WEC_00105

February 13, 2008

West-Wide Energy Corridor PEIS
Argonne National Laboratory
9700 S, Cass Ave. Bldg. 900
Mail Stop 4
Argonne IL. 60439

RE: Designation of Energy Corridors on federal lands in the 11 Western States

Tribal Comments of the Shoshone-Paiute Tribes of Duck Valley

The Shoshone-Paiute Tribes are not opposed to the Westwide Energy Corridor. We believe it is a good thing because of the growing need to move resources great distances from its point of origin to where it is needed. 105-001

Unfortunately there are areas that are sensitive to tribes for various reasons, and must be avoided. Hopefully the agencies will understand our position with respect to our history, culture and traditions.

Section 368 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 directs agencies to establish procedures under their respective authorities to expedite the application process for energy-related projects within Section 368 corridors.

The United States has a unique legal relationship with Indian tribal governments defined in history, the US Constitution, treaties, statutes Executive Orders, and court decisions. The relationship between Federal agencies and sovereign tribes is defined by several laws and regulations addressing the requirement of Federal agencies to consult with Native American tribes and consider their interests when planning and implementing federal undertakings. 105-002
Agencies cannot be selective when it comes to compliance with laws. Federal agencies must comply with all relevant laws and treaties when developing project proposals and land-use plans.

Before we can truly understand one another you must understand who we are as a people, our culture, and how we view our environment. Tribes are often referred to in the past tense in federal documents. It must be understood that we are a living culture, we still adhere to our teachings and our traditions. We still use the resources and the sites that our forefathers used many generations before us. We are always cognizant of the coming generations, it is our time to take care of the earth and the environment and we must leave it in the best possible condition for the coming generations.

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Tribal sovereignty predates the arrival of the non-Indian people, it predates the US Constitution. The US Government signed treaties with many Indian tribes. These treaties are referred to in the U.S. Constitution as the "Supreme Law of the Land." Within these treaties the tribes reserved certain rights for themselves. Tribal sovereignty is an inherent sovereignty and tribal rights are rights they reserved for themselves, it was not given to the them by the US Government.
In southwestern Idaho there were two treaties signed between the tribes and the U.S. Government, these were, the Boise Valley Treaty signed on October 10, 1864 and the Bruneau Valley Treaty signed on April 10, 1866. These treaties were signed in good faith by our chiefs, however, the U.S. Senate failed to ratify either of these treaties and the land title was never legally transferred to the US Government. The tribes maintain aboriginal land title, and the tribes have never relinquished any rights to their homelands. That's what makes our situation very unique.

The Snake River Corridor is an area that has always been important to the Shoshone-Paiute people. The Snake River has provided the resources essential for the survival of our people since time immemorial. Historically the salmon migrated to the upper reaches of the Snake River and it's tributaries to spawn and start another cycle of life, the way the creator intended it to be. Upon spawning they die, and the decomposing carcasses provided nourishment for the frys and for the birds and animals that fed on them. That ended when the Hydroelectric dams were built in the Hells Canyon. Not only was there a loss of salmon (a fish), it was a loss of a spiritual icon, a part of our culture was gone as well. The ceremonies that were conducted with respect to the salmon were no longer conducted.
The Snake River is an area where our people wintered to get out of the cold weather and the harsh conditions of the higher elevations. There were camps at various locations along the Snake River corridor, and there were fishing sites, ceremonial sites, etc. Because many people spent much of their time on the Snake River, there are also burials throughout the area.

There is a paragraph used in this document in reference to tribal lands, it states:
"It is common for federal lands to overlap with or be encompassed by an Indian tribe's ancestral lands or ceded lands where tribes have on going interests. There are more than 250 federally recognized tribes with ancestral territorial claims in 11 western states. Because traditional Tribal territories often lie will beyond modern reservation boundaries."
Who ever made that comment obviously has very little or no knowledge about the tribes and our history. 105-003
All of the federal and private lands are our ancestral lands. We have interests on all of our ancestral lands. We have been here for thousands of years, and there isn't anywhere our people haven't been within our traditional lands and beyond.
Modern day reservations are not where the tribes chose to be, that's where the U. S Government put us. Many tribes didn't want to leave their homelands. Warriors fought for the way of life and many died as a result, often defenseless old men, women and

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children were slaughtered, eventually tribes were forcefully removed from their homelands and placed on reservations.
The non-Indian people have been here for a short period, they've been in our homeland just barely over 200 years. That's a very short time in comparison to the thousands of years our people have been here.

P – 1-22
Tribes were encouraged to participate in scoping and comment avenues open to all public.
Tribes are sovereign Nations, and should not be expected to participate as a part of the public. Our relationship with the federal government and its agencies is different than that of the public, tribes have a "Special Standing." Federal agencies are mandated (EO 13175 Nov. 6, 2000, Consultation and Coordination with Tribal Governments) to consult with federally recognized tribes on a govt-to-govt basis.
Sometimes tribes must reveal sensitive and/or site specific information, information that cannot be discussed in a public meeting. Furthermore, the agencies are obligated to protect such information. 105-004

P - 1-23
Thirty five Tribal groups have entered into some form of one-one dialogue with the agencies,
Who are the "Tribal Groups"? Are these groups separate from the sovereign tribal governments? The Shoshone-Paiute Tribes prefer to be addressed as a sovereign entity, and the dialog must take place in a govt-to-govt consultation. 105-005

P – 1-23
A single Point of Contact (POC) was established at Argonne National Laboratory to answer tribal requests for information and consultation.
Consultation cannot be delegated to a private contractor. Agencies are mandated to consult with tribes. 105-006
At the same time, an interagency Tribal Consultation Working Group was set up to implement consultation. This Working Group developed a consultation protocol including points of contact within each Agency.
The Shoshone-Paiute Tribes have not seen this protocol. Have other tribes been provided an opportunity to review this protocol? The federal government/agencies claim to honor tribal sovereignty but fail to demonstrate that. A consultation protocol between the federal government/agency and an sovereign tribal government must be mutually agreed upon by the parties at the table.. 105-007

P – 2-27 IOPs

2.4.1 IOPs for Project Planning

3. The appropriate agency, assisted by the project applicant must comply with all aspects of Section 106 of the NHPA on a project-by-project basis. 105-008

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Section 106 is the criteria to determine if a site is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Whether a site is eligible for listing is irrelevant to tribes. A site could have very little, and still be a very significant site to tribes. Most sites have been picked over by pot hunters, vandals, professional archaeologist, etc. Bulletin 38 of NHPA must me a part of the assessment. A site could qualify for listing under the criteria of Bulletin 38. Tribes must be provided the opportunity to participate.
All relevant laws must me complied with, E.O. 13175, E.O. 13007, NAGPRA, AIRFA, etc., not just Section 106 of NHPA, agencies cannot be selective.

105-008 (cont.)

When such compliance results in adverse effects to historic properties that cannot be avoided or mitigated within the designated corridors, the agency may consider alternative development routes to avoid, minimize or mitigate adverse effects.
Tribes must be provided the opportunity to participate. Tribal consultation must occur to assure that the alternative route is satisfactory. Tribes may need to conduct ceremonies in respect to their traditions before crossing a sensitive site/area.

105-009

P – 2-30

27. The appropriate agency, assisted by the project applicant, must initiate govt-to-govt consultation with affected Tribes at the outset of project planning and shall continue consultation throughout all phases of the project, as necessary. The agency POC may require the project proponent to prepare an ethnographic study when consultation indicated the need.
Tribes must be provided the opportunity to request an ethnographic study on any part of this proposed project. Agencies must not confine themselves to archaeology alone. As stated earlier, most sites have very little remaining in the way of archaeology, therefore, an accurate assessment thorough archaeology alone is not possible. Ethnography must be included to provide a more accurate assessment of the sites and the area.
Tribes must be provided the opportunity to choose an ethnographer that they are comfortable with, this is most important. Tribes are often provided ethnographic studies that were completed without their participation or knowledge. The information is usually extracted from previous studies that were completed decades ago. The condition of the site may have changed and the contemporary and ongoing use must be included. The ethnographers hired by agencies/government are focused on one thing, and that is to produce a document as quickly as possible, without including the tribes. We refer to them as "Hired Guns,"
An ethnographer that has worked with the tribes over a long period has the ability to speak with tribal elders and spiritual leaders. Elders will not divulge sensitive information to someone they are not comfortable with. The connection of the tribes to their homelands includes not only archaeological sites, it includes gathering areas where food and medicinal plants can by harvested, hunting and fishing sites, ceremonial sites and other sensitive information handed down threw oral traditions for many generations.

105-010

30. Project proponents should develop a Cultural Resources Management Plan (CRMP) to provide guidance for compliance with applicable cultural resource laws throughout the life of the project.

105-011

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Tribes must be provided the opportunity to participate and provide input in the development of Cultural and Natural Resource Management Plans. Tribal consultation must take place throughout the development CRMPs and NRMPs. 105-011 (cont.)

33. The agency POC should coordinate compliance with existing Programmatic Agreements (PAs) and MOAs that pertain to agency responsibilities for cultural resources. The POC shall develop any other necessary PAs or MOAs that pertain to project-specific compliance. Where the proponent or the POC has designated a Cultural Resource and/or Tribal Coordinator, that person may assist with these and other tasks. *Federally recognized tribes must be involved in the development of all agreements and PAs within their traditional areas. If the U.S Government and its agencies truly respect tribal sovereignty they must demonstrate that by consulting with the tribes and including them as signatures to any agreements involving resources that are important to the tribes.* 105-012

34. Project applicants should provide cultural resources training for project personnel on the laws protecting cultural resources,
Tribes must be provided the opportunity to be a part of the cultural resources training. In our experience, some agencies misinterpret the laws. Tribes must be provided the opportunity to share their understanding of the law, and how they prefer to handle the cultural resources. After all, most prehistoric archaeological sites are Native American. 105-013
Cont. – appropriate conduct in the field (such as procedures for the inadvertent discovery of human remains).
Inadvertent Discovery Protocols must be developed with each tribe within areas crossing their traditional lands, with respect to tribal traditions. It is of utmost importance to treat human remains with respect to tribal customs. The issue of the discovery of human remains is the single most important and sensitive issue to tribes. Tribes view the remains as their relatives and to disturb the spirits of the ancestors that have gone to the spirit world is a sensitive issue. Tribal customs vary and must be respected. prayer and ceremonies must be conducted and direction on how to proceed must be at the direction of the tribes. 105-014
Cont. – and other project-specific issues identified in the CRMP. Training plans should be part of the CRMP and should be subject to the approval of the POC. *AND THE TRIBES.* 105-015

P. 2-31

37. As directed by the agency POC, projects should include as public education and outreach component regarding cultural resources such as a public presentation, news article, publication, or display.
As mention in the paragraph above, the treatment of cultural resources is a sensitive issue. The scientific community views Indian human remains and sacred items as "specimens and artifacts," they have no connection beyond that. 105-016
The tribes must be consulted and direction from the tribes must be respected. Display of human remains is inappropriate to most tribes and some artifacts should not be displayed

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either. Any education, publication or display it must cleared by the tribes affiliated with the said remains.

105-016 (cont.)

38. A protocol for unexpected discoveries (Inadvertent Discovery) should be developed. Unexpected discovery of cultural resources during construction should be brought to the immediate attention of the responsible federal agency's authorized officer. Work should be halted. ~~in the vicinity of the find to~~ *A*void further disturbance to the resources while they are being evaluated and appropriate mitigation measures are being developed.

105-017

P. 3-27

Table 3.2.24

Acreage of Tribal lands in the 11 Western States. The diagram lists all 11 Western States and the acreage in each state. The Duck Valley Indian Reservation straddles the Idaho/Nevada line so I'll quote what they have for those two states.
Idaho = 1,669.184 Nevada = 1,148.992

I believe this is total acreage of all lands within the exterior boundaries of the reservations in each state. There are unsettled land title issues still pending with some tribes. The Aboriginal title remains with the tribes, and that's the situation in southwestern Idaho. It is inappropriate to say that these lands are federal lands, because land title issue has not been settled.
There are legal issues that are still pending between tribes and the U.S Government. The US does not have legal ownership of these lands.

105-018

Sincerely,

_____
Ted Howard
Cultural Resources Director
Shoshone-Paiute Tribes

The Nature Conservancy
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February 14, 2008

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RE: Scoping Comments for the West-wide Energy Corridor Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement

To Whom It May Concern

The Nature Conservancy respectfully submits these comments regarding the "Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement for Designation of Energy Corridors on Federal lands in the 11 Western States". The impacts from this project are associated with both the construction and maintenance of the lines, as well as the lines and towers themselves. These comments build upon The Nature Conservancy's comments related to the scoping sessions held earlier.

The Nature Conservancy is an international conservation organization dedicated to preserving the plants, animals and natural communities that represent the diversity of life on Earth by protecting the lands and waters they need to survive. The Nature Conservancy is committed to working with partners to accomplish its mission in a science-based, collaborative manner.

These comments reinforce our public scoping comments, and highlight issues that can enhance the draft PEIS team's ability to make balanced resource management decisions that will conserve key biological resources, while allowing for future energy transmission needs. Many of the comments we are submitting today are similar to our previous comments. Specifically, these comments address the following:

- A recommendation to avoid or minimize potential impacts to areas of high biological importance from new or expanded corridors, which includes general considerations as well as site-specific analysis results from Conservancy chapters.
- Potential impacts that the PEIS should consider if it does not already do so.
- Recommended management guidelines and mitigation measures.

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As you refine the draft PEIS, we would be happy to provide more specific comments if they would be helpful, and to discuss our thoughts and ideas with you at the national level and/or with State or Regional Offices. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Nathaniel Williams
Director of U.S. Government Relations

COMMENTS OF THE NATURE CONSERVANCY RE:

DRAFT PROGRAMMATIC ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT FOR DESIGNATION OF ENERGY CORRIDORS ON FEDERAL LANDS IN ELEVEN WESTERN STATES

I. Management Recommendation: Avoid or minimize potential impacts to areas of high biological importance from new or expanded energy corridors.

Working with partners to take a proactive, science-based approach to conservation planning, The Nature Conservancy has completed assessments of the biological resources of most of the United States through a series of ecoregional assessments. These assessments identify species and habitats that are important regionally, nationally and globally by using the best available data and knowledge from State Natural Heritage Programs, and a range of private, academic, state and federal scientists and land managers.

Special attention to these species, plant communities and systems is warranted because they are documented to be endemic, vulnerable, declining and/or imperiled. The assessments support the importance of those species that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) has identified as threatened or endangered, proposed, candidates for listing, or Birds of Conservation Concern; that the Bureau of Land Management and USDA Forest Service have identified as Sensitive Species; and species and plant communities that State Natural Heritage programs have identified as having global or state importance. We have identified that the corridors will impact 80 threatened and endangered species, 96 Candidate species, 21 USFWS Species of concern, and 153 State sensitive species, as well as 44 Federal or State protected areas. 106-001

In addition to identifying species and habitats of concern, our analyses identified a network or "portfolio" of geographic areas that optimize inclusion and coverage of the largest number of these biologically important species and habitats for conservation. This portfolio, if managed appropriately could conserve a full range of rare, threatened and endangered species and habitats within each ecoregion. **Avoiding or minimizing the impact of energy corridor development to these portfolio sites would contribute to the persistence of a large array of biologically significant species and habitats, thereby helping to reduce the potential for future listings under the Endangered Species Act and helping ensure that the federal agencies can meet their conservation mandates.** The attached appendix depicts the overlap of this "portfolio" of areas with the draft corridors.

