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**Final Scoping Summary Report**

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*Appendix A*

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Scoping Materials

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**APPENDIX A  
SCOPING MATERIALS**

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## Meeting Notices

## Federal Register Notice of Intent

Federal Register / Vol. 75, No. 67 / Thursday, April 8, 2010 / Notices

17913

Signed:  
**Gracia Hillman,**  
*Commissioner, U.S. Election Assistance  
 Commission.*  
 [FR Doc. 2010-8171 Filed 4-6-10; 4:15 pm]  
 BILLING CODE 6820-KF-P

**ELECTION ASSISTANCE COMMISSION****Sunshine Act; Notice of Virtual Public Forum for EAC Standards Board**

**DATE & TIME:** Monday, May 3, 2010, 9 a.m. EDT through Friday, May 14, 2010, 9 p.m. EDT.

**PLACE:** EAC Standards Board Virtual Meeting Room at <http://www.eac.gov>.

Once at the main page of EAC's Web site, viewers should click the link to the Standards Board Virtual Meeting Room. The virtual meeting room will open on Monday, May 3, 2010, at 9 a.m. EDT and will close on Friday, May 14, 2010, at 9 p.m. EDT. The site will be available 24 hours per day during that 12-day period.

**PURPOSE:** The EAC Standards Board will review and provide comment on a draft version of the EAC Research Department's *Recounts and Contests* study. The draft version contains information about the laws and procedures each State uses to govern recounts, contests, and standards for what constitutes a valid vote. The study includes best practices that States use with respect to recounts and contests. The EAC Standards Board Virtual Meeting Room was established to enable the Standards Board to conduct business in an efficient manner in a public forum, including being able to review and discuss draft documents, when it is not feasible for an in-person board meeting. The Standards Board will not take any votes or propose any resolutions during the 12-day forum of May 3–May 14, 2010. Members will post comments about the draft version of the *Recounts and Contests* study.

This activity is open to the public. The public may view the proceedings of this special forum by visiting the EAC standards board virtual meeting room at <http://www.eac.gov> at any time between Monday, May 3, 2010, 9 a.m. EDT and Friday, May 14, 2010, 9 p.m. EDT. The public also may view *recounts and contests*, which will be posted on EAC's Web site beginning April 26, 2010. The public may file written statements to the EAC standards board at [standardsboard@eac.gov](mailto:standardsboard@eac.gov) and by copying Sharmili Edwards at [sedwards@eac.gov](mailto:sedwards@eac.gov). Data on EAC's Web site is accessible to visitors with disabilities and meets the requirements of Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act.

**PERSON TO CONTACT FOR INFORMATION:**  
 Bryan Whitener, Telephone: (202) 566–3100.

**Gineen Bresso Beach,**  
*Commissioner, U.S. Election Assistance  
 Commission.*

[FR Doc. 2010-8174 Filed 4-6-10; 4:15 pm]  
 BILLING CODE 6820-KF-P

**DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY****Western Area Power Administration****DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE****Forest Service**

**Maintenance and Vegetation  
 Management Along Existing Western  
 Area Power Administration  
 Transmission Line Rights of Way on  
 National Forest System Lands,  
 Colorado, Utah, and Nebraska (DOE/  
 EIS-0442)**

**AGENCIES:** Western Area Power Administration, DOE; Forest Service, USDA.

**ACTION:** Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement and to Conduct Scoping Meetings; Notice of Floodplain and Wetlands Involvement.

**SUMMARY:** Western Area Power Administration (Western) proposes to improve the way it manages vegetation along its rights-of-way (ROW) on National Forest System lands in the states of Colorado, Utah, and Nebraska. Implementing the proposal would include modifying existing United States Forest Service (Forest Service) authorizations or issuing new authorizations to accommodate Western's vegetation management proposal and maintenance of the electrical transmission facilities. Western and the FS will be joint lead agencies in the preparation of an environmental impact statement (EIS) on the proposal in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) NEPA Implementing Procedures, and the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations for implementing NEPA.

Western's need for agency action is to ensure that it can safely and reliably operate and maintain its existing electrical transmission facilities. Western must meet North American Electric Reliability Corporation's mandatory vegetation management and maintenance standards (FAC-003-1) in accordance with section 1211 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 and industry standards. These industry standards are

designed to ensure the safe and reliable operation of the transmission system.

Portions of the proposed Project may affect floodplains and wetlands, so this Notice of Intent (NOI) also serves as a notice of proposed floodplain or wetland action, in accordance with DOE floodplain and wetland environmental review requirements.

**DATES:** This NOI begins the public scoping period. The public scoping period will close May 26, 2010. Western and the Forest Service will consider all electronic and written scoping comments that are received or postmarked by midnight May 26, 2010.

**ADDRESSES:** Western and the Forest Service will host public scoping meetings on Thursday, April 22, 2010, at the Ramada Plaza Denver North, 10 East 120th Avenue, Denver, CO 80233; Friday, April 23, 2010, at the Museum of Western Colorado, Whitman Educational Center, 248 S. 4th (4th and Ute), Grand Junction, CO 81501; and Monday, April 26, 2010, at the Uintah Basin Applied Technology College, 450 N. 2000 W., Vernal, UT 84078. Scoping meetings will be from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. The meetings will provide information to the public and gather comments from the public. The meetings will be informal, and attendees will be able to speak directly with Western and FS representatives about the proposal. Attendees may provide written comments at the public scoping meetings, or send them to James Hartman, Environmental Manager, Rocky Mountain Regional Office, Western Area Power Administration, P.O. Box 3700, Loveland, CO 80539–3003, e-mail: [Western-FS-EIS@wapa.gov](mailto:Western-FS-EIS@wapa.gov).

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** For information on the proposal and the environmental review process, contact James Hartman at the above address. For general information on DOE's NEPA review process, contact Carol M. Borgstrom, Director, Office of NEPA Policy and Compliance, GC-54, U.S. Department of Energy, 1000 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20585-0119, telephone (202) 586-4600 or (800) 472-2756, facsimile (202) 586-7031. For information on the Forest Service role in this effort, please contact David Loomis, Regional Environmental Planner, Rocky Mountain Regional Office, U.S. Forest Service, 740 Simms St., Golden, CO 80401 (303) 275-5008.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** Western is a Federal power marketing agency within the DOE that markets and delivers Federal wholesale electric power (principally hydroelectric power)

to municipalities, rural electric cooperatives, public utilities and irrigation districts, Federal and State agencies, and Native American tribes in 15 western and central States. The proposal covers existing transmission lines located on National Forest System lands in Colorado, Utah, and Nebraska and operated and maintained by Western's Rocky Mountain Region. Western proposes to improve the way it manages vegetation on FS lands in part to ensure compliance with section 1211 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 and the subsequent changes in industry standards for vegetation management to control the costs of vegetation management, to reduce the risk of wildfires caused by vegetation interacting with energized transmission lines, and to reduce the potential impact of wildfires on the transmission lines. Forest Service authorizations, issued under 36 CFR 251.54, for Western's use of National Forest System lands would need to be modified to accommodate this proposal.

#### Purpose and Need for Agency Action

Western must ensure that it can safely and reliably operate and maintain its existing electrical transmission facilities to deliver electrical power. Western must ensure access to its transmission facilities for maintenance and emergency response. Western must also ensure that the costs associated with maintaining the transmission system can be controlled in accordance with sound business principles. Western must meet mandatory vegetation management standards in accordance with section 1211 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 and industry standards. The vegetation management standards are designed to ensure the safe and reliable operation of the transmission system.

To ensure that Western can safely, reliably, and cost-effectively operate, maintain, and access its transmission system and implement required vegetation management practices on lands managed by the FS, Western needs to participate with the FS to evaluate options to renew or modify Western's current authorizations.

*Western's objectives for this proposal are to maintain its transmission lines, ROW and access roads to:*

- Protect public and worker safety
- Ensure power system reliability
- Comply with current industry standards and mandatory reliability standards
- Achieve technical and economic efficiencies to minimize impacts on transmission line tariff costs and electrical power rates

- Reduce the risk of wildfires caused by vegetation growing into or falling onto transmission lines
- Reduce the risks to facilities from fires
- Control the spread of noxious weeds
- Ensure that Western's transmission facilities remain operational for the useful life of the facility
- Maintain flexibility to accommodate changes in transmission system operation and maintenance requirements

#### Proposed Action

Western proposes to improve the way it manages vegetation along its ROW on National Forest System lands in the states of Colorado, Utah, and Nebraska. Not all areas of Western's ROW would require the proposed changes to vegetation management. Vegetation management approaches would vary along the ROW depending on site conditions and identified risks to the transmission lines, and other factors. Over the life of Western's facilities, proposed vegetation management changes would be implemented in locations along its ROW where vegetation could interfere with Western's ability to reliably operate and maintain the facilities. In general, Western proposes to change its vegetation management practices in the following manner:

- Implement and then maintain vegetation conditions along the ROW that reduce the risk to the transmission lines from vegetation-caused interference with the maintenance and operation of the transmission line. This could include establishing relatively stable native vegetation that, at mature height, would not grow into conductors, fall onto conductors or structures, or contribute to high fuel loads.
- Change from a largely reactive approach of cutting danger trees with annual ROW re-entry cycles to a proactive approach that incorporates integrated vegetation management. The objectives would be to control vegetation that, at mature height, presents a risk to transmission line maintenance and operation, and allow for longer ROW re-entry intervals.
- Reduce as necessary and manage the amount of fuel-loading on the ROW to reduce the risk of transmission line-caused wildfires and to reduce the potential impacts of wildfires to transmission lines and structures.

#### Alternatives

Alternatives to Western's proposal include the no action alternative. In this alternative, Western would continue its

maintenance according to past and current practices. Danger trees would be managed as they are now using a reactive approach with annual re-entry cycle to locate and cut danger trees. Other alternatives may be identified based on public and agency comments.

#### Floodplain or Wetland Involvement

Since the proposed Project may involve action in floodplains or wetlands, this NOI also serves as a notice of proposed floodplain or wetland action, in accordance with 10 CFR 1022.12 (a). The EIS will include a floodplain/wetland assessment and floodplain statement of findings following DOE regulations for compliance with floodplain and wetlands environmental review (10 CFR 1022).

#### Environmental Issues

The location of the proposal is on National Forest System lands in Colorado, Utah, and Nebraska. National Forests in Colorado include the Arapaho-Roosevelt, Grand Mesa-Uncompahgre-Gunnison, White River, Routt, San Juan, and Pike-San Isabel. The project also includes the Nebraska National Forest in Nebraska and the Ashley National Forest in Utah. Western maintains approximately 300 miles of ROW in these forests. The ROWs cross through a variety of vegetation communities at elevations ranging from approximately 6,000 to 11,000 feet. The widths of the transmission line ROW depend on the voltage of the line and typically range from 75 to 175 feet. The EIS will evaluate impacts on a variety of environmental resources that may occur along the approximately 4,000 total acres of ROW. The EIS will include design criteria and other actions to avoid or minimize impacts. The EIS will also present the results of compliance with other environmental regulations including the Endangered Species Act, National Historic Preservation Act, Clean Water Act, Clean Air Act and others.

#### Public Participation

Interested parties are invited to participate in the scoping process to identify important issues to be analyzed in depth, and to eliminate from detailed study issues that are not pertinent. The scoping process will involve all interested agencies (Federal, State, county, and local), Native American tribes, public interest groups, businesses, affected landowners, and individual members of the public.

Western and the FS will consult with affected tribes to evaluate and address the potential effects on cultural

resources, traditional cultural properties, or other resources important to the tribes. These consultations will be conducted in accordance with Executive Order 13175, *Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments* (65 FR 67429), the President's memorandum of April 29, 1994, *Government-to-Government Relations with Native American Tribal Governments* (59 FR 22961), DOE-specific guidance on tribal interactions, and applicable natural and cultural resources laws and regulations.

The public is encouraged to provide information and comments on issues it believes should be addressed in the EIS. Comments on the scope of the EIS will be addressed by Western and the Forest Service. Comments will be accepted at any time during the EIS process. Comments received outside of the scoping period may be addressed in the draft EIS if practicable, otherwise they will be addressed later in the process, such as in the final EIS.

Western has set up a Web site at <http://www.wapa.gov/transmission/Western-FS-EIS.htm> to facilitate the distribution of project information including meeting notices, project documents, schedules and other information. The public will be able to obtain documents for review from this Web site or request digital or hardcopies of documents for review.

Western anticipates that the EIS process will take about 15 months, and will include public scoping meetings; consultation and coordination with appropriate Federal, State, county, and local agencies and tribes; distribution of and public review and comment on the Draft EIS; a formal public hearing on the Draft EIS; distribution of a Final EIS; and publication of the Record of Decision in the **Federal Register**.

#### Responsible Officials

*Western*: Administrator; Forest Service; Rocky Mountain Regional Forester.

Dated: March 24, 2010.

**Timothy J. Meeks**,  
Administrator.

Dated: March 24, 2010.

**Randall Karstaedt**,  
Acting Deputy Regional Forester.  
[FR Doc. 2010-7724 Filed 4-7-10; 8:45 am]  
BILLING CODE 6450-01-P

#### ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

[EPA-HQ-OAR-2003-0079; FRL-9135-2]

**Agency Information Collection Activities; Proposed Collection; Comment Request; 8-Hour Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standard, EPA ICR No. 2236.03, OMB Control No. 2060-0594**

**AGENCY:** Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** In compliance with the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) (44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.*), this document announces that EPA is planning to submit a request to renew an existing approved Information Collection Request (ICR) 2236.03—8-Hour Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standard to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). This ICR is scheduled to expire on July 31, 2010. Before submitting the ICR to OMB for review and approval, EPA is soliciting comments on specific aspects of the proposed information collection as described below.

**DATES:** Comments must be submitted on or before June 7, 2010.

**ADDRESSES:** Submit your comments, identified by Docket ID No. EPA-HQ-OAR-2003-0079, by one of the following methods:

- *http://www.regulations.gov*: Follow the on-line instructions for submitting comments.

- *E-mail*: [a-and-r-docket@epa.gov](mailto:a-and-r-docket@epa.gov).

- *Fax*: (202) 564-9744.

- *Mail*: Environmental Protection Agency, Air and Radiation Docket, Mailcode 2822T, 1200 Pennsylvania Ave., NW., Washington, DC 20460. Such deliveries are only accepted during the Docket's normal hours of operation, and special arrangements should be made for deliveries of boxed information. Please include a total of two copies.

- *Hand Delivery*: EPA Docket Center, Public Reading Room, EPA West, Room 3334, 1301 Constitution Ave., NW., Washington, DC 20004. Such deliveries are only accepted during the Docket's normal hours of operation, and special arrangements should be made for deliveries of boxed information.

**Instructions:** Direct your comments to Docket ID No. EPA-HQ-OAR-2003-0079. EPA's policy is that all comments received will be included in the public docket without change and may be made available online at <http://www.regulations.gov>, including any personal information provided, unless the comment includes information claimed to be Confidential Business

Information (CBI) or other information whose disclosure is restricted by statute. Do not submit information that you consider to be CBI or otherwise protected through [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov) or e-mail. The <http://www.regulations.gov> Web site is an "anonymous access" system, which means EPA will not know your identity or contact information unless you provide it in the body of your comment. If you send an e-mail comment directly to EPA without going through <http://www.regulations.gov>, your e-mail address will be automatically captured and included as part of the comment that is placed in the public docket and made available on the Internet. If you submit an electronic comment, EPA recommends that you include your name and other contact information in the body of your comment and with any disk or CD-ROM you submit. If EPA cannot read your comment due to technical difficulties and cannot contact you for clarification, EPA may not be able to consider your comment. Electronic files should avoid the use of special characters, any form of encryption, and be free of any defects or viruses. For additional information about EPA's public docket, visit the EPA Docket Center homepage at <http://www.epa.gov/epahome/dockets.htm>.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Mr. H. Lynn Dail, Air Quality Policy Division, Office of Air Quality Planning and Standards, Mail Code C539-01, Environmental Protection Agency, T.W. Alexander Drive, Research Triangle Park, NC 27711; telephone number: (919) 541-2363; fax number: (919) 541-0824; e-mail address: [dail.lynn@epa.gov](mailto:dail.lynn@epa.gov).

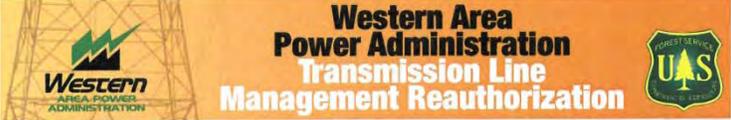
#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

##### How Can I Access the Docket and/or Submit Comments?

EPA has established a public docket for this ICR under Docket ID No. EPA-HQ-OAR-2003-0079, which is available for online viewing at <http://www.regulations.gov>, or in person viewing at the Air Docket in the EPA Docket Center (EPA/DC), EPA West, Room 3334, 1301 Constitution Ave., NW., Washington, DC. The EPA/DC Public Reading Room is open from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, excluding legal holidays. The telephone number for the Reading Room is 202-566-1744, and the telephone number for the Air Docket is 202-566-1742.

Use <http://www.regulations.gov> to obtain a copy of the draft collection of information, submit or view public comments, access the index listing of the contents of the docket, and to access

## Scoping Postcard



**Western Area  
Power Administration  
Transmission Line  
Management Reauthorization**

### Public Scoping Meetings

Western Area Power Administration (Western) and the U.S. Forest Service (FS) invite you to public scoping meetings for the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for maintenance of Western's existing transmission lines on National Forest System lands in Colorado, Utah and Nebraska. Western proposes to change how it manages vegetation on existing rights-of-way. Western must also ensure continued maintenance for transmission system safety and reliability. Changes would require modifying existing FS authorizations or issuing new authorizations.

Scoping provides an opportunity for you to learn more about the project, provide comments, and identify potential issues to be analyzed in the EIS. The public scoping comment period for this project ends on May 26, 2010.

The public scoping meetings will be held at the following locations:

#### DENVER, CO

**Thursday**  
**April 22, 2010**  
**3 to 7 pm** Ramada Plaza Denver North  
10 East 120th Avenue  
Denver, CO 80233

#### GRAND JUNCTION, CO

**Friday**  
**April 23, 2010**  
**3 to 7 pm** Museum of Western Colorado  
Whitman Educational Center  
248 S. 4th (4th and Ute)  
Grand Junction, CO 81501

#### VERNAL, UT

**Monday**  
**April 26, 2010**  
**3 to 7 pm** Uintah Basin Applied  
Technology College  
450 N. 2000 W.  
Vernal, UT 84078

#### Additional information:

Website: [www.wapa.gov/transmission/Western-fs-EIS.htm](http://www.wapa.gov/transmission/Western-fs-EIS.htm)

E-mail: [Western-FS-EIS@wapa.gov](mailto:Western-FS-EIS@wapa.gov)

Mail: Jim Hartman, Environmental Manager  
Western Area Power Administration  
P.O. Box 3700, Loveland CO 80539-3003

Western Area  
Power Administration  
P.O. Box 3700  
Loveland, CO 80539

## Scoping Email

**From:** Stevens, Kimberly  
**To:** [Stevens, Kimberly](#)  
**Subject:** Notice of Public Scoping Meetings - Western Area Power Administration Transmission Line Management Reauthorization Project  
**Date:** Friday, April 02, 2010 2:13:00 PM

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Public Scoping Meetings – Please Attend!

Western Area Power Administration (Western) and the U.S. Forest Service (FS) invite you to public scoping meetings for the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for maintenance of Western's existing transmission lines on National Forest System lands in Colorado, Utah and Nebraska. Western proposes to change how it manages vegetation on existing rights-of-way. Western must also ensure continued maintenance for transmission system safety and reliability. Changes would require modifying existing FS authorizations or issuing new authorizations. Scoping provides an opportunity for you to learn more about the project, provide comments, and identify potential issues to be analyzed in the EIS. The public scoping comment period for this project ends on May 26, 2010.

The public scoping meetings will be held at the following locations:

DENVER, COLORADO  
Thursday, April 22, 2010, 3 to 7 pm  
Ramada Plaza Denver North  
10 East 120th Avenue  
Denver, CO 80233

GRAND JUNCTION, COLORADO  
Friday, April 23, 2010, 3 to 7 pm  
Museum of Western Colorado  
Whitman Educational Center  
248 S. 4th (4th and Ute)  
Grand Junction, CO 81501

VERNAL, UT  
Monday, April 26, 2010, 3 to 7 pm  
Uintah Basin Applied Technology College  
450 N. 2000 W.  
Vernal, UT 84078

For additional information:

Website: [www.wapa.gov/transmission/Western-fs-EIS.htm](http://www.wapa.gov/transmission/Western-fs-EIS.htm)

E-mail: [Western-FS-EIS@wapa.gov](mailto:Western-FS-EIS@wapa.gov)

Mail: Jim Hartman, Environmental Manager, Western Area Power Administration, P.O. Box 3700, Loveland CO 80539-3003

## **Press Releases**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** April 21, 2010

**CONTACT:** Randy Wilkerson, 720-962-7056, [wilkerson@wapa.gov](mailto:wilkerson@wapa.gov)

### **PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE MEETINGS SET FOR TRANSMISSION LINE MANAGEMENT REAUTHORIZATION**

LAKEWOOD, Colo.— Western Area Power Administration (Western) and the U.S. Forest Service (FS) are hosting open-house, public scoping meetings to share information and receive public comments on issues associated with maintenance of Western's existing, high-voltage transmission lines on National Forest System lands in Colorado, Utah and Nebraska.

