

# Corridor 29-36

## Mountain Home Corridor

### Corridor Purpose and Rationale

The corridor provides a pathway for energy transport from Boise into the Twin Falls area energy corridor. The southern end of the corridor connects to multiple Section 368 energy corridors, creating a continuous corridor network across BLM- and USFS-administered lands south to Nevada and east across Idaho. Input regarding alignment from multiple organizations<sup>1</sup> during the WVEC PEIS suggested following this route. There has been interest in development within the corridor as well as interest in solar energy in the area. Gateway West, a recently authorized 500-kV transmission line follows the corridor from MP 12 to MP 46. A natural gas pipeline generally following the corridor is planned from MP 15 to MP 63. The potential for additional projects may be limited because of the density of existing and planned infrastructure within and adjacent to the corridor.

#### Corridor location:

Idaho (Ada and Elmore Co.)  
BLM: Four Rivers and Jarbidge Field Offices  
Regional Review Region: Region 6

#### Corridor width, length:

Width 1,000 ft (MP 31 to MP 33); 3,500 ft for the rest  
33 miles of designated corridor  
63 miles of posted route, including gaps

#### Designated Use:

- corridor is multi-modal

#### Corridor of concern (N)



Figure 1. Corridor 29-36

#### Corridor history:

- Locally designated prior to 2009 (N)
- Existing infrastructure (Y)
  - Multiple transmission lines ranging from 69- to 500-kV are within and adjacent to the full length of the corridor.
- Energy potential near the corridor (Y)
  - 16 power plants are within 5 miles (11 wind, 2 natural gas, 2 hydroelectric, 1 solar).
  - 1 substation is within the corridor and 31 more are within 5 mi.
- Corridor changes since 2009 (N)

<sup>1</sup> Chevron, Idaho Power Company, National Grid, PacifiCorp, and the Western Utility Group

