To: CN=Carolyn Mulvihill/OU=R9/O=USEPA/C=US@EPA[]
Cc: CN=Stephanie Skophammer/OU=R9/O=USEPA/C=US@EPA;CN=Ann McPherson/OU=R9/O=USEPA/C=US@EPA[]; N=Ann McPherson/OU=R9/O=USEPA/C=US@EPA[]
From: CN=Thomas Plenys/OU=R9/O=USEPA/C=US
Sent: Thur 8/4/2011 10:24:52 PM
Subject: Re: NEED YOUR FEEDBACK by 3PM TODAY (THURSDAY) Fw: Firedrill, deadline COB today - WH list of priority projects -
Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS)
State and Federal lead agencies
NEPA Pilot Program
mulvihill.carolyn@epa.gov

on the solar projects....

RENEWABLE ENERGY GENERATION

Overall recommendation:
Pending adequate resolution to the outstanding issues identified in EPA's FEIS comments (see below for additional project-specific details), we would support these three solar projects. Generally, EPA continues to support increasing the development of renewable energy resources, as recommended in the Energy Policy Act of 2005, in an expeditious and well planned manner. While renewable energy facilities offer many environmental benefits, appropriate siting and design of such facilities is of paramount importance if the nation is to make optimum use of its renewable energy resources without unnecessarily depleting or degrading its water resources, wildlife habitats, recreational opportunities, and scenic vistas.

1. First Solar's Desert Sunlight Solar Project

Current Status: EIS and FEIS Complete; BLM's Record of Decision Pending

Outstanding Concerns:
While we were pleased to see a number of our initial biological and hydrological concerns addressed during the course of the environmental review process, based on our review of the FEIS, we raised a number of outstanding concerns and recommended BLM and the applicant:
1) utilize the design flexibility of the proposed photovoltaic (PV) system to avoid the 35 acres of desert dry wash woodlands on-site;
2) demonstrate that downstream flows will not be disrupted due to vegetation clearing, proposed check dams, and grading of surface irregularities;
3) identify compensatory mitigation lands or quantify, in the ROD, available lands for compensatory habitat mitigation for this project, as well as reasonably foreseeable projects in the Riverside East Solar Energy Study Zone;
4) in conjunction with the local air agency, coordinate construction with the nearby solar projects to ensure air quality impacts are limited, sufficiently staggered, and do not violate any air quality regulations; and,
5) protect the remaining 15,000 acres within the Right-of-Way that the applicant has carefully chosen to avoid from future development.

2. Solar Millennium's Palen Solar project

TO INSERT FROM STEPHANIE

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3. Solar Reserve's Rice Solar Energy Project

Current Status: DEIS and FEIS Complete; BLM/WAPA's Record of Decision Pending

Outstanding Concerns:
We were pleased to note that a number of our initial biological, aquatic and cumulative impact concerns were addressed during the environmental review process. Based on our review of the FEIS, EPA detailed outstanding concerns and recommendations regarding impacts to aquatic and biological resources, including ephemeral washes and desert tortoise, impacts to site hydrology, and the availability of adequate compensatory mitigation lands. Primary recommendations for WAPA, BLM, and the applicant, to address in the ROD included:

1) Commit to all measures to avoid washes, including not placing heliostats and transmission towers in drainages;
2) include measurable performance standards for mitigation to avoid disruption of downstream flows due to proposed surface disturbances;
3) Identify compensatory mitigation lands or quantify available lands for compensatory habitat mitigation for this project, as well as reasonably foreseeable projects in the Riverside East Solar Energy Study Zone;
4) Ensure that all tribal representatives are invited to participate in the development of the Memorandum of Agreement for this project; and,
5) Identify the model (e.g. Sherpa, SCRE, etc.) to be used for the financial assurance calculations, and include an estimate of the overall size of the surety bond.

Tom Plenys
U.S. EPA, Region IX
Environmental Review Office
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San Francisco, CA 94105

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From: Carolyn Mulvihill/R9/USEPA/US
To: Thomas Plenys/R9/USEPA/US@EPA, Ann McPherson/R9/USEPA/US@EPA, Laura Fujii/R9/USEPA/US@EPA, Erin Foresman/R9/USEPA/US@EPA, Jason Gerdes/R9/USEPA/US@EPA
Cc: Connell Dunning/R9/USEPA/US@EPA, Kathleen Goforth/R9/USEPA/US@EPA
Date: 08/04/2011 11:29 AM
Subject: NEED YOUR FEEDBACK by 3PM TODAY (THURSDAY) Fw: Firedrill, deadline COB today - WH list of priority projects -

Hi all,
I need your feedback on the following projects, in order to respond to a request from HQ.

