

We would continue wildlife and habitat management activities as under Alternative A, while establishing and expanding rare and sensitive plant community surveys and management of seepage slopes. As under Alternative B, we would conduct a baseline population survey of Pine Barrens tree frogs. We would monitor populations of concern to discern population trends and effects of habitat management, coordinate with SCDNR to conduct surveys and assess effects of habitat management, and participate in amphibian and reptile conservation initiatives.

We would survey and manage for birds of conservation concern, assessing effects of habitat management. We would restore longleaf pine/wiregrass and native grasslands, establish native warm season grass demonstration areas, and eradicate non-native plants. We would also establish a native seed nursery/orchard for native warm season grasses and native groundcover and engage in native plant botanical research. We would manage dove fields and plant annual cool season crops. We would also work with cooperative farmers to establish native warm season grasses as a seed source or for biofuel production.

Most visitor services activities would be improved. We would enhance interpretation with additional wayside exhibits and an updated, interactive Web site. Hunting and fishing opportunities would be increased. Wildlife observation and photography opportunities would be improved by providing additional trails with better interpretation, an observation tower, and a photo blind. A portable viewing blind would be established in active RCW clusters along the wildlife drive during the nesting season. The environmental education program would be enhanced by developing a comprehensive program to be operated by volunteers and funded by grants. We would enhance appropriate recreational uses (e.g., biking and picnicking) to encourage families to use the refuge and pursue outdoor recreational activities. Communication about key issues would be enhanced by hosting an annual public lands and private landowner demonstration day to showcase restoration and management practices. We would target land acquisitions that would maximize ecosystem management objectives, provide opportunities for public use and environmental education, and identify and evaluate important gaps and corridors to ensure landscape-level conservation and connectivity. We would search for opportunities to enter

into cooperative wildlife management agreements with private landowners. We would increase protection of refuge visitors and the protection of archaeological and natural resources on the refuge. We would add visitor services facilities to provide more recreation and education programs and opportunities. We would add equipment to the fleet for producing and harvesting native warm season grass seed. In addition to increasing staff, we would utilize a cadre of career seasonal, temporary, and student employees.

Next Step

After the comment period ends, we will analyze the comments and address them.

Public Availability of Comments

Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment—including your personal identifying information—may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

Authority: This notice is published under the authority of the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997, Public Law 105-57.

Dated: January 15, 2010.

Jeffrey M. Fleming,

Acting Regional Director.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

National Park Service

Susquehanna to Roseland 500kV Transmission Line, Environmental Impact Statement, Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, Middle Delaware National Scenic and Recreational River, and Appalachian National Scenic Trail, Pennsylvania and New Jersey

AGENCY: National Park Service, Department of the Interior.

ACTION: Notice of intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for a construction and right-of-way permit requested from Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, Middle Delaware National Scenic and Recreational River, and Appalachian National Scenic Trail, in connection

with the Susquehanna to Roseland 500kV Transmission Line.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, 42 U.S.C. 4332(2)(C), the National Park Service (NPS) is preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and conducting public scoping meetings for a construction and right-of-way permit requested from Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, Middle Delaware National Scenic and Recreational River, and Appalachian National Scenic Trail, in connection with the proposed Susquehanna (Berwick, Pennsylvania) to Roseland, New Jersey 500 kilovolt (kV) Transmission Line. The line is being proposed by Pennsylvania Power and Light Electric Utilities (PPL) and Public Service Electric and Gas Company (PSE&G), and would cross the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area (DEWA), Middle Delaware National Scenic and Recreational River, and Appalachian National Scenic Trail (AT), in Pennsylvania and New Jersey. This NPS EIS will examine a range of feasible alternatives and evaluate potential impacts on the natural resource and cultural resource values, and the human environment in the areas of these NPS units.

PPL and PSE&G, applicants for an NPS permit, have proposed expansion of an existing electric transmission line right-of-way that crosses the three NPS units. The Applicants currently have a 230 kV transmission line running through their existing right-of-way. They are proposing to replace the existing line with a double circuit 500 kV transmission line with one circuit being operated at 500 kV and the second circuit being energized at 230 kV. The two circuits would be separate but carried on the same structures. The existing single 230 kV power line and towers currently on the right-of-way would be removed and replaced with larger towers. This would necessitate widening the cleared area, and the granting of additional rights to expand the width of the transmission line right-of-way beyond the Applicant's current holdings. The Applicants are also proposing to build new roads and rehabilitate and widen existing roads in DEWA for accessing the transmission line corridor. The Applicant's stated purpose for the project is to strengthen the grid at the direction of the Regional Transmission Operator, PJM Interconnection (PJM). PJM oversees the overall movement of wholesale electricity between many electric utilities throughout a 13 state region. PJM's 2007 load forecast model

identified 23 projected reliability criteria violations, starting in 2012 and beyond, that the proposed project is designed to alleviate.

