

**COVER SHEET****RESPONSIBLE FEDERAL AGENCY:** U.S. Department of Energy, Office of Fossil Energy**COOPERATING AGENCY:** U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management**TITLE:** Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Imperial-Mexicali 230-kV Transmission Lines

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**ABSTRACT:** A U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Presidential permit is required to construct an electric transmission line across the U.S. international border. On February 27, 2001, Baja California Power, Inc. (hereafter referred to as InterGen), InterGen Aztec Energy, V.B.V., filed an application with DOE, Office of Fossil Energy, for a Presidential permit that would allow construction and connection of a double-circuit, 230-kV transmission line extending from the Imperial Valley Substation in California for a distance of about 6 mi (10 km) to a point west of Calexico at the U.S.-Mexico border. The line would connect at the border with a similar line being built in Mexico. In a separate but similar proceeding, Sempra Energy Resources applied to DOE for a Presidential permit on March 7, 2001, also to construct a double-circuit, 230-kV transmission line that would parallel the proposed InterGen line and connect with a similar line being built in Mexico. The lines for both projects would traverse land managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), a cooperating agency in preparing this EIS. For both of these projects, the applicants propose to use the international lines to connect to separate power plants, each about 3 mi (5 km) south of the border and located approximately 10 mi (16 km) southwest of Mexicali, Baja California, Mexico.

DOE and BLM have determined that the issuance of Presidential permits and right-of-way grants for these projects constitutes a major Federal action within the meaning of the *National Environmental Policy Act of 1969* as amended. The *Federal Register* "Notice of Intent to Prepare an EIS and to Conduct a Public Scoping Meeting and Notice of Floodplain and Wetlands Involvement" was published on October 30, 2003 (68 FR 61797). Public scoping meetings were held by DOE and BLM on November 20, 2003, in the City Hall of El Centro and in the City of Calexico City Hall, Calexico, California.

DOE and BLM have prepared this Draft EIS to address the environmental impacts of the proposed action and the range of reasonable alternatives, including the "No Action" alternative. The Final EIS will be used by DOE and BLM to ensure that they have the environmental information needed for informed decision making. The decisions will be issued in the form of a Record of Decision by DOE and a Record of Decision by BLM subsequent to the Final EIS.