



United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF RECLAMATION
Phoenix Area Office
6150 West Thunderbird Road
Glendale, AZ 85306-4001
SEP 01 2022

IN REPLY REFER TO:
PXAO-1500
2.1.4.17

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL AND U.S. MAIL

Subject: Notice of Availability (NOA) – Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) on the Proposed Babbitt Ranch Energy Center Interconnection Project – Coconino County, Arizona (Action by 30 days from the date of this letter)

Dear Interested Party:

The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation has prepared a Draft EA, describing the potential impacts of NextEra Energy Resources, LLC's proposed interconnection of the Babbitt Ranch Energy Center (BREC) to the Navajo Southern Transmission System (NSTS) at the Moenkopi to Cedar Mountain 500-kilovolt (kV) transmission line, referred to as the BREC Interconnection Project. Reclamation is a part owner of the NSTS and must approve any interconnection requests.

NextEra Energy Resources, LLC, is proposing to construct, operate, and maintain BREC, a solar, wind, and battery storage facility located north of the Moenkopi to Cedar Mountain 500-kV transmission line, approximately 30 miles northwest of Flagstaff, Arizona. The BREC Interconnection Project would interconnect the BREC facility to the 500-kV transmission line, which is operated by Arizona Public Service (APS). At full buildout, the BREC facility would provide up to 160 megawatts of generation output to the transmission line.

The BREC Interconnection Project is located on Kaibab National Forest (NF), private, and Arizona State Land Department lands. The interconnection facilities would include collection lines, a substation, switchyard, and APS line tap. The BREC Interconnection Project also includes a 25-mile-long fiber-optic communication line to be located within the existing NSTS right-of-way. Approximately 9 miles of the fiber-optic line would cross the Kaibab NF; therefore, the U.S. Forest Service (Forest Service) is participating as a cooperating agency in the National Environmental Policy Act process. APS plans to file a special use permit application to the Kaibab NF for the installation and maintenance of the portion of the fiber-optic line which falls within National Forest System (NFS) lands. Nicole Branton, Forest Supervisor, (928) 635-8200, is the responsible official for the portion of the project on Forest Service lands and is accepting comments at the addresses listed below. The Kaibab NF would consider this request in accordance with 36 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 251, Subpart B, and if approved, would issue a separate decision and the special use permit for NFS lands. The activities proposed on NFS lands are a project implementing the Kaibab NF's land management plan and are not authorized by the Healthy Forest Restoration Act. As such, proposed activities occurring on NFS lands are subject to the pre-decisional administrative review process at subparts A and B of 36 CFR 218. Only those who submit timely and specific written comments regarding the proposed project or activity during a public comment period established by the responsible official are eligible to file an objection under 36 CFR 218. Additional information about the Forest Service portion of the Project can be obtained from <https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=61288>.

INTERIOR REGION 8 • LOWER COLORADO BASIN

ARIZONA, CALIFORNIA*, NEVADA*

* PARTIAL

The Draft EA is available for public review on the Phoenix Area Office website at <https://www.usbr.gov/lc/phoenix/index.html>. A paper copy or CD of the Draft EA can be obtained by calling Reclamation at (623) 773-6422 or by emailing Ms. Kelly Bergin at kbergin@usbr.gov.

Comments are due within 30 days of the date stamped on this letter. All comments should be submitted to the Bureau of Reclamation, ATTN: BREC Interconnection Project, 1645 S. Plaza Way Flagstaff, AZ 86001 or via email to brecinterconnectionea@swca.com. Hand delivered comments may be submitted to the Kaibab National Forest Supervisors Office, 800 S. 6th Street, Williams Arizona, 86046, between the hours of 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Comments may be submitted electronically in Word (.doc or.docx), rich text format (.rtf), text (.txt), portable document format (PDF), or HyperText Markup Language (.html). For objection eligibility, each individual or representative from each entity submitting timely and specific written comments regarding the proposed project or activity must either sign the comments or verify identity upon request.

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

If you have questions, or would like to discuss the project, please contact Ms. Kelly Bergin, Environmental Protection Specialist, Bureau of Reclamation Phoenix Area Office, at (623) 773-6422 or via email at kbergin@usbr.gov.

