

Corridor 4-247

Corvallis to Medford Corridor

Corridor Purpose and Rationale

The corridor provides a north-south pathway for energy transport through western Oregon. Input regarding alignment from the American Wind Energy Association, PacifiCorp, and Western Utility Group during the WWEC PEIS suggested following this route. The Eugene to Medford Transmission Line (Spencer to Dixonville), a 500-kV planned transmission line, follows the corridor from MP 58 to MP 101. The corridor contains fragmented land ownership and most of the corridor traverses private land. There is an upgrade currently under consideration for the power line three miles south of the corridor at MP 173. The project currently under consideration is to upgrade 17 miles of existing power line running east - west and a new substation. This upgrade is being considered in part because of increasing energy demand in the greater Medford area. It is possible that Corridor 4-247 provides some redundancy in services to the Medford area.

Corridor location:

Oregon (Douglas, Jackson, Lane, and Linn Co.)

BLM: Butte Falls, Cascades, Grants Pass, Siuslaw, South River, Swiftwater, and Upper Willamette Field Offices

Regional Review Region: Region 6

Corridor width, length:

Width 3,500 ft

23 miles of designated corridor

173 miles of posted route, including gaps

Designated Use:

- corridor is multi-modal

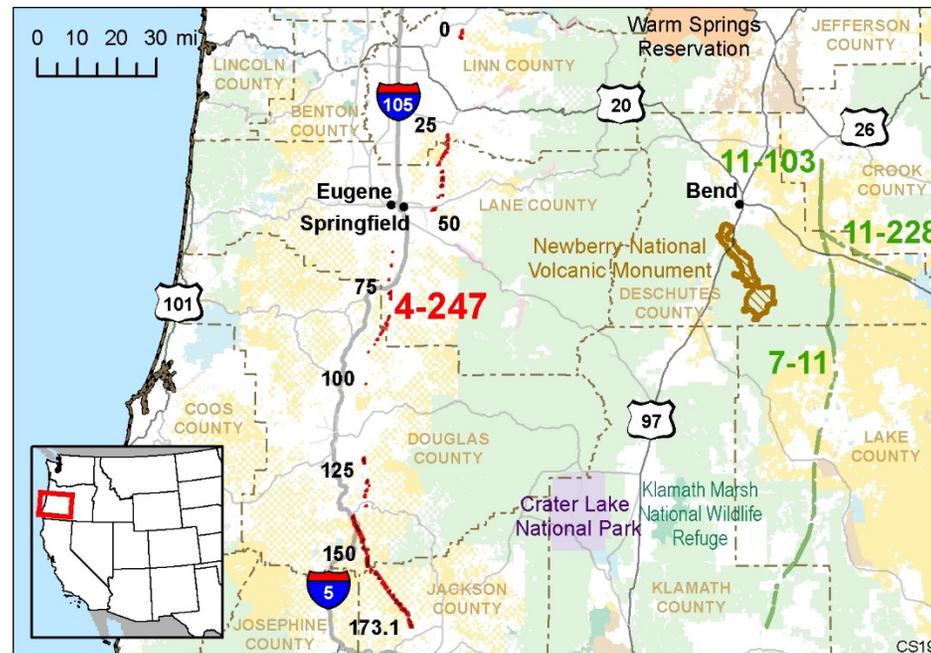


Figure 1. Corridor 4-247

Corridor of concern (Y)

Old growth forests, critical habitat, late-successional reserves, riparian reserves, and not close enough to qualified resource areas.

Corridor history:

- Locally designated prior to 2009 (Y)
- Existing infrastructure (Y)
 - One to six electric transmission lines are within and adjacent to the corridor at several locations throughout its length.
- Energy potential near the corridor (Y)
 - 3 power plants are within 4 mi (2 hydroelectric, 1 biomass).
 - 2 substations are within the corridor and 34 more substations are within 5 mi of the corridor.
- Corridor changes since 2009 (N)