As you will note, there is a significant overlap between portfolio sites and proposed corridors. We are not proposing the avoidance of all portfolio sites, as this would not be realistic from a multiple-use perspective or truly necessary in all places from a biological perspective. Rather:

- We strongly urge the avoidance of irreplaceable biological resources, which in some cases are portfolio sites as a whole, and in other cases are places within portfolio sites. The latter is much more common than the former.
- We encourage avoidance of non-irreplaceable portfolio sites as a whole to the extent possible, and particularly encourage the avoidance of large and intact blocks of habitat within or outside them.

For a list of each portfolio site and their respective environmental issues, see Appendix B.

Examples of avoidance areas include but are not limited to the following:

- In the Arizona/New Mexico Mountains and Chihuahuan Desert ecoregions, several sites should be avoided because they contain federally listed plants and animals and, in addition, are specially designated as Areas of Critical Environmental Concern and proposed National Conservation Areas
- There are several sites in the Colorado Plateau ecoregion for which we recommend avoidance based on the fact that the new corridor may impact the wild buckwheat, the Rocky Mountain thistle, and the desert parsley, all of which are listed as either endangered or sensitive.
- In the Southern Shortgrass Ecoregion of New Mexico, there are several sites that should be avoided (Appendix A) because they are occupied habitat for the lesser prairie chicken and sand-dune lizard, both federal candidates for listing that have been heavily impacted by oil and gas development elsewhere.
- In Oregon, the proposed action would place the new energy corridor along the state's southern border in areas designated as important nesting and breeding grounds for the greater sandhill crane, a state-listed vulnerable species. In the northern part of the state, the proposed corridor would also bisect important nesting, roosting, and foraging habitat for the federally-listed northern spotted owl around the Warm Springs Reservation, including a designated late-successional reserve.
- There are several sites in the southern Rocky Mountains that should be avoided because the new corridor may fragment one or more patches of habitat ranked as very high integrity. Such patches include species such as the western toad, the Uinta Basin hookless cactus, and the greenback cutthroat trout, which is listed as threatened.
- The Shirley Basin site in Wyoming is home to key habitat for both the greater sage grouse, a USFWS candidate species, as well as for the black-footed ferret, North America's most endangered mammal. The path of the proposed corridor would directly impact known habitat of both of these species, including breeding populations of the black-footed ferret.
- In Eastern Idaho, a proposed corridor in the Middle Rockies/Blue Mountains ecoregion passes through some of the best greater sage grouse habitat in the state and would have major impacts on one of the largest remaining populations of this candidate species.

106-001 (cont.)

We welcome the opportunity to work with your planning team to provide a more thorough explanation of how these assessments were conducted and how they might

assist in your selection of potential corridor locations and your deliberation of effects from various energy corridor alternatives. 106-001 (cont.)

II. Potential impacts that the PEIS should consider if it does not already do so.

Although the EIS will not authorize specific projects, designating corridors establishes energy distribution as an appropriate use of these areas and pre-determines in what areas future development for energy transmission will likely occur. Because of this likelihood, as the agencies are aware, it is important at this stage to consider a full range of environmental issues and resources that are likely to be affected by future corridor development. The location of this future infrastructure – especially in new corridors – can be expected to have a significant impact on the wildlife populations and habitats in the chosen areas. Careful selection of these corridors can reduce the potential future impacts by avoiding rare habitats, concentrations of species of biological importance, and important migratory corridors. 106-002

In addition to the preliminary list of environmental issues identified in the Federal Register Notice (September 28, 2005), the following issues should be analyzed in each alternative within the PEIS.

(1) Potential impacts of corridors on irreplaceable biological resources and other areas of high biological importance (particularly those that are identified in the attached appendix).

The PEIS should specifically consider potential impacts to:

a. Patches of habitat that are relatively large and in high quality, or are otherwise unique. For example, the Nature Conservancy in Colorado and the Colorado Natural Heritage Program have identified patches statewide as having very high, high, medium, or low integrity based on select land uses and linear fragmenting features (e.g., roads).

b. Wildlife migratory corridors and associated migratory wildlife, including Birds of Conservation Concern (USFWS 2003) and large mammals. The construction, operation and maintenance of pipelines, transmission lines, roads, railroads, buildings, compressors and other energy distribution facilities can significantly disturb or alter animal behavior and migration patterns (National Research Council 2003). 106-003

c. Raptors and their prey from transmission lines. Above-ground transmission lines can provide perches from which raptors may hunt but can also provide hazards to raptor survival. New transmission lines, if not properly designed, can increase the risk of electrocution to raptors. New transmission lines located in areas without trees or other natural perches may result in an increase in the hunting pressure on raptor prey species, including species that are rare or declining. Design features that protect raptors and other birds from electrocution are also important.

d. Candidate species for Federal listing such as Greater sage-grouse, Gunnison sage-grouse, pygmy rabbit and Lesser Prairie-Chicken, their habitats, and their migratory patterns. The cumulative loss and fragmentation of sagebrush, shrub-steppe and grassland

habitats have contributed to the decline of these species and are a major limiting factor to their successful recovery (BLM 1994; USDI 2004; WAFWA 2004)

e. Species that have been petitioned for listing in the past and their habitats, such as white-tailed and black-tailed prairie dog town complexes.

f. Other key species that may not be candidates or petitioned for listing (such as agency sensitive species and globally rare and imperiled rare species and plant communities as mapped and ranked by State Natural Heritage programs). These species may be important components of functional ecological systems and could become candidates for listing due to their rarity. 106-003 (cont.)

g. Freshwater systems, riparian systems and special-status fish, from placing new, buried pipelines across (under) perennial water features.

h. Playas. Ground disturbance during corridor construction could potentially disrupt playa hydrology and provide a conduit for non-native grass colonization of the site.

(2) Types of potential impacts from new or expanded corridors:

In addition to the specific features and species listed above, the PEIS should address the following types of impacts:

a. The potential to increase the introduction and spread of invasive species along proposed energy corridors due to future development and site disturbance.

b. The potential to increase disturbance (e.g. erosion, trampling, taking, increased fire frequency, etc.) of natural habitats and sensitive species by recreational vehicle use, hunting and other increased access to remote sites through development of corridor access. 106-004

c. Potential impacts to biological resources on private lands as a result of likely corridor paths from public to private lands.

d. Increased loss of habitat from wildfires caused by lightning strikes to towers.

e. Potential direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts related to climate change. 106-005

III. Recommended Management Guidelines and Mitigation Measures:

While this project will not authorize specific projects, it can and should develop a package of management guidelines to which all future specific projects must adhere, in order to avoid and/or minimize environmental impacts to resources of concern. Management guidelines should include provisions for:

a. Siting projects using the mitigation hierarchy, i.e. avoiding areas identified as having "very high" or "high" integrity. 106-006

b. Using off-site mitigation only where other alternatives (avoidance, on-site mitigation, restoration) have been considered.

c. Minimizing site disturbance to grasslands and future restoration of any disturbed areas within the energy corridors should be performed with native plant species and communities, including stockpiling of native stock prior to disturbance.

d. Ensuring intact migration corridors are available for migratory species (e.g. large mammals, upland game species, raptors, songbirds, etc.).

e. Preventing, managing and controlling the spread of alien invasive species.

f. Limiting recreational and other secondary uses of access roads.

g. Employing Best Practices to minimize disturbance to ecological systems, and especially to grassland communities.

h. Rerouting or relocating the new corridor to follow the existing energy transmission corridor when possible.

i. Evaluating whether the new corridor can be constructed while still protecting the values identified by federal and state land managers as important (e.g. Areas of Critical Environmental Concern).

j. Performing rare plant surveys prior to construction and avoiding these areas when and if "viable" globally rare or imperiled plants are identified. Coordination with State Heritage Programs is urged.

k. Curtailing construction and other activities during critical nesting and breeding periods and avoiding sensitive nesting, breeding, and brood rearing habitat.

106-006 (cont.)

CONCLUSION

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this significant project. We hope that this response meets your needs and look forward to discussing these issues with you throughout the Programmatic EIS process. Please let us know if can provide you with additional information to assist you in your analysis.

References

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National Research Council. 2003. Cumulative Environmental Effects of Oil and Gas Activities on Alaska's North Slope. 288 pp. The National Academies Press. Washington, DC.

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U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. 2003. Birds of Conservation Concern 2002. Federal Register: February 6, 2003. Volume 68, Number 25. Page 6179.

Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies. 2004. Conservation Assessment of Greater Sage-grouse and Sagebrush Habitats.

APPENDIX A

TNC portfolio sites impacted by proposed energy corridors

State	Site	Ecoregion	Designated use
WY	Shirley Basin	Wyoming Basins	All
WY	Flaming Gorge	Wyoming Basins	Underground only
CO	Crested Butte	Southern Rocky Mountains	All
CO	Gunnison River Complex	Colorado Plateau, Southern Rocky Mountains	All
CO	San Miguel and Lower Dolores Rivers	Colorado Plateau, Southern Rocky Mountains	All
CO	Yampa River	Southern Rocky Mountains, Wyoming Basins	All, Underground only
CO	Slater Park/Cherokee Basin	Southern Rocky Mountains, Wyoming Basins	Electric only
CO	DeBeque/Rifle River/Colorado River	Southern Rocky Mountains, Utah High Plateaus	All, Underground only
CO	Gunnison Basin	Southern Rocky Mountains	All
CO	South Arkansas	Southern Rocky Mountains	All
CO	Middle Arkansas River	Southern Rocky Mountains	All
CO	Roubideau	Colorado Plateau, Southern Rocky Mountains	All
MT	Divide	Middle Rockies-Blue Mountains	All
MT	Bannock – Horse Prairie	Middle Rockies-Blue Mountains	All
MT / ID	Big Sheep Creek	Middle Rockies-Blue Mountains	All
MT	Bitterroot Range Site	Middle Rockies-Blue Mountains	All
ID	Bruneau-Jacks Creek	Columbia Plateau	All
ID	Birds of Prey NCA	Columbia Plateau	All
ID / OR	Succor Creek	Columbia Plateau	All
ID	Salmon Falls Creek	Columbia Plateau	All
ID	Big Desert – INL	Columbia Plateau	All
ID	Crooked Creek Grazing Allotment (attached to Crooked Creek Preserve)	Columbia Plateau	All
ID	INL	Middle Rockies-Blue Mountains	All
ID	Middle Snake River Corridor	Columbia Plateau	All

State	Site	Ecoregion	Designated use
UT	Rush Valley	Great Basin	All
UT	East Tintic Mountains-Tintic Valley	Great Basin	All
UT	Clear Lake	Great Basin	All
UT	Cricket Mountains	Great Basin	All
UT	Tunnel Spring Mountains-Halfway Hills – Pine Valley	Great Basin	All
UT	North Wah Wah Mountains	Great Basin	All
UT	Thermal Hot Springs – Escalante Desert	Great Basin	All
UT	Marysvale Canyon	Utah High Plateaus	All
UT	Panguitch	Utah High Plateaus	All
UT	Upper Sevier River	Utah High Plateaus	All
UT	South Wasatch	Utah-Wyoming Ricky Mountains	All
UT	Woodside Desert	Colorado Plateau	All
UT	East Uintas	Utah-Wyoming Rocky Mountains	All
UT	Lower Green River	Utah-Wyoming Rocky Mountains	All
UT	Arches	Colorado Plateau	All
UT	Pine Valley Mountains	Great Basin	All
UT	Washington County	Mojave Desert	All
UT	Grand Staircase Escalante	Colorado Plateau	All
UT	La Sal Mountains	Colorado Plateau	All
NM	White Mesa/Todilto Gypsum	Arizona-New Mexico Mountains	All
NM	Organ Mountains	Chihuahuan Desert	All
NM	Franklin Mountains	Chihuahuan Desert	All
NM	Sevilleta NWR	Arizona-New Mexico Mountains	All
NM / AZ	Peloncillo Mountains/ Lordsburg Playas and Valley	Apache Highlands	All
NM	Querecho Plains	Southern Shortgrass Prairie	All
NM	Mescalero Sands	Southern Shortgrass Prairie	All
NM	Antelope Ridge	Southern Shortgrass Prairie	All
AZ	Mogollon Canyons Complex	Apache Highlands, Arizona-New Mexico Mountains	All
AZ	Agua Fria Watershed	Apache Highlands, Sonoran Desert	All
AZ	Upper Verde River Watershed	Apache Highlands	All
AZ	Hualapai Valley	Mojave Desert	All
AZ	Bill William's Complex	Sonoran Desert	All
AZ	Harcuvar Mountains	Sonoran Desert	All

State	Site	Ecoregion	Designated use
AZ	Kofa Complex	Sonoran Desert	All
CA / NV	Piute-Eldorado DWMA	Mojave Desert	All, Underground only
CA	Sky Islands / Cima Dome	Mojave Desert	Electric only
CA	Ord/Rodman Mts	Mojave Desert	All
CA	Fremont-Kraner/Superior-Cronese DWMA	Mojave desert	All, electric only
CA	Cajon Pass	Mojave Desert	All
CA	Koehn Dry Lake	Mojave Desert	All
CA	Scodie Mountain	Mojave Desert	All
CA	Owens Valley and Tributaries / Owens Lake	Mojave Desert, Great Basin	All
CA	Owens Valley-Benton Valley	Great Basin	All
NV	Mormon Mesa DWMA	Mojave Desert	All
NV	Coyote Springs DWMA	Mojave Desert	All
NV	Amargosa River/Oasis Valley/Goss Springs	Mojave Desert, Great Basin	All
NV	Upper White River (GRBA)	Great Basin	All
NV	Cave Valley-Upper White River Valley	Great Basin	All
NV	Steptoe Valley	Great Basin	All
NV	Pequop Mountains-Toano Draw	Great Basin	Underground only
NV	Elko	Great Basin	All
NV	Susie Creek-South Fork Humboldt River	Great Basin	All
NV	Emigrant Pass	Great Basin	All
NV	Humboldt River Golconda	Great Basin	All
NV	Silver State Sand Dunes	Great Basin	All
NV	Black Rock Desert-Smoke Creek Desert	Great Basin	All
NV	Sahwave Mountains-Lake Range	Great Basin	All
NV	Nightingale Flat	Great Basin	All
NV	Buffalo Valley-Tobin Range	Great Basin	All
NV	Pyramid Lake-Lower Truckee River	Great Basin	All
NV	Carson Range Front-Reno north Valleys-Long Valley	Great Basin	All
NV	Mono Lake	Great Basin	All
NV	Walker Lake-Walker River Complex	Great Basin	All
NV	Thorne Dune	Great Basin	All
NV/CA	Honey Lake Valley	Columbia Plateau	All

