Janet,

Just wanted to following up on our earlier phone conversation where J-6/Mescal CDO was requesting a Southline presentation/question and answer session with our communities now that the FEIS has been released.

Of particular interest to our community:

1. What are next steps now that Final Study has been completed? When do they anticipate the Record of Decision being filed, and is Alternative Route H bypassing the residential and commercial area of Mescal still a viable option?

Records of Decision (RODs) by BLM and Western Area Power Administration are expected in the first quarter of 2016. After the RODs are issued, for the Upgrade segment, the next steps would include communications to private landowners to request a right of entry permission to study and identify right of way opportunities.

On routing, Alternative H was analyzed in detail in the EIS, but after weighing impacts, the Agencies identified upgrading the line in the existing location as the preferred alternative.

2. What can local property owners expect since the existing Right of Way needs to be increased from 100' to 150'?

Please see the following description of the Right-of-Way (ROW) and Land Acquisition Process requirements and construction method for the Upgrade section as detailed in the FEIS:

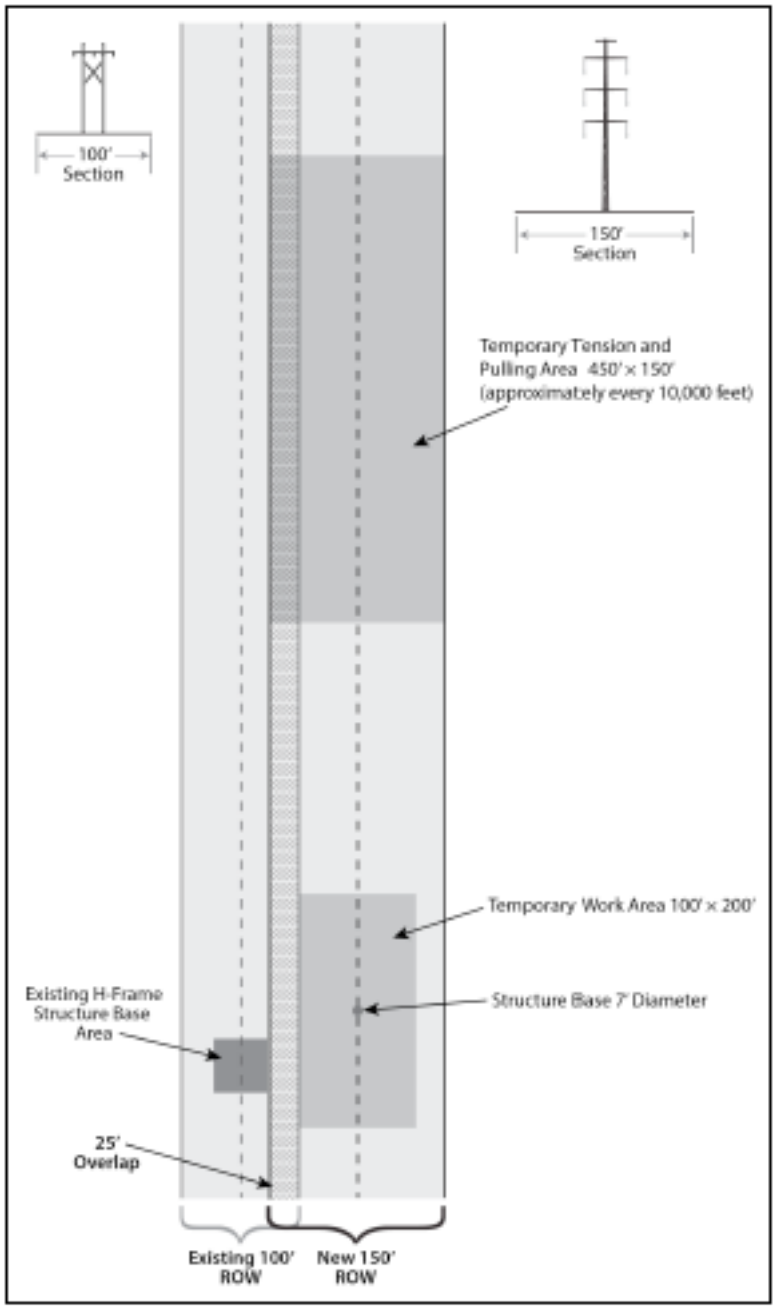
" One of two methods of construction for the Upgrade Section of the Project would be used, depending on ROW constraints: the tear-down and rebuild in place method; or construction of the new facilities adjacent to the existing facilities. In locations where possible, the new 230-kV line would be built 50 feet away from the edge of the existing 100-foot ROW, parallel to the existing line. A total of 50 feet of new ROW would be obtained where possible in order to accommodate this construction method. This would allow the existing line to remain in service until the new line is energized, at which point the existing line would be decommissioned and removed. Seventy-five feet of the existing 100-foot ROW would then be abandoned, and the remaining 25 feet adjacent to the new transmission line would be incorporated to form the new 150-foot permanent ROW. This is the preferred method of construction, as it would minimize the outage time on the existing line, and the risk of outages for local consumers during the upgrade process. Most of the disturbance in the old ROW would occur within 50 to 75 feet of the existing ROW centerline to remove old structures or old conductors. Western would work with private landowners during the micro-siting process to minimize potential impacts to landowners.
In places, such as across Bar V Ranch in Pima County, and the congested urban areas from the Del Bac Substation through Tucson to the Rattlesnake Substation, it may not be physically possible or prudent to construct the upgrade line in this manner. In these cases, a tear down and rebuild in place method would need to be used, centered on the existing 100-foot ROW. The old line would need to be taken out of service and torn out and the

