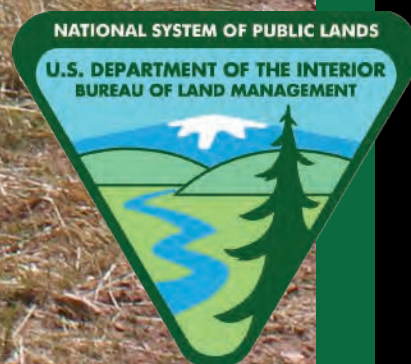


# **FINAL** **Environmental Impact Statement** **for the Gateway West Transmission Line Project** **Wyoming and Idaho**

**April 2013**



Wyoming State Office



The BLM's multiple-use mission is to sustain the health and productivity of the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations. The Bureau accomplishes this by managing such activities as outdoor recreation, livestock grazing, mineral development, and energy production, and by conserving natural, historical, cultural, and other resources on public lands.

**BLM/WY/PL-13/012+5101**

*The photograph used for the cover of the Final EIS was taken near Kemmerer, WY, from Dempsey Ridge Road north of Coke Mountain and east of the Tump Range facing south, Key Observation Point 636 in the visual resources analysis. The transmission lines and towers depicted in this photograph are computer-generated simulations.*

# Gateway West Transmission Line Project Environmental Impact Statement

[ ] Draft

[X] Final

[ ] Supplemental

<b>Lead Agency</b>	Bureau of Land Management, Department of the Interior	
<b>Cooperating Agencies</b>	Medicine Bow-Routt, Caribou-Targhee, and Sawtooth National Forests; National Park Service (National Trails Office, Minidoka National Historic Site, Hagerman Fossil Beds National Monument, Fossil Butte National Monument, Craters of the Moon National Monument and Preserve, and City of Rocks National Reserve); U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Ecological Services Division, Seedskaadee and Cokeville Meadows National Wildlife Refuges); U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; Bureau of Indian Affairs; the States of Idaho and Wyoming; Idaho Army National Guard; Cassia, Power, and Twin Falls Counties, Idaho; Lincoln, Sweetwater, and Carbon Counties, Wyoming; the Medicine Bow and Saratoga Encampment-Rawlins Conservation Districts in Wyoming; and the City of Kuna, Idaho.	
<b>Responsible Officials</b>	Don Simpson BLM Wyoming State Director	Brent L. Larson Forest Supervisor Caribou-Targhee National Forest
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## Abstract

Idaho Power Company and PacifiCorp, Inc. jointly submitted an application for a right of way grant and special use permit for the construction and operation of a 230/500-kV transmission line from the Windstar Substation at Glenrock, Wyoming, to the Hemingway Substation approximately 30 miles southwest of Boise, Idaho. The proposed transmission line would be approximately 990 miles long. This environmental impact statement evaluates the proposed action as stated in the application including environmental protection measures. It also examines the impacts of several possible alternative route locations. Route alternatives were developed to avoid (or minimize impacts to) historical features, important wildlife or forested habitat, National Wildlife Refuges, National Monuments, state parks, recreational activities, restricted areas, irrigated agricultural lands, and planned infrastructure and housing developments. Alternatives were also considered that were specifically requested by the Wyoming Governor's Office, were "more direct" (shorter distance), and that adhered to utility corridors previously established by BLM and Forest Service land use plans, including corridors established by the Approved Resource Management Plan Amendments/Record of Decision (ROD) for Designation of Energy Corridors on Bureau of Land Management-Administered Lands in the 11 Western States and Record of Decision: USDA Forest Service Designation of Section 368 Energy Corridors on National Forest System Land in 10 Western States. A Preferred Alternative has been identified by the BLM, the state of Wyoming, and Power and Cassia Counties. Granting of the right-of-way and special use authorization for the Preferred Route would require amendments to five BLM Resource Management Plans (RMPs)—Cassia, Green River, Jarbidge, Kemmerer, and Morley Nelson Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area; three BLM Framework Plans (MFPs)—Twin Falls, Bennett Hills/Timmerman Hills, Bruneau, and Kuna; and two Forest Service Plans—Revised Forest Plan for the Caribou National Forest and the Medicine Bow Revised Land and Resource Management Plan. Depending on alternatives selected, amendments to the Pocatello RMP, the Bruneau MFP, and the Sawtooth Forest Plan could also be required. Significant impacts were identified from construction and operations of the transmission line on historical resources (historic trails), visual quality, and cumulative impacts on several resources based on past and present levels of disturbance. The comment period on the Final EIS will close 60 days from the date of publication of the EPA's Notice of Availability in the Federal Register.