Corridor 50-203

Dillon to Idaho Falls Corridor

Corridor Purpose and Rationale

The corridor provides a north-south pathway for energy transport close to Interstate 15. The corridor connects to multiple Section 368 energy corridors, creating a continuous corridor network from Idaho into Montana across BLM- and USFS-administered lands. Input regarding alignment from multiple organizations¹ 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.

Corridor location:

Idaho (Bingham, Bonneville, Clark, and Jefferson Co.)

Montana (Beaverhead Co)

BLM: Dillon and Upper Snake Field Offices

USFS: Caribou-Targhee NF

Regional Review Region: Region 6

Corridor width, length:

Width 3,500 ft 40 miles of designated corridor 147 miles of posted route, including gaps

Designated Use:

• corridor is multi-modal

Corridor of concern (N)

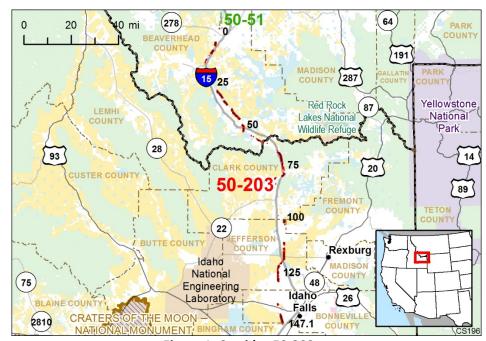


Figure 1. Corridor 50-203

Corridor history:

- Locally designated prior to 2009 (N)
- Existing infrastructure (Y)
- Three transmission lines run within and adjacent to the corridor.
- Highway 15 overlaps portions of the corridor.
- Energy potential near the corridor (Y)
- There are 2 power plants within 4 mi (biomass and hydroelectric)
- 2 substations are within the corridor and 37 more substations are within
 5 mi of the corridor.
- Corridor changes since 2009 (N)

¹ American Wind Energy Association, Idaho Power Company, Maximus USA, NW Energy, PacifiCorp, Rocky Mountain Area Transmission Study, and Western Transmission Protocol

