

Application for Special Use Permit San Miguel County, Colorado

Maverick to Cahone 230-kV Transmission Line



Submitted to: San Miguel County Planning Department
333 W. Colorado Ave., Telluride, CO 81435

Submitted by: Tri-State Generation and Transmission Assoc., Inc.
1100 W. 116th Ave. Westminster, CO 80234



October 2016

**Application for Special Use Permit
San Miguel County, Colorado
Maverick to Cahone 230-kV Transmission Line**

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1.0 APPLICATION SUBMITTAL CONTENTS (ARTICLE 4, SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS SECTION 4-2)

Land Use Code Section 4-2 establishes the minimum submission requirements for all development applications.

Introduction

Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association, Inc. (Tri-State) submits the following information to support San Miguel County's requirements for the request for a Special Use Permit for the rebuild of the existing Montrose-Nucla-Cahone 115-kilovolt (kV) transmission line to 230-kV. The Project will be rebuilt entirely along the existing 115-kV transmission line route and ROW in San Miguel County. The transmission line within San Miguel County will be about 25 miles in length: six miles crossing private lands, two miles crossing state land, 0.3 mile crossing Town of Telluride land and 16 miles crossing BLM-managed lands. See Table 1.

The portion of the transmission line that crosses San Miguel County is currently called the Nucla to Cahone 115-kV transmission line. However, the new line segment will be called the Maverick to Cahone 230-kV transmission line since the new line will connect at the new Maverick 230-kV substation instead of at the Nucla 115-kV substation (at the Nucla Generating Station).

4-201—General

Tri-State met with San Miguel Planning on July 13, 2016 for a pre-application meeting. That meeting was summarized in San Miguel County's pre-application conference summary letter dated August 5, 2016. Tri-State has prepared the enclosed application and related appendices in accordance with these pre-application items and San Miguel County Land Use Code.

4-202—Required Background Information

Owner

Tri-State will be the owner/operator of the new 230-kV transmission line. Tri-State does not own any of the lands crossed by the transmission line; legal access for the project on federal lands is obtained through federal authorization of right-of-way grants and special use permits and on State and private lands through easement agreements. Tables 1 and 2 below provide a summary of land ownership for the Nucla (from new Maverick 230-kV Substation) to Cahone transmission line right-of-way (ROW). Tri-State will also have a temporary 60-acre construction staging area off Highway 141 in Disappointment Valley which is the subject of a separate special use application. The transmission line is in the West End (WE) Zoning District of San Miguel County. Tri-State does own property at the Montrose, Nucla, Maverick, and Cahone substations, but these facilities are not located in San Miguel County.

Applicant's Name and Address

Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association, Inc.
1100 West 116th Avenue
Westminster, CO 80234
303-452-6111

Authorized Officer for the Applicant

Mr. Joel K. Bladow
Senior Vice President, Transmission

4-203—Parcel Description

Please see Figure 1 for the 8-1/2" x 11" vicinity map locating the project within San Miguel County. The transmission line spans approximately 25 miles in San Miguel County on lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Uncompahgre and Tres Rios Field Offices, State of Colorado, Town of Telluride, and private landowners.

A San Miguel County Map Atlas is included as Appendix 1 and shows the sections, townships, and ranges crossed by the transmission line and associated access roads. Table 1 lists the number of miles for each jurisdiction crossed in San Miguel County by the transmission line ROW.

The existing line crosses 6 miles of private lands in San Miguel County. Approximately 30 miles of access roads across private lands are currently used to construct, operate, and maintain the existing 115-kV transmission line in San Miguel County. This same road network will be utilized to construct, operate, and maintain the new 230-kV line rebuild.

Private landowners granting easements held by Tri-State for the existing 115-kV transmission line are listed in Table 2, which includes the mailing address and legal description.

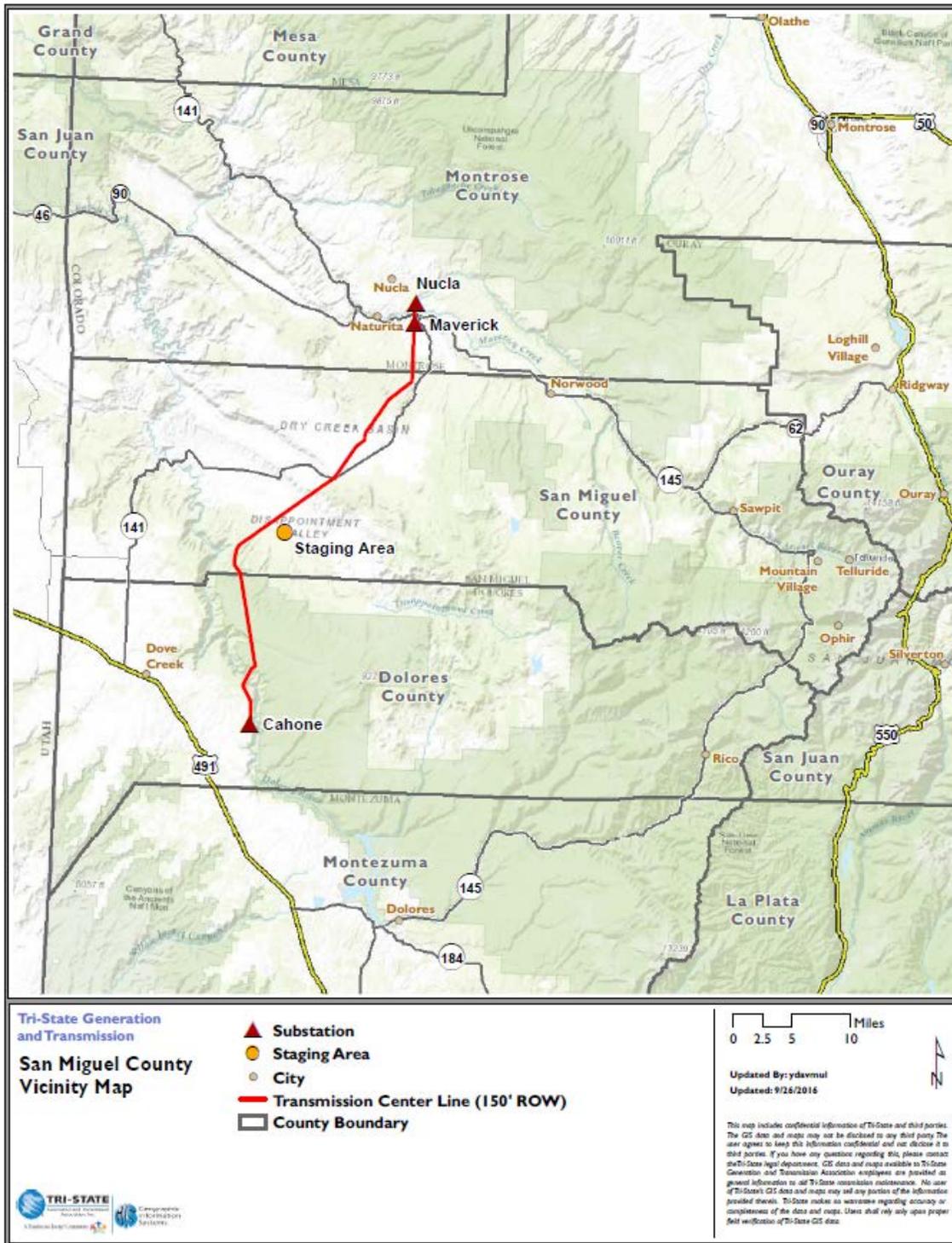


Figure 1: Vicinity Map

Table 1: Transmission line mileage by jurisdiction in San Miguel County for the new 230-kV Montrose-Maverick Cahone Project

Miles by Jurisdiction	Federal			State	Other	Private	
Description	BLM Uncompahgre Field Office	BLM Tres Rios Field Office	Total Federal Lands	State of Colorado Lands	Town of Telluride	Private Lands	Total San Miguel Co.
Transmission Line (150' wide)	2.66	13.31	15.97	2.12	0.34	6.13	24.56

Table 2: Private Parcels Crossed in San Miguel County by Project by name, parcel no., address, and legal description

Name	Parcel #	Address, City/State, Zip Code	Section	Township	Range
David & Terri Andrews	429115200003	P. O. Box 523 Norwood, CO 81423	15	45N	15W
Mex and Sons, Colorado General Partnership	453115200029	P.O. Box 126 Norwood, CO 81423	5, 7, 13 18	44N	16W
State of Colorado Division of Wildlife	453324200917	6060 Broadway Street Denver, CO 80216	23, 24, 26	44N	16W
Town of Telluride	453335200025	P.O. Box 397 Telluride, CO 81435	35	44N	16W
Barrett Brothers Inc.	455103200002	P.O. Box 56 Redvale, CO 81431	3	43W	16W
Steve M. and Pamela Suckla	455118300001	12551 Highway 491 Cortez, CO 81321	18, 19, 24	43N	16W/17W
Steve M. and Pamela Suckla	454927200001	12551 Highway 491 Cortez, CO 81321	27, 34	43N	17W
Scott E. Williams	479516300022	11461 Road 22 Cortez, CO 81321	17	42N	17W
Michael William Anderegg and Clara Love	479517300021	P.O. Box Drawer C Cortez, CO 81321	17	42N	17W
Steve M. and Pamela Suckla	479516300001	12551 Highway 491 Cortez, CO 81321	17	42N	17W

4-204—Disclosure and Proof of Ownership

Within San Miguel County, no new landowners will be affected since the line is being rebuilt in place. All affected private property owners are listed above in Table 2. The pre-application conference summary letter from San Miguel County staff clarified that Notification of Surface Development requirements per CRS 24-65.51-103 does not apply with respect to applications for electric transmission lines.

4-205—Legal Access

Tri-State has right-of-way (ROW) easements for the existing 115-kV line (100-foot ROW) which are included in Appendix 2 - "Easements for ROWs on Private Lands." Tri-State has not yet perfected new expanded easements (150 feet) with landowners along the Maverick-Cahone 230-kV line. Table 2 lists landowners and legal descriptions along the existing 115-kV line, which will be the same for the new proposed 230-kV transmission line.

Tri-State assumed the land rights to the existing transmission line upon acquiring assets from Colorado-Ute in 1992. Tri-State will acquire new 150-foot wide transmission line easements together with access roads (without a current easement). The existing 115-kV transmission line carries a fiber optic ground wire (OPGW). The new 230-kV line will be fitted with a new OPGW to replace the OPGW that existed on the 115-kV line. Easement agreements for the OPGW were obtained in the early 2000s and cover the new OPGW since nothing is changing (capacity, fiber count, etc.) except it will be brand new cable. An example of Tri-State's standard easement for private land is included as Appendix 2 - "Easements for ROWs on Private Lands."

Tri-State has been in contact with San Miguel landowners about the proposed transmission line rebuild since early 2013. All "permissions to survey" for engineering and environmental purposes have been obtained. Tri-State will be negotiating ROW easements with landowners in San Miguel County in 2017. New easements will be recorded at that time with the San Miguel County Clerk.

4-206—Standards Report

A written report demonstrating that the proposed development complies with the applicable substantive review standards.

The Standards Report is included as Chapter 3 of this Application.

4-207—Pre-application Summary Sheet

The pre-application summary letter dated August 5, 2016 provided by the San Miguel County Planning Department is enclosed as Appendix 3.

4-208—Site Plan

Site Plan Requirement:

The number of copies of 24" x 36" and 8-1/2" x 11" site utilization maps as specified by the staff during the pre-application conference. During the pre-application conference, the Planning Office may authorize an applicant to consolidate or delete specific maps that may not be applicable to a particular development proposal. The 24" x 36" site utilization maps must be folded to fit

within a legal-size folder with the name of the application visible. Site maps shall include identification of Areas of Local and State Interest as set forth in Section 5-4 and Wetland Areas as set forth in Section 5-22, for all areas where development activity is proposed.

Tri-State is submitting the San Miguel County Map Atlas in Appendix 1 to meet the requirements of the Site Plan including property boundaries, existing structures and roads.

Descriptions of structure types and proposed construction methods are included in Appendix 4 – Project Description.

4-209—Copies of Application

Tri-State has submitted eight (8) copies of the application to San Miguel County per directions provided in the Pre-application Conference Summary letter.

4-210—Revegetation Plan

Appendix 4 includes a revegetation plan (aka reclamation plan) to address all temporary disturbances resulting from project construction. This would include overland access roads, pad sites, and staging areas. The reclamation plan also outlines specific seed mixes provided by the federal land management agencies and Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) for the project including the Dry Creek Basin. Tri-State is collecting native seed through the Uncompahgre Partnership for the project. Tri-State will reseed private lands with seed mixes proposed by or acceptable to the landowners affected. Reclamation will be deemed complete once vegetation has been reestablished to 70 percent of pre-construction cover as required by Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) stormwater regulations and our federal permitting requirements.

4-211—Weed Control Plan

Tri-State has collected noxious weed data throughout the past three years as part of our engineering and environmental field reviews. This information has been supplemented with available noxious weed data provided by the BLM and the USFS. Tri-State has prepared a framework noxious weed plan included as Appendix 7.

For noxious weeds on private lands Tri-State will consult with landowners and contract with certified weed sprayers to pre-treat weeds prior to construction and to treat them post-construction in the appropriate season according to species occurring in the ROW. Tri-State's treatment methods will be consistent with State law as well as those required by the San Miguel Weed Board. A copy of the plan has been submitted for review to Ron Maybrey, San Miguel Co. weed advisor.

All heavy equipment, including all-terrain vehicles (ATV), utilized during construction will be washed prior to departure from the equipment storage facility and will be regularly inspected and washed as required by the environmental monitor. All seed mixes and mulch used for reclamation activities will be certified weed-free. Pre-construction treatment of weeds in staging or temporary use areas and within the existing ROW will be conducted to suppress weeds before the ground is disturbed.

4-212—Employee Housing Mitigation Plan

The project will employ a temporary work force of 40–60 people spread across 12 months of construction over 40 miles. The project is not expected to have a long-term effect on local housing and will not require additional temporary housing. The project may have a short-term minor effect on hotel availability and short-term rentals in the project vicinity during the construction period; however, there are camping facilities and housing, and hotels to accommodate the work force in cities and towns such as Montrose, Ridgeway, Nucla, Naturita, Norwood, and Dove Creek, Colorado, outside of San Miguel County.

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2.0 PUBLIC UTILITIES STRUCTURES AND ABOVE-GROUND ELECTRICITY TRANSMISSION (ARTICLE 4, SECTION 4-7 OTHER DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS)

Applications for public utilities structures and underground and above ground electricity transmission and distribution lines shall contain the submission contents in this section in addition to the submission contents in Sections 4-701 K. and 4-701 L.

- 4-703 A. Summary of the effects of the proposed site selection and construction upon the natural and socio-economic environment for the impact area as applicable to submission requirements. Included should be an analysis of impacts upon agricultural productivity and agricultural resources.*
- 4-703 B. Summary of major natural and socio-economic environmental constraints as they affect the site selection and construction of the facility as proposed.*
- 4-703 C. Analysis of the long-term effects of the proposed site selection and construction upon the physical and socio-economic development of the impact area.*
- 4-703 D. Justification of the proposed site selection and construction against present and alternative uses of the resources in the impact area.*
- 4-703 E. Description of a program to minimize and mitigate adverse impacts and to maximize the positive impacts of the proposed site selection and construction. Bonding may be required to insure that environmental impacts are mitigated.*
- 4-703 F. Analysis of non-structural alternatives as applicable.*
- 4-703 G. Analysis of air and water pollution control alternatives.*

Response: Tri-State is addressing Items 4-703A through G above by referencing the comprehensive NEPA/Environmental Assessment process that was conducted for the Project. The evaluation of action alternatives involved a detailed study of the natural and socio-economic environment resulting in a preferred alternative to rebuild the existing 115-kV line to 230-kV along its existing route in San Miguel County.

The existing 115-kV line has been in place for 58 years. In general, impacts to the environment are minimized when new or upgraded facilities are placed within existing utility corridors. By replacing the 115-kV line with the 230-kV system in an existing transmission corridor, overall cumulative impacts to the environment, land use, and socio-economics are reduced. While new

easements are required for the expanded 150-foot ROW, no additional landowners will be affected by the rebuild of the line.

Tri-State has committed to a number of design measures, Environmental Protection Measures (EPM), and conservation measures and strategies to avoid, minimize, and mitigate effects to the natural and human environment during project construction and long-term operation and maintenance activities. The EPM table, Biological Mitigation Plan, Reclamation Plan, Noxious Weed Plan, and Wetland and Floodplain plans are included in the appendices.

3.0 STANDARDS REPORT

This chapter serves as a separate written report demonstrating the project's conformance with all pertinent standards in the San Miguel County Land Use Code. A summary of the project's required agency permit, approval, and consultations are addressed in Section 51002 E. XI.

3.1 Project Conformance with Review Standards for More Specific Guidelines for the Siting of Utilities and Utility Lines Throughout the County including Special Uses in the WE Zone District (Article 5, Section 5-3 Zone District Standards)

It is the policy of San Miguel County to locate public utilities and utility lines to create the least amount of impact on county residents and the natural environment. To accomplish this in an orderly and equitable manner, the County has established a land classification system.

It is the County's policy to try and locate utility lines and utilities on Class 5 priority lands. Any proposal to utilize other priority lands shall demonstrate a clear need to do so and shall consider the visual, environmental, physiographic, and socio-economic characteristics of the land including evaluation of broad ecosystems, topography, soils hydrology, geology, vegetation, wildlife, climate and unique features so that the siting of utilities and utility lines results in the least possible adverse impact.

Class 1 Priority - Cemeteries, airports, private and emergency landing strips, future airport sites and approach and take off areas.

Class 2 Priority - Intensive cropland, including irrigated farms, meadows, irrigated pasture land, cropland used for dryland culture, lands along valley floors intermingled with cropland, farm and ranch headquarters and storage points.

Class 3 Priority - Unincorporated land zoned residential, multi-family residential, and commercial in which public utilities are a permitted use; lands containing or having significant impact on historical, natural, or archaeological resources, shorelines of major lakes or reservoirs, natural streams and ponds, skylines visible from major transportation routes, geologic hazard areas and critical wildlife areas.

Class 4 Priority - Timbered areas that would require modification or removal to provide clearance for utilities or utility lines; land within the boundaries of

approved developments and land suggested as future growth areas around existing communities.

Class 5 Priority - All public and government lands, and all other lands not falling within the definition of Class 1, 2, 3, or 4 Priority.

Consistency Statement: The transmission line occurs primarily on Class 5 Priority lands administered by the State of Colorado, Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Forest Service, and Town of Telluride. Rebuilding the line in the existing corridor reduces effects to new private landowners and reduces new environmental and land use effects. The project will cross small portions of Class 3 Priority lands involving critical wildlife areas-Gunnison Sage-Grouse critical and occupied habitat. The Biological Resource Protection Plan included as Appendix 13 provides a comprehensive conservation strategy to offset potential direct and indirect effects to Gunnison Sage-Grouse from project construction.

5-320 F—Uses Allowed Subject to Two-Step Special Use Review

Consistency Statement: Utility service facilities such as utility lines are identified in LUC Section 5-320 III as Uses Allowed Subject to Two-step Planning Commission and Board of County Commissioner Special Use Permit Review.

5-320 J—General Development Guidelines for All Uses

I. Potable Water & Sewage Disposal

Consistency Statement: The project does not have a permanent need for water for either construction or operations and maintenance activities. During construction water used for dust control will be secured from existing permitted uses such as a local water district or landowner. Drinking water will be supplied by workers. Sewage disposal will be handled with portable toilets; trash will be collected in trash bins located at the staging area and along the ROW.

II. Effects on Agriculture

a. Fences

Consistency Statement: Construction activities will require some new access through existing fences. Pursuant to landowner/land management agency approval, permanent gates will be installed within the ROW limits or along designated access roads to provide for controlled access during construction as well as for the long-term maintenance of the transmission line. To prevent the passage of livestock, all gates will be kept closed except to briefly allow the passage of equipment during construction. All gates will remain closed, unless the landowner or land management agency has given specified instructions to leave a gate open. Construction related damage to gates and fences will be repaired immediately at the construction contractor's expense and to the specification of the affected landowner/land management agency.

b. Irrigation Ditches

Consistency Statement: Construction and future maintenance activities will use existing culverts and bridges to cross irrigation ditches consistent with access easements or agreements secured from landowners or land managers. In some cases the use of a temporary culvert, mats, or earthen berm may be needed to cross small field ditches. Landowners and ditch companies would be consulted and approve crossing methods before ditches were crossed. Damage to irrigation ditches will be repaired as soon as possible to ensure proper functioning of these facilities during and post-construction.

c. Historical Easement for Ditches

Consistency Statement: Since Tri-State operates under an easement, only the permit holder or landowner can convey rights to existing historical irrigation access and facilities. No conflicts with irrigation are expected given the lack of conflict with the continued use of the ROW for the past 58 years.

III. Cooperation with landowners and wildlife lifestyle

Consistency Statement: Consistency Statement: Tri-State has developed Environmental Protection Measures (BR-1 through BR12 in Appendix 5) and a Biological Resource Protection Plan (Appendix 13) to minimize impacts to wildlife during the construction, operation and maintenance of the transmission line. Tri-State recognizes that the cooperative existence between landowners and wildlife is a way of life and understands our role in helping maintain that relationship.

5-320 K—Review Standards for all WE Zone District Special Uses

All special uses shall:

- I. Be consistent with the County Master Plan, the County Land Use Policies in Article 2 and the purpose of the WE Zone District;*

Consistency Statement: The project is consistent with County Master Plan, County Land Use Policies and the WE Zone District. See responses under Section 5-1002 A.

- II. Be consistent with and compatible with the character of the immediate vicinity of the parcel proposed for development and surrounding land uses, and/or shall enhance the mixture of complimentary uses and activities in the immediate vicinity of the parcel proposed for development;*

Consistency Statement: The project will limit development activity within the 150-foot ROW width easement. Given the line will remain in the same corridor, the rebuild project will not change the current character or land uses of parcels in the immediate vicinity.

III. Be designed, located and operated so that the public health, safety and welfare will be protected;

Consistency Statement: The project will be designed and constructed to meet or exceed all applicable requirements of the National Electric Safety Code (NESC) and North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC) guidelines for 230-kV transmission lines. Nevertheless, all energized electrical equipment is a potential safety hazard and care must be taken when working or playing near transmission lines and substations. Direct physical contact with a grounded object and high voltage wires is not the only way direct contact with electricity can be made. Arcing can occur across an air gap; therefore, care must be taken when operation tall machinery or equipment near energized lines. The project is designed to discourage direct contact with energized facilities including electrical towers, structures, and substation equipment.

IV. Be located, designed and operated to minimize adverse effects, including impacts on scenic quality, pedestrian and vehicular circulation, parking, trash, service delivery, noise, vibration and odor on surrounding properties;

Consistency Statement: The project will be located, designed, and operated to minimize adverse effects on scenic quality (See Section 3.5 and Appendix 10 – Visual Simulations). The line is located in remote, primarily public lands, in the West End of San Miguel County. All effects of construction, operation, and maintenance of the line such as vehicular traffic, parking, trash, dust, and noise will have minimal and short-term effects on surrounding properties.

V. Provide adequate public facilities and services to serve the special use, including but not limited to roads, adequate water supply in terms of both quality and quantity, sewer, solid waste and fire protection;

Consistency Statement: The project will upgrade and maintain the existing roads associated with the 115-kV transmission line. Where necessary, roads may be upgraded to 16 feet in width to allow passage of large equipment during construction. The project may use up to 2 acre-feet for water for dust abatement on roads and ROW. Water will be procured from a permitted source or through agreements with private landowners. Sanitary and solid wastes will be contained at designated staging areas and will meet applicable local, state, and federal regulation.

VI. Not substantially adversely affect agriculture or ranching operations and residences;

Consistency Statement: The transmission line will be rebuilt in an existing, but expanded transmission ROW. There will be no long-term impacts to ongoing agriculture and ranching operations beyond what has occurred on the landscape since the line was completed in 1958. Tri-State works diligently with local landowners to minimize short-term construction related effects to agriculture and ranching operations including limiting access at critical times of the year and compensating the landowner for potential loss of productivity resulting from construction and maintenance-related activities.

VII. Only include roads, utilities and associated structures that bear logical relationships to existing topography and minimize cuts and fills; and

Consistency Statement: By utilizing the existing 115-kV utility corridor, the proposed project minimizes the need for new roads and cuts and fills. Some roads may be improved and widened to 16 feet in width (or greater at corners or switchbacks) in order to allow for the safe passage of construction equipment and to ensure the adequate turning radii for pole-trucks hauling 100-foot plus poles.

VIII. Be consistent with the historic rural and agricultural character of the West End. Input from neighbors shall be considered by the County in determining consistency.

Consistency Statement: Overall the project will be consistent with the existing rural character of the West End. The new 230-kV wooden H-frame structures will be similar in appearance but taller than the existing 115-kV H-frame structures. In Dry Creek Basin, steel monopoles will replace wooden H-frame structures across Gunnison sage grouse critical habitat. These structures will be visible to the public only where the line crosses CR U-29 and SR 141. See Visual Simulations (Appendix 10) –and Project Description (Appendix 4) –for a comparison of the existing and proposed structures for the new 230-kV line.

3.2 Project Conformance for Areas and Activities of Local and State Interest (Article 5, Section 5-4 ‘1041’ Environmental Hazard Review)

5-402—General Standards

The standards in this section apply to all Areas of Local and State Interest with the exception of Mancos shale, expansive soil and rock, wildfire and historic and archaeological areas.

5-402 A. Development in Hazard-free Areas

Restrict development to a hazard-free area if such an area exists on a site.

5-402 B. Development in Hazard Areas

If no adequate hazard-free area exists on a site, the diversity of permitted uses in a zone district and permitted residential land use densities may be limited to minimize potential dangers to persons or wildlife.

Consistency Statement. The proposed Maverick-Cahone 230-kV transmission line meets all general standards and design engineering will mitigate any potential hazards to public health, safety, and welfare. See Project Description in Appendix 4.

5-403—Floodplain Hazard Areas

In addition to the development standards in 5-402 and the San Miguel County Floodplain Regulations (refer to Section 5-28), the standards in this section apply to mapped floodplain hazard areas as depicted in the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Flood Insurance Rate Map, National Flood Insurance Program, and to areas later found to be in flood hazard areas.

5-403 A. If no adequate hazard-free area exists on a site, development proposed within final base flood elevations Zones A1-30 and/or regulatory floodway shall:

- I. Have the lowest floor (including basement) elevated to one foot above the base flood level or be designed so that below the base flood level the structure is water tight with walls substantially impermeable to the passage of water and with structural components having the capability of resisting hydrostatic and hydrodynamic loads and effects of buoyancy; and*
- II. Be designed by a qualified professional engineer who shall certify that the flood proofing methods identified in Section 5-403 A.I. are adequate to withstand the flood depths, pressures, velocities, impact and uplift forces and other factors associated with the base flood.*

Consistency Statement. According to the Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) dated September 30, 1988, Map No. 08113C00075 C, the new 230-kV transmission line will have four (4) structures in three creeks in the Dry Creek Basin that occur within The structures in the floodplain include: new structures 95 near Nelson Creek; 96 near Dry Creek; and 101 and 102 near Dead Horse Creek. New structure 94 on the north side of Nelson Creek will be 30 feet outside the floodplain. Approximately 1,548 feet of proposed unsurfaced access trail will pass through the floodplains associated with Nelson Creek and Dead Horse Creek. Please refer to Appendix 9 for maps showing the location of these structures and roads in relation to the floodplains.

Tri-State currently has five (5) structures on their 115-kV transmission line that are located within the 100-year floodplains of Nelson Creek, Dry Creek, and Dead Horse Creek, as shown in

the maps provided in Appendix 9. These structures have been in place since 1958 without any impacts from floods. These existing structures will be removed as part of the proposed project. Following construction of the new 230-kV line, the number of structures within a floodplain hazard area will be reduced from five (5) to four (4). Similarly, Tri-State currently has authorized unsurfaced access trails that cross the Nelson Creek and Dead Horse Creek floodplains in the same locations as those that will service the new 230-kV line. Those roads have been in use since 1958 with no significant damage from flood events and only minor maintenance required. Neither the existing or future transmission line structures nor associated access road have or will have an effect on the functionality of the floodplain.

While the new structures occur within the contour elevation mapped in 1988 as the 100-year floodplain, it is likely this elevation is no longer the actual floodplain boundary. As seen in Figure 2 below, the channel of Dry Creek has been deeply eroded and incised. Structures adjacent to Dry Creek have been located up and outside of the arroyo walls. There will be no down-line access for construction through the arroyo itself.

Steps Taken to Minimize Construction within the Floodplain

Tri-State is proposing to rebuild the line within an existing transmission corridor to reduce cumulative effects to the floodplain beyond existing conditions. Tri-State was able to reduce the overall number of structures in Dry Creek Basin through a new design and structure type which is a single pole, steel, self-supporting structure. In order to keep the transmission line in the existing corridor it was not possible to avoid the large expanse of the Dry Creek Basin floodplains entirely. The number of structures placed within the floodplain was minimized to the extent possible.

Steps Taken to Minimize Effects of Infrastructure Located within the Floodplain

The structures that will be in the 100-year floodplain will be steel monopoles and will be designed by a Professional Engineer who will verify that the structures are adequate to withstand the flood depths, pressures, velocities, and other factors associated with the 100-year base flood determined by Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Poles located within the 100-year floodplain will not affect hydraulic capacity of the floodway or increase flood levels. Similarly, access trails/roads crossing through the floodplain will not create barriers to flows or alter the flood path in any way. Low water crossings would be armored with rock riprap at the same grade as the stream.



Figure 2: The Deeply Incised Dry Creek Arroyo

5-404—Geologic Hazard Areas

A memorandum titled, “Preliminary Geologic Hazards for the Nucla-Cahone Transmission Line San Miguel County, Colorado,” prepared by a Professional Engineer with Kleinfelder, Inc., presents a review of the location of potential geologic hazards and is included in Appendix 11. Geotechnical soil borings and investigations will be done for the Nucla-Cahone segment of the transmission line, including San Miguel County in 2017. The investigation will include a description of site-specific geologic hazards encountered in the field by the professional geologist. These hazards may include but are not limited to; landslides, unstable slopes, slopes greater than 30%, alluvial fans, talus slopes, Mancos shale, faults, expansive soil and rock and ground subsidence. This information will inform final design for transmission line structures.

5-405—Historic and Archaeological Resource Areas

The project will not affect historical properties. The project does cross-cultural resource sites eligible for listing under the National Historic Preservation Act. The determination of effects and associated mitigation measures are currently being assessed and managed through the Section 106 consultation process. A cultural resource Monitoring and Discovery Plan has been developed to ensure that sites eligible to the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), including those not identified during Class III cultural resource inventory, are treated in a planned, systematic manner as prescribed by regulation. The plan documents the procedures to be implemented for monitoring known onsite areas and for the treatment of discoveries found during construction of the transmission line project.

The monitoring plan identifies the monitoring locations and contains standards and procedures for the qualification and training of archaeological monitors and construction personnel, and for monitoring the removal and construction of transmission line support structures, vegetation removal within the project right-of-way (ROW), and grading associated with access road improvements and the construction of new access roads. The discovery plan includes procedures for the identification, protection, initial treatment, evaluation and treatment of discoveries (including discoveries of human remains), and also outlines procedures for coordination, notification, and reporting. This plan will be part of the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) for treating adverse effects to historic properties and supplements the Treatment Plan.

Environmental Protection Measures specific to cultural resources include G-3, CR-1 through CR-8 and are located in Appendix 5.

5-406—Wildfire Areas

The transmission line occurs in rural areas with native vegetation that is at risk for wildfire. While Tri-State cannot manage wildlife risk outside of the authorized transmission ROW, Tri-State manages transmission ROWs to reduce the potential for vegetation induced outages. Tri-State has an Integrated Vegetation Management Plan (IVMP) to reduce vegetation induced

outages on our transmission system. The IVMP focuses on maintaining ROWs with compatible (low-growing) vegetation. The IVMP also addresses the requirement and need to manage danger trees on and adjacent to the ROW. Danger trees are defined as those that may fall, blow, or grown into the transmission line. In addition, the IVMP addresses reducing fuel loading within the ROW to reduce wildfire related effects to the transmission structures and wires. Tri-State also clears a 75-foot radius around each structure to further protect this critical infrastructure.

Tri-State has prepared a Fire Plan to address fire hazard during construction (see Appendix 14).

5-407—Wildlife Habitat Areas

Development activities, such as Special Use Permits, may require a Wildlife Impact Assessment prepared by a qualified wildlife biologist or scientist for all mapped wildlife habitat areas or known habitat areas to be submitted with the land use application. The Impact Assessment should include changes, trends and proposed mitigation to be reviewed by the Colorado Parks and Wildlife or other County review staff.

Consistency with Wildlife Impact Assessment: Project related impacts to wildlife have been thoroughly addressed through the Environmental Assessment/NEPA process, and in the pending Biological Opinion being prepared by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. As part of the EA process, Tri-State prepared a Biological Resource Protection Plan (see Appendix 13) which incorporates Environmental Protection Measures for rare plants, big game, raptors and other migratory birds, and the federally threatened Gunnison Sage-Grouse. The Biological Resource Protection Plan also includes a Gunnison Sage-Grouse Voluntary Conservation Strategy. As a cooperating agency for the EA, San Miguel County provided excellent input and recommendations specifically pertaining to Gunnison Sage-Grouse for this strategy. The final approved Gunnison Sage-Grouse conservation strategy is the result of coordination between Colorado Parks and Wildlife, San Miguel County, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Bureau of Land Management, as well as third party sage-grouse experts that provided substantial support to the EA analysis.

Rebuilding the transmission line in an existing corridor will reduce cumulative effects to wildlife vegetation cover, and overall habitat. Reclamation and noxious weed management will be ongoing for the life of the transmission line and will mitigate long-term effects to wildlife foraging opportunities and habitat.

5-407 A General Standards

II. Removal of vegetation shall be minimized. Vegetation removed shall be promptly replaced with beneficial native browse species.

III. Wildlife food, cover and water shall be preserved and development effects that would destroy these shall be mitigated

Consistency with Vegetation Removal Statement: Tri-State has committed to the Environmental Protection Measures listed in Appendix 5 to reduce overall impacts to vegetation and wildlife from project construction and future maintenance activities. Rebuilding the line within an existing transmission corridor reduces any additional/cumulative effects to vegetation communities in San Miguel County. Vegetation management activities over the years have required Tri-State to maintain low-growing plant communities in our ROW to reduce wildfire risk and vegetation induced outages. These vegetation management requirements will continue during the operation and maintenance of the new 230-kV line.

Tri-State will only remove non-compatible vegetation in the ROW between spans. Sagebrush communities are compatible with operation of a transmission line and will not be removed in-between spans within occupied and critical habitat. However, in order to protect the transmission line from wildfire, Tri-State will clear all woody vegetation within a 75-foot area around all of the new 230-kV structures and some removal would occur near pulling sites for the fiber optic line. Tri-State will limit surface disturbance during construction to the minimum area required to safely and efficiently construct the transmission line. Post construction, Tri-State will reclaim all areas temporarily disturbed as a result of project construction. This will include re-seeding using native seed mixes (as approved by the land management agency/owner) at structure pad sites cut and fills slopes for access improvements, and the re-seeding of overland access routes to reduce long-term effects of erosion and noxious weed invasion. A specific seed mix for Gunnison Sage-Grouse habitat has been provided by the BLM and approved by CPW.

In addition, as mentioned above Tri-State has a Noxious Weed Plan (Appendix 7) and a Reclamation Plan (Appendix 6) that will be implemented for project construction and long-term maintenance to reduce long-term effects to native vegetation communities.

V. *Waterholes, springs, seepage, marshes, pond and watering areas shall be preserved*

Consistency Statement: Tri-State has avoided wetlands to the greatest extent possible in San Miguel County by routing access routes around them and creating areas of no-downline access across arroyos and canyons. Unavoidable impacts to wetlands are limited and have been minimized to the maximum extent practicable. The maps in Appendix 8 show the location of the only wetlands crossed by the project in San Miguel County. New transmission line structures would be located entirely outside of wetlands. Structures 96 and 173 would be located within the 100-foot buffer of wetlands. Structure 96 would be located on the north side of Dry Creek, entirely outside the deeply-incised arroyo. Similarly, Structure 173 would be located entirely

outside the deeply-incised Disappointment Creek arroyo. BMPs would be installed and signs, flagging and/or fencing used during construction to ensure there are no direct or indirect effects to the wetlands.

There is an access road that would cross an ephemeral tributary to Disappointment Creek. The access road will be routed across an existing dam within 100 feet of wetlands but with no direct or indirect effects to the wetlands. There may be temporary and minor effects to wetlands at the Nelson Creek crossing and during the removal of existing Structure 234 on the southwest side of Disappointment Creek. After Structure 234 is removed, no future maintenance activity will be required in wetlands associated with Disappointment Creek. Construction at these locations will be undertaken only when soils are dry, and mats will be employed when crossing through the Nelson Creek arroyo during construction. Mats would be removed once the pole has been wrecked out and the area would be restored using an approved wetland seed mix if necessary. Given the short-term nature of wreck-out activities, it is likely the area will reclaim itself in a short-period of time without the need for additional reclamation efforts. The environmental monitor would be present when the contractor is working in this area to ensure impacts are minimized and to monitor and make recommendations on future reclamation efforts in coordination with San Miguel County and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers staff. Effects to wetlands would be further minimized with implementation of avoidance measures and EPMs as listed in Appendix 5.

- VI. *Known endangered species habitats shall be preserved and all disturbances to those habitats shall be minimized*
- VII. *Every golden eagle nest site, bald eagle roost site, and all other raptor nest sites shall be protected from the adverse impacts of development within a ½ mile buffer*

There are no active bald eagle nest or roost sites, nor are there any golden eagle nest sites located within 0.5 mile of the Montrose-Nucla-Cahone transmission project.

The NEPA Contractor, ERO Resources, conducted raptor nesting surveys to identify nests in proximity to the ROW. Raptor nest locations are sensitive data and can be provided in GIS format to the County for review, but have not been included on the wildlife habitat maps. Prior to construction during spring and summer months, Tri-State will conduct nesting surveys for raptors and other migratory birds and apply the State recommended buffer and seasonal restriction to avoid impacts to protected species. In some locations, an environmental monitor may be used to watch active nests in proximity to the line to ensure the birds are not disturbed during construction related activities. If during said monitoring, the nesting pair displays signs of being disturbed or leaving the nest, the environmental monitor will have the right to cease construction in this area until the young have fledged or nesting is complete.

Tri-State has also conducted an avian collision risk assessment to identify areas along the line where collision risk is moderate to high. The risk assessment conducted by avian experts, EDM

International recommends marking across the Dry Creek Basin for Gunnison Sage-Grouse. The analysis indicated that risk for grouse collision with the transmission line is low, but given that the species is federally listed, line marking will be conducted through occupied habitat for the Gunnison Sage-Grouse in Dry Creek Basin to address the potential risk of take of a federally listed species.

XII. Development activities, such as Subdivisions, PUDs and Special Use Permits uses may require a Wildlife Impact Assessment prepared by a qualified wildlife biologist or scientist for all mapped wildlife habitat areas or known habitat areas to be submitted with the land use application. The Impact Assessment should include changes, trends and proposed mitigation to be reviewed by the Colorado Parks and Wildlife or other County review staff.

5-407 B—Deer, Elk and Bighorn Sheep Winter Concentration Area/Severe Winter Range

5-407 C—Deer, Elk and Bighorn Sheep Winter Range

5-407 D—Deer and Elk Migration Corridors

5-407 E—Deer and Elk Production Areas

Consistency Statement for Deer, Elk Winter Concentration, Migration Corridors, and Production Areas: Tri-State collected big game and other wildlife data as part of the early planning stages of this project and this data were analyzed in detail in the Environmental Assessment. CPW data was the primary data set incorporated into planning efforts, but on lands administered by the BLM and USFS, the Resource Management Plan guidance and the Forest Management Plan guidance were also incorporated to address and minimize project related effects to elk and mule deer.

Big game data is shown in Appendix 12 – “Wildlife Habitat Areas.” The Environmental Protection Measures table found in Appendix 5 and the Biological Resource Protection Plan (Appendix 13) detail all big game and other wildlife seasonal restriction and best management practices to reduce project related effects to big game and other wildlife species.

VIII. Mesh or woven fences shall be prohibited and are encouraged to be removed

Consistency Statement: Tri-State is not proposing to build new fences as part of this project, but rather would be replacing or repairing existing fences and adding new access gates as required. If new fences are required as part of the project they will be built to the standards of the affected land manager/owner. Typically, CPW and the federal agencies will require installation of a wildlife friendly fence. On private lands, fence and gates will be installed and repaired to the specification of the affected landowner. Typically, Tri-State installs panel gates and wire fence and will not be using mesh or woven fencing material. Big game movement will not be impeded

by this project as most of the fence and gate related infrastructure is already in place. Big game will be permitted to move freely through the transmission ROW.

5-411—Public Utility Facilities

The project is located consistent with the San Miguel Comprehensive Plan see Standards Report.

3.3 Project Conformance for Public Utilities Structures and Electricity Transmission (Article 5, Section 5-7 Improvements)

5-709

All public utility structures and electricity transmission lines more than 115 kilovolts shall comply with the standards in this section. Additionally, all above ground electricity transmission or distribution lines in excess of 1,000 linear feet in length in San Miguel County are subject to compliance with the standards in this section. These standards do not apply to the normal construction of local service natural gas lines.

5-709 A

The proposed development poses no significant threat to the health, welfare and safety of the citizens of San Miguel County or the citizens of the region.

Consistency Statement: The proposed project will help protect the health, welfare and safety of the citizens of San Miguel County by providing a reliable source of power to communities and rural residents in the region. In addition, the transmission line will continue to provide fiber optic service including 911 services to the region.

5-709 B

Construction and operation of the facility will not unreasonably impact the physical, economic, or social environment of San Miguel County or this region, including agricultural land and water.

Consistency Statement: The existing 115-kV line has been in place for 58 years. In general, impacts to the environment are minimized when new facilities are placed within existing utility corridors. By replacing the 115-kV line with the 230-kV line in the same location, no new utility corridor will be established, ground disturbance will be significantly reduced, and the potential impacts to the physical and social environment that can result from establishing new utility corridors and access will be avoided.

The project crosses almost exclusively open rangeland in the county so effects on agricultural will be minimal. The nearest large irrigated field (a pivot-irrigated hayfield) is 1.7 miles east of

the ROW near County Road U-29, and one structure is located in pastureland near Disappointment Creek.

The project will require less than 2 acre-feet of water for construction. Water will primarily be used for controlling dust on access roads and at construction sites. No water is necessary during the operation of the project. Water used during construction will be obtained from a qualified supplier.

The project will enhance the economic stability of the region by ensuring a reliable source of power. The project will generate sales and use tax to state and local governments. Construction expenditures for similar projects for regional supplies and services were estimated at about \$250,000 (Nucla-Sunshine Transmission Line Project). Local communities including Montrose, Ridgeway, Nulca, Naturita, Norwood, and Dove Creek will benefit from increased sales tax from local purchases. Finally, county tax revenue based on a percentage of capital expenditures for 25 miles of new transmission line at a cost of \$23.6 M is estimated to be \$191,000 for San Miguel County.

5-709 C

Adverse impacts to the County and/or region have been identified, and the applicant has presented a satisfactory program of mitigation, including assurances of implementation.

Consistency Statement: Potential adverse impacts and the related Environmental Protection Measures that reduced these to insignificant levels are documented in the Final Environmental Assessment released by the Forest Service and BLM in September 2016. The U.S. Forest Service has issued a Draft Decision Notice and Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) and the BLM will be following with their Draft Decision Record and FONSI. Tri-State's Environmental Protection Measures (EPMs) and the FONSI are included as Appendices 6 and 12.

5-709 D

Alternative sites and routes and methods to reduce the impact to the land such as combining new lines with existing lines, placing new lines underground, etc., have been identified and approved by the San Miguel County Board of County Commissioners.

Consistency Statement: Alternatives were developed through the NEPA public scoping process that considered public and agency comments, environmental issues, engineering, and cost criteria. Early in the federal public scoping process, undergrounding the line across Gunnison Sage-Grouse habitat was considered. This alternative did not move forward in the detailed analyses based on costs, constructability, and the extensive ground disturbance required for high voltage underground lines.

Two routing alternative were proposed by the BLM, including one in San Miguel County across Gunnison Sage-Grouse critical habitat in Dry Creek Basin. The alternative route would have relocated 9 miles of the transmission line along a portion of Highway 141 and require construction across previously undisturbed habitat and impacts to new landowners. Siting the transmission line parallel to a major transmission route was not consistent with LUC-5-709 H of the San Miguel County land use regulations. Ultimately this alternative was not selected and the existing routing was selected as the federal agencies preferred alternative. The existing route is therefore, consistent with County land use regulations.

5-709 E

All costs associated with the construction of new distribution lines, including any costs resulting from mitigation of visual impacts, shall be paid by the utility provided and/or the individual property owners who will connect to the new line.

Consistency Statement: Tri-State will pay for the costs of constructing and operating the aboveground 230-kV transmission line including all associated conservation measures and post-construction reclamation. The costs of the transmission line for both steel and wood structures and new OPGW fiber optic cable is estimated at approximately \$23.6M.

5-709 F

The benefits of the development outweigh the unavoidable and unmitigable impacts upon the physical, social, and economic environment of San Miguel County and the region.

Consistency Statement: The benefits of the project are significant to all residents of San Miguel County and the region. The project will ensure the delivery of safe and reliable electric power to the region while providing the capacity to support existing loads and future growth of residential, commercial, and industrial needs. No significant adverse impacts were identified specifically for San Miguel County resources in the EA with the exception of potential impacts to critical habitat for the Gunnison sage grouse. These impacts are addressed in detail in the Biological Resource Protection Plan (Appendix 13) which includes design features to reduce effects to Gunnison Sage-Grouse as well as habitat improvement funds, and the purchase of an approximately 500 acres parcel of lands near Miramonte Reservoir which has been identified by San Miguel County and CPW as a priority for habitat acquisition. These benefits to Gunnison Sage-Grouse are a unique and major contribution to survival of San Miguel Gunnison sage grouse population.

5-709 G

Proposed uses in Airport Reservations shall be for use by the facility and these and any other allowed facility shall meet the navigable airspace requirements of

AC No. 70-7460-2-E, dated 7/5/73 and issued by the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Commerce, as may be amended.

Consistency Statement: The proposed project does not affect the Airport Reservations areas as depicted in Appendix D of the San Miguel County Land Use Code.

5-709 H

All proposed above ground extensions are routed wherever possible to:

- I. Avoid paralleling of major transportation routes;*
- II. Cross any transportation route at as close to a right angle as possible;*
- III. Avoid “tunnel” effect of clearing areas visible from a population concentration or major transportation route;*
- IV. Avoid clear-stripping of right-of-way;*
- V. Avoid corrosive spoils;*
- VI. Avoid creation of access way scars visible as above;*
- VII. Avoid historic and archaeological sites; natural phenomenon;*
- VIII. Avoid impact on wildlife and wildlife habitat;*
- IX. Preserve as much as possible the natural landscape;*
- X. Minimize conflict with existing and planned uses shown on the County Master Plan Map;*
- XI. Maximize the natural screening potential of vegetation and topography; and*
- XII. Avoid crossing or use interference with a fishery.*

I. Avoid paralleling of major transportation routes

Consistency Statement: The project avoids paralleling major transportation routes. The project crosses SR 141 once in the Dry Creek Basin and is barely visible from the highway with the exception of the crossing.

II. Cross any transportation route at as close to a right angle as possible

Consistency Statement: The crossing of SR 141 is generally perpendicular to the highway see San Miguel County Map Atlas (Site Plan) Appendix 1, sheet 2.

III. Avoid “tunnel” effect of clearing areas visible from a population concentration or major transportation route

Consistency Statement: Tri-State’s Integrated Vegetation Management Program (IVMP) was introduced above in Section 5-407 and is described in further detail below in 5-709-IV. Tall growing (non-compatible) vegetation will be removed to reduce risk of vegetation induced outages and wildfire-related impacts to the transmission line. In pinyon-juniper communities, trees will be thinned to reduce fuel loading but a certain number of trees will remain in steeper

valleys and drainages to reduce the appearance of a tunnel effect. Sagebrush communities will not be removed between spans as they do not present a threat to the power line. Gambel oak will be removed from the ROW as it poses a grow-in and fuels risk. Given that this is an existing transmission line and vegetation management activities have been ongoing for decades, construction of the new 230-kv line should result in only minor changes from current visual conditions Appendix 10 provides photo-simulations of wooded slopes near SR 141 and CR 19Q before and after construction.

IV. Avoid clear-stripping of the right-of-way

Consistency Statement: Tri-State's Integrated Vegetation Management Program outlines the manner in which vegetation is managed on our transmission ROWs. The program takes into consideration the North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC) and the National Electric Safety Code (NESC) requirements for maintaining electrical clearances and reducing vegetation induced outages. Wildfire risk in the West has also resulted in utilities also addressing fuel loading and management in ROWs to further reduce wildfire risks to the transmission line and structures. Tri-State's goal is to have only compatible (low-growing) vegetation in our ROWs. Larger tall growing species have been historically and will continue to be removed from the ROW to protect this critical infrastructure and reduce wildfire related impacts. This transmission line carries fiber optic cable that carries 911 services. Protecting this transmission line through proactive vegetation management is critical to public health and safety. Tri-State works with each landowner and land management agency to meet our federal reliability requirements under NERC and to reduce impacts to the landscape.

V. Avoid corrosive soils

Consistency Statement: The alignment of the transmission line is not changing in San Miguel County, and therefore any corrosive soils present cannot be avoided. Any corrosive soils encountered during geotechnical testing will be factored into the final line design, foundations, and anchors.

VI. Avoid creation of access way scars visible as above

Consistency Statement: The proposed project minimizes the creation of new access roads and related landscape scars by using existing ROW and roads. About 30 miles of existing roads and trails currently used for maintenance of the 115-kV line will be used for construction. Overland access is used whenever possible to reduce grading on the ROW and to protect vegetation resources which will minimize landscape scarring. Graded construction pads will be reclaimed post construction to minimize visual effects.

VII. Avoid historic and archaeological sites; natural phenomenon

Consistency Statement: Tri-State is committed to avoiding impacts to cultural resources to the greatest extent feasible and practical. A Class III inventory has been completed for the entire

project. Eligible sites were avoided through careful pole placement to the greatest extent possible. Unavoidable eligible sites will be mitigated through a data recovery/treatment plan in accordance with state and federal laws and regulations for the protection of cultural resources.

VIII. Avoid impacts on wildlife and wildlife habitat

Consistency Statement: See Section 5-407 and refer to the Biological Resource Protection Plan and Environmental Protection Measures in Appendices 5 and 13).

IX. Preserve as much as possible the natural landscape

Consistency Statement: The proposed project preserves the natural landscape to the greatest extent possible by avoiding the construction of new access roads and by utilizing an existing utility corridor.

X. Minimize conflict with existing and planned uses shown on the County Master Plan Map

Consistency Statement: The proposed project minimizes conflicts with existing and planned land uses by routing the proposed 115-kV transmission line in an established 58-year-old utility corridor. Conflicts are also minimized since the existing 115-kV line will be removed once the 230-kV project is in operation, thereby resulting in no net increase in utility lines across San Miguel County. The longer spacing between the new 230-kV structures will reduce the number of structures on the landscape by one third.

XI. Maximize the natural screening potential of vegetation and topography

Consistency Statement: The current routing of the line through varied topography effectively screens the existing and proposed line. Only along SR 141, CRs U29 and 19Q is the line visible for any distance. The use of weathered steel in forested habitats and acid-etched galvanized steel in open terrain will help the line blend with vegetation, topography and the horizon.

XII. Avoid crossing or use interference with a fishery

Consistency Statement: The proposed project will not cross or interfere with any fisheries. All water bodies will be spanned and construction activities will be limited to existing access roadways.

5-709 I

All proposed extensions of central service plant whose curvature, grade or other constraint inherent in such facility tends to require alignment along valley floors or public ways, shall avoid impacts listed in (C) above; provide for recompaction to restore the original density of disturbed irrigated ground; provide for restoration of the original slope of hillsides and ridge cuts; and by innovative construction techniques minimize the width of clearing and cuts, including those

required for installation of normally buried facilities above ground where such might be less disturbing to the sum criteria of this plan.

Consistency Statement: Tri-State will restore all temporarily disturbed areas following completion of the project construction phase in accordance with the Revegetation Plan in Appendix 6. Tri-State is committed to only disturbing that which is required to safely construct, protect, and maintain the transmission line. If construction activities result in loss of agricultural or livestock production; Tri-State would compensate affected landowners for this impact. Tri-State would ensure the access roads and pad sites associated with transmission structures are properly graded to reduce erosion and to restore natural contours to the extent practicable.

5-709 J

These regulations shall not apply to the normal construction of individual telephone subscriber service, distribution and feeder cables, including the delivery of cable television, toll service, and extended area service telephone lines.

Consistency Statement: The proposed transmission line project and OPGW fiber is not a normal telephone line; the OPGW does provide delivery of phone and cable television service in the region.

5-709 K

Approval shall not be considered until such time as the Public Utilities Commission has granted a Certificate of Public Necessity and Convenience, if such Certificate is required from the Public Utilities Commission.

Consistency Statement: Tri-State received a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity from the Colorado Public Utilities Commission for the Montrose-Nucla-Cahone Transmission Project on July 22, 2013 (Proceedings No. 13A-0489E).

3.4 Project Conformance for All Special Uses and Uses Requiring One-Step and Two-step Review (Article 5, Section 5-10 Special Uses)

5-1002—Standards for All Special Uses and Other Uses Requiring One-Step and Two-step Review

All Uses requiring One-step and Two-step Review, except Oil and Gas Exploration and Development (Section 5-26), shall comply with the standards in this section.

5-1002 A. Consistency with Master Plan, Land Use Policies, Zone District and Neighborhood

I. Consistent with the County Master Plan

Consistency Statement: The transmission line will be an approved use consistent with the County Master Plan Article 2 and the purpose of the WE Zone District as described below.

