. Where stronger structures are required – for example, where the line takes a turn or a dead end structure is necessary – guy wires are proposed. MATL would work with landowners to develop a placement that minimizes the impact of the transmission line on their property and farming operations (MATL 2008). MATL proposes for Alternative 2 to use H-frame structures instead of monopoles on non-diagonal crossings of cropland and CRP land and in rangeland and pasture land. Only H-frame structures would be used under Alternative 3. Under Alternative 4, monopoles would be used for all crossings of cropland or CRP land.

Following completion of the transmission line, in most cases the right-of-way could be farmed (depending on the individual agreement with MATL), but the presence of structures in a cultivated field would take some land out of production. The presence of the MATL project may also make installation of large center-pivot irrigation systems impractical in some fields. The additional costs of farming around transmission line structures are discussed in Section 3.13. Additional details of the cost analysis were presented in Appendix N of the Draft EIS. That analysis has been updated in the Final EIS to reflect spring 2008 farming input costs and crop prices. The study of the costs of “farming around” includes consideration of the potential for reduced crop yields due to inadvertent over-application of agricultural chemicals.

MATL is a chartered entity in Montana and must abide by the same laws that regulate any corporation in Montana. In its Major Facility Siting Act (MFSA) application MATL has committed to an alternative dispute resolution process as a method to help resolve disagreements over the level of compensation for damages caused by line construction and line maintenance (Section 2.3 in the EIS). MATL has stated:

In the event that any damages are incurred in the process of regular or unscheduled maintenance, MATL will negotiate a settlement with landowners. MATL will compensate landowners for any crop loss, decrease in production, or any other damages to ensure that they are not adversely affected by MATL's operations. In the unlikely event that there is a dispute regarding damages owing, MATL would seek the advice of a mutually agreed party, such as a crop appraiser, to provide a neutral third party calculation of the damages owing (MATL 2006b).

In addition, MATL has indicated that it would fully compensate for damages caused by MATL and its contractors and this compensation would be paid immediately. If the line is approved, this procedure would become a requirement in the certificate.

MATL has revised its proposal regarding right-of-way width. Owners of land crossed by the transmission line would be paid for a 105-foot easement or right-of-way. In addition, MATL has committed to paying landowners annual compensation to offset lost production and increased input cost resulting from the existence of its facilities. MATL is currently proposing that the annual payment would be reviewed and adjusted every five years to ensure that the payment adequately reflects current input costs, commodity prices, and yields. These payment adjustments would usually be negotiated one-on-one between landowners and MATL. If a dispute arises upon future review of the annual compensation as to the amount of adjustment that is merited, the landowner would again be made the offer to take advantage of the alternative dispute resolution process (MATL 2008b).

MATL has also increased its proposed annual farmer compensation payment. This is discussed in more detail in the revisions to Section 3.13 in the Final EIS. In the June 19, 2008, submittal MATL indicates that their annual payment would compensate the landowner for reasonable, direct, ongoing impacts to his farming and/or ranching operation that may result from the presence of the transmission line. In most instances, this impact involves the additional cost of farming around the poles or associated structures combined with the lost production from those areas in which the structures are located.

MATL would have to obtain easements for access across private lands outside the right-of-way. If access to private roads was required in order to construct the transmission line, landowners would be properly compensated for the use of their roads and any damages.

MATL's revised compensation package proposal is in the EIS, Section 2.3. Additional discussion of costs to farmers is found in Section 3.13.3.2. DEQ could require that farmers receive compensation for any damages caused by transmission line construction, such as crop losses caused by construction during the growing season.

Legal and Regulatory Issues

A number of commenters raised legal and regulatory issues related to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Montana Environmental Policy Act (MEPA), MFSA, and other state and Federal requirements related to transmission lines. Specific issues included adequacy of compliance with NEPA and MEPA, the extra-territorial application of NEPA, the consideration of whether wind farms are connected actions, DEQ's authority to regulate the power lines that could connect wind farms to MATL, and use of eminent domain to acquire the right-of-way.

The EIS was prepared in accordance with NEPA and MEPA and their implementing regulations. The agencies determined which alternatives were analyzed in the EIS after receiving public input through the scoping process. MATL had no role in selection of which alternatives were analyzed.

In accordance with Executive Order 12114 (*Environmental Effects Abroad of Major Federal Actions*), the EIS does not assess impacts occurring in a foreign nation unless that foreign nation is not otherwise involved in the action. Because government authorities in Canada have regulatory involvement with the MATL proposal, impacts in Canada are not assessed in the EIS.

There are no connected actions associated with the MATL proposal. In compliance with NEPA, analysis of the potential cumulative impacts of reasonably foreseeable future actions, including wind farms that may use the transmission capacity of the proposed MATL line, is presented in Sections 4.1 to 4.16.

If the transmission lines built to connect individual wind farms to the proposed MATL line are large enough to fall under the definition of "facility" in MFSA (see 75-20-104(8), MCA) and are not exempted by statute, they would undergo a review process by DEQ. Regardless of whether they fall under MFSA, the companies proposing such lines would have the responsibility to negotiate easements with the landowners.

Montana Alberta Tie Ltd. is the chartered and recognized entity within the State of Montana under which name MATL would be conducting operations. It would be subject to applicable legislation within the State of Montana and the United States like any other United States corporation.

Section 3.18 lists the findings and determinations that DEQ must make under MFSA section 75-20-301, MCA, before the line can be approved. If DEQ cannot make the findings required in section 75-20-301, MCA, it is required to deny the certificate (75-20-301(4), MCA).

A landowner has the option of receiving a negotiated settlement for use of the land if and when the land is used for a facility by easement, right-of-way, or other legal conveyance in either a lump sum or in not more than five consecutive annual installments (75-20-409, MCA).

The standard easement agreement between MATL and the landowner contains terms that absolve the landowner of all liability for accidental damage to MATL's facilities (Williams 2008a).

Eminent Domain

DEQ does not have the authority to dictate what MATL pays to landowners for easements. This would be determined between MATL and each individual landowner, ideally in a negotiated settlement. If a negotiated settlement could not be agreed upon, a condemnation proceeding under the laws of eminent domain might be used to obtain the easement. Eminent domain may only be exercised if the purpose for which it is being exercised is a public use. Those public uses are identified and listed by the Legislature in Section 70-30-102, MCA. Subsection 37 of that statute lists electrical power lines as a public use. Section 70-30-102, MCA, does not distinguish between electrical power lines built by private enterprise and a publicly owned utility. Before private property can be taken, Section 70-30-111, MCA, requires the condemner to demonstrate that the public interest requires the taking based on the following findings:

1. the use to which the property is to be applied is a use authorized by law;
2. the taking is necessary to the use;
3. if already being used for a public use, that the public use for which the property is proposed to be used is a more necessary public use; and
4. an effort to obtain the property interest sought to be taken was made by submission of a written offer and the offer was rejected.

As indicated above, an electric transmission line is a use for which condemnation is authorized by law. In regard to whether the taking is necessary, Montana courts have determined that the necessity need not be absolute or indispensable. Rather, a taking is necessary if it "is reasonable, requisite, and proper for the accomplishment of the end in view, under the particular circumstances of the case." As indicated in Section 3.18, DEQ has determined the need of the electric transmission line proposed by MATL.

As indicated in the handbook entitled "Eminent Domain in Montana" published by the Legislative Environmental Policy Office in May of 2001, "A public use does not have to be a project that directly benefits the entire public or even the landowner whose property is taken through eminent domain. It may be a project that benefits Montana

citizens as a whole through greater economic development or increased access to communications.” As stated by the Montana Supreme Court in *Ellinghouse v. Taylor* (1897), 19 Mont. 462, 48 P. 757, “Persons have been allowed the right of eminent domain on the theory of public use, in the construction of dams for the operation of grist and saw mills, in the reclamation of swamp lands, and in other similar instances that might be enumerated where the public had no direct interest in these operations, whose main end was mere private gain, and where the benefit to the people at large could result indirectly and incidentally only from the increase of wealth and development of natural resources.” More information on eminent domain proceedings and compensation for easements can be found on the Office’s website:

<http://leg.mt.gov/content/publications/environmental/2001edhandbook.pdf>.

Any Presidential permit that DOE may issue would not convey any rights of Federal eminent domain.

Line Capacity Issues

A number of comments question whether the capacity of the MATL line would be adequate to handle the potential power transmission increases in the future and the ability for power to be shipped past the termination points of the MATL line. Commenters asked about MATL’s responsibility for extending transmission capacity beyond Great Falls. They also expressed concern that the EIS does not analyze the impacts of constructing new transmission capacity beyond the proposed line’s termination point at Great Falls.

MATL indicated (MATLb) that:

- a. MATL had applied and designed for a path rating of 300 MW in both directions.
- b. The 1590 kcmil Falcon conductor selected for the project can carry up to 600 MW and ensures low line losses at the current applied for capacity of 300 MW.
- c. MATL’s Board of directors has not approved an initiative to increase the capacity of the project beyond 300 MW. The capacity of this project could only be increased after the appropriate technical, economic and regulatory requirements have been met.

The line is rated at 300 MW of continuous load at the present time. Whether the line takes 300 MW from north to south, south to north or midpoint each direction, the line is still rated at 300 MW, not 450 or 600 MW. The mention of a 400 MW potential loading is explained in that if the MATL line would be loaded to the 300 MW, an extra contingency load of up to 100 MW must be carried by the line to support existing power facilities in the area in case of outages on other transmission lines.

Table 2.3-1 indicates the thermal capacity of the line rated at 625 MVA at 212° Fahrenheit which equates to 600 MW at a .96 power factor. The current flow at 600 MW would result in extremely high line losses that make that load economically infeasible. If this conductor were to carry 600 MW, roughly 20 percent of the energy (roughly 115 MW) would be lost in transport (MATL 2007b). MATL has made commitments to its customers who have signed contracts that line losses will not exceed 10 percent.

According to MATL (2007b):

To increase the capacity to 400 or 600 MW a second phase shifting transformer could theoretically be installed in parallel at the substation near Lethbridge, but engineering studies would be required to determine the practicality of installing this equipment and the limitations on incremental capacity that could be added this way. MATL estimates that the engineering studies and procurement and installation of a second phase shifting transformer would cost \$15 to \$20 million (USD).

In addition, the voltage level at the Marias substation is forecast to drop below Western Electricity Coordinating Council (WECC) standards when power transfers between the Great Falls and Lethbridge terminals are in the range of 390 to 450 MW, depending on system conditions. It may be possible to raise the “end-to-end” power transfer rate beyond this range. Engineering studies would be required to confirm the feasibility of this proposed solution. The estimated range of costs to conduct such studies, perform the detailed engineering, procure and construct the additional capacitors is \$10 to \$15 million (USD).

Lastly, the delivery and take-away capacity at Great Falls and Lethbridge would require upgrades to transfer more than 300 MW of power. MATL has not submitted interconnection requests to either NorthWestern Energy or the Alberta Electric System Operator for the upgrades required to transfer 400 or 600 MW into their respective systems, so the costs of these upgrades is not known. MATL is contributing approximately \$5 million for network upgrades at NorthWestern Energy’s Great Falls substation as part of MATL’s existing 300 MW interconnection request.

The proposed MATL transmission line would be theoretically capable (based on its thermal rating) of transmitting up to 600 MW in each direction without any changes to the transmission line itself or to the rights-of-way. However, the amount of power that any transmission line may be able to transmit is usually limited not by its thermal rating but by the ability of the existing transmission system to accept the power from the line. In this case, MATL has prepared transmission studies that indicate that the existing transmission system at each end of the line (in Canada and the United States) would be capable of accepting up to 300 MW. MATL has entered into contracts for 300 MW of

transmission. Although the transmission capacity of the proposed line could be upgraded without changes to the poles or structures or easements, such an upgrade would require other modifications to the United States or Canadian transmission system, as well as extensive modifications to the facilities in substations along the line. Any increase in power on the MATL line beyond 300 MW could only happen after appropriate transmission studies were performed to identify the needed transmission system upgrades and then the implementation of those upgrades. Such an increase in power flows on the MATL line would require revised permits from Federal, State, and provincial regulators.

As part of its Presidential permit application, MATL has provided technical studies demonstrating the operation of the existing regional power system with 300 MW transmitted over the MATL line. If a Presidential permit is granted, there would be a condition in the permit limiting the operation of the MATL line to 300 MW in either the import or export mode. If MATL wanted to increase the amount of power transmitted over the line, it would need to apply to DOE for an amendment to the Presidential permit. System transmission studies would need to be performed in order to determine what, if any, enhancements to the United States and/or Canadian electrical system would need to be made in order to accommodate the increased power flow. In order to decide on any amendment, DOE would need to consider the environmental impacts of the proposed amendment, determine the impact of the amendment on electric reliability, and obtain favorable recommendations from the Departments of State and Defense.

Currently there are no permit applications to increase transmission capacity south or west from Great Falls, so the construction of additional transmission capacity beyond Great Falls is not within the scope of this EIS. Eventually, additional economically viable transmission lines are likely to be built as need for transmission service grows. DEQ is aware that transmission planners are examining options to accommodate additional generation in the vicinity of Great Falls.

Line Issues

Comments addressed construction of the line underground, use of monopoles instead of H-frames, easement widths, and substations connecting wind farms to MATL.

Some commenters suggested that the transmission line should be placed underground. Building the line underground was considered but dismissed from detailed study after considering costs and impacts, as discussed in Section 2.7 – Alternatives Considered but Dismissed. The discussion includes information on the additional costs and the potential impacts and benefits associated with this type of construction.

For its proposed alignment (Alternative 2), MATL has increased its commitment to use monopole structures from its original commitment of 25 miles to its current commitment to use them wherever cropland or CRP land is crossed diagonally (about 56 miles). H-frame structures would be used where the line crosses cropland or CRP land parallel or perpendicular to the crop pattern. MATL's preferred route, Alternative 2, incorporates additional north/south and east/west routing adjustment as compared to Alternative 3. Alternative 3 would generally follow the NorthWestern Energy (NWE) 115-kV transmission line diagonally from Great Falls to Cut Bank and would be the shortest route of the three action alternatives. Alternative 4 includes additional routing modifications to reduce farmland impact and would require use of monopoles on all crossings of cultivated or CRP land.

Since the Draft EIS, MATL has increased its proposed right-of-way easement width from 45 feet to 105 feet (see Section 1.6 in the EIS).

MATL has successfully acquired portions of the proposed right-of-way or options in Montana. The company would continue to pursue negotiations with affected landowners along the route that is approved by the agencies.

Any substations required to interconnect with the MATL line would be constructed by MATL on behalf of and at the expense of the interconnecting party. This would be done in accordance with the Standard Large Generator Interconnection Procedures that form part of MATL's tariff approved by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC).

Safety Issues

Comments addressed the adequacy of ground clearance under the proposed transmission line and the safety of working or farming under and around the proposed line.

MATL has changed its application relative to minimum ground clearance. The minimum ground clearance of MATL's proposed line would comply with the requirements of the National Electrical Safety Code. On cultivated and CRP lands, expected heights of the tallest farming equipment (20 feet), including antenna heights, were used to determine the new minimum ground clearance of 27.2 feet for the safe operation of farm equipment under the line. Additionally, MATL has indicated it would work with farmers to alleviate the issue of tall radio antennas on farm equipment.

In all cases, ground clearances are calculated with the conductor temperature at 100 degrees Celsius (212 degrees Fahrenheit) and the ambient temperature at 32 degrees Celsius (90 degrees Fahrenheit). This is equivalent to a situation where the conductors are moving close to 600 MW of power (twice the rating of the line) on a warm summer day, excluding power factor effect.

Socioeconomic Issues

Some people expressed their expectations regarding the impacts of the Project and potential wind farms on local socioeconomic conditions, such as school enrollment, property values, employment, and property tax revenues. These topics are considered in Sections 3.13 (for the Project) and 4.14 (for cumulative impacts, including the impacts of potential wind farms).

Impacts from the transmission line on school enrollment were not examined in detail in the EIS. The relatively low number of employees expected during Project construction and the relatively short duration of activities occurring in a given locale make it unlikely that schools would incur any measurable direct impacts. Impacts to schools and taxation are discussed in Section 3.13.3.2. Cumulative impacts to schools are discussed in Section 4.14.

Potential impacts on local employment from the Project are discussed in the Section 3.13.3.2 in the EIS). Transmission line construction is estimated to employ about 55 people over a 6-month period, with average wages of \$23 per hour, generating approximately \$4.6 million in income over the construction period. The number of operations and maintenance workers is not known, but would be much smaller; these workers would be paid about \$25 per hour.

Some commenters expressed concerns about how the Project may affect their property value. Potential effects on real estate values are discussed in Section 3.13.3.2. The analysis used the latest studies available on the effect on real estate values from transmission lines.

Estimated property tax revenues from the proposed transmission line are presented in Table 3.13-18).

Soils Issues

Commenters expressed concern about soil compaction and erosion from construction and maintenance vehicles traversing the fields and field roads.

Soil-related impacts associated with access road construction and vehicle movement are a potential problem with any linear facility and are discussed in Section 3.2. Table 2.3-4, MATL Proposed Environmental Protection Measures, lists actions MATL would

implement to either minimize or avoid soil impacts. It states, “At sites with soils that are sensitive to compaction, construction would be done with low bearing-pressure vehicles or compacted soil would be rehabilitated after construction by discing, plowing or other means.”

Appendix F, Revised Draft DEQ Environmental Specifications, includes several measures that deal with soils and access roads that are likely to become conditions to the Certificate of Compliance, if it is approved. Section 2.3.2 of Appendix F states, “In order to prevent rutting and excessive damage to vegetation, construction will not take place during periods of high soil moisture when construction vehicles will cause severe rutting.” Section 2.7 of Appendix F includes 12 separate specifications that would apply to soils and access roads. The DEQ specifications are intended to help minimize soil compaction, erosion, and sedimentation and ensure that the soils and roads are returned to a condition as good as or better than when construction began. Compliance with these standards should minimize destruction of soils.

Additional information on soil compaction from other than farm equipment has been added to Section 3.2.3.2 in the EIS.

Erosion

As described in Table 2.3-4, Section 3.2.3, and Appendix D, project specifications would include preparing an erosion control plan and implementing best management practices (e.g., water bars, drainage contours, straw bales, filter cloth) in areas with susceptible soils in order to minimize erosion impacts. Driving around coulees and steep draws, rather than through them, would minimize or avoid erosion. Appendix F, Section 2.11, includes 23 separate specifications that apply to erosion and sediment control that are likely to become conditions to the Certificate of Compliance, if it is approved. Compliance with these standards should minimize impacts from erosion.

Tax Issues

A number of comments asked questions or expressed opinions about the taxation status of the MATL line in Montana.

Additional information on the relevant tax laws has been added to Section 3.13.3.2. The revised analysis in that section is based on current laws, including the May 2007 tax rate reduction on certain transmission lines and other applicable tax abatements.

MATL would pay property taxes in five Montana counties as well as paying Montana income tax.

House Bill (HB) 3 from the 2007 May Special Legislative Session states that the 3% tax rate (down from 12%) will be allowed for “(p) all property of electric transmission lines, including substations, that originate at facilities specified in this subsection (1), with at least 90% of electricity carried by the line originating at facilities specified in this subsection (1) and terminating at an existing transmission line or substation that has commenced construction after June 1, 2007”.

The Act identifies a number of facilities that, if connected to the MATL line, may make MATL eligible for favorable tax treatment. Under Montana law (15-24-3111, MCA), MATL would be eligible for a tax abatement of 50% of its taxable value for a qualifying period, not to exceed 19 years, that would include the construction period and the first 15 years after the facility commences operation. Because the agencies do not know if MATL would receive such an abatement, tax revenue for each affected county has been estimated at the 3% level as specified in HB 3. If MATL were to receive an abatement, its tax liability would be about half of those values for up to 19 years.

Vegetation, Wetland, and Weed Issues

Commenters expressed concerns about spread of weeds and impacts to vegetation and wetlands. Weed control and disturbance of wetlands and riparian areas were the main areas addressed by the commenters.

Vegetation

There are very few sites with riparian vegetation in the study area. Generally these areas are located low in drainages adjacent to wetlands and streams. Because transmission line structures are usually located at high points or in uplands, water bodies are normally spanned, and it is unlikely that much riparian area would be affected. There is no tall riparian vegetation at the proposed Marias River crossing site.

At the Teton River crossing, Alternative 2 crosses land near the river that is currently enrolled in the CRP program. This crossing would avoid all tall cottonwood trees, while the few low-growing willows there could easily be spanned.

The Local Routing Option to the east of MATL’s proposed Teton River crossing might require removal or topping of several cottonwood trees on the south side of the river to allow for the sag of the conductors. This routing option was located to avoid placing structures in fields or in the inundation zone described in a firsthand account of the location of floodwaters from the 1964 flood (close to a 500-year flood event). (There are no 100-year flood maps available for this portion of the Teton River.) Under this Local Routing Option structures could be sited on high terraces outside the riparian zone. Although cottonwoods might be affected, willows could probably be spanned by this Local Routing Option.

Another Local Routing Option located farther west and upstream was suggested that would avoid most cropland. This upstream location would not be as high above the present river channel and is believed to be more vulnerable to flood damage. That area has younger riparian vegetation that is just becoming established and would probably grow up around the line over the project lifetime. This vegetation could later require clearing or topping so that it would not interfere with the sag of the line. It is more likely that structures would have to be located in this young riparian zone.

DEQ would hold restoration and revegetation bonds for a period of up to 5 years or until perennial vegetation exclusive of noxious weeds and tall growing trees, attains a 90 percent ground cover when compared to similar undisturbed vegetation outside the right of way.

Wetlands

MATL has stated that its goal is to avoid impacts to floodplains and wetlands by avoiding placement of any structure (or related construction impact) within a regulatory floodplain or jurisdictional wetland and using construction buffers to avoid impacts to wetlands or other waters of the United States. Therefore, the agencies currently expect that the project could be completed with little direct disturbances to streams and wetlands because most of these waters can be spanned. Thus, no compensatory mitigation should be needed. If, however, during construction, a site specific wetland-impact issue arises, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) would be contacted to ensure compliance with Section 404 of the Clean Water Act and Section 318 of the Montana Water Quality Act. DEQ would be contacted for a 318 authorization if water were present. If work in streams or wetlands were necessary, the measures listed in sections 2.11.5, 2.11.6, and 2.11.9 of the revised Appendix F would likely apply as would any measures required by the USACE permits or DEQ 318 authorizations, and the agencies could require mitigation for lost wetland functions or values.

Possible impacts to wetlands are identified in EIS sections 3.6.2 and 3.6.3. The agencies are considering a revision to MATL's proposal for an area north of Great Falls to remove an angle structure from the southern end of Black Horse Lake and place this structure on higher ground west of the highway. The values in the EIS for wetlands crossed include all wetlands within a 500-foot-wide corridor; these values overstate the potential impact because they include areas that would be completely avoided by the narrower 105-foot right-of-way. The most probable general short-term, indirect impacts to wetlands and waters of the United States would include additional noise and vehicle traffic, an increase or decrease in surface water runoff to an area due to an access road grade, and increased soil erosion and sedimentation resulting from any soil disturbances. Although Alternative 4 would cross the largest area of wetlands within the 500-foot-wide corridor, it would cross the least area of wetlands associated with lakes.

Under MFSA rules, applicants are required to identify wetlands greater than 20 acres in size (Circular MFSA-2, Section 3.4(1)(u)). This size was selected to recognize that smaller wetlands can usually be spanned. At this time it appears that all wetlands could be spanned or otherwise avoided through final routing, except for one angle structure in Black Horse Lake, but final design is not yet complete. The revised Draft DEQ Environmental Specifications in Appendix F would require MATL to delineate wetlands within 250 feet of the approved alignment and would not allow construction activities within a 50-foot buffer around wetlands, so that wetlands would not be affected by construction disturbance and maintenance access.

All of the proposed alternatives would cross Teton County in an area (approximately from the town of Brady south to just north of Benton Lake NWR) for which no National Wetland Inventory (NWI) maps were available for use during preparation of the Draft EIS. Thus, to ascertain the potential impact of the proposed action on wetlands in that area, the agencies reviewed 2005 aerial photographs and, as stated in the Draft EIS, determined that no large wetland or concentration of smaller wetlands would cover more than approximately 500-linear feet of any of the proposed alignments. Therefore, the agencies concluded that through engineering design and implementation of mitigation measures existing wetlands along the entire proposed line could be completely spanned by the typical ruling span of 800 feet (except for one angle structure in Black Horse Lake). NWI maps are now available for this area, and the agencies have revised Table 3.6-2 in the EIS to include the new information on wetlands in Teton County. The new information does not change the agencies' earlier determination regarding the ability to span wetlands in Teton County.

The agencies would require installation and maintenance of line marking within ¼ mile of wetlands to reduce avian mortality from collisions.

Weeds

MATL would be responsible for weed control within the right-of-way for weeds due to its activities. MATL has prepared an integrated weed control program that includes spraying target weed species in coordination with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), state weed coordinator, and county weed boards and groups (see the EIS, Appendix C – MATL Noxious Weed Control Plan, and Appendix F – Revised Draft DEQ Environmental Specifications). Herbicides would be used in a safe manner in accordance with Federal label instructions and restrictions. Herbicides would not be used in certain areas identified by the landowners, DEQ, BLM, or the state and county weed boards. Section 4.4 in the revised Appendix F relates specifically to Herbicides and Weed Control measures and includes the requirements to employ Montana licensed applicators, use proper herbicide application methods, and inspect and monitor the right of way.

Visual Issues

Several commenters questioned the impact that the line or potential wind farms would have on the area viewshed and the possibility of requiring mitigation for wind farm impacts. Commenters were concerned about the intrusion of the line onto the landscape and locations from which the line would be visible. For wind farms, there were particular concerns about possible effects on views in and near Glacier National Park and the Rocky Mountain Front.

Table 3.15-1 notes that major visual effects would result from the proposed line for a distance of 1/2 mile from residences and primary travel routes, and minor effects would extend from 1/2 mile to one mile from the line.

Due to the distance from Glacier National Park to the proposed transmission line of 50 miles or more, the MATL line would not be visible from the park.

For a wind farm directly connecting to MATL to be economically viable, it would need to be no farther than 40 miles from the line. The park would be about 10 miles farther west from a wind farm located 40 miles west of the transmission line. At a distance of 10 miles, the visual impact to Glacier National Park visitors is likely to be low.

The Glacier Wind Project is a wind farm being developed by NaturEner approximately 10 miles southeast of Cut Bank (referred to as the McCormick Ranch wind farm in the Draft EIS). Other known areas of interest for potential wind farm development near Cut Bank, shown on Figure 4.1-2 are more than 50 miles to the east of the park.

DEQ has no legal authority to require mitigation for wind farm impacts.

Wind Farm Issues

A number of comments were concerned with siting of wind farms and impacts associated with the wind farms that are expected to connect to the MATL line. Commenters were concerned about the location of future wind farms and the lack of regulation of wind farms located on private property. Some comments were concerned with bird and bat mortality at wind farms; that topic is addressed in the Avian and Wildlife Issues section of the Consolidated Responses.

Neither DEQ nor DOE would have a regulatory role in siting future wind farms or have regulatory jurisdiction over wind farm development or operations. Specific proposals could, however, necessitate water quality permits under the Montana Water Quality Act (75-5-101 et seq., MCA). In compliance with NEPA, the potential future development of wind farms is considered in the EIS as a potential source of cumulative impacts. Assessment of potential cumulative impacts of reasonably foreseeable actions,

including wind farms that may use the transmission capacity of the proposed MATL line, is in Sections 4.1 to 4.16.

As a basis for assessing the impacts of potential wind farms, the agencies assumed that wind farms are most likely to be located in windy areas, within about 30 to 40 miles of an existing transmission line with available transmission capacity, and where agreements can be negotiated with affected landowners. Areas within 30 to 40 miles of the MATL line would have the highest probability for future wind farm development due to the cost of interconnecting power lines from the wind farms to the transmission line. Any substations necessary for connection to the MATL line would be built by MATL on behalf and at the expense of the interconnecting party in accordance with applicable FERC tariffs.

The agencies based their analysis of cumulative impacts from wind farm development on the best information available. Although the analysis does not include site-specific and design-specific impacts, it does provide comprehensive identification of the potential adverse impacts and possible mitigations of wind farm development and conservative estimates of the magnitude of those impacts. The assessment of the potential cumulative impacts of wind farms that may connect with the MATL line is based on realistic estimates of likely locations and conservative estimates of the number of wind turbines that could be built. More detailed assessment would require specific information on the locations and designs of wind turbines, associated transmission lines, and other associated facilities. That information either does not exist or is not available to the agencies. The agencies attempted to contact potential developers of wind farms that have contracts with MATL for information about their project locations. None of the developers that propose to connect to the MATL line has indicated a willingness to release detailed plans. Often projects are announced without details, and the announced projects may either change or not materialize.

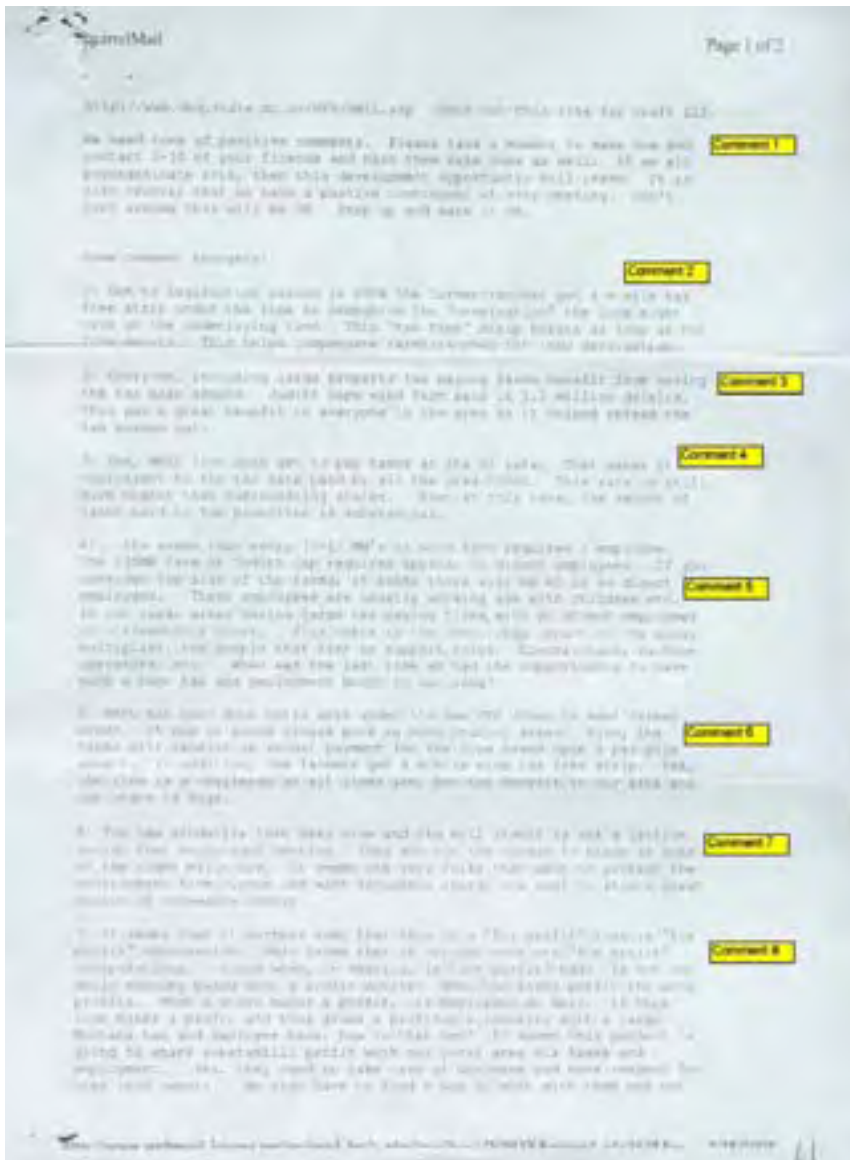
The only wind farm known to the agencies is NaturEner’s Glacier Wind Farm, referred to as the McCormick Ranch Wind Park in the Draft EIS. USFWS provided the agencies with a map outlining the extent of this wind farm; it appears as Figure 4.1-2 in the EIS. NaturEner is proceeding with development with the intent of interconnecting to other transmission lines in the area. This wind farm, which would have up to about 140 turbines, is located north of the Marias River between the McCormick and Sullivan Bridge roads. NaturEner still has an agreement with MATL for 300 MW to be shipped to the north and eventually might choose to exercise some of its rights on the MATL line with power generated at the Glacier Wind Farm. NaturEner might also build another wind farm in the area or choose to otherwise exercise its rights to firm capacity if the MATL line is built.

New wind farms that use transmission capacity on the proposed MATL transmission line would require new power lines to connect them to the MATL transmission line. These lines would be built by the wind farm developers, and interconnections would be coordinated with MATL. It is unlikely that new lines would be built underground. Instead, it is most likely that these new lines would be overhead lines. However, landowners would negotiate details with the wind farm developers. The use of eminent domain is a possibility if agreements could not be reached with landowners (see Eminent Domain in Legal and Regulatory Issues). If the transmission lines are large enough to fall under the definition of “facility” in the Major Facility Siting Act (75-20-104(8), MCA) and not exempted by statute, they would undergo a review process by DEQ.

Details on other potential wind farm locations, number of turbines, and other project-specific information are not available. This information is not necessary for certification of the MATL transmission line. In the absence of information from prospective wind farm developers, it would be speculative to assume that one alignment of the MATL line would be better than another relative to the ability of wind farms to interconnect to the line.

It is not possible to accurately determine how many permanent workers would be employed by wind farms made possible by construction of the MATL line. Section 4.14 includes estimates of job creation for different levels of potential wind development in the study area.

Potential visual impacts associated with wind farm development are discussed in Section 4.16 (see Visual Issues in Consolidated Responses).



Response 1: Comment noted.

Response 2: The information in the comment is correct and was considered in the analysis presented in Section 3.13.

Response 3: Comment noted.

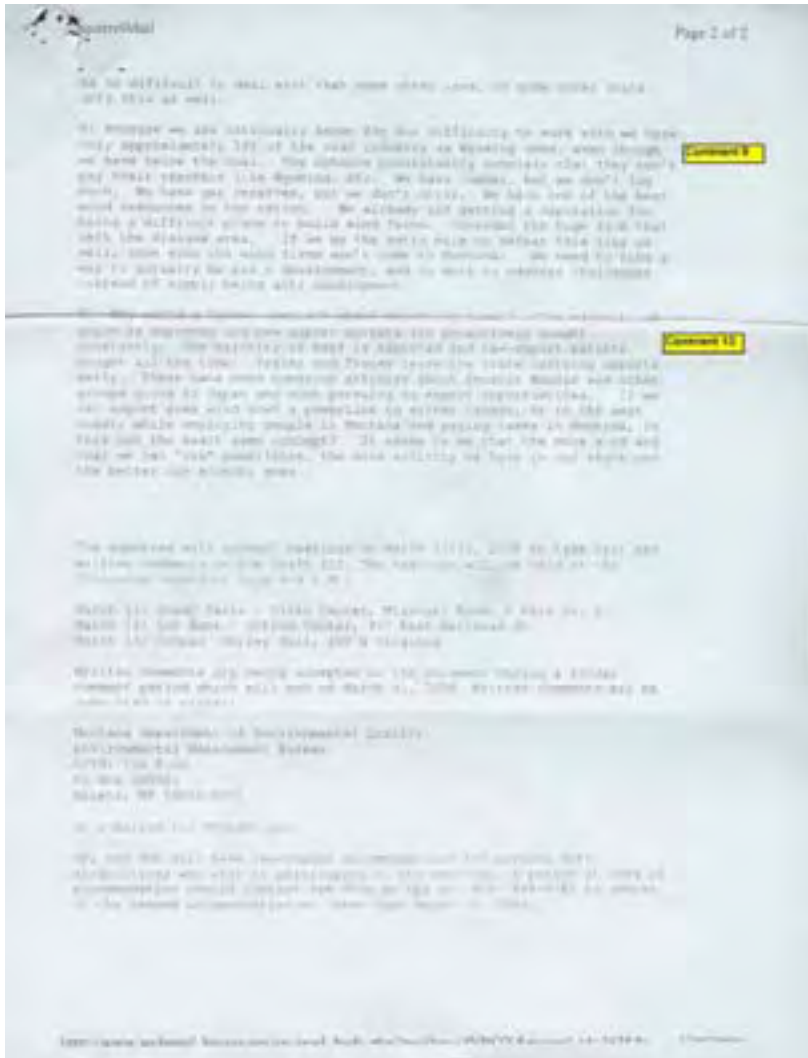
Response 4: See Tax Issues in the Consolidated Responses section for a discussion pertaining to tax revenue resulting from passage of House Bill 3.

Response 5: The economic impacts and benefits of wind farms are discussed in Section 4.14.

Response 6: Comment noted. See the discussion of Economic Issues in the Consolidated Responses section and the EIS for discussion of these revisions to MATL’s proposal.

Response 7: The analysis of potential bird and bat mortality from wind turbines in Chapter 4 of the EIS is based on mortality data at wind farms that have modern wind turbine technology. While the rotation speed of newer model wind turbines is slower than older models, the blade tip speed is still 140 – 200 mph due to the longer blades on newer turbines. (Manville 2005 and Danish Wind Industry Association undated). See the discussion of Avian and Wildlife Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 8: Comment noted.



Response 9: Your opinion is noted.

Response 10: Comment noted.



Response 11: Comment noted.



Response 12: Your opinion is noted. Adequate mitigation of significant impacts has been identified.

Response 13: DEQ must comply with MEPA “to the fullest extent possible” and “discuss the impacts of a proposed action in a level of detail that is proportionate to their significance.” Streams, wetlands, and aquatic resources would be spanned (except for one angle structure in Black Horse Lake) and would be minimally impacted. Floodplains would also be minimally impacted. Additional wetland impacts in Teton County are described in the Final EIS, Section 3.6. At this time it appears that all wetlands can be spanned, as noted above, or other wise avoided through design. DEQ would require a 50-foot buffer around wetlands (Appendix F). Also see the discussion in Vegetation, Wetlands and Weeds in the Consolidated Responses section. DEQ considered the level of information to be sufficient to make a decision because the detailed on-the-ground surveys to be completed during the construction phase will ensure effective mitigation.



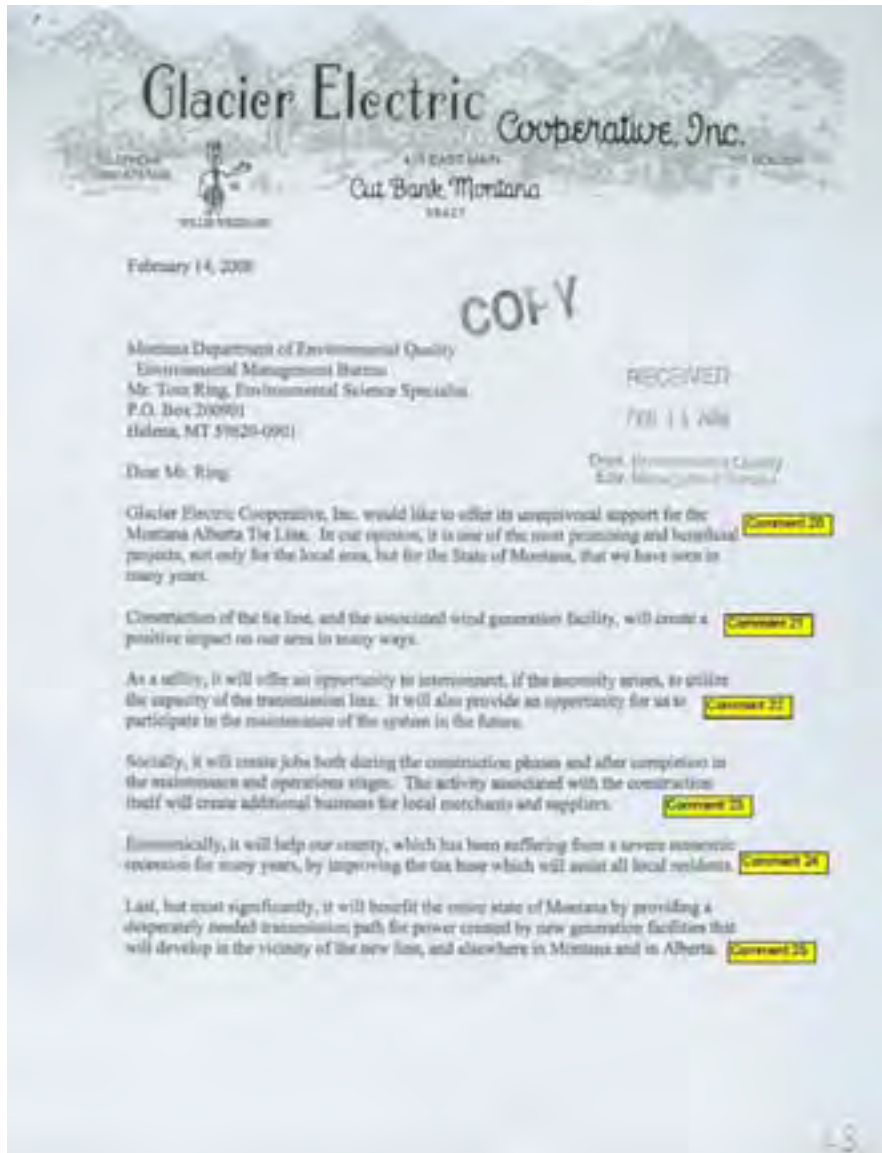
Response 14: The EIS has been revised to include additional information pertaining to Teton County wetlands in Section 3.6.

Response 15 and 16: See the discussion of Legal and Regulatory Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 17: The information available and the surveys completed were adequate to complete successful impact analysis. See the discussions of Legal and Regulatory Issues and Avian and Wildlife Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 18: Unless the entire habitat area were disturbed, low levels of disturbance should not impact a species with limited habitat. The analysis in the EIS does not indicate that the entire habitat area for any species would be disturbed due to the Project. Therefore, there should not be substantial impacts to any species. The discussion of impacts in Section 3.8.3 acknowledges that there might be impacts to wildlife due to disturbance during construction, but that the impacts would be short-term and concentrated within the action area. Also, at crossings of the Marias and Teton rivers the transmission line would span the river, so the impact to bat habitat and bats at river crossings would be minor. A few riparian cottonwood trees may need to be cleared or topped along the south shore of the Teton River Crossing Local Routing Option. See the discussions of Legal and Regulatory Issues and Avian and Wildlife Issues in the Consolidated Responses section. The analyses of direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts were complete and adequate, and the determination that populations within the area would not be negatively impacted was supported within the analyses.

Response 19: Comment noted. Also see responses to comments 12 through 18. On April 30, 2008, an on-ground survey for sharp-tailed grouse leks was conducted by AMEC-Helena for MATL. On May 2, 2008, an aerial survey was conducted by AMEC. No sharp-tailed grouse were observed during the April 30th survey, but two sharp-tailed grouse were seen during the May 2nd survey. No leks were observed, and AMEC concluded that the sighting of the lone birds did not necessarily imply grouse lek activity. Other reasonably foreseeable energy projects in the regions are addressed in the cumulative impacts analysis in Section 4 of the EIS.



Response 20 and 21: Comment noted.

Response 22: Thank you for your comment

Response 23 to 25: See Socioeconomic Impact Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Mr. Tom Ring
page 2
February 14, 2008

Comment 26

We congratulate the Montana Alberta Tie Line group on their innovative and progressive approach and wish them every success with the construction and operation of the transmission line.

Sincerely,



Jason R. Brann
General Manager

Response 26: Comment noted.

Response 27: Comment noted.

Hallsten, Greg

From: Neal Duran [mailto:nduran@hotmail.com]
Posted At: Sunday, February 10, 2008 3:17 AM
Conversation: MATL line comments
Posted To: MATL
Subject: MATL line comments

To whom it may concern:

Comment 27

I am a resident and home owner in Glacier County north of Cut Bank. I believe the proposed line will be a very beneficial asset to all of North Central Montana and especially beneficial to the economies of Glacier and Fording Counties. The planned line allows further development of wind energy to further supplement all of Montana as well as the both the US and Canadian energy needs. I am in full support of the planned transmission line.

Thank you for your time.

Neal R. Duran
148 Hwy 213
Cut Bank, MT 59427

Climb to the top of the stars! Play the word scramble challenge with star power. (Play now)



Response 28: Comment noted.



Response 29: Your comment regarding economic stimulation is noted.

Response 30: Information on the potential location of the line in Pondera County has been sent to the commenter.





Response 31: Your perspective on school enrollment trends has been noted.

Response 32: Socioeconomic impacts and benefits of the proposed MATL line are discussed in Section 3.13. Socioeconomic impacts of potential wind farms are discussed in Section 4.14. Also see the discussion of Socioeconomic Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 33: Your comments regarding start of construction and your regard for those who own the land are noted. Also see the discussion of Farming Issues and Visual Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 34 and 35: Your comments regarding area benefits, green energy resources, reliability of the transmission grid, and project schedule are noted.

FEB 14, 2008

DEAR MR. RING,

I WOULD VOTE A "NO ACTION" AND NO CONSTRUCTION OF THE MATL LINE AS STATED ON PAGE 5-3 BENEFITS ADMITTED BY THE APPLICANT AS FOLLOWS [Comment 36](#)

EIS STATES "THE PRIMARY PURPOSE OF WHICH IS TO FINANCIALLY BENEFIT THE OWNER/OPERATORS."

I WONDER IF THIS IS BENEFITTING THE CITIZENS OF MONTANA AS A WHOLE ? PERHAPS INSTEAD IT ONLY ENRICHES A FEW PRIVATE INTERESTS. [Comment 37](#)

EIS STATES "ADDITIONAL CAPACITY IS NOT NEEDED TO PROVIDE POWER TO MONTANA CUSTOMERS"

IT IS ADMITTADLY NOT NEEDED. [Comment 38](#)

EIS STATES "ADDITIONAL TRANSMISSION CAPACITY IS NOT NEEDED TO SERVE MONTANA CUSTOMERS, BUT IS ESSENCE FOR THE VIABILITY OF NEW GENERATION ENTERPRISES" [Comment 39](#)

IN OTHER WORDS THE CITIZENS OF MONTANA DO NOT NEED IT BUT A FEW PRIVATE FOR PROFIT ELECTRICAL COMPANIES MAY

ALLOWING THIS LINE TO GO IN MIGHT ONLY HURT MONTANA RATEPAYERS AND IS NOT IN THE MONTANA RESIDENTS BEST INTEREST. IT WOULD ALLOW NEW POWER SOURCES TO BE EXPORTED OUT OF THE COUNTRY TO HIGHER PAYING MARKETS, AND MAYBE EXISTING POWER AS WELL. THE POWER WOULD FLOW TO THE HIGHEST PRICE MARKET AND FORCE MONTANANS TO COMPETE AND PAY A HIGHER COMPETITIVE PRICE FOR THEIR POWER. VERY SIMILAR TO THE HIGH GASOLINE PRICES WE ARE FORCED TO PAY COMPETING WITH OTHER RAPIDLY DEVELOPING COUNTRIES LOWER POWER COSTS FROM THIS LINE ARE ONLY WISHFUL. [Comment 40](#)

Response 36: Your comment regarding no action is noted.

Response 37: See Section 3.13 and the discussion of Economic Impact Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 38 to 40: The need for the line is addressed in Sections 1.2 and 3.17. Also see the discussion of Economic Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

THINKING SOUNDING LIKE A SALES PITCH. I BELIEVE IT IS NOT IN MONTANANS BEST INTEREST TO ALLOW THIS INTERNATIONAL LINE TO BE BUILT. WE HAVE ALREADY LOST MOST OF OUR JOBS, MANUFACTURING AND INDUSTRY TO OTHER COUNTRIES THANKS TO NAFTA, AND NOW DO YOU WANT TO SUBJECT OUR POWER SUPPLY TO INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION AS WELL? Comment 41

THE EFFECTS ON WILDLIFE, FISH, AND THE ENVIRONMENT HAVE BEEN STUDIED AND ARE WITHIN REASON, BUT THE DETRIMENTAL EFFECT ON REAL ESTATE VALUES MAY BE GROSSLY UNDERESTIMATED. I AM QUITE FAMILIAR WITH THE REAL ESTATE MARKET AND I FEEL A POWER LINE OF THIS SIZE HAS A DEVASTATING EFFECT ON ONES LAND VALUE AS WELL AS A TOTAL NEGATIVE VISUAL EFFECT ON PROPERTY FOR MILES AROUND. IF YOU DONT BELIEVE IT HOW WOULD YOU LIKE THIS MONSTER IN YOUR BACK YARD? I WOULD GUESS THE ANSWER WOULD BE A RESOUNDING "NO" FROM NEARLY ANYONE WHO WAS NOT MONETARILY DIRECTLY BENEFITING BY OWNERSHIP IN THE LINE. Comment 42
Comment 43

I URGE YOU TO ALLOW "NO ACTION" ON THIS PROJECT. IT PERHAPS ONLY BENEFITS A SMALL NUMBER OF PRIVATE INTERESTS. IF PUT TO A VOTE WITH THE FACTS AS PRESENTED IN THE EIS TO ALL THE CITIZENS OF MONTANA I BELIEVE THE RESULT WOULD ECHO "NO ACTION". HOW IS THE BENEFIT TO A FEW INDIVIDUALS IN ALL GOOD CONSCIENCE GOOD FOR MONTANA OR MONTANANS? Comment 44

SINCERELY,



DAVID BAUMANN

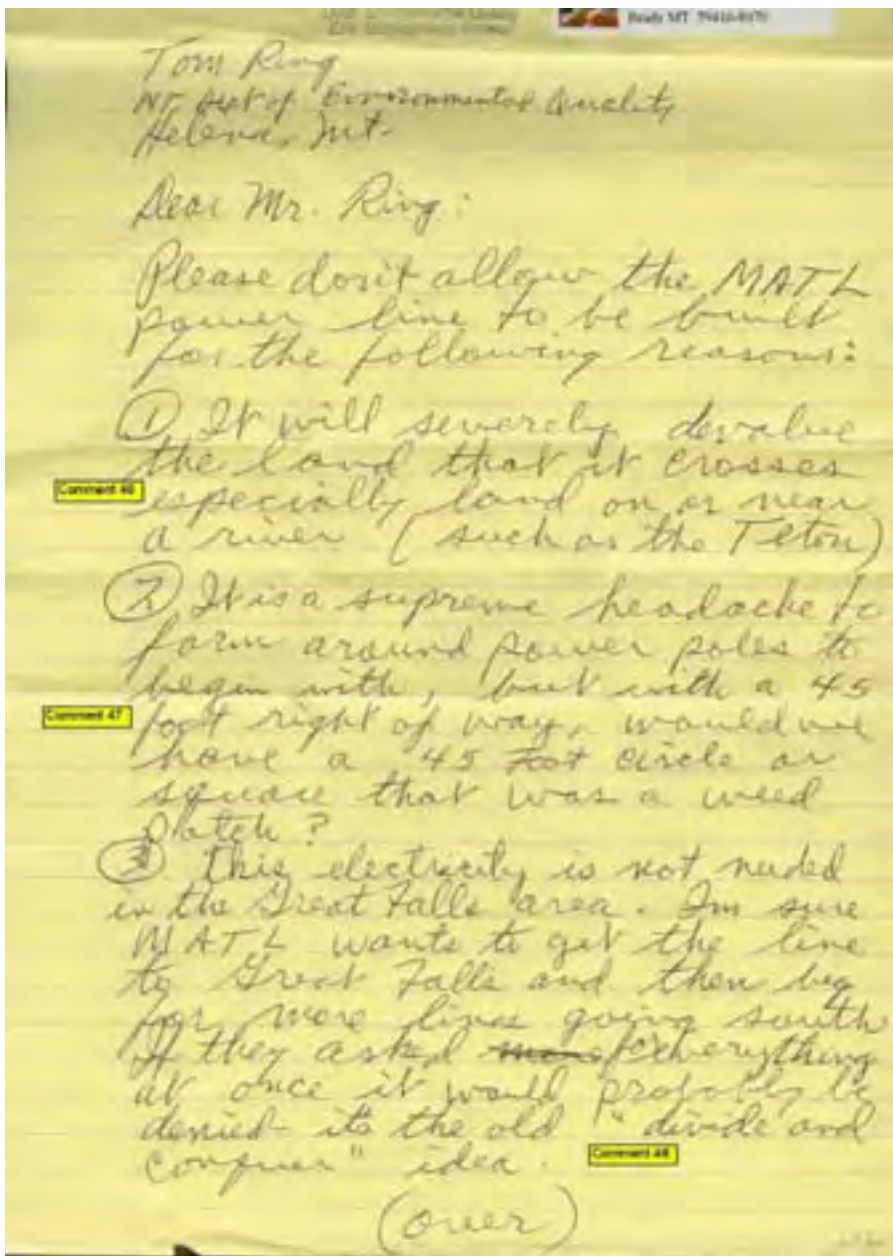
Response 41: The U.S. power supply, including power supplied in Montana, already faces some international competition from those customers that live in Canada and Mexico that are on the U.S. Western grid. The MATL line could increase competition for Montana generated power up to the rated capacity of the line going south to north which is 300 MW and a portion of this space would likely be used by generation from new Montana sources. Currently, Montana generators export about 1,400 MW. See Section 3.17.1 in the EIS.

Response 42: See the discussion of Socioeconomic Impacts Issues in the Consolidated Responses section

Response 43: See the discussion of Visual Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 44: Thank you for your comments pertaining to visual impacts.

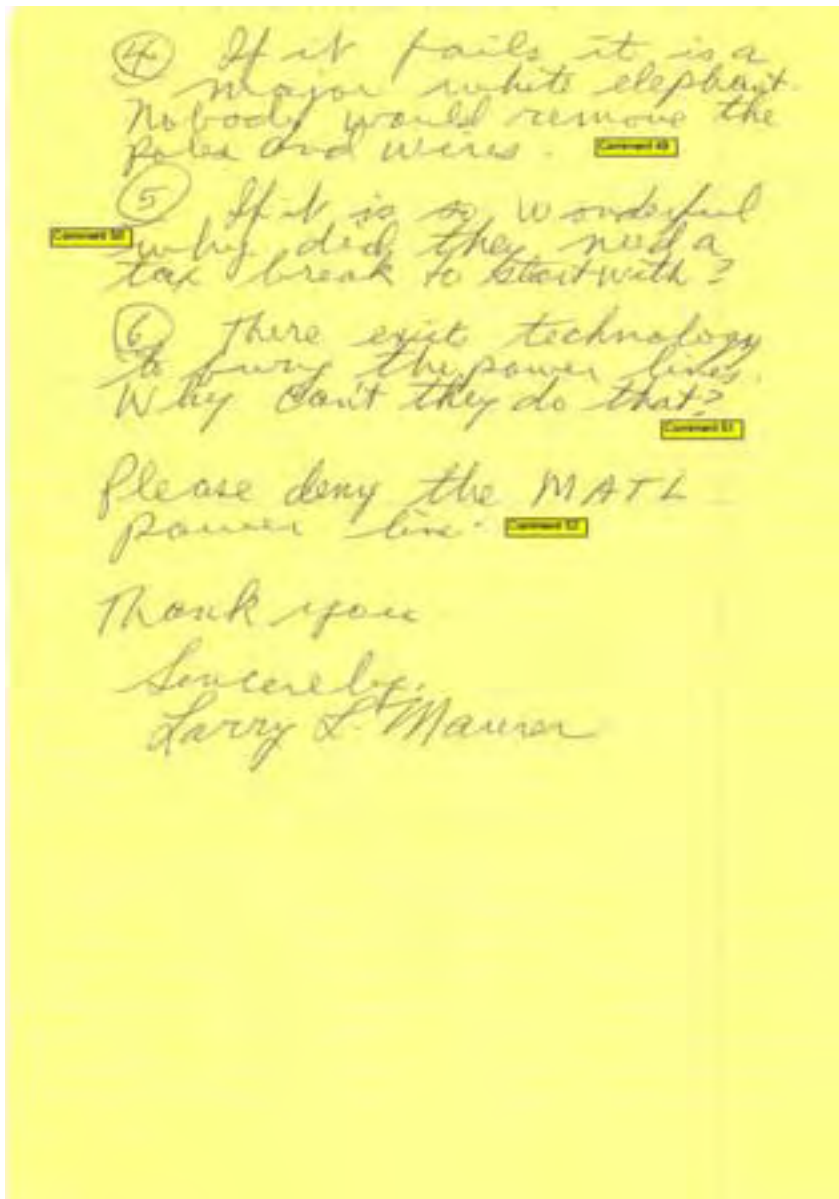
Response 45: Comments pertaining to benefits of the project are noted.



Response 46: See the discussion of Socioeconomic Impact Issues in the Consolidated Responses section and the EIS, Section 3.13.3.2, "Effects on Property Values."

Response 47: MATL has changed its proposal to include a 105-foot right-of-way. Appendix N, Figure 1, illustrates the typical amount of land taken out of production that could be more susceptible to weed infestation if control measures are not undertaken. Also, see the discussion of Farming Issues and Vegetation, Wetland and Weed Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 48: The need for the line is addressed in Sections 1.2 and 3.17.



Response 49: The agencies have noted your comment regarding the fate of the line should it not be a success. After the line is operational, it is expected to be an asset with value. In the hypothetical event that the project owners were to file for bankruptcy, the agencies expect that some other entity would acquire this asset and continue to operate it.

Response 50: See the discussion of Tax Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 51: Discussions of undergrounding the line are in Section 2.8. Also see Line Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 52: Comment noted.

Response 53 to 56: Your comments are noted.



Page 1 of 2

Shelby Chamber of Commerce

From: "Lucky Mellor" <lmellor@shelby.com>
To: "Shelby Chamber of Commerce" <shelby@shelby.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 04, 2008 1:16 PM
Subject: Louise Minetti's review of the MATL, Inc.

March 4, 2008

Lucky Mellor
PO Box 1001
Shelby, MT 59424

To Whom It May Concern:

Comment 57

I would like to express my earnest support in favor of the MATL power project. This project is a lifeline both for Montana and neighboring areas and will create opportunities for our economy while pursuing alternative energy production.

Comment 58

With any new project, there are certain obstacles that can be overcome with persistence and creative problem solving. This power project has so many positive benefits on our area that forward progress should not be halted.

As an avid mountaineer who appreciates the truly wild areas of Montana and also a person who grew up on the Belgian Hill north of Shelby, an area projected as having some windmills, I think I can appreciate the different aspects presented with this opportunity. To be sure, the skyline will change to some extent, but I think this will be merely a situation that we will become accustomed to in the same way that heliport win towers and telephone poles go relatively unnoticed in Montana.

Comment 59

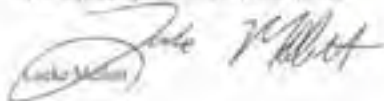
I am also very excited about the production of energy that does not clutter up waterways or pollute the atmosphere. Any income that can be made in this area help all Montanans as well as our neighboring states and the many animals that enjoy our great outdoor resources.

Comment 60

The Montana/Alberta Tie Line is a good solid step in the right direction!

Comment 61

Thank you for your time and consideration.



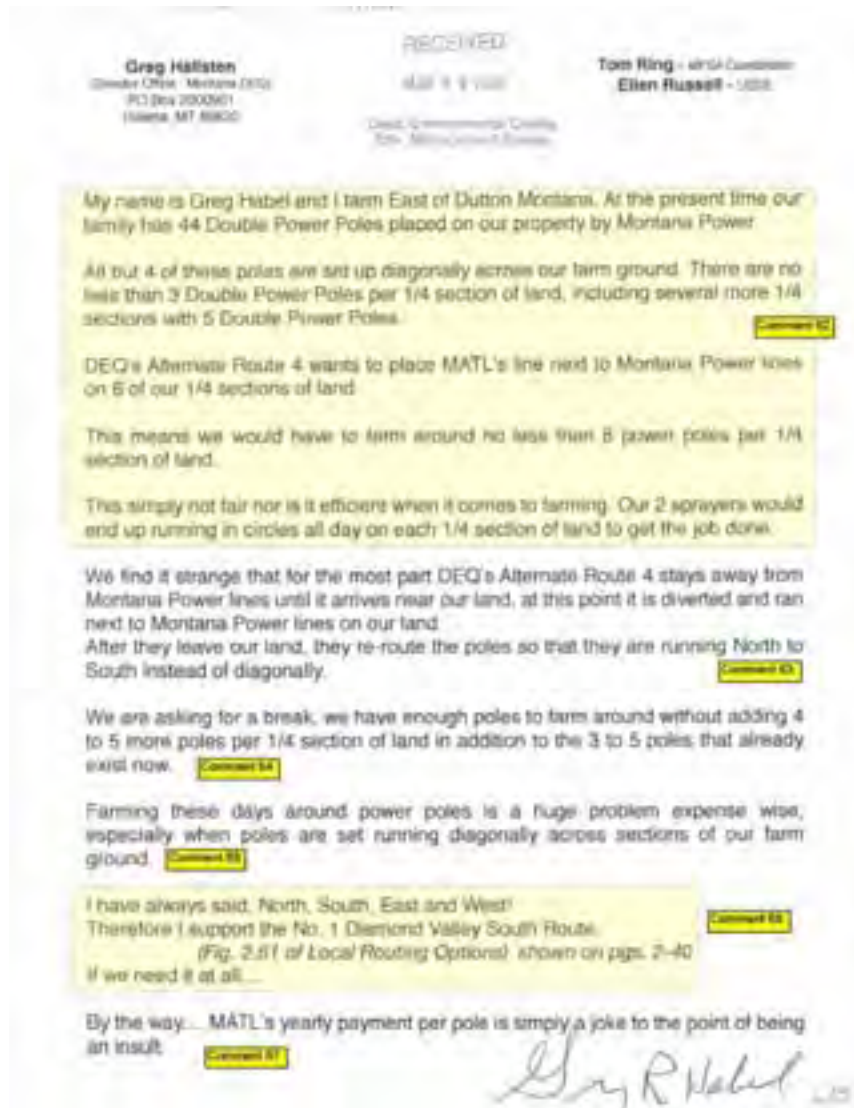
From: shelby@shelby.com
To: "Louise Minetti" <minetti@montana.com>
Subject: meeting

1/3/2008

Response 57 and 58: Thank you for your comment.

Response 59: Comment noted.

Response 60 and 61: Thank you for your comments.



Response 62 and 63: See Section 2.6.1 in the EIS. The Alternative 4 portion through the Diamond Valley did not meet with local acceptance and is no longer being carried forward as a viable option. See the revisions to the Diamond Valley local routing option in Section 2.6.1.

Response 64: Your comment is noted. In the Diamond Valley area several alternatives were identified that would limit the amount of farmland crossed on a diagonal. See Figure 2.6-2.

Response 65: The agencies acknowledge the increased cost to farm around structures. Farming cost estimates have been updated in Section 3.13.3.2.

Response 66: See Figure 2.6-2 of the Final EIS.

Response 67: The average per-structure payment has been updated to \$33.90. Also see Section 2.3 concerning the alternative dispute resolution process.

Response 68 to 71: Your comments are noted.

CITY OF SHELBY

112 First Street South
Shelby, MT 59474
Telephone: (406) 336-1222
FAX: (406) 336-0300
www.shelbymt.com



Mayor: Larry J. Bertoni
Council: Cindy Stone, Eugene Swanson,
Shirley Harwood, Lynn Wilson,
Tom Lee, Bruce Dyer, Keith A.
Alderman: William J. Kuhn, Jr.
Sug. Prosecutor/Warden: Jim Holley
Finance Officer: Tom Hall
Judge: Susan Aron
Superintendent: Bob Smith
Community Development: Jennifer Carter

March 4, 2008

Montana Department of Environmental Quality
Environmental Management Bureau
Attn: Tom King
P.O. Box 200801
Helena MT 59620-0801

Commission Members:

I am writing on behalf of the community of Shelby and Office of Economic Development to support the efforts to construct the Montana Alberta Transmission Line (MATL). Shelby, Teton County and Northern Montana are in a unique position of incredible economic benefit in the potential of the MATL line. With construction of the line items to begin soon, the approval of the line will create an immediate source of steady re-employment, incredible economic opportunity and reduction of taxes to those in the region. **Comment 68**

Our rural Montana region continually struggles with decades of drought, a depressed oil and gas industry and other economic factors beyond our control. The key to sustainability and development of a solid economic base is diversity and access to our available resources. Wind generation is an abundant, renewable resource that can provide a tremendous economic boost to our area in job creation, additional business and secondary services, reduction in taxes and wealth within our communities. **Comment 69**

MATL officials have been diligent in following all guidelines, gaining the commitments of lawmakers and assuring communities of their ongoing commitment to the benefit and wellbeing of the community now and for generations to come. I sincerely hope you will consider the wishes of those who live, work and raise our families in our region. Outside interests have many voices but the voice of those who live here must be heard loud and clear. **Comment 70**

Please support the efforts to bring new, clean industry to rural Montana. Help us show our communities care for our children and those that will come after us. **Comment 71**

Sincerely,

Linda Carter
City of Shelby
112 1st St. So
Shelby, MT 59474
406-336-4709
Fax: (406) 336-0413
lccarter@ci.shelby.mt.us

RECEIVED

MAR 9 5 2008

Tom King
Montana Department of Environmental Quality

Cc: Larry Bertoni, Mayor
Shelby City Council



Response 72: Comment noted.

Response 73: Comment noted.

Response 74: Your comments reflect conclusions in the EIS, Section 3.16. Since publication of the Draft EIS, DEQ and MATL staffs have reviewed the Bullhead Coulee South local routing option. Both MATL's proposed Alternative 2 and the Bullhead Coulee South local routing option pass near the cultural resource site mentioned in your comment. MATL has committed to avoid cultural resource sites. See Table 2.3-4 in the EIS.

Response 75: Both MATL's proposed line and the local routing option would cross four landowners (Montana Cadastral project, March 2008). MATL would have to obtain right-of-way no matter which alternative is selected.

Response 76: Note that the location proposed by MATL would place the line on an adjacent landowner's land in a manner that would prevent a wind turbine from being located on his property. Navitas Energy is considering a project in this vicinity (Davies 2008).

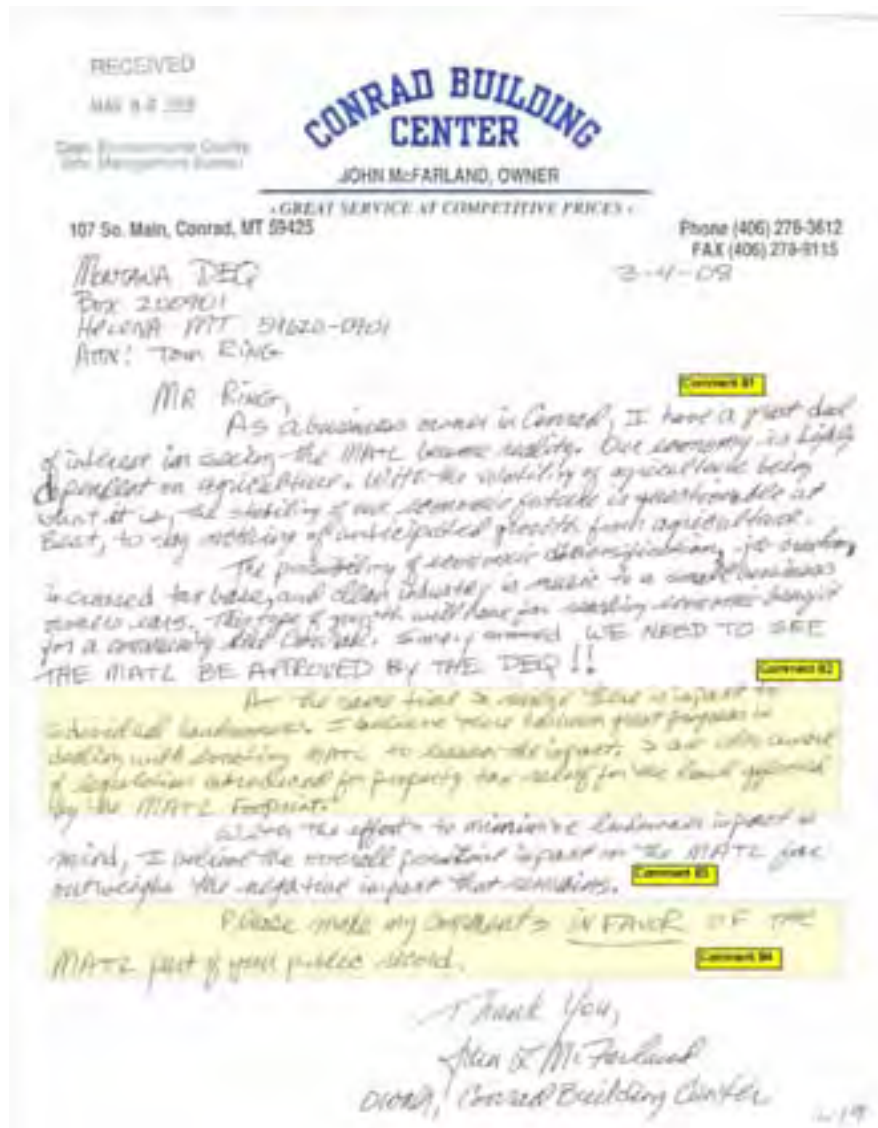
Response 77: Your comment regarding the Bullhead Coulee South Local Routing Option is noted.



Response 78: Thank you for your comment.

Response 79: Thank you for your comment. Employment and tax revenue impacts and impacts to local services are discussed in Section 3.13. Also see Socioeconomic Impact Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 80: Comment noted.



Response 81: Employment and tax revenue impacts and impacts to local services are discussed in Section 3.13.3.2. Also see Socioeconomic Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 82 to 84: Your comments are noted.

Hallsten, Greg

From: SCOTT ROBAR@usbank.com
 Posted At: Friday, March 07, 2008 4:58 PM
 Conversation: MATL - Diamond Valley South Option
 Posted To: MATL
 Subject: MATL - Diamond Valley South Option

Tom King
 US Bank is Managing Agent for the related borrowers that own farm land in the NW1/4 Sec. 12, Twp24, Rge 1 in Taylor County, MT. My understanding of the Diamond Valley South option is that the transmission line would run along the north end of that field. I am concerned about how the placement of the line could impact the owner's value and ease of farming. There is a field that goes across along the north end. Would the proposed line be placed down the middle of the field and thereby create the need to take away some land to create a new access road on both the owners side and the neighboring side to the north? Or, would the line go simply on one corner of the other north or south? Our farm owner, along with the NW 1/4 of Sec. 12 and the SW 1/4 of Sec. 2, (want for some good approximations of acre and features, the airplane can only go north-south) need the line in both sections. Any transmission line constructed here would hinder the use of an airplane in the area. I would appreciate any comments you might have and would prefer another option be approved if at all possible. Thank you for your assistance.

Scott Robar, AFM
 V.P. & Farm Manager
 Farm, Ranch & Timber Management
 U.S. Bank - Private Client Group
 Office (509) 353-7992
 toll free 800-331-4888
 fax (509) 353-7058

Electronic mail sent through the Internet is not secure. U.S. Bank National Association cannot guarantee the timeliness, accuracy, confidentiality, or security of messages, transactions, orders, funds transfer instructions or other payment requests sent by electronic mail. It will be processed as requested or received by the proper representative of U.S. Bank National Association. Do not distribute this message without written consent of the author. Nonbusiness e-mails may not reflect the opinions of U.S. Bank and its affiliates.

U.S. Bank National Association. Member FDIC. Equal Housing Lender.

U.S. BANCORP reads the following announcements:

Electronic Privacy Notice. This e-mail, and any attachments, contains information that is, or may be, covered by electronic communications privacy laws, and is also confidential and proprietary in nature. If you are not the intended recipient, please be advised that you are legally prohibited from viewing, using, copying, distributing, or otherwise disclosing this information in any manner. Instead, please reply to the sender that you have received this communication in error, and then immediately delete it. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

3/10/2008

Response 85: All of these comments refer to the Diamond Valley South local routing option. If adjacent property owners cannot agree on a line location that would straddle the property line, the intent is that the line would be located far enough off the edge of any field road to allow passage of the largest expected piece of farm equipment in a folded position. For example, a combine with the header attached may be the widest piece of equipment expected.

Response 86: The aerial applicator may not be able to fly north and south unhindered if a power line is present. Likewise, an aerial applicator may not be able to fly the length of a field unhindered with a diagonal line crossing it.

Response 87: Comments as well as information in the Draft EIS will be weighed and balanced in making final location decision.



Response 88: Comment noted. Economic benefits are discussed in Section 3.13.3.2 and in Socioeconomic Impact Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 89 to 92: Comments noted.

Response 93: Routing down Highway 89 is outside the study area. Figure 2.3-2 shows the study area boundary.

Response 94: Comment noted.





Response 95: Thank you for your comment.

Response 96: Thank you for your comment.

Response 97: Unemployment data and trends by county are presented in Table 3.13-3.

Response 98: The additional environmental review was prompted by extensive public comment on the March 2007 document. Federal agency decisions will be issued subsequent to this EIS in the form of a Record of Decision for each agency or as a letter of concurrence, no sooner than 30 days after this Final EIS is available. DEQ may not make a final decision sooner than 15 days after the final EIS is available and may time a decision on whether to issue a certificate to coincide with the decisions of the Federal agencies.

Response 99 to 101: Your comments are noted.

Response 102: Comment noted.

March 11, 2008

Tom Ring
Montana Department of Environmental Quality
PO Box 200901
Helena, MT 59620-0901

RE: Support of MATL

Dear Mr. Ring:

Comment 102

I am writing in support of the MATL. I support the MATL, because it benefits both consumers and generators through additional connection with markets in demand of energy. It also will allow additional purchasing options for Montana utilities resulting in lower rates for consumers. MATL is an economic opportunity for Montana by providing additional transmission capacity.

My name is Vanessa Bucklin, and I support MATL.

Sincerely,

Vanessa V. Bucklin

11
1 My name is Katrina Martin. I live on a farm west
2 ofutton. I would like to express my **Comment 103**
3 appreciation for the opportunity to participate in
4 this hearing process, and to acknowledge the hard
5 work done by the staffs of the US Department of
6 Energy and the Montana Department of Environmental
7 Quality in preparation of the joint EIS. Your
8 mandate under Federal and State law is a
9 complicated one, and I'm grateful for your
10 efforts.
11 I want to first emphasize I do not
12 rise in opposition to the MATL project. However,
13 have I stood in support of the re-acton **Comment 104**
14 alternative. I rely on electricity, and
15 acknowledge the need for more transmission
16 facilities. What I am not willing to support is
17 to have one company's short term economic gain
18 take precedence over long term negative impacts to
19 the farmers whose land is taken pursuant to the
20 construction of this line. **Comment 105**
21 More than two years ago, a group of the
22 affected landowners in Fenders and Teton Counties
23 met with MATL officials. These farmers were **Comment 106**
24 unanimous in expressing to the company their
25 willingness to partner with MATL in this project.

LAURIE CRUTCHER, SPR
408-442-8262

The following responses are to comments received at the public hearing in Great Falls.

Response 103 to 104: Your comments have been noted.

Response 105: Comment noted.

Response 106: The information about your past work with MATL is noted.

12
 1 if the company were just willing to use a route
 2 which followed field lines and was built with Comment 107
 3 monopole structures in crop land and CRF. This
 4 willingness was reiterated at every subsequent
 5 meeting or communication with the company.
 6
 7 These farmers accepted that they need to
 8 cooperate in economic development for the region,
 9 even though it meant dealing with permanent
 10 structures placed in their crop land.
 11
 12 However these farmers, in standing up Comment 108
 13 for themselves and their families, seem to have
 14 been painted as bad guys by the supporters of this
 15 project. Such a characterization is doubtfully
 16 unfair and counter-productive. The requests of
 17 these farmers are not unreasonable.
 18
 19 Erecting power poles on a diagonal
 20 running through crop land and CRF should be a
 21 thing of the past. New farming techniques and Comment 109
 22 larger equipment make such transmission structures
 23 environmentally unsound, and too economically
 24 burdensome. I do not begrudge this company and
 25 its investors the chance to make a handsome profit
 from filling a well-recognized need for increased
 electric transmission. Much power to them, as per
 intended. Comment 109

LAMIE CRUTCHER, SR
 406-442-8787

Response 107: Your comment is noted.

Response 108: See the discussion of Farming Issues in the Consolidated Responses section. Since publication of the Draft EIS MATL has proposed an alternative dispute resolution process to be used in conjunction with its compensation package to help alleviate the economic burden to farmers since publication of the Draft EIS. See Section 2.3 has been changed to reflect this revised proposal.

Response 109: Your comment is noted.

13
1 **Comment 110:** To see the extent of that profit, simply
2 visit the Tomblago web site, where it is reported
3 the company projects revenue of nearly a billion
4 dollars from the 21 year contracts now in place.
5 It thus defied the imagination to take as credible
6 the company's current claim it cannot possibly be
7 expected to spend around \$1 million extra dollars
8 to implement the alternative, Alternative 4, which
9 the agencies have analyzed as being, "The most
10 protective alternative for the maintenance and
11 enhancement of long term productivity of the
12 environment, while benefiting socioeconomic
13 resources."
14 **Comment 111:** Our state has accorded MATL many
15 advantages since its application was filed. From
16 the outset, the economic development staff of the
17 Governor's Office has worked closely with the
18 company to help it achieve its goals. The 2007
19 Legislature created an Energy Infrastructure
20 Promotion Office, with a \$150,000 annual budget,
21 whose sole mission included ensuring MATL the MATL
22 project gets built.
23 **Comment 112:** The Legislature also enacted a 75
24 percent property tax cut for the company, from
25 which it will reap nearly \$600,000 each year. A

LANNIE CRITCHER, RFD
404-442-9262

Response110: Your opinion is noted.

Response 111: The economic development staff has been actively involved with the MATL project.

Response 112: See the discussion of Tax Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

1 Tax break for property owners whose land is taken¹⁴
2 amounts to \$40,000.
3 **Comment 113** With all this help from the government,
4 it seems impossible to view this company as
5 persecuted, because the farmers who will forever
6 bear the burden of the line are not willing to
7 just let the company build the line as cheaply as
8 possible. **Over a fifty year life of this**
9 **facility, the property tax break dollars by** **Comment 114**
10 **themselves will nearly pay for the construction of**
11 **the line in Montana, projected at approximately**
12 **\$50 million.** It is not unreasonable for farmers
13 to push for the option of Alternative 4 when that
14 agency alternative clearly recognizes the validity
15 of the producer's position, and mitigates serious
16 adverse affects on production agriculture. **Comment 115**
17 **Comment 116** But let's return for a moment to the
18 advantages accorded to this company by our state.
19 Looking over every affected property owner is the
20 knowledge that this Canadian company, building a
21 for-profit merchant line, has the power to condemn
22 the land it says it needs. This company, with its
23 billion dollar revenue projection, has the
24 authority to invoke eminent domain over property
25 owners. These farmers' private property rights

LADNIE CRUTCHER, NFB
406-442-8262

Response 113 to 116: Comments noted.

15

1 can be distinguished to make way for this merchant
 2 line, a line which is not regulated by the PSC,
 3 because under the law, it does not constitute a
 4 public utility from which Montana consumers are
 5 guaranteed to benefit.

6 **Comment 11:** Is it any wonder these landowners hope
 7 the regulators will at least ensure that the
 8 chosen alternative reduces negative environmental
 9 and economic impacts to those owners.

10 **Comment 12:** Not long ago, I came across a clear
 11 policy statement issued by the Montana Legislature
 12 that seems relevant to the current permit
 13 application. "It is the policy of the State of
 14 Montana to promote energy conservation,
 15 production, and consumption of a reliable mix of
 16 energy sources, that represent the least social,
 17 environmental, and economic costs, and the
 18 greatest long term benefits to Montana citizens."

19 **Comment 13:** Alternative 1 does not represent the
 20 least environmental and economic costs to Montana
 21 citizens. Instead, it represents the least cost
 22 to the company. Alternative 4, the agency's
 23 alternative, does represent the least social,
 24 environmental, and economic costs, and the
 25 greatest long term benefits to Montana citizens.

LANNIE CRUTCHER, RPN
 406-442-9262

Response 117: Comment noted.

Response 118: Comment noted. The policy statement appears in Section 90-4-1001, MCA, of the state energy policy goal statement.

Response 119: The Department must apply the criteria set forth in the Administrative Rules of Montana 17.20.1604 in determining whether a proposed facility serves the public convenience and necessity. In general terms, it requires the Department to determine that the benefits of the proposed facility are greater than any other reasonable alternative based on the following:

- a. The Department's determination as to the need for the facility discussed in Sections 1.2 and 3.17.
- b. The cumulative environmental impacts of the facility discussed in Chapter 4.
- c. The benefits to the applicant, the state of Montana, the applicant's customers, and any other entities benefiting from the facility as discussed in Chapters 2, 3, and 4.
- d. The effects of the economic activity resulting from the proposed facility as discussed in Chapters 3 and 4.
- e. The costs of the facility including internal costs of construction and operation and mitigation costs, plus other external costs and unmitigated environmental costs as discussed in Chapter 3.
- f. Any other relevant factors.

Response 120 to 121: Comments noted.

Response 122: Comments noted.

