

Corridor 15-17

Reno Connector Corridor

Corridor Purpose and Rationale

The corridor connects multiple Section 368 energy corridors to provide a pathway from California across northwestern Nevada. The corridor provides a link to the Reno and the Truckee River Industrial Center areas where renewable energy is in demand. Input regarding alignment from the multiple organizations¹ during the WWEC PEIS suggested following this route. An electric transmission line is planned to generally follow the corridor from MP 0 to MP 28. There is the potential for future geothermal energy in the area that could tie into existing corridors. There is currently one proposed PV solar project (Dodge Flat Solar) near Wadsworth, and Apple is also proposing to construct a large PV solar field on private land near Tracy that does not use public lands.

Corridor location:

Nevada (Storey and Washoe Co.)
BLM: Humboldt River and Sierra Front Field Offices
Regional Review Region: Region 5

Corridor width, length:

Width 10,560 ft
20 miles of designated corridor
41 miles of posted route, including gaps

Designated Use;

- corridor is multi-modal

Corridor of concern (N)

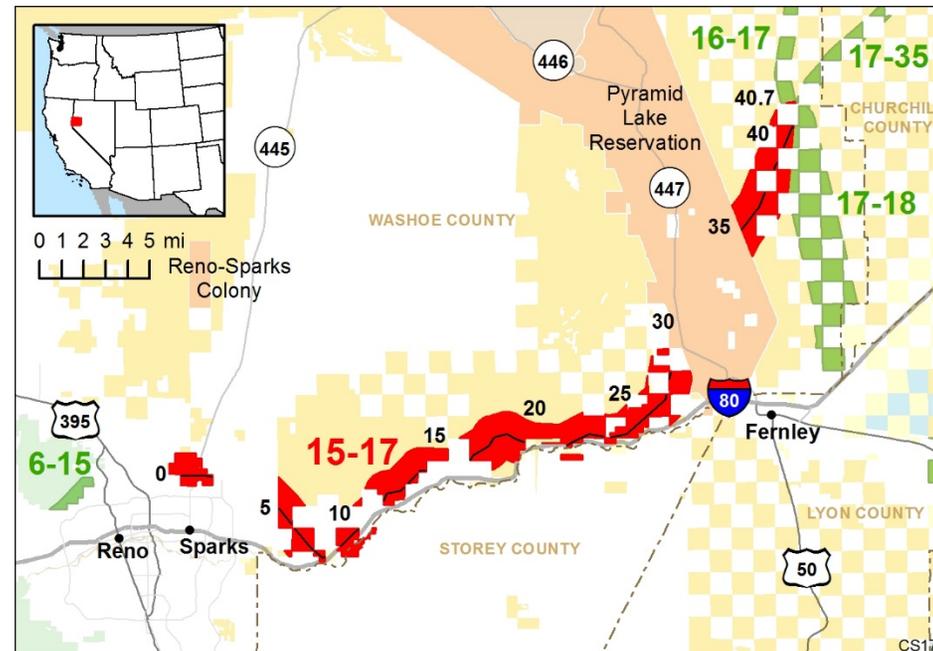


Figure 1. Corridor 15-17

Corridor history:

- Locally designated prior to 2009 (Y)
- Existing infrastructure (Y)
 - 69-kV, 115-kV, and multiple 345-kV transmission lines occupy portions of the corridor throughout its length.
 - A portion of the corridor is occupied by two natural gas pipelines.
 - I-80 is within and adjacent to most of the corridor.
- Energy potential near the corridor (Y)
 - 3 power plants are within 2 mi (2 natural gas, 1 biomass).
 - 23 substations are within 5 mi of the corridor.
- Corridor changes since 2009 (N)

¹ American Wind Energy Association, Frontier Line, National Grid, and Western Utility Group