II. Consistent with Article 2—Land Use Policies (All applicable policies listed)

Section 2-1: Conformance with Comprehensive Plan

Consistency Statement: The transmission line is a permitted use under the County Land Use Plan and the WE Zone District allows utility lines as an accepted use.

Section 2-4: Community Balance

Consistency Statement: The transmission line is an existing use and is being upgraded in place to address primarily aging infrastructure. The project will not directly result in significant changes in social, economic, or environmental conditions in the county.

Section 2-6: Compatibility with Existing Adjacent Neighborhoods

Consistency Statement: The transmission line crosses public lands and open rangeland. The upgraded transmission line is being rebuilt in place on an existing transmission line and will not alter the character or use of these lands by the public or landowners.

Section 2-8: Natural and Man-Made Hazard and Resource Areas

Consistency Statement: The transmission line will not increase natural hazards or create a man-made hazard. The transmission line does not affect other land use development outside of the 150-foot easement. Tri-State is responsible for mitigating emergencies or damage to the transmission line and facilities. The transmission is not unduly destructive to natural resources, especially since it is being rebuilt in place in an existing ROW. In addition, a Biological Resource Protection Plan has been created to offset potential adverse effects to the wildlife resources including Gunnison Sage-Grouse. The transmission line is designed to be safe for the public and does not constitute a nuisance.

Section 2-10: Drainage

Consistency Statement: The transmission line pad sites and associated access roads will be constructed and operated consistent with best engineering practices for restoring natural drainage patterns, reducing erosion and reducing damage from stormwater or floodwaters. The transmission line will have a Stormwater Management Plan (SWMP) consistent with the Colorado Department of Health and Environment General Construction Permit requirements.

Section 2-11: Erosion

Consistency Statement: Proper drainage design of access roads and pad sites is critical for reducing erosion and ensuring the long-term viability of access for future maintenance activities. Tri-State's standard drainage practices will be utilized to reduce erosion both during project construction as well as over the long-term operation of the line. These include installation of water bars and restoring or re-routing drainage to reduce erosion potential. In addition, as described in the project Revegetation Plan found in Appendix 6, Tri-State will minimize loss of vegetation and soil by using existing roads and ROW, mowing/masticating brush, minimizing grading and reseeding with native species following construction. Tri-State's reclamation measures include restoring natural contours, using temporary and permanent best management practices to reduce runoff and reseeding temporarily disturbed areas. The ROW must reach 70% of pre-existing cover before being released from monitoring per the Colorado Discharge Permit System (CDPS) General Permit for Stormwater Discharges Associated with Construction Activities General Permit.

Section 2-12: Scenic Quality

It is the policy of the County to preserve the scenic quality of lands within the County for the benefit of its residents and the continued viability of a resort economy that is dependent upon the quality of its rural and natural setting.

2-1201 Preserve the natural appearance of the mountain slopes, particularly from major activity areas, public roads, and trails by regulating the location, height, design and screening of development;

2-1202 Minimize the adverse scenic effects of roads and facilities by regulating the location and use of future development and the expansion of existing development where new or increased roads and facilities would be required to serve such areas and where the construction of such roads and facilities would impact the scenic quality of areas visible from public roads, trails or major activity centers;

2-1203 Minimize any adverse scenic effects of roads and other facilities by regulating their alignment, design, and construction so as to reduce their impact on the visual quality of any areas in the County, particularly public roads, trails and major activity areas;

2-1204 Control the use of natural areas to insure that development does not result in scars from fire, erosion or vandalism;

2-1205 Preserve and create scenic views of the surrounding mountains from public places within the County;

2-1206 Achieve visual quality within areas of existing and future development by prohibiting or mitigating the impacts of unsightly equipment, uses and structures; controlling the design and alignment of electricity and phone lines and similar facilities; and, where feasible, requiring such lines to be

underground; specifying design standards such as setbacks, height limits, view corridors, historic zones and material requirements; controlling signs, and ensuring the rehabilitation of areas subject to temporary or discontinuous use, such as mines, pits and quarries; and

2-1207 Manage development within the designated view planes and the scenic foreground to preserve the natural appearances within the Telluride Region.

Consistency Statement: By remaining in the existing transmission line corridor and alignment the new 230-kV transmission line will limit the effects on visual quality in the West End of San Miguel County. Most of the transmission line in San Miguel County crosses remote terrain not easily accessible or visible to the public. The primary location the line is visible and will be visible when rebuilt is along Highway 141 between the Basin store and the transmission line crossing. Here the transmission line is seen at a distance from Highway 141 (except for the actual highway crossing). The existing H-frame wood structures and future monopole steel structures in Dry Creek Basin will be barely visible in the distance. Where the line crosses the highway travelers on Highway 141 will see a steel structure on the north side of the Highway instead of a wood structure. Most visual changes, primarily visual contrast in color and texture, will be due to construction activity on slopes where trees are removed in the expanded ROW and where construction activity temporarily exposes more bare ground.

Since the line crosses the highway at an angle, rather than paralleling it, this effect will only be seen for a few seconds by the traveler on the highway. Of course ROW clearing will be more visible to landowners and neighbors living in the West End.

Appendix 10 presents visual simulations of the transmission line comparing the existing condition with the future visual conditions along Highway 141, including the proposed highway crossing in Dry Creek Basin, and a view in Disappointment Valley.

The new project will use the existing access road network. In Dry Creek Basin and Disappointment Valley the transmission line is more visible where it crosses slopes with shrubby and pinyon-juniper woodland.

In order to minimize visual effects from the transmission line from a design perspective, Tri-State has committed to utilizing non-specular conductor, applying acid-etched galvanized finish or weathering finish to all steel structures including steel fence, and using gray porcelain insulators. Acid etched galvanized steel will be used across the Dry Creek Basin since it will better blend-in with the blue sky horizon and open terrain in this desert environment. Where steel structures occur in forested areas, or at turning locations within a stretch of wood structures, weathered steel, which is dark rust in color, will be used to minimize visual contrast with the surrounding landscape.

Section 2-16: Wildlife Protection

It is the policy of the County to identify and protect wildlife habitats for the preservation of wildlife, to encourage land use patterns that avoid disruptions to such habitat. The County will coordinate with Colorado Parks and Wildlife personnel regarding proposed development or uses within or adjacent to mapped wildlife habitat areas to mitigate impacts of development on wildlife.

Consistency Statement: Through the implementation of Environmental Protection measures found in Appendix 5 and the Biological Resources Protection Plan (Appendix 13), the project is consistent with San Miguel counties requirements for wildlife protection. Section 5-407 provides a summary of wildlife analysis, protection, and agency consultation for the project.

2-1601 It is the policy of the County to protect, enhance and preserve Gunnison Sage-grouse populations and their habitats. To this end, the County will consider and, to the extent possible, implement the rangewide and local conservation strategies set forth in the Gunnison Sage-grouse Rangewide Conservation Plan, dated April 2005, and all amendments to the Plan (Colorado Parks and Wildlife) when considering land use activities and development that is located within Gunnison Sage-grouse habitat as mapped by the Colorado Parks and Wildlife.

Consistency Statement: Appendix 13 provides a summary of protection measures for wildlife, including a Voluntary Conservation Strategy for Gunnison Sage-Grouse. The conservation strategy includes purchase of a 500-acre parcel of land near Miramonte Reservoir. This parcel contains the last remaining non-protected lek in this population and was a priority for acquisition by San Miguel County and CPW. Tri-State has committed an additional \$100,000 for habitat improvement projects in Dry Creek Basin, and has committed to substantial engineering design measures (single self-supporting steel structures and perch discouragers) to reduce the risk of potential avian predation on sage-grouse.

This conservation strategy will provide a net benefit to the long-term conservation of the San Miguel Basin Gunnison-Sage Grouse population and is consistent with San Miguel County's policy on sage-grouse preservation.

SECTION 2-23: Extension of Utilities

It is the policy of the County to regulate utility extensions in a manner which insures that utility resources be directed to areas with or adjacent to existing development and to areas suitable for development consistent with the policies of the County.

Consistency Statement: The project is consistent with the County's request to utilize existing utility corridors. The project would occur entirely within the existing 115-kV transmission line corridor in San Miguel County. The ROW would be expanded from 100 to 150 to accommodate the increase in voltage from 115-kV to 230-kV.

III. Consistent with the purpose of the Zone District in which it is proposed to be located

Consistency Statement: The transmission line will be an approved use consistent with the purpose of the WE Zone District as described below.

IV. Consistent with and Compatible with the Character of the Neighborhood of the Parcel proposed for Development and surrounding land Uses, and may enhance the mixture of complimentary Uses and activities in the Neighborhood of the Parcel proposed for development

Consistency Statement: The proposed project will be compatible with the character of the neighborhoods (rural landscapes and rangeland).

V. Necessary for public convenience at the proposed location

Consistency Statement: On July 22, 2013, Tri-State received a Decision from the Colorado Public Utilities Commission granting a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity for the Montrose-Nucla-Cahone Transmission Improvement Project in Proceeding No. 13A-0489E.

VI. Designed, located and proposed to be operated so that the public health, safety and welfare will be protected

Consistency Statement: The proposed project will be operated to meet all applicable safety standards in order to protect public health, safety and welfare.

5-1002 B. Impacts on Surrounding Area

Compatibility with the Character of Parcels adjacent to the Parcel shall be expressed in terms of appearance, scale and features, Site design, landscaping, weed seed dispersal, as well as, the control and Minimization of adverse impacts including noise, vibration, dust, dirt, smoke, fumes, gas, odor, explosion, glare, Impacts on pedestrian and traffic congestion, parking, trash, service delivery, or other undesirable or hazardous conditions.

Consistency Statement: The Environmental Assessment for the project along with the associated Plan of Development (POD) address how the construction, operation and maintenance of the project will be constructed to have minimal impacts on the surrounding area.

5-1002 C. Public Facilities

Adequate public facilities and services shall exist or shall be provided to serve any reviewable Use including, but not limited to, roads, potable water, sewer, solid waste, parks, police, fire protection, emergency medical, hospital and medical, drainage system and schools.

Consistency Statement: Impacts to public facilities such as campgrounds will be limited to the construction period. Construction crews may use public and private campgrounds and local hotels/rental properties for lodging during the construction phase of the project which is expected to require approximately one year to complete. Portable toilets will be used by the construction crews and will be located at staging areas. The project will not result in the need for additional police, fire protection, emergency medical, hospital and medical services, and there will be no impact to local schools.

5-1002 D. Bond Requirement

A bond may be required, as a condition of any reviewable Use permit as deemed necessary by the Board of Commissioners or the Planning Commission, sufficient to cover the cost of Site remediation and/or satisfaction of the other conditions and requirements.

Consistency Statement: Tri-State has a demonstrated record of implementing transmission construction projects with comprehensive environmental requirements and is financially well-positioned to perform site remediation and address all other conditions, stipulations on private land without the need for a bond. Tri-State will comply with any and all federal, state, and local permit conditions pertaining to the reclamation and re-vegetation of the transmission ROW post-construction including noxious weed management activities. Tri-State is also responsible for reclamation and re-vegetation of private lands as outlined in each individual easement agreement.

5-1002 E. The following must be addressed as part of any application

- I. *A Site plan including:*
 - a. *Ownership, Use and zoning of all adjacent Parcels*
 - b. *Driveways, streets and right-of-way, Access ways, including points of ingress, egress, parking plan*
 - c. *Easements*
 - d. *Location and dimensions of Structures and Signs*
 - e. *Typical elevations/Heights of such Buildings*
 - f. *Landscaping*
 - g. *Topography*

- h. *Specific areas proposed for specific types of land Use/the identification of specific land Uses*
- i. *Information regarding the function and characteristics of any Building or Use proposed, including: days and hours of operation, number of employees, number of students, number of rooms for rent, etc., as applicable*

Consistency Statement: The pertinent requirements listed have been addressed in the San Miguel County Map Atlas in Appendix 1 and with the Project Description in Appendix 4.

II. Lighting plan

Consistency Statement: No lighting will be required with the possible exception of lighting at the staging area (addressed in separate application). Construction activities will only occur during day light hours.

III. Signs—all Signs must meet Section 5-704 standards

Consistency Statement: The project will have no permanent signs with the exception of small metal plates fastened to each structure noting the mile number and number of the structure in that mile.

IV. Water/sewer plan - must meet state standards and may include verification of a commercial well permit

Consistency Statement: The project will not require a permanent water or sewer plan.

V. Drainage plan

Consistency Statement: The project will follow reclamation and revegetation guidelines including restoring drainage patterns and contours as described in Appendix 6 – Revegetation Plan. Tri-State will prepare a Storm Water Management Plan to prevent any sediment from leaving the project area and to avoid effects on drainages.

VI. Grading plan

Consistency Statement: Grading is required to improve existing roads to allow passage of construction and maintenance equipment and to construct stable level pads for construction of structures on sloped terrain. Any grading will be conducted in full compliance with local, state and federal permits.

VII. Dust control plan

Consistency Statement: Fugitive dust could be generated directly from transmission line construction and associated traffic. It is Tri-State responsibility to ensure the project contractors

and the designated environmental monitors ensure all sources of dust generation are identified and fugitive dust and other pollutant emissions are minimized.

Fugitive dust will be controlled during construction by reducing vehicle and equipment speeds on unpaved surfaces, minimizing the amount of new exposed soil /surface disturbance, and periodic application of clean water as directed by the environmental monitors to exposed disturbed surface areas (application of water will be via water trucks). The environmental monitor and lead construction inspector will monitor construction to ensure that dust does not leave the work area and accumulate on adjacent crops, cultivated fields, dwellings, or roadways. If visible dust dispersion to off-site locations becomes apparent, the environmental monitor will establish a maximum speed limit in dust-prone areas, cover stockpiles, and/or apply additional water to access roads and work areas as necessary.

VIII. Detailed engineered plans and specifications by a registered Colorado Professional Engineer as requested by staff or Referral Agents

Consistency Statement: Final as-built plan and profile drawings, signed by a professional engineer, will be available for county review as requested.

IX. Weed control plan that must include use of weed free hay or straw

Consistency Statement: The Noxious Weed Plan (Appendix 7) requires use of weed free hay or straw.

X. Wildlife Plan (see Section 5-407 A. XII.)

Consistency Statement: See Appendix 13 for the Project Biological Resources Protection Plan.

XI. Additional permits as necessary from other agencies

Consistency Statement: See Table 3 below that lists permits required for the project.

Table 3: Required Agency Permit, Approval, or Consultation for the Proposed Project

Regulatory Agency	Required Permit, Approval, or Consultation	Agency Action
Federal		
Advisory Council on Historic Preservation	National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), Section 106 Consultation	Determination of effects to listed or eligible historic properties and cultural resources
USFS	Temporary SUA	For temporary uses of National Forest System (NFS) lands during construction. Includes a Surface Reclamation Bond

Table 3: Required Agency Permit, Approval, or Consultation for the Proposed Project

Regulatory Agency	Required Permit, Approval, or Consultation	Agency Action
USFS	SUA	Authorization of NFS lands for operation and maintenance of the transmission line, including use of National Forest System Roads (NFSRs) open to the public, administrative NFSRs closed to the public, and special use routes
USFS	Road Use Permit	Authorization of use of NFSRs during construction the transmission line. Includes a Performance Bond and Surface Rock Replacement
USFS	NTP	Allows proposed project to proceed to construction
USFS	POD	Consider approval of a detailed Final POD for proposed project construction, operation, and maintenance; meets the need for an SF-299
United States Department of Defense, Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)	Section 404, Clean Water Act Permit	Consider issuance of a Section 404 permit for fill in wetlands or other waters of the U.S. for upgrading access roads
BLM	Short and Long-term ROW Grant(s)	Consider issuance of short- (construction related) and long-term ROW grants
BLM	POD	Consider approval of a detailed Final POD for proposed project construction, operation, and maintenance
BLM	NTP	Allows proposed project to proceed to construction
United States Department of the Interior U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), Mountain Prairie Region, Colorado Field Office	Section 7 Consultation (Endangered Species Act [ESA])	Consider the findings (biological assessment) of the lead agency; provide a biological opinion if adverse effects to federal listed species or habitats would occur
State		
Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW)	Long-term and temporary ROW Grant(s)	Consider issuance of both long-term and temporary (construction-related) ROW grants across CPW lands
Colorado State Land Board	Long-term and temporary ROW Grant(s)	Consider issuance of both long-term and temporary (construction-related) ROW grants across State Land Board lands
Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE)	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Construction storm water; Construction dewatering	Consider issuance of permits
Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT)	Encroachment Permit	Consider issuance of permit for transmission line crossing of State Highway (SH) 141 and 145
Colorado Public Utilities Commission (CPUC)	Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (CPCN)	Issued July 22, 2013 Proceeding No. 13A-0489E

Table 3: Required Agency Permit, Approval, or Consultation for the Proposed Project

Regulatory Agency	Required Permit, Approval, or Consultation	Agency Action
Local		
Dolores County	Land Use Change permit for transmission line and Cahone substation expansion; Driveway permit for substation; Traffic Control; Contact for smoke notification	Consider issuance of permits (Project is consistent with the land use plan)
San Miguel County	Special Use permit for new 230-kV line	Consider issuance of permits (Project is consistent with the county master plan and land use code)
Montrose County	Special Use permit for new 230-kV (Maverick) substation and Montrose substation expansion; ROW Use Permit(s) as applicable	Consider issuance of permits (Project is consistent with the land use plan)

Note: Although the project crosses Ouray County, no permits are required.

3.5 Project Conformance with Scenic Quality (Article 5, Section 5-21)

Tri-State has committed to mitigation measures to minimize effects to aesthetics and visual resources that will minimize impacts and changes to scenic quality in San Miguel County. See Appendix 5 – Environmental Protection Measures (EPM), specifically EMPs A-1 to A-8.

5-2101 A. Preserving vistas

The new 230-kV will cross remote rural landscapes in San Miguel County and does not cross recognized scenic features except in the Dry Creek Basin where the line will cross SR 141 which is a historic feature and scenic byway. Current scenic views will remain much the same by re-building the line along the existing alignment. The net change relative to current landscape vistas will be negligible. Reference photo simulations in Appendix 10.

5-2101 B. Blending with natural topography

EPM A-4 in Appendix 5 states that structures and access roads will be located and designed to conform to the terrain and to minimize visual effects whenever possible. Leveling and benching of the structure sites (construction pads) will be done to the minimum extent necessary to allow for construction and future maintenance operations. Existing cleared or disturbed areas will be used to the extent practicable for staging areas and other temporary use areas.

5-2101 C. Using natural colors and textures and non-reflective materials

In order to reduce visual impacts from the transmission line, Tri-State has committed to using non-specular conductor, gray colored insulators and weathered steel or acid-etched galvanized steel structures for all steel structures including steel fence.

Structures would be constructed of wood or steel and the type of structure would be selected at specific locations to blend with the natural environment. Dulled, acid etched galvanized steel will be a dull non-reflective silver-gray color when new, that will darken slightly over time. Steel poles across Dry Creek Basin will be this type of treated steel to minimize reflection and decrease visibility (See Appendix 10 – Visual Simulations). Weathered steel is a reddish brown color when new, that becomes a dark brown over time, and closely resembles the appearance of a wood pole. Weathered steel will be used in turning structures used in otherwise wood pole segments. This will minimize abrupt visual changes with the surrounding environment.

5-2101 D. Using native species in revegetation

Implementing EPM VG-2 through VG-9 will minimize visual effects from project construction and operation by reclaiming areas of temporary disturbance and minimizing vegetation removal to tall woody vegetation required for the safe construction, operation, and maintenance of the transmission line. EPM VG-7 states all temporary surface disturbances on State, BLM and USFS administered lands will be seeded with native seed mixtures that have been approved by the authorizing agency. Seed mixes on private land will be at the discretion of the landowner. Reclamation will be deemed complete once vegetation has been reclaimed to 70 percent of pre-construction conditions.

5-2101 E. Saving and reusing topsoil

EPM S-4 requires that excavated material not used in the backfilling of structures will be spread around each pole, evenly spread on the access routes in the immediate vicinity of the pole structure or transported off-site to a Tri-State approved disposal location. Disturbed areas will then be regraded to approximate pre-construction contours and reseeded as specified in EPM S-1. EPM S-4 provides for topsoil salvage in sensitive areas and temporarily disturbed areas.

5-2101 F. Following contours and minimizing cuts and fills

EPMs A-8 requires that the alignment of any new access roads will follow the designated area's landform contours where practical, provided that such alignment does not additionally affect resource values. This will minimize ground disturbance and reduce scarring (visual contrast).

5-2101 G. Installing utilities with least damage

There will be no need for permanent utilities such as water, gas, or electric power associated with the project.

5-2101 H. Shielding exterior lights

There will be no need for permanent exterior lighting.

3.6 Project Conformance in Wetland Areas (Article 5, Section 5-22)

5-2201 B. Applicability

5-2201 C. Definitions

5-2202 B. Wetland Area Mapping

5-2203—Development in Wetland Areas

A potential developer desiring to develop within a wetland or within 100 feet of a wetland must submit an application for approval of such activity to the County for review under the Two-step Special Use Permit Process.

Consistency Statement: Tri-State is using the two-step review process for the overall project to meet the requirements of sections 2203A and 2203B.

5-2203 C. Issuance of Wetland Special Use Permits

A Wetland Special Use Permit may be issued only if the applicant has shown at least one of the following:

- I. The proposed activity is water-dependent;*
- II. The proposed activity is necessary to achieve access to property, and no other access route avoiding wetland and buffer zone areas is technically feasible;*
- III. Denial of the permit sought would result in denying the landowner all practical, reasonable and/or economically viable use of the subject property;*
- IV. The proposed activity meets the definition of Essential Services in Article 6 of this Code and could not reasonably be located elsewhere; and*
- V. In the case of development proposed solely in a buffer zone, the proposed land use would not adversely affect the adjacent wetland area.*

Consistency Statement: The proposed project meets criteria IV, the definition of Essential Services in Article 6 of the San Miguel County Code. The rebuild in place alternative was selected as the preferred alternative following a thorough review and comparison during the Environmental Assessment/NEPA process. The project could not be reasonably located elsewhere.

5-2203 D. Criteria for Review of Wetland Special Use Permits

In reviewing applications for Wetland Special Use Permits, the Board of Commissioners shall apply the following criteria:

- I. Avoidance – Development activity within a designated wetland area should be avoided whenever possible; and*

- II. Minimization of Impacts – The impacts of unavoidable development activity should be minimized by including appropriate project design modifications, control techniques or other conditions deemed appropriate by the County.*

Consistency Statement: Tri-State has avoided wetlands to the greatest extent possible in San Miguel County by routing access routes around them and creating areas of “no downline access” across arroyos and canyons. Unavoidable impacts to wetlands are very limited. Figures in Appendix 8 show the location of the only wetlands crossed in San Miguel County. New transmission line structures would be located entirely outside of wetlands. Structures 96 and 173 would be located within 100 feet of wetlands. Structure 96 would be located on the north side of Dry Creek, entirely outside the deeply-incised arroyo. Similarly, Structure 173 would be located entirely outside the deeply-incised Disappointment Creek arroyo. BMPs would be installed and signs, flagging and/or fencing used during construction to ensure there are no direct or indirect effects to the wetlands.

There is an access road that would cross an ephemeral tributary to Disappointment Creek. The access road will be routed across an existing dam within 100 feet of wetlands but with no direct or indirect effects to the wetlands. There may be temporary and minor effects to wetlands at the Nelson Creek crossing in Dry Creek Basin and during the removal of existing Structure 234 on the southwest side of Disappointment Creek. After Structure 234 is removed, no future maintenance activity will be required in wetlands associated with Disappointment Creek. Construction at these locations will be undertaken only when soils are dry, and mats will be employed when crossing through the Nelson Creek arroyo during construction. Mats would be removed once the pole has been wrecked out and the area would be restored using an approved wetland seed mix if necessary. Given the short-term nature of wreck-out activities, it is likely the area will reclaim itself in a short-period of time without the need for additional reclamation efforts. The environmental monitor would be present when the contractor is working in this area to ensure impacts are minimized and to monitor and make recommendations on future reclamation efforts in coordination with San Miguel County and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers staff. Effects to wetlands would be further minimized with implementation of avoidance measures and EPMs as listed in Appendix 5.

5-2203E. Impact Mitigation for Wetland Uses and Activities

Consistency Statement: Tri-State has avoided wetlands and mitigated impacts to the greatest degree possible as described above; a wetlands mitigation plan is not proposed since no wetland losses are expected from the proposed development.

5-2203 F. Submission Requirements

An applicant for a wetland special use permit must submit an application in accordance with Section 4-2 of the Code.

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Appendix 1:

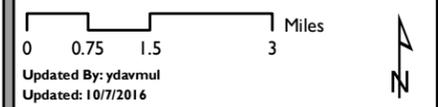
San Miguel County Map Atlas (Site Plan)

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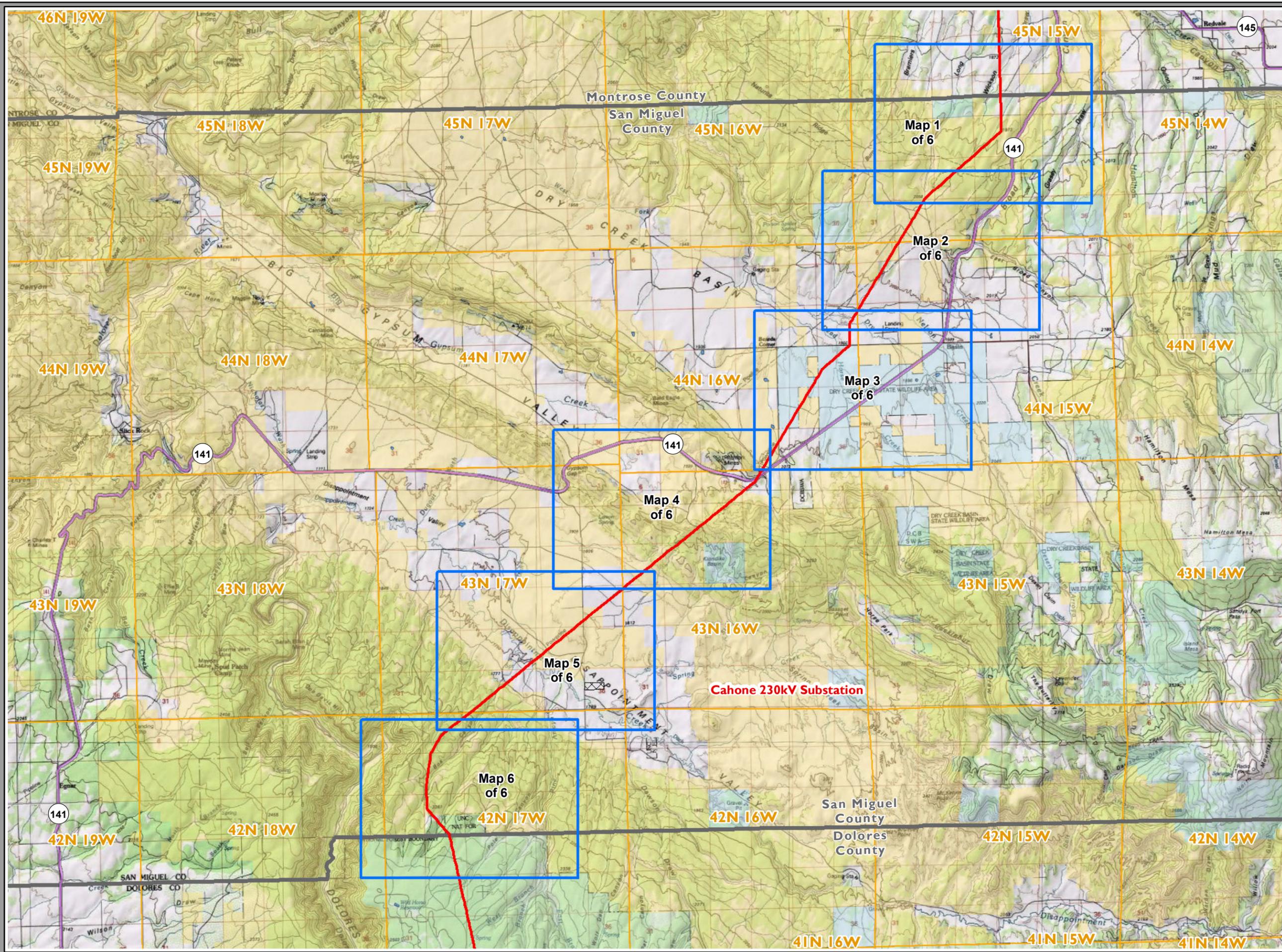
Index Map

- Map Pages
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- State Route
- Other Major Road
- Temporary Use Areas
- Hydrology
- Township/Range
- County Boundary
- Bureau of Land Management
- Forest Service (USFS)
- State Land

*Disclaimer: Data on maps represents preliminary engineering and may be modified in final POD

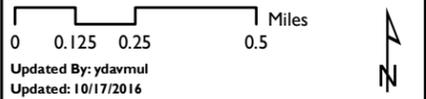


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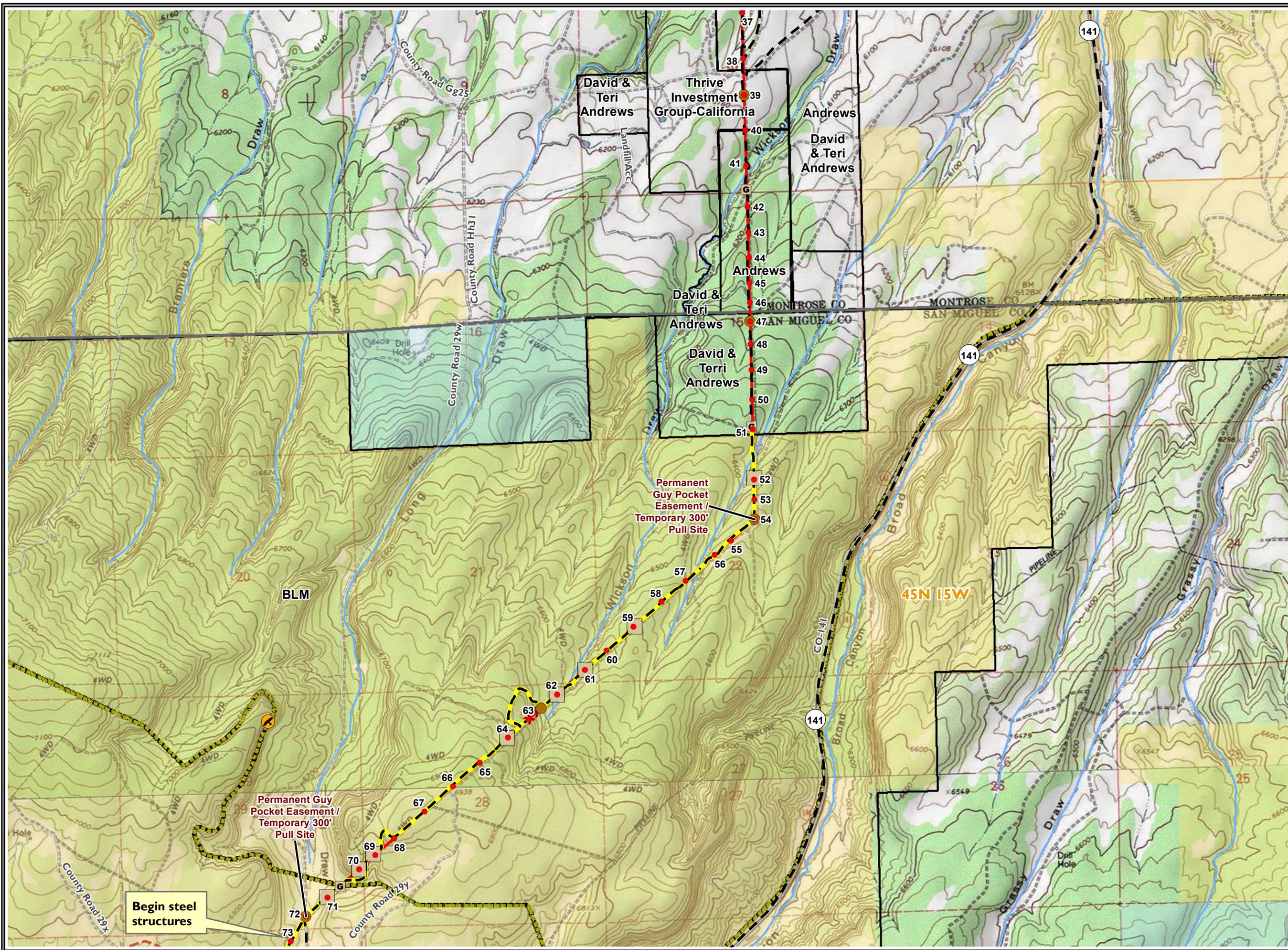
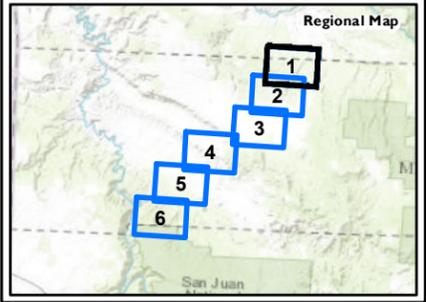


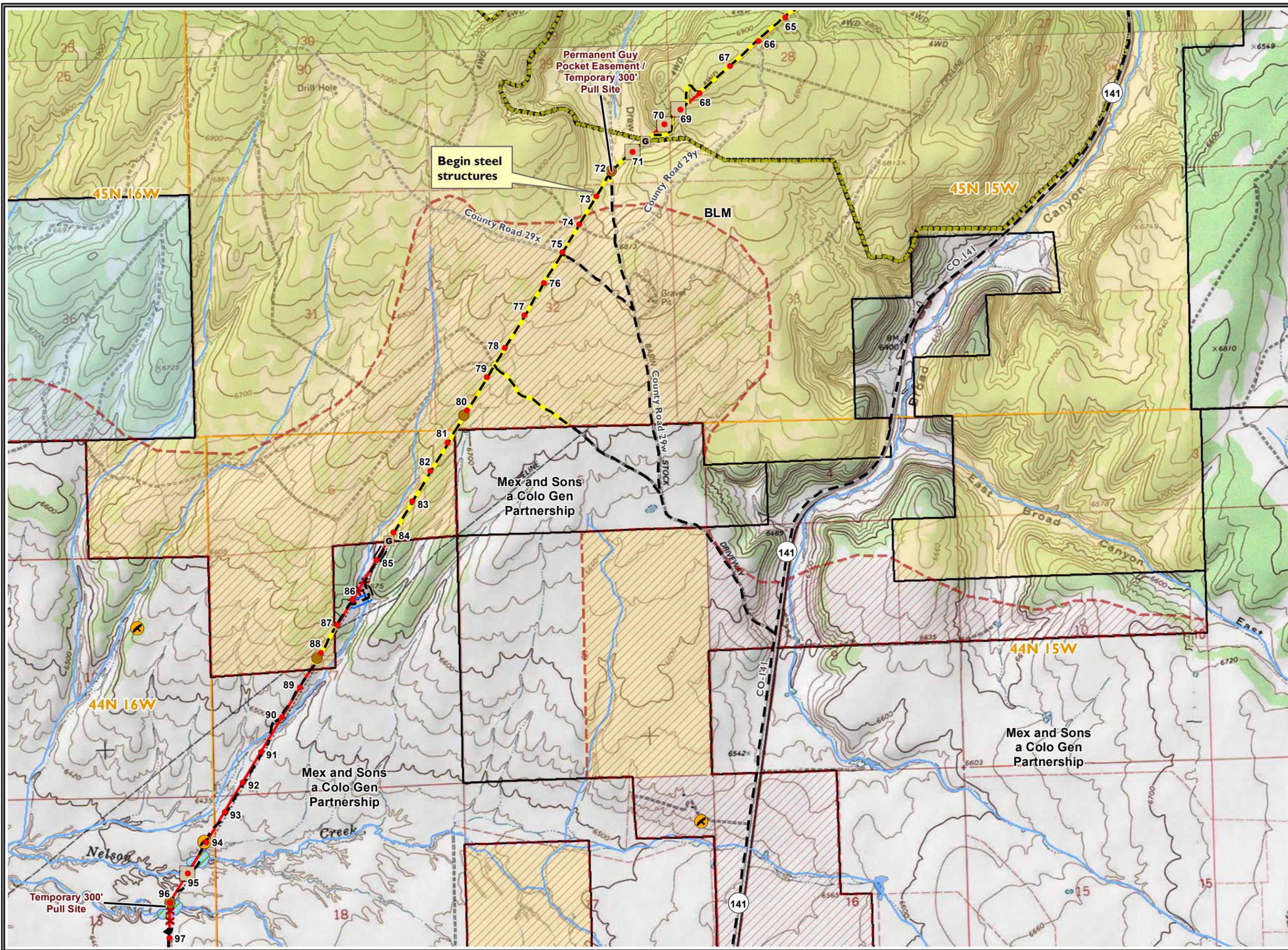
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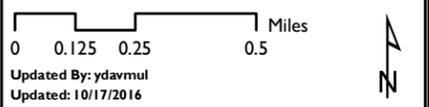
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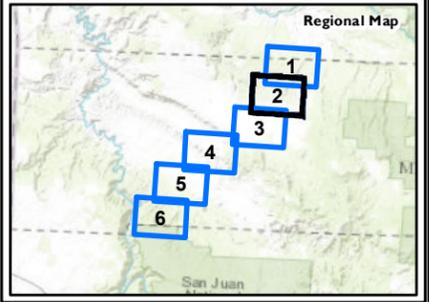


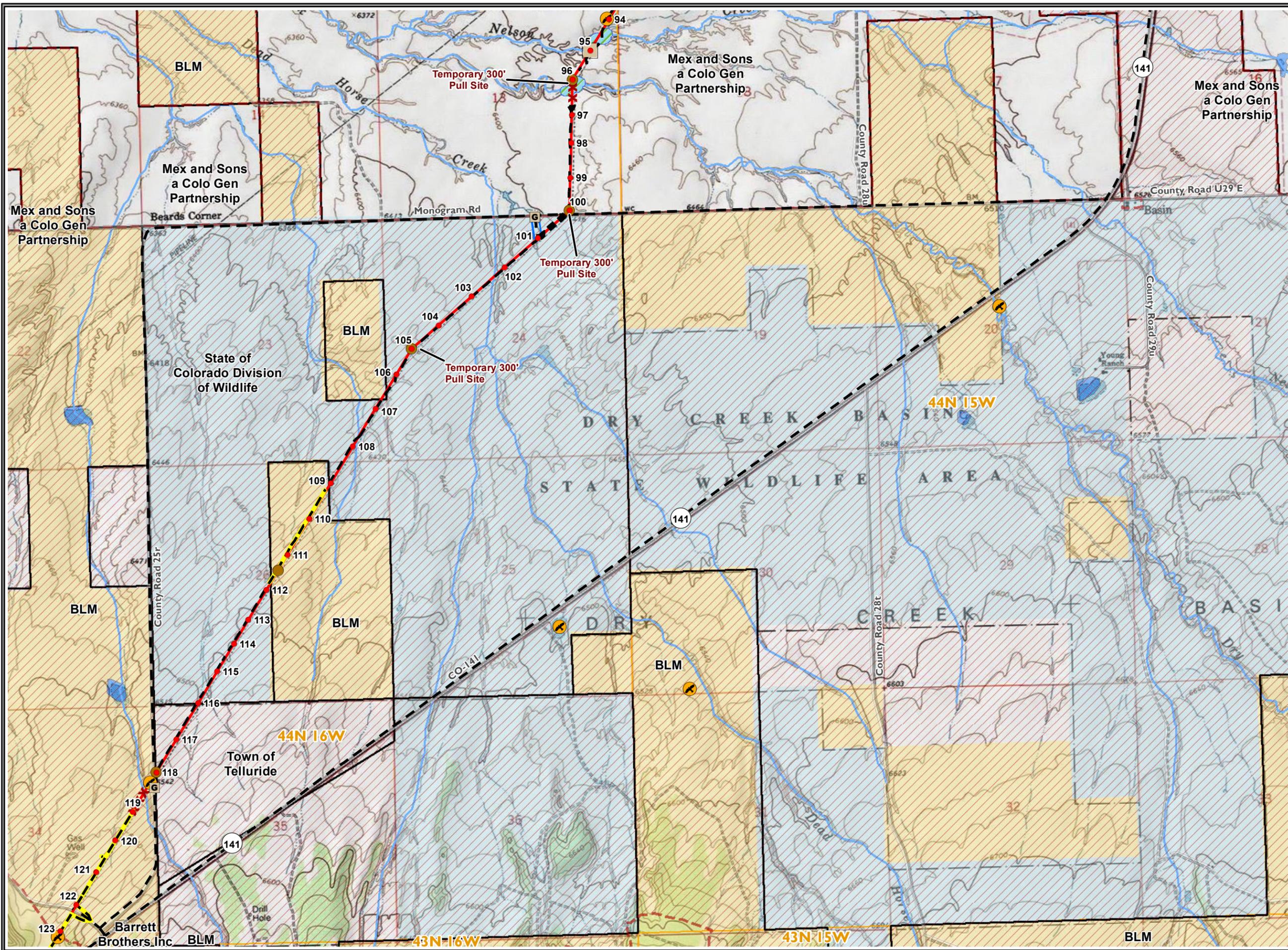
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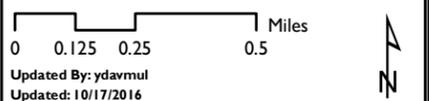
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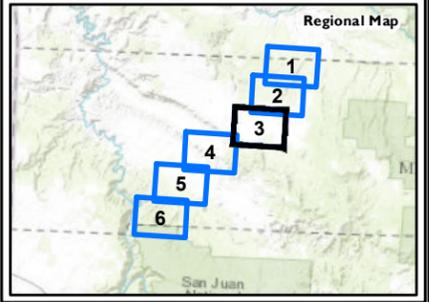


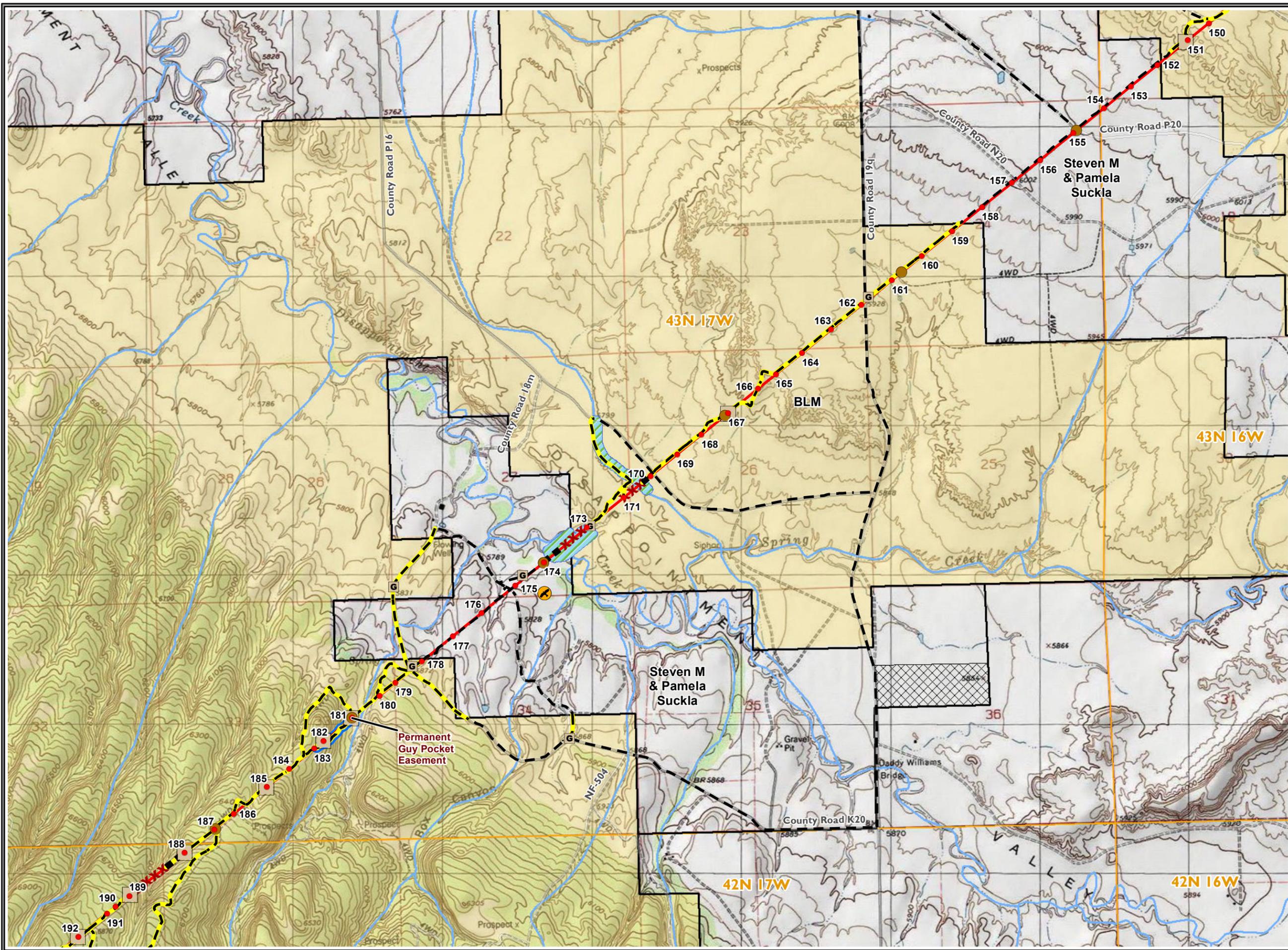
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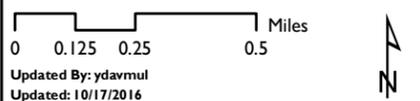
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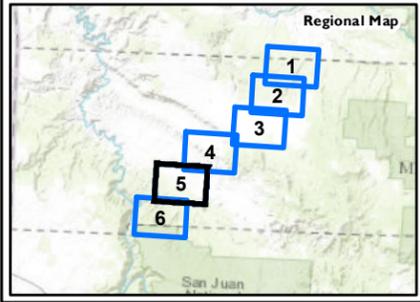
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- Bureau of Land Management
- Access Road**
- Access Road
- Construction Only
- Proposed New Route
- Authorized BLM Route (public)
- Parcels
- XX No Down Line Access

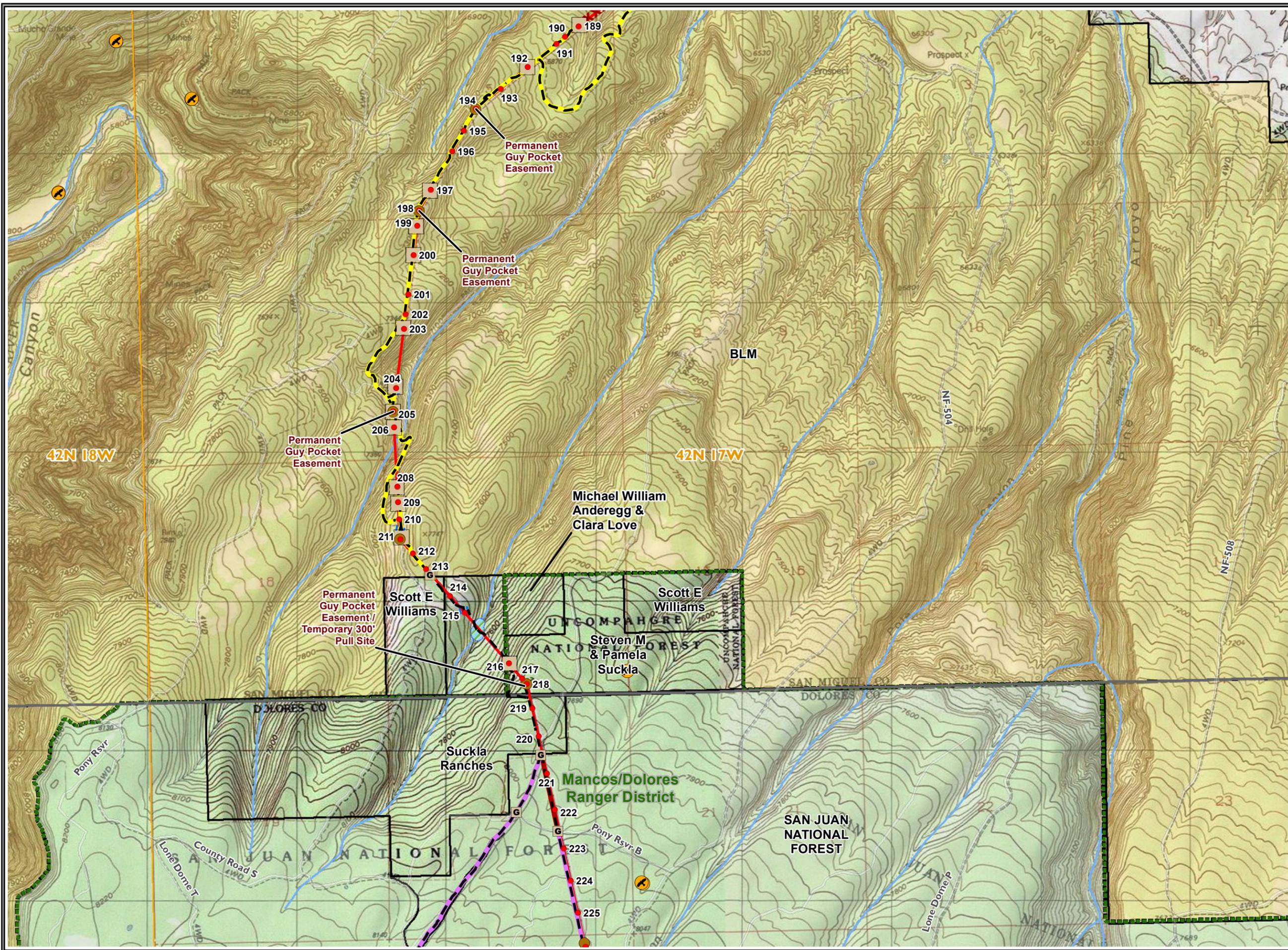
*Disclaimer: Data on maps represents preliminary engineering and may be modified in final POD



Updated By: ydavlul
Updated: 10/17/2016

This map includes confidential information of Tri-State and third parties. The GIS data and maps may not be disclosed to any third party. The user agrees to keep this information confidential and not disclose it to third parties. If you have any questions regarding this, please contact the Tri-State legal department. GIS data and maps available to Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association employees are provided as general information to aid Tri-State transmission maintenance. No user of Tri-State's GIS data and maps may sell any portion of the information provided therein. Tri-State makes no warranty regarding accuracy or completeness of the data and maps. Users shall rely only upon proper field verification of Tri-State GIS data.



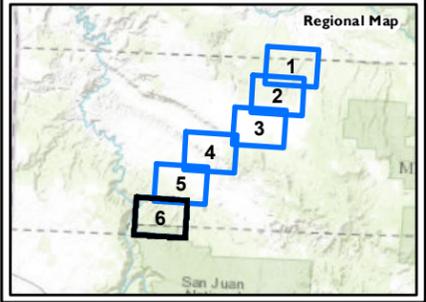


- Structures
 - G Gate
 - ⚡ Avian
 - Geotechnical Testing Location
 - Pad Site
 - Transmission Center Line (150' ROW)
 - Hydrology
 - Wetlands - 100' Buffer
 - Township/Range
 - BLM District Field Office
 - USFS Ranger District
 - County Boundary
 - Bureau of Land Management
 - Forest Service (USFS)
- Access Road**
- Access Road
 - Proposed New Route
 - Authorized BLM Route (public)
 - Parcels
 - System Road (NFSR or Admin NFSR)
 - Proposed Special Use Route
 - XX No Down Line Access

*Disclaimer: Data on maps represents preliminary engineering and may be modified in final POD



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Appendix 2: Easements for ROWs on Private Lands

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144302

Filed for record July 7, 1958
at 1:15 P. M.
Charles C. Carriere, Recorder.

TRANSMISSION LINE - RIGHT-OF-WAY EASEMENT

KNOW ALL MEN BY THESE PRESENTS, that to the undersigned,

Carlos W. Cornforth

for a good and valuable consideration, the receipt thereof is hereby acknowledged, do hereby grant unto Colorado-Ute Electric Association, Inc., a cooperative corporation (hereinafter called the "Cooperative"), whose post office is Montrose, Colorado, and to its successors or assigns, the perpetual right to enter upon the lands of the undersigned, situated in the County of San Miguel, State of Colorado, and more particularly described as follows:

NW 1/4 of SE 1/4 and SW 1/4 of Sec 17 Township 42 N Range 17 W

and to construct, reconstruct, repair, operate and maintain on the above-described lands and/or in or upon all streets, roads or highways abutting said lands, an electric transmission and/or distribution line or system; to cut, trim and control the growth by chemical means, machinery or otherwise of trees and shrubbery located within 50 feet of the center line of the operation and maintenance of said line or system (including any control of the growth of other vegetation in the right-of-way which may incidentally and necessarily result from the means of control employed); and to license, permit, or otherwise agree to the joint use or occupancy of the line or system by any other person, association or corporation for electrification or telephone purposes.

The undersigned agree that all poles, wire and other facilities, installed on the above-described lands at the Cooperative's expense, shall remain the property of the Cooperative, removable at the option of the Cooperative.

The Cooperative agrees to pay to the undersigned for the privileges herein granted, when said line or system has been completely constructed, \$3.00 for each structure and each anchor of said line or system located within the boundaries of said lands, or, in the event no poles or anchors are located on said lands, \$1.00 for each 100 feet or fraction thereof of overhead located on said lands.

The undersigned covenant that they are the owners of the above-described lands and that the said lands are free and clear of encumbrances and liens of whatsoever character except those held by the following persons: *Owner reserves right to any timber cut down, wants timber cut in orderly fashion*

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned have set their hands and seals this 7 day of July, 1957.

Carlos W. Cornforth (SEAL)

(SEAL)

STATE OF COLORADO }
COUNTY OF San Miguel } SS-

The above and foregoing easement was acknowledged before me this 7 day of July, 1957, by Carlos W. Cornforth.

