



## **FACT SHEET: Designation of National Interest Electric Transmission Corridors, As Authorized by the Energy Policy Act of 2005**

### **NATIONAL CORRIDORS and the ENERGY POLICY ACT OF 2005:**

- As directed by the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (EPAcT), the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) conducted the National Electric Transmission Congestion Study, which provides analysis of generation and transmission capacity across the U.S. and identifies critical areas that need attention due to transmission congestion and constraint problems.
- Based on data analysis and research documented in this study, EPAcT authorized the Secretary of Energy to select and designate geographic areas as “National Interest Electric Transmission Corridors,” (National Corridors).
- The study provided analysis of generation and transmission capacity across the U.S. and identified critical areas that need attention due to transmission congestion and constraints problems.
- The most severely congested areas – “Critical Congestion Areas” – were the Southwest and Mid-Atlantic regions, which were identified as having critical congestion problems

### **DRAFT NATIONAL CORRIDORS and EXTENSIVE PUBLIC COMMENT PROCESS**

- On May 7th, 2007, the Department published draft National Corridors to provide all interested parties with fair and ample opportunities to provide input and comments, including a 60-day public comment period, which ended July 6, 2007, and over 60 hours of public meetings across the country. During this time, DOE also consulted extensively with State officials local agencies, regional entities, and the public.
- To view the public comments received, visit:  
<http://www.nietc.anl.gov/involve/reviewcomment/index.cfm>.

### **DESIGNATION OF NATIONAL CORRIDORS:**

- On October 5, 2007, the Secretary of Energy designated two National Corridors – the Mid-Atlantic Area National Corridor and the Southwest Area National Corridor.
- The **Mid-Atlantic Area National Corridor** includes certain counties in Ohio, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, New York, Maryland, Virginia, and all of New Jersey, Delaware, and the District of Columbia.
- The **Southwest Area National Corridor** includes certain counties in California and Arizona.
- These National Corridors comprise geographic areas where consumers are adversely affected by transmission capacity constraints or congestion.
- The boundaries of the National Corridors extend beyond the immediate areas experiencing electric transmission congestion so as to include areas of the country with a wide range of potential sources of electricity generation.
- Designation remains in effect for twelve years from the date of designation.
- To view maps of the two National Corridors, visit:  
<http://www.nietc.anl.gov/nationalcorridor/index.cfm>.
- To view a list of cities and counties included in the designated corridors, visit:  
[http://www.nietc.anl.gov/documents/docs/National\\_Corridors\\_Counties\\_List.pdf](http://www.nietc.anl.gov/documents/docs/National_Corridors_Counties_List.pdf).

### **REQUESTS FOR REHEARING**

- After thoroughly and carefully considering both the properly filed requests for rehearing and other comments the Department received, DOE denied requests for rehearing regarding these National Corridors - citing extensive data analysis conducted in its 2006 National Electric Transmission Congestion study; ample opportunity for public review and comment during the 60-day public comment period; and other key reasons as discussed in its March 2008 Federal Register Notice.

## **WHAT IMPACT WILL THIS HAVE?**

- State authorities will continue to have primary responsibility for deciding how to resolve transmission congestion problems, evaluating transmission projects, and the siting of transmission facilities.
- EPCRA authorizes the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) to issue, under certain circumstances, permits for new transmission facilities within a National Corridor.
- Generally, if an applicant does not receive approval from a State to site a proposed new transmission project within a National Corridor within a year, a person proposing to build an interstate electric transmission facility may apply to FERC to issue a permit and to authorize construction of the project.
- In 2006, FERC issued regulations that stipulate that only those transmission projects in a National Corridor that would significantly reduce congestion into or within the congestion area would be eligible for a FERC permit.
- FERC's authority to authorize or order construction of transmission facilities does not extend to State or Federal property within the National Corridors.

## **PROJECTED ENERGY USE:**

- According to DOE's Energy Information Administration, electricity demand is projected to increase by nearly 30% from current levels by 2030.
- Our Nation's energy infrastructure is aging - much of our electricity infrastructure was built in the early half of the 20th century, and with the strain placed on it by today's population and with an economy of our size and scale, it has exceeded its intended use.

## **INTENDED GOALS OF NATIONAL CORRIDORS:**

- Designation of the National Corridors focuses attention on the need for action to keep pace with the electricity needs of American consumers, and aims to advance the President's goal of ensuring a reliable supply of electric energy for all Americans.
- Designation of National Corridors indicates that the Federal government has concluded that a significant transmission constraint or congestion problem exists in the area that it adversely affects consumers, and that it is in the national interest that the problem be alleviated.
- In addition to this designation, DOE continues to pursue and encourage robust demand response programs and a number of solutions for meeting future electricity demand, including: implementing energy efficiency measures across the country; developing and encouraging the increased use of clean, renewable energy technologies; developing more local generation; and researching, developing and deploying technologies that optimize operation of the electricity grid.

## **DESIGNATION OF NATIONAL CORRIDORS:**

- DOES NOT constitute a finding that additional transmission capacity must be built in the affected area;
- DOES NOT mean that additional transmission is the only, or the best solution to resolve the congestion; – rather, DOE encourages that local generation, demand response and energy conservation options also be considered;
- DOES NOT propose, direct or permit anyone to build a transmission facility; and
- DOES NOT equate to a determination of a route for a proposed transmission facility; or an endorsement of one or more transmission solutions to the congestion problem.

To view text of the order denying requests for rehearing and for additional information on National Corridors, visit: <http://www.oe.energy.gov/nietc.htm>.