State	Site	Ecoregion	Designated use
WA	ID = 13321*	Modoc Plateau and East Cascades	Electric only, above ground only
WA	ID = 13845*	Modoc Plateau and East Cascades	Electric only, above ground only
WA	Steven's Pass	Modoc Plateau and East Cascades	Electric only, above ground only
WA	ID = 13980*	Modoc Plateau and East Cascades	All
WA	Tonga Ridge	North Cascades	Electric only, above ground only
WA	Klinger Ridge	North Cascades	Electric only, above ground only
OR/WA	Wenaha-Tucannon	Middle Rockies-Blue Mountains	Electric only
OR	Steens/Alvord/Malheur	Columbia Plateau	All
OR	Hart Mtn/Warner Basin	Columbia Plateau	All
OR	Crooked Creek	Columbia Plateau	All
OR	Alkali Gulch	Columbia Plateau	All
OR	Huntington Limestone	Middle Rockies-Blue Mountains	All
OR	Rattlesnake Creek	Middle Rockies-Blue Mountains	All
OR	Hood River	Modoc Plateau and East Cascades	Electric only
OR	Warner Mountains	Modoc Plateau and East Cascades	All
OR	Middle Sprague	Modoc Plateau and East Cascades	All
OR	Sycan Marsh	Modoc Plateau and East Cascades	All
OR	Poe Valley/Bonanza	Modoc Plateau and East Cascades	All
OR	Thompson	Modoc Plateau and East Cascades	All
OR	North Fork Willow Creek	Modoc Plateau and East Cascades	All
OR	Upper Lost River	Modoc Plateau and East Cascades	All
OR	Forest Park – Coast Range	Pacific Northwest Coast	All

State	Site	Ecoregion	Designated use
OR	West Fork Hood River	West Cascades	Electric only
OR	Sandy River	West Cascades	Electric only
OR	Mount Hood West	West Cascades	Electric only
OR	Roaring River / Oak Grove / Fort Clackamas	West Cascades	All
OR	White River	West Cascades	All
OR	Upper Calapooia River	West Cascades	All
OR	Sexton Mountain Site	Klamath Mountains	All
OR	Soda Mountain Site	Klamath Mountains	All
CA	Shasta Valley Site	Klamath Mountains	All
CA	Mount Shasta Site	Klamath Mountains	Electric only
CA	Lake Shasta Site	Klamath Mountains	Electric only
CA	Cobbs	California North Coast	All
CA	Upper Trinity South Fork Site	Klamath Mountains	All
CA	ID=13288*	Modoc Plateau and East Cascades	All
CA	ID=13303*	Modoc Plateau and East Cascades	All
CA	ID=13318*	Modoc Plateau and East Cascades	All
CA	ID=13352*	Modoc Plateau and East Cascades	All
CA	ID=13356*	Modoc Plateau and East Cascades	All
CA	ID=13366*	Modoc Plateau and East Cascades	All
CA	ID=13395*	Modoc Plateau and East Cascades	All
CA	ID=13460*	Modoc Plateau and East Cascades	All
CA	Coachella Valley	Sonoran Desert	All

* The Nature Conservancy Identification Number

APPENDIX B

Specific Sites and their Issues

CA—Sonoran Desert—Imperial Valley
Ecoregional targets found in this site include the palm oases, microphyll woodland, pupfish refugia, sand dunes and migratory bird feeding areas. There are also many threatened and endangered species including the Desert pupfish, the peninsular bighorn sheep, the flat-tailed lizard, and numerous waterfowl.

CA—Sonoran Desert—Coachella Valley
Ecoregional targets found in this site include palm oases, microphyll woodland, mesquite bosque and desert riparian wash. Threatened and endangered species on this site include the desert tortoise, the peninsular bighorn sheep, the desert pupfish, and the Coachella fringe-toed lizard. Portions of the site could be easily avoided including the palm oases, pupfish refugia, and sheep habitat. In addition, the fringe-toed lizard habitat may be affected.

CO—Southern Rocky Mountains—Yampa River
The new corridor may not impact any ecoregional targets, however it may fragment one or more patches of habitat ranked as "very high" or "high" integrity. The existing corridor may impact Bessey's locoweed.

CO—Colorado Plateau—Uncompahgre Badlands
The new and existing corridors may impact the Colorado Desert-parsley (BLM-sensitive), and the existing corridors may impact the wild-buckwheat and Rocky Mtn. thistle (BLM/USFS sensitive). All three of these species are considered globally imperiled and are considered irreplaceable.

CO—Southern Rocky Mountains—San Miguel River
The new corridor may not impact any ecoregional targets, but the existing corridor may impact Naturita milk-vetch and Payson's lupine which are both BLM sensitive species. The new corridor may fragment one or more patches of habitat ranked as "very high" or "high" integrity.

CO—Southern Rocky Mountains—Roubideau
The new corridor may not impact any ecogregional targets, however the existing corridor may impact the Rio Grande cottonwood/skunkbrush woodland and the Uinta Basin hookless cactus. The new corridor may fragment one or more patches of habitat ranked as "very high" or "high" integrity.

CO—Southern Rocky Mountains—Rifle Reach/Colorado River
The new corridor may impact the Debeque phacelia, the Wetherill's milk-vetch, the Naturita milk-vetch, and the Rocky Mtn. thistle, while the new and existing corridor may impact the Rio Grande cottonwood/skunkbrush woodland and the razorback sucker. The new corridor may fragment one or more patches of habitat ranked as "very high" or "high" integrity.

CO—Colorado Plateau—Gunnison River Valley

The new and existing corridor will impact the Uinta Basin hookless cactus. The new corridor may fragment one or more patches of habitat ranked as "very high" or "high" integrity.

CO—Colorado Plateau—Dry Creek
There are no known globally imperiled species or communities within the new or existing corridor. However, the new corridor may fragment one or more patches of habitat ranked as "very high" or "high" integrity.

CO—Southern Rocky Mountains—Debeque South
The new and existing corridor may impact the Debeque milk-vetch, and the existing corridor may impact the Debeque phacelia which are both BLM and USFS sensitive species. The new corridor may fragment one or more patches of habitat ranked as "very high" or "high" integrity.

CO—Southern Rocky Mountains—Debeque
The new corridor may impact the Rio Grande cottonwood/skunkbrush, the Wetherill's milk-vetch, the Naturita milk-vetch, and the Rocky Mtn. thistle. The new and existing corridor may impact the Debeque milk-vetch and the Debeque phacelia. The new corridor may fragment one or more patches of habitat ranked as "very high" or "high" integrity and may also impact an Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC).

CO—Southern Rocky Mountains—Big Dominguez River
The new and existing corridor may impact the Uinta Basin hookless cactus.

CO—Southern Rocky Mountains—Berthoud Pass
The new corridor may impact the Greenback cutthroat trout, which is listed as threatened, while the existing corridor may impact the Western toad.

CO—Utah High Plateaus—Upper White River
The new corridor may fragment one or more patches of habitat ranked as "very high" or "high" integrity and may impact an ACEC.

CO—Wyoming Basins—Cherokee Basin
The new corridor may fragment one or more patches of habitat ranked as "very high" or "high" integrity.

CO—Utah High Plateaus—Piceance
Barneby's thistle (BLM sensitive) is the only globally imperiled target known within the new corridor. The new corridor may fragment one or more patches of habitat ranked as "very high" or "high" integrity.

CO—Southern Rocky Mountains—Muddy Creek
There are no threatened or endangered species impacted by the corridor, but the endangered Oosterhout milkvetch and the BLM/USFS sensitive Harrington beardtongue may be found in the broader site.

CO—Southern Rocky Mountains—Debeque Canyon
The new corridor may fragment one or more patches of habitat ranked as "very high" or "high" integrity.

ID—Middle Rockies-Blue Mountains-Medicine Lodge/Crooked Creek
The Crooked Creek site in Eastern Idaho is recognized as some of the best habitat in Idaho for sage grouse, a candidate species, and is the site of may active leks as well as important rearing and winter habitat. The proposed corridor bisects important breeding and rearing habitat for sage grouse and an important migratory corridor for large mammals, including pronghorn and elk.

ID—Columbia Plateau – Big Desert
Located just south of the Medicine Lodge/Crooked Creek site, this area includes important high quality habitat for sage grouse and pygmy rabbits, both candidate species. This area also includes winter habitat and is part of a migratory corridor for large mammals, including pronghorn and elk. This area includes some of the highest quality intact sagebrush-steppe habitat in Idaho.

MT—Middle Rockies Blue Mountains —Big Sheep, Divide, Bannock-Horse Prairie
Ecoregional species found in this site include the goshawk, the flammulated owl, and the three-toed woodpecker. In addition to these, additional threatened and endangered and proposed species include the pygmy rabbit, the sage grouse, the wolf, lynx, wolverine, west-slope cutthroat trout, and potentially the grizzly. The new corridor would fragment the site to a major degree for unique native plant communities, rare plants, and birds.

NM—Southern Shortgrass Prairie—Querecho Plains
The three system targets found in this site are Chihuahuan Desert Grassland Swales, Southern Great Plains Deep Sand Shrublands, Southern Great Plains Mesquite Woodlands and Shrublands. In addition, the four target species found here are Aimophila cassini, Tympanunchus pallidicinctus, Cicindela formosa rutilovirescens, and Scleroporus arenicolus. The proposed corridor bisects occupied habitat for a Federal Candidate species, the lesser prairie chicken, which is already heavily impacted by oil and gas development to the east.

NM—Southern Shortgrass Prairie—Mescalero Sands
The three system targets found in this site are Chihuahuan Desert Grassland Swales, Southern Great Plains Deep Sand Shrublands, Southern Great Plains Mesquite Woodlands and Shrublands. In addition, the four target species found here are Aimophila cassini, Tympanunchus pallidicinctus, Cicindela formosa rutilovirescens, and Scleroporus arenicolus. The proposed corridor bisects occupied habitat for a Federal Candidate species, the lesser prairie chicken, which is already heavily impacted by oil and gas development to the east.

NM—Southern Shortgrass Prairie—Antelope Ridge
One system target is found in this site, the Southern Great Plains Deep Sand Shrublands. In addition, the three target species that are found are Buteo regalis, Tympanuchus pallidinctus, and Proboscidea sabulosa. Tympanuchus pallidinctus is a Federal candidate species and Proboscidea sabulosa is a Federal species of concern. The proposed corridor bisects occupied habitat for Federal Candidate species, the

lesser prairie chicken, which is already heavily impacted by oil and gas development to the east.

NM—Southern Shortgrass Prairie—Winkler Sandhills
The two system targets found in this site are Chihuahuan Desert Grassland Swales and Southern Great Plains Deep Sand Shrublands. In addition the two target species found here are Cyperus onerosus and Proboscidea sabulosa which is a Federal species of concern.

NM—Southern Shortgrass Prairie—Duran Grasslands
The two system targets found in this site are the Great Plains Playa Lakes and Great Plains Shortgrass Prairie, and the target species that occurs here is the Astragalus siliceous which is a Federal and State species of concern.

NM—Southern Shortgrass Prairie
The one system target found in this area is a tributary of the Upper Pecos River in fine sandstone and sand. The current corridor path bisects the arroyo which is the freshwater target at this site. It should be rerouted to follow the existing 285 corridor.

NM—Chihuahuan Desert—Hagerman
The three system targets found in this area are Chihuahuan Desert Scrub, Chihuahuan Grasslands, and Mescalero Dunelands.

NM—Arizona-New Mexico Mountains—Sevilleta National Wildlife Refuge
There are thirty-one system targets (vegetation associations) and five species targets in this site. These include one Federally endangered species (Empidonax traillii extimus) and two USFWS Species of Concern (Hymenoxys brachyactuis and Silene plankii). There are also two State Endangered species (Empidonax traillii extimus and Ovis canadensis mexicana) and two State Species of Concern (Hymenoxys brachyactuis and Silene plankii). Due to the fact that the floodplain of the Rio Grande River (and seasonally flooded wetlands) lies to the east of the I-25 corridor, the energy corridor disturbance should be limited to the existing interstate corridor and to adjacent lands west of it.

NM—Chihuahuan Desert—Pecos River High Plains
The system target found in this site is Riparian/Wetland, and the six species targets are Cyprinodon pecosensis, Ictalurus punctatus, Macrhybopsis aestivalis, Notropis jemezanus, Notropis simus pecosensis, Notropis stramineus. These include one Federally Threatened species (Notropis simus pecosensis) and three Federal species of concern (Macrhybopsis aestivalis, Ictalurus punctatus, Notropis jemezanus), as well as three State Threatened (Notropis simus pecosensis, Cyprinodon pecosensis and Macrhybopsis aestivalis) and two State species of concern (Ictalurus punctatus and Notropis jemezanus).

NM—Chihuahuan Desert—Franklin Mountains
The system targets found in this site are Chihuahuan Desert Scrub and Chihuahuan Desert Grasslands, and the ten species targets found here are Amblyscirtes texanae, Ashmunella pasonis, Sonorella metcalfi, Brickellia baccharidea, Cryptantha paysonii, Escobaria sneedii var. snedii, Escobaria villardii, Opuntia arenaria, Salvia summa, and Silene plankii. These include one Federally Endangered species (Escobaria sneedii var. sneedii) and three USFWS Species of Concern (Escobaria villardii, Salvia summa,

Silene plankii) as well as two State Endangered species (Escobaria sneedii var sneedii and Escobaria villardii) and two State species of concern (Salvia summa, Silene plankii). In addition, the proposed energy corridor crosses an ACEC.

NM—Arizona-New Mexico Mountains—White Mesa Todilto Limestone
The system target found in this site is Gypsum Outcrops and the four species targets are Abronia bigelvii, Puccinellia parishii, Tourneya papyracantha and Townsendia gypsophila (all plant species). These include three USFWS species of concern (Abronia bigelvii, Puccinellia parishii, Townsendia gypsophila) two State species of concern (Abronia bigelvii, Townsendia gypsophila) and one State endangered species (Puccinellia parishii). In addition, the proposed energy corridor crosses an ACEC.

NM—Chihuahuan Desert—Organ Mountains
There are six system targets and twenty-eight species targets found in this site. They include the Federally threatened Spotted owl (Strix occidentalis lucida), Federally endangered Scobaria sneedii var. sneedii, Draba standleyi (USFWS Species of Concern), Escobaria organenis (USFWS Species of Concern), Hedeoma pulcherrima (USFWS Species of Concern), and Hymenoxys vaseyi (USFWS Species of Concern). There are also eight state sensitive species (6 of which have federal status), including Gray vireo (State Threatened) and desert bighorn sheep (State Endangered).

NM—Chihuahuan Desert—Dona Ana Mountains
There were four system targets in this site including Chihuahuan Desert Grassland, four species targets including the Burrowing owl, and two state sensitive plants (Callophrys henrici solatus and Junonia genoveva nigrosuffusa).

NM—Lordsburg Playa—Apache Highlands
The three system targets found in this site the Apachean grassland and savanna, Chihuahuan Desert Scrub, and Playa wetland. There were also three species targets found which were the Athene cunicularia hypugaea, Atriplex griffithsii (USFWS candidate) and Phrynosoma cornutum. This site contains some of the best remaining high-quality Apachean grassland in the ecoregion as well as shrub-invaded native grassland. Ground disturbance during corridor construction could potentially disrupt playa hydrology, impact the Candidate species and provide a conduit for non-native grass.

OR – West Cascades - Roaring River / Oak Grove / Fort Clackamas
The proposed action corridor would overlap 16 times with occurrences of species of concern, including the federally-listed northern spotted owl, coho and Chinook salmon, steelhead and bull trout. It also passes through a late-successional reserve in the Mount Hood National Forest. Working with the Warm Springs Tribe to re-route the corridor through the reservation could help to minimize impacts to these sensitive species and their habitats.

