



RioSol Public Comment Frequently Asked Questions

The New Mexico State Land Office (NMSLO) held three public meetings in February 2025. The purpose of the public meetings was to receive public comment regarding a proposed right-of-way application submitted by the New Mexico Renewable Energy Transmission Authority (NMRETA) for the RioSol Transmission Project (RioSol) right of way application for an easement from the NMSLO. The applicant's proposed projects cross state lands in Hidalgo, Luna, Grant, Sierra, Socorro, Valencia and Torrance Counties.

These topics and questions were raised during the public meetings held in Socorro County (February 18), Valencia County (February 24), and Luna County (February 26).

Safety Protocols:

Q1: What safety protocols is RioSol taking to ensure New Mexico residents' health?

A: Many safety protocols are implemented to protect the health and safety of New Mexico residents during design, construction, and operation. RioSol adheres to adequate clearance guidelines for minimum distances from residential areas based on voltage levels to mitigate risks. RioSol follows international EMF (electro-magnetic field) exposure limits by employing techniques such as increased tower heights and appropriate conductor configuration to reduce EMF limits to safe standards. Towers are designed and constructed to withstand extreme weather conditions. RioSol also works closely with landowners and educates the public about safety near power lines while implementing clear signage and physical barriers in advance of, during, and after construction. During operation, regular inspections and maintenance will be conducted to prevent safety hazards.



Environmental Impacts:

Q1: What efforts is RioSol Transmission Line making to address environmental impacts?

A: RioSol is dedicated to minimizing impacts on wildlife and preserving natural habitats that may be affected by the project. Funding and conducting important biological and wildlife studies has resulted in creating mitigation, restoration, and preservation plans that will guide our approach to construction and operations. These resources and land management programs were selected as part of an extensive Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process based on federal regulatory requirements and policies, concerns of the lead and cooperating agencies, and/or issues identified during scoping.

Q2: Where are the Environmental Impact Studies published for the RioSol Transmission project?

A: The Environmental Impact studies can be found on this website <https://riosol.energy/environment/>.

Q3: How will RioSol prevent soil erosion or other environmental impacts during construction?

A: RioSol has an expert construction and engineering team that evaluates how construction may cause any disturbances to the surrounding environment. A variety of measures will be employed to stabilize the soil and will be monitored/maintained throughout the construction period. RioSol will then proceed with a reclamation process and recontour the environment in the surrounding areas. The RioSol construction team is available to share their expertise on site-specific questions; please feel free to reach out to a representative at <https://riosol.energy/contact/>.



Community Benefits and Impacts:

Q1: How does the RioSol Transmission Line project benefit New Mexicans?

A: The RioSol Transmission Line project plays an important role in the energy industry of New Mexico, providing communities with the promise of long-term, consistent economic growth. The RioSol project will benefit communities by providing construction jobs, full-time operations and maintenance jobs, and part-time operations and maintenance jobs. Many indirect benefits will also follow, such as the positive impact of buying local goods and services, tax revenue generated from this project, and the opportunity for communities to benefit from renewable energy through the construction of substations along the route. For more information on community benefits, please visit <https://riosol.energy/community-benefits/>.

The RioSol Project helps boost local governments and communities along the route and helps support youth education programs, community enhancements and beautification, recreation programs, emergency clean-up efforts, increased fire and police protection and additional National Guard and border security services.

Q2: Is the RioSol Transmission Line funded by taxpayers? If so, what is the figure of tax dollars allocated to the project?

A: The RioSol Project is being developed by a private company: Southwestern Power Group, II. The project has not received any state or federal funding. The project is not funded by taxpayers.

Q3: Has or will RioSol exercise eminent domain?

A: RioSol does not possess eminent domain authority. The New Mexico Renewable Energy Transmission Authority (NMRETA) possesses eminent domain powers, but it is considered a last resort and only used when necessary for projects in the public interest, after reasonable negotiation attempts, and with proper compensation for property taken. Specific to RioSol, almost 100% of the private right of way has been secured without the use of eminent domain.

