



WESTERN RESOURCE
ADVOCATES

For Immediate Release

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Getting Renewable Energy to Consumers:
Smart Lines Report Provides Ground Rules for Electrical Grid of the
Future

Boulder, CO – The western U.S. has significant renewable energy potential. What is lacking is the capacity to carry renewable energy to consumers through the existing power grid. Because planners are trying to decide where to build new power lines, Western Resource Advocates and Resource Media have released a report called “Smart Lines: Transmission for the Renewable Energy Economy.” The report calls for proper siting of power lines to capture renewable energy sources while avoiding important wildlife habitat and national parks and monuments such as Arches and Escalante-Grand Staircase.

Western states are already shifting toward a renewable energy economy. Reducing reliance on fossil fuels is important for national security, global climate health and as an engine of economic growth. “The West has vast wind, solar and geothermal clean energy resources that need transmission to quickly move the region to a very promising new energy economy,” stated Tom Darin, Western Resource Advocates’ Energy Transmission Attorney. “We wrote Smart Lines to facilitate the development of smartly planned renewable energy and transmission projects. This report will be a helpful guide for transmission planners and the renewable energy industry.”

As new transmission capacity is being planned for the West, most current schemes are being designed to connect to coal or natural gas generation. Insufficient care is being given to the areas through which power lines would be routed. The western landscape is strewn with a patchwork of private, state and federal lands that contain critical wildlife habitat, pristine areas and some of the nation’s most treasured vistas. Smart Lines charts a path to capturing the West’s renewable energy while considering the impacts to western lands.

Smart Lines proposes new transmission to meet this nation’s energy needs with four principles:

- Efficiency first. Employ demand-side management to reduce demand.
- Maximize the existing grid.

- Connect to clean and renewable energy.
- Protect public lands and wildlife resources.

The Smart Lines report is available online through the WRA website at www.westernresourceadvocates.org/energy/smartlines.php.

Western Resource Advocates is a non-profit conservation organization dedicated to protecting the West's land, air and water. Visit us online at www.westernresourceadvocates.org.