

# Corridor 126-133

Vernal to Maybell Corridor

## Corridor Rationale

Input regarding alignment from National Grid, PacifiCorp, and the Western Utility Group during the WWEC PEIS suggested following this route. Agencies indicated that the corridor has been considered for use by several ROW applicants in Colorado. The recently authorized TransWest Express (600 kV DC) transmission line and the Energy Gateway South (500 kV) transmission line are located within the corridor.

### Corridor location:

Colorado (Moffat and Rio Blanco Co.)  
 Utah (Uintah Co.)  
 BLM: Little Snake, Vernal, and White River Field Offices  
 Regional Review Region(s): Region 3

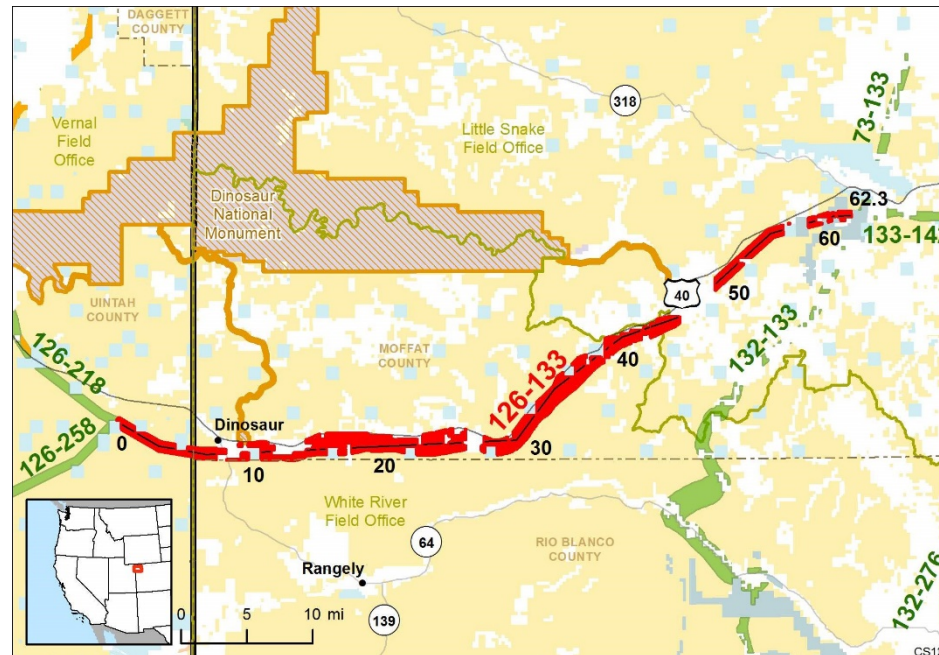
### Corridor width, length:

Width variable from 3,500 – 9,000 ft  
 38.2 miles of designated corridor  
 62.3 mile-posted route, including gaps

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

- corridor is multi-modal

### Corridor of concern (N)



### Corridor history:

- Locally designated corridor prior to 2009 (Y)
  - Locally designated in White River and Little Snake FOs
- Existing infrastructure (Y)
  - Electric transmission:
    - 120 kV, 345 kV (MP 181 to MP 202)
    - 138 kV (MP 0 to MP 2)
    - 138 kV (MP 0 to MP 62)
    - 345 kV (MP 11 to MP 62)
    - 69 kV (MP 0 to MP 2)
  - Pipelines:
    - Crude oil (MP 20 to MP 46)
  - Highways
    - U.S. 40 (MP 11 to MP 47)
- Energy potential near the corridor (Y)
  - 1 substation in corridor (MP 2)
- Corridor changes since 2009 (N)