16
1 **Comment 120** I do not oppose this project, even
2 though I can't say I look forward to having yet
3 another large transmission line in my
4 neighborhood. I do support the issuance of a
5 permit based upon Alternative 4. This line, and
6 the future lines which we know are coming, need to
7 be built on an orientation with field lines, and
8 the use of monopoles in crop land and CRF.
9 **Comment 121** Farmers who have been stewards of these
10 lands for generations should not have to bear the
11 burden of unsafe, costly structures in their crop
12 land and CRF simply because a company wants to
13 keep a bit of extra money in its pocket. That
14 should not be the way we do business in Montana.
15 Good public policy prescribes the choice of
16 Alternative 4 as the basis for the permits at
17 issue here. Thank you for your consideration.
18 MR. CROFT The next person signed up is
19 Allan Underdal.
20 **Comment 122** MR. UNDERDAL Hi. My name is Allen
21 Underdal. I am a Commissioner with Toole County
22 in north central Montana. And we would like to
23 say as Commissioners that we do support this line.
24 We feel that power lines obviously are important
25 to economic development in our region, and we are

LEONIE CRITCHER, NPS
406-442-6262

1 in support of it for that reason. There are
2 impacts to consider, and I think that what we just
3 listened to is one of the impacts, and I think we
4 have to certainly do consider those, and how long
5 term impacts from that will affect the land owner
6 that has those power lines right near their land.
7
8 **Comment 123:** We do feel, though, that we, I guess as
9 a county, that these power lines are necessary.
10 Obviously there is more power needed throughout
11 our United States, even though Montana is an
12 exporter of power. You know, there is a vast
13 quantity of power being consumed and needed to be
14 consumed in the near future. So we realize that a
15 power line like this is definitely necessary.
16
17 **Comment 124:** We know that there is proposed about 800
18 megawatts of power, wind power in our county and
19 the neighboring counties that would be put on this
20 line and sold both north and south. So that is a
21 positive to our area, and I guess we would like to
22 say that we do support this.
23
24 **MR. CONDI:** Thank you. The next speaker
25 is Mike Koopke.
26
27 **Comment 125:** MR. KOOPKE: I'm Mike Koopke from the
28 Bank. I wear many different hats. I'm actually a
29 producer in Glacier County. I'm in support of the
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60
61
62
63
64
65
66
67
68
69
70
71
72
73
74
75
76
77
78
79
80
81
82
83
84
85
86
87
88
89
90
91
92
93
94
95
96
97
98
99
100
101
102
103
104
105
106
107
108
109
110
111
112
113
114
115
116
117
118
119
120
121
122
123
124
125
126
127
128
129
130
131
132
133
134
135
136
137
138
139
140
141
142
143
144
145
146
147
148
149
150
151
152
153
154
155
156
157
158
159
160
161
162
163
164
165
166
167
168
169
170
171
172
173
174
175
176
177
178
179
180
181
182
183
184
185
186
187
188
189
190
191
192
193
194
195
196
197
198
199
200
201
202
203
204
205
206
207
208
209
210
211
212
213
214
215
216
217
218
219
220
221
222
223
224
225
226
227
228
229
230
231
232
233
234
235
236
237
238
239
240
241
242
243
244
245
246
247
248
249
250
251
252
253
254
255
256
257
258
259
260
261
262
263
264
265
266
267
268
269
270
271
272
273
274
275
276
277
278
279
280
281
282
283
284
285
286
287
288
289
290
291
292
293
294
295
296
297
298
299
300
301
302
303
304
305
306
307
308
309
310
311
312
313
314
315
316
317
318
319
320
321
322
323
324
325
326
327
328
329
330
331
332
333
334
335
336
337
338
339
340
341
342
343
344
345
346
347
348
349
350
351
352
353
354
355
356
357
358
359
360
361
362
363
364
365
366
367
368
369
370
371
372
373
374
375
376
377
378
379
380
381
382
383
384
385
386
387
388
389
390
391
392
393
394
395
396
397
398
399
400
401
402
403
404
405
406
407
408
409
410
411
412
413
414
415
416
417
418
419
420
421
422
423
424
425
426
427
428
429
430
431
432
433
434
435
436
437
438
439
440
441
442
443
444
445
446
447
448
449
450
451
452
453
454
455
456
457
458
459
460
461
462
463
464
465
466
467
468
469
470
471
472
473
474
475
476
477
478
479
480
481
482
483
484
485
486
487
488
489
490
491
492
493
494
495
496
497
498
499
500
501
502
503
504
505
506
507
508
509
510
511
512
513
514
515
516
517
518
519
520
521
522
523
524
525
526
527
528
529
530
531
532
533
534
535
536
537
538
539
540
541
542
543
544
545
546
547
548
549
550
551
552
553
554
555
556
557
558
559
560
561
562
563
564
565
566
567
568
569
570
571
572
573
574
575
576
577
578
579
580
581
582
583
584
585
586
587
588
589
590
591
592
593
594
595
596
597
598
599
600
601
602
603
604
605
606
607
608
609
610
611
612
613
614
615
616
617
618
619
620
621
622
623
624
625
626
627
628
629
630
631
632
633
634
635
636
637
638
639
640
641
642
643
644
645
646
647
648
649
650
651
652
653
654
655
656
657
658
659
660
661
662
663
664
665
666
667
668
669
670
671
672
673
674
675
676
677
678
679
680
681
682
683
684
685
686
687
688
689
690
691
692
693
694
695
696
697
698
699
700
701
702
703
704
705
706
707
708
709
710
711
712
713
714
715
716
717
718
719
720
721
722
723
724
725
726
727
728
729
730
731
732
733
734
735
736
737
738
739
740
741
742
743
744
745
746
747
748
749
750
751
752
753
754
755
756
757
758
759
760
761
762
763
764
765
766
767
768
769
770
771
772
773
774
775
776
777
778
779
780
781
782
783
784
785
786
787
788
789
790
791
792
793
794
795
796
797
798
799
800
801
802
803
804
805
806
807
808
809
810
811
812
813
814
815
816
817
818
819
820
821
822
823
824
825
826
827
828
829
830
831
832
833
834
835
836
837
838
839
840
841
842
843
844
845
846
847
848
849
850
851
852
853
854
855
856
857
858
859
860
861
862
863
864
865
866
867
868
869
870
871
872
873
874
875
876
877
878
879
880
881
882
883
884
885
886
887
888
889
890
891
892
893
894
895
896
897
898
899
900
901
902
903
904
905
906
907
908
909
910
911
912
913
914
915
916
917
918
919
920
921
922
923
924
925
926
927
928
929
930
931
932
933
934
935
936
937
938
939
940
941
942
943
944
945
946
947
948
949
950
951
952
953
954
955
956
957
958
959
960
961
962
963
964
965
966
967
968
969
970
971
972
973
974
975
976
977
978
979
980
981
982
983
984
985
986
987
988
989
990
991
992
993
994
995
996
997
998
999
1000

Response 123: The costs of farming around structures have been updated and changed in Section 3.13.3.2 of the EIS. The amount of cropland crossed is discussed in Section 3.1. Also see the discussion of `Farming Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 124: Comments noted.

Response 125: Your comment regarding 600 MW of wind generation in the area is noted.

Response 126: Comments noted.

Response 127 to 129: Comments noted.

1 NATL line. It's going to be going through my ⁱⁿ
2 property, but I feel it's my position or
3 responsibility to help bring economic growth to
4 Glacier County, and it's going to be an
5 inconvenience, but it's something I'm willing to
6 deal with in order to bring economic growth to Gal
7 East,

8 **Comment 127** I also own another farm, my parents'
9 farm, and the NATL line is going to go through
10 that farm, too, about 12 miles away and the farm
11 has decided that they're in support of the NATL
12 line also.

13 **Comment 128** I'm also the Executive Director for the
14 Bank Development Corporation, and we're in favor
15 of the NATL line because of economic possibility
16 of growth in Glacier County. We, the CFB Bank
17 Development Corporation, basically sees that all
18 of the farmers be treated fairly and just.

19 **Comment 129** I'm also the Chairman of the School
20 Board in CFB, and we see this as an
21 opportunity to help build the tax base for Glacier
22 County, which will help lead in the long run.
23 Thank you.

24 Mr. COMO: Thank you very much for your
25 comments. Harold Olson.

MARKIS CRITCHER, NPS
406-442-9262

Response 130 to 131: Comments noted.

13
1 **Comment 130** MR. GLACH: Members of the committee,
2 I'm Harold Olson from Conrad, President of the
3 Bozeman Economic Development Corporation, one of
4 the widest economic development groups in the
5 State.
6
7 We have encountered lots of economic
8 development projects in the past, and as we see
9 the diminishing opportunities of coal, gas,
10 forestry, mining, and so many industries that
11 Montana has been dependent upon in the past, no
12 longer being available to us, this opens up an
13 opportunity for resources that have only begun to
14 be developed in our area. So our group is very
15 strongly in favor of the MAIL line. We think that
16 it will be a spring board to greater opportunities
17 in the energy crisis that we sometimes see. Thank
18 you for your consideration.
19
20 MR. COMB: Thank you, Mr. Olson. We
21 have Gordon from Shelby. I can't read the last
22 name. Could you spell your last name.
23 **Comment 131** MR. BREDENBACH: Bredendach,
24 B-R-E-D-E-N-A-C-H. My name is Gordon Bredendach. I'm
25 partnered in an agency, insurance agency
26 involved in Conrad, Cut Bank, and Shelby, all of
27 the towns that are affected. We believe it is

28 JANNIS CRITCHER, RFR
29 406-442-9262

Response 132: Comment noted.

1 very important for our community, in that it Comment (1)
2 brings new jobs, and new jobs mean new customers (Cont.)
3 for us. And that's real important in a community
4 of -- real important to us. We have the gift.
5 This is a green industry. You can't ask for more
6 than that. I just don't believe that we can do
7 any better than this. Thank you.

8 MR. CONRAD: Thanks so much for coming
9 tonight. Jesse Parks.

10 Comment (1) MR. PARKS: My name is Jesse Parks. I'm
11 a business man from Conrad. I've been there for
12 11 years. And a lot of my friends are farmers,
13 and some are against, and some are for. But this
14 is -- what we're talking about here is energy,
15 which we're short of, and we'll get shorter of as
16 the years go on. -- (inaudible) -- and the way
17 we want to create more energy for our area, and it
18 also is something that we can look on this wind
19 energy, which is a big thing in northern Montana.
20 If this wind energy comes into our area, and we
21 have this line, it is going to be a big plus for
22 that company to want to come in here, and that
23 creates more energy, again, and more jobs, and
24 that's what we need in our country. So I speak
25 for this NWEL line, and thank you for your

LARKIE CRITCHER, NPS
406-442-9262

1 reconsideration. 21

2 MR. COMO: Thank you very much, Joe

3 Christiansen. I'll ask you to spell your name,

4 Joe.

5 MR. CHRISTIANSEN: It's Christiansen, like

6 the Christians and the lions. My name is Joe

7 Christiansen, and I'm a Fondren County Commissioner

8 in Osted.

9 **Comment 133:** And we support this very much because of

10 the economic development, and also for tax

11 purposes that we've got going on in our county.

12 We're getting really close to being stretched

13 clear to the wall.

14 **Comment 134:** We also support the fact that we would

15 like to see the company get along with the

16 farmers. We understand what their condition that

17 is going along, and it's getting the gates out

18 there, too, and we want that to also be addressed.

19 **Comment 135:** But when you look around at all of the

20 counties in this area and also here, what I heard

21 on the radio in morning, Great Falls is losing 300

22 students every year. I think this is a bit of a

23 problem, and we've got the same problem, too, but

24 not in the large numbers.

25 But you look at that, when our equipment

26

27 JAMIE CRITCHER, NPS
28 404-442-9262

Response 133: Comment noted.

Response 134: See Farming Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 135: Comments noted. See Socioeconomic Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 136: Comment noted.

1 at the county level is stretching the limit, the
2 cost of fuel that we have coming up right now,
3 everybody knows where it's going to go. It's
4 going to limit a lot of the growth and more that
5 we're going to be able to do. And in our schools
6 also. Everybody throughout the country is talking
7 about schools, and more money, and that they're
8 going to be needing it, and go back again for the
9 legislation as it has been put, everybody is in
10 need of more money.
11 We need to have something to stabilize
12 where we're at, or we're just going to continue to
13 drop down.
14 **Comment 136:** I come from a family of ten. All ten of
15 us grew up on the farm. I was born and raised
16 right where the line is going to go through.
17 There is one left on the farm now. So it says
18 something that something is going to change
19 somehow. And we do support this very much. And
20 hope that it will do something for all the
21 communities. Thank you for your time.
22 **MR. COMB:** Thank you. Cheryl Curry.
23 **MR. CURRY:** I'm Cheryl Curry. I'm the
24 Executive Director for the Fenders Regional Port
25 Authority. And a port authority is defined in the

LADNIE CRITCHER, NPS
408-442-8262

Response 137 to 138: Comments noted.

1 law, and is created by legislation and public vote.²³
2 for the purpose to promote, stimulate, develop,
3 and advance the general welfare, commerce, and **Comment 137**
4 economic development, and prosperity through its
5 jurisdiction, and of the state and its citizens.
6
7 A port authority also acts in
8 cooperation and in conjunction with other
9 organizations to develop industry, manufacturing,
10 natural resources, services, aquaculture, health
11 care, and other economic activities.
12
13 Our goal is to help create a vital
14 community for future generations of rural
15 Montanans.
16 **Comment 138** The Pondera Regional Port Authority
17 supports the Montana-Alberta Transmission line.
18 The construction of this line will have strong,
19 positive economic impact in the area, and creates
20 the potential to develop wind power in the future.
21 The power lines and associated wind development
22 will add jobs and tax base to our struggling
23 economy. It is clean, and has low impact on the
24 environment.
25 **Comment 139** I have read the Environmental Impact
26 Statement, and believe that economic benefits
27 outweigh the few minor environmental concerns.

28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60
61
62
63
64
65
66
67
68
69
70
71
72
73
74
75
76
77
78
79
80
81
82
83
84
85
86
87
88
89
90
91
92
93
94
95
96
97
98
99
100
101
102
103
104
105
106
107
108
109
110
111
112
113
114
115
116
117
118
119
120
121
122
123
124
125
126
127
128
129
130
131
132
133
134
135
136
137
138
139
140
141
142
143
144
145
146
147
148
149
150
151
152
153
154
155
156
157
158
159
160
161
162
163
164
165
166
167
168
169
170
171
172
173
174
175
176
177
178
179
180
181
182
183
184
185
186
187
188
189
190
191
192
193
194
195
196
197
198
199
200
201
202
203
204
205
206
207
208
209
210
211
212
213
214
215
216
217
218
219
220
221
222
223
224
225
226
227
228
229
230
231
232
233
234
235
236
237
238
239
240
241
242
243
244
245
246
247
248
249
250
251
252
253
254
255
256
257
258
259
260
261
262
263
264
265
266
267
268
269
270
271
272
273
274
275
276
277
278
279
280
281
282
283
284
285
286
287
288
289
290
291
292
293
294
295
296
297
298
299
300
301
302
303
304
305
306
307
308
309
310
311
312
313
314
315
316
317
318
319
320
321
322
323
324
325
326
327
328
329
330
331
332
333
334
335
336
337
338
339
340
341
342
343
344
345
346
347
348
349
350
351
352
353
354
355
356
357
358
359
360
361
362
363
364
365
366
367
368
369
370
371
372
373
374
375
376
377
378
379
380
381
382
383
384
385
386
387
388
389
390
391
392
393
394
395
396
397
398
399
400
401
402
403
404
405
406
407
408
409
410
411
412
413
414
415
416
417
418
419
420
421
422
423
424
425
426
427
428
429
430
431
432
433
434
435
436
437
438
439
440
441
442
443
444
445
446
447
448
449
450
451
452
453
454
455
456
457
458
459
460
461
462
463
464
465
466
467
468
469
470
471
472
473
474
475
476
477
478
479
480
481
482
483
484
485
486
487
488
489
490
491
492
493
494
495
496
497
498
499
500
501
502
503
504
505
506
507
508
509
510
511
512
513
514
515
516
517
518
519
520
521
522
523
524
525
526
527
528
529
530
531
532
533
534
535
536
537
538
539
540
541
542
543
544
545
546
547
548
549
550
551
552
553
554
555
556
557
558
559
560
561
562
563
564
565
566
567
568
569
570
571
572
573
574
575
576
577
578
579
580
581
582
583
584
585
586
587
588
589
590
591
592
593
594
595
596
597
598
599
600
601
602
603
604
605
606
607
608
609
610
611
612
613
614
615
616
617
618
619
620
621
622
623
624
625
626
627
628
629
630
631
632
633
634
635
636
637
638
639
640
641
642
643
644
645
646
647
648
649
650
651
652
653
654
655
656
657
658
659
660
661
662
663
664
665
666
667
668
669
670
671
672
673
674
675
676
677
678
679
680
681
682
683
684
685
686
687
688
689
690
691
692
693
694
695
696
697
698
699
700
701
702
703
704
705
706
707
708
709
710
711
712
713
714
715
716
717
718
719
720
721
722
723
724
725
726
727
728
729
730
731
732
733
734
735
736
737
738
739
740
741
742
743
744
745
746
747
748
749
750
751
752
753
754
755
756
757
758
759
760
761
762
763
764
765
766
767
768
769
770
771
772
773
774
775
776
777
778
779
780
781
782
783
784
785
786
787
788
789
790
791
792
793
794
795
796
797
798
799
800
801
802
803
804
805
806
807
808
809
810
811
812
813
814
815
816
817
818
819
820
821
822
823
824
825
826
827
828
829
830
831
832
833
834
835
836
837
838
839
840
841
842
843
844
845
846
847
848
849
850
851
852
853
854
855
856
857
858
859
860
861
862
863
864
865
866
867
868
869
870
871
872
873
874
875
876
877
878
879
880
881
882
883
884
885
886
887
888
889
890
891
892
893
894
895
896
897
898
899
900
901
902
903
904
905
906
907
908
909
910
911
912
913
914
915
916
917
918
919
920
921
922
923
924
925
926
927
928
929
930
931
932
933
934
935
936
937
938
939
940
941
942
943
944
945
946
947
948
949
950
951
952
953
954
955
956
957
958
959
960
961
962
963
964
965
966
967
968
969
970
971
972
973
974
975
976
977
978
979
980
981
982
983
984
985
986
987
988
989
990
991
992
993
994
995
996
997
998
999
1000

Response 139 to 140: Comments noted.

1 There are inconveniences to affected farms and
2 ranches, but they are compensated to a certain **Comment 139**
3 extent by -- (insubstantial) -- and payments from
4 MATL, as well as by tax reductions on the affected
5 land.
6
7 **Comment 140** As a nation, our energy demands are
8 ever increasing, and our options for production
9 unlimited. The development of clean wind power
10 and the lines to transport it make sense for this
11 area and for the nation. Please support the
12 construction of the MATL transmission lines. The
13 environmental impacts are minor, and the economic
14 benefits are great. Thank you for your
15 consideration.
16
17 MS. COMR: This goes for anyone. If
18 you're creating something that you're already
19 prepared in addition to speaking, if you'd like to
20 leave it with us, so that we make sure that we get
21 every one of your words, that would be great also.
22
23 Loretta Carter,
24
25 MS. CARTER: Hello. My name is Loretta
26 Carter, and I am the Economic Development Director
27 for the City of Shelby. But I'm not here tonight
28 as a city official, I'm here as a parent.
29
30 We are very fortunate here in Montana to
31
32 LANNIE CRUTCHER, SPR
33 408-442-8267

Response 141 to 143: Comments noted.

1 have exceptional colleges and universities for our ²⁵
2 children to receive a good post secondary
3 education. I have three sons, one who has
4 graduated, and two that are presently attending
5 Montana Tech. These boys are receiving an
6 incredible education, yet we are educating them to
7 leave the state.
8
9 In 2004, statistical information for
10 Montana Tech School of Mines and Engineering
11 graduates, 76 percent went to work out of state.
12 My son is an occupational safety and health
13 engineer in Paramus, New Jersey and my second son
14 is now pursuing a second degree in the hopes to
15 remain in Montana after graduation.
16 **Comment 141** Projects such as the Montana-Alberta
17 Transmission Line have the potential to create
18 opportunities and employment for all our children.
19 The project may have limited permanent employment
20 opportunity, but has tremendous potential to open
21 the door to other clean viable industry in our
22 state. Projects of this magnitude require **Comment 142**
23 numerous secondary services to project related
24 employment. It will generate tremendous tax
25 reductions and wealth within our communities that
may translate into new industry and new jobs. **Comment 143**

LADWIS CRUTCHER, NFB
406-442-8262

1 creation. 26

2 **Comment 144** Ultimately it announces to all that
3 Montana welcomes clean viable industry, and that
4 our best and brightest need not leave the state to
5 find good jobs. Outside interests have many
6 voices, but I hope you will consider the voices of
7 those who live, and work, and raise our families
8 in this region. Help us keep our small rural
9 communities alive, so that our children and others
10 can return to the state, and it will benefit
11 generations to come. Thank you.

12 MR. CONER: Thank you. Steve Sheffield.

13 MR. SHEFFIELD: My name is Steve
14 Sheffield. We live just north of the termination
15 point in Great Falls. We have several concerns
16 that were not addressed by the draft proposal, and
17 the concerns that have arisen since our last
18 opportunity to comment. Some of these concerns we
19 feel need to be addressed are as follows:

20 **Comment 145** Long span monopoles with 8.5 foot wide
21 concrete foundations should be required for any
22 portion of the transmission line that cross or
23 border farm fields. It has been reported that the
24 Alberta portion of the proposed Montana-Alberta
25 Tin Line is being required to use single poles

Comment 146

JACKIE CRUTCHER, NPS
406-442-9262

Response 144: Comments noted.

Response 145: Your comment regarding long-span monopoles is noted. Details of the types of poles proposed are in Figure 2.3-5.

Response 146: In Canada, monopoles are being used only in areas with center pivot irrigation, not along the entire line.

1 through farming lands. Is this true? 21

2 **Comment 141** Although the initial costs might be
 3 somewhat higher, these lines are built to last a
 4 long time. We've been farming around existing
 5 lines for over 70 years. Less land is removed
 6 from production, and it's much easier to maneuver
 7 around a single pole than a double pole design.

8 **Comment 142** Very serious consideration should be
 9 given to weigh the differences in short term
 10 up-front costs against the long term costs to the
 11 farmer who will be living with these decisions for
 12 generations. What justification could be used to
 13 treat farmers differently on each side of the
 14 border?

15 **Comment 143** How will the alternate routes of MWL be
 16 evaluated? Will there be a public open process?
 17 How will the weighting of various factors be
 18 decided? Who decides the weighting factors? Who
 19 decides between the alternatives?

20 **Comment 144** House Bill 3 of the May 2007 special
 21 session permanently reduced property tax credits
 22 from 12 percent to 3 percent for new investments
 23 in transmission lines that are constructed after
 24 June 2007. For Alternative 4, this change has
 25 reduced the total property tax income for the

26
 27
 28
 29
 30
 31
 32
 33
 34
 35
 36
 37
 38
 39
 40
 41
 42
 43
 44
 45
 46
 47
 48
 49
 50
 51
 52
 53
 54
 55
 56
 57
 58
 59
 60
 61
 62
 63
 64
 65
 66
 67
 68
 69
 70
 71
 72
 73
 74
 75
 76
 77
 78
 79
 80
 81
 82
 83
 84
 85
 86
 87
 88
 89
 90
 91
 92
 93
 94
 95
 96
 97
 98
 99
 100

LADKIE CRUTCHER, RFB
 404-442-9262

Response 147: Transmission lines do last a long time. Some of the oldest transmission lines in the state, 100kV lines from Great Falls and the powerhouse on Ennis Lake to Butte, are 100 years old this year. Monopoles are proposed for all diagonally crossed cropland and CRP land. See Farming Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 148: A new analysis comparing the costs of farming around the transmission line under Alternative 2 to the costs of constructing the line to minimize farmer impacts (Alternative 4) has been added to the EIS. See Section 3.13.3.2. Different laws govern siting on each side of the border.

Response 149: In their decision documents, the agencies will indicate the alternative selected and the reasons for the selection.

Response 150: See the discussion of Tax Issues and Economic Issues in the Consolidated Responses section. The costs and benefits of the project will be weighed in the agencies' decisions.

29
 1 emergency repair operations. What will the
 2 process be for making these claims? If there is a
 3 dispute, what recourse will the land owner have? **Comment 154**
 4 What will be the differences in dealing with a
 5 Canadian corporation versus a US corporation? **Comment 155**
 6 **Comment 156** Should some sort of a bond be required
 7 of a foreign corporation to guarantee these
 8 obligations? What will happen if MATL goes out of
 9 business? Who will own the line? **Will all of the**
 10 **obligations that MATL is entering into upon** **Comment 157**
 11 **building the line transfer to whoever buys it?**
 12 **Comment 158** MATL has received numerous comments
 13 suggesting farm machinery can reach 25 feet in
 14 height. Has MATL changed their plans to account
 15 for this information? What is MATL doing
 16 differently?
 17 **Comment 159** It is reasonable to expect that farm
 18 equipment will be used under the line that will
 19 require 20 to 25 feet of clearance. Current air
 20 drills have a travel height of 19 feet. The
 21 current models are not large enough to be of
 22 economic use on our property. We expect that
 23 larger equipment will be available in the future,
 24 but we will use it. If further restrictions,
 25 i.e., limiting equipment height under the line are

LADNIE CRUTCHER, NPS
 408-442-9262

Response 154: See Farming Issues in the Consolidated Responses section. In addition, Section 2.3 has been changed in the EIS to provide information regarding MATL's compensation and alternative dispute resolution process.

Response 155: See the discussion in Legal and Regulatory Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 156: DEQ's administrative rules, ARM 17.20.1902(10), allow the department to hold a bond and monitor reclamation for up to 5 years. Also see the response to comment 49.

Response 157: Yes. All commitments MATL makes to the agencies would transfer to any new owner of the line. The commitments made to landowners may transfer depending on the arrangement made between MATL and the landowner.

Response 158 and 159: Yes, MATL has changed its proposal to reflect comments about minimum ground clearance in cultivated areas. See the discussion of Safety Issues in the Consolidated Responses section. MATL's current proposal for ground clearance is described in Section 2.3. The certificate would specify that MATL must comply with the National Electrical Safety Code.

1 our land use are required -- further restrictions.
 2 on our land use are required, will there be
 3 additional compensation?
 4 **Comment 160** Market forces have significantly changed
 5 the cost of -- (inaudible) -- described in
 6 Attachment DL of the EIS. For example, Roundup
 7 has gone from \$21.00 to \$37, an increase of 77
 8 percent; crop prices have gone from \$4 to \$12.50,
 9 an increase of 109 percent; seed has gone from \$18
 10 to \$28, an increase of 75 percent. In some
 11 places, Roundup is now currently over \$90 a
 12 gallon.
 13 **Comment 161** Dramatic changes in costs can occur in
 14 relatively short time frames. Our families have
 15 been farming our land for over 80 years. How will
 16 farmers be compensated for changing costs over the
 17 life of the power line? **Comment 162**
 18 To reflect current costs? What changes will
 19 result in NREL signing policy as a result of this
 20 new information? Will annual per acre
 21 compensation be adjusted?
 22 **Comment 163** There are a number of planned projects
 23 bringing power to the Great Falls area. The
 24 Rainbow Dam upgrade will result in a 25 megawatt
 25 increase. The MATL line could potentially bring

LADKIE CRITCHER, NFW
 408-442-9262

Response 160: See the discussion of Farming Issues in the Consolidated Responses section; Section 3.13; and Appendix N.

Response 161: See Section 3.13.3.2 for a description of how farmers would be compensated over the life of the project. See Section 2.3 for a description of MATL's revised compensation package and alternative dispute resolution process.

Response 162: Section 3.13.3.2 has been updated to include farming costs as of early 2008.

Response 163: Because the proposed MATL line would not depend on additional transmission capacity south or west out of Great Falls, and there are no proposals before the agencies to increase such transmission capacity, the construction of additional transmission capacity south or west of Great Falls is not within the scope of this EIS. However, the potential impacts of some of the activities mentioned in the comment are considered in the cumulative impacts analysis in Section 4.

1 300 megawatts to Great Falls; the Highwood 21
 2 Generating Station, 250 megawatts; the Cat East
 3 wind farm is projected to be 216 megawatts, some
 4 of that will be coming towards Great Falls.
 5
 6 Where is the Environmental Impact
 7 Statement/analysis of the construction needed to
 8 move the power out of the Great Falls area? These
 9 projects alone could cause an 80 percent increase
 10 in power, exported power in Montana. What is the
 11 environmental/economic impact of not having the
 12 power for glancing charger to power Comment 164
 13 infrastructure?
 14
 15 Comment 165 With the withdrawal of federal funding
 16 from the Highwood Generating Station, will MATL be
 17 responsible for determining the impact of
 18 transmission lines required to move the power from
 19 Great Falls? If not now, then when?
 20
 21 Comment 166 Why bring the MATL line to Great Falls?
 22 With the projects noted above, there will be
 23 little or no capacity to transfer the power south
 24 of Great Falls, already noted as constrained by
 25 the EIS. Where is the benefit to Montanans? As
 26 noted above, the power is likely to flow from
 27 Montana to Alberta a vast majority of the time.
 28
 29 Comment 167 If the purpose of the line is to export
 30
 31 LARKIE CRUTCHER, NFB
 32 406-442-9262

Response 164: One possible result of poorly coordinated and sized projects might include building two undersized lines rather than a single line large enough to handle anticipated generation projects.

Response 165: MATL would not be responsible for determining how power would be moved out of Great Falls unless it chooses to consider another business venture to address such a need. Under FERC regulations, generators submit interconnection requests to the operators of transmission systems and then the transmission operator addresses these requests. NorthWestern Energy operates transmission lines southeast, south, and southwest out of Great Falls. Independent, non-utility transmission service providers also hold open seasons to solicit customers for new transmission projects.

Response 166: MATL justifies building the line down to Great Falls in several different ways – not just based on additional tariffs. With agreed upon upgrades, MATL’s shippers would be able to move some power south out of Great Falls, especially on a non-firm basis (where moving power is allowed during those times when there is room on the line). As stated in Section 1.2.1, “The purpose for the proposed MATL transmission line is to connect the Montana electrical transmission grid with the Alberta electrical transmission grid (no direct connection currently exists), provide access to potential markets for new and existing power generation facilities in the vicinity of the proposed transmission line, and improve transmission access to markets seeking new energy resources.” Great Falls is the most feasible connection point economically and from an engineering perspective. See Section 2.8 for a

more detailed discussion on why terminating the line at Shelby would not be feasible.

The system south and west-bound from Great Falls is contractually congested in that parties have pre-existing rights on the lines, but these parties do not necessarily use their full rights. When these rights are not fully used, the capacity could be used by other shippers.

Response 167: The need for the line is outlined in Chapter 1.

The purpose of the line is to provide a path to transmit power between Lethbridge and Great Falls. Power can flow in either direction on the line. Although the purpose of this line is stated to increase transfer capacity and allow for new energy development, the line could be used by utilities and other entities to make purchases and sales on the spot market (short-term non-firm transactions might occur on the spot market when the wind is not blowing or when a wind farm holding a firm contract with MATL is not fully exercising its rights). Such transactions would be limited by the amount of firm and non-firm power left over on the line after the firm contract obligations are met.

The Mid Columbia trading hub (Mid-C) is a commonly used location where electricity prices in the Pacific Northwest are compared. Electricity prices are higher in Alberta than in Mid-C about 75 percent of the time, so it is possible that some monetary plays could be made on the spot market as a result of this line. This 75 percent figure comes from a paper entitled “Montana Alberta Tie-Line: What are the Economic Benefits to Alberta?” by Aidan Hollis, Department of Economics, University of Calgary, ahollis@ucalgary.ca. This paper states that “when there is a price difference between two markets, there is generally an economic inefficiency. It means that there are buyers in the lower priced market who would be willing to sell into the higher priced market just below the prevailing higher

price, and buyers in the higher-priced market who would be willing to buy at that price. If they were to undertake such a transaction, both parties would benefit. The same applies in electricity markets, and the benefits accrue to parties in both jurisdictions, regardless of which one has the higher price” (p. 6). The paper also states on page 7 that “given, as discussed above, the likely increase in prices in Alberta in the near future, it appears that there will continue to be ample scope for imports of Mid-C priced electricity.” Page 8 states that “on days when prices are higher in Alberta, we would expect imports into Alberta from Montana, if the MATL tie-line were available.” The reason for this is that importing electricity from Montana could make Alberta electricity prices lower on certain days as Alberta could avoid using some of its highest cost generation. This same gain from lower prices could happen in Montana when Alberta prices are lower than Montana prices. However, the amount of Montana-generated electricity that could flow up to Alberta is limited by the relatively small size of the line (300 MW) and would be a small portion compared to the amount of electricity Montana generates each year (about 3,000 MW) and exports each year (over 1,000 MW). Much of the time, a large portion of MATL’s 300 MW would be used for firm commitments from generators rather than for trading opportunities. The paper also states that both Alberta and Montana could benefit from the MATL line since it would result in less of a chance of volatile spot market prices as well as less of a chance of electricity suppliers using their market share to increase prices. Also see the response to comment 166.

power, why not say so? Is it in the best
interests of Montanans to ship our clean,
renewable hydro and wind power to Canada? If the
purpose of the line is to make money for MATL --
which it should be -- why shouldn't MATL be paying
market rates for their services like the wind
farm owners? Comment 166

Comment 167 Are there other power line connections
between the US and Canada? Comment 168 How did local power
prices change after they were constructed? How can
MATL justify building 100 miles of transmission
line just to avoid tariffs at the Cut Bank or
Shelby substations? Do MATL's profits weigh
higher with regulatory authorities than all of the
impacted landowners to the south? Comment 169

Comment 170 The attitude seems to be, if the project
was described correctly, eminent domain can be
used to take the required right-of-way and
maximize profits for the corporation. (171) With the
Cut Bank wind farm, there probably won't be any
capacity to move power from the Cut Bank
substation to the south. However, that is true
for Great Falls as well.

Comment 172 With the new wind farms, is there enough
capacity at the Cut Bank station to supply MATL

LAMAR CRUTCHER, SR
406-442-8787

Response 168: The need for the line is outlined in Chapter 1. See the response to comments 166 and 167. The state has no legal control over where electricity produced in Montana goes. Also see Economic Issues in the Consolidated Response section.

Response 169: See the discussion in Legal and Regulatory Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 170: Currently there are 79 Presidential permits that have been granted for transmission lines that cross the U.S.-Canadian border.

Response 171: DOE has no information on the effect that international transmission lines have on local power prices. Local (retail) electricity rates are established and regulated at the state level.

Response 172: In the MFSA application, MATL documented a number of factors it considered in reaching the conclusion that it was not feasible to terminate its project at either the Glacier Electric substation near Cut Bank or the Western Area Power Administration (WAPA) substation near Shelby. These factors included:

- (a) The addition of the WAPA tariff would almost double the total tariff paid by MATL shippers,
- (b) The NorthWestern 115kV line from Cut Bank to Great Falls has a maximum capacity of 130 MW under the best conditions and already carries electricity for other customers,

(c) The WAPA 230kV line from Shelby to Conrad and from Conrad to Great Falls has a capacity of 240 MW under the best conditions. Further, all of the WAPA lines in the region have firm commitments for available capacity.

Response 173: The DEQ Director will consider information in MATL’s application and the EIS, including public comment and agency responses, when making the findings required in 75-20-301, MCA, before the project could move forward. Section 3.18 describes the information considered by DEQ to approve a transmission line facility. The findings will be made in the record of decision.

Response 174a: See the discussion of eminent domain in Legal and Regulatory Issues of the Consolidated Responses. While the Major Facility Siting Act provides the procedure for obtaining approval to construct a major facility, including electric transmission lines, it does not provide a procedure for acquiring property on which to construct the facility. The property must be obtained through negotiations between a project sponsor and a landowner or if negotiations are not successful, a condemnation proceeding under the laws of eminent domain may be used.

Eminent domain may only be exercised if the purpose for which it is being exercised is a public use. Those public uses are identified and listed by the Legislature in Section 70-30-102, MCA. Subsection 37 of that statute lists electrical power lines as a public use. Section 70-30-102, MCA, does not distinguish between electrical power lines built by private enterprise and a publicly owned utility.

Before private property can be taken, Section 70-30-111, MCA, requires the condemner to demonstrate that the public interest requires the taking based on the following findings:

1. the use to which the property is to be applied is a use authorized by law;
2. the taking is necessary to the use;
3. if already being used for a public use, that the public use for which the property is proposed to be used is a more necessary public use; and
4. an effort to obtain the property interest sought to be taken was made by submission of a written offer and the offer was rejected.

As indicated above, an electric transmission line is a use for which condemnation is authorized by law. In regard to whether the taking is necessary, Montana courts have determined that the necessity need not be absolute or indispensable. Rather, a taking is necessary if it “is reasonable, requisite, and proper for the accomplishment of the end in view, under the particular circumstances of the case.” As indicated in Section 3.17, DEQ has determined the necessity of the electric transmission line proposed by MATL.

As indicated in the handbook entitled Eminent Domain in Montana published by the Legislative Environmental Policy Office in May of 2001, “[a] public use does not have to be a project that directly benefits the entire public or even the landowner whose property is taken through eminent domain. It may be a project that benefits Montana citizens as a whole through greater economic development or increased access to communications.” As stated by the

Montana Supreme Court in *Ellinghouse v. Taylor* (1897), 19 Mont. 462, 48 P. 757, “Persons have been allowed the right of eminent domain on the theory of public use, in the construction of dams for the operation of grist and saw mills, in the reclamation of swamp lands, and in other similar instances that might be enumerated where the public had no direct interest in these operations, whose main end was mere private gain, and where the benefit to the people at large could result indirectly and incidentally only from the increase of wealth and development of natural resources.

Response 174b: With agreed upon upgrades to the NorthWestern system, MATL’s customers will be able to move some power south out of Great Falls, especially on a non-firm basis (where moving power is allowed during those times when there is room on the line).

Response 175: The MATL line is not proposed to connect to the Cut Bank substation. MATL is proposing to build a new substation. See Section 2.3.

11
 1 with 300 megawatts into Alberta? If MATL
 2 connected near Cut Nose, would there be enough
 3 capacity for the Cut Nose Wind farm to complete
 4 their Phase 3 plan?
 5 **Comment 176** Power poles on farm land will be hit by
 6 farm equipment. Farmers are expected to maneuver
 7 their 20 to 120 foot wide implements around these
 8 poles five to ten times per year for decades.
 9 Getting too close risks impact. Being too far
 10 away takes land out of production, and invites
 11 weeds.
 12 **Comment 177** What plans are being implemented to
 13 ensure the safety of farmers, their equipment,
 14 their crops, and power consumers? At what point
 15 do farmers become liable for hitting power poles?
 16 A nick, a scratch, a dent, damaging requires the
 17 replacement of a pole. How much force would
 18 **Comment 178** damage such of the proposed pole designs? If a
 19 farmer lost control of his tractor, say he had a
 20 heart attack or a stroke, and it took down a pole,
 21 how much liability could the farm have? **Comment 179**
 22 **Comment 180** Poorly maintained power lines have been
 23 known to cause fires. Will MATL be liable for any
 24 damage caused by their lines? What limits will
 25 there be?
 LADNIE CRUTCHER, NFB
 404-442-9262

Response 176: See the discussion of Farming Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 177: See the discussion in Safety Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 178: A farmer may be liable if damage was caused by an intentional act of the farmer or by the farmer's negligence in farming around the pole. The easement agreement between MATL and the landowner would have terms that would absolve the landowner of all liability for accidental damage to MATL's facilities. A nick, scratch or dent caused by the farmer would be de minimis damage and not justify replacement of the pole.

Response 179: It depends where and how this force is applied. The transmission structures are designed to meet NESC Medium loading, NESC 50-year return period wind loading (144 km/hr), 50mm radial wet snow with 70 km/hr wind, rime (in-cloud) ice (40mm radial ice) loading, broken OPGW loading as well as construction loads. These are very strong structures that would require a lot of force to bring them down.

Response 180: See response to comment 178.

Response 181: See the discussion of Farming Issues in the Consolidated Responses section. MATL may be responsible for damages resulting from a fire if the fire was caused by MATL's negligence in designing, constructing, operating or maintaining the transmission line.

34
 1 **Comment 181** Would portions of the line near
 2 terminations be constructed to enable additional
 3 capacity for multiple lines? We are interested in
 4 encouraging more intelligent design and future
 5 planning with regards to the clutter now existing
 6 around substations. The line itself should be
 7 designed for an increased capacity to avoid the
 8 necessity of adding new poles in the future. **Comment 182**
 9
 10 **Comment 183** Is the provision for 300 megawatts
 11 enough? MATL suggests that the capacity could be
 12 increased to 400 megawatts in each direction.
 13 **Comment 184** What changes need to be made to increase this
 14 capacity? Will easements need to change? **Comment 185**
 15 **Comment 186** Will the landowners be compensated? Was MATL a
 16 party to the Northwest Wind Integration Action
 17 Plan? If not, why not? Who was MATL's
 18 representative? What, if any, action does MATL
 19 plan with regards to the Northwest Wind
 20 Integration Action Plan? **Comment 187**
 21 **Comment 188** As the MATL line is behind schedule,
 22 what is the current state of the TIR's that have
 23 been awarded thus far? When do the bids expire? **Comment 189**
 24 How is it that MATL has accepted bids for 300
 25 megawatts north to south, when there is not
 capacity to move this power from Great Falls?

LAMAR CRUTCHER, SR
 406-442-8787

Response 182: The agencies are considering the possibility of MATL building double circuit structures for about 4.2 miles north of the Great Falls switchyard. Lines for one circuit would be constructed now and used by MATL, and space on the structures would be available for a second circuit. The future circuit could be used by a firm other than MATL.

Response 183: See the discussion of Line Capacity Issues in the Consolidated Responses.

Response 184: The proposed line would be large enough for MATL's current customers. If all the possible wind and other generation that might be built in the area were actually constructed, the proposed line would not be large enough. See the discussion of Line Capacity Issues in the Consolidated Responses.

Response 185: See the discussion of Line Capacity Issues in the Consolidated Responses.

Response 186: Transmission of up to 400 MW in each direction would not require any changes in the proposed easements.

Response 187: Compensation to landowners would be based on the physical size of the transmission line, not on the amount of electricity transmitted on the line. Similarly, compensation to landowners for construction of a highway is based on the acreage required for the highway, not on the traffic volume.

Response 188: MATL was not a party to the Northwest Wind Integration Plan. MATL is a party to the Montana Wind Working Group and has contributed funding towards wind modeling as directed by the working group. MATL decided to participate in the Montana Wind Working Group because that group is focused on Montana whereas the Northwest Wind Integrated Plan is focused on the Pacific Northwest.

Response 189: MATL's transmission service request (TSR) contracts accommodate the current schedule for construction of the transmission line either explicitly or in side agreements. The MATL line would provide a conduit for power transmission between two points. It is the responsibility of the contracting shipper to make the necessary commercial arrangements and ensure the capacity exists to get power to the MATL line and to ship it from the line terminus to the intended customer.

Response 190: The bids submitted by prospective shippers did not include expiration dates. Bids were either accepted or rejected at the conclusion of the capacity auction process. Contracts were executed with the successful bidders (Williams 2008c)

Response 191: See response to comment 189.

35

1 **Comment 112:** We are sure that the average person does
 2 not understand how difficult it is to farm around
 3 obstacles such as power poles. We will probably
 4 always object to having them forced upon us. That
 5 said, our objection would be reduced significantly
 6 by receipt of a fair, annual, cost adjusted
 7 compensation, and by having a reasonable plan for
 8 future development that optimized impact to our
 9 land, the state, and our community.

10 **Comment 113:** We are extremely concerned that there is
 11 not a plan, nor did there seem to be a planning
 12 process for transmission line development. We
 13 currently have four lines running across our
 14 property, and the MATL transmission line would be
 15 the fifth. Without a comprehensive plan, it is
 16 difficult to know how many there will be built in
 17 the future. Given this lack of planning, and
 18 given the lack of capacity out of Great Falls, we
 19 believe that Alternative 1 or the status quo would
 20 be the right alternative for now.

21 MR. CONRO: Thank you, Mr. Whittely.
 22 Jerry McRae.

23 MR. McRAE: My name is Jerry McRae. I'm
 24 a farmer on the proposed MATL line near Dutton,
 25 Montana.

LANNIE CRUTCHER, NPS
 406-442-9262

Response 192: MATL has updated its proposal regarding compensation. It now includes an alternative dispute resolution process. See Section 2.3.

Response 193: No comprehensive transmission planning process exists in Montana. MATL complied with the FERC process. Individual processes include but are not limited to: the Northern Tier Transmission Group, Integrated Resource Plans required of NorthWestern Energy and Montana Dakota Utilities, and other independent multi-state efforts such as the Rocky Mountain Area Transmission Study. Montana law does not require a comprehensive plan for the grid. Projects, both generators and transmission lines, are built in response to growing demands. These patterns of growth vary geographically and over time. Transmission planners within and between these geographic areas propose new projects in response to these changing demands as needed. Thus, it is difficult to say what the transmission grid will look like in the future.

36
1 One of the major conclusions reached by
2 all this EIS were concerning the cost of farming
3 around poles was found on Page 1169, and states
4 that the annual net monetary effect and the 80
5 year effect to all land owners are positive for
6 all three alternatives. This is the conclusion
7 that was on the front page of the Great Falls
8 Tribune immediately following their release of
9 this Environmental Impact Statement.
10
11 It seems we are all to believe that
12 farmers are being paid more to have these poles
13 than we are spending to farm around them. I would
14 ask the DEQ to reconsider this conclusion, based
15 on the following points:
16 **Comment 194** Number one: DEQ derives half of the
17 estimated annual payments to farmers as being
18 received from the property tax rates we were
19 given. Is it fair to say that the property tax
20 break should be used to pay for farming around the
21 poles, while leaving the issue of reduced property
22 values uncalculated and valued at zero as the cost
23 for farmers? **Is it fair to say that this property**
24 **tax break, which is \$40,000 per year for all of** **Comment 195**
25 **the landowner in Montana on the line, should be**
used for farming around these poles, when the MATL

LADKIS CRUTCHER, NPS
406-442-8262

Response 194: The effect on property values from the MATL line is discussed in the EIS, Section 3.13.3.2. The effects are expected to be minimal based on available studies of actual property values near transmission lines.

Response 195: What landowners and MATL choose to do with their property tax incentive is beyond the scope of the EIS. The DEQ will balance costs and benefits of all parties in its decision.

1 property tax break of \$400,000 per year is not
 2 earmarked to pay for anything but MATL increased
 3 costs.

4 **Comment 187** Number two DEQ has used inaccurate
 5 costs for farming around the poles. They're in
 6 excess of 100 percent too low, and should be
 7 revised in the final EIS. I'm submitting tonight
 8 a study just completed by Hydro Solutions, in
 9 which Mr. Fairhead (phonetic) provides more
 10 accurate and fair estimates of the true costs of
 11 farming around poles.

12 **Comment 188** DEQ continues to support a 15 foot
 13 easement as a workable proposal for MATL. The 10
 14 foot easement will not provide the necessary
 15 safety zone required, and it does not provide
 16 enough work room to complete the construction.
 17 MATL is required to obtain the full 126 foot
 18 easement on the Canadian portion of the line.
 19 Farmers in Montana should not have to continue to
 20 fight for the same 126 foot deal.

21 **Comment 189** DEQ has underestimated the environmental
 22 impact caused by the lack of access to the project
 23 when it runs so much diagonal lines. DEQ continued
 24 to support the idea that this is construction --
 25 that there is construction access from field roads

LAURIE CRITCHER, RPN
 404-447-9262

Response 196: The farming cost estimates have been revised to reflect recent costs of inputs and commodity prices. See Farming Issues in the Consolidated Responses section and revisions to Section 3.13 and Appendix N.

Response 197: MATL has revised its proposal to use a 105-foot easement.

Response 198: As discussed in Chapter 2 of the EIS, much of the construction equipment would move along the right-of-way as construction proceeds because so much of the project area consists of relatively level ground. Existing roads would be used to the extent practicable and in a few areas, such as on the south side valley wall of the Teton River, MATL proposes to construct a total of about 3.5 miles of new roads on Alternative 2 since the moderately steep side hill will not allow safe movement of construction vehicles. Alternative 3 would require about 3.8 miles of new roads and Alternative 4 about 7.6 miles of new roads.

MATL might also have to purchase some off-right-of-way access to avoid sensitive features. Typically equipment can move on side slopes up to about 5 to 7 percent. On very steep slopes such as the cliff on the north side of the Marias River and at the Teton River crossing there would be no through access. In these areas access to structures would be from each direction with a skip in the middle.

Temporary and permanent roads or trails might need to be used to allow for construction and maintenance of the transmission line. The location of these features can only be precisely determined after the centerline is selected and the siting of individual structures has been determined through detailed design including consultation with landowners to minimize impacts. Wherever temporary or permanent roads are constructed, the landowner would be fully compensated on the basis of loss of use, general disturbance, and adverse effect.

38
1 in fine fields. Field roads are not diagonal, and
2 they're private roads. A diagonal line runs six
3 to eight miles with no access to reach county
4 roads in the Dillon area.
5 [Comment 199] The destruction of soil by compaction,
6 grass loss by destruction of native sod, erosion
7 in all erodible passages by the number of trips
8 necessary to construct the line between county
9 roads is inaccurate, should be reconsidered and
10 restated.
11 [Comment 200] Once again, field roads -- which are
12 essentially just a trail of two tracks -- are
13 private property, and not public access.
14 [Comment 201] The height above the ground that MATL is
15 proposing to build this line at does not meet
16 safety standards. Dials next to the water in
17 field positions, cracks with the fences raised
18 killing air drills, are just a couple of examples
19 of equipment which will operate in excess of 50
20 feet in height, way above the 14 foot minimum
21 height that MATL continues to use.
22 [Comment 202] Building taller for just some farmers
23 means unsafe height allowances whenever the line
24 is sold or leased to a farmer whose taller
25 equipment must have the higher allowance. A safe

LAURIE CHUTEAU, RFB
406-442-8187

Response 199: See the discussion of Soils Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 200: Comment noted. MATL would have to obtain easements for use of off right-of-way field roads.

Response 201 and 202: MATL has changed its proposal regarding minimum ground clearance. For more information, see the discussion of Safety Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

25

1 line should be the only choice for MATL to build
 2 in all locations;

3 [REDACTED] For all of you who are here to support
 4 the economic value associated with building this
 5 line, please understand that as a land owner, I
 6 can join with you in applauding economic progress
 7 in our state. You should know that MATL continues
 8 to propose paying the farmer a one time payment,
 9 once in my life, once in my farm's history, \$500
 10 per structure. That is the easement payment, \$500
 11 once. Then they're willing to pay the farmer
 12 \$55.00 per structure on an annual basis to help us
 13 farm around the poles. The cost of going around
 14 the poles is at least \$250. \$55.00 doesn't cut
 15 it. This offer is just completely unacceptable.

16 [REDACTED] Please join me as a farmer in asking
 17 MATL to present landowners with a realistic offer
 18 for the use of our land. Thank you.

19 MR. COOPER: John Shevlin.
 20 MS. SHEVLIN: John Shevlin,
 21 S-O-U-R-L-I-N. I come before you tonight as the
 22 Mayor of Concord, Nebraska, also a business man,
 23 owner in Concord. I would like to thank you for
 24 the opportunity of speaking tonight.

25 [REDACTED] As Mayor of Concord, I strongly support

LADKIE CRUTCHER, NPB
 404-442-9262

Response 203 and 204: Comments noted. MATL has updated its proposal regarding compensation. It now includes an alternative dispute resolution process. See the EIS, Sections 2.3 and 3.13.3.2.

Response 205: Comment noted. Economic impacts and benefits of the proposed transmission line and potential wind farms are discussed in the EIS, Sections 3.13 and 4.14. Also see the discussions of Economic Issues and Socioeconomic Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

1 the Montana-Alberta Transmission Line. The ⁴⁵
2 economic benefits to our community would be very
3 substantial. Benefits from the line and resulting
4 wind farms would go a long way in easing the tax
5 burden on our county and city levels. An example
6 would be the large infusion of tax money from the
7 Judith Gap wind farm.
8 **Comment 206** Due to unemployment, permanent workers
9 with families and children would relocate to our
10 area. This would greatly help our school system.
11 Currently the school system is looking at
12 remodeling the local high school and elementary
13 school. The additional tax money would ease the
14 burden on existing taxpayers.
15 **Comment 207** In this area, we do not get a lot of
16 opportunities for economic development. When the
17 projects like the MATL line and wind farms come
18 along, they should be embraced and supported by
19 the whole community.
20 **Comment 208** I would like to take this opportunity to
21 encourage both the land owners and MATL to come to
22 some kind of a conclusion to make this work for
23 everybody involved, and the DEQ and the DOE to
24 give favorable status to this project. Thank you
25 very much.

LANNIE CRUTCHER, NPS
406-442-9262

Response 206 and 207: See the response to comment 205.

Response 208: Comment noted.

41
 1 MR. COHO: Thank you. Peggy Beltrone.
 2 [Comment 209] MS. BELTRONE: Thank you, Mr. Coe and
 3 Mr. Ring. I'm Peggy Beltrone. I rise as yet
 4 another County Commissioner to represent the
 5 County, along with NATL line group. I'm a Cascade
 6 County Commissioner. I'm here tonight on behalf
 7 of Linda Olson and Joe Griggs, my co-workers, my
 8 co-Commissioner mates, if you will, who are also in
 9 support of this line.
 10 [Comment 210] I would like to urge an expedited
 11 process. I've been concerned about this process
 12 and the delays that have occurred, and I would
 13 like for both the Department of Energy and the
 14 Department of Environmental Quality to redouble
 15 its efforts in getting to a solution here. We
 16 understand that there are outstanding issues
 17 between the company and the landowners, and we
 18 would like to see those resolved, but more than
 19 anything --
 20 (End of side one)
 21 [Comment 211] Ms. BELTRONE: I just want to emphasize
 22 the fact that many projects are relying on a short
 23 time frame, and these wind projects that would be
 24 hooked up to the NATL line are also on that time
 25 frame. And as a member of the steering committee

 LANNIE CHITCHER, NFM
 408-442-9262

Response 209: Comment noted.

Response 210: The agencies are working as rapidly as possible under the circumstances.

Response 211: Comments noted.

Response 212 to 214: Comments noted.

42

1 for Wind Power in America, which is the Department
 2 of Energy's program to promote wind in this
 3 country, I know how important it is for these
 4 projects to go forward.

5 **Comment 212** We have in this country 17,000 megawatts
 6 of wind installed. Last year 5,000 megawatts were
 7 installed, making us the leading country in the
 8 world for installing in one year wind energy. We
 9 have only have 180 megawatts of wind in Montana.
 10 And so I have seen, over the years being involved
 11 in this program, other states with far less wind
 12 resource than Montana expand its wind portfolio
 13 much faster, and the reason is transmission.

14 **Comment 213** I've been involved in the Rocky Mountain
 15 Area Transmission Study, and I've been involved in
 16 the government, the Western Governors
 17 Association Clean Energy Advisory Committee. In
 18 both of those instances, I have learned how
 19 important it is that transmission be sited so that
 20 we can get these valuable wind resources in
 21 service.

22 **Comment 214** We have many compelling reasons in the
 23 west to have wind energy, the environmental
 24 reasons of saving water, of having no carbon
 25 footprint, of having an economic benefit to

JACKIE CRITCHER, NFW
 404-442-9262

Response 215: Comment noted.

1 communities. All of these things are important.
 2 And I'm afraid that drawn out processes are just
 3 going to keep Montana further and further behind
 4 in the amount of wind that we are contributing to
 5 the nation's energy portfolio. So I appreciate
 6 the work that you're doing, and I would just like
 7 to have the work done faster.

8 MR. CORBI: Thank you. LAYNE KAVANAGH,
 9 Comment 215 MS. SAVINICH: Good evening. My name is
 10 Layne Kavanagh. I am the President of the Out
 11 Bank Area Chamber of Commerce. My husband and I
 12 own newspapers in Out Bank, Shelby, Browning, and
 13 Valler. Thank you for the opportunity to comment
 14 on the draft Environmental Impact Statement for
 15 the Montana-Alberta Tie Transmission Line.

16 The Out Bank Area Chamber of Commerce
 17 would like to go on record once again offering its
 18 full support for the all-circuit transmission line
 19 proposed by Montana-Alberta Tie, Limited. Our
 20 organization is approximately 140 members strong,
 21 and is dedicated to the promotion of the Out Bank
 22 area. We firmly believe construction of this line
 23 will have a positive and lasting effect on not
 24 only our community, but the Golden Triangle area.

25 We applaud the steps taken by MNTL
 26
 27
 28
 29
 30
 31
 32
 33
 34
 35
 36
 37
 38
 39
 40
 41
 42
 43
 44
 45
 46
 47
 48
 49
 50
 51
 52
 53
 54
 55
 56
 57
 58
 59
 60
 61
 62
 63
 64
 65
 66
 67
 68
 69
 70
 71
 72
 73
 74
 75
 76
 77
 78
 79
 80
 81
 82
 83
 84
 85
 86
 87
 88
 89
 90
 91
 92
 93
 94
 95
 96
 97
 98
 99
 100

LAYNE KAVANAGH, PWS
 406-442-6262

44
 1 officials to respond to the concerns raised by **Comment 216**
 2 landowners whose property would be affected by the
 3 line. We support the new law which provided the
 4 property tax break to land owners whose land is
 5 crossed by the line, and transfer the **Comment 217**
 6 responsibility for the tax on the affected land to
 7 MATL.
 8 **Comment 218** The chamber supports MATL's decision to
 9 use some poles instead of H-frame structures along
 10 the 53 miles of cultivated lands, though the land
 11 crosses the fields diagonally, thereby lessening
 12 the impact of the line on farm and ranch
 13 operations. The Out Bank Area Chamber of Commerce
 14 is not insensitive to the ag producers whose
 15 operations are affected by this project, or to
 16 those who have expressed concern over the **Comment 219**
 17 project's impact on the environment and historic
 18 agriculturally significant areas. We are hopeful
 19 changes to those by MATL officials will result in
 20 a win-win situation.
 21 **Comment 220** The Out Bank Chamber believes the
 22 transmission line holds the key to the development
 23 of a number of wind farm projects in this area,
 24 most notably the McCormick Ranch, which will be
 25 located in both Glacier and Toole Counties.
 LADNIE CRUTCHER, NPS
 406-442-9262

Response 216 to 218: Comments noted.

Response 219: See the discussion of Farming Issues in the Consolidated Responses section and information about MATL's revised compensation package in the EIS, Sections 2.3 and 3.13.3.2.

Response 220: Construction of the NaturEner Glacier Wind Project (referred to in the Draft EIS as the McCormick Ranch project) is underway. However, only portions of the former project are being constructed. The agencies understand the project would initially use capacity of existing transmission lines. The agencies understand that additional transmission capacity may be necessary to fully complete the project. NaturEner still holds agreements with MATL for 300 MW of capacity to the north and may build additional wind farms or may market this 300 MW capacity.

85
 1 **Comment 221** The development of wind power is a clean
 2 and green renewable energy source that will
 3 greatly enhance our stagnant tax base, potentially
 4 reducing property taxes for all our residents,
 5 whether they be farmers, ranchers, small business
 6 owners, or individuals struggling to make ends
 7 meet on a fixed income.

8 **Comment 222** Due to the nature of this project, we
 9 are well aware the number of permanent jobs
 10 created will be limited, but any increase in job
 11 opportunities trickle down into our communities by
 12 way of increased school enrollment and additional
 13 consumer buying power.

14 **Comment 223** Thank you for the opportunity to express
 15 our support for this project. We look forward to
 16 hearing very soon that a Residential Permit has
 17 been issued for the project, and we urge the
 18 Montana DQG and BLM to issue the needed
 19 certificates of compliance and right-of-ways.

20 MR. CIPCI: Thank you very much. By the
 21 way, what my colleague -- is not the people
 22 signing, as the job partnership is not the result
 23 of the people signing in, so I'm going to butcher
 24 this name, too. So it's Sandra E-S-O-E-S-D-E-R.

25 MR. BRONSTER: Hi. May I name is Sandy

 JACKIE CRITCHER, NFW
 404-442-9262

Response 221 and 222: Comments noted. Also see the discussion of Socioeconomic Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 223: Comment noted.

Response 224: Comment noted.

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
26
27
28
29
30

88

Broadwater. I'm a Fenders County Commissioner. I'm
also an ag producer.

[REDACTED] I have maintained from the ERG time I
heard of this proposed package. This is a line
that needs to be built; it's a line that needs to
be built tight. I think at this point I would
probably echo the same issues, the economic
potential, growth in our tax base, that my fellow
commissioners have urged. I wasn't really
planning on speaking tonight. I will have
comments for you in Concord. Thank you.

MR. COMB: Thank you very much.

Lewellen Jones.

MR. JONES: Good evening. My name is
Lew Jones. I am a representative from House
District 21, which is Cit Wate, Concord, and
Shelby.

I'm also a land owner. My family has
been involved in agriculture since the 1890s. We
have several thousand acres, and we have our share
of power poles, and this is nothing new to us.
Sometimes we have to cut fields, and we have lots
of power poles.

But that being said, I was also the
person who carried the energy bill last session.

LAWRENCE CRITCHER, NPS
404-442-9262

41
1 and I do want to try to comment on a few lines
2 that haven't been touched tonight.
3 **Comment 20:** Discussion here along in the energy bill
4 did drop the rate of the lines, new power lines,
5 after June of 2007, from 10 to 3 percent. That
6 raised it about twice the rate of the surrounding
7 states. 100 percent of zero was zero. And we had
8 concern there was that we weren't having any line
9 built. In fact, the rate we dropped it to is
10 currently the same rate that all of the on-ops in
11 the state of Montana pay; and given that the
12 on-ops represent about 50 percent of the lines in
13 the state, it is not an unusual rate.
14 **Comment 21:** I also was a party to the -- [irresponsible]
15 -- where we made the quarter mile strip tax free
16 property owner the lines, and to be honest, our
17 intent was in that case to recognize that the
18 value, or the decrease in the value of the
19 property associated with the lines upon that land.
20 Other issues that haven't been touched
21 on. Most folks touched on a lot of things I was
22 going to say, and so I don't feel it necessary to
23 repeat myself.
24 **Comment 22:** The greatest respect for the land owners
25 -- obviously this is an ag state -- is the long

JANNIS CRITCHER, NPS
406-442-9262

Response 225 to 227: Thank you for your insight into the legislative process.

line stewards of the land, and I do recognize we
 have to achieve a win-win. **Comment 228**
 long ways from the first time that I've seen it
 discussed, and it recognizes the need for annual
 payments. There may need to be discussions to the
 amount. It recognizes the need to have more
 complex structures, and it recognizes the need to
 run north and south and east and west along
 fields, which is more appropriate.

Comment 229 Add I think that's to be applauded, is
 that they recognize the fact. They've also hired
 a more positive crew that seems more willing to
 negotiate with the farm folks to -- (inaudible) --
 and we seem to be going that way, and they seem
 more to what the needs are of the landowners.

Comment 230 We know that this project does represent
 great amounts of economic development. Again, I
 would point out that they have to pay \$1.2 million
 in taxes. This is a potential to be five times
 larger.

Comment 231 Folks talk about limited employment
 opportunities. By my calculations, this
 represents a potential for 80 to 100 employees.
 There are in Great Falls between 60 to 100
 employees, let alone in Conrad and Cut Bank and

JANIS CRUTCHER, NPS
 406-442-9262

Response 228: Comment noted.

Response 229: MATL's proposed alternative would use H-frame structures on about 38.4 miles of cropland or CRP crossed parallel or perpendicular to the cropping pattern. See the discussion of Line Issues in the Consolidated Responses section and Sections 2.3 and 3.13.3.2 for information regarding MATL's revised compensation package.

Response 230 and 231: MATL would pay about \$700,000 per year in property taxes in Montana under the 3 percent tax rate.

Response 232: Projected employment from the MATL line is in Section 3.13.3.

1 Shelby. It is not as limited in that sense, ⁸⁹ not
2 to mention that there is a great economic spin
3 associated with any person, more kids in our
4 schools, something we struggle for. Just the spin
5 alone would be enormous. This also represents, at
6 a time of \$110 oil, a good source of clean energy. comment 233

7 comment 234 I was at Bonneville Power in the
8 Northwest Area Wind Integration Plan, and I spent
9 two days out in Bonneville Power, and heard
10 significant discussions about the Northwest Area
11 Wind Integration Plan, their intent to add 6,000
12 megawatts of wind, geographically diverse wind, to
13 their grid to basically compare with their hydro
14 energy. In this plan, they recognized Montana as
15 a huge potential source of wind, and they also
16 recognized, or in this discussion that I had, they
17 recognized that Montana has a huge potential,
18 They also recognized that there was huge
19 transmission limits.

20 Interestingly enough they had the --
21 (incredible) -- at that seminar and at that
22 seminar that I attended, there were seven lines
23 being proposed in Wyoming, three lines being
24 proposed in Idaho, and I guess there was 2,000 lines
25 of being discussed in Montana. So it isn't that

JANNIS CRITCHER, NPS
406-442-9262

Response 233: Comment noted.

Response 234: DEQ is aware of early planning efforts to add another 500MW or more of transmission capacity west out of Montana. Some of this capacity may come from improvements to existing lines rather than construction of new lines. No applications for new transmission lines to the Pacific Northwest have been received to date. NorthWestern Energy submitted an application for a new 500 kV line from the Townsend area south into south central Idaho.

The Western Governors Association is also beginning a new transmission planning effort to integrate new generation from renewable resources into the western grid.

1 Montana is breaking speed records with the ²⁶
 2 creation of power lines. We tend to do stuff as
 3 slow as any other state out there.
 4 **Comment 235** Your know, exports always come up. It's
 5 in the cattle business, the sheep business, the
 6 grain business. And we export grain on trucks, on
 7 trains. We -- (inaudible) -- to foreign markets.
 8 Our Senators and Representatives, I read about it
 9 in Japan. I hear about -- (inaudible) -- actually
 10 there's a group in China, now that I think about
 11 it -- looking at it and surpassing our markets.
 12 We do the same with cattle. We see export as a
 13 good thing.
 14 **Comment 236** Here there is an opportunity to be on
 15 line, to export clean, renewable energy, to help
 16 us become less dependent, to provide in part the
 17 potential and the structure, the tax paying
 18 structure in employment -- (inaudible) -- in
 19 Montana. I have a tough time wrapping my mind
 20 around that -- (inaudible) -- and I would say
 21 that's a good thing.
 22 **Comment 237** Yes, we do need to work towards a
 23 win-win, the long time stewards of the land, the
 24 long time taxpayers, those of us that have been in
 25 ag a long time. **We don't need another negative to**
 26 **Comment 238**

LARKIE CRITCHER, RPR
 406-442-9262

Response 235 to 238: Your comments regarding exports are noted, and the agencies recognize that transmission lines have been proposed infrequently.

1 deal with, but we do need to find a way to deal
2 with this, because these opportunities don't come
3 along every day. I don't want to hear two years
4 from now, as I so often hear, "Why not here? Why
5 not us?" because we are going to choose, not
6 hoping, will choose to find a win-win -- as in my
7 friend LeAnne's vernacular, which I will have to
8 tend to borrow.

9 [Comment 239] With that, thank you for the chance to
10 comment. I appreciate all of the hard work you
11 folks do.

12 MR. COMAR: Thanks very much. How about
13 William McCauley.

14 MR. McCAULEY: My name is William
15 McCauley. I'm a Native American of Irish descent.
16 I am a Director of our Cit Bank Local Development
17 Corporation, and also a City Councilman in the
18 city of Cit Bank.

19 [Comment 240] I grew up on a homestead between Chuteau
20 and Aquada, at a drop star property with a line
21 that was put in there by the now defunct Montana
22 Power. We had no problem going around that line.
23 Of course in those days, an eight foot --
24 [Inaudible] -- hole was pretty easy to work
25 around, and I don't think that's the same today.

26 JARKIE CRITCHER, NPS
27 406-442-6262

Response 239 and 240: Comments noted.

Response 241: Comment noted.

Response 242 to 245: Comments noted.

1 But the new thing that we didn't have was ²² **Comment 242**
2 electricity. And the power line went through, but
3 until the electric cooperatives came through in
4 1952, we had no power.
5 **Comment 243** As we look at this today, and see the
6 greater that the population gets and everything
7 else, it is only prevalent that we do on the
8 winning end of producing this power for other
9 people, and if exporting is part of it, so be it.
10 **Comment 244** I would like to see the agricultural
11 people be taken care of in the proper manner. I
12 also feel as a local businessman that that but in
13 our tax structure by the additional taxes that
14 will come from this will be a God send.
15 **Comment 245** And as I listened to people like the
16 gentleman from Duron, as you go down their
17 street, you can see what happens when that is gone
18 and those buildings close. So to keep Duron the
19 way that it should be, we support it in every
20 manner. Thank you.
21 MR. CONDI: Thank you, Mr. McCauley. We
22 have a Jeff, the first initial of his last name is
23 "G," and he's either from Laurel, Montana, or
24 Laurel, Maryland. That's not even close. Does
25 anybody have any ideas? Which side are we talking

LANNIE CRITCHER, RFD
404-442-9262

Response 246: Comment noted.

1 about? Jeff N. from Laurel something. 54
2 The last name looks like K-O -- I'm
3 sorry.
4 UNKNOWN SPEAKER: Is there anybody here
5 this evening from Laurel who wishes to speak? NOT
6 If not, we'll come back to this name at the end,
7 and we'll try to decipher it as we listen to
8 another speaker.
9
10 MR. MITCH: We have only these more names
11 that are just signed up here. We have this room
12 at least until 8:00, so after those other three
13 people are given an opportunity, we'll take a five
14 or ten minute break or something like that, and we
15 can meet, chat, or whatever, and we can get back
16 on the record. Oh, I'm sorry. How about Conrad?
17 Jeff from Conrad? Does anybody from Conrad want
18 to speak?
19
20 MR. SCHNEIDER: My name is Ted
21 Schneidman. K-N-O-W-N-E-D-S-H-N-E.
22
23 MR. COMB: Okay. That works.
24
25 MR. SCHNEIDER: I'm a private electrical
26 contractor. I live in the Conrad area. Many of
27 the people that are here from the agricultural
28 side are long time customers of mine. It seems to
29 me that the problems that they need solved are
30
31 JAMIE CRITCHER, NPS
32 304-442-9262

1 based upon an economic issue or a private land 24
2 issue. They all seem to be problems that are
3 easily solved, and it's a negotiable deal. The
4 economic trickle down for them and for the private
5 business sector is astronomical, and so I would
6 hope that the people will still keep coming to the
7 table, and the issues are solved. As a private
8 business man I strongly support the MATL line. **Comment 24**
9
10 MR. CEMO: Before you -- could you just
11 spell your last name for us so we could make --
12 MR. KROGEBUSH: Think of two kinds of
13 beer, Corona and Busch.
14 MR. CEMO: Ray W. from Brady, last name
15 starting with an "M" from Brady, Montana.
16 **Comment 25** MR. HOLLANDSWORTH: Hollandsworth is the
17 last name. I'm from Brady, and I farm, and the
18 power line isn't close to my place. You have my
19 permission to move few miles east and build it
20 there. It would be a God send, because wind power
21 is what's coming, and I would like a chance to
22 have a wind farm on my place. We're all involved
23 with wind power. When you came here today, and
24 you opened your door of your vehicle, you were
25 involved with wind power. So it's here to stay.
Comment 26 But you've got to really compensate the

LADNIE CRUTCHER, NPS
406-442-8262

Response 247 and 248: Comments noted.

Response 249 and 250: Comments noted.

Response 251: Comment noted. See the EIS, Sections 2.3 and 3.13 for a discussion of MATL's proposed compensation package and alternative dispute resolution process.

1 **Comment 251 (cont.)** 55
2 farmers. It doesn't matter to farmers. It's the
3 money, it's what everybody is talking about. But
4 I can tell you the farmer is going to spend it all
5 anyway, so it doesn't matter, because that's what
6 farmers do, and they don't keep any for
7 themselves. I would think there is way more **Comment 252**
8 benefits than there are -- I don't like farming
9 around poles, but the technology is there.
10 **Comment 253** And I just thought of something when I
11 listened to everybody. There should be a whole
12 business start, and it would be, "I'll farm your
13 power lines," there would be somebody that would
14 do it for you. So don't think it's impossible to
15 get that done. Thank you.
16 MR. GEMO: Thank you, Jerry Black.
17 **Comment 254** MR. BLACK: For the record, my name is
18 Jerry Black, I'm a member of the State
19 Legislature representing Senate District 14. That
20 includes Teton, Foothills, Glacier, Liberty, and
21 Choteau Counties. First I would like to thank the
22 EEO and the Department of Energy for the excellent
23 job that you've done in preparing the preliminary
24 Environmental Impact Study. I thought it was very
25 well done, and certainly addresses and answers a
26 lot of the issues.
27
28 JAMIE CRITCHER, NPS
29 406-442-6262

Response 252 and 253: Comments noted.

Response 254: Comment noted.

Responses 255 to 258: See Socioeconomic Issues and Wind Farm Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

54

1 **Comment 255** To say that a majority of my
 2 constituents within the counties that I represent
 3 are in favor of the HNTL power line is certainly a
 4 huge under statement. They enthusiastically for
 5 the most part support the HNTL line. We're all
 6 concerned and want the farmers and landowners to
 7 be treated fairly and with respect.

8 **Comment 256** The HNTL line is the key to the
 9 development of a \$1 billion wind energy project.
 10 It will be a huge economic benefit for north
 11 central Montana and the entire state. Our area,
 12 north central Montana, has suffered through
 13 extreme drought, declining enrollments in the
 14 schools, loss of tax base, and this would be one
 15 of the things that would help turn it around, and
 16 would certainly be beneficial. **dirty employees**
 17 **say our word like a lot in a larger view, but it**
 18 **is a huge amount for our area, and the ripple**
 19 **effects are tremendous.** **Comment 257**

20 **Comment 258** Wind is our natural resource in northern
 21 Montana, and as you noted, we have plenty of it,
 22 both outside and inside. Without transmission to
 23 move electric power, green and clean wind energy
 24 cannot be developed.

25 I believe that HNTL, after a rather

JANIS CRITCHER, RPH
 404-442-9262

1 **Comment 259** 57
 2 enough start, is demonstrating a great willingness
 3 to work with the affected landowners to address
 4 concerns regarding the routing of transmission
 5 lines, the placement of poles that would be
 6 potentially destructive to their agricultural
 7 operations. This includes the use of screw poles
 8 rather than H-poles wherever it's practical, and
 9 we understand that NREL has entered into multiple
 10 land owner agreements should this project receive
 11 final approval and concurs with recommendations in
 12 the DEQ report.

13 **Comment 260** The NREL line would certainly improve
 14 the reliability of electric transmission in both
 15 Alberta and Canada by making these regions less
 16 vulnerable to outages, creating a greater
 17 opportunity to import as well as export
 18 electricity, all of which would be of benefit to
 19 consumers and suppliers. Just as we export grain,
 20 cattle, coal, oil, and other commodities, all of
 21 these exports benefit a growing economy, not only
 22 in Montana, but throughout the nation. **Comment 261**

23 **Comment 262** The increased tax base, the construction
 24 jobs, royalty payments from wind generators, along
 25 with the permanent monitoring and maintenance
 26 jobs, will provide increased tax revenues for

27 LARKIE CRITCHER, NPS
 28 406-442-9262

Response 259: See the discussion of Line Issues in the Consolidated Responses section and the response to comment 229.

Responses 260 to 262: See Socioeconomic Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 263 to 265: Comments noted.

1 Montana, and even more importantly, the badly
2 needed local tax dollars for our schools, fire
3 departments, law enforcement, county roads, parks,
4 and other services that have suffered due to that
5 declining population and loss of tax base.

6 **Comment 263** It should be noted that NREL is the
7 merchant's line, and in that a capital investment
8 and risk is made by the banks and private
9 investors rather than by local taxpayers in
10 Montana and Alberta.

11 **Comment 264** It is imperative that we develop all of
12 our country's green energy resources for our
13 generation and, of course, for future generations
14 to come. There is already a great concern about
15 brownouts throughout various parts of the United
16 States. By working cooperatively with all
17 stakeholders, including the landowners, state
18 agencies such as DEQ, our county governments, and
19 others, we can move forward without costly delays
20 that could very well jeopardize the entire
21 project.

22 **Comment 265** We certainly urge your approval of the
23 NATH line application that will benefit Montana
24 and Alberta consumers and suppliers. It's such
25 nice connecting power cables to a huge battery

JAMIE CRITCHER, NRE
406-442-9262

24
1 that moves the economic engine of development.
2 [Comment 266] He believes that in your decisions, there
3 must be good balance in your decisions that are
4 fair to all parties, that make sense
5 economically, and addresses the most sensitive
6 issues in a reasonable and proper manner.
7 [Comment 267] I'll be submitting a written statement
8 of my interests, along with the support of other
9 state senators and state representatives in
10 Montana, who strongly supported the clean and
11 green energy bill, and support the MACTC line in
12 Montana. We feel it's absolutely essential for
13 the development of clean energy.
14 [Comment 268] I would like to thank you once again for
15 providing this time for these remarks. I think
16 the input has been extremely good, and I know
17 you'll weigh those with good judgment and good
18 balance. Thank you very much.
19 MR. CHMUR: Thank you, Mr. Black. Doug
20 Ray.
21 [Comment 269] MR. RAY: My name is Doug Ray, and I'm
22 here to represent Glacier Electric Board of
23 Directors and Management. Glacier Electric
24 Cooperative, Incorporated would like to offer its
25 unequivocal support to the Montana-Alberta Tie

LANNIS CHURCH, RPN
406-442-9262

Response 266 to 268: Comments noted.

Response 269: Comment noted.

Response 270 to 274: Comments noted.

1 Line. In our opinion, it is one of the most ⁸⁵
 2 promising and beneficial projects, not only for
 3 the local area, but for the state of Montana, that
 4 we have seen in many years.

5 **Comment 270** Construction of the line and the
 6 associated wind generation facility will have a
 7 positive impact in our area in many ways. As a
 8 utility, we're offered an opportunity to
 9 interconnect, if the necessity arises, to utilize
 10 the capacity of the transmission line. **It will**
 11 **also provide an opportunity for us to participate**
 12 **in the maintenance of the system in the future.** **Comment 271**
 13 Socially it will create jobs both during the **construction**
 14 **phases and after completion and** **Comment 272**
 15 **maintenance and operation stages.** The activity
 16 associated with construction itself will create
 17 additional businesses for local merchants and
 18 suppliers.

19 **Comment 273** Economically, it will help our country,
 20 which has been suffering from a severe economic
 21 recession for many years, by improving the tax
 22 base, which will associate with all local
 23 revenues. **Not but most significantly, it will**
 24 **benefit the entire state of Montana by providing a**
 25 **desperately needed transmission path to power.** **Comment 274**

JANIS CRUTCHER, NPS
 406-442-8262

Response 275: Comment noted.

1 created by new generation facilities that will
2 develop in the vicinity of the new line and also
3 in Montana and in Alberta.

4 [REDACTED] We congratulate the Montana-Alberta Tie
5 Line group on their innovative and progressive
6 approach, and wish them success for construction
7 and operation of the transmission line.

8 Sincerely, Jason A. Strachan (phonetic), General
9 manager.

10 MR. COMO: Thank you. We've gone
11 through our list of people that have already
12 signed up. We'll take about a ten minute break,
13 and then we'll reconvene, and give us a chance to
14 meet some of you, and some of you might have some
15 other thoughts that you want to throw on the
16 record. So we'll just take a pause in the
17 proceedings for awhile.

18 (Pause taken)

19 MR. COMO: If you'll take your seats,
20 and we'll get going just as soon as you can do
21 that. We understand that some of you have some
22 transportation that's desperately waiting to
23 leave. We don't want that to happen.

24 The next gentleman that's signed up to
25 speak is Tom Shuck.

LADKIS CRUTCHER, NPS
406-442-8262

Response 276 to 278: Comments noted.

82

1 **Comment 276** MR. SHOOK: I'm Tom Shook of Cit Bank.
 2 I'm a city council person. And I'm a person who
 3 has studied this power requirement thing that we
 4 have in this country for quite some time. I
 5 believe that the population of our country is
 6 growing bigger every day, and for whatever reason,
 7 we're doing all sorts of things to reduce our
 8 energy input, but our energy output requirements
 9 continue to increase. And I personally am in
 10 **Comment 277** fear of nuclear power plants, but once you say
 11 **Comment 278** that word in one sentence, then everybody thinks
 12 they're going to turn green and glow in the dark.
 13 **Comment 279** And as my family is mostly back east,
 14 They talk about having clean water, clean fuel,
 15 and clean energy. The other day on television --
 16 which requires energy to view -- I looked at a map
 17 of the wind areas in the United States,
 18 Now, it turns out that from the northern
 19 tip of the Rocky Mountains at the border of
 20 Canada, to the southeast corner of the state of
 21 Montana, and also to include North Dakota and
 22 South Dakota, is one of the highest velocity wind
 23 energy, the most consistent velocity wind energy
 24 areas in the United States. So I feel like the
 25 wind farms that we have today are just the

LARKIE CRITCHER, NPS
 404-442-9262

1 Exploring of mega wind farms. We're probably ⁴³
2 going to be coming to Montana to see the wind
3 farms before this is all over with:
4 **Comment 279:** Listening to what I have heard today, I
5 really believe that since we have not gotten this
6 project finished yet, or started really, that we
7 need to put some time and effort into tuning up
8 the contracts with all of the individuals
9 involved, putting together safeguards for things
10 like increased energy consumption. For instance,
11 this one gentleman from Dutton I believe was
12 talking about farming around things that he felt
13 would cost \$250 a year to do, so if it gets down
14 to where it cost \$350, then they should be
15 adequately compensated for that.
16 **Comment 280:** Do we have need to have what I would
17 call living documents, something that is reviewed
18 by a commission of all of these people together as
19 their representatives, so that we can continue to
20 feed these people and allow them to have their
21 operations at the proper placements for poles, and
22 various things like that. **And we need to do this**
23 **correctly this time, because I believe we're going**
24 **to have a lot more of these, and there is no sense**
25 **in creating a case for ourselves the very first**
Laurie Crutcher, SPR
408-442-8262 **Comment 281**

Response 279: Comment noted. See the discussion of MATL's revised compensation package in the EIS, Section 2.3, Rights-of-Way.

Response 280: In June 2008, after discussions between DEQ and MATL, MATL proposed an alternative dispute resolution package, as described in the EIS, Section 2.3, Rights-of-Way.

Response 281: Comment noted.

1 close out of the gate. 84
2 I would like to thank you for allowing
3 me to speak. I'm sorry. I didn't check the right
4 thing. Thank you so much.
5 MR. CUMMIS: Thank you very much. We've
6 sort of used up all of the people that registered
7 at the show, but we've got the room for at least
8 another hour. So yes. Just come on up and give
9 us your name.
10 [Comment 282] MR. DALTON (phonetic): Good evening.
11 My name is Davey Dalton. I think the last
12 gentleman kind of -- with his remarks, or far just
13 listening to this, again, kind of to reiterate
14 what Kristina, our first speaker, indicated. And I
15 was one of the producers in the Dutton area that
16 had met, and at our first meetings with Montana --
17 (inaudible) -- nobody was against it. And so far
18 I haven't heard anybody that really is. It just
19 goes back to the implementation of how we, as the
20 ag producers, how they are going to be supporting
21 this needs to be done.
22 [Comment 283] So with that, I am a fourth generation
23 ag producer in the Dutton/Lower area. First, with
24 regard to the power poles. They should be all of
25 the single monopole design throughout the whole

LANNIS CUMMIS, NPS
406-442-6262

Response 282: Comments noted.

Response 283: MATL has proposed to use monopoles on all diagonal crossings of cultivated and CRP land. See the discussion of Line Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

1 project. But at the least -- and again I say --
2 the least, it would be all crop land and CRP, **Comment 284**
3 would also like to see a provision that **Comment 284**
4 where applicable, they are placed on or just off
5 of the property line, especially when located
6 between two different property owners.
7 **Comment 285** If the proposed route is utilized, our
8 operation would be included as a carrier of the
9 transmission line. The proposed right-of-way
10 allowance will not give us an allowable amount of
11 clearance to circle any of the power poles between
12 us and our adjoining land owner, thus creating a
13 considerable amount of non-productive farm ground
14 in a highly productive area.
15 **Comment 286** The old option for this unfarmed area
16 would be to plant a grass species for erosion
17 control. For this reason, I will not present the
18 cost at this time to implement this, because our
19 operation has no intent to seed this grass,
20 maintain weed control, chemicals, etc., since this
21 would have to be an additional cost incurred by
22 the transmission line. An H-frame designed power
23 pole would only increase this cost even more. **Comment 287**
24 monopoles were to be utilized and placed on or
25 near the property line, then the loss of our crop
Comment 288
LARKIE CRITCHER, NPS
404-442-8262

Response 284: DEQ typically approves constructing a line within 250 feet on either side of a reference center line. Certificate holders then negotiate with landowners on exact structure placement.

Response 285: Comment noted.

Response 286: Comments noted. See the discussion of MATL's revised compensation package in the EIS, Section 2.3, Rights-of-Way.

Response 287: Comment noted.

1 land, the cost of the transmission line would be
 2 minimal.

3 **Comment 288:** Regarding safety. I know there was a
 4 little bit touched on this. Our farm equipment is
 5 not getting any smaller, and in time will probably
 6 continue to increase in height, width, weight, and
 7 etc.

8 **Comment 289:** You read about the loss of birds, but
 9 what about the increased risk of death or serious
 10 injury for the humans that are driving this large-
 11 farm equipment? Would you like to send your
 12 family members, younger nieces and nephews, into
 13 potential harm's way, especially at harvest time,
 14 driving -- (inaudible) -- with lift augers or high
 15 -- (inaudible) -- grain augers themselves. There
 16 was an incident not too long ago just north of
 17 Great Falls where a young man pulling a grain
 18 auger got close enough to a power line, the
 19 electricity arced, and this young man was
 20 seriously injured.

21 **Comment 290:** Again, this is why it is absolutely
 22 necessary to utilize the higher power pole
 23 lines of the monopole design. We utilize serial
 24 epoxy. Have you taken into consideration the
 25 increased risk to those -- (inaudible) -- I have

26
 27
 28
 29
 30
 31
 32
 33
 34
 35
 36
 37
 38
 39
 40
 41
 42
 43
 44
 45
 46
 47
 48
 49
 50
 51
 52
 53
 54
 55
 56
 57
 58
 59
 60
 61
 62
 63
 64
 65
 66
 67
 68
 69
 70
 71
 72
 73
 74
 75
 76
 77
 78
 79
 80
 81
 82
 83
 84
 85
 86
 87
 88
 89
 90
 91
 92
 93
 94
 95
 96
 97
 98
 99
 100

MARKIS CRITCHER, NFW
 404-442-8262

Response 288: Comment noted.

Response 289 and 290: See the discussion of Safety Issues in the Consolidated Responses section and the EIS, Section 2.3, and Table 2.3-1.

