

Corridor reviews use a comprehensive resource conflict assessment to help the Agencies identify a corridor’s proximity to environmentally sensitive areas. The potential conflict assessment (low, medium, high) is generated using the criteria from BLM’s new regulations for prioritizing applications for solar and wind energy projects (43 CFR 2804.35(a)-(c)). The Agencies incorporated the criteria into the conflict assessment criteria table, shown below. The matrix was applied to each corridor to generate conflict maps to aid in reviewing whether the corridor’s current location best meets the Settlement Agreement siting principles to provide maximum utility and minimum impact to the environment.

Where feasible, corridors should be sited in the areas of low conflict; however, to meet the requirements in the Energy Policy Act and the siting principles in the Settlement Agreement, corridors may be located in medium and high potential conflict areas. In those instances, it’s important to note many energy corridors were already designated in land use plans prior to being carried forward into Section 368 designation. In almost all instances, these existing corridors (pre-Section 368) contained existing infrastructure. Retaining corridors through these areas may be the best option available for providing long-distance pathways for electrical transmission and pipelines while avoiding disperse development across Federal lands.

Table 2-5 Conflict Assessment Criteria Table for Section 368 Energy Corridor Reviews

The blue rows indicate the conflict criteria, while the white rows underneath are individual GIS data layers associated with the criteria.

Low Potential Conflict Areas	
■	Lands designated as Visual Resource Management Class IV
	<i>VRM Class IV</i>
■	Previously disturbed sites or areas adjacent to previously disturbed or developed sites
	BLM data were not available for inclusion in the figures in individual abstracts, but existing infrastructure can be viewed on the Section 368 Mapper .
	<i>Existing transmission lines</i>
	<i>Existing pipelines</i>
	<i>Existing roadways and railways</i>
	<i>Existing telecommunication lines, communication sites</i>
	<i>Existing agricultural uses</i>
	<i>Other energy development (e.g. adjacent windfarms, solar farms, power generation facilities, substations)</i>
■	Lands identified in BLM land use plans as suitable for disposal
	No BLM data are available for inclusion in the graphical display
■	Lands specifically identified as appropriate for solar or wind energy development, other than designated leasing areas
	<i>Solar Energy Zones</i>
	<i>BLM AZ Renewable Energy Development Areas</i>
	<i>DRECP Development Focus Areas Restricted to Solar and/or Geothermal Energy</i>

Medium Potential Conflict Areas	
■ BLM special management areas that provide for limited development, including recreation sites and facilities	
	<i>Areas of Critical Environmental Concern</i>
	<i>DRECP Extensive Recreation Management Areas</i>
	<i>Other recreation sites and facilities, as data are available</i>
■ Lands with wilderness characteristics outside Wilderness and Wilderness Study Areas that have been identified in an updated wilderness characteristics inventory	
	<i>Lands Inventoried and Managed for Wilderness Character</i>
■ ROW avoidance areas	
	<i>ROW Avoidance Areas</i>
■ Areas where project development may adversely affect resources and properties listed in a national register, such as in the National Register of Historic Places, National Natural Landmarks, or National Historic Landmarks	
	<i>Properties Listed in the National Register of Historic Places</i>
	<i>National Natural Landmarks</i>
	<i>National Historic Landmarks</i>
	<i>National Historic Parks</i>
■ Sensitive habitat areas, including important species use areas, riparian areas, or areas of importance for Federal or State sensitive species	
	<i>Greater Sage-grouse General Habitat Management Areas</i>
	<i>Greater Sage-grouse Priority Habitat Management Areas</i>
	<i>Desert Tortoise Designated Critical Habitat</i>
	<i>DRECP Wildlife Allocations</i>
	<i>Important Bird Areas</i>
	<i>Sagebrush Focal Areas</i>
	<i>USFWS-identified Desert Tortoise Connectivity Areas</i>
	<i>Least Cost Corridors for Tortoise Population Connectivity</i>
	<i>DRECP Tortoise Conservation Areas and Linkages</i>
■ Lands designated as Visual Resource Management Class III	
	<i>VRM Class III</i>
■ DoD operating areas with land use or operational mission conflicts	
	Military Training Route: Instrument Route Corridors
	Military Training Route: Slow Route Corridors
	Military Training Route: Visual Route Corridors
	Special Use Airspace - Low Altitude
	<i>DoD High Risk of Adverse Impact Areas</i>
■ Areas where project development may adversely affect lands acquired for conservation purposes	
	<i>Lands Acquired with Federal Funds for Conservation Purposes</i>
	<i>Boulder City Conservation Easement</i>
■ Projects with proposed groundwater uses within groundwater basins that have been allocated by State water resource agencies	
	No data are available for inclusion in the graphical display

High Potential Conflict Areas

■ **Lands designated by Congress, the President, or the Secretary for the protection of sensitive viewsheds, resources, and values (e.g., units of the National Park System, Fish and Wildlife Service Refuge System, some National Forest System units, and the BLM National Landscape Conservation System), which could be adversely affected by development**

Units of the National Park System

Units of the Fish and Wildlife Refuge System

National Monuments

Wilderness Areas

Wilderness Study Areas

National Conservation Areas (except CDNCA)

Other Lands in the NLCS

EPA Class I Air Quality Areas

DRECP California Desert National Conservation Lands

DRECP National Scenic Cooperative Management Areas

USFS Roadless Areas

National Historic Trails

National Scenic Trails

*National Recreation Trails**

■ **Wild and Scenic Rivers and Recreational Rivers and river segments deemed suitable for Wild and Scenic River status, if project development could have significant adverse effects on sensitive viewsheds, resources, and values**

Wild and Scenic Rivers

*Recreational Rivers**

*River segments deemed suitable for Wild and Scenic River status**

■ **Designated critical habitat for federally threatened or endangered species, if project development could result in the destruction or adverse modification of that critical habitat**

Critical Habitat Areas

Critical Habitat Lines

■ **Lands designated as Visual Resource Management Class I or Class II**

Visual Resource Management Class I

Visual Resource Management Class II

■ **ROW exclusion areas**

ROW exclusion areas

■ **Lands designated as no surface occupancy for oil and gas development in BLM land use plans**

No Surface Occupancy

*No data are currently available for inclusion in the graphical display