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MEREDITH BRASELMAN: Hello, and welcome to the National Interest Electric Transmission Corridor Designation Process Final Guidance Informational Webinar. I'm Meredith Braselman with ICF, and I will be your host today. Throughout today's webinar, we will use the acronym NIETC to refer to this designation.

First, I have some housekeeping items for today's webinar. None of the information presented herein is legally binding. The content included in this presentation is intended for informational purposes only related to the guidance on implementing section 216(a) of the Federal Power Act to Designate National Interest Electric Transmission Corridors-- NIETC Guidance. Any content within this presentation that appears discrepant from the NIETC Guidance is superseded by the NIETC Guidance language. The purpose of this webinar is to provide an overview of the NIETC Guidance and to inform interested parties on how to submit information and recommendations to the Department of Energy as part of the NIETC designation process.

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All participants are in listen-only mode. If you need to view live captioning, please refer to the link that will appear in the chat now. If you have any technical issues or questions, you may type them in the chat box and select to send to host. Any questions you have about the NIETC designation process should be sent to nietc@hq.doe.gov for consideration. We will not be answering questions during today's live webinar.

Finally, we will post a recording and copy of today's presentation on the NIETC designation process final guidance webinar web page in about two weeks. We will alert you via email when those materials are available online. The link to that web page is now in the chat. With those announcements out of the way, let's get started. To kick off today's meeting, we have Maria Robinson, Director of the Grid Deployment Office, joining us. Maria, welcome, and I'm going to turn it over to you.

MARIA ROBINSON: Thanks so much, Meredith. Good afternoon, or good morning, depending on where you are. My name's Maria Robinson, and I'm the Director of the Grid Deployment Office here at the US Department of Energy. And we just want to thank you so much for joining today to learn more about our final guidance on National Interest Electric Corridors, or NIETC designation.

If you can't tell by the fact that we are hosting a webinar on the third day of the new year, our work here at the Grid Deployment Office never stops. And I'm just incredibly proud of the team who keeps this work going every single day, working to improve and expand transmission and distribution systems and develop high-capacity electric transmission lines nationwide.

NIETC designation is, of course, an important part of our work on transmission. And the issuance of this guidance kicks off a critical process to signal development opportunities to transmission developers and planning entities, help to guide the use of federal funds for transmission, and, of course, unlock siting and permitting tools for transmission in these identified areas.

So, for those who are not deep in the weeds, in short, NIETC is an area of the country where inadequate transmission harms consumers either now or in the future, and as a result, the Department of Energy will

identify as a high priority for transmission development. Designating these areas can help encourage transmission development and advance important national interests-- in particular, increased reliability, potentially access to clean energy, and, of course, reduced consumer costs.

Specifically, after a NIETC is designated, transmission projects within that designated NIETC may be able to apply for public-private partnerships with the Department of Energy through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law's Transmission Facilitation Program, from direct loans from the Department of Energy through the IRA's Transmission Facility Financing Program, which sounds similar, but is a different program, and of course, federal permits from FERC in certain circumstances.

With this new guidance document, we as the Department have designated a four-phase process that creates multiple opportunities for public input, which is incredibly important to us. This guidance improves upon previous NIETC designation processes in response to both court decisions and updates to our authority in recent legislation. Specifically, I'll note that the proposed process would designate narrow geographic areas as NIETCs, rather than large swaths of land.

This new process also engages stakeholders early and throughout the process, and makes sure that DOE conducts any required environmental review under NEPA. And, again, I'll note that this webinar and what we have released to date is guidance for NIETC designation. We have not actually designated anything as a NIETC to date, but we will walk through the process of how that will work.

And you will hear more about that from Gretchen Kershaw, who has fearlessly spearheaded this process, and she will be able to work through that final designation guidance more in depth. So, with that, I'll pass it back over to you, Meredith.

MEREDITH BRASELMAN: Thank you so much, Maria. We now welcome Gretchen Kershaw, Senior Advisor for Transmission from the Grid Deployment Office, to discuss the NIETC designation process final guidance. Gretchen, the floor is yours.

GRETCHEN KERSHAW: Thanks, Meredith. And thank you, Maria, for that excellent preview of what we're going to go through today. So here's the agenda for the rest of the webinar. I will be describing what is a NIETC, what is the impact of NIETC designation, what is DOE doing in the recently released guidance document, as well as the benefits of the new approach in that guidance document. Then I will go through the four phases of the new NIETC designation process, and finish up with a timeline providing an overview of how NIETC designation will proceed.