1 **Comment 291** yet to hear our pilots complain about a line being ^{BT}
2 too high. Give them the option of blowing under
3 these lines if they have to as a last resort.
4 **Comment 292** Briefly in closing, I would like to say
5 that if all it takes is a few extra million
6 dollars -- which in my opinion is minuscule when
7 dealing with a project of this magnitude -- to
8 prevent human tragedy from occurring, then you
9 have no choice but to do what is right the first
10 time. Why not be the one to set an example for
11 why further transmission lines in the future?
12 Thank you.
13 MR. CONN: Thank you very much.
14 MR. McFARLAND: My name is John
15 McFarland. I'm from Conrad. I was born and
16 raised on a farm and ranch. I am a friend of
17 agriculture for sure. I'm currently a small
18 business owner in Conrad, past president of the
19 Conrad Chamber of Commerce, and a board member on
20 the Flanders Regional Port Authority.
21 **Comment 293** Having said all of that, it is
22 imperative that we move forward with the project.
23 I am very much in support. But we also need to
24 turn our attention to our friends in agriculture,
25 make sure that MATL is willing to consider the

26 JARRIS CRITCHER, NPS
27 406-442-8262

Response 291: Your comment is noted.

Response 292: Comments noted.

Response 293: Comment noted.

1 additional cost to fairly compensate our folks who
 2 have had the negative impact on their land, and to
 3 take the least invasive route possible to ensure
 4 minimal amount of invasion. Thank you. **Comment 294**

5 MR. COBE: Thank you.

6 **Comment 295** MR. SHERRY: I'm Dale Seibert. I'm a
 7 land owner up in the area that the line is going
 8 through. They are not proposing going through me,
 9 but I'm strongly in favor of it.

10 **Comment 296** One thing that happens in our area is
 11 we've a larger gated area, and with the water
 12 rights situations like we're having, and the low
 13 moisture levels, the economy around is hurting.
 14 As far as I'm concerned, the MATL line itself will
 15 not benefit me directly, but it opens up the
 16 possibility for wind farms, which generates
 17 income. As Mr. Hollandsworth said, farmers spend
 18 money. It will help.

19 **Comment 297** You can look at the businesses in
 20 Conrad, which is an irrigated area, compare it to
 21 Cheater or Shelby. That is the same type of land,
 22 farm dry land. The farmers are struggling.
 23 They're not spending the money. The local
 24 businesses are closing down.

25 **Comment 298** I believe the farmers should be fairly

LADNIE CRUTCHER, NPS
 406-442-9262

Response 294: Comments noted.

Response 295 to 297: Your comments are noted.

Response 298: Comments noted. See the discussion of
 MATL's revised compensation package in the EIS, Section
 2.3, Rights-of-Way.

1 compensated, and that could be done through
2 negotiation. If they use eminent domain to place
3 it down, I'll fight it all the way, because that
4 isn't what that was meant to do. Thank you. **Comment 299**

5 MR. COMB: Thank you.

6 **Comment 300** MR. JONES: My name is Carol Jones from
7 Conrad. I am a business person in support of the
8 MAIL line for reasons that have already been
9 stated. And I also have a letter from someone who
10 couldn't be here tonight that I would like to read
11 and submit.

12 **Comment 301** "I am writing in support of the MAIL. I
13 support the MAIL because it benefits both
14 consumers and generators through additional
15 connection with markets and demand of energy. It
16 also will allow additional purchasing options for
17 Montana utilities, resulting in lower rates for
18 consumers. MAIL is an economic opportunity for
19 Montana by providing additional transmission **Comment 302**
20 capacity. My name is Vanessa Buckland, and I
21 support MAIL. Sincerely, Vanessa Buckland."

22 MR. COMB: Could we have that? Thank
23 you.

24 **Comment 303** MR. BREDDING: My name is Everett
25 Bredding. I'm from Conrad. On behalf of myself

LARRY CHUTNER, NPS
406-442-8262

Response 299: Comment noted. See Legal and Regulatory Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 300 to 302: Thank you for your comments and the comments in the letter from Vanessa Buckland.

Response 303: Comment noted.

1 privately, and I am part of the Concord Area
2 Chamber of Commerce, among all of the other things
3 stated, we are in support of MATL. Thank you.

4 MR. COMB: Thank you.

5 **Comment 304** MR. LEE: Good evening. My name is
6 Robert Lee, and I'm a banker/lender, and very
7 sympathetic to the issues of the power lines not
8 being placed correctly. I studied them in my
9 youth. And that being said, I am very much in
10 favor of this proposal moving forward for the **Comment 305**
11 economic benefits that have been talked about
12 before and the tax base situation. Thank you.

13 MR. COMB: Thank you.

14 **Comment 306** MR. HARRISON: I'm Ralph Harrison from the
15 Concord area. I farm in that area. I support the
16 line because of the possible economic benefits to
17 all of the communities in our area. We have the
18 real possibility of a people wind farms in our
19 area, and that would be non-existent without a
20 power line close by. I support the line if it is
21 a safe line, and it addresses the property lines, **Comment 307**
22 and single pole construction. So I would urge you
23 to admit this facility if you address the concerns
24 of those farmers that were presented to you **Comment 308**
25 tonight. Thank you.

LARRY CRITCHER, RFD
406-442-9262

Response 304 and 305: Comments noted.

Response 306 to 308: Comments noted. See the discussion of
Farming Issues and Line Issues in the Consolidated
Responses section.

21

1 MR. CONO: Thank you.

2 **Comment 309** MR. WILSON: My name is Del Wilson. I

3 just had one question. With all of these proposed

4 or potential wind farms, how do you get the power

5 from the wind farm to the transmission line? **Who**

6 **builds the substations that would accept that** **Comment 310**

7 **power?** And are the lines from the wind farms to

8 this transmission line overhead or underground? **Comment 311**

9 **How do you take that into account from a property**

10 **owner's standpoint?** **Comment 312**

11 MR. ELMAN: My name is Brad Elman. I

12 farm about seven miles north of Conrad. However,

13 the line will not cross my property. I've been a

14 producer for 38 years now, ten in Lake County and

15 28 in Sanders County. Over those 38 years, I've

16 farmed around a lot of power poles, both double

17 and single REA Montana Power.

18 And what's even better than the power

19 poles -- and some of you would be familiar with

20 this -- were those missile points out in the fields

21 that the missile cables pointed the direction the

22 missile cables went to. I've farmed around

23 numerous ones of those, plus irrigated ground.

24 **Comment 313** With all due respect to the previous

25 testimony I've heard, -- (inaudible) -- farmed

LARRY CRITCHER, RFD
406-442-8262

Response 309: See the discussion of Wind Farm Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 310: See the discussions of Line Issues and Wind Farm Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 311: See the discussion of Wind Farm Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 312: See the discussion of Wind Farm Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 313: Comment noted.

1 around anything. Having said that, I do support
2 the line, and I do support the producers' attempts
3 if need to find a reasonable amount for **Comment 314**
4 compensation for this. However, negotiation is a
5 two-way street. MATL is in business to make a
6 profit, as are they. And I believe the **Comment 315**
7 negotiation has to take place, but it is a two-way
8 street. I do support the line. Thank you.
9
10 MR. CRON: Thank you.
11
12 **Comment 316** MR. FLYNN: Good evening. My name is
13 Don Flynn. I'm with the International Brotherhood
14 of Electrical Workers. I represent the people
15 that build power lines. I'm not the guy that's
16 going to show up this meeting. I'm sure somebody
17 else will. I think there has been a pretty good
18 discussion tonight. I think there is some farmers
19 concerns that need to be addressed.
20
21 **Comment 317** Having said that, if those things are
22 taken into account, I think everybody here pretty
23 well recognizes the value of a power line through
24 this part of Montana, as far as what it's going to
25 do for economic development with these wind farms
26 and such. With that, of course we're in favor of
27 it. We build power lines. There is not a power
28 line we haven't ever not been in favor of.
29
30 LARRIE CRUTCHER, RPO
31 406-442-9262

Response 314 and 315: Comments noted. MATL has updated the compensation package and proposed an alternative dispute resolution process. These are described in Sections 2.3 and 3.13.3.2 in the EIS. Your comment regarding negotiation is noted.

Response 316 and 317: See the discussion of Farming Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

The following responses are to comments received at the public hearing in Cut Bank.

Response 318: Comment noted.

1 in two weeks later, are we going to throw it away?
2 Of course not. If you send it in a month later,
3 yes, we'll probably still be able to -- if you
4 hand it in like three months later when we've got
5 the final document on the press, we're probably
6 not going to be able to do anything about it. So
7 yes, it's not a hard and fast legal deadline, but
8 the closer you get your comments in to that, the
9 better chance we can guarantee that we'll be able
10 to consider them in our final document. Thank.
11 Joe Christianse.
12 MS. CHRISTIANSE: Thank you very much.
13 My name is Joe Christianse. I'm a Sanders County
14 Commissioner, Conrad, Montana, and I represent the
15 western district.
16 **Comment 318** We commented about a lot of things, and
17 one of the things that -- the schools bothers me
18 considerably. We lost a school here about three
19 or four years ago. We were able to get it back
20 open a little, not a lot, but we were able to get
21 it up some. We are going to lose the Brady School
22 next year because of the lack of students and a
23 lack of money. The money is just not there to
24 keep that little school open, and that created a
25 real problem for us, too.
LARRY CROTCHER, SR.
408-447-9260

1 **Comment 319:** Again, I want to echo the thought that
2 we are really sympathetic with the farm problem,
3 too. We do want the people that they're working
4 with, the line is working with, that they keep
5 those people first in mind of everything that
6 they're going to do, and work on.

7 **Comment 320:** So we've let a lot of things go by us in
8 the past, and I think we need to make sure that we
9 don't let something like this go past us again,
10 because I think it's going to be of utmost
11 importance to all of the counties in this area
12 really. I think it will help them considerably
13 with road maintenance, equipment, anything that is
14 out there in the field. So again, thank you very
15 much. I appreciate the lines.

16 MR. COMOR: Thank you. Roy
17 Hollandsworth.

18 MR. HOLLANDSWORTH: I'm Roy
19 Hollandsworth. I was in Great Falls last night,
20 and I've got to say the bus load of people coming
21 down was great. Numbers do matter, and it was
22 really quite supportive. Because the meeting
23 turned out well in Great Falls.

24 **Comment 321:** But I face by Sredy, and I have no power
25 lines on my place, but I'm here to support it from

 LAURIE CROTCHER, SPS
 404-447-8262

Response 319: Your comments regarding farming around poles are noted.

Response 320: Comment noted.

Response 321: Comment noted.

1 the economic development end. And we can't let ¹⁹
2 this go by this time. And we talked earlier. The
3 wind turbine thing may not be part of this, but
4 Freelander (phonetic) isn't building in Butte so
5 not use turbines. We have wind blow every day.
6 This line might not be used 100 percent for **Comment 322**
7 turbines, but if this goes through smoothly, other
8 lines will develop in different places.
9 **Comment 323** Wind turbine energy is, I think, another
10 crop that we can harvest, and we need it, and we
11 want to really turn around the down slide in all
12 of our communities. Brady is one. Conrad, you
13 could shoot a rifle or sack a car down the street
14 most days, and you wouldn't even know anybody is
15 around. And Conrad used to be a going concern.
16 **Comment 324** Oh I'm glad everybody is here, and I
17 hope everybody is behind it, and I want to show my
18 support. Thank you.
19 Mr. CMO: Johnal Barrow.
20 **Comment 325** Mr. Chairman, Browning
21 Area Chamber of Commerce, although it's roughly on
22 the Blackfoot Reservation, and we're not touched
23 by this, this affects our whole area. A lot of
24 the potential that we have in our area this place
25 to Glacier National Park are tourists and on the

LARRY CRITCHER, RPO
406-442-9262

Response 322 and 324: Comments noted.

Response 325: Comment noted.

11
 1 | observation, unlike a lot of rural Montana, like
 2 | they mentioned with Brady and lack of enrollment,
 3 | we have a large growing population on the
 4 | reservation, which is pretty particular of all
 5 | Indian communities in the state. So the potential
 6 | is here, and this is only going to further it.
 7 | [Commented Out] Along with that, economic development,
 8 | jobs, and our transmission system throughout this
 9 | area, throughout our state, is very -- it's going
 10 | down. It needs this upgrade, and we need this
 11 | line in.
 12 | [Commented Out] And yes, you're right. That Better
 13 | Center, they're not going to be building those that
 14 | close in North Dakota, they're not building those
 15 | that close unless they have some projects moving
 16 | there. Thank you.
 17 | We, CTRC: Thank you. By the way, if
 18 | any of you have anything that you're reading from,
 19 | it would help us if you left it with us.
 20 | Dave Brownell.
 21 | [Commented Out] Mr. BROWNELL: It's from Conrad, and
 22 | unlike Roy, we won't see any poles on our plant.
 23 | I've farmed around oil wells, power poles; I've
 24 | worked for Custom Crop Care in Conrad running a
 25 | big ninety foot boom sprayer, and I've worked --
 26 |
 27 | JAMIE CUTLER, RPO
 28 | 406-442-9200

Response 326 and 367: Comment noted.

Response 328: Comment noted.

1 I've gone around H-frases, and single poles, and
2 yea, they are a bugger.

3 **Comment 329** But my concern is -- and I've had people
4 I've talked to -- and I said, "You've got to look
5 at the tax base for one thing it is going to bring
6 to us." And they said, "But they'll raise the
7 taxes anyway," and I said, "Property taxes, well
8 maybe they won't raise them quite so much." **I**
9 think a million dollar tax base to start with in
10 Fenders County just off the line -- and that's not
11 counting any wind turbine farms that go in **Comment 330**
12 Fenders, Teton. Boise is already going to get some
13 started, Teton and Glacier. It's going to make a
14 lot of difference.

15 **Comment 331** You've got people that will be coming in
16 working on these jobs. It's going to help the
17 economy. You're going to have certain easy guys
18 that have got to be around to maintain these
19 towers. And it's like it said, that turbine
20 that's going to be built in Butte, they're going
21 to go somewhere, and you know that they're
22 already planning down there at Judith Gap to
23 expand that wind system down there.

24 **Comment 332** But I still think you've got to consider
25 the tax base that's going to happen. At least our

LARRIS CRITCHER, RPO
406-442-9262

Response 329: Comment noted. Also see Socioeconomic Impact Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 330: Taxes are discussed in Sections 3.13 and 4.14 of the EIS.

Response 331 and 332: See Socioeconomic Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

1 13
2 2
3 3
4 4
5 5
6 6
7 7
8 8
9 9
10 10
11 11
12 12
13 13
14 14
15 15
16 16
17 17
18 18
19 19
20 20
21 21
22 22
23 23
24 24
25 25
26 26

washed out of Fenders County, Teton, Glacier,
and Teton, I think, and a little bit out of Lewis
& Clark, but I think Fenders County was hit the
hardest. My family farms both in Teton and
Fenders County. Our biggest chunk is in Teton.
But anything that can help our tax base, I think
we should look at. Thank you.

MR. COYO: Thank you. Mike Koepke.

Comment 333: MR. KOKINGER: I'm Mike Koepke of the
Bank, Executive Director of the COT Bank
Development Corporation. I have four letters that
were sent to me. These individuals were not able
to show up. The first was from Triangle Land and
Livestock Company.

Comment 334: "We are sorry we are not able to attend
the hearing in person, but we are in the spirit of
giving. We would like to express our strong
support for the Madison-Alberta Tie line. It is
imperative that this region develop
infrastructure and business opportunities to
bolster the economy and expand the tax base. It
is increasingly difficult for the existing small
business owners to bear the burden of business and
local property taxes.

Comment 335: "This is a tremendous opportunity to

LARRIE CRUTCHER, RPN
406-442-9262

Response 333 to 335: Thank you for bringing comments from people who were unable to attend the meeting.

14
1 open the doors to new and responsible development.
2 We encourage all parties to work together to
3 mitigate any problems with the placement of this
4 line, and offer our strong support for proceeding
5 with the Montana-Alberta Tie Line. Sincerely,
6 Billiee Gustafson,"
7
8 [Comment 336] Next over "Thank you for the
9 opportunity to comment on the draft Environmental
10 Impact Statement for the Montana-Alberta Tie
11 Transmission Line. Billiee's Home Decor would
12 like to go on record offering its full support for
13 the electric transmission line proposed by
14 Montana-Alberta Tie, Limited.
15
16 "Our business is located in Cut Bank,
17 Montana, and is dedicated to the promotion and
18 growth of the Cut Bank area. We firmly believe
19 construction of this line will have a positive and
20 lasting effect on not only our community, but the
21 Golden Triangle Area.
22
23 [Comment 337] "Thank you for the opportunity to
24 express our support for this project. We look
25 forward to hearing very soon that a Presidential
26 Permit has been issued for the project, and we
27 urge the Montana DEQ and BLM to issue the needed
28 certificates of compliance and right-of-ways as
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60
61
62
63
64
65
66
67
68
69
70
71
72
73
74
75
76
77
78
79
80
81
82
83
84
85
86
87
88
89
90
91
92
93
94
95
96
97
98
99
100
LARRIS CRITCHER, RFB
406-442-9262

Response 336: Comment noted.

Response 337 and 338: Comments noted. Also see Socioeconomic Impact Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

1 required. Sincerely, Valerie Veprachen 13
 2 (phonetic), President, Billman's Home Decor."
 3 [REDACTED] "Thank you for the opportunity to
 4 comment on the draft Environmental Impact
 5 Statement for the Montana-Alberta Tie Transmission
 6 line. Billman's, Incorporated would like to do so
 7 second offering its full support for the electric
 8 transmission line proposed by Montana-Alberta Tie,
 9 Limited.
 10 "Our business is located in Cut Bank,
 11 and it is dedicated to the promotion and growth of
 12 the Cut Bank area. We firmly believe construction
 13 of this line will have a positive and lasting
 14 effect on not only our community, but the Golden
 15 Triangle area.
 16 "Thank you for the opportunity to
 17 express our support for this project. We look
 18 forward to hearing very soon that a Presidential
 19 permit has been issued for the project. And we
 20 urge that the Montana DEP and EIS issue the needed
 21 certification of compliance and rights-of-way as
 22 required. Sincerely, Rick Billman, President of
 23 Billman's, Inc."
 24 [REDACTED] "Thanks for the opportunity to comment
 25 on the draft Environmental Impact Statement for

LARRIS CRITCHER, RFO
 406-442-9262

Response 339 and 340: Comments noted.

1 the Montana-Alberta Tie Transmission Line. We
 2 would like to offer our full support for the
 3 electric transmission line proposed by
 4 Montana-Alberta Tie, Limited. Our family owns
 5 several rental businesses in Our Bank, making us
 6 dedicated to the continued growth of the area. We
 7 firmly believe construction of this line will have
 8 a positive and lasting effect on not only our
 9 community, but the entire Golden Triangle Area.

10 *Thank you for the opportunity to
 11 express our support for this project. We look
 12 forward to hearing very soon that a Presidential
 13 Permit has been issued for the project, and we
 14 urge the Montana DEQ and BLM to issue the needed
 15 certificate of compliance and right-of-ways.

16 Sincerely Rick Willman, Jeff Willman, former
 17 Vicepres of SAG Rentals, J&C Rentals, &V
 18 Rentals.*

19 **Comment 341** And I'd just like to reiterate for Our
 20 Bank Willman Corporation that we're in support of
 21 the MATL line project. And as a producer, I farm
 22 in Glacier County and Teton County, and I would
 23 like to be on record as in support again for the
 24 MATL line.

25 **Comment 342** And also as Chairman of the school

26
 27
 28
 29
 30
 31
 32
 33
 34
 35
 36
 37
 38
 39
 40
 41
 42
 43
 44
 45
 46
 47
 48
 49
 50
 51
 52
 53
 54
 55
 56
 57
 58
 59
 60
 61
 62
 63
 64
 65
 66
 67
 68
 69
 70
 71
 72
 73
 74
 75
 76
 77
 78
 79
 80
 81
 82
 83
 84
 85
 86
 87
 88
 89
 90
 91
 92
 93
 94
 95
 96
 97
 98
 99
 100

LADRIE CRITCHER, RPO
 406-442-9262

Response 341 and 342: Comments noted.

1 board, I would like to show support for the WYTL
 2 line, and the increase in tax base is going to
 3 help this. Thank you.

4 MR. COMO: Bill McCauley.

5 **Comment 343** MR. MCDONLEY: As a local business
 6 person, and City Council person, I wish to go on
 7 record as supporting the project, but would
 8 request that the farmers and ranchers that the
 9 line crosses are taken care of both financially
 10 and by future agreements in writing for all
 11 parties.

12 **Comment 344** This project is a great boost to our
 13 overburdened tax base. I have heard the argument
 14 that we are allowing the line owners too much
 15 short term tax break, but I ask you: What is 100
 16 percent of nothing? And that's what we have at
 17 this time.

18 **Comment 345** Our local cooperatives, CWSA
 19 cooperatives, are the backbone of the electrical
 20 rural America, and now they feel that this is a
 21 good deal, which they have. Once again, on behalf
 22 of myself as a taxpayer for many phases, I fully
 23 support this project. Thank you.

24 MR. COMO: Thank you. Joni Stewart.

25 MR. STEWART: My name is Joni Stewart.

LARRIE CATCHER, SR
 408-447-9761

Response 343: See Farming Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 344: See Socioeconomic Issues and Tax Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 345: Comment noted.

1 and I'm the Mayor of the city of Cut Bank. And on
2 behalf of the City Council, I'd like to read this
3 letter.

4 **Comment 346** "The purpose of this letter is to
5 indicate the City of Cut Bank's full support for
6 the electric transmission line proposed by MATL.
7 We have reviewed the Draft Environmental Impact
8 Statement, and find this project to be of great
9 benefit to Glacier County and the surrounding
10 areas.

11 **Comment 347** "We believe that MATL's response to the
12 current concerns raised in previous public
13 meetings have been thoroughly addressed, and
14 commend MATL officials on their efforts to create
15 a positive situation for all involved.

16 **Comment 348** "Wind energy projects are one of the
17 most viable answers to developing clean and green
18 industry for northern Montana. On behalf of the
19 City of Cut Bank, we urge DEQ and BLM to issue the
20 required permits, and look forward to hearing that
21 a Presidential Permit has been issued. Thanks."

22 MR. CHMO: Okay Willemink, you feel done
23 maybe.

24 **Comment 349** MS. WILLEMINK: I just wanted to say for
25 my husband and I, Wiscock Cattle Company, that we

LARKIE CRUTCHER, APP
406-447-9261

Response 346 to 348: Comments noted.

Response 349: Comment noted.

1 support this, especially in view of the number of
2 drought years that our counties have had. Just
3 having a better tax base would improve everything
4 agriculturally and also in the urban communities.

5 MR. COTNER: Thank you. We've got a whole
6 another page and a half of people who have given
7 us their names and their addresses, but haven't
8 indicated that they want to speak. So if it's okay,
9 I'll just go down -- who are you?

10 MR. COTNER: Jackie Conledge. I'm
11 from Dunbart, Montana, and I'm on the council
12 there. But I came to speak from my heart.

13 [Comment 350] We're trying to bring our community back
14 to life, and this is an opportunity that will help
15 our community get on its feet again. We have
16 several things that are happening there, and it's
17 exciting for us.

18 [Comment 351] We have lost quite a bit of our
19 population, our schools, our student population,
20 and we would like to get that back again; and the
21 way to get that back again is to attract people to
22 our town and have them stay there. And if this
23 program comes in, there might be jobs. They would
24 boost our school system, which is very important.

25 [Comment 352] Also we have a lot of small businesses.

LARRY COTNER, SR.
406-442-9260

Response 350 to 352: See Socioeconomic Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 353 to 355: Comments noted.

20
1 like everyone else in every other community; and
2 with the workers that come in, they support the
3 restaurants, they support the schools, they
4 support the person that sells groceries, whatever.
5 Every little bit helps the population and the tax
6 base, of course. **Comment 353**

7 **Comment 354** Another thing is: When this comes in,
8 our kids don't know anything about the wind, the
9 turbines, everything like that. This is another
10 career opportunity that they would have or be
11 exposed to. They may get into it. If it grows
12 here, maybe our children won't have to leave
13 Montana to make a living. Maybe they won't have
14 to leave this area. They might want to stay here
15 and raise their families here. We need to look at
16 that. We don't want to have to have our children
17 leaving, and having a dead Montana. Nothing left.
18 The land is great, but it's not worth anything if
19 we're not on it. So that's an important thing to
20 me.

21 **Comment 355** And also we're in the construction
22 business. This is an opportunity for my husband's
23 and my company to maybe work here, instead of
24 having to travel 100 miles each direction from our
25 home. So this is really important to me, and

Laurie Crutcher, CPA
406-442-9261

Response 356 and 357: Comments noted.

1 these are just comments from my heart. 21
2 MR. CONOI: Thank you.
3 [Comment 356] MR. IVERSON: I'm Gary Iverson. I'm the
4 Mayor of the town of Suckurat, and I wanted to be
5 here tonight to show the support of the City
6 Council -- of course, Cathy is one of our council
7 members -- the people of the town of Suckurat, the
8 businesses of the town of Suckurat, the schools of
9 the town of Suckurat, and the whole area: the
10 support for business because we need industry, we
11 need business.
12 [Comment 357] This wind farm that's going to come in
13 on top of this power line is a tremendous asset to
14 our community. And we need the tax base. And I
15 understand the problems with the power lines
16 crossing land, and those type of things: and those
17 need to be worked out, and they need to be worked
18 out fairly. But we do not want to miss an
19 opportunity like this to have this power line and
20 to have the things that will come along with it.
21 And that's all I've got.
22 MR. CONOI: Thank you. Yes, sir.
23 MR. SITZMAN: My name is Tony Sitzman,
24 and I represent the Glacier County Regional Port
25 Authority as Chairman. I just want to read your

LARRY CRITCHER, SR.
408-442-9260

Response 358 to 361: Comments noted.

1 mission statement.

2 "The mission of Regional Port Authority

3 is to promote, stimulate, and advance the general

4 welfare, commerce, and economic development, and

5 prosperity of our region."

6 **Comment 358** Our region is Glacier County, the

7 majority of which lies on the Blackfeet Indian

8 reservation. The NMTL will have a tremendous

9 impact on the region, and will assist in potential

10 wind development projects. The NMTL will pump

11 needed revenue into the tax base of our region,

12 and will assist in our struggling economy.

13 **Comment 359** The Glacier County Regional Port

14 Authority supports the Montana-Alberta

15 Transmission Line, and views it as a means of

16 reaching our vision, which is to have a quality

17 rural community with living experiences,

18 opportunities, and amenities of urban living.

19 **Comment 360** We are encouraging you to support the

20 line, which has little environmental impact, but

21 large economic benefits. We appreciate the

22 attention you have given our request.

23 **Comment 361** And along with this, I just want to

24 thank everybody for coming. We were at the

25 meeting last night, and in cooperation, this is a

LAURIE CROTHER, SRP
408-447-9260

1 that 30 day cooling off period -- that's what we
 2 call it -- after we publish the final. So thanks,
 3 I'm sorry.

4 **Comment 362** MR. CAVETT (phonetic): My name is Bussy
 5 Cavett, and I'm on the Board of Directors of the
 6 Northern Michigan Medical Center here in Our Bank.
 7 And as a member of the Board of Directors, we
 8 would like to pledge our full support to this
 9 economic opportunity for our area, so that we can
 10 of course increase our economic base, and provide
 11 jobs, and also improve any services that we can
 12 provide for the community and the area. Thank
 13 you.

14 MR. COMO: Thank you. Anybody else?
 15 Mr. Jones.

16 MR. JONES: I was wondering when the
 17 politicians are going to get going.

18 **Comment 363** I guess I would share that I'm pleased.
 19 First of all, I want to thank WATL for addressing
 20 a whole bunch of the issues that they had earlier,
 21 including per pole payments, trying to work with
 22 their landowners, spacing up their lines, and
 23 trying to deal with a bunch of the land issues.

24 **Comment 364** And there is a couple of things I always
 25 like bringing up. I always have employment is

LANNIS CUTCHES, RPN
 498-442-9262

Response 362 to 364: Comments noted.

1 limited. And I guess in our rural areas, given ²¹
 2 that this system, when the windmills were fully
 3 in, employ potentially 60 to 100 people. That's
 4 not limited for us. That's probably a huge
 5 employer in a rural area. And when you consider
 6 the spin associated with it, the multiplier
 7 effect, it's even more than that.

8 **Comment 365:** And I guess a couple other items. I was
 9 asked today about the number of birds that would
 10 be damaged in the area, and I guess I wanted point
 11 out -- and as has been in your statements before
 12 -- the new wind mills turn very, very slow, and
 13 the number of bird deaths associated with it are
 14 entirely limited. I've heard folks say that it's
 15 less than when driving a car. So in fact I see
 16 numbers of 1.5 to two, and that's a good thing.
 17 And so I don't think for those folks concerned
 18 with the sports issue, this is a problem.

19
 20 Another comment that came up after last
 21 night's hearing that I didn't mention -- and I'm
 22 trying to skip stuff that we've mentioned before
 23 so you don't have to go through it over and over
 24 again:

25 MR. COMO: We normally do this. The
 issue of bird strikes, that was come up from the

LARRY CUTLER, RFD
 408-442-9262

Response 365: Comment noted. See the discussion of Avian and Wildlife Issues in the Consolidated Responses section and the revisions to Section 4.9 in the EIS.

1) operations, it was precisely from the operations.
 2) [REDACTED] MR. JOHNS: Yes. There were just some
 3) concerns about that, and I know during talking
 4) with folks, and I'd actually researched some of
 5) those issues, it was not a huge number anymore.
 6) The old mills turned far faster, etc.
 7) [REDACTED] There was some issues that Alternative 4
 8) came up, and they wanted to make sure it was
 9) pointed out there are several substations south of
 10) Conrad that Alternative 4 would bypass, and that
 11) there is a potential development straight to the
 12) west of Conrad referred to as the Sam George Hill
 13) that has some leasing going on along that area.
 14) And it would definitely increase the distance
 15) lines would have to be built from the Sam George
 16) Hill to interconnect with MATL by companies that
 17) currently own space on the MATL line.
 18) [REDACTED] Then just exporting. Basically, we export
 19) grain, and the benefit stays here. The farms stay
 20) here. We export beef, and the ranches remain
 21) here. And how we export or have the opportunity
 22) to export kilowatt hours, to export electricity,
 23) and have the tax base, the jobs and everything,
 24) remain here.
 25) [REDACTED] And so with that, thanks, all of you,
 26)
 LARRY CRITCHER, RPO
 406-442-9260

Response 366: See the discussion of Avian and Wildlife Issues in the Consolidated Responses section and the response to comment 7.

Response 367: Comment noted. MATL does not propose to interconnect to the two substations south of Conrad and has indicated to DEQ that there will be one point of interconnection at the Marias substation. DEQ is aware of an anemometer on Sam George Hill but is not aware of a planned wind farm there that would connect to the MATL line. Numerous parties are considering wind farms in the area, and it is difficult for the agencies to ascertain which wind farm is proposing to connect to which transmission line. MATL's customers include NaturEner, Wind Hunter, and Invenergy. NaturEner is beginning to construct initial phases of a wind farm southeast of Cut Bank but may have options in other areas. Invenergy has announced plans for a wind farm or wind farms north of Conrad and in the Cut Bank area. It is unclear where Wind Hunter may be proposing a wind farm or wind farms. See the discussion of Line Issues and Wind Farm Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 368 and 369: Comments noted.

1 for all your hard work, all of you folks for
2 showing up on this. And actually one of our
3 reasons to get up was to point out that we had a
4 bus riding around last night, and before that.
5
6 WENDY SPEAKER: I was a grateful guest.
7
8 [Comment 370] WENDY SPEAKER: Sam George Hill is
9 proposed for wind farms. Mr. James Wind
10 turbines are being proposed in this area called
11 Sam George Hill?
12
13 MR. JONES: Yes. There is an area
14 straight west of Conrad that we call the Sam
15 George Hill. I don't know if that's what it is
16 called on the map.
17
18 WENDY SPEAKER: Thank you.
19
20 [Comment 371] MR. REYNOLDS: Hi. I'm Dirty Reynolds.
21 I'm with Border States Electric out of Billings,
22 Montana. We employ about 30 people. We do a lot
23 of work with the electric utilities. We hope to
24 be involved in this project because we have a lot
25 of jobs in Billings, that with our down turn in
26 the economy, this would help. Anytime we can
27 utilize our natural resources in Montana and
28 create more jobs here, I think it's a good deal
29 for everyone. Thank you.
30
31 MR. COMO: Last time when these can meet.
32
33 LAURIE DUTCHER, SPE
34 406-447-9260

Response 370: Comment noted. See the response to comment 367. Last year, DEQ noted the anemometer on Sam George Hill, and it is shown on Figure 4.1-2.

Response 371: Comments noted.

Response 372 and 373: Comments noted.

1 of a lull in the action, we said we could take a
2 little break and wander around.
3
4 WENAS SPEAKS: I actually have a
5 question, and Lew Jones asked me to ask this
6 question. But he would like to know where the
7 cookies are.
8
9 SEN. ELACH: For the record, my name is
10 Jerry Elach. I represent Senate District 11,
11 which includes most of Glacier County, Sanders
12 County, Toole County, Liberty County, and Custer
13 County.
14 [Comment 372] This wind project is extremely important
15 to all of the area, not just in Glacier County and
16 Toole, but the entire area. I think this is
17 probably one of the greatest economic development
18 opportunities since the discovery of oil in
19 northern Montana, since the building of the
20 Burlington Northern Railroad. There are so many
21 spin offs. When you talk about over \$1 billion in
22 investment, that is a huge amount of money.
23 That's going to have a great impact on the total
24 area.
25 [Comment 373] You've all heard everybody identify why
26 we need it: Declining school enrollments, loss of
27 tax base, loss of jobs, devaluations of land.
28
29 LARRIS CRITCHER, RPO
30 406-442-6262

31.
 1 Well, this could very well turn that all around,
 2 and I think it will.

3 **Comment 374:** MATL is demonstrating a willingness to
 4 work with the landowners to address concerns
 5 regarding the routing of transmission lines and
 6 placement of poles that would be potentially
 7 disruptive to their agricultural operations. It
 8 kind of got off, if you will crossover, to a rough
 9 start at the very beginning but since that time,
 10 they have changed their attitude. They're willing
 11 to work with people, address those concerns,

12 **Comment 375:** Now, you are never going to make
 13 everybody happy. I don't care what you do,
 14 somebody is not going to be happy with it, whether
 15 it's MATL or whether it's some landowners. We
 16 know that. But this line will improve the
 17 reliability of electric transmission system in
 18 both Montana and Alberta by making those regions
 19 less vulnerable to outages, creating a greater
 20 opportunity to import and export electricity, all
 21 of which can benefit consumers and suppliers.

22 **Comment 376:** The MATL line could very well provide
 23 another opportunity for some of our energy
 24 companies in Montana, electric co-ops, to find
 25 another bidder for electricity when they need one.

LARRY CRUTCHER, RFB
 408-442-9262

Response 374 and 375: Comments noted. See the discussion of MATL's revised compensation package and alternative dispute resolution process in the EIS, Sections 2.3 and 3.13.3.

Response 376: That may be true, but it would depend on the transmission line owners and other external factors. Potential impacts of the proposed line on electrical transmission system operation are discussed in Section 3.17.

1 The increased tax base, construction jobs, and ³⁰ **Comment 377**
2 royalty payments from wind generators, along with
3 the permanent monitoring and maintenance jobs,
4 will provide increased tax revenues for Montana,
5 and more importantly, right for our area. We know
6 that.
7 **Comment 378** It should be noted -- they mentioned
8 last night -- this is a merchant lined and in that
9 the large capital investment required for this
10 line is made by banks and private investors,
11 rather than by local taxpayers in Montana and
12 Alberta.
13 **Comment 379** You know, it's imperative that we
14 develop our green energy resources. The United
15 States is going to be facing a severe energy
16 crunch in the years to come. **You've seen what's** **Comment 380**
17 happened with coal. There are about 60 plants in
18 the US that have cancelled their plans to build
19 coal fired generators. We're going to need a
20 cheap, clean source of energy if we're going to
21 compete, and if we're going to be able to keep the
22 costs down for people like you and me all across
23 the country. So this is very important that we
24 develop this clean energy.
25
26 Rod Mentana is absolutely a huge

LAURIE CRUTCHER, RPN
406-843-9260

Response 377 and 378: Comments noted. See Section 3.13 and Economic Issues, Tax Issues, and Socioeconomic Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 379: One objective of the proposed action is to support development of wind power, which is a green energy source.

Response 380: Comment noted.

1 resource for wind. It's one of the best sources
2 in the North American continent, and we have to
3 use that wind energy. I think it's very **Comment 381**
4 important, when these decisions are made on
5 routing and the alternative routes that are going
6 to be taken, that they display a very sound
7 balance between the landowners and MATL. You
8 know, they both have to have their concerns met.
9 **Comment 382** One of the -- I think Option 4, if I
10 read in the EIS, concerned us because it said
11 Option 4 would increase the cost to MATL by \$7
12 million, and delay the project for up to one year.
13 I think that's very disturbing. And MATL has
14 said, you know, that option could very well
15 jeopardize the project. So that's why we have to
16 strike an equal balance between what MATL needs
17 and what the landowners need, and that's their
18 decision that they'll be making as to which of
19 those options they will decide upon.
20 **Comment 383** I believe we've got to be fair to all of
21 the parties involved. We want to take care of the
22 landowners. They should be compensated fairly and
23 respectfully for the cost of farming around those
24 poles. There is no doubt about it. And that is
25 one of their great concerns.

LARRY CROTHER, SR
408-447-9260

Response 381: Comment noted.

Response 382: Comments noted.

MATL outlined its concerns regarding Alternative 4 in its letter to the DEQ of March 28, 2008, and summarized those concerns as follows: "Of the route options proposed, Alternative 4 is materially longer in length. As a consequence: it impacts more landowners; has a larger footprint; may span more unstable soils; may have a greater potential of encountering archaeological and heritage resources; and has higher energy losses."

Response 383: See Farming Issues in the Consolidated Responses section as well as the discussion of MATL's revised compensation package and alternative dispute resolution process in Sections 2.3 and 3.13.3.

34
1 **Comment 384** This was a big issue in the Legislature
2 session in the last session. Law carried it
3 through the House, and I and several other
4 senators nurtured it through the Senate, and this
5 had wide support. And I'll have a letter to
6 submit that will have a lot of senators and state
7 representatives sign on supporting this project.
8 We definitely need it. We want it. It's good not
9 only for our local area, but for the state of
10 Montana, and for the whole nation for that matter,
11 and we're going to see a lot of this being done
12 across the country.

13 **Comment 385** So thank you very much. I want to
14 acknowledge the DEQ and the Department of Energy
15 for the great job on the EIS that you prepared,
16 was excellent, and for holding these hearings.
17 Thank you very much.

18 MR. DIXON: Thank you.

19 **Comment 386** MR. MUMFITT (phonetic): For the record,
20 I'm Marvin Mumfitt. We farm and ranch southeast
21 of Cut Bank. NATL line will go across us. I'm
22 here to show support for it. The impact to us
23 will be very slight, and the impact for Glacier
24 County and the state would be very great.

25 I also sit as Vice President of Glacier

LARRY CROTHER, SR.
406-447-9260

Response 384: Comments noted. Your comments and those of the other legislators in the letter are noted.

Response 385 and 386: Comments noted.

35
1 Electric Cooperatives and Through Board Comment 387
2 discussions, we would like to confirm our support
3 for the MATL line. Thank you.
4 Comment 388 MR. KAVANAGH: I'm LeAnne Kavanagh. I'm
5 President of the Out Bank Area Chamber of
6 Commerce. I was one of the ones who went to Great
7 Falls last night. I read the letter of support
8 from the chamber at that meeting, so I won't go
9 over it again tonight, but it was a pretty good
10 letter. What I do have here, though, is
11 approximately 30 letters of support from various
12 chamber members, retired citizens of our
13 community, local small business owners, and some
14 ag producers who would offer their support to the
15 MATL project. I'm not going to read them all.
16 I'm just going to enter them into the record.
17 Thank you.
18
19 MR. CEMO: By the way, everybody, if
20 some of you represent like a lot of developers and
21 large groups of people, if you want to help us get
22 a decision out quicker, okay, a letter -- getting
23 a single letter with 200, 300 people signing it,
24 that's the most efficient way, assuming everybody
25 wants to say the same thing. I'm not telling you
what to do. But like if everybody is going to

LAURIE CATCHER, SR
408-447-8262

Response 387: Comment noted.

Response 388: The letters were accepted as individual letters, entered into the record, and responded to along with all other letters received.

Response 389: Comment noted.

1 that's not how this country was meant to work. BT
2 And you folks are here, and you're doing a great
3 thing, and I just want to send my appreciation to
4 you for that fact.
5 It's been reinvigorating a little bit
6 for me to be here and see some of this, and not
7 just go, "Well, I don't know if I'll have any
8 impact, so I might as well not be here." The fact
9 that you're here tonight is doing great things,
10 not only for yourself, but for the future
11 generations of us up here in north central
12 Montana.
13 So I just wanted to say thanks to
14 everybody in the audience tonight, and if there is
15 anything I can do for you, catch me at the end,
16 I'll be floating around. So thank you.
17 MR. CHOI: Thank you.
18 Anybody else? Yes, sir.
19 **Comment 389** MR. HARRISON: I'm Shannon Harrison with
20 Sweetgrass Development, I'm the Executive Director
21 there. And I won't bore you by repeating all of
22 the wonderful positive things I've heard tonight,
23 but I do want to offer Sweetgrass Development's
24 full support on this project.
25 MR. CHOI: Would anybody else like to --

LAURIE CRUTCHER, SFR
408-447-8262

1 Go ahead. 38

2 MALE SPEAKER: I have one -- This

3 question is just killing me, and I need to ask it.

4 **Comment 390** Everybody in this room is probably my

5 age, or some is younger, some is older. How many

6 of us have kids that work out of state? Could we

7 have a flow of hands? There is the reason we need

8 the power line, okay? Thank you.

9

10 MALE SPEAKER: Most are younger.

11 MR. CONO: I recognize you, but I can't

12 remember your name from last night. I'm sorry.

13 MS. BROSEDER: I'm Sandy Broseder. I'm

14 Sanders County Commissioner. And I'm not going to

15 speak as a Commissioner tonight. I want to speak

16 as a land owner who owns land west of Conrad. Our

17 farm is called Broseder Ranch, Incorporated.

18 **Comment 391** We've a number of wind experts come

19 around our area, and they tell us that they look

20 for certain geographic formations, that if they

21 can catch the wind at the apex of a hill, it has

22 more energy than wind that's blowing across a flat

23 surface. That's one of the reasons for the

24 interest in areas like the San George Hill and the

25 Belgian Hill.

26

27 If we look at Alternative 4, while it

28

29 LAURIE CRUTCHER, RPS

30 408-442-9260

Response 390: Comment noted.

Response 391: At their closest, Alternatives 2 and 4 are about 3.5 and 7.6 miles, respectively, from the anemometer location on Sam George Hill. See the response to comment 367 for more information and the discussion of Line Issues and Wind Farm Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

1 does have the appeal of being a straighter line
 2 and cutting across more range land as opposed to
 3 going through farm land, we need to remember that
 4 this is going to move it further away from those
 5 geographic formations where the wind farms
 6 ultimately probably will be located, and it also
 7 takes it further away from the substation that's
 8 located just at the bottom of the San George Hill.

9
 10 **Comment 392:** I think if we end up going with the No.
 11 4 option, we are going to ultimately end up with
 12 yet more power lines traveling a further distance
 13 to take the power from the generation point to the
 14 ultimate transmission point.

15
 16 **Comment 393:** MATL is making great strides in land-
 17 owner relationships. It seems to me that maybe
 18 that should be the result of private business, and
 19 I would strongly urge the DOE and the DEQ to issue
 20 any needed permits as expeditiously as possible
 21 and let business happen. Thank you.

22
 23 MR. USNO: Thank you. Anybody else?

24
 25 UNKNOWN SPEAKER: Like somebody standing
 26 in the back that wants to stretch their legs and
 27 walk all the way up here.

28
 29 MR. USNO: Well, we've got a little
 30 dilemma. On the one hand, we're sort of committed

31
 32
 33
 34
 35
 36
 37
 38
 39
 40
 41
 42
 43
 44
 45
 46
 47
 48
 49
 50
 51
 52
 53
 54
 55
 56
 57
 58
 59
 60
 61
 62
 63
 64
 65
 66
 67
 68
 69
 70
 71
 72
 73
 74
 75
 76
 77
 78
 79
 80
 81
 82
 83
 84
 85
 86
 87
 88
 89
 90
 91
 92
 93
 94
 95
 96
 97
 98
 99
 100

LARRIE CRUTCHER, SPE
 408-447-9262

Response 392: See the responses to comments 367 and 391. Also see the discussion of Line Issues and Wind Farm Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 393: See the discussion of MATL's revised compensation package and alternative dispute resolution process in Sections 2.3 and 3.13.3.

1 yourselves -- if you want to leave, fine. ⁴¹ If you
2 don't, we'd rather have you stay -- and then open
3 the record again, and if there are any additional
4 questions --

5 MR. CHAM: We could take a 15 minute
6 break, or a quarter after seven we'll resume.
7 You can leave if you want before then, and if not,
8 then we'll just close it up then. Thank.

9 (Recess taken)

10 MR. KING: For those of who came in a
11 little bit late, the purpose of the meeting is to
12 take comments on the Environmental Impact
13 Statement that's being circulated. We're going to
14 ask -- There is a general guideline that comments
15 be submitted to us by March 31st, and we can
16 assure you those that get in by that date are
17 going to get the most attention.

18 So I believe we had one gentleman during
19 the break indicated he wanted to speak, so if you
20 could take the floor. And if there is anybody
21 else, we'll let you out at a time, and after
22 those are done, we'll close out the hearing for
23 tonight.

24 Comment 204 MR. HANSON: Hi. My name is Gabriel
25 Pearson and I'm from Gilmont, Montana. Puri

LARRY CRUTCHER, RPO
406-442-9262

1 years ago, I was in a little country called ⁴²
2 Vietnam. I had two real nice friends that were Comment 204
3 killed right next to me. And you know who was (cont)
4 taking all our draft dodgers at that time was
5 Canada.

6 Now, a few questions I want to come up
7 with. I understand by the news last night Wendie
8 Ontario, Canada will be in charge of this project,
9 where is our side of the story in the United
10 States? I think it should be equal and fair. I'm
11 all for making money, but I'm not for making money
12 over Veterans that have spilled their blood. And
13 we have what -- the position in our country right
14 now, we can't drill it, we can't mine it, we can't
15 log it, but we'll let her burn, and we've got to
16 put a stop to this sometime.

17 I know everybody is for this project,
18 I'm for making money, but not on the backs of
19 people that give their life for this country. I'm
20 one of them. I'm a totally disabled American
21 Veteran. It's not too fun to go through major of
22 heart ailments. It's very important for me to
23 stand up for those Veterans that died. They say,
24 "If you ever make it back to the United States,
25 you let those people know what we went through in

LARRY CRUTCHER, RPO
406-442-9262

43

1 Minister.* I'm hoping you know.
 2 I grew up with the Chief Justice of the
 3 Supreme Court of Canada, her name was Beverly
 4 McLaughlin, her maiden name was Beverly Yeats
 5 (phonetic) out of Banquet Crest (phonetic),
 6 Alberta, Canada.
 7 They have a very liberal government up
 8 in Canada. Alberta, the crown lands, support most
 9 of Canada. If we get tied in with them, we're
 10 going to support the same government which I'm
 11 definitely against. Hays, homosexuals, lesbians.
 12 Money is good to be made but on the wrong reasons,
 13 wrong objective, and wrong motives, we'd better
 14 watch what we're doing. I'm just -- There is
 15 always opposition to things, as Jerry Black said,
 16 but what the deal is, what is our end goal.
 17 Now, I understand this transmission line
 18 will take all of the electricity and stuff that
 19 people put into it, but there is a lot of other
 20 things that can be developed in eastern Montana.
 21 We have oil wells that are making millions of
 22 dollars a day. My Group is from Lake Elbert,
 23 North Dakota, which is Burke County, and what the
 24 deal is, we have the same position here.
 25 We have the environmentalists that --

LARRY CRUTCHER, REP
 406-842-8262

44

1 it's too pretty to drill, and there is one little
 2 problem. We already drilled it. If you look at
 3 Dapuyer, they have all these pump jacks that go up
 4 and down, and they're not pumping air. The other
 5 place we drilled was at Black Leaf Canyon. In the
 6 case the other day, it says, "This contains iron
 7 and not been touched." Well, if you read the
 8 geological records and the drilling permits, you
 9 will find that Fraczone No. 1 Texas was drilled
 10 right in the Black Leaf Canyon, and there is a lot
 11 of gas there. But we won't develop this because
 12 it gets too pretty to drill.
 13 We have coal plants that can't be put in
 14 because they're creating emissions. And when I
 15 was a kid, I rubbed dimes and stuff with the
 16 mercury that we had as kids. And what the deal
 17 is, the mercury that comes out of this coal plant
 18 is less than what we are accustomed to, what we
 19 grew up with, but it doesn't get into sides of the
 20 story.
 21 And what I'm standing up for is: let's
 22 make certain we get our fair share, instead of
 23 giving the control to Canada. Thank you.
 24 MR. WOODHURST: My name is Ted
 25 Woodhurst. I'm from Barber's County. As a private

LARRY CRUTCHER, REP
 406-842-8262

Response 394: Comments noted.

1 citizen, I think it is also important that we
 2 utilize the available taxable assets that will be
 3 generated --
 4 (Flip the tape)
 5 **Comment 395** MR. JOHNSON: -- the taxable assets
 6 that will become available with a project of this
 7 with spare the other activities that will come
 8 along with this, are also important to all of our
 9 communities. I think that there isn't a person in
 10 here that doesn't understand what the value of
 11 lowering our personal property taxes are, and how
 12 important it would be for us to do that. And with
 13 that, thank you very much, and I would support the
 14 MATL line.
 15 MR. CRSH: Anyone else?
 16 **Comment 396** MR. SITZMAN: I have a question. They
 17 sit down. I hear about farming around these
 18 uprights that are going to hold the line. What
 19 would be the problem of moving them? The straight
 20 distance between two points is a straight line,
 21 but what difference would it make if the straight
 22 line was over on a section line rather than
 23 running down through the middle of someone's
 24 property? If the person didn't own both sides of
 25 the section, all they would be doing is going

LARRY CRUTCHER, RFD
 406-442-9262

Response 395: Comment noted.

Response 396: As the agencies understand Mr. Sitzman's suggestion, it is to place the structures on section lines rather than in the interior of fields because the landowner would typically farm around only one side of the structure when placed on section lines. MATL is prepared to work with landowners to achieve a similar benefit by placing interior structures along field strip boundaries where the landowner farms that land in strips that are narrower than a full quarter section (Williams 2008d).

1 around it. It wouldn't be going around it, it
 2 would just be pulling into the field ways.
 3 **Comment 397** I'm no engineer or anything else, but it
 4 just seems to me that if you stayed away from the
 5 center of the property, and stayed to the property
 6 lines, it would make a lot more sense.
 7 **Comment 398** FEMALE SPEAKER: I'd like to ask one
 8 more question for those of you who are left.
 9 Based on what everyone has heard tonight about
 10 Alternative 4, could we have a show of hands of
 11 the people that are here tonight, that understood
 12 those four alternatives, that would be against
 13 Alternative 4?
 14 MALE SPEAKER: Against Alternative 4?
 15 FEMALE SPEAKER: Against Alternative 4.
 16 Six people.
 17 MALE SPEAKER: How many people do you
 18 think we lost?
 19 FEMALE SPEAKER: A lot. At least 10.
 20 MALE SPEAKER: How many people would be
 21 undecided?
 22 FEMALE SPEAKER: Undecided, would you
 23 like to raise your hands? There is one undecided.
 24 And those who didn't raise their hands, does that
 25 mean you're for it? Do a count down.
 LAURIE CRUTCHER, SRP
 408-440-9260

Response 397 and 398: Comments noted.

1 MALE SPEAKER: You know, another ⁴⁷ problem
 2 we could solve is had we just divided US and
 3 Canada on the Mississippi River, we wouldn't be
 4 having all these problems. Yeah, you wouldn't be
 5 here. We'd just have the DOD. You'd be somewhere
 6 else.

7 MR. KING: Well, I would get along.

8 FEMALE SPEAKER: Do you have to address
 9 that comment? You don't do that.

10 MR. KING: Probably not. The way we --
 11 "Commented noted."

12 MR. KING: Are there any other comments
 13 on the Environmental Impact Statement?

14 MR. KING: I'd like to -- we'll probably
 15 just close the record now. This is not --

16 **Comment 46** FEMALE SPEAKER: I should have clarified
 17 this. They don't have to go with just one
 18 alternative, right? You can use a combination of
 19 the four alternatives. So just for clarification
 20 for the audience, you can say you're against
 21 Alternative 4, but they still say use one, two, or
 22 three, and a little bit of four. So am I correct
 23 in that, Yes?

24 MR. KING: Well, I believe one is the
 25 no-action alternative, so we probably wouldn't use

LAURIE CRITCHER, APB
 800-442-8242

1 that in combination with the others. But ⁴⁸
 2 Alternatives 2, 3, and 4, and the local routing
 3 options that we've identified in the documents,
 4 more or less bracket the range of possibilities.
 5 If in your comments you come up with a new idea,
 6 an adjustment in alignment, submit that, and we'll
 7 try to take care of it.

8 Under the State process, if there is
 9 something new that is not proposed by HNTL, we
 10 have to notify the affected owners of that
 11 property, so we'll be making those contacts if any
 12 such suggestions do come in. But yes, what's laid
 13 out there brackets a fairly large range of
 14 possibilities of segments connecting each other,
 15 interconnecting one to another, and there is all
 16 sorts of permutations that could occur. We'll try
 17 to pick the alignment that minimizes adverse
 18 effect, while still keeping requirements of the statute
 19 involved both to the landowners and to HNTL.

20 MR. KING: That was a good point. And
 21 from the federal point of view, anything, any
 22 decision that's made, we are probably going to be
 23 looking primarily towards the State. Okay? In
 24 every one of these things, the State, they're sort
 25 of where the rubber meets the road. They know the

LAURIE CRITCHER, APB
 800-442-8242

1 local community much better than us, their doing
2 and approval criteria is a lot more extensive than
3 ours is.
4 So obviously we're going to give a great
5 deal of deference to any kind of opinions that they
6 have and anything that they might come up with, or
7 that any of you might further suggest, that
8 already is studied in the EIS in some way, or
9 shape, or form, would be fair game. We don't
10 necessarily have to go back to the drawing board.
11 If we've already covered the environmental impacts
12 of something, and there's little variations on it,
13 and what we've studied is already encompassed in
14 that, that's really no problem.
15 Well, with that, I guess we'll close the
16 record. I just want to thank everyone.
17 r r r r r
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

LAUREN CRITCHER, SR
404-442-2167

Response 399: The agencies could combine elements of Alternatives 2 through 4 or the local routing options. Alternative 1 is the No-Action alternative, so the agencies could not use that alternative in combination with elements of other alternatives.

14
1 right was the best. And I have to tell you, I've
2 never seen a community -- I'm proud to be part of
3 the Highline. That whole community, 100 percent,
4 wants this project. They know what it means to
5 the town. The farmers said, "I know it's -- I've
6 got a farm under those power lines, but we're
7 doing it for the community," they know what it's
8 going to do.
9
10 **Comment 401** So keep all this in mind, because the
11 benefits far outweigh -- and I don't like farming
12 around poles, and I have some of them on my place,
13 I wish the line was going out there, because then
14 I could put a wind farm in, and that's going to be
15 the spin-off. But you guys are going to have your
16 work out and here to make it as positive as Out
17 Bank did. They were really good. So nice power
18 to you guys. Thank you.
19
20 Mr. O'Neil: The next one that is signed
21 up -- By the way, we're calling up people who have
22 checked that they want to speak. We'll go through
23 those checks, and then that doesn't mean that
24 that's not your only bite at the apple. So as we
25 go through the evening, you change your mind, and
26 you want to say something, just come on up, tell
27 Ellen, tell myself, just step up to the microphone
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60
61
62
63
64
65
66
67
68
69
70
71
72
73
74
75
76
77
78
79
80
81
82
83
84
85
86
87
88
89
90
91
92
93
94
95
96
97
98
99
100
101
102
103
104
105
106
107
108
109
110
111
112
113
114
115
116
117
118
119
120
121
122
123
124
125
126
127
128
129
130
131
132
133
134
135
136
137
138
139
140
141
142
143
144
145
146
147
148
149
150
151
152
153
154
155
156
157
158
159
160
161
162
163
164
165
166
167
168
169
170
171
172
173
174
175
176
177
178
179
180
181
182
183
184
185
186
187
188
189
190
191
192
193
194
195
196
197
198
199
200
201
202
203
204
205
206
207
208
209
210
211
212
213
214
215
216
217
218
219
220
221
222
223
224
225
226
227
228
229
230
231
232
233
234
235
236
237
238
239
240
241
242
243
244
245
246
247
248
249
250
251
252
253
254
255
256
257
258
259
260
261
262
263
264
265
266
267
268
269
270
271
272
273
274
275
276
277
278
279
280
281
282
283
284
285
286
287
288
289
290
291
292
293
294
295
296
297
298
299
300
301
302
303
304
305
306
307
308
309
310
311
312
313
314
315
316
317
318
319
320
321
322
323
324
325
326
327
328
329
330
331
332
333
334
335
336
337
338
339
340
341
342
343
344
345
346
347
348
349
350
351
352
353
354
355
356
357
358
359
360
361
362
363
364
365
366
367
368
369
370
371
372
373
374
375
376
377
378
379
380
381
382
383
384
385
386
387
388
389
390
391
392
393
394
395
396
397
398
399
400
401
402
403
404
405
406
407
408
409
410
411
412
413
414
415
416
417
418
419
420
421
422
423
424
425
426
427
428
429
430
431
432
433
434
435
436
437
438
439
440
441
442
443
444
445
446
447
448
449
450
451
452
453
454
455
456
457
458
459
460
461
462
463
464
465
466
467
468
469
470
471
472
473
474
475
476
477
478
479
480
481
482
483
484
485
486
487
488
489
490
491
492
493
494
495
496
497
498
499
500
501
502
503
504
505
506
507
508
509
510
511
512
513
514
515
516
517
518
519
520
521
522
523
524
525
526
527
528
529
530
531
532
533
534
535
536
537
538
539
540
541
542
543
544
545
546
547
548
549
550
551
552
553
554
555
556
557
558
559
560
561
562
563
564
565
566
567
568
569
570
571
572
573
574
575
576
577
578
579
580
581
582
583
584
585
586
587
588
589
590
591
592
593
594
595
596
597
598
599
600
601
602
603
604
605
606
607
608
609
610
611
612
613
614
615
616
617
618
619
620
621
622
623
624
625
626
627
628
629
630
631
632
633
634
635
636
637
638
639
640
641
642
643
644
645
646
647
648
649
650
651
652
653
654
655
656
657
658
659
660
661
662
663
664
665
666
667
668
669
670
671
672
673
674
675
676
677
678
679
680
681
682
683
684
685
686
687
688
689
690
691
692
693
694
695
696
697
698
699
700
701
702
703
704
705
706
707
708
709
710
711
712
713
714
715
716
717
718
719
720
721
722
723
724
725
726
727
728
729
730
731
732
733
734
735
736
737
738
739
740
741
742
743
744
745
746
747
748
749
750
751
752
753
754
755
756
757
758
759
760
761
762
763
764
765
766
767
768
769
770
771
772
773
774
775
776
777
778
779
780
781
782
783
784
785
786
787
788
789
790
791
792
793
794
795
796
797
798
799
800
801
802
803
804
805
806
807
808
809
810
811
812
813
814
815
816
817
818
819
820
821
822
823
824
825
826
827
828
829
830
831
832
833
834
835
836
837
838
839
840
841
842
843
844
845
846
847
848
849
850
851
852
853
854
855
856
857
858
859
860
861
862
863
864
865
866
867
868
869
870
871
872
873
874
875
876
877
878
879
880
881
882
883
884
885
886
887
888
889
890
891
892
893
894
895
896
897
898
899
900
901
902
903
904
905
906
907
908
909
910
911
912
913
914
915
916
917
918
919
920
921
922
923
924
925
926
927
928
929
930
931
932
933
934
935
936
937
938
939
940
941
942
943
944
945
946
947
948
949
950
951
952
953
954
955
956
957
958
959
960
961
962
963
964
965
966
967
968
969
970
971
972
973
974
975
976
977
978
979
980
981
982
983
984
985
986
987
988
989
990
991
992
993
994
995
996
997
998
999
1000
1001
1002
1003
1004
1005
1006
1007
1008
1009
1010
1011
1012
1013
1014
1015
1016
1017
1018
1019
1020
1021
1022
1023
1024
1025
1026
1027
1028
1029
1030
1031
1032
1033
1034
1035
1036
1037
1038
1039
1040
1041
1042
1043
1044
1045
1046
1047
1048
1049
1050
1051
1052
1053
1054
1055
1056
1057
1058
1059
1060
1061
1062
1063
1064
1065
1066
1067
1068
1069
1070
1071
1072
1073
1074
1075
1076
1077
1078
1079
1080
1081
1082
1083
1084
1085
1086
1087
1088
1089
1090
1091
1092
1093
1094
1095
1096
1097
1098
1099
1100
1101
1102
1103
1104
1105
1106
1107
1108
1109
1110
1111
1112
1113
1114
1115
1116
1117
1118
1119
1120
1121
1122
1123
1124
1125
1126
1127
1128
1129
1130
1131
1132
1133
1134
1135
1136
1137
1138
1139
1140
1141
1142
1143
1144
1145
1146
1147
1148
1149
1150
1151
1152
1153
1154
1155
1156
1157
1158
1159
1160
1161
1162
1163
1164
1165
1166
1167
1168
1169
1170
1171
1172
1173
1174
1175
1176
1177
1178
1179
1180
1181
1182
1183
1184
1185
1186
1187
1188
1189
1190
1191
1192
1193
1194
1195
1196
1197
1198
1199
1200
1201
1202
1203
1204
1205
1206
1207
1208
1209
1210
1211
1212
1213
1214
1215
1216
1217
1218
1219
1220
1221
1222
1223
1224
1225
1226
1227
1228
1229
1230
1231
1232
1233
1234
1235
1236
1237
1238
1239
1240
1241
1242
1243
1244
1245
1246
1247
1248
1249
1250
1251
1252
1253
1254
1255
1256
1257
1258
1259
1260
1261
1262
1263
1264
1265
1266
1267
1268
1269
1270
1271
1272
1273
1274
1275
1276
1277
1278
1279
1280
1281
1282
1283
1284
1285
1286
1287
1288
1289
1290
1291
1292
1293
1294
1295
1296
1297
1298
1299
1300
1301
1302
1303
1304
1305
1306
1307
1308
1309
1310
1311
1312
1313
1314
1315
1316
1317
1318
1319
1320
1321
1322
1323
1324
1325
1326
1327
1328
1329
1330
1331
1332
1333
1334
1335
1336
1337
1338
1339
1340
1341
1342
1343
1344
1345
1346
1347
1348
1349
1350
1351
1352
1353
1354
1355
1356
1357
1358
1359
1360
1361
1362
1363
1364
1365
1366
1367
1368
1369
1370
1371
1372
1373
1374
1375
1376
1377
1378
1379
1380
1381
1382
1383
1384
1385
1386
1387
1388
1389
1390
1391
1392
1393
1394
1395
1396
1397
1398
1399
1400
1401
1402
1403
1404
1405
1406
1407
1408
1409
1410
1411
1412
1413
1414
1415
1416
1417
1418
1419
1420
1421
1422
1423
1424
1425
1426
1427
1428
1429
1430
1431
1432
1433
1434
1435
1436
1437
1438
1439
1440
1441
1442
1443
1444
1445
1446
1447
1448
1449
1450
1451
1452
1453
1454
1455
1456
1457
1458
1459
1460
1461
1462
1463
1464
1465
1466
1467
1468
1469
1470
1471
1472
1473
1474
1475
1476
1477
1478
1479
1480
1481
1482
1483
1484
1485
1486
1487
1488
1489
1490
1491
1492
1493
1494
1495
1496
1497
1498
1499
1500
1501
1502
1503
1504
1505
1506
1507
1508
1509
1510
1511
1512
1513
1514
1515
1516
1517
1518
1519
1520
1521
1522
1523
1524
1525
1526
1527
1528
1529
1530
1531
1532
1533
1534
1535
1536
1537
1538
1539
1540
1541
1542
1543
1544
1545
1546
1547
1548
1549
1550
1551
1552
1553
1554
1555
1556
1557
1558
1559
1560
1561
1562
1563
1564
1565
1566
1567
1568
1569
1570
1571
1572
1573
1574
1575
1576
1577
1578
1579
1580
1581
1582
1583
1584
1585
1586
1587
1588
1589
1590
1591
1592
1593
1594
1595
1596
1597
1598
1599
1600
1601
1602
1603
1604
1605
1606
1607
1608
1609
1610
1611
1612
1613
1614
1615
1616
1617
1618
1619
1620
1621
1622
1623
1624
1625
1626
1627
1628
1629
1630
1631
1632
1633
1634
1635
1636
1637
1638
1639
1640
1641
1642
1643
1644
1645
1646
1647
1648
1649
1650
1651
1652
1653
1654
1655
1656
1657
1658
1659
1660
1661
1662
1663
1664
1665
1666
1667
1668
1669
1670
1671
1672
1673
1674
1675
1676
1677
1678
1679
1680
1681
1682
1683
1684
1685
1686
1687
1688
1689
1690
1691
1692
1693
1694
1695
1696
1697
1698
1699
1700
1701
1702
1703
1704
1705
1706
1707
1708
1709
1710
1711
1712
1713
1714
1715
1716
1717
1718
1719
1720
1721
1722
1723
1724
1725
1726
1727
1728
1729
1730
1731
1732
1733
1734
1735
1736
1737
1738
1739
1740
1741
1742
1743
1744
1745
1746
1747
1748
1749
1750
1751
1752
1753
1754
1755
1756
1757
1758
1759
1760
1761
1762
1763
1764
1765
1766
1767
1768
1769
1770
1771
1772
1773
1774
1775
1776
1777
1778
1779
1780
1781
1782
1783
1784
1785
1786
1787
1788
1789
1790
1791
1792
1793
1794
1795
1796
1797
1798
1799
1800
1801
1802
1803
1804
1805
1806
1807
1808
1809
1810
1811
1812
1813
1814
1815
1816
1817
1818
1819
1820
1821
1822
1823
1824
1825
1826
1827
1828
1829
1830
1831
1832
1833
1834
1835
1836
1837
1838
1839
1840
1841
1842
1843
1844
1845
1846
1847
1848
1849
1850
1851
1852
1853
1854
1855
1856
1857
1858
1859
1860
1861
1862
1863
1864
1865
1866
1867
1868
1869
1870
1871
1872
1873
1874
1875
1876
1877
1878
1879
1880
1881
1882
1883
1884
1885
1886
1887
1888
1889
1890
1891
1892
1893
1894
1895
1896
1897
1898
1899
1900
1901
1902
1903
1904
1905
1906
1907
1908
1909
1910
1911
1912
1913
1914
1915
1916
1917
1918
1919
1920
1921
1922
1923
1924
1925
1926
1927
1928
1929
1930
1931
1932
1933
1934
1935
1936
1937
1938
1939
1940
1941
1942
1943
1944
1945
1946
1947
1948
1949
1950
1951
1952
1953
1954
1955
1956
1957
1958
1959
1960
1961
1962
1963
1964
1965
1966
1967
1968
1969
1970
1971
1972
1973
1974
1975
1976
1977
1978
1979
1980
1981
1982
1983
1984
1985
1986
1987
1988
1989
1990
1991
1992
1993
1994
1995
1996
1997
1998
1999
2000
2001
2002
2003
2004
2005
2006
2007
2008
2009
2010
2011
2012
2013
2014
2015
2016
2017
2018
2019
2020
2021
2022
2023
2024
2025
2026
2027
2028
2029
2030
2031
2032
2033
2034
2035
2036
2037
2038
2039
2040
2041
2042
2043
2044
2045
2046
2047
2048
2049
2050
2051
2052
2053
2054
2055
2056
2057
2058
2059
2060
2061
2062
2063
2064
2065
2066
2067
2068
2069
2070
2071
2072
2073
2074
2075
2076
2077
2078
2079
2080
2081
2082
2083
2084
2085
2086
2087
2088
2089
2090
2091
2092
2093
2094
2095
2096
2097
2098
2099
2100
2101
2102
2103
2104
2105
2106
2107
2108
2109
2110
2111
2112
2113
2114
2115
2116
2117
2118
2119
2120
2121
2122
2123
2124
2125
2126
2127
2128
2129
2130
2131
2132
2133
2134
2135
2136
2137
2138
2139
2140
2141
2142
2143
2144
2145
2146
2147
2148
2149
2150
2151
2152
2153
2154
2155
2156
2157
2158
2159
2160
2161
2162
2163
2164
2165
2166
2167
2168
2169
2170
2171
2172
2173
2174
2175
2176
2177
2178
2179
2180
2181
2182
2183
2184
2185
2186
2187

Responses 402 and 403: Your comments are noted.

1 when everybody is done. And just because you've¹⁵
2 spoken once doesn't mean you can't speak again.
3 So this is pretty informal. All right?
4 Brett Doney.

5 **Comment 402** MR. DONEY: I'm Brett Doney with the
6 Great Falls Development Authority. We're a
7 regional economic development group based in Great
8 Falls, but we provide services in the entire
9 sixteen county central Montana region.

10 We're very much in support of this
11 project. We have a couple of comments. First of
12 all, with regard to the draft EIS, a very thorough
13 job, took longer than any of us wanted, but we
14 think it covered all of the issues. We do believe
15 that the process has gone on much too slowly.

16 **Comment 403** In terms of the need from an economic
17 development standpoint, energy is a target
18 industry of ours. We think there are tremendous
19 opportunities here in central Montana. You can't
20 have wind energy development without transmission,
21 just like you can't have agriculture without
22 highways and railroads to export the product. We
23 think energy can be a wonderful export product.

24 There does need to be a balance between
25 property owners and the transmission, and we think

LARRY CRITCHER, RPO
406-442-8262

16
 1 there's a balance that's possible here to have.
 2 **Comment 404** We have been down to west Texas and seen
 3 what they've done down there. Now, west Texas had
 4 an average wind speed of nine miles an hour. We
 5 have average wind speed of 15 to 17 miles an hour.
 6 We want to know -- and this is primarily directed
 7 to the State -- why in west Texas they have 4,500
 8 megawatts of installed wind power.
 9 **Comment 405** The twelve counties of west Texas, their
 10 economies have been completely transformed. Their
 11 county budgets have been turned around 180
 12 degrees, their schools, their economic
 13 development, their tax base. They've had a --
 14 Right now it's about a million dollars per
 15 megawatt in terms of tax base. Imagine, they've
 16 got four and a half billion dollars of investment.
 17 They've got another 4,000 megawatts under
 18 development. And Texas did it by putting together
 19 a transmission plan and getting their act
 20 together.
 21 **Comment 406** We have a better wind resource here than
 22 they do, and there is no reason, if we can't work
 23 together, set standards, treat property owners
 24 right, that we can't have 8,000 to 10,000
 25 megawatts in central Montana, and this is just a
 LAURIE CRUTCHER, RFR
 406-247-0262

Response 404: In both states businesses that use, manufacture, or install wind energy generators can receive franchise tax deductions and/or exemptions. There are also property tax exemptions involving wind energy generation for business installation or for the construction of such systems.

Probably the largest differences in wind development between Montana and Texas are in the states' respective populations, renewable portfolio standards, and prices paid for electricity. Montana has a population of about 950,000 and consumes about 28,000,000 MWh/year while Texas has a population of about 24,000,000 and consumes about 400,000,000 MWh/year. Montana has a renewable energy portfolio requirement of 15% or about 450 average MW applied to its utilities in the year 2015. In 2005 Texas passed a renewable energy portfolio requirement of 2,000 MW by 2009. This has been expanded to 5,580 MW by 2015.

Lastly, the price paid for electricity is higher in Texas than it is in Montana as shown below. Higher prices could make it easier to attract investors in Texas than Montana.

| Average Retail Prices (cents/KWh) | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| | Texas ¹ | Montana ² |
| Residential | 12.86 | 8.28 |
| Commercial | 9.85 | 7.44 |
| Industrial | 7.82 | 5.12 |
| Transportation | 8.42 | NA |
| All Sectors | 10.34 | 6.91 |

Source:

¹http://www.eia.doe.gov/cneaf/electricity/st_profiles/sept08tx.xls

²http://www.eia.doe.gov/cneaf/electricity/st_profiles/sept08mt.xls

Responses 405 and 406: Comments noted.

17

1 part of it.

2 **Comment 407** Our region is far too dependent on

3 defense and agriculture, two wonderful industries

4 that we want to see continue, but let's face it.

5 We have very little control over what the

6 Department of Defense does, and we don't have any

7 control over the weather or what rural commodity

8 prices do. Right now, things are looking very

9 good, but we lost a missile squadron, and that's

10 going to be a tax hit on the rural counties.

11 We formed a diversification project

12 working with Sweetgrass Development that we're

13 kicking off. We're targeting two industries, milk

14 processing and energy. We think there is a lot of

15 potential, and there is some over with biomass

16 and things like that. But the best opportunity

17 that we have right now for immediate tax base is

18 wind development. So we've got to figure out a

19 way that we can all sit down and work together and

20 make it happen.

21 **Comment 408** Lastly, on the need from the

22 transmission grid standpoint, this line will add

23 quite a bit of reliability and flexibility to the

24 transmission grid that we have now. And the

25 transmission grid, something to keep in mind is

LAURIE CRUTCHER, SFB
408-842-8260

Response 407: Comment noted.

Response 408: NorthWestern has announced plans to construct a new gas fired generation plant near Anaconda, MT to satisfy its load balancing challenges. While the MATL line would certainly open new possibilities for load balancing for NorthWestern, NorthWestern may have other options available for load balancing. Also see Line Capacity Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 409: Comment noted.

Response 410: Also see Farming Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

1 that Northwestern has had problems. They are not
2 at balance a number of times, and there is a
3 safety margin, and they have slipped below the
4 margin. So having this opportunity to share power
5 with our neighbors in Alberta will strengthen our
6 overall regional grid, which is important to all
7 of us.

8 **Comment 409** So just I want to stress. Thank you for
9 the opportunity, but please expedite the process,
10 issue a decision. We like what we've seen in
11 Alberta. They've issued a decision with
12 conditions, and NRTL is now working to meet those
13 conditions up in Alberta, and take care of the
14 property owners. We think the same could be done
15 here.

16 **MR. CHISH** The next person is Ted
17 Crawford.

18 **Comment 410** **MR. CRAWFORD:** I just wanted to say that
19 I'm not against the line, but I would like to see
20 where the -- (inaudible) -- power goes. I would
21 like to have it go straight down the fence line,
22 single pole, and that would be fine, because my
23 son and grandson are here, and they farm to the
24 farmer, and we have all big equipment, and we
25 can't be turning around and missing the ground.

LARRY CROUCHER, SPE
408-447-9260

1 that we can't see. So with single poles, we can
2 swing around them without any trouble, and that's
3 my comment -- (inaudible) -- big equipment.
4
5 MS. COOK: Sandra Broadner.
6
7 MS. BROADNER: Last night I spoke a
8 little bit, and I said I didn't have my
9 Commissioner hat on, but tonight I do have my
10 Commissioner hat on. I am speaking on behalf of
11 our entire Board of Commissioners. Cindy Johnson
12 is currently in China. She won't be here tonight.
13 Joe Christensen has been at the meetings, both in
14 Great Falls and in Cut Bank. We had a medical
15 procedure today, and he won't be here tonight. So
16 you're stuck with hearing from me.
17
18 **Comment 411** The Board of Deputy Commissioners
19 strongly supports construction of the Alberta Tie
20 line. There are plenty of reasons to support this
21 construction. If environmental concerns were your
22 only criteria, the minimal trade-offs imposed by
23 this new construction would be well worth the
24 value to our society and to the environment.
25 simply for the capability to transmit clean green
26 power.
27
28 **Comment 412** Given the fact that most of the carrying
29 capacity of the line has already been obligated to
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60
61
62
63
64
65
66
67
68
69
70
71
72
73
74
75
76
77
78
79
80
81
82
83
84
85
86
87
88
89
90
91
92
93
94
95
96
97
98
99
100
101
102
103
104
105
106
107
108
109
110
111
112
113
114
115
116
117
118
119
120
121
122
123
124
125
126
127
128
129
130
131
132
133
134
135
136
137
138
139
140
141
142
143
144
145
146
147
148
149
150
151
152
153
154
155
156
157
158
159
160
161
162
163
164
165
166
167
168
169
170
171
172
173
174
175
176
177
178
179
180
181
182
183
184
185
186
187
188
189
190
191
192
193
194
195
196
197
198
199
200
201
202
203
204
205
206
207
208
209
210
211
212
213
214
215
216
217
218
219
220
221
222
223
224
225
226
227
228
229
230
231
232
233
234
235
236
237
238
239
240
241
242
243
244
245
246
247
248
249
250
251
252
253
254
255
256
257
258
259
260
261
262
263
264
265
266
267
268
269
270
271
272
273
274
275
276
277
278
279
280
281
282
283
284
285
286
287
288
289
290
291
292
293
294
295
296
297
298
299
300
301
302
303
304
305
306
307
308
309
310
311
312
313
314
315
316
317
318
319
320
321
322
323
324
325
326
327
328
329
330
331
332
333
334
335
336
337
338
339
340
341
342
343
344
345
346
347
348
349
350
351
352
353
354
355
356
357
358
359
360
361
362
363
364
365
366
367
368
369
370
371
372
373
374
375
376
377
378
379
380
381
382
383
384
385
386
387
388
389
390
391
392
393
394
395
396
397
398
399
400
401
402
403
404
405
406
407
408
409
410
411
412
413
414
415
416
417
418
419
420
421
422
423
424
425
426
427
428
429
430
431
432
433
434
435
436
437
438
439
440
441
442
443
444
445
446
447
448
449
450
451
452
453
454
455
456
457
458
459
460
461
462
463
464
465
466
467
468
469
470
471
472
473
474
475
476
477
478
479
480
481
482
483
484
485
486
487
488
489
490
491
492
493
494
495
496
497
498
499
500
501
502
503
504
505
506
507
508
509
510
511
512
513
514
515
516
517
518
519
520
521
522
523
524
525
526
527
528
529
530
531
532
533
534
535
536
537
538
539
540
541
542
543
544
545
546
547
548
549
550
551
552
553
554
555
556
557
558
559
560
561
562
563
564
565
566
567
568
569
570
571
572
573
574
575
576
577
578
579
580
581
582
583
584
585
586
587
588
589
590
591
592
593
594
595
596
597
598
599
600
601
602
603
604
605
606
607
608
609
610
611
612
613
614
615
616
617
618
619
620
621
622
623
624
625
626
627
628
629
630
631
632
633
634
635
636
637
638
639
640
641
642
643
644
645
646
647
648
649
650
651
652
653
654
655
656
657
658
659
660
661
662
663
664
665
666
667
668
669
670
671
672
673
674
675
676
677
678
679
680
681
682
683
684
685
686
687
688
689
690
691
692
693
694
695
696
697
698
699
700
701
702
703
704
705
706
707
708
709
710
711
712
713
714
715
716
717
718
719
720
721
722
723
724
725
726
727
728
729
730
731
732
733
734
735
736
737
738
739
740
741
742
743
744
745
746
747
748
749
750
751
752
753
754
755
756
757
758
759
760
761
762
763
764
765
766
767
768
769
770
771
772
773
774
775
776
777
778
779
780
781
782
783
784
785
786
787
788
789
790
791
792
793
794
795
796
797
798
799
800
801
802
803
804
805
806
807
808
809
810
811
812
813
814
815
816
817
818
819
820
821
822
823
824
825
826
827
828
829
830
831
832
833
834
835
836
837
838
839
840
841
842
843
844
845
846
847
848
849
850
851
852
853
854
855
856
857
858
859
860
861
862
863
864
865
866
867
868
869
870
871
872
873
874
875
876
877
878
879
880
881
882
883
884
885
886
887
888
889
890
891
892
893
894
895
896
897
898
899
900
901
902
903
904
905
906
907
908
909
910
911
912
913
914
915
916
917
918
919
920
921
922
923
924
925
926
927
928
929
930
931
932
933
934
935
936
937
938
939
940
941
942
943
944
945
946
947
948
949
950
951
952
953
954
955
956
957
958
959
960
961
962
963
964
965
966
967
968
969
970
971
972
973
974
975
976
977
978
979
980
981
982
983
984
985
986
987
988
989
990
991
992
993
994
995
996
997
998
999
1000
1001
1002
1003
1004
1005
1006
1007
1008
1009
1010
1011
1012
1013
1014
1015
1016
1017
1018
1019
1020
1021
1022
1023
1024
1025
1026
1027
1028
1029
1030
1031
1032
1033
1034
1035
1036
1037
1038
1039
1040
1041
1042
1043
1044
1045
1046
1047
1048
1049
1050
1051
1052
1053
1054
1055
1056
1057
1058
1059
1060
1061
1062
1063
1064
1065
1066
1067
1068
1069
1070
1071
1072
1073
1074
1075
1076
1077
1078
1079
1080
1081
1082
1083
1084
1085
1086
1087
1088
1089
1090
1091
1092
1093
1094
1095
1096
1097
1098
1099
1100
1101
1102
1103
1104
1105
1106
1107
1108
1109
1110
1111
1112
1113
1114
1115
1116
1117
1118
1119
1120
1121
1122
1123
1124
1125
1126
1127
1128
1129
1130
1131
1132
1133
1134
1135
1136
1137
1138
1139
1140
1141
1142
1143
1144
1145
1146
1147
1148
1149
1150
1151
1152
1153
1154
1155
1156
1157
1158
1159
1160
1161
1162
1163
1164
1165
1166
1167
1168
1169
1170
1171
1172
1173
1174
1175
1176
1177
1178
1179
1180
1181
1182
1183
1184
1185
1186
1187
1188
1189
1190
1191
1192
1193
1194
1195
1196
1197
1198
1199
1200
1201
1202
1203
1204
1205
1206
1207
1208
1209
1210
1211
1212
1213
1214
1215
1216
1217
1218
1219
1220
1221
1222
1223
1224
1225
1226
1227
1228
1229
1230
1231
1232
1233
1234
1235
1236
1237
1238
1239
1240
1241
1242
1243
1244
1245
1246
1247
1248
1249
1250
1251
1252
1253
1254
1255
1256
1257
1258
1259
1260
1261
1262
1263
1264
1265
1266
1267
1268
1269
1270
1271
1272
1273
1274
1275
1276
1277
1278
1279
1280
1281
1282
1283
1284
1285
1286
1287
1288
1289
1290
1291
1292
1293
1294
1295
1296
1297
1298
1299
1300
1301
1302
1303
1304
1305
1306
1307
1308
1309
1310
1311
1312
1313
1314
1315
1316
1317
1318
1319
1320
1321
1322
1323
1324
1325
1326
1327
1328
1329
1330
1331
1332
1333
1334
1335
1336
1337
1338
1339
1340
1341
1342
1343
1344
1345
1346
1347
1348
1349
1350
1351
1352
1353
1354
1355
1356
1357
1358
1359
1360
1361
1362
1363
1364
1365
1366
1367
1368
1369
1370
1371
1372
1373
1374
1375
1376
1377
1378
1379
1380
1381
1382
1383
1384
1385
1386
1387
1388
1389
1390
1391
1392
1393
1394
1395
1396
1397
1398
1399
1400
1401
1402
1403
1404
1405
1406
1407
1408
1409
1410
1411
1412
1413
1414
1415
1416
1417
1418
1419
1420
1421
1422
1423
1424
1425
1426
1427
1428
1429
1430
1431
1432
1433
1434
1435
1436
1437
1438
1439
1440
1441
1442
1443
1444
1445
1446
1447
1448
1449
1450
1451
1452
1453
1454
1455
1456
1457
1458
1459
1460
1461
1462
1463
1464
1465
1466
1467
1468
1469
1470
1471
1472
1473
1474
1475
1476
1477
1478
1479
1480
1481
1482
1483
1484
1485
1486
1487
1488
1489
1490
1491
1492
1493
1494
1495
1496
1497
1498
1499
1500
1501
1502
1503
1504
1505
1506
1507
1508
1509
1510
1511
1512
1513
1514
1515
1516
1517
1518
1519
1520
1521
1522
1523
1524
1525
1526
1527
1528
1529
1530
1531
1532
1533
1534
1535
1536
1537
1538
1539
1540
1541
1542
1543
1544
1545
1546
1547
1548
1549
1550
1551
1552
1553
1554
1555
1556
1557
1558
1559
1560
1561
1562
1563
1564
1565
1566
1567
1568
1569
1570
1571
1572
1573
1574
1575
1576
1577
1578
1579
1580
1581
1582
1583
1584
1585
1586
1587
1588
1589
1590
1591
1592
1593
1594
1595
1596
1597
1598
1599
1600
1601
1602
1603
1604
1605
1606
1607
1608
1609
1610
1611
1612
1613
1614
1615
1616
1617
1618
1619
1620
1621
1622
1623
1624
1625
1626
1627
1628
1629
1630
1631
1632
1633
1634
1635
1636
1637
1638
1639
1640
1641
1642
1643
1644
1645
1646
1647
1648
1649
1650
1651
1652
1653
1654
1655
1656
1657
1658
1659
1660
1661
1662
1663
1664
1665
1666
1667
1668
1669
1670
1671
1672
1673
1674
1675
1676
1677
1678
1679
1680
1681
1682
1683
1684
1685
1686
1687
1688
1689
1690
1691
1692
1693
1694
1695
1696
1697
1698
1699
1700
1701
1702
1703
1704
1705
1706
1707
1708
1709
1710
1711
1712
1713
1714
1715
1716
1717
1718
1719
1720
1721
1722
1723
1724
1725
1726
1727
1728
1729
1730
1731
1732
1733
1734
1735
1736
1737
1738
1739
1740
1741
1742
1743
1744
1745
1746
1747
1748
1749
1750
1751
1752
1753
1754
1755
1756
1757
1758
1759
1760
1761
1762
1763
1764
1765
1766
1767
1768
1769
1770
1771
1772
1773
1774
1775
1776
1777
1778
1779
1780
1781
1782
1783
1784
1785
1786
1787
1788
1789
1790
1791
1792
1793
1794
1795
1796
1797
1798
1799
1800
1801
1802
1803
1804
1805
1806
1807
1808
1809
1810
1811
1812
1813
1814
1815
1816
1817
1818
1819
1820
1821
1822
1823
1824
1825
1826
1827
1828
1829
1830
1831
1832
1833
1834
1835
1836
1837
1838
1839
1840
1841
1842
1843
1844
1845
1846
1847
1848
1849
1850
1851
1852
1853
1854
1855
1856
1857
1858
1859
1860
1861
1862
1863
1864
1865
1866
1867
1868
1869
1870
1871
1872
1873
1874
1875
1876
1877
1878
1879
1880
1881
1882
1883
1884
1885
1886
1887
1888
1889
1890
1891
1892
1893
1894
1895
1896
1897
1898
1899
1900
1901
1902
1903
1904
1905
1906
1907
1908
1909
1910
1911
1912
1913
1914
1915
1916
1917
1918
1919
1920
1921
1922
1923
1924
1925
1926
1927
1928
1929
1930
1931
1932
1933
1934
1935
1936
1937
1938
1939
1940
1941
1942
1943
1944
1945
1946
1947
1948
1949
1950
1951
1952
1953
1954
1955
1956
1957
1958
1959
1960
1961
1962
1963
1964
1965
1966
1967
1968
1969
1970
1971
1972
1973
1974
1975
1976
1977
1978
1979
1980
1981
1982
1983
1984
1985
1986
1987
1988
1989
1990
1991
1992
1993
1994
1995
1996
1997
1998
1999
2000
2001
2002
2003
2004
2005
2006
2007
2008
2009
2010
2011
2012
2013
2014
2015
2016
2017
2018
2019
2020
2021
2022
2023
2024
2025
2026
2027
2028
2029
2030
2031
2032
2033
2034
2035
2036
2037
2038
2039
2040
2041
2042
2043
2044
2045
2046
2047
2048
2049
2050
2051
2052
2053
2054
2055
2056
2057
2058
2059
2060
2061
2062
2063
2064
2065
2066
2067
2068
2069
2070
2071
2072
2073
2074
2075
2076
2077
2078
2079
2080
2081
2082
2083
2084
2085
2086
2087
2088
2089
2090
2091
2092
2093
2094
2095
2096
2097
2098
2099
2100
2101
2102
2103
2104
2105
2106
2107
2108
2109
2110
2111
2112
2113
2114
2115
2116
2117
2118
2119
2120
2121
2122
2123
2124
2125
2126
2127
2128
2129
2130
2131
2132
2133
2134
2135
2136
2137
2138
2139
2140
2141
2142
2143
2144
2145
2146
2147
2148
2149
2150
2151
2152
2153
2154
2155
2156
2157
2158
2159
2160
2161
2162
2163
2164
2165
2166
2167
2168
2169
2170
2171
2172
2173
2174
2175
2176
2177
2178
2179
2180
2181
2182
2183
2184
2185
2186
2187
2188
2189
2190
2191
2192
2193
2194
219

Response 413 and 414: Comments noted.

