

February 18, 2025, will be provided to the board members prior to the meeting. Written comments will be accepted after the meeting until Friday, February 28, 2025. Please submit written comments to [nssab@emcbc.doe.gov](mailto:nssab@emcbc.doe.gov). Individuals who wish to make oral comments during the meeting can do so in 2-minute segments for the 15 minutes allotted for public comments. The Deputy Designated Federal Officer (DDFO) is empowered to conduct the meeting in a fashion that will facilitate the orderly conduct of business. Questioning of committee members or participants by the public is not permitted except with the approval of the DDFO and chairperson.

**Minutes:** Minutes will be available by writing or calling Barbara Ulmer, NSSAB Administrator, U.S. Department of Energy, EM Nevada Program, 100 North City Parkway, Suite 1750, Las Vegas, NV 89106; Phone: (702) 523-0894. Minutes will also be available at the following website: <https://www.nnss.gov/nssab/nssab-meetings/>.

**Signing Authority:** This document of the Department of Energy was signed on January 14, 2025, by David Borak, Committee Management Officer, pursuant to delegated authority from the Secretary of Energy. That document with the original signature and date is maintained by DOE. For administrative purposes only, and in compliance with requirements of the Office of the Federal Register, the undersigned DOE Federal Register Liaison Officer has been authorized to sign and submit the document in electronic format for publication, as an official document of the Department of Energy. This administrative process in no way alters the legal effect of this document upon publication in the **Federal Register**.

Signed in Washington, DC on January 14, 2025.

**Jennifer Hartzell,**

*Alternate Federal Register Liaison Officer,  
U.S. Department of Energy.*

[FR Doc. 2025-01228 Filed 1-16-25; 8:45 am]

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## DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

[Docket No. DOE-HQ-2023-0020]

### Notice of Availability of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for Phase 1 of the Grain Belt Express Transmission Line Project (DOE/EIS-0554)

**AGENCY:** Loan Programs Office, Department of Energy.

**ACTION:** Notice of availability, request for comments, notice of proposed floodplain action.

**SUMMARY:** The Loan Programs Office (LPO), U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), announces the availability of the draft environmental impact statement (DEIS) for the proposed Phase 1 of the Grain Belt Express Transmission Project (Project), and a Notice of Proposed Floodplain Action. The DEIS analyzes the impacts associated with providing potential financial assistance (a Federal loan guarantee) to Grain Belt Express, LLC, for construction and energization of the Project. This notice of availability (NOA) announces the start of the public review and comment period, as well as the dates and times for public meetings on the DEIS. After DOE LPO holds the public meetings and addresses public comments submitted during the review period, DOE LPO will publish a final environmental impact statement. Because the Project may include activities within floodplains, this NOA also serves as a notice of proposed floodplain action.

**DATES:** Comments must be received no later than March 3, 2025. LPO will hold six public meetings for the Project, four in-person and two virtual, at the following dates and times (Central Time):

- Monday, February 10, 2025, 4–6 p.m., Dodge City Public Library, 1001 N 2nd Ave., Dodge City, KS 67801.
- Tuesday, February 11, 2025, 4–6 p.m., Holiday Inn Express, 2175 Lincoln St., Concordia, KS 66901.
- Wednesday, February 12, 2025, 4–6 p.m. St. Joseph Museum, Jackie Lewin Conference Room, 3406 Frederick Ave., St. Joseph, MO 64506.
- Thursday, February 13, 2025, 4–6 p.m., La Bella Casa Event Center, 5 South Main St., Carrollton, MO 64633.
- Virtual, Wednesday, February 19, 2025, 11 a.m.–1 p.m.
- Virtual, Wednesday, February 20, 2025, 4–6 p.m.

All meetings are open to the public and free to attend. Registration for in person meetings is not required. Registration for the virtual public meetings is required and may be completed at <https://www.energy.gov/lpo/eis-0554-grain-belt-express-transmission-line>. Meeting information will be sent to registrants via their email address provided during registration.

**ADDRESSES:** The DEIS and detailed information about the Project can be found on DOE LPO's website at: <https://www.energy.gov/lpo/eis-0554-grain-belt-express-transmission-line>. Comments can be submitted in any of the following ways:

Online via DOE LPO's website at <https://www.energy.gov/lpo/eis-0554-grain-belt-express-transmission-line> or email: [LPO\\_GrainBelt\\_EIS@hq.doe.gov](mailto:LPO_GrainBelt_EIS@hq.doe.gov).

Orally or in writing during any of the public meetings identified in this NOA.