Public, open-house scoping meetings will be held from 3 to 7 p.m.:

- Thursday, Apr. 22, **Denver, Colo.**, Ramada Plaza Denver North, 10 East 120<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Denver, CO 80233
- Friday, Apr. 23, **Grand Junction, Colo.**, Museum of Western Colorado, Whitman Educational Center, 248 S. 4<sup>th</sup> (4<sup>th</sup> and Ute), Grand Junction, CO 81501
- Monday, Apr. 26, **Vernal, Utah**, Uintah Basin Applied Technology College, 450 N. 2000 W., Vernal, UT 84078

All meeting locations are wheelchair accessible. Please contact Western if you need other accommodations to attend the scoping meetings.

Western and the FS are preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to address Western's proposal to change how it manages vegetation on existing transmission line rights of way (ROW). Western must also ensure continued maintenance for transmission system safety and reliability. Changes would require modifying existing FS authorizations or issuing new authorizations.

The scoping meetings provide an opportunity to learn more about the project, provide comments and identify potential issues to be analyzed in the EIS. The public scoping comment period for this project ends May 26, 2010.

PO Box 281213 Lakewood, CO 80228-2802 • Phone: 720-962-7050 • Toll Free: 1-800-982-4523  
Fax: 720-962-7059 • E-mail: [CorpComm@wapa.gov](mailto:CorpComm@wapa.gov) • Web site: <http://www.wapa.gov>

Comments on the proposed project can be submitted at one of the meetings or to Jim Hartman, Environmental Manager, Western Area Power Administration, Rocky Mountain Region, P.O. Box 3700, Loveland, CO 80539; fax 970-461-7213; or e-mail [Western-FS-EIS@wapa.gov](mailto:Western-FS-EIS@wapa.gov). Comments are due by May 26.

For more information about the proposed project, please visit the project Web site online at: <http://www.wapa.gov/transmission/western-fs-eis.htm>.

Western proposes to improve the way it manages vegetation along its ROW on National Forest System lands in Colorado, Utah and Nebraska. National Forests in Colorado include the Arapaho-Roosevelt, Grand Mesa-Uncompahgre-Gunnison, White River, Medicine Bow-Routt, San Juan and Pike-San Isabel. The project also includes the Ashley National Forest in Utah and the Nebraska National Forest in Nebraska. Western maintains about 300 miles of ROW in these Forests.

Not all areas of Western's ROW would require the proposed changes to vegetation management. Vegetation management approaches would vary along the ROW depending on site conditions and identified risks to the transmission lines and other factors.

In general, Western proposes to change its vegetation management practices in the following manner:

- Implement and then maintain vegetation conditions along the ROW that reduce the risk to the transmission lines from vegetation-caused interference with the maintenance and operation of the transmission line.
- Change from a largely reactive approach of cutting danger trees with annual ROW re-entry cycles to a proactive approach that incorporates integrated vegetation management.
- Reduce as necessary and manage the amount of fuel-loading on the ROW to reduce the risk of transmission line-caused wildfires to transmission lines and structures.

-30-

PO Box 281213 Lakewood, CO 80228-2802 • Phone: 720-962-7050 • Toll Free: 1-800-982-4523  
Fax: 720-962-7059 • E-mail: [CorpComm@wapa.gov](mailto:CorpComm@wapa.gov) • Web site: <http://www.wapa.gov>

## We need your ideas!

Western Area Power Administration (Western) and the U.S. Forest Service (FS) invite you to a public, open-house scoping meeting. Your input will help evaluate issues associated with maintenance of Western's existing transmission lines on National Forest System lands in Colorado, Utah and Nebraska.

The meeting will be held:

<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Ramada Plaza Denver North</b>
<b>April 22</b>	<b>10 East 120th Avenue</b>
<b>3 to 7 p.m.</b>	<b>Denver, CO 80233</b>

Western and the FS are preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to address Western's proposal to change how it manages vegetation on existing transmission line rights of way. Western must also ensure continued maintenance for transmission system safety and reliability. Changes would require modifying existing FS authorizations or issuing new authorizations.

Scoping provides an opportunity for you to learn more about the project, provide comments and identify potential issues to be analyzed in the EIS. The public scoping comment period for this project ends May 26, 2010.

For more information, visit  
<http://www.wapa.gov/transmission/Western-FS-EIS.htm>  
or contact:

Jim Hartman, Environmental Manager  
Western Area Power Administration  
P.O. Box 3700  
Loveland, CO 80539-3003  
E-mail: [Western-FS-EIS@wapa.gov](mailto:Western-FS-EIS@wapa.gov)



## iPad demand costs buyer part of finger

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

DENVER — A thief's thirst for a brand new iPad cost a Colorado man not only a much-coveted device but also two-thirds of a pinky finger.

Doctors had to amputate part of Bill Jordan's left pinky after a man Thursday yanked away a bag containing an iPad that Jordan had just purchased at a Denver mall.

Jordan, 28, had the cord of the bag wrapped around his left hand when the thief "completely blind-sided" him and jerked the bag off his hand, stripping the flesh of Jordan's finger down to the bone.

"He kept pulling until something had to give, and it wound up being my finger," Jordan said in an interview Tuesday.

Jordan, of Aurora east of Denver, said he had no idea anyone was following him when he left the Apple store at Cherry Creek Mall, and he didn't expect to be robbed of his purchase in broad daylight.

Denver police have security footage from the scene and have obtained the serial number of the iPad from the Apple store.

## RESORT: \$100 million expansion seen

Continued from Page One

incorporating alternative energy sources into future development.

Williams said resort officials have held three neighborhood meetings about the resort community with Gateway residents and property owners.

"We've pretty well vetted this thing in the community for two to three years," he said.

Jackie Bevan, president of the Gateway Property Owners Association, said Gateway residents largely have been silent about the expansion.

"Everyone has had ample opportunity to bring their concerns," Bevan said.

"There really hasn't been any," Hendricks told commissioners he has invested more than \$50 million in capital in Gateway Canyon thus far and expects to sink a total of more than \$100 million into it by the time the resort and the residential community are fully developed.

Despite that hefty investment, the resort currently is losing money — about

\$2 million this year — as Hendricks noted the difficulty of recouping an investment in a remote destination. He hopes to reduce his losses to \$500,000 next year and have the resort break even in 2013.

He then hopes to recoup \$15 million of his capital investment by 2025. To recoup another \$85 million and, therefore, the full \$100 million, he said he would have to sell a minimum of 300 of the 300 lots at an average price of \$275,000.

"We're confident this is a very special part of America that people are going to discover," Hendricks told commissioners.

The founder of the Discovery Channel said the Expertus Academy which will open in June, will offer weeklong retreats for individuals and groups to explore questions about science, technology, medicine and other topics. The academy and the Discovery Channel are partners in the production "Curiosity: The Questions of Our Life," a five-year, 60-episode series that will premier next year.

## BILL: Opponents criticize attempt to eliminate late fee

Continued from Page One

got people to opt for registering their automobiles for two years rather than the usual one.

But opponents said it was a back-door attempt at getting rid of the controversial late fee.

"If we're going to have a bill that deals with the late fee, we ought to come out and just say it," said Rep. Randy Fischer, D-Fort Collins, who introduced an amendment to take that provision out of King's House Bill 1288. "Let's not try to obfuscate the fact that what we're doing here is creating a loophole that

would allow people to basically never have to pay a late fee again."

King, however, said he only was trying to offer motorists an incentive to use the two-year option. Motorists benefit from not having to return each year, and the state can get additional money up front, earning interest on it in the process, he said.

Currently, motorists who register their vehicles after their tags have expired pay a \$25-a-month late fee, capped at \$100.

King offered a substitute amendment to lower the maximum late fee to \$50 for those

who use the two-year option, but that effort failed.

What we're trying to do is make it more consumer friendly... to not have to take time off your job to go in and re-register your car," King said. "It is a way of enticing the consumer. There was no attempt to hide anything. It was just trying to give as much benefit to our taxpayers as we can."

A legislative fiscal analysis of

King's bill showed it would cost the state about \$434,000 a year in lost revenue from the late-fee exemption. Overall, though, the bill would earn the state a one-time increase of nearly \$12 million during the first of the two-year option is used.

The bill requires a final House vote, which could come as early as today, before it can head to the Senate for more debate.

## THE ACES BOBBY WOLFF

"A learned man is an idler who kills time with study. Beware of his false knowledge; it is more dangerous than ignorance."

— George Bernard Shaw

**NORTH** 0421A  
 ▲ K 10 6 4 3  
 ▲ A K  
 ▲ A 7 5 3  
 ▲ 4

In today's auction South asked for specific kings with his call of five no trump, but North bid six hearts, unwilling to go past that contract with just the spade king.

**WEST**  
 ▲ 3  
 ▲ 4 3  
 ▲ K Q J 10 8 4  
 ▲ J 8 7 5

**EAST**  
 ▲ J 9 8 2  
 ▲ 9 7 5  
 ▲ 10 9 6 3 2

A casual look at the deal suggests there should be no problem taking 13 tricks in hearts: declarer has 10 tricks in the majors and four tricks in the minors. A second glance reveals the bad spade break, but that appears only to reduce 14 tricks to 13.

**SOUTH** 0421B  
 ▲ A Q 7  
 ▼ Q J 10 6 2  
 ▲ 9 2  
 ▲ A K Q

The real problem comes with the lead of a diamond, which removes the side-suit entry to the spades. This means real care is necessary — but what else would you expect in a grand slam?

South won the diamond lead in dummy and, after counting the top tricks, prepared to protect himself against possible bad breaks. Since the auction showed that West was the hand far more likely to be short in spades, South decided to protect against this eventuality, with West also holding no more than two trumps. Instead of drawing all the trumps, he cashed the trump ace and queen, then took two top spades. Had they split, he would have completed drawing trump. When they broke badly, he ruffed out the spades, went back to the board with the trump king, and pitched his diamond on the 13th spade. Contract made.

Vulnerable: North-South  
 Dealer: North

The bidding:  
 South West North East  
 2♥ Pass 4♥ Pass  
 4NT Pass 5♠ Pass  
 5NT Pass 6♥ Pass  
 7♥ All pass  
 "Three of the five aces," counting the trump king as an ace

Opening lead: Diamond king

**HID WITH THE ACES** 0421B

South holds:  
 ▲ K 10 6 4 3  
 ▲ A K  
 ▲ A 7 5 3  
 ▲ 4

South West North East  
 1♠ Pass 3♠ 4

**ANSWER:** Whether the jump to three clubs is weak or invitational, you cannot afford to sell out now. You must act, and the choice is to double for takeout or bid your spades. While spades might be your best suit, considerations of safety should suggest that the double will help you find your best fit whenever possible.

## ANNIE'S MAILBOX ADVICE TO YOU

Dear Annie:  
 I'm 24 years old and confused. I have been in an on-and-off relationship with the same woman for the past eight years. A year ago, I discovered "Samantha" had been having extended, all-night conversations with "Andrew," the same guy she cheated on me with in high school. It was so hurt that I broke off our relationship.

We got back together a few months later, but during the break, I got involved with "Ava." Ava recently had a baby boy and told me I might be the father. I have asked for a DNA test, but in the meantime, I've become really attached to the child and told Ava she can call on me any time. Even if the baby is not mine, I would still want to be part of his life. The other potential candidate for fatherhood changed his phone number and moved out of town. Am I wrong to want to be a father to this boy even though I'm back with Samantha now?

A Man with a Good Heart

Dear Man:  
 Becoming a father to another

woman's child could profoundly change the relationship you have with Samantha. If the child is biologically yours, you have a legal obligation to care for him. If you are not the father, it is kind and generous of you to want to be part of his life, and we hope you will be. But if you intend to stay with Samantha, we recommend you let her be part of the decision. Otherwise, you may have to choose between them.

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**We need your ideas!**

Western Area Power Administration (Western) and the U.S. Forest Service (FS) invite you to a public, open-house scoping meeting. Your input will help evaluate issues associated with maintenance of Western's existing transmission lines on National Forest System lands in Colorado, Utah and Nebraska.

The meeting will be held:  
**Friday**  
**April 23**  
**3 to 7 p.m.**  
 Museum of Western Colorado  
 Whitman Educational Center  
 248 S. 4th (4th and Ute)  
 Grand Junction, CO 81501

Western and the FS are preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to address Western's proposal to change how it manages vegetation on existing transmission line rights of way. Western must also ensure continued maintenance for transmission system safety and reliability. Changes would require modifying existing FS authorizations or issuing new authorizations.

Scoping provides an opportunity for you to learn more about the project, provide comments and identify potential issues to be analyzed in the EIS. The public scoping comment period for this project ends May 26, 2010.

For more information, visit <http://www.wapa.gov/transmission/Western-FS-EIS.htm> or contact:  
 Jim Hartman, Environmental Manager  
 Western Area Power Administration  
 P.O. Box 3700  
 Loveland, CO 80539-3003  
 E-mail: [Western-FS-EIS@wapa.gov](mailto:Western-FS-EIS@wapa.gov)

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The meeting will be held:

<b>Monday</b>	<b>Uintah Basin Applied</b>
<b>April 26</b>	<b>Technology College</b>
<b>3 to 7 p.m.</b>	<b>450 N. 2000 W.</b>
	<b>Vernal, UT 84078</b>

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Jim Hartman, Environmental Manager  
Western Area Power Administration  
P.O. Box 3700  
Loveland, CO 80539-3003  
E-mail: [Western-FS-EIS@wapa.gov](mailto:Western-FS-EIS@wapa.gov)



its "reverse seniority" policy last month to avoid potential lawsuits from the Jordan

district in the Jordan School District," said Robin Frodge, JEA president. Otherwise, she said,

employees lose their positions and want to go back to the classroom. For instance,

administrators, most of whom have moved up Jordan's ranks as teachers and principals, have the potential to bump

we're the unseen helpers mostly. We are there to support those teachers so they're able to do their job," said

PA and a special-ed bus driver. "We're just sick."

rwinters@strib.com

## New group aims at halting all executions

**Crime** » Group's opposition is primarily on moral grounds.

By NATE CARLISLE  
The Salt Lake Tribune

A group opposed to capital punishment will introduce itself to the public today, minutes before a judge may sign a death warrant for convicted murderer Ronnie Lee Gardner. The group calls itself Utahns for Alternatives to the Death Penalty and will hold a news conference at 8:30 a.m. at the Matheson Courthouse, 450 S. State St. in Salt Lake City. Dee Rowland, the government liaison for the Roman Catholic Diocese of Salt Lake City and an organizer for Utahns for Alternatives, said a few people may be holding signs, but the group does not plan a demonstration or a picket.

Third District Court Judge Robin Reese will hold a 9 a.m. hearing at the same courthouse to consider what might be Gardner's final judicial appeal. If Reese rules against the appeal, he may sign an order for Gardner's execution. Under state law, the execution must occur 30 to 60 days after the order is signed.

Gardner will be present for the hearing. If Reese orders the execution, Gardner is expected to say whether he wants to die by lethal injection or firing squad.

The Utah Attorney General's Office has argued

Gardner's latest appeal has no merit and the judge is obligated to sign the death warrant.

Gardner was sentenced to death for killing lawyer Michael Burdell during an escape attempt at a 1985 court hearing in Salt Lake City. He also was convicted of killing bartender Melvyn John Osterstrom during a 1984 robbery.

Gardner's name did not even appear in a news release announcing Utahns for Alternatives.

"We don't want to tie [our opposition] to a particular crime," Rowland said in an interview Thursday. "It's the issue itself that we think is important."

Utahns for Alternatives is led by the state's Catholics, and Bishop John Wester of the Salt Lake City Diocese plans to attend the news conference. But the group also lists attorneys, physicians, academics and other religious leaders as members. And while the group's opposition is primarily on moral grounds, Rowland said people may be surprised by the monetary cost of capital punishment. Utahns for Alternatives highlights studies showing executing someone is much more expensive than giving them a long prison sentence.

"There's an illusion that executing a person is cheaper than keeping them in prison and that is not so," Rowland said.

## TED HATCH » 1933 - 2010

# Utah river rafting pioneer treated passengers like friends

By TOM WHARTON  
The Salt Lake Tribune

**Vernal** » Ted Hatch, a member of one of Utah's best known river rafting company families, died this week in Vernal. He was 76.

Hatch was the son of legendary river pioneer Bus Hatch, who founded Hatch River Expeditions and was among the pioneers of Utah's river rafting industry.



Ted Hatch

When Bus died in 1967, Ted gave up his job as the principal of Manila High School and took over the family business along with his late brother Don. The two split the company 10 years later with Don taking over the Utah operation and Ted running the Grand Canyon operation. His son Steve and daughter-in-law, Sarah, continue to operate Hatch River Expeditions in the Grand Canyon.

Ted Hatch ran his final river last summer on the Main Salmon River in Idaho where he rowed his own boat and was accompanied by his wife, Pat, sons Bruce and Steve and grandchildren.

"He was a fun loving guy

who would always do anything for you," said Dee Holdaday who founded Salt Lake based Holiday River Expeditions. "I enjoyed his company over the years."

Roy Webb, who wrote a biography of Bus Hatch called *River Man: The Story of Bus Hatch*, said Ted Hatch loved the challenge of running the big rapids in the Colorado River.

"What struck me about Ted was that his philosophy was that passengers are a company's bread and butter and you needed to treat them like friends you never met," Webb said. "He had such a loyal clientele that they never had to advertise until just a few years ago."

Others praised Hatch for the active role he played in professional guides association and in working with the National Park Service and Bureau of Land Management to win favorable regulations for commercial guides on western rivers.

He is survived by his wife, Pat; sons Bruce, of Vernal, and Steve, of Marble Canyon, Ariz.; and daughter, Susan Wadley, of Vernal.

Funeral services are scheduled Saturday at Western Park in Vernal with a viewing from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. Friday at the Blackburn Vernal Mortuary.

## Provo OKs severance packages

**Provo** » It will cost Provo more than a half-million dollars to remove 26 people from the payroll.

But Mayor John R. Curtis told the Municipal Council on Tuesday that the \$625,550 would save \$2.5 million a year in salaries.

"These are positions that will not be replaced, so this represents ongoing savings to the city on an annual basis," he said.

The council unanimously approved taking the money from surplus funds to finance the severance packages for employees being laid off or being bought out of their jobs.

Last week, Curtis announced the layoffs and buyouts as a means to balance the city budget in the face of declining sales-tax proceeds. Six employees were laid off last week, and

20 are being given the option to leave voluntarily.

Those who take the buyout will receive one week's severance pay for each year of service with the city, up to 26 weeks, along with a signing bonus of four week's pay and three months of health insurance coverage. If the employees do not step forward, the city will lay off 20 additional employees, and severance packages won't include the bonus or health insurance.

— Donald W. Meyers

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**We need your ideas!**

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The meeting will be held:

<b>Monday</b> April 26 3 to 7 p.m.	<b>Utah Basin Applied Technology College</b> 450 N. 2000 W. Vernal, UT 84078
--	--

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For more information, visit  
<http://www.wapa.gov/transmission/Western-FS-EIS.htm>  
or contact:

Jim Hartman, Environmental Manager  
Western Area Power Administration  
P.O. Box 3700  
Loveland, CO 80539-3003  
E-mail: [Western-FS-EIS@wapa.gov](mailto:Western-FS-EIS@wapa.gov)




## Meeting Displays

### Scoping and How to Comment

#### National Environmental Policy Act

Western Area Power Administration (Western) and the U.S. Forest Service (FS) are jointly preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the continued management of Western's existing transmission lines on FS lands. Western proposes to continue maintaining these lines and is proposing to change the way it manages vegetation on the right-of-way (ROW). The changes would require updated or new authorizations from the FS.

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires federal agencies to consider the following when making a decision that could significantly affect the environment:

- Alternatives to the proposed action
- Environmental impacts
- Comments and information from the public, federal, state, and local agencies, tribes, and affected parties

The EIS will integrate other environmental review and consultation such as section 7 of the Endangered Species Act and section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

#### What is Scoping?

Scoping is part of the NEPA review process. During scoping federal agencies solicit comments and information from the public, agencies, and tribes. Comments on the proposed action, alternatives to the proposed action and environmental impacts will help Western and the FS determine what to address in the EIS.



Western Area Power Administration Aul-Cross Line.

#### Project Timeline

- April 8, 2010 Notice of Intent Published in Federal Register
- April 22, 2010 Public Scoping Meeting Denver, Colorado
- April 23, 2010 Public Scoping Meeting Grand Junction, Colorado
- April 26, 2010 Public Scoping Meeting Vernal, Utah
- May 26, 2010 Close of the Public Scoping Period
- Spring/Summer 2010 Preparation of Draft EIS
- Summer 2010 Notice of Availability of Draft EIS
- Summer/Fall 2010 45-Day Public Comment Period & Hearings
- Fall/Winter 2010 Preparation of Final EIS
- Spring 2011 Notice of Availability of Final EIS/ Record of Decision

#### Making Effective Comments

Effective comments help ensure important issues are identified and addressed in the EIS.

