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May 10, 2012

Bill Childress, District Manager
Las Cruces District Office
Bureau of Land Management
1800 Marquess Street
Las Cruces, NM 8805-3371

Dear Mr. Childress:

Thank you for your letter dated April 20, 2012 accepting our request for Coordinating Agency status in the preparation of the proposed Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and potential BLM land use plan amendments for the Southline Transmission Line Project (project) 345-kilovolt (kV) and 230-kV transmission line.

The County's jurisdiction by law is outlined in the Arizona State Constitution and Title 11 of the Arizona Revised Statutes. The County, as a body politic and corporate, may purchase and hold land for public purposes. Counties may still establish planning and zoning commissions to assist the County Board of Supervisors to create such zones as will preserve public health and safety and foster growth, adopt a master plan and effectuate that plan by passing zoning ordinances, and regulate the type, size, height, bulk, and other characteristics of buildings through zoning ordinances. The County Board of Supervisors is charged with laying out, constructing, maintaining, and vacating all county highways, bridges, easements, and public rights-of-way. County Boards may purchase, lease, or obtain by gift, land for a public park within or without its territorial boundaries. The County Board may acquire land by lease or purchase to protect historic property which has cultural or economic value in the County.

Further legal authority for our position as a Coordinating Agency is found in Federal Register Volume 77, Number 48, March 12, 2012, Pages 14473-14480 - Final Guidance on Improving the Process for Preparing Efficient and Timely Environmental Reviews Under the National Environmental Policy Act.

Our special expertise relates to land use, economic, environmental, social and historical issues and concerns relevant to the proposed project. We are eager to be an active party in the decision-making process to ensure that our special knowledge is considered by the BLM and Western Area Power Administration (Western).

We request an invitation to participate in all interdisciplinary meetings related to the NEPA process, the opportunity to review the draft and final copies of the EIS(s) prior to public review, participation in government-to-government meetings that BLM and Western hold with USFWS, EPA and other agencies, and the ability to have our policies, issues and concerns fully addressed.

In accordance with our existing policies and procedures, Cochise County will attempt to meet with the BLM and Western to discuss concerns prior to submission of comment letters. The purpose of such meetings is to describe the specific County concerns and discuss ways to resolve those concerns, ensure that the County review correctly interprets the proposal and supporting information, and inform the County of any ongoing action that will adequately address the County's concerns.

Please send a draft copy of an agreement that identifies the respective responsibilities of the BLM and the County, as a Coordinating Agency, in preparing the EIS, and please add my name to the list of contacts for all correspondence, meetings, and other information related to this project.

I look forward to a productive working relationship.

Sincerely,



Richard R. Searle, Chairman
Cochise County Board of Supervisors

Cc: Patrick G. Call, District 1 Supervisor
Ann English, District 2 Supervisor
Michael J. Ortega, County Administrator
Katie Howard, Clerk of the Board