

Rio Rico to Harshaw 138kV Transmission Line Project Virtual Open House #1 Q&A Transcripts

#	Question/Comment	Response
1	Will the recording be available to the public?	Yes, the recording will be available. It may not be up until after the weekend. It will be up on Monday.
2	Where is the funding for this project coming from?	If the Mine project moves forward, South32 will be funding this transmission project because it is primarily serving their loads. There will be associated benefits to our customers as a result of building it, but the cost will be funded by the customer.
3	The 100' right-of-way, is this each way or 50' on either side?	It will be 50' on either side of the center line of the transmission alignment.
4	Who pays for this project, if it's the worst performing circuit why have we taken....	If the project moves forward South 32 will be funding the project. The public will not be responsible for the payment of this project. UES monitors its distribution lines and if there are any issues with them, then UES goes out and fixes them. This particular circuit is a very long circuit with a minimal amount of customers. When problems do occur we address them and repair them. However, this project will allow us to upgrade the system to 138-kV which will provide benefit to all of our customers and our system.
5	What is the estimated costs of the project? Is the mining company paying for the project?	At this time we do not have a cost estimate because we do not have any routes determined. Yes, the customer (South32) will be paying for the costs of the project.
6	What are the plans for Flux canyon road?	At this time no plans have been determined, no route has been presented. That is the first part of the process we're seeking input from the public to help best determine what route we should choose to get from the switchyard to the planned substation.
7	Will future documents have a better map? The current map does not have much detail for example there is a lake in the project boundary and other major roads are not included.	Yes, we will have an interactive map as well as better maps as we start to develop the preliminary links and routes.
8	Will you be able to answer questions about the substation such as, is it to be on South 32 land? if so, who will control and own the substation?	The substation will be on South 32 land but UES will own and control the substation that serves residential customers. It will be a split substation where UES will have its own transformers serving residential customers and South32 will have their own transformers serving the project.
9	Will it be 100% funded by South32?	Yes, It will be 100% funded by South32.
10	The in-service date of May 2024 assumes a Finding of No Significant Impact by the US Forest service is that correct?	Yes, that is the assumption.

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11	What alternatives have been considered?	At this time no alternatives have been considered. The first thing we have done is identify the beginning and ending points of the project to help us develop the study area. From this point forward we will begin resource studies and seeking input about any constraints and preferred routes that the public may know of and any opportunity to expand on that study area.
12	Can you address the potential harms of the project along with possible benefits to the mining company?	The purpose of the environmental analyses and resource studies are to determine what resources are present within the study area and to be able to determine what potential impacts will come from the project. So that is what will be coming in the next year. All of those studies will be available as they are completed both on the Forest Service website and the UES website. We don't know at this point and don't want make any assumptions. The benefits to the mining company will be a more reliable source of power for their operations as well as to more than 3,000 customers in the area. Additionally, transmission structures have lightening protection which reduces the potential of outages due to lightening that currently exists.
13	For those of us south of the substation, will there be any redundancy for power or will we still have problems with long term outages or will you also be fixing the power lines beyond south32?	If the project moves forward, the existing distribution line serving the area, will bring a stronger source of power and it will eliminate a portion of that distribution line thus hopefully reducing the outages people south of South32 are experiencing. UES will not be rebuilding the line in the area past the substation.
14	Are there alternatives to the location of the switchyard in Rio Rico?	UES currently owns the land we are planning to place the Rio Rico switchyard on. The existing substations do not have room for another connection coming into them so UES would like to utilize the land they have.
15	If both south 32 and UES have transformers at the substation, does that ensure that residents will be protected if the mine has a major problem?	Yes, there will be protection in place that if the mine has a major problem will minimize the impact to residential customers.
16	Visual impacts resources be addressed?	Absolutely, for both Forest and State processes, visual resource impacts are part of the analysis. Besides impact assessments, we also do visual simulations for the Arizona Corporation Commission. We do what's called a google fly through which models the alternative pole locations in the corridor and flying through the aerial photograph of the project.