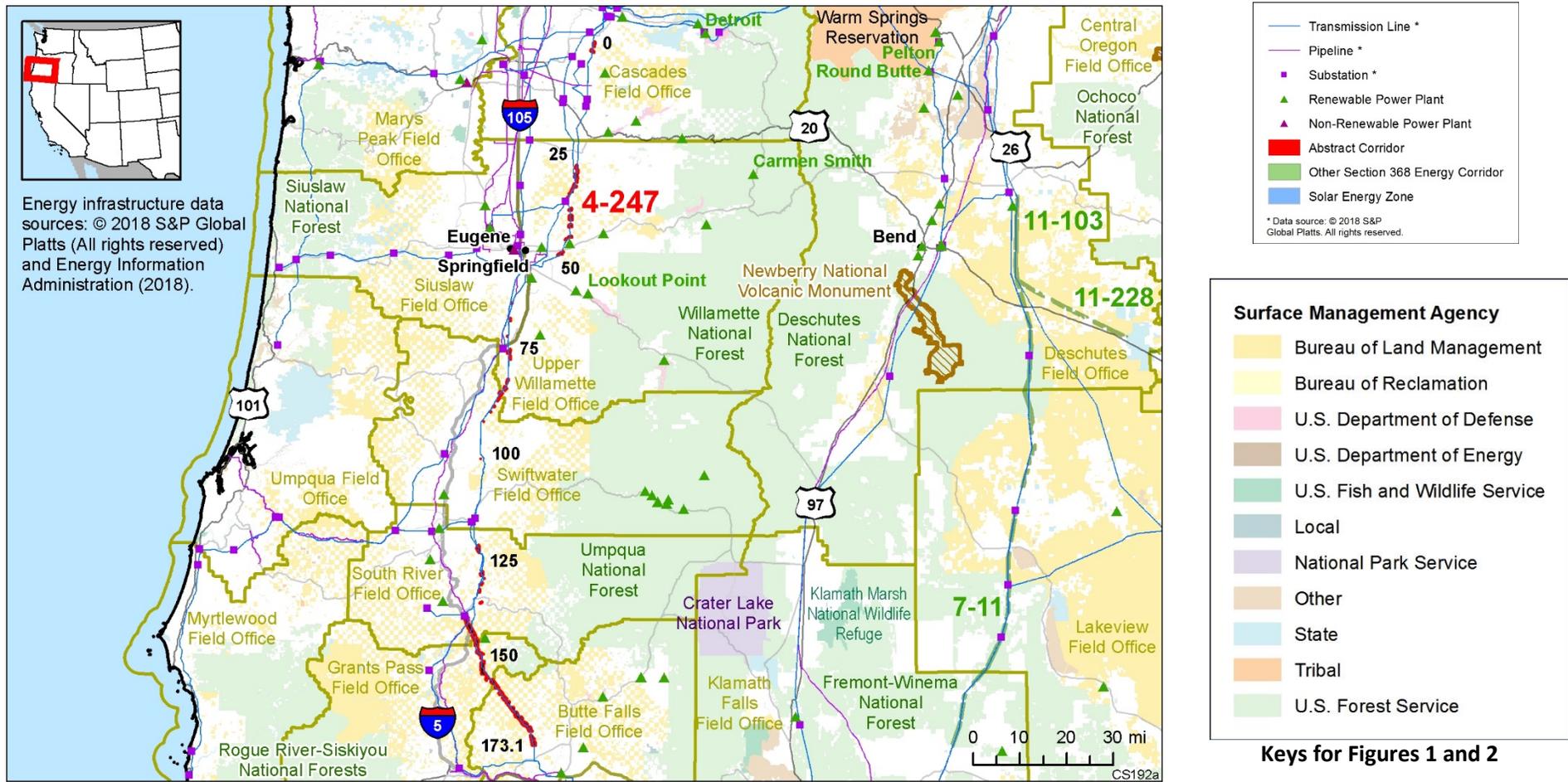


Figure 2. Corridor 4-247 and nearby electric transmission lines and pipelines

Conflict Map Analysis

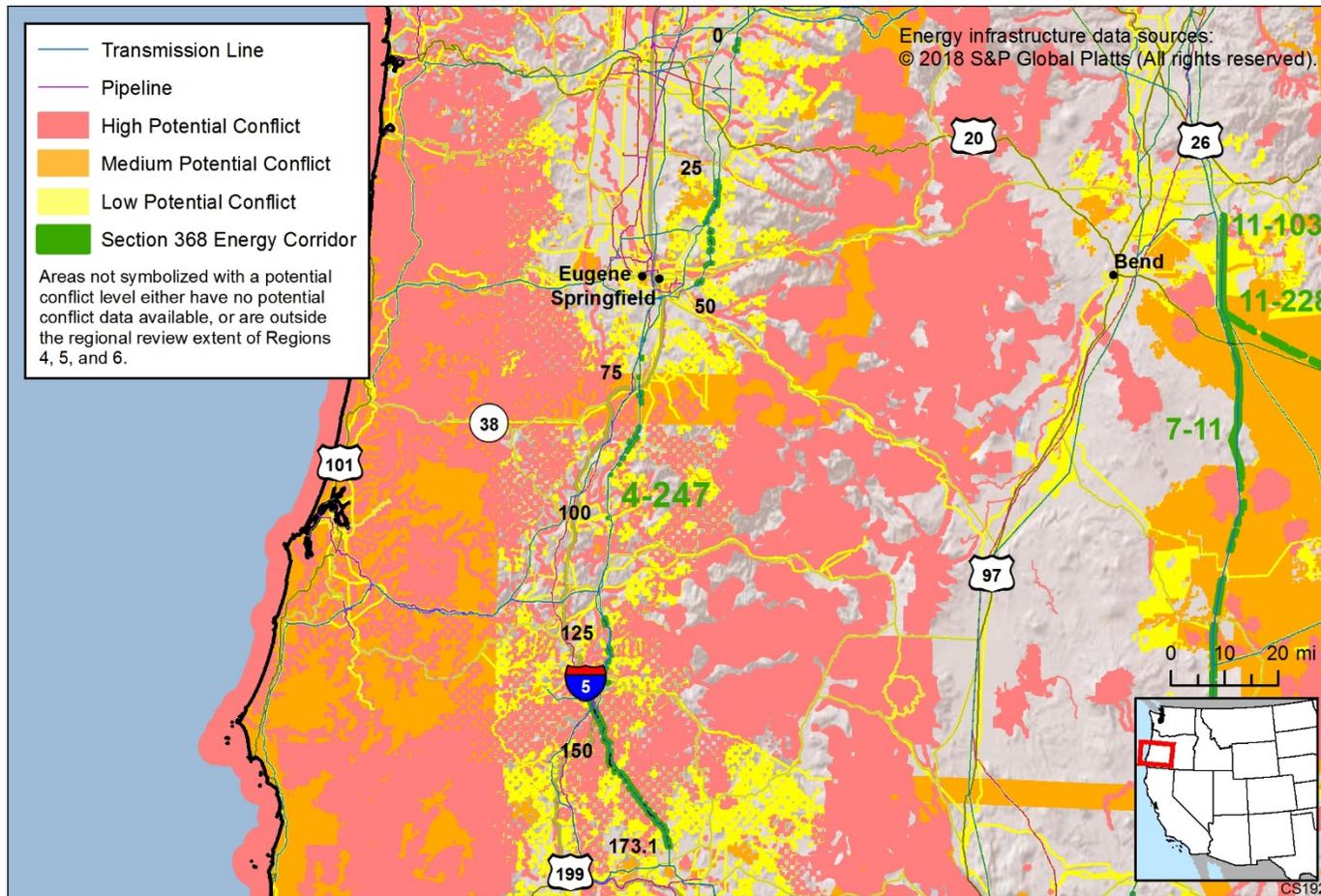


Figure 3. Map of Conflict Areas in Vicinity of Corridor 4-247

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 WVEC 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/>)

