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## Ute Tribe, TransWest collaborate for successful construction of the TransWest Express Transmission Project

*Partnering agreements underscore commitment to job creation,  
career training for tribal members*

FORT DUCHESNE, Utah, and DENVER, Sept. 21, 2016 – With a shared commitment to creating employment opportunities and strengthening the Western electric grid, the Ute Indian Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation and TransWest Express LLC have signed coordination and partnering agreements for the construction of the TransWest Express Transmission Project.

Under the agreements, TransWest's contractors will work to recruit, train and employ tribal members to maximize employment and advancement opportunities – not only for jobs to construct the TWE Project but also for ongoing careers in the electric power and transmission industry.

The Ute Tribe Employment Rights Office (UTERO) and TransWest will closely coordinate with each other throughout the construction process to connect qualified tribal members to available construction-related jobs. UTERO's mission is to promote tribal self-sufficiency and well-being through addressing employment needs.

Approximately 123 miles of the 730-mile TWE Project will be constructed along non-trust lands within or near the Uintah and Ouray Reservation in Uintah County and Duchesne County, Utah. TransWest's prime contractor will seek to retain qualified tribal member-owned businesses as preferred subcontractors in this area.

Efforts to increase tribal member awareness and consideration of careers in the electric power industry are already underway. In partnership with UTERO, TransWest and its affiliates will be hosting two events on Sept. 27 in Fort Duchesne:

- A career day for high-school students from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. at Uintah River High School.
- A job fair from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the Ute Crossing Grill.

Representatives from TransWest, engineering and design firms, the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW), the International Union of Operating Engineers (IUOE), and construction firms will attend. They will talk with students and job fair attendees about how transmission lines are engineered and constructed, what union apprenticeship programs and training are available, and what kinds of jobs and subcontracts are anticipated with the construction of the TWE Project. Another job fair will be held at least three months before the project's construction commencement date.

The TWE Project is a 600 kV high-voltage direct current (HVDC) transmission line that can deliver about 20,000 gigawatt-hours per year of clean and sustainable energy. It will create a critical bidirectional link between the diverse renewable resources in the Rocky Mountain and Desert Southwest regions to foster a more resilient western U.S. power grid. As a significant inter-regional transmission line, the TWE Project will create up to 1,000 construction-related jobs each year during the estimated three-year construction period.

The Ute Indian Tribe was among the 49 cooperating agencies that collaborated to prepare the TWE Project's Environmental Impact Statement, a process led jointly by the Bureau of Land Management and Western Area Power Administration. The Final EIS was published on May 1, 2015, and the Record of Decision is anticipated in 2016.

The Ute Indian Tribe is a Signatory to BLM's Programmatic Agreement for the TWE Project, prepared under the requirements of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, which requires federal agencies to consider the potential effects of undertakings on historic properties, including Traditional Cultural Properties. The Ute Indian Tribe, TransWest and BLM have also entered into a Tribal Consultation Agreement that further recognizes the Ute Indian Tribe's role in participating fully in the identification, mitigation, and monitoring of culturally sensitive resources.

For more information about the Ute Indian Tribe, visit [www.utetribe.com](http://www.utetribe.com)

For more information about TransWest and the TWE Project, visit [www.transwestexpress.net](http://www.transwestexpress.net).