

# Corridor 132-276

De Beque – Rifle – Craig Corridor

## Corridor Rationale

Input regarding alignment from PacifiCorp and National Grid during the WWEC PEIS suggested following this route. There are no planned transmission or pipeline projects within the corridor and 16 pending or recently authorized major ROWs intersect the corridor.

### Corridor location:

Colorado (Garfield, Mesa, Moffat, and Rio Blanco Co.)

BLM: Colorado River Valley, Grand Junction, Little Snake, and White River Field Offices

Regional Review Region(s): Region 3

### Corridor width, length:

Width 3,500 ft

33.7 miles of designated corridor

116.2 mile-posted route, including gaps

### Sec 368 energy corridor restrictions: (Y)

- Corridor is designated electric-only for most of its length (corridor is multi-modal within a portion of the Colorado River Valley Field Office– MP 8 to MP 37)

### Corridor of concern (N)

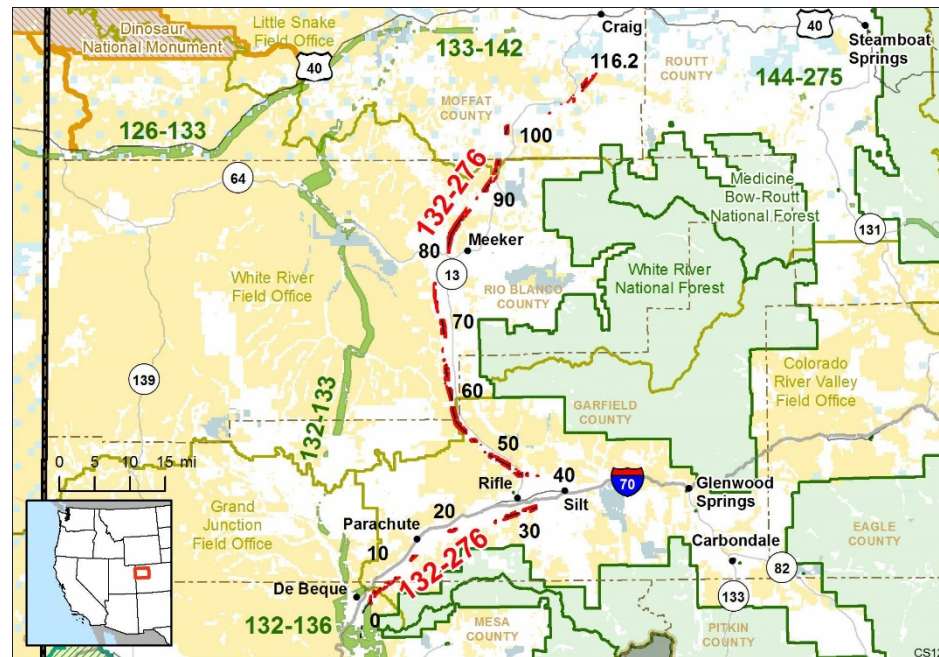


Figure 1. Corridor 132-276

### Corridor history:

- Locally designated corridor prior to 2009 (N)
- Existing infrastructure (Y)
  - Electric transmission:
    - 138 kV (MP 101 to MP 116)
    - 345 kV (MP 11 to MP 15, MP 32 to MP 43, and MP 86 to MP 90)
    - Two 345 kV (MP 81 to MP 85)
    - 230 kV (MP 0 to MP 19)
    - Two 230 kV (MP 19 to MP 77)
  - Pipelines:
    - natural gas (MP 6 to MP 12, MP 28 to MP 31, MP 34 to MP 37, MP 43 to MP 46, MP 80 to MP 82, and MP 87 to MP 90)
- Energy potential near the corridor (Y)
  - 2 solar power plants (1 and 1.3 MW) within 2 mi (MP 31 and MP 37)
  - natural gas plant (73 MW) as close as 1,100 ft (MP 35)
  - coal power plant (1,304 MW) as close as 5 mi (MP 116.2)
- Corridor changes since 2009 (Y)
  - MP 5.5 to 8.0 removed, some area added in MP 4.5 to 5.5