OR – West Cascades – White River
The proposed action corridor would pass through important northern spotted owl habitat, including a designated late-successional reserve within Mount Hood National Forest, and would overlap with ten northern spotted owl species occurrences. Potential impacts could be minimized or avoided by working with the Warm Springs Trive to re-route the proposed corridor through their reservation.

WEC_00106

WY—Wyoming Basins—Shirley Basin
Shirley Basin is a vast landscape of wooded mountains, and sweeping extents of open sagebrush land. With one of the largest extant colonies of white-tailed prairie dogs, the Shirley Basin has been the site of endangered black footed ferret reintroductions since 1991. This site contains some of the best remaining high-quality Sagebrush Steppe and grassland in the ecoregion. Proposed corridor would directly impact known breeding populations of black-footed ferret and breeding leks of sage grouse, USFWS candidate species.

WY—Basins—Flaming Gorge
The Flaming Gorge site includes the sharply dissected mesas, bad-lands, mountains, and canyons surrounding the dammed Green River. Due to the exposure of several unusual rock substrates, notably the Bridger Formation, the area provides habitat for a wide diversity of rare or endemic plant species. In addition there are also pinyon and juniper shrub lands providing habitat for Pygmy rabbits, Idaho pocket gophers, prairie dogs and their associates.

WEC_00106

The Nature Conservancy
Protecting nature. Preserving life.™

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February 15, 2008

West-wide Energy Corridor DEIS
Argonne National Laboratory
9700 S. Cass Avenue
Building 900, Mail Stop 4
Argonne, IL 60439

RE: Scoping Comments for the West-wide Energy Corridor Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement

To Whom It May Concern

Please consider the following an addendum to our comments submitted 2/14/08 regarding the "Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement for Designation of Energy Corridors on Federal lands in the 11 Western States". These build upon The Nature Conservancy's comments related to the scoping sessions held earlier.

As you refine the draft PEIS, we would be happy to provide more specific comments if they would be helpful, and to discuss our thoughts and ideas with you at the national level and/or with State or Regional Offices. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Julie Falkner

Julie Falkner
Senior Policy Advisor

WEC_00106

2/15/08

Addendum to Comments from The Nature Conservancy. Colorado-specific information for Appendices A and B.

Please replace the Colorado-specific information in Appendices A and B of our original comments (2/14/08) with this Addendum. Thank you for your flexibility.

APPENDIX A – TNC Portfolio Sites Impacted by Proposed Energy Corridors

TNC in Colorado focused its attention on portfolio sites and ecological values that would be impacted by "new" proposed corridors – the portions of proposed corridors that lie beyond existing corridors of which TNC is aware. Appendices A and B specifically include the 15 TNC portfolio sites for which "new" proposed corridors would impact:

- T&E species or other irreplaceable biological values (i.e., globally imperiled occurrences of species and plant communities) within a half-mile buffer of the "new" proposed corridor (recommendation: shift the corridor to avoid these resources by working with the Colorado Natural Heritage Program); and/or
- At least 100 acres of high or very high-ranked integrity patches of habitat, as identified in a Conservancy and Heritage Program GIS analysis (recommendation: avoid these areas to the extent possible for the EIS, and adjust as appropriate based on field verification for site-specific projects).

106-007

State	Site	Ecoregion
CO	Dry Creek	Colorado Plateau
CO	Gunnison River Valley	Colorado Plateau
CO	Uncompahgre Badlands	Colorado Plateau
CO	Berthoud Pass	Southern Rocky Mountains
CO	Big Dominguez River	Southern Rocky Mountains
CO	Debeque Canyon	Southern Rocky Mountains
CO	Debeque South	Southern Rocky Mountains
CO	Rifle Reach/Colorado River	Southern Rocky Mountains
CO	Roubideau	Southern Rocky Mountains
CO	San Miguel River	Southern Rocky Mountains
CO	Yampa River	Southern Rocky Mountains
CO	DeBeque	Utah High Plateaus
CO	Piceance	Utah High Plateaus
CO	Upper White River	Utah High Plateaus
CO	Cherokee Basin	Wyoming Basins

APPENDIX B – Specific Sites and their Issues

CO—Colorado Plateau—Dry Creek
There are no known globally imperiled species or communities within the new or existing corridor. However, the new corridor may fragment one or more patches of habitat ranked as "very high" or "high" integrity.

CO—Colorado Plateau—Gunnison River Valley
The new and existing corridor will impact the Uinta Basin hookless cactus, a federally listed plant species. The new corridor may fragment one or more patches of habitat ranked as "very high" or "high" integrity.

CO—Colorado Plateau—Uncompahgre Badlands
The new and existing corridors may impact the Colorado Desert-parsley (BLM-sensitive), and the existing corridors may impact the federally listed clay-loving wild-buckwheat and Rocky Mtn. thistle (BLM/USFS sensitive). All three of these species are globally imperiled and are considered irreplaceable.

CO—Southern Rocky Mountains—Berthoud Pass
The new corridor may impact the Greenback cutthroat trout, which is listed as threatened, while the existing corridor may impact the Western toad.

CO—Southern Rocky Mountains—Big Dominguez River
The new and existing corridor may impact the Uinta Basin hookless cactus, a federally listed species.

106-007 (cont.)

CO—Southern Rocky Mountains—Debeque Canyon
The new corridor may fragment one or more patches of habitat ranked as "very high" or "high" integrity.

CO—Southern Rocky Mountains—Debeque South
The new and existing corridor may impact the globally imperiled Debeque milk-vetch, and the existing corridor may impact the Debeque phacelia, a federal candidate, which are both BLM and USFS sensitive species. The new corridor may fragment one or more patches of habitat ranked as "very high" or "high" integrity.

CO—Southern Rocky Mountains—Rifle Reach/Colorado River
The new corridor may impact the globally imperiled species: Debeque phacelia, a federal candidate for listing by the USFWS, the Wetherill's milk-vetch, the Naturita milk-vetch, and the Rocky Mtn. thistle, while the new and existing corridor may impact the Rio Grande cottonwood/skunkbrush woodland and the razorback sucker, a federally endangered fish species. The new corridor may fragment one or more patches of habitat ranked as "very high" or "high" integrity.

CO—Southern Rocky Mountains—Roubideau
The new corridor may not impact any ecoregional targets, however the existing corridor may impact the Rio Grande cottonwood/skunkbrush woodland and the Uinta Basin hookless cactus, a federally listed plant species. The new corridor may fragment one or more patches of habitat ranked as "very high" or "high" integrity.

CO—Southern Rocky Mountains—San Miguel River
The new corridor may not impact any ecoregional targets, but the existing corridor may impact the globally imperiled plant species,Naturita milk-vetch and Payson's lupine which are both BLM sensitive species. The new corridor may fragment one or more patches of habitat ranked as "very high" or "high" integrity.

CO—Southern Rocky Mountains—Yampa River
The new corridor may not impact any ecoregional targets, however it may fragment one or more patches of habitat ranked as "very high" or "high" integrity. The existing corridor may impact Bessey's locoweed, a globally imperiled taxon.

CO—Utah High Plateaus—Debeque The new corridor may impact the Rio Grande cottonwood/skunkbrush, the Wetherill's milk-vetch, the Naturita milk-vetch, and the Rocky Mtn. thistle. The new and existing corridor may impact the globally imperiled Debeque milk-vetch and the Debeque phacelia, a candidate for listing by the USFWS. The new corridor may fragment one or more patches of habitat ranked as "very high" or "high" integrity and may also impact an Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC).

106-007 (cont.)

CO—Utah High Plateaus—Piceance
Barneby's thistle (BLM sensitive) is the only globally imperiled target known within the new corridor. The new corridor may fragment one or more patches of habitat ranked as "very high" or "high" integrity.

CO—Utah High Plateaus—Upper White River
The new corridor may fragment one or more patches of habitat ranked as "very high" or "high" integrity and may impact an ACEC.

CO—Wyoming Basins—Cherokee Basin
The new corridor may fragment one or more patches of habitat ranked as "very high" or "high" integrity.

LIVING RIVERS
COLORADO RIVERKEEPER®

February 11, 2008

West-wide Energy Corridor DEIS
Argonne National Laboratory
9700 S. Cass Avenue
Building 900, Mail Stop 4
Argonne, IL 60439

Sent via fax: 866-542-5904

Dear Ms. Julia Souder,

Thank you for this opportunity to submit comments on West-wide Energy Corridor Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS). Living Rivers is a non-profit organization based in Moab, Utah, which is situated along the Colorado River and two national parks, Canyonlands and Arches. Our mission is to preserve, protect and restore watershed ecosystems and resources in the Colorado River basin.

The Colorado River is the lifeblood of the seven western states and Mexico. The river supplies water for federal reserve lands, agriculture and 30 million people. The geophysical province, the Colorado Plateau, is the major drainage area by volume in the Colorado River basin.

The Colorado Plateau and the Colorado River will be adversely affected by the development of energy transmission corridors considered in this PEIS. This development will encourage industries that are inappropriate for a watershed of this importance, because it will jeopardize our drinking water and watershed habitats that are necessary to recover federal endangered species.

This development sets the stage for extractive industries, and power-generation facilities, of both fossil and nuclear fuels, to enter the Colorado Plateau. The Colorado Plateau is the largest intact wilderness and refuge by area in the contiguous United States. 107-001

These industries require incredible amounts of water to operate. Water the Colorado River can no longer reliably provide, because the legal documents of

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www.livingrivers.org

the system have created a situation of over-allocation. Additionally, over-consumption and excessive evaporation from rising temperatures in the atmosphere, will continue the trend of dwindling supplies. Reservoirs are currently lowering and in-stream flows are diminishing throughout the basin.

The energy program proposed in this document, and its connection to large-scale energy fuel development projects, will cause unnecessary harm to the various communities dependent on the Colorado River. They are also financially burdensome and will not reduce our dependency of finite energy resources.

107-001 (cont.)

The paradigm of status quo energy development must be changed. Research and development funds must be appropriated to begin a new paradigm of renewable resources and conservation. These programs will reduce the ever-increasing amount of pollution entering the atmosphere and the landscape.

Furthermore, transmission lines spanning the open spaces of the Colorado Plateau, which has the highest concentration of national parks in the United States, can be avoided completely by keeping energy-producing facilities as close to the market place as possible. Eliminating extensive transmission lines altogether will help to increase the yield of electricity through efficiency, and protect what cherished landscapes yet remain in our wild lands of the Colorado Plateau.

107-002

If we can be of further assistance to you, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely yours,

John Weisheit
Conservation Director

02/06/2008 16:50 4352597612 LIVING RIVERS PAGE 01

WEC_00107

LIVING RIVERS

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Date: 2/11/08

Pages: COVER + 2

To: WEST-SIDE ENERGY CORRIDOR PEIS

Fax: 866-542-5904

From: JOHN WEISHEIT

Re: ENERGY CORRIDOR PEIS COMMENT LETTER

Notes:
ATTN: JULIA SOUDER

WILL ALSO SEND VIA POSTMASTER

People for the Integrity of Rivers & Watersheds

WEC_00108

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
STATE OF MONTANA

BRIAN SCHWEITZER
GOVERNOR

JOHN BOHLINGER
LT. GOVERNOR

February 14, 2008

West-wide Energy Corridor DEIS
Argonne National Laboratory
9700 S. Cass Avenue
Building 900, Mail Stop 4
Argonne, IL 60439

RE: West-wide Energy Corridor Programmatic EIS

The following are comments from the State of Montana on the Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement, Designation of Energy Corridors on Federal land in the 11 Western States (DEIS).

The State of Montana agencies have reviewed the DEIS. The Energy Infrastructure Promotion and Development Division of the Montana Department of Commerce was charged by the Governor's Office with the compilation and submission of the comments submitted by state agencies, as well as providing the state's overall views. This letter provides an executive overview of the major points in the comments of the State of Montana on the DEIS as well as some additional comments on behalf of state agencies. The full text of specific agency comments submitted by the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT), the Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks (FWP) and the Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) are attached.

We thank the DOE for giving the state of Montana the opportunity to comment. The following points highlight the most critical issues and comments with regard to the DEIS.

- We recommend that the federal agencies work with local stakeholders in the Lima, Montana area and examine whether the existing corridor that is west of Interstate 15 (I-15) should be moved to the first bench east of I-15 as shown on Figure: North of Lima. The area that we have suggested is mostly used for grazing and contains both State of Montana and BLM lands. Where privately owned irrigated lands are crossed, they are located mostly in narrow valleys that could probably be spanned by a transmission line. 108-001

- Where isolated, discontinuous parcels in federal ownership are proposed for energy corridors, such corridor designation is of negligible value, since adjacent private lands may pose substantial roadblocks to successful siting of energy projects. Several examples are identified in the full text of attached comments. The state encourages DOE, BLM, USFS and cooperating agencies to avoid designating energy corridors on isolated and discontinuous parcels of federal land 108-002

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MDT - WEC_00109; FWP - WEC_00110; DEQ - WEC_00111

WEC_00108

Cover letter comments re: West-wide Energy Corridor DEIS
February 14, 2008
Page 2 of 4

in Montana that would, for all intents and purposes, create a *de facto* corridor on adjacent private and state lands. 108-001 (cont.)

