



AN ALLETE COMPANY

EnergizerNews

WINTER 2017

Permit clears way for international transmission line balancing MP wind energy with hydropower from Canada

With the final major regulatory approval in hand, Minnesota Power is preparing to build the Great Northern Transmission Line that will deliver hundreds of megawatts of clean energy from Canada's extensive hydropower resources to Minnesota while strengthening reliability of the power grid.

The U.S. Department of Energy issued a Presidential Permit for the project in November 2016. The Presidential Permit, necessary because the 500-kilovolt transmission line will cross an international border, followed four years of comprehensive regulatory review and meetings with landowners, community members and tribal and government representatives.

"This transmission line is a crucial link in Minnesota Power's *EnergyForward* strategy of balancing renewable and traditional energy sources," said ALLETE Chairman, President and CEO Al Hodnik. "Minnesota Power was forged from renewable hydropower 110 years ago, and that sustainable ethos lives on in this project."

The GNTL will allow Minnesota Power to creatively connect two renewable resources by balancing the intermittent wind energy generated at its Bison wind farm in North Dakota with the dispatchable, baseload hydroelectric power of Manitoba



The approved 224-mile route (represented here in yellow) will cross the border between the U.S. and Canada in Roseau County in northern Minnesota, about three miles east of Minnesota Highway 89.

For more information about the project, including a detailed map of the route, visit greatnortherntransmissionline.com.

Hydro's system of dams and reservoirs in northern Canada. Under power purchase agreements between Manitoba Hydro and Minnesota Power, Manitoba Hydro can reduce the flow of water through its hydro generators when there is excess wind power from Bison. When winds are light or calm, Manitoba Hydro can release more water—stored while the wind was blowing—through its dams and increase its hydropower production. The approved 224-mile route will cross the border between the U.S. and Canada in Roseau County in northern Minnesota, about three miles east of Minnesota Highway 89. The line will run to an expanded Blackberry electric substation east of Grand Rapids. The route includes locations in Roseau, Lake of the Woods, Koochiching and Itasca counties.

The first leg of the project is a 55-mile stretch that runs through Lake of the Woods and Koochiching Counties south of Baudette to the intersection of Highway 71 near Big Falls. The segment—about one-quarter of the total route—features the most difficult access.

Building the transmission line is an enormous undertaking. It will generally require a 200-foot-wide right-of-way, with about four or five structures per mile. Each structure is about 100 to 170 feet in height and the specific types of structures will depend on land type and land use.

The line is expected to be in service in June 2020, when power purchase agreements with Manitoba Hydro take effect. Minnesota Power estimates its cost of the project will be between \$300 million and \$350 million.

In its announcement of the Presidential Permit on its website, the DOE said the Great Northern Transmission Line addresses the need to establish infrastructure for the development of remote generation such as wind energy and has the potential to enable lower-emissions electricity, enhance system reliability and operate at a reasonable cost to consumers. ■



GNTL field office between Grand Rapids and Cohasset on Hwy. 2

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Do you generate your own electricity?

The Minnesota Public Utilities Commission requires Minnesota Power to buy all electric energy that qualified facilities offer for sale. The rules apply to small power producers who use renewable resources and cogenerators who produce electricity and steam.

Disputes that arise over interconnections, sales or purchases of power will be resolved by the MPUC. For information, call Minnesota Power at 800-228-4966. ■

Duel fuel customers can sign up for email, text alerts

If you're a Minnesota Power dual fuel customer, you can sign up to receive text or email alerts when there is a planned interruption to your dual fuel account.

Sign up at mnpower.com/DualFuelAlert. ■

Customer generosity helps to warm homes

Our customers have long been able to contribute to the Salvation Army's HeatShare program through their Minnesota Power bill, and last year was no exception. Customers helped their neighbors in need to keep warm in winter by donating more than \$37,236 to the program in 2016. In addition, the Minnesota Power Foundation donated \$25,000 to HeatShare. ■



Always ask permission: Power line rights-of-way mostly privately owned

Minnesota Power maintains about 7,500 miles of power line rights-of-way in northern and central Minnesota, and most of it is owned by private parties.

A right-of-way means Minnesota Power has been granted rights permitting an electric line to be constructed and maintained on the private land.

A right-of-way is not a public thoroughfare and if you use a right-of-way for snowmobiling, hunting or all-terrain vehicle riding, you must first obtain the landowner's permission. Failure to get permission can be considered trespassing. ■

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Don't fall victim to telephone scams

Scammers often target customers of electric utilities. Con artists may call your home with demands for immediate payment of a past due electric bill and threaten to disconnect power within the hour if no payment is made. Various directions are given for payment—prepaid money cards from Walgreen's or CVS, electronic funds transfer through a "MoneyPak" payment system, routing and check numbers from your bank account or credit/debit card numbers. **If you get such a call, hang up.**



As a reminder:

1. We do place courtesy calls for various business reasons and leave our 1-800-228-4966 number for a return call. These are usually recorded calls and never demand immediate payment of an overdue bill.
2. While you may pay your MP bill by phone or credit card, it is only through our third-party vendor, Western Union Speedpay, that these payments are accepted.
3. You should never give your personal information to strangers. If a call sounds suspicious, call us at 1-800-228-4966 to report your concerns to one of our customer agents.
4. To further protect yourself, only use authorized methods to pay your Minnesota Power bill.

If you believe you're a victim of a scam, notify the proper authorities, such as local police or the state attorney general's office. If you believe your Minnesota Power account has been affected, please call 1-800-228-4966 to speak with a Minnesota Power customer information representative. ■

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