- State specific concerns instead of making broad statements
- Focus comments on specific issues and provide supporting information
- Identify important environmental and community concerns

You are encouraged to provide written comments this evening, email, or mail your comments by the close of the public scoping period (May 26, 2010). Your comments will become part of the official public record.



Aspen regeneration in the ROW after the first growing season.



Western Area Power Administration Aul-Cross Line showing U.S. Forest Service land.

### Project Description and Objectives

#### Project Description

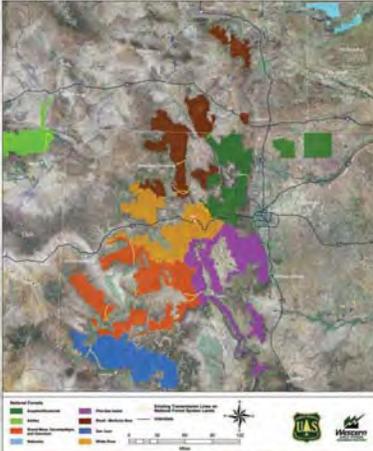
The proposed action includes maintenance activities typical of electrical industry practices for maintaining right-of-way (ROW), access, structures, and other equipment.

To comply with changed industry regulations and standards, Western proposes to modify its overall approach to ROW vegetation management. Western's improved vegetation management along ROWs on National Forest System lands would include:

- Changing from a focus on danger tree cutting to an active management approach that ensures vegetation does not become a risk to the transmission lines.
- Reducing the amount of wildfire fuel on the ROW including the debris from years of danger tree cutting.
- Implementing and maintaining vegetation conditions along the ROW that focus on establishing stable native vegetation that reduces risk to transmission lines.

The proposed methods for maintaining the ROW include: mechanical treatments, use of herbicides and hand treatments.

#### Project Area Map



The transmission lines cross approximately 280 miles of National Forest System lands in Colorado, Utah, and Nebraska.

#### Project Objectives

- Ensure Western's capability to maintain the transmission lines to ensure safety and the reliability of the transmission system.
- Ensure sufficient access for maintenance.
- Ensure public and worker safety.
- Manage vegetation to comply with current industry and mandatory reliability standards.
- Enhance the ability of the facilities to survive wildfires.
- Protect sensitive environmental resources including cultural resources, special status biological resources, water quality, sensitive visual resources, and others.
- Control maintenance costs and improve efficiency.
- Reduce the risk that fires would be started by transmission lines.



Vegetation regeneration and debris buildup in the ROW.



ROW vegetation treatment.

## Design Features



**Western Area  
Power Administration**  
Transmission Line  
Management Reauthorization





**Western Area  
Power Administration**  
Transmission Line  
Management Reauthorization

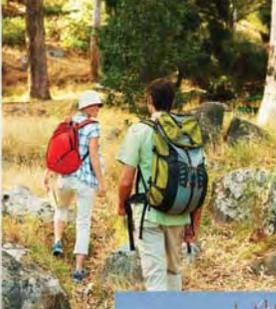




**Western Area  
Power Administration**  
Transmission Line  
Management Reauthorization



### Design Feature Examples



**TO MINIMIZE IMPACTS TO PUBLIC AND PERMITTED RECREATIONAL USERS:**  
Western would coordinate temporary closures of trail heads, administrative sites, campgrounds, and forest corridors with the local Ranger Districts.



**TO PROTECT SOILS, WATERSHEDS, AND WATER QUALITY:**  
Heavy equipment would not be used in the ROW when soils are too wet.

### What are Design Features?

Design features are part of the proposed action and define how the proposal will be implemented. Design features are intended to avoid or minimize impacts.

### How are They Used?

Design features are used during project implementation and may be site-specific or broader in scope.



**A SITE-SPECIFIC DESIGN FEATURE USED TO PROTECT SENSITIVE WILDLIFE:**  
Prohibit activity within 1/2 mile of an active raptor nest during nesting season.



**A BROADER SCOPE DESIGN FEATURE USED TO REDUCE THE RISK OF WILDFIRE:**  
Remove snags wherever to establish an oil chokepoint.

### Design Feature Examples



**TO PROTECT RIPARIAN AREAS, AQUATIC RESOURCES, AND WATER QUALITY:**  
Equipment staging areas and rebaring locations will be located at least 250 feet away from streams and wetlands.

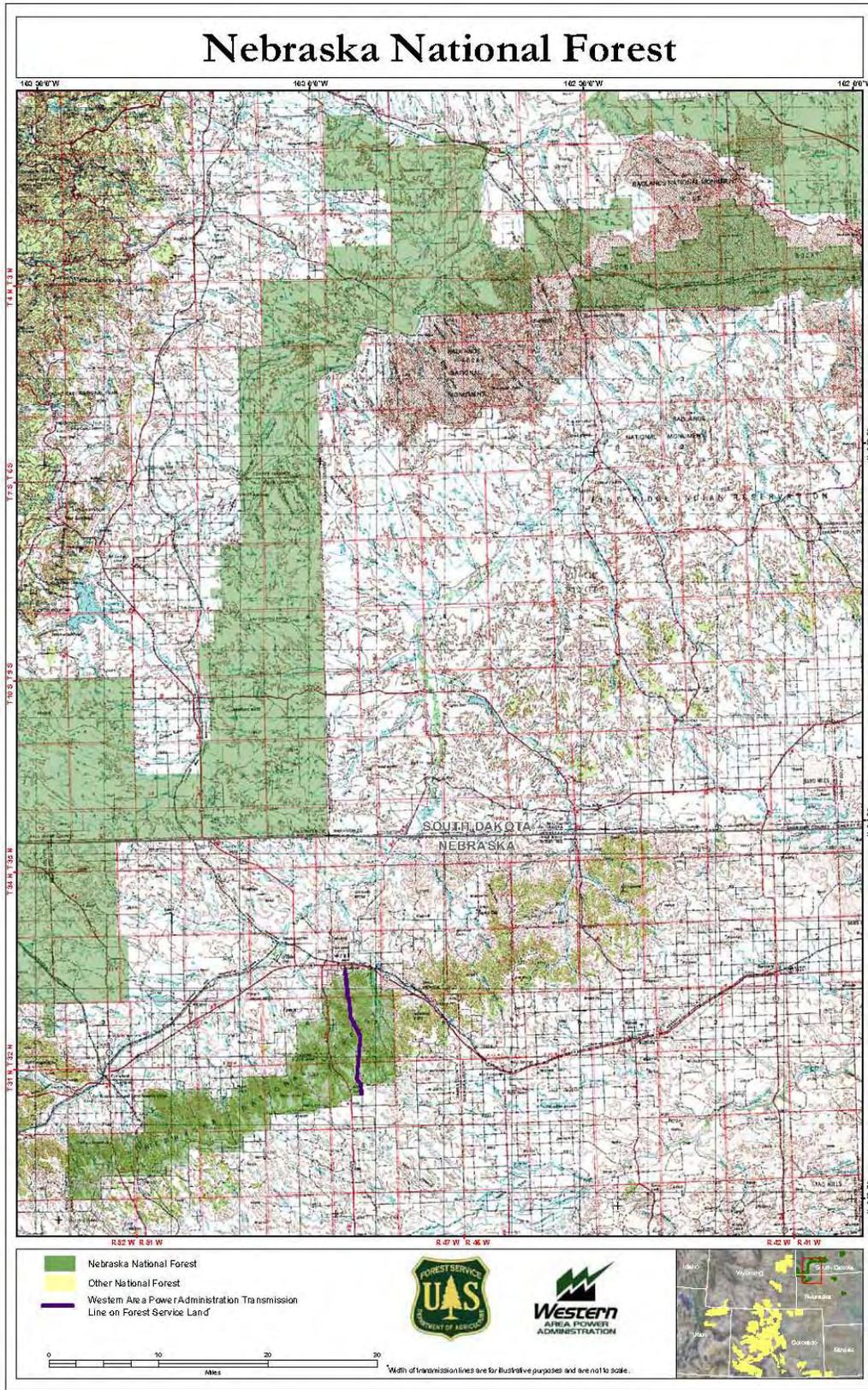


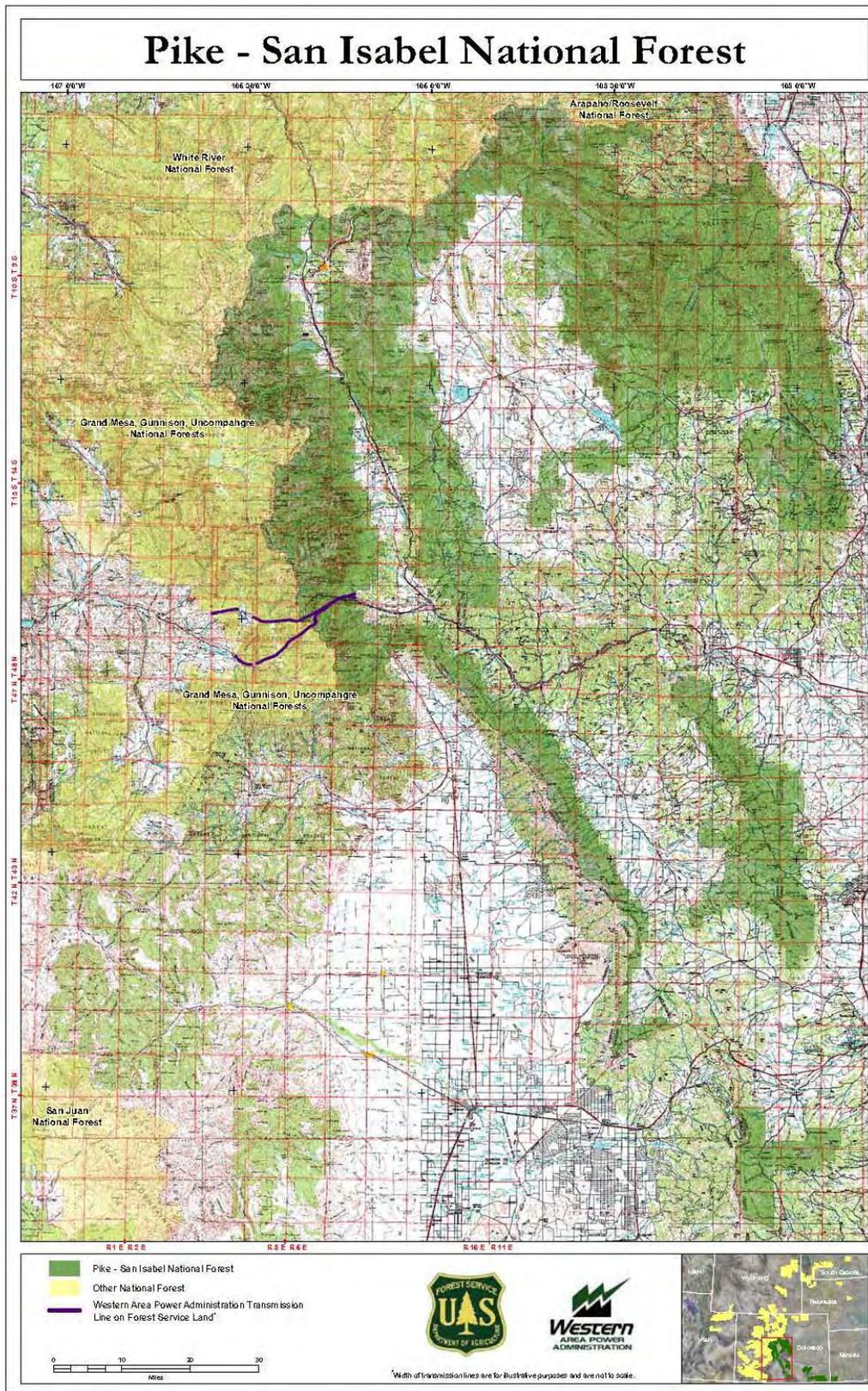
**TO PROTECT AIR QUALITY:**  
Equipment and vehicles that show excessive emissions of exhaust gases due to poor engine adjustments, or other inefficient operating conditions, shall not be operated until corrective repairs or adjustments are made.