Please send me a few sentences for each project you've worked on, with the following information:
- Status of the planning/NEPA process
- Any concerns we have/had about these projects
- Whether the projects should be supported as part of a White House streamlining initiative to create jobs, because they're good projects that are close to completing NEPA and just about "shovel ready." For example, I would support White House involvement to resolve issues in the LA transit projects to get them moving forward because I think they are good projects with minimal impacts, and their NEPA is just about complete. If a highway project that filled 30 acres of wetlands without appropriate mitigation was proposed for this effort, I would

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probably not support that.

Please look at the following projects:
Tom/Ann - energy and transmission line projects, or forward to the appropriate person if someone else reviewed.
Laura - San Joaquin River, "Resilient and Safe Infrastructure" and "Boost Production of Clean, Renewable Hydropower" (Laura, please let me know if any of the projects listed under those broad topics include R9 projects)
Erin - Bay Delta
Jason - Four Forest Restoration

Any questions, let me know!

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----- Forwarded by Carolyn Mulvihill/R9/USEPA/US on 08/04/2011 11:11 AM -----

From: Christopher Forinash/DC/USEPA/US
To: Carolyn Mulvihill/R9/USEPA/US@EPA
Cc: Connell Dunning/R9/USEPA/US@EPA, Kathleen Goforth/R9/USEPA/US@EPA
Date: 08/04/2011 08:20 AM
Subject: Re: Firedrill, deadline COB today - WH list of priority projects - opinions about Crenshaw/LAX, Westside Subway, forests & water & ...

Thanks for the prompt reply, Carolyn. I always hate it when my firedrill becomes someone else's problem, but that's definitely the way with this one!

These descriptions aren't consistent, as they're just a cut/paste job from what the agencies submitted. The first batch is DOI, then the forests one is from CEQ.

RENEWABLE ENERGY GENERATION

1. First Solar's Desert Sunlight Solar Project

Project: The Desert Sunlight project is proposed to be 550 MW. It will use photovoltaic technology and be located on about 4,000 acres of Bureau of Land Management Lands in Riverside County California. When built, it is expected to power about 165,000 homes.
Related review(s): The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) must prepare a Record of Decision for the solar project.
Time frame: BLM expects to be in a position to make a decision no later than the end of August.
Jobs impact: Estimated creation of 630 (at peak) temporary direct construction positions and 15 direct permanent positions.
Related initiative:The company is also hoping to secure a DOE Loan Guarantee for this project.

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2. Solar Millennium's Palen Solar project

Project: Solar Millennium's Palen Solar project is proposed to be 484 MW. The proposed project will use parabolic trough, concentrated solar technology. This project will be located on about 3,000 acres of BLM land in Riverside County California. When built, it is expected to power about 145,000 homes.
Related review(s): The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) must prepare a Record of Decision for the solar project.
Time frame: The Bureau of Land Management anticipates being in position to make a decision by the end of August.
Jobs impact: Estimated creation of 1,145 construction jobs (at peak construction) and 134 operation jobs.
Related initiative:This project was jointly analyzed under a Memorandum of Understanding signed by Interior and California. The MOU formed a Renewable Energy Policy Group which brought together all of the agencies with permitting functions in Interior and the State. The California Energy Commission permitted the project on December 15, 2010.

3. Solar Reserve's Rice Solar Energy Project

Project: Solar Reserve's Rice Solar Energy project is proposed to be 150 MW. This project will be a solar power tower and include molten salt storage, which will enable it to produce power after the sun has set. The Rice project is proposed for approximately 2,500 acres of private land in Riverside County, California.
Related review(s): The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) must prepare a Record of Decision for the solar project.
Time frame: The Bureau of Land Management anticipates being in position to make a decision by the end of August.
Jobs impact: Construction: 670 jobs skilled and semi-skilled construction labor and professionals in San Bernardino, Riverside and La Paz Counties.
Operations: 45-50 full-time jobs plus additional services and secondary jobs, induced impacts from regional spending on goods and services.
Technology: 120 to 130 full time highly-skilled engineers and technologists at CA based Rocketdyne including manufacturing and engineering suppliers.
Sponsor: Enable expansion from 35 to 50 or more jobs at SolarReserve's Santa Monica (CA) corporate headquarters.
Induced: 5,369 direct and indirect induced jobs in supply chain including manufacturing, value-added services and transportation.
Related initiative:This project required close consultation with State agencies in California, including the California Energy Commission who permitted this project on December 15, 2010. WAPA is the NEPA lead on this project. The project developer is hoping to secure a DOE Loan Guarantee.
TRANSMISSION