The Federal action under consideration in this EIS is the Applicant's proposal that the National Park Service grant the permits it has requested. The National Park Service's purpose in taking action is to respond to the Applicant's expressed need to expand its current right-of-way to construct new and taller power lines and add an additional 500kV power line, in light of the purposes and resources of the affected units of the National Park System, as expressed in statutes, regulations, and policies. Federal action is needed because the applicant has submitted the required applications and construction plan to replace and expand the existing line in accordance with 36 CFR Part 14 and applicable NPS Management Policies. The NPS therefore has a duty to consider whether, and with what conditions, if any, to issue the requested permits.

The NPS will analyze the proposed action and no action alternatives, as well as other possible alternatives including granting of the permits as requested, granting of the permits with stipulations, or denying the permits, and alternatives to the proposed line both within and outside the park. The NPS expects to identify additional alternatives, issues concerning the alternatives, and alternative mitigation strategies during the public scoping process.

This notice initiates the public participation and scoping process for the EIS. The public is invited to comment on the purpose, need, objectives, preliminary alternatives, or any other issues associated with the proposal. Information that details the purpose, need, and issues identified to date is available from the NPS Planning, Environment and Public Comment (PEPC) website at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/dewa/>.

Dates and Meeting Notices: The public scoping period will commence on the date this notice is published in the **Federal Register** and last for at least 30 days. The NPS will hold public meetings near the parks and surrounding region to provide the public an opportunity to review the proposal and project information. All public meetings will be announced through local media, mailings, and the NPS PEPC Web site at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/dewa/>. Comments will be accepted within 30 days after this publication date and/or

until at least 15 days after the last public scoping meeting.

ADDRESSES: Comments on issues, potential impacts, or suggestions for additional alternatives can be submitted using any one of the following methods. You may submit comments through the NPS PEPC Web site at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/dewa/>, which is the preferred method. You may mail your comments to the National Park Service, Attention: DEWA PPL EIS Planning Team, Denver Service Center—Planning, P.O. Box 25287, Denver, CO 80225. Comments may also be submitted at any of the three public meetings to be announced.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Kara Deutsch, NEPA Compliance Specialist, Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, HQ River Rd. off Route 209, Bushkill, PA 18324-9999, telephone 570-426-2491.

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

Michael T. Reynolds,

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

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

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Notice of Public Meeting: Recreation Subcommittee of the Sierra Front-Northwestern Great Basin, Northeastern Great Basin, and Mojave-Southern Great Basin Resource Advisory Councils, Nevada

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior and Forest Service, Agriculture.

ACTION: Notice of recreation advisory subcommittee meeting.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act of 2004 (FLREA) (Pub. L. 108-447), the Recreation Subcommittee of the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) Nevada Resource Advisory Committees (RACs) will hold a meeting to discuss fee proposals at the Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area (NCA) Scenic Loop managed by the Bureau of Land Management.

Date and Time: The Recreation Subcommittee will meet on Wednesday, February 17, 2010, at 12:30 p.m. A time for general public comment, where the public may submit oral or written comments to the Recreation Subcommittee, will be provided during the meeting.

ADDRESSES: Red Rock Canyon NCA Visitor Center, Highway 159, Las Vegas, Nevada.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Barbara Keleher, Outdoor Recreation Planner, telephone (775) 861-6628, e-mail: barbara_keleher@blm.gov, or mail: BLM Nevada State Office, 1340 Financial Blvd., Reno, NV 89502.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: FLREA directs the secretaries of Interior and Agriculture to establish Recreation Resource Advisory Committees to provide advice and recommendations on recreation fees and fee areas in each state or region for Federal recreational lands and waters managed by the BLM or Forest Service. Nevada's recreation subcommittee includes members of the three existing BLM RACs and has responsibilities pertaining to both BLM and Forest Service managed Federal lands and waters according to a national interagency agreement between the Forest Service and the BLM. This subcommittee will recommend new