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July 16, 2009

*****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*****

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GOVERNOR SUPPORTS BLMS RESPONSE TO TRANSMISSION PROJECT CONCERNS

CHEYENNE, Wyo. - The Bureau of Land Management today announced that in response to public concerns and in coordination with state, tribal and county governments, it would continue to collect input on route alternatives for the Gateway West Transmission Line Project in Wyoming and Idaho.

Proposed by Idaho Power and Rocky Mountain Power, the project would involve about 1,150 miles of high voltage transmission lines from Glenrock, Wyo. to Melba, Idaho. The two companies applied to the BLM and U.S. Forest Service for right-of-way grants to construct, operate and maintain the transmission lines.

In response to the BLMs announcement, Gov. Dave Freudenthal issued the following statement:

It seems that the BLM and Rocky Mountain Power not only listened, but really heard the concerns that were mounting with the Gateway West Project. By taking this decisive action, which will cost Rocky Mountain Power quite a bit more money and the BLM significantly more staff time, they have taken a step in restoring the publics trust not only with this particular project, but in the overall process. People now know that their words matter, their efforts make a difference and their voices can lead to significant changes - especially if they come to the table with alternatives. This is exactly how the NEPA process is supposed to work. People in this state usually don't come out for public meetings unless they have something important to say, and I thank BLM and Rocky Mountain Power for their willingness to work with folks and to not always paddle against the wave of public sentiment. I encourage Wyoming residents to continue to engage in the discussion with the agency and the project proponents to ensure that the best possible outcome can be achieved. Transmission is a critical piece of the puzzle that must be developed in concert with renewable energy projects in Wyoming, but it is important that we do it right, so that the affected communities and landowners are comfortable with the outcome.

To read todays announcement from the BLM, visit:

http://www.blm.gov/wy/st/en/info/news_room/2009/july/16gateway-west.html

For more information on the Gateway West Project, visit:

www.wy.blm.gov/nepa/cfodocs/gateway_west