4.0 Federal Agency Land Use Plan Amendments

This chapter discusses federal agency land use plan amendments associated with the TWE project alternatives proposed in Chapter 2.0 and residual impacts from the project-specific impact analysis in Chapter 3.0.

The approximately 725-mile TWE transmission line between Rawlins, Wyoming, and Las Vegas, Nevada, crosses four states, including public lands administered by 14 BLM FOs and 5 national forests. In areas where mitigation or avoidance could not be applied as determined through the project-specific impact analysis discussed in Chapter 3.0, some aspects of the TWE project would not conform to portions of the administering federal agency's land use plan. In addition, because of the large-scale nature of the TWE project and other RFFAs for transmission projects proposed in similar areas, administering agencies have determined that plan amendments to establish new utility corridors should be evaluated to inform lead agency decision-making.

Both the BLM and USFS land use planning regulations (43 CFR 1610.5 and 36 CFR 219.10) require that site-specific decisions, including authorized uses of land, be consistent with the applicable plan. If a proposed site-specific decision is not consistent with the applicable plan, the responsible official may modify the proposed decision to make it consistent with the plan, reject the proposal, or amend the plan to authorize the action. As a result, amendments of multiple USFS LRMPs and BLM RMPs may be necessary before the project could proceed, if approved. Plan amendments also may be needed for proposed or alternative routes that cross the Dinosaur National Monument or Lake Mead NRA and associated NPS decisions may involve a separate NEPA review.

The BLM and USFS plan amendments are subject to public review and procedures outlined in federal regulations (43 CFR 1610.2-4 and 36 CFR 219.9). Pursuant to these regulations, outreach activities (see Chapter 6.0) were conducted to gather public input on the project and proposed amendments, planning criteria were developed and circulated for use in evaluating the amendments, and an analysis of the plan amendments was incorporated into this EIS. The BLM plan amendment procedures also call for an extended 90-day public review period/objection period of plan amendments issued concurrently with project-specific EISs. The BLM's regulations in 43 CFR 1610 require a concurrent 30-day public protest period and 60-day Governor's Consistency Review of the plan amendments.

For the TWE Project, each potential situation of non-conformance by proposed and alternative routes is identified through a comparison to the respective land use plan. A plan amendment that would allow authorization of the proposed or alternative route is presented as the preferred plan amendment for that situation. Land use planning regulations require that the Draft EIS identify the "preferred alternative," or those plan amendments that best meet multiple use and sustained yield mandates of FLPMA and the NFMA. Plan amendments would only be implemented for any project routes that are finally authorized. The plan amendments are identified in the Draft EIS because proposed BLM land use plan decisions (i.e., plan amendments) are subject to a 90-day Draft EIS public comment period and may be protested or subject to an objection process during the Final EIS phase of the NEPA process, as opposed to implementation decisions (i.e., approving a ROW grant), which may have a 45-day Draft EIS public comment period and may be subject to appeal at the ROD phase of the NEPA process.

The following sections describe the proposed BLM and USFS plan amendments required under each alternative, followed by an analysis of the environmental impacts and planning implications associated with adoption of these amendments. A discussion of the federal agencies affected is provided in Section 1.4.2 in Chapter 1.0 and associated BLM and USFS plans are listed in **Table 1-3** (BLM plans) and **Table 1-4** (USFS plans). The project purpose and need, alternatives, affected environment, and

TWE project-specific impact analysis are discussed in the previous EIS chapters (1.0 through 3.0). Cumulative impacts are addressed in Chapter 5.0.

4.1 Land Use Plan Amendment Process

4.1.1 Bureau of Land Management Planning

The BLM prepares RMPs for public lands and federal minerals in accordance with FLPMA and the regulations in 43 CFR 1600. The BLM Handbook H-1601-1 *Land Use Planning Handbook* provides specific guidance for preparing, amending, revising, maintaining, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating BLM land use plans. According to the BLM Land Use Planning Handbook (H-1601-1), "plan amendments (see 43 CFR 1610.5-5) change one or more of the terms, conditions, or decisions of an approved land use plan" and "are most often prompted by the need to: (1) Consider a proposal or action that does not conform to the plan." The BLM's land use planning regulations at 43 CFR 1610.5-5 state, "an amendment shall be initiated by the need to consider a Proposed Action that may result in a change in the scope of resources uses or a change in the terms, conditions, and decisions of the approved plan." Plans needing amendment may be grouped geographically or by type of decision in the same amendment process. Similarly, one amendment process may amend the same or related decisions in more than one land use plan. The amendment process also may be used to update plans adopted from another agency (H-1601-1).

4.1.2 U.S. Forest Service Planning

The USFS prepares LRMPs in accordance with NFMA and the regulations in 36 CFR 219. The USFS direction for plan development, plan amendment, or plan revision is provided in the Forest Service Manual (FSM) 1920 *Land Management Planning* Section or Forest Service Handbook (FSH) 1909.12 *Land Management Planning Handbook* Chapter. The USFS land use planning regulations at 36 CFR 219.8 state, "a plan amendment may add, modify, or rescind one or more of the decisions of a plan (§219.7). An amendment decision must be based on the identification and consideration of issues (§219.4), applicable information (§219.5), and an analysis of the effects of the proposed amendment (§219.6). In developing an amendment, the responsible official must provide opportunities for collaboration consistent with §219.12 through §219.18." The USFS recently revised their planning rule, which was published in the *Federal Register* on April 9, 2012, and includes a 60-day objection process (detailed in Subpart B of the final planning rule).

4.2 Planning Area Boundaries

Since the plan amendments needed to bring the proposed or alternative routes into conformance would be limited to the 2-mile transmission line corridor, the planning area boundaries are limited to this area (shown in **Figures 2-1** through **2-4** in Chapter 2.0).

4.3 Planning Issues and Criteria

The NOI to prepare an EIS and associated plan amendments for the TWE Project was published in the *Federal Register* on January 4, 2011, and initiated a 90-day public scoping period. The BLM and Western held 23 public scoping meetings at various locations in Wyoming, Colorado, Utah, and Nevada (see Section 1.7 and **Table 1-5** in Chapter 1.0 for a list of meetings). The planning issues identified in the NOI and through scoping are discussed in Section 4.3.1. General planning criteria were developed based on these issues in relation to areas of non-conformance and are included in Section 4.3.2.

4.3.1 Planning Issues

According to 43 CFR 1610.4-1, at the outset of the planning process, the public, other federal agencies, state and local governments, and Indian tribes shall be given an opportunity to suggest concerns, needs, and resource use, development, and protection opportunities for consideration in analyzing

project impacts and identifying potential plan amendments. The federal land manager, in collaboration with any cooperating agencies, analyzed those suggestions and other available data, such as records of resource conditions, trends, needs, problems, and select topics to determine the issues to be addressed during the planning process. Issues were modified during the planning process to incorporate new information. The identification of issues also complies with the scoping process required by regulations implementing NEPA (40 CFR 1501.7).

The following issues were identified by the BLM and USFS, other agencies, cooperators, and individuals in the January 2011 NOI:

- Socioeconomic impacts;
- Public health and safety;
- Plant and animal species (including special and sensitive status species, desert tortoise and sage-grouse);
- Cultural resources and historic sites;
- Visual intrusions;
- Lands with wilderness characteristics;
- National scenic and historic trails;
- Wild and scenic rivers; and,
- IRAs on national forests.

BLM and USFS invited the public, other federal agencies, and state, local, and Tribal governments to identify additional concerns or issues during scoping meetings and the public comment period that followed. The following nine key topics were identified through public scoping as discussed in Section 1.8:

- Corridor locations;
- Potential private and public land use conflicts;
- Impacts to fish, wildlife, vegetation, special status species, and habitat;
- Public health and safety;
- Impacts to areas with special management designations;
- Cumulative impacts;
- Socioeconomic impacts (property values and tax base);
- Concerns about wildlife mitigation; and
- Noxious weed control and reclamation.

4.3.2 Planning Criteria

Planning criteria guide development of the plan amendment by helping define the decision space (or the "sideboards" that define the scope of the planning effort); they are based upon applicable laws, Director and State Director guidance, and the results of public and governmental participation (43 CFR 1610.4-2). The planning criteria serve the following purposes:

- To ensure that the planning effort is focused on the issues, follows and incorporates legal requirements, addresses management of all land resources and land uses in the planning area, and that preparation is accomplished efficiently;
- To identify the scope and parameters of the planning effort for the decision-maker, the interdisciplinary team and the public; and
- Inform the public of what should and should not be expected from the plan amendment effort. This includes identification of any planning issues that are not ready for decision-making and that will be addressed only through subsequent activity or implementation planning efforts or in approving public land and resource use authorizations (e.g., processing applications for ROWs).

The following general planning criteria were developed for the proposed plan amendments to help focus the preparation of planning and management alternatives and the analysis of impacts and to guide selection of the preferred alternative.

- This planning effort will recognize valid existing rights.
- Actions must comply with laws, executive orders, regulations, and policy.
- Lands covered by the planning effort include any/all lands that may affect, or be affected by, the management occurring on lands in the planning area. However, the plan amendment will apply only to the BLM and USFS-administered lands in the planning area. Within the planning area, management decisions will not apply to non-public land surface or mineral estate, on public lands administered by other federal agencies, or the federal mineral estate underlying public lands administered by other federal agencies.
- A collaborative and multi-jurisdictional approach will be used, where possible, to jointly determine the desired future condition and management direction for the public lands.
- To the extent possible, and within legal and regulatory parameters, management and plan amendment decisions will be consistent with officially approved or adopted resource related plans, and the policies and programs contained therein, of other federal agencies, state and local governments and Indian tribes, so long as the guidance and resource management plans also are consistent with the purposes, policies and programs of federal laws and regulations applicable to federal lands, including federal and state pollution control laws as implemented by applicable federal and state air, water, noise, and other pollution standards or implementation plans.
- Planning and management direction will be focused on the relative values of resources and not the combination of uses that will give the greatest economic return or economic output.
- Where practicable and timely for the plan amendment, current scientific information, research, and new technologies will be considered.

- Existing endangered species recovery plans, including plans for reintroduction of endangered species and other species, will be considered. Consultation, coordination and cooperation with the USFWS will be in accordance with Interagency MOUs regarding Section 7 Consultation. Applicable biological opinions regarding areas within the planning area will be considered.
- Standard Mitigation Guidelines for surface disturbing and disruptive activities will be applied to the analysis and approval of subsequent activities.

The following planning criteria will be used to guide the selection of the plan amendment:

- Levels of land use restrictions or mitigation needed to protect resources and keep lands and resources available for public use;
- Manageability of plan amendment decisions with consideration of jurisdiction, management goals for other resources present, and resource uses in the planning area;
- The potential for the occurrence of mineral and energy resources;
- Consistency with the land use plans, programs, and policies of other federal agencies, state and local governments, and Indian tribes;
- The potential for sustaining the productivity and diversity of ecosystems while providing for human values, products, and services;
- Social and economic values;
- Existing law, regulations, and policy;
- Public welfare and safety; and
- Environmental impacts.

4.4 Proposed Land Use Plan Amendments

Affected federal land managers were contacted in May and June 2011 with follow-up discussions in March 2012 to gather data on whether plan amendments were needed when crossing their jurisdiction. Based on those discussions and conformance considerations resulting from the TWE project impact analysis in Chapter 3.0, areas of potential non-conformance were identified as follows:

- Areas with utility-corridor-only placement restrictions, corridors with underground only restrictions, ROW exclusion areas, or ROW avoidance areas with unavoidable resource conflicts;
- Areas crossing Special Designations or Management Areas (SD/MAs), such as NHTs, ACECs, natural areas, or WSRs, that have ROW corridor restrictions or unavoidable resource conflicts;
- Lack of compliance with resource objectives, stipulations, standards, and guidelines that cannot be avoided or mitigated, which could include areas that encroach on buffers to protect raptors, cultural resources, special status species, water sources, and areas that conflict with recreation or visual quality objectives; and,
- Agency-identified need to amend a plan to expand an existing utility corridor or create a new utility corridor because of the large-scale nature of the TWE project and other RFFA transmission projects proposed in similar areas.

Table 4-1 describes the type of non-conformance issue in each affected jurisdiction per alternative that necessitates a plan amendment for the various BLM FOs and national forests. **Table 4-1** also lists routing issues that were considered, but did not require a plan amendment. Maps depicting with the required plan amendments are included in **Figures 4-1** through **4-19**.

In general, the federal land managers designate utility corridors with the objectives of providing space for infrastructure projects, while minimizing the proliferation of dispersed ROWs across federal lands and the associated environmental impacts. Designation of utility corridors in a land use plan indicates the preferred location for linear ROWs (such as those needed for transmission lines, pipelines and other infrastructure projects) in a particular resource area. Most utility corridors are designated based on the best information available from utilities and government agencies at the time of the plan revision. Many utility corridors have been designated based on the location and type of existing facilities present. However, some of the corridors were never used due to changes in the economy or a variety of other reasons. Other projects were approved outside of designated corridors. Thus, while utility corridors reflect the agency's best efforts to predict future needs, they do occasionally need to be re-evaluated and updated.

Designation of a utility corridor does not mean that future ROWs are necessarily restricted to corridors, nor is it a commitment by the federal land manager to approve all ROW applications within corridors. If the TWE Project and plan amendments are approved, subsequent projects seeking to locate in existing or newly created utility corridors would still be required to undergo additional environmental review pursuant to NEPA. The average number of transmission lines that are placed together in the same corridor is usually two to four lines. However, the corridor could contain other linear facilities, such as pipelines or fiber-optic cables. The ultimate capacity of the corridor for additional facilities would be determined by the federal land manager through review of future NEPA documents, as well as ongoing land use monitoring and management activities.

While the amendments for new utility corridors designate a corridor centered on the TWE reference lines, the width of the corridor may be narrowed or widened in places at the federal land manager's discretion in the future. This may be necessary and appropriate, for example, as a way to avoid disturbing sensitive resources in a particular area. The designated width is considered a general guideline; however, the federal land manager can require proposed utilities to reduce spacing to the extent feasible or avoid sensitive resources within a corridor. This flexibility is desirable as it allows the federal land manager to locate future ROWs and facilities to avoid sensitive resources or other developments.

A description of the non-conformance issues and whether a plan amendment would be needed are described in the following sections.

Table 4-1 Federal Agency Land Use Plan Amendment Considerations and Recommendations[1]

Agency	Office	State	Affected Management Plans	Alternatives Requiring Amendment	Non-conformance Issue	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F	Alternative Connector	Alternative Variation
BLM	Rawlins FO	Wyoming	ROD and Approved Rawlins RMP (Dec 2008)	A, B, C, D, and Connectors (Mexican Flats, Baggs, Fivemile Point N & S)	Utility Corridor Restriction[2]/ ROW Exclusion Area	--	X	--	--	N/A	N/A	--	N/A
					Lack of Compliance with Resource Objectives, Stipulations, Standards, Guidelines[3]	X-raptors, cultural, visual[5]	X-raptors, cultural, visual[5]	X-raptors, cultural, water, visual[5]	X-raptors, cultural, visual[5]	N/A	N/A	X-raptors, cultural, water, visual[5]	N/A
					Amendments to Accommodate RFFA Projects	X	X	X	X	N/A	N/A	X	N/A
BLM	Little Snake FO	Colorado	Little Snake ROD and Approved RMP (Oct 2011)	A, B, D	Utility Corridor Restriction[2]/ ROW Exclusion Area	--	--	--	--	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
					Lack of Compliance with Resource Objectives, Stipulations, Standards, Guidelines[3]	X-raptors, SSS wildlife, water, visual[5]	X-raptors, SSS wildlife, visual[5]	X-raptors, SSS wildlife, water, visual[5]	X-raptors, SSS wildlife, visual[5]	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
					Amendments to Accommodate RFFA Projects	X	X	--	X	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
BLM	White River FO	Colorado	White River ROD and Approved RMP (Jul 1997)	B, C	Utility Corridor Restriction[2]/ ROW Exclusion Area	--	X	X	--	--	--	N/A	N/A
					Lack of Compliance with Resource Objectives, Stipulations, Standards, Guidelines[3]	X-raptors	X-visual[4,5], SSS wildlife, raptors	X-visual[4,5], SSS wildlife, raptors	X-raptors	X-raptors	X-raptors	N/A	N/A
					Amendments to Accommodate RFFA Projects	--	X	X	--	--	--	N/A	N/A

Table 4-1 Federal Agency Land Use Plan Amendment Considerations and Recommendations[1]

Agency	Office	State	Affected Management Plans	Alternatives Requiring Amendment	Non-conformance Issue	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F	Alternative Connector	Alternative Variation
BLM	Grand Junction FO	Colorado	Grand Junction Resource Area RMP and ROD (Jan 1987)	None[6]	Utility Corridor Restriction[2]/ ROW Exclusion Area	N/A	--	--	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
					Lack of Compliance with Resource Objectives, Stipulations, Standards, Guidelines[3]	N/A	X-SMAs, wildlife, visual[5]	X-SMAs, wildlife, visual[5]	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
					Amendments to Accommodate RFFA Projects	N/A	--	--	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
BLM	Vernal FO	Utah	Vernal FO ROD and Approved RMP (Oct 2008)	A, B, C, D, E, F	Utility Corridor Restriction[2]/ ROW Exclusion Area	X	X	X	X	X	X	N/A	N/A
					Lack of Compliance with Resource Objectives, Stipulations, Standards, Guidelines[3]	X-SSS wildlife, water, visual[5]	X-SSS wildlife, water	X-SSS wildlife, water	X-SSS wildlife, water, SMAs, visual[5]	X-SSS wildlife, water, visual[5]	X-SSS wildlife, water, SMAs, visual[5]	N/A	N/A
					Amendments to Accommodate RFFA Projects	--	--	--	--	--	--	N/A	N/A
BLM	Moab FO	Utah	Moab FO ROD and Approved RMP (Oct 2008)	None	Utility Corridor Restriction[2]/ ROW Exclusion Area	N/A	--	--	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
					Lack of Compliance with Resource Objectives, Stipulations, Standards, Guidelines[3]	N/A	X-cultural, minerals, SSS wildlife, water, visual[5]	X-cultural, minerals, SSS wildlife, water, visual[5]	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
					Amendments to Accommodate RFFA Projects	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Table 4-1 Federal Agency Land Use Plan Amendment Considerations and Recommendations[1]

Agency	Office	State	Affected Management Plans	Alternatives Requiring Amendment	Non-conformance Issue	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F	Alternative Connector	Alternative Variation
BLM	Price FO	Utah	Price FO ROD and Approved RMP (Oct 2008)	B, C	Utility Corridor Restriction[2]/ ROW Exclusion Area	N/A	X	X	--	N/A	N/A	--	N/A
					Lack of Compliance with Resource Objectives, Stipulations, Standards, Guidelines[3]	N/A	X-cultural, water, SSS wildlife	X-SMAs, cultural, water, SSS wildlife, visual[5]	X-water	N/A	N/A	X-water	X-water
					Amendments to Accommodate RFFA Projects	N/A	X	X	--	N/A	N/A	--	--
BLM	Salt Lake FO	Utah	ROD for the Pony Express RMP and Rangeland Program Summary for Utah County (Jan 1990)	F, Emma Park Alternative Variation	Utility Corridor Restriction[2]/ ROW Exclusion Area	--	N/A	N/A	N/A	--	X	N/A	X
					Lack of Compliance with Resource Objectives, Stipulations, Standards, Guidelines[3]	--	N/A	N/A	N/A	--	--	N/A	--
					Amendments to Accommodate RFFA Projects	--	N/A	N/A	N/A	--	X	N/A	X
BLM	Richfield FO	Utah	Richfield ROD and Approved RMP (Oct 2008)	None[6]	Utility Corridor Restriction[2]/ ROW Exclusion Area	--	--	--	--	--	--	N/A	N/A
					Lack of Compliance with Resource Objectives, Stipulations, Standards, Guidelines[3]	--	X-water	X-water	X-water	--	--	N/A	N/A
					Amendments to Accommodate RFFA Projects	--	--	--	--	--	--	N/A	N/A

Table 4-1 Federal Agency Land Use Plan Amendment Considerations and Recommendations[1]

Agency	Office	State	Affected Management Plans	Alternatives Requiring Amendment	Non-conformance Issue	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F	Alternative Connector	Alternative Variation
BLM	Fillmore FO	Utah	Warm Springs Resource Area RMP and ROD (Apr 1987) House Range Resource Area RMP and ROD (Oct 1987)	None[6]	Utility Corridor Restriction[2]/ ROW Exclusion Area	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	N/A
					Lack of Compliance with Resource Objectives, Stipulations, Standards, Guidelines[3]	X-visual[5]	--	--	X-visual[5]	X-visual[5]	X-visual[5]	--	N/A
					Amendments to Accommodate RFFA Projects	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	N/A
BLM	Cedar City FO	Utah	Pinyon Management Framework Plan (Jun 1983) Cedar Beaver Garfield Antimony ROD / RMP (Oct 1986)	None[6]	Utility Corridor Restriction[2]/ ROW Exclusion Area	--	--	--	N/A	N/A	N/A	--	--
					Lack of Compliance with Resource Objectives, Stipulations, Standards, Guidelines[3]	--	X-visual[5]	X-visual[5]	N/A	N/A	N/A	--	--
					Amendments to Accommodate RFFA Projects	--	--	--	N/A	N/A	N/A	--	--
BLM	St. George FO	Utah	Saint George FO ROD and RMP (Mar 1999)	None[6]	Utility Corridor Restriction[2]/ ROW Exclusion Area	--	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	--
					Lack of Compliance with Resource Objectives, Stipulations, Standards, Guidelines[3]	X-SSS wildlife	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	--
					Amendments to Accommodate RFFA Projects	--	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	--

Table 4-1 Federal Agency Land Use Plan Amendment Considerations and Recommendations[1]

Agency	Office	State	Affected Management Plans	Alternatives Requiring Amendment	Non-conformance Issue	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F	Alternative Connector	Alternative Variation
BLM	Caliente FO	Nevada	Ely District Approved RMP (Aug 2008)	C	Utility Corridor Restriction[2]/ ROW Exclusion Area	--	--	X	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
					Lack of Compliance with Resource Objectives, Stipulations, Standards, Guidelines[3]	X-visual[5]	X-visual[5]	X-visual[5]	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
					Amendments to Accommodate RFFA Projects	--	--	--	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
BLM	Las Vegas FO	Nevada	ROD for the Approved Las Vegas RMP and FEIS (Oct 1998)	A, Sunrise Connector	Utility Corridor Restriction[2]/ ROW Exclusion Area	X	--	--	N/A	N/A	N/A	--	X
					Lack of Compliance with Resource Objectives, Stipulations, Standards, Guidelines[3]	X-SMAs, Water, visual[5]	X-SMAs, Water, visual[5]	X-visual[5]	N/A	N/A	N/A	--	X-SMAs, visual[5]
					Amendments to Accommodate RFFA Projects	--	--	--	N/A	N/A	N/A	--	--
USFS	Ashley National Forest	Utah	Ashley National Forest LRMP (Nov 1986)	None	Utility Corridor Restriction[2]/ ROW Exclusion Area	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	--	--	N/A	N/A
					Lack of Compliance with Resource Objectives, Stipulations, Standards, Guidelines[3]	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	--	--	N/A	N/A
					Amendments to Accommodate RFFA Projects	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	--	--	N/A	N/A

Table 4-1 Federal Agency Land Use Plan Amendment Considerations and Recommendations[1]

Agency	Office	State	Affected Management Plans	Alternatives Requiring Amendment	Non-conformance Issue	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F	Alternative Connector	Alternative Variation
USFS	Uinta National Forest	Utah	LRMP Uinta National Forest (May 2003)	None[6]	Utility Corridor Restriction[2]/ ROW Exclusion Area	--	N/A	N/A	N/A	--	--	N/A	N/A
					Lack of Compliance with Resource Objectives, Stipulations, Standards, Guidelines[3]	X-riparian, visual[5]	N/A	N/A	N/A	X-riparian, visual[5]	X-riparian, visual[5]	N/A	N/A
					Amendments to Accommodate RFFA Projects	--	N/A	N/A	N/A	--	--	N/A	N/A
USFS	Manti-La Sal National Forest	Utah	LRMP Manti-La Sal National Forest (Nov 1986)	None[6]	Utility Corridor Restriction[2]/ ROW Exclusion Area	--	--	N/A	--	--	--	N/A	N/A
					Lack of Compliance with Resource Objectives, Stipulations, Standards, Guidelines[3]	X-visual[5]	X-visual[5]	N/A	X-visual[5]	X-visual[5]	X-visual[5]	N/A	N/A
					Amendments to Accommodate RFFA Projects	--	--	N/A	--	--	--	N/A	N/A
USFS	Fishlake National Forest	Utah	Fishlake National Forest LRMP (Jun 1986)	C	Utility Corridor Restriction[2]/ ROW Exclusion Area	N/A	--	--	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
					Lack of Compliance with Resource Objectives, Stipulations, Standards, Guidelines[3]	N/A	X-visual[5]	X-visual[4,5]	N/A	N/A	X-visual	N/A	N/A
					Amendments to Accommodate RFFA Projects	N/A	--	X	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Table 4-1 Federal Agency Land Use Plan Amendment Considerations and Recommendations[1]

Agency	Office	State	Affected Management Plans	Alternatives Requiring Amendment	Non-conformance Issue	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E	Alternative F	Alternative Connector	Alternative Variation
USFS	Dixie National Forest	Utah	LRMP for the Dixie National Forest (Sept 1986)	None[6]	Utility Corridor Restriction[2]/ ROW Exclusion Area	--	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	--
					Lack of Compliance with Resource Objectives, Stipulations, Standards, Guidelines[3]	X-recreation, visual[5]	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	X-recreation, visual[5]
					Amendments to Accommodate RFFA Projects	--	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	--

[1] Non-conformance issues identified require a plan amendment before the project could proceed, if approved.

[2] Non-conformance issues related to utility corridors was only identified for agency plans that have restrictions to locating ROWs within corridors or the designated corridor was identified for underground only utilities.

[3] Resource conflicts were identified from affected management plans; however, these issues do not necessarily require a plan amendment as some issues allow exceptions in the current plan.

[4] Non-conformance issues related to visual resources include all areas of VRM Class I and II, VQO Preservation and Retention, or SIO Very High and High.

[5] Areas that would conflict with visual quality objectives were determined through the TWE impact analysis in Section 3.12; however, these areas are designated as VRM Class III, VQO Partial Retention, or SIO Moderate in the current management plan and do not necessarily restrict the proposed use in the current approved plan. Therefore, plan amendments for these conflicts are not necessarily required, but are mitigated as determined by federal land managers.

[6] Through discussions with federal land managers and information considered, it was determined that a plan amendment was not necessary to address the conflicts identified. These resource conflicts could be addressed through other measures, including exceptions, as allowed through the current area plan.

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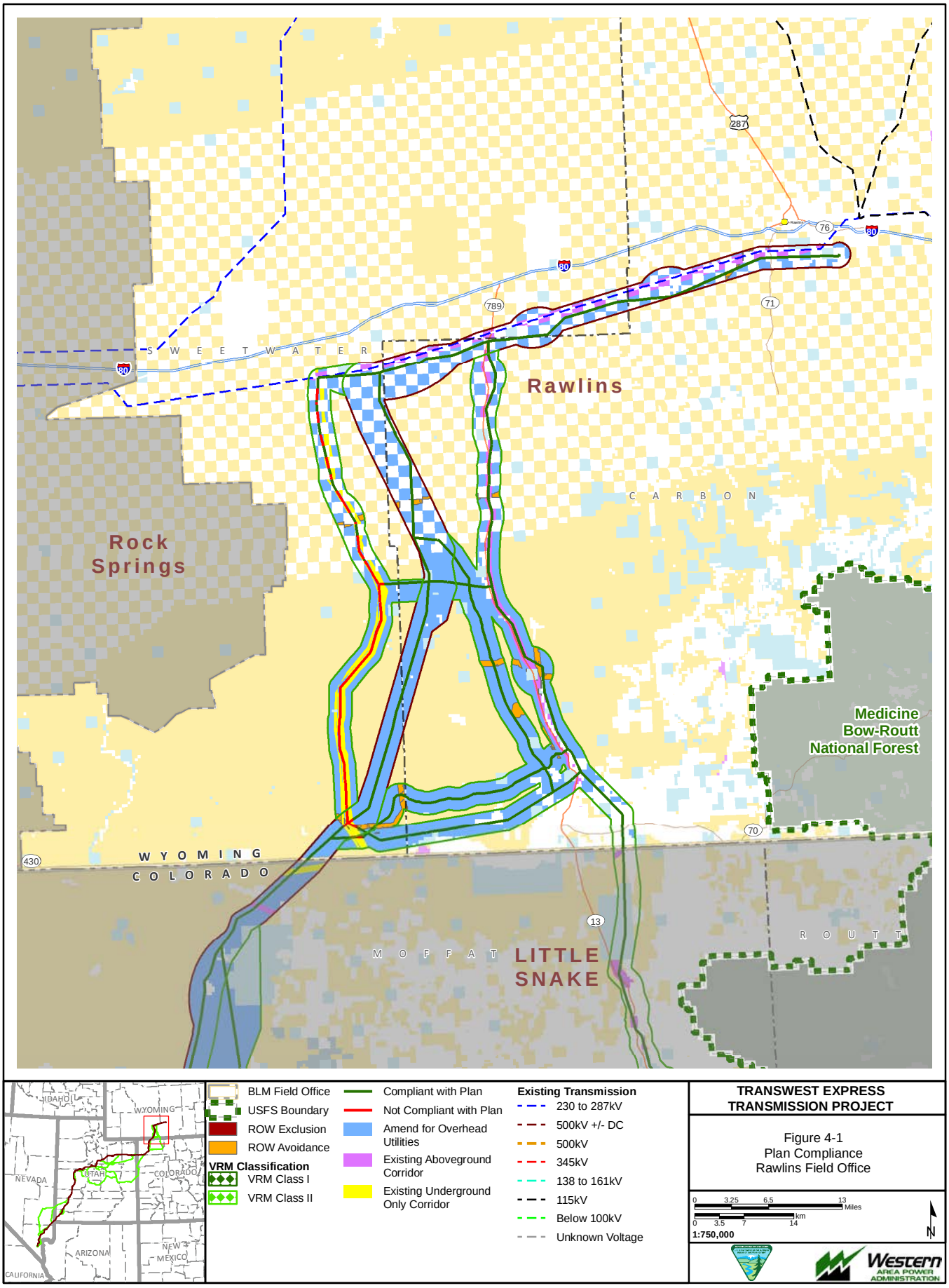

TRANSWEST EXPRESS TRANSMISSION PROJECT

Figure 4-1
Plan Compliance
Rawlins Field Office

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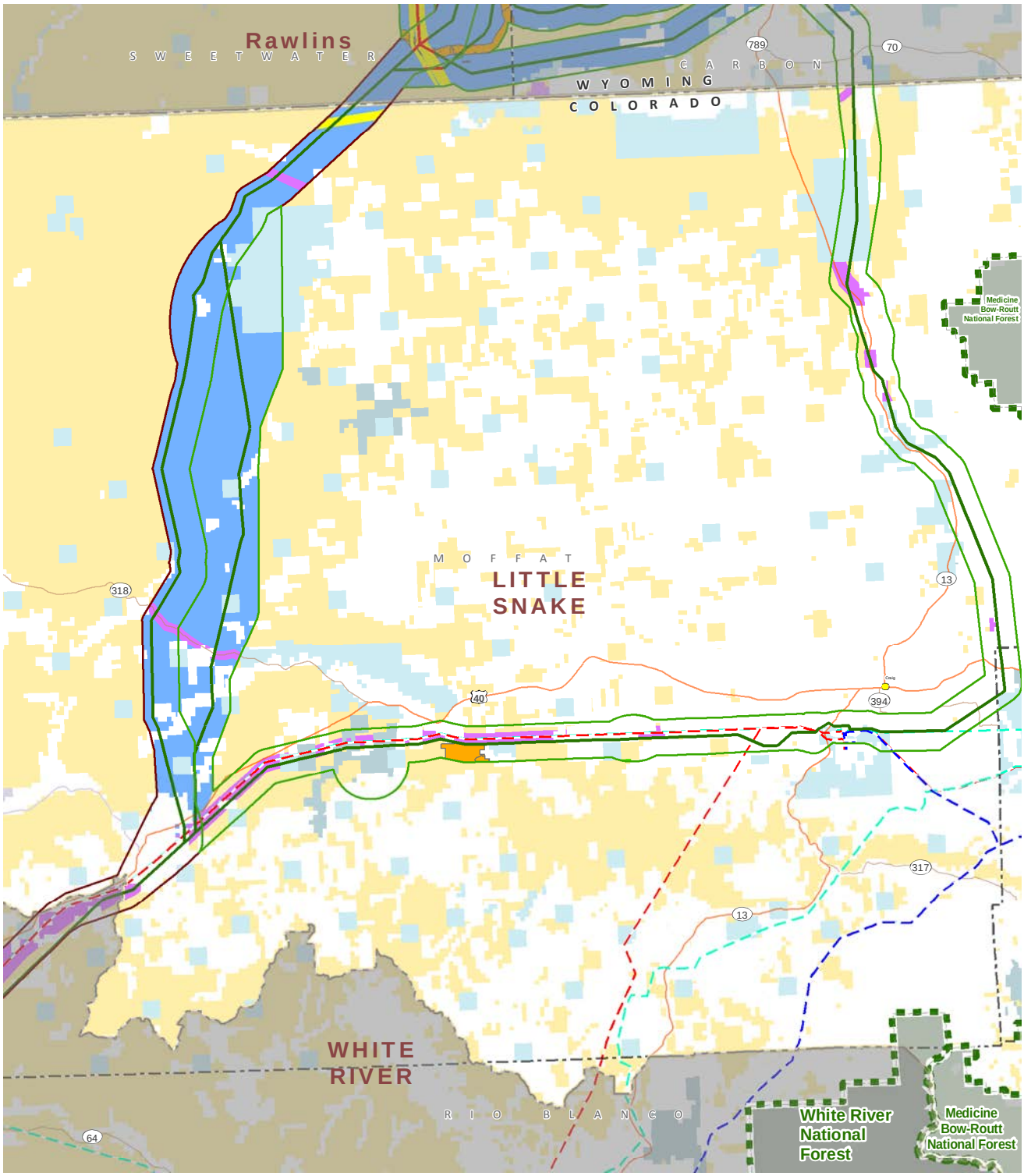

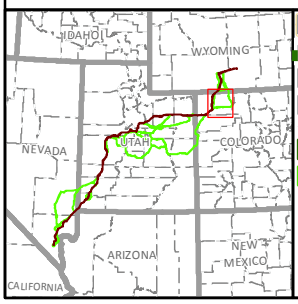

BLM Field Office
USFS Boundary
ROW Exclusion
ROW Avoidance

VRM Classification
VRM Class I
VRM Class II

Compliant with Plan
Not Compliant with Plan
Amend for Overhead Utilities
Existing Aboveground Corridor
Existing Underground Only Corridor

Existing Transmission
230 to 287kV
500kV +/- DC
500kV
345kV
138 to 161kV
115kV
Below 100kV
Unknown Voltage

TRANSWEST EXPRESS TRANSMISSION PROJECT

Figure 4-2
Plan Compliance
Little Snake Field Office

0 2.25 4.5 9 Miles
0 2.25 4.5 9 km
1:530,000
N

Western AREA POWER ADMINISTRATION

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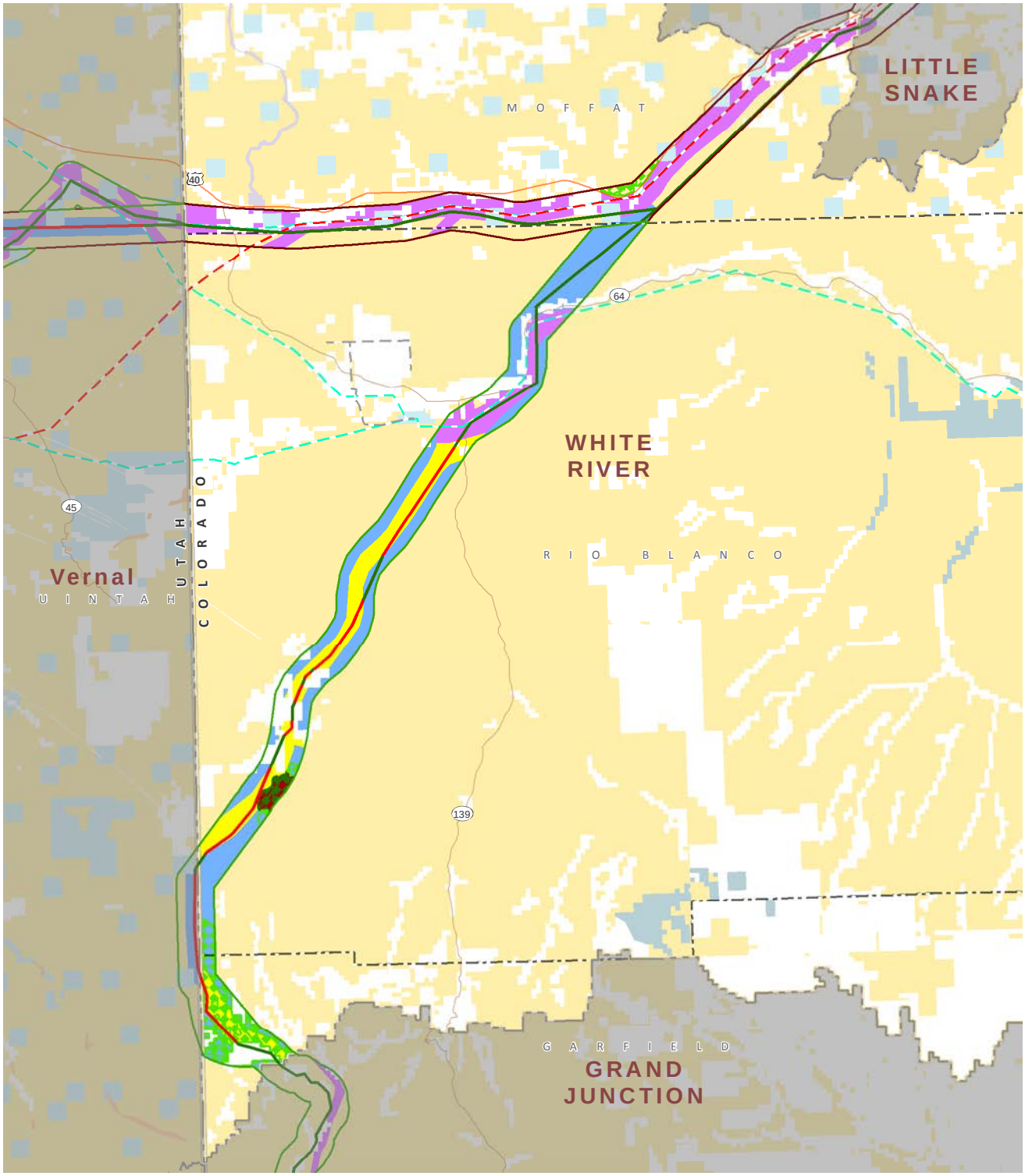

TRANSWEST EXPRESS TRANSMISSION PROJECT

Figure 4-3
Plan Compliance
White River Field Office

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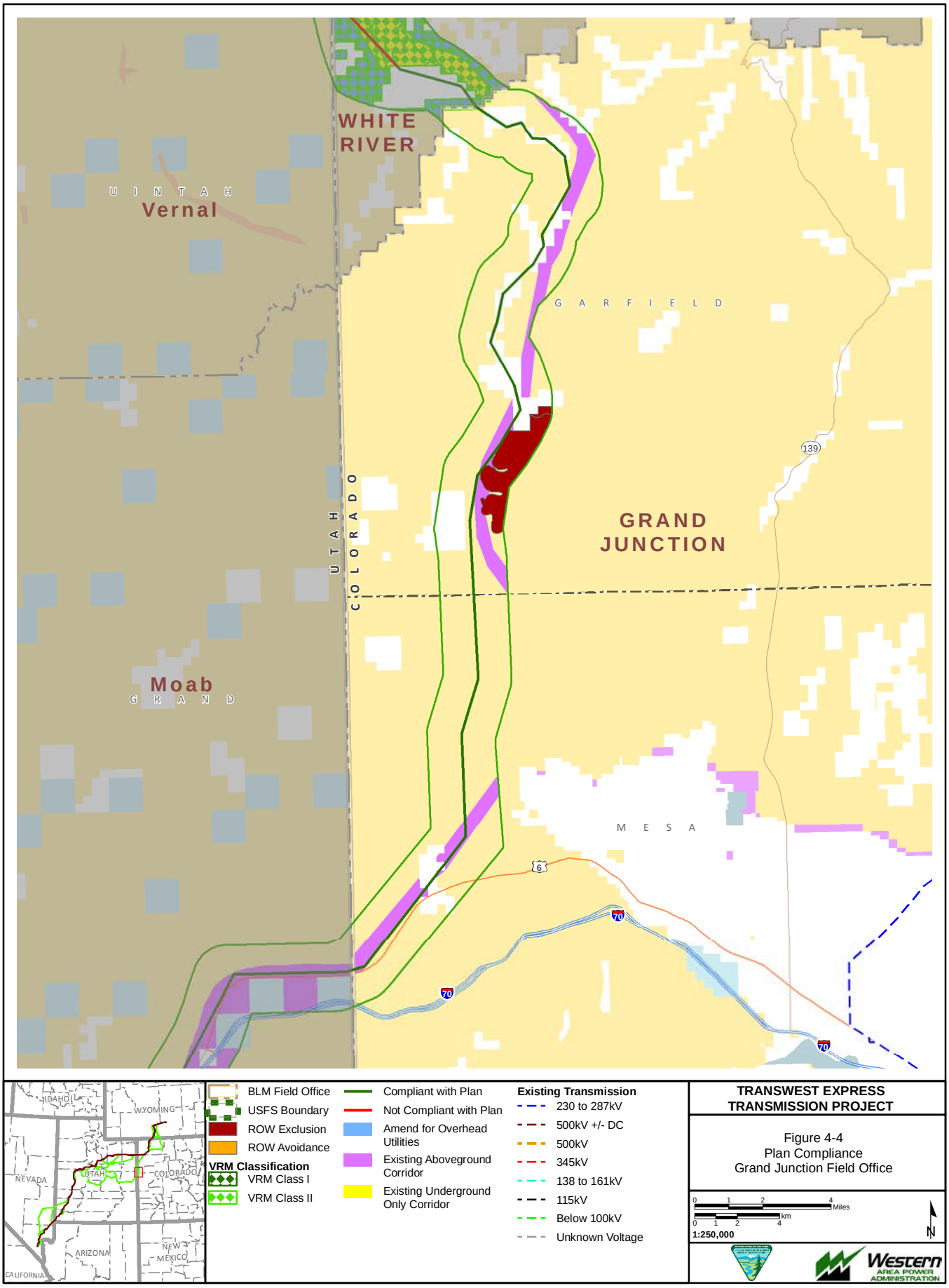

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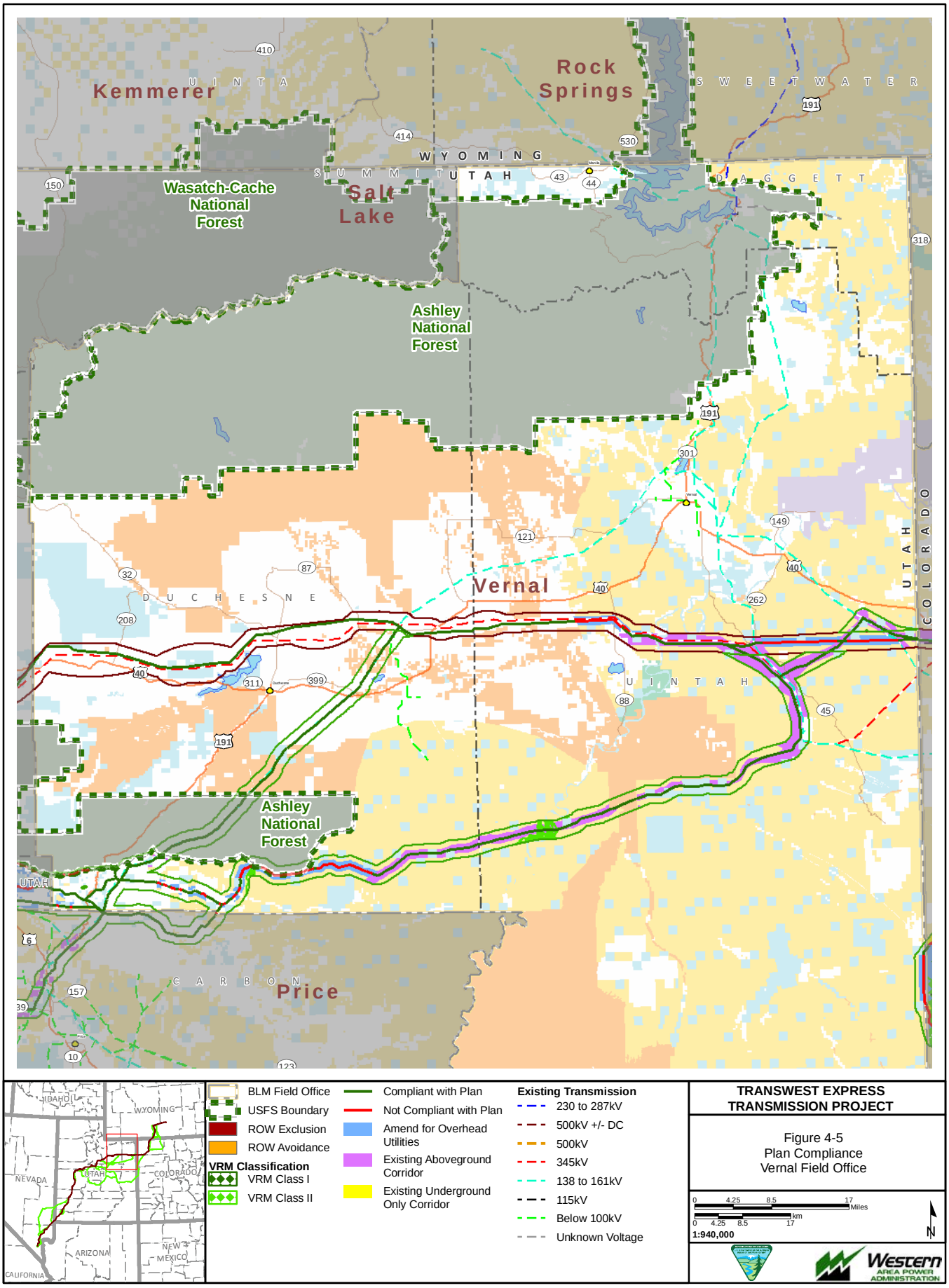