1. SunZia

Project: This project is proposed by SunZia Transmission, LLC. The company plans to construct and operate up to two 500 kilovolt (kV) transmission lines originating at a new substation in either Socorro County or Lincoln County in the vicinity of Bingham or Ancho, New Mexico, and terminating at the Pinal Central Substation in Pinal County near Coolidge, Arizona.
The purpose of the proposed project is to transport electricity generated by power generation resources, including primarily renewable resources, to western power markets and load centers. The SunZia project would enable the development of renewable energy resources including wind, solar, and geothermal generation by creating access to the interstate power grid in the Southwest.
The proposed transmission line route would be approximately 460 miles in length. The proposed route and alternatives would cross approximately 45 miles of BLM lands in Arizona and 170 miles in New Mexico, along with state and private lands. BLM is the lead agency.
Related review(s): The BLM is currently finalizing the scoping report in preparation for the Draft

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Environmental Impact Statement. The Draft EIS is expected in September 2011.
Time frame: BLM anticipates being in position to make a decision on the SunZia transmission line in fall of 2012. Construction – 2013-2014.
Jobs impact: Estimated creation of 4,570 jobs during construction and 150 jobs for operation and maintenance of the transmission project. Additional jobs would be created from the renewable projects that could be built as a result of the transmission line.
Related initiative:This project will also be identified by the transmission working group as a pilot.

1. TransWest Express

Project: TransWest Express, LLC, has filed an application for a right-of-way to construct and operate a 600kV overhead direct current transmission line to cross public and private lands for the TransWest Express 600kV Project. The approximately 700+ mile long extra high voltage line is designed to carry renewable power generated in Wyoming to the Desert Southwest.
The project begins in south central Wyoming, crosses northwestern Colorado, crosses Utah diagonally from northeast to southwest and ends south of Las Vegas at the Marketplace hub in the Eldorado Valley area (near Boulder City, Nevada).
Western Area Power Administration plans to partially fund the project under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, and will be joint lead agency with the BLM for the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process. The project plans to provide 3,000 megawatts of capacity by 2015.
Related review(s): WAPA, USFS
Time frame: The preliminary draft environmental impact statement is anticipated in fall of 2012. The agencies currently anticipate being in a position to make a decision on this project in the spring of 2014.
Jobs impact: Estimated 1,035—1,550 at peak construction.
Related initiative:This project will also be identified by the transmission working group as a pilot.

1. Centennial West Clean Line

Project: Clean Line Energy partners' Centennial West Clean Line transmission project is proposed to transport clean power via an approximately 900-mile overhead, high-voltage direct current transmission (HVDC) line. The Centennial West Clean Line would deliver 3,500 megawatts of renewable energy from northeastern New Mexico to communities in California and other areas in the west that have a strong demand for clean, reliable energy. The route of the Centennial West Clean Line has not yet been determined. The project will begin in northeastern New Mexico and will end in southern California. The BLM and WAPA are co-lead agencies.

Related review(s): WAPA.
Time frame: The project is in the early stages of development and the developer expects to conduct public outreach, siting, permitting in the 2010-2014 timeframe.
Jobs impact: Estimated to create more than 5,000 construction jobs and over 500 operation jobs.
Related initiative:This project will also be identified by the transmission working group as a pilot.

BUREAU OF RECLAMATION INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS
1. Bay-Delta Conservation Plan (BDCP)
Project: The Delta has experienced significant ecological collapse as a result of 150 years of human activity, including California's increasing demand for water and changing environmental conditions. Water from the Delta serves the federal and state water projects, which in turn, serve urban and agricultural areas in the San Francisco Bay area, the Silicon Valley, the San Joaquin Valley, the central coast and southern California. The Delta is also the habitat for hundreds of species of wildlife and fish, including some that are threatened and endangered. The BDCP program is currently investigating water conveyance alternatives to move Central Valley Project and State Water Project water through, around, and/or under the Delta while restoring the Delta ecosystem. Proponents' proposed project involves construction of a 30 mile tunnel to convey water "around" the delta at an estimated cost of more than $12 billion dollars. BDCP participants are drafting a Habitat Conservation Plan that identifies proposed conservation measures addressing water conveyance and project operations, habitat restoration, and other stressors on the Delta environment.

