

# MSTI

## Review Project



**What is the independent Project?** A unique effort between Montana counties and non-governmental organizations along the Montana-Idaho border to conduct an independent analysis of the Mountain States Transmission Intertie (MSTI). The Project is working to:

- Better understand the need and context of the line,
- Balance energy development with local values by identifying corridors while protecting the community and environment, and
- Assess the economic impacts and benefits of the line.

The MSTI Review Project includes Madison County, MT, Jefferson County, MT, Western Environmental Law Center, Headwaters Economics, Sonoran Institute, Craighead Institute, and Future West.

**Why did we form?** The MSTI Review Project believes that it is essential to work together to protect rural lifestyles, private property rights, *and* the natural environment. To that end, we are providing an independent analysis and outreach to affected MSTI counties supported by a high quality, transparent, and meaningful analysis that will ultimately lead to better planning outcomes from a variety of perspectives that are often seen as mutually exclusive.

**What are we doing?** We are sharing unbiased policy and scientific data with counties in a transparent process where different perspectives can be discussed and reconciled. Specifically, we are:

- Providing peer-reviewed, accessible information about energy resources, the viability and need for the line, what the line will carry, and who will pay for it,
- Developing an objective, quantitative, and transparent spatial analysis of the MSTI line to empower local governments to make informed decisions on the proposed routing alternatives as it pertains to their unique economic, rural, and environmental values and concerns, and
- Conducting an accurate economic analysis for counties that analyze the potential amount of revenue generated by the line for each county as well as the potential impact that the line may have on property value.

[www.MSTIReviewProject.org](http://www.MSTIReviewProject.org)  
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**Can I participate?** The Project is reaching out to counties affected by the MSTI line in both Montana and Idaho to work with local elected officials on weighting and ranking rural community values to better inform local decision-making. The Project will have a Liaison Group, appointed by local elected officials, which will include county representatives, state and federal agencies, non-governmental organizations, and citizen members to help define the process. In addition, we will be hosting meetings in Montana and Idaho and information about the project will be readily accessible on the web.

**How is this related to the MSTI DEIS?** Our analysis is being done as an independent process from the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) being prepared by state and federal agencies. Our project is an independent review providing unbiased and scientific information to county officials. We are communicating frequently with NorthWestern Energy, Montana Department of Environmental Quality, and BLM to ensure that whatever findings we produce will have maximum effectiveness and impact in their decision-making process within the current timeline.

**Why is this important for Montana and Idaho?** The Project integrates values that are unique to our Western way of life in Montana and Idaho, such as private property, hunting and fishing, agriculture, viewshed, building density, wildlife habitat, and many others.

**When will our independent project be complete and how is it funded?** The timeline of the project is September 1 - May 30, 2012. Funding for the project is expected to come from a variety of sources, in-kind and cash, including counties, states, individuals, foundations, and Northwestern Energy.

**For more information:**  
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