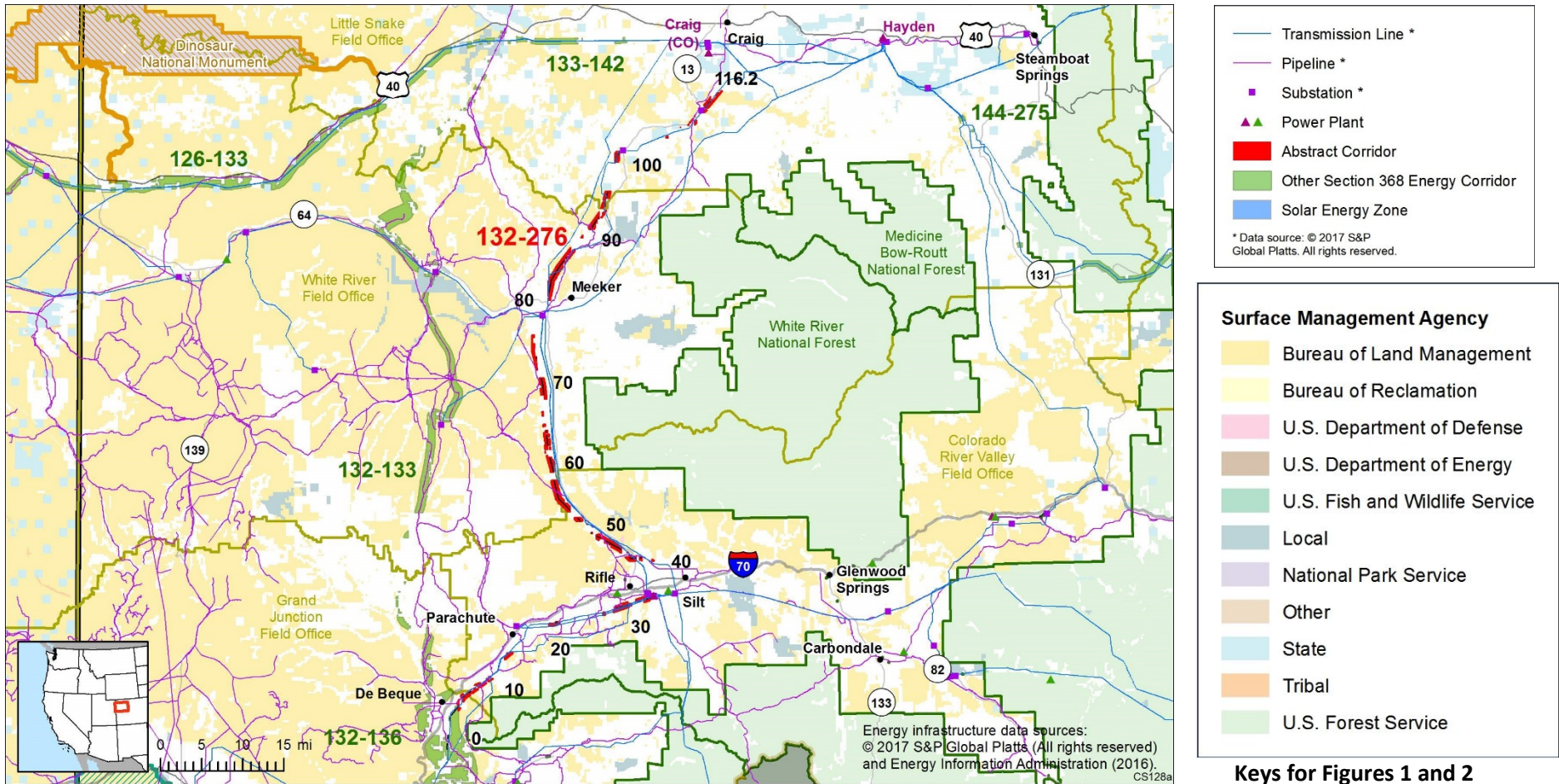


Figure 2. Corridor 132-276 and nearby electric transmission lines and pipelines