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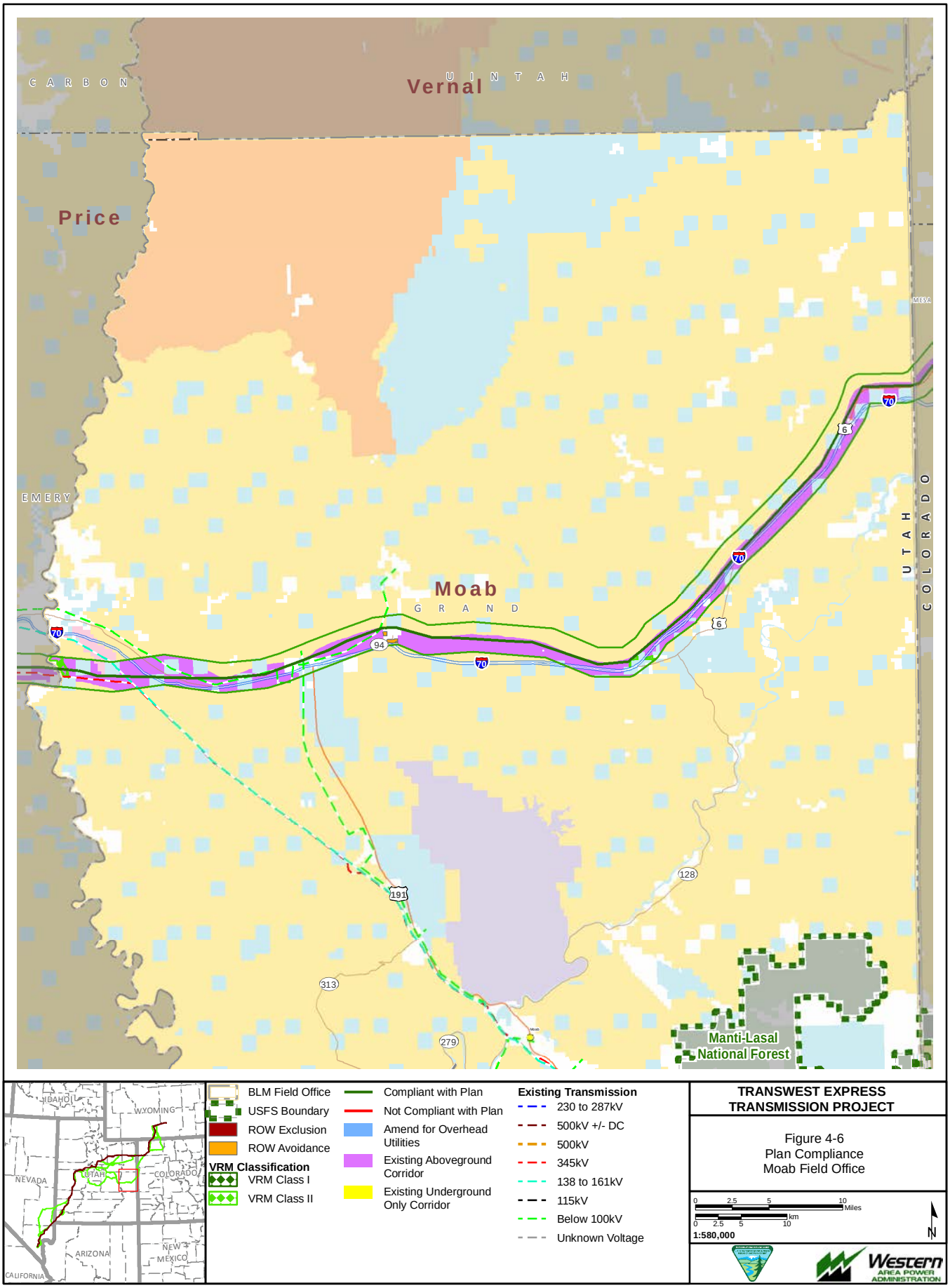

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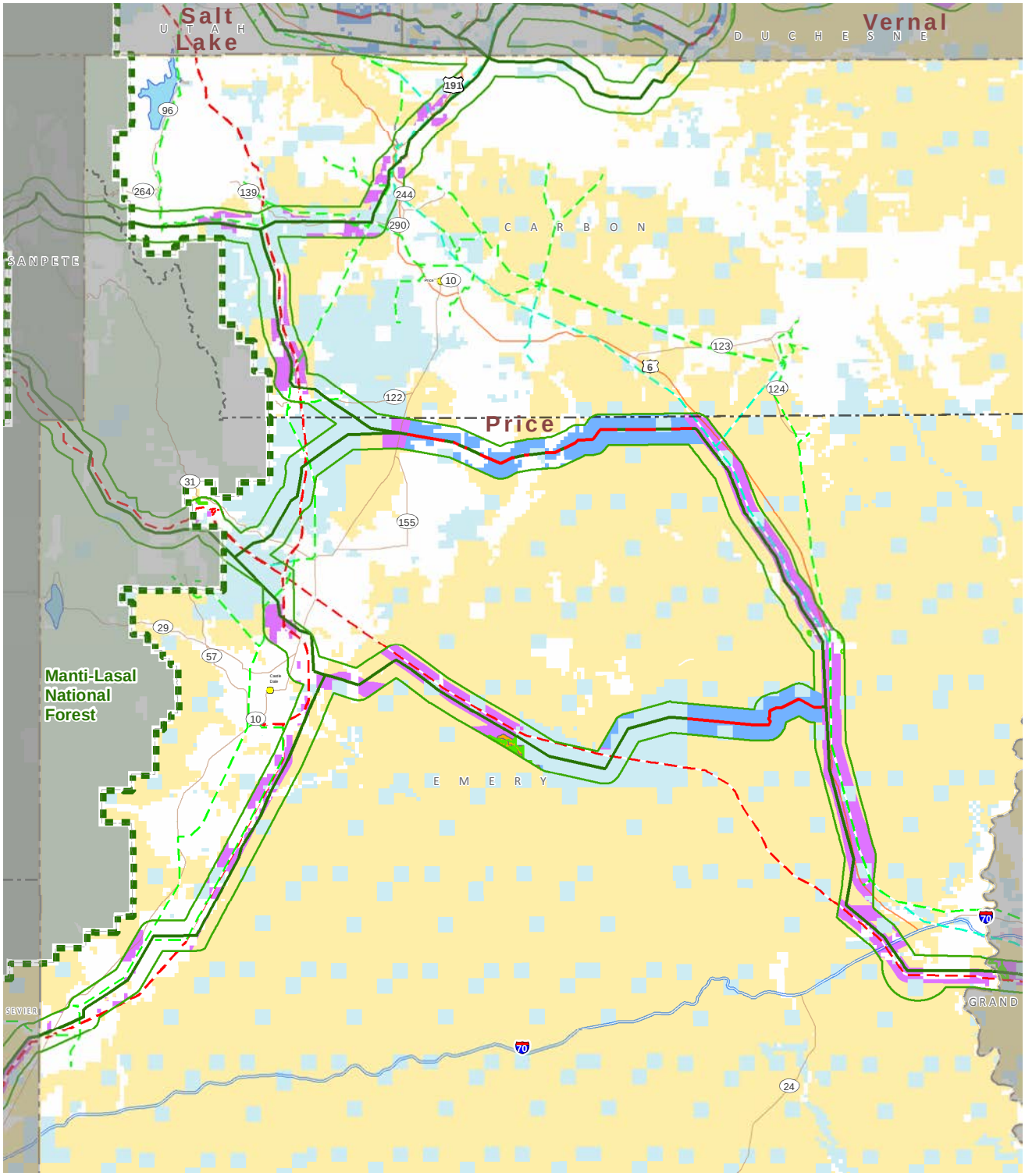

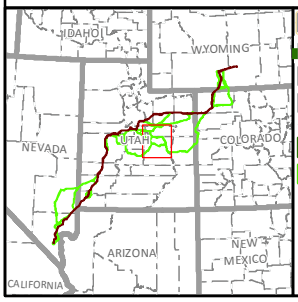

BLM Field Office
USFS Boundary
ROW Exclusion
ROW Avoidance

VRM Classification
VRM Class I
VRM Class II

Compliant with Plan
Not Compliant with Plan
Amend for Overhead Utilities
Existing Aboveground Corridor
Existing Underground Only Corridor

Existing Transmission
230 to 287kV
500kV +/- DC
500kV
345kV
138 to 161kV
115kV
Below 100kV
Unknown Voltage

TRANSWEST EXPRESS TRANSMISSION PROJECT

Figure 4-7
Plan Compliance
Price Field Office

0 2.75 5.5 11 Miles
0 2.75 5.5 11 km
1:620,000
N

Western AREA POWER ADMINISTRATION

Exported On: 4/18/2013

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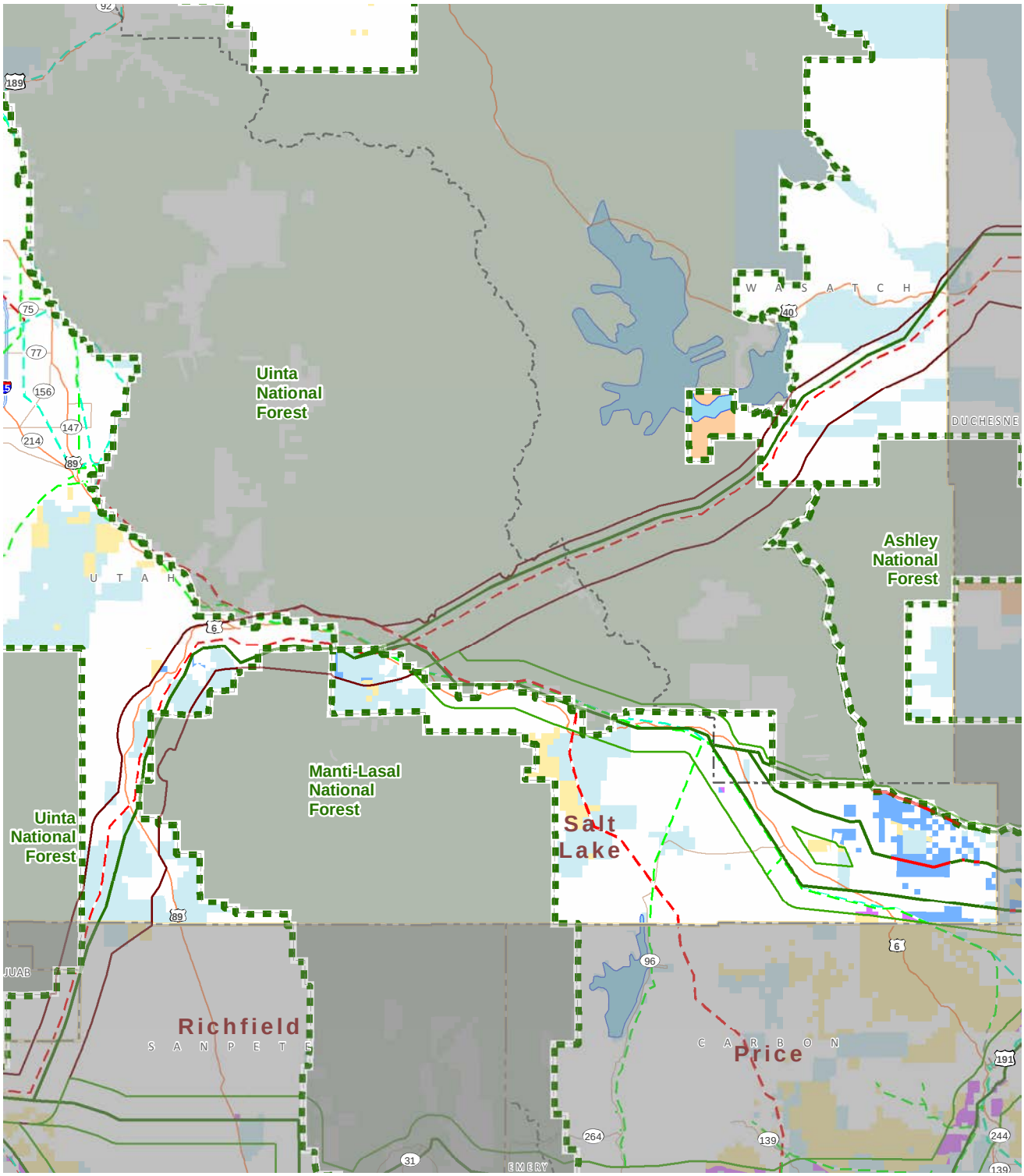

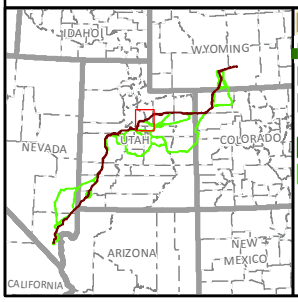

BLM Field Office
USFS Boundary
ROW Exclusion
ROW Avoidance

VRM Classification
VRM Class I
VRM Class II

Compliant with Plan
Not Compliant with Plan
Amend for Overhead Utilities
Existing Aboveground Corridor
Existing Underground Only Corridor

Existing Transmission
230 to 287kV
500kV +/- DC
500kV
345kV
138 to 161kV
115kV
Below 100kV
Unknown Voltage

TRANSWEST EXPRESS TRANSMISSION PROJECT

Figure 4-8
Plan Compliance
Salt Lake Field Office

0 1.75 3.5 7 Miles
0 1.75 3.5 7 km
1:400,000
N

Western AREA POWER ADMINISTRATION

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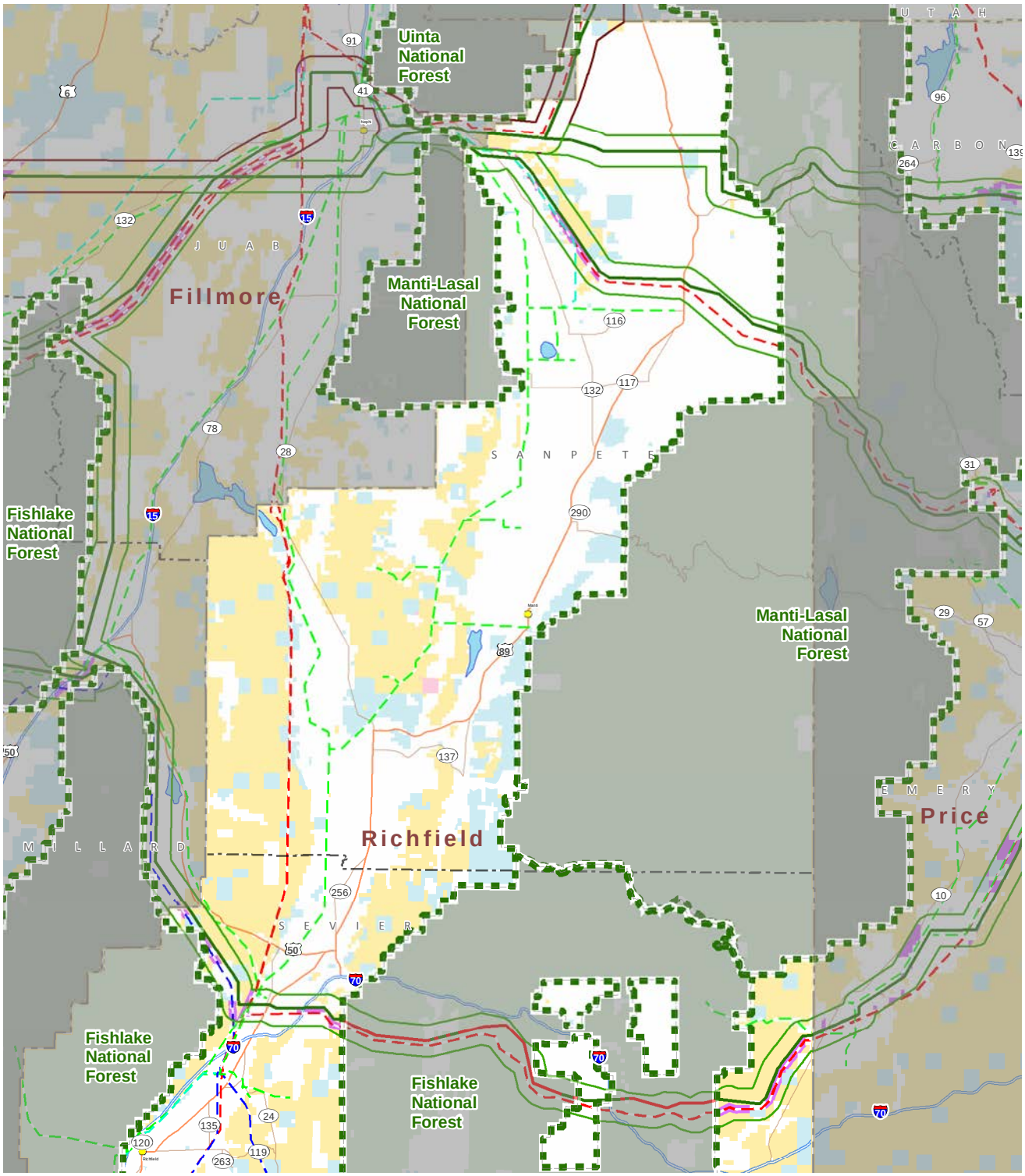

TRANSWEST EXPRESS TRANSMISSION PROJECT

Figure 4-9
Plan Compliance
Richfield Field Office

Western AREA POWER ADMINISTRATION

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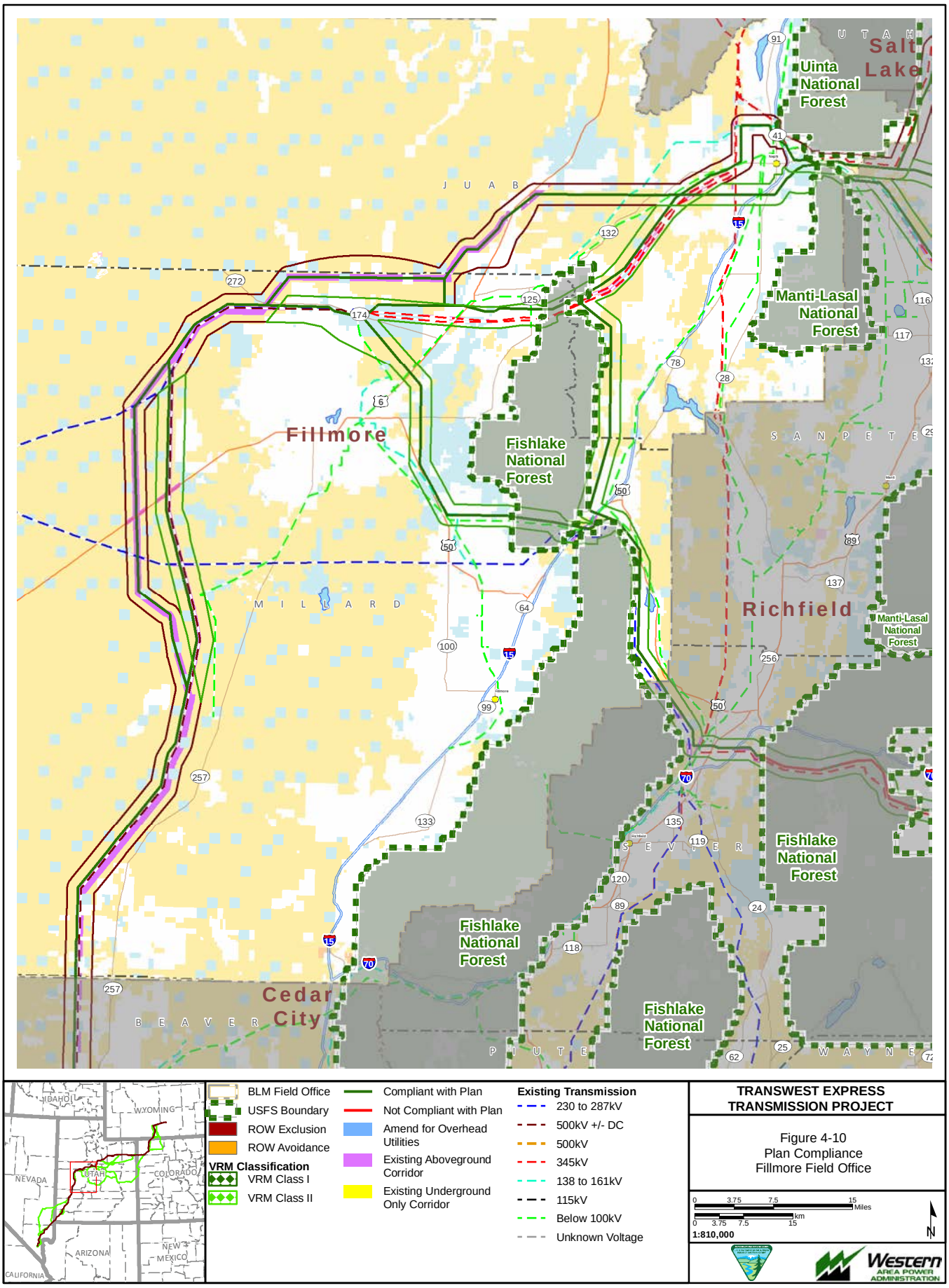

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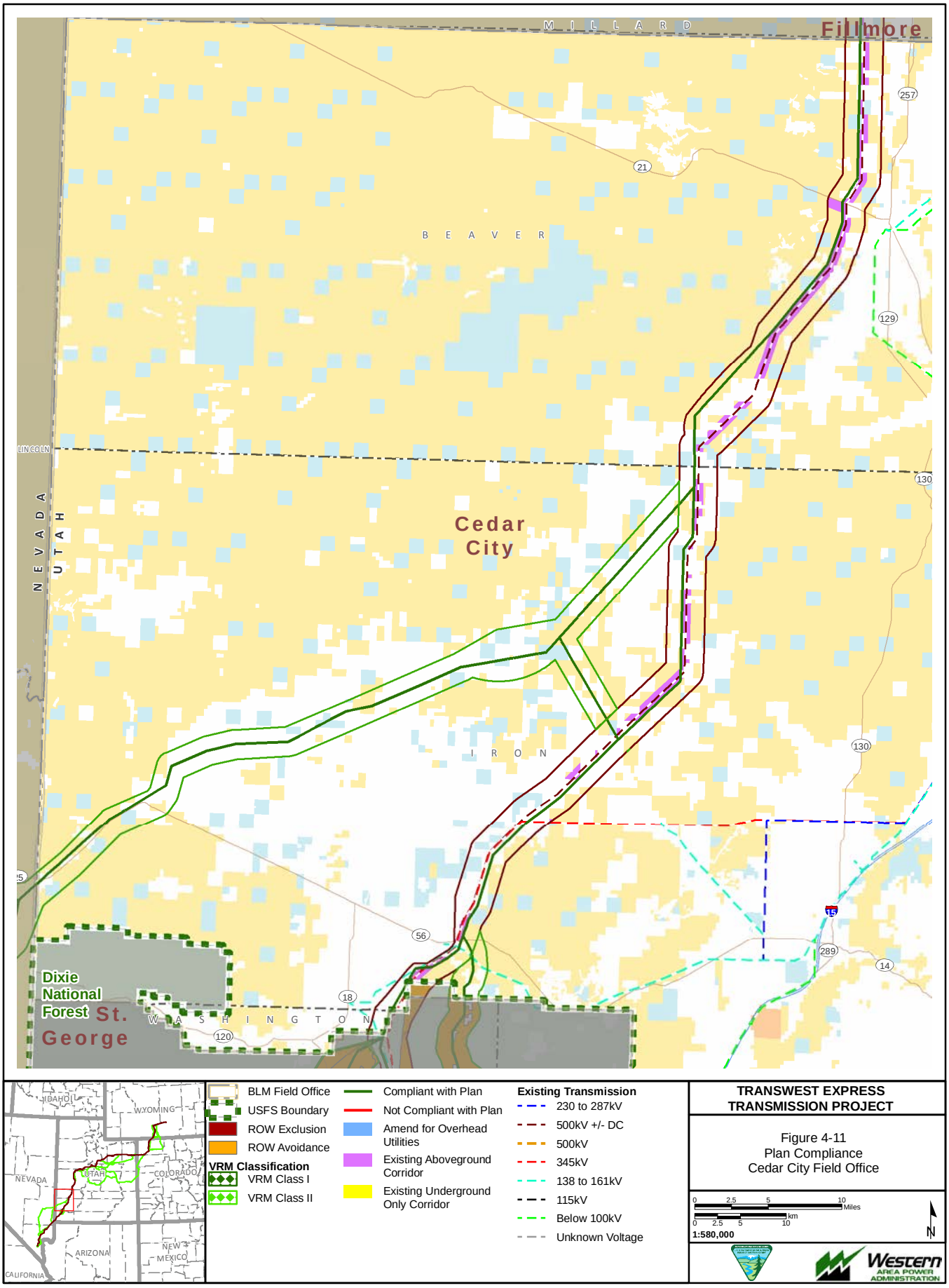

TRANSWEST EXPRESS TRANSMISSION PROJECT

Figure 4-11
Plan Compliance
Cedar City Field Office

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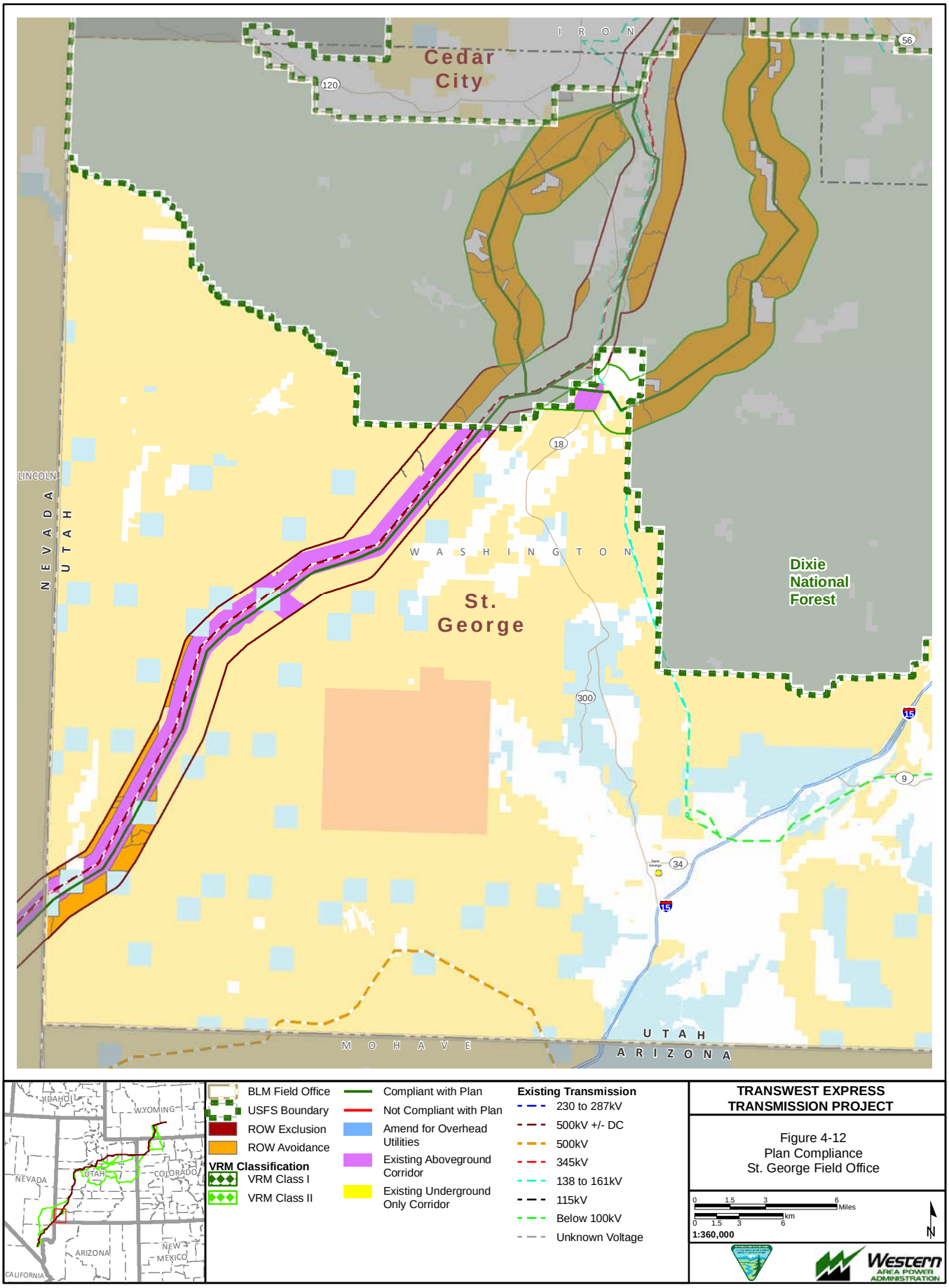

TRANSWEST EXPRESS TRANSMISSION PROJECT

Figure 4-12
Plan Compliance
St. George Field Office

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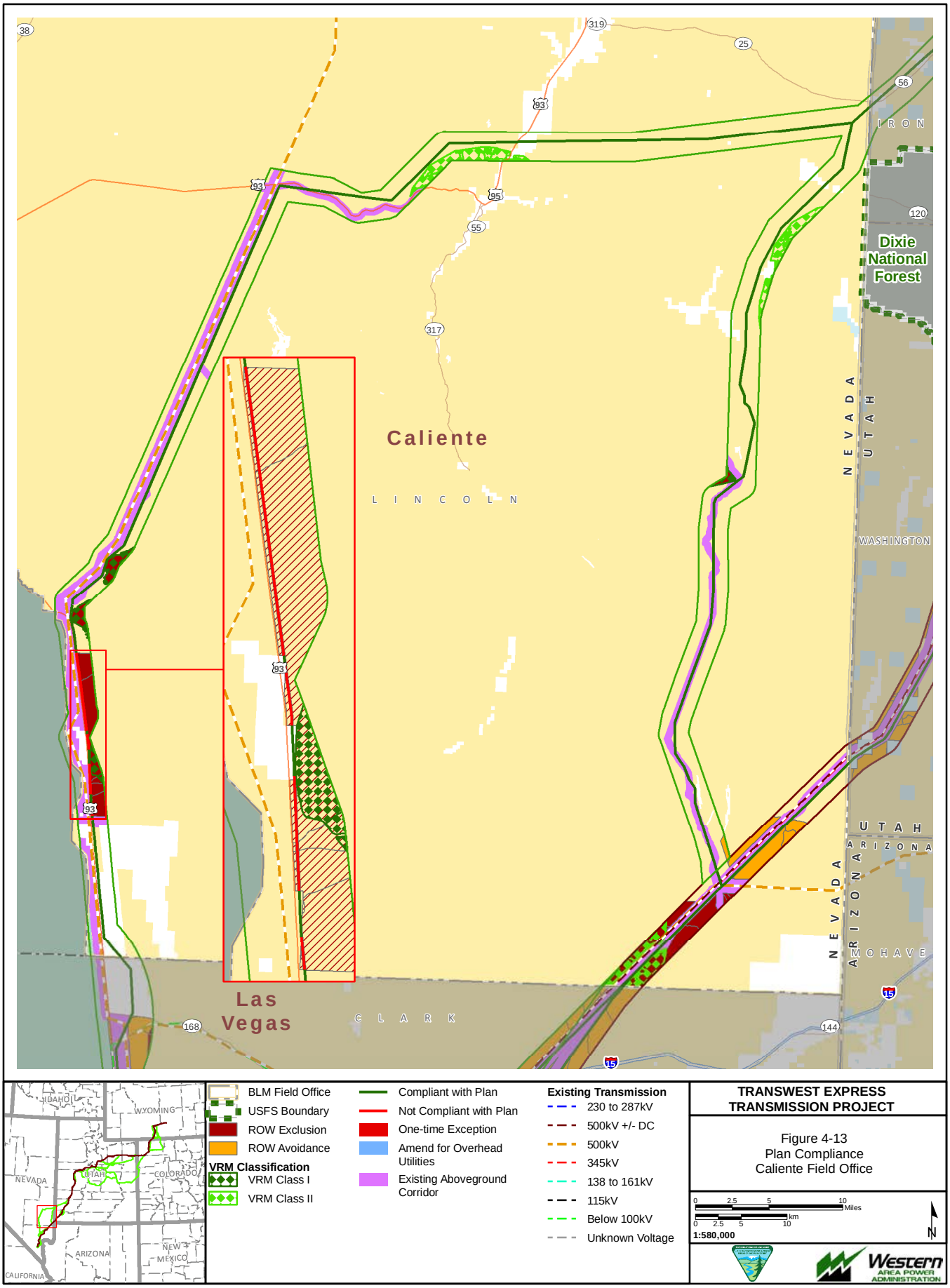

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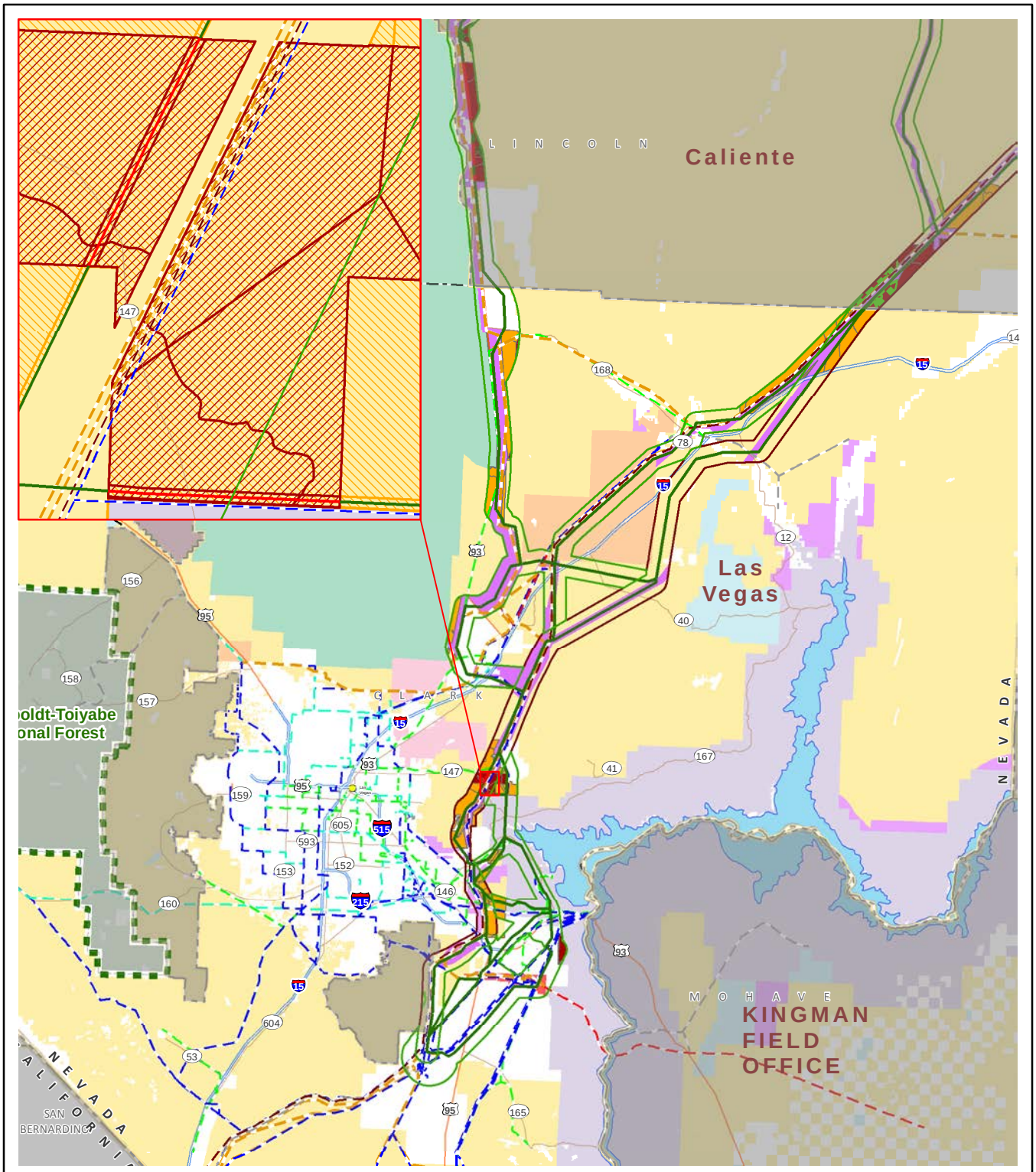

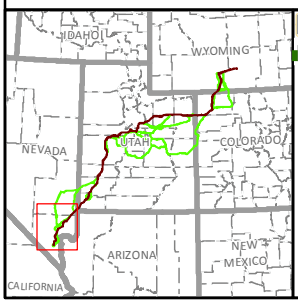

BLM Field Office
USFS Boundary

Existing Transmission
- 230 to 287kV
- 500kV +/- DC
- 500kV
- 345kV
- 138 to 161kV
- 115kV
- Below 100kV
- Unknown Voltage

TRANSWEST EXPRESS TRANSMISSION PROJECT

Figure 4-14
Plan Compliance
Las Vegas Field Office

0 3.75 7.5 15 Miles
0 4 8 16 km
1:860,000
N

Western AREA POWER ADMINISTRATION

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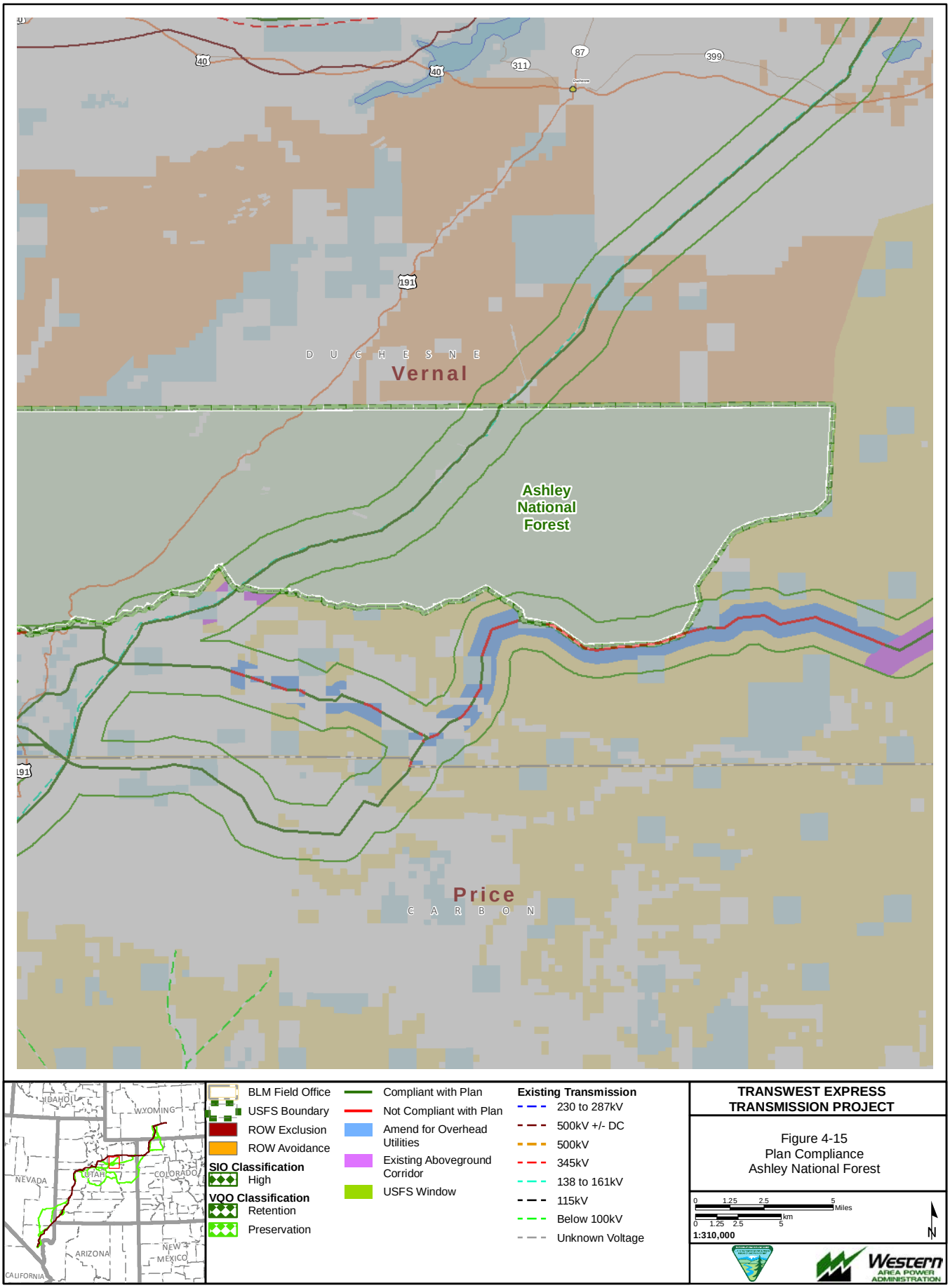

TRANSWEST EXPRESS TRANSMISSION PROJECT

Figure 4-15
Plan Compliance
Ashley National Forest

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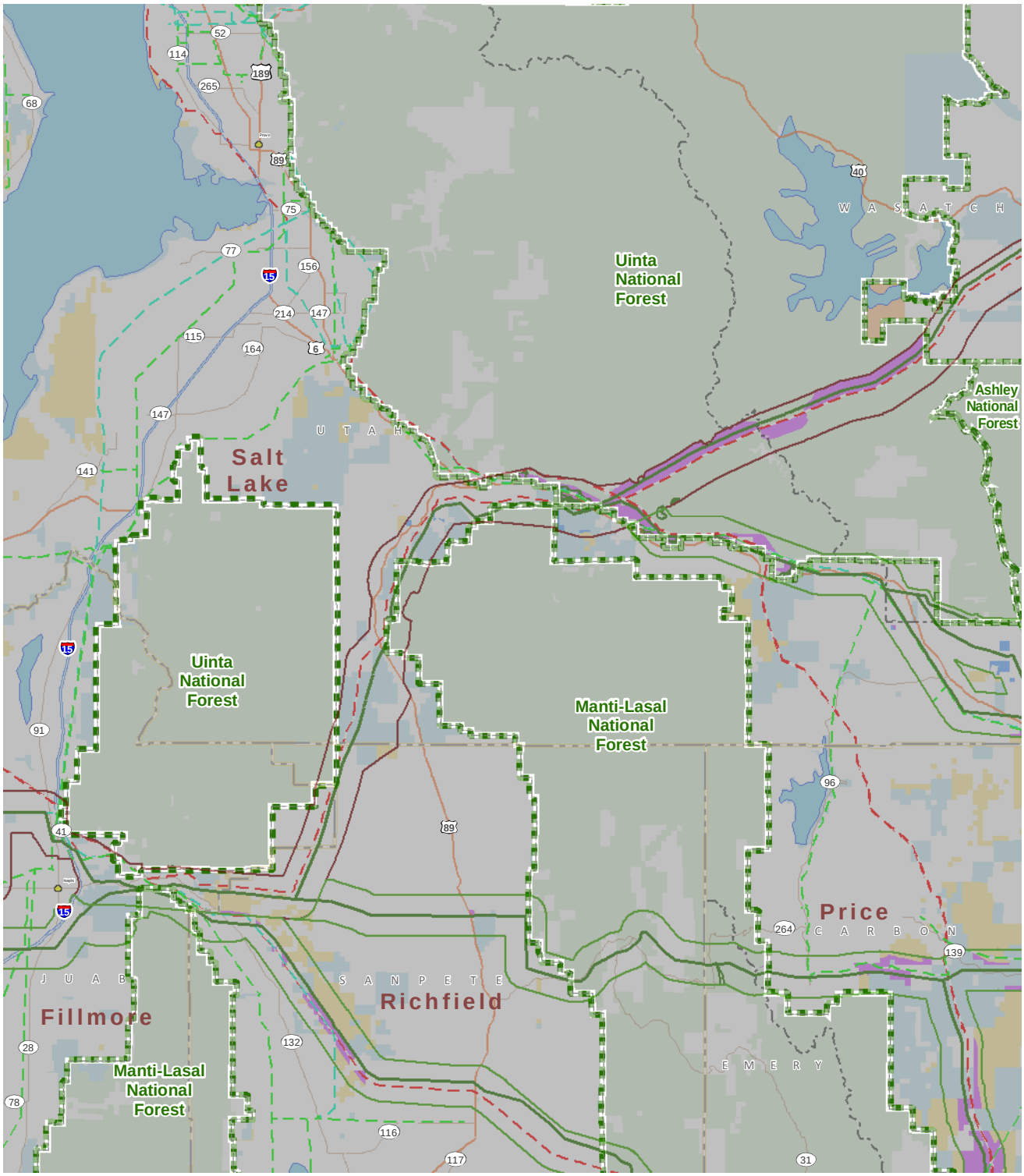