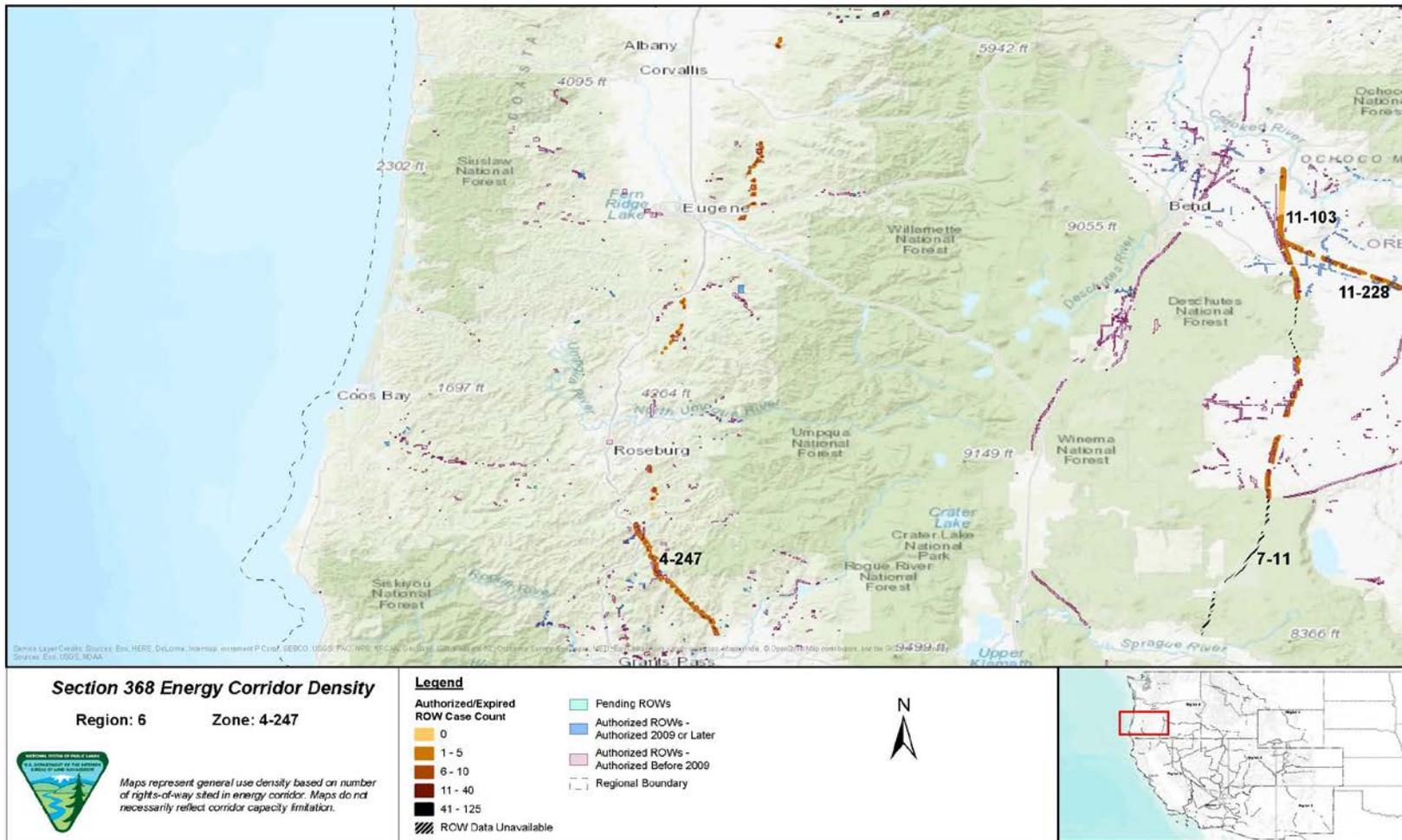


Figure 4. Corridor 4-247, Corridor Density Map

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 4-247 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: Salem Cascades Field Office; Eugene District Office; and Roseburg District Office</i> <i>Agency Land Use Plan: Northwestern and Coastal Oregon ROD/RMP (2016)</i></p>			
Lands with undetermined status for wilderness characteristics intersect and are adjacent to the corridor	MP 27 to 43, MP 47 to MP 49, MP 76 to MP 78, and MP 84 to MP 87	BLM Manual Section 6320 (Considering lands with wilderness characteristics in the BLM Land Use Planning Process), 3/15/2012, provides policy and guidance for considering lands with wilderness characteristics in land use planning under FLPMA.	<p>The corridor location appears to best meet the siting principles. The potential lands with wilderness characteristics encompass a broad area around the corridor which cannot be avoided. Additionally, the corridor is collocated with existing infrastructure (several transmission lines).</p> <p>The BLM retains broad discretion regarding the multiple use management of lands possessing wilderness characteristics without Wilderness or WSA designations.</p> <p>Agencies could consider a new IOP to assist with avoiding and/or minimizing impacts of developing energy infrastructure on lands with wilderness characteristics.</p>
Cottage Grove Old Growth ACEC and the corridor intersect—the ACEC is an avoidance area.	MP 73	<p>ACEC intersects a small isolated corridor parcel.</p> <p>Comment on abstract: Cottage Grove Old Growth ACEC overlaps 9 acres of corridor.</p>	<p>ROW avoidance areas are not compatible with the corridor’s purpose as a preferred location for infrastructure. However, the overlap with the ACEC is very small and the corridor is collocated with existing transmission lines. ROWs can be granted when no feasible alternate route or designated ROW is available as applicable with BLM laws and policy.</p>

