

Corridor 126-258

Vernal to Fort Duchesne Corridor

Corridor Rationale

Input regarding alignment from Chevron, National Grid, and PacifiCorp during the WWEC PEIS suggested following this route. There are two planned 500-kV transmission projects that generally follow the path of the corridor, two pending or recently authorized transmission ROWs in the corridor (TransWest Express and Zephyr transmission projects), and an oil and gas pipeline that intersects the corridor at multiple locations.

Corridor location:

Utah (Uintah Co.)
BLM: Vernal Field Office
Regional Review Region(s): Region 3

Corridor width, length:

Width 3,500 ft
24.3 miles of designated corridor
30.4 mile-posted route, including gaps

Sec 368 energy corridor restrictions: (N)

- corridor is multi-modal

Corridor of concern (Y)

- access to coal plants.



Corridor history:

- Locally designated corridor prior to 2009 (N)
- Existing infrastructure (Y)
 - Electric transmission:
 - 138 kV (MP 10 to MP 12)
 - 345 kV (MP 10 to MP 12 and MP 18 to MP 24)
 - Pipelines:
 - natural gas (MP 5 to MP 8)
 - refined product (MP 0 to MP 7)
- Energy potential near the corridor (N)
- Corridor changes since 2009 (N)

Figure 1. Corridor 126-258



Figure 2. Corridor 126-258 and nearby electric transmission lines and pipelines

Conflict Map Analysis

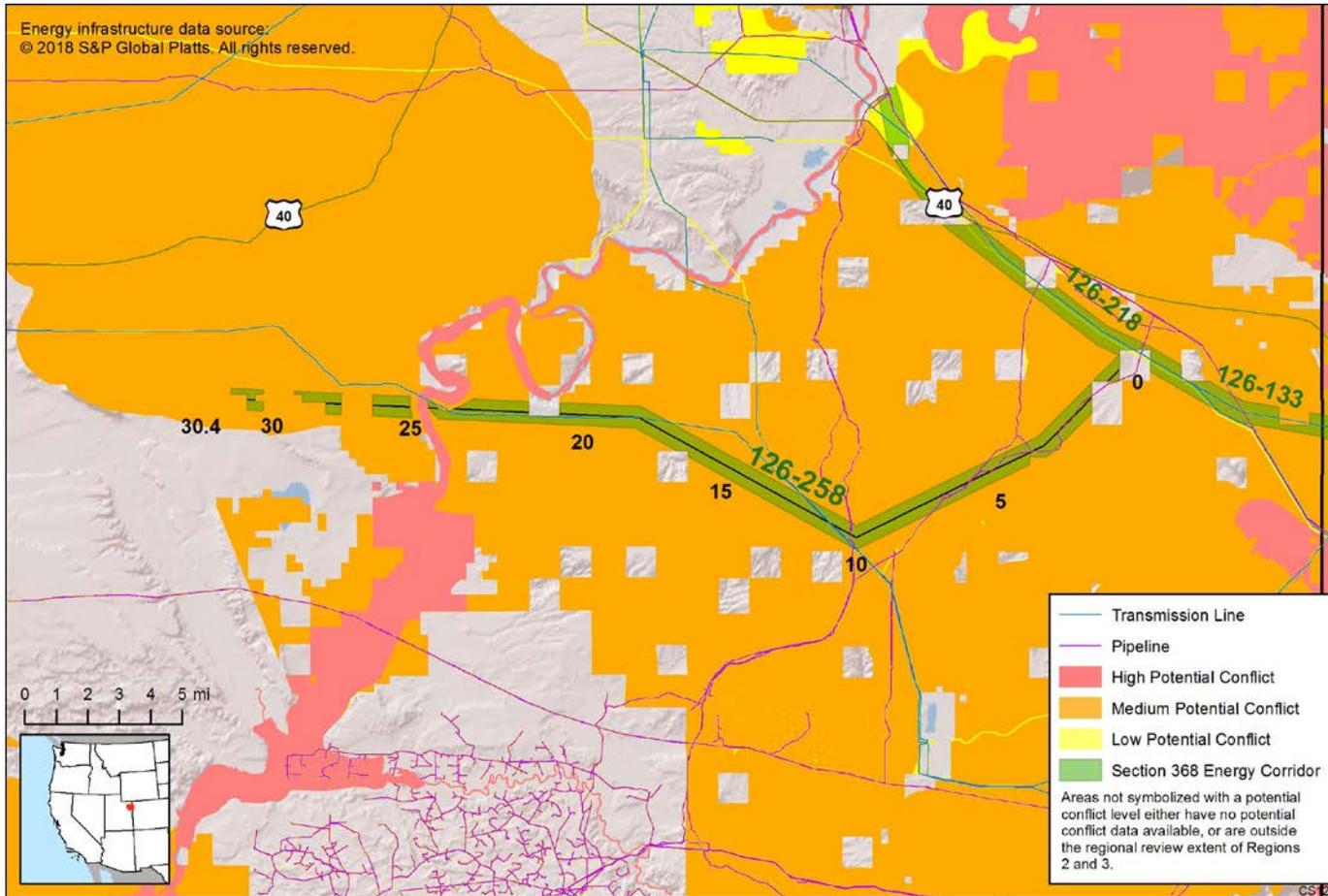


Figure 3. Map of Conflict Areas in Vicinity of Corridor 126-258

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

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

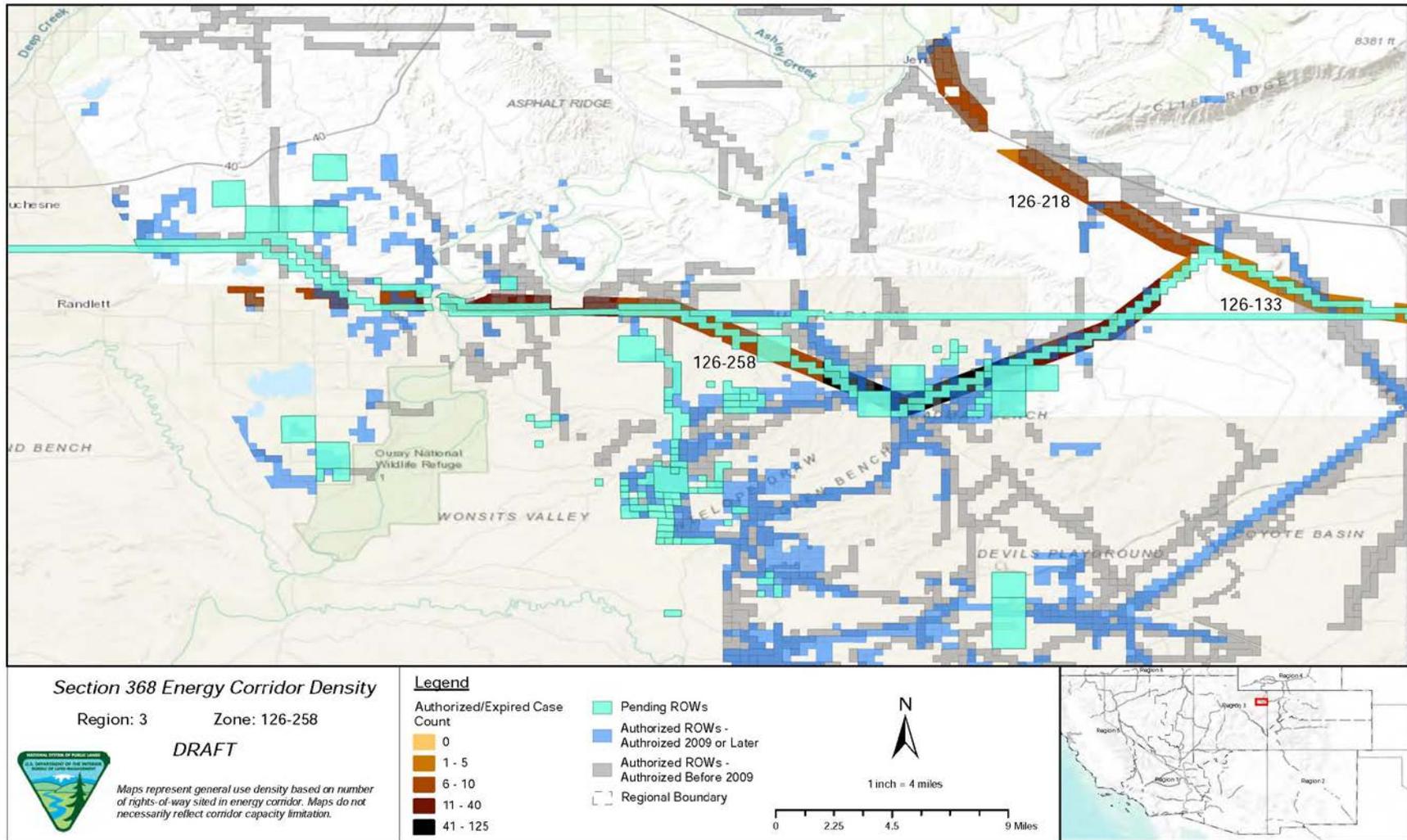


Figure 4. Corridor 126-258, Corridor Density Map

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

General Stakeholder Feedback on Corridor Utility

The State of Utah believes that the corridor plays an important role for existing and future energy infrastructure in western Utah, and requests that no change are made to the existing alignment of the corridor. While the State of Utah has not identified any necessary corridor additions in order to access renewable energy resources, the State of Utah asks that the BLM work cooperatively with the State to expand the corridor as necessary should renewable resources in the area be developed in the future.