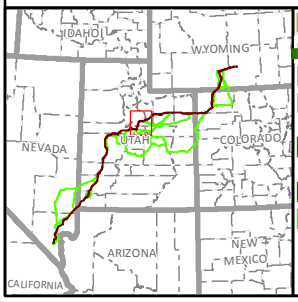

BLM Field Office
USFS Boundary
ROW Exclusion
ROW Avoidance

SIO Classification
High

VQO Classification
Retention
Preservation

Compliant with Plan
Not Compliant with Plan
Amend for Overhead Utilities
Existing Aboveground Corridor
USFS Window

Existing Transmission
230 to 287kV
500kV +/- DC
500kV
345kV
138 to 161kV
115kV
Below 100kV
Unknown Voltage

TRANSWEST EXPRESS TRANSMISSION PROJECT

Figure 4-16
Plan Compliance
Uinta-Wasatch-Cache National Forest

0 2 4 8 Miles
0 2 4 8 km
1:460,000
N

Western AREA POWER ADMINISTRATION

Exported On: 6/7/2013

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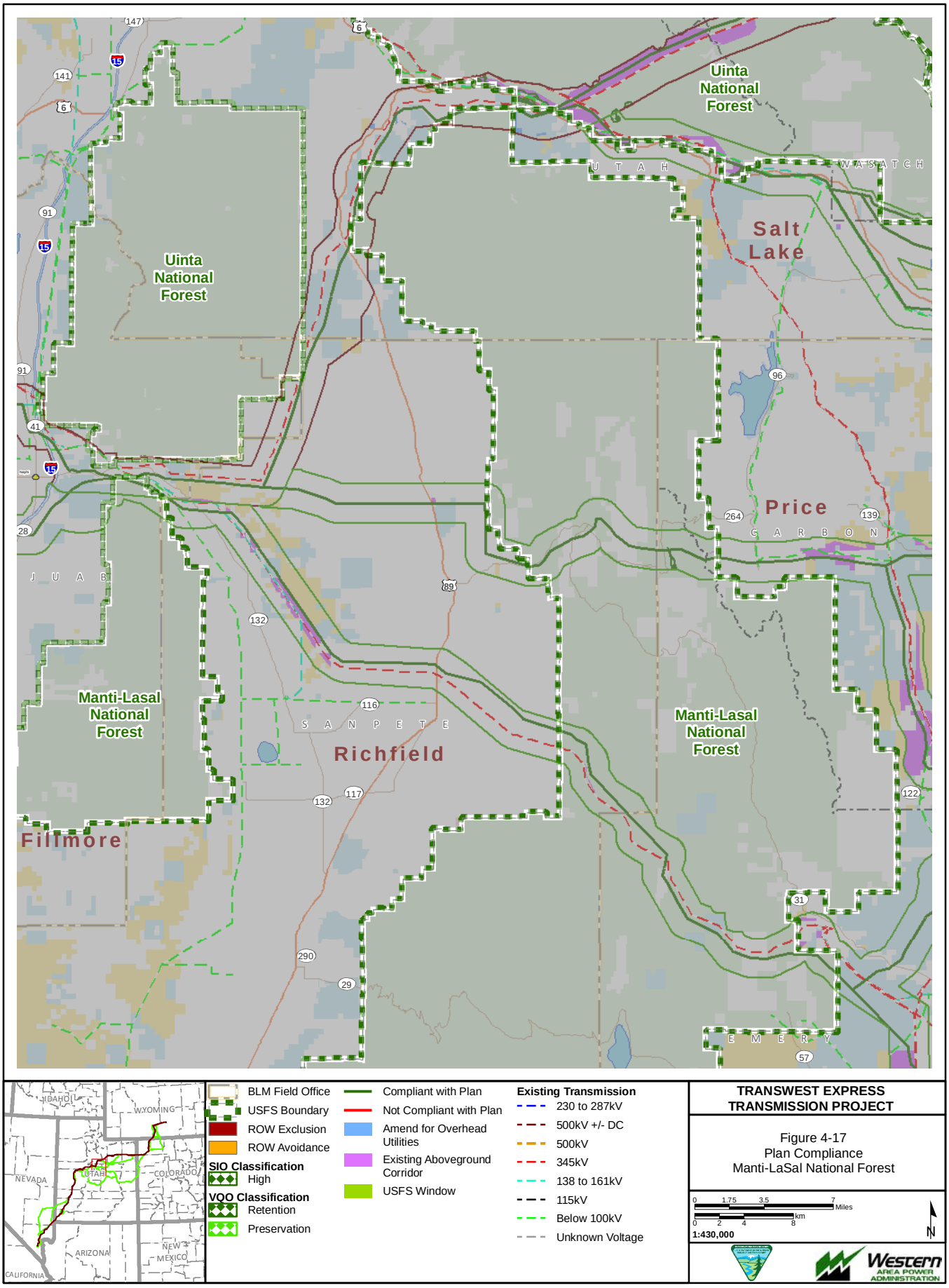

TRANSWEST EXPRESS TRANSMISSION PROJECT

Figure 4-17
Plan Compliance
Manti-LaSal National Forest

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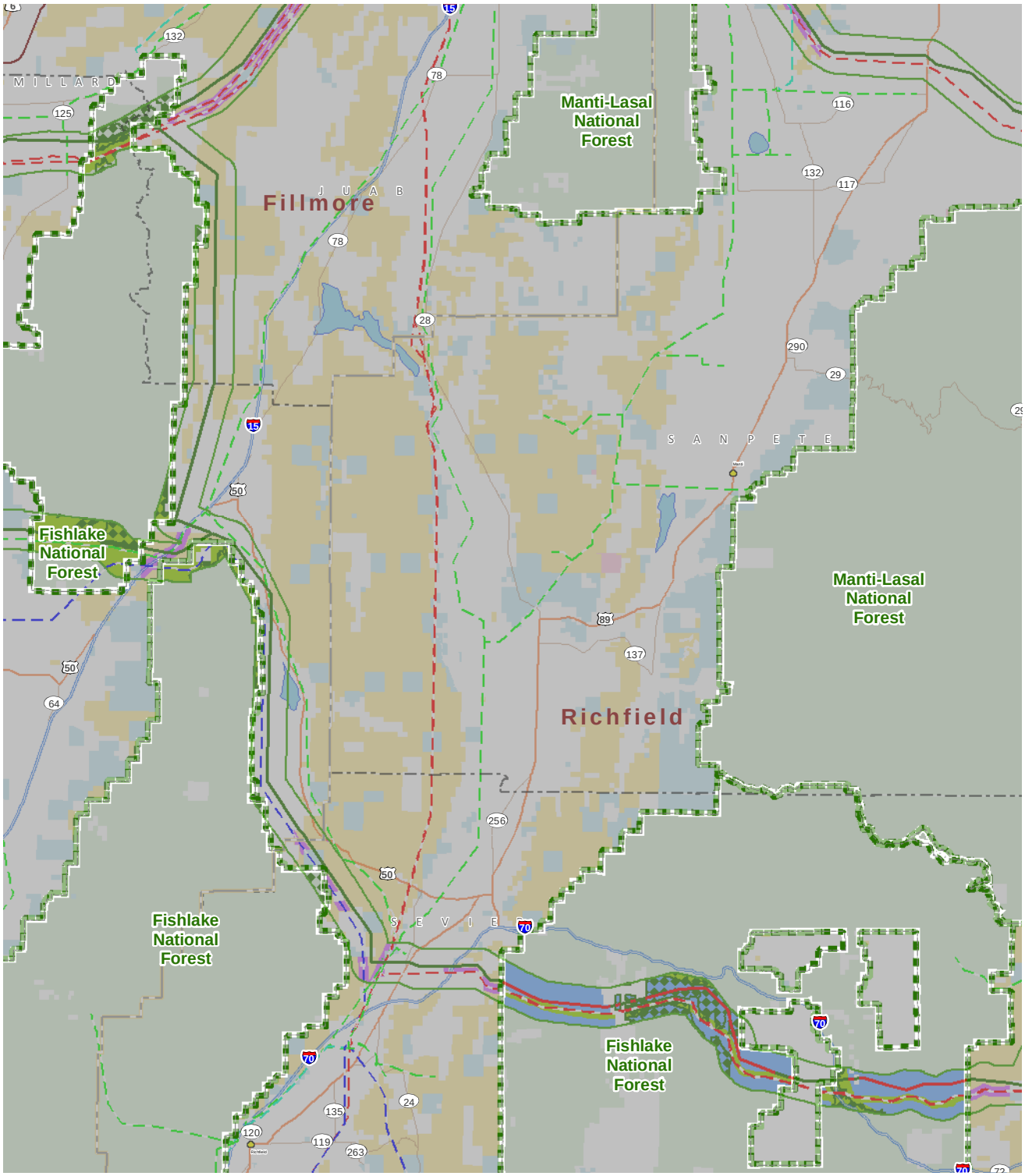

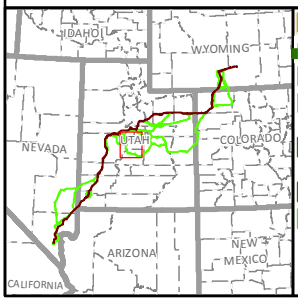

BLM Field Office
USFS Boundary
ROW Exclusion
ROW Avoidance

SIO Classification
High

VQO Classification
Retention
Preservation

Compliant with Plan
Not Compliant with Plan
Amend for Overhead Utilities
Existing Aboveground Corridor
USFS Window

Existing Transmission
230 to 287kV
500kV +/- DC
500kV
345kV
138 to 161kV
115kV
Below 100kV
Unknown Voltage

TRANSWEST EXPRESS TRANSMISSION PROJECT

Figure 4-18
Plan Compliance
Fishlake National Forest

0 2 4 8 Miles
0 2 4 8 km
1:480,000
N

Western AREA POWER ADMINISTRATION

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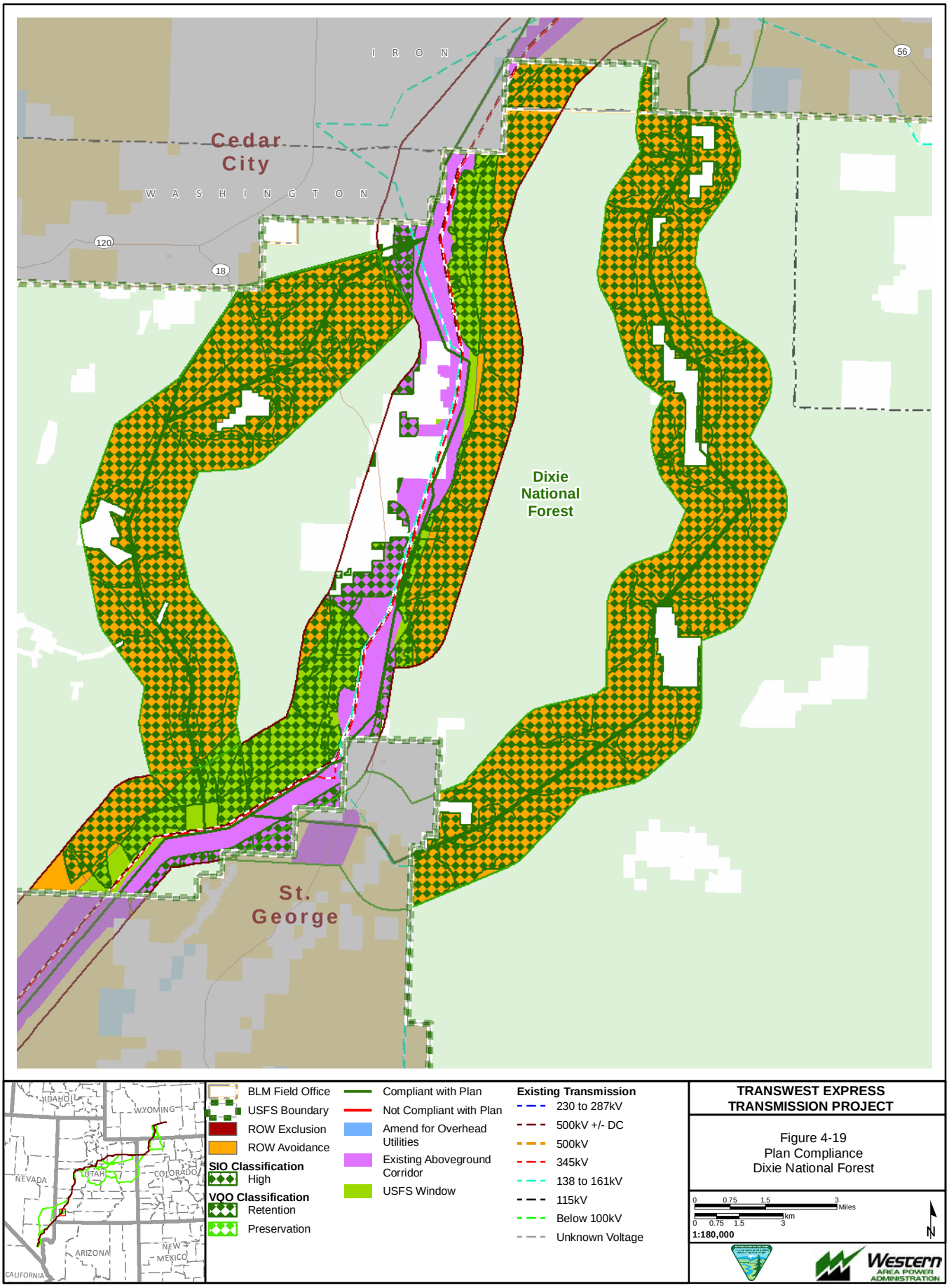

TRANSWEST EXPRESS TRANSMISSION PROJECT

Figure 4-19
Plan Compliance
Dixie National Forest

Western AREA POWER ADMINISTRATION

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4.4.1 BLM Rawlins Field Office

Alternatives A, B, C, and D as well as the Mexican Flats, Baggs, Fivemile Point North and Fivemile Point South Alternative Connectors traverse lands administered by the Rawlins FO. According to the RMP (RMP ROD, p. 2-17), "all BLM-administered public lands, except WSAs and some SD/MAs (including ACECs), are open to consideration for placement of transportation and utility ROW systems. Each transportation system and utility ROW will be located adjacent to existing facilities, when possible." Appendix A-34 of the RMP details ROW corridor and selection criteria. All alternatives traverse areas that would conflict with resource protection measures, including buffers to protect raptors and historic trails, and areas that would conflict with visual quality objectives as determined through the TWE impact analysis in Section 3.12. In addition to these resource conflicts, Alternative C and the Mexican Flats and Fivemile Point North Alternative Connectors would also conflict with buffers to protect surface water.

Alternative B is entirely situated within the underground-only 1,320-ft CIG/Entrega/WIC Transmission line corridor. To minimize environmental impacts and the proliferation of separate ROWs for TWE and/or other RFFA transmission projects within the FO, the BLM has indicated that a plan amendment would be needed to designate a new corridor or expand the existing corridor for any TWE project route traversing the FO.

For Alternative A, ROW decisions listed under Section 2.3.5 Lands and Realty in the RMP (p. 2-18) and Table A34-1 in Appendix 34 (p. A34-1) and Table A (page A-15) in the ROD for the Westwide Energy Corridor (WWEC) would be amended as follows for 58 miles ***(new text in bold italics)***:

<u>Utility/Transportation Systems</u>

1. Areas with important resource values will be avoided where possible in planning for new facility placement (600,290 acres). If it becomes necessary for facilities (i.e., linear ROWs) to be placed within avoidance areas, effects will be intensively managed. Avoidance and exclusion areas are identified on Map 2-33b and Table 2-5.

2. Utility corridors are designated as follows:

a. Rawlins-Wamsutter: The existing WWEC multi-modal utility corridor south of I-80 is expanded to two miles between Rawlins and Wamsutter. Exceptions to resource stipulations within the designated corridor may be granted if measures of avoidance or minimization are not feasible. Minimum separation distance is required in greater sage-grouse core areas. All possible measures will be taken to avoid conflicts with other existing and proposed uses (utility and otherwise) within the designated corridor.

b. Wamsutter-Powder Rim: A north-south, two-mile-wide utility corridor is designated along the Sweetwater/Carbon County line for all utilities. Exceptions to resource stipulations within the designated corridor may be granted if measures of avoidance or minimization are not feasible. All possible measures will be taken to avoid conflicts with other existing and proposed uses (utility and otherwise) within the designated corridor.

Table A34-1. Designated ROW Corridors

Corridor	Width	Uses
Spence-Bairoil-Jim Bridger 230 kV Transmission Line	1,320'	Overhead utilities only
CIG/Entrega/WIC Transmission lines	1,320'	Buried utilities only
Lost Creek Pipeline	1,320'	Buried utilities only
WAPA 115 kV Transmission Line	1,320'	Overhead utilities only

Corridor	Width	Uses
I-80 Corridor	1,320' on either side of the interstate	Buried utilities only
Rawlins-Wamsutter WWEC Corridor[1]	~~***3,500'***~~ ***2 miles***	Multi-modal
Highway 789	1,320' east of the highway	Overhead utilities
Wamsutter-Powder Rim Corridor	***2 miles***	***All utilities***
Rock Springs to Dave Johnston 230 kV Transmission Line	1,320' north from the existing line	Overhead utilities only

[1] Not included in the Table A34-1 of the RMP but designated through the WWEC land use plan amendment process.

For Alternative B, ROW decisions listed under Section 2.3.5 Lands and Realty in the RMP (p. 2-18) and Table A34-1 in Appendix 34 (p. A34-1) and Table A (page A-15) in the ROD for WWEC would be amended as follows for 61 miles ***(new text in bold italics)***:

Utility/Transportation Systems

1. Areas with important resource values will be avoided where possible in planning for new facility placement (600,290 acres). If it becomes necessary for facilities (i.e., linear ROWs) to be placed within avoidance areas, effects will be intensively managed. Avoidance and exclusion areas are identified on Map 2-33b and Table 2-5.

2. Utility corridors are designated as follows:

a. Rawlins-Frewen: The existing WWEC multi-modal utility corridor south of I-80 is expanded to two miles between Rawlins and Frewen. Exceptions to resource stipulations within the designated corridor may be granted if measures of avoidance or minimization are not feasible. Minimum separation distance is required in greater sage-grouse core areas. All possible measures will be taken to avoid conflicts with other existing and proposed uses (utility and otherwise) within the designated corridor.

b. CIG/Entrega/WIC Transmission lines: Conversion and expansion of the existing north-south, underground-only corridor to a two-mile wide underground and aboveground utility corridor is designated west of the Sweetwater/Carbon County line. Exceptions to resource stipulations within the designated corridor may be granted if measures of avoidance or minimization are not feasible. All possible measures will be taken to avoid conflicts with other existing and proposed uses (utility and otherwise) within the designated corridor.

Table A34-1. Designated ROW Corridors

Corridor	Width	Uses
Spence-Bairoil-Jim Bridger 230 kV Transmission Line	1,320'	Overhead utilities only
CIG/Entrega/WIC Transmission lines	~~***1,320'***~~ ***2 miles***	Buried ***and overhead*** utilities ~~***only***~~
Lost Creek Pipeline	1,320'	Buried utilities only
WAPA 115 kV Transmission Line	1,320'	Overhead utilities only
I-80 Corridor	1,320' on either side of the interstate	Buried utilities only
Rawlins-Frewen WWEC Corridor[1]	~~***3,500'***~~ ***2 miles***	Multi-modal
Highway 789	1,320' east of the highway	Overhead utilities
Rock Springs to Dave Johnston 230 kV Transmission Line	1,320' north from the existing line	Overhead utilities only

[1] Not included in the Table A34-1 of the RMP but designated through the WWEC land use plan amendment process.

For Alternative C, ROW decisions listed under Section 2.3.5 Lands and Realty in the RMP (p. 2-18) and Table A34-1 in Appendix 34 (p. A34-1) and Table A (page A-15) in the ROD for WWEC would be amended as follows for 27 miles ***(new text in bold italics)***:

Utility/Transportation Systems

1. Areas with important resource values will be avoided where possible in planning for new facility placement (600,290 acres). If it becomes necessary for facilities (i.e., linear ROWs) to be placed within avoidance areas, effects will be intensively managed. Avoidance and exclusion areas are identified on Map 2-33b and Table 2-5.

2. Utility corridors are designated as follows:

a. Rawlins-Creston: The existing WWEC multi-modal utility corridor south of I-80 is expanded to two miles between Rawlins and Creston to allow. Exceptions to resource stipulations within the designated corridor may be granted if measures of avoidance or minimization are not feasible. Minimum separation distance is required in greater sage-grouse core areas. All possible measures will be taken to avoid conflicts with other existing and proposed uses (utility and otherwise) within the designated corridor.

b. Highway 789: The existing utility corridor along Highway 789 from Creston to Baggs is expanded to two miles to allow for all utilities including high voltage overhead transmission. Exceptions to resource stipulations within the designated corridor may be granted if measures of avoidance or minimization are not feasible. Minimum separation distance is required in greater sage-grouse core areas. All possible measures will be taken to avoid conflicts with other existing and proposed uses (utility and otherwise) within the designated corridor.

Table A34-1. Designated ROW Corridors

Corridor	Width	Uses
Spence-Bairoil-Jim Bridger 230 kV Transmission Line	1,320’	Overhead utilities only
CIG/Entrega/WIC Transmission lines	1,320’	Buried utilities only
Lost Creek Pipeline	1,320’	Buried utilities only
WAPA 115 kV Transmission Line	1,320’	Overhead utilities only
I-80 Corridor	1,320’ on either side of the interstate	Buried utilities only
Rawlins-Creston WWEC Corridor[1]	***~~3,500’~~ 2 miles***	Multi-modal
Highway 789	***~~1,320’ east of the highway~~ 2 miles***	Overhead utilities
Rock Springs to Dave Johnston 230 kV Transmission Line	1,320’ north from the existing line	Overhead utilities only

[1] Not included in the Table A34-1 of the RMP but designated through the WWEC land use plan amendment process.

For Alternative D (Agency Preferred Alternative) and the Baggs Alternative Connector, ROW decisions listed under Section 2.3.5 Lands and Realty in the RMP (p. 2-18) and Table A34-1 in Appendix 34 (p. A34-1) and Table A (page A-15) in the ROD for WWEC would be amended as follows for 76 miles ***(new text in bold italics)***:

Utility/Transportation Systems

1. Areas with important resource values will be avoided where possible in planning for new facility placement (600,290 acres). If it becomes necessary for facilities (i.e., linear ROWs) to

be placed within avoidance areas, effects will be intensively managed. Avoidance and exclusion areas are identified on Map 2-33b and Table 2-5.

2. ***Utility corridors are designated as follows:***

   a. ***Rawlins-Wamsutter: The existing WWEC multi-modal utility corridor south of I-80 is expanded to two miles between Rawlins and Wamsutter. Exceptions to resource stipulations within the designated corridor may be granted if measures of avoidance or minimization are not feasible. Minimum separation distance is required in greater sage-grouse core areas. All possible measures will be taken to avoid conflicts with other existing and proposed uses (utility and otherwise) within the designated corridor.***

   b. ***Wamsutter-Baggs-Powder Rim: A two-mile wide utility corridor is designated north-south to Baggs then east-west to Powder Rim for all utilities. Exceptions to resource stipulations within the designated corridor may be granted if measures of avoidance or minimization are not feasible. All possible measures will be taken to avoid conflicts with other existing and proposed uses (utility and otherwise) within the designated corridor.***

Table A34-1. Designated ROW Corridors

Corridor	Width	Uses
Spence-Bairoil-Jim Bridger 230 kV Transmission Line	1,320’	Overhead utilities only
CIG/Entrega/WIC Transmission lines	1,320’	Buried utilities only
Lost Creek Pipeline	1,320’	Buried utilities only
WAPA 115 kV Transmission Line	1,320’	Overhead utilities only
I-80 Corridor	1,320’ on either side of the interstate	Buried utilities only
Rawlins-Creston WWEC Corridor[1]	***~~3,500’~~ 2 miles***	Multi-modal
Highway 789	1,320’ east of the highway	Overhead utilities
Wamsutter-Baggs-Powder Rim Corridor	***2 miles***	***All utilities***
Rock Springs to Dave Johnston 230 kV Transmission Line	1,320’ north from the existing line	Overhead utilities only

[1] Not included in the Table A34-1 of the RMP but designated through the WWEC land use plan amendment process.

4.4.2 BLM Little Snake Field Office

Alternatives A, B, C, and D traverse lands administered by the Little Snake FO. Alternatives A, B, and D are located either partly or wholly outside of designated corridors. According to the RMP (RMP ROD, p. RMP-51), “Section 503 of FLPMA provides for the designation of ROW corridors and encourages use of in-common ROWs to minimize environmental impacts and the proliferation of separate ROWs. BLM policy, as described in BLM Manual 2801.13B1, is to encourage prospective applicants to locate their proposals within corridors…The remainder of the LSFO will be open for the consideration of ROWs on a case-by-case basis, with stipulations identified during activity level environmental reviews.”

All alternatives traverse areas that would conflict with resource protection measures, as follows:

- Alternatives A and C encroach on buffers to protect raptors, special status aquatic species, Greater sage-grouse, perennial water sources, and areas that would conflict with visual quality objectives as determined through the TWE impact analysis in Section 3.12. In addition, Alternative C encroaches on buffers to protect a State Wildlife Area.

- Alternatives B and D encroach on buffers to raptors, Greater sage-grouse, white-tailed prairie dog towns, and areas that would conflict with visual quality objectives as determined through the TWE impact analysis in Section 3.12.

Resource conflicts with Alternative C would occur within a designated utility corridor, where exceptions can be granted if mitigation or avoidance is not feasible. Resource conflicts for Alternatives A, B, and D occur in areas outside of designated corridors. To minimize environmental impacts and the proliferation of separate ROWs for TWE and other RFFA transmission projects within the FO, the BLM has indicated that a plan amendment would be needed to designate a new corridor for any TWE project route traversing the FO for routes outside of the electric-only or multi-modal designated WWEC corridors.

For Alternative A, ROW decisions listed under in Table 2-17 for Lands and Realty in the RMP (p. RMP-53) would be amended as follows for 34 miles ***(new text in bold italics)***:

> ***Utility Corridors***
>
> ***A north-south, two-mile wide aboveground utility corridor is designated along Sevenmile Ridge following County Road 75 from the Wyoming state line south to U.S. Highway 40 at Maybell. Exceptions to resource stipulations within the designated corridor may be granted if measures of avoidance or minimization are not feasible.***

For Alternatives B and D (Agency Preferred Alternative), ROW decisions listed under in Table 2-17 for Lands and Realty in the RMP (p. RMP-53) would be amended as follows for 27 miles ***(new text in bold italics)***:

> ***Utility Corridors***
>
> ***A north-south, two-mile wide aboveground utility corridor is designated along the foothills of Sevenmile Ridge east of County Road 75 from the Wyoming state line south to U.S. Highway 40 at Maybell. Exceptions to resource stipulations within the designated corridor may be granted if measures of avoidance or minimization are not feasible.***

4.4.3 BLM White River Field Office

Alternatives A, B, C, D, E, and F traverse lands administered by the White River FO. According to the RMP (RMP ROD, p. 2-49), “applications for land use authorizations (e.g., rights-of-way, leases, and permits) will be considered on a case-by-case basis and the remainder of the Resource Area outside of exclusion and avoidance areas will be considered open for land use authorizations.” All alternatives traverse areas that would conflict with resource protection measures, as follows:

- Alternatives A, D, E, and F (Agency Preferred) encroach on buffers to protect raptors.
- Alternatives B and C encroach on buffers to Greater sage-grouse, raptors, areas designated as VRM Class II and areas that would conflict with visual quality objectives as determined through the TWE impact analysis in Section 3.12.

Alternatives A, D, E, and F (Agency Preferred) are situated within utility corridors designated through WWEC where exceptions may be granted if avoidance or mitigation would not be feasible. Therefore, a plan amendment would not be required.

Alternatives B and C are situated within an underground only ROW corridor, the 1-mile-wide Dragon Trail-Atchee Ridge ROW corridor. A portion of the route passes through VRM Class II in Garfield County, an area that inventoried as VRI Class III.

For Alternatives B and C, utility corridor decisions in the RMP (p. 2-51) would be amended as follows for 38 miles ***(new text in bold italics)***:

> DRAGON TRAIL-ATCHEE RIDGE: This corridor follows the route once proposed as the Rangely Loop segment of the Northwest Pipeline Expansion Project. It runs south from Rangely, to the vicinity of Baxter Pass, is approximately ~~***1 mile***~~ ***two miles*** wide, and will accommodate all buried ***and overhead*** linear facilities. ***Power lines located within the designated utility corridor would be excepted from the requirements associated with VRM Class II areas. Exceptions to resource stipulations within the designated corridor may be granted if measures of avoidance or minimization are not feasible.***

4.4.4 BLM Grand Junction Field Office

Proposed routes through this area are considered to be in conformance with the RMP. Alternatives B and C pass through a 4-mile wide utility corridor (from De Beque to Southern Boundary of resource area) for all major power lines, but some portions deviate. While the RMP encourages the use of existing corridors (RMP ROD, p. 2-29), the remaining public lands are suitable for consideration for public utilities.

Alternatives B and C traverse areas that would conflict with resource protection measures. Alternatives B and C cross portions of the Prairie Canyon ACEC, elk production areas, and areas that would conflict with visual quality objectives as determined through the TWE impact analysis in Section 3.12. However, these alternatives would be mostly situated within utility corridors designated through the RMP and exceptions could be granted if avoidance or minimization isn't feasible. Therefore, a plan amendment would not be required.

4.4.5 BLM Vernal Field Office

Alternatives A, B, C, D, E, and F (Agency Preferred Alternative) traverse lands administered by the Vernal FO. All alternatives traverse areas that would conflict with resource protection measures, as follows:

- Alternatives A and E encroach on buffers to protect white-tailed prairie dog colonies, Greater sage-grouse, floodplain and riparian areas, and areas that would conflict with visual quality objectives as determined through the TWE impact analysis in Section 3.12.
- Alternatives B and C encroach on buffers to protect Mexican Spotted Owl and floodplain and riparian areas.
- Alternatives D and F (Agency Preferred) encroaches on buffers to protect white-tailed prairie dog colonies, Greater sage-grouse, Mexican Spotted Owl, floodplain and riparian, the Lower Green River ACEC, White River corridors, and areas that would conflict with visual quality objectives as determined through the TWE impact analysis in Section 3.12, Visual Resources.

Alternative A, B, C, D, E, and F (Agency Preferred) would be partially situated outside of designated utility corridors. According to decision LAR-42 (RMP ROD, p. 91), major linear ROWs exceeding the size thresholds that are proposed outside of the preferred, designated corridors may require a plan amendment.

For Alternative A, utility corridor decision LAR-42 in the RMP (p. 91) would be amended as follows for 19 miles ***(new text in bold italics)***:

> <u>LAR-42</u>
>
> Major linear ROWs meeting the above thresholds that are proposed outside of the preferred, designated corridors may require a plan amendment.

The RMP has been amended to accommodate a new aboveground utility corridor up to one mile wide for high voltage transmission lines requiring straight east-west alignments between the Colorado State line near Dinosaur, CO and Randlett, UT. Exceptions to resource stipulations within the designated corridor may be granted if measures of avoidance or minimization are not feasible.

For Alternatives B and C, utility corridor decision LAR-42 in the RMP (p. 91) would be amended as follows for 6 miles ***(new text in bold italics)***:

LAR-42

Major linear ROWs meeting the above thresholds that are proposed outside of the preferred, designated corridors may require a plan amendment.

The RMP has been amended to accommodate a new aboveground utility corridor up to one mile wide for high voltage transmission lines requiring straight north-south alignments traversing Atchee Ridge Road across the Utah/Colorado State line. Exceptions to resource stipulations within the designated corridor may be granted if measures of avoidance or minimization are not feasible.

For Alternative D, utility corridor decision LAR-42 in the RMP (p. 91) would be amended as follows for 17 miles ***(new text in bold italics)***:

LAR-42

Major linear ROWs meeting the above thresholds that are proposed outside of the preferred, designated corridors may require a plan amendment.

The RMP has been amended to accommodate a new aboveground utility corridor up to one mile wide for high voltage transmission lines requiring east-west alignments south of the Ashley National Forest boundary, east of Highway 191. Exceptions to resource stipulations within the designated corridor may be granted if measures of avoidance or minimization are not feasible.

For Alternative E, utility corridor decision LAR-42 in the RMP (p. 91) would be amended as follows for 6 miles ***(new text in bold italics)***:

LAR-42

Major linear ROWs meeting the above thresholds that are proposed outside of the preferred, designated corridors may require a plan amendment.

The RMP has been amended to accommodate a new aboveground utility corridor up to one mile wide for high voltage transmission lines requiring east-west alignments between Highway 88 and Randlett, UT, west of the existing utility corridor. Exceptions to resource stipulations within the designated corridor may be granted if measures of avoidance or minimization are not feasible.

For Alternative F (Agency Preferred Alternative), utility corridor decision LAR-42 in the RMP (p. 91) would be amended as follows for 22 miles ***(new text in bold italics)***:

LAR-42

Major linear ROWs meeting the above thresholds that are proposed outside of the preferred, designated corridors may require a plan amendment.

The RMP has been amended to accommodate a new aboveground utility corridor up to one mile wide for high voltage transmission lines requiring east-west alignments south of the Ashley National Forest boundary, east of Highway 191. Exceptions to resource stipulations within the designated corridor may be granted if measures of avoidance or minimization are not feasible.

4.4.6 BLM Moab Field Office

Alternatives B and C traverse lands administered by the Moab FO. Proposed routes through this area are considered to be in conformance with the RMP. The RMP does not specifically restrict ROW to designated corridors. Alternatives B and C mostly follow the I-70 utility corridor and includes all major existing ROW as identified in the RMP with a 0.5-mile width on each side of the widest ROW corridor (LAR-14).

Alternatives B and C traverse areas that would conflict with resource protection measures. Alternatives B and C cross segments of the Old Spanish Trail (within existing designated utility corridors), the Three Rivers and Westwater mineral withdrawal area, select rivers for protection of special status aquatic species, and riparian area buffers, and areas that would conflict with visual quality objectives as determined through the TWE impact analysis in Section 3.12, Visual Resources. However, alternatives would be mostly situated within utility corridors designated through the RMP and exceptions could be granted if avoidance or minimization isn't feasible. Therefore, a plan amendment would not be required.

4.4.7 BLM Price Field Office

Alternatives B, C, and D as well as the Price and Castle Dale alternative connectors and a portion of the Emma Park Alternative Variation traverse lands administered by the Price FO. Alternative D as well as the Price and Castle Dale alternative connectors and a portion of the Emma Park Alternative Variation would not meet resource objectives that establish buffers to protect streams. However, these alternatives are situated within utility corridors designated through the RMP and the transmission line can be designed to avoid the water resource buffers and access roads routed to minimize conflict. Therefore, a plan amendment would not be required for these alternatives.

Alternative D and the Price and Castle Dale alternative connectors and a portion of the Emma Park Alternative Variation are situated within utility corridors designated through the RMP where they cross BLM-administered land. However, Alternatives B and C would be partially situated on lands outside of designated corridors and would require a plan amendment to designate a new utility corridor in these areas. The RMP identifies utility corridors as the preferred location for future major linear ROWs including transmission (not distribution) lines with a voltage capacity of 69 kV or greater (LAR-23, RMP ROD, p. 122). LAR-24 indicates that any new utility corridors will require a plan amendment (RMP ROD, p. 123).

Alternatives B and C traverse areas that would conflict with resource protection measures. Alternative B crosses segments of the Old Spanish Trail (within existing designated utility corridors), buffers to protect white-tailed prairie dog colonies, and stream protection buffers. Alternative C crosses portions of two ACECs (San Rafael Canyon as well as the Dry Wash and Molen Seep units of the Rock Art ACECs), segments of the Old Spanish Trail (within existing designated utility corridors), buffers to protect white-tailed prairie dog colonies, stream protection buffers, and areas that would conflict with visual quality objectives as determined through the TWE impact analysis in Section 3.12. Therefore, plan amendments

that allow exceptions for these stipulations in the newly designated utility corridors would also be required.

For Alternative B, utility corridor decision LAR-22 in the RMP (p. 122) would be amended as follows for 14 miles ***(new text in bold italics)***:

> LAR-22
>
> Designate existing utility corridors, (including the WUG updates to the Western Regional Corridor Study and west-wide energy corridors designated pursuant to the Energy Policy Act of 2005 and studied in an interagency Programmatic EIS) and additional corridors subject to physical barriers and sensitive resource values (Map R-21).
>
> ***A new east-west aboveground utility corridor up to one mile is designated south of the Carbon County line between U.S. Highway 191/6 and State Route 10 to accommodate high voltage transmission. Exceptions to resource stipulations within the designated corridor may be granted if measures of avoidance or minimization are not feasible.***

For Alternative C, utility corridor decision LAR-22 in the RMP (p. 122) would be amended as follows for 10 miles ***(new text in bold italics)***:

> LAR-22
>
> Designate existing utility corridors, (including the WUG updates to the Western Regional Corridor Study and west-wide energy corridors designated pursuant to the Energy Policy Act of 2005 and studied in an interagency Programmatic EIS) and additional corridors subject to physical barriers and sensitive resource values (Map R-21).
>
> ***A new east-west aboveground utility corridor up to one mile is designated along County Road 401/Green River Cutoff between U.S. Highway 191/6 and Castle Dale to accommodate high voltage transmission. Exceptions to resource stipulations within the designated corridor may be granted if measures of avoidance or minimization are not feasible. If future utilities cannot avoid ROW Exclusion Areas designated through the RMP encroaching into the corridor, then relocation of the utility or a plan amendment would be needed.***

4.4.8 BLM Salt Lake Field Office

Alternatives A, E, F, and the Emma Park Alternative Variation traverse the Salt Lake FO. However, only Alternative F (Agency Preferred Alternative) and the Emma Park Alternative Variation traverse small parcels of lands administered by the Salt Lake FO. These alternatives are not located within a designated utility corridor when crossing public lands. According to the RMP (RMP ROD, p. 56), “future proposals for major rights-of-way such as pipelines, large power lines and permanent improved roads must use identified corridors. Otherwise, a planning amendment and appropriate environmental analysis will be required. Proposals that are not considered major may be sited outside corridors after demonstrating that locating within a corridor is not viable. In all cases, the utilization of ROW in common shall be considered whenever possible. ROW, whether within or outside a corridor, will avoid the following areas to the maximum extent possible:

- Lands within 0.5 mile of greater sage-grouse strutting grounds if the disturbance would adversely impact the effectiveness of the lek.
- Lands within 1200 feet of riparian/aquatic habitats.

- Lands within VRM class II and III areas.
- Lands within WSAs.
- Lands where an aboveground ROW would be an obvious visual or physical intrusion such as ridge tops or narrow drainages.
- Lands with slopes greater than 30 percent.
- Lands with known or suspected hazardous materials."

For Alternative F (Agency Preferred Alternative) and the Emma Park Alternative Variation, transportation and utility corridor decisions associated with the RMP (p. 56) would be amended as follows for 3 miles ***(new text in bold italics)***:

> ***Decision 2***
>
> ***A two-mile wide aboveground utility corridor is designated south of the Ashley National Forest boundary between Highway 191 and U.S. Highway 6 to accommodate future high-voltage transmission lines.***

4.4.9 BLM Richfield Field Office

Alternatives A, B, C, D, E, and F traverse lands administered by the Richfield FO. Proposed routes through this area are considered to be in conformance with the RMP. The RMP does not specifically restrict ROWs to designated corridors. According to the LAR-33 (RMP ROD, p. 130), "to minimize adverse environmental impacts and the proliferation of separate ROWs, use common ROWs whenever possible, including collocation of new utility transmission lines and other facilities within existing utility and highway corridors."

Alternatives B, C, and D would not meet resource objectives that establish buffers to protect streams and Alternative C would traverse a wetland. However, these alternatives are situated within utility corridors designated through the RMP and the transmission line can be designed to avoid the water resource buffers and access roads routed to minimize conflict. Therefore, a plan amendment would not be required.

4.4.10 BLM Fillmore Field Office

Alternatives A, B (Agency Preferred in Region III), C, D, E, and F (Agency Preferred in Region II) as well as the Lynndyl and IPP East Alternative Connectors traverse lands administered by the Fillmore FO. Proposed routes through this area are considered to be in conformance with the RMP. The RMP does not specifically restrict ROWs to designated corridors. According to the Warm Springs RMP (Warm Springs ROD, p.40), "new ROW will be restricted to designated corridors wherever feasible. Special management designation areas and VRM Class II areas are ROW avoidance areas." According to the House Range RMP, (House Range ROD, p. 67), "Section 503 of FLPMA states '…utilization of ROW in common shall be required to the extent practical…' The utilization of existing corridors, whether designated or not, will be standard procedure."

The point where Alternatives A, D, E, and F converge with U.S. Highway 6 south of Jericho would not be able to meet visual quality objectives as determined through the TWE impact analysis in Section 3.12. However, this area is within a utility corridor designated through WWEC, and exceptions to visual resource conflicts could be granted if mitigation and avoidance is not feasible. Therefore, a plan amendment would not be required.

4.4.11 BLM Cedar City Field Office

Alternatives A, B (Agency Preferred), and C as well as the Avon Alternative Connector and northern portions of the Pinto Alternative Variation traverse lands administered by the Cedar City FO. Proposed routes through this area are considered to be in conformance with the RMP. The RMP does not specifically restrict ROWs to designated corridors. According to the RMP (RMP ROD, p. 6), “encourage, to the maximum extent practicable, the location of new major ROW within designated corridors.”

The point where Alternatives B and C diverge at the state line would not be able to meet visual quality objectives as determined through the TWE impact analysis in Section 3.12. However, the BLM has determined that a plan amendment would not be required, but visual resource mitigation and avoidance would be used to the extent practical to minimize the conflict.

4.4.12 BLM St. George Field Office

Alternative A and the southern portion of the Pinto Alternative Variation traverse lands administered by the St. George FO. These alternatives are situated within utility corridors designated by WWEC or the RMP. According to the RMP decision LD-12 (RMP ROD, p. 2.3), applications for new ROW on public lands will be considered and analyzed on a case-by-case basis. Proposals will be reviewed for consistency with planning decisions and evaluated under requirements of the NEPA and other applicable laws for resource protection. Mitigation needed to avoid adverse impacts will be integrated into project proposals and, where appropriate, alternatives identified to further reduce environmental impacts to lands, resources, or adjacent land uses. New utility lines and long-distance transmission lines will be designed and located so as to reduce visual impacts to travelers along I-15 and visually sensitive highways in the county.

Alternative A traverses areas considered to be Desert Tortoise Critical Habitat; however, the reference line would be located within the designated utility corridor and resource mitigation and avoidance would be used to the extent practical to minimize the conflict. Therefore, a plan amendment would not be needed.

4.4.13 BLM Caliente Field Office

Alternatives A, B (Agency Preferred), and C traverse the Caliente FO and mostly follow utility corridors designated through WWEC or the RMP. According to the RMP (RMP ROD, p. 65), “ROW and other land uses are recognized as major uses of the public lands and are authorized pursuant to Sections 302 and 501 of FLPMA. Section 503 of the FLPMA provides for the designation of utility corridors and encourages utilization of ROW in-common to minimize environmental impacts and the proliferation of separate ROW. It is BLM policy to encourage prospective applicants to locate their proposals within corridors. Only facilities and uses that are consistent with the special designation associated with that area will be permitted in avoidance areas. Designation of exclusion zones—those areas where no new ROW will be allowed—will provide protection of lands and resources with values that are not compatible with ROW or other land uses.”

Alternatives A, B, and C would not be able to meet visual quality objectives as determined through the TWE impact analysis in Section 3.12. However, these areas are situated within a utility corridor designated through WWEC and the RMP, and exceptions to visual resource conflicts could be granted if mitigation and avoidance is not feasible. While the 2-mile corridor that may be used for access roads encompasses ROW exclusion areas associated with one designated wilderness area and ROW exclusion areas associated with an ACEC, utilities and associated access could be routed to avoid these areas. Therefore, a plan amendment would not be required.

Due to the spacing constraints within the utility corridor along U.S Highway 93, the reference line for Alternative C is situated within a ROW exclusion area and the 2-mile corridor encompasses multiple ROW exclusions areas. Approximately 9 miles of the Alternative C reference line would cross the 57,190-acre Kane Springs ACEC exclusion area, and an amendment would be needed to expand the ROW corridor through this area. While the 2-mile corridor that may be used for access roads encompasses ROW exclusion areas associated with two designated wilderness areas, five proposed wilderness areas and one NWR, access roads could be routed to minimize or avoid these areas.

For Alternative C, Map 23 and Table 26 (p. 115 and 119) associated with RMP decision SD-3 would be amended as follows for 9 miles ***(new text in bold italics)***:

Table 26
Management Prescriptions for ACECs

Kane Springs (57,190 acres)	
Management Activities	**Management Prescriptions**
Land Use Authorization	Limited[9]/avoidance[2]/exclusion area***[15]***

[15] A one-time exception is granted to accommodate one high-voltage transmission line through the ROW exclusion area adjacent to U.S. Highway 93

4.4.14 BLM Las Vegas Field Office

Alternatives A (Agency Preferred Alternative), B, C and the Sunrise Mountain Alternative Connector would not meet resource objectives as noted below; however, a plan amendment would only be required for Alternative A and the Sunrise Mountain Alternative Connector.

