

Corridor 37-223(N) and 37-223(S)

West Apex

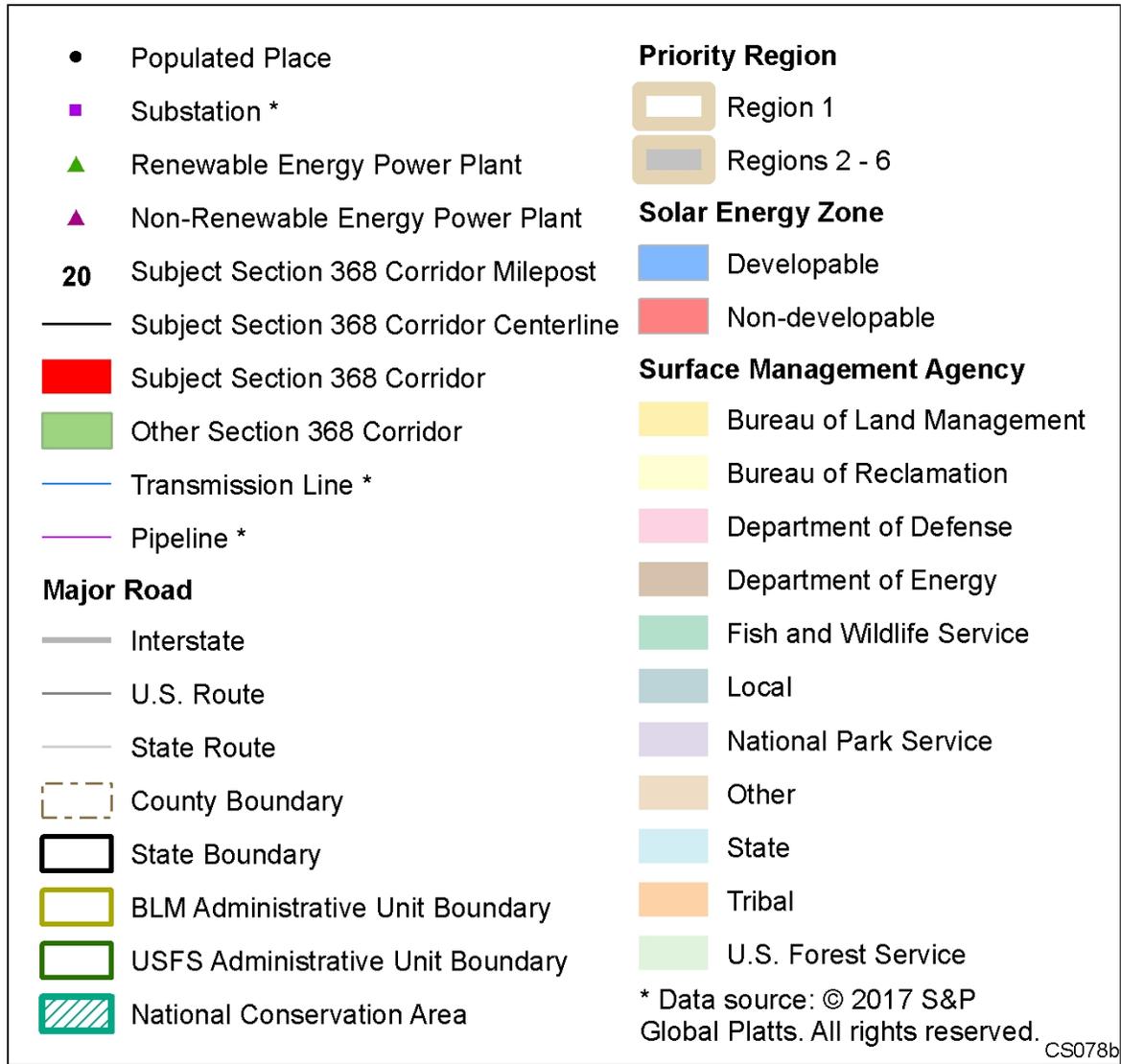
Introduction

Corridor 37-223(N) (Figures 1 and 2) extends west near the southeast corner of the Desert National Wildlife Range in southern Nevada, intended to link with Corridor 223-224 near the northwest corner of Nellis Air Force Base (AFB). Federally designated portions of this corridor are entirely on BLM-administered land, with a 3,500-ft width over its entire length. Corridor 37-223(N) is designated as multimodal and can therefore accommodate both electrical transmission and pipeline projects. The corridor spans a 0.6-mile distance, with 0.6 miles designated on BLM-administered lands. The designated area is 200 acres or 0.31 square miles. This corridor is entirely in Clark County, Nevada, under the jurisdiction of the BLM Las Vegas Field Office. This corridor is in Region 1.