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Related Reviews/Issues:

· Potential habitat restoration and water supply conveyance options included in the BDCP will be assessed as part of an Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS).

· State and Federal lead agencies for the EIR/EIS are the California Department of Water Resources, Bureau of Reclamation, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service, in cooperation with California Department of Fish and Game, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

· The EIR/EIS will fulfill the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and National Environmental Policy Act.

Time Frame:

· BDCP participants are drafting a Habitat Conservation Plan that identifies conservation strategies to improve the overall ecological health of the Delta; ecologically friendly ways to move fresh water through and/or around the Delta; and address toxic pollutants, invasive species, and impairments to water quality.

· The Public Draft of the BDCP is scheduled for fall/winter 2011 and the final BDCP is scheduled to be completed in the fall/winter of 2012.

· The BDCP would be implemented over a 50-year period.

Jobs Impact: Reclamation's future investment is currently estimated at $20,020,000 or approximately 108 The President's Council of Economic Advisors (CEA) produced estimates of stimulus related job creation in May 2009. That guidance provided that creating one job [one job for one year] requires $92,136 of government spending. Reclamation's jobs estimate for all four listed projects is based on that factor.
jobs each year created or maintained based on the workload planned for that year. Reclamation does not have an estimate of the total investment by all the participating agencies. Although there will be continued investment over the 50-year implementation period, Reclamation currently does not have an estimate, as decisions for action are yet to be made.

1. San Joaquin River Restoration Program

Description: The San Joaquin River Restoration Program is the result of a settlement of NRDC, et al., v. Kirk Rodgers, et al., and the San Joaquin River Restoration Settlement Act (P.L. 111-11) focused on restoring flows and fish, including Chinook salmon to the San Joaquin River. These efforts will restore riparian habitat to more than 30 miles of the San Joaquin River, restore ecosystem function and aquatic, riparian, and upland species habitats along the river, improve river channel capacities and flood control operations, and reconnect the upper San Joaquin River to the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. A restored river will enhance recreational access and opportunities for many communities along the river. Several non-profit conservation organizations working on the program formed a collaborative partnership to maximize the environmental, social, and economic benefits this restoration program brings to the people of California.

Related Reviews/Issues:

§ The implementation plan for the San Joaquin River Restoration Program (SJRRP) includes the public release of a Draft Program Environmental Impact Statement/Report (PEIS/R) in 2011, a Final PEIS/R in 2012, and a Record of Decision shortly thereafter.

§ Interim Flows - The first river releases under the Settlement began in October 2009, to collect a range of information on flows, temperatures, fish needs, seepage losses, and water recirculation, recapture and reuse which are ongoing.

§ Site-specific Projects - Reclamation and the State of California initiated site-specific planning, environmental compliance, and design work focused on four high-priority channel improvement projects; the Reach 4B, Eastside Bypass, and Mariposa Bypass Channel and Structural Improvements Project, and the Mendota Pool Bypass, and Reach 2B Channel Improvements Project, the Arroyo Canal Fish Screen and Sack Dam Fish Passage Project, and the Salt and Mud Slough Seasonal Barriers Project.

§ Reach 4B High Flow Routing study will determine the routing of long-term flows in the San Joaquin River. The study will result in a report to Congress.

§ Water Management Actions - Reclamation anticipates completing final design and beginning construction

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activities for the Friant-Kern and Madera Canal Capacity Correction Project.

§ Fish Reintroduction - Using funds provided by Reclamation, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) are conducting the technical and scientific analysis to support the reintroduction of spring-run Chinook salmon.

§ All parties have expressed concern that Reclamation has not been including any funding in its budget for the Settlement outside of CVPIA believing that requests for appropriations now will reduce the large appropriations requests needed in FY 14 and FY 15 by spreading the $88 million not subject to appropriation into those years.

