

3.17 LAND USE AND RECREATION

This section addresses potential impacts on land use and recreation from the Preferred Route, Proposed Route, and Route Alternatives during construction, operations, and decommissioning. This section analyzes the land ownership affected by the Project's activities; use of designated utility corridors and existing ROW; and the potential impacts of the Project on specific land uses including commercial and residential properties, timber and fire management, Indian reservations, recreational and public interest areas, and OHV use. Impacts on forests are addressed in Section 3.6 – Vegetation Communities. Agricultural uses (prime farmland, livestock grazing, crop production, lands enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program, and dairy farms) are addressed in Section 3.18 – Agriculture. Visual and noise effects on land uses are discussed in Sections 3.2 – Visual Resources and 3.23 – Noise, respectively. Mines are discussed in Section 3.12 – Minerals.

The BLM's Preferred Routes for each segment of the Project are listed below. Where applicable, the preferred route identified by another federal agency or a county or state government is also noted. The BLM's Preferred Routes only apply to federal lands. If approved, the BLM's Preferred Routes could affect private lands adjacent to or between federal areas; however, decisions on siting and construction requirements for non-federal lands are under the authority of state and local governments (see Table 1.4-1 for permits that would be required and Section 3.17.1.3 for a description of the regulatory requirements).

- **Segment 1W:** The BLM's Preferred Route is the Proposed Route (Figure A-2). This route is also the State of Wyoming's preferred route.
- **Segment 2:** The BLM's Preferred Route is the Proposed Route (Figure A-3). This route is also the State of Wyoming's preferred route.
- **Segment 3:** The BLM's Preferred Route is the Proposed Route, including 3A (Figure A-4). This route is also the State of Wyoming's preferred route.
- **Segment 4:** The BLM's Preferred Route is the Proposed Route (Figures A-5 and A-6) except within the Caribou-Targhee NF. The portion of this route in Wyoming is also the State of Wyoming's preferred route. The Forest Service's preferred route is the Proposed Route within the NF incorporating Alternative 4G (Figure A-6).
- **Segment 5:** The BLM's Preferred Route is the Proposed Route incorporating Alternatives 5B and 5E, assuming that WECC reliability issues associated with 5E are resolved (Figure A-7). Power County's preferred route is the Proposed Route incorporating Alternatives 5C and 5E (Figure A-7).
- **Segment 6:** The BLM's Preferred Route is the proposal to upgrade the line voltage from 345 kV to 500 kV (Figure A-8).
- **Segment 7:** The BLM's Preferred Route is the Proposed Route incorporating Alternatives 7B, 7C, 7D, and 7G (Figure A-9). The Proposed Route in the East Hills and Alternative 7G will be microsited to avoid sage-grouse PPH. Power and Cassia Counties' preferred route is Alternative 7K (Figure A-9).

- **Segment 8:** The BLM's Preferred Route is the Proposed Route incorporating Alternative 8B (Figure A-10). This is also IDANG's preferred route.
- **Segment 9:** The BLM's Preferred Route is the Proposed Route incorporating Alternative 9E, which was revised to avoid PPH and the community of Murphy (Figure A-11). Owyhee County's preferred route is Alternative 9D (Figure A-11).
- **Segment 10:** The BLM's Preferred Route is the Proposed Route (Figure A-12).

3.17.1 Affected Environment

This section discusses those aspects of the environment that could be affected by the Project. It starts with a discussion of the Analysis Area considered, identifies the issues that have driven the analysis, and characterizes the existing conditions within the Analysis Area.

3.17.1.1 Analysis Area

The Analysis Area for characterizing land use and ownership patterns extends 250 feet on either side of the Proposed Route and Route Alternatives and 25 feet on either side of access roads, and includes the areas needed for new or expanded substations as well as temporary facilities such as staging areas and fly yards. Specific land uses are identified as crossed or within 1,000 feet of the Proposed Route and Route Alternatives. This area is used because the ground-disturbing activities related to the transmission line that could cause land use effects would occur within these areas. Specific land uses, such as residences, schools, and dairies that may be affected by close proximity to a transmission line are also discussed in Sections 3.18 – Agriculture, 3.21 – Electrical Environment, and 3.22 – Public Safety.

Land uses in the area where the Project would be located generally consist of open spaces and agricultural use with an occasional town, city, or other urbanized or developed area. Much of the land in the region is managed by federal agencies, which generally provide for multiple use management or preservation of natural resources. Special uses within the vicinity of the Analysis Area include areas of prehistoric and historic significance and wildlife management areas. The eastern portion of the Project (Segments 1, 2, and 3) would be located in open range–type land uses with some topographic relief provided by major drainages (see Figure 3.17-1). Moving west, similar land uses continue as in the eastern portion, but the landscape becomes more forested and the terrain steeper (Segments 4, 5, and the eastern portion of 7). Farther west, the mountain ranges give way to the Snake River Plain, where land use includes irrigated cropland.

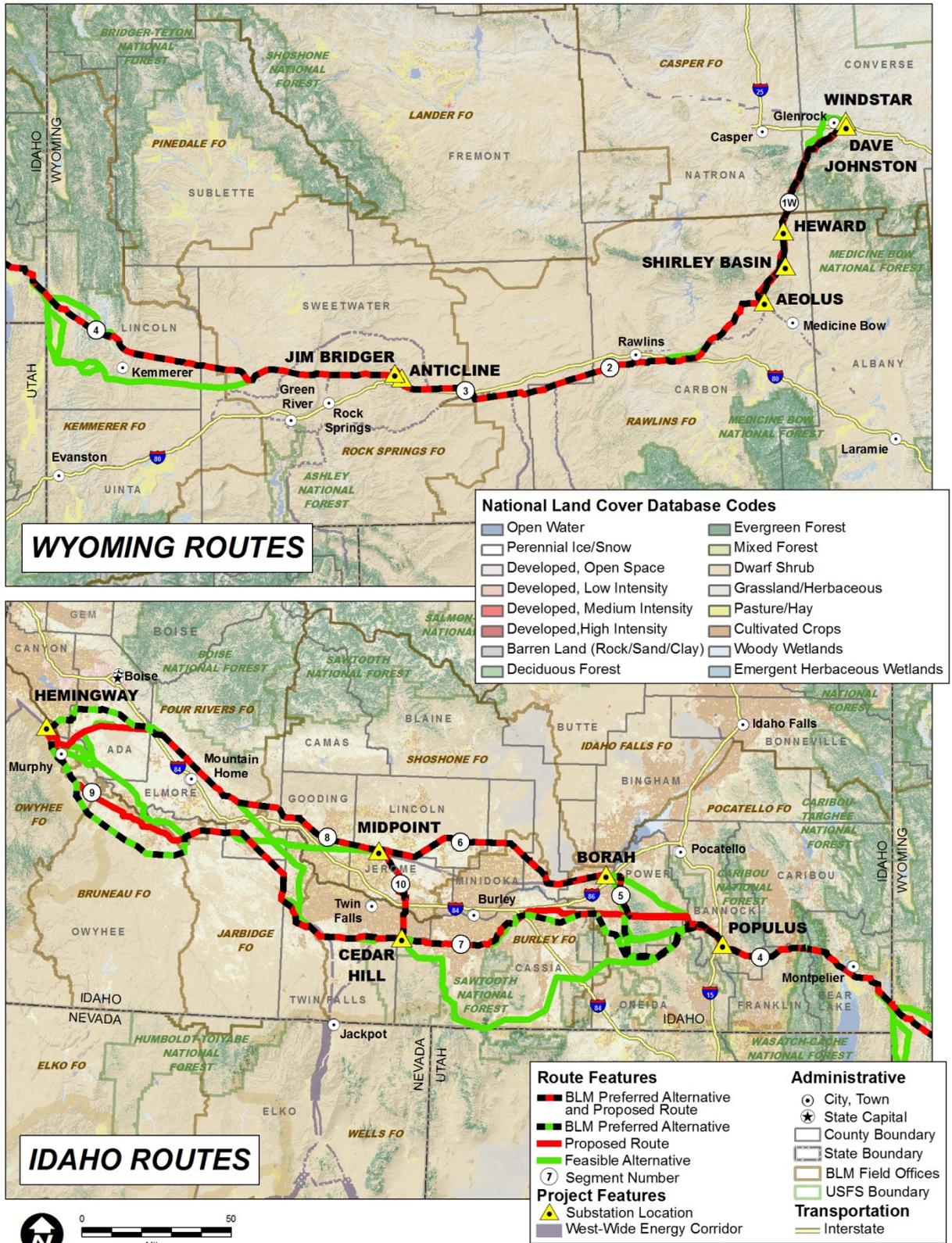


Figure 3.17-1. Generalized Land Use

3.17.1.2 Issues Related to Land Use and Recreation

The following issues related to land use were identified by the public during public scoping (Tetra Tech 2009) and comments on the Draft EIS, raised by federal and state agencies during scoping, or are issues that must be considered as stipulated in law or regulation. These issues are discussed in more detail in Section 3.17.2 – Direct and Indirect Effects, with the exception of the first two bullets below, which are discussed in Section 3.18 – Agriculture.

- Identify how the Project would affect CAFOs;
- Identify how the Project would affect current agricultural systems, including pivot irrigation and advanced positioning systems used in farm equipment;
- Identify residential areas, planned development, and specially designated uses that would be affected by the Project;
- Assess the effects of the Project on specially designated areas including NWRs, National Parks, National Monuments, SMAs, recreation sites, and roadless areas;
- Assess potential impacts to timber and fire management activities;
- Assess potential effects on Indian Reservations;
- Identify the extent to which the Project would be co-located with existing developments;
- Assess potential effects to hunting or fishing;
- Assess whether there would be any loss of recreational opportunities;
- Describe how the Project would adhere to local land use plans and policies;
- Assess potential Project impacts to military activities;
- Assess how construction of this transmission line would influence the installation of more developments and projects in the same area in the future;
- Indicate whether construction buffers around buildings would be maintained;
- Identify the permits and plan amendments that would be required for this project; and
- Describe the plan for re-entries and maintenance activities on private land that would likely continue over the life of the Project.

3.17.1.3 Regulatory Framework

The following section first summarizes county plans and the one city planning area crossed, then discusses state planning requirements, and concludes with a discussion of federally managed land use planning.

County and City Plans

Local guidance provided by county and community plans and policy documents is summarized below by county and community, and route segment.

Converse County, Wyoming (Segments 1W[a] and 1W[c])

Converse County does not have a comprehensive plan or any planning and zoning regulations. The construction of transmission lines, substations, or any other structures is not regulated by Converse County.

Natrona County, Wyoming (Segments 1W[a] and 1W[c])

The Natrona County Development Plan was approved in 1998 and amended in 2004. The Plan is concerned with “promoting regionalization of utilities to promote efficiency and to protect the environment.” The Rural Area Plan portion of the Development Plan (Chapter 7) states that transmission lines create unusable corridors in urban areas but have little effect in rural areas. Otherwise, transmission lines are not included in it.

The Natrona County Planning and Zoning Commission maintains the 2000 Zoning Resolution. This Resolution, last amended in 2011, requires conditional use permits (CUPs) for construction of transmission lines and substations in the Ranching, Agricultural, and Mining (RAM) Zoning District.

Carbon County, Wyoming (Segments 1W[a], 1W[c], and 2)

The current Carbon County Land Use Plan was adopted on November 9, 2010, and amended on April 3, 2012. The Plan mentions the federal approval process currently underway for the Project. A County land use goal is to achieve a balance between energy development (including transmission lines), agriculture, and the environment. The Carbon County Planning and Zoning Commission maintains the Carbon County Zoning Resolution, adopted January 2003 and last amended in April 2011. In the RAM Zoning District, utilities including above ground transmission lines over 69,000 volts, and substations require a CUP. Carbon County would require a CUP for expansion of the Aeolus and Heward Substations and construction of the transmission line.

Sweetwater County, Wyoming (Segments 2, 3, and 4)

Sweetwater County has two plans that address land use policies within the County: the 2002 Sweetwater County Comprehensive Plan and the Sweetwater County Growth Management Plan. The Sweetwater County Comprehensive Plan is the statutorily required land use plan that provides the land use policies that guide development within Sweetwater County as a whole. The Growth Management Plan is a subset of the 2002 Sweetwater County Comprehensive Plan. This plan focuses on development policies and plans that coordinate growth with the Cities of Rock Springs and Green River.

The Sweetwater County Zoning Resolution was re-adopted in March 2003 and last revised on May 1, 2012. Currently within the agricultural (A) zoning district, “transmission lines, stations, and towers” are a permitted use. Sweetwater County is planning an amendment to its Zoning Resolution to make “transmission towers, associated substations and support facilities” a conditional use. Permits and authorizations required by Sweetwater County include conditional use permits for work camps, construction yards, storage of explosives and other similar temporary uses; construction/use permits; grading permits; waste water permits; recordation of hazardous material storage; and compliance with the International Fire Code. Coordination with Sweetwater County Weed and Pest District is also encouraged.

Lincoln County, Wyoming (Segment 4)

The Lincoln County Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 2005 and amended in 2006. The County Plan has an objective to “promote and support the development of infrastructure in and around the towns and community centers for the creation and expansion of new and existing businesses.” A public land use policy attached to the plan lists an objective to “ensure public and private access and rights-of-way for utilities and transportation of people and products on and across public lands.” Transmission lines are not specifically mentioned in the County Plan.

The Lincoln County Land Use regulations were last amended in May 2011. Utility buildings over 800 square feet are permitted in the Industrial (I) and Public (P) Zoning districts and require a CUP. Utility buildings are defined as buildings and other structures used for housing switches, substations and other equipment for operation of utilities. The Project does not include any substations or buildings that do not meet the Lincoln County criteria. Lincoln County does not require a CUP for transmission lines.

Bear Lake County, Idaho (Segment 4)

Bear Lake County does not have a comprehensive plan. The Bear Lake County Land Use Ordinances require a CUP when located in agricultural, commercial, or industrial zones. The proposed Project would be located within an agricultural zone and would, therefore, require a CUP.

Franklin County, Idaho (Segment 4)

The Franklin County Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 2007. The Plan is strongly geared toward residential and commercial development and does not discuss utility corridors. The Franklin County Planning Department does not require a CUP for construction of transmission lines.

Bannock County, Idaho (Segments 4, 5, and 7)

The Bannock County Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 2008. The County Plan has a public services, facilities, and utilities goal to “[p]lan for adequate public facilities and services to meet future needs.” Otherwise, transmission lines are not included in the Plan. Bannock County does not require a CUP for transmission lines, but does require a zoning permit for substations and subsequent substation expansion. Expansion of the Populus Substation would require a permit.

Power County, Idaho (Segments 5 and 7)

Power County prepared a Comprehensive Plan in 1975, and adopted an updated Comprehensive Plan in June 2009 (Power County Board of Commissioners and Power County Planning and Zoning Commission 2009). As part of the 2009 update, the County adopted utility transmission corridors ordinances to provide a set of standards for the development and installation of natural gas and electric transmission structures and related facilities. Among other provisions, it establishes siting criteria and zones limiting transmission lines with capacities of 460 volts or higher.

Goal 2 under Public Services, Facilities, and Utilities in the Comprehensive Plan is as follows: “Allow for utility transmission corridors in appropriate locations so to minimize or

eliminate any adverse impact upon the County and its residents.” Strategies identified under this goal include:

(2) Require the location of any utility transmission devices in the manner which will provide the greatest benefit to Power County and its residents, and have the least impact upon private property.

(4) Discourage or prevent utility transmission devices from interfering with the efficient use of private property, particularly agriculture and residential property.

Power County Code 10-19-6:A provides “(a)s much as is reasonably possible, no utility transmission systems should be allowed in land zoned rural residential, commercial, light industrial, or agricultural.” Code 10-19-6:B provides that “Unless unreasonable, or absolutely necessary, no systems may be located on irrigated farmland. The planning and zoning commission should carefully consider alternatives to locating utility transmission structures on any type of working agricultural land, including CRP land, due to the potential adverse impact.”

Expansion of the Borah Substation would be covered by this ordinance. A special use permit would be required for construction of transmission lines and expansion of the Borah Substation. Transmission line construction would occur in Power County as part of Segment 5, including the Preferred Route, Proposed Route, and all alternatives. Parts of the Preferred Route and Proposed Route for Segment 7 and Alternatives 7A, 7B, and 7K would also cross Power County.

Oneida County, Idaho (Segment 5 and 7)

Oneida County has a Comprehensive Plan that is currently under revision, but the County does not have a date for completion. Oneida County does not require CUPs for construction of transmission lines.

Cassia County, Idaho (Segments 7, 9, and 10)

The Cassia County Comprehensive Plan was revised in 2006 and designed to guide development for the next 20 to 25 years. Cassia County’s Plan includes a brief discussion of electrical transmission corridors and indicates that collective efforts between the County and power companies would provide better siting options within the county. Cassia County requires a CUP for construction of transmission lines and substations.

Cassia County Public Use Policy Plan Resolution 2009-022 (C. Agriculture) states: “Federal and State governments should not ... obstruct agricultural opportunities on private land.” Cassia County recently adopted a new ordinance designating an Electrical Transmission Corridor Overlay Zone. The purpose of this overlay zone is to allow for the siting of electrical transmission lines exceeding 138 kV within Cassia County’s geographical boundaries and overriding any contrary provisions in current regulations for any underlying zone. The County will develop regulations governing the establishment and operation of transmission lines more than 138 kV. These regulations will be contained in Section 5, Chapter 9, Title 9 of the Cassia Code (9-5-5, Electrical Transmission Lines Siting and Performance Standards.) The Electrical Transmission Corridor Overlay Zone will be legally described and defined in Appendix 18 of Title 9 of

the Cassia County Code. As of September 2012, the planned additions to Title 9 of the Cassia Code had not yet been completed. The proposed Cedar Hill Substation would require a CUP.

Twin Falls County, Idaho (Segments 9 and 10)

The Twin Falls County Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 2008. The Plan lists a policy to “coordinate with utility companies to develop plans for energy services and public utility facilities for long term needs of the County.” Twin Falls County requires a CUP for substations but not for transmission lines.

Lincoln County, Idaho (Segment 8)

The Lincoln County Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 2008. The Plan includes, as an appendix, a map provided by Idaho Power showing future additional transmission lines. Lincoln County requires CUPs for construction of transmission lines and substations within the County’s Agricultural (A-40) Zone.

Gooding County, Idaho (Segment 8)

The Gooding County Comprehensive Plan was adopted on March 8, 1999. The Plan was designed to provide development guidance until 2015. A revised Gooding County Comprehensive Plan, approved in May 2010, references the Gateway West Project and includes Goal 13.1 to “work with power companies to establish a corridor which is in the interest of both parties” and the associated implementation action to “(u)pdate County Zoning Ordinances to accommodate utility providers’ application for long-term ‘Special Use Permits.’” Goal 13.2 to “(p)romote public health, safety and general welfare in the designated corridors” has the following associated implementation action: “(a) ‘Special Use Permit’ will be required for power transmission lines” (Gooding County 2010).

Elmore County, Idaho (Segments 8 and 9)

Elmore County established the 2004 Comprehensive Growth and Development Plan adopted in 2004, and amended on October 3, 2007, mainly to address land use for planned communities. The Elmore Plan lists three goals for electrical power:

- Work with Idaho Power Company to develop three-phase power capability in all areas of the County and all communities;
- Encourage local power companies to upgrade distribution systems for reliable service to outlying areas of the County; and
- Support creation of wind energy farms in appropriate areas of the County.

Elmore County adopted a zoning and development ordinance on May 13, 2009, which requires a CUP for the construction of transmission lines and substations. Other facilities, such as storage yards, would also require a CUP.

Ada County, Idaho (Segment 8)

The Ada County Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 2007. Due to population growth, much of the Ada Plan addresses managing that growth with land use guidelines and improvements to transportation and infrastructure. A stated goal in the Ada Plan is to “promote the development of energy services and public utility facilities to meet public needs”. The Plan includes a map of Idaho Power facilities, including a future 500-kV

line in southern Ada County. Construction of transmission lines in Ada County would require a CUP.

Canyon County, Idaho (Segment 8)

The Canyon County 2020 Comprehensive Plan was adopted in May 2011. The Comprehensive Plan includes a number of related policies, including:

- Encourage the co-location and joint use of utility corridors and facilities;
- Promote the development of energy services and public utility facilities to meet public needs;
- Encourage the placement of electric utility facilities on public right-of-ways; and
- Support siting of utility corridors within identified or designated transportation corridors.

Construction of transmission lines in Canyon County would require a CUP.

City of Kuna, Idaho (Segment 8)

The City of Kuna approved a Comprehensive Plan update in 2009 that included an accompanying Future Land Use map. This Plan update includes a new electric transmission corridor component as required by Idaho State Code and in response to the Energy Policy Act of 2005. This new section includes a goal and several supporting objectives to ensure that electric transmission corridors are considered in land use planning decisions, and to minimize the adverse impacts of transmission corridors on the community. A version of the Future Land Use map was prepared to show the proposed Gateway West route through the southern reaches of the city but this map was not adopted as part of the Comprehensive Plan update. Public utilities are subject to a Special Use Permit.

Owyhee County, Idaho (Segments 8 and 9)

The Owyhee County Comprehensive Plan was published on February 11, 2002. An economic goal is to protect and improve infrastructure so that agriculture, grazing, and industry will generate income. Transmission lines are not mentioned in the Plan but the County states that a CUP would be required. Construction of substations is permitted in the County's Multi-use district and would require a CUP in the Agricultural, Residential, Commercial, or Industrial districts. Additions to the Hemingway Substation would occur within the existing fenced substation yard and would not require a CUP.

Jerome County, Idaho (Segments 8 and 10)

The current Jerome County Comprehensive Plan was adopted on January 1, 1997. The County's economy is based largely on agricultural production and related industries. The Plan indicated that dairy farming was the leading industry. From a power perspective, the Plan states a goal to "provide County facilities that are adequate for the needs of citizens." A CUP would not be required for construction of transmission lines or expansion of the Midpoint Substation.

City Impact Areas

According to Section 50-222 of the Idaho Code, an area of city impact must be established before a city may annex adjacent territory. Each county and city adopts by ordinance a map identifying an area of city impact within the relevant unincorporated area of the county. In defining an area of city impact, the following factors shall be considered: 1) trade area; 2) geographic factors; and 3) areas that can reasonably be expected to be annexed to the city in the future. Each city adopting an area of city impact must identify the comprehensive plan and zoning ordinances that will apply within the established area of impact.

Idaho counties crossed by the Preferred Route, Proposed Route, or Route Alternatives with city impact areas include Bear Lake, Franklin, Bannock, Oneida, Power, Cassia, Jerome, Lincoln, Twin Falls, Gooding, Owyhee, Elmore, Ada, and Canyon. The Preferred, Proposed, or Alternative Routes cross the city impact areas for the cities of Downey (Bannock County), Melba (Canyon County), and Kuna (Ada County) (see Figure 3.17-2).

State Rules for Land Use

Wyoming

In Wyoming, land use permits must first be obtained from counties and local governments where applicable, (see above). The siting process then proceeds through the Wyoming PSC, which has jurisdiction over transmission lines greater than 69 kV and longer than 3 miles. Lines greater than 230 kV require public notice and hearing.

If a utility wishes to construct a transmission line, it must submit an application for a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity. As part of that process, the applicant must demonstrate the necessity of the additional service and the financial ability to complete the project. If the proposed line requires condemnation of land, the Certificate must be obtained prior to any condemnation hearings (Wyoming Statute 75-2-205[f]). There is no time limit for the PSC to make a decision once an application is submitted. Once the PSC makes a final decision, it issues or denies the certificate and, unless otherwise prescribed, any order the PSC makes is effective 30 days after its issuance (Wyoming Statute 75-2-213) (Western Interstate Energy Board 2009).

The Wyoming Board of Land Commissioners is responsible for the direction, control, leasing, and disposal of state lands. The Board currently manages approximately 3.6 million surface acres and 4.2 million mineral acres of state lands. The Board of Land Commissioners leases virtually all of the state trust lands for mineral production and grazing and agricultural use, with a small portion leased for industrial, commercial, or recreational use. Easements would be required for the transmission line where it would cross state lands. Revenues from trust land activities are used to support the state's schools and institutions (<http://slf-web.state.wy.us/admin/boards.aspx>).

The WDEQ's Industrial Siting Division administers the state's Industrial Information and Siting Act. The Industrial Siting Council reviews the socioeconomic and environmental impacts of industrial facilities before issuing a permit for construction. Permits are required for all projects with a construction cost of \$190.2 million or more (Wyoming Statute 35-12, <http://deq.state.wy.us/isd/>) including collector systems (transmission lines) with voltages greater than or equal to 160 kV (<http://deq.state.wy.us/isd/>). Any facility for which a permit

is required will be constructed, operated, and maintained in conformity with the permit and any terms, conditions, and modifications contained in the permit.

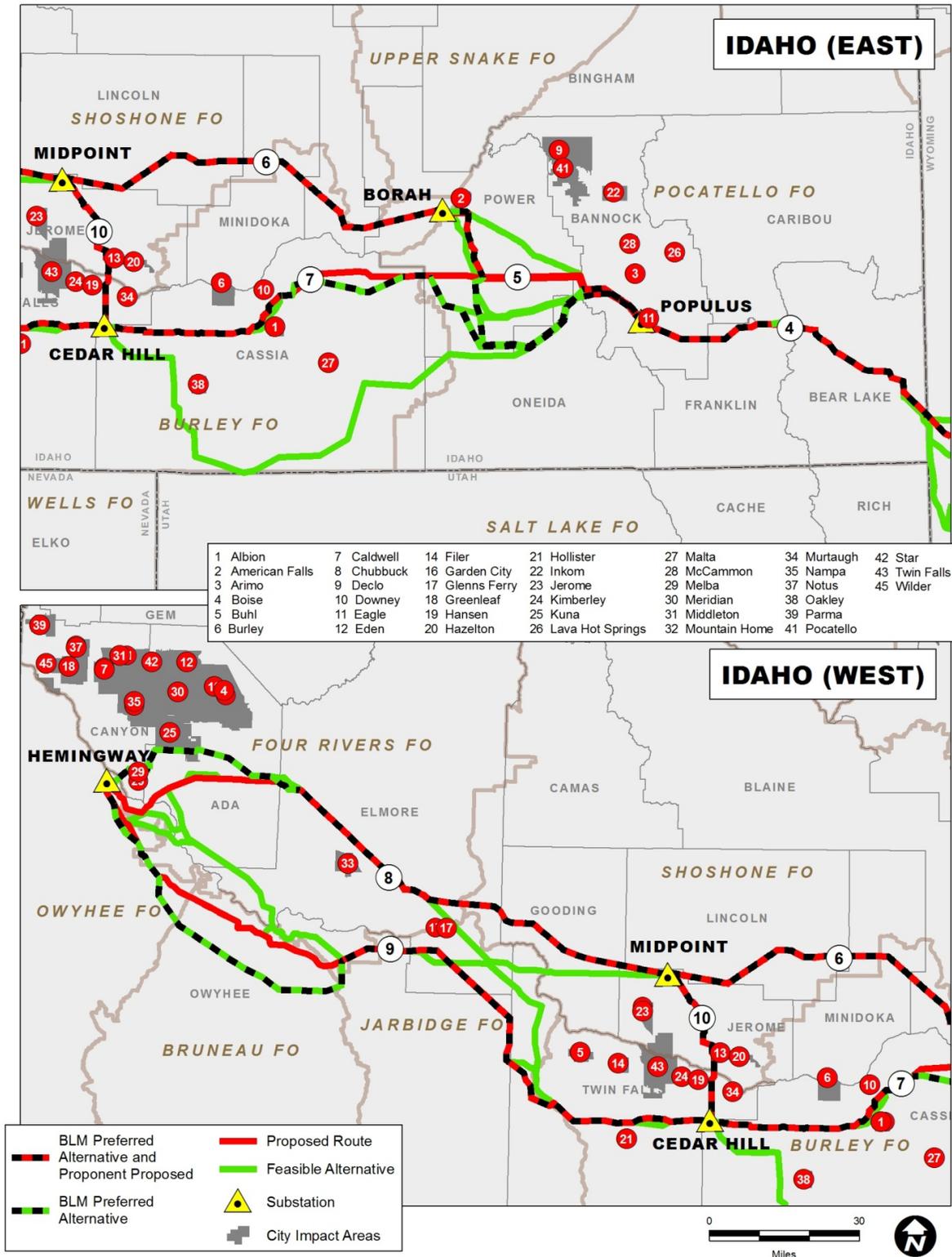


Figure 3.17-2. Idaho City Impact Areas

Idaho

The IPUC regulates siting of major transmission facilities by public utilities in Idaho through a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (Idaho Title 61-526). Siting is regulated at the local level by county and other local governments. Idaho Title 67-65, Local Land Use Planning, requires all city and county governments to establish local planning procedures and land use regulations. The Local Land Use Planning Act requires every city and county to enact a comprehensive plan; zoning ordinance; subdivision ordinance; area of city impact ordinances; and regulations for confined animal feeding operations (counties only). The Act also grants cities and counties the authority to adopt certain laws and policies at the discretion of the governing board. As a result, local regulation of transmission line siting may vary from one local government to the next, with different requirements and different processes required to amend zoning ordinances and comprehensive plans. Local authority siting requirements for transmission lines and substations are discussed by county and municipality above.

The State of Idaho owns and manages more than 2 million acres of endowment lands that provide financial support to public schools and other institutions. The IDL manages these trust lands under the governance of the Idaho Board of Land Commissioners, which consists of Idaho's Governor, Secretary of State, Attorney General, Superintendent of Public Instruction, and State Controller. The Board of Land Commissioners acts in the capacity of trustees on behalf of the beneficiary schools and other institutions to manage the state's endowment lands.

All endowment assets of the State of Idaho, per the state constitution, must be managed "in such manner as will secure the maximum long term financial return" to the trust beneficiaries. The *State Trust Lands Asset Management Plan* (Idaho State Board of Land Commissioners 2007) identifies utility and roadway ROWs as valid uses of endowment lands. However, any lease on endowment land would need to be negotiated with the IDL. Table 3.17-1 identifies the Preferred Route, Proposed Route, and alternatives that pass through Idaho endowment land.

Table 3.17-1. Idaho Endowment Land

Segment Number	Segment/Alternative	Total Miles
4	Preferred/Proposed–Total Length	8.1
5	Preferred Route – Total Length	0.8
	Proposed–Total Length	3.5
	Proposed–Comparison Portion for Alternative 5A,B	3.0
	Alternative 5A	0.3
	Alternative 5B	0.3
	Proposed–Comparison Portion for Alternative 5C	3.5
	Alternative 5C	0.7
	Proposed–Comparison Portion for Alternative 5D	0.5
7	Preferred Route – Total Length	2.0
	Proposed–Total Length	4.3
	Proposed–Comparison Portion for Alternative 7A,B	3.8
	Alternative 7C	1.0
	Proposed–Comparison Portion for Alternative 7D	0.5
	Alternative 7D	1.0
	Proposed–Comparison Portion for Alternative 7K	4.3
	Alternative 7K	7.8

Table 3.17-1. Idaho Endowment Land (continued)

Segment Number	Segment/Alternative	Total Miles
8	Preferred Route – Total Length	11.8
	Proposed–Total Length	9.0
	Proposed–Comparison Portion for Alternative 8A	2.0
	Alternative 8A	6.2
	Alternative 8B	2.8
	Alternative 8C	0.3
	Alternative 8D	1.0
9	Preferred Route – Total Length	4.7
	Proposed–Total Length	4.6
	Proposed–Comparison Portion for Alternative 9B	1.1
	Alternative 9B	1.0
	Proposed–Comparison Portion for Alternative 9C	1.1
	Proposed–Comparison Portion for Alternative 9D,F,G,H	1.1
	Alternative 9D	3.9
	Alternative 9F	3.9
	Alternative 9G	3.9
	Alternative 9H	3.9
	Proposed–Comparison Portion for Alternative 9E (revised)	1.1
	Alternative 9E (revised)	1.2

Rows missing from this table indicate that no Idaho Endowment Lands occur along that Segment or Alternative.

Federal Lands

Land uses on federal lands in the Analysis Area are governed by various land use plans, including BLM RMPs and MFPs, and Forest Service Forest Plans. These plans typically establish goals, objectives, and standards that apply to the land and resources managed under the plan. The Forest Service and the BLM have determined that, depending on the route selected, the proposed Project would not conform to certain aspects of some of the RMPs and MFPs that guide management of the lands crossed by the Preferred Route, Proposed Route and/or Route Alternatives. Approval of a project that has elements that are not in conformance with an applicable management plan requires consideration of an amendment at the same time that the project is being analyzed. Proposed plan amendments for the Proposed Route, and/or Route Alternatives are discussed for each RMP and MFP in Appendix F-1 and each Forest Plan in Appendix F-2.

Forest Service Plans

A Forest Plan provides direction for all resource management activities on a national forest. An approved Forest Plan is the product of a process established by Congress in the National Forest Management Act. A plan allocates land for timber production, oil and gas leasing, and other resource management activities. It designates areas for recreation and recommends the establishment of wilderness, WSRs, and other special designations. Forest Plans establish standards for resource management, either forest-wide or for specific management areas. The Preferred Route, Proposed Route, and Route Alternatives cross three NFs: the Medicine Bow-Routt, Caribou-Targhee, and Sawtooth NFs.

Medicine Bow NF Revised Land and Resource Management Plan (Segments 1W)

Established in December 2003, the Medicine Bow Forest Plan (Forest Service 2003b) provides direction for the management of approximately 1.1 million acres in

southeastern Wyoming. Timber harvest and livestock grazing have been historical uses on the forest since before the turn of the century. The Forest provides a wide variety of recreation activities, such as hunting, snowmobiling, skiing, hiking, and camping. The primary purpose of land and resource planning on the Medicine Bow-Routt NFs is to ensure sustainable ecosystems, provide multiple benefits to people, provide scientific and technical assistance, and provide effective public service.

Revised Forest Plan for the Caribou NF (Segment 4)

The Caribou Forest Plan (Forest Service 2003a) addresses management of the Caribou portion of the Caribou-Targhee NF, which includes land within the Cache NF managed by the Caribou-Targhee NF. The 2003 Revised Plan updated the 1985 Caribou Forest Plan's guidance to better reflect changing public values and current science. The Caribou NF is located primarily in southeastern Idaho, within the northern extent of the Great Basin Region, with small amounts of land in Wyoming and Utah. The Caribou portion of the Caribou-Targhee NF includes land within 11 counties in 3 states. Several urban centers use the Caribou-Targhee NF for recreation and commercial uses.

The Caribou NF is an area of high, rugged mountain ranges rising sharply from semi-arid sagebrush plains and agricultural valleys. Forestlands occupy approximately 50 percent of the Caribou NF, mainly above 6,000 feet in elevation. The Caribou Forest Plan establishes direction to ensure coordination of multiple uses (outdoor recreation, range/livestock grazing, timber harvest, watershed, wildlife, fish, mineral extraction, and wilderness) and the sustained yield of products and services (16 U.S.C. 1604[e]). The National Forest provides a wide range of recreation opportunities including hunting, camping, OHV and other trail uses, and snowmobile use. The Revised Forest Plan focuses small landscape planning on the mix of activities and projects needed to meet Forest-wide goals and implement the Forest Plan.

Sawtooth NF Revised Land and Resource Management Plan (Segment 7)

The Sawtooth Forest Plan (Forest Service 2003c, as amended in 2012) guides natural resource management activities on NFS lands on the Sawtooth. The purpose of the Forest Plan is to provide management direction to ensure sustainable ecosystems that provide beneficial goods and services to the public. The Sawtooth NF is located in south-central Idaho and administers approximately 2.1 million acres of federal lands, including an estimated 218,000 acres in the Sawtooth Wilderness. A wide range of landforms, elevation, and climate occur across the Forest and provide a wide variety of vegetative conditions. Timber harvest and grazing contribute to the economic health of the region. The Forest serves as an important recreation destination, receiving approximately 1.3 million visits per year. Land management on the Forest is driven by the goals and objectives listed in Chapter III of the Forest Plan.

BLM Resource Management Plans and Management Framework Plans

BLM's land use planning process (43 CFR 1610) combines Section 202 of the FLPMA and NEPA regulations. To ensure the best balance of uses and resource protections for America's public lands, the BLM undertakes extensive land use planning through a collaborative approach with local, state, and Tribal governments; the general public; and stakeholder groups. BLM-managed land use plans include both RMPs and MFPs.

These documents provide land use planning and management direction on a broad scale and guide future actions on BLM-managed lands. Land use plan decisions consist of 1) desired outcomes (goals and objectives) and 2) allowable uses and management actions. Land use plans are used by managers and the public to: allocate resources and determine appropriate multiple uses for the public lands; develop a strategy to manage and protect resources; and set up systems to monitor and evaluate the status of resources and the effectiveness of management practices over time.

Land use plans and planning decisions are the basis for every on-the-ground action the BLM undertakes. Land use plans ensure that the public lands are managed under the principles of multiple use and sustained yield except in those areas that have been designated for special management such as the SRBOP. The SRBOP, for example, is managed for the specific purposes outlined in the enabling legislation, which include the conservation, protection, and enhancement of raptor populations and habitat. As required by FLPMA and BLM policy, public lands must be managed in a manner that protects the quality of scientific, scenic, historical, ecological, environmental, air and atmospheric, water resource, and archaeological values; that, where appropriate, preserves and protects certain public lands in their natural condition; that provides food and habitat for fish and wildlife and domestic animals; that provides for outdoor recreation and human occupancy and use; and that recognizes the nation’s need for domestic sources of minerals, food, timber, and fiber from the public lands by encouraging collaboration and public participation throughout the planning process (BLM 2005a).

The Preferred Route, Proposed Route, and Route Alternatives cross BLM-administered lands managed under 11 different RMPs and 5 different MFPs. These RMPs and MFPs are identified by name and segment in Table 3.17-2. The plans identified in the table generally proceed from east to west.

Table 3.17-2. BLM Management Plan Jurisdiction Crossed by the Proposed Route

Resource Management Plan	Segment	Management Framework Plan	Segment
Casper	1W	Twin Falls	9, 10
Rawlins	1W, 2, 3	Bennett Hills/Timmerman Hills	8
Green River	3, 4	Kuna	8
Kemmerer	4	Bruneau	8
Pocatello	4, 5, 7		
Monument	6, 8, 10		
Cassia	7, 9, 10		
Jarbidge	8, 9		
SRBOP	8, 9		
Owyhee	8, 9		

BLM Casper Resource Management Plan (Segment1W)

The Casper RMP (BLM 2007a) provides direction for managing public lands under the jurisdiction of the Casper FO in east-central Wyoming. The RMP planning area encompasses approximately 8.5 million acres in Natrona, Converse, Platte, and Goshen Counties. Other land management agencies in the area are the Bureau of Reclamation, Department of Defense, USFWS, Forest Service, and NPS.

The RMP identifies the following four key planning issues regarding management of resources or uses on BLM-managed lands within the Casper RMP planning area:

- Energy and mineral resources—suitability and level of intensity that the lands of the Casper FO should be explored for energy development and mineral extraction;
- Vegetation and habitat management—including management for the reduction of fuel loads and increase of forest and rangeland health, as well as conservation of protected species while serving all other land users;
- Land ownership adjustments, access and transportation—such as travel management to serve the public for commercial, recreational and general use, while also protecting cultural and natural resources;
- Special designation—where necessary, to protect unique sensitive resources.

The Casper RMP designates areas for limiting OHV use on BLM-managed lands. The Preferred/Proposed Route and Route Alternatives would cross only through lands designated for OHV use on existing roads and trails, with the possible exception of the Bates Hole MA, portions of which restrict OHV use to specifically designated roads and trails only.

BLM Rawlins Resource Management Plan (Segments 1W, 2, and 3)

The Rawlins RMP (BLM 2008a) provides direction for managing public lands under the jurisdiction of the Rawlins FO in southeastern Wyoming. The Rawlins RMP planning area covers approximately 11.2 million acres in Sweetwater, Carbon, Albany, and Laramie Counties. Other land management agencies in the area are the Bureau of Reclamation, Department of Defense, and the USFWS.

The RMP establishes and addresses the following eight key planning issues regarding management of resources or uses on BLM-managed lands within the Rawlins RMP planning area:

- Development of energy resources and minerals-related issues, including solar and wind as well as oil, gas and coal;
- Special management designations, including five WSAs, four ACECs, three Wild Horse Herd Management Areas, and three National Natural Landmarks designated by the NPS;
- Public access and transportation systems, especially with regards to the legal and physical accessibility of resources on BLM-managed lands;
- Wildland-urban interface;
- Management of special status species, including the identification of areas where resource activities conflict with threatened and endangered species habitat;
- Water quality, such as issues arising from the demand for water used in resource extraction activities, including contaminated discharge water;

- Vegetation management, especially how it relates to special status species habitat as well as livestock, big game, and wild horse grazing, and its role in erosion control; and
- Recreation and cultural resources, including potential conflicts between recreation and resource uses of the land, and the impact on the viewshed of development along historic transportation routes of the area.

The Rawlins RMP designates areas for limiting OHV use on BLM-managed lands.

Green River Resource Management Plan (Segments 3 and 4)

The Green River RMP, completed in October 1997 (BLM 1997), provides direction for managing public lands under the jurisdiction of the Rock Springs FO in southwestern Wyoming. The RMP planning area encompasses approximately 3.6 million acres in Sweetwater, Lincoln, Sublette, Fremont, and Uinta Counties.

The Green River RMP designates areas for limiting OHV use on BLM-managed lands. It is not anticipated that the Preferred/Proposed Route or Route Alternatives would cross these OHV exclusion areas. The Green River RMP also designates six SRMAs, which would also not be crossed by the Preferred/Proposed Route or Route Alternatives for Segment 4.

Kemmerer Resource Management Plan (Segment 4)

The Kemmerer RMP (BLM 2010b) provides direction for managing public lands under the jurisdiction of the Kemmerer FO in southwest Wyoming. The RMP planning area encompasses 3.9 million acres in Lincoln, Uinta, and Sweetwater Counties. The 2010 RMP and resulting ROD are intended to provide land use planning and management direction at a broad scale and guide future actions. The 2010 RMP supersedes the 1986 Kemmerer RMP and subsequent amendments. Land use plan decisions consist of desired outcomes (goals and objectives) and allowable uses and management actions. Key planning issues in the preparation of the RMP include energy and mineral resources; vegetation and habitat management; land ownership adjustments; access and transportation; NHT management; and special designation for unique or sensitive resources. The RMP increases conservation of physical, biological, and heritage resources and emphasizes moderate constraints on resource issues.

Pocatello Resource Management Plan (Segments 4, 5, and 7)

The Pocatello RMP was updated and revised in 2012, with final approval on July 10, 2012 (BLM 2012b). It replaces the 1981 Malad MFP, as well as the 1988 Pocatello RMP. This plan guides future management of public lands, federal minerals, resources, and resource uses administered by the BLM Pocatello FO. The Pocatello FO, located in southeastern Idaho, covers all or portions of Bannock, Bear Lake, Bingham, Bonneville, Caribou, Cassia, Franklin, Oneida, and Power Counties, and encompasses 613,800 acres of public land, including the lands surrounding the city of Pocatello. The RMP applies only to public lands in the planning area. The RMP addresses the following issues identified by planning team members, interagency consultation, public input, and review by BLM managers: OHV use on public lands; BLM management of mining and reclamation (including control of hazardous substances); process for acquiring and maintaining access to public lands; private property rights; balance of

recreation use and quality; management of sagebrush ecosystems for sage-grouse and other sagebrush species; and balancing social and economic benefits of commodity and amenity uses. Management goals and objectives are also provided for natural, biological, and cultural resources; resource uses (e.g., forestry and recreation); and special administrative designations.

