Corridor 16-24

Black Rock Desert to Oregon

Corridor Purpose and Rationale

The corridor provides a pathway for energy transport from Nevada into Oregon. The corridor connects multiple Section 368 energy corridors, creating a corridor network across BLM- and USFS-administered lands from Carson City, Nevada north into Oregon and Boise, Idaho. Input regarding alignment from the American Wind Energy Association, Idaho Power Company, and Rocky Mountain Area Transmission Study during the WWEC PEIS suggested following this route. There are no major pending ROWs for transmission line or pipeline projects within the corridor at this time. There is interest in potential solar and geothermal development in and around the Winnemucca area. The BLM is in the beginning stages of potential geothermal project re-activation (Star Peak) and project development (North Valley and Baltazor) which would need tie in connections to existing transmission lines.

Corridor location:
Nevada (Humboldt, Pershing, and Washoe Co.) and Oregon (Malheur Co.)
BLM: Black Rock, Humboldt, and Jordan Field Offices
Regional Review Regions: Region 5 and Region 6

Corridor width, length:
Width 2,640 ft (MP 0 to MP 41.8); 3,500 ft the rest
142 miles of designated corridor
195 miles of posted route, including gaps

Designated Use:
- corridor is multi-modal

Corridor of concern (Y)
Wilderness, NCA, National Historic Place, BLM WSA (in Oregon).