Alternative B would not meet resource objectives that establish buffers to protect water resources and visual objectives as determined through the TWE impact analysis in Section 3.12. Alternative C would not meet visual objectives as determined through the TWE impact analysis in Section 3.12. The transmission line can be designed to avoid the water resource buffers and access roads routed to minimize conflict. In addition, these alternatives are situated within utility corridors designated through WWEC and the LRMP, and exceptions to visual resource conflicts could be granted if mitigation and avoidance is not feasible. Therefore, a plan amendment would not be required for Alternatives B and C.

Alternative A would cross the Muddy River and Alternative B would cross both the Muddy River and Meadow Valley Wash. These rivers were determined to be eligible for inclusion in the Wild and Scenic River system with tentative classifications of recreational for the Muddy River and scenic for Meadow Valley Wash. However, since these rivers are not addressed in the current RMP, a plan amendment would not be required.

Alternative A and the Sunrise Mountain Alternative Connector would pass through the Sunrise Mountain ISA, an exclusion area. An existing ROW corridor would need to be expanded adjacent to existing utilities for Alternative A. For the Sunrise Mountain Alternative Connector, a one-time exception would be needed to allow the transmission line to cross a small area north of the Lake Mead National Recreation Area boundary.

For Alternative A (Agency Preferred Alternative), RMP decision RW-1-a (RMP ROD, p. 19) in the RMP would be amended as follows for 1 mile ***(new text in bold italics)***:

1. A corridor 1,400 feet wide from the north side of the Sunrise ISA south through Rainbow Gardens to the Lake Mead crossover is designated. ***A one-time exception to expand the***

existing corridor up to 1-mile wide is granted to accommodate one high-voltage transmission line.

This corridor is described as west of the east boundary of the IPP-McCullough powerlines. Activation and use of this corridor ***or the one-time exception*** is contingent upon Congressional action releasing the ISA from further wilderness consideration and study.

For the Sunrise Mountain Alternative Connector, RMP decision RW-1-a (RMP ROD, p. 19) in the RMP would be amended as follows for 1 mile ***(new text in bold italics)***:

1. A corridor 1,400 feet wide from the north side of the Sunrise ISA south through Rainbow Gardens to the Lake Mead crossover is designated. This corridor is described as west of the east boundary of the IPP-McCullough powerlines.

   A one-time exception to designate a 1,500 feet wide, east-west utility corridor along the southeast edge of the Sunrise Mountain ISA adjacent to the Lake Mead National Recreation Area boundary is granted to accommodate one high-voltage transmission line.

   Activation and use of this corridor ***or the one-time exception*** is contingent upon Congressional action releasing the ISA from further wilderness consideration and study.

4.4.15 USFS Ashley National Forest

Alternatives E and F pass through the Ashley National Forest. Proposed routes through this area were determined to meet standards and guidelines and are considered to be in conformance with the LRMP. The LRMP did not formally identify ROW corridors and ROW requests are processed on a case-by-case basis following the NEPA process based on a demonstrated need and only after assurance that the use is properly coordinated with other resources and within land capabilities. Alternative E passes through the Sowers Canyon area that was recommended to be incorporated into the South Unit planning utility window; however, this recommendation was never formally adopted in the approved plan. The Sowers Canyon evaluation contained in the LRMP concluded that there was no land use plan conflict and that all conflicts with resource values could be mitigated. Although the USFS has not identified any plan amendments for the alternative route at this time, the USFS may identify plan amendments in response to additional information learned through the EIS process to fulfill the intent of standards and guidelines in the areas affected.

4.4.16 USFS Uinta National Forest

Alternatives A, E, and F pass through the Uinta National Forest. Proposed routes through this area were determined to meet standards and guidelines except as noted and are considered to be in conformance with the LRMP. Routes through this area follow utility corridors designated by WWEC or the LRMP. Alternatives A, E, and F conflict with standards establishing buffers for riparian habitat conservation areas; however, the transmission line can be designed to avoid the area and access roads routed to minimize conflict. The point where Alternatives A, E, and F converge in the Uinta National Forest would not be able to meet visual quality objectives as determined through the TWE impact analysis in Section 3.12, Visual Resources. However, this area is situated within a utility corridor designated through WWEC and the LRMP, and exceptions to visual resource conflicts could be granted if mitigation and avoidance is not feasible. Alternatives A, E, and F use the existing Deseret Generating and Transmission utility corridor designated in the LRMP, which limits use to currently permitted power transmission facilities (in MA-8.2-4 Standard). In addition, the FEIS associated with the LRMP states that requests for infrastructural developments on National Forest System lands would only be considered if the need

cannot be satisfied on lands under other ownership. Generally, additional infrastructure facilities would be limited as much as possible to existing utility corridors and sites. Since Alternatives A, E, and F would be situated within utility corridors designated by WWEC or the LRMP, a plan amendment would not be required. Although the USFS has not identified any plan amendments for the alternative route at this time, the USFS may identify plan amendments in response to additional information learned through the EIS process to fulfill the intent of standards and guidelines in the areas affected.

4.4.17 USFS Manti-La Sal National Forest

Alternatives A, B, C, D, E, and F pass through the Manti-La Sal National Forest; all routes follow utility corridors designated by WWEC or the LRMP. Proposed routes through this area were determined to meet standards and guidelines with the one exception noted and are considered to be in conformance with the LRMP. At the northern edge of the Manti-La Sal National Forest near the county line east of Nephi, the point where Alternatives A, B, C, D, E, and F converge would not meet visual quality objectives as determined through the TWE impact analysis in Section 3.12. However, this point is at the forest edge and would mostly be situated on private lands and a plan amendment would not be required to resolve the visual resource conflict.

According to the LRMP (Appendix D, p. D-2), “energy transportation proposals and applications for locations outside of corridors (within avoidance areas) would be subject to possible denial, if mitigation measures could not provide for adequate protection of sensitive/critical resource values. Proposals and applications for locations within avoidance or unclassified areas would be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Approval of proposals/applications with adequate mitigations may be possible from such evaluations.” Although the USFS has not identified any plan amendments for the alternative route at this time, the USFS may identify plan amendments in response to additional information learned through the EIS process to fulfill the intent of standards and guidelines in the areas affected.

4.4.18 USFS Fishlake National Forest

Alternatives B, C, and F pass through the Fishlake National Forest. According to the LRMP (Appendix G, p. G-8), “there are no areas on the Fishlake National Forest with legislation prohibiting transmission facilities.” The alternatives were determined to meet standards and guidelines except as noted for visual resources.

Alternatives B and F would traverse an area of High SIO and an area that would not meet visual management objectives as determined as determined through the TWE impact analysis in Section 3.12. However, the area is situated within a utility corridor designated through the LRMP (the Lynndyl to Mona utility corridor) and exceptions to visual resource conflicts could be granted if mitigation and avoidance is not feasible. Therefore, a plan amendment would not be required for Alternatives B and F.

Alternative C traverses two small areas of High SIO and areas that would not meet visual management objectives as determined as determined through the TWE impact analysis in Section 3.12. The route cannot be relocated to avoid crossing these areas. One of these areas is within a utility corridor and window as shown in the North Half Utilities and Transportation Management map in the LRMP. A plan amendment would be required to widen the utility corridor and window south of I-70 to bring the project in conformance for Alternative C.

For Alternative C, plan amendment language would be added to the LRMP to widen the corridor width for the Huntington/Hunter – Sigurd, 345 kv, Trough Hollow to Sigurd Segment, in *Table F Summary of Management Direction For Existing Electrical Transmission Line And Highway Routes and Planning Windows* (p. G-29) as follows ***(new text in bold italics)***:

1. Electrical Transmission Line Routes	Corridor Designation	Type of Facility	Width of Corridor	Adjacent N.F. Land Designation
d. Huntington/Hunter – Sigurd, 345 kv Trough Hollow to Sigurd Segment	Yes	Overhead Only***, up to 600 kV***	Lateral distance of Trough Hollow or lateral distance of most stable landforms in Gooseberry Valley, whichever is the least distance***, up to 2 miles***	Gooseberry-Fishlake-Hilgard and Old Woman-Willow Creek Avoidance Area

In addition, text would be added under *C. Management Requirements, Visual Resource Management (A04)* (p. IV-14) as follows for 22 miles ***(new text in bold italics)***:

> 7. Choose facility and structure design, color of materials, location and orientation to meet the adopted visual quality objective(s) for the management area. ***In areas where utility corridors and windows are designated, exceptions to visual quality objectives and scenic integrity objectives will be allowed if mitigation or avoidance is not possible.***

Although the USFS has identified the plan amendment described for the alternative route at this time, the USFS may identify additional plan amendments in response to additional information learned through the EIS process to fulfill the intent of standards and guidelines in the areas affected.

4.4.19 USFS Dixie National Forest

Alternative A as well as the Ox Valley East, Ox Valley West, and Pinto Alternative Variations pass through the Dixie National Forest. Proposed routes through this area were determined to meet standards and guidelines except as noted and are considered to be in conformance with the LRMP. The Ox Valley East, Ox Valley West, and Pinto Alternative Variations pass through ROW Avoidance Areas and areas that would not meet visual management objectives as determined as determined through the TWE impact analysis in Section 3.12. Alternative A follows a WWEC corridor. Portions of these alternatives traverse areas designated as primitive motorized and semi-primitive non-motorized ROS; however, exceptions to visual and recreation use conflicts could be granted if mitigation and avoidance is not feasible. Therefore, USFS determined that a plan amendment would not be required. Although the USFS has not identified any plan amendments for the alternative route at this time, the USFS may identify plan amendments in response to additional information learned through the EIS process to fulfill the intent of standards and guidelines in the areas affected.

4.5 Analysis of Environmental Impacts and Planning Implications

This section presents an analysis of the environmental impacts and planning implications that would be associated with approval of the land use plan amendments, as described in the previous sections. Pursuant to federal regulations, this analysis is limited to the portions of the land use plans being considered for amendment.

Under all alternatives, plan amendments for the following BLM FOs would not be needed: Grand Junction, Moab, Richfield, Fillmore, Cedar City, and St. George. Under all alternatives, plan amendments for the following National Forests would not be needed: Uinta, Manti La-Sal, Ashley, and Dixie. The analysis for plan amendments needed by alternative is presented in the following sections.

4.5.1 Climate and Air Quality

There would be little or no impacts on air resources from plan amendment decisions. Plan amendments to create new or expand existing utility corridors would influence the ability to locate utilities in areas. These actions in turn would have direct impacts on air resources, which would be analyzed pursuant to NEPA process as individual projects are proposed. Consistency with current air quality regulations in

Wyoming, Colorado, Utah, or Nevada would need to be assessed as future projects are proposed along with the potential for individual projects to exceed applicable state or federal air quality standards and meet conformity requirements. Section 3.1 provides a detailed description of impacts to air resources within the corridors proposed, plan amendment-specific impacts are addressed in the following sections.

4.5.1.1 Alternative A

The Alternative A route would require plan amendments involving four BLM offices—Rawlins, Little Snake, Vernal, and Las Vegas. No national forests require plan amendments under this alternative. The proposed plan amendments would have minor and inconsequential effects for the following areas because the areas are in attainment for air quality related values: BLM Rawlins FO, BLM Little Snake FO, and BLM Vernal FO. Only areas that may have air quality impact concerns for the plan amendment under this alternative are discussed in the following section.

BLM Las Vegas Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

A BLM RMP plan amendment expanding an existing utility corridor, for a length of 1 mile, to allow for more utilities through the Sunrise Mountain ISA in the Las Vegas FO area would have minor and inconsequential effects under current conditions as stated above. Effects from any future authorized projects would be of slightly more concern in this area because a portion of Clark County is a nonattainment area for ozone (8-hour) and dust (particulate matter, PM_{10} [24-hour]).

4.5.1.2 Alternative B

The Alternative B route would require plan amendments involving five BLM offices—Rawlins, Little Snake, White River, Vernal, and Price. Plan amendments are not required for national forests under this alternative. The proposed plan amendments would have minor and inconsequential effects for the following areas because the areas are in attainment for air quality related values: BLM Rawlins FO, BLM Little Snake FO, BLM White River FO, BLM Vernal FO, and BLM Price FO. There are no areas with air quality impact concerns for the plan amendments under this alternative.

4.5.1.3 Alternative C

The Alternative C route would require plan amendments involving five BLM offices—Rawlins, White River, Vernal, Price, and Caliente—and one national forest—Fishlake. The proposed plan amendments would have minor and inconsequential effects for the following areas because the areas are in attainment for air quality related values: BLM Rawlins FO, BLM White River FO, BLM Vernal FO, BLM Price FO, BLM Caliente FO, and USFS Fishlake National Forest. There are no areas with air quality impact concerns for the plan amendments under this alternative.

4.5.1.4 Alternative D

The Alternative D route would require plan amendments involving three BLM offices—Rawlins, Little Snake, and Vernal. The effect these plan amendments would have on climate and air quality in the respective areas is discussed in the following sections. The proposed plan amendments would have minor and inconsequential effects for the following FOs because the area is in attainment for air quality related values: BLM Rawlins FO, BLM Little Snake FO, and BLM Vernal FO.

4.5.1.5 Alternative E

The Alternative E route would require plan amendments involving one BLM office—Vernal. The proposed plan amendment would have minor and inconsequential effects in the BLM Vernal FO because the area is in attainment for air quality related values.

4.5.1.6 Alternative F

The Alternative F route would require plan amendments involving two BLM offices—Vernal and Salt Lake. The proposed plan amendments would have minor and inconsequential effects for both of these areas since they are in attainment for air quality related values.

4.5.1.7 Alternative Connectors

The various alternative connectors would require plan amendments involving the following FOs: Rawlins and Las Vegas. The proposed plan amendments would have minor and inconsequential effects in the BLM Rawlins FO because the area is in attainment for air quality related values. Only areas that may have air quality impact concerns for the plan amendment under this alternative are discussed in the following section.

BLM Las Vegas Field Office

A one-time exception to allow the Sunrise Mountain Alternative Connector route, for a length of 1 mile, would have similar effects to climate and air quality as described for Alternative A above.

4.5.1.8 Alternative Variations

The various alternative variations would require plan amendments involving the following FO—Salt Lake. The proposed plan amendment for the Emma Park Alternative Variation would have minor and inconsequential effects in the BLM Salt Lake FO because the area is in attainment for air quality related values.

4.5.2 Geological, Paleontological, and Mineral Resources

Section 3.2 provides a detailed description of impacts to geological, paleontological, and mineral resources within the corridors proposed, plan amendment-specific impacts are addressed in the following sections.

4.5.2.1 Paleontological Resources

There would be little or no impacts on paleontological resources from plan amendment decisions. Plan amendments to create new utility or expand existing corridors would influence the ability to locate utilities in areas. These actions in turn have direct impacts on paleontological resources, which are analyzed pursuant to NEPA as individual projects are proposed. Allowing for potential future utilities to be developed in areas where currently none exist could increase the likelihood of unanticipated subsurface discoveries. Any development activities in the proximity of high potential fossil yield areas could degrade the value of a site.

Alternative A

The Alternative A route would require plan amendments involving four BLM offices—Rawlins, Little Snake, Vernal, and Las Vegas. No national forests require plan amendments under this alternative. The effect these plan amendments would have on the management of paleontological resources in the respective FOs is discussed below.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

There are a number of important fossil bearing formations in the area. Expanding an existing and designating a new utility corridor for a length of 58 miles would increase the potential for discovering or disturbing paleontological resources. A total of 53,620 acres of potential fossil yield Class 5 areas would be overlapped by the amended area.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

The only outstanding fossil resource in the area is Dinosaur National Monument, located a few miles east of Vernal, Utah. The majority of the 42 miles of new utility corridor overlaps category III (moderate or unknown potential) and V (very high potential) Potential Fossil Yield Classification (PFYC) areas; however, there is some overlap with PFYC II (low potential) areas. A total of 31,954 acres of potential fossil yield Class 5 areas would be overlapped by the amended area.

BLM Vernal Field Office

There are a number of important fossil bearing formations in the area. Expanding an existing and designating a new utility corridor for a length of 19 miles would increase the potential for discovering or disturbing paleontological resources. A total of 9,182 acres of potential fossil yield Class 5 areas would be overlapped by the amended area.

BLM Las Vegas Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

This area does not have formations with high fossil potential. While expanding an existing utility corridor for a length of 1 mile would increase the potential for discovering or disturbing paleontological resources, these impacts would not be likely given the low potential of the area.

Alternative B

The Alternative B route would require plan amendments involving five BLM offices—Rawlins, Little Snake, White River, Vernal, and Price. No national forests require plan amendments under this alternative. The effect these plan amendments would have on the management of paleontological resource in the respective FOs is discussed below.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

There are a number of important fossil bearing formations in the area. Effects for the 61 miles of new utility corridor would be similar to those described for Alternative A. A total of 51,439 acres of potential fossil yield Class 5 areas would be overlapped by the amended area.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

There is an outstanding fossil resource in the area at Dinosaur National Monument, located a few miles east of Vernal, Utah. The majority of the 37 miles of new utility corridor overlaps category III and V PFYC areas; however, there is some overlap with PFYC II areas. A total of 51,710 acres of potential fossil yield Class 5 areas would be overlapped by the amended area. Effects would be similar to those described for Alternative A.

BLM White River Field Office

There are a number of important fossil bearing formations in the area. Expanding and converting an existing utility corridor for 38 miles would increase the potential for discovering or disturbing paleontological resources. A total of 46,907 acres of potential fossil yield Class 5 areas would be overlapped by the amended area.

BLM Vernal Field Office

There are a number of important fossil bearing formations in the area. Effects of designating 6 miles of new utility corridor would be similar to those described for Alternative A. A total of 2,001 acres of potential fossil yield Class 5 would be overlapped by the amended area.

BLM Price Field Office

There are a number of important fossil bearing formations in the area and an outstanding fossil resource in the area at Cleveland Lloyd Dinosaur Quarry, located a few miles south of the utility corridor. Designating a new utility corridor for 14 miles would increase the potential for discovering or disturbing paleontological resources. A total of 4,821 acres of potential fossil yield Class 5 areas would be overlapped by the amended area.

Alternative C

The Alternative C route would require plan amendments involving five BLM offices—Rawlins, White River, Vernal, Price, and Caliente—and Fishlake National Forest. The effect these plan amendments would have on the management of paleontological resources in the respective BLM offices and national forest is discussed below.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

There are a number of important fossil bearing formations in the area. Effects for the 27 miles of new utility corridor would be similar to those described for Alternative A. A total of 16,013 acres of potential fossil yield Class 5 areas would be overlapped by the amended area.

BLM White River Field Office

Impacts would be the same as Alternative B.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Impacts would be the same as Alternative B.

BLM Price Field Office

There are a number of important fossil bearing formations in the area and an outstanding fossil resource in the area at Cleveland Lloyd Dinosaur Quarry, located a few miles north of the utility corridor. Designating a new utility corridor for 10 miles would increase the potential for discovering or disturbing paleontological resources. A total of 4,829 acres of potential fossil yield Class 5 areas would be overlapped by the amended area.

BLM Caliente Field Office

This area does not have formations with high fossil potential. While expanding an existing utility corridor for 9 miles would increase the potential for discovering or disturbing paleontological resources, these impacts would not be likely given the low potential of the area.

USFS Fishlake National Forest

There are a number of important fossil bearing formations in the area. Designating a new utility corridor for 22 miles would increase the potential for discovering or disturbing paleontological resources. There are no potential fossil yield Class 5 areas that would be overlapped by the amended area. A total of 7,012 acres of potential fossil yield Class 5 areas would be overlapped by the amended area.

Alternative D

The Alternative D route would require plan amendments involving three BLM offices—Rawlins, Little Snake, and Vernal. The effect these plan amendments would have on the management of paleontological resources in the respective BLM offices is discussed below.

BLM Rawlins Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

There are a number of important fossil bearing formations in the area. Effects for the 76 miles of new utility corridor would be similar to those described for Alternative A. A total of 71,719 acres of potential fossil yield Class 5 areas would be overlapped by the amended area.

BLM Little Snake Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

Impacts would be the same as Alternative B.

BLM Vernal Field Office

There are a number of important fossil bearing formations in the area. Effects of designating 17 miles of new utility corridor would be similar to those described for Alternative A. A total of 9,121 acres of potential fossil yield Class 5 would be overlapped by the amended area.

Alternative E

The Alternative E route would require a plan amendment involving one BLM office—Vernal. The effect the plan amendment would have on the management of paleontological resources in the respective BLM office is discussed below.

BLM Vernal Field Office

There are a number of important fossil bearing formations in the area. Effects of designating 6 miles of new utility corridor would be similar to those described for Alternative A. A total of 2,442 acres of potential fossil yield Class 5 would be overlapped by the amended area.

Alternative F

The Alternative F route would require plan amendments involving two BLM offices—Vernal and Salt Lake. The effect the plan amendments would have on the management of paleontological resources in the respective BLM office is discussed below.

BLM Vernal Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

There are a number of important fossil bearing formations in the area. Effects of designating 22 miles of new utility corridor would be similar to those described for Alternative A. A total of 11,011 acres of potential fossil yield Class 5 would be overlapped by the amended area.

BLM Salt Lake Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

There are a number of important fossil bearing formations in the area. Effects of designating 3 miles of new utility corridor would be similar to those described for Alternative A. A total of 2,296 acres of potential fossil yield Class 5 would be overlapped by the amended area.

Alternative Variations

The various alternative variations would require plan amendments involving the following FO—Salt Lake. Effects of designating 3 miles of new utility corridor would be similar to those described for Alternative A. A total of 2,523 acres of potential fossil yield Class 5 would be overlapped by the amended area.

Alternative Connectors

The various alternative connectors would require plan amendments involving the following FOs—Rawlins and Las Vegas. A description of the involved routing variations and the effect the plan amendments would have on paleontological resources management in the respective FOs is discussed below.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

There are a number of important fossil bearing formations in the area. Effects for designation of new utility corridors for the Baggs (18 miles), Fivemile Point North (2 miles), Fivemile Point South (2 miles), and Mexican Flats (9 miles) alternative connectors would be similar to those described for Alternative A. Potential follies yield Class 5 areas overlapped by the amended areas include: Baggs (24,139 acres), Fivemile Point North (1,928 acres), Fivemile Point South (999 acres), and Mexican Flats (7,006 acres).

BLM Las Vegas Field Office

This area does not have formations with high fossil potential. While expanding an existing utility corridor for 1 mile would increase the potential for discovering or disturbing paleontological resources, these impacts would not be likely given the low potential of the area. Only 3 acres of potential fossil yield Class 5 would overlap with the amended area.

4.5.2.2 Mineral Resources

Allowing for potential future development of utilities in areas where currently none exist could affect the management of mineral resources. A potential impact would be the loss of access to mineral resources and prevention of the mineral owner (including governmental entities) to develop minerals. Where the corridor is co-located with existing utility or transportation routes, it is expected to have a minimal impact on access to and development of mineral resources.

Alternative A

The Alternative A route would require plan amendments involving four BLM offices—Rawlins, Little Snake, Vernal, and Las Vegas. No national forests require plan amendments under this alternative. The effect these plan amendments would have on the management of mineral resources in the respective FOs is discussed below.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

The 58 miles of newly designated utility corridor would pass through areas leased for mineral development and active operations. The utility corridor traverses areas open to leasing with standard stipulations and minor constraints as well as some areas of major constraints for fluid minerals. There are mineral withdrawal areas south of I-80. The remaining land within the utility corridor is available for other minerals; however, there is no active mineral activity. Concentrating utilities in this area could compete with the ability to access and develop mineral resources. However, proposed utilities would have to recognize valid existing rights and work with leaseholders to minimize conflicts.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

The utility corridor traverses areas open to leasing with minor constraints. The land within the 42-mile utility corridor is available for other minerals; however, there is no active mineral activity. Concentrating utilities in this area could compete with the ability to access and develop mineral resources. However, proposed utilities would have to recognize valid existing rights and work with leaseholders to minimize conflicts.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The FO is entirely contained within the Uinta Basin, which is known nationally for oil and gas production. The Vernal RMP and ROD prioritize the development of mineral resources while protecting other valuable natural resources. The 19-mile utility corridor traverses areas open to leasing with standard stipulations for fluid minerals. The land within the utility corridor is available for other minerals; however, there is no active mineral activity. Concentrating utilities in this area could compete with the ability to access and develop mineral resources. However, proposed utilities would have to recognize valid existing rights and work with leaseholders to minimize conflicts.

BLM Las Vegas Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

Since the development of mineral resources is not permitted within the Rainbow Gardens ACEC, which overlaps the Sunrise ISA, impacts to mineral resources would not be anticipated, due to the 1-mile amended area.

Alternative B

The Alternative B route would require plan amendments involving five BLM offices—Rawlins, Little Snake, White River, Vernal, and Price. The effect these plan amendments would have on the management of mineral resources in the respective FOs is discussed below.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

The 61-mile utility corridor includes areas leased for mineral development and active operations. The utility corridor traverses areas open to leasing with standard stipulations and minor constraints as well as some areas of major constraints for fluid minerals. There are mineral withdrawal areas south of I-80. The remaining land within the utility corridor is available for other minerals; however, there is no active mineral activity. Conversion and expansion of the underground-only corridor would expand the area where utilities could compete with the ability to access and develop mineral resources. However, proposed utilities would have to recognize valid existing rights and work with leaseholders to minimize conflicts.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

The 37-mile utility corridor traverses areas open to leasing with minor constraints for fluid minerals. The land within the utility corridor is available for other minerals; however, there is no active mineral activity. Concentrating utilities in this area could compete with the ability to access and develop mineral resources. However, proposed utilities would have to recognize valid existing rights and work with leaseholders to minimize conflicts.

BLM White River Field Office

The 38-mile utility corridor traverses areas open to leasing with standard stipulations and minor constraints for fluid minerals. There are no other mineral resources affected. Conversion and expansion of the underground-only corridor would expand the area where utilities could compete with the ability to access and develop mineral resources. However, proposed utilities would have to recognize valid existing rights and work with leaseholders to minimize conflicts.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The 6-mile utility corridor traverses areas open to leasing with standard stipulations for fluid minerals. The land within the utility corridor is available for other mineral activity; however, there is no active mineral activity. Concentrating utilities in this area could compete with the ability to access and develop mineral resources, as discussed under Alternative A. However, proposed utilities would have to recognize valid existing rights and work with leaseholders to minimize conflicts.

BLM Price Field Office

The 14-mile utility corridor traverses areas open to leasing with standard stipulations for fluid minerals. No areas of tar sands, oil shale, or coal reserves are affected. Concentrating utilities in this area could compete with the ability to access and develop mineral resources. However, proposed utilities would have to recognize valid existing rights and work with leaseholders to minimize conflicts.

Alternative C

The Alternative C route would require plan amendments involving five BLM offices—Rawlins, White River, Vernal, Price, and Caliente—and Fishlake National Forest. The effect these plan amendments would have on managing mineral resources in the respective BLM offices and national forest is discussed below.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

The 27-mile utility corridor includes areas leased for mineral development and active operations. The utility corridor traverses areas open to leasing with standard stipulations and minor constraints as well as some areas of major constraints. Concentrating utilities in this area could compete with the ability to access and develop mineral resources. However, proposed utilities would have to recognize valid existing rights and work with leaseholders to minimize conflicts.

BLM White River Field Office

Effects to minerals management as a result of expanding and converting an existing underground-only corridor would be the same as described for Alternative B.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Effects to minerals management as a result of designating a new utility corridor would be the same as described for Alternative B.

BLM Price Field Office

The 10-mile utility corridor traverses areas open to leasing with standard stipulations. Concentrating utilities in this area could compete with the ability to access and develop mineral resources. However, proposed utilities would have to recognize valid existing rights and work with leaseholders to minimize conflicts.

BLM Caliente Field Office

Mineral resources development is not permitted within the Kane Springs ACEC; therefore, there would be no impact to mineral resources management due to the corridor location.

USFS Fishlake National Forest

Because the 22-mile ROW is co-located with an existing transportation and utility corridor, it is unlikely to interfere with mineral resources management. Allowing exceptions to the SIO designation could also reduce visual mitigation restrictions on mineral resources development.

Alternative D

The Alternative D route would require plan amendments involving three BLM offices—Rawlins, Little Snake, and Vernal. The effect these plan amendments would have on managing mineral resources in the respective BLM offices is discussed below.

BLM Rawlins Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

The 76-mile utility corridor includes areas leased for mineral development and active operations. The utility corridor traverses areas open to leasing with standard stipulations and minor constraints as well as some areas of major constraints. Concentrating utilities in this area could compete with the ability to access and develop mineral resources. However, proposed utilities would have to recognize valid existing rights and work with leaseholders to minimize conflicts.

BLM Little Snake Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

Impacts would be the same as Alternative B.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The 17-mile utility corridor traverses areas open to leasing with standard stipulations for fluid minerals. The land within the utility corridor is available for other mineral activity; however, there is no active mineral activity. Concentrating utilities in this area could compete with the ability to access and develop mineral resources, as discussed under Alternative A. However, proposed utilities would have to recognize valid existing rights and work with leaseholders to minimize conflicts.

Alternative E

The Alternative E route would require plan amendments involving one BLM offices—Vernal. The effect these plan amendments would have on managing mineral resources in the respective BLM office is discussed below.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The 6-mile utility corridor traverses areas open to leasing with standard stipulations for fluid minerals. The land within the utility corridor is available for other mineral activity; however, there is no active mineral activity. Concentrating utilities in this area could compete with the ability to access and develop mineral resources, as discussed under Alternative A. However, proposed utilities would have to recognize valid existing rights and work with leaseholders to minimize conflicts.

Alternative F

The Alternative F route would require plan amendments involving two BLM offices—Vernal and Salt Lake. The effect the plan amendments would have on the managing mineral resources in the respective BLM office is discussed below.

BLM Vernal Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

The 22-mile utility corridor traverses areas open to leasing with standard stipulations for fluid minerals. The land within the utility corridor is available for other mineral activity; however, there is no active mineral activity. Concentrating utilities in this area could compete with the ability to access and develop mineral resources, as discussed under Alternative A. However, proposed utilities would have to recognize valid existing rights and work with leaseholders to minimize conflicts.

BLM Salt Lake Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

The 3-mile utility corridor traverses areas open to leasing with standard stipulations for fluid minerals. The land within the utility corridor is available for other minerals; however, there is no active mineral activity. Concentrating utilities in this area could compete with the ability to access and develop mineral resources. However, proposed utilities would have to recognize valid existing rights and work with leaseholders to minimize conflicts.

Alternative Variations

The various alternative variations would require plan amendments involving the following FO—Salt Lake. The 3-mile utility corridor for the Emma Park Alternative Variation traverses areas open to leasing with standard stipulations for fluid minerals. The land within the utility corridor is available for other minerals; however, there is no active mineral activity. Concentrating utilities in this area could compete with the ability to access and develop mineral resources. However, proposed utilities would have to recognize valid existing rights and work with leaseholders to minimize conflicts.

Alternative Connectors

The various alternative connectors would require plan amendments involving the following FOs—Rawlins and Las Vegas. A description of the involved routing variations and the effect the plan amendments would have on the management of mineral resources in the respective FOs is discussed below.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

Effects for the designation of new utility corridors for the Baggs (18 miles), Fivemile Point North (2 miles), Fivemile South (2 miles), and Mexican Flats (9 miles) alternative connectors would be similar to those described for Alternative A. These alternative connectors traverse areas open to leasing with minor constraints as well as some areas of major constraints. Concentrating utilities in this area could complete with the ability to access and develop mineral resources. However, proposed utilities would have to recognize valid existing rights and work with leaseholders to minimize conflicts.

BLM Las Vegas Field Office

Since the development of mineral resources is not permitted within the Rainbow Gardens ACEC, which overlaps the Sunrise ISA, impacts to mineral resources would not be anticipated.

4.5.3 Soil Resources

No direct effect would occur to soil resources from plan amendments; however, effects could occur from changes to land management that would allow and/or encourage new utility project development such as the establishment of new designated or expanded utility corridors. Development of additional utility projects within new utility corridors or development of additional ROWs would result in direct and indirect impacts to soil resources. Impacts could occur from short-term increases of erosion rates within disturbed areas, potential creation of unstable soil conditions at excavated areas, and soil contamination from leaks and spills. Impacts also could occur from short-term increases in upland erosion. These impacts would be analyzed on a project-by-project basis, and are discussed in detail for the TWE Project in Section 3.3, Soils, of this EIS.

4.5.3.1 Alternative A

The Alternative A route would require plan amendments involving four BLM offices—Rawlins, Little Snake, Vernal, and Las Vegas. Plan amendments are not required for national forests under this alternative. Plan amendments for utility corridors could result in effects from potential additional development as stated above.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

The 58 miles of newly designated utility corridor would pass through areas with sensitive soils. The amended area would overlap with 39,888 acres of soil designated as highly erodible and 47,912 acres that are designated as prone to compaction. Concentrating utilities in this area could compromise soil stability and productivity.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

The 42 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with 27,122 acres of soil designated as highly erodible, 19,473 acres that are designated as prone to compaction, and 2,985 acres of prime farmland. Concentrating utilities in this area could compromise soil stability and productivity.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The 19 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with 3,254 acres of soil designated as highly erodible, 9,891 acres that are designated as prone to compaction, and 811 acres of prime farmland. Concentrating utilities in this area could compromise soil stability and productivity.

BLM Las Vegas Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

The one mile of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with 20 acres of soil designated as highly erodible. Concentrating utilities in this area could compromise soil stability.

4.5.3.2 Alternative B

The Alternative B route would require plan amendments involving five BLM offices—Rawlins, Little Snake, White River, Vernal, and Price. Plan amendments are not required for national forests under this alternative. Plan amendments for utility corridors could result in effects from potential additional development as stated above.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

The 61 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would pass through areas with sensitive soils. The amended area would overlap with 48,559 acres of soil designated as highly erodible and 47,133 acres that are designated as prone to compaction. Concentrating utilities in this area could compromise soil stability and productivity.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

The 37 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with 34,418 acres of soil designated as highly erodible, 26,441 acres that are designated as prone to compaction, and 4,649 acres of prime farmland. Concentrating utilities in this area could compromise soil stability and productivity.

BLM White River Field Office

The 38 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with 349 acres of soil designated as highly erodible, 26,854 acres that are designated as prone to compaction, and 3,815 acres of prime farmland. Concentrating utilities in this area could compromise soil stability and productivity.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The 6 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with 14 acres of soil designated as prone to compaction. Concentrating utilities in this area could compromise soil productivity.

BLM Price Field Office

The 14 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with 5,895 acres of soil designated as highly erodible, 13,819 acres that are designated as prone to compaction, and 682 acres of prime farmland. Concentrating utilities in this area could compromise soil stability and productivity.

4.5.3.3 Alternative C

The Alternative C route would require plan amendments involving five BLM offices—Rawlins, White River, Vernal, Price, and Caliente—and one national forest—Fishlake. Plan amendments for utility corridors could result in effects from potential additional development as stated above.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

The 27 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would pass through areas with sensitive soils. The amended area would overlap with 11,965 acres of soil designated as highly erodible, 17,106 acres that are designated as prone to compaction, and 199 acres of prime farmland. Concentrating utilities in this area could compromise soil stability and productivity.

BLM White River Field Office

Impacts would be the same as for Alternative B.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Impacts would be the same as for Alternative B.

BLM Price Field Office

The 10 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with 609 acres of soil designated as highly erodible and 6,085 acres that are designated as prone to compaction. Concentrating utilities in this area could compromise soil stability and productivity.

BLM Caliente Field Office

The nine miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with 118 acres of soil designated as highly erodible. Concentrating utilities in this area could compromise soil stability.

USFS Fishlake National Forest

The 22 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with 10,805 acres of soil designated as highly erodible, 21,061 acres that are designated as prone to compaction, and 1 acre of prime farmland. The corridor would be co-located with an existing transportation and utility corridor; however, concentrating utilities in this area could compromise soil stability and productivity.

4.5.3.4 Alternative D

The Alternative D route would require plan amendments involving three BLM offices—Rawlins, Little Snake, and Vernal. Plan amendments for utility corridors could result in effects from potential additional development as stated above.

BLM Rawlins Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

The 76 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would pass through areas with sensitive soils. The amended area would overlap with 40,511 acres of soil designated as highly erodible and 58,172 acres that are designated as prone to compaction. Concentrating utilities in this area could compromise soil stability and productivity.

BLM Little Snake Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

Impacts would be the same as for Alternative B.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The 17 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with 4,696 acres of soil designated as highly erodible and 9,178 acres designated as prone to compaction. Concentrating utilities in this area could compromise soil stability and productivity.

4.5.3.5 Alternative E

The Alternative E route would require a plan amendment involving one BLM office—Vernal. Plan amendments for utility corridors could result in effects from potential additional development as stated above.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The 6 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with 335 acres of soil designated as highly erodible, 2,999 acres designated as prone to compaction, and 506 acres of prime farmland. Concentrating utilities in this area could compromise soil stability and productivity.

4.5.3.6 Alternative F

The Alternative F route would require plan amendments involving two BLM offices—Vernal and Salt Lake. The effect the plan amendments would have on the managing soil resources in the respective BLM office is discussed below.

BLM Vernal Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

The 22-mile utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with 4,618 acres of soil designated as highly erodible and 11,090 acres designated as prone to compaction. Concentrating utilities in this area could compromise soil stability and productivity.

BLM Salt Lake Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

The 3-mile utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with 275 acres of soil designated as highly erodible, 2,239 acres designated as prone to compaction, and four acres of prime farmland. Concentrating utilities in this area could compromise soil stability and productivity.

4.5.3.7 Alternative Variations

The various alternative variations would require plan amendments involving the following FO—Salt Lake. The 3-mile utility corridor for the Emma Park Alternative Variation that would require a plan amendment would overlap with 107 acres of soil designated as highly erodible and 2,723 acres designated as prone to compaction. Concentrating utilities in this area could compromise soil stability and productivity.

4.5.3.8 Alternative Connectors

The various alternative connectors would require plan amendments involving the following FOs—Rawlins and Las Vegas. Plan amendments for utility corridors could result in effects from potential additional development as stated above.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

Designation of new utility corridors for the Baggs (18 miles), Fivemile Point North (2 miles), Fivemile South (2 miles), and Mexican Flats (9 miles) alternative connectors would pass through areas with sensitive soils. The areas requiring a plan amendment would overlap with soil designated as highly erodible (Baggs—17,393 acres, Mexican Flats—3,622 acres, and no areas for Fivemile Point North and South), soil designated as prone to compaction (Baggs—17,640 acres, Fivemile Point North—315 acres,

Fivemile Point South—816 acres, and Mexican Flats—6,675 acres). Only the Baggs Alternative Connector would overlap with soil designated as prime farmland (116 acres). Concentrating utilities in this area could compromise soil stability and productivity.

BLM Las Vegas Field Office

The 1 mile of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with three acres of soil designated as highly erodible by water. The placement of utilities in this area could compromise soil stability and productivity.

4.5.4 Water Resources

No direct effect would occur to water resources from plan amendments; however, effects could occur from changes to land management that would allow and/or encourage new utility project development such as the establishment of new designated or expanded utility corridors. Development of additional utility projects within new utility corridors or development of additional ROWs would result in direct and indirect impacts to water resources. Impacts could occur from short-term increases of erosion rates within disturbed areas, potential creation of unstable soil conditions at excavated areas, increased suspended sediment concentrations below access road stream crossings, and water contamination from leaks and spills. Impacts also could occur from short-term increases from upland erosion contributing to suspended solids concentrations and sedimentation issues in streams. These impacts would be analyzed on a project-by-project basis, and are discussed in detail for the TWE Project in Section 3.4, Water Resources, of this EIS.

4.5.4.1 Alternative A

The Alternative A route would require plan amendments involving four BLM offices—Rawlins, Little Snake, Vernal, and Las Vegas. Plan amendments are not required for national forests under this alternative. Plan amendments for utility corridors could result in effects from potential additional development as stated above.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

The 58 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would cross or overlap with intermittent streams and various waterbodies. The amended area would overlap with 294 miles of intermittent streams and 316 acres of waterbodies. Concentrating utilities in this area could result in reductions to water quality due to erosion and sedimentation.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

The 42 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would cross or overlap with intermittent streams and various waterbodies. The amended area would overlap with 196 miles of intermittent streams and 4 acres of waterbodies. Concentrating utilities in this area could result in reductions to water quality due to erosion and sedimentation.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The 19 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would cross or overlap with intermittent streams and various waterbodies. The amended area would overlap with 46 miles of intermittent streams. Concentrating utilities in this area could result in reductions to water quality due to erosion and sedimentation.

BLM Las Vegas Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

The 1 mile of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would not cross or overlap with any intermittent or perennial streams or waterbodies.

4.5.4.2 Alternative B

The Alternative B route would require plan amendments involving five BLM offices—Rawlins, Little Snake, White River, Vernal, and Price. Plan amendments are not required for national forests under these alternatives. Plan amendments for utility corridors could result in effects from potential additional development as stated above.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

The 61 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would cross or overlap with intermittent streams and various waterbodies. The amended area would overlap with 320 miles of intermittent streams and 75 acres of waterbodies. Concentrating utilities in this area could result in reductions to water quality due to erosion and sedimentation.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

The 37 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would cross or overlap with intermittent streams and various waterbodies. The amended area would overlap with 223 miles of intermittent streams and 4 acres of waterbodies. Concentrating utilities in this area could result in reductions to water quality due to erosion and sedimentation.

BLM White River Field Office

The 38 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would cross or overlap with intermittent streams and various waterbodies. The amended area would overlap with 211 miles of intermittent and 5 miles of perennial streams. Concentrating utilities in this area could result in reductions to water quality due to erosion and sedimentation.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The 6 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would cross or overlap with 12 miles of intermittent streams. Concentrating utilities in this area could result in reductions to water quality due to erosion and sedimentation.

BLM Price Field Office

The 14 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would cross or overlap with intermittent streams and various waterbodies. The amended area would overlap with 51 miles of intermittent streams, 1 mile of perennial streams, and 11 acres of waterbodies. Concentrating utilities in this area could result in reductions to water quality due to erosion and sedimentation.

4.5.4.3 Alternative C

The Alternative C route would require plan amendments involving five BLM offices—Rawlins, White River, Vernal, Price, and Caliente—and one national forest—Fishlake. Plan amendments for utility corridors could result in effects from potential additional development as stated above. Additional impacts are noted in the following sections.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

The 27 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would cross or overlap with intermittent streams and various waterbodies. The amended area would overlap with 147 miles of intermittent streams, 17 miles of perennial streams, and 84 acres of waterbodies. Concentrating utilities in this area could result in reductions to water quality due to erosion and sedimentation. Exceptions to surface water buffers may need to be granted if avoidance or minimization is not possible when siting utilities; however, overhead structures can span these areas and roads re-routed to the extent feasible.

BLM White River Field Office

Impacts would be the same as for Alternative B.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Impacts would be the same as for Alternative B.

BLM Price Field Office

The 10 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would cross or overlap with intermittent streams and various waterbodies. The amended area would overlap with 40 miles of intermittent streams and 6 acres of waterbodies. Concentrating utilities in this area could result in reductions to water quality due to erosion and sedimentation.

BLM Caliente Field Office

The 9 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would cross or overlap with intermittent streams and various waterbodies. The amended area would overlap with one mile intermittent streams. Concentrating utilities in this area could result in reductions to water quality due to erosion and sedimentation.

USFS Fishlake National Forest

The 22 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would cross or overlap with intermittent streams and various waterbodies. The amended area would overlap with 51 miles of intermittent streams, 10 miles of perennial streams, and 27 acres of waterbodies. Concentrating utilities in this area could result in reductions to water quality due to erosion and sedimentation.

4.5.4.4 Alternative D

The Alternative D route would require plan amendments involving three BLM offices—Rawlins, Little Snake, and Vernal. Plan amendments for utility corridors could result in effects from potential additional development as stated above.

BLM Rawlins Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

The 76 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would cross or overlap with intermittent streams and various waterbodies. The amended area would overlap with 346 miles of intermittent streams and 472 acres of waterbodies. Concentrating utilities in this area could result in reductions to water quality due to erosion and sedimentation.

BLM Little Snake Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

Impacts would be the same as for Alternative B.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The 6 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would cross or overlap with 12 miles of intermittent streams. Concentrating utilities in this area could result in reductions to water quality due to erosion and sedimentation.

4.5.4.5 Alternative E

The Alternative E route would require a plan amendment involving one BLM office—Vernal. Plan amendments for utility corridors could result in effects from potential additional development as stated above.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The 6 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would cross or overlap with 15 miles of intermittent streams. Concentrating utilities in this area could result in reductions to water quality due to erosion and sedimentation.

4.5.4.6 Alternative F

The Alternative F route would require a plan amendment involving two BLM offices—Vernal and Salt Lake. Plan amendments for utility corridors could result in effects from potential additional development as stated above.

BLM Vernal Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

The 22-mile utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with 30 miles of intermittent streams and 1 mile of perennial streams. Concentrating utilities in this area could result in reductions to water quality due to erosion and sedimentation.

BLM Salt Lake Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

The 3-mile utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with 3 miles of intermittent streams and 2 miles of perennial streams. Concentrating utilities in this area could result in reductions to water quality due to erosion and sedimentation.

4.5.4.7 Alternative Variations

The various alternative variations would require plan amendments involving the following FO—Salt Lake. The 3-mile utility corridor for the Emma Park Alternative Variation that would require a plan amendment would overlap with 3 miles of intermittent streams and 1 mile of perennial streams. Concentrating utilities in this area could result in reductions to water quality due to erosion and sedimentation.