1 wind developers, transmission of renewable energy
2 seems assured.

3 **Comment 413** As Commissioners, we are responsible for
4 the fiscal operations of Sanders County. We look
5 to the construction of this line and the
6 associated wind generation facilities as a way to
7 broaden the tax base, or simultaneously alleviate
8 the tax burdens on our existing taxpayers. The
9 approximately \$280,000 in property taxes that
10 would come directly from the line would be a more
11 than welcome addition.

12 **Comment 414** The transmission line would also be
13 a catalyst for wind farm developments such as that
14 in Judith Gap. MATL project pays approximately
15 \$1.2 million in taxes to the county in which it is
16 located. To put that into perspective, Sanders
17 County's entire budget for fiscal year 2008 was
18 right at \$7 million. This is a big impact, folks.
19 From an economic point of view, factoring in
20 additional people, businesses, and support
21 services, both for line itself and for
22 accompanying wind towers, the positive fiscal
23 impact of this project could be critical for the
24 sustainability of our communities.

25 As Commissioners, we also have a duty of

LARRY CATCHER, SR.
408-447-9261

Response 415: Comment noted.

Response 416: MATL has proposed a revised compensation package and an alternative dispute resolution process. They are described in Sections 2.3 and 3.13.2.

21
1 rare towards all of the residents in the county,
2 which included a variety of businesses, as well as
3 agriculture. With all three Commissioners
4 involved in business, and two of our three
5 Commissioners actively involved in the production
6 agriculture, it is a duty we take seriously.

7 **Comment 415** There is no denying that farming around
8 power poles is costly, inefficient, and there are
9 a whole variety of politically incorrect
10 adjectives that can be used to describe the
11 process. It followed logically that it's much
12 simpler to farm around single pole structures that
13 are located on section lines, as opposed to double
14 pole structures that were initially proposed in
15 the diagonal crossings. To the extent practical,
16 monopoles should be utilized. This line needs to
17 be built right, but it must be built.

18 **Comment 416** All stakeholders need to recognize that
19 both MATL and farmers face serious financial
20 consequences based upon these placement decisions,
21 and an equitable balance has to be achieved.

22 Many of the concerns that we have heard
23 regarding compensation for poles should be
24 business negotiations between MATL and private
25 landowners. To that end, we would urge both the

LARRY CRUTCHER, SR.
408-847-8961

1 ONE and the DEQ to issue any and all necessary ²² **Comment 417**
2 permits as expeditiously as possible, so that MNTL
3 may finalize those negotiations and begin
4 construction. Thank you.

5 MR. COYNE: Doug Ray, please.

6 **Comment 418** MR. RAY: Thank you. I'll be brief. I
7 represent Glacier -- (inaudible) -- and I'm here
8 on behalf of the Board of Directors and the
9 management. And we just want to throw our support
10 behind this project. It means a lot to a lot of
11 people, and we'll do whatever it takes to get it
12 going. Thank you.

13 MR. COYNE: The next speaker signed up is
14 Chris Berg.

15 MR. BERG: My name is Chris Berg. I
16 live in the northwest, Genard, and I'm a citizen
17 of the United States, and a member of Pondera
18 County.

19 **Comment 419** MNTL's Alternative 1 would pass just
20 west of my property in Pondera County, and may
21 additionally affect the western view from my
22 property. However, I'm in favor of the project
23 for the following reasons.

24 A very clear Environmental Impact
25 Statement study has been completed. It means a

LARIS DUTCHER, SR
408-447-9262

Response 417: Comments noted.

Response 418: Comment noted.

Response 419: Your comment is noted. See the discussion of Visual Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 420 and 421: Comment noted.

1 very minimal impact on the -- (impossible) --²³
 2 environment of both farms. Several designs and
 3 construction methods have been incorporated into
 4 the project to minimize the environmental impact
 5 at the cost of NATEL. I believe NATEL has gone to
 6 great lengths to meet the concerns of persons and
 7 entities at the top of the line, including charged
 8 in pole types, and monetary compensation for those
 9 affected.

10 **Comment 40:** NATEL's project is good for the state and
 11 local economies of Montana. Rural communities
 12 will benefit from the construction, future
 13 maintenance, and tax revenues paid by NATEL, which
 14 would be critically important for rural areas of
 15 Montana now and in the future.

16 **Comment 41:** This project will enable several wind
 17 turbine farms to operate in north central Montana.
 18 Wind energy is a very environmentally friendly
 19 electrical generation resource that without this
 20 line would not be possible. This project, in
 21 combination with wind generation, will be seen by
 22 other investors, and will help Montana become
 23 recognized as a place to develop renewable energy
 24 resources.

25 In the end, I do believe there is more

LARRY CROTHER, SR
 406-442-9260

34

1 sacrifice by those who farm lands or are grazed
 2 by those lines. However, many of those concerns
 3 have been met. This line is critically important
 4 for Montana and its rural communities, including
 5 Conrad.

6 **Comment 422** Furthermore, I'm extremely disappointed
 7 that I was not contacted by MDTL as a land owner
 8 whose land would be bordered by the line. Just
 9 this evening looking at the new map, I made this
 10 discovery. I believe it's due process that I be
 11 contacted as part of the process. The new
 12 alternative is an alternative to Alternative 3
 13 northwest of Conrad, and I was not aware it may
 14 cross or border my property.

15 I am, however, still in favor of the
 16 line, but I would like to be better informed.
 17 Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

18 MR. CHOI: Harold Olson, please.

19 **Comment 423** MR. OLSON: Tom, Tony, and the rest of
 20 the committee here, we thank you for giving us
 21 this opportunity to tell you our feelings about
 22 the MDTL line. I am Harold Olson of Conrad, and I
 23 represent the Fenders Economic Development
 24 Corporation, and the corporation has been in the
 25 economic development business for over 30 years.

LARRY CRUTCHER, RFR
 408-442-9262

Response 422: Comments noted.

Response 423: See the revision in Section 2.6.5.

Response 424: Comment noted.

Response 425: Comment noted.

28

1 **Comment 425** This is one of the greatest economic
 2 **Cont.** development possibilities that we have. We have
 3 seen the demise of lumbering in Montana, mining in
 4 Montana, the demise of many energy sources and
 5 with that, we need alternate energy transmission
 6 lines, so that development of wind power becomes
 7 more feasible. So I speak on behalf of the Board
 8 in favor of this project. Thank you.

9 MR. CHASE: Chris Stephens.

10 MR. STEPHENS: Hello. My name is Chris
 11 Stephens, and my family farm is in the county where
 12 this line is being built. We will have at least a
 13 mile to a mile and a half of this line, depending
 14 upon the route.

15 **Comment 426** I myself was personally disappointed in
 16 all the County Commissioners and local businesses,
 17 who are more concerned with the needs of MDTL
 18 than they are of long time faithful taxpayers. We
 19 aren't asking for much. We are asking only for a
 20 design of this line in a manner that the local
 21 cooperatives have long recognized as the proper
 22 design for the power infrastructure. It is not a
 23 coincidence that the resistance of this line
 24 begins with the start of the diagonal at Conrad,
 25 and continues south to Great Falls, and ends the

LAURIE CRUTCHER, SR
 408-447-9260

28

1 diagonal.

2 **Comment 426** You had to remember that along this

3 portion of line, we aren't talking about one

4 diagonal line, we are talking about two diagonal

5 lines. There is already a diagonal line that we

6 have had to live with for thirty years.

7 **Comment 427** The northern portion of this line has

8 all of the benefits, the north/south orientation

9 and the wind development; the southern all of the

10 impacts, the diagonal, and no wind development.

11 Since I have owned my farm east of town

12 here, I have had two power lines, a gas line with

13 a pumping station, and a fiberoptic line cross

14 this farm, and none of them provide service to my

15 farm. I did not oppose them. I am not against

16 progress.

17 **Comment 428** We talk about the tax base and the

18 economic development that brings to these

19 communities. Let us share the tax base and the

20 economic benefits my family provides. We pay

21 \$36,537 in taxes in Flanders County; \$84,210 in

22 Teton County; \$39,898 in Cascade County; \$2,783 in

23 Choteau County; for a total of over \$135,000

24 annually property taxes.

25 By -- (Inaudible) -- to have a line

JACKIE CRITCHER, RPO
406-442-6262

Response 426: The agencies realize that an existing 115 kV transmission line already crosses fields on a diagonal.

Response 427: Comment noted.

Response 428: Comment noted.

1 built on its property on Teton County, spend ²⁷ Comment 429 (Cont.)
2 \$318,000 at front line angle over the last three
3 years for an average of almost \$79,000 a year. I
4 myself have spent over \$80,000 in the last two
5 months -- (incredible) -- by day. This is just
6 our business.
7
8 We support many other businesses in
9 Conrad. I am disappointed and angered by the lack
10 of support of the Conrad community. We're asking
11 only for this line to be built so it doesn't
12 negatively impact the people that supported the
13 schools and businesses before MATL arrived, and
14 will be here long after MATL leaves.
15 Comment 430 The State of Montana, through the
16 generosity of its tax policy, have given MATL a
17 tax break of between \$2.1 million and \$2.3 million
18 annually, over \$100 million over the projected
19 fifty year lifetime of this project. It's time
20 that MATL shows generosity, and to agree to spend
21 the \$4 million to \$7 million to build Alternatives
22 & monopolies. After all, they're actually using
23 our money to build it with.
24 Comment 431 MATL could also show its generosity by
25 purchasing the entire 105 foot easement that they
26 will exercise complete control over, not just the

LAURIE CRUTCHER, 898
408-842-9262

Response 429: See Tax Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 430: MATL has changed its proposal and would purchase the 105-foot easement. See Farming Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

1 45 foot piece, not just the 45 foot. The Alberta
 2 Utilities Board is requiring this in Canada. Why
 3 not here in Montana?

4 **Comment 431** The economic benefits of the wind farms
 5 are documented in the EIS, but the impact never
 6 mentioned is that these projects do not stand
 7 alone. There has to be a network of additional
 8 power lines to connect to this merchant line. Are
 9 these lines going to be allowed to take off any
 10 direction cross country to get to MATL, possibly
 11 using eminent domain against those who oppose
 12 these additional power lines?

13 **Comment 432** MATL is more than willing to use eminent
 14 domain to get where it's going. In fact, there
 15 are people in this town who have already received
 16 such letters telling them this. If you live
 17 between a windy ridge and this line, you, too, may
 18 share in the unpleasant impacts of power
 19 development, with none of the money from the
 20 power, the profits are not shared, only the
 21 problems.

22 **Comment 433** I for one am not interested in
 23 maintaining around these poles for MATL. That
 24 responsibility lies solely with MATL, and the EIS
 25 states this, but this company is trying to pass

LAURIE CRUTCHER, SR
 408-447-9260

Response 431: See the discussions of Wind Farm Issues and Legal and Regulatory Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 432: See the discussion of Legal and Regulatory Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 433: Under DEQ administrative rules, MATL could contract with landowners for reclamation and weed control; however, this is not a requirement and certain landowners might wish to have MATL or its contractors perform weed control.

Response 434 and 435: Comments noted.

1 this duty off on the farmers -- (inaudible) --²⁸
 2 such payments, including in the farming impact
 3 payments. If MATL thinks that it is profitable to
 4 do this for the small amount being offered, let
 5 them hire an independent contractor for this duty.
 6 I do not want to become an employee of MATL in any
 7 capacity.

8 **Comment 434** In closing, I have been a member of a
 9 group of landowners who have been meeting with
 10 MATL for over two years. We have never said that
 11 we didn't want this built. We have wanted the
 12 central field lines, section lines, monopoles,
 13 field lines, section lines, monopoles. MATL has
 14 not listened. They have always said, "Too much
 15 money, too much money, too much money."

16 I have to wonder how much money is
 17 enough for these people. Is the \$1 million tax
 18 relief that the taxpayers of Montana will have to
 19 replace enough? Is the projected revenues of over
 20 a billion dollars in the first ten years of
 21 operations enough? For the profits from near fine
 22 lines of President John promises to stockholders
 23 enough?

24 **Comment 435** I want to thank the DEQ and Tom King for
 25 designing the agency alternative, Alternative 1.

LARRY CROTHER, SR
 408-447-9260

1 and the work they have done, and I want to thank
 2 Ellen Russell and her co-workers for being curious
 3 and concerned enough to actually ride on a 100
 4 foot sprayer, and experience first hand the
 5 difficulty these structures are in conducting
 6 agriculture. The same invitation was extended to
 7 MATL officials two years ago, but they didn't find
 8 interest in it until they saw your example. Thank
 9 you.

10 MR. COMO: Shawn Dolan.
 11 **Comment 43:** MR. DOLAN: Hi. My name is Shawn Dolan.
 12 It would have been Hayden, Idaho. My family owns
 13 400 acres, a little over half a section near the
 14 Belgian Hill area. The MATL line has three
 15 proposed crossings on our property, one of it cuts
 16 the center of the property, which is the area of
 17 the field, right down the center; Alternative 1
 18 crosses the north part of the field lines; and then
 19 Alternative 2 cuts diagonally, and then runs along
 20 the road.

21 We're not opposed to the MATL line,
 22 however, we feel that they need to make some
 23 design changes. And to the previous fellow that
 24 spoke, all I could say is, "Amen, hallelujah." His
 25 sentiments pretty much echo ours as we go through
 26 **Comment 43:**

LAURIE CRUTCHER, RFB
 408-842-9262

Response 436: In response to this and similar comments, DEQ has learned that the Dolans and Andersons have purchased shares in the Pondera County Canal and Reservoir Company for water to be used to irrigate the affected parcel of land. Thus, the local routing option designed to move the line farther away from two houses is not workable.

DEQ, MATL representatives and engineers, and an independent transmission design engineer under contract to DEQ reevaluated local routing options in the Belgian Hill Road area. A local routing option previously dismissed was revisited when it was learned that an existing side roll irrigation system could be spanned. This would enable the line to be located along the western edge of property owned by the Dolan family, as indicated on Figure 2.6-7 in the Final EIS. This alignment would allow for one or two center pivots to be constructed on this parcel of land. This alignment also remains about 0.5 mile from houses along Belgian Hill Road. However, it would increase the amount of cropland crossed by approximately 0.42 mile and adds 0.35 mile of total line length to the previous Belgian Hill local routing option.

Response 437: Comment noted.

31

1 that,

2 **Comment 438** One of the previous speakers talked

3 about, "Get the process over on MATL and negotiate

4 with the land owners." I hope that is indeed the

5 case. What we've experienced was a right-of-way

6 agent showed up on our doorstep, said, "Sign this

7 or I'd taking your property through eminent

8 domain," which kind of poses an interesting

9 question. I know they assert that they have

10 eminent domain rights, but I wonder if a class

11 action suit should be taken to the Supreme Court.

12 I don't return the Canadian company's stealing US

13 citizens' property.

14 **Comment 439** And the 105 foot for the full

15 right-of-way is a standard practice in the utility

16 industry.

17 If you want a little background about

18 myself, since some of you may not have been here

19 at the last meeting, I am a registered

20 professional engineer in the state of Montana.

21 I'm chief engineer for an electric cooperative in

22 Idaho, and have been working in the utility

23 industry for over twenty years building power

24 lines, transmission lines, and the like.

25 **Comment 440** To talk about the EIS, I read the

LARRY CRUTCHER, SPE
408-447-9260

Response 438: Comment noted. See the discussion of Legal and Regulatory Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 439: MATL has revised its application indicating that it would purchase an easement for a 105-foot-wide right-of-way.

Response 440: Comment noted.

1 documents early. I thought it was fairly well
 2 done, covered most of the issues. I was Comment 43C
 3 appreciative that the staff took into account my
 4 comments previously about the pie-in-the-sky
 5 claims that a lot of people getting thousands of
 6 jobs and everything like that, toned it down to
 7 more realistic economic impacts. I think the
 8 numbers they have in there now are pretty close to
 9 probably what they'll see, maybe a little bit
 10 optimistic, but I don't know -- (inaudible) --
 11 I did notice in the EIS in the Comment 44
 12 Regulatory Restriction Analysis in Section 2.7,
 13 the preparers seem to be a little bit more
 14 concerned about the WATL's private property rights
 15 than the land owners' property rights. I don't
 16 know about the rest of you, but WATL is offering
 17 us an option to purchase right-of-way at pennies
 18 on the dollar, and then when they got farther Comment 44
 19 along, they were going to pony up the money for
 20 the 45 feet of the 105 foot wide strip a mile long
 21 that they wanted to take of our property.
 22 Comment 44 So they really don't have a huge amount
 23 invested unless they went out to actually sign
 24 checks for the full amount out to some folks.
 25 They certainly did not offer that option to us.

LAURIE CRUTCHER, RPR
 408-847-9260

Response 441: In addition to determining impacts to the environment, MEPA requires the regulatory restrictions analysis to disclose the economic impact on the applicant of additional requirements imposed by the agency that are not absolutely required by law. The legal requirement to disclose the regulatory impact on the applicant's private property rights applies only to the applicant and not to other people who might be affected by the permitting action. This is a matter of law, not DEQ's choice. See the discussion of Legal and Regulatory Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 442: See the discussion of Farming Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 443: Comment noted.

Comment 443
Cont)

1 They just offered us an option at this point. So
2 I would say their private property rights are
3 probably a little shaky at this point, and that
4 the preparers should probably focus on the land
5 owners' rights, as well as MNTL's rights, and
6 balance out that perspective. It did seem to be a
7 little one-sided on that.

8 **Comment 444** Regarding the routes through our
9 property on Belgian Hill, we'd certainly be
10 willing to talk to MNTL about it if they want to
11 make some changes to the design, but like the
12 fellow said before, if you section line, field
13 line, don't cross diagonally, make square corners,
14 and we'll deal with some guy wires, but we don't
15 want you crossing diagonally or gutting the field.
16 Our field is an irrigated half-section of land in
17 that particular area, and it's going to be real
18 hard to predict where we'll put our irrigation
19 system in if we put those poles there. We would
20 prefer to have an amount of poles along the
21 section line or along the road line.

22 **Comment 445** If MNTL does decide to go with their
23 alternative Belgian Hill option through the center
24 of our field, our family has already decided we
25 are going to file a lawsuit because it will be

LARRY CATCHER, SR.
408-447-9262

Response 444 and 445: The agencies have revised their evaluation of the Belgian Hill local routing option. See the response to comment 436 and Sections 2.6 and 3.16.

34
 1 effect make our property worthless for anything
 2 other than grazing. Right now it is in CRP, but
 3 with the recent IRS decision that CRP payments are
 4 counted as earned income for self-employment tax,
 5 it might come out of CRP sooner than it is
 6 scheduled to.

7 **Comment 446** I guess I have general comments on the
 8 EIS. I know a number of engineers and
 9 professional people have worked on preparing this.
 10 As I've gone through it, the only engineering PE
 11 stamp I saw was from someone from California. I
 12 think that Montana state law requires that public
 13 facilities designed in the state have to be sealed
 14 by an engineer registered in the state with a
 15 Montana PE stamp, so you might check into that and
 16 make sure that they have that, or they probably
 17 just didn't use it.

18 **Comment 447** And then finally, I'd like to further
 19 address the minimum line clearance issue. The EIS
 20 lists the minimum line to ground clearance as 21.2
 21 feet. In Volume 1, the response to my previous
 22 comments, I believe DEQ talked to NECA Engineers in
 23 Billings, Montana, Mr. William Bowers (phonetic)
 24 who is a very talented and gifted transmission
 25 line designer, and he saw the calculations, and

LARRY CROTHER, SPE
 406-447-9260

Response 446: An EIS is not an engineering design document requiring approval by a professional engineer. MATL and the agencies are currently in a planning and permitting process. If agency approval is granted, MATL would proceed with final design before constructing the line. If the project is approved, one of the conditions of approval could be a requirement that final design plans be reviewed and approved by an engineer registered in Montana.

Response 447: See the discussion of Safety Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 448: Thank you for your research.

Response 449: See the discussion of Safety Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

1 came up with a little bit higher number than I ²⁵
2 have, because he assumed 4,500 feet in elevation,
3 and I assumed 3,500 feet. That was the
4 difference, the elevation error.

5 **Comment 448** MRYL contacted Dave (phonetic) and
6 associates out of Missoula, Montana. As luck
7 would have it, I've worked with both of those
8 people, and have worked with the same company. I
9 had nice visit with Dave, and he said, "I can't
10 share the calculations." He was asked if the Dave
11 minimum calculations are for a 220 line.

12 **Comment 449** And my main concern that I have on the
13 line to ground clearance is that the 21 foot
14 level, 21.2, 21.8, depending on which page you
15 pick the number off, that's too low for a 220 line
16 to cross agricultural fields. The National
17 Electric Safety Code has provisions specifically
18 that states that you anticipate for height
19 equipment operating, such as combines, tractors,
20 etc., you should design the line to accommodate
21 the height of these vehicles, and it's reasonable
22 to expect them to operate in that area.

23 I've got copies of that portion of the
24 code. It's Footnote 26, Table 241-14 and also the
25 National Electric Safety Code Handbook, Edition 4,

LARRY CRUTCHER, RPE
406-442-9262

Response 450 to 452: See the discussion of Safety Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

38
1 and it talks specifically about that,
2 **Comment 450** One of the things that I found in
3 reading NHTA's comments, they said, "Well, we had
4 three different engineers look at it. They all
5 came up with different numbers. We're going to
6 use our windows, bare bones, because we don't know
7 what type of vehicle is going to go across that."
8 **Comment 451** If you read through the code, the term
9 that they're trying to rely on, it says, "Vehicles
10 under 14 feet in height." I called John Deere and
11 said, "Send me an email with a diagram showing the
12 height of your equipment, your combines," so they
13 sent me the 9000 series combine envelope drawings,
14 and they put some engines on it, plus the original
15 printout that I got from John Deere, and
16 down-the-road height of their combine is fourteen
17 feet six inches in operation with no modifications
18 to the combine, with the hopper out, sixteen feet
19 seven inches, above the fourteen foot mark.
20 **Comment 452** Now, there's one modification that most
21 farmers make to their combine, and I've dealt with
22 a lot of farmers through my transmission line
23 construction and acquisition. I've -- (inaudible)
24 -- their farmers. They usually add a two-way
25 radio to their combine, or a CB. Right? What do

LARRY CATCHER, SR.
408-447-9260

Response 453 and 454: Comments noted.

1 they put the antenna? On the cab. So if you look
 2 at that 9000 Series combine whose cab height is
 3 twelve feet four inches, when you add a standard
 4 180 inch CB with antenna to the top of the cab,
 5 the height of that vehicle when it's operating in
 6 the field is 11 feet four inches. Guess what?
 7 That's right at the conductor level.

8 What's going to happen to you if you run
 9 into a 130 KV line with your CB antenna on top of
 10 your combine? You're going to be dead.

11 **Comment 453** Now, every three years I take an update
 12 on the National Electric Safety Code from the
 13 fellow that used to be the Chairman of the NESC
 14 code committee, that was Mr. Allen -- (inaudible)
 15 -- and this last fall, I took my update, and I sat
 16 with Allen after the class, and had a beer, and
 17 kind of explained why, and his response to me was,
 18 "The first lawyer that hires it, the plaintiff's
 19 attorney will have no problem getting a
 20 multi-million dollar lawsuit, and they will own
 21 that transmission line company, because there is
 22 no defense for that."

23 **Comment 454** His exact words that he's fond of saying
 24 is, "That's socially unacceptable behavior to put
 25 a 130 KV line at that level above worked.

LARRY CROTCHER, SR.
 408-447-9260

Response 455: Comment noted. Under DEQ regulations, MATL must comply with the National Electrical Safety Code.

1 agricultural ground.* Above grazing ground²⁰ where
2 you don't expect a combine, it's fine to go down
3 that low; BUT above agriculture ground, there's
4 stuff that's perceived -- (inadvisable) -- area is
5 critical.
6 **Comment 455** Now, I did some quick calculations,
7 MATL used Rule 232(d) out of the National Electrical
8 Safety Code to calculate their height, which is a
9 reduced clearance based on switching surge factors
10 of the transmission line. In that rule, there is
11 an exception, or kind of a stop-gap, and it says,
12 "Minimum height shall be based on Rule 232(c) for
13 at least 88 KV." It seems you can't go below that
14 calculated level.
15 Which points you back to Rule 232(c),
16 and you go look at that, column 4, and there's a
17 Footnote 26. If you have the latest edition, it's
18 in there. If you have an earlier edition, there
19 is an errata sheet saying that Footnote should be
20 Footnote 29, says if it's anticipated over height
21 equipment, you have to add the difference of the
22 height between that equipment and the 14 feet
23 that's in the code.
24 And if you have a combine that's running
25 down the field with a CB antenna that's at 11 feet

LARRY CRITCHER, RFP
404-442-9200

Response 456 and 457: Comments noted.

1 four inches, subtract that 14 feet, add that³⁹
2 difference to the covered value, that line
3 clearance ends up closer to 29 feet you have to
4 meet, substantially higher than MATL is quoting.
5 I'll turn in my notes for you to look through.
6 MR. CONO: Gary Iversen, please.
7 **Comment 456** MR. IVERSEN: Hi. I'm Gary Iversen.
8 I'm the Mayor of the town of Sunburst, and I'm
9 here representing the City Council, the businesses
10 of Sunburst, the school system in Sunburst, and
11 all of the citizens of Sunburst, and their support
12 for the line and the potential industry that it
13 can bring into Montana.
14 We do understand those concerns with
15 where the line goes, and we understand the people
16 who live around it and work under it, and the line
17 has to take care of those problems. But this
18 opportunity to have this line and to have the wind
19 farms and the industry that go along with this
20 line are very incremental to this area, and keep
21 our populations, our schools, and keep some of our
22 kids home.
23 **Comment 457** We had an interesting comment in Out
24 front last night that Roy brought up, and he asked
25 the people how many people in the crowd have

LAURIE CROTCHER, SR
408-247-9260

1 children who had to go out of state to find a job,⁴⁵
 2 and I'll be do that for my tonight, and raise
 3 your hands. How many people have side out of
 4 state? They have to go out of state to find a job
 5 because there is no jobs in Montana. We don't
 6 have a lot of opportunities for a lot of different
 7 industries, that I see wind power as being one
 8 that's really incremental to us.

9 And we just wanted to pass on our
 10 support for this project. We want the project
 11 done right, and we want to see the wind farms come
 12 in, and everything else. Thank you.

13 MR. COSE: Curt Hais.

14 (He responds)

15 MR. COSE: Melissa Schae.

16 **Comment 458** MR. SCHAE: Hello. For the record, my
 17 name is Melissa Schae, and I'm a fourth generation
 18 farmer out near Dutton, and I'm actually for the
 19 NATH project. But I'm also graduating as a student
 20 this spring with a biology degree, and this is an
 21 environmental impact hearing, and we haven't
 22 talked about that, so I would like to talk about
 23 environmental effects.

24 You must understand that farming around
 25 poles is inconvenient and financially burdensome.

LARRIE CRITCHER, RPN
 406-442-9262

Response 458: The study of the costs of farming around structures that is included in the EIS includes consideration of the potential for reduced crop yields due to inadvertent over-application of herbicides and fertilizers. Effects of over-application of chemicals on groundwater would depend on the nature of the chemicals used. Selection of pesticide chemicals that degrade rapidly would minimize the potential for pesticide contamination of groundwater. Excess fertilizer application could be a problem in high groundwater areas. Fertilizer nutrients and long-lived pesticides have the potential to infiltrate to the underlying groundwater, but on dryland farms the potential for adverse effects would be low because little moisture infiltrates to the water table. With or without a transmission line, farmers should monitor their fertilizer and pesticide use to avoid overloading. Also see the discussion of Farming Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

1 but I would like to speak about this in detail.⁸¹
2 Much of the cost is incurred by the extra chemical
3 and fertilizer used. 134 foot sprayers are not
4 designed to turn sharply, and when you go around
5 the pole, you lay down extra spray. It's
6 inevitable.

7 This is a concern for the farmer because
8 extra chemical can burn the crop, and it can cause
9 production loss. It should also be a concern to
10 everyone because extra chemical has potential to
11 be very dangerous to our -- (inaudible) --. If you
12 look toward the future, in fifty years the
13 cumulative effect of this chemical could be even
14 worse, and in areas like Valley, where the ground
15 water is very high, you can expect that people may
16 even start to feel these effects.

17 **Comment 459** The best solution would be to keep the
18 poles out of the fields, but the next best
19 solution would be to minimize the number of poles
20 in the fields, keep them to the edges whenever
21 possible, and make sure they are monopoles.

22 **Comment 460** We also would appreciate financial
23 incentive to help us make sure that we farm the
24 poles carefully, that we limit the damage we do.
25 We are given incentives by the government to help

LARRY CRUTCHER, SR.
408-447-9260

Response 459: See the response to comment 85 regarding pole placement.

Response 460: MATL's revised compensation package is described in Section 2.3.

1 pay for the extra costs of GPS and other ^{all} systems
2 that make precision spraying possible, lessening
3 the amount of chemicals we use there. Shouldn't
4 we also receive help for the burden of farming
5 around poles?

6 **Comment 461** I know that everyone is very excited
7 about the economic -- (incredible) -- these poles
8 may bring, and I hope along with you that more
9 business ventures like this will help keep towns
10 together, and schools like the one I graduated
11 from open. But we need to keep in mind that the
12 area said to profit the most from this
13 transmission line is MATL, and they need to
14 negotiate with landowners to make the burden for
15 their for-profit merchant line more bearable for
16 us.

17 I ask you all to please visit the
18 company's website at 700tridgspower.com to see for
19 yourselves. Thank you.

20 MR. COMO: Cheryl Cuspy.

21 **Comment 462** MS. CURRY: I'm again standing here in
22 support of the construction of the proposed MATL
23 line.

24 At the Great Falls hearing, it was
25 mentioned that the proposed Alternative No. 1

LARIS CRUTCHER, SR.
408-442-9262

Response 461: Comment noted.

Response 462: Alternative 4 lies within the project study area.
See the discussion of Legal and Regulatory Issues in the
Consolidated Responses section.

1 would be a preferred alternative. I'm standing to ⁴³
2 oppose this selection. The studies have been
3 completed on the MATL proposal. Alternative 1
4 moves the lines significantly away from the
5 already studied area, and also makes less sense:
6 The Alternative No. 1 places the line west of Comment 463
7 Conrad, a greater distance from the proposed wind
8 development, and farther from the already existing
9 substations.
10 In consideration of future environmental
11 impacts, this is not a good choice. Lines from
12 potential wind development areas and some
13 substations that may eventually connect would be
14 longer, and more obstacles would be encountered.
15 Comment 464 I support the project, and urge the DEQ
16 to move forward quickly on this project in order
17 that this area may see the benefits in our
18 economy, rather than see another project go away.
19 Comment 465 I'm also carrying a letter signed by 28
20 people that says, "In an effort to show our
21 support for the MATL transmission line and cut
22 down on the number of responses you must make to
23 our comments, we present this letter as a group of
24 individuals. We support the line and believe that
25 it is good for the area. The economic benefits of

LAURIE CRUTCHER, RPN
406-842-9262

Response 463: Comment noted. There is no evidence on the record that a wind farm west of Conrad would interconnect to the MATL line. Other possible interconnections should a wind farm be proposed in the area include the NorthWestern Energy 115-kV line and the Western Area Power Administration 230-kV line. Both have substations just south of Conrad. Figure 4.1-2 sets out the locations of potential wind farms, based on field observations of anemometers. One anemometer location was found west of Conrad and west of Alternative 2.

Response 464 and 465: Comments noted.

14
1 the line and the potential of wind development
2 projects in the future will contribute in a
3 positive way for our rural economy. We believe
4 the environmental concerns are minor, and we
5 welcome the enhanced tax base and the jobs that
6 will be created. We ask you to move the process
7 forward in an expeditious manner with thoughts of
8 fairness to the affected landowners."

9 And I didn't identify myself. (Cue)

10 (Cue)

11 [Comment 466] For those of you that weren't at the
12 Great Falls hearing, and because I am an a
13 friend of farmers, I want to make sure that you
14 understand that I am also standing in
15 understanding your concerns, and urging
16 consideration of your concerns.

17 MR. COMPTON: Is it Mr. McFarland?

18 MR. McFARLAND: Forgive me if I turn my
19 back to you. I came to talk to these guys, not
20 you.

21 [Comment 467] My name is John McFarland. I'm a small
22 business owner from Cheral. I would just like to
23 say with respect to all of our friends in
24 agriculture, that we would like to see the RWTL
25 line go through. We're in favor of it, but doing

LARRY CATCHER, SR.
408-447-8260

Response 466: Comment noted.

Response 467: Any approved alternative alignment would generally be 500-foot wide and would allow for adjustments to better align with property lines, field edges, and strip-cropping boundaries. Also see the response to comment 85.

Response 468 and 469: Comments noted.

1 to following property lines, section lines, 45
2 township lines, etc.
3 [REDACTED] We also respect the fact that the
4 agricultural community is the greatest contributor
5 to wealth in our area, but we would also like to
6 see the additional impact created -- (inaudible)
7 -- by the NATL line. Thank you.
8 MR. COMO: Thank you. Of all of the
9 people that have just signed our list just
10 indicated that they wanted copies of the document.
11 We've sort of run out of the names of people who
12 said that they wanted to say something. So I'm
13 sure everybody is sitting there -- we have plenty
14 more names. Great. Well, come.
15 FEMALE SPEAKER: Wendy Judisch.
16 [REDACTED] MS. JUDISCH: Thank you, Mr. Como. My
17 name is Wendy Judisch. I am a resident of the
18 city of Concord, and a member of the Concord City
19 Council.
20 I welcome the opportunity for our area
21 to use our natural resources. One of these
22 natural resources is our wind, a great source of
23 renewable energy. A transmission line through our
24 area will not only help encourage the development
25 of wind energy, but also help to spread the tax

LARRIE CRUTCHER, SR
408-447-8260

Response 470 and 471: Comment noted.

1 garden throughout our area. The economic boost
2 and its inevitable spin-off will help benefit our
3 area schools, our city, and our county.

4 **Comment 470** I encourage you to help the proposed
5 MATL line become a reality as efficiently and
6 expeditiously as possible. The economic pros far
7 outweigh any environmental cons. Thank you.

8 MR. COHEN: Thank you. He seems to have
9 run out of names again. No. SSA's waving me off.
10 Sir.

11 MR. STROTH: Do I want to thank you for
12 this opportunity to appear before you. My name is
13 Eric Stroh. I live in Cortad. I was born and
14 raised in Pooders County. I've farmed for 44
15 years, and just retired from that farming. And
16 you can take the farmer off the farm, but you
17 can't take the farmer out of the farmer.

18 **Comment 471** So what I do, once I'm retired, I'm not
19 retired. I run sprayers, 30 foot header combines.
20 My biggest problem is going down the road, and
21 hitting wall knobs.

22 But here is my comment. And I'm in
23 support of the MATL line. I think it's a great
24 idea. I know there is some problems that need to
25 be resolved. But one thing I think is positive is

LARRY DUTCHER, SR
408-442-9260

Response 472: Comment noted.

1 that if we had a wind farm out this side of town^{BT}
2 would have my plastic garbage cans from recycling
3 down the street, because I know it reduces the
4 velocity of wind. But thank you.
5
6 MR. COYNE: We seem to have run out of
7 names again. Good.
8
9 **Comment 472** MR. DULLEN: Thank you, Tom and Tony. I
10 will face you. I marked out -- first let me say
11 that my name is John Dullen, I live in Yallet, and
12 I'm presently the Superintendent of Schools. I'm
13 not sure how long that will last. -- [inaudible]
14 -- items as they were stated, and I'd like to
15 thank you, Tom.
16
17 There is one issue that I think that has
18 not been mentioned, and I did talk to Tom on the
19 phone -- and I just met Tony -- asked him to send
20 me the document. It's over 800 pages. I had't
21 remember if it was Page 491 on Page 2 that I fell
22 asleep.
23
24 This is my second time through this. We
25 moved from Oregon, and had the opportunity to
26 represent a county that was very similar to this
27 situation, to Fendora County, and all of the good
28 impacts that come with wind farms have been
29 stated, and there is only one that I would add
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60
61
62
63
64
65
66
67
68
69
70
71
72
73
74
75
76
77
78
79
80
81
82
83
84
85
86
87
88
89
90
91
92
93
94
95
96
97
98
99
100
101
102
103
104
105
106
107
108
109
110
111
112
113
114
115
116
117
118
119
120
121
122
123
124
125
126
127
128
129
130
131
132
133
134
135
136
137
138
139
140
141
142
143
144
145
146
147
148
149
150
151
152
153
154
155
156
157
158
159
160
161
162
163
164
165
166
167
168
169
170
171
172
173
174
175
176
177
178
179
180
181
182
183
184
185
186
187
188
189
190
191
192
193
194
195
196
197
198
199
200
201
202
203
204
205
206
207
208
209
210
211
212
213
214
215
216
217
218
219
220
221
222
223
224
225
226
227
228
229
230
231
232
233
234
235
236
237
238
239
240
241
242
243
244
245
246
247
248
249
250
251
252
253
254
255
256
257
258
259
260
261
262
263
264
265
266
267
268
269
270
271
272
273
274
275
276
277
278
279
280
281
282
283
284
285
286
287
288
289
290
291
292
293
294
295
296
297
298
299
300
301
302
303
304
305
306
307
308
309
310
311
312
313
314
315
316
317
318
319
320
321
322
323
324
325
326
327
328
329
330
331
332
333
334
335
336
337
338
339
340
341
342
343
344
345
346
347
348
349
350
351
352
353
354
355
356
357
358
359
360
361
362
363
364
365
366
367
368
369
370
371
372
373
374
375
376
377
378
379
380
381
382
383
384
385
386
387
388
389
390
391
392
393
394
395
396
397
398
399
400
401
402
403
404
405
406
407
408
409
410
411
412
413
414
415
416
417
418
419
420
421
422
423
424
425
426
427
428
429
430
431
432
433
434
435
436
437
438
439
440
441
442
443
444
445
446
447
448
449
450
451
452
453
454
455
456
457
458
459
460
461
462
463
464
465
466
467
468
469
470
471
472
473
474
475
476
477
478
479
480
481
482
483
484
485
486
487
488
489
490
491
492
493
494
495
496
497
498
499
500
501
502
503
504
505
506
507
508
509
510
511
512
513
514
515
516
517
518
519
520
521
522
523
524
525
526
527
528
529
530
531
532
533
534
535
536
537
538
539
540
541
542
543
544
545
546
547
548
549
550
551
552
553
554
555
556
557
558
559
560
561
562
563
564
565
566
567
568
569
570
571
572
573
574
575
576
577
578
579
580
581
582
583
584
585
586
587
588
589
590
591
592
593
594
595
596
597
598
599
600
601
602
603
604
605
606
607
608
609
610
611
612
613
614
615
616
617
618
619
620
621
622
623
624
625
626
627
628
629
630
631
632
633
634
635
636
637
638
639
640
641
642
643
644
645
646
647
648
649
650
651
652
653
654
655
656
657
658
659
660
661
662
663
664
665
666
667
668
669
670
671
672
673
674
675
676
677
678
679
680
681
682
683
684
685
686
687
688
689
690
691
692
693
694
695
696
697
698
699
700
701
702
703
704
705
706
707
708
709
710
711
712
713
714
715
716
717
718
719
720
721
722
723
724
725
726
727
728
729
730
731
732
733
734
735
736
737
738
739
740
741
742
743
744
745
746
747
748
749
750
751
752
753
754
755
756
757
758
759
760
761
762
763
764
765
766
767
768
769
770
771
772
773
774
775
776
777
778
779
780
781
782
783
784
785
786
787
788
789
790
791
792
793
794
795
796
797
798
799
800
801
802
803
804
805
806
807
808
809
810
811
812
813
814
815
816
817
818
819
820
821
822
823
824
825
826
827
828
829
830
831
832
833
834
835
836
837
838
839
840
841
842
843
844
845
846
847
848
849
850
851
852
853
854
855
856
857
858
859
860
861
862
863
864
865
866
867
868
869
870
871
872
873
874
875
876
877
878
879
880
881
882
883
884
885
886
887
888
889
890
891
892
893
894
895
896
897
898
899
900
901
902
903
904
905
906
907
908
909
910
911
912
913
914
915
916
917
918
919
920
921
922
923
924
925
926
927
928
929
930
931
932
933
934
935
936
937
938
939
940
941
942
943
944
945
946
947
948
949
950
951
952
953
954
955
956
957
958
959
960
961
962
963
964
965
966
967
968
969
970
971
972
973
974
975
976
977
978
979
980
981
982
983
984
985
986
987
988
989
990
991
992
993
994
995
996
997
998
999
1000

Response 473 to 475: See Sections 3.13 and 3.17 for benefits from the MATL line, including some benefits that would extend beyond Montana's borders.

1 that seems to have been missed, and this is all
2 missed up. I don't want to take your time.
3 **Comment 473** And I did not see it in the executive
4 summary either, Tom. And that is the value that
5 this project has to our nation. Our utilities
6 face some very complex decisions, one requiring
7 trying to acquire power. Utilities are looking
8 for a number of different sources and strategies.
9 We're going to by 2016 be facing a serious power
10 shortage, and the gross load that is coming will
11 only intensify that shortage.
12 **Comment 474** So I say to you: Besides the good that
13 will come to my county, Sanders County, besides
14 the tax base increase that will come to my state,
15 it's my nation that will benefit from this. This
16 program helps satisfy our need for power, and the
17 plan meets the environmental tests. Of course, we
18 have to realize those issues that impact our
19 friends and neighbors. The plan moves this region
20 and this nation forward.
21 **Comment 475** So I say to you three gentlemen
22 implement this plan and implement it promptly.
23 Thank you very much for the opportunity.
24 MR. DENO: Thank you.
25 MR. REID: I'm Ronald Reid, and I'm from

LAURIE DUTCHER, SPE
408-842-9260

Response 476 to 478: Comments noted.

18
 1 Chared, and I'm a small business owner in town. Comment 476
 2 And we've heard about all of the positive things
 3 that this project can bring to our community, and
 4 communities which this line travels through. I am
 5 in support of this project, providing that it
 6 passes the two "F" word rules, and those words are,
 7 "farmer friendly." If this project is not farmer
 8 friendly, and meets the needs and the operations
 9 of the farmers that this projects goes through,
 10 then NAIL has more work to do. Thank you.
 11 Comment 477 MR. CONO: Anybody else?
 12 We've got one in the back and then --
 13 MR. FETTER (phonetic): My name is
 14 Patrick Fetter, and I was born and raised in this
 15 country. And I can remember -- electricity, no
 16 running water, no phones, not many paved roads. I
 17 don't want that again.
 18 Comment 478 I remember when one -- (inaudible) --
 19 REA came in, and no one was against that. Many
 20 people who had no electricity prior to that also
 21 got phones, or had no phones but no electricity.
 22 We have had boom and bust building, and drought,
 23 and flood, since the advent of power on demand.
 24 We have had creature comforts. We as an area
 25 affected by this transmission line may have ?
 LAURIE CRUTCHER, SR
 408-447-9260

Response 479 to 481: Comments noted.

1 future of steady growth. With power available, ²⁵ we
 2 are in a good area. We are on the transportation
 3 corridor with I-15, we would be on power corridors.
 4 We would be on -- With a water project in the
 5 works, the area is going to be looked at by other
 6 entities.

7 **Comment 479** The inconvenience of the power poles
 8 affects everyone involved, the farming, and
 9 whoever has to move or build. I myself would not
 10 want a pole or structure on my property. That
 11 would be inconvenient for me, but I would not say
 12 no if it made sense.

13 **Comment 480** I would hope that the changes made by
 14 the power line would help my children,
 15 grandchildren, and others stay in the area, so
 16 that they might have the opportunity to live and
 17 work in Montana as I have. Thank you.

18 MR. CROCI: Thank you, sir.

19 **Comment 481** INTRODUCED SPEAKER: Good to see you guys
 20 again tonight. I think we have got a bigger crowd
 21 than we had last night in Cut Bank. So far I do I
 22 know -- (inaudible) -- Sanders County, both
 23 Sanders and Teton Counties. And I am in favor of
 24 this, but I think NATEL has to work with the
 25 farmers, because it's no fun farming around oil

LARRY CRITCHER, RPN
 406-442-9262

1 wellis, power poles. I have worked -- (inaudible)
 2 -- where I had -- (inaudible) -- poles, some
 3 monopoles in fields, and stuff, and I had to drive
 4 100 foot sprayer again. So 134 foot sprayer --
 5 (inaudible) -- to work around these -- spray
 6 around these poles.

7 The only comment that I've got to say,
 8 and that's to you, very few, that you along with
 9 our machine any more proceedings. And probably
 10 your average -- (inaudible) -- would be between
 11 25 and 30 inches -- (inaudible) -- but that's the
 12 only thing I can disagree with. But I am in
 13 favor, and I think that -- (inaudible) -- NATH can
 14 do a better job with the landowners. I think
 15 they've got to get up and do a better job of
 16 working with the landowners. Thank you.

17 **Comment 48:** MALE SPEAKER: I don't know you guys. I
 18 do know -- (inaudible) -- My name is George Young
 19 (inaudible), and I'm the manager of the local --
 20 (inaudible) -- theater here in town. I'm one of
 21 those people from the state of Montana that we're
 22 losing each and every day. We've got lots and
 23 lots of assets in this beautiful state of Montana.
 24 We have more landowners than any other state in the
 25 nation. We're No. 1 in production. But we're

LARRY CATCHER, SR
 408-447-9260

Response 482: Comment noted.

1 leasing our young people. 46
2 I was gone for 15 years. I came back
3 only because I have elderly relatives here, and I
4 came back to care for them. But in that process,
5 I got reacquainted again with why I was here in
6 the first place. I love this state. I wanted for
7 and received the brand that my grandfather had
8 when he homesteaded in this country. I still own
9 that, and I'll pass it on to my children. I want
10 them to have a piece of Montana.
11 But if we do not start to utilize those
12 resources to create opportunities for our young
13 people to come back and live in this state, and
14 become active and vital members, we're losing one
15 of the best raw resources that we have.
16 **Comment 483** I'm not a farmer. I did, however, --
17 (inaudible) -- been able to hatch a fence corner
18 or two, because I was hired by local farmers when
19 you guys could still go out and hire young men
20 that wanted to work. We're getting rid of those
21 people, and we need them around here. I did learn
22 from those experiences, though. If you rebuild
23 enough the fence corners, you can start missing
24 fences pretty quick.
25 So I only want to say that anytime that

LAURIE CATCHER, SR
408-447-8260

Response 483: Comment noted.

Responses 484 to 486: Comments noted.

Comment 484 21
 1 we can create opportunities for our young people
 2 to come back into this wonderful state -- I just
 3 only love the mountains, and the trees, and the
 4 animals that are there, but I'm a prairie boy. I
 5 love fields, I love grass, I love the Big Sky
 6 Country. I've lived in about 12 other states in
 7 the 30 years I was gone from here, and there is
 8 nothing like the Big Sky of Montana.
 9 Comment 485 MR. BRANNING (phonetic): My name is
 10 Rich Branning, and I think I know 80 percent of
 11 the people in here. I've got offices -- that's
 12 the reason why -- I have offices in Cut Bank,
 13 Conrad, Valley, and Browning. I'm also a small
 14 farmer, for those of you who didn't know that
 15 little tidbit. So I'm kind of nervous about it.
 16 I don't face the land, but listening to the
 17 questions over here, I think they raise some valid
 18 points, and I hope that NATL and the farmers can
 19 get together and work out these points.
 20 Comment 486 But on another aspect, I'm also a
 21 business person, and I see the importance of this
 22 project, and I think all of the people that have
 23 spoken have spoke towards the progress of this
 24 project, other than there needs to be some more
 25 dimensions.

 LARRY CRITCHER, RPO
 406-442-9262

Response 487 to 489: Comments noted.

1 The gentleman from Idaho, being a⁵⁴
2 professional, very good. I appreciate that. But
3 advice in Montana here, and I hope that things can
4 be worked out in the long run.
5
6 [Comment 487] I also have four children, and I really
7 don't want to ship my commodities out. So I am
8 very much in support of this, and I know a lot of
9 other people that are in this room, too. So thank
10 you.
11
12 [Comment 488] FEMALE SPEAKER: My name is Jackie --
13 (inaudible) -- and I'm from Bonhurst, Montana. I
14 don't farm, and I understand that there is
15 problems with farming. My husband is in the oil
16 fields, and you know, things are inconvenient. If
17 we go across someone's field, we compensate them
18 for going across their field. When a line is laid
19 -- my husband is on the board for wire telephones
20 -- when there is line laid, they're compensated.
21
22 [Comment 489] I hear all about the taxes you're
23 paying, and that's -- you know, we're all paying
24 taxes, and golly, it's a lot. It's a lot today,
25 especially if you have kids and everything else.
26 The tennis shoes alone will break you by the time
27 they're out of high school. But they're
28 compensated.

LARRY CRITCHER, RPO
406-442-9292

85

1 These is a lot of breaks that you get
2 from the government that we don't get. And I'm
3 very resentful to you for saying, "We will sue,"
4 well you're from Idaho. He's from Montana.
5 okay. Sue -- [inaudible] -- No. I'm upset with
6 you. These people are trying to work things out,
7 and we're running up -- sue. Yes, you said you
8 would.

9 **Comment 490** But what I'm saying is: This is a
10 business that's coming in here. They're getting
11 money. Every one of you that went into business
12 or are farming, you're there to make money. And
13 if you do really well, you can hire someone.
14 That's great. They can draw from that. That's
15 what business is. You go into business to make
16 money for yourself, and these people are, and they
17 do have a responsibility. I'd love to see them
18 buy the land from you to run that thing through,
19 so you wouldn't have to farm it, so you wouldn't
20 have to go around it. That would be great. They
21 need to work with the farmer.

22 This is your land. This is your heart.
23 And they have a responsibility to work with you.
24 but you also have a responsibility to work with
25 them, so that all of us can benefit. And that's

LARRY CRUTCHER, RFD
406-442-8262

Response 490: The agencies recognize the controversy over this project and the disagreement among people who might be affected. See Farming Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

1 what I think we need to think about, not just 44
 2 ourselves. We all can benefit from this. But
 3 let's not -- [inaudible] -- and close our eyes,
 4 and say, "We won't talk about it unless it's 100
 5 percent our way." We all have to compromise.

6 Golly. How many people are married
 7 here? How many people hope to improve? How
 8 many people have to compromise?

9 Things are really, really, really
 10 important to us, like our land, like our jobs,
 11 like our families. We all have to compromise.
 12 And I guess what I'm trying to say is this:
 13 Please, please. Sit down at the table; don't
 14 threaten each other; compromise; work this out so
 15 that everybody can benefit. Thank you.

16 MR. ANDERSON: I'm Ray Anderson, and I
 17 take offense to that. Shawn Dolan here is a very
 18 bright man, well educated, and he knows what he's
 19 talking about. But I'll tell you what. It's WALT
 20 plan that they compensated to the people to the
 21 north of us, and they compensated to the people to
 22 the south of us, and they want to go directly up
 23 the middle of our full half-section, right up the
 24 middle of it.

25 How many of you people would like to

LARRY CRUTCHER, RFD
 408-442-9262

1 have a power line go right up the middle of your 57
 2 place? It's irrigated property, and it would
 3 eliminate the chance of a center pivot system, it
 4 eliminates the possibility of a side roll, and it
 5 would be worse -- [inaudible] --

6 I think that when they have
 7 compensations to the north, they have
 8 compensations to the south -- and Randy Hummel,
 9 who was the lead man that talked to us, I said,
 10 "My, gosh, Randy. You're leading us to death."
 11 Well, he said, "Yes, kind of." And that's just
 12 terrible. And that's why Shawn said that we're
 13 not going to stand still for that. We absolutely
 14 aren't.

15 YOUNG SPEAKER: But don't walk away
 16 either.

17 MR. ANDERSON: We're not. Believe me,
 18 I'm as much for progress for the state of Montana
 19 as anybody, I absolutely am, except that it
 20 absolutely has to be done right. But lots of
 21 times on school boards, and soil conservation
 22 districts, and stuff, and one of the things -- The
 23 last thing I said when I left the school board, I
 24 said, "You know, put off the project as long as
 25 you can but when you do, do it as possible as

LARRY CRUTCHER, RFD
 408-442-9262

1 best as you can. State of the art." That's what
2 -- (inaudible) -- They weren't using state of
3 art. I mean do it first class when you do
4 something, and don't cut any corners.

5 And I said this to HWY before at about
6 four of these meetings that we have had here.
7 They said, well, they can't afford to go to the
8 single phase because of the fact that it was more
9 expensive, but their capacity has been sold out.
10 Now, that's a no-brainer, because if their
11 capacity has been sold out, and yet they can't do
12 it right for the farmers, they sold out too cheap,
13 didn't they? They missing -- (inaudible) --
14 missing in the process.

15 MALE SPEAKER: -- (inaudible) -- Is he
16 from Idaho, and Shawn Dulan, and he's from Idaho.
17 And I was born and raised in Montana, educated in
18 Montana, and left because --

19 TROYALL SPEAKER: His kids aren't going
20 to school here, are they?

21 MALE SPEAKER: No, they're not.

22 FEMALE SPEAKER: And this will help our
23 side.

24 MALE SPEAKER: I said we're not opposed
25 to the flow.

Laurie Crotcher, RPB
808-442-8240

Response 491: Comments noted.

Response 492: Comment noted.

1 rain the value of the property, we're going to
2 look at a lawsuit. If they work the edges,
3 section lines, fence lines, we can work with that.
4 That's what I said.
5 FEMALE SPEAKER: -- (inaudible) --
6 MALE SPEAKER: Yes, but sometimes you
7 have to use legal process, and that's part of the
8 legal process.
9 MALE SPEAKER: -- (inaudible)--
10 [Comment 491] FEMALE SPEAKER: I'm -- (inaudible) --
11 and I represent House District 28. It's an honor
12 to be here and support this project for economic
13 reasons for this area, for adding a piece of the
14 puzzle for green energy.
15 But what I really would like to do is
16 compliment all of you. It's been a long, hard
17 process. You've put many hours of work and
18 thought into this project. This is international.
19 It can happen. I would urge NHTL to make things
20 right with the people that work the land, and
21 let's keep working together. Let's make this a
22 pattern for our future. Thank you.
23 [Comment 492] MR. JONES (phonetic): My name is Lew
24 Jones, and tonight I want to talk to you -- I've
25 talked with the state rep a number of times today.
26
27 LAURIE CRITCHER, SRP
28 408-442-8262

1 We'll talk about the farm boy. I guess I'll start
 2 with I believe they can be -- (inaudible) --
 3 work, and LeAnne Favenough, and so I won't take
 4 credit for it. She said there can be win-win
 5 here. There can be a way to settle these issues,
 6 and I kind of like that word, so I've kind of
 7 settled it.

8 As a farmer, I'd like to share some
 9 names with you, and there is the Howley, the
 10 Leases, the Smiths, the Bruthers, the Thomases,
 11 those are all places that the Jones Ranch row
 12 farms. What's happening is we are fairly large
 13 operators even in today's world, and unfortunately
 14 each time one of those families leaves, our school
 15 system shrinks, because there is huge equipment
 16 now. Everything is big now. What's happened with
 17 ag, it takes less and less hands. With less and
 18 less hands to control more and more land, Class
 19 B schools become Class C's, Class C schools go
 20 away.

21 You know, Conrad could become Valler,
 22 Valler could become Brady, and Brady could become
 23 Gallop City. Do you guys remember Gallop City?
 24 It's on the Jones Ranch as well. I don't advocate
 25 -- we all know the oilfields are out there. Jerry

Laurie Crotcher, APB
 806-442-8240

Response 493 to 495: Comments noted.

1 **Comment 493** 62
 2 Christians -- I see his standing in the back of
 3 the room. I can tell you about power poles, tho.
 4 I've spun a sweater around, and unspun a guy
 5 wire on a stupid corner pole on Sunday, and it
 6 cost me \$5,000, because Jerry showed up on a
 7 Sunday, and -- (inaudible) -- Next time I'm going
 8 to leave the pole stay there until Monday. But
 9 they are a pain in the ass. There is no question
 0 about it.

10 **Comment 494**
 11 As a business man in this town, I
 12 certainly do not advocate that the farmers and
 13 ranchers not be compensated. They remain here.
 14 They will be always be a significant part of the
 15 tax paying economy. Hopefully we'll be here. I
 16 have several sons. I'm hoping they can come home
 17 here. That's why I work on this.

17 **Comment 495**
 18 We have to broaden our economic base.
 19 To do so, we have to achieve a win-win. We have
 20 to work this thing out. When the fighting gets
 21 nasty, and then it doesn't work out, then we lose.
 22 This is possible. There are no medals here. We
 23 appreciate you shopping at Front Line --
 24 (inaudible) -- I kind of like that. I do. And
 25 therefore I hope you continue to farm. That's a
 26 huge part of what we do.

LARRY CRITCHER, RFD
 406-442-0202

1 **Comment 496** But I tell you what, we took a risk ⁸²
 2 having -- (inaudible) -- to stay here as well,
 3 because it costs money and it was a risk. You
 4 know, a lot of folks who said, money in the bank,
 5 you've got to roll the dice and try. There are
 6 folks here trying to make this work. --
 7 (inaudible) -- wants to leave, nobody wants to
 8 leave. The farmers want to make it work. There
 9 is only going to be failure when the lighting
 10 starts. There can be a win-win here. That's what
 11 we've got to achieve. To do that, we've got to
 12 keep working on it.
 13 **Comment 497** MATL has changed their behavior since
 14 the first time. They did have a group of land
 15 agents that were not doing justice. There is no
 16 doubt about it. We talked to John personally
 17 about that. His phone number is not posted, he
 18 is trying to work it and I believe we're
 19 discussing the first per pole payments in the
 20 history of easements.
 21 **Comment 498** How, maybe the per pole payments aren't
 22 sufficient. Maybe that needs to be talked about.
 23 Maybe there are some adjustments that need to be
 24 made. Let's get them done. This is three years,
 25 what would happen if the grid -- (inaudible) --

 LARRY CRITCHER, RFD
 406-442-8262

Response 496: Comment noted.

Responses 497 and 498: See the description of MATL's compensation package in Sections 2.3 and 3.13.2. DEQ is not aware of any other Montana utilities or electric cooperatives that are making annual per pole payments to farmers. Also see Farming Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

64
1 and we will achieve what Montana can successfully
2 do to itself a number of times. If we delay this
3 long enough, it will go away. Then two years from
4 now, we'll say, "How come we didn't get that? Why
5 didn't we get it done?"

6 **Comment 499** You know, I look out on this crowd, and
7 there's a number of you that I prefer meticulously
8 to show up at these meetings, because you've got
9 to. If you don't become informed and participate,
10 it goes away. And we need that.

11 You know, I know why folks don't talk.
12 I heard it here tonight from -- (inaudible) -- We
13 don't talk because we're afraid. We don't want to
14 lose your business. But by the same token, if we
15 don't talk, we lose everything. We have to find a
16 way to work this out.

17 You know, I want the Jones Ranch to
18 survive. I want the sheep on it to survive. I
19 want this to be a Class B school. Let's find a
20 way to win. Let's quit fighting and get it done.

21 **Comment 500** MR. BLANCHI for the record, my name is
22 Jerry Blanch. I represent Senate District 14.
23 That includes Glacier, Toulé, Flanders, Liberty,
24 and Choteau Counties. I want to thank all of the
25 people who got up and spoke. I think this is what

LARRY CROTCHER, SR.
408-842-9260

Response 499: Comment noted.

Response 500: Comment noted.

Response 501: Comments noted.

1 we need to hear, this is what NATL needs to hear. ⁴⁰

2 To say that the vast majority of the
3 people in my district support NATL is really an
4 overstatement. They would like to see this
5 project go forward. They realize there are great
6 concerns by many landowners, and that those issues
7 have to be resolved. I think it was very
8 unfortunate that NATL got off to such a rough
9 start due to the agents that represented them
10 initially, and they realize that, too. They got
11 started on the wrong foot. They seem to me to be
12 very eager to now meet with farmers and
13 landowners, and try to resolve those issues.

14 Comment 501 I think Johan said today that he was
15 going out this afternoon to meet with several
16 landowners in regards to their issues, and they
17 want to work together with northern Montana and
18 with the landowners to make this project work, and
19 hopefully they'll be able to get that done.

20 I think, you know, we've got to realize
21 that not everybody is going to be completely
22 satisfied, landowners, and neither will NATL.
23 They're going to have to make concessions that
24 they really didn't want to do to or live with, and
25 I think some landowners might be in that area.

LARRY CROTCHER, SR
408-442-9260

1 position. It's kind of a give and take situation.

2 **Comment 502** But this is extremely important. I
3 think this is the largest economic development
4 opportunity that this area has had since oil was
5 discovered in Northern Montana, and since all of
6 the railroads were built across Montana, and to
7 Great Falls, and interconnecting. This is an
8 opportunity that we can't afford to miss.

9 **Comment 503** We've talked about what it would do for
10 the schools, the declining enrollments, the tax
11 base. These are all things that we need to do,
12 and work with, and improve upon, and MNTL is
13 certainly one of the answers to that.

14 **Comment 504** As far as the need for MNTL, it's
15 predicted that the United States is going to have
16 an energy crisis in the next few years, and
17 already roughly sixty coal fired generation plants
18 across the US have been cancelled due to
19 environmental concerns. It's predicted that the
20 price of energy is going to go sky high, and that
21 will affect every one of us.

22 Wind energy is a clean and affordable
23 energy that we must develop, and we have the best
24 wind energy, one of the best in the North American
25 continent. We have to develop that resource and

LARRY CROTHER, SPS
408-447-9260

Response 502: Comment noted.

Response 503: See Socioeconomic Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 504: Comments noted.

Response 505 and 506: Comments noted.

1 was it well, ST
2 [Comment 505] And you, there will be some sacrifices.
3 Some lawmakers might be taking a hit for the
4 team, as Jehan said earlier today. But the
5 direction this is going right now I think is in
6 the right direction. I think NATL is listening
7 very periodically to your concerns, they want to
8 address those, and want to work with you, and they
9 want to make this whole project work.
10 [Comment 506] You know, somebody said at one of the
11 other hearings that I was out, you know, the wind
12 is blowing an strong outside -- or inside as it is
13 outside, and I think he was referring to I and Lew
14 at the time.
15 By the way if you do have any problems,
16 I refer them all over to Representative Lew Jones.
17 He said he would take those calls.
18 So it's my hope and wish that we work
19 this out. If we can move forward -- and I think
20 we can, if we're really willing to work together.
21 It is an important project that must be done.
22 Thank you.
23 MR. AIKEN: I'll speak up, get along
24 with NATL quite well, which listening here I have
25 a little advantage --

26 LARRY CROTHER, SR
27 408-447-9260

1 MR. COMB: Could you give your name just
2 for the record.
3 MR. AYER: Russ Ayer, C&S Farms.
4 [redacted] My youngest grand daughter was there
5 when they showed up to talk to us, and I said,
6 "Well, whatever we do to get along with this, when
7 I'm gone, I don't want her standing on that hill
8 saying, 'What in the hell was Grandpa thinking
9 with this thing?'" So I'm going to assume maybe
10 that's -- inaudible -- We got with MATL. The
11 people were nice to work with, and they were
12 considerate to us, and well mannered. They moved
13 the line to the east side of us, and that line
14 could be put on grass land. The Alternative 3
15 aligned and Alignment 4 were the same on us of
16 Township 30 North, Four west, Section 24, 13 and
17 14.
18 [redacted] But in your book of 2-4-6, local routing
19 options, page 3-20, Chapter 3, page 3-217, 218,
20 217 -- inaudible -- So looking south option
21 would increase the land potential for soil erosion
22 greatly. MATL and I looked at this option when
23 they laid out the plan to cross us. There are
24 several drawbacks to this option, and going down
25 the hill, erosion was the first, weed control from
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60
61
62
63
64
65
66
67
68
69
70
71
72
73
74
75
76
77
78
79
80
81
82
83
84
85
86
87
88
89
90
91
92
93
94
95
96
97
98
99
100
101
102
103
104
105
106
107
108
109
110
111
112
113
114
115
116
117
118
119
120
121
122
123
124
125
126
127
128
129
130
131
132
133
134
135
136
137
138
139
140
141
142
143
144
145
146
147
148
149
150
151
152
153
154
155
156
157
158
159
160
161
162
163
164
165
166
167
168
169
170
171
172
173
174
175
176
177
178
179
180
181
182
183
184
185
186
187
188
189
190
191
192
193
194
195
196
197
198
199
200
201
202
203
204
205
206
207
208
209
210
211
212
213
214
215
216
217
218
219
220
221
222
223
224
225
226
227
228
229
230
231
232
233
234
235
236
237
238
239
240
241
242
243
244
245
246
247
248
249
250
251
252
253
254
255
256
257
258
259
260
261
262
263
264
265
266
267
268
269
270
271
272
273
274
275
276
277
278
279
280
281
282
283
284
285
286
287
288
289
290
291
292
293
294
295
296
297
298
299
300
301
302
303
304
305
306
307
308
309
310
311
312
313
314
315
316
317
318
319
320
321
322
323
324
325
326
327
328
329
330
331
332
333
334
335
336
337
338
339
340
341
342
343
344
345
346
347
348
349
350
351
352
353
354
355
356
357
358
359
360
361
362
363
364
365
366
367
368
369
370
371
372
373
374
375
376
377
378
379
380
381
382
383
384
385
386
387
388
389
390
391
392
393
394
395
396
397
398
399
400
401
402
403
404
405
406
407
408
409
410
411
412
413
414
415
416
417
418
419
420
421
422
423
424
425
426
427
428
429
430
431
432
433
434
435
436
437
438
439
440
441
442
443
444
445
446
447
448
449
450
451
452
453
454
455
456
457
458
459
460
461
462
463
464
465
466
467
468
469
470
471
472
473
474
475
476
477
478
479
480
481
482
483
484
485
486
487
488
489
490
491
492
493
494
495
496
497
498
499
500
501
502
503
504
505
506
507
508
509
510
511
512
513
514
515
516
517
518
519
520
521
522
523
524
525
526
527
528
529
530
531
532
533
534
535
536
537
538
539
540
541
542
543
544
545
546
547
548
549
550
551
552
553
554
555
556
557
558
559
560
561
562
563
564
565
566
567
568
569
570
571
572
573
574
575
576
577
578
579
580
581
582
583
584
585
586
587
588
589
590
591
592
593
594
595
596
597
598
599
600
601
602
603
604
605
606
607
608
609
610
611
612
613
614
615
616
617
618
619
620
621
622
623
624
625
626
627
628
629
630
631
632
633
634
635
636
637
638
639
640
641
642
643
644
645
646
647
648
649
650
651
652
653
654
655
656
657
658
659
660
661
662
663
664
665
666
667
668
669
670
671
672
673
674
675
676
677
678
679
680
681
682
683
684
685
686
687
688
689
690
691
692
693
694
695
696
697
698
699
700
701
702
703
704
705
706
707
708
709
710
711
712
713
714
715
716
717
718
719
720
721
722
723
724
725
726
727
728
729
730
731
732
733
734
735
736
737
738
739
740
741
742
743
744
745
746
747
748
749
750
751
752
753
754
755
756
757
758
759
760
761
762
763
764
765
766
767
768
769
770
771
772
773
774
775
776
777
778
779
780
781
782
783
784
785
786
787
788
789
790
791
792
793
794
795
796
797
798
799
800
801
802
803
804
805
806
807
808
809
810
811
812
813
814
815
816
817
818
819
820
821
822
823
824
825
826
827
828
829
830
831
832
833
834
835
836
837
838
839
840
841
842
843
844
845
846
847
848
849
850
851
852
853
854
855
856
857
858
859
860
861
862
863
864
865
866
867
868
869
870
871
872
873
874
875
876
877
878
879
880
881
882
883
884
885
886
887
888
889
890
891
892
893
894
895
896
897
898
899
900
901
902
903
904
905
906
907
908
909
910
911
912
913
914
915
916
917
918
919
920
921
922
923
924
925
926
927
928
929
930
931
932
933
934
935
936
937
938
939
940
941
942
943
944
945
946
947
948
949
950
951
952
953
954
955
956
957
958
959
960
961
962
963
964
965
966
967
968
969
970
971
972
973
974
975
976
977
978
979
980
981
982
983
984
985
986
987
988
989
990
991
992
993
994
995
996
997
998
999
1000

Response 507: Comment noted.

Response 508: Since publication of the Draft EIS, MATL representatives and their engineers, a DEQ representative, and an independent transmission engineer under contract to DEQ reviewed the Bullhead Coulee South Local Routing Option. The steepest slopes crossed could be spanned by the transmission line and access for construction and maintenance equipment could avoid the steepest slopes for this local routing option. On the east side of this local routing option, access would be on relatively flat ground at the top of the hill where a structure would be located. Separate access to the base of the hill would be from the old county road. The line could be strung by hand or helicopter minimizing impacts to the steep slope.

The hill on the west end of the local routing option is much gentler but again access could be restricted in the span where the steepest terrain is crossed.

MATL would be required to implement a noxious weed control plan to reduce the spread of weeds regardless of the alternative alignment selected. Likewise, MATL would be required to implement Best Management Practices to control erosion caused by construction and maintenance activities regardless of the alignment selected.

See the discussion of Vegetation, Wetland and Weed Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

1 construction, and servicing the line, plus extra
 2 expense of \$100,000 to build it.
 3 **Comment 509** It is also nice to an artifact that was
 4 left with the flooding in Canada. They asked if
 5 we would try not to have this line close to it.
 6 If we go down this hill and back up again, there
 7 is some 200 foot drop going down and up, and it
 8 would involve three more landowners, the MWL
 9 people and us as landowners, GPS line on top of
 10 the ridge to a gradual descent for a minimum of
 11 impact on the land. We will have one inch point
 12 -- we can either farm around it, or include it
 13 into the grass next to it. We would like to have
 14 this line as it was proposed to us, and the Bull
 15 Head Hills curving south, routing off and
 16 dismissed.

17 **MR. UNDERDAL:** My name is Allan
 18 Underdal. I'm a Commissioner with Toole County in
 19 the Shelly area. And of course, my two colleagues
 20 are here, too. And when I was waiting for them to
 21 get up here, usually they're so talkative in the
 22 office, and I was wondering why they didn't get up
 23 first.

24 Anyway, we would like to state that in
 25 Toole County, we are very much supportive of this

LARRIE CRUTCHER, SR.
 408-447-9262

Response 509: The cultural resource would be avoided by both
 MATL's proposed alignment and the Bullhead Coulee South
 local routing option. See the response to comment 74.

Response 510 to 512: Comments noted.

1 project, and we think that this will be very⁴⁶
 2 positive, not only for Toole County, but for
 3 Glacier and Sanders County as well, and others.
 4 **Comment 10:** I was very fortunate today to be
 5 standing, just kind of doing some things out in
 6 the area where the first wind farm will go in just
 7 a few weeks. That isn't dependent upon the MNTL
 8 line. But we don't want to be the only one that
 9 has a wind farm. We see so much potential in this
 10 area. There won't be a second wind farm in this
 11 area, I don't believe, without MNTL. You have to
 12 have some way of getting that power to market.
 13 **Comment 11:** And certainly this is very, very
 14 worthwhile. As Jerry said, I think power is of a
 15 premium, and certainly it's not going to get any
 16 better as time goes on. So we would continue to
 17 say that we support this.
 18 **Comment 12:** I guess one of the things I was thinking
 19 about was that when you get up in the morning,
 20 usually you get the wind blowing outside, and you
 21 don't think something positive, but maybe if you
 22 have a wind generator out there, you'll think
 23 differently about that, if we could make something
 24 negative into a positive, and that's what we'd
 25 like to do. Thank you.

LARRIS CRITCHER, RPO
 406-442-6262

Response 513 to 515: Comments noted.

March 10, 2019

Mr. Tom Ring,
Montana Department of Environmental Quality
Environmental Management Bureau
P.O. Box 200901
Helena, MT 59620-0901

Dear Mr. Ring:

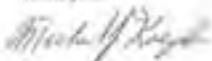
I'm a producer in Glacier County. The MATI line will be going through my property. I want to be on record that I'm in support of the MATI line and wind generation in Glacier County.

This is an opportunity for me personally to help the economy of Glacier County and for myself. I have recreational rights to the land that I bought in 1987. This will give me the chance to have an additional income source for my farm. Glacier County has been suffering through a drought. Comment 513

Change is hard to deal with but this is an opportunity for our area to bring in a new business that is clean and friendly for the environment. I'm willing to deal with some inconvenience to do my part to help bring new business to Glacier County. Comment 514

The MATI line and wind generation will increase the tax base for the County. This will help our tax bills, provide more for our schools, and help build our infrastructure. Comment 515

I support the MATI line.

Thank you,

Mike Koefke

Responses 516 to 519: Comments noted.

March 11, 2008

Mr. Tom Ring
Alabama Department of Environmental Quality
Environmental Management Bureau
P.O. Box 203901
Tulosa, MT 59625-0901

Dear Mr. Ring:

Comment 516 The MATL line is scheduled to pass through Koepke Farms property. Koepke Farms is in support of the MATL line.

Comment 517 Toxbridge has been accommodating and has listened to the concerns that we may have had.

Comment 518 We believe that we need to be supportive of new industries that want to locate in our counties. The increase in tax base will benefit all taxpayers. This is a rare opportunity for this area to have a clean industry come to our counties. We need to be supportive and take advantage of this opportunity.

Comment 519 Koepke Farms wants to be not taxed to support for the MATL line.

Thank you.

By: Ronald Koepke, Michael J. Koepke
Koepke Farms
By Michael J. Koepke, President

Response 520: Comment noted.

March 11, 2009

Mr. Tom Ring
Montana Department of Environmental Quality
Environmental Management Bureau
P.O. Box 200601
Helena, MT 59620-0601

Dear Mr. Ring:

Comment 520

Tim Haurean for the Caf Bank Public Schools. I believe that the building of the MATL transmission line will benefit the children of School District 15, the taxpayers, businesses in the area, and help the overall economy of Glacier County.

I wish to be on record in support for the MATL line.

Thank you.


Michael J. Kuyke

Response 521 to 524: Comments noted.





Hydro Solutions Inc
 January 28, 2008
 Page 2

February 28, 2008

Mr. Jerry McKee
 Mac's Farm
 1810 19th Lane NE
 Orono, Montana 59455

ORIGINAL
 ←

Re: MATL Agricultural Impact Cost Estimate

Dear Mr. McKee:

Comment 1, 2, 3

Introduction

This report was prepared by Fehringer Agricultural Consulting, Inc. (Fehringer) in conjunction with HydroSolutions Inc (HydroSolutions) to update cost estimates for the agricultural impact due to the proposed Montana-Alberta Tie Ltd. (MATL) power pole installations on your farm.

Analysis

Attached please find our estimated costs of farming around MATL's proposed power poles. The attached sheets, DL-7 and DL-8, are for long span interior mono-pole (Layout D) and interior H-poles (Layout H) placements in a crop-fallow rotation, respectively. Layout D and H are the only placements that are projected to be on your property. These sheets were initially prepared by HydroSolutions and Fehringer for a Montana Department of Environmental Quality (Montana DEQ) study dated July 12, 2007. This study evaluated anticipated costs to farmers as a result of the MATL power poles. The original report's designated table sheets were updated so that these updated pages may be compared with the corresponding sheets in the original report. The footprint diagram, Figure 1, is attached as well. All eight the original poles layouts are shown on this page.

Table 1, listing your specific machinery also used for tillage, spraying, seeding, and harvesting, is also attached. "Footprint" amounts remain the same for these layouts as in the July 12, 2007 report. However, overlap areas increased for spraying and seeding since your sprayer is 134 feet instead of the 120 feet for the typical Corned farmer. In the study, overlap width was 60 feet, whereas yours is 70 feet. Since the herbicide Maverick is

applied for erosion control and weed suppression, the "Fargo" application volume was deleted in Table 1.

In addition to modifying implement widths, prices for inputs have significantly changed since the July 2007 report, and therefore have been modified as well. For example, \$13.00 per gallon (Roundup) is now \$32 per gallon instead of \$21.50. Price for phosphate fertilizer (11-02-0 or 14-46-0) has increased from \$450 per ton to \$800 per ton. It is projected that by the end of March, phosphate fertilizer will be \$1,060 per ton. Urea nitrogen is now \$400 per ton whereas it was also \$400 per ton in June 2007.

Another modification to the cost analysis was to change the input to reflect your use of Maverick instead of Fargo herbicide. Cost per acre for Maverick is \$10.00 instead of \$13.00 for Fargo. Application expense was increased to \$10.00 for spraying since you have to reduce your speed from 8 miles per hour to 4 miles per hour to go around the pole(s) with the 134 foot sprayer. This practice is currently used by you for spraying around power poles already in your fields. The speed reduction results in a 50% reduction in your acres per hour, thus doubling application cost. By not figuring a reduction in speed, even for a 120 foot sprayer in the July 2007 study, was an oversight.

Estimated harvesting expense increased due to projected diesel fuel prices of \$3.50 to \$4.00 per gallon by harvest time. In addition, combining expense was figured based on a 50 bushel per acre yield. Your long-term yield history for summer fallow wheat was estimated to be 60 bushels per acre. Harvesting cost is based on a base per acre fee plus a per bushel charge. The more the crop yields, the higher the combining expense. You stated that you paid \$23 per acre in 2007, therefore \$25 per acre is reasonable.

For crop loss, wheat value was modified to reflect increase in winter wheat prices, which is currently over \$10 per bushel. In summer 2007, spring wheat price used for the original study was \$6.00 per bushel. Winter wheat at that time was \$5.00 to \$5.50 per bushel. With increase in yield and price, the value of your crop in the footprint area is now estimated to be \$600 per acre versus \$300 in the 2007 study. The value increase also impacts the loss due to overlap. In the original study, overlap damage was projected at 20% of the crop value per acre.

The last modification to the cost of farming around MATL poles was to the cost of weed control. Currently, you have employees apply all the herbicides around current poles, and do not find comfortable having them apply a residual herbicide that may result in damage outside of the poles' projected five foot buffer. As you stated, you now have your employees apply RTD three times during the fallow season, and then apply Maverick and the "In Crop Spraying" mixture during the cropping year. This represents five applications of herbicides in two years.

| | | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Billings Office PO Box 80000 Billings, MT 59109-0000 Phone: (406) 453-2700 Fax: (406) 453-4515 | Helena Office PO Box 1776 Helena, MT 59624 Phone: (406) 443-6000 Fax: (406) 443-4285 | Sheridan Office 1001 Center Ave. SW Sheridan, WY 82801 Phone: (307) 673-4400 Fax: (307) 673-4397 | Red Lodge Office PO Box 2640 Red Lodge, MT 59068 Phone: (406) 446-2000 Fax: (406) 446-2200 |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

HydroSolutions.com

Montana MATL Report
February 28, 2008
Page 1

Conclusion

In summary, the annual cost of farming around Layout D and Layout H were \$107.98 and \$120.37 per acre in the original 2007 study, respectively. With the revisions outlined above, your annual cost is now estimated at \$225.50 per acre for long span cross-pole interior field placement (Layout D). For H-pole interior placement (Layout H), your annual cost is estimated at \$235.17 per acre. Please refer to Attachments DL-4 and DL-8 for the derivation of costs as summarized in Table 2. The above referenced modifications reflect your current crop of farming around poles. These costs have substantially increased in comparison to the original 2007 study. The basis and foundations for the modifications to the estimating procedure have been outlined above.