Figure 1. Corridor 126-133

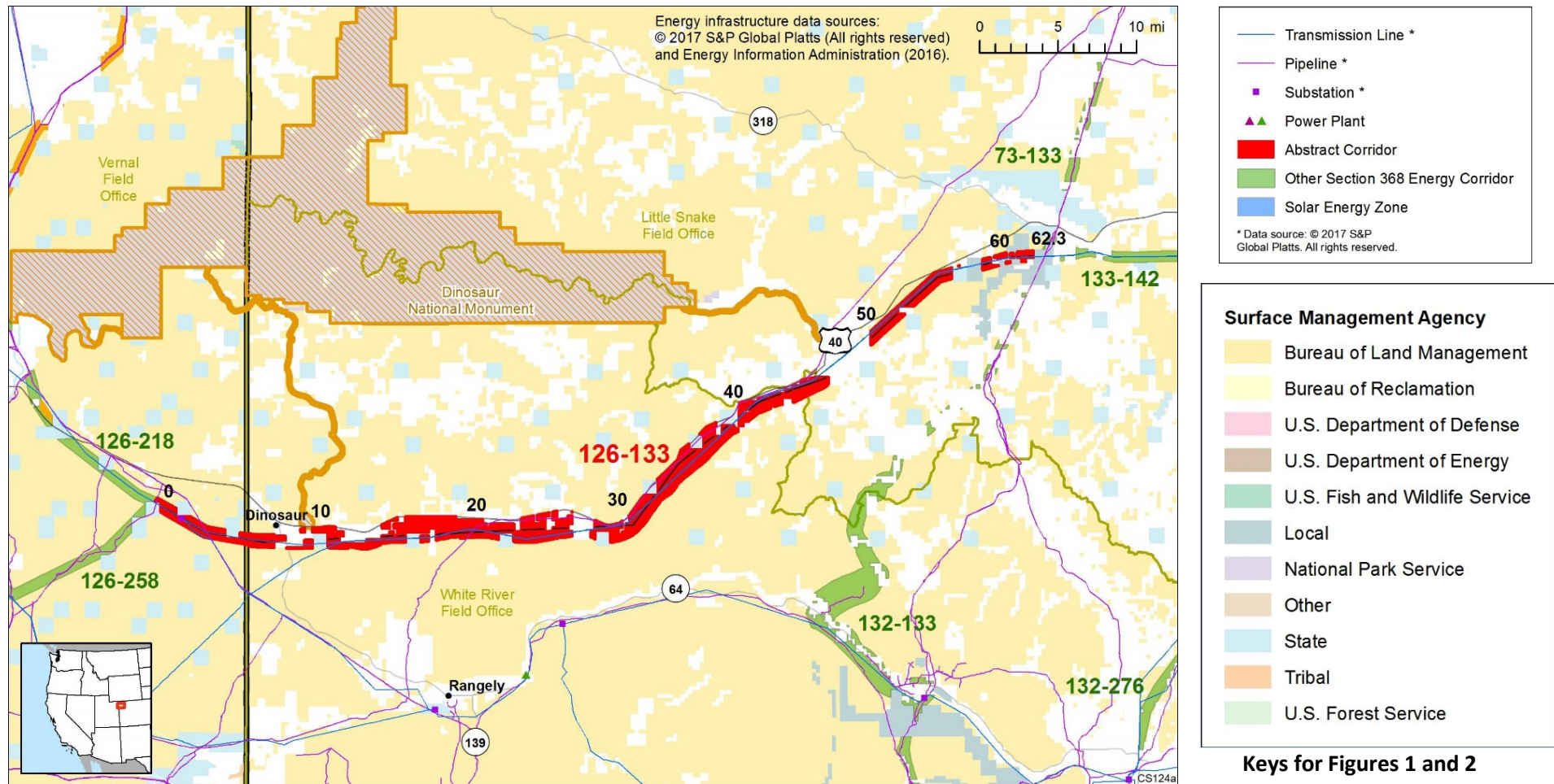