- The draft EIS continues to show a lack of energy corridors in eastern Montana in spite of comments the state provided during scoping recommending the creation of federal energy corridors in the Eastern part of the state. In central and eastern Montana there is great interest in developing coal and sequestering the CO_2 that might come from the mine-mouth use of that coal. Over the long-term, we envision new pipelines crossing Montana carrying either synthetic fuel or CO_2. Appendix B is a map showing potential CO_2 sequestration locations. A primary reason for designating these energy corridors will be the value derived from Federal land management agencies changing their Land Use Plans to reflect corridor designation which should make future federal and state energy transmission development more efficient. Without these designations, these land use plans may not appropriately reflect the need for energy corridors. It is commendable that there are several corridors identified in western Montana, but the lack of corridors identified in eastern and central Montana is disappointing. We recommend that corridors be researched and identified or we recommend designating all federal lands in central and eastern Montana as being suitable for energy corridors and stating why such recommendation is appropriate. 108-003

- Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks (FW&P) is concerned about many proposed small sections that constitute one overall corridor running North/South in the Medicine Lodge and Big Sheep Creek valleys -- the western-most proposed corridor (50-260). This is currently an existing energy corridor containing a 230kV transmission line. The Montana FW&P has commented that designating this as a 368 corridor could promote development that would impact sensitive species such as sage-grouse and pygmy rabbits. In addition, corridor 50-260 is adjacent to an alternative proposed corridor along I-15 (see bullet above) that would have less fish and wildlife impacts to this area. There is currently a proposal from a developer to construct a transmission line going south into eastern Idaho. The developer of that proposed transmission line has stated that it could potentially use either of these corridors. The state of Montana will encourage this and other transmission line developers to use the eastern I-15 corridor in order to reduce wildlife impact. However, we recommend that DOE designate both of these corridors as 368 corridors as is proposed in the draft EIS because we need to have options available for moving power and fuel down the critical path to Idaho. There may be circumstances that would preclude the use of the eastern I-15 corridor and the ability to shift to the west would become important. In the case where proposed corridor 50-260 were to be used, wildlife mitigation measures would need to be implemented to protect sensitive wildlife habitat. We recommend that such mitigation measures be required by BLM and USFS should this corridor be used. 108-004

WEC_00108

- Consider providing three kinds of corridors – one for pipelines, another for electric transmission lines and one that could be used for both pipelines and transmission lines. These three types of separate designations can provide flexibility in areas where the impacts of these very different types of facilities warrant separate designations. The full text comments of DEQ identify proposed corridors where this is appropriate. 108-005

- Designate the existing east-west 500 kV line running through Montana as a "Designated 368 Corridor". The routing of that line (particularly from Townsend to the west) was done with careful, thorough review and significant public input at the time of the line development. The resulting location of the line reflects a preference for public over private land and also provides more viewshed protection with lower visibility than other routes considered at that time. Selecting it as a "Designated 368 Corridor" can take advantage of the proper decisions made over 25 years ago. We further recommend that that portion of this line west of Townsend, Montana, be designated as an electric transmission corridor only. 108-006

- Transmission line and pipeline crossings of rivers and streams will undoubtedly occur in many of the proposed corridors. Careful consideration should be given to the approaches for these crossing because they will often proceed through diverse riparian habitat and may have adverse impacts on birds and other fish and wildlife. We recognize that, historically, it has been difficult to do sufficient on site mitigation for some of these impacts. 108-007

Many factors will determine the ultimate best locations for additional energy corridors in Montana. Environmental, social and economic impacts will all be weighed by private industry as well as public agencies in the siting process. Governor Schweitzer is promoting energy development as a key component of his economic development strategy. And this new energy will largely be exported to load centers and refineries outside Montana and this makes energy corridor designation and ensuing permitting critical to this economic development path. We believe our biggest challenge, as a state, is to balance the public interests with those of the industry that will develop the energy and build the transmission lines and pipelines. We think we can build a strong economy, help private industry prosper and create good jobs while we protect the attributes of Montana that are so precious to our citizens, i.e. beautiful scenery and a clean and healthy environment.

For the new energy development that is taking place in Montana to succeed, there need to be opportunities to export the energy to markets beyond Montana. Many projects are underway to develop increased energy transmission to export this energy and thereby help achieve U.S. energy independence. The Townsend to Three Forks to Mill Creek corridor and the Garrison to Mill Creek corridor are of great importance to the development of power in Montana. It is crucial that the segments on contiguous blocks 108-008

WEC_00108

of federal lands be designated as energy corridors. See the attached map titled "Proposed 368 Utility Corridors." 108-008 (cont.)

Governor Schweitzer and his administration are extremely aggressive in working with Tribal Governments in Montana, on a government to government basis, to create economic and job growth in Indian Country. Energy development is a major part of that effort. For energy to be developed on tribal lands, that energy must find a way to market – thus the importance and relevancy of the federal energy corridor designations. The Schweitzer Administration encourages private sector energy developers to give strong consideration to energy development in Indian Country. We facilitate communication between the parties. Because 368 corridors can be essential to energy development on tribal lands and because energy development on tribal lands is a real opportunity for growth for those tribes that seek such growth, we urge DOE and other federal agencies involved in energy to be aggressive, in a positive way, in communicating with the tribal governments here in Montana and to respond to the advice and counsel provided by them. 108-009

In closing, since Montana is in the process of developing large amounts of energy resources that need to be exported out of state, increased transmission capability is crucial to this development and we urge DOE to act expeditiously to facilitate such appropriate energy development. 108-010

We invite you to consider these comments as well as view the full text of attached State agency comments.

Best regards,

EVAN D. BARRETT
Chief Business Development Officer
Governor's Office of Economic Development

MDT - WEC_00109; FWP - WEC_00110; DEQ - WEC_00111

WEC_00109

Montana Department of Transportation
2701 Prospect Avenue
PO Box 201001
Helena MT 59620-1001

Jim Lynch, Director
Brian Schweitzer, Governor

January 30, 2008

Kevin Furey
Montana Department of Commerce
Energy Infrastructure Promotion and Development
PO Box 200501
Helena, MT 59620

Subject: Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement for the Designation of Energy Corridors on Federal Land in 11 Western States (DOE/EIS-0386) Comments

Dear Kevin,

Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) staff has reviewed the subject document, our comments follow.

- Section 368(a) of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 indicates that the Secretaries of the lead federal agencies are to consult with local, tribal, and state agencies so that these agencies incorporate the corridor designation into their agency plans. MDT further understands that the Montana Department of Commerce is the lead State of Montana agency.

- To facilitate on-going consultation with MDT and ensure transportation issues and permitting requirements are included in this plan; Jim Skinner, MDT Systems Impact Manager, and Jean Riley, Systems Impact Coordinator, will serve as MDT's point of contact for the Section 368 energy corridors environmental review process. Please provide both Jim and Jean all notices and information on the corridors. This coordination will enable MDT to provide timely comments on the Section 368 energy corridor development and also ensure that MDT appropriately incorporates these corridors in our statewide transportation planning processes.

109-001

- MDT must be involved if the Department of Commerce develops procedures for inter-agency coordination for this project. MDT's internal process review takes approximately three weeks for each submission. Having sufficient time to comment on submissions ensures the project can move forward without permitting delays.

- MDT will only provide comments on those elements of the state's surface transportation system that are under the jurisdiction of the State of Montana. Of the roughly 69,000 public road centerline miles within the State of Montana, MDT has jurisdiction or stewardship responsibilities over 12,939 centerline miles. All other public road miles are under the jurisdiction of an array of public agencies including local governments, tribal governments, and federal land management agencies. MDT cannot coordinate comments from these agencies on potential impacts to local road or bridge infrastructure. Nor can we comment on the permitting requirements of these agencies for utilities planned to enter or cross their rights-of-way. Please contact MDT if you need a map showing the location of Montana public road miles that are under state jurisdiction.

Program & Policy Analysis Bureau
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WEC_00109

- The preferred alternative suggests using existing transportation corridors. The State of Montana does not allow longitudinal utility occupancy of Interstate rights-of-way. Transverse utility crossing of Interstate rights-of-way is allowed, as consistent with MDT rules. 109-002

- The limits of Interstate rights-of-way are not readily apparent from field observations. If the utilities or service line provider wants to parallel the Interstate corridor (the intent is unclear in the maps provided), without longitudinal encroachment into the Interstate rights-of-way, MDT still must participate in the review. The preferred alternative must be clarified to reflect the prohibition against longitudinal utility occupancy of Montana Interstate rights-of-way. 109-003

- Public utilities may occupy MDT rights-of-way along non-Interstate system roadways and are governed by MDT rules governing placement of utilities. Please note that all requirements of the attached publication must be complied with including placement to minimize the need for future adjustment, and placement to minimize danger to the traveling public. 109-004

    - http://www.mdt.mt.gov/other/rw/external/manual/chapter_43.pdf

- Installation of utilities within MDT rights-of-way must be in a manner to minimize danger to the traveling public. Approval to enter MDT rights-of-way must be obtained from district offices based on approved traffic control plans. 109-005

- Any damage to the highway facility or to other utilities already occupying the rights-of-way will be the responsibility of the utility company. 109-006

If you have any questions concerning the above information, please contact Jim Skinner at 444-9233.

Sincerely,

Sandra S, Strachl, Administrator
Rail, Transit and Planning Division

Copies: Jim Currie, Deputy Director
Loran Frazier, P.E., Engineering Division Administrator
Dwane Kailey, P.E., Missoula District Administrator
Jeff Ebert, P.E., Butte District Administrator
Stefan Streeter, P.E., Billings District Administrator
Walt Scott, Utilities
Jim Skinner, Rail, Transit and Planning Division
File

WEC_00110

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

JANUARY 14, 2008

WESTWIDE CORRIDOR PEIS FINAL DRAFT COMMENTS

CONCERNS SPECIFIC TO FISH AND WILDLIFE AND RELATED RESOURCES

Overall Fish and Wildlife Concerns and Recommendations

There are many proposed small sections that constitute one overall corridor that is of concern to Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks running North/South in the Beaverhead Valley representing the western most proposed corridor (50-260). This corridor could promote development that would impact sensitive species such as sage-grouse and pygmy rabbits. In addition, corridor 50-260 is adjacent to an alternative proposed corridor along Interstate Highway 15 that would have less fish and wildlife impacts to this area. Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks recommend that consideration of the 50-260 proposed corridor be permanently abandoned. Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks also has comments concerning the proposed corridor sections along the Clark Fork River East/West (229-254) and these comments should be given all due consideration. 110-001

Beaverhead North/South

Sage Grouse

With the recent ruling by B. Lynn Winmill, Chief U.S. District Judge (2007), which remands the original 2005 not warranted decision back to the USFWS for reconsideration of sage-grouse as a threatened or endangered species, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks is concerned with all new actions that could have negative impacts on sage grouse populations. The populations of sage-grouse in southwestern Montana represent their western most range in Montana and the Federal Agencies should give consideration to any of their actions that could be counter productive to conserving this population and maintaining historic sage-grouse ranges.

Recently, in cooperation with Northwestern Energy, FWP surveyed several proposed power line right-of-ways in the Dillon area in the spring of 2007. These surveys revealed 5 new sage grouse dancing grounds (leks) near Segment 50-260. In addition there are 4 historic leks within the segment and 3 other grounds that have migrated, been extirpated or are of unknown status. The habitat around both active and inactive leks is critical to the long-term survival of sage grouse. Other leks occur just outside of the corridor and these birds are known to winter over vast areas including the habitat within Segment 50-260. 110-002

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Southwest Montana is home to both resident and interstate populations of sage grouse. The interstate population is a shared resource with Idaho and some birds are known to migrate 40 miles between winter and summer ranges. In the near term it is apparent that large electrical transmission export lines are destined to bisect southwest Montana. Currently there are two such proposals for 500 KV lines. We find these proposals to be a serious threat to sage grouse because they fragment habitat, provide artificial perches for aerial predators and kill sage grouse via collisions with wires. Based on recent research FWP recommends no surface occupancy on habitats within a 1-mile radius of leks and a 4-mile radius during the breeding and nesting seasons (March through June). 110-002 (cont.)

Given the recently initiated, court mandated status review of sage grouse and the fact that much of the sage grouse information within Segment 50-260 was collected concurrent to the development of your DPEIS, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks believes our request to not designate this segment as an energy corridor is justified.

Conservation Easements and connected Effects

FWP has invested significant state dollars for conservation along the proposed corridor 50-260. For example, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks purchased a conservation easement on the Dragging Y Cattle Company in 2000. The easement provides perpetual protection to important wildlife habitat through prohibitions on subdivision and certain land use practices. The easement is bound on the north by Segment 50-260 and by other private land to the south, where the Segment resumes south of these holdings. While these private lands are not included in the federal energy corridor, FWP believes the conservation values of the easement will be degraded as it is likely that expedited permitting process promised by corridors will promote development that ultimately must proceed through shorter stretches of private lands not included, but bound by the corridor. This implies that development through these private land sections in order to utilize designated corridors is eminent, and FWP's understanding of the draft DPEIS confirms this statement. Some of these lands will inevitably be state owned, FWP managed fishing access sites, conservation easements, and state parks or fishing access sites. In consideration, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks believes that it is important to consider these impacts as well as those to fish and wildlife and their associated habitats on federal corridor lands. We interpret these other effects as those caused by the use of corridors in future development that impacts private lands between corridor sections but are later in time or farther removed in distance, but are still reasonably foreseeable. Furthermore, major linear projects through these private lands would be less likely or not probable without designation of Federal Corridors. For these reasons FWP believes that the designation of corridors and future likelihood of linear projects impacting fish and wildlife resources on private lands are inextricably linked as components of a broader chain of developments. Because impacts associated with the construction and operation of linear transmission facilities could have adverse impacts on fish and wildlife resources and their associated habitats on adjacent private lands, and should be considered prior to designation of corridors through the DPEIS as connected effects. 110-003

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Montana Fish, wildlife and Parks also believes that the agencies responsible for preparing the DPEIS missed a significant opportunity to promote energy conservation and efficiency by not analyzing the alternative to upgrade existing energy transport facilities within existing energy corridors and right-of-ways. The DPEIS suggests that such an alternative would have to done before new federal energy corridors are designated. We see no reason why such a proposal could not be carried concurrent to the designation of new corridors. 110-004

Clark Fork East/West

Following a review of the proposed corridor sections along the Clark Fork River (229-254), Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks finds that the proposed action offers no advantages to the management of fish, wildlife and recreation resources in FWP Region 2. Montana Fish, wildlife and Parks would like to be assured that we will have every opportunity to analyze and provide input on facilities siting and other considerations of transmission development on a project-by-project basis when developed, whether the proposed action or the no action alternative were to be selected. 110-005 Likewise the DPEIS should state that options must remain for future siting that include areas outside the designated corridor if impacts to fish, wildlife and recreation resources are to be best avoided in this manner. 110-006 General principles in our evaluation of projects that might occur in corridor sections 229-254 include the following.

- Due to the existence of the Interstate 90 (I 90) corridor, this area is somewhat reasonably appropriate for energy transmission. However, since the corridor runs along the Clark Fork and St. Regis Rivers, we have significant concerns should pipe lines break or rupture and spill into the river. 110-007
- Transmission facilities generally should be placed in the narrowest corridor width, and concentrated close to I90 where possible, except on sites where resource concerns are better addressed on an alternate route. 110-008
- Concerns/recommendations that influence the resources FWP manages could include the following:
    - Fisheries and riparian:
        - Make efforts to limit the number of crossings
        - Keep corridors that require vegetation clearing outside of riparian areas, or keep them an adequate distance from streams so corridors are not likely to become in contact with the stream or reduce streamside vegetation in the future (usually outside the flood-prone area). Federal INFISH regulations may apply to proposed corridor location and management 110-009
        - Use existing structures such as bridges or bore underneath the maximum scour depth when crossing streams
        - Bore underneath the maximum scour depth for the width of the flood-prone area so when the stream migrates lines will remain buried

WEC_00110

- Any project that alters a streambed or bank would require a Stream Protection Act permit under State of Montana law. (Application for this permit is through Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks.)
- Bull trout are present in many of the waters where corridors are proposed. Bull trout are listed as Threatened under the Endangered Species Act. Westslope cutthroat trout (a Montana Species of Special Concern) is another species present in the proposed corridor

- Wildlife
  - Keeping development out of wetlands
  - Critical ungulate winter range (which can often include slopes over river/streams)
  - Cumulative impacts on threatened and endangered species, as well as Montana's State Species of Special Concern
  - State of the art raptor-proofing methods should be employed to minimize raptor electrocutions on powerlines
  - Swan deflectors should be placed on all spans of powerlines, since trumpeter swans could be found anywhere in the Clark Fork drainage
- Recreation:
  - Viewshed considerations for such state sites as FWP's Alberton Gorge Recreation area

110-009 (cont.)

WEC_00111

BLM_WestWideCorridorEIS_DEQ comments

JANUARY 22, 2008

The following are comments from the Montana Department of Environmental Quality on the Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement, Designation of Energy Corridors on Federal land in the 11 Western States.

