



United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF RECLAMATION
Phoenix Area Office
6150 West Thunderbird Road
Glendale, AZ 85306-4001
December 19, 2024

IN REPLY REFER TO:
PXAO-1500
2.1.4.17

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL AND U.S. MAIL

Subject: Notice of Public Scoping for an Environmental Assessment (EA) on the Proposed Arizona Public Service (APS) Queue 317 Interconnection for the Painted Desert Power Project on the Navajo Nation in Coconino County, Arizona. PXAO-25-3-Scoping (Action by 30 days from the date of this memorandum)

Dear Interested Party:

Painted Desert Power, LLC (Applicant) is proposing to construct, operate, maintain, and decommission the Painted Desert Power Project (Project), a 750-megawatt (MW) photovoltaic solar generating and battery energy storage system with a generation intertie (gen-tie) that would connect the Project to the existing Moenkopi Switchyard. The Project is located approximately 4 miles east of the unincorporated town of Cameron, Arizona, within the Cameron and Coalmine Canyon Chapters of the Navajo Nation (Figure 1). The Applicant has filed an interconnection request with APS at the Moenkopi Switchyard. The Moenkopi Switchyard is part of the Navajo Southern Transmission System (NSTS), which is partially owned by the federal government. The United States Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) is responsible for the federal interest in the NSTS and must approve the interconnection into the Moenkopi Switchyard. The Applicant has also filed a right-of-way (ROW) application with the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) for the Project gen-tie, to interconnect the Project to the Moenkopi Switchyard via a 4.2-mile 500 kilovolt (kV) gen-tie line, and to improve the existing BIA Route 6730 to the Project generation site (Figure 1). The ROW associated with the gen-tie would parallel existing multiple transmission ROWs that terminate at the switchyard.

The major Project components include a gen-tie transmission line and associated elements, interconnection facilities, and the solar generation and storage facility. The gen-tie line would support one circuit of suspended 500 kV electrical conductors and one or two communications lines. The gen-tie line structures, whether steel monopole, steel lattice, or steel H-frame structures, would be anchored to poured concrete column or footing foundations. A fiber-optic ground wire may also be installed in the circuit for communications and grounding purposes. The Project ROW would be accessed from existing roads and spurs associated with the existing multiple transmission line corridor that the Project would parallel. The 750-MW solar generation and storage facility will be evaluated in the EA as a connected action consistent with 40 CFR §1501.3(b). Concurrently with the National Environmental Policy Act process, the Navajo Nation is processing the Applicant's application for the 4,563-acre solar generation site under provisions of the Navajo Leasing Act.

INTERIOR REGION 8 • LOWER COLORADO BASIN

ARIZONA, CALIFORNIA*, NEVADA*

* PARTIAL

Reclamation, as the lead federal agency, and BIA, as a cooperating agency have determined that an EA is the appropriate level of review under the National Environmental Policy Act (Public Law 91-190; NEPA). Reclamation and BIA are requesting public input to help identify issues and concerns associated with the proposed Project. This information will be used to evaluate the potential effects of the Project on the environment. Comments should be submitted to APS Queue 317 Interconnection Project, c/o Barr Engineering Company, 776 East 2nd Avenue, Durango, Colorado, 81301, or via email to fitz@barr.com, no later than 30 days from the date of this memorandum.

Please be aware that by law, your name, address, and other personal identifying information may be made publicly available at any time. Individuals may request that their personal identifying information be withheld from public review by stating so prominently at the beginning of your comment. We cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so; however, we will honor your request to the extent allowable by law. All comments from organizations or businesses will be available for public inspection in their entirety.

For additional information on this Project or the status of the EA for this Project, please contact Ms. Evi Rader, Environmental Protection Specialist with Reclamation’s Phoenix Area Office, at (480) 216-9914 or via email at erader@usbr.gov. Individuals in the United States who are deaf, deafblind, hard of hearing, or have a speech disability, may dial 711 (TTY, TDD, or TeleBraille) to access telecommunication relay services.