WITNESS my hand and Notarial Seal.



George E. Dobbe
Notary Public

My Commission expires April 2, 1958

My commission expires _____

#351

KNOW ALL MEN BY THESE PRESENTS, that we the undersigned,

Albert Garbareno

for a good and valuable consideration, the receipt thereof is hereby acknowledged, do hereby grant unto Colorado-Ute Electric Association, Inc., a cooperative corporation (hereinafter called the "Cooperative"), whose post office is Montrose, Colorado, and to its successors or assigns, the perpetual right to enter upon the lands of the undersigned, situated in the County of San Miguel, State of Colorado, and more particularly described as follows:

- SW 1/4 of the SE 1/4 of Section 27 Township 43N Range 17 W
- E 1/2 of the NW 1/4 of Section 34 Township 43N Range 17 W
- NE 1/4 of Section 34 Township 43N Range 17 W

and to construct, reconstruct, repair, operate and maintain on the above-described lands and/or in or upon all streets, roads, or highways abutting said lands, an electric transmission and/or distribution line or system; to cut, trim and control the growth by chemical means, machinery or otherwise of trees and shrubbery located within 50 feet of the center line of the operation and maintenance of said line or system (including any control of the growth of other vegetation in the right-of-way which may incidentally and necessarily result from the means of control employed); and to license, permit, or otherwise agree to the joint use or occupancy of the line or system by any other person, association or corporation for electrification or telephone purposes.

The undersigned agree that all poles, wire and other facilities, installed on the above-described lands at the Cooperative's expense, shall remain the property of the Cooperative, removable at the option of the Cooperative.

The Cooperative agrees to pay to the undersigned for the privileges herein granted, when said line or system has been completely constructed, 45.00 for each structure and each anchor of said line or system located within the boundaries of said lands, or, in the event no poles or anchors are located on said lands, 11.00 for each 100 feet or fraction thereof of overhand located on said lands.

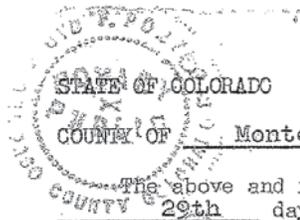
As a part of the consideration for the granting of this easement, Cooperative agrees to pay grantor the reasonable damage done to any growing crop in the construction of said transmission line. In the event the parties are unable to agree on the amount of such damage, if any, each party shall appoint one arbitrator, and such arbitrators, if unable to agree, shall appoint a third arbitrator, and the decision of a majority shall be final and binding on both parties.

The undersigned covenant that they are the owners of the above-described lands and that the said lands are free and clear of encumbrances and liens of whatsoever character except those held by the following persons:

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned have set their hands and seals this 29th day of July, 19 57.

Albert Garbareno (SEAL)

_____ (SEAL)



STATE OF COLORADO)
COUNTY OF Montezuma) SS.

The above and foregoing easement was acknowledged before me this 29th day of July, 19 57, by Albert Garbareno.

WITNESS my hand and Notarial Seal.

Floyd F. Porter
Notary Public

144303

Albert J. Salzano

State of Colorado, } ss.
County of San Miguel

Filed for record at 1:20 o'clock
P.M. July 7, 1958
and duly recorded in

Book 282 Page 122

By *Debra A. ...*
Recorder

Fee, \$ 1.75

#290

TRANSMISSION LINE - RIGHT-OF-WAY EASEMENT

KNOW ALL MEN BY THESE PRESENTS, that we the undersigned,

Brumley Land and Livestock Company

for a good and valuable consideration, the receipt thereof is hereby acknowledged, do hereby grant unto Colorado-Ute Electric Association, Inc., a cooperative corporation (hereinafter called the "Cooperative"), whose post office is Montrose, Colorado, and to its successors or assigns, the perpetual right to enter upon the lands of the undersigned, situated in the County of San Miguel, State of Colorado, and more particularly described as follows:

S 1/2 of Section 13 Township 43N Range 17 W

N 1/2 of Section 24 Township 43N Range 17 W

SE 1/4 of Section 24 Township 43N Range 17 W

NW 1/4 of Section 19 Township 43N Range 16 W

and to construct, reconstruct, repair, operate and maintain on the above-described lands and/or in or upon all streets, roads, or highways abutting said lands, an electric transmission and/or distribution line or system; to cut, trim and control the growth by chemical means, machinery or otherwise of trees and shrubbery located within 50 feet of the center line of the operation and maintenance of said line or system (including any control of the growth of other vegetation in the right-of-way which may incidentally and necessarily result from the means of control employed); and to license, permit, or otherwise agree to the joint use or occupancy of the line or system by any other person, association or corporation for electrification or telephone purposes.

The undersigned agree that all poles, wire and other facilities, installed on the above-described lands at the Cooperative's expense, shall remain the property of the Cooperative, removable at the option of the Cooperative.

The Cooperative agrees to pay to the undersigned for the privileges herein granted, when said line or system has been completely constructed, \$3.00 for each structure and each anchor of said line or system located within the boundaries of said lands, or, in the event no poles or anchors are located on said lands, \$1.00 for each 100 feet or fraction thereof of overhand located on said lands.

As a part of the consideration for the granting of this easement, Cooperative agrees to pay grantor the reasonable damage done to any growing crop in the construction of said transmission line. In the event the parties are unable to agree on the amount of such damage, if any, each party shall appoint one arbitrator, and such arbitrators, if unable to agree, shall appoint a third arbitrator, and the decision of a majority shall be final and binding on both parties.

The undersigned covenant that they are the owners of the above-described lands and that the said lands are free and clear of encumbrances and liens of whatsoever character except those held by the following persons:

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned have set their hands and seals this 26th day of July, 19 57.

Attest:

Betty Lou Brumley
Secretary

Wilson Brumley (SEAL)
President of Brumley Land and Livestock Co.

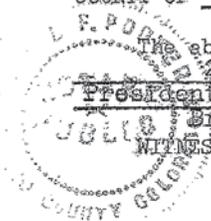


STATE OF COLORADO)
COUNTY OF Montezuma) SS.

The above and foregoing easement was acknowledged before me this 26th day of July, 19 57, by Wilson Brumley, President of Brumley Land and Livestock Co. Attested by Betty Lou Brumley, Secretary

WITNESS my hand and Notarial Seal.

Floyd F. Porter
Notary Public



144304

Quinnley, J. & Co. Stock

State of Colorado, }
County of San Miguel } ss.

Filed for record at 12:27 o'clock
P. M. July 7, 1958
and duly recorded in

Book 282 Page 13
Quinnley, J. & Co. Stock

By _____ Recorder

Fees, \$ 1.25 Deput

#160

TRANSMISSION LINE - RIGHT-OF-WAY EASEMENT

KNOW ALL MEN BY THESE PRESENTS, that we the undersigned,

Dan^H Hughes

for a good and valuable consideration, the receipt thereof is hereby acknowledged, do hereby grant unto Colorado-Ute Electric Association, Inc., a cooperative corporation (hereinafter called the "Cooperative"), whose post office is Montrose, Colorado, and to its successors or assigns, the perpetual right to enter upon the lands of the undersigned, situated in the County of San Miguel, State of Colorado; and more particularly described as follows:

NW 1/4 Sec 18 Township 44 N Range 15 W

and to construct, reconstruct, repair, operate and maintain on the above-described lands and/or in or upon all streets, roads or highways abutting said lands, an electric transmission and/or distribution line or system; to cut, trim and control the growth by chemical means, machinery or otherwise of trees and shrubbery located within 50 feet of the center line of the operation and maintenance of said line or system (including any control of the growth of other vegetation in the right-of-way which may incidentally and necessarily result from the means of control employed); and to license, permit, or otherwise agree to the joint use or occupancy of the line or system by any other person, association or corporation for electrification or telephone purposes.

The undersigned agree that all poles, wire and other facilities, installed on the above-described lands at the Cooperative's expense, shall remain the property of the Cooperative, removable at the option of the Cooperative.

The Cooperative agrees to pay to the undersigned for the privileges herein granted, when said line or system has been completely constructed, \$3.00 for each structure and each anchor of said line or system located within the boundaries of said lands, or, in the event no poles or anchors are located on said lands, \$1.00 for each 100 feet or fraction thereof of overhand located on said lands.

The undersigned covenant that they are the owners of the above-described lands and that the said lands are free and clear of encumbrances and liens of whatsoever character except those held by the following persons:

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned have set their hands and seals this 28 day of June, 1957.

Dan H. Hughes (SEAL)

(SEAL)

STATE OF COLORADO)
COUNTY OF Montrose) SS.

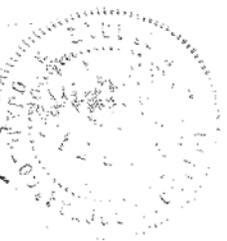
The above and foregoing easement was acknowledged before me this 28 day of June, 1957, by Dan H. Hughes



WITNESS my hand and Notarial Seal.

R.B. Vota
Notary Public

My commission expires June 22, 1958.



Don H. Hughes

State of Florida, } ss.
County of San Miguel

Filed for record at 1:30 o'clock
P. M. July 7, 1958
and duly recorded in

Book 282 Page 14
Don H. Hughes
Recorder

By _____
Fees \$ 1.25 (per page)

TRANSMISSION LINE - RIGHT-OF-WAY EASEMENT

#150

KNOW ALL MEN BY THESE PRESENTS, that we the undersigned,

Joseph S. Hughes

for a good and valuable consideration, the receipt thereof is hereby acknowledged, do hereby grant unto Colorado-Ute Electric Association, Inc., a cooperative corporation (hereinafter called the "Cooperative"), whose post office is Montrose, Colorado, and to its successors or assigns, the perpetual right to enter upon the lands of the undersigned, situated in the County of San Miguel, State of Colorado, and more particularly described as follows:

- SW 1/4 and E 1/2 of Sec 7 Township 44N Range 15W
- Sec 12 Township 44N Range 15W
- E 1/2 of SE 1/4 and N 1/2 of Sec 13 Township 44N Range 16W

and to construct, reconstruct, repair, operate and maintain on the above-described lands and/or in or upon all streets, roads or highways abutting said lands, an electric transmission and/or distribution line or system; to cut, trim and control the growth by chemical means, machinery or otherwise of trees and shrubbery located within 50 feet of the center line of the operation and maintenance of said line or system (including any control of the growth of other vegetation in the right-of-way which may incidentally and necessarily result from the means of control employed); and to license, permit, or otherwise agree to the joint use or occupancy of the line or system by any other person, association or corporation for electrification or telephone purposes.

The undersigned agree that all poles, wire and other facilities, installed on the above-described lands at the Cooperative's expense, shall remain the property of the Cooperative, removable at the option of the Cooperative.

The Cooperative agrees to pay to the undersigned for the privileges herein granted, when said line or system has been completely constructed, \$3.00 for each structure and each anchor of said line or system located within the boundaries of said lands, or, in the event no poles or anchors are located on said lands, \$1.00 for each 100 feet or fraction thereof of overhead located on said lands.

The undersigned covenant that they are the owners of the above-described lands and that the said lands are free and clear of encumbrances and liens of whatsoever character except those held by the following persons;

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned have set their hands and seals this 15th day of April, 1957.

Joseph S. Hughes (SEAL)

(SEAL)

STATE OF COLORADO)
COUNTY OF MONTROSE.) SS.

The above and foregoing easement was acknowledged before me this 16th day of July, 1957, by Joseph S. Hughes



Bernice E. Sweitzer

Clerk of the District Court

144306

Joseph S. Hughes

State of Colorado,
County of San Miguel

Filed for record at 1:35 o'clock

on July 7, 1958

and duly recorded in

Book 282 Page 15

of Records

By *Charles E. Hansen* Registrar

Fees \$ 1.00

Durham Colo.

#12

TRANSMISSION LINE - RIGHT-OF-WAY EASEMENT

KNOW ALL MEN BY THESE PRESENTS, that we the undersigned,

William R. Swille

for a good and valuable consideration, the receipt thereof is hereby acknowledged, do hereby grant unto Colorado-Uto Electric Association, Inc., a cooperative corporation (hereinafter called the "Cooperative"), whose post office is Montrose, Colorado, and to its successors or assigns, the perpetual right to enter upon the lands of the undersigned, situated in the County of San Miguel, State of Colorado, and more particularly described as follows:

E 1/2 of SW 1/4 and SE 1/4 of Sec 15 Township 45 N Range 15

and to construct, reconstruct, repair, operate and maintain on the above-described lands and/or in or upon all streets, roads or highways abutting said lands, an electric transmission and/or distribution line or system; to cut, trim and control the growth by chemical means, machinery or otherwise of trees and shrubbery located within 50 feet of the center line of the operation and maintenance of said line or system (including any control of the growth of other vegetation in the right-of-way which may incidentally and necessarily result from the means of control employed); and to license, permit, or otherwise agree to the joint use or occupancy of the line or system by any other person, association or corporation for electrification or telephone purposes.

The undersigned agree that all poles, wire and other facilities, installed on the above-described lands at the Cooperative's expense, shall remain the property of the Cooperative, removable at the option of the Cooperative.

The Cooperative agrees to pay to the undersigned for the privileges herein granted, when said line or system has been completely constructed, \$2.00 for each structure and each anchor of said line or system located within the boundaries of said lands, or, in the event no poles or anchors are located on said lands, \$1.00 for each 100 feet or fraction thereof of overhead located on said lands.

The undersigned covenant that they are the owners of the above-described lands and that the said lands are free and clear of encumbrances and liens of whatsoever character except those held by the following persons:

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned have set their hands and seals this 15th day of August, 1957.

William R Swille (SEAL)

(SEAL)

STATE OF COLORADO)
COUNTY OF Gilpin) SS.

The above and foregoing easement was acknowledged before me this 15 day of August, 1957, by Margaret E. DeLeve William R. Swille.

WITNESS my hand and Notarial Seal.

Margaret E. DeLeve
Notary Public

My commission expires July 23, 1960.



William P. Duffie

State of Colorado }
County of San Miguel }

Filed for record at 1:40 o'clock
P. M. July 7 1958
and duly recorded in

Book 88 Page 16
Harlow C. Carver

By _____
Fees \$ 1.25
Recorder

TRANSMISSION LINE -- RIGHT-OF-WAY EASEMENT

KNOW ALL MEN BY THESE PRESENTS, that we the undersigned, H. A. Mills for a good and valuable consideration, the receipt thereof is hereby acknowledged, do hereby grant unto Colorado-Ute Electric Association, Inc., a cooperative corporation (hereinafter called the Cooperative), whose post office is Montrose, Colorado, and to its successors or assigns, the perpetual right to enter upon the lands of the undersigned, situated in the County of San Miguel, State of Colorado, and more particularly described as follows: Section 35, Township 44 North, Range 16 West and to construct, reconstruct, repair, operate and maintain on the above described lands and/or in or upon all streets, roads or highways abutting said lands, an electric transmission and/or distribution line or system; to cut, trim and control the growth by machinery or otherwise of trees and shrubbery located within 50 feet of the center line of said line or system, or that may interfere with or threaten to endanger the operation and maintenance of said line or system (including any control of the growth of other vegetation in the right-of-way which may incidentally and necessarily result from the means of control employed); and to license, permit, or otherwise agree to the joint use or occupancy of the line or system by any other person, association or corporation for electrification or telephone purposes.

The undersigned agree that all poles, wire and other facilities, installed on the above-described lands at the Cooperative's expense, shall remain the property of the Cooperative, removable at the option of the Cooperative.

The Cooperative agrees to pay to the undersigned for the privileges herein granted, when said line or system has been completely constructed, \$3.00 for each structure and each anchor of said line or system located within the boundaries of said lands, or, in the event no poles or anchors are located on said lands, \$1.00 for each 100 feet or fraction thereof of overhang located on said lands.

The Cooperative and its assigns further agree not to use chemicals, substances of any kind material or apparatus which might be dangerous or damaging to livestock or humans in controlling trees or shrubbery that may interfere with the operation and maintenance of the line; all fences damaged or removed in construction of the line shall be replaced and/or repaired in a satisfactory condition and any right-of-way from which grass and vegetation is removed shall be reseeded with crested wheat grass at a rate of not less than 8 pounds per acre.

The undersigned covenant that they are the owners of the above-described lands and that the said lands are free and clear of encumbrances and liens of whatsoever character.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned have set their hands and seals this 21 day of September, 1957.

H. A. Mills (SEAL)

STATE OF MASSACHUSETTS }
COUNTY OF Worcester } SS

The above and foregoing easement was acknowledged before me this 21 day of September, 1957, by H. A. Mills.

WITNESS my hand and Notarial Seal.



Lionel P. Lamour
Notary Public

My commission expires April 29 1961

H. C. Smith

State of Colorado, }
County of San Miguel } ss.

Filed for record at 1 1/2 o'clock
P. M. July 7, 1958
and duly recorded in

Book 282 Page 17
D. C. Smith Recorder

By _____ Deputy
Filed 8/1/58

WHEN RECORDED RETURN TO:

If via USPS:

Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association, Inc.
P.O. Box 33695
Denver, CO 80233
Attn: Glenda Lanik, Senior Manager and Assistant General Counsel

If via Federal Express or UPS:

Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association, Inc.
3761 Eureka Way
Frederick, CO 80516
Attn: Glenda Lanik, Senior Manager and Assistant General Counsel

**TRI-STATE GENERATION AND TRANSMISSION ASSOCIATION, INC.
TRANSMISSION LINE AND ACCESS EASEMENT**

1. **GRANT.** In consideration of the sum of Ten Dollars (\$10.00) and other good and valuable consideration, the receipt and sufficiency of which are hereby acknowledged, _____ (whether one or more than one, the "Grantor") hereby grants to TRI-STATE GENERATION AND TRANSMISSION ASSOCIATION, INC., P.O. Box 33695, Denver, Colorado 80233, and its successors and assigns (the "Grantee"), this Transmission Line and Access Easement (this "Easement") for the purposes described herein, situated in the County of _____, State of _____, for the use and benefit of Grantee, and its employees, agents, licensees, invitees, contractors, and lessees.
2. **TRANSMISSION LINE USE.** This Easement may be used for the erection, installation, construction, reconstruction, replacement, modification, uprating, upgrading, removal, maintenance, inspection, and operation, at any time and from time to time, of electrical transmission and distribution lines, including structures, poles, towers, wires, cables, cable terminations, tracer wires, arrestors, footings, foundations, cross-arms, ductbank systems, cable troughs, conduits, vaults, manholes, transition structures, riser structures, control buildings, telecommunications buildings, fences, gates, landscaping, access roads, and other equipment and fixtures, supporting one or more electrical circuits, and any other facilities, equipment and systems used or useable for the transmission or distribution of electricity, together with commercial use fiber optic cables and other equipment and systems used or useable for the transmission or provision of commercial telecommunications and fiber optic services (including but not limited to the transmission of voice, video and data signals and the transfer or shared use such fiber optic cables and other equipment and systems), on, over, under and across the premises described on the attached **Exhibit A** (the "Transmission Line Easement Area").
3. **ACCESS.** This Easement may also be used for access, on, over, and across the Transmission Line Easement Area and that portion of Grantor's property described on the attached **Exhibit B** (the "Access Easement Area") on foot or through use of such vehicles and equipment as Grantee deems appropriate for the activities and uses allowed under this Easement, together with the rights to maintain and improve the Transmission Line Easement Area and Access Easement Area as needed to accommodate said vehicles and equipment. The word "access" as used herein shall include ingress and egress.
4. **NON-EXCLUSIVITY, PERPETUITY.** This Easement shall be non-exclusive and perpetual, and shall run with the land, burdening all present and future owners.

5. **GRANTOR RESERVED RIGHTS.** Grantor reserves the right to use and occupy the Transmission Line Easement Area and the Access Easement Area for any and all purposes that will not interfere with Grantee's uses thereof or endanger or damage Grantee's facilities installed thereon. Grantor shall have the right to cultivate, graze, use, occupy and have access to and across the Transmission Line Easement Area and the Access Easement Area described herein for any purposes that will not pose a significant risk of bodily injury or death to any person or damage to Grantee's property, or interfere with any of the rights and privileges herein granted to the Grantee.
6. **GRANTOR COVENANTS.** Unless prior written permission is granted by Grantee, Grantor shall not, within the Transmission Line Easement Area or the Access Easement Area: i) erect or construct any building or other structure (including but not limited to mobile homes or travel trailers); ii) store flammable or explosive materials; iii) stack any objects or materials (including but not limited to hay, straw or tires); iv) conduct fueling operations; v) construct, install or operate above ground mechanical irrigation facilities which could make an electrical contact with Grantee's conductors; vi) drill wells or conduct mining operations; vii) alter the grade of the ground surface; nor viii) undertake or allow any action that might impair the lateral or subjacent support for Grantee's facilities or access roads.

Upon receipt of written notice from Grantee identifying material or property deemed by Grantee to interfere with the safe operation or maintenance of Grantee's lines or facilities, Grantor shall remove the material or property within 10 days. If there is a failure to so remove the material within 10 days, Grantee may remove the material or property and collect the costs of such removal from Grantor.

Grantor must obtain Grantee's prior written consent before granting any subsequent easement encumbering the Transmission Line Easement Area or Access Easement Area.

7. **GRANTOR WARRANTS.** Grantor warrants that: i) Grantor is the owner of the land on which this Easement is situated; ii) Grantor has full authority to grant this Easement; iii) the individual or individuals signing this Easement have full authority to execute this Easement on behalf of Grantor; and iv) the rights granted herein are subject only to easements of record and mineral rights of record in third parties.
8. **GRANTEE MAINTENANCE.** Grantee may at any time cut, remove, clear away, trim and control, by chemical means, machinery or otherwise, any and all trees, brush and shrubbery whether on the easement areas described herein, or adjacent thereto, which now or hereafter, in the sole and exclusive opinion of Grantee, may interfere with the safe construction, operation and maintenance of the electric transmission and distribution lines, and the facilities, equipment, buildings and structures used in connection therewith. Grantee may also install and use gates in all of Grantor's fences which now or might hereafter cross or be adjacent to the easement areas conveyed herein. Grantee shall at all times exercise reasonable care and diligence to avoid damage to Grantor's real property, fences, crops, livestock and other personal property located on or adjacent to the Transmission Line Easement Area and the Access Easement Area, and shall repair or pay

Grantor for the reasonable costs or value of any and all damage to said real property, fences, crops, livestock and other personal property caused by Grantee, its employees, agents, licensees, invitees, contractors, or lessees while performing construction or maintenance work within the Transmission Line Easement Area and Access Easement Area.

9. **GRANTEE FACILITIES.** All structures, buildings, poles, wires and other facilities installed on, across, and under the Transmission Line Easement Area or Access Easement Area at Grantee's expense, shall remain the property of Grantee, removable at the sole discretion of Grantee; provided, however, that any fences, gates, culverts or ditches constructed by Grantee may be conveyed to Grantor on such terms and conditions and at such times as may be mutually agreed upon by Grantor and Grantee.
10. **NON-USE.** Non-use or limited use of this Easement shall not prevent Grantee from thereafter making use of this Easement to the full extent herein authorized.
11. **MISCELLANEOUS.** The provisions of this Easement shall be binding upon and shall inure to the benefit of the heirs, executors, administrators, personal representatives, successors and assigns of the Grantor and Grantee. The rights, privileges, and obligations granted and created hereunder may be assigned, licensed, or otherwise conveyed or transferred by Grantee in whole or in part. Grantee shall be entitled to all remedies at law or in equity to enforce the terms of this Easement or to recover damages for breach. If any provision of this Easement is held by a court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid or unenforceable or not run with the land, such holding shall not affect the validity or enforceability of the remainder of this Easement. The headings and captions in this Easement are used for convenience only and shall not be construed to affect its meaning.

[The remainder of this page intentionally left blank]

Grantor signs this Transmission Line and Access Easement to be effective upon execution hereof.

GRANTOR:

Signature: _____

Printed Name: _____

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

STATE OF _____)

) ss:

COUNTY OF _____)

The foregoing instrument was acknowledged before me on _____, 20____,
by _____.

(Notarial Seal)

Notary Public

My commission expires: _____

Appendix 3: San Miguel County Pre-application Summary Sheet

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**SAN MIGUEL COUNTY
PLANNING DEPARTMENT**



P.O. Box 548, 333 West Colorado Avenue, 3rd Floor, Telluride, CO 81435

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August 5, 2016

Karl Myers
Transmission Siting & Permitting Manager
Tri State Generation and Transmission Association
P.O. Box 33695
Denver, CO 80233-0695

**Re: Pre-application Conference Summary:
To Replace the existing Above-ground 115-kilovolt (kV) Electric Transmission Line to operate at 230-kV, and to include Storage and Staging Areas within the West End (WE) Master Plan Area and the West End (WE) Zone District in San Miguel County.**

Dear Karl,

The Planning Office appreciated meeting with you and your team concerning the permitting and construction of the portion of the proposed Tri-State Transmission Line Improvement Project (Project) from Montrose-Nucla-Cahone (MNC) that is located within unincorporated San Miguel County. It is our understanding that the proposal is to improve the existing MNC 115-kV line to operate at 230-kV. It is also our understanding that Tri-State's proposal is to upgrade the transmission line in its current alignment through San Miguel County to include the upgrade-in-place alignment in the Dry Creek Basin. As part of this transmission line project there will need to be temporary staging areas to store poles, equipment and vehicles. It is our understanding that Tri-State has identified an approximately 60 acre site on private land owned by the Suckla family located south of SH 141, which is accessed by CR 19Q in the Spring Creek area.

The purpose of this correspondence is to serve as a Pre-application Summary, in accordance with San Miguel County Land Use Code Section 4-207, for the purposes of **Rebuild of an Above-ground 115-kilovolt (kV) Electric Transmission Line to operate at 230-kV** located in the WE Master Plan Area and is within the WE Zone District. Utility service facilities such as utility lines (which I interpret to include transmission lines) and service centers are identified in LUC Section 5-320 F. III as Uses Allowed Subject to Two-step Planning Commission and Board of County Commissioner Special Use Permit Review. LUC Section 5-320 J General Development Guidelines for all uses in the WE Zone District apply to your application. The Review Standards for all WE Zone District Special Uses are set forth in LUC Section 5-320 K. These special uses standards include consistency with the County Master Plan,; as noted above the subject

transmission line upgrade is within the WE Master Plan Area, Section 5.3 of the WE Master Plan 'More Specific Guidelines for the Siting of Utilities and Utility Lines Throughout the County need to be addressed in your SUP application.; the County LUC Policies in Article 2, I would encourage you to review and address LUC Section 2-12 Scenic Quality policies as they apply to your application as well as the Wildlife Protection Policies in LUC Section 2-16 and specifically LUC Section 2-1601 it's the county policy to protect, enhance and preserve Gunnison Sage Grouse populations and their habitats to include considering the range-wide conservation strategies set forth in the most current Gunnison Sage-grouse Range-wide Conservation Plan.

The Special Use Permit application for this proposed transmission line upgrade shall also address the provisions and standards contained in LUC Section 5-709 Public Utility Structures and Electricity Transmission and Distribution Lines including sub-sections 5-709 A. thru 5-709 K. It is staff's understanding that a portion of the transmission line alignment traverses wetlands and as such the application will need to address the applicable review standards in LUC Section 5-22-3 Development in Wetlands. In preparing the SUP application you will need to review LUC Section 5-4 Areas & Activities of Local and State Interest "1041" Environmental Hazard Review to determine if any of these "1041" categories apply to your proposed project and if so the application will need to address any and all applicable review standards in this LUC section.

A separate Special Use Permit application is required for the proposed approximately 60-acre temporary staging area to store poles, equipment and vehicles in conjunction with this transmission upgrade and re-build project on private property in the WE Zone District. This SUP application is also subject to a two-step review for a Public Utility Area Service Center Special Use Permit pursuant to Land Use Code Sections 5-320 F. III. Utility Services Facilities, 5-320 J. General Development Guidelines, 5-320 K. Review Standards for Special Uses, Section 5-4 Areas and Activities of Local and State Interest, 5-1002 Standards for All Special Uses and other Uses Requiring One-step and Two-step Review. While this will be treated as a separate SUP application per LUC Section 3-8 Consolidation of Applications these two requests for Special Use Permits will be "consolidated so that the different but related requests for approvals are considered comprehensively by the Planning Commission and the Board of County Commissioners. Most but not all of the Review Standards stated in this letter are contained in this letter following the submission requirement.

Considering that the access to the proposed large staging area, CR 19Q is also an access to the Spring Creek Basin Wild Horse Management Area (HMA) in Disappointment Valley I would encourage you early on in the process to contact T.J. Holmes, a wild horse advocate who resides in the area to identify any issues or concerns there may be, if any, with the proposed staging area and its potential impacts to the Spring Creek Wild Horse Herd. Ms. Holme's email address is mtbqrrl@fone.net.

Submission Requirements

Land Use Code Section 4-2 establishes the minimum submission requirements for all development applications:

4-201 General

All development applications shall include, at minimum, the information and materials specified in this section of the Code. During the pre-application conference the Planning Office staff may authorize modifications to the required submission contents.

4-202 Required Background Information

A letter signed by the property owner containing the property owner's name, the applicant's name, address and telephone number, and if applicable, the name, address and telephone number of the representative authorized to act on behalf of the property owner.

4-203 Parcel Description

The street address and current legal description of the parcel on which the development is proposed to occur and an 8-1/2" x 11" vicinity map locating the subject property within San Miguel County.

4-204 Disclosure and Proof of Ownership

A disclosure of ownership of the parcel on which the development is proposed to occur, consisting of a current certificate from a title insurance company or attorney licensed to practice law in the State of Colorado, listing the names of all owners of the property and all holders of subsurface mineral interests of record listed in the real estate records of the San Miguel County Clerk and recorder, mortgages, judgments, liens, easements, contracts and agreements affecting use and development of the parcel and proof of the owner's right to use the land for the purposes identified in the development application. This shall normally require proof of complete ownership or written consent from all owners. The staff may also request the applicant to supply information regarding the subject property and contiguous property sufficient to indicate that the subject lot was legally created.

4-205 Legal Access

Sufficient information to demonstrate that the applicant has adequate legal access to the parcel for the development proposal.

4-206 Standards Report

A written report demonstrating that the proposed development complies with the applicable substantive review standards that have been identified in this pre-application summary letter.

4-207 Pre-Application Conference Summary Sheet

A copy of the pre-application conference summary sheet provided to the applicant at the pre-application conference.

4-208 Site Plan

The number of copies of 24" x 36" and 8-1/2" x 11" site utilization maps as specified by the staff during the pre-application conference. During the pre-application conference, the Planning Office may authorize an applicant to consolidate or delete specific maps that may not be applicable to a particular development proposal. The 24" x 36" site utilization maps must be folded to fit within a legal-size folder with the name of the application visible. Site maps shall include identification of Areas of Local and State Interest as set forth in Section 5-4 and Wetland Areas as set forth in Section 5-22, for all areas where development activity is proposed.

4-209 Copies of Application

During the pre-application conference the staff shall specify the number of copies of the application to be submitted. This number is identified in the section concerning referrals. fed

4-210 Revegetation Plan

A plan for revegetation of all surfaces disturbed in conjunction with development that preferably employs native species includes replacement of topsoil and specifies a maintenance schedule and techniques.

4-211 Weed Control Plan

A plan for control of noxious weed, as listed in the San Miguel County Weed Identification List, for all surfaces disturbed in conjunction with Development, as approved by County staff. Disturbed surfaces over one cumulative acre in size will require bonding for revegetation and weed control.

Review Standards for Public Utilities Structures and Public Utilities Staging Areas

Land Use Code Section 5-709 establishes the standards for the Planning Commission and Board of County Commissioners to use in reviewing all public utility applications, which you must address in the Standards Report required by Section 4-206:

Review Standards for Special Uses in the WE Zone District

- 5-320 F. Uses Allowed Subject to Two-Step Planning Commission and Board of Commissioners Special Use Permit Review (see Section 5-320 K.)
 - III. Utility service facilities such as utility lines and service centers;
- 5-320 J. General Development Guidelines for all uses
 - I. All uses must conform to the state health and sanitation requirements regarding

potable water supply and sewage disposal;

- II. Before issuing a special use permit for any land use change adjoining or affecting agricultural lands, assurance must be established that adequate provisions are included that minimize or eliminate impacts on agricultural lands, including compliance with the following guidelines
 - a. Fences shall be constructed to separate development from adjoining agricultural lands or stock drives. Both new and existing fences shall be properly maintained and repaired. Notification of the lot owner's duty to maintain such fences shall be provided on subdivision plats;
 - b. Where irrigation ditches cross or adjoin land proposed to be developed, adequate provisions shall be made to insure that the use of such ditches, including the maintenance thereof, can continue uninterruptedly; and
 - c. Existing historical easements utilized to gain access to ditches, head gates and fences for maintenance or operational purposes shall be preserved or replaced with alternate easements suitable for a continuation of the historic use.

- III. In addition, local landowners recognize that the cooperative existence between landowners and wildlife is a way of life. To assure the preservation of both farmers/ranchers and wildlife, the Colorado Parks and Wildlife is encouraged to maintain reasonable herd populations.

Land Use Code Section 5-320 K. establishes the standards for the Planning Commission and Board of County Commissioners to use in reviewing all special uses in the WE Zone District, which you must address in the Standards Report required by Section 4-206:

5-320 K. Review Standards for all WE Zone District Special Uses

All special uses shall:

- I. Be consistent with the County Master Plan, the County Land Use Policies in Article 2 and the purpose of the WE Zone District;

- II. Be consistent with and compatible with the character of the immediate vicinity of the parcel proposed for development and surrounding land uses, and/or shall enhance the mixture of complimentary uses and activities in the immediate vicinity of the parcel proposed for development;

- III. Be designed, located and operated so that the public health, safety and welfare will be protected;

- IV. Be located, designed and operated to minimize adverse effects, including impacts on scenic quality, pedestrian and vehicular circulation, parking, trash, service delivery, noise, vibration and odor on surrounding

properties;

- V. Provide adequate public facilities and services to serve the special use, including but not limited to roads, adequate water supply in terms of both quality and quantity, sewer, solid waste and fire protection;
- VI. Not substantially adversely affect agriculture or ranching operations and residences;
- VII. Only include roads, utilities and associated structures that bear logical relationships to existing topography and minimize cuts and fills; and
- XII. Be consistent with the historic rural and agricultural character of the West End. Input from neighbors shall be considered by the County in determining consistency.

Review Standards for Areas and Activities of Local and State Interest

This section of the Code contains development standards for Areas and Activities of Local and State Interest, pursuant to C.R.S. Section 24-65.1-101 et seq. The standards apply to areas mapped on San Miguel County's adopted Environmental Hazard Maps and to unmapped areas known to be Areas of Local and State Interest ("Colorado House Bill 1041 Environmental Hazard Areas"). Section 5-401 D. identifies Areas of Local and State Interest, and Section 5-401 E. identifies Activities of Local and State Interest.

5-401 C. Two-step Reviews

Reviews of multiple single-family dwelling units, multi-family dwelling units and non-residential uses in relation to Areas of Local and State Interest shall be two-step reviews.

All reviews relevant to Activities of Local and State Interest shall be two-step reviews.

5-401 D. The following are the Areas of Local and State interest within San Miguel County:

- I. Floodplain hazard areas (refer to Section 5-403);
- II. Geologic hazard areas (refer to Section 5-404);
- III. Historic and archaeological resource areas (refer to Section 5-405);
- IV. Wildfire hazard areas (refer to Section 5-406); and
- V. Wildlife habitat areas (refer to Section 5-407).

5-401 E. The following are the Activities of Local and State interest within San Miguel County:

IV. Public Utility Facilities (refer to Section 5-411);

5-402 General Standards

The standards in this section apply to all Areas of Local and State Interest with the exception of Mancos shale, expansive soil and rock, wildfire and historic and archaeological areas.

5-402 A. Development in Hazard-free Areas

Restrict development to a hazard-free area if such an area exists on a site.

5-402 B. Development in Hazard Areas

If no adequate hazard-free area exists on a site, the diversity of permitted uses in a zone district and permitted residential land use densities may be limited to minimize potential dangers to persons or wildlife.

5-402 C. Development Prohibited

Development shall be prohibited within an Area of Local and State Interest (C.R.S. 1041 Environmental Hazard Area) if:

- I. Site planning and engineering techniques cannot completely mitigate potential hazards to public health, safety and welfare.
- II. Development subjects persons or the County to dangers or expenses required to mitigate hazardous conditions, respond to emergencies created by such conditions or rehabilitate improvements and lands.

5-402 D. Exemptions

The following types of development shall be exempt from the provisions of Section 5-4 of this Code:

- I. As per C.R.S. 24-65.1-107: "Effect of article - developments in areas of state interest and activities of state interest meeting certain conditions: (1) This article shall not apply to any development in an area of state interest or any activity of state interest which meets any one of the following conditions as of May 17, 1974: (a) The development or activity is covered by a current building permit issued by the appropriate local government; or (b) The development or activity has been approved by the electorate; or (c) The development or activity is to be on land: (I) Which has been

conditionally or finally approved by the appropriate local government for planned unit development or for a use substantially the same as planned unit development; or (II) Which has been zoned by the appropriate local government for the use contemplated by such development or activity [meaning zoned in response to a specific development application]; or (III) With respect to which a development plan has been conditionally or finally approved by the appropriate governmental authority;" and

- II. Normal and customary ranching and agriculture-related uses or activities.

5-404 Geologic Hazard Areas

This section identifies development standards applicable to specific geologic hazard areas in addition to the general standards in Section 5-402.

5-404 B. Landslide areas

If no adequate hazard-free area exists on a site, land uses shall:

- I. Insure strict adherence to recommended design, construction and maintenance procedures approved by qualified professional geologists or engineers;
- II. Avoid adding water to the site that would cause decreased stability;
- III. Avoid removing the toe of the slide without adequate mechanical support;
- IV. Avoid increasing the weight load on the top of the slide;
- V. Avoid removing vegetation from the site; and
- VI. Avoid oversteepening the existing slope of the slide.

5-404 C. Potentially Unstable Slopes

- I. If Development is proposed in an area containing moderate and extremely hazardous Slopes, Development shall be permitted only if design and construction stabilization and maintenance measures approved by a qualified professional geologist or engineer and the County are utilized.
- II. Any land uses on a potentially unstable slope area shall avoid:
 - a. Cutting into slope without providing adequate mechanical support;
 - b. Decreasing slope stability by adding water;

- c. Adding weight to the top of the slope;
- d. Removing vegetation from the slope without adequate revegetation; and
- e. Oversteepening slopes.

II. Development shall not:

- a. Increase water supply to cliffs or overhangs;
- b. Remove protective vegetation;
- c. Add weight or otherwise disturb overhanging strata;
- d. Cause any excavations that remove underlying support; or
- e. Increase erosion that removes underlying support.

5-404 E. Slopes Greater Than 30 Percent

I. If Development is proposed in an area containing Slopes greater than 30 percent design and Development shall be based upon a detailed site survey including geologic and engineering analysis to identify the most level Development Site on the Parcel.

II. In addition a developer shall:

- a. Provide mechanical support for all cuts;
- b. Confine cuts and fills and grading and scraping to the minimum area needed for construction;
- c. Provide for stability and revegetation of cut and fill slopes; and
- d. Retain a certified engineer to design a soil absorption sewage disposal systems.

5-404 F. Alluvial fans

I. If no adequate hazard-free area exists on a site, land uses shall:

- a. Be based upon site evaluation and recommendations by a qualified professional engineer or geologist; and
- b. Be protected by channelizing, damming or diverting potential mud

or debris flows utilizing engineering structures designed by a qualified professional engineer or geologist.

- II. A disturbance shall be prohibited in the drainage basin above a fan unless an evaluation of the effect on runoff and stability of the fan shows that disturbance is acceptable.

5-404 G. Talus slope

- I. If no adequate hazard-free area exists on a site, structural construction associated with residential, commercial, industrial and high impact recreational activity shall be permitted only if design and construction stabilization and maintenance measures approved by a qualified professional geologist or engineer and the County are utilized.
- II. In addition developers shall:
 - a. Design developments other than those referenced in section 5-404 G.I. to withstand down slope movement;
 - b. Bury foundations and utilities in talus slope areas below the active surface;
 - c. Minimize site disturbance in talus slope areas to avoid inducing slope instability; and
 - d. Not remove the toe of a talus slope without providing adequate mechanical support.

5-404 H. Mancos shale

Development within a Mancos shale area shall be permitted based upon an evaluation of the development's effect on slope stability and shrink-swell properties:

- I. If design and construction stabilization and maintenance measures approved by a qualified professional geologist or engineer and the County are utilized;
- II. If designed to provide adequate surface drainage; and
- III. If concentrated runoff from impervious surfaces into natural drainages is demonstrated to pose no threat of adverse effects.

5-404 I. Faults

If no adequate hazard-free area exists on a site, land uses shall incorporate adequate mitigation measures determined by a qualified professional engineer or geologist and approved by the County.

5-404 J. Expansive Soil and Rock

Development in an identified area of expansive soil and rock shall be permitted upon County approval of engineered foundation and floor system designs.

5-404 K. Ground Subsidence

In the event a development site is comprised exclusively of moderate and extremely hazardous areas, the development shall be permitted if design and construction stabilization and maintenance measures approved by a qualified professional geologist or engineer and the County are utilized.

5-407 Wildlife Habitat Areas

This section establishes land use standards for wildlife habitat areas in addition to the general standards in Section 5-402. The standards apply to areas mapped by the Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) on the County's adopted Wildlife Resource Information System (C.R.S.1041 Wildlife maps) and to areas known to be wildlife habitat areas by the Colorado Parks and Wildlife, and areas mapped by the Colorado Natural Heritage Program. Agricultural and Ranching activities are exempt from this Section.

5-407 A. General Standards

The standards in this section apply to all wildlife habitat areas.

- I. Residential development shall be clustered to avoid impacting wildlife and their habitat.
- II. Removal of vegetation shall be minimized. Vegetation removed shall be promptly replaced with beneficial native browse species.
- III. Wildlife food, cover and water shall be preserved and development effects that would destroy these shall be mitigated. Special consideration shall be given to trees and shrubs with high wildlife food value, especially heavy seed, berry and fruit producing species.
- IV. The planting of wildlife food species and woody cover along fences shall be encouraged as one way of improving wildlife habitat.
- V. Waterholes, springs, seepage, marshes, pond and watering areas shall be preserved.

- VI. Known endangered species habitats shall be preserved and all disturbances to those habitats shall be minimized.
- VII. Every golden eagle nest site, bald eagle roost site, and all other raptor nest sites shall be protected from the adverse impacts of development within a ½ mile buffer.
- VIII. Mesh or woven fences shall be prohibited and are encouraged to be removed.
- IX. Fences located within CPW designated mapped wildlife habitat areas are discouraged. Fences in such wildlife habitat areas shall be limited to “wildlife friendly fences” that are in compliance with applicable CPW fencing standards. Wildlife friendly fences are very visible and allow wild animals to easily jump over or slip under the wires or rails. The following regulations shall apply to fencing:
 - a. Smooth wire or rounded rail for the top, smooth wire on the bottom;
 - b. Fence is limited to 42: in height;
 - c. At least 12” between the top two wires or rails;
 - d. At least 16” between the bottom wire or rail and the ground;
 - e. Posts at minimum 16’ intervals;
 - f. Gates, drop-downs, removable fence sections or other passages where animals concentrate and cross;
 - g. Using a rail, high-visibility wire, flagging or other visual markers for the top.
 - h. A zigzagged worm fence (rails stacked alternately on top of one another, with rails interlocked like laced fingers where the ends meet) should create openings for wildlife to cross by intermittently dropping rails to the ground every 400’; and in swales and at stream crossing for easy wildlife passage.
 - i. Perimeter fencing of an entire parcel is discouraged.
 - j. As an exception to “wildlife friendly fencing” dogs shall be kept in an enclosed kennel or small fenced yard adjacent to the residence.

The standards or allowance for a small fenced yard or area shall be specified in the county’s revised dog or animal control regulations.

If staff has a question regarding the appropriateness of proposed fencing to be located within a CPW mapped wildlife habitat area the application may be referred to the CPW for comment and recommendation. Any new fencing shall follow the CPW “Fencing with Wildlife in Mind” guidelines available at the CPW website, www.wildlife.state.co.us

- IX. Residential development shall maintain bear proof storage for garbage disposal for all parcels located in all zone districts.

- X. Development activities, such as Subdivisions, PUDs and Special Use Permits uses may require a Wildlife Impact Assessment prepared by a qualified wildlife biologist or scientist for all mapped wildlife habitat areas or known habitat areas to be submitted with the land use application. The Impact Assessment should include changes, trends and proposed mitigation to be reviewed by the Colorado Parks and Wildlife or other County review staff.
- XI. Barking dogs, dogs at large, and stray dogs are not permitted in any unincorporated portion of San Miguel County pursuant to Board of County Commissioner Resolution 1982-27 or as may be set forth in the most current Board of County Commissioner Resolution regarding dog or animal control rules and regulations.
- XIII. It is illegal for dogs to chase and/or harass wildlife, on public or private property. A Colorado wildlife officer or other peace officer may capture or kill any dog he or she determines to be harassing wildlife, pursuant to C.R.S. §33-6-128.

5-407 B. Deer, Elk and Bighorn Sheep Winter Concentration Area/Severe Winter Range

Land uses in deer, elk or bighorn sheep winter concentration areas/severe winter range shall comply with the standards in Section 5-407 A. and the standards in this Section.

- I. Overgrazing of ranges by livestock shall be prohibited.
- II. Development shall be restricted to areas in which wildlife impacts can be minimized.
- III. Access for the Colorado Parks and Wildlife for managing wildlife shall be maintained.
- IV. Commercial activity and recreational uses requiring County review shall be prohibited from December through April 15.

5-407 C. Deer, Elk and Bighorn Sheep Winter Range

Land uses located in deer, elk or bighorn sheep winter range shall comply with Sections 5-407 A. and 5-407 B.I.-III. and the standard in this section.

Commercial activity and recreational uses requiring County review shall be prohibited from December 1 through April 15, unless an applicant can demonstrate written approval from the Colorado Parks and Wildlife of a site-specific wildlife protection plan. Such plan shall include CPW monitoring provisions and set forth on-site protection, including but not limited to habitat enhancement and habitat protection, including but not limited to control of fencing, noise,

lighting and siting of structures, and establishment of routes and means of transportation and hours/days of operation. Permits must be renewed annually. The dates in this section may be modified and permits may be suspended at any time upon CPW recommendation on a case-by-case basis as necessary to protect the health of the herd.

5-407 D. Deer and Elk Migration Corridors

Land uses located in deer and elk Migration Corridors shall comply with Section 5-407 A. and the standards in this section.

- I. Development blocking a corridor and preventing migration between summer and winter ranges shall be prohibited.
- II. Fences restricting deer or elk migration shall be prohibited.

5-407 E. Deer and Elk Production Areas

Land uses located in deer and elk production areas shall comply with Section 5-407 A. and the standards in this Section.

- I. Where no appropriate development site exists in a production area, development shall be prohibited.
- II. Access shall be maintained for the Colorado Parks and Wildlife for trapping, tagging and studying wildlife.
- III. Manipulation of vegetation shall be prohibited, except within a designated building envelope.
- IV. Commercial and construction activity, recreational uses and off-road motorized activity shall be prohibited from May 1 through June 30. These dates may be modified upon Colorado Parks and Wildlife recommendation on a case-by-case basis as necessary to protect the health of the herd.

5-411 Public Utility Facilities

5-411 A. Sites for Public Utility Facilities

Where feasible, major facilities of public utilities shall be located consistently with the San Miguel County Comprehensive Development Plan.

5-415 D. Burdens on Public

Development of a key facility that imposes burdens or deprivation on the public shall not be approved solely on the basis of potential benefit.

5-709 Public Utilities Structures and Electricity Transmission and Distribution Lines

All public utility structures and electricity transmission lines more than 115 kilovolts shall comply with the standards in this section. Additionally, all above ground electricity transmission or distribution lines in excess of 1,000 linear feet in length in San Miguel County are subject to compliance with the standards in this section. These standards do not apply to the normal construction of local service natural gas lines.

- 5-709 A. The proposed development poses no significant threat to the health, welfare and safety of the citizens of San Miguel County or the citizens of the region.
- 5-709 B. Construction and operation of the facility will not unreasonably impact the physical, economic, or social environment of San Miguel County or this region, including agricultural land and water.
- 5-709 C. Adverse impacts to the County and/or region have been identified, and the applicant has presented a satisfactory program of mitigation, including assurances of implementation.
- 5-709 D. Alternative sites and routes and methods to reduce the impact to the land such as combining new lines with existing lines, placing new lines underground, etc., have been identified and approved by the San Miguel County Board of County Commissioners.
- 5-709 E. All costs associated with the construction of new distribution lines, including any costs resulting from mitigation of visual impacts, shall be paid by the utility provider and/or the individual property owners who will connect to the new lines.
- 5-709 F. The benefits of the development outweigh the unavoidable and unmitigatable impacts upon the physical, social, and economic environment of San Miguel County and this region.
- 5-709 G. Proposed uses in Airport Reservations shall be for use by the facility and these and any other allowed facility shall meet the navigable airspace requirements of AC No. 70-7460-2-E, dated 7/5/73 and issued by the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Commerce, as may be amended.
- 5-709 H. All proposed above ground extensions are routed wherever possible to:
 - I. Avoid paralleling of major transportation routes;
 - II. Cross any transportation route at as close to a right angle as possible;
 - III. Avoid "tunnel" effect of clearing areas visible from a population concentration or major transportation route;
 - IV. Avoid clear-stripping of right-of-way;
 - V. Avoid corrosive soils;

- VI. Avoid creation of access way scars visible as above;
- VII. Avoid historic and archaeological sites; natural phenomenon;
- VIII. Avoid impact on wildlife and wildlife habitat;
- IX. Preserve as much as possible the natural landscape;
- X. Minimize conflict with existing and planned uses shown on the County Master Plan Map;
- XI. Maximize the natural screening potential of vegetation and topography; and
- XII. Avoid crossing or use interference with a fishery.

5-709 I. All proposed extensions of central service plant whose curvature, grade or other constraint inherent in such facility tends to require alignment along valley floors or public ways, shall avoid impacts listed in (c) above; provide for recompaction to restore the original density of disturbed irrigated ground; provide for restoration of the original slope of hillsides and ridge cuts; and by innovative construction techniques minimize the width of clearing and cuts, including those required for installation of normally buried facilities above ground where such might be less disturbing to the sum of criteria of this plan.

5-709 J. These regulations shall not apply to the normal construction of individual telephone subscriber service, distribution and feeder cables, including the delivery of cable television, toll service, and extended area service telephone lines.

5-709 K. Approval shall not be considered until such time as the Public Utilities Commission has granted a Certificate of Public Necessity and Convenience, if such Certificate is required from the Public Utilities Commission.

5-1002 Standards for All Special Uses and Other Uses Requiring One-step and Two-step Review

All Uses requiring One-step and Two-step Review, except Oil and Gas Exploration and Development (Section 5-26), shall comply with the standards in this section.

Consistency with Master Plan, Land Use Polices, Zone District and Neighborhood

The Use shall be:

5-1002 A.I. Consistent with the County Master Plan;

II. Consistent with County Land Use Policies in Article 2;

III. Consistent with the purpose of the Zone District in which it is proposed to be located;

IV. Consistent with and Compatible with the Character of the Neighborhood

of the Parcel proposed for Development and surrounding land Uses, and may enhance the mixture of complimentary Uses and activities in the Neighborhood of the Parcel proposed for Development;

- V. Necessary for public convenience at the proposed location; and
- VI. Designed, located and proposed to be operated so that the public health, safety and welfare will be protected.

5-1002 B. Impacts on Surrounding Area

Compatibility with the Character of Parcels adjacent to the Parcel shall be expressed in terms of appearance, scale and features, Site design, landscaping, weed seed dispersal, as well as, the control and Minimization of adverse Impacts including Noise, vibration, dust, dirt, smoke, fumes, gas, odor, explosion, glare, Impacts on pedestrian and traffic congestion, parking, trash, service delivery, or other undesirable or hazardous conditions.

5-1002 C. Public Facilities

Adequate public facilities and services shall exist or shall be provided to serve any reviewable Use including, but not limited to, roads, potable water, sewer, solid waste, parks, police, fire protection, emergency medical, hospital and medical, drainage system and schools.

5-1002 D. Bond Requirement

A bond may be required, as a condition of any reviewable Use permit as deemed necessary by the Board of Commissioners or the Planning Commission, sufficient to cover the cost of Site remediation and/or satisfaction of the other conditions and requirements.

5-1002 E. The following must be addressed as part of any application:

- I. A Site plan including:
 - a. Ownership, Use and zoning of all adjacent Parcels;
 - b. Driveways, streets and right-of-way, Access ways, including points of ingress, egress, parking plan;
 - c. Easements;
 - d. Location and dimensions of Structures and Signs;
 - e. Typical elevations/Heights of such Buildings;

- f. Landscaping;
 - g. Topography;
 - h. Specific areas proposed for specific types of land Use/the identification of specific land Uses; and
 - i. Information regarding the function and characteristics of any Building or Use proposed, including: days and hours of operation, number of employees, number of students, number of rooms for rent, etc., as applicable;
- II. Lighting plan;
 - III. Signs - all Signs must meet Section 5-704 standards;
 - IV. Water/sewer plan - must meet state standards and may include verification of a commercial well permit;
 - V. Drainage plan;
 - VI. Grading plan;
 - VII. Dust control plan;
 - VIII. Detailed engineered plans and specifications by a registered Colorado Professional Engineer as requested by staff or Referral Agents;
 - I. Weed control plan that must include use of weed free hay or straw;
 - II. Wildlife Plan (see Section 5-407 A. XII.); and
 - XI. Additional permits as necessary from other agencies.

Upon or prior to the expiration of the three (3) year period, the owner/applicant may provide a written statement withdrawing the Special Use application and requesting the Special Use approval be terminated. If upon expiration of the three (3) year period the owner/applicant does not provide a written statement withdrawing the application the matter shall be noticed and scheduled for Public Hearing by the County. The applicant is encouraged to provide a written statement, prior to the Public Hearing, indicating why the approved Special Use has not been permitted and/or commenced, identifying any changes that may have occurred in the surrounding land uses and explaining how the proposed Special Use meets the review standards in Land Use Code Sections 5-1002 A. and 5-1002 B.