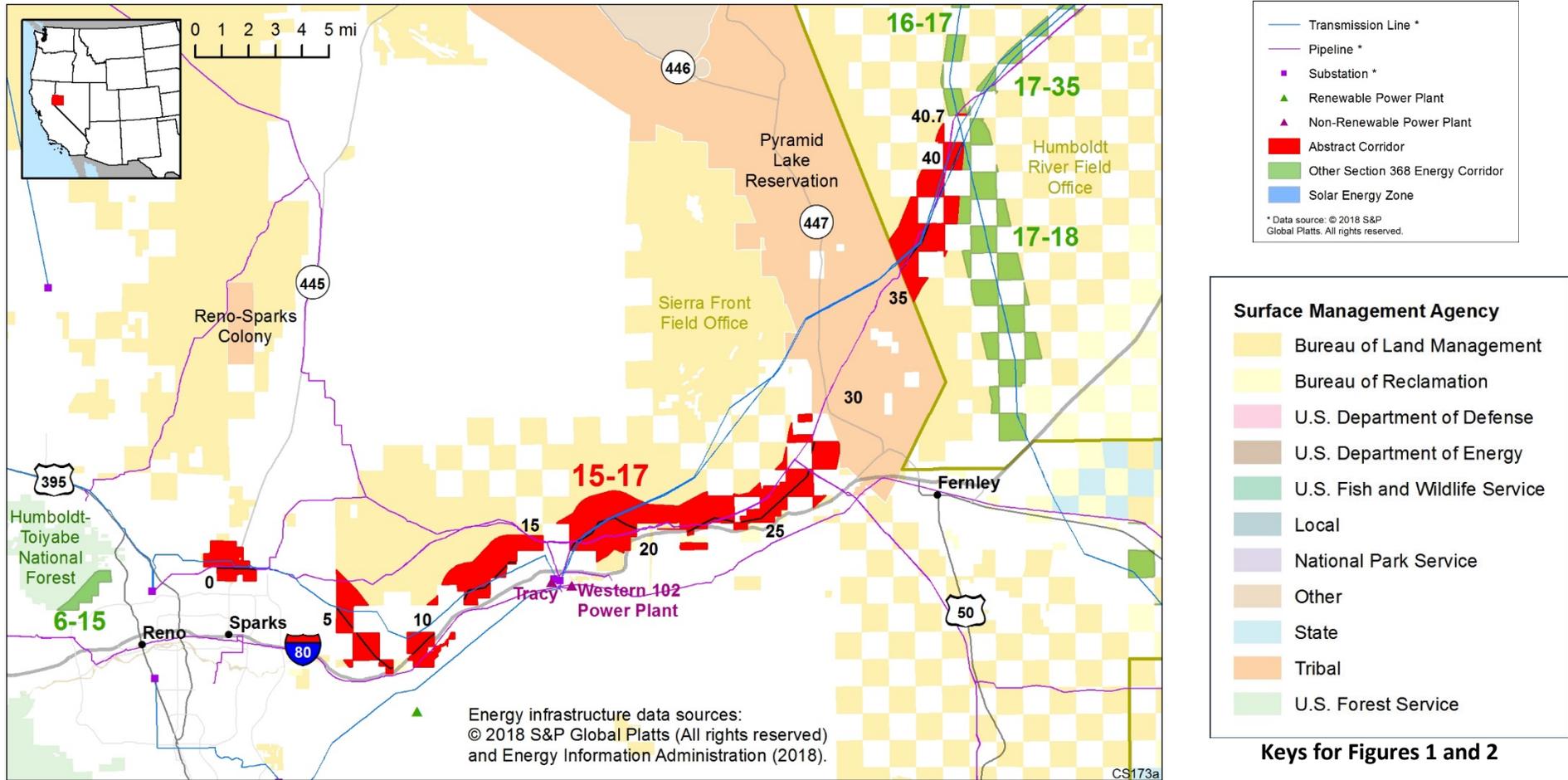


Figure 2. Corridor 15-17 and nearby electric transmission lines and pipelines

Conflict Map Analysis

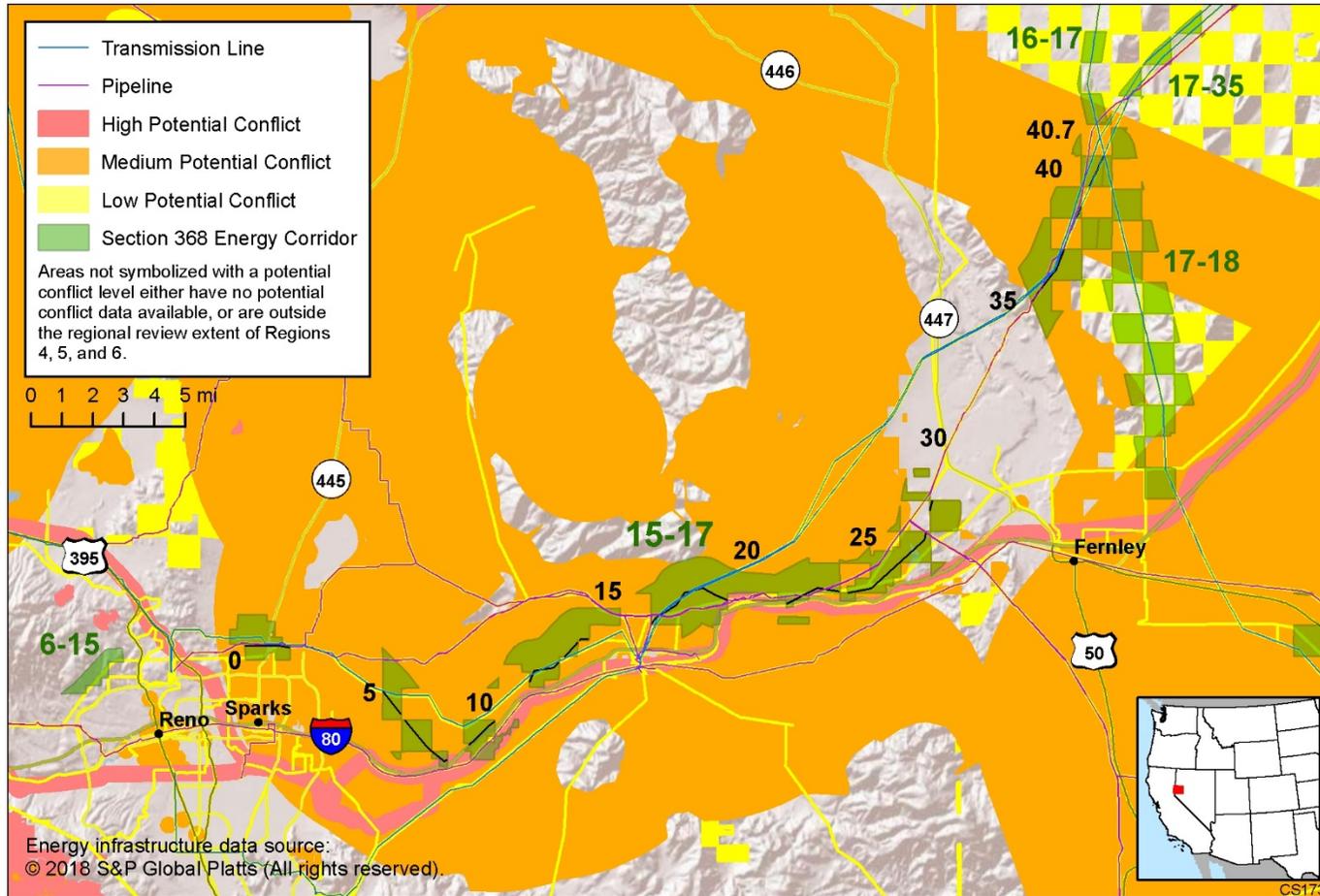


Figure 3. Map of Conflict Areas in Vicinity of Corridor 15-17

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. 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/>)

