

TransWest Express Final Environmental Impact Statement Addendum

This addendum provides clarifications and information to the TransWest Express Final Environmental Impact Statement (Final EIS). These changes will be incorporated into the electronic version of the document that is available on the BLM project website.

Addendum to Section 3.11 Cultural Resources and Native American Concerns

This text will be added to section 3.11.6.2 of the Final EIS on page 3.11-23. Original text, in part, is as follows:

To date, the number of historic properties that would be adversely affected by the proposed Project is unknown. As stipulated in the PA, an intensive Class III pedestrian inventory would be required after the final route is selected by the BLM and Western. The pedestrian inventory of the final route would be completed prior to construction and with enough lead time to allow for NRHP evaluation of identified sites, impact assessments, and resolution of adverse effects, if necessary. The inventory would be performed regardless of land ownership. All cultural resources located within the APE would be evaluated for eligibility to the NRHP and for Native American traditional religious and cultural importance in consultation with Native American Tribes.

Per the PA, the BLM Wyoming State Office is lead for compliance with Section 106 of the NHPA on behalf of the federal agencies (36 CFR 800.2(a)(2)), as evidenced by the Memorandum of Understanding between BLM and Western. In consultation with Western ...

This text is revised as follows:

To date, the number of historic properties that would be adversely affected by the proposed Project is unknown. As stipulated in the PA, an intensive Class III pedestrian inventory would be required after the final route is selected by the BLM and Western. The pedestrian inventory of the final route would be completed prior to construction and with enough lead time to allow for NRHP evaluation of identified sites, impact assessments, and resolution of adverse effects, if necessary. The inventory would be performed regardless of land ownership. All cultural resources located within the APE would be evaluated for eligibility to the NRHP and for Native American traditional religious and cultural importance in consultation with Native American Tribes.

Through the NEPA process, the BLM Las Vegas Field Office identified cumulative impacts to cultural and historic properties from the construction, operation, and maintenance of the 600-kV TransWest transmission line. The Project is located within a designated WWEC and passes through the Rainbow Gardens Area of Critical Environmental Concern (identified as "corridor of concern" 39-231 in the July 11, 2012, settlement agreement establishing an inter-agency MOU, work plan, and BLM policy guidance providing for the review of WWECs). Because the Project is in a designated Section 368 energy corridor, meaningful mitigation measures are needed to ensure that impacts to sensitive resources are minimized and that the public has an opportunity to participate in the mitigation process.

The Gypsum Cave Traditional Cultural Property and portions of the Old Spanish National Historic Trail are impacted by this Project. The TWE alignment runs adjacent to the Gypsum Cave TCP, which is held as sacred to the Nuwu (Paiute) people. The TCP designation came about through consultation with the Nuwu and the Nevada SHPO as part of the mitigation of the Harry Allen to Mead transmission line, which was constructed within the WWEC corridor in 2009. The cumulative impacts identified include vandalism and the proliferation of unauthorized roads and trails because of increased access to the cave resources as well as visual, audible and atmospheric impacts on the integrity of setting, feeling and association of the TCP. CUL-2 provides for on-site and off-site mitigation to compensate for cumulative impacts, as well as unavoidable direct and indirect adverse effects to Gypsum Cave TCP.

The Old Spanish National Historic Trail runs adjacent to the Project for 15 miles in the California Wash area near Moapa. This segment of the Old Spanish NHT could include a high potential segment of the trail which would be conducive to recreation and interpretation of native habitats and ecosystems. Impacts to the Old Spanish NHT include visual impacts on the integrity of setting, feeling and association of the trail. CUL-1 and CUL-3 provide for on-site and off-site mitigation to compensate for cumulative impacts, as well as direct and indirect adverse effects to the Old Spanish NHT in Nevada, as directed in the NTSA.

The proposed mitigation will support meaningful measures to offset the cumulative impacts from this and other transmission projects in the area. BLM will require current cost estimates from the applicant based upon mitigation specific for the Project. This mitigation for cumulative effects does not relieve TransWest of its responsibilities under Section 106 of the NHPA or Project-specific BMPs for cultural resources.

