

August 8, 2011

Dear Neighbor,

We are writing to give you an update on the Gateway West electric power line project. The BLM has recently issued their Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). We had hoped that some clear thinking would prevail and that the Commissary Ridge area would be spared. But that is not the case. The DEIS reaffirms the northern route in Section 4 without modification. If we do nothing, we will have power lines.

You might think that one power line isn't that bad. That it won't be that close to your property. That you might even make a few bucks from it. But there are now five power lines in various stages of planning and, when this line is approved, they will all try to follow a similar route. At minimum spacing this would result in a swath a little over a mile wide with ten rows of towers each almost 200 feet tall stretching from horizon to horizon. Of course in our rugged terrain minimum spacing won't work so there's no telling where the rest of the lines will end up. As for the bucks, if a tower is placed on your property, you get a one time token payment.

You might think that these power lines are good for Wyoming, and we would agree with you. They support the mineral industry and provide infrastructure needed by the wind energy business. But why have they targeted Commissary Ridge? Originally the lines were to parallel the existing lines to the south. But the Fossil Butte and Oregon Trail people objected to their view being further spoiled. So the BLM found a better place to put them. Better seems to mean undefended. If we don't put up a defense, we get them.

Our hope is to convince the BLM to stop defending an already spoiled "view shed", as they call it, and come up with a plan which does not destroy Commissary Ridge, one of the last, best, unspoiled areas in Wyoming.

What can you do? Don't ignore the DEIS. Don't accept it and remain silent. Write to the BLM. The public comment period is open until October 28th. Attend the meetings. One will be scheduled in Kemmerer and we will let you know when the date is set. We hope to see you there.

Best regards,

Jo Himes, Landowner, Spring Canyon Ranches
Mike Welsh, Landowner, South Fork Mountain
Bob Love, Landowner, Mammoth Hollow

P.S. The back of this sheet has a variety of contact information. We would like to hear from you.

The BLM has a website which accepts email and has project and contact information:

http://www.wy.blm.gov/nepa/cfodocs/gateway_west/

The DEIS may be viewed online at that web site or at local BLM and Forest Service offices or at local libraries.

Comments may be submitted online through that website or mailed to:
Bureau of Land Management
Gateway West Project
P. O. Box 20879
Cheyenne, WY 82003

Rocky Mountain Power participates in a website which has additional project and contact information and also accepts emails:

<http://gatewaywestproject.com/>

It's not clear that the BLM and the power companies are good at sharing information with each other so, if you have something you would like them both to get, send it to each of them.

You may write to us at:

Savecridge@yahoo.com

Or

Bob Love
303 Morning Glory Lane
Sandpoint, ID 83864

We have been maintaining a Facebook page as "Commissary Ridge Defenders" which has information and notification of current events. The direct address is:

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Commissary-Ridge-Defenders/148402991853397>

You probably don't have to join Facebook to look at most of what we have there. But sign up is free and relatively simple and remember that you don't have to tell them anything about yourself that you don't want to. Please let us know if you have problems.