4.5.4.8 Alternative Connectors

The various alternative connectors would require plan amendments involving the following FOs—Rawlins and Las Vegas. Plan amendments for utility corridors could result in effects from potential additional development as stated above. Additional impacts are noted in the following sections.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

Designation of new utility corridors for the Baggs (18 miles), Fivemile Point North (2 miles), Fivemile South (2 miles), and Mexican Flats (9 miles) alternative connectors would overlap with intermittent streams, perennial streams, and waterbodies. The Baggs Alternative Connector would overlap with 84 miles of intermittent streams and 5 acres of water bodies. The Fivemile Point North Alternative Connector would overlap with 7 miles of intermittent streams. The Fivemile Point South Alternative

Connector would overlap with 5 miles of intermittent streams and 2 acres of water bodies. The Mexican Flats Alternative Connector would overlap with 36 miles of intermittent streams and 4 acres of water bodies. Exceptions to surface water buffers for the Mexican Flats and Fivemile Point North alternative connectors may need to be granted if avoidance or minimization is not possible when siting utilities; however, overhead structures can span these areas and roads re-routed to the extent feasible.

BLM Las Vegas Field Office

The 1 mile of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would not cross or overlap with any intermittent or perennial streams or waterbodies.

4.5.5 Vegetation

Section 3.5 provides a detailed description of impacts to vegetation resources within the corridors proposed, plan amendment-specific impacts are addressed in the following sections. This section is subdivided into general vegetation, forest management, and fire and fuels management.

4.5.5.1 General Vegetation

Allowing for potential future development of utilities in areas where currently none exist could affect the vegetation composition and spread of noxious weeds. Vegetation could be removed temporarily during potential future project construction or the vegetation composition permanently altered for installation of project facilities. Surface disturbing activities, human presence, and wildland fires all have the potential to increase the spread of noxious and invasive weed species.

Alternative A

The Alternative A route would require plan amendments involving four BLM offices—Rawlins, Little Snake, Vernal, and Las Vegas. Plan amendments for utility corridors could result in effects from potential additional development as stated above.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

The 58 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with several different vegetation community types. The amended area would overlap with 200 acres of grassland, 1,293 acres of riparian and wetland communities, 64,417 acres of shrubland, 335 acres of forested, and 2,593 acres of sparsely vegetated or barren land. No agricultural land or pinyon/juniper would be within the amended area. Concentrating utilities in this area would result in the removal or alteration of vegetation within these community types.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

The 42 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with several different vegetation community types. The amended area would overlap with 6,659 acres of grassland, 8 acres of riparian and wetland communities, 41,137 acres of shrubland, 167 acres of agricultural land, 23 acres of pinyon/juniper, and 473 acres of sparsely vegetated or barren land. No forested areas would be within the amended area. Concentrating utilities in this area would result in the removal or alteration of vegetation within these community types.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The 19 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with several different vegetation community types. The amended area would overlap with 3 acres of agricultural land, 232 acres of grassland, 1,231 acres of pinyon/juniper, 8,994 acres of shrubland, 9 acres of riparian/wetland and 1,240 acres of sparsely vegetated or barren land. No forested areas would be within

the amended area. Concentrating utilities in this area would result in the replacement or alteration of vegetation within these community types.

BLM Las Vegas Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

The 1 mile of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with several different vegetation community types. The amended area would overlap with 4 acres of riparian and wetland communities, 26 acres of shrubland, and 3 acres of sparsely vegetated or barren land. No agricultural land, forested areas, grasslands, or pinyon/juniper would be within the amended area. Concentrating utilities in this area would result in the removal or alteration of vegetation within these community types.

Alternative B

The Alternative B route would require plan amendments involving five BLM offices—Rawlins, Little Snake, White River, Vernal, and Price. Plan amendments for utility corridors could result in effects from potential additional development as stated above. Additional impacts are noted in the following sections.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

Impacts from expansion of the existing corridor along I-80 and conversion of a utility corridor to allow overhead facilities south of I-80 would be the same as those stated above. Over time, development would temporarily or permanently alter the vegetation composition necessary for managing sage-obligate habitat. Known unique plant communities lie to the north and east of the corridor and would not be affected by the development of an aboveground utility corridor.

The 61 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with several different vegetation community types. The amended area would overlap with 6 acres of agricultural land, 257 acres of forested areas, 197 acres of grassland, 1,200 acres of riparian and wetland communities, 62,567 acres of shrubland, and 2,076 acres of sparsely vegetated or barren land. No pinyon/juniper would be within the amended area. Concentrating utilities in this area would result in the removal or alteration of vegetation within these community types.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

The 37 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with several different vegetation community types. The amended area would overlap with 230 acres of agricultural land, 1 acre of forested land, 8 acres of pinyon/juniper, 8,478 acres of grassland, 3 acres of riparian and wetland communities, 49,411 acres of shrubland, and 829 acres of sparsely vegetated or barren land. No agricultural land, forested areas, or pinyon/juniper would be within the amended area. Concentrating utilities in this area would result in the removal or alteration of vegetation within these community types.

BLM White River Field Office

Impacts from expansion and conversion of a utility corridor to allow overhead facilities would be the same as those stated above. The northern portion of the corridor passes through a “weed free” area. Efforts to combat the invasion and spread of noxious weeds would likely need to be elevated to ensure this condition in, along, and near the corridor. In areas near the Oil Spring Mountain and White River Riparian ACECs, efforts will need to be elevated to ensure the protection of Remnant Vegetation Associations (vegetation species with the potential to be listed in the near future).

The 38 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with several different vegetation community types. The amended area would overlap with 26 acres of agricultural land, 2,525 acres of forested areas, 606 acres of grassland, 19,736 acres of pinyon/juniper, 73 acres of riparian and wetland communities, 26,324 acres of shrubland, and 802 acres of sparsely vegetated or barren

land. Concentrating utilities in this area would result in the removal or alteration of vegetation within these community types.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The 6 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with several different vegetation community types. The amended area would overlap with 102 acres of forested, 1,962 acres of pinyon/juniper, two acres of riparian and wetland, 288 acres of shrubland, and 83 acres of sparsely vegetated or barren land. No agricultural land or grassland would be in the amended area. Concentrating utilities in this area would result in the removal or alteration of vegetation within these community types.

BLM Price Field Office

The 14 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with several different vegetation community types. The amended area would overlap with 48 acres of agricultural land, 573 acres of grassland, 700 acres of pinyon/juniper, 285 acres of riparian and wetland communities, 12,718 acres of shrubland, and 2,426 acres of sparsely vegetated or barren land. No forested areas would be within the amended area. Concentrating utilities in this area would result in the removal or alteration of vegetation within these community types.

Alternative C

The Alternative C route would require plan amendments involving five BLM offices—Rawlins, White River, Vernal, Price, and Caliente—and Fishlake National Forest. Plan amendments for utility corridors could result in effects from potential additional development as stated above. Additional impacts are noted in the following sections.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

The 27 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with several different vegetation community types. The amended area would overlap with 2 acres of agricultural land, 123 acres of forested areas, 434 acres of grassland, 955 acres of riparian and wetland communities, 39,853 acres of shrubland, and 531 acres of sparsely vegetated or barren land. No pinyon/juniper would be within the amended area. Concentrating utilities in this area would result in the replacement or alteration of vegetation within these community types.

BLM White River Field Office

Effects would be the same as for Alternative B described above.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Effects would be the same as for Alternative B described above.

BLM Price Field Office

The 10 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with several different vegetation community types. The amended area would overlap with 674 acres of grassland, 1,885 acres of pinyon/juniper, 3 acres of riparian and wetland communities, 5,714 acres of shrubland, and 3,453 acres of sparsely vegetated or barren land. No agricultural land or forested areas would be within the amended area. Concentrating utilities in this area would result in the removal or alteration of vegetation within these community types.

BLM Caliente Field Office

The 9 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with several different vegetation community types. The amended area would overlap with 4 acres of riparian and wetland communities and 274 acres of shrubland. No agricultural land, forested areas, grassland, pinyon/juniper, or sparsely vegetated or barren land would be within the amended area. Concentrating utilities in this area would result in the removal or alteration of vegetation within these community types.

USFS Fishlake National Forest

The 22 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with several different vegetation community types. The amended area would overlap with 35 acres of agricultural land, 2,749 acres of forested areas, 51 acres of grassland, 8,858 acres of pinyon/juniper, 373 acres of riparian and wetland communities, 8,873 acres of shrubland, and 904 acres of sparsely vegetated or barren land. Concentrating utilities in this area would result in the removal or alteration of vegetation within these community types.

Alternative D

The Alternative D route would require plan amendments involving three BLM offices—Rawlins, Little Snake, and Vernal. Plan amendments for utility corridors could result in effects from potential additional development as stated above.

BLM Rawlins Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

The 76 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with several different vegetation community types. The amended area would overlap with 7 acres of agricultural land, 441 acres of forested areas, 183 acres of grassland, 1,958 acres of riparian and wetland communities, 82,061 acres of shrubland, and 373 acres of sparsely vegetated or barren land. No pinyon/juniper would be within the amended area. Concentrating utilities in this area would result in the removal or alteration of vegetation within these community types.

BLM Little Snake Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

Impacts would be the same as for Alternative B.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The 17 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with several different vegetation community types. The amended area would overlap with six acres of agricultural land, 384 acres of forested, 737 acres of grassland, 4,279 acres of pinyon/juniper, two acres of riparian and wetland, 2,380 acres of shrubland, and 1,281 acres of sparsely vegetated or barren land. Concentrating utilities in this area would result in the removal or alteration of vegetation within these community types.

Alternative E

The Alternative E route would require a plan amendment involving one BLM office—Vernal. Plan amendments for utility corridors could result in effects from potential additional development as stated above.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The 6 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with several different vegetation community types. The amended area would overlap with three acres of agricultural land, 12 acres of forested, 143 acres of grassland, 66 acres of pinyon/juniper, nine acres of riparian and wetland,

3,818 acres of shrubland, and 254 acres of sparsely vegetated or barren land. Concentrating utilities in this area would result in the removal or alteration of vegetation within these community types.

Alternative F

The Alternative F route would require plan amendments involving two BLM offices—Vernal and Salt Lake. The effect the plan amendments would have on the managing vegetation resources in the respective BLM office is discussed below.

BLM Vernal Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

The 22-mile utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with several different vegetation community types. The amended area would overlap with six acres of agricultural land, 1,668 acres of forested, 750 acres of grassland, 4,248 acres of pinyon/juniper, two acres of riparian and wetland, 2,960 acres of shrubland, and 1,315 acres of sparsely vegetated or barren land. Concentrating utilities in this area would result in the removal or alteration of vegetation within these community types.

BLM Salt Lake Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

The 3-mile utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with several different vegetation community types. The amended area would overlap with three acres of agricultural land, 1,064 acres of forested, 59 acres of grassland, 88 acres of pinyon/juniper, 1,048 acres of shrubland, and 23 acres of sparsely vegetated or barren land. No areas of riparian and wetland would be affected. Concentrating utilities in this area would result in the removal or alteration of vegetation within these community types.

Alternative Variations

The various alternative variations would require plan amendments involving the following FO—Salt Lake. The 3-mile utility corridor for the Emma Park Alternative Variation that would require a plan amendment would overlap with several different vegetation community types. The amended area would overlap with 1,120 acres of forested, 53 acres of grassland, 28 acres of pinyon/juniper, 1,359 acres of shrubland, and 133 acres of sparsely vegetated or barren land. No areas of agricultural land or riparian and wetland would be affected. Concentrating utilities in this area would result in the removal or alteration of vegetation within these community types.

Alternative Connectors

The various alternative connectors would require plan amendments involving the following FOs—Rawlins and Las Vegas. Plan amendments for utility corridors could result in effects from potential additional development as stated above.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

Designation of new utility corridors for the Baggs (18 miles), Fivemile Point North (2 miles), Fivemile South (2 miles), and Mexican Flats (9 miles) alternative connectors would overlap with several different vegetation community types. The Baggs Alternative Connector would overlap with 12 acres of agricultural land, 465 acres of forested land, 21 acres of grassland, 314 acres of riparian and wetland, 18,148 acres of shrubland, and 972 acres of sparsely vegetated or barren land; no areas of pinyon juniper would be affected. The Fivemile Point North Alternative Connector would overlap with two acres of grassland, 12 acres of riparian and wetland, 2,075 acres of shrubland, and 78 acres of sparsely vegetated or barren land; no areas of agricultural land, forested, or pinyon juniper would be affected. The Fivemile Point South Alternative Connector would overlap with eight acres of riparian and wetland and 987 acres of shrubland; no areas of agricultural land, grassland, forested, pinyon juniper, or sparsely vegetated or barren would

be affected. The Mexican Flats Alternative Connector would overlap with one acre of agricultural land, 142 acres of riparian and wetland, 7,276 acres of shrubland, and 961 acres of sparsely vegetated or barren land; no areas of grassland, forested, or pinyon juniper would be affected. Concentrating utilities in this area would result in the removal or alteration of vegetation within these community types.

BLM Las Vegas Field Office

The one mile of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with several different vegetation community types. The amended area would overlap with 16 acres of shrubland and 14 acres of sparsely vegetated or barren land. No agricultural land, forested areas, grasslands, pinyon/juniper, or riparian and wetland communities would be within the amended area. Concentrating utilities in this area would result in the removal or alteration of vegetation within these community types.

4.5.5.2 Forest Management

Allowing for potential future utilities to be developed in areas where currently none exist could affect the management of forests. Corridor areas may influence the size and location of commercial timber harvesting. Initial ROW clearing and operational maintenance would result in a reduced fuel load and, therefore, incrementally reduce the potential for wildland fires in the area of the corridor. There would be a greater emphasis on fire suppression to protect the developed infrastructure within the corridor.

Alternative A

The Alternative A route would require plan amendments involving four BLM offices—Rawlins, Little Snake, Vernal, and Las Vegas. No national forests require plan amendments under this alternative. The proposed plan amendments would have minor and inconsequential effects for the following areas because the areas do not contain forested and woodland areas suitable for timber harvest: BLM Little Snake FO, and BLM Las Vegas FO. Only areas that may have forest management concerns for the plan amendment under this alternative are discussed in the following sections.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

Since all forested and woodland areas within the FO are open to commercial and noncommercial timber harvesting, the location of this corridor could potentially interfere with harvest operations in the Powder Rim area of the FO. However, given that the limited forest resources exist along the route, impacts to forest management would not be anticipated.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Some of these areas that would be crossed Alternative A are approved for woodcutting and the existence of the corridor could interfere with harvesting operations.

Alternative B

The Alternative B route would require plan amendments involving five BLM offices—Rawlins, Little Snake, White River, Vernal, and Price. The effect these plan amendments would have on forest management in the respective FOs is discussed below. The proposed plan amendments would have minor and inconsequential effects for the following areas because the areas do not contain forested and woodland areas suitable for timber harvest: BLM Little Snake FO, BLM White River FO, and BLM Price FO. Only areas that may have forest management concerns for the plan amendment under this alternative are discussed in the following section.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

Since all forested and woodland areas within the FO are open to commercial and noncommercial timber harvesting, the location of this corridor could potentially interfere with harvest operations in the Powder Rim area of the FO. However, given that the limited forest resources exist along the route, impacts to forest management would not be anticipated.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Some of the areas that are crossed by Alternative B are approved for woodcutting and the existence of the corridor could interfere with harvesting operations.

Alternative C

The Alternative C route would require plan amendments involving five BLM offices—Rawlins, White River, Vernal, Price, and Caliente—and Fishlake National Forest. The effect these plan amendments would have on forest management in the respective BLM offices and national forest is discussed below. The proposed plan amendments would have minor and inconsequential effects for the following areas because the areas do not contain forested and woodland areas suitable for timber harvest: BLM White River FO, BLM Price FO, BLM Caliente FO. Only areas that may have forest management concerns for the plan amendment under this alternative are discussed in the following sections.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

Since all forested and woodland areas within the FO are open to commercial and noncommercial timber harvesting, the location of this corridor could potentially interfere with harvest operations in the Powder Rim area of the FO. However, given that the limited forest resources exist along the route, impacts to forest management would not be anticipated.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Some of the areas that are crossed by Alternative C are approved for woodcutting and the existence of the corridor could interfere with harvesting operations.

USFS Fishlake National Forest

Timber harvest operations are active within the forest. The majority of the proposed utility corridor location follows a transportation corridor and the remainder is co-located with an existing transmission line. Expanding the utility corridor and allowing exception to the SIO could open the area for harvest or other types of development, which could interfere with harvest operations. However, the proposed utility corridor location does not cross any areas managed for production or forest management.

Alternative D

The Alternative D route would require plan amendments involving three BLM offices—Rawlins, Little Snake, and Vernal. The effect these plan amendments would have on forest management in the respective BLM offices is discussed below. The proposed plan amendments would have minor and inconsequential effects for the following area because the area does not contain forested and woodland areas suitable for timber harvest: BLM Little Snake FO. Only areas that may have forest management concerns for the plan amendment under this alternative are discussed in the following section.

BLM Rawlins Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

Since all forested and woodland areas within the FO are open to commercial and noncommercial timber harvesting, the location of this corridor could potentially interfere with harvest operations in the Powder

Rim area of the FO. However, given that the limited forest resources exist along the route, impacts to forest management would not be anticipated.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Some of the areas that are crossed by Alternative D are approved for woodcutting and the existence of the corridor could interfere with harvesting operations.

Alternative E

The Alternative E route would require plan amendments involving one BLM office—Vernal.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Some of the areas that are crossed by Alternative E are approved for woodcutting and the existence of the corridor could interfere with harvesting operations.

Alternative F

The Alternative F route would require plan amendments involving two BLM offices—Vernal and Salt Lake. The proposed plan amendment would have minor and inconsequential effects in the BLM Salt Lake FO because the area does not contain forested and woodland areas suitable for timber harvest. Only areas that may have forest management concerns for the plan amendment under this alternative are discussed in the following section.

BLM Vernal Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

Some of the areas that are crossed by Alternative F are approved for woodcutting and the existence of the corridor could interfere with harvesting operations.

Alternative Variations

The various alternative variations would require plan amendments involving the following FO—Salt Lake. The proposed plan amendment would have minor and inconsequential effects in the BLM Salt Lake FO because the area does not contain forested and woodland areas suitable for timber harvest.

Alternative Connectors

The various alternative connectors would require plan amendments involving the following FOs: Rawlins and Las Vegas. A description of the involved routing variations and the effect the plan amendments would have on forest management in the respective FOs is discussed below. The proposed plan amendments would have minor and inconsequential effects for the following area because the area does not contain forested and woodland areas suitable for timber harvest: BLM Las Vegas Office. Only areas that may have forest management concerns for the plan amendment under this alternative are discussed in the following section.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

Since all forested and woodland areas within the FO are open to commercial and noncommercial timber harvesting, the location of utility corridors for the Baggs (18 miles), Fivemile Point North (2 miles), Fivemile Point South (2 miles), and Mexican Flats (9 miles) alternative connectors potentially could interfere with harvest operations in the Powder Rim area of the FO. However, given that the limited forest resources exist along the route, impacts to forest management would not be anticipated.

4.5.5.3 Fire and Fuels Management

Allowing for potential future utilities to be developed in areas where currently none exist could affect the management of fire and fuels. Benefits to fire and fuel management would include decreased fuel loads due to ROW clearing and maintenance, resulting in the potential for reduced fire size and intensity. The addition of access roads also could facilitate firefighting efforts. The inclusion of a utility corridor could eliminate the ability to use wildland fire for beneficial vegetation treatment and may increase the frequency of fire events due to additional human presence, vehicles, and equipment (ignition sources). The location of infrastructure would elevate the need to suppress fire in the utility corridor with this additional value at risk to wildland fire. If an RMP or LRMP does not state that wildland fire is being reintroduced to the ecosystem, then it is assumed that some level of suppression of wildland fire is the overall strategy of the land management agency.

Alternative A

The Alternative A route would require plan amendments involving four BLM offices—Rawlins, Little Snake, Vernal, and Las Vegas. No national forests require plan amendments under this alternative. The effect these plan amendments would have on fire and fuels management in the respective FOs is discussed below.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

The location of an aboveground transmission line in this area could have an effect on fire and fuels management because the area has been designated as suitable for the use of wildland fire as a resource benefit used to protect, maintain, and enhance vegetation resources and to allow fire to function in its natural ecological role. There would need to be an increased emphasis on fire suppression and post-fire restoration in the corridor area to protect the infrastructure and maintain public health and safety.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

As a whole, the Little Snake FO integrates wildland fire into the ecosystem as a natural process on a landscape scale. Development in a new utility corridor where currently no development exists could have an effect on fire and fuels management. Along the Alternative A route, a suppression response from fire management units to wildland fire may be necessary to prevent damage to the infrastructure and risks to public health and safety taking into consideration firefighter safety. This area would be precluded from the use of wildland fire as a vegetation treatment; however, the vegetation clearing and maintenance practices along the corridor may serve a similar role.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Prescribed and wildland fire is used within the FO as a method for reintroducing natural fire regimes to fire-adapt ecosystems; however, in the eastern portion of the FO, where Alternative A crosses public land, is a high fire risk area where fire is not desired. Introducing additional structures in this area may increase the potential for wildfire and associated suppression efforts required to control any fire starts. Any future transmission lines would need to meet design requirements to reduce the chances of fire in this high fire risk area.

BLM Las Vegas Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

There is some use of prescribed fire within the Las Vegas FO; however, the vast majority of the FO is managed to suppress fire. Alternative A does not pass through any areas where fire is used for enhancement of vegetation communities.

Alternative B

The Alternative B route would require plan amendments involving five BLM offices—Rawlins, Little Snake, White River, Vernal, and Price. The effect these plan amendments would have on fire and fuels management in the respective FOs is discussed below.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

The Alternative B route has been designated as suitable for the use of wildland fire as a resource benefit used to protect, maintain, and enhance vegetation resources and to allow fire to function in its natural ecological role. Effects to fire and fuels management would be the same as for Alternative A described above.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

As a whole, the Little Snake FO integrates wildland fire into the ecosystem as a natural process on a landscape scale. Effects to fire and fuels management from the newly designated corridor would be the same as for Alternative A described above.

BLM White River Field Office

Wildland fire is used by the White River FO as a method for protecting, maintaining, and enhancing vegetation communities. Conversion and expansion of the existing utility corridor could have an effect on fire and fuels management within the FO. The corridor would constitute an area where additional fire suppression may be required to protect the infrastructure providing for public health and safety. Vegetation clearing and maintenance practices along the corridor may serve a similar role to fire in reducing fuel biomass.

BLM Vernal Field Office

In the eastern portion of the FO where Alternative B crosses public land, is a high fire risk area where fire is not desired. Therefore, Alternative B may not constitute an area where additional suppression efforts would be required.

BLM Price Field Office

Within the Price FO, wildland fire is the preferred method of vegetation treatment because it is considered to be less intrusive. Portions of Alternative B that extend outside of the utility corridor designated in the RMP equate to areas where wildland fire use would be precluded. In the absence of fire, mechanical, chemical, and biological methods are employed for vegetation treatments. The vegetation clearing and maintenance practices along the corridor would serve a similar role in reducing fuel loads.

Alternative C

The Alternative C route would require plan amendments involving five BLM offices—Rawlins, White River, Vernal, Price, and Caliente—and Fishlake National Forest. The effect these plan amendments would have on fire and fuels management in the respective BLM offices and national forest is discussed below.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

The Alternative C route has been designated as suitable for the use of wildland fire as a resource benefit used to protect, maintain, and enhance vegetation resources and to allow fire to function in its natural ecological role. Effects to fire and fuels management would be the same as for Alternative A described above.

BLM White River Field Office

Effects to fire and fuels management as a result of converting to an aboveground corridor would be the same as for Alternative B described above.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Effects to fire and fuels management from the newly designated corridor would be the same as for Alternative B described above.

BLM Price Field Office

Portions of Alternative C that extend outside of the utility corridor designated in the RMP equate to areas where wildland fire use would be precluded. Effects to fire and fuels management as a result of expanding the existing utility corridor would be the same as for Alternative B described above.

BLM Caliente Field Office

Within the Caliente FO, fire is being reintroduced as a natural component of the ecosystem. A one-time exception through the Kane Springs ACEC would equate to an increased level of fire suppression, particularly in high elevation areas where there tends to be a greater accumulation of fuel biomass.

USFS Fishlake National Forest

Some wildland fires are permitted to burn within the Fishlake National Forest. This would depend on the vegetation community type involved and the intensity of the fire. In areas intersected by Alternative C, this strategy would likely be precluded. Fire suppression would need to be prioritized in an effort to protect the infrastructure within the ROW. While the ROW and aboveground transmission line would result in visual impairment due to clearing and presence of the line, the necessary fire suppression would benefit visual quality in that it would eliminate visual impairment resulting from burn areas. The vegetation clearing and maintenance practices along the ROW also would serve a similar role to fire in reducing fuel loads.

Alternative D

The Alternative D route would require plan amendments involving three BLM offices—Rawlins, Little Snake, and Vernal. The effect these plan amendments would have on fire and fuels management in the respective BLM offices is discussed below.

BLM Rawlins Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

The Alternative D route has been designated as suitable for the use of wildland fire as a resource benefit used to protect, maintain, and enhance vegetation resources and to allow fire to function in its natural ecological role. Effects to fire and fuels management would be the same as for Alternative A described above.

BLM Little Snake Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

Impacts would be the same as Alternative B.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Areas crossed by Alternative D are classified as areas where wildland fire is desired but there are significant constraints. Effects to fire and fuels management would be the same as for Alternative A described above.

Alternative E

The Alternative E route would require plan amendments involving one BLM office—Vernal. The effect this plan amendment would have on fire and fuels management in the respective BLM office is discussed below.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Areas crossed by Alternative E are classified as areas where fire is not desired at all. Effects to fire and fuels management would be the same as for Alternative A described above. Effects to fire and fuels management would be the same as for Alternative A described above.

Alternative F

The Alternative F route would require plan amendments involving two BLM offices—Vernal and Salt Lake. The effect the plan amendments would have on the fire and fuels management in the respective BLM office is discussed below.

BLM Vernal Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

Areas crossed by Alternative F are classified as areas where wildland fire is desired but there are significant constraints. Effects to fire and fuels management would be the same as for Alternative A described above.

BLM Salt Lake Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

Overall, wildlife fire within the FO is suppressed when it occurs on public land. Therefore, Alternative F may not constitute an area where additional suppression efforts would be required.

Alternative Variations

The various alternative variations would require plan amendments involving the following FO—Salt Lake. The 3-mile utility corridor for the Emma Park Alternative Variation that would require a plan amendment would be located in an area of existing fire suppression. Therefore, the Emma Park Alternative Variation may not constitute an area where additional suppression efforts would be required.

Alternative Connectors

The various alternative connectors would require plan amendments involving the following FOs—Rawlins and Las Vegas. A description of the involved routing variations and the effect the plan amendments would have on fire and fuels management in the respective FOs is discussed below.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

The Baggs, Fivemile Point North, Fivemile Point South, and Mexican Flats alternative connectors have been designated as suitable for the use of wildland fire as a resource benefit used to protect, maintain, and enhance vegetation resources and to allow fire to function in its natural ecological role. Effects to fire and fuels management would be the same as for Alternative A described above.

BLM Las Vegas Field Office

A one-time exception to allow the Sunrise Mountain Alternative Connector route would have similar effects to management of cultural resources as described for Alternative A above.

4.5.6 Special Status Plant Species

The expansion or designation of new utility corridors would concentrate future utility development in these areas. Impacts to special status plant species would generally be the same as discussed in Section 4.5.5, Vegetation. On BLM- and USFS-managed lands (and private lands in many cases), surveys typically are required in potential or known habitats of threatened, endangered, or otherwise special status species. These surveys would help determine the presence of any special status species or extent of habitat, and protective measures generally would be taken to avoid or minimize direct disturbance in these important areas before any potential future proposed utility projects are permitted. Additional information on special status species that may be affected is presented in Section 3.6, Special Status Plant Species.

4.5.6.1 Alternative A

The Alternative A route would require plan amendments involving four BLM offices—Rawlins, Little Snake, Vernal, and Las Vegas. Plan amendments are not required for national forests under this alternative. The effect these plan amendments would have on special status plant species in the respective areas is discussed in the following sections.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

Impacts to special status species from expansion of the existing utility corridor along I-80 and designation of a new utility corridor south of I-80 would be the same as those stated above. **Table 4-2** presents the federally listed and candidate plant species for the BLM Rawlins FO.

Table 4-2 Federally Listed and Candidate Plant Species Potentially Occurring in the BLM Rawlins Field Office

Species	Scientific Name	County	State	Federal Status
Ute ladies'-tresses	*Spiranthes diluvialis*	Carbon, Sweetwater	Wyoming	Threatened

The proposed utility corridor would cross 86 acres of known or modeled areas with Ute ladies'-tresses. Overhead utilities could be mitigated to avoid or span identified habitat to the extent practical.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

Impacts to special status plant species from a new utility corridor would be the same as those stated above. **Table 4-3** presents the federally listed and candidate plant species for the BLM Little Snake FO.

Table 4-3 Federally Listed and Candidate Plant Species Potentially Occurring in the BLM Little Snake Field Office

Species	Scientific Name	County	State	Federal Status
Ute ladies'-tresses	*Spiranthes diluvialis*	Moffat	Colorado	Threatened

The proposed utility corridor would traverse 349 acres containing known or modeled areas with Ute ladies'-tresses. Overhead utilities could be mitigated to avoid or span identified habitat to the extent practical.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Impacts to special status plant species from a new utility corridor would be the same as those stated above. **Table 4-4** presents the federally listed and candidate species for the BLM Vernal FO.

Table 4-4 Federally Listed and Candidate Plant Species Potentially Occurring in the BLM Vernal Field Office

Species	Scientific Name	County	State	Federal Status
Graham penstemon	*Penstemon grameii*	Duchesne, Uintah	Utah	Proposed Threatened
Shrubby reed-mustard	*Schoenocrambe suffrutescens*	Duchesne, Uintah	Utah	Endangered
White River beardtongue	*Penstemon scariosus*	Uintah	Utah	Candidate
Ute ladies'-tresses	*Spiranthes diluvialis*	Duchesne, Uintah, Daggett	Utah	Threatened
Clay reed-mustard	*Schoenocrambe argillacea*	Uintah	Utah	Threatened
Pariette cactus	*Sclerocactus brevispinus*	Duchesne, Uintah	Utah	Threatened
Uinta Basin hookless cactus	*Sclerocactus wetlandicus*	Duchesne, Uintah	Utah	Threatened

The proposed utility corridor would cross areas containing known or modeled areas with 342 acres of Graham penstemon. Overhead utilities could be mitigated to avoid or span identified habitat to the extent practical.

BLM Las Vegas Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

Impacts to special status plant species from a one-time exception through the Sunrise Mountain ISA would be the same as those stated above. **Table 4-5** presents the federally listed and candidate plant species for the BLM Las Vegas FO.

Table 4-5 Federally Listed and Candidate Plant Species Potentially Occurring in the BLM Las Vegas Field Office

Species	Scientific Name	County	State	Federal Status
Las Vegas buckwheat	*Eriogonum corymbosum var. nilesii*	Clark, Lincoln	Nevada	Candidate

The proposed utility corridor would cross 20 acres of areas containing known or modeled areas with Las Vegas buckwheat. Overhead utilities could be mitigated to avoid or span identified habitat to the extent practical.

4.5.6.2 Alternative B

The Alternative B route would require plan amendments involving five BLM offices—Rawlins, Little Snake, White River, Vernal, and Price. Plan amendments are not required for national forests under this alternative. The effect these plan amendments would have on special status species in the respective areas is discussed in the following sections.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

The proposed utility corridor would cross 214 acres of areas containing known or modeled Ute ladies'-tresses. Overhead utilities could be mitigated to avoid or span identified habitat to the extent practical.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

Impacts to special status plant species from a new utility corridor would be similar to those stated for Alternative A. A total of 295 acres of known or modeled areas for Ute ladies-tresses would be within the amended area. Overhead utilities could be mitigated to avoid or span identified habitat to the extent practical.

BLM White River Field Office

Impacts to special status species from expansion and conversion of an underground utility corridor to allow aboveground development would be the same as those stated above. **Table 4-6** presents the federally listed and candidate plant species for the BLM White River FO.

Table 4-6 Federally Listed and Candidate Plant Species Potentially Occurring in the BLM White River Field Office

Species	Scientific Name	County	State	Federal Status
White River beardtongue	*Penstemon scariosus var. albifluvis*	Rio Blanco	Colorado	Candidate
Grahams penstemon	*Penstemon grahamii*	Rio Blanco	Colorado	Proposed Threatened
Ute ladies'-tresses	*Spiranthes diluvialis*	Rio Blanco	Colorado	Threatened

The proposed corridor would traverse areas containing known or modeled areas with Grahams penstemon, Ute ladies'-tresses, and White River beardtongue as follows: Grahams penstemon – 1,710 acres, Ute ladies'-tresses – 108 acres, and White River beardtongue – 1,247 acres. Overhead utilities could be mitigated to avoid or span identified habitat to the extent practical.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The proposed utility corridor would cross two acres with known or modeled areas of Ute ladies'-tresses and 1,148 acres with known or modeled areas of White River beardtongue. Overhead utilities could be mitigated to avoid or span identified habitat to the extent practical.

BLM Price Field Office

Impacts to special status plant species from a new utility corridor or possibly widening an existing corridor would be the same as those stated above. **Table 4-7** presents the federally listed and candidate plant species for the BLM Price FO.

Table 4-7 Federally Listed and Candidate Plant Species Potentially Occurring in the BLM Price Field Office

Species	Scientific Name	County	State	Federal Status
Jones Cycladenia	*Cycladenia humilis var. jonesii*	Grand, Emery	Utah	Threatened
Wright fishhook cactus	*Sclerocactus wrightiae*	Emery	Utah	Endangered
Last chance townsendia	*Townsendia aprica*	Emery	Utah	Threatened
San Rafael cactus	*Pediocactus despainii*	Emery	Utah	Endangered
Winkler cactus	*Pediocactus winkleri*	Emery	Utah	Threatened
Barneby reed-mustard	*Schoenocrambe barnebyi*	Emery	Utah	Endangered

The proposed utility corridor would cross 11,751 acres containing known or modeled areas with Wright fishhook cactus and 3,255 acres of known or modeled areas with Winkler cactus. Overhead utilities could be mitigated to avoid or span identified habitat to the extent practical.

4.5.6.3 Alternative C

The Alternative C route would require plan amendments involving five BLM offices—Rawlins, White River, Vernal, Price, and Caliente—and one national forest—Fishlake. The effect these plan amendments would have on special status species in the respective areas is discussed in the following sections.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

The proposed utility corridor would cross 403 acres of areas containing known or modeled Ute ladies'-tresses. Overhead utilities could be mitigated to avoid or span identified habitat to the extent practical.

BLM White River Field Office

Impacts to special status plant species from expansion and conversion of an underground utility corridor to allow aboveground development would be the same as those stated above for Alternative B.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Impacts to special status plant species from designating the new utility corridor would be the same as those stated above for Alternative B.

BLM Price Field Office

The proposed utility corridor would cross areas containing known or modeled areas with Jones cycladenia, San Rafael cactus, Wright fishhook cactus, and Winkler cactus as follows: Jones cycladenia – 773 acres; San Rafael cactus – 206 acres; Wright fishhook cactus – 7,944 acres; Winkler cactus – 523 acres. Overhead utilities could be mitigated to avoid or span identified habitats to the extent practical.

BLM Caliente Field Office

Impacts to special status plant species from a one-time exception through the Sunrise Mountain ISA would be the same as those stated above. **Table 4-8** presents the federally listed and candidate plant species for the BLM Caliente FO.

Table 4-8 Federally Listed and Candidate Plant Species Potentially Occurring in the BLM Caliente Field Office

Species	Scientific Name	County	State	Federal Status
Las Vegas buckwheat	*Eriogonum corymbosum var. nilesii*	Clark, Lincoln	Nevada	Candidate

The proposed utility corridor would not cross areas containing known or modeled areas with special status plant species.

USFS Fishlake National Forest

Impacts to special status plant species from the expanded utility corridor would be the same as those stated above. **Table 4-9** presents the federally listed and candidate plant species for the USFS Fishlake National Forest.

Table 4-9 Federally Listed and Candidate Plant Species Potentially Occurring in the USFS Fishlake National Forest

Species	Scientific Name	County	State	Federal Status
Arizona willow	*Salix arizonica*	Sevier	Utah	Candidate
Bicknell milkvetch	*Astragalus consobrinus*	Sevier	Utah	Sensitive
Elsinore buckwheat	*Eriogonum ostlundii*	Sevier	Utah	Sensitive
Last Chance townsendia	*Townsendia aprica*	Sevier	Utah	Threatened
Maguire campion	*Silene petersonii*	Sevier	Utah	Sensitive
Sigurd townsendia	*Townsendia jonesii var. lutea*	Sevier	Utah	Candidate
Ward beardtongue	*Penstemon wardii*	Sevier	Utah	Candidate
Wright fishhook cactus	*Sclerocactus wrightiae*	Sevier	Utah	Endangered

The proposed utility corridor would cross areas containing known or modeled areas as follows: Arizona willow – 4,320 acres, Bicknell milkvetch – 1,544 acres, Elsinore buckwheat – 2,303 acres, Last Chance townsendia – 2,247 acres, Maguire campion – 3,082 acres, Sigurd townsendia – 2,995 acres, Ward beardtongue – 7,368 acres, and Wright fishhook cactus – 307 acres. Overhead utilities could be mitigated to avoid or span identified habitat to the extent practical.

4.5.6.4 Alternative D

The Alternative D route would require plan amendments involving three BLM offices—Rawlins, Little Snake, and Vernal. The effect these plan amendments would have on special status species in the respective areas is discussed in the following sections.

BLM Rawlins Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

The proposed utility corridor would cross 729 acres of areas containing known or modeled Ute ladies'-tresses. Overhead utilities could be mitigated to avoid or span identified habitat to the extent practical.

BLM Little Snake Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

Impacts would be the same as Alternative B.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The proposed utility corridor would cross 2,619 acres of Grahams penstemon, 425 acres of Uinta Basin hookless cactus, and three acres of Ute ladies'-tresses. Overhead utilities could be mitigated to avoid or span identified habitat to the extent practical.

4.5.6.5 Alternative E

The Alternative E route would require a plan amendment involving one BLM office—Vernal. The effect the plan amendment would have on special status species in the respective area is discussed in the following section.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The proposed utility corridor would not cross areas containing known or modeled special status plant species.

4.5.6.6 Alternative F

The Alternative F route would require plan amendments involving two BLM offices—Vernal and Salt Lake. The effect the plan amendments would have on special status plant species in the respective BLM office is discussed below.

BLM Vernal Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

The proposed utility corridor would cross 3,937 acres of Grahams penstemon, 425 acres of Uinta Basin hookless cactus, and three acres of Ute ladies'-tresses. Overhead utilities could be mitigated to avoid or span identified habitat to the extent practical.

BLM Salt Lake Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

Impacts to special status plant species from a new utility corridor on public lands would be the same as those stated above. **Table 4-10** presents the federally listed and candidate plant species for the BLM Salt Lake FO.

Table 4-10 Federally Listed and Candidate Species Potentially Occurring in the BLM Salt Lake Field Office

Species	Scientific Name	County	State	Federal Status
Deseret milk-vetch	*Astragalus desereticus*	Utah	Utah	Threatened
Clay phacelia	*Phacelia argillacea*	Utah	Utah	Endangered
Ute ladies'-tresses	*Spiranthes diluvialis*	Utah, Wasatch, Duchesne	Utah	Threatened

The proposed utility corridor would cross four acres of areas containing known or modeled areas Ute ladies'-tresses.

4.5.6.7 Alternative Variations

The various alternative variations would require plan amendments involving the following FO—Salt Lake. The 3-mile utility corridor for the Emma Park Alternative Variation would not cross any known or modeled areas containing special status plant species.

4.5.6.8 Alternative Connectors

The various alternative connectors would require plan amendments involving the following FOs—Rawlins and Las Vegas. A description of the involved routing variations and the effect the plan amendments would have on special status plant species in the respective areas is discussed below.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

The proposed utility corridor would cross known or modeled areas for Ute ladies'-tresses for the Baggs (293 acres), Fivemile Point South (7 acres), and Mexican Flats (71 acres) alternative connectors. Overhead utilities could be mitigated to avoid or span identified habitat to the extent practical. The Fivemile Point North Alternative Connector would not cross any areas containing known or modeled special status plant species.

BLM Las Vegas Field Office

A one-time exception through the Sunrise Mountain ISA would cross 1 acre of Las Vegas buckwheat. Overhead utilities could be mitigated to span identified habitat to the extent practical.

4.5.7 Wildlife

Allowing for potential future development of utilities in areas where currently none exist could result in habitat loss, fragmentation, increased human disturbance, and direct wildlife mortalities. Potential impacts from habitat loss would include the incremental loss of potential cover and forage and the incremental increase of habitat fragmentation from vegetation removal associated with surface disturbance activities. Habitat loss or alteration also would result in direct losses of smaller, less mobile species of wildlife, such as small mammals and reptiles, and the displacement of more mobile species into adjacent habitats. In areas where habitats are at, or near, carrying capacity, animal displacement could result in some unquantifiable reductions in local wildlife populations. Wildlife mortalities may occur as a result of road construction, vehicle and transmission line collisions, and crushing of less mobile species, nests, and/or burrows. Potential impacts also could include increased predation, nest and burrow abandonment, or loss of eggs or young during construction.

The primary impact is wildlife avoidance (displacement) of otherwise suitable habitat in and around the disturbance areas during construction and operation. Avoidance would result in displacement of animals from an area larger than the actual disturbance area. The primary operation-related impacts to wildlife are mortalities as a result of electrocution and collision from transmission line components. Additional information on wildlife is presented in Section 3.7, Wildlife.

4.5.7.1 Alternative A

The Alternative A route would require plan amendments involving four BLM offices—Rawlins, Little Snake, Vernal, and Las Vegas. Plan amendments are not required for national forests under this alternative. The effect these plan amendments would have on wildlife in the respective areas is discussed in the following sections.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

Impacts to wildlife from 58 miles of a new utility corridor would be the same as those stated above. Impacts to big game (i.e., pronghorn and mule deer) and raptors would be more pronounced than other wildlife species in this BLM FO due to their relative abundance, presence of available habitat (e.g., crucial winter range), and sensitivity to disturbance. The 58 miles of the newly designated utility corridor would overlap with critical habitat for elk (1,782 acres), mule deer (5,839 acres), and pronghorn antelope (8,112 acres). Sage grouse core areas would be overlapped by 6,019 acres and raptor nest buffer zones would be intersected for a total of 44,680 acres. Concentrating utilities in this area could result in temporary or permanent displacement of wildlife. Exceptions to stipulations for raptor nest buffers that occur within the corridor would be required for all utilities using the corridor. Mitigation and monitoring would be resolved for site-specific projects with the BLM staff.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

Impacts to wildlife from 42 miles of a new utility corridor to accommodate Alternative A would be the same as those stated above. Impacts to big game (i.e., pronghorn, mule deer, and elk) and raptors would be more pronounced than other wildlife species in this BLM FO due to their relative abundance, presence of available habitat (e.g., severe winter range), and sensitivity to disturbance. The 42 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with critical habitat for elk (8,087 acres), mule deer (13,569 acres), and pronghorn antelope (8,352 acres). Sage grouse preliminary priority habitat would be overlapped by 49,110 acres and raptor nest buffer zones would be intersected for a total of 12,360 acres. Concentrating utilities in this area could result in temporary or permanent displacement of wildlife. Exceptions to stipulations for raptor nest buffers that occur within the corridor may be required for all utilities using the corridor. Mitigation techniques including relocation of active nests may be required.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Impacts to wildlife from 19 miles of a new utility corridor to accommodate Alternative A would be the same as those stated above. Impacts to big game (e.g., mule deer) and raptors would be more pronounced than other wildlife species in this BLM FO due to their relative abundance, presence of available habitat (e.g., crucial winter range), and sensitivity to disturbance. The 19 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with critical habitat for mule deer (2,237 acres), and pronghorn antelope (10,667 acres). No sage grouse preliminary priority habitat or raptor nest buffer zones would be intersected. Concentrating utilities in this area could result in temporary or permanent displacement of wildlife.

BLM Las Vegas Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

Impacts to wildlife from a 1 mile, one-time exception through the Sunrise Mountain ISA would be the same as those stated above. Impacts to big game (i.e., desert bighorn sheep), raptors, and reptiles would be more pronounced within this FO due to presence of available habitat (e.g., occupied habitat) and sensitivity to disturbance. No known critical or priority habitat would be within the amended area.

4.5.7.2 Alternative B

The Alternative B route would require plan amendments involving five BLM offices—Rawlins, Little Snake, White River, Vernal, and Price. Plan amendments are not required for national forests under this alternative. The effect these plan amendments would have on wildlife in the respective areas is discussed in the following sections.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

Impacts to wildlife from 61 miles of a new utility corridor and locating aboveground development in portion of a corridor designated as underground only would be the same as those stated above. Impacts to big game (i.e., pronghorn and mule deer) and raptors would be more pronounced than other wildlife species in this BLM FO due to their relative abundance, presence of available habitat (e.g., crucial winter range), and sensitivity to disturbance. The 61 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with critical habitat for elk (1,782 acres), mule deer (5,958 acres), and pronghorn antelope (7,280 acres). Sage grouse core areas would be overlapped by 6,019 acres and eight raptor nest buffer zones would be intersected for a total of 44,713 acres. Concentrating utilities in this area could result in temporary or permanent displacement of wildlife. Exceptions to stipulations for raptor nest buffers that occur within the corridor would be required for all utilities using the corridor. Mitigation and monitoring would be resolved for site-specific projects with BLM staff.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

Impacts to wildlife from 37 miles of a new utility corridor to accommodate Alternative B would be similar to those stated for Alternative A. The 37 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with critical habitat for elk (21,160 acres), mule deer (14,588 acres), and pronghorn antelope (11,502 acres). Sage grouse preliminary priority habitat would be overlapped by 59,681 acres and raptor nest buffer zones would be intersected for a total of 20,401 acres. Concentrating utilities in this area could result in temporary or permanent displacement of wildlife.