## Conflict Map Analysis

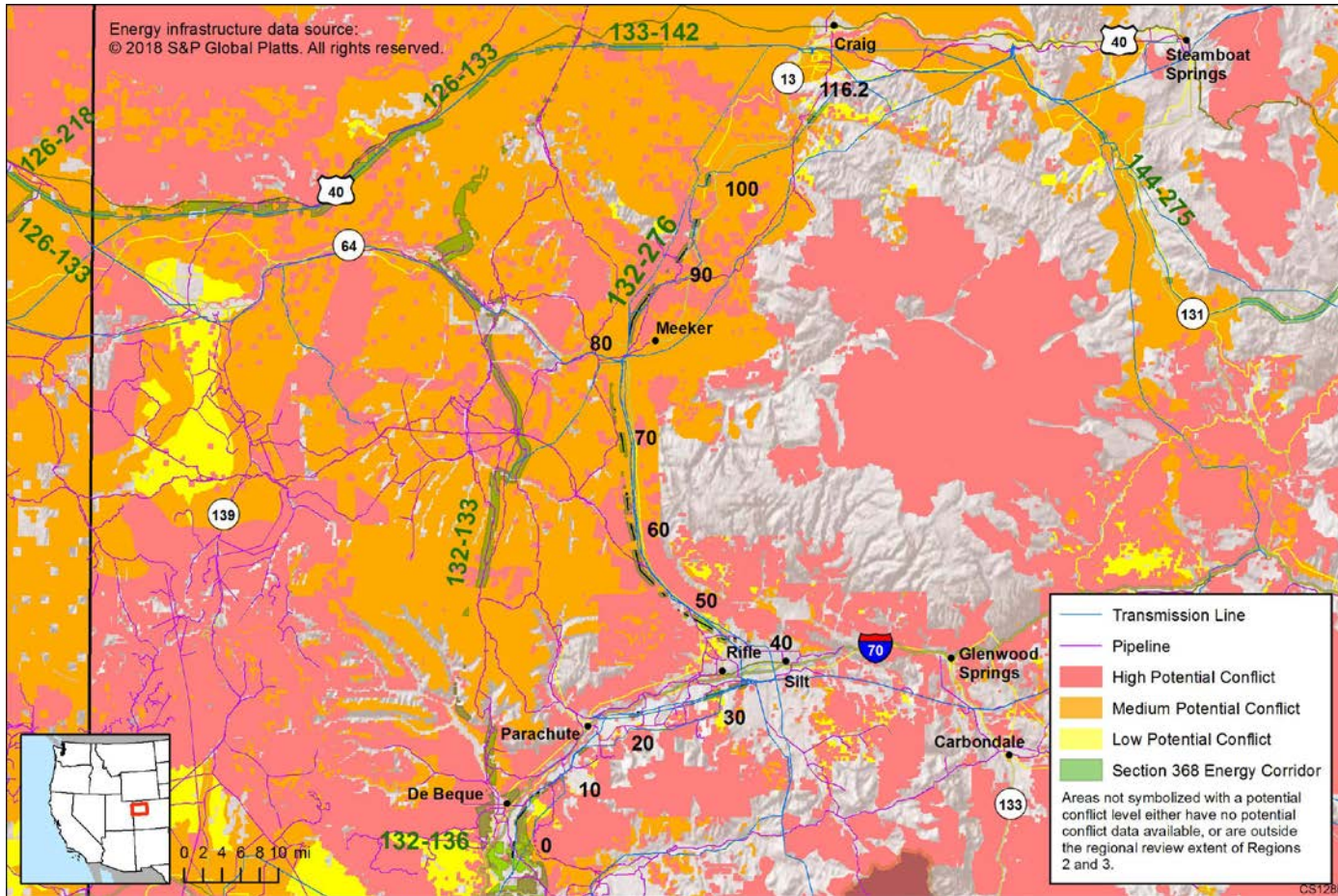
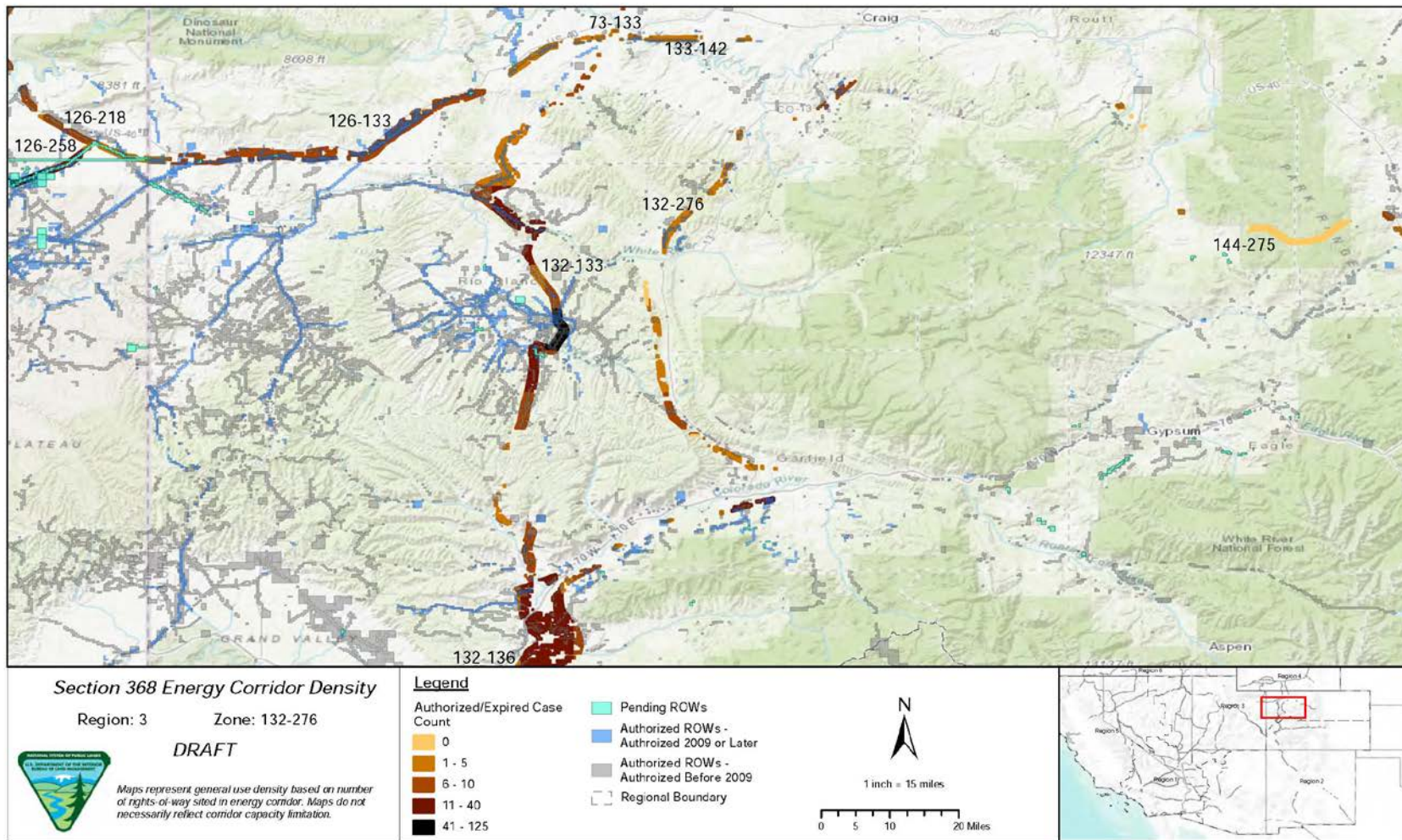