Corridor Review Table

The table below captures details of the Agencies’ review of the energy corridor. Consideration of the general corridor siting principles of the 2012 Settlement Agreement framed each corridor review, to identify potential improvements to maximize corridor utility and minimize impacts on the environment. Initial Agency analysis is provided to facilitate further discussion during stakeholder workshops.

CORRIDOR 126-258 REVIEW TABLE							
ID	Agency	Agency Jurisdiction	County	Primary Issue	Corridor Location (by Milepost [MP])	Source	Agency Review and Analysis ^{1,2}
ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCE ISSUES							
Ecology							
126-258 .001	BLM	Vernal FO	Uintah	Hamilton Milkvetch (BLM-sensitive species)	MP 25 to MP 30	Agency Input: potential habitat.	The corridor location within the current range where these species may occur is not easily resolved or avoided by corridor-level planning because an alternate route might still require siting through the current range of the species. Further analysis to determine the presence of these species occurring within the area will be considered outside of corridor-level planning. (3)
126-258 .002	BLM	Vernal FO	Uintah	Horseshoe Milkvetch (BLM-sensitive species)	MP 10 to MP 30	Agency Input: known individuals/populations. Occupied and potential habitat.	
126-258 .003	NA	Vernal FO and State land	Uintah, UT	Western Yellow-billed Cuckoo proposed critical habitat (ESA-listed: threatened); Colorado Pikeminnow critical habitat (ESA-listed: endangered); Razorback Sucker critical habitat (ESA-listed: endangered)	MP 25	GIS Analysis: corridor crosses proposed critical and critical habitat for these species (there is a gap in the corridor at the waterbody.)	Protection of ESA-listed species habitat is important. The preferred methodology to mitigate undue degradation of resources is to collocate future energy infrastructure across public land with existing infrastructure to the extent feasible. As such, the current location appears to best meet the siting principles based on the settlement agreement, since any alternative route would go through areas of ESA-listed critical habitat and