Monument Resource Management Plan (Segments 6, 8, and 10)

The Monument RMP (BLM 1986d) provides direction for management of public lands within the Monument Planning Area, which encompasses 2,059,441 acres of land north of the Snake River in south-central Idaho. The Monument RMP planning area includes lands that are part of the Shoshone FO, as well as lands that are part of the Burley FO. The RMP planning area includes all of Jerome and Minidoka Counties and portions of Gooding, Lincoln, Blaine, Butte, and Power Counties. Approximately 57 percent of the planning area is public land administered by the BLM, 2 percent is land administered by other federal agencies, 3 percent is land belonging to the State of Idaho, and 38 percent is private land.

The RMP includes goals that allow for a variety of resource uses within the planning area. Production and use of commodity resources and commercial use authorization is permitted, while protecting fragile resources and wildlife habitat, preserving natural systems and cultural values, and allowing for nonconsumptive resource uses. The RMP also includes management prescriptions to guide resource management activities within the planning area.

Cassia Resource Management Plan (Segments 7, 9, and 10)

The Cassia RMP (BLM 1985a) provides direction for management of public lands in a 1.6 million-acre planning area located south of the Snake River in south-central Idaho. This area is located entirely within the Burley FO. Approximately 97 percent of the planning area is within Cassia County, with 2 percent in Oneida County and less than 1 percent in each of Twin Falls and Power Counties. Twenty-nine percent of the planning area is public land administered by BLM; 22 percent is administered by the Forest Service, USFWS, and Bureau of Reclamation; and 5 percent is owned by the State of Idaho. The remaining land is privately owned.

The planning area's local economy is based on agriculture and agricultural-supporting industries. Domestic livestock grazing is the area's primary agricultural use involving nearly all of the public lands in the planning area. The Cassia RMP (BLM 1985a) divides the planning area into 14 management areas for the purposes of organizing and presenting its planning decisions. A management area generally contains lands having similar resources, features, and characteristics that can be effectively managed as a unit. Resource management guidelines are used to direct BLM management actions on public lands. The Cassia RMP includes policies and resource management guidelines for the management of the following specific resources: air quality; cultural resources; economic and social considerations; fire management; fish and wildlife; forest management; geology, energy and minerals management; motorized vehicle access and use; public utilities; rangeland management; recreation; transportation; visual resources management; and watershed management.

Twin Falls Management Framework Plan (Segments 9 and 10)

The Twin Falls MFP (BLM 1982) provides direction for management of resource activities on public lands administered by the BLM within the western portion of the Burley FO. The MFP includes objectives and recommendations for the following activities: lands, minerals (oil and gas, geothermal, saleable), cultural resource management, forestry, recreation management, visual resource management, wilderness management, natural history resource management, range management, wildlife (big game, upland game, sage grouse, sharp-tailed grouse, quail, aquatics, wetland-riparian, furbearers, waterfowl, fisheries, raptors, general, non-game), watershed management, and fire management.

Bennett Hills/Timmerman Hills Management Framework Plan (Segment 8)

The Bennett Hills/Timmerman Hills MFP (BLM 1980) provides direction for management of resource activities on public lands administered by the BLM within the western portion of the Shoshone FO. The MFP includes objectives and recommendations for the following activities: lands, minerals, recreation, wildlife, range management, and watershed management.

Jarbidge Resource Management Plan (Segments 8 and 9)

The current Jarbidge RMP (BLM 1987), which is currently being revised, is designed to guide the management of public land resources in the Jarbidge FO and ensure that the public lands and resources are planned and managed in accordance with the principles of multiple use and sustained yield. The FO includes 2,100,519 acres of land in south-central Idaho and northern Nevada. Approximately 81 percent of the lands in this area are public lands administered by BLM in Elmore, Owyhee, and Twin Falls Counties, Idaho. Five percent of the remaining lands are state-owned.

The plan focuses on nine issues identified by the public: land tenure and adjustments; livestock grazing; management of wildlife resources (including riparian and aquatic habitats); wilderness management; recreation; soil, air, and water; energy and mineral exploitation and development; fire management; and special designations. Special management concerns also addressed in the plan include cultural resource protection, paleontologic resource protection, timber management, and social and economic changes. The Plan includes objectives and management actions for 16 separate management areas called multiple use areas (MUAs) and three ACECs.

In August 2010, the Jarbidge FO released a proposed Draft RMP and EIS that analyzes management alternatives that could be used to guide the multiple-use management of all resources and uses in the Jarbidge FO. Completion of this proposed plan, once approved, will result in a revised RMP for the Jarbidge FO.

Kuna Management Framework Plan (Segment 8)

The Kuna MFP (BLM 1983a) provides direction for management of resource activities on public lands administered by the BLM within a portion of the Four Rivers FO. The MFP includes objectives and recommendations for the following activities: lands, minerals, range management, watershed management, wildlife-terrestrial, wildlife-aquatic, cultural resource management, recreation, visual resource management, and transportation/support.

Morley Nelson Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area Resource Management Plan (Segments 8 and 9)

The SRBOP RMP (BLM 2008b) provides guidance for the public lands and resources within the SRBOP, which are managed as a part of the BLM Four Rivers FO. The SRBOP contains approximately 485,600 acres of public land extending 81 miles along the Snake River in the Idaho counties of Ada, Canyon, Elmore, and Owyhee. The SRBOP includes the approximately 142,000-acre OCTC, used by the IDANG for military training since 1953.

The SRBOP contains the greatest concentration of nesting raptors in North America, as well as the greatest density of prairie falcons. The area is a unique habitat for birds of prey because the cliffs of the Snake River Canyon provide ideal nesting sites, while the adjacent upland plateau supports unusually large populations of small mammal prey species.

The SRBOP is managed by BLM under the concept of dominant use rather than multiple use. This means that prior to authorizing uses, BLM determines the compatibility of those uses with the purposes for which the SRBOP was established. The purpose of the SRBOP is to ensure that public land uses are planned for and managed in accordance with the requirements of P.L. 103-64, which established the SRBOP National Conservation Area in 1993 for the "...conservation, protection and enhancement of raptor populations and habitats and the natural and environmental resources and values associated therewith." The SRBOP RMP replaced portions of the 1983 Kuna MFP, 1983 Bruneau MFP, 1987 Jarbidge RMP, and 1999 Owyhee RMP that cover the SRBOP, and replaced the 1996 SRBOP Management Plan. Specific management decisions for the public lands within the SRBOP include:

- Protecting remaining shrub communities through aggressive wildfire suppression;
- Restoring up to 130,000 acres of shrub habitat;
- Completing up to 100,000 acres of fuels management projects;
- Modifying IDANG training activities by limiting vehicular maneuver training to non-shrub communities to protect existing shrub communities, and by providing 4,100 acres of additional training area to enhance military maneuvers impacted by restrictions; and
- Area and use designations for livestock grazing, OHV use, ROWs, visual resource management, and energy corridors.

The approved RMP emphasizes the restoration and rehabilitation of all non-shrub areas outside the OCTC to improve raptor and raptor prey habitat while imposing moderate restrictions on recreation, military training, and commodity uses.

Bruneau Management Framework Plan (Segment 9)

The Bruneau MFP (BLM 1983b) provides direction for management of resource activities on public lands administered by the BLM within the Bruneau FO. The MFP includes objectives and recommendations for the following activities: lands, minerals, forest products, range management, watershed management, wildlife-terrestrial, wildlife-aquatic, cultural resource management, recreation, visual resource management, and wilderness.

Owyhee Resource Management Plan (Segments 8 and 9)

The Owyhee RMP (BLM 1999) is a general RMP for BLM-managed public lands in western Owyhee County in southwestern Idaho. The Owyhee FO manages 1,779,492 acres. This total includes 1,320,032 acres administered by BLM and 136,936 acres administered by the State of Idaho. The FO contains the northern extent of the Owyhee Mountain Range and lies within what is often referred to as the Columbia Plateau, an elevated plateau with mountains that are separated by canyons draining to the Pacific Ocean via the Snake and Columbia Rivers.

The Owyhee RMP establishes guidance for managing a broad spectrum of land uses and allocations including livestock grazing management; wild horse management; land tenure adjustments; OHV designations; wild, scenic, and recreational river designations; and ACECs. The RMP contains resource objectives, land use allocations, management actions, and direction needed to achieve program and multiple use goals.

The Owyhee FO is currently developing a travel management plan for motorized routes on non-wilderness public lands in Owyhee County, west of the Bruneau River. Once completed, this will result in an updated RMP for the Owyhee FO.

Military Operations Areas and Military Training Routes

A military operations area is “airspace established outside Class A airspace to separate or segregate certain nonhazardous military activities from instrument flight rules traffic and to identify for visual flight rules traffic where these activities are conducted” (14 CFR Part 1.1). Military operations areas are designed for routine training or testing maneuvers. A military operations area is a type of special use airspace, other than restricted airspace or prohibited airspace, where military operations justify limitations on aircraft not participating in those operations.

The designation of special use airspaces identifies areas where military activity occurs, provides for segregation of that activity from other fliers, and allows charting to keep airspace users informed. Local flight service facilities maintain current schedules and contacts for the agency controlling each military operations area. Military operations areas are often positioned over isolated, rural areas to provide ground separation for any noise nuisance or potential accident debris. Each designated military operations area appears on the relevant sectional charts, along with its normal hours of operation, lower and upper altitudes of operation, controlling authority contact, and using agency.

The Owyhee and Jarbidge Military Operations Areas are located in the southern portion of Owyhee County, Idaho, south of Segment 9 (see Figure 3.17-3). Mountain Home Air Force Base is located in southwestern Elmore County, Idaho, in the vicinity of Segments 8 and 9 (Figure 3.17-3). The OCTC is located within the boundaries of the SRBOP in Ada County, Idaho, in the vicinity of Segment 8 (see Figure 3.17-9).

Military Training Routes (MTRs) are aerial corridors used solely by military aviation for training flights. The routes are the result of a joint venture between the FAA and the Department of Defense to provide for high-speed, low-level military activities. MTRs are divided into Instrument Routes (IR) and Visual Routes (VR). Each route is identified by either of these two letters, followed by either four digits for routes below 1,500 feet

above ground level (AGL), or three digits for routes extending for at least one leg above 1,500 feet AGL. IR routes are flown under Air Traffic Control, while VR routes are not. Each route is defined by a number of geographical coordinates. MTRs are individually operated through one of the local military air bases.

One MTR is located within the vicinity of Segment 7. IR-302/305/VR-1304/1305 (IR-302) is located in Minidoka, Blaine, and Cassia Counties, Idaho, and Box Elder County, Utah (see Figure 3.17-3). Unless noted on the air navigation chart, aircraft may fly as low as 100-110 AGL in the Project area along these routes.

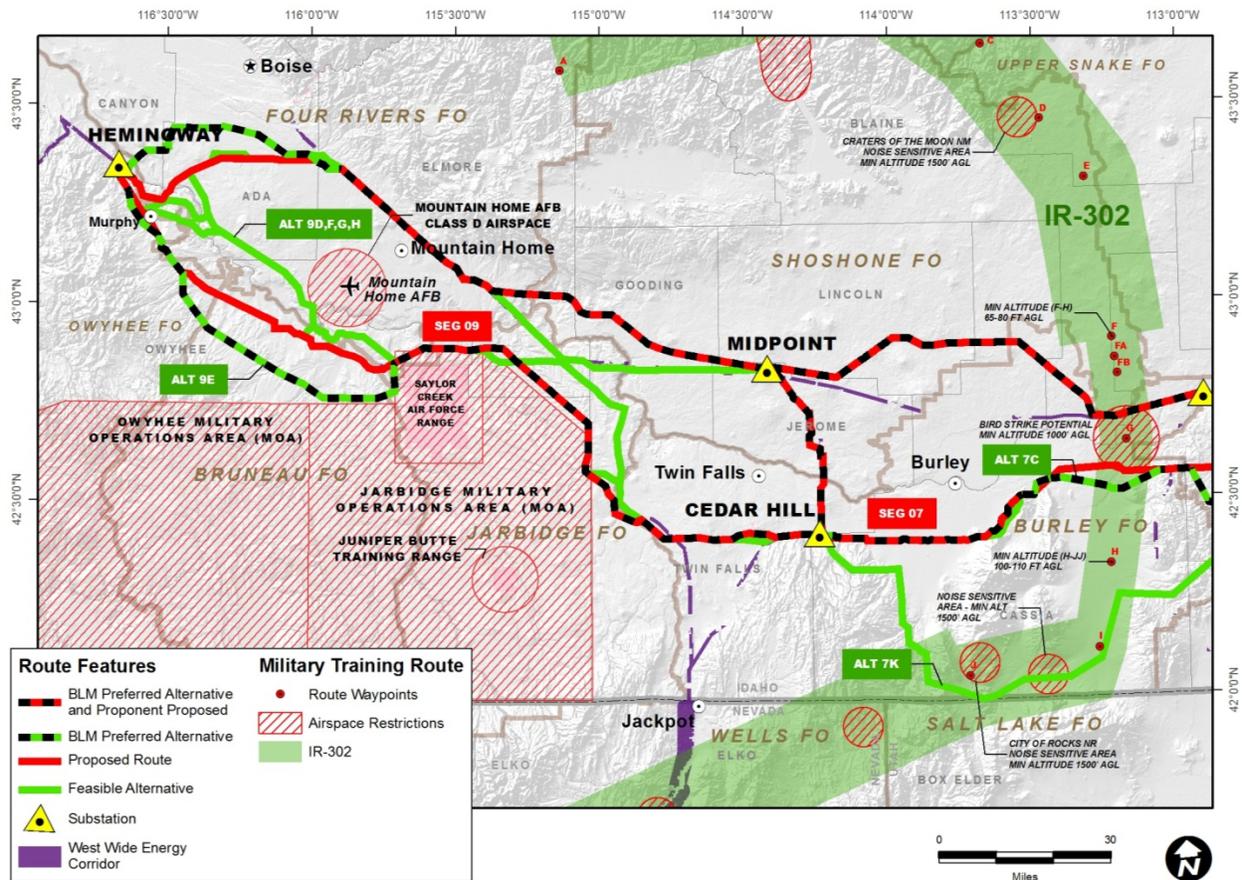


Figure 3.17-3. Military Operations Areas and Training Routes

Indian Reservations

Lands within the Fort Hall Indian Reservation are currently managed in accordance with the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes 1976 Comprehensive Plan, and the draft Comprehensive Plan, as proposed in 2005. Under this plan, tribal departments work independently to plan and implement programs and projects, with various departments coordinating with one another to ensure that their actions do not impact the ability of other resource managers to attain their goals (Shoshone-Bannock 2010a). The tribes are in the process of developing a Tribal Integrated Resource Management Plan (TIRMP), which would provide guidance for natural resource management that reflects the traditional and cultural land use patterns of the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes (Shoshone-Bannock

2010b). The TIRMP would integrate interdisciplinary resource planning into all resource plans and projects in order to balance resource development with natural sustainability and cultural resource protection (Shoshone-Bannock 2010a). The draft TIRMP is currently under internal review, incorporating feedback gained through public input meetings during the spring of 2012.

Indian Trust Assets

Indian Trust Assets (ITAs) are legal interests in property held in trust by the United States for Indian tribes or individuals. The Secretary of the Interior acts as the trustee for the United States with respect to ITAs. All Interior agencies share the Secretary's duty to act responsibly to protect and maintain ITAs reserved by or granted to Indian tribes or individuals by treaties, statutes, and executive orders. These rights are sometimes further interpreted through court decisions and regulations. Examples of trust assets include lands, minerals, hunting and fishing rights, and water rights. While most ITAs are on reservations, they may also be found off reservations.

Interior carries out its activities in a manner that protects trust assets and avoids adverse impacts as directed by:

- EO 13175, Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments;
- EO 13007 on Sacred Sites;
- Bureau of Reclamation Guidance for Implementing Indian Sacred Sites Executive Order No. 13007, dated September 16, 1998;
- Department of the Interior. Secretarial Order June 7, 1997. American Indian Tribal Rights, Federal-Tribal Trust Responsibility, and the Endangered Species Act;
- U.S. Department of the Interior 512 Departmental Manual 2;
- U.S. Department of the Interior. 2000. Secretarial Order No. 3206. American Indian Tribal Rights, Federal-Tribal Trust Responsibilities, and the Endangered Species Act; and
- Consultation with Tribes is required by NEPA as well as by other BLM policies and guidance.

3.17.1.4 Methods

The environmental effects analyses completed for this assessment were conducted using readily available data and GIS files derived from preliminary centerline and component design for the Preferred Route, Proposed Route, and Route Alternatives, including ROW, access roads, staging areas, and fly yards. (See Section 3.1 – Introduction for details on the development of these files.)

Land ownership, Indian Reservations, and designated areas were determined from GIS data gathered from the Forest Service, the BLM, and the states of Wyoming and Idaho. Information about existing corridors and ROWs was gathered from USGS, field information, RMPs and MFPs, and Forest Plans.

Information on land use was obtained from GIS mapping of aerial photographs, and from federal and state agency personnel and state databases. Other GIS information collected and used for this Project included vegetation mapping prepared in accordance with NVCS, NWI wetland maps, and federal agency data on land use management plans. Land use classifications follow Anderson et al. (1976). Recreation and special interest areas were identified by reviewing USGS topographic maps; DeLorme Gazetteers for Wyoming and Idaho (DeLorme 2003, 2000); WGFD and IDFG interactive maps; BLM RMP and MFP and Forest Service Forest Plan maps of the proposed Project area; and field reconnaissance. Aerial photography was used to identify and confirm land uses within 1,000 feet of the centerline of the Preferred Route, Proposed Route, and Route Alternatives.

Data on property ownership, miles of various land uses crossed, and disturbance to land use types during construction and operation were generated in GIS.

The existence and location of ITAs were assessed in consultation with the Bureau of Indian Affairs and Tribes/Tribal Nations that had aboriginal claims to the Project Area, including the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes, Shoshone-Paiute Tribes, Northern Ute Tribe, Northern Arapaho, Northern Cheyenne, Eastern Shoshone, Northwest Shoshone Band, Southern Arapaho, Southern Cheyenne, and Oglala Sioux. Research was also conducted using treaties, statutes, EOs, and other mandates.

An impact is considered to exist for any action that would result in the following:

- An adverse result in terms of the value, use, or enjoyment of an ITA; or
- A failure by any federal agency to protect ITAs from loss, damage, waste, depletion, or other negative effects.

3.17.1.5 Existing Conditions

Land Ownership

Table 3.17-3 summarizes existing land ownership within the Analysis Area by Project segment, which includes area associated both with the Proposed Route and Route Alternatives. The Analysis Area for Project Segment 1W is primarily private and BLM-managed lands, with the final third in state and Forest Service ownership. The majority of land in Project Segment 2 is privately owned, followed by nearly 40 percent managed by the BLM, and five percent in state ownership.

The Analysis Area for Segment 3 is split between private and BLM ownership, with a small amount of state land. Segment 4 also consists primarily of private and BLM-managed land, with a small amount of state, National Forest, and other lands (“other” includes Bureau of Reclamation, USFWS, and Indian Reservation lands, where crossed). The majority of land in Segment 5 is privately owned, with another 17 percent managed by BLM, 8 percent other, and 4 percent state. The entire Analysis Area for Segment 6 is privately owned.

Table 3.17-3. Existing Land Ownership within the Analysis Area

Segment	Analysis Area Total (Acres) ^{1/}	Percent of Analysis Area				
		Bureau of Land Management	National Forest	State ^{2/}	Private	Other ^{3/}
1W	3,687	30	3	27	40	–
2	4,690	39	–	5	56	–
3	1,955	48	–	2	50	–
4	14,594	43	2	7	47	1
5	6,857	17	–	4	71	8
6	73	–	–	–	100	–
7	13,808	35	4	4	57	–
8	9,928	57	–	8	34	2
9	14,317	79	–	3	17	<1
10	1,358	46	–	<1	54	–
Total	71,267	47	1	6	44	1

1/ The Analysis Area is based on a buffer of 250 feet on either side of the Proposed Route and Route Alternatives applicable in each Project segment, plus 25 feet on either side of access roads, and includes the areas needed for new or expanded substations as well as temporary facilities such as multipurpose yards and fly yards. Note that the Analysis Area for the Project varies by resource. Numbers in this table include the Analysis Area associated with the Proposed Route and all Route Alternatives.

2/ State includes water.

3/ Other includes Bureau of Reclamation, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and Indian Reservation lands where crossed.

The majority of the Analysis Area for Segment 7 is privately owned, with another 35 percent owned by the BLM, 4 percent in National Forest, and 4 percent state. A majority of Segment 8 is on BLM-managed land, with another 34 percent on private land, 8 percent state owned, and 2 percent other. An even larger majority of Segment 9 is on BLM-managed land, followed by 17 percent private, 3 percent state, and less than 1 percent other. Lastly, ownership is roughly split between private (54 percent) and BLM (46 percent) within the Analysis Area for Segment 10. Less than 1 percent of Project Segment 10 is state-owned.

Land Use

Land use within the Analysis Area is primarily rangeland (82 percent), with cropland and forestland accounting for about 11 percent and 3 percent, respectively (Table 3.17-4). Relatively small portions of the route border or cross developed areas (including industrial, commercial, and residential areas, and existing ROWs), wetlands and open water, and “barren” areas (including disturbed and extractive mining areas) (Table 3.17-4).

Rangeland accounts for the majority (82 percent) of the land use within the Analysis Area, ranging from 50 percent for Segment 10 to 98 percent for Segment 2 (Table 3.17-4). Cropland, including dryland and irrigated farming, accounts for approximately 11 percent of total land use. Cropland would only be present along the Idaho portion of the Project, and would range from 4 percent of total land use for Segment 4 (including the Wyoming portion) to 46 percent for Segment 10 (Table 3.17-4). Rangeland and agricultural lands, including prime farmland and lands in the CRP, are discussed in Section 3.18 – Agriculture.

Table 3.17-4. Existing Land Uses within the Analysis Area

Segment	Analysis Area Total (Acres) ^{1/}	Percent of Analysis Area						
		Rangeland	Cropland	Forest	Water and Wetlands	ROW	Developed ^{2/}	Other ^{3/}
1W	3,687	93	t ^{4/}	4	2	3	t ^{4/}	<1
2	4,690	98	–	–	2	2	t ^{4/}	<1
3	1,955	97	–	–	1	2	1	<1
4	14,594	90	4	4	3	1	<1	1
5	6,857	61	24	13	1	1	<1	1
6	73	80	–	–	14	2	18	–
7	13,808	72	20	7	<1	1	<1	t ^{4/}
8	9,928	83	15	–	1	2	1	<1
9	14,317	90	8	–	<1	1	<1	<1
10	1,358	50	46	–	1	2	2	<1
Total	71,267	82	11	3	1	1	<1	<1

1/ The Analysis Area is based on a buffer of 250 feet on either side of the Proposed Route and Route Alternatives applicable in each Project segment, plus 25 feet on either side of access roads, and includes the areas needed for new or expanded substations as well as temporary facilities such as staging areas and fly yards. Note that the Analysis Area used for the Project varies by resource. Numbers in this table include the Analysis Area associated with the Proposed Route and all Route Alternatives.

2/ Developed includes industrial, commercial, and residential land uses, as well as lands within existing rights-of-way (ROWs).

3/ Other includes “barren” areas, which include disturbed and extractive mining areas.

4/ “t” indicates values <0.1.

Forestland accounts for approximately 3 percent of the lands within the Analysis Area. Forestland as a share of total land use ranges from 4 percent for Segment 1W to 13 percent for Segment 5 (Table 3.17-4). Not all of the route segments cross forestland. Forestland is discussed below relative to effects on timber management. Additional detail on the composition and extent of the forests found in the Analysis Area is presented in Section 3.6 – Vegetation Communities.

Water and wetlands make up about 1 percent of the total land use within the Analysis Area, generally ranging from about 1 percent to 3 percent for each segment (Table 3.17-4). Segment 6 is an exception with approximately 14 percent of the Analysis Area in water and wetlands. Water and wetlands are discussed in Sections 3.16 – Water Resources and 3.9 – Wetlands and Riparian Areas, respectively.

Developed land, including residential, commercial, and industrial development, occupies less than 1 percent of the Analysis Area. Most of this development occurs along Segments 6, 8, and 10. Existing ROW accounts for approximately 1 percent of the overall Analysis Area and includes lands used for roads, transmission lines, gas pipelines, and other linear facilities.

The following sections discuss land use within the Analysis Area by segment.

Segment 1W

Rangeland accounts for the majority (93 percent) of the land use within the Analysis Area for Segment 1W. Higher elevation forestland in and around the Medicine Bow-Routt NFs accounts for about 4 percent of total land use in the Analysis Area (Table 3.17-4). Segment 1W trends southwest from the Windstar Substation, crossing a checkerboard area of rural private, state, and federal lands. Development within the Analysis Area is limited to a few scattered homes and ranches.

Segment 2

Segment 2 would generally follow the existing SR 72 and I-80 corridors west from the Aeolus Substation. Land use within the Analysis Area for this segment is primarily rangeland (98 percent) (Table 3.17-4). This segment begins in the vicinity of an existing wind farm. Approximately 12.5 miles southwest of the Aeolus Substation it would cross about 2 miles of former strip mines. Farther west, south of the city of Rawlins, the segment would pass within 1 mile of oil and gas development that continues for about 10 miles to Creston.

Segment 3

Segment 3 would generally follow the existing I-80 corridor. Land use within the Analysis Area for this segment is primarily rangeland (97 percent) with existing ROWs accounting for about 2 percent of the total Analysis Area for this segment (Table 3.17-4). Oil and gas development occurs in the general vicinity of Creston and the proposed Anticline Substation site. Several areas of strip mining are also located in the vicinity of the Anticline Substation site.

Segment 4

Land use within the Analysis Area for Segment 4 consists of rangeland (90 percent), cropland (4 percent), and forestland (4 percent) (Table 3.17-4). The cropland occurs in three main areas: near the two proposed crossings of the Bear River and near the city of Downey. The forestland occurs mainly within and in the vicinity of Caribou-Targhee NF in Idaho. Development is limited within the Analysis Area. Residential development in the general vicinity of the Analysis Area tends to be located in proximity to communities like Kemmerer and Cokeville in Wyoming and Montpelier and Downey in Idaho. The area between the Jim Bridger Power Plant and the town of Cokeville has substantial oil and gas development and coal mining.

Segment 5

Rangeland accounts for more than half (61 percent) of the land use in the Analysis Area for Segment 5, with cropland and forestland accounting for 24 percent and 13 percent, respectively (Table 3.17-4). Dryland farming occurs mostly west of the Deep Creek Mountains. Irrigated cropland is scattered along the Analysis Area. Forestland within the Analysis Area is mainly concentrated in the Deep Creek Mountains. Residential development within the Analysis Area is limited to scattered rural residences.

Segment 6

An existing 345-kV transmission line would be upgraded to 500 kV using existing support structures, except for five new structures needed to connect to substations at each end of the line. The Borah Substation is located approximately 0.5 mile north of the Snake River. Land use in the surrounding area consists of rangeland with some areas of irrigated cropland. The existing Midpoint Substation is located approximately 0.2 mile east of US 93. Land use to the north, east, and west is primarily rangeland. The area south of the substation is irrigated cropland.

Segment 7

Rangeland accounts for 72 percent of the land use in the Analysis Area for Segment 7, with cropland and forestland accounting for 20 percent and 7 percent, respectively (Table 3.17-4). Cropland within the Analysis Area may be broadly divided into irrigated cropland and dryland farming (see Section 3.18 – Agriculture). Irrigated cropland accounts for an estimated 6 percent of the Analysis Area for this segment; dryland farming accounts for an estimated 14 percent. The irrigated cropland within the Analysis Area occurs predominantly south of Burley and at scattered locations east and west of the Deep Creek Mountains. The Burley area is part of the Mini-Cassia community of Minidoka County and Cassia County in south-central Idaho, which includes some of the best agricultural land in the region. Forestland mainly occurs in higher elevation areas. Development includes a number of residences, farms including dairy operations, and feedlots along much of the Analysis Area except in the more mountainous locations.

Segment 8

The Analysis Area for Segment 8 is primarily rangeland (83 percent), with irrigated cropland accounting for 15 percent. Irrigated agriculture is found mostly in the first 40 miles from the Midpoint Substation and the last 25 miles before Hemingway Substation. This segment parallels existing transmission facilities for much of its length. Farms and residences occur along the Analysis Area and more intensive residential development is planned in the area south of Boise.

Segment 9

The Analysis Area for Segment 9 is mainly rangeland (90 percent) with approximately 8 percent used for irrigated crop production (Table 3.17-4). Irrigated cropland in the vicinity of the Analysis Area is concentrated in three main areas: west of the proposed Cedar Hill Substation, west of Castleford, and between the communities of Bruneau and Grandview. The majority of the irrigated acres within the Analysis Area are located between Bruneau and Grandview. Development in the Analysis Area for this segment includes a small number of scattered residences and farms. More concentrated residential development exists near the town of Murphy and near the proposed Hemingway Substation.

Segment 10

The Analysis Area for Segment 10 is approximately 50 percent rangeland and 46 percent cropland (Table 3.17-4). In the vicinity of Jerome and from Eden south to the Cedar Hill Substation, the entire Analysis Area is irrigated agricultural lands with scattered farms and residences. From Jerome north, the area is mostly rangeland with some crop production.

Designated Corridors and Existing ROWs

Corridors are established in BLM and Forest Service land use plans and, most recently, by the West-Wide Energy Corridor ROD (see Section 1.5.2; BLM 2009a). There is a robust system of east-west high-voltage (230-kV and above) transmission lines across Wyoming and Idaho. Locations of existing electric transmission lines near the Project are noted on figures in Appendix A. The length and percentage of the Preferred Route,

Proposed Route, and Route Alternatives that align with the WWE corridor and existing transmission lines are summarized in Table 2.4-3 and discussed below in Section 3.17.2.3 by segment.

Timber and Fire Management Activities

Timber Management

Timber management includes the commercial and non-commercial harvest of forest wood products. Forest products may include lumber, poles, posts, firewood, and Christmas trees. Timber harvest is governed by the Wyoming State Forest Practice Act in Wyoming and by the Idaho State Forest Practice Act in Idaho. In addition, RMP requirements apply to BLM-managed lands and Forest Plan standards and guidelines and regional BMPs apply to NFS lands. Four of the proposed segments—1W, 4, 5, and 7—cross forested lands. See Section 3.4 – Socioeconomics and Section 3.6 – Vegetation Communities for further discussion of forest economics and communities.

NFS lands crossed by the Preferred Route, Proposed Route, and Route Alternatives include the Medicine Bow-Routt NFs, crossed by Segment 1W, and the Caribou-Targhee NF crossed in Segment 4. Neither the Preferred Route nor the Proposed Route would cross the Sawtooth NF but Alternative 7K to the Segment 7 Proposed Route would cross the Sawtooth NF. Both the Caribou-Targhee and Sawtooth NFs have suitable timber lands that would be affected by the Preferred Route, Proposed Route, or a Route Alternative.

BLM-managed forested lands crossed include those lands managed by the Pocatello FO and Burley FO that are crossed by Segments 5 and 7.

Fire Management

Across Wyoming and Idaho, areas have been designated for initial fire suppression responsibility to eliminate confusion about who is in charge during a fire emergency. Primarily, initial suppression authority falls to either a federal (Forest Service or BLM) or state (Wyoming State Forestry Division or IDL) department, and less commonly, fire protective associations have this responsibility. Fire protective associations are set up by groups of landowners to provide wildland fire protection. Participating landowners contribute funding to the association who hires firefighters and provides services in a designated area. These agencies work across land ownership boundaries.

Individual land management agencies or landowners have responsibility for managing lands to reduce fire hazards and provide fire suppression access prior to the event of a fire.

The Project area often experiences fire ignitions that quickly escalate to large fires, due to fuel types including annual grasses and brush, combined with summer temperatures in the 90°F to 105°F range, and relative humidity in the 10 to 25 percent range. The fire season typically starts in May and ends in mid-October. Fires occur as early as March and as late as December depending on weather and ignition activities (lightning, vehicles, sparks from railroads, fireworks, debris burning, arson, etc.). Powerlines that are downed during high wind events may also be a potential ignition source (BLM 2005b).

Indian Reservations

The Fort Hall Indian Reservation, which is crossed by Alternative 5C in Segment 5, is the only Indian Reservation crossed by the proposed Project. The Fort Hall Indian Reservation was established for the Shoshone and Bannock Tribes, as well as one Northern Paiute band, as part of the Fort Bridger Treaty of 1868 (Shoshone-Bannock 2009). Today, the reservation consists of approximately 521,519 acres, and is included in parts of four counties within southeastern Idaho: Bingham, Power, Bannock, and Caribou Counties. According to the 2000 U.S. Census, there were an estimated 5,762 individuals living within the Fort Hall Reservation and on Off-Reservation Trust Lands (U.S. Census Bureau 2000d), with approximately 70 percent of these people living within the boundary of the Fort Hall Indian Reservation (Shoshone-Bannock 2009).

Indian Trust Assets

No ITAs would be crossed in the state of Wyoming. In Idaho, Segments 4 and 5 cross ITAs managed for the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes on ceded lands south of the present-day Fort Hall Indian Reservation in Segments 4 and 5. When those lands were ceded to the United States government (Fort Bridger Treaty 1868; Pocatello Cession Agreement 1900), some rights were retained. Specifically, the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes have the right to hunt on public lands (Fort Bridger Treaty 1868). Heads of households may select a tract of land up to 320 acres in size for farming, and any person over 18 years of age not being a head of a household may select a tract of land up to 80 acres in size for farming. Members of the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes residing on the reservation have rights to cut timber for their own use, pasture cattle, and hunt and fish from the streams from any of the ceded lands as long as they remained in the public domain (Pocatello Cession Agreement 1900).

The construction and operations of the Project would not affect these trust assets on ceded lands near the Fort Hall Reservation crossed other than restricting access to the ROW during construction. Refer to Section 3.6 – Vegetation Communities for a discussion of the Project's effects on plants, Sections 3.10 – General Wildlife and Fish and 3.11 – Special Status Wildlife and Fish Species for a discussion of the Project's effects on wildlife, Section 3.18 – Agriculture for effects on farming and grazing, and Section 3.19 – Transportation for effects on access.

Recreational and Public Interest Areas

Recreation on federal and other public lands in Wyoming and Idaho involve developed sites and also dispersed activities, such as hiking, backcountry camping, OHV use, hunting, and fishing, which occur in and outside designated use and public interest areas. Recreation opportunities are offered to the public on all NFS lands and BLM-managed lands where legal access exists. Existing recreation resources in the general vicinity of the proposed Project were avoided during the initial route selection studies wherever possible in order to limit the potential impact of the Project on these areas. Land use features used for recreation, and other specific land uses crossed or within 1,000 feet of the Proposed Route and Route Alternatives, are identified by segment in Table D.17-1 of Appendix D.

Recreation activities on federal lands in the Analysis Area are managed under the applicable resource management plans (see Section 3.17.1.3). These plans specify the

locations and times when many of these activities can occur, as well as applicable State regulations. Hunting in the Analysis Area, for example, varies by season and location, as permitted by the WGFD and IDFG.

Designated recreation resources within the Analysis Area include SRMAs and other special management areas designated by the BLM, historic trails, and scenic byways, as well as developed recreation facilities. Recreation management is guided on NFS lands by the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) system. Management on public lands for OHV use also has important implications for recreation use.

FLPMA recognizes recreation as an important component of multiple use management and BLM Manual 8300 (Recreation) “directs the BLM to designate administrative units known as SRMAs where there is a need for a higher level of managerial presence or investment than is typical of most public land. BLM-managed land outside of SRMAs is designated as an Extensive Recreation Management Area where limited resources are required to provide extensive, unstructured recreational activities” (BLM 2008b). SRMAs that would be crossed by or are within 1,000 feet of the Preferred Route, Proposed Route or Route Alternatives are discussed by segment in the following section.

Historic trails within the Project area include trails designated as NHTs by Congress under the National Trail Systems Act of 1968, as amended 1978. These include the web of pathways that are variously known as the Oregon, Mormon Pioneer, California, or Pony Express Trails. These pathways were historically a network of trail segments, river crossings, and landmarks that stretched across 1,800 miles of territory and linked the western frontier to the settled lands of the east. Most components of these four historic trails have been designated as NHTs and are part of the National Trails System. The Oregon, Mormon Pioneer, California, and Pony Express NHTs coincide and share a common corridor across many, but not all, portions of the Project area. Shortcuts that developed along the Oregon-California-Mormon Pioneer trail system were called “Cutoffs” by emigrants. The Project would also cross a number of Cutoffs, including Child’s Cutoff, Slate Creek Cutoff, Sublette Cutoff, Hams Fork Cutoff, and Hudspeth’s Cutoff (see Section 3.3 – Cultural Resources).

There are also a number of scenic byways within the Analysis Area that would be crossed by the Preferred Route, Proposed Route, and/or Route Alternatives. Scenic byways are generally roads that have historic, recreational, scenic, or other qualities that make them attractive for recreationists and others interested in driving for pleasure. Developed recreation facilities within the Analysis Area are also identified by segment below. These facilities include a ski area and two developed campground sites with boat ramps.

The following sections provide an overview of recreational resources within the Project Analysis Area by segment. OHV use on BLM-managed and NFS lands and the ROS system are discussed in separate sections that follow the segment-by-segment summaries.

Segment 1W

Recreational resources on federal lands along Segment 1W are regulated in part by the Medicine Bow Forest Plan and the Casper and Rawlins RMPs. Recreational activities identified in the Medicine Bow Forest Plan include camping, hiking, wildlife viewing, horseback riding, fishing, snowmobile use, OHV use, boating, and hunting.

Recreational activities on the Casper and Rawlins BLM districts that are identified in their respective RMPs include those listed above for the Medicine Bow-Routt NFs, as well as the use of historic trails, wildlife viewing, hiking, cave exploration, use of WSRs, and the use of areas established for special events. Note that these are the recreational resources identified in the applicable federal plans, and it is possible that some of these recreational activities take place within or near the Project area.

There are no SRMAs crossed or located within 1,000 feet of the Preferred/Proposed Route or Route Alternative 1W(a)-B for this segment. One designated Management Area (MA), the Bates Hole MA, is located within the Analysis Area and would be crossed by the Preferred/Proposed Route along Segment 1W. The Bates Hole MA was established in the 2007 ROD and Approved Casper RMP to “protect highly erosive soils, fragile watersheds, and important and crucial wildlife habitat,” including habitat for special status species such as sage-grouse (BLM 2007a). The area encompasses 375,221 acres, including 158,023 acres of BLM-managed lands.

Segment 1W(a) would cross a segment of the California, Pony Express, and Mormon Pioneer NHTs, where they all share the same alignment; it would also cross the Child’s Cutoff and the Bozeman Trail (see Table 3.3-9 in Section 3.3 – Cultural Resources).

There are no developed recreation facilities located within 1,000 feet of the Preferred/Proposed Route and Route Alternative 1W(a)-B for Segment 1W.

The Preferred/Proposed Route along Segment 1W would either cross or pass within 1,000 feet of areas on the Medicine Bow-Routt NFs and BLM-managed lands that offer dispersed recreational opportunities. In addition, the Preferred/Proposed Route along Segment 1W would cross through the Shirley Basin, which is an important area used by recreationists to hunt pronghorn antelope.

Segment 2

Recreational resources on federal lands along Segment 2 are regulated in part by the Rawlins RMP. Recreational activities that are identified in the Rawlins RMP include camping, hiking, fishing, boating, sightseeing, OHV use, cave exploration, and use of WSRs. Note that these are the recreational resources identified in the applicable federal plans, and it is possible that some of these recreational activities take place within or near the Project area. Segment 2 would cross through “checkerboard lands,” where every square mile section of federal land alternates with non-federal lands in a checkerboard pattern. This pattern of land ownership complicates recreation management on public lands.

There are two SRMAs and one Wildlife Habitat MA located within the Analysis Area for this segment. These are the North Platte River SRMA, the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail (CDNST) SRMA (discussed in detail in the following subsection), and the Red Rim Wildlife Habitat Management Area (WHMA).

The North Platte River SRMA consists of 5,060 acres located in discrete and separate areas along the river. The management goal for this SRMA is to “ensure the continued availability of outdoor recreation opportunities associated with the North Platte and Encampment Rivers” (BLM 2008a: 2-27). This area is managed to provide high quality recreation opportunities, especially for floating, fishing, camping, and sightseeing. Surface-disturbing activities on public lands within 0.25 mile on either side of the river are intensively managed to maintain the quality of the visual resource.

The Red Rim WHMA contains 26,083 acres. Of this total, 13,498 are owned by the Wyoming Game and Fish Commission (WGFC), 11,305 acres are BLM-managed land, and 1,280 acres are state land. This area is cooperatively managed by the BLM, WGFD, and local conservation districts. The management goals for this WHMA include the protection of crucial winter habitat for pronghorn antelope and nesting habitat for raptors (BLM 2008a: 2-39). This area is open to management activities including oil and gas leasing, locatable mineral entry, and mineral material disposal, with intensive management of surface disturbing and disruptive activities (BLM 2008a).

Segment 2 would not cross any NHTs, but would cross the Rawlins to Baggs Stage Road and would also cross the Lincoln Highway several times (see Table 3.3-10 in Section 3.3 – Cultural Resources). Alternatives 2A and 2B pass close to the Fort Fred Steele Historic Site, which is a historic site managed by Wyoming State Parks, Historic Sites & Trails.

Continental Divide National Scenic Trail

The CDNST extends approximately 3,100 miles from the Canada-U.S. border in the north to the U.S.-Mexico border to the south, generally following the Continental Divide. The CDNST crosses the states of Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, Colorado, and New Mexico. In Wyoming, the trail passes through Yellowstone National Park; the Bridger/Teton, Shoshone, and Medicine Bow-Routt NFs; and public lands managed by the BLM, as well as private lands. National Scenic Trails are authorized under the National Trails System Act of 1968 (P.L. 90-543) and may only be designated by an act of Congress. The National Parks and Recreation Act of 1978 amended the National Trails System Act of 1968 and established the CDNST.

The CDNST crosses portions of 25 National Forests, 3 National Parks, 4 BLM Districts, and various private lands. The Forest Service manages the greatest amount of land along the CDNST corridor and has overall responsibility for administration of the trail. The Regional Forester of the Rocky Mountain Region is the lead Forest Service official for coordinating matters related to the CDNST (FSM 2353.04). CDNST-related programs are developed and coordinated through the CDNST Interagency Leadership Council, consisting of Regional Foresters for the Forest Service, State Directors for the BLM, and a Regional Director for the NPS. The Council provides leadership and oversight to complete and sustain the CDNST and ensures consistent, coordinated, and effective programs.

The National Trails System Act required that a comprehensive plan be prepared for the management and use of the CDNST. Originally completed in 1985, the Comprehensive Plan for the CDNST was amended in 2009 and replaced by the 2009 CDNST

Comprehensive Plan (Forest Service 2009d). As described in the 2009 Comprehensive Plan:

The nature and purposes of the CDNST are to provide for high-quality scenic, primitive hiking and horseback riding opportunities and to conserve natural, historic, and cultural resources along the CDNST corridor.

The east-west orientation of the proposed Project, extending from the vicinity of Casper, Wyoming, to southwest of Boise, Idaho, means that the proposed transmission line cannot avoid crossing the CDNST in Wyoming. The Proponent Proposed and BLM Preferred Route for Segment 2 of Gateway West crosses the CDNST approximately 3 miles southwest of the city of Rawlins and 2.5 miles south of I-80. The federal lands in the vicinity of this crossing location are checkerboard lands managed by the BLM's Rawlins FO (sections of public and private land alternate, forming a "checkerboard" pattern). The proposed CDNST crossing would occur on a section of private land (Section 3, Township 20 North, Range 88 West). The closest BLM-managed sections are located immediately north and more than 0.25 mile east of the proposed crossing location. The CDNST on BLM-managed lands in this area is managed under the 2008 Rawlins RMP/ROD (BLM 2008a) as a SRMA. The CDNST SRMA is a 0.25-mile-wide corridor centered on the trail.