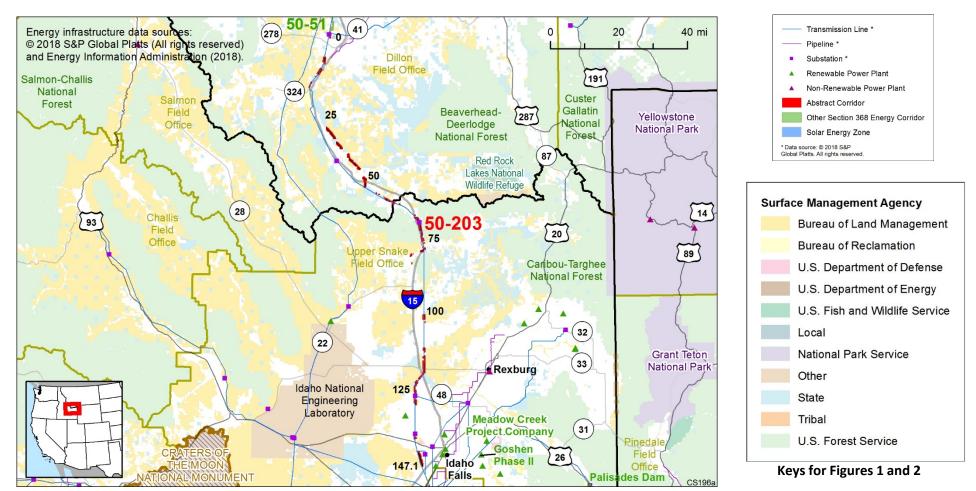


Figure 2. Corridor 50-203 and nearby electric transmission lines and pipelines

Conflict Map Analysis

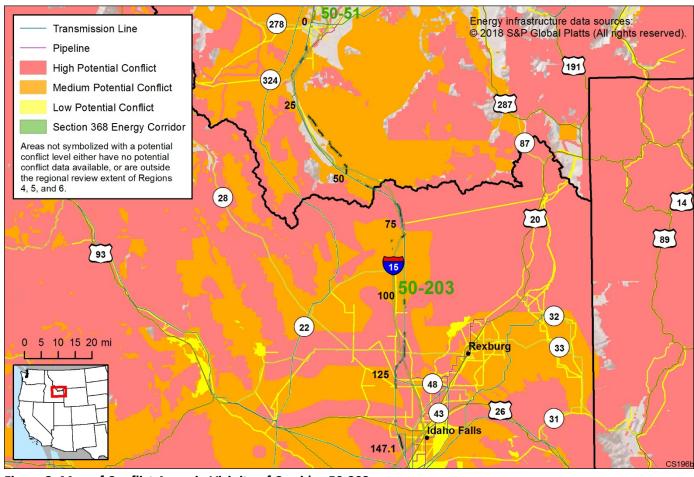


Figure 3. Map of Conflict Areas in Vicinity of Corridor 50-203

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

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

areas with potentially lower conflict.

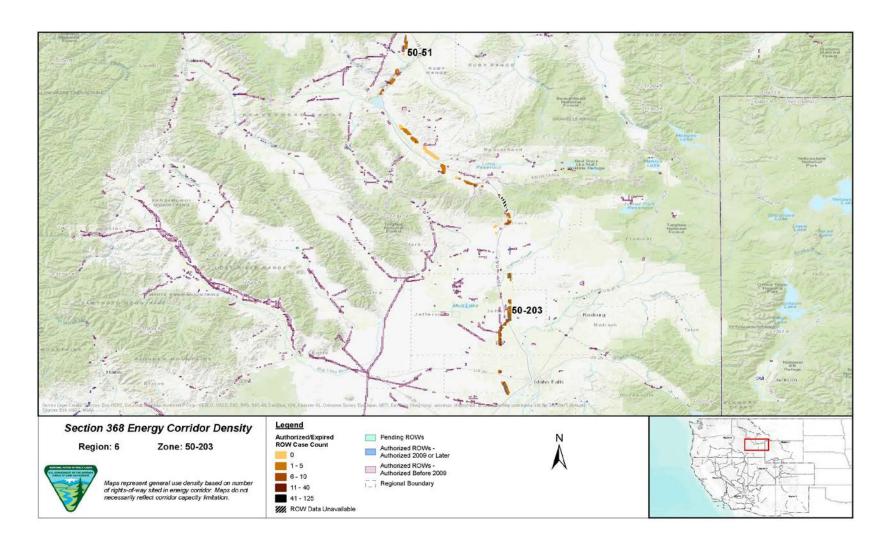


Figure 4. Corridor 50-203, Corridor Density Map

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 50-203 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: Dillon Field Office Agency Land Use Plan: Dillon RMP (2006)			
Lewis and Clark NHT and the corridor intersect – The RMP lists the NHT as a designated ROW avoidance area. New ROWs will be avoided unless there are no other options. New ROWs and upgrade/expansion of existing ROWs will be allowed if mitigation can reduce impacts to an appropriate level.	MP 10 to MP 11	At this location, the corridor is collocated with a transmission line and a segment of I-15. The path of the NHT meanders in and out of the southeastern edge of the corridor. 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.	ROW avoidance areas are not compatible with the corridor's purpose as a preferred location for infrastructure. There is available space within the corridor west of the existing transmission line that would allow the NHT to be avoided, while still locating infrastructure within the corridor. Shifting the corridor slightly to the west so that I-15 or the existing transmission line is the eastern edge of the corridor would avoid the NHT while maintaining the corridor width on federal lands. However, the terrain along this route could make future siting of facilities difficult. Agencies could consider a new IOP for NSTs and NHTs to enhance BMPs for proposed development within the energy corridor.
The Wild and Scenic Study River segment of the Beaverhead River and the corridor intersect – The RMP states that no river segments within the Dillon	MP 10 to MP 11	Comment on abstract: this river section should be evaluated more thoroughly to consider any impacts to	There is available space within the corridor west of the existing transmission line that would allow the Study River to be avoided, while still locating infrastructure within the

