

1 FORT BLISS ENERGY, WATER AND SOLID WASTE SUSTAINABILITY
2 INITIATIVES DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

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OTERO COUNTY ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
1101 NEW YORK AVENUE, ROOM 106
ALAMOGORDO, NEW MEXICO 88310

JUNE 13, 2013

6:30 P.M.

06:34:06 25

1 MR. PLAKORUS: Good evening, my name is
2 David Plakorus and I work with the Louis Berger Group,
3 the contractor that's assisting Fort Bliss in developing
4 the EIS. I would like to welcome you to this public
06:35:37 5 meeting to the Net Zero Draft Environmental Impact
6 Statement. I'm going to make a few housekeeping
7 announcements including Spanish language announcements
8 and the formal meeting will then start after those
9 announcements.

06:35:48 10 First I want to draw your attention to the
11 exits in case we need to leave the building quickly.
12 The exits can be found behind you through the door and
13 down the stairs and to the right. Second, restrooms are
14 located down the hall on the left. Finally, please
06:36:02 15 silence or turn off your cell phones as to not distract
16 from tonight's proceedings.

17 I would now like to introduce Victor Uranga
18 who will be providing the Spanish translation. He will
19 now make the Spanish language announcements.

06:36:16 20 THE INTERPRETER: (Speaking Spanish).

21 MR. PLAKORUS: With that I would now like
22 to introduce garrison commander for Fort Bliss, Colonel
23 Brant Dayley.

24 MR. DAYLEY: Thank you. Good evening,
06:37:23 25 everybody. All right. Hopefully you can hear me.

1 As -- as my introductions that I'm the garrison
2 commander at Fort Bliss, Texas, and my name is Colonel
3 Brant Dayley. I'd like to thank you for taking the time
4 in joining with us this evening because I am here
06:37:40 5 officially to announce the availability and opportunity
6 to comment on the Army's preparation of a draft
7 environmental impact statement. It's referred to as an
8 EIS for the implementation of net zero energy, water and
9 waste initiatives at Fort Bliss, Texas. The purpose of
06:38:03 10 this meeting is to solicit your input from the public
11 regarding the alternatives presented and the
12 environmental analysis conducted for sustainable energy,
13 water and solid waste initiatives and to provide you
14 with an opportunity to find out more about the project
06:38:20 15 and to provide comments regarding the draft
16 environmental impact statement, EIS. The mission of the
17 Fort Bliss garrison, the organization that I command, is
18 to train, sustain, mobilize and deploy soldiers to
19 conduct global full-spectrum operations in support of
06:38:43 20 the national military strategy while providing for the
21 well-being of the regional military community. I'm
22 confident that the net zero program will greatly assist
23 Fort Bliss in meeting this mission.

24 If I can go to the second slide.

06:39:02 25 Okay. EIS. Thank you. I'd like to

1 introduce if team that'll be presenting during tonight's
2 meeting. Mr. B.J. Tomlinson, our renewable energy
3 manager from the Fort Bliss Directorate of Public Works
4 will present the agenda of the meeting and what the
06:39:19 5 concept of the proposal is. He will describe the
6 Fort Bliss vision of the net zero program and present
7 the alternatives under consideration. Mr. -- or
8 Dr. John Kipp from the Fort Bliss DPW Environmental
9 Division and experts from the Louis Berger Group will
06:39:39 10 follow with information on the project schedule and how
11 individuals can comment on the draft environmental
12 impact statement.

13 A representative from the National
14 Renewable Energy Lab, Mr. Doug Dahle in the back, is
06:39:54 15 available to provide technical information and
16 Dr. Rafael Corral from the Fort Bliss Directorate of
17 Public Works Environmental Division is also available to
18 provide information in Spanish.

19 Is Dr. Corral here this evening?

06:40:07 20 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: He is not, sir.

21 MR. DAYLEY: Okay. So who is acting in his
22 in his stead?

23 THE INTERPRETER: Victor Uranga.

24 MR. DAYLEY: Thank you very much, sir.

06:40:16 25 Following the presentation, we will have a

1 short break during which you can look over the posters
2 and banners that have been set up. Members of my staff
3 and/or contractors will be available to discuss the
4 project and provide information on the proposed actions.

06:40:32

5 It's also important that you sign in with
6 your contact information so that you can receive future
7 notifications about the project.

06:40:51

8 For slide 3, your input is vitally
9 important in making this EIS a better document. I want
10 to express my gratitude that you took the time to attend
11 this meeting this evening. Your attendance shows you
12 care about our regional community and in finding ways to
13 conserve and sustain our resources for the long term.

06:41:08

14 All of us at Fort Bliss appreciate any
15 comments that you may have about this project and we
16 sincerely solicit your input tonight.

06:41:26

17 Without further ado, let's have
18 Mr. Tomlinson step up and explain the agenda and some of
19 the aspects of what we consider a very important
20 initiative for Fort Bliss, Texas, the net zero use of
21 energy, water and the generation of waste at our
22 installation.

23 Thank you.

06:41:47

24 MR. TOMLINSON: Thank you. Again, thank
25 you, sir.

1 Good evening. My name is B.J. Tomlinson,
2 I'm the renewable energy manager at Fort Bliss, Texas.
3 This meeting will cover the following topics. First,
4 the overview of the Army's net zero initiative. Second,
06:42:05 5 Fort Bliss' role in net zero. Third, the purpose and
6 need for the proposed project. Fourth, the proposed
7 action, that is, what exactly it is that Fort Bliss is
8 proposing to do. Five, the proposed project
9 alternatives. Six, the potential environmental concerns
06:42:26 10 related to the implementation of the proposed
11 alternatives. And, seven, a schedule for completion.

12 Fort Bliss' vision is to coordinate the
13 installation's operational, material and natural
14 resources with the goal of achieving net zero status as
06:42:48 15 defined by the Army which will be explained shortly.
16 Currently, the Army faces significant threats on the
17 reliability of its energy and water supplies at a number
18 of different installations. Addressing energy security
19 and sustainability is operationally necessary. It's
06:43:05 20 financially prudent and essential to the mission
21 accomplishment. Net zero goals are to increase energy
22 from renewable sources and reduce freshwater consumption
23 and solid waste generation on the post. Attaining these
24 goals will help maintain mission capabilities, improve
06:43:24 25 the quality of life not only for those stationed at

1 Fort Bliss, but also in nearby communities and
2 strengthen the relationship between the Army and these
3 communities.

4 Why is the Army at Fort Bliss implementing
06:43:41 5 net zero initiatives? The world is a rapidly changing
6 place and all the military services are changing to meet
7 new challenges and missions around the globe. The Army
8 as a whole is proposing to make changes that will
9 enhance the mission objectives and secure the
06:43:55 10 installation's critical mission moving into the future.

11 A number of reasons exist as to why the
12 Army at Fort Bliss should implement net zero
13 initiatives. These include better insulating Fort Bliss
14 from potential disruptions to its energy supplies due to
06:44:14 15 vulnerable energy infrastructure and addressing both
16 potential short- and long-term variations in the water
17 supply and quality.

18 Net zero for energy use would occur when
19 the installation produces as much energy on site as it
06:44:31 20 uses throughout the course of a whole year. Fort Bliss
21 would first implement aggressive conservation and
22 efficiency efforts. The next step is to utilize
23 renewable energy technologies such as solar, geothermal
24 and wind. The remaining energy needs can then be met by
06:44:51 25 capturing waste energy usually in the form of heat from

1 sources such as stacks and building heating and
2 ventilation and cooling. The recovered heat can then be
3 used to improve the efficiency for electrical
4 generation.

06:45:08

5 A net zero water program at Fort Bliss
6 would limit the consumption of freshwater resources and
7 return water back to the watershed so as not to deplete
8 the regional water resources in quantity or quality
9 over the course of a typical year.

06:45:23

10 To achieve net zero water status, efforts
11 would again begin with conservation efforts followed by
12 increasing efficiency and use of greywater, for example
13 purple pipe, for landscape irrigation obtained from
14 El Paso Water Utilities and collected from sources such
15 as showers, sinks and laundries.

06:45:43

16 In addition Fort Bliss plans to limit
17 impervious surfaces, encourage green spaces planted with
18 native vegetation and conduct retention of storm water
19 on site so that it percolates into and recharges the
20 local groundwater.

06:46:00

21 Finally, net zero initiatives for waste
22 would reduce, reuse and recover solid waste streams
23 converting them for fuel or usable materials, greatly
24 reducing landfill requirements.

06:46:17

25 I would now like to present the

1 alternatives under consideration and which have been
2 analyzed in the draft EIS. Fort Bliss is proposing to
3 implement the Army's net zero energy, water and waste
4 goals by 2020. Fort Bliss would evaluate and implement
06:46:34 5 where feasible, one, producing as much renewable energy
6 on the installation as it uses annually. Two, limiting
7 the consumption of freshwater resources. And, three,
8 reducing, reusing and recovering waste streams thereby
9 lessening the burden on regional landfills.

06:46:54 10 The Army has developed several alternatives
11 for net zero implementation that strive to best utilize
12 renewable energy resources and balance the
13 installation's critical training mission with the need
14 for enhanced energy security and environmental
06:47:09 15 stewardship. These alternatives have been developed in
16 collaboration between the national renewable energy
17 laboratory, the installation and Army headquarter's
18 energy and sustainability planners.

19 We are here tonight to solicit comments and
06:47:23 20 input on Fort Bliss' proposed action and alternatives to
21 generate public awareness and engagement as part of the
22 National Environmental Policy Act, or NEPA, process.
23 Successful NEPA cannot be accomplished without hearing
24 from the public and ensuring an awareness of key
06:47:44 25 concerns.

1 The Army and Fort Bliss wish to hear from
2 you to continue to prove our ability to make the
3 smartest decisions and be a good neighbor and regional
4 partner in improving quality of life in Texas and
06:47:54 5 New Mexico. NEPA requires that federal agencies analyze
6 a reasonable range of alternatives and solicit input from
7 the public about the proposed actions which is why we're
8 here tonight.

9 Any of the alternatives or combination of
06:48:09 10 alternatives you're about to see and other alternatives
11 identified through this draft EIS, may ultimately be
12 selected. Alternative 1 would be to not take action to
13 meet federal requirements and continue with base
14 operations at Fort Bliss as they currently occur. Fort
06:48:31 15 Bliss would not proceed with net zero initiatives for
16 energy, water and solid waste at Fort Bliss. This
17 no-action alternative would not address the energy and
18 water and resource vulnerabilities and, therefore, does
19 not meet the purpose and need of the Army net zero
06:48:49 20 initiatives.

21 Alternative 2 would be to implement new
22 procedures and policies at Fort Bliss to conserve energy
23 and water and reduce solid waste generation using the
24 existing infrastructure and capabilities.

06:49:03 25 Alternatives 3 through 7 proposed to

1 implement technology-specific water conservation, waste
2 reduction and energy infrastructure options.

3 Alternative 7 is programmatic alternative for future
4 energy development projects that would work in
06:49:22 5 supporting Fort Bliss net zero initiatives all of which
6 will be discussed in more detail shortly.

7 As mentioned before any of the alternatives
8 or combination of alternatives you're about to see and
9 other alternatives identified through this draft EIS,
06:49:39 10 may ultimately be selected.

11 This map details the proposed locations of
12 the specific alternatives. Both alternatives 4 and 5
13 have multiple locations exhibited and both locations
14 will be analyzed in the EIS to help narrow the location.
06:49:58 15 As you can see, the alternatives include a wide array of
16 technology.