Review of an approved Special Use shall be conducted in accordance with the applicable provisions of Article 3 Procedures for one-step reviews and shall include posting and sending written notice of the Public Hearing for review of the Special Use to adjacent property owners. Development

5-2203 Development in Wetland Areas

5-2203 A. Administrative Review

No Development activity shall be allowed within any Wetland or Buffer Zone without a Wetland Special Use Permit issued in compliance with the terms of this section. All activities that are not permitted by Special Use Permit shall be prohibited.

A Wetland Special Use Permit may be issued in accordance with the Administrative Review Process described in Section 3-4 of this Code when the applicant demonstrates to the County's satisfaction that the proposed Wetlands Development satisfies at least one of the following standards/criteria:

- I. The proposed development is required to provide protection against property loss and/or damage.
- II. The proposed development will increase the size and improve the quality of Wetlands, aquatic, and/or riparian habitat, and enhance ecosystem functioning such as improving water quality, wildlife habitat and biodiversity.
- III. The proposed Development is associated with residential Development (construction of Access, utilities and/or a home or homes).
- IV. The proposed Development is associated with a Minor Facility Administrative Review process for Oil and Gas Exploration and Development pursuant to Section 5-2603.

5-2203 B. Two-Step Special Use Permit Review

A potential developer desiring to develop within a wetland or within 100 feet of a wetland must submit an application for approval of such activity to the County for review under the Two-step Special Use Permit Process described in Section 3-6 of this Code. However, when such proposed development comprises construction of access, utilities and/or a home or homes on parcels final platted or otherwise legally created prior to June 4, 1992, such application shall be reviewed in accordance with the Administrative Review Process described in Section 3-4 of this Code. Major Oil and Gas Facility applications shall be processed in accordance with this Section. No development activity shall be allowed within any wetland or buffer zone without a Wetland Special Use Permit issued in

compliance with the terms of this section. All activities that are not permitted by Special Use Permit shall be prohibited.

5-2203 C. Issuance of Wetland Special Use Permits

A Wetland Special Use Permit may be issued only if the applicant has shown at least one of the following:

- I. The proposed activity is water-dependent;
- II. The proposed activity is necessary to achieve access to property, and no other access route avoiding wetland and buffer zone areas is technically feasible;
- III. Denial of the permit sought would result in denying the landowner all practical, reasonable and/or economically viable use of the subject property;
- IV. The proposed activity meets the definition of Essential Services in Article 6 of this Code and could not reasonably be located elsewhere; and
- V. In the case of development proposed solely in a buffer zone, the proposed land use would not adversely affect the adjacent wetland area.

5-2203 D. Criteria for Review of Wetland Special Use Permits

In reviewing applications for Wetland Special Use Permits, the Board of Commissioners shall apply the following criteria:

- I. Avoidance -- Development activity within a designated wetland area should be avoided whenever possible; and
- II. Minimization of Impacts -- The impacts of unavoidable development activity should be minimized by including appropriate project design modifications, control techniques or other conditions deemed appropriate by the County.

5-2203 E. Impact Mitigation for Wetland Uses and Activities

As a condition of Wetland Special Use Permit approval, or in the event of a violation of any terms in this Section 5-22, the Board of County Commissioners may require a mitigation plan. The plan shall require the applicant or developer to engage in the restoration of wetland areas in order to offset, in whole or in part, the wetland losses resulting from an applicant's proposed or violator's historic actions. Approval of such plan by the Board of Commissioners shall not constitute an alternative to compliance with the standards set forth in this Section

5-22.

5-2203 F. Submission Requirements

An applicant for a wetland special use permit must submit an application in accordance with Section 4-2 of the Code. In addition, an applicant must submit evidence of compliance with the standards described in Sections 5-2203 A., B. and C., and the Board of County Commissioners may require additional information as appropriate.

Scheduling of Application Consideration

Once the Planning Department receives eight (8) copies of a complete application that conforms to all applicable Land Use Code requirements, the application can be scheduled for consideration by the Planning Commission at a regular meeting. The Planning Commission meets the second Wednesday of each month. In accordance with San Miguel County Board of Commissioners Resolution 2000-13, an application review fee of \$500 for the transmission line project, and an additional \$500 (\$1000 total) for the staging area is required, payable to San Miguel County and must accompany the submission for the application to be considered complete.

Once these applications are determined to be complete per LUC Section 3-202- C. the Planning Department will refer the application to the County Attorney, the County Road & Bridge Superintendent, the County Environmental Health Director, the County Open Space Coordinator, the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT), the Colorado Parks & Wildlife (CPW) and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) for their review and comment.

Prior to 20 days before any meeting for which consideration of **any** land use application is scheduled, the applicant shall notify by First Class mail every property owner and condominium unit owner within 500 feet of the perimeter of the subject property as listed in the records of the San Miguel County Assessor. In addition, prior to 20 days before any meeting for which consideration of **any** land use application is scheduled, the applicant shall post notice (letter and sign to be obtained from the Planning Department) of the scheduled consideration of the application. Mailing and posting of notice (*letter and sign to be obtained from the Planning Department*) by an applicant prior to a meeting that is not a public hearing shall be carried out pursuant to Section 3-903 A., B. and C. In addition to the general notice provisions of Section 3-9, the San Miguel County Land Use Code may require additional notice for certain property owners and parties outside the 500 foot perimeter of the subject property for certain specific development applications, as set forth in the Land Use Code.

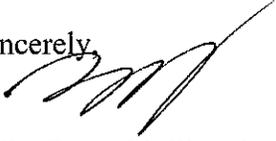
It is the Planning staff's understanding that Notification of Surface Development requirements per CRS 24-65.51-103 does not apply with respect to applications for electric transmission lines. If there is a separate subsurface mineral estate associated with the proposed construction staging parcel such notice to the holder of the mineral estate may be required.

You also will be responsible for such mailing and posting of notice prior to the second step of the

review process, a public hearing before the Board of County Commissioners.

If you have any questions or wish to discuss the contents of this letter please feel free to contact me at (970)728-3083.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'MR', written over the word 'Sincerely,'.

Mike Rozycki, Planning Director

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Appendix 4: Project Description

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PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The objective of this Project Description is to provide a project summary. Full descriptions of all aspects of the Project are available in the Project Final EA and Plan of Development.

Project improvements in San Miguel County would consist of the following components:

- A new 230-kV transmission line from the Maverick 230-kV substation to the existing Cahone substation near Dove Creek, Colorado; including 25 miles across San Miguel County.
- Less than 0.5 mile of additional spur routes for construction and long-term operation/maintenance of the line.
- Replacement of the existing optical ground wire (OPGW) fiber cable used for communications.
- Removal and/or reclamation of the existing 115-kV transmission line facility and any roads not needed for operation of the new line.

Tri-State proposes to expand the existing 100-foot Right of Way (ROW) for the 115-kV line to a 150-foot-wide corridor to accommodate the safe operation and maintenance activities for the new larger 230-kV transmission line. A vicinity map of the project is shown in Figure 1.

Appendix 1 provides detailed maps of the route in San Miguel County.

Structure Design and Types

The new 230-kV transmission line will typically be constructed using wood H-frame structures with three-pole turning structures where the line changes direction. The new 230-kV structures will average about 80 feet in height and will be about 30 feet taller than the existing 115-kV structures. See Figure 2 for comparison of 115-kV and 230-kV wooden H-frame structures. Average span length in San Miguel County (Structures 47-218) is 784 feet which is about 7 structures per mile. Wood or steel structures will be used for all 3-pole turning structures (Figure 3), the wood structures will be guyed, and the steel will be un-guyed steel poles on concrete foundations.

Single steel pole (monopole) structures are proposed for the portion of the line that crosses critical habitat for Gunnison Sage-Grouse in the Dry Creek Basin (Figure 4). These structures will range between 80 to 115 feet in height in the Dry Creek Basin. The structure arms and pole top will be fitted with perch discouragers to reduce avian perching and nesting on these structures (Figure 5). Tri-State has also committed to using self-supporting steel structures through critical habitat to eliminate the need for guy wires to reduce potential collision risk to Gunnison Sage-Grouse.

Table 1. Transmission Line Design Comparison (for structures in San Miguel County)

Description	Comparison of Existing and Proposed Structure Designs*	
	Existing 115-kV Wood H- Frame Structures (to be removed)	Proposed 230-kV Wood H-Frame and Steel Mono-Pole Structures (to be installed)
Right-of-way width	100 feet	150 feet
Span between structures (average)	500 feet	754 feet
Number of structures per mile (average)	11	7
Height of wood H-frame structures (typical range)	48 to 57 feet	61 to 90 feet
Height of steel H-frame structures	N/A	100 to 111 feet
Height of steel monopole structures (typical range)	N/A	90 to 115
Conductor type and size	336.4 kcmil ACSR (0.720")	1272 kcmil ACSR (1.345")
Circuit configuration	Horizontal	Horizontal and vertical
Minimum ground clearance beneath conductors	25 feet	28 feet
NERC electrical clearance	20.7 feet	23.3 feet

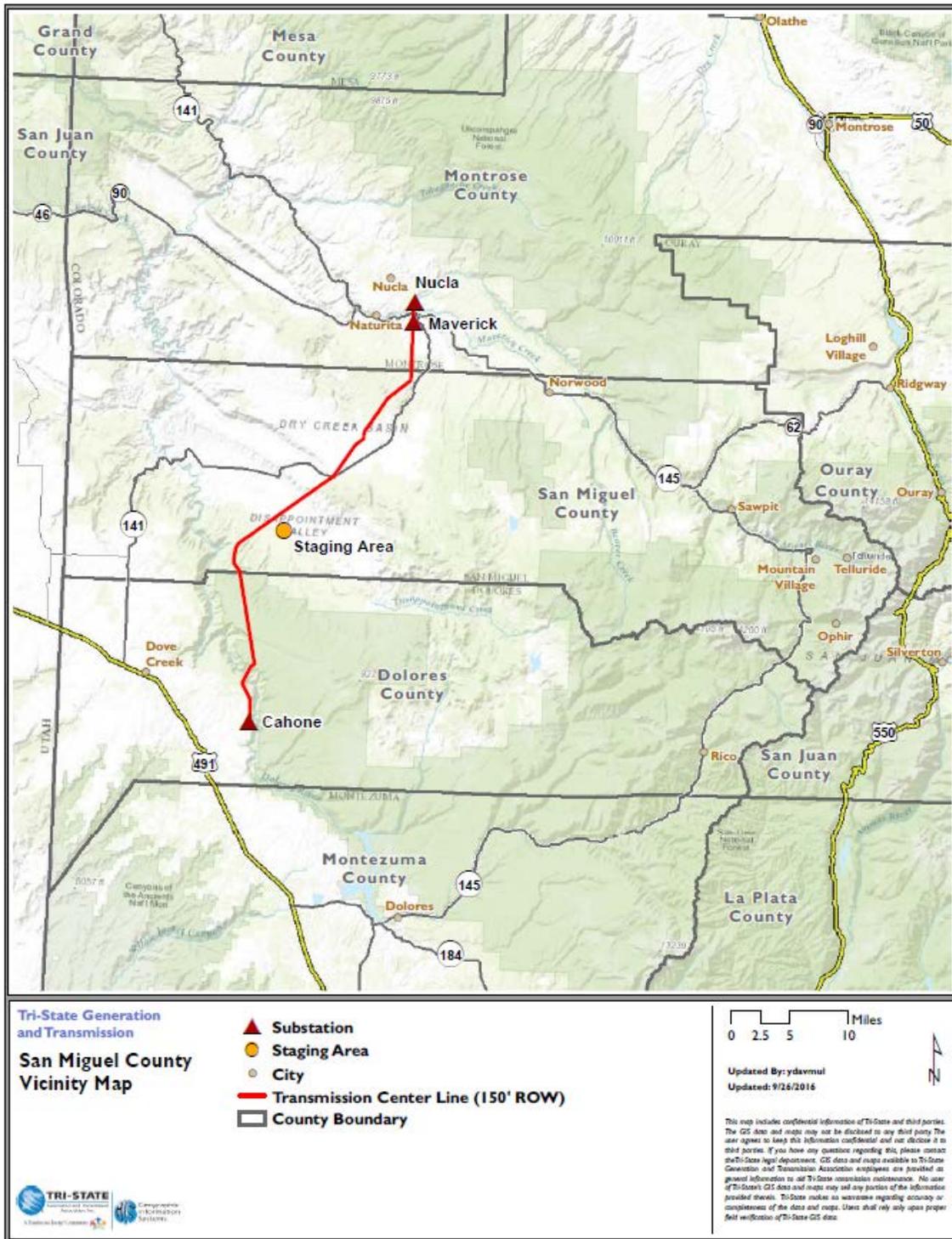


Figure 1: Vicinity Map

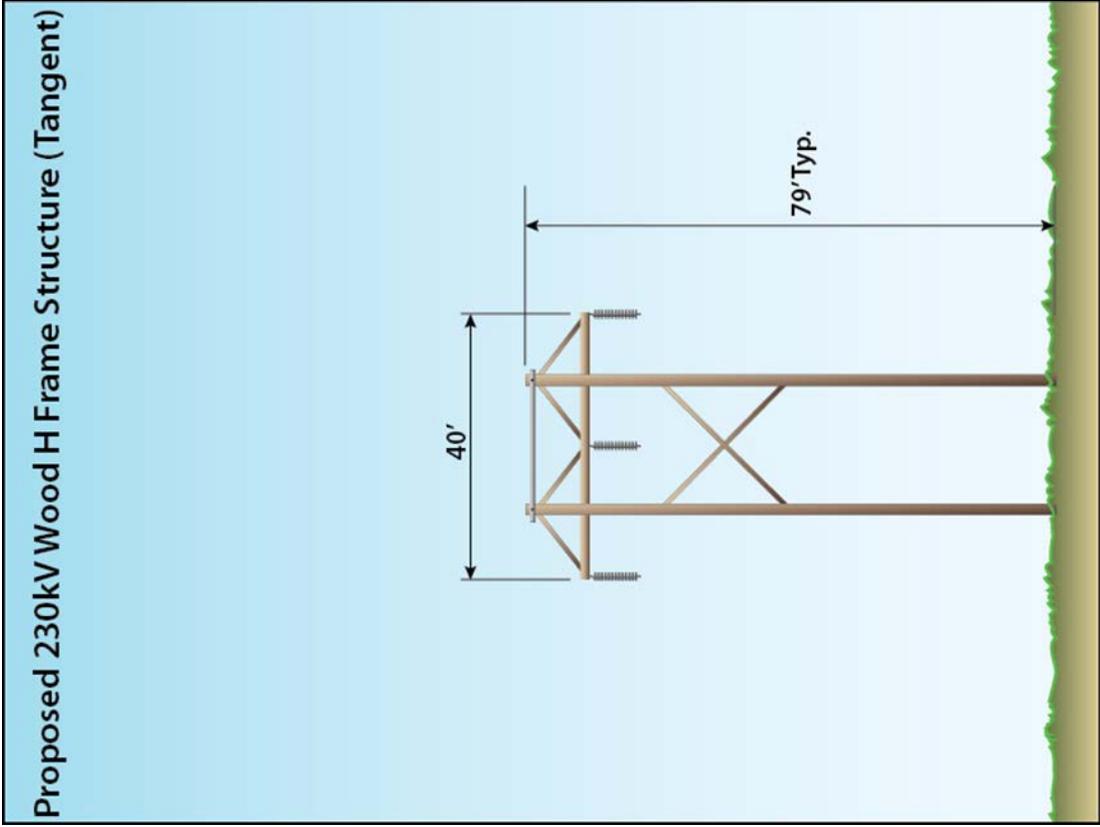
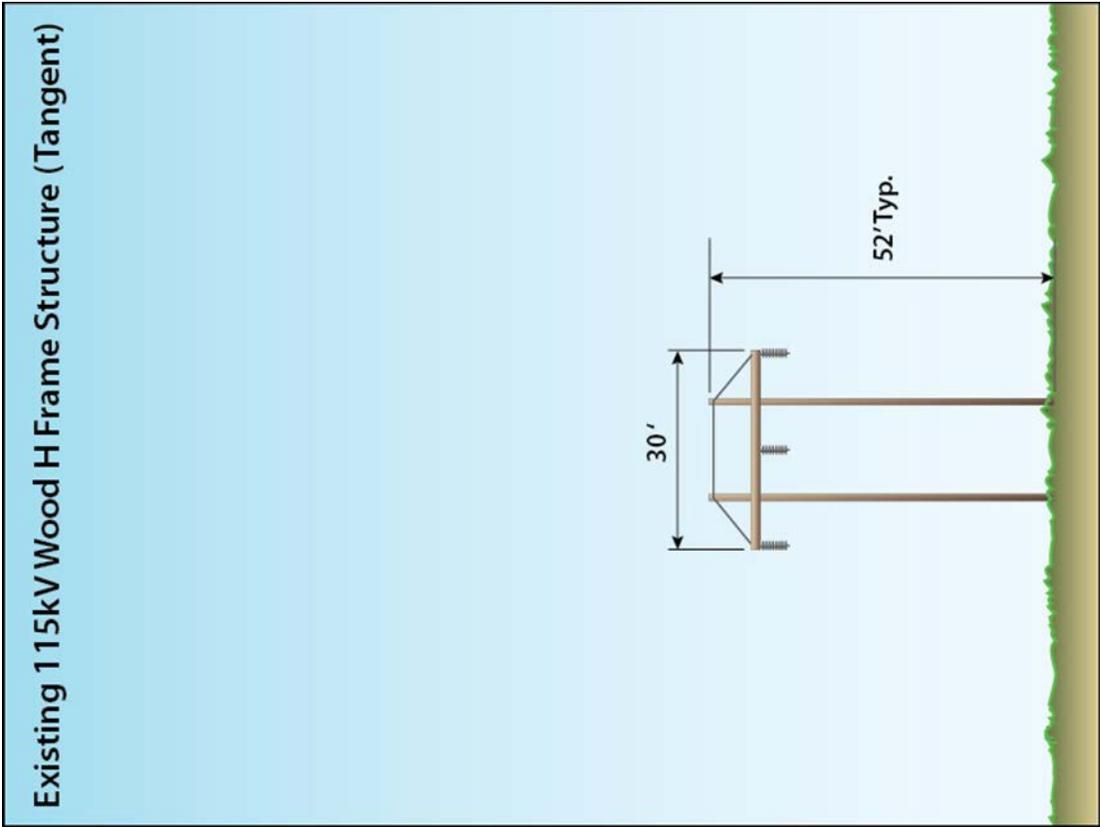


Figure 2: Comparison of 115-kV and 230-kV Wooden H Frame Structures

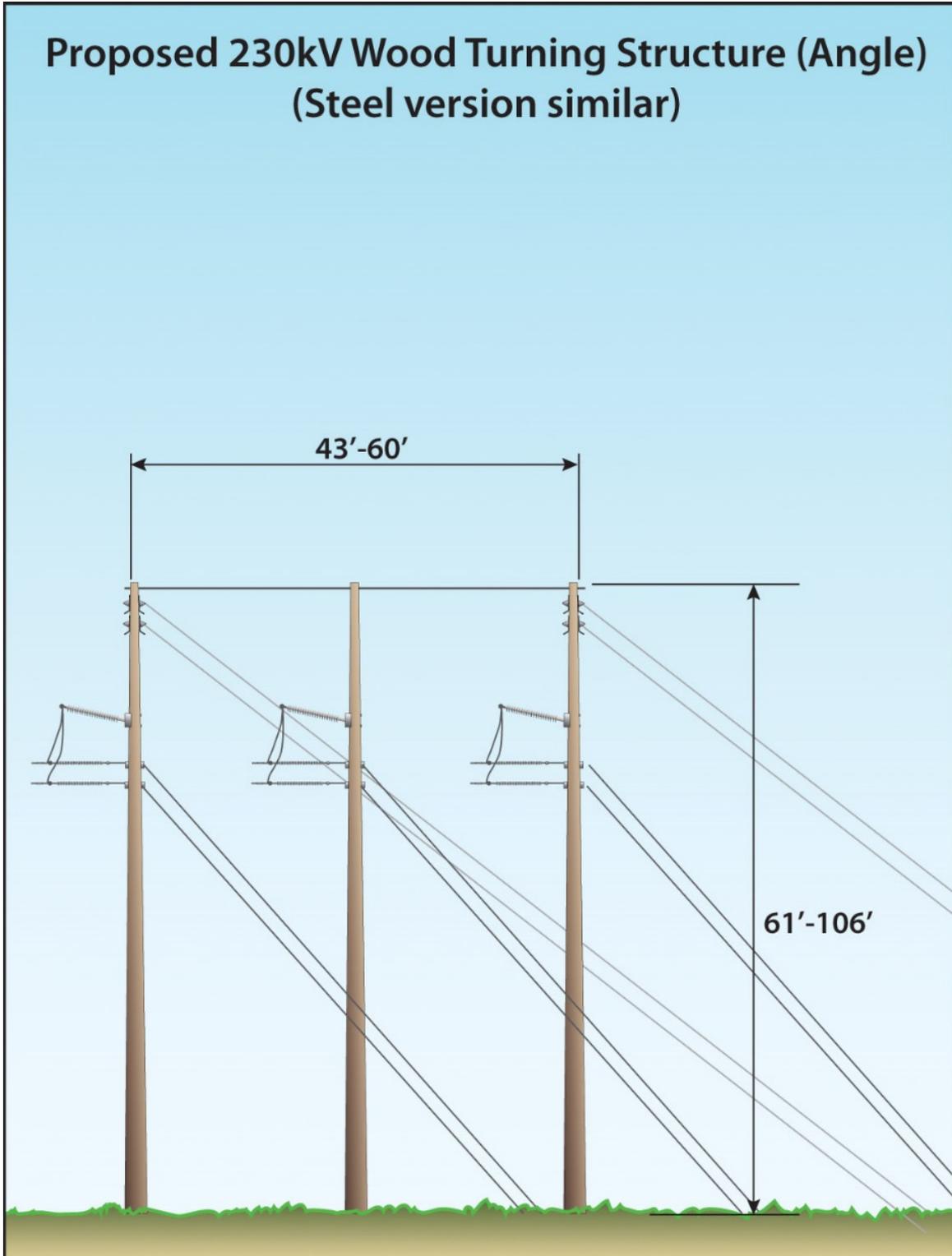
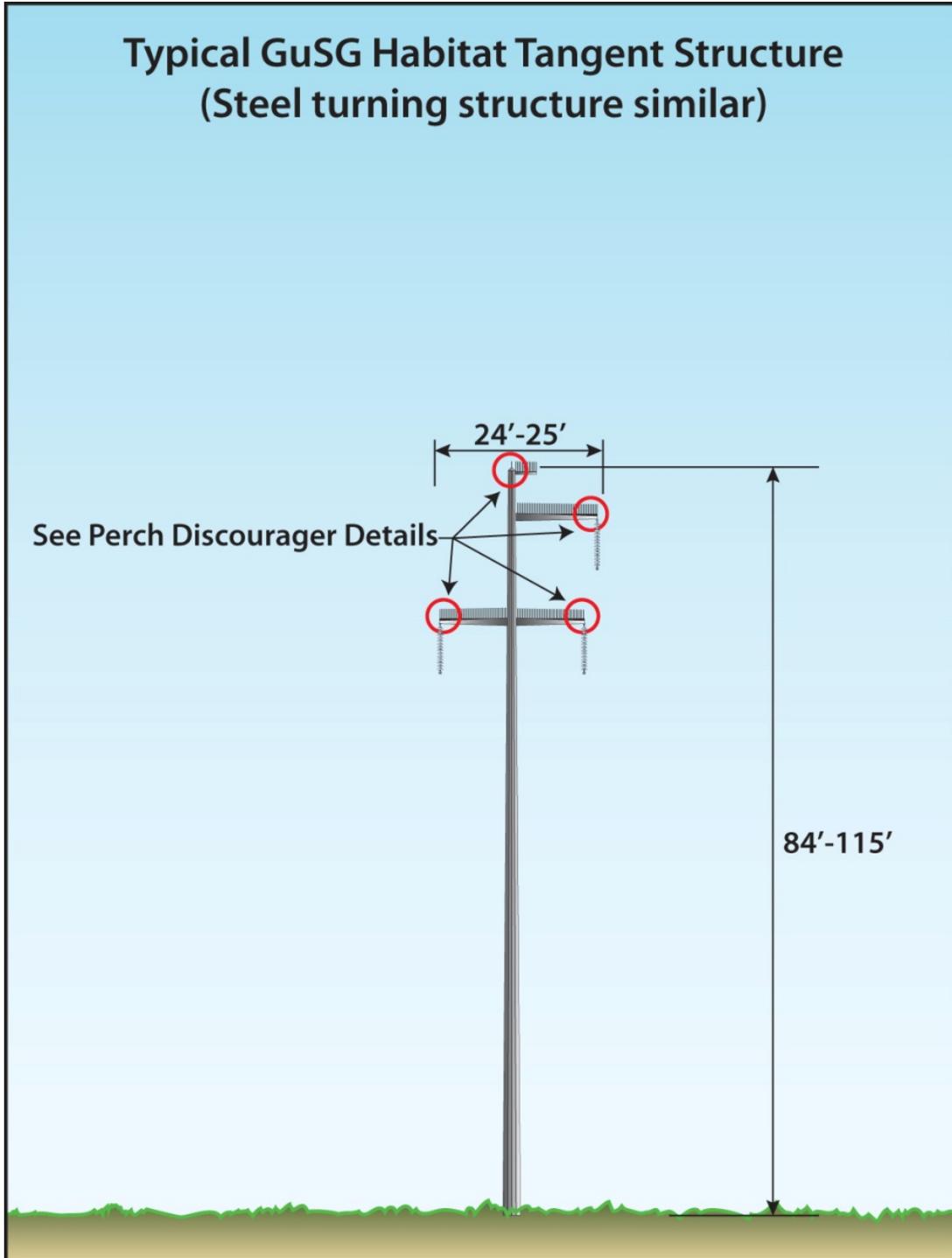
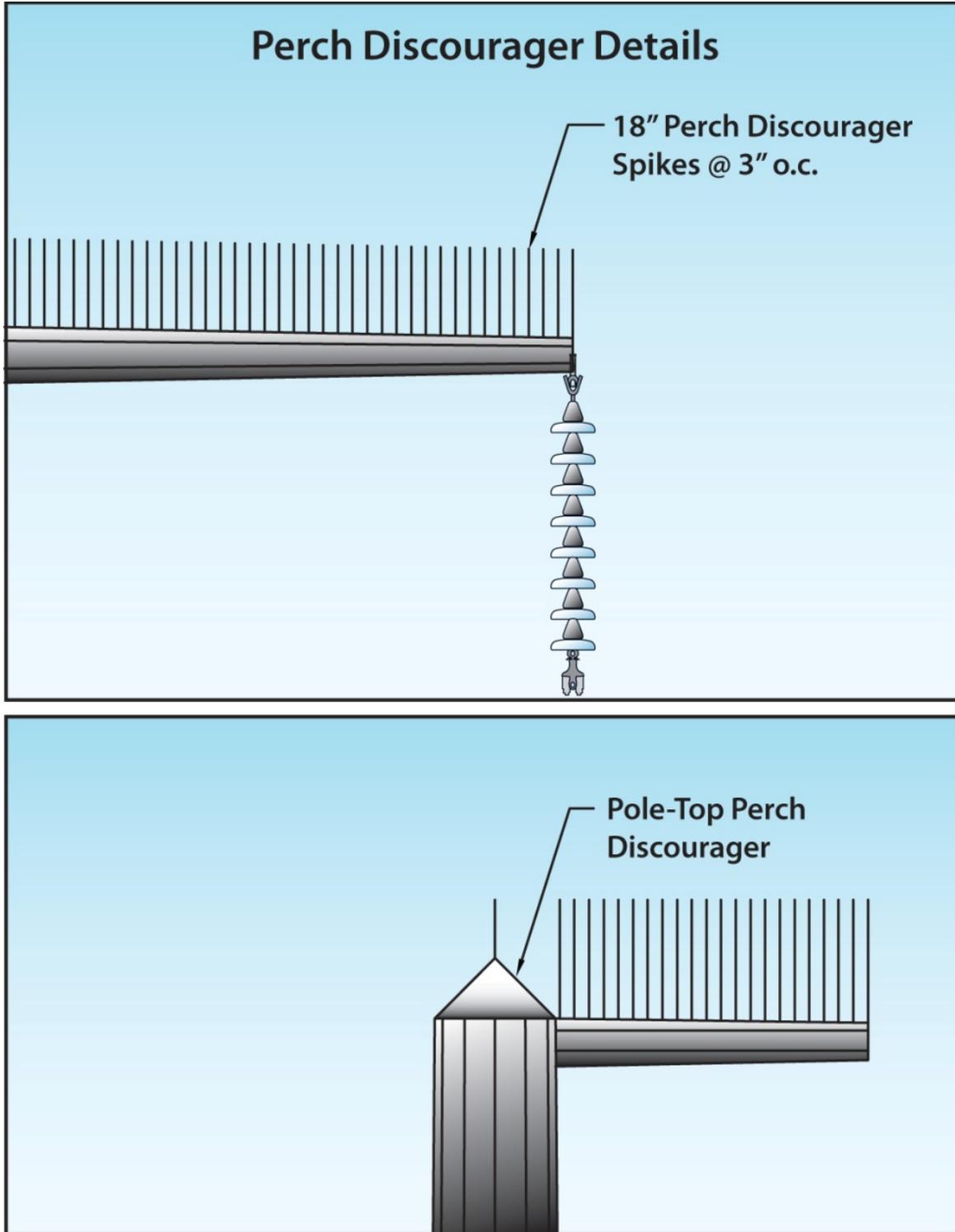


Figure 3: Three-pole Wood or Steel Turning Structure



**Figure 4: Steel Structures proposed for Dry Creek Basin
Gunnison Sage-Grouse Occupied Habitat**



**Figure 5: Perch Discourager Details for structures in Dry Creek Basin
Gunnison Sage-Grouse Occupied Habitat**

Conductor Wires and Fiber Optic Cable

New larger 1.35-inch-diameter conductors would be used for the 230-kV transmission line rather than the 0.72-inch-diameter conductors used on the 115-kV line (conductor size pending final engineering design).

One new shield wire and one new fiber optic cable would be installed. The fiber optic cable is a cable that contains numerous glass fiber optic rods that can be used for various applications, including communications. Fiber optic cable hangs along with the conductors on the H-frame structures. This wire provides protection from lightning strikes, similar to the normal static wire, while protecting and carrying the tiny fiber optic rods. The fiber optic cable would provide Tri-State's communication for the new 230-kV transmission line. Using fiber optics for communication allows for fewer microwave radio stations on the transmission system.

Along with communication for the transmission system, the current fiber optic cable contains a portion of the Northern Fiber Optic Telecommunication Project, which was added to the line in 2003. This 220-mile system, previously known as PathNet, provides critical communications for emergency services (911) to southwestern Colorado, along with commercial internet capabilities. Eighty miles of this system currently reside on the project transmission line system.

Service for this critical communication link cannot be interrupted and would need to remain in service while the new 230-kV line was constructed. This presents unique challenges to constructing the new 230-kV line. Part of the existing structures (single pole or additional temporary poles) must remain in place until the new fiber optic cable is installed and operational. Complete structure removal will not be completed until 2019. The fiber optic cable would be new, but the service and customer base would remain the same.

Transmission Line Construction

The MNC transmission line would be constructed in phases in order to maintain electrical service. Outages must be planned in advance in cooperation with other electric utility companies to allow for the system to be supported by other portions of the grid while this line is being improved. Tri-State is proposing to begin construction at the Montrose substation in 2016 beginning with grading to prepare for installation of equipment in 2017 coinciding with outages associated with scheduled maintenance at one of the Craig generating station units. The new 230-kV substation must be operational before the line is completed, and the existing fiber optic cable must remain in service at all times. These constraints, along with the seasonal constraints of constructing at high elevations and in rugged terrain, present unique challenges to constructing this proposed project.

Using the existing road system, much of the transmission system can be built using traditional construction techniques. However, given rugged terrain, seasonal timing constraints, and the outage timeframe, some portions of the line may be constructed using helicopters. The

location and extent of helicopter use would be determined by the contractor once final engineering design is complete.

Construction must be staged to allow for outages to be taken sequentially to maintain electrical service in the region. **Table 2** lists a tentative schedule of activity.

Table 2. Preliminary Montrose-Nucla-Cahone Transmission Line Improvement Schedule

Construction Task	Construction Completion
Existing ROW clearing and expansion of the existing Montrose 345-kV substation	2017
Energize Montrose substation expansion	2017
Construction of new 230-kV Maverick substation (Nucla)	2018
Completion of Montrose 230-kV substation	2018
Construction of Nucla-Montrose transmission line	2018
Construction of Nucla-Cahone transmission line	2019
Construction of Cahone substation expansion	2019

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Appendix 5: Environmental Protection Measures

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ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION MEASURES (EPMS)

Environmental Protection Measures (EPMS) provide a complete list of proponent-committed measures to address potential impacts from construction of the Tri-State Montrose-Nucla-Cahone Transmission Line Improvement Project (Project). Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association, Inc. (Tri-State) has developed these EPMS as part of the Plan of Development (POD) that accompanies their application to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) for a Right of Way (ROW) grant. If the ROW grant is approved, the final POD and all appendices will be attached to the Decision Record. The following table is a list of all EPMS that Tri-State has committed to through construction, operations and maintenance for the transmission line upgrade.

Topic - No.	Applicant Committed EPMS And Design Features For Construction (C), Operation, And Maintenance (O&M)	Applicable to C and/or O&M*
<i>General</i>		
G-1	Tri-State and its contractors will comply with all federal, state and local environmental laws, orders and regulations. Tri-State will comply with applicable San Miguel, Dolores, and Montrose County Land Use Code provisions, and Special Use Permit conditions of approval. Prior to construction, all construction personnel will be instructed on the protection of cultural and ecological resources.	C and O&M
G-2	Tri-State will discuss with the Contractor/Maintenance staff areas of environmental sensitivity within the project area, and, in particular, those areas where a monitor must be present during construction and future heavy maintenance.	C and O&M
G-3	Tri-State will contract an agency approved and qualified transmission construction environmental monitor who will be present at all times when working on federal and state lands as well as on private lands when work will occur in proximity to sensitive biological, paleontological or cultural resources. The environmental monitor will be responsible for keeping Tri-State and its contractors in compliance with the Final POD and associated permits/easements. The environmental monitor will report any compliance concerns to the agencies' authorized representative and Tri-State's chief environmental compliance officer concurrently within 24 hours or less of all reportable violations. The environmental monitor will be given full authority to halt construction if an activity will result in non-compliance with any terms of grants, permits, easements and associated committed environmental protection and mitigation measures approved for the project. Tri-State would also employ a monitor for "heavy maintenance" activities in sensitive habitat including historic properties/eligible cultural resources.	C
G-4	Tri-State and its contractors will adhere to the Final POD which includes keeping all construction and future maintenance activities within the permitted transmission and access road ROWs. Any deviation from the Final POD will require submittal and approval of a variance request to the BLM/USFS. The Final POD will include environmental protection measures (EPMS) applicable to future routine and emergency maintenance activities including vegetation management. All construction plans will be approved by the agencies before the Notice to Proceed (NTP) is issued by BLM.	C and O&M

Topic - No.	Applicant Committed EPMs And Design Features For Construction (C), Operation, And Maintenance (O&M)	Applicable to C and/or O&M*
G-5	The project will be planned, constructed, operated, and maintained in accordance with the Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI), ROW grant (BLM), special use authorization (USFS), and requirements of other federal, state and local permitting agencies.	C and O&M
G-6	Tri-State will notify the BLM, USFS, and appropriate landowners regarding the schedule and scope of work for construction of the transmission line as well as for future major maintenance activities. A pre-construction meeting will be held with Tri-State, its contractors, environmental monitors, and agency representatives to review environmental and land use compliance for the project.	C and O&M
<i>Access Routes (also see Traffic section, T-1 and T-2)</i>		
AR-1	No construction or heavy maintenance activities will be performed during periods when the soil is too wet to adequately support equipment and vehicles. If equipment or vehicles create ruts in excess of 4 to 6 inches deep for a distance of 10 feet on native surface roads, the soil will be deemed too wet to adequately support construction equipment. If equipment or vehicles create ruts in excess of 2 inches deep on graveled roads, the roads will be deemed too wet to support construction equipment.	C and O&M
AR-2	Only the minimum amount of soils and vegetation necessary for the construction and maintenance of the access routes and the safe and reliable operation of transmission line will be disturbed. If excavation is necessary, topsoil (if present) will be conserved and reused as cover on disturbed areas to facilitate re-growth of vegetation. Vegetation will be cleared from those areas necessary to obtain adequate working width and turning radius space for maintenance equipment and allow for the safe operation of the transmission line.	C and O&M
AR-3	Tri-State’s construction contractor and maintenance crews will be required to remain within authorized access ROWs. Access outside of permitted access ROWs will need to be approved by the affected land management agency/owner prior to use. Future maintenance work will also occur entirely within the transmission and access ROWs unless otherwise authorized by the affected agency/landowner.	C and O&M
AR-4	Tri-State and its contractor(s) will work with the BLM and USFS regarding travel restrictions as well as the need, location and type of closure devices that will be utilized and installed to protect key areas along access roads and to clarify which roads are being used for administrative purposes only. Tri-State will provide funding for closure devices and informational signage. All rights-of-way will be maintained to allow BLM and USFS personnel access at any time, especially in the event of emergencies (e.g. fires).	C and O&M
AR-5	Tri-State will design, construct and maintain access roads to BLM/USFS road standards through coordination with the authorized agencies road engineer and obtain design approval from the relevant agency road engineer prior to construction. In areas where more than 3 feet of grading is required (Tri-State improvement Level 3b), Tri-State will coordinate with the BLM and USFS engineers prior to the initial work on the ground to strategize on how the work can be accomplished with the minimum amount of surface disturbance. Tri-State will use the USFS/USID’s (United States Agency for International Development) Low-Volume Road Engineering: Best Management Practices Field Guide and the BLM Gold Book to minimize soil losses, erosion and unstable slope conditions. These measures include: maintenance of soil erosion features such as dips and cross drains, repair of ditches, clearing of culverts and avoiding maintenance during wet periods.	C and O&M

Topic - No.	Applicant Committed EPMs And Design Features For Construction (C), Operation, And Maintenance (O&M)	Applicable to C and/or O&M*
AR-6	Tri-State will work with the USFS to maintain locked gates to restrict access south of the Big Water Springs Road and on both sides of Forest Road 509 in the San Juan National Forest (east of Dolores Canyon).	C and O&M
AR-7	<p><i>Emergency Maintenance Access:</i></p> <p>Emergency access will be allowed during any time of the year. In the event of an emergency, Tri-State and its contractor(s) will notify the BLM and/or USFS/landowner as soon as possible. Tri-State will meet with BLM and/or USFS/landowner onsite after an emergency to determine the required rehabilitation work and to establish a rehabilitation schedule.</p> <p>If emergency access to the transmission line is required during wet weather, or if other maintenance activities result in the removal of vegetation, or substantial vehicle impacts to existing native vegetation, revegetation of disturbed areas will be completed as directed by the BLM/USFS or affected landowner. Reclamation and revegetation will be implemented, as required, as soon as practical after any emergency road access or maintenance work needed to repair the transmission line.</p> <p>If emergency line maintenance is required during the winter or spring months, care will be taken to minimize erosion and sedimentation to the extent practicable and effects will be mitigated after the emergency has been resolved in coordination with the affect land management agency or landowner.</p>	O&M
<i>Aesthetics/Visual Resources</i>		
A-1	Tri-State and its contractors will exercise care to preserve the natural landscape, and will conduct construction operations so as to prevent any unnecessary destruction, scarring or defacing of the natural surroundings in the vicinity of the work. Except where clearing is required for permanent work, approved temporary or permanent construction roads, staging areas or excavation operations, vegetation will be preserved and will be protected from damage by the contractor’s construction operations and equipment.	C
A-2	Tri-State and its contractor(s) will minimize scarring, defacing, damage, or destruction of the natural landscape resulting from construction operations; any unnecessary or unauthorized disturbance will be repaired by the contractor to the satisfaction of the agency authorized officer.	C
A-3	All construction and future maintenance materials, waste, and debris will be removed from the project area in a timely manner. Burning or burying of waste materials on the ROW or construction sites will not be allowed. All materials resulting from the contractor’s clearing operations will be removed from the ROW.	C and O&M
A-4	<p>Structures and access roads will be located and designed to conform to the terrain and to minimize visual effects whenever possible. Specifically, visibility from Key Observation Points (KOPs) will be considered at the Dolores River crossing. (See A-6).</p> <p>Leveling and benching of the structure sites will be done to the minimum extent necessary to allow for construction and future maintenance operations. Existing cleared or disturbed areas will be used to the extent practicable for staging areas and other temporary use areas.</p>	C

Topic - No.	Applicant Committed EPMs And Design Features For Construction (C), Operation, And Maintenance (O&M)	Applicable to C and/or O&M*
A-5	Tri-State and its contractor(s) will attempt to manage vegetation within the ROW in a manner that reduces the visual effect by only removing non-compatible vegetation that could pose a threat to the transmission line in the next 10 years and leaving compatible vegetation in the ROW. The first priority is to allow Tri-State to meet their federal reliability standards for vegetation management within and adjacent to the transmission ROW.	C and O&M
A-6	In order to minimize visual effects from the transmission line from a design perspective, Tri-State has committed to utilizing non-specular conductor, applying acid-etched galvanized finish or weathering finish to all steel structures including steel fence, and using gray porcelain insulators.	C
A-7	EPM VG-2 through VG-9 will minimize visual effects from project construction and operation by reclaiming areas of temporary disturbance and minimizing vegetation removal to tall woody vegetation required for the safe construction, operation, and maintenance of the transmission line.	C and O&M
A-8	The alignment of any new access roads will follow the designated area's landform contours where practical, provided that such alignment does not additionally affect resource values. This will minimize ground disturbance and reduce scarring (visual contrast).	C
<i>Air Quality</i>		
AQ-1	Tri-State and its contractor(s) will utilize practicable methods and devices as are reasonably available to control, prevent, and otherwise minimize atmospheric emissions or discharges of air contaminants.	C and O&M
AQ-2	Possible construction related dust disturbance will be controlled by the periodic application of water to all disturbed areas along the ROW and access roads, thus preventing any visible dust plumes from project-related traffic or excavation activities.	C
AQ-3	Vehicles and equipment showing excessive emission of exhaust gases due to poor engine adjustments or other inefficient operating conditions will not be operated until corrective adjustments or repairs are made.	C and O&M
AQ-4	Post seeding mulch or other approved methods will be utilized during reclamation activities to help reduce wind erosion and blowing dust. Soil stabilization will be performed as soon as possible after completion of project activities to minimize potential fugitive dust generation as re-vegetation occurs.	C and O&M
AQ-5	The contractor will turn off equipment when it is not in use.	C and O&M
AQ-6	When wind speeds exceed 20 miles per hour (mph), Tri-State and contractors will minimize new disturbance to the extent possible and/or mobilize additional water trucks to minimize fugitive dust from exposed surfaces. Also see AQ-4.	C

Topic - No.	Applicant Committed EPMS And Design Features For Construction (C), Operation, And Maintenance (O&M)	Applicable to C and/or O&M*
<i>Biological Resources and Federally Listed Species</i>		
BR-1	<p>Tri-State and its contractor(s) will also restrict construction activities and future major routine maintenance activities in elk production areas on lands administered by the USFS and BLM administered lands in accordance with the respective Resource Management Plans and Land Management Plans. These timing restrictions on federal lands will be adhered to whenever feasible and a waiver will be required from the land management agency in coordination with Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) if construction needs to occur in sensitive big game habitats during sensitive time periods. Prior to the Notice to Proceed, Tri-State will update the POD atlas to identify seasonal restrictions for big game per direct guidance from the USFS, BLM, and CPW.</p>	C and O&M
BR-2	<p>To ensure compliance with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, Tri-State and its contractor(s) will incorporate BLM, USFS, CPW, and US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) guidelines for raptor protection if construction occurs during the breeding season. Raptor nest surveys will be conducted prior to construction. If an active raptor nest is found within the project area, seasonal buffers and timing restrictions will be determined through coordination with the affected agency and will utilize guidance as outlined in CPW's Recommended Buffer Zones and Seasonal Restrictions for Colorado Raptors (CPW 2008) on BLM UFO, private, State, and USFS administered lands. Separate guidance will be followed on lands in the BLM Tres-Rios Field office (TRFO). Buffers will be determined according to species, existing disturbance in the area, and line of sight. If complete avoidance of a buffer is not feasible, a qualified biological monitor could be used to observe the nest during construction activities to ensure the activity does not disturb nesting activities. The biological monitor will have the authority to halt or modify construction if an activity is likely to result in nest abandonment.</p>	C and O&M
BR-3	<p>No bald or golden eagle nests are known to occur within 0.5 mile of any portion of the project. Surveys will be conducted prior to construction to identify any active nest or roost location within 0.5 miles of the transmission ROW and associated access roads. If an active eagle nest is found prior to construction, no work will be permitted within 0.5 mile of the active nest from December 15 through July 15 unless otherwise authorized by the USFWS. Historically, bald eagle communal roosting site and winter concentration areas have been documented along the San Miguel and Dolores Rivers, Wrights Mesa, Dry Creek Basin, and Disappointment Valley. Activity will be restricted from November 15 through March 15 if an active communal roost is found within 0.5 miles the proposed project activities during pre-construction surveys unless otherwise authorized by the USFWS. If complete avoidance of a nest or roost buffer is not feasible, the USFWS will be contacted to approve a modified buffer or approve use of a qualified biological monitor to observe the nest during construction activities to ensure the activity does not disturb nesting activities. The biological monitor will have the authority to halt or modify construction if an activity is likely to result in nest abandonment. If USFWS determines take may occur, Tri-State will obtain an eagle take permit from the USFWS prior to construction. The same process will apply to future major maintenance activities.</p>	C and O&M
BR-4	<p>Once pre-construction surveys have been completed, the Final Construction Constraints Atlas will be updated to reflect appropriate seasonal restrictions and buffers to ensure construction activities are in compliance with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act. Seasonal avian restrictions will also apply to heavy maintenance activities as defined in the POD.</p>	C and O&M

Topic - No.	Applicant Committed EPMs And Design Features For Construction (C), Operation, And Maintenance (O&M)	Applicable to C and/or O&M*
BR-5	<p>On State owned lands, USFS, and private property, if a prairie dog colony is found within the project area prior to construction, and construction is scheduled to occur during the breeding season for burrowing owls (April 1 through September 1), surveys will be conducted using CPW's approved protocol.</p> <p>If prairie dog colonies occur on BLM lands, burrowing owl surveys will be conducted using protocol from the TRFO BLM. If an active nesting burrow is found, it will be avoided by a buffer of 0.25 miles from March 15 through August 15 or until the young have fledged and left the nest.</p>	C and O&M
BR-6	<p>In order to preclude avian electrocutions and minimize collision risk, Tri-State has incorporated guidelines developed by the Avian Power Line Interaction Committee (APLIC) and USFWS (APLIC 2012) to protect birds on power lines.</p>	C
BR-7	<p>The construction contractor will be required to avoid active burrows whenever feasible within the ROW during project construction to minimize impacts to ground dwelling species.</p>	C
BR-8	<p>Structure holes will be covered when work is completed each day to prevent entrapment of wildlife.</p>	C
BR-9	<p>Impacts to wildlife and special status species habitats will be minimized through incorporation of EPMs included under Vegetation and Water Resources.</p>	C and O&M
BR-10	<p>If vegetation removal occurs during the spring and summer months, Tri-State will conduct pre-construction surveys to ensure compliance with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. Tri-State will map active nests and flag and avoid any active nests identified.</p>	C and O&M
BR-11	<p>Tri-State and its contractors will site transmission structures and access roads to avoid BLM/USFS sensitive plant species to the greatest extent feasible. Where sensitive plants are located adjacent to the transmission structures or access roads, fencing/ropes/signs will be installed to prevent construction crews from impacting BLM/USFS sensitive plants. Management of fugitive construction dust as discussed under water resources and quality will also minimize indirect effects to sensitive plant species.</p>	C
BR-12	<p>Emergency maintenance activities will be permitted any time of year to ensure electric reliability and to protect the public health and safety. Examples of emergency maintenance activities include wires on the ground, structure repairs required as a result of severe weather incidents and vandalism activities. The affected agencies will be notified as soon as possible, but within 48 hours of the activities occurring and any required reclamation will be completed as soon as possible.</p>	O&M
<i>Gunnison Sage-Grouse</i>		
GUSG-1	<p>Tri-State will utilize single-pole structures to reduce perching surfaces for GuSG avian predators through Dry Creek Basin.</p>	C
GUSG-2	<p>Tri-State and its contractor(s) will install perch discouragers on the horizontal portions of the steel structure including the pole tops in Dry Creek Basin.</p>	C
GUSG-3	<p>Tri-State will utilize self-supporting steel structures in GuSG occupied habitat to reduce GuSG and other avian and wildlife collisions with guy wires.</p>	C
GUSG-4	<p>The project will comply with the 0.6-mile No Surface Occupancy Buffer for lek sites and there are no access roads proposed within 0.6-mile of an active lek. In addition, the project does not occur within 0.6 miles of riparian habitat or documented GuSG concentration areas.</p>	C

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GUSG-5	Tri-State's transmission line and access road construction along the existing alignment will not occur within occupied habitat from March 1 through June 30th.	C
GUSG-6	Planned heavy maintenance activities by Tri-State's and its contractor(s) including structure replacement, cross arm replacement, and replacement/re-pair of the conductor/fiber optic cable (OPGW) will not occur March 1 through June 30 in GuSG occupied habitat. Light maintenance activities such as annual inspections, hardware tightening, pole testing, and insulator replacement will be permitted year-round. However, during the lekking season, these activities will occur after 10:00 a.m.	O&M
GUSG-7	Emergency maintenance activities will be permitted any time of year to ensure electric reliability and to protect the public health and safety. Examples of emergency maintenance activities include wires on the ground and structure repairs required as a result of severe weather incidents and vandalism activities. The affected agencies will be notified within 48 hours of the activities occurring and any required reclamation will be completed as soon as possible.	O&M
GUSG-8	Maintenance and construction crews will be required to drive 35 miles per hour (mph) or less on all roads associated with GuSG occupied habitat in Dry Creek Basin (with the exception of SH 141) to minimize vehicle collisions with GuSG.	C and O&M
GUSG-9	An agency approved environmental monitor will be present at all times during construction in GuSG occupied habitat to ensure compliance with any and all environmental protection and mitigation measures identified in the Environmental Assessment (EA) and Biological Assessment (BA). The environmental monitor is given full authority to stop or modify construction activities that may be affecting GuSG and other sensitive resources.	C
GUSG-10	Construction and maintenance crews will be required to go through formal environmental training prior to the initiation of construction and maintenance activities in GuSG habitat to ensure compliance with all approved EPMs and mitigation measures for the project.	C and O&M
GUSG-11	Any areas disturbed during project construction and future maintenance activities will be reclaimed using an approved weed-free native seed mix beneficial to GuSG, as provided by the affected land management agency/landowner.	C and O&M
GUSG-12	Tri-State and its contractor(s) will treat noxious weeds infestations per NW-1 through NW-8 to minimize habitat effects impacts to GuSG.	C and O&M
GUSG-13	Tri-State will monitor and maintain the condition of the perch discouragers for the life of the transmission line. Tri-State in coordination with BLM and CPW will monitor the efficacy of the perch discouragers installed in occupied habitat for GuSG for two years. This will include one year of pre-construction monitoring to evaluate current perching activity on the existing 115-kV line.	O&M
GUSG-14	A draft GuSG design minimization and conservation strategy has been prepared by Tri-State for the existing alignment through Dry Creek Basin. This draft minimization strategy can be found in the <i>Biological Resource Plan, Appendix B</i> .	C and O&M

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GUSG-15	Establish and implement a fire prevention and suppression plan for construction and future heavy maintenance activities. Adhere to seasonal fire restrictions and stipulations which may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educate crews how to enforce and practice appropriate fire prevention and suppression actions and behavior. • Minimize idling during construction and routine maintenance activities. • Park vehicles in designated parking or construction areas. Avoid parking over tall, dry vegetation. • Implement use of spark arrestors. 	C and O&M
GUSG-16	Any areas disturbed during project construction and future maintenance activities will be reclaimed using an approved weed-free, native seed mix as provided by the affected land management agency/owner.	C and O&M
GUSG-17	Tri-State will design access and pad sites for structures locations in a manner that minimizes effects to the greatest extent feasible while also allowing for the safe operation of construction of maintenance and construction equipment.	C
<i>Cultural Resources</i>		
CR-1	Prior to construction and future heavy maintenance activities, all construction personnel will be instructed on the protection of cultural and paleontological resources with reference to relevant laws and penalties, and the need to cease work in the location if cultural resource items are discovered.	C and O&M
CR-2	Should any previously unknown historic/prehistoric sites or artifacts be encountered during construction, all land altering activities at that location will be immediately suspended and the discovery left intact until such time that the appropriate land management agency is notified and appropriate measures taken to assure compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act and enabling legislation.	C and O&M
CR-3	Cultural Resources—Inadvertent Discovery: Pursuant to 43 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 10.4 (g); Tri-State will notify the authorized officer, by telephone with written confirmation, immediately upon the discovery of human remains, funerary items, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony or possible vertebrate fossils. Further, pursuant to 43 CFR 10.4 (c) and (d), Tri-State will stop activities in the vicinity of the discovery and protect it until notified to proceed by the authorized officer.	C and O&M
CR-4	Sensitive cultural resource locations (historic properties) in proximity to the area of potential effect will be flagged prior to construction and major maintenance activities to ensure avoidance. A qualified and agency approved cultural resource monitor will be on site when construction activities are planned in proximity to cultural resources to ensure historic properties are not disturbed.	C and O&M
CR-5	Cultural resource inventories will be completed for areas that were not previously surveyed and the existing treatment plan will be appended to include newly documented areas of unavoidable disturbance to historic resources. The Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) and agency approved appended treatment plan will be updated and implemented prior to the start of any construction activities.	C
CR-6	Tri-State and its contractors will comply with the historic properties treatment plan approved by the BLM, USFS, and the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) to ensure unavoidable effects to historic properties are properly mitigated.	C and O&M