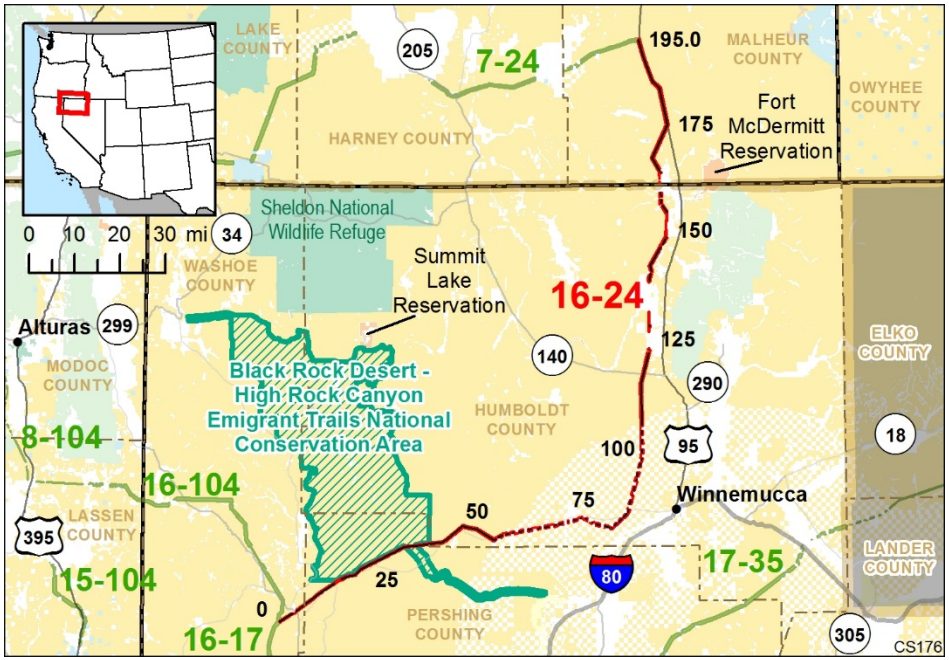
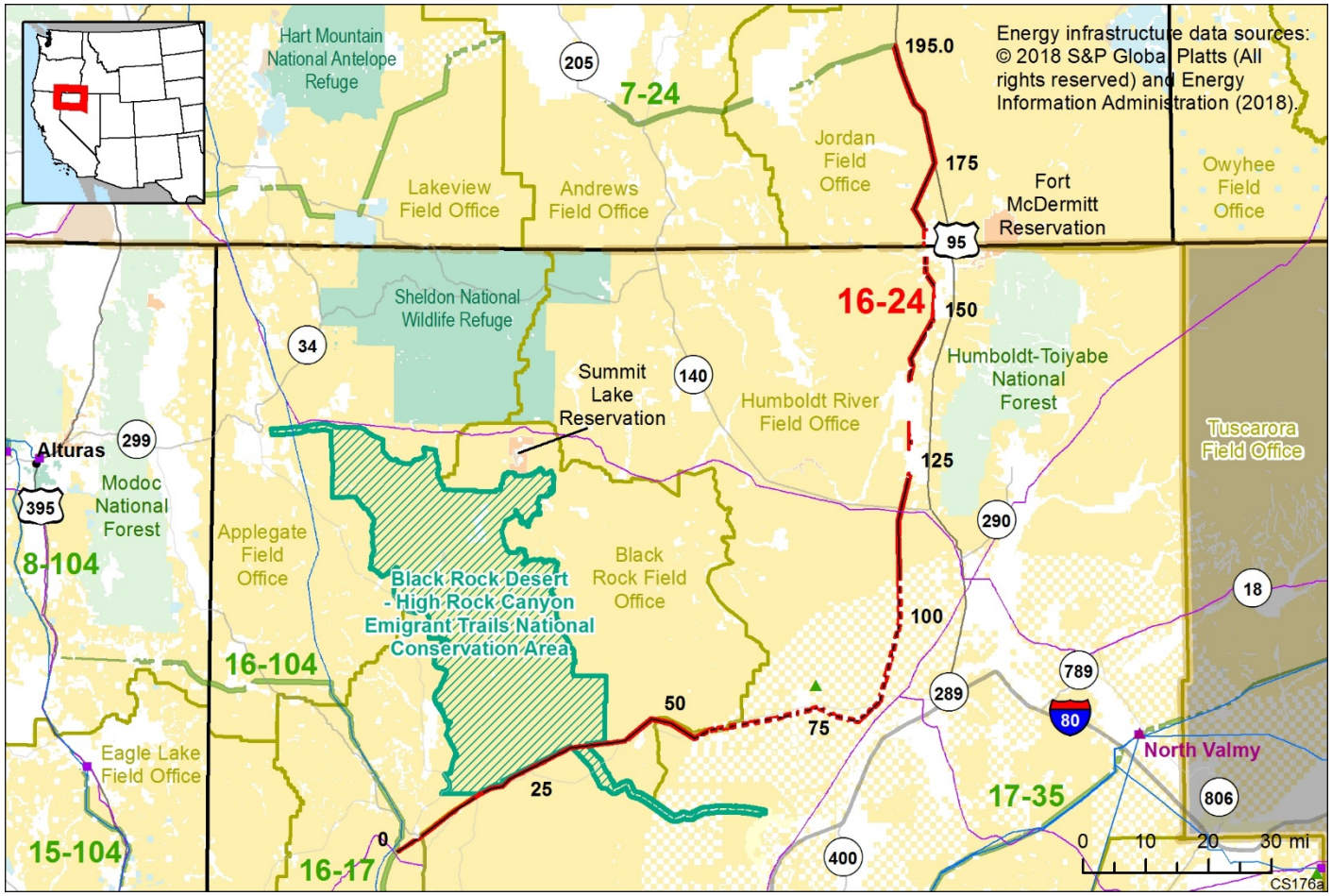
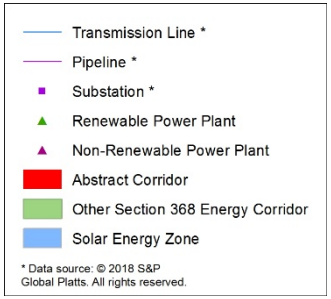


Figure 1. Corridor 16-24

Corridor history:
- Locally designated prior to 2009 (Y)
- Existing infrastructure (Y)
  - 60-, 115- and 120-kV transmission lines are within and adjacent to portions of the corridor.
  - I-95 is within and adjacent to a portion of the corridor.
- Energy potential near the corridor (Y)
  - A geothermal power plant is within 3 mi.
  - 3 substations are within the corridor and 12 more substations are within 5 mi of the corridor.
- Corridor changes since 2009 (N)





