

**TOWN OF MINTURN, COLORADO
RESOLUTION NO. 34- SERIES 2025**

**A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING ALTERNATIVE 4 IN THE HOLY CROSS ENERGY
115KV AVON-GILMAN TRANSMISSION LINE ENVIRONMETAL ASSESSMENT**

WHEREAS, Holy Cross Energy (HCE) has submitted a proposal to the U.S. Forest Service for the construction of an 8.9-mile 115 kV transmission line between the Avon Substation and Gilman Substation, as described in the Environmental Assessment (EA) for the HCE Avon–Gilman 115 kV Transmission Line, June 2025; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Minturn participated in the NEPA process, providing comments on visual impacts, wildlife habitat, recreation, and community character, resulting in the development of Alternative 4 as a preferred alignment that incorporates extended undergrounding through Minturn; and

WHEREAS, Alternative 4 would place approximately 4.1 miles of the line underground through Minturn (EA §2.4), eliminating visual impacts at Dowd Junction, the Game Creek Trailhead, and the Minturn Bike Park (EA Figures 4, 5, and 7); and

WHEREAS, Alternative 4 directly responds to community concerns by minimizing scenic and recreational impacts, reducing potential wildlife disturbance, and preserving the historic and visual character of the Town of Minturn (EA §4.13 Wildlife, §4.16 Recreation, §4.17 Scenery Resources); and

WHEREAS, the Environmental Assessment concludes that Alternative 4 is the environmentally preferable and community-compatible alternative, as it reduces overhead structure mileage compared to Alternatives 2 and 3, requires no permanent new roads on National Forest System lands, and retains safe and reliable electric service with system redundancy (EA §§2.4, 4.3, 4.20); and

WHEREAS, the Town Council wishes to approve a letter on behalf of the Town of Minturn and directed to the Forest Supervisor for the White River National Forest, as set forth in **Exhibit A** (the “Letter”), encouraging the Forest Service to adopt Alternative 4 as the preferred alternative for the project; and

WHEREAS, the Town Council of the Town of Minturn recognizes that supporting Alternative 4 is in the best interest of the Town to protect scenic resources, recreation, and community character while allowing critical infrastructure improvements to proceed.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF MINTURN, COLORADO:

1. The foregoing recitals are incorporated herein as findings of the Town Council.
2. The Town of Minturn formally supports Alternative 4 as the preferred alternative for the Holy Cross Energy Avon–Gilman 115 kV Transmission Line project, as described in the June 2025 Environmental Assessment.

3. The Town Council hereby approves the Letter in substantially the same form as set forth in **Exhibit A**, as determined to be satisfactory to the Town Attorney, and authorizes the Mayor to execute the same. The Town Council ratifies and approves all actions taken by the Town to date with respect to participation in public involvement for the EA.
4. The Town **requests that the White River National Forest Responsible Official select Alternative 4** and ensure that all **Project Design Criteria (PDCs), seasonal restrictions, and appropriate monitoring measures** are included to minimize environmental and community impacts.
5. Adoption of this resolution **does not waive the Town's right** to provide additional comments or request further mitigation during the NEPA process, including under **36 CFR Part 218 pre-decisional review**, if new information arises or project conditions warrant.
6. The Town Manager is directed to transmit this Resolution to the Eagle–Holy Cross Ranger District and all cooperating agencies to be included in the project record.

INTRODUCED, READ, APPROVED, ADOPTED, AND RESOLVED this 6th day of August, 2025.

TOWN OF MINTURN



Earle Bidez, Mayor

ATTEST:



Jay Brunvand, Town Clerk



EXHIBIT A

Letter in Support of Alternative 4



Town of Minturn
302 Pine St.
PO Box 309
Minturn, CO 81645
<https://www.minturn.org>

August 6th, 2025

Brian Glaspell, Forest Supervisor
White River National Forest
c/o Leanne Veldhuis, District Ranger
Eagle-Holy Cross Ranger District
White River National Forest
P.O. Box 190
Minturn, CO 81645
leanne.veldhuis@usda.gov

RE: *Town of Minturn Comments on Environmental Assessment for Avon-to-Gilman 115-kV Transmission Line Project*

NEPA Project #57224

Dear Forest Supervisor Glaspell,

On behalf of the Town of Minturn (the “Town”), we write to express our appreciation for the opportunity to comment on the *Environmental Assessment (EA)* for the proposed Holy Cross Energy Avon-to-Gilman 115-kV Transmission Line (the “Project”). We appreciate the Forest Service’s early and continuing efforts to bring the Town into discussions relating to the Project as a Cooperating Agency. We especially appreciate the Forest Service’s and Applicant’s efforts to develop and analyze **Alternative 4**, which responds directly to concerns and suggestions raised by our community regarding visual impacts, right-of-way conflicts, and community character.

Support for Alternative 4

The Town of Minturn **strongly supports Alternative 4** as the preferred alternative for this project. Alternative 4 represents a thoughtful and responsive approach that balances regional energy reliability goals with the protection of Minturn’s unique mountain town character, scenic viewsheds, and environmental values. Key reasons for our support include:

- **Reduction in Visual Impacts:** By undergrounding the transmission line through the town and key public-facing segments, Alternative 4 preserves critical viewsheds near the Game Creek Trailhead, Minturn Bike Park, River View Cemetery, and adjacent residential areas. This directly addresses community concerns raised during prior comment periods.
- **Respect for Community and Cultural Resources:** Alternative 4 minimizes above-ground infrastructure within town limits, reducing impacts to historic and recreational areas and aligning with the Town’s long-standing efforts to preserve its cultural and aesthetic values.
- **Improved Right-of-Way Compatibility:** The underground routing through Minturn avoids potential conflicts with land use, transportation corridors, and municipal infrastructure that would have arisen under Alternatives 2 and 3.
- **Public Safety and Fire Mitigation:** Undergrounding the line through fire-prone areas near the town reduces risk of ignition and enhances long-term public safety in this wildland-urban interface zone.
- **Compatibility with Future Land Uses:** The alignment and undergrounding around and through the Forest Service Administrative Site 730 appears to avoid potential



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development interference of any future Minturn Gateway redevelopment at Dowd Junction.

Request for Continued Coordination

The Town of Minturn remains committed to regional infrastructure planning and values our partnership with the Forest Service and Holy Cross Energy. We respectfully request continued coordination during final design and permitting to ensure:

- Construction methods and staging are sensitive to adjacent neighborhoods, recreation assets, and seasonal tourism.
- Restoration and revegetation efforts reflect the Town's ecological and visual standards.
- Opportunities for community information and engagement are maintained throughout implementation.

As a Cooperating Agency, the Town requests the opportunity to review any Final EA, Finding of No Significant Impact, and Decision Notice prior to public release.

We commend the Forest Service and the Applicant for this comprehensive analysis and for listening to local concerns through the development of Alternative 4. The Town supports selection of the Preferred Alternative as described in Alternative 4.¹

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Earle Bidez

Mayor, Town of Minturn
ebidez@minturn.org

¹ The Town reserves its regulatory authority over the Project pursuant to the Minturn Municipal Charter and Code, and the Areas and Activities of State Interest Statute, C.R.S. 24-65.1-101 *et seq.*