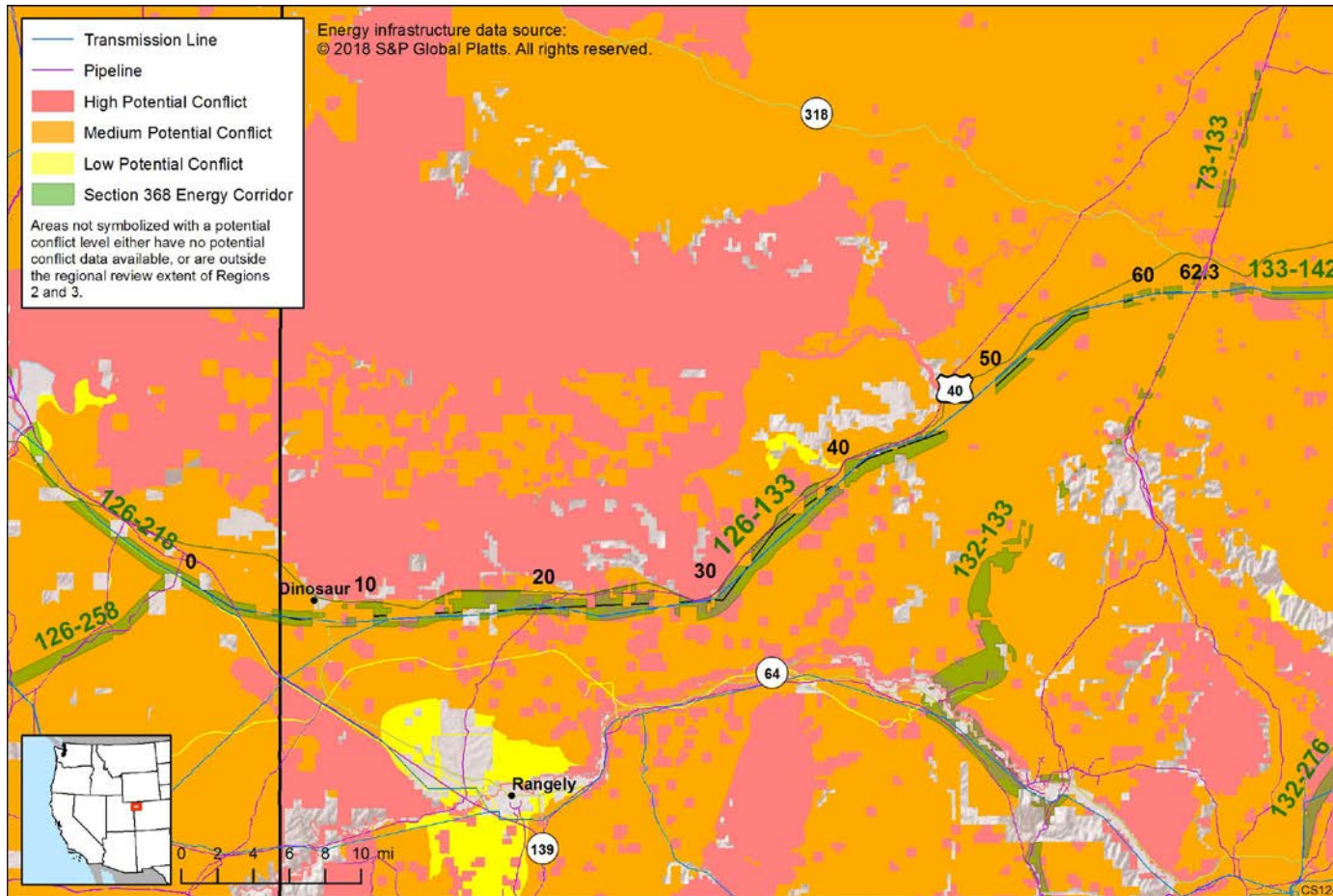