Regulatory Framework

Allowable uses of the BLM-portion of the CDNST in Wyoming include hiking, mountain biking, horseback riding, and limited motor vehicle use. On the BLM portion of the trail in Wyoming, 95 percent is primitive two-track roads, 4 percent is improved roads, and 1 percent requires cross-country travel. Cross-country segments are closed to motorized vehicles.

Land use and recreation on public lands in the vicinity of the proposed CDNST crossing are managed per the direction set forth in the 2008 Rawlins RMP/ROD, which includes specific management goals and objectives for the CDNST established in the 2009 CDNST Comprehensive Plan (Forest Service 2009d). Pertinent management considerations are identified below.

2009 CDNST Comprehensive Plan

Management Goals:

- *The nature and purposes of the CDNST are to provide for high-quality scenic, primitive hiking and horseback riding opportunities and to conserve natural, historic, and cultural resources along the CDNST corridor (p. 4).*
- *Manage the CDNST to provide high-quality scenic, primitive hiking and pack and saddle stock opportunities. Backpacking, nature walking, day hiking, horseback riding, nature photography, mountain climbing, cross-country skiing, and snowshoeing are compatible with the nature and purposes of the CDNST (p. 16).*
- *Bureau of Land Management managers will develop Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) management prescriptions, which will provide the physical, biological, social, and managerial settings deemed appropriate for the CDNST segments within their jurisdiction (p. 15).*

Management Objectives:

- *On public lands administered by the BLM, the visual resource inventory will follow the procedures outlined in BLM Manual Section 8400. The inventory shall be conducted on the basis that the CDNST is a high sensitivity level travel route (p. 13).*
- *Use the ROS system in delineating and integrating recreation opportunities in managing the CDNST. Where possible, locate the CDNST in primitive or semi-primitive non-motorized ROS classes; provided that the CDNST may have to traverse intermittently through more developed ROS classes to provide for continuous travel (p. 16).*
- *Semi-primitive Motorized (i.e., Middle Country): Trail segments in the ROS class will be in a natural setting which may have moderately dominant alterations but will not draw attention, as would be judged by motorized observers on trails and primitive roads within the area... The user may experience more control and regulation but will still have a feeling of achievement, adventure, and a release from the dominance of human structures or noise (p. 17).*
- *Private Land ROWs or Easements: Trail segments in this category provide the user with a safe continuous trail link between other trail segments. They have as their primary purpose the safety, protection, and convenience of the user. Evidence of civilization usually is predominant with the recreation opportunity pointed to allowing passage of recreationists in a safe, convenient manner. These segments will generally be as short as necessary to cross highways and railroads or passage through developed areas (p. 19).*

2008 Rawlins RMP/ROD – CDNST SRMA

Management Goals:

- *Manage to emphasize interpretive and educational opportunities.*
- *Ensure the continued availability of outdoor recreation opportunities associated with the CDNST.*

Management Objectives:

- *Comply with the CDNST Comprehensive Plan.*
- *Locate the trail so users may experience available examples of the great diversity of topographic, geologic, vegetation, and scenic phenomenon in proximity to the Continental Divide.*
- *Provide users with opportunities to view, experience, and appreciate examples of prehistoric and historic human use of the resources along the Continental Divide, and examples of the ways these resources on public lands are being managed in harmony with the environment, as an asset to the existing character of the Continental Divide, and which will not detract from the overall experience of the trail.*
- *Provide a route that will have a minimum adverse effect on adjacent natural and cultural environments and harmonize with the management objectives of land*

and resource uses that are now or may be occurring on the lands through which the trail passes.

- *Maintain and enhance recreation opportunities for residents and visitors to the area to accommodate camping, wildlife viewing, and other compatible uses in prescribed settings so visitors are able to realize experiences and benefits.*
- *Pursue opportunities for partnership and cooperative management with adjacent property owners.*

Management Actions:

- *The CDNST (600 acres; the federal portion of the trail is about 82 miles long and is located within a 0.25 mile wide corridor) will be managed to provide opportunities for trail users to view the diverse topographic, geographic, vegetation, wildlife, and scenic phenomena that characterize the Continental Divide and to observe examples of human use of the natural resources. The prescribed setting for the CDNST is Middle Country (i.e., Semi-primitive Motorized).*
- *Implementation of the CDNST Comprehensive Plan will potentially result in a significant rerouting of the trail and/or trail corridor.*
- *Pursue agreements with private landowners to facilitate routing of the trail and to improve the quality of recreational experiences.*

2008 Rawlins RMP/ROD – Linear Utility/Transportation Systems/Communication Site Exclusion and Avoidance Areas

The 2008 Rawlins RMP/ROD establishes Linear Utility/Transportation Systems/Communication Site Exclusion and Avoidance Areas. The CDNST SRMA is identified as a Linear Utility/Transportation Systems/Communication Site Avoidance Area (BLM 2008, p. 2-60). Responding to the Wyoming Governor's concern that the RMP not serve to "functionally preclude the location of new electric transmission lines," the Rawlins RMP/ROD clarifies that project proposals will be considered and evaluated on a case-by-case basis, with avoidance areas defined as follows:

Avoidance Areas: *Areas to be avoided which may be available for location of ROWs and Section 302 permits, leases, and easements with special stipulations or mitigation measures. For such authorizations, the area's environmental sensitivity and other feasible alternatives will be strongly considered. (p. 1-2)*

Trail Location and Proposed Crossing

Congress established that the CDNST would generally follow the corridor described in a 1976 Study Report prepared by the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation, which found that much of the proposed CDNST existed in the form of discontinuous trails and primitive roadways (Forest Service 2009d). The 2009 Comprehensive Plan provides management and direction with respect to locating the CDNST and indicates that:

The trail shall be located as close to the geographic Continental Divide as possible, but as far away as necessary to provide for safe travel and diverse recreation appeal, to be economically feasible, and to keep environmental impacts to an acceptable level.

The Comprehensive Plan also outlines the circumstances under which deviation from routes that more closely follow the geographic Continental Divide is acceptable.

The 2008 Rawlins RMP/ROD also addresses this in the Management Actions prescribed for the CDNST SRMA, which state that:

Implementation of the CDNST Comprehensive Plan will potentially result in a significant rerouting of the trail and/or trail corridor. Pursue agreements with private landowners to facilitate routing of the trail and to improve the quality of recreational experiences. (p. 2-26)

The 2008 Rawlins RMP/ROD established a 0.25-mile-wide CDNST SRMA centered on the trail as shown in the RMP/ROD Map 2-17a. The portion of the CDNST in the vicinity of the proposed Gateway West transmission line, as shown, is located within the ROW of Wyoming Highway 71 (WY-71), a paved, two-lane road. Based on this location, the proposed transmission line would cross the trail on a checkerboard section of private land by the City of Rawlins Water Treatment Facility. However, consistent with the direction provided in the CDNST Comprehensive Plan and Rawlins RMP/ROD, this section of the CDNST has been relocated off the road and moved approximately 1.5 miles west. The Proponent Proposed and BLM Preferred Route for the Gateway West transmission line would cross the new trail location on a section of private land. The closest BLM-managed sections are located immediately north and more than 0.25 mile east of the proposed crossing location.

The CDNST crosses this section of private land under the terms of a Conditional Renewable Exclusive Trail Easement agreement established between the private land owner and the BLM. This agreement establishes a 60-foot-wide corridor for the CDNST, 30 feet either side of the trail's centerline, and grants the BLM "a conditional, renewable exclusive easement to locate, construct, use, control, maintain, improve, relocate and repair a trail over and across the ... property."

The CDNST is managed in a SRMA. A management objective for the CDNST SRMA stated in the 2008 Rawlins RMP is to comply with the CDNST Management Plan. The 2009 CDNST Plan (Forest Service 2009d) management direction for visual resources states that the visual resource as seen from the trail must be considered in land and resource management planning, and in specific project planning and design. The 2009 Plan does not specify the level of protection for CDNST visual resources in the Visual Resource guidance section; however, guidance for recreation resources states that the CDNST is to be managed to provide high-quality scenic, primitive hiking and pack-and-saddle stock opportunities.

Segment 3

Recreational resources on federal lands along Segment 3 are regulated in part by the Rawlins and Green River RMPs. Recreational activities identified under the Rawlins RMP are discussed above, for Segment 1W. Recreational activities that are identified in the Green River RMP include camping, fishing, hunting, OHV use, mountain biking, use of snow mobiles, use of historic trails, and viewing of wild horses. Note that these are the recreational resources identified in the applicable federal plans, and it is possible that some of these recreational activities take place within or near the Project area.

Segment 3 would also cross through “checkerboard lands.” The Preferred/Proposed Route would not cross any special MAs identified in these plans.

Segment 3 would not cross any NHTs but would cross the Overland Trail and the Point of Rocks to South Pass Stage Road, as well as the Lincoln Highway (see Table 3.3-11 in Section 3.3 – Cultural Resources).

There are no developed recreation facilities located within 1,000 feet of the Preferred/Proposed Route and Route Alternatives for Segment 3.

Segment 4

Recreational resources on federal lands along Segment 4 are regulated in part by the Caribou Forest Plan and the Green River, Kemmerer, and Pocatello RMPs. Recreational activities identified in the Caribou Forest Plan include hunting, camping, OHV and other trail uses, snowmobiling, and scenic viewing. Recreational activities identified in the Green River RMP are identified above under Segment 3. Recreational activities identified in the Kemmerer and Pocatello RMPs include the use of historic trails, OHVs, and snowmobiles. Note that these are the recreational resources identified in the applicable federal plans, and it is possible that some of these recreational activities take place within or near the Project area.

The Preferred/Proposed Route or Route Alternatives for Segment 4 would cross the Dempsey Ridge SRMA and the Rock Creek/Tunp and Bear River Divide SMAs, as well as the Cokeville Meadows NWR. These areas are briefly described below.

BLM-administered lands in the vicinity of Dempsey Ridge (33,445 acres) are managed as an SRMA. The management objective for this SRMA is to “manage the area to provide quality dispersed recreation opportunities in a natural setting” (BLM 2010b: 2-47). Primary recreation activities identified for this area include hunting, driving for pleasure, and heritage tourism. Management prescriptions allow mineral development and other construction activities with the goal of no further loss of habitat from these activities.

The Rock Creek/Tunp SMA consists of 45,863 acres managed under the 2010 Kemmerer RMP with the objective of preserving and enhancing the critical wildlife habitats and cultural values that occur in the area. Off-trail motor vehicle travel is not allowed and all new ROW actions are restricted to existing disturbance zones (BLM 2010b: 2-53).

The Bear River Divide SMA consists of 74,954 acres managed under the 2010 Kemmerer RMP. Like the Rock Creek/Tunp SMA, the objective of this SMA is to preserve and enhance the critical wildlife habitats and cultural values that occur in the management area. Off-trail motor vehicle travel is not allowed and ROW actions are considered on a case-by-case basis, with proponents encouraged to use existing disturbance zones (BLM 2010b: 2-54). The Bear River Divide SMA is located directly south of the Rock Creek SMA.

The Cokeville Meadows NWR is centered around a 20-mile stretch of the Bear River and its associated wetlands and uplands, south of Cokeville, Wyoming. Wetlands within the NWR provide high quality habitat for migratory and resident wildlife species and

support high densities of nesting waterfowl. Established in 1992, the NWR is currently managed by the USFWS as a satellite of the relatively nearby Seedskadee NWR. The approved acquisition boundary for the refuge encompasses 26,657 acres. To date, 9,259 acres have been purchased or are protected through conservation easements (USFWS 2011b). The Preferred/Proposed Route and Route Alternatives for Segment 4 would cross a number of NHTs and other trails, including stage and wagon roads that have potential historic significance (see Table 3.3-12 in Section 3.3 – Cultural Resources). These include the Oregon and Pony Express NHTs, and the California NHT Sublette Cutoff, and Bartleton-Bidwell Route. Alternative 4F would also cross the Dempsey-Hockaday Cutoff. The Preferred/Proposed Route along Segment 4 would also cross the Overland Trail and the 1849 Evans Cherokee Trail, as well as a number of historic stage and wagon roads (see Section 3.3 – Cultural Resources).

The Analysis Area for Segment 4 also crosses a number of scenic byways. The Preferred/Proposed Route along Segment 4 would cross the Oregon NHT/Bear Lake Scenic Byway southeast of Montpelier, Idaho; the Pioneer Historic Byway approximately 0.3 mile south of Thatcher, Idaho; and the Big Spring Scenic Backway directly south of the Bridger NF and again north of Cokeville, Wyoming. The Preferred/Proposed Route would also cross the Big Spring Scenic Backway between the Kemmerer Reservoir and Lake Viva Naughton; Alternative 4F would cross this backway a second time north of Cokeville, Wyoming (see Section 3.2 – Visual Resources).

Alternative 4F would pass within 1,000 feet of the Pine Creek Ski Area. The Pine Creek Ski Area is a ski resort located on BLM-managed land south of Cokeville, Wyoming, between the Pine Creek and Dempsey Ridge SRMAs. The ski area includes 30 ski runs and 60 acres of skiable terrain.

Segment 5

Recreational resources on federal lands along Segment 5 are regulated in part by the Caribou Forest Plan and Pocatello RMP. Recreational activities identified in the Pocatello RMP include use of historic trails, OHVs, and snowmobiles. Note that these are the recreational resources identified in the applicable federal plans, and it is possible that some of these recreational activities take place within or near the Project area.

The Preferred Route, Proposed Route, and Route Alternatives for Segment 5 would not cross any special management areas identified in these plans.

The Preferred Route, Proposed Route, and Route Alternatives for Segment 5 would cross the Oregon and California NHTs and the North Alternate Oregon Trail (see Table 3.3-14 in Section 3.3 – Cultural Resources).

The Preferred Route and Proposed Route along Segment 5 would either cross or pass within 1,000 feet of areas on the Caribou-Targhee NF and BLM-managed lands that offer dispersed recreational opportunities. The Proposed Route would cross the Snake River and pass within 1,000 feet of the Pipeline Recreation Site. Located on the Snake River about 3 miles southwest of American Falls, Idaho, the Pipeline Recreation Site is a developed campground with eight campsites and a boat ramp. This site is managed

by the BLM Pocatello FO. Alternatives 5D and 5E (which is part of the Preferred Route) both cross the Snake River at different locations to the Proposed Route.

Alternative 5B would pass within 1,000 feet of the Hawkins Reservoir Campground. Located about 9 miles west of Virginia, Idaho, on the Hawkins Reservoir, this campground is managed by the BLM Pocatello FO and includes 10 campsites and a boat ramp. The Preferred Route incorporates Alternative 5B and would, therefore, pass within 1,000 feet of this campground.

Segment 6

Segment 6 is an existing 345-kV transmission line that would be changed to operate at 500 kV. Existing support structures would be used and impacts would be limited to the structures within approximately 0.25 mile from each substation to allow for moving the entry point into the substation to the new 500-kV bay. Land use in the vicinity of the substations is primarily rangeland, with some areas of irrigated cropland.

Segment 7

Recreational resources on federal lands along Segment 7 are regulated in part by the Sawtooth Forest Plan and the Pocatello and Cassia RMPs. Recreational activities identified in the Pocatello RMP are listed above under Segment 5. Recreational activities identified in the Sawtooth Forest Plan include mountain biking, cross country and downhill skiing, hunting, rafting, boating, horseback riding, and wildlife viewing. Recreational activities identified in the Cassia RMP include trail use, skiing, hunting, fishing, biking, OHV use, and snowmobile use. Note that these are the recreational resources identified in the applicable federal plans, and it is possible that some of these recreational activities take place within or near the Project area.

The Preferred Route, Proposed Route, and Route Alternatives for Segment 7 would not cross any SRMAs or other SMAs identified in these plans. Alternative 7K would, however, cross the Raft River/Curlew Valley IBA. This area consists of approximately 490,000 acres of sagebrush/grass rangelands within the Raft River and Curlew-Juniper Valleys in south-central Idaho. The area was designated an IBA by the National Audubon Society and the American Bird Conservancy to protect the large population of ferruginous hawks found in the area (National Audubon Society 2011). IBAs may include public or private lands, or both, and they may be protected or unprotected.

The Preferred Route, Proposed Route, and Route Alternatives for Segment 7 would cross a number of NHTs and other trails that have potential historic significance (see Table 3.3-15 in Section 3.3 – Cultural Resources). These include the Oregon and California NHTs, California NHT – Hudspeth Cutoff, Kelton Road, and the Oregon-California Trail Junction. Alternative 7K would also cross the California NHT – South Lake Alternate.

The Proposed Route along Segment 7 would either cross or pass within 1,000 feet of areas on the Sawtooth NF and BLM-managed lands that offer dispersed recreational opportunities. The Preferred and Proposed Routes would also pass within 1,000 feet of the Hawkins Reservoir Campground, which, as noted above under Segment 5, is managed by the BLM Pocatello FO and includes 10 campsites and a boat ramp.

The Preferred and Proposed Routes would pass within 1,000 feet of the Elkhorn Mountain Roadless Area in the Caribou-Targhee NF (Table D.17-1). Alternative 7K would pass within 1,000 feet of the Elkhorn Mountain Roadless Area and the Curlew National Grasslands.

Segment 8

Recreational resources on federal lands along Segment 8 are regulated in part by the Monument, Jarbidge, SRBOP, and Owyhee RMPs, as well as the Bennett Hills/Timmerman Hills and Kuna MFPs. Recreational activities identified in the Monument RMP include fishing, shooting, archery, picnicking, boating, sightseeing, cave exploration, and motorcycle racing, as well as use of off-road vehicles and trails. Recreational activities identified in the Jarbidge RMP include hiking, collecting fossils, and use of OHVs and trails. Recreational activities identified in the SRBOP RMP include camping, rock climbing, paintballing, hunting, fishing, and OHV use. Recreational activities identified in the Owyhee RMP include OHV use, river recreation, hiking, and horseback riding. Recreational activities identified in the Bennett Hills/Timmerman Hills MFP include camping, fishing, boating, hunting, rock collecting, and use of OHVs and snowmobiles. Recreational activities identified in the Kuna MFP include horseback riding, hunting, bird watching, fishing, and use of OHVs and trails. Note that these are the recreational resources identified in the applicable federal plans, and it is possible that some of these recreational activities take place within or near the Project area.

The Proposed Route and Route Alternatives for Segment 8 would cross the SRBOP and three SRMAs managed under the SRBOP RMP: the Oregon NHT, Owyhee Front, and Snake River Canyon SRMAs.

The Oregon NHT SRMA consists of approximately 7,900 acres along a 1-mile-wide (0.5 mile either side) corridor of the South Alternate of the Oregon NHT. The purpose of the Oregon NHT SRMA is to protect the visual and historic values of the NHT.

The Owyhee Front SRMA consists of 6,300 acres located west of SR 78. The purpose of this SRMA is to provide enhanced management of recreational resources in the area.

The Snake River Canyon SRMA consists of 22,300 acres in the Snake River Canyon downstream from Grand View, Idaho, that are managed for the protection of cultural and scenic values.

Other special management areas crossed by the Preferred Route, Proposed Route, and Route Alternatives for this segment are the Birds of Prey Avoidance Area, a National Register Historic District, the Black Mountain Herd Management Area (HMA), the Halverson Bar Non-Motorized Area, and the Wees Bar Non-Motorized Area.

The Birds of Prey Avoidance Area is a 43,000-acre ROW avoidance area established in the 2008 SRBOP RMP to protect the visual corridor along the Oregon NHT and resources along the Snake River Canyon. This avoidance area includes parts of Oregon NHT and Snake River Canyon SRMAs.

The National Register Historic District includes approximately 26,300 acres of public land along portions of the Snake River Canyon. This district was listed on the NRHP in 1978 to protect over 200 known sites in the area.

The Black Mountain HMA is managed under the Owyhee RMP and consists of 50,611 acres of public and other land south of the Snake River, between Murphy and US 95 to the west. The area is generally characterized by rolling hills and sagebrush steppe (BLM 2011d).

The Halverson Bar Non-Motorized Area includes a 1,150-acre area. Wees Bar Non-Motorized Area encompasses a 1,200-acre area that has been closed to motorized use and where non-motorized use (e.g., horseback riding and biking) is encouraged.

The Preferred Route, Proposed Route along Segment 8, and Route Alternatives to this segment would cross a number of NHTs and other trails such as stage and wagon roads that have potential historic significance (see Table 3.3-16 in Section 3.3 – Cultural Resources). These include the Oregon NHT, the Oregon NHT South Alternate, the Northside Alternate Oregon NHT, the North Alternate Oregon NHT, Kelton Road, Dorsey's Road, and the Boise City-Silver City Road.

The Preferred Route, Proposed Route, and Route Alternatives for Segment 8 would also cross three scenic byways: the Western Heritage Historic Byway, the Snake River Canyon Scenic Byway, and the Thousand Springs Scenic Byway (see Section 3.2 – Visual Resources).

The Western Heritage Historic Byway is 47 miles long and includes parts of SR 69 and Swan Falls Road (Idaho Transportation Department 2011). This byway mainly passes through the SRBOP. The Proposed Route along Segment 8 would cross this byway south of Initial Point, while Alternative 8B (and the Preferred Route) would cross it south of Kuna, Idaho (directly east of Kuna Butte). Alternative 8B would also cross the Snake River Canyon Scenic Byway on Map Rock Road, north of Walters Island. Alternative 8A would cross the Thousand Springs Scenic Byway between Hagerman, Idaho, and Lower Salmon Falls (see Section 3.2 – Visual Resources).

Segment 9

Recreational resources on federal lands along Segment 9 are regulated in part by the Cassia, Jarbidge, SRBOP, and Owyhee RMPs, as well as the Twin Falls and Bruneau MFPs. Recreational activities identified in the Cassia RMP are listed above under Segment 5. Recreational activities identified in the Twin Falls MFP include camping, hunting, fishing, boating, target shooting, hiking, trail use, OHV use, and rock collecting. Recreational activities identified in the Jarbidge, SRBOP, and Owyhee RMPs are listed above under Segment 8. Recreational activities that are identified in the Bruneau MFP include camping, fishing, boating, rock collecting, motorcycle racing, and OHV use. Note that these are the recreational resources identified in the applicable federal plans, and it is possible that some of these recreational activities take place within or near the Project area.

The Preferred Route, Proposed Route, and Route Alternatives for Segment 9 would cross the SRBOP and four SRMAs: the Oregon NHT, Owyhee Front, Snake River

Canyon, and C.J. Strike Reservoir SRMA. Summary information is presented for the Oregon NHT, Owyhee Front, and Snake River Canyon SRMAs under Segment 8.

The C.J. Strike SRMA consists of 20,000 acres surrounding C.J. Strike Reservoir along the Snake River. The purpose of the SRMA is to provide enhanced recreation management associated with the reservoir, and protection of the Oregon NHT adjacent to the reservoir.

Other SMAs that would be crossed by the Preferred Route, Proposed Route, and Route Alternatives for this segment are the Salmon Falls Creek ACEC, the Birds of Prey Avoidance Area, a National Register Historic District, and the Black Mountain and Saylor Creek HMAs. Summary information is presented for the Birds of Prey Avoidance Area, a National Register Historic District, and the Black Mountain HMA under Segment 8.

The Salmon Falls Creek ACEC consists of 2,700 acres of public land managed with the goal of protecting Salmon Falls Creek Canyon for its natural and scenic values. It also includes the portion of Salmon Falls Creek eligible as a WSR (see Figure 3.17-10 later in this section).

The Saylor Creek HMA consists of 94,992 acres, located approximately 15 miles south of Glens Ferry, Idaho, in Owyhee and Elmore Counties (BLM 2011e).

The Preferred and Proposed Route along Segment 9 and Route Alternatives to this segment would cross several trails such as stage and wagon roads that have potential historic significance (see Table 3.3-17 in Section 3.3 – Cultural Resources). These include the Toana Freight Wagon Road and Boise City-Silver City Road. Several Route Alternatives would cross the Oregon NHT, and Alternative 9D would also cross the Oregon NHT South Alternate several times.

In addition, the Preferred Route, Proposed Route, and Alternative 9E would cross the Owyhee Uplands Backcountry Byway, directly north of Rock House Ranch (see Section 3.2 – Visual Resources).

Alternative 9D would cross the Cove Non-Motorized Area and Alternatives 9D and 9G would pass within 1,000 feet of Locust Park, which is owned and maintained by Idaho Power.

Alternative 9E (which is part of the Preferred Route) would cross a motorcycle raceway area located on lands managed by the BLM's Bruneau FO. Alternative 9E and the Preferred Route would cross this area between the Grandview area (around Shoofly Creek) and Castle Creek. This motorcycle raceway is an undeveloped raceway (e.g., there are no restroom facilities or staging areas present). The majority of people that utilize this area are looking for a less developed racing experience, and one of the major events at this facility is a long-distance endurance race. This area is already disturbed due to the previous land use in this area (it was historically a missile base).

Alternatives 9B and 9C would pass approximately 0.5 mile east of Balanced Rock County Park in Twin Falls County (Figure 3.17-10).

Segment 10

Recreational resources on federal lands along Segment 10 are regulated in part by the Monument and Cassia RMPs, as well as the Twin Falls MFP. Recreational activities identified in the Monument and Cassia RMPs and the Twin Falls MFP are listed above under Segment 8, and Segment 9, respectively. The Preferred/Proposed Route for Segment 10 would not cross any SMAs identified in these plans.

Segment 10 would cross the Oregon NHT, Northside Alternate Oregon NHT, and Kelton Road (see Table 3.3-18 in Section 3.3 – Cultural Resources).

OHV Use on BLM-managed and NFS Lands

The OHV designations for the majority of travel routes on public lands are currently either “open,” “closed,” “seasonally closed,” or “limited” (use is limited to existing travel routes designated as open to OHV use). The Analysis Area includes numerous trails that are maintained by the land management agencies, some of which are designated as open to OHV use and some as closed to OHV use (Table 3.17-5).

Travel by snowmobiles is permitted off existing routes and in all open or limited areas (unless otherwise specifically limited or closed to snowmobiles) if the snowmobiles are operated in a responsible manner without damaging the vegetation or harming wildlife.

The non-highway road networks within the planning area consist of a series of county roads, BLM- and Forest Service-maintained roads, private (ungated) roads, two-track routes, and snowmobile trails. These travel ways are used for both recreational and nonrecreational purposes. The three NFs potentially crossed by the Preferred Route, Proposed Route, or Route Alternatives have completed travel management plans that designate which roads are open for use. All areas on these national forests are closed to motor vehicles, including OHVs, unless designated open.

Table 3.17-5. OHV Designations on Federal Lands for the Proposed Route (miles)

Segment	Total Route Length	Closed	Limited	Limited to Designated Roads	Limited to Existing Routes	Seasonal Closure	Open	Undesignated
1W(a)	73.8	–	–	–	4.0	2.2	–	–
1W(c)	73.6	–	–	–	3.4	2.3	–	–
2	91.9	–	–	–	37.6	–	–	–
3	51.1	–	–	–	11.5	–	–	–
4	197.6	–	1.1	0.4	2.0	9.6	7.1	–
5	55.7	–	7.9	–	–	5.2	–	–
6	0.5	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
7	118.2	0.9	6.8	–	–	4.3	15.8	0.3
8	131.5	–	31.9	–	–	–	28.8	26.4
9	162.2	3.1	36.9	–	–	–	89.2	–
10	34.4	–	–	–	–	–	–	16.2
Total	990.5	4.0	84.7	0.4	58.5	23.6	140.9	42.9

Typical recreational OHV activities within the planning area include enduro races, trial competitions, all-terrain vehicle and motorcycle trail riding, and snowmobiling. OHV use, in itself, has become a popular method for exploring public lands. In addition, OHV use provides access for other recreational purposes, such as fishing, hiking, mountain biking, horseback riding, and primitive camping opportunities.

Nonrecreational OHV use includes agricultural management, energy development, and land management activities. OHVs may also be used for the noncommercial collection of decorative rock and native plant materials. Employees of government agencies, ranchers, timber companies, energy companies, and utility providers are permitted users who utilize OHVs to access and maintain the infrastructure required for the continued operation and maintenance of their facilities. OHVs are used for range inspections, vegetation treatments, surveying and mapping, inventories, monitoring, fire suppression, project construction, and maintenance.

Recreation Opportunity Spectrum

The Forest Service developed the ROS land classification system to help identify and describe possible combinations of recreation activities, settings, and experiences for management purposes. The ROS system portrays the appropriate combination of activities, settings, and experiences along a continuum that ranges from highly modified to primitive environments. Six factors describe the range along the spectrum of available opportunities: access, other non-recreational resource uses, on-site management, social interaction, acceptability of visitor impacts, and acceptable level of regimentation. Classifications typically identified along this continuum include Urban, Rural, Roaded Modified, Roaded Natural, Semi-Primitive Motorized, Semi-Primitive Non-Motorized, and Primitive. These classifications may be summarized as follows:

- **Urban (U)** – This class is characterized by a substantially urbanized environment, although the background may have natural-appealing elements. High levels of human activity and concentrated development, including recreation opportunities are prevalent.
- **Rural (R)** – This class provides highly developed opportunities. Visitor use levels are high, facilities accommodate greater numbers of visitors, management is more obvious, and visitors can expect opportunities to interact with others.
- **Roaded Modified (RM)** – This class is predominantly influenced by human management activities, such as road building and timber production. It provides opportunities for dispersed recreation without any formal structure.
- **Roaded Natural (RN)** – This class is found around developed sites where the setting is managed for outdoor recreation. These areas provide scenic driving opportunities, trailheads, dispersed campsites, and fishing and hunting areas. They are natural appearing settings that may have modifications that range from being easily noticed to strongly dominant to observers within the area.
- **Semi-Primitive Motorized (SPM)** – This class is a natural appearing setting with 2-track roads or motorized trails. It provides for a more solitary experience. This setting may challenge survival skills. Lands within this classification should be at least 2,500 acres in size, but the shape can be linear (along a motorized trail, with a buffer for noise absorption). The areas have natural appearing settings that may have moderately dominant alterations but do not draw the attention of motorized observers on trails and primitive roads within the area. This class is more restrictive than RN because structures are rare and isolated.

- **Semi-Primitive Non-Motorized (SPNM)** – This class offers solitude. It is an unaltered natural setting with only non-motorized trails. This class may require a high level of survival skill because there's a lower probability of meeting other users. This class should cover at least 2,500 acres.
- **Primitive (P)** – This class includes areas that are at least 5,000 acres and provides for solitude with a very low likelihood of encountering other users. This is backcountry where survival skills are required. This class is at least three miles from roads with traffic (Forest Service 2003b).

Changes in ROS classification are used to evaluate the potential recreation effects on NFS lands due to the Preferred Route, Proposed Route, and Route Alternatives on NFS lands.

The BLM's Owyhee FO also uses the ROS system, as does the SRBOP RMP; therefore, potential changes in ROS classification on lands managed under the Owyhee and SRBOP RMPs are also used to evaluate potential impacts of the Preferred Route, Proposed Route, and Route Alternatives.

3.17.1.6 Lands with Wilderness Characteristics

The FLPMA requires the BLM to maintain inventories of lands with wilderness characteristics and both FLPMA and NEPA require disclosure of impacts on wilderness characteristics from proposed projects. Direction for conducting wilderness characteristics inventories is included under Section 201 of the FLPMA. The inventory evaluates wilderness characteristics as defined in Section 2(c) of the Wilderness Act, and incorporated in the FLPMA. In order for an area to have wilderness characteristics, it must possess sufficient size, naturalness, and outstanding opportunities for either solitude or primitive and unconfined recreation. In addition, it may also possess supplemental values.

For an area of land to be characterized as wilderness, it must be over 5,000 acres of contiguous BLM-managed land that does not contain maintained roads or other developments. Parcels of BLM-managed land connected only at the junction of two corners (i.e., checkerboard land ownership) are not considered continuous. Areas with less than 5,000 acres of contiguous BLM-managed land can still be considered wilderness if they are contiguous with one or more of the following: designated wilderness, BLM WSAs, USFWS areas proposed for wilderness designation, Forest Service WSAs or areas of recommended wilderness, and NPS areas recommended or proposed for designation. Areas of land less than 5,000 acres that still have wilderness characteristics and are large enough to be managed for preservation may also be considered. Examples of these areas include islands, buttes, and isolated canyons.

An area is considered to be in a natural condition if it is affected only by the dominant forces of nature, with limited influence of human beings on the land. Examples of human-made features that may be considered unnoticeable include trails, historic properties, archaeological resources, minor radio repeater sites, air quality monitoring devices, some types of fencing, spring developments, and stock ponds. A wilderness

area may also have ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic, or historical value.

As part of the wilderness characteristics inventory conducted for the Project, existing wilderness inventory findings for BLM-managed lands crossed by the Preferred Route, Proposed Route, or Route Alternative completed prior to December 2010 were reviewed. The completed forms are included in the project record. None of the existing inventories identified lands crossed by the Project with wilderness characteristics. However, many of the areas crossed did not have existing inventories on record.

The following steps were taken to identify areas crossed by the Project that may have wilderness characteristics:

- Blocks of BLM-managed land that are over 5,000 acres or contiguous to wilderness areas, WSAs, or other federal lands recommended for wilderness designation were mapped.
- Railroads, highways, county, BLM, or other maintained roads, transmission lines, and pipelines that cross a block were identified.
- Blocks crossed by any of these features were separated into smaller units using the roads and utility lines as boundaries. (Roads that enter into but do not fully cross a unit, referred to as cherry stem roads, do not subdivide a unit.)
- Maps documenting this process were distributed to the applicable FOs, along with shape files and layers of existing features for review and approval.
- BLM staff at each FO used local knowledge and records to identify additional roads maintained by mechanical means and other evidences of human presence not already identified. Additional information provided by each FO was included on the maps. Areas that did not meet the criteria were dropped from the inventory.
- Remaining areas were reviewed in the field to determine if they met the criteria. Some areas were not accessible due to snow or access restrictions.
- Reports for each area were submitted to the FO manager for review and approval.

Areas identified as having wilderness characteristics (or areas that are assumed to have wilderness characteristics pending completion of a field inventory) are identified by route segment below.

Segment 1W

No areas with wilderness characteristics are crossed in this segment. Surveys conducted by the Rawlins FO in 2012 determined that the two inventory units crossed by Segment 1W discussed in the Draft EIS do not have wilderness characteristics.

Segment 2

No areas with wilderness characteristics are crossed in this segment.

Segment 3

No areas with wilderness characteristics are crossed in this segment.

Segment 3A

No areas with wilderness characteristics are crossed in this segment.

Segment 4

Inventory Unit WY-K-6L is a large unit in Lincoln County, Wyoming, divided in two by Trail Creek Road, which runs north/south through the unit. Subunit WY-K-6L-1 (Township 23/24 North, Range 115/116 West) is bound by Trail Creek Road, County Route 306, an existing transmission line, and state and private land. It has approximately 17,642 acres. This subunit includes two non-federal parcels totaling approximately 680 acres. Subunit WY-K-6L-2 (Township 24/25 North, Range 115/116 West) is bound by Trail Creek Road, State Highway 233, and state, private, and NFS land. It has approximately 17,709 acres. This area is a high mountain-rimmed desert plateau with an extensive terrace system creating numerous canyons and drainages. Commissary Ridge runs along the eastern boundary of unit WY-K-6L-2. South Fork Mountain lies along the western boundary of unit WY-K-6L-1 and the eastern boundary of WY-K-6L-2.

Inventory Unit WY-K-6S is a large unit in Lincoln County, Wyoming. The unit includes several non-federal parcels totaling approximately 6,500 acres. A county maintained road separates the unit into two sections. The eastern portion, WY-K-6S-1, would be crossed by route alternatives. The subunit (Township 20/21 North, Range 117/118/119 West) is bound by an existing transmission line in the north and east, and maintained county roads in the south and west. The subunit has approximately 37,617 acres. Topography includes numerous ridges sloping into valleys and drainages. Fossil Ridge occupies the northwest portion of the subunit and Bear River Divide follows the south border. Smaller drainages and creeks are found throughout. The vegetation community is dominated by sagebrush. Gas wells are found along a ridge near the western boundary. A field inventory was not completed due to snow.

Inventory Unit WY-K-8A is in Lincoln County, Wyoming. It is approximately 33,293 acres (Township 25/26/27/28 North, Range 119/120 West). The unit includes several non-federal parcels totaling approximately 1,520 acres. It is bounded by a maintained county road and by state and private land. The Sublette Range runs the length of the unit (north/south). There are numerous drainages in the unit. Lodgepole pine is dominant on the eastern slopes of the range and Douglas-fir is dominant on the western slopes of the range. The inventory unit includes the Raymond Mountain WSA (Decision 7001 in the Kemmerer RMP). This inventory unit is not crossed by the Preferred/Proposed Route or Route Alternative based on indicative engineering; however, it is within 0.25 mile of Alternative 4F. This is within the 1-mile study area used in this EIS to analyze potential effects.

Segment 5

No areas with wilderness characteristics are crossed in this segment.

Segment 6

Segment 6 uses an existing transmission line. No areas with wilderness characteristics are affected in this Segment.

Segment 7

Inventory Unit ID-B-18A (Jim Sage) is part of a large block (42,000 acres) in Cassia County, Idaho. It is bounded by an existing transmission line and State Highway 81 in the east and by state and private lands in every other direction. Irrigated agricultural lands are found to the east of the unit. The Sawtooth NF is to the west and south of the unit. The topography in the area is dominated by the north/south oriented Jim Sage Mountain Range. Cassia Creek is to the north of the unit and Raft River runs along the southern boundary of the unit. The vegetation is primarily forest. The boundary was modified to follow natural contours and exclude portions that lack naturalness. The revised unit (Township 25/26 North, R 13/14/15 West) is approximately 31,062 acres.

Inventory Unit ID-B-22A (Mountain Meadow) is in Cassia County, Idaho (Township 12 North, R 20 West). It is approximately 5,442 acres. The unit is bounded by maintained roads and by private and state lands. The Sawtooth NF lies to the south. The topography is steep and rugged. Mountain Meadow Creek flows through the middle of the unit. The unit requires field inventory to verify whether it has outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive recreation.

Segment 8

No areas with wilderness characteristics are crossed in this segment.

Segment 9

No areas with wilderness characteristics are affected in this segment.

Segment 10

No areas with wilderness characteristics are affected in this segment.

3.17.2 Direct and Indirect Effects

This section is organized to present the effects to land use and recreation from construction, then operation, followed by decommissioning activities for the proposed Project. Route Alternatives are analyzed in detail below in Section 3.17.2.3.

EPMs are presented in detail within this section only if it is the first time they have been discussed in Chapter 3; all other measures are referenced or summarized. A comprehensive list of all EPMS, and the land ownership to which they apply, can be found in Table 2.7-1 of Chapter 2.

Plan Amendments

Plan amendments are discussed in general in Sections 3.17.2.2 and 3.17.2.3 under discussions for each alternative for applicable amendments.

3.17.2.1 No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, the BLM would not issue a ROW grant to the Proponents of Gateway West and the Project would not be constructed across federal lands. No land management plans would be amended to allow for the construction of this Project. No Project-related impacts to land use would occur; however, impacts would continue as a result of natural events (such as fire, drought, and severe weather) as well as from existing and planned developments within the Analysis Area and from

other projects, including wind farms, mining, agricultural, or other competing land uses. The demand for electricity, especially for renewable energy, would continue to grow in the Proponents' service territories. If the No Action Alternative is implemented, the demand for transmission services, as described in Section 1.3, Proponents' Objectives for the Project, would not be met with this Project and the area would have to turn to other proposals to meet the transmission demand. Under the No Action Alternative, impacts similar to those described below may occur due to new transmission lines built to meet the increasing demand in place of this Project.

3.17.2.2 Effects Common to Action Alternatives

Construction

Land Use and Ownership

During scoping, some commenters expressed strong opinions on whether it is better to place transmission lines on private or public lands.

Private lands are owned by individuals or groups, and, therefore, fewer potential users are directly affected. Properties owned by individuals or groups tend to be smaller than publicly managed lands. Effects to private lands may be felt more intensely by the affected landowner because affected lands typically represent a larger relative share of their property and may affect existing or proposed land uses on those lands. Some private landowners may find ROW compensation adequate or beneficial and may actually request placement of transmission line facilities on their property, while other private owners may not feel that they can be adequately compensated for loss of the use of their land and inconvenience.

Public lands are managed for all citizens, under various laws and plans. Therefore, everyone gets the benefit and consequences. Public lands provide resources that could be affected by the location of the transmission line (see other resource analyses, such as wildlife, visual, cultural, historical, etc.). Both the Forest Service and the BLM derive their authority to locate transmission lines on public land under the FLPMA (BLM and Office of the Solicitor 2001). This act explicitly permits the issuance of ROWs under Title V, Section 503. Decisions on issuing a ROW grant or a Special Use Authorization must also consider national and state land use policies, environmental quality, economic efficiency, national security, safety, and good engineering and technological practices.

The direct and indirect effects of a transmission line crossing rangeland, pasture, and other low vegetation are generally minor, beyond the localized impacts of structure installation and the construction of roads and other facilities, because the surrounding vegetation is low-growing and generally compatible with the proposed transmission line (i.e., the existing vegetation would not be affected). Potential impacts in forested areas would, however, be greater because in addition to the effects of roads and structures, the entire ROW would need to be cleared of trees tall enough to endanger the line. Construction clearing limits in forested environments are illustrated in Figure 3.6-1 in Section 3.6 – Vegetation Communities. Chapter 2 provides a detailed description of the construction ROW, access roads, and other Project facilities.

As discussed in Section 3.17.1.5 – Existing Conditions, land use within the Analysis Area is primarily rangeland (82 percent), with cropland and forestland accounting for about 11 percent and 3 percent, respectively (Table 3.17-4). Relatively small portions of the route border or cross developed areas (including industrial, commercial, and residential areas, and existing ROWs), wetlands and open water, and “barren” areas (including disturbed and extractive mining areas) (Table 3.17-4).

Potential impacts to rangeland and cropland during construction and operation of the Preferred Route, Proposed Route, and Alternative Routes are assessed in detail by segment in Section 3.18 – Agriculture. Impacts to vegetation including forestland are addressed in Section 3.6 – Vegetation.

Land Use Plans

The potential effects of the Project on public resources are considered by evaluating conformance with land use plans administered by the BLM and Forest Service. Effects on private lands are influenced through a combination of comprehensive plans and zoning; for example, CUPs and associated conditions would have to be obtained and met as a condition of approval on private lands (see Section 3.17.1.3). In the initial siting of the Proposed Route by the Proponents and subsequent evaluation of alternatives by the BLM Interdisciplinary Team (IDT), an attempt has been made to meet all plan requirements.

The IDT reviewed the Forest Service standards and guidelines and BLM requirements (stipulations) that would be applicable to the proposed Project and identified whether the Project would be consistent with these standards (and, in some cases, guidelines) and other requirements. The results of this analysis are summarized in a series of tables that are included in the Administrative Record for this Project. Cases where the proposed Project would not be consistent with the identified standards or stipulations would in most cases require that the management plan (Forest Plan, RMP, or MFP) that contains these standards or stipulations be amended. Proposed amendments to BLM RMPs and MFPs are summarized in Table 2.2-1 of Chapter 2, while BLM plan amendments associated with other routes are summarized in Table 2.2-2. BLM plan amendments are discussed in detail in Appendices F-1 and G-1. Proposed amendments to Forest Plans are summarized in Table 2.2-3 of Chapter 2 and discussed in detail in Appendices F-2 and G-2. Appendices G-1 and G-2 provide analyses of visual resource impacts of BLM and Forest Service plan amendments, respectively. Inconsistencies of the Project with the applicable plans include:

- Developing a new ROW outside of approved corridors,
- Building additional roads where motorized access is limited,
- Crossing NHTs,
- Crossing ACECs,
- Crossing National WSR-eligible segments,
- Modifying wildlife habitat requirements,
- Allowing surface disturbance near scenic rivers,

- Allowing new roads near special status plant species,
- Changing VRM classifications, and
- Allowing incompatibility with established VRM classes.