§ A lawsuit has been filed by a family of landowners against the United States alleging a taking of private property due to numerous allegations including seepage. The Department of Justice has entered into alternative dispute resolution with the plaintiffs and Reclamation is working to install groundwater monitoring wells on the plaintiff's properties.

Time Frame: Through 2018

Jobs Impact: The total estimated investment is $640.8 million. Reclamation's future estimated investment is approximately $563,182,000 or about 873 jobs per year created or maintained based on the workload planned for that year. There will also be some continuing impact into the future with ongoing operations and infrastructure maintenance. Due to funding issues this timeline may be extended.

"GREEN" INFRASTRUCTURE

1. Four Forest Restoration Initiative (4FRI)

Project: Forest restoration program for approximately one million acres in the Coconino and Kaibab National Forests, including mechanical thinning, prescribed burning, temporary road construction and decommission, road reconstruction, road and unauthorized decommission and obliteration, ephemeral stream channel restoration, and riparian springs and seeps restoration.
Related review(s): USDA is preparing an EIS
Time frame: Early stage project; will realize efficiencies through landscape-level NEPA analysis and innovative collaboration that can be applied broadly.
Jobs impact: Consult USDA
Related initiative: USDA has proposed to collaborate with CEQ on the NEPA for this project through CEQ's NEPA Pilot Program. USDA would use a novel, landscape-scale approach to NEPA planning that would eliminate the need to conduct an estimated 20-50 individual NEPA analyses that USFS would ordinarily complete for an area that size.

This next batch is from the Corps, which hasn't clearly indicated where the projects would be, so I've included all of them.

RESILIENT AND SAFE INFRASTRUCTURE

1. Restore Projects and Reduce Risk to Life and Property Following 2011 Historic Floods
Program: The historic floods in the Mississippi, Missouri, and lower Ohio river basins not only damaged homes and businesses, but also destroyed or degraded the ability of existing flood control projects to protect from future floods. The damaged projects include major Federal levees and reservoirs, as well as non-Federal levees qualifying for assistance under the Rehabilitation and Inspection Program. To avoid major flood losses in the future, including risks to life and damages impacting local economic activity, these projects must be repaired, restored, or rehabilitated. The current estimate for these repairs is about $2.0 billion, including $1 billion for critical repairs needed before the next flood season (Spring 2012) in order to protect life and safety and public infrastructure. The additional $1 billion would be used to restore full long-term project functionality. Additional project level detail is available upon request.

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Related Reviews: For repairs to these existing projects, environmental review requirements are limited.
Time Frame: Hundreds of projects are affected. Funds could be obligated in anywhere from a few days to a few months.
Jobs impact: Direct: 18,500; Indirect: 5,100; Induced: 15,000; Total (Direct + Indirect + Induced): 38,600. Increased economic activity resulting from restored flood protection.
Related Initiative: Restore Navigation Capacity Following 2011 Historic Floods to Maintain Global Competitiveness

2. Restore Navigation Capacity Following 2011 Historic Floods to Maintain Global Competitiveness
Program: The historic floods in the Mississippi, Missouri, and lower Ohio river basins left behind sediment that chokes the channels and waterways that sustain commercial navigation. Deep draft navigation from Baton Rouge to the Gulf of Mexico was impacted by these historic floods, resulting in impacts to both exports and imports. Three of the 10 busiest ports in the Nation – the Port of New Orleans, the Port of Baton Rouge, and the Port of Southeast Louisiana – are among those affected. Failure to provide economically efficient and reliable channel dimensions drives up costs to producers and consumers and damages the ability of United States businesses to compete on world markets. This program involves restoring channel dimensions degraded by the historic floods. The current estimate of restoration costs is about $300 million. Additional project level detail is available upon request.

Related Reviews: For repairs to existing projects, environmental review requirements are limited
Time Frame: Funds could be obligated in anywhere from a few days to a few months.
Jobs impact: Direct: 2,800; Indirect: 800; Induced: 2,300; Total (Direct + Indirect + Induced): 5,900 from construction. Increased economic activity as a result of restored channel capacity.
Related Initiatives: Restore Projects and Reduce Risk to Life and Property Following 2011 Historic Floods; Accelerate Completion of Navigation Improvements and Maintenance for Global Competition