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CR-7	Construction activities within the boundaries of historic properties will be limited to permitted access roads or noncontributing areas of sites, or mitigated or monitored as specified in the Treatment Plan for any off-road travel necessary. "See also AR-1, which addresses rutting in wet road conditions.	C
CR-8	To the extent feasible, as allowed by transmission line design requirements, Section 106 implementing procedures (36 CFR 800) will be followed for the portions of the area of potential effect not yet surveyed.	C
<i>Fire Prevention/Control</i>		
FP-1	Construction vehicles will be equipped with government approved spark arrestors.	C and O&M
FP-2	Tri-State and its contractor(s) will maintain in all construction and maintenance vehicles a current list of local emergency response providers and methods of contact/communication.	C and O&M
FP-3	A fire plan is included in the Final POD and will be adhered to during transmission construction and maintenance activities.	C and O&M
FP-4	<p>The following procedures will be followed by Tri-State and its contractors to reduce fire danger during project construction and future maintenance activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The BLM, USFS, and CPW will be kept appraised of Tri-State work locations during times of high fire danger to provide for evacuation purposes and fire alert opportunities. • The nearest federal agency as well as the local fire department will be notified in the event a construction or maintenance crew observes a lightning strike or other suspicious smoke. • Tri-State’s contractors and maintenance crews will avoid parking hot vehicles in contact with dry vegetation. • Vegetation will be removed around the structure (roughly a 75-foot radius) to allow bucket truck access which will help minimize effects to the power line in the event of a wildfire. • Vegetation management within and adjacent to the ROW will minimize risk to the transmission line and federal, state, and private lands. 	C and O&M
<i>Hazardous Materials</i>		
HM-1	Tri-State and its contractors will comply with all applicable federal laws and regulations existing or hereafter enacted or promulgated regarding toxic substances or hazardous materials during both construction and future maintenance activities. In any event, Tri-State and its contractors will comply with the Toxic Substance Control Act of 1976, as amended (15 United States Code 2601, et seq.) with regard to any toxic substances that are used, generated by or stored on the ROW or on facilities authorized under this ROW grant (See 40 CFR, Part 702-799 and especially, provisions on polychlorinated biphenyls, 40 CFR 761.1-761.193.) Additionally, any release of toxic substances (leaks, spills, etc.) in excess of the reportable quantity established by 40 CFR, Part 117 will be reported as required by the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act of 1980, section 102b. A copy of any report required or requested by any federal agency or state government as a result of a reportable release or spill of any toxic substance will be furnished to the authorized officer concurrent with the filing of the reports to the involved federal agency or state government.	C and O&M

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HM-2	No bulk fuel storage will occur within the public lands portion of the ROW project. All fuel and fluid spills within this area will be handled in accordance with appropriate state and federal spill reporting and response requirements. Tri-State’s contractor will notify Tri-State of any spills so appropriate notifications can be made to the appropriate regulatory authorities/landowners and managers.	C and O&M
HM-3	<p>The following hazardous materials management procedures will be used during maintenance and operation activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Storage of hazardous materials, chemicals, fuels, and oils and fueling of construction equipment will not be performed within 100 feet of an ephemeral drainage. • An effort will be made to store only enough products required to do the job. • Materials will be stored in a neat, orderly manner, in appropriately closed containers, in secondary containment and, if possible, under a roof or other enclosure. • Products will be kept in their original containers with the original manufacturer’s label. • Substances will not be mixed with one another unless recommended by the manufacturer. • Whenever possible, all of the product will be used up before disposing of the container. • Manufacturer’s recommendations for proper use of a product will be followed. • If surplus product must be disposed of, local and state recommended methods for proper disposal will be followed. 	C and O&M
HM-4	Any waste generated as a result of the project will be properly disposed in a permitted facility. Solid waste generated during construction and periodic maintenance periods will be minimal. All hazardous materials will be handled in accordance with applicable local, state, and federal hazardous material statutes and regulations.	C and O&M
<i>Land Use</i>		
LU-1	All activities associated with the construction, operation and maintenance of the transmission line will take place within the authorized limits of the transmission line ROW and access routes. Additional access routes or cross-country travel will not be allowed outside of the authorized routes prior to review and approval by the affected land management agency authorized officer/landowner.	C and O&M
LU-2	Tri-State will notify private landowners that will be affected during project construction and provide compensation if new easement agreements are required prior to construction.	C

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LU-3	<p>Tri-State will coordinate throughout the planning and construction phases of the project with other ROW grant/Special use permit holders/other lessees within the project area to ensure there are no conflicts or effects to existing land uses. It is Tri-State's and industry standard practice to design and build infrastructure to avoid possible safety and operational concerns from existing land uses (oil and gas, water and gas pipelines, grazing, etc.).</p> <p>Tri-State will work with affected oil and gas and other operators in the project area during project design, construction, and operations on a case-by-case basis. In general Tri-State will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact all affected operators in the study area to explain the project and • Work with operators to identify areas that may require special design considerations on a case-by-case basis. This could include conducting field visits with operators, identifying pipelines that may require cathodic protection (due to proximity to the transmission line), or specific design considerations if they are located under or near access roads; or identifying areas where subsidence may be a concern. As part of these discussions, best management practices and standard operating procedures will be identified on a case-by-case basis, as well as measures that will be implemented to minimize effects to operators during construction. Tri-State will continue to work with operators throughout construction and operation of the project. 	C
LU-4	<p>The contractor will maintain all fences, brace panels, gates, and cattle guards during the construction period. Any fence, brace panel, or gate damaged during construction will be repaired immediately by the contractor to appropriate landowner or agency standards as determined by the authorized officer. Tri-State would maintain gates on Tri-State's administrative routes only.</p>	C and O&M
LU-5	<p>The contractor will eliminate, at the earliest opportunity, all construction ruts that are detrimental to agricultural operations and/or hazardous to movement of vehicles and equipment. Such ruts will be leveled, filled and graded, or otherwise eliminated in an approved manner. Damage to ditches, tile drains, culverts, terraces, local roads, and other similar land use features will be corrected as necessary by the contractor. The land and facilities will be restored as nearly as practicable to their original condition.</p>	C
LU-6	<p>Structure foundation holes will not be left open overnight and will be covered. Covers will be secured in place and will be strong enough to prevent livestock, wildlife, or the public from falling through and into a hole.</p>	C
LU-7	<p>Tri-State will provide as-built drawings to federal agencies when construction is completed.</p>	C and O&M

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<i>Noise</i>		
N-1	Construction vehicles and equipment will be maintained in proper operating condition and will be equipped with manufacturers’ standard noise control devices or better (e.g. mufflers, engine enclosures). Improperly functioning equipment will be removed from the construction site until the issue is corrected.	C and O&M
N-2	Noise associated with project construction activities shall comply with C.R.S 25-12-103(5). Maximum permissible noise levels. Post construction noise levels for project operation shall comply with C.R.S. 25-12-103(12)	C and O&M
<i>Noxious Weeds</i>		
NW-1	<p>Noxious weed management is required throughout the life of the transmission line easements, special use permits, and ROW Grant. Tri-State shall be responsible for weed control within the limits of the right-of-way. Tri-State is responsible for consultation with the authorized officer and/or local authorities for acceptable weed control methods (within limits imposed in the grant stipulations) including pesticides/herbicides approved for use on BLM land.</p> <p>A noxious weed MOU is already in place with the USFS for the transmission line. If noxious weed agreements are not in place by the initiation of ROW clearing in spring of 2017. Tri-State will supplement USFS weed treatment efforts as needed prior to construction. Tri-State will pre-treat noxious weeds on BLM and private lands (where permitted) in the spring of 2017. Noxious weed management will continue throughout the life of the transmission line via agreements with the USFS and BLM.</p>	C and O&M
NW-2	<p>Tri-State will continue to participate and voluntarily fund noxious weed management activities on Tri-State ROWs under the existing Collection Agreement between Tri-State and the USFS for the Grand Mesa Uncompahgre Gunnison (GMUG) NF and San Juan National Forest (SJNF) (this agreement covers 18 miles of the existing transmission ROW). Additional detail will be provided in the Final POD (Appendix S, Noxious Weed Management Plan). The existing agreement with between Tri-State and the USFS is also in accordance with USFS direction for invasive species management (including Forest Service Manual 2900 invasive species management; Forest and/or regional invasive species strategy).</p> <p>The same approach to noxious weed management is proposed on BLM administered lands and a draft agreement is currently being drafted. The POD will be updated with this finalized BLM Uncompahgre Field Office and Tres Rios agreement. Tri-State will participate and fund noxious weed management activities on Tri-State ROWs under a Collection Agreement between Tri-State and the BLM GMUG and Tres Rios. Additional detail will be provided in the Final POD (Appendix S, Noxious Weed Management Plan). An approved weed treatment plan shall be reviewed and approved by the BLM prior to the issuance of the Notice to Proceed.</p>	C and O&M
NW-3	The reclamation and noxious weed management plan will be approved by the appropriate agency prior to the issuance of a ROW grant. The noxious weed management plan for areas not covered under pending agreements with the BLM and existing agreements with the USFS will be developed in accordance with appropriate land management agencies’ standards, consistent with applicable regulations and agency permitting stipulations for the control of noxious weeds and invasive species (Executive Order 3112).	C and O&M

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NW-4	On-site weed control for pre-construction activities that may occur prior to implementation of a noxious weed agreement with the BLM and on private lands will be conducted through herbicide use and a weed control plan and/or agreement approved by the BLM, CPW, and affected landowner (on private lands). The BLM requires a Pesticide Use Proposal package, and will approve proposed herbicides, treatments and time of treatment. Applicators are also legally required to supply the BLM with a written herbicide application record within 24 hours of applying herbicides on BLM-managed lands. The pesticide use proposal should be submitted to the agencies by March 1, annually. Application records will be submitted weekly and will include both spatial and tabular element (using forms provided by the agencies).	C
NW-5	All heavy equipment, including all-terrain vehicles (ATV) and lowboys, utilized during construction will be washed prior to departure from the equipment storage facility. This method promotes containment of weed seeds on the work site; all seed mixes and mulch used for reclamation activities will be certified weed-free. Tri-State will consider providing a portable/mobile vehicle wash station on-site where appropriate. Tri-State will require that all vehicles be washed prior to entering the project area; when travelling from an area infested with invasives to an area that has no known invasives; and when travelling from an area infested with spotted knapweed to any other parts of the project area.	C and O&M
NW-6	Pre-construction treatment of weeds in staging or temporary use areas will be conducted.	C
NW-7	Noxious weed treatments conducted outside of agreements with BLM and USFS will require avoidance and/or minimization measure to protect documented populations of rare plant species that are included in the project's constraints atlas (POD Appendix G).	C and O&M
NW-8	Noxious weed treatment conducted outside of Federal lands shall comply with Land Use Code 5-1002-E.IX.	C and O&M
<i>Paleontological Resources</i>		
PA-1	In consultation with applicable agencies, a paleontological resource monitoring and mitigation plan will be prepared for locations (if any), where construction will disturb geologic units with high Potential Fossil Yield Classification (PFYC) of high (PFYC 4) or very high (PFYC 5) resource potential. The plan will include specific monitoring locations, monitoring and fossil salvage and data collection procedures, notification procedures in the event of a scientifically significant discovery, and notification procedures in the event of a fossil discovery by construction personnel in areas that are not monitored.	C
<i>Recreation</i>		
R-1	Tri-State and its contractor(s) will be responsible for avoiding effects to the Power Line Trail and its associated facilities (signs, off-highway vehicle gates, fencing, cattle guards, etc.). If this trail and/or any other trail facilities on BLM and USFS administered lands are impacted during project construction and/or maintenance activities, Tri-State will rehabilitate/re-construct the trail and its corridor to USFS specifications and replace damaged trail facilities. Tri-State will also provide signs and coordinate any necessary trail closures with the BLM and/or USFS. If guy wires are required for specific structures in proximity to trails, the wires will be marked with reflective tape to reduce risk of collision.	C and O&M

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R-2	<p>Tri-State has coordinated with CPW to obtain priorities for restrictions in specific areas to reduce impacts to hunters. CPW has indicated their priority is to restrict construction from Naturita Ridge to Disappointment Valley from: 11/2-11/13 in 2016, 11/1-11/12 in 2017, and 10/31-11/11 in 2018.</p> <p>Tri-State will work with CPW, BLM, USFS, and private landowners on reducing effects to hunters and providing information/maps to CPW to provide to hunters within the affected game management units about construction schedules and activities.</p>	C
<i>Soils and Geology</i>		
S-1	<p>Tri-State and its contractor(s) will mitigate temporary effects to soils compacted by movement of construction vehicles and equipment, by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loosened and leveled harrowing or disking to approximate pre-construction contours and • Reseeding with certified weed-free grasses and mulched (except in cultivated fields). The specific agency approved seed mix(s) and rate(s) of application will be determined by the affected land management agencies or private landowners. 	C
S-2	<p>Movement of construction and maintenance vehicles and equipment will be limited to the ROW and approved access routes.</p>	C and O&M
S-3	<p>Excavated material not used in the backfilling of structures will be spread around each pole, evenly spread on the access routes in the immediate vicinity of the pole structure or transported off-site to a Tri-State approved disposal location. Disturbed areas will then be regraded to approximate pre-construction contours and reseeded as specified in S-1 (above).</p>	C
S-4	<p>Wherever salvage is feasible, particularly in sensitive areas (wetlands), topsoil will be removed, stockpiled, and re-spread at temporarily disturbed areas not needed for maintenance access.</p>	C
S-5	<p>As part of pre-construction activities, Tri-State and/or Tri-State contractors will perform detailed geologic evaluation and investigations in certain locations to evaluate potential geological and geotechnical hazards, and design the project to avoid and minimize potential geotechnical risks such as slope failure, unstable soils, and landslide risks. In addition, soil will be sampled if potentially contaminated soils were observed during the pre-construction geotechnical investigation.</p>	C
<i>Traffic</i>		
T-1	<p>Tri-State and its contractor(s) will make all necessary provisions for conformance with federal, state, and local traffic safety standards and will conduct construction and maintenance operations so as to offer the least possible obstruction and inconvenience to public traffic.</p>	C and O&M
T-2	<p>Prior to construction, Tri-State or its contractors will develop a construction traffic management plan in consultation with affected landowners. This includes working with San Miguel and Montrose counties as well as Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) to incorporate appropriate measures and obtain approval for construction of the transmission line across county roads and state highways as applicable. It also will include obtaining crossing permits as required by state, county, or local requirements and developing a plan for installation of warning signs where construction activities may cross a recreational trail.</p>	C

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<i>Vegetation</i>		
VG-1	In designated areas, structures and new access roads (if required) will be placed to avoid and/or minimize sensitive features, such as, but not limited to, threatened or sensitive plants, riparian areas, water courses, and cultural sites.	C
VG-2	<p>Vegetation will be preserved and protected from damage during transmission line construction and operation to the maximum extent practicable and within areas approved in the Final POD, with the exception of trees and other woody vegetation that poses a threat to the safe and reliable operation of the transmission line. Wherever possible, on access roads, vegetation will be trampled rather than cleared where vehicles can move safely across the vegetation.</p> <p>By federal mandate, Tri-State is required to manage vegetation that creates a threat to the electrical reliability of the transmission line or substations, or will impede access for safe operations. Danger tree/vegetation is defined as that vegetation that could grow, fall, or blow into the power line. Tri-State will also work with the authorizing agency to address any fuel loading concerns in the ROW that may pose a threat to the safe and reliable operation of the transmission line. Tri-State will manage ROWs to maintain compatible “low growing” vegetation only.</p>	C and O&M
VG-3	Disturbed areas where vegetation has been temporarily removed by construction activities to the extent that the potential for soil erosion is increased to a detrimental level will be subject to seedbed preparation techniques, reseeded to an approved seed mixture, and mulched if necessary during a recognized planting season. Mulching will be applied only to those areas where potential erosion will prohibit vegetation establishment and growth. BLM and USFS will provide information on the recognized planting season.	C

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VG-4	<p><i>Vegetation Management on USFS Administered Lands:</i> On lands administered by the USFS timber removal and slash management will be coordinated and approved by the USFS and outlined in the Plan of Development prior to construction and future maintenance activities. The Forest Service will conduct a timber cruise of the 150 foot ROW. Tri-State will mark danger trees adjacent to the ROW and incompatible vegetation within the ROW required for removal. These off ROW trees will be counted, measured at diameter breast height, recorded by species, and marked using a paint color and type approved by the Forest Service. A timber appraisal will be conducted for merchantable timber on and off ROW and this timber will be sold to Tri-State at the appraised rate. Tri-State will be responsible for removal/transfer/disposal of material on the ROW.</p> <p><i>Vegetation Management on BLM Administered Lands:</i> Tree removal on BLM administered lands will be conducted in compliance with the TRFO and UFO Resource Management Plans. Tri-State will reduce visual impacts from vegetation management activities by minimizing the appearance of straight edges/visual uniformity whenever practicable while also meeting other federal reliability requirements. The BLM TRFO specifications that will be incorporated into the timber removal for project construction can be found in the Resource Management Plan on Page II-96, Sections 2.16.19, and 2.16.21 (a-f).</p> <p>Trees and vegetation removed during clearing activities will be hauled offsite to an approved disposal facility or masticated on site to a depth approved by the BLM. Where appropriate, cleared trees and/or vegetation may be spread onsite to promote wildlife habitat or chipped/masticated in place and used as mulch for erosion control with approval from the landowner or land management agencies authorized representative. BLM requirements and stipulations for vegetation removal will be incorporated into the Final POD.</p> <p><i>Vegetation Management on Private and State Lands”</i> Vegetation on State, Local, and Private lands will be in compliance with NERC standards and the individual easement agreements.</p>	C
VG-5	Tri-State and its contractor(s) will not cross any wetland, riparian area (of/ or relating to, or located on, the banks of a river or stream), or ponds unless at designated locations authorized under the 404 permit. Any variance from the 404 permit will be reviewed and approved by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE).	C and O&M
VG-6	On completion of the work, all temporary use areas will be regraded, as required, so that all surfaces drain naturally, blend with the natural terrain, and are left in a condition that will facilitate natural revegetation, and provide for proper drainage and prevent erosion.	C
VG-7	All temporary surface disturbances on State, BLM and USFS administered lands will be seeded with native seed mixtures that have been approved by the authorizing agency. Seed mixes on private land will be at the discretion of the landowner. Reclamation will be deemed complete once vegetation has been reclaimed to 70 percent of pre-construction conditions, or at the discretion of the agency authorized agent.	C
VG-8	All construction materials and debris will be removed from the project area.	C
VG-9	The Final POD includes a reclamation and noxious weed management plan.	C

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<i>Water Quality and Erosion</i>		
WQ-1	A Storm Water Management Plan (SWMP) will be developed and implemented to address all construction/ reconstruction activities. The plan will conform to Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) requirements including regular inspections to ensure proper and effective functioning of Best Management Practices (BMPs). The Final POD will also be updated with specific water quality design measures once final engineering is complete.	C
WQ-2	All Tri-State construction personnel, including contractors will be trained on stormwater management requirements for the project. The environmental monitor will be responsible for compliance with the stormwater management plan from construction and through post-construction/reclamation.	C
WQ-3	<p>BMPs will be installed for project construction and future access road maintenance to protect water quality and surface waters. BMPs implemented will encompass a wide range of practices, both structural and non-structural in nature, such as road design requirements and construction techniques (installing cross drains, dips, and/or water bars) to minimize sediment discharge to surface water, as well as standards for maintaining road stability to control erosion.</p> <p>Site assessments will be conducted bi-weekly (as outlined in the SWMP) to assess the adequacy of BMPs at the site, and the necessity of changes to those BMPs to ensure continued effective performance. Where site assessment results in the determination that new or replacement BMPs are necessary, BMPs will be installed to ensure effective erosion control. Where BMPs have failed, resulting in noncompliance, they will be addressed as soon as possible, immediately in most cases, to minimize the discharge of pollutants. In addition, there will be areas that will no longer require BMPs. These BMPs will be identified and removed when appropriate.</p>	C
WQ-4	<p>Construction activities will be performed using methods that prevent entrance or accidental spillage of solid matter, contaminants, debris, and other objectionable pollutants and wastes into flowing streams or dry water courses, lakes, and underground water sources. Such pollutants and wastes include, but are not restricted to, refuse, garbage, cement, concrete, sanitary waste, industrial waste, radioactive substances, oil and other petroleum products, aggregate processing tailings, mineral salts, and thermal pollution.</p> <p>Excavated material or other construction materials will not be stockpiled or deposited near or within 100 feet of any surface water, wetlands, stream banks, lake shorelines, or other water course perimeters where they can be washed away by high water or storm runoff or can in any way encroach upon the actual water source itself. BMPs will be installed if it is likely materials could leave the site (silt fence, waddles, or other methods could be implemented).</p>	C
WQ-5	With the exception of areas where access roads cross surface waters, buffers will be used when constructing new access roads and structure locations occur in proximity to water resources including wetlands. Tri-State will buffer surface waters, wetlands, riparian areas, and ditches 100 feet regardless of slope class whenever feasible. When 100 feet is not feasible, the following standard will be used: 30 feet for gentle slopes, 60 feet for moderate slopes, and 100 feet or more for severe slopes. If these buffers are not feasible in a particular area because of another resource, land use, or engineering constraint, BMPs will be utilized to ensure that sediment from construction does not enter surface waters and drainages.	C

Topic - No.	Applicant Committed EPMs And Design Features For Construction (C), Operation, And Maintenance (O&M)	Applicable to C and/or O&M*
WQ-6	Tri-State does not expect dewatering to be required for the project. However, if future geological testing indicates dewatering at structure locations is required, dewatering work for structure foundations or earthwork operations adjacent to, or encroaching on, streams or water courses will not be performed without prior approval by CDPHE and affected land management agency. Water and eroded materials will be prevented from entering the streams or watercourses by constructing intercepting ditches, bypass channels, barriers, settling ponds, or other approved methods. All fuel and fluid spills within this area will be handled in accordance with appropriate state and federal spill reporting and response requirements.	C
WQ-7	Wastewaters from concrete batching and other construction operations during project construction or future maintenance activity will not enter streams, watercourses, or other surface waters without the use of turbidity control methods such as settling ponds, gravel-filter entrapment dikes, and approved flocculating processes that are not harmful to fish, recirculating systems for washing of aggregates, or other approved methods. Any such wastewaters discharged into surface waters will be essentially free of settleable material. For the purpose of these specifications, settleable material is defined as that material which will settle from the water by gravity during a 1-hour quiescent detention period.	C
WQ-8	Access roads will be designed/improved to properly drain in order to prevent future erosion. Final access road design/improvement requiring substantial cut and fill (Level 3) will be reviewed and approved by the affected authorized agency road engineer prior to construction.	C
WQ-9	Erosion control measures including silt fences, straw bales, and other stormwater runoff and sediment controls will be implemented and regularly maintained on disturbed areas, including areas that must be used for maintenance operations (access ways and areas around structures).	C and O&M
WQ-10	Prior to construction, a wetland and surface waters wetland delineations will be completed within the area of proposed disturbance and fill within or proximity to potential waters of the U.S., and appropriate permits will be obtained from the USACE if the project exceeds Nationwide Permitting (NWP) thresholds. Construction activities will be limited to that approved in the NWP obtained from the USACE for the project. Tri-State will strictly adhere to all applicable conditions of the 404 permit (s). Tri-State will comply with San Miguel County regulations for wetland protection.	C
WQ-11	Delineated wetland boundaries within the project area will be identified clearly with wetland pin flags, fluorescent wetland tape, and/or orange plastic construction fencing. The markers will be installed prior to the initiation of construction and will be maintained throughout the construction process. Wetland boundaries not authorized for disturbance under a Corps of Engineers permit will be buffered (from construction activities) by 100 horizontal feet.	C
WQ-12	Disposal of excess water from dust control will be done on flat upland locations away from surface drainages to prevent runoff and to encourage infiltration into the soil.	C
WQ-13	Vegetation removal will be limited to the area necessary for construction activities, and disturbed areas will be scarified and revegetated after construction, using native vegetation (see Appendix P). Noxious weed management will occur, per EPMs NW-1 to NW-8 (see Appendix S).	C

Topic - No.	Applicant Committed EPMs And Design Features For Construction (C), Operation, And Maintenance (O&M)	Applicable to C and/or O&M*
WQ-14	Tri-State will hire an agency- approved environmental monitor to ensure the project complies with all conditions of Nationwide Permit 12 (Utility Line Activities) to prevent unplanned impacts to wetlands and other waters of the U.S. Prior to construction, all supervisory construction personnel will be trained in avoidance and minimization techniques to lessen impacts to wetlands and other waters of the U.S.	C
WQ-15	In areas where construction may occur near surface waters and wetlands but no permanent or temporary impacts are planned and permitted under a USACE permit, 100 horizontal foot buffers will be created to protect these resources from sedimentation and erosion impacts. Fueling will occur only at staging areas and commercial stations to avoid potential contamination of surface waters, wetlands, and riparian communities. All reportable fuel and chemical spills will be reported to the State of Colorado, per applicable statutes and regulations, contained and cleaned up promptly.	C
WQ-16	Culverts or armored low water crossings will be located as approved by the appropriate agencies and any changes to stream banks at crossings will be designed to sustain bank full dimensions of width, depth, and slope and keep streambeds and banks resilient to prevent effects to natural streamflow at stream crossings. New and existing culverts will be maintained in such a manner so as to allow continual flow of irrigation water, return water, waste water and on-and-off site run-off, and allow fish passage if fish were historically present.	C
WQ-17	Low water crossings will be used instead of culverts to the extent possible, particularly in drainages with floodplains. Armored low water crossings will be designed to prevent scouring along the downstream edge, and maintain the channel pattern, profile and dimension. These will be designed and constructed per United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) USFS Tech Reference – Low-Water Crossings: geomorphic, biological, and engineering design considerations. See reference (http://www.USFS.fed.us/eng/pubs/pdf/LowWaterCrossings/LoWholeDoc.pdf).	C
WQ-18	Intermittent or ephemeral streams will be crossed at right angles to the main channel.	C and O&M
WQ-19	No construction equipment will be operated within the stream channel, unless for the purpose of installing armored crossing and culverts or moving construction equipment across the channel for use on either bank.	C
WQ-20	Implementation of EPMs outlined above under Vegetation and Soils will also minimize impacts to water quality and surface waters. Reclamation will occur as soon as the season permits, including implementation of post-construction measures to stabilize areas of permanent and temporary disturbance.	C
WQ-21	Excavated topsoil and/or hydric soils from temporarily or permanently impacted wetlands will be selectively stockpiled for appropriate use in the project area following disturbance. Stockpiled soil will be stabilized using mulch or covering the material, to minimize erosion and sediment delivery to streams and wetlands. Further information can be found in Appendix P.	C

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Appendix 6: Revegetation Plan

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REVEGETATION PLAN

The objective of this Reclamation Plan is to detail practices designed to address temporary impacts resulting from construction of the Tri-State Montrose-Nucla-Cahone Transmission Line Improvement Project (Project). Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association, Inc. (Tri-State) has developed this plan as part of the Plan of Development (POD) that accompanies its application to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) for a Right of Way (ROW) grant. The final POD will be developed in coordination with federal agencies and landowners and will provide a detailed reclamation plan specific for the project. If the ROW grant is approved, the final POD and all appendices will be attached to the Decision Record.

Reclamation Objectives

This reclamation plan provides a framework approach and various techniques and options that may be employed to successfully restore temporarily disturbed areas from construction of the Project. The reclamation plan is intended to be implemented in conjunction with the other plans in the POD, with particular focus on the following:

- Storm Water Management Plan
- Noxious Weed Plan
- Operations, Maintenance and Vegetation Management

Revegetation will be considered successful if species composition and vegetative cover was similar to preconstruction conditions three years following treatment. The Storm Water Management Plan (SWMP) requires that 70% of surrounding or pre-existing cover be established before the site is considered permanently stabilized. Tri-State's SWMPs for the transmission lines and substations will address both temporary erosion control and long-term stabilization of disturbed soils, and these plans are incorporated here by reference. Many of the Environmental Protection Measures (EPMs) that Tri-State has committed to also contribute to successful reclamation and revegetation and can be found in Chapter 3.0 of the POD. Appendices A (Road Siting) and T (Operations, Maintenance, and Vegetation Management) also overlap with revegetation practices and should be reviewed along with this appendix. More specific detail of the site-specific reclamation treatment will be included in the final POD.

Reclamation of Temporarily Disturbed Areas Post-Construction

Permanent disturbance will occur primarily at each structure location and along new access routes. Temporary disturbance will include areas where additional cut and fill are needed to construct new access roads, improve existing access roads, construct pull sites, construct pad sites around structures where necessary, and set up staging areas. New disturbance also captures alignment changes, including the proposed two miles of new ROW for the proposed Dolores River crossing.

Noxious Weeds

Noxious weed management is critical to successful reclamation activities. A detailed noxious weed management plan is included in Appendix 7.

Topsoil Salvage

Generally, topsoil salvage is not proposed because most areas will not be extensively graded. The final reclamation plan will identify areas where topsoil salvage is warranted and feasible. Topsoil is identified as the top 6 to 12 inches of soil containing organic matter. Salvaged topsoil will be protected and stabilized by practices identified in the Storm Water Management Plan. Salvaged topsoil will be re-spread before seeding.

During construction activity, some excess spoils (subsoil and/or waste rock) will be generated. Spoil will be spread close to the site of disturbance in a uniform manner to match existing contours or will be hauled off-site. Where feasible, spoils will be spread, covered with topsoil if available, mulched if needed, and seeded.

ROW Reclamation

Re-contouring may be required for areas proposed for temporary disturbance as discussed above. Areas within the ROW, laydown or staging areas, or other areas with heavy vehicle traffic and exposure to water may become compacted. These areas will be “de-compacted” on a case-by-case basis using appropriate equipment such as discs and rippers.

Shallow soils, steep slopes, rocks, or exposed bedrock may not be seeded but will be treated to restore contours and visually blend with surrounding areas to the degree possible. Placement of boulders or special grading and contouring will be considered in visually sensitive areas.

Seed Bed Preparation

Re-contouring, surface roughening, and/or de-compaction will prepare a suitable rough surface with friable soils for seeding. Soil amendments are generally not proposed since they tend to favor weedy annual species that compete with native grasses. Soil amendments may be proposed on a case-by-case basis with agency or landowner approval.

Seeding Methods

Seeding will utilize a variety of methods depending on the timing of seeding and site conditions. Generally, methods that apply the seed directly to the soil, such as with a drill seeder, broadcast spreader, or by hand, are preferred. The preferred method for seeding is drill seeding with a rangeland drill; however, if the areas of bare soil and disturbance are patchy and small, broadcast seeding will be used. Broadcast seeding rate will be double the drill seed rates. Broadcast seed will be covered by raking, harrowing, or dragging a chain over the surface.

In some cases, such as on steep, inaccessible slopes, hydro-seeding/mulching may be needed. Where possible, seed will be broadcast first before applying hydro-mulch, tackifier, or erosion blankets.

Seed Mixes

Site specific seed mixes will be developed for different elevations, plant communities, and soils in coordination with a local seed bank, such as the Uncompahgre Partnership, or another BLM-approved source such as the BLM regional seed warehouse. It is understood the seed availability will vary from year to year and that the final seeding plan will need to be reviewed prior to the initiation of reclamation activities. All seed mixes will be state certified weed-free. These seed mixes will be comprised primarily of native species readily available for purchase or specifically collected locally for Tri-State (through the Uncompahgre Partnership) for sensitive habitats such as Gunnison sage-grouse habitat. Seed rates will be given in pounds per live seed (PLS). Proper testing, labeling, storage, handling and protection of seed will be required.

Tri-State will work with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), BLM, Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW), USFS, and landowners to develop seed mixes compatible with current conditions and land uses. In some cases a sterile cover crop may be added to the mixes to ensure germination and cover on severe slopes, under erosion blankets, or on sensitive sites. Cover crop seeding can serve as a nurse crop for native species. Many native species need a season to break dormancy. Cover crop provides quick vegetative cover, soil stabilization, and competes well with invasive weedy species but not with native species.

The following are proposed seed mixes for USFS lands and BLM lands including Dry Creek Basin. For the Dry Creek Basin, the final seed mix will be approved by the BLM, CPW, and affected landowners 45 days prior to the initiation of reclamation activities. Tri-State will coordinate with each agency’s reclamation specialists to determine the availability of recommended species and seek out alternative species if availability of preferred options is limited.

Table P-1. Grand Mesa Uncompahgre and Gunnison and San Juan National Forest Seed Mix
Forest Service-Uncompahgre Plateau Species in bold, italics

Common Name (<i>Cultivar</i>)	Scientific Name	% of Mix Desired (PLS)
Forbs		
Blue-eyed grass	<i>Sisyrinchium species</i>	0.1
Globemallow	<i>Sphaeralcea coccinea</i>	0.1
Rocky Mountain penstemon	<i>Penstemon strictus</i>	0.1
Splitleaf Indian paintbrush	<i>Castilleja rhexifolia</i>	0.1
<i>Yarrow - UP Dryfork</i>	<i>Achillea millefolium</i>	0.3
<i>Showy Fleabane – (Dry Fork)</i>	<i>Erigeron speciosus</i>	0.3
<i>Dusty Penstemon – (Delta)</i>	<i>Penstemon comarrhenus</i>	0.6

Forest Service-Uncompahgre Plateau Species in bold, italics

Common Name (<i>Cultivar</i>)	Scientific Name	% of Mix Desired (PLS)
<i>Bluestem Penstemon – (San Miguel)</i>	<i>Penstemon cyanocaulis</i>	0.5
<i>Sulphur Buckwheat – (UP)</i>	<i>Eriogonum umbellatum</i>	0.3
<u>Grass and grasslike species</u>		
Arizona fescue	<i>Festuca arizonica</i>	0.5
Basin wildrye	<i>Leymus cinereus</i>	0.5
Blue wildrye	<i>Elymus glaucus</i>	0.5
Bottlebrush squirreltail	<i>Elymus elymoides</i>	5.0
<i>Sandberg bluegrass – (UP Colorado)</i>	<i>Poa secunda</i>	15.0
Columbia needlegrass	<i>Stipa columbiana (S.nelsonii)</i>	0.5
Fendler’s bluegrass	<i>Poa fendleriana</i>	2.0
Idaho fescue	<i>Festuca idahoensis</i>	0.5
Indian ricegrass	<i>Oryzopsis hymenoides (Stipa hymenoides)</i>	0.5
<i>Prairie Junegrass – (Sims Mesa)</i>	<i>Koeleria cristata/K.nitida (K.macrantha)</i>	10.0
Letterman needlegrass	<i>Stipa lettermanii</i>	3.0
<i>Mountain brome – (Cold Springs)</i>	<i>Bromus marginatus</i>	14.0
Needle and thread	<i>Stipa comata</i>	0.5
<i>Sand dropseed – (UP Dolores)</i>	<i>Sporobolus cryptandrus</i>	8.0
<i>Slender wheatgrass – (San Luis)</i>	<i>Elymus trachycaulus</i>	20.0
Thurber fescue	<i>Festuca thurberi</i>	0.5
<i>Western wheatgrass – (Arriba)</i>	<i>Pascopyrum smithii</i>	15.0
<u>Shrubs</u>		
Antelope bitterbrush	<i>Purshia tridentata</i>	0.1
Chokecherry	<i>Prunus virginiana (Padus virginiana)</i>	0.1
Drummond willow	<i>Salix drummondiana</i>	0.1
Golden currant	<i>Ribes aureum</i>	0.1
Mormon tea	<i>Ephedra viridis</i>	0.1
Mountain mahogany	<i>Cercocarpus montanus</i>	0.1
Mountain willow	<i>Salix monticola</i>	0.1
Sagebrush	<i>Artemisia tridentata ssp. tridentata</i>	0.1
Saskatoon serviceberry	<i>Amelanchier alnifolia</i>	0.1
Serviceberry	<i>Amelanchier utahensis</i>	0.1
Wax currant	<i>Ribes cereum</i>	0.1
Wild rose	<i>Rosa woodsii</i>	0.1
	Total	99.6

*Final species list and percentages of mix can be negotiated, based on availability of seed and price.

BLM Seed Mix Tables

Table P-2. BLM Ecosite Seedmix Crosswalk

BLM Lands Ecosites	Vegetation Type	Seed Mix
Alkaline Slopes	Xeric Sagebrush	Salt Desert
Basin Shale	Xeric Sagebrush	Sage and PJ
Foothill Swale	Xeric Sagebrush	Sage and PJ
Foothill Valley	Xeric Sagebrush	Sage and PJ
Semidesert Loam	Xeric Sagebrush	Sage and PJ
Semidesert Sandy Loam	Xeric Sagebrush	Sage and PJ
Salt desert Over Flow	Dry Sagebrush/greasewood	Salt Desert
Loamy Park	Mixed Mtn. Shrub	Mixed Mtn. Shrub
Mtn. Clay Loam	Mixed Mtn. Shrub	Mixed Mtn. Shrub
Mtn. Loam	Mixed Mtn. Shrub	Mixed Mtn. Shrub
Pine Grasslands	Mixed Mtn. Shrub	Mixed Mtn. Shrub
Shallow Subalpine	Mixed Mtn. Shrub	Mixed Mtn. Shrub
Loamy Clay PJ	PJ	Sage and PJ
PJ	PJ	Sage and PJ
Shallow Clay Loam PJ	PJ	Sage and PJ
Shallow Loam PJ	PJ	Sage and PJ
Clayey Salt Desert	Salt Desert Shrub	Salt Desert
Loamy Salt desert	Salt Desert Shrub	Salt Desert
Salt Flats	Salt Desert Shrub	Salt Desert
Silty Salt desert	Salt Desert Shrub	Salt Desert
Stoney Salt desert	Salt Desert Shrub	Salt Desert
Clayey Foothills	Mesic Sagebrush	Sage and PJ
Loamy Foothills	Mesic Sagebrush	Sage and PJ

Note: A seed mix calculator (Excel spreadsheet) provided by the BLM UFO, converting acres of ecosystem habitat to pounds of seed required, will be used for final calculations based on seed availability.

Table P-3. BLM Seed Mix: Sagebrush & PJ including GuSG

Common Name (Cultivar)	Scientific Name	% of Mix Desired (PLS)
Western wheatgrass (X-ARRIBA)	<i>Pascopyrum smithii</i>	0.03
Bottlebrush squirreltail ¹ (Accession #9092275)	<i>Elymus elymoides</i>	0.20
Indian ricegrass ⁴ (UP White River)	<i>Achnatherum hymenoides</i>	0.20
Slender wheatgrass (White River)	<i>Elymus trachycaulus</i>	0.20
Sand dropseed (UP Dolores)	<i>Sporobolus cryptandrus</i>	0.05
Prairie junegrass (UP Sims Mesa)	<i>Koeleria macrantha</i>	0.05
Sandburg bluegrass ³ (UP Colorado)	<i>Poa secunda</i>	0.10
Annual sunflower (X-VNS)	<i>Helianthus annuus</i>	0.01
Dusty penstemon ² (UP Delta)	<i>Penstemon comarrhenus</i>	0.01
Northern (Utah) sweetvetch (TIMP)	<i>Hedysarum boreale</i>	0.01
Lewis blue flax (Mapel Grove)	<i>Linum lewisii</i>	0.02
Wyoming big sage ⁴ (X-VNS)	<i>Artemisia tridentata ssp. Wyomingensis</i>	0.05
	Total	1.00

¹If bottlebrush squirreltail (Accession # 9092275) is not available, use Tusas.

²If dusty penstemon is not available, use Bluestem Penstemon (UP San Miguel) (*Penstemon cyanocaulis*)

³If Sandburg bluegrass is not available, use muttongrass (UP Ruin Canyon) (*Poa fendleriana*).

⁴Wyoming sagebrush shall be collected within 10 air miles of the ROW and certified as to the proper species.

Table P-4. BLM Seed Mix: Mixed Mountain Shrub.

Common Name (Cultivar)	Scientific Name	% of Mix Desired (PLS)
Western wheatgrass (X-ARRIBA)	<i>Pascopyrum smithii</i>	0.07
Bottlebrush squirreltail ¹ (Accession #9092275)	<i>Elymus elymoides</i>	0.23
Mountain brome (UP Cold Springs)	<i>Bromus marginatus</i>	0.10
Slender wheatgrass (White River)	<i>Elymus trachycaulus</i>	0.21
Muttongrass (UP Ruin Canyon)	<i>Poa fendleriana</i>	0.11
Prairie junegrass (UP Sims Mesa)	<i>Koeleria macrantha</i>	0.09
Showy fleabane/Oregon daisy ²	<i>Erigeron speciosus</i>	0.03
Annual sunflower (X-VNS)	<i>Helianthus annuus</i>	0.01
Western white yarrow (UP Dry Fork)	<i>Achillea millefolium</i>	0.07
Northern (Utah) sweetvetch (TIMP)	<i>Hedysarum boreale</i>	0.01
Lewis blue flax (Mapel Grove)	<i>Linum lewisii</i>	0.01
Mountain big sage (X-VNS)	<i>Artemisia tridentata ssp. Vaseyana</i>	0.05
	Total	1

¹If bottlebrush squirreltail (Accession # 9092275) is not available, use Tusas.

²If showy fleabane/Oregon daisy is not available, omit.

³Mountain sagebrush shall be collected within 10 air miles of the ROW and certified as to the proper species.

Table P-5. BLM Seed Mix: Salt Desert Shrub

Common Name (Cultivar)	Scientific Name	% of Mix Desired (PLS)
Bottlebrush squirreltail (Toe Jam)	<i>Elymus elymoides</i>	0.20
Western wheatgrass (X-Arriba)	<i>Pascopyrum smithii</i>	0.20
Galleta grass* (Viva)	<i>Pleuraphis jamesii</i>	0.30
Indian ricegrass (UP White River)	<i>Achnatherum hymenoides</i>	0.10
Sandburg bluegrass ³ (UP Colorado)	<i>Poa secunda</i>	
Cleftleaf wild heliotrope ¹ (UP Wildland Collection)	<i>Phacelia crenulata</i>	0.05
Redwhisker clammyweed ¹ (UP Wildland Collection)	<i>Polanisia dodecandra</i>	0.02
Annual sunflower (X-VNS)	<i>Helianthus annuus</i>	0.03
Winterfat* (X-VNS)	<i>Krascheninnikovia lanata</i>	0.01
Shadscale (X-VNS)	<i>Atriplex confertifolia</i>	0.01
Four wing saltbush ² (X-VNS)	<i>Atriplex canescens</i> spp. <i>Canescens</i>	0.05
Basin big sage (X-VNS)	<i>Artemisia tridentata</i> ssp. <i>Tridentata</i>	0.05
	Total	1.02

¹If these products cannot be supplied through collection, replace with 0.5 lb/acre Scarlet globemallow (*Sphaeralcea coccinea* spp. *Coccinea*).

²Request that source be from western Colorado, E Utah.

*Recommend requesting that seed be de-bearded for better drill flow.

Basin sagebrush - shall be collected within 10 air miles of the right of way and certified as to the proper species.

Mulching

Mulch (clean, certified weed-free straw) will be applied at one to two tons (2000-4000 pounds [lbs.]) per acre where deemed necessary by the agencies in coordination with the environmental monitor and Tri-State's reclamation contractor. This will primarily take place on areas of steeper slope. Where practical, mulch will be crimped, tackified, or otherwise incorporated into the soil to the degree possible. Crimping or anchoring of mulch will occur immediately following treatment, no longer than 24 hours after treatment. If machine crimping is not possible, straw may be spread by hand, anchored with shovel crimps, or sprayed with tackifier. Masticated brush or slash may be spread and used as a natural mulch layer. On steep slopes such as along roads or at substations, hydro-mulch may be sprayed with water to minimize erosion and help establish vegetation. Hydro-mulch will be applied at a rate of 2,000 lbs. /acre.

Monitoring Recovery/Maintenance

The reclaimed ROW and substations will be inspected after the first growing season to assess germination and reclamation success. Monitoring requirements will follow measures required in the Storm Water Management Plan (Appendix Q) until final stabilization is achieved. Following

construction, inspection of site recovery will be done on a monthly basis until 70% of pre-existing vegetation cover is achieved. Tri-State will consult with land management agencies and landowners regarding the relative success of reclamation and the potential need for additional treatment.

Appendix 7: Noxious Weed Plan

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NOXIOUS WEED PLAN

The objective of this Noxious Weed Plan is to detail practices designed to address potential impacts from construction of the Tri-State Montrose-Nucla-Cahone Transmission Line Improvement Project (Project). Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association, Inc. (Tri-State) has developed this plan as part of the Plan of Development (POD) that accompanies its application to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) for a Right of Way (ROW) grant. If the ROW grant is approved, the final POD and all appendices will be attached to the Decision Record. This plan provides guidance to construction and field personnel on measures identified by Tri-State, BLM, and US Forest Service (USFS) to minimize effects during construction activities associated with the Project. It will be the responsibility of Tri-State and its project contractors, working with designated environmental inspectors, to comply with measures identified in this plan. In addition to adhering to the Environmental Protection Measures (EPMs) outlined in the table below, Tri-State prepared this Noxious Weed Plan for use during construction, operation, and maintenance on the right-of-way and temporary work areas.

Tri-State will treat noxious weeds prior to construction using maps created and reviewed by the appropriate land management agency/entity that outlines noxious weed populations on the ROW. Tri-State may also collaborate with county weed programs or contract with a third party-certified applicator to control weeds on private and state lands.

The ROW and access roads were surveyed in 2013 for noxious weeds listed by the State of Colorado in the “Rules Pertaining to the Administration and Enforcement of the Colorado Noxious Weed Act” (Colorado Noxious Weed Act 2003). Noxious weed occurrence was also mapped during field visits conducted in 2015 for the alignment. Locations and species of noxious weed areas, avoidance measures, methods for reducing potential transportation of viable seeds, and eradication procedures will be included in the final POD. The appropriate land management agency will be consulted for planning specific weed control measures on all noxious weed infestations within the limits of the ROW prior to treatment.

Only certified weed-free straw will be used. The Contractor will retain documentation verifying that straw used for mulch, straw bale sediment barriers, or straw wattles has been certified weed free by the Colorado Department of Agriculture. The following table summarizes EPMs for Noxious Weed Management and notes whether they apply to construction (C) or construction and operations and maintenance (C and O&M).

Table S-6. Noxious Weed EPMs

Topic - No.	Applicant Committed EPMs And Design Features For Construction (C), Operation, And Maintenance (O&M)	Applicable to C and/or O&M*
<i>Noxious Weeds</i>		
NW-1	<p>Noxious weed management is required throughout the life of the transmission line easements, special use permits, and ROW Grant. Tri-State shall be responsible for weed control within the limits of the right-of-way. Tri-State is responsible for consultation with the authorized officer and/or local authorities for acceptable weed control methods (within limits imposed in the grant stipulations) including pesticides/herbicides approved for use on BLM land.</p> <p>A noxious weed MOU is already in place with the USFS for the transmission line. If noxious weed agreements are not in place by the initiation of ROW clearing in spring of 2017. Tri-State will supplement USFS weed treatment efforts as needed prior to construction. Tri-State will pre-treat noxious weeds on BLM and private lands (where permitted) in the spring of 2017. Noxious weed management will continue throughout the life of the transmission line via agreements with the USFS and BLM.</p>	C and O&M
NW-2	<p>Tri-State will continue to participate and voluntarily fund noxious weed management activities on Tri-State ROWs under the existing Collection Agreement between Tri-State and the USFS for the Grand Mesa Uncompahgre Gunnison (GMUG) NF and San Juan National Forest (SJNF) (this agreement covers 18 miles of the existing transmission ROW). Additional detail will be provided in the Final POD (Appendix S, Noxious Weed Management Plan). The existing agreement with between Tri-State and the USFS is also in accordance with USFS direction for invasive species management (including Forest Service Manual 2900 invasive species management; Forest and/or regional invasive species strategy).</p> <p>The same approach to noxious weed management is proposed on BLM administered lands and a draft agreement is currently being drafted. The POD will be updated with this finalized BLM Uncompahgre Field Office and Tres Rios agreement. Tri-State will participate and fund noxious weed management activities on Tri-State ROWs under a Collection Agreement between Tri-State and the BLM GMUG and Tres Rios. Additional detail will be provided in the Final POD (Appendix S, Noxious Weed Management Plan). An approved weed treatment plan shall be reviewed and approved by the BLM prior to the issuance of the Notice to Proceed.</p>	C and O&M
NW-3	<p>The reclamation and noxious weed management plan will be approved by the appropriate agency prior to the issuance of a ROW grant. The noxious weed management plan for areas not covered under pending agreements with the BLM and existing agreements with the USFS will be developed in accordance with appropriate land management agencies' standards, consistent with applicable regulations and agency permitting stipulations for the control of noxious weeds and invasive species (Executive Order 3112).</p>	C and O&M

Topic - No.	Applicant Committed EPMs And Design Features For Construction (C), Operation, And Maintenance (O&M)	Applicable to C and/or O&M*
NW-4	On-site weed control for pre-construction activities that may occur prior to implementation of a noxious weed agreement with the BLM and on private lands will be conducted through herbicide use and a weed control plan and/or agreement approved by the BLM, CPW, and affected landowner (on private lands). The BLM requires a Pesticide Use Proposal package, and will approve proposed herbicides, treatments and time of treatment. Applicators are also legally required to supply the BLM with a written herbicide application record within 24 hours of applying herbicides on BLM-managed lands. The pesticide use proposal should be submitted to the agencies by March 1, annually. Application records will be submitted weekly and will include both spatial and tabular element (using forms provided by the agencies).	C
NW-5	All heavy equipment, including all-terrain vehicles (ATV) and lowboys, utilized during construction will be washed prior to departure from the equipment storage facility. This method promotes containment of weed seeds on the work site; all seed mixes and mulch used for reclamation activities will be certified weed-free. Tri-State will consider providing a portable/mobile vehicle wash station on-site where appropriate. Tri-State will require that all vehicles be washed prior to entering the project area; when travelling from an area infested with invasives to an area that has no known invasives; and when travelling from an area infested with spotted knapweed to any other parts of the project area.	C and O&M
NW-6	Pre-construction treatment of weeds in staging or temporary use areas will be conducted.	C
NW-7	Noxious weed treatments conducted outside of agreements with BLM and USFS will require avoidance and/or minimization measure to protect documented populations of rare plant species that are included in the project’s constraints atlas (POD Appendix G).	C and O&M
NW-8	Noxious weed treatment conducted outside of Federal lands shall comply with Land Use Code 5-1002-E.IX.	C and O&M

Tri-State construction and maintenance crews will use the weed spread prevention techniques outlined in this POD, such as washing trucks before they enter the work area or transporting them to another area where weed seeds can be dispersed.

In addition to this, Tri-State crews may work with the county weed control divisions to treat weed infestations off federal lands. All herbicide applicators will be licensed by the State of Colorado.

This plan is designed to be flexible, so pages can be added as the weed situation changes, and adaptive management is needed to keep pace with the problem. Table S-3 lists weeds noted during surveys conducted for the Environmental Assessment (EA).

Table S-7. Acres of Noxious Weeds Present in the Project Area

Noxious Weed	Colorado Noxious Weed Act List	Proposed Action
Bull thistle	B	7
Canada thistle	B	25
Canada thistle/Musk thistle	B	71
Canada thistle/Musk thistle/Russian knapweed	B	1
Diffuse knapweed	B	4
Houndstongue	B	15
Musk thistle/Russian knapweed	B	<1
Oxeye daisy	B	<1
Russian knapweed	B	65
Saltcedar	B	1
Spotted knapweed	B	74
Whitetop (hoary cress)	B	<1
Whitetop (hoary cress)/ Russian knapweed	B	<1
Common burdock	C	1
Common mullein	C	7
Total		315

References

State of Colorado. (2003). *State of Colorado Noxious Weed Act*.