In writing submitted by mail or any other delivery service, enclosed in an envelope labeled "Grain Belt Express EIS" and addressed to Todd Stribley, NEPA Compliance Officer, U.S. Department of Energy, Loan Programs Office—LP30, 1000 Independence Avenue SW, Washington, DC 20585.

Through the regulations.gov web portal: Navigate to <https://www.regulations.gov> and search for Docket No. DOE-HQ-2023-0020. Click on the "Comment" button below the document link. Enter your information and comment, then click "Submit Comment."

For more information about submitting comments, please see "Information on Submitting Comments" under the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** heading below.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Todd Stribley, U.S. Department of Energy, Loan Programs Office, 1000 Independence Avenue SW, Washington, DC 20585. Email: [LPO\\_GrainBelt\\_EIS@hq.doe.gov](mailto:LPO_GrainBelt_EIS@hq.doe.gov). Phone: 301-525-5944.

#### **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

Grain Belt Express LLC (the "Applicant"), applied for Federal financial assistance via a loan guarantee from the DOE LPO under title XVII of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S. Code [U.S.C.] 16511–16517), as amended. Section 1703 of title XVII (the Clean Energy Financing Program) defines eligible projects as those that, "avoid, reduce, or sequester air pollutants or anthropogenic emissions of greenhouse gases; and employ new or significantly improved technologies as compared to commercial technologies in service in the United States at the time the guarantee is issued" (Pub. L. 109–58, sec. 1703(a)). Because the Project may include activities within floodplains, this NOA also serves as a notice of proposed floodplain action, in accordance with 10 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) part 1022.

**Proposed Action.** The Federal financing provided by DOE LPO will apply to eligible project costs that include the design, engineering, financing, construction, startup, commissioning, and shakedown of the Project, which includes the following elements:

- A 542-mile, overhead 600-kilovolt (kV) high-voltage direct-current (HVDC) transmission line that would extend between Ford County in southwestern

Kansas and Monroe County in northeastern Missouri (HVDC Line);

- The Tiger Connector, an approximately 36-mile, overhead 345-kV alternating-current (AC) transmission line that would extend from the HVDC converter station in Monroe County, Missouri, to the existing McCredie Substation, owned and operated by Associated Electric Cooperative Incorporated, and the existing Burns Substation, owned and operated by Ameren, in Callaway County, Missouri;
- The Ford County Interconnect, an approximately 0.2-mile, overhead 345-kV AC transmission line located in Ford County, Kansas that would extend from the HVDC converter station to the existing Saddle Substation, owned and operated by ITC Great Plains;
- Two HVDC converter stations and associated infrastructure, one located in Ford County, Kansas and one located in Monroe County, Missouri;
- Optical regeneration facilities in support of the HVDC Line and associated access driveways; and
- Temporary workspaces needed for construction, including temporary access routes, workspaces around transmission structures, pull or tension sites, multi-use construction yards, concrete batch plants, and fly yards and helipads.

*No Action Alternative.* Under the No Action Alternative, DOE LPO would not provide Federal financial support (a loan guarantee) to the Applicant, with the assumption for the purpose of the environmental analysis that the project would not be constructed.

*Availability of the DEIS:* The DEIS and associated information are available on DOE LPO's website at: <https://www.energy.gov/lpo/eis-0554-grain-belt-express-transmission-line>. If you require a digital copy on a flash drive or paper copy, LPO will provide one upon request, if supplies are available. You may request a flash drive or paper copy of the DEIS by contacting DOE LPO at [LPO\\_GrainBelt\\_EIS@hq.doe.gov](mailto:LPO_GrainBelt_EIS@hq.doe.gov). Hard copies of the DEIS are available for review at the following libraries:

- Dodge City Public Library, 1001 N 2nd Ave, Dodge City, KS 67801
- Southwest Kansas Library System, 100 Military Ave Suite 210, Dodge City, KS 67801
- Frank Carlson Library, 702 Broadway, Concordia, KS 66901
- Learning Resource Center, 2221 Campus Dr., Concordia, KS 66901
- Great Bend Public Library, 1409 Williams St., Great Bend, KS 67530
- Hays Public Library 1205 Main St., Hays, KS 67601

- Manhattan Public Library, 629 Poyntz Ave., Manhattan, KS 66502
  - Kansas City Public Library, 6242 Swope Pkwy, Kansas City, MO 64130
  - Mid-Continent Woodneath, 8900 NE Flintlock Rd., Kansas City, MO 64157
  - Little Dixie Regional Library, 111 N. 4th St., Moberly, MO 65270
  - Little Dixie Regional Library, 102 E Library St., Huntsville, MO 65259
  - St. Joseph Public Library, 927 Felix Street, St., Joseph, MO 64501
  - East Hills Library, 502 N Woodbine Rd., St., Joseph, MO 64506
  - Carnegie Branch Library, 316 Massachusetts St., St. Joseph, MO 64504
  - Carrollton Public Library, 1 North Folger St., Carrollton, MO 64633
  - Trails Regional Library, 203 E Kelling Ave., Waverly, MO 64096
- Cooperating Agencies:* The following 4 Federal agencies participated as cooperating agencies in the preparation of the DEIS: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, National Park Service, and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation was a participating agency.