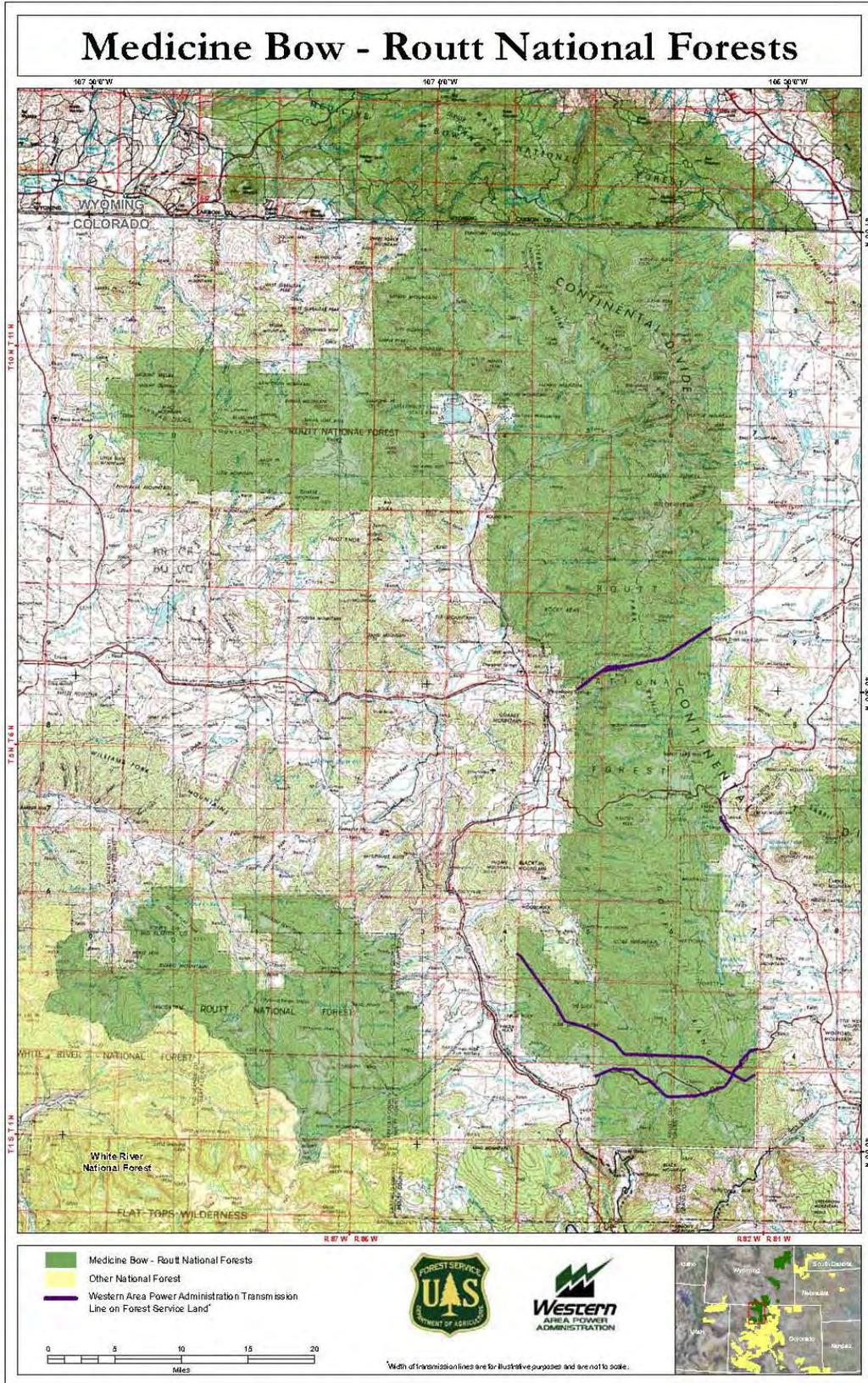
Maps

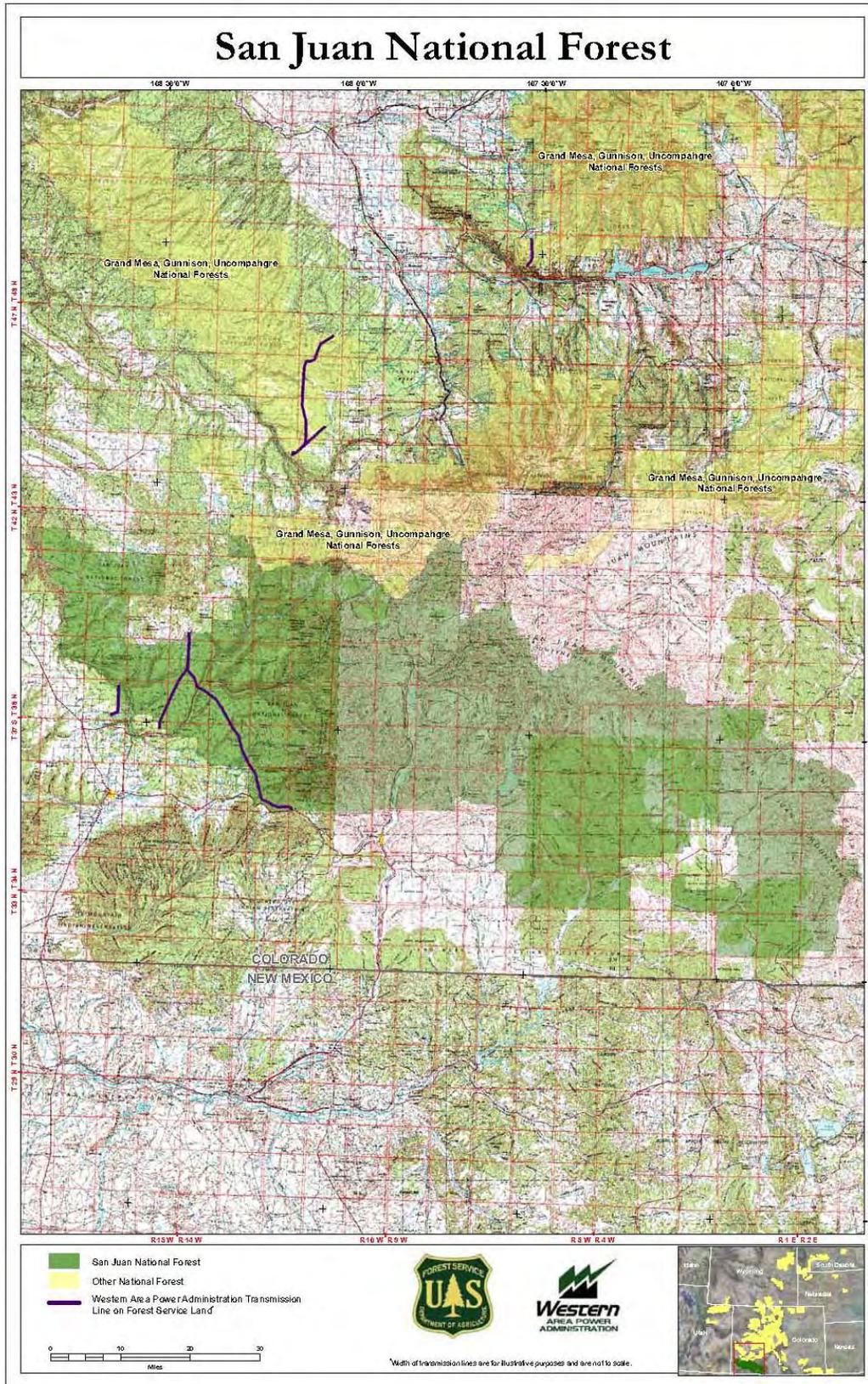


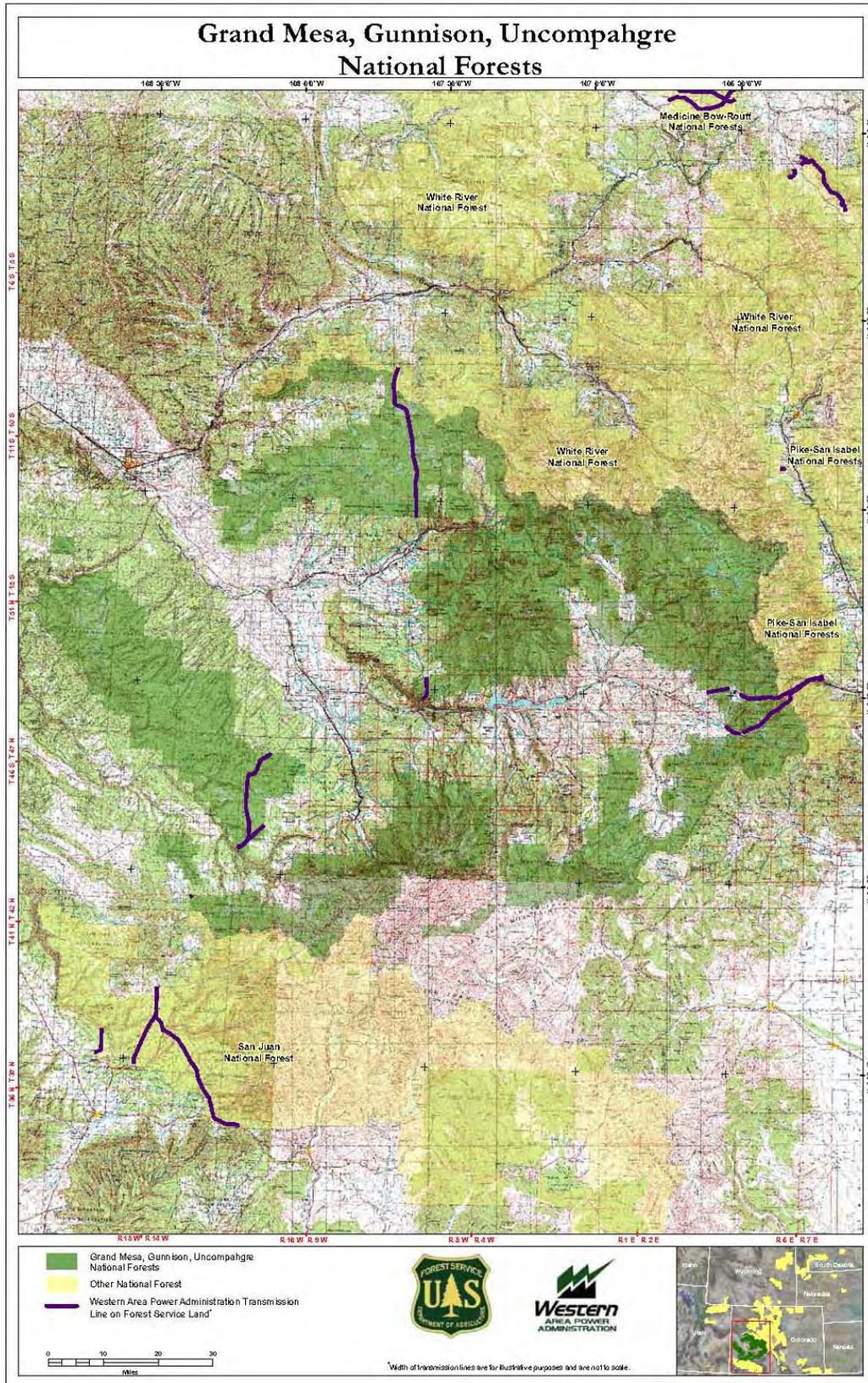


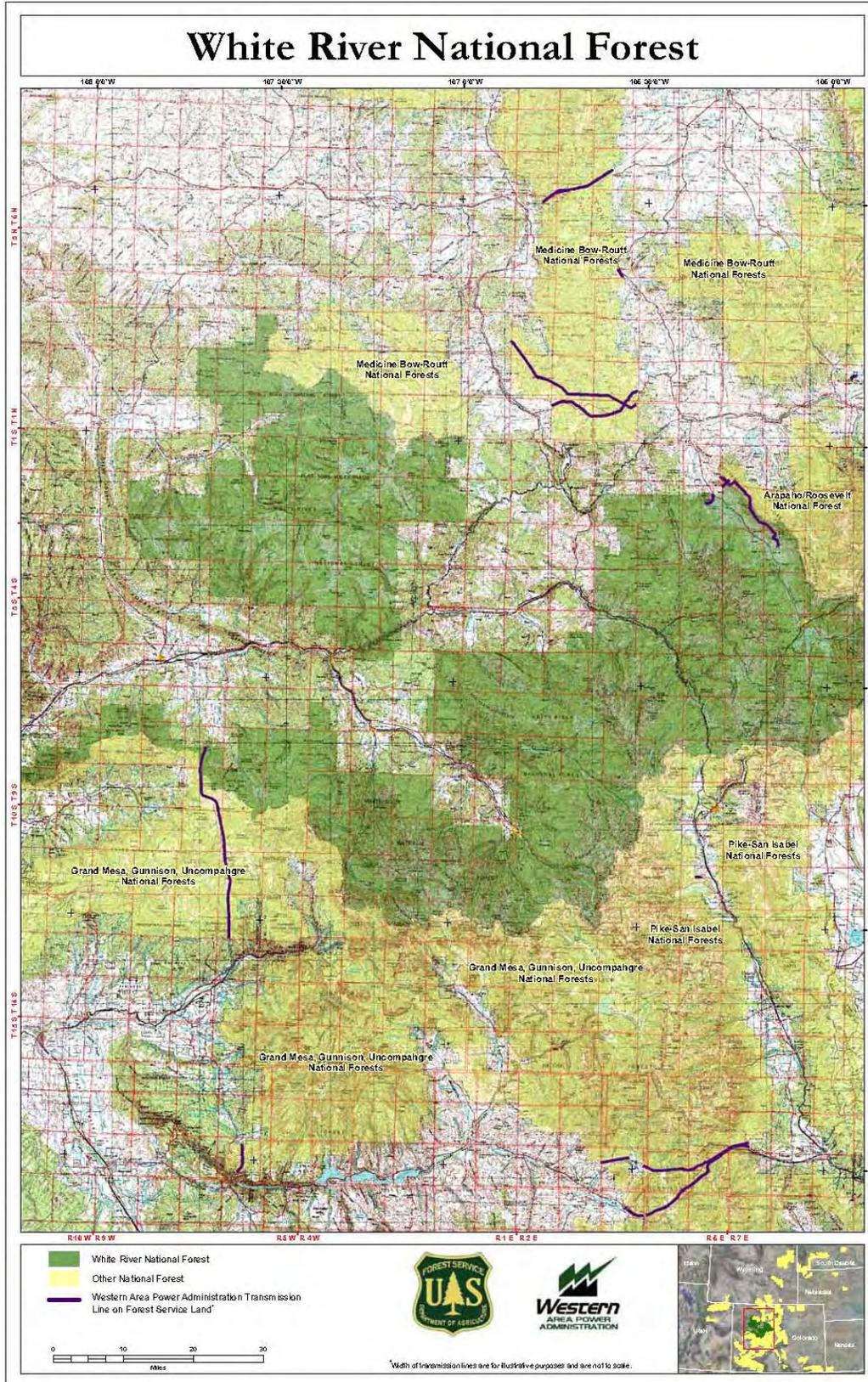












## Meeting Handouts Scoping Brochure

Western Area  
Power Administration  
Transmission Line  
Management Reauthorization

### How to Provide Comments:

Please complete a comment form and place it in the comment box or give it to a meeting representative at the scoping meeting. Comments can also be sent to the following address and must be postmarked by May 26, 2010:

Jim Hartman, Environmental Manager  
Western Area Power Administration  
P.O. Box 3700  
Loveland, CO 80538-3503  
Email: Western-FS-EIS@wapa.gov

Please note that by including your name and address on correspondence, you agree the information may be made public as part of the EIS process.

Your involvement and input on the proposed action, alternatives to the proposed action, and environmental impacts will help Western and the FS determine what to address in the EIS.

### Making Effective Comments:

Effective comments help ensure important issues are identified and addressed in the EIS.

- State specific concerns instead of making broad statements.
- Focus your comments on specific issues and provide supporting information.
- Identify important environmental and community concerns.

For more information, please visit the project website at [www.wapa.gov/Transmission/Western-FS-EIS.htm](http://www.wapa.gov/Transmission/Western-FS-EIS.htm)

### Project Timeline

- April 8, 2010  
**Notice of Intent Published in Federal Register**
- April 22, 2010  
**Public Scoping Meeting  
Denver, Colorado**
- April 23, 2010  
**Public Scoping Meeting  
Grand Junction, Colorado**
- April 26, 2010  
**Public Scoping Meeting  
Vernal, Utah**
- May 26, 2010  
**Close of the Public Scoping Period**
- Spring/Summer 2010  
**Preparation of Draft EIS**
- Summer 2010  
**Notice of Availability of Draft EIS**
- Summer/Fall 2010  
**45-Day Public Comment Period & Hearings**
- Fall/Winter 2010  
**Preparation of Final EIS**
- Spring 2011  
**Notice of Availability of Final EIS/ Record of Decision**

### Welcome!

Western Area Power Administration (Western) and the U.S. Forest Service (FS) are jointly preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the continued management of Western's existing transmission lines on FS lands in Colorado, Utah, and Nebraska. Western proposes to continue maintaining these lines and is proposing to change the way it manages vegetation on the existing rights-of-way (ROW). The changes would require updated or new authorizations from the FS.

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires federal agencies to consider the following when making a decision that could significantly affect the environment:

- Alternatives to the proposed action.
- Environmental impacts.
- Information from the public, agencies, and tribes.

The EIS will integrate other environmental review and consultation such as section 7 of the Endangered Species Act and section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

Scoping is part of the NEPA review process. Western and the FS are conducting these scoping meetings to provide an opportunity for you to learn more about the project, provide comments, and identify potential issues to be analyzed in the EIS.

**The proposed methods for maintaining vegetation in the ROW include:**

- Mechanical treatments
- Use of herbicides
- Hand treatments

The proposed action includes maintenance activities typical of electrical industry practices for maintaining ROW, access, structures, and other equipment. To comply with changed industry regulations and standards, Western proposes to modify its overall approach to ROW vegetation management. Western's improved vegetation management along ROWs on National Forest System lands would include:

- Changing from a focus on danger tree cutting to an active management approach that ensures vegetation does not become a risk to the transmission lines.
- Reducing the amount of woody fuel on the ROW including the debris from years of danger tree cutting.
- Implementing and maintaining vegetation conditions along the ROW that focus on stabilizing stable native vegetation that reduces risk to transmission lines.

The public scoping comment period ends on May 26, 2010.

### Project Objectives

- Ensure Western's capability to maintain the transmission lines to ensure safety and the reliability of the transmission system.
- Ensure sufficient access for maintenance.
- Ensure public and worker safety.
- Manage vegetation to comply with current industry and regulatory reliability standards.
- Enhance the ability of the facilities to survive wildfires.
- Protect sensitive environmental resources including cultural resources, special status biological resources, water quality, sensitive visual resources, and others.
- Control maintenance costs and improve efficiency.
- Reduce the risk that fires would be started by transmission lines.

### What are Design Features?

Design features are part of the proposed action and define how the proposal will be implemented. Design features are intended to avoid or minimize impacts.

### How are They Used?

Design features are used during project implementation and may be site-specific or broader in scope.

The transmission lines cross approximately 280 miles of National Forest System lands in Colorado, Utah, and Nebraska.

### Design Feature Examples:

A SITE-SPECIFIC DESIGN FEATURE USED TO PROTECT SENSITIVE WILDLIFE through security within 5 miles of an active crown nest during nesting season.

TO MINIMIZE IMPACTS TO PUBLIC AND PERMITTED RECREATIONAL USERS, Western's work incorporates temporary closures of trail heads, administrative sites, campgrounds, and trails consistent with the state Range Steward.

TO PROTECT SOILS, WATERBODIES, AND WATER QUALITY Heavy equipment would not be used on the ROW when soils are too wet.

TO PROTECT RIPARIAN AREAS, AQUATIC RESOURCES, AND WATER QUALITY Equipment staging areas and vehicle locations will be located at least 300 feet away from streams and wetlands.

TO PROTECT AIR QUALITY Equipment and vehicles that show visible emissions of exhaust gases due to poor engine adjustments, or other malfunctions operating conditions, shall not be operated until corrective repairs or adjustments are made.



### Sign-in Card



\_\_\_\_\_  
*Meeting Location* *Meeting Date*

*First Name:* \_\_\_\_\_ *Last Name:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Organization:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Phone:* \_\_\_\_\_ *Email:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Mailing Address:* \_\_\_\_\_

*City:* \_\_\_\_\_ *State:* \_\_\_\_\_ *Zip Code:* \_\_\_\_\_

I wish to receive additional information about this project (check one)  yes  no  
*Please include your email address.*

*We are trying to maximize resources by utilizing electronic notifications and project updates.*

## Website Information

### Website

Western - Forest Service Right-of-Way Vegetation Management and Authorization

Page 1 of 2



Serving the West with Federal hydropower  
**Western Area Power Administration**  
 An agency of the U.S. Department of Energy

Home || About Western || Power Marketing || Transmission || Jobs || EPTC || Energy Services

Corp. Services    Regions    Doing Business    Newsroom    Industry Links    Federal Register Notices

You are here: [Western](#) | [Transmission](#) | [Western - Forest Service Right-of-Way Vegetation Management and Authorization](#)

**Transmission**

**OASIS**

**Functions**

**OATT Revisions**

**Interconnection**

**Infrastructure projects**

**Maintenance and Vegetation Management along Existing Western Transmission Line Rights of Way on National Forest System Lands in Colorado, Utah, Nebraska**

Western Area Power Administration proposes to improve the way it manages vegetation along its rights of way (ROW) on National Forest System lands in the states of Colorado, Utah and Nebraska. Implementing the proposal would include modifying existing Forest Service authorizations or issuing new authorizations to accommodate Western's proposal and other routine maintenance.

In response to North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC) requirements and changing industry practices, Western proposes to modify its overall approach to vegetation management. The new approach involves evaluating existing vegetation conditions on the ROW, defining actions needed to manage vegetation and then implementing the actions and monitoring the ROW.

Implementation would include a variety of vegetation management activities designed to reduce or eliminate threats to facilities, mitigate ROW fuel load conditions, and meet other objectives listed below. In general, trees that grow to heights that may present a safety hazard are considered incompatible. These species would be targeted for management. About 237 miles of transmission line ROW are proposed for initial treatment to meet these objectives.

**Learn more about the project**

Western and the U.S. Forest Service invite you to attend public scoping meetings for the Environmental Impact Statement for maintenance of Western's existing transmission lines on National Forest System lands in Colorado, Utah and Nebraska. Scoping provides an opportunity for you to learn more about the project, provide comments and identify potential issues to be analyzed in the EIS. Open-house, public scoping meetings will be held:

**Thursday, April 22**, 3 to 7 p.m.  
 Ramada Plaza Denver North  
 10 East 120th Avenue  
 Denver, CO 80223

**Friday, April 23**, 3 to 7 p.m.  
 Museum of Western Colorado  
 Whitman Educational Center  
 248 South 4th (4th and Ute)  
 Grand Junction, CO 81501

**Monday, April 26**, 3 to 7 p.m.  
 Uintah Basin Applied Technology College  
 450 North 2000 West  
 Vernal, UT 84078

**Would you like to comment on this proposal?**

[Comments](#) are welcome on this proposal. The public scoping period ends May 26, 2010. Please get your comments to Western by May 26, 2010 (postmarked by May 26, 2010, if mailed). Comments will be taken throughout the NEPA review process, but comments must be received by the end of the established scoping period to be considered as the DEIS is being prepared. Comments are also welcome at the public scoping meetings.

**Where should I send my comments?**

Comments on the project should be sent to Western [online](#), by [e-mail](#) or by regular mail at the address below. Comments meant for the Forest Service should also be sent to these addresses.

You may e-mail your comments: [Western-FS-EIS@wapa.gov](mailto:Western-FS-EIS@wapa.gov)  
 You may mail your comments:

Mr. Jim Hartman  
 Environmental Manager, J0400  
 Western Area Power Administration  
 P.O. Box 3700  
 Loveland, CO 80538

**Who is the Forest Service contact for this project?**

Mr. David Loomis  
 Regional Environmental Planner  
 U.S. Forest Service, Rocky Mountain Region  
 740 Simms St., Golden, CO 80401

**How can I get my name removed from the mailing list, added to the mailing list, or request notification that the DEIS is available for review?**

All requests may be made through the [online comment form](#), [e-mailed](#) or sent via regular mail to the address above under "Where should I send my comments?"

**Resources**

<http://www.wapa.gov/transmission/Western-FS-EIS.htm>

6/30/2010

[Background information](#) (3.9 MB pdf)

[Design features \(Draft\)](#) (72 kb pdf)

- What are design features?
  - Design features are part of the proposed action. They are intended to avoid or minimize impacts.
- How are they used?
  - Design features are part of the proposed action and define how the proposal will be implemented. Some are site specific. For example: a design feature that prohibits an activity within 100 feet of a perennial stream, or one that prohibits activity within 1/4 mile of an active raptor nest during the nesting season. Some design features are broader. For example: Spark arrestors shall be installed on all chainsaws.

[Project description](#) (78 kb pdf)

Project area maps

- [Arapaho-Roosevelt National Forest](#) (1.1 MB pdf)
- [Ashley National Forest](#) (1.1 MB pdf)
- [Nebraska National Forest](#) (1.2 MB pdf)
- [Pike National Forest](#) (1.1 MB pdf)
- [Routt National Forest](#) (1.1 MB pdf)
- [San Juan National Forest](#) (1.1 MB pdf)
- [Uncompahgre National Forest](#) (1.1 MB pdf)
- [White River National Forest](#) (1.1 MB pdf)

Scoping materials

[Comment form \(online\)](#)

[Scoping meeting brochure](#) (1.5 MB pdf)

[Design features display boards](#) (907 kb pdf)

[NEPA display boards](#) (658 kb pdf)

[Project description display boards](#) (809 kb pdf)

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[Contact us](#)

[Web policies](#)

[FOIA](#)

[USA.gov](#)

[No FEAR Act](#)

[Site map and content inventory](#)



**Background Information**

# Transmission Line Management Issues on Forested Rights-of-Way

A Brief Overview

## Objectives

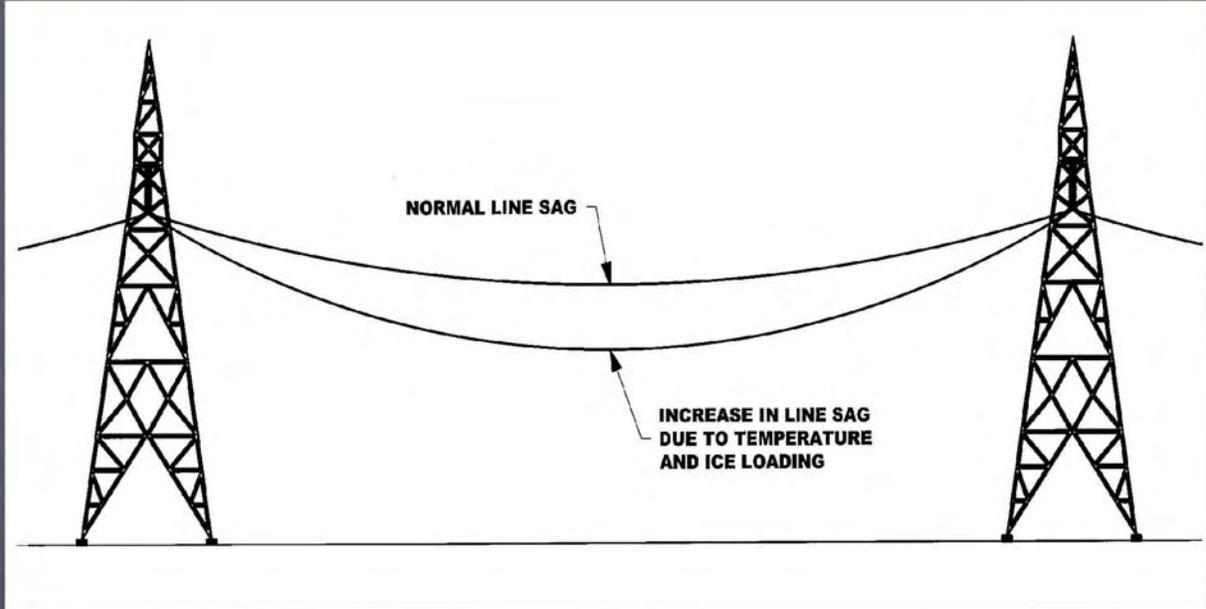
- ▶ Protect public and worker safety
- ▶ Reduce the risk of wildfires caused by transmission lines
- ▶ Ensure power system reliability
- ▶ Comply with current industry standards and mandatory reliability standards
- ▶ Achieve technical and economic efficiencies
- ▶ Reduce the risk to transmission system from wildfire
- ▶ Maintain flexibility to accommodate changing requirements in transmission system operation and maintenance

Goal: Manage rights-of-way to ensure safe, reliable transmission and incorporate environmental values

