



BLM NEWS RELEASE

U.S. Department of the Interior • Bureau of Land Management • Washington, D.C., Office • 1849 C Street N.W. • Washington, D.C.

Bureau of Land Management
For immediate release

Contact: Dana Wilson, (202) 912-7422
Date: March 28, 2014

Interagency Workgroup Seeks Public Input in Energy Corridor Review

Agencies looking to determine best location and use of corridors on Federal lands in the West

WASHINGTON, D.C. – An interagency workgroup consisting of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) and the Department of Energy (DOE) is seeking the public’s assistance with an ongoing review of Federal energy corridors (Section 368 Corridors) in 11 western states: Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming.

A Request for Information (RFI) was published in the *Federal Register* on March 28, 2014 soliciting information for consideration in developing the Section 368 Corridor Study and provides the foundation for an initial Regional Periodic Review of the Section 368 Corridors. The RFI is an important step for the BLM, USFS and DOE’s efforts to determine if Section 368 Corridors should be modified to better serve public interests. The public comment period will be open for 60 days.

The corridors were designated in 2009, as required by Section 368 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005. To resolve a lawsuit filed by several non-profit groups that challenged the corridor designation decisions, the agencies and the plaintiffs entered into a settlement agreement. This RFI seeks to gather information relevant to specific provisions set forth in the settlement. The RFI can be found at <http://corridoreis.anl.gov>.

The information sought by the RFI covers two major areas: (1) a Section 368 Corridor Study, and (2) Regional Periodic Review of Section 368 Corridors.

Section 368 Corridors Study

1. Advances/Updates in GIS Data. Because the original corridors were designed with data available prior to 2009, the Agencies are interested in obtaining new GIS information that may affect the location of Section 368 Corridors.
2. Types of Projects Considered. The Agencies are focused on 100kV and larger transmission projects, and oil, gas, and hydrogen pipelines 10 inches or more in diameter that have been authorized on Federal lands. The Agencies are interested in knowing if the

public thinks that there are other types of projects that they should consider in assessing use of Section 368 Corridors.

3. Method for Assessing Inter-Agency Operating Procedures (IOPs). The Agencies will assess the effectiveness of the IOPs in expediting the siting, permitting, and review process and are interested in receiving suggestions of methods for assessing the effectiveness of IOPs.

Regional Periodic Review of Section 368 Corridors

1. Additional Public Information. The Agencies have listed several studies and reports they are considering and are interested in learning if there is other publicly available information that the Agencies should consider as part of the initial Regional Periodic Review of Section 368 Corridors, including review of the IOPs.
2. New Laws and Regulations That Affect Section 368 Corridors. The Agencies are interested in learning if there are any laws, regulations, or other requirements that have been implemented after January 2009 that the Agencies should consider when reviewing Section 368 Corridors.
3. Stakeholder Fora. The Agencies are interested in learning if there are any additional fora that could be considered for stakeholder engagement during Regional Periodic Reviews.
4. IOP Modifications. The Agencies are interested in learning if there any additions, deletions, or revisions the Agencies should consider making to IOPs.
5. Comments on New IOPs. The Agencies have committed to consideration of new IOPs submitted by the plaintiffs who are parties to the settlement. The new IOPs are available at <http://corridoreis.anl.gov>. The Agencies are soliciting comment on these new IOPs.

Through this outreach, the agencies hope to engage government agencies, tribes, industry, and the general public in designating the location and use of Section 368 Corridors.

The BLM manages more than 245 million acres of public land, the most of any Federal agency. This land, known as the National System of Public Lands, is primarily located in 12 Western states, including Alaska. The BLM also administers 700 million acres of sub-surface mineral estate throughout the nation. In Fiscal Year (FY) 2011, recreational and other activities on BLM-managed land contributed more than \$130 billion to the U.S. economy and supported more than 600,000 American jobs. The Bureau is also one of a handful of agencies that collects more revenue than it spends. In FY 2012, nearly \$5.7 billion will be generated on lands managed by the BLM, which operates on a \$1.1 billion budget. The BLM's multiple-use mission is to sustain the health and productivity of the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations. The Bureau accomplishes this by managing such activities as outdoor recreation, livestock grazing, mineral development, and energy production, and by conserving natural, historical, cultural, and other resources on public lands.

– BLM –