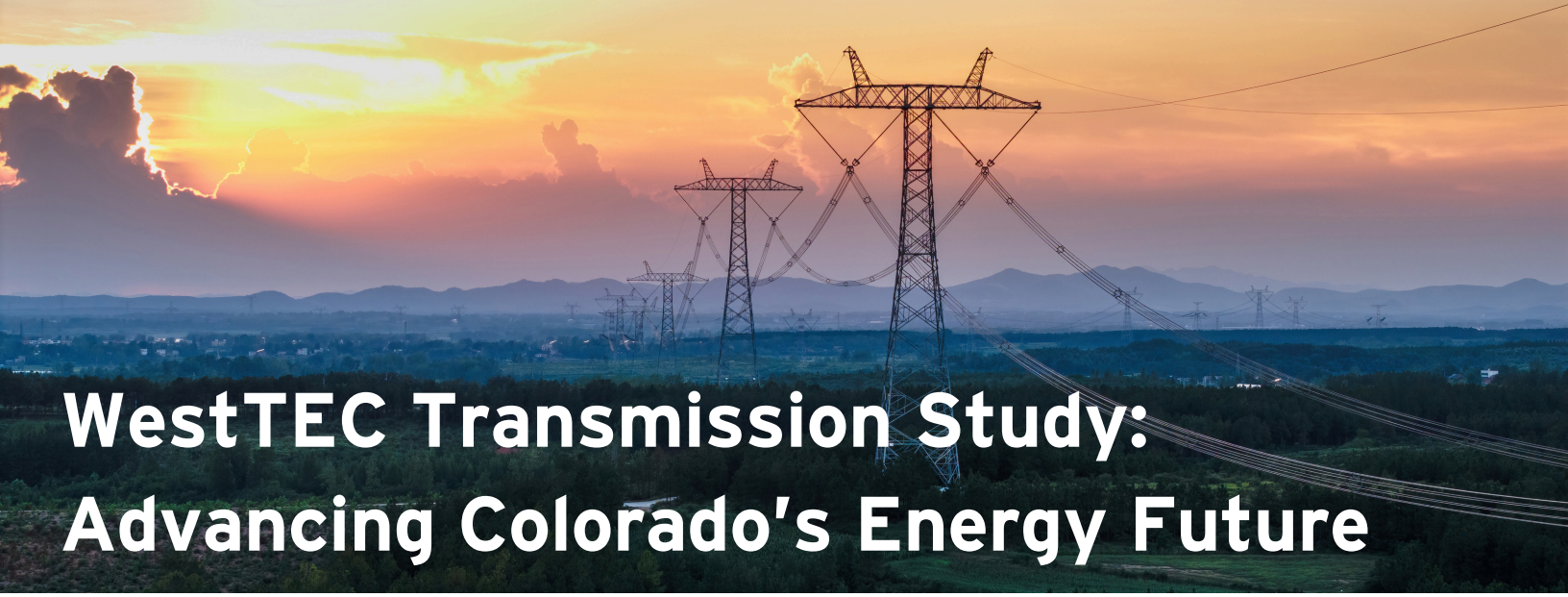


WestTEC Transmission Study: Advancing Colorado's Energy Future

WestTEC's 10-year West-Wide Transmission Study provides an actionable plan to advance critical transmission projects that strenthen reliability, integrate new resources, and enable economic growth in Colorado and across the West.

About the WestTEC study

Through an unprecedented effort paid for and driven by over 70 regional utilities and stakeholders, WestTEC's *West-Wide Transmission Study: 10-year Horizon Report* identifies transmission projects required for reliable and efficient grid operations through 2035. While this summary focuses on projects located in Colorado, the broader portfolio also includes transmission investments in neighboring states that will provide significant reliability and economic benefits to Colorado.

Colorado 2035 outlook

45% load growth

928 miles of transmission upgrades*

14 GW of new generating capacity

*Includes interstate transmission projects with mileage outside of Colorado.

WestTEC benefits for Colorado

WestTEC transmission projects would deliver significant benefits to Colorado, including:

- **More generation.** Enables 14 GW of new capacity, a 101% increase from today.
- **More resilience.** Supports critical electricity transfers to keep the lights on during extreme events, such as winter storms and heat waves.
- **More economic development.** Enables 45% load growth by 2035, positioning Colorado to attract and grow new industries.
- **Advancing Colorado's goals.** Supports Colorado's law requiring certain investor-owned utilities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from electricity generation by at least 80% by 2030, using a 2005 baseline.

