

Governor's Consistency Review – Greenlink North Transmission Project Sagebrush
Ecosystem Council Meeting | 10-22-2025

Thank you, Chair and members of the Council.

I appreciate the opportunity to speak today on behalf of the Governor's Office regarding the consistency review we submitted to the Bureau of Land Management for the Greenlink North Transmission Project.

Let me begin by acknowledging the exceptional work of the Sagebrush Ecosystem Council and the Sagebrush Ecosystem Technical Team. Your ongoing commitment to safeguarding Nevada's iconic sagebrush landscape and the greater sage-grouse is unmatched. The Governor and our office recognize the scientific rigor, the on-the-ground insight, and the collaborative ethos that defines the work of the SETT and SEC, and I want to be absolutely clear, our letter was in no way intended to diminish or undercut that work.

Specifically, I want to thank:

- Kathleen Steele, Program Manager
- Cheyenne Acevedo, Wildlife Staff Specialist
- Casey Adkins, Forestry and Wildland Fire Specialist
- Sarah Hale, State Lands Environmental Scientist
- Skyler Monaghan, Agriculture and Rangeland Specialist

Each of them brings a unique blend of scientific discipline and practical land management experience to this program, and we are deeply grateful for their service to the state.

Let me also say this clearly: this decision does not set a precedent. The Governor's Office remains firmly committed to the full process established through the Sagebrush Ecosystem Program. We continue to stand behind the SETT, the SEC, and the Conservation Credit System. This review reflects the unique and time-sensitive circumstances of this specific project, not a shift in policy or a new standard for other transmission or development efforts.

The Governor's consistency review reflects the challenging reality we're in. Greenlink is a critical piece of transmission infrastructure for our state. It will enable energy growth, increase grid reliability, and improve resiliency across the western intertie.

But this is not just about infrastructure. It's about people.

Our office took into consideration that the cost of delay on this project, whether from construction inefficiencies or prolonged mobilizations, could ultimately be passed on to Nevada's ratepayers. And that's not a theoretical risk. The regulatory filings make it clear: delays increase cost, and cost increases are shared across utility bills. The Governor felt it was necessary to raise that concern in the formal record.

At the same time, we did not want to dismiss the need for continued mitigation and stewardship of the sage grouse. In fact, the State's consistency letter highlights that the project incorporates habitat offsets, co-location to avoid greenfield impacts, and avian safe design measures.

The Governor's review supports the proposed exemption from seasonal construction restrictions along the GLNP corridor but only because, if applied cumulatively, those restrictions would limit construction windows in some segments to as little as 45 days per year.

That's not a workable timeline, not for a 235 mile line.

We firmly believe that more efficient construction, under the right environmental controls and through best practices, can still protect the resource and meet the moment. That's why we encouraged BLM to reaffirm the exemption, while holding the project to the highest standards of mitigation.

Typically, our office uses the full 60 day window afforded under 43 CFR 1610.3-2(e). It is standard practice for us to allow the first 30 days to accommodate the public protest period and then use the remaining time to craft a thoughtful and informed consistency review, ideally reflecting broad input and coordination.

In this case, due to a miscommunication around the notification timeline, that standard process was compressed. The BLM formally released the Final EIS and Proposed RMP Amendment on May 23 and requested a response by June 23, which, didn't leave the usual two-phase review process room to unfold as intended.

Given that compressed timeline, we made the best decision we could in that window.

I'll close by emphasizing that this project, and this process, is not the end of our work. It is our shared responsibility to continue collaborating with you, with BLM, and with all partners to ensure that Nevada's growth is done wisely, with conservation embedded from design through construction.

The Governor remains fully committed to the conservation of the greater sage-grouse and does not view this action as a signal to US Fish and Wildlife that Nevada is retreating from our commitments.

Thank you again, and I'm happy to take any questions.