

# Corridor 131-134

Montrose-Nucla Connector

## Corridor Rationale

This energy corridor provides connectivity for electric transmission line and pipeline infrastructure. Input regarding alignment from the Western Utility Group during the WWEC PEIS suggested following this route. There are no planned transmission or pipeline projects within the corridor and no pending or recently authorized major ROWs for transmission line or pipeline projects within the corridor at this time. Tri-state Electric is upgrading the existing transmission line in this corridor from 115 kV to 230 kV as shown in the Section 368 Energy Corridor Mapping Tool. The upgrade is expected to be completed by late winter 2018/2019.

### Corridor location:

Colorado (Montrose Co.)  
 USFS: Uncompahgre National Forest  
 Regional Review Region(s): Region 2

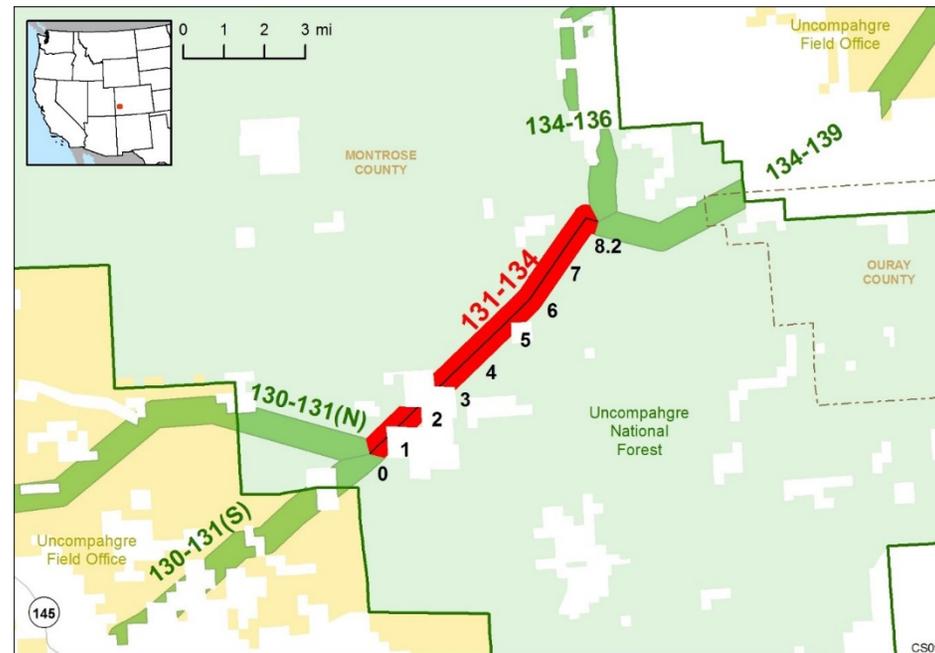
### Corridor width, length:

Width 3,500 ft  
 7.3 miles of designated corridor  
 8.2 mile-posted route, including gaps

### Sec 368 energy corridor restrictions: (N)

- corridor is multi-modal

### Corridor of concern (N)



### Corridor history:

- Locally designated corridor prior to 2009 (N)
- Existing infrastructure (Y)
  - Electric transmission:
    - 115-kV line being upgraded to 230-kV line (MP 0 to MP 8)
  - Pipelines:
    - 2 natural gas (MP 0 to MP 8)
- Energy potential near the corridor (N)
- Corridor changes since 2009 (N)