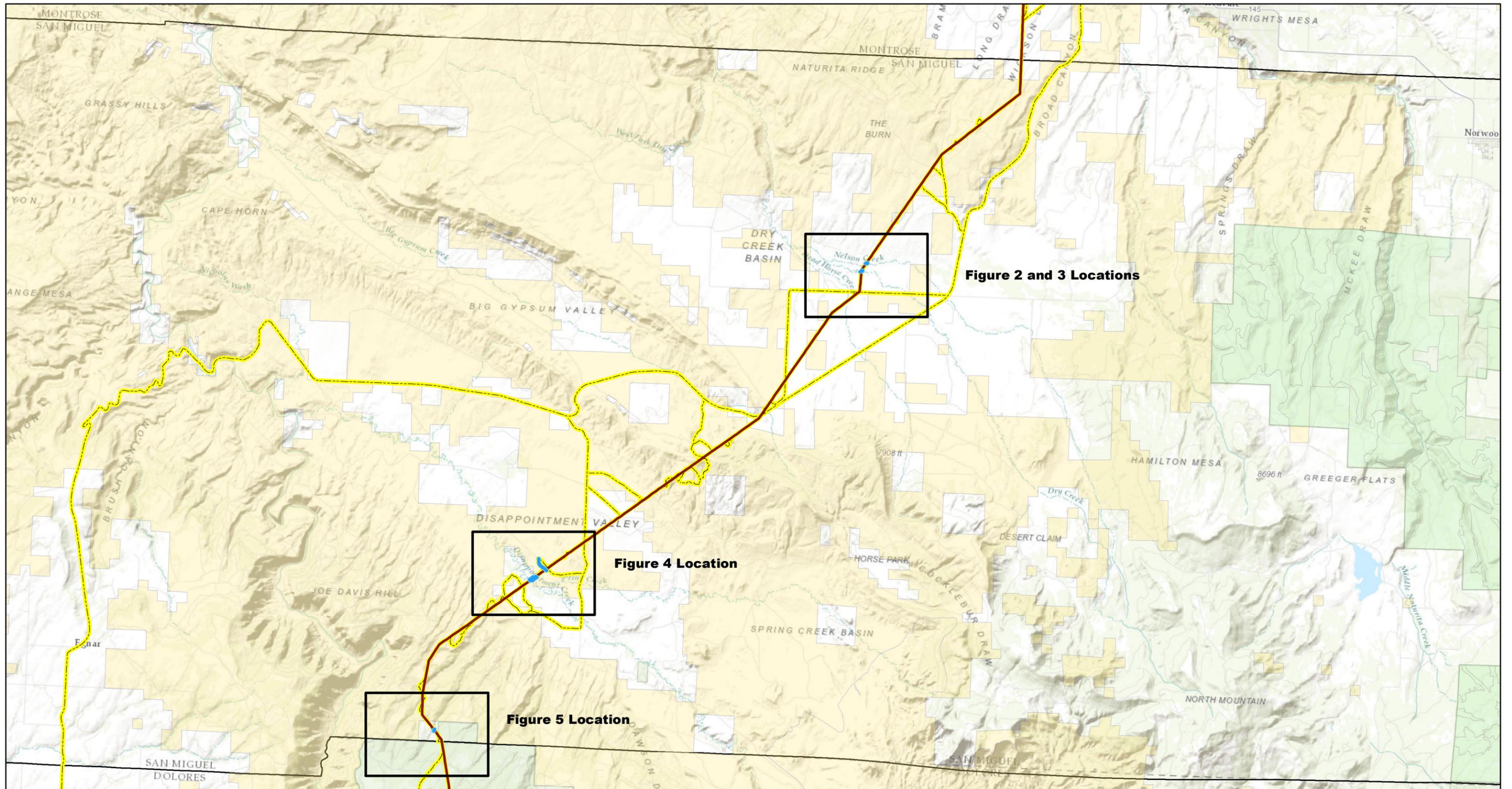
Bureau of Land Management, 2007. Final Vegetation Treatments Using Herbicides on Bureau of Land Management Lands in 17 Western States Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS). Available: http://www.blm.gov/wo/st/en/prog/more/veg_eis.html

Attachments

- S-1 Weed Collection Agreement between the Tri-State Generation & Transmission Association, Inc. and the USDA, Forest Service- San Juan National Forest (January 2012).
- S-2 Weed Collection Agreement between the Tri-State Generation & Transmission Association, Inc. and the USDA, Forest Service- Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison National Forest (July 2012).

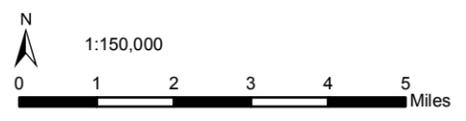
Appendix 8: Wetlands

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Base Map Source:
ESRI Topographic Map

Map created: 10/04/2016

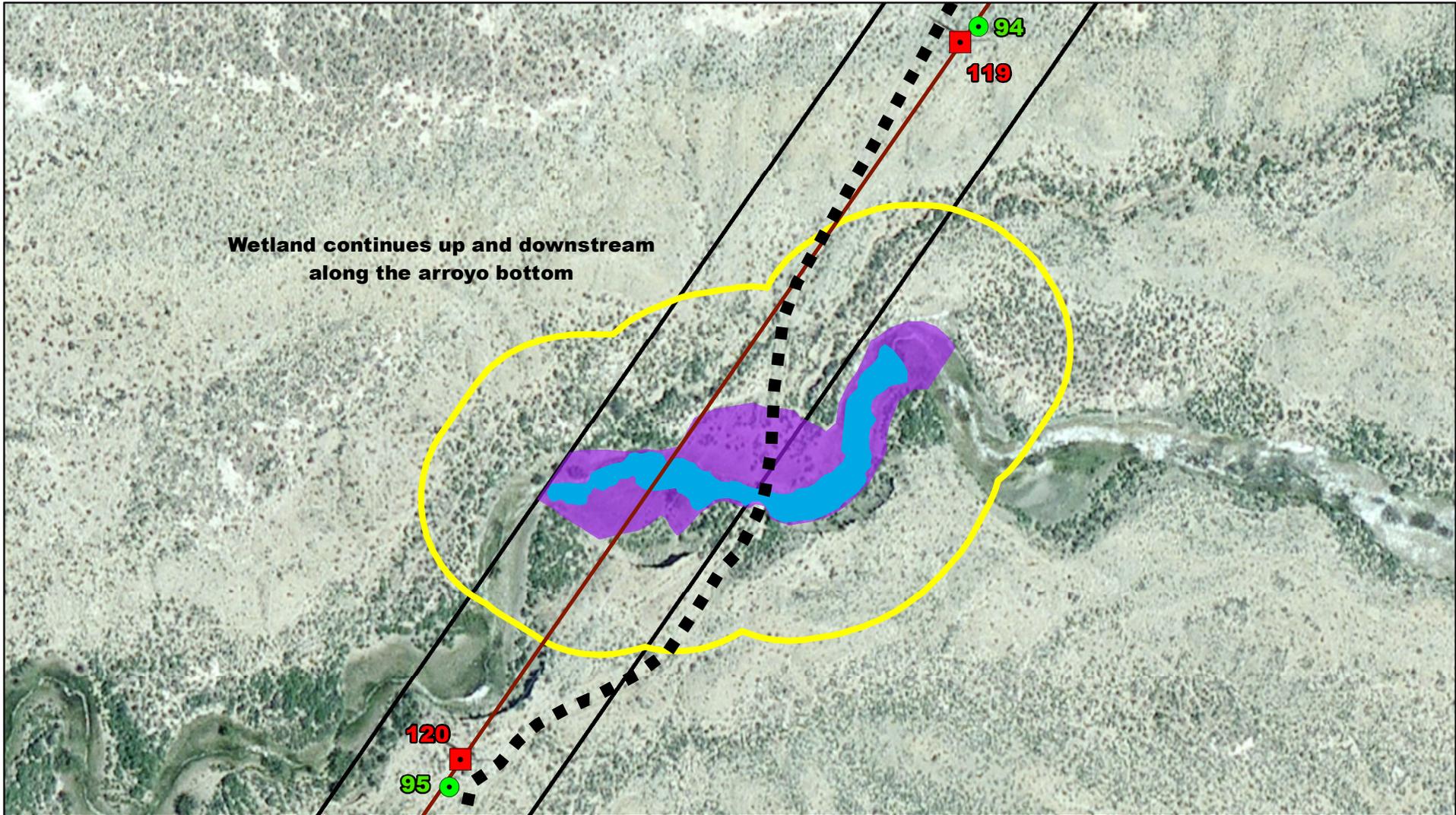


- Legend**
- Wetland
 - Transmission Line
 - Access Roads
 - Public Lands
Bureau of Land Management
 - U.S. Forest Service - GMUG

Tri-State Generation & Transmission Association, Inc.
Montrose-Nucla-Cahone Transmission Improvement Project

Figure 1
San Miguel County Wetlands Overview

BIO-Logic, Inc.
125 Colorado Avenue, Suite B
Montrose, CO 81401
(970) 240-4374,
www.bio-geo.com



Basemap Source:
 ESRI composite aerial image,
 Aerial photos taken summer 2015

Map created: 10/04/2016



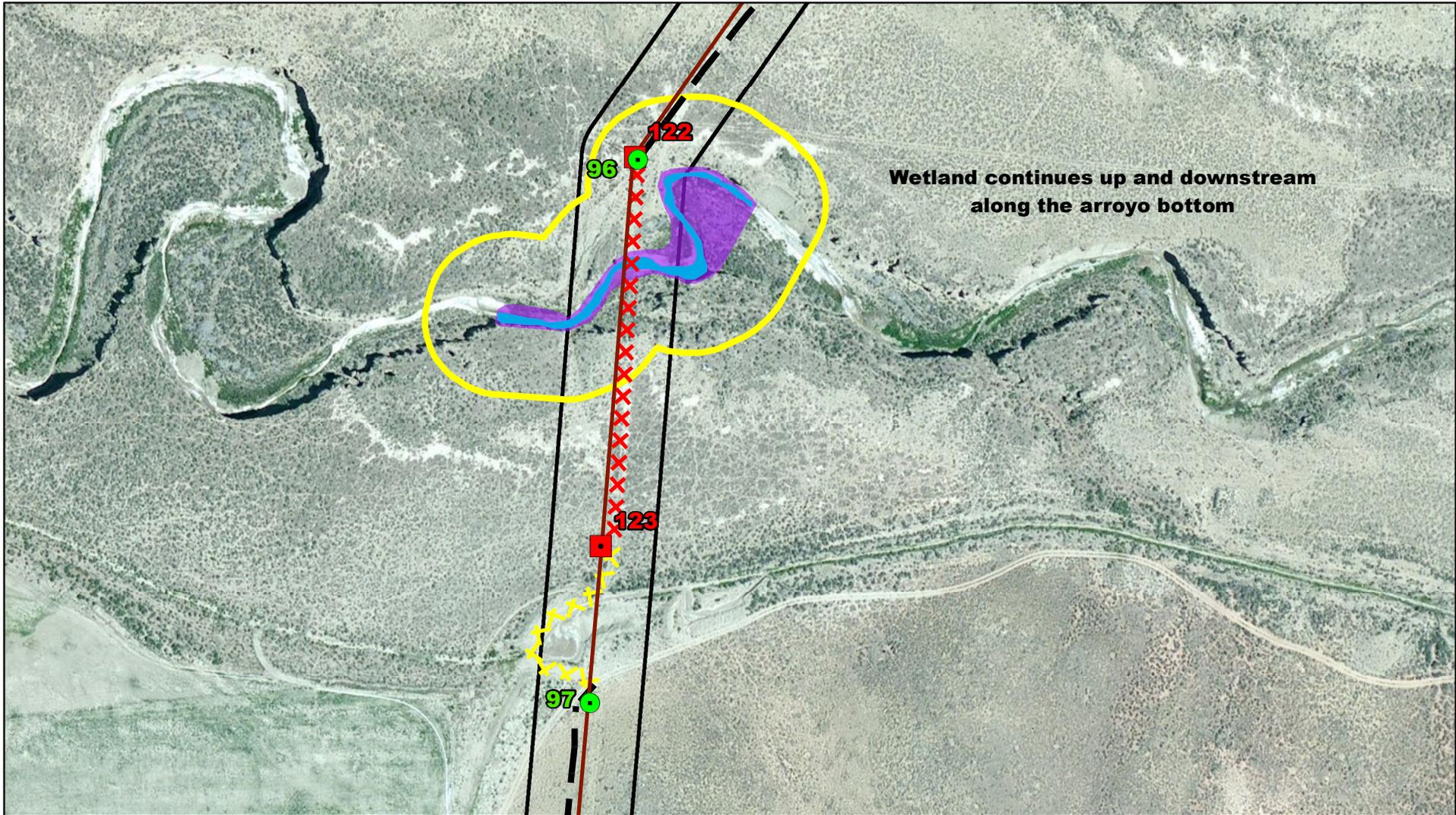
Legend

- | | |
|--------------------------------|------------------------|
| Wetland Boundary | Existing Structure |
| Riparian Boundary | 230 kV Structure |
| 100-ft Wetland/Riparian Buffer | Road Improvement Level |
| Transmission Line | 1 |
| Transmission Line 150-ft ROW | 2 |
| | 3a |
| | 3b |

**Tri-State Generation & Transmission
 Montrose-Nucla-Cahone
 Transmission Improvement Project**

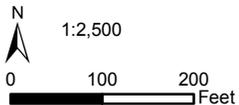
**Figure 2
 Nelson Creek Wetlands**

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 125 Colorado Avenue, Suite B
 Montrose, CO 81401
 (970) 240-4374
 www.bio-geo.com



Basemap Source:
 ESRI composite aerial image,
 Aerial photos taken summer 2015

Map created: 10/04/2016



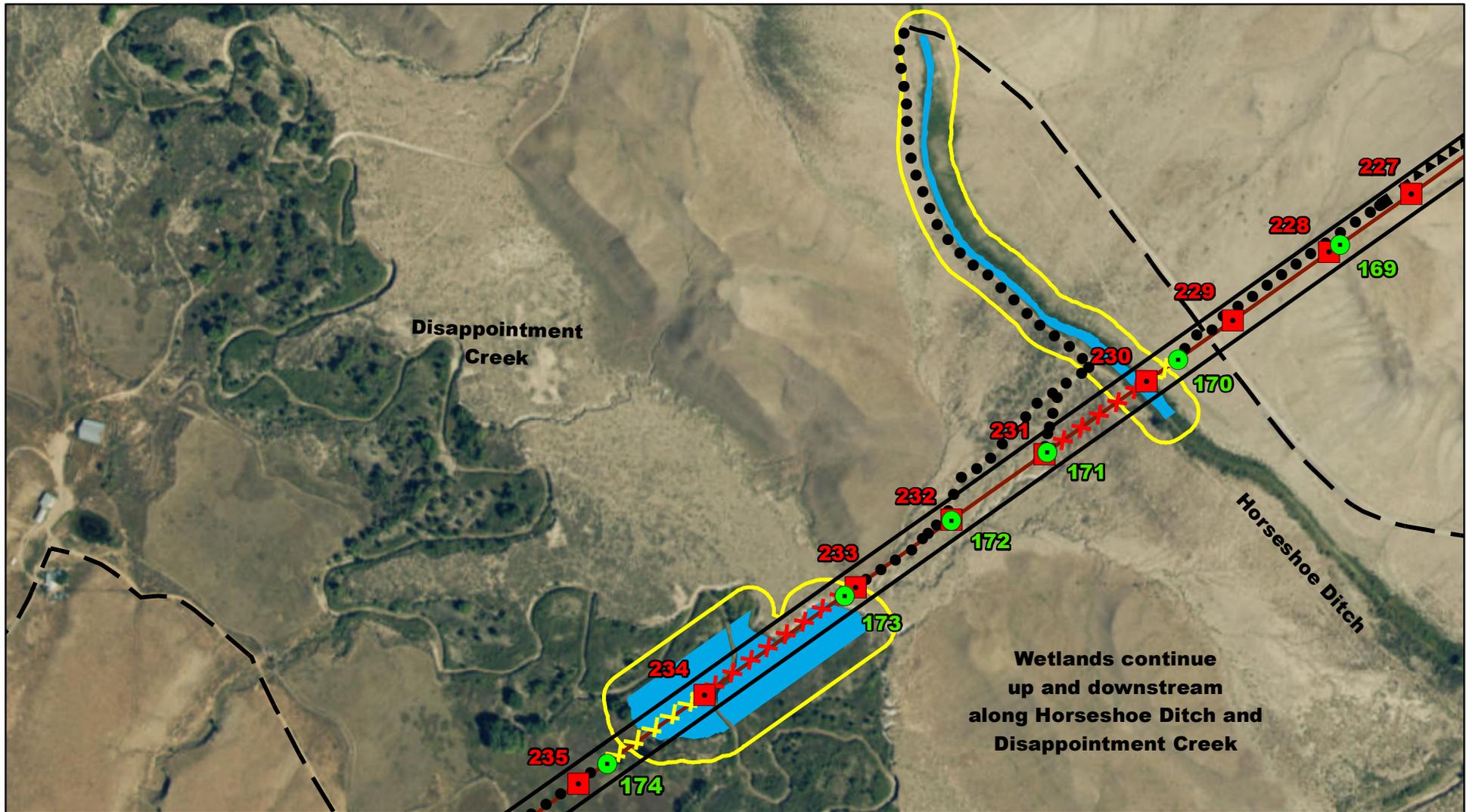
Legend

- Wetland Boundary
- Riparian Boundary
- 100-ft Wetland/Riparian Buffer
- Transmission Line
- Transmission Line 150-ft ROW
- Existing Structure
- 230 kV Structure
- Road Improvement Level 1
- Road Improvement Level 2
- Road Improvement Level 3a
- Road Improvement Level 3b
- Construction Only
- No Down Line

**Tri-State Generation & Transmission
 Montrose-Nucla-Cahone
 Transmission Improvement Project**

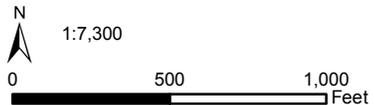
**Figure 3
 Dry Creek Wetlands**

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Basemap Source:
 ESRI composite aerial image,
 Aerial photos taken summer 2015

Map created: 10/04/2016



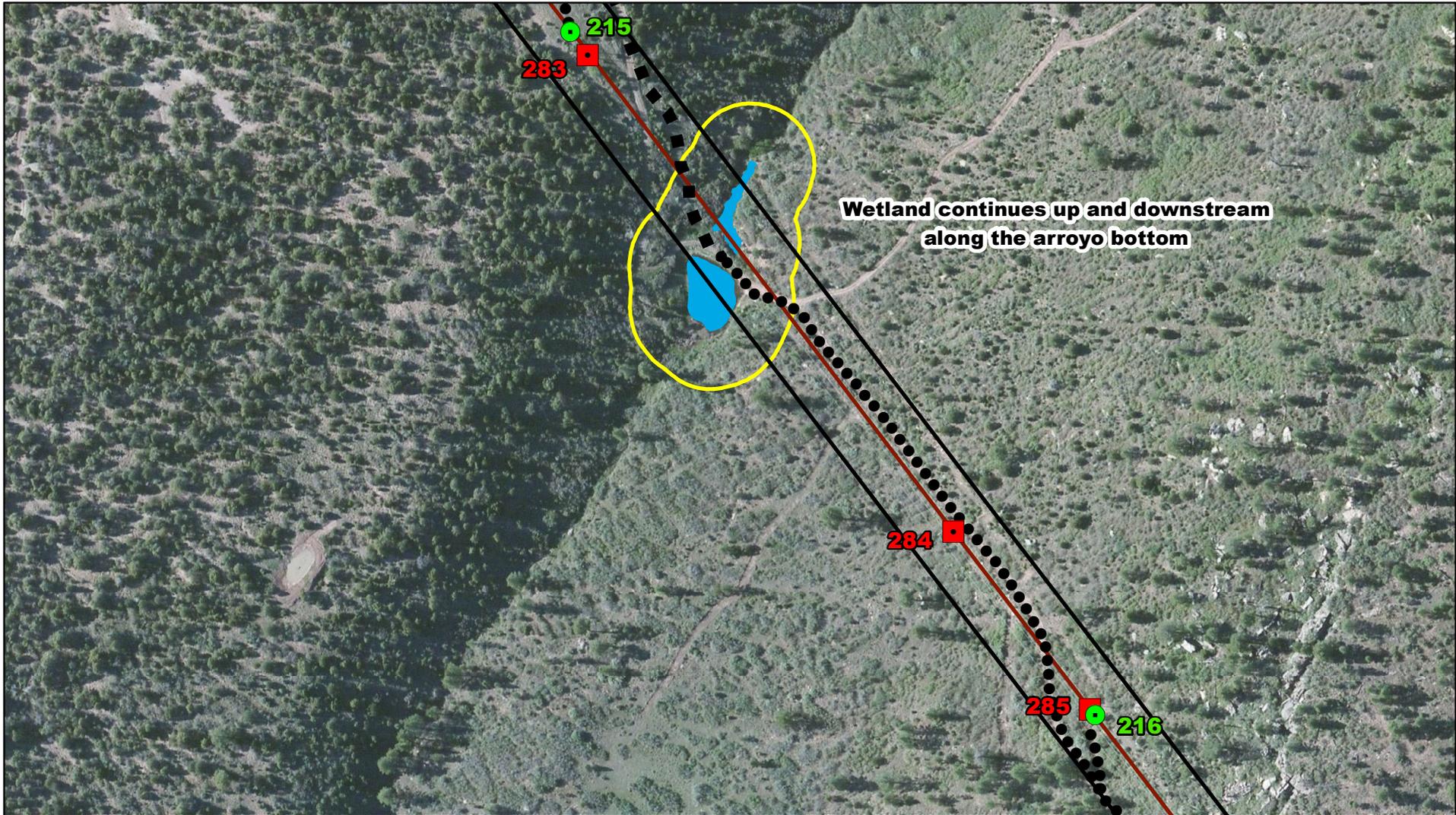
Legend

- Wetland Boundary
- 100-ft Wetland/Riparian Buffer
- Transmission Line
- Transmission Line 150-ft ROW
- Existing Structure
- 230 kV Structure
- Road Improvement Level 1
- Road Improvement Level 2
- Road Improvement Level 3a
- Road Improvement Level 3b
- Construction Only
- No Down Line

**Tri-State Generation & Transmission
 Montrose-Nucla-Cahone
 Transmission Improvement Project**

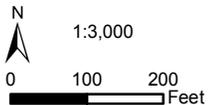
**Figure 4
 Disappointment Creek and Horseshoe Ditch**

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Basemap Source:
 ESRI composite aerial image,
 Aerial photos taken summer 2015

Map created: 10/04/2016



Legend

- | | |
|--------------------------------|------------|
| Wetland Boundary | Road Level |
| 100-ft Wetland/Riparian Buffer | ■ ■ 1 |
| Transmission Line | ● ● ● 2 |
| Transmission Line 150-ft ROW | ▲ ▲ ▲ 3a |
| Existing Structure | ■ ■ 3b |
| 230 kV Structure | |

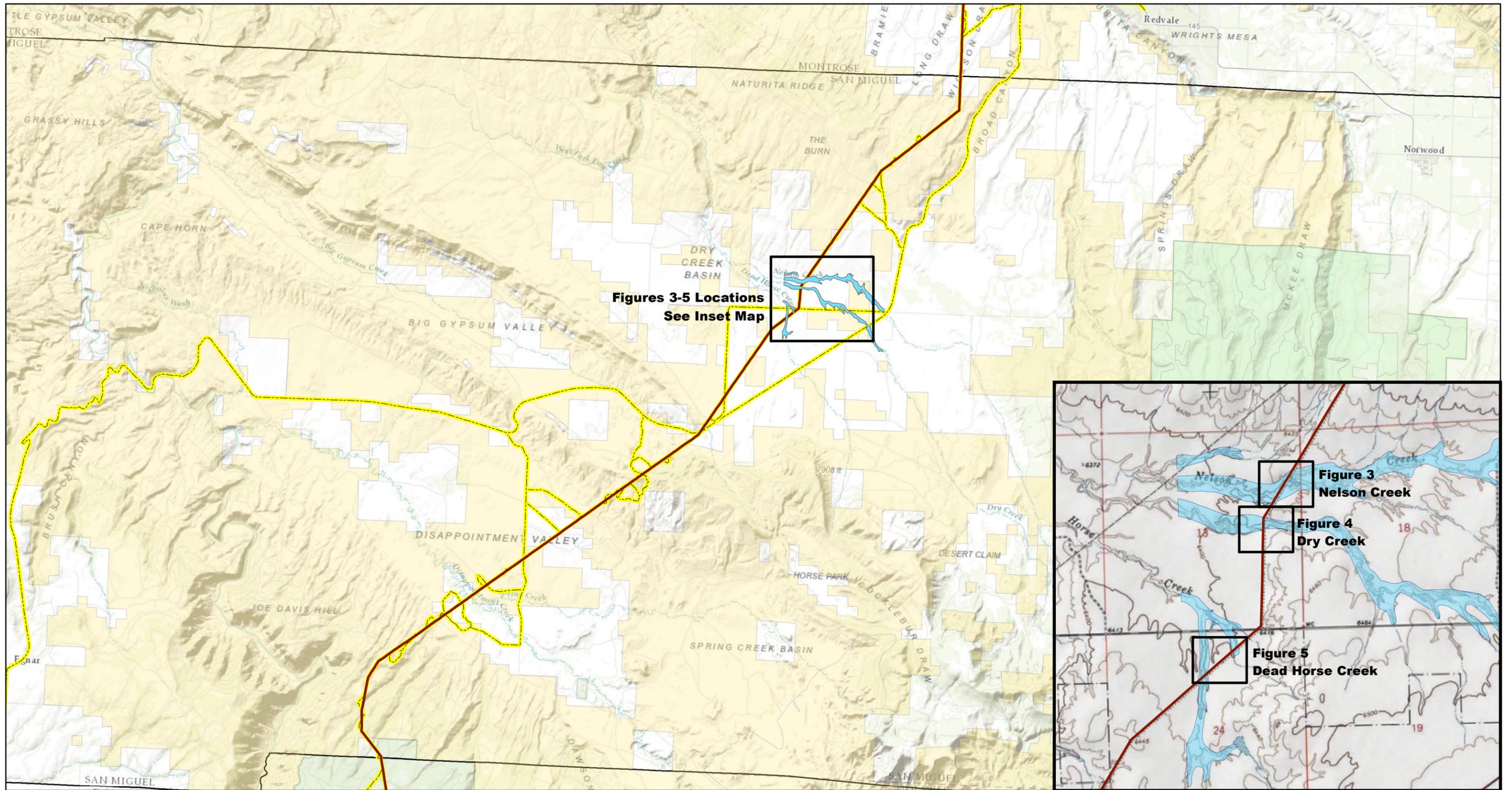
**Tri-State Generation & Transmission
 Montrose-Nucla-Cahone
 Transmission Improvement Project**

**Figure 5
 Unnamed Ephemeral Stream
 and Stockpond**

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Appendix 9: Floodplains

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**Figures 3-5 Locations
See Inset Map**

**Figure 3
Nelson Creek**

**Figure 4
Dry Creek**

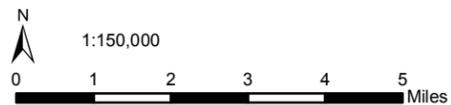
**Figure 5
Dead Horse Creek**

Base Map Source:
ESRI Topographic Map

Map created: 10/11/2016

Legend

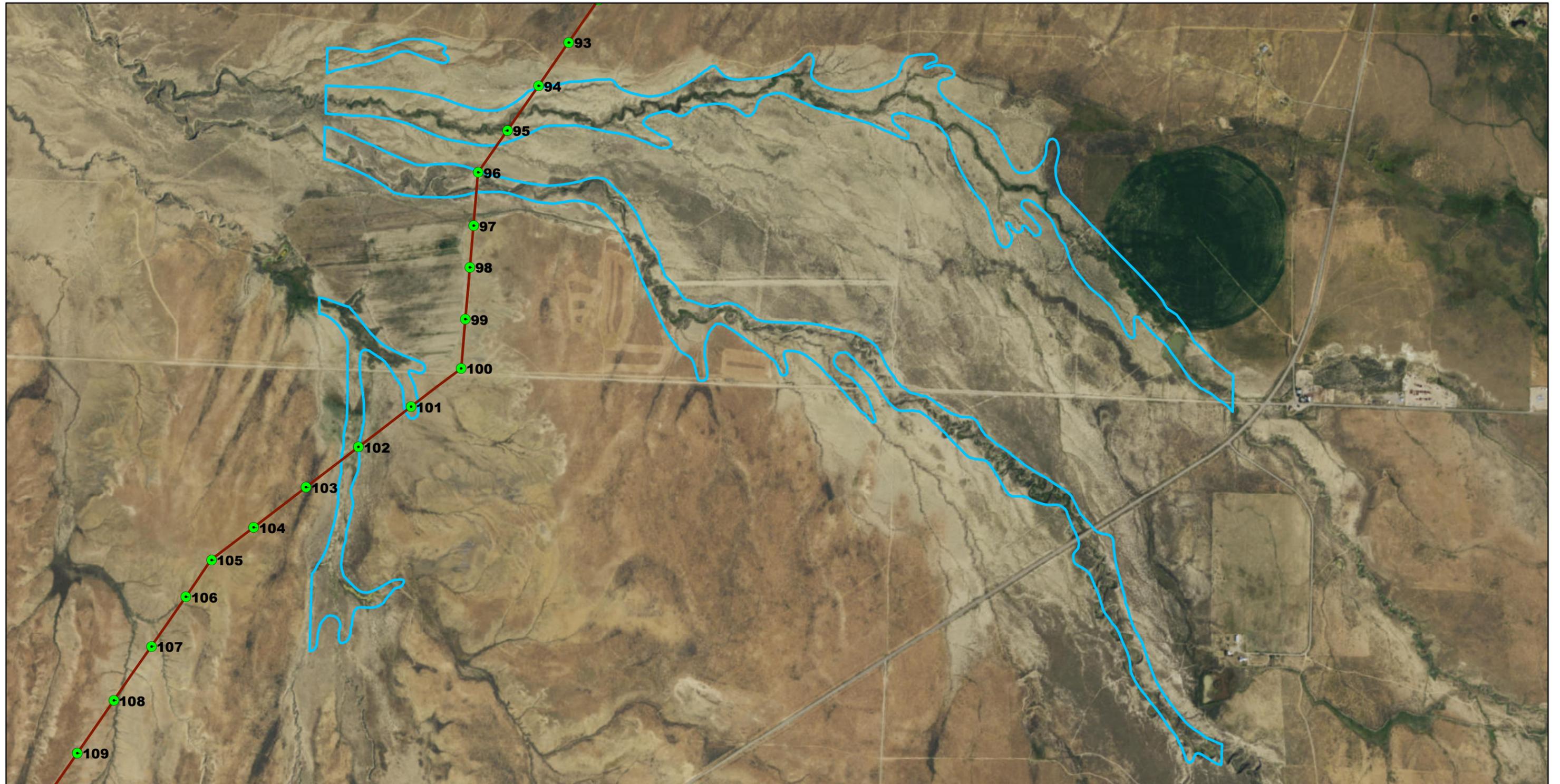
- Transmission Line
- Access Roads
- FIRM 100-year Floodplain
- Public Lands
 - Bureau of Land Management
 - U.S. Forest Service - GMUG



**Tri-State Generation & Transmission Association, Inc.
Montrose-Nucla-Cahone Transmission Improvement Project**

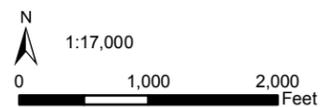
**Figure 1
San Miguel County Floodplain Overview**

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www.bio-geo.com



Basemap Source:
 ESRI composite aerial image,
 Aerial photos taken summer 2015

Floodplain Map Source:
 Federal Emergency Management Agency,
 National Flood Insurance Program,
 FIRM Map# 08113C0075 C,
 Effective Date: 9/30/1988



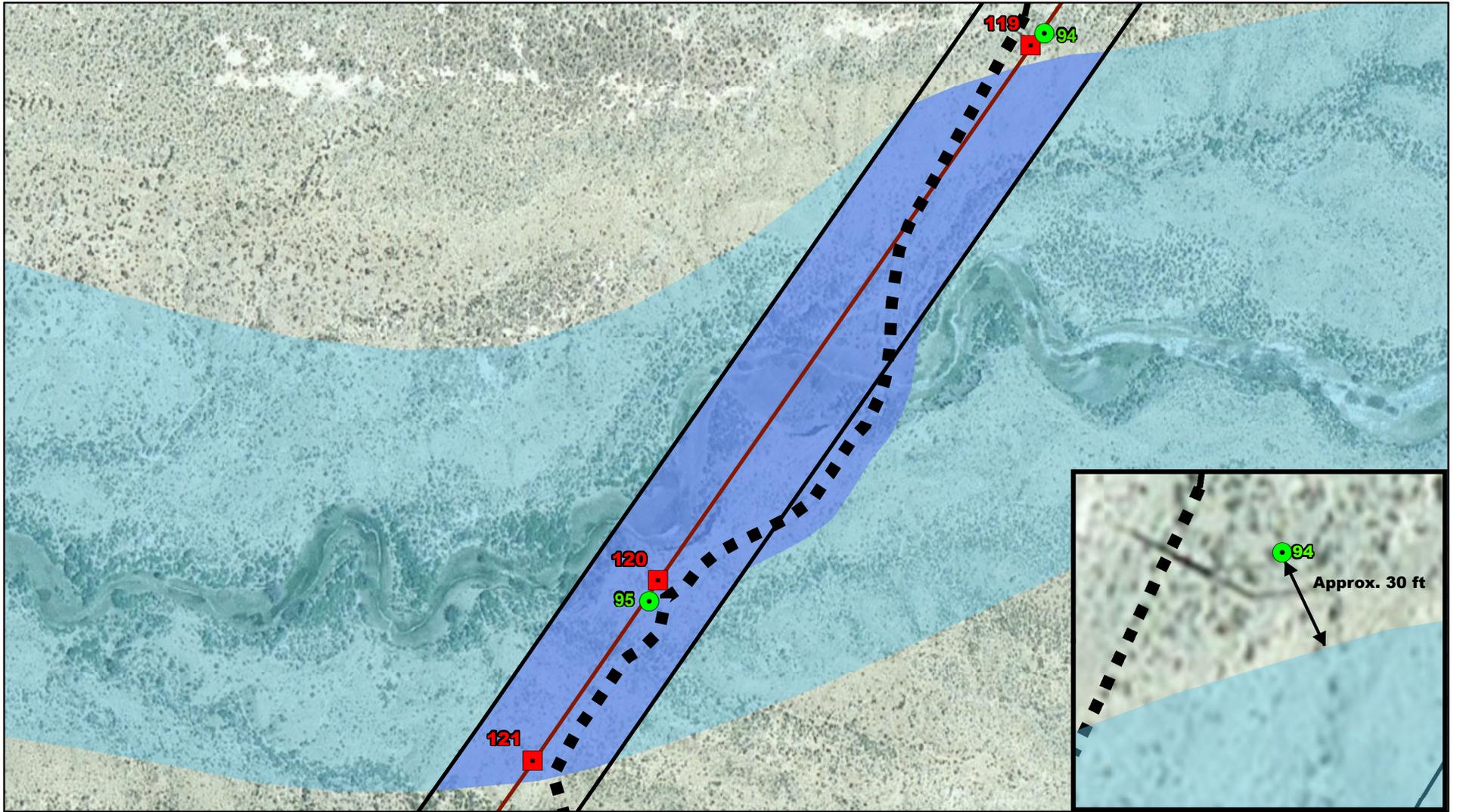
Map created: 10/11/2016

- Legend**
- FIRM 100-year Floodplain
 - Transmission Line
 - 230 kV Structure

**Tri-State Generation & Transmission
 Montrose-Nucla-Cahone
 Transmission Improvement Project**

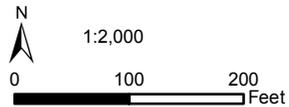
**Figure 2
 FIRM 100-year Floodplain: Dry Creek Basin**

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 125 Colorado Avenue, Suite B
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Basemap Source:
 ESRI composite aerial image,
 Aerial photos taken summer 2015

Map created: 10/11/2016



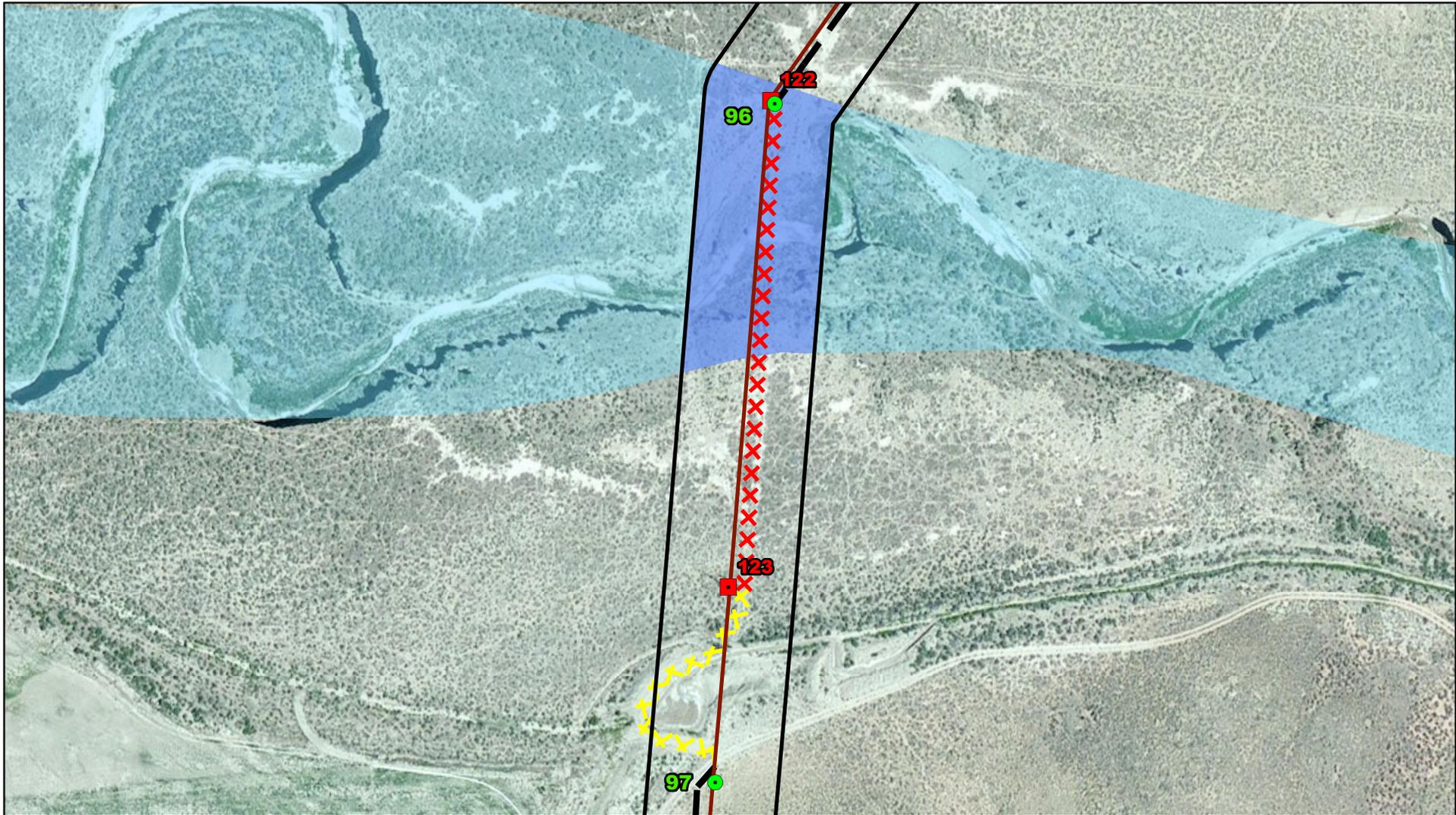
Legend

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------|
| Tri-State ROW within 100-year Floodplain | Road Improvement Level |
| FIRM 100-year Floodplain | 1 |
| Transmission Line | 2 |
| Transmission Line 150-ft ROW | 3a |
| Existing Structure | 3b |
| 230 kV Structure | |

**Tri-State Generation & Transmission
 Montrose-Nucla-Cahone
 Transmission Improvement Project**

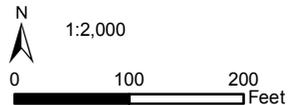
**Figure 3
 Nelson Creek Floodplain**

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Basemap Source:
 ESRI composite aerial image,
 Aerial photos taken summer 2015

Map created: 10/11/2016



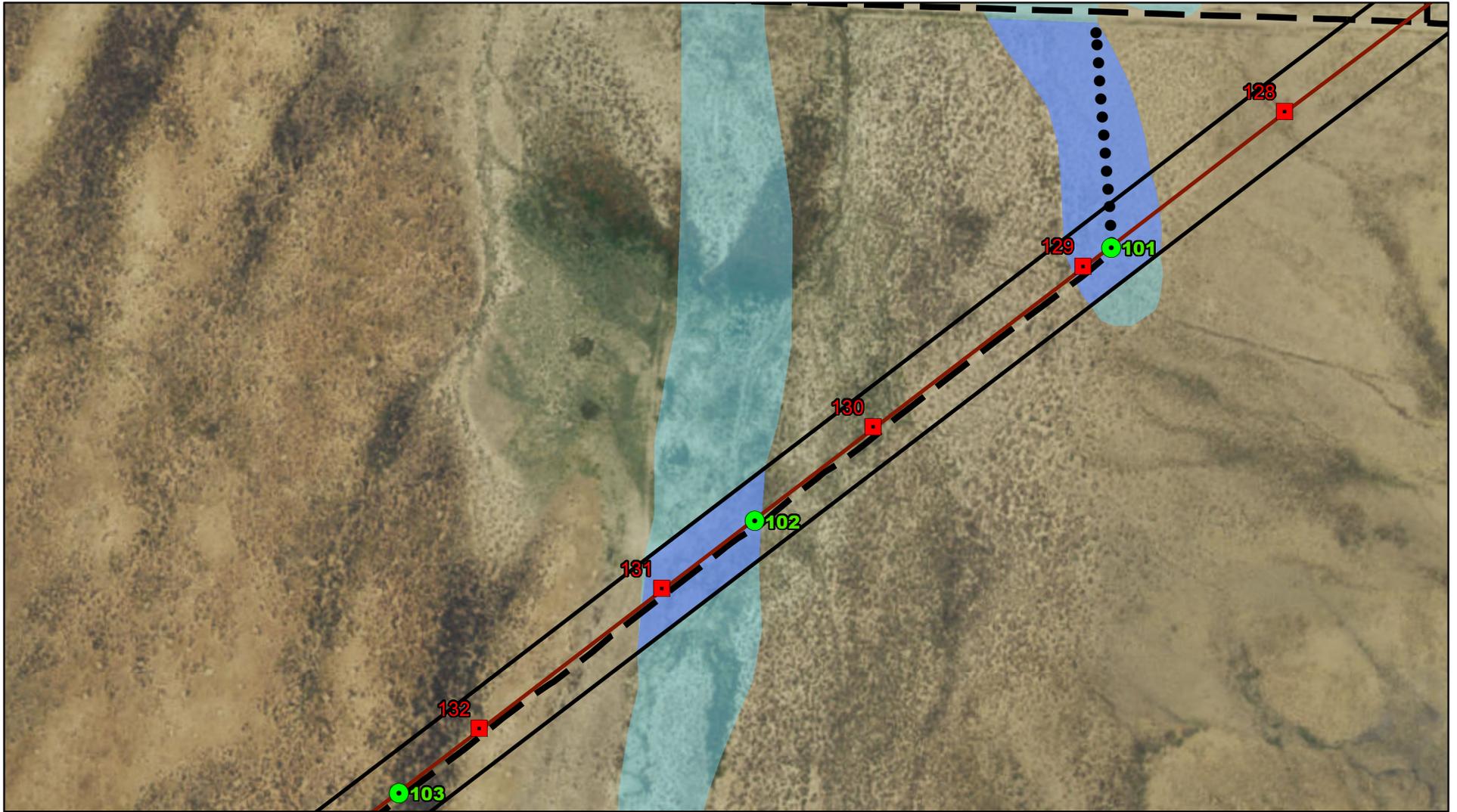
Legend

- | | |
|--|---------------------------|
| Tri-State ROW within 100-year Floodplain | Road Improvement Level 1 |
| FIRM 100-year Floodplain | Road Improvement Level 2 |
| Transmission Line | Road Improvement Level 3a |
| Transmission Line 150-ft ROW | Road Improvement Level 3b |
| Existing Structure | Construction Only |
| 230 kV Structure | No Down Line |

**Tri-State Generation & Transmission
 Montrose-Nucla-Cahone
 Transmission Improvement Project**

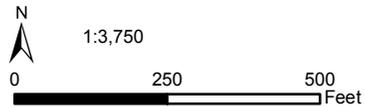
**Figure 4
 Dry Creek Floodplain**

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Basemap Source:
 ESRI composite aerial image,
 Aerial photos taken summer 2015

Map created: 10/11/2016



Legend

- Tri-State ROW within 100-year Floodplain
- FIRM 100-year Floodplain
- Transmission Line
- Transmission Line 150-ft ROW
- Existing Structure
- 230 kV Structure

Road Improvement Level

- 1
- 2
- 3a
- 3b

**Tri-State Generation & Transmission
 Montrose-Nucla-Cahone
 Transmission Improvement Project**

**Figure 5
 Dead Horse Creek Floodplain**

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Appendix 10: Visual Resource Plan and Visual Simulations

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VISUAL RESOURCES PLAN AND VISUAL SIMULATIONS

The objective of this Visual Resources Plan is to detail practices designed to address potential visual impacts from construction of the Tri-State Montrose-Nucla-Cahone Transmission Line Improvement Project (Project). Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association, Inc. (Tri-State) has developed this plan as part of the Plan of Development (POD) that accompanies its application to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) for a Right of Way (ROW) grant. If the ROW grant is approved, the final POD and all appendices will be attached to the Decision Record.

This Visual Resources Management (Plan) describes the framework for implementing protection measures for visual resources. The timetable for detailing Tri-State’s practices for protecting visual resources is as follows:

Table E-1. Timetable for Final Visual Resources Plan

Timetable	Deliverables/Task
By Preliminary Final EA (internal review step)	Final Visual Resources Protection Plan (complete), including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General concepts for structure treatment to protect visual resources (weathered steel to imitate wood, acid-etched non-reflective steel, and wood) • Final EPMs for proposed visual impact reduction
45 Days prior to Notice to Proceed	Construction Atlas Provided to BLM authorizing officer, including specific locations of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transmission line structure treatment(s) to blend with natural environment • Access roads and any necessary measures to minimize visual impacts for road alignments/realignments; • Staging area treatments or screening.

This plan focuses on the implementation of Best Management Practices (BMPs), Applicant Committed Design Features, State and BLM Guidelines, United States Forest Service (USFS) Standards and Guidelines designed to reduce visual impacts of the Project, as applicable. These measures are collectively referred to as Environmental Protection Measures (EPMs).

The focus of this plan is to minimize visual contrasts created by project construction, operation, and maintenance, and to provide an implementation strategy for EPMs. This plan is applicable project-wide and will be updated based on the selected Agency Preferred Alternative and final engineering and design of the Project. Tri-State and its Construction Contractor(s) will be responsible for carrying out the methods described in this plan. This plan is based on the existing

conditions, visual impacts, and mitigation measures identified in the EA. EPMs including all project design features and BMPs, are applicable to the design, construction, and operation of the Project. In addition to the measures and practices detailed in this Plan, implementation of several other Plans and EPMs will serve to reduce visual contrasts and impacts. Those Appendices and applicable implementation measures include:

1. Dust Control and Air Quality Plan. Control of dust will minimize visual impacts of dust plumes caused by construction traffic driving on dirt or gravel surfaces.
2. Reclamation Plan. Implementation of reclamation activities will guide rapid revegetation of areas with direct soil disturbance, and reduce the geographic extent and time frame of resulting visual contrasts.
3. Operations, Maintenance and Vegetation Management Plan. Tri-State must manage their ROW to comply with federal regulations to reduce vegetation induced outages. Vegetation management generally involves removing non-compatible (tall-growing) vegetation in the ROW. Smaller, slow growing vegetation may be left but at an appropriate density to reduce fuel loading the ROW.

The goals of this plan are to minimize visual contrasts created by the Project in compliance or conformance with agency or landowner visual management requirements by:

1. Summarizing areas of visual concern in Project affected areas;
2. Providing guidance during the design, construction, and operation of the Project to applicable parties that address visual impacts and impact-reducing measures identified during the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) process; and
3. Providing a framework methodology for the implementation of impact-reducing EPMs. The methodology includes communicating EPMs that minimize visual impacts both internally within Tri-State and to all subcontractors during the contracting process, incorporating EPMs into environmental trainings and briefings, and compliance and monitoring for EPMs that minimize visual contrasts (see *Appendix G, Environmental Monitoring and Compliance Plan*).

All project personnel working on the ROW will receive environmental training, including a briefing on the EPMs that apply to visual resources. The following EPMs apply specifically to visual resources:

Table E-2: Visual Resources Environmental Protection Measures

Topic - No.	Applicant Committed EPMs And Design Features For Construction (C), Operation, And Maintenance (O&M)	Applicable to C and/or O&M*
<i>Aesthetics/Visual Resources</i>		
A-1	Tri-State and its contractors will exercise care to preserve the natural landscape, and will conduct construction operations so as to prevent any unnecessary destruction, scarring or defacing of the natural surroundings in the vicinity of the work. Except where clearing is required for permanent work, approved temporary or permanent construction roads, staging areas or excavation operations, vegetation will be preserved and will be protected from damage by the contractor's construction operations and equipment.	C
A-2	Tri-State and its contractor(s) will minimize scarring, defacing, damage, or destruction of the natural landscape resulting from construction operations; any unnecessary or unauthorized disturbance will be repaired by the contractor to the satisfaction of the agency authorized officer.	C
A-3	All construction and future maintenance materials, waste, and debris will be removed from the project area in a timely manner. Burning or burying of waste materials on the ROW or construction sites will not be allowed. All materials resulting from the contractor's clearing operations will be removed from the ROW.	C and O&M
A-4	Structures and access roads will be located and designed to conform to the terrain and to minimize visual effects whenever possible. Specifically, visibility from Key Observation Points (KOPs) will be considered at the Dolores River crossing. (See A-6). Leveling and benching of the structure sites will be done to the minimum extent necessary to allow for construction and future maintenance operations. Existing cleared or disturbed areas will be used to the extent practicable for staging areas and other temporary use areas.	C
A-5	Tri-State and its contractor(s) will attempt to manage vegetation within the ROW in a manner that reduces the visual effect by only removing non-compatible vegetation that could pose a threat to the transmission line in the next 10 years and leaving compatible vegetation in the ROW. The first priority is to allow Tri-State to meet their federal reliability standards for vegetation management within and adjacent to the transmission ROW.	C and O&M
A-6	In order to minimize visual effects from the transmission line from a design perspective, Tri-State has committed to utilizing non-specular conductor, applying acid-etched galvanized finish or weathering finish to all steel structures including steel fence, and using gray porcelain insulators.	C
A-7	EPM VG-2 through VG-9 will minimize visual effects from project construction and operation by reclaiming areas of temporary disturbance and minimizing vegetation removal to tall woody vegetation required for the safe construction, operation, and maintenance of the transmission line.	C and O&M
A-8	The alignment of any new access roads will follow the designated area's landform contours where practical, provided that such alignment does not additionally affect resource values. This will minimize ground disturbance and reduce scarring (visual contrast).	C

Visual Simulations

Photo-simulation Key

Figure 1 illustrates where the baseline photographs of existing conditions were taken. There are four Key Observation Points (KOPs). These include:

- KOP 1: Dry Creek Basin—from Highway 141 looking northeast to transmission line on skyline
- KOP 2: Dry Creek Basin—from Highway 14 transmission line crossing of highway looking west at structure on right side of highway
- KOP 3: Dry Creek Basin—from Highway 141 transmission line crossing looking southwest at structure(s) on left side of highway going over distant hills
- KOP 4: Disappointment Valley—from County Road 19Q looking southwest at transmission line heading over distant mountain slopes

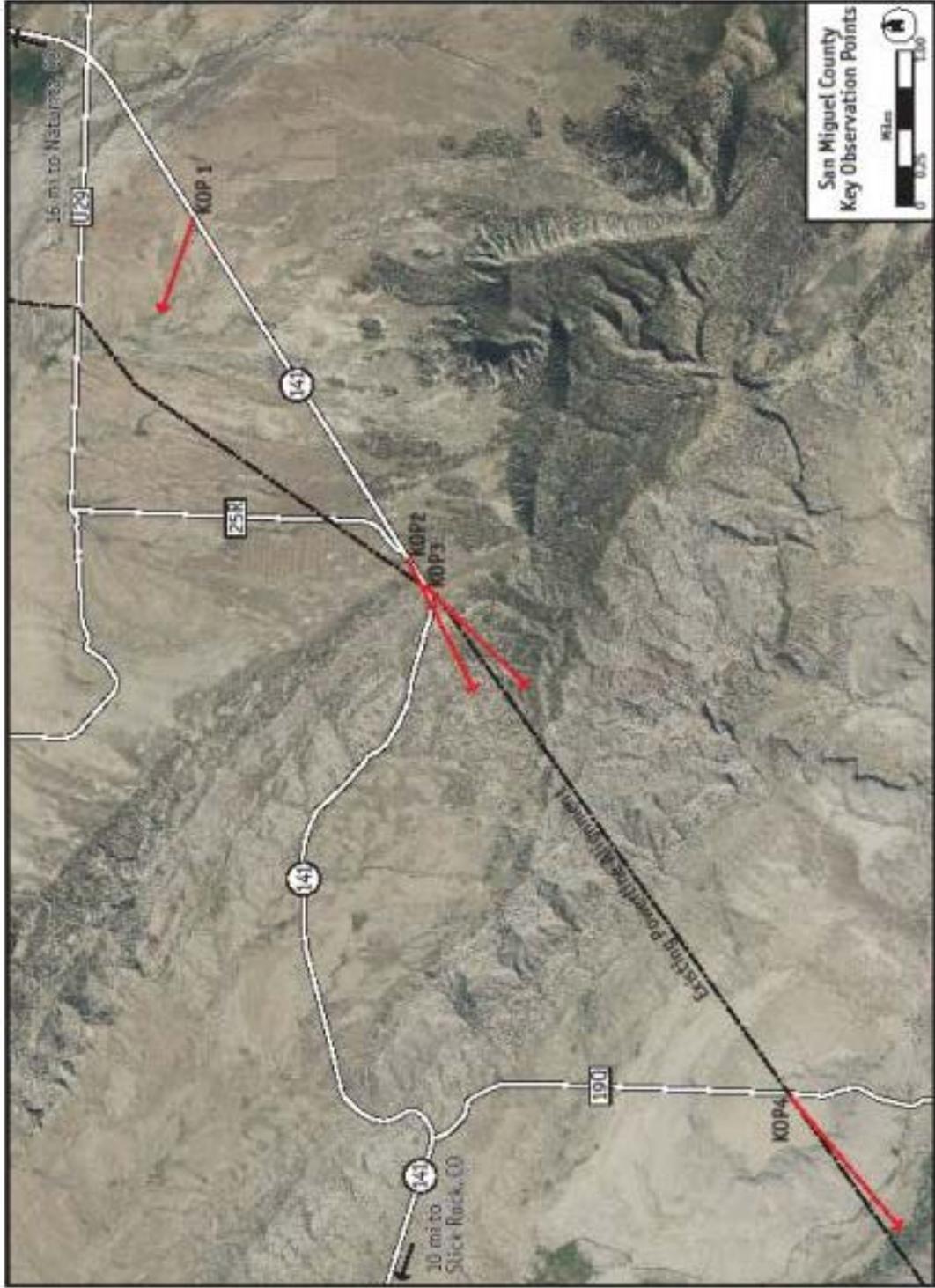


Figure 1: Key Observation Map Indicating Location and Direction of Photographs.