17 Next slide.

18 Under this -- for alternative 3, under this
19 alternative Fort Bliss would extend an existing water
06:50:12 20 reclamation system or a purple pipe on to Fort Bliss
21 from the city of El Paso. This reclaimed greywater that
22 is water previously used for domestic activities such as
23 bathing and laundry and treated to secondary standards,
24 would be reused for landscaping irrigation of parade
06:50:33 25 grounds, parks and other vegetated areas on Fort Bliss.

1 This alternative redirects this nonpotable water from
2 disposal outfalls to other best uses reducing the demand
3 on potable water.

4 For Alternative 4, this alternative
06:50:53 5 includes two subalternatives involving the construction
6 and operation of a waste to energy plant to be located
7 either within the southern portion of the south training
8 area or adjacent to Railroad Drive. The plant would
9 produce up to 45 megawatts of electricity by utilizing
06:51:13 10 solid waste as a source of alternative power for burning
11 or other viable processes. The waste energy plant would
12 receive waste streams from Fort Bliss, the city of El
13 Paso and from other sources identified in the future.

14 Up to 1,100 tons of municipal solid waste
06:51:32 15 would be transported to the waste energy facility each
16 day by about 68 to 100 truck deliveries. The facility
17 would be owned and operated by a private operator
18 contracted by the Army. The project would require the
19 establishment of between 13 to 14 miles of electrical
06:51:49 20 transmission lines and approximately 20 percent of the
21 waste would become ash after being burned and converted
22 to energy which would then be deposited in a solid waste
23 landfill. Emmissions-control equipment would be
24 included to maintain air quality.

06:52:07 25 Here you can see the two waste energy plant

1 proposed locations. The map on the left shows the
2 proposed location in the southern portion of the south
3 training area. The map on the right shows the locations
4 where the plant could be located adjacent to Railroad
06:52:24 5 Drive.

6 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Sir, we can see that
7 a lot better if the lights were off.

8 MR. TOMLINSON: That's better. Again south
9 training area, Railroad Drive area, these are potential
06:52:39 10 locations.

11 MR. DAYLEY: Can you just point out
12 Montana?

13 MR. TOMLINSON: For the south training
14 area, this is Montana Avenue. This is Loop 375 across
06:52:49 15 through here. On this right here, this is Railroad
16 Drive.

17 Again, the actual location has not yet been
18 determined.

19 This alternative involves the construction
06:53:07 20 and operation of a geothermal facility at Davis Dome in
21 the McGregor Range base camp in New Mexico. This
22 facility would be approximately 20 acres and involve a
23 closed-loop production system to produce geothermal
24 energy. The closed loop reinjects geothermal water into
06:53:26 25 the aquifer thereby not consuming the resource. Solar

1 panels may be used on this site to increase the
2 temperature of the geothermal resource and increase the
3 efficiency of the energy production.

4 This alternative includes the development
06:53:44 5 of a dry cooled concentrated solar power on
6 approximately 300 acres within the south training area
7 in Texas. This system would use a dry cooling
8 technology, thereby minimizing the use of water.

9 This alternative considers the development
06:54:04 10 of additional geothermal wind, solar and other future
11 renewable energy technologies to meet net zero
12 initiatives. Screened criteria for compatible
13 development will be established in this EIS.

14 The Army recognizes there are potential
06:54:22 15 impacts to the environment associated with the
16 implementation of the net zero initiative and associated
17 proposed alternatives as analyzed and described in this
18 draft EIS. These alternatives include potential impacts
19 to air quality, air space, cultural resources, noise,
06:54:43 20 soils, water resources, biological resources,
21 socioeconomics, energy demand, land use, hazardous
22 materials and waste and also traffic and transportation.
23 While projects will increase sustainability at the
24 installation, there will be an associated level of
06:55:03 25 impact to the environment as the development proceeds.

1 The EIS process is working to define these
2 impacts. We are here today to get your input and key
3 concerns on alternatives as well as the impact analysis
4 conducted through this draft EIS.

06:55:21 5 I would now like to ask Dr. John Kipp to
6 come up here to the podium and continue the explanation.

7 MR. KIPP: Thank you, B.J.

8 Good evening. My name is John Kipp,
9 environmental planner with the Fort Bliss Directorate of
06:55:42 10 Public Works. Before we take our break, I'd like to
11 briefly discuss the National Environmental Policy Act,
12 NEPA, requirements and milestones for the project.

13 A public review period for the draft EIS is
14 required under NEPA and is important to ensure that the
06:55:59 15 draft EIS includes public input as well as provide some
16 important information to the public. I will now discuss
17 the overall schedule for the net zero EIS project and
18 after that we will take a break so that you can look at
19 the banners and talk with the Army and National
06:56:18 20 Renewable Energy Lab personnel. We will also return
21 from the break and we'll have David here describe in
22 detail how the comments session will be organized.

23 Let's review now the major milestone of the
24 EIS process. NEPA requires a 45-day period for the
06:56:37 25 public to become informed about the proposed EIS project

1 and provide comments on the draft EIS. On May 17th,
2 2013, the 45-day comment period began with the
3 publication of the notice of availability in the federal
4 register. Notices about the draft EIS and where to find
06:56:55 5 it were also published in local newspapers and placed on
6 the Fort Bliss Web site. Tonight is the third of three
7 public meetings that are being held this week to receive
8 input and questions from the public.

9 You have three ways tonight to provide
06:57:12 10 input on the draft EIS. You can provide written input
11 by filling out a comment card here tonight or by going
12 to the Web site. If you want to fill out a comment card
13 tonight, please see our staff at the sign-in table for
14 assistance. The project Web site address is in your
06:57:29 15 brochure. You can speak directly to the court reporter.
16 The court reporter is sitting right here. You can
17 provide these comments in either English or Spanish with
18 the assistance of Victor, our translator. The court
19 reporter will be available to accept spoken input during
06:57:45 20 the break and after the formal public input session
21 concludes. You can provide input during the open
22 comments session that will happen after the break. Oral
23 comments provided during the open comments session will
24 be transcribed and included as part of the project
06:58:02 25 record. All comments from the public comment period

1 must be submitted by July 1st, 2013.

2 After July 1st, the team will begin to
3 prepare the final EIS. The comments and questions from
4 the public received during this review period will be
06:58:17 5 taken into account.

6 The final EIS is expected to be published
7 August 2013. Notices about the publication of the final
8 EIS will appear in the Federal Register, local
9 newspapers, on the project Web site and the garrison Web
06:58:34 10 site. If you provide an e-mail address tonight, you
11 will also be added to the project contact list for
12 future project correspondence.

13 Before a final decision is made, a minimum
14 waiting period of 30 days will occur after the final EIS
06:58:49 15 is published. A record of decision will then be
16 published in the Federal Register and announced in local
17 newspapers scheduled for approximately October 2013.

18 If you have any questions about any of
19 these milestones, please ask me or project staff
06:59:04 20 personnel during the break.

21 Let's now take a break so you can look at
22 the materials around the room and speak with project
23 staff. David will also let you know five minutes before
24 we resume the comments session. We will start with any
06:59:16 25 elected officials or representatives of federal agencies

1 and then move to members of the public who indicated a
2 desire to comment and that will be in the order that
3 people signed in. So please help yourself to water and
4 soda in the back and we'll take our break.

06:59:27 5 (Break taken.)

6 MR. PLAKORUS: All right. Again, good
7 evening. I want to once again welcome you on behalf of
8 the United State Army Environmental Command and the Fort
9 Bliss garrison. This meeting is being held to inform
07:22:53 10 and hear input from the public about the availability of
11 U.S. Army's Net Zero Initiative Draft Environmental
12 Impact Statement that is required by the National
13 Environmental Policy Act.

14 My name is David Plakorus and I am with the
07:23:06 15 contractor team that is supporting the Army in the
16 preparation of this environmental impact statement. Let
17 me review the guidelines or ground rules for this
18 comments session. I am the moderator and my job is to
19 keep the comments session on track so that everyone who
07:23:19 20 wants the opportunity to comment in the open session has
21 the chance to do so. I will do three things. I will
22 keep track of the time with the assistance of Katy here
23 to my left, call people in order to the podium to speak
24 and encourage a respectful environment. Everyone will
07:23:35 25 have five minutes to speak, however, you are welcome to

1 submit any length of comments in writing.

2 This is the protocol for the order of
3 speaking. First I will call on any elected officials or
4 their official representatives who wish to speak. This
07:23:50 5 will be followed by the government agency
6 representatives, federal, state and local. Next I will
7 invite those who signed up earlier this evening at the
8 sign-in table who signed up to provide comment to do so.
9 I will call you in the order that you signed in.

07:24:05 10 Finally I will ask for a show of hands to find out if
11 anyone else would like to make a comment.

12 When I call you to the podium, come forward
13 to the mic in front of me, state your name and spell it
14 for the court reporter. You may state your affiliation
07:24:15 15 and whether you are representing a group. Your comments
16 are being recorded for Army consideration as part of the
17 EIS process. After you spell your name, the time will
18 start. Katy will act as the official timer. She will
19 hold up the yellow card when you have one minute
07:24:28 20 remaining, an orange card when there are 30 seconds left
21 and a red card when time is up. I will also tell you
22 that time is up. To be fair to the people who speak
23 after you, please respect the time limits.

24 If you do not finish your comments in the
07:24:41 25 time allowed, there are three options. You may finish

1 providing your input to the court reporter after the
2 formal input session. You may also submit all of the
3 remainder of your comments in writing using the comment
4 card that is available at the sign-in sheet, it's a blue
07:24:56 5 comment card, you may either leave it here tonight or
6 mail it in to the address located on the back of the
7 comment sheet. You can also go to the net zero the Web
8 site address and download a comment form. The Web site
9 address is on the brochure available at the sign-in
07:25:09 10 table. It is important to note that any written
11 comments will be accepted no matter the form.

12 Please note that regardless of method you
13 choose to submit a comment, it will become part of the
14 record and considered in the preparation of the final
07:25:22 15 EIS. I'd like to make one more point before the comment
16 period starts so you are clear about what to expect
17 tonight from the project team. The team is here to
18 listen to your comments but this session is not a
19 question-and-answer forum. Your comments will be
07:25:33 20 recorded and then addressed in the final environmental
21 impact statement but not here tonight.

22 Does anyone have any questions before we
23 begin the comments session?

24 Hearing and seeing none, we currently have
07:25:47 25 one individual who signed in to speak so I'd like to

1 invite Risher Gilbert.

2 MS. GILBERT: Okay. I guess you'd like for
3 me to come up here?

4 MR. PLAKORUS: Sure.

07:25:59 5 MS. GILBERT: My name is Risher Gilbert,
6 I'm a real estate lawyer, I practice law in El Paso --

7 MR. PLAKORUS: Could you spell your name
8 for the --

9 MS. GILBERT: -- with the Gilbert Law Firm.
07:26:06 10 My name is spelled R-I-S-H-E-R, my last name is Gilbert.
11 First I want to thank you for having this public meeting
12 and allowing us to make a comment. I will have more
13 comments and will put comments in writing. I have just
14 recently become aware of the EIS document and started
07:26:29 15 reviewing it. As you know it's some 500 pages long so I
16 have a lot of learning to do and if I misstate something
17 that I have not covered in there, I apologize.