3. Accelerate Reduction in Flood Risks to Life and Property

Program: The Army Corps of Engineers is constructing approximately 50 budgeted Civil Works projects for flood risk management (including safety of dams), and operates and maintains (O&M) hundreds more completed projects for flood damage reduction. The construction projects provide high returns on investment, as measured by benefit-cost ratio and protection of life. The O&M projects, which have prevented hundreds of billions in flood damages, are aging, with the costs of maintenance and repairs increasing. The Corps would accelerate completion of budgeted construction projects and accelerate maintenance of critical projects within its budgeted FY2012 program, in coordination with local cost share sponsors, to provide expedite reduction of flood risks to life and property across the country. Initial estimated funding required is $750 million. This includes $500 million for construction, of which $300 million specifically support projects that reduce high risk to human life such as East St. Louis, IL and American River near Sacramento, CA, and $250 million for O&M, including such projects as Lewisville Lake upstream of Dallas, TX and Addicks-Barker Dam upstream of Houston, TX. Additional project level detail is available upon request.

Related reviews: NEPA, historic preservation, and other requirements have been addressed during planning of individual projects.

Time frame: Projects would begin to be executed during FY2012 in accordance with current project management plans.
Jobs impact: Direct: 6,900; Indirect: 1,900; Induced: 5,600; Total (Direct + Indirect + Induced): 14,400. Increased economic activity from reduced flood damage risks.
Related initiatives: Restore Projects and Reduce Risk to Life and Property Following 2011 Historic Floods; Interagency Silver Jackets Natural Hazard Initiative.

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4. Accelerate Completion of Navigation Improvements and Maintenance for Global Competition

Program: The Army Corps of Engineers is constructing improvements at 17 budgeted commercial navigation projects and maintains hundreds more existing commercial navigation channels and harbors, including 59 projects with annual commercial tonnage of 10 million tons or more. Construction of the new projects and maintenance of the existing projects produce savings to producers and consumers and help the United States compete in world markets. The Corps would accelerate O&M and construction of its budgeted FY2012 navigation program. Initial estimated funding required is $1.34 billion:

- $640 million for critical O&M on 59 high-use coastal deep draft harbors (these harbors support movement of 90% of the waterborne commerce -- imports and exports – through the Nation's coastal ports),
- $600 million for critical inland waterways O&M, such as the critical maintenance on the Ohio River Locks and Dams and channel work, and
- $100 million for coastal navigation construction, such as the New York Harbor deepening and Dredged Material Disposal Facilities for Great Lakes and East Coast ports.

Inland waterway improvements are not included in these estimates due to limited funding in the Inland Waterways Trust Fund, which by law finances 50% of capital improvement costs. Inland waterway construction projects cannot be accelerated until a long-term mechanism is in place to enhance trust fund revenues. Additional project level detail is available upon request.

Related reviews: NEPA, historic preservation, and other requirements are addressed during planning of individual projects.

Time frame: Projects would begin to be executed during FY2012 in accordance with current project management plans. For construction projects, contracting would be increased in FY12 and completion would be accelerated.

Jobs impact: Direct: 12,400; Indirect: 3,4000; Induced: 10,100; Total (Direct + Indirect + Induced): 25,900. Increased economic activity from more efficient, more competitive navigation systems.

Related initiatives: National Export Initiative. (Although these harbors have recently petitioned the President for support, Charleston Harbor deepening is still under study and the Port of Miami deepening will be fully funded by the Port in 2012. Therefore, these projects are not included in the above estimates.)

5. Accelerate Completion of Priority Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration Programs

Program: As part of its ongoing Civil Works Construction program, the Army Corps of Engineers would accelerate its budgeted FY2012 Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration program in order to provide immediate restoration improvements for the five Priority Aquatic Ecosystems across the country – the Great Lakes, the Chesapeake Bay, the Everglades, the California Bay Delta, and the Gulf Coast. Initial estimated funding is $300 million.

Compliance with Endangered Species Act requirements on the Columbia River and Missouri River also could be accelerated for an estimated $120 million.

Additional project level detail is available upon request.

Related reviews: Proposed accelerations of Construction projects would need to be coordinated with local cost share sponsors in order to confirm availability of local sponsor funding, where required. NEPA, historic preservation, and other requirements are addressed during planning of individual projects.

Time frame: Projects would begin to be executed during FY2012 in accordance with current project management plans.

Jobs impact: Direct: 7,800; Indirect: 2,100; Induced: 6,300; Total (Direct + Indirect + Induced): 16,200.