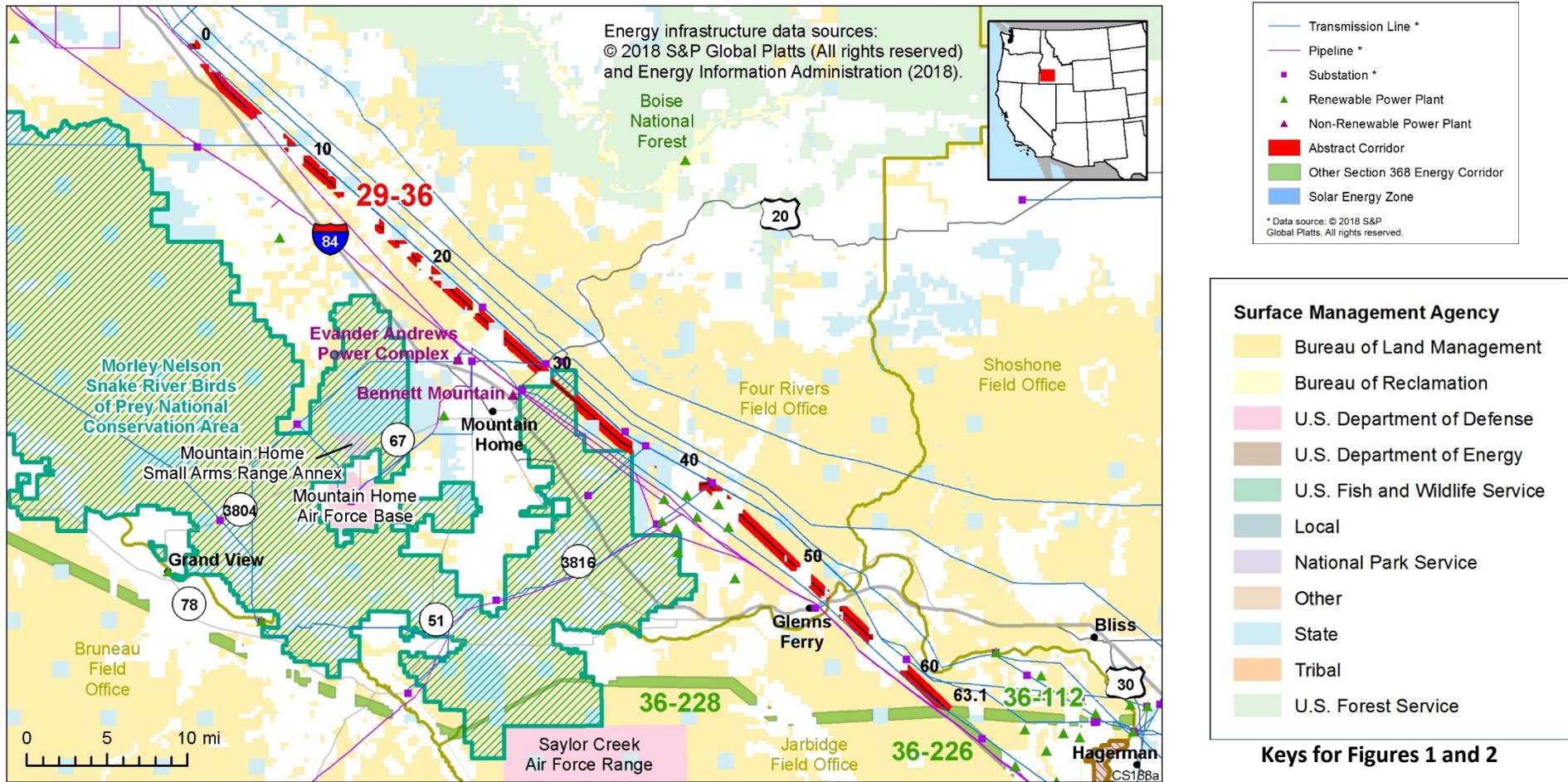


Figure 2. Corridor 29-36 and nearby electric transmission lines and pipelines

## Conflict Map Analysis

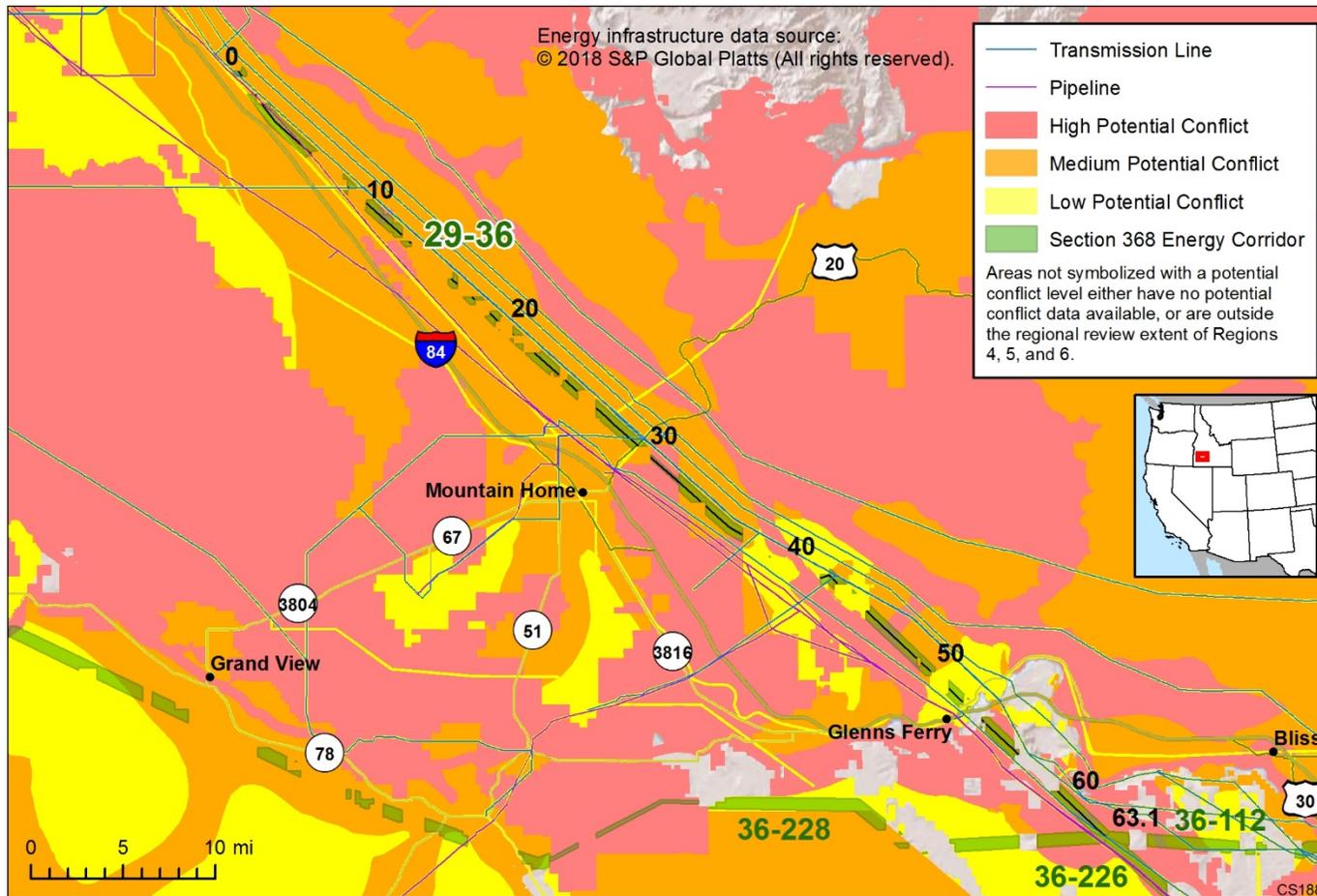


Figure 3. Map of Conflict Areas in Vicinity of Corridor 29-36

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

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

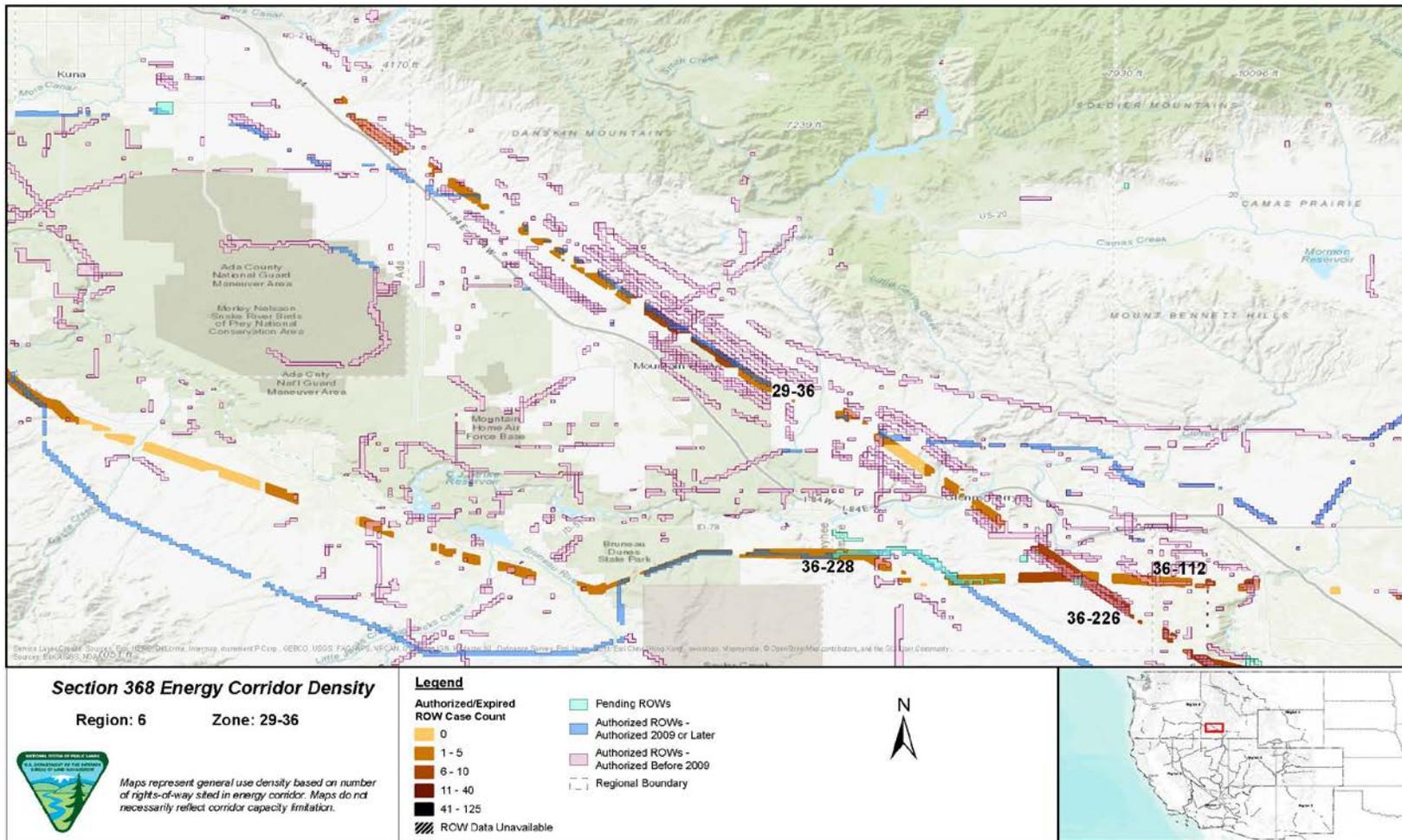


Figure 4. Corridor 29-36, Corridor Density Map

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

## Corridor Review Table

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

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

CORRIDOR 29-36 REVIEW			
POTENTIAL COMPATIBILITY ISSUES or CONCERNS TO EXAMINE	MILEPOST (MP) <sup>1</sup>	STAKEHOLDER INPUT and OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION	POTENTIAL RESOLUTIONS BASED ON SITING PRINCIPLE ANALYSIS <sup>2</sup>
<p><b>BLM Jurisdiction:</b> Four Rivers Field Office</p> <p><b>Agency Land Use Plan:</b> Kuna MFP (1983) and Snake River Birds of Prey NCA RMP and ROD (2008)</p>			