Corridor 37-223(S) begins just east of the southeast corner of the Desert National Wildlife Range in southern Nevada, at the junction of Corridors 37-232 and 37-39 and extends 7.1 miles to the south and west. Federally designated portions of this corridor are entirely on BLM-administered land, with a 2,400-ft width over its entire length. It is designated as an underground-only corridor due to military training requirements. The corridor spans 7.1-miles, with 3.4 miles designated on BLM-administered lands. The designated area is 817 acres/1.28 square miles. This corridor is also entirely in Region 1.



Figure 1. Corridor 37-223



Key

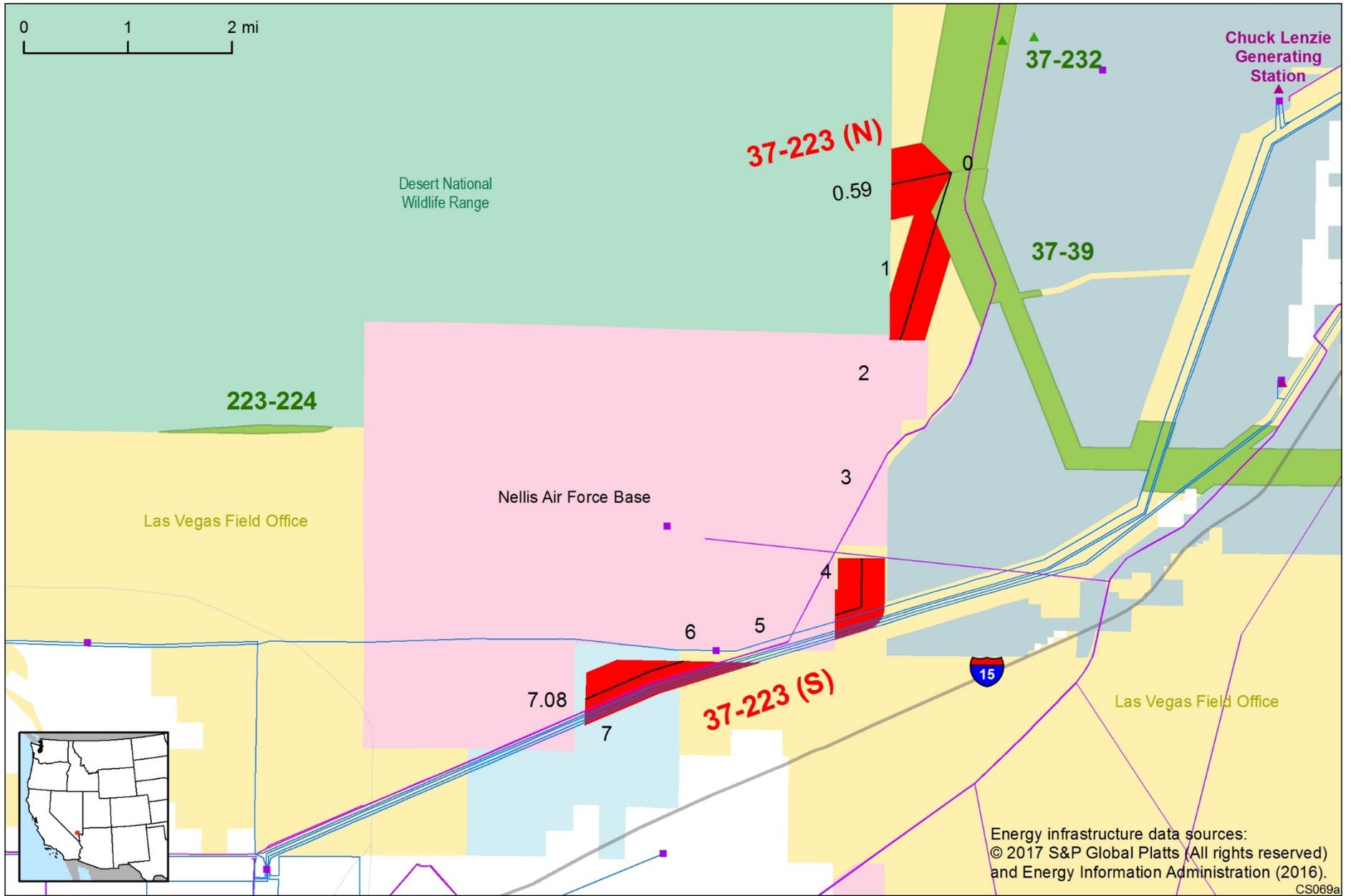


Figure 2. Corridor 37-223, Including Existing Energy Infrastructure

Corridor Rationale

During scoping for the WWEC PEIS, routes generally following these corridors were suggested by Western Utility Group. The intent was to complete a Section 368 energy corridor across the northern portion of Las Vegas in response to anticipated demand for alternate routes in this high-use area by connecting Corridor 223-224 to Corridor 37-232 via Corridors 37-223(N) or 37-223(S). However, because Section 368 energy corridors were not designated on DoD or USFWS lands as anticipated, the connection appears incomplete.