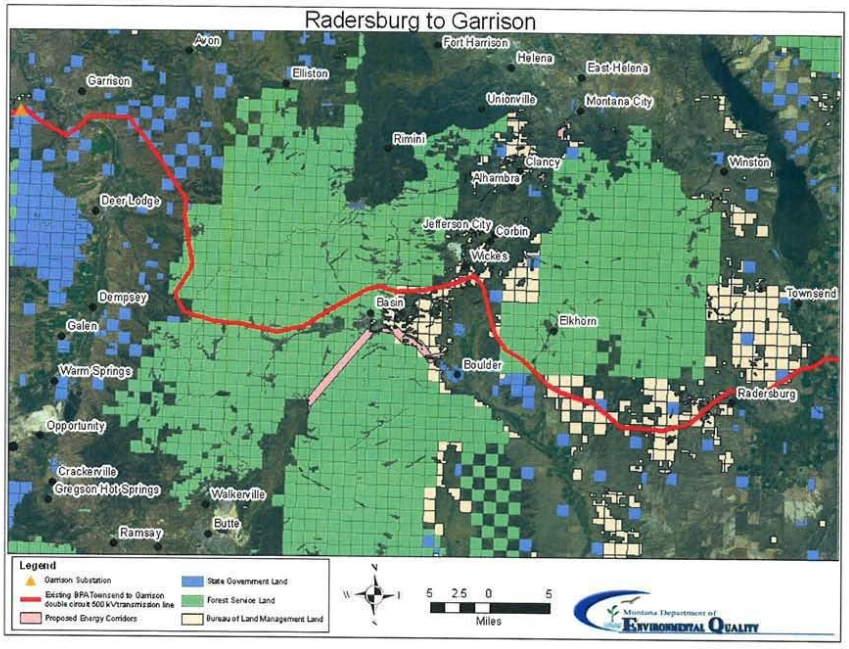
General comments:

The draft programmatic environmental impact statement (PEIS) lacks a historic perspective of various energy projects that have been studied and sited in western Montana over the last 20 years. Previous siting efforts in western and southwestern Montana have much to contribute to the current effort. Several are described below that provide useful information for areas being proposed for energy corridors. 111-001

Two 500 kV circuits were sited by BPA on federal lands between Raidersburg and Garrison (Figure Garrison-Raidersburg) in about 1980 in an effort to avoid adverse visual impacts to private lands from transmission lines that were serving national and regional needs. This location also avoided interference with farming activities and alleviated public health concerns associated with EMF exposure as a result of the lines otherwise being located in close proximity to people. A fairly extensive system of access roads was constructed to facilitate construction and maintenance of the lines. We recommend that the federal agencies designate a single purpose electricity corridor on federal land parallel to the existing 500 kV line. 111-002 The federal corridor need not be 35000 feet wide but should be adequately sized to carry anticipated high voltage transmission lines (greater than 230 kV) and still meet reliability guidelines of the Western Electricity Coordinating Council (WECC) for parallel lines. 111-003 This corridor has the benefits of avoiding impacts to private lands by using large contiguous blocks of federal land, it would avoid visual impacts associated with siting on more densely populated private land, it would avoid interference with farming activities on private land that could otherwise be adversely affected, and would largely avoid concerns over EMF adversely affecting public health. 111-004

WEC_00111

BLM_WestWideCorridorEIS_DEQ comments



Several proposed corridor segments in Montana would have local land use constraints for energy corridors due to private lands that surround small isolated parcels of federal land. The potential constraints on surrounding private lands could substantially hinder use of a designated corridor on adjacent federal land by proposed developers of energy projects. By focusing the corridor effort solely on lands in federal ownership, the siting of energy corridors in areas of Montana with mixed public-private ownership occurs in a spatial vacuum. Where isolated, discontinuous parcels in federal ownership are proposed for energy corridors, designation of corridors is counter-productive, since adjacent private lands may pose substantial roadblocks to successful siting of energy projects. Several examples are provided below.

111-005

The department encourages DOE, BLM, USFS and cooperating agencies to avoid designating energy corridors on isolated and discontinuous parcels of federal land in Montana that would for all intents and purposes create a corridor on adjacent private and state lands.

It is prudent at this time to adjust existing corridor designations that dead-end on private land where existing land uses are incompatible or not highly compatible with multimodal corridors. The following maps indicate several areas in Montana where existing

corridors dead-end in such areas and suggest alternative locations for corridors that would better use federal lands. 111-005 (cont.)

Lima, Montana Area

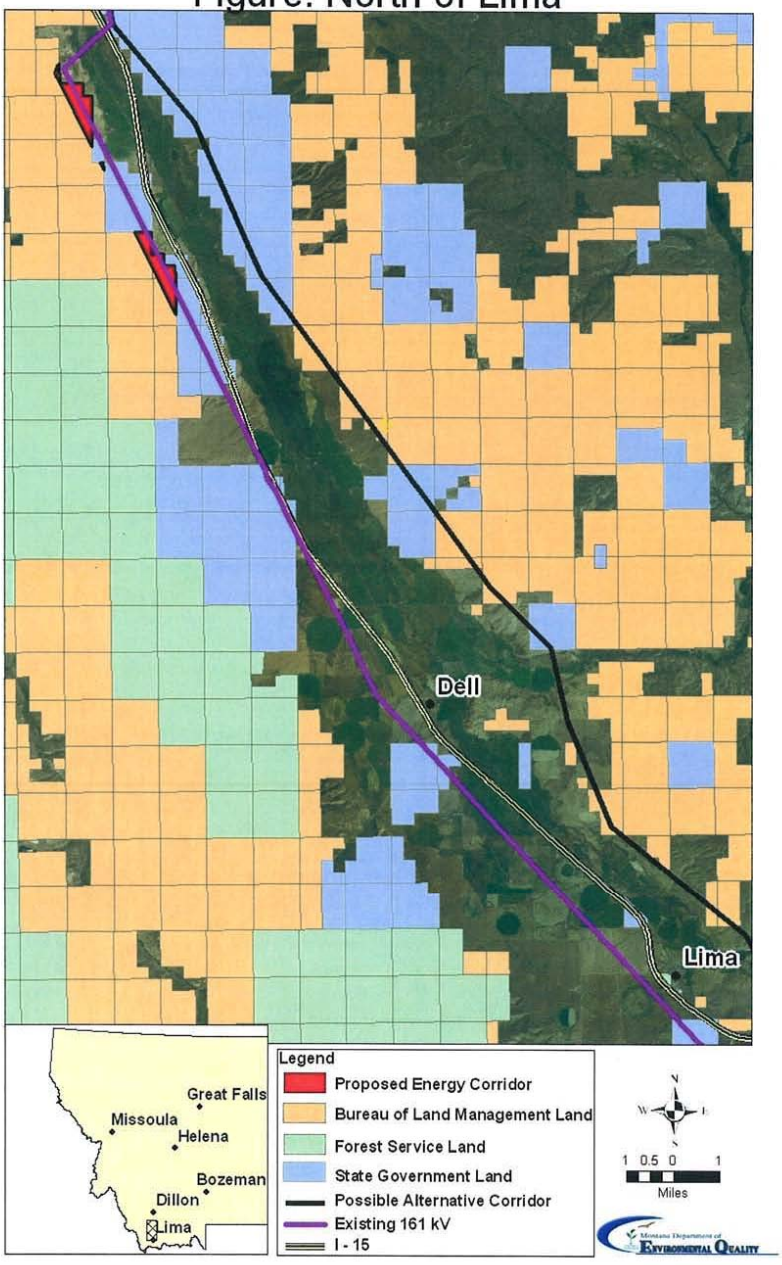
As indicated in Figure North of Lima it appears that the corridor follows a single existing 161-kV line. There is a large break in federal land ownership northwest of Lima with the 161-kV line crossing state and private lands. Since this line was built the regulatory framework has changed, public values have changed, and land uses on adjacent private lands have changed. Much of the irrigation on intervening private land has been converted to center pivot irrigation, with half-circle center pivots now abutting the 161-kV line. There is not sufficient space available for another transmission line, much less the eight more transmission lines envisioned in the draft PEIS. A USFS visual retention area is located to the west of the private land, discouraging a line location further west. Still further west, the steep unroaded mountainous terrain would not be conducive to construction of transmission lines or pipelines. In this area near Lima, a corridor has been designated in a local land management plan in an area that is unlikely to be used in the future. Now this corridor is proposed for expansion and designation as a national energy corridor. 111-006

Montana state agencies recommend that the federal agencies work with local stakeholders in the Lima, Montana area and examine whether the existing corridor should be moved to the first bench east of Interstate 15 as shown on Figure North of Lima and that the existing corridor be dropped as transmission corridor. The area suggested is mostly used for grazing and contains both State of Montana and BLM lands. Where privately owned irrigated lands are crossed, they are located mostly in narrow valleys that could probably be spanned.

WEC_00111

BLM_WestWideCorridorEIS_DEQ comments

Figure: North of Lima



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BLM_WestWideCorridorEIS_DEQ comments

Isolated Federal Parcels

Text in Section 2.5.9 (page 2-38 *Preliminary Corridors Identified during the Siting Process)* states that "during Step 3, these corridors were eliminated because they consisted of relatively small corridor segments on largely isolated federal lands; thus their designation under the Proposed Action would do little to meet the needs of Section 368."

Areas between Montana City and Boulder and Drummond and Clinton in Montana

Corridor number 51-204 between Montana City and Boulder, MT and corridor number 229-254 between Drummond and Clinton, MT should have been eliminated during Step 3 of the analysis because of the paucity of federal lands and the abundance of private land where the corridors are proposed. (See Figure South of Montana City and Figure Between Clinton and Drummond). In addition it appears that the corridor between Montana City and Boulder is designated to meet local or state electricity needs rather than national needs associated with a multi-modal corridor.

111-007

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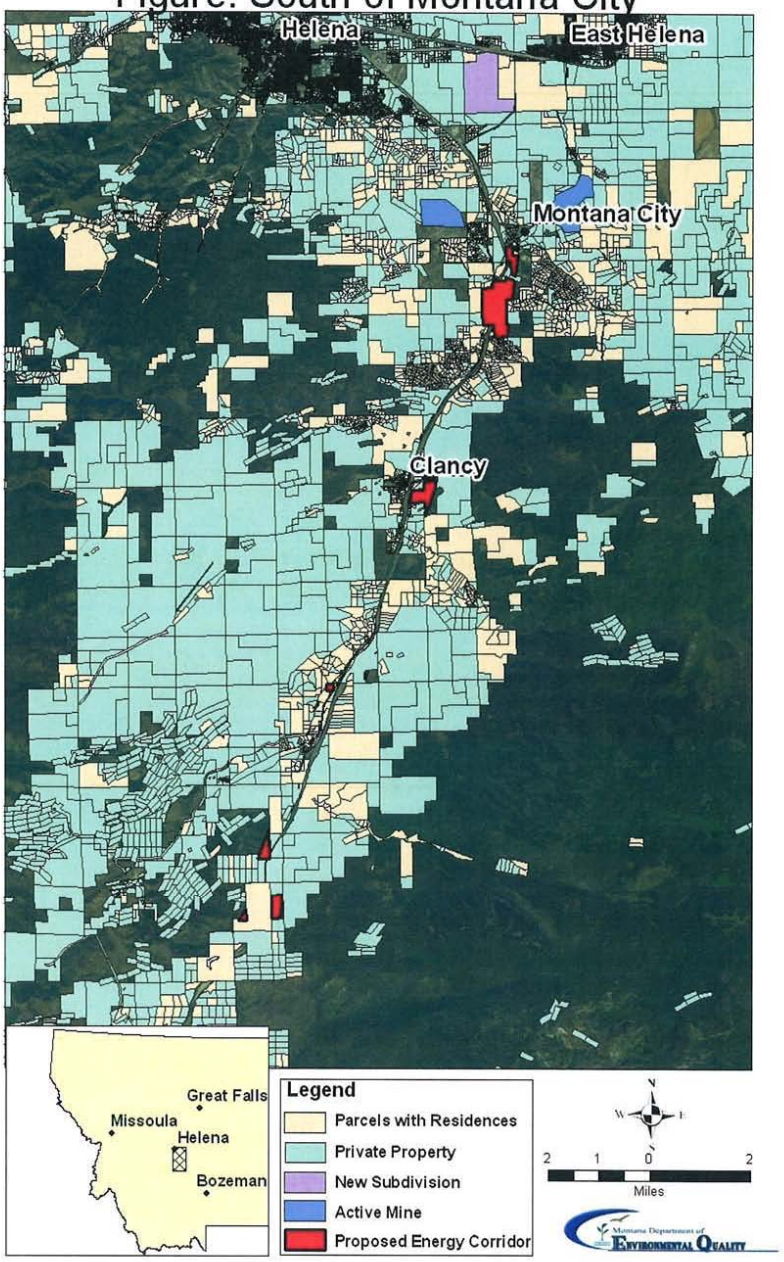
BLM_WestWideCorridorEIS_DEQ comments

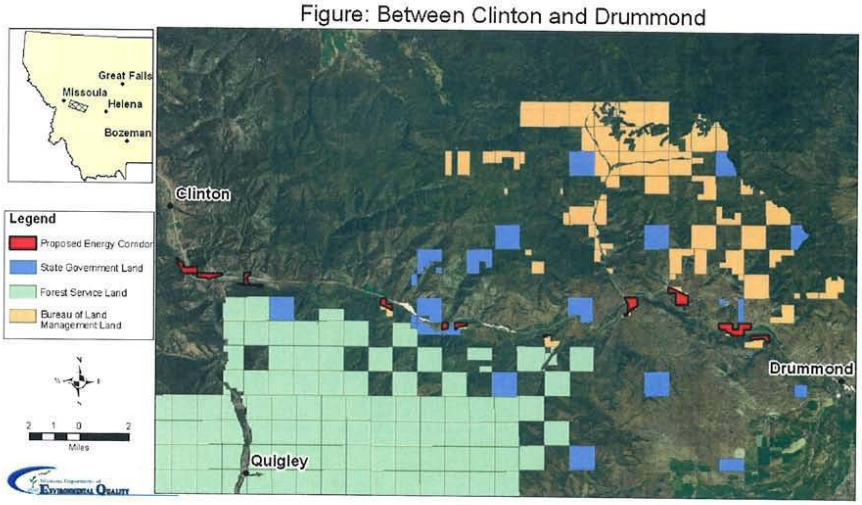
Figure: South of Montana City



WEC_00111

BLM_WestWideCorridorEIS_DEQ comments

Figure: Between Clinton and Drummond



Near Missoula, Montana

Immediately west of Missoula, draft corridor 229-254 (Figure Missoula Airport) consists of an isolated federal parcel. It is proposed to be a multimodal corridor adjacent to hangars and taxiways at the Missoula airport and the USFS smoke jumper training facility. Helicopters fly low as they taxi in an out of hangers and refueling areas at the Missoula airport. Low flying aircraft and transmission lines are usually incompatible. Even if a transmission line would meet FAA minimum standards, this is not a wise choice for corridor designation. The multimodal designation should be reconsidered from a safety and compatibility perspective. Consider looking farther north for a transmission corridor along the base of hills on forested USFS lands where larger continuous blocks of USFS ownership are present.