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<p>Northern Spotted Owl (ESA-listed threatened) critical habitat and the corridor intersect – Manage habitat for species that are ESA-listed, or are candidates for listing, consistent with recovery plans, conservation agreements, and designated critical habitat.</p>	<p>MP 82 to MP 87, MP 142 to MP 154, and MP 157 to MP 169</p>	<p>Two existing transmission lines within corridor from MP 82 to MP 87 and one transmission line within other areas of intersection between the corridor and the critical habitat.</p> <p>The FS Final Supplemental EIS on Management of Habitat for Late-Successional and Old-Growth Forest Related Species Within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl was issued in 1994 but does not address utility corridors.</p> <p>The USFWS final rule for Northern spotted owl critical habitat was issued in 1992 and revised in 2012. The Revised Recovery Plan for the Northern Spotted Owl (2011) does not discuss conflicts between utility corridors and critical habitat.</p> <p>Reasonable and prudent measures identified by the USFWS during consultation will be incorporated in project plans to minimize habitat fragmentation.</p> <p>RFI comment: re-route to avoid critical habitat. Consult closely with state fish & game agencies and WGA to implement the full mitigation hierarchy of avoidance, minimization, and compensation for CHAT resources at "Very High" risk. Consult with USFWS to avoid adverse</p>	<p>Currently the corridor intersects two active home ranges with many other active home ranges in close proximity. This may not be compatible with the corridor’s purpose as a preferred location for infrastructure. However, the corridor is collocated with existing transmission line(s) and options to shift this corridor to federal lands outside the critical habitat are limited.</p> <p>Existing IOPs would be required, including consultation with the USFWS.</p>

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		<p>modification to Northern Spotted Owl designated critical habitat.</p> <p>Comment on abstract: avoid designated Northern Spotted Owl critical habitat.</p>	
<p>Coho Salmon (ESA-listed threatened) critical habitat intersects and is adjacent to the corridor – Manage habitat for species that are ESA-listed, or are candidates for listing, consistent with recovery plans, conservation agreements, and designated critical habitat.</p>	<p>MP 122, MP 140 to MP 143, and MP 151 to MP 152</p>	<p>Three transmission lines within corridor at MP 122 and one transmission line within corridor at other MP locations.</p> <p>RFI comment: re-route to avoid critical habitat. Consult closely with state fish & game agencies and WGA to implement the full mitigation hierarchy of avoidance, minimization, and compensation for CHAT resources at "Very High" risk.</p>	<p>The Agencies could consider locating future infrastructure within the eastern portion of the corridor or slightly shifting the corridor to the east at MP 122 to avoid the critical habitat. At MP 140 to MP 143, shifting the corridor to the west would limit the corridor and the critical habitat intersections to generally perpendicular crossings, which minimizes potential impacts compared to the critical habitat paralleling the corridor. The Agencies could consider limiting future infrastructure to the western portion of the corridor from MP 151 to MP 152 to avoid the critical habitat. Options to shift the corridor at this location are limited because Coho Salmon critical habitat also occurs just west of the corridor.</p> <p>Existing IOPs would be required, including consultation with the USFWS and NMFS.</p>
<p>California NHT and the corridor intersect—The RMP states the following regarding NHT management: Enhance, promote, and protect the scenic, natural, and cultural resource values associated with current and future designated NSTs and NHTs.</p> <p>This portion of the NHT includes the high potential Canyon Creek Pass segment.</p>	<p>MP 140 to MP 143</p>	<p>Transmission line occurs within or adjacent to a portion of the corridor.</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</p>	<p>NHT high potential segments may not be compatible with the corridor’s purpose as a preferred location for energy infrastructure. Potentially, future infrastructure could be selectively located within the corridor, or segments of the corridor could be shifted, to minimize intersections with the NHT. The corridor could also be shifted to the east at MP 136 to align with the existing 500-kV transmission line to minimize the intersections with the NHT.</p> <p>Agencies could consider a new IOP for NSTs and NHTs to enhance BMPs for proposed development within the energy corridor.</p>