Figure 3. Map of Conflict Areas in Vicinity of Corridor 132-276

Figure 3 reflects a comprehensive resource conflict assessment developed to enable the Agencies and stakeholders to visualize a corridor’s proximity to environmentally sensitive areas and to evaluate options for routes with lower potential conflict. The potential conflict assessment (low, medium, high) shown in the figure is based on [criteria](#) found on the WWEC Information Center at [www.corridoreis.anl.gov](http://www.corridoreis.anl.gov). To meet the intent of the Energy Policy Act and the Settlement Agreement siting principles, corridors may be located in areas where there is potentially high resource conflict; however, where feasible, opportunity for corridor revisions should be identified in areas with potentially lower conflict.

Visit the 368 Mapper for a full view of the Potential conflict map (<https://bogi.evs.anl.gov/section368/portal/>)



**Figure 4. Corridor 132-276, Corridor Density Map**

Figure 4 shows the density of energy use to assist in evaluating corridor utility. ROWs granted prior to the corridor designation (2009) are shown in grey; ROWs granted after corridor designation are shown in blue; and pending ROWs under current review for approval are shown in turquoise. Note the ROW density shown for the corridor is only a snapshot that does not fully illustrate remaining corridor capacity. Not all ROWs had GIS data at the time this abstract was developed. BLM and USFS are currently improving their ROW GIS databases and anticipate more complete data in the near future.

## General Stakeholder Feedback on Corridor Utility

Stakeholders did not provide specific input on corridor utility.