Related initiatives: CEQ/OMB FY 2013 Budget Guidance Document – Ecosystems, America's Great Outdoors, and Oceans

RENEWABLE ENERGY GENERATION

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6. Boost Production of Clean, Renewable Hydropower

Program: The Army Corps of Engineers operates and maintains about 75 hydropower facilities at its multi-purpose projects. These facilities produce one fourth of the nation's hydropower, 3 percent of its total electricity. Hydropower is clean and renewable. It is important to the Nation's energy future that hydropower production be efficient and reliable. In coordination with the Federal Power Marketing Administrations (PMAs), the Corps could accelerate maintenance and repairs and move forward with major rehabilitations that are critical to the reliability of this energy supply. Initial estimated funding for construction or major rehabilitation projects is $100 million for projects under the Hydropower Modernization Initiative, including the power plant at Allatoona Lake near Atlanta, GA. Initial estimated funding for the critical hydropower maintenance backlog is $90 million, including Cordell Hull Power Plant in Nashville, TN. Additional project level detail is available upon request.

Related review(s): Proposed accelerations of construction projects would need to be coordinated with PMAs, in order to confirm availability of associated PMA funding, where required.

Time frame: Projects would begin to be executed during FY2012 in accordance with current project management plans.

Jobs impact: Direct: 500; Indirect: 100; Induced: 400; Total (Direct + Indirect + Induced): 1,000. Increased economic activity from the increased availability and reliability of low-cost hydropower.

Related initiative: President's Executive Order 13514; Bureau of Reclamation Hydropower Modernization Initiative; Interagency Memorandum of Understanding for Hydropower Among the Departments of Energy, Interior, and Army.

Christopher Forinash
U.S. EPA - Office of Sustainable Communities
(202) 566-0518

From: Carolyn Mulvihill/R9/USEPA/US
To: Christopher Forinash/DC/USEPA/US@EPA
Cc: Connell Dunning/R9/USEPA/US@EPA, Kathleen Goforth/R9/USEPA/US@EPA
Date: 08/04/2011 11:04 AM
Subject: Re: Firedrill, deadline COB today - WH list of priority projects - opinions about Crenshaw/LAX, Westside Subway, forests & water & ...

Hi Chris,

I can definitely speak to the transportation projects - I'm still at home, but once I get to the office I can review the EIS review letters we wrote and get back to you. I think I reviewed Crenshaw. Also, go ahead and send the non-transport projects and I will distribute to the folks in my office who worked on those projects to see if they might have any sustainable communities impacts.

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-----Christopher Forinash/DC/USEPA/US wrote: -----
To: Carolyn Mulvihill/R9/USEPA/US@EPA
From: Christopher Forinash/DC/USEPA/US
Date: 08/04/2011 07:35AM
Subject: Firedrill, deadline COB today - WH list of priority projects - opinions about Crenshaw/LAX, Westside Subway, forests & water & ...

Hey Carolyn,

We have a fast-turnaround request via the WH jobs council to review a list of potential "high priority infrastructure projects" and let them know of any serious concerns. I don't know many details of the projects in your region and am hoping you do! I really appreciate any opinions you can offer, and feel free to just call and tell me and I'll write it up.

Here's some background. The WH jobs council solicited from various agencies projects that are funded and in progress or ready to start but that have some bureaucratic or other issues. Tim Torma described it to me in terms of Project XL, a search for good (jobs) projects that collaboration could push through. We have been asked to review the list to make sure there aren't any horrible ones on here, and to pass up to the council any serious concerns (or praise). Our management needs to report to the council tomorrow, Friday, so this has to be done COB today or early tomorrow.

The list includes projects in R9 ranging from powerlines to water supply to Bay-Delta and San Joaquin restorations and a forest plan in Arizona, plus transportation stuff. I can send details on the non-transport if you think they might have sustinable-communities impacts, but here are the transport ones.

DOT characterized this as SHORT-TERM, JOB CREATION. Do you think it's an appropriate project, and at an appropriate stage, to include on such a list?