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FO are eligible for inclusion in the Wild and Scenic Rivers System.	. ,	this coldwater fishery likely to be imposed from a possible corridor.	corridor. Shifting the corridor slightly to the west so that I-15 or the existing transmission line is the eastern edge of the corridor would avoid the Study River while maintaining the corridor width on federal lands. An existing IOP requires proposed projects mitigate the disturbance to wild and scenic rivers and their vicinity.
Rocky Hills SRMA and the corridor intersect – The RMP does not prescribe ROW avoidance or exclusions for SRMAs.	MP 10 to 11 and MP 16		The corridor intersection here appears to best meet the siting principles, as there is existing infrastructure within the corridor. SRMAs do not preclude future development within the corridor. Options to shift the corridor to federal lands outside of the SRMA are limited.
BLM Jurisdiction: Upper Snake Field Office Agency Land Use Plan: Medicine Lodge RMP (1985)			
VRM Class II areas and the corridor intersect – The RMP states that, in general, stipulations will be used as appropriate to maintain existing visual resource management classes. The objective of VRM Class II designation is to retain the existing character of the landscape.	MP 60 to MP 68, MP 75 to MP 77, MP 104, MP 129, MP 138 to MP 139, MP 143 to MP 147		Areas with the VRM Class II designation may not be compatible with future overhead transmission line development within the corridor. The Agencies could consider changing the VRM class or could re-route the corridor at these locations. Options to shift this corridor to federal lands outside of the VRM Class II areas are limited. The corridor includes existing transmission lines where it intersects VRM Class II areas.
Continental Divide NST and the corridor intersect – The land use plan pre-dates the Continental Divide NST Comprehensive Plan and does not have specific guidance or objectives.	MP 62	The Continental Divide National Scenic Trail Comprehensive Plan was finalized in 2009. The NST is managed according to the National Trails Act.	The corridor intersection here appears to best meet the siting principles. While the corridor cannot be re-routed to avoid the NST, the corridor is collocated with existing infrastructure and the NST crosses the corridor at an angle (minimizing impacts). Agencies could consider a new IOP for NSTs and NHTs to enhance BMPs for proposed development within the energy corridor.

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Hell's Half Acre WSA and the corridor are adjacent — The RMP does not prescribe ROW avoidance or exclusions for areas adjacent to WSAs.	MP 144 to MP 147	Under Wilderness Act (1964), WSA must be managed as Wilderness pending final determination by Congress. It is highly unlikely that utility ROWs could be approved in WAs or WSAs. When MSTI was active, there was considerable public resistance to the project. Idaho Power Company's transmission line is located in the corridor in this area. In 2016, Idaho Power was granted an amendment to their existing ROW which created a concern on the shared boundary of the WSA. Part of the amendment included widening the ROW and Idaho Power was only allowed to	The corridor appears to best meet the siting principles. The corridor is not located in the WSA and development and management inside of the corridor would not be affected. There are two existing transmission lines where the WSA and the corridor are adjacent to each other. However, future development would be limited to east of the WSA.
		widen from the centerline to the east.	
USFS Jurisdiction: Caribou-Targhee National Forest Agency Land Use Plan: Caribou-Targhee NF Revised	Forest Plan (1007)		
VQO Partial Retention and the corridor intersect –	MP 68 to MP 76	Comment on abstract: the outdated	Areas with the VQO Partial Retention designation may not
The LMP states that the management objective for	55 15 1711 75	forest plan (1997) does not have	be compatible with future development within the
Partial Retention is that human activities may be		objectives or measures for	corridor. The Agencies could consider changing the VQO
evident, but must remain subordinate to the		management of electric and other	designation. The VQO encompasses a broad area both east
characteristic landscape.		transmission activities. In addition to	and west of the corridor, which cannot easily be avoided
		providing additional mitigation	and the corridor is collocated with an existing transmission
VQO Maximum Modification – The LMP states that		measures beyond those in the	line. The VQO Maximum Modification areas are where the
the management objective for this VQO is that		outdated plan, we urge both Agencies	existing transmission line, railroad, and I-15 occur.
human activities may dominate the characteristic		to make sure all ROWs stay in	
landscape but should appear as a natural		designated ROW corridors and to	The Targhee Revised Forest Plan does have goals,
occurrence when viewed as background.		encourage the use of collocation of multiple projects within the same	objectives, standards and guidelines applicable to
		corridor to minimize environmental	concentrated development areas, including transmission lines. See Management Prescription 8.1 Concentrated
		impacts.	Development Areas, pp. III-157 and III-158 Targhee RFP 1997.

