



## Final Environmental Impact Statement released

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has released the Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Boardman to Hemingway (B2H) Transmission Line Project. The Final EIS considers resource impacts across 24 alternative routes organized in six geographic segments, as well as a No Action Alternative. The document responds to comments received on the Draft EIS and identifies the Agency Preferred Alternative, as well as the Environmentally Preferable Action Alternative.

## Key changes in the Final EIS:

- Updated routes and variations developed in response to comments on the Draft EIS
- Updated baseline environmental data and a robust explanation of the methodologies used to analyze resource impacts
- Updated mitigation information including a Mitigation Framework Plan
- Additional information about routing considerations on and near the Naval Weapons Systems Training Facility Boardman
- Additional analysis of the project's impacts to National Historic Trails and high-value agricultural lands
- New summaries comparing resource impacts for each route alternative by segment

## How to access the Final EIS:

- Online at [boardmantohemingway.com/documents.aspx](http://boardmantohemingway.com/documents.aspx)
- Via BLM's ePlanning website <http://bit.ly/2dWseZL>
- Request a CD version by e-mailing [comment@boardmantohemingway.com](mailto:comment@boardmantohemingway.com)
- At BLM offices or libraries in the project area. A full list of reading rooms is available online at [boardmantohemingway.com](http://boardmantohemingway.com)

## For Project Information

### Project Website

[boardmantohemingway.com](http://boardmantohemingway.com)

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This newsletter was developed by the Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Forest Service and the Oregon Department of Energy to keep you informed about the proposed Boardman to Hemingway Transmission Line Project.

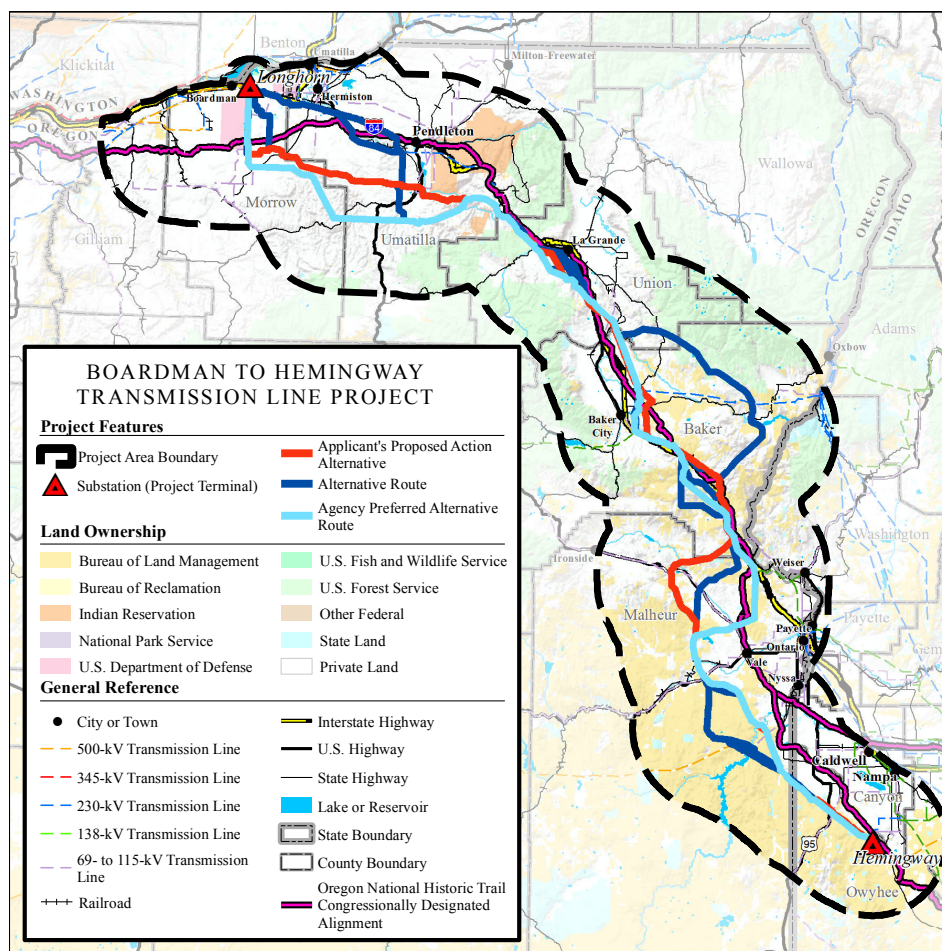
## The Agency Preferred Alternative

After thoroughly considering all route alternatives and variations across the six project segments, the BLM identified its Agency Preferred Alternative. The Agency Preferred Alternative has been updated since the preliminary Agency Preferred Alternative was announced in March 2016.

The criteria used to identify the Agency Preferred Alternative included:

- Maximize use of existing utility corridors/follow existing infrastructure
- Avoid or minimize impacts on resources, including Greater Sage-Grouse
- Minimize need for plan amendments
- Avoid or minimize proximity to private residences
- Minimize use of private lands

The Agency Preferred Alternative is identified by the light blue line on the map below. More detailed maps as well as an interactive parcel search map are available online at [boardmantohemingway.com/maps.aspx](http://boardmantohemingway.com/maps.aspx).