Standard of Care

Services performed by HVI personnel for this project have been conducted with that level of care and skill ordinarily exercised by members of the profession customarily practicing in this area under similar budget and time constraints. No warranty, expressed or implied, is made. Since this evaluation was developed specifically for your operation, some of the information contained in this revised report and attachments may be unique to Montana DDQ.

HVI appreciates this opportunity to provide our services to Jerry McRae. If you have any questions regarding the content of this report, or if I can be of further assistance, please contact Neal Febringer at 375-5905 or Klaus Buhle at 925-9233.

Sincerely,

Neal E. Febringer
Neal E. Febringer
Certified Professional Agronomist, C.C.A.
Febringer Agricultural Consulting, Inc.

Klaus Buhle
Klaus A. Buhle
Senior Environmental Engineer
Hydrobiological Inc.

Attachments:

- Figure 1 - Pole Configuration Footprint
- Table 1 - McRae Footprint Overlay
- Table 2 - McRae Dryland Cost of Farming Around Poles
- Attachment DL-4
- Attachment DL-8

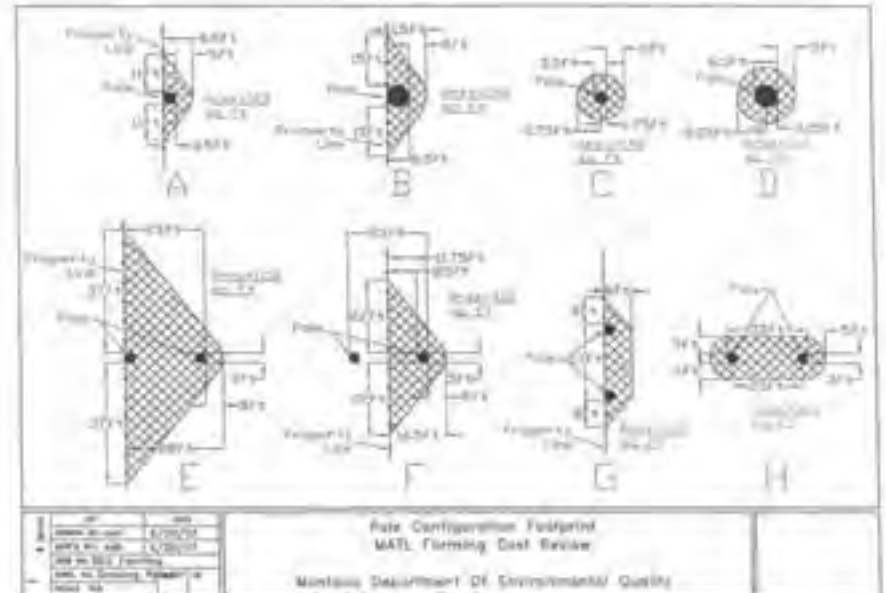




Table 1. McRae Footprint and Overlap

| Layout | Structure | Pole Diam. (ft) | Location | Minimum Buffer Distance From Center of Pole (ft) | Footprint (square feet) | McRae equipment (Mobile shed) | | | |
|--------|-----------|-----------------|----------|--------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------|---------|---------|--------|
| | | | | | | Overlap (square feet) | | | |
| | | | | | | Tractor | Sprayer | Combine | Harrow |
| D | Monopole | 3.5 | center | 125 | 214 | 19,023 | 93,756 | 8,831 | 14,023 |
| H | H-pole | 3.0 | center | 125 | 540 | 21,121 | 94,068 | 1,251 | 21,121 |

Notes: Monopole: 1.0 ft span and 8.0 ft diameter.
 H-Pole: 3.0 ft diameter with 23.4 ft horizontal center to center, 23.8 ft from outside pole to outside pole & 8 ft safety buffer.

Table created by Reed E. Frittinger, Certified Professional Agronomist, C.C.A. on 10/16/08

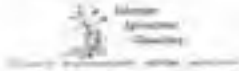


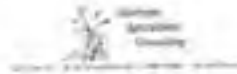
Table 2. McRae Dryland Costs of Farming Around Pole(s).

| Layout | Structure | Pole Diam. (ft) | Location | Farming Practice | |
|--------|-----------|-----------------|----------|---------------------|------------------------|
| | | | | Winter Wheat/Fallow | |
| | | | | Information Source | Annual Cost (per acre) |
| D | Monopole | 3.5 | center | Abundant (1.4) | \$227.50 |
| H | H-pole | 3.0 | center | Abundant (1.4) | \$235.12 |

Notes: From Figure 1
 Mono-pole: 1.0 ft span and 8.0 ft diameter.
 H-Pole: 3.0 ft diam. with 23.4 ft horizontal center to center, 23.8 ft from outside pole to outside pole
 Safety buffer: 8 ft.

Table created by Reed E. Frittinger, Certified Professional Agronomist, C.C.A. on 10/16/08

Attachment D.4



Dryland Wheat-Fallow Rotation
Long Span Mono-Pole in Field Interior (Layout D)

| Operation | Cost | Unit | Rate/ha | No of | Op. Total | Overall | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|--------|-------------|-------|------------|---------|----------------|-------------------|
| | | | | | | Cost/ha | Y ² | Acres |
| Post Harvest: | | | | | | | | |
| Heavy Harrow | \$7.00 | acre | | 1 | \$7.00 | 19,522 | 3,437 | \$3.19 |
| Chemical Fertilizer: | | | | | | | | |
| Roundup (RTT) | \$52.00 | gallon | 16 ounce | 4 | \$208.00 | | | |
| Diamide | \$71.00 | gallon | 4 ounce | 7 | \$497.00 | | | |
| Ammonium sulfate | \$8.00 | gallon | 16 ounce | 4 | \$32.00 | | | |
| Application | \$10.00 | acre | | 4 | \$40.00 | 71.22 | 63,356 | 1.45 ¹ |
| Weed/Chesapeake Control: | | | | | | | | |
| Maverik | \$15.00 | ounce | 0.667 pound | 3 | \$45.00 | | | |
| Application | \$10.00 | acre | | 1 | \$10.00 | 23.01 | 63,356 | 1.66 ¹ |
| Fertilizer: | | | | | | | | |
| Phosphate ¹ | \$600 | ton | 80 pound | 7 | \$4,200.00 | | | |
| Nitrogen ² (46-0-0) | \$600 | ton | 210 pound | 7 | \$4,200.00 | 87.25 | 19,522 | 3.47 |
| Planting: | | | | | | | | |
| Seed | \$40.00 | bu | 80 bushel | 1 | \$40.00 | | | |
| Seeding | \$13.00 | acre | | 1 | \$13.00 | 31.00 | 19,522 | 3.37 |
| In-Crop Services: | | | | | | | | |
| Affinity Broad Spectrum | \$9.25 | ounce | 0.6 ounce | 1 | \$9.25 | | | |
| LY-6 (2,4-D) | \$20.00 | gallon | 8 ounce | 1 | \$20.00 | | | |
| Surfactant | \$16.00 | gallon | 1 ounce | 1 | \$16.00 | | | |
| Application | \$19.00 | acre | | 1 | \$19.00 | 16.62 | 63,356 | 1.64 |
| Harvesting: | | | | | | | | |
| Combine | \$35.00 | acre | | 1 | \$35.00 | 25.00 | 5,837 | 5.13 |
| Crop Loss: | | | | | | | | |
| Quality/Quantity in Overlay | \$10.00 | bushel | 60 bushel | 27% | \$120.00 | 120.00 | 63,356 | 1.45 ¹ |
| Post Harvest | \$10.00 | bushel | 60 bushel | | \$600.00 | 600.00 | 214 | 0.05 ¹ |
| Weed Control/Armed Fall: | | | | | | | | |
| Roundup (RTT) | \$52 | ounce | 16 ounce | 3 | \$156.00 | 19.01 | 263 | 0.02 ¹ |
| Maverik | \$15.00 | ounce | 0.667 pound | 1 | \$15.00 | 10.10 | 393 | 0.03 ¹ |
| In-Crop Herbicide Mix (application figured below) | | | | 1 | \$6.62 | 6.62 | 323 | 0.02 ¹ |
| Labor & Equipment | \$50 | hour | 0.25 hour | 6 | \$300.00 | 62.00 | | 0.25 ¹ |
| TOTAL COST PER POLE DURING 2 YEAR ROTATION | | | | | | | | \$468.89 |
| ANNUAL COST OF FARMING AROUND LONG SPAN MONO-POLE IN FIELD INTERIOR | | | | | | | | \$237.69 |

¹Estimated Winter Wheat Yield: 80 bu/ac
²Seeding 11-62-0 or 18-46-0 with seed
³Applying a total of 100 actual units of nitrogen per acre

Compiled by Neil R. Fehniger, Certified Professional Agronomist, C.C.A. in 2010/8

Attachment D.4



Dryland Wheat-Fallow Rotation
H-Pole in Field Interior (Layout H)

| Operation | Cost | Unit | Rate/ha | No of | Op. Total | Overall | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|--------|-------------|-------|------------|---------|----------------|-------------------|
| | | | | | | Cost/ha | Y ² | Acres |
| Post Harvest: | | | | | | | | |
| Heavy Harrow | \$7.00 | acre | | 1 | \$7.00 | 21,511 | 3,494 | \$3.47 |
| Chemical Fertilizer: | | | | | | | | |
| Roundup (RTT) | \$52.00 | gallon | 16 ounce | 4 | \$208.00 | | | |
| Diamide | \$71.00 | gallon | 4 ounce | 7 | \$497.00 | | | |
| Ammonium sulfate | \$8.00 | gallon | 16 ounce | 4 | \$32.00 | | | |
| Application | \$10.00 | acre | | 4 | \$40.00 | 71.22 | 69,096 | 1.63 |
| Weed/Chesapeake Control: | | | | | | | | |
| Maverik | \$15.00 | ounce | 0.667 pound | 3 | \$45.00 | | | |
| Application | \$10.00 | acre | | 1 | \$10.00 | 23.01 | 69,096 | 1.63 |
| Fertilizer: | | | | | | | | |
| Phosphate ¹ | \$600 | ton | 80 pound | 7 | \$4,200.00 | | | |
| Nitrogen ² (46-0-0) | \$600 | ton | 210 pound | 7 | \$4,200.00 | 97.29 | 21,511 | 3.49 ¹ |
| Planting: | | | | | | | | |
| Seed | \$40.00 | bu | 80 bushel | 1 | \$40.00 | | | |
| Seeding | \$13.00 | acre | | 1 | \$13.00 | 31.00 | 21,511 | 3.69 |
| In-Crop Services: | | | | | | | | |
| Affinity Broad Spectrum | \$9.25 | ounce | 0.6 ounce | 1 | \$9.25 | | | |
| LY-6 (2,4-D) | \$20.00 | gallon | 8 ounce | 1 | \$20.00 | | | |
| Surfactant | \$16.00 | gallon | 1 ounce | 1 | \$16.00 | | | |
| Application | \$19.00 | acre | | 1 | \$19.00 | 16.62 | 69,096 | 1.63 |
| Harvesting: | | | | | | | | |
| Combine | \$25.00 | acre | | 1 | \$25.00 | 35.00 | 7,237 | 4.13 |
| Crop Loss: | | | | | | | | |
| Quality/Quantity in Overlay | \$10.00 | bushel | 60 bushel | 20% | \$120.00 | 120.00 | 69,096 | 1.63 |
| Post Harvest | \$10.00 | bushel | 60 bushel | | \$600.00 | 600.00 | 232 | 0.03 ¹ |
| Weed Control/Armed Fall: | | | | | | | | |
| Roundup (RTT) | \$52 | ounce | 16 ounce | 3 | \$156.00 | 19.01 | 263 | 0.02 ¹ |
| Maverik | \$15.00 | ounce | 0.667 pound | 1 | \$15.00 | 10.10 | 393 | 0.03 ¹ |
| In-Crop Herbicide Mix (application figured below) | | | | 1 | \$6.62 | 6.62 | 323 | 0.02 ¹ |
| Labor & Equipment | \$50 | hour | 0.25 hour | 6 | \$300.00 | 62.00 | | 0.25 ¹ |
| TOTAL COST PER POLE DURING 2 YEAR ROTATION | | | | | | | | \$919.24 |
| ANNUAL COST OF FARMING AROUND LONG SPAN MONO-POLE IN FIELD INTERIOR | | | | | | | | \$459.12 |

¹Estimated Winter Wheat Yield: 80 bu/ac
²Seeding 11-62-0 or 18-46-0 with seed
³Applying a total of 100 actual units of nitrogen per acre

Compiled by Neil R. Fehniger, Certified Professional Agronomist, C.C.A. in 2010/8

Response 525: Because the costs and prices used previously have increased substantially, the farmer economics were recalculated and are shown in Section 3.13 using updated 2008 numbers.

3/11/2008

Doug

From: "Doug" <doug@...>
To: ...
Sent: Friday, March 07, 2008 1:00 PM
Subject: MATL, etc

Tandridge Power Inc.
Waterpark Place, 20 Bay Street, Suite 1100, Toronto, Ontario
M5J2N8

Douglas Banks
888 Business 15
Conrad, Montana
59425

Comment 103

Dear Johan van't Hof,

I visited with you on the phone a week or so ago about the MATL power line that is proposed through my farm. We seemed to have a couple of issues regarding the EIS statement about the prices associated with farming around the proposed line. First of all I think all of this will be fruitless as the main desire is to have the line go in a straight line format instead of the diagonal format. The use of single poles instead of the H structure. I have H separate transmission and distribution lines run on the farm. The H structure is the most difficult to go around and the most costly to operate around. I presently have an H structure on the farm. It presents the most weed issues and the most varmit issues of any other structure.

However, with that stated, the costs in the EIS are not accurate and alchemy at best.

For instance. The price of Roundup RT3 is not 21.50 per gallon but closer to 35.00 per gallon. Monsanto has informed us that we should expect a 3 dollar per month increase in the price. Monsanto has increased in Feb. 2008 the price of RT3 15.00 alone. That was with the base price of 22 to 26 dollars per gallon.

The price of Topdress N is not 400 per ton but 600 per ton.

The price of Phosphate fert is not 450 per ton but 500 per ton. The fertilizer dealer expects the price to exceed 600 per ton within months.

The EIS statement implies that there is 80 lbs of fertilizer banded with the seed. However in my area the number is closer to 75 lbs. 60 lbs of fert @450 per ton is 27.00, 75 lbs @ 500 per ton is 37.50 per acre.

Seed cost is not 15.00 per cwt but closer to 25.00 - 24.00 per bushel. The price will depend on the availability and quality of the seed being planted. ie certified, registered etc. Treating the grain is to be added to that number. Treating can vary from 1.00 to 2.00 per bushel and higher.

The harvest costs are not 25.00 per acre but close to the 2007 numbers of 27.00 and higher. I was quoted 27.00 by the custom harvesters in this area. I am sure the price will not be lower for 2008

In the past couple of years the cost of burning an acre of ground has held steady at 110.00 - 150.00 per acre. However in the 2008 season the cost will be over double those figures. In operating around an H structure it takes me approximately 2.4 acres of area. That figure is used from the GPS in my sprayer.

A large issue that still is on the horizon is the aggressive tactics used by your agents in the earlier attempts of easement signings. That has created a very disturbing issue for many people. VERY DISTURBING.

I do have many documents supporting my numbers above. If you would like to see them please advise. As the EIS statement quotes, farmers will profit from having poles on their farms. I can assure you that I will NEVER profit from this line having poles in the middle of my fields. A straight line format with single poles is the direction of least impact for me and the least costly to farm around.

3/11/2008

One last issue is the creation of a fire by the power poles. I have had fires from power lines that have created sparks from arcing wires and abraded insulators etc. One as recently as 2 weeks ago. Who is the agency responsible for damages from such actions.

Thank you for your time.

Douglas C. Banks
888 Business 15
Conrad, Montana
59425

3/11/2008

Response 526: Because the costs and prices used previously have increased substantially, the farmer economics were recalculated and are shown in Section 3.13 using updated 2008 numbers.

Response 527: Comment noted.

Montana-Alberta Tie Ltd. 230-kV Transmission Line Project

Name Bob Geddes PE
Address 700 Sandpoint Dr
City Great Falls State MT Zip 59414

Comments may be submitted orally or in writing at the public hearing.

Please consider these written comments on the Environmental Impact Statement:

This is a good project. It will
be sustainable, sound economically and
an important necessity to our roads
and nation. I highly support it!!!

Comment 527

Bob Geddes
3-11-09

459

Response 528: Comment noted.

March 11, 2008

Tim Ring
Montana Department of Environmental Quality Mgmt Bureau
PO Box 206851
Helena, MT 59620-6851

RE: Support of MATL

Dear Mr. Ring:

I am writing in support of the MATL. I support the MATL, because it benefits both consumers and generators through additional connections with markets in demand of energy. It also will allow additional purchasing options for Montana utilities resulting in lower rates for consumers. MATL is an economic opportunity for Montana by providing additional transmission capacity.

My name is Vanessa Bucklin, and I support MATL.

Sincerely,


Vanessa Y. Bucklin

Response 529 and 530: Comments noted.

Buck Texeira
Independent Consultant
Box 466, 59425
B. March '08

Tom Ring
MONTANA DEED
Box 2894, Helena 59620

Dear Mr. Ring -

Comment 529
I would like to state that I favor the proposed
MTE transmission line between Great Falls
and Lethbridge.

THE potential for renewable energy development
throughout the entire state is enormous. However
without the transmission and renewable wind
energy ~~can~~ become a moot point and
southcentral Montana remains in economic ~~decay~~ ^{decay}.

Comment 530
I truly believe the line will be a
vital cog in funding for schools and
business, not to mention tax help for
infrastructure of the entire area.

Thank you in advance for your consideration

Sincerely
Buck Texeira
I.D. Elitox

RECEIVED
MAR 11 2008

Dear Environmental Quality
Enr. Management Bureau

472

Response 531: Comment noted.





United States Department of the Interior



FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Bentley Lake National Wildlife Refuge
922 Hootloggy Trail
Great Falls, Montana 59404-6133

March 10, 2008

HARVEY KOSAR, MD
FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
WASHINGTON, DC

Mr. Tom Ring
Environmental Sciences Specialist
Montana Department of Environmental Quality
P.O. Box 200901
Helena, Montana 59620-0901

Mr. Ring:

This correspondence is in response to the receipt of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Montana Alberta Tie Line 230-kV Transmission Line Summary, Bentley Lake National Wildlife Refuge (Refuge) is nationally recognized as a migratory bird area and on March 17, 2002, the Refuge was designated a Globally Important Bird Area by the American Bird Conservancy. In addition, the Refuge is also recognized as a regional site by the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network.

In a correspondence dated November 29, 2006, from the Service to Mr. Patrick Mullins of AMEC Earth and Environmental, we discussed the proposed transmission line and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's suggestion on modifications that can minimize the impact to wildlife resources.

Comment 155

Specifically, the Service stated that our preferred placement of the transmission lines would be AL74_SEGMENT1C_BRADYFRONTAGE with slight modification. We recommended that the route be located within 140 feet east and north of the existing line, starting 5 miles north of the Refuge (Section 4, C23N, R5E) and ending 3 miles south of the Refuge. As an alternative, the Service also recommended utilizing AL74_SEGMENT1A_WESTGREATFALLS which is located west and south of the Refuge. These modifications will decrease the likelihood of bird strikes and increase viability to migratory birds.

Our review of the Summary Draft EIS indicates that these modifications were not incorporated into the Preferred Alternative. We would like to minimize that we suggest these modifications be made to minimize the impact of the transmission line to wildlife resources. If you have any questions, please contact Refuge Biologist Vanessa Fields at (406)727-5400 Extension 274.

Sincerely,

Kathleen A. Hartman
Kathleen A. Hartman
Refuge Manager

Enclosure

cc: Patrick Mullins, AMEC Earth and Environmental, 21 North Last Chance Gulch, Box 298, Helena, Montana 59601

Response 532: The proposed action and all alternatives avoid refuge lands. Overhead ground wires on alternatives east of the refuge could be marked to reduce avian mortality from line collisions. Also see Section 3.8.3.2, which has been revised. Alternative 4 uses about 30 miles of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's preferred placement.

Response 533 and 534: Comments noted.

Browning Area Chamber of Commerce

PO Box 690 • Browning, MT 59417 • (406) 338-4015

March 12, 2008

Mr. Chairman:

Comment 533 Browning Area Chamber of Commerce serves the Blackfoot Reservation business and is in support of the Montana Alberta Transmission Line. The environmental impact is little compared to the economic impact it will have on our Reservation. Unlike many rural communities, this Reservation does not have to worry about out migration of its population. The population is increasing, indicating we only a large workforce, but a large consuming force, with a need for more local services & goods. The reservation borders Glacier Park this coupled with our unique Blackfoot Culture indicates enormous potential for tourism services. MATL will assist in realizing the potential of our area.

Comment 534 As a nation, our energy demands are ever increasing and our options for production are limited. The development of clean wind power and the lines to transport it makes sense. Please support the construction of the MATL Transmission Line. The environmental impacts are minor and the economic benefits are great. We appreciate the time and attention you have given our request.

Sincerely,



Joseph H. Barnes, Member
PO Box 690
Browning, MT 59417
406 338-4015

Response 535: Comment noted.

Montana-Alberta Tie Ltd. 2304V Transmission Line Project

Name David L. Jacobson
 Address 409 6th Ave S.E.
 City CUTBANK State MT Zip 59427

Comments may be submitted orally or in writing at the public hearing. Comment Box

Please consider these written comments on the Environmental Impact Statement:

THE MATL PROJECT IS ESSENTIAL TO THE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH CENTRAL MONTANA. THE INCURRING OF A SMALL PERCENTAGE OF FACES AND RANCHERS SHOULD BE ACCEPTABLE. MATL HAS BEEN GOOD AT ADDRESSING THEIR NEEDS AND CONCERNS. WITHOUT MATL THE DEVELOPMENT OF WIND ENERGY WILL BE MINIMAL. MATL CAN PROVIDE THE IMPROVED JOBS AND TAX SUPPORT THE "MILLIE" NEEDS TO GROW AND SURVIVE WITHOUT ANY ADVERSE AFFECT TO THE ENVIRONMENT.

COMMENT DEADLINE March 31, 2008

HOW TO COMMENT AND PARTICIPATE AFTER THE HEARING

VIEW THE EIS ONLINE AT www.deq.mt.gov/MEP/MATL.asp

SUBMIT WRITTEN COMMENTS TO: Mr. Greg Hallock
 Director's Office
 Montana Department of Environmental Quality
 PO Box 20001
 Helena, MT 59620-0901

SUBMIT COMMENTS, QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS VIA EMAIL TO MATL@mt.gov

PROJECT CONTACTS

Tom Ring, MFSA Coordinator 406-444-8785
 Ellen Russell, US Department of Energy 202-505-9624
 Greg Hallock, MEPA Coordinator 406-444-3278

Individuals needing an alternative accessible form of information should contact Mr. Hallock at the address above.

Response 536: Comment noted.

Montana-Alberta Tie Ltd. 230-kV Transmission Line Project

Name Cathleen Russell
Address 20 4th Ave SW
City Great Falls State MT Zip 59427

Comments may be submitted orally or in writing at the public hearing.

Please consider these written comments on the Environmental Impact Statement:

I do support the construction of the
Montana-Alberta tie line near Great Falls
& surrounding communities

Comment ID

COMMENT DEADLINE March 31, 2008

HOW TO COMMENT AND PARTICIPATE AFTER THE HEARING

VIEW THE EIS ONLINE AT web.doe.mt.gov/MSL/MATL.asp

SUBMIT WRITTEN COMMENTS TO: Mr. Greg Halsten
Director's Office
Montana Department of Environmental Quality
PO Box 200901
Helena, MT 59620-0901

SUBMIT COMMENTS, QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS VIA EMAIL TO MATL@doe.mt.gov

PROJECT CONTACTS:

Tom Ring, MESA Coordinator 406-444-6785
Ellen Russell, US Department of Energy 202-585-9524
Greg Halsten, NEPA Coordinator 406-444-3279

Individuals needing an alternative accessible form of information should contact Mr. Halsten at the address above.

132

Response 537: Comments noted.

Montana-Alberta Tie Ltd. 230-kV Transmission Line Project

Name Greg Halsten
Address 502 2nd Ave SE
City Butte, Montana State MT Zip 59701

Comments may be submitted orally or in writing at the public hearing. **Comment 537**
Please consider these written comments on the Environmental Impact Statement.

*I think your my support
for the Montana-Alberta Tie Ltd
Transmission Line project,
I feel this will be a huge
boost for the area & community
This will also help bring more
jobs to the community*

COMMENT DEADLINE March 31, 2008

HOW TO COMMENT AND PARTICIPATE AFTER THE HEARING

VIEW THE EIS ONLINE AT www.dow.mt.gov/MES/MATL.asp

SUBMIT WRITTEN COMMENTS TO: Mr. Greg Halsten
Director's Office
Montana Department of Environmental Quality
PO Box 20901
Helena, MT 59625-0901

SUBMIT COMMENTS, QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS VIA EMAIL TO MAIL@DOW.MT.GOV

PROJECT CONTACTS

Toh King, MESA Coordinator 406-444-5785
Ellen Russell, US Department of Energy 202-586-9624
Greg Halsten, MEPA Coordinator 406-444-3278

Individuals needing an alternative accessible form of information should contact Mr. Halsten at the address above.

477

Response 538: Comment noted.

Montana-Alberta Tie Ltd. 330kV Transmission Line Project

Name LINTON J. ANDERSON
Address 442 Highway 213 N
City GUT BANK State MT Zip 59427

Comments may be submitted orally or in writing at the public hearing. Comment 538

Please consider these written comments on the Environmental Impact Statement:

I think it's very important for the
development of the community.
Linton J. Anderson

COMMENT DEADLINE March 31, 2008

HOW TO COMMENT AND PARTICIPATE AFTER THE HEARING:

VIEW THE EIS ONLINE AT www.deq.mt.gov/MFSMATL.asp

SUBMIT WRITTEN COMMENTS TO: Mr. Greg Halsten
Director's Office
Montana Department of Environmental Quality
PO Box 200901
Helena, MT 59620-0901

SUBMIT COMMENTS, QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS VIA EMAIL TO MATL@mt.gov

PROJECT CONTACTS:

Tom Ring, MFS Coordinator 406-444-6750
Ellen Russell, US Department of Energy 202-585-9024
Greg Halsten, MEPA Coordinator 406-444-3276

Individuals needing an alternative accessible form of literature should contact Mr. Halsten at the address above.

Response 539: Comment noted.

Montana-Alberta Tie Ltd. 230-KV Transmission Line Project

Name John Haddock
Address 935 6th Ave SE
City Cut Bank MT State MT Zip 59427

Comments may be submitted orally or in writing at the public hearing. **Comment 539**

Please consider these written comments on the Environmental Impact Statement:

*This is a development that is
very important to our community*
J. Haddock

COMMENT DEADLINE March 31, 2008

HOW TO COMMENT AND PARTICIPATE AFTER THE HEARING

VIEW THE EIS ONLINE AT www.deq.mt.gov/MFS/MATL.asp

SUBMIT WRITTEN COMMENTS TO: Mr. Greg Hallden
Director's Office
Montana Department of Environmental Quality
PO Box 200901
Helena, MT 59620-0901

SUBMIT COMMENTS, QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS VIA EMAIL TO MATL@deq.mt.gov

PROJECT CONTACTS:

Tom Fung, MFDA Coordinator 406-444-0765
Ellen Russell, US Department of Energy 202-586-9534
Greg Hallden, MEPA Coordinator 406-444-3776

Individuals needing an alternative accessible form of information should contact Mr. Hallden at the address above.

4-34

Response 540: Comment noted.

Montana-Alberta Tie Ltd. 230-4V Transmission Line Project

Name Stephanie Pinneroy
Address 1001 West 2000th
City Cut Bank State MT Zip 59403-1

Comments may be submitted orally or in writing at the public hearing. Comment Card

Please consider these written comments on the Environmental Impact Statement:

I think this is a great project not only
to increase our tax base in this area
but to increase employment opportunities.
I appreciate that you are taking the
consideration the impact on the environment
for the fairness as well as other land
owners.

Your commitment to the community of
Cut Bank is impressive.

COMMENT DEADLINE March 31, 2008

HOW TO COMMENT AND PARTICIPATE AFTER THE HEARING.

VIEW THE EIS ONLINE AT www.deq.mt.gov/MFSMATL.asp

SUBMIT WRITTEN COMMENTS TO: Mr. Greg Hallden
Director's Office
Montana Department of Environmental Quality
PO Box 200901
Helena, MT 59620-0901

SUBMIT COMMENTS, QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS VIA EMAIL TO MATL@mt.gov

PROJECT CONTACTS:

Tom Ring, MESA Coordinator 406-444-8705
Ellen Russell, US Department of Energy 202-586-9624
Oleg Hallden, MEPA Coordinator 406-444-3276

Individuals needing an alternative accessible form of information should contact Mr. Russell at the address above

Response 541: Thank you for your comment

Montana-Alberta Tie Line, 230-kV Transmission Line Project

Name L. Wright (Northern Montana Irrigation District)
Address 234 4th St SE
City / Loc / State Scale / IT 2059427

Comments may be submitted orally or in writing at the public hearing. **Comment 541**

Please consider these written comments on the Environmental Impact Statement:

Welcome!
I totally support MATL and their
proposal for a power line to help
protect clean green and farmland.
The tax relief and job opportunities
brought to our county will be
very beneficial.

COMMENT DEADLINE March 31, 2008

HOW TO COMMENT AND PARTICIPATE AFTER THE HEARING

VIEW THE EIS ONLINE AT www.deq.mt.gov/MEP/MATL.asp

SUBMIT WRITTEN COMMENTS TO: Mr. Greg Hallock
Director's Office
Montana Department of Environmental Quality
PO Box 203901
Helena, MT 59620-0901

SUBMIT COMMENTS, QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS VIA EMAIL TO MATL@mt.gov

PROJECT CONTACTS

Toni Ring, MFSA Coordinator 406-444-6705
Elen Russell, US Department of Energy 202-585-9524
Greg Hallock, MEPA Coordinator 406-444-3278

Individuals needing an alternative accessible form of information should contact Mr. Hallock at the address above.

152

Response 542: Comment noted.

Moltana-Adena Tie Ltd. 230KV Transmission Line Project

Name JEFF GOTTSCH AMERICAN PIPE & Supply
Address 234 4TH AVE SE
City CURT BANE State MT Zip 59427

Comments may be submitted orally or in writing at the public hearing 

Please consider these written comments on the Environmental Impact Statement

*To support the electric transmission
being proposed by MATL. The
construction of this will bring
jobs and needed tax base to
our country. MATL ground concern
for private property (farmers) is
mitigating in a satisfactory way or made,*

COMMENT DEADLINE March 31, 2008

HOW TO COMMENT AND PARTICIPATE AFTER THE HEARING

VIEW THE EIS ONLINE AT www.doe.mt.gov/MFSAATL.asp

SUBMIT WRITTEN COMMENTS TO: Mr. Greg Hallden
Director's Office
Montana Department of Environmental Quality
PO Box 200901
Helena, MT 59620-0901

SUBMIT COMMENTS, QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS VIA EMAIL TO MATL@mt.gov

PROJECT CONTACTS

Tom Ring, MFSA Coordinator 406-444-5785
Ellen Russell, US Department of Energy 202-585-9624
Greg Hallden, MEPA Coordinator 406-444-3278

Individuals needing an alternative accessible form of information should contact Mr. Hallden at the address above.

Response 543: Comment noted.

Montana-Alberta Tie Ltd. 230-kV Transmission Line Project

Name Scott Laird
Address 322 2nd Ave SE
City Our Town State MT Zip 59927

Comments may be submitted orally or in writing at the public hearing. **Comment 543**

Please consider these written comments on the Environmental Impact Statement:

The one concern in our area is the woods and anything we can do to use it is needed with declining finances in our school local area. This project is a huge benefit w/ the increase in taxable values also.

The ability to use clean energy is also a major factor. This is definitely a win-win situation for everyone.

COMMENT DEADLINE March 31, 2008

HOW TO COMMENT AND PARTICIPATE AFTER THE HEARING:

VIEW THE EIS ONLINE AT www.doc.mt.gov/MEPA/MATL.asp

SUBMIT WRITTEN COMMENTS TO: Mr. Greg Hallsten
Director's Office
Montana Department of Environmental Quality
PO Box 200901
Helena, MT 59620-0901

SUBMIT COMMENTS, QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS VIA EMAIL TO MATL@mt.gov

PROJECT CONTACTS:

Tom Ring, MFSA Coordinator 406-444-6720
Elen Russell, US Department of Energy 202-586-9624
Greg Hallsten, MEPA Coordinator 406-444-3276

Individuals needing an alternative accessible form of information should contact Mr. Tomlin at the address above.

457

Response 544: Comment noted.

Montana-Alberta Tie Ltd. 230kV Transmission Line Project

Name Yvonne M. J. ...
Address 221 3rd St NE
City Butte State MT Zip 59701

Comments may be submitted orally or in writing at the public hearing. Comment Card

Please consider these written comments on the Environmental Impact Statement:

I would like to express my concern of
the upcoming MATL project. I feel it is
necessary for North Central Montana to
continue to grow in the energy world.
Without proper transmission we cannot
support the growth of the new wind energy.
Please consider our concerns in your consultation
for this project.

COMMENT DEADLINE March 31, 2008

HOW TO COMMENT AND PARTICIPATE AFTER THE HEARING

VIEW THE EIS ONLINE AT www.deq.mt.gov/MFS/MATL.asp

SUBMIT WRITTEN COMMENTS TO: Mr. Greg Hallsten
Director's Office
Montana Department of Environmental Quality
PO Box 200901
Helena, MT 59620-0901

SUBMIT COMMENTS, QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS VIA EMAIL TO MATL@mt.gov

PROJECT CONTACTS

Tom Ring, MFSA Coordinator 406-444-6785
Ellen Russell, US Department of Energy 202-586-9024
Greg Hallsten, MEPA Coordinator 406-444-3278

Individuals needing an alternative accessible form of information should contact Mr. Hallsten at the address above.

58

Response 545: Comment noted.

Montana-Alberta Tie Ltd. 230kV Transmission Line Project

Name Fritz H. Smith
Address 1422 MARIE ST. PO BOX 55
City CUT BONE State MT Zip 59427

Comments may be submitted orally or in writing at the public hearing **Comment 545**
Please consider these written comments on the Environmental Impact Statement

I support this project
Fritz H. Smith

COMMENT DEADLINE March 31, 2008

HOW TO COMMENT AND PARTICIPATE AFTER THE HEARING:

VIEW THE EIS ONLINE AT www.deq.mt.gov/MPE/MATI.asp

SUBMIT WRITTEN COMMENTS TO: Mr. Greg Hallsten
Director's Office
Montana Department of Environmental Quality
PO Box 200901
Helena, MT 59620-0901

SUBMIT COMMENTS, QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS VIA EMAIL TO MATI@deq.mt.gov

PROJECT CONTACTS:

Tom Ring, MESA Coordinator 406-444-8785
Ellen Russell, US Department of Energy 202-505-9524
Greg Hallsten, MEPA Coordinator 406-444-3276

Individuals needing an alternative accessible form of information should contact Mr. Hallsten at the address above.

Response 546: Comment noted.

Montana-Alberta Tie Ltd. 230kV Transmission Line Project

Name Wade Johnson
Address 436 Circle Drive
City Cut Bank State MT Zip 59422

Comments may be submitted orally or in writing at the public hearing. **Comment 546**

Please consider these written comments on the Environmental Impact Statement:

The State of Montana is in need of economic
development as well as development of green,
renewable energy sources. The MATL project
is a positive step in solving both of these
problems.

I strongly recommend the approval and
consideration of the MATL project.

Sincerely,
Wade Johnson

COMMENT DEADLINE March 31, 2008

HOW TO COMMENT AND PARTICIPATE AFTER THE HEARING

VIEW THE EIS ONLINE AT www.deq.mt.gov/MT/MATL.htm

SUBMIT WRITTEN COMMENTS TO: Mr. Greg Halsten
Director's Office
Montana Department of Environmental Quality
PO Box 200901
Helena, MT 59620-0901

SUBMIT COMMENTS, QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS VIA EMAIL TO MATL@mt.gov

PROJECT CONTACTS:

Tom Ring, MESA Coordinator 406-444-6700
Eliot Russell, US Department of Energy 202-585-9624
Greg Halsten, MEPA Coordinator 406-444-3270

Individuals needing an alternative accessible form of information should contact Mr. Halsten at the address above.

437

Billman's Home Décor LLP

March 11, 2020

Mr. Tom King
Montana Department of Environmental Quality
Environmental Management Bureau
P.O. Box 202902
Helena, MT 59620-0902

Dear Mr. King:

Comment 341

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Montana Alberta Transmission Line. Billman's Home Décor LLP would like to go on record offering its full support for the electric transmission line proposed by Montana Alberta Tie, Ltd. (MATL). Our business is located in Cut Bank Montana and is dedicated to the promotion and growth of the Cut Bank area. We firmly believe construction of this line will have a positive and lasting effect on not only our community, but the Golden Triangle area.

Comment 342

Thank you for the opportunity to express our support for this project. We look forward to hearing very soon that a Presidential Permit has been issued for the project and we urge the Montana DQJ and BLM issue the needed certificates of compliance and right-of-way as required.

Sincerely,

Valerie Vermoren, President
Billman's Home Décor

R&G Rentals, J&C Rentals, D&V Rentals

March 11, 2020

Mr. Tom King
Montana Department of Environmental Quality
Environmental Management Bureau
P.O. Box 202902
Helena, MT 59620-0902

Dear Mr. King:

Comment 343

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Montana Alberta Transmission Line. We would like to offer our full support for the electric transmission line proposed by Montana Alberta Tie, Ltd. (MATL). Our family owns several rental businesses in Cut Bank making us dedicated to the continued growth of the area. We firmly believe construction of this line will have a positive and lasting effect on not only our community, but the entire Golden Triangle area.

Comment 344

Thank you for the opportunity to express our support for this project. We look forward to hearing very soon that a Presidential Permit has been issued for the project and we urge the Montana DQJ and BLM issue the needed certificates of compliance and right-of-way as required.

Sincerely,

R&G Rentals, J&C Rentals, D&V Rentals
R&G Rentals, J&C Rentals, D&V Rentals

Responses 547 and 548: Comments noted.

Billman's Inc

March 11, 2008

Mr. Tim King
Montana Department of Environmental Quality
Environmental Management Bureau
P.O. Box 200901
Helena, MT 59620-0901

Dear Mr. King:

Comment 547

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Montana Alberta Transmission Line. Billman's Inc would like to go on record offering its full support for the electric transmission line proposed by Montana Alberta Te, Ltd. (MATL). Our business is located in Cut Bank Montana and is dedicated to the promotion and growth of the Cut Bank area. We fully believe construction of this line will have a positive and lasting effect on not only our community, but the Golden Triangle area.

Comment 548

Thank you for the opportunity to express our support for this project. We look forward to finishing very soon that a Presidential Permit has been issued for the project and we urge the Montana DEQ and BLM issue the needed certificates of completion and right-of-way as required.

Sincerely,


Rick Billman, President
Billman's Inc.

Response 549: Comment noted.

**PONDERA COUNTY
SANITARIAN**

LEOPOLD & ROME, PO
204TH AVE SW
CONRAD, MT 69423
cross@drivers.net
(406) 271-4335 Cell 988-7025

March 13, 2008

YOM RING, ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES SPECIALIST, MT DEQ

Comment Card

I am a life long resident of Teton County and operate the family farm with my husband in the Flamingo Community. I am also the County Sanitarian for both Teton and Pondera Counties. I am supporting the jurisdiction of the MATL line.

I believe that the technology is available that will allow us to develop our natural resources, which will help to meet our energy needs, while maintaining our clean and beautiful environment. I also believe that it can be accomplished while recognizing private property rights.

I do see the potential for being much needed economic development to our area which will benefit our local business and our tax base.

Sincerely,

Carrie A Pyles

Responses 550a through 550e. See responses to comments 436 and 441 through 443.

Response 550f: Chapter 512, Montana Session Laws 2007, revised Montana's urban renewal laws. It precludes a city or town from using its power of eminent domain to obtain property with the intent to sell, lease, or provide the property to a private entity. This law does not apply to MATL because it is not a city or town exercising eminent domain authority under the urban renewal laws.

Shirley and Paul Dolan
12418 N. Diamond Dr.
Hayden, ID 83837
March 12, 2008

Mr. Tom Ring
Environmental Sciences Specialist
Montana Department of Environmental Quality
PO Box 200961
Helena, MT 59620-0961

Re: MATL EIS Comments

Dear Mr. Ring:

I would like to submit my comments on the Federal Draft of the Environmental Impact Statement for the Montana Alberta Tie Ltd. 230 KV Transmission Line. In general we felt that the document was fairly well done and we appreciate the revised economic impact projections and believe the new projections are more realistic than MATL was finding to the press. The \$249,000 annual tax impact to Parkland County may still be a little optimistic though. We are not opposed to the line reconstruction, however, we do have a few concerns with some of the material presented in the EIS document. (I should point out that I am a registered professional engineer in the State of Montana and have been involved in power line design and construction for over 20 years.

Under the Regulatory Restrictions Analysis Section 5.7 the proposer seems to be more concerned with the potential property rights impact to MATL than the property rights impact to the various US citizens and land owners along the proposed transmission line route. The various agencies should be more concerned with the impact of MATL's activities on the various land owner's property rights. Land owners that I might add unlike MATL, which is a Canadian based firm, I would like to point out that MATL's right-of-way agencies have been securing "options" at very minimal rates for actively purchasing right-of-way. At least the preliminary documents we've seen as were option documents that stated should MATL choose to exercise the option the land owners would be paid their taken right-of-way fee. So the impact to MATL's property rights by requiring them to follow the agency prepared route of Alternative 4 would be fairly minimal.

MATL has repeatedly stated that it has the ability to condemn property using eminent domain in the State of Montana. How does the recent Montana legislature action last summer limiting the use of eminent domain powers by private enterprise affect MATL's ability to exercise eminent domain condemnations?

Response 551 and 552: See the response to comment 436.

Response 553: Comment noted.

Response 554a: Comment noted.

Response 554b and 554c: See responses to comments 446. See the discussion of Safety Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Comment 447

Our family owns 400 acres in the Heligan Hill area near Valley. In Figure 2.10.7 of the EIS, three of the routing options are depicted crossing our property. The Old Heligan Hill route, the current Heligan Hill local routing option and the A/C2 Proposed alignment. The current Heligan Hill local routing option goes right through the middle of our irrigated field longitudinally. If the line was located in this manner it would make our property pretty much impossible to irrigate and would drastically affect the property value and use as irrigated farmland. We strongly oppose this option and will file a lawsuit if this option is chosen. This route would inflict the maximum harm and damage to our property and would be in direct conflict with statements on page 1-16 pertaining to right-of-way providing the greatest public benefit and the least private harm. The Old Heligan Hill route follows the field line at the edge of our property on the west end the A/C2 Proposed alignment cuts diagonally across our property then generally parallels the road. By adding a couple gaged 90 degree corner structures or better yet, a couple angled self supported structures to MATT's design in this area to eliminate the routing angles in the line, the impact on our property could be minimized and crossing the well irrigated field to the south at a diagonal could be avoided. As our property is presently in CFP and will be entering to crop production shortly, we strongly advocate the usual easement structures across our property. We would prefer Alternative 4 be selected as it has the minimum impact on our property. It runs across the northern edge.

Comment 448

In routing through the EIS I noticed that the only PE stamp I saw in the document was from an engineer from California. Montana law requires that transmission lines and other utility projects constructed in the state be designed under the responsible charge of a PE licensed in the State of Montana. Subsequently, documents covering the Montana portion of this line should be sealed or stamped by a Montana PE. California PE's are not recognized by the Montana Board of Engineers and it should be noted that California does not follow the NESC.

Comment 449

And finally I would like to further address the minimum line clearance issue. The EIS lists the minimum line to ground clearance design criteria of the line to be 21.2 feet. As Volume 2 of the EIS resulted response to comments, two additional minimum clearance calculations are shown, one by Mr. Wayne Dumas of HDR in 8/10/08, the other by Mr. Dave Marie of Marie Associates of Missoula Montana. Both of these calculations were performed in response to my earlier comments regarding the line being designed with insufficient line to ground clearance to meet the requirements of the NESC. HDR calculated the minimum clearance using NESC rule 232C and MATT and Marie Associates used the alternate method provided under NESC rule 232D, which allows for reduced clearances for circuits with known switching surge factors. The HDR minimum clearance was 22.6 feet, slightly more than I calculated due to their assuming an elevation of 4,300 feet versus the 3,300 feet elevation assumed by my calculation. The approach used by the MATT consultant resulted in a clearance of 21.8 feet.

Response 555 to 558: See the discussion of Safety Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Comment 555

MATL's Response on page 233 of Volume 2 acknowledges the differing calculated clearance results, but instead of identifying why they received different values from three different engineers by looking at the different assumptions used, they chose to adopt the bare minimum clearance provided by their consultant. As I pointed out and Mr. Rosen of HDR pointed out design clearances should be prudently greater than the absolute minimum cycle clearance. The minimum line clearance proposed by MATL is too low and poses a safety hazard to farmer operating equipment under their lines. MATL assumes equipment heights are limited to less than 14 feet in height. Modern farming equipment greatly exceeds this height and can directly contact the 230 kV conductors if constructed at the heights proposed by MATL and will result in a fatality.

Comment 556

To prove this point I contacted the John Deere Corporation and had them email me the dimensional details of their 9870 series combines. I have attached this information for your reference. The model 9870 combine from John Deere has an operational height of 16 feet 7 inches to the top of the combine's cabin. If a farmer were to attach a typical 100 inch (8ft) CB antenna at the top of the cab of the combine (which is a very common practice) the operational height of the combine jumps to 21 feet 4 inches. This is at or above the minimum clearance proposed by MATL, resulting in one electrocuted farmer. As my friend Allen Clapp the former chairman of the National Electric Code Clearance Committee is fond of saying "this is socially unacceptable behavior on the part of the utility".

Comment 557

The question at hand is whether or not MATL should design the line assuming that typical over height farm machinery such as combines will be present. During my conversations with Mr. Clapp former NESC Clearance Committee Chairman last fall at a NESC code class, he indicated that in court a plaintiff's attorney could easily make that argument and win a large verdict against MATL if the line is designed at the proposed levels. Mr. Clapp indicated that jury awards for these kinds of cases run at about \$1 million dollars (US) per inch of potential code violation. My experience has shown that Mr. Clapp's number might be a little low. The power company I work for was involved in an electrical contact law suit a few of years ago and the plaintiff was awarded 10.5 million dollars even though the line was built to code. The plaintiff's attorney successfully argued that the utility should have foreseen that a hillbilly worker could come in contact with the power lines even though the lines met code.

Comment 558

The NESC requires power line (conductors) to be raised up to accommodate the operation of over height vehicles or machines and requires them to be raised if it is infeasible to assume that the area in question is being used by over height vehicles. I refer you to excerpt F we attached from the NESC Handbook, Sixth Edition. See pages 299 through 300. I've also attached excerpts from the 2007 version of the National Electric Safety Code covering NESC Rules 232C and 232D the governing rules of the code for this line. Since MATL has chosen to hang its hat on Rule 232D I refer you to 232D subpart 4, which states "The alternate clearance shall not be less than the clearance given in Table 232-1 or 232-2 (whichever is greater) for 98 kV or as provided in accordance with 232C." Column 4 pertaining to land traversal by vehicles, such as railroad, grading, forest, orchards etc.


Response 559: See the discussion of Safety Issues in the Consolidated Responses section. DEQ would require MATL to comply with the National Electrical Safety Code.

provides a base clearance level of 18.5 feet for voltages between 750V and 23 kV. The first note on column 4 refers you to note 26 on the table which states "when designing a line to accommodate overhead vehicles, these clearance values shall be increased by the difference between the known height of the overhead vehicle and 14 feet." (HIE issued an errata sheet correcting the first note reference on column 4 of Table 232-1 to reference footnote 26 not footnote 24 as was shown on the earlier publication of the NESC. Rule 232C requires .4 inches per kV above 23 kV to be added to the calculated clearance and 3% for each 1000 ft above 3300 ft of elevation. Now putting it all together the minimum clearance of the line across farmland to accommodate a combine with CB antenna assuming the minimum 98 kV clearance requirement asserted by Rule 232D.4 should be:

| | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|-------------|
| Base Clearance from Table 232-1 up to 23 kV | 18.5 feet | Table 232-1 |
| Overheight vehicle clearance added 21 ft 4 inches - 14 feet = | 7.5 feet | Note 26 |
| Voltage Clearance Added (98 kV - 23 kV) * .4 inches/kV = | 2.5 feet | 232C.1.a |
| | 28.3 feet | |
| Elevation Multiplier (4,500 ft - 3,300 ft) / 1000 ft * .3 + 1 = | 1.365 | 232C.1.b |
| | 29.3 feet | |

If the combine didn't have a CB antenna the clearance calculated above would drop to 24.4 feet assuming a maximum operating height of 16 feet 7 inches as published by the John Deere Company. However, my experience in dealing with farmers is that a lot of them do have CB or other radio antennas mounted to their combines. To allow for this fact, it is common utility practice to use minimum line to ground clearances above the base minimums listed in the NESC tables when crossing farmland. An HDR indicated the Rural Utilities Services (RUS) Design Manual for High Voltage Lines (CFR 17246-200) requires a minimum clearance of 24.5 feet for 230 kV lines, NESC uses 30 feet as does Grant County PUD. If the state accepts the low conductor levels proposed by MATL, it could find itself a joint party to a lawsuit when a fatality occurs due to an electrical contact with the proposed line. I caution you to carefully consider this before you approve the MATL line as designed.

Respectfully Submitted,


Sherry DeWitt, P.E.

Enclosure

Response 560 and 561: Comments noted.

March 11, 2008

To: Montana Department Environmental Quality
Environmental Management Bureau
ATTN: Tom Ring

My name is Everett Swarthland. I reside at 207 South Colorado Street,
Conrad, MT. 59425. My phone # is: 406-271-3777.

I was born and raised in Fenders County and I am a retired farmer. This
was my main occupation for forty-three years.

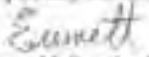
I thank you for this opportunity to present testimony to you and your
agency.

Comment 560: We in agriculture in the Golden Triangle have for many years produced
wheat, barley, canola, hogs, cattle, lamb, wool and other products, most of
which is exported. Wind generated energy is an environmental friendly
product that has very good export potential.

Comment 561: The building and use of the Montana-Alberta Transmission Line will
increase our tax base, improve our economy, create jobs and create a price
competitive energy source. It will also ensure an adequate energy supply
locally and statewide.

Your Agency's consideration and approval of wind energy transmission in
this part of Montana will be greatly appreciated.

Respectfully submitted,


Everett M. Swarthland

Response 562: See sections 3.13 and 3.17 for benefits from the MATL line, including some benefits that would extend beyond Montana’s borders.

Response 563: Comment noted.

March 12, 2008

Tom Ring
Environmental Science Specialist
Montana Department of Environmental Quality
PO Box 200901
Helena, MT 59620

Dear Tom:

Thank you for sending the executive summary for the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) regarding the Montana Alberta Tie LTD (MATL). You and your agency have been most helpful with explaining the process and the function of these hearings.

For the record my name is Julie Dufham. I live in Valier and presently serve the Valier School District as their Superintendent of Schools.

Comment 562: As I read the summary, what was not said or maybe could not be said, struck me. Perhaps a benefit to the nation section could be added to the EIS.

Bismillah Power Administrator, Steve Wright, in remarks to the People Utility District in Oregon recently reviewed the power situation.

"Utilities face complex decisions when acquiring the power we need."

"Utilities are looking at a number of different resource strategies – our situation will degrade further because of competing demand."

"We are looking at a supply deficit by 2010. Growth loads will make this even sicker." "We need an aggressive plan for providing power."

This document is the first step in solving a desperate need. Your fine office has performed well implementing this plan.

Comment 563: On the MSU Green web site <http://green.msu.edu> the question is asked "Why is it taking so long to develop more clean energy?"

Wind energy has the potential to become a major source of global electricity supply. But will politicians establish the policies required to make this potential a reality? The indefatigable conservationist David Brower would remind citizens, "Politicians are like weather vane and our job is to make the wind blow." Nothing could be truer in the case of ensuring politicians make judicious policy and regulatory decisions.

Response 564 and 565: Comments noted.

that seize opportunities presented by economically attractive, ecologically sustainable wind power.

Even in this case the politicians have made the wind blow. The policy is in place; the plan has been written.

Just implement the plan, it is a good one. Well written and thought.

Comment 564 Finally, it is not what power line will do to impact the environment it is what other options will do to the environment.

The Department of Environmental Quality has written a plan.

1. That helps satisfy the need for power
2. A plan that meets environmental tests
3. A plan that moves this region and this nation forward

Comment 565 Gentlemen do your duty implement this plan.

John Dalton

Response 566: Thank you for combining your comments.
Comments noted.

March 11, 2009

Dear Mr. Ring:

Comment 566

In an effort to show our support for the MATL Transmission Line, and to cut down on the number of responses you must make to our concerns, we present this letter as a group of individuals. We support the line and believe that it is good for the area. The economic benefits of the line and the potential development of wind projects in the future will contribute in a positive way to our local economy. We believe the environmental concerns are minor and we welcome the increased tax base and the jobs that will be created. We ask that you move the process forward in an expeditious manner with thoughts to fairness to the affected landowners.

Walt & Mary
Mike and Lisa Waffle
Jo & Kate Embryson
Doreen & Betsy Blasen
Buck Traylor
Dabbin Hicks
Harry Black
Craig P. Sawyer
Heather Coethund
Debra
George Byrnes
Shirley Applegate
Scott & Janice McFarland
John & Penny Sturles

Ronald Kain
Gerald Reed
Ryan Underly
Wagner Vagners
K. M. Stone
Jordan B. Bruster
Jared Reuter
Kyla Bradley
John Van Dyke

679

Response 567: Comment noted.

March 13, 2008
MATE E26 Hearing

Comments:

Totally Support

Signature

[Handwritten Signature]

March 13, 2008
MATE E26 Hearing

Comments:

Comment 147

Strongly support budget for the
economy in our area

Signature

Shane Richman

4/26/08

Response 568 and 569: Comments noted.

Montana Department of Environmental Quality
Environmental Management Bureau
ATTN: Tom Ring
PO Box 200901
Helena, MT 59620-0901

RECEIVED

MAR 18 2008

Dept. Environmental Quality
Environmental Management Bureau

March 10, 2008

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in support of the Montana Alberta Tie Ltd. This electric transmission line is necessary to open up our area to Wind Energy.

We in Northern Montana are struggling with a dwindling economy and small towns like Sunburst are battling to keep our schools alive and well. This transmission line will make it possible for the planned Phase II Wind Farm to be built, resulting in numerous advantages to our local economy.

Comment 568

I feel that MATL will not negatively impact the environment. It will, however, have a huge positive impact on the area. Not only will we benefit directly from the jobs it creates and the tax base it will provide, but we will also see its benefits in our schools, and in our consumer spending.

Comment 569

Please record my support of this project.

Sincerely,


Brian Reed

Responses 570 to 575: Comments noted.

CONRAD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

ERIK BARBERGER, Director
Montana's Finest Schools District #10
Phone: (406) 276-7025
Fax: (406) 276-7025
Address: Middle School #201
Phone: (406) 276-1227
Fax: (406) 276-1227

SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 10
LYNN L'AMOREAUX, Superintendent
APRIL C. L'AMOREAUX, Chief Business Manager
215 SOUTH MARYLAND STREET
CONRAD, MONTANA 59425
PHONE: (406) 276-7025
FAX: (406) 276-7025

KEVIN HARTNEY, Treasurer
Conrad High School #111
Phone: (406) 276-1226
Fax: (406) 276-7025
GREG JENKINS, Principal
Conrad Elementary #44
Phone: (406) 276-1225
Fax: (406) 276-1225

To: Montana Department of Environmental Quality
Attn: Tom Ring
PO Box 200901
Helena, Mt. 59625-0901

From: Conrad High School
Ken Larson, Principal
215 South Maryland Street
Conrad, Montana, 59425



Dear Sirs:

I am writing in support of the MATL power line that is proposed for our area. As a school administrator I can assure you that the tax base of our country is in dire need of additional projects and businesses to help support the financial needs of our schools, county and small cities. It is particularly exciting when these projects can provide additional jobs for families in areas that have been suffering from declining population.

The MATL project would also open the door to energy development of wind in our area. There is a nation wide shortage of energy and transmission lines. The ability to produce electrical power from the wind projects that are pollution free should be handled along and not allowed to be bogged down by the endless filing of court orders by those groups who wish not to prove any points but to win by making their firms of these projects as long that companies simply go else where to build. Coal development exemplifies this and this would be illustrated by the fact that Montana has twice the coal reserves of Wyoming but only 10% of the coal industry of Wyoming.

The MATL line has made many changes to help bring land owners on board. The rules have been changed, tax assessments made, and basic changes such as going to single poles and following property lines have been initiated. I suspect that after all is said and done, the biggest benefit for landowner maybe the reduction in their tax liability after the transmission lines and wind farms become reality.

Comment 570
Comment 571
Comment 572
Comment 573
Comment 574
Comment 575


I would hope that we can reasonably pass "good" projects such as the MATL line through our state of regulations without undue delays or hardships. I would believe that another "Berkley Pit" project could be recognized and stopped without years of study. Please note my support and the good that will come from allowing this project in our area in terms of economic development and growth to our community. Thank you.

Sincerely,



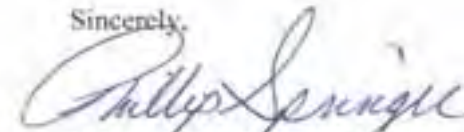
Amy J. Keenan
Conrad Public Schools

Best regards,



Ken Larson, Principal
Conrad High School

Sincerely,



Phil Springer, Science teacher
Conrad Public Schools

Best regards,



Lynn Utterback, Superintendent
Conrad Public Schools

Response 576: Comment noted.

Ring, Tom

From: tomring@qwest.com
Posted At: Saturday, March 11, 2006 7:01 AM
Conversation: AATL
Posted To: AATL
Subject: AATL

Comment 576

I am a homeowner in Stoney Montana. I feel that this project would not be done correctly. I support the proposed Montana Alberta Transwestern line and look forward to learning very soon that a Proclamation Period has been issued for the project. I urge the Montana Department of Environmental Quality and Bureau of Land Management to take the need, availability of consultation and right of ways as required. Thank you for the opportunity to express my opinion of this project.

Sincerely,

Thomas P. Ring

Stoney Montana

Ring, Tom

From: Doug [Subject:Powerline.com]
 Sent: Saturday, March 15, 2008 1:47 PM
 Conversation: EIS comments
 To: MATL
 Subject: EIS comments

Mr. Greg Hallgren
 Mr. Tom Ring
 Montana Department of Environmental Quality
 P.O. Box 200901
 Helena, Montana 59620-0901

March 13, 2008

Sirs,

This is a follow up letter concerning the MATL (Montana Alberta Tie Ltd.) power line. Again I want to reiterate that this is not about the line itself but the proposed direction of the line (diagonal) and the use of H-structures instead of the preferred mass pole design.

Comment 177

In the Great Falls and Conrad meetings it was brought up several times that everyone should sacrifice and **"take one for the team"**. I do believe that with the total number of poles and power lines coupled with the pipelines etc. I have done my share of **"Taking One for the Team"**. Therefore if it is a team effort then EVERYONE should share in the costs and not just a few burden the entire costs of having to farm around a diagonal direction power line. In the next paragraph it will state as the number of issues that I have to deal with on a yearly basis, MATL needs to address the issue of a straight line format only. I should not be singled with a diagonal direction because of the funding problems that MATL has with making the line a few miles longer. It has been brought to my attention that the Northern portion of the line is only on a straight line format. We are asking for the same consideration that our Northern neighbors have been afforded.

Comment 178

As in my previous letter I wish to state that I have an existing 230 KV line cross the property. It consists of 30 + mass poles and of these only 2 of the poles presents any type of issues. The only issues they present are because of the location in the middle of fields. To operate around one of these poles presents an additional 2.4 acres of added input costs. I have also a 115 KV line that cuts a diagonal across the property.

2/11

Response 577: See the discussion of Economic Issues and Line Issues in the Consolidated Responses section for related information.

Response 578: See the discussion of Farming Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Comment 579

This line consists of 11 H-structures and 1 triple pole structure with 6 guy wires associated with it. Of those particular structures they present the biggest problem in my farming practices. They have the **largest weed problem** due to the size of footprint of the poles structure. They also present the **largest gopher/grasshopper issue**. When operating around them they also have a larger area to operate around them. It approaches 2.8+ acres. Of the balance of lines on the farm (I have 8 separate transmission lines) there are only a total of 12 other poles that cause any issues. I started to count the number of power lines on the farm recently and stopped counting when the number surpassed 150. The total number of poles that follow field lines and roads etc is very large and they **do not cause any issues**. Only the poles in the middle of field and the diagonal direction cause the most economic loss to me in my farming. I have 269 KV lines and several other smaller distribution lines. I also have an increase through the middle of the farm, a Burlington Northern Railroad, an irrigation system, several ICBM missile cables, 5 underground pipelines (include oil, natural Gas, water, and a multiple fact line), Fiber optic lines, telephone cables, and the 8 power lines. With the recent upsurge in the price of farming inputs, the cost of operating around these poles have went up approximately 120 to 125 percent. The cost to operate NEXT to a power line is NIL. It is nothing more than in saving around each pole on the opening of each field. The added cost is minor compared to operating around poles. In your assessment please consider only the use of open poles and straight line direction.

One other issue is the tactics of the original leasing company that used intimidation and threats of Business Domain on people. This is especially concerning as the threats were used on some elderly people. This is a very concerning issue.

Comment 580

I have submitted some information earlier as to the cost increases of farming in the past year and wish the DEQ to use these in its assessment also. To echo the earlier thoughts, fertilizer in the EIS was listed at 425 dollars per ton. Actually costs today are \$350 for Urea and \$350 for our phosphate. The amounts that were suggested are also misleading because my input amounts are based completely on my APH (actual proven history).

Response 579: Your comments regarding pole placement, weeds, gophers, and grasshoppers are noted. The agencies also note your comment indicating that pole placement at the edge of fields reduces interference with farming activities. Also see the discussions of Farming Issues and Legal and Regulatory Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 580: Thank you for submitting more information on farm input costs. The agencies updated the analysis of farming costs in Section 3.13.2. See the discussion of Farming Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.



Response 581: Herbicides and other pesticides that deteriorate rapidly should not affect groundwater quality or grain germination and growth over time. As the commenter notes, most of the pesticides used by farmers are in this category. For more persistent pesticides and for fertilizer nutrients, the potential for effects would vary with the chemical and the farming method. Usually, soil moisture will soak only to about 4 feet in dryland and pivot and wheel line irrigated fields, and generally it will not reach more than about 6 feet even in flood irrigated fields. Thus, it is unlikely that any of these products would get into ground water. However, on either dryland or irrigated fields, excessive application of fertilizer could adversely affect surface water quality by increasing nutrient runoff that can promote excessive growth of algae and other aquatic plants. Excess fertilizer nutrients that reached groundwater below irrigated fields could discharge to springs or seeps that enter surface streams, also adversely affecting surface water. With or without a transmission line, farmers should monitor their fertilizer and pesticide use to avoid overloading (Technical memorandum from Shane A Bofto, Engineer, HydroSolutions, Inc. to Tom Ring, DEQ, dated July 17, 2008).

Response 582: Although MATL proposes to raise conductor height, farmers and aerial sprayers would have to exercise caution around the transmission line. Also see the discussion of Safety Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 583: Comment noted.

Response 584: Comment noted.

Response 585: A map of the area in question was sent to Mr. Majerus by e-mail on April 4, 2008. Alternative 3 does dissect the center pivot in that section. Also see the discussion of Farming Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

March 11, 2008

Tyen Rung
Environmental Sciences Specialist
Montana DEQ
Box 200901
Helena, MT 59620-0901

RECEIVED
MAY 1 6 2008
Chief, The Administration & Policy

Dear Tom:

This letter is in response to the Montana Alberta Tie Line. I work at Stockman Bank in Conrad, and as a business man and banker I would like to state my support for the transmission line. We definitely need the economic benefits and tax base that it will provide for our community. I would simply echo the comments from others on how it will help maintain our schools and labor force.

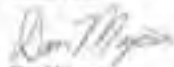
I also have a specific interest in the line as it will potentially cross my land northwest of Conrad. It appears that Alternative # 3 would cross my land in section 25, Township 29 North, Range 4 West.

My concern is that it appears that it dissects an irrigated hay field that I have an irrigation pivot on. I am hoping that we can negotiate the placement of poles so that they are not in a position that will prevent me from operating my irrigation system. If this alternative is not chosen then obviously this would not be an issue. Frankly, I have a hard time discerning exactly from the maps where it will be. The maps get a bit grainy when I blow them up to be sure.

If it were possible I would appreciate a little clearer map of the alternative that crosses through the above mentioned land description.

Again, I would like to voice my support for the transmission line in general.

Thank You,



Dan Majerus
Box 843
Conrad, MT 59425
Work phone: 278-8200
Home phone: 278-3434

Email address: dmajerus@stockmanbank.com



Response 586: See the discussion of Socioeconomic Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 587: The topic of property taxation for Native Americans living on the Blackfeet Reservation is beyond the scope of this EIS. Potential impacts of the proposed project on property tax revenues and other socioeconomic conditions are discussed in Section 3.13.



United States Department of the Interior

U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
BIRMINGHAM OFFICE

In Reply Refer To:
Mail Stop 423
BIR 08/161

March 14, 2008

Mr. Tom Ring
Environmental Sciences Specialist
Bureau of Land Management
PO Box 200901
Helena, MT 59620-0901

Subject: Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Montana Alberta Tie Line,
(MATT) 230-kV Transmission Line, Cascade, Tenon, Chisena, Pondera, Toole, and
Glacier Counties, Montana.

Dear Mr. Ring:

As requested by the U.S. Department of the Interior, Office of Environmental Policy and
Compliance, in their correspondence of February 12, 2008, the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS)
has reviewed the subject draft environmental impact statement (DEIS) and offers the following
comment:

SPECIFIC COMMENT

Section 3.6.1 Analysis Methods, page 3-66, last paragraph, first sentence: **Comment 588**

There is a typographical error in the Internet link provided for USGS flood-frequency and basin-
characteristic data for Montana. The correct Internet link is:
http://mi.water.usgs.gov/freq/pmic_freq-stokstat_wc=0108000

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on this DEIS. If you have any questions
concerning our comment, please contact Lloyd Woodley, Chief of the USGS Environmental
Affairs Program, at (703) 648-5028 or at lwoodley@usgs.gov.

Sincerely,

Signed
James P. Devine
Senior Advisor for Science Applications

Copy to: Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance

472

Response 588: Thank you for pointing out the error. The correction is included in Section 3.6.1 in the EIS.

March 16, 2008

Mr. Tom King,
Montana DEQ

Please accept these comments on the Federal Draft EIS and State of Montana Supplemental Draft EIS for the Montana Alberta Tie Ltd. (MATL) Transmission Line.

Comment 589: The proposed energy development is unnecessary and inappropriate for this area. This sparsely populated area of Montana does not need such a large, expensive centralized energy system. Montana does not need such a system. Montana already makes more electricity than it consumes. There is no reason for Montana to supply other regions with power. This only fuels excessive growth in other areas that are beyond the resources of the local area. It also allows other areas to not face the environmental impacts of their own lifestyles. Montana should not subsidize other people's energy consumption.

Comment 590: This project will have a very large and negative impact on Montana's environment. I am opposed to this level of landscape alteration, including infrastructure, visual deterioration and noise pollution. The financial expense of this project would be better used to develop local, sustainable energy technologies and systems for this remote area of Montana.

Comment 591: We need to move toward small-scale renewable energy developments that are in-synch with the communities and work well with the landscapes. The relatively small and sparse population of this area is perfect for small scale local energy development. This area should not be supplying energy to other regions. It makes no sense. This amounts to subsidizing over consumptive lifestyles into rural communities.

Comment 592: We need to reduce our total energy consumption and keep production of the energy as local as possible and under public control. This proposal does the opposite, creating a separate central transmission energy grid. If it had idea, I strongly support the "no action alternative." The time, money and energy would be better invested into research and development of local, renewable energy sources.
David Aldredde
PO Box 7624
Missoula, MT 59807

Response 589: Your comments are noted.

Response 590: Local, sustainable energy technologies can still be developed in this part of the state. However, their development would not satisfy the project need.

Response 591 and 592: Comments noted.

Ring, Tom

From: Michael (michael@deq.mn.gov)
 Posted At: Monday, March 17, 2008 1:14 PM
 Conversation: powerline
 Posted To: MATL
 Subject: powerline

Dear Mr. Ring,

Comment 593

I am writing to you again in response to the e-mail that we all saw which recently arrived in the mail. You are correct in some areas in this e-mail. My e-mail was only in some ways talking with certain concerns in the affected area from the powerline construction. My father and I are correct in the middle of this situation. Because we are not sure whether our farm is located at the 100 year mark for family ownership and we have had powerlines to fight with on the power transmission lines when they were asked to deal with since we had started farming. We are not against powerlines on this shoreline. But we don't feel like we need another powerline crossing our property we highly recommend that this shoreline be either taken to the next so that it is closer to the supposedly wind generating farms that are being constructed and that land being built on to the east we proposed would be much eliminated by the powerlines on our property or any of the shoreline. All please take into consideration our suggestions when making your final decision.

Sincerely,
 EYDALL W. RICHIE
 RICHARD D. RICHIE
 3/17/08

PHILIPPO MILLER
 500 WYMAN WAY NE
 ANDOVER, MN 56301-1000

Response 593: Representatives of DEQ and MATL met with the Koenigs to discuss the possibility of a new local routing option to address the concerns raised in this comment. The Koenigs indicated they did not want the line crossing their property and did not want the agencies to consider additional alignments on their property.

Response 594: Your comment on Alternative 4 is noted, however, the agencies note that the reference to R5W may be in error.

March 11, 2008

Montana Department of Environmental Quality
P.O. Box 200901
Helena, Montana 59620-0901

w/o. Tom Ring

Dear Mr. Ring,

Regarding the routing on the proposed 230KV transmission line, I would request (alternative 4) R5W be utilized. This routing is more of a direct approach with a straight line to the final required destination. At the time I would not deny the lines to cross my property due to the impact of wildlife in the area. I purchased the property as an investment with the intent to preserve the raw natural beauty of the land. I would rather the proposed placement not cross my property line.

Sincerely,


Kathy Gudenberg
KMC, INC.

RECEIVED

MAR 17 2008

Montana Department of Environmental Quality
P.O. Box 200901
Helena, Montana 59620-0901

Comment 594

Response 595: Comment noted.

March 12, 2008

Mr. Tom King
Montana Department of Environmental Quality
P.O. Box 205901
Helena, Montana
59622-0901

RECEIVED

MAR 17 2008

Office of Environmental Quality
Environmental Programs & Planning

Comment 595

Dear Mr. King,

I am writing in response to the invitation to comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Montana/Alberta Tie Transmission Line. I am chairperson of the Northern Rocklin Medical Center in Coe Bank.

As a small rural medical facility, NRMHC is impacted by the shift in population up or down and the economics of the area. We struggle to bring adequate health care to the citizens in our service area. I view the proposed electric transmission line as a positive step in bolstering the economy, which in turn will make it easier to provide better healthcare. Wind energy in my opinion is a "clean" industry that will not impact the environment negatively. I am in favor of the proposed project by Montana/Alberta Tie, Ltd.

I appreciate the opportunity to express my opinion and speak in favor of the transmission line. I look forward to hearing of the progress being made in obtaining the necessary permits and right-of-ways to complete the project.

Sincerely yours,



Rev. Gerald P. Bell



Response 596: See the discussion in the EIS, Section 3.4.2.

Although no federal or state regulations are in effect specifying environmental limits on the strengths of magnetic fields from power lines, the agencies have worked to site the line so that it would not be in close proximity to residences. The agencies acknowledge that those people working in close proximity to the line would be exposed to elevated electromagnetic fields. In addition, MATL’s policy is to minimize EMF exposure levels to the extent practicable. MATL would use a vertical optimized phasing orientation for the proposed line, where phases of the single circuit are offset to minimize the line’s EMF strength. While additional research has occurred since 1999, the cover letter transmitting an exhaustive report about potential health implications of exposure to EMF still summarizes the state of science on this topic. (NIEHS REPORT 1992). An excerpt from this cover letter follows:

“The scientific evidence used in preparation of this report has undergone extensive scientific and public review. The entire process was open and transparent. Anyone who wanted “to have a say” was provided the opportunity.

“The scientific evidence suggesting that ELF-EMF exposures pose any health risk is weak. The strongest evidence for health effects comes from associations observed in human populations with two forms of cancer: childhood leukemia and chronic lymphocytic leukemia in occupationally exposed adults. While the support from individual studies is weak, the epidemiological studies demonstrate, for some methods of measuring exposure, a fairly consistent pattern of a small, increased risk with increasing exposure that is somewhat weaker for chronic lymphocytic leukemia than for childhood leukemia. In contrast, the mechanistic studies and the animal toxicology literature fail to demonstrate any consistent pattern across studies although sporadic findings of biological

effects have been reported. No indication of increased leukemias in experimental animals has been observed.

“The lack of connection between the human data and the experimental data (animal and mechanistic) severely complicates the interpretation of these results. The human data are in the "right" species, are tied to "real life" exposures and show some consistency that is difficult to ignore. This assessment is tempered by the observation that given the weak magnitude of these increased risks, some other factor or common source of error could explain these findings. However, no consistent explanation other than exposure to ELFEMF has been identified.

“Epidemiological studies have serious limitations in their ability to demonstrate a cause and effect relationship whereas laboratory studies, by design, can clearly show that cause and effect are possible. Virtually all of the laboratory evidence in animals and humans and most of the mechanistic work done in cells fail to support a causal relationship between exposure to ELF-EMF at environmental levels and changes in biological function or disease status. The lack of consistent, positive findings in animal or mechanistic studies weakens the belief that this association is actually due to ELF-EMF, but it cannot completely discount the epidemiological findings.

“The NIEHS concludes that ELF-EMF exposure cannot be recognized at this time as entirely safe because of weak scientific evidence that exposure may pose a leukemia hazard. In my opinion, the conclusion of this report is insufficient to warrant aggressive regulatory concern. However, because virtually everyone in the United States uses electricity and therefore is routinely exposed to ELF-EMF, passive regulatory action is warranted such as a continued emphasis on educating both the public and the regulated community on means aimed at reducing exposures. The NIEHS does not believe that other cancers or

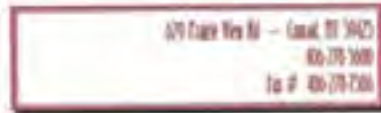
noncancer health outcomes provide sufficient evidence of a risk to currently warrant concern.

“The interaction of humans with ELF-EMF is complicated and will undoubtedly continue to be an area of public concern. The EMF-RAPID Program successfully contributed to the scientific knowledge on ELF-EMF through its support of high quality, hypothesis-based research. While some questions were answered, others remain. Building upon the knowledge base developed under the EMF-RAPID Program, meritorious research on ELFEMF through carefully designed, hypothesis-driven studies should continue for areas warranting fundamental study including leukemia. Recent research in two areas, neurodegenerative diseases and cardiac diseases associated with heart rate variability, have identified some interesting and novel findings for which further study is ongoing. Advocacy groups have opposing views concerning the health effects of ELF-EMF. Some advocacy groups want complete exoneration and others want a more serious indictment. Our conclusions are prudent and consistent with the scientific data. I am satisfied with the report and believe it provides a pragmatic, scientifically-driven basis for any further regulatory review.”

The alternatives developed by the agencies have avoided siting the line in close proximity to areas of concentrated human use such as homes, schools, and businesses, where humans would be exposed to EMF from the transmission line over prolonged periods. This approach has been termed “prudent avoidance”. The agencies recognize that persons working in agricultural operations and travelers will be exposed to elevated EMF for short periods as they work and travel under and near the lines.

Response 597 and 598: Comments noted. The agencies do not have the authority to reserve transmission capacity for a particular use. Under regulations of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, MATL is required to provide open access to generators without special treatment for anyone. The benefits of the MATL line are discussed in Sections 3.13 and 3.17. Where the power flowing over MATL would be used is the decision of power generators, utilities, and other electricity buyers.

Response 599: Comment noted.



March 15, 2010

RECEIVED

MAR 17 2010

Great Falls Environmental Quality
Unit Management Bureau

Montana Department of Environmental Quality
Environmental Management Bureau
Attn: Tom King
P.O. Box 210991
Helena, MT 59620-0991

Dear Mr. King,

I am a Great Falls business person and a land owner 8 miles north of Great Falls.

Comment 600

I am writing in support for the MATL line. Knowing that the impact to the environment is minimal, and knowing that this line will be the conduit to harnessing northern Montana's natural resource, the wind, I support the business to accept MATL and its preferred placement.

Everybody always complains about not having good Montana jobs for our college graduates and employable work force. The MATL is a solution to this.

Comment 601

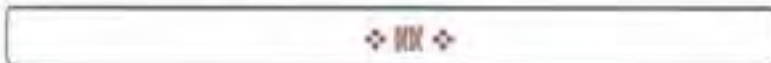
Everybody always says we should harness that wind and make some good of it. The MATL is a solution to this.

Everybody wishes for lower property taxes. The MATL would help spread the tax burden in many ways.

Please do not stand in the way of this improvement to Northern Montana.

Best regards,

Mike Brown



1-1-10
TK

Response 600: Comment noted. While the line could facilitate the development of wind resources and other generation facilities, it would be a merchant line and provide another transmission path to and from Montana. When the wind is not blowing or when wind generators are not fully exercising their agreements to transmit power over MATL's line, the proposed line could be available to other generators and power users on a short-term, non-firm basis.

Response 601: Comments are noted.

Response 602 to 604: Comments noted. See the discussion of Farming Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Montana-Alberta Tie Ltd. 230kV Transmission Line Project

Name Maurice Tack
Address 78 Tower Rd
City Valier State MT Zip 59486-5138

RECEIVED
MAY 14 2015
GAD
DIRECTOR'S OFFICE

Comments may be submitted orally or in writing at the public hearing.

Please consider these written comments on the Environmental Impact Statement.

As a former-rancher living in Montana Comment 602
for over 30 years I think this transmission
line is a good deal for the state. The
power line will greatly help towns like
Conrad and Valier once the line is built
and wind energy companies start to
develop. My one concern is that
single poles are placed in all
available ground. The 11 poles are every Comment 603
hard to farm around. I have farm
ground that I have that will have a route
of line. Single poles could be placed in
places like with very little trouble to
that or myself. Other than pole Comment 604
placement the positive benefits of the
Montana-Alberta Tie power line far out
weigh the negatives. Thank you
for your time setting up the public meetings
everyone was well informed.

Sincerely,

Maurice Tack

END

King, Tom

From: Jim Anderson (jim@jivars.net)
Posted At: Wednesday, March 19, 2008 9:44 AM
Conversation: Teton County
Posted To: B2ATL
Subject: Teton County

Response 605: Comment noted.

Dear Tom,
I am in favor of the NAD's plan making some better roads. The best comment to be made is needed. Any more questions to this area could be over the line.
Thank you,
Jim Anderson
State and Wild Rivers
Dorcas, WY

Comment 605

Response 606 to 609: Comments noted.



Response 610 to 612: Comments noted.



Response 613: Comment noted.

MATL Project:
MT Dept. Environmental Quality
Management Bureau

To: Whose It May Concern:

Comment 613

The Glacier County Commissioners would like to be on the record as in support of the MATL line being proposed for construction in our county. We have previously, in meetings with MATL personnel and publicly shown our support for the MATL line. We want to continue to show our support for this project and any others that may offer opportunities for economic growth in our area. Thank you for your public comment presentations in our area.

Glacier County Commissioners:

John W. Ray
Michael DeRoussier
Ben Riden At The Desk

Response 614: Comment noted.

King, Tom

From: Mary Anderson (mary@connects.net)
Posted At: Thursday, March 20, 2008 1:48 PM
Conversation: MATL issue
Posted To: MATL
Subject: MATL issue

Hi Tom:

Comment 614

I am in favor of the MATL site coming to Big Lake County. I believe this is good for our local economy and for the state.

Thank you.

Mary Anderson
Chaska, MN



United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
Office of Environmental Policy and Communications
Delaware Federal Center, Building 56, Room 1017
Post Office Box 25007 (D-100)
Denver, Colorado 80225-0007



March 21, 2008

9042.1
EE 08/161

Mr. Ellen Russell, Project Manager
Office of Electric Delivery and Energy Reliability
U.S. Department of Energy
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. Russell:

The Department of the Interior has reviewed the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Montana Alberta Tie Line, 276-KV Transmission Line, Montana, and offers the following comments:

The National Park Service has reviewed this project in relation to any possible conflicts with the Land and Water Conservation Fund (L&WCF) and the Urban Park and Recreation Recovery programs, and reports that there are numerous L&WCF projects in the counties affected by the transmission line.

They recommend you consult with the official who administers the L&WCF program in Montana to determine any potential conflicts with Section 6(f)(2) of the L&WCF Act (Public Law 95-578, as amended). This section states: "No project acquired or developed with assistance under this section shall, without the approval of the Secretary [of the Interior], be converted to other than public outdoor recreation uses. The Secretary shall approve such conversion only if he finds it to be in accord with the plan existing contemporaneous with the outdoor recreation plan and only upon such conditions as he deems necessary to assure the substitution of other recreation properties of at least equal fair market value and of reasonably equivalent usefulness and location."

The administrator for the L&WCF program in Montana is Mr. Walt Zimmerman, Grant Coordinator, Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks, P.O. Box 200706, Helena, Montana, 59626. Mr. Zimmerman's phone number is 406-444-3753.

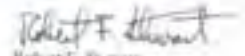
Response 615: Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks did not express any concerns regarding the Land & Water Conservation Fund program in its review of the EIS. Further review found that none of these sites would be crossed.

Mr. Ellen Rasmussen

If you have any questions regarding the I&WCF projects that could be impacted, please contact
Tarrin Klinecky, Outreach Promotion Planner, to the National Park Service Midwest Regional
Office at 402.221.1700.

In addition, under separate cover the U.S. Geological Survey has provided a typographical
correction to their Internet link on page 7-66. **Comment 616**

Sincerely,


Robert F. Stewart
Regional Environmental Officer

cc: Tom Ring, Montana DWR

Response 616: Thank you for pointing out the error. The correction is included in Section 3.6.1.

Ring, Tom

From: George Warriner [gwarriner@earthlink.net]
 Posted At: Friday, March 21, 2008 4:13 PM
 Conversation: Power line development
 Posted To: (b)(1)
 Subject: Power line development

Re: Warriner,

Comment 617

I'm concerned about the development of a 515 mile long power line along the I-15 corridor. In particular, I am concerned about big wind development along the Rocky Mountain Front. That power line might facilitate better wind development closer to the front. I hope the Department will do a "Dry State" development alternative that looks at the impacts of major wind farms, especially as they get closer to the front. Thank you.

George Warriner
 170 South 1500
 Livingston, Montana 59011

Response 617: The EIS analyzes effects of the proposed line and several alternatives. Length of the proposed line in the United States is approximately 130 miles. All alternative alignments would extend from the Cut Bank area to Great Falls, and would cross but not parallel I-15. See Figures 2.3-1, 2.4-1, and 2.5-1 for locations of these alternatives.

Assessment of cumulative effects of potential wind farm development, including location, size and number of turbines, was based on the best available information. The agencies do not know at this time where turbines would be located. The agencies judged it unduly speculative to assume that feeder lines more than 40 miles in length would be built to serve a single moderate sized wind farm outside of Glacier National Park or the Rocky Mountain Front. Also see the discussion of Visual Issues and Wind Farm Issues in the Consolidated Responses section and the discussion of wind farms in Chapter 4.

Response 618: Comment noted.