BLM and consulting parties (including federal agencies, state and local governments, tribes, and many other stakeholders) will evaluate and select appropriate mitigation action(s) to address cumulative effects of the Project. Available mitigation actions include:

Project Archaeology - Investigating Migration: The national award-winning Project Archaeology program is developing 7-12th grade curriculum on westward migration, including a context document that summarizes baseline research on the National Historic Trails. This context would provide a structure for developing individual teaching modules that could be used in southern Nevada schools on specific Old Spanish NHT locations or on the Old Spanish NHT in Nevada.

Recreational/Interpretative/Educational Walking Trails: A 15-mile trail along the segment identified as California Crossing (California Wash) would be developed, including as-needed National Historic Trail inventory (M-6280) as well as metal detecting to locate trail trace in advance of any proposed trail construction.

Old Spanish Trail Application (App) for the Southern Nevada District: The Old Spanish NHT App is a trail interpretation app for smartphones and tablets currently being planned by the NPS. NPS and BLM are co-administrators of the Old Spanish NHT. Development of the app would be coordinated in partnership with NPS.

Management plan for each of the five high potential Old Spanish NHT segments in Clark County: This plan would include, as needed: National Historic Trail inventory (M-6280), a Class I records search, visual assessment of the significant segments, a Class III inventory of the segments, condition assessments, and recommendations for proposed development and use of each trail segment based on the information gathered.

Mobile exhibit of the Old Spanish NHT: In conjunction with the Project Archaeology context and individual curriculum modules for the Old Spanish NHT, this mobile exhibit to be developed in partnership with the Old Spanish Trail Association would travel to schools and events across Nevada to inform the public about the trail.

Interpretation Plan for the Old Spanish NHT Auto Route across Clark County: BLM and its partners would work with the NPS to develop and implement an interpretive plan for a proposed auto route of the Old Spanish NHT across Nevada.

Post and cable fencing to protect portions of the Old Spanish NHT West of Mountain Springs: BLM would develop and implement a plan for post and cable fencing to protect sections of the Old Spanish NHT in the vicinity of Stump Springs and Sandy Valley Road west of Las Vegas.

Interpretation of the History of Transportation: In conjunction with its partners, BLM would explore possibilities for developing exhibits at locations where Native American Trails, the Old Spanish NHT,

the Mormon Wagon Road, the Union Pacific Railroad, and Arrowhead highway could be interpreted to inform the public about the history of transportation in Southern Nevada.

Gypsum Cave post and cable fencing, site reclamation, and travel management: These actions would limit access of vehicles to the cave over power line roads, close and reclaim unauthorized roads, and clean up vandalism of the cave and associated areas.

Designation of other TCPs valued by the Nuwu people: In consultation with the Nuwu, BLM would propose, document, and manage other TCPs on BLM lands in southern Nevada.

Per the PA, the BLM Wyoming State Office is lead for compliance with Section 106 of the NHPA on behalf of the federal agencies (36 CFR 800.2(a)(2)), as evidenced by the Memorandum of Understanding between BLM and Western. In consultation with Western ...

Addendum to Section 3.14 Land Use

The following text clarifies information found in Section 3.14.4 and Section 3.14.6.3 of the Final EIS; specifically, text related to conservation easements in the last row of Table 3.14-11 "Designated Avoidance Areas Within Region I", as well as the alternative discussions that follow the table related to conservation easements. The Cross Mountain Ranch Conservation Easement was recorded with the Moffat County Clerk on December 24, 2014. A depiction of the Cross Mountain Ranch Conservation Easement boundary can be found in Figure 2.26 (Section 2.5.1.1).

All of the Region I main alternatives would cross the same portion of the Cross Mountain Ranch Conservation Easement; Alternatives I-A, I-B, I-C, and I-D would each cross 1 mile of the easement.

Tuttle Ranch Micro-siting Option 3 would cross 2 miles of the Cross Mountain Ranch Conservation Easement. This option also would cross the NPS Deerlodge Road but avoid the Tuttle Ranch Conservation Easement (as disclosed in Section 3.14.6.3).

