

## DOCKETED

<b>Docket Number:</b>	15-RETI-02
<b>Project Title:</b>	Renewable Energy Transmission Initiative 2.0
<b>TN #:</b>	206323
<b>Document Title:</b>	TransCanyon Comments: On the Renewable Energy Transmission Initiative
<b>Description:</b>	N/A
<b>Filer:</b>	System
<b>Organization:</b>	TransCanyon
<b>Submitter Role:</b>	Public
<b>Submission Date:</b>	10/9/2015 1:53:25 PM
<b>Docketed Date:</b>	10/9/2015

*Comment Received From: TransCanyon*

*Submitted On: 10/9/2015*

*Docket Number: 15-RETI-02*

## **Comments on the Renewable Energy Transmission Initiative**

*Additional submitted attachment is included below.*



# TRANSCANYON

JASON R. SMITH  
President

October 9, 2015

Robert B. Weisenmiller, Ph.D.  
Chair  
California Energy Commission  
1516 Ninth Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814-5512

Re: 15-RETI-02 (Renewable Energy Transmission Initiative)

Dear Chair Weisenmiller:

TransCanyon, LLC (TransCanyon) appreciates the opportunity to have provided comments during the public comment period at the September 10, 2015 Joint Agency Workshop and to provide these comments in further support of the Renewable Energy Transmission Initiative (RETI 2.0) initiative.

TransCanyon, a joint venture between Berkshire Hathaway Energy's subsidiary, BHE U.S. Transmission and Pinnacle West Capital Corporation's subsidiary, Bright Canyon Energy, is an independent developer of electric transmission infrastructure for the western United States. We have been an active participant in WestConnect, where Bob Smith currently serves as Vice Chairman of the Planning Management Committee, and the California ISO transmission planning process, through which TransCanyon sponsored the Delaney to Colorado River transmission line. Our team has a keen understanding of the unique challenges California faces in meeting its renewable and greenhouse gas emission goals. Although TransCanyon is a newly formed entity, our team has successfully developed 10 major high voltage transmission lines representing \$3.7 billion of investment in the western United States in the last five years.

TransCanyon strongly supports RETI 2.0 and commends the California Energy Commission (CEC), the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC), and the California ISO (CAISO) for the joint effort to develop concrete plans to meet the renewable energy and greenhouse gas emissions goals of the State of California. We believe that transmission investment will play a crucial role in meeting these important goals and therefore very much support this process that will help identify the best renewable resources and related transmission corridors for development. In keeping with these overall objectives, TransCanyon offers the following recommendations for consideration:

1. Define clear objectives, deliverables and timelines associated with each deliverable such that all stakeholders have clear alignment and transparency on goals and objectives
2. Develop a coordinated process outlining how RETI 2.0 will inform and streamline the CAISO Transmission Planning Process

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3. Develop a coordinated process outlining how RETI 2.0 will inform and streamline the CPUC's environmental permitting process
4. Develop cooperative frameworks for coordinating federal and state review processes that may be necessary for any in-state or regional solutions considered that would fall under a multi-jurisdiction environmental review process
5. Evaluate the cost-benefit tradeoffs of potential solutions such that the most cost-effective means to meet the policy goals of the State of California are prioritized
6. Establish least regrets recommendations for renewable resource/transmission development for several scenarios in order to derive maximum benefit from RETI 2.0's work (e.g., look at 50% RPS, 60% RPS and 70% RPS, and energy-only and full deliverability scenarios in order to form views on cost-benefit tradeoffs of various scenarios and be well positioned to inform future goals)
7. Consider ways to leverage existing transmission infrastructure that is currently or may become underutilized (e.g., examine how best to utilize transmission capacity freed up from retired coal plants)
8. Evaluate both in-state and regional renewable resources

We stand ready to bring our expertise and commit resources to actively lead or participate, as appropriate, in committees and working groups formed as part of the RETI 2.0 initiative.

TransCanyon appreciates the opportunity to submit these comments and looks forward to continued participation and engagement in this effort.

Sincerely,



Jason R. Smith