So, to start off, what is a National Interest Electric Transmission Corridor, or NIETC? What's here on the slide is not the statutory or legal definition, but rather our attempt to explain the concept at a higher level. So a NIETC is an area of the country where inadequate transmission harms consumers currently or in the future, and of course, the DOE has designated as a NIETC.

So, for purposes of a NIETC, transmission is inadequate where there is present or expected transmission capacity constraints or congestion that adversely affects consumers. And, when we talk about consumer harms, it's a really broad concept. It includes economic harms, harms to reliability, harms to resilience, as well as the inability to access clean, diverse, and affordable electricity supply. So development of new transmission in a NIETC is needed to address these types of consumer harms.

So now you know what a NIETC is. But-- so what is the impact of DOE's designation of an area as a NIETC? First of all, NIETC designation focuses public and policymaker attention on the greatest areas of transmission need. It also unlocks key statutory tools-- Maria mentioned these in her introduction-- that advance transmission deployment.

These include public-private partnerships under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law's Transmission Facilitation Program, direct loans under the Inflation Reduction Act Transmission Facility Financing Program, as well as federal siting and permitting authority under section 216(b) of the Federal Power Act for the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, or FERC, in certain circumstances outlined in the statute. And here at the bottom of this slide is a really important note. NIETC designation is not a route determination for a specific transmission project. It is also not endorsement of a specific transmission solution to the needs identified within the area.

And it is not selection of or preference for a specific transmission project for any purposes. So what this means is a transmission developer developing a project within a NIETC must apply separately for the tools unlocked by NIETC designation and be evaluated based on the criteria for that specific program. So, next, I'll discuss what DOE is doing with the December 19 release of a guidance document, and why DOE is taking this action. So, procedurally, DOE issued a non-binding guidance document that sets out what plans to follow. But the guidance is not binding on DOE, and it's not binding on any other person or entity. And DOE uses guidance documents for other programs as well.

Substantively, in the guidance, DOE is describing a new process that is responsive to a number of different things. For one, it's responsive to the comments received in response to DOE's May 2023 Notice of Intent and Request for Information on the NIETC program. DOE received 112 separate comments, and these comments really informed DOE's approach to its designation.

As you can see as you read through the guidance document, the comments are cited throughout the guidance. The new process is also responsive to lessons learned from DOE's 2007 NIETC designations, which were vacated by the US Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit. And, finally, the new process is also responsive to congressional action in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, which revised DOE's statutory authority to designate NIETCs.

So, now, moving to the benefits of DOE's new approach-- so DOE's new approach seeks to balance efficiency and effectiveness. When we say "efficiency," we want to get to NIETC designation as quickly as possible. But when we get to NIETC designation, we want it to be effective, to be meaningful.

This means that there are transmission developers waiting in the wings to take advantage of those tools unlocked by NIETC designation. So the new process balances this efficiency and effectiveness by helping DOE independently identify, using best available information, targeted, high-priority areas for NIETC designation where there is a pressing need for transmission.

One of the key features of the new process is identification of narrow geographic areas. As Maria mentioned, this is compared to those vast territories that DOE designated as NIETCs in 2007. And the narrow geographic areas have a number of different benefits.

One is it focuses-- concentrates stakeholder attention on where new transmission is most likely to be built within a NIETC by having that narrower scope. The narrower geographic areas also lead to more efficient preparation by DOE of environmental documents-- again, focused on a narrower area-- and also more useful environmental documents for permitting agencies, including FERC, the goal there being eliminating or at least reducing the need for further review following the NIETC designation.

Another important feature of the new process is robust public engagement. So DOE is exercising its independent judgment throughout this entire process. But it's doing so while meaningfully engaging the public early and throughout the process. And DOE will engage a diverse set of interested parties.

This includes states, Indian tribes, reliability entities, communities, siting authorities, other federal agencies, as well as transmission planners and developers. And this will allow DOE to leverage best available information by soliciting submissions from this diverse set of interested parties, which we hope will lead to more efficient NIETC designations.

This slide provides an overview of the relevant provisions of Federal Power Act section 216 and where NIETCs fit into that statutory scheme. Briefly, Federal Power Act section 216(a) requires DOE to conduct the Triennial National Transmission Needs Study. This is essentially DOE's state of the grid report.

The most recent version, we released at the end of October last year. Section 216(a) also requires DOE to issue a designation report at least once every three years based on the Needs Study or other relevant information, which may designate one or more NIETCs. So that's section 216(a).