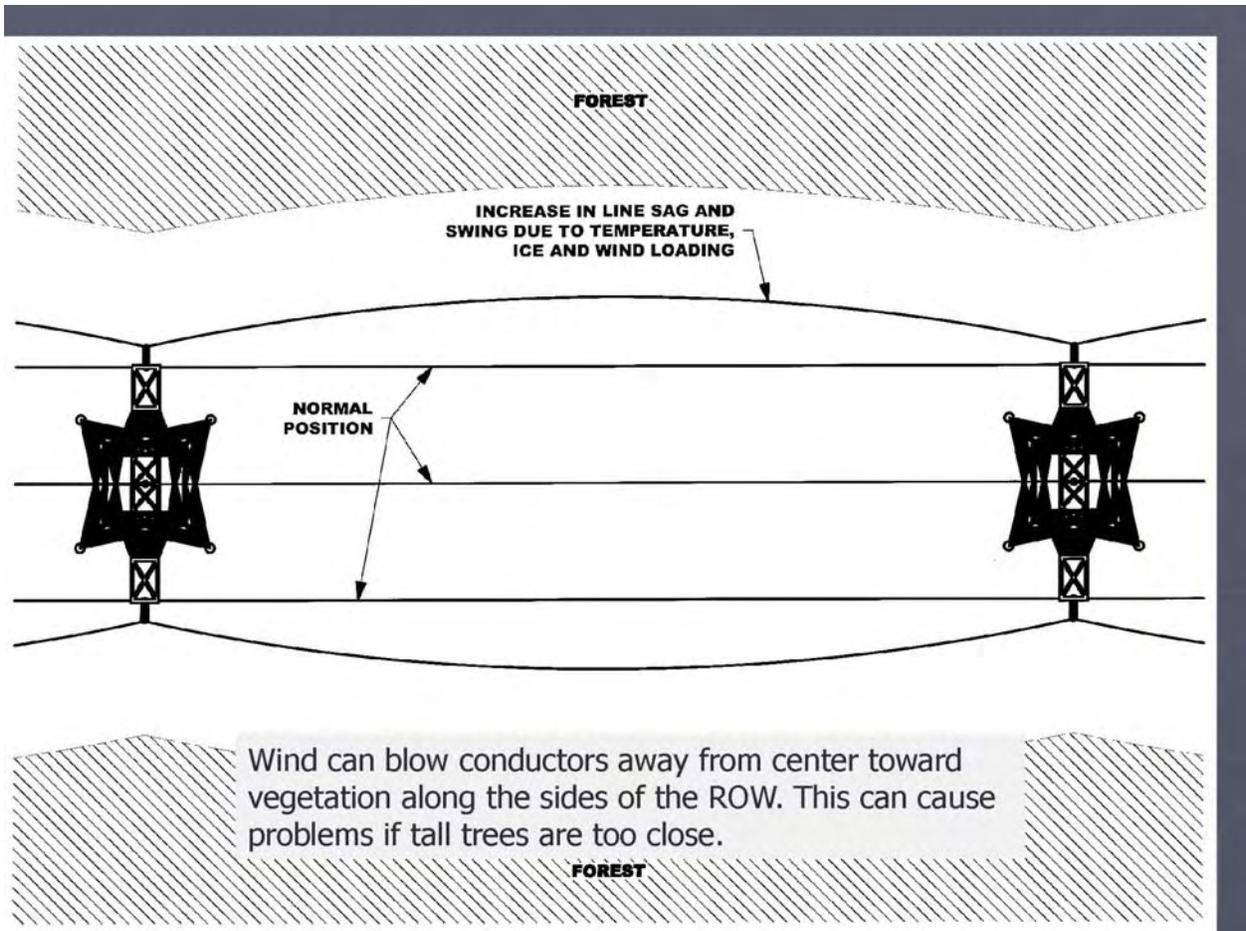


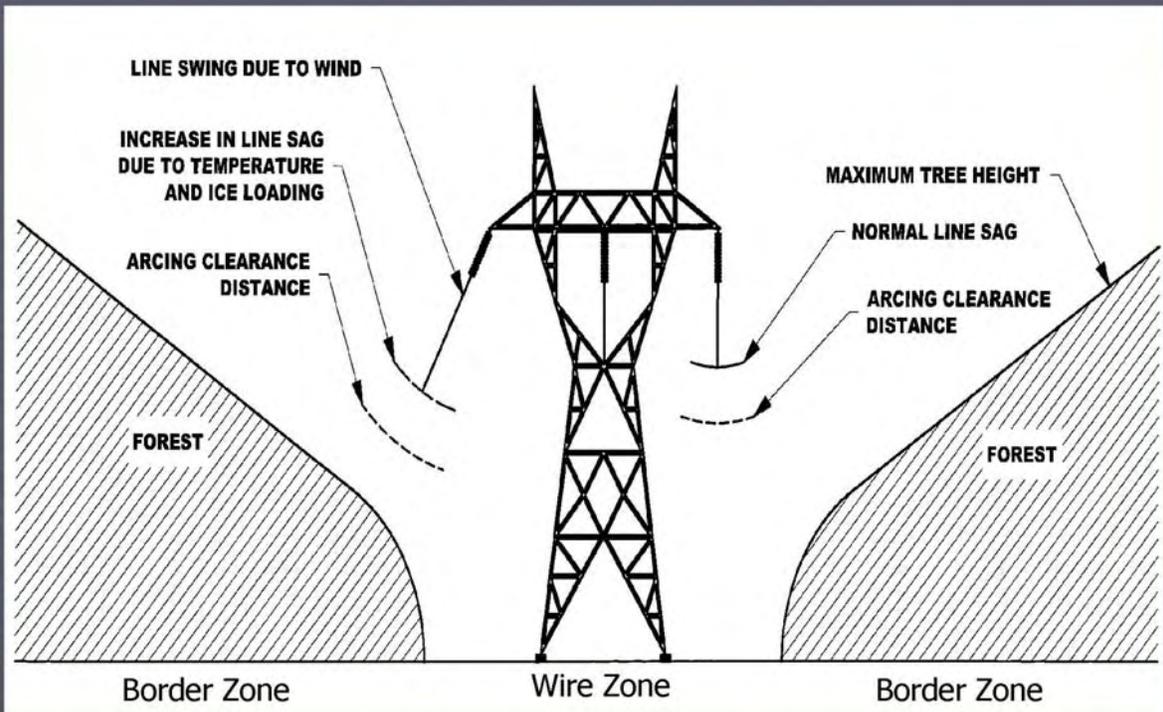
## Transmission line contact with trees is common cause of power outages

- ▶ Northwest Blackouts of August 1996 caused by a power line that sagged into filbert trees near Hillsboro, Oregon
- ▶ Main cause of the Northeast Blackout of August 2003, blamed on a power company's failure to trim trees. Loss of power to millions of customers in eastern Canada, Michigan to New York.
- ▶ Outages result in loss of service to residences, businesses, hospitals and are costly.

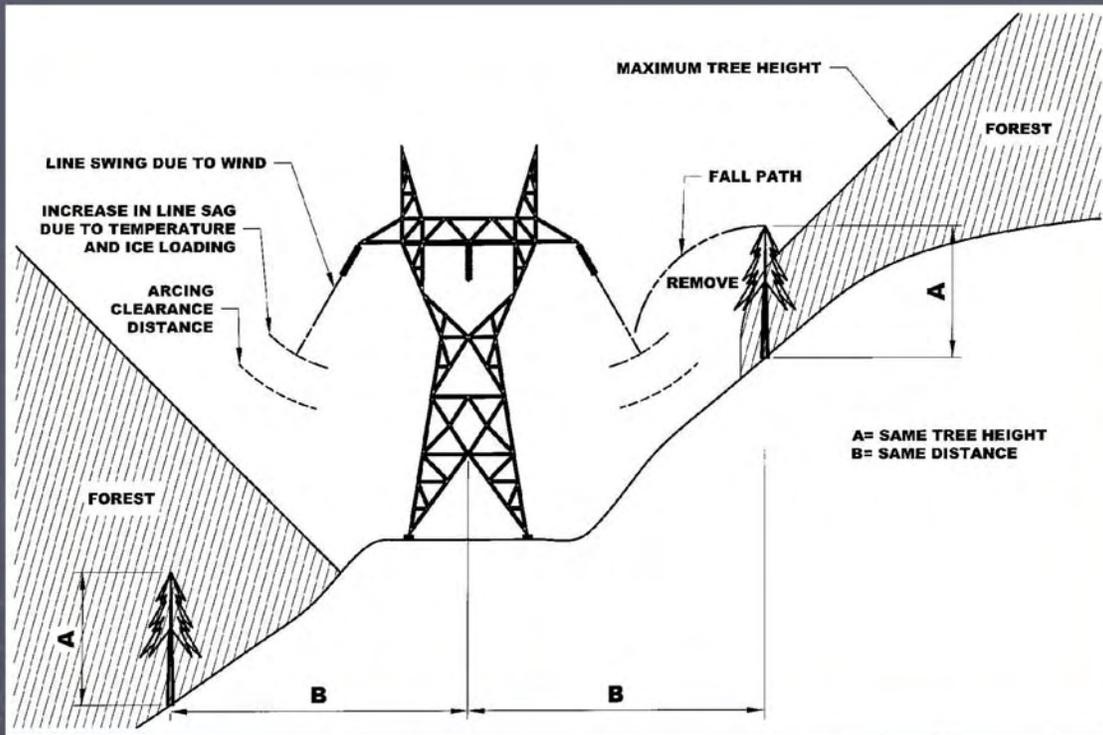


Transmission line conductors (wires) can sag in response to increased temperature. This can cause problems if vegetation below the transmission line is too tall.





Vegetation management requires consideration of both transmission line sag and swing.



Vegetation management on steep slopes requires additional consideration of trees upslope of the line.

Scorched tree tops are a common sight under many lines, indicating the tree top is too close to the conductor.



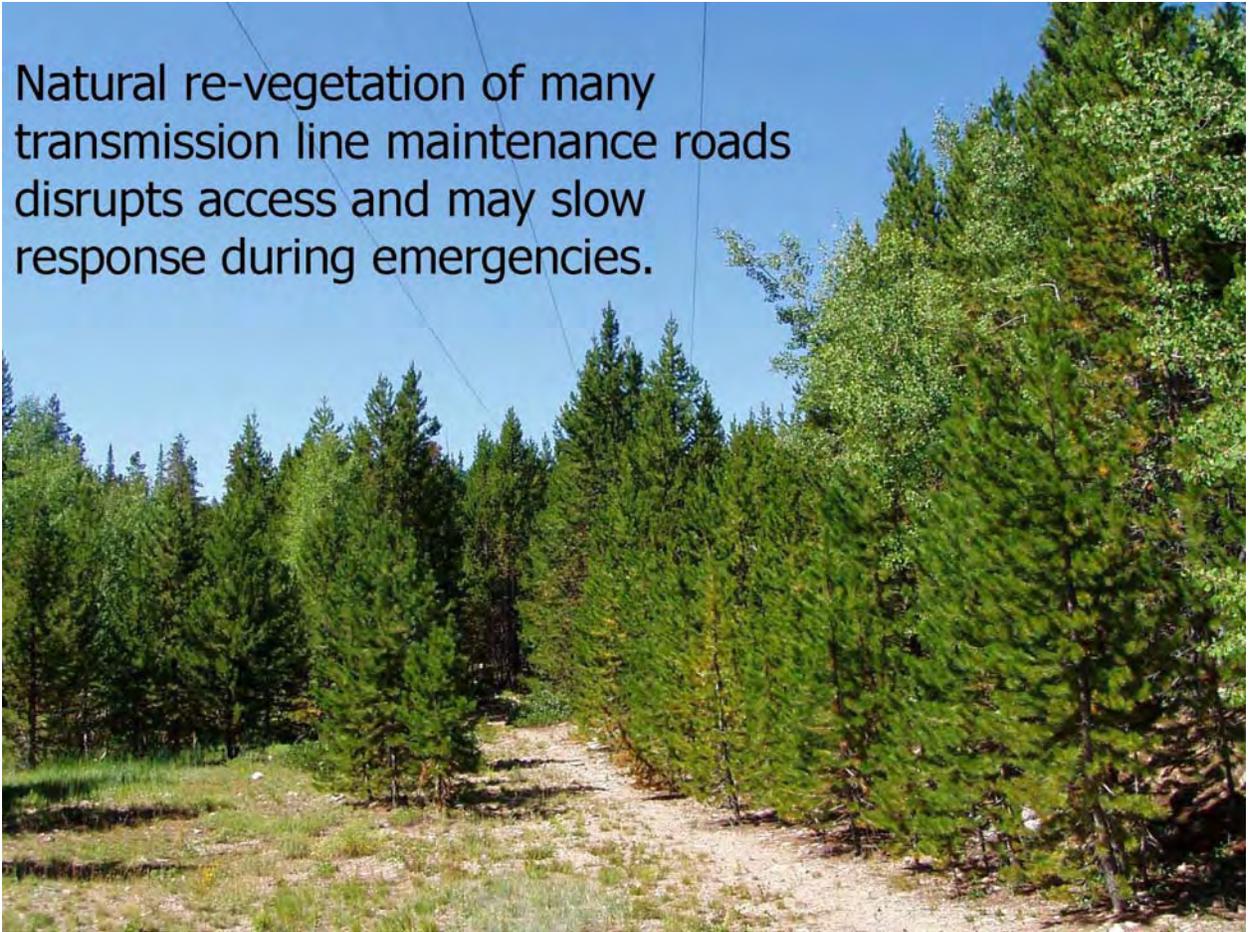
Vegetation regeneration and debris buildup in the ROW increases fuel load and the threat of wild fires.

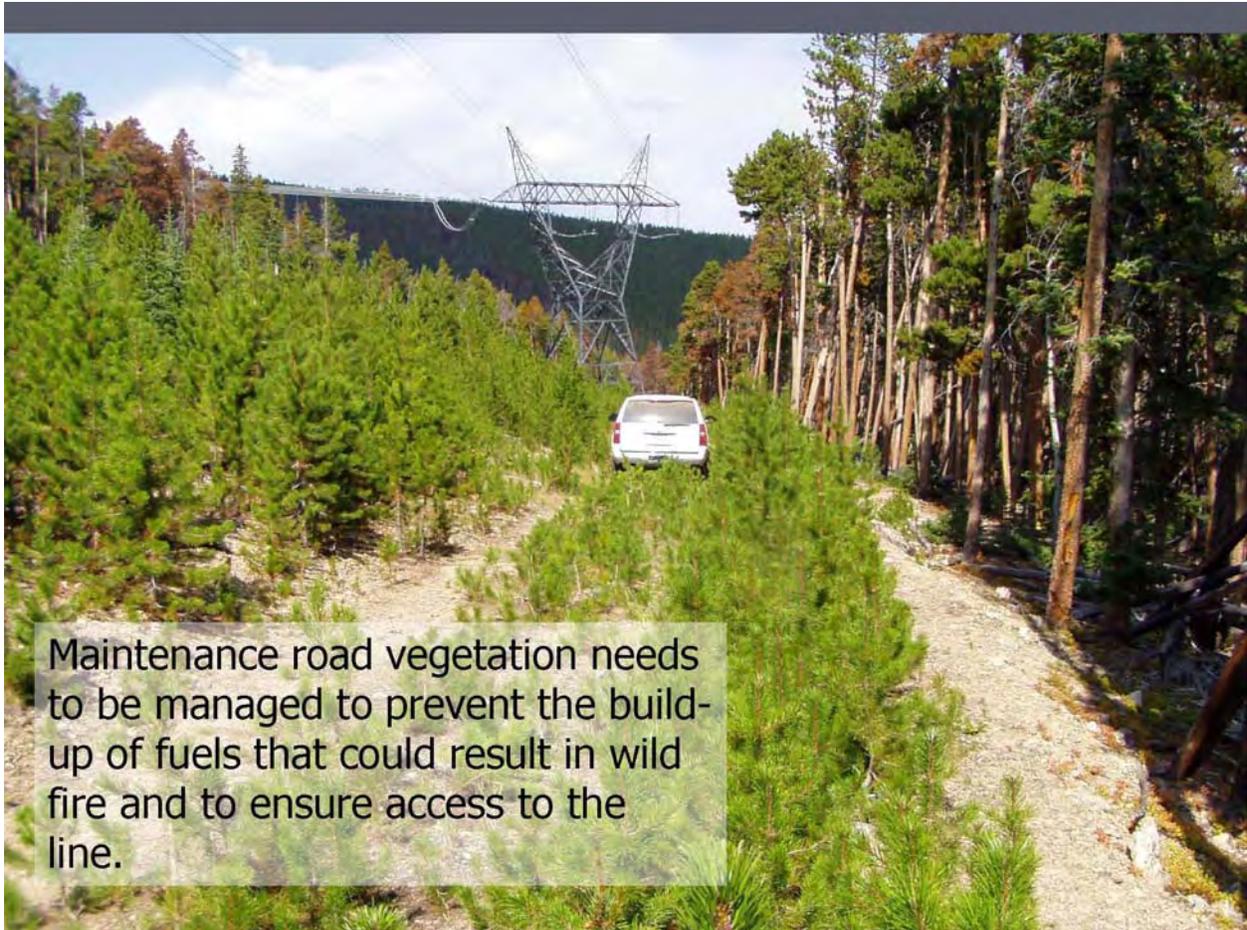


The ROW vegetation was not managed adequately when this line was constructed. Now the dense vegetation must be addressed.



Natural re-vegetation of many transmission line maintenance roads disrupts access and may slow response during emergencies.







Vegetation encroachment near towers prevents access for repair and maintenance. Trees may fall and damage structures or result in fuel sources too close to the structures.

## Legislation and Administrative Actions that focused attention on the utility grids

- ▶ Executive Order E.O. 13212
  - Signed in May of 2001
  - Declared the Electric Utility Grid to be a matter of national security
  - Improve and expedite cooperation among federal agencies to insure the supply and availability of energy for the country
- ▶ Energy Policy Act of 2005 (P.L. 109-58)
  - Required federal agencies to expedite approvals to comply with applicable reliability standards
  - Directed FERC and NERC to develop and enforce reliability standards
  - Specifically addressed vegetation management in electric utility ROWs
  - Enforcement began February 2007

## Considerations

- ▶ Compliance with NEPA, endangered species, cultural resource protection, water and other protections
- ▶ Powerlines and Forested Areas
  - Transmission line routes are permanently altered areas; tall trees are not compatible with power lines.
  - Electric utility rights-of-way need to be maintained to reduce wildfire risk, incorporate multiple use objectives, reduce fuels and ensure safety and reliability.

## Proposal

- ▶ Transition from a **Reactive** to a **Proactive** approach to maintaining electrical transmission line ROWs. Get out in front of the problem to effectively manage it.
- ▶ Use integrated vegetation management practices.
- ▶ Develop a phased, staged approach to implement changes.
  - Short-term - Clear ROWs of tall tree species
  - Mid-term - Manage vegetation threats to structures and conductors
  - Long-term - Maintain transmission lines and ROWs to ensure safety and reliability

Short-term — remove tall vegetation species from the ROW.



Mid-term — manage vegetation to reduce potential threats to structures and conductors.



Long-term — maintain transmission lines and ROWs to ensure safety and reliability.