## Corridor Review Table

The table below captures details of the Agencies' review of the energy corridor. Consideration of the general corridor siting principles of the 2012 Settlement Agreement framed each corridor review, to identify potential improvements to maximize corridor utility and minimize impacts on the environment. Initial Agency analysis is provided to facilitate further discussion during stakeholder workshops.

CORRIDOR 132-276 REVIEW TABLE							
ID	Agency	Agency Jurisdiction	County	Primary Issue	Corridor Location (by Milepost [MP])	Source	Agency Review and Analysis <sup>1,2</sup>
<b>ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCE ISSUES</b>							
<b><i>Specially Designated Areas</i></b>							
132-276 .001	BLM	White River FO	Rio Blanca, CO	Deer Gulch ACEC	MP 60 to MP 61, MP 62 to MP 63	GIS Analysis: ACEC adjacent to corridor.	ACECs are an important resource that are considered carefully during corridor planning. The corridor's current location does not intersect the ACECs and best meets the siting principles. (1)
132-276 .002	BLM	Colorado River Valley FO and private land	Garfield, CO	Lower Colorado River ACEC	MP 9, MP 11, MP 23, MP 29 to 32	GIS Analysis: ACEC as close as 1,100 ft north of corridor.	
132-276 .003	BLM	Colorado River Valley FO and private land	Garfield, CO	Trapper Creek ACEC	MP 53 to MP 54	GIS Analysis: ACEC less than 1 mi west of corridor.	
132-276 .004	BLM	Colorado River Valley FO	Garfield, CO	Grand Hogback ACEC	MP 41 to MP 45	GIS Analysis: ACEC less than 0.8 mi north of corridor.	
132-276 .005	BLM	Colorado River Valley FO	Garfield, CO	Anvil Points ACEC	MP 43	GIS Analysis: ACEC 0.8 mi north of corridor.	
132-276 .006	BLM	Colorado River Valley FO	Garfield, CO	Magpie Gulch ACEC	MP 53 to MP 54  MP 47 to MP 53	GIS Analysis: ACEC intersects corridor.  Agency Input: the ACEC is near, adjacent to, or intersecting the corridor.	There is an opportunity to re-route the corridor to accommodate additional BLM land and continue to avoid the ACEC. (2)
<b><i>Ecology</i></b>							
132-276 .007	NA	Private land	Garfield and Mesa, CO	Colorado Pikeminnow	MP 0 to MP 33	RFI: consult with USFWS to avoid adverse modification to	Colorado Pikeminnow critical habitat is not located within corridor. The

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				designated critical habitat (ESA-listed: endangered)		Colorado Pikeminnow designated critical habitat.  Agency Input: Critical habitat is designated on the Colorado River from Rifle downstream to Lake Powell.	Colorado River parallels the corridor near, but not within, the corridor. (1)
132-276 .008	BLM	Little Snake FO  Colorado River Valley FO, White River FO, Little Snake FO	Moffat, CO  Garfield, Rio Blanco, and Moffat, CO	GRSG PHMA (BLM and USFS sensitive species)  GRSG GHMA	MP 101 to MP 111  MP 53 to MP 93, MP 98 to MP 115	GIS Analysis: GRSG PHMA intersects corridor.  GIS Analysis: GRSG GHMA intersects corridor.  Comment on abstract: Re-route to avoid GRSG PHMAs.	In the Little Snake RMP, PHMA and GHMA are designated as avoidance areas for high-voltage transmission line ROWs. Exceptions include: -if ROWs would not adversely affect GRSG populations, or -any new projects within PHMA would be subject to the 3 percent disturbance cap unless site -specific NEPA analysis indicates that a net conservation gain to the species will be achieved.  The Colorado River Valley RMP prohibits surface occupancy and surface-disturbing activities in GRSG priority habitat.  The White River RMP has spatial and temporal restrictions on surface occupation and long-term conversion or adverse modification to select GRSG habitat. (3)
132-276 .009	BLM			GUSG critical habitat	Not specified.	Comment on abstract: recommend that GUSG critical habitat within the satellite populations be designated as a ROW exclusion area and in the Gunnison Basin, critical habitat be designated as a ROW avoidance area. Recommend that this corridor be rerouted to avoid GUSG habitat. In areas	The corridor’s current location does not intersect GUSG critical habitat and best meets the siting principles. (1)