BLM White River Field Office

Impacts to wildlife expanding and locating aboveground development in 38 miles of a corridor designated as underground only would be the same as those stated above. Impacts to big game (i.e., pronghorn, mule deer, and elk) and raptors would be more pronounced than other wildlife species in this BLM FO due to their relative abundance, presence of available habitat (e.g., severe winter range), and sensitivity to disturbance. The 38 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with critical habitat for elk (7,612 acres), mule deer (4,898 acres), and Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep (4 acres). Sage grouse preliminary priority habitat would be overlapped for a total of 11,459 acres and raptor nest buffer zones would be intersected for a total of 21,497 acres. Concentrating utilities in this area could result in temporary or permanent displacement of wildlife. Exceptions to stipulations for raptor nest buffers that occur within the corridor would be required for all utilities using the corridor. Mitigation and monitoring would be resolved for site-specific projects with BLM staff.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Impacts to wildlife from 6 miles of a new utility corridor to accommodate Alternative B would be the same as those stated above. Impacts to big game (e.g., mule deer) and raptors would be more pronounced than other wildlife species in this BLM FO due to their relative abundance, presence of available habitat (e.g., crucial range), and sensitivity to disturbance. The 6 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with four acres of Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep. No sage grouse preliminary priority habitat or raptor nest buffers would be intersected. Concentrating utilities in this area could result in temporary or permanent displacement of wildlife.

BLM Price Field Office

Impacts to wildlife from 14 miles of a new utility corridor would be the same as those stated above. Impacts to big game (i.e., desert bighorn sheep) and raptors would be more pronounced than other wildlife species in this BLM FO due to their relative abundance, presence of available habitat (e.g., crucial winter range), and sensitivity to disturbance. The 14 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with critical habitat for elk (1,581 acres) and pronghorn antelope (12,451 acres) and raptor nest buffer zones would be intersected for a total of 2,106 acres. No sage grouse preliminary priority habitat would be intersected. Concentrating utilities in this area could result in temporary or permanent displacement of wildlife.

4.5.7.3 Alternative C

The Alternative C route would require plan amendments involving five BLM offices—Rawlins, White River, Vernal, Price, and Caliente—and one national forest—Fishlake. The effect these plan amendments would have on wildlife and fish resources in the respective areas is discussed in the following sections.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

Impacts to wildlife from expanding 27 miles of an existing utility corridor would be the same as those stated above. Impacts to big game (i.e., pronghorn and mule deer) and raptors would be more

pronounced than other wildlife species in this BLM FO due to their relative abundance, presence of available habitat (e.g., crucial winter range), and sensitivity to disturbance. The 27 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with critical habitat for elk (100 acres), mule deer (15,869 acres), and pronghorn antelope (21,220 acres). Sage grouse core areas would be overlapped by 8,130 acres and raptor nest buffer zones would be intersected for a total of 34,896 acres. Concentrating utilities in this area could result in temporary or permanent displacement of wildlife. Exceptions to stipulations for raptor nest buffers that occur within the corridor would be required for all utilities using the corridor. Mitigation techniques and monitoring would be resolved for site-specific projects with BLM staff.

BLM White River Field Office

Impacts to wildlife from expanding and locating aboveground development in portion of a corridor designated as underground only would be the same as those stated above for Alternative B.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Impacts to wildlife from the new designated corridor would be the same as those stated above for Alternative B.

BLM Price Field Office

Impacts to wildlife from 10 miles of a new utility corridor would be similar to those stated above for Alternative B. The 10 miles of utility corridor would overlap with 60 acres of critical habitat for pronghorn and 3,017 acres of raptor nest buffer zones. No sage grouse preliminary priority habitat would be overlapped by the portion of the utility corridor that would require a plan amendment.

BLM Caliente Field Office

Impacts to wildlife from a 9-mile, one-time exception through the Kane Springs ACEC would be the same as those stated above. Impacts to big game (i.e., pronghorn and desert bighorn sheep), raptors, and reptiles would be more pronounced within this FO due to presence of available habitat, and sensitivity to disturbance. No critical big game habitat or raptor nest buffer zones would be intersected. Concentrating utilities in this area could result in temporary or permanent displacement of wildlife.

USFS Fishlake National Forest

Impacts to wildlife from expanding 22 miles of the existing utility corridor would be the same as those stated above. Impacts to big game (i.e., mule deer and elk) and raptors would be more pronounced than other wildlife species in this national forest due to their relative abundance, presence of available habitat (e.g., crucial winter range), and sensitivity to disturbance. The 22 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with 18,032 acres of critical habitat for elk and 11,436 acres of critical habitat for mule deer. No sage grouse preliminary priority habitat or raptor nest buffer zones would be intersected. Concentrating utilities in this area could result in temporary or permanent displacement of wildlife.

4.5.7.4 Alternative D

The Alternative D route would require plan amendments involving three BLM offices—Rawlins, Little Snake, and Vernal. The effect these plan amendments would have on wildlife in the respective areas is discussed in the following sections.

BLM Rawlins Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

Impacts to wildlife from expanding 76 miles of an existing utility and designating a new corridor would be the same as those stated above. Impacts to big game (i.e., pronghorn and mule deer) and raptors would

be more pronounced than other wildlife species in this BLM FO due to their relative abundance, presence of available habitat (e.g., crucial winter range), and sensitivity to disturbance. The 76 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with critical habitat for elk (1,779 acres), mule deer (16,252 acres), and pronghorn antelope (17,485 acres). Sage grouse core areas would be overlapped by 6,019 acres and raptor nest buffer zones would be intersected for a total of 57,211 acres. Concentrating utilities in this area could result in temporary or permanent displacement of wildlife. Exceptions to stipulations for raptor nest buffers that occur within the corridor would be required for all utilities using the corridor. Mitigation and monitoring would be resolved for site-specific projects with BLM staff.

BLM Little Snake Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

Impacts would be the same as Alternative B.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Impacts to wildlife from 17 miles of a new utility corridor to accommodate Alternative D would be the same as those stated above. Impacts to big game (e.g., mule deer) and raptors would be more pronounced than other wildlife species in this BLM FO due to their relative abundance, presence of available habitat (e.g., crucial range), and sensitivity to disturbance. The 17 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with critical habitat for elk (323 acres), moose (1,811 acres), mule deer (113 acres), and pronghorn (64 acres). Sage grouse preliminary priority habitat would be overlapped by 1,077 acres. No raptor nest buffers would be intersected. Concentrating utilities in this area could result in temporary or permanent displacement of wildlife.

4.5.7.5 Alternative E

The Alternative E route would require a plan amendment involving one BLM office—Vernal. The effect the plan amendment would have on wildlife in the respective area is discussed in the following section.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Impacts to wildlife from 6 miles of a new utility corridor to accommodate Alternative E would be the same as those stated above. Impacts to big game (e.g., mule deer) and raptors would be more pronounced than other wildlife species in this BLM FO due to their relative abundance, presence of available habitat (e.g., crucial range), and sensitivity to disturbance. The 6 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with critical habitat for elk (303 acres), moose (335 acres), mule deer (13 acres), and pronghorn (3,933 acres). Sage grouse preliminary priority habitat would be overlapped by 4,071 acres and raptor nest buffers would be overlapped by 1,573 acres. Concentrating utilities in this area could result in temporary or permanent displacement of wildlife.

4.5.7.6 Alternative F

The Alternative F route would require plan amendments involving two BLM offices—Vernal and Salt Lake. The effect the plan amendments would have on special status plant species in the respective BLM office is discussed below.

BLM Vernal Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

Impacts to wildlife from 22 miles of a new utility corridor to accommodate Alternative F would be the same as those stated above. Impacts to big game (e.g., mule deer) and raptors would be more pronounced than other wildlife species in this BLM FO due to their relative abundance, presence of available habitat (e.g., crucial range), and sensitivity to disturbance. The 22 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with critical habitat for elk (251 acres), moose (2,706 acres), mule deer

(140 acres), and pronghorn (64 acres). Sage grouse preliminary priority habitat would be overlapped by 1,077 acres and raptor nest buffers would be overlapped by 845 acres. Concentrating utilities in this area could result in temporary or permanent displacement of wildlife.

BLM Salt Lake Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

Impacts to wildlife from 3 miles of a new utility corridor to accommodate Alternative F would be the same as those stated above. Impacts to big game (e.g., elk) and raptors would be more pronounced than other wildlife species in this BLM FO due to their relative abundance, presence of available habitat (e.g., crucial range), and sensitivity to disturbance. The 3 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with critical habitat for elk (180 acres) and moose (1,293 acres). Raptor nest buffers would be overlapped by 56 acres. No areas of sage grouse preliminary priority habitat would be overlapped. Concentrating utilities in this area could result in temporary or permanent displacement of wildlife.

4.5.7.7 Alternative Variations

The various alternative variations would require plan amendments involving the following FO—Salt Lake. The 3-mile utility corridor for the Emma Park Alternative Variation would overlap with critical habitat for elk (675 acres) and moose (2,488 acres). No areas of sage grouse preliminary priority habitat or raptor nest buffers would be overlapped. Concentrating utilities in this area could result in temporary or permanent displacement of wildlife.

4.5.7.8 Alternative Connectors

The various alternative connectors would require plan amendments involving the following FOs—Rawlins and Las Vegas. A description of the involved routing variations and the effect the plan amendments would have on wildlife in the respective areas is discussed below.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

Designation of new utility corridors for the Baggs (18 miles), Fivemile Point North (2 miles), Fivemile South (2 miles), and Mexican Flats (9 miles) alternative connectors would overlap with critical habitat for big game (i.e., pronghorn and mule deer) and raptors. The Baggs Alternative Connector would overlap with critical habitat for mule deer (19,430 acres) and pronghorn (15,891 acres) and 13,981 acres of raptor nest buffers; no areas of sage grouse core areas would be overlapped. The Fivemile Point North Alternative Connector would overlap with critical habitat for mule deer (2,187 acres) and 2,186 acres of raptor nest buffers; no areas of sage grouse core areas would be overlapped. The Fivemile Point South Alternative Connector would overlap with critical habitat for mule deer (999 acres) and 274 acres of raptor nest buffers; no areas of sage grouse core areas would be overlapped. The Mexican Flats Alternative Connector would overlap with critical habitat for mule deer (290 acres) and pronghorn (2,061 acres) and 5,507 acres of raptor nest buffers; no areas of sage grouse core areas would be overlapped. Concentrating utilities in this area could result in temporary or permanent displacement of wildlife.

BLM Las Vegas Field Office

Impacts to wildlife from a one-time exception through the Sunrise Mountain ISA would be the same as those stated for Alternative A.

4.5.8 Special Status Wildlife Species

The expansion or designation of new utility corridors would concentrate future utility development in these areas. Impacts to special status wildlife species would generally be the same as discussed in Section 4.5.7, Wildlife. On BLM- and USFS-managed lands (and private lands in many cases), surveys typically are required in potential or known habitats of threatened, endangered, or otherwise special

status species. These surveys would help determine the presence of any special status species or extent of habitat, and protective measures generally would be taken to avoid or minimize direct disturbance in these important areas before any potential future proposed utility projects are permitted. Additional information on special status species that may be affected is presented in Section 3.8, Special Status Wildlife Species.

4.5.8.1 Alternative A

The Alternative A route would require plan amendments involving four BLM offices—Rawlins, Little Snake, Vernal, and Las Vegas. Plan amendments are not required for national forests under this alternative. The effect these plan amendments would have on special status wildlife species in the respective areas is discussed in the following sections.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

Impacts to special status wildlife species from the 58 miles of expansion of the existing utility corridor along I-80 and designation of a new utility corridor south of I-80 would be the same as those stated above. **Table 4-11** presents the federally listed and candidate wildlife species for the BLM Rawlins FO.

Table 4-11 Federally Listed and Candidate Wildlife Species Potentially Occurring in the BLM Rawlins Field Office

Species	Scientific Name	County	State	Federal Status
Black-footed ferret	*Mustela nigripes*	Carbon	Wyoming	Experimental, NEP[1]
Black-footed ferret	*Mustela nigripes*	Carbon, Sweetwater	Wyoming	Endangered
Canada lynx	*Lynx canadensis*	Carbon	Wyoming	Threatened
Greater sage-grouse	*Centrocercus urophasianus*	Carbon, Sweetwater	Wyoming	Candidate
Interior Least Tern	*Sterna antillarum*	Carbon	Wyoming	Endangered
Piping Plover	*Charadrius melodus*	Carbon	Wyoming	Threatened
Whooping Crane	*Grus Americana*	Carbon	Wyoming	Endangered
Yellow-billed cuckoo (Western)	*Coccyzus americanus*	Carbon, Sweetwater	Wyoming	Candidate

[1] Non-essential Population.

Impacts to the black-footed ferret, greater sage-grouse, and raptors would be more pronounced than other species in this FO due to their relative abundance, available habitat, and sensitivity to disturbance. All proposed plan amendment alternatives through the BLM Rawlins FO cross USFWS non-block cleared areas and white-tailed prairie dog colonies, raptors nest buffers, and greater sage-grouse core areas along I-80. A total of 5,191 acres of white-tailed prairie dog colonies would be overlapped by the 58 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment. Concentrating utilities in this area could result in temporary or permanent displacement of this species. Projects proposed in the corridor would need to abide by timing stipulations and request an exception under unique or emergency situations.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

Impacts to special status wildlife species from 42 miles of a new utility corridor would be the same as those stated above. **Table 4-12** presents the federally listed and candidate wildlife species for the BLM Little Snake FO.

Table 4-12 Federally Listed and Candidate Wildlife Species Potentially Occurring in the BLM Little Snake Field Office

Species	Scientific Name	County	State	Federal Status
Black-footed ferret	*Mustela nigripes*	Moffat	Colorado	Experimental, NEP[1]
Canada lynx	*Lynx canadensis*	Moffat, Routt	Colorado	Threatened
North American wolverine	*Gulo gulo*	Moffat, Routt	Colorado	Candidate
Yellow-billed cuckoo (Western)	*Coccyzus americanus*	Moffat, Routt	Colorado	Candidate
Mexican spotted owl	*Strix occidentalis lucida*	Moffat	Colorado	Threatened

[1] Non-essential Population.

Impacts to greater sage-grouse and raptors would be more pronounced than other species in this BLM FO due to their relative abundance, available habitat, and sensitivity to disturbance. All proposed plan amendment alternatives through the BLM Little Snake Office cross raptors nest buffers and greater sage-grouse preliminary priority habitat. Exceptions to stipulations for buffers to protect these species that occur within the corridor would be necessary for all proposed utilities. A total of 3,633 acres of white-tailed prairie dog colonies would be overlapped by the 42 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment. Concentrating utilities in this area could result in temporary or permanent displacement of this species. Mitigation measures including avoidance or off-site compensatory mitigation and monitoring would be required site-specific projects.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Impacts to special status wildlife species from 19 miles of a new utility corridor would be the same as those stated above. **Table 4-13** presents the federally listed and candidate wildlife species for the BLM Vernal FO.

Table 4-13 Federally Listed and Candidate Wildlife Species Potentially Occurring in the BLM Vernal Field Office

Species	Scientific Name	County	State	Federal Status
Canada lynx	*Lynx canadensis*	Duchesne, Uintah, Daggett	Utah	Threatened
Black-footed ferret	*Mustela nigripes*	Uintah	Utah	Experimental, NEP[1]
Yellow-billed cuckoo (Western)	*Coccyzus americanus*	Duchesne, Uintah, Daggett	Utah	Candidate
Greater sage-grouse	*Centrocercus urophasianus*	Duchesne, Uintah, Daggett	Utah	Candidate
Mexican spotted owl	*Strix occidentalis lucida*	Duchesne, Uintah	Utah	Threatened

Impacts to the black-footed ferret, greater sage-grouse, and raptors would be more pronounced than other species in this BLM FO due to their relative abundance, available habitat, and sensitivity to disturbance. However, the area within the proposed utility corridor does not encroach on buffers for these species and is located north of occupied greater sage-grouse habitat. A total of 534 acres of white-tailed prairie dog colonies would be overlapped by the 19 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment. Concentrating utilities in this area could result in temporary or permanent displacement of this species.

BLM Las Vegas Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

Impacts to special status wildlife species from a 1-mile, one-time exception through the Sunrise Mountain ISA would be the same as those stated above. **Table 4-14** presents the federally listed and candidate wildlife species for the BLM Las Vegas FO.

Table 4-14 Federally Listed and Candidate Wildlife Species Potentially Occurring in the BLM Las Vegas Field Office

Species	Scientific Name	County	State	Federal Status
Yuma clapper rail	*Rallus longirostris yumanensis*	Clark	Nevada	Endangered
Yellow-billed cuckoo (Western)	*Coccyzus americanus*	Clark	Nevada	Candidate
Southwestern willow flycatcher	*Empidonax traillii extimus*	Clark	Nevada	Endangered
Relict leopard frog	*Rana onca*	Clark	Nevada	Candidate
Desert tortoise	*Gopherus agassizii*	Clark	Nevada	Threatened

Impacts to reptiles (e.g., desert tortoise, banded gila monster) and raptors would be more pronounced within this FO due to available habitat, and sensitivity to disturbance. The area proposed for the one-time exception would affect 33 acres identified as potential habitat for the desert tortoise. Mitigation and monitoring measures would be required for site-specific projects.

4.5.8.2 Alternative B

The Alternative B route would require plan amendments involving five BLM offices—Rawlins, Little Snake, White River, Vernal, and Price. Plan amendments are not required for national forests under this alternative. The effect these plan amendments would have on special status wildlife species in the respective areas is discussed in the following sections.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

Impacts to special status wildlife species from 61 miles of a new utility corridor or aboveground development in portion of a corridor designated as underground would be similar to those stated for Alternative A. A total of 5,793 acres of white-tailed prairie dog colonies would be overlapped by the 61 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment. Concentrating utilities in this area could result in temporary or permanent displacement of this species.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

Impacts to special status wildlife species from 37 miles of a new utility corridor would be similar to those stated for Alternative A. However, this alternative would affect more area of greater sage-grouse preliminary priority habitat. A total of 6,749 acres of white-tailed prairie dog colonies would be overlapped by the 37 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment. Concentrating utilities in this area could result in temporary or permanent displacement of this species.

BLM White River Field Office

Impacts to special status wildlife species from the expansion and conversion of 38 miles of an underground utility corridor to allow aboveground development would be the same as those stated above. **Table 4-15** presents the federally listed and candidate wildlife species for the BLM White River FO.

Table 4-15 Federally Listed and Candidate Wildlife Species Potentially Occurring in the BLM White River Field Office

Species	Scientific Name	County	State	Federal Status
Black-footed ferret	*Mustela nigripes*	Rio Blanco	Colorado	Experimental, NEP[1]
Canada lynx	*Lynx canadensis*	Rio Blanco	Colorado	Threatened
Greater sage-grouse	*Centrocercus urophasianus*	Rio Blanco	Colorado	Candidate
Yellow-billed cuckoo (Western)	*Coccyzus americanus*	Rio Blanco	Colorado	Candidate
North American wolverine	*Gulo gulo*	Rio Blanco	Colorado	Candidate
Mexican Spotted Owl	*Strix occidentalis lucida*	Rio Blanco	Colorado	Threatened

[1] Non-essential Population.

Impacts to greater sage-grouse and raptors would be more pronounced than other species in this BLM FO due to their relative abundance, available habitat, and sensitivity to disturbance. All proposed plan amendment alternatives through the BLM White River Field Office cross raptors nest buffers and greater sage-grouse preliminary general habitat. A total of 814 acres of white-tailed prairie dog colonies would be overlapped by the 38 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment. Concentrating utilities in this area could result in temporary or permanent displacement of this species. Mitigation and monitoring measures would be required with site-specific approvals.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Impacts to special status wildlife species from 6 miles of new utility corridor would be similar to those stated for Alternative A. However, this alternative would affect no areas of greater sage grouse preliminary priority habitat and no areas of white-tailed prairie dog.

BLM Price Field Office

Impacts to special status wildlife species from 14 miles of a new utility corridor or possibly widening an existing corridor would be the same as those stated above. **Table 4-16** presents the federally listed and candidate wildlife species for the BLM Price FO.

Table 4-16 Federally Listed and Candidate Wildlife Species Potentially Occurring in the BLM Price Field Office

Species	Scientific Name	County	State	Federal Status
California Condor	*Gymnogyps californianus*	Grand, Emery	Utah	Experimental, NEP[1]
Yellow-billed cuckoo (Western)	*Coccyzus americanus*	Grand, Emery	Utah	Candidate
Greater sage-grouse	*Centrocercus urophasianus*	Grand, Emery	Utah	Candidate
Mexican spotted owl	*Strix occidentalis lucida*	Grand, Emery	Utah	Threatened
Southwestern willow flycatcher	*Empidonax traillii extimus*	Grand, Emery	Utah	Endangered

[1] Non-essential Population.

Impacts to raptors would be more pronounced than other wildlife species in this BLM FO due to their relative abundance, available habitat, and sensitivity to disturbance. A total of 584 acres of white-tailed prairie dog colonies would be overlapped by the 14 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan

amendment. Concentrating utilities in this area could result in temporary or permanent displacement of this species.

4.5.8.3 Alternative C

The Alternative C route would require plan amendments involving five BLM offices—Rawlins, White River, Vernal, Price, and Caliente—and one national forest—Fishlake. The effect these plan amendments would have on special status wildlife species in the respective areas is discussed in the following sections.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

Impacts to special status wildlife species from 27 miles of a new utility corridor or aboveground development in portion of a corridor designated as underground would be similar to those stated for Alternative A. However, this alternative would also cross the greater sage-grouse core area that extends south of I-80 and would overlap a total of 1,112 acres of white-tailed prairie dog colonies by the 27 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment. Concentrating utilities in this area could result in temporary or permanent displacement of this species.

BLM White River Field Office

Impacts to special status wildlife species from a 38-mile expansion and conversion of an underground utility corridor to allow aboveground development would be the same as those stated above for Alternative B.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Impacts to special status wildlife species from 6 miles of new utility corridor would be the same as those stated above for Alternative B.

BLM Price Field Office

Impacts to special status wildlife species from 10 miles of a new utility corridor would be similar to those stated above for Alternative B. Exceptions to buffers of white-tailed prairie dog colonies may need to be granted if avoidance or minimization is not possible when siting utilities. A total of 584 acres of white-tailed prairie dog colonies would be overlapped by the 10 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment. Concentrating utilities in this area could result in temporary or permanent displacement of this species.

BLM Caliente Field Office

Impacts to special status wildlife species from a 9-mile, one-time exception through the Kane Springs ACEC would be the same as those stated above. **Table 4-17** presents the federally listed and candidate wildlife species for the BLM Caliente FO.

Table 4-17 Federally Listed and Candidate Wildlife Species Potentially Occurring in the BLM Caliente Field Office

Species	Scientific Name	County	State	Federal Status
Yellow-billed cuckoo (Western)	*Coccyzus americanus*	Lincoln	Nevada	Candidate
Southwestern willow flycatcher	*Empidonax traillii extimus*	Lincoln	Nevada	Endangered
Desert tortoise	*Gopherus agassizii*	Lincoln	Nevada	Threatened

Impacts to reptiles (e.g., desert tortoise, banded gila monster) and raptors would be more pronounced within this FO due to available habitat, and sensitivity to disturbance. This proposed plan amendment alternative would cross 276 acres of critical habitat and 3 acres of potential habitat for desert tortoise.

USFS Fishlake National Forest

Impacts to special status wildlife species from 22 miles of a new utility corridor would be the same as those stated above. Impacts to the Utah prairie dog, greater sage-grouse, and raptors would be more pronounced than other species in this national forest due to their relative abundance, available habitat, and sensitivity to disturbance. The proposed plan amendment alternative through the USFS Fishlake National Forest crosses occupied habitat for greater sage-grouse. No special status species critical habitat is overlapped by the 22 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment. Mitigation measures including off-site mitigation may be needed as site-specific projects are proposed.

4.5.8.4 Alternative D

The Alternative D route would require plan amendments involving three BLM offices—Rawlins, Little Snake, and Vernal. The effect these plan amendments would have on special status wildlife species in the respective areas is discussed in the following sections.

BLM Rawlins Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

Impacts to special status wildlife species from 76 miles of a new utility corridor or aboveground development in portion of a corridor designated as underground would be similar to those stated for Alternative A. A total of 3,343 acres of white-tailed prairie dog colonies would be overlapped by the 76 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment. Concentrating utilities in this area could result in temporary or permanent displacement of this species.

BLM Little Snake Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

Impacts would be the same as Alternative B.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Impacts to special status wildlife species from 17 miles of new utility corridor would be similar to those stated for Alternative A. However, this alternative would affect less area of greater sage grouse preliminary priority habitat and no areas of white-tailed prairie dog. Concentrating utilities in this area could result in temporary or permanent displacement of special status species.

4.5.8.5 Alternative E

The Alternative E route would require a plan amendment involving one BLM office—Vernal. The effect the plan amendment would have on special status wildlife species in the respective area is discussed in the following section.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Impacts to special status wildlife species from 22 miles of new utility corridor would be similar to those stated for Alternative A. This alternative would affect a comparable area of greater sage grouse preliminary priority habitat and 308 areas of white-tailed prairie dog. Concentrating utilities in this area could result in temporary or permanent displacement of special status species.

4.5.8.6 Alternative F

The Alternative F route would require plan amendments involving two BLM offices—Vernal and Salt Lake. The effect the plan amendments would have on special status plant species in the respective BLM office is discussed below.

BLM Vernal Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

Impacts to wildlife from 22 miles of a new utility corridor to accommodate Alternative F would be similar to those stated for Alternative A. This alternative would affect less area of greater sage grouse preliminary priority habitat and no areas of white-tailed prairie dog. Concentrating utilities in this area could result in temporary or permanent displacement of special status species.

BLM Salt Lake Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

Impacts to special status wildlife species from a new utility corridor on public lands would be the same as those stated above. **Table 4-18** presents the federally listed and candidate species for the BLM Salt Lake FO.

Table 4-18 Federally Listed and Candidate Species Potentially Occurring in the BLM Salt Lake Field Office

Species	Scientific Name	County	State	Federal Status
Canada lynx	*Lynx canadensis*	Utah, Wasatch, Duchesne	Utah	Threatened
Yellow-billed cuckoo (Western)	*Coccyzus americanus*	Utah, Wasatch, Duchesne	Utah	Candidate
Greater sage-grouse	*Centrocercus urophasianus*	Utah, Wasatch, Duchesne	Utah	Candidate

The area within the proposed 3-mile utility corridor would not encroach on buffers to protect special status species.

4.5.8.7 Alternative Variations

The various alternative variations would require plan amendments involving the following FO—Salt Lake. The 3-mile utility corridor for the Emma Park Alternative Variation would not encroach on buffers to protect special status species.

4.5.8.8 Alternative Connectors

The various alternative connectors would require plan amendments involving the following FOs—Rawlins and Las Vegas. A description of the involved routing variations and the effect the plan amendments would have on special status wildlife species in the respective areas is discussed below.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

Designation of new utility corridors for the Baggs (18 miles) and Mexican Flats (9 miles) alternative connectors would overlap with white-tailed prairie dog habitat (61 and 3,112 acres, respectively), and no areas of greater sage grouse core areas. The Fivemile Point North (2 miles) and Fivemile South (2 miles) alternative connectors would not encroach on buffers to protect special status species.

BLM Las Vegas Field Office

Impacts to special status wildlife species from a one-time exception through the Sunrise Mountain ISA would overlap 30 acres of desert tortoise potential habitat. Concentrating utilities in this area could result in temporary or permanent displacement of this species.

4.5.9 Aquatic Biological Resources

Allowing for potential future development of utilities in areas where currently none exist could result in habitat loss or loss of individuals from equipment and vehicles. Habitat also could be affected by changes in water quality from increased sedimentation and potential fuel spills or use of surface water for construction. Additional information on aquatic biological resources is presented in Section 3.9, Aquatic Biological Resources.

4.5.9.1 Alternative A

The Alternative A route would require plan amendments involving four BLM offices—Rawlins, Little Snake, Vernal, and Las Vegas. Plan amendments are not required for national forests under this alternative. Impacts to aquatic biological resources from potential utility crossings or effects to water quality resulting from construction would be the same as stated above. Additional impacts are noted below.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

Impacts to aquatic biological resources from 42 miles of a new utility corridor would be the same as those stated above. This alternative would cross both the Little Snake and Yampa rivers, which could deteriorate aquatic habitat conditions if utilities are concentrated in these areas.

4.5.9.2 Alternative B

The Alternative B route would require plan amendments involving five BLM offices—Rawlins, Little Snake, White River, Vernal, and Price. Plan amendments are not required for national forests under this alternative. Impacts to aquatic biological resources from potential utility crossings or effects to water quality resulting from construction would be the same as stated above. Additional impacts are noted below.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

Impacts to wildlife and fish resources from 37 miles of a new utility corridor would be similar to those stated for Alternative A.

BLM White River Field Office

Impacts to aquatic biological resources from 38 miles of a new utility corridor would be the same as those stated above. This alternative would have multiple stream crossings.

BLM Price Field Office

Impacts to aquatic biological resources from 14 miles of a new utility corridor would be the same as those stated above. This alternative would have a stream crossing.

4.5.9.3 Alternative C

The Alternative C route would require plan amendments involving five BLM offices—Rawlins, White River, Vernal, Price, and Caliente—and one national forest—Fishlake. Impacts to aquatic biological resources

from potential utility crossings or effects to water quality resulting from construction would be the same as stated above. Additional impacts are noted below.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

Impacts to aquatic biological resources from 27 miles of a new utility corridor would be the same as those stated above. This alternative would cross Muddy Creek.

BLM White River Field Office

Impacts would be the same as those stated above for Alternative B.

4.5.9.4 Alternative D

The Alternative D route would require plan amendments involving three BLM offices—Rawlins, Little Snake, and Vernal. Impacts to aquatic biological resources from potential utility crossings or effects to water quality resulting from construction would be the same as stated above. Additional impacts are noted below.

BLM Rawlins Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

Impacts to aquatic biological resources from 76 miles of a new utility corridor would be the same as those stated above. This alternative would have a stream crossing, which could deteriorate aquatic habitat conditions if utilities were concentrated in this area.

BLM Little Snake Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

Impacts would be the same as Alternative B.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Impacts to aquatic biological resources from 17 miles of a new utility corridor to accommodate Alternative D would be the same as those stated above. This alternative would cross the Argyle Creek, which could deteriorate aquatic habitat conditions if utilities were concentrated in this area.

4.5.9.5 Alternative E

The Alternative E route would require a plan amendment involving one BLM office—Vernal. Impacts to aquatic biological resources from potential utility crossings or effects to water quality resulting from construction would be the same as for Alternative A.

4.5.9.6 Alternative F

The Alternative F route would require plan amendments involving two BLM offices—Vernal and Salt Lake. Impacts to aquatic biological resources from potential utility crossings or effects to water quality resulting from construction would be the same as stated above. Additional impacts area noted below.

BLM Vernal Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

Impacts to aquatic biological resources from 22 miles of a new utility corridor to accommodate Alternative F would be the same as those stated above. This alternative would cross the Argyle Creek, which could deteriorate aquatic habitat conditions if utilities were concentrated in this area.

4.5.9.7 Alternative Variations

The various alternative variations would require plan amendments involving the following FO—Salt Lake. Impacts to aquatic biological resources associated with the 3-mile utility corridor for the Emma Park Alternative Variation from potential utility crossings or effects to water quality resulting from construction would be the same as stated above.

4.5.9.8 Alternative Connectors

The various alternative connectors would require plan amendments involving the following FOs—Rawlins and Las Vegas. Impacts to aquatic biological resources from potential utility crossings or effects to water quality resulting from construction would be the same as stated above. Additional impacts are noted below.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

Impacts to aquatic biological resources from a new utility corridor would be the same as those stated above. The Fivemile Point North and Baggs alternative connectors would have a stream crossing at Muddy Creek, which could deteriorate aquatic habitat conditions if utilities were concentrated in this area.

4.5.10 Special Status Aquatic Species

The expansion or designation of new utility corridors would concentrate future utility development in these areas. Impacts to special status aquatic species would generally be the same as discussed in Section 4.5.9, Aquatic Biological Resources. On BLM- and USFS-managed lands (and private lands in many cases), surveys typically are required in potential or known habitats of threatened, endangered, or otherwise special status species. These surveys would help determine the presence of any special status species or extent of habitat, and protective measures generally would be taken to avoid or minimize direct disturbance in these important areas before any potential future proposed utility projects are permitted. Section 3.10, Special Status Aquatic Species, provides a detailed description of impacts to special status aquatic species within the corridors proposed, plan amendment-specific impacts are addressed in the following sections.

4.5.10.1 Alternative A

The Alternative A route would require plan amendments involving four BLM offices—Rawlins, Little Snake, Vernal, and Las Vegas. Plan amendments are not required for national forests under this alternative. The effect these plan amendments would have on special status aquatic species in the respective areas is discussed in the following sections.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

Impacts to special status aquatic species from the 58-mile expansion of the existing utility corridor along I-80 and designation of a new utility corridor south of I-80 would be the same as those stated above. **Table 4-19** presents the federally listed and candidate aquatic species for the BLM Rawlins FO.

Table 4-19 Federally Listed and Candidate Aquatic Species Potentially Occurring in the BLM Rawlins Field Office

Species	Scientific Name	County	State	Federal Status
Pallid Sturgeon	*Scaphirhynchus albus*	Carbon	Wyoming	Endangered
Bonytail	*Gila elegans*	Carbon, Sweetwater	Wyoming	Endangered
Colorado Pikeminnow	*Ptychocheilus lucius*	Carbon, Sweetwater	Wyoming	Endangered

Table 4-19 Federally Listed and Candidate Aquatic Species Potentially Occurring in the BLM Rawlins Field Office

Species	Scientific Name	County	State	Federal Status
Humpback Chub	*Gila cypha*	Carbon, Sweetwater	Wyoming	Endangered
Razorback Sucker	*Xyrauchen texanus*	Carbon, Sweetwater	Wyoming	Endangered

The proposed utility corridor would cross one stream near the Colorado state line, which is occupied by Colorado pikeminnow habitat. Overhead utilities could be mitigated to avoid or span occupied habitat; however, buried utilities would be unable to avoid the occupied stream.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

Impacts to special status aquatic species from 42 miles of a new utility corridor would be the same as those stated above. **Table 4-20** presents the federally listed and candidate aquatic species for the BLM Little Snake FO.

Table 4-20 Federally Listed and Candidate Aquatic Species Potentially Occurring in the BLM Little Snake Field Office

Species	Scientific Name	County	State	Federal Status
Humpback chub	*Gila cypha*	Moffat	Colorado	Endangered
Colorado pikeminnow	*Ptychocheilus lucius*	Moffat	Colorado	Endangered
Bonytail	*Gila elegans*	Moffat	Colorado	Endangered
Razorback sucker	*Xyrauchen texanus*	Moffat	Colorado	Endangered

The proposed utility corridor would have two stream crossings, one occupied by Colorado Pikeminnow and one by both the Colorado pikeminnow and razorback sucker. Overhead utilities could be mitigated to avoid or span occupied habitat; however, buried utilities would be unable to avoid the occupied stream.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Impacts to special status aquatic species from 19 miles of a new utility corridor would be the same as those stated above. **Table 4-21** presents the federally listed and candidate aquatic species for the BLM Vernal FO.

Table 4-21 Federally Listed and Candidate Aquatic Species Potentially Occurring in the BLM Vernal Field Office

Species	Scientific Name	County	State	Federal Status
Humpback chub	*Gila cypha*	Duchesne, Uintah, Daggett	Utah	Endangered
Colorado pikeminnow	*Ptychocheilus lucius*	Duchesne, Uintah, Daggett	Utah	Endangered
Bonytail	*Gila elegans*	Duchesne, Uintah, Daggett	Utah	Endangered
Razorback sucker	*Xyrauchen texanus*	Duchesne, Uintah, Daggett	Utah	Endangered

The proposed utility corridor would not cross streams occupied by special status aquatic species.

BLM Las Vegas Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

Impacts to special status aquatic species from a 1-mile, one-time exception through the Sunrise Mountain ISA would be the same as those stated above. **Table 4-22** presents the federally listed and candidate aquatic species for the BLM Las Vegas FO.

Table 4-22 Federally Listed and Candidate Aquatic Species Potentially Occurring in the BLM Las Vegas Field Office

Species	Scientific Name	County	State	Federal Status
Moapa dace	*Moapa coriacea*	Clark	Nevada	Endangered
Pahrump poolfish	*Empetrichthys latos*	Clark	Nevada	Endangered
Lahontan cutthroat trout	*Oncorhynchus clarkii henshawi*	Clark	Nevada	Threatened
Woundfin	*Plagopterus argentissimus*	Clark	Nevada	Endangered
Bonytail	*Gila elegans*	Clark	Nevada	Endangered
Virgin River chub	*Gila robusta seminuda*	Clark	Nevada	Endangered
Razorback sucker	*Xyrauchen texanus*	Clark	Nevada	Endangered

The proposed one-time exception would not cross streams occupied by special status aquatic species.

4.5.10.2 Alternative B

The Alternative B route would require plan amendments involving five BLM offices—Rawlins, Little Snake, White River, Vernal, and Price. Plan amendments are not required for national forests under this alternative. The effect these plan amendments would have on special status aquatic species in the respective areas is discussed in the following sections.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

Impacts to special status aquatic species from 58 miles of a new utility corridor or aboveground development in portion of a corridor designated as underground would be the same as those stated for Alternative A. The proposed utility corridor would cross one stream near the Colorado state line, which is occupied by the Colorado pikeminnow. Overhead utilities could be mitigated to avoid or span occupied habitat; however, buried utilities would be unable to avoid the occupied stream.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

Impacts to special status aquatic species from 37 miles of a new utility corridor would be the same as those stated for Alternative A. The proposed utility corridor would have two stream crossings; however, no special status aquatic species occur within these streams.

BLM White River Field Office

Impacts to special status aquatic species from expansion and conversion of 38 miles of an underground utility corridor to allow aboveground development would be the same as those stated above. **Table 4-23** presents the federally listed and candidate aquatic species for the BLM White River FO.

Table 4-23 Federally Listed and Candidate Aquatic Species Potentially Occurring in the BLM White River Field Office

Species	Scientific Name	County	State	Federal Status
Humpback chub	*Gila cypha*	Rio Blanco	Colorado	Endangered
Colorado pikeminnow	*Ptychocheilus lucius*	Rio Blanco	Colorado	Endangered
Bonytail	*Gila elegans*	Rio Blanco	Colorado	Endangered
Razorback sucker	*Xyrauchen texanus*	Rio Blanco	Colorado	Endangered

The proposed utility corridor would not cross streams occupied by special status aquatic species.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Impacts to special status species from 6 miles of new utility corridor would not affect any areas occupied by special status aquatic species.

BLM Price Field Office

Impacts to special status aquatic species from 14 miles of a new utility corridor or possibly widening an existing corridor would be the same as those stated above. **Table 4-24** presents the federally listed and candidate aquatic species for the BLM Price FO.

Table 4-24 Federally Listed and Candidate Aquatic Species Potentially Occurring in the BLM Price Field Office

Species	Scientific Name	County	State	Federal Status
Humpback chub	*Gila cypha*	Grand, Emery	Utah	Endangered
Colorado pikeminnow	*Ptychocheilus lucius*	Grand, Emery	Utah	Endangered
Bonytail	*Gila elegans*	Grand, Emery	Utah	Endangered
Razorback sucker	*Xyrauchen texanus*	Grand, Emery	Utah	Endangered

The proposed utility corridor would not cross streams occupied by special status aquatic species.

4.5.10.3 Alternative C

The Alternative C route would require plan amendments involving five BLM offices—Rawlins, White River, Vernal, Price, and Caliente—and one national forest—Fishlake. The effect these plan amendments would have on special status aquatic species in the respective areas is discussed in the following sections.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

Impacts to special status aquatic species from 27 miles of a new utility corridor or aboveground development in portion of a corridor designated as underground would be the same as those stated for Alternative A. The proposed utility corridor would cross one stream; however, it does not contain any special status aquatic species.

BLM White River Field Office

Impacts to special status aquatic species from expansion and conversion of 38 miles of an underground utility corridor to allow aboveground development would be the same as those stated above for Alternative B.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Similar to Alternative B, impacts to special status species from 6 miles of new utility corridor would not affect any areas occupied by special status aquatic species.

BLM Price Field Office

Impacts to special status aquatic species from 10 miles of a new utility corridor would not cross streams occupied by special status aquatic species.

BLM Caliente Field Office

Impacts to special status aquatic species from 9 miles of a one-time exception through the Kane Springs ACEC would be the same as those stated above. **Table 4-25** presents the federally listed and candidate aquatic species for the BLM Caliente FO.

Table 4-25 Federally Listed and Candidate Aquatic Species Potentially Occurring in the BLM Caliente Field Office

Species	Scientific Name	County	State	Federal Status
Pahranagat roundtail chub	*Gila robusta jordani*	Lincoln	Nevada	Endangered
Big Spring spinedace	*Lepidomeda mollispinis pratensis*	Lincoln	Nevada	Threatened
Hiko White River springfish	*Crenichthys baileyi grandis*	Lincoln	Nevada	Endangered
White River springfish	*Crenichthys baileyi baileyi*	Lincoln	Nevada	Endangered

The proposed utility corridor would not cross streams occupied by special status aquatic species.

USFS Fishlake National Forest

The 23-mile proposed utility corridor would not cross streams occupied by special status aquatic species.

4.5.10.4 Alternative D

The Alternative D route would require plan amendments involving three BLM offices—Rawlins, Little Snake, and Vernal. The effect these plan amendments would have on special status aquatic species in the respective areas is discussed in the following sections.

BLM Rawlins Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

Impacts to special status aquatic species from 76 miles of a new utility corridor or aboveground development in portion of a corridor designated as underground would be the same as those stated for Alternative A. The proposed utility corridor would cross one stream; however, it does not contain any special status aquatic species.

BLM Little Snake Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

Impacts would be the same as Alternative B.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Impacts to special status species from 17 miles of new utility corridor would not affect any areas occupied by special status aquatic species.

4.5.10.5 Alternative E

The Alternative E route would require a plan amendment involving one BLM office—Vernal. The effect the plan amendment would have on special status aquatic species in the respective area is discussed in the following section.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Impacts to special status species from 6 miles of new utility corridor would not affect any areas occupied by special status aquatic species.

4.5.10.6 Alternative F

The Alternative F route would require plan amendments involving two BLM offices—Vernal and Salt Lake. Impacts to special status aquatic species from potential utility crossings or effects to water quality resulting from construction would be the same as stated above. Additional impacts area noted below.

BLM Vernal Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

Impacts to special status aquatic species from 22 miles of a new utility corridor to accommodate Alternative F would not affect any areas occupied by special status aquatic species.

BLM Salt Lake Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

Impacts to special status aquatic species from a new utility corridor on public lands would be the same as those stated above. **Table 4-26** presents the federally listed and candidate aquatic species for the BLM Salt Lake FO.

Table 4-26 Federally Listed and Candidate Aquatic Species Potentially Occurring in the BLM Salt Lake Field Office

Species	Scientific Name	County	State	Federal Status
Humpback chub	*Gila cypha*	Utah, Wasatch, Duchesne	Utah	Endangered
Colorado pikeminnow	*Ptychocheilus lucius*	Utah, Wasatch, Duchesne	Utah	Endangered
Bonytail	*Gila elegans*	Utah, Wasatch, Duchesne	Utah	Endangered
Least chub	*Iotichthys phlegethontis*	Utah	Utah	Candidate
Razorback sucker	*Xyrauchen texanus*	Utah, Wasatch, Duchesne	Utah	Endangered
June sucker	*Chasmistes liorus*	Utah	Utah	Endangered

The proposed utility corridor would not cross streams occupied by special status aquatic species.

4.5.10.7 Alternative Variations

The various alternative variations would require plan amendments involving the following FO—Salt Lake. Impacts to special status aquatic species associated with the 3-mile utility corridor for the Emma Park Alternative Variation would not affect any areas occupied by special status aquatic species.

4.5.10.8 Alternative Connectors

The various alternative connectors would require plan amendments involving the following FOs—Rawlins and Las Vegas. A description of the involved routing variations and the effect the plan amendments would have on special status aquatic species in the respective areas is discussed below.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

The Baggs (18 miles), Fivemile Point North (2 miles), Fivemile Point south (2 miles), and Mexican Flats (9 miles) alternative connectors would not affect any areas occupied by special status aquatic species.

BLM Las Vegas Field Office

Impacts to special status aquatic species from a 1-mile, one-time exception through the Sunrise Mountain ISA would not affect any areas occupied by special status aquatic species.

4.5.11 Cultural Resources and Native American Concerns

Plan amendments to create new or expand existing utility corridors would influence the ability to locate utilities in areas. These actions in turn have direct impacts on cultural resources, which are analyzed pursuant to NEPA as individual projects are proposed. Cultural properties located in utility corridors would be subject to a potentially higher level of activities that disturb the ground, which would increase the likelihood of unanticipated surface and subsurface discoveries. In addition, utility corridors would be subject to a potentially higher level of visual intrusions from placement of structures and facilities, which would affect cultural resources where setting is an aspect of their integrity. However, all projects proposed in the utility corridors would require SHPO and tribal consultation as well as compliance with Section 106 and 110 of the NHPA. Section 3.11 provides a detailed description of impacts to resources within the corridors proposed, plan amendment-specific impacts are addressed in the following sections.

