

New Public Hearings on Proposed SunZia Transmission Line Will Aid in Local Input, Help Protect Lands and Access Renewable Energy

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DENVER — Increased public participation opportunities for the proposed SunZia Southwest Transmission Project were announced by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) today, an encouraging sign to conservationists and renewable energy policy experts.

Last year 12 public scoping meetings were held throughout communities in Arizona and New Mexico to allow for public comment on proposed route corridors and to solicit alternatives. The BLM received numerous comments regarding the proposed and alternative transmission line routes and is holding additional public scoping meetings to continue the conversation with the public regarding a proposed study expansion area for the project. The Wilderness Society and our coalition partners see this as a positive step in ensuring there is robust public participation as well as identifying the best possible routes for the proposed line, intended to access the states' rich wind and solar resources.

The following statement can be attributed to Alex Daue, Renewable Energy Coordinator for The Wilderness Society's BLM Action Center. Alex is available for further comment and guidance to reporters as this process moves forward.

“The BLM continues to show they understand the importance of working with local communities to ensure permitting of new energy corridors is in line with protecting the lands and lifestyles of those who treasure our southwestern landscape,” said Daue. “As the BLM and SunZia continue to explore options with the goal of minimizing conflicts we hope to see even greater local community engagement in this process. We look forward to continuing our work with our partners on the project to find a route that provides transmission access for renewable energy without unacceptable impacts on our land, water, and wildlife.”