DOE/EIS-0399

Final
Environmental Impact Statement

for the

Montana Alberta Tie Ltd. (MATL)
230-kV Transmission Line

VOLUME 1

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COVER SHEET

Responsible Agencies: U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) and Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) are co-lead agencies; the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), U.S. Department of the Interior, is a cooperating agency.

Title: Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Montana Alberta Tie Ltd. (MATL) 230-kV Transmission Line (DOE/EIS-0399)

Location: Cascade, Teton, Chouteau, Pondera, Toole, and Glacier counties, Montana.

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Abstract: MATL proposes to construct and operate a merchant 230-kV transmission line between Great Falls, Montana, and Lethbridge, Alberta, that would cross the U.S.-Canada border north of Cut Bank, Montana. The transmission line would transmit 300 megawatts (MW) of electric power south and 300 MW north. In order to build and operate the line, MATL must first obtain a Presidential permit (Permit) from DOE to cross the U.S.-Canada border, a Certificate of Compliance (Certificate) from the Montana DEQ to construct the line in Montana, and a right-of-way grant from the BLM to cross any BLM-administered lands.

In March 2007 DOE and DEQ published a joint document (referred to herein as the March 2007 document) that was a Draft Environmental Assessment for DOE and a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for DEQ. Based largely on the public comments received on the March 2007 document, DOE determined that an EIS was the appropriate level of review. For the same reasons, DEQ decided to prepare a supplement to its Draft EIS. In February 2008 the agencies published a document (referred to herein as the Draft EIS) that was a Federal Draft EIS and a State of Montana Supplemental Draft EIS. A 45-day comment period began with publication of a Notice of Availability in the *Federal Register* on February 15, 2008 (73 FR 8869), and ended on March 31, 2008, during which the agencies held three public hearings to obtain comments. The Final EIS contains the agencies' responses to comments and revisions to the Draft EIS. Text changes to this Final EIS from the Draft EIS are identified by underlining for corrected or added text and a mark along the left margin.

The EIS analyzes the "No Action" alternative and three alternative transmission line alignments with 11 Local Routing Options and other minor variations to the alternative alignments. The agencies will use the EIS to ensure that they have the environmental information needed to render informed decisions.

An accompanying compact disc contains electronic copies of the Final EIS, including the appendices, which are not included in the paper copy, along with Volume 2 from the Draft EIS, which provides responses to comments received on the March 2007 document. The EIS will be available on DOE's NEPA website at www.gc.energy.gov/NEPA/DOE_NEPA_documents.htm and at DEQ's website at http://deq.mt.gov/MFS/MATL.asp.

Table of Contents

VOLUME 1

SUMMARY S-1

S.1 Introduction S-1

S.2 Purpose and Benefit to the State of Montana S-2
S.2.1 Benefits to Electricity Generators and Consumers in Montana S-2
S.2.2 Benefits to Existing Transmission Systems S-3
S.2.3 Benefits as Stated by the Applicant S-3

S.3 General DOE, MFSA, NEPA/MEPA, and BLM Requirements S-4
S.3.1 Purpose and Need for DOE Action S-4
S.3.2 DEQ MFSA Requirements S-5
S.3.3 BLM Requirements S-6
S.3.4 NEPA/MEPA Process S-6

S.4 Alternatives Description S-11
S.4.1 Details Common to All Action Alternatives S-11
S.4.2 Alternative 1 — No Action S-18
S.4.3 Alternative 2 — MATL's Proposed Project S-18
S.4.4 Alternative 3 — MATL B S-18
S.4.5 Alternative 4 — Agencies' Alternative S-19
S.4.6 Local Routing Options S-19
S.4.7 The Agencies' Preferred Alternative S-23
S.4.8 Alternatives Considered But Dismissed S-27

S.5 Affected Environment S-28

S.6 Comparison of Alternatives and Impacts S-29
S.6.1 No Action Alternative S-29
S.6.2 Alternatives 2, 3, and 4 ..... S-30
S.6.3 Agencies' Preferred Alternative S-31
S.6.4 Cumulative Impacts S-33
S.6.5 Unavoidable Adverse Impacts S-34
S.6.6 Irreversible or Irretrievable Commitments of Resources S-54
S.6.7 Short-Term Use and Long-Term Productivity S-54