Individuals in the United States who are deaf, deafblind, hard of hearing, or have a speech disability, may dial 711 (TTY, TDD, or TeleBraille) to access telecommunication relay services. Individuals outside the United States should use the relay services offered within their country to make international calls to the point of contact in the United States.

Sincerely,

**DARION
MAYHORN**

Digitally signed by
DARION MAYHORN
Date: 2022.08.29
09:47:08 -07'00'

Darion T. Mayhorn
Acting Area Manager

Enclosure

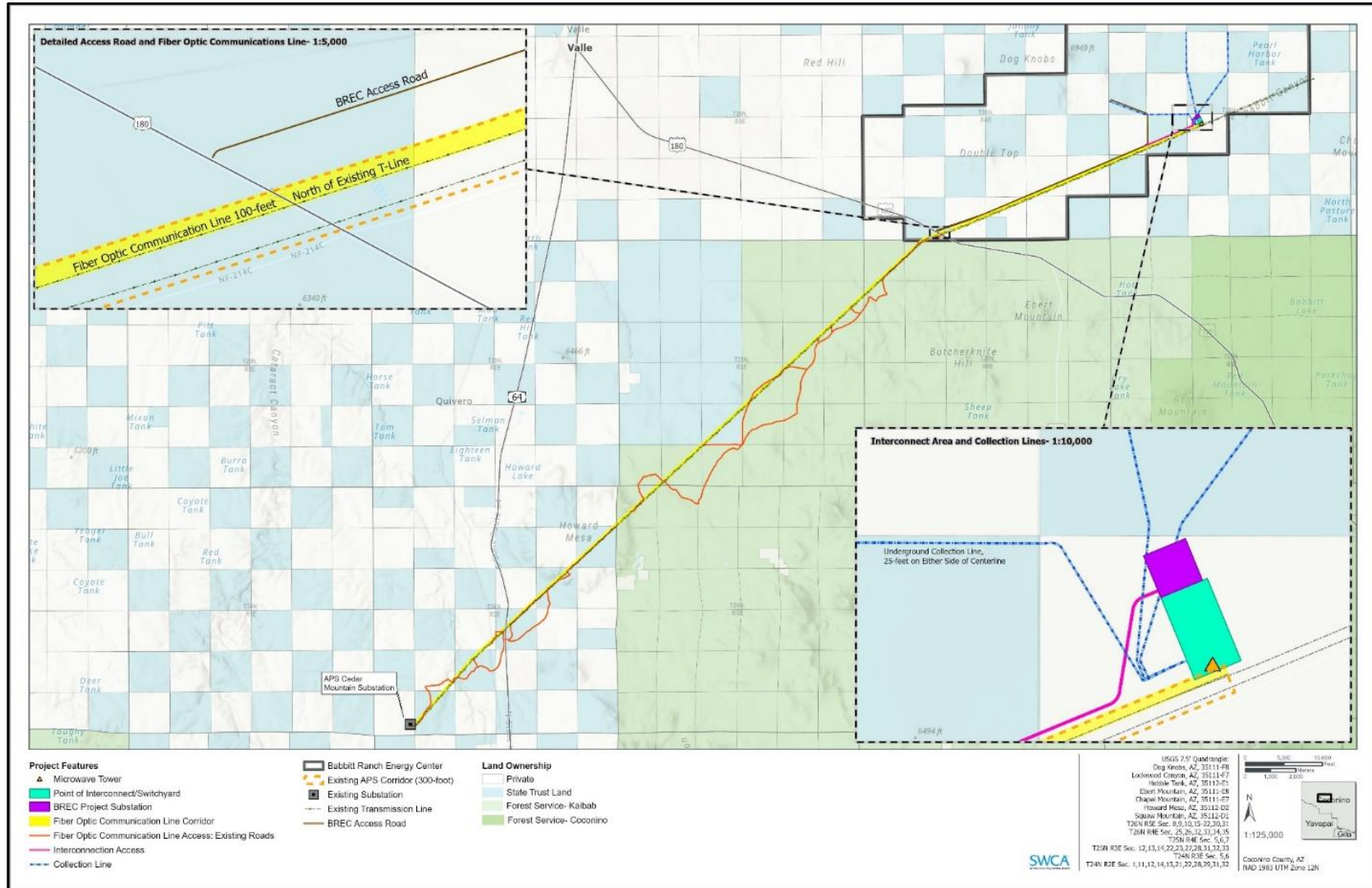


Figure 1. BREC Interconnection Project and existing NSTS 300-foot right-of-way corridor.