NIETC designation triggers FERC siting and permitting authority under section 216(b). FERC's authority is generally limited to instances where states lack authority to site a project, including lack of authority to consider interstate or inter-regional benefits of the project, state has not acted on the application after more than a year or has denied an application. And FERC is a pending notice of proposed rulemaking to revise its regulations under section 216(b).

Then there is section 216(h). At a high level, this allows DOE coordinate all federal authorizations and environmental reviews for certain transmission projects. And DOE also has a pending notice of proposed rulemaking, this under section 216(h). And that proposed rule would establish the Coordinated Interagency Transmission Authorizations and Permits, or CITA, program.

The relationship between these two permitting provisions is this. Developer of a transmission project within a NIETC that seeks a permit from FERC under section 216(b) cannot also seek DOE federal coordination under section 216(h) because DOE delegated its authority to coordinate federal authorizations for those projects to FERC in a memorandum of understanding. But, if a developer of a transmission project within a NIETC does not seek a permit from FERC under section 216(b), it may qualify for DOE federal coordination under section 216(h).

So now, turning to the details of the four-phase NIETC designation process set out in the December 19 guidance, DOE has designed a four-phase process. The goal is to create multiple opportunities for public input from the initial proposals to feedback on an increasingly narrow list of potential NIETCs. So this slide provides the highest-level view of the four phases. The first phase involves public proposals for NIETC designation and DOE's preliminary review of those proposals.

The second phase involves DOE publicly releasing a preliminary list of potential NIETCs, taking public comment on that list, as well as soliciting additional information from the public on the potential NIETCs in that list. The third phase involves robust public engagement on all aspects of NIETC designation. This also includes conducting environmental review under the National Environmental Policy Act, or NEPA, as needed, and issuance of a draft designation report in any needed draft environmental document.

And the fourth phase is the conclusion of the NIETC designation process, with DOE issuing a final designation report and any needed final environmental document. So let's go through that in a bit more detail. So here are the components of phase 1.

Phase 1 begins with DOE evaluating the most recently issued needs study to identify areas where NIETC designation may be particularly valuable. And the check mark here on this slide indicates that this step has already been completed, which I will explain on the next slide what findings are for this issuance.

DOE then opens a phase 1 information submission window, which is opened by DOE's issuance of the guidance. So a phase 1 information submission window is currently open following the December 19 guidance issuance. And, I will, of course, discuss more about that window.

Following the close of a phase 1 information submission window, DOE makes what's called a threshold need determination for each potential NIETC. And then DOE preliminarily identifies relevant discretionary factors from the list that we may consider in Federal Power Act section 216(a)(4). And I will provide more information on that list as we go through.

So, as I mentioned, phase 1 begins with DOE looking at the most recently issued Needs Study and identifying areas where NIETC designation may be particularly valuable. And this preliminary finding helps focus DOE and public resources on particular transmission needs, but it does not foreclose DOE's consideration of NIETC designation separate from the transmission needs in the preliminary finding. For the December 19 guidance, DOE looked at the October 2023 Needs Study, which identifies both regional and interregional transmission needs in every region of the United States. So we looked at that, and we decided that there's a need to focus.

So we preliminarily find that NIETC designation may be particularly valuable in areas where the Needs Study finds a need for increased interregional transfer capacity. And this is based on a couple of different considerations. First is the Needs Study shows significant present and future need for increased interregional transfer capacity across the entire United States.

The map shown here is just one piece of data in the Needs Study that shows present need for increased interregional transfer capacity. But there is other data in the Needs Study that shows significant need everywhere in the country. So, in addition to the significant need shown by the study, there are also acute challenges with planning for increased interregional transfer capacity.

So, when we looked at the significant present and future need, combined with the acute challenges, this suggests that deploying all tools available will be required to address the need, which includes NIETC designation. But, to be clear, areas where increased interregional transfer capacity is needed are broad. Any geographic area designated as a NIETC would be narrower, and may even be within a single region. So, in other words, DOE is not saying that NIETCs must be interregional.

In addition, DOE is not foreclosing information and recommendations from interested parties on potential NIETCs in other geographic areas. There are many findings in the 2023 Needs Study, including needs that must urgently be addressed to relieve consumer burdens and to ensure a resilient and reliable transmission system.