Figure 1. Corridor 131-134

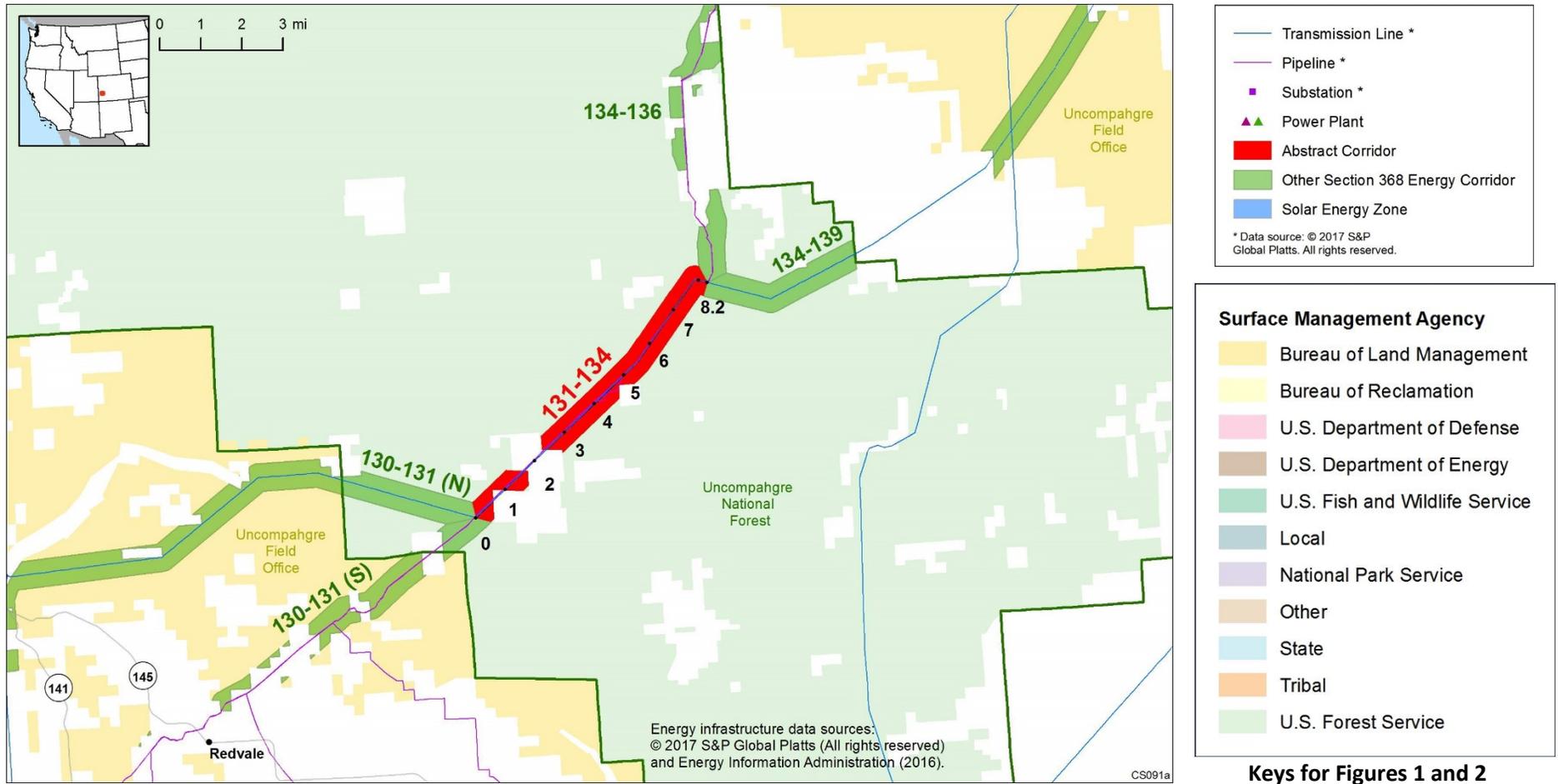


Figure 2. Corridor 131-134 and nearby electric transmission