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		<p>contained in such easements and rights-of-way are related to the policy and purposes of this Act.</p> <p>For high potential route segments, the National Trails System Act states: Federally owned sites and segments of these trails are considered federal protection components and should receive special attention by managing agencies to enhance their trail-related values.</p>	
<p>Four Trails Feasibility Study Trail and the corridor intersect— The RMP states the following regarding Study Trail management: Enhance, promote, and protect the scenic, natural, and cultural resource values associated with current and future designated National Scenic and Historic Trails.</p>	<p>MP 140 to MP 143</p>	<p>Transmission line occurs within or adjacent to a portion of the corridor.</p> <p>The Act (Public Law 111-11; 2009) directs the Secretary of the Interior to revise the original feasibility studies of the Oregon, Mormon Pioneer, California, and Pony Express NHTs.</p> <p>BLM Manual 6280 directs the BLM to maintain the values, characteristics, and settings for which the trail is being studied or for which the trail was recommended as suitable.</p>	<p>Potentially, future infrastructure could be selectively located within the corridor, or segments of the corridor could be shifted, to minimize intersections with the Study Trail. The Agencies could also consider shifting the corridor to the east at MP 136 to align with the existing 500-kV transmission line to minimize the intersections with the Study Trail.</p> <p>Agencies could consider a new IOP for NSTs and NHTs to enhance BMPs for proposed development within the energy corridor.</p>
<p>BLM Jurisdiction: Medford District Office Agency Land Use Plan: Southwestern Oregon ROD/RMP (2016)</p>			
<p>West Fork Evans Creek ERMA and the corridor intersect—RMP identifies the ERMA and the Recreation Management Area Framework for the Medford DO contains management actions, and allowable use restrictions.</p>	<p>To be provided.</p>	<p>The Recreation Management Area Framework identifies the ERMA as a ROW avoidance area.</p>	<p>ROW avoidance areas are not compatible with the corridor’s purpose as a preferred location for infrastructure. It is possible that future development could occur in this corridor if it does not significantly change the characteristics of the ERMA.</p>

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.

Proximity to Renewable Energy:

- Re-route because the corridor is not close enough to QRAs. Ensure connection to renewable energy development (RFI comment).

Analysis: There are no wind or solar energy zones between the Pacific Ocean and the Cascade Range.

Ecology:

- Re-route to avoid old-growth forests, late-successional reserves, riparian reserves (RFI comment).
- The south end of the corridor within the Butte Falls FO is habitat for federally listed plant species *Fritillaria gentneri*.
- A new Area of Known Wolf Activity has been designated by Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife in the southern portion of the Indigo Unit (Douglas and Lane Counties). Biologists found tracks of multiple wolves in late 2018 (comment on abstract).

Analysis: Section 7 consultation with USFWS would be commensurate with agency determination of potential affect to threatened or endangered species. Adherence to existing IOPs and BMPs would be required. In general, the corridor follows existing infrastructure.

Military and Civilian Aviation:

- MTR – IR and the corridor intersect from MP 73 to MP 82.

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

Land Use:

- Future development within the corridor could conflict with timber development due to the policies of the Oregon and California Railroad Lands and the Coos Bay Wagon Road Lands Act of August 28, 1937 (O&C Act) for Southwest Oregon.
- This corridor passes through an area with extensive holdings within the BLM Harvest Land Base, crisscrossed by riparian lands. BLM lands within the corridor are designated Revested Oregon & California Railroad Lands and contain actively managed timber stands covered by Reciprocal Right-of-Way Agreements with various timber companies. Numerous active timber sales, and associated timber harvest and hauling activities, are conducted in the

area, requiring frequent use of timber roads near and in the energy corridor. Revested Oregon & California Railroad Lands intersect the corridor at MP 0 to MP 2, MP 27 to MP 31, MP 32 to MP 36, MP 37 to MP 38, MP 39 to MP 40, MP 41, MP 43, MP 45, MP 47 to MP 48, MP 66, MP 69 to MP 70, MP 76 to MP 78, MP 82 to MP 90, MP 122 to MP 123, MP 128, MP 130 to MP 132, MP 135, and MP 139 to MP 173.

Analysis: The BLM retains broad discretion regarding the multiple use management of its lands. Adherence to BMPs and mitigation measures would be required, but timber harvest and management of energy corridor are considered compatible uses. Stakeholder engagement with state fish and game agencies and timber operators during this regional review and input from these organizations will be considered and incorporated into the corridor abstract.

Abstract Acronyms and Abbreviations

ACEC = area critical environmental concern; BLM = Bureau of Land Management; BMP = best management practice; CHAT = Crucial Habitat Assessment Tool; DO = District Office; DoD = Department of Defense; ERMA = Extensive Recreation Management Area; ESA = Endangered Species Act; = Field Office; GIS = geographic information system; IOP = interagency operating procedure; IR = instrument route; MP = milepost; MTR = Military Training Route; NHT = National Historic Trail; NMFS = National Marine Fisheries Service; NST = National Scenic Trail; PEIS = Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement; QRA = Qualified Resource Areas; RFI = request for information; RMP = resource management plan; ROD = record of decision; ROW = right-of-way; USFS = U.S. Forest Service; USFWS = U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; WGA = Western Governors' Association; WREZ = Western Renewable Energy Zone; WSA = Wilderness Study Area; WWEC = West-wide Energy Corridor.