<p>Oregon NHT and the corridor are parallel but do not intersect in this field office. The distance between the corridor and the NHT ranges from about ¼ mile (near MP 42) to 4 miles (several locations).</p> <p>In a few locations the Oregon NHT is within easy viewing distance of the corridor. The segment of the Oregon NHT that parallels the corridor is a high potential segment (North Trail) and there are 8 high potential sites that would have potentially impacted viewsheds (Bonneville Point, Indian Creek Station, Ditto Station, Inscription Rock, Canyon Creek Station, Rattlesnake Station, and Teapot Dome Hot Springs). India Creek Station is also listed on the NRHP, and Bonneville Point is a BLM interpretive site.</p>	<p>MP 0 to MP 53</p>	<p>The corridor runs parallel to but generally does not follow existing transmission lines.</p> <p>The National Trails System Act, as cited in the Comprehensive Plan for the California NHT (1999)<sup>3</sup>, states that the Secretary of the Interior or the Secretary of Agriculture may grant easements and rights-of-way upon, over, under, across, or along any component of the national trails system in accordance with the laws applicable to the national forest system, provided that any conditions contained in such easements and rights-of-way are related to the policy and purposes of this Act.</p> <p>For high potential route segments, the National Trails System Act states: Federally owned sites and segments of these trails are considered federal</p>	<p>Since the corridor does not intersect with the NHT, site-specific analyses would be needed to assess impacts of new infrastructure on the NHT. However, the Agencies could consider re-routing the corridor along the Gateway West approved route at MP 45 to connect to Corridor 36-112 to avoid impacts to the NHT.</p> <p>Agencies could consider a new IOP for NSTs and NHTs to enhance BMPs for proposed development within the energy corridor.</p>