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						where existing transmission lines are present, recommend disturbance be within the existing infrastructure footprint. If avoidance or co-location is not possible within the Gunnison Basin, then we recommend burying the transmission line and instituting compensatory mitigation.	
132-276 .010				Special Status Species	Not specified.	<p>Comment on abstract: Additional species not identified in the corridor abstract may be present: Canada Lynx, North American Wolverine, Mexican Spotted Owl, Western Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Bonytail Chub, Humpback Chub, Razorback Sucker, Greenback Cutthroat Trout, Colorado Pikeminnow, and Ute Ladies'-tresses.</p> <p>Conduct further analysis to determine the presence of abovementioned species.</p>	This corridor location within the current range where these species may occur is not easily resolved or avoided by corridor-level planning because alternate routes would still require siting through the current range of these species. Further analysis to determine the presence of all species occurring within the area will be considered outside of corridor-level planning. (3)
<b>Lands with Wilderness Characteristics</b>							
132-276 .011	BLM	Colorado River Valley FO	Garfield, CO	Lands with wilderness characteristics	<p>Not specified.</p> <p>MP 51 to MP 54</p>	<p>RFI: CO-070-033 and 034, CO-070-322, CO-070-Roan C Northeast Cliffs</p> <p>GIS Analysis: Roan C Northeast Cliffs lands with wilderness characteristics intersects corridor</p>	The BLM retains broad discretion regarding the multiple use management of lands possessing wilderness characteristics without Wilderness or WSA designations. As such, land possessing the characteristics of wilderness are not subject to the legal thresholds or other statutory obligations specified for congressionally designated Wilderness and WSAs. There are necessities that warrant land use and thus rationalize energy corridors as meeting the best

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ID	Agency	Agency Jurisdiction	County	Primary Issue	Corridor Location (by Milepost [MP])	Source	Agency Review and Analysis <sup>1,2</sup>
							<p>siting principles, which include maximizing utility while minimizing impacts. In locations where the BLM is not managing lands with wilderness characteristics with protective allocations, project level planning will still consider ways to minimize or avoid impacts while meeting the purpose and need of various types of land use including energy projects. Furthermore, the impairment of wilderness characteristics does not, in and of itself, constitute a significant impact; or on its own, warrant the relocation of a corridor or corridor segment. BLM must consider all resources and resource uses and carefully weigh the current value for the present generation as well as for future generations. At this time, given the information available the corridor is determined as best meeting the siting principles of the settlement agreement. (1)</p>
132-276 .012	BLM			Citizens' proposed wilderness	Not specified.	RFI: Roan Plateau	<p>The BLM's current inventory findings will be used in land use planning analyses related to the revision, deletion, or addition to the energy corridors. Consideration of citizens' wilderness proposals is beyond the Agencies scope and authority. As such, the corridor's current location best meets the siting principles. (1) At such time that citizens' inventory information is formally submitted, the BLM will compare its official Agency inventory information with the submitted materials, determine if the conclusion reached in previous BLM</p>



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							inventories remains valid, and update findings regarding the lands ability to qualify as wilderness in character.
132-276 .013	BLM	Colorado River Valley FO	Garfield, CO	BLM wilderness-quality lands	MP 42 to MP 43  MP 53 to MP 54	<p>Comment on abstract: corridor intersects with BLM wilderness-quality lands. 19 acres overlap (Hogback East-citizen).</p> <p>Corridor intersects with BLM wilderness-quality lands. 226 acres overlap (Roan C Northeast Cliffs-BLM).</p> <p>Exclude energy corridors from all wilderness-quality lands.</p>	<p>For the 19 acres where the corridor intersects with citizen-proposed wilderness, the BLM’s current inventory findings will be used in land use planning analyses related to the revision, deletion, or addition to the energy corridors. Consideration of citizens’ wilderness proposals is beyond the Agencies scope and authority. As such, the corridor’s current location best meets the siting principles. (1) At such time that citizens’ inventory information is formally submitted, the BLM will compare its official Agency inventory information with the submitted materials, determine if the conclusion reached in previous BLM inventories remains valid, and update findings regarding the lands ability to qualify as wilderness in character.</p> <p>For the 226 acres where the corridor intersects with BLM wilderness-quality lands, the BLM retains broad discretion regarding the multiple use management of lands possessing wilderness characteristics without Wilderness or WSA designations. As such, land possessing the characteristics of wilderness are not subject to the legal thresholds or other statutory obligations specified for congressionally designated Wilderness and WSAs. There are necessities that warrant land use and thus rationalize</p>