new line constructed in the original 100-foot, or somewhat expanded, ROW. This work would likely be subject to seasonal restrictions to minimize the outage impacts on system reliability. **(Volume 1 Chapter 2 page 89)**

As mentioned above, after the RODs are issued, communications to private landowners would be made to request a right of entry permission to study and identify right of way opportunities where the 150-foot expanded ROW may be possible, and where using the existing 100-foot ROW to build in place would be required.

Figure 2-15b is an example of typical ROW configuration for Upgrade sections of the Project that require 150 feet.

Figure 2-15b. Typical ROW configuration (150-foot), Upgrade Section.



3. What are the known impacts during construction and maintenance of the upgrade related to Health and Safety, Noise, and Visual Resources?

The complete impact analysis for noise is found in the FEIS, Section 4.3-Noise and Vibration. Those closest to the ROW would experience the highest levels of construction noise of up to 83 dBA **(Volume 3, page 677 of FEIS),** however, construction noise would be short-term temporary, and intermittent in nature. Therefore, construction noise would represent more of a nuisance and would be reduced to below thresholds and/or baseline conditions with the use of the proposed mitigation measures to reduce noise levels. Mitigation measures include proper scheduling of noisy construction activities, minimizing construction traffic, and locating noisy construction equipment away from sensitive receptors (see table 2-8, **Volume 1, page 107 and 108** of the FEIS). The level of noise associated with the corona effect of the transmission line strongly depends on weather conditions as well as the condition of the transmission line **(Volume 3, page 665-666**, FEIS). Because of the relatively dry nature of the area, the overall level of operational noise would be minimal and would decrease rapidly with distance from the transmission line. Corona noise increases with aging, damaged equipment. Therefore in the Upgrade Section where the transmission line will be replacing the existing line with newer equipment with an increased height above ground, corona noise would be expected to decrease from currently existing line conditions.

The complete impact analysis for health and safety can be found in the FEIS, Section 4.16-Public Health and Safety **(Volume 3, page 1136).** The upgraded lines will generate higher electromagnetic field (EMF) levels within the ROW. However, EMF levels outside the ROW are expected to be comparable to EMF levels created by the existing transmission infrastructure, as a result of the double-circuit configuration's phase cancellation effect.