18 My primary comments are that I think
19 alternative 4-A is a bad alternative. I think it's bad
07:26:48 20 for several reasons. First of all it's near numerous
21 residences. As you all know with your EIS recognizes
22 the Homestead Meadows North, there's also a Haciendas
23 development. It simply, I believe, is inappropriate to
24 have a waste treatment plant that close to those
07:27:11 25 residences with emissions. Your EIS document makes it

1 clear there are hazardous materials that will be
2 disposed of at the site on page 3, hyphen, 77. It's a
3 long list of those. I won't repeat them, but it's a
4 fairly serious list. There will also be emissions, as I
07:27:32 5 recall, of lead, maybe cadmium and chromium. I'm not
6 sure of all those, but it's under your air quality
7 section. With Fort Bliss owning or leasing over a
8 million acres, it is simply not logical to put this type
9 of treatment plant that close to residences. Also the
07:27:50 10 impacts of the plan include substantial daily traffic
11 and other impacts that are recited in your EIS.

12 I think, though, most importantly what I
13 want you to take note of tonight is an environmental
14 justice issue which I think is very valid. This
07:28:10 15 neighborhood where you are proposing to -- where
16 alternative 4-A would be placed has already absorbed a
17 very large tank farm. It is now going to have a large
18 El Paso Electric power plant with its own emissions and
19 its own traffic. It's going to have huge transmission
07:28:30 20 lines which are currently before the Public Utility
21 Commission, as you may know. And to add this treatment
22 plant to a neighborhood that's already been so impacted,
23 I believe is frankly irresponsible and not good planning
24 and is not -- and I expect more out of Fort Bliss and
07:28:52 25 its land use planners than that.

1 The -- there is a tipping point with
2 neighborhoods. I've done fairly extensive environmental
3 work for neighborhoods and there is a tipping point and
4 when you add one more plant like this waste treatment
07:29:10 5 plant, I believe it will be the tipping point for this
6 neighborhood if it's not already going to be reached
7 with the El Paso Electric power plant.

8 So I have many other things I could comment
9 on. I think your alternative 4 -- I think it's 4-B on
07:29:29 10 Railroad Drive makes much more sense. Particularly as
11 I've learned tonight you have two waste treatment plants
12 or at least landfills near there already and you don't
13 have as many private residences near there. I also
14 would urge you to consider on any of these sites, as has
07:29:43 15 been pointed out to me, you've given the general
16 footprint in the EIS but not the specific location. I
17 would urge you to go into a location further in to the
18 military reservation as opposed to on the edges and I
19 realize that there are all kinds of balancing factors
07:30:01 20 you have to look at for operations in your other
21 military uses.

22 Fort Bliss has been a great community
23 neighbor and a great citizen of El Paso, we're very
24 proud of it. We are supportive of Fort Bliss, but we do
07:30:18 25 think it's important that you be responsible in the

1 placement of this plant. I know that recently we had
2 the largest inland desalination plant in the world
3 with -- at Fort Bliss, supported, participated in,
4 helped get funding for, allowed to be in its reservation
07:30:37 5 and made possible and congratulations for that. So I
6 think you've done some wonderful things. We would just
7 encourage you to not pursue the alternative which is on
8 Montana and would have a waste treatment plant right
9 near the new electrical substation and the tank farm.

07:30:56 10 Happy to answer any questions and if you
11 don't have anymore comments and you had this whole
12 meeting, we can have further discussion if you desire.

13 Thank you.

14 (Applause.)

07:31:10 15 MR. PLAKORUS: Thank you. That is all that
16 have signed up to speak.

17 MS. SCHUSTER: I would like to speak after
18 all.

19 MR. PLAKORUS: Okay. If you would just
07:31:17 20 please state your name and spell it for the court
21 reporter.

22 MS. SCHUSTER: I'm Dory Schuster, D-O-R-Y,
23 S-C-H-U-S-T-E-R. And I can't really comment on this
24 environmental impact statement because I barely found
07:31:30 25 out about it today, but I do have to say, as I was

1 commenting to some of the -- your associates here, that
2 I had a problem that's been reoccurrent with other
3 military impact statements that -- environmental impact
4 statements that have come through and that is that the
07:31:50 5 Fort Bliss Web site isn't accessible to many of the
6 public. When we try to access it, is not accessible so
7 if it's not accessible, we cannot read the document and
8 with that in mind, I believe that this 45-day period
9 should be extended because we should be able to access
07:32:09 10 it online, hard copy, CD. I see that coming here
11 tonight I asked for a CD or hard copy. Neither of those
12 are available either. I cannot sit at a public library
13 for hours on end to read a 500-page document, it's
14 impossible. And this is not the first time. Fort Bliss
07:32:28 15 has been contacted numerous times, White Sands, which
16 this is a Fort Bliss issue, this environmental impact
17 statements, but I know the Army wants to get there on
18 many initiatives. So that is a disadvantage to the
19 public and I do not believe that I can read a 500-page
07:32:44 20 document, comment and do a good effort in what's left.

21 From what I saw on the Register, there's a
22 few days left for the 30 days to end and then there's,
23 what, a couple of weeks which brings us to July 1st.
24 This is a busy time for many people and I will ask
07:33:04 25 formally that that extension be done and I will also be

1 contacting the delegation and others who might be
2 involved both here in my area and elsewhere.

3 And another problem that has been is the
4 inaccessibility of even contacting the Fort Bliss Public
07:33:24 5 Affairs Office. When we have problems related to the
6 military, it's impossible to contact public affairs.
7 I've have to call all the way to the garrison
8 commander's office and then someone might speak to me
9 from public affairs because going through that loop, but
07:33:40 10 it has been quite a challenge because, as I mentioned,
11 many times the e-mail address as given even on the
12 Register are inaccessible so we have to call public
13 affairs to get a working e-mail address, a working
14 number. That should not be -- we as the public, if you
07:33:57 15 want us to be involved, we need to have access, proper
16 access or we cannot be involved.

17 The other issue that's a regular
18 occurrence. We also can't be involved if the
19 notification is through a legal notice on the back of a
07:34:12 20 newspaper published one time that is so small nobody can
21 read it. We're -- how can we be involved? And the only
22 reason I can -- I know that's the way it is because is
23 because this is reoccurrent, we've seen it on
24 emissions -- emissions, White Sands initiatives, Fort
07:34:35 25 Bliss issues, and that is the way it's done. I do not

1 believe that the public is really welcome. As tonight I
2 asked how many people here from the city of Alamogordo
3 and vicinity? Who is being represented here by the
4 public besides the few? There are just a few of us.
07:34:52 5 When I ask what, nobody will have heard of this. If
6 somebody doesn't tell me this afternoon about it, I
7 would not be here tonight. And I want to be the -- make
8 known about it because I just had not heard of this.
9 And then going back into the Register, this apparently
07:35:08 10 was initiated back in 2012 so that's quite a long time
11 that I had not heard.

12 And so, again, you know, we only have a few
13 weeks for comment and that's a lot of pages of technical
14 information for public citizens to comb through. Some
07:35:24 15 of us have more knowledge than others, but for the
16 regular folk, they don't have a chance so I would
17 appreciate if those issues were addressed and even
18 though I live in this community, in the area and I care
19 about it, I care about what my neighbors go through,
07:35:41 20 including her comments about El Paso and communities,
21 social justice and justice to the people who live, their
22 consideration, and I believe there should be a balance.
23 We're seeing a lack of balance in what's going on here
24 now with the military community which I've never had to
07:36:01 25 get involved till now because I see the lack of balance,

1 the pollution, the extreme noise and the negative impact
2 and that's why I'm here tonight.

3 Thank you.

4 (Applause.)

07:36:11 5 MR. PLAKORUS: Thank you. Is there anyone
6 else who would like to speak?

7 Hearing and seeing none, this completes the
8 public comment portion of the final of three meetings
9 held this week for the draft net zero environmental
07:36:29 10 impact statement. When the final environmental impact
11 statement is published in August, you will be notified.
12 The information will be announced through the
13 publication of a notice of availability in the Federal
14 Register, advertised in local newspapers, posted on the
07:36:42 15 project and Fort Bliss Web sites and copies of the
16 environmental impact statement will be placed in local
17 libraries for the public to read. Specific locations
18 will be identified with the final EIS public
19 announcements and on the project Web site.

07:36:56 20 You're welcome to stay around and look at
21 the banners and talk to project staff. With that, thank
22 you and have a safe trip home.

23 (Hearing concluded at 7:37 p.m.)

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CERTIFICATE

State of Texas)
)
County of El Paso)

I, Teresita Fonseca, a Certified Shorthand Reporter, in and for the State of Texas, do hereby certify that this transcript is a true record of the testimony given, and that said transcription is done to the best of my ability.

Given under my hand and seal of office on this 26h day of June, 2013.

Teresita Fonseca, CSR, Texas #8288
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FORT BLISS ENERGY, WATER AND SOLID WASTE SUSTAINABILITY
INITIATIVES DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

CHAPIN HIGH SCHOOL
7000 DYER STREET, EL PASO, TEXAS 79904

JUNE 10, 2013
6:30 P.M.

1 MR. SNYDER: Good evening, everyone. If
2 you could make your way over to the seats, we're going
3 to begin our formal presentation.

4 Okay. Well, good evening. My name a Mike
06:37:05 5 Snyder, I work with the The Louis Berger Group, we're
6 the contractors supporting Fort Bliss on this draft
7 environmental impact statement. I want to welcome you
8 to tonight's public meeting on the draft Net Zero
9 Environmental Impact Statement.

06:37:16 10 I'm going to make a few housekeeping
11 announcements including -- and Spanish language
12 announcements and, following that, the formal
13 presentation will begin.

14 First I want to draw your attention to the
06:37:30 15 exits in case we need to leave the building quickly.
16 One exit is directly here to my right and the next
17 closest exit is to my left where everyone came in from
18 the front.

19 Second, the restrooms are located down this
06:37:45 20 hall to the right on the right side as that hooks
21 around. I'd also like to ask to encourage a respectful
22 environment. Please silence or turn off your cell
23 phones at this time.

24 Now I'd like to introduce Victor Uranga,
06:38:04 25 who will be providing Spanish translation tonight and he

1 will give these announcements in Spanish at this time.

2 THE INTERPRETER: (Speaking Spanish.)

3 MR. SNYDER: Thank you, Victor.

4 Colonel Dayley.

06:39:14 5 COLONEL DAYLEY: Thanks, Mike.

6 Good evening, everybody, how are you-all
7 doing tonight?

8 Okay. If I'm not speaking loud enough, let
9 me know. If you feel look like sliding up to the first
06:39:25 10 couple rows of seats, it looks like a few choice seats
11 are left.

12 But I would like to also say good evening
13 to all of you. My name is Colonel Brant Dayley and I'm
14 the garrison commander for Fort Bliss, Texas, and I'd
06:39:39 15 like to thank you tonight for taking the time to join
16 with us and I am here tonight officially to announce the
17 availability and the opportunity to comment on the
18 Army's preparation of a draft environmental impact
19 statement or EIS, echo, India, sierra, for the
06:40:02 20 implementation of the net zero energy, water and waste
21 initiatives for Fort Bliss, Texas. The purpose of
22 tonight's meeting is to solicit input from the public
23 regarding the alternatives presented and the
24 environmental analysis conducted for sustainable energy,
06:40:23 25 water and solid waste initiatives and to provide you

1 with an opportunity to find out more about the project
2 and to provide comments regarding the draft EIS or
3 environmental impact statement.

4 The mission of the Fort Bliss garrison, the
06:40:45 5 organization that I command, is to train, sustain,
6 mobilize and deploy soldiers to conduct global
7 full-spectrum operations in support of the national
8 military strategy, while providing for the well-being of
9 the regional military community. I'm confident that the
06:41:10 10 net zero program will greatly assist Fort Bliss in
11 meeting this important mission.