Total investment in Colorado

The WestTEC study identified a need for $2 billion of new or upgraded transmission in Colorado — an investment roughly equivalent to building two projects the size of the I-70 highway upgrade at Floyd Hill.

While this may seem daunting, 34% of the total mileage is already in service, and projects representing 58% of the total mileage have either been identified in previous utility studies or are currently under development.

Colorado has the expertise, resources, and institutions to deliver these projects. The following page reviews the full project portfolio and outlines what is next.

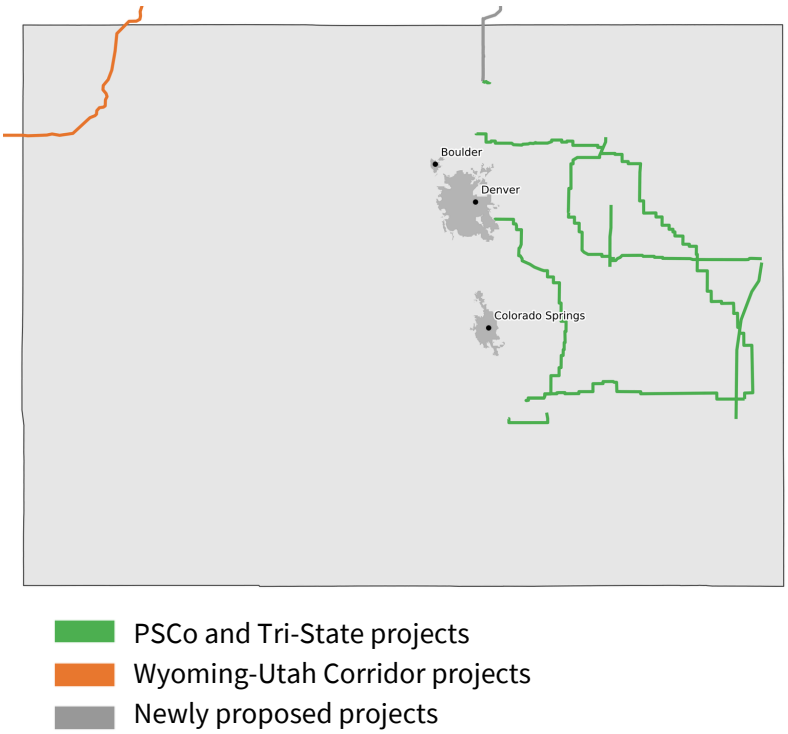
Proposed WestTEC transmission projects in Colorado

In Colorado, WestTEC confirmed the need for six projects already identified by incumbent and independent developers. It also identified three additional projects that are not yet formally planned and will require sponsors. All projects must be completed by 2035 to meet growing demand and maintain reliability in Colorado and across the West.

Public Service Company of Colorado and Tri-State projects

PSCo is building a 550-mile, $1.7 billion transmission portfolio. The Power Pathways system will primarily span eastern Colorado and is expected to be online by 2027. Tri-State has identified the need for four lines, totaling $134 million, as part of its Eastern Colorado Transmission plan. These projects are at various stages of development, with several expected before 2030, making timely completion — without permitting or other delays — critical.

WestTEC transmission portfolio in Colorado by project developer



Source: Horizon Energy Systems, 2026, ourgridfuture.org

Wyoming–Utah Corridor projects

The northwest corner of Colorado is emerging as a strategically important transmission corridor for the West. The TransWest Express and Rocky Mountain Power's Energy Gateway South projects follow closely aligned routes across the state. They will help advance regional grid reliability, resource diversification, and interregional coordination. By leveraging shared siting opportunities and strengthening the broader Western Interconnection, these investments support improved power flows into and out of Colorado.

Newly proposed projects

The WestTEC plan identified a reconductoring project to address grid congestion between Wyoming and Colorado, along with a substation project and new transformer in Western Colorado. The total cost of the projects is $67 million. Early coordinated action on these projects is essential to ensure reliability through 2035.

What happens next?

WestTEC's 10-Year Transmission Study provides an actionable roadmap for advancing transmission in Colorado. Given the long timeline for siting, permitting, and construction, it is critical to move these projects forward now. Incumbent and independent transmission developers must complete their planned projects, while newly proposed projects will need to be advanced through new partnerships. Strong coordination across stakeholders will be essential to ensure these projects are successfully delivered.

Coming soon...

Expected later in 2026, WestTEC's 20-year horizon study will build on the 10-year horizon study by examining Western grid needs through 2045 under varied load growth, policy, and technology futures. Extending the planning horizon enables more proactive decision-making, helping ensure that near-term investments deliver the greatest long-term value at the lowest overall costs.