KOP 1: Existing Conditions, 115-kV Montrose-Nucla-Cahone line in background below mountains.



KOP 1: Photo-simulation, 230-kV Montrose-Nucla-Cahone line in background below mountains.



KOP 2: Existing Conditions 115-kV Montrose-Nucla-Cahone Crossing of Highway 141



KOP 2: Photo-simulation 230-kV C Montrose-Nucla-Cahone Crossing of Highway 141



KOP 3: Existing Conditions 115-kV Montrose-Nucla-Cahone Highway 141 Crossing looking SW



KOP 3: Photo-simulation 230-kV Montrose-Nucla-Cahone Highway 141 Crossing looking SW



KOP 4: Existing Conditions Montrose-Nucla-Cahone 115-kV County Road 19Q looking SW



KOP 4: Photo-simulation Montrose-Nucla-Cahone 230-kV County Road 19Q looking SW

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Appendix 11: Geologic Hazards (Geotechnical Report)

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KLEINFELDER TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM

TO: John Olson, PE, SE, SECB
FROM: J. Kevin White, PE
DATE: October 11, 2016
**SUBJECT: Preliminary Geologic Hazards
Nucla-Cahone Transmission Line
San Miguel County, Colorado**

This memorandum presents preliminary results of our review of the location of potential geologic hazards based on published information for the Nucla-Cahone Transmission Line within San Miguel County in Colorado. The purpose of the review is to comply with the County's Special Use Permit regarding nine specified potential geologic hazards along the alignment. The final hazard analysis, including alternative mitigation recommendations, will be completed as part of our 2017 on-site investigation. This investigation will include 24 borings labeled 2-15 through 2-38.

Nine geologic hazard maps have been compiled from two geologic quadrangle maps [1] & [2], a Digital Elevation Model file [3] & [4], Colorado's Earthquake and Fault Map [5], Swelling Soils and Rock map [6], Collapsible-Soil Susceptibility Map [7], Colorado Historic Coal Mines map [8], and Colorado Map of Potential Evaporite Dissolution and Evaporite Karst Subsidence Hazards map [9]. The published maps provide general guidance on potential geologic hazards based on regional information sources.

Figures presenting the geologic hazard information are provided in Appendix A. A short summary of each map is provided below. Table 1 summarizes the number and type of geologic hazards that potentially exist at each boring.

1. Landslide Areas

This map indicates known and mapped landslide features. No landslides were identified within study area based on the geologic quadrangle maps [1] & [2].

2. Potentially Unstable Slopes

No specific "Potentially Unstable Slope" hazard mapping is readily available other than what is provided in hazards one, three, and five in this technical memorandum. This will be evaluated during the investigation phase.

3. Slopes Greater than 30 Percent

This map created from the USGS DEM shows slopes with gradients greater than 30 percent in red and less than 30 percent in green [3] & [4].

4. Alluvial Fans

This map indicates known and mapped alluvial fan features. No alluvial fans were identified within study area based on the geologic quadrangle maps [1] & [2].

5. Talus Slopes

This map indicates known and mapped talus slope features within study area based on the geologic quadrangle maps [1] & [2].

6. Mancos Shale

This map indicates the known and mapped Mancos Shale Formation within study area based on the geologic quadrangle maps [1] & [2].

7. Faults

This map indicates known and mapped faults. The map shows faults within the study area based on geologic quadrangle maps (Mapped_Faults_(no_age_given)) and Colorado's Earthquake and Fault Map (Quaternary_Faults) [1] & [2] and [5]. It is important to note that the map used to indicate Quaternary faults does not meet U.S. National Map Accuracy Standards and is intended for general reference only. Also, there is a Colorado Earthquake Map Server with Late Cenozoic Faults provided by the Colorado Geologic Survey, however the server was not available during this office study and it should be referred to as soon as it becomes available again.

8. Expansive Soil and Rock

This map indicates known and mapped expansive soil and rock areas within the study area based on the swelling soil and rock map [6]. The published map for this hazard is broadly characterized over the state of Colorado and therefore, further subsurface investigation through drilling of the boreholes will help clarify the extent of the potential hazard.

9. Ground Subsidence

This map indicates known and mapped areas with reported or potential for subsidence within the study area based on Collapsible-Soil Susceptibility Map [7], Colorado Historic Coal Mines map [8], and Colorado Map of Potential Evaporite Dissolution and Evaporite Karst Subsidence Hazards map [9]. The following text provides a description of each feature shown on the ground subsidence map.

Surface Karst Features: Point locations of localized ground depressions, caverns, and sinkholes that have formed from the dissolution of evaporite rock

Cretaceous and Tertiary Formations: Sediments derived from these formations can have the characteristics of collapsible soils when deposited in alluvial-fan, colluvial, alluvial, and eolian depositional systems.

Eolian Deposits: Exposed evaporite rocks contain soluble minerals and are generally soft, poorly covered with vegetation, and prone to erosion.

Evaporite Bedrock: These exposed and near-surface rock units are composed of high percentages of the evaporite minerals. Evaporite rocks are soluble in water and near-surface voids and loose rubble zones can form through dissolution.

Collapse Center: Regions of Colorado underlain by evaporite where strong evidence suggesting salt tectonics, dissolution, and subsidence has caused regional ground deformations. These locations can have active karst landforms where evaporite rocks are near surface but also show evidence of regional subsidence and geologic deformation where thick deposits of evaporite rocks are buried by hundreds of feet of younger rock strata. The modern subsidence rate of regional evaporite collapse areas and the hazard of related ground movements are presently unknown. The risk of damage is also unknown, but likely very low for current or planned developments for the design life of normal residential structures. Movement over geologic time, ranging from hundreds to thousands of years, could still be significant. For the planning and construction of long-term or critical facilities, more in-depth study of the collapse regions should be considered.

Author:



Ethan Faber
Staff Professional

Reviewed by:



J. Kevin White, PE
Professional Engineer

10/11/16

Table 1: Potential Hazard Summary by Boring Location

Boring No.	Potential Total Hazards Present at Boring	Potential hazard present at this Boring? ¹								
		Landslide Areas	Potentially Unstable Slopes? ²	Slopes Greater than 30 Percent	Alluvial Fans	Talus Slopes	Mancos Shale	Faults	Expansive Soil and Rock	Ground Subsidence
2-15	2	No	NA	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes	No
2-16	1	No	NA	Nearby	No	No	No	No	Yes	No
2-17	1	No	NA	Nearby	No	No	No	No	Yes	No
2-18	3	No	NA	Nearby	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
2-19	3	No	NA	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
2-20	3	No	NA	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
2-21	3	No	NA	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
2-22	3	No	NA	Nearby	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
2-23	3	No	NA	Nearby	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
2-24	1	No	NA	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	No
2-25	1	No	NA	Nearby	No	No	No	No	Yes	No
2-26	3	No	NA	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
2-27	3	No	NA	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
2-28	1	No	NA	Nearby	No	No	Nearby	No	Yes	No
2-29	2	No	NA	Yes	No	No	No	Nearby	Yes	Nearby
2-30	3	No	NA	Nearby	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
2-31	3	No	NA	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
2-32	2	No	NA	No	No	No	Nearby	No	Yes	Yes
2-33	2	No	NA	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes	No
2-34	1	No	NA	Nearby	No	No	No	No	Yes	No
2-35	2	No	NA	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes	No
2-36	2	No	NA	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes	No
2-37	2	No	NA	Yes	No	Nearby	No	No	Yes	No
2-38	1	No	NA	Nearby	No	Nearby	No	No	Yes	Nearby

Notes: 1. Table based on a desktop review only using the cited references and is to be verified during the 2017 field investigation

2. No published mapping available, to be assessed during 2017 field investigation

References:

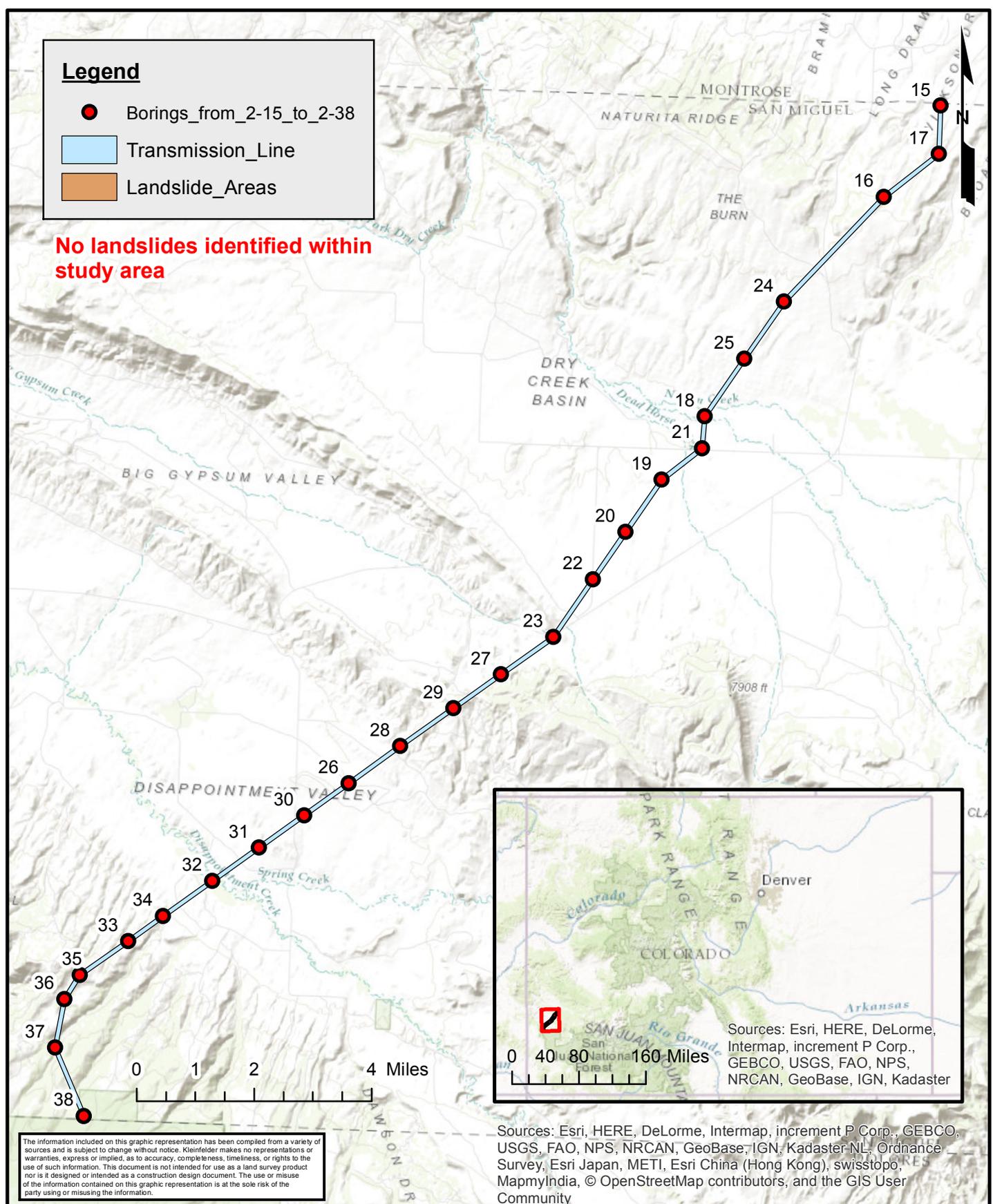
- [1] Moab Quadrangle Map I-360 (Sheet 1 or 2-Geology), 1964. Department of the Interior, USGS. n.d. Web. 29 Sept. 2016. <http://ngmdb.usgs.gov/maps/MapView/>
- [2] Cortez Quadrangle Map I-629 (Sheet 1 of 2), 1972. Department of the Interior, USGS. n.d. Web. 29 Sept. 2016. <http://ngmdb.usgs.gov/maps/MapView/>
- [3] U.S. Geological Survey, 2013, USGS NED n38w109 1/3 arc-second 2013 1 x 1 degree ArcGrid: U.S. Geological Survey: Reston, VA, <http://ned.usgs.gov/>, <http://nationalmap.gov/viewer.html>.
- [4] U.S. Geological Survey, 2013, USGS NED n39w109 1/3 arc-second 2013 1 x 1 degree ArcGrid: U.S. Geological Survey: Reston, VA, <http://ned.usgs.gov/>, <http://nationalmap.gov/viewer.html>.
- [5] Colorado Earthquake Hazard Mitigation Council, 2008, Colorado Earthquake Hazards, Colorado's Earthquake and Fault Map Showing Locations of Historical Earthquakes and Known or Suspected Geologically Young Faults
- [6] Distribution of swelling soils and bedrock (shaded areas) in Colorado, Colorado Geologic Survey. "Maps." n.d. Web. 29 Sept. 2016. <http://coloradogeologicalsurvey.org/geologic-hazards/swelling-soils/maps/>.
- [7] Colorado Geologic Survey, Collapsible-Soil Susceptibility Map Viewer, n.d. Web. 29 Sept. 2016. http://www.arcgis.com/home/webmap/viewer.html?url=https%3A%2F%2Fcgsrcimage.mines.edu%2Farcgis%2Frest%2Fservices%2Fcgsrc_services%2FCollapsible_Soils_withMeeker%2FMapServer&source=sd
- [8] Colorado Geologic Survey, Colorado Historic Coal Mines _CGS_arcview map, n.d. Web. 29 Sept. 2016. <https://cologeosurvey.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=1891e3149eda44af9dc8af81c4dc58a8>
- [9] White, J. L., 2012, "Colorado Map of Potential Evaporite Dissolution and Evaporite Karst Subsidence Hazards" Report and "Evap karst GIS data. Colorado" files. Geological Survey, Department of Natural Resources

Appendix A
Geologic Hazard Figures

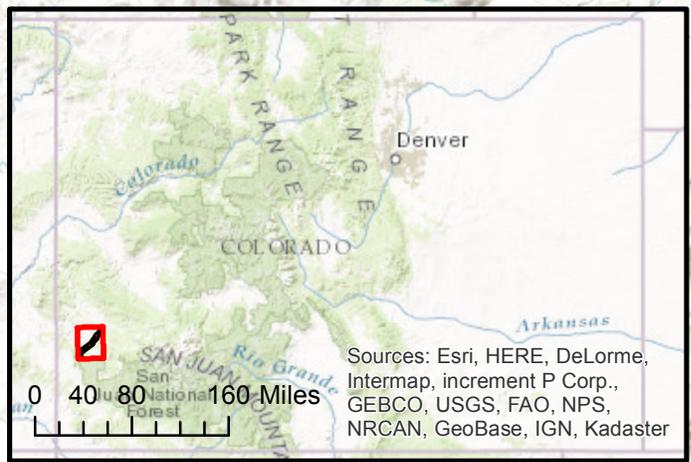
Legend

- Borings_from_2-15_to_2-38
- Transmission_Line
- Landslide_Areas

No landslides identified within study area



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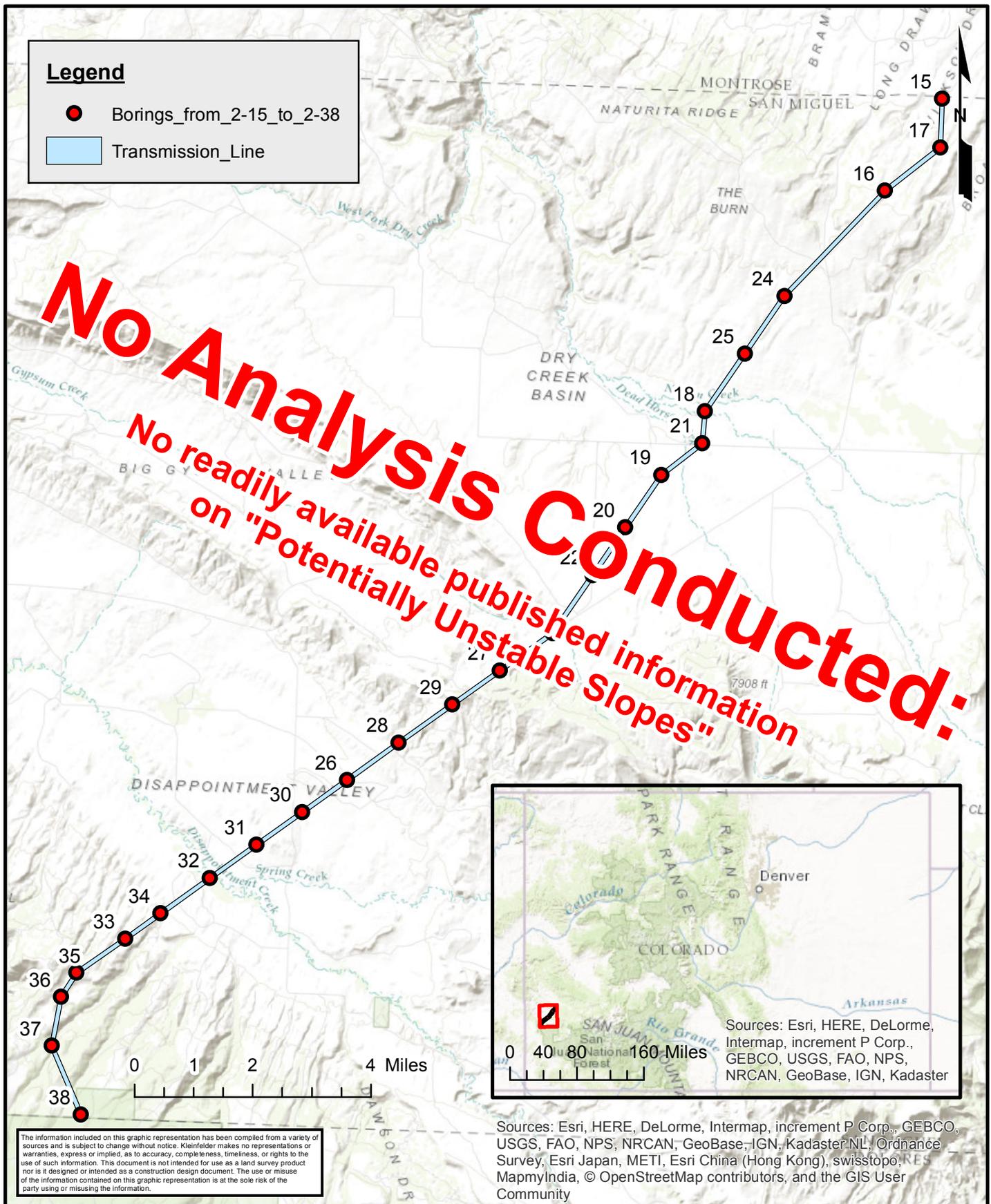
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DRAWN BY:	EJF
CHECKED BY:	XXXXX
FILE NAME:	1_Landslide_Areas

Hazard Technical Memorandum
Nucla - Cahone
Landslide Areas

Montrose-Cahone Geologic Investigation
 Tri-State Generation and Transmission
 1100 W 116th Ave,
 Westminster, CO 80234

PLATE

1

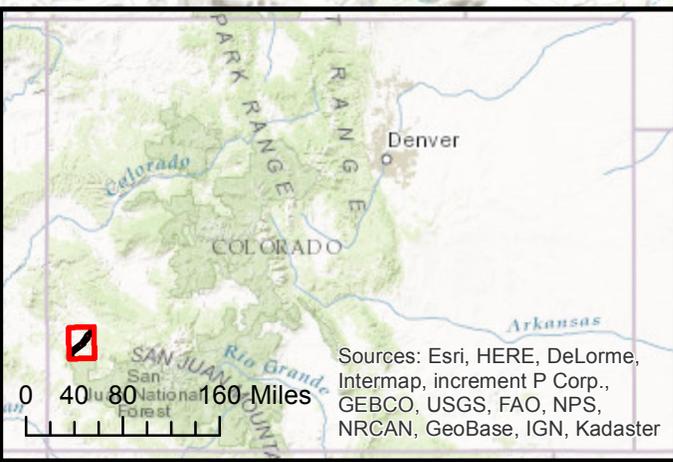


Legend

- Borings_from_2-15_to_2-38
- Transmission_Line

No Analysis Conducted:
 No readily available published information
 on "Potentially Unstable Slopes"

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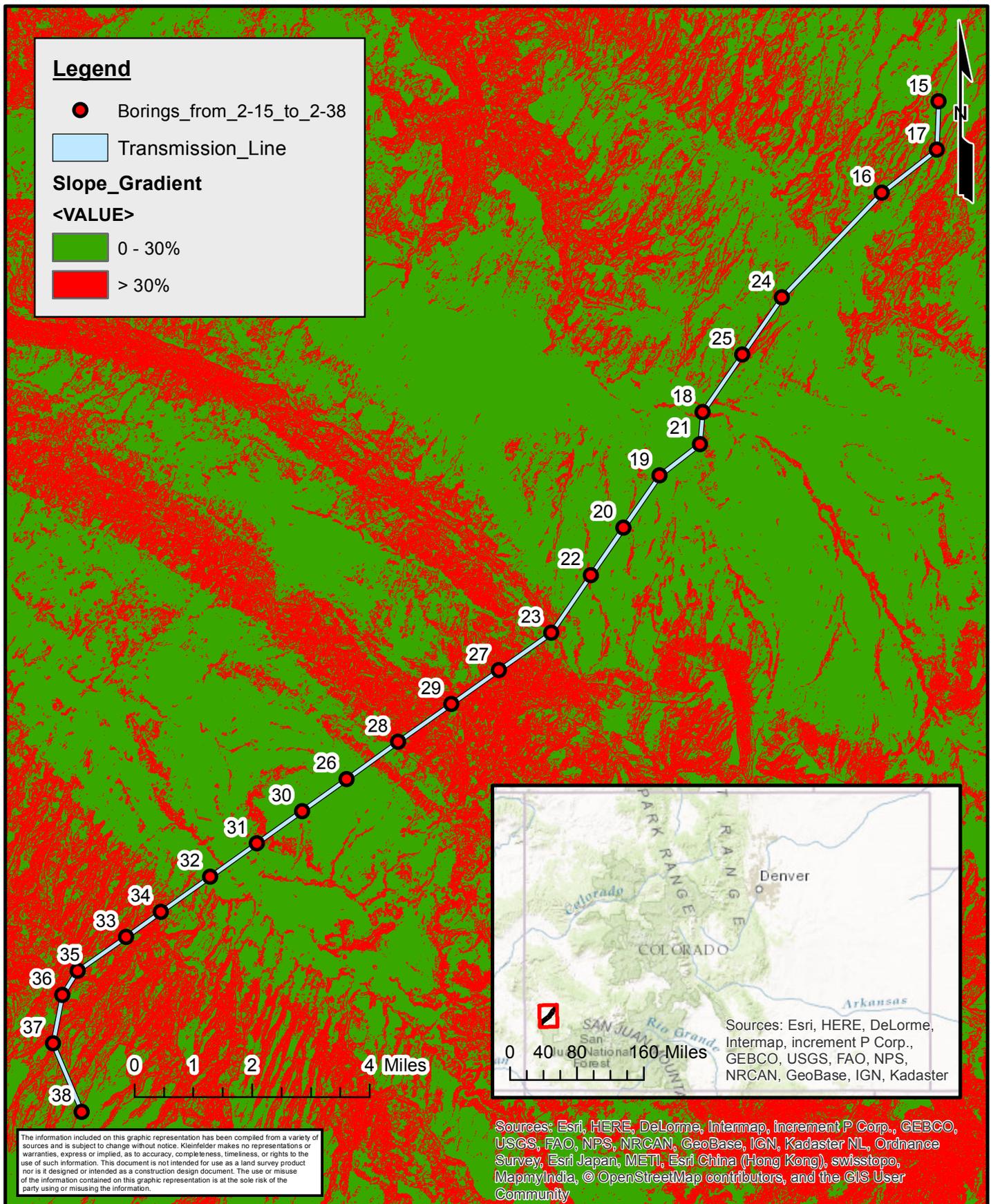
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Nucla - Cahone
Potentially Unstable Slopes

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PLATE

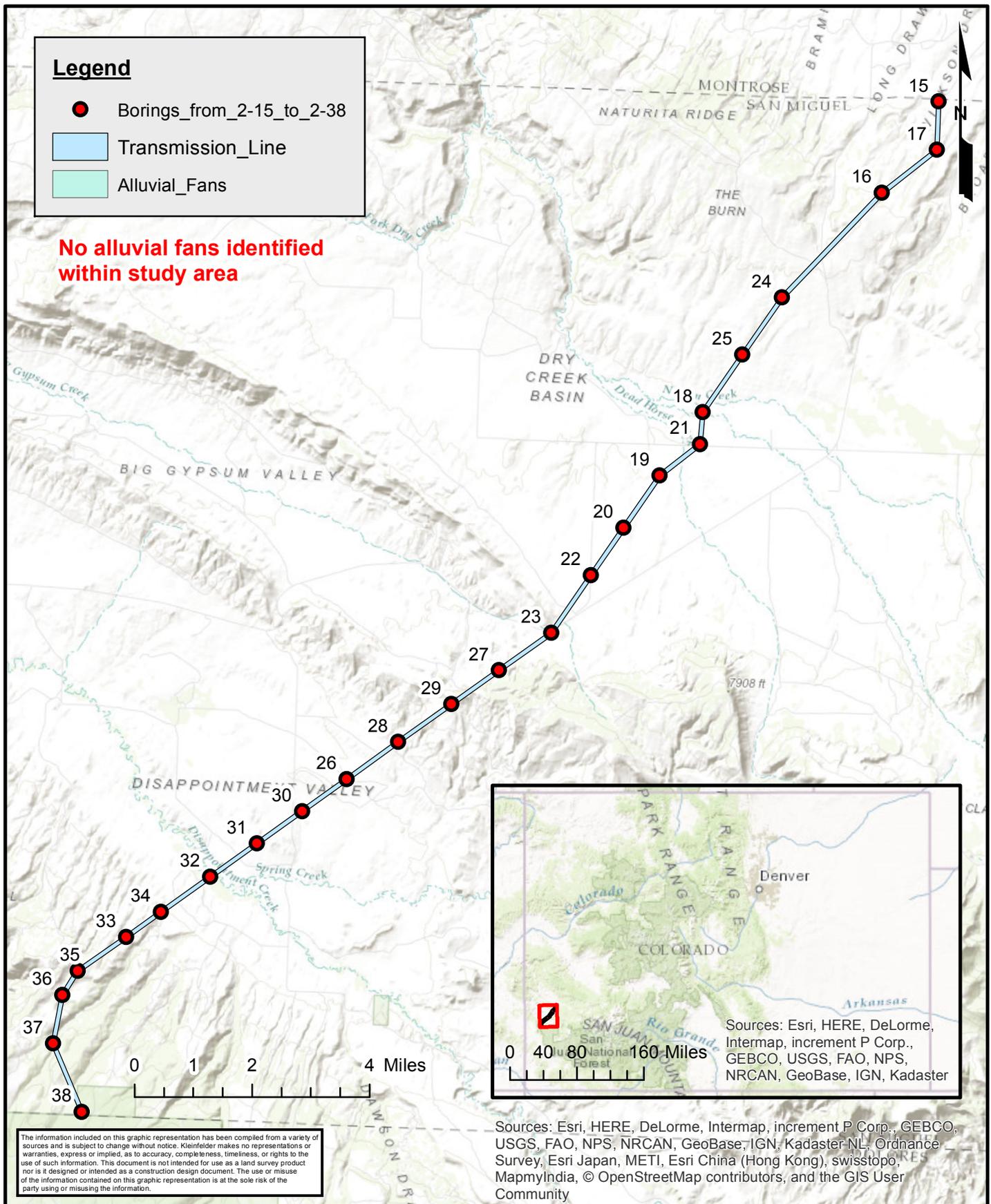
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	DRAWN BY: EJF	Montrose-Cahone Geologic Investigation Tri-State Generation and Transmission 1100 W 116th Ave, Westminster, CO 80234	
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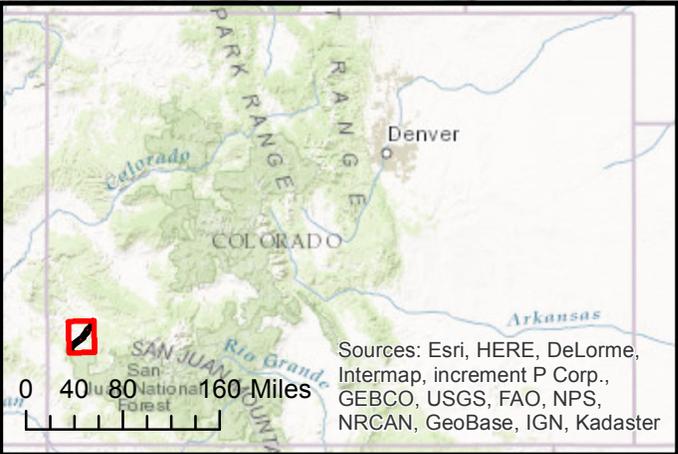


Legend

- Borings_from_2-15_to_2-38
- Transmission_Line
- Alluvial_Fans

No alluvial fans identified within study area

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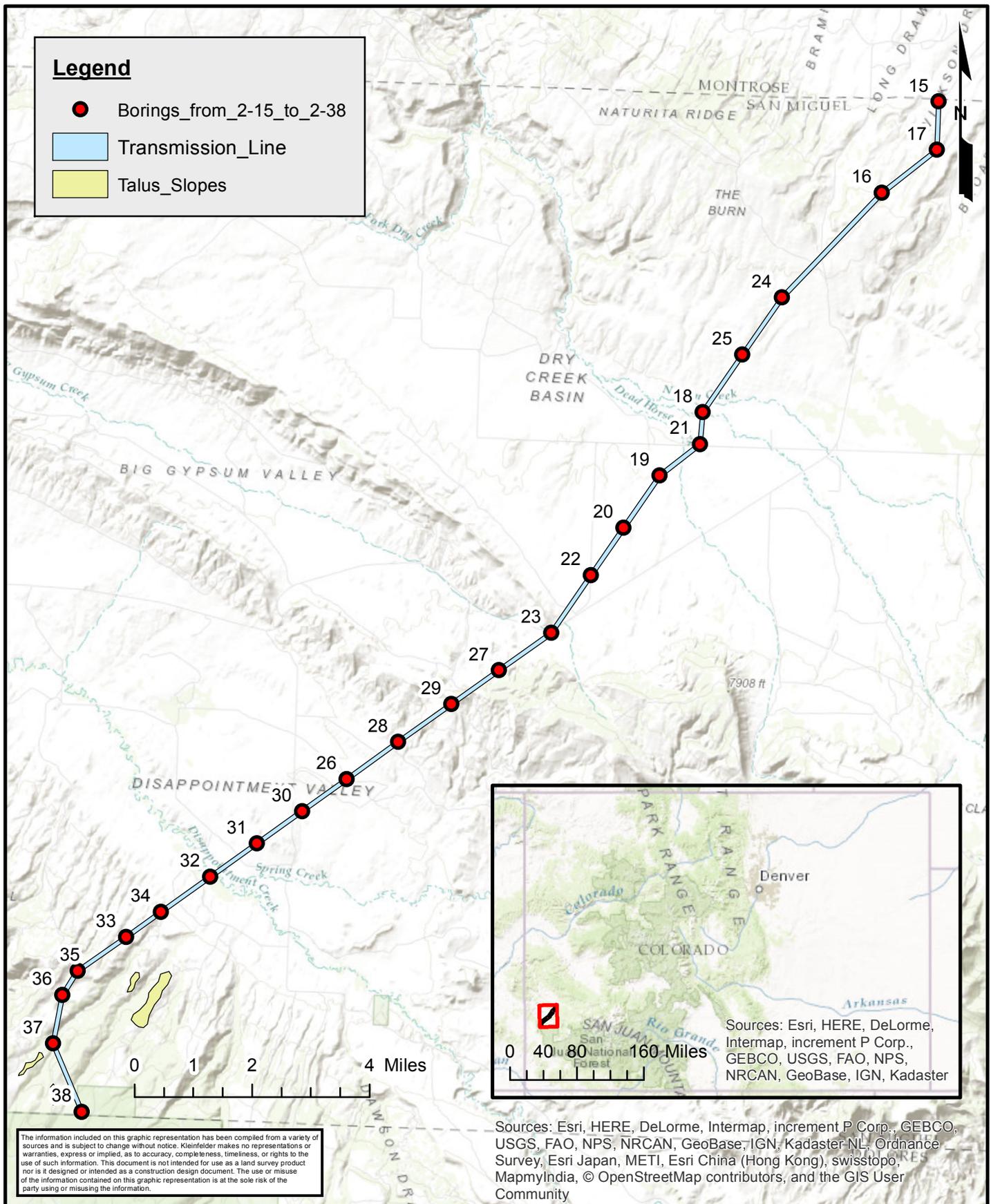
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Nucla - Cahone
Alluvial Fans

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PLATE

4



Legend

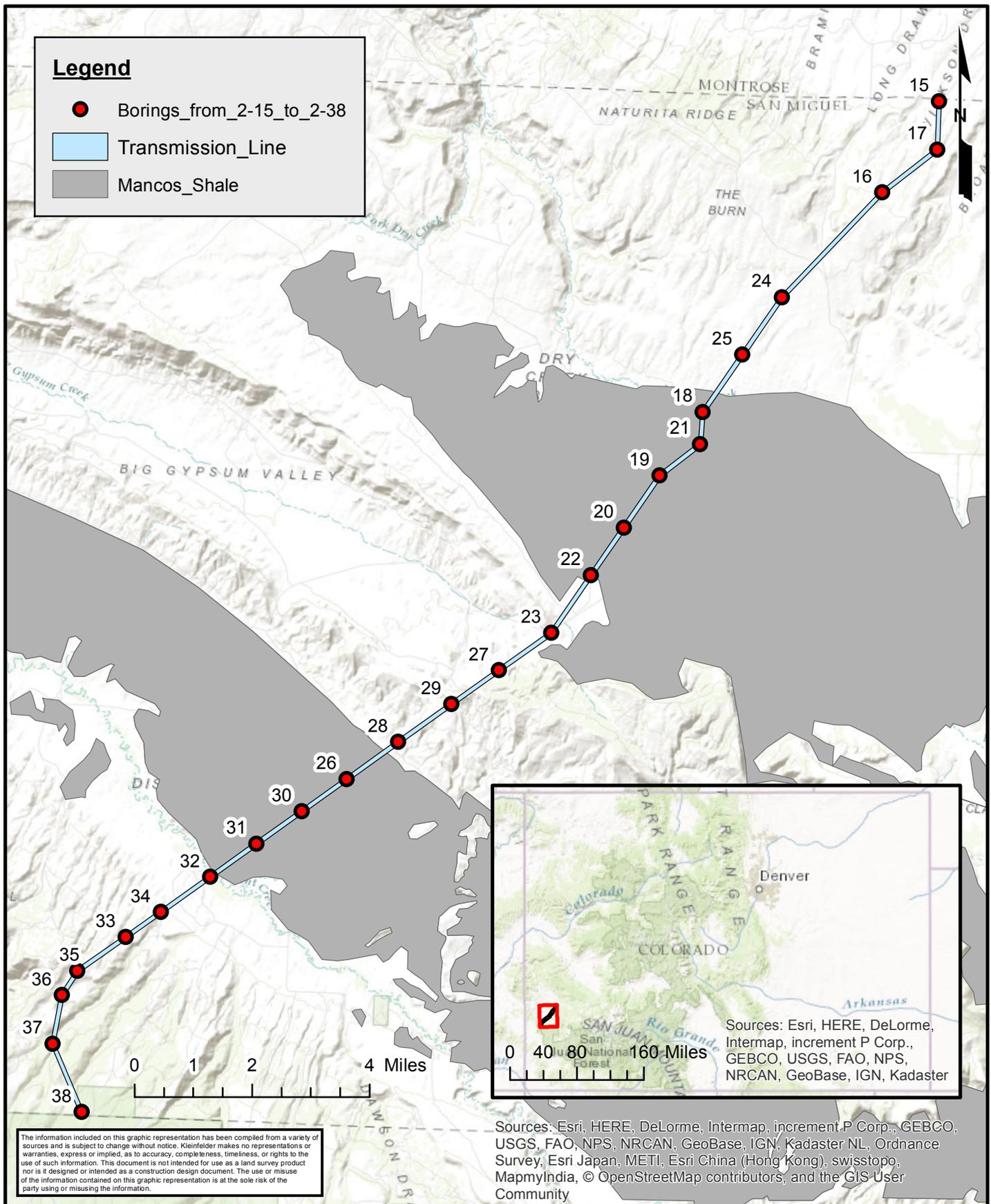
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- Transmission_Line
- Talus_Slopes

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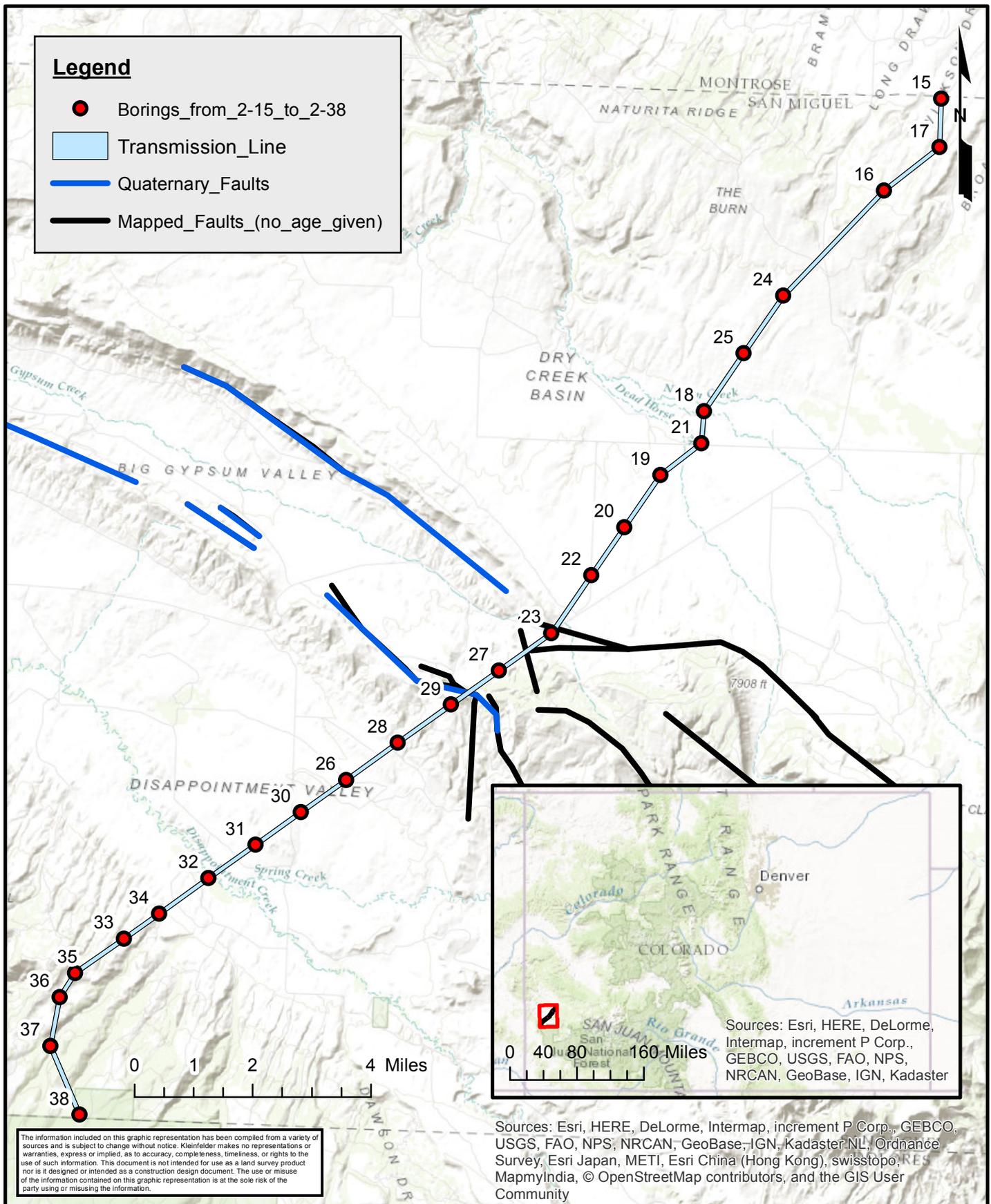


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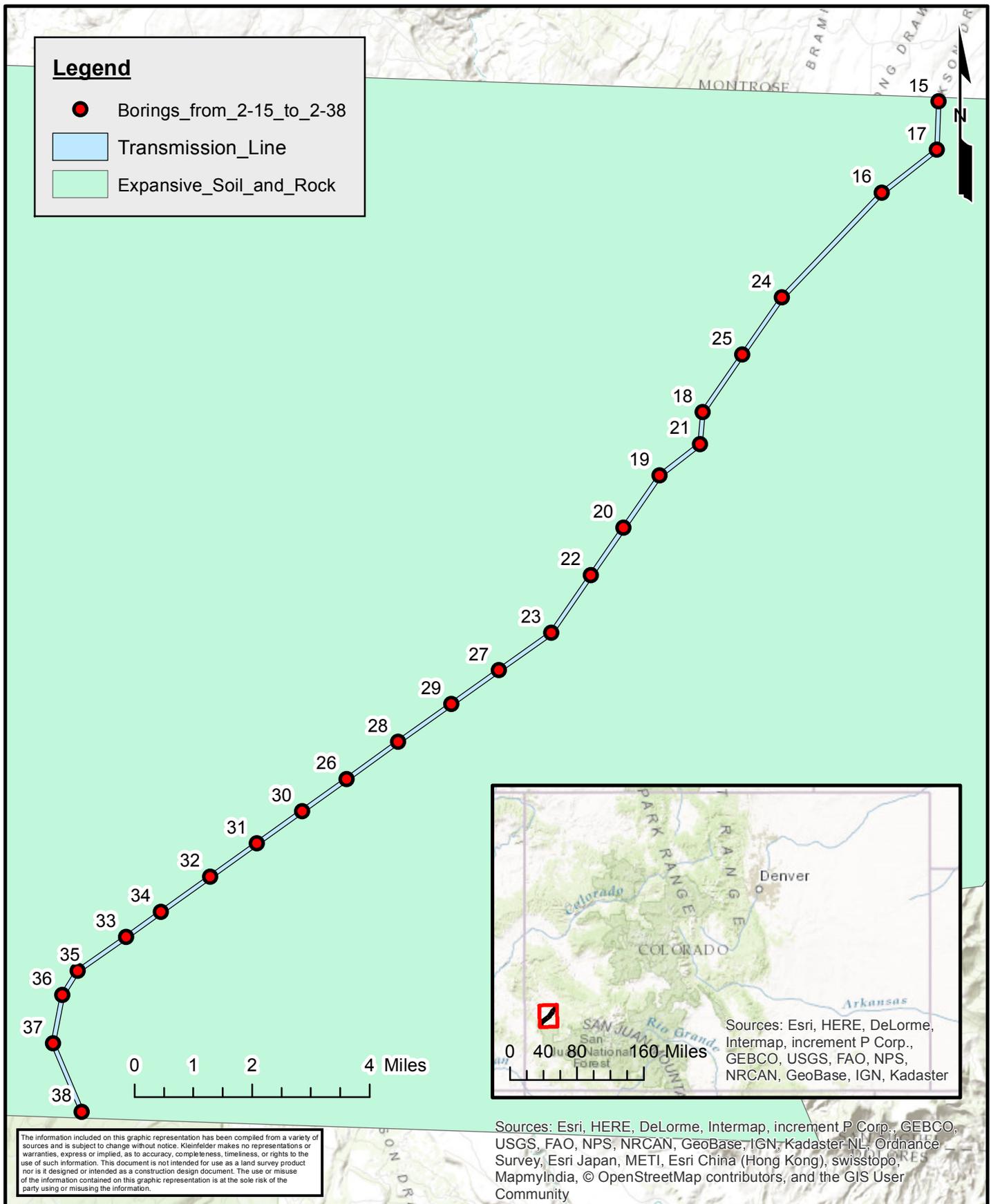
Hazard Technical Memorandum
Nucla - Cahone
Mancos Shale

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PLATE
6



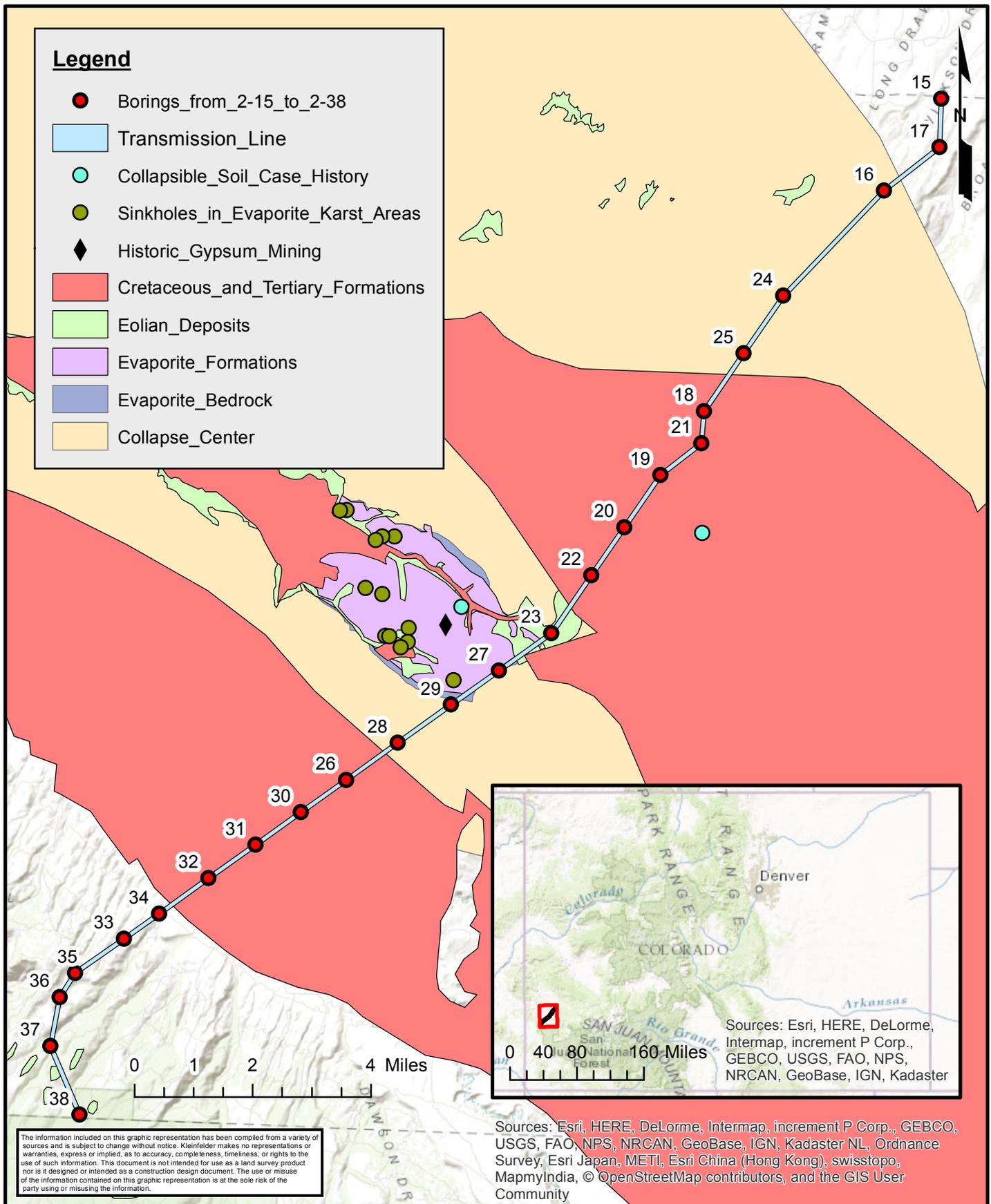
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	DRAWN BY: EJF	Montrose-Cahone Geologic Investigation Tri-State Generation and Transmission 1100 W 116th Ave, Westminster, CO 80234	
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Nucla - Cahone
Ground Subsidence
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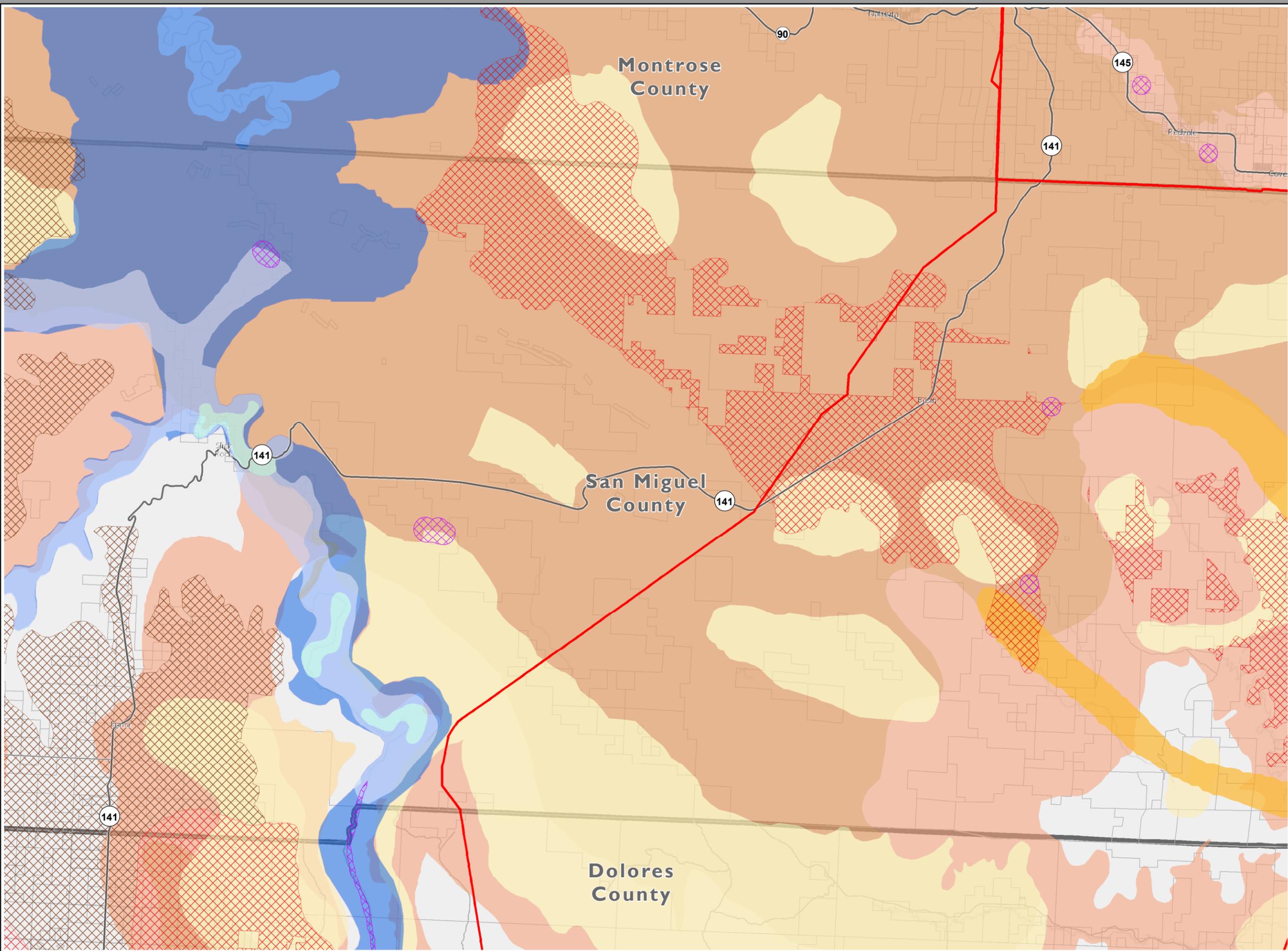
PLATE
9

Appendix 12: Wildlife Habitat Areas

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Tri-State Generation and Transmission

San Miguel County Wildlife Habitat Areas



- State Route
- Other Major Road
- Transmission Line - Tri-State
- ⊗ Bald Eagle Roost Sites
- ⊗ GSG Occupied Critical Habitat
- ⊗ GSG Unoccupied Critical Habitat
- Bighorn Production Area
- Bighorn Winter Concentration Area
- Bighorn Summer Range
- Elk Migration Corridors
- Elk Production Area
- Elk Severe Winter Range
- Elk Winter Concentration Area
- Elk Winter Range
- ▭ Parcel Boundaries
- ▭ County Boundary



0 0.75 1.5 3 Miles

Updated By: curtmi
Updated: 10/14/2016

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Appendix 13: Biological Resource Protection Plan

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BIOLOGICAL RESOURCE PROTECTION PLAN

The objective of this Biological Resource Protection Plan is to detail practices designed to address potential impacts to biological resources, particularly Gunnison sage-grouse (GuSG), during construction of the Tri-State Montrose-Nucla-Cahone Transmission Improvement Project (Project). Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association, Inc. (Tri-State) has developed this plan as part of the Plan of Development (POD) that accompanies their application to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) for a Right of Way (ROW) grant. If the ROW grant is approved, the final POD and all appendices will be attached to the Decision Record. This plan provides guidance to construction and field personnel on measures identified by Tri-State, BLM and US Forest Service (USFS) to minimize effects during construction activities associated with the Project. It will be the responsibility of Tri-State and its project contractors, working with designated environmental inspectors, to comply with measures identified in this plan.

The timetable for conservation strategy implementation is as follows:

Table B-1. Timetable for Final Biological Resource Protection Plan

Timeframe	Deliverable/Task
By Preliminary Final Environmental Assessment (internal review step)	Progress on Lek/Land acquisition in GuSG habitat <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parcel boundaries defined by June 15 Option to purchase signed by Summer 2016 with a term of 12 months. Biological Resources Protection Measures Constraints Atlas (see Appendix G)
By Finding of No Significant Impact/Decision Record (FONSI/DR) and Issuance of County Permits- January 2017	GuSG Mitigation: Tri-State will buy on behalf of, or transfer the Miramonte Parcel to Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW). Habitat improvement funds will be transferred to BLM within the same time frame.
Avian Collision Risk Assessment	Complete
45 Days Prior to Notice to Proceed	Final Detailed Biological Resource Plan
2017 (Nucla-Cahone Pre-construction phase)	Avian perch activity monitored on existing 115-kV line in Dry Creek Basin
2018 (Nucla-Cahone Construction phase)	EPMS implemented; Avian perch activity monitored on new 230-kV line to verify effectiveness of perch discouragers
2017 through life of transmission line	EPMS implemented.