Plan amendments that are directly related to land use or recreation (i.e., the need for these amendments is directly related to the Project's impacts on land use or recreation) or visual resources (due to the close relationship between visual resources and recreation) are identified by Segment in Section 3.17.2.3.

In addition, there are plan amendments proposed that, although not specifically related to land use or recreation, would result in alterations to current land management practices and would allow the permitting of this Project in areas that are currently managed in such a way as to exclude projects of this type (see Appendices G-1 and G-2 for maps of areas with visual resource management class changes). These types of proposed plan amendments could have an indirect impact on the allowable use of lands as well as recreational experiences. For example, proposed amendments to the federal wildlife stipulations could alter the composition of wildlife species found near the Project (see Sections 3.10 – General Wildlife and Fish and 3.11 – Special Status Wildlife and Fish Species), which could in turn affect hunting and wildlife viewing in these areas (as discussed in more detail later in this section).

Designated Corridors and Existing ROW

Major portions of the Preferred Route, Proposed Route, and Route Alternatives would use one or more of the proposed WWE corridors (DOE and BLM 2008). Other portions are located within or adjacent to Forest Service- or BLM-designated utility corridors. Use of these corridors was considered a siting opportunity during the route selection process and these corridors were used whenever feasible considering all the resource categories and when the WECC reliability criteria could be met. Table 2.4-3 presents the length and percentage of Proposed Route and Route Alternative segments that are within the WWE corridor (all ownership types), within the WWE corridor (federal lands only), adjacent to the WWE corridor (within 1/3 mile of the WWE corridor), within an existing transmission corridor (existing transmission lines only), and within an existing transmission corridor (including the WWE corridor and existing transmission lines).

For reliability and public safety reasons and based on regulatory guidance, the minimum separation for preliminary siting of the line adjacent to existing lines was 1,500 feet (see Section 1.3.5 of Chapter 1). During final design, the separation distance could be greater due to the distance between structures, topography, or other factors. For example, portions of Segment 1W(a) and 1W(c) would be less than 1,500 feet apart due to topography. The 5.3-mile-long Alternative 5E proposed by Power County would be located adjacent to an existing 345-kV line and would, therefore, not be consistent with the 1,500-foot separation criteria established for the Project.

The Proposed Route and Route Alternatives would also cross numerous federal, state, county, and local highways and railroads, electric transmission lines, gas and oil pipelines, sewer lines, and irrigation pipes and canals. The exact alignment and design configurations of the crossings would be in accordance with applicable regulations and

codes. Special construction protection measures would be undertaken at road and other ROW crossings, and would include measures such as the use of protective wood poles to prevent conductors from interfering with road traffic.

Existing, Proposed, and Planned Commercial or Residential Areas

Existing commercial and residential structures located within 1,000 feet of the Proposed Route and Route Alternatives are identified by segment in Table D.17-1 and discussed below by segment in Section 3.17.2.3.

The effects on commercial farm and dairy operations are discussed in Sections 3.18 – Agriculture and 3.21 – Electrical Environment, as well as in Appendix K. All existing improvements, such as fences, gates, irrigation ditches, cattle guards, and reservoirs would be maintained during construction and repaired to pre-construction conditions or better. If pipelines or canals transporting water for livestock, wildlife, and crops were damaged by construction activities, the Proponents would repair them to the landowner or land management agency specifications.

Other commercial operations located in the vicinity of the proposed Project could be temporarily affected during construction by the presence of construction workers and equipment, noise from construction, and areas where access is temporarily prohibited for safety reasons. Some areas may be disturbed by access roads, fly yards, and staging areas. In some cases, access to commercial operations may be hindered periodically during construction. The Proponents have designed EPMs to minimize traffic and transportation-related impacts. These measures, described in Appendix B, and further discussed in Section 3.19 – Transportation, would help reduce potential construction-related impacts to commercial operations. Any residual construction-related impacts would be short-term, occurring for the few months that construction activities occur in any one area.

Potential construction impacts on nearby residences could include dust and noise from construction activities, additional traffic, and emergency access. Residences within 1,000 feet and 300 feet are identified for the Proposed Route and Route Alternatives by segment in Section 3.17.2.3 below. Effects from noise and traffic are addressed in Section 3.23 – Noise, and Section 3.19 – Transportation, respectively. The EPMs designed to minimize traffic and transportation-related impacts would help reduce potential construction-related impacts to existing residences (see Appendix B and Section 3.19 – Transportation).

Planned commercial and residential developments would only be affected during construction if the Proposed Route or Route Alternatives precluded access to lots intended for other uses or if the schedule for development coincided with the Gateway West Project construction schedule. In that case, the Proponents and the development construction operators would need to coordinate their efforts to minimize the effects on each other.

Timber Management

Construction through timber management areas would require the removal of trees within the ROW and adjacent hazard trees that could fall into the structures, conductors, and/or access roads. Land within the ROW, as well as land occupied by new

permanent roads, would no longer be available for timber production. When these activities occur, the merchantable value of the timber is determined and the landowner or land management agency would be compensated for the timber taken and for the loss of timber production on that land. Impacts from other construction-related ground disturbance, such as staging areas and fly yards, would be temporary and sited to avoid timbered areas, where possible.

Section 3.6 – Vegetation Communities contains information on the acres of forest that would be affected by the Project. Section 3.4 – Socioeconomics discusses the associated economic impacts.

Fire Management

A transmission line can influence fire management in the following ways:

- Construction equipment starting a fire;
- Transmission lines being the cause of fires, resulting from downed power lines, birds or airplanes striking a line and starting a fire upon hitting the ground, sparking at substations and transformers or, during smoky or humid conditions, electric arcs hitting the ground;
- Interfering with aerial suppression or fuel reduction operations, including helicopters, single-engine air tankers, air tactical aircraft, utility aircraft, aerial supervision modules, heavy air tankers, smokejumper aircraft, and large transport aircraft; and
- Delaying firefighters as they wait for the line to be de-energized for safety.

Construction would increase the potential for ignition in the proposed ROW corridor due to operation of equipment capable of producing heat and sparks in the presence of wildland fuel. The states of Wyoming and Idaho, along with the Forest Service and BLM, have requirements for fire preparedness for construction equipment operating during fire season, including the availability of a bucket and shovel, spark arrestors, mufflers, spill control, and brush disposal. During extreme fire danger, state and federal agencies would implement operating restrictions during specified hours. To reduce the potential for construction-related fires, the Proponents have adopted nine EPMs to ensure that fire prevention and suppression measures are carried out in accordance with federal, state, and local regulations. These EPMs are described in Section 3.22 – Public Safety.

Safety hazards would increase in localized areas of the ROW corridor presenting challenges for fire managers whose first priority is safety. The effect of these safety hazards on fire management would depend on the particular hazard encountered. Potential effects could range from a simple alteration in fire suppression tactics—in the case of an overhead hazard—to outright avoidance, in the case of hazardous materials or fuel storage tanks. The potential for fire managers to alter suppression tactics or avoid suppression operations in the ROW corridor altogether due to safety hazards is low due to the low probability that a fire would coincide with fueling activities or occur at a fuel station.

Motor vehicle traffic mobilizing into and out of the proposed ROW area could increase emergency response times if fire responders encounter construction related traffic en-route to an incident. There is a low potential for fire responders to encounter traffic associated with ROW construction on low capacity roads. Traffic bottlenecks would not be expected to affect firefighter safety or fire size unless responders encounter convoys of ingress / egress traffic on low capacity roads. BLM and the cooperating agencies have identified a mitigation measure regarding fire management (VEG-5).

Recreation and Public Interest Areas

Existing recreation and public interest areas found within the general vicinity of the Project are discussed by segment in Section 3.17.1.5. Construction of the Project is not expected to permanently preclude the use of or access to any existing recreation areas or activities; however, some short-term impacts to these resources would occur during the construction phase of the Project.

Hunting and wildlife viewing opportunities could be impacted by the Project if wildlife species are displaced from areas near construction activities to suitable habitats adjacent to, but beyond the extent of, construction disturbances. Alternately, some wildlife may be attracted to disturbed areas (see Section 3.10 – General Wildlife and Fish). This could improve hunting and wildlife viewing opportunities in some areas while reducing or temporarily eliminating opportunities in other areas. These impacts would be limited to the immediate area of construction activity and would be short-term in nature.

Construction of the Project would also affect dispersed recreation activities, such as river rafting, fishing, hiking, camping, that are influenced by the presence of construction noises, visual disturbances, or other humans. The presence of these construction-related disturbances would likely diminish the quality of these recreation activities for the duration of the construction phase of the Project. These impacts would be localized and short-term in nature.

Construction of the Project may require the temporary closure of access roads for public safety reasons, while construction crews move large equipment in and out of remote areas. Recreation areas that have only limited access options may become inaccessible for short periods of time during construction. Road closures would be conducted in accordance with the Proponents' Framework Traffic and Transportation Monitoring Plan (see Appendix B) and agency requirements. The movement of vehicles and heavy equipment could also temporarily affect the recreation experience of visitors traveling the scenic byways that pass through the Analysis Area.

As construction activities are not expected to occur during winter months, winter sports and recreation activities (such as skiing and snowmobiling) are not expected to be affected during the construction phase of the Project.

OHV Use

Construction of the Project would create additional access routes, which may facilitate OHV use in areas that are currently designated as closed to OHVs or where OHV use is limited. In addition, where a ROW or new access road crosses trails not designated as open to OHV use, the Project may lead to unauthorized use of these trails by OHVs.

Therefore, as indicated in EPM TRANS-5, vehicles within the construction ROW or along roadsides near the ROW will not be allowed (Section 3.19 – Transportation).

Some unauthorized OHV use may occur during construction when workers are not on-site (such as weekends or between the time that a section is completed but not activated) but unauthorized use is more likely to occur after construction is completed. Therefore, unauthorized OHV use is discussed under Operations (see below). Effects of unauthorized OHV use during construction, if any, would be similar to those discussed under Operations.

Operations

Land Use and Ownership

Placement of towers, development of access roads, and construction of substations, and substation expansions would affect existing land uses as described elsewhere in this section and document, but would not substantially affect overall existing or future land use or ownership patterns along most of the route. On a per mile basis, a 250-foot ROW would require 30.3 acres of easement. Structure bases would occupy about 0.3 acre of this area and access roads about 1.7 acres, for a total of 2.0 acres or 6.6 percent of the total ROW area. It is recommended that the Proponents work with landowners, as required, to locate roads and structures to minimize impacts to existing and planned subdivisions.

Existing land use or ownership would not change along the majority of the ROW but easements (private land) and authorizations (public land) would encumber the ROW area with some land use limitations. During operations, the Proponents would require access to the ROW for operations and maintenance purposes, including vegetation management and routine, periodic maintenance, and emergency repairs to the transmission line, should they be required. The easement would also specify that the ROW be kept clear of trees and buildings or structures, and prohibit storage of flammable material of any kind within the boundaries of the ROW or bringing equipment or vehicles to the ROW that would exceed 12 feet in height. The ROW may be used for roads, agricultural crops, other purposes not inconsistent with the above limitations, and special circumstances in mining and agricultural areas where necessary to maintain existing practices, as negotiated with the landowner. On federal lands, authorizations would specify vegetation management and other activities within the ROW.

In Wyoming, the Office of State Lands and Investments (OSLI) has indicated that it reserves the right to engage in specific site planning for routing on State parcels in order to maximize retention of current and future uses. Further, for any segments of the final alignment where it is necessary to cross Wyoming State trust parcels, the Rules and Regulations adopted by the Board of Land Commissioners must be followed in accordance with Wyoming Statutes §36-2-107 and §36-9-118.

Designated Corridors and Existing ROW

In some locations, the presence of a 230- or 500-kV transmission line ROW could be considered a corridor. Some federal and county land use plans require use of existing ROW or designated utility corridors for new utility projects. Section 503 (43 U.S.C. § 1763) of the FLPMA encourages the BLM and Forest Service to use existing corridors

to the extent practical to minimize adverse environmental impacts and the proliferation of separate ROWs.

Power County and Cassia County have initiated efforts to designate transmission line corridors in response to the Gateway West proposed routes and in anticipation of other transmission lines that have been publicly disclosed (see <http://swipps.com/> and <http://www.datcllc.com/regulatory-filings/zephyr/>). Both counties have expressed concern that permitting the Gateway West Project could result in the establishment of a de facto corridor and in additional requests for locating additional transmission lines in close proximity. As a practical matter, many factors influence the feasibility of using common corridors. These include beginning and ending points, intermediate substation interconnections, reliability criteria dictating minimum separation distances, physical pinch points such as concentrations of oil and gas wells or sensitive natural resources such as nesting habitat, land use exclusion areas such as wilderness areas or NWRs, and intensively developed commercial, residential or agricultural uses. Route Alternatives proposed by Power and Cassia Counties are discussed below in Section 3.17.2.3 under Segments 5 and 7, respectively.

Existing, Proposed, and Planned Commercial or Residential Development

Effects of transmission line operations on commercial dairies, farms, and feedlots are discussed in Section 3.18 – Agriculture. The impact of operations of the proposed Project on other commercial facilities is expected to be minimal in most cases.

Effects on existing and planned residential development would vary. Potential effects on residential property values and visual quality are discussed in Section 3.4 – Socioeconomics and Section 3.2 – Visual Resources, respectively. The presence of a transmission line may be viewed negatively by residents living nearby. As discussed with respect to potential impacts to property values, proximity to electric transmission lines can have negative effects on residential property values. These effects tend to decrease with distance and over time, with short-term impacts usually greater than long-term effects (see Section 3.4 – Socioeconomics). Proposed and Alternatives Routes to avoid existing and planned residential development are discussed in Section 3.17.2.3 under Segments 2 and 8.

Timber Management

Impacts to forested areas from clearing the ROWs and constructing new roads, transmission structures, and substations would be permanent and would continue through operations. Section 3.6 – Vegetation Communities contains information on the acres of forest that would be affected by the Project.

The existence of the transmission line structures and conductors could interfere with any aerial logging operations, such as helicopter or skyline logging. These potential impacts would be limited to forested areas managed for timber and are not expected to be extensive.

The use of new roads and the maintenance and operation of a new transmission line would increase the risk of wildland fire. Fires could spread to adjacent forestland and could damage or kill existing timber.

The construction of new access roads could be beneficial to timber harvest activities. These roads would provide access to timber resources where access did not previously exist and could also support future management of other resources. However, as noted above, land occupied by new permanent roads would no longer be available for timber production.

Fire Management

The proposed transmission line would increase the potential for ignitions along the corridor, particularly during summertime red flag warnings, which bring low humidity, low fuel moisture, and high winds (BLM 2005b; Orr 2008). Maintenance and routine inspection of the lines would minimize the potential for abnormal arcing or overheating to cause a wildfire. The potential for ignitions along the ROW corridor would remain low during the operational life of the Project due to scheduled maintenance of equipment and vegetation within the ROW corridor.

The proposed ROW would become a high-priority suppression and fuels management area where it traverses undeveloped areas. Clearing of trees and large brush and treating weeds within the proposed ROW would decrease the continuity of ladder fuels and increase the fire-free interval in the vicinity of the proposed ROW corridor (Deanne et al. 1998).

One commenter suggested the use of green strips (grass areas managed to prevent annual weeds) as a fire suppression technique along the ROW. In concept, green strips in combination with the ROW would provide an enhanced fire suppression management tool. However, implementation of this approach would have significant land use and wildlife habitat impacts. Additional land use controls would be needed in areas of adjacent native vegetation. This vegetation, which would otherwise be unaffected, would be converted to grass and maintained with herbicides to prevent weed infestations.

Structures and facilities proposed for the ROW could narrow the range of appropriate management response to future wildfires in the vicinity. "Wildland fire use" fires or containment fires could become inappropriate where excessive heat and smoke might damage structures or prevent effective transmission of electricity. Prescribed fire would also be limited in the vicinity of the proposed ROW for the same reasons. This would reduce opportunities to reintroduce fire into localized ecosystems along the Proposed Route and Route Alternatives but the overall reduction would be minor because fire is undesirable along a majority of the routes due to existing resource conditions and structures. In the Caribou-Targhee NF, 2.5 miles of the 9.1 miles crossed are in the "fire use" prescription. This area would not be allowed to burn should an ignition occur. This change is not considered significant because much of the Caribou-Targhee NF is prescribed as "wildland fire use" or "prescribed fire" (Forest Service 2003a) and, therefore, the area affected by the Project is a minor component of these areas.

Some suppression tactics in the ROW vicinity may become inappropriate due to the safety hazard that the infrastructure represents to firefighters and the potential for damage to the infrastructure in the ROW. Aerial operations may become inappropriate near the ROW corridor because they would endanger pilots and firefighters and cause

potential damage to infrastructure in the ROW. Direct suppression using engines and hand crews may also become inappropriate where it exposes firefighters to an unacceptable level of risk during periods of high wind and smoke. These limitations could have a cumulative effect where the ROW passes areas of sensitive resources, such as historic portions of the Oregon NHT, where heavy equipment to construct fire line is already limited. Limitations on fire suppression tactics in the vicinity of the ROW corridor could result in a minor increase in the extent of fires that occur there.

In forested environments such as the Medicine Bow-Routt and Caribou-Targhee NFs, broadcast burning may become an inappropriate tool to dispose of slash near the ROW.

Recreation and Public Interest Areas

Operations of the Project are not expected to preclude the use of or access to any existing recreation areas or activities. The primary operations impact to recreation resources would likely result from the visual effect of the transmission line and associated facilities on recreation activities near the Project (see Section 3.2 – Visual Resources). The visual presence of the proposed Project could have a detrimental effect on the recreation experience associated with recreation activities that typically benefit from a lack of human disturbance, including dispersed camping, hunting, wildlife viewing, rafting, skiing, and snowmobiling. For backcountry snowmobiling, the addition of transmission line towers could create a safety risk, while also opening up potential new areas to snowmobile recreation in formerly forested areas cleared for the ROW.

The visual impact of the Project could also potentially affect the quality of the recreation experience in locations where the proposed Project would cross or be located near NHT and other trails including stage and wagon roads that have potential historic significance. NHTs are typically established to preserve the conditions historically experienced along these trails and, depending on existing conditions, the presence of a transmission line and its associated facilities could diminish the “historical experience” along those portions of the NHT located within sight of the Project. Visual impacts to historic trails are evaluated in detail in Section 3.3 – Cultural Resources. The Project could also have detrimental impacts on scenic byways by reducing the quality the natural or rural landscapes that typically characterize these highways.

The extent of these effects would, however, depend on existing visual conditions in the affected areas, with impacts lower in those areas where high-voltage transmission lines and other types of development are already present. Impacts would also vary based on the distance of the recreation area from the proposed transmission line and potential effects would tend to be greater in locations where the Project would be visible on the horizon. Site-specific visual impacts are evaluated in detail in Section 3.2 – Visual Resources.

Additional impacts could also result from operations and maintenance activities; however, these activities are expected to be infrequent and localized and are, therefore, not expected to substantially affect recreation areas or the experiences of those who use these areas (see Chapter 2 for a description of the operation and maintenance activities that would occur).

To help prevent creating new access to areas restricted to the general public, the following EPMs would be implemented:

- OM-6 The Agencies may restrict general public access to closed federal or state roads and service roads that the Proponents maintain. In cases of restricted access, the Proponents will physically close the road with a gate. Gates will be locked with both a lock supplied by the Proponents, and with a federal agency lock. This Plan will be updated as necessary to reflect current road closures and gate locations.

- LU-1 Signs shall be posted at access points to service roads where public access is restricted by a land use plan, and on private, state, and Tribal lands at the request of the landowner, agency, or Tribal government. Signs shall indicate the restriction or regulation, location, penalty for violation, and appropriate contact information for reporting violations. Signage shall be maintained and replaced as part of the routine maintenance.

OHV Use

The Proposed Route and Route Alternatives would create additional access routes across areas that are currently closed to OHVs. In addition, where a ROW or new access road crosses trails that are closed to OHV use, the Project may lead to unauthorized use of these trails by OHVs. Unless signage and effective barriers are in place, it is likely that the access roads would provide additional points of OHV entry into new areas, particularly areas that have low vegetation and are in relatively flat or gentle terrain. The EPMs noted above should help address such activity. The Agencies also recommend that the Proponents coordinate with agency and county law enforcement to minimize unauthorized OHV use on public and private lands.

Decommissioning

Decommissioning would create another temporary disturbance of the area and land uses along the ROW, and vegetation, including trees, could be removed to provide safe work areas for decommissioning activities. Once structures and facilities are removed, former uses could resume and forested areas would be replanted. It is unlikely that decompaction of soils would be 100 percent effective, so it is possible that forests reestablished in some areas would not be as productive as areas that had never been a road or facility location. These impacts would remain until the soil naturally recovers. Once decommissioning is complete and areas restored to their previous condition, fire management activities would no longer be affected.

3.17.2.3 Comparison of Alternatives by Segment

This section evaluates the potential impacts of the Preferred Route, Proposed Route, and the Route Alternatives in terms of land ownership, designated corridors and existing ROWs, anticipated federal land use plan amendments, and specific land uses and recreational resources.

Specific land uses, including residences, commercial buildings, barns, other structures, wind farms, mines, gravel pits, wells, center-pivot agricultural fields, and historic trails

that are either crossed or within 1,000 feet of the centerline of the Proposed Route and Route Alternatives are identified in Table D.17-1 in Appendix D. The following segment-by-segment discussion also addresses SMAs, historic trails, and OHV use.

Other potential land uses including wetlands, mineral resources, water resources, and agriculture are discussed in Sections 3.9, 3.12, 3.16, and 3.18, respectively. Potential impacts related to visual resources, transportation, and noise are noted in this section, as appropriate. Detailed analyses of impacts to these resources are included in the visual resources (Section 3.2), transportation (Section 3.19), and noise (Section 3.23) sections.

Segment 1W

The preferred routes in Segment 1W are as follows:

Segment	Preferred Route	Agency
Segment 1W(a)	Proposed Route (Figure A-2)	BLM and State of Wyoming
Segment 1W(c)	Proposed Route (Figure A-2)	BLM and State of Wyoming

Segment 1W is composed of Segments 1W(a) and 1W(c), both of which consist of single-circuit 230-kV transmission lines. Generally, Segment 1W(a) would be a new 73.8-mile-long transmission line, and 1W(c) involves reconstruction of a 73.6-mile-long portion of the existing Dave Johnston – Rock Springs 230-kV transmission line. However, in the area approximately 5 miles to the north and to the south of Ice Cave Mountain, the lines shift east to avoid the ice cave. In this area, 1W(a) would be the reconstruction of the existing line and 1W(c) would be the new line. Segment 1W(a) has one alternative, Alternative 1W(a)-B, which is located north and west of the town of Glenrock and was the Proponents’ initial proposal. However, the Proposed Route was revised following the Draft EIS public comment period in order to avoid the more populated area around Glenrock. Figure A-2 in Appendix A shows the location of the Segment 1W routes.

Land Use and Ownership

The Preferred/Proposed Route for Segment 1W(a) would cross approximately 27 miles of BLM-managed land, 2.3 miles of NFS land, 17.5 miles of state land, and 27 miles of private land (Table 3.17-6). Alternative 1W(a)-B would be approximately 4 miles longer than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route and would affect more state-managed land (Table 3.17-6).

Table 3.17-6. Miles Crossed by Land Ownership – Segment 1W

Segment/Alternative	Total	BLM	NFS	Other	State	Private
1W(a) Preferred/Proposed – Total Length	73.8	27.0	2.3	–	17.5	27.0
Preferred/Proposed – Comparison portion for Alt. 1W(a)-B	16.5	–	–	–	7.0	9.5
Alternative 1W(a)-B	20.9	–	–	–	10.9	10.0
1W(c) Preferred/Proposed – Total Length	73.6	24.7	2.3	–	16.1	30.4

Miles are rounded to tenths of a mile; columns/rows may therefore not sum exactly.
 BLM – Bureau of Land Management; NFS – National Forest System

The Preferred/Proposed Route for Segment 1W(c) would cross approximately 24.7 miles of BLM-managed land, 2.3 miles of NFS land, 16.1 miles of state land, and 30.4 miles of private land.

Designated Corridors and Existing ROW

Segment 1W(a) would be adjacent to Segment 1W(c) for most of its 73.8-mile length. About 17 miles of Segment 1W(a) (23 percent of its total length) would be on federal lands within the WWE corridor, 23.3 miles (31.6 percent) would cross non-federal lands (i.e., all other ownership types) within the WWE corridor, and 26.4 miles (35.8 percent) would be adjacent to the WWE corridor (Table 2.4-3).

Approximately 8.3 miles of the 20.9-mile Alternative 1W(a)-B (39.7 percent) would be adjacent to the existing transmission line and 0.5 mile adjacent to the WWE corridor. Viewed in terms of designated corridors and existing ROW, the comparison section of the Preferred/Proposed Route makes better use of proximity to existing utility lines and the designated WWE corridor than Alternative 1W(a)-B.

Approximately 60.1 miles (81.7 percent) of Segment 1W(c) would be within the WWE corridor (21.1 miles [28.7 percent] on federal lands; the remaining 39 miles [53 percent] on other land ownerships) and 12.7 miles (17.3 percent) would be adjacent to the WWE corridor.

Federal Land Use Plan Amendments

Medicine Bow Forest Plan

The Preferred/Proposed Routes for Segments 1W(a) and 1W(c) would both cross the Medicine Bow-Routt NFs (see Figure 3.19-5 in Section 3.19 – Transportation). The Project, as currently designed along Segments 1W(a) and 1W(c), would not be consistent with a standard found in the Medicine Bow Forest Plan (see Table 2.2-3). Segment 1W(a) would cross approximately 2.3 miles of land classified as MA 8.3, which allows development to dominate the foreground views; however, the development must be consistent with the SIOs of adjacent MAs. The adjacent land is MA 3.31 where the SIO is Moderate. A plan amendment would be needed to permit the Project to cross land managed to be consistent with this adjacent MA SIO (see Appendices F-2 and G-2); areas within MA 3.31 where roads are constructed or reconstructed for the Project will be allocated to an ROS of RN. Segment 1W(c) would be adjacent to, but outside of, the WWE corridor and would cross approximately 2.3 miles of land classified as MA 3.31. Plan amendments are needed to allocate the land crossed by the Project to MA 8.3 Utility Corridor, which is managed for an ROS class of RN. The amendment allowing the Project where it is not consistent with the adjacent SIO class is needed for Segment 1W(c) as well (See Appendices F-2 and G-2).

Segments 1W(a) and 1W(c) would also cross BLM-managed lands that fall within the jurisdiction of the Casper and Rawlins RMPs (Table 3.17-2). No plan amendments are proposed for these RMPs.

Specific Land Uses and Recreational Resources

Land Use

Land use within the Analysis Area is summarized by segment in Table 3.17-4. Viewed in terms of miles crossed, the Proposed Route for Segment 1W(a) would primarily cross rangeland (95 percent), with the remainder of the route crossing forest (2 percent) and water and wetlands (2 percent). The Proposed Route for Segment 1W(c) would also primarily cross rangeland (89 percent), with forest and water and wetlands each accounting for about 7 percent and 2 percent, respectively, of the route's total length. Much of the Proposed Route for Segment 1W(c) would be rebuilt within an existing ROW that would need to be expanded by only 25 feet and, as a result, relatively small amounts of clearing would be required in forested areas (Table 3.17-7).

Table 3.17-7. Miles Crossed by Land Use – Segment 1W

Segment/ Alternative	Total	Rangeland	Agriculture	Forest	Water and Wetlands	ROW	Developed	Other
1W(a) Preferred/ Proposed – Total Length	73.8	70.3	–	1.7	1.5	0.3	–	0.1
Preferred/Proposed – Comparison portion for Alternative 1W(a)- B	16.5	15.8	–	–	0.4	0.1	–	0.1
Alternative 1W(a)-B	20.9	20.3	t ^{1/}	0.1	0.2	0.2	–	–
1W(c) Preferred/ Proposed – Total Length	73.6	65.7	t ^{1/}	5.1	1.8	0.6	0.2	0.2

Miles are rounded to tenths of a mile; columns/rows may therefore not sum exactly. ROW – right-of-way
1/ “t” indicates values <0.1.

Alternative 1W(a)-B runs north above the town of Glenrock before turning southwest, and is approximately 4 miles longer than the comparison portion of the Preferred/Proposed Route for Segment 1W(a). This alternative would cross approximately 4.5 miles more rangeland than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route (Table 3.17-7).

The Preferred/Proposed Route for Segment 1W(a) would pass within 1,000 feet of six residences; two of these residences would be within 300 feet of the proposed ROW centerline. Alternative 1W(a)-B would pass within 1,000 feet of more residences than the comparison portion of the Preferred/Proposed Route (seven versus four), and one residence is located within 300 feet of Alternative 1W(a)-B, same as the comparison portion of the Preferred/Proposed Route.

The Preferred/Proposed Route for Segment 1W(c) would pass within 1,000 feet of 24 residences between MPs 1.3 and 2.3; five of these residences are within 300 feet of the proposed ROW centerline. Segment 1W(c) involves the reconstruction of an existing transmission line and would, therefore, result in minimal new long-term effects on existing residences. The Proponents have committed to developing a transportation plan (see Appendix B) that addresses issues such as maintaining emergency access during construction, dust suppression, and notification procedures. The implementation

of this plan is expected to reduce impacts to nearby private residences during construction.

The Preferred/Proposed Route for Segment 1W(a) would pass within 1,000 feet of several industrial buildings and outbuildings, a mine, and Ellis Ranch Airport. Alternative 1W(a)-B would pass within 1,000 feet of several outbuildings or structures. Segment 1W(c) would pass within 1,000 feet of a radio tower, a barn, and an electric substation.

The Preferred/Proposed Route for 1W(a) would cross a BLM parcel identified as available for public disposal in the Casper RMP in Township 30 North, Range 77 West. This may affect the eligibility and/or value of the parcel for disposal.

Special Management Areas

The Preferred/Proposed Routes for Segments 1W(a) and 1W(c) both cross about 10.5 miles of the Bates Hole MA , which was established by the BLM in 2007 to “protect highly erosive soils, fragile watersheds, and important and crucial wildlife habitat.” This area has a restriction against new utility corridors, unless there are no other feasible options.

Wilderness Characteristics

No areas with wilderness characteristics are crossed in this Segment. Surveys conducted by the Rawlins FO in 2012 determined that the two inventory units crossed by Segment 1W discussed in the Draft EIS do not have wilderness characteristics.

Historic Trails

Segment 1W(a) would cross a segment of the California and Mormon Pioneer NHTs. Both 1W(a) and 1W(c) would cross the Pony Express NHT, as well as the Child’s Cutoff and the Bozeman Trail. Alternative 1W(a)-B would cross the California and Mormon Pioneer NHTs and the Bozeman Trail. Potential impacts to historic trails are assessed in Section 3.3 – Cultural Resources.

OHV Use

The Preferred/Proposed Route Segment 1W(a) would cross 4 miles of public land where OHV use is limited to existing routes and 2.2 miles with seasonal closure. Segment 1W(c) would cross 3.4 miles of public land where OHV use is limited to existing routes, and 2.3 miles with seasonal closure. The Preferred/Proposed Route Segment 1W(a) would cross one trail that is designated closed to OHV use. Segment 1W(c) would not cross any trails closed to OHV use. In open areas (the majority of the route), it would be difficult to physically close these access points to unauthorized OHV use. OHV use on non-motorized trails could disrupt existing uses, such as hiking and horseback riding, and may result in adverse effects to trails not designed maintained for motorized use. The Proponents would post signs identifying the area as closed to OHV use and implement blocking measures where practical.

Alternative 1W(a)-B would be 4.4 miles longer than the comparison portion of the Preferred/Proposed Route and it would not cross any area with an OHV designation (closed, open, or otherwise). Alternative 1W(a)-B would cross two trails designated as closed to OHV use, one more than the comparison portion of the Preferred/Proposed

Route. This alternative would cross a third trail due to associated new road construction. Overall, there would be slightly more risk of unauthorized OHV access under Alternative 1W(a)-B.

Segment 2

The preferred route in Segment 2 is as follows:

Preferred Route	Agency
Proposed Route (Figure A-3)	BLM and State of Wyoming

Segment 2 consists of one single-circuit 500-kV transmission line between the proposed Aeolus Substation and the location of the originally planned Creston Substation near Wamsutter, Wyoming (a new substation at Creston is no longer needed due to changes in anticipated demand for oil and gas field electricity). The Preferred/Proposed Route has been revised to incorporate Alternative 2C, as analyzed in the Draft EIS. Segment 2 would be approximately 91.9 miles long. Alternative 2A is being considered by the BLM because much of this alternative route is within the WWE corridor. Alternative 2B was initially the Proponents' Proposed Route before they responded to local suggestions and relocated the Proposed Route farther to the south. Figure A-3 in Appendix A shows the location of the Segment 2 routes.

Land Ownership

The Preferred/Proposed Route for Segment 2 would cross approximately 37.6 miles of BLM-managed land, 4.8 miles of state land, and 49.5 miles of private land (Table 3.17-8). Alternatives 2A and 2B would be both less than 1 mile shorter than the Proposed Route and cross almost the same miles of land ownership.

Table 3.17-8. Miles Crossed by Land Ownership – Segment 2

Segment/Alternative	Total	BLM	NFS	Other	State	Private
Preferred/Proposed – Total Length	91.9	37.6	–	–	4.8	49.5
Preferred/Proposed – Comparison Portion for Alternative 2A	16.8	6.1	–	–	0.8	9.9
Alternative 2A	16.0	6.1	–	–	0.8	9.9
Preferred/Proposed – Comparison Portion for Alternative 2B	12.5	4.6	–	–	0.8	7.1
Alternative 2B	12.2	3.2	–	–	1.3	7.8

Miles are rounded to tenths of a mile; columns/rows may therefore not sum exactly.
BLM – Bureau of Land Management; NFS – National Forest System

Designated Corridors and Existing ROW

There is an existing 230-kV transmission line corridor between the planned Aeolus and formerly proposed Creston Substation. During siting studies, routing obstacles pushed the Preferred/Proposed Route away from the existing and designated WWE corridor. These obstacles include oil and gas development, lek concentrations, and proximity to the Fort Fred Steele State Historic Site. The Preferred/Proposed Route would follow the existing transmission corridor for 43.2 miles (47 percent) of its length. Approximately 28.8 miles (31.3 percent) of this route would be within the WWE corridor (12.8 miles [13.9 percent] on federal lands; 16 miles [17.4 percent] on other land ownerships) and 10.5 miles (11.4 percent) adjacent to the WWE corridor (Table 2.4-3).

Alternative 2A would be entirely adjacent to the existing transmission line and substantially in or adjacent to the WWE corridor (Table 2.4-3). Approximately 9.1 miles

(74.6) percent of Alternative 2B would be adjacent to the existing transmission line, with 6.7 miles (54.9 percent) either in or adjacent to the WWE corridor (Table 2.4-3). While these alternatives maximize use of existing and designated corridors, they would be closer to the Fort Fred Steele State Historic Site and residences.

Federal Land Use Plan Amendments

Segment 2 would cross BLM-managed lands that fall within the jurisdiction of the Rawlins RMP (Table 3.17-2). No federal land use plan amendments would be required for the Preferred/Proposed Route and Route Alternatives for this segment.

Specific Land Uses and Recreational Resources

Land Use

Land use within the Analysis Area for the Preferred/Proposed Route is summarized by segment in Table 3.17-4. Viewed in terms of miles crossed, the Preferred/Proposed Route for Segment 2 would primarily cross rangeland (97 percent), with water and wetlands accounting for about 2 percent of the route's total length. Alternatives 2A and 2B would both be less than one mile shorter than their respective comparison portions of the Proposed Route, with generally commensurate reductions in the miles of rangeland crossed (Table 3.17-9).

Table 3.17-9. Miles Crossed by Land Use – Segment 2

Segment/ Alternative	Total	Rangeland	Agriculture	Forest	Water and Wetlands	ROW	Developed	Other
Preferred/Proposed – Total Length	91.9	89.0	–	–	1.7	0.5	0.1	0.6
Preferred/Proposed – Comparison Portion for Alt. 2A	16.8	16.1	–	–	0.6	0.1	–	0.1
Alternative 2A	16.0	15.3	–	–	0.6	0.1	–	–
Preferred/Proposed – Comparison Portion for Alt. 2B	12.5	11.9	–	–	0.5	0.1	–	0.1
Alternative 2B	12.2	11.2	–	–	0.7	0.2	–	–

Miles are rounded to tenths of a mile; columns/rows may therefore not sum exactly. ROW – right-of-way

Segment 2 generally would follow the existing SR 72 and I-80 corridors west from the Aeolus Substation. Land use within the Analysis Area for this segment is primarily rangeland (98 percent) (Table 3.17-4). This segment begins in the vicinity of an existing wind farm. Approximately 12.5 miles southwest of the Aeolus Substation, it would cross about 2 miles of a former strip mine. Farther west, south of the city of Rawlins, the segment would pass within 1 mile of oil and gas development that continues for about 10 miles to the Creston site.

The Preferred/Proposed Route for Segment 2 would pass within 1,000 feet of one residence; there are no residences located within 300 feet of the proposed ROW centerline. Alternative 2B would pass within 1,000 feet of six residences between MP 1.8 and 1.9; one of these residences is within 300 feet of the proposed ROW centerline.

The Preferred/Proposed Route would pass within 1,000 feet of a wind farm (at MP 1.8), one mine, an oil and gas well, and a variety of existing structures. The 500-kV

TransWest Express transmission line is proposed to traverse from east to west in the same general area. Alternative 2A would pass within 1,000 feet of a gravel pit. Alternative 2B would pass within 1,000 feet of a gravel pit and an active mine

During meetings sponsored by the Proponents, concerns were raised about visual impacts to the Fort Fred Steele State Historic Site and proximity to nearby rural residences. In addition, the Wyoming Office of the Governor requested that an alternative crossing to the south of I-80 be considered for detailed analysis to avoid these resources (OGW 2009). Based on these concerns, the Preferred/Proposed Route was modified to avoid the Fort Fred Steele State Historic Site and nearby residences. Figure 3.17-4 shows the Preferred/Proposed Route and Route Alternatives for this portion of Segment 2.

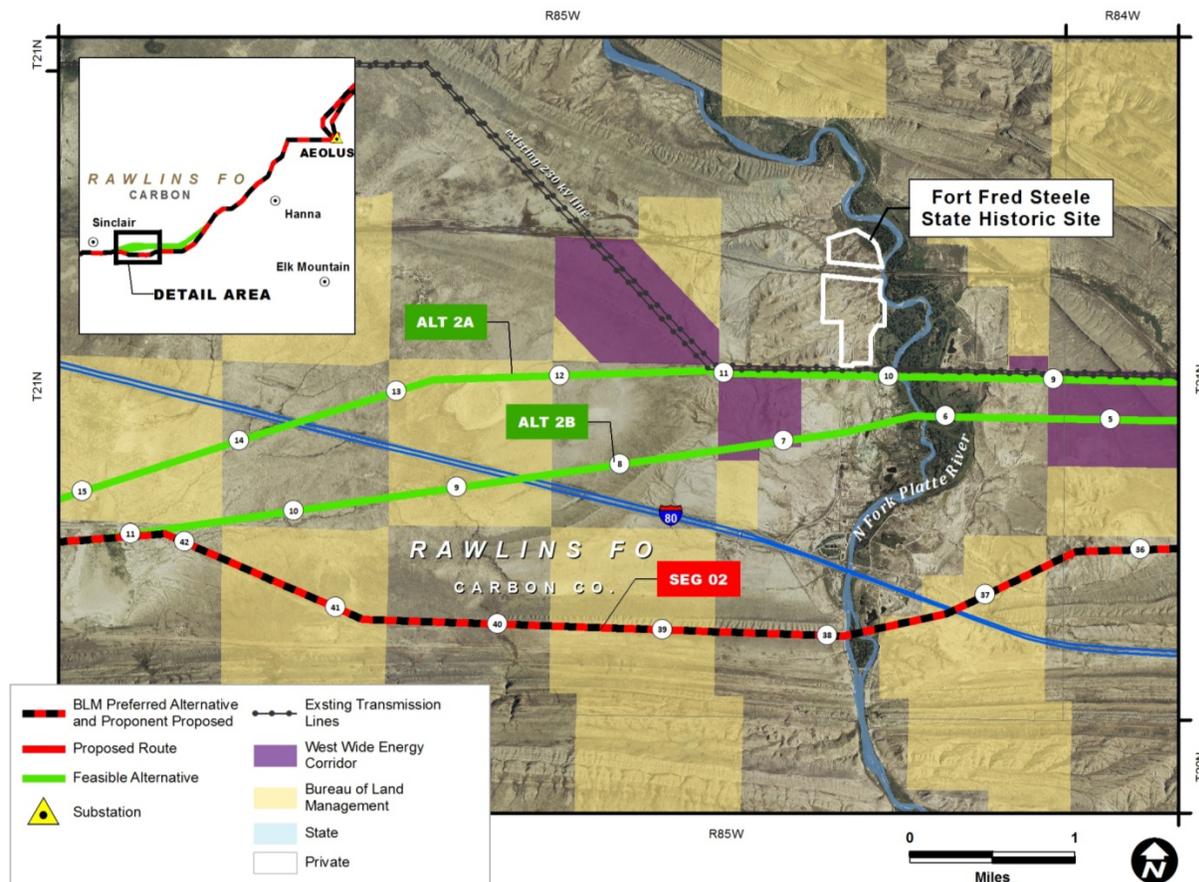


Figure 3.17-4. Fort Fred Steele State Historic Site Vicinity – Preferred/Proposed Route and Route Alternatives

Based on comments from the City of Rawlins, the alignment of the Proposed Route was also adjusted to avoid a settling pond near MP 55.

This portion of the Preferred/Proposed Route is slightly longer than the corresponding parts of the Route Alternatives (see Table 3.17-6) but avoids potential impacts to the Fort Fred Steele State Historic Site and the rural residences located near the Route Alternatives.

The Preferred/Proposed Route crosses two BLM parcels identified in the Rawlins RMP as available for public disposal in Township 21 North, Range 87 West. This may affect their eligibility and/or value for disposal.

Special Management Areas

The Preferred/Proposed Route for Segment 2 would cross three SRMAs and one Wildlife Habitat MA (Table 3.17-10).

Table 3.17-10. Special Management Areas Crossed by the Preferred/Proposed Route and Route Alternatives for Segment 2

Preferred/Proposed Route/Alternative ^{1/}	Segment Length (Miles)	Management Area	Miles Crossed
Preferred/Proposed – Total Length	91.9	North Platte SRMA	0.2
		Red Rim WHMA	5.7
Preferred/Proposed – Comparison portion for Alt 2A	16.8	North Platte River SRMA	0.2
		CDNST SRMA	0.25
Alternative 2A	16.0	CD NST SRMA	0.25
Preferred/Proposed – Comparison portion for Alt 2B	12.5	North Platte River SRMA	0.2
		CDNST SRMA	0.25
Alternative 2B	12.2	CDNST SRMA	0.25

^{1/} Route Alternatives are only included in this table if the comparison portion of the Proposed Route or the Route Alternative would cross a special management area.