## Public participation

The Final EIS represents a significant milestone in the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process for the B2H project. Public participation is an essential element of the NEPA process, and the BLM has worked closely with Cooperating Agencies, Tribes, stakeholders and the public throughout the project. Public participation related to the Final EIS must adhere to the formal process outlined to the right under Next Steps.

## Mitigation

Some comments on the Draft EIS raised concerns about the documentation and application of mitigation in the resource impact analysis. The Final EIS applies a consistent and defensible system for documenting and determining the effectiveness of mitigation measures on resource impacts.

The document also includes updated information on mitigation in a Mitigation Framework Plan (Appendix C). Compensatory mitigation is one type of tool that may be required to offset residual impacts on Greater Sage-Grouse, National Historic Trails and cultural resources (for cultural effects not mitigated under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act) and riparian conservation areas.

## Land crossed by the Agency Preferred Alternative

Land ownership and use (miles)			Total length (miles)	Miles within designated utility corridors	Miles co-located with existing transmission lines and pipelines
Federal	State	Private			
100	3	190	293	24	90

## Next steps

### BLM's notice of availability period and planning protest process

A 30-day notice of availability period on the Final EIS will extend from Nov. 25 to Dec. 26, 2016. There is no formal comment period on the Final EIS. Any comments received may be addressed in the Record of Decision (ROD). Comments on the Final EIS will be reviewed to determine if they have merit; for example, if they identify significant new circumstances or information relevant to environmental concerns and bear upon the proposed action.

The BLM has integrated the land use planning process with the NEPA process for this project and with the publication of the Final EIS announces a 30-day land use planning protest period. Protests submitted during the public protest period must be related to the land use planning process. To be valid, a protest must be filed by someone who has submitted comments or otherwise participated during an earlier phase of the process. Protests must be submitted in writing by Dec. 26, 2016. Please see the separate insert included with this newsletter for more information about the protest period and a checklist for critical elements of a valid protest.

The BLM will issue its ROD after any protests are resolved but no earlier than 30 days after the Final EIS is available. The federal right of way authorization would apply only to lands administered by the BLM.

### U.S. Forest Service objection filing period and process

The U.S. Forest Service (USFS) will also issue a separate ROD for the project on the basis of the analysis in the Final EIS. USFS special use authorization would apply only to lands administered by the USFS. Because the USFS decision will apply to a small portion of the overall project area, the agency plans to release its draft ROD concurrent with, or shortly after, the release of BLM's ROD.

The USFS previously notified the public that the agency would waive its administrative review procedures and adopt the BLM's protest procedures for its decisions related to granting special use authorization on USFS land. Following further review, the USFS determined that it will instead engage in its own administrative review process.

This process will allow for pre-decisional review of the Final EIS and a draft ROD prepared by the USFS. A 45-day Objection Filing Period will begin when the USFS publishes a legal notice in the newspaper of record, the *Baker City Herald*. The USFS draft ROD will be available on the B2H website. Additional information on the USFS objection process and timeframes will be provided when the USFS's draft ROD is released. For more information on the USFS process, download the Dear Reader letter from the Final EIS at [boardmantohemingway.com](http://boardmantohemingway.com).

### State process

The project must also be considered through the state permitting process. The Oregon Department of Energy (ODOE) and the Energy Facility Siting Council (EFSC) will be reviewing Idaho Power's application for compliance with state energy facility siting standards. The state permitting process will continue after the BLM issues its ROD. For more information, please visit [boardmantohemingway.com/odoe-efsc.aspx](http://boardmantohemingway.com/odoe-efsc.aspx).

## Project Milestones

### 2007

- Project initiated

### 2008

- Sept. 12: Original Notice of Intent to prepare an EIS issued
- Sept. 12 – Nov. 14: Original public scoping period

### 2009 - 2010

- March 2009 – July 2010: Idaho Power's Community Advisory Process

### 2010

- July 27 – Sept. 27: Second public scoping period

### 2014

- Dec. 19: Draft EIS published

### 2014 - 2015

- Dec. 19, 2014 – March 19, 2015: Public comment period on the Draft EIS

### 2016

- Nov. 25: Final EIS published
- Nov. 25 – Dec. 26: BLM's protest period on the Final EIS

### 2017

- First Quarter: BLM expects to issue its Record of Decision (ROD)
- USFS expects to issue its draft ROD concurrent with or shortly after the release of BLM's ROD, followed by an objection period

### 2017 - 2020

- Additional activities related to state and local permitting processes and USFS special use authorization

### 2020

- Construction projected to start if project is approved

**B2H Project**  
P.O. Box 655  
Vale, OR 97918

# B2H Boardman to Hemingway NEWSWIRE

Boardman to Hemingway Transmission Line Project



OREGON  
DEPARTMENT OF  
ENERGY



## About the project

Idaho Power, PacifiCorp and Bonneville Power Administration propose to design, construct, operate and maintain a new 500 kilovolt, single-circuit electric transmission line from a proposed substation near Boardman, Oregon to the Hemingway Substation in Owyhee County which is near Melba, Idaho—known as the Boardman to Hemingway Transmission Line Project or B2H Project.

