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Alternative Routes Explored for Gateway West Transmission Line Project

In response to requests from local government officials and the public, Rocky Mountain Power and Idaho Power are continuing discussions with counties, landowners, and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to identify potential alternative routes for the Gateway West transmission project in Wyoming and Idaho. Reasonable alternatives developed by Sept. 4 will be analyzed by the BLM in the draft Environmental Impact Statement to ensure alternative routes address public concerns and meet the utilities' objectives for the project. With this change, the draft Environmental Impact Statement is now scheduled for release in spring 2010.

These discussions and studies are part of the National Environmental Policy Act process which requires an Environmental Impact Statement be issued for this project. Since the BLM's initial scoping in 2007 and 2008, additional input has been provided by the utilities, local government officials, landowners and the general public prompting this action.

"The utilities have listened to the concerns of landowners and other stakeholders regarding line routes," said Richard Walje, president, Rocky Mountain Power. "This extension is a welcome development. We remain committed to evaluating all reasonable options and are taking steps to address areas where consideration of additional alternatives may benefit the project and the public."

Rocky Mountain Power and Idaho Power proposed in the Gateway West project to build approximately 1,150 miles of high-voltage transmission lines from Glenrock, Wyoming to Melba, Idaho. The lines will increase the transmission capacity of the two utilities in order to meet customers' growing need for electricity and will contribute to the economic vitality of local communities across Wyoming and Idaho.

"Collaboration is key to the successful siting and construction of this necessary transmission line project to ensure safe, reliable electric service to our customers and those across the region," said Lisa Grow, vice president, Idaho Power.

Additional meetings will be coordinated in local areas by the two utilities, local governments and interested groups.

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The utilities encourage the public to participate in the process and provide their comments directly to the BLM. Comments can be provided by e-mail at Gateway_West_WYMail@blm.gov or by regular mail to: Bureau of Land Management, Gateway West Project, P. O. Box 20879, Cheyenne, WY 82003.

For more information about the Gateway West Project, visit www.gatewaywestproject.com. For information about the two utilities, visit: www.idahopower.com or www.rockymountainpower.net.

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