CDNST – Continental Divide National Scenic Trail; SRMA – Special Recreation Management Area; WHMA – Wildlife Habitat Management Area

The Preferred/Proposed Route would cross 0.2 mile of the North Platte River SRMA on the east side of the river. The North Platte River SRMA consists of 5,060 acres of lands located in discrete areas along the river. Surface-disturbing activities on public lands within 0.25 mile on either side of the river are intensively managed to maintain the quality of the visual resource. The BLM has determined that no amendments to the Rawlins RMP would be required for the Project (refer to Appendix F-1).

The part of the SRMA that would be crossed by the Preferred/Proposed Route is less than 1,000 feet from I-80 at its closest point, and the Preferred/Proposed Route would cross this SRMA within 0.5 mile of I-80. This part of the SRMA is separated from the river by an access road. Construction of the proposed Project in this location could potentially affect the quality of the recreation experience in this area but the visual setting is only one aspect of the outdoor recreation experience and other types of infrastructure, including I-80, already exist in the immediate vicinity.

Alternatives 2A and 2B would cross the North Platte River, north of I-80, but would not cross the North Platte River SRMA.

The CDNST SRMA consists of 600 acres based on a 0.25-mile corridor that follows the trail on lands managed under the Rawlins RMP. The Preferred/Proposed Route would cross this SRMA on private land south of the city of Rawlins. Effects on the CDNST are discussed in detail in the following subsection.

The Preferred/Proposed Route would cross approximately 5.7 miles of the Red Rim WHMA. The Preferred/Proposed Route would parallel (offset by 1,500 feet) an existing

230-kV transmission line across the affected sections. There are no alternatives to this portion of the Preferred/Proposed Route (Table 3.17-10).

Continental Divide National Scenic Trail

Lands

The CDNST SRMA is identified as a Linear Utility/Transportation Systems/Communication Site Avoidance Area in the Rawlins RMP/ROD (BLM 2008a). The proposed Gateway West transmission line would cross the CDNST on private land and would not cross the SRMA or the associated Avoidance Area. The SRMA is a 0.25-mile-wide area centered on the trail. The closest BLM-managed section either side of the trail in the proposed crossing location is more than 0.25 mile east of the centerline (see Figure 3.17-5).

Recreation

The majority of the CDNST that passes through the BLM-managed and private checkerboard lands south of I-80 follows or lies adjacent to existing two-track, resource, and county roads, and is generally open to motorized use as allowed in accordance with a BLM easement or when crossing private lands. While most use along the CDNST consists of day and through hiking, limited mountain biking and horseback riding also occurs. The BLM recorded approximately 189 visits along the CDNST in 2007 and 673 visits in 2008 (BLM 2012c). According to BLM (2012c), the ROS inventory classifies the majority of the CDNST as Front Country (Roaded Natural) and the 2008 Rawlins RMP/ROD establishes the prescribed setting for the CDNST as Middle Country (Semi-primitive Motorized), which,

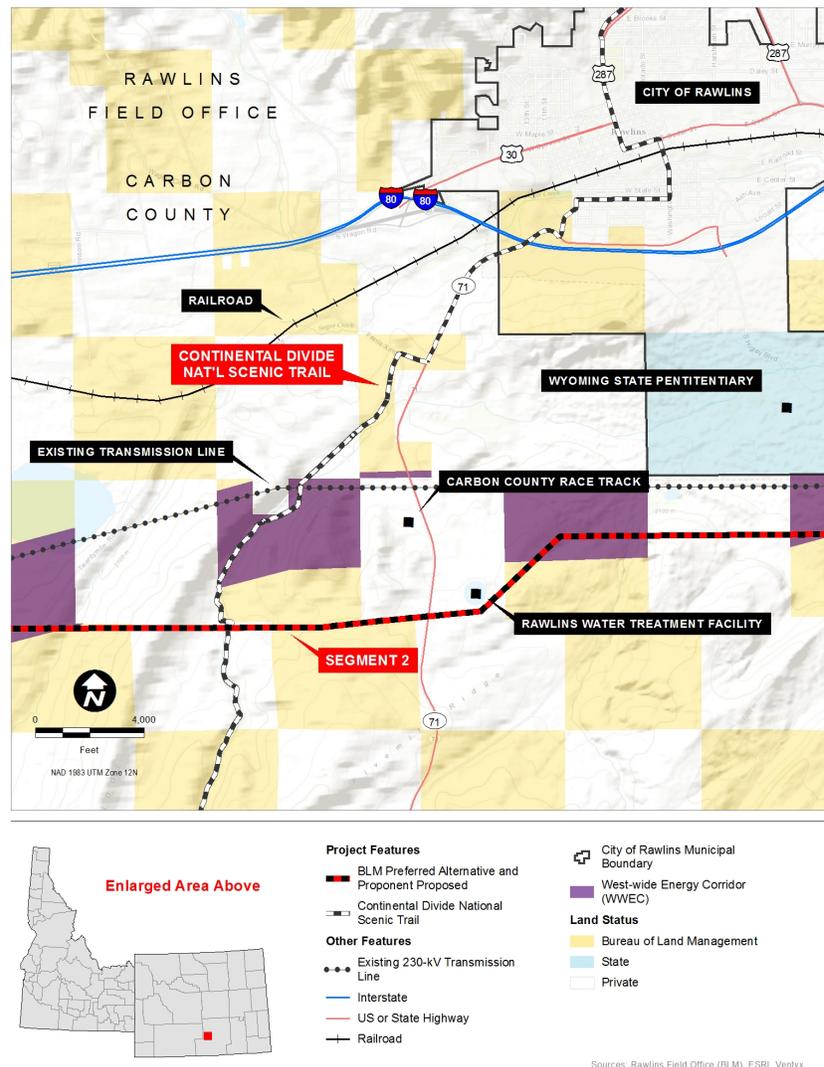


Figure 3.17-5. Continental Divide National Scenic Trail Vicinity – Proposed Route

it notes, would be difficult to achieve without significant rerouting of the trail and/or trail corridor.

According to Section 7(c) of the National Trail System Act, uses along the CDNST should not substantially interfere with the nature and purposes of the trail. As stated in Section 3.17.1.7, the 2009 CDNST Comprehensive Plan (Forest Service 2009d) states that the “nature and purposes of the CDNST are to provide for high-quality scenic, primitive hiking and horseback riding opportunities and to conserve natural, historic, and cultural resources along the CDNST corridor.” Similarly, the 2008 Rawlins RMP/ROD (BLM 2008a) states that the CDNST will be “managed to provide opportunities for trail users to view the diverse topographic, geographic, vegetation, wildlife, and scenic phenomena that characterize the Continental Divide and to observe examples of human use of the natural resources.” Section 7(a)(2) of the National Trails Act also addresses the management of land adjacent to trails, including federal and private lands:

Development and management of each segment of the National Trails System shall be designed to harmonize with and complement any established multiple-use plans for the specific area in order to insure continued maximum benefits from the land.

In accordance with Section 7(a)(2), the management of the CDNST considers the established goals and objectives of the 2008 Rawlins RMP/ROD for multiple uses of land within area. A management goal of the 2008 Rawlins RMP/ROD is to comply with 2009 CDNST Plan; however, the 2008 Rawlins RMP/ROD includes other resource goals and objectives for multiple land uses that occur within the checkerboard.

The CDNST Comprehensive Plan acknowledges private interests and the unique concentration of non-federal land “near the Continental Divide within the Great Divide basin in Wyoming.” This Plan also anticipates that human modifications may dominate views from the trail and states that CDNST should be located in Primitive or Semi-primitive Non-Motorized ROS classes, where possible, but recognizes that the CDNST “may have to traverse intermittently through more developed ROS classes to provide for continuous travel” (Forest Service 2009d: p. 16). This is particularly the case for portions of the CDNST crossing private land. The Plan provides the following management direction with respect to trail segments crossing private land:

Trail segments in this category provide the user with a safe continuous trail link between other trail segments. They have as their primary purpose the safety, protection, and convenience of the user. Evidence of civilization usually is predominant with the recreation opportunity pointed to allowing passage of recreationists in a safe, convenient manner. These segments will generally be as short as necessary to cross highways and railroads or passage through developed areas (p. 19.)

The proposed CDNST crossing would occur on private lands and would, therefore, be consistent with this direction. The proposed crossing would, however, affect the ROS setting of the portion of the CDNST SRMA located on the BLM-managed section immediately north of the proposed crossing. Based on the presence of the proposed transmission line, the BLM-managed land located immediately north would most likely be inventoried as RN. This would not be consistent with the prescribed setting of Middle Country (Semi-primitive Motorized) established for the CDNST SRMA in the Rawlins RMP/ROD (BLM 2008a). Visual impacts are discussed in more detail in

Section 3.2 – Visual Resources. The visual analysis concludes that while the proposed transmission line would result in a strong visual contrast, it would not substantially interfere with the nature and purposes of the CDNST.

Wilderness Characteristics

No areas with wilderness characteristics would be crossed in this segment.

Historic Trails

Segment 2 would not cross any NHTs but would cross the Rawlins to Baggs Stage Road and would also cross the Lincoln Highway several times (see Table 3.3-10 in Section 3.3 – Cultural Resources). Potential impacts to historic trails are assessed in Section 3.3 – Cultural Resources.

OHV Use

The Preferred/Proposed Route would not cross any public land closed to OHV use and 37.6 miles where OHV use is limited to existing routes. The Preferred/Proposed Route would cross one trail closed to OHV use and there would be no additional trail crossings due to new road construction. The Preferred/Proposed Route would provide new access for OHVs to areas where OHV use is limited. In open areas (the majority of the route) it would be difficult to physically close the route to unauthorized OHV use. The Proponents would post signs identifying the area as closed to OHV use and implement blocking measures where practical.

Alternative 2A would be 0.8 mile shorter than the comparison portion of the Preferred/Proposed Route but it would cross the same amount of area with OHV access limited to existing routes. Neither Alternative 2A nor the comparison portion of the Preferred/Proposed Route would result in additional trail crossings; however, 76 percent of Alternative 2A is co-located with existing transmission lines, compared to less than 15 percent of the comparison portion of the Preferred/Proposed Route. Therefore, the Preferred/Proposed Route would likely have a greater effect on unauthorized OHV use compared to Alternative 2A.

Alternative 2B would be 0.3 mile shorter than the comparison portion of the Preferred/Proposed Route and it would cross 1.4 miles less area where OHV use is limited to existing routes. Neither Alternative 2B nor the comparison portion of the Proposed Route would result in additional trail crossings. However, about 55 percent of Alternative 2B is co-located with existing transmission lines, compared to 5 percent of the comparison portion of the Preferred/Proposed Route. Therefore, the Preferred/Proposed Route would likely have a greater effect on unauthorized OHV use than Alternative 2B.

Segment 3

The preferred route in Segment 3 is as follows:

Preferred Route	Agency
Proposed Route, including 3A (Figure A-4)	BLM and State of Wyoming

A single-circuit 500-kV line would link the former location of the Creston Substation, approximately 2.1 miles south of Wamsutter, Wyoming, to the proposed Anticline

Substation near the existing Jim Bridger Power Plant. Segment 3 would be approximately 45.9 miles long. This segment also includes a 5.1-mile segment of 345 kV line to connect to the existing Jim Bridger Power Plant Substation (Segment 3A). There are no alternatives proposed along Segment 3. Figure A-4 in Appendix A shows the location of the Segment 3 routes.

Land Ownership

The Preferred/Proposed Route would cross approximately 22.5 miles of BLM-managed land, 1 mile of state land, and 22.5 miles of private land (Table 3.17-11).

Table 3.17-11. Miles Crossed by Land Ownership – Segment 3

Segment/Alternative	Total	BLM	NFS	Other	State	Private
Segment 3 Preferred/Proposed – Total Length	45.9	22.5	–	–	1.0	22.5
Segment 3A Preferred/Proposed – Total Length	5.1	3.2	–	–	–	1.9

Miles are rounded to tenths of a mile; columns/rows may therefore not sum exactly.
 BLM – Bureau of Land Management; NFS – National Forest System

Designated Corridors and Existing ROW

The 51-mile Preferred/Proposed Route would follow a combination of existing transmission lines for 41.1 miles (80.6 percent), with 16.8 miles (32.9 percent) located within the WWE corridor (7.7 miles [15.1 percent] on federal lands; the remaining 9.1 miles [17.8 percent] on other land ownerships) (see Table 2.4-3). The WWE corridor location in this area is constrained by existing development associated with roads, railroad, mining, and oil and gas operations.

Federal Land Use Plan Amendments

Segment 3 would cross BLM-managed lands that fall within the jurisdiction of the Rawlins and Green River RMPs (Table 3.17-2). Plan amendments for the Preferred/Proposed Route are identified in Tables 2.2-1 and 2.2-2. No plan amendments are proposed for Segment 3.

Specific Land Uses and Recreational Resources

Land Use

Land use within the Analysis Area for the Preferred/Proposed Route is summarized by segment in Table 3.17-4. Viewed in terms of miles crossed, the Proposed Route for Segment 3 would primarily cross rangeland (96 percent), with water and wetlands accounting for about 1 percent of the route’s total length.

Segment 3 generally would follow the existing I-80 corridor and existing ROWs account for about 2 percent of the total Analysis Area for this segment (Table 3.17-4). Oil and gas development occurs in the general vicinity of both the proposed Creston and Anticline Substation sites. Several areas of strip mining are also located in the vicinity of the Anticline Substation site. These land uses are not within 500 feet of Segment 3.

There are no residences located within 1,000 feet of the Preferred/Proposed Route. This segment would cross 0.3 mile of the Table Rock city limits and would pass within

1,000 feet of the Patrick Draw Oil Field, nine oil/gas wells, and the Point of Rocks city limits.

Special Management Areas

Federal lands along Segment 3 are regulated in part by the Rawlins and Green River RMPs. Segment 3 would not cross any SMAs identified in these plans.

Wilderness Characteristics

No areas with wilderness characteristics would be crossed in this Segment.

Historic Trails

Segment 3 would not cross any NHTs but would cross the Overland Trail and the Point of Rocks to South Pass Stage Road, and would also cross the Lincoln Highway (see Table 3.3-11 in Section 3.3 – Cultural Resources). The Overland Trail is not well-marked and mostly alternates between sections of private lands and BLM-managed public lands west of the Platte River. The part of the Point of Rocks to South Pass Stage Road that would be crossed by Segment 3 has been converted to a modern roadway. Potential impacts to historic trails are assessed in Section 3.3.

OHV Use

The Preferred/Proposed Route would cross 11.5 miles of public land where OHV use is limited to existing routes. The Proposed Route would not cross any trails closed to OHV use and there would be no additional trail crossings due to new road construction. Approximately 90 percent of the Proposed Route is co-located with an existing transmission line corridor; therefore, there would be no effect on unauthorized OHV use.

Segment 4

The preferred routes in Segment 4 are as follows:

Preferred Route	Agency
Proposed Route (Figures A-5 and A-6) except within the Caribou-Targhee NF (see below)	BLM, State of Wyoming, and Lincoln County
Proposed Route within the NF incorporating Alternative 4G (Figure A-6)	Forest Service

Segment 4 would link the proposed Anticline Substation and the existing Populus Substation near Downey, Idaho with a single-circuit 500-kV line. Its proposed length is approximately 197.6 miles. The Segment 4 Preferred/Proposed Route was revised to follow Alternative 4A, as analyzed in the Draft EIS, based on public comments. This segment generally follows an existing transmission line corridor. Segment 4 has five Route Alternatives in the middle portion of its route; however the first 52 miles to the east and the last 61 miles to the west (in Idaho) do not have any route alternatives. The middle section of the Proposed Route, for which alternatives are presented, is approximately 85.2 miles long, and its alternatives vary from approximately 87.5 to 102.2 miles long. Alternatives 4B through 4E were proposed by the BLM Kemmerer FO (with input from various cooperating agencies), with the intent to avoid impacts to cultural resources to the extent practical. Alternative 4F was proposed by the Proponents to avoid impacts to cultural resources while still remaining north of the existing Bridger Lines. Alternative 4G was proposed by the Forest Service in order to avoid unstable soils identified along the Proposed Route during the 2012 soil

assessment (it is located within Sections 1 and 2, Township 12 South, Range 41 East). Figures A-5 and A-6 in Appendix A show the location of the Segment 4 routes in Wyoming and Idaho, respectively.

Land Ownership

The Preferred/Proposed Route for Segment 4 would cross approximately 72 miles of BLM-managed land, 3.1 miles of Bureau of Reclamation land, 9.1 miles of NFS land, 12.7 miles of state land, and 100.7 miles of private land (Table 3.17-12). The five proposed alternatives (Alternatives 4B through 4F) range from about 2 to 17 miles longer than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route and would cross similar totals of miles by land ownership (Table 3.17-12). In addition, Alternatives 4C and 4E cross 0.7 mile of the USFWS-managed Cokeville Meadows NWR.

Table 3.17-12. Miles Crossed by Land Ownership – Segment 4

Segment/Alternative	Total	BLM	NFS	Other^{1/}	State	Private
Preferred/Proposed – Total Length	197.6	72.0	9.1	3.1	12.7	100.7
Preferred/Proposed – Comparison Portion for Alternatives 4B–4F	85.2	43.0	–	3.1	4.7	34.4
Alternative 4B	100.2	50.6	–	0.6	8.1	41.0
Alternative 4C	101.6	46.9	–	1.2	8.7	44.9
Alternative 4D	100.8	52.1	–	0.6	6.7	41.4
Alternative 4E	102.2	48.4	–	1.2	7.2	45.3
Alternative 4F	87.5	45.2	–	3.1	3.6	35.7

Miles are rounded to tenths of a mile; columns/rows may therefore not sum exactly.

1/ The Other category for the Proposed Route and Alternatives 4B, 4D, and 4F consists of Bureau of Reclamation lands; Other for Alternatives 4C and 4E consists of 0.6 mile Bureau of Reclamation and 0.7 mile U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service-managed lands.

BLM – Bureau of Land Management; NFS – National Forest System

Designated Corridors and Existing ROW

The Preferred/Proposed Route begins on the east end in the Rock Springs FO where it would follow the WWE corridor. It proceeds into the Kemmerer FO where there is no WWE corridor or designated corridor going in the same direction as the Gateway West route. An existing 345-kV transmission line does, however, cross the Kemmerer FO diagonally, southeast to northwest, and would be paralleled by the Preferred/Proposed Route.

From the Kemmerer FO, the route heads into the BLM Pocatello FO in an area where there are no designated corridors and across the Caribou-Targhee NF, where there is no WWE corridor. The Caribou-Targhee NF is, however, crossed by a 600-foot-wide designated utility corridor that is occupied by two existing 345-kV transmission lines. Initial siting studies for the Project attempted to locate this part of the segment within the existing corridor but, due to terrain, narrow corridor width, reliability separation criteria, and impacts to North Canyon Creek and associated AIZs, the route was not co-located. The current, nearby location has been developed in conjunction with the Forest Service to best meet the intent of consolidating utility lines.

Approximately 150.1 miles (76 percent) of the Preferred/Proposed Route would be located within or adjacent to an existing transmission corridor, 26 miles (13.2 percent) would be within the WWE corridor (11.9 miles [6 percent] on federal lands; the

remaining 14.1 miles [7.2 percent] on other land ownerships), and 10.6 miles (5.4 percent) would be adjacent to the WWE corridor (Table 2.4-3).

The lengths of the Route Alternatives that follow existing transmission lines range from 0 miles under Alternative 4G to 35.6 miles for Alternatives 4B to 4E through 54.1 miles for Alternative 4F (Table 2.4-3). Alternatives 4B through 4F would all cross the Kemmerer FO where there is no WWE corridor or designated corridor. As a result, none of these alternatives would be located within a designated ROW corridor.

Federal Land Use Plan Amendments

Forest Service

Caribou Forest Plan

Neither the Preferred Route nor the Proposed Route, as currently designed along Segment 4, would be consistent with Standards and Guidelines in the Caribou Forest Plan (see Table 2.2-3). Segment 4 would not be consistent with portions of the Caribou-Targhee NF currently designated as Prescription 5.2 (Forest Vegetation Management), Prescription 3.2 (Semi-Primitive Recreation), and Prescription 2.8.3 (Aquatic Influence Zone). In addition, the Project would not be consistent with two guidelines within the Caribou Forest Plan that would directly affect recreation. The Scenic Resources Guideline 2 states that projects should be implemented to meet the VQOs displayed on the Forest VQO map and the Recreation Guideline 4 states that they should be implemented to meet the ROS depicted on the Forest ROS map. The portions of the NF that would be crossed by the Project have VQOs of Retention and Partial Retention and ROS classifications of RN and SPM. To be consistent with Forest Plan direction, an amendment is needed to designate the ROW for the proposed single circuit 500-kV line as Prescription 8.1 (Concentrated Development Area with an ROS of RN; see Appendix F-2). The area within 375 feet of the ROW and within 500 feet of new permanent access roads would be amended to have an ROS of RN. Approval of this plan amendment would result in impacts to the experiences of recreationalists that use these areas, in that these areas would afford a less “semi-primitive” experience to users.

There are two routes considered across the Caribou-Targhee NF: the Proposed Route and Alternative 4G (see Figure 3.19-6 in Section 3.19 – Transportation). The Forest Service soils assessment, which was completed in October 2012, identified steep slopes and potentially unstable soils along a portion of the Proposed Route that crosses the Caribou-Targhee NF (i.e., in Sections 1 and 2, Township 12 South, Range 41 East). The Forest Service therefore, identified an alternative route that avoids these areas (referred to as Alternative 4G). Alternative 4G is 2.6 miles long compared to 2.3 miles for the comparison portion of the Proposed Route (see Figure 2.4-3 in Chapter 2).

The Forest Service’s Preferred Route for the portion of Segment 4 within the Caribou Targhee NF is the Proposed Route with the inclusion of Alternative 4G. The Forest Service’s Preferred Route for the ROW on the Caribou NF would be 9.4 miles long and impact a total of 356 acres of land (28 acres more than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route). This increase in the acreage of disturbance associated with the Forest Service Preferred Route is mostly related to increases in the amount of

disturbance to forests and juniper woodlands. Table 3.6-9 in Section 3.6 lists the acres of impact (by Project component) that would occur along the portion of the Proposed Route that would be located on the Caribou-Targhee NF, Alternative 4G, as well as the portion of the Proposed Route that would be comparable to Alternative 4G.

Bureau of Land Management

Segment 4 would cross BLM-managed lands that fall within the jurisdiction of the Green River, Kemmerer, and Pocatello RMPs (Table 3.17-2). No amendments would be required for the portion of the Project located on lands managed under the Pocatello RMPs (no amendments directly related to land use or otherwise).

Green River RMP

The Preferred/Proposed Route for Segment 4 would not be in conformance with the Green River RMP; therefore, an amendment is proposed to allow the Project to cross the VRM Class II designated areas on the east side of the Green River. This amendment would not change the VRM Class for the area crossed (see Appendix F-1, Appendix G-1, and Section 3.2 – Visual Resources).

Kemmerer RMP

The Preferred/Proposed Route and Alternatives 4B, 4C, 4D, 4E, and 4F cross lands mapped as VRM Class II within the Kemmerer RMP (a corridor extending up to 1 mile on either side of the Sublette Cutoff and Slate Creek Cutoff). The Project would not be consistent with the VRM class in this area. Therefore, these routes could not be selected unless the Kemmerer RMP is amended to allow the Project as a visually altering action. In order for the Preferred/Proposed Route or any of the Route Alternatives to be selected, an amendment to the Kemmerer RMP would be needed to allow the Project as a visually altering action without changing the VRM class. If any of the Alternatives 4B through 4E is selected, the plan would also be amended to change the VRM classification from VRM Class II to VRM Class III for areas crossed by portions of those routes (see Section 3.2 – Visual Resources and Appendices F-1 and G-1).

The Preferred/Proposed Route and Alternatives 4C, 4E, and 4F would not be consistent with the management objectives found in the Kemmerer RMP for the Tunp/Dempsey area, or areas near US 189 (see Tables 2.2-1 and 2.2-2). Therefore, these routes could not be selected unless the Kemmerer RMP is amended to permit a one-time allowance for the Project where it would otherwise be in conflict. One amendment is proposed for the impacts to the viewshed of this area that would result from the Preferred/Proposed Route and Alternative 4F (see Section 3.2 – Visual Resources and Appendices F-1 and G-1).

The Preferred/Proposed Route would cross within 3 miles of eligible NRHP sites whose viewsheds are protected under the Kemmerer RMP; thus, the Preferred/Proposed Route does not conform to the Kemmerer RMP. An amendment to the Kemmerer RMP has been proposed that would allow the Project within these sites' viewshed (see Section 3.2 – Visual Resources and Appendix F-1).

Plan Amendment Summary

Approval of plan amendments that would result in changes to ROS settings, VQO, or VRM classes to more developed classifications have the potential to affect the quality of

the experience for recreationalists using the affected areas and would, in some cases, afford a less “semi-primitive” experience to users. Visual impacts to the potentially affected areas as well as the visual amendments, as discussed above, are evaluated in Section 3.2 – Visual Resources.

Specific Land Uses and Recreational Resources

Land Use

Land use within the Analysis Area for the Preferred/Proposed Route is summarized by segment in Table 3.17-4. Viewed in terms of miles crossed, the Preferred/Proposed Route for Segment 4 would primarily cross rangeland (84 percent), with the remainder of the route crossing forest (6 percent), cropland (4 percent), and water and wetlands (4 percent). Alternatives 4B through 4F range from approximately 2 miles shorter (Alternative 4F) than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route to 17 miles longer (Alternative 4E). Alternatives 4B through 4E would Preferred/ cross about one mile less of forest than the Preferred/Proposed Route and 15 to 20 more miles of rangeland (Table 3.17-13). Alternative 4F would cross about one mile more forest land and a similar amount of rangeland than the comparison portion of the Preferred/Proposed Route (Table 3.17-13).

Table 3.17-13. Miles Crossed by Land Use – Segment 4

Segment/ Alternative	Total	Rangeland	Agriculture	Forest	Water and Wetlands	ROW	Developed	Other
Preferred/ Proposed – Total Length	197.6	165.9	7.4	12.7	7.8	0.9	0.3	2.5
Preferred/ Proposed – Comparison Portion for Alternative 4B - 4F	85.2	79.4	0.7	1.2	3.3	0.2	0.3	–
Alternative 4B	100.2	94.4	2.6	t ^{1/}	2.1	0.5	0.2	0.4
Alternative 4C	101.6	98.6	0.2	–	1.5	0.6	0.4	0.4
Alternative 4D	100.8	95.0	2.6	0.1	2.1	0.4	0.2	0.4
Alternative 4E	102.2	99.2	0.2	0.1	1.5	0.5	0.4	0.4
Alternative 4F	87.5	80.6	1.4	2.3	2.9	0.2	0.2	–

Miles are rounded to tenths of a mile; columns/rows may therefore not sum exactly. ROW – right-of-way
1/ “t” indicates values <0.1.

The Preferred/Proposed Route for Segment 4 would pass within 1,000 feet of 12 residences; none of these residences are located within 300 feet of the proposed ROW centerline. The number of residences within 1,000 feet of the Route Alternatives ranges from one (Alternative 4B and 4D) to 3 (Alternative 4F), versus 2 for the comparison section of the Preferred/Proposed Route. There are no residences located within 300 feet of the proposed ROW centerlines for the Route Alternatives, same as the comparison portion of the Preferred/Proposed Route (Table 3.17-14).

The Preferred/Proposed Route would cross 2.5 miles of the city impact area of the City of Downey (Bannock County) in the vicinity of the Populus Substation.

The Preferred/Proposed Route would pass within 1,000 feet of 24 non-residential buildings or structures, a substation, a gravel pit, and a mine. Commercial, industrial,

and institutional land uses crossed or within 1,000 feet of the Route Alternatives are itemized by milepost in Table D.17-1 in Appendix D and summarized below.

Alternative 4B would pass within 1,000 feet of an oil/gas well, the Glencoe Mine and Elkol Strip Mine, the CH Smith dam and reservoir, two center-pivot agricultural facilities, and the B-Q Dam.

Table 3.17-14. Number of Residences within 1,000 feet and 300 feet – Segment 4

Proposed Route/ Alternative	Within 1,000 Feet			Within 300 Feet		
	Proposed Route/ Alternative	Comparison Portion of the Proposed Route	Net Difference	Proposed Route/ Alternative	Comparison Portion of the Proposed Route	Net Difference
Preferred/ Proposed Route	12	NA	NA	–	NA	NA
Alternative 4B	1	2	-1	–	–	–
Alternative 4C	2	2	–	–	–	–
Alternative 4D	1	2	-1	–	–	–
Alternative 4E	2	2	–	–	–	–
Alternative 4F	3	2	1	–	–	–

Alternative 4C would cross approximately 1 mile of a proposed wind farm boundary and an active mining claim. This alternative is within 1,000 feet of an oil/gas well, the Glencoe Mine and the Elkol Strip Mine, the CH Smith dam and reservoir, a substation, a gravel pit, two commercial buildings, and several barns and sheds.

Alternative 4D would cross approximately 4.5 miles of wind energy facilities and an active mining claim. This alternative is within 1,000 feet of an oil/gas well, the Glencoe Mine and the Elkol Strip Mine, the CH Smith dam and reservoir, a mine, two center-pivot agricultural facilities, and the B-Q Dam.

Alternative 4E would cross approximately 2 miles of a proposed wind farm boundary and an active mining claim. This alternative is within 1,000 feet of an oil/gas well, the Glencoe Mine, the Elkol Strip Mine, the CH Smith dam and reservoir, a mine, a substation, a gravel pit, two commercial buildings, and several barns and sheds.

Alternative 4F would cross approximately 8 miles of a proposed wind farm boundary. This alternative is within 1,000 feet of an oil/gas well, four center-pivot agricultural facilities, and the Cook Canal. Alternative 4F also would pass within 1,000 feet of the Pine Creek Ski Area, a ski resort located south of Cokeville, Wyoming, on BLM-managed land.¹ The Preferred/Proposed Route and other Route Alternatives for Segment 4 do not cross or pass within 1,000 feet of this area.

Alternative 4G is located entirely on the Caribou-Targhee NF and is 2.6 miles in length, approximately 0.3 mile longer than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route.

¹ Lincoln County, the grant sponsor for the Pine Creek Ski Resort, received financial assistance from the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) program to improve the ski area through grants 56-00371, 56-00467, 56-00602, 56-00772, and 56-00781. The granting of any new ROW and/or the placement of transmission lines within the boundary of the Pine Creek Ski Resort would constitute a conversion to other than public outdoor recreation under Section 6(1)(3) of the LWCF Act (P.L. 88-578, as amended). Avoiding the Pine Creek Ski Resort would prevent any LWCF conflicts.

Impacts to land use are not expected to substantially differ from those identified for the comparison portion of the Proposed Route.

The Preferred/Proposed Route for Segment 4 and Alternatives 4B, 4C, 4D, and 4E may cross parcels identified as available for public disposal in the Pocatello RMP in Township 14/15 South, Range 46 East. This may affect the eligibility and/or value for disposal.

Special Management Areas

Federal lands along Segment 4 are regulated in part by the Green River, Kemmerer, and Pocatello RMPs. The Preferred/Proposed Route and Route Alternatives for Segment 4 would cross the Dempsey Ridge SRMA, as well as the Rock Creek/Tunp and Bear River Divide SMAs. Some Route Alternatives for Segment 4 would cross the Cokeville Meadows NWR (Table 3.17-15).

Table 3.17-15. Special Management Areas Crossed by the Preferred/Proposed Route and Route Alternatives for Segment 4

Proposed or Alternative Name ^{1/}	Segment Length (Miles)	Management Area	Miles Crossed
Preferred/Proposed - Total Length	197.6	Dempsey Ridge SRMA	5.9
		Rock Creek/Tunp SMA	3.6
Preferred/Proposed - Comparison portion for Alternatives 4B–4F	85.2	Dempsey Ridge SMRA	5.9
		Rock Creek/Tunp SMA	3.6
Alternative 4B	100.2	Bear River Divide SMA	5.5
		Cokeville Meadows NWR	2.5
Alternative 4C	101.6	Bear River Divide SMA	4.3
		Cokeville Meadows NWR	2.4
		Rock Creek/Tunp SMA	4.1
Alternative 4D	100.8	Bear River Divide SMA	5.5
		Cokeville Meadows NWR	2.5
Alternative 4E	102.2	Bear River Divide SMA	4.3
		Cokeville Meadows NWR	2.4
		Rock Creek/Tunp SMA	4.1
Alternative 4F	87.5	Dempsey Ridge SRMA	9.4

1/ Alternative routes are only included in this table if the comparison portion of the Proposed Route or Route Alternative would cross a special management area.
 NWR – National Wildlife Refuge; SRMA – Special Recreation Management Area; SMA – Special Management Area

The Preferred/Proposed Route and Alternative 4F would cross 5.9 and 9.4 miles of the Dempsey Ridge SRMA, respectively (Table 3.17-15).

The Preferred/Proposed Route would cross approximately 3.6 miles of the Rock Creek/Tunp SMA and Alternatives 4C and 4E, sharing a common alignment, would cross 4.1 miles (Table 3.17-15).

Alternatives 4B and 4D, sharing a common alignment, would cross 5.5 miles of the Bear River Divide SMA, and Alternatives 4C and 4E, sharing a different common alignment, cross 4.3 miles. The Proposed Route would not cross this SMA (Table 3.17-15).

Alternatives 4B and 4D, sharing a common alignment, would cross approximately 2.5 miles of the Cokeville Meadows NWR, and Alternatives 4C and 4E, sharing a different common alignment, would cross approximately 2.4 miles (Table 3.17-15). The Proposed Route would not cross this NWR (Table 3.17-15).

Wilderness Characteristics

Inventory Unit WY-K-6L-1 contains approximately 17,642 acres of BLM-managed land identified as having wilderness characteristics. The inventory unit is crossed by both the Preferred/Proposed Route and Alternative 4E near the southern boundary. If the Proposed Route were approved and constructed, approximately 1,383 acres along the southern boundary of the unit would be dropped. The Preferred/Proposed Route would be adjacent to existing transmission lines; therefore, the effect of the Project would be to move the southern boundary approximately 1,500 feet to the north. The remainder of the unit would retain naturalness and outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation, except for the area immediately under and adjacent to the transmission line. Alternative 4F follows the same route for approximately half its length within the inventory unit and then follows a more northwest path. If Alternative 4F were built, approximately 2,457 acres would drop from the unit, nearly 1,000 acres more than under the Preferred/Proposed Route. People using the Emigrant Trail (which crossed the unit) would not be affected by any of the alternatives. If either of these routes is approved, construction activities would disrupt those seeking solitude in the short term.

Inventory Unit WY-K-6S-1 contains approximately 37,617 acres of BLM-managed land assumed to have wilderness characteristics pending field inventory. Alternatives 4B/C and 4D/E cross the inventory unit. Alternative 4B/C crosses the northeast corner of the unit. If this route were constructed, approximately 3,592 acres northeast of the transmission line would drop from the unit. Alternative 4D/E follows 4B/C through the northeastern corner of the inventory unit but instead of exiting the unit at the north boundary, it continues west and then northwest for approximately 10 miles. If constructed, the area affected by Alternative 4B/C would also be affected by 4D/E. In addition, the area north of the 4D/E line (approximately 7,004 acres) would drop from the unit. In either case, the remaining portion of this large unit transmission would still have wilderness characteristics. People would be able to find outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation. However, the naturalness of the area along the proposed transmission line would be degraded by the presence of towers up to 190 feet high and multiple cables crossing between the towers. If either of these routes is approved, construction activities would disrupt those seeking solitude in the short term.

Inventory Unit WY-K-8A contains approximately 33,293 acres of BLM-managed land identified as having wilderness characteristics. It includes the Raymond Mountain WSA (Decision 7001 in the Kemmerer RMP). Alternative 4F would cross less than 0.25 mile south of the inventory unit. A county road separates the route from the inventory unit/WSA. The Proponents have stipulated that they would not move the route north into the unit; therefore, the inventory unit/WSA would not be directly affected by the Project. If this route is approved, construction activities would disrupt users seeking solitude in the southern portion of the unit in the short term.

Historic Trails

The Preferred/Proposed Route and Route Alternatives for Segment 4 would cross a number of NHTs and other trails, including stage and wagon roads, that have potential historic significance (see Table 3.3-12 in Section 3.3 – Cultural Resources). These include the Oregon, California, Pony Express, and Mormon Pioneer NHTs, and the

California NHT Sublette Cutoff, and Bartleton-Bidwell Route. Alternative 4F would also cross the Dempsey-Hockaday Cutoff. The Preferred/Proposed Route along Segment 4 would also cross the Overland Trail and the 1849 Evans Cherokee Trail, as well as a number of historic stage and wagon roads. Potential impacts to historic trails are assessed in Section 3.3 – Cultural Resources.

OHV Use

The Preferred/Proposed Route would cross 3.5 miles of public land where OHV use is limited, 9.6 miles with seasonal closure, and 7.1 miles open to OHV use. The Preferred/Proposed Route would cross nine trails closed to OHV use. There would be two additional trail crossings due to new road construction. In open areas (the majority of the route) it would be difficult to physically close these access points to unauthorized OHV use. OHV use on nonmotorized trails could disrupt existing uses, such as hiking and horseback riding, and may result in adverse effects to trails not designed or maintained for motorized use. The Proponents would post signs identifying the area as closed to OHV use and implement blocking measures where practical.

Alternative 4B would be 15 miles longer than the comparison portion of the Preferred/Proposed Route; it would cross 6.3 more miles of areas with seasonal closure and 0.6 mile more where OHV access is limited. Alternative 4B would cross three trails closed to OHV use, compared to none for the comparison portion of the Preferred/Proposed Route. New roads associated with Alternative 4B would cross three trails closed to OHV use, compared to none for the comparison portion of the Preferred/Proposed Route. Overall, Alternative 4B would have more of an effect than the comparison portion of the Preferred/Proposed Route in terms of unauthorized OHV access to trails or areas closed to OHV use.

Alternative 4C would be 16.5 miles longer than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route, and it would cross 9.3 miles more area with seasonal closure and 0.6 mile more where OHV access is limited. Alternative 4C would cross five trails closed to OHV use, compared to none for the comparison portion of the Preferred/Proposed Route. New roads associated with Alternative 4C would cross four trails closed to OHV use, compared to none for the comparison portion of the Preferred/Proposed Route. Overall, Alternative 4C would have more of an effect than the comparison portion of the Preferred/Proposed Route in unauthorized OHV access to trails or areas closed to OHV use.

Alternative 4D would be 15.6 miles longer than the comparison portion of the Preferred/Proposed Route, and it would cross 2.9 miles more area with seasonal closure and 0.6 mile more where OHV access is limited. Alternative 4D would cross three trails closed to OHV use, compared to none for the comparison portion of the Preferred/Proposed Route. New roads associated with Alternative 4D would cross three trails closed to OHV use, compared to none for the comparison portion of the Proposed Route. Overall, Alternative 4D would have greater effect than the comparison portion of the Preferred/Proposed Route in unauthorized OHV access to trails or areas closed to OHV use.

Alternative 4E would be 17.1 miles longer than the comparison portion of the Preferred/Proposed Route, and it would cross 5.9 miles more area with seasonal

closure, and 0.6 mile more with limited OHV use. Alternative 4E would cross five trails closed to OHV use, compared to none for the comparison portion of the Preferred/Proposed Route. New roads associated with Alternative 4E would cross four trails closed to OHV use, compared to none for the comparison portion of the Proposed Route. Overall, Alternative 4E would have greater effect than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route in unauthorized OHV access to trails or areas closed to OHV use.

Alternative 4F would be 2.4 miles longer than the comparison portion of the Preferred/Proposed Route, but it would cross one mile less area with seasonal closure and the same area where OHV access is limited. Alternative 4F would cross two trails closed to OHV use, compared to none for the comparison portion of the Preferred/Proposed Route. New roads associated with Alternative 4F would cross one trail closed to OHV use, compared to none for the comparison portion of the Preferred/Proposed Route. Overall, Alternative 4F would have a slightly greater effect than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route.

Alternative 4G is located entirely on the Caribou-Targhee NF and is 2.6 miles in length, approximately 0.3 mile longer than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route. Impacts to OHV use are not expected to substantially differ from those identified for the comparison portion of the Proposed Route.

Segment 5

The preferred routes in Segment 5 are as follows:

Preferred Route	Agency
Proposed Route incorporating Alternatives 5B and 5E ^{1/} (Figure A-7)	BLM
Proposed Route incorporating Alternatives 5C and 5E (Figure A-7)	Power County

1/ Assumes that Western Electricity Coordinating Council reliability issues associated with 5E are resolved.

Segment 5 would link the Populus and Borah Substations with a single-circuit 500-kV line that would be approximately 55.7 miles long. There are five Route Alternatives to portions of the Proposed Route in Segment 5. Alternatives 5A and 5B were proposed by the BLM to avoid crossing the Deep Creek Mountains. Alternative 5C, which crosses the Fort Hall Indian Reservation, was proposed as the preferred route by Power County; however, the Fort Hall Business Council has voted not to permit the Project across the Reservation. Alternative 5D was originally the Proponents' Proposed Route.

Alternative 5E was proposed by Power County as an alternative approach to the Borah Substation. The BLM has identified a Preferred Route that includes portions of the Proposed Route with Alternatives 5B and 5E (with the assumption that reliability issues associated with Alternative 5E can be resolved). Figure A-7 in Appendix A shows the location of the Segment 5 routes.

Land Ownership

Approximately 70 percent or 38.7 miles of the Proposed Route for Segment 5 would cross private land with the remainder of the route crossing BLM (13.2 miles) and State (3.6 miles) land (Table 3.17-16). Alternatives 5A and 5B are approximately 7.4 miles and 18.1 miles longer than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route, respectively, with private lands accounting for the majority of the increase in miles by land ownership in both cases (Table 3.17-16). Approximately 80 percent or 58.3 miles of the Preferred Route for Segment 5

would cross private land with the remainder of the route crossing BLM-managed (13.8 miles) and state (1.0 miles) land (Table 3.17-16).

Alternative 5C is approximately 6.9 miles shorter than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route and would cross fewer miles of BLM-managed, state, and private lands. However, unlike the Proposed Route and other alternatives to Segment 5, Alternative 5C also would cross about 12.4 miles of the Fort Hall Indian Reservation (Table 3.17-16).

Table 3.17-16. Miles Crossed by Land Ownership – Segment 5

Segment/Alternative	Total	BLM	NFS	Other ^{1/}	State	Private
Preferred Route – Total Length	73.3	13.8	–	–	1.0	58.3
Proposed – Total Length	55.7	13.2	–	–	3.6	38.7
Proposed – Comparison Portion for Alternative 5A and 5B	22.3	7.2	–	–	3.0	12.1
Alternative 5A	29.7	8.6	–	–	0.3	20.9
Alternative 5B	40.4	8.8	–	–	0.3	31.3
Proposed – Comparison Portion for Alternative 5C	32.9	8.7	–	–	3.5	20.7
Alternative 5C	26.0	–	–	12.4	0.7	12.8
Proposed – Comparison Portion for Alternative 5D	19.2	2.6	–	–	0.6	16.0
Alternative 5D	17.0	–	–	–	0.4	16.7
Proposed – Comparison Portion for Alternative 5E	5.8	1.2	–	–	0.1	4.5
Alternative 5E	5.3	0.2	–	–	0.2	4.9

Miles are rounded to tenths of a mile; columns/rows may therefore not sum exactly.

1/ The 12.4 “Other” miles crossed by Alternative 5C are part of the Fort Hall Indian Reservation.