Tuttle Ranch Micro-siting Option 4 would cross 1 mile of the Cross Mountain Ranch Conservation Easement. This option also would avoid the Tuttle Ranch Conservation Easement and cross Deerlodge Road, however it would cross the road at a state-land section instead of on NPS-managed land.

Original text from paragraphs 7 on page 3.14-42 of Section 3.14.6.3 of this Final EIS is as follows:

Alternative I-B (Agency Preferred)

Alternative I-B follows the Alternative I-A route with the exception of a 2-mile deviation in Sweetwater County. This would change the portion of the route located on BLM-managed lands from 103 miles to 105 miles and the portion within Sweetwater County from 34 to 36 miles. All other impacts would be the same, or very similar to Alternative I-A.

This text is revised as follows:

Alternative I-B (Agency Preferred)

Alternative I-B follows the Alternative I-A route with the exception of a 2-mile deviation in Sweetwater County. This would change the portion of the route located on BLM-managed lands from 103 miles to 105 miles and the portion within Sweetwater County from 34 to 36 miles. **The BLM also may consider micro-siting variations to Alternative I-B to avoid crossing portions of the Cross Mountain Ranch conservation easement. Such minor variations would be within the 2-mile corridor analyzed in the EIS.** All other impacts would be the same, or very similar to Alternative I-A.

Addendum to Section 3.15 Special Designations

Original text for SDA-14 in Section 3.15.6 of the Final EIS is as follows:

SDA-14: *Placement of any project component within/across river segments that are eligible or suitable for inclusion in the NWSRS shall be micro-sited in coordination with BLM to minimize surface or visual disturbances from towers, roads, or other facilities to the outstandingly remarkable values that led to segment eligibility/suitability.*

This text is revised as follows:

SDA-14: *Placement of any project component within/across river segments that are [NTSA components](#) or eligible or suitable for inclusion in the NWSRS shall be micro-sited in coordination with BLM to minimize surface or visual disturbances from towers, roads, or other facilities to the outstandingly remarkable values that led to segments eligibility/suitability. [Compensatory mitigation may be required to offset impacts to the outstandingly remarkable values when impacts cannot be effectively avoided and mitigation is infeasible, consistent with DOI's Secretarial Order 3330, BLM's Draft Regional Mitigation Manual Section 1794, and the CEQ \(40 CFR 1508.20\).](#)*

Addendum to Section 3.20 Lands with Wilderness Characteristics

Original text from paragraphs 6 and 7 of Section 3.20.6.2 of this Final EIS is as follows.

LWC-1: *Applicable SDA mitigations noted in Section 3.15 shall be applied to areas managed to protect wilderness characteristics and, to the extent feasible and practicable through coordination with the local BLM Field Office at their discretion, to inventoried areas that have been documented to contain wilderness characteristics.*

While applicant committed measures as well as proposed mitigations for other resource values provide for measures to protect resources contributing to an area's wilderness characteristics, **LWC-1** would provide an additional method for the BLM to minimize impacts. Effectiveness of **LWC-1** includes minimizing Project effects to resources that contribute to the area wilderness character by consolidating and minimizing surface disturbances during project construction, access, and facility placement as well as assure that the alignment would not further encroach into areas not currently affected by the Project as disclosed in this EIS. Applying the SDA mitigations to areas managed to protect wilderness characteristics as well as inventoried areas that have been documented to contain wilderness characteristics would allow for the local BLM office discretion in the best way to retain as much of the wilderness characteristics in areas not directly affected for future management consideration.