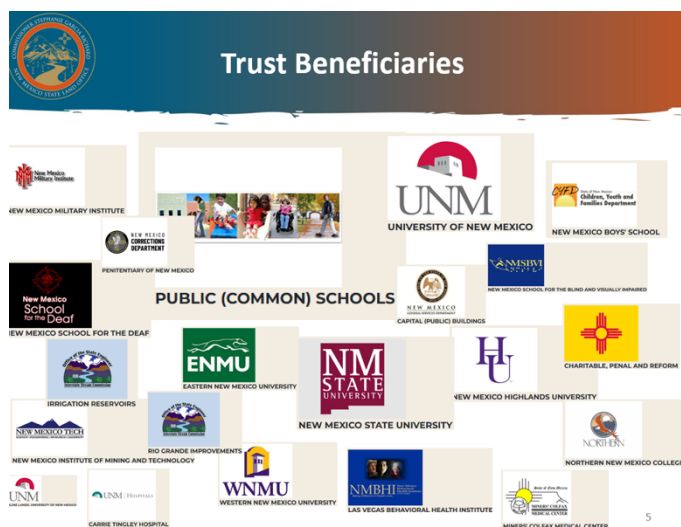
Funding:

Q1: How are the lease payments received by NMSLO allocated to local communities, schools and institutions?

A: The Commissioner of Public Lands manages lands granted by Congress to New Mexico as a means of generating revenue to support public institutions. All State Trust Land (STL) has a specific beneficiary or beneficiaries designated or attached to it. There are 21 beneficiaries. About 94% of earnings support education.

Q2: Will the state compensate for the loss of property value if the RioSol Transmission Line runs near my property?

A: The proposed RioSol Transmission Line crosses many land ownerships and jurisdictions. The NMSLO is only able to address concerns related to its lands. As part of our approval process for transmission line projects, we require a public participation and comment component that enables us to listen to and try to address the concerns of impacted property owners. Within reason, the NMSLO can consider route changes and mitigation techniques in order to lessen the impact of development or protect cultural and/or biological resources. NMSLO is prohibited by law from providing compensation for alleged loss to adjacent property values.





Transmission Infrastructure:

Q1: Will the RioSol Transmission Line share the same infrastructure as the SunZia Transmission Line?

A: The RioSol route will generally be parallel with the approved SunZia Transmission line route and be structurally similar but will generally have separate infrastructure. The two lines have been co-developed in their planning and permitting. While they have a shared history, each transmission line serves a unique purpose toward a singular goal. SunZia (Line 1) is a High Voltage Direct Current (HVDC) transmission line, the most effective at carrying energy over long distances. RioSol (Line 2) is a High Voltage Alternating Current (HVAC) transmission line, the most effective at delivering clean energy to rural communities and towns in New Mexico. To learn more about the two lines, visit <https://riosol.energy/riosol-sunzia/>.

Q2: Where will the transfer stations be located for the RioSol Transmission Line in New Mexico?

A: A detailed map of the RioSol Transmission Line project can be found here: <https://www.nmstatelands.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/ERS-Overview-20241101.pdf>.

Q3: With the RioSol Transmission Line running near many properties, how will the line affect property value?

A: Several studies on transmission line impacts were reviewed from 1964 to 2009. All of these studies have been published and deal with empirical data – either survey-based data or actual real estate sales data. The studies reviewed, while having some inconsistencies in their detailed results, generally pointed to small or no effects on sales price due to the presence of electric transmission lines. Some studies found an effect, but this effect generally dissipated with time and distance. The effects that were found ranged from approximately 2% to 9%. Most studies found no effect, and in some cases, a premium was observed. This was attributed to the additional open area, usually behind the residence, created by the transmission line easement.



Q4: Will there be more than three lines in the corridor? Will the development stop after the RioSol Transmission Line?

A: The RioSol Transmission Line and SunZia Transmission Line are part of a large renewable energy infrastructure project in the region. While there are no specific mentions of additional lines beyond these two, it's important to note that the corridor has been identified as a strategic route for renewable energy transmission in New Mexico and the development of transmission infrastructure often evolves based on future energy needs and policy changes.

Q5: Has the RioSol Transmission Line acquired the right of way for the river crossing in New Mexico?

A: Core to RioSol's 17-year development history has been understanding the immense responsibility for a project of this size and minimizing any impact. RioSol was initially permitted as the SunZia Project's second 500kV line. A federal right-of-way grant was issued for both transmission lines after completing an extensive EIS process, issued in 2015 and 2023, pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act. All necessary land rights and permits have been acquired.

Resources:

Q1: Where can detailed maps of the RioSol Transmission Line project be found?

A: Detailed maps can be found in the NMSLO Public Meeting presentation, https://www.nmstatelands.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/RioSol-Project-Update_NMSLO-Public-Meetings_2.20.25-1.pdf.

Q2: Which public roads will be accessed during the construction of the RioSol Transmission Line?

A: Detailed county and public road access maps can found at the New Mexico State Land Office NMSLO/RioSol project page: <https://www.nmstatelands.org/riosol-meetings/>.