4.5.11.1 Alternative A

The Alternative A route would require plan amendments involving four BLM offices—Rawlins, Little Snake, Vernal, and Las Vegas. No national forests require plan amendments under this alternative. The effect these plan amendments would have on the management of cultural resources in the respective FOs is discussed below.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

The newly designated 58-mile corridor would cross one segment of the Cherokee and Overland trails and the Rawlins to Baggs Road Trail and would be within the viewshed of these historic trails as well as the Lincoln Highway Trail. The Cherokee Trail in southwestern Wyoming has been erased and no visible remnants remain. A total of 1 mile of the Cherokee Trail, 2 miles of the Overland Trail, and 2 miles of the Rawlins to Baggs Road would be overlapped by the 58 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment. Disturbance to cultural resource sites and visual impacts to historic properties may be reduced, but not eliminated, through implementation of design features and mitigation measures outlined in the project-specific programmatic agreements and treatment plans. Cultural resource goals and objectives in the RMP would be compromised for historic trails if contributing segments are crossed. It is unknown at this time whether segments of historic trails or roads crossed by the alternatives contribute to

the overall NRHP eligibility of these linear resources. A total of 589 known NHRP eligible sites would be overlapped by the amended area.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

The 42 miles of newly designated corridor would be located to the east of the following cultural resource areas that have been identified as high priority by the BLM: Sand Wash Basin, Vermillion Basin, Irish Canyon, and Cross Mountain. A total of 192 known NHRP eligible sites would be overlapped by the amended area. Effects would be the same a stated above.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The 19 miles of new utility corridor would overlap 41 known NHRP eligible sites. Effects would be the same as stated above.

BLM Las Vegas Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

There are no known culturally sensitive or high priority areas within the new proposed utility corridor location.

4.5.11.2 Alternative B

The Alternative B route would require plan amendments involving five BLM offices—Rawlins, Little Snake, White River, Vernal, and Price. The effect these plan amendments would have on the management of cultural resources in the respective FOs is discussed below.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

Sixty-one miles of a new utility corridor and above ground designation of an existing corridor would require a plan amendment. The southern portion of Alternative B would be located in a corridor designated as underground-only, which crosses one segment of the Cherokee and Overland trails and one segment of the Rawlins to Baggs Road Trail and would be within the viewshed of these historic trails as well as the Lincoln Highway Trail. A total of 1 mile of the Cherokee Trail, 1 mile of the Overland Trail, and 2 miles of the Rawlins to Baggs Road would be overlapped by the 61 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment. While there are pipelines in the existing corridor, conversion to allow aboveground facilities would enable more effects to the viewshed of cultural resources and historic trails. A total of 498 known NHRP eligible sites would be overlapped by the amended area. Effects to the management of cultural resources would be the same as for Alternative A described above.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

The 37 miles of newly designated corridor would be located to the east of the following cultural resource areas that have been identified as high priority by the BLM: Sand Wash Basin, Vermillion Basin, Irish Canyon, and Cross Mountain. A total of 115 known NHRP eligible sites would be overlapped by the amended area. Effects to the management of cultural resources would be the same as for Alternative A described above.

BLM White River Field Office

Thirty-eight miles of a new utility corridor would require a plan amendment. The closest area of known cultural significance is the Canyon Pintado Historic District, which abuts the northern portion of the corridor. Additionally, the Texas-Missouri-Evacuation Creek area is known to contain cultural resources and would be partially overlapped by the expanded corridor. Both areas are categorized as ROW avoidance in the RMP and future utilities in the expanded corridor should be sited to avoid these areas. While there are pipelines in the existing corridor, conversion to allow aboveground facilities would enable

more effects to the viewshed of cultural resources and these areas of known cultural significance. A total of 835 known NHRP eligible sites would be overlapped by the amended area.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The 6 miles of new utility corridor would overlap with no known NHRP eligible sites.

BLM Price Field Office

Fourteen miles of a new utility corridor would require a plan amendment. Within this area, a total of 72 known NHRP eligible sites would be overlapped by the amended area.

4.5.11.3 Alternative C

The Alternative C route would require plan amendments involving five BLM offices—Rawlins, White River, Vernal, Price, and Caliente—and Fishlake National Forest. The effect these plan amendments would have on the management of cultural resources in the respective BLM offices and national forest is discussed below.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

The existing designated corridor along Highway 789 crosses one segment of the Cherokee and Overland trails and two segments of the Rawlins to Baggs Road Trail and would be within the viewshed of these historic trails as well as the Lincoln Highway Trail. The 27 miles of expanded utility corridor would include more area crossed by the trail. Two miles of the Cherokee Trail, 1 mile of the Overland Trail, and 5 miles of the Rawlins to Baggs Road would be overlapped by the 27 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment. A total of 272 known NHRP eligible sites would be overlapped by the amended area.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The 6 miles of new utility corridor would overlap with no known NHRP eligible sites.

BLM White River Field Office

Effects to the management of cultural resources as a result of converting to an aboveground corridor would be the same as for Alternative B described above.

BLM Price Field Office

Ten miles of a new utility corridor would require a plan amendment. Within this area, a total of 120 known NHRP eligible sites would be overlapped by the amended area. Effects would be the same as previously described.

BLM Caliente Field Office

Nine miles of a new utility corridor would require a plan amendment. Within this area, one known NHRP eligible site would be overlapped by the amended area. Effects would be the same as previously described.

USFS Fishlake National Forest

Expansion of the existing transportation and utility corridor is unlikely to interfere with the standards and guidelines for the management of cultural resources. While allowing for exceptions to High SIO in the area may introduce elements that contrast with the setting, no areas of cultural significance were identified in this area. However, 108 known NHRP eligible sites would be overlapped by the amended area.

4.5.11.4 Alternative D

The Alternative D route would require plan amendments involving three BLM offices—Rawlins, Little Snake, and Vernal. The effect these plan amendments would have on the management of cultural resources in the respective BLM offices is discussed below.

BLM Rawlins Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

The 76 miles of newly designated corridor would cross three segments of the Cherokee Trail, one segment of the Overland Trail, and one segment of the Rawlins to Baggs Road Trail and would be within the viewshed of these historic trails as well as the Lincoln Highway Trail. Effects to the management of cultural resources would be the similar to Alternative A described above, but would have potential to impact more of the Cherokee Trail. Eight miles of the Cherokee Trail, 2 miles of the Overland Trail, and 2 miles of the Rawlins to Baggs Road would be overlapped by the 76 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment. A total of 741 known NHRP eligible sites would be overlapped by the amended area.

BLM Little Snake Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

Impacts would be the same as Alternative B.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The 17 miles of new utility corridor would overlap with 8 known NHRP eligible sites. Effects would be the same as previously described.

4.5.11.5 Alternative E

The Alternative E route would require plan amendments involving one BLM office—Vernal. The effect this plan amendment would have on the management of cultural resources in the respective BLM office is discussed below.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The 6 miles of new utility corridor would overlap with 26 known NHRP eligible sites. Effects would be the same as previously described.

4.5.11.6 Alternative F

The Alternative F route would require plan amendments involving two BLM offices—Vernal and Salt Lake. The effect these plan amendments would have on the management of cultural resources in the respective BLM office is discussed below.

BLM Vernal Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

The 22 miles of new utility corridor would overlap with 8 known NHRP eligible sites. Effects would be the same as previously described.

BLM Salt Lake Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

The 3 miles of new utility corridor would overlap with 2 known NHRP eligible sites. Effects would be the same as previously described.

4.5.11.7 Alternative Variations

The various alternative variations would require plan amendments involving the following FO—Salt Lake. The 3 miles of new utility corridor for the Emma Park Alternative Variation would overlap with no known NHRP eligible sites. Effects would be the same as previously described.

4.5.11.8 Alternative Connectors

The various alternative connectors would require plan amendments involving the following FOs—Rawlins and Las Vegas. A description of the involved routing variations and the effect the plan amendments would have on the management of cultural resources in the respective FOs is discussed below.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

Designation of new utility corridors for the Baggs (18 miles), Fivemile Point North (2 miles), Fivemile South (2 miles), and Mexican Flats (9 miles) alternative connectors would overlap with areas of known NHRP eligible sites. The Baggs Alternative Connector would cross non-contributing segments and be within the viewshed of the Cherokee and Rawlins to Baggs Road Trails, and overlap with 274 known NHRP eligible sites. The Fivemile Point North Alternative Connector would overlap with no known NHRP eligible sites. The Fivemile Point South Alternative Connector would overlap with 12 known NHRP eligible sites. The Mexican Flats Alternative Connector would overlap with 233 known NHRP eligible sites. Effects would be the same as previously described.

BLM Las Vegas Field Office

A 1-mile, one-time exception to allow the Sunrise Mountain Alternative Connector route would overlap with no known NHRP eligible sites.

4.5.12 Visual Resources

Plan amendments to expand an existing corridor or designate a new utility corridor and alter VRM classes would not directly impact visual resources; however, authorization of these amendments would open areas that currently prevent utility development to allow potential future development of energy transmission and other linear ROW projects. Resulting effects to visual resources occur to federal and non-federal lands within and adjacent to areas that are within the viewshed.

Allowing for the potential future development of utilities in areas not previously developed could result in visible landscape altering activities and the permanent addition of overhead transmission structures in predominantly natural landscapes that provide settings for recreation and other uses. Indirect impacts to the scenic qualities of the natural landscapes would occur from visual contrast associated with landscape altering activities and visual intrusions that modify the form, line, color, and texture of the landscape character. Potential future contrasts would alter predominantly natural landscape settings to landscapes that could eventually trend toward an industrialized setting.

Potential future developments proposed in areas where developments do not exist must meet BLM and USFS objectives for visual resource management on federal lands. Since areas of VRM Class I/II on BLM lands and very high/high SIO or preservation/retention VQO are intended to maintain or improve the visual setting, any potential future large-scale or predominantly-located utility developments in these areas could not be reasonably mitigated to meet the visual resource objectives and plan amendments are proposed in these areas. Adequate visual mitigation in the form of standard BMPs from agency plans and guidance would allow some landscape altering activities and visual intrusions that minimize the extent of modification to the form, line, color, and texture of the landscape character and minimize visual contrast with the natural setting to be compatible with VRM Class III on BLM lands and areas of moderate SIO or Partial Retention VQO in national forests. While the objectives for any development that occurs in VRM

Class IV on BLM lands and areas of low/very low SIO or modification/maximum modification in national forests would allow for more landscape altering activities and visual contrast with the natural landscape, every attempt will be made to minimize the impact of potential future development activities through careful location, minimal disturbance, and repeating the basic elements to the extent practical and feasible.

Section 3.12, Visual Resources, provides a detailed description of visual resource impacts within the corridors proposed, plan amendment-specific impacts are addressed in the following sections.

4.5.12.1 Alternative A

The Alternative A route would require plan amendments involving four BLM offices—Rawlins, Little Snake, Vernal, and Las Vegas. No national forests require plan amendments under this alternative. The effect these plan amendments would have on visual resources in the respective areas is discussed in the following sections.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

Expanding an existing utility corridor along I-80 and designating a new corridor south of I-80 for a combined total of 58 miles would result in impacts to visual resources on public and non-federal lands and adjacent to areas that are within the viewshed, as stated above. Potential future projects proposed in the utility corridor would need to conform with the VRM Class III and IV objectives on public lands, including portions of the corridor that are located in sensitive viewpoints of the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail SRMA, the Rawlins to Baggs Road Historic Trail, and the Overland National Historic Trail. Siting utilities in multiple locations along I-80 and near Powder Rim in the corridor would not be able to meet visual quality objectives after mitigation; however, none of the amended areas would be located within VRM Class I or II areas. Visual resource mitigation measures discussed in Section 3.12 would minimize the extent of these impacts.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

A newly designated 43-mile utility corridor in the Little Snake FO to accommodate Alternative A would be located in an area not previously developed for utilities and would allow for additional potential future linear projects, which would result in impacts to visual resources on public and non-federal lands and adjacent to areas that are within the viewshed, as stated above. The new utility corridor would be located in an area that may include recreation and rural land uses that are sensitive to changes in landscape settings. Potential future projects proposed in the new utility corridor would need to conform to VRM Class III objectives on public lands. Part of the corridor is located in close proximity (up to an estimated 1.0 to 1.5 mile distance) to sensitive viewpoints. Depending on project location, these viewpoints could be affected by proposed future developments within the designated corridor. Affected sensitive viewpoints occur within the nearby Sand Wash Basin and the Cross Mountain WSA. Siting utilities in multiple locations in the corridor would not be able to meet visual quality objectives after mitigation. None of the amended areas would be located within VRM Class I or II areas. Visual resource mitigation measures discussed in Section 3.12 would minimize the extent of these impacts.

BLM Vernal Field Office

A 19-mile newly designated utility corridor in the Vernal FO to accommodate Alternative A would be located in an area that generally parallels an existing 345-kV transmission line and would allow for additional potential future linear projects, which would result in impacts to visual resources on public and non-federal lands and adjacent to areas that are within the viewshed, as stated above. Potential future projects proposed in the new utility corridor would need to conform to the VRM Class III and IV objectives on public lands. None of the amended areas would be located within VRM Class I or II areas.

BLM Las Vegas Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

A plan amendment to allow a 1-mile, one-time exception through the Sunrise ISA/Rainbow Gardens ACEC/Sunrise Mountain SRMA that parallels existing high voltage transmission lines would result in impacts to visual resources on public and non-federal lands and adjacent to areas that are within the viewshed, as stated above. The one-time exception would need to conform with VRM Class III objectives on public lands, including portions of the corridor that are located in sensitive viewpoints of the surrounding sensitive areas including the Sunrise Mountain ISA, Rainbow Gardens ACEC, and Sunrise Mountain SRMA. None of the amended areas would be located within VRM Class I or II areas.

4.5.12.2 Alternative B

The Alternative B route would require plan amendments involving five BLM offices—Rawlins, Little Snake, White River, Vernal, and Price. Plan amendments are not required for national forests under this alternative. The effect these plan amendments would have on visual resources in the respective areas is discussed in the following sections.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

Expanding the existing corridor along I-80 and converting an existing underground utility corridor for a combined total of 61 miles to allow overhead facilities south of I-80 would allow for additional potential future aboveground linear projects, which would result in impacts to visual resources on public and non-federal lands and adjacent to areas that are within the viewshed, as stated above. None of the amended areas would be located within VRM Class I or II areas. Potential future projects proposed in the utility corridor would need to conform with the VRM Class III and IV objectives on public lands, including portions of the corridor that are located in sensitive viewpoints of the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail SRMA, the Rawlins to Baggs Road Historic Trail, and the Overland National Historic Trail. Siting utilities in multiple locations along I-80 and near Powder Rim in the corridor would not be able to meet visual quality objectives after mitigation.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

A 37-mile newly designated utility corridor in the Little Snake FO would be located in an area not previously developed for utilities and would allow for additional potential future linear projects, which would result in impacts to visual resources on public and non-federal lands and adjacent to areas that are within the viewshed, as stated above. None of the amended areas would be located within VRM Class I or II areas. Potential future projects proposed in the new utility corridor would need to conform to VRM Class III objectives on public lands. Siting utilities in multiple locations in the corridor would not be able to meet visual quality objectives after mitigation.

BLM White River Field Office

Thirty-eight miles of a new utility corridor would require a plan amendment. Alternative B crosses scenic BLM lands managed with VRM Class II objectives in the southwest corner of the FO and would not conform to the objectives for VRM Class II, which accommodates only low levels of change to the landscape to retain the existing natural landscape character and could not be reasonably mitigated to a level that would allow the large-scale aboveground utilities to meet VRM Class II objectives. A total of 1,244 acres of VRM Class I and 8,556 acres of VRM class II viewshed areas would be overlapped by the amended areas. Converting an existing underground utility corridor to allow overhead facilities in the White River FO would allow for additional potential future aboveground linear projects, which would result in impacts to visual resources on public and non-federal lands and adjacent to areas that are within the viewshed, as stated above. Potential future projects proposed in the utility corridor would need to conform with the VRM Class objectives on public lands, including portions of the corridor that are located in

sensitive viewpoints of the Oil Spring Mountain WSA. Siting utilities in multiple locations in the corridor would not be able to meet visual quality objectives after mitigation.

BLM Vernal Field Office

A 6-mile newly designated utility corridor in the Vernal FO to accommodate Alternative B would be located in an area not previously developed for utilities and would allow for potential future linear projects, which would result in impacts to visual resources on public and non-federal lands and adjacent to areas that are within the viewshed, as stated above. None of the amended areas would be located within VRM Class I or II areas. Potential future projects proposed in the new utility corridor would need to conform with VRM Class III objectives on public lands. Siting utilities in multiple locations in the corridor would not be able to meet visual quality objectives after mitigation.

BLM Price Field Office

A 14-mile newly designated utility corridor in the Price FO would be located in an area with no existing transmission lines and would allow for additional potential future linear projects, which would result in impacts to visual resources on public and non-federal lands and adjacent to areas that are within the viewshed, as stated above. None of the amended areas would be located within VRM Class I or II areas. Potential future projects proposed in the new utility corridor would need to conform to the VRM Class III and IV objectives on public lands.

4.5.12.3 Alternative C

The Alternative C route would require plan amendments involving five BLM offices—Rawlins, White River, Vernal, Price, and Caliente—and one national forest—Fishlake. The effect these plan amendments would have on visual resources in the respective areas is discussed in the following sections.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

Expanding 27 miles of the existing corridors would allow for additional potential future aboveground linear projects, which would result in impacts to visual resources on public and non-federal lands and adjacent to areas that are within the viewshed, as stated above. None of the amended areas would be located within VRM Class I or II areas. Potential future projects proposed in the utility corridor would need to conform with the VRM Class III and IV objectives on public lands, including portions of the corridor that are located in sensitive viewpoints of the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail SRMA, the Rawlins to Baggs Road Historic Trail, and the Overland National Historic Trail. Siting utilities in multiple locations along I-80 and along Highway 789 in the corridor would not be able to meet visual quality objectives after mitigation.

BLM White River Field Office

Impacts would be the same as the impacts identified for Alternative B.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Impacts would be the same as the impacts identified for Alternative B.

BLM Price Field Office

A 10-mile newly designated utility corridor in the Price FO would be located in an area with no existing transmission lines and would allow for additional potential future linear projects, which would result in impacts to visual resources on public and non-federal lands and adjacent to areas that are within the viewshed, as stated above. None of the amended areas would be located within VRM Class I or II areas. Potential future projects proposed in the new utility corridor would need to conform to the VRM Class III

and IV objectives on public lands. Siting utilities in the corridor would not be able to meet visual quality objectives after mitigation.

Caliente Field Office

A 9-mile, one-time exception to allow another utility through the Kane Springs ACEC would allow for additional potential future linear projects, which would result in impacts to visual resources on public and non-federal lands and adjacent to areas that are within the viewshed, as stated above. One acre of VRM Class I viewshed area would be overlapped by the amended area. Potential future projects proposed in the ROW avoidance area would need to conform with VRM Class III objectives on public lands, including portions of the corridor that are located in sensitive viewpoints of the surrounding sensitive areas including the Delamar Mountains Wilderness.

USFS Fishlake National Forest

Alternative C near I-70 and at the south end of the Canyon Mountains overlaps 5,303 acres managed with a High SIO, which requires the landscape character to appear intact but allows for deviations that must repeat the form, line, color, texture, and pattern common to the landscape character so completely and at such a scale that they are not evident. A plan amendment to allow exceptions to the SIO within the expanded utility corridor would allow projects that alter the landscape character with noticeable deviations, but are visually subordinate to the landscape character being viewed.

4.5.12.4 Alternative D

The Alternative D route would require plan amendments involving three BLM offices—Rawlins, Little Snake, and Vernal. The effect these plan amendments would have on visual resources in the respective areas is discussed in the following sections.

BLM Rawlins Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

Expanding the existing corridor along I-80 and designating a new corridor south of I-80 for a combined total of 76 miles would allow for additional potential future aboveground linear projects, which would result in impacts to visual resources on public and non-federal lands and adjacent to areas that are within the viewshed, as stated above. None of the amended areas would be located within VRM Class I or II areas. Potential future projects proposed in the utility corridor would need to conform with the VRM Class III and IV objectives on public lands, including portions of the corridor that are located in sensitive viewpoints of the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail SRMA, the Rawlins to Baggs Road Historic Trail, and the Overland National Historic Trail. Siting utilities in multiple locations along I-80 and near Powder Rim in the corridor would not be able to meet visual quality objectives after mitigation.

BLM Little Snake Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

Impacts would be the same as Alternative B.

BLM Vernal Field Office

A 17-mile newly designated utility corridor in the Vernal FO to accommodate Alternative D would be located in an area not previously developed for utilities and would allow for potential future linear projects, which would result in impacts to visual resources on public and non-federal lands and adjacent to areas that are within the viewshed, as stated above. Alternative D crosses 54 acres managed with VRM Class II objectives, which accommodate only low levels of change to the landscape to retain the existing natural character and could not be reasonably mitigated to a level that would allow the large-scale aboveground utilities to meet VRM Class II objectives. Siting utilities in multiple locations in the corridor would not be able to meet visual quality objectives after mitigation.

4.5.12.5 Alternative E

The Alternative E route would require a plan amendment involving one BLM office—Vernal. The effect the plan amendment would have on visual resources in the respective area is discussed in the following section.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The 6 miles of new utility corridor in the Vernal FO would be located in an area not previously developed for utilities and would allow for potential future linear projects, which would result in impacts to visual resources on public and non-federal lands and adjacent to areas that are within the viewshed, as stated above. None of the amended areas would be located within VRM Class I or II areas. Potential future projects proposed in the new utility corridor would need to conform with VRM Class III objectives on public lands. Siting utilities in multiple locations in the corridor would not be able to meet visual quality objectives after mitigation.

4.5.12.6 Alternative F

The Alternative F route would require plan amendments involving two BLM offices—Vernal and Salt Lake. The effect these plan amendments would have on visual resources in the respective BLM office is discussed below.

BLM Vernal Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

The 22 miles of new utility corridor in the Vernal FO to accommodate Alternative F would be located in an area not previously developed for utilities and would allow for potential future linear projects, which would result in impacts to visual resources on public and non-federal lands and adjacent to areas that are within the viewshed, as stated above. Alternative F crosses 54 acres managed with VRM Class II objectives, which accommodate only low levels of change to the landscape to retain the existing natural character and could not be reasonably mitigated to a level that would allow the large-scale aboveground utilities to meet VRM Class II objectives. Siting utilities in multiple locations in the corridor would not be able to meet visual quality objectives after mitigation.

BLM Salt Lake Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

The 3 miles of new utility corridor in the Salt Lake FO would be located in an area not previously developed for utilities and would allow for potential future linear projects, which would result in impacts to visual resources on public and non-federal lands and adjacent to areas that are within the viewshed, as stated above. None of the amended areas would be located within VRM Class I or II areas. Potential future projects proposed in the new utility corridor would need to conform with VRM Class objectives on public lands. Siting utilities in multiple locations in the corridor would not be able to meet visual quality objectives after mitigation.

4.5.12.7 Alternative Variations

The various alternative variations would require plan amendments involving the following FO—Salt Lake. The 3 miles of new utility corridor for the Emma Park Alternative Variation would be located in an area not previously developed for utilities and would allow for potential future linear projects, which would result in impacts to visual resources on public and non-federal lands and adjacent to areas that are within the viewshed, as stated above. None of the amended areas would be located within VRM Class I or II areas. Potential future projects proposed in the new utility corridor would need to conform with VRM Class objectives on public lands. Siting utilities in multiple locations in the corridor would not be able to meet visual quality objectives after mitigation.

4.5.12.8 Alternative Connectors

The various alternative connectors would require plan amendments involving the following FOs—Rawlins and Las Vegas. A description of the involved routing variations and the effect the plan amendments would have on visual resources in the respective areas is discussed below.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

Designating new utility corridors for the Baggs (18 miles), Fivemile Point North (2 miles), Fivemile Point South (2 miles), and Mexican Flats (9 miles) alternative connectors would result in impacts to visual resources on public and non-federal lands and adjacent to areas that are within the viewshed, as stated above. None of the amended areas would be located within VRM Class I or II areas. Potential future projects proposed in the utility corridor would need to conform to the VRM Class III and IV objectives on public lands. Siting utilities in multiple locations along the corridor would not be able to meet visual quality objectives after mitigation.

BLM Las Vegas Field Office

The 1-mile, one-time exception for the Sunrise Mountain Alternative Connector through the Sunrise Mountain ISA would not allow for additional future linear projects. Therefore, no additional impacts would be anticipated from future development in this area. None of the amended areas would be located within VRM Class I or II areas.

4.5.13 Recreation Resources

Plan amendments to grant a new or expand an existing transmission line utility corridor, convert an existing underground corridor to aboveground, and alter a ROW exclusion area to an avoidance area, could affect recreation settings and experiences through additional permitted development. Altering the recreation setting would adversely affect visitors' recreation experiences and could lead to the displacement of some visitors to other areas or other parts of affected areas. Changing visitors' recreation experiences also may affect the recreation goals and objectives for certain areas as stated in the RMPs. Recreation impacts focus on SRMAs, Extensive Recreation Management Areas (ERMAs), and developed/undeveloped recreation sites.

Plan amendments to grant a new or expand an existing transmission line utility corridor could affect OHV recreation over time through concentrating additional permitted development that could affect the OHV-related goals and objectives near the corridors. Although ROWs sited within the corridors would likely lead to additional new access, new routes would be available for administrative use only and not for OHV recreation. OHV recreationists could be temporarily or permanently displaced due to the construction and location of the corridor, facilities, and access roads. OHV impacts focus on only OHV-related recreation. Increased access to maintain facilities in the utility corridors could also increase the potential for unauthorized OHV use.

Section 3.13, Recreation Resources, provides a detailed description of impacts to recreation resources within the corridors proposed, plan amendment-specific impacts are addressed in the following sections.

4.5.13.1 Alternative A

The Alternative A route would require plan amendments involving four BLM offices—Rawlins, Little Snake, Vernal, and Las Vegas. Plan amendments are not required for national forests under this alternative. The effect these plan amendments would have on recreation in the respective areas is discussed in the following sections.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

The expanded utility corridor along I-80 overlaps with 44 acres of the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail (CDNST); however, there are multiple utility and transportation facilities in the area. Expanding the utility corridor south of I-80 would alter the recreation setting for dispersed recreation uses that likely occur on undesignated public lands in the Western ERMA, which could displace some visitors.

Assuming existing authorized OHV access through the corridor is maintained, the ability for visitors to participate in authorized OHV recreation opportunities in the corridor should not be affected. The new utility corridor would not affect the area designation of limited to existing roads and vehicle routes within the checkerboard area; and the limited to designated roads and trails designation between the checkerboard area and the state line. In addition, the RMP OHV management goal and objectives would not be affected by the new utility corridor.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

Providing a 42-mile new utility corridor would alter the recreation setting for dispersed recreation uses that likely occur on undesignated lands and recreation uses at Sevenmile Ridge/Sand Wash Basin, which could interfere with access used by visitors to recreate in the area including those interested in viewing wild horses within the Sand Wash Basin. The new utility corridor would not affect the ERMA objectives in the RMP, which include providing direction and destination signing, focusing public land boundary signing on fragmented lands, and using education to further enhance resource protection.

Assuming existing authorized OHV access through the corridor is maintained, the ability for visitors to participate in authorized OHV recreation opportunities in the corridor should not be affected. The new utility corridor would not affect the area designation of limited to existing roads and trails nor would the transportation and access and travel management goals and objectives be affected.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Providing a 19-mile new utility corridor would alter the recreation setting for dispersed recreation uses that likely occur on undesignated lands, which could displace some visitors. The new utility corridor would not affect the goals and objectives for recreational resources as stated in the RMP or management of undesignated lands for dispersed recreation (RMP Management Decision REC-4).

Assuming existing authorized OHV access through the corridor is maintained, the ability for visitors to participate in authorized OHV recreation opportunities in the corridor should not be affected. The new utility corridor would not affect the area designation of limited to designated roads and trails nor would the travel management of roads and trails goals and objectives be affected.

BLM Las Vegas Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

Allowing a 1-mile, one-time exception to add additional utilities to the existing corridor would further alter the recreation setting for dispersed recreation use that occurs in this area, which could displace some visitors. The one-time exception would conflict with the management of the Sunrise Mountain SRMA for recreation opportunities in concert with sensitive plant, scenic, cultural, and geologic values of the concurrent ACEC, as stated in the RMP. Thirty-three acres of the Sunrise Mountain SRMA would be overlapped by the amended area.

Assuming existing authorized OHV access through the utility corridor is maintained, the ability for visitors to participate in authorized OHV recreation opportunities should not be affected. The one-time exception would not affect the area designation of limited to designated roads and trails in the Rainbow Gardens

ACEC/Sunrise Mountain ISA south of Highway 147; and limited to existing roads, trails, and dry washes north of Highway 147.

4.5.13.2 Alternative B

The Alternative B route would require plan amendments involving five BLM offices—Rawlins, Little Snake, White River, Vernal, and Price. Plan amendments are not required for national forests under this alternative. The effect these plan amendments would have on recreation in the respective areas is discussed in the following sections.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

The expanded utility corridor along I-80 overlaps with 44 acres of the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail (CDNST) and new utility corridor south of I-80 is within the Western ERMA. Effects would be the same as described for Alternative A. Alternative B would also cross the Adobe Town Dispersed Recreation Use Area (DRUA) that is managed for middle and front country recreation uses with an emphasis on maintaining an undeveloped recreation setting. The new utility corridor designation would conflict with management in eastern portions of the DRUA within middle country settings, which provide for recreational with some isolation from sights and sounds of development.

Expansion and conversion of the utility corridor would not affect the RMP OHV designation of limited to existing roads and vehicle routes within the checkerboard area; and the limited to designated roads and trails designation between the checkerboard area and the state line. Effects to OHV would be the same as discussed for Alternative A.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

The 42-mile new utility corridor would alter the recreation setting for dispersed recreation uses at Sevenmile Ridge/Sand Wash Basin. Effects would be the same as described for Alternative A.

The new utility corridor would not affect the area designation of limited to existing roads and trails. Effects to OHV would be the same as discussed for Alternative A.

BLM White River Field Office

Expanding and converting the 38-mile existing utility corridor to allow overhead utilities would alter the recreation setting for dispersed recreation use on undesignated BLM lands as additional projects are approved within the corridor. The new utility corridor would not affect ERMA management as described in the RMP, which states that the ERMA will be managed custodially to provide an unstructured recreational opportunity.

Assuming existing authorized OHV access through the corridor is maintained, the ability for visitors to participate in authorized OHV recreation opportunities in the corridor would not be affected. Expansion and conversion of the utility corridor would not affect the area designation of limited to existing roads, ways, and trails on most of the public lands from October 1 through April 30; and the limited to designated roads, trails, and ways designation for the White River ACEC and an area south of Rangely. In addition, the RMP Motorized Vehicle Travel objective should not be affected by the new utility corridor.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Providing a new 6-mile utility corridor would alter the recreation setting for dispersed recreation uses that likely occur on undesignated lands, which could displace some visitors. The new utility corridor would not affect the goals and objectives for recreational resources as stated in the RMP or management of undesignated lands for dispersed recreation (RMP Management Decision REC-4).

Assuming existing authorized OHV access through the corridor is maintained, the ability for visitors to participate in authorized OHV recreation opportunities in the corridor should not be affected. The new utility corridor would not affect the area designation of limited to designated roads and trails nor would the travel management of roads and trails goals and objectives be affected.

BLM Price Field Office

Providing a 14-mile new utility corridor would alter the recreation setting for dispersed recreation uses that likely occur on undesignated lands and recreation uses, which could displace some visitors. A new corridor would not substantially affect the management goal for the ERMA to provide opportunities for a wide variety of recreation experiences, activities, and benefits in a manner that protects visitor health and safety, resource protection, and seek to reduce conflicts between other land uses and other recreation user groups due to the size of the ERMA and the variety of experiences provided within the ERMA.

Assuming existing authorized OHV access through the corridor is maintained, the ability of visitors to participate in authorized OHV recreation opportunities in the corridor would not be affected. The new utility corridor would not affect the area designation of limited to designated roads and trails. In addition, the RMP Recreation and OHV and the Transportation goals and objectives should not be affected by the new utility corridor.

4.5.13.3 Alternative C

The Alternative C route would require plan amendments involving five BLM offices—Rawlins, White River, Vernal, Price, and Caliente—and one national forest—Fishlake. The effect these plan amendments would have on recreation in the respective areas is discussed in the following sections.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

The expanded utility corridor along I-80 overlaps with 44 acres of the CDNST and the expanded utility corridor along Highway 789 is within the Western ERMA. Effects would be the same as described for Alternative A.

Expansion of the utility corridor would not affect the RMP OHV designation of limited to existing roads and vehicle routes within the checkerboard area; and the limited to designated roads and trails designation between the checkerboard area and the state line. Effects to OHV would be the same as discussed for Alternative A.

BLM White River Field Office

Impacts would be the same as stated above for Alternative B.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Impacts would be the same as stated above for Alternative B.

BLM Price Field Office

Providing a 10-mile new utility corridor would alter the recreation setting for dispersed recreation uses that likely occur on undesignated lands and recreation uses, which could displace some visitors. A new corridor would not substantially affect the management goal for the ERMA to provide opportunities for a wide variety of recreation experiences, activities, and benefits in a manner that protects visitor health and safety, resource protection, and seek to reduce conflicts between other land uses and other recreation user groups due to the size of the ERMA and the variety of experiences provided within the ERMA. However, 1,250 acres of the amended area would overlap with the San Rafael Swell SRMA.

The new utility corridor would not affect the RMP OHV designation of limited to designated roads and trails. Effects to OHV would be the same as discussed for Alternative B.

BLM Caliente Field Office

Allowing a 9-mile, one-time exception to add additional utilities to the existing corridor across the Kane Springs ACEC would further alter the recreation setting for dispersed recreation use that occurs in this area, which could displace some visitors. Expanding the corridor would affect the RMP recreation goal of providing quality settings for developed and undeveloped recreation experiences and opportunities while protecting resources.

Assuming existing authorized OHV access through the utility corridor is maintained, the ability for visitors to participate in authorized OHV recreation opportunities would not be affected. The one-time exception would not affect the areas designation of limited to existing roads and trails. In addition, the RMP Travel Management goals and objective would not be affected.

USFS Fishlake National Forest

Expanding 22 miles of the utility corridor would allow a higher degree of alteration of recreation settings in this area in the future thus potentially altering the recreation setting for dispersed recreation uses, which could displace some visitors. The 22 miles of utility corridor that would require a plan amendment would overlap with areas within the forest that are utilized for various types of recreation. The amended area would overlap with 13,154 acres of roaded natural areas and 14,899 acres of semi-primitive motorized areas. Concentrating utilities in this area could result in decreased recreational experiences within the forest.

Expanding the existing utility corridor would not affect the overall LRMP off-road vehicle or motorized recreation-related goals and would not affect any route designations.

4.5.13.4 Alternative D

The Alternative D route would require plan amendments involving three BLM offices—Rawlins, Little Snake, and Vernal. The effect these plan amendments would have on recreation in the respective areas is discussed in the following sections.

BLM Rawlins Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

The expanded utility corridor along I-80 overlaps with 44 miles of the CDNST and the new utility corridor south of I-80 is within the Western ERMA. Effects would be the same as described for Alternative A.

Expansion of the utility corridor would not affect the RMP OHV designation of limited to existing roads and vehicle routes within the checkerboard area; and the limited to designated roads and trails designation between the checkerboard area and the state line. Effects to OHV would be the same as discussed for Alternative A.

BLM Little Snake Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

Impacts would be the same as Alternative B.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Providing a new 17-mile utility corridor would alter the recreation setting for dispersed recreation uses that likely occur on undesignated lands, which could displace some visitors. The new utility corridor would not

affect the goals and objectives for recreational resources as stated in the RMP or management of undesignated lands for dispersed recreation (RMP Management Decision REC-4).

Assuming existing authorized OHV access through the corridor is maintained, the ability for visitors to participate in authorized OHV recreation opportunities in the corridor should not be affected. The new utility corridor would not affect the area designation of limited to designated roads and trails nor would the travel management of roads and trails goals and objectives be affected.

4.5.13.5 Alternative E

The Alternative E route would require a plan amendment involving one BLM office—Vernal. The effect the plan amendment would have on recreation in the respective area is discussed in the following section.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Providing a new 6-mile utility corridor would alter the recreation setting for dispersed recreation uses that likely occur on undesignated lands, which could displace some visitors. The new utility corridor would not affect the goals and objectives for recreational resources as stated in the RMP or management of undesignated lands for dispersed recreation (RMP Management Decision REC-4).

Assuming existing authorized OHV access through the corridor is maintained, the ability for visitors to participate in authorized OHV recreation opportunities in the corridor should not be affected. The new utility corridor would not affect the area designation of limited to designated roads and trails nor would the travel management of roads and trails goals and objectives be affected.

4.5.13.6 Alternative F

The Alternative F route would require plan amendments involving two BLM offices—Vernal and Salt Lake. The effect these plan amendments would have on visual resources in the respective BLM office is discussed below.

BLM Vernal Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

The 22 miles of new utility corridor in the Vernal FO to accommodate Alternative F would alter the recreation setting for dispersed recreation uses that likely occur on undesignated lands, which could displace some visitors. The new utility corridor would not affect the goals and objectives for recreational resources as stated in the RMP or management of undesignated lands for dispersed recreation (RMP Management Decision REC-4).

Assuming existing authorized OHV access through the corridor is maintained, the ability for visitors to participate in authorized OHV recreation opportunities in the corridor should not be affected. The new utility corridor would not affect the area designation of limited to designated roads and trails nor would the travel management of roads and trails goals and objectives be affected.

BLM Salt Lake Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

The 3 miles of new utility corridor in the Salt Lake FO would alter the recreation setting for dispersed recreation uses that likely occur on undesignated lands, which could displace some visitors. The new utility corridor would not affect the unstructured types of recreation activities provided in the ERMA.

Assuming existing authorized OHV access through the corridor is maintained, the ability for visitors to participate in authorized OHV recreation opportunities in the corridor should not be affected. The new utility corridor would not affect the area designation of open to ORV use.

4.5.13.7 Alternative Variations

The various alternative variations would require plan amendments involving the following FO—Salt Lake. The 3 miles of new utility corridor for the Emma Park Alternative Variation would alter the recreation setting for dispersed recreation uses that likely occur on undesignated lands, which could displace some visitors. The new utility corridor would not affect the unstructured types of recreation activities provided in the ERMA.

Assuming existing authorized OHV access through the corridor is maintained, the ability for visitors to participate in authorized OHV recreation opportunities in the corridor should not be affected. The new utility corridor would not affect the area designation of open to ORV use.

4.5.13.8 Alternative Connectors

The various alternative connectors would require plan amendments involving the following FOs—Rawlins and Las Vegas. A description of the involved routing variations and the effect the plan amendments would have on recreation in the respective areas is discussed below.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

The new utility corridor south of I-80 for the Baggs (18 miles), Fivemile Point North (2 miles), Fivemile Point South (2 miles), and Mexican Flats (9 miles) alternative connectors are within the Western ERMA. Effects would be the same as described for Alternative A.

Expansion of the utility corridor would not affect the RMP OHV designation of limited to existing roads and vehicle routes within the checkerboard area; and the limited to designated roads and trails designation between the checkerboard area and the state line. Effects to OHV would be the same as discussed for Alternative A.

BLM Las Vegas Field Office

Allowing a 1-mile, one-time exception to allow a transmission line would further alter the recreation setting for dispersed recreation use that occurs in this area, which could displace some visitors. The one-time exception would conflict with the management of the Sunrise Mountain SRMA for recreation opportunities in concert with sensitive plant, scenic, cultural, and geologic values of the concurrent ACEC, as stated in the RMP. Thirty acres of the Sunrise Mountain SRMA would be overlapped by the amended area.

The one-time exception would not affect the area designation of limited to designated roads and trails in the Rainbow Gardens ACEC/Sunrise Mountain ISA south of Highway 147; and limited to existing roads, trails, and dry washes north of Highway 147. Effects to OHV would be the same as discussed for Alternative A.

4.5.14 Land Use

Section 3.14 provides a detailed description of impacts to land use within the corridors proposed, plan amendment-specific impacts are addressed in the following sections. This section is subdivided into lands and realty and livestock grazing.

4.5.14.1 Lands and Realty

Plan amendments granting a new or expanded utility corridor or changing an exclusion area to an avoidance area would change the allowed uses and associated consequences for lands and realty as they are managed pursuant to BLM RMPs and USFS LRMPs. In all instances, the plan amendments proposed would lessen the restrictions currently in place, which would permit more flexibility for the

acquisition, disposal, withdrawal and use of public lands. The lands and realty management objectives were reviewed for the affected FOs where amendments are proposed. For some of the older RMPs that do not include lands and realty goals or direction, land management, ROW and/or utility corridor objectives were reviewed instead.

Alternative A

The Alternative A route would require plan amendments involving four BLM offices—Rawlins, Little Snake, Vernal, and Las Vegas. Plan amendments for national forests are not required under this alternative. The effect these plan amendments would have on lands and realty in the respective areas is discussed in the following sections.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

The existing utility corridor proposed for expansion along I-80 currently contains one 115-kV transmission line. Additional high voltage transmission lines are proposed in the same corridor, as discussed in Chapter 5.0, Cumulative Impacts. There are currently no utilities located within the proposed 58 miles of newly designated corridor; however, other transmission projects are analyzing the route for potential siting. Expanding the existing utility corridor would allow for concentration of up to three additional future utilities to a common area; however, separation distances would restrict the amount of new utilities permitted within the corridor. Areas where a new above-ground utility corridor is established would permit up to five other utilities (power lines, communications, and renewable energy facilities) to be located in an area where utilities and existing ROWs currently do not exist, depending on separation distance requirements. The proposed corridor would not conflict with the ROW exclusion areas identified in Section 2.17 of the RMP, Lands and Realty Management Actions. In addition, the plan amendment would not prevent land tenure adjustments identified within the RMP-designated retention and disposal zones.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

Establishing a new 42-mile utility corridor to accommodate Alternative A would permit up to three other above-ground utilities to be located in an area where utilities and existing ROWs currently do not exist, depending on separation distance requirements. The proposed corridor would not conflict with the ROW exclusion areas identified in Section 2.17 of the RMP, Lands and Realty Management Actions. In addition, the plan amendment would not prevent land tenure adjustments identified within the RMP-designated retention and disposal zones.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Alternative A would cross 19 miles of public lands outside of designated WWEC and RMP-designated utility corridors. Utilities and utility corridors exist to the south and north of the new corridor; however, there are no utilities sited in the same location. A new utility corridor to accommodate Alternative A would permit other utilities (up to three additional electric transmission and distribution lines) to be located in an area where utilities and existing ROWs currently do not exist, depending on separation distance requirements. The proposed utility corridor would not be located within ROW exclusion areas or ROW-avoidance areas, which are specifically identified in the Lands and Realty Management chapter of the RMP as being set aside for the protection of natural resources. A new utility corridor would not prevent the sale (disposal) of public lands.

BLM Las Vegas Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

The corridor through the Sunrise ISA/Rainbow Gardens ACEC/Sunrise Mountain SRMA contains high voltage transmission lines. Since the expansion through this area is a 1-mile, one-time exception, there would be no effects via the creation of opportunities for other utilities (powerlines, pipelines, communication sites) to be located within the ISA.

Alternative B

The Alternative B route would require plan amendments involving five BLM offices—Rawlins, Little Snake, White River, Vernal, and Price. Plan amendments are not required for national forests under this alternative. The effect these plan amendments would have on lands and realty in the respective resource management areas is discussed in the following sections.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

A total of 61 miles of utility corridor would require a plan amendment. The southern portion of Alternative B would be located in a designated utility corridor for underground utilities only, pursuant to the Rawlins RMP. There are existing underground pipelines located within the existing utility corridor, but there are no overhead transmission lines. Any high voltage transmission lines would require measures for cathodic protection to minimize impacts to existing underground utilities. Alternative B would not be located within any exclusion areas designated in the Rawlins RMP, or within any WSAs or SD/MAs.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

Establishing 37 miles of a new (aboveground) utility corridor for the Alternative B route would permit other utilities (power lines) to be located in an area where utilities and existing ROWs currently do not exist. The proposed corridor would not conflict with the ROW exclusion areas identified in Section 2.17 of the RMP, Lands and Realty Management Actions. Effects would be the same as described under Alternative A for lands and realty.

BLM White River Field Office

Expanding and converting 38 miles of the existing utility corridor to allow aboveground utilities would allow opportunities for up to four more utilities to be located in the corridor, depending on separation distance requirements. Any high voltage transmission lines would require measures for cathodic protection to minimize impacts to existing underground utilities. These plan amendments would not prevent the acquisition, disposal, withdrawal and use of public lands.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Establishing 6 miles of new utility corridor for the Alternative B route would permit other utilities to be located in an area where utilities and existing ROW currently do not exist. The proposed utility corridor would not be located within ROW exclusion or avoidance areas, which are specifically identified in the Lands and Realty Management chapter of the RMP as being set aside for the protection of natural resources. A new utility corridor would not prevent the sale (disposal) of public lands.