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							would not lend-itself to collocation and would further fragment critical habitat. (1)
126-258 .004	BLM	Vernal FO	Uintah, UT	GRSG GHMA (BLM sensitive species)	MP 3 to MP 10, MP 26 to MP 30	GIS Analysis: GRSG GHMA intersects corridor.	<p>Utah GRSG ARMPA GHMA retains management from the Vernal RMP.</p> <p>The Vernal RMP has a NSO stipulation in 0.25-mi zone around GRSG leks. No permanent facilities or structures will be allowed within 2 mi when possible. No surface-disturbing activities within 2 mi of active GRSG leks will be allowed from March 1 through June 15.</p> <p>There is an opportunity for the Agencies to consider revising the corridor to follow the preferred route for TransWest Express north of Corridor 126-258 to avoid some of the GRSG GHMA. (2)</p>
126-258 .005				Special status species	Not specified.	<p>Comment on abstract: threatened and endangered species that may occur along this corridor include Black-footed Ferret, Western Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Colorado River fishes (Bonytail Chub, Colorado Pikeminnow, Humpback Chub, and Razorback Sucker), and Ute Ladies'-tresses as well as listed critical habitat for Colorado Pikeminnow and Razorback Sucker and proposed critical habitat for Western Yellow-billed Cuckoo. Colorado River fishes may be impacted by direct impacts from stream crossings and water depletions. Projects taking place in this</p>	<p>This corridor location within the current range where these species may occur is not easily resolved or avoided by corridor-level planning because alternate routes would still require siting through the current range of these species. Further analysis to determine the presence of all species occurring within the area will be considered outside of corridor-level planning. (3)</p>