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							energy corridors as meeting the best siting principles, which include maximizing utility while minimizing impacts. In locations where the BLM is not managing lands with wilderness characteristics with protective allocations, project level planning will still consider ways to minimize or avoid impacts while meeting the purpose and need of various types of land use including energy projects. Furthermore, the impairment of wilderness characteristics does not, in and of itself, constitute a significant impact; or on its own, warrant the relocation of a corridor or corridor segment. BLM must consider all resources and resource uses and carefully weigh the current value for the present generation as well as for future generations. At this time, given the information available the corridor is determined as best meeting the siting principles of the settlement agreement. (1)
<b>Visual Resources</b>							
132-276 .014	BLM	Grand Junction FO, Colorado River Valley FO, White River FO	Mesa, Garfield, and Rio Blanco, CO	VRM Class II	MP 1 to MP 10, MP 14, MP 22 to MP 23, MP 31 to MP 35, MP 51 to MP 66, MP 83 to MP 96	GIS Analysis: VRM Class II areas and the corridor intersect.	The Grand Junction RMP states that surface-disturbing activities may be denied in sensitive areas, which include VRM Class II areas. The Colorado River Valley RMP, with exceptions, prohibits surface occupancy and surface-disturbing activities in VRM Class II areas with slopes over 30 percent and high visual sensitivity. The White River RMP stipulates that proposed management actions and projects will be evaluated for consistency with VRM classification objectives. This is a

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							conflict that must be resolved. There is an opportunity to revise the corridor or revise the ACEC boundaries or management prescriptions. (2)
132-276 .015	BLM	Colorado River Valley FO, White River FO, and Little Snake FO	Mesa, Garfield, Rio Blanco, and Moffat, CO	VRM Class III	MP 8 to MP 11, MP 14 to MP 15, MP 34 to MP 35, MP 43 to MP 45, MP 55 to MP 59, MP 67 to MP 77, MP 102 to MP 116	GIS Analysis: VRM Class III areas and the corridor intersect.	VRM Class III allows for moderate change to the characteristic landscape, although minimizing visual contrast remains a requirement. Management activities may attract the attention of the casual observer, but shall not dominate the view. (1)
132-276 .016	BLM	Grand Junction FO, Colorado River Valley FO, and Little Snake FO	Mesa, Garfield, Rio Blanco, and Moffat, CO	VRM Class IV	MP 0 to MP 8, MP 28 to MP 34, MP 45 to MP 53, MP 96 to MP 98, MP 116	GIS Analysis: VRM Class IV areas and the corridor intersect.	The existing corridor location best meets the siting principles. (1)
<b>Cultural Resources</b>							
132-276 .017	NA	Private land	Mesa, CO	De Beque House	MP 5	GIS Analysis: property listed on the NRHP is less than 2 mi west of corridor gap.	Not a consideration for corridor-level planning since not within the corridor. Section 106 process would be followed to identify any possible impact of development. (3)
<b>Land Use Concerns</b>							
<b>Corridor pinched by BLM or USFS authorized use</b>							
132-276 .018	NA	State and private lands	Moffat, CO	Existing infrastructure and state land	MP 99 to MP 102	GIS Analysis: Mining operations and state land in corridor gap.	<p>Mining operations within corridor gaps could affect potential for additional development within the corridor.</p> <p>If a proposal was submitted to use the corridor as is it would be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and conflicts would be resolved at that time or the corridor rerouted.</p> <p>There is an opportunity to consider a corridor revision at MP 97 to follow existing infrastructure to the west to</p>