lines and pipelines

## Conflict Map Analysis

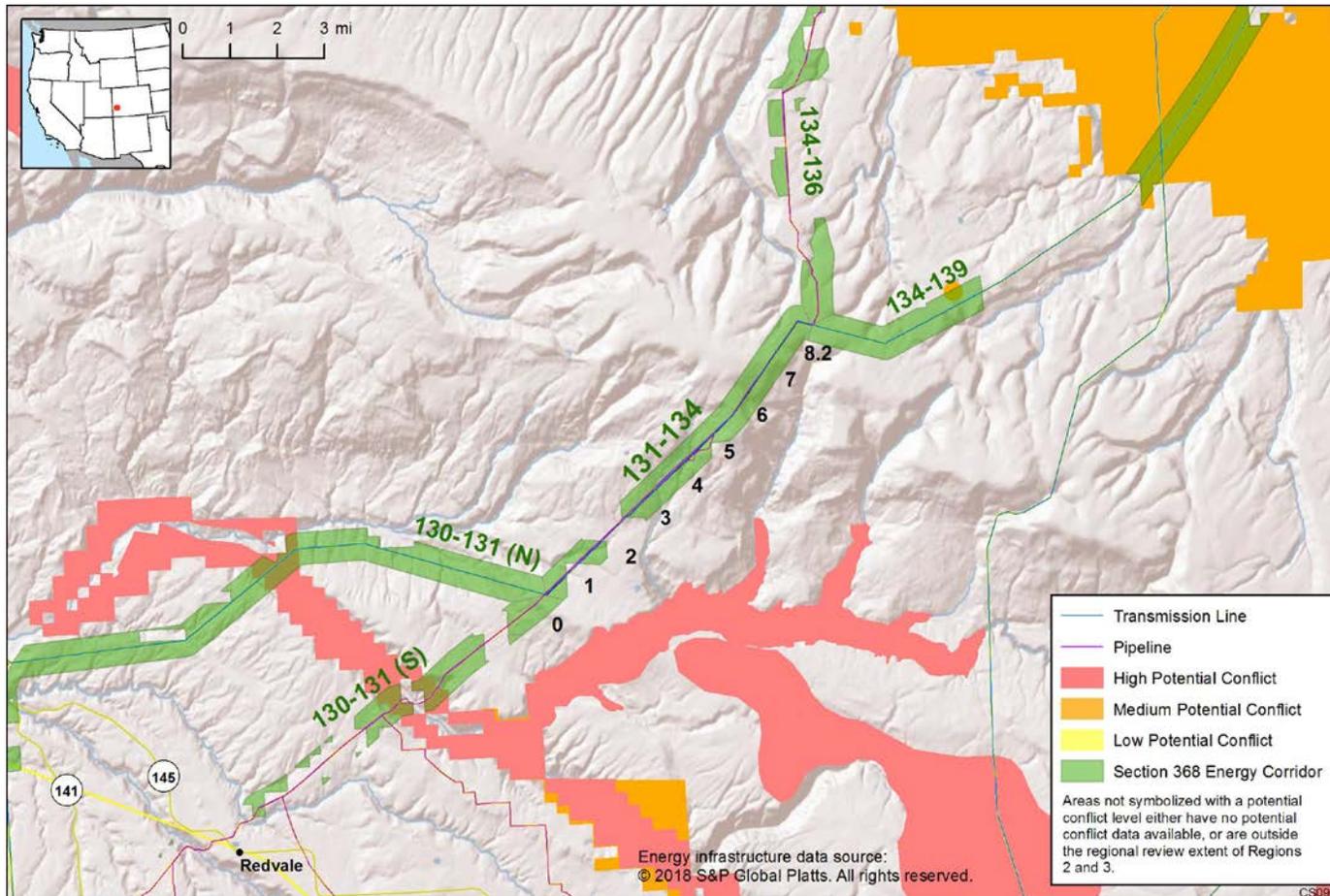
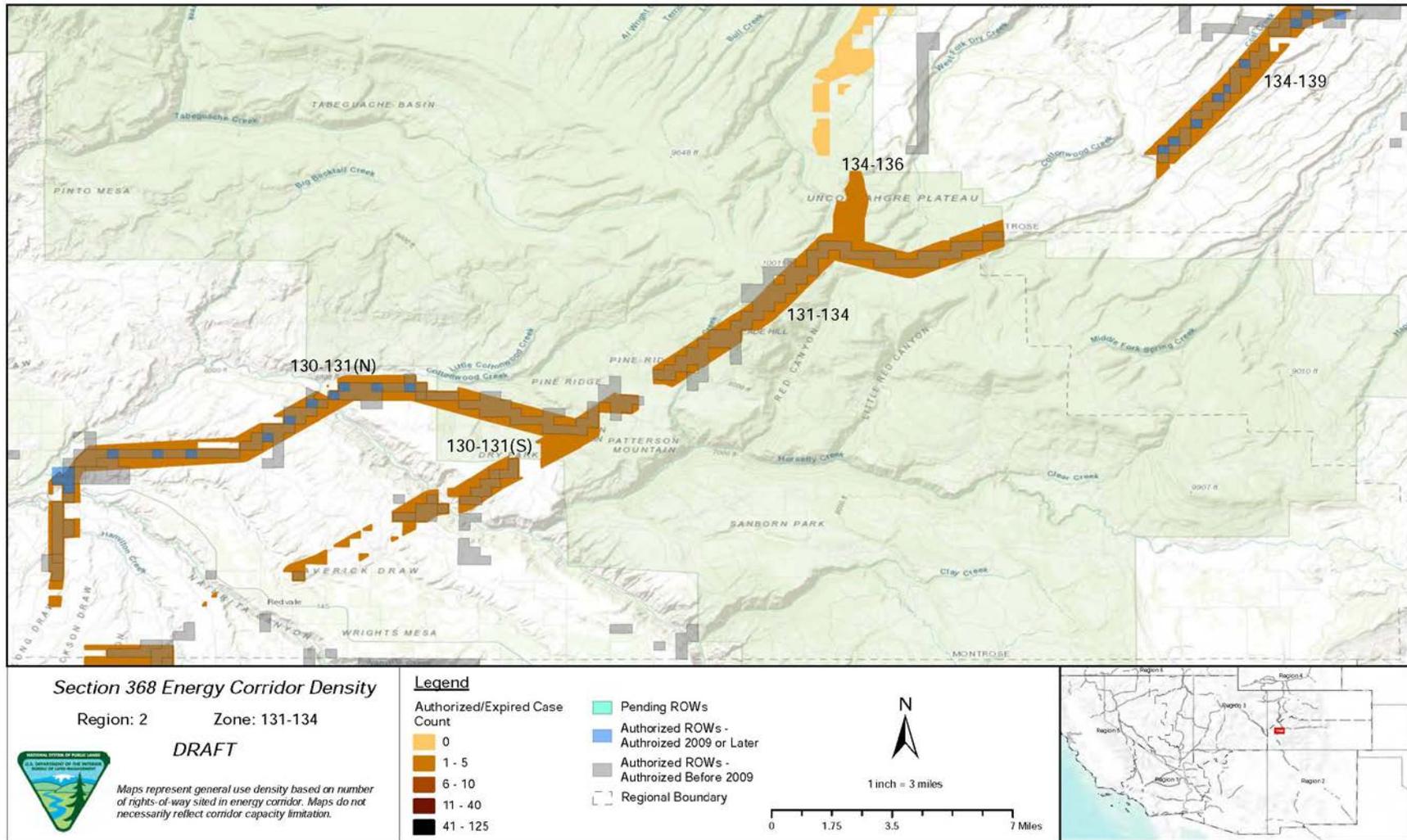