Figure 2. Corridor 126-133 and nearby electric transmission lines and pipelines



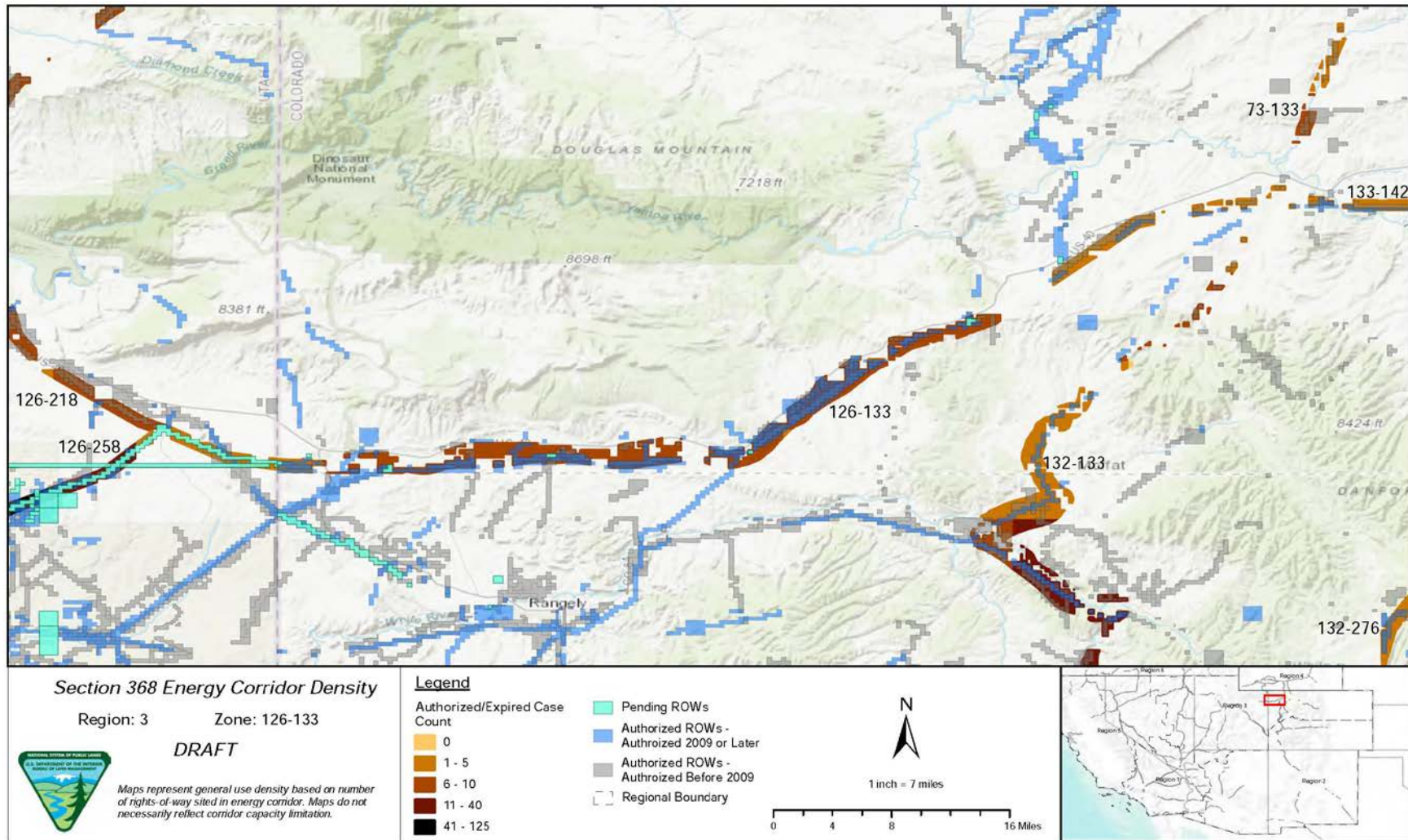
## Conflict Map Analysis



**Figure 3. Map of Conflict Areas in Vicinity of Corridor 126-133**

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

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



**Figure 4. Corridor 126-133, Corridor Density Map**

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

## General Stakeholder Feedback on Corridor Utility

The State of Utah believes that the corridor plays an important role for existing energy infrastructure in the Uintah Basin, and requests that no change are made to the existing alignment of the corridor.