BLM – Bureau of Land Management; NFS – National Forest System

Alternative 5C would parallel an existing transmission, offset 1,500 feet to the south and west, across the southern half of the Fort Hall Indian Reservation, from the southeastern corner, angling diagonally to the northwest. Potential impacts to visual and cultural resources on the reservation are discussed in Section 3.2 – Visual Resources and Section 3.3 – Cultural Resources, respectively. Approximately 219 acres would be disturbed within the reservation boundary for construction if this route was selected.

of the route across the Fort Hall Reservation would have to be negotiated between the Proponents and the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes. The Tribes could refuse to allow the route to cross their Reservation if they decide they do not like the terms or effects of the ROW the Proponents would seek. The Tribes have the authority to negotiate the location, management, and compensation for the transmission line through the Reservation. The outcome of this negotiation is beyond the scope of this EIS. However, as noted above, the Fort Hall Business Council has voted not to permit the Project across the Reservation.

Alternatives 5D and 5E are approximately 2.2 miles and 0.5 mile shorter than their respective comparison portions of the Proposed Route and cross similar totals of miles by land ownership (Table 3.17-16).

Designated Corridors and Existing ROW

Between the Populus and the Borah Substations there is no WWE corridor or other designated corridors for the Proposed Route and Route Alternatives to follow. However, existing 345-kV and other lines exist between these points as well as in the

general vicinity. The Proposed Route and Route Alternatives make the following use of existing utility corridors:

- Preferred Route – 16.5 miles (22.5 percent) adjacent to an existing transmission corridor;
- Proposed Route – 17.1 miles (30.7 percent) adjacent to an existing transmission corridor;
- Alternatives 5A and 5B – 0 miles adjacent to an existing transmission corridor;
- Alternative 5C – 26 miles (100 percent) adjacent to an existing transmission corridor;
- Alternative 5D – 1.3 miles (7.6 percent) adjacent to an existing transmission corridor; and
- Alternative 5E – 5.3 miles (100 percent) adjacent to an existing transmission corridor (Note: this alternative would be located adjacent to an existing 345-kV line at a proximity that would not be consistent with the 1,500-foot separation criteria established for the Project [see Section 1.3.5]).

Federal Land Use Plan Amendments

Segment 5 would cross BLM-managed lands that fall within the jurisdiction of the Pocatello and Cassia RMPs (Table 3.17-2). There are no proposed plan amendments for the Preferred Route. Plan amendments that would be associated with the Proposed Route and Route Alternatives are identified in Tables 2.2-2 and 2.2-3.

The Proposed Route for Segment 5 would require a visual resource amendment to the Pocatello RMP. This amendment would allow the Gateway West transmission line without changing the VRM classification.

No amendments related to Segment 5 have been identified for the Cassia RMP (those directly related to land use/recreation, or otherwise). An amendment has, however, been proposed for the Cassia RMP for Segment 7 (Table 2.2-1).

Plan Amendment Summary

Approval of plan amendments that would result in changes to VRM classes to more developed classifications has the potential to affect the quality of the experience for recreationalists using the affected areas and would, in some cases, afford a less “semi-primitive” experience to users. Visual impacts to the potentially affected areas as well as the visual amendment, as noted above, are evaluated in more detail within Section 3.2 – Visual Resources and Appendix G.

Specific Land Uses and Recreational Resources

Land Use

Land use within the Analysis Area for the Preferred and Proposed Route is summarized by segment in Table 3.17-4. Viewed in terms of miles crossed, approximately 79 percent (58.1 miles) of the Preferred Route would cross rangeland, 26 percent would cross cropland, 7 percent would cross forest, and less than 1 percent would cross water and wetlands. More than half of the Proposed Route for Segment 5 would cross

rangeland (64 percent), with the remainder of the route crossing cropland (20 percent), forest (14 percent), and water and wetlands (1 percent). Alternatives 5A through 5E range from approximately 7 miles shorter than their respective comparison portions of the Proposed Route to 18 miles longer (Table 3.17-17).

The two Route Alternatives that are longer than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route (Alternatives 5A and 5B) are located south of the Proposed Route to avoid crossing the Deep Creek Mountains. Both Alternatives 5A and 5B would cross more miles of rangeland and dryland farming than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route.

Table 3.17-17. Miles Crossed by Land Use – Segment 5

Segment/Alternative	Total	Rangeland	Agriculture	Forest	Water and Wetlands	ROW	Developed	Other
Preferred – Total Length	73.3	58.1	18.9	4.8	0.5	0.7	0.2	1.2
Proposed – Total Length	55.7	35.9	10.9	7.8	0.5	0.5	0.1	–
Proposed – Comparison Portion for Alternatives 5A and 5B	22.3	1.5	3.9	5.9	t ^{1/}	t ^{1/}	–	–
Alternative 5A	29.7	17.6	7.1	5.0	0.1	t ^{1/}	–	–
Alternative 5B	40.4	24.7	12.6	2.9	0.1	0.1	–	–
Proposed – Comparison Portion for Alternative 5C	32.9	20.4	4.5	7.7	0.1	0.1	–	–
Alternative 5C	26.0	18.7	5.2	1.7	0.2	0.1	–	–
Proposed – Comparison Portion for Alternative 5D	19.2	12.9	3.6	1.8	0.4	0.3	0.1	–
Alternative 5D	17.0	8.6	4.2	3.5	0.4	0.1	0.2	–
Proposed – Comparison Portion for Alternative 5E	5.8	2.3	3.0	–	0.3	0.1	0.1	–
Alternative 5E	5.3	1.3	2.3	–	0.2	0.2	0.2	1.2

Miles are rounded to tenths of a mile; columns/rows may therefore not sum exactly. ROW – right-of-way
1/ “t” indicates a value less than 0.1.

Alternative 5C extends to the north and east of the Proposed Route and would cross approximately 12.4 miles of the Fort Hall Indian Reservation (as discussed above). This alternative is approximately 7 miles shorter than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route and would cross approximately 1.7 fewer miles of rangeland and about 6 miles less forestland.

Alternatives 5D and 5E are shorter than their respective comparison portions of the Proposed Route and primarily would cross fewer miles of rangeland. Alternative 5D would also cross approximately 4.2 miles of cropland.

Dryland farming occurs mostly west of the Deep Creek Mountains. Irrigated cropland is scattered along the Analysis Area. Forestland within the Analysis Area is mainly concentrated in the Deep Creek Mountains. Residential development within the Analysis Area is limited to scattered rural residences.

The Proposed Route for Segment 5 would pass within 1,000 feet of 20 residences; 2 of these residences are located within 300 feet of the proposed ROW centerline. Eight of the houses within 1,000 feet are part of a subdivision located on the west side of I-86, near the existing Borah Substation (Table 3.17-18).

Table 3.17-18. Number of Residences within 1,000 feet and 300 feet – Segment 5

Proposed Route/ Alternative	Within 1,000 Feet			Within 300 Feet		
	Preferred/ Proposed Route/ Alternative	Comparison Portion of the Proposed Route	Net Difference	Preferred/ Proposed Route/ Alternative	Comparison Portion of the Proposed Route	Net Difference
Preferred Route	16	NA	NA	4	NA	NA
Proposed Route	20	NA	NA	2	NA	NA
5A	4	1	3	1	–	1
5B	5	1	4	2	–	2
5C	–	1	-1	–	–	–
5D	24	10	14	2	–	2
5E	2	10	-8	–	–	–

NA – not applicable

The Preferred Route would pass within 1,000 feet of 16 residences; 4 of these residences are located within 300 feet of the proposed ROW centerline. Alternatives 5A and 5B would pass within 1,000 feet of 4 and 5 residences, respectively, versus one for the comparison portion of the Proposed Route. However, unlike the comparison portion of the Proposed Route, one residence would be located within 300 feet of the ROW centerline for Alternatives 5A and 5B. There are no residences within 1,000 feet of Alternative 5C. Alternative 5D would pass within 1,000 feet of 24 residences, 14 more residences than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route; 2 of these residences are within 300 feet of the proposed centerline for Alternative 5D versus none for the comparison portion of the Proposed Route. Alternative 5E would pass within 1,000 feet of 2 residences versus 10 for the comparison portion of the Proposed Route; none of these residences are located within 300 feet of the proposed centerline for Alternative 5E (Table 3.17-18).

Commercial, industrial, and institutional land uses crossed or within 1,000 feet of the Proposed Route and Route Alternatives are itemized by milepost in Table D.17-1 in Appendix D and summarized below. The Proposed Route would pass within 1,000 feet of the Arbon Elementary School, a commercial building, three barns, a pipeline, Marys Mine Access Area, and a substation. The Preferred Route would pass within 1,000 feet of Hawkins Dam and Reservoir, the Hawkins Dam Recreation Site, a commercial building, three barns, a pipeline, Marys Mine Access Area, and a substation.

Alternatives 5A and 5B would both pass within 1,000 feet of the Hawkins Dam and Reservoir, and the Hawkins Dam Recreation Site. Alternative 5A would also pass within 1,000 feet of the Arbon Cemetery. There are no commercial, industrial, or institutional land uses within 1,000 feet of Alternative 5C.

Alternative 5D would pass within 1,000 feet of a borrow pit and a substation. The alternative is also near but would not affect a recreational access site on the East Fork of Rock Creek. Alternative 5E would be located within 1,000 feet of a barn and a commercial building.

Power County requested that a combination of Alternatives 5C and 5E be considered as the preferred route to the Borah Substation. Alternative 5E would proceed due west parallel and adjacent to existing transmission lines for approximately 4.2 miles, crossing irrigated cropland and the Snake River in this interval. As noted above, this Route

Alternative would be adjacent to existing 230- and 345-kV transmission lines (Figure 3.17-6).

Alternative 5E would pass within 1,000 feet of fewer residences than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route (2 versus 10). There are no residences within 300 feet of the proposed centerline for Alternative 5E or the comparison portion of the Proposed Route (Table 3.17-18).

As noted above, the ROW for this alternative, as proposed by Power County, would be located immediately adjacent to an existing 345-kV line (with a tower-to-tower distance of less than 200 feet) and would, therefore, not be consistent with the 1,500-foot separation criteria established for the Project (see Section 1.3.5). An exception does exist in the WECC criterion that allows the last five spans approaching a substation to be closer to existing lines. For Gateway West this would be up to 1.5 miles; however, the length of Alternative 5E would be approximately 4.2 miles and would, therefore, not be consistent with this exception. (Note that Alternative 5E is part of the Preferred Route).

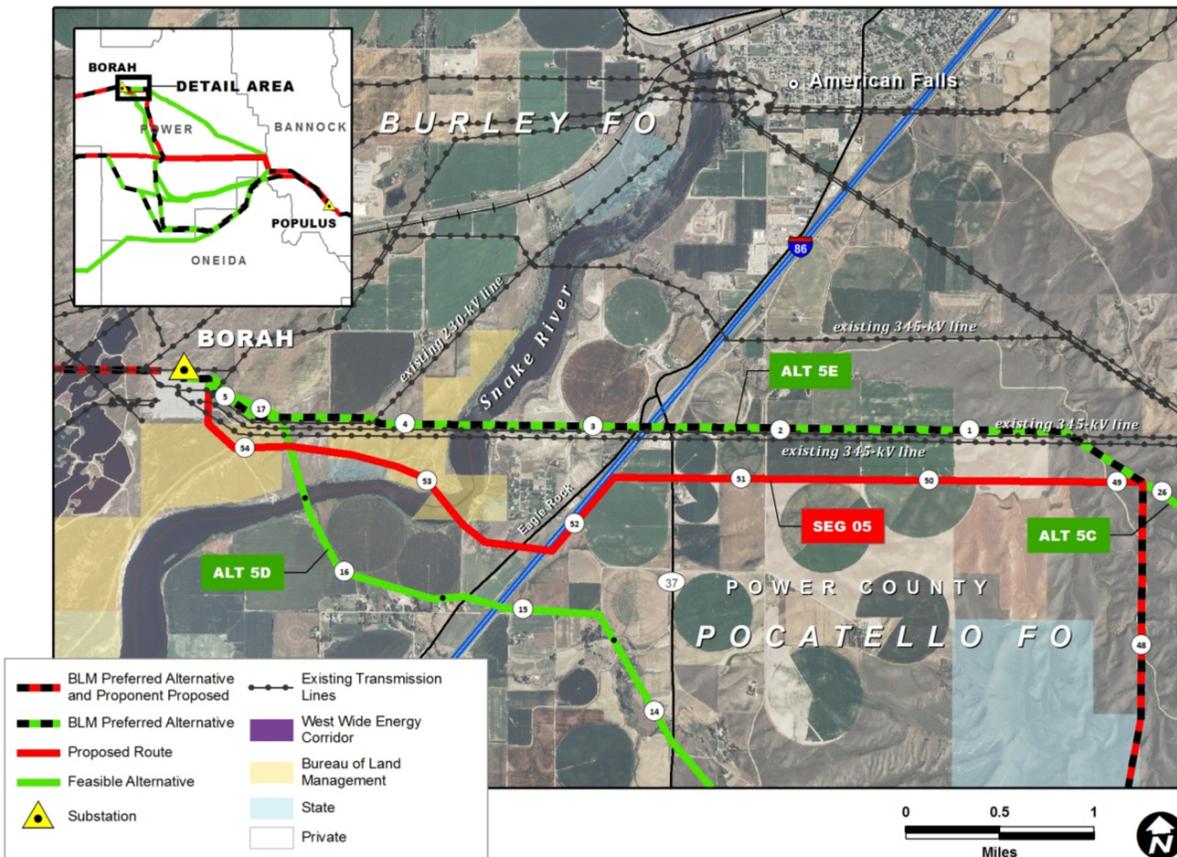


Figure 3.17-6. Power County – Alternative 5E

The Preferred Route, Proposed Route, and Alternatives 5A and 5B may cross BLM parcels identified as available for public disposal in the Pocatello RMP in Township 11/10 South and Range 35/36 East. Alternative 5C may cross disposal parcels from the same plan in Township 8 South, Range 31 East. This may affect the eligibility and/or value for disposal.

Special Management Areas

Federal lands along Segment 5 are regulated in part by the Pocatello and Cassia RMPs. The Preferred Route, Proposed Route, and Route Alternatives for Segment 5 would not cross any SMAs identified in these plans.

Wilderness Characteristics

No areas with wilderness characteristics would be crossed in this segment.

Historic Trails

The Preferred Route, Proposed Route, and/or Route Alternatives for Segment 5 would cross the Oregon and California NHTs and the North Alternate Oregon NHT (see Table 3.3-14 in Section 3.3 – Cultural Resources). Potential impacts to historic trails are assessed in Section 3.3.

OHV Use

The Proposed Route would cross 7.9 miles of public land where OHV use is limited and 5.2 miles with seasonal closure. The Proposed Route would cross one trail closed to OHV use and there would be one additional trail crossing due to new road construction. In open areas (the majority of the route) it would be difficult to physically close these access points to unauthorized OHV use. OHV use on nonmotorized trails would disrupt existing uses, such as hiking and horseback, and may result in adverse effects to trails not designed maintained for motorized use. The Proponents would post signs identifying the area as closed to OHV use and implement blocking measures where practical.

The Preferred Route would cross 10.1 miles of public land where OHV use is limited, 2.5 miles with seasonal closure, and one trail closed to OHV use. There would be two additional trail crossings due to new road construction.

Alternative 5A would be 7.4 miles longer than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route, and it would cross 5.7 miles where OHV use is limited (compared to 3.5 miles for the comparison portion of the Proposed Route). Alternative 5A and the comparison portion of the Proposed Route would both cross one trail closed to OHV use. New roads associated with both routes would cross one additional trail closed to OHV use. Overall, there would be somewhat more opportunity for unauthorized OHV use and potential disruption of existing uses under Alternative 5A.

Alternative 5B would be 18.1 miles longer than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route, and it would cross 7.8 miles where OHV use is limited (compared to 3.5 miles for the comparison portion of the Proposed Route). Alternative 5B and the comparison portion of the Proposed Route would both cross one trail closed to OHV use. Alternative 5B would cross two additional trails due to new road construction, compared

to one trail for the comparison portion of the Proposed Route. There would be more opportunity for unauthorized OHV use in areas with limited OHV use and a greater risk for unauthorized use of trails closed to OHV use under Alternative 5B than the Proposed Route.

Alternative 5C would be 6.9 miles shorter than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route. Alternative 5C would follow an existing transmission line for the majority of its route and does not cross any land with a particular OHV designation; therefore, there would be no additional effects on areas closed to OHV use. The comparison portion of the Proposed Route would cross 5 miles of land with limited OHV use. Therefore, Alternative 5C would have a lower potential for unauthorized OHV use in areas with limits on OHVs. There would be no additional trail crossings under Alternative 5C or the comparison portion of the Proposed Route. Overall, Alternative 5C would have less effect on OHV use.

Alternative 5D would be 2.2 miles shorter than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route and would not cross any areas where OHV use is limited, while the comparison portion of the Proposed Route would cross 2.6 miles where OHV use is limited. This would result in a lower potential for unauthorized OHV use in areas where OHV access is limited. There would be no additional trail crossings for Alternative 5D or for the comparison portion of the Proposed Route. Overall, Alternative 5D would have less effect on OHV use.

Alternative 5E would be 0.5 mile shorter than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route and it would cross 1.0 mile less area where OHV access is limited. This would result in a lower potential for unauthorized OHV use in areas where OHV access is limited. There would be no additional trail crossings for Alternative 5E or for the comparison portion of the Proposed Route. All of Alternative 5E would follow existing transmission lines, as does nearly 80 percent of the comparison portion of the Proposed Route. Therefore, there would be little difference in terms of potential unauthorized OHV use between these two alternatives.

Segment 6

The BLM’s Preferred Route in Segment 6 is as follows:

Preferred Route	Agency
The proposal to upgrade the line voltage from 345-kV to 500-kV (Figure A-8)	BLM

Segment 6 is an existing transmission line linking the Borah and Midpoint Substations; it is now operated at 345 kV but would be changed to operate at 500 kV. This segment has no Route Alternatives. Existing support structures would be used and impacts would be limited to within approximately 0.25 mile from each substation to allow for moving the entry point into the substation to the new 500-kV bay. Changes at the Borah and Midpoint Substations would allow Segment 6 to be operated at 500 kV. Figure A-8 in Appendix A shows the Preferred/Proposed Route for Segment 6. No plan amendments are associated with this segment.

Segment 7

The preferred routes in Segment 7 are as follows:

Preferred Route	Agency
Proposed Route incorporating Alternatives 7B, 7C, 7D, and 7G (Figure A-9). The Proposed Route in the East Hills and Alternative 7G will be microsited to avoid Preliminary Priority Sage-grouse Habitat (PPH).	BLM
Alternative 7K (Figure A-9)	Power and Cassia Counties

Segment 7 would link the Populus Substation and the proposed Cedar Hill Substation with a single-circuit 500-kV line that would be approximately 118.2 miles long. Several alternatives to the Proposed Route are being considered. Route Alternatives 7A and 7B have been proposed by the BLM to avoid crossing the Deep Creek Mountains. Alternatives 7C, 7D, 7E, 7F, and 7G were proposed by local landowners to avoid private agricultural lands. Alternative 7K (also called the Goose Creek Alternative) was identified during the public comment period as a shorter alternative to the Proposed Route than either 7I or 7J (refer to Chapter 2 of the Draft EIS for a description of these routes). The alignment for Alternative 7K was developed in cooperation with Cassia County. Alternatives 7H, 7I and 7J, which were analyzed in the Draft EIS, are no longer under consideration. The BLM has identified a Preferred Route that includes portions of the Proposed Route with Alternatives 7B, 7C, 7D, and 7G. The Segment 7 Preferred Route is 130.2 miles long, compared to 118.2 miles for the Proposed Route. Figure A-9 in Appendix A shows the location of the Segment 7 routes.

Land Ownership

Almost three quarters (72 percent) or 85.5 miles of the Proposed Route for Segment 7 would cross private lands, with the remainder of the route crossing BLM-managed (28.1 miles) and state (4.3 miles) land (Table 3.17-19). The Preferred Route would cross 102.6 miles of private lands (79 percent), 25.1 miles of BLM-managed land, and 2 miles of state land. Alternatives 7A and 7B would be 2.6 miles and 11.1 miles longer, respectively, than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route. Both routes would

Table 3.17-19. Miles Crossed by Land Ownership – Segment 7

Segment/Alternative	Total	BLM	NFS	Other	State	Private
Preferred – Total Length	130.2	25.1	–	–	2.0	102.6
Proposed – Total Length	118.2	28.1	–	–	4.3	85.5
Proposed – Comparison Portion for Alternatives 7A,B	35.1	7.3	–	–	3.8	24.1
Alternative 7A	37.7	7.2	–	–	–	30.5
Alternative 7B	46.2	7.7	–	–	–	38.5
Proposed – Comparison Portion for Alternative 7C	20.1	9.1	–	–	–	11.0
Alternative 7C	20.3	7.2	–	–	1.0	12.0
Proposed – Comparison Portion for Alternative 7D	6.2	1.7	–	–	0.5	4.0
Alternative 7D	6.8	0.1	–	–	1.0	5.7
Proposed – Comparison Portion for Alternative 7E	3.8	0.3	–	–	–	3.5
Alternative 7E	4.5	1.9	–	–	–	2.6
Proposed – Comparison Portion for Alternative 7F	10.5	1.3	–	–	–	9.2
Alternative 7F	10.8	4.4	–	–	–	6.4
Proposed – Comparison Portion for Alternative 7G	3.3	2.5	–	–	–	0.8
Alternative 7G	3.4	2.6	–	–	–	0.8
Proposed – Comparison Portion for Alternative 7K	118.2	28.1	–	–	4.3	85.8
Alternative 7K	148.1	72.5	12.7	–	7.8	55.1

Miles are rounded to tenths of a mile; columns/rows may therefore not sum exactly.

BLM – Bureau of Land Management; NFS – National Forest System

cross 3.8 miles less of state land than the Proposed Route and more miles of private land (Table 3.17-19). Alternatives 7C through 7G range from 0.1 mile to 0.7 mile longer than their respective comparison portions of the Proposed Route and cross similar totals of miles by land ownership.

Alternative 7K is 29.9 miles longer than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route. This alternative would cross more public land and less private land than the Proposed Route. The largest difference is in miles crossed of BLM-managed land and private land: Alternative 7K would cross 44.4 miles more BLM-managed land and 30.7 miles less of private land than the Proposed Route. Alternative 7K would also cross 12.7 miles of Sawtooth NF that would not be crossed by the Proposed Route.

Designated Corridors and Existing ROW

Most of the Proposed Route along Segment 7 between Populus and Cedar Hill Substations does not follow existing corridors and construction of a transmission line would, therefore, result in the development of a new utility corridor. The Proposed Route would be co-located with existing transmission lines for about 12.2 miles (10.3 percent of its length). The Proposed Route would be within the WWE corridor for 1.4 miles (1.2 percent) of its 118.2-mile total (0.5 mile [0.4 percent] on federal land; 0.9 mile [0.8 percent] on other land ownerships) and adjacent to the WWE corridor for 1.1 miles (0.9 percent) (Table 2.4-3). In addition, the Proposed Route would cross through an MA 11 area, as designated by the Cassia RMP. The Cassia RMP limits new ROWs in MA 11 to areas adjacent to existing facilities. This limitation in the plan requires a plan amendment for Gateway West in order for Segment 7 to be consistent with it; therefore, a plan amendment has been proposed (as discussed below in the Federal Land Use Plans section).

The Preferred Route would be co-located with existing transmission lines for about 12.2 miles (9.4 percent of its length). The Preferred Route would be within the WWE corridor for 1.4 miles and would be adjacent to the WWE corridor for 1.0 mile. The Preferred Route would also cross through an MA 11 area, as designated by the Cassia RMP.

Alternatives 7A through 7F do not follow existing transmission lines, nor do they occur within or near the WWE corridor. Alternative 7G would follow existing transmission lines and the WWE corridor for a combined total of 0.5 mile or 14.7 percent of its total 3.4-mile length. Alternative 7K would follow existing transmission lines or the WWE corridor for 14.4 miles (9.7 percent) of its route (Table 2.4-3).

Accommodating one or more extra high-voltage transmission line along the same path as Gateway West may not be reasonable. The establishment of the alignment is a very site-specific exercise to avoid areas where impacts might occur. In doing so, the alignment attempts to make the best use of topography and to go around features such as sage-grouse leks and uses such as irrigated fields. A second future transmission line would presumably go through the same siting process but would unlikely be able to take advantage of the locations occupied by the first line.

Federal Land Use Plan Amendments

Segment 7 would cross BLM-managed lands that fall within the jurisdiction of the Pocatello and Cassia RMPs (Table 3.17-2). Additionally, Alternative 7K would cross the Sawtooth NF. Plan amendments for the Proposed Route and Route Alternatives are identified in Tables 2.2-2 and 2.2-3. Some portions of the Project located along Segment 7 would not conform to land use stipulations found in the Pocatello and Cassia RMPs, and the Sawtooth Amended Forest Plan (Forest Service 2003c, as amended 2012), as discussed below.

Pocatello RMP

The Proposed Route for Segment 7 would require a visual resource amendment to the Pocatello RMP. This amendment would allow Gateway West in the Deep Creek area without changing the VRM classification. The Preferred Route would not require this amendment.

Cassia RMP

The Proposed Route, as currently designed along Segment 7, would not conform to land use stipulations found in the Cassia RMP. The Cassia RMP management direction for MA 11 is as follows:

Limit rights-of-way (ROWs) to existing facilities/localities.

The Proposed Route along Segment 7 would cross through MA 11. As currently designed, this route would not conform to the Cassia RMP stipulations, because the route would not be constructed within “existing facilities/ localities.” Therefore, the Proposed Route would either need to be altered so that it conforms to the Cassia RMP or the RMP would need to be amended. The associated amendment would allow the Project to be constructed outside of “existing facilities/localities” (see Appendix F-1). Allowing this Project to be constructed outside of “existing facilities/localities” on lands managed by the Cassia RMP could potentially create new areas where additional lines could be routed in the future, because the Project would become an “existing facility” following construction. Alternative 7D (part of the Preferred Route) avoids MA 11; therefore, this amendment would not be required for the Preferred Route.

Alternatives 7E and 7K would require that the Cassia RMP be amended to allow the reclassification of certain VRM Class II areas to VRM Class III (39 acres in the Spring Canyon area [Alternative 7E]), and some VRM Class III areas to VRM Class IV (1,381 acres in the Cottonwood Creek area [Alternative 7K]). For Alternative 7K, an additional amendment is proposed to allow a one-time crossing through the VRM Class II area around Goose Creek without changing the VRM classification.

Sawtooth National Forest Amended Forest Plan

Alternative 7K, as currently designed, is not consistent with a land use Standard and two Guidelines found in the Sawtooth Amended Forest Plan (Forest Service 2003c, as amended 2012).

Guideline REQU08 states:

All projects and activities should maintain or enhance the adopted ROS classes as displayed on the Forest ROS strategy maps.

Guideline REQU12 states:

Facilities identified as necessary should blend with the surrounding landscape character and ROS setting.

Approximately 3 miles of Alternative 7K would cross an area in the Cassia Division of the Sawtooth NF with a mapped ROS of SPM (however, this area is crossed by roads 079 and 089, which the 2010 Motor Vehicle Use Map designates as open to all vehicles). If Alternative 7K is approved, the ROS within 500 feet of the transmission line and new permanent roads would change to RN. If this alternative is approved, Forest Plan Guidelines REQU08 and REQU12 would not be met. Any associated change in ROS class would not have substantial effect on the recreation setting for the Cassia Division because the line would cross NFS land near the northern boundary of the Cassia Division, which has a VQO of Maximum Modification, and because Project-related roads would be decommissioned, leaving an 8-foot-wide vegetated roadbed that would be closed to public use. No additional motorized use would occur.

Alternative 7K would cross the Modification VQO within the Sublett Division of the Sawtooth NF. This would not be consistent with the management direction for scenic environment found in the Sawtooth Amended Forest Plan, which states:

All projects shall be designed to meet the adopted VQOs as displayed on the Forest VQO map. Duration of visual impacts from ground disturbance in vegetation removal activities to allow for herbaceous recovery of ground cover may extend three years in the foreground and middleground of Retention designations, and foreground and middleground Partial Retention (PR) designations. There should be minimal distraction from scenic quality in the foreground from road construction, reconstruction, and other excavation management. Roads and other excavation may be visible in the middleground and background landscapes, but should blend into the characteristic landscape of the surroundings. In areas designated as Modification, management activities may dominate the characteristic landscape but must use naturally established form, line, color, and texture. They should appear as a natural occurrence when viewed as middleground.

Where Alternative 7K enters the Sublett portion of the Sawtooth NF it turns to the southwest. This results in the alternative crossing approximately 4.0 miles of NFS land managed as VQO Modification. The presence of the proposed transmission line in this landscape would not meet the designated VQOs. As a result, Forest Service action would be necessary to modify the visual classification or approve a one-time allowance to be consistent with the Forest Plan.

Plan Amendment Summary

Approval of this plan amendment would result in changes to VQOs and VRM classes to more developed classifications that have the potential to affect the quality of the experience for recreationists using the affected areas and would, in some cases, afford

a less “semi-primitive” experience to users. Visual impacts to the potentially affected areas as well as the visual amendments, as discussed above, are evaluated in more detail within Section 3.2 – Visual Resources.

Specific Land Uses and Recreational Resources

Land Use

Land use within the Analysis Area for the Proposed Route is summarized by segment in Table 3.17-4. Land uses crossed by the Preferred Route, Proposed Route, and Route Alternatives for Segment 7 are included in Table 3.17-20. Viewed in terms of miles crossed, more than half of the Proposed Route for Segment 7 would cross rangeland (60 percent), with the remainder of the route crossing cropland (35 percent), and forest (4 percent) (Table 3.17-20). The irrigated cropland crossed by the Proposed Route occurs predominantly south of Burley and at scattered locations east and west of the Deep Creek Mountains.

The Preferred Route would cross 83.3 miles (64 percent) of rangeland, 42.7 miles (33 percent) of cropland, and 2.6 miles (2 percent) of forest.

Table 3.17-20. Miles Crossed by Land Use – Segment 7

Segment/Alternative	Total	Rangeland	Agriculture	Forest	Water and Wetlands	ROW	Developed	Other
Preferred – Total Length	130.2	83.3	42.7	2.6	0.2	0.7	0.3	–
Proposed – Total Length	118.2	70.3	41.8	4.9	0.3	0.5	0.1	–
Proposed – Comparison Portion for Alternative 7A,B	35.1	20.4	9.7	4.9	0.1	0.1	–	–
Alternative 7A	37.7	23.5	7.5	5.9	0.6	0.2	t ^{1/}	–
Alternative 7B	46.2	30.0	13.4	2.6	t ^{1/}	0.3	–	–
Proposed – Comparison Portion for Alternative 7C	20.1	11.9	8.1	–	t ^{1/}	t ^{1/}	–	–
Alternative 7C	20.3	15.2	4.8	–	t ^{1/}	t ^{1/}	0.2	–
Proposed – Comparison Portion for Alternative 7D	6.2	5.3	0.8	–	0.1	0.1	–	–
Alternative 7D	6.8	5.6	1.0	–	0.1	0.1	–	–
Proposed – Comparison Portion for Alternative 7E	3.8	3.6	0.2	–	–	–	t ^{1/}	–
Alternative 7E	4.5	4.5	–	–	–	t ^{1/}	–	–
Proposed – Comparison Portion for Alternative 7F	10.5	8.3	2.1	–	–	–	0.1	–
Alternative 7F	10.8	9.1	1.7	–	–	t ^{1/}	–	–
Proposed – Comparison Portion for Alternative 7G	3.3	2.8	0.4	–	–	–	–	–
Alternative 7G	3.4	2.6	0.7	–	–	–	–	–
Proposed – Comparison Portion for Alternative 7K	118.2	70.3	41.8	4.9	0.3	0.5	0.1	–
Alternative 7K	148.1	126.3	11.5	9.1	0.6	0.6	–	–

Miles are rounded to tenths of a mile; columns/rows may therefore not sum exactly. ROW – right-of-way
1/ “t” indicates values <0.1.

Alternatives 7A through 7K range from less than 1 mile longer to approximately 30 miles longer than their respective comparison portions of the Proposed Route (Table 3.17-20).

Alternatives 7A and 7B (which is included in the Preferred Route) would extend to the south of the Proposed Route to avoid the Deep Creek Mountains. Both alternatives are

longer than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route and cross more miles of rangeland. Alternative 7A would cross fewer miles of cropland and slightly more forest land. Alternative 7B would cross more cropland than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route and about 2 miles less forest. Alternative 7C (included in the Preferred Route) is almost the same length as the comparison portion of the Proposed Route but would cross about 3 miles more rangeland and about 3 miles less cropland.

Alternatives 7D (included in the Preferred Route) through 7G are each almost the same length as their respective comparison portion of the Proposed Route and would cross roughly the same miles of different land uses.

Alternative 7K is approximately 30 miles longer than the Proposed Route. This alternative would cross about 56 miles more rangeland than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route, and 30 miles less cropland. Alternative 7K would also cross 4 more miles of forest than the Proposed Route.

The Proposed Route for Segment 7 would pass within 1,000 feet of 20 residences; 7 of these residences are located within 300 feet of the proposed ROW centerline (Table 3.17-21). Seven of the houses within 1,000 feet are clustered on the east side of State Route 77, north of Albion, Idaho.

The Preferred Route for Segment 7 would pass within 1,000 feet of 24 residences; 8 of these residences are located within 300 feet of the proposed ROW centerline (Table 3.17-21).

Table 3.17-21. Number of Residences within 1,000 feet and 300 feet – Segment 7

Preferred/ Proposed Route / Alternative	Within 1,000 Feet			Within 300 Feet		
	Proposed Route / Alternative	Comparison Portion of the Proposed Route	Net Difference	Proposed Route / Alternative	Comparison Portion of the Proposed Route	Net Difference
Preferred Route	24	NA	NA	8	NA	NA
Proposed Route	20	NA	NA	7	NA	NA
7A	3	1	2	–	1	-1
7B	3	1	2	1	1	–
7C	2	–	2	–	–	–
7D	–	–	–	–	–	–
7E	3	6	-3	1	1	–
7F	–	6	-6	–	1	-1
7G	1	1	–	1	–	1
7K	5	20	-15	1	7	-6

NA – not applicable

Alternatives 7A and 7B would each pass within 1,000 feet of three residences versus one for the comparison portion of the Proposed Route; the proposed ROW centerlines for Alternative 7B and the comparison portion of the Proposed Route both pass within 300 feet of one residence.

Alternative 7C would pass within 1,000 feet of two residences versus none for the comparison portion of the Proposed Route; neither of these residences are located within 300 feet of the proposed ROW centerline for Alternative 7C. There are no

residences within 1,000 feet of Alternative 7D or the comparison portion of the Proposed Route.

Alternative 7E would pass within 1,000 feet of three residences versus six for the comparison portion of the Proposed Route; the proposed ROW centerlines for Alternative 7E and the comparison portion of the Proposed Route both pass within 300 feet of one residence. There are no residences within 1,000 feet of Alternative 7F versus six for the comparison portion of the Proposed Route, one of which would be located within 300 feet of the proposed ROW centerline. Alternative 7G and the comparison portion of the Proposed Route would each pass within 1,000 feet of one residence; the residence for Alternative 7G would be within 300 feet of proposed ROW centerline (Table 3.17-21). Alternative 7K would pass within 1,000 feet of five residences versus 20 for the comparison portion of the Proposed Route; one of these residences would be within 300 feet, versus seven residences within 300 feet of the comparison portion of the Proposed Route.

Commercial, industrial, and institutional land uses crossed or within 1,000 feet of the Proposed Route and Route Alternatives are itemized by milepost in Table D.17-1 in Appendix D and summarized below. The Proposed Route would come within 1,000 feet of two CAFOs (see Section 3.18 – Agriculture) and an MTR (see below) and would pass within 1,000 feet of many center pivots and the Bower Cemetery. Alternative 7G would also pass within 1,000 feet of the Bower Cemetery. The Preferred Route would pass within 1,000 feet of three CAFOs and Bower Cemetery.

Alternatives 7A and 7B would each pass within 1,000 feet of one farm. Alternative 7C would pass within 1,000 feet of a center-pivot and a CAFO. Alternative 7D would cross 0.3 mile of a wind energy facility and pass within 1,000 feet of a center pivot.

The Proposed Route would cross MTR 302 at MP 58. Consultation with the IDANG (Postema 2010) indicates that, in general, there is an approximate height restriction of 100 feet AGL. However, higher structures can be accommodated along these routes, if marked on charts so that pilots are alerted to their presence. There should be no impact on the MTRs from the transmission line.

The Preferred Route and Proposed Route would cross the planned Dry Creek Sky Ranches airstrip (Figure 3.17-7). According to the owner, the location of the runway is approved by the FAA and will be marked on the FAA Sectional as an unrestricted public use facility. A helipad is also planned, which would be located approximately 2,000 feet south of the Proposed Route and approximately 500 feet farther south of Alternative 7G and the Preferred Route (Figure 3.17-7). The airstrip and helipad are part of a planned “fly-in” development.

The Preferred and Proposed Routes would also cross an existing airstrip near Albion at MP 87 (for the Proposed Route). If the Preferred Route or Proposed Route were selected, the Proponents would attempt to microsite the route to avoid the airstrip.

The Preferred and Proposed Routes for Segment 7 may cross BLM parcels identified for public disposal in the Pocatello RMP in Township 11 South, Range 36 East. Alternatives 7A and 7B may also cross disposal parcels identified in this plan in Township 10/11 South, Range 35 East. The Cassia RMP also identifies parcels for public disposal that may be crossed by or located very close to Segment 7. Parcels in Township 11/12/13/15 South and Range 19/22/24/28 East would need to be reviewed in more detail. A Project crossing or close proximity to the transmission line may affect the eligibility and/or value for disposal of these parcels.

Special Management Areas

Federal lands along Segment 7 are regulated in part by the Sawtooth Forest Plan and the Pocatello and Cassia RMPs. The Preferred Route, Proposed Route, and Route Alternatives for Segment 7 would not cross any SMAs identified in these plans. Alternative 7K would, however, cross approximately 26 miles of the Raft River Curlew Valley IBA.

Wilderness Characteristics

No areas with wilderness characteristics would be crossed in this segment.

Historic Trails

The Preferred Route, Proposed Route, and Route Alternatives for Segment 7 would cross a number of NHTs and other trails that have potential historic significance (see Table 3.3-15 in Section 3.3 – Cultural Resources). These include the Oregon NHT, California NHT–Hudspeth Cutoff, and Kelton Road. Alternative 7K would also cross the California NHT – South Lake Alternate. Potential impacts to historic trails are assessed in Section 3.3 – Cultural Resources.

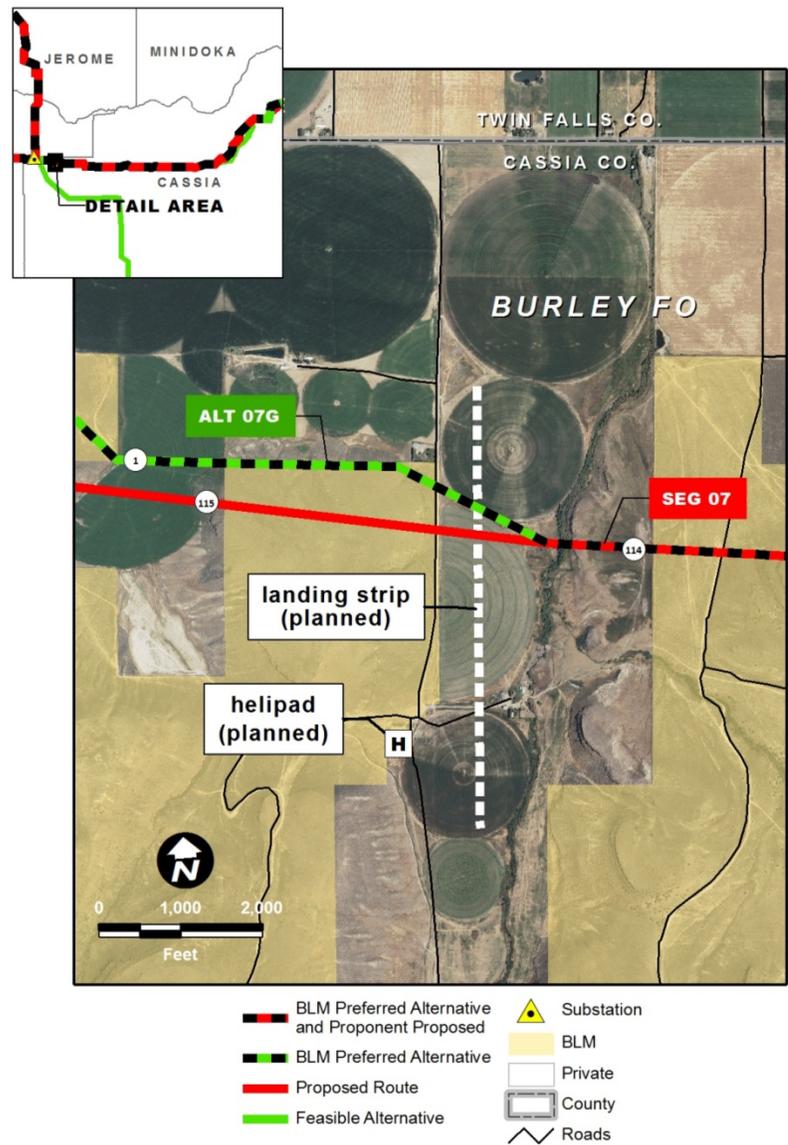


Figure 3.17-7. Dry Creek Sky Ranches Planned Airstrip

OHV Use

The Proposed Route would cross 0.9 mile of public land closed to OHV use, 4.3 miles with seasonal closure, and 6.8 miles where OHV use is limited. The Proposed Route would cross five trails closed to OHV use and there would be four additional trail crossings due to new road construction. In open areas (the majority of the route), it would be difficult to physically close these access points to unauthorized OHV use. OHV use on nonmotorized trails would disrupt existing uses, such as hiking and horseback riding, and may result in adverse effects to trails not designed or maintained for motorized use. The Proponents would post signs identifying the area as closed to OHV use and implement blocking measures where practical.

The Preferred Route would cross 1.6 miles of public land closed to OHV use, 1.0 mile with seasonal closure, and 8.6 miles where OHV use is limited. The Preferred Route would cross five trails closed to OHV use and there would be five additional trail crossings due to new road construction.

Alternative 7A would be 2.6 miles longer than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route, and it would not cross any areas closed to OHV use but would cross 4.3 miles where OHV use is limited. The comparison portion of the Proposed Route would also not cross any areas closed to OHV use, but slightly less area with limited access (3.0 miles). Alternative 7A and the comparison portion of the Proposed Route would cross one trail closed to OHV use, and new road construction associated with Alternative 7A would cross one additional trail, same as the comparison portion of the Proposed Route. Overall, there would be slightly less opportunity for unauthorized use in areas limited to OHVs under the Proposed Route than Alternative 7A, but similar opportunity for unauthorized access to trails closed to OHV use.

Alternative 7B would be 11.1 miles longer than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route. Neither Alternative 7B nor the comparison portion of the Proposed Route would cross any areas closed to OHV use. Alternative 7B would, however, cross 6.4 miles where OHV use is limited compared to 3.0 miles for the comparison portion of the Proposed Route. Alternative 7B would cross one trail closed to OHV use, the same as the comparison portion of the Proposed Route. New road construction associated with Alternative 7B would cross two additional trails, one more than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route. Overall, there would be somewhat more opportunity for unauthorized use in areas with limited access for OHVs.

