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8TH ANNUAL PUBLIC PARTICIPATION FOR TRANSMISSION SITING

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January 23-24, 2014 :: Houston, TX

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DAY 1 AGENDA

Thursday, January 23, 2014

7:30 - 8:00 a.m. :: Registration & Welcome

8:00 - 8:30 a.m. :: Keynote Presentation: Beyond Regulations-Supporting Project Communities

Margaret Neves, Senior Public Involvement Specialist, Burns & McDonnell

8:30 - 9:15 a.m. :: Change the Conversation by Utilizing Advanced 3D Visual Imagery to Explain Your Siting Project

Dominion Energy and Truescape have been involved in a number of high profile projects over the past four years. Visualization technology has enabled Dominion Energy to accurately portray their projects to the public from initial open houses through to permitting.

Stephanie Harrington, Manager - Electric Transmission Project Communications, Dominion Virginia Power

Edward Twiss, Operations Manager- North America, TrueScape

9:15 - 9:45 a.m. :: Networking Break

9:45 - 10:30 a.m. :: The Importance of Early Landowner Outreach

Early and consistent outreach to, and input from, potentially affected landowners is a critical element of transmission route analysis. This presentation will walk through the process of landowner engagement as a route selection tool and as a foundation for right-of-way negotiation.

Steve Gray, Land Rights Acquisition Manager, Tri-State G&T

10:30 a.m. - 11:15 p.m. :: Understanding Native American Perspectives and Overcoming Cultural Barriers to Achieve Meaningful Consultation

This presentation will briefly summarize the various laws requiring consultations with Native American Tribes, discuss tribal attitudes towards energy development and the regulatory process, and review some of the common issues encountered when working with Native American Tribes. Finally a case study involving the Ruby Pipeline Project will be presented as an example of how effective communication can be achieved on a major energy project.

Glenn Darrington, Senior Project Manager, POWER Engineers



11:15 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. :: Using Collaboration and Multimedia to Permit Project in a Cultural Landscape

Environmental Planning Group, LLC (EPG) prepared and implemented a comprehensive public participation strategy for preparation of an environmental impact statement addressing the effects of a 170-mile-long 345-kilovolt transmission line in southwestern Utah. The strategy focused heavily on engagement and extensive collaboration with the project proponent, agencies, landowners, and special-interest groups. The relationships developed proved beneficial as siting and planning issues arose during the environmental studies. However, one area, a nationally renowned cultural landscape, stood out for its complexity and heightened sensitivity. To graphically communicate the complexity of conflicting resource issues and challenges associated with potentially locating the proposed transmission line in proximity to the Mountain Meadows National Historic Landmark, which memorializes the Mountain Meadows Massacre of 1857, EPG developed a narrated virtual video tour to facilitate a solution. The virtual video tour was developed considering concerns of and with input from stakeholders, including the descendants of the massacre victims interested in preserving the site and surrounding area, the National Park Service, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, local residents, and various environmental and special-interest groups interested in preserving the wilderness characteristics of an adjacent U.S. Forest Service Inventoried Roadless Area.

Cindy Smith, Senior Project Manager, Environmental Planning Group (EPG)

12:00 - 1:00 p.m. :: Group Luncheon

1:00 - 2:00 p.m. :: America's Power Plan: Finding a Home for Transmission

Home to our most abundant renewable energy resources, rural regions throughout the Upper Midwest and Great Plains are planning to host the next generation of transmission infrastructure. This gives rise to a new set of challenges: How can we effectively communicate project need? What is the best way to engage opposition? How can we better respect community and landowners? Siting large amounts of infrastructure will require us to overcome obstacles, but with smart reforms of policies and business practices, it is doable. This segment discusses rural attitudes toward transmission development, best practices for engaging stakeholders and affected communities, and new approaches to landowner treatment.

Johnathan Hladik, Senior Policy Advocate, Center for Rural Affairs

2:00 - 2:30 p.m. :: Networking Break Sponsored By Environmental Planning Group (EPG)

2:30 - 3:15 p.m. :: Best Practices in Dealing with Community Based Opposition Groups

Increasingly, organizing public participation opportunities means having to handle disruptive influences from community-based opposition groups. This presentation will discuss experiences at Southern California Edison and how the company has adapted to this new business environment. Southern California Edison is currently experiencing one of the largest infrastructure capital investment programs in company history. Recent advances in technology have made it easier for community-based opposition groups to organize and, more importantly, to strategize.

The discussion will provide the audience with best practices on dealing with community-based opposition groups as well as tips on how to prepare internal, technical subject matter experts to effectively handle emotionally charged situations. These best practices are based upon the experiences of Southern California Edison's local public affairs department.

Joshua Torres, Public Involvement Representative, Southern California Edison

Michael Huynh, Public Involvement Manager, Southern California Edison

3:15 - 4:00 p.m. :: Engaging Elected Leaders: Developing an Effective Strategy for Including Elected Leaders in Public Participation Plans

We often hear about how to involve the public in transmission siting decisions, but keeping elected officials informed is also critical for successful projects. Supporters and opponents alike communicate their thoughts and opinions to those elected to represent them - how can you effectively communicate the facts and benefits of your project to those who must answer to their constituents? This interactive session will focus on the opportunities and challenges in engaging federal, state, and local elected officials throughout your project's planning and public involvement process.

Charla Skaggs, Senior Associate, EnviroIssues



4:00 - 5:00 p.m. :: Mock Open House

Open houses are commonly used during the public outreach campaign through the transmission siting process. They are used to communicate with the community, land owners, stake holders and public officials and allow them to express their concerns regarding the transmission lines. Effective, clear and concise communications are crucial for the open house to run smoothly and successful. This mock open house will allow key subject experts to run an open house and the attendees to participate in the "open house," showing effective forms of communication, how to answer questions and walk away with everyone being pleased with the outcome.