**Design Features (Draft)**

Examples of Design Features, Draft

March 22, 2010

Designator	RESOURCE
	<b>Plants</b>
1	Before implementing new vegetation treatments and ground-disturbing maintenance activities, the action area will be reviewed using existing data or if appropriate surveyed for listed and Proposed Threatened, Endangered, and Sensitive (PTES) plant species and plant species of local concern.
2	FS will identify activity restrictions and requirements in areas of known declining plant species (e.g. Timing, measures to provide connectivity/linkage of habitats, etc.) so that the activity would not increase the trend toward Federal listing or loss of population viability.
	<b>Developed Recreation Sites, Trails, Trailheads, and Administrative Sites</b>
3	Western would coordinate closure of trailheads, administrative sites, campgrounds, and travel corridors with local Ranger District to minimize impacts to the public and other permitted users.
	<b>Historic Resources</b>
4	A Cultural Resource Inventory will be completed in consultation with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) prior to project activities, if no previous surveys of the activity areas have been conducted. The SHPO must have concurred with a determination that no eligible or potentially eligible historic properties would be affected or no eligible or potentially eligible historic properties would be adversely affected.
5	Activity will not occur in areas with identified eligible or potentially eligible historic resources until the appropriate avoidance or other measures that were concurred in by the SHPO are implemented.
6	A 50-foot buffer surrounding historic properties (cultural resources that are eligible for or are listed on the National Register of Historic Places) within the area of potential effect will be marked on the ground and the exclusion area included in contracts. No heavy equipment or mechanical vegetation removal will be allowed within these exclusion areas. If treatment is necessary, these sites and the 50-foot buffer will be hand-treated for hazard trees and accumulated fuel buildup. Slash pile burning would be allowed in areas reviewed by and approved by a qualified archaeologist prior to the implementation of the burn.
7	An archaeologist will review access Roads, temporary roads, skid trails and landing areas identified during project planning. If the actions are located in areas not covered by the original inventory and are in areas with a high

1

Examples of Design Features, Draft

March 22, 2010

	potential for historic properties, cultural resource inventories will be conducted on these areas. Activities will comply with appropriate Programmatic Agreement (PA) or Section 106 and other applicable requirements.
8	If previously unidentified prehistoric or historic materials are found during the course of the proposed activity, work in that area will cease. Work in the area of the cultural resource will not resume until the site has been evaluated for cultural materials and potential effects and Section 106 is complied with. The discovery must be protected until notified to proceed by the authorized officer.
9	If requested by the SHPO or an Indian tribe, the Forest Service or Western will consult to identify properties of traditional cultural and religious significance to Indian Tribes or other interested parties.
10	Prior to construction, supervisory construction personnel will be instructed on the protection of cultural and environmental resources and the locations of areas that are off-limits shall be clearly communicated to construction personnel.
11	Heavy trucks and other equipment would not cross eligible sites when unimproved access roads are wet. Upgrading or maintenance of access roads within the boundaries of eligible sites would be avoided wherever possible. Where avoidance is not possible, a mitigation plan would be prepared and implemented prior to any construction or roadwork. The plan would include mitigation of adverse effects. These guidelines apply not only to roads surveyed as project access roads, but also to roads beneath the transmission lines that were included in the transmission line survey.
	<b>Noxious Weeds and Invasive Species</b>
12	The Forest Service may conduct surveys to determine noxious weed occurrence and the risk of spread prior to treatment(s) in and around power line corridors. This may result in noxious weed eradication efforts prior to treatment. The surveys may also help identify areas in which disturbance or activity would be avoided or minimized, if feasible, due to expected abundance of noxious weed seed bank in the soil.
13	Off-road equipment shall not be moved into project area without having first taken reasonable measures to ensure it is free of soil, seeds, vegetative matter, or other debris that could contain noxious weed seeds. Equipment may also be inspected prior to moving it from areas infested with invasive species of concern to areas free of such invasive species. Reasonable measures include pressure-washing or steam cleaning in an offsite location where containment of oil, grease, soil and plant debris provides optimal protection of project areas. All equipment surfaces should be cleaned especially drive systems, tracks and "pinch points" to ensure removal of potentially invasive species).
14	Re-vegetation may be required on areas where ground cover is disturbed (e.g., landings, burned slash pile sites, skid trails, etc.). As a general guideline, ground cover should recover to its normal range of variability for the land type and geo-climatic area by the end of the first entire growing season after treatment. Native plant species should ultimately dominate the site, although use of non-persistent species may be used to ensure vegetation cover initially.
15	Re-vegetation will be conducted with approved certified weed-free seed mixes to prevent soil erosion or noxious weeds. The Forest Service will designate the seed mixture to be used, and approve appropriate substitutions based on availability of seed. Certification tags from the seed mixture would be provided to the Forest Service. If necessary, seeding would be accomplished as designated by the Forest Service

Examples of Design Features, Draft

March 22, 2010

	following completion of activity in an area.
	<b>Public Safety</b>
16	Maintenance Level 2 – 5 roads, county, state and federal highways shall be posted with warning signs and traffic control devices shall be employed in accordance with the “Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.”
17	Maintenance Level 3 - 5 roads: a) Shall be maintained for through traffic during felling, slash treatment, or removal operations. Traffic delays may occur for a maximum of one-half (½) hour. b) Shall be left in a condition that will adequately accommodate traffic at the end of each work day. c) Shall be marked with barricades or proper signs placed at traffic hazards in or adjacent to the road at the end of each workday. All felled trees and slash shall be removed from the bladed, mowed, or brushed road corridor each day. d) No felling, slash treatment, and/or removal operations shall occur adjacent to level 3-4 roads on weekends, holidays, or one day prior to the opening of each of the four big game rifle seasons.
18	Maintenance Level 2 roads shall be temporarily closed to general public access during felling, slash treatment, and/or removal operations. Temporary closures may range from one day to two weeks.
19	Western will design and include mitigation to eliminate problems of induced currents and voltages onto conductive objects sharing a ROW, to the mutual satisfaction of the parties involved. Western will install fence grounds on all fences that cross or are parallel to the proposed line and in which induced currents are a problem.
	<b>Riparian Areas, Aquatic Resources, and Water Quality</b>
20	Equipment staging areas and refueling locations will be located at least 250 feet away from streams and wetlands.
21	Vehicles, including heavy equipment, trucks, and ATV's will be allowed to cross perennial and intermittent streams, with defined beds and banks at open channel crossings (without bridges or culverts) only at locations designated by the Forest Service. If the Forest Service determines that it is needed, open channel crossing locations will be restored following use to restore the channel to appropriate dimensions, stabilize stream banks and prevent erosion, and allow for vegetation recovery.

Examples of Design Features, Draft

March 22, 2010

22	Stream crossing structures and other in-stream structures (e.g. culverts, bridges, etc.) will be designed to provide for passage of flow and sediment, withstand expected flood flows, and allow free movement of resident aquatic life. Stream crossing structures will be removed following completion of vegetation management, unless written approval is obtained from the Forest Service.
23	Equipment will not be permitted within 100 feet from the edge of streams, or the edge of riparian or wetlands/fens vegetation; except as noted below and authorized by the Forest Service. Hand felling of hazardous trees is permitted in the 100-foot buffer.
24	<p>For hazardous trees felled within riparian buffers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) ) Trees should be directionally felled away from streams and wetlands in areas immediately adjacent to culverts (within 50 feet) or when trees are too small to be sufficiently anchored and would provide problems during high flows by being transported downstream and potentially block culverts.</li> <li>b) Trees that are large enough to be anchored and would provide instream aquatic habitat should be felled directly across the stream. This simulates natural conditions and provides a large woody component to the stream for aquatic organism and fisheries habitat. Which trees that will be felled across the stream and used for habitat versus being felled away from the stream will be determined by the Forest Service in perennial streams with fish.</li> <li>c) Trees should be removed using at least one-end (partial) suspension.</li> <li>d) Trees should not be skidded across perennial or intermittent stream courses.</li> </ul>
25	If appropriate and consistent with the need to reduce fuel loading and maintain access, felled trees would be left in place whenever possible. If appropriate, slash would be lopped and scattered to a depth of less than 24 inches. Where leaving felled trees may create unacceptable fuel loading, fail to meet visual objectives, interfere with transmission line maintenance or unacceptably limit wildlife access to streams and riparian areas, trees may be removed.
26	For isolated wetlands that occur within the power line corridors, trees within the wetland and wetland buffer should be left standing, if the trees will not violate applicable electrical safety standards.
27	For some streams, terrain may limit the extent of riparian vegetation, and upland vegetation within the Water Influence Zone (WIZ). For these streams, conventional logging equipment may be used within the WIZ with Forest Service approval. Larger trees and woody debris should be kept in the riparian zone and be used for instream aquatic habitat when feasible and consistent with protection of other resources.
28	Burn piles will be located away from perennial streams, lakes, ponds, wetlands and riparian areas. The minimum distances are 50 feet for handmade piles and at least 200 feet for machine-made pies. For intermittent or ephemeral streams, hand made burn piles would be located 50 feet from or outside of the inner gorge, whichever is less.

Examples of Design Features, Draft

March 22, 2010

29	Isolated wetlands that occur under tree canopy may not have been mapped and may not be visible on aerial photos. In these cases, power line corridors should be surveyed to identify wetlands and riparian areas prior to use of mechanical equipment so that the appropriate design criteria are planned and implemented.
30	Excavated material or other construction materials shall not be stockpiled or deposited near or on stream banks, lake shorelines, or other water course perimeters where they could be washed away by high water or storm runoff or can in any way encroach upon the actual water source itself. The contractor or Western shall comply with all NPDES requirements and obtain the appropriate permits.
31	Waste waters from construction-type operations shall not enter streams, water courses, or other surface waters without use of turbidity control methods such as settling ponds, gravel-filter entrapment dikes, filter fences, approved flocculating processes that are not harmful to fish, recirculation systems for washing of aggregates, or other approved methods. Waste waters discharged into surface waters shall be essentially free of suspended material. These actions shall comply with all applicable NPDES permitting requirements.
32	Minimize activities in riparian areas or span riparian areas. Avoid disturbance to riparian vegetation whenever practical.
33	Prior to the activity personnel will be instructed on the protection of environmental resources and the locations of areas that are off-limits shall be clearly communicated to all construction personnel.
34	If Aquatic Nuisance Species are likely to occur, their spread would be controlled by equipment cleanings before crossing streams and other water bodies.
	<b>Scenic Byways, Special Interest Areas (SIAs), and Reseach Natural Areas (RNAs)</b>
35	Trees cutting and clearing should be done by hand within power line corridors that are adjacent to scenic byways and SIAs. Boles would be left in place; slash will be lopped and scattered to a depth of less than 24 inches unless it would result in unacceptable fuel loading, interfere with wildlife travel, interfere with maintenance of the line, or impact other resources.
	<b>Soils</b>
38	Machinery will be used on slopes greater than 35% grade, except for slopes less than 100 feet in length.
39	The contractor and Western shall preserve the natural landscape. Activities shall be conducted to minimize scarring, or defacing of the natural surroundings in the vicinity of the work. Except where clearing is required for excavation operations, vegetation shall be preserved and shall be protected from damage.

Examples of Design Features, Draft

March 22, 2010

40	Heavy equipment will not be operated for land treatments when soils are “too wet”. Soils are too wet when soil can be molded into a ball that holds together under repeated tosses, or if the soil can be rolled into a 3mm thread without breaking or crumbling
41	On soils rated high for susceptibility to compaction and if skid trails are greater than or equal to 75 feet apart, then half of these skid trails will be rehabilitated to bring the compaction below 15%.
42	The organic ground cover of each land unit shall be maintained so that pedestals, rills, and surface runoff from the land unit are not increased. Maintain a ground cover of 65% or greater within the activity areas.
43	Chipped material depth may be limited based on further coordination with the FS. Areas exceeding depth and cover limits should be re-spread.
44	If landings, roads or skid trails are constructed by removing topsoil: a) Topsoil will be stockpiled for re-spreading. b) Inclusion of stumps and woody debris with topsoil will be minimized. c) Handling topsoil during wet conditions will be avoided. d) Topsoil piles will be protected from traffic and water erosion and will not be buried by slash. e) The consistency of the surface of the re-spread topsoil will be suitable for the subsequent seeding (if seeding is to be done). f) Slash will be scattered on the soil surface to provide some erosion control until vegetation is established. g) Where rehabilitation treatments will include both tillage and topsoil re-spreading, the sequence of operations will be planned to avoid re-compacting tilled areas. Tilling can take place after topsoil is re-spread with a minimum of mixing.
45	Sub-soiling and/or ripping shall occur when soil moisture is such that the soil is friable, which means dry enough to crumble (rather than smear) but not so dry to turn to powder.
46	Landing debris will be used to help provide soil amendments. Ash from burn piles will be spread along with topsoil and other debris to create a source of organic matter.
47	All scarification and other site prep work should be laid out with the terrain contour.
	<b>Transportation</b>
48	Slash and debris will be kept out of road ditches and drainage channels.

Examples of Design Features, Draft

March 22, 2010

49	Hauling that results in excessive road damage and may contribute to possible sediment discharges into stream channels will be suspended on native surface roads during periods of precipitation. Hauling will be suspended until the road sub-grade can adequately carry trucks and road damage will not occur.
50	On haul roads, ruts, holes and washboards shall be removed by scarifying or cutting the bottom of the defects. Fines accumulated while blading roads or from drainage ditches shall not be wasted over fill shoulders.
51	Temporary or unauthorized roads will be rehabilitated by depositing excavated soils and rock to fill in road cut, where feasible.
52	Water bars, out sloping the prism and cross drains will be installed as needed to remove surface water and stabilize road surfaces. Stumps, rocks, slash and logs will be placed on the ripped road surface to a density and depth to mimic the surrounding ground. Specific rehabilitative methods would be determined on a case by case basis.
53	Equipment and materials staging areas shall be located and arranged in a manner to preserve trees and vegetation to the maximum practicable extent. The area shall 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, provide for proper drainage, and prevent erosion.
	<b>Visual</b>
54	Clumps and/or islands of trees will be left within openings of hazard tree removal (where sagging lines and ground clearance are not a concern) to break sight distance and to maintain natural appearing landscape mosaic pattern.
	<b>Wildlife</b>
55	Western would design and ensure that repairs and replacements of transmission line structures maintain conformance with Suggested Practices for Protection of Raptors on Power lines (APLIC 1994) and Suggested Practices for Avian Protection on Power Lines: The State of the Art in 2006 (APLIC 2006).
56	Activities that may occur in areas with sensitive species, sensitive live cycle needs (e.g. lambing areas, crucial winter ranges, sensitive nesting areas) would be modified to minimize or avoid adverse impacts based on additional coordination with the FS.
57	Avian nesting surveys would be conducted prior to activities to ensure ground-disturbing activities do not result in the “take” of an active nest or migratory bird protected under the MBTA. If activity occurs during the raptor nesting seasons, surveys would be conducted and buffers would be established to ensure noise and human disturbance do not result in nest abandonment.

Examples of Design Features, Draft

March 22, 2010

58	In areas with active osprey nests, Western would work outside of the osprey nesting season (May 1 through September 1).
59	Prior to activities, supervisory personnel will be instructed on the protection environmental resources and the locations of areas that are off-limits shall be clearly communicated to all personnel.
60	When treatments occur within or near known amphibian breeding sites, a decontamination protocol may be required to prevent the spread of chytrid fungus. This would be predicated on whether the equipment has been exposed to sites that are known to harbor or are highly suspected of harboring chytrid fungus.
61	For Proposed Endangered and Threatened Species or Species Of Local Concern with identified viability concerns, the Forest Service will identify activity restrictions (e.g., activity timing, vegetation management prescriptions, etc.) so the activity will not result in adverse effects, a trend toward Federal listing, or loss of population viability.
	<b>Winter Logging</b>
62	In areas with soils with high susceptibility for compaction, activities will be limited when soils are “too wet” (as described under Soils). If harvesting during conditions when soil wetness cannot be determined (i.e. when soil is covered with snow), either a soil scientist will be consulted or the following guidelines will be used: a) Frozen soil is 4 inches deep OR b) Compactable snow or a combination of compactable snow and frozen soil is 12 inches in thickness. Snow quality should compact and form a running surface for equipment by being moist and non-granular. c) Designated skidtrails are NOT REQUIRED except for other resource concerns. d) Conditions that would be monitored closely during operations are: soil being “too wet” (as described in Soils); bare soil in trails; and day time temperatures exceeding 35° F for an extended period.
63	For soils rated low or moderate for susceptibility to compaction, harvesting will not be done when soils are “too wet” (as described in Soils). These soil types may be harvested on year-round as long they are not wet. Snow or frozen soil is NOT required to protect soils.
	<b>Waste Management.</b>
64	Activities shall be performed by methods that prevent accidental spills of solid matter, liquids, contaminants, debris, and other pollutants and wastes into flowing streams or dry water courses, lakes, playas, and underground water sources. These pollutants and wastes include, but are not restricted to, refuse, garbage, cement, concrete, sanitary waste, industrial waste, oil and other petroleum products, aggregate processing tailings, mineral salts, and thermal pollution.

Examples of Design Features, Draft

March 22, 2010

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65	Burning or burying of waste materials on the ROW or at the site is not allowed. The contractor shall remove all waste materials from the area. All materials resulting from the contractor's clearing operations shall be removed from the ROW and disposed of in accordance with applicable regulations.
	<b>Air Quality</b>
66	The contractor shall use such practicable methods and devices as are reasonably available to minimize emissions of air contaminants. This includes particulates from soil disturbance and activities, excessive exhaust from internal combustion engines, etc.
67	Equipment and vehicles that show excessive emissions of exhaust gases due to poor engine adjustments, or other inefficient operating conditions, shall not be operated until corrective repairs or adjustments are made.

## **Project Description**

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2/26/2010

### **Proposed Project Description Summary**

The proposed action consists of maintenance activities typical of electrical industry practices for maintaining right-of-way (ROW), access, structures and other equipment along approximately 280 miles of existing transmission lines located on National Forest System (NFS) lands. Part of the proposal is to change the approach to vegetation management. In response to North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC) requirements and changing industry practices, Western proposes to modify its overall approach to vegetation management. The new approach involves evaluating existing vegetation conditions on the ROW, defining actions needed to manage vegetation and then implementing the actions and monitoring the ROW. Implementation would include a variety of vegetation management activities designed to reduce or eliminate threats to facilities, mitigate ROW fuel load conditions, and meet other objectives listed below. In general, trees that grow to heights that may present a safety hazard are considered incompatible. These species would be targeted for management. About 237 miles of transmission line ROW are proposed for initial treatment to meet these objectives. Western's proposal includes a long term approach that will involve monitoring and re-treatment of these and other areas at appropriate intervals based on the re-growth rates for incompatible species. Forest Service authorizations for Western's transmission lines on NFS lands would need to be modified to accommodate this proposal.

Several objectives would be met by the proposed action;

- Ensure sufficient access to the facilities for maintenance.
- Ensure that Western's transmission facilities can be maintained to ensure that they are operational for the useful life of the facility.
- Protect public and worker safety by ensuring safe conditions on the ROW and well maintained facilities.
- Manage vegetation more effectively to ensure the reliable operation of the power system.
- Comply with current industry practices and mandatory reliability standards and maintain flexibility to accommodate future changes in requirements.
- Reduce the risk and duration of power flow interruptions caused by wildfire events, and enhance the overall fire survivability of Western's facilities. This includes managing ROW fuel loads.
- Increase management flexibility to address a variety of conditions and risks while effectively meeting other natural resource protection objectives such as minimizing visual impacts; protecting sensitive areas; minimize effects on special status species and habitats, controlling noxious weeds; protecting cultural resources; and others.
- Minimize risks of power interruptions, fire starts and damage to the transmission lines from vegetation growing into or too close to conductors (wires).

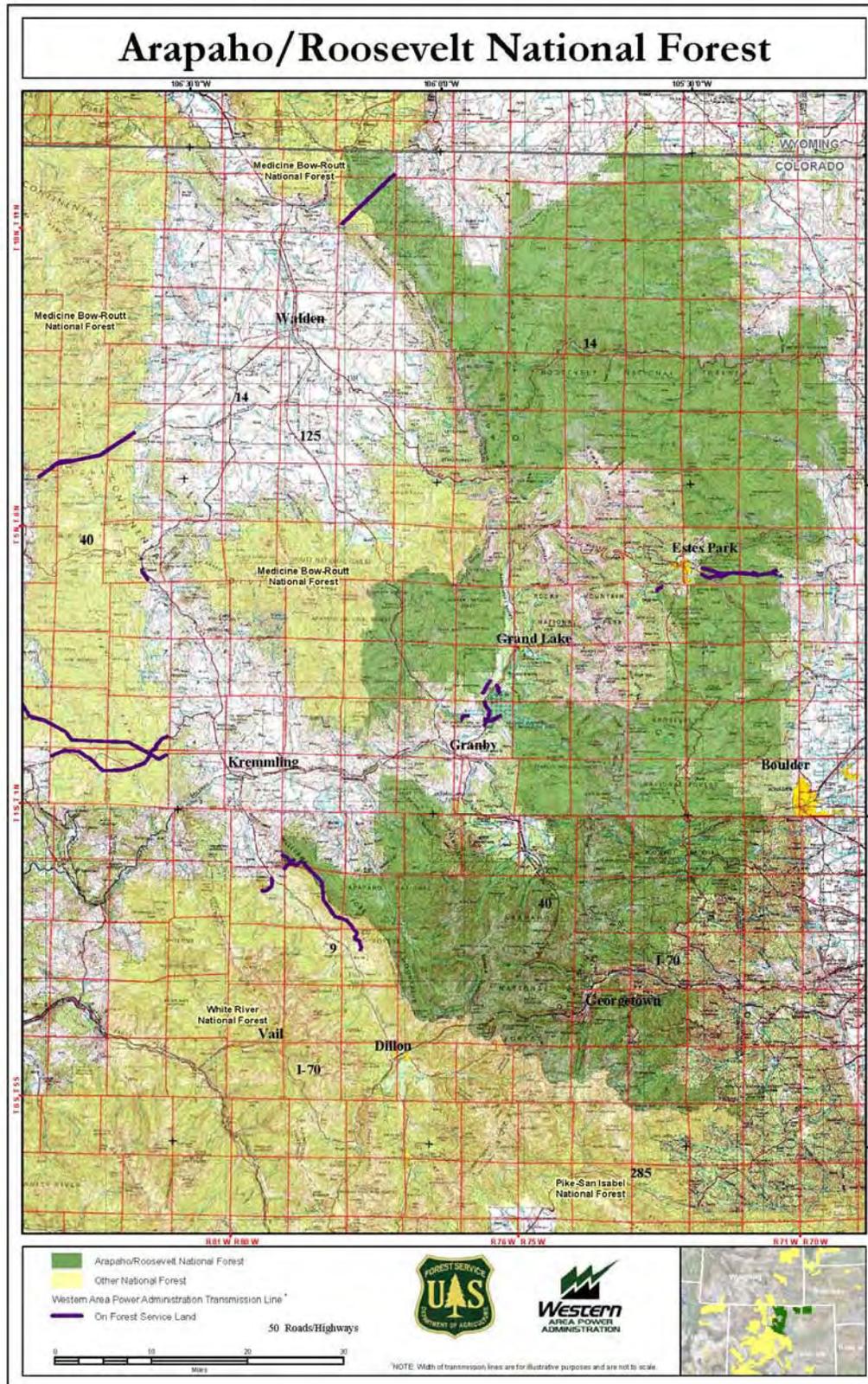
- Minimize the risks of power interruptions, fire starts and damage to the transmission lines from vegetation falling into structures and conductors.
- Maximize cost containment and improve maintenance efficiency. This may be done by balancing the frequency and intensity of vegetation treatment on the ROW in the short term and over the long term by choosing control methods based on effectiveness, environmental effects, site characteristics, safety, security and economics.