*Information on Submitting Comments:* LPO requests data, comments, information, analysis, or suggestions relevant to the environmental analysis in the DEIS from the public; affected Federal, tribal, state, and local governments, agencies and offices; the scientific community; industry; or any other interested party. DOE LPO does not consider anonymous comments. To promote informed decision-making, comments should be as specific as possible and should provide as much detail as necessary to meaningfully and fully inform DOE LPO on why the issues raised are important to the consideration of potential environmental effects and/or the alternatives to the proposed action.

Please include your name and address as part of your comment. DOE LPO makes your comments, including your name and address, available for public review. You may request that DOE LPO withhold your name, address, or any other personally identifiable information (PII) included in your comment from the public record; however, DOE LPO cannot guarantee that it will be able to do so. If you wish your name, address, or other PII to be withheld, you must state your request prominently in a cover letter and explain the harm that you fear from its disclosure, such as unwarranted privacy invasion, embarrassment, or injury. Even if LPO withholds your information in the context of this notice, your comment is subject to the Freedom of

Information Act (FOIA) and any relevant court orders. If your comment is requested under FOIA or relevant court order, your information will only be withheld if a determination is made that one of the FOIA exemptions to disclosure applies or if the relevant court order is challenged. Such a determination will be made in accordance with DOE's FOIA regulations and applicable law.

Please label privileged or confidential information as "Contains Confidential Information," and consider submitting such information as a separate attachment. Information that is not labeled as privileged or confidential may be regarded by DOE LPO as suitable for public release. Consistent with Section 304 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) (54 U.S.C. 307103(a)), DOE LPO is required to withhold the location, character, or ownership of historic resources if it determines that disclosure may, among other things, risk harm to the historic resources or impede the use of a traditional religious site by practitioners. Tribal entities should designate information that falls under Section 304 of NHPA as confidential.

All submissions from organizations or businesses and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses will be made available for public inspection in their entirety.

*Authority:* 42 U.S.C. 4231 *et seq.* (National Environmental Policy Act, as amended) and 40 CFR 1501.9 and 1503.1.

### Signing Authority

This document of the Department of Energy was signed on January 8, 2025, by Todd Stribley, NEPA Compliance Officer, Loan Programs Office, pursuant to delegated authority from the Secretary of Energy. That document with the original signature and date is maintained by DOE. For administrative purposes only, and in compliance with requirements of the Office of the Federal Register, the undersigned DOE **Federal Register** Liaison Officer has been authorized to sign and submit the document in electronic format for publication as an official document of DOE. This administrative process in no way alters the legal effect of this document upon publication in the **Federal Register**.

Signed in Washington, DC, on January 10, 2025.

**Treena V. Garrett,**

*Federal Register Liaison Officer, U.S.  
Department of Energy.*

[FR Doc. 2025-00736 Filed 1-16-25; 8:45 am]

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## DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

### Notice of Request for Information (RFI) on Autonomous Experimentation Platforms from Material Genome Initiative

**AGENCY:** Office of Critical and Emerging Technologies, Department of Energy.

**ACTION:** Request for information (RFI).

**SUMMARY:** On behalf of the Material Genome Initiative (MGI), the Department of Energy (DOE) seeks public comment on autonomous experimentation platforms to inform implementation of the MGI Challenges and Autonomous Materials Innovation Infrastructure (AMII).

**DATES:** Responses to the RFI are requested by March 21, 2025.

**ADDRESSES:** Interested parties may submit comments electronically to [info@mg.gov](mailto:info@mg.gov) and include “MGI RFI” in the subject line of the email.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Further questions may be addressed to Charles Yang through [info@mg.gov](mailto:info@mg.gov) or (202) 586-6116.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

#### I. Background

This is an RFI issued by DOE in support of the Material Genome Initiative (MGI) that seeks public input to inform interagency coordination around Autonomous Experimentation (AE) platform research, development, capabilities, and infrastructure. This input will support the efforts of the recently announced MGI Challenges that aim to help unify and promote adoption of the Materials Innovation Infrastructure—through the expansion and integration of capabilities including autonomy, artificial intelligence, and robotics—to realize solutions to challenges of national interest.<sup>1</sup> MGI is a Federal multi-agency initiative for discovering, manufacturing, and deploying advanced materials and supporting U.S. institutions in the adoption of methods for accelerating materials development, with over 15 agency participants.