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						<p>corridor may require ESA Section 7 consultation with the USFWS. Recommend that projects within this corridor are evaluated for impacts to listed species and their habitats, and measures are included to avoid, minimize, and mitigate impacts.</p> <p>Comment on abstract: Additional species not identified in the corridor abstract may be present: Black-footed Ferret, Canada Lynx, Mexican Spotted Owl, Western Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Bonytail Chub, Colorado Pikeminnow, Humpback Chub, Razorback Sucker, Uinta Basin Hookless Cactus, Ute Ladies'-tresses, White-tailed Prairie Dog, and Burrowing Owl.</p> <p>Conduct further analysis to determine the presence of abovementioned species.</p> <p>Re-route to avoid listed and proposed critical habitat. Corridor passes through designated and proposed critical habitat for several ESA species.</p>	
Air Quality							
126-258 .006	EPA	Vernal FO, Uintah and Ouray Reservation, and private land	Uintah	Ozone NAAQS non-attainment designation pending	Entire corridor	Agency Input: Uintah County is pending non-attainment designation for the ozone NAAQS.	Not a consideration for corridor-level planning. At the project-level, any new project would need to take non-attainment into consideration. IOPs would be followed to minimize fugitive dust generation. (1)

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Paleontology							
126-258 .007	BLM	Vernal FO	Uintah, UT	PFYC Class 5	MP 0 to MP 22, MP 23 to MP 24, MP 25 to MP 30	GIS Analysis: PFYC Class 5 areas intersect corridor	The identified potential of paleontological resources is a concern for the Agencies, which cannot be resolved during corridor-level planning. Assessments will occur as part of the ROW application process. (3)
Lands with Wilderness Characteristics							
126-258 .008	BLM	Vernal FO	Uintah, UT	Lands with wilderness characteristics	MP 0 to MP 30	GIS Analysis: lands with wilderness characteristics intersect the corridor.	The BLM retains broad discretion regarding the multiple use management of lands possessing wilderness characteristics without Wilderness, WSA designations. As such, land possessing the characteristics of wilderness are not subject to the legal thresholds or other statutory obligations specified for congressionally designated Wilderness and WSAs. There are necessities that warrant land use and thus rationalize energy corridors as meeting the best siting principles, which include maximizing utility while minimizing impacts. In locations where the BLM is not managing lands with wilderness characteristics with protective allocations, project level planning will still consider ways to minimize or avoid impacts while meeting the purpose and need of various types of land use including energy projects. Furthermore, the impairment of wilderness characteristics does not, in and of itself, constitute a significant impact; or on its own, warrant the relocation of a corridor or corridor segment. BLM must consider all resources and resource uses and carefully weigh the current value for

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							the present generation as well as for future generations. At this time, given the information available the corridor could be re-routed along the recently authorized TransWest Express Transmission project to further collocate infrastructure. (2)
Visual Resources							
126-258 .009	BLM	Vernal FO	Uintah, UT	VRM Class III	MP 0 to MP 2, MP 13 to MP 16, MP 25 to MP 26, MP 27 to MP 29, MP 30	GIS Analysis: VRM Class III areas and corridor intersect.	VRM Class III allows for moderate change to the characteristic landscape, although minimizing visual contrast remains a requirement. Management activities may attract the attention of the casual observer, but shall not dominate the view. (1)
126-258 .010	BLM	Vernal FO	Uintah, UT	VRM Class IV	MP 2 to MP 25, MP 30	GIS Analysis: VRM Class IV areas and corridor intersect.	The existing corridor location best meets the siting principles. (1)
Cultural Resources and Tribal Concerns							
126-258 .011				TCP	Not disclosed.	Agency Input: Randlett contains a TCP – the Ute Tribe’s Bear Dance site, which is used annually. The Bear Dance site is in the middle of town. Comment on abstract: Section 106 at the project level stage will be critical for avoiding harmful impacts on this important cultural activity.	The TCP mentioned is a concern for the Agencies that cannot be resolved during corridor-level planning. Existing IOPs specific to cultural resources and tribal consultation would be followed in connection with any proposed energy project in the corridor. (3)
126-258 .012	BIA	Uintah and Ouray Reservation and private land	Uintah, UT	Indian trust lands	MP 30	GIS Analysis: corridor ends at private lands but is directly in line with Indian trust lands.	Corridor ends in line with Indian trust lands of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation. BLM can only authorize projects on BLM-administered lands. Development on corridor gaps would require coordination outside of the Agencies. The proponent would have to work with the Ute Tribe to obtain a tribal resolution consenting to the