S.7 Regulatory Restrictions Analysis S-55
S.8 Intentional Destructive Acts S-56

Table of Contents

Chapter 1 Purpose, Benefits and Need for the Proposed Actions 1-1

1.1 Project Background 1-6
1.2 Purpose, Benefit, and Need 1-8
1.2.1 Purpose and Benefit to the State of Montana 1-8
1.2.2 Benefits as Stated by the Applicant 1-9
1.2.3 Need for the Facility 1-10
1.2.4 Purpose and Need for DOE and BLM Action 1-10

1.3 Scope of this Document 1-11
1.3.1 Alternatives Considered for Detailed Analysis 1-11
1.3.2 The Agencies' Preferred Alternative 1-13
1.3.3 Other Analysis Used in this Document 1-13

1.4 Agency Permitting Actions and Authorities 1-17
1.5 Public Participation and Issues of Concern 1-21
1.5.1 Opportunities for Public and Agency Input 1-21
1.5.2 Issues of Concern 1-22

1.6 Definition of Terms 1-26

Chapter 2 Description of Alternatives 2-1

2.1 Development of Alternatives 2-1
2.2 Alternative 1 - No Action 2-2
2.3 Alternative 2 – Proposed Project (MATL A) 2-3
2.4 Alternative 3 – MATL B 2-31
2.5 Alternative 4 – Agencies' Alternative 2-37
2.6 Development of Local Routing Options for Alternatives 2 and 4 2-44
2.6.1 Diamond Valley Area 2-46
2.6.2 Teton River Crossing Area 2-48
2.6.3 Southeast of Conrad 2-48
2.6.4 West of Conrad 2-48
2.6.5 Northwest of Conrad 2-52
2.6.6 Belgian Hill Area 2-52
2.6.7 Bullhead Coulee Area 2-52
2.6.8 South of Cut Bank 2-56
2.6.9 Great Falls 230-kV Switchyard Area 2-56
2.7 Agencies' Preferred Alternative 2-59
2.8 Alternatives Considered but Dismissed 2-61

Table of Contents

Chapter 3 Affected Environment and Environmental Impacts..... 3-1

3.1 Land Use and Infrastructure 3-2
3.1.1 Analysis Methods 3-2
3.1.2 Affected Environment 3-3
3.1.3 Environmental Impacts 3-13
3.1.3.1 Alternative 1 - No Action 3-13
3.1.3.2 Alternatives 2, 3, and 4 – Action Alternatives 3-13
3.1.3.3 Local Routing Options 3-24

3.2 Geology and Soils 3-25
3.2.1 Analysis Methods 3-25
3.2.2 Affected Environment 3-25
3.2.3 Environmental Impacts 3-31
3.2.3.1 Alternative 1 - No Action 3-32
3.2.3.2 Alternative 2 – Proposed Project 3-32
3.2.3.3 Alternative 3 – MATL B 3-34
3.2.3.4 Alternative 4 – Agency Alternative 3-35
3.2.3.5 Local Routing Options 3-36

3.3 Engineering and Hazardous Materials 3-37
3.3.1 Analysis Methods 3-37
3.3.2 Affected Environment 3-37
3.3.3 Environmental Impacts 3-39
3.3.3.1 Alternative 1 - No Action 3-39
3.3.3.2 Alternatives 2, 3, and 4 – Action Alternatives 3-39
3.3.3.3 Local Routing Options 3-41

3.4 Electric and Magnetic Fields 3-42
3.4.1 Analysis Methods 3-42
3.4.2 Affected Environment 3-43
3.4.3 Environmental Impacts 3-50
3.4.3.1 Alternative 1 - No Action 3-50
3.4.3.2 Alternative 2 – Proposed Project 3-50
3.4.3.3 Alternatives 3 and 4 – MATL B and Agency Alternative 3-57

3.5 Water Resources 3-58
3.5.1 Analysis Methods 3-58
3.5.2 Affected Environment 3-60
3.5.3 Environmental Impacts 3-63
3.5.3.1 Alternative 1 - No Action 3-64
3.5.3.2 Alternative 2 – Proposed Project 3-64
3.5.3.3 Alternatives 3 and 4 3-65
3.5.3.4 Local Routing Options 3-65