## Corridor Review Table

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

CORRIDOR 126-133 REVIEW TABLE							
ID	Agency	Agency Jurisdiction	County	Primary Issue	Corridor Location (by Milepost [MP])	Source	Agency Review and Analysis <sup>1,2</sup>
<b>ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCE ISSUES</b>							
<i>Specially Designated Areas</i>							
126-133 .001	BLM	White River FO	Moffat, CO	Skull Creek WSA	MP 18 to MP 27	GIS Analysis: WSA less than 1 mi north of corridor.	WSAs are an important resource that are considered carefully during corridor planning. The corridor’s current location does not intersect the WSAs and best meets the siting principles. (1)
126-133 .002	BLM	White River FO	Moffat, CO	Willow Creek WSA	MP 15 to MP 17	GIS Analysis: WSA is adjacent to corridor.	
<i>Ecology</i>							
126-133 .003	NA	State lands	Uintah, UT	Dinosaur Milkvetch (BLM special status)	MP 0 to MP 6 (state line)	Agency Input.	Not a consideration for corridor-level planning. At the project-level, any new project would need to take important habitat into consideration. IOPs would be followed to minimize impacts. (3)
126-133 .004	BLM			GRSG (BLM special status)	Not specified.	RFI: re-route or exclude new infrastructure ROWs and avoid all new energy infrastructure development within GRSG PACs (33% overlap). Use full mitigation hierarchy to address potential impacts within 4 mi of important GRSG breeding areas. Consult closely with state fish and game Agencies and WGA to implement the full mitigation	The NWCO GRSG ARMPA: -Manage areas within PHMA as avoidance areas for BLM ROW permits. -Manage areas within GHMA as avoidance areas for major transmission lines greater than 100 kV and pipelines greater than 24 in. and minor BLM ROW permits. -PHMA and GHMA are designated as avoidance areas for high-voltage transmission line ROWs:



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		Little Snake FO  Vernal FO  White River FO and Little Snake FO	Moffat, CO  Uintah, UT  Moffat, CO	GRSG PHMA  GRSG GMHA  GRSG GMA  GRSG PHMA and GHMA in White River FO	MP 33 to MP 62  MP 2 to MP 6  MP 6 to MP 34 and MP 39 to MP 51	hierarchy for CHAT resources at "Very High" risk.  GIS Analysis: GRSG PHMA intersects corridor.  GIS Analysis: GRSG GHMA intersects corridor.  GIS Analysis: GRSG GHMA and PHMA intersects corridor.  Comment on abstract: support existing PHMA and GHMA designations. Recommend that this corridor be re-routed to avoid PHMA and GHMA. In areas where existing transmission lines are present, recommend disturbance be within the existing infrastructure footprint. If avoidance or collocation is not possible, recommend burying the transmission line and instituting compensatory mitigation.  Comment on abstract: Reroute to avoid GRSG PHMA.	-ROWs may be issued after documenting that the ROWs would not adversely affect GRSG populations -Any new projects within PHMA would be subject to the 3% disturbance cap. Within existing designated utility corridors, the 3% disturbance cap may be exceeded at the project scale if the site-specific NEPA analysis indicates that a net conservation gain to the species will be achieved. (3)  The Agencies could consider an opportunity to revise the corridor to avoid negative impacts on active GRSG leks. Opportunities could include re-routing the corridor, changing the corridor designation to underground only, or locating projects north of existing lines. (2) The location of a new proposal will be open for consideration on a case-by-case basis with stipulations identified during activity level environmental reviews. The BLM will remain in close consultation with the State and USFWS regarding GRSG habitat and adhere to NWCO GRSG ARMPA.
126-133 .005				Black-footed Ferret and White-tailed Prairie Dog	Not specified.	Agency Input: the corridor passes through Black-footed Ferret reintroduction site and expansive White-tailed Prairie Dog colonies.  Comment on abstract: Reroute to avoid White-tailed Prairie Dog colonies. Corridor intersects	Controlled Surface Use for Black-footed Ferret management area.  This corridor location within the current range where these species may occur is not easily resolved or avoided by corridor-level planning. Further analysis to determine the presence of all species occurring within the area