111-008

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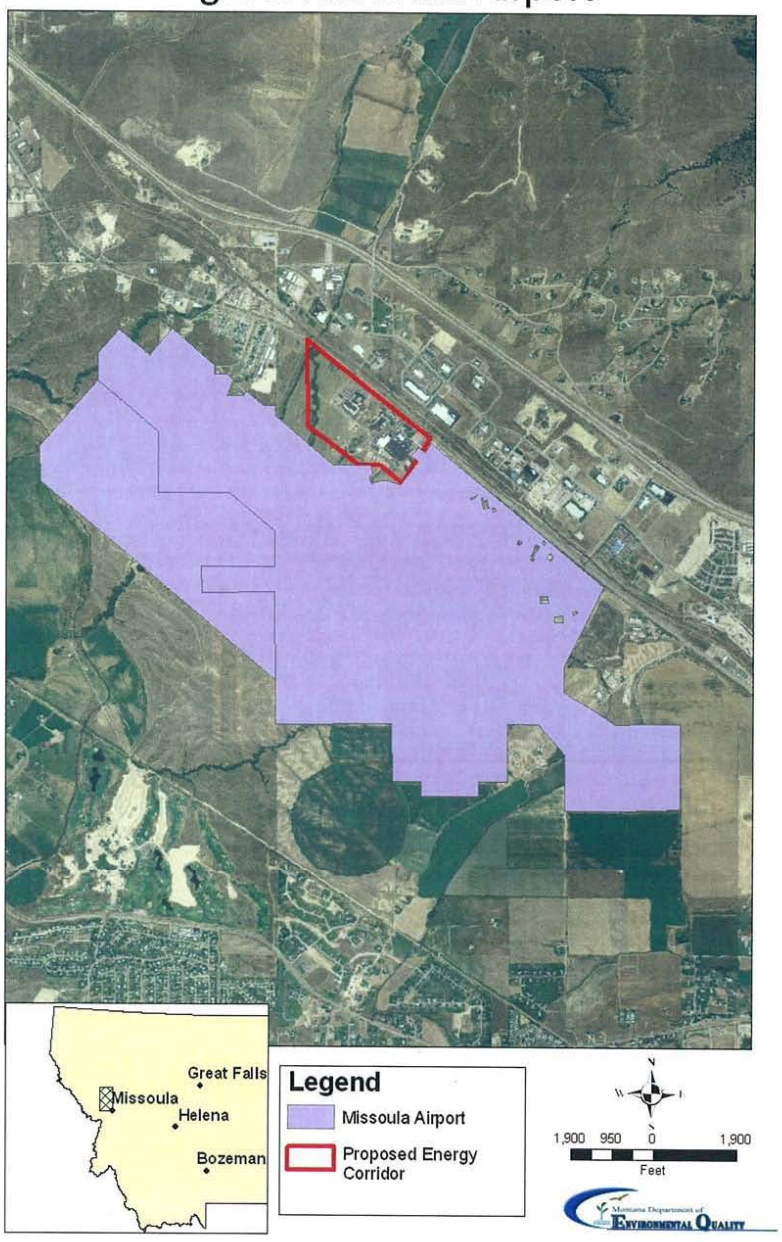
BLM_WestWideCorridorEIS_DEQ comments

Figure: Missoula Airport



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BLM_WestWideCorridorEIS_DEQ comments

Western Montana from Missoula to the MT-ID line

Department staff notes that a proposed west-wide energy corridor in western Montana would be located near a location studied in 1999 for location of the Yellowstone Pipeline (USFS Lolo National Forest 1999. Yellowstone Pipeline, Missoula to Thompson Falls, Draft Environmental Impact Statement. Missoula, Montana). The Montana portion of the I-90 to Kingston, Idaho alternative would have paralleled state-maintained and dirt roads, with other segments located within the abandoned Milwaukee Railroad right-of-way prior to reaching Lookout Pass at the MT-ID border. Between Missoula and St. Reis the proposed corridor would parallel to the old Northern Pacific Railroad right-of-way.

As discussed in the Draft EIS for the Yellowstone Pipeline, this alternative had advantages over other alternatives for water resources, safety and fuel consumption via pipeline transport compared to transport by train. This alternative also minimized disturbance by use of an existing transportation and utility corridor. Staff notes that after agency selection of a preferred alternative, Yellowstone Pipeline dropped its application for the new I-90 to Kingston segment, and since 1999 has transported petroleum products via train between Missoula and Thompson Falls. 111-009

The I-90 to Kingston alternative may provide a siting opportunity for one pipeline. However, this transportation and utility corridor would be tightly constrained by terraine and private land usesfor additional energy facilities. In addition to the Clark Fork and St. Regis rivers, an interstate highway, state, county and private roads cross the narrow valley bottom. The abandoned Milwaukee Railroad right-of-way snakes through and along the side of the valley. A 100-kV line that once served the railroad and area mines remains. The 100 kV line follows a torturous alignment in this area. The interstate highway frequently bridges these linear features. Private land with scattered residential development and small ranchettes dominate land use in the Clark Fork Valley from Missoula to St. Regis. The area near Tarkio provides one example of these siting constraints (Figure Northwest of Tarkio) and local residents are likely to resist substantial new visual impacts from large new overhead transmission lines.

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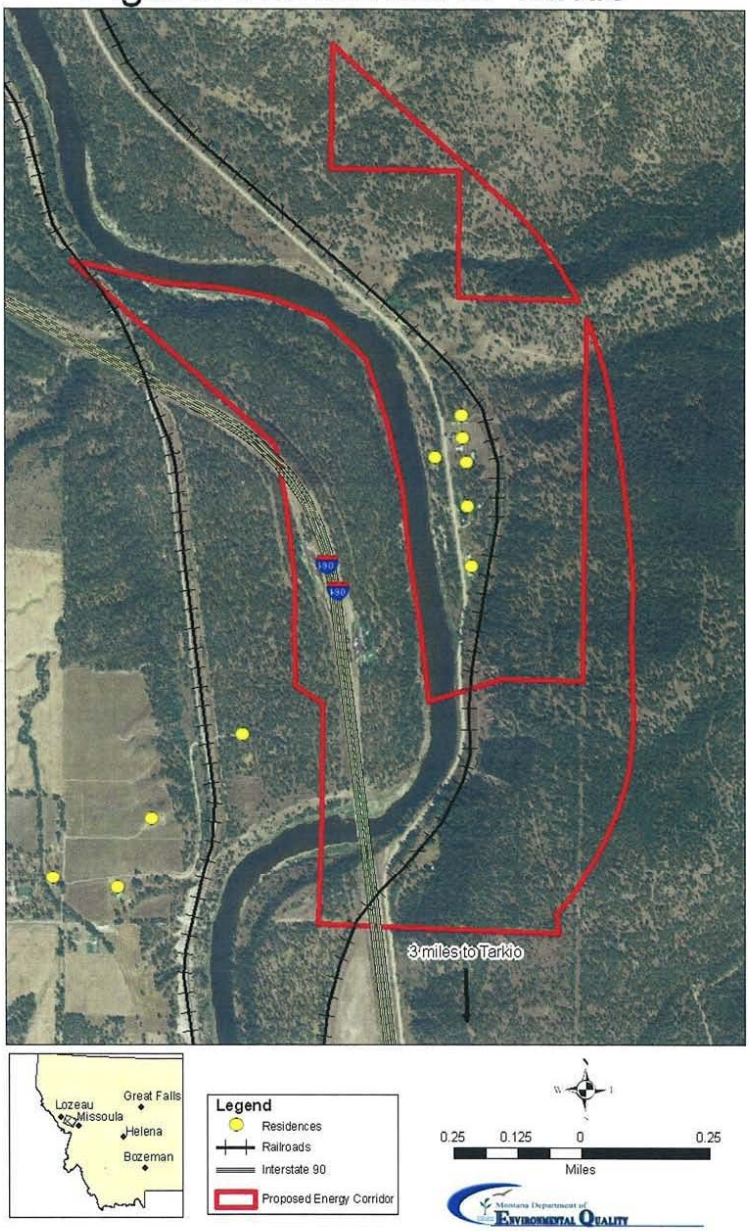
BLM_WestWideCorridorEIS_DEQ comments

Figure: Northwest of Tarkio



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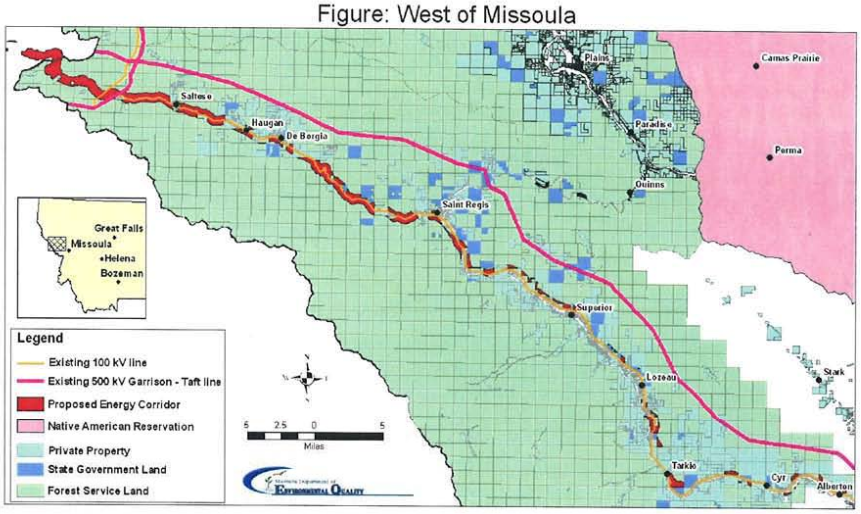
BLM_WestWideCorridorEIS_DEQ comments

State agencies encourage federal agencies to evaluate other options for overhead transmission lines in this area of western Montana. Possible routes for a 500-kV transmission line in western Montana were evaluated by federal and state agencies in the early 1980s (Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation1983. Final Report Preferred and Alternate Routes: BPA 500-Kilovolt line From Garrison – West. Helena, Montana). Due to the high level of public interest demonstrated at hearings on the project, suggestions that the proposed project be on public lands away from people, concern for electromagnetic fields and potential health effects associated with siting near people, and concern for diminished scenic quality, state and federal agencies required a line location west of Missoula that was north of and several miles distant from the Clark Fork Valley between Missoula and the Taft Substation.

The proposed corridor for multimodal projects west of Missoula (corridor number 229-254) would not make sense for a high voltage transmission line project. Figure West of Missoula illustrates that an existing double-circuit 500-kV transmission line is located several miles farther north of the proposed designated corridor and is located on much more continuous blocks of federal land.

Figure: West of Missoula



The proposed corridor is much more intermixed with private and federal land. While the USFS selected the proposed corridor for the location of a single new segment of the Yellowstone Pipeline which was never built, a wide corridor that could hold up to 8-15 crude oil or refined product pipelines would substantially increase the risk that a spill could easily reach the St. Regis or Clark Fork rivers which parallel the proposed corridor. The rivers are large and frequently contain moving ice floes in winter, so that quick and easy containment of a spill would be nearly impossible at times during the winter.

111-009 (cont.)

Montana agencies recommend that proposed Corridor number 229-254 be reduced in width and designated for underground projects only. We further suggest that an overhead corridor be evaluated that would be located adjacent to the double-circuit 500-kV line and its system of access roads, rather than opening a new high voltage corridor along the interstate highway. The federal corridor need not be 35000 feet wide but should be adequately sized to carry anticipated high voltage transmission lines (greater than 230 kV) and still meet reliability guidelines of the Western Electricity Coordinating Council (WECC) for parallel lines. We encourage federal agencies to evaluate this option paralleling the 500-kV line for overhead transmission lines only, rather than designating a corridor in the Clark Fork Valley for multi-modal use by both pipelines and transmission lines. 111-009 (cont.)

NUMBERED COMMENTS:

1. On page 1-12 the Data Analysis section does not allow for consideration of alternatives. In states such as Montana, where there is a formal state siting process, and where there is often a complex mix of private, state and federal land, state siting laws require consideration of alternatives. These alternatives are developed to reduce or minimize impacts while weighing and balancing alternative technologies and costs, as well as the preference for use of public lands when an alternative on federal land is as economically practicable as the use of private lands. NEPA regulations direct federal agencies to cooperate with state agencies in joint reviews. Therefore, it is likely that alternatives would be considered in Montana even if corridors are designated. 111-010

2. Page 2-2, "A corridor width of 3,500 feet was selected by the Agencies for the Section 368 energy corridors. […] For example, assuming an operational right-of-way width of 400 feet, about 9 individual 500-kV transmission lines could be supported within a 3,500-foot-wide corridor."

Developers of a new 500-kV project in Montana mention that they would only need about 220 feet for a right-of-way width. The text above from the PEIS mentions the operational right-of-way width of 400 feet. Comments you have received from utilities indicated that transmission lines can be 200 feet apart. The PEIS should describe why 400 feet spacing is necessary. For a 500-kV transmission line a right-of-way of 400 feet would be extremely large given the BPA Garrison – Spokane double circuit 500-kV right-of-way is only 125 feet (U.S. Department of Energy 1982. Draft Environmental Impact Statement Garrison-Spokane 500-kV Transmission Project. Bonneville Power Administration. Portland, Oregon). 111-011
How closely could large transmission lines (greater than 230 KV) be spaced and still meet the reliability requirements of the Western Electricity Coordinating Council?

3. Page 2-16. Why do you consider Helena, Montana to be a high demand area? The entire state of Montana consumes only about 1550 MW a year; hardly comparable to the larger cities named such as Los Angeles, Las Vegas and Denver. Even in Montana Helena is far from the largest load. Energy consumption by selected cities in Montana is indicated below: 111-012

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City	aMW/yr
Billings	186.18
Bozeman	56.82
Butte	69.49
Columbus	24.43
Great Falls	77.65
Helena	50.46
Laurel	22.89
Missoula	124.36
Silverbow	73.64

111-012 (cont.)