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<b>POTENTIAL COMPATIBILITY ISSUES or CONCERNS TO EXAMINE</b>	<b>MILEPOST (MP)<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>STAKEHOLDER INPUT and OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION</b>	<b>POTENTIAL RESOLUTIONS BASED ON SITING PRINCIPLE ANALYSIS<sup>2</sup></b>
		<p>protection components and should receive special attention by managing agencies to enhance their trail-related values.</p> <p>Comment on abstract: because the Four Rivers BLM is undergoing an RMP revision, request a more thorough review and alternative resolutions than what are identified for portions of this crossing.</p>	
<p>Slickspot Peppergrass (ESA-listed threatened) proposed critical habitat and the corridor intersect - The land use plan pre-dates when critical habitat was proposed for this species (May 2011) and does not have specific guidance or objectives.</p>	MP 11	<p>Comment on abstract: because the Four Rivers BLM is undergoing an RMP revision, request a more thorough review and alternative resolutions than what are identified for portions of this crossing.</p>	<p>The corridor location appears to best meet the siting principles. Existing transmission lines intersect the proposed critical habitat in areas adjacent to the corridor. Options to shift the corridor to the southeast between MP 10 and MP 12 to better align with existing infrastructure and avoid the critical habitat are possible.</p>
<p>Morley Nelson Snake River Birds of Prey NCA and the corridor intersect - Major utilities within the NCA will be restricted to two identified corridors, including Corridor 29-36.</p>	MP 30 to MP 33	<p>Comment on abstract: NCA overlaps 453.68 acres of the corridor at MP 31 to MP 32. And overlaps 44.37 acres at MP 37.</p> <p>Comment on abstract: minimize impacts to nesting raptors in the Snake River Birds of Prey NCA.</p> <p>Comment on abstract: re-route to avoid the Snake River Birds of Prey NCA/CJ Strike Reservoir IBA. If rerouting around the NCA is not feasible, reroute to collocate with existing and proposed transmission lines.</p> <p>Comment on abstract: because the Four Rivers BLM is undergoing an</p>	<p>The corridor has a reduced width to minimize potential impacts to nesting raptors in the Snake River Birds of Prey NCA. There are a number of existing and proposed transmission lines to either side of Corridor 29-36 that intersect the NCA. At this location the corridor is collocated with the Gateway West approved route. Shifting the corridor outside of the NCA would require crossing multiple existing transmission lines.</p>

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		RMP revision, request a more thorough review and alternative resolutions than what are identified for portions of this crossing.	
VRM Class I area and the corridor intersect – The objective of VRM Class I designations is to preserve the existing character of the landscape.	MP 42 and MP 46 to MP 50	Comment on abstract: because the Four Rivers BLM is undergoing an RMP revision, request a more thorough review and alternative resolutions than what are identified for portions of this crossing.	VRM Class I area is not consistent with future overhead transmission line development. In order to best meet the siting principles, a change in the VRM class could be considered or the Agencies could consider shifting the corridor to the east to better align with existing infrastructure and avoid a portion of the VRM Class I area.
Four Trails Feasibility Study Trail and the corridor intersect—The RMP does not reference the Four Trails Feasibility Study Trail since it pre-dates the 2009 legislation designating the study trail (Public Law 111-11).	MP 47 to MP 48	<p>The corridor is not collocated with infrastructure, but several transmission lines parallel the corridor on both sides. The intersection of the corridor with the Study Trail is approximately perpendicular.</p> <p>The Act (Public Law 111-11; 2009) directs the Secretary of the Interior to revise the original feasibility studies of the Oregon, Mormon Pioneer, California, and Pony Express NHTs.</p> <p>BLM Manual 6280 directs the BLM to maintain the values, characteristics, and settings for which the trail is being studied or for which the trail was recommended as suitable.</p>	<p>The Agencies could consider shifting re-routing the corridor along the Gateway West approved route at MP 45 to connect to Corridor 36-112 to avoid impacts to the NHT, but this would require multiple intersections with the Four Trails Feasibility Study Trail.</p> <p>Agencies could consider a new IOP for NSTs and NHTs to enhance BMPs for proposed development within the energy corridor.</p>
Snake River (Wild and Scenic Study River) is in a corridor gap southeast of BLM-administered land within the corridor.	MP 53	Comment on abstract: because the Four Rivers BLM is undergoing an RMP revision, request a more thorough review and alternative resolutions than what are identified for portions of this crossing.	The Agencies could consider revising the corridor along the Gateway West approved route at MP 45 to connect to Corridor 36-112 to avoid intersections with the WSR. Existing IOP requires proposed projects mitigate the disturbance to WSRs and their vicinity.