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						Black-footed Ferret reintroduction site and expansive White-tailed Prairie Dog colonies.	will be considered outside of corridor-level planning. (3)
126-133 .006				Special status species	Not specified.	<p>Comments on abstract: threatened and endangered species that may occur along this corridor include Black-footed Ferret, Mexican Spotted Owl, Colorado River fishes (Bonytail Chub, Colorado Pikeminnow, Humpback Chub, and Razorback Sucker), and Ute Ladies'-tresses. Colorado River fishes may be impacted by direct impacts from stream crossings and water depletions. Projects taking place in this corridor may require ESA Section 7 consultation with the USFWS. We recommend that projects within this corridor are evaluated for impacts to listed species and their habitats, and measures are included to avoid, minimize, and mitigate impacts.</p> <p>Conduct further analysis to determine the presence of abovementioned species.</p>	This corridor location within the current range where these species may occur is not easily resolved or avoided by corridor-level planning because alternate routes would still require siting through the current range of these species. Further analysis to determine the presence of all species occurring within the area will be considered outside of corridor-level planning. (3)
126-133 .007	BLM	White River FO	Moffat, CO	Elk and Mule Deer	Not specified.	Agency Input: the corridor passes through both Elk and Mule Deer winter concentration areas and severe winter ranges.	Ungulate winter habitat is an important consideration but further analysis of the species is not a consideration for corridor-level planning. (3)

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<b>Air Quality</b>							
126-133 .008	EPA	EPA	Uintah	Ozone NAAQS non-attainment designation pending	Entire corridor	Agency Input: this section of the corridor could occur within a non-attainment area.	Not a consideration for corridor-level planning. At the project-level, any new project would need to take non-attainment into consideration. IOPs would be followed to minimize fugitive dust generation. (1)
<b>Paleontological Resources</b>							
126-133 .009	BLM	Vernal FO	Uintah, UT	PFYC Class 4	MP 0 to MP 3 and MP 5 to MP 6	GIS Analysis: PFYC Class 4 areas intersect designated corridor  Agency Input. Corridor crosses the Mancos Shale (Cretaceous) which may have marine vertebrates PFYC 3. Large fossil vertebrates may be encountered. Where the corridor crosses Raven Ridge, the Wasatch Formation (Eocene) has produced many microvertebrate sites.	The identified potential of paleontological resources is a concern for the Agencies that cannot be resolved during corridor-level planning. Assessments will occur as part of the ROW application process. (3)
<b>Lands with Wilderness Characteristics</b>							
126-133 .010	BLM	Vernal FO and White River FO	Uintah, UT and Moffat, CO	Lands with wilderness characteristics	MP 0 to MP 3, MP 13 to MP 15 (Coal Oil Gulch), and MP 30 to MP 38 (Lower Wolf Creek).	GIS Analysis: lands with wilderness characteristics intersects corridor (Coal Oil Gulch and Lower Wolf Creek).	About half of the corridor has been surveyed. No lands with wilderness characteristics were found. The eastern half of the corridor to the state line has not been surveyed. No lands with wilderness characteristics are likely to be found due to the number of existing roads which bisect the area into parcels smaller than 5,000 acres.  The BLM retains broad discretion regarding the multiple use management of lands possessing wilderness characteristics without Wilderness or WSA designations. As such, land possessing the characteristics of wilderness are not