Alternative 7C would be 0.2 mile longer than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route, and it would cross 0.7 more miles closed to OHV use than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route. Alternative 7C would cross two trails closed to OHV use, the same as the comparison portion of the Proposed Route. New road construction associated with Alternative 7C would not cross any additional trails, while road construction associated with the comparison portion of the Proposed Route would cross two additional trails. Overall, there would be a greater opportunity for unauthorized use in areas closed to OHVs, however somewhat less opportunity for unauthorized access to trails closed to OHV use and potential disruption of existing uses on these trails under Alternative 7C.

Alternative 7D would be 0.6 mile longer than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route but would cross 1.6 miles less area where OHV use is limited than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route. Alternative 7D would cross one trail closed to OHV use and there would be one additional trail crossing due to new road construction. This would be the same as the comparison portion of the Proposed Route; therefore, there would be no difference in the risk of unauthorized use on trails closed to OHVs and less potential for unauthorized OHV use in areas where OHV access is limited under Alternative 7D.

Alternative 7E would be 0.7 mile longer than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route, and it would cross 1.6 more miles where OHV use is limited than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route. This would result in a greater potential for unauthorized OHV use in areas where OHV access is limited. There would be no additional trail crossings for Alternative 7E or for the comparison portion of the Proposed Route; therefore, there would be no additional opportunity for unauthorized use on trails closed to OHVs or potential disruption of existing uses on these trails.

Alternative 7F would be 0.3 mile longer than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route, and would cross 3.1 more miles where OHV use is limited than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route. This would result in a greater potential for unauthorized OHV use in areas where OHV access is limited. There would be no additional trail crossings for Alternative 7F or for the comparison portion of the Proposed Route; therefore, there would be no additional opportunity for unauthorized use on trails closed to OHVs or potential disruption of existing uses on these trails.

Alternative 7G would be approximately the same length as the comparison portion of the Proposed Route, and neither route would cross areas closed to OHVs or where OHV use is limited. There would be no additional trail crossings for Alternative 7G or for the comparison portion of the Proposed Route; therefore, there would be no additional opportunity for unauthorized use on trails closed to OHVs or potential disruption of existing uses on these trails under either alternative.

Alternative 7K would be 30.2 miles longer than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route, and would cross 11.8 more miles closed to OHV use and 24.3 more miles where OHV use is limited than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route. This would result in a greater potential for unauthorized OHV use in areas where OHV access is currently limited or not allowed. Alternative 7K would cross 10 trails closed to OHV use, while the comparison portion of the Proposed Route would cross five. New road construction associated with Alternative 7K would result in an additional 10 trail crossings, compared to an additional four for the Proposed Route. There would be greater opportunity for unauthorized use on trails and potential disruption of existing uses on these trails under Alternative 7K.

Segment 8

The preferred route in Segment 8 is as follows:

Preferred Route	Agency
Proposed Route incorporating Alternative 8B (Figure A-10)	BLM and IDANG

Segment 8 would link the Midpoint and Hemingway Substations. This 131.5-mile single-circuit 500-kV transmission line would stay north of the Snake River generally parallel to an existing 500-kV transmission line, before ending at the Hemingway Substation. There are five Route Alternatives to the Proposed Route. Alternative 8A follows the WWE corridor but crosses the Snake River and I-84 twice (while the Proposed Route would stay north of this area). Alternatives 8B and 8C were originally proposed by the Proponents as parts of the Proposed Route but were later dropped from the Proposed Route to avoid planned developments near the cities of Kuna and Mayfield, respectively. Alternative 8D would rebuild a portion of an existing 500-kV transmission line to move it away from the National Guard Maneuver Area. Alternative 8D would be constructed within the ROW currently occupied by the existing line. Alternative 8E was proposed by the BLM in order to avoid crossing the Halverson Bar non-motorized portion of a National Register Historic District (see the discussion of 8E under Segment 9). The BLM has identified a Preferred Route that includes portions of the Proposed Route with Alternative 8B and generally avoids the SRBOP. The Segment 8 Preferred Route is 132.0 miles long, compared to 131.5 miles for the Proposed Route. Figure A-10 in Appendix A shows the location of the Segment 8 routes.

Land Ownership

Almost two-thirds (66 percent) or 87.1 miles of the Proposed Route for Segment 8 would cross BLM-managed land, with the remainder crossing private (31.5 miles), state (9.4 miles), and Bureau of Reclamation (3.5 miles) land (Table 3.17-22). Less than half (46 percent) or 61.3 miles of the Preferred Route for Segment 8 would cross BLM-managed land, with the remainder crossing private (56.1 miles), state (12.3 miles), and Bureau of Reclamation (2.4 miles) land. Alternatives 8A, 8C, and 8D range from 0.1 mile shorter to 1.7 miles longer than their respective comparison portions of the Proposed Route and would cross similar totals of miles by land ownership. Alternative 8B is 0.5 mile longer than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route and would

Table 3.17-22. Miles Crossed by Land Ownership – Segment 8

Segment/Alternative	Total	BLM	NFS	Other^{1/}	State	Private
Preferred – Total Length	132.0	61.3	–	2.4	12.3	56.1
Proposed – Total Length	131.5	87.1	–	3.5	9.4	31.5
Proposed – Comparison Portion for Alternative 8A	51.9	31.5	–	–	2.3	18.1
Alternative 8A	53.6	25.1	–	–	6.5	21.9
Proposed – Comparison Portion for Alternative 8B	45.3	40.0	–	2.6	0.1	2.5
Alternative 8B	45.8	14.2	–	1.5	3.0	27.1
Proposed – Comparison Portion for Alternative 8C	6.5	5.5	–	0.3	–	0.8
Alternative 8C	6.4	2.3	–	–	0.3	3.9
Proposed – Comparison Portion for Alternative 8D	6.9	6.9	–	–	–	–
Alternative 8D	8.1	2.9	–	–	1.0	4.2
Proposed – Comparison Portion for Alternative 8E	7.0	4.6	–	1.8	0.1	0.4
Alternative 8E	18.3	17.7	–	0.1	0.1	0.3

Miles are rounded to tenths of a mile; columns/rows may therefore not sum exactly.

1/ The “Other” miles crossed by the Proposed Route and some of the Route Alternatives are Bureau of Reclamation lands.

cross 24.6 more miles of private land and 25.8 fewer miles of BLM-managed land (Table 3.17-22). Alternative 8E would be about 11.3 miles longer than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route and would cross more BLM-managed lands and slightly less private land.

Approximately 6 miles of Alternative 8B, which is part of the Preferred Route, would cross land that is part of the city of Kuna, and zoned and identified in the City's 2009 Comprehensive Plan for future residential and commercial development (City of Kuna 2009b). The comparison portion of the Proposed Route would avoid this and other current and planned development that would be affected by Alternative 8B by crossing the SRBOP.

Designated Corridors and Existing ROW

The Proposed Route would be adjacent to existing transmission corridors for 110.1 miles (83.7 percent of its length). This route would follow the WWE corridor for much of its length except at the north end where there are no existing designated corridors across the SRBOP. Approximately 38.1 miles (29 percent) of the Proposed Route would be within the WWE corridor (18.8 miles [14.3 percent] on federal lands; the remaining 19.3 miles [14.7 percent] on other land ownerships) and 4.7 miles (3.6 percent) would be adjacent to the WWE corridor (Table 2.4-3).

The Preferred Route would be adjacent to existing transmission corridors for 95.2 miles (72.1 percent of its length). Approximately 33.2 miles (25.2 percent) of the Preferred Route for this segment would be within the WWE corridor (14.5 miles [11 percent] on federal lands; 18.7 miles [14.2 percent] on other land ownerships) and 3.4 miles (2.6 percent) would be adjacent to the WWE corridor (Table 2.4-3).

Alternative 8A would be adjacent to existing transmission corridors for 38.3 miles (71.5 percent) of its total 53.6 miles. The alternative would be within the WWE corridor for 29.5 miles (55 percent of its total length) and adjacent to the WWE corridor for 9.3 miles (17.4 percent). The Jarbidge RMP restricts the location of new utilities in MUA 7. The alternative would cross a part of an existing wind farm that the Proponents would avoid during final design.

Alternative 8B would be adjacent to existing transmission corridors for 17.1 miles (37.3 percent) of its total 45.8 miles. The alternative would be within or adjacent to the WWE corridor for less than 3 miles.

Alternative 8C would be adjacent to existing transmission corridors for 5.5 miles (85.9 percent) of its total 6.4 miles. This alternative would be within the WWE corridor for 4.3 miles (67.2 percent) and adjacent to the projected WWE corridor for 0.5 mile (7.8 percent) (Table 2.4-3).

Alternative 8D would be adjacent to existing transmission corridors for 6.9 miles (85.2 percent) of its 8.1-mile total. There is no WWE corridor in this area.

Alternative 8E would be adjacent to existing transmission corridors for 11.1 miles (60.7 percent) of its 18.3-mile total. There is no WWE corridor in this area.

Federal Land Use Plan Amendments

Segment 8 would cross BLM-managed lands that fall within the jurisdiction of the Monument, Jarbidge, SRBOP, and Owyhee RMPs and the Bennett Hills/Timmerman Hills, and Kuna MFPs (Table 3.17-2). Plan amendments for the Preferred Route, Proposed Route, and Route Alternatives are identified in Tables 2.2-1 and 2.2-2. No plan amendments to the Monument or Owyhee RMPs have been proposed.

Jarbidge RMP

The Preferred and Proposed Routes for Segment 8 would both require that the Jarbidge RMP be amended to allow the reclassification of approximately 5,200 acres of VRM I to VRM III in the vicinity of the Oregon Trail. Alternative 8A would require a similar amendment to the Jarbidge RMP to allow the reclassification of approximately 2,800 acres of VRM Class I to VRM Class III in the vicinity of the Oregon NHT. The Preferred Route, Proposed Route, and Alternative 8A would all require an amendment to reclassify an area currently identified as a restricted zone to a utility avoidance area in order to accommodate a 500-kV transmission line ROW. These alternatives would also require an amendment to reduce the requirement of no surface disturbance within 0.5 mile of the Oregon Trail and Kelton Road to 330 feet. For Alternative 8A, this reduction would apply to all lands within the WWE corridor. The Preferred Route and Proposed Route would cross these trails outside of the WWE corridor and the amendment would be restricted to crossings associated with Gateway West.

SRBOP RMP

The Preferred Route for Segment 8 would avoid the SRBOP management area except for a small portion where it crosses within one of the designated corridors and is in conformance with the SRBOP RMP. Alternative routes (including the western portion of the Proposed Route), as currently designed along Segment 8, would not conform to multiple stipulations found in the SRBOP RMP. These stipulations are as follows:

Restrict major utility developments to the two utility corridors identified (see Lands Map 3 in the SRBOP RMP)

Retain all public lands in the 43,000-acre ROW avoidance area to protect the visual corridor along the historic Oregon Trail and the resources along the Snake River canyon.” (Lands Map 1)

Close the following areas to motorized vehicles:

- *Halverson Bar – 1,150 acres*

Manage the areas along the Oregon Trail and the Snake River Canyon as VRM Class II, the OTA as Class IV and remaining areas as Class III [Visual Resource Management (VRM) Map]. This will provide reasonable protection of the Oregon Trail and flexibility in managing the remainder of the NCA.

This SRMA (Snake River SRMA) consists of 22,300 acres in the Snake River Canyon downstream from Grandview, Idaho that is managed for the protection of cultural and scenic values (2.14 Recreation 2-20).

While the Preferred Route would avoid these areas with management restrictions, the Proposed Route along Segment 8, as well as Alternatives 8D and 8E, would cross through areas managed under the SRBOP RMP and would be constructed in areas outside of the two utility corridors identified within this RMP. Therefore, these alternatives would not conform to the SRBOP RMP stipulation regarding utility corridors and the Project would either need to be altered so that it conforms to the SRBOP RMP, or the RMP would need to be amended. The amendment would allow the Project to be constructed outside of the two utility corridors defined in the SRBOP RMP along Segment 8, as well as Alternatives 8D and 8E, if these alternatives are selected (see Appendices F and G). Allowing this Project to be constructed outside of the utility corridors identified within the RMP is not likely to create new areas where additional lines could be routed in the future, unless the final amendment is worded such that it identifies the Project's ROW as a viable utility corridor for future lines. Amending the SRBOP to allow the Project would not meet the enabling legislation of the SRBOP. Alternative 8C avoids crossing the SRBOP area, and the Preferred Route, including Alternative 8B, avoids crossing the SRBOP outside the designated utility corridors. Therefore, no amendment would be needed for these routes.

The Proposed Route along Segment 8 would cross through the Halverson Bar area, which is designated as a non-motorized area. Therefore, this route would not conform to the SRBOP RMP stipulation regarding the Halverson Bar area, and the Project would either need to be altered so that conforms to the SRBOP RMP, or the RMP would need to be amended for this route to be approved. An amendment would be needed to allow the Project to be constructed within this non-motorized area; however, the Boise District BLM Office has stated that the RMP could not be amended in this way to meet RMP objectives and amending the RMP would not meet the enabling legislation of the SRBOP. Alternatives 8B (which is part of the Preferred Route) and 8E would avoid this area.

The Proposed Route along Segment 8 and Alternative 8E would cross the Snake River SRMA managed under the SRBOP RMP. Because a transmission line does not conform to the SRMA designation, an amendment would be required to allow the Project to cross and would result in a reduction of the total acreage by removing the area crossed by the Project from the SRMA designation. The amendment would reduce the size of the Snake River SRMA by 6,400 acres. This could impact the purpose and goals of the SRMA due to the visual disturbance of a utility line, as well as reducing the overall size of the SRMA.

The Proposed Route along Segment 8 as well as Alternative 8E would cross through a VRM Class II area designated by the SRBOP RMP to protect the visual corridor along the Oregon NHT and the resources along the Snake River canyon. Therefore, these routes would not conform to the SRBOP RMP regarding this VRM designation, and the Project would either need to be altered so that it conforms to the SRBOP, or the RMP would need to be amended for this route to be approved. The amendment would allow the Project to be constructed by changing the classification of approximately 6,400 acres of VRM Class II to VRM Class III.

Approval of the amendments to the SRBOP RMP would result in approximately 785 acres changing from an ROS of SPNM to RN as a result of the transmission line and new road construction under the Proposed Route. The majority of the SRBOP is currently allocated to the RN ROS class.

Mitigation Associated with the Preferred Route in the SRBOP

The BLM's Preferred Route for Segment 8 crosses through approximately 2 miles of the SRBOP within an approved utility corridor. The SRBOP was established in 1993 by P.L. 103-64, which states that: "[t]he...conservation area is established...to provide for the conservation, protection, and enhancement of raptor populations and habitats and the natural and environmental resources and values associated therewith, and of the scientific, cultural, and educational resources and values of the public lands in the conservation area." As a result, any action in the SRBOP must enhance the resources for which the SRBOP was designated.

The SRBOP's RMP and accompanying EIS identifies restoration and outreach opportunities that could help mitigate for project-related impacts in the SRBOP, as well as ensure enhancement of the resources for which the SRBOP was designated. This includes 1) restoration of shrub and grasslands, 2) inventorying cultural resources, 3) hiring an additional law enforcement ranger to deal with the increased unauthorized cross country travel access that could be created by energy development projects, and 4) enhancing scientific and educational efforts in the SRBOP.

The BLM's Preferred Route would result in approximately 36 acres of impact within the SRBOP. Potential mitigation ratios that could be applied to this impact value in order to calculate the total acreage of required mitigation (specifically applicable to the acreage of shrub and grasslands that would need to be restored, as well as acres of cultural resource areas to be inventoried) would need to be at least a 2:1 ratio in order to fulfill the "enhancement" requirement in P.L. 103-64; however, larger ratios may be considered by the BLM. The BLM is currently considering mitigation ratios ranging from 2:1 to 5:1 based on mitigation required/offered by other energy development projects (BLM 2006c, 2010e). Additionally, the timeline for employment of an additional law enforcement ranger could range from 10 years (the shortest time frame currently considered by the BLM for this mitigation option) to 50 years (i.e., the permitted life of the project). The timeline for the funding of scientific and educational efforts in the SRBOP could range from 2 years to 5 years.

Bennett Hills/Timmerman Hills MFP

The Preferred Route and Proposed Route for Segment 8 would require that the Bennett Hills/Timmerman Hills MFP be amended to allow the Project. Two amendments are proposed resulting in the reclassification of approximately 3,000 acres of VRM Class II to VRM Class III in the Burnt Ridge area to the north of the Preferred and Proposed Routes and allowing disturbance within 330 feet of the Oregon Trail and archaeological sites.

Kuna MFP

The Project, as currently designed along Segment 8, would not conform to a land use stipulation found in the Kuna MFP. The Kuna MFP states the following:

Confine major new utility R/Ws (i.e., 500KV or larger or 24-inch pipeline) to existing corridors. The R/Ws will subject to reasonable stipulations to protect other resource uses.

The Preferred Route and Proposed Route along Segment 8, as well as Alternatives 8B and 8C, would cross through areas managed under Kuna MFP and would be constructed in areas outside of existing corridors. Therefore, these routes would not conform to the Kuna MFP. The proposed amendment would allow the Preferred Route (which comprises Alternative 8B in this area) to be constructed outside of “existing corridors” along Segment 8, as well as the Proposed Route and Alternative 8C if these routes are selected (see Appendix F-1). Allowing this Project to be constructed outside of “existing corridors” on lands managed by the Kuna MFP could potentially create new areas where additional lines could be routed in the future, as the Project would become an “existing corridor” following construction.

Plan Amendment Summary

Approval of plan amendments that would result in changes to VRM classes to more developed classifications have the potential to affect the quality of the experience for recreationists using the affected areas and would, in some cases, afford a less “semi-primitive” experience to users. Visual impacts to the potentially affected areas as well as the visual amendments, as discussed above, are evaluated in more detail within Section 3.2 – Visual Resources.

Specific Land Uses and Recreational Resources

Land Use

Land use within the Analysis Area for the Proposed Route is summarized by segment in Table 3.17-4. Land uses crossed by the Preferred Route, Proposed Route, and Route Alternatives for Segment 8 are included in Table 3.17-23. Viewed in terms of miles crossed, the majority of the Proposed Route for Segment 8 would cross rangeland (89 percent), with the remainder of the route crossing cropland (9 percent), and water and wetlands (1 percent) (Table 3.17-23). The majority of the Preferred Route would cross rangeland (78 percent), with the remainder of the route crossing cropland (17.6 percent) and water and wetlands (less than 1 percent). Alternatives 8A through 8E range from less than 1 mile shorter to approximately 11.3 miles longer than their respective comparison portions of the Proposed Route (Table 3.17-23).

Alternative 8A is approximately 53.6 miles long and extends to the south of the eastern portion of the Proposed Route. This alternative generally would follow the WWE corridor but would cross the Snake River and I-84 twice. Alternative 8A is about 1.7 miles longer than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route and would cross very similar miles of different land uses.

Table 3.17-23. Miles Crossed by Land Use – Segment 8

Segment/ Alternative	Total	Rangeland	Agriculture	Forest	Water and Wetlands	ROW	Developed	Other
Preferred – Total Length	132.0	103.3	23.2	–	1.2	3.1	0.4	0.9
Proposed – Total Length	131.5	117.5	11.9	–	1.0	0.8	–	0.3
Proposed – Comparison Portion for Alternative 8A	51.9	40.1	11.1	–	0.3	0.4	–	t ^{1/}
Alternative 8A	53.6	40.2	11.7	–	0.6	0.3	0.7	–
Proposed – Comparison Portion for Alternative 8B	45.3	44.1	0.4	–	0.2	0.3	–	0.2
Alternative 8B	45.8	29.9	11.7	–	0.4	2.6	0.4	0.8
Proposed – Comparison Portion for Alternative 8C	6.5	6.4	–	–	t ^{1/}	0.1	–	–
Alternative 8C	6.4	6.3	–	–	–	0.1	–	–
Proposed – Comparison Portion for Alternative 8D	6.9	6.9	–	–	–	t ^{1/}	–	–
Alternative 8D	8.1	6.6	1.4	–	–	t ^{1/}	–	–
Proposed – Comparison Portion for Alternative 8E	7.0	6.3	0.4	–	0.2	0.1	–	–
Alternative 8E	18.3	18.2	–	–	t ^{1/}	0.1	–	–

Miles are rounded to tenths of a mile; columns/rows may therefore not sum exactly. ROW – right-of-way

1/ “t” indicates values <0.1.

Alternative 8B, which is part of the BLM’s Preferred Route, is approximately 45.8 miles, about 0.5 mile longer than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route. This route, originally identified by the Proponents as the Proposed Route, would cross approximately 14 fewer miles of rangeland and about 11 miles more of cropland, mostly irrigated. Alternative 8B would avoid the IDANG OCTC.

Alternatives 8C and 8D, 6.4 miles and 8.1 miles long, respectively, are very similar in total length to their respective comparison portion of the Proposed Route and would cross roughly the same miles of different land uses.

Alternative 8E would be approximately 18.3 miles long, about 11.3 miles longer than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route. Alternative 8E and the comparison portion of the Proposed Route both primarily cross rangeland; approximately 18.2 miles or 99 percent of Alternative 8E crosses rangeland.

The Preferred Route would pass within 1,000 feet of 74 residences, 28 of which are located within 300 feet of the proposed ROW centerline (Table 3.17-24). The Proposed Route would pass within 1,000 feet of 26 residences; 6 of these residences are located within 300 feet of the proposed ROW centerline (Table 3.17-24). Eight of the residences within 1,000 feet are between MPs 130.4 and 130.7 where the Preferred/Proposed Route approaches the Hemingway Substation.

Table 3.17-24. Number of Residences within 1,000 feet and 300 feet – Segment 8

Preferred / Proposed Route / Alternative	Within 1,000 Feet			Within 300 Feet		
	Preferred / Proposed Route / Alternative	Comparison Portion of the Proposed Route	Net Difference	Preferred / Proposed Route / Alternative	Comparison Portion of the Proposed Route	Net Difference
Preferred Route	74	NA	NA	28	NA	NA
Proposed Route	26	NA	NA	6	NA	NA
8A	46	13	33	7	3	4
8B	60	12	48	24	2	22
8C	1	–	1	–	–	–
8D	1	–	1	1	–	1
8E	–	–	–	–	–	–

NA – not applicable

Alternative 8A would pass within 1,000 feet of substantially more residences than the Proposed Route. Alternative 8A would pass within 1,000 feet of 46 residences versus 13 for the comparison portion of the Proposed Route. The majority of these residences, approximately 30, are located north of the city of Hagerman near where Alternative 8A would cross I-84. Seven of the residences within 1,000 feet of Alternative 8A are located within 300 feet of the proposed ROW centerline versus 3 for the comparison portion of the Proposed Route.

Alternative 8B, which is part of the Preferred Route, would pass within 1,000 feet of 60 residences versus 12 for the comparison portion of the Proposed Route. These residences are clustered in the vicinities of Mora, Kuna, and Melba, and at the approach to the Hemingway Substation. Twenty-four of the residences within 1,000 feet of Alternative 8B are located within 300 feet of the proposed ROW centerline versus 2 for the comparison portion of the Proposed Route (Table 3.17-24).

Alternatives 8C and 8D each pass within 1,000 feet of one residence versus none for the respective comparison portions of the Proposed Route (Table 3.17-24). No residences are located near Alternative 8E or the comparison portion of the Proposed Route (Table 3.17-24).

Commercial, industrial, and institutional land uses crossed or within 1,000 feet of the Proposed Route and Route Alternatives are itemized by milepost in Table D.17-1 in Appendix D and summarized below.

The Proposed Route for Segment 8 would cross approximately 0.5 mile of a wind energy facility and the Wilson Creek Landfill, and pass within 1,000 feet of five center-pivots, two CAFOs, a gravel pit, and four other structures. Potential impacts to agricultural operations are addressed in Section 3.18 – Agriculture.

The Proposed Route would also cross approximately 9.2 miles of the IDANG OCTC. Consultation with the IDANG indicates their preference for the line to avoid a portion of the “Alpha” Maneuver Sector, OCTC (see Alternative 8D below). The IDANG has indicated that the presence of additional power lines would adversely affect existing ground maneuver and aerial combat training operations within the OCTC (Kelly 2011). The IDANG has also indicated that the Proposed Route would adversely affect approximately 3,500 acres of lands in the northern portion of the OCTC by limiting or

restricting training near the proposed transmission line. This would adversely affect their ability to train personnel. In addition, this impact would constitute a permanent loss of lands within the OCTC, due to the Major Land Acquisition Moratorium established in 1990 by the Deputy Secretary of Defense, which constrains the DoD Agencies from acquiring new land.

The Preferred Route would pass within 1,000 feet of five center-pivots, one CAFO, and a gravel pit. The Preferred Route includes Alternative 8B and would cross the city of Kuna, as described below for Alternative 8B. It would also pass within 1,000 feet of the other land uses identified below for Alternative 8B.

Alternative 8A would cross approximately 0.3 mile of the Glens Ferry Landfill and pass within 1,000 feet of two center-pivot agricultural fields, a CAFO, an animal pen, the Billingsley Creek Wildlife Management Area, a fish farm, and a wind farm.

Alternative 8B would cross approximately 6 miles of the city of Kuna in Ada County, as well as 3 miles of its city impact area. Part of the area within the Kuna city limits that would be crossed was recently annexed to include the proposed Osprey Ridge development and other smaller proposed developments (City of Kuna 2009b). The area that would be crossed by Alternative 8B is currently largely agricultural land use, with existing commercial and residential development mainly limited to farms and rural residences (Figure 3.17-8). The City has, however, installed sewer lines in this area

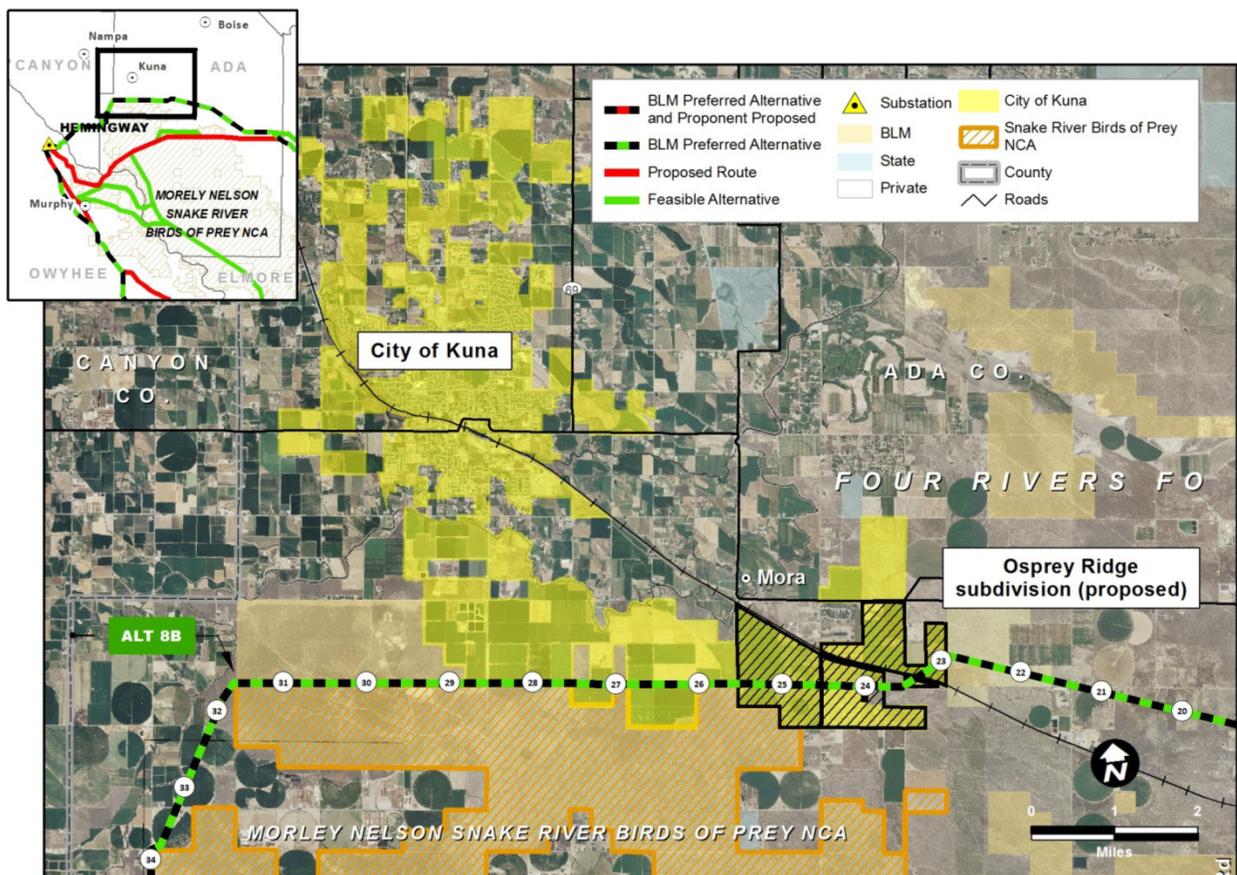


Figure 3.17-8. Alternative 8B – Vicinity of Kuna

and modified its treatment plan to accommodate future development (Hasson 2010). The City of Kuna approved a Comprehensive Plan update in September 2009 that identified the proposed Osprey Ridge development area as Mixed Use General, which is defined as a zoning classification that “pertains to a land parcel or combination of parcels that are planned and developed together” (City of Kuna 2009b). The Osprey Ridge development proposal has a recorded agreement with the City of Kuna, however the city had not received an application for development as of September 2012.

The City of Kuna has indicated that if Alternative 8B is part of the selected route the City would require the following items as part of its land use permitting process: an amendment of the City’s recently approved comprehensive plan; “special use permit; design review, possible rezone; special studies; variance procedure; amendment to sewer, water, pressure irrigation and transportation plans; and road permits” (Hasson 2010).

The Preferred Route (which includes Alternative 8B) also runs along 2 miles of the northern edge of the city impact area for the city of Melba in Canyon County. This alternative would also cross approximately 0.1 mile and 0.3 mile of two residential subdivisions (Colombani Estates and Sagebrush Ridge Estates), respectively, within Ada County, Idaho. These two subdivisions are not located within an incorporated town or city; the closest city to these subdivisions is Melba, located in Canyon County. This alternative also would cross a parcel that is in the process of being acquired by BLM and pass within 1,000 feet of two animal pens, two CAFOs, a commercial building, two gravel pits, a silo, a warehouse, and six outbuildings.

Alternative 8B (45.8 miles) was originally identified by the Proponents as their proposed route. It is not part of the current Proposed Route but is part of the BLM’s Preferred Route. The communities of Kuna and Melba have expressed strong opposition to this route and the City of Kuna and a number of private landowners in Kuna and Melba commissioned a study of the effects of the then-proposed route on these communities (ECS 2009). This study contends that this route would adversely affect the planned Osprey Ridge development and would also impact an adjacent 600-acre tract of land owned by the City of Kuna. The referenced City of Kuna land is identified in the 2009 City Future Land Use Map as agricultural with a “City Interest” overlay; the ECS study identifies this area as sewer and waste water treatment, with future park and recreational development also envisioned (ECS 2009). Much of the 6 miles of proposed transmission line that would cross the City of Kuna parallels an existing road, Barker Road.

The ECS study contends that this route (which is part of the Preferred Route) would affect long-term growth potential in Kuna and Melba by altering the comprehensive planning process for Kuna that was ongoing when ECS prepared its study, “resulting in:

- Requiring the possible relocation of essential public services such as fire and police stations;
- Altering infrastructure such as roads and their placement;
- Rerouting the City’s traffic circulation;

- Impairing utility services such as sewer and water by requiring the City's wastewater, water and stormwater management plans to be modified;
- Affecting the desirability and therefore the value of residential property; and
- Degrading view-sheds in Kuna and Melba including but not limited to the Kuna Butte and the McElroy Butte, Powers Butte and Hat Butte near Melba as well as the views in the Snake River canyon" (ECS 2009: 4).

Although not stated, it appears that the first four points pertain specifically to development in the recently annexed part of Kuna, while the last two points are more general and meant to apply to both Kuna and Melba. It is important to note that the impacts identified in the first four bullets apply to public services, infrastructure, and utility services that, for the most part, do not yet exist. Construction of the proposed transmission line through the planned Osprey Ridge development, and along the south boundary of the 600-acre parcel owned by the City of Kuna, could have implications for the location of future infrastructure and public utilities, but would not require that existing facilities be relocated.

Construction of the proposed transmission line along Alternative 8B could affect future development plans in the planned Osprey Ridge development and other areas identified as part of the city impact areas for Kuna and Melba, as could many other factors, including housing market trends and the availability of development capital. The presence of a transmission line corridor could discourage some development in the immediate vicinity, but high-voltage transmission lines coexist with residential and other types of development in cities, suburbs, and rural subdivisions, throughout the United States, with many examples of commercial and residential development abutting the transmission line ROW. Potential impacts to property values and visual impacts are addressed in Section 3.4 – Socioeconomics and Section 3.2 – Visual Resources, respectively.

The ECS study also contends that Alternative 8B would “considerably impair Kuna’s and Melba’s economic development opportunities by diminishing potential revenue from property taxes, building permits, and utility fees” from future planned developments like Osprey Ridge. These concerns are addressed in Section 3.4 – Socioeconomics.

In a separate comment, the City of Kuna expressed concern that construction of the proposed transmission line along Alternative 8B could negatively affect the ability of the Osprey Ridge development to provide the public amenities required by the applicable City of Kuna zoning classification (Planned Unit Development). Kuna believes this could occur if a portion of Osprey Ridge property was “severed” by the proposed transmission line corridor in a way that affected the developers’ ability to benefit from potential economies of scale that would facilitate the provision of public amenities. While this could potentially occur, the concept of “severance damage”, whereby the presence of a transmission line potentially diminishes the utility of a portion of property by severing this area from the remaining property, is more generally applicable to properties smaller than large scale planned developments like Osprey Ridge (see Section 3.4 – Socioeconomics).

Alternative 8C would cross the Mayfield Springs planned community and Regina Heights. BLM has identified the need for the transmission line to be realigned in the

vicinity of the planned Mayfield Springs community to substantially reduce impact to the planned development if Alternative 8C is selected.

Alternative 8D would accommodate the IDANG concerns that the “Alpha” Maneuver Sector, OCTC be avoided. This 8.1-mile alternative begins at the east boundary of the Alpha Maneuver Sector. At this point, the transmission line would be located in the existing Summer Lake to Midpoint 500-kV ROW or on new structures if the existing ones are not adequate to support the proposed conductor. The existing circuits would be relocated to a parallel 4.7-mile-long segment offset 1,500 feet to the north to maintain the reliability separation distance. This alternative would avoid the Alpha Maneuver Sector but would still be within the SRBOP. Figure 3.17-9 shows the location of Alternative 8D, the Proposed Route, and the training area. While the realignment proposed as Alternative 8D appears feasible, it would cause more construction disturbance than the Proposed Route.

Alternative 8E would not pass within 1,000 feet of any identified structures; however, see the discussion in the “Special Management Areas” section below regarding special designated areas crossed by Alternative 8E.



Figure 3.17-9. Orchard Combat Training Center – Preferred Route, Proposed Route, and Route Alternatives

The Preferred Route, Proposed Route, and Alternative 8A may cross or come within close proximity to BLM parcels identified as available for public disposal in the Monument RMP. Approximately the first 30 miles of these two routes would need to be reviewed in further detail. In addition, there are multiple groupings of disposal parcels identified in the Jarbidge RMP between Range 5 and 13 East along Segment 8 that would need to be reviewed in more detail to determine any crossings. A Project crossing or close proximity to the transmission line may affect the eligibility and/or value for disposal of these parcels.

Special Management Areas

Federal lands along Segment 8 are regulated in part by the Monument, Jarbidge, SRBOP, and Owyhee RMPs, as well as the Bennett Hills/Timmerman Hills and Kuna MFPs.

The Proposed Route for Segment 8 would cross approximately 29.8 miles of the SRBOP and three SRMAs managed under the SRBOP RMP: the Oregon NHT, Owyhee Front, and Snake River Canyon SRMAs (Table 3.17-25). The Proposed Route would also cross 7 miles of the Black Mountain Habitat MA.

Table 3.17-25. Special Management Areas Crossed by the Preferred Route, Proposed Route, and Route Alternatives for Segment 8

Proposed or Alternative Name ^{1/}	Segment Length (Miles)	Management Area	Miles Crossed
Preferred – Total Length	132.0	SRBOP	2.0
		Deer Flat NWR	0.1
Proposed – Total Length	131.5	Black Mountain HMA	7.0
		Oregon NHT SRMA	0.2
		Owyhee Front SRMA	2.8
		SRBOP	29.8
		Snake River Canyon SRMA	2.1
Proposed – Comparison portion for Alternative 8A	51.9	None	NA
Alternative 8A	53.6	Oregon NHT SRMA	1.5
Proposed – Comparison portion for Alternative 8B	45.3	SRBOP	27.8
		Oregon NHT SRMA	0.2
		Owyhee Front SRMA	2.8
		Snake River Canyon SRMA	2.1
		Black Mountain HMA	7.0
Alternative 8B	45.8	Deer Flat NWR	0.1
		SRBOP	0.7
Proposed – Comparison portion for Alternative 8D	6.9	SRBOP	6.9
Alternative 8D	8.1	SRBOP	7.9
Proposed – Comparison portion for Alternative 8E	7.0	SRBOP	7.0
		Snake River Canyon SRMA	2.1
Alternative 8E	18.3	SRBOP	18.3
		Snake River Canyon SRMA	1.3

1/ Alternative routes are only included in this table if the comparison portion of the Proposed Route or the Route Alternative would cross a special management area.

HMA – Herd Management Area; NA – not applicable; NHT – National Historic Trail; ; NWR – National Wildlife Refuge; SRBOP – Morley Nelson Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area; SRMA – Special Recreation Management Area

The Preferred Route would cross 2.0 miles of the SRBOP within a designated utility corridor. In comparison, the Proposed Route would cross approximately 27.8 miles more than the Preferred Route and would generally be outside of the utility corridor. The Preferred Route would cross 0.1 mile of the Deer Flat NWR (Table 3.17-25).

Alternative 8C does not cross the SRBOP at all. Alternative 8D would cross approximately 1 mile more of the SRBOP than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route, while Alternative 8E would cross about 11.3 miles more (Table 3.17-25).

Alternative 8E may also affect a portion of the SRBOP (Township 2 South, Range 1 East, Section 22) under permit by a rocketry club (Tripoli), which requires over a mile of clear air space to fly their rockets.

The Proposed Route for Segment 8 would cross approximately 0.2 mile of the Oregon NHT SRMA, 2.8 miles of the Owyhee Front SRMA, and 2.1 miles of the Snake River Canyon SRMA (Table 3.17-25). The Preferred Route and Alternative 8B would avoid crossing all three of these SRMAs. Alternative 8A would cross an additional 1.5 miles of the Oregon NHT SRMA. Alternative 8C would not cross the SRBOP and would, therefore, avoid crossing all three SRMAs and the ROW avoidance area. Alternative 8E would cross 0.7 mile less of the River Canyon SRMA (Table 3.17-25).

Section 302(a) of the FLPMA states that public lands are to be managed under the principles of multiple use and sustained yield “except that where a tract of such public land has been dedicated to specific uses according to any other provisions of law it will be managed in accordance with such law.” By crossing the SRBOP outside of a designated utility corridor, the Proposed Route for Segment 8, as well as Alternatives 8B, 8D and 8E, would conflict with the purpose of the SRBOP established in P.L. 103-64 to conserve, protect, and enhance raptor populations and habitats.

Wilderness Characteristics

No areas with wilderness characteristics would be crossed in this segment.

Historic Trails

The Preferred Route and Proposed Route along Segment 8 and route alternatives to this segment would cross a number of NHTs and other trails such as stage and wagon roads that have potential historic significance. These include the Oregon NHT, the Oregon NHT South Alternate, the Northside Alternate Oregon NHT, the North Alternate Oregon NHT, Kelton Road, Dorsey’s Road, and the Boise City-Silver City Road. Potential impacts to historic trails are assessed in Section 3.3 – Cultural Resources.

OHV Use

The Proposed Route would cross 31.9 miles of public land where OHV use is limited. Segment 8 of the Proposed Route would cross approximately 0.8 mile of Halverson Bora (public land) immediately north of the Snake River that is closed to all motorized vehicles. The Proposed Route would cross four trails closed to OHV use and there would be two additional trail crossings due to new road construction. Approximately 75 percent of the Proposed Route would follow existing transmission lines, reducing the effect on unauthorized OHV access.

The Preferred Route would cross 9.7 miles of public land where OHV use is limited and four trails closed to OHV use. There would also be one additional trail crossing due to new road construction.

Alternative 8A would be 1.7 miles longer than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route and would cross one mile of land closed to OHV use and 3.3 miles where OHV use is limited. The comparison portion of the Proposed Route would not cross any areas closed to OHV use or where use is limited. Alternative 8A would cross two trails closed to OHV use, one more than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route. There would be two additional trail crossings due to new road construction, one more than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route. Approximately 78 percent of Alternative 8A and 87 percent of the comparison portion of the Proposed Route would follow existing transmission lines. Overall, there would be a somewhat greater risk of unauthorized OHV under Alternative 8A.

Alternative 8B would be 0.5 mile longer than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route, but would cross 22.2 miles less where OHV use is limited than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route. Alternative 8B would cross one trail closed to OHV use, the same as the comparison portion of the Proposed Route. There would be no additional trail crossings due to new road construction, compared to one additional trail crossing for the comparison portion of the Proposed Route. In addition, about 44 percent of the comparison portion of the Proposed Route would follow existing transmission lines, compared to about 32 percent under Alternative 8B. Overall, Alternative 8B would have a similar or lower risk for adverse effects due to increased OHV access.

Alternative 8C would be 0.1 mile shorter than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route. Neither Alternative 8C nor the comparison portion of the Proposed Route would cross areas closed to OHV use or where OHV use is limited. Alternative 8C would not result in any additional trail crossing, nor would the comparison portion of the Proposed Route. About 75 percent of Alternative 8C would follow existing transmission lines, compared to 34 percent of the comparison portion of the Proposed Route. Overall, there would be little effect on unauthorized OHV use under either alternative.

Alternative 8D would be 1.2 miles longer than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route but would cross 4 miles less area where OHV use is limited than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route. Alternative 8D would not result in any additional trail crossings due to new road construction, nor would the comparison portion of the Proposed Route. Approximately 21 percent of Alternative 8D would follow existing transmission lines, compared to 53 percent of the comparison portion of the Proposed Route. Overall, there would be somewhat greater risk of unauthorized use in areas closed to OHVs under Alternative 8D, and similar potential for disruption of existing uses on trails closed to OHV use.

Alternative 8E would be 11.5 miles longer than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route and would cross 13.2 miles more area where OHV use is limited. Alternative 8E would not result in any additional trail crossings due to new road construction, nor would the comparison portion of the Proposed Route. About 59 percent of Alternative 8E would follow existing transmission lines, compared to 36 percent for the comparison

portion of the Proposed Route. Because of the longer length and the additional crossing of areas where OHV use is limited, Alternative 8E would generally have a greater risk for adverse effects due to increased OHV access than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route.