Keys for Figures 1 and 2

Figure 2. Corridor 16-24 and nearby electric transmission lines and pipelines

Conflict Map Analysis

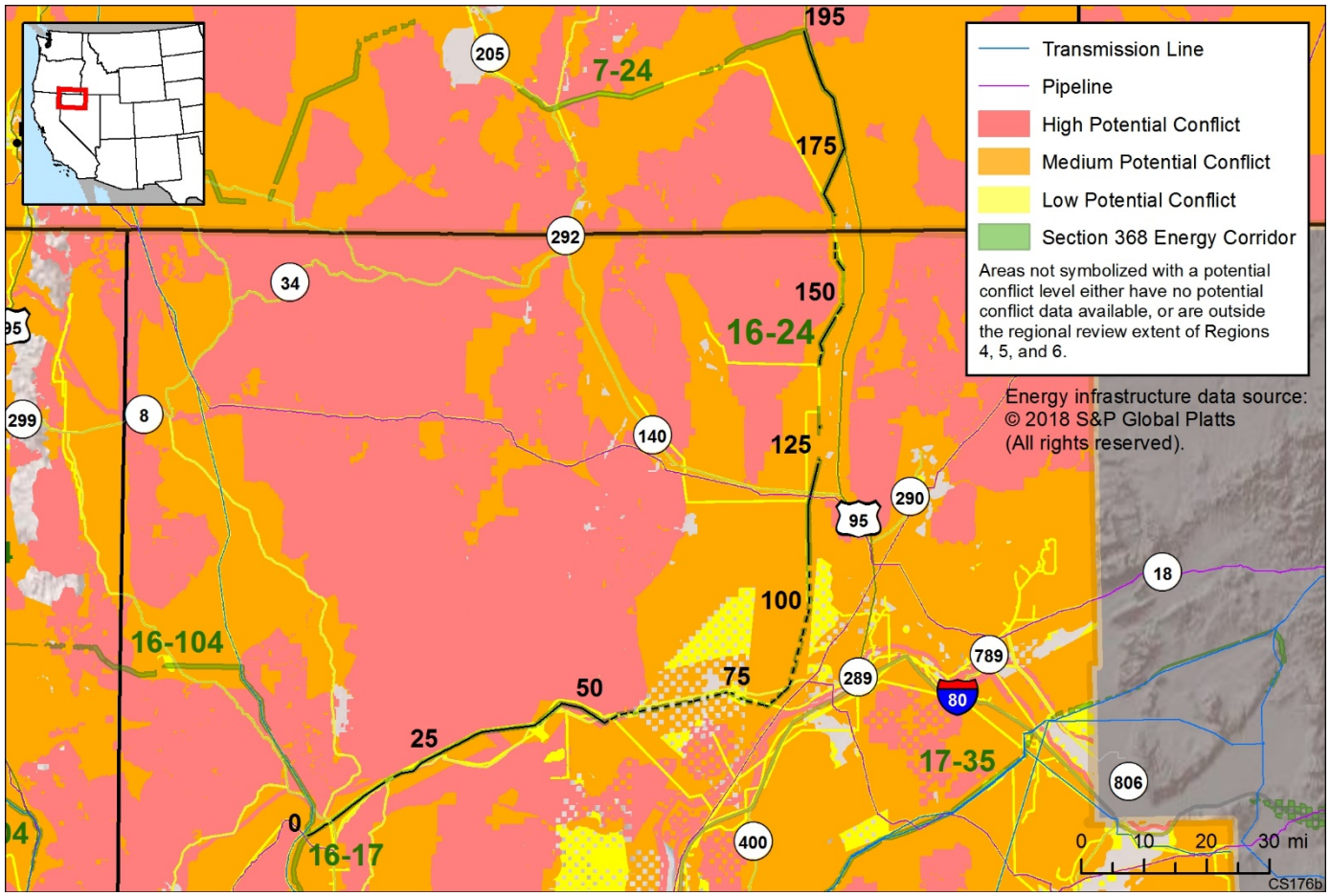


Figure 3. Map of Conflict Areas in Vicinity of Corridor 16-24

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

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

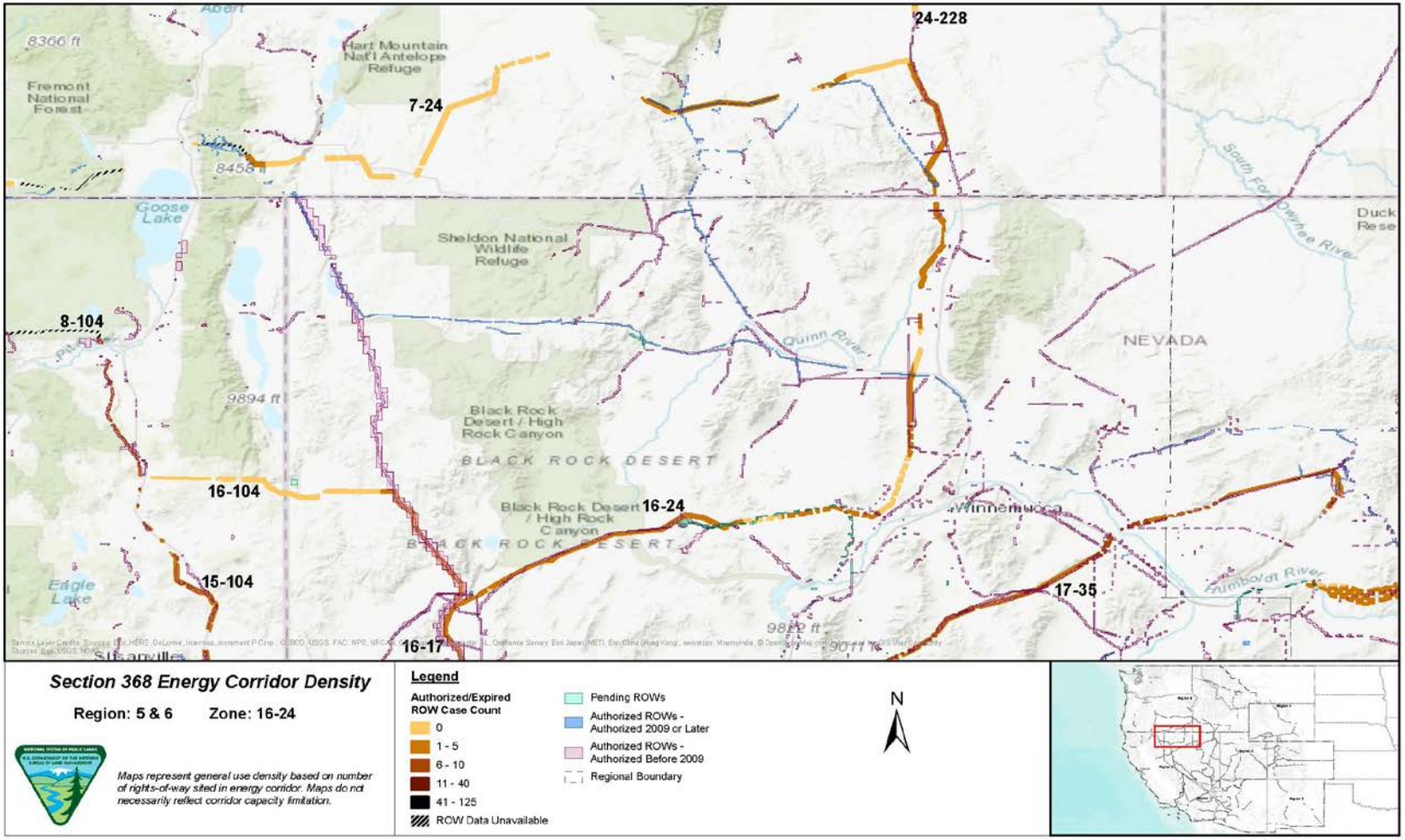


Figure 4. Corridor 16-24, Corridor Density Map

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

Corridor Review Table

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

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

CORRIDOR 16-24 REVIEW			
POTENTIAL COMPATIBILITY ISSUES or CONCERNS TO EXAMINE	**MILEPOST (MP)[1]**	**STAKEHOLDER INPUT and OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION**	**POTENTIAL RESOLUTIONS BASED ON SITING PRINCIPLE ANALYSIS [2]**
BLM Jurisdiction: *Winnemucca District Office* ***Agency Land Use Plan:*** *Winnemucca District Planning Area RMP (2015)*			
VRM Class I area is adjacent to the corridor – The VRM Class I area is the Selenite Mountains WSA. The RMP does not prescribe ROW avoidance or exclusions for areas adjacent to VRM Class I areas.	MP 10 to MP 15		The corridor location appears to best meet the siting principles. The corridor is collocated with an existing transmission line, minimizing impacts on the VRM Class I area. Because the corridor is not located in the VRM Class I area development and management inside of the corridor would not be affected. However, the Agencies could consider shifting the corridor to the north at this location to further minimize potential impacts on the VRM Class I area.
Selenite Mountains WSA and the corridor are adjacent – The RMP does not prescribe ROW avoidance or exclusions for areas adjacent to WSAs.	MP 12 to MP 15	Under the Wilderness Act (1964), a WSA must be managed as Wilderness pending final determination by Congress. It is highly unlikely that utility ROWs could be approved in Wilderness Areas or WSAs.	The corridor location appears to best meet the siting principles. The corridor is collocated with an existing transmission line, minimizing impacts on the WSA. Because the corridor is not located in the WSA development and management inside of the corridor would not be affected. However, the Agencies could consider shifting the corridor to the north at this location to further minimize potential impacts on the WSA.
California NHT and the corridor intersect – The RMP does not prescribe ROW avoidance or exclusions for areas within the California NHT. The corridor crosses a high potential segment (Nobles Trail Junction to Granite Peak).	MP 21	The corridor crosses and does not follow the California NHT, although it parallels the California NHT for four miles in areas with broad visibility. The National Trails System Act, as cited in the Comprehensive Plan for	NHT high potential segments may not be compatible with the corridor's purpose as a preferred location for energy infrastructure. However, the intersection with the trail is generally perpendicular to the corridor and cannot be avoided. At this location the corridor is collocated with a