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							<p>subject to the legal thresholds or other statutory obligations specified for congressionally designated Wilderness and WSAs. There are necessities that warrant land use and thus rationalize energy corridors as meeting the best siting principles, which include maximizing utility while minimizing impacts. In locations where the BLM is not managing lands with wilderness characteristics with protective allocations, project level planning will still consider ways to minimize or avoid impacts while meeting the purpose and need of various types of land use including energy projects. Furthermore, the impairment of wilderness characteristics does not, in and of itself, constitute a significant impact; or on its own, warrant the relocation of a corridor or corridor segment. BLM must consider all resources and resource uses and carefully weigh the current value for the present generation as well as for future generations. At this time, given the information available the corridor is determined as best meeting the siting principles of the settlement agreement. (1)</p>
126-133 .011	BLM	White River FO	Moffat, CO	Lands with wilderness characteristics	MP 13  MP 13 to MP 15	<p>RFI: Coal Oil Gulch and Lower Wolf Creek.</p> <p>Agency Input: lands with wilderness characteristics Unit 22-Coal Oil Gulch.</p> <p>Comment on abstract: corridor intersects with BLM wilderness-</p>	<p>Managed as a ROW avoidance area. Managed to emphasize other multiple uses while applying management restrictions to reduce impacts on wilderness characteristics. Topographic screening may be applied, roads will not bisect the unit, visuals resources will be managed similar to VRM Class II, and timing restrictions on use</p>

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						quality lands. 184 acres overlap (Coal Oil Gulch-BLM).  Exclude energy corridors from all wilderness-quality lands.	of helicopters may be applied during big game hunting seasons. Mitigation would be applied at the project level on a case-by-case basis. (3)
126-133 .012	BLM	White River FO	Moffat, CO	Lands with wilderness characteristics	MP 30 to MP 38	Agency Input: lands with wilderness characteristics Unit 25-Lower Wolf Creek.  Comment on abstract: Corridor intersects with BLM wilderness-quality lands. 2,111 acres overlap (Lower Wolf Creek-BLM).	Managed as a ROW avoidance area. Managed to emphasize other multiple uses while applying management restrictions to reduce impacts on wilderness characteristics. Topographic screening may be applied, roads will not bisect the unit, visuals resources will be managed similar to VRM Class II, and timing restrictions on use of helicopters may be applied during big game hunting seasons. Mitigation would be applied at the project level on a case-by-case basis. (3)
<b>Visual Resources</b>							
126-133 .013	BLM	White River FO	Moffat, CO	VRM Class I	MP 15 to MP 17	GIS Analysis: VRM Class I area is adjacent to corridor.	The corridor does not cross any VRM Class I areas. (1)
126-133 .014	BLM	White River FO	Moffat, CO	VRM Class I	MP 6 to MP 8, MP 14 to MP 15, and MP 17 to MP 27  MP 15 to MP 17	GIS Analysis: VRM Class I area is as close as 1,100 ft north of corridor.  Agency Input: corridor is nearly adjacent to VRM Class I area of Willow Creek WSA	
126-133 .015	BLM	White River FO	Moffat, CO	VRM Class II	MP 11 to MP 12, MP 15 to MP 19, MP 23 to MP 24, MP 25, MP 26, MP 28 to MP 30, and MP 31 to MP 33	GIS Analysis: VRM Class II areas adjacent to corridor.	The corridor does not cross any VRM Class II areas. (1)
126-133 .016	BLM	Vernal FO, White River FO, and Little Snake FO	Uintah, UT and Moffat, CO	VRM Class III	Entire length of corridor  MP 10	GIS Analysis: VRM Class III areas and corridor intersect.  Agency Input: corridor is adjacent to Dinosaur NM.	VRM Class III allows for moderate change to the characteristic landscape, although minimizing visual contrast remains a requirement. Management activities may attract the attention of