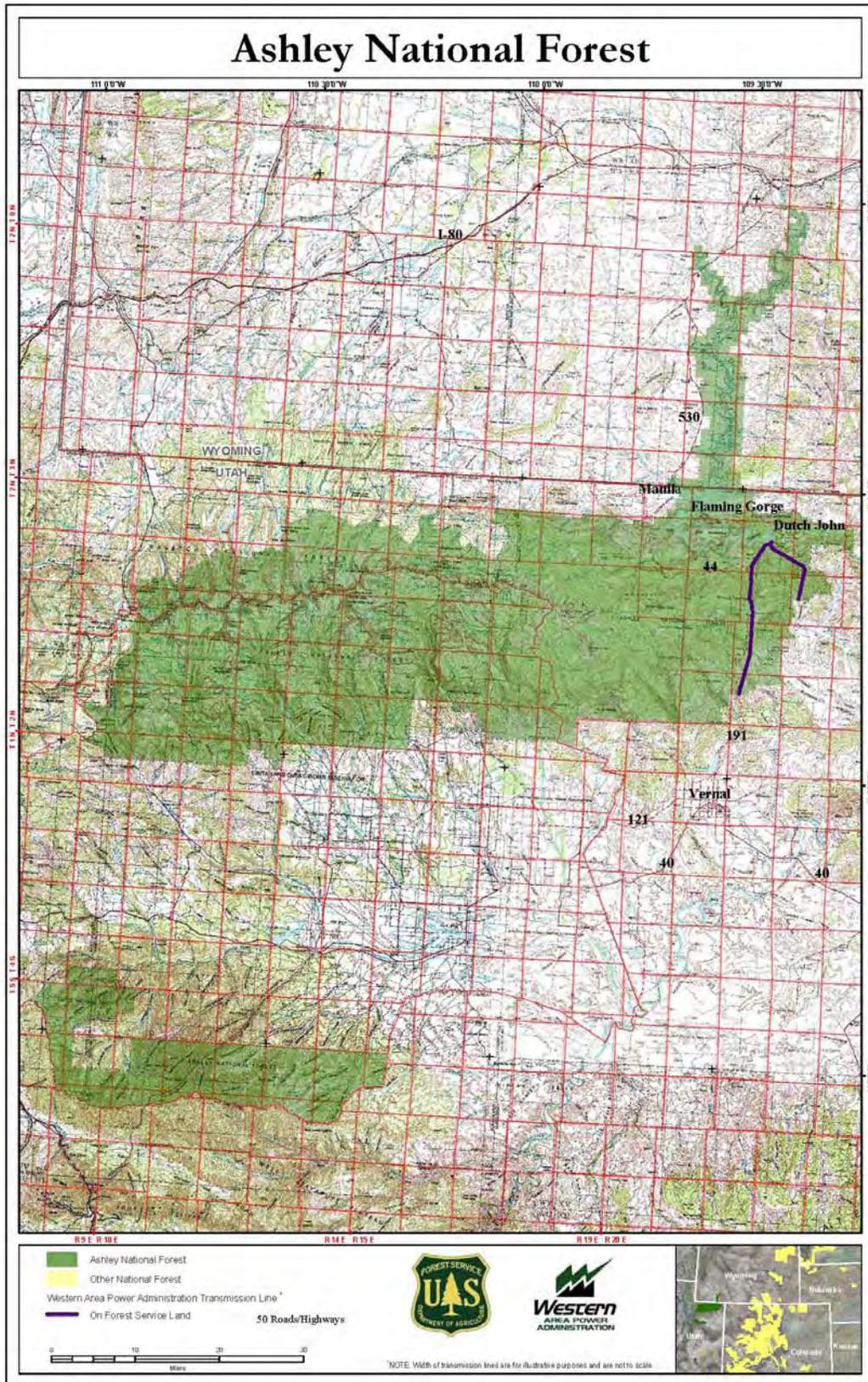
The ROWs cross through a variety of vegetation communities at elevations ranging from approximately 6,000 feet to 11,000 feet. The widths of the transmission line ROW vary based on the voltage of the line and typically range from 75 feet to 175 feet. Western and the Forest Service will evaluate impacts on a variety of environmental resources that may occur along the approximately 4,000 total acres of right-of-way. Design criteria will be developed to minimize these impacts.

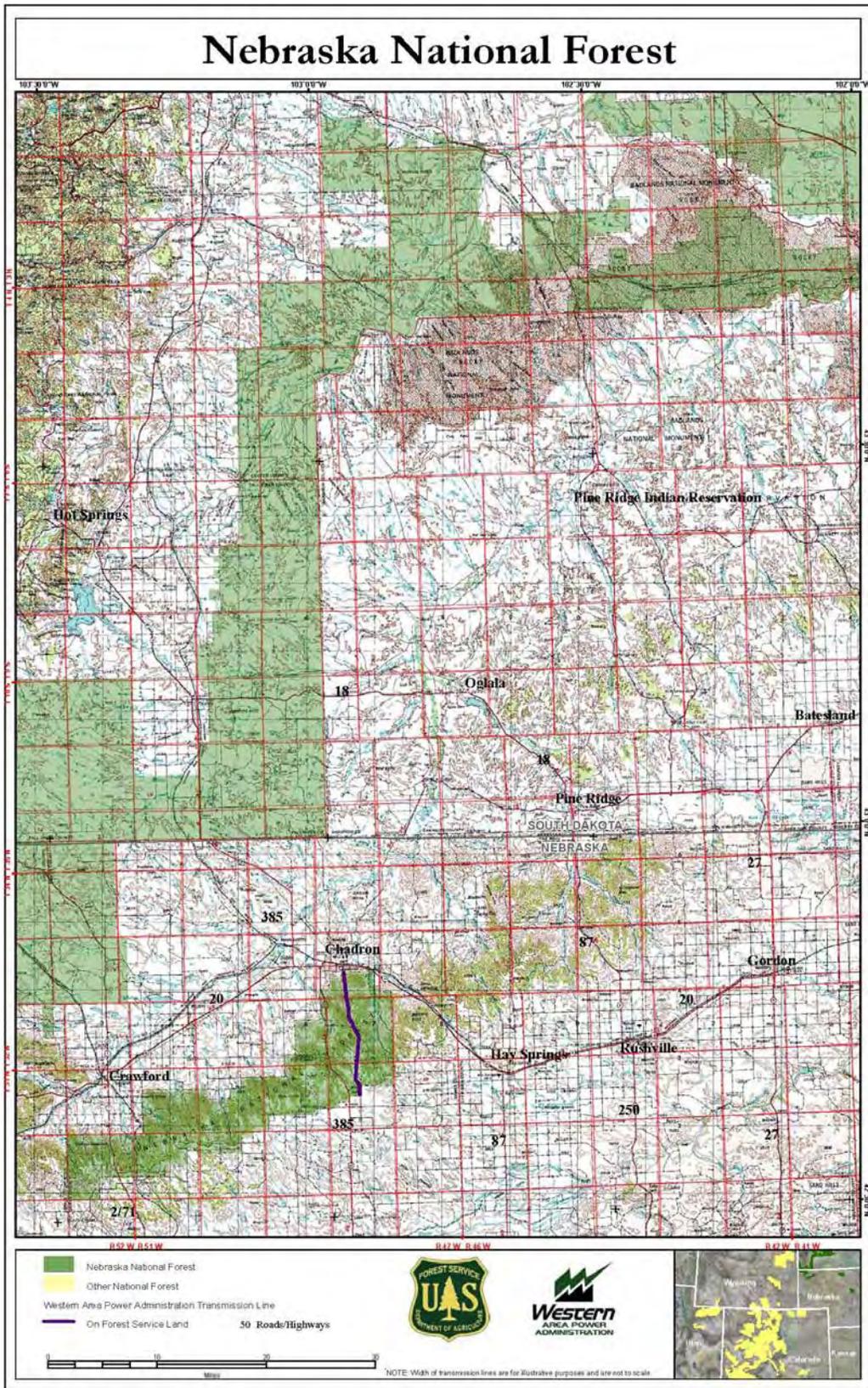
Some vegetative communities pose more risk to transmission lines than others and treatment proposals would be based on the characteristics of each community. Vegetation treatment methods and future treatment intervals would vary on a ROW depending on the vegetation type, vegetative regrowth, environmental protection requirements, and risks to the transmission line. For example, in ROW areas with relatively low conductor to ground clearances, the proposal would typically include managing for lower growth plant species through more frequent reentries and selectively reducing or eliminating species that at mature height would threaten the reliability of the transmission line. Species that would be promoted would generally be grasses, forbs, shrubs, and occasional small or low growth tree species. In ROW areas where there is generally sufficient conductor to ground clearance even with mature trees, vegetation management actions would be less intensive. For example in areas of extremes in terrain, such as in drainages and canyons spanned by the line, mature trees may not pose significant risks to the transmission lines. However, the same tree species may pose unacceptable risks on the crests of the adjacent slopes where these trees could grow into or fall into the structures or conductors.

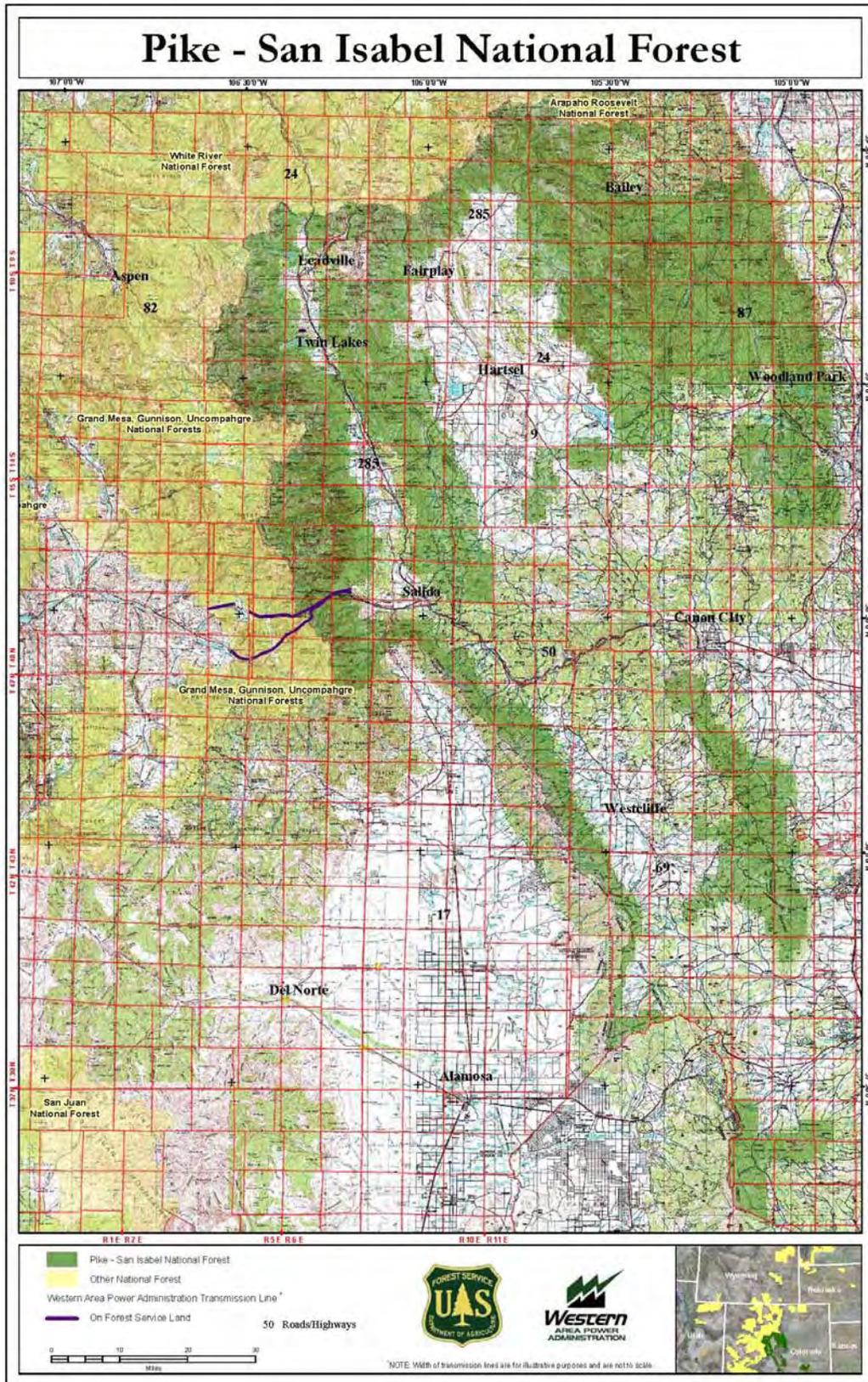
The vegetation management proposal includes an initial pass through areas that have been identified as requiring immediate treatment. The initial pass will affect approximately 237 miles of the approximately 278 miles of transmission line ROW on NFS lands. These areas are proposed for mechanical treatment, to remove tall growth species in forested areas, and address a build up of fuels resulting from several decades of previous vegetation management activities, in which trees were cut and left. Treatments may include logging, chipping, and grinding of trees and existing debris using mechanized equipment, and other activities developed in concert with the Forest Service and public involvement. Longer term vegetation management activities would shift to lower intensity treatments that encourage the recruitment, retention, and stabilization of more compatible plant communities.