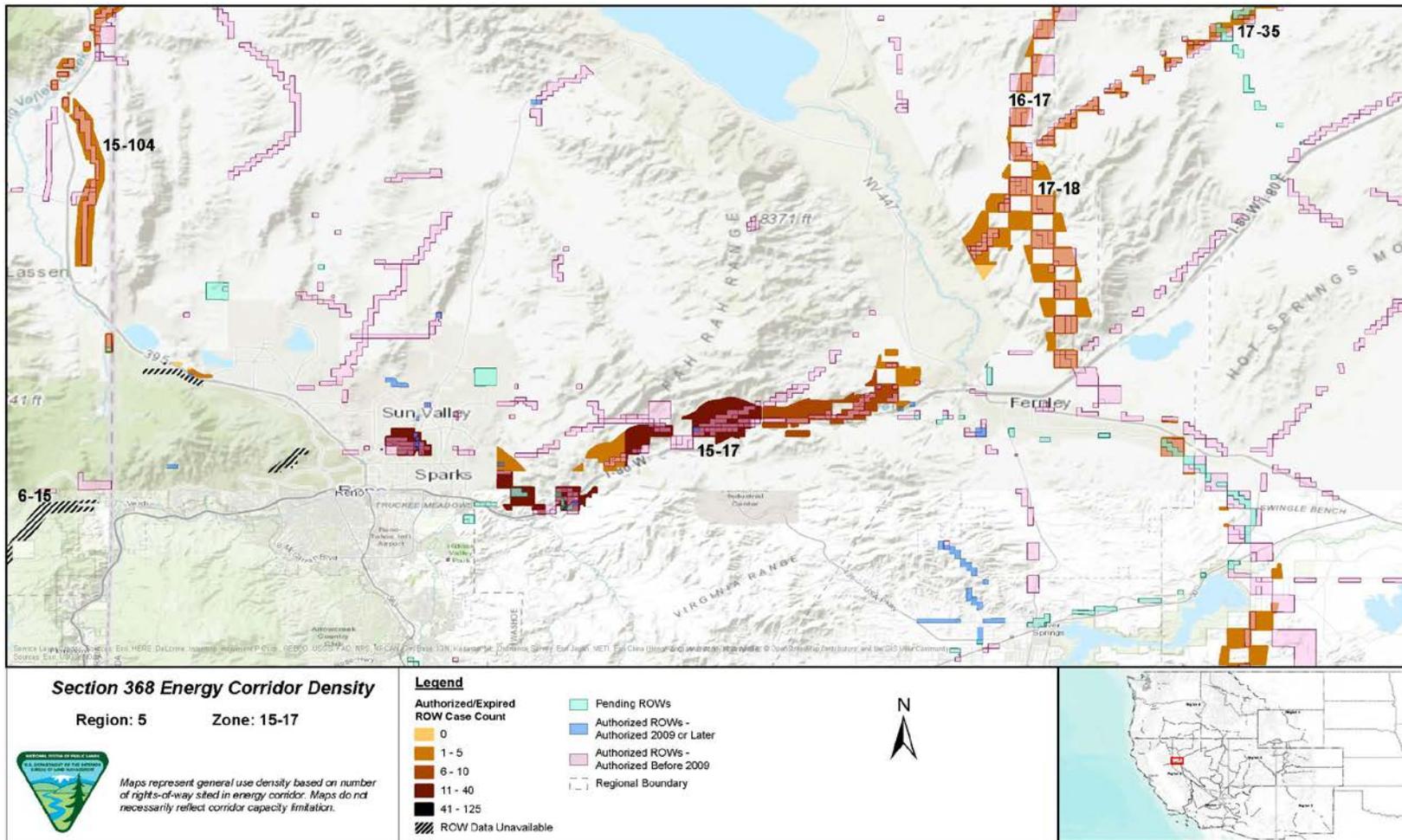


Figure 4. Corridor 15-17, Corridor Density Map

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 pink; 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 have 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.