12 If I could go to the next slide, slide
13 number 2. I hope you can see it, hopefully it will get
14 darker just a little bit sooner. But this is the EIS
06:41:27 15 team, again the environmental impact statement team.
16 I'd like to introduce the team that will be presenting
17 tonight during this meeting.

18 When I announce your name, please stand up.

19 First of all, Mr. B.J. Tomlinson is the
06:41:44 20 renewable energy manager from the Fort Bliss Directorate
21 of Public Works and he will present the agenda for the
22 meeting of what the concept of this proposal is.

23 Mr. Tomlinson will describe Fort Bliss' vision of the
24 net zero program and will present the alternatives under
06:42:03 25 consideration.

1 John Kipp, also from the Fort Bliss
2 department of environmental works or public works,
3 pardon me, environmental division, and experts from the
4 Louis Berger Group will follow with information of the
06:42:17 5 project schedule and how individuals can comment on the
6 draft EIS. A representative from the National Renewable
7 Energy Lab, Mr. Doug Dahle, is available to provide
8 technical information. Dr. Rafael Corral, also from
9 Fort Bliss DPW environmental division, is also available
06:42:42 10 to provide information in Spanish.

11 Following the presentation we'll have a
12 short break during which you can look over the posters
13 and banners to my left and your right that have been set
14 up. Members of my staff from the Fort Bliss garrison
06:42:58 15 and our contractors will be available to discuss the
16 project and provide information on the proposed actions.

17 It's also important that you sign in with
18 your contact information so that you can receive future
19 notifications about the project.

06:43:15 20 If I could go to the next slide, please,
21 regarding the purpose of tonight's meeting. Your input
22 is important in making this EIS a better document. I
23 want to express my gratitude that you took the time
24 tonight to attend this important meeting. Your
06:43:34 25 attendance shows you care about our regional community

1 and in finding ways to conserve and sustain our
2 resources for the long term. All of us at Fort Bliss
3 appreciate any comments you may have about this project
4 and we sincerely solicit your input.

06:43:54 5 Without further ado, let me have
6 Mr. Tomlinson explain the agenda and some of the aspects
7 of what we consider a very important initiative of Fort
8 Bliss, the net zero use of energy, water and the
9 generation of waste of -- at our installation.

06:44:11 10 Thank you very much.

11 B.J.

12 MR. TOMLINSON: Thank you, sir.

13 Good evening. My name is B.J. Tomlinson
14 and I'm the renewable energy manager here at Fort Bliss.
06:44:35 15 This meeting will cover the following topics: One, an
16 overview of the Army Net Zero Initiative. Two, Fort
17 Bliss' role in net zero. Three, the purpose and need
18 for the proposed project. Four, the proposed action
19 that is what exactly Fort Bliss is proposing to do.
06:44:54 20 Five, the proposed project alternatives. Six, potential
21 environmental concerns related to the implementation of
22 the proposed alternatives. And, seven, a schedule for
23 completion.

24 Next slide, please.

06:45:11 25 Fort Bliss' vision is to coordinate the

1 installation's operational, material and natural
2 resources with a goal of achieving net zero status as
3 defined by the Army, which will be explained shortly.
4 Currently the Army faces significant threats not only in
06:45:28 5 the reliability of its energy and water supplies at a
6 number of installations, but actually addressing energy
7 and security sustainability, which is operationally
8 necessary, financially prudent and essential to mission
9 accomplishments.

06:45:44 10 Net zero goals are to increase energy from
11 renewable sources, reduce fresh water consumption and
12 solid waste generation on the post. Attaining these
13 goals will help maintain mission capabilities, improve
14 the quality of life for those stationed on Fort Bliss
06:46:02 15 and in nearby communities and strengthen the
16 relationships between the Army and these communities.

17 Next slide.

18 Why is the Army and Fort Bliss implementing
19 need net zero initiatives? The world is a rapidly
06:46:17 20 changing place and all the military services are
21 changing to meet new challenges and missions around the
22 globe. The Army as a whole is proposing to make changes
23 that will enhance the mission objectives and secure
24 installation critical mission -- installation's critical
06:46:33 25 mission moving into the future. A number of reasons

1 exist as to why the Army and Fort Bliss should implement
2 net zero initiatives. These include better insulating
3 Fort Bliss from potential disruptions to its energy
4 supply due to vulnerable energy infrastructure and
06:46:51 5 addressing both potential short- and long-term
6 variations in the water supply and quality.

7 Next slide.

8 Net zero for energy use would occur when
9 the installation produces as much energy on-site as it
06:47:08 10 uses throughout the course of a whole year. Fort Bliss
11 would first implement aggressive conservation and
12 efficiency efforts. The following step is to utilize
13 renewable energy technologies such as solar, geothermal
14 and wind. The remaining energy needs can then be met by
06:47:26 15 capturing waste energy, usually in the form of heat from
16 sources such as stacks and building heating and
17 ventilation and cooling exhausts. The recovered heat
18 can then be used to improve efficiency for electrical
19 production.

06:47:42 20 The net zero program at Fort Bliss would
21 limit the consumption of fresh water resources and
22 return water back to the watershed so as not to deplete
23 regional water resources in quantity or quality over the
24 course of a typical year. To achieve net zero water
06:48:01 25 status, efforts would begin with conservation, followed

1 by increasing efficiency in use of greywater, for
2 example, purple pipe water for landscape irrigation
3 obtained from the City of El Paso Water Utilities and
4 collected from sources such as showers, sinks and
06:48:21 5 laundries. In addition, Fort Bliss plans to limit
6 impervious surfaces, encourage green spaces planted with
7 native vegetation and conduct retention of storm water
8 on-site so that it percolates into and recharges the
9 local ground water.

06:48:38 10 Finally, net zero initiatives for waste
11 would reduce, reuse, recover solid waste streams,
12 converting them for fuel or usable materials, greatly
13 reducing landfill requirements.

14 Next slide, please.

06:48:53 15 I would now like to present the
16 alternatives under consideration and which have been
17 analyzed in the draft EIS. Fort Bliss is proposing to
18 implement the Army's net zero energy water and waste
19 goals by 2020. Fort Bliss would evaluate and implement,
06:49:11 20 where feasible, one, producing as much renewable energy
21 on the installation as it uses annually. Two, limiting
22 the consumption of fresh water resources. And, three,
23 reducing, reusing and recovering waste streams, thereby
24 lessening the burden on regional landfills.

06:49:29 25 Next slide, please.

1 The Army has developed several alternatives
2 for net zero implementation that strive to best utilize
3 renewable energy resources and balance the
4 installation's critical training mission with the need
06:49:47 5 for enhanced energy security and environmental
6 stewardship. These alternatives have been developed in
7 collaboration between the National Renewable Energy Lab,
8 the installation and the Army headquarters energy and
9 sustainability planners. We are here tonight to solicit
06:50:03 10 comments and input on Fort Bliss' proposed action and
11 alternatives and to generate public awareness and
12 engagement as part of this National Environmental Policy
13 Act or, NEPA, process.

14 Successful NEPA cannot be accomplished
06:50:23 15 without hearing from the public and ensuring an
16 awareness of key concerns. The Army and Fort Bliss wish
17 to hear from you to continue to improve our ability to
18 make the smartest decisions and be a good neighbor and
19 regional partner in improving quality of life in Texas
06:50:40 20 and New Mexico. NEPA requires that federal agencies
21 analyze a reasonable range of alternatives and solicit
22 input from the public about each proposed action which
23 is why we're here tonight. Any of the alternatives or a
24 combination of alternatives you're about to see and
06:50:59 25 other alternatives identified through this draft EIS may

1 ultimately be selected.

2 Alternative 1 would be to not take action
3 to meet the federal requirements and continue with base
4 operations at Fort Bliss as they currently occur.

06:51:15 5 Fort Bliss would not proceed with net zero initiatives
6 for energy, water and solid waste to Fort Bliss. This
7 no-action alternative would not address energy, water
8 and resource vulnerabilities and, therefore, does not
9 meet the proposed need -- the purpose and need of the
06:51:32 10 Army net zero initiatives.

11 Alternative 2 would be to implement new
12 procedures and policies at Fort Bliss to conserve energy
13 and water and reduce solid waste generation using
14 existing infrastructure and capabilities.

06:51:48 15 Next slide.

16 Alternatives 3 through 7 propose to
17 implement technology-specific water conservation, waste
18 reduction and energy infrastructure options.

19 Alternative 7 is a programmatic alternative
06:52:05 20 for future energy development projects that would work
21 in supporting Fort Bliss net zero initiatives, all of
22 which will be discussed in more details shortly.

23 As mentioned before, any of the
24 alternatives or a combination of alternatives you're
06:52:18 25 about to see and other alternatives identified through

1 this draft EIS may ultimately be selected.

2 Next slide, please.

3 This map details the proposed locations of
4 the specific alternatives. Both alternatives 4 and 5
06:52:35 5 have multiple locations exhibited and both locations
6 will be analyzed in the EIS to help narrow the
7 locations.

8 Next slide, please.

9 Under this alternative, Fort Bliss would
06:52:53 10 extend an existing water reclamation system or a purple
11 pipe on to Fort Bliss from the city of El Paso. This
12 reclaimed greywater, water previously used for domestic
13 activities, such as bathing and laundry and treated to
14 secondary standards, would be reused for landscape
06:53:11 15 irrigation of parade grounds, parks and other vegetated
16 areas on Fort Bliss. This alternative redirects this
17 nonpotable water from disposal outfalls to other best
18 uses reducing the demand on potable water.

19 Next slide.

06:53:29 20 This alternative includes two
21 subalternatives involving the construction and operation
22 of a waste energy plant to be located within the
23 southern portion of the south training area or adjacent
24 to Railroad Drive. This plan will produce up to 45
06:53:45 25 megawatts of electricity by utilizing solid waste such

1 as a source of alternative power through burning or
2 other viable processes. The waste energy plant would
3 receive waste streams from Fort Bliss, the city of El
4 Paso and from other sources identified in the future.
06:54:02 5 Up to 1,100 tons of municipal solid waste would be
6 transported to the waste energy facility each day by
7 about 60 to 100 truck deliveries. The facility would be
8 owned and operated by a private operator contracted by
9 the Army. The project would require established --
06:54:22 10 establishment of between 13 to 14 miles of electrical
11 transmission lines. Approximately 20 percent of the
12 waste would become ash after being burned and converted
13 to energy and then it would be deposited in a solid
14 waste landfill. Emissions control equipment would be
06:54:40 15 included to maintain air quality.

16 Next slide.

17 Here you can see where the two waste energy
18 plant proposed locations are. The map on the left shows
19 the proposal location in the southern portion of the
06:54:56 20 south training areas. The map on the right shows the
21 locations where the plant could be located adjacent to
22 Railroad Drive. The actual location has not been
23 determined yet.

24 Next slide.

06:55:09 25 This alternative involves the construction

1 and operation of a geothermal facility at Davis Dome in
2 the McGregor Range camp in New Mexico. This facility
3 would be approximately 20 acres and involve a
4 closed-loop production system to produce geothermal
06:55:27 5 energy. A closed loop reinjects geothermal water into
6 the aquifer, thereby, not consuming the resource. Solar
7 panels may be used at this site to increase the
8 temperature of the geothermal resource and increase the
9 efficiency of the overall energy production.

06:55:46 10 Next chart.

11 This alternative involves the development
12 of dry cool concentrated solar power on approximately
13 300 acres within the south training area in Texas. This
14 system would use a dry cooling technology and thereby
06:56:03 15 minimizing the use of water.

