

ATC, ITC Midwest and Dairyland Power Cooperative: Began filing Wisconsin regulatory application to build Cardinal-Hickory Creek Transmission Line Project

Posted on Thursday, Apr 26, 2018

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MADISON, Wis. – Following years of analysis and public outreach, American Transmission Co., ITC Midwest and Dairyland Power Cooperative have begun filing their application for a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (CPCN) with the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin (PSCW) and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources seeking approval to build an approximately 102- to 120-mile, 345-kilovolt transmission line from Dane County, Wisconsin, to Dubuque County, Iowa. The application filing process should be completed by the end of the month.

The Cardinal-Hickory Creek Transmission Line Project has been designated a Multi-Value Project by the Midcontinent Independent System Operator because it will enable the delivery of energy in support of electric reliability, economic and public policy benefits. The CPCN filing contains hundreds of pages of detailed analysis of the project. Among the filing's findings, data indicates the project would:

- Provide \$23.5 million to \$350.1 million in net economic benefits to Wisconsin electric consumers
- Avoid the need to spend \$87.2 million to \$98.8 million on transmission line and asset renewal projects that would otherwise be needed if the project is not constructed
- Increase the transfer capability of the electric system between Iowa and Wisconsin by approximately 1,300 megawatts, which would ease grid congestion, increase competition to help provide lower-cost power to Wisconsin and transfer additional low-cost wind energy into the state
- Provide an outlet for approximately 25 gigawatts of wind resources in Iowa and areas west of Wisconsin and enable more than a dozen new wind facilities to fully interconnect to the electric system in areas west of Wisconsin

“Dairyland’s cooperative members—and energy users across the region—depend on a reliable, safe transmission system to meet their needs every day,” said Ben Porath, Dairyland Vice President, Power Delivery. “Investing in a robust transmission system is necessary for regional reliability, particularly in light of how the sources of electricity generation are changing. Dairyland is committed to diversifying its generation portfolio with more renewable resources to benefit our electric cooperative members, and the ability to reliably transport that energy will be of great importance. This project also will support stable energy prices by reducing grid congestion.”

The utilities are required to propose two route options for the transmission line. Approximately 95 percent of the 102-mile preferred route in Wisconsin follows existing utility and highway corridors, versus 63 percent on the alternate route. If the project is approved, the PSCW will select the final route and issue an order for it to be constructed. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources will then issue a utility permit for the project to be constructed.

The project’s estimated cost is \$492 million to \$543 million, depending on the route. Wisconsin electric consumers would pay for approximately 10 to 15 percent of the construction cost, with the remainder of the costs allocated to the rest of the MISO region. However, the benefits are expected to help put downward pressure on electric rates and outweigh the costs.

“We appreciate the public’s active involvement over the past several years in helping us evaluate possible routes,” said ITC Midwest Local Government and Community Affairs Area Manager Angela Jordan. “We’ve looked at hundreds of

paths for these lines and made adjustments based on what we learned from area landowners, businesses, community organizations and local officials.”

“Once the PSCW deems our application complete, the regulatory review process should take 12 months,” said ATC Project Manager Tom Schemm. “During that time, the PSCW will provide opportunities for the public and other stakeholders to provide input and follow the regulatory review process.”

If the project is approved, construction of the project would begin in 2021 to meet an in-service date of 2023. The [application](#) to the PSCW can be found by visiting www.psc.wi.gov and entering Docket No. 5-CE-146.

ITC Midwest and Dairyland Power Cooperative also have kicked off the Iowa regulatory review process, with Iowa Utilities Board public information meetings held in Dubuque and Clayton counties on March 29, 2018.

An interactive map of the preferred and alternate route options and additional project information is available at www.cardinal-hickorycreek.com.