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Comments on Energy Corridor Draft Programmatic EIS
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The Interwest Energy Alliance is a trade association that represents the nation’s leading companies in the wind and utility-scale solar industries, bringing them together with the West's advocacy community in pursuit of consensus-based, collaborative approaches to new market and transmission development. Together, our members support state-level public policies that harness the West's abundant –and inexhaustible– renewable energy and energy efficiency resources. Currently, our primary states of focus are Arizona, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah and Wyoming.

The American Wind Energy Association (AWEA) is a national trade association representing over 1200 entities with a common interest in encouraging the expansion and facilitation of wind energy resources in the United States. AWEA members include wind turbine manufacturers, component suppliers, project developers, project owners and operators, financiers, researchers, renewable energy supporters, utilities, marketers, customers and their advocates. Many AWEA members are interested in developing projects in the interior West and will need transmission over federal lands.

The Solar Energy Industries Association (SEIA) is the national trade association of solar energy manufacturers, dealers, distributors, contractors, installers, architects, consultants, and marketers.

We represent 750 companies and work to expand the use of solar technologies in the global marketplace.

The West is rich in energy resources: clean and renewable energy resources. The Western Governors’ Association’s multi-stakeholder CDEAC (“Clean and Diversified Energy Advisory Committee”) process in 2004-2006 verified the West’s abundant —and achievable— renewable energy resource base:

Wind	9,175-54,000 MW
Solar	8,000 MW
Biomass	10,000 MW

Geothermal	5,600 – 13,000 MW
Advanced coal:	5,000 MW
Energy efficiency	48,000 MW

It is important to note that these numbers are *achievable and feasible*. However, for most of these resources, transmission is a necessity. In this regard, we appreciate the coordinated, comprehensive approach that this corridors process is bringing. This corridor process is an excellent opportunity to move the western region to a new energy economy focused on its wealth of clean and renewable energy sources.

It seems the current proposed corridors appear to facilitate proposed coal plants...and only some of the best areas for renewable energy potential. We need to look toward the future as we plan these permanent corridors across the West in a comprehensive, region-wide approach.

We would like to suggest improving the corridor study by having the federal agencies, in the final study, develop alternative corridors that focus on linking up renewable energy resources throughout the region. A detailed study on Colorado's renewable resources was recently conducted by the "SB 91" task force (<http://www.colorado.gov/energy/utilities/sb91-taskforce.asp>), whose final report identifies and quantifies the state's renewable resource zones, or "generation development areas." The WGA is considering undertaking a similar effort throughout the region. Federal agencies involved in this corridor effort would be well advised to work closely and collaboratively with WGA, state agencies, and all stakeholder groups in fashioning a western corridors plan that capitalizes on our wealth of renewable resources in a responsible, environmentally sensitive manner.

We also urge the Department to make sure that paths fully connect from their generation source to their destination in demand centers. In this regard we agree with EEI's comments which suggest that DOE should (1) provide maps and information that demonstrate how the corridors fully connect, and (2) ensure that all federal segments of these overall paths are designated as part of this section 368 process rather than designating just some segments and leaving others undesignated. The current proposed designations have limited the segments being designated to the point that they exclude important passage across federal lands and omit the broader context for the corridors.

Harnessing the West's abundant renewable energy resource will bring tremendous economic, environmental and other benefits to the entire country, helping insulate us from price volatility and ensuring a stronger national energy security posture. The renewable energy industry is ready to strengthen our country's energy infrastructure, and properly designed corridors can make it happen.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,

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