16 Next chart, please.

17 This alternative considers the development
18 of additional geothermal wind, solar and other future
19 renewable energy technologies to meet net zero
06:56:20 20 initiatives. Screening criteria for compatible
21 development will be established within the EIS.

22 Next slide.

23 The Army recognizes that there are
24 potential impacts to the environment associated with the
06:56:34 25 implementation of the net zero initiatives and

1 associated proposed initiatives as analyzed and
2 described in this draft EIS. These alternatives include
3 potential impacts to air quality, air space, cultural
4 resources, noise, soils, water resources, biological
06:56:55 5 resources, socioeconomics, energy demand, land use,
6 hazardous materials and waste from traffic and
7 transportation. While projects will increase
8 substantially at the installation, there will be an
9 associated level of impact to the environment as the
06:57:13 10 development proceeds. The EIS process is working to
11 define these impacts. We are here today to get your
12 input in key concerns on the alternatives as well as the
13 impact analysis conducted through the draft EIS.

14 I would now like to ask Dr. John Kipp to
06:57:32 15 come to the podium and explain the rest of the details a
16 little bit more in depth.

17 John.

18 MR. KIPP: Thank you, B.J.

19 Good evening. My name is John Kipp,
06:57:49 20 environmental planner for Fort Bliss Directorate of
21 Public Works. Before we take our break, I'd like to now
22 briefly discuss the National Environmental Policy Act,
23 NEPA, requirements and milestones for this project. A
24 public review period for the draft EIS is required under
06:58:03 25 NEPA and is important to ensure that the draft EIS

1 includes public input as well as provides information
2 important to the public. I will now discuss the overall
3 schedule for the net zero EIS project. After that we'll
4 take a break so that you can look at the banners and
06:58:22 5 talk to Army and National Renewable Energy Lab
6 personnel. Dr. Corral from the Fort Bliss environmental
7 division is also here to help if you prefer conversing
8 in Spanish. When we return from the break, Mr. Snyder
9 will describe in detail how the comments session will be
06:58:39 10 organized.

11 Let's review the major milestones in the
12 EIS process. NEPA requires a 45-day period for the
13 public to become informed about a proposed EIS project
14 and provide comments on the draft EIS. On May 17th,
06:58:57 15 2013, the 45-day comment period began the publication of
16 a notice of availability of the draft EIS in the Federal
17 Registry. Notices about the draft EIS and where to find
18 it were also published in local newspapers and placed on
19 the Fort Bliss Web site. Tonight is the first of three
06:59:15 20 public meetings that are being held this week to receive
21 input and questions from the public. You have three
22 ways tonight to provide input on the draft EIS. You can
23 provide written input by filling out a comment card here
24 tonight or by going to the Web site. If you want to
06:59:33 25 fill out a comment card tonight, please see our staff at

1 the sign-in table for assistance. The project Web site
2 is in your brochure. You can speak directly to the
3 court reporter. The court reporter is sitting right
4 here, you can provide those comments in either English
06:59:51 5 or Spanish with the assistance of Victor, who is back
6 there, our translator, or Dr. Corral. The court
7 reporter will be available to accept spoken input during
8 the break and after formal public input session
9 concludes.

07:00:07 10 You can provide your input during the open
11 comments session which will happen after the break.
12 Oral comments provided during the open comments session
13 will be transcribed and be included as part of the
14 project record. All comments for the public comment
07:00:23 15 period must be submitted by July 1st, 2013. After July
16 1st, a team will begin to assemble and prepare the final
17 EIS. Comments and questions from the public received
18 during a review period will be taken into account.

19 The final EIS is expected to be published
07:00:42 20 on August 2013. Notices about publication of the final
21 EIS will appear in the Federal Register, local
22 newspapers, on the project Web site and on the garrison
23 Web site.

24 If you provide an e-mail address tonight,
07:00:56 25 it will be added to the project contact list for future

1 project correspondence.

2 Before a final decision is made, a minimum
3 waiting period of 30 days will occur after the final EIS
4 is published. A record of decision will then be
07:01:11 5 published in the Federal Register and announced in local
6 newspapers scheduled for approximately October 2013. If
7 you have any questions about these milestones, please
8 speak to me or project staff and personnel during the
9 break.

07:01:24 10 Let's now take a break so that you can look
11 over the materials around the room and speak to project
12 staff. Mr. Snyder will let you know about five minutes
13 before we resume with the comments session. We will
14 start with any elected officials and representatives of
07:01:43 15 federal agencies and then move to members of the public
16 who indicated the desire to comment that will be in the
17 order that the people signed in.

18 Please help yourself to water and soda over
19 in that corner.

07:11:23 20 (Break taken.)

21 MR. SNYDER: Good evening, everyone, if you
22 could make your way back and take a seat, we're going to
23 begin the open comments session.

24 Okay. Thank you. We're going to go ahead
07:17:25 25 and get started if you can take a seat.

1 Again, good evening. I want to once again
2 welcome you on behalf of the United States Army
3 environmental command on the Fort Bliss garrison to
4 tonight's public meeting on the draft net zero
07:17:41 5 environmental impact statement. My name again is Mike
6 Snyder with the contractor team supporting this effort.
7 And at this time we want to begin the open comments
8 session. We spoke to those of you in the room and I
9 just want to take a show of hands. Is there anyone here
07:18:04 10 who would like to make a public comment that has not
11 signed up to do so? Could you please raise your hand.

12 Okay. Thank you. In that regard I would
13 just like to review the opportunities that are available
14 to comment before we close. First of all, if you'd
07:18:27 15 like, following the closing of this session, the court
16 reporter is here and you may go over to the court
17 reporter and make a comment directly to the court
18 reporter and that will get transcribed into the record.
19 Also here tonight you can take one of the comment forms
07:18:43 20 that were at the sign-in table, these are the blue
21 sheets, you can provide your written comment either
22 tonight or you can mail that in as long as it's
23 submitted by July 1.

24 You may also go to the project Web site
07:18:58 25 which the Web address is located in the brochure that

1 was at the sign-in table and you can download a comment
2 form from that Web site.

3 I want to take the opportunity to note that
4 regardless of the method that you choose to submit your
07:19:18 5 comment, they will all become part of the record and
6 will be considered at preparation of the final EIS.

7 So this now completes the public comment
8 portion of the first of three public meetings being held
9 this week on the draft net zero environmental impact
07:19:40 10 statement. When the final environmental impact
11 statement is published in August, you will be notified
12 and information will be announced through the
13 publication of a notice of availability in the Federal
14 Register, it will be advertised in local newspapers, it
07:19:59 15 will be posted on the project and Fort Bliss Web site
16 and copies of the final environmental impact statement
17 will be placed in local libraries for the public to
18 read. Specific locations will be identified with the
19 final EIS public announcements and on the project Web
07:20:18 20 site.

21 Again, you are welcome to take time to look
22 at the banners and speak with the project staff who are
23 here. And for that I would just like to thank you for
24 coming out and please travel safely. Thank you.

25 (Hearing concluded at 7:20 p.m.)

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CERTIFICATE

State of Texas)
)
County of El Paso)

I, Teresita Fonseca, a Certified Shorthand Reporter, in and for the State of Texas, do hereby certify that this transcript is a true record of the testimony given, and that said transcription is done to the best of my ability.

Given under my hand and seal of office on this 26th day of June, 2013.

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1 FORT BLISS ENERGY, WATER AND SOLID WASTE SUSTAINABILITY
2 INITIATIVES DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

3
4 MOUNTAIN VIEW HIGH SCHOOL
5 14964 GREG DRIVE, EL PASO, TEXAS 79938
6

7 JUNE 11, 2013

8 6:30 P.M.
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1 MR. SNYDER: Ladies and gentlemen, please
2 take your seats, we'd like to get started with the
3 public comments session.

4 THE INTERPRETER: (Speaking Spanish).

07:42:11 5 MR. SNYDER: Thank you. We're going to get
6 started.

7 Again, good evening. I want to once again
8 welcome you on behalf of the United States Army
9 Environmental Command and the Fort Bliss garrison. This
07:43:14 10 meeting is being held to inform and hear input from the
11 public about the availability of the U.S. Army's Net
12 Zero initiative draft environmental impact statement
13 that is required by the National Environmental Policy
14 Act.

07:43:35 15 THE INTERPRETER: (Speaking Spanish).

16 MR. SNYDER: My name is Mike Snyder and I
17 am with the contractor team supporting the Army in the
18 preparation of the environmental impact statement.

19 THE INTERPRETER: (Speaking Spanish).

07:44:03 20 MR. SNYDER: Let me review the guidelines
21 and ground rules for this comments session.

22 THE INTERPRETER: (Speaking Spanish).

23 MR. SNYDER: I am the moderator and my job
24 is to keep the comments session on track so that
07:44:23 25 everyone who wants the opportunity to comment in the

1 open session has the chance to do so.

2 THE INTERPRETER: (Speaking Spanish).

3 MR. SNYDER: I will keep track of the time
4 with the assistance of David Plakorus.

07:41:16 5 THE INTERPRETER: (Speaking Spanish).

6 MR. SNYDER: Call people to the podium in
7 the order to speak.

8 THE INTERPRETER: (Speaking Spanish).

9 MR. SNYDER: And encourage a respectful
07:45:14 10 environment.

11 THE INTERPRETER: (Speaking Spanish).

12 MR. SNYDER: Everyone will have five
13 minutes to speak. You are welcome to submit any length
14 of comments in writing.

07:41:16 15 THE INTERPRETER: (Speaking Spanish).

16 MR. SNYDER: This is the protocol for the
17 order of speaking. First I will call on any elected
18 officials or their official representatives who wish to
19 speak. This will be followed by government agency
07:45:55 20 representatives: federal, state and local.

21 THE INTERPRETER: (Speaking Spanish).

22 MR. SNYDER: Next I will invite those who
23 signed up earlier this evening to provide comment, to do
24 so, I will call you in the order that you signed in.

07:41:16 25 THE INTERPRETER: (Speaking Spanish).

1 MR. SNYDER: Finally I'll ask for a show of
2 hands to find out if anyone else would like to make a
3 comment.

4 THE INTERPRETER: (Speaking Spanish).

07:46:58 5 MR. SNYDER: When I call you to the podium,
6 come forward to the microphone located up here in the
7 center, state your name and spell it for the court
8 reporter. You may state your affiliation and whether
9 you are representing a group. Your comments are being
07:47:33 10 recorded for Army consideration as part of the EIS
11 process.

12 THE INTERPRETER: (Speaking Spanish).

13 MR. SNYDER: After you spell your name, the
14 time will start. Again David Plakorus will act as the
07:48:06 15 official timer.

16 THE INTERPRETER: (Speaking Spanish).

17 MR. SNYDER: He will hold a yellow card
18 when there is one minute left.

19 THE INTERPRETER: (Speaking Spanish).

07:48:19 20 MR. SNYDER: He will hold up an orange card
21 when there are 30 seconds left.

22 THE INTERPRETER: (Speaking Spanish).

23 MR. SNYDER: And he will hold up a red card
24 when your time is up.

07:41:16 25 THE INTERPRETER: (Speaking Spanish).

1 MR. SNYDER: I will also tell you when time
2 is up.

3 THE INTERPRETER: (Speaking Spanish).

4 MR. SNYDER: To be fair to the people who
07:48:46 5 speak after you, please respect the time limit.

6 THE INTERPRETER: (Speaking Spanish).

7 MR. SNYDER: If you do not finish your
8 comments in the time allowed, there are three options.

9 THE INTERPRETER: (Speaking Spanish).

07:49:05 10 MR. SNYDER: You can finish providing your
11 input to the court reporter after the formal comments
12 session concludes.