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ROS Roaded Natural and the corridor intersect – Areas under this ROS class may have resource modification and utilization practices evident, but should be harmonized with the natural environment. Conventional motorized use is provided for in construction standards and design of facilities.	MP 68 to MP 74		The corridor appears to best meet the siting principles as the corridor is collocated with an existing transmission line. There could be an opportunity to shift the corridor to the west to be located more within the ROS Rural class.
ROS Rural and the corridor intersect – Areas under this ROS class may be substantially modified. Resource modification and utilization practices are to enhance specific recreation activities and to maintain vegetative cover and soil.	MP 68 to MP 73, MP 74 to MP 76		The corridor appears to best meet the siting principles as the corridor is collocated with an existing transmission line. Extensive areas to either side of the ROS Rural are the somewhat more development-restrictive ROS Roaded Natural, within which portions of the corridor occur. There could be an opportunity to shift the corridor more fully within the ROS Rural class.
			The Targhee Revised Forest Plan does have goals, objectives, standards and guidelines applicable to concentrated development areas, including transmission lines. See Management Prescription 8.1 Concentrated Development Areas, pp. III-157 and III-158 Targhee RFP 1997.
			western Montana, Nevada and Northeastern California,
Oregon, and Utah (Sept 2015); Idaho and Southwester GRSG PHMA (ROW avoidance area) and the corridor intersect — The ARMPA states that collocating new infrastructure within existing ROWs and maintaining and upgrading ROWs is preferred over the creation of new ROWs. Collocation in designated corridors can be built within the existing corridor or adjacent to the existing corridor. Appendix E of ARMPA states that the buffer distance from leks established for tall structures, including transmission lines and communications	MP 6 to MP 16, MP 32 to MP 37, MP 42 to MP 45, MP 54 to MP 60	RFI comment: re-route or exclude new infrastructure ROWs and avoid all new energy infrastructure development within GRSG PACs (56% overlap). Use full mitigation hierarchy to avoid, minimize, and compensate for impacts within four miles of important sage-grouse breeding areas.	ROW avoidance areas are not compatible with the corridor's purpose as a preferred location for infrastructure. However, collocation is preferred and the corridor is collocated with infrastructure (I-15, transmission line, railroad ROW). Additionally, there is an absence of preferable alternatives because the corridor is

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site is 2 miles and the buffer distances from linear features such as a level 3 road is 3.1 miles.			bordered by large areas of non-Federal land that make shifting the corridor difficult.	
			Required Design Features identified in the ARMPA would be required for future development within the corridor where it intersects PHMAs.	
GRSG GHMA and the corridor intersect — The ARMPA states that existing designated corridors in GHMA will remain open to utility ROWs. Collocating new infrastructure within existing ROWs and maintaining and upgrading ROWs is preferred over the creation of new ROWs. Collocation in designated corridors can be built within the existing corridor or adjacent to the existing corridor. Appendix E of ARMPA states that the buffer distance from leks established for tall structures, including transmission lines and communications site is 2 miles and the buffer distances from linear features such as a level 3 road is 3.1 miles.	MP 29 to MP 33, MP 35 to MP 37, MP 39 to MP 43, MP 48 to MP 51.	RFI comment: re-route or exclude new infrastructure ROWs and avoid all new energy infrastructure development within GRSG PACs (56% overlap). Use full mitigation hierarchy to avoid, minimize, and compensate for impacts within four miles of important sage-grouse breeding areas.	The corridor location appears to best meet the siting principles. The corridor is collocated with infrastructure (I-15, transmission line, railroad ROW). Additionally, there is an absence of preferable alternatives because the corridor is bordered by large areas of non-Federal lands that make shifting the corridor difficult. There are multiple leks within two miles of the corridor; therefore, the corridor may have to be shifted to avoid these areas.	
BLM Jurisdiction: Upper Snake Field Office Agency Land Use Plan: Idaho GRSG ROD and ARMPA				
GRSG PHMA (ROW avoidance area) and the corridor intersect — The ARMPA states that collocating new infrastructure within existing ROWs and maintaining and upgrading ROWs is preferred over the creation of new ROWs. Collocation in designated corridors can be built within the existing corridor or adjacent to the existing corridor. In PHMAs, the buffer distance from leks established for tall structures, including transmission towers and lines is 2 mi.	MP 78 to MP 79, MP 82 to MP 83, MP 85	RFI comment: re-route or exclude new infrastructure ROWs and avoid all new energy infrastructure development within GRSG PACs (56% overlap). Use full mitigation hierarchy to avoid, minimize, and compensate for impacts within four miles of important sage-grouse breeding areas.	ROW avoidance areas are not compatible with the corridor's purpose as a preferred location for infrastructure. However, collocation is preferred and the corridor is collocated with infrastructure (I-15, transmission line, railroad ROW). Additionally, there is an absence of preferable alternatives because the corridor is	