The complete impact analysis for visual can be found in the FEIS, Section 4.10Visual Resources **(Volume 3, page 968)** and visual simulations can be found in Appendix K. During construction, visual impacts would occur with the introduction of construction vehicles, equipment, and construction materials **(Volume 3, page 972 FEIS).** Disturbance resulting from construction, earthwork, and vegetation clearing would be temporary and short in duration until restoration of disturbed vegetation occurs. Visual impacts in the Upgrade Section will result from the replacement of existing transmission line structures with taller structures, substation expansion, removal of vegetation to construct and maintain the transmission line, and temporary construction staging areas **(Volume 3, page 991, FEIS).**

4. What are the latest simulations relevant to area pole design and method of installation?

Figure 2-12 Comparison of Typical Existing and Proposed Structure Types

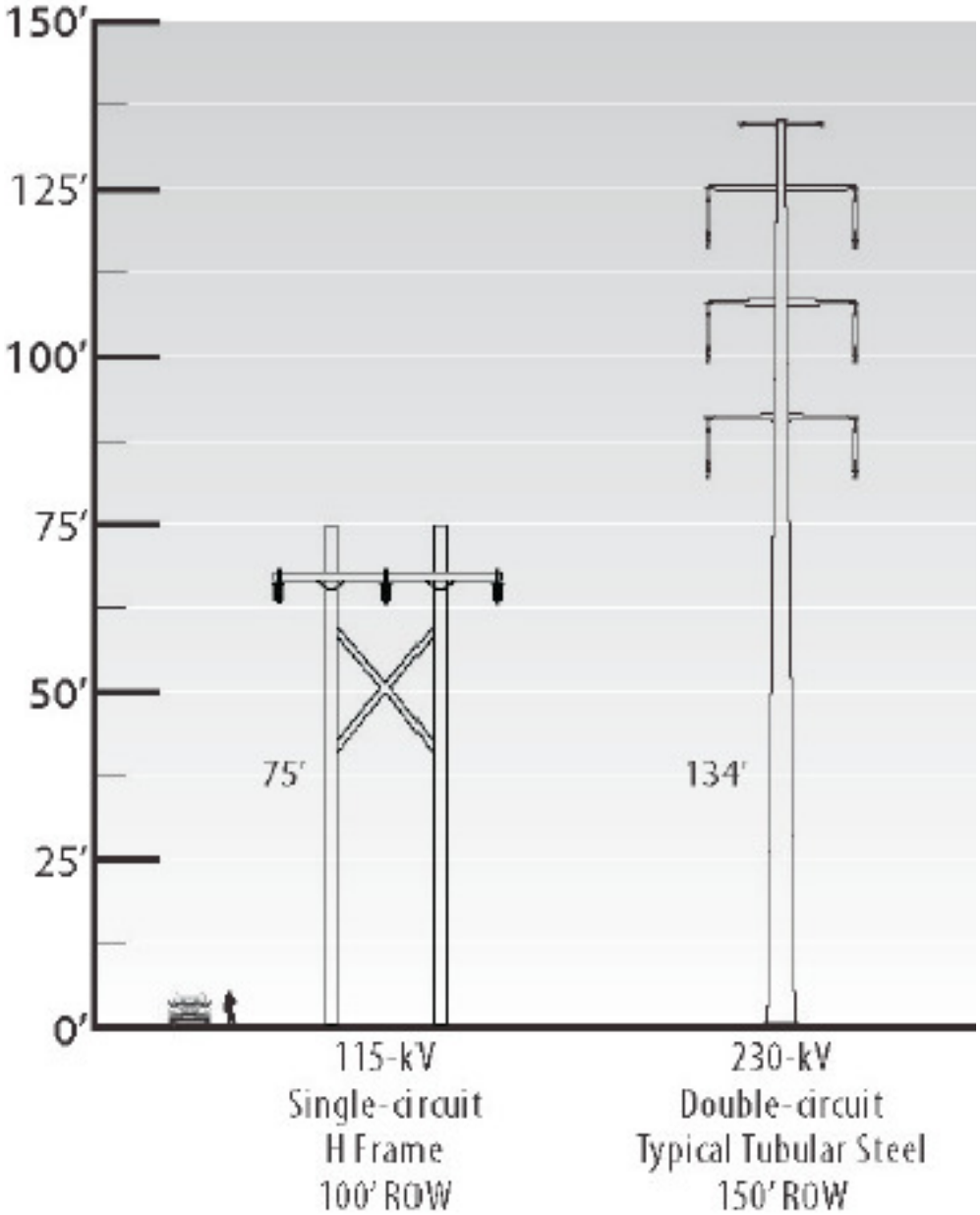
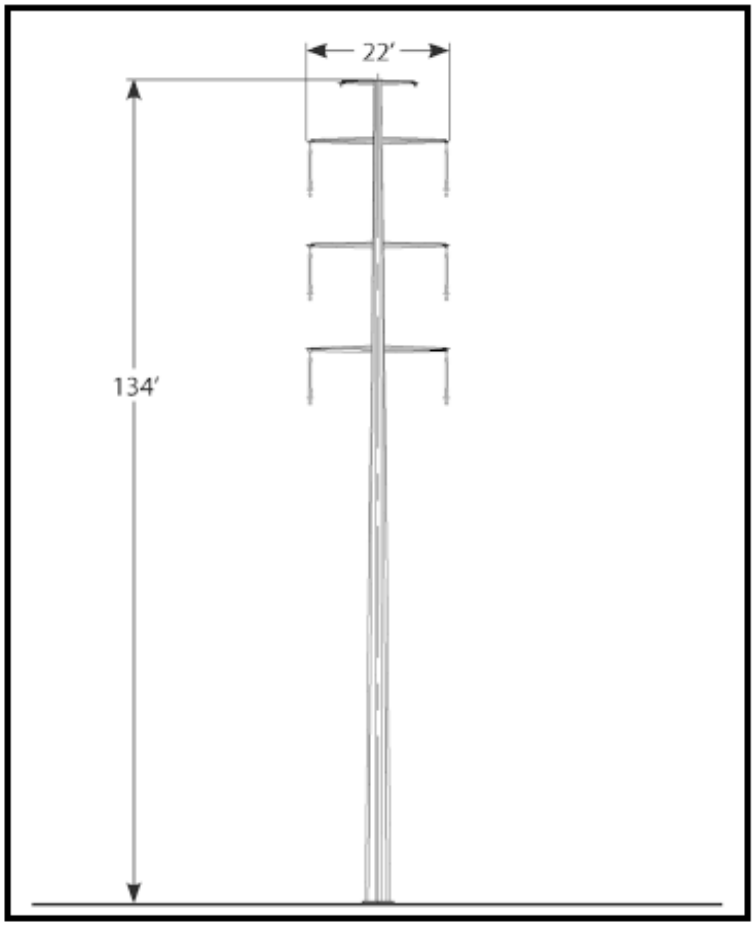


Table 2-2. Typical Design Characteristics of the Proposed Upgrade Section 230-kV Transmission Line

Feature	Proposed (Description)
General Description	
Structure type	Tubular steel poles (see figures 2-8 through 2-11)
Structure height	100–140 feet
Span length	700–1,100 feet
Number of structures per mile*	5–6
ROW width†	150 feet

Figure 2-9. Typical 230-kV tangent tubular steel pole diagram (foundation type).



Example of actual 230kV structure replacement of existing 115kV H-frame along Silverbell Road in Tucson

Looking forward to hearing from you regarding what can be scheduled after you spoke to several individuals...

Mary

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