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		the California NHT (1999)[3], states that the Secretary of the Interior or the Secretary of Agriculture may grant easements and rights-of-way upon, over, under, across, or along any component of the national trails system in accordance with the laws applicable to the national forest system, provided that any conditions contained in such easements and rights-of-way are related to the policy and purposes of this Act. For high potential route segments, the National Trails System Act states: Federally owned sites and segments of these trails are considered federal protection components and should receive special attention by managing agencies to enhance their trail-related values. Comment on abstract: putting the transmission lines underground would solve the negative visual impact. An alternative would be to move the corridor to the south where there is an existing corridor that is further out of view.	transmission line and a railroad runs generally parallel to the northern corridor border. Agencies could consider a new IOP for NSTs and NHTs to enhance BMPs for proposed development within the energy corridor.
BLM Jurisdiction: *Winnemucca and Surprise Field Office* ***Agency Land Use Plan:*** *Black Rock Desert-High Rock Canyon Emigrant Trails NCA and Associated Wilderness, and Other Contiguous Lands in Nevada ROD and RMP (2004)*			
Black Rock Desert - High Rock Canyon Emigrant Trails NCA and the corridor intersect – The corridor is one of two designated corridors within the NCA.	MP 33 to MP 35 (intersects)	The area of the NCA that is intersected by the corridor is a fingerlike extension that crosses the	The corridor is narrowed near the Black Rock Desert-High Rock Canyon Emigrant Trails NCA to minimize impacts. There is no opportunity to avoid the NCA extension area

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The area of intersection is 2.75-mi wide with the Union Pacific rail line located at its northern edge. No other utility corridors will be established in the planning area.	MP 15 to MP 33 and MP 35 to MP 38 (adjacent)	corridor at a generally perpendicular angle. Comment on abstract: Black Rock Desert-High Rock Canyon Emigrant Trails NCA overlaps 1,419 acres of the corridor.	because it extends about 30 miles from the location of intersection with the corridor. Crossing the corridor at an angle limits potential impacts on the NCA.
California NHT and the corridor intersect - The RMP does not prescribe ROW avoidance or exclusions for areas within the California NHT. The corridor crosses a high potential segment (Lassen Meadows to Pothole Springs).	MP 34	At MP 34, the corridor crosses a segment of the California NHT, which is also designated as the Four Trails Feasibility Study Trail at this location. The intersection is in an area with broad visibility. The National Trails System Act, as cited in the Comprehensive Plan for the California NHT (1999)[3], states that the Secretary of the Interior or the Secretary of Agriculture may grant easements and rights-of-way upon, over, under, across, or along any component of the national trails system in accordance with the laws applicable to the national forest system, provided that any conditions contained in such easements and rights-of-way are related to the policy and purposes of this Act. For high potential route segments, the National Trails System Act states: Federally owned sites and segments of these trails are considered federal protection components and should	NHT high potential segments may not be compatible with the corridor's purpose as a preferred location for energy infrastructure. However, the intersection with the trail is generally perpendicular to the corridor and cannot be avoided. At this location the corridor is located near existing infrastructure (a railroad runs parallel to the northern corridor border). Agencies could consider a new IOP for NSTs and NHTs to enhance BMPs for proposed development within the energy corridor.