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17	Please remind people that it is not only the mine who will benefit from the project residential customers also have the right to reliable service.	
18	How about with respect to property values and health issues for living near a line this powerful?	With respect to property values, we've done literature searches and found dozens of studies that have found no conclusive evidence of transmission lines diminishing property values. We have an informational fact sheet and will make it available on the website. Although researchers have studied the health affects posed by high voltage transmission lines since the 1970s, they have not confirmed that any adverse health affects are caused by exposure to low level EMFs. EMFs produced by transmission lines are considered low level. As part of this process we will be conducting an EMF study and it will show the impact the project will have relative to other household objects.
19	Will the possible routes require private land acquisitions.	We don't have alternative routes at this time, but UES has a design philosophy that is to use road right-of-way to the extent possible for construction our transmission lines. There is always the potential for some private land acquisition, as those preliminary alternative routes are flushed out we will be better able to determine areas where that may be required.
20	If the mines actually goes into production, and has an estimated production life of 50 years, what happens then? Will UES own the substation ultimately?	UES will have its own substation at the Hermosa end of the project and there will be an adjacent substation that belongs to the mine. The substation that the mine will be using is at a different voltage than the residential substation, so UES will not take ownership of that substation. When the mine cases operation they will have a requirement to remove their substation.
21	What is the approximate benefit to customers versus South32?	At this time we don't have a percentage benefit. We do want to reiterate the benefit to customers versus south32, the customers will receive the benefit of more reliable power with no addition to their monthly bills. South32 will be paying for the transmission line. If the project moves forward, it would allow for interconnections with renewable sources of energy and potentially additional jobs in the area.
22	Are UES and TEP sister companies?	Yes, UES and TEP are sister companies. We all work for both companies that is why we keep messing up and saying TEP when we mean UES.

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23	In the interests of fairness, why were benefits cited but not detriments?	At this point no detriments have been clearly defined as that is part of the study process. As we complete the studies we will be better able to discuss potential detriments. Benefits are determined through a facilities study that is done at the beginning before the line siting and permitting process begin. we just haven't got there yet.
24	Residential customers could have been served with repairs to existing distribution line. No response needed.	
25	(call in) There is a substation in flux canyon, where does the power come from that services that? Wouldn't it make sense to go straight from there instead of powering it from Rio Rico? Does the mine not have generating capacity to make their own 138 kv at the mine site? What's the average cost per mile to provide overhead 138 power in todays dollars	That power comes from the TEP system from an existing 13.2 kV line that ties into the 138-kV line that goes back up towards Tucson. There is not sufficient capacity between the exiting 138-kV line and flux canyon distribution line to serve the loads that are proposed. South32 does have the option of onsite generation but it is more costly than working with UES to build the 138kV line for their long term needs. Approximately 1 million dollars per mile to construct is a rough estimate that we use in Tucson.
26	(call in) I have two properties on s river road, I have an existing 3 phase primary line that goes in front of my houses, they are 40-foot poles. For them to be changed out and double the size is going to be a big eye sore. I don't mind seeing the lines at a distance but I don't want them in my front yard. this area is rural, lots of pine and big mesquite and I would hate to stare out my window at a big 138 kv line. I am concerned you will choose a line route on south River and I am not going to be happy with it. There is endangered grey owl in the area and this is a nesting area, I am wondering what kinds of effect will have on them.	This is the first step in the process to site a line. As you can see in the map there are no routes identified yet so as further information is provided please comment specifically when you see routes we would appreciate it.
27	(Call in) I guarantee we will not give right-of-way through this property I don't want my grandsons to live under these lines or go to school near these lines. It is just a horrible route, seems like you could go directly from the other side of the lake where there is nothing but vacant land.	We do not have any routes identified. This is a study area only. We want to know what types of things you are concerned about and that is the purpose of this meeting and that is what we are documenting which are the health and property concerns, which helps us understand what we need to look at when determining preliminary links.
28	Who will be responsible for the cost of maintaining these lines?	If the project moves forward, UES will be responsible for the operation and maintenance of the transmission line.

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29	Who will be paying for these studies? Your company? What steps will be taken to mitigate potential bias in the results?	The studies will be conducted by third party consultants. The US Forest Service approves the third party contractor for the NEPA analysis of routes on Forest Lands. We will likely use the same contractor for the studies on non-Forest land as well.
30	Have you considered burring these lines?	Currently we don't have a route so we have not considered burying the lines for the project. However, it is not common practice for UES to burry high voltage transmission lines.
31	Who is the EIS company and who is paying for it? Can we vet the company?	The consultant has not been selected or contracted yet. Ultimately is will be the Forest Service who approves the contractor. I don't think public vetting is an option. The cost of the studies is part of the project budge being paid for by the Customer South32.
32	So that means that the UES customers will be paying the cost for maintaining these lines?	What will be included is the O&M. However, the cost should actually be reduced compared to the maintenance required on the distribution line currently. So the transmission line will provide the added benefit of a reduction in O&M costs.
33	Just to follow up who will be paying the third party researchers?	The costs of the studies are part of the budget and will be paid for by the customer (South32).
34	How do you decide who to send the newsletter to?	That is determined by the study area. Anyone who has a mailing address or lives within the study limit plus a one mile buffer will receive a newsletter.
35	Will there be a recording available for view later?	Yes, the recording will be available. It may not be up until after the weekend. It will likely be up on Monday.