DOE encourages multi-driver, multi-value transmission planning, and, likewise, approaches NIETC designation with the aim of maximizing value across the range of transmission needs that may be addressed through transmission development within a NIETC. So we encourage public submissions that identify potential NIETCs in which transmission development could address multiple categories of transmission needs, and not just interregional transfer capacity needs.

I've mentioned earlier the December 19 guidance opened a phase 1 information submission window. This is a 45-day window. It closes at 5:00 PM Eastern time on February 2, 2024. This 45-day window is an opportunity for interested parties to submit information and recommendations to DOE on where to designate a NIETC and why. "Interested parties" is a very broadly defined term.

It includes any person or entity, including states or Indian tribes, concerned with DOE's exercise of its discretion to designate a geographic area as a NIETC. So, in other words interested parties is anyone.

And there's a list of information that DOE requests during the phase 1 information submission window in the guidance.

At the highest level, DOE's seeking information on where to designate potential NIETCs. That's the geographic boundaries, the perimeter of an area that should consider for NIETC designation. Broadly, this area should be of sufficient scope and size to construct, maintain, and safely operate one or more transmission projects.

To assist with consideration of where to designate a NIETC, we're also seeking information on potential transmission projects within the area, including potential interconnection points, federal authorizations that may be needed, as well as information on state or local siting processes and the potential for a transmission developer to seek a federal permit from FERC under Federal Power Act section 216(b). In addition to asking where to designate a NIETC, we're also seeking public input on why to designate a NIETC in a particular area.

So this means helping DOE identify present or expected transmission needs, as well as harms to consumers caused by the lack of adequate transmission infrastructure in the area. DOE is also interested in information on relevant local and regional transmission planning processes and how they are considering that area and those needs.

Finally, the phase 1 window provides an opportunity for the public to identify factors from the list in Federal Power Act section 216(a)(4) for that may be relevant. And, again, I'll go through those factors in a couple of slides.

So evidence of transmission needs-- when we talk about transmission needs for NIETC designation, we're focused on transmission congestion and transmission capacity constraints. So, generally, transmission congestion is the economic impacts on consumers that result from physical limits on the amount of electricity that can safely and reliably flow across a transmission line.

Transmission capacity constraints are a bit broader. They are suboptimal limits on the amount of electricity that can flow across a transmission line. This includes limits that reduce reliability.

This includes limits that reduce the ability to transfer electricity between regions, and also limits on the ability to deliver lower-cost electricity to where it is needed. So DOE can designate a NIETC where it finds transmission needs based on either the Needs Study or on, quote, "other information."

So starting with the Needs Study-- the 2023 Needs Study included DOE's assessment of publicly available data and more than 120 recently published reports that consider current and anticipated future needs under a range of electricity demand, public policy, and market conditions. So the findings in the Needs Study may support NIETC designation in a particular area.

But the Federal Power Act still permits DOE to consider other information. This is not defined by the statute. But, when we see this other information, we consider such reliable sources as studies conducted by regional transmission organizations and independent system operators, analysis performed by national labs or academic institutions, and similar type information.

So what this means is, during the NIETC designation process, the public has the opportunity to help inform DOE beyond our assessment in the Needs Study on transmission needs that may warrant NIETC designation.

So, in addition to finding transmission needs within a geographic area that DOE may designate as a NIETC, the Federal Power Act also requires DOE to find harm to consumers as a result of the transmission need. Those harms do not have to be within the geographic area that is designated as a

NIETC, and they're also not limited to economic effects, nor limited to a certain time horizon. So it really is a broad perspective.

But they certainly do include economic impacts, including high costs where not enough transmission is available to move lower-cost electricity from where it's produced to where it's needed. But consumer harms also include more and longer power outages due to increased vulnerability to disruptive events, as well as delayed access to a diverse, clean, and reliable energy supply. So DOE is seeking public input on the full breadth of consumer harms that may support NIETC designation in a particular area.

So, once DOE finds transmission needs and harms to consumers in a geographic area, DOE may consider the list of factors included in Federal Power Act Section 216(a)(4), which the guidance refers to as the discretionary factors. And I've mentioned these a couple of times already. So this slide provides a paraphrased list of the factors. As you can see, there are many, and they are broad.

They include the impact of inadequate transmission on economic vitality and growth, the impact on national energy independence, on national energy policy, on national defense, on the ability to interconnect firm or intermittent energy resources, the ability to maximize existing rights of way, minimize environmental and cultural impacts, as well as reduce electricity costs for consumers.