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<b>BLM Jurisdiction:</b> Jarbidge Field Office <b>Agency Land Use Plan:</b> Jarbidge RMP (2015)			
Oregon NHT and the corridor intersect - The RMP indicates that the corridor is not in an Oregon NHT protective zone, which are avoidance areas for ROWs.	MP 61 to MP 62	The National Trails System Act, as cited in the Comprehensive Plan for the California NHT (1999) <sup>3</sup> , states that the Secretary of the Interior or the Secretary of Agriculture may grant easements and rights-of-way upon, over, under, across, or along any component of the national trails system in accordance with the laws applicable to the national forest system, provided that any conditions contained in such easements and rights-of-way are related to the policy and purposes of this Act.	The corridor intersection here appears to best meet the siting principles. While the corridor cannot be re-routed to avoid the NHT, the corridor is collocated with existing and proposed existing infrastructure (several transmission lines) and the NHT crosses the corridor tangentially (minimizing impacts).  Agencies could consider a new IOP for NSTs and NHTs to enhance BMPs for proposed development within the energy corridor.
<b>BLM Jurisdiction:</b> Four Rivers Field Office <b>Agency Land Use Plan:</b> Idaho GRSG ROD and ARMPA – March 2019			
GRSG GHMA and the corridor intersect - The 2019 ARMPA states that existing designated corridors in GHMA will remain open to utility ROWs. Collocating new infrastructure within existing ROWs and maintaining and upgrading ROWs is preferred over the creation of new ROWs. Collocation in designated corridors can be built within the existing corridor or adjacent to the existing corridor.	MP 25 to MP 43 and MP 45 to MP 50	Comment on abstract: re-route to avoid Sage-grouse PHMA.	In GHMA habitat there are numerous transmission lines paralleling both sides of the corridor, but not within the corridor. While development within GHMA is allowed a shift in the corridor location to the northeast to collocate with two to three transmission lines and minimize impacts to GHMA may be possible. There is a pinch point at MP 31 to MP 33 within the Snake River Birds of Prey NCA.  The corridor does not intersect PHMA.

<sup>1</sup> Mileposts are rounded to the nearest mile.

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

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

## Additional Compatibility Concerns

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

### **Specially Designated Areas:**

- Main Oregon Trail Back Country Byway intersects and is adjacent to the corridor from MP 25 to MP 30.

*Analysis:* The backcountry byway is administered by the Idaho Department of Transportation, and future development in the corridor would require coordination with this agency.

### **Ecology:**

- The corridor intersects the IBA from MP 31 to MP 33. This site supports one of the densest populations of nesting raptors in North America.

*Analysis:* At this location the corridor is collocated with the Gateway West approved route. Shifting the corridor outside of the NCA would require crossing multiple existing transmission lines.

## Abstract Acronyms and Abbreviations

ARMPA = Approved Resource Management Plan Amendment; BLM = Bureau of Land Management; BMP = best management practice; FO = field office; ESA = Endangered Species Act; GHMA = general habitat management area; GIS = geographic information system; GRSG = Greater Sage-grouse; IBA = important bird area; IOP = interagency operating procedure; MFP = Management Framework Plan; MP = milepost; NCA = National Conservation Area; NHT = National Historic Trail; NST = National Scenic Trail; PEIS = Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement; PHMA = priority habitat management area; RFI = request for information; RMP = resource management plan; ROD = Record of Decision; ROW = right-of-way; USFS = U.S. Forest Service; VRM = visual resource management; WSR = Wild and Scenic River; WWEC = West-wide Energy Corridor.