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		receive special attention by managing agencies to enhance their trail-related values.	
Four Trails Feasibility Study Trail and the corridor intersect – The RMP does not reference the Four Trails Feasibility Study Trail since it pre-dates the 2009 legislation designating the Study Trail (Public Law 111-11).	MP 34	At MP 34, the corridor intersects the Applegate Trail (identified in the RMP as a NHT – see above). The Act (Public Law 111-11; 2009) directs the Secretary of the Interior to revise the original feasibility studies of the Oregon, Mormon Pioneer, California, and Pony Express NHTs. BLM Manual 6280 directs the BLM to maintain the values, characteristics, and settings for which the trail was recommended as suitable.	The intersection with the Study Trail is generally perpendicular to the corridor and cannot be avoided. At this location the corridor is located near existing infrastructure (a railroad runs parallel to the northern corridor border). Agencies could consider a new IOP for NSTs and NHTs to enhance BMPs for proposed development within the energy corridor.
VRM Class II areas and the corridor intersect - The RMP does not prescribe ROW avoidance or exclusions for VRM Class II areas. . The objective of VRM Class II designation is to retain the existing character of the landscape.	MP 46 to MP 59		Areas with the VRM Class II designation may not be compatible with future overhead transmission line development in this section of the corridor that does not have existing infrastructure. The Agencies could consider changing the VRM designation, or shifting the corridor to the south between MP 44 and MP 50 to collocate it with an existing 60 kV transmission line and avoid the VRM II area. Between MP 50 and MP 59 the corridor could be shifted to other federal lands to avoid the VRM Class II area, but it would then not be collocated with the existing transmission line.
BLM Jurisdiction: *Vale District Office* ***Agency Land Use Plan:*** *Southeastern Oregon RMP (2002)*			
Lands with wilderness characteristics and lands with undetermined status for wilderness characteristics intersect and are adjacent to the corridor.	MP 167 to MP 195	At MP 167 the corridor parts from an existing 115 kV transmission line to join I-95 at MP 175. From MP 175 to MP 195 the corridor is collocated with	The corridor location appears to best meet siting principles. The corridor is partially collocated with I-95, and, for the most part, the corridor cannot be shifted to avoid the lands with wilderness characteristics because

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		I-95. Routing the corridor away from the existing transmission line also increases the distance from the Oregon Canyon WSA and the Twelve Mile Creek WSA. BLM Manual Section 6320 (Considering lands with wilderness characteristics in the BLM Land Use Planning Process), 3/15, 2012, provides policy and guidance for considering lands with wilderness characteristics in land use planning under FLPMA. Comment on abstract: Blue Mountain lands with wilderness characteristics overlaps the corridor 1,039 acres from MP 177 to MP 190 and 125 acres from MP 189 to MP 190.	those lands are located along both sides of the corridor. From MP 185 to MP 188, the corridor could be shifted to the west to avoid lands with wilderness characteristics; while the corridor could be shifted to the east at MP 189 to MP 190 to reduce the amount of intersection with lands with wilderness characteristics. The BLM retains broad discretion regarding the multiple use management of lands possessing wilderness characteristics without Wilderness or WSA designations. Agencies could consider a new IOP to assist with avoiding and/or minimizing impacts to developing energy infrastructure on lands with wilderness characteristics.
VRM Class I area is adjacent to the corridor – The VRM Class I area is the Bowden Hills WSA. The RMP does not prescribe ROW avoidance or exclusions for areas adjacent to VRM Class I areas.	MP 192 to MP 195		The corridor location appears to best meet the siting principles. The corridor is collocated with I-95, minimizing impacts on the VRM Class I area. Because the corridor is not located in the VRM Class I area development and management inside of the corridor would not be affected. However, the Agencies could consider shifting the corridor to the west at this location to further minimize potential impacts on the VRM Class I area.
Bowden Hills WSA and the corridor are adjacent – The RMP does not prescribe ROW avoidance or exclusions for areas adjacent to WSAs.	MP 192 to MP 195	Under the Wilderness Act (1964), a WSA must be managed as Wilderness pending final determination by Congress. It is highly unlikely that utility ROWs could be approved in Wilderness Areas or WSAs.	The corridor location appears to best meet the siting principles. The corridor is collocated with I-95, minimizing impacts on the WSA. Because the corridor is not located in the WSA development and management inside of the corridor would not be affected. However, the Agencies could consider shifting the corridor to the west at this