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			bordered by large areas of non-Federal land that make shifting the corridor difficult. There are multiple leks within two miles of the corridor; therefore, the corridor may have to be shifted to avoid these areas. Due to the hard trigger protocols, until further notice, the Upper Snake FO will not be processing any ROW/LUA
GRSG GHMA and the corridor intersect — The ARMPA states that existing designated corridors in GHMA will remain open to utility ROWs. Collocating new infrastructure within existing ROWs and maintaining and upgrading ROWs is preferred over the creation of new ROWs. Collocation in designated corridors can be built within the existing corridor or adjacent to the existing corridor. In GHMAs, the buffer distance from leks established for tall structures, including	MP 78 to MP 79, MP 103 to MP 104		applications which include anthropogenic disturbance within IHMA and PHMA (MP 60 to MP 85). The corridor location appears to best meet the siting principles. The corridor is collocated with infrastructure (I-15, transmission line, railroad ROW). Additionally, there is an absence of preferable alternatives because the corridor is bordered by large areas of non-Federal lands that make shifting the corridor difficult.
transmission towers and lines is 0.6 mi. GRSG IHMA (ROW avoidance area) and the corridor intersect — The ARMPA states collocating new infrastructure within existing ROWs and maintaining and upgrading ROWs is preferred over the creation of new ROWs. Collocation in designated corridors can be built within the existing corridor or adjacent to the existing corridor. In IHMAs, the buffer distance from leks established for tall structures, including transmission towers and lines is 1.2 mi.	MP 60 to MP 61, MP 62, MP 75 to MP 76, MP 102 to MP 103, MP 111 to MP 129	RFI comment: re-route or exclude new infrastructure ROWs and avoid all new energy infrastructure development within GRSG PACs (56% overlap). Use full mitigation hierarchy to avoid, minimize, and compensate for impacts within four miles of important GRSG breeding areas.	ROW avoidance areas are not compatible with the corridor's purpose as a preferred location for infrastructure. However, the corridor is collocated with infrastructure in some locations (I-15, transmission line, railroad ROW). Additionally, there is an absence of preferable alternatives because the corridor is bordered by

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			large areas of non-Federal lands that make shifting the corridor difficult. There are multiple leks within two miles of the corridor; therefore, the corridor may have to be shifted to avoid these areas. Due to the hard trigger protocols, until further notice, the
BLM Jurisdiction: Caribou-Targhee National Forest		and a Uttack Attack as and A COSC Ideals a	Upper Snake FO will not be processing any ROW/LUA applications which include anthropogenic disturbance within IHMA and PHMA.
GRSG IHMA and the corridor intersect – The Plan Amendment states that in IHMA, new lands special-use authorizations may be issued for infrastructure if they can be located within existing designated corridors or ROWs and the authorization includes stipulations to protect the GRSG and its habitat.	MP 68 to 76	iaa, Utan; Attachment A –GKSG läänö ä	Ind Southwest Montana Plan Amendment (Sept 2015) The location appears to best meet the siting principles because collocation is preferred and the corridor is collocated with an existing transmission line.
An October 2018 USFS Draft EIS addressing planning issues for GRSG included Idaho NFs, so changes to GRSG management prescriptions in the Caribou-Targhee NF may be associated with the forthcoming ROD.			

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.

Jurisdictional Concerns:

• Portions of the designated corridor are adjacent to and share a boundary with US Sheep Experiment Station and the State of Idaho's managed Market Lake Wildlife Management Area. The agencies managing these areas (USDA and Idaho Department of Fish and Game respectively) may have concerns related to development within the corridor.

