



Connecting the Dots: West-wide Energy Corridors Regional Re-Evaluation

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September 10, 2015



West-wide Energy Corridors Programmatic EIS Overview



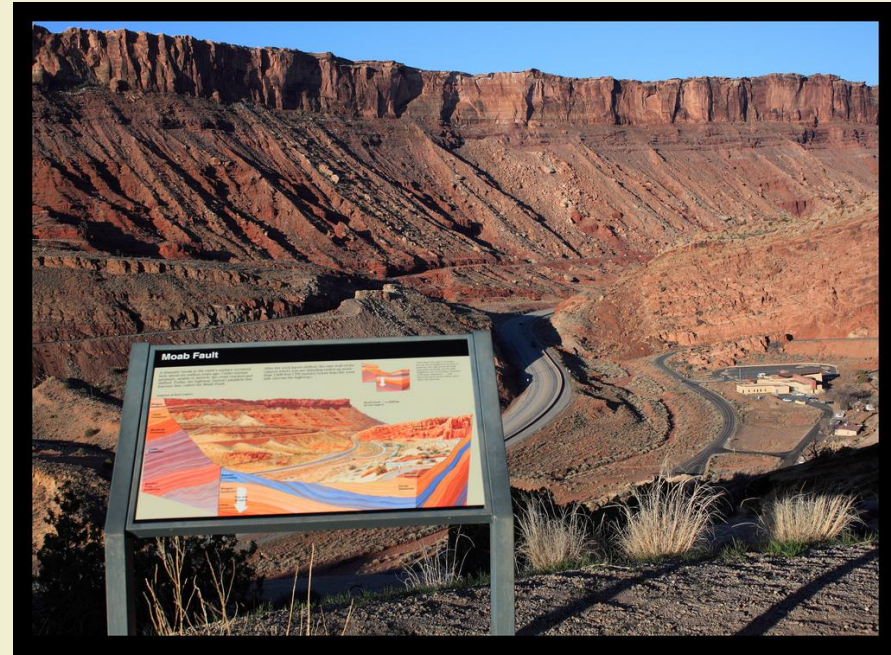
- Lead agencies BLM and DOE, with USDA, DOD and FWS consulting
- ROD signed in 2008 designated over 6,000 miles of corridors for pipelines and powerlines on over 3 million acres of public lands across 11 western states
- Applications for ROWs in corridors are to be expedited, with environmental review “tiered” back to the PEIS





Draft Corridors: Conflicts and Controversy

- Failure to evaluate environmental consequences



- Insufficient protections for public lands including beautiful wildlands and important wildlife habitat

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Litigation



**THE WILDERNESS SOCIETY, et al.,
v.
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, et al.,**

- Plaintiffs: The Wilderness Society, Center for Biological Diversity, Defenders of Wildlife, National Parks Conservation Association, National Trust for Historic Preservation, Natural Resources Defense Council, Sierra Club, County of San Miguel, Colorado, and others.
- Defendants: DOI, BLM, USDA, USFS, DOE
- Intervenor: American Petroleum Institute, Edison Electric Institute

WWEC Lawsuit: June 2012 Settlement Agreement



- Corridors will be reevaluated and revised to better:
 - avoid environmentally sensitive areas,
 - diminish proliferation of dispersed right-of-ways (ROWs), and
 - facilitate development of renewable energy projects

Corridors of Concern (COCs)

- 36 of the 119 BLM approved corridors identified as Corridors of Concern (COC) in settlement
- Encompass 2,700 miles identified by number and types of concerns

West-wide Energy Corridors: Corridors of Concern



Corridors of Concern (COCs)

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West-wide Energy Corridors: Corridors of Concern



Use of COCs



- Settlement directs that managers and the public will be notified that attempting to site projects within these corridors will likely lead to heightened public interest and concern and may:
 - Be challenged;
 - Involve significant environmental impacts;
 - Involve substantially increased or extensive mitigation measures (off-site mitigation) to compensate for impacts to sensitive resources;



Use of COCs (cont.)

- Use of Corridors of Concern – may:
 - Include preparation of an EIS;
 - Include consideration of alternatives outside the corridor and consideration of an alternative that denies the requested use; and
 - Include amendment of the applicable land use plan to modify or delete the corridor of concern and designate an alternative corridor.