So, during the phase 1 window, which is open right now, DOE is seeking public input on which of these discretionary factors may be relevant to a specific NIETC designation. And DOE will again seek input on these factors in subsequent phases of the designation process.

So we've now covered DOE's preliminary finding, as well as the phase 1 information submission window. Once the window closes, DOE will make what's called a threshold need determination for each potential NIETC. During this, DOE preliminarily determines whether there's transmission need within the narrow geographic areas for potential NIETC designation, and whether that transmission need harms consumers.

So, for this, DOE will look at the 2023 Needs Study findings, look at the status of ongoing transmission planning processes, as well as other relevant information, as I discussed, such as national lab reports. And those NIETCs that satisfy this threshold need screening will then move to preliminarily identifying the relevant discretionary factors from that list I just showed you from Federal Power Act section 216(a)(4). And, to the extent that the list of potential NIETCs needs to be narrowed before moving to phase 2, DOE may rely on the relevant discretionary factors to further narrow that list. So here are the components of phase 2, which I'm going to briefly mention here, and then I'm going to go through in a bit more detail. So DOE begins phase 2 by publicly issuing a preliminary list of potential NIETC designations and opening a comment period on the list.

DOE concurrently opens a phase 2 information submission window. When the comment period on the list and the phase 2 window close, DOE conducts what the guidance calls a technical completeness assessment for each potential NIETC and preliminarily reviews the comments received, and then moves to phase 3 with a narrowed list of potential NIETCs from that initial announcement.

So, approximately 60 days after the close of the phase 1 information submission window, so some time in the spring of 2024 for the process initiated on December 19, DOE aims to publicly release a preliminary list that identifies which potential NIETCs DOE is continuing to consider. This will be the first public release following the December 19 guidance issuance.

And this list will provide the preliminary geographic boundaries of potential NIETCs, which we expect to be a rough approximation, DOE's preliminary assessment of transmission needs within the relevant area,

as well as the harms to consumers, so essentially explaining the threshold need determination part of phase 1, the preliminary list of relevant discretionary factors for each potential NIETC that DOE identified in phase 1, and a high-level explanation on why the potential NIETCs in the list have moved to phase 2. So any potential NIETCs that are not on the preliminary list do not move forward to phase 2, but resubmissions are allowed in future phase 1 windows. And DOE will invite public comment on the list, including recommendations and alternatives from interested parties, including affected states and Indian tribes.

So, as I mentioned earlier, in addition to the comment period on the list itself, DOE will concurrently open a phase 2 information submission window. So, like the first, the second window will be open for 45 days, which will also be the same length as the comment period on the list.

There is a list of information that DOE requests during phase 2 included in the guidance. So interested parties are welcome to review the list of information months in advance before DOE actually is requesting that that information be submitted.

The information that DOE is seeking in phase 2 is designed to assist DOE in conducting a study of environmental impacts and examining any requirements that may apply under other federal statutes, such as study potential impacts on cultural and tribal resources. The information requested in phase 2 is also aimed at helping DOE refine the geographic boundaries from that rough approximation included in the preliminary list to a final NIETC designation.

And the information for phase 2 is organized into 13 Resource Reports, which are listed here on the next slide. These Resource Reports largely track those that DOE is considering for its section 216(h) federal coordination process, as well as those that FERC is considering for its section 216(b) permitting process, but revised to reflect the nature of NIETC designation. And these may be adjusted as DOE and FERC finalize their pending rules.

As you can see on the slide, the Resource Reports are titled based on their general contents. So there's a general description of geographic boundaries; water use and quality; fish, wildlife and vegetation; cultural resources; socioeconomics; tribal resources; communities of interest; geological resources; soils; land use, recreation, and aesthetics; air quality and environmental noise; alternatives; and reliability and safety.

So, when the public comment period on the preliminary list and the phase 2 information submission window close, DOE will conduct what the guidance refers to as a technical completeness assessment for potential NIETCs, as well as preliminarily review comments.

So what this means is DOE is going to assess the relative completeness of information available for each potential NIETC and then rank potential NIETCs based on relative completeness of information available on geographic boundaries and permitting. And DOE will also preliminarily review public comments, including any recommendations and alternatives from interested parties, including from affected states and Indian tribes. DOE will prioritize moving potential resources to phase 3 where there's more complete information available.

So, in other words, DOE prioritizes potential NIETCs where there's sufficient information to facilitate DOE's environmental review, as well as other resource impacts, as efficiently and effectively as possible. And then DOE will move to phase 3 with a narrowed list of potential NIETCs.