This text is revised as follows:

LWC-1: *Applicable SDA mitigations noted in Section 3.15 shall be applied to areas documented to contain wilderness characteristics. Application of these mitigations would be implemented at the discretion of the local BLM [Field Office](#).*

While applicant committed measures [and](#) proposed mitigations for other resource values provide measures to protect resources contributing to an area's wilderness characteristics, **LWC-1** would provide an additional method for the BLM to minimize impacts. Effectiveness of **LWC-1** includes minimizing Project effects to resources that contribute to the area's wilderness character by consolidating and minimizing surface disturbances during project construction, access, and facility placement as well as assure that the alignment would not further encroach into areas not currently affected by the Project as disclosed in this EIS. Applying the SDA mitigations to inventoried areas that have been documented to contain wilderness characteristics would allow for the local BLM office [to](#)

use its discretion to ensure retention of as much as possible of the wilderness characteristics in areas not directly affected for future management consideration.

Compensatory mitigation may be required to offset impacts to the inventoried lands with wilderness characteristics where impacts cannot be effectively avoided and mitigation is infeasible in accordance with the Department of the Interior's Secretarial Order 3330 and BLM's Draft Regional Mitigation Manual Section 1794 and consistent with the CEQ (40 CFR 1508.20). Secretarial Order 3330 provides a policy that directs the Department of the Interior bureaus to "seek ways to offset or compensate for those impacts [that cannot be avoided or effectively minimized] to ensure the continued resilience and viability of our natural resources over time." (Secretarial Order 3330 at 2). BLM's Draft Regional Mitigation Manual also reflects BLM's policy commitment to "consider mitigation outside of the area of impact when it is not feasible or practical to mitigate impacts to an acceptable level in the same area as the use-authorization." (BLM Draft Regional Mitigation Manual at 1-5). Compensatory mitigation may be required to offset impacts to those inventoried lands with wilderness characteristics that mitigation measure LWC-1 would minimize, but not avoid altogether. Compensatory mitigation for impacts to inventoried lands with wilderness characteristics may include funding to maintain or enhance wilderness characteristics through resource restoration and other related activities, funding of related interpretation and educational programs, or other appropriate projects at the discretion of the field manager.

Addendum to Chapter 5.0 Cumulative Impacts

Due to the recent change in status of the Cross Mountain Ranch Conservation Easement, the paragraph 6 of Section 5.3.14.2 has been revised to clarify cumulative impacts to the easement.

The original text is as follows:

Conclusion

Cumulative impacts on land use are most apparent where there are pinch points where one or more transmission lines would cause intrusion into areas that are managed for uses that may be

incompatible with multiple transmission lines. These areas include the area where Segment 1106 would cross the Tuttle Conservation Easement. Although it may be possible to fit one transmission line between the Tuttle Conservation Easement and the NPS lands for Deerlodge Road to Dinosaur National Monument, placement of more than one transmission line would require that one or the other cross either the NPS lands or the Tuttle Conservation Easement. Placement of a transmission line would be inconsistent with the management of either the easement or the NPS lands. Similarly, Segment 1219.20 in the Emma Park area of Region II would allow only one transmission line without encroaching on either a USFS IRA or a 4-mile buffer for active sage grouse leks (see Section 3.8, Special Status Wildlife Species, for detailed description on potential impacts to sage grouse and Section 3.15, Special Designation Areas, for a detailed description on potential impacts to the IRA).

This text is revised as follows:

Conclusion

Cumulative impacts on land use are most apparent where there are pinch points where one or more transmission lines would cause intrusion into areas that are managed for uses that may be incompatible with multiple transmission lines. These areas include the area where Segment 1106 would cross the Tuttle Conservation Easement. Although it may be possible to fit one transmission line between the Tuttle Conservation Easement and the NPS lands for Deerlodge Road to Dinosaur National Monument, placement of more than one transmission line would require that one or the other cross the NPS lands and the Cross Mountain Ranch Conservation Easement, or the Tuttle Conservation Easement. Placement of a transmission line would be inconsistent with the management

of either [of these easements](#) or the NPS lands. Similarly, Segment 1219.20 in the Emma Park area of Region II would allow only one transmission line without encroaching on either a USFS IRA or a 4-mile buffer for active sage grouse leks (see Section 3.8, Special Status Wildlife Species, for detailed description on potential impacts to sage grouse and Section 3.15, Special Designation Areas, for a detailed description on potential impacts to the IRA).