



U.S. Department of Energy Environmental Impact Statement for the Alignment, Construction, and Operation of a Rail Line to a Geologic Repository at Yucca Mountain, Nye County, NV

RECEIVED
MAY 28 2004

RECEIVED

040740

MAY 28 2004

SCOPING COMMENT SHEET

Name: David C. Lee

Organization: Taiwanese Chamber of Commerce
Southern Nevada

Mailing Address: [REDACTED]

Zip: [REDACTED]

Telephone Number (Optional): _____

How did you hear about us?

Newspaper Public meetings _____ Other _____
Neighbor _____ News coverage _____

If you want to receive information about the Rail Alignment Environmental Impact Statement by mail, please check here.

COMMENTS:

Please see the attached letter.

Please note: Your comment(s) must be received by the Department of Energy by June 1, 2004 to be considered. Comments received after the close of the comment period will be considered to the extent practicable.

If you prefer to mail your comments, you may use the back side of this sheet as a postage-paid, self-mailer. To do so, fold in thirds along the dotted line so the address and postage-paid notice are visible, then secure with tape.

Please feel free to attach additional pages (if mailing, more postage may be needed).

Southern Nevada Taiwanese Chamber Of Commerce

[Redacted]

Tel: [Redacted]
Fax: [Redacted]

May 25, 2004

040240

Ms. Robin Sweeney, EIS Document Manager
Office of National Transportation
Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management
US Department of Energy
1551 Hillshire Drive, M/S 011
Las Vegas, NV 89134

Re: Rail Alignment EIS for the Yucca Mountain Repository

Dear EIS Document Manager:

Southern Nevada Taiwanese Chamber of Commerce, a non-profit Nevada organization, submits this comment on the above subject following our participation of the public scoping meeting on May 17, 2004.

Our comment is based on the fact that DOE is confronting tremendous adversity in both the political and the legal fronts. If DOE does not want perpetual resentment of Nevadans against the construction of the Yucca Mountain Repository, and if DOE does not want a prolonged legal battle with the Nevada State government, then DOE should take stock to see what avenues are available that would resolve the political and legal issues.

We are proposing an Apex Rail Corridor that preserves the distinct advantages of the Valley Modified Rail Corridor, while minimizing the clear disadvantages inherent with the Caliente Rail Corridor. Of course, we are aware that DOE has already decided to select the Caliente Corridor. But the huge cost in pursuing that selection and the irrecoverable socio-economic losses may warrant a reconsideration. We share the same interest as DOE in finding a win-win plan.

The proposed Apex Corridor is a slight revision to the Valley Modified Rail Corridor. It proposes placing the rail route a few miles north circumventing the Las Vegas Valley, and constructing the inter-modal transfer facility near the junction of Highway 93 and I-15. It circumvents the Nellis Air Force Range. Enclosed is a rough drawing of the proposed corridor. Our proposal aims at a better return on investment, particularly the socio-economic advantages that could never be available if the Caliente Corridor is the final choice.

First, DOE should work with relevant and interested parties in the State of Nevada. To do so, DOE should work with the Clark County government, which population is nearly 70% of the state population. The Caliente Corridor looks so remote as to create an image of a covert operation or something to hide. The culture of the West dictates that the business of transporting nuclear wastes should always be upfront and open to the people.

The proposed inter-modal transfer facility is approximately 3 miles outside the Las Vegas Valley, and a short drive from any point in the greater Las Vegas metropolitan area for anyone who wishes to observe how rail shipments look and the transfer procedure. DOE would have the opportunity to show off how environmental issues are addressed in real scenes, and how safe the operation would appear. This opportunity to build public trust and confidence is not available to the predominant population in the State of Nevada if the Caliente Rail Corridor is chosen. In fact, a tourist center properly located near the facility for the public to see the transfer operation and to take the train to the Yucca Mountain Repository would boost the return on investment for the proposed Apex Corridor.

An additional benefit for the proposed Apex Rail Corridor is a more economical transportation means that allows hundreds of workers to commute between Las Vegas and Yucca Mountain. Currently they depend on buses to go to work at both the Test Site and the Yucca Mountain Repository.

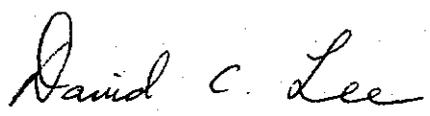
It goes without saying that circumventing the area that has a good potential for local community plan for development is highly desirable. This is why the proposed Apex Rail Corridor curves northward from the proposed inter-modal transfer facility and then converges to the existing railroad near Indian Spring. A survey is necessary to pinpoint the exact route for the proposed Apex Corridor. The issue with regard to addressing the Desert National Wildlife Range is relatively minor because an inexpensive mitigation plan should be available to satisfy everyone.

The proposed Apex Corridor would add an additional 15 miles of distance over the length of the Valley Modified Corridor and the estimated cost would approach \$300 million dollars. Compared with the Caliente Corridor, which would cost \$880 million dollars, the saving is a huge \$580 million dollars. The return on investment is the core of our issue in this comment. We have not been able to identify an equally equitable return on the investment of as much as \$580 million dollars as the proposed Apex Corridor.