Table of Contents

3.6 Wetlands and Floodplains 3-66
3.6.1 Analysis Methods 3-66
3.6.2 Affected Environment 3-68
3.6.3 Environmental Impacts to Wetlands 3-74
3.6.3.1 Alternative 1 - No Action 3-76
3.6.3.2 Alternative 2 – Proposed Project 3-76
3.6.3.3 Alternatives 3 – MATL B 3-78
3.6.3.4 Alternative 4 – Agency Alternative 3-78
3.6.4 Environmental Impacts to Floodplains 3-80
3.6.5 Local Routing Options 3-82

3.7 Vegetation 3-83
3.7.1 Analysis Methods 3-83
3.7.2 Affected Environment 3-83
3.7.2.1 Riparian Vegetation 3-86
3.7.3 Environmental Impacts 3-89
3.7.3.1 Alternative 1 – No Action 3-89
3.7.3.2 Alternatives 2, 3, and 4 – Action Alternatives 3-89
3.7.3.3 Local Routing Options 3-92

3.8 Wildlife 3-93
3.8.1 Analysis Methods 3-93
3.8.2 Affected Environment 3-93
3.8.2.1 Mammals 3-95
3.8.2.2 Birds 3-100
3.8.2.3 Reptiles and Amphibians 3-105
3.8.3 Environmental Impacts 3-107
3.8.3.1 Alternative 1 - No Action 3-108
3.8.3.2 Alternatives 2, 3, and 4 – Action Alternatives 3-108
3.8.3.3 Local Routing Options 3-113

3.9 Fish 3-114
3.9.1 Analysis Methods 3-114
3.9.2 Affected Environment 3-114
3.9.3 Environmental Impacts 3-116
3.9.3.1 Alternative 1 - No Action 3-116
3.9.3.2 Alternatives 2, 3, and 4 – Action Alternatives 3-116
3.9.3.3 Local Routing Options 3-117

3.10 Threatened, Endangered, and Candidate for Listing Species 3-118
3.10.1 Analysis Methods 3-118
3.10.2 Affected Environment 3-118
3.10.2.1 Vegetation 3-118
3.10.2.2 Wildlife 3-120
3.10.2.3 Fish 3-126
3.10.3 Environmental Impacts 3-127

3.10.3.1 Alternative 1 - No Action 3-127
3.10.3.2 Alternative 2, 3, and 4 – Action Alternatives 3-127
3.10.3.3 Local Routing Options 2-132

3.11 Air Quality 3-133
3.11.1 Analysis Methods 3-133
3.11.2 Affected Environment 3-133
3.11.3 Environmental Impacts 3-137
3.11.3.1 Alternative 1 – No Action 3-137
3.11.3.2 Alternatives 2, 3, and 4 –Action Alternatives 3-138
3.11.3.3 Local Routing Options 3-139

3.12 Audible Noise 3-140
3.12.1 Analysis Methods 3-140
3.12.2 Affected Environment 3-141
3.12.3 Environmental Impacts 3-142
3.12.3.1 Alternative 1 – No Action 3-142
3.12.3.2 Alternatives 2, 3, and 4 – Action Alternatives 3-142
3.12.3.3 Local Routing Options 3-145

3.13 Socioeconomics 3-146
3.13.1 Analysis Method 3-146
3.13.2 Affected Environment 3-147
3.13.2.1 Demographics 3-147
3.13.2.2 Economic Activity 3-152
3.13.2.3 Local Resources 3-162
3.13.3 Environmental Impacts 3-165
3.13.3.1 Alternative 1 – No Action 3-166
3.13.3.2 Alternatives 2, 3, and 4 Action Alternatives 3-166
3.13.3.3 Environmental Justice 3-182

3.14 Paleontological and Cultural Resources 3-188
3.14.1 Analysis Methods 3-188
3.14.2 Affected Environment 3-190
3.14.3 Environmental Impacts 3-195
3.14.3.1 Alternative 1 – No Action 3-198
3.14.3.2 Alternative 2 – Proposed Project 3-198
3.14.3.3 Alternative 3 – MATL B 3-199
3.14.3.4 Alternative 4 – Agency Alternatives 3-199