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			location to further minimize potential impacts on the WSA.
BLM Jurisdiction: *Winnemucca District Office* ***Agency Land Use Plan:*** *Nevada and Northeastern California GRSG ROD and ARMPA –March 2019*			
GRSG GHMA (ROW avoidance area) and the corridor intersect – The 2019 ARMPA indicates that PHMA and GHMA areas are designated as major pipeline (≥24-inch diameter) ROW avoidance areas, unless the major pipeline meets one of the allocation exception criteria outlined (in MD SSS 5). The ARMPA also states that collocating new infrastructure within or next to existing infrastructure is a priority when PHMA and GHMA areas cannot be avoided	MP 138 to MP 139 and MP 154 to MP 160	RFI comment: re-route or exclude new infrastructure ROWs and avoid all new energy infrastructure development within GRSG PACs (12% overlap). Use full mitigation hierarchy to avoid, minimize, and compensate for impacts within four miles of important GRSG breeding areas. Comment on abstract: acceptable modifications to re-route this corridor and avoid Sage-grouse impacts would be unlikely. The Agencies should delete this corridor.	ROW avoidance areas are not compatible with the corridor's purpose as a preferred location for infrastructure. From MP 138 to MP 139 the corridor could be shifted west to avoid the GHMA while keeping the existing transmission line on the eastern edge of corridor. Between MP 154 and MP 160, the corridor could be shifted east to align with the existing transmission line, which could minimize but not eliminate impacts on GHMA habitat. Required Design Features identified in the ARMPA would be required for future development within the corridor where it intersects PHMAs.
BLM Jurisdiction: *Vale District Office* ***Agency Land Use Plan:*** *Oregon GRSG ROD and ARMPA –March 2019*			
GRSG GHMA (ROW avoidance area) and the corridor intersect – The 2019 ARMPA did not make changes to GHMA in Oregon; designated utility corridors in GHMA may be available for utility ROWs with special stipulations.	MP 160 to MP 161, MP 167 to MP 169, and MP 191 to MP 195	RFI comment: corridor traverses a large area of priority GRSG habitat that provides critical habitat connectivity for GRSG populations in Malheur and Harney Counties. Due to the configuration of priority GRSG habitat in this region, acceptable modifications to reroute this corridor and avoid GRSG impacts would be unlikely. Re-route or exclude new infrastructure ROWs and avoid all new energy infrastructure development within GRSG PACs (12% overlap). Use full mitigation hierarchy to avoid, minimize, and compensate	ROW avoidance areas are not compatible with the corridor's purpose as a preferred location for infrastructure. In some locations, it may be possible to shift the corridor to avoid or decrease the GHMA intersections while still collocating with the existing infrastructure. In other locations, the GHMA encompasses a broad area on both sides of the corridor that cannot be avoided.

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		for impacts within four miles of important GRSG breeding areas. Comment on abstract: acceptable modifications to re-route this corridor and avoid Sage-grouse impacts would be unlikely. The Agencies should delete this corridor. Comment on abstract: collocate with existing transmission to the west. This shift would avoid and/or minimize new impacts to GRSG PHMAs, in favor of collocating in an area where impacts are already realized.	
GRSG PHMA (ROW avoidance area) and the corridor intersect. The 2019 ARMPA did not make changes to PHMA in Oregon; designated utility corridors in GHMA may be available for utility ROWs with special stipulations.	MP 165 to MP 167 and MP 175 to MP 191	RFI comment: corridor traverses a large area of priority GRSG habitat that provides critical habitat connectivity for GRSG populations in Malheur and Harney Counties. Due to the configuration of priority GRSG habitat in this region, acceptable modifications to reroute this corridor and avoid GRSG impacts would be unlikely. Re-route or exclude new infrastructure ROWs and avoid all new energy infrastructure development within GRSG PACs (12% overlap). Use full mitigation hierarchy to avoid, minimize, and compensate for impacts within four miles of important GRSG breeding areas. Comment on abstract: the corridor crosses large areas of PHMA. The	ROW avoidance areas are not compatible with the corridor's purpose as a preferred location for infrastructure. In some locations, it may be possible to shift the corridor to avoid or decrease the PHMA intersections, although this would minimize or eliminate collocating with the existing infrastructure. In other locations, the PHMA encompasses a broad area on both sides of the corridor that cannot be avoided. Areas of corridor intersection with PHMAs occur in collocated areas where impacts are already realized (collocated with an existing transmission line from MP 165 to MP 167 and with I-95 from MP 175 to MP 191).