Corridor Review Table

Designated energy corridors are areas of land prioritized for energy transmission infrastructure and are intended to be predominantly managed for multiple energy transmission infrastructure lines. Other compatible uses are allowable as specified or practicable. Resource management goals and objectives should be compatible with the desired future conditions (i.e., responsible linear infrastructure development of the corridor with minimal impacts) of the energy transmission corridor. Land management objectives that do not align with desired future conditions should be avoided. The table below identifies serious concerns or issues and presents potential resolution options to better meet corridor siting principles.

The preliminary information below is provided to facilitate further discussion and input prior to developing potential revisions, deletions, or additions.

CORRIDOR 15-17 REVIEW			
POTENTIAL COMPATIBILITY ISSUES or CONCERNS TO EXAMINE	MILEPOST (MP)¹	STAKEHOLDER INPUT and OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION	POTENTIAL RESOLUTIONS BASED ON SITING PRINCIPLE ANALYSIS²
<p><i>BLM Jurisdiction: Carson City District Office</i> <i>Agency Land Use Plan: Carson City FO Consolidated RMP (2001)</i></p>			
<p>California NHT and the corridor intersect and are adjacent to each other - The RMP does not mention the California NHT.</p>	<p>MP 8 to MP 10 and MP 20 to MP 22</p>	<p>Between MP 8 and MP 10, the corridor includes I-80 and a natural gas pipeline. The corridor and the California NHT run parallel to each other where they intersect.</p> <p>The National Trails System Act, as cited in the Comprehensive Plan for the California NHT (1999)³, states that the Secretary of the Interior or the Secretary of Agriculture may grant easements and rights-of-way upon, over, under, across, or along any component of the national trails system in accordance with the laws applicable to the national forest system, provided that any conditions contained in such easements and rights-of-way are related to the policy and purposes of this Act.</p>	<p>There is adequate space within the corridor north of I-80 to locate new infrastructure without the need to intersect the NHT. The setting may have been impacted in this area considering the existing infrastructure (transmission lines, pipelines, and I-80), however, there are still documented archaeological remnants of the trail that justify preservation of the trail corridor.</p> <p>Agencies could consider a new IOP for NSTs and NHTs to enhance BMPs for proposed development within the energy corridor.</p>

CORRIDOR 15-17 REVIEW			
POTENTIAL COMPATIBILITY ISSUES or CONCERNS TO EXAMINE	MILEPOST (MP)¹	STAKEHOLDER INPUT and OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION	POTENTIAL RESOLUTIONS BASED ON SITING PRINCIPLE ANALYSIS²
<p>BLM Jurisdiction: Winnemucca District Office Agency Land Use Plan: Winnemucca District Planning Area RMP (2015)</p>			
Other than the GRSG OHMA intersections discussed below, no issues related to resource intersections with the corridor in Winnemucca Field Office have been identified.			
<p>BLM Jurisdiction: Carson City District Office and Winnemucca District Office Agency Land Use Plan: Nevada and Northeastern California GRSG ROD and ARMPA – March 2019</p>			
GRSG GHMA (ROW avoidance area) and the corridor intersect – The 2019 ARMPA indicates that PHMA and GHMA areas are designated as major pipeline (≥24-inch diameter) ROW avoidance areas, unless the major pipeline meets one of the allocation exception criteria outlined (in MD SSS 5). The ARMPA also states that co-locating new infrastructure within or next to existing infrastructure is a priority when PHMA and GHMA areas cannot be avoided.	MP 0 to MP 7 and MP 10 to MP 26		ROW avoidance areas are not compatible with the corridor’s purpose as a preferred location for infrastructure. However, collocation is preferred and the corridor is collocated with several existing transmission lines and pipelines. Required Design Features identified in the ARMPA would be required for future development within the corridor where it intersects PHMAs.
GRSG OHMA and the corridor intersect – The 2019 ARMPA states that OHMA is allocated as Open for major ROWs.	MP 1, MP 5 to MP 14, MP 18 to MP 22, MP 24 to MP 28, and MP 35 to MP 39		The corridor appears to best meet the siting principles. The corridor is collocated with several existing transmission lines and pipelines. In addition, OHMA areas are Open for major ROWs.