3.15 Visuals 3-200
3.15.1 Analysis Methods 3-200
3.15.2 Affected Environment 3-200
3.15.3 Environmental Impacts 3-206
3.15.3.1 Alternative 1 – No Action 3-208

3.15.3.2 Alternatives 2, 3, and 4 – Action Alternatives 3-208
3.15.3.3 Local Routing Options 3-215

3.16 Local Routing Options 3-216
3.16.1 Analysis Methods 3-216
3.16.2 Affected Environment 3-217
3.16.3 Environmental Impacts 3-217
3.16.3.1 Diamond Valley Area 3-220
3.16.3.2 Teton River Crossing Area 3-221
3.16.3.3 Southeast of Conrad 3-221
3.16.3.4 West of Conrad 3-221
3.16.3.5 Northwest of Conrad 3-222
3.16.3.6 Belgian Hill Road Area 3-222
3.16.3.7 Bullhead Coulee Area 3-223
3.16.3.8 South of Cut Bank 3-223
3.17 Electrical Transmission System Operation and Reliability 3-225
3.17.1 Existing Transmission System 3-225
3.17.2 System Reliability Constraints and Influences 3-228

3.18 Information Regarding Findings for MFSA Certification 3-230
3.18.1 Need 3-230
3.18.2 Nature of Probable Environmental Impacts 3-231
3.18.3 Facility Minimizes Adverse Environmental Impact 3-231
3.18.4 Locating Transmission Lines Underground 3-232
3.18.5 Facility is Consistent with Regional Plans for Expansion of the Appropriate Grid of the Utility Systems Serving the State and Interconnected Utility Systems 3-233
3.18.6 Facility Would Serve the Interests of Utility System Economy and Reliability 3-233
3.18.7 Location of the Proposed Facility Conforms to Applicable State and Local Laws 3-233
3.18.8 Facility Would Serve the Public Interest, Convenience, and Necessity 3-233
3.18-9 Public and Private Lands 3-234
3.18-10 DEQ Issuance of Necessary Decisions, Opinions, Orders, Certifications, and Permits 3-234

Chapter 4 Cumulative Impacts and Other NEPA and MEPA Considerations 4-1
4.1 Cumulative Impacts 4-3
4.1.1 Region of Influence for Cumulative Impacts 4-4
4.1.2 Past and Present Actions Potentially Contributing to Cumulative Impacts 4-4
4.1.3 Reasonably Foreseeable Future Actions Potentially Contributing to Cumulative Impacts 4-5
4.2 Cumulative Impacts on Land use and Infrastructure 4-16

Table of Contents

4.3 Cumulative Impacts on Geology and Soils 4-19
4.4 Cumulative Impacts Related to Hazardous Materials 4-20
4.5 Cumulative Impacts on EMF and Health and Safety 4-20
4.6 Cumulative Impacts on Water Resources 4-21
4.7 Cumulative Impacts on Wetlands and Floodplains 4-23
4.8 Cumulative Impacts on Vegetation 4-23
4.9 Cumulative Impacts on Wildlife 4-25
4.10 Cumulative Impacts on Fish 4-31
4.11 Cumulative Impacts on Special Status Species 4-31
4.12 Cumulative Impacts on Air Quality 4-32
4.13 Cumulative Noise Impacts 4-33
4.14 Cumulative Socioeconomic and Environmental Justice Impacts 4-34
4.15 Cumulative Impacts on Paleontological and Cultural Resources 4-37
4.16 Cumulative Visual Resource Impacts 4-39
4.17 Unavoidable Adverse Impacts 4-43
4.18 Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitments of Resources 4-43
4.19 Relationship between Short-Term Use and Long-Term Productivity 4-44
4.20 Regulatory Restrictions Analysis 4-44
4.21 Intentional Destructive Acts 4-47

Chapter 5 Consultation and Coordination 5-1
Chapter 6 List of Preparers 6-1
Chapter 7 Glossary and Acronym List 7-1
Chapter 8 References 8-1
Chapter 9 Distribution List 9-1