13 THE INTERPRETER: (Speaking Spanish).

14 MR. SNYDER: You can also submit all or the
07:49:24 15 remainder of your comments in writing using either the
16 comment card that is available here tonight, the blue
17 form that was at the front desk, you may leave that here
18 tonight or mail it in later. There is also -- you can
19 also go to the Net Zero Web site address and download a
07:49:46 20 comment form. The Web site address is on the brochure
21 available on the sign-in table. However, any written
22 comments will be accepted, they do not have to be on the
23 comment forms provided.

24 THE INTERPRETER: (Speaking Spanish).

07:50:46 25 MR. SNYDER: Please note that regardless of

1 the method you choose to submit a comment, it will
2 become part of the record and considered in preparation
3 of the final environmental impact statement.

4 THE INTERPRETER: (Speaking Spanish).

07:51:14 5 MR. SNYDER: I want to make one more point
6 before the comment period starts so you are clear about
7 what to expect from the project team.

8 The team is here to listen to your comments
9 and questions, but this set -- to your comments --
07:51:30 10 excuse me -- but this session is not a
11 question-and-answer forum. Your comments will be
12 recorded then addressed in the final environmental
13 impact statement but not here tonight.

14 THE INTERPRETER: (Speaking Spanish).

07:52:27 15 MR. SNYDER: Before we begin, does anyone
16 have any questions about how the comment session will be
17 organized?

18 THE INTERPRETER: (Speaking Spanish).

19 MR. SNYDER: Okay. Seeing and hearing
07:52:50 20 none, we will continue with the comments session.

21 THE INTERPRETER: (Speaking Spanish).

22 MR. SNYDER: I'd like to ask if there are
23 any elected officials or their official representatives
24 who did not sign in to speak who have decided they would
07:53:04 25 like to speak at this time?

1 THE INTERPRETER: (Speaking Spanish).

2 MR. SNYDER: Seeing and hearing none, we
3 will move forward.

4 THE INTERPRETER: (Speaking Spanish).

07:53:27 5 MR. SNYDER: The first person to come give
6 a comment is Vincent Perez.

7 THE INTERPRETER: (Speaking Spanish).

8 MR. PEREZ: Good evening. My name is
9 Vincent Perez, V-I-N-C-E-N-T P-E-R-E-Z. I'm the county
07:53:47 10 commissioner for precinct 3. I'm one of four county
11 commissioners who represent El Paso, County. My
12 colleague, Carlos Leon is also here. I'm speaking for
13 myself.

14 First I want to thank you, Colonel, and
07:54:01 15 your team for coming out here tonight and explaining
16 Fort Bliss' project for the zero net energy efforts and
17 thanks to all residents who have come out as well.

18 First I just want to say that I commend
19 Fort Bliss and the leadership for the zero net energy
07:54:18 20 initiative. I previously worked for Congressman
21 Silvester Reyes so I'm familiar with many of the
22 initiatives that Fort Bliss has done and I know that
23 Fort Bliss leading the nation when it comes to these
24 types of efforts. We're going to be one of the first
07:54:32 25 zero net energy installation in the country. And I know

1 that many initiatives, they're very worthwhile projects,
2 forward-thinking in pursuing many of these projects.
3 The county of El Paso has actually partnered with
4 Fort Bliss for one of the geothermal projects, the
07:54:46 5 installation for the geothermal project so we're very
6 supportive overall of the zero net energy initiative and
7 I want to commend the leadership and Fort Bliss for
8 their vision and for doing that.

9 I represent the far east El Paso,
07:54:58 10 Commissioner Leon and I. He represents the part of -- I
11 guess kind of west of Flager and I work in the east
12 Flager so we share many of the residents that will be
13 impacted by some of these projects.

14 I just wanted to express some concern with
07:55:15 15 the project 4-A, that particular alternative which is a
16 waste burning facility. My concern is the commissioner
17 who represents any of the residents there in some of the
18 development at least that's merging, I'm sure as you
19 know, we already have the Magellan tanks that are
07:55:27 20 situated there. El Paso Electric has recently announced
21 plans that it's pursuing a permit from TCEQ to build a
22 power plant right behind the tanks, literally just 500
23 feet behind the tanks. And this scrap burn facility
24 would go essentially right behind El Paso Electric's
07:55:45 25 facility.

1 As the commissioner who represents many of
2 the residents there, I share many of the concerns that I
3 heard from many of them who are concerned about this
4 type of development, the impact it would have on future
07:55:56 5 developments in their community. Far east El Paso is
6 one of the fastest-growing areas in El Paso County. If
7 you just go down Montana literally just a mile or two,
8 you'll see movie theaters popping up, we expect
9 restaurants to pop up very soon. So it's an area that's
07:56:09 10 experiencing rapid growth and rapid developments and I'm
11 just speaking concern that these types of projects might
12 have a negative impact on this type of growth or
13 certainly even stunt growth to a certain extent as we
14 get further east in El Paso.

07:56:24 15 El Paso Electric is unfortunately moving
16 forward with its plans to build a power plant, but I'm
17 encouraged to see -- unlike El Paso Electric that did
18 not have an alternative site for their facility, I'm
19 glad to see that at least in this particular
07:56:38 20 circumstance there is an alternative site that's being
21 considered near Railroad Drive. I would strongly
22 consider pursuing this alternative because just given
23 the cumulative effects that we've seen with the Magellan
24 tanks, with the El Paso Electric and now having a waste
07:56:52 25 burning facility, you know, just from looking at the

1 grid there I see that the air quality obviously would be
2 a main concern of the residents and the impact it would
3 have and, obviously, on the traffic. Those are two of
4 the red bullets at least I see in that particular
07:57:04 5 alternative.

6 Again, you know, there's a lot of positive
7 things that are happening in far east El Paso. There's
8 great potential I believe not only for commercial
9 development, but also for future residential
07:57:14 10 development. My concern is is just that really grouping
11 these types of projects, like I said, although very
12 worthy and worthwhile and we support the goal of
13 becoming a zero net energy installation, I'm just very
14 concerned about the location and the impact it's going
07:57:29 15 to have on the development but, with that, I mean I
16 appreciate the time you're taking to hear from
17 residents, but again we strongly advocate for pursuing
18 an alternative site just due to the fact of the types of
19 developments that are already occurring there, the
07:57:41 20 industrial sites and the impact it's already having on
21 some of the residents that live in that area.

22 Thank you.

23 (Applause.)

24 MR. SNYDER: I would now like now ask if
07:57:59 25 there are any other government agency representatives,

1 federal, state or local, who did not sign up to speak
2 who would like to speak at this time?

3 Seeing and hearing none, we will proceed.

4 THE INTERPRETER: (Speaking Spanish).

07:58:31 5 MR. SNYDER: The next person to come
6 forward to give comment, Alfredo Garcia.

7 THE INTERPRETER: (Speaking Spanish).

8 MS. GARCIA: Good afternoon. My name is
9 Alfredo, middle initial E, Garcia, A-L-F-R-E-D-O, E,
07:58:51 10 last name G-A-R-C-I-A.

11 First I want to thank you for the
12 opportunity and -- to speak here and, second, thank you
13 for your service. I live right there in what we call
14 the red zone, others call it the affected zone and we --
07:59:13 15 my main concern, sir, is is those tanks, that tank farm
16 that's there. We are fighting the electric company to
17 build -- to not build there because of that. That's one
18 of the issues and, of course, the air quality. Being
19 that we have a prevailing westwardly wind out here, that
07:59:34 20 plant would be literally right on the edge of you-all's
21 property and, then, as the wind would blow, it would
22 carry it directly into the developed areas of housing
23 there. This town, sir, loves Fort Bliss, we love our
24 soldiers. I personally don't think this is the way to
07:59:55 25 pay us back. I respect you, sir, and everything, and I

1 know we've got other alternatives. To me, sir, it's
2 just a big mistake to put it out here. It would scar
3 our community out here. We've been fighting for
4 respect, we've been fighting for acknowledgment and I
08:00:17 5 just don't feel, sir, that that would be a place to do
6 it.

7 Thank you.

8 (Applause.)

9 MR. SNYDER: Our next person to come up and
08:00:32 10 make a comment is Ralph Carrasco.

11 THE INTERPRETER: (Speaking Spanish).

12 MR. CARRASCO: Hello, my name is Rafael
13 Carrasco, Jr. It's spelled R-A-F-A-E-L, last name
14 C-A-R-R-A-S-C-O, Jr. Thank you, Colonel, for your
08:01:03 15 service. Thank you for giving us this opportunity to
16 let us speak out and share what we think about your
17 great projects. I personally think it's great what you
18 guys are doing in your base as far as taking care of our
19 future water, our energy, even looking after the waste,
08:01:23 20 I applaud that with all my heart. But where I live, our
21 community, it's currently being plagued with a serious
22 environmental injustice. I live less than half a mile
23 away from these fuel tanks that store ethanol, jet fuel,
24 diesel, distillate mix and various fuel liquids. Right
08:01:50 25 now we are currently combatting a power plant that wants

1 to move in right next to where we reside and they will
2 be burning natural gas and releasing particulate matter
3 along with other contaminants into the air already
4 affecting our air quality. And, now, with this waste
08:02:12 5 plant that wants to consider our community, it will
6 further contribute to the air quality by further
7 releasing air pollutants or particulate matters
8 specifically. And, not only that, but they will use
9 that area to dump trash and hold it until it's, you
08:02:28 10 know, properly separated before it's incinerated which
11 will only add to the stench, you know, of where we
12 currently live.

13 Out there in that area, we are being
14 plagued by these industrial companies and I think that
08:02:43 15 it is very serious environmental injustice to look at
16 our community and think of it as a dumping ground. It's
17 not fair to my family, it is not fair to my neighbors.
18 We pay taxes just like every other citizen does. We
19 work just as hard as every soldier in that base does,
08:02:59 20 but yet we have to deal with the effects of different
21 polluters moving in our community and affecting the
22 future of my kids and my neighbors. I am pleading to
23 you this afternoon and asking that you consider our
24 community, that you consider our kids, that you consider
08:03:23 25 our schools, that you consider our community already

1 being plagued by industrial companies. It is not our
2 fault, we were there first. We were there over 40 years
3 ago. We, up to this day, have been working hard
4 building our homes, building our communities and it's
08:03:42 5 unfortunate that companies come and belittle our efforts
6 with dumping of trash where we live.

7 We ask that you consider the contamination
8 that you will bring to our area. We ask that you
9 consider the traffic that you will bring to our two-way
08:03:59 10 street and how many -- the traffic flow that will clog
11 up our community with only a two-way street. That is
12 very unfair to the people that live there. The noise of
13 the traffic, the noise of the power plants, the smell of
14 the waste plant, it's not fair to us and we ask that you
08:04:18 15 please consider any other alternative. It's unfortunate
16 that we are there, but like I said we plead that you
17 consider other alternatives. Also, please consider our
18 gratitude to your service and our gratitude to what
19 these companies do and what these companies bring to the
08:04:36 20 city, but like I said our health is our number one
21 concern. We are under the impression that the
22 governments and their defense is supposed to protect the
23 civilians, not endanger the civilians. We are grateful
24 for your service, like I said, and we look at you as our
08:04:56 25 protectors, as our guardians. We look to you as the

1 people that fight for us. We look to you as the people
2 that lay your life down for liberty and fight for our
3 freedom and fight for our rights. So we are getting a
4 distorted message with looking at the government and
08:05:12 5 looking at our area as a dumping ground and that is not
6 fair to us. Please consider other areas.