For this RFI, MGI seeks input from stakeholders across the entire materials

innovation ecosystem including but not limited to:

- Academic and federally funded research and development centers
- For-profit and non-profit AI developers
- Consortia, public/private partnerships, and industry groups interested in AE
- Scientific equipment manufacturers
- Robotics/automation manufacturers and developers
- Startups and investors
- Scientific workforce and education organizations
- Think tanks and science policy organizations
- And other interested entities

#### II. Purpose

Autonomous experimentation (AE) is defined in the MGI Workshop Report on Autonomous Materials Innovation Infrastructure<sup>2</sup> as “the coupling of automated experimentation and in situ or in line analysis of results, with artificial intelligence (AI) to direct experiments in rapid, closed-loops.” The report identifies several technological advances coupled to existing techniques that need to be integrated to realize AE:

(1) Laboratory automation, enabling robots to carry out the autonomous experimental tasks (Including transfer between instruments/experimental stations) prescribed by the decision algorithms.

(2) Automated in-line & in situ sensing, characterization, and analysis capabilities to enable closed-loop autonomous experimentation.

(3) Improved AI and autonomous experimentation decision methods for materials that enable faster and better R&D.

(4) Improved software for hardware automation, sensing and autonomous experimentation.

MGI announced five challenges to help unify and accelerate adoption of Materials Innovation Infrastructure to build scientific infrastructure to address issues national interest.<sup>3</sup> These challenges build off several recent announcements from across the U.S. Government in support of AE systems, including funding for AE for semiconductor materials<sup>4</sup> from the CHIPS office in NIST, a National Science Foundation (NSF) solicitation

for material discovery,<sup>5</sup> and an ARPA-E funding opportunity for catalyst discovery with AE.<sup>6</sup> This RFI is not a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) or Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA).

This RFI seeks public input on existing research infrastructure as well as opportunities and challenges to leverage autonomous experimentation systems to realize the MGI Challenges. This RFI also seeks input on steps the MGI and the U.S. Government can take to support a broader research and development (R&D) ecosystem for autonomous experimentation systems.

#### III. Questions

##### 1. MGI Challenges

For any of the following MGI challenges, respondents may provide input on any number or all of the following topics:

- Identify and map existing autonomous experimentation infrastructure suitable to addressing the MGI challenges;
- Describe how autonomous experimentation systems should be designed and integrated to accomplish MGI challenges;
- Describe promising technical approaches to addressing a particular challenge and how AE systems can be designed to accelerate progress in those approaches;
- Describe obstacles to leveraging autonomous experimentation systems specific to a given MGI challenge that will need to be addressed.

Clearly indicate which challenge is being responded to. Further details on the challenges can be found here.<sup>7</sup> One response may respond to multiple challenges.

- (a) MGI Challenge: Point of Care Tissue-Mimetic Materials for Biomedical Devices and Implants
- (b) MGI Challenge: Agile Manufacturing of Affordable Multi-Functional Composites
- (c) MGI Challenge: Quantum Position, Navigation, and Timing on a Chip
- (d) MGI Challenge: High Performance, Low Carbon Cementitious Materials
- (e) MGI Challenge: Sustainable Materials Design for Semiconductor Applications

##### 2. Partnerships and Consortium

(a) How should the Material Genome Initiative (MGI) and the U.S.

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.mgi.gov/sites/default/files/documents/MGI\\_Autonomous\\_Materials\\_Innovation\\_Infrastructure\\_Workshop\\_Report.pdf](https://www.mgi.gov/sites/default/files/documents/MGI_Autonomous_Materials_Innovation_Infrastructure_Workshop_Report.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.mgi.gov/2024-materials-genome-initiative-mgi-challenges>.

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.nist.gov/system/files/documents/2024/10/30/CHIPS%20CARISSMA%20NOFO.pdf>.

<sup>5</sup> <https://nsf.gov-resources.nsf.gov/files/nsf25508.pdf?VersionId=m260vPkM22sxSgrP2Kawqho5qTCDDHYD>.

<sup>6</sup> <https://arpa-e.energy.gov/technologies/programs/catalchem-e>.

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.mgi.gov/2024-materials-genome-initiative-mgi-challenges>.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.mgi.gov/2024-materials-genome-initiative-mgi-challenges>.