VOLUME 2 – Comment Response Document

Appendices

A DEQ Local Realignment Segments Preliminary Analysis
B Types of H-frame Structures
C MATL Noxious Weed Control Plan
D Draft MATL Reclamation & Revegetation Plan
E Drainages and Wetland Areas That Would Be Avoided
F Revised Draft DEQ Environmental Specifications
G Alternatives Considered But Dismissed by MATL
H Land Use Types by Milepost
I Impaired River Segments Summary Sheets
J Summary of Surface Water Resources and Water Quality
K Priority Pollutant Monitoring Data
L Photographic Simulations
M Interconnection Information and Agreement
N Farm Cost Review for MATL Project (2007 and 2008 costs)
O Potential Wind Farm Mitigation Measures Adapted from BLM Programmatic EIS for Wind Energy Development on BLM Lands in the Western U.S.
P Endangered Species Act Section 7, State Historic Preservation Officer, and Tribal Consultation
Q Contractor's Disclosure Statement

Table of Contents

Figures

S-1 Project Study Area S-13
S-2 Proposed MATL Powerline Typical Support Structures S-14
S-3 Local Routing Options and Variations S-20
S-4 Agencies' Preferred Alignment – South S-24
S-5 Agencies' Preferred Alignment – Middle S-25
S-6 Agencies' Preferred Alignment – North S-26

1.1-1 Project Study Area 1-2
1.1-2 NERC Regions and Balancing Authorities 1-7

1.3-1 Agencies' Preferred Alignment – South 1-14
1.3-2 Agencies' Preferred Alignment – Middle 1-15
1.3-3 Agencies' Preferred Alignment – North 1-16

2.3-1 Alternative 2 Alignment 2-4
2.3-2 Alternative 2 Alignment - South 2-5
2.3-3 Alternative 2 Alignment - Middle 2-6
2.3-4 Alternative 2 Alignment - North 2-7
2.3-5 Proposed MATL Powerline Typical Support Structures 2-10

2.4-1 Alternative 3 Alignment – (MATL B) 2-32
2.4-2 Alternative 3 Alignment – South 2-33
2.4-3 Alternative 3 Alignment – Middle 2-34
2.4-4 Alternative 3 Alignment – North 2-35

2.5-1 Alternative 4 Alignment 2-39
2.5-2 Alternative 4 Alignment - South 2-40
2.5-3 Alternative 4 Alignment -Middle 2-41
2.5-4 Alternative 4 Alignment -North 2-42

2.6-1 Local Routing Options and Variations 2-45
2.6-2 Local Routing Option and Variation - Diamond Valley Area 2-47
2.6-3 Local Routing Option at Teton River Crossing 2-49
2.6-4 Local Routing Options Southeast of Conrad 2-50
2.6-5 Local Routing Option West of Conrad 2-51
2.6-6 Local Routing Option and Variation Northwest of Conrad 2-53
2.6-7 Local Routing Option and Variation in the Belgian Hill Area 2-54
2.6-8 Local Routing Options Bullhead Coulee Area 2-55
2.6-9 Local Routing Option and Variation – South of Cut Bank 2-57
2.6-10 Local Routing Option and Variation - Great Falls Switchyard Approach ... 2-58

Figures (Cont.)

2.8-1 Dismissed Alignments in Diamond Valley Area 2-64
2.8-2 Dismissed Alignments West of Conrad..... 2-66
2.8-3 Dismissed Alignments in Bullhead Coulee Area 2-68

3.1-1 Proposed MATL Powerline Land Use Analysis Area – South..... 3-5
3.1-2 Proposed MATL Powerline Land Use Analysis Area – Middle 3-6
3.1-3 Proposed MATL Powerline Land Use Analysis Area – North 3-7

3.2-1 Soil Erosion Potential..... 3-28

3.4-1 Existing Transmission Lines Larger than 69kV in Project Vicinity 3-46
3.4-2 Proposed MATL Powerline Electric Field Strength for Normal Operating Conditions, Optimized Phasing..... 3-52
3.4-3 Proposed MATL Powerline Magnetic Field Strength for Normal Operating Conditions, Optimized Phasing..... 3-53