7 Thank you.

8 (Applause.)

9 MR. SNYDER: The next person to please come
08:05:30 10 forward is Adrian Castillo.

11 THE INTERPRETER: (Speaking Spanish).

12 MR. CASTILLO: Good evening. Adrian
13 Castillo, A-D-R-I-A-N, Castillo, C-A-S-T-I-L-L-O, and
14 I'm a resident of Montana Vista. I'm just going to
08:05:52 15 follow up with what Mr. Carrasco said. I mean you do
16 acknowledge that you're going to build a waste to energy
17 power plant. Basically this is what used to be called
18 an incinerator, but I guess because of the fancy word to
19 say, we are going use the waste and we're go to use it
08:06:05 20 to create energy. Well, the majority of the waste comes
21 from Fort Bliss. I believe if it's a great project,
22 let's keep this in Fort Bliss, but let's keep it close
23 to the homes. I mean the majority of the waste or the
24 trash comes from Fort Bliss, wow, what a great plan you
08:06:26 25 guys have in mind, but let's keep it over there where

1 the waste and the trash will be produced. So why come
2 to our community? Why bring the trash or the waste of
3 Fort Bliss and the trash away from the city? The
4 majority of the trash will not come from our community
08:06:43 5 so I think in order to be -- to provide any type of
6 justice, let's have it over there close to the soldiers
7 that are going to produce the waste or close to the
8 hospitals or whatever you're going to pick up the waste,
9 because you do acknowledge in this flyer that they're
08:07:01 10 going to have hazardous materials and waste. I mean
11 that makes me think twice, what type of waste are you
12 guys talking about? If it's hazardous, it may produce
13 health issues with the people around us. So my
14 recommendation would be please do not bring it close to
08:07:22 15 the people.

16 In your flyer you also acknowledge that you
17 have 1.12 million acres in Fort Bliss, why next to us?
18 Once again, we do not want this next to us, we do not
19 want this type of power plant next to our families, next
08:07:40 20 to our homes, next to schools. I don't know if you're
21 aware, but there are many schools close by. We have
22 many many businesses close by also so I'm concerned
23 about the air quality.

24 It has been acknowledged that incinerators,
08:07:54 25 once again, they call it -- you guys call it waste to

1 energy, but I call it an incinerator. That's basically
2 the type of power plant that we have right now in other
3 states. And, by the way, they haven't built one of
4 these since a while back, I believe since 1970-something
08:08:14 5 was the last one they built. The type of pollutants we
6 can expect are dioxins. For those of you who don't know
7 or people maybe you're not aware, but dioxins produce
8 cancer and it has been proven. Particulate matter, once
9 again, you want to be next to an already proposed site
08:08:35 10 for a power plant that's going to produce great amounts
11 of particulate matter and then you're going to
12 contribute to the -- with more particulate matter?
13 That's very concerning to me. And then heavy metals and
14 acid gas. So we're talking -- we were talking about
08:08:52 15 many many pollutants and I'm concerned about
16 contamination to our region and the soil may be
17 contaminated. What about the water under the soil?

18 The noise, up to 160 trucks coming back and
19 forth, that's really concerning. We do not have the
08:09:10 20 infrastructure to have that quantity of vehicles coming
21 by the streets. What about the pollution from the
22 trucks? They have to operate with diesel so we also
23 have that contributing factor, the diesel coming off
24 from the trucks.

08:09:24 25 And then what about talking about traffic?

1 What about our families coming back and forth visiting
2 their families, going to school? There's another hazard
3 or another danger to us.

4 What about the noise? Yes, the noise
08:09:44 5 that's what's concerning. We're out here for the peace.
6 We're working for peace of mind, we want to relax and
7 now we're going to have all this noise coming from the
8 power plant. So I'm concerned about many many hazards
9 with your proposed power plant. With 1.12 million
08:10:05 10 acres, I'm trying to figure out why you guys picked our
11 region. I don't have -- I mean it doesn't make sense.
12 Maybe it's because you -- the energy that's going to be
13 left over, the extra -- the amount of electricity will
14 be sold back to El Paso Electric, I don't know, maybe
08:10:23 15 that's the possibility. I don't think it's a
16 coincidence that you want to build next to El Paso
17 Electric's power plant. I think there was a plan
18 beforehand, there's something going on, and the people
19 are aware. We're fighting El Paso Electric so we're
08:10:39 20 fighting them, but, please, do not make us fight you
21 guys. We don't want to fight the government.

22 Like my partner said, you're sending mixed
23 messages, but we don't want those because, believe me,
24 if it requires us to fight whoever is going to come to
08:10:54 25 our region and contaminate our families and homes, we're

1 going to do that but, please, do not force us to go that
2 route.

3 Thank you.

4 (Applause.)

08:11:07 5 MR. SNYDER: The next person, please come
6 forward, Delia Labrado.

7 THE INTERPRETER: (Speaking Spanish).

8 MS. LABRADO: Good evening, thank you for
9 coming and allowing us to speak. I'm not against any --

08:11:27 10 MR. SNYDER: Excuse me.

11 MS. LABRADO: Yes.

12 MR. SNYDER: I'm sorry. Can you please --

13 MS. LABRADO: Oh, I'm sorry.

14 MR. SNYDER: -- state your name and spell
08:11:29 15 it.

16 MS. LABRADO: Delia Labrado, D-E-L-I-A,
17 last name, Labrado, L-A-B-R-A-D-O.

18 I'm not against generating any type of
19 electricity, energy and all that and I do commend you
08:11:46 20 for your efforts of what you're trying to do, but I
21 do -- I am here to ask you to please keep it very, very,
22 very far away from the fence line. Our families should
23 not have to put up with all those hazards that will be
24 in invading. And you stated about the hazards, it is an
08:12:11 25 environmental and social injustice what you're trying to

1 do.

2 When I was talking to my daughter, because
3 I'm a member of the Far East El Paso Citizens United
4 Group, and my daughter, eight years old, she says, "Mom,
08:12:30 5 where are we going?"

6 "To another meeting."

7 "Another meeting?"

8 "Yeah, you know, we have meetings to go
9 to."

08:12:36 10 "And now what's this about?"

11 And I told her, "It's Fort Bliss."

12 "Explain that to me."

13 I go, "Well, Fort Bliss, they're trying to
14 do this and that."

08:12:47 15 "Mom, is that our soldiers?"

16 "Yes."

17 "Those are our heroes. They're supposed to
18 protect us, they're not supposed to harm us. They
19 should be ashamed."

08:12:58 20 That's what she said on our way over here.

21 And I'm proud to have such a daughter and I do ask, you
22 know, we're happy to have you here in El Paso and we
23 thank you for all your efforts and every protection that
24 you provide us citizens. Far east El Paso, still part
08:13:18 25 of the United States, and we do demand and merit respect

1 and our health should be also protected by you
2 especially.

3 Thank you.

4 (Applause.)

08:13:39 5 MR. SNYDER: The next person to come
6 forward is Arlennee Solano.

7 THE INTERPRETER: (Speaking Spanish).

8 I'm not Arlennee, I'm her husband Mario.
9 I'll be speaking on behalf of both of us. My name is
08:14:00 10 Mario Solano. M-A-R-I-O, S-O-L-A-N-O. And wife,
11 Arlennee, A-R-L-E-N-N-E-E, S-O-L-A-N-O.

12 Colonel, your team, thank you for being
13 here. I respect what you're all doing. I'm a retired
14 master sergeant from the Air Force. I was an explosive
08:14:21 15 site planner and I'm here to tell you that what you're
16 all planning here is wonderful, however, you-all
17 definitely need to look at your impact study of the
18 environment, not only air quality, look at the safety of
19 where you're coming to. I'm actually at ground zero, my
08:14:42 20 friends over here are red zone, which is the surrounding
21 environment. I'm directly in front of Flager where the
22 electric power plant and your facility is proposed to be
23 and the alternative site. I'm here to tell you that
24 part of your impact study should involve the safety of
08:15:02 25 the community, not only of Fort Bliss. The safety of

1 the community is that we have a fuel tank where we have
2 4.2 million gallons of fuel stored, class A fuel. We
3 also have nearby 65,000 gallons of LPG natural gas which
4 services the community. We have an electric company who
08:15:25 5 has disrespected this arm of this community by trying to
6 sneak in a power plant on a fuel farm. Nowhere in the
7 world is there an electric plant on a fuel farm. It
8 doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure out that if
9 this thing goes caboom, how many people are in -- or
08:15:45 10 neighbors in the community is it going to affect? A
11 five-mile radius, 200,000 plus families.

12 If you want to be part of that charade of
13 disrespect to our community, look at the consequences
14 when that thing goes up. We just had an explosion in
08:16:07 15 west Texas with the fertilizer plant, a fraction of fuel
16 of what is stored there, it devastated a community. We
17 have a senator that was quoted in the Associated Press,
18 "We have to look around to see what other issues we have
19 out there that could blow up." Duh. A blind man can
08:16:26 20 see that you don't put an electric plant next to a fuel
21 farm.

22 The impact study should also, Colonel,
23 address the safety of the community, the welfare
24 being of the community being air pollutants, smog,
08:16:46 25 stink, mosquito growth from your water treatment plants

1 and a heavy carbon monoxide that the trucks will do on a
2 daily basis. 160 trucks barreling through a two-way
3 street, the safety and the air pollutants are a major
4 concern.

08:17:03

5 I want to quote something that I saw in
6 your presentation, "the quality of life and relationship
7 with our local communities." You're looking at the
8 quality of life for Fort Bliss, I applaud you for that.
9 Several years ago your base was due to become extinct.

08:17:22

10 Thanks to the efforts of Mr. Perez and Congressman
11 Reyes, the base was salvaged. We came this close of you
12 guys not being here. The community backed up what the
13 congressman was doing. We helped salvage your base. Do
14 not do this to our community. If you obviously think
08:17:41 15 that your plant is such a good thing and it's clean, why
16 don't you put it across your house? Why do you want to
17 put it across mine?

08:18:05

18 We support solar geothermal energy, but
19 look at what you're going to do to this community. This
20 community, we have below poverty individuals. Your
21 communication, if it wasn't for Mr. Barrera's e-mail
22 that they've been tracking us fighting the electric
23 company, we would have never known this was going on.
24 This community doesn't have e-mail so don't send them
08:18:21 25 messages, come out here and talk to them in English and

1 Spanish. We don't have running water, we don't have
2 sewer, but, yet, you're worried about quality of life
3 for Fort Bliss. Think about our community. It's about
4 time somebody cared about what we do in our community.

08:18:39 5 Thank you, sir.

6 (Applause.)

7 MR. SNYDER: The next person to come
8 forward and speak is Barney Irving.

9 THE INTERPRETER: (Speaking Spanish).

08:18:57 10 MR. IRVING: Good evening. My name is
11 Barney Irving, B-A-R-N-E-Y, I-R-V-I-N-G. I don't know
12 if I can add much. The folks that spoke before me have
13 touched on just about everything that bothers me. I did
14 hear you talk about 160 trucks. That's just coming one
08:19:24 15 way I guess. Then I guess 160 trucks will go the other
16 way. That's 320 trucks and probably not on propane,
17 they're probably on diesel fuel. And where are they
18 going to be? On my street, Flager Street, a two-way
19 street, that's how I get to Montana, that's how I get to
08:19:48 20 the airport, that's how I get downtown, that's how I get
21 anywhere from my house is down Flager Street.

22 Not on my street, folks. You've got a
23 million acres out there, build a road for your tracks
24 and build it through another area of Fort Bliss.