1. Crenshaw/ LAX Transit Corridor (CA)
Project: The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority's (LACMTA) light rail transit (LRT) project that will connect with the existing lines Metro Green Line and Expo Light Rail Transit (which is already under construction). The corridor crosses several environmental justice communities and comments have been received on equity of providing a subway for the Westside in LA, but a partially at-grade LRT for the Crenshaw corridor. (See Westside project in document for more details). Additionally, FAA was recently added as a cooperating agency due to safety concerns about the alignment near LAX airport.
Related Review(s): Since the completion of the Draft EIS/EIR, a Supplemental EIS/ Recirculated Draft EIR was prepared, waiting to move to Final.

Time Frame: The project is under a timeline related to the city's "America Fast Forward" plan, which aims to advance 30 years of transportation improvements within 10 years. This project needs to immediately resolve EJ and safety issues in order to move to a Final EIS.

Jobs Impact: Under development.

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2. Westside Subway Extension (CA)
Project: The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (LACMTA) has selected a nine mile extension of the Metro Purple Line to the Westwood/Veterans Administration (VA) Hospital as the Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) for the Westside Subway Extension.

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Process Improvements: The aggressive schedule, number of station and alignment options, the complex geotechnical issues (Santa Monica Fault), and the high level of concern (with potential litigation) over three station options (Century City, Westwood/UCLA and Westwood/ VA Hospital) with associated alignment options. Major public concerns have arisen since the Draft EIS/EIR, and high-level leadership involvement would help move the project forward.

3. Streetcar Categorical Exclusions (Nationwide)
Project: With increases in the number of cities implementing new streetcar systems – or returning streetcars to use within rights-of-way which previously supported streetcar tracks and service – new NEPA CEs are needed. For example, the District Department of Transportation (DDOT) is implementing a comprehensive streetcar system, some alignments of which constitute a return to service while others are new in scope. The majority of the planned lines are within city streets.
Related Review(s): While an EA is underway for the segment of the system in Anacostia, the placement of track for the H Street/Benning Road segment occurred earlier during reconstruction of the streets using local funding. This segment is now precluded from FTA funding because DDOT did not undertake the EA process at the outset. However, the street reconstruction project would have only required a CE but there is no CE available for a streetcar project that is entirely in the right-of-way of an existing street. Many other streetcar projects in the country perform EAs when only a CE would be required for the roadway aspects of the projects.

Time Frame: The DC system is planned to be implemented in phases over multiple years. The first phase in Anacostia is expected to start revenue-service by the fall of 2012. The H Street/Benning Road segment is delayed due to the NEPA/funding issue. Nationwide, the time frame is ongoing.

Process Improvements: If the list of CEs can be expanded to include streetcar projects, then joint road/streetcar construction will not need to be bifurcated and run through two different NEPA processes.

agency Memorandum of Understanding for Hydropower Among the Departments of Energy, Interior, and Army.

Christopher Forinash
U.S. EPA - Office of Sustainable Communities
(202) 566-0518

From: Carolyn Mulvihill/R9/USEPA/US
To: Christopher Forinash/DC/USEPA/US@EPA
Cc: Connell Dunning/R9/USEPA/US@EPA, Kathleen Goforth/R9/USEPA/US@EPA
Date: 08/04/2011 11:04 AM
Subject: Re: Firedrill, deadline COB today - WH list of priority projects - opinions about Crenshaw/LAX, Westside Subway, forests & water & ...

Hi Chris,
I can definitely speak to the transportation projects - I'm still at home, but once I get to the office I can review the EIS review letters we wrote and get back to you. I think I reviewed Crenshaw. Also, go ahead and send the non-transport projects and I will distribute to the folks in my office who worked on those projects to see if they might have any sustainable communities impacts.

Carolyn Mulvihill
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Environmental Review Office
U.S. EPA, Region 9
75 Hawthorne Street, CED-2
San Francisco CA 94105-3901

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fax: (415) 947-8026
email: mulvihill.carolyn@epa.gov

-----Christopher Forinash/DC/USEPA/US wrote: -----
To: Carolyn Mulvihill/R9/USEPA/US@EPA
From: Christopher Forinash/DC/USEPA/US
Date: 08/04/2011 07:35AM
Subject: Firedrill, deadline COB today - WH list of priority projects - opinions about Crenshaw/LAX, Westside Subway, forests & water & ...

Hey Carolyn,

We have a fast-turnaround request via the WH jobs council to review a list of potential "high priority infrastructure projects" and let them know of any serious concerns. I don't know many details of the projects in your region and am hoping you do! I really appreciate any opinions you can offer, and feel free to just call and tell me and I'll write it up.

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