Idaho Power submitted applications to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), U.S. Forest Service (USFS), U.S. Department of Navy, and the Bureau

of Reclamation to obtain authorization for B2H to cross the lands they manage. The BLM is the lead federal agency for the National Environmental Policy Act process for the project. The BLM has prepared an Environmental Impact Statement to identify and disclose the potential effects of authorizing the proposed transmission line and to examine a range of reasonable alternatives. The BLM and the USFS will use the analysis as the basis for the agencies' respective Records of Decision. Visit [boardmantohemingway.com](http://boardmantohemingway.com) for more information.

## For more information:

Visit [www.boardmantohemingway.com](http://www.boardmantohemingway.com) / Email [comment@boardmantohemingway.com](mailto:comment@boardmantohemingway.com)



# Protesting the proposed BLM land use plan amendments

## Is there a public comment period for the Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)?

No, there is no public comment period on the Final EIS. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) accepted public comments on the Draft EIS for 90 days (Dec. 19, 2014 - March 19, 2015).

## What is the difference between a protest and a comment?

The BLM takes comments during scoping for an EIS and when it publishes a Draft EIS. Protests relate to a Final EIS with proposed plan amendments. Anyone may submit comments during scoping or on any part of the Draft EIS, and comments may be supportive or critical of the action or analysis presented in the EIS. Protests may only be filed by someone who has participated in developing the EIS (i.e., submitted comments during earlier phases of the process) and who believes they will or may be adversely affected by approval of the proposed land use plan amendment(s).

BLM responses to scoping comments are reflected in the Draft EIS, and responses to comments on the Draft EIS are reflected in the Final EIS. Resolutions of protests may affect the provisions in the Record of Decision on the project that relate to land use plan amendments.

## What can I protest about the B2H Final EIS?

Anyone who participated in the EIS process and who has an interest that is or may be adversely affected by the approval or amendment of the land use plans may protest BLM's proposed land use plan amendments identified in the Final EIS.

## What is the deadline for filing a protest?

You must file your BLM protest by Dec. 26, 2016.

## What information does my protest need to contain?

Each protest must be in writing and contain this information:

- Your name, mailing address and telephone number
- Your interest in filing the protest
- A statement of the issue(s) you are protesting
- A statement of the part(s) of the plan amendment(s) you are protesting

- A copy of all documents addressing the issue(s) that you submitted during the process or an indication of the date(s) the issue(s) were discussed for the record.
- A concise statement explaining why you believe the proposed plan amendment is wrong.

A checklist of critical elements for a valid protest is provided on the reverse side of this page.

## Where do I send my protest letter?

All BLM protests must be mailed to one of the following addresses:

### Regular Mail

Director (210)  
Attn: Protest Coordinator  
P.O. Box 71383  
Washington, D.C. 20024-1383

### Overnight Mail

Director (210)  
Attn: Protest Coordinator  
20 M Street SE, Rm 2134LM  
Washington, D.C. 20003

## Can I submit my protest by email?

You may email an electronic copy of your protest as advance notice to [protest@blm.gov](mailto:protest@blm.gov), but you must also send the original, written protest – postmarked by the close of the protest period – to one of the addresses specified above in order for it to receive full consideration.

## What will the BLM do with protests that are received timely?

The BLM Director will render prompt decisions on each protest – either dismissing the protest, granting the protest based on the merits of the protest issues or denying the protest based on the merits of the protest issues.

## How will I know what the BLM's response to my protest is?

Decisions will be sent to respective protesting parties by certified mail, return receipt requested. Responses to protest issues will also be compiled in a Director's Protest Resolution Report made available at the same time as decisions are mailed.

## If I disagree with the BLM's response, is there a way to appeal it?

The decision of the BLM Director shall be the final decision of the Department of the Interior on each protest.



**BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT**

November 2016

# **Resource Management Plan Protest Critical Item Checklist**

**The following items *must* be included to constitute a valid protest  
whether using this optional format, or a narrative letter.**

**(43 CFR 1610.5-2)**

Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your **protest**, be advised that your entire **protest**--including your personal identifying information--may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your **protest** to withhold from public review your personal identifying information, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so. All submissions from organizations and businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations and businesses, will be available for public inspection in their entirety.

**Resource Management Plan (RMP) or Amendment (RMPA) being protested:**

**Name:**

**Address:**

**Phone Number: (    )**

**Your interest in filing this protest (how will you be adversely affected by the approval or amendment of this plan?):**

**Issue or issues being protested:**

**Statement of the part or parts of the plan being protested:**

**Chapter:**

**Section:**

**Page:**

**(or) Map:**

**Attach copies of all documents addressing the issue(s) that were submitted during the planning process by the protesting party, OR an indication of the date the issue(s) were discussed for the record.**

**Date(s):**

**A concise statement explaining why the State Director's decisions is believed to be wrong:**