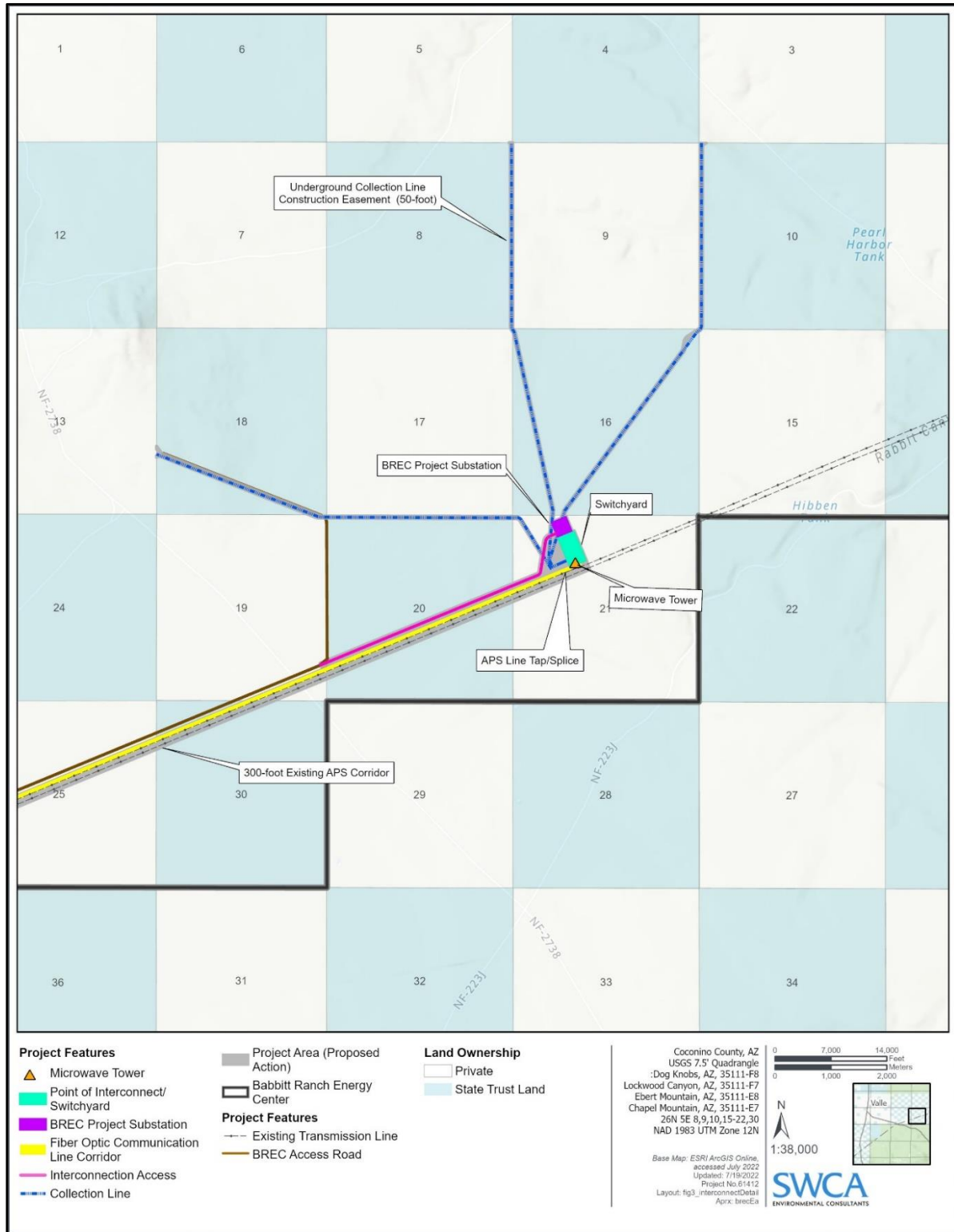


Figure 2. BREC Interconnection Project detail.