08:20:06 25 Quality of life, I wonder how many flies

1 are going to be on these trucks. I've been down to the
2 landfill and you can't breathe, you need a handkerchief
3 over your face in order to breathe. So the pollution
4 from the trucks, the flies, the stench, that's quality
08:20:25 5 of life.

6 It's not just about parts per million like
7 the EPA talks about. Environment is a whole lot more
8 than parts per million in the air. It's what we've got
9 to put up with every day. I think you could move the
08:20:40 10 place to some other area in Fort Bliss.

11 And then, when you think about it, the
12 cheapest thing in the world we can transport is
13 electricity. Why wouldn't you put it remotely from our
14 area? If you want to bring electricity into El Paso
08:21:01 15 Electric, it's cheap, they can bring power in from up in
16 British Columbia to Los Angeles Department of Water and
17 Power, high tension line, they move the electricity
18 around this country in grids. Do you have to be right
19 next door to a power plant that we don't want either?

08:21:20 20 So I just hope you think about an
21 environment that's more than parts per million, but it's
22 noise and it's confusion and it's accidents on the
23 streets and trucks coming and going and we're going to
24 be putting up with that for a long time. Oh, by the
08:21:38 25 way, and then we're going to have trucks going to the

1 landfill with the waste from the -- from what you're
2 burning. It's too much. The streets aren't for it and
3 we don't have -- we don't have the facilities for that
4 kind of thing and you're going to crowd us off our own
08:22:00 5 roads. No. And if you really love us, then you must
6 love the soldiers in Fort Bliss just as much and, like
7 Ralph said, give it to them. So that's mainly my point.
8 And one other thing, putting in a big industrial plant
9 in the middle of a residential neighborhood is really
08:22:24 10 nutty, it's unheard of. And I was driving by the Newman
11 plant up north not too long ago and I was looking for
12 all the beautiful homes that were snuggled up against
13 that big Newman plant. I couldn't find one. People
14 don't want to move in by an industrial plant and in this
08:22:43 15 you should not be moving into our neighborhood.

16 Thank you very much.

17 (Applause.)

18 MR. SNYDER: The next person to speak is
19 John Briggs.

08:22:54 20 THE INTERPRETER: (Speaking Spanish).

21 MR. BRIGGS: John Briggs, J-O-H-N,
22 B-R-I-G-G-S.

23 I built my house out here three years ago,
24 it cost me over \$300,000, that was my retirement after
08:23:17 25 spending 20 years in the service and 25 years working

1 for the government out at White Sands, and you want to
2 take this away from me. This is something that I had
3 built that my children would be able to inherit after
4 I'm gone and it's not going to be here -- I mean it's
08:23:36 5 not going to be there for them. The price of my
6 property, if you build this plant, is going to go down
7 to next to nothing because you can't have property next
8 to a dump and you keep telling me this isn't a dump. If
9 it looks like a duck and quacks like a duck, it's a duck
08:23:58 10 and this is a duck.

11 And the other thing that you were talking
12 about was security. What kind of security do you have?
13 As far as I could tell driving by that fuel tank farm
14 that they have out there, there is no security or little
08:24:16 15 to speak of. What's going to keep terrorists -- which
16 the base is the terrorist part of it, you have to admit
17 that -- to come in there and put a couple of RPGs in one
18 of those tanks and take out your whole facility, the
19 electric company and everything else out there along
08:24:32 20 with our community. Now, we can't do anything about it.
21 The tank farmers there, it's already there and we can't
22 do anything about that, but we can do something about
23 what you guys are doing and it's stupid to build a dump
24 in the middle of a city and that's what you're doing.
08:24:57 25 The other thing is if you have three major military

1 facilities in this area, you've got Fort Bliss, you've
2 got White Sands and you've got Holloman Air Force Base.
3 Now, if you guys are truly looking at some way where you
4 can save money, why can't you get together with these
08:25:17 5 other three military installations and build some place
6 centrally where all three of those facilities can use
7 for something like this and build it out in the middle
8 of nowhere? You have plenty of land around here with
9 nothing in it. Why do you want to build this right in
08:25:35 10 the middle of our city? It's stupid and you need to
11 think about that.

12 (Applause.)

13 MR. SNYDER: I'd like to ask for a show of
14 hands if there's anyone else who would like to make a
08:25:53 15 comment who did not previously sign in.

16 The gentleman here in front.

17 MR. JOHNSON: Good evening. My name is
18 Fred Johnson, F-R-E-D, J-O-H-N-S-O-N. Colonel, I salute
19 you, sir, and thank the rest of you for coming.

08:26:21 20 Like Mr. Briggs, I retired in the year
21 2000, I spent six years building that home and my own
22 shop where I like to work in. I ruined my back
23 somewhere along the way. It wasn't my wife's fault. I
24 like what you-all are doing with renewable energy and
08:26:42 25 the whole aspect of Net Zero, I really do, but this is

1 selfish, not by my house. Everybody said everything, we
2 all feel that way. I was hoping my kids would inherit
3 my property. I spent about what he did on his, my
4 retirement. This is my retirement plan and I just
08:27:11 5 personally don't want it near my place. There's a lot
6 of other land out there that would be closer to where
7 the electricity renews. Traffic is a big concern of
8 ours, the pollution, children live out here and
9 everything respectfully.

08:27:29 10 Thank you.

11 (Applause.)

12 MR. SNYDER: Ma'am.

13 MS. CARBAJAL: Good evening, I'll try to
14 keep this brief. I am an attorney and we tend to
08:27:41 15 speak --

16 MR. SNYDER: Excuse me. Could you please
17 state your name and spell it.

18 MS. CARBAJAL: Veronica Carbajal,
19 V-E-R-O-N-I-C-A, C-A-R-B-A-J-A-L. Thank you for hosting
08:27:53 20 this meeting. I am an attorney with Texas Rio Grande
21 Legal Aid, we provide free legal services to the poor
22 and we represent Far East El Paso Citizens United in a
23 fight against the El Paso Electric power plant proposed
24 on Montana Vista which has already been described at
08:28:14 25 length. I commend what you're doing today for a number

1 of reasons. The Magellan pipeline did not give my
2 clients an opportunity like this, neither did El Paso
3 Electric and so it was really, you know, until they had
4 to. They did not get an alternative, they didn't have
08:28:31 5 even the courtesy to look for alternative locations and
6 now we're fighting. In fact we just had our first
7 administrative hearing last week before the state. And
8 on Thursday when we finished, I received an e-mail
9 regarding this meeting today. Net Zero is wonderful for
08:28:51 10 our communities. We fight environmental racism and
11 injustice next to landfills, next to power plants and
12 what you're doing will help my other clients, it will
13 help my clients in the Clint Landfill, it will help our
14 clients near the Newman Power Plant in Montana Vista
08:29:08 15 where they'll manage to fight the power plant because
16 your reduction in energy reduces the pollution that
17 El Paso Electric generates around these already
18 sensitive communities.

19 However, Montana Vista should not bear the
08:29:23 20 cost of your efforts. This community is comprised of
21 over 7,000 people, over 30 percent of them live below
22 the federal property guidelines. And I say live, but,
23 really, they survive below the federal property
24 guidelines and income. 90 percent of them are people of
08:29:43 25 color, many of them are immigrants and if you've driven

1 by the community, you have witnessed that it's a
2 community of pioneers, folks who have managed to survive
3 for over 40 years without, for a time, potable water,
4 without sewage, without street lighting, with terrible
08:30:02 5 roads. They really moved out here because they needed
6 affordable housing and because they love the desert and
7 your plans drive them both. My clients have poured
8 every single penny they own into their homes, that is
9 their equity, and what you're proposing will threaten
08:30:21 10 their property values. As many have said, it will
11 threaten what they leave their children and also what
12 they can bank on during their own lifetimes.

13 So we're pleading with you that you
14 consider the other alternatives because if you don't, my
08:30:33 15 clients do have legal counsel and we will pursue this as
16 far as we need to.

17 We applaud what you're doing for El Paso to
18 go -- for Fort Bliss and El Paso to go to Net Zero is
19 fantastic and as an environmentalist, I -- again, we're
08:30:52 20 all behind you on that, but we ask that you also
21 consider the environmental impact.

22 When I was a student, I did my thesis on a
23 community in Austin that was fighting a recycling plant,
24 it was in east Austin. And, as you-all know, there's
08:31:06 25 the logo, Keep El Paso -- excuse me -- "Keep Austin

1 beautiful" and "Keep Austin green." Well, east Austin
2 was sort of left out of that equation and that's what
3 happening here. You want to clean up the air in other
4 areas of El Paso at the cost of this community and that
08:31:25 5 simply isn't fair. They're not a dump site, they
6 deserve better and they're least equipped to deal with
7 the health repercussions of what you're planning to do.
8 So thank you again for your time.

9 (Applause.)

08:31:39 10 MR. SNYDER: Ma'am, in the back.

11 MS. FLORES: (Through the Interpreter) Can
12 you translate for me?

13 My name is Guillermina Flores,
14 G-U-I-L-L-E-R-M-A, Flores, F-L-O-R-E-S.

08:32:16 15 Before anything, I would like to make a --
16 I would like to ask a question of Fort Bliss. If you
17 are aware of the project of El Paso Electric, the impact
18 that they want to have in our community, this for me is
19 quite deplorable that you still don't know the impact
08:32:52 20 that this plant is going to have for us. For me
21 personally, if you really need this plant, then please
22 put it in an area where it will impact you and not for
23 us. Why on the outskirts of the property? Why where we
24 live and not where you live? That is not a good
08:33:31 25 neighbor who would like to harm us. I don't think that

1 that is really the policy of Fort Bliss.

2 That's all.

3 (Applause.)

4 MR. SNYDER: Is there anyone else who would
08:33:55 5 like to make a comment?

6 THE INTERPRETER: (Speaking Spanish).

7 MR. SNYDER: Hearing and seeing no hands,
8 this completes the public portion of the second of three
9 public meetings being held this week for the draft Net
08:34:23 10 Zero environmental impact statement.

11 THE INTERPRETER: (Speaking Spanish).

12 MR. SNYDER: When the final environmental
13 impact statement is published in August, you will be
14 notified.

08:34:41 15 THE INTERPRETER: (Speaking Spanish).

16 MR. SNYDER: That information will be
17 announced for publication of a notice of availability in
18 the Federal Register.

19 THE INTERPRETER: (Speaking Spanish).

08:35:05 20 MR. SNYDER: It will be advertised in local
21 newspapers, it will be posted on the project in Fort
22 Bliss Web sites.

23 THE INTERPRETER: (Speaking Spanish).

24 MR. SNYDER: And copies of the final
08:35:29 25 environmental impact statement will be placed in local

1 libraries for the public to read. Specific locations
2 will be identified with the final EIS announcement and
3 on the project Web site.

4 THE INTERPRETER: (Speaking Spanish).

08:36:04

5 MR. SNYDER: You are welcome to look again
6 at the banners and project staff are here to talk with
7 you.

8 THE INTERPRETER: (Speaking Spanish).

08:36:20

9 MR. SNYDER: Thank you for coming out
10 tonight and please travel safely home.

11 THE INTERPRETER: (Speaking Spanish).

12 (Hearing concluded at 8:36 p.m.)

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CERTIFICATE

State of Texas)
)
County of El Paso)

I, Teresita Fonseca, a Certified Shorthand Reporter, in and for the State of Texas, do hereby certify that this transcript is a true record of the testimony given, and that said transcription is done to the best of my ability.

Given under my hand and seal of office on this 26th day of June, 2013.

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08:37:24