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							avoid conflicts with mining operations and state lands. (2)
132-276 .019	BLM	Colorado River Valley FO	Garfield, CO	Existing infrastructure	MP 34 to MP 35	GIS Analysis: Existing infrastructure follows and crosses corridor. Airfield just north of corridor gap.	Existing infrastructure could affect potential for additional development within the corridor, but corridor best meets siting principles. (1)
<b>Military and Civilian Aviation</b>							
132-276 .020	NA	Private land	Garfield, CO	Juniper Hills Airport	MP 12	GIS Analysis: airport is adjacent to corridor gap.	BLM can only authorize projects on BLM-administered lands. Development in corridor gaps would require coordination outside of the Agencies. (1)
132-276 .021	NA	Private land	Garfield, CO	Dry Pen Airport	MP 13	GIS Analysis: airport is adjacent to corridor gap.	
132-276 .022	NA	Private land	Garfield, CO	Garfield County Regional Airport	MP 35 to MP 36	GIS Analysis: airport is adjacent to corridor.	
132-276 .023	NA	Private land	Garfield, CO	Dbs Air Heliport	MP 35	GIS Analysis: heliport is adjacent to corridor gap.	
132-276 .024	BLM	White River FO	Rio Blanco, CO	Rio Blanco Heliport	MP 58	GIS Analysis: heliport intersects corridor.	Existing infrastructure could affect potential for additional development within the corridor. (3)
132-276 .025	NA	Private land	Rio Blanco, CO	Teepee Park Heliport	MP 92	GIS Analysis: heliport is adjacent to corridor gap.	BLM can only authorize projects on BLM-administered lands. Development in corridor gaps would require coordination outside of the Agencies. (1)
<b>Other noted land use concerns</b>							
132-276 .026	BOR	BOR	Mesa, CO	Unspecified Reclamation land	MP 7 to MP 8	GIS Analysis: BOR land adjacent to corridor and in corridor gap.	Coordination and authorization from BOR would be required to traverse this segment. The BOR reviews applications for rights-of-use on BOR-administered land within the corridor on a case-by-case basis to ensure that BOR projects are not impacted. (3)
132-276 .027	State	Colorado Parks and Wildlife, private		Conservation easements	Not specified.	Comment on abstract: corridor crosses private lands encumbered by conservation easements or CPW-owned properties which are managed for wildlife, wildlife related recreation, and other	BLM can only authorize land uses on public land. Any gaps between public land within a new proposal would have to be coordinated with those landowners/managers. Since the corridor is centered on the existing ROWs/easements, additional uses may

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						recreational uses. In many instances corridor development would be incompatible with the purpose for which those properties were acquired and are managed. Recommend avoiding CPW properties for corridor alignments, otherwise close pre-planning and coordination with CPW staff would be required. In instances where an easement prohibits corridor development and avoidance of the parcel is not possible, and the exercise of eminent domain may result, then the lost conservation values due to corridor development must be compensated for and replaced.	be compatible within that footprint, depending on how the conservation easements and the WAPA easements across non-BLM managed lands are written. (3)
132-276 .028	BLM	Grand Junction FO, Colorado River Valley FO, White River, Little Snake FO	Mesa, Garfield, Rio Blanco, and Moffat, CO	NSO Area	Scattered throughout corridor	GIS Analysis: NSO areas intersect corridor.  Comment on abstract: need to be consistent in how NSO areas are treated.	This is a concern that cannot be easily resolved during corridor level planning.  NSOs protect certain resources in the Little Snake FO depending on the area. Since an NSO would prohibit surface occupancy, potential re-routing of above ground infrastructure could occur.  NSOs are ROW avoidance areas in the GJFO and White River FO and could result in applicants finding alternative routes or sites. (3)

<sup>1</sup> Projects proposed in the corridor would be reviewed during their ROW application review process and would adhere to Federal laws, regulations, and policy.

<sup>2</sup> (1) = confirm existing corridor best meets siting principles; (2) = identify opportunities to improve corridor placement or IOPs; (3) = acknowledge concern not easily resolved or avoided by corridor-level planning.

## Abstract Acronyms and Abbreviations

ACEC = area of environmental concern; BLM = Bureau of Land Management; BOR = Bureau of Reclamation; CPW = Colorado Parks and Wildlife; ESA = Endangered Species Act; FO = Field Office; GHMA = General Habitat Management Area; GIS = geographic information system; GRSG = Greater Sage-grouse; IOP = interagency operating procedure; MP = milepost; NA = not applicable; NEPA = National Environmental Policy Act; NRHP = National Register Historic Places; NSO = no surface occupancy; PEIS = Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement; PHMA = Priority Habitat Management Area; RFI = request for information; RMP = Resource Management Plan; ROW = right-of-way; USFS = U.S. Forest Service; USFWS = U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; VRM = Visual Resource Management; WSA = Wilderness Study Area; WWEC = West-wide Energy Corridor.