3.5-1 Watersheds Intersecting the Study Area 3-59
3.5-2 Hydrogeologic Features and Water Quality 3-61

3.6-1 Wetlands in Study Area – South..... 3-70
3.6-2 Wetlands in Study Area – Middle 3-71
3.6-3 Wetlands in Study Area – North 3-72

3.8-1 Proposed MATL Powerline Mule Deer Winter Range and Species of Special Concern – South..... 3-96
3.8-2 Proposed MATL Powerline Mule Deer Winter Range and Species of Special Concern – Middle 3-97
3.8-3 Proposed MATL Powerline Mule Deer Winter Range and Species of Special Concern – North 3-98
3.8-4 North American Migration Flyways..... 3-106

3.13-1 Census Tracts in the Region Surrounding the Proposed Project 3-183

3.15-1 Locations of Visual Importance – South..... 3-203
3.15-2 Locations of Visual Importance – Middle 3-204
3.15-3 Locations of Visual Importance – North 3-205
3.15-4 Visual Simulation Locations..... 3-212
3.15-5 Proposed MATL Powerline Bootlegger Trail-Visual Simulation of Monopole Construction 3-213
3.15-6 Proposed MATL Powerline Marias River Crossing Visual Simulation..... 3-214

Figures (Cont.)

4.1-1 Proposed Highwood Generating Station 4-7
4.1-2 Areas of Interest in Wind Farm Development..... 4-10

4.16-1 Two 1.5 MW Turbines with Passing Crane Truck and Crazy Mountains in the Background..... 4-40
4.16-2 Turbines on West Side of US Highway 191 with Big Belt Mountains in Background..... 4-41
4.16-3 Judith Gap Operations and Control Facility with Foothills of Big Snowy Mountains in the Background..... 4-40

Tables

S-1 Summary of Construction Tasks and Required Resources and Equipment..... S-16
S-2 Summary of Impacts by Resource Area S-35
S-3 Project Costs..... S-55

1.4-1 Permits and Other Requirements for the Project 1-18

2.3-1 Typical Design Characteristics..... 2-15
2.3-2 Additional Design Characteristics..... 2-16
2.3-3 Summary of Construction Tasks and Required Resources and Equipment..... 2-20
2.3-4 MATL Proposed Environmental Protection Measures 2-23

3.1-1 Land Ownership and Jurisdiction within Analysis Area 3-4
3.1-2 Agricultural Lands in the Analysis Area..... 3-9
3.1-3 Type of Land Use Crossed by Alternatives 2, 3, and 4 (Miles) 3-17
3.1-4 Acres of Production in CRP or Cropland Affected By H-Frame or Monopole Structures in Alternatives 2, 3, and 4 3-18
3.1-5 Miles of Federal/State Land and Special Management Areas and Conservation Easements Crossed..... 3-20
3.1-6 Highways Crossed by Alternative 3-22

3.2-1 Approximate Axle Loads for Farm Equipment..... 3-34

3.3-1 Maximum Steady State Induced Voltages for Selected Separation Distances and Lengths of Parallel..... 3-40
3.3-2 Areas Where Transmission Line and Pipeline Separation and Length of Parallel May Create Voltages Above 15 Volts 3-41

Tables (Cont.)

3.4-1 EMF Level of Some Common Household Appliances 3-45
3.4-2 Short Circuit Currents for Various Object in Milliamperes 3-47
3.4-3 EMF Effects 3-51

3.5-1 Hydrology – Comparison of Alternatives 3-64

3.6-1 Wetland Types Mapped in Analysis Area 3-68
3.6-2 Percentage and Area of Wetland Types in Analysis Area 3-69
3.6-3 Wetlands Potentially Affected By Alternative 2 3-76
3.6-4 Wetlands Potentially Affected By Alternative 3 3-78
3.6-5 Wetlands Potentially Affected By Alternative 4 3-79

3.7-1 Project Area Level IV Ecoregions 3-84
3.7-2 Dominant Plant Species Combinations in The Project Area 3-85
3.7-3 Category One and Two Noxious Weeds Found In Counties within the Project Area 3-88
3.7-4 Native Vegetation Cover Types Crossed By Alternatives 2, 3, and 4 3-89
3.7-5 Estimated Operational Disturbance for H-Frame Structures by Native Cover Type 3-90