Emily Hyland, Associate Public Involvement Coordinator, HDR

Dana Petersen, Public Involvement Coordinator, HDR

Arlee Jones, Project Administrator- Project Management, Tampa Electric Company

Michael Huynh, Local Public Affairs/Public Involvement, Southern California Edison

5:00 - 6:00 p.m. :: Networking Reception

DAY 2 AGENDA

Friday, January 24, 2014

8:30 - 9:00 a.m. :: Continental Breakfast

9:00 - 10:30 a.m. :: Panel Discussion: Lessons Learned - What Went Wrong and Why

Without the public support, the transmission siting process can be delayed or stopped all together. This panel discussion will highlight case studies of public outreach campaigns that have not been successful and why. Hearing situations that have not effectively reached their goals can help attendees understand situations that may go wrong while engaging the public - why, and how to move forward in order for all parties to be satisfied with the end result.

MaryBeth Vrees, Director - Customer Communications & Marketing, Pepco Holdings, Inc.

Rick Thompson, Senior Manager- Transmission Land Rights & Permitting, Tri-State G&T

Michael Huynh, Local Public Affairs/Public Involvement, Southern California Edison

Arlee Jones, Project Administrator- Project Management, Tampa Electric Company

10:30 - 11:00 a.m. :: Networking Break

11:00 - 11:45 a.m. :: Utilizing Interactive Websites to Engage the Public

Public Facing Interactive Information is increasingly important as the public wants to be involved with what is happening in and around their communities. POWER Engineers' Strategic Communications team has experience creating a number of state-of-the-art, interactive tools that offer the public the information they expect at their fingertips. But this information is only as useful as how it's communicated to the audience. Therefore, POWER also focuses on important human dynamics: How is project information resonating with the public? What works best and when is the right time to get peoples' attention? What are useful strategies to engage the public (especially when a project is NOT in their back yard), and how do they react to what the industry is saying?

Anne Spalholz, Manager- Corporate Communications, American Transmission Comp.

Ryan Otto, Visualization Specialist, POWER Engineers

Connie Gemmer, Director Strategic Communications, POWER Engineers

11:45 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. :: Formal Q&A Session

POST CONFERENCE WORKSHOP

FRAMING THE MESSAGE: MEDIA & COMMUNICATIONS TRAINING

Friday, January 24, 2014

12:30 - 1:00 p.m. :: Registration

1:00 - 5:00 p.m. :: Workshop Timing

Workshop Overview

Industry experts will discuss how to frame and "sell" infrastructure projects as the beneficial investments on behalf of the customers that they actually are. Attendees will learn how to keep messaging succinct, consistent and well-positioned, and how to be an effective messenger. Learn effective strategies and tactics, and share in critique of on-camera training for attendees.

Learning Outcomes

Attendees will learn:

- Discuss different types of media, how to identify their purpose and how to work with them
- Recognize how to convey your message properly by positioning your message
- Demonstrate understanding of how to properly communicate your message through application and critique

Agenda

- Introduction
- Media Outlets and Reporters
 - What to know about different media outlets
 - What reporters really want
- Introduction to Interviews
 - What to expect
 - Getting into a reporter's head
 - Do's and don'ts
- Preparing for the Media
 - Anticipating scenarios, story angles and questions
 - Positioning your message
 - How to answer questions you don't want to be asked
 - How not to comment without saying "no comment"
 - Developing solid and succinct answers
- On Camera Interviews
 - Interviews with select attendees
- Critiques
 - Group critiques of recorded interviews
 - Discussion of techniques
- Final Thoughts and Wrap Up

Instructors

MaryBeth Vrees, Director - Customer Communications & Marketing, Pepco Holdings, Inc.

MaryBeth Vrees is Director of Customer Communications and Marketing for Pepco Holdings, Inc. (PHI), a regional energy holding company that provides utility service to about 2 million customers. Ms. Vrees serves as the executive communications interface between PHI and its regulated and non-regulated subsidiaries to ensure strategic alignment and integration of all market research, customer communication, customer education, marketing, brand-building and advertising strategies.

Ms. Vrees brings over 20 years of integrated communications strategy and leadership experience to the Corporate Communications team including extensive experience in customer communications for investor-owned utilities. She led and directed the rebranding and repositioning of American Water for the company's initial public offering, which led to dramatic increases in customer brand advocacy, recall of customer educational materials and important improvements in the company's reputational rating.

Ms. Vrees began her career in television news and served as an anchor and reporter across the country. She then transitioned into public relations, advertising and marketing, to provide support for such brands as Borders and Ford, and develop a media training course for executives, state officials and politicians. She has media trained over 400 people coast to coast, including a 2008 U.S. Presidential candidate.

A graduate of the S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communication at Syracuse University, Ms. Vrees has won nearly 100 awards for communications and marketing excellence and was nominated for an Emmy.

Myra Oppel, Regional Communications Vice President, Pepco Holdings, Inc.

Myra Oppel is Regional Communications Vice President for Pepco Holdings Inc. (PHI), where she leads and manages media relations and communications staff for three utilities. She began her career as a reporter and editor at Mississippi newspapers. She joined The Associated Press in 1990 as a newswoman in Mississippi and Connecticut bureaus. She then shifted to Northeast Utilities in Connecticut, where she was corporate spokesperson and headed media relations. She left NU in 1997 and worked as an award-winning political media consultant and general public relations professional until 2012, when she joined PHI. Her skills include strategic communications, integrated marketing and advertising, writing, editing, design, media relations and media training. She graduated Magna Cum Laude from the University of Mississippi with a bachelor's degree in journalism and is an accredited PR professional by the Public Relations Society of America.



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