Existing Infrastructure: Platts data indicate two existing Kern River natural gas pipelines and six existing transmission lines (AEP Energy Services, Inc. [230 kV], Nevada Power Co. [138 kV], three Nevada Power Co. 230-kV lines, and Nevada Power Co. [500 kV]). There are also two existing substations within 1 mile of the corridor centerline.

Potential Future Development: Three applications are pending within Corridor 37-223(N), and there are seven pending applications for use of Corridor 37-223(S). Three planned transmission lines include AEP Energy Services, Inc. (230 kV) and Nevada Power Co. (230 kV and 500 kV) within the corridor. Proposed out-of-state transmission projects that could affect this corridor include Southwest Intertie Project, TransWest Express Transmission Project, and Zephyr Power Transmission Project. The Dry Lake SEZ is 3.8 miles northeast of the corridors providing opportunity for the corridors to accommodate transmission generated from renewable energy development.

Corridor of Concern Status

This corridor was not identified in the Settlement Agreement as a corridor of concern.

Corridor Abstract Update

New data have been added to the Section 368 Energy Corridor Mapping Tool since the release of the draft abstracts in September 2016. A GIS view identifying high-, medium-, and low-conflict areas consistent with the screening criteria in 43 CFR 204.35(a)-(c) has also been added to the mapping tool. A complete description of the mapping tool, a description of the high-, medium-, and low-conflict areas, and a list of the GIS data sources are included in the report for the Region 1 Regional Review.

Additions to the corridor analysis table, based on input from stakeholders and additional review by the Agencies, include jurisdictional concerns, where the corridor is expected to cross the DNWR, special status species, specially designated areas, and visual resources.

Revisions, deletions, or additions to Section 368 energy corridors would be made only during the land-use planning process through a plan amendment for an individual project or a plan revision. However, the Settlement Agreement sets forth a systematic process for the Agencies to review Section 368 corridors and provide recommendations for revisions, deletions, or additions to the corridors. There were stakeholder recommendations in the 2014 RFI to reroute this corridor to avoid siting new facilities in TCAs, Priority 1 and 2 connectivity habitat, and areas of "very high" risk to permeability (wildlife connectivity). There does not appear to be a reasonable alternative route that could connect the corridors to other areas in the region while avoiding jurisdictional gaps and military concerns. Suggestions for corridor revisions, deletions, and additions in response to the release of the draft abstracts included realigning the corridor south of the DNWR. Based on Agency analysis, as well as input provided by stakeholders, the Agencies recommend deleting these two corridors to address DoD training concerns and additional DoD land withdrawal.

Corridor Analysis

The corridor analysis table below identifies concerns affecting Corridors 37-223(N) and 37-223(S), the location of the concerns within the corridor, and the results of the analysis of the concerns by the Agencies. Concerns are checked if they are known to apply to the corridor.

Energy Planning Opportunities

- Appropriate and acceptable uses
- WWEC purpose (e.g., renewable energy)
- Transmission and pipeline capacity opportunity

Energy Planning Concerns

- Physical barrier
- Jurisdictional concern
- Corridor alignment and spacing
- Transmission and pipeline capacity concern

Land Management Responsibilities and Environmental Concerns

- Acoustics
- Air quality
- Climate change
- Cultural resources
- Ecological resources
- Environmental justice
- Hydrological resources
- Lands and realty
- Lands with wilderness characteristics

Livestock grazing

- Paleontology
- Public access and recreation
- Socioeconomics
- Soils/erosion
- Specially designated areas
- Tribal concerns
- Visual resources
- Wild horses and burros