So this slide summarizes a number of the key considerations that will go into DOE's identification and narrowing of the list of potential NIETCs. Top of the list, of course, is the presence of pressing transmission needs, again, based on the Needs Study or other relevant information.

Then there are those relevant discretionary factors from the long list in Federal Power Act Section 216(a)(4), including the one about furthering national energy policy goals. As I just mentioned, relative completeness of information available on geographic boundaries and permitting will be an important factor, and finally, public engagement and with a diverse set of interested parties.

So we know that one roadblock to more transmission development is public opposition, and that early public engagement is a key to addressing such opposition. So the new process provides multiple opportunities for public input. It enables DOE to uncover potential issues within NIETCs, use that information both to carefully develop the geographic boundaries of the NIETCs, and also to assist siting authorities by engaging relevant entities early in the process of developing new transmission.

So phase 3 involves a lot of concurrent activity, as you can see from this slide. So, starting all the way on one side, DOE develops the geographic boundaries of potential NIETCs. So this is, again, refining from the rough approximation that you see in phase 2.

There are many considerations here. These include whether combining potential NIETCs could actually achieve greater benefits, so such benefits as increased competition within the NIETC or coordinated environmental reviews for multiple solutions, also looking at the environmental and resource impacts within a potential NIETC to refine those boundaries, as well as, of course information or recommendations from the public.

At the end of the day, in developing the geographic boundaries, DOE will seek to balance the value of the narrowness for efficient environmental review that's more useful for siting and permitting with the value of allowing for competition within a NIETC, reasonable route changes, effective engagement with interested parties, and all similar considerations.

During phase 3, DOE also initiates the NEPA process as needed, which may differ based on the nature of the potential NIETC and the information available. Each potential NIETC designation will proceed on its own timeline at this point, most likely dependent on the timeline for the NEPA review.

In addition, phase 3 includes conducting robust public engagement tailored to the potential NIETCs under consideration. And this may include public meetings and workshops where developers within a potential NIETC indicate that they intend to seek a permit from FERC. DOE will coordinate with FERC to the maximum extent possible to minimize redundancy and promote efficiency.

In addition to environmental review, during phase 3, DOE will assess the full basis for NIETC designation. That means, again, looking at the transmission needs, the harms to consumers, and the list of relevant discretionary factors, but at a more in-depth level than before. And these activities culminate in DOE issuing one or more draft NIETC designation reports and draft environmental documents as needed, opening a comment period on the draft documents, and convening public meetings to discuss.

And then DOE moves to phase 4. The NIETC design process concludes in phase 4. So it begins with DOE issuing any final environmental documents that are needed and waiting any required period before closing out the environmental review.

Then DOE will issue one or more final designation reports. And these reports will include background information, a description of the designation process specific to that NIETC, a summary of comments and

DOE's responses, of course, an explanation of DOE's basis for finding transmission needs and harms to consumers, and DOE's consideration of those relevant discretionary factors.

This slide provides an anticipated timeline for the NIETC designation process. So DOE released the guidance on December 19, 2023, which, again, opened a 45-day phase 1 information submission window. That will close on February 2, 2024.

Some time in the spring of 2024, DOE aims to publicly issue a preliminary list of potential NIETCs and open a 45-day comment period on the list, as well as a 45-day phase 2 information submission window. That will close in the spring or summer of 2024.

From there, phases 3 and 4 are variable based on the level of information available, as well as the necessary environmental documentation for each potential NIETC. So, just to provide an example, the standard timeline for a full environmental impact statement that DOE proposed in its pending rulemaking under Section 216(h) is a two-year timeline.

So thank you so much for joining us today for your interest [INAUDIBLE] for your interest in the National Interest Electric Transmission Corridor Program. The full guidance document, as well as frequently asked questions, are available on the website. Questions can also be sent at any time to our dedicated email box, which is right here, NIETC@hq.doe.gov. This is also the email where you can make information submissions during the appropriate window.

MEREDITH BRASELMAN: Thank you, Gretchen, for that excellent presentation. So this wraps up today's webinar. The recording of today's webinar will be available in about two weeks on the NIETC Designation Process Final Guidance Webinar web page.

To find more information about the NIETC designation process, please visit the program web page. You can find the link to both of those web pages in the chat now. And you can also send your questions to the email on the screen, as Gretchen shared. Maria and Gretchen, thank you so much for joining us today, and thank you to all of our attendees for participating. Take care, everyone. See you next time.