¹ Mileposts are rounded to the nearest mile.

² Siting Principles include: Corridors are thoughtfully sited to provide maximum utility and minimum impact on the environment; Corridors promote efficient use of landscape for necessary development; Appropriate and acceptable uses are defined for specific corridors; and Corridors provide connectivity to renewable energy generation to the maximum extent possible, while also considering other generation, in order to balance the renewable sources and to ensure the safety and reliability of electricity transmission. Projects proposed in the corridor would be reviewed during their ROW application review process and would adhere to Federal laws, regulations, and policy.

³ Full Title: Comprehensive Management and Use Plan / Final Environmental Impact Statement - California National Historic Trail and Pony Express National Historic Trail. Management and Use Plan Update/Final Environmental Impact Statement - Oregon National Historic Trail and Mormon Pioneer National Historic Trail.

Additional Compatibility Concerns

The issues and concerns listed below are not explicitly addressed through agency land use plans or are too general in nature to be addressed without further clarification. Although difficult to quantify, the concerns listed have potential to affect future use and/or development within this designated corridor. The Agencies have provided a preliminary general analysis. The information below is provided to facilitate further discussion during stakeholder review.

Topography/Terrain:

- The corridor traverses the Virginia Mountains on the north side of the Truckee River, so topography may create pinch points.

Analysis: The widened corridor (10,560 ft) allows greater flexibility to traverse difficult terrain and still locate future development within the corridor.

Tribal Concerns/Cultural Resources:

- There is a corridor gap between MP 29 and MP 35 across the Pyramid Lake Indian Reservation.

Analysis: Development within tribal lands would require proponent negotiations with the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe and the BIA. Proponents would have to work with the tribe for a tribal resolution consenting to the grant of ROWs (by BIA). BIA cannot grant ROWs without tribal consent. Existing IOPs specific to tribal consultation would be followed in connection with any proposed energy project in the corridor.

- The corridor is just south of the Pah-Rah High Basin ACEC. Any development in the Virginia Mountains garners high interest from the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony.

Analysis: Existing IOPs require tribal engagement early in the planning process for any proposed project in the corridor.

Visual Resources:

- The Truckee River corridor is a visually sensitive area for the Washoe County government.

Analysis: Adherence to existing IOPs regarding visual resources would be required.

Ecology:

- The area has been greatly affected by wildfire. Loss of native plants (sage brush and native grasses) and invasive species (cheatgrass and medusa head) are major problems.

Analysis: Existing IOPs and BMPs would be required. In general, the corridor follows existing infrastructure. In addition, BLM Instruction Memorandum No. 2018-070 provides guidance to state/district/field offices on vegetation management to establish sound Integrated Vegetation Management practices in electric utility corridors, including coordination between Federal land management agencies and utility companies that hold ROWs.

Military and Civilian Aviation:

- MTR – VR and the corridor intersect from MP 37 to MP 41.

Analysis: Adherence to existing IOP regarding coordination with DoD would be required. Agencies could consider a revision to the existing IOP to include height restrictions for corridors in the vicinity of DoD training routes.

Abstract Acronyms and Abbreviations

ACEC = area of critical environmental concern; ARMPA = Approved Resource Management Plan Amendment; BIA = Bureau of Indian Affairs; BLM = Bureau of Land Management; BMP = best management practice; DoD = Department of Defense; FO = Field Office; GHMA = general habitat management area; GIS = geographic information system; GRSG = Greater Sage-grouse; IOP = interagency operating procedure; MP = milepost; MTR = Military Training Route; NHT = National Historic Trail; NST = National Scenic Trail; OHMA = other habitat management area; PEIS = Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement; PHMA = priority habitat management area; RFI = request for information; RMP = resource management plan; ROD = Record of Decision; ROW = right-of-way; USFS = U.S. Forest Service; VR = visual route; VRM = visual resource management; WWEC = West-wide Energy Corridor.