Implementation Update

- Issued a new policy for the administration of West Wide Energy Corridors providing direction to field offices on how to use the corridors ([IM-2014-080](#), effective April 7, 2014)
- Initiated the internal BLM “Corridor Study”
 - Assess usefulness in reducing the proliferation of dispersed rights-of-way crossing federal lands
 - Identify where corridors are being over- or underutilizes
 - Assess efficiency and effectiveness in permitting
 - Record lessons learned in the siting process

Implementation Update

- Identified and prioritized regions where corridors will be reviewed in accordance with principles in settlement, including
 - Corridors of concern
 - Data available
 - Active or planned renewable energy development (that would need transmission)
- Initial Priority Regions
 - 1) Southern California, Southern Nevada, Western Arizona
 - 2) Eastern Arizona, New Mexico, Southern Colorado
 - 3) Eastern Nevada, Utah, Northern Colorado
 - 4) Additional regions

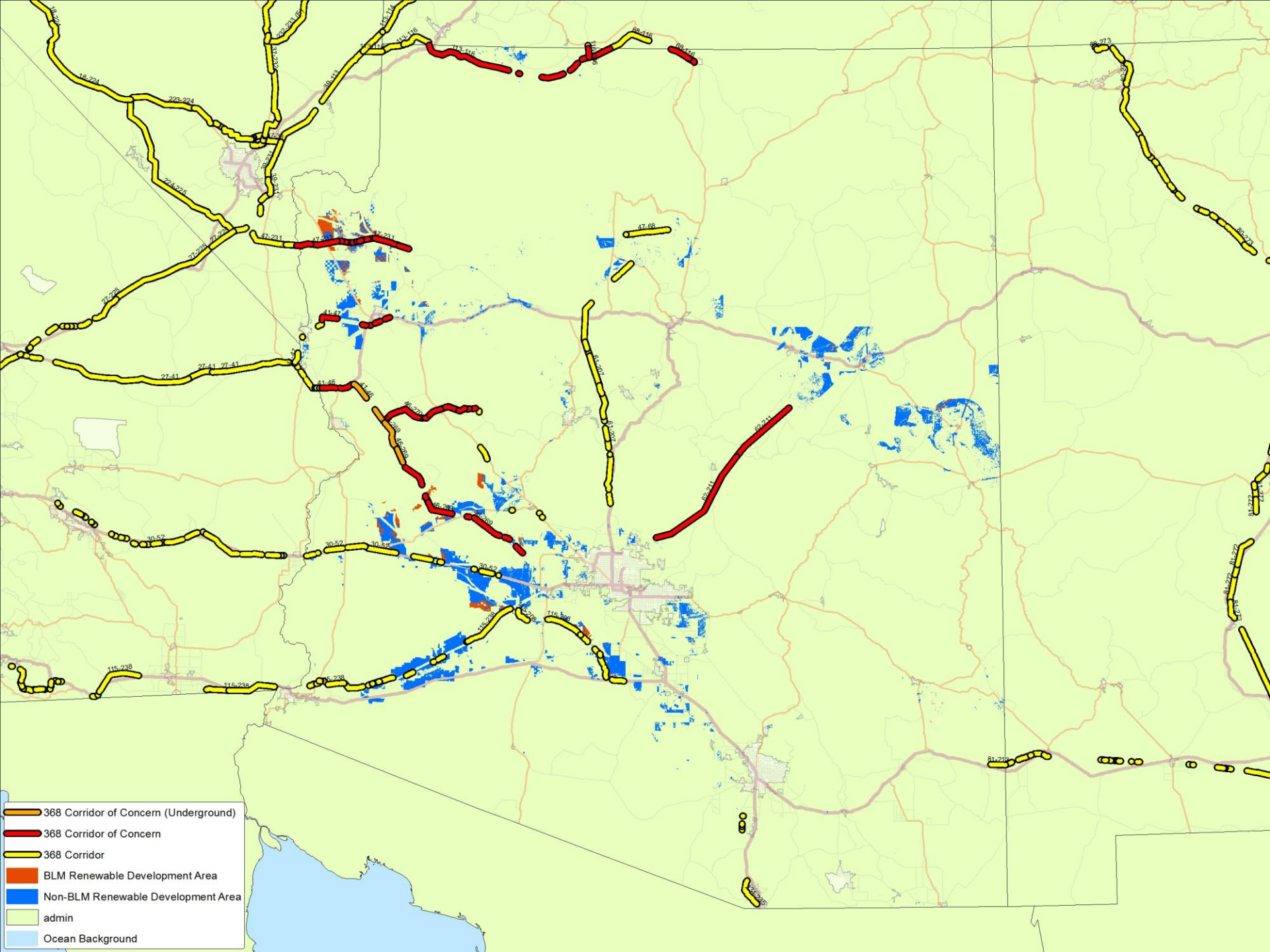


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Arizona Solar Working Group

- Diverse stakeholder group, participants include conservation groups, RE advocates, solar developers, and utilities
- Filed supportive comments on Restoration Design Energy Projects
- Now focused on WWEC re-evaluation
- Successes to date:
 - Scoping report for WWEC 30-52
 - “Smart Corridor” planning along proposed Interstate 11 routes
 - Selection of Desert Southwest as first priority region



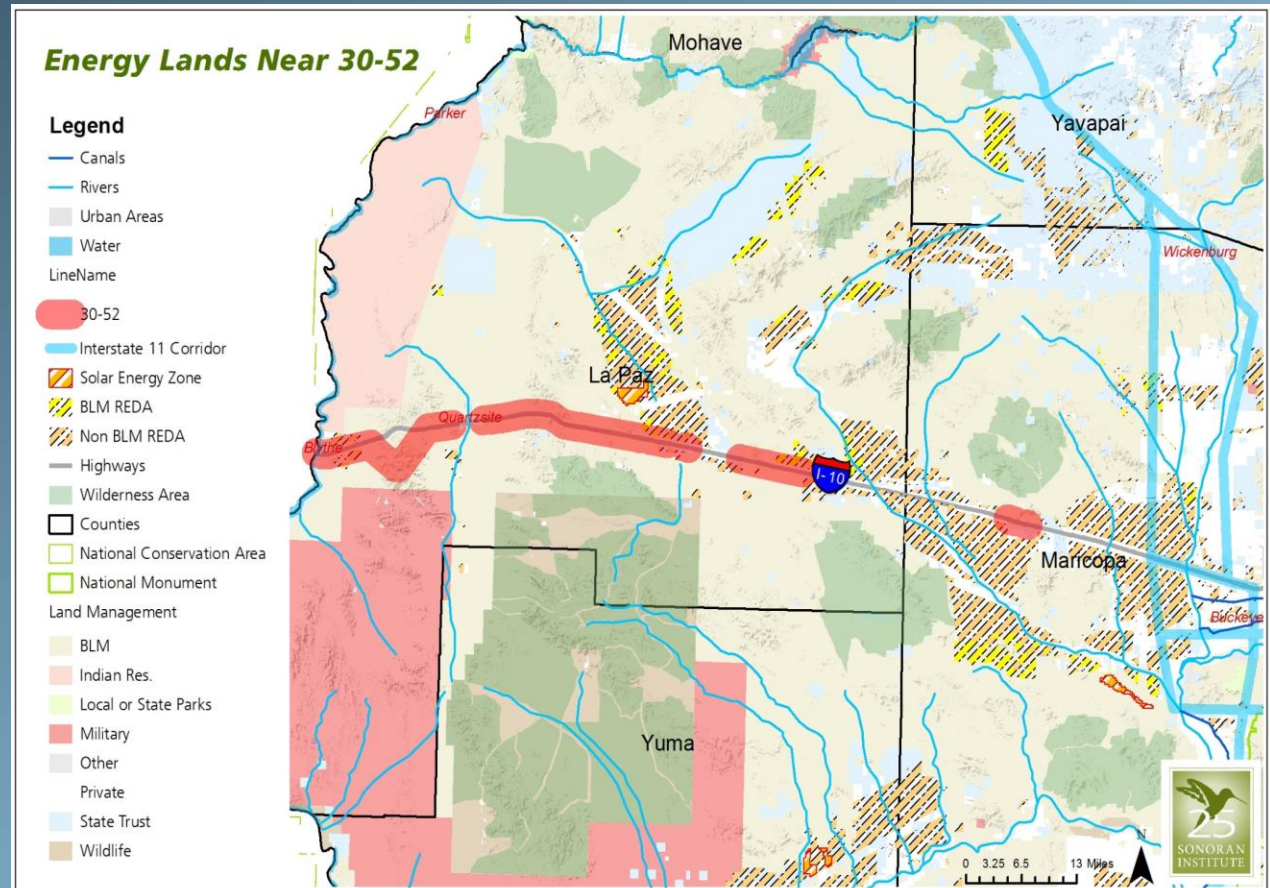


- 368 Corridor of Concern (Underground)
- 368 Corridor of Concern
- 368 Corridor
- BLM Renewable Development Area
- Non-BLM Renewable Development Area
- admin
- Ocean Background