512 East Main
Coe Bank, Helena, MT 59601
(406) 873-2062
(406) 873-2123 FAX

John W. Kay,
Chairman, Est. 2002
Richard E. Hoffman,
Vice-Chairman, Est. 2003
Ken B. Stoltz At The Door,
Helena, Est. 2001
Recording Clerk, Est. 2004

RECEIVED
MAR 2 1 2008

Tom Ringo,
MT, Dept. of Environmental Quality
Management Bureau
POB 200901
Helena, MT 59620

Commissioner
C/O

To Whom It May Concern:

Comment 618

This letter is to offer our continued support for the construction of the MATT (mt).
Glacier County has previously shown our complete support for this project through the
meetings we have had with company officials and at local meetings.
Glacier County is fully supportive of any means that helps develop the economic growth
that might occur as a result of this project.
We can offer support through user benefits and infrastructure that we are capable of.
Thank you for your interest and the local meetings you have so far conducted.
If we can be of any further assistance please feel free to contact the Glacier County
Commissioners.

Glacier County Commissioners:

M. DeRose
Richard E. Hoffman
John W. Kay

Montana-Alberta Tie Ltd. 230-kV Transmission Line Project

Name Joe DeStefano
Address 676 Marquette Rd
City CONRAD State MT Zip 57425

Comments may be submitted orally or in writing at the public hearing

Please consider these written comments on the Environmental Impact Statement

Please use single pole towers at
the edge of farm land. Comment 619

Also the height of the line
(21') of cold or hot temperatures?
As a set this height will be
lower. Comment 620

RECEIVED

SEP 21 2011

REGISTRATION UNIT

201

Response 619: Comment noted. See the discussion of Farming Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 620: See the discussion of Safety Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 621: Comments noted.

Montana-Abernethy Ltd. 230KV Transmission Line Project

Name Mick Lakin
 Address 11501th St SW
 City Butte State MT Zip 59701

Comments may be submitted orally or in writing at the public hearing. Comment Box

Please consider these written comments on the Environmental Impact Statement.
I support the proposed Montana direct
transmission line and look forward to
hearing very soon that a Presidential Permit
has been issued for the project. I urge
the Montana Dept of Environmental
Quality and Bureau of Land Management
to issue the needed Certificate of Compliance
and right-of-way as required. Thank
you for the opportunity to express
my support of this project.

RECEIVED

COMMENT DEADLINE March 31, 2008

HOW TO COMMENT AND PARTICIPATE AFTER THE HEARING

VIEW THE EIS ONLINE AT www.deq.mt.gov/MPS/MATL.asp

SUBMIT WRITTEN COMMENTS TO: Mr. Greg Halseth
 Director's Office
 Montana Department of Environmental Quality
 PO Box 200901
 Helena, MT 59620-0901

SUBMIT COMMENTS, QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS VIA EMAIL TO MATL@deq.mt.gov

PROJECT CONTACTS:

| | |
|----------------------------------------|--------------|
| Tom Ring, MESA Coordinator | 405-444-6788 |
| Ellen Russell, US Department of Energy | 202-586-9824 |
| Greg Halseth, MESA Coordinator | 405-444-3278 |

Individuals having an opportunity to submit comments should contact Mr. [Name] at the address above.

Montana-Alberta Tie Ltd. 230-kV Transmission Line Project

Name: Gene Lacey
 Address: 118 4th St SW
 City: Cat Brook State: MT Zip: 59427

Comments may be submitted orally or in writing at the public hearing.

Please consider these written comments on the Environmental Impact Statement. See Comment #21

I support the proposed Montana-Alberta
Transmission line and ask forward to hearing
very soon that a Presidential Permit has been
issued for the project. Since the Montana Dept
of Environmental Quality with Bureau of Land
Management has some 400 needed certificates of
compliance and right of ways to require. Thank
you for the opportunity to express my support
of this project.

COMMENT DEADLINE March 31, 2008

RECEIVED

HOW TO COMMENT AND PARTICIPATE AFTER THE HEARING. MONTANA DEPT. OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

VIEW THE EIS ONLINE AT www.deq.mt.gov/MCS/MATL.asp

SUBMIT WRITTEN COMMENTS TO: **Mr. Greg Halsten**
 Director's Office
 Montana Department of Environmental Quality
 PO Box 200901
 Helena, MT 59620-0901

SUBMIT COMMENTS, QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS VIA EMAIL TO MATL@deq.mt.gov

PROJECT CONTACTS:

Tom Ring, MESA Coordinator 406-444-8783
 Ellen Russell, US Department of Energy 202-585-9524
 Greg Halsten, MESA Coordinator 406-444-3278

Individuals needing an alternative accessible form of information should contact Mr. Halsten at the address above.

Montana-Alberta Tie Ltd. 230-kV Transmission Line Project

Name: Scott Loder
 Address: 118 4th St SW
 City: Cat Brook State: MT Zip: 59427

Comments may be submitted orally or in writing at the public hearing.

Please consider these written comments on the Environmental Impact Statement. See Comment #21

I support the proposed Montana-Alberta
Transmission line and ask forward to
hearing very soon that a Presidential Permit
has been issued for the project. I urge
the Montana Dept of Environmental
Quality and Bureau of Land Management
to issue the needed certificates of compliance
and right of ways as required. Thank
you for the opportunity to express
my support of this project.

RECEIVED

MAR 21 2008

COMMENT DEADLINE March 31, 2008

DEPT. OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

HOW TO COMMENT AND PARTICIPATE AFTER THE HEARING.

VIEW THE EIS ONLINE AT www.deq.mt.gov/MCS/MATL.asp

SUBMIT WRITTEN COMMENTS TO: **Mr. Greg Halsten**
 Director's Office
 Montana Department of Environmental Quality
 PO Box 200901
 Helena, MT 59620-0901

SUBMIT COMMENTS, QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS VIA EMAIL TO MATL@deq.mt.gov

PROJECT CONTACTS:

Tom Ring, MESA Coordinator 406-444-8783
 Ellen Russell, US Department of Energy 202-585-9524
 Greg Halsten, MESA Coordinator 406-444-3278

Individuals needing an alternative accessible form of information should contact Mr. Halsten at the address above.



Response 622: The potential cumulative impacts of wind farms that may connect with the MATL line, assessed in Sections 4.1 to 4.16, are based on realistic estimates of likely locations and conservative estimates of the number of wind turbines that could be built. Specific details are not yet available, and neither DOE nor DEQ would have regulatory authority over the siting of wind farms unless specific locations required a water quality permit under the Montana Water Quality Act. Because mortality data from areas with high bird migration are included in the data used as a basis for analyzing potential mortality of birds and bats, the analysis should bound the potential impact on migratory birds. The EIS discusses the potential for adverse effects on birds from facilities near Benton Lake National Wildlife Refuge. Freezeout Lake is about 40 miles west of Great Falls, so it should not be affected by the wind farms sited to connect directly to the transmission line. Also see the discussion of Avian and Wildlife Issues in the Consolidated Responses section and sections 3.8.3 and 4.9.

no apparent analysis based on the area being a major migratory bird flyway, with Fryeout Lake and surroundings a main stopping-off point for tens of thousands of geese, cranes, ducks, and other waterfowl.

Comment 623

There also seems to be only a rather superficial discussion about impacts on viewsheds and habitat fragmentation caused by roads, power lines, large turbines, and other developments associated with big wind farms, especially if they might be located near Glacier National Park or the Rocky Mountain Front sometime in the future, when more capacity is added to the MATL line and additional feeder lines might be built.

Comment 624

DEQ repeatedly states or implies that neither it nor any other state agency nor the public has any real, viable jurisdictional authority over, or any procedure by which to give meaningful input about, the size or extent or location of wind farms on private land, and so the cumulative impact and effects of dozens or hundreds (or even thousands) of giant wind turbines at some future time do not have to be seriously addressed and/or quantified in this EIS.

Comment 625

It is regrettable and alarming that the Montana legislature took away the authority of state agencies, and therefore the Montana public, to submit viable input and be seriously involved in the siting of large-scale energy facilities such as big wind farms with dozens or hundreds of giant turbines.

Comment 626

With all due respect, however, the rules of NEPA mandate that all cumulative impact and effects need to be taken seriously and quantified in an in-depth manner in an EIS. Outwitted, the media reason the public has been given for the purpose and need for the MATL transmission line is to carry electricity need of which will be generated by big wind farms.

Comment 627

The cumulative effects of wind farms, even on private land, need to be quantified in an EIS to satisfy NEPA requirements. This DEIS seems quite lacking of a really serious in-depth study quantifying the cumulative impact and effects of “reasonably foreseeable” wind farms, and therefore it apparently does not meet the legal criteria mandated by federal government requirements under NEPA.

Comment 628

At the bottom of this letter is a copy of the relevant NEPA requirements, Sec. 1506.7 Cumulative Impact, and Sec. 1506.8 Effects. The applicable language is in Sec. 1506.7: “...reasonably foreseeable future actions regardless of what agency (Federal or non-Federal) or person undertakes such future actions.”

Comment 629

Please, go back and do more in-depth study that carefully quantifies all the foreseeable cumulative impacts and effects of large-scale wind farms (e.g., how big and how many turbines and other consequences, etc) that might be spawned by the MATL line, and the possibility and extent of potential increased capacity and future tangential lines attaching to the MATL transmission line. This study may

Response 623: Assessment of cumulative effects of potential wind farm development, including location, size and number of turbines, was based on the best available information. The agencies do not know at this time where turbines would be located. MATL has not proposed to upgrade the line (see the discussion in response to comment 183). DOE would require a new NEPA review if capacity increase were proposed for the MATL transmission line. The agencies judged it unduly speculative to assume that feeder lines more than 40 miles in length would be built to serve a single moderate sized wind farm outside of Glacier National Park or the Rocky Mountain Front. Therefore, this situation is not reasonably foreseeable. Also see the discussion of Visual Issues and Wind Farm Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 624: Since 1995 Montana’s legislature has decreased the amount of regulatory control over generation facilities under the Montana Major Facility Siting Act. In 2001 the legislature removed the DEQ’s authority to regulate the location of most types of generation facilities. DEQ does not have the authority to regulate the location of wind farms under other statutes it administers. Without statutory authority, DEQ cannot guarantee that the public would have a voice in determining where future wind farm developments should or should not be located. The agencies understand that the wind farms would be located on privately owned land. See the discussion of Wind Farm Issues in the Consolidated Responses section and sections 4.1 through 4.16.

Response 625: Comment noted.

Response 626 to 629: See the discussion of Wind Farm Issues in the Consolidated Responses section. In compliance with NEPA, analysis of the potential cumulative impacts of reasonably foreseeable actions, including wind farms that may use the transmission capacity of the proposed MATL line, is in Sections 4.1 to 4.16. The cumulative impacts analysis considers the impacts of wind farm developments that might be built to use the full potential transmission capacity of the MATL line. The analysis is based on the best available information respecting the potential sizes, designs, and locations of reasonably foreseeable future wind farms.

Response 630: Comment noted.

be the best chance – possibly the only chance – that the public will ever have to consider and comment on such impacts to this region of Montana.

Finally: PLEASE, NO WIND FARMS NEAR THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN FRONT! [Comment 630](#)

Respectfully,

Gene Sente

PO Box 763

Chelsea, Montana 59422

GeneSente@gmail.com

NEPA Requirements to be studied in an EIS:

Sec. 1506.7 Cumulative impact.

"Cumulative impact" is the impact on the environment which results from the incremental impacts of the action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions regardless of what agency (Federal or non-Federal) or person undertakes such other actions. Cumulative impacts can result from individually small but collectively significant actions taking place over a period of time.

Sec. 1506.8 Effects.

"Effects" include:

(a) Direct effects, which are caused by the action and occur at the same time and place;

(b) Indirect effects, which are caused by the action and are later in time or farther removed in distance, but are still reasonably foreseeable. Indirect effects may include growth-inducing effects and other effects related to induced changes in the pattern of land use, population density, or growth rate, and related effects on air, water, and other natural systems, including ecosystems.

Effects and impacts as well as their mitigation are synergistic. Effects includes ecological (such as the effects on natural resources), on the composition, structure, and functioning of affected ecosystems), aesthetic, historic, cultural, economic, social, or health, whether direct, indirect, or cumulative. Effects may also include those resulting from actions which may have both beneficial and detrimental effects, even if not balance the

Ring, Tom

From: Daniel and Dawn Cronley [mailto:daniel@montana.com]
 Posted At: Sunday, March 22, 2009 10:55 PM
 Conversation: Montana Alerts To L.A. Proposal
 Posted To: MMT
 Subject: Montana Alerts To L.A. Proposal

Dawn Cronley
 145 Bowers Road
 Rock Hill, NY 12775-6815
 845-704-1064

March 22, 2009

Montana Dept of Environmental Quality
 Environmental Management Bureau
 Attn: Tom Ring [mailto:tr@mt.gov]
 PO Box 200001
 Helena, MT 59600-0001

Dear Mr. Ring:

I hope I'm not out of line commenting here, but wanted to say that I am pleased to see Montana pursuing alternative energy development. I think in certain respects, it can be said that Montana is leading our nation in this important direction. I live in the Catskill Mountain region of New York, and we are facing a lot of similar choices and difficult decisions as to where people believe alternative energy development to be compatible with other values of the landscape. I just wanted to say that your Rocky Mountain Front is dear to my heart, and I think unique in a number of respects compared with much of the Super 48 states. It is for this reason that I hope industrial development does not encroach upon the Front, now or at any time in the future. I'm not sure of the legalities involved in ensuring this, but hope any easements, protections, covenants - or whatever else - that may be required to insulate the Front from such encroachment, are in place.

Comment 631

Comment 632

Comment 633

2/14/9

Response 631: Comment noted.

Response 632: See the discussion of Visual Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 633: The topic of legal mechanisms to prevent industrial encroachment on the Rocky Mountain Front is outside the scope of this EIS.

Response 634 to 635: Comments noted.

Response 636: The Rocky Mountain Front is more than 50 miles away from the proposed MATL line and more than 10 miles away from the nearest potential wind farm that might use the MATL line. See the discussion of Visual Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 637 and 638: Comments noted.

Ring, Tom

From: William Gardner [mailto:will_gardner@mont.gov]
 Posted At: Sunday, March 23, 2008 11:28 AM
 Conversation: MATL comments
 Posted To: MATL
 Subject: MATL comments

Montana Department of Environmental Quality

Regarding the proposed Montana Alberta Tie Ltd. transmission line

I am a native of Clendenau, MT – born and bred. I grew up there, left to Butte and then Missoula for my undergraduate academic work, and have now returned to the Rocky Mountain Front (Front) as an outdoor educator. I am passionate about the Front, and quite well acquainted with the environmental, economic, social, and ecological complexities of the proposed Montana Alberta Tie Ltd. (MATL) transmission line project. I am taking this opportunity to identify a couple of concerns that I hope the MT DEQ will be keeping at the forefront in their consideration of this project.

First, alternative energy is, of course, only a positive alternative if it results in less (usually substantially less) negative ecological and social impact. Considering that a great deal of the energy will be sold outside the state of Montana, I am concerned that the project may compromise the ecological and social integrity of the region and ultimately the state. The state's agencies, particularly the DEQ, ought to maintain this integrity above all economic considerations!

Comment 634

Comment 635

Second, I am well aware of the economic challenges facing a rural mountain west state like ours. For centuries, Montanans have been struggling against a tradition of making whatever the current desirable resource(s) may be, shipping the commodity elsewhere, and watching as the majority of the profits were pocketed out-of-state, and large environmental and social degradation occurred within the state. As the world's focus shifts from historic resource extraction and use to new technology and energy development strategies, it is of paramount importance that we in Montana stand in the forefront of a new tradition – we need to break the habit of bleeding our state! The MATL is a positive addition to our state ONLY if it ensures the citizens of this state (including both affected property owners and all others) that our integrity, economic stability, and dignity will be safeguarded.

Comment 636

Third, aesthetic considerations are significant to every region, but the citizens of both MT and the entire nation have made it clear that the Rocky Mountain Front deserves particular consideration in this regard. Therefore, the appearance of any form of energy development, resource extraction, or other forms of industrial development must respond to the overwhelming concern our nation has expressed regarding the perpetuation of this region as an ecological, social, and cultural treasure of irreplaceable worth – whole, intact, and unblemished into perpetuity.

Comment 637

Fourth, as a matter of personal right and liberty, I am extremely concerned about the current trend in this state (see the matter of the Great Falls coal energy plant, for example) of forcing land owners to swallow bitter reductions in their ability to actively participate in the decisions affecting them. For that matter, MT seems to be right on track with situations having similar results (if not details) in other states and at a federal level as well. This is unacceptable! The state constitution guarantees the citizens of Montana express rights in a healthful environment, as well as the right to privacy, and other rights fundamental to our individual and collective self-respect and integrity. If the development of the MATL threatens these inalienable rights, it ought not be approved.

I conclude by assuring you that I am in full-hearted favor of appropriate rest.

Comment 638

insistent development of more economically efficient and ecologically sound energy technologies and natural resource usage. However, I cannot support decisions which would threaten the ecological sanctity of a region considered to be one of the most biologically diverse, historically intact, and therefore significant regions of the planet. Additionally, I will stand and speak in opposition to any decisions with threaten to carry on the tradition of culturally detrimental economic practices which have faced Montanans since long before its statehood. The integrity of the place and its people, ecologically, culturally, and then economically **MUST** become a principle factor in all decisions made by the governments affecting this state.

I thank you sincerely for your attention to the concerns and very real needs of the state of Montana.

Sincerely,
Bethann Gattaman



Never miss a thing. Make Yahoo your homepage.

Response 639 to 641: Comments noted.

March 20, 2009

To: Montana Department of Environmental Quality

From: Fredrick C. Traubler, Valier, MT

Re: MATL

To Whom It May Concern:

I am a teacher in the Valier Public School system. I would like to go on record supporting the Montana Alberta Transmission Line. After reading comments in regards to MATL, I feel the benefits completely outweigh any negative effects felt by the construction of the power line.

The figures I've seen appear to indicate the potential to have strong economic impact in the area. The creation of employment possibilities with the addition of families to our local area would be of great interest to all local schools.

Landowners are fairly compensated for lines passing across the underlying land. Tax paying farmers also benefit from having the tax base expanded.

The power line and associated wind development will add jobs and tax base to our economy.

Again, I would go on record supporting the Montana Alberta Transmission Line.

Respectfully submitted,



Fredrick C. Traubler
PO Box 211
Valier, MT 59480

Response 642 and 643: Comments noted.

Response 644: Comment noted. The agencies acknowledge that, visually, different viewpoints provide different perspectives. See the discussion of Visual Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 645 and 646: Comments noted.

March 11, 2008

Montana Dept of Environmental Quality
Environmental Management Division
ATTN: Tom Ring
P.O. Box 200901
Helena, MT 59620-0901

To whom it may Concern,

I am writing in support of the MATL line that is proposed between Our Bank and Crown Falls. I am a farmer in Petroleum County, however the line will not cross any of my property. I have owned property in 3 of Montana's counties over the last 38 years, so am quite familiar with the amount of property tax paid by property owners in Montana. Any increase in tax base will be welcome.

We, as the State of Montana, need this project and other like it, to give a boost to our economy both locally and State wide. There is no good reason why this should not be approved and more reasons why it should. Development of clean, renewable wind energy along the line is probably among the most important. The exportation of a resource such as energy (wind) can only help the state's economy both through jobs and an increase in tax base. We export wheat, barley and beef among other things, why not energy?

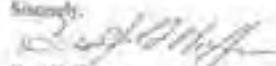
For those that are concerned about the "viewshed" of the Rocky Mountain Front, I suggest they go west of the line and look to their finest content.

In reality, I believe the single most important reason for development of this or any environmentally sound project is the retention of our most valuable resource. I speak of our children, the young adults that leave our state each year because the only jobs available in the State are low paying service related jobs. Our best and brightest are going to Seattle, Portland and Denver for good paying jobs they need to pay off their student loans and still have a decent standard of living. Maybe, if we allow some sound resource extraction and/or exportation projects like the MATL line, our kids will be able to find a good job at home.

In closing I would like to remind all concerned that the only true wealth of any nation, ours included, comes from the earth, whether it be agriculture, mining, timber, or energy from oil, coal, hydro, wind or solar. It all comes from the land.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,


Brad Hoffman
7787 US Hwy 91 North
Crown, MT 59423



Response 647: The agencies do not know at this time where turbines would be located. The agencies judged it unduly speculative to assume that feeder lines more than 40 miles in length would be built to serve a single moderate sized wind farm outside of Glacier National Park or the Rocky Mountain Front. Also see the discussions of Visual Issues and Wind Farm Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

PO Box 3
Dutton MT 59403
March 27, 2008

Tom Ring
Environmental Sciences Specialist
Montana Department of Environmental Quality
PO Box 200901
Helena MT 59620-0901

RECEIVED

MAR 28 2008

Montana Department of Environmental Quality
Environmental Sciences

Dear Tom:

The E.L.S. from D.E.Q. are the *only* things I have received on this transmission line, except for the condemnation letter from an attorney in Helena.

The first meeting I attended was in Cut Bank about two (2) years ago. I advised you at that time I had a gate cut in half and tracks leading to the proposed line and running parallel to the N.W.E. line. You stated this was not acceptable.

Comment 648: I attended several meetings after the one in Cut Bank, including one in the Spring of 2007. I spoke with you after that meeting and you stated you would be in Dutton the next day to talk with Greg Hahn. You stated you would go down and look at the way the line could cross my property. The day before you were in Dutton I know my gate was intact because I was out there. The day after you were in Dutton I went back out to my property and the gate was cut in half. Is this a coincidence or what?

Comment 649: I noticed at all the meetings the discussion was from the land owners and politicians. Never has a County Commissioner from Teton County been at a meeting to support this line. Many city people want this line for the tax dollars and don't care how it crosses a farmer or ranchers land.

Comment 650: On March 11, 2008, Peggy Beltrove voted against the rezoning for the coal fired plant east of Great Falls. She knew her fellow commissioners were going to vote for it. That evening she was at the power line meeting and wanted it expedited. This is real hypocritical, but then she gets paid \$800.00 per meeting from Tetonbridge to support their power line.

Comment 651: If Tetonbridge can make the projected profits from this line, it should at least be fair to the landowners and go single pole all the way across Montana, east and west and north and south, with no diagonals. D.E.Q. get this done on the W.A.P.A. line and the land owners were treated fair.

Comment 652: The line could parallel Interstate 17 from Canada to Great Falls and not harm any ranchers or farmers.

Response 648: DEQ staff contacted Mr. Carney for permission to walk on his property to inspect the landslide adjacent to MATL's proposed alignment. Mr. Carney granted his permission. A neighbor gave a DEQ staff member a ride to the State Trust Land section at the Teton River crossing, and the DEQ staffer proceeded on foot on the Carney property. DEQ staff did not cut Mr. Carney's gate.

Response 649: Comment noted.

Response 650: Comment noted.

Response 651: Comment noted. The commenter is correct in observing that when Western Area Power Administration built the Great Falls to Conrad and later the Conrad to Shelby 230 kV transmission lines, it sited the lines on rangeland and pasture where it was available. Elsewhere, those lines generally used field boundaries in most but not all areas.

Response 652: Federal regulations prevent the line from sharing the right-of-way of the interstate system. Locating the line off the interstate right-of-way would still place structures in farm fields and would also place the line near homes.

Response 653 and 654: See the discussion of Farming Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 655: Under Montana law the use of eminent domain is not limited to a governmental entity and may be exercised by a private company as long as it is for a public use listed in Section 70-30-102, MCA. Also see the discussion of Legal and Regulatory Issues in the Consolidated Responses section for related information.

Response 656: Comment noted.

Response 657: Comment noted.

Comment 653: The fair market value for land is far from what Tenbridge is offering. Tenbridge's price for land is pre-World War II.

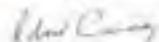
Comment 654: The man in Billings, who did a study about farming around the poles needs to put his toys away, get out of the sandbox and go out and see how big farm machinery is today.

Comment 655: The Right of Eminent Domain is for the government or its agents. This, being a private company does not qualify for eminent domain.

Comment 656: Canada made this company go out and deal with the land owners before a certain date. They were to report back to the Energy Board with the results of this endeavor. The U.S. should do the same before a permit is issued.

Comment 657: It seems the land owners are being forgotten for the value of a dollar. This is not right. The land owners should always come first.

Sincerely,



Robert J. Casey

Ben Ober,
 Chairman
 Allan Underdal,
 Commissioner
 Dave Miller,
 Commissioner
 Mark Rapp,
 County Attorney
 Donna Mahler,
 Clerk
 Dan E. Whitford,
 Contact
 406-431-8110
 www.co.toole.mt



COUNTY OF TOOLE
 226 1st Street South
 Toole County Courthouse, Shelby, MT 59474

Mary Ann Winwood,
 Clerk & Assessor
 SANDY PERRY,
 Clerk of Court
 Brent Jackson,
 Treasurer
 Sgt. D. Brown
 Nylee J. Schmitt,
 Public Administrator
 Russell Mann,
 Justice of the Peace
 Clerk & Recorder Office
 406-431-8110
 Fax 406-431-4021
 www.co.toole.mt

Response 658 and 659: Comment noted. See the discussion of Socioeconomic Impact Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

March 28, 2008

Tom Ring, Environmental Sciences Specialist
 Montana Department of Environmental Quality
 PO Box 200901
 Helena, MT 59602

Dear Tom:

Comment 658

We are writing to express our enthusiastic support of the proposed MATL Line from Lettbridge to Great Falls. This is a very important project for Northern Montana and Toole County in particular. This power line will generate over one billion dollars of investment in Toole, Parkers, and Glacier Counties. It will also be positive for power consumers in Montana, as the hydroelectric wind energy will add 600 Megawatts to the total generation capacity in the grid. Other positive byproducts will be construction and permanent jobs, tax base increase, and stimulation of our local economies.

Comment 659

We believe that there are legitimate concerns from landowners and that they should be worked out as best they can be, but we feel very strongly that there be **no further delays** to the project. Again, we strongly support the project and hope that you will grant them the permitting needed as soon as possible. Thanks for listening.

Respectfully,

Ben Ober
 Ben Ober
 Chairman

Allan Underdal
 Allan Underdal
 Commissioner

Dave Miller
 Dave Miller
 Commissioner

219

Response 660 to 666: Comments noted.

TO: THE MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
THE U. S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

We the undersigned strongly endorse approval of the Montana-Alberta Tie Line (MATL) from Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada to Great Falls, Montana.

MATL is the key to development of up to \$1 billion in wind energy projects that will be an enormous economic benefit for north central Montana, the State of Montana, and the nation's energy supply. The increased tax base, construction jobs, royalty payments from wind generators, and the permanent monitoring and maintenance jobs will provide badly needed tax dollars for Montana, local schools, law enforcement, fire departments, county roads, parks, and other services. Comment 661

Wind is one natural resource northern Montana has plenty of and, in fact, it is rated one of the best and most reliable wind resources on the North American continent. Without transmission lines to move electric power, wind cannot be developed. Comment 662

After a rather rough start, MATL is demonstrating an eager willingness to work with affected landowners to address concerns regarding routing of transmission lines and placement of poles that would be potentially disruptive to agriculture operations. This includes the use of monopoles rather than "H" poles, wherever it is practical. MATL has entered into multiple landowner agreements should this project receive final approval and concurs with recommendations in the DEQ report. Landowners must be fairly compensated and treated with the upmost dignity. Comment 663

The MATL line will improve the reliability of the electric transmission system in both Montana and Alberta by making these regions less vulnerable to outages, brownouts, and creating a greater opportunity to import and export electricity, all of can be of benefit to consumers and suppliers. It's predicted the United States within a few years will experience an energy shortage due to increased demand and the cancellation of approximately 40 coal fired generation projects in the U.S. because of environmental concerns. It's absolutely imperative we develop this country's green and clean energy resources for our generation and future generations to come. Comment 664

It is important to note that MATL is a "merchant line" and the large capital investment and risk is made by the banks and private investors rather than by local taxpayers in Montana and Alberta. Comment 665

We urge your approval of the MATL application without costly delays that could very well jeopardize the entire project. Your final routing decisions should be fair to all parties. MATL and landowners, striking a good balance between what makes sense economically and addresses the most sensitive issues in a responsible and proper manner. Comment 666

A good analogy is, "it's would be like connecting power cables to a huge battery that moves the economic engine of development." Let's move forward and approve the MATL. Comment 667

We the undersigned support MATL as per the attached letter

SIGNATURE

ADDRESS

Mark ...
John ...
Tom ...
Thomas Waller
David ...
Sam ...
Alan Underdal

1025 Main St. Shelby
P.O. Box 220 Shelby
64 White St. Shelby, MT
115 Radio Dr. Shelby, MT
702 Box 701 Shelby MT
720 Main St. Shelby, MT
435 China Blvd. Shelby, MT

Chisana, Montana

Tuan Ring
 Environmental Scientist Specialist
 Montana Department of Environmental Quality
 P.O. Box # 200901
 Helena, MT: 59602

I am responding to you again for the third time about your company needing us, or wanting to have access on our land with your transmission line. The legal description of our property is Section 12, 29N, 4W, Pondera County, Montana.

Again I am stating that there will be absolutely no access unless you follow the east section line or west half section line with single poles with no guy wires. The least amount of area to farm around and interruption of farming operation is what I am asking. I would prefer that the alternate route to use it alternate four.

Our Nephew Shawn Dolan, who is an engineer and works on power transmission lines in the Coeur d' Alene, Idaho area had a excellent presentation at Nobby Hall in Conrad, MT. He submitted the concept of single pole with no guy lines.

Having served on several boards and committees, have come to the conclusion that doing a project with state of art technology, materials and design from the very start, has always been an advantage to all parties concerned.

We do hope MATT, will be reasonable and fair with all land owners.

Sincerely,

Arlene & Ray Anderson
 Arlene & Ray Anderson

Responses 667 and 668: See the discussion in the response to comment 436.

Response 669: Unguyed single poles at angle structures would reduce impacts by removing guy wires that may interfere with farming practices. Unguyed single pole structures would add costs as indicated below. In addition, the agencies recognize that some agricultural producers would choose to sterilize the soil between the poles of an H-frame structure or between the structure and the guy wire anchors to control weeds. Others would choose to establish a more permanent perennial grass cover that would compete with weedy species.

Both the single pole and three pole structures would be classified into three types: small angle, medium angle, and deadend. The unguyed structures would require large foundations with anchor bolts and much larger steel poles to hold the conductor loads. This results in higher costs for unguyed structures as compared to guyed structures. The following estimates are labor and material cost comparisons per structure for the three types:

| | | |
|-----------------------|-------------|--------------|
| Single Pole Structure | Guyed | Unguyed |
| Small Angle | \$15,000.00 | \$ 35,000.00 |
| Medium Angle | \$20,000.00 | \$ 50,000.00 |
| Deadend | \$30,000.00 | \$100,000.00 |
| Three Pole Structure | Guyed | Unguyed |
| Small Angle | \$30,000.00 | \$ 50,000.00 |
| Medium Angle | \$40,000.00 | \$ 70,000.00 |
| Deadend | \$50,000.00 | \$120,000.00 |

Source: HDR 2007. Also see the discussion of Farming Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 670 and 671: Comments noted.

Response 672 to 677: Comments noted.

27 March 2008

Mr. Tim King
Department of Environmental Quality
PO Box 208900
Helena, MT 59602

Subject: MATL

Dear Mr. King,


First, we would like to thank you again for your support with our not going differently with MATL. We appreciated the time you took to support an alternate route away from our home and off our property. Comment 672

Second, it needs to be stated in no time have we had a positive or "good neighbor" contact from MATL as consistently declared at the meeting in Cut Bank. Every phone call from them was hostile, aggressive and demanding. We were clearly told that such as, "all of the meetings were over, all the permits have been issued, we have to fight while ever they send us, they will put the power lines wherever they want, regardless any part of our property they want, and we have nothing to say about this." We disagree with them and will continue to fight for our rights. At the meeting the concern about the additional financial burden for MATL for alternate routes was discussed. How can you assure what is simply positive on the dollar for a large foreign corporation is compared to the potential billions of profit versus the negative impact on the quality of life on a family and community. We believe it will "cost" no more than MATL if they do not follow an alternate route. Comment 673

Thirdly, we feel that this is a lose-lose situation for the United States of America, the state of Montana and Glacier country. All of the true benefits go to Canada. They are willing to give some token monetary benefits. But, as a whole it doesn't do anything to decrease our foreign energy dependence. It simply trades one country for another. Would we let Venezuela or Iran run a project like this in the United States of America? Comment 674

Lastly, the only support we can give this project is no more before is to keep it off of our property. Comment 675

Sincerely,


Joseph J. Karcher & Diane C. Karcher
PO Box 354
Cut Bank, MT 59427

Response 678 to 681: Comments noted.



- 3) Our region has one of the best wind power resources in the nation, yet has seen little wind power development because of the lack of transmission capacity. We believe that the way you approve this project should set the standard for future transmission line projects that can allow for the development of this national resource while protecting the rights of property owners. Comment 682a
- 4) The State of Montana has recognized the importance of projects such as this to the state's economy and the citizen's energy needs by creating a one-quarter-mile-wide property tax free zone for property owners along new transmission line routes. Comment 682b
- 5) Timing of this project is critical to attract investment in wind power development. Comment 683

Thank you for supporting renewable energy development in central Montana.

Brett Zornes

President

Great Falls Development Authority

info@greatfallsdevelopment.org

1 (406) 771-4030

Call 1 (406) 796-2119

Fax 1 (406) 454-2285

P.O. Box 340

Great Falls, MT 59404

Street Address:

300 Central Avenue, Suite 400

Great Falls, MT 59401

Response 682a: Comment noted.

Response 682b: Land that is within 660 feet on either side of the midpoint of right-of-way or easement for a transmission line with a design capacity of 30 megavolt-amperes or greater and constructed after January 1, 2007, is exempt from property taxes under Section 15-6-229, MCA. The exemption does not apply within the boundaries of an incorporated or unincorporated city or town; to a platted and filed subdivision; or to land used for residential, commercial or industrial purposes. Also see the discussion of Tax Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 683: Comment noted.

Ring, Tom

From: Tom [mailto:tom@ring.com]
Posted At: Monday, March 21, 2011 5:11 PM
Conversation: Comments on MATL Draft EIS
Posted To: MATL
Subject: Comments on MATL Draft EIS

March 21, 2011

Western Department of Environmental Quality, Environmental Management System
 ATTN: Tom Ring
 PO Box 40000
 Helena, MT 59611-0000

Re: Comments on Draft EIS for MATL

To whom it may concern:

I am deeply concerned that the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the proposed
 Western Electric Via Line Extension almost negligently on the direct impacts of the
 transmission line itself, and failed to consider the cumulative effects of the industrial
 scale wind power development which would be an immediate consequence of the MATL.

The MATL EIS repeatedly implies that this environmental study focuses only the
 transmission line and that it does not have to address the location, number, size, and
 effects of the environmental wind farms.
 Therefore, the cumulative impacts and effects of wind farms that are expected to occur along
 the MATL line are covered only in a cursory fashion in the draft EIS.

There is at best only a superficial discussion of impacts on raptors and the effects of
 habitat fragmentation caused by roads, power lines, large turbines, and other development
 associated with big industrial wind farms. This is of particular concern since, when more
 capacity is added to the MATL and additional wind lines built, such wind farms may be
 located near Glacier National Park or the Rocky Mountain Front.
 Similarly, there is an adequate analysis of the impact of industrial wind farms on birds
 and bats. Despite the fact that the Rocky Mountain Front is a major migratory bird
 flyway.

The Draft EIS repeatedly indicates that neither NEPA nor any other statute requires any
 jurisdictional authority over the size or location of wind farms on private
 land, and so the cumulative impact and effects of hundreds or even thousands of wind
 farm turbines do not have to be seriously addressed unless quantified in the EIS.

However, the rules of NEPA require that all cumulative impacts must be comprehensively
 analyzed and quantified in an in-depth manner in an EIS.
 The multiple mentioned justification for the MATL transmission line is that it is to
 an energy efficiency which will be ultimately generated by big wind farms. Thus, the
 cumulative effects of wind farms, when on private land, need to be quantified in an EIS to
 satisfy NEPA requirements. Because the current draft EIS lacks a serious study
 quantifying the cumulative impact and effects of "reasonably foreseeable" wind farms, it
 does not meet the legal criteria mandated by Federal government requirements under NEPA.
 Under the law of NEPA, language from NEPA stating that jurisdictional boundaries
 "determine" the cumulative impact and/or effects.

It is essential that the Draft EIS be modified to include an in-depth study that
 carefully quantifies the foreseeable cumulative impacts and effects of the large scale
 wind farms that will result from the construction of the MATL, and from any future
 increases in the MATL's capacity along with the possible future attachment of additional
 lines.

This study may be the best chance - possibly the only chance - the public will have to
 consider and comment on such impacts in this region of Montana.

Response 684 and 685: In compliance with NEPA, analysis of the potential cumulative impacts of reasonably foreseeable actions, including wind farms that may use the transmission capacity of the proposed MATL line, is presented in the EIS (see Sections 4.1 to 4.16). Also see the discussion of Wind Farm Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 686: See the discussion of Wind Farm Issues in the Consolidated Responses section. Additional information on bird and bat mortality from the Judith Gap Energy Center wind farm is included in the discussion of Avian and Wildlife Issues in the Consolidated Responses section and in the EIS, Section 4.9.

Response 687 and 688: In compliance with NEPA, analysis of the potential cumulative impacts of reasonably foreseeable actions, including wind farms that may use the transmission capacity of the proposed MATL line, is in Sections 4.1 to 4.16. The cumulative impacts analysis considers the impacts of wind farm developments that might be built to use the full potential transmission capacity of the MATL line. The analysis is based on the best available information respecting the potential sizes, designs, and locations of reasonably foreseeable future wind farms. See the discussions of Wind Farm Issues and Legal and Regulatory Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 689: Comment noted.

which permit the potential to make a significant contribution to Montana's economy and to
provide a beneficial return from sources of energy. However, it must be done right, we
must use environmental, scientific, and social costs to our advantage for every potential
benefit. There are some places where (commercial wind farms don't fit our history. The
State should look to use of those places.

Comments:

Jack Kinnison
12 Street St.
New York, NY 10014

NY 10014
New York, NY 10014

What Department of the State is in charge of the EIS?

Re: EIS of Cumulative Impact
"Cumulative impact" is the impact on the environment which results from the incremental
impact of the action being added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future
actions regardless of what agency (Federal or
non-Federal) or person undertakes such other actions. Cumulative impacts can result from
individually minor but collectively significant actions taking place over a period of
time.

Re: EIS of Effects:

"Effects" include:
(i) Direct effects, which are caused by the action and occur at the same time and place;
(ii) Indirect effects, which are caused by the action and are later in time or farther
removed in distance, but are still reasonably foreseeable;
Indirect effects may include growth inducing effects and other effects related to induced
changes in the pattern of land use, population density or growth rate, and related effects
on air and water and other natural systems, including ecosystems.
Effects and impacts as used in these regulations are synonymous. Effects include
ecological (such as the effects on natural resources and on the components, structures,
and functioning of affected ecosystems), aesthetic, historic, cultural, economic, scenic,
or social, whether direct, indirect, or cumulative. Effects may also include those
resulting from actions which may have both beneficial and (unintended) effects, even if an
agency has agency believed that the effect will be beneficial.

Response 690: See the discussion of Socioeconomic Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 691: Comment noted.

Ring, Tom

From: Steven Schilling (schillst@cutbankwaters.com)
Posted At: Monday, March 21, 2006 10:02 AM
Conversation: Environmental Impact Statement
Posted To: EAATL
Subject: Environmental Impact Statement

Dear Mr. Ring,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Louisiana Atchafalaya Tier Transmission Line. I am a teacher in the Cut Bank School system, and would like to offer my full support of the project. I am originally from the Wolf Point area, which has been devastated by business closures and lack of economic stimulus. I wish my own children, as well as my students, to have a hometown to return to 10 years from now, and I firmly believe this transmission line to be a key in the economic progress of our community, as well as the Golden Triangle area.

I have numerous students who are in favor of this project. If I can provide signatures, please let me know.

Sincerely,

Steven Schilling (Schillst)

Cut Bank Schools

Response 692 to 694: Comments noted.

Ring, Tom

From: Dave Brooker (dbrookd@yaho.com)
Posted At: Monday, March 21, 2011 8:55 AM
Conversation: MATL Comments
Posted To: MATL
Subject: MATL Comments

Re: 692 Reply

I would like to leave what I do as kind of the second Illinois Transportation Line. The line will provide a positive environmental and economic impact to the area surrounding the line. In no way will the potential for wind farm noise over the line could more than make up for any environmental issues presented by the line itself. **Comment 692**
Noise and other issues should be handled as issues the demand for fuel and power a significant issue. The wind farm could also provide a small amount of power to the area surrounding the line. I also feel that low level turbines should be considered for those with existing energy generation facilities on their property. **Comment 694**

Dave Brooker, P.E.

9947 Douglas Street,
Mesa, AZ 85208

Like Service/Work's a Limited Line also; Blockwater total works for me would be an issue.
<http://fr.20414.yahoo.com/99/brooker/2009.com>

1186

Response 695 and 696: Comments noted.

Ring, Tom

From: Vernon Berger (vberger@montana.net)
Posted At: Sunday, March 30, 2008 9:34 PM
Conversation: MATL LRD
Posted To: MATL
Subject: MATL LRD

Tom Ring

Environmental Scientist Specialist

Montana Department of Environmental Quality

Home MT 59002

Comment 695

I strongly support the proposed MATL line. Mt. 2 runs through two miles of my farmland and I believe it will be a great asset to my farm and the complete area.

The ponds will be a nuisance to farm around but not any more than the gas wells and pipes we now have to farm around.

Comment 696

Vernon C. Berger
258 Berger Rd.
P. O. Box 451
Cut Bank, Mt. 59421

Ring, Tom

From: [redacted]
 Posted At: Saturday, March 28, 2008, 12:47 PM
 Conversation: Comment to MATL FDEIS
 Posted To: MATL
 Subject: Comment to MATL FDEIS

March 28, 2008

Montana Department of Environmental Quality
 Environmental Management Bureau
 ATTN: Tom Ring
 PO Box 202901
 Helena, MT 59620-0901
 Re: MATL FDEIS

Dear Department of Environmental Quality & Department Of Energy, et al:

In the cumulative impacts section of the Federal Draft Environmental Impact Statement (FDEIS) it is written "Department of Energy (DOE) does not view the wind farms as 'foreseeable actions'... DOE believes that Montana Alberta Tie Line's (MATL's) proposed project is separate from and has an existence and utility independent from the wind farms". However, according to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Sec. 1508.7 cumulative impacts related to a particular development, whether they are past, present and/or future, need to be addressed in an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

Moreover, according to NEPA, sec. 1508.8, direct and indirect effects which are caused by the action, in this case MATL, need to be addressed as well. This would certainly include the numerous wind farms that are proposed to be built along MATL. Proper placement as well as pre-surveying is important to regulate where these wind farms are placed and should prevent many unnecessary costs and bird mortalities. I recommend consulting the 2007 version of California Guidelines for Reducing Impacts to Birds and Bats from Wind Farm Development for additional strategies and recommendations.

Detailed maps of MATL, extending from Lembridge to Great Falls were provided displaying existing wildlife habitat, river systems, fire, fauna, etc. I would like to see similar maps provided to show that the proposed wind farms connected to MATL are not intruding on threatened or endangered species, important migratory flyways, sensitive ecosystems, watersheds, etc.

I remain skeptical that MATL project will truly provide all of the benefits that have been promised to Montanans. The MATL project is being financed by the payments made to purchase the transmission/shipping capacity by wind farm companies. All of the wind farm companies named in FDEIS Table 4.1-1 are out-of-state companies and their payments for transmission rights will go to MATL in Calgary, Alberta. Where is the financial benefit for Montanans?

Additionally, MATL is a merchant line which by definition is a line constructed and owned by a private party with no electric service area and who owns no other electrical facilities. This stated in layman's terms means that the power will be shipped away from the area that it is generated and has no

Response 697: As the comment indicates, wind farms that may use the transmission capacity of the proposed MATL line are considered to be reasonably foreseeable actions that may result in cumulative impacts. Analysis of potential cumulative impacts is presented in Sections 4.1 to 4.16. See the discussion of Wind Farm Issues and Legal and Regulatory Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 698: See the discussion of the analysis of impacts in Chapters 3 and 4.

Response 699 and 700: Neither DEQ nor DOE has a regulatory role in siting wind farms nor do the agencies have regulatory jurisdiction over wind farm development or operation. The agencies were aware of the 2007 draft California guidelines while preparing the Draft EIS. These guidelines are now finalized in California.

Response 701: The detailed information requested in the comment would require specific knowledge of the locations of proposed wind farms. This information is not available. See the discussion of Wind Farm Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 702: See the discussion of Economic Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 703: See the discussion of Line Issues and Economic Issues in the Consolidated Responses section and the responses to comments 166, 167, and 168.

capacity to be used locally. It appears that nearly all, if not all, of the power generated from this project is going directly out of state. Montana already generates 2x as much power as it needs. Is it wise to allow thousands of acres of Montana cropland along the Rocky Mountain front to be devoted to a project headed by out-of-state developers (MATL and industrial wind farms) who also happen to be the two primary beneficiaries of the income?

Please go back and quantify the cumulative effects, direct and indirect, of the proposed MATL project, in a new EIS, specifically including wind farms that are proposed to use MATL. I am attaching the full versions of the aforementioned NEPA Sections at the end of this letter.

Sincerely,

Jessie Sherrills
221 1/2 W. Karl Ave.
Missoula, MT 59801

NEPA Requirements to be studied in an EIS:

Sec. 1508.7 Cumulative Impact:

"Cumulative impact" is the impact on the environment which results from the incremental impact of the action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions regardless of what agency (Federal or non-Federal) or person undertakes such other actions. Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor but collectively significant actions taking place over a period of time.

Sec. 1508.8 Effects:

"Effects" include:

(a) Direct effects, which are caused by the action and occur at the same time and place;

(b) Indirect effects, which are caused by the action and are later in time or farther removed in distance, but are still reasonably foreseeable. Indirect effects may include growth inducing effects and other effects related to induced changes in the pattern of land use, population density or growth rate, and related effects on air and water and other natural systems, including ecosystems.

Effects and impacts as used in these regulations are synonymous. Effects includes ecological (such as the effects on natural resources and on the composition, structure, and functioning of affected ecosystems), aesthetic, historic, cultural, economic, social, or health, whether direct, indirect, or cumulative. Effects may also include fringe resulting from actions which may have both beneficial and detrimental effects, even if on balance the agency believes that the effect will be beneficial.

Response 704: In compliance with NEPA, analysis of the potential cumulative impacts of reasonably foreseeable actions, including wind farms that may use the transmission capacity of the proposed MATL line, is in Sections 4.1 to 4.16. The cumulative impacts analysis considers the impacts of wind farm developments that might be built to use the full potential transmission capacity of the MATL line. See the discussion of Wind Farm Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 705: See the discussion of Wind Farm Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 706: Comment noted.

Response 707: See the discussion in Chapter 4 and the discussion of Wind Farm Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Ring, Tom

From: Steve Dahlman [SDA.Land@statevermont.net]
 Pasted At: Friday, March 25, 2010 2:10 PM
 Conversation: EIS MATL Transmission Line
 Pasted To: EIS MATL
 Subject: EIS MATL Transmission Line

1. 25.2010

Mr. Tom Ring
 P.O. Box 23190
 Dulais, VT 05620

Mr. Ring,

My name is Steve Dahlman, I am a 47 year old farmer in the Duxbury area. My 1st issue is regarding the power poles. They should all be of the single tower pole design throughout the whole project, but at the time and again I say the team they should be in all complaint and CRP. I would also like to see a provision that where applicable they can be placed on a straight next to the property line especially when behind someone else's property owners. The proposed pole placement will not give us an adequate amount of clearance towards one of the power poles between or will not allowing herbicides, this creating a considerable amount of non-productive farm ground by a highly productive area. The only option for this unproductive area would be to plant a grass species for erosion control. This will be an increased cost to the merchant line to their minimum weed control, apply herbicides etc. An H-frame design power pole would only increase the cost even more. If monopoles were utilized and placed on or right next to the property line then the loss of farm ground and cost to transmission line would be minimized.

Regarding safety, low field equipment is not getting any taller and is being used primarily common to common in farms, woods, woods etc. You read about the loss of birds, but what about the increase risk of death or serious injury for the humans that are driving this large farm equipment. Would you like to send your family members, teenage niece and nephews, into potential harm's way, especially at harvest time, driving grain carts with tall augers or high lifting grain augers themselves. There was an incident not long ago just north of Great Falls where a young man, pulling a grain auger, got close enough to a power line, the electricity arced, and the young man was seriously injured. Again, this why it is absolutely necessary to utilize the monopole design and raise the current proposed ground height requirements. We utilize aerial spraying, low clearance in the woods for the increase and to those spray poles. I have yet to hear one public complaint about a power line being too high. Give them the option of being under those lines if they had to be in a bad spot. Safety should be of the utmost concern no matter what distance, diagonally or straight, the power line is constructed.

In closing I would like to say that if all it takes is a few extra million dollars, which is my opinion is reasonable when dealing with a project of this magnitude, to prevent human injury from occurring, then you have my utmost but to do it right the first time. Why not be the one to set an example for any further transmission lines in the future.

Sincerely,
 Steve Dahlman
 Box 204
 Duxbury, VT 05623
 (800) 851-1700

Response 708: Location of structures on property lines would help reduce interference to farming activities so long as there is not an existing road located along a property line. Movement of farm equipment along a road may be impeded by siting on a property line. Also see the response to comment 85.

Response 709: The optimum placement for a single pole would be along a property line if there is no road present. Locating a single pole or H-frame structure inside a field but less than the toolbar or sprayer width from the edge of a field could cause a larger area to be taken out of production than moving the single pole or H-frame structure farther away from the field edge and allowing farming equipment to work around a structure (de Waal Malefyt 1979). This principle would apply whether a single pole or an H-frame structure would be used.

Response 710: Comment noted. Today's line clearances may not be adequate in the future as the size of equipment increases.

Response 711 and 712: See the discussions of Safety Issues in the Consolidated Responses section and Section 3.4.

Response 713: Potential impacts on aerial spraying are discussed in Section 3.1 and were a consideration in developing local routing options (See the discussion in Section 2.6).

Response 714: Comment noted.

Ring, Tom

From: [Tom Ring](mailto:TomRing@montana.net)
Posted At: Thursday, March 27, 2025 6:21 PM
Conversation: MATL Comments - For Ring
Posted To: MATL
Subject: MATL Comments - Tom Ring

To whom this may concern:

I am writing in support of the MATL power line. Because I am involved in our farming operation, I feel the construction of this power line should follow the boundaries of the land and the single pole construction would be beneficial to any farmers whose land will be used for this project.

We need this line for wind power projects.

I appreciate your consideration about this issue.
Sincerely, Bonnie J. Kronbusch, 8200 Old Shelby Rd., Conrad, MT 59425,

Response 715 and 716: Comments noted.

Response 717: See the discussions of Wind Farm Issues and Visual Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

King, Tom

From: tomking@montana.com
Posted At: Thursday, March 27, 2008 9:45 AM
Content-Type: [MIME](#) [message](#)
Posted To: [MATEL](#)
Subject: [MATEL](#)

Comment 717

I want to go on record, please, with my feelings about the MATEL proposal. Montana's Rocky Mountain Front is one of the most special undeveloped and uncluttered landscapes in North America. A lot of people have fought long and hard to keep it that way. And, while I support alternative energy, I would rather not see big wind farms built anywhere near The Front.

Thank you so much.

Sincerely,

Muh Rüdner
Harmon, Montana & Coonsee, New Mexico

Planning your summer road trip? Check out [ADL Travel Guides](#).

2176

Response 718: See the discussion of Wind Farm Issues in the Consolidated Responses section and Chapter 4 for a discussion of the cumulative impacts.

Responses 719 and 720: In compliance with NEPA, analysis of the potential cumulative impacts of reasonably foreseeable actions, including wind farms that may use the transmission capacity of the proposed MATL line, is in Sections 4.1 to 4.16. The cumulative impacts analysis considers the impacts of wind farm developments that might be built to use the full potential transmission capacity of the MATL line. The analysis is based on the best available information respecting the potential sizes, designs, and locations of reasonably foreseeable future wind farms. See the discussions of Wind Farm Issues and Visual Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Dan Bennett
2410 2nd Avenue South
Great Falls, MT 59405

March 28, 2008

VIA EMAIL: MATL@mt.gov

Montana DEQ
Environmental Management Bureau
ATTN: Tom Ring
P.O. Box 200901
Helena, MT 59620

Dear Mr. Ring:

I believe the DEIS is totally flawed due to its failure to consider the cumulative impacts – specifically the impacts of wind farms on the Rocky Mountain Front and on migratory birds that use the Front – of the tie line. The NEPA requires agencies to consider foreseeable impacts, “regardless of what agency or person” undertakes the action. This would include wind farms on private lands along the Front that would not be economically feasible without the MATL. The MATL may very well be separate and independent from the wind farms. This does not absolve agencies from complying with their duty to consider the cumulative effects of their proposal. The NEPA specifically identifies natural resources, the functioning of ecosystems, and aesthetic, historical and cultural resources as effects that must be considered in the DEIS.

The time to address these issues is now. It is much more economical to prepare a supplement to the DEIS than to charge forward into a mess of litigation.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this issue.

Sincerely,

Dan Bennett

MONTANA ALBERTA TIE LTD



March 26, 2017

Montana Department of Environmental Quality
 Facility Siting Program
 1520 East Sixth Avenue
 PO Box 200891
 Helena, MT 59620-0891 U.S.A.

Attention: Tom King

Dear Mr. King,

Re: DQ01710-0709, Federal High Environmental Impact Statement and State of Montana Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Montana Alberta Tie Ltd. (MATL) 2-10-16 Transmission Line (February 2008)

Comment 721: Montana Alberta Tie Ltd. is very pleased that the regulatory process in Montana is moving forward and that this important project can move forward. We are particularly pleased by the positive and constructive feedback provided during the recent round of public consultation. There are several points MATL would like to make concerning the draft Environmental Impact Statement and stakeholder concerns. MATL's comments are made in light of the current dire state of the debt capital markets, including the recent near failure of Bear Stearns, which is causing lenders to retreat from risk. MATL's comments are also made in light of the recognized economic importance of this project to Montana, in particular with respect to the development of wind generation in the state. Each of these factors reinforces the need for expediency in: 1) making a prudent investment decision, both environmentally and economically; and 2) issuing the Record of Decision in order to allow this project to proceed.

Comment 722

Comment 723

Comment 724: The recently-released draft Environmental Impact Statement considers a number of alternatives, including MATL's preferred route, Alternative 2. While there is a wide range of alternatives that must be considered in evaluating a transmission corridor, economic efficiency is typically emphasized for all stakeholders by making the alignment as straight and short as possible. Of the route options proposed, Alternative 4 is materially longer in length. As a consequence, it impacts more landowners; has a larger footprint; may span more unstable soils; may have a greater potential of encountering archaeological and sensitive resources; and has higher energy losses. These are economic arguments which are subject to be considered in the final route selection. Our views on this follow.

Comment 725: MATL understands the regulator's desire to address individual landowner concerns, but in doing so, the intergenerational tradeoffs, environmental and otherwise, may suppress economic efficiency to the point where the project becomes unviable. Such is the concern with Alternative 4; for example:

© Montana Alberta Tie Ltd. 2017. All Rights Reserved. 1520 East Sixth Avenue, Helena, Montana 59620-0891

3/27

Response 721: Comment noted. However, it is premature to conclude that a decision has been made by the DEQ that would allow the project to proceed. Such a decision cannot be made by DEQ for at least 15 days following publication of the EIS and by DOE for at least 30 days following publication of EPA's notice of availability of the Final EIS in the *Federal Register*.

Response 722 to 725: Comments noted.

Response 726: Impacts on farming and visual resources are discussed in Sections 3.1 and 3.15, respectively. Although structures with guy wires would increase the size of the footprint compared to non-guyed structures, the guy wires do not substantially contribute to increased visual impact due to their small diameter and inconspicuous nature compared to the structures and conductors. The agencies used proximity of the line (its structures and conductors) to residences, recreation areas, and roads as the key factor influencing magnitude of visual impact.

Response 727: Comment noted. DEQ will weigh costs and benefits of all parties in the EIS and in its siting determination.

Response 728: Comment noted. All alternatives identified in the EIS fall within the study area identified by MATL. See the discussion of Legal and Regulatory Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 729: MATL has changed its proposal and now would use monopoles on about 56 miles of line crossing cropland or CRP on the diagonal. See the discussion in Section 1.3.1.

Response 730: MATL has changed its proposed compensation package. See the discussion in Sections 2.3 and 3.13.2. DEQ is not aware of any other Montana utilities or electric cooperatives that are making annual per pole payments to farmers.

Response 731: Comment noted. See the discussion of Tax Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.



Response 732: The EIS has been revised to reflect the changes to MATL's MFSA application. See the revised discussion in Section 2.3, and the discussion of Safety Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 733: The proposed right-of-way is now 105 feet wide.

Response 734 and 735: Comments noted.



*Comments on the Federal Draft Environmental Impact Statement and
Montana Supplemental Draft EIS for the
Montana-Alberta Tie Ltd. 230 kV Transmission Line – February 2008*

VOLUME ONE

Page 1-13

Comment 736 How likely is it MATL's shippers will be issued electricity export authorizations by DOE? Is it largely pro forma, or is it a challenging process for the issuer and shippers? Have any of the shippers applied for such authorizations? How might this affect the viability of the MATL line?

Comment 736

Comment 736

Page 2-9

Comment 740 In the discussion of right-of-way, MATL recognizes that 45 feet plus 10 feet on each side of the line (105') is the necessary safety zone for the proposed project. However, MATL wants to limit compensation to landowners to the 45 feet. This is not appropriate, and the regulators should require MATL to compensate for the 105' which is what the regulators in Alberta require.

Page 2-15

Comment 741 Press reports have speculated that the McCormick wind farm is not going to be connected to the MATL line. Does the discussion of "Substations" need to be corrected?

Comment 742 Has MATL submitted a valid interconnection agreement as an addendum to its application?

Page 3-9

Comment 743 The vast majority of the land in the analysis area is agricultural (88%). Of that 88 percent, 73% is used to produce crops. This equates to a total of 64% of the land in the analysis area. Impacts to those lands should therefore be weighted heavily when the Departments balance all the factors prior to the issuance of the permit/certificate.

////
////

The Great Falls Tribune, 24 February 2008.

Response 736: Section 202(e) of the Federal Power Act requires that no person shall transmit electric energy from the United States to a foreign country without first obtaining authority from DOE. The Act specifies that DOE shall issue an export order upon application unless, after opportunity for hearing, it finds that the proposed export would impair the sufficiency of electric supply within the United States or would impede the coordination in the public interest of facilities subject to the jurisdiction of DOE. Each export application is evaluated on its own merits and it is neither possible nor appropriate to speculate on the likelihood of issuing an export authorization to an entity that has not yet applied to DOE.

Response 737: While not challenging, an export authorization applicant must comply with the evidentiary requirements of the program regulations contained at 10 CFR 205.300 et seq. DOE has been able to respond to export requests within 60 days of receipt of an uncontested application.

Response 738: No. DOE will not accept an application to transmit electric energy to a foreign country using facilities that have not yet been authorized by issuance of a Presidential permit.

Response 739: DOE and DEQ cannot speculate on the factors which may affect the viability of the MATL line.

Response 740: MATL has indicated it would pay for a 105-foot easement. See the discussion in Section 1.6.

Response 741: Although the decision regarding interconnection of the Glacier Wind Farm (formerly the McCormick Wind Farm) changes some details presented in the EIS, it does not change the need to consider the project as part of the cumulative impact assessment in the EIS. The Marias Substation is still being proposed by MATL regardless of the Glacier Wind Farm because an intermediate substation is needed to house switching equipment and series capacitors. Since MATL does not intend to change its plans for the Marias Substation, the discussion in the EIS has not been revised.

Response 742: Yes. See Appendix M in the Final EIS.

Response 743: Comment noted. Impacts to farming land use are discussed in Section 3.1.

Page 3-11

Comment 744: Table 3.1-3 shows there is twice as many miles of line placed on the diagonal in cropland under Alternative 2 (54.9) as there are under Alternative 4 (28). As noted later in this document, farming around structures where the line is diagonal (especially when located within a field) causes the most interference with farming operations. It seems 3.1.3 Environmental Impacts as to land use, should also include discussion of the increased "carbon footprint" associated with farming around poles placed within the interior of fields. Each extra movement of mechanical farm equipment around a pole spews extra carbon into the atmosphere. Over the life of this line all these additional passes around structures in the field will add to greenhouse gases. Also, the increased number of trips over the same soil leads to extra compaction of the soil which in turn reduces the amount of carbon that loose farm soil absorbs. This double negative effect on the net impact to carbon in the atmosphere should be noted as an environmental impact. It may be difficult to quantify, but that does not make it any less real.

Comments 745:

Page 3-18

Comment 746: The detailed discussion regarding impacts of construction and maintenance activity relating to "vegetation" (3.1.3.2) is equally applicable to "land use". Disturbance due to construction and maintenance will be greater on Alternative 2 than Alternative 4 because the additional miles of line placed diagonally in cropland will greatly increase the need for off right-of-way access. To get to the interior of so many more fields will mean many additional imp. access land which is outside of the 45' or 105' right of way. The additional interference with farming operations and increase in disturbance to cropland should be included in the discussion of environmental impacts under land use in 3.1.3.2.

Page 7-109

Comment 747: This discussion regarding impact on big game animals includes the statement that the construction would occur in the spring and summer. If in fact construction would take place in the spring and summer, disturbance to farm activities would increase and disturbance of roadways, cropland, and rangeland would be much greater. Can the Department require that construction not occur at such times?

Page 3-126

Comment 748: Does Alternative 2 cross riparian lands in either the Matias and Etnoh rivers?

Response 744: There would be a slight increase in carbon dioxide emissions resulting from additional equipment usage in order to farm around structures. Activities and variable factors involved in farming around are discussed in Section 3.1. The increase would be very small relative to total emissions of greenhouse gases in the region, which are discussed in Section 4.12.

Response 745: Any driving over fields with equipment will cause compaction. This includes concrete trucks and cranes. It would be worse when the soil is wet. Trucks and equipment should be kept in one track to minimize impacts. Additional compaction would be expected with more trips across an area such as when farming around poles. However, the 20% yield reduction listed on the farming costs in Section 3.13 takes this into account. Although soil compaction from agricultural equipment may have detrimental effects on crop yields, soil bulk density, and soil water processes, any effect on carbon storage in soil would be inconsequential. Carbon in the plow layer actively cycles between soil, plants, and atmosphere. Carbon sequestration is accomplished by farming practices that add large amounts of crop residues and other stable biomass to the soil and increase the soil's organic content. Continuous no-till crop production is one of the best examples of a farming practice that can increase soil organic matter and thus help sequester carbon from the atmosphere into soil (Bofto 2008). In response to this comment, information about compaction has been added to Section 3.2.3.2.

Response 746: Alternative 4 would result in the shortest distance of transmission line crossing cropland at a diagonal (See Table 3.1-3). Section 3.1.3 discusses the additional impact from diagonal crossings. Routine maintenance can often be scheduled to occur following the completion of harvest thereby reducing crop damages.

Diamond Valley South would be adjacent to about 1 mile of field road in T24N R1E between sections 3 and 10. Diamond Valley Middle would be adjacent to about 2.5 miles of field road in between T25N, R1E and T25N, R2E, and T25N R2E and T24N R2E. Diamond Valley North would be adjacent to field roads in T25N R2E between sections 31 and 32, 30 and 29, and 19 and 20. The estimated maximum number of miles of trails needed by alternative is: Alternative 2 - Dryland = 81.71 miles, Irrigated = 0.3 mile, Range = 27.55 miles; Alternative 3 - Dryland = 87.84 miles, Irrigated = 3.31 miles, Range = 17.91 miles; Alternative 4 - Dryland = 72.45 miles, Irrigated = 0 mile, Range = 40.96 miles.

Response 747: DEQ could require that construction not take place in cultivated areas during spring and summer. DEQ could also require that farmers receive compensation for damages caused by transmission line construction, such as crop losses caused by construction during the growing season.

Response 748: Alternative 2 would not cross cottonwood stands on the Marias or Teton River. See the discussion of Vegetation, Wetland and Weed Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 749: See the discussion of Tax Issues in the Consolidated Responses section. The assessment assumed that MATL would be taxed at 3 percent because the agencies did not know whether the additional 50 percent tax abatement would be issued by local governments.

Response 750: The correction you stated for Table 3.18-1 has been made. The analysis presented in Section 3.13 indicates that Alternative 2 would cost more to farmers than Alternative 4.

Response 751: The agencies do not regulate MATL’s choice to make particular easement payments. MATL is not prohibited from seeking easements in advance of obtaining approval from DEQ. The regulatory restrictions analysis is required by the Montana Environmental Policy Act. Also see the discussion of Legal and Regulatory Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 752: Legal notices of the meeting dates and locations were printed in the following newspapers:

| Newspaper | Location | Publication Dates |
|------------------------|-------------|-------------------------|
| Independent Observer | Conrad | Feb. 21 & Feb 28, 2008 |
| The Valierian | Valier | Feb. 21 & Feb 28, 2008 |
| The Shelby Promoter | Shelby | Feb. 21 & Feb 28, 2008 |
| Choteau Acantha | Choteau | Feb. 20 & Feb 27, 2008 |
| Cut Bank Pioneer Press | Cut Bank | Feb. 20 & Feb 27, 2008 |
| Great Falls Tribune | Great Falls | Feb. 17 & Feb. 24, 2008 |

A press release was issued, but not all the news papers picked up the story. DEQ is aware that the following newspapers ran articles about the meetings – Acantha, Promoter, Pioneer Press, and Valierian.

Response 753: Comment noted.

Page 3-172-173

Comment 749: The projected tax increases are incorrect in that they do not include a 1.3% (.15-18) rate tax abatement granted to MATL by the 2007 Legislature. There need to be recalculated based upon the additional tax break. MATL's corporate website includes a statement that its calculations indicate the company will pay about \$400,000 per year to local governments in Montana.

Page 3-244

Comment 750: In Table 3.18-1 under "Economics / Costing" the Summary of Impacts states: All alternatives have similar impact. This is an inaccurate characterization in relation to the second column which states, "Farmers would bear additional costs from having to farm around easement structures." The earlier discussion as to interference with farming already shows interior diagonal structures increase the interference and cost. Alternative 2 has twice as many miles of such line in comparison to Alternative 4. The Summary should acknowledge this difference.

Page 3-44

Comment 751: I still question the inclusion of the last paragraph on this page. A business decision by MATL to pay for easements along one route of its choosing seems irrelevant to this discussion of regulatory restriction. How do DOI and DEQ regulate the choice of an applicant to make any particular set of easement payments?

Page 3-2

Comment 752: In the future the Department's might analyze more carefully where they advertise public meetings. The newspapers mentioned in relation to public scoping do not cover more than the northern half of this particular project. For example, the notices should have appeared in the newspapers in Conrad, Choteau, and Great Falls.

Page 3-4

Comment 753: Future projects that have so much impact on farmers should generate contact with NGOs such as the Montana Goat Growers Association and the Montana Farmers' Union.

Page 3-1

<http://www.mtdeq.com/318.pdf>

VOLUME FWD

Pages 25-31.

Comment 754 The property tax revenue information in these comments may no longer be valid in light of changes made by the 2007 Legislature.

Page 124.

Comment 755 Response 532 as to placing the line along a highway corridor includes a statement which recognizes "Such a line location may also result in greater public exposure to EMF." Perhaps there should be discussion taken here as to the possible greater effects of EMF on those who have to live throughout each growing season up and under the proposed line.

CORRECTIONS TO MY EARLIER COMMENT SUBMITTED AT GREAT FALLS

Comment 756 In my comment submitted at the March 11th hearing in Great Falls, I made inaccurate statements regarding the amount of property tax relief granted to MATL by the 2007 Legislature. In paragraph 2 on page 2, I stated: "The Legislature also enacted a 75% property tax cut for the company from which it will reap nearly \$800,000 each year." In fact the amount of tax relief the company received is far, far greater. The permanent property tax rate did go from 12% to 3%. However, the dollar amount of that change equals a tax reduction of \$2.2 million per year for Alternative 2 or \$2.4 million per year for Alternative 3. I also did not include the additional tax abatement which amounts to 1.5% for a period of 15-19 years. Since I was not completely sure as to the dollar amount generated by this abatement, I did not include it.

Comment 757 The property tax break received by affected landowners (\$40,000 per year total for the entire 130+ miles of the line) was included as revenue to farmers in calculating compensation for interference with farming. Surely the same logic should apply when costs to MATL are discussed or considered. Any calculation of MATL's costs should include the more than \$2 million per year the taxpayers of Montana are giving up to benefit MATL.

Katrina Wilson Martin
1770 24th Ln NE
Drum, MT 59413
406.461.2317

Response 754: The property tax changes made in 2007, including those made in HB 3 of the 2007 Special Legislative Session, did not change the tax rate on wind farms. In other words, wind farms did not get an additional incentive under HB 3. The tax rate on wind farms was dropped to 3% in the 2005 Legislative Session. The tax information presented in the EIS is correct for wind farms. Also see the discussion of Tax Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 755: Section 3.4 contains the discussion of the potential impacts associated with electric and magnetic fields that would be produced by the MATL line. Also see the response to comment 596.

Response 756: Your corrections are noted. Also see the discussion of Tax Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 757: See the discussion of Farming Issues in the Consolidated Responses section. The tax advantage information has been changed accordingly to address your comment. The property tax relief to farmers is no longer included in the numerical comparison between costs and benefits, although it is mentioned separately.

Response 758: Comment noted.

Response 759 and 760: Comments noted. See the discussion of Farming Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 761: See the discussion of Eminent Domain in the Legal and Regulatory Issues of the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 762: Comment noted. Also see the revised discussion in Section 3.13.

Response 763 to 765: Invitations were mailed to the owners of property in the Diamond Valley area. Mr. Goodmundson’s address was obtained from the database of property owners used in assessing state property taxes. DEQ has no record of the letter sent to that address being returned with an incorrect address. See the discussion in response to comment 746 for miles of field roads affected.

Mr. Goodmundson’s concern about interference with use of a field road is noted and will be taken into consideration when making a decision.

DEQ must make the findings required by the Major Facility Siting Act and associated administrative rules before approving the project. Your comments will be taken into consideration when making a decision. Also see the discussion in the responses to comments 708 and 709.





United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
 Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance
 United Federal Center, Building 66, Room 1009
 Post Office Box 25007 (D-2500)
 Denver, Colorado 80225-0007



March 31, 2008

0043 /
 ER 08/063

Ms. Ellen Russell, Project Manager
 Office of Electric Delivery and System Reliability
 U.S. Department of Energy
 Washington, DC

Dear Ms. Russell:

The Department of the Interior submitted comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Montana Alberta Tie Ltd. 220kV Transmission Line, Montana, on March 21, 2008. The following additional comments were received from the National Park Service this day for inclusion in that letter. Please accept our apologies for any inconvenience this may cause.

Comment 766 The National Park Service understands that one of the benefits of the MATT would be alternative energy production by developed wind farms on lands east of Glacier National Park's boundary. They are supportive of alternative energy development, including wind energy, as a national goal, but are concerned that this type of development would adversely affect the park's intended night skies, and expose populations during migration.

Comment 767 Glacier, along with Watkins Lakes National Park in Canada, is the world's first International Peace Park and also a World Heritage Site and a Biosphere Reserve. Glacier National Park has raised concerns about impacts to the ecosystem from development on the east side in the 1999 General Management Plan in 2001 when the Park submitted comments to Bonneville Power Administration for the proposed Blackfoot Wind Project near Blaine, and during scoping for this project in 2007.

Comment 768 In its scoping comments to US FERC, Glacier National Park asked that potential impacts to the Park be analyzed together cumulative impacts, but again as part of the EIS, they did not find potential impacts to the Park acknowledged, analyzed or analyzed in the Cumulative Impact Section. Impacts to views were discussed only in a general sense.

Response 766 to 768: See the discussions of Visual Issues and Wind Farm Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Mr. Ellen Knutell

Comment 769

Glacier's impacts on bird species that frequent Glacier National Park were also not quantified, although the document did analyze impacts on birds and raptors from these kinds of facilities. Impacts on night owls in Glacier National Park from future wind farm development were also not analyzed. While we understand and acknowledge safety concerns, lights on the wind turbines and associated development could have significant impacts on Glacier's night owls that are valued by park visitors and necessary for the health and survival of some wildlife species.

Comment 770

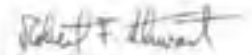
The mitigation measures described in Appendix F to reduce impacts to visual resources, riparian and night owls were well developed and appear to be complete given available technology and best efforts. However, we urge you to address ways to **require** implementation of these measures for any subsequent wind farm development, particularly farms that are adjacent to the park boundary or within view of Glacier National Park.

Comment 771

Wind farm development on public lands would be subject to further analysis and public input comments; however wind farm development on private lands would not be, unless state or local permits are required. All of the land adjacent to Glacier National Park on the east side is within the Blackfoot Indian Reservation. We anticipate working with the tribe to mitigate impacts from future wind farms, but in the event that DOE or the State are involved, Glacier National Park would like to be notified of **any** future wind farm proposals within 15 miles of the park boundary.

If you have any questions regarding these comments, please contact Mary Riddie, Environmental Protection Specialist, Planning and Compliance Coordinator Glacier National Park at (406) 888-7898.

Sincerely,


Robert F. Stewart
Regional Environmental Officer

cc: Tom King, Montana DQG

Response 769: See the discussion of Avian and Wildlife Issues in the Consolidated Responses section. Note that the cumulative effects analysis analyzed impacts on all potentially impacted migratory birds. Birds were not grouped based on their destination as there is no advantage to this approach.

Response 770: See the discussion of Visual Issues and Wind Farm Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 771: DOE and the state will attempt to honor the National Park Service request for information when the agencies are involved with proposals for wind farms within 15 miles of the park boundary. However, the agencies are not likely to have any role in future wind farm projects in that area.

Response 772 and 773: Comments noted.

March 31, 2008

Montana Department of Environmental Quality

Environmental Management Bureau

ATTN: Tom Ring

PO Box 200901

Helena, MT 59620-0901

Re: the Montana Alberta Tie Line (MATL)

Comment 772

The Montana Farmers Union (MFU) would like to comment about potential benefits and/or impacts the Montana-Alberta Tie Line (MATL) design may have on local area landowners and agriculture production.

Montana Farmers Union policy has strongly supported development of alternative energy options within our state. We recognize the benefits that can be gleaned from oil and energy development projects as well as other alternatives such as the planting, raising and production of fuel from oil seed crops. As always, Montana farmers stand ready to help our state and our country move toward energy independence.

Comment 773

We do not support renewable energy developments at all costs however. We believe that development should be done smartly and with a critical eye toward the impacts or benefits to rural landowners. We think that it is in our state's economic development interests that such developments be locally owned and operated whenever possible - thus keeping revenues working in the state and in the supporting communities.

119

Response 774 and 775: Comments noted.

Comment 774

In the case of the Missouri Alberta Tie Lines, where local impact - not ownership - is the central issue of our concerns, we support development if it can be accomplished with as little impact to the affected landowners as possible. The negative impact of the diagonal lines being proposed from approximately 1/2 mile north is significant. They pose unnecessary burdens on the farmers whose property the lines cross.

Comment 775

MFU believes that the best way to minimize impact while still ensuring that the development moves forward is by building power lines along field lines, section lines and with the use of monopoles in CRP and cropland.



Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments.

Sincerely,

Alan Merrill, President

MATL POWER LINE

To: Who It May Concern:

Comment 776: We agree a power line needs to be built to service this area of land. Our **Comment 777:** concern is the impact caused by the Corrad in Great falls diagonal section that crosses cultivated and CRP farm land. This section is shadowing the existing already established power line of SW energy. Our concern is farming around the poles which will cause doubling of fertilizer, spray, seed, fuel, labor. The amount the land will receive from this use, causing it to blow in the strong winds, and produce a poor crop. We are producers just like they are. We supply a commodity that the world also needs, if the land is taken out of production because of the diagonal line this will cause a loss of a shortage of **Comment 778:** food. But if the power line is put parallel to the fields the effect on the commodity we raise will be minimal. If the world is to see an increase in food shortage, which commodity will they pick to keep the power of food? **Comment 779:**

Our son lost his arm and still wants to farm. With the power line running diagonal this will cause great stress on his other arm. With the power line running parallel to our fields the impact on his arm will be greatly reduced. **Comment 780:**

We prefer Route 4, which will be more expensive for MATL to build, but which will have minimal impact on farming. MATL's additional expense is being off set by their large tax break. **Comment 781:**

Allen Denzer
Terri Denzer
Darlene Denzer

Response 776: Comment noted.

Response 777: Comments noted.

Response 778 to 779: Comments noted. See the discussion of Farming Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 780: Comment noted.

Response 781: Comment noted.



Montana Audubon

P.O. Box 507 • Helena, MT 59603 • 406.441.5077 • montana@montanaaudubon.org

March 21, 2008

Tom Ring
 Montana Department of Environmental Quality
 P.O. Box 200901
 Helena, MT 59620-0901

Dear Mr. Ring,

Please accept the following comment from Montana Audubon regarding the Federal Draft Environmental Impact Statement and Final EIS of Montana Department of Environmental Quality submitted for the Montana Alberta Tie Line (MATL) 230-41 Transmission Line (Draft MATL EIS). Montana Audubon is the sponsoring entity for the Montana Audubon Society Chapters in the state of Montana. Currently there are approximately 3,000 Audubon facilities in the state. Our members in different trails and other habitats, and their habitats. You may receive comments from other members of the Society.

This project proposes to build a transmission line from northeast of Cascadeville, Alberta to Great Falls, Montana, with approximately 130 miles of the line in Montana. The Draft MATL EIS is a critical part of the environmental impact for the Montana portion of the project.

Because Montana Audubon's mission is focused on protection of wildlife and wildlife habitat issues, our comments are directed at those impacts/issues:

1. According to the Draft MATL EIS, MATL has "used all the 'capacity' of the line to potential to not [redacted]". It also states that the "development of wind farms along the MATL line is considered to be a reasonably foreseeable future action under federal law and is analyzed under the cumulative impacts." While we agree that "development of wind farms along the MATL line should be 'considered to be a reasonably foreseeable future action under federal law,'" we disagree that the Draft MATL EIS did an analysis of these developments under cumulative impacts. How can the EIS (data re-analysis was done [redacted])
 1. The location of only one of the wind farms is discussed.
 2. The EIS describes the acreage for only two of the projects a total of 27,000 acres, will be [redacted], but no details on the environmental impacts or potential types of land impacted, species of wildlife impacted, numbers of wetlands or floodplain acres impacted, etc.
 3. The EIS states that "several potential wind farms that would stop power on the proposed MATL transmission line are so early development stages" (p. 4-16, yet it comes out) in the EIS that the Great Plains Wind and Energy – McClelland Ranch Wind Park is slated for development in 2007-08, and the Great Plains Wind and Energy – Keweenaw Wind Park is slated for construction in mid-2007 (obviously these deadlines have slipped, but these statements indicate that the wind projects are NOT in the early development stage).
 4. The EIS states that most of the information on wind farms was taken from a [redacted] press release. It appears that HQ/TWR did not even call the wind farms on document (they would provide information on their project).

CLB

Response 782: See the discussion of Wind Farm Issues and Legal and Regulatory Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 783: See the discussion of Wind Farm Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Montana Comments Page 7

2. We disagree with the DEQ assessment that MATL "has an extremely low utility for potential future wind farms." MATL has indicated that it will qualify for the "white and green" property tax category established under HB 3 adopted by the 2007 Montana Legislature in May 2007. Without new wind farm-bank and using this fact, the transmission line will not qualify for this tax category, making it less economically feasible. We believe that the DOE needs to re-examine its decision that wind farms are a "committed asset" as defined in 40 CFR 1500.25(a)(1). As a result, the environmental impacts for all wind farms that have a contract with MATL, listing 5 or more years used to be more accurately and thoroughly analyzed by the EIS.

Comment 784

The assessment reflects an over-estimate of impacts due to bird and bat mortality from potential future power generation projects by at least one- and probably two-orders. It also fails to take into account the health of wind farm studies recently completed that document 4.52 birds per turbine killed per year and 13.4 bats per turbine per year killed these numbers generated by a wind farm in Montana are higher than any numbers found in the tables on pages 4-28 and 4-29. The health gap also has almost no standing water, no perennial streams, no prairie dog towns, and few ground squirrels. As a result, depositing on the information provided by the wind company planning to use MATL, higher numbers of these species may be killed. We understand that DEQ has a copy of this study. If you do not, we can direct you to a copy.

Comment 785

Comment 786

Comment 787

We would also argue that if any utility easements are required by wind farms for transmission lines from proposed wind farms, river state lands, that MEPA requires cumulative impacts to be considered. Not knowing where these projects are located, prevents DEQ from knowing if DNRC is assessing even considering easements for transmission lines (which would be an action under MEPA requiring cumulative impacts to be examined). This lack of information is not insupportable, at best.

3. We support keeping the transmission line as far away from Kevin Rim as possible. Kevin Rim has been identified as an Important Bird Area. The Important Bird Areas Program (IBA) is a global effort to identify and conserve areas that are vital to birds. The Kevin Rim easement provides existing habitat for a diversity of diurnal raptors and has been designated as an Area of Critical Environmental Concern and as a Key Riparian Area by the Bureau of Land Management. It is also the site of a long-term research and monitoring project begun in 2000 by biologists from Montana State University. This species of raptor breed within the IBA, four of which are of Global (Ferruginous Hawk), Continental (Crowsfoot Hawk, Prairie Falcon), or State (Golden Eagle) conservation concern. The site contains the highest known density of nesting Ferruginous Hawks in Montana. Based on the number of nesting Ferruginous Hawks, the site qualifies as an IBA of Global significance.

Comment 788

Comment 789

We question the quality of the bird studies conducted for the MATL application. The EA states on page 3-111 that "Two biologists walked along approximately 3 miles of Kevin Rim in early May 2000 surveying for raptor nests. No nests and no raptors were observed at that time (MATE, 2006)." Working time in early May and nesting on raptors? We have in our files BLM studies from 2001, 2002, and 2003 (a consulting nesting Ferruginous Hawks, a species of special conservation concern) 114 pair nesting in 2001, 4 pair nesting in 2002, and 13 pair nesting in 2003). In addition to Ferruginous Hawks, nesting Prairie Falcons and Golden Eagles were also documented. Did they disappear all of a sudden? Instead, it appears that the bird survey work was inadequate. We would be happy to share their studies with DEQ/DOE since you did not receive them from the BLM.

Comment 790

We also support requiring the use of bird strike deterrents or similar warning devices along the transmission line would be closer to Kevin Rim, including as and extending at least 1/2 mile or other amount of the line. We also support requiring such kinds of transmission lines in all areas where raptors habitat from approximately 1/2 mile to 1 mile upstream of transmission lines that cross the Kevin Rim area.

Comment 791

Response 784: See the discussion of Tax Issues, Legal and Regulatory Issues, and Wind Farm Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 785: See the discussion of Wind Farm Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 786: See the revisions to Section 4.9, which includes information from a recent study of bird mortality estimated at Montana's largest operating wind farm near Judith Gap.

Response 787: See the discussion of Wind Farm Issues in the Consolidated Responses section. DNRC has no power line easement applications in the area of the proposed MATL line (Sullivan 2008).

Response 788: Kevin Rim is discussed in Sections 3.7, 3.8, and 3.10. The easternmost alternative route for the transmission line (Alternatives 2 and 4) is approximately 7 miles due west of the Kevin Rim Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC). The other routes are further west. Additionally, the agencies note that one anemometer is located near Kevin Rim. Although the presence of an anemometer does not equate to a wind farm, the presence of an anemometer does indicate interest in wind resources.

Response 789: Regarding wildlife surveys, see the discussion of Avian and Wildlife Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

As stated in Table 2.3-4, “Raptor safe power line construction practices (Edison Electric Institute, Avian Power Line Interaction Committee) would be employed during transmission line construction.” Additionally, in Table 2.3-4, it states “Approved line marking devices would be installed at appropriate intervals and appropriately staggered on each overhead ground wire across stream crossings and migratory bird flyways (for example wetlands) within the Right-of-Way.” These areas would be finalized during design.

Section 3.8.3.2 contains a discussion of potential collision impacts as well as environmental protection measures that would be implemented.

As stated in Appendix F, environmental specifications under consideration by DEQ would include the requirement that “Overhead ground wires within ¼ mile of wetlands will be marked to reduce the potential for collisions after inspection and a determination of the need for marking in consultation with FWP and FWS biologists.”

