



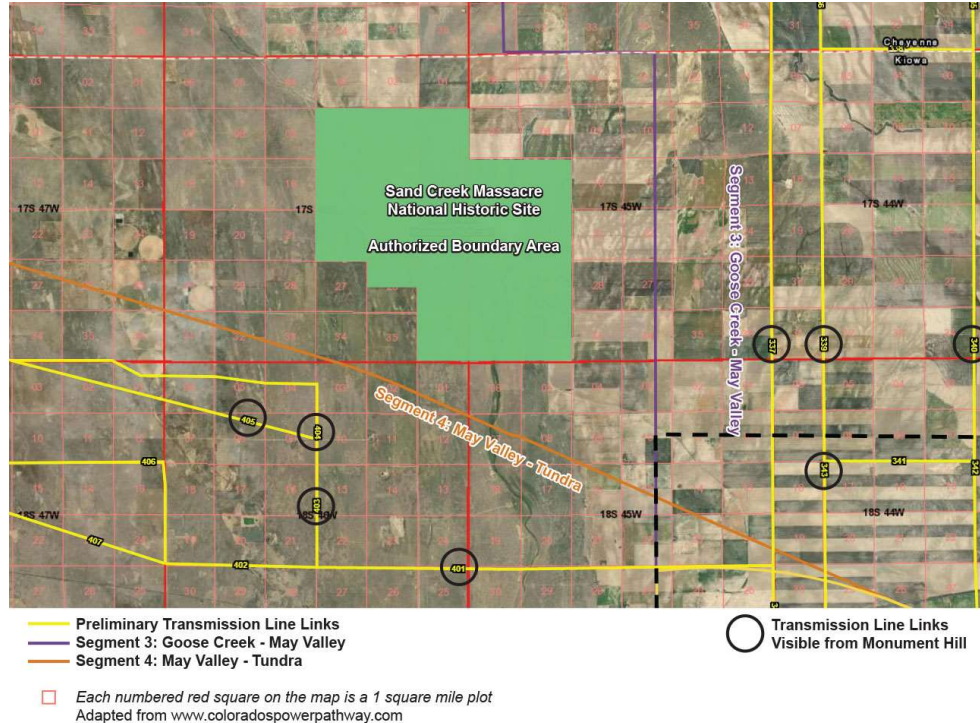
November 20, 2021

This is an urgent call to action. Time is running out to submit your comments regarding the proposed placement of new power transmission lines near the Sand Creek Massacre National Historic Site by November 24, 2021 via the public comment form.

Xcel Energy has released their preliminary transmission line links for up to 650 miles of new line across Colorado as part of their Power Pathway program. Some of the preferred routing for these 120 to 190 feet tall transmission lines is as close as 3 miles from the historic site boundary, and would, in our opinion, permanently damage the scenic and historic integrity of the site for the Cheyenne and Arapaho people and for visitors.

If you have visited the Sand Creek Massacre NHS you know that the viewshed, the area that is visible from the site, extends for several miles, particularly to the north, east, and south. At the average tower height, the transmission lines would be visible for up to about 12 miles in the viewshed from Monument Hill. If wind turbines are developed from this pathway, the intrusion on the viewshed would be even greater.

For more than 150 years the viewshed from the Massacre Site has remained largely unchanged. Xcel's preferred route for the transmission lines is simply along county roads that create the least amount of work for installation. With minimal effort, Xcel can find a route in the area that does not present this intrusion into the viewshed of the Historic Site. Now is the time to submit your comments encouraging Xcel to find alternative routes for the transmission lines at least 12 miles from the Historic Site in order to preserve the historic integrity of the site, the cultural and natural landscape, of this place which is particularly sacred to the Cheyenne and Arapaho tribes.



[Click here to view the interactive Xcel map](#)

Xcel hosted a Public Open House in Eads to learn about their progress in identifying transmission line route and substation site locations on November 11. **The Public Comment Form closes on November 24, 2021, just five days before the 157th anniversary of the Sand Creek Massacre.** Many tribal representatives will be engaged in ceremonial observances at the site and are not able to review the proposal or comment within this timeframe.

Because there is no “federal involvement” in the form of funding, permitting etc. for this project, federal requirements for assessment of environmental and cultural impacts do not apply, nor does the requirement for consultation with potentially affected Tribes and communities. We are relying on public voices to alter the course of these lines away from the National Historic Site. Please share this widely with your personal and professional networks.

Suggested talking points for your comment:

- Such a visual intrusion would permanently impair the integrity of the Massacre site landscape, the experience of visitors to the site and their ability to understand and appreciate the historic and physical context in which the massacre took place, and most importantly, the cultural significance of the Massacre site landscape to the Cheyenne and Arapaho people, especially descendants of the Massacre victims.



- Since the day the atrocity occurred the cultural landscape surrounding the Massacre site has remained almost as intact as it appeared 157 years ago. Since the national historic site was dedicated and opened to the public in 2007, numerous potential intrusions on the massacre site viewshed, including oil and gas developments, have been kept at bay. County officials and surrounding landowners have been very conscious of preserving the integrity of the only national historic site in the area, which attracts over 6000 visitors per year. Even the Colorado Air National Guard went to considerable effort, working closely with the Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes to protect the airspace over the site!
- In establishing the site, Congress directed that the Sand Creek Massacre National Historic Site be managed to to protect and preserve the site, including... the cultural landscape of the site, in a manner that preserves, as closely as practicable, the cultural landscape of the site as it appeared at the time of the Sand Creek Massacre.
- The transmission lines are the first step toward future infrastructure. While we are not against renewable energy, the presence of the transmission line will likely spur the development of wind and solar power generating facilities whose proximity to the site would only add to the destruction of the historic viewshed. (see Kiowa County Independent article)
- In 2013 the NPS went through the effort to bury the three miles of power lines leading to the site and these were traditional 40-foot tall poles. Imagine the impact 190 foot-tall towers will have on a visitor's experience. Does Xcel Energy really want to have the distinction of being the first entity responsible for marring a culturally significant landscape that so many others have been respectful of preserving?

[Click Here to Submit Your Comment Today!](#)

Once on the form we suggest that you check the following topics as being important to your comment:

- Location of Transmission Line
- Visual Impacts
- Land Use Impact

The segments of interest are:

- Segment 3: Goose Creek - May Valley
- Segment 4: May Valley - Tundra