



Challenge – Infrastructure Siting & Permitting

Rapidly integrating new renewable projects to the grid is critical for maintaining the electricity reliability and affordability that we all count on. This will only be possible by expanding our transmission system and generation resources.

Power providers, from interstate wholesalers like Tri-State to our local distribution cooperative members, will need the ability to build transmission and generation infrastructure within the time and cost expectations of the clean energy transition – that is, in the next decade without raising rates. We will only be able to meet this need if siting and permitting for this necessary infrastructure is streamlined. A rapid expansion of utility-scale and local renewable generation will require significant construction of infrastructure to bring electricity from where it is generated to where consumers need it. Even as more local distributed energy is added, upgrades and additions to the Grid will be necessary for communities and cooperatives to access this power, which will involve overcoming many of the same siting and permitting challenges that exist for utility-scale projects.

Incentives and reforms that decrease the costs, timelines and risks to plan, site, permit, and construct new generation and transmission while maintaining environmental and community safeguards will be key. These changes could improve the multiple levels of regulatory requirements that currently impede cost-effective and efficient development of necessary infrastructure.

Today, developing new transmission projects to expand existing generation or connect new resources can take anywhere from 2 – 16 years, with siting and permitting taking between 50 – 75% of that time. This means that new electricity generation and transmission that we forecast demand for in 2035 may need to be underway as early as this year, depending on factors like the size of the project, its location, its proximity to the consumers who will use its power, and the type of land – private, state, federal, tribal, etc. – that the project will cross.



State permitting
(6 months - 1 year)



**Transmission
line siting**
(3 months - 5 years)



**The National
Environmental
Policy Act (NEPA)**
(3 months - 6 years)



**Local land -
use permitting**
(3 months - 1 year)



Construction
(1 - 3 years)

Improvements to these siting and permitting processes could make it possible to build both the energy generation in the sunny and windy places where it will be most-productive, and the transmission to deliver reliable electricity to communities across the West, where it ultimately serves your home, your school, your place of work. There are many areas where these improvements could be made, including:

Eliminate Gen-ties of Convenience

Waive CPCNs for Transmission that Implements PUC-Approved Energy Resource Plans

Institute EA Time & Page Limits

Subordinate Deeds of Trust

Clarify ROW Obtainment Requirements for Partner Entities

Streamline US Fish & Wildlife Service Consultations

Extend Authorizations for ROWs

Allow Contractors to Manage ROW Authorization

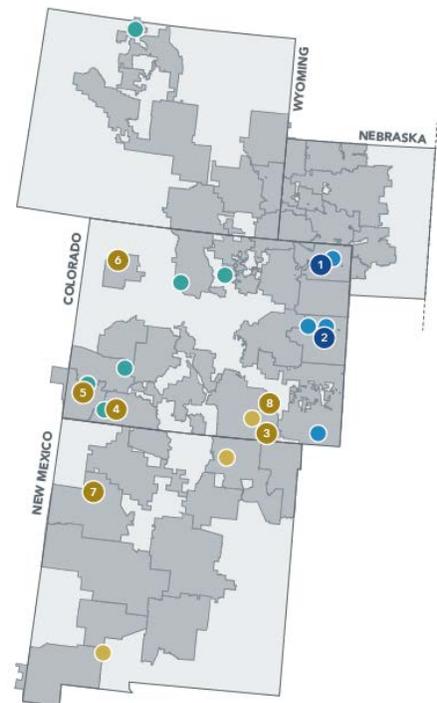
Standardize Historic Preservation/Cultural Resource Reviews

By 2024 Tri-State is bringing over 1 gigawatt of wind and solar resources online, meaning 50% of the energy our cooperative consumes will come from renewables. But to go further – to have a chance to make it to our ambitious goal of 100% clean energy in Colorado by 2040, Tri-State and our members will need to be able to build at least as many more renewable projects and connect them to the grid by that time.

Projects coming online by 2024

<p>1 Niyol Wind 200 MW Highline Electric's service territory in Logan and Washington Counties, CO</p> <p>2 Crossing Trails Wind 104 MW K.C. Electric's service territory in Seibert, CO</p> <p>3 Spanish Peaks II Solar 40 MW San Isabel Electric Association's service territory in Las Animas County, CO</p> <p>4 Coyote Gulch Solar 120 MW La Plata Electric Association's service territory in La Plata County, CO</p> <p>5 Dolores Canyon Solar 110 MW Empire Electric's service territory in Dolores County, CO</p>	<p>6 Axial Basin Solar 145 MW White River Electric Association's service territory, Colowyo Coal Co. land in Moffat County, CO</p> <p>7 Escalante Solar 200 MW Continental Divide's service territory, Escalante Station land in McKinley County, NM</p> <p>8 Spanish Peaks Solar 100 MW San Isabel Electric Association's service territory in Trinidad, CO</p>
--	---

Existing Wind	Existing Solar	Existing Hydro
● 367 MW total	● 85 MW total	● 26.56 MW small hydro total plus WAPA allocations



To meet the timelines of a rapid economy-wide energy transition, the decades it currently takes to site and permit generation and transmission must be measured-down to years. Otherwise, it won't be possible to connect enough new power to the grid.