Response 790: The easternmost route (Alternatives 2 and 4) is approximately 7 miles due west of the Kevin Rim area ACEC and about 3 miles west of the rims northwest and southwest of Kevin. Alternative 3 is farther west.

MATL has carried out field studies using censusing protocols, including call back surveys, to determine the presence of listed species. Few areas of concern have been identified. See Section 4.9.

Response 791: MATL has agreed to use perch guards where, in collaboration with regulatory authorities, it is determined that they are required. The MATL transmission line is located about 3 miles from the rims northwest and southwest of Kevin. Regarding wildlife surveys, see the discussion of Avian and Wildlife Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 792: Comment noted.

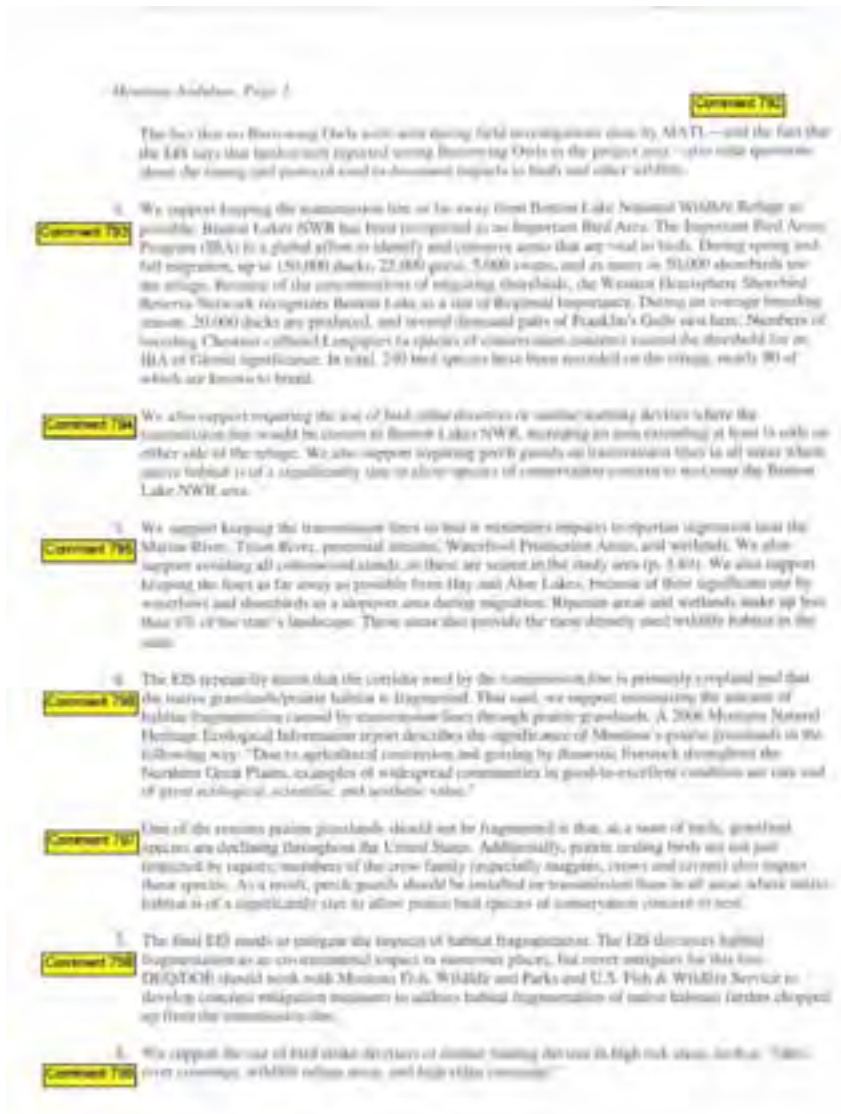
Response 793: The alignments cross land to the east (Alternatives 2 and 3) or south and west (Alternative 4) of Benton Lake NWR. Alternative 2 and 3 routes are approximately 0.8 to 0.9 mile away from Benton Lake, but much closer to the eastern boundary of the NWR, while Alternative 4 is more than 2 miles from the nearest NWR boundary. This information has been included in Section 3.8.3.2.

Response 794: See the discussion in the responses to comments 789 and 791.

Response 795: Comments noted. See the discussion of Legal and Regulatory Issues and Vegetation, Wetlands and Weed Issues in the Consolidated Responses section. Aloe Lake is 10-12 miles from the transmission line alternatives. North of Cut Bank, Alternatives 2 and 4 pass near Hay and Grassy lakes, while Alternative 3 passes near or crosses several unnamed ponds and intermittent lakes.

Response 796: As the comment notes, little native grassland habitat remains in the area, and the habitat that remains is fragmented. Transmission line development should not contribute to substantial fragmentation of grassland habitats because any permanent disturbance of grassland vegetation would be spatially discontinuous; only the sites of transmission line support structures would be permanently disturbed for construction. Alternative 4 would cross the greatest amount of grassland but Alternative 2, which best avoids grasslands, conflicts with your preference to remain as far away from the refuge as possible.

Response 797: Comment noted.



Response 798: Farming and other development in the area has already fragmented the natural grassland habitat. Transmission line development could contribute to additional fragmentation of grassland habitats, especially along the Dry Fork Marias River on Alternative 4.

Response 799: Comment noted.

Minutes-Appendix Page 4

9. We listed as recommendations in the main body of the report that the developer to this project first be certain to determine the location and length of access roads, allowing more time to design and construct access roads and utility as a condition of construction to the extent of access roads. Impacts from newly constructed roads needed for this project need to be more accurately quantified and described, including secondary impacts from the network of roads on the ecosystem. The Final EIS needs to describe the number of miles of roads crossing native habitat.
10. Riparian zone power lines should be constructed to reduce the risk of electrocution to nesting raptors. Additionally, mitigation measures should also assess whether or not resulting conditions for other species including (1) or all ground birds to prevent raptor electrocution should be required—especially in areas around Lake Mead and Grand Lake NWR.
11. The Final EIS needs to document all Sharp-tailed Grouse lek and winter range survey parameters followed. This means particularly important given the questions we have about other bird field work done by MATL in preparation for the Draft EIS. In the Draft EIS, it was all loks that will be monitored appear to be identified. (1) as a condition of the permit of the proposed project to locate sensitive areas to be monitored. (2) the EIS needs to more completely evaluate the utilization of available habitat by Sharp-tailed Grouse (or leks, foraging, or brood rearing because recent studies indicate that provide avoid areas of development, increasing mortality), and (3) the impact of the power line on movement of Sharp-tailed Grouse needs to be more adequately assessed.
12. The EIS fails to address or mitigate the impacts of radio data and geolocation. It is especially important to mitigate impacts to important winter range.
13. Because of the way in which the Draft MATL EIS is written, it is very difficult to determine what measures will be used to mitigate impacts to wildlife or wildlife habitat. The following mitigation measures should be required:
- Minimizing the length of roads that cause fragmentation of habitat (width of road in native habitat).
 - Using appropriate lighting, that won't attract night migrants (birds and bats) to any substations.
 - Requiring that intensive post construction monitoring (annual mortality surveys identified on page 5-126) is done to ensure that tool and bat mortality is as low as predicted. This monitoring must use gender corrected monitoring protocol to ensure that the results are meaningful. This means particularly important given the questions we have about other bird field work done by MATL in preparation for the Draft EIS. Additionally, we would ask that, as a mitigation measure, a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) be formed for the purpose of reviewing post construction monitoring results and making recommendations if changes are needed. If post construction studies reveal significant impacts, it makes sense to allow the TAC to recommend that additional tool (radio) devices or similar warning devices be installed, additional monitoring studies be conducted, etc.
 - Taking precautions in the construction process to power work all construction equipment to avoid transporting noxious weed seeds. At one point in the EIS, there seems to be a commitment to doing this:
 - Page 2-18: "Newest Weed Control (Section 1.5): Requires a "clean vehicle policy," which cleaning and keeping construction areas to prevent transport of noxious-weed plants and seeds."
 Yet in other parts of the EIS, there seems to be a qualification to this requirement:
 - Page 3-27: "Mitigation practices such as washing vehicles and equipment would occur throughout construction and continue during future fire management activities." Note that "washing vehicles" is very different than requiring vehicles entering and leaving construction areas to be power washed.
 - Appendix C, Page 5-75 (a) is causing the permit area, which would construction equipment will be cleaned (pressure wash or third party) of all mud, dirt, and plant parts under the cover.

Response 800: Until the project is completely planned and engineered, it is not possible to determine the location and length of access roads. The project would employ environmental protection measures to minimize the area disturbed due to access roads and the impacts from erosion, soil compaction, and noxious weeds. See Table 2.3-2 in the EIS and Section 2.7 of Appendix F.

Response 801: As discussed in Section 3.8.3.2, transmission line design standards provide adequate spacing to prevent raptor electrocution.

Response 802: Section 3.8.2.2 has been updated to reflect the latest surveys. Lek surveys were conducted on April 30 (ground) and May 2 (aerial), 2008. Although some isolated sharp-tailed grouse were seen, no leks were observed. Wind breaks and shrubby areas are generally avoided. See the discussion of Avian and Wildlife Issues in the Consolidated Responses section. It is possible that sharp-tailed grouse may collide with the line.

Response 803: The majority of impacts to winter range would be short term due to construction activities. The DOE and DEQ did not find the long-term impacts to be at a level to warrant mitigation as long-term impacts would consist of a minimal amount of habitat loss.

Response 804: Comments noted. Road length and impacts would be minimized as outlined in the DEIS. The contradiction between the Chapter 2 summary "requiring" a clean vehicle policy and Chapter 3 and Appendix C "recommending" clean vehicle mitigation has been corrected. The requirement is for vehicles to be thoroughly washed. See Appendix F, item 2.8.6.

During the preparation of the Major Facility Siting Act application (MFSA) and the Draft EIS, MATL communicated with Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks relative to known locations, population status, and habitat use of sharp-tailed grouse in the project area. MATL also conducted lek surveys in areas of suitable habitat within the project area (MATL 2006b, as referenced in the EIS). Field surveys undertaken by MATL in 2005 resulted in the verification of seven sharp-tailed grouse leks, three observed and four heard.

MATL's MFSA application (MATL 2006b), page 83 provides the following discussion on grouse winter range: "Gary Olson, Region 4 biologist for Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks (MFWP) in Conrad identified shelterbelts and riparian areas as areas where Sharp-tailed grouse concentrate during severe winters (Olson 2006). MT Natural Heritage Program cited the MFWP Bird Coordinator, Rick Northrup, as also identifying riparian and brush-covered areas as important to sharp-tailed grouse during severe winters (Maxwell 2006). MFWP has not developed this information into a GIS layer that could be used to make a map. But, Olson reiterated that sharp-tailed grouse are widely distributed within the Project Study Area from the Canadian Border south to Great Falls. He said that field and homestead shelterbelts as well as native riparian areas, including brush coulee bottoms, are where sharp-tailed grouse concentrate during severe winters."

During a subsequent conversation with Gary Olson on May 6, 2008, he reiterated that there were no available data on sharp-tailed grouse movement patterns relative to winter habitat use for the Project Area, and that given the wide and diverse distribution of potential severe winter habitat, additional detail could not be expected or provided. He did indicate that some 2008 data recently collected for areas

north of Cut Bank would provide additional information on spring distribution and habitat use (including lek attendance).



Response 805: Your comment is noted. Section 3.7.3.2 discusses revegetation with the appropriate seed mixtures. For CRP land those seed mixtures would be determined by the requirements of the CRP program.

Response 806: Your comment is noted. Additional information pertaining to wetlands in Teton County is presented in Section 3.6. The delineation of all wetlands along the selected alignment where it traverses Teton County is primarily to assist with the engineering design and pole placement, so that all wetlands can be spanned. DEQ has draft Environmental Specifications (Appendix F, revised in the Final EIS) that are essentially mitigation measures that apply to many environmental aspects of the project to ensure that the disturbed areas are returned to conditions as good as or better than before construction. Additional mitigation measures specific to wetlands and Waters of the United States may be required by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers under a Nationwide #12 Permit (Utilities Line Activities), if any construction, maintenance, or repair of utility lines and associated facilities is required within a jurisdictional wetland and Waters of the U.S. DOE has completed consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for this project. The inventorying of wetland plant species of concern could be included as an ecological component of the delineation of wetlands along the selected alignment.

Response 807: DEQ's administrative rules allow the department to hold a bond and monitor reclamation.

Response 808: Comment noted.

TO: THE MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
THE U. S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

We the undersigned members of the Montana Serum and the Montana House of Representatives strongly endorse approval of the Montana Alberta Tie Line (MATL) from Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada to Great Falls, Montana. **Comment 809**

MATL is the key to development of up to \$1 billion in wind energy projects that will be an enormous economic benefit for north central Montana, the State of Montana, and the nation's energy supply. The increased tax base, construction jobs, royalty payments from wind generators, and the permanent manufacturing and maintenance jobs will provide badly-needed tax dollars for the state, local schools, county, and city governments. **Comment 810**

Wind is one natural resource northern Montana has plenty of and, in fact, it is rated one of the best and most reliable wind resources on the North American continent. Without transmission lines to move electric power, wind cannot be developed. **Comment 811**

After a rough start, MATL is demonstrating an eager willingness to work with affected landowners to address concerns regarding routing of transmission lines and placement of poles that would be potentially disruptive to agriculture operations. This includes the use of monopoles rather than "H" poles, wherever it is practical. MATL has entered into multiple landowner agreements which have received local approval and concurred with recommendations in the DEQ report. Landowners must be fairly compensated and treated with the up-most dignity. **Comment 812**

The MATL line will improve the reliability of the electric transmission system in both Montana and Alberta by making these regions less vulnerable to outages, brownouts, and creating a greater opportunity to import and export electricity, which can be of benefit to consumers and suppliers. It's predicted the United States within a few years could experience a serious energy shortage due to increased demand and the cancellation of many proposed coal fired generation projects in the U.S. because of global warming and environmental concerns. It's absolutely imperative we now develop this country's green and clean energy resources for our generation and future generations to come. **Comment 813**

It is important to note that MATL is a "merchant line" and the large capital investment and risk is made by the banks and private investors rather than by local taxpayers in Montana and Alberta. **Comment 814**

We urge your approval of the MATL application without costly and unnecessary delays that could very well jeopardize the entire project. The final routing decision should be fair to all parties, MATL, and landowners, striking a fair balance between what makes sense economically and addressing the most sensitive issues in a responsible and private manner. **Comment 815**

Response 809 to 811: Comments noted.

Response 812 and 813: See the discussion of Farming Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 814 to 818: Comments noted.

Response 819: Comments noted.

Comment 819
 A great analogy is, "it would be like connecting power cables to a huge battery that serves the economic engine of development". Let's move forward and approve the SEAFI project for Montana. We respectfully ask for your positive and thoughtful decision-making decision for our great state.

Senator Jerry Black
 Senator Ray Brown
 Senator John Dreyfusman
 Senator Audrey Cunn
 Senator Jeff Emswam
 Senator Kelly Gebhardt
 Senator Kim Gillan
 Senator Ken Harum
 Senator Rick LaBbe
 Senator Lars Larson
 Senator Anne Laslevich
 Senator Dave Lewis
 Senator Jim Peterson
 Senator Todd Schmidt
 Senator Frank Smith
 Senator Don Ryan
 Senator Joe Trepola
 Senator Don Strohman
 Senator Keith Bates

Representative Linn Jones
 Representative Tim Callahan
 Representative Edith Clark
 Representative Sue Dickerson
 Representative Julie French
 Representative Ralph Hemert
 Representative Gordon Hershock
 Representative Pat Ingolfsen
 Representative Harry Kluck
 Representative Bob Lake
 Representative Scott Mandrossall
 Representative Bill Nancey
 Representative James O'Hara
 Representative Alan Olson
 Representative Mike Phillips
 Representative Rick Ripley
 Representative Ian Semon
 Representative Wayne Stahl
 Representative John Ward
 Representative Bill Wilson
 Representative Jonathan Winsty Hix
 Representative Ken Peterson
 Representative Gary MacLaren
 Representative John Patrick
 Representative Bill Beck
 Representative Mike Milburn
 Representative Diane Arkurey

Response 820 to 822: Comments noted. See Farming Issues and Socioeconomic Issues in the Consolidated Responses section. Additional signatures to this letter are on the next page.

Montana Department of Environmental Quality
Environmental Management Bureau
ATTN: Tom Ring
PO Box 201601
Helena, MT 59620-0901

RECEIVED

APR 23 2014

Montana Department of Environmental Quality
Environmental Management Bureau

Re: MATL Transmission Line

We would like to go on record as supporting the construction of the Montana Alberta Tie (MATL) 540/230 kV merchant transmission line and strongly urge the Montana Department of Environmental Quality and the U.S. Department of Energy along with the Bureau of Land Management and the Department of the Interior to issue all necessary permits and grants as expeditiously as possible.

The environmental impact of this line is negligible, and the potential for this line to transmit clean, green wind energy is limited only by the capacity of the line itself. At the same time, it is imperative to the sustainability of our communities that this positive economic growth in our local economy be realized.

We recognize there is an impact on the farmers whose lands will be crossed. To the extent practical, we think there should be single pole structures that follow section lines on farm acres, while still keeping the line as close to potential wind farm sites such as Alternative 2 depicts. We would also request that both MATL and the landowners be bound fairly, equitably and with respect.

Sincerely,

Donald Broecker

Gregg Bell

Ray Bell

Jeffery Bell

W. Bell

Phil Broecker

Gregg Bell

Emmett Breding

Bruce R. Rice

Michael W. Russell

2204

| | |
|-------------------------|------------------------|
| <u>Sandra Smith</u> | <u>Di Frazier</u> |
| <u>Angela D Brown</u> | <u>Betty Plunk</u> |
| <u>Christa Anderson</u> | <u>Arnold X. Olson</u> |
| <u>Shirley Spivey</u> | <u>James Byrd</u> |
| <u>Pam E. Kehler</u> | <u>_____</u> |

| | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| <u>Joseph L. Bennett</u> | <u>John J. Hicks</u> |
| <u>Cheryl A. Brown</u> | <u>John D.</u> |
| <u>Hugh W. Campbell</u> | <u>Robert R.</u> |
| <u>Shirley H. Harrison</u> | <u>Wanda Anderson</u> |
| <u>John & Betty L. Smith</u> | <u>Dick Siefert</u> |
| <u>Angie Spitzer</u> | <u>Ronald L. Wickham</u> |
| <u>John McFarland</u> | <u>Ben Wickham</u> |
| <u>Lowell Ross</u> | <u>Bob L.</u> |
| <u>Orlando Rivers</u> | <u>Joe Hays</u> |
| <u>Cheryl Clegg</u> | <u>Ernest S. Slaughter</u> |
| <u>Carmelita</u> | <u>Paul Becker</u> |
| <u>Carolyn Jones</u> | <u>Jack Becker</u> |
| <u>Marjorie Jones</u> | <u>Lyndee Johnson</u> |
| <u>_____</u> | <u>_____</u> |
| <u>_____</u> | <u>_____</u> |

Response 823 and 824: Comments noted.

Dr. Robert and Ali Newkirk
P.O. Box 110
Dunsmuir, MT 59432
(406) 472-3388



March 31, 2008

Tom Ring
Environmental Sciences Specialist
Montana DEQ
P.O. Box 205901
Helena, MT 59602

Dear Mr. Ring

Comment 823

We are writing to express our support of the MATL electric transmission line proposed to be built between Letford, Alberta and Great Falls, Montana.

We believe that is an important energy and economic project for the people of our state and even the country.

Comment 824

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signatures of Dr. Robert Newkirk and Ali Newkirk in cursive script.
Dr. Robert Newkirk Ali Newkirk

Response 825 and 826: See revised Appendix F, Sections 2.6.1 and 2.7.1.



Response 827: Comments noted. See Visual Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

To: Montana Department of Environmental Quality
 Environmental Management Bureau
 ATTN: Tom Rink
 PO Box 200901
 Helena, MT 59620-0901 DEADLINE: MARCH 31, 2008

RECEIVED
 APR 1 2 2008

We, the undersigned, oppose the development of industrial wind complexes and associated transmission corridors within the view shed of Glacier National Park and the Rocky Mountain Front.

Comment 827

- | NAME | ADDRESS |
|---------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| 1. EGERAN A WRIGHT | Redwood Hill 3/20/08 |
| 2. Heather Hollaway | Westport, Idaho PO Box 414 E. Glac. NP 59434 |
| 3. LARRY VICK | Larry Vick PO Box # 55 S. Glac. NP 59434 |
| 4. JANE VERNON | 216 S. 1st St. E. Glac. NP 59434 |
| 5. Carolee Vernon | 216 S. 1st St. E. Glac. NP 59434 |
| 6. Melissa Vernon | 216 S. 1st St. E. Glac. NP 59434 |
| 7. GREG STAUTZ | PO Box 122 E. GLACIER NP, MT 59434 |
| 8. Gregory M. Stutz | |
| 9. | |
| 10. | |
| 11. | |
| 12. | |
| 13. | |
| 14. | |
| 15. | |
| 16. | |
| 17. | |
| 18. | |
| 19. | |
| 20. | |
| 21. | |
| 22. | |
| 23. | |

1.109

Response 828: Comment noted. See Visual Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Greg Halloran, MEPA Coordinator
Director's Office
Montana Department of Environmental Quality
PO Box 200901
Helena, MT 59620-0901

Re: MATE Draft EIS


Dear Mr. Halloran:

In my initial letter to you, regarding the Montana Alberta Tie Ltd. and dated April 26, 2007, my comments ran to more than 1000 words. Today, I will be brief.

In responding to my concern about the visual impact of giant industrial wind farms on Montana's landscapes, the staff response was, in part, as follows: *"Both the transmission line and wind turbines would introduce linear elements into viewed landscapes. It is unlikely these structures would conceal or hide surrounding mountain ranges. Whether this constitutes industrial development that degrades scenic views is a site judgement."* [Response 797, MATE Draft EIS]

I can only say, in reaction to this kind of transparency, that it offers me little in the way of comfort. However, it does help to explain the thought process behind the making of these remarkable, often environment-sterling decisions, on behalf of the citizens of Montana.

Sincerely yours,

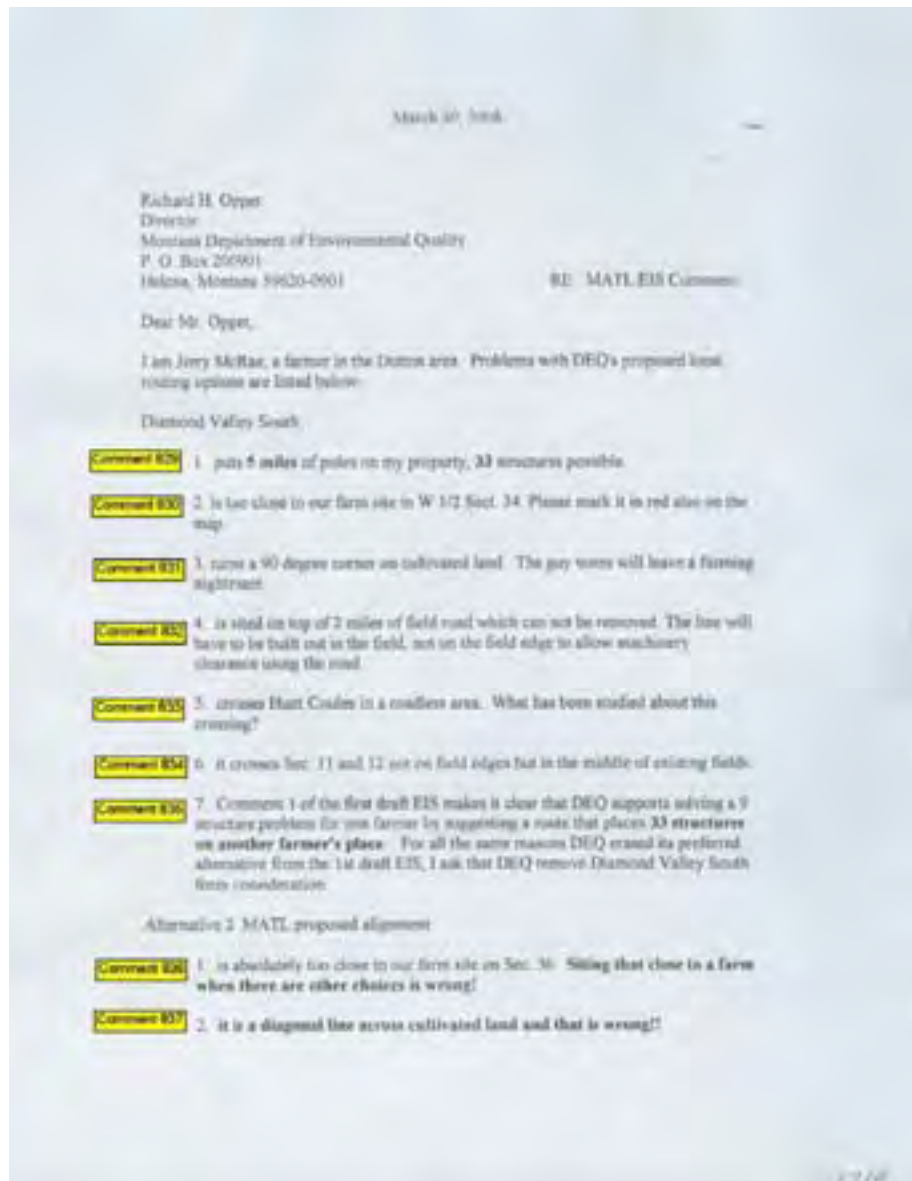


Philip Perseyk
620 Evans
Missoula, MT 59801

March 11, 2008

RECEIVED

L209



Response 829 to 832: Figure 2.6-2 has been updated to include the house that was inadvertently omitted. Also see the responses to comments 708 and 709.

Response 833: Hunt Coulee is located on private land and does not have a road that crosses the draw at the Diamond Valley South crossing of the draw. A small pond is located near the crossing and the area is indicated as winter range in MATL's application. Where possible, such coulees are typically spanned. If this alignment were selected, design of the line and final structure location would occur after the agencies reach their decisions. If the goal is to avoid constructing new roads on the steep erosion prone slopes, access would likely be from each side of the coulee, and construction and maintenance traffic would have to drive out and around to access each side of the coulee rather than directly across the coulee. Alternative 2 is located near a private road that crosses the coulee. However, this road is located off the right-of-way and additional easements would be necessary to use it for construction.

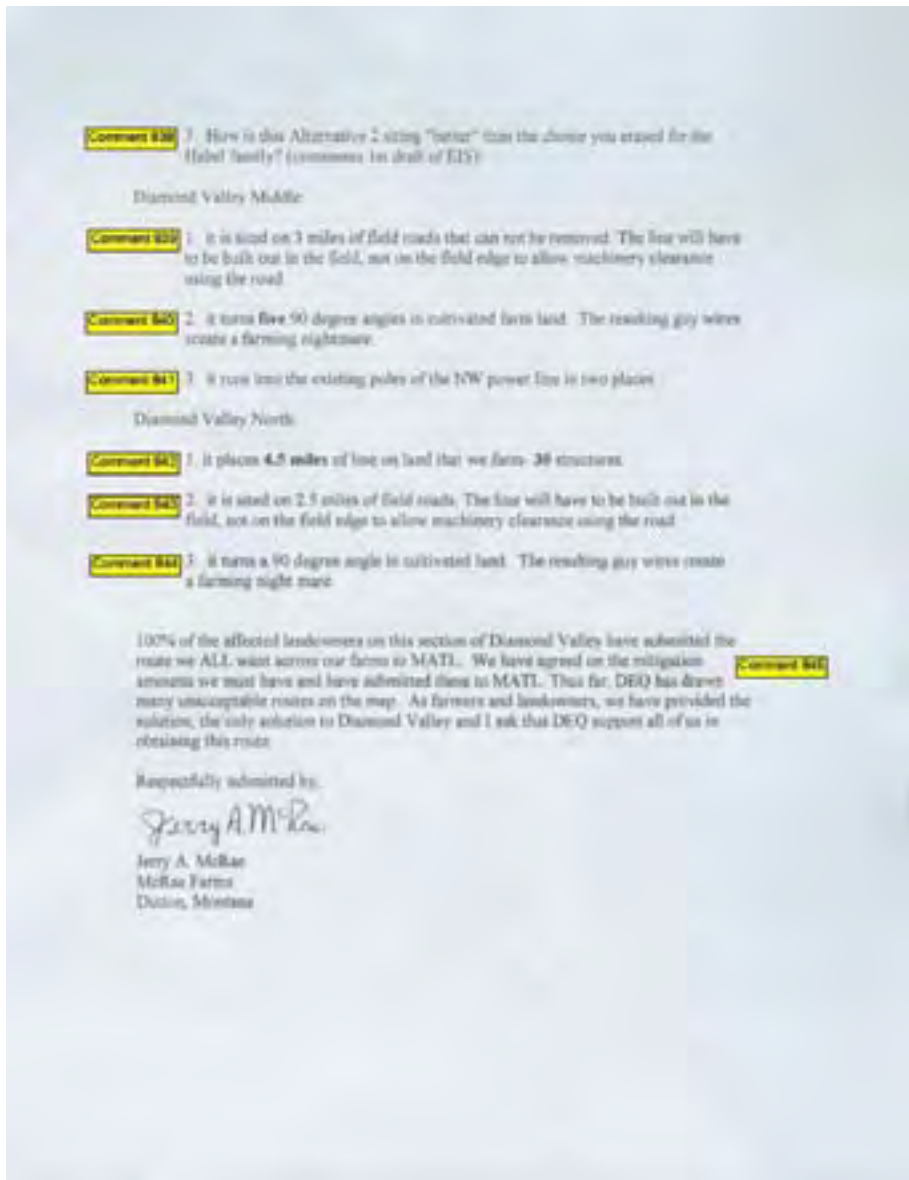
Response 834: Comment noted.

Response 835: In discussions during the development of the local routing option for the original March 2007 document, DEQ staff was led to believe that there was consensus among the landowners in the Diamond Valley area to move the line farther away from two homes and parallel to an existing transmission line. As indicated by the Draft EIS comment you cited, there was not consensus among area landowners. Therefore, DEQ determined there was a need to examine other possible alternatives in this area. A mailing list of landowners in the area was developed from the Department of Revenue database of property owners and a letter was

sent inviting them to a meeting to discuss other alignment options.

The agencies received two letters of comment opposing the Diamond Valley South local routing option because it would be located along a field road. The agencies received no letters or testimony supporting this local routing option. When making their decision, the agencies will consider this input indicating there is no local support for the Diamond Valley South local routing option.

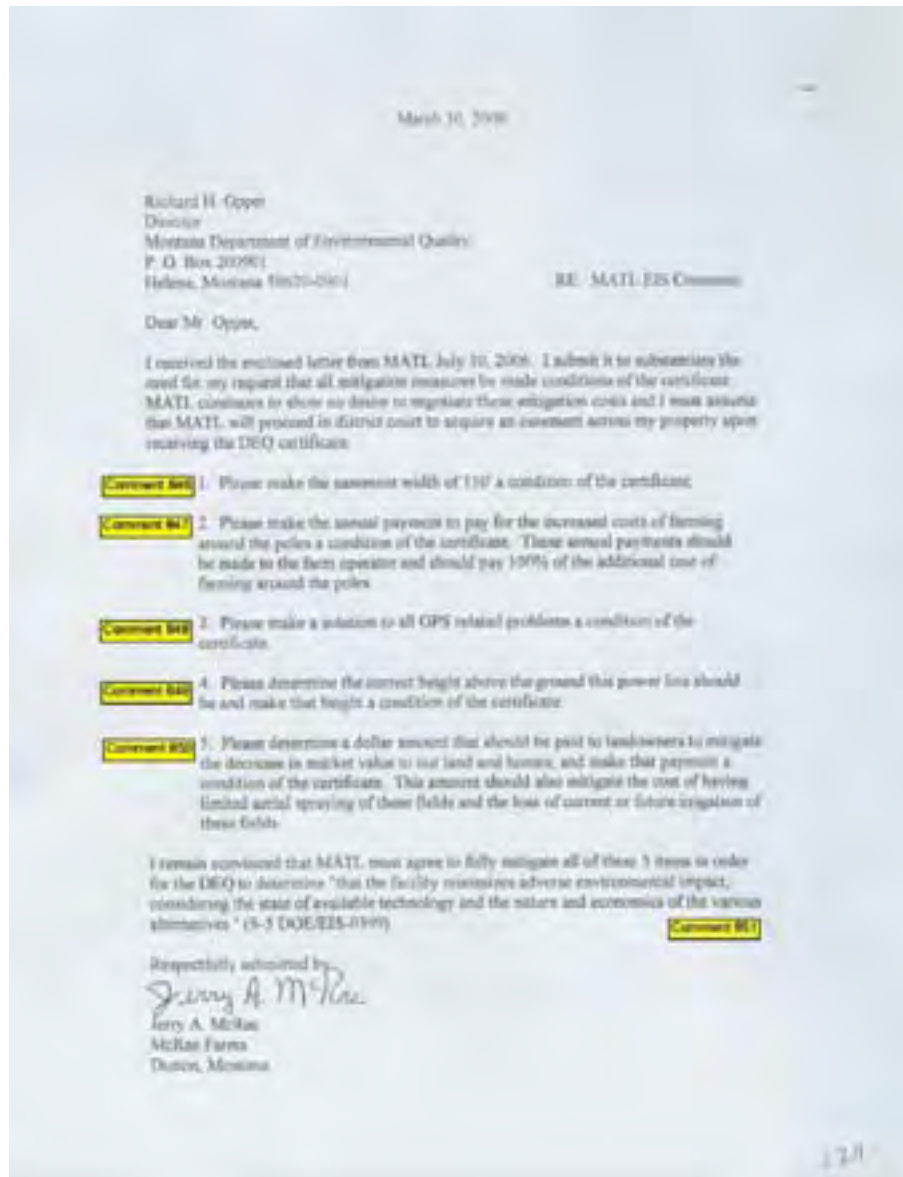
Response 836 and 837: Comments noted. Also see Farming Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.



Response 838: DEQ is looking for the lowest impact alignment while considering the nature and economics of the various alternatives and will make its finding independent of which private landowners' lands would be crossed. In the Diamond Valley area Alternative 2 does not closely parallel an existing line where maneuvering equipment between two sets of poles may prove difficult or impossible depending on final line location. Alternative 2 is shorter than the now dropped Diamond Valley portion of Alternative 4 in the March 2007 document and therefore is likely to have fewer structures located in fields. Alternative 2 also has fewer guyed angles than would the other now dropped alternative. Alternative 2 is not located adjacent to any field roads and therefore would have a lower overall number of structures in mid-field locations. However, as indicated in response to comment 835, Alternative 2 is located much closer to two houses, resulting in greater visual impacts.

Responses 839 to 844: Comments noted.

Response 845: The agencies are considering the route submitted by Mr. McRae, as well as the compensation amounts.



Response 846: MATL has revised its proposal to increase the easement width to 105 feet. See Section 2.3.

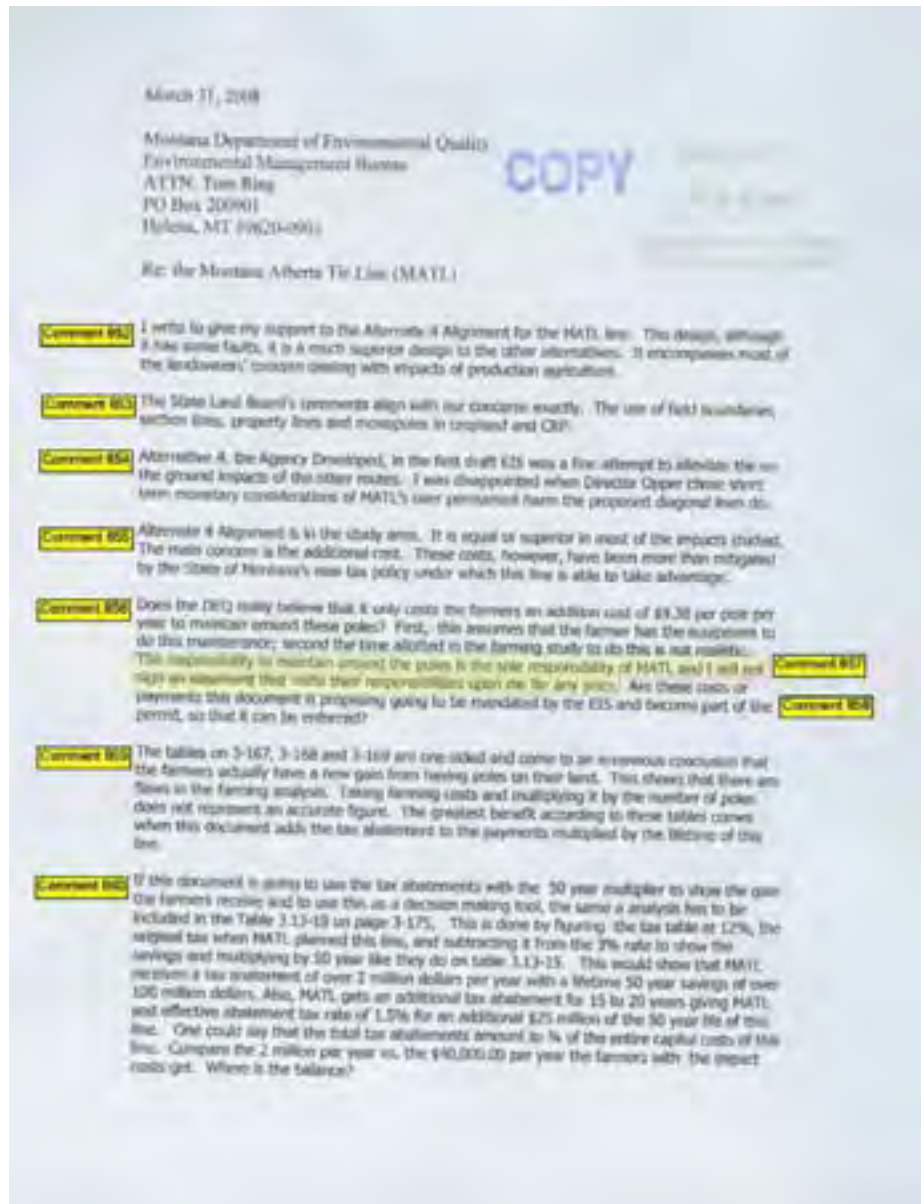
Response 847: MATL’s compensation package is part of the overall project. MATL has revised its proposed compensation package. See Sections 2.3 and 3.13.2, and Farming Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 848: The Revised Draft DEQ Environmental Specifications include correction of problems of interference with GPS by the MATL line.

Response 849: MATL has revised the minimum ground clearance for the conductor to 27.2 feet where the line would cross cultivated and CRP land. Also see Safety Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 850: DEQ will not become involved in the compensation negotiations. Also see the response to comment 847 and Legal and Regulatory Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 851: Comment noted.



Response 852: Comment noted.

Response 853: Comment noted.

Response 854: The tentative identification of a preferred alternative in the EIS is based on many factors, not just economics. DEQ’s ultimate decision will be disclosed when it determines whether to issue a Certificate of Compliance.

Response 855: See Tax Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 856: The \$9.38 was the original figure MATL calculated for farmer cost. It was neither a DEQ-generated figure nor did it reflect DEQ conclusions. MATL has since generated a new average figure of \$33.90 per pole per year. See Section 3.13.3.2.

Response 857: Comment noted.

Response 858: The EIS, as an impact disclosure document, can identify mitigation measures, such as compensation, but cannot require them. Any mitigation measures DEQ imposes on MATL must be within the authority of the Major Facility Siting Act to impose or must be attached to the Certificate at MATL’s request. Any conditions on the Certificate are enforceable. If the project is approved, DEQ would mandate payments for damages during construction. See the discussions of Legal and Regulatory Issues and Farming Issues in the Consolidated Responses section. Also see Sections 2.3 and 3.13.3.2.

Response 859: The analysis and tables referred to in the comment have been revised. See Section 3.13. The information provided in those tables is for a general comparison of alternatives across all landowners and not for individual farmers. Individual costs could vary based on individual farming practices.

Response 860: See the discussion of Tax Issues in the Consolidated Responses section. The tax incentive to farmers is no longer included in the tables that balance benefits and costs to farmers. It is included as a separate item. The lower tax rate to MATL is also included in revised Section 3.13.



Response 861: The Major Facility Siting Act requires DEQ to make findings that the facility minimizes adverse environmental impact, considering the state of available technology and the nature and economics of the various alternatives, and that the facility will serve the public interest, convenience, and necessity. Decision makers will weigh many aspects of project viability in making this finding and before making their decisions.

Response 862: The agencies contracted with an independent consulting firm, HDR in Billings, MT, to review MATL's costs. HDR compared the MATL costs to similar projects they have completed or have estimated and agree with the MATL costs at this time. HDR noted that labor and material prices are currently very volatile and cost estimates are subject to change in short periods of time.

Response 863: See the discussion of Farming Issues in the Consolidated Responses section. MATL has revised its proposal to obtain a 105-foot-wide easement.

Response 864: See the discussion of Safety Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 865: See the discussion of Farming Issues in Consolidated Responses and the response to comment 861. Appendix N indicates that most farmers would farm closer than 5 feet. This does not indicate that all farmers would farm this close, but, for purposes of study, a safety buffer of 5 feet was used. The document indicates that the safety buffer is generally dependent on the specific field, equipment, and operator experience, but in this case a 5-foot safety buffer should be adequate to safely clear the pole(s) using typical equipment while still optimizing farmed area. Conservative assumptions were used in the farming cost study in order to

avoid underestimating costs for farmers. However, individual operators will have their own preferences on factors such as equipment speed and how close to a structure to farm.

Response 866: See the discussion of Farming Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 867: Comment noted. See the discussion of Farming Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 868: If MATL already paid for right-of-way access, and that alternative is not permitted, MATL may lose the money it already spent. To seek easements and pay for routes that have not been permitted by DEQ is a business decision MATL made.

Response 869: See the response to Comment 868. The Montana Environmental Policy Act requires that an EIS disclose the impacts of regulations on an applicant (75-1-201(b)(iv)(D), MCA). Easement payments made on MATL's proposed route would be an adverse economic impact of regulation if another alternative is selected.

Response 870: See the response to comment 862 and the discussion of Farming Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 871: Comment noted.

Comment 874

I am amazed by this company. I know that time is of the essence. We told MATL two years ago that if they would abandon the diagonal and h-fences in CRP and stippled that we would support this line. Some even offered to forgo easement payments and to help get the easements from their neighbors. This line could have been built and drawing revenue if these changes had been agreed upon then. How short sighted was this.

Comment 873

If MATL wants to go forward smoothly with future projects it should weight carefully the harm to its reputation when it has to use eminent domain to force the diagonal across cropland from Conrad to Great Falls.

Comment 874

This also a political process, although it claims to be above this. This was proven to my satisfaction by when Mr. Ogger dismissed the work product of his own employees in the DEIS, the Agency designed Alternative 4. Governor Schweitzer may be surprised who will join the outcry on the farmer's side for personal property rights when this Canadian company starts using eminent domain to get its cheaper, but impact, across diagonal. This will be a big news and political story not just a legal fight. MATL may win their diagonal for this line, but squander any goodwill and future projects to achieve this.

These comments are respectfully submitted.

Chris Stephens
PO Box 94
Dutton, Montana 59411

Responses 872 to 874: Comments noted.



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
 REGION 8, MONTANA OFFICE
 FEDERAL BUILDING, 10 West 15th Street, Suite 2300
 HELENA, MONTANA 59625

Re: AMO

March 26, 2008

Mr. Tom Biag
 Environmental Sciences Specialist
 Montana Dept. of Environmental Quality
 P.O. Box 200901
 Helena, Montana 59620-901

RECEIVED
 MAR 27 2008
 DEQ/EMB

Re: CEQ # 2006014, Montana Alberta Tie Line, 230kV
 International Transmission Line DEIS

Dear Mr. Biag:

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region VIII Montana Office has reviewed the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Montana Alberta Tie Line (MATL) 230kV International Transmission Line, in accordance with EPA responsibilities under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), 42 U.S.C. 4321 and Section 309 of the Clean Air Act. Section 309 of the Clean Air Act directs EPA to review and comment on writing on the environmental impacts of any major Federal agency action. The EPA's comments include a rating of both the environmental impact of the proposed action and the adequacy of the NEPA document.

Comment 875

The EPA does not object to the proposed construction and operation of the MATL 230kV transmission line from Great Falls, Montana into Alberta, Canada. Although, we recommend the DOE and MDEQ consider construction of a new modified preferred alternative that would better optimize the many environmental, social and economic trade-offs for this project (i.e., trade-offs in impacts to farm operations and residences, soil erosion during construction, water quality and wetland impacts, impacts to birds and wildlife habitat, costs, etc.). The issues should be to address project purpose and need and the significant issues while minimizing adverse environmental impacts. Evaluation of a modified alternative in the FEIS may also better explain to the public the many trade-offs involved in making transmission line decisions, which may lead to improved public acceptance of decisions. In general, desirable features we consider worthy of including in a new modified preferred alternative include:

- minimize soil disturbance and soil erosion by selecting alignments on less erodible soils and then reduce the extent of ground disturbance as much as possible;
- use outcrops rather than H-frame structures wherever possible to reduce soil disturbance and impacts to farm operations;

Response 875: In assembling the alternatives presented in the EIS, the agencies have attempted to present a full range of reasonable alternatives that optimize the social, economic, and environmental trade-offs associated with the proposed project. Several of the desirable features of a new modified alternative suggested by EPA are included in each of the alternatives analyzed in detail in the EIS, including the applicant's proposed route, Alternative 2. The alternative alignments considered in the EIS provide options to minimize impacts, consistent with the siting criteria suggested in the comment. The agencies will examine the alternatives and consider environmental impacts in making their decisions. The DEQ decision will be based on the findings required by the Major Facility Siting Act. This includes consideration of cost and economics of the various alternatives, in addition to minimization of environmental impacts. Likewise, DOE must consider environmental impact, impact on electric reliability, and any other factors that DOE may consider relevant to the public interest.

- incorporate appropriate construction sediment and erosion control methods and BMPs, as well as weed prevention and control measures during construction;
- minimize new access roads and new road construction, and locate any new roads that may be needed where they have minimal impacts, away from rivers, streams and wetlands;
- minimize stream and lake crossings, and disturbances of wetlands and riparian areas;
- minimize disturbances to sensitive wildlife habitat, and use appropriate mitigation measures to reduce wildlife impacts, particularly transmission line mortality in birds;
- minimize adverse impacts to farm operations and residences;
- minimize fragmentation of open landscapes from a scenic standpoint, and use topographical features to help screen the transmission poles as much as possible;
- consider costs of construction and operation.

We are of course that the MDEQ and DOE will need to evaluate and analyze the impacts of any new modified alternative, and display those impacts in the FEIS.

Comment 311 We also want to state that it appears to us that Alternative 3 would have fewer environmental impacts than the other action alternatives. Alternative 3 would have the shortest alignment (121.6 miles) with the fewest stream and lake crossings (12), fewest acres of wetlands within 500 feet of the alignment (62.3 acres), and least amount of construction ground disturbance (206 acres). Alternative 4 would have the longest transmission line (139.6 miles) with greatest number of stream and lake crossings (19), greatest potential wetland impact (76.4 acres), and greatest ground disturbance (240 acres), although Alternative 4 would reduce impacts to farm operations. Alternative 2 would appear have impacts between those of Alternatives 3 and 4, with 129.9 miles transmission line length, 14 stream and lake crossings, 76.4 acres of potential wetlands impact, and 214 acres of ground disturbance.

Comment 312 We recognize that there are many considerations and trade-offs involved in evaluating the transmission line alternatives, but we want to emphasize our interest that minimization of environmental impacts be considered as an important criterion in the decision making process. We support reductions in soil, water quality, wetlands, fisheries and wildlife impacts when finalizing alignment alternatives and evaluating the many project trade-offs.

Comment 313 We also believe that the FEIS and Record of Decision (ROD) should clearly explain the process and underlying rationale for the selection of the Preferred Alternative, and the environmentally preferred alternative should be identified in the ROD (40 CFR 1500.2(b)).

Response 876: Note that some of the values in the comparison tables have changed since the Draft EIS, primarily due to the incorporation of new information on wetlands in Teton County. While some of the numerical values in comparison tables suggest that Alternative 3 may have fewer impacts to natural resources, a crude comparison of these numbers is not sufficient by itself to determine the lowest impact alternative. Numerical values for crossings of streams, lakes, and wetlands indicate the potential for impacts, but because surface waters and wetlands would be spanned or otherwise avoided under all alternatives (except for one angle structure in Black Horse Lake under Alternative 2), most potential impacts of surface water and wetland crossings would be avoided. Thus, after the application of this mitigating measure, there is little or no difference between alternatives with respect to the environmental impacts on surface water and wetland crossings. Similarly, because potential impacts to surface water quality due to construction disturbance would be minimized through mitigation measures, impacts would be minor under all action alternatives, in spite of the differences in land areas disturbed. Additionally, not all of the potential environmental impacts of this project are easily correlated with numerical measures. For example, Alternative 4 would reduce potential impacts to birds by avoiding Benton Lake National Wildlife Refuge, but the tables do not include a numerical indicator of this difference between the alternatives. Finally, because of the preponderance of agricultural land uses in the region and the long-term nature of impacts to farming practices, the agencies must give significant weight to impacts to farming practices when comparing the overall impacts of the alternatives.

Response 877: See the response to comment 875.

Response 878: Consistent with the requirements of CEQ’s NEPA regulations, the final EIS identifies the agencies’ preferred alternatives, and the agencies’ Records of Decision will identify the environmentally preferable alternative and present the agencies’ decisions and the basis for those decisions.

Response 879: If DEQ decides to issue a certificate for the proposed Project, all of the environmental protection measures identified in MATL’s application would be incorporated into the DEQ certificate as requirements. Appendix F is a draft of the additional environmental specifications that DEQ could include as conditions.

Response 880: As stated in Section 3.5.3, the implementation of a storm water pollution prevention plan, avoidance of activities in flowing or standing water, and other measures to reduce sediment delivery to surface waters would effectively reduce short- and long-term risk of sedimentation from transmission line and access road construction to a minor adverse impact.

Response 881: The DEQ Watershed Protection staff and TMDL staff are aware of the proposed project.

Response 882: The commenter addressed this topic in greater detail in comments 896 to 904. See the responses to those comments and Vegetation, Wetland and Weed Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 883: See the discussion of Avian and Wildlife Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Comment 878: We appreciate the listing of the MATL environmental protection measures by Table 2.1 and the MDEQ environmental specifications included in Appendix F. The Appendix F environmental specifications protective measures appear to be particularly detailed and comprehensive. We support utilization of these environmental specifications and environmental protection measures to avoid or reduce the intensity and duration of impacts to the environment. We encourage use of the most comprehensive set of environmental protection measures using the most protective measures from both MATL’s and MDEQ’s lists.

Comment 879: We also believe that if there is likely to be any increase in sediment delivery (e.g., sediment) in water quality impaired waters listed by the State of Montana under Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act as a result of construction and/or operation and maintenance of the transmission line that watershed restoration activities should also be included in the project to offset sediment delivery from transmission line and access road construction. This is needed to assure that no further degradation occurs to the several 303(d) listed streams along the project alignments (i.e., Old Maids Coulee an intermittent stream, Pondera Coulee, Cut Bank Creek, Maria River, Tetón River, Lake Creek, the Missouri River, and Brown Lake). For example, we recommend stabilization of existing eroding banks; improving/installing BMPs on additional existing roads, perhaps in cooperation with local governments, to reduce existing road sediment sources. Unless existing sediment sources are reduced, we believe there will be potential to further degrade 303(d) listed streams by transmission line and road construction.

Comment 880: We also encourage the DOE and MDEQ Major Facility Siting Act staff to contact MDEQ’s TMDL Program staff to assure that the MDEQ Watershed Protection and TMDL staff consider the proposed project in its consultation with MDEQ’s development TMDLs and Water Quality Plans for the applicable TMDL Planning Areas (contact Robert Ray of the MDEQ in Helena at 444-3319).

Comment 881: The DEIS states that there could be alterations to wetland hydrology, wetland plant communities and inadvertent filling of wetlands or sedimentation of wetlands, although no direct filling of wetlands is intended. We recommend that there be a strict prohibition of placement of transmission line pole structures in wetlands, rather than just avoiding placement in wetlands “wherever possible,” and that a wetland buffer zone be used to avoid even inadvertent construction impacts to wetlands (e.g., 50 foot wetland buffer zone). We also recommend that wetlands be flagged on the ground to facilitate contractor avoidance and inadvertent wetland impacts. If any wetlands are to be impacted the extent of impacts should be more clearly estimated and disclosed. The final EIS should also more clearly identify and disclose probable wetland impacts, as well as the mitigation activities that would compensate for unavoidable impacts to wetlands.

Comment 882: In addition, we recommend that the FEIS include maps that identify locations of important migration corridors of birds and along with identified potential collision hazard areas. This will provide the public and the decision maker with a clear understanding of the locations where effects to avian species are likely to be the greatest, assist in selecting alignments that avoid avian flyways, and help focus identification of the mitigation measures needed to eliminate or reduce avian effects.

Response 884: In accordance with Executive Order 12114, the EIS does not assess impacts occurring in a foreign nation unless that foreign nation is not otherwise involved in the action. The portions discussing the Canadian part of the project were included for information only.

Response 885: The comment and rating have been noted.

Finally, the DEIS does not provide such information about construction of the transmission line and new substation in Alberta, Canada or the proposed route of the Canadian transmission line. We recommend that the FEIS identify the agency responsible for construction of the transmission line in Canada, and a contact person with that agency, and provide a discussion of the applicability of Executive Order 12114 *Environmental Effects Abroad of Major Federal Actions* and CEQ's *Guidance on NEPA Analysis for Transboundary Effects* (July 1, 1997) in regard to the proposed MATL transmission line: (<http://www.epa.gov/opa/tsp/ceqa/ceqa.html>). We believe additional information about proper implementation in Canada and any significant environmental effects that may occur as a result should be provided in the FEIS.

The EPA's further discussion and more detailed questions, comments, and concerns regarding the analysis, documentation, or potential environmental impacts of the Northern Alberta Tie Ltd. International Transmission Line DEIS are included in the enclosure with this letter. Based on the procedures EPA uses to evaluate the adequacy of the information and the potential environmental impacts of the proposed action and alternatives in an EIS, the DEIS has been rated as Category EC-2 (Environmental Concern - Insufficient Information). A copy of EPA's rating criteria is attached. The EPA believes additional information is needed to fully assess and mitigate all potential impacts of the management actions.

The EPA appreciates the opportunity to review and comment on the DEIS. If we may provide further explanation of our comments and concerns please contact Mr. Steve Potts of my staff in Helena at (406)457-5022 or in Missoula at 406-329-3313, or via e-mail at steve.potts@epa.gov. Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,



John F. Warden
Director
Missoula Office

Enclosures

- 1. w/ enclosure
- 2. Larry Svoboda/Julia Johnson, EPA-N, Denver
- 3. Robert Ray/Mark Kelley, MDNR, Helena
- 4. Carol M. Bergstrom, DOE, Washington DC

EPA COMMENTS ON THE DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT FOR THE MONTANA ALBERTA TIE (MATL) 230-KILOVOLT TRANSMISSION LINE

Brief Project Overview

The U.S. Dept. of Energy (DOE), Office of Electricity Delivery and Energy Reliability, and Montana Dept. of Environmental Quality prepared this EIS to evaluate impacts of a proposal to construct the Montana Alberta Tie Line (MATL) 230-kilovolt (kV) electric transmission line across the U.S. – Canada border in northwestern Montana. Originally DOE and MDEQ prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) to evaluate this project, which would require granting a Presidential Permit from DOE under the Major Facility Siting Act (MFSIA) certificate of consistency from MDEQ. However, based on comments received on the EA relating to land use and potential effects on farming, it was determined that an EIS should be prepared.

The proposed project is an international 240/230-kV alternating current overhead (overhead) transmission line that would originate at an existing NorthWestern Energy (NWE) 230-kV switch yard near Rainbow Dam at Great Falls, Montana, and extend north to a new substation to be constructed southeast of Lethbridge, Alberta, crossing the U.S.-Canada international border north of Cut Bank, Montana. The total length of transmission line would be 213 miles, with approximately 126 miles constructed inside the U.S. The transmission line would be owned by MATL, a private Canadian corporation owned by Transbridge Power. The proposed line would be part of the Western Interconnection (western grid), and a phase shifting transformer would be installed at the substation near Lethbridge to control the direction of power flows on the line. The MATL application for certification described the following purpose and need:

The Project would be the United States' first power transmission interconnection with Alberta and is expected to facilitate development of additional sources of generation (e.g., windfarms both in northern Montana, and southern Alberta), and improve transmission system reliability in Montana, Alberta, and on a regional basis in both the U.S. and Canada. In addition, the Project would promote increased trade in electrical energy across the international border, and provide a transmission route to balance energy supply/demand situations in an efficient and economic manner.

The line would directly connect Montana and Alberta's regional operating transmission systems, and would allow power to flow directly between these two systems where there is no current connection. The proposed transmission line would have the capacity to carry up to 300 MW north and 300 MW south for a total capacity of up to 600 MW. However, due to constraints on the current system where MATL would tie in at Great Falls, the full capacity of 300 MW to the south would not be realized unless additional upgrades are made.

The proposed new transmission line could support a modest increase of new electricity generation, such as wind, in the study area by connecting them to regional grids and thus

Response 886: Note that the first document published by DEQ and DOE for the MATL project (in March 2007) was a DEQ Draft EIS under the Montana Environmental Policy Act and a DOE Draft EA under NEPA. The second document, published in February 2008, was a supplement to the DEQ Draft EIS and a DOE Draft EIS. See page 1-1 of the EIS.

Response 887: There may be non-firm space available to prospective shippers south of Great Falls without additional upgrades. If the permitted and queued generation plants are not all constructed in the Great Falls area, non-firm space may be available south or west out of Great Falls. If all the planned and permitted generation in the Great Falls area and north of Great Falls was constructed and prospective shippers sought firm transmission rights, existing lines might have to be upgraded or additional lines might be required. Also see the discussion of Line Capacity Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 888: While it is correct that NorthWestern Energy would have an opportunity to obtain regulating reserves through the MATL line, there is no guarantee that it would use the line for this purpose. NorthWestern recently announced plans to construct a gas-fired generation plant near Anaconda to help satisfy its need for regulating reserves.

proximity to statutory baseload. A connection could provide access to markets for new wind generation facilities in the vicinity of the proposed transmission line and improve transmission access to markets linking new energy resources. Additional transmission capacity is needed for the stability of new energy generation enterprises, and added capacity from the proposed transmission line could support a modest increase in new power generation in Montana, including wind energy. The option of Montana to be crossed by the proposed transmission line has a high potential for development of wind resources.

The proposed tie line between Montana and Alberta, and its associated interties in transmission systems whose service areas include Montana and its utilities that provide transmission service within the state. A modified transmission system could provide more options for power trading within Montana, increase energy transactions between Montana and Alberta, and allow for easier balancing of energy supplies and shortages within and between balancing authority areas. Because the lines are able to connect with adjacent electric systems, different generation resources can combine to provide a level of reliability that one jurisdiction could not otherwise afford if that jurisdiction had to cover the same resources independently. The MATL line could also create another opportunity for Montana's largest privately owned transmission and distribution utility, NorthWestern Energy, to obtain regulating reserves for its transmission system control area.

Four alternatives have been evaluated including No Action (Alternative 1). Alternative 2 is MATL's proposed project to construct and operate a 129.9 mile long, 230-kV merchant transmission line between Great Falls, Montana, and Lethbridge, Alberta. The proposed alignment would have an operational ROW width of 43 feet with an additional 20 feet on either side to create a 103-foot safety zone. The line would extend from the expanded 230-kV Great Falls switch yard north of Great Falls to a proposed new substation south of Car Bank, and then north to the Montana-Canada border at the western edge of the Red Creek Oil Field. Monopole structures would be used on 53 miles of the line where it would cross cropland and Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) land diagonally. H-frame structures would be used for the remainder of this alternative. Costs are estimated to be \$40.6 million with mitigation.

Alternative 3 is a modified MATL alignment B proposal for a 121.6 mile transmission line that would be similar to Alternative 2 in width of the ROW, types of access roads, and other features, but the alignment would generally parallel an existing 115-kV transmission line along the entire route from the Great Falls switch yard to a substation near Car Bank and use only H-frame structures. Alternative 3 was developed by MATL in response to a single rating criterion under MESA that gives consideration to utilizing existing utility corridors (Circular MESA 2). This alternative alignment was not intended to address potential land use issues or maintenance issues but is the shortest and potentially the least costly alternative under consideration. Costs are estimated to be \$36.2 million with mitigation.

Alternative 4 was developed by the DEJ to address public concerns regarding line construction with farming activities and close proximity to residences. Alternative 4 would be 119.6 miles long and would be similar to Alternative 2 in that width of the ROW and other features, but would incorporate a higher degree of environmental protection throughout.

Alternative 2 or 3 since it would employ DEQ's draft Environmental Specifications. The Alternative 4 alignment would use portions of the Alternative 2 alignment from north of Clinton to the Montana-Alberta border. In later areas it would maximize the use of range and pasture land, where available. Where cultivated land would be crossed, it would generally be located along field or strip boundaries. Alternative 4 would require the use of monopile structures on all 88.9 miles of cropland and CRP land, not just where cropland and CRP land are crossed on the alignment as in Alternative 2. Although Alternative 4 is analyzed as a whole, the agencies could later revise all parts of this alternative or other realignments. Costs are estimated to be \$44.9 million with mitigation. MATL has stated that if Alternative 4 is selected, the project would be unlikely to be built since it would have difficulties obtaining adequate financing for the project due to additional cost and delays.

Comments

1. Thank you for providing clear maps and aerial photos showing the various transmission line alignment options. (Figures 2.3-1 to 2.3-11). We also appreciate the inclusion of Table 2.3-4 showing MATL's proposed environmental protection measures (page 2-20), and Appendix F showing MDEQ's revised environmental specifications, as well as Table 5-2 providing an alternatives matrix that compares resource impacts of the alternatives (pages 5-26 to 5-44).

The Appendix F environmental specifications protection measures are detailed and comprehensive. We support utilization of these environmental specifications and environmental protection measures to avoid or reduce the intensity and duration of impacts to the environment. We encourage use of the most comprehensive set of environmental protection measures using the most protective measures from both MATL's and MDEQ's lists.

These maps, photos, and tables facilitate improved project understanding, help define issues, and assist in evaluation of alternatives providing a clearer basis of choice among options for the decisionmaker and the public in accordance with the goals of NEPA.

2. The EPA does not object to the proposed construction and operation of the MATL 230-kV transmission line from Great Falls, Montana into Alberta, Canada. Although, we recommend that the many environmental, social and economic tradeoffs may be better balanced and optimized with creation of a new modified preferred alternative that would use the better features from the existing action alternatives. We recommend the DEQ and MDEQ consider construction of a new modified alternative that would better optimize the many environmental, social and economic trade-offs for this project (i.e., trade-offs in impacts to farm operations and residences, soil erosion during construction, water quality and wetland impacts, impacts to birds and wildlife habitat, noise, etc.).

The intent should be to address project purpose and need and the significant issues while minimizing adverse environmental impacts. Additional alternatives evaluation in the FEIS may also better explain to the public the many trade-offs involved in making

Response 889: Comments noted.

Response 890: Note that Appendix F has been revised to include additional environmental protection measures that DEQ could require.

Response 891 to 893: It is the opinion of the agencies that a full spectrum of reasonable alternatives was considered, including Alternative 4, which attempted to accommodate both the transmission line and existing land uses. Also see the response to comment 875.

Response 894: Alternatives 2, 3, and 4 together with local routing options bracket the range of possible agency actions. Portions of these alternatives may be combined in the agencies’ decisions. Since the publication of the Draft EIS, MATL has revised its application to include additional provisions to reduce some potential impacts. Also, MATL and DEQ worked with local land owners to modify some local routing options to reduce potential adverse effects on farming activities. The Final EIS presents the impacts of these revisions to the proposal and the modified local routing options.

Response 895: See the response to comment 876. Alternative 3 crosses more land diagonally than any other alternative alignment, so it would have the greatest potential for interference with farming activities. Also, because of its location adjacent to NorthWestern’s Great Falls to Cut Bank line, it could place two sets of structures near each other, which would further complicate farming operations.

transmission line decisions. This may also lead to improved public acceptance of decisions. In general desirable features we consider worthy of including in a new modified preferred alternative include:

- minimize soil disturbance and soil erosion by selecting alignments on less erodible soils and that reduce the extent of ground disturbance as much as possible;
- use monopoles rather than H-frame structures wherever possible to reduce soil disturbance and impacts to farm operations;
- incorporate appropriate construction techniques and erosion control methods and BMPs, as well as weed prevention and control measures during construction;
- minimize new access roads and new road construction, and locate any new roads that may be needed where they have minimal impacts, away from rivers, streams and wetlands;
- minimize stream and lake crossings, and disturbances of wetlands and riparian areas;
- minimize disturbances to sensitive wildlife habitat, and use appropriate mitigation measures to reduce wildlife impacts, particularly transmission line mortality to birds;
- minimize adverse impacts to farm operations and facilities;
- minimize fragmentation of open landscapes from a scenic standpoint, and use topographical features to help screen the transmission poles as much as possible;
- consider costs of construction and operation.

We note of course that the MDEQ and DOE will need to evaluate and analyze the impacts of any new modified alternative, and display those impacts in the FEIS.

We also want to state that Alternative 3 appears to have the shortest transmission line alignment (121.6 miles) with the fewest stream and lake crossings (12), fewest acres of wetlands within the 500 foot alignment (62.3 acres), and least amount of construction ground disturbance (206 acres); while Alternative 4 has the longest transmission line (139.6 miles) with greatest number of stream and lake crossings (19), greatest potential wetland impact (76.4 acres), and greatest ground disturbance (240 acres), although Alternative 4 would reduce impacts to farm operations. Alternative 2 would be 129.9 miles long with 14 stream and lake crossings (Table 3.5-1, page 3-63), and 76.4 acres of potential wetland impacts, and 214 acres of ground disturbance (page 3-90). It appears to us that Alternative 3 would have fewer environmental impacts than the other action alternatives.

Response 896 and 897: Comments noted.

Responses 898 to 901: Only minimum development of new access roads is anticipated for any of the alternative alignments. Few graded surface access roads are planned or anticipated, and no new culverts, bridges, or other constructed stream crossings are expected to be needed. The majority of the right-of-way for the alternative transmission line alignments can be easily accessed from public roads, existing two track roads, and farm fields allowing truck and equipment travel. The study area is relatively flat, and most construction equipment for a line of this size can move cross country on side slopes of up to about 5 percent.

MFSA rules define a road as “... a way or course that is constructed or formed by substantial recontouring of land, clearing, or other action designed to be permanent or intended to permit passage by most four-wheeled vehicles for a significant period of time.” MATL’s application identifies several areas where road construction could be necessary. Specifically, the application identifies sites north and south of the proposed transmission line’s crossings of the Teton and Marias rivers as places where grading and recontouring might be required to provide access to construct the reinforced structures needed to span these valleys. (All alternative alignments would cross both of these rivers.) Prior to construction these areas would be reviewed in the field to assure that there would be no unnecessary disturbance. There are other areas where there would be cross country travel with no road blading.

Sites of structures and roads would be chosen to avoid surface streams and 100-year floodplains. Areas judged to have significant constraints on effective reclamation would also be avoided to the extent possible.

Comment 896 We recognize that there are many considerations and trade-offs involved in evaluating the transmission line alternatives, but we want to emphasize our interest in seeing the maximization of environmental impacts is considered to be an important criterion in the decision making process. We encourage efforts to support reductions in soil, water, sediment, fisheries and wildlife impacts of the alternative alignments when evaluating the study project trade-offs.

Comment 897 We also believe that the FEIS and Record of Decision (ROD) should clearly explain the process and underlying rationale for the selection of the Preferred Alternative, and the environmentally preferred alternative should be identified in the ROD (40 CFR 1515.2(b)).

3 **Comment 898** We are pleased that the DEIS states that MATL anticipates only minimum development of new access roads to construct, operate, and maintain the proposed transmission line (page 2-13). Construction of access roads is an important aspect of the project, since road construction and road operation and maintenance can result in adverse effects to water quality and other resources. Sediment from roads, particularly during road construction and reconstruction, and from poorly maintained roads with inadequate road drainage, is often a major cause of adverse water quality impacts, particularly where roads are near streams and there are many stream crossings.

Comment 899 It will be important for MATL, MDEQ and DOE to minimize new road construction, as well as to properly plan and design access roads, and to properly maintain roads and utilize adequate sediment and erosion control BMPs during road construction to minimize erosion and reduce sediment production and transport from roads.

Comment 900 Table 2.3-2 (page 2-13) estimates 3, 5, and 7 miles of new access road construction with Alternatives 2, 3 and 4, respectively. We did not see clear disclosure of the number of the number of road stream crossings associated with the proposed new access roads. The number of new road stream crossings for new access roads should be disclosed for each alternative in the FEIS. We also suggest that MATL, DOE and MDEQ review and consider our general recommendations regarding road construction in regard to new access roads, which are:

- * minimize road construction and reduce road density as much as possible to reduce potential adverse effects to waterbody;
- * locate roads away from streams and riparian areas as much as possible;
- * locate roads away from steep slopes or erodible soils;
- * minimize the number of road stream crossings;

** maintain upland habitats:*

- provide for adequate road drainage and control of surface erosion with measures such as adequate numbers of waterbars, maintaining crowns on roads, adequate numbers of rolling dips and ditch relief culverts to promote drainage off roads avoid drainage or along roads and avoid interception and causing sediment to stream;
- consider road effects on stream structure and seasonal and fish spawning habitat;
- allow for adequate large woody debris recruitment to streams and riparian buffers near streams;
- properly size culverts to handle flood events, pass bedload and woody debris, and reduce potential for washout;
- replace undersized culverts and adjust culverts which are not properly aligned or which present fish passage problems and/or serve as barriers to fish migration;
- use bridges or open bottom culverts that simulate stream grade and substrate and that provide adequate capacity for flood flows, bedload and woody debris where needed to minimize adverse fisheries effects of road stream crossings.

We also encourage conduct of inspections and evaluations to identify conditions on roads that may cause or contribute to sediment delivery and stream impairment, and to correct road conditions impacting streams. It is important that road maintenance (e.g., grading) be focused on reducing total surface erosion and sediment delivery from roads to area streams. Grading (grading) of unpaved roads in a manner that contributes to road erosion and sediment transport to streams and wetlands should be avoided. Practices of expediently broadcasting graded material over the shoulder and widening shoulders and snow plowing can have adverse effects upon streams, wetlands, and riparian areas that are adjacent to roads. Road use during spring breakup conditions should also be avoided to limit runoff created road cuts during late winter thaws that increase road erosion (i.e., cuts channel road runoff along roads).

We also recommend that MATL and its road contractors and the agencies review road design and maintenance training videos available from the Forest Service San Diego Technology and Development Center for use by road contractors (e.g., "Forest Roads and the Environment" - an overview of how maintenance can affect watershed condition and fish habitat; "Restoring the Traveled Way" - how road conditions create problems and how to identify effective treatments; "Roading Beyond the Traveled Way" - explains considerations of roads vs. natural landscape functions and how to design maintenance to minimize road impacts; "Smoothing and Reshaping the Traveled Way" - step by step process for smoothing and reshaping a road while maintaining crowns and other road slopes; and "Maintaining the Ditch and Surface Cross Drains" - instructions for constructing and maintaining ditches, culverts and surface cross drains).

Additionally, DEQ's draft environmental specifications (Appendix F) would require (if adopted) that roads be designed to prevent channeling of runoff. Areas of new road construction would be reviewed and inspected in the field prior to construction to assure that there would be no unnecessary disturbance. State inspections would also take place during construction of new roads. Any construction on the bed and banks of a perennial stream would require state inspection.

Following construction, MATL would retain some key access roads to maintain access to the right-of-way for routine operations and maintenance activities, but most access roads would be restored to pre-existing conditions. Reclamation of temporary roads built for use during project construction would be done in coordination with landowners and appropriate agencies. Long-term road maintenance would be minimal.

Response 902: MATL was provided a copy of your letter so that company personnel might see your suggestions.

Response 903: Comment noted.

Response 904: Because sites of structures and roads would be chosen to avoid surface streams and because Best Management Practices would be used to minimize construction site erosion and sedimentation, impacts to surface streams are expected to be negligible. Erosion Control Plans and Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plans would be developed and implemented, as recommended. The DEQ Watershed Protection staff and TMDL staff are aware of the proposed project. Additional measures aimed at reducing sediment from other sources are voluntary actions MATL may undertake if these measures cannot be required in another water quality permit. At this time it appears that the line could be constructed without any specific permits. Also see Legal and Regulatory Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

High-voltage field (www.fda.gov/cfsr/ohrt/ohrt040907.html; revised Oreg. Mapping, at 904-599-1287 x 200).

As you know, there can be public health concerns regarding electric fields created by a high-voltage transmission line. Electric electromagnetic fields (EMF) field effects can include induced currents, steady-state current shocks, spark discharge shocks, and in some cases field perception and nonbiological responses. We appreciate the analysis and discussion regarding potential health and environmental effects associated with electromagnetic fields induced by the transmission line (Section 1.4). We are pleased that the DEQ analysis predicts that the level of electromagnetic fields will be below the standard and within the biologically based recommendations (page 3-50).

Thank you for providing Figure 1.5-1 showing waterbodies intersecting the study area (page 3-58), and Figure 1.5-2 (page 3-60) showing water quality impaired streams that may be crossed by the transmission line (i.e., Old Man's Creek – an intermittent stream; Powder Creek, Old Black Creek, Meigs River, Teton River, Lake Creek, the Missouri River, and Brown Lake). A Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) and Water Quality Plan will need to be prepared for all impaired streams listed by the State of Montana under Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act to promote water quality restoration. It will be important that the proposed MATL transmission line project be consistent with the MDEQ's preparation of TMDLs and Water Quality Plans for impaired waters.

Consistency with a TMDL, that has not yet been completed means that any additional degradation of the impaired water (i.e., pollutant increase) should be avoided and if pollutants may be generated that would exceed required limits during project activities (e.g., activities), mitigation or restoration activities should also be included in the project to reduce pollutant sources to offset or compensate for pollutants generated during project activities. Requiring uncertainties and desiring a margin of safety, such compensation should more than offset pollutants generated, resulting in overall reductions in pollutants. Watershed (mitigation) activities that compensate for pollutant production during management activities in watersheds of 303(d) listed streams should be included in each project, and restoration activities should be implemented within a reasonable period of time in relation to pollutant producing activities (e.g., within 3 years).

The aforementioned MATL environmental protection measures and MDEQ environmental specifications, including preparation of an Erosion Control Plan (page 2-20) and Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP, page 2-22) appear to address the need to use adequate BMPs and erosion and sediment control measures during and following construction. The State criteria for construction storm water permitting activities in Basin Headquarters of the Montana DEQ at 406-444-5310. These mitigation activities should reduce or minimize erosion and sediment production and transport during construction, however, even with use of BMPs it is likely that some additional pollutant (sediment) delivery to 303(d) listed streams may still occur.

Response 905 to 913: The agencies agree that the protection, improvement, and restoration of riparian areas and wetlands are high priorities.

MATL has stated that its goal is to avoid impacts to wetlands by avoiding placement of any structure within a jurisdictional wetland. MATL would use construction buffers to eliminate any and all, including inadvertent, impacts to wetlands or other waters of the United States. It is currently expected that the project could be completed without any direct disturbances to streams and wetlands. Thus, no compensatory mitigation would be needed. If, however, any disturbance were found to be unavoidable, the applicant would be required to comply with all applicable regulatory requirements. If, during construction, a site specific wetland impact issue arises, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers would be contacted to assure compliance with Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. Additional mitigation measures to help minimize the potential unavoidable construction-related impacts to wetlands would then be required for MATL and their construction contractors under the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Nationwide #12 Permit (Utilities Line Activities).

If work in streams or wetlands is necessary, the measures listed in sections 2.11.5, 2.11.6, and 2.11.9 of the revised draft Environmental Specifications in Appendix F would become conditions to the Certificate of Compliance if it is approved. In addition, if DOE grants the Presidential permit, it may place any conditions in the permit that it deems necessary and appropriate to protect the public interest. DOE has typically placed conditions in Presidential permits that require the permittee to employ the mitigation measures identified in the NEPA document and that formed the basis of any impact analysis.

We believe the FEIS should identify and discuss watershed recreational activities to control sediment erosion sources to avoid or provide compensation for the sediment problems and transport associated with maintenance, fire and road construction activities for 700-ft board streams (e.g., stabilize existing eroding banks), improve/restore BMPs on additional existing roads perhaps in cooperation with local governments to reduce erosion and sediment issues). Activities to control and reduce existing sediment sources are needed to provide full assurance that no further degradation occurs to 300-ft board streams during transmission line and road construction, since a small amount of sediment transport is still likely to occur even with use of BMPs during transmission line and road construction. Unless existing sediment sources are reduced, 300-ft board streams will be further degraded by transmission line and road construction.

We also encourage the DOE and MDEQ Major Facility Site Act staff to contact MDEQ's TMDL Program staff to assure that the MDEQ Watershed Protection and TMDL staff consider the proposed project to be consistent with MDEQ's development TMDLs and Water Quality Plans for the applicable TMDL Planning Areas (contact Robert Ray of the MDEQ in Helena at 444-3119)

8 EPA considers the protection, improvement, and restoration of riparian areas and wetlands to be a high priority. Wetlands and riparian areas increase landscape and species diversity, support many species of western wildlife, and are critical to the protection of water quality and downstream beneficial water uses. Potential impacts on riparian areas and wetlands include: water quality, habitat for aquatic and terrestrial life, flood storage, ground water recharge and discharge, sources of primary production, and recreation and aesthetics.

Executive Order 11990 requires that Federal Agencies "take action to minimize the degradation, loss or degradation of wetlands, and to preserve and enhance the natural and beneficial values of wetlands in carrying out the agency's responsibilities..." and agencies are further directed to "avoid undermining or providing assistance for new construction located in wetlands unless the head of the agency finds (1) that there is no practicable alternative to such construction, and (2) that the proposed action includes all practicable measures to minimize harm to wetlands which may result from such act...". In addition national wetlands policy has established an interim goal of **No Overall Net Loss of the Nation's remaining wetlands**, and a long-term goal of increasing quantity and quality of the Nation's wetlands resource base.

We are pleased that impacts to wetlands, riparian areas and floodplains are discussed (Section 3.6), and that whenever possible placement of new structures constructed and associated construction activities would occur outside wetland areas (pages 2-23, 3-8). Although we would rather see a strict prohibition on placing new structures and access roads in wetland areas, rather than just doing this "wherever possible." We would like to see wetland and riparian areas fully opened to avoid any direct impacts. We also support the MDEQ environmental specification to delineate wetlands along the 800-ft

Under MFSA rules applicants are required to identify wetlands greater than 20 acres in size (Circular MFSA-2, Section 3.4(1)(u)). This size was selected to recognize that smaller wetlands can usually be spanned. Under MFSA no other local permits are required after a certificate has been issued. Therefore, DEQ's Environmental Specifications would require on-site inspections of perennial stream crossings prior to the start of construction. If no in-stream activities would be required, then no 310 permit is necessary.

The numerical values in the EIS for areas of wetlands crossed include all wetlands within a 500-ft-wide corridor. These numbers overstate the potential impact because they include areas that would not be included in the narrower 105-foot right-of-way in which the project would be built. Although Alternative 4 would cross the largest area of wetlands, it would cross the least area of wetlands associated with lakes.

The very few sites with riparian vegetation in the study area are located low in drainages adjacent to wetlands and streams. Transmission line structures are usually located at high points or in uplands making it possible to span wetlands and riparian areas. If a wetland could not be spanned by the transmission line, compensation or other mitigation would be required. It is, however, unlikely that any wetlands or riparian areas could not be spanned, except for one angle structure in Black Horse Lake under Alternative 2.

The draft Environmental Specifications (Appendix F) have been revised; they would (if adopted), require delineation of wetlands within 250 feet of the approved location, prohibit access through wetlands, and require that all wetlands be spanned. Additionally, the agencies are considering requiring a 50-foot buffer zone around wetlands within

which no disturbance would be allowed, and the draft Environmental Specifications have been revised to include this possible requirement.

Responses 914 to 922: Within the right-of-way MATL would be responsible for controlling weeds due to the company's activities. The provisions of MATL's proposed integrated weed control program, which is mentioned in the comment, would be incorporated into the DEQ certificate. MATL's proposed weed control plan includes the suggested practice of requiring washing of vehicles and construction equipment before entering the right-of-way area to reduce the spread of noxious weeds.

The agencies have considered the recommendation for use of gates on access roads. However, much of the land that would be traversed by the proposed line is flat and unfenced. Adding a gate across a road where there is no fence would have little mitigation value. Where fences exist, MATL would be required to consult with the landowner and where requested by the landowner, all fences crossed by permanent access roads would be provided with a gate (Appendix F, Section 2.5.7). Where gates are not requested, the existing fence would be replaced to prevent unauthorized access (Appendix F, Section 2.5.4).

Spraying of target weed species would be done in coordination with the BLM, state weed coordinator, and county weed boards and groups (see Appendix C – MATL Noxious Weed Control Plan, and Appendix F – Revised draft DEQ Environmental Specifications). As noted in the comment, MATL would be required to use Montana licensed applicators. All use of herbicides, pesticides, or other toxicants would be required to be done in accordance with Federal label instructions and restrictions. Adherence to label requirements against using certain herbicides near surface waters should make it unnecessary to require a 50-foot buffer around streams and wetlands within which no spraying would be allowed.

The recommendations provided in the comments regarding picloram (Tordon), including application rate, number of applications per year, and restrictions on application around roadside drainage areas leading to intermittent and perennial streams are noted.

Also see Vegetation, Wetland and Weed Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

control efforts (page 3-91).

Comment 10: We note that while the MDEQ measures generally appear to be more detailed and comprehensive than the MATL measures (Table 2.3-8), the MATL measures already we need to wash vehicles and construction equipment before entering the streambank from ROW to reduce spread of weed seeds. We support this measure and any other in the MDEQ environmental specifications. We recommend careful review of the MATL measures in comparison to the MDEQ measure to ensure that the most comprehensive and effective set of environmental protection measures are used.

Comment 11: Weed prevention is the most cost-effective way to manage and control weeds by avoiding new infestations and spread of weeds, and thus, avoiding the need for subsequent weed treatments (e.g., weed prevention practices such as minimizing ground disturbance, revegetating disturbed areas, use of weed free seed, cleaning vehicles and equipment, and other practices that prevent introduction and spread of weeds). Early recognition and control of new infestations avoids wider future use of herbicides and other control methods. We also support use of gates or access roads to discourage ATV/recreational vehicle travel on these roads, since such motorized uses disturb soil, create weed seedbeds, and disperse weed seeds.

Comment 12: We appreciate the integration in the MDEQ environmental specifications of the need to use certified herbicide applicators, and to use herbicides in accordance with label specifications, and to be cautious in spraying near streams and wetlands with use of no-spray buffer zones along streams and wetlands. Herbicide drift into streams and wetlands could adversely affect aquatic life and wetland functions such as food chain support and habitat for wetland species.

We recommend use of 30 foot no-spray buffer zones adjacent to streams and wetlands, and mechanical weed removal or hand-pulling of weeds adjacent to aquatic areas. Hand-pulling can be effective for weeds that do not exist in extensive root systems near surface waters. It may be helpful to add a list of those weed species which can be effectively hand-pulled (i.e., those without large tap roots and spreading rhizomatous root systems). The herbicide application technique of hand or manual wipe-on (especially applicable for certain systemic herbicides such as glyphosate) is an option to control individual weed plants up to the existing water level adjacent to streams or sensitive aquatic sites.

Herbicides should be applied at the lowest rate effective to meeting weed control objectives and according to guidelines for protecting public health and the environment. All efforts should be made to avoid movement or transport of herbicides into surface waters that could adversely affect public health, fisheries or other water uses. The Montana Water Quality Standards include a general narrative standard requiring surface waters to be free from substances that create concentrations which are toxic or harmful to aquatic life.