Figure 3. Map of Conflict Areas in Vicinity of Corridor 131-134

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](http://www.corridoreis.anl.gov). To meet the intent of the Energy Policy Act and the Settlement Agreement siting principles, corridors may be located in areas where there is potentially high resource conflict; however, where feasible, opportunity for corridor revisions should be identified in areas with potentially lower conflict.

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



**Figure 4. Corridor 131-134, 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

Stakeholders did not provide specific input on corridor utility.

## 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 131-134 REVIEW TABLE        |        |                      |              |  |                                      |  |   |
|--------------------------------------|--------|----------------------|--------------|--|--------------------------------------|--|---|
| ID                                   | Agency | Agency Jurisdiction  | County       | Primary Issue                          | Corridor Location (by Milepost [MP]) | Source   | Agency Review and Analysis <sup>1, 2</sup>  |
| <b>ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCE ISSUES</b> |        |                      |              |  |                                      |  |   |
| <i>Specially Designated Areas</i>    |        |                      |              |  |                                      |  |   |
| 131-134 .001                         | USFS   | GMUG National Forest | Montrose, CO | Horsefly Canyon Colorado Roadless Area | MP 0 to MP 4 (near)                  | GIS Analysis: Colorado Roadless Area less than 1 mi south of the corridor. | The corridor is not located in the Colorado Roadless Area and development and management inside of the corridor would not be affected. (1)  |
| 131-134 .002                         | USFS   | GMUG National Forest | Montrose, CO | Roubideau SMA                          | MP 7 MP 8 (near)                     | GIS Analysis: SMA as close 1,600 ft north of corridor.                     | The corridor does not cross the Roubideau SMA and development in this corridor would not be affected. The corridor is south of the Roubideau SMA, which is a canyon designated to be managed to preserve its wilderness character. The Roubideau SMA was designated in 1993, after the TransColorado pipeline and Tri-State transmission lines were already in place. (1) |
| <b>Ecology</b>                       |        |                      |              |  |                                      |  |   |

| CORRIDOR 131-134 REVIEW TABLE |        |                      |              |   |                                      |  |   |
|-------------------------------|--------|----------------------|--------------|---|--------------------------------------|--|---|
| ID                            | Agency | Agency Jurisdiction  | County       | Primary Issue                           | Corridor Location (by Milepost [MP]) | Source   | Agency Review and Analysis <sup>1, 2</sup>  |
| 131-134 .003                  |        |                      |              | Special Status Species                  | Not specified.                       | <p>Comment on abstract: additional species not identified in the corridor abstract may be present: New Mexico Meadow Jumping Mouse, North American Wolverine, Mexican Spotted Owl, Southwestern Willow Flycatcher, Western Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Bonytail Chub, Colorado Pikeminnow, Greenback Cutthroat Trout, Humpback Chub, Razorback Sucker, and Mesa Verde Cactus.</p> <p>Conduct further analysis to determine the presence of abovementioned species.</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) |
| <b>Cultural Resources</b>     |        |                      |              |   |                                      |  |   |
| 131-134 .004                  | USFS   | GMUG National Forest | Montrose, CO | Eligible historic and prehistoric sites | Not specified.                       | Agency Input: eligible historic and prehistoric sites are likely located within the corridor.  | Cultural sites are a concern for the Agencies that cannot be easily 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)   |

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

<sup>2</sup> (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

BLM = Bureau of Land Management; ESA = Endangered Species Act; GIS = geographic information system; GMUG = Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre, and Gunnison; IOP = interagency operating procedure; MP = milepost; PEIS = Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement; ROW = right-of-way; SMA = Special Management Area; USFS = U.S. Forest Service; USFWS = U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; WWEC = West-wide Energy Corridor.