Interagency Operating Procedures

REGION 1 – CORRIDOR 37-223 – ANALYSIS TABLE							
ID	Agency	Agency Jurisdiction	County	Primary Concern/ Opportunity	Corridor Location (by Milepost [MP])	Source: Context	Agency Review and Analysis
ENERGY PLANNING OPPORTUNITIES							
<i>WWEC Purpose</i>							
37-223 .004	BLM	Las Vegas FO	Clark, NV	Designated Leasing Area, i.e., Dry Lake SEZ	MP 0.0	GIS Analysis: the Dry Lake SEZ is 3.8 miles northeast of the corridor.	The Dry Lake SEZ provides opportunity for the corridor to accommodate transmission tied to renewable energy development.
ENERGY PLANNING CONCERNS							
<i>Jurisdictional Concern</i>							
37-223 .005 and 37-223 .009	FWS	USFWS	Clark, NV	Desert National Wildlife Range (DNWR)	From corridor end (MP 0.6), extending out 5.9 miles	Comment on corridor abstract: DNWR abuts the corridor on its western edge. Corridor route runs through the southeast corner of USFWS land (DNWR), but was not designated (2,207 acres). Stakeholders suggest corridors be moved south of the DNWR.	A good percentage of the corridor (as originally designed) relied on the USFWS and DoD to approve corridors on lands within their jurisdiction. Since the designation of the corridor, that option no longer seems feasible, and the Agencies are recommending removal of the Section 368 energy corridor designation.

REGION 1 – CORRIDOR 37-223 – ANALYSIS TABLE							
ID	Agency	Agency Jurisdiction	County	Primary Concern/ Opportunity	Corridor Location (by Milepost [MP])	Source: Context	Agency Review and Analysis
						GIS Analysis.	
37-223 .010	DoD	Nellis AFB	Clark, NV	Undesignated DoD land (Nellis AFB)	Intermittent throughout corridor at MP 1.7, MP 3.8, and MP 6.1	GIS Analysis: corridor route crosses DoD land (Nellis AFB) but was not designated (2,257 acres):	A good percentage of the corridor (as originally designed) relied on the USFWS and DoD to approve corridors on lands within their jurisdiction. Additional DoD land withdrawal overlaps the corridor within Section 14 of Township 10 South, Range 62 East, Mount Diablo Meridian, Clark County, NV. On December 19, 2014, bill H. R. 3979 was enacted as Public Law (P.L.) 113-291. Section 3092(k) of P.L. 113-291 amended the Military Lands Withdrawal Act of 1999 (P.L. 106-65; 113 Stat. 886) to add approximately 1,120 acres to the existing withdrawal for Nellis AFB in Clark County, NV. The public land is to be withdrawn in accordance with the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S. Code § 1714). Since the designation of the corridor, that option no longer seems feasible, and the Agencies are recommending removal of the Section 368 energy corridor designation.
Corridor Alignment and Spacing							
37-223 .001	BLM	Las Vegas FO	Clark, NV	Nevada Power Co. 500-kV line	MP 4.3 to MP 4.5	GIS Analysis.	Proposed project siting and collocation alternatives would be analyzed as part of the project-specific environmental review required under NEPA and other Federal laws.
37-223 .002	BLM, State	Las Vegas FO	Clark, NV	AEP Energy Services, Inc. 230-kV line, Nevada Power Co. 138-kV line, and three Nevada Power Co. 230-kV lines	MP 4.3 to MP 4.5; MP 6.1 to MP 7.1	GIS Analysis.	Proposed project siting and collocation alternatives would be analyzed as part of the project-specific environmental review required under NEPA and other Federal laws.
37-223 .003	BLM, State	Las Vegas FO	Clark, NV	Kern River Gas Transmission Co. natural gas pipelines	MP 6.1 to MP 7.1	GIS Analysis.	Proposed project siting and collocation alternatives would be analyzed as part of the project-specific environmental review