Sincerely,

SEAN
HEATH

Digitally signed by SEAN
HEATH
Date: 2024.12.16
14:33:13 -07'00'

Acting
For

Alexander B. Smith
Area Manager

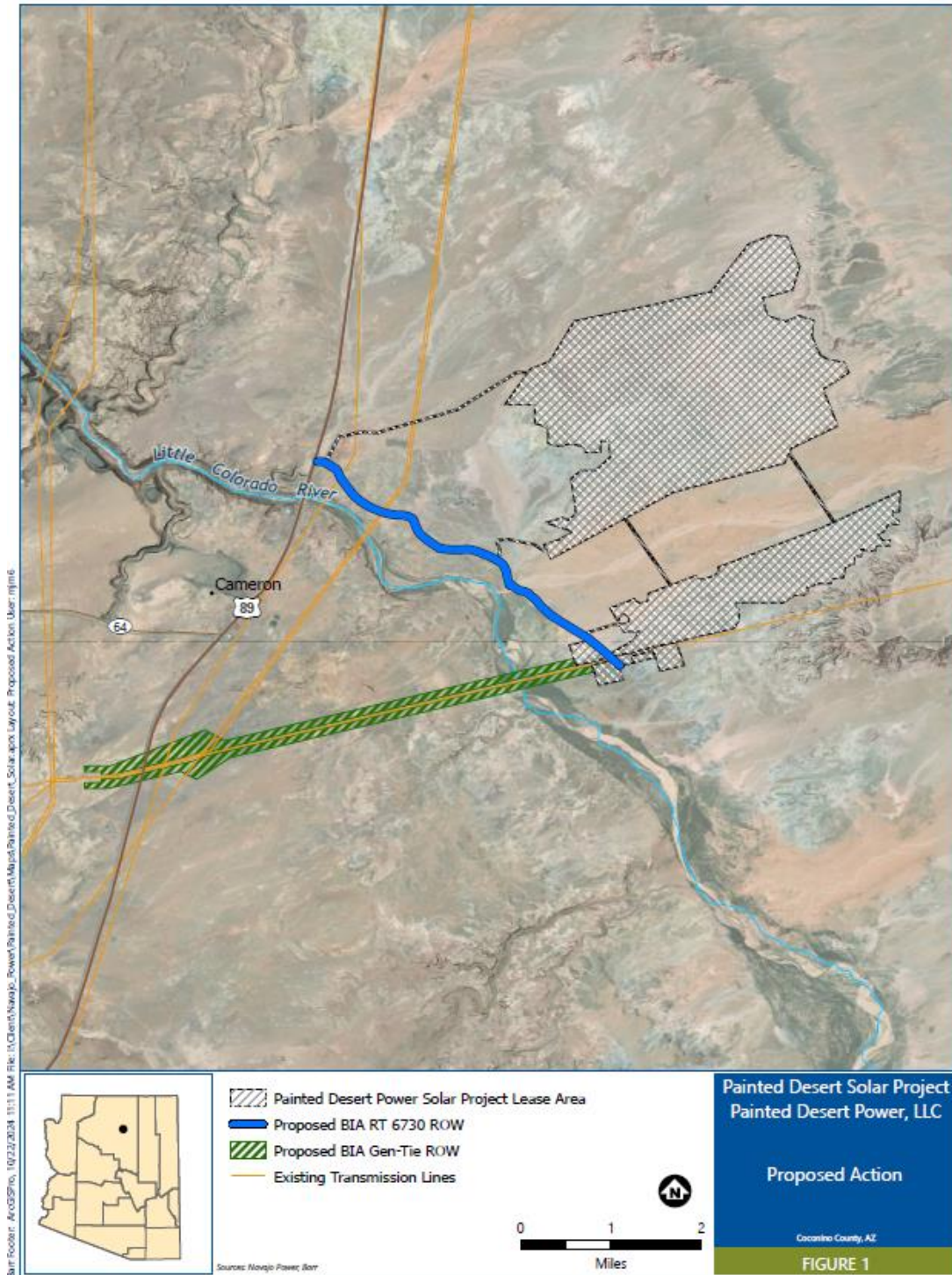


Figure 1. APS Queue 317 Interconnection Project Location.