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		corridor traverses a large area of PHMA that provided critical habitat connectivity for GRSG populations in Malheur and Harney counties. Due to the configuration of PHMA habitat in this region, acceptable modification to reroute this corridor and avoid GRSG impacts would be unlikely. The Agencies should delete this corridor. Comment on abstract: recommend shifting the corridor along MP 165 to MP 195 to collocate with the existing transmission line to the west to avoid and/or minimize new impacts to GRSG core and low-density habitats (PHMAs) in favor of collocating in an area where impacts are already realized.	

[1] Mileposts are rounded to the nearest mile.

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

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

Additional Compatibility Concerns

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

Corridor Revision:

- The Agencies should consider adjusting the corridor to follow the existing transmission line further south; if the corridor can't be adjusted to follow the existing transmission line, the Agencies should delete the corridor (comment on abstract).

Agency Analysis: In some places the corridor can be re-routed to better align with the existing transmission line.

Jurisdictional Concern:

- The corridor crosses towns and private land in corridor gaps.

*Analysis***:** The Agencies should consider shifting the corridor south from MP 3 to MP 5 to avoid the town of Gerlach. The Agencies should consider shifting the corridor north from MP 15 to MP 17 so that the existing infrastructure is the southern border instead of the northern border to avoid private land. The Agencies could consider shifting the corridor to the east from MP 139 to MP 140 and MP 155 to MP 158 along existing infrastructure to avoid corridor gaps.

Lands with wilderness characteristics:

- Citizens' Wilderness Proposal: Ten Mile Creek (RFI comment). The corridor crosses BLM lands with wilderness characteristics and 6 citizen-proposed wilderness areas (RFI comment).
- This corridor should be deleted as a Section 368 corridor by BLM during subsequent land-use planning and environmental review processes (comment on abstract).

*Analysis***:** The BLM's current inventory findings will be used in land use planning analyses related to the revision, deletion, or addition to the energy corridors. At such time that citizen's inventory information is formally submitted, the BLM will compare its official Agency inventory information with the submitted materials, determine if the conclusion reached in previous BLM inventories remains valid, and update findings regarding the lands ability to qualify as wilderness in character. Agencies could consider an IOP to provide guidance on the review process for applications within corridors with incomplete inventories. The potential IOP would assist with avoiding, minimizing, and/or mitigating impacts on lands with wilderness characteristics.

Ecology:

- The corridor crosses Pygmy Rabbit habitat (RFI comment). Re-route to avoid "Very High" risk to the number and magnitude of flowline crossings by WWEC segments. Where flowlines must unavoidably be crossed, minimize impacts on connectivity (RFI comment).
- This corridor traces along the eastern edge of Bill Creek - Montana Mountains Global IBA from MP 141 to MP 160. This site supports the largest GRSG population in Nevada, and one of the highest densities of GRSG in the country. Recommend re-routing the corridor to avoid the IBA (comment on abstract).

Analysis: IOPs and BMPs would be required. Collocation is preferred and existing infrastructure is located within portions of the corridor. The Agencies could consider an IOP for habitat connectivity so that transmission projects within Section 368 energy corridors are sited and designed in a manner that minimizes impacts on habitat connectivity.

Military and Civilian Aviation:

- SUA and the corridor intersect from MP 0 to MP 18.
- MTR – Slow-speed Route and the corridor intersect from MP 42 to MP 59.
- MTR - VR and the corridor intersect from MP 78 to MP 147 and MP 154 to MP 195.
- MTR - IR and the corridor intersect from MP 108 to MP 121 and MP 174 to MP 195.

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

Abstract Acronyms and Abbreviations

ARMPA = Approved Resource Management Plan Amendment; BLM = Bureau of Land Management; BMP = best management practice; DoD = Department of Defense; FO = Field Office; GHMA = general habitat management area; GIS = geographic information system; GRSG = Greater Sage-grouse; IBA = important bird area; IOP = interagency operating procedure; IR = instrument route; MP = milepost; MTR = Military Training Route; NCA = National Conservation Area; NHT = National Historic Trail; NST = National Scenic Trail; ODFW = Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife; PAC = priority area of conservation; PEIS = Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement; PHMA = priority habitat management area; RFI = request for information; RMP = resource management plan; ROD = Record of Decision; ROW = right-of-way; SUA = special use airspace; USFS = U.S. Forest Service; VR = visual route; VRM = visual resource management; WSA = Wilderness Study Area; WWEC = West-wide Energy Corridor.