

**From:** Melton, Douglas [<mailto:d1melton@blm.gov>]  
**Sent:** Sunday, December 07, 2014 4:42 PM  
**To:** Starzak, Richard  
**Subject:** Re: Thank you for being on the call!

Thanks Richard:

I have a few comments on the PA and some of the attachments

1. On page 1 in the third Whereas clause, I am assuming that the Decker Alternative is the same as the 2007 western alignment and would still tie in with the existing railroad near the Spring Creek Mine. If this is the case you should probably add Big Horn County to the list of other counties. The railroad, mine and Tongue River Dam are all in big Horn rather than Rosebud County.
2. On Page 5, 5th full whereas clause, I don't have a problem with the clause, I would point out undertakings in the Tongue River Valley can go from fairly small-such as installing signs, building fences to large, complex actions such as yours.
3. Page 10 2(f). You might also want to add some language for borrow sources that involve split estate minerals or BLM managed surface where the Federal approval would be a different process than the ROW grant.
4. Page 11-12, Under Section IV.B, Second Phase Surveys if a Built Alternative is Approved. Is there any thought of adding something about Geo-archaeological modeling at areas that have high potential for buried cultural deposits, such as river crossings, but where surface indications may not be apparent.
5. Page 27, you probably already realize this, but you may want to separate the line for the Eastern Shoshone and Oglala Sioux Tribe
6. Page 51: Lithic Scatters. The fact that Tongue River Silicified Sediment is the most common raw material is interesting. I would interested in seeing a photograph of what is being called Tongue River Silicified Sediment. Most previous studies have shown porcellanite to be the most common raw material used in the Tongue River Valley and surrounding areas of southeast Montana. The 2006 Miles City Class I Overview gives a good summary of lithic materials available for use in southeast Montana.
7. Page 54: Built Resources. Although it lacks standing structures, I was surprised to see the CCC camp at Spotted Eagle was not listed in this section. The camp is currently in the Miles City Shooting Range.
8. Page 57. Lee community District: for the Lee Community District, you may want to check with the Montana SHPO for additional work done for later coal [studies.to](#) the north might contain additional information on the district.

9. Finally, has there any thought to doing anything with the existing rail line from the former Rosebud Mine to the mainline terminus west of Forsyth? I understand that this not necessarily a part of the Tongue River Railroad, but any upgrading to connect it to the main line would be viewed as a connected action. I would also point out that in and of itself, the line is a historic resources.

Doug Melton, Lead Archaeologist  
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