BLM Price Field Office

Alternative B would traverse an area where no utilities currently exist. Establishing 14 miles of a new utility corridor would permit other up to four utilities (power lines, and communication sites) to be located in an area where utilities and existing ROWs currently do not exist, depending on separation distance requirements. These plan amendments would be consistent with Land and Realty management decisions LAR-21, -25 and -26. LAR-21 requires that WSAs are utility corridor exclusion areas; Alternative B does not cross a WSA. LAR-25 and -26 list the avoidance and exclusion areas where new utility corridors cannot be located; none of those listed in the RMP are crossed by Alternative B. Plan amendments would not prevent the acquisition, disposal, withdrawal and use of public lands.

Alternative C

The Alternative C route would require plan amendments involving five BLM offices—Rawlins, White River, Vernal, Price, and Caliente—and one national forest—Fishlake. The effect plan amendments would have on lands and realty in the respective resource management areas is discussed in the following sections.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

The southern portion of Alternative C would be located in a designated utility corridor along Highway 789, pursuant to the Rawlins RMP. Expanding 27 miles of the existing utility corridor along Highway 789 would allow opportunities for up to three more utilities to be located in the corridor, depending on separation distance requirements. Alternative C would not be located within any exclusion areas designated in the Rawlins RMP, or within any WSAs or SD/MAs. Effects would be the same as described under Alternative A for lands and realty.

BLM White River Field Office

Effects to lands and realty as a result of converting to an aboveground corridor would be the same as for Alternative B described above.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Effects to lands and realty as a result of establishing a new 6-mile utility corridor would be the same as for Alternative B described above.

BLM Price Field Office

Alternative C would traverse an area where no utilities currently exist. Establishing 10 miles of a new utility corridor in this area would permit up to three other utilities (power lines, pipelines, and communication sites) to be located in an area where utilities and existing ROWs currently do not exist, depending on separation distance requirements. These plan amendments would be consistent with Land and Realty management decisions LAR-21, -25 and -26. Effects would be the same as described under Alternative B for lands and realty.

BLM Caliente Field Office

Alternative C parallels U.S. Highway 93, which contains multiple transmission and pipeline utilities between the National Wildlife Refuge and Delamar Wilderness Area. Since the expansion through this area is a 9-mile, one-time exception, there would be no effects or opportunities for other utilities (powerlines, pipelines, communication sites). The plan amendment would not prevent the acquisition, disposal, withdrawal and use of public lands pursuant to the lands and realty objectives of the RMP.

USFS Fishlake National Forest

The area proposed for expansion parallels I-70 to the north and an existing 345-kV transmission line to the south. Expansion of the 22-mile existing utility corridor would permit up to three other utilities (power lines, pipelines, and communication sites) to be located in an area where utilities and existing ROWs currently do not exist, depending on separation distance requirements. Allowing exceptions to areas of High SIO would reduce land management restrictions for siting linear right-of-way facilities within the national forest. The plan amendment would not conflict with the ROW standard of providing adequate forest access, or the ability of the USFS to acquire or exchange the use of public lands pursuant to other management direction of the Fishlake LRMP.

Alternative D

The Alternative D route would require plan amendments involving three BLM offices—Rawlins, Little Snake, and Vernal. The effect plan amendments would have on lands and realty in the respective resource management areas is discussed in the following sections.

BLM Rawlins Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

The existing 76-mile utility corridor proposed for expansion along I-80 currently contains a 115-kV transmission line and additional high voltage transmission lines are proposed in the same corridor. There are currently no utilities located within the newly designated corridor; however, other transmission projects are analyzing the route for potential siting, as discussed in Chapter 5.0. Establishing a new utility corridor in this area would permit up to three other utilities (power lines) to be located in an area where utilities and existing ROWs currently do not exist, depending on separation distance requirements. The proposed corridor would not conflict with the ROW exclusion areas identified in Section 2.17 of the RMP, Lands and Realty Management Actions. Effects would be the same as described under Alternative A for lands and realty.

BLM Little Snake Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

Impacts would be the same as Alternative B.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Establishing 17 miles of new utility corridor for the Alternative D route would permit other utilities to be located in an area where utilities and existing ROW currently do not exist. The proposed utility corridor would not be located within ROW exclusion or avoidance areas, which are specifically identified in the Lands and Realty Management chapter of the RMP as being set aside for the protection of natural resources. A new utility corridor would not prevent the sale (disposal) of public lands.

Alternative E

The Alternative E route would require plan amendments involving one BLM office—Vernal. The effect plan amendment would have on lands and realty in the respective resource management area is discussed in the following sections.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Establishing 6 miles of new utility corridor for the Alternative E route would permit other utilities to be located in an area where utilities and existing ROW currently do not exist. The proposed utility corridor would not be located within ROW exclusion or avoidance areas, which are specifically identified in the Lands and Realty Management chapter of the RMP as being set aside for the protection of natural resources. A new utility corridor would not prevent the sale (disposal) of public lands.

Alternative F

The Alternative F route would require plan amendments involving two BLM offices—Vernal and Salt Lake. The effect these plan amendments would have on lands and realty in the respective BLM office is discussed below.

BLM Vernal Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

The 22 miles of new utility corridor in the Vernal FO to accommodate Alternative F would permit other utilities to be located in an area where utilities and existing ROW currently do not exist. The proposed utility corridor would not be located within ROW exclusion or avoidance areas, which are specifically

identified in the Lands and Realty Management chapter of the RMP as being set aside for the protection of natural resources. A new utility corridor would not prevent the sale (disposal) of public lands.

BLM Salt Lake Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

The 3 miles of new utility corridor in the Salt Lake FO would cross isolated parcels of public land managed under the Pony Express RMP. Providing a new utility corridor with a plan amendment to accommodate Alternative F could permit above-ground utilities to be located in an area where utilities and existing ROWs currently do not exist. The Pony Express RMP does not contain a Lands and Realty program; however, the Lands Program includes priorities for the disposal or exchange of public lands, primarily focused on the disposal of lands for agriculture, mineral development, community/public purposes, or for protection of resources (e.g., national forest, historic sites, military use). Since the proposed utility corridor does not fall within the category of “lands not available for ownership adjustment,” impacts to land management and real estate transactions would be minor.

Alternative Variations

The various alternative variations would require plan amendments involving the following FO—Salt Lake. The 3 miles of new utility corridor for the Emma Park Alternative Variation would cross isolated parcels of public land managed under the Pony Express RMP. Providing a new utility corridor with a plan amendment to accommodate Alternative F could permit above-ground utilities to be located in an area where utilities and existing ROWs currently do not exist. The Pony Express RMP does not contain a Lands and Realty program; however, the Lands Program includes priorities for the disposal or exchange of public lands, primarily focused on the disposal of lands for agriculture, mineral development, community/public purposes, or for protection of resources (e.g., national forest, historic sites, military use). Since the proposed utility corridor does not fall within the category of “lands not available for ownership adjustment,” impacts to land management and real estate transactions would be minor.

Alternative Connectors

The various alternative connectors would require plan amendments involving the following FOs—Rawlins and Las Vegas. A description of the involved routing variations and the effect the plan amendments would have on lands and realty in the respective resource management areas is discussed below.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

New utility corridors for the Baggs (18 miles), Fivemile Point North (2 miles), Fivemile Point South (2 miles), and Mexican Flats (9 miles) alternative connectors are proposed where no utilities currently exist; however, other transmission projects are analyzing the route for potential siting, as discussed in Chapter 5.0. Establishing a new utility corridor in this area would permit up to three other utilities (power lines) to be located in an area where utilities and existing ROWs currently do not exist, depending on separation distance requirements. The proposed corridor would not conflict with the ROW exclusion areas identified in Section 2.17 of the RMP, Lands and Realty Management Actions. Effects would be the same as described under Alternative A for lands and realty.

BLM Las Vegas Field Office

There are no existing utilities through the portion of the Sunrise ISA/Rainbow Gardens ACEC/Sunrise Mountain SRMA. Since the expansion through this area is a 1-mile, one-time exception, there would be no effects or opportunities for other utilities (powerlines, pipelines, communication sites).

4.5.14.2 Livestock Grazing

There would be little or no impacts on livestock grazing from plan amendment decisions. Plan amendments to create new utility or expand existing corridors would influence the ability to locate utilities in areas. These actions in turn have direct impacts on livestock grazing, which are analyzed pursuant to NEPA as individual projects are proposed. Allowing for potential future utilities to be developed in areas where currently none exist could affect the management of livestock on public lands as projects are developed. Short-term impacts would include vegetation removal and loss of AUMs during infrastructure construction; impacts to range improvements or the use of those range improvements such as fences, pipelines, troughs, reservoirs, corrals; generating construction and traffic-related dust; and an increased risk of animal/vehicle collisions from construction-related activities. Long-term impacts would include loss of AUMs from removal of vegetation with the existence of permanent facilities and an increased risk of animal/vehicle collisions from maintenance operations.

Alternative A

The Alternative A route would require plan amendments involving four BLM offices—Rawlins, Little Snake, Vernal, and Las Vegas. No national forests require land use plan amendments under this alternative. Concentrating utilities in the areas as proposed in the plan amendments would affect management of livestock on public lands as discussed above. However, proposed utilities would have to recognize valid existing rights and work with leaseholders to minimize conflicts.

The following allotments would be overlapped by the amended area:

Rawlins FO, WY – Continental –Daley Ranch –Doty Mountain –Echo Springs –Lazy Y S Ranch –Mexican Graves –North Laclede –Pine Grove/Bolten –Powder Rim Rotation –Red Creek –Riner –Rotten Springs –Sand Creek –Sixteen Mile –South Barrel –South Laclede –South Wamsutter

Little Snake FO, CO –Cedar Springs Draw –Cross Mountain Disappointment –East Canyon –East Powder Wash –Grounds –Horse Draw –Lang Spring –Nipple Peak –Nipple Rim –Powder Rim Rotation –Powder Wash –Sand Wash –Sheepherder Spring –Snake River

Vernal FO, UT –Powder Wash –Snake John –Split Mountain –Walker Hollow –Ouray Road –Twelve Mile

Las Vegas FO, NV –Sunrise Mountain

Alternative B

The Alternative B route would require plan amendments involving five BLM offices—Rawlins, Little Snake, White River, Vernal, and Price. Concentrating utilities in the areas as proposed in the plan amendments would affect management of livestock on public lands as discussed above. However, proposed utilities would have to recognize valid existing rights and work with leaseholders to minimize conflicts.

Rawlins FO, WY –Continental –Daley Ranch –Echo Springs –Lazy Y S Ranch –Mexican Graves –North Barrel –North Laclede –Pine Grove/Bolten –Powder Rim Rotation –Riner –Rotten Springs –Sand Creek –Sixteen Mile –South Laclede –South Wamsutter –Willow Creek

Little Snake FO, CO –Cedar Springs Draw –East Powder Wash –Grounds –Horse Draw –Lang Spring –Nipple Peak –Nipple Rim –Powder Rim Rotation –Powder Wash –Sand Creek –Sand Hills –Sand Wash –Sheepherder Spring –Snake River –Suttles Basin

White River FO, CO –Atchee Ridge Amp – Cathedral Bluffs –Douglas Creek –Evacuation Creek –Hall Draw –Hatch Flat –Johnson/Trujillo –Lower Fletcher Draw –Massadona –Raven Park –Red Wash –Spooky Mountain –Spring Creek –Twin Buttes –West Salt Common

Vernal FO, UT –Atchee Ridge Amp, –Evacuation Creek

Price FO, UT –Elmo –Icelander –Marsing –Mathis Wash –Mounds –Mud Springs –North Olsen Lake –Oviatt –South Olsen Lake –Stalker –Victor –Washboard

Alternative C

The Alternative C route would require plan amendments involving five BLM offices—Rawlins, White River, Vernal, Price, and Caliente—and Fishlake National Forest. Concentrating utilities in the areas as proposed in the plan amendments would affect management of livestock on public lands as discussed above. However, proposed utilities would have to recognize valid existing rights and work with leaseholders to minimize conflicts.

Rawlins FO, WY –Adam's Ranch –Airheart Pasture –Baggs Subunit –Big Robber –Brimmer Pastures –Cedars –Cherokee –Coal Bank Wash –Cottonwood Hill –Dad –Daley Ranch –Doty Mountain –East Muddy –Echo Springs –George Dew –Grieve Pasture –Lazy Y S Ranch –Little Robber –Mexican Flats –Mexican Graves –North Baggs –North Pine Butte –Pine Grove/Bolten –Riner –Sixteen Mile –South Laclede –South Muddy –South Pasture –South Pine Butte –V Spreaders –Wagon Tongue

White River FO, CO –Atchee Ridge Amp – Cathedral Bluffs –Douglas Creek –Evacuation Creek –Hall Draw –Hatch Flat –Johnson/Trujillo –Lower Fletcher Draw –Massadona –Raven Park –Red Wash –Spooky Mountain –Spring Creek –Twin Buttes –West Salt Common

Vernal FO, UT –Atchee Ridge Amp –Evacuation Creek

Price FO, UT –Chimney Rock Flat, –Little Holes, –Lookoff –Summerville –Trail Springs –Beaver Dams –Browns Hole –Chicken Coop –Flat Top –Meadow Gulch –Moroni Peak –Saleratus

Caliente FO, NV –Delamar –Lower Lake East

Fishlake National Forest –Beaver Dams, –Browns Hole, –Flat Top, –Meadow Gulch, –South Water Hollow

Alternative D

The Alternative D route would require plan amendments involving three BLM offices—Rawlins, Little Snake, and Vernal. Concentrating utilities in the areas as proposed in the plan amendments would affect management of livestock on public lands as discussed above. However, proposed utilities would have to recognize valid existing rights and work with leaseholders to minimize conflicts.

Rawlins FO, WY –Big Robber –Big Robber Spreaders –Cottonwood Hill –Dad –Daley Ranch –Doty Mountain –Echo Springs –Lazy Y S Ranch –Mexican Flats –Mexican Graves –North Laclede –Oppenheimer –Pine Grove/Bolten –Poison Buttes –Powder Rim Rotation –Red Creek –Riner –Rotten Springs –Sand Creek –Sixteen Mile –South Barrel –South Flat Top –South Laclede –South Wamsutter

Little Snake FO, CO –Cedar Springs Draw –East Powder Wash –Grounds –Horse Draw –Lang Spring –Nipple Peak –Nipple Rim –Powder Rim Rotation, –Powder Wash, –Sand Creek –Sand Hills –Sand Wash–Sheepherder Spring –Snake River –Suttles Basin

Vernal FO, UT –Argyle Ridge –Big Wash –Currant Canyon –Five Mile –Lears Canyon –Parleys Canyon –Powder Wash –Snake John –Split Mountain –Sulfur Canyon –Water Canyon #2

Alternative E

The Alternative E route would require a plan amendment involving one BLM office—Vernal. Concentrating utilities in the areas as proposed in the plan amendments would affect management of livestock on public lands as discussed above. However, proposed utilities would have to recognize valid existing rights and work with leaseholders to minimize conflicts.

Vernal FO, UT –Ouray Road –Powder Wash –Snake John –Split Mountain –Twelve Mile –West Fork

Alternative F

The Alternative F route would require a plan amendment involving two BLM offices—Vernal and Salt Lake. Concentrating utilities in the areas as proposed in the plan amendments would affect management of livestock on public lands as discussed above. However, proposed utilities would have to recognize valid existing rights and work with leaseholders to minimize conflicts.

Vernal FO, UT –Argyle Ridge –Big Wash –Currant Canyon –Five Mile –Lears Canyon –Parleys Canyon –Powder Wash –Snake John –Split Mountain –Sulfur Canyon –Water Canyon #1 –Water Canyon #2 –West Fork

Salt Lake FO, UT –Iso Tract –Ludlow –Kyune I –West Fork

Alternative Variations

The Emma Park Alternative Variation would require a plan amendment involving one BLM office—Salt Lake. Concentrating utilities in the areas as proposed in the plan amendments would affect management of livestock on public lands as discussed above. However, proposed utilities would have to recognize valid existing rights and work with leaseholders to minimize conflicts.

Salt Lake FO, UT –Cherry Creek –Kyune I –West Fork

Alternative Connectors

The various alternative connectors would require plan amendments involving the following FOs: Rawlins and Las Vegas. Concentrating utilities in the areas as proposed in the plan amendments would affect management of livestock on public lands as discussed above. However, proposed utilities would have to recognize valid existing rights and work with leaseholders to minimize conflicts.

Baggs Alternative Connector, Rawlins FO, WY –44 Ranch –Brimmer Pastures –Cottonwood Hill –North Baggs –Oppenheimer –Poison Buttes –Powder Rim Rotation –River Bottom

Fivemile Point North Alternative Connector, Rawlins FO, WY –Big Robber –Cottonwood Hill

Fivemile Point South Alternative Connector, Rawlins FO, WY –Cottonwood Hill

Mexican Flats Alternative Connector, Rawlins FO, WY –Adam's Ranch –Doty Mountain –Headquarters Ranch –Mexican Graves –South Laclede

Sunrise Mountain Alternative Connector, Las Vegas FO, NV –Sunrise Mountain

4.5.15 Special Designation and Management Areas

Plan amendments to expand an existing or create a new transmission line utility corridor could affect management objectives for special designations/management areas (SD/MAs). While some of the proposed and alternative corridors currently include portions of Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs) or wilderness areas, utilities would not be allowed in these areas unless Congressional approval is provided. The ROW is adjacent to the following areas:

- Oil Spring Mountain WSA (BLM White River FO, Alternatives B and C)
- Clover Mountains Wilderness (BLM Caliente FO, Alternative B)

The wilderness characteristics in these adjacent wilderness areas and WSAs may be temporarily diminished during construction of potential adjacent utility projects from noise associated with heavy machinery and increased traffic occurring near the wilderness area or WSA boundary. Visitors in adjacent wilderness areas or WSAs might notice a temporary disruption to solitude during construction. However, since all project construction would occur outside the wilderness area or WSA boundaries, no direct (permanent or physical) impacts to these areas are anticipated.

Section 3.15 provides a detailed description of impacts to SD/MAs within the corridors proposed, plan amendment-specific impacts are addressed in the following sections.

4.5.15.1 Alternative A

The Alternative A route would require plan amendments involving four BLM offices—Rawlins, Little Snake, Vernal, and Las Vegas. Plan amendments are not required for national forests under this alternative. No SD/MAs would be affected by the plan amendments proposed in the following areas: BLM Little Snake FO, and BLM Vernal FO. The proposed plan amendment that may affect SD/MAs is discussed in the following section.

<u>BLM Rawlins Field Office</u>

The 58-mile expanded utility corridor would overlap with 2,161 acres of the Red Rim-Daley WHMA and 880 acres of the Grizzly WHMA, which are ROW avoidance areas. Crossings of the CDNST and historic trails under study for national designation (Overland and Cherokee) would occur. Impacts are discussed in Section 3.15, Special Designation Areas.

<u>BLM Las Vegas Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)</u>

The 1-mile, one-time exception for an additional utility line in the existing corridor would affect the Sunrise Mountain ISA and Rainbow Gardens ACEC. According to the RMP, use of areas within the ISA is contingent upon Congressional action releasing the ISA from further wilderness consideration and study. Allowing additional ROWs within the ISA could affect the character of the ISA; however, the ISA was found to be in an unnatural condition and does not offer outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive and unconfined recreation.

4.5.15.2 Alternative B

The Alternative B route would require plan amendments involving five BLM offices—Rawlins, Little Snake, White River, Vernal, and Price. Plan amendments are not required for national forests under this alternative. No SD/MAs would be affected by the plan amendments proposed in the following areas: BLM Little Snake FO, BLM Vernal FO, and BLM Price FO. The proposed plan amendment that may affect SD/MAs is discussed in the following section.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

The 61-mile expanded utility corridor would overlap with 2,161 acres of the Red Rim-Daley WHMA, which is a ROW avoidance area. Crossings of the CDNST and historic trails under study for national designation (Overland and Cherokee) would occur. Impacts are discussed in Section 3.15, Special Designation Areas.

BLM White River Field Office

The utility corridor is situated within 122 acres of the White River Riparian ACEC, which is a ROW avoidance area. Construction through the ACEC would be contingent upon avoidance of cottonwood communities, maintenance of utility as bald eagle habitat and properly functioning riparian community. Indirect impacts to 1,241 acres of the adjacent Oil Spring Mountain WSA from potential future construction within the utility corridor are discussed above.

4.5.15.3 Alternative C

The Alternative C route would require plan amendments involving five BLM offices—Rawlins, White River, Vernal, Price, and Caliente—and one national forest—Fishlake. No SD/MAs would be affected by the plan amendments proposed in the following areas: BLM Vernal FO, BLM Price FO, and USFS Fishlake National Forest. The proposed plan amendment that may affect SD/MAs is discussed in the following section.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

The 27-mile expanded utility corridor would overlap with 2,161 acres of the Red Rim-Daley WHMA and 880 acres of the Grizzly WHMA, which are ROW avoidance areas. Crossings of the CDNST and historic trails under study for national designation (Overland and Cherokee) would occur. Impacts are discussed in Section 3.15, Special Designation Areas.

BLM White River Field Office

The utility corridor is situated within 122 acres of the White River Riparian ACEC, which is a ROW avoidance area. Construction through the ACEC would be contingent upon avoidance of cottonwood communities, maintenance of bald eagle habitat and properly functioning riparian community. Indirect impacts to 1,241 acres of the adjacent Oil Springs Mountain WSA from potential future construction within the utility corridor are discussed above.

BLM Caliente Field Office

A 9-mile, one-time exception to allow an additional utility in the corridor through the Kane Springs ACEC would affect the values of the ACEC. A total of 279 acres of the Kane Springs ACEC would be overlapped by the amended area. According to the RMP, the Kane Springs ACEC will be managed primarily for the recovery of the desert tortoise, which could be affected by additional ROWs through critical habitat within the ACEC. Please see Section 4.5.14 for additional impacts to special status species from the plan amendment. Indirect impacts to the adjacent Delamar Mountains Wilderness Area from potential future construction within the utility corridor are discussed above.

4.5.15.4 Alternative D

The Alternative D route would require plan amendments involving three BLM offices—Rawlins, Little Snake, and Vernal. No SD/MAs would be affected by the plan amendments proposed in the Little Snake FO.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

The 76-mile utility corridor would overlap with 2,161 acres of the Red Rim-Daley WHMA and 880 acres of the Grizzly WHMA, which are ROW avoidance areas. Crossings of the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail and historic trails under study for national designation (Overland and Cherokee) would occur. Impacts are discussed in Section 3.15, Special Designation Areas.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The 17-mile utility corridor would cross 54 acres of the Lower Green River Corridor ACEC. The area is managed as ROW avoidance area for protection of riparian and special status species habitat and scenic values.

4.5.15.5 Alternative E

The Alternative E route would require a plan amendment involving one BLM office—Vernal. No SD/MAs would be affected by the plan amendments proposed in this area.

4.5.15.6 Alternative F

The Alternative F route would require plan amendments involving two BLM offices—Vernal and Salt Lake. The effect these plan amendments would have on special designations in the respective BLM office is discussed below.

BLM Vernal Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

The 22 miles of new utility corridor in the Vernal FO to accommodate Alternative F would cross 54 acres of the Lower Green River Corridor ACEC. The area is managed as ROW avoidance area for protection of riparian and special status species habitat and scenic values.

BLM Salt Lake Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

The 3 miles of new utility corridor in the Salt Lake FO would not affect SD/MAs.

4.5.15.7 Alternative Variations

The various alternative variations would require plan amendments involving the following FO—Salt Lake. The three miles of new utility corridor for the Emma Park Alternative Variation would not affect SD/MAs.

4.5.15.8 Alternative Connectors

The various alternative connectors would require plan amendments involving the following FOs—Rawlins and Las Vegas. A description of the involved routing variations and the effect the plan amendments would have on SD/MAs in the respective areas is discussed below. No SD/MAs would be affected by the plan amendments proposed in the BLM Rawlins FO. The proposed plan amendment that may affect SD/MAs is discussed in the following section.

BLM Las Vegas Field Office

The one-time exception for an additional utility line in the existing corridor would affect the Sunrise Mountain ISA and Rainbow Gardens ACEC. According to the RMP, use of areas within the ISA is contingent upon Congressional action releasing the ISA from further wilderness consideration and study. Allowing additional ROWs within the ISA could affect the character of the ISA; however, the ISA was found to be in an unnatural condition and does not offer outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive and unconfined recreation.

4.5.16 Transportation and Access

In general, a plan amendment creating a new utility corridor would allow for potential future developments that require new road construction and road upgrades to provide access to utility system alignments, staging areas and related facilities. The new roads would extend from the existing roadway network into areas previously without roads. The road upgrades would increase safety and/or capacity of the existing roads and change maintenance needs and long-term requirements. The new roads and the existing roads would be used by utility construction, operation, maintenance, and decommissioning vehicles during the life cycle of each utility installation. Some new roads would remain in place for maintenance and could be added to the road inventory for the administering agency depending on identified needs. No conflicts with airports or air travel would be expected, except where the new corridors would be located within military operation areas. Section 3.16 provides a detailed description of impacts to transportation and access within the corridors proposed, plan amendment-specific impacts are addressed in the following sections.

4.5.16.1 Alternative A

The Alternative A route would require plan amendments involving four BLM offices—Rawlins, Little Snake, Vernal, and Las Vegas. Plan amendments for utility corridors could result in effects from potential additional development as stated above. Additional effects are discussed in the following section.

<u>BLM Las Vegas Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)</u>

A 1-mile, one-time exception through the Sunrise Mountain ISA could result in indirect effects from potential additional development as stated above. Utilities in the Sunrise Mountain ISA could affect military operations associated with Nellis AFB, the NTTR, and the Nellis Small Arms Range/Jettison Hill boundaries. Potential future aboveground utilities could disrupt military activity and could be damaged by military activity creating financial and system reliability impacts. However, there is an existing aboveground facility in this location through the Sunrise Mountain ISA. In addition, utility repair and maintenance may be prevented by military operations. The presence of utilities also may adversely impact low-level fixed and rotary wing flying operations.

4.5.16.2 Alternative B

The Alternative B route would require plan amendments involving five BLM offices—Rawlins, Little Snake, White River, Vernal, and Price. Plan amendments are not required for national forests under this alternative. Plan amendments for utility corridors could result in effects from potential additional development as stated above.

4.5.16.3 Alternative C

The Alternative C route would require plan amendments involving five BLM offices—Rawlins, White River, Vernal, Price, and Caliente—and one national forest—Fishlake. Plan amendments for utility corridors could result in effects from potential additional development as stated above. Additional effects are discussed in the following section.

<u>BLM Caliente Field Office</u>

A 9-mile, one-time exception through the Kane Springs ACEC could result in indirect effects from potential additional development as stated above. Utilities in the Kane Springs ACEC could affect military operations associated with Nellis AFB and the NTTR. Potential future aboveground utilities could disrupt military activity and could be damaged by military activity creating financial and system reliability impacts. However, there is an existing aboveground facility in this location adjacent to the Kane Springs ACEC. In

addition, utility repair and maintenance may be prevented by military operations. The presence of utilities also may adversely impact low-level fixed and rotary wing flying operations.

4.5.16.4 Alternative D

The Alternative D route would require plan amendments involving three BLM offices—Rawlins, Little Snake, and Vernal. Plan amendments for utility corridors could result in effects from potential additional development as stated above.

4.5.16.5 Alternative E

The Alternative E route would require a plan amendment involving one BLM office—Vernal. Plan amendments for utility corridors could result in effects from potential additional development as stated above.

4.5.16.6 Alternative F

The Alternative F route would require plan amendments involving two BLM offices—Vernal and Salt Lake. Plan amendments for utility corridors could result in effects from potential additional developed as stated above.

4.5.16.7 Alternative Variations

The various alternative variations would require plan amendments involving the following FO—Salt Lake. Plan amendments for a new utility corridor for the Emma Park Alternative Variation could result in effects from potential additional developed as stated above.

4.5.16.8 Alternative Connectors

The various alternative connectors would require plan amendments involving the following FOs—Rawlins and Las Vegas. Plan amendments for utility corridors could result in effects from potential additional development as stated above. Additional effects are discussed in the following section.

<u>BLM Las Vegas Field Office</u>

A 1-mile, one-time exception through the Sunrise Mountain ISA could result in indirect effects from potential additional development as stated above. Utilities in the Sunrise Mountain ISA could affect military operations associated with Nellis Air Force Base (AFB), the Nevada Test and Training Range (NTTR), and the Nellis Small Arms Range (SAR)/Jettison Hill boundaries, as discussed under Alternative A.

4.5.17 Social and Economic Conditions

There would be little or no impacts on socioeconomics from plan amendment decisions. Plan amendments to create new utility or expand existing corridors would influence the ability to locate utilities in areas. These actions in turn have direct impacts on socioeconomics, which are analyzed pursuant to NEPA as individual projects are proposed. Designation of utility corridors would facilitate processing of ROW applications; however, these projects would be proposed whether or not a corridor was designated. Indirect effects to other revenue sources, such as recreation, hunting, and livestock operations, could occur in localized areas if users are displaced as a result of concentrated ROW development. Section 3.17 provides a detailed description of impacts to social and economic conditions within the corridors proposed, plan amendment-specific impacts are addressed in the following sections.

4.5.17.1 Alternative A

The Alternative A route would require plan amendments involving four BLM offices—Rawlins, Little Snake, Vernal, and Las Vegas. Plan amendments for utility corridors could result in effects from potential additional development as stated above.

4.5.17.2 Alternative B

The Alternative B route would require plan amendments involving five BLM offices—Rawlins, Little Snake, White River, Vernal, and Price. Plan amendments for utility corridors could result in effects from potential additional development as stated above.

4.5.17.3 Alternative C

The Alternative C route would require plan amendments involving five BLM offices—Rawlins, White River, Vernal, Price, and Caliente—and one national forest—Fishlake. Plan amendments for utility corridors could result in effects from potential additional development as stated above.

4.5.17.4 Alternative D

The Alternative D route would require plan amendments involving three BLM offices—Rawlins, Little Snake, and Vernal. Plan amendments for utility corridors could result in effects from potential additional development as stated above.

4.5.17.5 Alternative E

The Alternative E route would require a plan amendment involving one BLM office—Vernal. Plan amendments for utility corridors could result in effects from potential additional development as stated above.

4.5.17.6 Alternative F

The Alternative F route would require plan amendments in two BLM offices—Vernal and Salt Lake. Plan amendments for utility corridors could result in effects from potential additional development as stated above.

4.5.17.7 Alternative Variations

The Emma Park Alternative Variation would require a plan amendment in the BLM Salt Lake FO. Plan amendments for utility corridors could result in effects from potential additional development as stated above.

4.5.17.8 Alternative Connectors

The various alternative connectors would require plan amendments involving the following FOs—Rawlins and Las Vegas. Plan amendments for utility corridors could result in effects from potential additional development as stated above.

4.5.18 Public Health & Safety

There would be little or no impacts on public health and safety from plan amendment decisions. Plan amendments to create new utility or expand existing corridors would influence the ability to locate utilities in areas. These actions in turn have direct impacts on public health and safety, which are analyzed pursuant to NEPA as individual projects are proposed. Anticipated public health and safety risks from proposed utility projects would include worker accidents, fire, electrocution, exposure to hazardous

materials, exposure to electric fields and magnetic fields (EMF), communication disturbances caused by corona, impacts from stray and induced voltage, and noise. Potential risks from the future proposed utilities in the corridors would be considered minor because previously established requirements for utilities and utility corridors would be expected to remain in place, would be modified as needed if new risks were identified, and the requirements would continue to effectively avoid, minimize and mitigate anticipated public health and safety risks. Section 3.18 provides a detailed description of public health and safety impacts to resources within the corridors proposed, plan amendment-specific impacts are addressed in the following sections.

4.5.18.1 Alternative A

The Alternative A route would require plan amendments involving four BLM offices—Rawlins, Little Snake, Vernal, and Las Vegas. No national forests require plan amendments under this alternative. The proposed plan amendments would have minor and inconsequential effects for all these areas because previously established requirements for utilities and utility corridors would be expected to remain in place for project proposed in the utility corridor as discussed above.

4.5.18.2 Alternative B

The Alternative B route would require plan amendments involving five BLM offices—Rawlins, Little Snake, White River, Vernal, and Price. Plan amendments are not required for national forests under this alternative. The proposed plan amendments would have minor and inconsequential effects for all these areas because previously established requirements for utilities and utility corridors would be expected to remain in place for project proposed in the utility corridor as discussed above.

4.5.18.3 Alternative C

The Alternative C route would require plan amendments involving five BLM offices—Rawlins, White River, Vernal, Price, and Caliente—and one national forest—Fishlake. The proposed plan amendments would have minor and inconsequential effects for all these areas because previously established requirements for utilities and utility corridors would be expected to remain in place for project proposed in the utility corridor as discussed above.

4.5.18.4 Alternative D

The Alternative D route would require plan amendments involving three BLM offices—Rawlins, Little Snake, and Vernal. The proposed plan amendments would have minor and inconsequential effects for all these areas because previously established requirements for utilities and utility corridors would be expected to remain in place for project proposed in the utility corridor as discussed above.

4.5.18.5 Alternative E

The Alternative E route would require plan amendments involving one BLM office—Vernal. The proposed plan amendments would have minor and inconsequential effects for this area because previously established requirements for utilities and utility corridors would be expected to remain in place for project proposed in the utility corridor as discussed above.

4.5.18.6 Alternative F

The Alternative F route would require plan amendments involving two BLM offices—Vernal and Salt Lake. The proposed plan amendments would have minor and inconsequential effects for all these areas because previously established requirements for utilities and utility corridors would be expected to remain in place for project proposed in the utility corridor as discussed above.

4.5.18.7 Alternative Variations

The Emma Park Alternative Variation would require a plan amendment in the BLM Salt Lake Office. The proposed plan amendment would have minor and inconsequential effects for this area because previously established requirements for utilities and utility corridors would be expected to remain in place for project proposed in the utility corridor as discussed above.

4.5.18.8 Alternative Connectors

The various alternative connectors would require plan amendments involving the following FOs—Rawlins and Las Vegas. The proposed plan amendments would have minor and inconsequential effects for all these areas because previously established requirements for utilities and utility corridors would be expected to remain in place for project proposed in the utility corridor as discussed above.

4.5.19 Wild Horses Management Areas

Allowing for potential future development of utilities in areas where currently none exist could affect the management of wild horses and burros on public lands. Effects to wild horses and burros consist of temporary and permanent displacement of vegetation due to construction of infrastructure, interference with access to water sources, and overall disturbance due to construction noise and human presence (usually only an issue during foaling season). Depending on the location of the overhead power lines they may have a negative effect on BLM's ability to gather excess wild horses in areas where wild horses occupy the landscape.

4.5.19.1 Alternative A

The Alternative A route would require plan amendments involving four BLM offices—Rawlins, Little Snake, Vernal, and Las Vegas. The effect these plan amendments would have on wild horses and burros in the respective FO is discussed below.

<u>BLM Rawlins Field Office</u>

The new utility corridor traverses the Adobe Town HMA. Wild horses may experience increased stress from human presence and noise, and viewers could be displaced. If the location is critical to BLM's ability to gather wild horses, overhead utilities in the corridor could affect BLM's ability to effectively manage horses.

<u>BLM Little Snake Field Office</u>

The new utility corridor traverses the eastern portion of the Sand Wash HMA and would be located directly over a County Road 75, which is a primary route for public wild horse viewing. Wild horses may experience increased stress from human presence and noise, and viewers could be displaced. If the location of the corridor is critical to BLM's ability to gather wild horses, overhead utilities in the corridor could affect BLM's ability to effectively manage wild horses.

<u>BLM Vernal Field Office</u>

The Bonanza HA is located south of the corridor; therefore, there would be no effects to HAs in this FO.

<u>BLM Las Vegas Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)</u>

The Muddy Mountains HMA is located east of the corridor; therefore, there would be no effects to HMAs in this FO.

4.5.19.2 Alternative B

The Alternative B route would require plan amendments involving five BLM offices—Rawlins, Little Snake, White River, Vernal, and Price. The effect these plan amendments would have on wild horses and burros in the respective FOs is discussed below.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

The Adobe Town HMA is located within the corridor; therefore, impacts would the same as described in Alternative A.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

The Sand Wash HMA is located to the west of the corridor; therefore, there would be no effects to HMAs in this FO.

BLM White River Field Office

The utility corridor intersects the, Piceance/East Douglas HMA as well as the North Piceance and West Douglas herd areas, which could be affected during construction by the loss of vegetation and cover until reclamation is successful. Wild horses may experience increased stress from human presence and noise. If the location of the corridor is critical to BLM's ability to gather wild horses, overhead utilities in the corridor could affect BLM's ability to effectively manage wild horses.

BLM Vernal Field Office

No HAs are intersected by the corridor; therefore, there would be no effects to this FO.

BLM Price Field Office

No HMAs are intersected by the corridor; therefore, there would be no effects to this FO.

4.5.19.3 Alternative C

The Alternative C route would require plan amendments involving five BLM offices—Rawlins, White River, Vernal, Price, and Caliente—and Fishlake National Forest. The effect these plan amendments would have on wild horses and burros in the respective BLM offices and national forest is discussed below.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

The Adobe Town HMA is located west of the corridor; therefore, there would be no effects to HMAs in this FO.

BLM White River Field Office

Effects to wild horses and burros would be the same as for Alternative B described above.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Effects to wild horses and burros would be the same as for Alternative B described above.

BLM Price Field Office

No HMAs are intersected by the corridor; therefore, there would be no effects to this FO.

BLM Caliente Field Office

The Silver King and Eagle HMAs are located approximately ten miles north of the area of the one-time exception; therefore, there would be no effects to HMAs in this FO.

USFS Fishlake National Forest

Wild horses and burros do not exist in the forest; therefore, there would be no effect to wild horses and burros.

4.5.19.4 Alternative D

The Alternative D route would require plan amendments involving three BLM offices—Rawlins, Little Snake, and Vernal. The effect these plan amendments would have on wild horses and burros in the respective BLM offices is discussed below.

BLM Rawlins Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

The new utility corridor traverses a small portion of the Adobe Town HMA. Wild horses may experience increased stress from human presence and noise, and viewers could be displaced. If the location is critical to BLM's ability to gather wild horses, overhead utilities in the corridor could affect BLM's ability to effectively manage horses.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

Impacts would be the same as Alternative B.

BLM Vernal Field Office

The Hill Creek HA is located approximately 17 miles east of the area proposed for amendment. Therefore, no effects to HAs from the amendment are anticipated in this FO.

4.5.19.5 Alternative E

The Alternative E route would require a plan amendment involving one BLM office—Vernal. The effect the plan amendment would have on wild horses and burros in the respective BLM office is discussed below.

BLM Vernal Field Office

No HMAs are intersected by the corridor; therefore, there would be no effects to this FO.

4.5.19.6 Alternative F

The Alternative F route would require plan amendments involving two BLM offices—Vernal and Salt Lake. The effect the plan amendment would have on wild horses and burros in the respective BLM office is discussed below.

BLM Vernal Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

The Hill Creek HA is located approximately 17 miles east of the area proposed for amendment. Therefore, no effects to HAs from the amendment are anticipated in this FO.

BLM Salt Lake Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

No HMAs are intersected by the corridor; therefore, there would be no effects to this FO.

4.5.19.7 Alternative Variations

The Emma Park Alternative Variation would require a plan amendment in the BLM Salt Lake Office. No HMAs are intersected by the corridor; therefore, there would be no effects to this FO.

4.5.19.1 Alternative Connectors

The various alternative connectors would require plan amendments involving the following FOs—Rawlins and Las Vegas. A description of the involved routing variations and the effect the plan amendments would have on wild horses and burros in the respective FOs is discussed below.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

There are no HMAs/HAs affected by the Mexican Flats, Baggs, Fivemile Point North, and Fivemile Point South alternative connectors. The Adobe Town HMA is located west of the corridor; therefore, there would be no effects to HMAs in this FO.

BLM Las Vegas Field Office

The Sunrise Mountain Alternative Connector intersects the Sunrise Mountain ISA, which is an exclusion area. Allowances would have to be made (change the area designation from ROW exclusion to ROW avoidance) to develop a utility ROW through this area. There would be no effects to wild horses and burros as a result of the Sunrise Mountain Alternative Connector.

4.5.20 Lands with Wilderness Characteristics

Establishing utility corridors in areas containing inventory units that are determined to meet criteria for LWC could lead to potential future development of utilities that could affect LWC units and eliminate portions or the entirety of the unit from meeting LWC criteria. Impacts could either result from the loss of wilderness characteristics in areas that the BLM has administratively made a decision to protect or negate the eligibility of the whole inventoried area for consideration in a future planning effort for wilderness character protection.

4.5.20.1 Alternative A

The Alternative A route would require plan amendments involving four BLM offices—Rawlins, Little Snake, Vernal, and Las Vegas. The effect these plan amendments would have on LWC in the respective FO is discussed below.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

No LWC units would be affected by the proposed plan amendment.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

Eight LWC units (290, 291, 318, 332, 351, 353, 364, 409) would be affected by the proposed plan amendment. Depending on the location of utilities as they are developed, part or the entirety of the unit may not meet the LWC criteria for size, solitude, and naturalness.

BLM Vernal Field Office

No LWC units would be affected by the proposed plan amendment.

BLM Las Vegas Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

Alternative A traverses the Sunrise Mountain ISA, but no LWC units would be affected by the proposed plan amendment.

4.5.20.2 Alternative B

The Alternative B route would require plan amendments for five BLM offices—Rawlins, Little Snake, White River, Vernal, and Price. The effect these plan amendments would have on LWC in the respective FO is discussed below.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

One LWC unit (WY-030-13N95W24-2012 – Rotten Springs) would be affected by the proposed plan amendment. Depending on the location of utilities as they are developed, part or the entirety of the unit may not meet the LWC criteria for size, solitude, and naturalness.

BLM Little Snake Field Office

Eight LWC units (290, 291, 318, 353, 364, 406, 407, 409) would be affected by the proposed plan amendment. Depending on the location of utilities as they are developed, part or the entirety of the unit may not meet the LWC criteria for size, solitude, and naturalness.

BLM White River Field Office

Three LWC units (2, 7, 21) would be affected by the proposed plan amendment. Depending on the location of utilities as they are developed, part or the entirety of the unit may not meet the LWC criteria for size, solitude, and naturalness.

BLM Vernal Field Office

One LWC unit (Bitter Creek), which is not managed for wilderness character as determined through the RMP, would be affected by the proposed plan amendment. Depending on the location of utilities as they are developed, part or the entirety of the unit may not meet the LWC criteria for size, solitude, and naturalness.

BLM Price Field Office

One LWC unit (Price River), which is not managed for wilderness character as determined through the RMP, would be affected by the proposed plan amendment. Depending on the location of utilities as they are developed, part of the unit may not meet the LWC criteria for size, solitude, and naturalness.

4.5.20.3 Alternative C

The Alternative C route would require plan amendments for five BLM offices—Rawlins, White River, Vernal, Price, and Caliente—and Fishlake National Forest. The effect these plan amendments would have on LWC in the respective BLM FO is discussed below. There are no LWC units on national forests.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

No LWC units would be affected by the proposed plan amendment.

BLM White River Field Office

Impacts would be the same as discussed for Alternative B.

BLM Vernal Field Office

Impacts would be the same as discussed for Alternative B.

BLM Price Field Office

Three LWC units (Lost Springs Wash, Never Sweat Wash, Sids Mountain), which are not managed for wilderness character as determined through the RMP, would be affected by the proposed plan amendment. Depending on the location of utilities as they are developed, part of the unit may not meet the LWC criteria for size, solitude, and naturalness.

BLM Caliente Field Office

No LWC units would be affected by the proposed plan amendment.

4.5.20.4 Alternative D

The Alternative D route would require plan amendments for three BLM offices—Rawlins, Little Snake, and Vernal. The effect these plan amendments would have on LWC in the respective BLM FO is discussed below.

BLM Rawlins Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

No LWC units would be affected by the proposed plan amendment.

BLM Little Snake Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

Impacts would be the same as discussed for Alternative B.

BLM Vernal Field Office

One LWC unit (Currant Canyon) would be affected by the proposed plan amendment. Depending on the location of utilities as they are developed, part or the entirety of the unit may not meet the LWC criteria for size, solitude, and naturalness.

4.5.20.5 Alternative E

The Alternative E route would require plan amendments for one BLM office—Vernal. The effect these plan amendments would have on LWC in the respective BLM FO is discussed below.

BLM Vernal Field Office

No LWC units would be affected by the proposed plan amendment.

4.5.20.6 Alternative F

The Alternative F route would require plan amendments for two BLM offices—Vernal and Salt Lake. The effect these plan amendments would have on LWC in the respective BLM FO is discussed below.

BLM Vernal Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

One LWC unit (Currant Canyon) would be affected by the proposed plan amendment. Depending on the location of utilities as they are developed, part or the entirety of the unit may not meet the LWC criteria for size, solitude, and naturalness.

BLM Salt Lake Field Office (Agency Preferred Alternative)

No LWC units would be affected by the proposed plan amendment.

4.5.20.7 Alternative Variations

The Emma Park Alternative Variation would require a plan amendment for the BLM Salt Lake FO. No LWC units would be affected by the proposed plan amendment.

4.5.20.8 Alternative Connectors

The various alternative connectors would require plan amendments in the following FOs—Rawlins and Las Vegas. The effect these plan amendments would have on LWC in the respective BLM FO is discussed below.

BLM Rawlins Field Office

Designation of new utility corridors for the Baggs (18 miles), Fivemile Point North (2 miles), Fivemile South (2 miles), and Mexican Flats (9 miles) alternative connectors would not affect any LWC units as a result of the proposed plan amendments.

BLM Las Vegas Field Office

The alternative connector traverses the Sunrise Mountain ISA, but no LWC units would be affected by the proposed plan amendment.