

Siting and Permitting

Increasing electric load growth in the San Juan Basin region of Colorado and New Mexico, in residential, commercial and industrial sectors, has put a strain on the existing electrical system.

Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association (Tri-State) is proposing a to construct a 230-kilovolt transmission line from the Farmington area in northwest New Mexico to Ignacio, Colorado. This line and supporting electrical facilities are needed to provide the power delivery infrastructure for the San Juan Basin that will relieve transmission constraints, serve new loads and offer economic development through renewable energy opportunities.



Siting Considerations

Siting new transmission lines calls for an open and comprehensive process that involves various factors: electric system planning, economics, the environment, public involvement, regulatory requirements, land rights and engineering input. Tri-State is committed to following a thorough siting and environmental process in order to meet or exceed local, state and federal compliance requirements.



Preliminary Corridor Identification

Step 1. Define the project area based on required interconnection points.

Step 2. Obtain resource data and conduct an opportunity and constraint analysis.

Step 3. Identify preliminary alternative corridors from the analysis above, seek public input and coordinate with agencies.

Route Identification and Refinement

Step 1. Address specific concerns identified by the public, such as sensitive resources, and refine, add, modify or delete preliminary alternative corridors.

Step 2. Identify preliminary routes within alternative corridors and conduct a comparative analysis of the alternative routes.

Step 3. Present the comparative analysis and alternative routes for review and comment.

Identification of Preferred and Alternative Routes

Step 1. Address comments made by public and agencies and make final adjustments to the alternative route options.

Step 2. Identify a preferred route and a select number of feasible alternatives based on the comparative analysis and public feedback.

Step 3. Carry the preferred and alternative routes forward for analysis under the National Environmental Policy Act and other required permits and approvals.

Common Terms

- **Corridor:** An area to be evaluated for possible transmission line routes.
- **Route:** A specific alignment of the transmission line within a corridor.
- **Opportunity:** A favorable location for siting a transmission line. While opportunity areas are preferred for siting, they rarely extend the entire length of a route.
- **Constraint:** A sensitive area typically related to environmental resources or land use. Because of the complex nature of siting, constrained areas are often crossed by portions of a proposed route.



Data Collection and Evaluation

Resource data were collected and mapped using a Geographic Information System (GIS). Data were analyzed in the following categories:

- Land use and jurisdiction
- Existing linear transportation and utility corridors
- Water resources
- Cultural and historic resources
- Biological resources

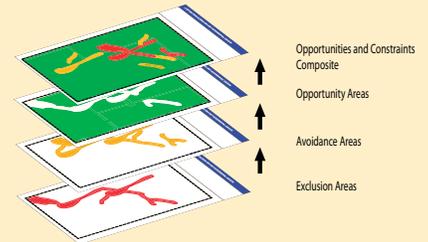
Project Permits and Approvals

Opportunity and Constraints Analysis

Opportunity areas include existing linear facilities and associated corridors that may provide suitable opportunities for collocating a transmission line. These areas contain existing land uses that may be compatible with the project.

Constraints include areas identified for avoidance or exclusion. Avoidance areas include sensitive areas that could potentially incur environmental impacts or result in land-use conflicts if directly affected by the project.

Exclusion areas include locations with the highest level of sensitivity, including those areas with regulatory or legislative designations or extreme physical constraints not compatible with transmission line construction and/or operation.



Jurisdiction	Permit/Decision/Action
Federal	
Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Rural Utilities Service, Western Area Power Administration	43 CFR 2800 Rights-of-Way under Federal Land Policy Management Act, 25 CFR 169 Rights-of-Way Over Indian Lands, NEPA: Title 7 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 1794, National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) Section 106
Federal Aviation Administration	Title 14 CFR Part 77, Objects Affecting Navigable Airspace
U.S. Army Corp of Engineers	Clean Water Act, Section 404/Nationwide Permit 12, Jurisdictional Waters of the U.S.
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	Endangered Species Act, Section 7 Consultation
State	
Colorado Public Utilities Commission	Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (CPCN)
New Mexico Public Regulation Commission	Location Approval for Transmission Line
Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment New Mexico Surface Water Quality Bureau	Construction General Stormwater Permit and Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) Section 401 Water Quality Certification
Colorado Department of Transportation New Mexico Department of Transportation	Access Permits if necessary
Colorado Office of Archaeology & Historic Preservation New Mexico Historic Preservation Division	Determination of Compliance with NHPA Section 106
New Mexico Renewable Energy Transmission Authority	To be determined
Local	
Municipalities and Counties - Colorado, New Mexico	Land Use, Construction and Crossing Permits



For more information:

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