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							grant of a ROW by BIA. BIA cannot grant ROWs without tribal consent. (3)
126-258 .013			Uintah, UT	Ute Tribe trust land	Not specified.	Agency Input: the majority of the corridor is within the exterior boundaries of the Reservation. The Ute Tribe is seeking those lands to be restored to them administratively.	The Ute Tribe land ownership lawsuit is pending early next year, which may affect the lower portion of this route. Re-routing the corridor along the recently authorized Transwest Express Transmission Project appears to avoid tribal lands. (3)
Land Use Concerns							
Corridor pinched by BLM or USFS authorized use							
126-258 .014	BLM	Vernal FO	Uintah, UT	Existing infrastructure	MP 10	Agency Input: existing oil and gas infrastructure around MP 10. This route was deliberately avoided by TransWest Express because it was too hard to weave through and maintain appropriate buffer distances.	It would be difficult to site additional energy transport infrastructure in the corridor at this location. There is an opportunity for the agencies to consider revising the corridor to follow the preferred route for TransWest Express north of Corridor 126-258 to avoid this area. (2)
126-258 .015	BLM	Vernal FO	Uintah, UT	Cathodic protection due to existing infrastructure	Not specified.	Agency Input: if power and pipelines are to be collocated, then cathodic protection of the pipelines will be necessary.	Cathodic protection of the pipelines as well as separation distances between the two will be necessary for collocation of power lines and pipelines. There is an existing project design IOP that requires designing the project to avoid accelerating the corrosion of the pipelines and/or pumping wells. (1)
Public Access and Recreation							
126-258 .016	NA	State land	Uintah, UT	Green River	MP 24 to MP 25	Agency Input: Green River recreation.	Not a consideration for corridor-level planning. At the project-level, any new project would need to take recreation on the Green River into consideration. (3)
Other noted land use concerns							
126-258 .017	NA	Private lands	UT	Agricultural lands	Not specified.	Comment on abstract: energy development may have impact on agriculture in adjacent areas	Corridor-level planning does not entail the detail necessary to prescribe operation and maintenance procedures

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						if not developed and maintained properly (e.g., invasive and noxious weed species). Ensure that all developments, changes, or alterations to energy corridors do not adversely affect agriculture and domestic livestock grazing in the affected areas.	on hypothetical projects or corridor revisions. The concern will be addressed with specific, current information at the time of energy development proposal(s) (3).

¹ Projects proposed in the corridor would be reviewed during their ROW application review process and would adhere to Federal laws, regulations, and policy.

² (1) = confirm existing corridor best meets siting principles; (2) = identify opportunities to improve corridor placement or IOPs; (3) = acknowledge concern not easily resolved or avoided by corridor-level planning.

Abstract Acronyms and Abbreviations

ARMPA = Approved Resource Management Plan Amendment; BIA= Bureau of Indian Affairs; BLM = Bureau of Land Management; ESA = Endangered Species Act; FO = Field Office; GHMA = General Habitat Management Area; GIS = geographic information system; GRSG = Greater Sage-grouse; IOP = interagency operating procedure; MP = milepost; NA = not applicable; NAAQS = National Ambient Air Quality Standards; NSO = no surface occupancy; PEIS = Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement; PFYC = Potential Fossil Yield Classification; RMP = Resource Management Plan; ROW = right-of-way; TCP = Traditional Cultural Property; USFS = U.S. Forest Service; USFWS = U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; VRM = Visual Resource Management; WSA = Wilderness Study Area; WWEC = West-wide Energy Corridor.