Comment 13: It is important that the water contamination concerns of herbicide usage be fully evaluated and mitigated. All efforts should be made to avoid movement or transport of herbicides into surface waters that could adversely affect fisheries or other water uses. Herbicides, pesticides, and other toxicants and chemicals must be used in a safe manner in accordance with Federal label instructions and restrictions that allow protection and maintenance of water quality standards and ecological integrity, and avoid public health and safety problems.

Comment 14: Herbicide applicators should be advised of the potential for runoff of herbicides in aquatic environments near the streams. The applicators should take precautions during spraying (e.g., applying herbicide only after careful review of weather reports to ensure minimal likelihood of rainfall within 24 hours of spraying; special precautions adjacent to the stream to reduce runoff potential; etc.). It should be unequivocally stated that no herbicide spraying will occur in streams and wetlands or other aquatic areas (reefs, springs, etc.). Streams and wetlands in any area to be sprayed be identified and flagged on the ground to assure that herbicide applicators are aware of the location of wetlands, and thus, can avoid spraying in or near wetlands.

Comment 15: We are particularly concerned about potential use of more toxic and persistent herbicides such as picloram (Tordon), since they have higher potential for more serious stream and/or groundwater contamination. We recommend that roadside drainage areas leading to intermittent and perennial streams be flagged as no-spray zones and not sprayed with picloram based herbicides. We also recommend that picloram not be used at rates greater than 0.25 lbs/acre, and suggest that MATL and the agencies consider applications of persistent herbicides such as picloram only once per year to reduce potential for accumulation in soil. Potential for persistent herbicides to accumulate in soil is harmful amounts are reduced if sites are treated only once per year (twice being the limit). Trade-offs between effective weed control and effects on soil productivity and leaching concerns may need to be considered. A second treatment application if needed should only occur after 30 days (or according to label directions).

Comment 16: For your information, Dow AgroSciences, the manufacturer of Tordon 22K, has recently developed supplemental labeling for Tordon 22K for areas west of the Mississippi River. They have directions for walk or carpet roller applications. Tordon 22K herbicide can be applied using walk or carpet roller equipment where drift poses a hazard to susceptible crops, surface waters, and other sensitive areas. One part Tordon 22K is mixed with 2 parts water to prepare a 13% solution. The walk method of application is more labor intensive but very effective at targeting particular noxious weeds adjacent to surface waters, wetlands, or perennial plants.

Comment 17: Many picloram products, including Tordon 22K, are Restricted Use Pesticides (RUPs) requiring pesticide applicator certification to purchase and apply. It is important that herbicide applicators be certified throughout the duration of the project. If commercial applicators will be contracted for RUP applications, we recommend checking to make sure their RUP certification is current. Please contact Montana Dept. of

Response 923: See Avian and Wildlife Issues in the Consolidated Responses section. A map of flyways has been added to Section 4.9, but fine scale flyway maps for the area traversed by the proposed transmission line are not available.

Response 924: See Avian and Wildlife Issues in the Consolidated Responses section for additional discussion of measures to prevent avian collisions.

Response 925: Comment noted

*Agreement at (800) 844-3400 for more information. Also, please note that organophosphorus pesticides are not used as active ingredients in this product.

For your information, the website for EPA information regarding pesticides and herbicides is <http://www.epa.gov/pesticides/>. The National Pesticide Telecommunication Network (NPTN) website is <http://npn.epa.gov/npn2000.asp>, which operates under a cooperative agreement with EPA and Oregon State University and has a wealth of information on toxicity, mobility, and environmental fate on pesticides which may be helpful (phone number 800-833-7378).

8

As you know, transmission lines can result in avian mortality particularly due to bird collisions with the transmission line. We are pleased that the DEIS states that areas with a higher likelihood of collisions, known flyways, would be avoided (Page 3-107). It would be of interest to identify in the FEIS the known avian flyways that will be avoided. We recommend that the FEIS include maps that identify locations of important migration corridors of birds and along with identified potential collision hazard areas. This will provide the public and the decision maker with a clear understanding of the locations where effects to avian species are likely to be the greatest, and assist in selecting alignments that avoid flyways, and help focus the identification and evaluation of mitigation measures needed to eliminate or reduce avian effects.

9

We are pleased that MATL would apply: "Suggested Practices for Avian Protection on Power Lines: The State of the Art in 2006" developed by the EEL, APLIC and the California Energy Commission (2006), during design and construction of overhead structures and the subsequent additions; and that avian collisions would be reduced to approved line marking devices would be installed, at intervals suggested by manufacturers' recommendations, on overhead ground wires within all canyon, river and wetland crossings, such as crossings of the Maricopa River, the Dry Fork Maricopa River, Teton River, east of the Benton Lake NWR boundary and within a 1/2 mile of the village boundary. Line marking devices would also be placed within a 1/4 mile buffer on either side of streams, rivers, or wetlands.

In addition, the DEIS states that annual mortality surveys would be conducted to ensure that line marking devices are functioning properly. We recommend that the field surveys be conducted during the spring and fall migratory periods and the spring nesting period to locate birds which have been electrocuted or have struck transmission lines to aid in the priority of identifying and modifying problem areas.

10

The DEIS indicates that the proposed action would result in an increase in activities that could adversely affect air quality during construction (short term), and during operation and maintenance of the transmission line (long term) (page 3-136). The DEIS does not report any air quality non-attainment areas along the alternative alignments, and states that Federal/State air quality Class I areas located within 100 miles of the project area include Scappoose Wetlands (30 miles west), Bob Marshall Wetlands (30 miles west), Colman National Park (40 miles west), and Clatsop of the Multnomah Wetlands (100

mitigating emissions. The project area has meteorological conditions that provide for good dispersion of air pollutants.

Air quality impacts would result from use of equipment and vehicle idling during construction and during operation and maintenance (i.e., pollution emissions of carbon monoxide, lead, carbon dioxide, sulfur dioxide, PM-2.5, nitrogen oxides, volatile organic hydrocarbons, aldehydes, and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons), and erosion of fugitive dust and particulates during construction.

We are pleased that fugitive dust could be controlled through dust control measures such as water sprays, limiting the speed of construction equipment, and re-vegetating the disturbed areas at the end of the construction period, and that gaseous emissions would be limited through construction management and scheduling. In addition we recommend limiting diesel emissions by reduced idling and modern diesel engines and/or use of Ultra Low Sulfur Diesel in the construction equipment, and including rock crushing and other material production and processing that may be needed during construction of access roads to the extent to minimize fugitive dust.

iii. Executive Order 12898, "Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations," requires federal agencies to make environmental justice part of their missions by identifying and addressing, as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human health and environmental effects of its programs, policies, and activities on minority populations (e.g. Native American) and low-income populations. We are pleased that the DEIS includes evaluation of environmental justice considerations for the proposed transmission line (page 3-176), concludes that no disproportionately high and adverse impacts would be expected for minority or low income populations (page 3-181).

ii. The DEIS states that wind farms have purchased all the power shipping capacity of the proposed transmission line (Table 4.3-1, page 4-2), but that because capacity rights are a commodity that may be resold or traded, the original wind farm purchasers may not be the power suppliers that use the line. Accordingly, the DOE does not consider wind farms that may be served by the proposed transmission line to be "connected actions" as defined in 40 CFR 1508.25(a) (page 4-2). The DOE believes the proposed MATL line has an existence and utility independent from the wind farms, and impacts from potential wind farms are evaluated as cumulative impacts in accordance with 40 CFR 1508.7.

Table 4.1-2 (page 4-6) shows the potential reasonably foreseeable future power generation projects in the vicinity of the MATL line. These include several wind farms, as well as the 230 MW Highwood Coal Fired Generating Station, and the 275 MW Great Falls Energy Partners Gas Fired Power Plant. We have concerns regarding the cumulative effects of the reasonably foreseeable future actions, particularly the cumulative effects of air pollutant emissions of new power plants and the effects of many new wind farms on avian species.

Response 926: The agencies will consider the recommendation regarding the use of ultra-low sulfur diesel and reduced vehicle idling time. Rock crushing operations would have to comply with Montana air quality regulations.

Response 927: Comment noted.

Response 928 to 930: Cumulative impacts of reasonably foreseeable future actions, including those named in the comment are presented in sections 4.1 to 4.16. Your concerns about cumulative impacts of future power plant and wind farm development are noted. Note that future privately funded wind generation projects located on private land would not be subject to site-specific NEPA review. Also see Avian and Wildlife Issues in the Consolidated Responses section.

Response 931: See response to comment 884.

Comment 884 It will be necessary that additional line-specific NEPA analysis occur to evaluate and mitigate adverse effects for other future activity to the maximum extent possible. As noted above, we recommend that the FEIS include maps that identify locations of important riparian corridors of birds and along with identified potential critical habitat areas. Also, this information may also assist in locating new wind farms away from avian flyways.

12 **Comment 884** The DEIS states that the proposed transmission line would extend north in Alberta, Canada to a new substation to be constructed northeast of Lethbridge, Alberta (page 3-11). The proposed line would be part of the Western Interconnection, and a phase shifting transformer would be installed at the substation near Lethbridge to control the direction of power flows on the line. The DEIS does not provide such information about the 77 construction of the transmission line and new substation in Alberta, Canada or the proposed 77 mile north of the Canadian transmission line.

We recommend that the FEIS identify the agency responsible for construction of the transmission line in Canada, and a contact person with that agency, and provide a discussion of the applicability of Executive Order 12114 *Environmental Effects Abroad of Major Federal Actions* and CEQ's *Guidance on NEPA Analysis for Transboundary Effects, July 1, 1997* in regard to the proposed MATL transmission line (<http://www.epa.gov/epa/ceq/12114guidance.html>). We recommend that additional information about project implementation in Canada and any significant environmental effects that may occur as a result should be provided in the FEIS.

PART 3. LIST OF COMMENTERS

C = Conrad Public Hearing; CB = Cut Bank Public Hearing; GF = Great Falls Public Hearing

| Log Number | Name | Last Name | Response Number |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| C | Russ Aiken | Aiken | 507 |
| 50 | Alan Anderson | Anderson | 539 |
| 181 | Arlene & Ray Anderson | Anderson | 667, 668, 669, 670, 671, |
| 49 | Clinton Anderson | Anderson | 538 |
| 5 | Jim Anderson | Anderson | 28, 605 |
| 134 | Mary Anderson | Anderson | 614 |
| C | Ray Anderson | Anderson | 490 |
| 202 | Rep. Duane Ankney | Ankney | 815 |
| 202 | Sen. Keith Bales | Bales | 818 |
| 37 | Doug Banka | Banka | 526, 579, 580, 581, 582 |
| 118 | Brian Banons | Banons | 568, 569 |
| 152 | Aidan Banows | Banows | 568, 569 |
| 154 | Brian Banows | Banows | 568, 569 |
| 151 | Conagher Banows | Banows | 568, 569 |
| 148 | Dee Banows | Banows | 568, 569 |
| 150 | Shad Banows | Banows | 568, 569 |
| CB | Johnel H Barcus | Barcus | 325, 326, 327, 533, |
| 47 | Dawn Barrett | Barrett | 536 |
| 10 | David Baumann | Bauman | 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, |
| 202 | Rep. Bill Beck | Beck | 816 |
| 204 | Fred And Pat Becker | Becker | 820, 822 |
| GF | Peggy Beltrone | Beltrone | 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, |
| 194 | Dan Bennett | Bennett | 718, 719, 720 |
| C | Chris Berg | Berg | 419, 420, 421, 422, 423, |
| 187 | Vernon Berger | Berger | 694, 695 |
| 2 | MT FWP (Gary Bertellotti) | Bertellotti | 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, |
| CB | Dave Brownell Letter From Rick, Jeff, Valerie Billman | Billman | 340 |
| CB | Dave Brownell Read Letter From Rick Billman | Billman | 339 |
| 70 | Jeff Billman | Billman | 548 |
| 68 | Rick Billman (Billman's Inc) | Billman | 547, 548 |

| Log Number | Name | Last Name | Response Number |
|-------------------|-----------------------------------------------|------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 67 | Rick Billman, Jeff Billman, Valerie Vermulm | Billman | 547 254, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267, 268, 372, 373, 374, 375, 376, 377, 378, 379, 380, 381, 382, 383, 384, 382, 383, 384, 385, 500, 501, 502, 503, 504, 505, 506, 566, |
| GF | Jerry Black | Black | 811 |
| 202 | Sen. Jerry Black | Black | 811 |
| 107 | Ronald S. Block | Block | 568, 569 |
| 204 | Howard Bouma | Bouma | 820 |
| 157 | Bill Brandon | Brandon | 568, 569 |
| 123 | Deb Brandon | Brandon | 610, 611 |
| 123 | Deb Brandon | Brandon | 612 |
| 180 | Deb Brandon | Brandon | 665 |
| C | Rich Branning | Branning | 485, 486, 487 |
| GF | Everett Breeding | Breeding | 303, 820 |
| 204 | Sandra Broesder | Breosder | 822 |
| 204 | Donald Broesder | Broesder | 821 |
| 204 | Kaye Broesder | Broesder | 822 |
| 204 | Phil Broesder | Broesder | 821 224, 411, 411, 412, 412, 413, 413, 414, 414, 415, 415, 416, 416, 417, 417, 566, 391, 392, 393, |
| GF | Sandra Broesder | Broesder | 415, 416, 416, 417, 417, 566, 391, 392, 393, |
| 186 | Shane Broesder | Broesder | 691, 692, 693 |
| 3 | Glacier Electric (Jasen Bronec) | Bronec | 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, |
| 204 | Angela D. Brown | Brown | 820 |
| 119 | Dede Brown | Brown | 600, 601 |
| 202 | Sen. Roy Brown | Brown | 812 |
| CB | Dave Brownell | Brownell | 328, 329, 330, 331, 332, 341, 342, |
| 51 | Stephanie Browning | Browning | 540 |
| 202 | Sen. John Bruggeman | Bruggeman | 813 |
| GF | Vanessa Buckland - Letter Read By Carol Jones | Buckland | 301, 302 |
| 26 | Vanessa Bucklin | Bucklin | 102, 528 |
| 24 | USFWS (Kathleen A Burchett) | Burchett | 532 |
| 180 | Alice Burchser | Burchser | 666 |
| 88 | Linda Burley | Burley | 576, 577 |
| 86 | Vincent Burley | Burley | 568, 569 |

| Log Number | Name | Last Name | Response Number |
|-------------------|--------------------------------------------|------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 79 | Jamey Byrnes | Byrnes | 566, 577 |
| 202 | Rep. Tim Callahan | Callahan | 810 |
| 174 | Robert Carney | Carney | 648, 649, 649, 650, 651, 652, 653, 654, 655, 656, 657, |
| 12 | Lorette Carter | Carter | 53, 54, 55, 56, 141, 142, 143, 144, 68, 69, 70, 71, |
| CB | Becky Cavett | Cavett | 362 |
| GF | Joe Christians | Christians | 133, 134, 135, 136, 318, 319, 320, 321, 322, 323, 324, |
| 108 | Ray Christians | Christians | 568, 569 |
| 109 | Shawn Christians | Christians | 568, 569 |
| 6 | Lew & Christy Clark | Clark | 29 |
| 202 | Rep. Edith Clark | Clark | 811 |
| 144 | Dave Colavito | Colavito | 631, 632, 633 |
| 180 | Krystina Z. Cole | Cole | |
| CB | Jackie Coolidge | Coolidge | 350, 351, 352, 353, 354, 355, 568, 568, 569, 569, |
| C | Ted Crawford | Crawford | 410 |
| 180 | Mark A. Cron | Cron | 666 |
| 7 | Jim Cummings | Cummings | 30 |
| 115 | Kathy Cummings (Kmc Inc) | Cummings | 594 |
| 33 | Cheryl Curry | Curry | 137, 138, 139, 140, 462, 462, 463, 463, 464, 464, 465, 466, |
| 204 | Cheryl Curry | Curry | 822 |
| 202 | Sen. Aubyn Curtis | Curtis | 814 |
| 190 | Steve Dahlman | Dahlman | 707, 708, 709, 710, 711, 712, 713, 714, |
| 78 | John Dallum | Dallum | 473, 562, 563, 564, 565, 282, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287, 288, 289, 290, 291, |
| GF | Steve Dalton | Dalton | 292, |
| 149 | Christy Dennison | Dennison | 568, 569 |
| 200 | Terri Denzer, Allen Denzer, Darlene Denzer | Denzer | 776, 777, 778, 779, 780, 781, |
| 133 | Michael Desrosier | Desrosier | 613, 618 |
| 139 | Joe Deftaffany | Deftaffany | 619, 620 |
| 92 | USGS (James Devine) | Devine | 588 |
| 202 | Rep. Sue Dickenson | Dickenson | 812 |

| Log Number | Name | Last Name | Response Number |
|------------|--------------------------|------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | | | 436, 436, 437, 437, 438, 439, 440, 441, 441, 442, 442, 443, 443, 444, 445, 446, 446, 447, 447, 448, 449, 450, 451, 452, 453, 454, 455, 550, 454, 455, 550, 551, 552, 553, 554, 555, 556, 557, 558, 559, |
| C | Shawn Dolan | Dolan | |
| C | Brett Doney | Doney | 402, 403, 404, 405, 406, 406, 407, 408, 408, 409, |
| 183 | Brett Doney | Doney | 677, 678, 679, 680, 681, 682, |
| 4 | Noel Duram | Duram | 27 |
| 116 | Rev. Gerald Ebelt | Ebelt | 595 |
| 48 | Gary Ellergson | Ellergson | 537 |
| | | | 782, 783, 784, 785, 786, 787, 788, 789, 790, 791, 792, 793, 794, 795, 796, 797, 798, 799, 800, 801, 802, 803, 804, 805, 806, 807, 808, 807, 808, |
| 201 | Janet Ellis (MT Audubon) | Ellis | |
| GF | Brad Elman | Elman | |
| | | | 875, 876, 877, 878, 879, 880, 881, 882, 883, 884, 885, 886, 887, 888, 889, 890, 891, 892, 893, 894, 895, 896, 897, 898, 899, 900, 901, 899, 900, 901, 902, 903, 904, 905, 906, 907, 908, 909, 910, 911, 912, 913, 914, 915, 916, 917, 918, 919, 920, 921, 923, 924, 899, 900, 901, 902, 903, 904, 905, 906, 907, 908, 909, 910, 911, 912, 913, 914, 915, 916, 917, 918, 919, 920, 921, 923, 924, |
| 169 | US EPA | EPA | |
| 202 | Sen. Jeff Essman | Essman | 815 |
| 83 | Pat Fetger | Fetger | 477 |
| 204 | J. Findlayson | Findlayson | 821 |
| 79 | Jim & Kit Finlayson | Finlayson | 566 |
| GF | Dan Flynn | Flynn | 316, 317 |
| 202 | Rep. Julie French | French | 813 |
| 60 | Jackie Galespe | Galespe | 349 |
| 165 | Garcia | Garcia | 577 |
| 145 | Bethann Garramon | Garramon | 634, 635, 636, 637, 638 |
| 180 | Renae Gates | Gates | 666 |
| 202 | Sen. Kelly Gebhardt | Gebhardt | 816 |
| 165 | Carle Gebhart | Gebhart | 577 |
| 202 | Sen. Kim Gillan | Gillan | 817 |
| CB | Roxy Gillespie | Gillespie | 349 |

| Log Number | Name | Last Name | Response Number |
|-------------------|--------------------------------------------------|------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| 177 | Brianna Gillund | Gillund | 568, 569, 568, 569, 568, 569 |
| 197 | John Goodmundson | Goodmunson | 758, 759, 760, 761, 762, 763, 764, 765, |
| 18 | Heather A Gottfried | Gottfried | 78, 79, 80 |
| 204 | Heather Gottfired | Gottfried | 822 |
| 53 | Jeff Gottlob | Gottlob | 542 |
| 52 | Tori Gottlob | Gottlob | 541 |
| 39 | Bob Guditis | Guditis | 527 |
| 90 | Mary Guse | Guse | 586, 587 |
| 57 | Colleen Gustafson (Triangle Land & Livestock) | Gustafson | 334, 335, 336 |
| CB | Dave Brownell Read Letter From Colleen Gustafson | Gustafson | 335, 336 |
| 204 | G. Gustafson | Gustafson | 820 |
| 14 | Greg Habel | Habel | 652, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67 |
| 202 | Sen. Ken Hanson | Hanson | 818 |
| GF | Ralph Harbush | Harbush | 306, 307, 308 |
| CB | Shannon Harrison | Harrison | 389 |
| 180 | Mary Ann Harwood | Harwood | 666 |
| 105 | Diane Hastings | Hastings | 568, 569 |
| 21 | Jack Hayne | Hayne | 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, |
| 202 | Rep. Ralph Heinert | Heknert | 814 |
| 202 | Rep. Gordon Hendrick | Hendrick | 815 |
| 1.5 | J. Hianse | Hianse | 11 |
| 79 | Debbie Hicks | Hicks | 566, 822 |
| 206 | Stephanie Hilger (Mt Dot) | Hilger | 825, 826 |
| GF | Ray Hollandsworth | Hollandsworth | 249, 250, 251, 252, 253, 400, 401, 820 |
| 208 | Heather Holloway | Holloway | 827 |
| 167 | Brad Huffman | Huffman | 642, 643, 644, 645, 646 |
| 202 | Rep. Pat Ingraham | Ingraham | 816 |
| CB | Gary Iverson | Iverson | 356, 357, 456, 457, 568, 569, |
| 165 | Alyssa Jackson | Jackson | 577 |
| 180 | Boyd Jackson | Jackson | 666 |
| 46 | David Jacobson | Jacobson | 535 |
| 180 | Paulette Jacobson | Jacobson | 666 |
| 158 | Holly Jaeger | Jaeger | 568, 569 |
| 163 | Megan Jaeger | Jaeger | 568, 569 |

| Log Number | Name | Last Name | Response Number |
|------------|--------------------------------|------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 160 | Sandie Jaeger | Jaeger | 568, 569 |
| 164 | Tech Jaye | Jaye | 568, 569 |
| 129 | Clive Johanin | Johanin | 568, 569 |
| 130 | Jonelle Johannsec | Johannsec | 568, 569 |
| 204 | Cynthia A. Johnson | Johnson | 821 |
| 11 | Wade Johnson | Johnson | 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, |
| GF | Carol Jones | Jones | 300 |
| 204 | Carole Jones | Jones | 821 |
| 204 | Katie Jones | Jones | 821 |
| | | | 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 492, 493, 494, 495, 496, 497, 498, 499, 363, 364, 365, 366, 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 369, |
| GF | Lew Jones | Jones | 822 |
| 204 | Marjorie Jones | Jones | 819 |
| 202 | Rep. Llew Jones | Jones | 819 |
| C | Wendy Judisch | Judisch | 469, 469, 470, |
| 182 | Joseph & Diane Karcher | Karcher | 672, 673, 674, 675, 676, |
| 165 | Wendy Kasun | Kasun | 577 |
| | | | 215, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 388, |
| 41 | Leanne Kavanagh | Kavanagh | 386, 387 |
| CB | Marvin Kemmitt | Kemmitt | 568, 569 |
| 106 | Susan Kimmet | Kimmet | 666 |
| 180 | J. Kline | Kline | 817 |
| 202 | Rep. Harry Klock | Klock | 593 |
| 114 | Donald Koenig & Michael Koenig | Koenig | 517, 518 |
| 30 | Koepke Farms | Koepke | 126, 127, 128, 129, 512, 514, 515, 516, 519, 520, 521, 522, 523, 524, |
| GF | Mike Koepke | Koepke | 568, 570, 575 |
| 97 | Amy Krause | Krause | 715, 716 |
| 191 | Bonnie Kronebusch | Kronebusch | 246, 247, 248 |
| GF | Ted Kronebush | Kronebush | 621 |
| 141 | Geni Laden | Laden | 621 |
| 140 | Mick Laden | Laden | 621543 |
| 142 | Scott Laden | Laden | 819 |
| 202 | Sen. Rick Laibbe | Laibbe | |

| Log Number | Name | Last Name | Response Number |
|------------|-------------------------------------------|------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 202 | Rep. Bob Lake | Lake | 818 |
| 202 | Sen. Lane Larson | Larson | 810 |
| 96 | Ken Larson | Larson | 570, 575 |
| 202 | Sen. Jesse Laslovich | Laslovich | 811 |
| GF | Robert Lee | Lee | 304, 305 |
| 131 | John Lemme | Lemme | 568, 569 |
| 202 | Sen. Dave Lewis | Lewis | 812 |
| 79 | Mike & Jessi Lytle | Lytle | 566 |
| 202 | Rep. Gary Maclaren | MacLaren | 811 |
| 89 | Dan Majerus | Majerus | 578, 584, 585 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 736, 737, 738, 739, 740, 741, 742, 743, 744, 742, 743, 744, 745, 746, 747, 748, 749, 755, 754, 755, 756, 757, |
| GF | Katrina Martin | Martin | 757, |
| 208 | H. Mattsen | Mattsen | 827 |
| 11 | Larry L. Maurer | Maurer | 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, |
| 127 | Wendy Mcairene | McAirene | 568, 569 |
| CB | Bill Mccauley | McCauley | 343, 344, 345, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245, 344, 345 |
| 24 | Burke Mccormick | McCormick | 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101 |
| 79 | John & Janice Mcfarland | McFarland | 566 |
| 18 | John L Mcfarland (Conrad Building Center) | McFarland | 81, 82, 83, 84, 293, 294, 467, 468, 822 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 525, 829, 830, 831, 832, 833, 834, 835, 836, 837, 838, 839, 840, 841, 842, 843, 844, 842, 843, 844, 845, 846, 847, 848, 849, 850, 851, 851, 458, 489, 460, 461, 458, 459, 460, 461, |
| GF | Jerry Mcrae | McRae | 844, 845, 846, 847, 848, 849, 850, 851, 851, |
| 74 | Melisa Mcrae | McRae | 458, 489, 460, 461, 458, 459, 460, 461, |
| 14 | Locke Mellott | Mellott | 57, 58, 59, 60, 61 |
| 202 | Rep. Scott Mendenhall | Mendenhall | 819 |
| 199 | Alan Merrill | Merrill | 772, 773, 774, 775 |
| 202 | Rep. Mike Milburn | Milburn | 814 |
| 112 | David Mildrexler | Mildrexler | 589, 590, 591, 592 |
| 23 | Dave Miller | Miler | 94 |
| 179 | Dave Miller | Miller | 659 |
| 180 | David T. Miller | Miller | 666 |

| Log Number | Name | Last Name | Response Number |
|------------|----------------------|-----------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 124 | Mary Miller | Miller | 568, 569 |
| 204 | G. Mills | Mills | 822 |
| 128 | Jerry Mioem | Miom | 568, 569 |
| 180 | Rachel Monty | Monty | 662 |
| 176 | Carol Morgan | Morgan | 568, 569 |
| 180 | Jewel Moritz | Moritz | 666 |
| 165 | Kim Mosley | Mosley | 577 |
| 55 | Juanita Muhr | Muhr | 544 |
| 205 | Robert & Ali Newkirk | Newkirk | 823, 824 |
| 125 | Tamie Nic | Nic | 568, 569 |
| 202 | Rep. Bill Nooney | Niiney | 810 |
| 43 | Ben Ober | Ober | 531, 568 |
| 202 | Rep Jesse O'hara | O'Hara | 811 |
| 180 | Jeannie Olmstead | Olmstead | 666 |
| 204 | Betty Olson | Olson | 822 |
| 79 | Harold & Betty Olson | Olson | 566 |
| 204 | Harold D. Olson | Olson | 820 |
| GF | Harold Olson | Olson | 130, 424, 425, 426, 427, 428, 429, 430, 431, 432, 433, 434, 435, |
| 202 | Rep. Alan Olson | Olson | 812 |
| 180 | Melissa Osther | Osther | 663 |
| 122 | Sean Pahut | Pahut | 606, 607, 608, 609 |
| 202 | Rep. Hjohn Parker | Parker | 812 |
| GF | Jesse Parks | Parks | 132 |
| CB | Gabriel Pearson | Pearson | 394 |
| 180 | Sandra Peen | Peen | 666 |
| 209 | Philip Perszyk | Perszyk | 828 |
| 202 | Rep. Ken Peterson | Peterson | 810 |
| 202 | Sen. Jim Peterson | Peterson | 813 |
| 202 | Rep. Mike Phillips | Phillips | 813 |
| 79 | Karla Pogreba | Pogreba | 566 |
| 180 | Nancy Potter | Potter | 666 |
| 168 | Kathleen Rankin | Rankin | 568, 569 |
| C | Doug Ray | Ray | 418 |

| Log Number | Name | Last Name | Response Number |
|-------------------|-----------------------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| GF | Doug Ray - Read Letter #3 From Jason R. Bonec | Ray | 269, 270, 271, 272, 273, 274, 275, |
| 133 | John Ray | Ray | 613, 618 |
| 117 | Cheryl Reichert | Reichert | 596, 597, 598, 599 |
| 94 | Julie Reighard | Reighard | 568, 569, 568 |
| C | Ronald Reis | Reis | 476 |
| CB | Marty Reynolds | Reynolds | 568, 569 |
| 82 | Shari Richter | Richter | 567 |
| 133 | Ron Rides At The Door | Rides at the Door | 613, 618 |
| 204 | Bernard Ries | Ries | 821 |
| 204 | Curtis Ries | Ries | 821 |
| 79 | Deborah Ries | Ries | 566, 566, 821 |
| 204 | Maryann Ries | Ries | 822 |
| 204 | Ronald Ries | Ries | 820 |
| 202 | Rep. Rick Ripley | Ripley | 814 |
| 85 | Brian Roark | Roark | 568, 569 |
| 19 | Scott Robar | Robar | 85, 86, 87 |
| 180 | Phyllis Robertson | Robertson | 666 |
| 165 | Sherry Roos | Roos | 577 |
| 71 | Corrine Rose | Rose | 549, 549, 820 |
| 156 | Robert Ross | Ross | 568, 569 |
| 173 | Ruth Rudner | Rudner | 647, 717 |
| 165 | Mike Rudolf | Rudolf | 577 |
| 107 | Dave A Ryan | Ryan | 568, 569, 568, 569 |
| 202 | Sen. Don Ryan | Ryan | 818 |
| 79 | Cheryl A. Sawyer | Sawyer | 566, 821 |
| 185 | Brenda Schilling | Schilling | 689, 690 |
| 202 | Sen. Trudi Schmidt | Schmidt | 814 |
| 153 | Andrew Scott | Scott | 568, 569 |
| 161 | Kathy Semmli | Semmli | 568, 569 |
| 162 | William Semmli | Semmli | 568, 569 |
| 159 | Matt Sendor | Sendor | 568, 569 |
| 143 | Gene Sentz | Sentz | 622, 622, 623, 623, 624, 624, 625, 625, 626, 626, 627, 627, 628, 628, 629, 629, 630, 630, |

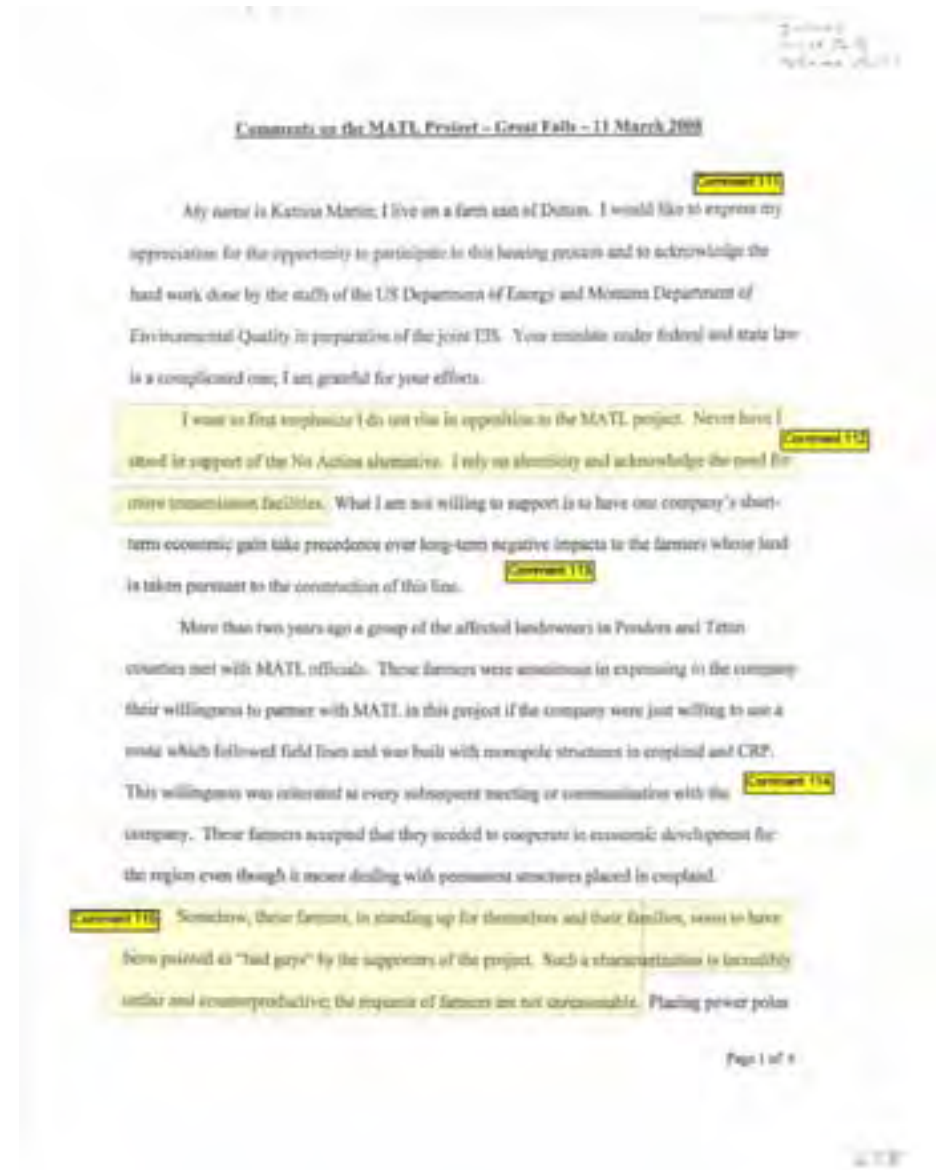
| Log Number | Name | Last Name | Response Number |
|------------|----------------------------------------|--------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 202 | Rep. Jon Sesso | Sesso | 815 145, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 192, 193, |
| 35 | Steve Sheffels | Sheffels | 696, 697, 698, 699, 700, 701, 702, 703, |
| 188 | Jessica Sherburne | Sherburne | 704, 705, 706, |
| 189 | Steven Sherburne | Sherburne | 205, 205, 206, 207, 208 |
| GF | John Shevlin | Shevlin | 566 |
| 79 | Lohn P. & Penny Shevlin | Shevlin | 276, 277, 278, 279, 280, 281, |
| GF | Tom Shock | Shock | 295, 296, 297, 298, 299, 820 |
| GF | Dale Siefert | Siefert | 396, 397, 358, 359, 360, 361, 358, 359, 360, |
| CB | Tony Sitzman | Sitzman | 131 |
| GF | Gordon Smesdrud | Smedsrud | 545 |
| 56 | Fritz Smith | Smith | 568, 569 |
| 98 | Michael Smith | Smith | 560, 561, 821 |
| 76 | Everett Snortland | Snortland | 568, 569 |
| 135 | Dennis Someday | Someday | 666 |
| 180 | Don South | South | 570, 571, 575 |
| 93 | Phil Springer | Springer | 816 |
| 202 | Rep. Wayne Stahl | Stahl | 666 |
| 180 | Julie Stakes | Stakes | 817 425, 426, 427, 428, 429, 430, 431, 432, 433, 434, 435, 847, 848, 849, 850, 852, 853, 854, 855, 856, 857, 858, 859, 860, 861, 862, 863, 864, 862, 863, 864, 865, 866, 867, 868, 869, 870, 871, 872, 873, 874, |
| 202 | Sen. Don Steinbeisser | Steinbeisser | 874, 346, 346, 347, 348, 348 |
| 72 | Chris Stephens | Stephens | 615, 616 |
| CB | Joni Stewart (Mayor Of Cut Bank) | Stewart | 471, 472, 473, 474, 475, |
| 44 | Robert Stewart (National Park Service) | Stewart | 827 |
| 4 | Eric Strom | Strom | 821 |
| 208 | Greg Strutz | Strutz | 602, 603, 604 |
| 204 | Sandy Syvertson | Syvertson | |
| 120 | Maurice Tack | Tack | |

| Log Number | Name | Last Name | Response Number |
|------------|--------------------------------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 155 | Fredrick Trafelet | Trafelet | 639, 640, 641 |
| 42.5 | Buck Traxler | Traxler | 529, 530, 566 |
| 202 | Sen. Joe Tropila | Tropila | 816 |
| C | George Tsonga | Tsonga | 482, 483, 484 |
| GF | Allan | Underdal | 122, 123, 124, 125, 510, 511, 513, |
| 179 | Allan Underdal | Underdal | 659, 664 |
| 1 | Unknown 1 | Unknown 1 | 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, |
| 87 | Lynn Utterback | Utterback | 568, 570, 572, 573, 574, |
| 204 | Gerri Vandebos | VandenBos | 821 |
| 79 | John Vandyke | VanDyke | 566, |
| CB | Dave Brownell Read Letter From Valerie Vermohlen | Vermohlen | 337, 338 |
| 67 | Valerie Vermohlen | Vermulm | 547, 547, 547, 548 |
| 79 | William Vandebos | Vnadenbos | 566 |
| 208 | Fred And Carletta Vroman | Vroman | 827 |
| 180 | Karla A. Wagner | Wagner | 666 |
| 180 | Myrna Wallan | Wallan | 666 |
| 165 | Kathy Walter | Walter | 577 |
| 208 | Tracey War | War | 827 |
| 202 | Rep. John Ward | Ward | 817 |
| 99 | Peggy Warm | Warm | 568, 569 |
| 180 | White | White | 666 |
| 204 | Bev Widhalm | Widhalm | 821 |
| 204 | Ronald Widhalm | Widhalm | 822 |
| 195 | Bob Williams (MATL) | Williams | 721, 722, 723, 724, 725, 726, 727, 728, 729, 730, 731, 732, 733, 734, 735, |
| 166 | Todd Williams | Williams | 568, 569 |
| GF | Del Wilson | Wilson | 309, 310, 311, 312 |
| 202 | Rep. Bill Wilson | Wilson | 818 |
| 202 | Rep. Jonathan Windy Boy | Windy Boy | 819 |
| 184 | Zack Winestine | Winestine | 683, 684, 685, 686, 687, 688, |
| 208 | Rebekah Wright | Wright | 827 |
| 137 | George Wuerthner | Wuerthner | 617 |
| 165 | Dave Illegible | | 577 |
| 172 | Diane F Illegible | | 568, 569 |

| Log Number | Name | Last Name | Response Number |
|-------------------|----------------------------------------|------------------|----------------------------------------|
| CB | Female Speaker | | 398, 399, 490, 491 |
| 79 | Ilegible 1 | | 566, 566 |
| 82 | Ilegible 2 | | 567 |
| 180 | Illegible 3 | | 666, 666, 666, 666 |
| 204 | Illegible4 | | 820, 820, 820, 820, 821, 822, 822, 822 |
| 165 | Illegible 5 | | 577, 577, 577, 577 |
| C | Jackie ? | | 489, 490, 490 |
| 165 | James Illegible | | 577, 577 |
| 202 | List Of Senators & Representatives | | 809 |
| CB | Male Speaker, Cut Bank | | 390 |
| C | Male Speaker, Conrad | | 490 |
| 126 | M-SOMEBODY Illegible | | 568, 569 |
| 79 | Paul Illegible | | 566 |
| 198 | Robert Stewart (National Park Service) | | 766, 767, 768, 769, 770, 771, |
| 103 | Ronald Illegible | | 568, 569 |
| 79 | Sandy Illegible | | 566 |
| C | Unknown | | 481 |
| 79 | Multiple signers | | 566 |
| 204 | Multiple signers | | 204 |
| 208 | Multiple signers | | 827 |
| 165 | Multiple signers | | 577 |
| 180 | Multiple signers | | 660 |
| CB | Woman Speaker | | 370 |

PART 4. ATTACHMENT

The following letters were read at the public hearings and comments are addressed above. The letters were submitted at a later date and are included in this attachment.



on a diagonal running through cropland and CRP should be a thing of the past. New farming techniques and larger equipment make such transmission structures environmentally sound and too economically infeasible. Comment 118

Comment 119 I do not begrudge this company and its investors the chance to make a handsome profit from filling a well recognized need for increased electric transmission – more power to their (or your) ranch(es). To see the extent of that profit, simply visit the Tushetiga website where it is reported the company projects revenues of nearly a billion dollars from the twenty-five year contract now in place. If that defies the imagination to take as feasible, the company's extreme claim it cannot possibly be expected to spend around \$3 million extra dollars to implement the alternative (Alternative 4) which the agencies have analyzed as being "... the most protective alternative for the maintenance and enhancement of long-term productivity of the environment while benefiting socioeconomic resources."⁴ Comment 119

Comment 119 Our state has accorded MATL every advantage since its application was filed. From the outset, the economic development staff in the Governor's Office has worked closely with the company to help it achieve its goals. The 2007 Legislature created an energy infrastructure promotion office with a \$350,000 annual budget whose sole mission includes assisting the MATL project gets built. The Legislature also enacted a 75% property tax cut for the company from which it will reap nearly \$400,000 each year (a tax break for property owners whose land is taken amounts to \$40,000).

With all this help from the government, it seems impossible to view this company as persecuted because the farmers who will forever bear the burden of the line are not willing to just

⁴14-19, Draft EIS

let the company build the line as cheaply as possible. Over a 50-year life of the facility, the property tax break dollars by themselves will nearly pay for the construction of the line in Montana, projected at approximately \$40 million. It is not unreasonable for farmers to push for adoption of Alternative 4 when that agency alternative clearly recognizes the validity of the producers' position and mitigates serious adverse effects on production agriculture. Comment 120

But let's return for a moment to the advantages accorded to this company by our state. Lamenting over every affected property owner is the knowledge that this Canadian company, holding a for-profit merchant line, has the power to condemn the land it says it needs. This company (with its billion dollar revenue projection) has the authority to invoke eminent domain over property owners. These farmers' private property rights can be extinguished to make way for this merchant line, a line which is not regulated by the PSC because under the law it does not constitute a "public utility" from which Montana consumers are guaranteed to benefit. Is it any wonder these landowners hope the regulators will at least insure that the chosen alternative reduces negative environmental and economic impacts to these events? Comment 120

Not long ago I came across a clear policy statement issued by the Montana Legislature that seems relevant to the current permit application:

It is the policy of the state of Montana to promote energy conservation, production, and consumption of a reliable mix of energy sources that represent the least social, environmental, and economic costs and the greatest long-term benefits to Montana citizens.⁵ Comment 120

Alternative 2 does not represent the least environmental and economic costs to Montana citizens; instead, it represents the least cost to the company. Alternative 4, the agencies' alternative, does

⁵390-4-1001, MCA.

represent the least social, environmental, and economic costs and the greatest long-term benefits to Montana citizens. Comment 126

I do not oppose this project, even though I can't say I look forward to having yet another large transmission line in my neighborhood. I do support the issuance of a permit for an Alternative 4. This line, and the future lines which we know are coming, need to be built on an alternative with field lines and the use of structures in cropland and CRP. Farmers who have been stewards of their lands for generations should not have to bear the burden of installing structures in their cropland and CRP simply because a company wants to keep a bit of extra money in its pocket. This should not be the way we do business in Montana; good public policy prescribes the issuance of Alternative 4 as the basis for the permits at issue here. Comment 127

Thank you for your consideration.


Katrina Wilson Martin
1720 24th Ln. NE
Dutton, MT 59413
406-463-2337

March 10, 2018

Mr. Tom Ring
Montana Department of Environmental Quality
Environmental Management Bureau
P.O. Box 205882
Helena, MT 59620-0882

Dear Mr. Ring:

I'm a producer in Glacier County. The MATL line will be going through my property. I want to be on record that I'm in support of the MATL line and wind generation in Glacier County. Comment 128

This is an opportunity for me personally to help the economy of Glacier County and for myself. I have no mineral rights to the land that I bought in 1987. This will give me the chance to have an additional income source for my farm. Glacier County has been suffering through a drought. Comment 129

Change is hard to deal with but this is an opportunity for our area to bring in a new business that is clean and friendly for the environment. I'm willing to deal with some inconveniences to do my part to help bring new business to Glacier County. Comment 130

The MATL line and wind generation will increase the tax base for the County. This will help our tax bills, provide more for our schools, and help build our infrastructure. Comment 131

I support the MATL line.

Thank you.


Julie Koefke

P.O. Box 777
Crested, MT 59425



1-406-271-4619
1-800-228-7625
ponera@ponera.net

March 11, 2008

Mr. Chairman:

I am Cheryl Curry, Executive Director for the Pondera Regional Port Authority.

A Port Authority is defined in Montana law and is created by statute and public vote with one purpose: to promote, stimulate, develop and advance the general welfare, commerce, economic development and prosperity of its jurisdiction and of the state and its citizens. A Port Authority always acts in cooperation and in conjunction with other organizations to develop industry, manufacturing, mineral resources, services, agriculture, health care, and other economic activity.

Our goal is to help create a vibrant community for future generations of rural Montanans.

The Pondera Regional Port Authority supports the Montana Alberta Transmission Line. The construction of this line will have strong positive economic impact in the area and across the potential to develop wind power in the future. The power line and associated wind development will add jobs and tax base to our struggling economy. It is clear and has low impact on the environment. I have read the environmental impact statement and believe the economic benefits outweigh the few minor environmental concerns. They are inconsequential to affected farmers and ranchers, but they are compensated to a certain extent by annual and one-time payments from MATL as well as by tax reductions on the affected land. Comment 146

As a nation, our energy demands are ever increasing and we explore the production are limited. The development of clean wind power and the lines to transport it makes sense.

Please support the construction of the MATL Transmission Line. The environmental impacts are minor and the economic benefits are great. Comment 148

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Cheryl Curry
Executive Director
Pondera Regional Port Authority
311 South Main, Suite D
Crested, MT 59425
406 271-7237
ponera@ponera.net

Local Economic Development Solutions

Loishe Carter

March 11, 2008

Good evening, my name is Loishe Carter, Economic Development Director for the City of Shelby. I am not here tonight to speak as city government, but as a parent. We are very fortunate here in Montana to have exceptional colleges and universities for our children to receive a post-secondary education. I have three sons, one who has graduated and 2 that presently attend Montana Tech. These boys are applying an incredible education, yet we are educating them to leave the state. In 2005 similar information for Montana Tech School of Mines & Engineering graduates, 70% went to work out of state. My son is an Occupational Safety & Health Engineer in Passaic, New Jersey and my second son is now pursuing a second degree in the hopes to remain in Montana after graduation. Projects such as the Montana Alberta Transmission Line have the potential to create opportunity and employment for our children. They project may have limited government employment opportunity but has tremendous potential to open the doors to other great viable industry in our state. Projects of this magnitude require numerous specialty services and project skilled employees. It will generate tremendous tax revenues and wealth within our communities that may translate into new industry and job creation. Ultimately, if announced to all the Montana welcomes clean viable industry and that our best and brightest need not leave the state to find great jobs. Outside interests have many voices, but I hope you will consider the voices of those who live, work and lease our farms here. Help us bring our children's communities closer to our children's education and to benefit generations to come. Comment 149

Loishe Carter
118 W 5th St
Shelby, MT 59674
406-424-8759



SHEFFELS FARMS, Inc.

PO Box 1245 - Great Falls, MT 59403-1245
 Phone (406) 763-6507 - Fax (406) 763-6508

March 11, 2008

Mr. Tom Ring
 Montana Department of Environmental Quality
 P. O. Box 200901
 Helena, MT 59620-0901

Re: Federal Draft Environmental Impact Statement and State of Montana Supplemental
 Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Montana-Alberta Tie Line (MATL) 230-
 kV Transmission Line

Dear Mr. Ring:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the subject documents. As you know, we
 farm near the south termination of this line just north of Great Falls. We have several
 concerns that were not addressed by the draft proposal and new concerns that have arisen
 since our last opportunity to comment.

Some of the concerns that we feel need to be addressed are as follows:

- Comment 114 • Long-span monopoles with 6.5 foot-wide concrete foundations should be required for any portion of the transmission line that crosses or borders farm fields. It has been reported that the Alberta portion of the proposed Montana-Alberta Tie Line is being required to use single poles through farming lands. If this is true? Although the initial cost might be somewhat higher, these lines are built to last a long time. We have been farming around existing lines for over 70 years. Lata land is removed from production and it is much easier to maneuver around a single pole than a double pole design. Very serious consideration should be given to weigh the difference in short-term, up-front costs against the long-term costs to the farmer who will be living with these decisions for generations. What justification could be used to treat farmers differently on each side of the border? Comment 115
- Comment 116 • How will the alternate routes of the MATL be evaluated? Will there be a public open process? How will the weighting of the various factors be decided? Who decides the weighting factors? Who decides between the alternatives? Comment 117
- Comment 118 • House Bill 3 of the May 2007 Special Session permanently reduces the property tax rate from 1.2% to .7% for new investments in transmission lines that are constructed after June 2007. For alternative 4, this change has reduced the total Comment 119

property tax income from \$3,157,952 to \$789,488. Cascade County's income is reduced from \$435,560 to \$108,840. How does this new rate affect the approval process of the MATL line? What, if any, taxes will MATL be paying to the state of Montana for the revenue they receive from doing business in the state (above and beyond property taxes)?

- Comment 120 • Landowners of wind towers are being compensated ~\$2,500 per tower per year. How does this compare with what is being proposed for transmission line easement owners? It seems that wind tower owners are receiving much more. Both project types are being funded by private investment. Both project types impact the landowner in similar ways. Why isn't MATL required to pay market rates for land use like the wind tower project owners are? Comment 121
- Comment 122 • Does MATL comply with Federal Energy Regulatory Commission Order 840? If not, why not? What changes occurred or would be required for compliance? Will the EIS be updated to reflect these changes/requirements? Comment 123
- Comment 124 • MATL claims in the EIS that they will be responsible for damages to land and crops from emergency repair operations. What will the process be for making these claims? If there is a dispute, what recourse will the landowner have? What will be the differences in dealing with a Canadian corporation vs. a US corporation? Should some sort of a bond be required of a foreign corporation to guarantee their obligations? Comment 125
- Comment 126 • What will happen if MATL goes out of business? Who will own the line? Will all of the obligations that MATL is entering into upon building the line transfer to whomever buys it? Comment 127
- Comment 128 • MATL has received numerous comments suggesting farm machinery can reach 25 feet in height. Has MATL changed their plans to account for this information? What is MATL doing differently? (It is reasonable to expect that farm equipment will be used under the line that will require 20-25 feet of clearance. Custom air drills have a travel height of 19 feet. The current models are not large enough to be of economic use on our property. We expect that larger equipment will be available in the future and that we will use it.) If further restrictions (i.e. limiting equipment height under the line) on our land use are required, will there be additional compensation? Comment 129
- Comment 130 • Market prices have significantly changed the cost of inputs described in Attachment DL-01. They are some examples: Comment 131

| Input | EIS cost | Current cost | Units | % Change |
|---------------|----------|--------------|---------|----------|
| Roundup (RTJ) | \$21.50 | \$37.00** | Gallons | 77% |
| Crop | \$1.00 | \$12.50 | Bushel | 100% |
| Seed | \$14.00 | \$28.00 | Bushel | 200% |

** RT) over \$50/gal in some areas today.

Comment 110 RTJ @ \$40/gal is a 113% increase over the original EIS. Dramatic changes in costs can occur in relatively short time frames. Our family has been farming our land for over 90 years. How will farmers be compensated for changing costs over the life of the power line? Will the EIS be updated to reflect current costs? What changes will result in MATL planning/policy as a result of this new information? Will initial per-pole compensation be adjusted? **Comment 111a**

- There are a number of planned projects bringing power to the Great Falls area.

| | | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------------|---|-----------------------------------------------------|
| Comment 111b | Rainbow dam upgrade | - | 25MW (increase) |
| | MATL line | - | 600MW |
| | Highwood generating station | - | 250MW |
| | Caribou wind farm | - | 210MW (total - some portion to come to Great Falls) |

Where is the EIS analysis of the construction needed to move this power out of the Great Falls area? These projects alone would cause an 80% increase in power exported out of Montana. What is the environmental/economic impact of not having a process for planning changes in power infrastructure? With the withdrawal of federal funding from the Highwood generating station, will MATL be responsible for determining the impact of transmission lines required to move power from Great Falls? If not MATL, who? **Comment 112**

- Why bring the MATL line to Great Falls? With the projects stated above, there will be little or no capacity to transfer the power south of Great Falls (already noted as constrained by the EIS). **Comment 113**

- Where is the benefit to Montana? As noted above, the power is likely to flow from Montana to Alberta a vast majority of the time. If the purpose of the line is to export power, why not say so? Is it in the best interests of Montana to ship out clean, renewable hydro and wind power to Canada? If the purpose of the line is to make money for MATL (which it should but why should it MATL be paying market rates for their customers like west farm owners? Are there other power line connections between the US and Canada? How did local power prices change after the connection? **Comment 114**

- How can MATL justify building ~500 miles of transmission line just to avoid tariffs at the Caribou or Shelby substations? Do MATL's profits weigh higher with regulatory authorities than all of the impacted landowners to the south? The attitude seems to be, "if the project is described correctly, eminent domain can be used to 'take' the required right-of-way to maintain profits for the corporation." **Comment 115**

- With the Caribou wind farm, there probably won't be any capacity to move power from the Caribou substation to the south. However, that is true for Green

Falls as well. With the new wind farm, is there enough capacity at the Caribou station to supply MATL with 300MW into Alberta? If MATL connected near Caribou, would there be enough capacity for the Caribou wind farm to complete their Phase 3 plan? **Comment 116**

- Power poles on farmland will be hit by farm equipment. (Farmers are expected to mow their 30-130 foot-wide implements around these poles 5-10 times per year for decades. Getting too close to poles risks impact. Being too far leaves takes land out of production and invites weeds.) What plans are being implemented to ensure the safety of farmers, their equipment, their crops, and power customers? At what point do farmers become liable for hitting power poles? (A nick, a scratch, a dent, damage that requires replacement of a pole?) How much force would damage such of the proposed pole design? If a farmer lost control of his tractor (lost attack or stroke) and it took down a pole, how much liability would the farmer have? **Comment 117**

- Poorly maintained power lines have been known to cause fires. Will MATL be liable for any damage caused by their line? What limits will there be? **Comment 118**

- Should portions of the line near the terminations be constructed to enable additional capacity or multiple lines? We are interested in encouraging some intelligent design and future planning with regards to the clutter now existing around substations. **Comment 119**

- The line itself should be designed for increased capacity to avoid the necessity of adding new poles in the future. Is the provision for 230KV enough? MATL suggests that the capacity can be increased to 450MW in each direction. What changes need to be made to increase this capacity? Will customers need to change? How will landowners be compensated? **Comment 120**

- Was MATL a party to The Northwest Wind Integrates Action Plan? If not, why not? Who was MATL's representative? What, if any, actions does MATL plan with regards to The Northwest Wind Integrates Action Plan? **Comment 121**

- As the MATL line is bid/bid schedule, what is the current state of the TSOs that have been awarded this far? When do the bids expire? How is it that MATL has accepted bids for 300MW north to south when there is not capacity to move this power from Great Falls? **Comment 122**

We are sure that the average person does not understand just how difficult it is to farm around obstacles such as power poles. We will probably always object to having them spread upon us. This said our objections would be reduced significantly by receiving fair, annual, cost-adjusted compensation and by having a reasonable plan for future development that anticipated the impact to our land, the soils, and our community. **Comment 123**

We are extremely concerned that there is not a plan, nor does there seem to be a planning process for transmission line development. We currently have four lines running across our property. The MATL transmission line would be the fifth. Without a comprehensive plan, it is difficult to know how many there may be in the future. Given this lack of planning, and given the lack of capacity out of Great Falls, we believe that Alternative 1, as the status quo, is the right alternative for now.

Thank you,

Sheffels Farms, Inc.

Jim Sheffels John Sheffels Steve Sheffels

CITY OF CONRAD
301 1/2 SOUTH MAIN
CONRAD, MONTANA 59425
PHONE: 406-271-3027 FAX: 406-271-3002

CITY OF CONRAD

301 1/2 SOUTH MAIN
CONRAD, MONTANA 59425
PHONE: 406-271-3027 FAX: 406-271-3002

CITY MANAGER
CITY CLERK
CITY ENGINEER
CITY ATTORNEY
CITY COMMISSIONER

Monday, 10, 2008

To whom it may concern:

As Mayor of Conrad, I strongly support the Montana Alberta Transmission Line (MATL). The economic benefits to our community would be very substantial. The benefits from the line and the resulting wind farms would go a long way in easing the tax burden on the county level. An example would be the large infusion of tax money from the Judith Gap wind farm.

Due to the unemployment, permanent workers with families and children would relocate to our area. This would greatly help our school systems. Currently the school system is looking at remodeling the local high school and elementary school. The additional tax money would ease the burden on existing tax payers.

In this area we do not get a lot of opportunities for economic development. When projects like the MATL line and wind farms come along they should be embraced and supported by the whole community.

I would like to take this opportunity to encourage the U.S.O. and the D.O.E. to give favorable status to this project.

Sincerely,

John P. Merrill
Mayor
CITY OF CONRAD

Discover Cut Bank

March 10, 2008

Mr. Tom Ring
 Montana Department of Environmental Quality
 Environmental Management Bureau
 P.O. Box 209901
 Helena, MT 59620-0901

From Mr. Ring:

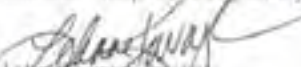
Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Montana Alberta Tie Transmission Line. The Cut Bank Area Chamber of Commerce would like to go on record, once again, offering its full support for the electric transmission line proposed by Montana Alberta Tie, Ltd. (MATL). The vegetation is approximately 140 meters young and is indicated to the protection of the Cut Bank area. We firmly believe construction of this line will have a positive and lasting effect on not only our community but the Golden Triangle area. Comment 2.10

We applaud the steps taken by MATL officials to respond to the concerns raised by landowners, whose property would be affected by the line. We support the rate law which provides a property tax break to land owners whose land is crossed by the line and transfers the responsibility for the tax on the affected land to MATL. The Chamber supports MATL's decision to use monopoles instead of "H frame" structures along the 83 miles of cut banked land where the line crosses fields diagonally thereby lowering the impact of the line on farms and ranch operations. The Cut Bank Area Chamber of Commerce is not concerned by being perceived as a utility supporter as stated by this project or by those who have expressed concerns over the project's impact on the community and Montana and its voluntary signatories areas. We are hopeful changes proposed by MATL officials will result in a "successful" outcome for all parties involved. Comment 2.11

The Cut Bank Chamber believes the transmission line holds the key to the development of a number of wind park projects in this area, most notably the McCormick Ranch Wind Park, which will be located in both Glacier and Teton Counties. The development of wind power at a clean and green renewable energy source will greatly reduce our stagnant tax base, potentially reducing property taxes for all our residents—whether they be farmers, ranchers, small business owners or individuals struggling to make ends meet on a fixed income. Comment 2.12

Due to the nature of this project, we are well aware the number of permanent jobs created will be limited, but any increase in job opportunities trickles down into the communities by way of increased demand for services and additional economic buying power. Comment 2.13

Thank you for the opportunity to express our support for this project. We look forward to hearing very soon that a Preliminary Permit has been issued for the project and we urge the Montana DEQ and BLM issue the needed certificates of compliance and right-of-ways as required. Comment 2.14


 LeAnn Overman, President
 Cut Bank Area Chamber of Commerce



**Cut Bank Area
 Chamber of Commerce**

P. O. Box 1243 • Cut Bank, MT 59427 • (406) 873-4541

450

February 14, 2008

Montana Department of Environmental Quality
 Environmental Management Bureau
 Mr. Tom Ring, Environmental Science Specialist
 P.O. Box 209901
 Helena, MT 59620-0901

Dear Mr. Ring:

Glacier Electric Cooperative, Inc. would like to offer its unequivocal support for the Montana Alberta Tie Line. In our opinion, it is one of the most promising and beneficial projects, not only for the local area, but for the State of Montana, that we have seen in many years. Comment 2.15

Construction of this tie line, and the associated wind generation facility, will create a positive impact on our area in many ways. Comment 2.16

As a utility, it will offer an opportunity to interconnect, if the necessary action, to utilize the capacity of the transmission line. It will also provide an opportunity for us to participate in the maintenance of the system in the future. Comment 2.17

Socially, it will create jobs both during the construction phase and after completion in the maintenance and operations stages. The activity associated with the construction itself will create additional business for local merchants and suppliers. Comment 2.18

Economically, it will help our county, which has been suffering from a severe economic recession for many years, by improving the tax base which will assist all local residents. Comment 2.19

Last, but not most significantly, it will benefit the entire state of Montana by providing a desperately needed transmission path for power created by new generation facilities that will develop in the vicinity of the new line, and elsewhere in Montana and in Alberta. Comment 2.20

Letter # 10

Mr. Tom Ring
page 2
February 14, 2008

We congratulate the Montana Alberta Tie Line group on their innovative and progressive approach and wish them every success with the construction and operation of the inter-tie line. Comment 28

Sincerely,

Jason B. Brown
General Manager

Triangle Land & Livestock Co., Inc.
Burr & Colleen Gustafson
P.O. Box 508
Browning, MT 59417
Ph: (406) 338-5128 FAX: (406) 338-5128
e-mail: jgustaf@triangleland.com

March 12, 2008

To: Montana Department of Environmental Quality
From: Colleen Gustafson

To Whom It May Concern:

We are sorry we are not able to attend the meeting in person, but we are in the midst of moving. Comment 30

We would like to express our strong support for the Montana Alberta Tie Line. It is imperative that this region develop infrastructure and business opportunities to bolster the economy and expand the tax base. It is increasingly difficult for the existing small business owners to bear the burden of business and real property taxes. Comment 31

This is a tremendous opportunity to open the doors to new and responsible development. We encourage all parties to work together to mitigate any problems with the placement of this line, and offer our strong support for proceeding with the Montana Alberta Tie Line. Comment 32

Sincerely,


Colleen Gustafson



REG. 405-873-5525 FAX 405-873-5432

TO: *State of Montana Dept. of Environmental Quality*
 FROM: *Bill McCalister*
 SUBJECT: *Montana Alberta Tie LTD (MATL)*
 DATE: *3-11-08*

To Whom it may concern,

As a local business person and city council person I want to go on record in supporting the project, but with the request that the farmers and ranchers who the line crosses are taken care of both financially and by future agreements in writing for all parties.

This project is a great first to the new business tax base. I have heard the argument that we are allowing the line cross to meet that town tax base, but I ask you what is 100% of 0 which we have seen.

Don't bustle yourselves by the breaking of potential rural community and if they feel it is a good deal which they do shouldn't we.

Since acting on behalf of a taxpayer from every place I fully support this project.

*Bill McCalister
 318 1st Ave S.W.
 Cut Bank, MT, 59421*

CITY of CUT BANK

221 West Main • (406) 873-5525 • Fax: (406) 873-5432 • Cut Bank, MT 59427

March 12, 2008

Tom Ring
 Montana Department of Environmental Quality
 Environmental Management Bureau
 P.O. Box 200001
 Helena, MT 59620-0001

Dear Mr. Ring,

The purpose of this letter is to indicate the City of Cut Bank's full support for the electric transmission line proposed by Montana Alberta Tie, Ltd. (MATL). We have reviewed the Draft Environmental Impact Statement and find this project to be of great benefit to Glacier County and the surrounding area.

We believe MATL's response to the concerns raised in previous public meetings have been thoroughly addressed and commend MATL officials on their efforts to create a positive situation for all involved. Wind energy projects are one of the most viable answers to developing clean and green industries for Northern Montana.

On behalf of the City of Cut Bank, we urge MDES and BLM to issue the permits required for compliance and right-of-ways and look forward to hearing a Presidential Permit has been issued.

Should you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me at 406-873-5525 or at the above address.

Sincerely,

Tom Stewart
 Tom Stewart, Mayor

2010-2011
 Eco Development
 Growth in smart population
 Growth in small business
 Youth opportunities → career opportunities - stay in Montana
 Outreach to urban communities
 Construction & help our business

Comment 30



March 11, 2008

Montana Department of Environmental Quality
 Environmental Management Bureau
 ATTN: Tom Ring
 PO Box 209963
 Helena, MT 59620-0963

Re: MATL Transmission Line

The Pondera County Board of Commissioners strongly supports the construction of the Montana Alberta Tie LTD 240.236kV merchant transmission line.

Comment 41

There are a plethora of reasons to support the construction. If environmental concerns were your only criteria, the minimal trade-offs imposed by this new construction would be well worth the value to our society and to the environment simply for the capability to meet clean, green, power. Given the fact that most of the carrying capacity of the line has already been assigned to wind development, construction of reasonable energy sources is needed.

Comment 42

As Commissioners, we are responsible for the fiscal operations of Pondera County. We look to the construction of this line and associated wind generation facilities as a way to broaden the tax base, while simultaneously alleviating the tax burden on our existing taxpayers. This approximately \$260,000 dollars in property taxes directly from the line would be a more than welcome addition. The transmission line would also be the catalyst for wind farm developments such as that in Judith Gap, MT, where that wind project pays approximately \$1.2 million in taxes to the county it is located in. To put that into perspective, the entire budget for Pondera County in fiscal 2008 was \$7 million dollars. From an economic viewpoint, factoring in additional people, businesses and support services both for the line itself and accompanying wind farms, the positive fiscal impact of this project could be critical for the sustainability of our communities.

Comment 43

As Commissioners, we also have a duty of care towards all the residents in the county which includes a variety of businesses as well as agriculture. With all three Commissioners involved in businesses and two of our three commissioners actively involved in producing agriculture, it is a duty that we take very seriously. There is no denying that firing ground power poles is costly, inefficient and while a variety of politically incorrect adjectives can describe the time and other

Comment 44

LBO

LBO

preferred. It logically follows that it is much simpler to farm around single pole structures that are located on uniform lines as opposed to the double pole structures that were initially proposed in diagonal field crossings. To the extent practical, monopoles should be utilized. This has much to be built right, but it must be built. All stakeholders need to recognize that both MATL and farmers have serious financial commitments based on the placement decisions. An equitable balance has to be achieved.

Many of the concerns that we have heard regarding cooperation for pole placement should be resolved through negotiations between MATL and private landowners. To that end, we would urge both the DOE and the DEQ to issue any and all necessary permits as expeditiously as possible so that MATL, Ltd. may finalize those negotiations and begin construction.

On behalf of the entire Board of Pondera County Commissioners,


Sandra J. Brasher, Vice-Chair

March 13, 2008

Chris Stephens
PO Box 94
Dutton, MT 59423
406-465-2433, 406-758-0498

Comments file MATL-135--Conrad hearing

My name is Chris Stephens and my family farms in the counties where this line is being built. We will have at least a mile to a mile and half of this line depending upon the route.

I am disappointed that all the county commissioners and local businesses are more concerned with the needs of the MATL than they are of us longtime faithful taxpayers. We aren't asking for much. We are asking only for a design of this line in a manner that the local cooperatives have long recognized as the proper design for the power infrastructure. It is not a coincidence that the resistance of this line begins with the start of the diagonal portion of this line at Conrad and continues south to Great Falls as does the diagonal. One has to remember that along this portion of line we aren't talking about one diagonal line we are talking about two as there is already a diagonal line that we have had to live with for 30 years.

The northern portion of the line has all the benefits. The north-south orientation and the wind development. The southern all the impacts. The diagonal and no wind development.

Since I have owned my farm east of town here, I have had two power lines, a gas line with a pumping station and a fiber optic line cross this farm and none of them provide service to my farm. I did not oppose them. I am not against progress.

We talk about the tax base and economic development MATL brings to these communities. Let me share the tax base and economic benefits my family provide. We pay \$26539 dollars property tax in Pondera county, \$6210 dollars in Teton, \$39896 dollars in Cascade and \$2783 in Chouteau county for a total of over \$133,000 dollars annually. My older brother and his family, who will have line build on his property in Teton county, spend

Comment 438
 \$113,000 at Frontline Ag over the last three years for an average of almost \$79,000 dollars a year. I myself have spent over \$80,000 dollars in the last two months at Frontline Ag. This is just one business. We support many other businesses in Conrad. I am disappointed and angered by the lack of support of Conrad community. We are asking only for this line to be built so that it doesn't negatively impact the people who have supported your schools and businesses before MATL arrived and will be here long after MATL leaves.

Comment 439
 The State of Montana, thru its generosity of its tax policy, has given MATL a tax break of between 2.1-2.3 million annually or over 100 million dollars for the projected 30 year lifetime of this project. It's time MATL shows us generosity and agree to spend the 4-7 seven million dollars to build alternative 4 with monopoles. After all, they are actually using our money to build it with. MATL could also show its generosity by purchasing the entire 105 foot easement that they will exercise complete control over, not just the 45 ft. The Alberta Utilities Board is requiring this in Canada. Why not here in Montana?

Comment 440
 The economic benefits of the wind farms are documented in the EIS, but the impact never mentioned is that these projects do not stand alone. There has to be a network of additional power lines to connect to this merchant line. Are these lines going to be allowed to take off any direction cross country to get to MATL, and possibly sue eminent domain against those who oppose these additional power lines. MATL is more than willing to use eminent domain or get where its going. In fact, there are people in this room who have already received such letters telling them this. If you live between a steady ridge and this line you has my share in the unpleasant impact of power development, with none of the money from the success. The profits are not shared, only the problems.

Comment 441
 I, for one, am not interested in maintaining around these poles for MATL. That responsibility lies solely with MATL and the EIS reviewer, but this company is trying to pass this duty off to the farmers with a pittance of a payment included in the farming impact payments. If MATL thinks that it is possible to do this for the small amount being offered, let them hire a independent contractor do this job. I do not want to be an employee of MATL in any capacity.

In closing, I have been a member of a group of landowners who have been

meeting with MATL for over two years. We have never said that we didn't want this built. We have charted the manna, field lines, section lines, monopoles, field lines, section lines, monopoles. MATL has not listened. They have always said too much money, too much money, too much money!

I have to wonder how much money is enough for these people. Is the 100 million dollar tax relief that the taxpayers of Montana will have to replace enough? Is the projected revenues of over a billion dollars in the first 10 years of operations enough? Will the profits from the next 3 lines that President Johnson promises his stockholders enough?

I want to thank the DEQ for designing the Agency Alternative 4 and the work they have done. And I want to thank Ellen Rosell and her coworkers to be curious and concerned enough to actually to ride on a 120-foot strayer and experience first hand the difficulty these structures are to production agriculture. This same invitation was extended to MATL officials two years ago, but they didn't find interest in it until they saw your example.

Thank you

Chris Stephens

March 13, 2008

Chris Stephens
PO Box 94
Dutton, MT 59433
406-363-2433, 406-788-0498

Comments for MATL EIS- Conrad hearing

My name is Chris Stephens and my family farms in the counties where this line is being built. We will have at least a mile to a mile and half of this line depending upon the route.

I am disappointed that all the county commissioners and local businesses are more concerned with the needs of the MATL than they are of an longtime faithful taxpayer. We aren't asking for much. We are asking only for a design of this line in a manner that the local cooperatives have long recognized as the proper design for the power infrastructure. It is not a coincidence that the resistance of this line begins with the start of the diagonal portion of this line at Conrad and continues south to Great Falls or does the diagonal. One has to remember that along this portion of line we aren't talking about one diagonal line we are talking about two as there is already a diagonal line that we have had to live with for 30 years.

The northern portion of the line has all the benefits. The north-south orientation and the wind development. The southern all the impacts. The diagonal and no wind development.

Since I have owned my farm east of town here, I have had two power lines, a gas line with a pumping station and a fiber optic line cross this farm and none of them provide service to my farm. I did not oppose them. I am not against progress.

We talk about the tax base and economic development. MATL brings to these communities. Let me share the tax base and economic benefits my family provide. We pay \$26539 dollars property tax in Pondera county; \$64210 dollars in Teton; \$39896 dollars in Cascade and \$2783 in Chouteau county for a total of over \$133,000 dollars annually. My elder brother and

his family, who will have line build on his property in Teton county, spent \$315,000 at Frontline Ag over the last three years for an average of almost \$79,000 dollars a year. I myself have spent over \$40,000 dollars in the last two months at Frontline Ag. This is just one business. We support many other businesses in Conrad. I am disappointed and angered by the lack of support of the Conrad community. We are asking only for this line to be built so that it doesn't negatively impact the people who have supported your schools and businesses before MATL arrived and will be here long after MATL leaves.

The State of Montana, thru its generosity of its tax policy, has given MATL a tax break of between 2.1-2.3 million annually or over 100 million dollars for the projected 50 year lifetime of this project. It's time MATL shows its generosity and agree to spend the 4-7 seven million dollars to build alternative 4 with monopoles. After all, they are actually using our money to build it with. MATL even shows its generosity by purchasing the entire 105 line easement that they will exercise complete control over, not just the 48 ft. The Alberta Utilities Board is requiring this in Canada. Why not here in Montana?

The economic benefits of the wind farms are documented in the EIS, but the impact never mentioned is that these projects do not stand alone. There has to be a network of additional power lines to connect to this merchant line. Are these lines going to be allowed to take off any direction across country to get to MATL and possibly use eminent domain against those who oppose these additional power lines? MATL is more than willing to use eminent domain to get where its going. In fact, there are people in this room who have already received such letters telling them this. If you live between a windy ridge and this line you see my share in the unpleasant impacts of power development, with some of the money from the towers. The profits are not shared; only the problems.

I, for one, am not interested in maintaining around these poles for MATL. That responsibility lies solely with MATL and the EIS states this, but this company is trying to pass this duty off to the farmers with a pittance of a payments included in the farming impact payments. If MATL thinks that it is possible to do this for the small amount being offered, let them hire a independent contractor to do this job. I do not want to be an employee of MATL in any capacity.

Shawn and Lori Dohrt
 12418 N. Diamond Ln
 Hayden, ID 83423

March 12, 2008

Mr. Tom Ring
 Environmental Sciences Specialist
 Montana Department of Environmental Quality
 PO Box 202990
 Helena, MT 59620-4990

Re: MATEL EIS Comments

Dear Mr. Ring:

I would like to submit my comments on the Federal Draft of the Environmental Impact Statement for the Montana Alberta Tie (al. 230 kV Transmission Line). In general we felt that the document was fairly well done and we appreciate the revised economic impact projections and believe the new projections are more realistic than MATEL was leading to the press. The \$240,000 annual tax impact to Pondera County may still be a little optimistic though. We are not opposed to the line construction, however, we do have a few concerns with some of the material presented in the EIS document. I should point out that I am a registered professional engineer in the State of Montana and have been involved in power line design and construction for over 20 years. Comment 440

Under the Regulatory Restrictions Analysis Section 5.7 the preparer seems to be more concerned with the potential property rights impact to MATEL than the property rights impact to the various US citizens and land owners along the proposed transmission line route. The various agencies should be more concerned with the impact of MATEL's activities on the various land owner's property rights. Land owners that I might add too, unlike MATEL which is a Canadian based firm. I would like to point out that MATEL's right-of-way agents have been requesting "setbacks" at very minimal times but believe purchasing right-of-way. At least the preliminary documents sent to us were options documents that stated should MATEL choose to increase the option the land owners would be paid their taken right-of-way fee. So the impact to MATEL's property rights by requiring them to follow the agency prepared route of Alternative 4 would be fairly minimal. Comment 441

MATEL has repeatedly stated that it has the ability to condemn property using eminent domain in the State of Montana. How does the recent Montana legislature action last summer limiting the use of eminent domain powers for private enterprise affect MATEL's ability to exercise eminent domain condemnation? Comment 442

Our family owns 600 acres in the Heligan EIS area near Valer. In Figures 1.10-7 of the EIS, three of the routing options are depicted crossing our property. The Old Heligan EIS route, the current Heligan EIS local routing option and the Alt 2 Proposed alignment. The current Heligan EIS local routing option goes right through the middle of our irrigated field longitudinally. If the line was located by this route it would make our property pretty much impossible to irrigate and would drastically affect the property value and use as irrigated farmland. We strongly oppose this option and will file a lawsuit if this option is chosen. This route would inflict the maximum harm and damage to our property and would be in direct conflict with statements on page 1-16 pertaining to right-of-way providing the greatest public benefit and the least private harm. The Old Heligan EIS route follows the field line at the edge of our property to the west end of the Alt 2 Proposed alignment cuts diagonally across our property then generally parallels the road. By adding a couple gated 90 degree water structures or better yet, a couple sagged self supported structures to MATEL's design in this area to eliminate the crossing angle in the line, the impact to our property could be minimized and crossing the well irrigated field to the south at a diagonal could be avoided. As our property is presently in CFP and will be returning to crop production shortly, we strongly advocate the use of temporary structures across our property. We would prefer Alternative 4 be selected as it has the minimum impact on our property. It runs across the northern edge. Comment 443

In routing through the EIS I noticed that the only PE (other than I was in the document was from an engineer from California. Montana law requires that transmission lines and other utility projects constructed in the state be designed under the responsible charge of a PE licensed in the State of Montana. Subsequently, documents covering the Montana portions of this line should be sealed or stamped by a Montana PE. California PE's are not recognized by the Montana Board of Engineers and it should be noted that California does not follow the NESC. Comment 444

And finally I would like to further address the minimum line clearance issue. The EIS lists the maximum line to ground clearance design criteria of the line to be 21.2 feet. In Volume 2 of the EIS emailed response to comments, two additional minimum clearance calculations are shown, one by Mr. Wayne Ducey of HDR in Billings, the other by Mr. Dave Marie of Marie Associates of Missoula Montana. Both of these calculations were performed in response to my earlier comments regarding the line being designed with insufficient line to ground clearance to meet the requirements of the NESC. HDR calculated the minimum clearance using NESC rule 232C and MATEL and Marie Associates used the alternate method provided under NESC rule 232D, which allows for reduced clearances for circuits with known switching surge factors. The HDR minimum clearance was 22.8 feet, slightly more than I calculated due to their assuming an elevation of 4,300 feet versus the 3,200 foot elevation assumed by my calculation. The approach used by the MATEL consultant resulted in a clearance of 21.8 feet. Comment 445

For the record, my name is Melissa McClare, and I am the fourth generation of a firm near Detroit. I am also graduating as a vetcat this spring with a biology degree. This is an environmental impact hearing, yet we have spoken very little about the actual environmental effects of these proposed transmission lines. Many of us understand that farming around poles is inconvenient and financially burdensome, but I would like to speak about this in detail. Much of the cost is accrued by the extra chemical and fertilizer used. 134 ft. sprayers are not designed to turn sharply, and going around a pole causes extra spray to be put down. This is a concern for the farmer, because too much chemical or fertilizer can burn the crop and result in production loss. It should also be a concern to everyone, because extra chemical is potentially hazardous to the environment. If we look towards the future, the accumulated effect of fifty years of extra chemical will be even more damaging, and in areas with ground water near the surface, everyone may feel these effects. The best solution would be to keep all poles on field edges. A more realistic solution would be to minimize the number of poles in fields and also make sure the farmer has the financial wherewithal to farm the poles carefully. We are given incentives by the government to help pay for the extra costs of GPS and other systems that make precision spraying possible, lessening the amount of chemical used. Shouldn't we also receive help for the burden of farming around poles?

I know that everyone is very excited about the economic boost these poles may bring, and I hope along with you that more business ventures like this will help keep towns together and schools like the one I graduated from open. But we need to keep in mind that the ones set to profit the most from this transmission line is MATL, and they need to negotiate with landowners to make the burden of their for-profit turbines less

P.O. Box 777
Connell, MT 59425



1-800-271-4010
1-800-278-7525
pioneer@prra.com

March 11, 2008

Dear Sir:

I am again standing in support of the construction of the proposed MATL line. At the Great Falls hearing it was mentioned that the proposed Alternative #4 would be a preferred alternative. I am standing to oppose this selection. The Studies have been completed on the MATL proposal. The Alternative #4 moves the line significantly away from the already studied area and also makes less sense. The #4 Alternative places the line west of Connell a greater distance from the proposed wind developments and farther from the already existing substations. In consideration of future environmental impacts like it is not a good choice. Lines from potential wind development areas and from substations that may eventually connect would be longer and more obstacles would be encountered.

I support the project and urge the DEQ to move this project forward quickly in order that this area may see the benefits in our economy, rather than see another project go empty.

Thank you sincerely,

Cheryl Clary
Cheryl Clary
Pioneer Regional Port Authority
111 South Main, Suite D
Connell, MT 59425

406 271-7231
pioneer@prra.com

Local Economic Development Solutions

March 11, 2008

Montana Department of Environmental Quality
Environmental Management Bureau
ATTN: Tom King
PO Box 205901
Helena, MT 59620-0901

To whom it may concern:

My name is Wendy Judich, a resident of the City of Conrad and a member of the Conrad City Council.

I welcome the opportunity for our area to use our natural resources. One of these natural resources is our wind, a great source of renewable energy. A transmission line through our area will not only help encourage the development of wind energy but also help to spread the tax burden throughout our area. The economic boost and its inevitable spin-off will help benefit our area schools, our city, and our county.

I encourage you to help the proposed MATL line become a reality as efficiently and expeditiously as possible. The economic gains far outweigh any environmental costs.

Sincerely,

Wendy Judich
616 S. Maryland
Conrad, MT 19425

3-12-08
Tom King

Comment 103

I remember no electricity, no running water
no phones not any paved roads, I don't want
that again

Comment 104

I remember when REA came in 2001
was against that many people who had
no electricity prior to that also got phones
or had phones but no electricity

We have had power robust building and
drought and flood but since the
advent of power or demand we have
had great wire contracts.

We as an area are fostered by this
transmission line may have a future
of steady growth.

With power available we are in
a good place we are on a transportation
corridor with I 15 we would be on
a power corridor - with a water
project in the works the area is going
to be looked at by other entities

Comment 105

The inconvenience of the power poles
a great nuisance involved with farming
and who ever gets into trouble with
I myself would not want a power
structure on my property that would

177

103

do in 2008 but I would not say so if it made sense.

Comment 24

I would hope that the changes made by the pipeline would help my children, grandchildren, and others stay in the area so they might have the opportunity to live and work in MT.

Glacier County Regional Port Authority

PO Box 409
Browning, MT 59417
(406) 338-4015

March 12, 2009

Mr. Tom Ring
Montana Department of Environmental Quality
Environmental Management Bureau
P.O. Box 200901
Helena, MT 59620-0901

Dear Mr. Ring,

Comment 24

The mission of our regional port authority is to promote, stimulate and advance the general welfare, commerce, economic development and prosperity of our region. Our region is Glacier County, and a majority of our rural county lies within the Blackfoot Reservation. The MATL will have a tremendous economic impact on our region and will assist in potential wind development projects. The MATL will pump needed revenue into the tax base of our region and will assist with our struggling economy.

Comment 24

The Glacier County Regional Port Authority supports the Montana Alberta Transmission Line and views it as a means to reach our vision, which is to have a quality rural community with living experiences, opportunities and the amenities of urban living. We are encouraging you to support the line, which has little environmental impact, but large economic benefits. We appreciate the attention you have given our request.

Comment 24

Sincerely,

Tracy Starnes, Chair
Glacier County Regional Port Authority
PO Box 409
Browning, MT 59417
806 338-4015

- 3) Our higher risk use of the best wind power resources in the future will not be the best power development alternative of the best of future wind capacity. We believe that the way you approve this project should set the standard for future transmission line projects that can allow for the development of the natural resource while protecting the rights of property owners. **Comment 1.10**
- 4) The State of Montana has recognized the importance of projects such as this to the state's economy and the nation's energy security by creating a new (state) wind siting law that sets the property owners along the transmission line route. **Comment 1.11**
- 6) Timing of this project is critical to direct investment in wind power development. **Comment 1.12**

Thank you for supporting renewable energy development in central Montana.

Best Regards,

Phyllis

Great Falls Development Authority

1000 10th Street SW

1 (406) 771-6000

Cell 1 (406) 786-2118

Fax 1 (406) 454-2095

P.O. Box 540

Great Falls, MT 59404

Great Address:

327 Central Avenue, Suite 400

Great Falls, MT 59401