Segment 9

The preferred routes in Segment 9 are as follows:

Preferred Route	Agency
Proposed Route incorporating Alternative 9E, which was revised to avoid PPH and Murphy (Figure A-11)	BLM
Alternative 9D (Figure A-11)	Owyhee County

Segment 9 would link the Cedar Hill and Hemingway Substations with a 162.2-mile single-circuit 500-kV transmission line that skirts the Jarbidge and Owyhee Military Operating Areas to the north, then follows the WWE corridor just north of the Saylor Creek Air Force Range, passing through Owyhee County before entering the Hemingway Substation. There are eight Route Alternatives proposed. Alternative 9A was the Proponents’ Proposed Route until that route was revised to avoid the Hollister area. Alternative 9B is being considered by the BLM because it follows the WWE corridor and parallels existing utility corridors. Alternative 9C was the Proponents’ Proposed Route until that route was revised to avoid the Castleford area. Alternatives 9D through 9G were proposed by the Owyhee County Task Force to reduce impacts to private land. Alternatives 9F and 9H were proposed to avoid crossing the non-motorized area south of C.J. Strike Reservoir and as an alternate route if Alternative 8E is selected. The BLM has identified a Preferred Route that includes portions of the Proposed Route with Alternative 9E. Figure A-11 in Appendix A shows the location of the Segment 9 routes. A portion of Alternative 9D/F uses the same path as Alternative 8E in Segment 8; therefore, 8E and 9D/F could not both be selected. Alternative 9E has been revised to avoid sage-grouse PPH and to incorporate a recommended route change submitted by Owyhee County that avoids a planned subdivision near Murphy. The Segment 9 Preferred Route is 171.4 miles long, compared to 162.2 miles for the Proposed Route.

Land Ownership

The majority (80 percent) of the Proposed Route for Segment 9, approximately 129.4 miles, would cross BLM-managed lands, with the remainder crossing private (28.3 miles) and state (4.6 miles) lands (Table 3.17-26). Approximately 153.5 miles (89.6 percent) of the Preferred Route would cross BLM-managed lands, with the remainder crossing private (7.8 percent) and state (2.7 percent) lands (Table 3.17-26). Alternative 9A is 0.1 mile shorter than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route and would cross similar totals of miles by land ownership. Alternative 9B would be approximately 3.2 miles longer than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route and would cross 16.7 miles more private land, with a generally commensurate reduction in the acres of BLM-managed lands that would be crossed (Table 3.17-26). Alternative 9C would be the same total length as the comparison portion of the Proposed Route, crossing 7 more miles of private land, reducing the miles of BLM-managed land crossed by a similar amount.

Table 3.17-26. Miles Crossed by Land Ownership – Segment 9

Segment/Alternative	Total	BLM	NFS	Other^{1/}	State	Private
Preferred – Total Length	171.4	153.5	–	–	4.7	13.4
Proposed – Total Length	162.2	129.4	–	–	4.6	28.3
Proposed – Comparison Portion for Alternative 9A	7.8	6.0	–	–	–	1.8
Alternative 9A	7.7	5.5	–	–	–	2.2
Proposed – Comparison Portion for Alternative 9B	49.1	45.6	–	–	1.1	2.4
Alternative 9B	52.3	32.2	–	–	1.0	19.1
Proposed – Comparison Portion for Alternative 9C	14.4	13.3	–	–	1.1	–
Alternative 9C	14.4	7.4	–	–	–	7.0
Proposed – Comparison Portion for Alternatives 9D,F,G,H	57.2	37.8	–	–	1.1	18.2
Alternative 9D	60.1	52.6	–	0.1	4.1	3.3
Alternative 9F	63.3	47.0	–	0.1	4.1	12.1
Alternative 9G	57.8	49.3	–	1.3	4.1	3.0
Alternative 9H	61.0	43.7	–	1.3	4.1	11.9
Proposed – Comparison Portion for Alternative 9E (revised)	61.4	42.0	–	–	1.1	18.2
Alternative 9E (revised)	70.6	66.1	–	–	1.2	3.3

Miles are rounded to tenths of a mile; columns/rows may therefore not sum exactly.

1/ The “Other” miles crossed by some of the Route Alternatives are Bureau of Reclamation lands.

Alternatives 9D and 9E (which is part of the Preferred Route) would be approximately 2.9 miles and 9.2 miles longer than the comparison portions of the Proposed Route and would cross 14.9 and 16.9 fewer miles of private land, respectively. Both alternatives are located almost entirely on BLM-managed lands, and Alternative 9D would cross 54.3 miles of the SRBOP.

Alternatives 9F and 9H would be approximately 6.1 miles and 3.8 miles longer, respectively, than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route. Both alternatives would cross more miles of BLM-managed land and fewer miles of private land than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route.

Alternative 9G would be approximately 0.6 miles longer than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route. Like Alternatives 9F and 9H, Alternative 9G would cross more miles of BLM-managed land and fewer miles of private land than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route.

Designated Corridors and Existing ROW

The 162.2-mile Proposed Route would follow existing transmission line corridors for 17.6 miles (10.9 percent) of its length. The route would be within the WWE corridor for 67.8 miles (41.8 percent) of its total length (53.9 miles [33.2 percent] on federal land; 13.9 miles [8.6 percent] on other land ownerships) and adjacent to the WWE corridor for 10.6 miles (6.5 percent) (Table 2.4-3).

The 171.4-mile Preferred Route would also follow existing transmission line corridors for 17.6 miles (10.3 percent) of its length. The route would be within the WWE corridor for 34 miles (19.8 percent) (27.9 miles [16.3 percent] on federal land; 6.1 miles [3.5

percent] on other land ownerships), and adjacent to the WWE corridor for 6 miles (3.5 percent) (Table 2.4-3).

Approximately 2.2 miles (28.6 percent) of Alternative 9A would be adjacent to an existing transmission corridor and about 2.2 miles (28.6 percent) would be adjacent to the WWE corridor.

Alternative 9B would follow an existing 138-kV transmission line or run adjacent to an existing transmission corridor for 22.4 miles (42.8 percent of its total length). The route would be within the WWE corridor for 43.9 miles (83.9 percent) of its 52.3 mile length (28.2 miles [53.9 percent] on federal lands; 15.7 miles [30 percent] on other land ownerships) and adjacent to the WWE corridor for 2.8 miles (5.4 percent).

Alternative 9C would follow an existing 138-kV transmission line for 9.5 miles. This alternative is not located within the WWE corridor, but approximately 3.1 miles (21.5 percent) would be adjacent to the WWE corridor.

Alternative 9D would follow an existing 138-kV transmission line for 31.3 miles (52.1 percent) of its 14.4 mile total. The route would be within the WWE corridor for 0.4 mile (0.7 percent) and adjacent to the WWE corridor for 1.1 miles (1.8 percent).

Alternative 9E would be within the WWE corridor for 7.4 miles (10.5 percent) of its 70.6-mile length (6.8 miles [9.6 percent] on federal land; 0.6 mile [0.9 percent] on other land ownerships) and adjacent to the WWE corridor for 2.7 miles (3.8 percent) of its total length.

Alternative 9F would follow an existing transmission line for 29 miles (45.8 percent) of its 63.3 mile length. This alternative would be within the WWE corridor for 11.4 miles (18 percent) (8.4 miles [13.3 percent] on federal land; 3 miles [4.7 percent] on other land ownerships) and adjacent to the WWE corridor for 3.6 miles (5.7 percent).

Alternative 9G would follow an existing transmission line for 25.9 miles (44.8 percent) of its 57.8 mile total. This alternative would be within the WWE corridor for 0.4 mile, and adjacent to the WWE corridor for 1.0 mile.

Alternative 9H would follow an existing transmission line for 23.6 miles (38.7 percent). This alternative would be within the WWE corridor for 11.4 miles (18.7 percent) (8.4 miles [13.8 percent] on federal land; 3 miles [4.9 percent] on other land ownerships) and adjacent to the WWE corridor for 3.5 miles (5.7 percent).

Federal Land Use Plan Amendments

Segment 9 would cross BLM-managed lands that fall within the jurisdiction of the Cassia, Jarbidge, SRBOP, and Owyhee RMPs, and the Twin Falls and Bruneau MFPs (Table 3.17-2). Plan amendments for the Preferred Route, Proposed Route, and Route Alternatives are identified in Tables 2.2-1 and 2.2-2.

No plan amendments to the Cassia and Owyhee RMPs, directly related to land use or recreation or otherwise, are proposed for Segment 9.

Bruneau MFP

No amendments to the Bruneau MFP are proposed for the Preferred Route. The Proposed Route as currently designed is not in conformance with the Bruneau MFP in regards to VRM. The MFP designation of VRM Class II areas includes a parcel that would be crossed by the Proposed Route. Two plan amendments would convert the entire VRM Class II parcel crossed by the Proposed Route (located near Castle Creek) to VRM Class III (see Appendix F-1).

Twin Falls MFP

The Project as currently designed does not conform to the Twin Falls MFP. The Twin Falls MFP states the following:

L-4.1 Allow future major power transmission lines (line of at least 46-138RV which originate and terminate outside of the MFP area) to be constructed within the recommended corridors. Also allow construction of transmission lines between the corridors. Do not permit power lines to the west or the east of the two corridors. Exempt service lines from restriction.

The Preferred Route and Proposed Route along Segment 9 and Alternative 9A would cross through lands managed by the Twin Falls MFP, but would not be constructed in areas identified by the MFP as “recommended corridors.” Therefore, these routes do not conform to the Twin Falls MFP, and an amendment is proposed to allow the Project ROW outside of existing corridors. The proposed amendment would allow the Project to be constructed outside of the Twin Falls MFP’s “recommended corridors” along the Preferred Route for Segment 9. A similar amendment would be needed if Alternative 9A is selected (see Appendix F-1). The proposed amendment would not designate the ROW as a “recommended corridor”.

The Proposed Route along Segment 9 would require an amendment to the Twin Falls VRM classification for the Rock Creek area before this route could be approved. Seventy acres of VRM Class II (the Rock Creek area, north of the section line) would be changed to VRM Class III (see Appendix F).

Segment 9 of the Preferred and Proposed Routes, as currently designed, would cross the Salmon Falls Creek ACEC along a WSR-eligible portion of Salmon Falls Creek. The FO has stated that this portion of Salmon Falls Creek is WSR eligible as a Recreational River and that a transmission line crossing would not affect the river’s suitability as a Recreational River. WSR eligibility is discussed at the end of the Segment 9 amendment discussion. An amendment is proposed to allow the Project to cross VRM Class II areas associated with the Salmon Falls Creek crossing as well as allowing the Project to cross the Salmon Falls Creek ACEC. Transmission structures would be sited as far from the rim as possible to limit visual intrusion.

SRBOP RMP

The Project as currently designed along Segment 9 would not conform to multiple stipulations found in the SRBOP RMP. These stipulations are as follows:

Restrict major utility developments to the two utility corridors identified. (see Lands Map 3 in the SRBOP RMP)

The Snake River SRMA consists of 22,300 acres in the Snake River Canyon downstream from Grandview, Idaho that is managed for the protection of cultural and scenic values. (2.14 Recreation 2-20).

The C.J. Strike SRMA consists of 20,000 acres surrounding C.J. Strike Reservoir along the Snake River. The purpose of the SRMA is to provide enhanced recreation management associated with the reservoir, and protection of the Oregon Trail adjacent to the reservoir (2.14 Recreation 2-20).

Manage the areas along the Oregon Trail and the Snake River Canyon as VRM Class II, the OTA as Class IV and remaining areas as Class III. [Visual Resource Management (VRM) Map] This will provide reasonable protection of the Oregon Trail and flexibility in managing the remainder of the NCA.

Manage the areas along the Oregon Trail and the Snake River Canyon as VRM Class II, the OTA as Class IV and remaining areas as Class III. [Visual Resource Management (VRM Map A-147)]

Protect the Oregon Trail as a Visual Resource Management (VRM) Class II area. [Visual Resource Management (VRM Map)]

Close the following areas to motorized vehicles:

- *Cove – 1,600 acres*

The Preferred Route and Proposed Route, as well as Alternatives 9D, 9E, 9F, 9G, and 9H, would cross through areas managed under the SRBOP RMP and would be constructed in areas outside of the two utility corridors identified within this RMP. Therefore, these alternatives would not conform to the SRBOP RMP stipulation regarding utility corridors. An amendment is proposed for the Preferred Route that would allow the Project to be constructed outside of the two utility corridors defined in the SRBOP RMP along Segment 9. This amendment would also be needed for Alternatives 9D, 9F, 9G, and 9H if these routes are selected (see Appendices F-1 and G-1).

Alternatives 9D and 9G would cross through the Snake River and the C.J. Strike SRMAs managed under the SRBOP RMP. A transmission line does not conform to the SRMA designation for these areas; therefore, an amendment that would reduce the acreage of the designated areas (i.e., remove the area crossed by the Project from the SRMA designation) would be required to construct the line along Alternatives 9D and 9G (see Appendices F and G). The amendment would remove 3,100 acres from the C.J. Strike SRMA. This would impact the utility of these SRMAs due to the visual disturbance of a transmission line near these areas, as well as reducing their overall size.

Alternatives 9D, 9F, 9G, and 9H would also require that the SRBOP RMP be amended to allow the reclassification of approximately 3,100 acres of VRM Class II to VRM Class III in the vicinity of the Oregon NHT and the Snake River Canyon.

In addition, Alternatives 9D and 9G would cross along the southeastern boundary of the Cove Non-Motorized Area. Roads would be constructed as part of these alternatives,

which means they would not conform to the SRBOP RMP stipulation for this area, and the Project would either need to be altered so that it conforms to the SRBOP RMP or the RMP would need to be amended for this route to be approved. An amendment would be needed to allow the Project to be constructed within this non-motorized area; however, amending the plan would not meet the intent of the enabling legislation of the SRBOP. The Preferred Route and Proposed Route and Alternatives 9F and 9H would avoid this area.

Alternatives 9D, 9F, 9G, and 9H would cross through a ROW avoidance area designated by the SRBOP RMP to protect the visual corridor along the Oregon NHT and the resources along the Snake River canyon. Therefore, these routes would not conform to the SRBOP RMP regarding this ROW avoidance area, and the Project would either need to be altered so that it conforms to the SRBOP, or the RMP would need to be amended for this route to be approved. The proposed amendment would allow these alternatives to be constructed within this ROW avoidance area.

Alternatives 9D, 9F, 9G, and 9H would cross the Snake River SRMA and would require an amendment to reduce the SRMA size to accommodate the Project, as a high-voltage transmission line would not meet the objectives for which the SRMA was established.

Mitigation Associated with the Preferred Route in the SRBOP

The BLM's Preferred Route for Segment 9 crosses through approximately 11 miles of the SRBOP, approximately 9 miles of which would be within or adjacent to an approved utility corridor. The SRBOP was established in 1993 by P.L. 103-64, which states that: "[t]he...conservation area is established...to provide for the conservation, protection, and enhancement of raptor populations and habitats and the natural and environmental resources and values associated therewith, and of the scientific, cultural, and educational resources and values of the public lands in the conservation area." As a result, any action in the SRBOP must enhance the resources for which the SRBOP was designated.

The SRBOP's RMP and accompanying EIS identifies restoration and outreach opportunities that could help mitigate for project related impacts in the SRBOP, as well as ensure enhancement of the resources for which the SRBOP was designated. This includes 1) restoration of shrub and grasslands, 2) inventorying cultural resources, 3) hiring an additional law enforcement ranger to deal with the increased unauthorized cross-country travel access that could be created by energy development projects, and 4) enhancing scientific and educational efforts in the SRBOP.

The BLM's Preferred Route would result in approximately 258 acres of impact within the SRBOP (assuming staging areas are located outside the SRBOP). Potential mitigation ratios that could be applied to this impact value in order to calculate the total acreage of required mitigation (specifically applicable to the acreage of shrub and grasslands that would need to be restored, as well as acres of cultural resource areas to be inventoried) would need to be at least a 2:1 ratio in order to fulfill the "enhancement" requirement in P.L. 103-64; however, larger ratios may be considered by the BLM. The BLM is currently considering mitigation ratios ranging from 2:1 to 5:1 based on mitigation required/offered by other energy development projects (BLM 2006c, 2010e).

Additionally, the timeline for employment of an additional law enforcement ranger could range from 10 years (the shortest time frame currently considered by the BLM for this mitigation option) to 50 years (i.e., the permitted life of the project). The timeline for the funding of scientific and educational efforts in the SRBOP could range from 2 years to 5 years.

Jarbidge RMP

The Preferred and Proposed Routes along Segment 9 analyzed in the Draft EIS would pass through the Salmon Falls Creek ACEC below Lilly Grade Road. As a result, it does not conform to the Jarbidge RMP, due to the restriction of “No developments in the Salmon Falls Creek ACEC,” the establishment of the ACEC as a utility avoidance/restriction area, and the current VRM Class I designation. Therefore, for the Preferred Route along Segment 9 (which incorporates the Proposed Route in this area) to be approved, amendments are proposed to allow construction of the Project in the Salmon Falls Creek ACEC and cross VRM Class II lands.

In addition, the crossing of Salmon Falls Creek would occur within a WSR-eligible portion of the river. WSR eligibility requires management that prevents activities that could result in the river being declared WSR-unsuitable. A powerline crossing at the original proposed location would not conform to WSR management and therefore no amendment was proposed in the Draft EIS (see Appendix F-1). The Proposed Route was revised to cross the river below the Wild portion of the Eligible WSR as well as downstream of the Wilderness Study Area. The Proposed Route for Segment 9 would now cross a Recreation portion of the river, adjacent to an existing single-phase low voltage distribution line, just north of the Lilly Grade Road. An amendment is proposed to allow the line to cross the ACEC.

The Preferred and Proposed Routes along Segment 9 would also cross VRM Class II area in the Saylor Creek area. An amendment would be needed to reclassify the area within the WWE corridor to VRM Class II, in order to conform to the Jarbidge RMP.

Plan Amendment Summary

Approval of plan amendments that would result in changes to VRM classes to more developed classifications have the potential to affect the quality of the experience for recreationalists using the affected areas and would, in some cases, afford a less “semi-primitive” experience to users. Visual impacts to the potentially affected areas as well as the visual amendments, as discussed above, are evaluated in more detail within Section 3.2 – Visual Resources and Appendix G.

Salmon Falls Creek Wild and Scenic River Eligibility

The Proponents’ Proposed Route was developed in cooperation with Twin Falls County to cross Salmon Falls Creek at Lilly Grade Road. The reason for the crossing is to keep the Project on public lands and off of private agriculture lands. The revised route crossing near the Lilly Grade Road is north of the Salmon Falls Creek WSA and would not affect the use. However, the route would cross the Salmon Falls Creek ACEC and a Recreation portion of an eligible WSR segment (as shown in Figure 3.17-10). Note that the Preferred Route also crosses Salmon Falls Creek at this location (Figure 3.17-10).

The segment of Salmon Falls Creek from Lilly Grade to Balanced Rock is eligible as a WSR because it is free-flowing and possesses scenic, recreational, and geological outstandingly remarkable values (ORVs); this segment's tentative classification is Recreation. BLM Manual 8351, Wild and Scenic Rivers, states at 0.32 C:

When a river segment is determined eligible and given a tentative classification (wild, scenic, and/or recreational), its identified ORVs must be afforded adequate protection, subject to valid existing rights, and until the eligibility determination is superseded, management activities and uses shall not be allowed to adversely affect either eligibility or the tentative classification... Each segment shall be managed to protect identified ORVs (subject to valid existing rights) and, to the extent practicable such values shall be enhanced.

Although scenery is one of the river's ORVs, the crossing point currently includes an existing single-phase low voltage distribution line and a paved road and bridge—the Lilly Grade Road. The towers would be located outside the WSR corridor (generally 0.25-mile wide). Only the transmission lines would cross the WSR eligible segment.

Section 2(b) of the WSR Act specifies the following:

Recreational River Areas: Recreational river areas are those rivers or sections of rivers that are readily accessible by road or railroad, that may have some development along the shorelines, and that may have undergone some impoundment or diversion in the past.

A transmission line crossing this portion of this eligible WSR segment would not affect the river's suitability as a Recreation River.

Specific Land Uses and Recreational Resources

Land Use

Land use within the Analysis Area for the Proposed Route is summarized by segment in Table 3.17-4. Land uses crossed by the Preferred Route, Proposed Route, and Route Alternatives for Segment 9 are identified in Table 3.17-27. Viewed in terms of miles crossed, the majority of the Proposed Route for Segment 9 would cross rangeland (90

Table 3.17-27. Miles Crossed by Land Use – Segment 9

Segment/ Alternative	Total	Rangeland	Agriculture	Forest	Water and Wetlands	ROW	Developed	Other
Preferred – Total Length	171.4	166.3	3.8	–	0.3	1.2	0.2	0.5
Proposed – Total Length	162.2	145.6	13.5	–	0.7	1.3	0.2	1.0
Proposed – Comparison Portion for Alternative 9A	7.8	7.6	–	–	0.1	0.1	t ¹⁷	–
Alternative 9A	7.7	7.1	0.1	–	t ¹⁷	0.3	0.1	0.1
Proposed – Comparison Portion for Alternative 9B	49.1	48.1	t ¹⁷	–	0.1	0.6	–	0.3
Alternative 9B	52.3	42.7	9.3	–	0.1	0.1	0.2	–
Proposed – Comparison Portion for Alternative 9C	14.4	13.8	–	–	t ¹⁷	0.3	–	0.3

Table 3.17-27. Miles Crossed by Land Use – Segment 9 (continued)

Segment/ Alternative	Total	Rangeland	Agriculture	Forest	Water and Wetlands	ROW	Developed	Other
Alternative 9C	14.4	13.9	0.4	–	t ^{1/}	t ^{1/}	t ^{1/}	t ^{1/}
Proposed – Comparison Portion for Alternatives 9D, 9E, 9F, 9G, 9H	57.2	45.7	10.0	–	0.6	0.4	t ^{1/}	0.5
Alternative 9D	60.1	57.4	1.5	–	0.3	0.9	–	t ^{1/}
Alternative 9F	63.3	55.4	6.4	–	0.6	0.8	t ^{1/}	0.2
Alternative 9G	57.8	54.9	1.5	–	0.5	0.9	–	t ^{1/}
Alternative 9H	61.0	52.9	6.4	–	0.7	0.8	t ^{1/}	0.2
Proposed – Comparison Portion for Alternative 9E (revised)	61.4	49.9	10.0		0.6	0.4	t ^{1/}	0.5
Alternative 9E (revised)	70.6	69.7	0.3	–	0.2	0.3	–	t ^{1/}

Miles are rounded to tenths of a mile; columns/rows may therefore not sum exactly. ROW – right-of-way
1/ "t" indicates values <0.1.

percent), with much of the remainder of the route crossing cropland (8 percent). The majority of the Preferred Route for Segment 9 would cross rangeland (166.3 miles or 97 percent of the total), with much of the remainder of the route crossing cropland (2.2 percent) (Table 3.17-27). Alternatives 9A through 9E would range from less than 9.2 miles shorter to approximately 6.1 miles longer than their respective comparison portions of the Proposed Route (Table 3.17-27). Alternatives 9A and 9C are very similar in total length to their respective comparison portion of the Proposed Route and cross very similar miles of different land uses.

Alternative 9B, which would follow the WWE corridor and parallel existing utility corridors, would be approximately 52.3 miles long, about 3.2 miles longer than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route. This alternative would cross 9.3 more miles of cropland and 5.4 miles less of rangeland.

Alternatives 9D and 9E (revised), both proposed by the Owyhee County Task Force, are approximately 60.1 miles and 70.6 miles long, respectively, about 2.9 miles and 9.2 miles longer than their respective comparison portions of the Proposed Route. The majority of Alternative 9D (93 percent; 56 miles) would cross the SRBOP. Viewed in terms of land use cover, this alternative would cross 8.5 miles less of cropland and 11.7 more miles of rangeland. Alternative 9E (revised), which would cross 6.3 miles of the SRBOP, would cross 9.7 miles less of cropland and 19.8 more miles of rangeland.

Alternatives 9F and 9H are both longer than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route (about 6.1 miles and 3.8 miles longer, respectively). Alternative 9G is 0.6 mile longer than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route. All three of these alternatives predominantly cross rangelands, with a small component of agricultural lands, wetlands, and other.

The Proposed Route for Segment 9 would pass within 1,000 feet of 19 residences; 8 of these residences are located within 300 feet of the proposed ROW centerline (Table 3.17-28). Nine of the houses within 1,000 feet are clustered near where the Proposed Route approaches the proposed Hemingway Substation.

Table 3.17-28. Number of Residences within 1,000 feet and 300 feet – Segment 9

Preferred / Proposed Route / Alternative	Within 1,000 Feet			Within 300 Feet		
	Preferred / Proposed Route / Alternative	Comparison Portion of the Proposed Route	Net Difference	Preferred / Proposed Route / Alternative	Comparison Portion of the Proposed Route	Net Difference
Preferred Route	10	NA	NA	2	NA	NA
Proposed Route	19	NA	NA	8	NA	NA
9A	2	–	2	–	–	–
9B	7	–	7	1	–	1
9C	5	–	5	1	–	1
9D	–	9	-9	–	6	-6
9F	6	9	-3	2	6	-4
9G	–	9	-9	–	6	-6
9H	6	9	-3	2	6	-4
9E (revised)	–	9	-9	–	6	-6

NA – not applicable

The Preferred Route for Segment 9 would pass within 1,000 feet of 10 residences; 2 of these residences are located within 300 feet of the proposed ROW centerline (Table 3.17-28).

Alternative 9A would pass within 1,000 feet of 2 residences, versus none for the comparison portion of the Proposed Route.

Alternatives 9B and 9C would pass within 1,000 feet of 7 and 5 more residences than the Proposed Route, respectively; in both cases 1 of these residences would be located within 300 feet of the proposed ROW centerline.

Alternatives 9D, 9E (revised), and 9G would all pass within 1,000 feet of no residences, nine fewer than the Proposed Route; six of the residences they avoid are within 300 feet of the proposed ROW centerline for the Proposed Route.

Alternatives 9F and 9H would both pass within 1,000 feet of three fewer residences than the Proposed Route, and four fewer residences within 300 feet.

Commercial, industrial, and institutional land uses crossed or within 1,000 feet of the Proposed Route and Route Alternatives are itemized by milepost in Table D.17-1 in Appendix D and summarized below.

The Proposed Route for Segment 9 would cross 1 mile of a proposed wind farm and 0.5 mile of an active mining claim. The Proposed Route would also pass within 1,000 feet of two gravel pits, a clay pit, the Indian Springs Estate, the Murphy Airport, two animal pens, a water tank, a cemetery, and a center-pivot. The Preferred Route would pass within 1,000 feet of two gravel pits, an animal pen, and a water tank, as well as two dams and four towers.

From MPs 48 to 54, the Preferred and Proposed Routes would be just inside the east boundary of the general Jarbidge Military Operating Area. Within the general Military Operating Area, the height of transmission structures normally cannot extend more than 100 feet above ground level. Consultation between Twin Falls County and the U.S. Air Force has determined that this height restriction would not apply and this minor encroachment would be acceptable (Kramer 2009).

The Preferred and Proposed Routes would also pass through the Saylor Creek Air Force Range restricted area and to the south of Bruneau Dunes State Park in the vicinity of MPs 90 to 95. Consultation between representatives of the BLM, U.S. Air Force, Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation, and the Proponents has determined that the location of the Proposed Route within the restricted military operations area and just to the south of Bruneau Dunes State Park is acceptable.

Alternative 9A would pass within 1,000 feet of a gravel pit. Alternative 9B would cross approximately 0.1 mile of an active mining claim and about 0.7 mile of a wind energy facility, and pass within 1,000 feet of a CAFO, six center-pivots, a proposed wind farm boundary, miscellaneous outbuildings (e.g., warehouses and animal pens)). Alternative 9B would cross an airstrip at Grindstone Airport from MPs 46.9 to 49.3. If Alternative 9B were selected, the Proponents would attempt to microsite the route to avoid the airstrip. Alternative 9C would cross 0.1 mile of the same active mining claim as Alternative 9B and pass within 1,000 feet of a CAFO.

Alternative 9D would follow the southwest boundary of the IDANG OCTC and pass within 1,000 feet of two structures and Locust Park, which is owned and maintained by Idaho Power.

Alternative 9E (revised) would pass within 1,000 feet of two dams and four towers.

Alternatives 9F and 9H would cross about 4.6 miles of the IDANG OCTC and would pass within 1,000 feet of three structures, one center-pivot, a cemetery, Beeroth Canal, and Bieroth Canal.

Alternative 9G would cross about 4.6 miles of the IDANG OCTC and would pass within 1,000 feet of Locust Park and one structure.

There are multiple groupings of parcels available for public disposal identified in the Jarbidge RMP between Range 5 and 13 East along Segment 9 that would need to be reviewed in more detail to determine any crossings. A Project crossing or close proximity to the transmission line may affect the eligibility and/or value for disposal of these parcels.

Special Management Areas

Federal lands along Segment 9 are regulated in part by the Cassia, Jarbidge, SRBOP, and Owyhee RMPs, as well as the Twin Falls and Bruneau MFPs.

The Proposed Route would cross approximately 2.7 miles of the Salmon Falls Creek ACEC. This is discussed in more detail above in the Federal Land Use Amendments section. The Route Alternatives would not cross this area (Table 3.17-29).

The Proposed Route would cross approximately 13.6 miles of the SRBOP and would also cross the Owyhee Front SRMA (4.7 miles), the Black Mountain HMA (9.5 miles), and the Saylor Creek HMA (12.9 miles) (Table 3.17-29). The Preferred Route would also cross these SMAs (see Table 3.17-29).

Table 3.17-29. Special Management Areas Crossed by the Preferred Route, Proposed Route, and Route Alternatives for Segment 9

Proposed or Alternative Name^{1/}	Segment Length (Miles)	Management Area	Miles Crossed
Preferred – Total Length	171.4	Salmon Falls Creek ACEC	2.7
		SRBOP	13.8
		Owyhee Front SRMA	3.8
		Black Mountain HMA	9.4
		Saylor Creek HMA	12.9
Proposed – Total Length	162.2	Salmon Falls Creek ACEC	2.7
		SRBOP	13.6
		Owyhee Front SRMA	4.7
		Black Mountain HMA	9.5
		Saylor Creek HMA	12.9
Proposed – Comparison portion for Alternative 9B	49.1	Salmon Falls Creek ACEC	2.7
		Saylor Creek HMA	12.9
Alternative 9B	52.3	Saylor Creek HMA	12.9
Proposed – Comparison portion for Alternative 9C	14.4	Salmon Falls Creek ACEC	2.7
Proposed – Comparison portion for Alternatives 9D,F,G,H	57.2	SRBOP	6.1
		Owyhee Front SRMA	4.7
		Black Mountain HMA	1.1
Alternative 9D	60.1	SRBOP	56.0
		Oregon NHT SRMA	0.8
		Owyhee Front SRMA	1.2
		Snake River Canyon SRMA	1.3
		C.J. Strike Reservoir SRMA	3.4
		C.J. Strike SRMA	6.9
		Black Mountain HMA	1.3
Alternative 9F	62.9	SRBOP	43.1
		Black Mountain HMA	1.3
		Oregon Trail SRMA	0.2
		Owyhee Front SRMA	1.2
		Snake River Canyon SRMA	1.3
Alternative 9G	56.4	SRBOP	53.3
		Black Mountain HMA	1.2
		Oregon Trail SRMA	0.8
		Owyhee Front SRMA	1.1
		Snake River Canyon SRMA	2.6
		C.J. Strike Reservoir SRMA	3.4
		C.J. Strike SRMA	6.9
Alternative 9H	61.0	SRBOP	40.3
		Black Mountain HMA	1.2
		Oregon Trail SRMA	0.2
		Owyhee Front SRMA	1.1
		Snake River Canyon SRMA	2.6
Proposed – Comparison portion for Alternative 9E (revised)	61.4	SRBOP	6.1
		Black Mountain HMA	5.3
		Owyhee Front SRMA	4.7
Alternative 9E (revised)	70.6	SRBOP	6.3
		Black Mountain HMA	5.2
		Owyhee Front SRMA	3.8

1/ Route Alternatives are only included in this table if the comparison portion of the Proposed Route or the Route Alternative would cross a special management area.

ACEC – Area of Critical Environmental Concern; HMA – Herd Management Area; NA – not applicable; NHT – National Historic Trail; NWR – National Wildlife Refuge; SRMA –Special Recreation Management Area; SRBOP – Morley Nelson Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area

Alternatives 9A and 9C would not cross any SMAs. Alternative 9B would cross approximately 6.8 fewer miles of the Saylor Creek HMA than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route.

Alternative 9D would cross approximately 56 miles of the SRBOP, about 50 miles more than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route (Table 3.17-29). This alternative would cross approximately 3.5 fewer miles of the Owyhee Front SRMA and 0.2 more mile of the Black Mountain HMA than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route. It would also cross a number of other SMAs that would not be crossed by the Proposed Route or the other alternatives (Table 3.17-29). These areas include the C.J. Strike Reservoir SRMA, the Snake River Canyon SRMA, the Oregon NHT SRMA, a National Register Historic District, and the SRBOP ROW avoidance area. Construction of a transmission line through some these areas (through selection of this alternative or any other alternative that would cross these areas) would require amendments to the SRBOP RMP as discussed above in the Federal Land Use Plan Amendments section.

Alternative 9E would cross approximately 3.5 fewer miles of the SRBOP than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route, 4.5 fewer miles of the Owyhee Front SRMA, and approximately 0.1 mile more of the Black Mountain HMA (Table 3.17-29).

Alternative 9F would cross approximately 43.1 miles of the SRBOP, about 37 miles more than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route. Alternative 9G would cross approximately 53.3 miles of the SRBOP, about 47 miles more than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route. Alternative 9H would cross approximately 40.3 miles of the SRBOP, about 34 miles more than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route. Alternatives 9F, 9G, and 9H would cross similar amounts of the Owyhee Front SRMA, Black Mountain HMA, Snake River Canyon SRMA, the Oregon NHT SRMA, a National Register Historic District, and the SRBOP ROW avoidance area (Table 3.17-29). Alternative 9G would also cross the C.J. Strike SRMA, which would not be crossed by Alternatives 9F and 9H. With the exception of the SRBOP, these alternatives would cross fewer miles of the SMAs that are also crossed by the comparison portion of the Proposed Route (Owyhee Front SRMA and Black Mountain HMA) and unlike the Proposed Route would not cross the Salmon Falls Creek ACEC (Table 3.17-29).

Where the transmission line crosses the SRBOP, participants in internationally attended horse endurance rides held annually in the area for the past 10 years may be affected if potential route changes are required to avoid the transmission line. In addition, potential transmission line-related impacts to visual resources could affect the recreation experience for these recreationists.

Wilderness Characteristics

No areas with wilderness characteristics would be crossed in this segment.

Historic Trails

The Preferred Route and Proposed Route along Segment 9 and route alternatives to this segment would cross several trails such as stage and wagon roads that have potential historic significance (see Table 3.3-17 in Section 3.3 – Cultural Resources). These include the Toana Freight Wagon Road and Boise City-Silver City Road. Several

Route Alternatives would cross the Oregon NHT, and Alternative 9D would also cross the Oregon NHT South Alternate several times. Potential impacts to historic trails are assessed in Section 3.3 – Cultural Resources.

OHV Use

The Proposed Route would cross 3.1 miles of public land closed to OHV use and 36.9 miles where OHV use is limited, resulting in increased opportunities for unauthorized OHV access, and potential for disruption of existing uses. The Proposed Route would cross one trail closed to OHV use. New road construction associated with the Proposed Route would result in one additional trail crossing. The Proponents would post signs identifying the area as closed to OHV use and implement blocking measures where practical.

The Preferred Route would cross 3.1 miles of public land closed to OHV use and 40.8 miles where OHV use is limited. The Preferred Route would cross one trail closed to OHV use, and new road construction would result in one additional trail crossing.

Alternative 9A would be 0.1 mile shorter than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route, but it would cross 0.6 more mile of land where OHV use is limited. Neither Alternative 9A nor the comparison portion of the Proposed Route would result in any additional trail crossings. Overall, there would be slightly more opportunity for unauthorized use in areas closed to OHVs under Alternative 9A.

Alternative 9B would be 3.2 miles longer than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route and would cross 0.5 mile more land closed to OHV use and 1.6 miles more land where OHV use is limited compared to the comparison portion of the Proposed Route. Alternative 9B would cross one more trail closed to OHV use than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route, and two additional trails due to new road construction, one more than the Proposed Route. Overall, because all of Alternative 9B would follow existing transmission lines, the risk of increased unauthorized OHV use would be similarly low for both alternatives.

Alternative 9C would be the same length as the comparison portion of the Proposed Route, but would cross 0.5 mile more land closed to OHV use than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route. Neither Alternative 9C nor the comparison portion of the Proposed Route would result in any additional trail crossings. About 64 percent of Alternative 9C would follow existing transmission lines, compared to 6 percent for the comparison portion of the Proposed Route; therefore, there would be little potential for increased unauthorized OHV use compared to the Proposed Route.

Alternative 9D would be 3 miles longer than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route and would cross 25.8 miles more area where OHV use is limited compared to comparison portion of the Proposed Route. Alternative 9D would cross one trail closed to OHV use and new road construction associated with this alternative would result in an additional two crossings. This would be a total of three crossings more than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route. Approximately 52 percent of Alternative 9D would follow existing transmission lines, compared to 85 percent for the comparison portion of the Proposed Route. Overall, there would be a greater potential for increased unauthorized OHV use compared to the comparison portion of the Proposed Route.

Alternative 9E, which is part of the Preferred Route, would be 9.2 miles longer than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route and would cross 3.9 miles more area where OHV use is limited than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route. Neither Alternative 9E nor the comparison portion of the Proposed Route would cross trails closed to OHV use, nor would new road construction result in additional trail crossings. Approximately 14 percent of Alternative 9E would follow existing transmission lines, compared to 79 percent for the comparison portion of the Proposed Route. Overall, there would be somewhat greater opportunity for unauthorized use in areas limited to OHVs under Alternative 9E than under the comparison portion of the Proposed Route.

Alternative 9F would be 6.2 miles longer than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route and would cross 18.0 miles more area where OHV use is limited than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route. Approximately 67 percent of Alternative 9F would follow existing transmission lines, compared to 85 percent for the comparison portion of the Proposed Route. Alternative 9F would cross one more trail than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route and two additional trails due to new road construction. Overall, there would be a greater opportunity for unauthorized use in areas closed to OHVs under Alternative 9F than under the comparison portion of the Proposed Route, as well as a greater potential disruption of existing uses.

Alternative 9G would be about 0.6 mile longer than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route, and it would cross 22 miles more area where OHV use is limited than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route. Approximately 44 percent of Alternative 9G would follow existing transmission lines, compared to 85 percent for the comparison portion of the Proposed Route. Alternative 9G would cross one more trail than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route and two additional trails due to new road construction. Overall, there would be a greater opportunity for unauthorized use in areas closed to OHVs under Alternative 9G than under the comparison portion of the Proposed Route, as well as a greater potential disruption of existing uses.

Alternative 9H would be 3.8 miles longer than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route and would cross 14.1 miles more area where OHV use is limited than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route. Approximately 60 percent of Alternative 9H would follow existing transmission lines, compared to 85 percent for the comparison portion of the Proposed Route. Alternative 9H would cross one more trail than the comparison portion of the Proposed Route and two additional trails due to new road construction. Overall, there would be a greater opportunity for unauthorized use in areas closed to OHVs under Alternative 9H than under the comparison portion of the Proposed Route, as well as a greater potential disruption of existing uses.

Segment 10

The BLM’s Preferred Route in Segment 10 is as follows:

Preferred Route	Agency
Proposed Route (Figure A-12)	BLM

Segment 10 would link the Cedar Hill and Midpoint Substations with a 34.4-mile single-circuit 500-kV line. Segment 10 would follow a WWE corridor for most of the route. The Preferred/Proposed Route would also be adjacent to the existing 345-kV line most of

this length and has been sited to follow the same alignment of the planned SWIP. Either the SWIP or Gateway West would be built, but not both. There are no Route Alternatives proposed along this segment. Figure A-12 in Appendix A shows the location of the Preferred/Proposed Route in Segment 10.

The Preferred/Proposed Route would comprise 50 percent rangeland, 46 percent agriculture, and 2 percent commercial and residential development. In the vicinity of Jerome and from Eden south to the Cedar Hill Substation, the entire route would be irrigated agricultural lands with scattered farms and residences. From Jerome north, this area is mostly rangeland with some agriculture. Both the Midpoint Substation and the proposed Cedar Hill Substation would be located on rangeland. Also, there is an existing 345-kV line that follows the Proposed Route from north to south for its entire length.

Land Ownership

The 34.4-mile-long Preferred/Proposed Route would cross 16.2 miles of BLM-managed land and 18 miles of private land (Table 3.17-30).

Table 3.17-30. Miles Crossed by Land Ownership – Segment 10

Segment/Alternative	Total	BLM	Indian Reservation	State (including water)	Private
Preferred/Proposed – Total Length	34.4	16.2	–	0.1	18.0

Miles are rounded to tenths of a mile; columns/rows may therefore not sum exactly.

Designated Corridors and Existing ROW

The Preferred/Proposed Route would follow an existing transmission line for most (85.5 percent) of its 34.3 mile length, except to deviate from the existing line in the vicinity of the Minidoka National Historic Site. The Preferred/Proposed Route would be within the WWE corridor for 27.2 miles (79.1 percent) of its total length (9.9 miles [28.8 percent] on federal lands; 17.3 miles [50.3 percent] of its total length) and adjacent to the WWE corridor for 1.9 miles (5.5 percent) (Table 2.4-3).

Federal Land Use Plan Amendments

Segment 10 would cross BLM-managed lands that fall within the jurisdiction of the Monument and Cassia RMPs, and the Twin Falls MFP (Table 3.17-2). Plan amendments for the Preferred/Proposed Route are identified in Tables 2.2-1 through 2.2-3. No plan amendments (related to land use or otherwise) are currently proposed for Segment 10.

Specific Land Uses and Recreational Resources

Land Use

Land use within the Analysis Area for the Preferred/Proposed Route is summarized by segment in Table 3.17-4. Viewed in terms of miles crossed, half of the Preferred/Proposed Route for Segment 10 would cross rangeland (approximately 50 percent), with the remainder crossing irrigated cropland (45 percent), and water and wetlands (1 percent). In the vicinity of Jerome and from Eden south to the Cedar Hill Substation, the entire Analysis Area would be irrigated agricultural lands with scattered farms and

residences. From Jerome north, the area is mostly rangeland with some crop production.

The Preferred/Proposed Route for Segment 10 would pass within 1,000 feet of 16 residences; 4 of these residences are located within 300 feet of the proposed ROW centerline.

Segment 10 would pass within 1,000 feet of two CAFOs and a center-pivot agricultural field. Between MPs 11 and 20, the Proposed Route would deviate from the existing 345-kV transmission line and follow the WWE corridor, thereby increasing the distance between the proposed transmission line and the NPS-managed Minidoka National Historic Site, which would be located approximately 1 mile east of the Proposed Route.

The Preferred/Proposed Route may cross or come within close proximity to BLM parcels identified as available for public disposal in the Monument RMP. Approximately the first 25 miles of Segment 10 would need to be reviewed in further detail to determine any crossings. A Project crossing or close proximity to the transmission line may affect the eligibility and/or value of the parcels for disposal.

Special Management Areas

Federal lands along Segment 10 are regulated in part by the Monument and Cassia RMPs, as well as the Twin Falls MFP. The Proposed Route for Segment 10 would not cross any SMAs identified in these plans.

Wilderness Characteristics

No areas with wilderness characteristics would be crossed in this segment.

Historic Trails

Segment 10 would cross the Oregon NHT, Northside Alternate Oregon NHT, and Kelton Road. Potential impacts to historic trails are assessed in Section 3.3 – Cultural Resources.

OHV Use

The Preferred/Proposed Route would not cross any public land closed to OHV use or where OHV use is limited, nor would it result in any trail crossings. In addition, 91 percent of the Proposed Route would follow existing transmission lines; therefore, there would be little or no effect on OHV access.