REGION 1 – CORRIDOR 37-223 – ANALYSIS TABLE							
ID	Agency	Agency Jurisdiction	County	Primary Concern/ Opportunity	Corridor Location (by Milepost [MP])	Source: Context	Agency Review and Analysis
							required under NEPA and other Federal laws.
LAND MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS							
Ecology: Special Status Animal Species							
37-223 .006 .007	BLM	Las Vegas FO	Clark, NV	Tortoise Conservation Areas (TCAs); Priority 1 and 2 connectivity habitat	MP 0 to MP 0.6	RFI: reroute to avoid siting new facilities in TCAs and Priority 1 and 2 connectivity habitat without existing transmission, and minimize additional transmission siting in these areas.	Analysis would be completed through the NEPA process case by case with a full range of alternatives. Impacts on habitat connectivity could be avoided, minimized, or mitigated through activities identified and implemented in consultation with the USFWS under ESA Section 7. The BLM policy on use of the mitigation hierarchy would be applied to avoid and minimize impacts.
37-223 .008	BLM	Las Vegas FO	Clark, NV	Connectivity	Not specified	RFI: reroute to avoid "very high" risk to permeability, and work closely with state and Federal wildlife and science agencies to ensure that connectivity is maintained.	Analysis would be completed through the NEPA process (i.e., for RMP revision) case by case with a full range of alternatives.. Impacts on habitat and habitat could be avoided, minimized, or mitigated through activities identified and implemented in consultation with the USFWS under ESA Section 7. The BLM policy on use of the mitigation hierarchy would be applied to avoid and minimize impacts.
Lands and Realty: Civilian and Military Aviation							
37-223 .new1	BLM	Las Vegas FO	Clark, NV	DoD ejection and aircraft safety		Agency analysis	DoD ejection and aircraft safety were the primary military concerns. The Agencies are recommending removal of the Section 368 energy corridor designation.
Specially Designated Areas							
37-223 .011	BLM	Las Vegas FO	Clark, NV	Coyote Springs ACEC	Entire corridor 37-223 (N), and Corridor 37-223(S) from MP 0 to MP 2	GIS Analysis: Coyote Springs ACEC through entire corridor; Tule Springs Fossil Beds NM located to the west of the designated segments of the corridor	This is one of four ACECs within the BLM SNDO which is specifically designated to protect Desert Tortoise critical habitat. The ACEC is managed as an avoidance area to linear ROWs, and as an exclusion area to site-type ROWs (except within 0.5 mile of the centerline of Federal-aid highways).

REGION 1 – CORRIDOR 37-223 – ANALYSIS TABLE							
ID	Agency	Agency Jurisdiction	County	Primary Concern/ Opportunity	Corridor Location (by Milepost [MP])	Source: Context	Agency Review and Analysis
							Site-type ROWs (such as electrical substations, water treatment plant, construction staging areas) may or may not be compatible with the use and future use of the corridor. Adherence to IOPs and use of BMP’s would be required to avoid incompatible uses within the corridor. The Agencies have identified a potential corridor deletion to avoid impacts on the undesignated gap (where the corridor crosses the DNWR) prevents the corridor from connecting to other existing Section 368 energy corridors
Visual Resources							
37-223 .012	BLM	Las Vegas FO	Clark, NV	VRM Class III	Entire corridor [both 37-223 (N) and 37-223(S)]	GIS Analysis.	VRM class objectives are binding land use plan decisions. Transmission facilities must demonstrate that they will conform to the VRM decisions in the land use plan through a hard-look visual impacts analysis outlined in BLM VRM Contrast Rating Handbook H 8431-1 (VRM Manual Section (MS) 8400, BLM 1986). Minimizing visual contrast remains a requirement of applicable VRM class objectives even when the proposed action is in conformance with these VRM class objectives (VRM MS-8400).
Other Issues							
37-223 .new2						Input was received requesting the Agencies to provide missing data to determine whether new projects in the corridor require rerouting due to TCAs, Priority 1 and 2 connectivity habitat, and wildlife connectivity. One stakeholder urged the Agencies to consider that	The Agencies have updated the corridor abstracts and the Section 368 Energy Corridor Mapping Tool with new information, including new designations and species connectivity data. The West-wide Energy Corridor RODs designated Section 368 energy corridors for oil, gas, and hydrogen pipelines and electricity transmission and distribution facilities to provide long-distance pathways for future

REGION 1 – CORRIDOR 37-223 – ANALYSIS TABLE

ID	Agency	Agency Jurisdiction	County	Primary Concern/ Opportunity	Corridor Location (by Milepost [MP])	Source: Context	Agency Review and Analysis
						transportation, drainage, and all utility uses be included in the appropriate and acceptable uses for the corridor. Last, input was provided clarifying existing capacity and potential for new capacity.	pipelines as well as long-distance electrical transmission lines. Therefore, transportation, drainage, and all utility uses are not generally considered appropriate and acceptable uses for the designated Section 368 energy corridors. The input provided by stakeholders regarding existing capacity and potential for future capacity has been added to the corridor abstracts and has been considered in the Agencies' analysis.

Abbreviations: ACEC = Area of Critical Environmental Concern; AFB = Air Force Base; BLM = Bureau of Land Management; BMP = best management practice; CFR = Code of Federal regulations; DNWR = Desert National Wildlife Refuge; DoD = Department of Defense; ESA = Endangered Species Act; FO = Field Office; IOP = Interagency Operating Procedures; GIS = geographic information system; MP = milepost; PEIS = Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement; RFI = Request for Information; SEZ = Solar Energy Zone; SNDO = Southern Nevada District Office; TCA = Tortoise Conservation Area; USFWS = U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; VRM = Visual Resource Management; WWEC = West-wide Energy Corridor.