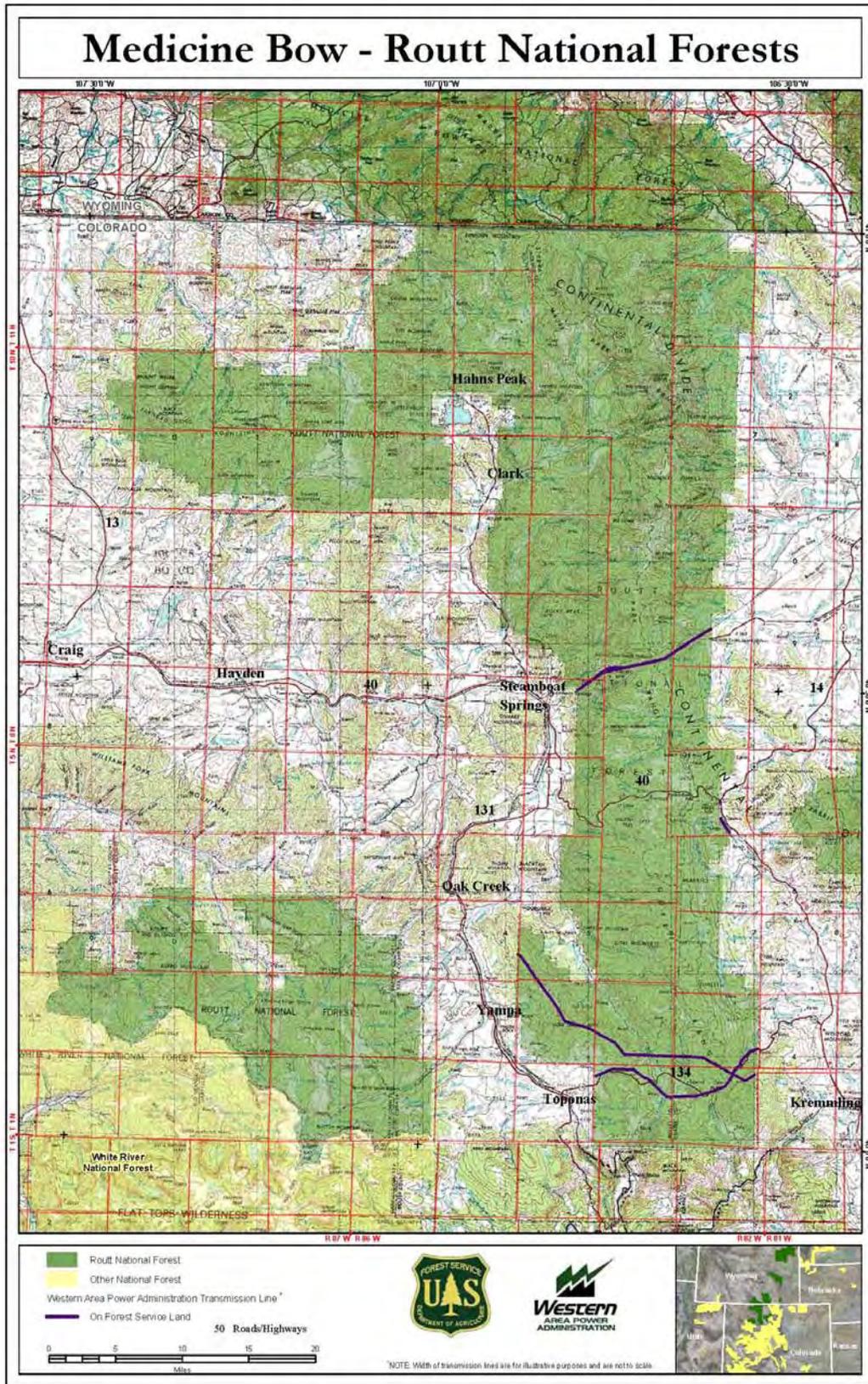
Maps

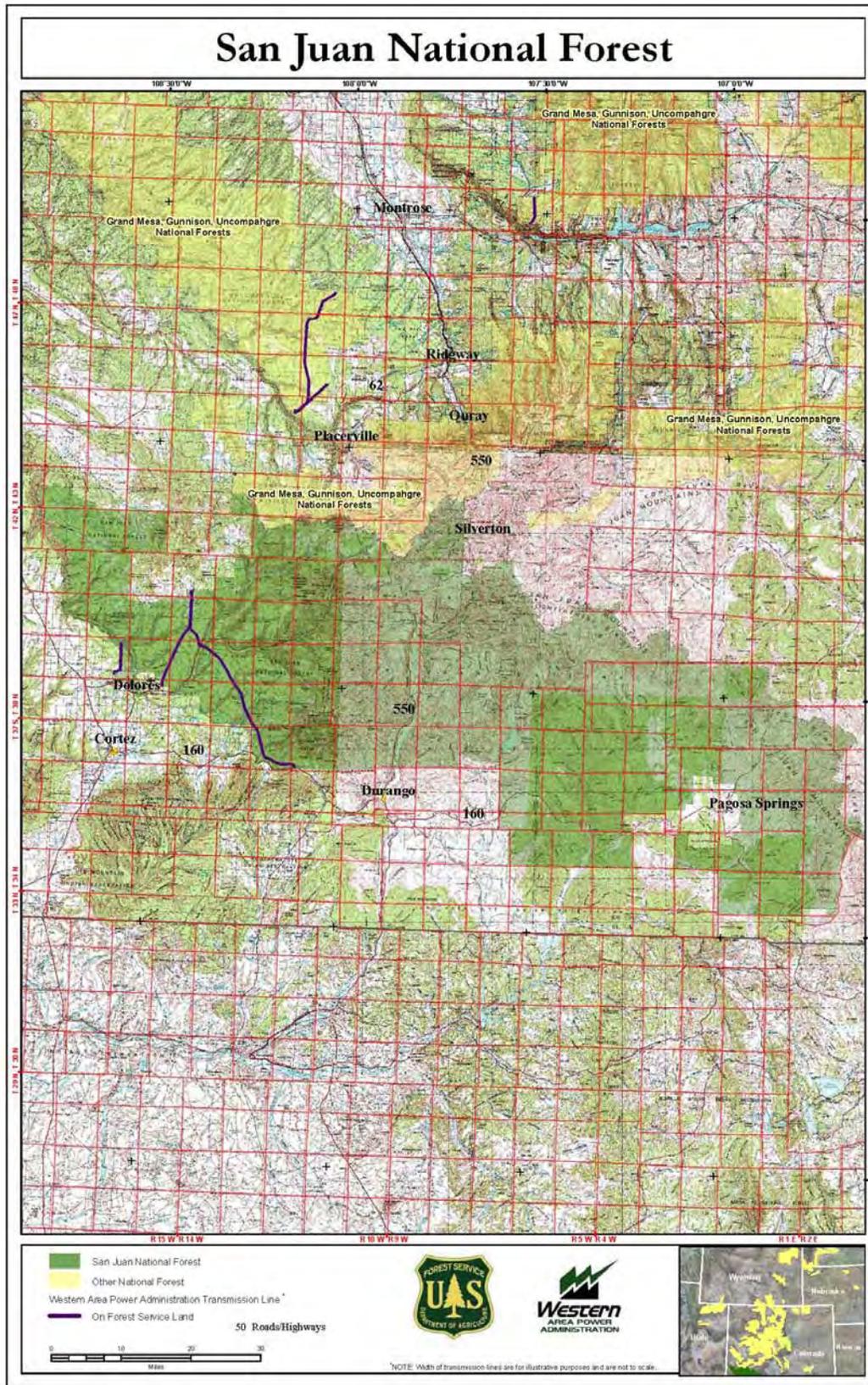


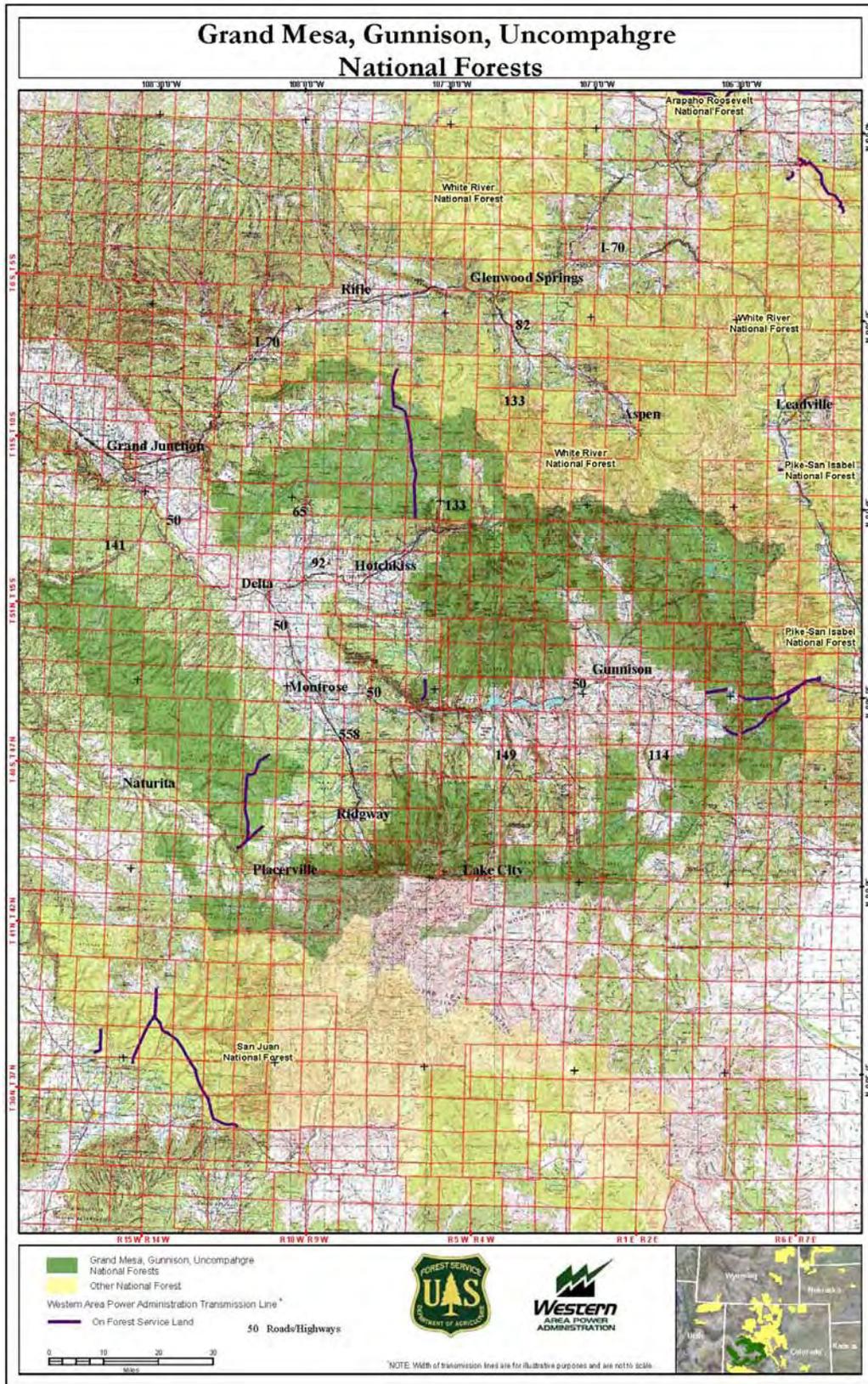


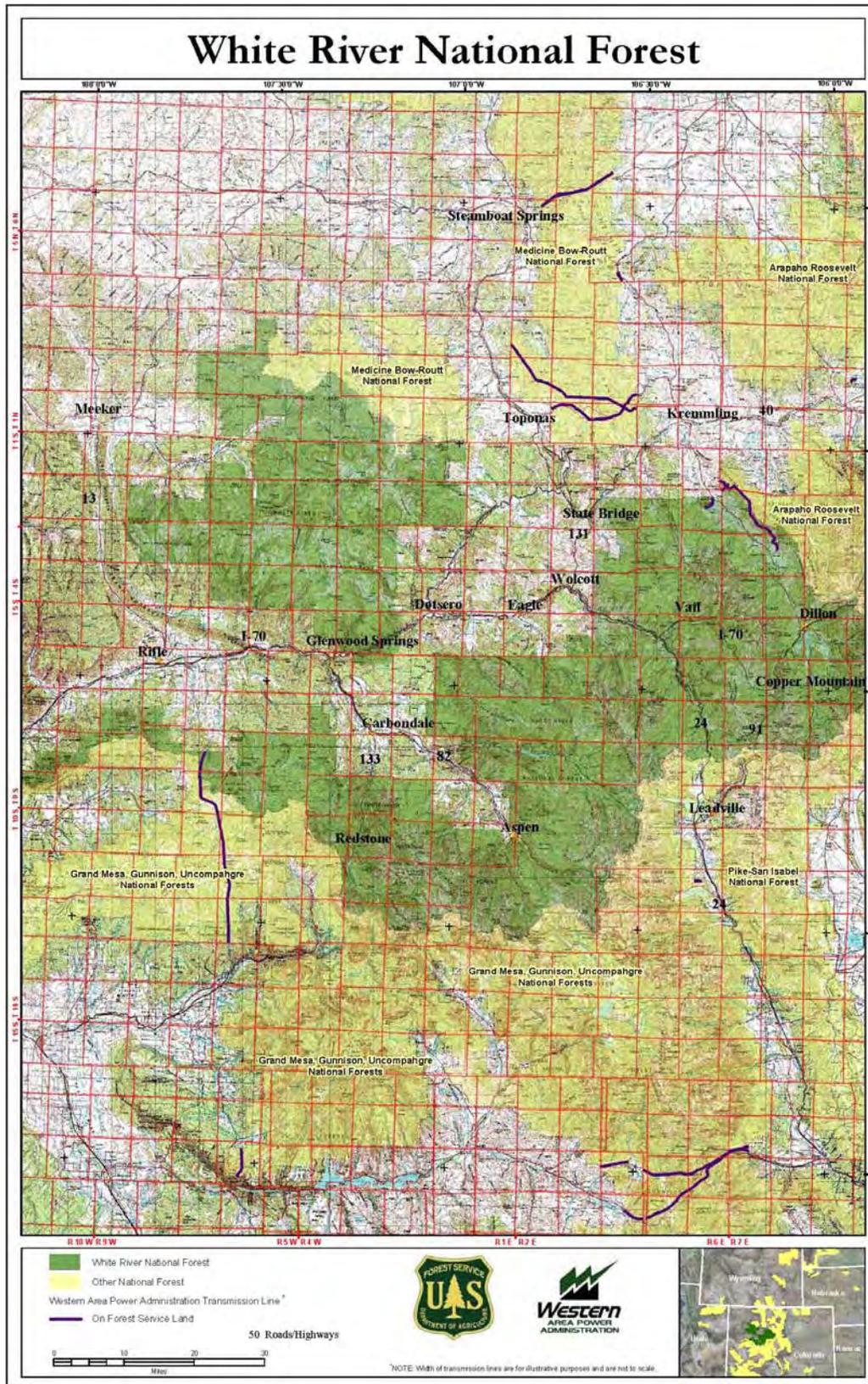












## Online Comment Form

Scoping comment form for Western-FS-EIS

Page 1 of 2



Serving the West with Federal hydropower  
**Western Area Power Administration**  
 An agency of the U.S. Department of Energy

Home | About Western | Power Marketing | Transmission | Jobs | EPTC | Energy Services  
 Corp. Services | Regions | Doing Business | Newsroom | Industry Links | Federal Register Notices  
 You are here: [Western](#) | [transmission](#) | [Western-FS-EIS](#) | [Scoping comment form for Western-FS-EIS](#)

**Transmission**  
**OASIS**  
**Function**  
**OATT Revisions**  
**Interconnection**  
**Infrastructure projects**

**Maintenance and Vegetation Management along Existing Western Transmission Line Rights of Way on National Forest System Lands in Colorado, Utah, Nebraska**

**We need your input to help identify issues and concerns for the Environmental Impact Statement for maintenance of Western's existing transmission lines on National Forest System lands in Colorado, Utah and Nebraska**

Your comments will help us define issues and alternatives for evaluation of the environmental impacts of the proposed project. If you have any issues, concerns or questions that you would like addressed in the Environmental Impact Statement, please complete this response form and click the "Submit" button at the bottom of the page to send it to us. Please provide your comments by May 26, 2010.

**Share your issues, concerns or questions with us:**

Replace this text to list concerns or questions you have about the proposed project.

You can also send additional concerns, issues, questions or comments to:

Mr. Jim Hartman  
 Environmental Manager, JD400  
 Western Area Power Administration  
 P.O. Box 3700  
 Loveland, CO 80538  
 E-mail: [Western-FS-EIS@wapa.gov](mailto:Western-FS-EIS@wapa.gov)

**Receive future announcements about Maintenance and Vegetation Management along Existing Western Transmission Line Rights of Way on National Forest System Lands in Colorado, Utah, Nebraska**

To have your name added to or removed from our mailing list for this project, check the appropriate box and complete the contact information below.

Yes, add my name to the mailing list to receive future information. Please send me information by **regular mail** only.

Yes, add my name to the mailing list to receive future information. Please send me information by **e-mail**.

No, please remove my name from your mailing list.

**Tell us how to reach you**

Include your name, address and e-mail address, so we may keep you up to date about this project.

**Contact information (optional)**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Representing:

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip code: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

<http://www.wapa.gov/transmission/Western-FS-EIS/scopingcomment.htm>

6/23/2010

## Scoping Meeting Brochure

**Western Area  
Power Administration**

**Western Area  
Power Administration  
Transmission Line  
Management Reauthorization**

**How to Provide Comments:**

Please complete a comment form and place it in the comment box or give it to a meeting representative at the scoping meeting. Comments can also be sent to the following address and must be postmarked by May 26, 2010:

Jim Hartman, Environmental Manager  
Western Area Power Administration  
P.O. Box 3700  
Loveland, CO 80535-3003  
Email: Western-FS-EIS@wapa.gov

Please note that by including your name and address on correspondence, you agree the information may be made public as part of the EIS process.

Your involvement and input on the proposed action, alternatives to the proposed action, and environmental impacts will help Western and the FS determine what to address in the EIS.

**Making Effective Comments:**

Effective comments help ensure important issues are identified and addressed in the EIS.

- State specific concerns instead of making broad statements.
- Focus your comments on specific issues and provide supporting information.
- Identify important environmental and community concerns.

For more information, please visit the project website at:  
[www.wapa.gov/transmission/Western-fs-EIS.htm](http://www.wapa.gov/transmission/Western-fs-EIS.htm)

Western Area Power Administration Photo: Craig Lind.

**Project Timeline**

**April 8, 2010**

Notice of Intent Published in Federal Register

**April 22, 2010**

Public Scoping Meeting  
Denver, Colorado

**April 23, 2010**

Public Scoping Meeting  
Grand Junction, Colorado

**April 26, 2010**

Public Scoping Meeting  
Vernal, Utah

**May 26, 2010**

Close of the Public Scoping Period

Spring/Summer 2010

Preparation of Draft EIS

Summer 2010

Notice of Availability of Draft EIS

Summer/Fall 2010

45-Day Public Comment Period & Hearings

Fall/Winter 2010

Preparation of Final EIS

Spring 2011

Notice of Availability of Final EIS/ Record of Decision

**Welcome!**

Western Area Power Administration (Western) and the U.S. Forest Service (FS) are jointly preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the continued management of Western's existing transmission lines on FS lands in Colorado, Utah, and Nebraska. Western proposes to continue maintaining these lines and is proposing to change the way it manages vegetation on the existing rights-of-way (ROW). The changes would require updated or new authorizations from the FS.

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires federal agencies to consider the following when making a decision that could significantly affect the environment:

- Alternatives to the proposed action.
- Environmental impacts.
- Information from the public, agencies, and tribes.

The EIS will integrate other environmental review and consultation such as section 7 of the Endangered Species Act and section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

Scoping is part of the NEPA review process. Western and the FS are conducting three scoping meetings to provide an opportunity for you to learn more about the project, provide comments, and identify potential issues to be analyzed in the EIS.

The proposed methods for maintaining vegetation in the ROW include:

- Mechanical treatments
- Use of herbicides
- Hand treatments

The proposed action includes maintenance activities typical of electrical industry practices for maintaining ROW access, structures, and other equipment. To comply with changed industry regulations and standards, Western proposes to modify its overall approach to ROW vegetation management along ROWs on National Forest System lands would include:

- Changing from a focus on danger tree cutting to an active management approach that ensures vegetation does not become a risk to the transmission lines.
- Reducing the amount of wildfire fuel on the ROW including the debris from years of danger tree cutting.
- Implementing and maintaining vegetation conditions along the ROW that focus on establishing stable native vegetation that reduces risk to transmission lines.

Vegetation regeneration in the ROW.

ABOVE: ROW after vegetation treatment.

BELOW: ROW vegetation regeneration during the first growing season after treatment.

The public scoping comment period ends on May 26, 2010.

**Project Objectives**

- Ensure Western's capability to maintain the transmission lines to ensure safety and the reliability of the transmission system.
- Ensure sufficient access for maintenance.
- Ensure public and worker safety.
- Manage vegetation to comply with current industry and nascent reliability standards.
- Enhance the ability of the facilities to survive wildfires.
- Protect sensitive environmental resources including cultural resources, special status biological resources, water quality, sensitive visual resources, and others.
- Control maintenance costs and improve efficiency.
- Reduce the risk that fires would be started by transmission lines.

## What are Design Features?

Design features are part of the proposed action and define how the proposal will be implemented. Design features are intended to avoid or minimize impacts.

The transmission lines cross approximately 280 miles of National Forest System lands in Colorado, Utah, and Nebraska.

**How are They Used?**

Design features are used during project implementation and may be site-specific or broader in scope.

A SITE-SPECIFIC DESIGN FEATURE USED TO PROTECT SENSITIVE WILDLIFE: Provide publicly when to walk of an access right-of-way during nesting season.

A BROADER SCOPE DESIGN FEATURE USED TO REDUCE THE RISK OF WILDFIRE: Require spark arrestors to be installed on all chippers.

**Design Feature Examples:**

**TO MINIMIZE IMPACTS TO PUBLIC AND PERMITTED RECREATIONAL USERS:**

Western would coordinate temporary closures of trail heads, administrative sites, campgrounds, and trail corridors with the local Ranger Districts.

**TO PROTECT SOILS, WATERSHEDS, AND WATER QUALITY:**

Heavy equipment would not be used on the ROW when soils are too wet.

**TO PROTECT RIPARIAN AREAS, AQUATIC RESOURCES, AND WATER QUALITY:**

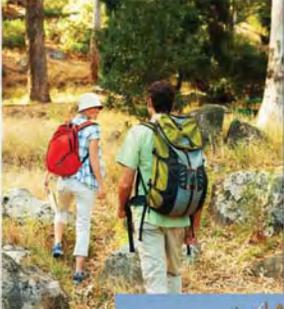
Equipment staging areas and refueling locations will be located at least 100 feet away from streams and wetlands.

**TO PROTECT AIR QUALITY:**

Equipment and vehicles that show excessive emissions of exhaust gases due to poor engine adjustments, or other inefficient operating conditions, shall not be operated until complete repairs or adjustments are made.

### Design Features Display Boards

#### Design Feature Examples



**TO MINIMIZE IMPACTS TO PUBLIC AND PERMITTED RECREATIONAL USERS:**  
Western would coordinate temporary closures of trail heads, administrative sites, campgrounds, and trail corridors with the local Ranger Districts.



**TO PROTECT SOILS, WATERSHEDS, AND WATER QUALITY:**  
Heavy equipment should not be used on the ROW when soils are too wet.

#### What are Design Features?

Design features are part of the proposed action and define how the proposal will be implemented. Design features are intended to avoid or minimize impacts.

#### How are They Used?

Design features are used during project implementation and may be site-specific or broader in scope.

#### Design Feature Examples



**TO PROTECT RIPARIAN AREAS, AQUATIC RESOURCES, AND WATER QUALITY:**  
Equipment staging areas and refueling locations will be located at least 250 feet away from streams and wetlands.



**A SITE-SPECIFIC DESIGN FEATURE USED TO PROTECT SENSITIVE WILDLIFE:**  
Prohibit activity within 1/2 mile of an active raptor nest during nesting season.



**TO PROTECT AIR QUALITY:**  
Equipment and vehicles that show excessive emissions of hydrocarbon gases due to poor engine adjustments, or other inefficient operating conditions, shall not be operated until corrective repairs or adjustments are made.

### National Environmental Policy Act Display Boards

#### National Environmental Policy Act



Western Area Power Administration (Western) and the U.S. Forest Service (FS) are jointly preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the continued management of Western's existing transmission lines on FS lands. Western proposes to continue maintaining these lines and is proposing to change the way it manages vegetation on the right-of-way (ROW). The changes would require updated or new authorizations from the FS.

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires federal agencies to consider the following when making a decision that could significantly affect the environment:

- Alternatives to the proposed action
- Environmental impacts
- Comments and information from the public, federal, state, and local agencies, tribes, and affected parties



Vegetation regeneration on the ROW

The EIS will integrate other environmental review and consultation such as section 7 of the Endangered Species Act and section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.



Regeneration of aspen trees in the ROW

#### What is Scoping?

Scoping is part of the NEPA review process. During scoping federal agencies solicit comments and information from the public, agencies, and tribes. Comments on the proposed action, alternatives to the proposed action and environmental impacts will help Western and the FS determine what to address in the EIS.



Western Area Power Administration Aut-Cross Lines

#### Project Timeline

- April 8, 2010  
Notice of Intent Published in Federal Register
- April 22, 2010  
Public Scoping Meeting  
Denver, Colorado
- April 23, 2010  
Public Scoping Meeting  
Grand Junction, Colorado
- April 26, 2010  
Public Scoping Meeting  
Hermosa Beach
- May 26, 2010  
Close of the Public Scoping Period
- Spring/Summer 2010  
Preparation of Draft EIS
- Summer 2010  
Notice of Availability of Draft EIS
- Summer/Fall 2010  
45 Day Public Comment Period & Hearings
- Fall/Winter 2010  
Preparation of Final EIS
- Spring 2011  
Notice of Availability of Final EIS/ Record of Decision

#### Making Effective Comments

Effective comments help ensure important issues are identified and addressed in the EIS.

- State specific concerns instead of making broad statements
- Focus comments on specific issues and provide supporting information
- Identify important environmental and community concerns

You are encouraged to provide written comments this evening, email, or mail your comments by the close of the public scoping period (May 26, 2010). Your comments will become part of the official public record.



ROW after treatment for aspen growth



Aspen regeneration in the ROW after fire (not growing yet)



AC-130-SAOL  
Western Area Power Administration Aut-Cross Line crossing U.S. Forest Service land

Project Description Display Boards



**Western Area  
Power Administration  
Transmission Line  
Management Reauthorization**





**Western Area  
Power Administration  
Transmission Line  
Management Reauthorization**





**Western Area  
Power Administration  
Transmission Line  
Management Reauthorization**



### Project Description

The proposed action includes maintenance activities typical of electrical industry practices for maintaining right-of-way (ROW), access, structures, and other equipment.

To comply with changed industry regulations and standards, Western proposes to modify its overall approach to ROW vegetation management. Western's improved vegetation management along ROWs on National Forest System lands would include:

- Changing from a focus on danger tree cutting to an active management approach that ensures vegetation does not become a risk to the transmission lines.
- Reducing the amount of wildfire fuel on the ROW including the debris from years of danger tree cutting.
- Implementing and maintaining vegetation conditions along the ROW that focus on establishing stable native vegetation that reduces risk to transmission lines.



Vegetation regeneration in the ROW



Vegetation regeneration and debris loading in the ROW



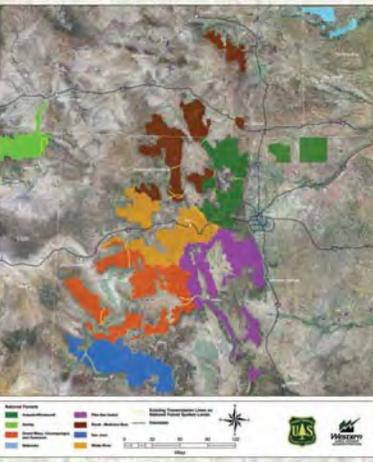
ROW after vegetation treatment



ROW vegetation regeneration along the ROW growing season after treatment

The proposed methods for maintaining the ROW include: mechanical treatments, use of herbicides and hand treatments.

### Project Area Map



The transmission lines cross approximately 280 miles of National Forest System lands in Colorado, Utah, and Nebraska.

### Project Objectives

- Ensure Western's capability to maintain the transmission lines to ensure safety and the reliability of the transmission system.
- Ensure sufficient access for maintenance.
- Ensure public and worker safety.
- Manage vegetation to comply with current industry and mandatory reliability standards.
- Enhance the ability of the facilities to survive wildfires.
- Protect sensitive environmental resources including cultural resources, special status biological resources, water quality, sensitive visual resources, and others.
- Control maintenance costs and improve efficiency.
- Reduce the risk that fires would be started by transmission lines.



ROW after vegetation treatment

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