



For Immediate Release

Contact: Dave Rose
Public Information Officer
Phone: 520-6540 Cell: 337-9239
DaveRose@elpasoco.com

**Commissioners Initiate Statutory Process to Strengthen Local Control of Large Projects
Specific Areas and Activities of Broad Impact on El Paso County Subject to Permit Requirements**

Colorado Springs, CO, April 23, 2013 – At its regularly scheduled meeting on Tuesday, April 30, 2013 the Board of El Paso County Commissioners is expected to set June 6, 2013 for an official public hearing on local implementation of the process established by state statute to further define and protect the role of local government in planning for large scale projects which are otherwise deemed areas or activities of statewide interest.

“Over the years we’ve seen large scale projects proposed which would have a notable impact on El Paso County residents but because they are considered to be of statewide interest the County has had very limited ability to make sure that the voices and concerns of our citizens are heard and addressed,” said Commissioner Chair Dennis Hisey. “County residents turn to County government when they hear about plans for pipelines, power transmission lines, high-speed trains, large scale water projects and expressways but El Paso County has never gone through the statutory process required to establish its proper place at the table when these projects are being planned.”

The statutory provisions assuring a local voice in these large scale projects were established by Colorado lawmakers in 1974. Commonly referred to as “1041 powers,” they establish the framework for local governments to identify, designate, and regulate specific areas and activities of state interest through a local permitting process. The intent of state lawmakers was to allow local governments to maintain their local control over particular development projects even where the development project or activity has statewide impact.

El Paso County is the only large statutory county in Colorado which has never implemented its “1041 powers.” “It’s no secret, El Paso County is pro-business we just don’t want to see any unnecessary rules,” commented Commissioner Vice-Chair Amy Lathen. “But we also don’t like the idea that faceless workers in agencies based in Denver and Washington can simply override local control and potentially ignore the property rights and legitimate concerns of our residents. The county just has to have a voice when it comes to large scale projects and activities that have such an impact on county residents. Otherwise we will continue to be forced to respond to our constituents that there is little or nothing we can do to represent them. Taking this step will allow us to better represent our constituents on these huge projects and activities of state interest.”

The areas and activities which the county proposes to designate for its local permit process will be available for inspection at the offices of the Board of County Commissioners and will also be posted on the County website following the April 30th meeting.

-30-



Attached: The Resolution to be Considered April 30-th