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							the casual observer, but shall not dominate the view. (1)
<b>Tribal Concerns</b>							
126-133 .017	BLM			Ute Reservation	Not specified.	Agency Input: The majority of this corridor in Utah is within the exterior boundaries of the Ute Reservation, even though it is on BLM-managed lands	The Ute Tribe considers those lands to be “surplus” lands and are seeking those lands to be restored to them administratively, which they have requested. (3)
<b>Land Use Concerns</b>							
<b>Corridor pinched by BLM or USFS authorized use</b>							
126-133 .018	BLM	Vernal FO	Uintah, UT	Collocation of transmission lines and pipelines	Entire corridor	Agency Input: incompatibility of pipelines with transmission line projects has been an issue in the Vernal FO.	Cathodic protection of the pipelines as well as separation distances between the two will be necessary for collocation of power lines and pipelines. There is an existing project design IOP that requires designing the project to avoid accelerating the corrosion of the pipelines and/or pumping wells. (1)
<b>Public Access and Recreation</b>							
126-133 .019	BLM	White River FO	Moffat, CO	Dinosaur Diamond Prehistoric Highway	MP 8	GIS Analysis: State scenic highway intersects corridor.	Coordination with UDOT would be required to identify any management prescriptions related to the scenic highway. (3)
<b>Other noted land use concerns</b>							
126-133 .020	NPS	Dinosaur NM	Moffat, CO	Dinosaur NM	MP 10	GIS Analysis: the corridor passes to the south of the Dinosaur NM boundary, entrance road, and visitor center near the town of Dinosaur.  Comment on abstract: recommend that the Agencies improve their analysis and treatment of potential impacts to Dinosaur NM. Provide more details on potential impacts and	Corridor does not intersect the Dinosaur National Monument and best meets the siting principles. (1)



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						commit to addressing them through the Regional Reviews.	
126-133 .021	State	Colorado Parks and Wildlife		Conservation easements	Not specified.	Comment on abstract: corridor crosses private lands encumbered by conservation easements or CPW-owned properties, which are managed for wildlife, wildlife related recreation, and other recreational uses. In many instances corridor development would be incompatible with the purpose for which those properties were acquired and are managed. Recommend avoiding CPW properties for corridor alignments, otherwise close pre-planning and coordination with CPW staff would be required. In instances where an easement prohibits corridor development and avoidance of the parcel is not possible, and the exercise of Eminent Domain may result, then the lost conservation values due to corridor development must be compensated for and replaced.	BLM can only authorize land uses on public land. Any gaps between public lands within a new proposal would have to be coordinated with those landowners/managers. Since the corridor is centered on the existing ROWs/easements, additional uses may be compatible within that footprint, depending on how the conservation easements and the easements across non-BLM managed lands are written.
126-133 .022	NA	Private lands	Utah	Agricultural lands	Not specified.	Comment on abstract: energy development may have impact on agriculture in adjacent areas if not developed and maintained properly (e.g., invasive and noxious weed species). Ensure that all developments, changes, or alterations to energy corridors do not adversely affect agriculture and domestic	Corridor-level planning does not entail the detail necessary to prescribe operation and maintenance procedures on hypothetical projects or corridor revisions. The concern will be addressed with specific, current information at the time of energy development proposal(s). (3)

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						livestock grazing in the affected areas.	

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

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

### Abstract Acronyms and Abbreviations

BLM = Bureau of Land Management; CHAT = Crucial Habitat Assessment Tool; CPW = Colorado Parks and Wildlife; EPA = Environmental Protection Agency; ESA = Endangered Species Act; FO = Field Office; GIS = geographic information system; GHMA = General Habitat Management Area; GRSG = Greater Sage-grouse; IOP = interagency operating procedure; MP = milepost; NAAQS = National Ambient Air Quality Standards; NM = National Monument; NPS = National Park Service; PAC = Priority Area for Conservation; PEIS = Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement; PFYC = Potential Fossil Yield Classification; PHMA = Priority Habitat Management Area; RFI = request for information; ROW = right-of-way; UDOT = Utah Department of Transportation; USFS = U.S. Forest Service; USFWS = U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; VRM = Visual Resource Management; WGA = Western Governors’ Association; WSA = Wilderness Study Area; WWEC = West-wide Energy Corridor.