Incidentally, until we participated in the public scoping meeting held on May 17, 2004 at the Cashman Center, we did not have any negative feeling about the choice of the Caliente Corridor. The more we looked into the rationale of choosing the Caliente Corridor, the more we feel negatively. Our conclusion is that common sense should prevail.

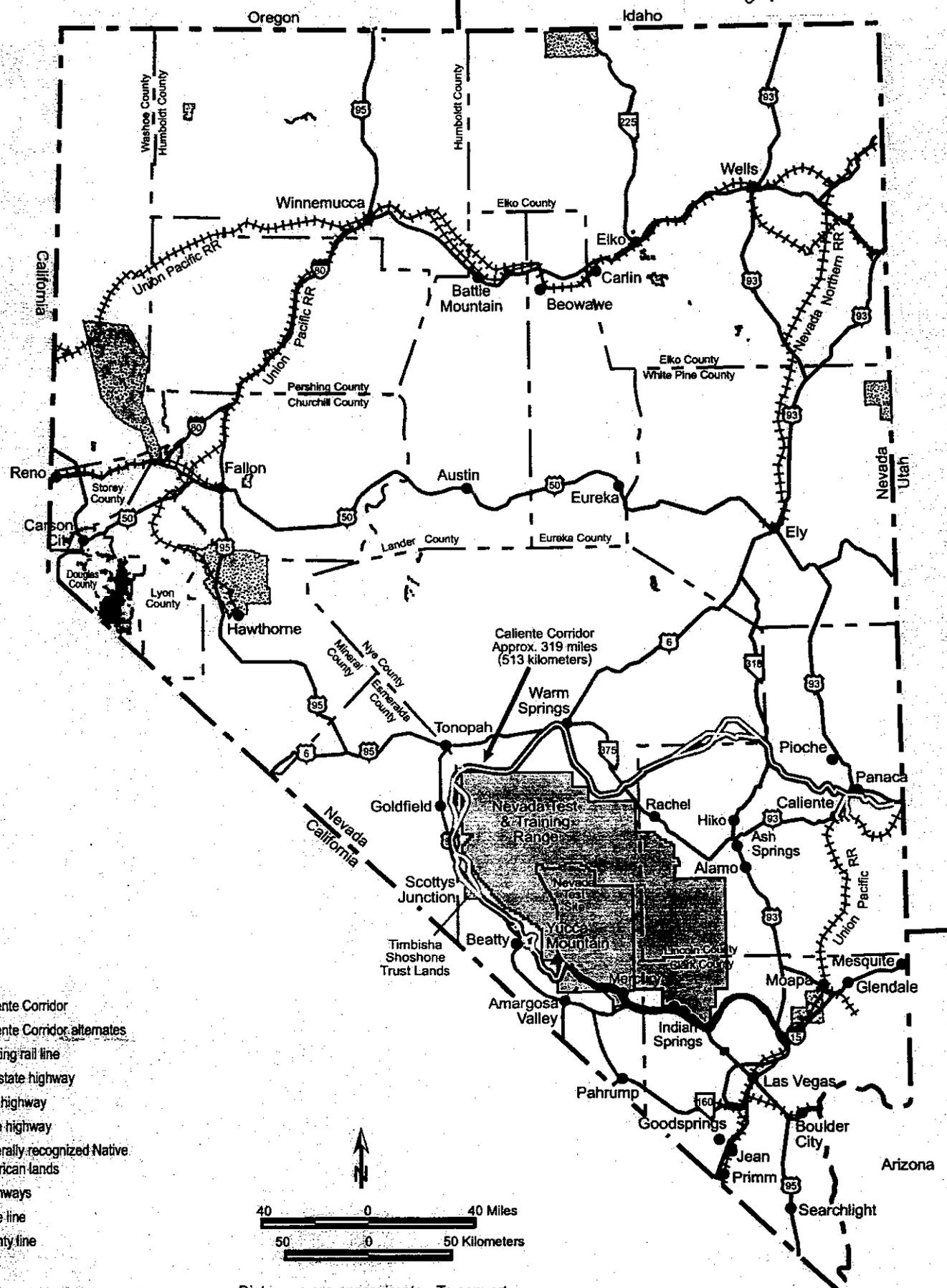
Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

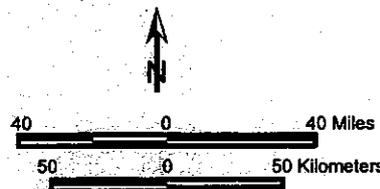


David C. Lee
President, Southern Nevada Taiwanese Chamber of Commerce

040740



- Legend**
- Caliente Corridor
 - Caliente Corridor alternates
 - Existing rail line
 - Interstate highway
 - U.S. highway
 - State highway
 - Federally recognized Native American lands
 - Highways
 - State line
 - County line



Proposed Apex Corridor Distances are approximate. To convert kilometers to miles, multiply by 0.62137.