



**Event Date:** February 9 – 11, 2016

**Location:** TBA / Las Vegas, Nevada

**Organizer:** BLM and National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL)

**Attendees:** BLM managers, realty specialists, renewable energy program leads, NEPA ID team members, and other staff working on transmission issues or natural gas pipelines. This workshop is intended for BLM staff as well as partner agencies dealing with transmission issues within their jurisdictions, or responsible for a component of the permitting process.

**Objective:** To enhance an understanding of the complete 'energy picture' to aid decision making for stakeholders, improve related agency coordination, enhance communication, and search for collaborative solutions.

- Goals:**
- Update participants on BLM policies related to transmission, regional planning efforts (Planning 2.0, NEPA processes, Raven management plan, Cultural impacts)
  - Receive input regarding Section 368 Corridor Regional Review
  - Raise transmission and energy project understanding, in particular, to renewable energy development
  - Most efficient use of space in existing corridors
  - Identify shared development obstacles amongst jurisdictions, with potential solutions or approaches for successful resolution
  - Improved coordination with/among:
    - Multi-state transmission or natural gas pipeline projects
    - Permitting agencies without duplication of efforts

**Pre-Coursework:** Participants should complete on-line training for this coursework before attending this workshop, and please come prepared with questions. Online training web links TBA following confirmed RSVPs.

# *PLANNED DISCUSSIONS*

**Day 1 (February 9) @ 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.**

## **Transmission Training**

- Industry process for completing a project – understanding the different permitting processes, timelines, considerations, risks and rewards (for both transmission and energy generation industries, and how those industries interact)
- Transmission line construction – understanding the temporary and permanent impacts on the ground
- Mitigation options – understanding different transmission line configurations that BLM can consider to reduce potential impacts
- Update on New Transmission policies, Guidance on how BLM approaches proponents on inquiries to consider other technology, structures, height, wattage, carrying capacity, etc. What should BLM ask applicants, and how does that influence BLM's decision?

## **Energy Generation Training**

- Solar, Wind, and Natural Gas projects
- What is each state's potential renewable energy development potential by generation type (PV solar, CSP solar, wind, biomass, geothermal)?
- Construction – understanding the temporary and permanent impacts
- Environmental considerations – visual, land, wildlife, air impacts
- Coordinated questions: What should BLM be asking the applicants, and how does that influence BLM's decision?

## **Panel Discussion: Energy & Transmission – current & future challenges**

- What challenges are the different states currently facing, and how are the agencies responding?
- Why does industry site large renewable energy projects out of service territory?
- 368 Corridors and corridors of concern - Regional Review (First priority region)
- Difficulty with adding new natural gas pipelines to 368 Corridors?
- How are large/multi state, long distance transmission projects compounding multi-agency approval process?
- How can existing transmission 'pinch points' accommodate future new transmission lines? Mitigation plans?
- How is the merchant market changing the way industry does business, and how will that affect the way BLM does business?

## **DOI/BLM Overview (Panel) - Discussion of:**

- Current/future (maps) Project types: renewable energy, fossil fuel-based; and T-lines
- Transmission/Gas line Pinch points
- Corridor of Concern/Section 368
- Permitting/ROW grant decision making process

- Considerations: Land use, biological, cultural, air quality, view shed, water use
- Coordination with RMP (Resource Management Plan)

***Regulatory Road mapping - Discussion of:***

- Current/future initiatives - renewable energy, fossil fuel-based; and T-lines
- Regional/state energy initiatives & coordination
- Impediments
- Opportunities
- Regulatory Road mapping
- Continuation of a collaborative process

**Day 2 (February 10) – Field Trip @ 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.**

To provide visualization to problems and generation of new ideas for solutions. Experience actual ‘pinch points’ with development difficulties - steep terrain, line crossings, environmental concerns (i.e. tortoise connectivity); added difficulties with natural gas line development.

NOTE: Motor coach accommodations provided based on RSVP response. Package lunch and beverages/water will be made available during trip. Precautions for a day long field trip should be taken, such as sunscreen, hats, sturdy shoes, etc.

**Day 3 (February 11) @ 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.**

***Panel Discussion: Identification of Challenges & Addressing Proactive solutions***

- How can agencies better coordinate establishment of ROW corridors for a variety of utilities (ex: electric and natural gas)?
- What incentive is there for developers to work together to avoid a future spaghetti bowl of transmission, or can BLM create this incentive? Reducing Habitat Fragmentation - Is there a way to share access and monitor the lines without each one having its own access road?
- Identification of areas for renewable energy development - how does BLM, as a group of interagency managers, work together to encourage development in the right place?
- Improving agency coordination: division of work, sharing findings, expedited response to developers, addressing each agency’s concerns, outlining enhanced application requirements from developers to address coordinated efforts, etc.
- Establishment of new, preferred development areas based on market knowledge and likely preferences of developers and utilities

**Energy Across Jurisdictions – a discussion of policies, challenges, and what’s ahead**

Policies/Challenges/Outlook - California, Nevada, Arizona, Utah, and WECC