3.8-1 Species Observed in the Analysis Area During Field Investigations 3-94
3.8-2 Bat Species Likely to Occur in the Analysis Area 3-99
3.8-3 Waterfowl and Shore Birds Sighted On Benton Lake NWR Since 1961 3-103
3.8-4 Raptors Observed at the Kevin Rim, 1993-1994 3-104
3.8-5 Reptile and Amphibian Species Likely to Occur in the Analysis Area 3-107
3.8-6 Mule Deer Winter Range Impacted By Alternatives 3-111

3.9-1 Fish Species Known To Occur Within the Project Area 3-115

3.10-1 Plant Species of Concern Reported To Occur Within or Adjacent to the Project Area 3-119
3.10-2 Special Status Wildlife Species Reported to Occur Within or Adjacent to the Project Area by NHP 3-120
3.10-3 Linear Miles of Special Status Species' Habitat Range by Alternative 3-128

3.11-1 State of Montana and National Ambient Air Quality Standards 3-135

3.12-1 Noise Levels of Common Sources 3-141
3.12-2 Audible Noise Effect 3-144

Tables (Cont.)

3.13-1 Demographic Profiles of Counties within the Project Analysis Area 3-149
3.13-2 Race and Ethnicity within Counties in the Project Analysis Area 3-150
3.13-3 Employment and Data Trends by County, 2000 – 2005 3-153
3.13-4 Industry Sector Earnings Trends – Cascade County 3-155
3.13-5 Industry Sector Earnings Trends – Teton County 3-155
3.13-6 Industry Sector Earnings Trends – Chouteau County 3-156
3.13-7 Industry Sector Earnings Trends – Pondera County 3-156
3.13-8 Industry Sector Earnings Trends – Toole County 3-157
3.13-9 Industry Sector Earnings Trends – Glacier County 3-157
3.13-10 Per Capita Personal Income Trends 3-158
3.13-11 Annual Costs of Farming Around Transmission Structures 3-170
3.13-12 Estimated Annual and 50-Year Gross Costs to Affected Farmers from the MATL Line 3-172
3.13-13 Estimated Total Annual Payments from MATL to All Affected Landowners 3-173
3.13-14 Estimated Annual Adverse Effects Payments to Farmers 3-174
3.13-15 Estimated Annual and 50-Year Net Effect on Farmers 3-175
3.13-16 Acres and Easement Payment 3-176
3.13-17 Farmer Net Effects from MATL Over 50 Years Compared with MATL Costs of Construction for Alternatives 2 and 4 3-177
3.13-18 Tax Benefit Estimates from MATL with 3% Tax Rate 3-181
3.13-19 Racial and Ethnic Composition (by Percentage) in 2000 of Census Tracts within the Study Area 3-184
3.13-20 Low-Income Compositions (by Percentage) in 2000 for Census Tracts within the Study Area 3-185

3.14-1 Results of Class I Inventory 3-192
3.14-2 Results of Class III Inventory, Alternative 2 3-194

3.15-1 Visual Impact Levels from Various Observation Points 3-208
3.15-2 Comparison of Distance Zones from Various Observation Points 3-209

3.16-1 Differences Between Local Routing Options and Alternative 2 3-218

3.18-1 Summary Comparison of Environmental Impacts and Costs by Action Alternative 3-235

Tables (Cont.)

4.1-1 Bids Accepted By MATL 4-2
4.1-2 Potential Generation Projects in the Vicinity of the MATL Line from Northwestern and WAPA Interconnection Queues 4-6
4.1-3 Montana Department of Environmental Quality Permits and Approvals 4-11
4.1-4 Authorizations, Permits, Reviews, and Approvals by Other Agencies 4-13

4.9-1 Avian Fatality Rates Observed at Some Wind Energy Projects 4-29
4.9-2 Bat Fatality Rates Observed at Wind Energy Projects 4-30

4.14-1 Summary of Estimated Economic Effects of Different Levels of Wind Generation in the Study Area 4-35

4.20-1 Regulatory Restrictions Analysis 4-46