Analysis: Section 368 energy corridors are only designated on BLM- and USFS-administered lands. The Agencies could consider shifting the corridor slightly northwest so that the existing transmission line is the eastern border of the corridor to avoid the Market Lake Wildlife Refuge and still maintain corridor width on federal land. It is possible that future infrastructure could potentially be selectively located within the corridor to minimize impact on the US Sheep Experiment Station.

• Jurisdictional gaps occur within the corridor.

Analysis: The Agencies could consider shifting the corridor northwest from MP 118 to MP 123 and east from MP 11 to MP 16 to reduce gaps.

Cultural Resources:

• Cultural resources could be a concern in the Dillon FO.

Analysis: Section 106 of the NHPA requires federal agencies to consider the effects of an undertaking on cultural resources.

Specially Designated Areas:

• Lost Gold Trails Loop State Scenic Byway and the corridor intersect from MP 78 to MP 79.

Analysis: The Lost Gold Trails Loop Idaho State Scenic Byway is administered by the Idaho Transportation Department, and future development in the corridor would require coordination with this agency.

Visual Resources:

• This part of the corridor was attempted for use during the MSTI siting process. General feedback from the communities was that they wanted it farther away from residences and the interstate where it would not be visible. Forcing these locations in the valley will result in greater public opposition due to visuals and repeated infrastructure impacts to a small number of landowners due to the fragmentation of the corridor (comment on abstract).

Analysis: The corridor is collocated with an existing transmission line and highway. Between MP 8 and MP 12 the corridor is located in a VRM Class III area which allows for moderate change to the characteristic landscape while minimizing visual contrast. In general, collocation is preferred to maximize utility, minimize potential impacts and to promote efficient use of landscape.

Ecology:

- 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).
- Other concerns related to wildlife from future development in the corridor include wildlife migration corridors, loss of wildlife habitat and displacement of wildlife. This corridor runs through an important linkage area between the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem and the Central Idaho wilderness complex. This landscape connection must be protected to foster wildlife movement of grizzlies, wolves, wolverines, bighorns and other species between these two large areas. Though this route does follow an existing interstate highway, which poses its own set of problems to wildlife movement, the Agencies should ensure that any further infrastructure work within this corridor includes avoidance, minimization and mitigation measures to ensure that additional development does not further comprise the already-somewhat compromised values of this linkage area (comment on abstract).
- This corridor traces along southeastern edge of northern section of the Beaverhead Sage-steppe Global IBA from MP 17 to MP 19 and along the southwestern edge of southern section of the IBA from MP 31 to MP 49. The IBA represents the largest intact sagebrush habitats that remain in southwestern Montana, in extent and continuity and supports significant numbers of GRSG-at least 3% of the state population. The IBA encompasses at least 29 known lek sites (3% of the leks in the state) and supports at least 730 male grouse in the breeding season (>3% of the state population of surveyed male grouse) (comment on abstract).
- MP 8 to MP 12 should be considered a high conflict area for DEQ siting purposes. It is too fragmented to be effectively considered under Montana MFSA Preferred Location Criteria. Additionally, slope stability issues (known mass land movement) were identified as a grave concern in the area of MP 8 to MP 12 (comment on abstract).
- Ecology discussion must include watershed analysis and review (comment on abstract).

Analysis: Existing IOPs and BMPs would be required. In general, the corridor follows existing infrastructure. 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.

Abstract Acronyms and Abbreviations

ARMPA = Approved Resource Management Plan Amendment; BLM = Bureau of Land Management; BMP = best management practice; FO = field office; GHMA = general habitat management area; GIS = geographic information system; GRSG = Greater Sage-grouse; IHMA = important habitat management area; IOP = interagency operating procedure; MP = milepost; MSTI = Mountain States Transmission Intertie; NHPA = National Historic Preservation Act; NHT = National Historic Trail; NST = National Scenic Trail; PAC = Priority Area for Conservation; PEIS = Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement; PHMA = priority habitat management area; RFI = request for information; RMP = resource management plan; ROD = Record of Decision; ROS = recreation opportunity spectrum; ROW = right-of-way; SRMA = Special Recreation Management Area; USDA = U.S. Department of Agriculture; USFS = U.S. Forest Service; VQO = visual quality objective; VRM = visual resource management; WA = Wilderness Area; WSA = Wilderness Study Area; WWEC = West-wide Energy Corridor.