4. Page 2-22, column 2, and first complete paragraph. Availability of existing data doesn't necessarily equate to a location that would minimize impacts. 111-013

5. Page 2-28, item 16. Define what is meant by "best management practices of the states in which the proposed project would be located." In Montana at a minimum this would entail compliance with the following: the Montana Major Facility Siting Act, the state noxious weed control statute, water quality statutes including those for control of storm water, and local zoning guidance. 111-014

6. Page 2-29, item 24. Do not limit the consideration to only occupational safety. Consider potential off-corridor effects on members of the public, not just workers. 111-015

7. Page 2-29, item 25. "It should also identify measures to be taken during the operations phase to limit public access to facilities." When it says "facilities" does that mean substations, pump and compressor stations? It would not be practical to limit public access to transmission lines and pipelines. Clarify what 'facilities' means in the sentence noted above. 111-016

8. Page 2-30 item 31. The concept of applying lessons learned to subsequent projects should be applied to all resource areas, not just cultural resources. 111-017

9. Page 2-36, 2.5.4. Does Section 368 prohibit agencies from examining whether a project should first be upgraded rather than designating a new corridor? If not, examine in greater detail an upgrade before further designation. 111-018

10. Table 3.2-7 *Types of Lands Managed by the FS in the 11 Western States*. What type of land is classified as "Other"? 111-019

11. The footnote to Figure 1.1-1 indicates that generation <200 MW is not shown. However, Figure 1.1-1 indicates many generators with capacities <200 MW in Montana. Either the footnote or the figure should be corrected. A description of existing Montana generation can be found at: http://deq.mt.gov/Energy/HistoricalEnergy/index.asp 111-020

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12. Does Figure 1.1-2 show actual constraints or potential constraints (conditional congestion areas) if further construction is not completed in a timely manner? Each of the three categories (critical congestion areas, congestion areas of concern, and conditional congestion areas) should be indicated on the figure so as to not present an alarmist viewpoint. Montana has no critical congestion areas or congestion areas of concern.	111-021 (cont.)
13. On page 3-27, the draft PEIS only mentions public airports. There is no mention that there could be an impact on private airstrips that are adjacent to these designated corridors.	111-022
14. Page 3-34, section 3.2.4.1. The tendency of a corridor to attract future projects resulting in impacts to non-federal lands adjacent to federal corridors should be considered in order to ensure that such indirect impacts are addressed in subsequent project assessments for water resources and other resource areas.	111-023
15. Page 3-69. Alluvial aquifers should be described as they provide water sources for irrigation, support riparian vegetation, and contribute to stream flow.	111-024
16. Page 3-74, column 2. Shallow groundwater is susceptible to contamination from pipeline sub-surface leakage that never reaches the surface.	111-025
17. In certain circumstances excavation and back filling from pipeline construction can provide a more permeable path for groundwater flow, dewatering certain areas and saturating others. This is typically a local concern on irrigated land and some wetlands but the consequence of unintentional alterations of recharge and discharge can be serious.	111-026
18. Figure 3.5-5 should also show those streams and rivers that have been determined to be eligible for listing as recreational, wild, or scenic under the Wild and Scenic River Act but not yet listed.	111-027
19. Figure 3.5-4 shows water quality on other non-BLM lands covered in this programmatic review. Also show streams that are listed as water quality impaired on Montana's 303d and 305b listed streams. (See http://www.deq.mt.gov/CWAIC/wq_reps.aspx?yr=2000qryId=15265).	111-028
20. Page 3-87. The methodology described fails to recognize likely differences in amounts of disturbance for construction of a pipeline and construction of a transmission line. Transmission lines can sometimes span a stream with little or no disturbance of the stream bed or banks. Pipeline construction results in more physical alteration of the streambed and banks unless non-standard overhead crossings are used or crossings are directionally drilled. Further, the possibility of a leak from a pipeline is greater than the potential for a leak from an overhead transmission line.	111-029
The programmatic review is being used to describe the effects of corridor designation as well as laying the ground work for future analyses. The document needs to provide more direction about best management practices to agency hydrologists dealing with pipeline	111-030

construction. You may wish to incorporate some of the methods in the following document: Alberta Environment 1988. Environmental Handbook For Pipeline Construction. Edmonton, Alberta. 111-030 (cont.)

21. The discussion of groundwater impacts needs to provide general quantitative discussion of the frequency and size of pipeline leaks and spills. It needs to recognize and describe the types of impacts to water quality that may result from a spill occurring within a federal corridor extending to and being transported in streams and rivers outside a corridor. For example, a corridor designation is proposed that incorporates the Clark Fork and St. Regis rivers in western Montana. These rivers provide habitat for bull trout, a listed threatened species. The consequences of a spill along corridor 229-254 making its way to a river and flowing downstream and outside the corridor, thereby degrading water quality and fish habitat on both federal and private lands, should generally be described along with any mitigation measures to reduce such impacts. 111-031

22. Relative to streams, the number of corridor segments or miles of corridors that include or intercept streams should be counted, since a pipeline leak in steep terrain could flow to the nearest stream, not just the streams that are crossed. Does Table 3.5-6 depict the number of streams intercepted or the number of streams crossed? The column headings and title seem to conflict. 111-032

23. 3.5.3.2. The discussion of water resource impacts should describe the types of impacts that may result from withdrawal and disposal of water used for hydrostatic testing of pipelines. 111-033

24. Page 3-95 and 3-98, column 1. Appropriate mitigating measures should be carefully chosen and applied to all streams crossed, not just to wild and scenic rivers. 111-034

25. Page 3-97. Despite another agency regulating pipeline safety, the draft PEIS needs to describe the potential for and consequences of pipeline spills and leaks. Quantitative information should be included in the PEIS regarding the risk of pipeline spills, similar to the quantitative treatment given to the risk of avian mortality in BLM's Programmatic EIS on Wind Energy Development (a case where USFWS is responsible for enforcement of the laws protecting migratory birds). 111-035

26. Page 3-99. During evaluation of individual pipelines at each perennial stream crossing and at intermittent stream crossings where channels are subject to down cutting or head cutting, scour depths should be calculated and pipelines should be buried below the depth of scour plus a prudent safety factor. This burial depth should be carried laterally a sufficient distance to account for lateral stream channel movement expected during the life of a project. 111-036

27. Page 3-100, column 2, and bullet 2. Include waste cuttings and drilling mud generated during directional drilling operations. 111-037

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28. Page 3-100. Pipeline decommissioning should include measures to prevent the pipeline from becoming a conduit for groundwater movement as the pipeline corrodes and degrades. Similarly, decommissioning should include measures to address soil settling, interception of runoff and initiating gully erosion over larger pipelines as the pipeline corrodes after it is no longer useable. 111-038

29. Page 3-117. Figure 3-117 needs to be updated to indicate three Class I areas on Montana's Indian Reservations or the title needs to be changed to indicate you are discussing visibility. 111-039

30. Page 3-122. Describe the potential impacts to air quality that could result from a pipeline leak. Consider hydrogen pipelines, crude and syncrude pipelines, refined product pipelines, and natural gas pipelines. 111-040

31. Page 3-122. How much corona induced ozone would be produced if the corridors are filled with large transmission lines? Would the impacts be potentially significant in certain areas? 111-041

32. Page 3-132. Administrative Rules of Montana 17.20.1607(2)(a)(i) limits noise from transmission line facilities to "50 decibels at the edge of the right-of-way in residential and subdivided areas unless the affected landowner waives this condition." 111-042

33. Page 181, column 1. Although counting streams may be a method used to quantify impacts in a programmatic EIS, actual review of projects should be much more robust and include at a minimum consideration of the amount of streambed and stream bank disturbance, amount of disturbance in close proximity to streams, existing sediment loads, intervening slope and vegetative cover, soil erodibility, soil limitations to reclamation, presence or absence of aquatic biota, rarity of species present and sensitivity of these species to disturbance, and likelihood and consequences of operational disturbances (oil spills, right-of-way clearing and weed control). 111-043

34. Page 3-192. Note that impacts to wet areas are sometimes regulated. Recent federal court decisions have indicated that ephemeral, intermittent, and isolated wetlands may not be protected under the federal Clean Water Act and thus would not fall under the regulatory purview of the Corp of Engineers. In the West these areas support some of the most productive and diverse local ecosystems. BLM and USFS biologists should consider these resources in their evaluations of individual projects and require mitigation measures to reduce impacts as part of their resource management roles. 111-044

35. Page 3-212, column 2, and last paragraph. Small diameter guy wires near streams and wetlands may also be a source of avian collision related mortality or injury. Agencies should consider marking guy wires in close proximity to high use areas or other sensitive habitats. 111-045

36. Page 3-223. Column 2, bullet #2. Are directionally drilled crossings appropriate for all wetlands, streams and rivers? We have witnessed examples where pressurized drilling 111-046

mud and cuttings have flowed along fractured rock layers and emerged several hundred feet upstream of the crossing. In certain high quality streams with coarse alluvial substrates over fractured bedrock, the use of a conventional open trench crossing could result in less fine sediment entering a stream than the use of directional drilling. Consequently, we recommend that the impacts and merits of alternative crossing techniques be evaluated on a stream-by-stream basis. 111-046 (cont.)

37. Page 3-223. Column 2, bullet #3. In order to place conductors and ground wires below tree level to lessen the likelihood of avian collision mortality, large diameter trees might have to be cleared (see diagrams on pages 51-92 in *Thompson, Larry 1978. Impact of Transmission Lines on Birds in Flight. Proceedings of a Conference January 31-February 2 Oak Ridge Associated Universities, Oak Ridge, Tennessee. ORAU-142*). Likewise, federal pipeline safety regulations require large trees to be cleared over a pipeline. The determination of whether or not to clear individual trees should only be made after a field inspection of the stream, wetland or riparian area. 111-047

38. Page 3-223. Column 2. Wetlands should be avoided where reasonably possible, even if this means leaving a corridor. 111-048

39. Page 3-224. Column 1, bullet #2. In certain areas less impact might result when leaving a structure in a stream buffer area in order to raise transmission line conductor height and reduce right-of-way clearing. Such a decision should only be made after an on-site inspection. 111-049

40. On page 3-240, under section 3.9.3.1, fourth paragraph, "Under No Action, in the absence of dedicated energy corridors and an associated expedited permitting process, there could be increased siting of ROWs on nonfederal lands and a concomitant shift of visual impacts associated with the ROWs to those lands, although some ROWs would still be sited on federal lands."

Montana agencies do not believe that not designating corridors on federal land would lead to more corridors on private land. In most cases private land is developed (residences, commercial areas, farmed, etc.) making siting more challenging. 111-050

Additionally, one of the Montana Major Facility Siting Act findings necessary for certification of a linear facility is "that the use of public lands for location of the facility was evaluated and public lands were selected whenever their use is as economically practicable as the use of private lands." 75-20-301(1)(h) Montana Code Annotated.

41. GIS metadata for the proposed corridors do not mention the scale the polygons are to be used at and limitation to their use should be described. 111-051

42. Page 3-304, column 1, first paragraph, last sentence. In Montana, for pipeline facilities covered by MFSA, a mechanism exists for potentially locating pipeline facilities safe distances from public receptors. Also note that under the proposed action use of corridors that are fragmented by populated private land could result in a situation where 111-052

federal approval of a pipeline within a corridor could result in exposure of sensitive receptors (people in homes, schools, and businesses) on the intervening private land. This could be the case in western Montana along corridor 229-254. The corridor is located in a relatively narrow valley and human settlement is concentrated on isolated blocks of private land along the valley floor surrounded by USFS land. Use of the proposed federal corridor would substantially increase the chances that a pipeline would be located near a sensitive receptor. 111-052 (cont.)

43. General Safety Comment: On a recent project we have heard complaints about use of helicopters flying at low elevations to build and patrol a transmission lines over populated areas. The concern was from a helicopter pilot who was concerned that if there was a mechanical failure with the chopper that the pilot would need someplace without people or buildings to quickly make an emergency landing without hurting anyone or damaging property. This potential impact should be briefly described in the health and safety section where lines emerge from a corridor onto private lands. 111-053

Page 3-324 Col. 2, last paragraph. If high voltage transmission lines are co-located in close proximity and parallel to a pipeline, is there an increased risk of induced shock hazard being created on the pipeline? If so, what measure can be used to mitigate the risk? (See publications such as: Shwehdi, M. H. and U. M. Johar 2003. Transmission Line EMF Interference with Buried Pipeline: Essential & Cautions. Proceedings of the International Conference on Non-Ionizing Radiation at UNITEN (ICNIR 2003). Electromagnetic Fields and Our Health 20th – 22nd October 2003. and Markovic, D, V.Smith, S.Perera, S.Elphick 2004. Modeling of the Interaction Between Gas Pipelines and Power Transmission Lines in Shared Corridors. Australasian Universities Power Engineering Conference (AUPEC 2004), 26-29 September 2004, Brisbane, Australia. School of Electrical, Computer and Telecommunications Engineering University of Wollongong, NSW 2522 Australia. This issue has come up before and we suggest that you contact Anthony Como with DOE for more information. He can be reached at (202) 586-5935). 111-054

44. Page 3-326. General Comment. From a national or regional grid reliability perspective and petroleum supply perspective, does it make sense to co-locate many facilities in a single corridor where they would be exposed to similar environmental and circumstantial factors that could adversely affect all the lines in a corridor? Would we not be putting most all our eggs in the same basket? Would a single event such as an ice storm, forest fire, fault rupture, or volcanic eruption increase the risk that the energy supply to a major market would be disrupted? Consider the ice storm that affected Quebec in 1998 and recent forest fires in Montana that removed several 500 kV circuits from service. 111-055

45. Page 3-294. The social and economic effects of energy corridor designation (the Proposed Action) are mainly going to occur in the form of a changed probability of such effects occurring as a result of large scale energy development. A change in the probability of economic and social effects is discussed briefly in section 3.12.3.3 on page 3-294, but could use more detail. Also, Section 3.12 and Appendix S do not talk enough about potential social impacts (positive and negative) from the designation. 111-056

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46. Page 3-292. To the extent that the Proposed Action increases the chances of major pipelines, transmission lines and energy generation projects in a given locale, it would increase the chances of creating the positive effects and negative effects described in Section 3.12 starting on page 3-292. It might change the probability of such effects happening by very little or by a lot, depending on the area in question. That point needs to be emphasized. Clearly, such effects cannot be quantified, as is correctly stated in this section. 111-057

47. Social effects of an increased probability of energy projects occurring (as a result of the Proposed Action) are mostly left out of Section 3.12 and Appendix S. Only property values are considered as social effects in those sections. Positive social effects that might have a greater chance of occurring as a result of the Proposed Action include increased community diversity from in-migration, economic stimulus above what would happen under No Action, an increase in the tax base, increased load-serving capacity for a given area, increased electricity reliability, and a perception of prosperity by those that have a positive view of energy development projects. Negative social effects that might have a greater chance of occurring as a result of the Proposed Action include negative perceptions by those opposed to energy development projects, a negative change on the character of the area, additional noise and stress, divisions in the community over energy development, extra services needed (already mentioned), and a perception of less control by locals over siting decisions. These effects should be included in section 3.12 and Appendix S, alongside the economics effects discussed. 111-058

48. On page 3-294 of the PEIS, second column, it is stated that: "The construction and operation of energy transport projects under each alternative would produce employment and generate income and state tax revenues and would likely require the in-migration of workers for certain occupational categories…" Be sure to clarify that benefits from potential energy projects that occur as a result of the Proposed Action include only those benefits that would occur beyond what would happen under the No Action Alternative as well. It does not include <u>all</u> economic activity that would result under the Proposed Action, as some economic activity from energy projects would likely occur under the No Action Alternative. This is an important consideration not only for Section 3.12, but also for Appendix S. It is unclear whether the numbers in Appendix S count all economic activity expected under the Proposed Action or only that activity that would occur as a result of the Proposed Action. 111-059

49. Appendix D. General Comment. The Montana Environmental Policy Act (MCA 75-1-101 et seq) is not listed under any of the tables. The Montana Environmental Policy Act would apply to any project done in a federally designated corridor. 111-060

50. Appendix E, E-17. General Comment. In Canada there is an enhanced oil recovery project that uses carbon dioxide shipped through a pipeline from North Dakota. (Behula, ND) Considering the desire and potential of carbon capture and sequestration, why is carbon dioxide not included in the impact assessment? 111-061

51. Volume III Part 1. Corridor 51-204 is not located on Map E2. Is this an oversight or is this no longer a part of the corridor designation process? 111-062

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APPENDIX B:
Potential CO_2 sequestration locations