Avian Protection Measures

Tri-State has a comprehensive Avian Protection Plan/Program (APP) that addresses avian management on the entire transmission system. Tri-State's APP is not a project-specific document but instead outlines how avian interactions with Tri-State facilities are managed and

reduced on a system wide level. The purpose of the APP is to proactively work toward protecting avian (i.e., bird) species by minimizing collision and electrocution hazards for birds on its existing electrical facilities and outlines the process for proactively minimizing avian impacts during the routing, construction, and maintenance of new facilities. The program also was created to ensure compliance with federal and state regulatory requirements that protect birds, nests, and related parts.

The program dictates that Tri-State will conduct an avian collision risk assessment once final alignment and engineering is complete for new projects to identify areas with moderate to high collision risk. The collision risk assessment will be completed by late fall 2016. Moderate to high risk areas will be marked with flight diverters during project construction. Tri-State’s avian program coordinator reviews engineering designs and ensures transmission line clearances are sufficient to minimize electrocution risk raptors.

For pre-construction survey requirements and specific construction buffers and seasonal restrictions for raptors known to occur in the project area, please see Environmental Protection Measures (EPMs) listed in Table B-2.

Table B-2. Biological Resources Environmental Protection Measures (EPMs)

Topic - No.	Applicant Committed EPMs And Design Features For Construction (C), Operation, And Maintenance (O&M)	Applicable to C and/or O&M*
<i>Biological Resources and Federally Listed Species</i>		
BR-1	Tri-State and its contractor(s) will also restrict construction activities and future major routine maintenance activities in elk production areas on lands administered by the USFS and BLM administered lands in lands in accordance with the respective Resource Management Plans and Land Management Plans. These timing restrictions on federal lands will be adhered to whenever feasible and a waiver will be required from the land management agency in coordination with Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) if construction needs to occur in sensitive big game habitats during sensitive time periods. Prior to the Notice to Proceed, Tri-State will update the POD atlas to identify seasonal restrictions for big game per direct guidance from the USFS, BLM, and CPW.	C and O&M

Topic - No.	Applicant Committed EPMs And Design Features For Construction (C), Operation, And Maintenance (O&M)	Applicable to C and/or O&M*
BR-2	<p>To ensure compliance with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, Tri-State and its contractor(s) will incorporate BLM, USFS, CPW, and US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) guidelines for raptor protection if construction occurs during the breeding season.</p> <p>Raptor nest surveys will be conducted prior to construction. If an active raptor nest is found within the project area, seasonal buffers and timing restrictions will be determined through coordination with the affected agency and will utilize guidance as outlined in CPW’s Recommended Buffer Zones and Seasonal Restrictions for Colorado Raptors (CPW 2008) on BLM UFO, private, State, and USFS administered lands. Separate guidance will be followed on lands in the BLM Tres-Rios Field office (TRFO). Buffers will be determined according to species, existing disturbance in the area, and line of sight. If complete avoidance of a buffer is not feasible, a qualified biological monitor could be used to observe the nest during construction activities to ensure the activity does not disturb nesting activities. The biological monitor will have the authority to halt or modify construction if an activity is likely to result in nest abandonment.</p>	C and O&M
BR-3	<p>No bald or golden eagle nests are known to occur within 0.5 mile of any portion of the project. Surveys will be conducted prior to construction to identify any active nest or roost location within 0.5 miles of the transmission ROW and associated access roads. If an active eagle nest is found prior to construction, no work will be permitted within 0.5 mile of the active nest from December 15 through July 15 unless otherwise authorized by the USFWS. Historically, bald eagle communal roosting site and winter concentration areas have been documented along the San Miguel and Dolores Rivers, Wrights Mesa, Dry Creek Basin, and Disappointment Valley. Activity will be restricted from November 15 through March 15 if an active communal roost is found within 0.5 miles the proposed project activities during pre-construction surveys unless otherwise authorized by the USFWS.</p> <p>If complete avoidance of a nest or roost buffer is not feasible, the USFWS will be contacted to approve a modified buffer or approve use of a qualified biological monitor to observe the nest during construction activities to ensure the activity does not disturb nesting activities. The biological monitor will have the authority to halt or modify construction if an activity is likely to result in nest abandonment. If USFWS determines take may occur, Tri-State will obtain an eagle take permit from the USFWS prior to construction. The same process will apply to future major maintenance activities.</p>	C and O&M
BR-4	<p>Once pre-construction surveys have been completed, the Final Construction Constraints Atlas will be updated to reflect appropriate seasonal restrictions and buffers to ensure construction activities are in compliance with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act. Seasonal avian restrictions will also apply to heavy maintenance activities as defined in the POD.</p>	C and O&M
BR-5	<p>On State owned lands, USFS, and private property, if a prairie dog colony is found within the project area prior to construction, and construction is scheduled to occur during the breeding season for burrowing owls (April 1 through September 1), surveys will be conducted using CPW’s approved protocol.</p> <p>If prairie dog colonies occur on BLM lands, burrowing owl surveys will be conducted using protocol from the TRFO BLM. If an active nesting burrow is found, it will be avoided by a buffer of 0.25 miles from March 15 through August 15 or until the young have fledged and left the nest.</p>	C and O&M

Topic - No.	Applicant Committed EPMs And Design Features For Construction (C), Operation, And Maintenance (O&M)	Applicable to C and/or O&M*
BR-6	In order to preclude avian electrocutions and minimize collision risk, Tri-State has incorporated guidelines developed by the Avian Power Line Interaction Committee (APLIC) and USFWS (APLIC 2012) to protect birds on power lines.	C
BR-7	The construction contractor will be required to avoid active burrows whenever feasible within the ROW during project construction to minimize impacts to ground dwelling species.	C
BR-8	Structure holes will be covered when work is completed each day to prevent entrapment of wildlife.	C
BR-9	Impacts to wildlife and special status species habitats will be minimized through incorporation of EPMs included under Vegetation and Water Resources.	C and O&M
BR-10	If vegetation removal occurs during the spring and summer months, Tri-State will conduct pre-construction surveys to ensure compliance with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. Tri-State will map active nests and flag and avoid any active nests identified.	C and O&M
BR-11	Tri-State and its contractors will site transmission structures and access roads to avoid BLM/USFS sensitive plant species to the greatest extent feasible. Where sensitive plants are located adjacent to the transmission structures or access roads, fencing/ropes/signs will be installed to prevent construction crews from impacting BLM/USFS sensitive plants. Management of fugitive construction dust as discussed under water resources and quality will also minimize indirect effects to sensitive plant species.	C
BR-12	Emergency maintenance activities will be permitted any time of year to ensure electric reliability and to protect the public health and safety. Examples of emergency maintenance activities include wires on the ground, structure repairs required as a result of severe weather incidents and vandalism activities. The affected agencies will be notified as soon as possible, but within 48 hours of the activities occurring and any required reclamation will be completed as soon as possible.	O&M

Gunnison Sage-Grouse Conservation Strategy for the Preferred Alternative

Tri-State recognizes the importance of conserving GuSG populations in the Dry Creek Basin and has prepared a draft GuSG conservation strategy to accompany the standard EPM's for the Project. This conservation strategy was designed by Tri-State through consultation with CPW and Tom Remington, a biologist with knowledge and experience with GuSG in the Dry Creek Basin and former Director of the then Colorado Division of Wildlife. This conservation strategy was approved by the BLM via email on April 21, 2016. The purpose of this Conservation Strategy is to minimize impacts to the GuSG and its occupied and critical habitat from construction related and long-term operational impacts of the transmission line and to provide a net conservation benefit to GuSG. This document summarizes the project design and conservation strategy for the BLM's preferred action in the Environmental Assessment. This plan was prepared through coordination with CPW and Tri-State's and Mr. Remington's review of publicly available scientific data, literature review, professional knowledge and experience of sage-grouse and the Dry Creek Basin population of GuSG.

Table B-3 outlines the Tri-State's voluntary, committed EPMS to be implemented for areas of occupied GuSG habitat (which includes critical habitat) during project construction, operation, and maintenance activities.

Table B-3. GuSG EPMS Associated with the Proposed Project

Topic - No.	Applicant Committed EPMS And Design Features For Construction (C), Operation, And Maintenance (O&M)	Applicable to C and/or O&M*
<i>Gunnison Sage-Grouse</i>		
GUSG-1	Tri-State will utilize single-pole structures to reduce perching surfaces for GuSG avian predators through Dry Creek Basin.	C
GUSG-2	Tri-State and its contractor(s) will install perch discouragers on the horizontal portions of the steel structure including the pole tops in Dry Creek Basin.	C
GUSG-3	Tri-State will utilize self-supporting steel structures in GuSG occupied habitat to reduce GuSG and other avian and wildlife collisions with guy wires.	C
GUSG-4	The project will comply with the 0.6-mile No Surface Occupancy Buffer for lek sites and there are no access roads proposed within 0.6-mile of an active lek. In addition, the project does not occur within 0.6 miles of riparian habitat or documented GuSG concentration areas.	C
GUSG-5	Tri-State's transmission line and access road construction along the existing alignment will not occur within occupied habitat from March 1 through June 30th.	C
GUSG-6	Planned heavy maintenance activities by Tri-State's and its contractor(s) including structure replacement, cross arm replacement, and replacement/re-pair of the conductor/fiber optic cable (OPGW) will not occur March 1 through June 30 in GuSG occupied habitat. Light maintenance activities such as annual inspections, hardware tightening, pole testing, and insulator replacement will be permitted year-round. However, during the lekking season, these activities will occur after 10:00 a.m.	O&M
GUSG-7	Emergency maintenance activities will be permitted any time of year to ensure electric reliability and to protect the public health and safety. Examples of emergency maintenance activities include wires on the ground and structure repairs required as a result of severe weather incidents and vandalism activities. The affected agencies will be notified within 48 hours of the activities occurring and any required reclamation will be completed as soon as possible.	O&M
GUSG-8	Maintenance and construction crews will be required to drive 35 miles per hour (mph) or less on all roads associated with GuSG occupied habitat in Dry Creek Basin (with the exception of SH 141) to minimize vehicle collisions with GuSG.	C and O&M
GUSG-9	An agency approved environmental monitor will be present at all times during construction in GuSG occupied habitat to ensure compliance with any and all environmental protection and mitigation measures identified in the Environmental Assessment (EA) and Biological Assessment (BA). The environmental monitor is given full authority to stop or modify construction activities that may be affecting GuSG and other sensitive resources.	C
GUSG-10	Construction and maintenance crews will be required to go through formal environmental training prior to the initiation of construction and maintenance activities in GuSG habitat to ensure compliance with all approved EPMS and mitigation measures for the project.	C and O&M

Topic - No.	Applicant Committed EPMs And Design Features For Construction (C), Operation, And Maintenance (O&M)	Applicable to C and/or O&M*
GUSG-11	Any areas disturbed during project construction and future maintenance activities will be reclaimed using an approved weed-free native seed mix beneficial to GuSG, as provided by the affected land management agency/landowner.	C and O&M
GUSG-12	Tri-State and its contractor(s) will treat noxious weeds infestations per NW-1 through NW-8 to minimize habitat effects impacts to GuSG.	C and O&M
GUSG-13	Tri-State will monitor and maintain the condition of the perch discouragers for the life of the transmission line. Tri-State in coordination with BLM and CPW will monitor the efficacy of the perch discouragers installed in occupied habitat for GuSG for two years. This will include one year of pre-construction monitoring to evaluate current perching activity on the existing 115-kV line.	O&M
GUSG-14	A draft GuSG design minimization and conservation strategy has been prepared by Tri-State for the existing alignment through Dry Creek Basin. This draft minimization strategy can be found in the <i>Biological Resource Plan, Appendix B</i> .	C and O&M
GUSG-15	<p>Establish and implement a fire prevention and suppression plan for construction and future heavy maintenance activities. Adhere to seasonal fire restrictions and stipulations which may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educate crews how to enforce and practice appropriate fire prevention and suppression actions and behavior. • Minimize idling during construction and routine maintenance activities. • Park vehicles in designated parking or construction areas. Avoid parking over tall, dry vegetation. • Implement use of spark arrestors. 	C and O&M
GUSG-16	Any areas disturbed during project construction and future maintenance activities will be reclaimed using an approved weed-free, native seed mix as provided by the affected land management agency/owner.	C and O&M
GUSG-17	Tri-State will design access and pad sites for structures locations in a manner that minimizes effects to the greatest extent feasible while also allowing for the safe operation of construction of maintenance and construction equipment.	C

Tri-State's Committed Engineering/Design Specific Conservation Measures

Tri-State has proposed and committed to multiple engineering and design modifications to their proposed action in order to minimize project related effects to GuSG and critical habitat. Tri-State has agreed to utilize single-pole steel structure configurations to minimize avian predator nesting and perching on structures in GUSG critical habitat. Utilizing steel structures relative to the originally proposed H-frame wood structures will reduce the frequency of routine maintenance needed on the line (excluding cases of vandalism), the frequency with which crews will need to access the ROW for major corrective actions, thereby reducing temporary disturbance to GuSG. Replacing H-Frame structures within the existing alignment with steel monopoles with perch discouragers will reduce the number of structures across GuSG critical habitat. Replacing H-frames with monopole structures along with the installation of perch

discouragers (see Figure B-1) on the pole top and davit arms will result in a beneficial effect to GuSG by reducing the amount of time ravens or other avian predators are perching on the transmission line.

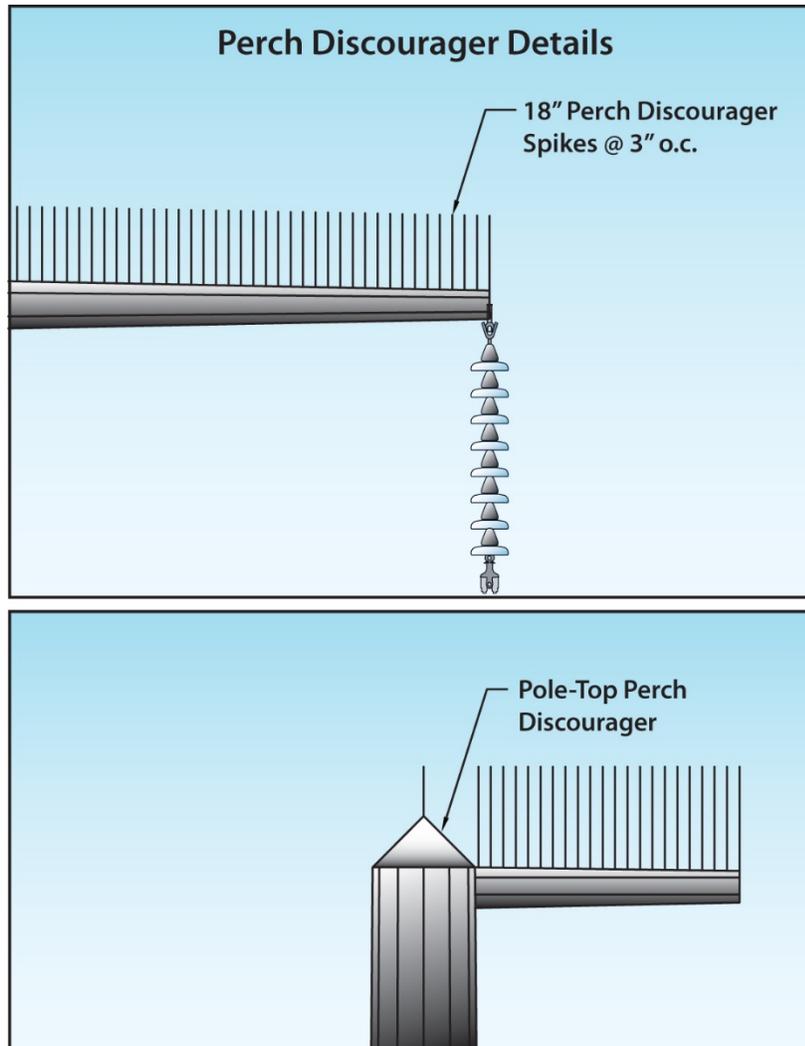


Figure B-1. Perch Discourager Detail for Dry Creek Basin

Replacing H-Frame structures within the existing alignment with steel monopoles with perch discouragers will reduce the number of structures across GuSG critical habitat from 72 to approximately 50. Replacing H-frames with fewer and single monopole structure along with the installation of perch discouragers on the pole top and davit arms will result in a beneficial effect to GuSG relative to the environmental baseline.

The proposed action will be approximately 7.6 miles in length. Tri-State has committed to changing the standard wood H-frame design to a single, self-supporting steel structure. The cost of wood pole construction on the existing alignment alternative is approximately \$3,864,600.00 (\$508,500.00/mile). The cost to change to single pole steel structures on the existing alignment is \$5,959,920.00 (\$784,200.00/mile). This results in commitment of approximately \$2,095,320 in design features to mitigate grouse impacts. Tri-State has also committed an additional \$120,000.00 (\$40,000.00 /structure) to eliminate guy wires on turning structures (also known as P.I.s) to make the poles “self-supporting”. Removing guy wires may reduce collision risk of GuSG and the overall footprint of the structure itself. The horizontal surfaces on the davit arm configuration and the pole top will be fitted with perch discouragers as shown in the attached figure. The perch discouragers will be inspected annually, and damaged or missing discouragers will be replaced as soon as maintenance can obtain a clearance on the line (required to safely conduct maintenance on an energized line). Tri-State has committed approximately \$150,000.00 towards perch discourager design, requisition, and installation.

The proposed action is expected to result in approximately 31 acres of direct disturbance to GuSG occupied habitat. This direct disturbance will occur in an existing authorized utility corridor and associated access roads, and therefore the temporary impacts will be minimized through incorporation of EPMs listed in Table B-3.

Tri-State has proposed these design elements as incorporated into the Proposed Action to minimize potential avoidance and predation effects, and result in a beneficial impact to GuSG in Dry Creek Basin. This project will replace the existing 115-kV line with a 230-kV line which will provide a direct and indirect beneficial effect to the grouse relative to existing conditions (the environmental baseline) by: reducing the number of structures currently on the landscape from 73 to 50 (reduces avoidance related effects as well as perching surfaces for corvids); installation of a structure type that minimizes perching surfaces to the greatest extent practical while maintaining safety clearances (minimizes potential corvid predation); installing perch discouragers to reduce the duration of corvids perching on structures; utilizing an existing electric ROW and an existing access road network (keeps impacts confined to an existing corridor). Tri-State believes these committed design elements mitigate the potential existing effects associated with rebuilding the transmission line in place.

Conservation Strategy for the Proposed Action

Given the extensive design elements and the total cost (approximately \$2,365,320) of Tri-State’s proposed engineering/design features, as well as committed environmental protection measures to minimize project related effects to GuSG, Tri-State is not proposing additional compensatory mitigation for the Proposed Action. However, Tri-State is volunteering the following conservation strategy to improve habitat for GuSG and to protect crucial habitat for the GuSG San Miguel Basin Population.

Tri-State's conservation strategy will result in long-term beneficial effects to the San Miguel GuSG population and habitat improvements within Dry Creek Basin. The agency biologists have been clear that the transmission line is not the primary source of direct and indirect effects to the GuSG in Dry Creek Basin. The problem is described as one of "death by many cuts" both man-made and environmental factors. In order to address long-term recovery goals, a collaborative effort between federal, state, county, and local entities and local industry is required. This proposed voluntary conservation strategy will encourage a collaborative effort to address GuSG survival in Dry Creek Basin and target those measures in a way that provides the greatest benefit to the GuSG.

Tri-State has committed to purchasing an approximately 500 acre parcel of property near Miramonte Reservoir (Dan Noble) State Wildlife Area. This 500 acre parcel will be incorporated into the State Wildlife Area and will be under the ownership and management of CPW. This parcel has been a conservation priority for CPW and San Miguel County because it contains the last remaining documented GuSG lek that is unprotected. CPW has collected extensive telemetry data on the GuSG use of this parcel and has documented the use of both lek and brood-rearing on the property. The habitat quality of this parcel is substantially greater than that found in the portion of Dry Creek Basin where the existing Montrose-Nucla-Cahone 115-kV transmission line occurs. This investment will provide a long-term net conservation benefit to the San Miguel Basin GuSG population.

In addition to purchase of the parcel, Tri-State has voluntarily committed \$100,000.00 for habitat improvement projects in the Dry Creek Basin both on and off BLM administered lands. The BLM will plan, implement, manage, and monitor the habitat improvement projects, and provide annual status and expenditure updates to Tri-State on the implemented projects and efficacy of these funded habitat improvement projects.

Habitat improvement projects that may be implemented by the BLM may include but are not limited to:

- Pinyon-Juniper Removal within critical habitat in areas with early stage (Phase I) pinyon-juniper communities.
- Water development/enhancement projects within Dry Creek Basin. These projects may include funding towards the installation of Zeedyk check dams, Zuni bowls, plug and spread methods, and channel shaping.
- Inter-seeding, mowing, or other habitat efforts within Dry Creek Basin designed to enhance understories where needed (recognizing these efforts have had limited success in the past and likely will need refinement to enhance success).
- Fence Removal or fence marking.

Table B-4 below addresses the primary threats to GuSG and the voluntary conservation measures that are being proposed to counterbalance these threats.

Table B-4. Tri-State MNC 230kV Improvement Project - Voluntary Conservation Measure Alternatives Summary for Tri-State’s Proposed Alternative (Re-build in Place) within GuSG Occupied Habitat in Dry Creek Basin

	Potential Effect	Conservation Alternative	Conservation Benefit	Description
1	Fragmentation, drought, poor habitat quality	Habitat Enhancement	Increased survival and habitat availability in Dry Creek Basin	Tri-State will contribute \$100,000.00 towards habitat improvement projects in Dry Creek Basin to be planned, implemented, managed, and monitored by the BLM. Tri-State will purchase an approximately 500 acre parcel near Miramonte Reservoir that contains a lek and brood-rearing habitat.
2	Limited Population Size and Survivability	Habitat Enhancement/Habitat Conservation	Increased Survival and Genetic Variability	Habitat improvement in Dry Creek Basin should improve population size and survivability in Dry Creek Basin. Habitat acquisition near Miramonte will preserve the last unprotected lek and associated brood-rearing habitat for the San Miguel GuSG population which will have a direct benefit to GuSG survivability.
3	Fragmentation; Direct and indirect impacts to Critical Habitat (CH)	Habitat enhancement: Weed Management	Weed monitoring and management to improve overall habitat for GuSG (above location options apply)	Tri-State will treat noxious weeds in the treatment area to prevent spread and propagation of noxious weeds which will affect the success of grass and forb restoration post- construction. Tri-State will treat noxious weeds associated with the transmission ROW for the life of the facility.
4	Human Disturbance	Re-Build the Transmission Line in an existing corridor	Reduces new habitat fragmentation	Utilize the existing transmission ROW and associated existing access road for construction and future maintenance activities. Temporary disturbance will be re-seeded using the approved BLM mix included in the Final Reclamation Plan, Appendix P.
5	Fragmentation; Direct and indirect impacts to CH	Expand State Wildlife Area-Purchase of Approximately 500 acres of land near Miramonte Reservoir with a GuSG lek that borders an existing State Wildlife Area.	Increase critical habitat protected in perpetuity	Tri-State will fund the purchase of a parcel near Miramonte Reservoir for CPW.

	Potential Effect	Conservation Alternative	Conservation Benefit	Description
6	Fragmentation; Direct and indirect impacts to CH	Land Acquisition at Miramonte Reservoir Habitat Enhancement Funding	Protection of habitat	Tri-State will fund the purchase of a parcel near Miramonte Reservoir for CPW. Reclamation of temporarily disturbed areas will occur post-construction. Perch discouragers will be installed to minimize perch duration and nesting opportunities on the new transmission line structures.
7	Fragmentation; Direct and indirect impacts to CH	Habitat Enhancement Funding	Improve forage and habitat sustainability and extent	Habitat enhancement project funding may include seeding, pinyon-juniper removal, water enhancement projects, etc. as determined by the BLM in coordination with the State and USFWS.
8	Fragmentation; Direct and indirect impacts to CH	Habitat enhancement: Water sources	Increased brood-rearing habitat which will have a direct benefit to production and chick survival	Habitat enhancement funding may be used for water enhancements in Dry Creek Basin.

Monitoring of Perch Discourager Efficacy

Tri-State has contracted EDM, International in Fort Collins to prepare a perch discourager monitoring study for the Dry Creek Basin. Tri-State will contract BIO-Logic and EDM, International to monitor current raven use of the existing structures in 2017 and conduct two years of monitoring the effectiveness of the perch discouragers on the modified davit arm structure in Dry Creek Basin. The USFWS, BLM, and CPW will be provided the proposed study design for review and comment prior to any monitoring activities being initiated. Annual reports will be provided to the BLM, CPW, USFWS, and San Miguel County on monitoring results. The draft monitoring proposal will be submitted to CPW, USFWS, and BLM by December of 2016. It is assumed that the final plan is not needed prior to the FONSI as Tri-State has been told research does not apply towards conservation efforts. This study is being voluntarily offered to collect further information on the efficacy of perch discouragers on a modified davit arm structure type. The monitoring results will only be used to document raven response to the discouragers, not to quantify raven populations in Dry Creek Basin or to make assumptions regarding the potential effects of raven predation on GuSG in Dry Creek Basin.

References

Avian Power Line Protection Committee. (2012). Reducing Avian Collisions with Power Lines, The State of the Art in 2102. *Edison Electric Institute and Avian Power Line Protection Committee*.

Colorado Parks and Wildlife. (2008). *Recommended buffer zones and seasonal restrictions for Colorado Raptors*. Denver: Colorado Parks and Wildlife.

Federal Register. (2001, January 10). Migratory Bird Executive Order 13186.

Appendix 14: Fire Plan

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FIRE PLAN

The objective of this Fire Plan is to detail practices designed to address potential impacts from construction of the Tri-State Montrose-Nucla-Cahone Transmission Line Improvement Project (Project). Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association, Inc. (Tri-State) has developed this plan as part of the Plan of Development (POD) that accompanies its application to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) for a Right of Way (ROW) grant. If the ROW grant is approved, the final POD and all appendices will be attached to the Decision Record. This plan provides guidance to construction and field personnel on measures identified by Tri-State, BLM, and US Forest Service (USFS) to minimize effects during construction activities associated with the Project. It will be the responsibility of Tri-State and its project contractors, working with designated environmental inspectors, to comply with measures identified in this plan.

This fire plan is generally accepted on all federal units within the State of Colorado. As the fire season progresses, each BLM or USFS office may impose closures for fire prevention reasons. Tri-State operations are subject to Stage I and Stage II fire restrictions on federal lands, as described in the items below. Under Colorado law the San Miguel County Sheriff's Office is responsible for responding to wildfires located on private property located outside a fire protection district, including portions of the proposed 230-kV line in Dry Creek Basin.

Tri-State and all contractors are advised to stay in touch with local fire dispatch offices to be of service and for personal safety. The attached map shows fire dispatch centers and phone numbers.

Fire Prevention and Suppression Requirements for Operations on Bureau of Land Management and National Forest Lands

1. Tri-State (hereafter referred to as the operator) will require its employees, contractors and employees of contractors to do everything reasonable within their power, expertise, and assessment of human safety both independently and upon request of the BLM and USFS to prevent and suppress fires resulting from transmission construction or maintenance activities on or near the lands to be occupied under this permit. In case of fire suppressed by the operator, the operator will report its occurrence to the appropriate Interagency Dispatch Center immediately (see attached map). The operator is responsible for all suppression costs and resource damage for any fire resulting from its operations and practices.
2. The operator is responsible to ensure that each employee, subcontractor, or any other individual or company working on the project site is aware of the provisions of this fire plan, is familiar with the location and proper use of firefighting equipment, and conducts themselves in a fire-safe manner.
3. No material will be disposed of by burning in open fires without a written permit from the BLM or USFS.

4. Exhaust systems of vehicles will have an acceptable muffler and will be in proper working condition. All motorized equipment and machinery will be equipped with spark arresters.
5. Vehicles will be parked only in cleared areas.
6. All smoking will be done only inside of vehicles or in areas cleared of flammable material and consistent with precautionary measures listed below in Item 9.
7. Fuels and flammable materials may not be stored on BLM or National Forest System lands. They may be located in approved containers in a truck. For example, an approved diesel tank in the back of a truck, or dolmar with chainsaw fuel. No fuel or flammable substance will be stored in any glass container.
8. A separate fire cache of tools will be required and maintained at the site of all operations. Tools must be kept sharp and handles smooth, ready for immediate use. Fire tools will not be used on the job for other purposes. When Stage I restrictions are implemented, a 300-gallon water package will be required at the site of all operations (see also item 14). When no restrictions are in place, the cache will contain at a minimum:
 - One shovel per person;
 - One water filled 4 or 5 gallon backpack pump (“Indian” or equivalent); and
 - One axe or Pulaski.
9. Type ABC rated fire extinguishers are required and will be available during all operations at the following capacities:
 - One 2 pound per pick up;
 - One 5 pound for trucks over 1 ton Gross Vehicle Weight; and
 - One 10 pound per dozer, motor patrol, scraper or other earthmoving equipment.
10. During the period of April 1st thru November 30th, a fire watch person (lookout) is required at the site of all welding, blasting, propane torch use, fueling, tractor or other mechanized equipment operation, etc. unless specifically excepted in item 15. This person will have no other duty than to watch for fire starts, have all required items of the fire cache immediately available, and be ready to take fire suppression actions. The fire watch person will remain on site observing for smoke or fire for a minimum of 30 minutes after cessation of the operations that required them. The fire watch person will be in good physical condition and able to fight fires.
11. Welding is herein used to mean electric arc welding; arc or gas cutting or heating; gas welding; grinding of metal; use of any flammable gas, carbon or hydrocarbon fuel for heating or forging metal.
12. Welding operations are subject to the following additional provisions:
 - There will be no welding when winds are over 15 miles per hour; and
 - Welding will occur only in areas cleared of all flammable vegetation and materials at a minimum radius of 30 feet from the welding operation.

13. Blasting: Use of explosives is authorized, but is subject to the following additional provisions:
- Operator must have a valid, current Explosives Permit from the State of Colorado;
 - Overnight storage of explosives is not authorized on BLM or USFS land;
 - There will be no blasting when winds over 15 mph occur; and
 - Adequate safety lookouts and traffic control will be provided to insure public safety during all blasting operations.
14. In addition, when Stage I restrictions are implemented all fire caches including in areas of welding, blasting and torch use operations, the fire watch and crew must have immediately available to them a water tank of not less than 300 gallon capacity with a pump capable of pumping 20 gallons per minute at 100 pound-force per square inch and not less than 100 feet of hose.
15. Additional Stage I and Stage II prohibited acts will also apply when enacted. Details and updates of restrictions, areas, and additional prohibited acts can be acquired by calling the respective Dispatch office or by going to the following websites:
- [Colorado Emergency Management: Fire Bans & Danger](#)
 - [Montrose Interagency Dispatch Center \(MTC\) - Fire Restrictions](#)
 - [Durango Interagency Dispatch Center \(DRC\)-Fire Restrictions](#)
16. Operations may be suspended if inspection by a BLM or USFS representative reveals non-compliance with the provisions of these fire prevention and suppression requirements

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Appendix 15: Decision Notice and Finding of No Significant Impact

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**Tri-State Montrose-Nucla-Cahone Transmission Line
Improvement Project
Decision Notice and Finding of No Significant Impact
U.S. Forest Service
Norwood, Ouray, and Dolores Ranger Districts
Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre, and Gunnison National Forests and San Juan
National Forest
Dolores, San Miguel, Montrose, and Ouray Counties, Colorado**

INTRODUCTION

Tri-State Transmission and Generation, Inc. (Tri-State) has submitted applications to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the United States Forest Service (USFS), for right-of-way (ROW) grant amendments to the existing Bureau of Land Management (BLM) ROW grants for a 115-kilovolt (kV) transmission line (COC-66840) and a fiber optic cable for 911 and internet services (COC-63427), and for a new special use authorization (SUA) from the United States Forest Service (USFS). In the application, Tri-State proposed to improve the existing 115 kilovolt Montrose-Nucla-Cahone (MNC) Transmission Line to a 230-kV transmission line, and to operate and maintain the new 230-kV transmission line and a fiber optic cable.

The existing 115-kV system extends approximately 80 miles from the Montrose substation west of Montrose, Colorado, to the Nucla substation at the Nucla Power Plant, to the Cahone substation near Dove Creek, Colorado. The existing line crosses 35.7 miles of BLM-managed land (19.1 miles on Uncompahgre Field Office managed lands and 16.6 miles on Tres Rios Field Office managed lands) and 22.1 miles of National Forest System (NFS) lands (14.5 miles on Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre, and Gunnison National Forests and 7.6 miles on San Juan National Forest), with the balance (22.6 miles) on state and private land. The Proposed Action includes the following components:

- A 230-kV transmission line from the existing Montrose substation, to a new substation (named Maverick) on private land near the existing Nucla-230-kV substation.
- A 230-kV transmission line from the Maverick substation to the Cahone substation.
- Upgrades to the Montrose and Cahone substations, both located on Tri-State property.
- A short deviation from the route to avoid canyon walls near the Cahone substation.
- Removal of the existing 115-kV structures and line following construction of the 230-kV line.
- Installation of the fiber optic cable.

- Use of 251 miles of road (including existing authorized, maintained access roads and other roads such as county roads and about 2.6 miles of new access road) crossing public, NFS, state, county, and private lands. About 71 of these miles are down-line access roads located under the existing 115-kV line.
- Tri-State will use the existing 115-kV 100-foot ROW for the upgrade to the greatest extent possible. The new 230-kV transmission line would require an additional 50 feet of ROW for a total ROW corridor width of 150 feet.

The BLM is the lead federal agency and prepared an environmental analysis (EA) with the following cooperating agencies: USFS; Colorado Energy Office; and Montrose, San Miguel and Dolores Counties.

PURPOSE AND NEED

The USFS's purpose is to respond to Tri-State's application in a timely manner, in accordance with the Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre, and Gunnison National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (1991) and the San Juan National Forest Land Management Plan (2013), and to identify any permit conditions necessary for resource protection and public safety. The agency's purpose is in accordance with the following laws, Memorandum(s) of Understanding (MOU), and Executive Orders (EO):

- Title V of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) of 1976, as amended (43 United States Code [U.S.C.] 1761), gives authority to both agencies to grant, amend, or renew authorizations for ROWs for electrical transmission lines.
- Westwide Energy Corridor MOU, dated October 2009 and created under authority of the Energy Policy Act of 2005, requires federal agencies including the Department of Energy, Department of Agriculture, and Department of Interior, among others, to coordinate efforts in the siting and permitting process of electric transmission facilities on federal land.
- Section Two of EO 13212 requires agencies to expedite their review of energy-related permits or take other actions as necessary to accelerate the completion of such projects, while maintaining safety, public health, and environmental protections. Agencies shall take such action to the extent permitted by law and regulation, and where appropriate.

The USFS is responding to a request for a new SUA, which is a legal document (e.g., a permit). An SUA allows occupancy, use, rights, or privileges on NFS lands for a specific use of land for a specific period of time. The USFS has primary responsibility to issue SUAs on NFS lands under the FLPMA.

DECISION

The *Tri-State Montrose-Nucla-Cahone Transmission Line Improvement Project Environmental Assessment (EA)* (DOI-BLM-CO-S000-2013-0001) documents the environmental analysis and conclusions upon which this decision is based.

Based upon my review of the EA and project file, as the Forest Service Supervisor for the Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre, and Gunnison National Forests and with authority delegated by the San Juan National Forest Supervisor, I have approved Alternative A, Tri-State's Proposed Action as detailed in the EA and the Plan of Development (POD). This action will allow Tri-State to address aging infrastructure and system deficiencies as discussed in Section 1.2 of the EA. My decision, in accord with the EA analysis:

- Requires the inclusion of all practical measures (project design features and applicable agency enforced Conditions of Approval) to avoid, minimize, or offset project-related effects in order to conserve and protect resources in the interest of the public specific to NFS lands as identified in Appendix D and associated appendices of the EA.
- Does not authorize the initiation of surface disturbing activities on BLM or NFS lands. Initiation of ground disturbance activities may commence only upon issuance of a Notice to Proceed (NTP) by the BLM and the USFS.
- Approves issuance of SUA, authorizing pre-construction testing, construction, operation and maintenance of the line on NFS lands.

DECISION RATIONALE

Approval of the Proposed Action is consistent with the purpose and need described above. I have considered the needs of State and local residents and their economies, maintained multiple-use values and implemented Forest Plan direction while accommodating the request for a SUA. Below is a summary of the primary resource concerns analyzed in the EA and which informed my decision.

Access, Roads, and Transportation

Overall effects to access, roads, and transportation are expected to be negligible to low from the short-term use of existing public access roads and 2.6 miles of new access roads during construction and maintenance. Construction activities would result in a short-term increase in traffic; total construction duration would be between 2 and 3 years with about 12 months for each section. Because the majority of the project area is located in rural areas with low traffic volumes, effects to public traffic are expected to be negligible. Future maintenance of the road system supporting the 230-kV line would be similar to ongoing maintenance on the 115-kV line. The new Dolores River Canyon crossing would require construction of about 1.4 miles of new access roads on San Juan National Forest and BLM land. A total of about 3.6 miles of existing

access roads and 0.5 mile of new temporary road would be decommissioned and reclaimed for the new Dolores River Canyon crossing. A total of 2.6 miles of new access roads and 5.2 miles of reclaimed access road are anticipated for Tri-State's Proposed Action.

Areas of Critical Environmental Concern

The BLM has one designated and four nominated Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) within the project area. The nominated ACECs are: the Dry Creek Basin Nominated ACEC, the Gypsum Valley Nominated ACEC, the Spring Creek Nominated ACEC, and the Snaggletooth Nominated ACEC. Effects to these nominated ACECs would be negligible; the relevance and importance criteria of the 4 nominated ACECs would not be impacted as a result of the proposed action.

Cultural Resources

The BLM, USFS, the Colorado State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), and Tri-State will enter into a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) regarding treatment of cultural resources within the project area in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). Concurrence from SHPO will be obtained prior to the Notice to Proceed (NTP).

Forest Resources (High-Return Forest Activities/Timber Resources):

The Proposed Action would result in the clearing of 48 acres of land on the Grand Mesa Uncompahgre Gunnison National Forest (GMUG) and 43 acres of land on the San Juan National Forest suitable for timber harvest. In addition, Tri-State is authorized to disturb up to a maximum 79 acres of suitable timber along existing access roads within the ROW, although this disturbance is not anticipated for the project. Tri-State will be responsible for paying for merchantable timber removed.

Lands with Wilderness Characteristics

The existing conductor spans the BLM-managed Snaggletooth Unit of lands with wilderness characteristics where the existing line crosses the Dolores River canyon. The Snaggletooth Unit takes into account the existing transmission line corridor. There would be low, long-term beneficial effects due to moving structures away from the river corridor and reducing the ROW width to less than 100 feet over the Dolores River Canyon. There would be about 0.02 acres of temporary effects to lands inventoried (but not managed) for wilderness characteristics.

Threatened, Endangered, or Candidate Animal Species

The existing line crosses occupied and designated critical habitat for the Gunnison sage-grouse (GuSG) in the Dry Creek Basin. The federal land crossed is managed by the BLM's Tres Rios Field Office. As disclosed in Section 4.3.6 and 5.3.5 long term-minor beneficial effects to GuSG

are expected; the design features and voluntary conservation strategy included in the Proposed Action would further benefit GuSG and contribute to the recovery of the species. A Biological Assessment (BA) concluded the selected action may affect, is likely to adversely affect GuSG and designated GuSG critical habitat. The BA also concluded the Proposed Action would have no effects to the Mexican spotted owl and may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect Canada lynx, both of which have the potential to occur in the project area. Section 7 Endangered Species Act (ESA) Consultation is ongoing. Signing of decisions and issuance of authorizations is contingent on U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service concurrence with this conclusion.

Visual Resource

Long-term and short-term effects to visual resources would be low to moderate. Low to high long-term increased visibility at the Dolores River Crossing is expected, but due to site-specific context (e.g., frequency of visitor use and the presence of the existing transmission line as an expected frame-of-reference in the landscape); the overall effects are expected to be low. The north crossing structure at this crossing would require changing the Scenic Integrity Objective within a 0.25-mile radius from “moderate” to “low”, in an area where the landscape character can be moderately altered. Project-wide, no BLM or USFS visual resource management classification would need to be adjusted.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

The agencies have engaged the public at multiple stages throughout the drafting of the EA. The proposed action was listed in the Schedule of Proposed Actions (SOPA) from April, 2014 to the present¹.

The agencies began scoping on the proposed action on May 5, 2014 and accepted comments through June 4, 2014. The USFS published a legal notice in the two newspapers of record (the *Grand Junction Daily Sentinel* and the *Durango Herald*) announcing scoping. The BLM issued a press release and both the BLM and USFS updated their project websites to include the notice of scoping and links to project information and a letter, dated May 5, 2014 was mailed to the appropriate agencies, specific interested parties, and to the general public. The letter was sent to approximately 900 addresses. A total of 17 scoping comments were received; 1 was received outside of the scoping comment period. A summary of scoping activities is available on the BLM project website² or through the SOPA. Scoping comments were considered during the development of the EA.

A 30-day public EA review period was held from November 3 through December 3, 2015. In addition to the notifications described above, the agencies also sent copies of the EA to 31

¹ Located here: <http://www.fs.usda.gov/projects/gmug/landmanagement/projects>

² Located here: <http://www.blm.gov/dvld>

libraries and agency offices in the project area and a public meeting was held on November 23, 2015 in Dolores, Colorado. Sixty-five comment submissions were received. Responses to those comments are documented in Appendix F of the EA.

FINDINGS REQUIRED BY OTHER LAWS AND REGULATIONS

Section 1.6 and 1.7 of the EA explain in further detail the applicable statutes, regulations or other plans in which the Proposed Action must be in conformance (i.e., FLPMA, National Environmental Policy Act, etc.) Section 1.6 of the EA provides the Proposed Action is in conformance with USFS Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison National Forests Land and Resource Management Plan (Amended 1991) and the San Juan National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (2013.)

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FONSI)

Based upon review of the EA and the supporting documents, BLM's Southwest District Manager and I have determined that the Alternative A – Proposed Action (Selected Alternative), with the Environmental Protection Measures and stipulations (Appendix D and associated appendices of EA) of the project, is not a major federal action and will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment individually or cumulatively with other actions in the general area. No environmental effects meet the definition of significance in context or intensity as defined in 40 CFR 1508.27 and do not exceed those effects described in the land management plans and associated EISs listed below. Therefore, an environmental impact statement is not needed.

- BLM San Juan/San Miguel Planning Area Resource Management Plan and Uncompahgre Basin Resource Management Plan (1985 and 1989)
- USFS Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre, and Gunnison National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (1991)
- USFS San Juan National Forest Land Management Plan (2013)
- BLM Tres Rios Field Office Resource Management Plan (2015)

This finding is based on the context and intensity of the project as described:

Context: The project is a site-specific action directly involving BLM and NFS administered land. For this transmission line upgrade, the context of the environmental effects is based on the environmental analysis in this EA. The transmission line upgrade entails a construction project spanning approximately 80 miles of existing corridor and 251 miles of road use, and associated effects on the human and natural environment. The project area includes portions of designated critical habitat for the GuSG; therefore, effects of the action have been analyzed in the context of effects to the GuSG and the broad interest among local, state and federal agencies as well as non-public special interest groups in protection of the GuSG. Effects of the action have also been analyzed in the context of society as a whole, including effects to private landowners including

socioeconomic effects, effects to the visual resources for the public visiting and residing in the scenic areas of the project corridor, effects to the Snaggletooth Unit of lands with wilderness characteristics in the Dolores River Canyon area; and important and relevant values for one designated and four nominated ACECs where the corridor transects nominated areas. The action has been analyzed in the context of natural resources including forest and timber resources, soil, geological and mineral resources, and cultural and paleontological resources. See EA Chapter 5 as well as Appendix E.

Intensity: The following discussion is organized around the Ten Significance Criteria described in 40 CFR 1508.27 and incorporated into resources and issues considered (includes supplemental authorities Appendix 1 H-1790-1) and supplemental Instruction Memorandum, Acts, regulations, and Executive Orders.

The following have been considered in evaluating intensity for this proposal:

1. *Impacts may be both beneficial and adverse.* The proposed action would affect resources as described in this EA. Minimization and avoidance measures to reduce impacts to the GuSG and its habitat, visual resources throughout the project area, watersheds, woodlands, and desert vegetation were incorporated in the design of the action alternatives. Beneficial effects to the GuSG may occur from the installation of perch discouragers on new structures in the Dry Creek Basin to minimize avian predation on GuSG. None of the environmental effects discussed in detail in this EA and associated appendices are considered significant, nor do the effects exceed those described in the Management Plans and associated EIS's listed previously.
2. *The degree to which the selected alternative will affect public health or safety.* The proposed action is designed to ensure reliable power supply to communities throughout southwestern Colorado, particularly as load levels increase. The project will aid public safety by replacing aging infrastructure, including wooden poles erected in 1958. In addition, the proposed project will re-route the crossing at the Dolores River Canyon, alleviating health and safety issues associated with the maintenance of the transmission line on steep and unstable slopes in the crossing area. The EA considered impacts associated with hazardous and solid wastes, air and water quality and there are no significant impacts relative to public health and safety.
3. *Unique characteristics of the geographic area such as proximity to historic or cultural resources, park lands, prime farm lands, wetlands, wilderness, wild and scenic rivers, or ecologically critical areas.* Potential effects to unique characteristics of the geographic area, including habitat for the GuSG, one designated and four nominated ACECs (43 CFR 1610.7-2), and the Snaggletooth Unit of lands with wilderness characteristics boundary and wild and scenic rivers where the transmission line crosses the Dolores River Canyon have been minimized in the design of the selected alternative, Alternative

A, as described in this EA. Historic and cultural resources of the area have been inventoried and potential impacts mitigated.

4. *The degree to which the effects on the quality of the human environment are likely to be highly controversial.* There is no scientific controversy over the nature of the impacts on the quality of the human environment; effects associated with a transmission line improvement have been documented before on public lands.
5. *The degree to which the possible effects on the human environment are highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks.* The project is not unique or unusual and the risks are not unknown. The BLM and USFS have experience implementing similar actions in similar areas. The environmental effects to the human environment, including effects in the Dry Creek Basin and the Dolores River Canyon area are fully analyzed in this EA. There are no predicted effects on the human environment that are considered to be highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks. The types of effects to GuSG are generally known; the degree of the effects is somewhat uncertain but is expected to be minimally beneficial.
6. *The degree to which the action may establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects or represents a decision in principle about a future consideration.* The actions considered in the selected alternative were considered by the interdisciplinary team within the context of past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions. Significant cumulative effects are not predicted. A complete analysis of the direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the selected alternative and all other alternatives is described in Chapters 4 and 5 of this EA. The proposed transmission line upgrade for the most part in existing corridor does not establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects, or represent a decision in principle about a future consideration.
7. *Whether the action is related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts – which include connected actions regardless of land ownership.* The interdisciplinary team evaluated the possible actions in context of past, present and reasonably foreseeable actions. Significant cumulative effects are not predicted. A complete disclosure of the effects of the project is contained in Chapter 5 of this EA.
8. *The degree to which the action may adversely affect districts, sites, highways, structures, or other objects listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places or may cause loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historical resources.* The transmission line upgrade project will adversely affect archaeological sites listed in or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The loss of historic properties will be minimized by the recovery of scientific data through archaeological excavation. Historic properties have been identified within the area of potential effect and review and concurrence will be obtained from the SHPO in accordance with Section 106 of the NHPA prior to issuance of a NTP. SHPO concurrence will be obtained on the agency finding of “historic properties adversely effected” pursuant to 36 CFR 800.5 of

the NHPA. A MOA will be executed between the BLM, SHPO, and interested Tribes to resolve the adverse effects to historic properties. A historic property treatment plan will be appended to the MOA to guide data recovery. The impacts to these resources are not considered significant.

9. *The degree to which the action may adversely affect an endangered or threatened species or its habitat that has been determined to be critical under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, or the degree to which the action may adversely affect: 1) a proposed to be listed endangered or threatened species or its habitat, or 2) a species on BLM's and USFS's sensitive species lists.* As described in Sections 3.4.6, 3.4.7, and 4.3.6 of this EA, four BLM special status plant species and sixteen special status animal species including BLM/USFS sensitive species (SS), USFS Management Indicator Species (MIS), and State of Colorado species of concern (SOC) may occur in the proposed project area. Adverse effects to all sensitive species will be low due to the confined and controlled nature of the project and negligible effects to habitat, particularly in relation to the habitat available within and adjacent to the proposed project area. Design measures to reduce impacts to wildlife have been incorporated into the design of the action alternatives (EA Chapter 2, Table 9). Avoidance and minimization measures will reduce disturbance of sensitive species and their habitat and includes reclamation of temporarily disturbed areas. Alternative A will have no effects on Mexican spotted owl; may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect Canada lynx, and may affect, is likely to adversely affect GuSG and designated GuSG critical habitat, which are the three federally-listed species with potential to occur in the project area as described in this EA (Chapter 4). The project upgrade includes the installation of perch deterrents throughout GuSG habitat, which may benefit GuSG. Habitat for lynx in the project area is poor and potential Mexican spotted owl habitat is unoccupied. No other threatened or endangered plants or animals are known to occur in the area. Section 7 ESA Consultation is ongoing. If the Section 7 Consultation does not confirm the agencies' effects determinations for the federally listed species and critical habitat, then this FONSI will be revised to incorporate such changes and to confirm the final intensity evaluation for this factor. A final decision won't be executed until a) a FONSI is confirmed and b) consultation is complete. Impacts are not expected to be significant.
10. *Whether the action threatens a violation of a federal, state, local, or tribal law, regulation or policy imposed for the protection of the environment, where non-federal requirements are consistent with federal requirements.* The project does not violate any known federal, state, local or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment. State, local, and tribal interests were given the opportunity to participate in this EA process. The BLM Southwest District Office (SWDO) initiated Native American consultation with 25 tribes via letter on August 12, 2014; consultation thus far has identified no concerns with Native American tribes potentially affected by this project.

In addition, the project is consistent with applicable land management plans, policies, and programs.

ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW (OBJECTION) OPPORTUNITIES

This decision is subject to a pre-decisional objection process in accordance with the provision of 36 CFR § 218 subparts A and B. Objections must be filed with the reviewing officer in writing. All objections are available for public inspection during and after the objection process. Issues raised in objections must be based on previously submitted and timely, specific written comments regarding the proposed project or activity and attributed to the objector, unless the issue is based on new information that arose after the opportunities for comment.

At a minimum, an objection must include the following: (1) Objector's name and address as defined in 36 CFR § 218.2, with telephone number, if available; (2) Signature or other verification of authorship upon request (a scanned signature for electronic mail may be filed with the objection); (3) When multiple names are listed on an objection, identification of the lead objector as defined in 36 CFR § 218.2. Verification of the identity of the lead objector must be provided upon request or the reviewing officer will designate a lead objector as provided in 36 CFR § 218.5(d); (4) The name of the proposed project, the name and title of the responsible official, and the name(s) of the national forest(s) and/or ranger district(s) on which the proposed project will be implemented; (5) A description of those aspects of the proposed project addressed by the objection, including specific issues related to the project; if applicable, how the objector believes the environmental analysis of draft decision specifically violates law, regulation, or policy; suggested remedies that would resolve the objection; supporting reasons for the reviewing officer to consider; and (6) A statement that demonstrates the connection between prior specific written comments on the particular proposed project or activity and the content of the objection, unless the objection concerns an issue that arose after the designated opportunities for comment. Incorporation of documents by reference is permitted only as provided for at 36 CFR § 218.8(b).

Objections, including attachments, must be filed (regular mail, fax, email, hand-delivery, express delivery, or messenger service) with the reviewing officer (see 36 CFR § 218.3 and § 218.8) within 45 days of the publication of the legal notices in the *Grand Junction Daily Sentinel* (Grand Junction, CO) and the *Durango Herald* (Durango, CO) whichever publishes later. The publication date(s) of the legal notices in the *Grand Junction Daily Sentinel* and the *Durango Herald* is/are the exclusive means for calculating the time to file an objection. Those wishing to object should not rely upon dates or time frame information provided by any other source. Evidence of timely filing is described in 36 CFR § 218.9. Please submit objections to the Reviewing Officer at:

Mail or hand delivery:

Maribeth Gustafson, Reviewing Officer
U.S.D.A Forest Service
Rocky Mountain Region
740 Simms Street
Golden, CO 80401
Fax: 303-275-5134 to the attention of Objections

The office business hours for those submitting hand-delivered objection are 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM Monday through Friday, excluding federal holidays.

Electronic objections must be submitted in a format such as an e-mail message, plain text (.txt), rich text format (.rtf), or MS Word (.doc). In cases where no identifiable name is attached to an electronic message, a verification of identity will be required. A scanned signature is one way to provide verification.

Email: r02admin-review@fs.fed.us

IMPLEMENTATION DATE

The BLM will not issue a Decision Record and ROW grants until the conclusion of the USFS pre-decisional objection period. The minimum period for concluding the objection period is 50 days (45 day objection period opportunity and five day stay if no objection is received) following publication of the legal notice of objection in the *Grand Junction Daily Sentinel* and the *Durango Herald*. If an objection is filed, the reviewing officer's response is due within 45 days (can be extended up to 30 more days). Ground disturbing activities cannot occur until the BLM and FS issue NTPs. The BLM and Forest Service would not issue NTPs until the Final POD has been approved.

CONTACT

For additional information concerning this decision contact:

Liz Mauch
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Ouray Ranger District
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Montrose, CO 81401
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Not signed until final decision

SCOTT G. ARMENTROUT
Forest Supervisor

Date

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