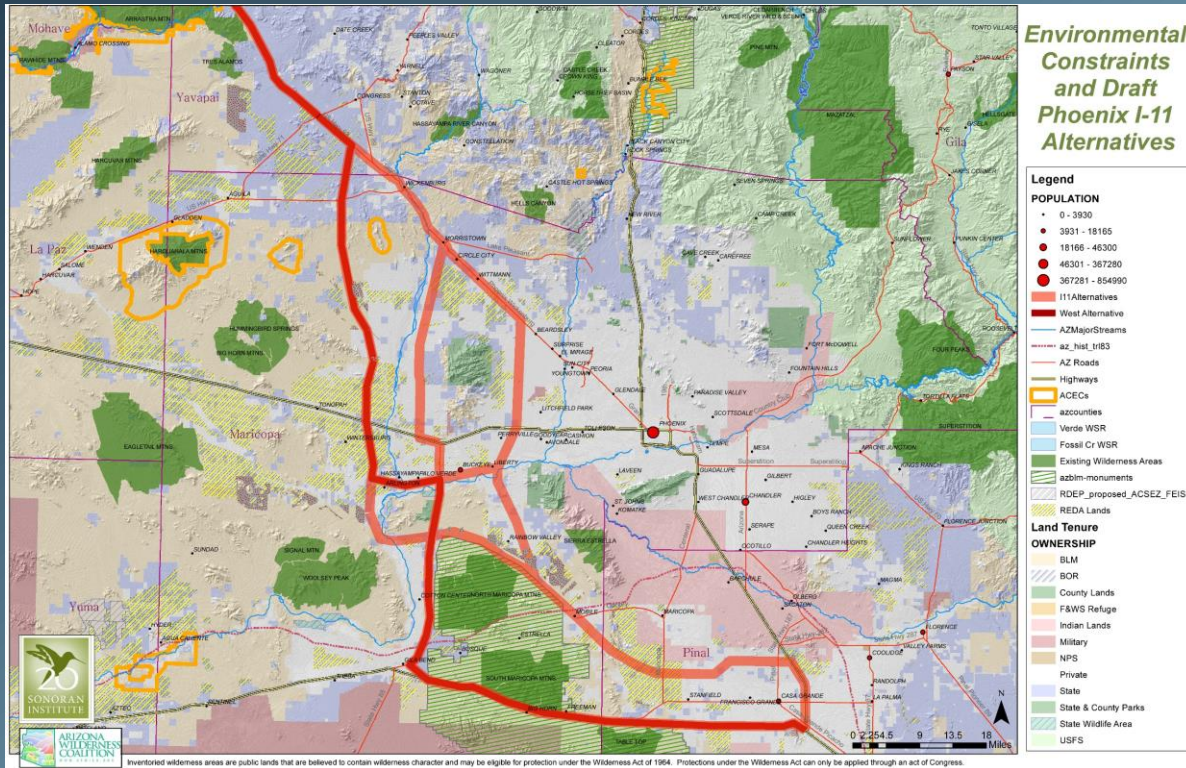
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30-52 Report

- Identified congested area
- Opportunity to co-locate infrastructure
- Potential to avoid Kofa NWR
- Likely alternative for proposed Delaney-Colorado River transmission line



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Interstate 11

- Alignment with REDAs
- Gila Bend Transmission Initiative
- ADOT and BLM Collaboration re. WWECs

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Regional Priority Assessment

- **\$500k in new funding for BLM Re-evaluation in the Desert Southwest (W. AZ, So NV, and CA Desert)**
- **Initial recommendations on how BLM should use the funds:**
 - 1) **Reaffirm goals of re-evaluations as they relate to renewable energy development and reducing environmental conflicts**
 - 2) **Identify two or more opportunities to engage stakeholders, preferably where transmission congestion/capacity is an issue or where lines are being proposed**
 - 3) **Identify priority regions/corridors where transmission congestion/capacity is an issue or where lines are being proposed**

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Initial recommendations on how BLM should use the funds (cont.):

- 4) If an existing WWEC is likely to be subject to a proposed transmission line in near term, determine how re-evaluation can support NEPA process
- 5) Update prior WWECs environmental analysis
- 6) Extend analysis to non-federal lands, using Arizona's Restoration Design Energy Project as a model