



Minnesota Power and Great River Energy to Build Transmission Line to Bolster Electric Reliability in Northern Minnesota

July 25, 2022

DULUTH, Minn.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Jul. 25, 2022-- Minnesota Power, a utility division of ALLETE Inc. (NYSE: ALE), and Great River Energy today announced their intent to build an approximately 150-mile, double-circuit 345-kV transmission line from northern Minnesota to central Minnesota near Becker that will support grid reliability in the Upper Midwest.

This press release features multimedia. View the full release here: <https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20220725005764/en/>



Minnesota Power and Great River Energy will jointly develop this important transmission line project. The final route will be determined by the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission.

The planned transmission line will run from Minnesota Power's Iron Range Substation in Itasca County to Great River Energy's Benton County Substation in Benton County, and then replace an existing Great River Energy transmission line from Benton County to a new substation in Sherburne County. (Graphic: Business Wire)

"Building the right transmission will ensure continued reliability as we transition our energy mix, prepare for increased electrification and build in more resilience to extreme weather and other consequential events," said Priti Patel, vice president and chief transmission officer for Great River Energy. "The right transmission will ensure we can make the transition to more low-cost renewable energy and maintain the reliability our members expect."

Planning for the approximately \$970 million transmission line is in its early stages. Subject to board approval, the two companies intend to seek a Certificate of Need and Route Permit from the MPUC in late 2023. The MPUC will determine need and the final route and separately review cost recovery for Minnesota Power's share of the project. Subject to regulatory approvals, the transmission line is estimated to be in service by 2030.

Minnesota Power and Great River Energy will begin coordinating with landowners, local governments, agencies, Tribal Nations and tribal organizations, and other interested parties in late 2022 and early 2023. Engagement opportunities including open house meetings and workshops will offer the project community an opportunity to ask questions and provide input on the project planning and routing.

The transmission line will run from Minnesota Power's Iron Range Substation in Itasca County to Great River Energy's Benton County Substation in Benton County, and then replace an existing Great River Energy transmission line from Benton County to a new substation in Sherburne County. The Sherburne County substation will be built as part of a separate project.

Minnesota Power, an investor-owned public utility, and Great River Energy, a wholesale electric power cooperative, expect to file a Notice of Intent to Construct, Own and Maintain the transmission line with the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (MPUC) in early August.

This joint project is one of a portfolio of transmission projects approved July 25 by the region's grid operator, the Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO), as part of the first phase of its Long Range Transmission Plan. In total MISO approved 18 projects across its Midwest sub region, with six, including the Minnesota Power/Great River Energy project, in the Upper Midwest.

Proactive investments to maintain a reliable and resilient regional power grid are necessary as more low-cost renewable energy is brought online, existing power plants are retired, electrification continues to grow and extreme weather events become more frequent.

"Investing in transmission resources is a critical component of our EnergyForward strategy for building a carbon-free energy future while maintaining the reliable service our customers and communities expect," said Josh Skelton, Minnesota Power chief operating officer. "This joint project with Great River Energy will ensure that the regional power grid our customers depend on will continue to be reliable and flexible as we navigate a changing energy mix for Minnesota Power and in the broader MISO region."

Utilities across the region are significantly increasing the amount of renewable energy they provide to their customers. Great River Energy will more than double the amount of renewable energy, primarily wind energy, in its portfolio by 2025 and reduce its carbon emissions by 80 percent from 2005 levels in the next 10 years. Minnesota Power was the first utility in the state to deliver 50% renewable energy to its customers in 2021 and envisions delivering 100% carbon-free energy by 2050.

Great River Energy, Maple Grove, Minnesota, is a not-for-profit wholesale electric power cooperative that provides electricity to 28 member-owner distribution cooperatives, serving more than 720,000 member-consumers. Great River Energy owns and operates more than 4,400 miles of high-voltage transmission lines. The organization is on track to meet Minnesota's goal to reduce carbon dioxide emissions 80% from 2005 levels approximately two decades before the 2050 target. Learn more at greatriverenergy.com.

Minnesota Power provides electric service within a 26,000-square-mile area in northeastern Minnesota, supporting comfort, security and quality of life for 145,000 customers, 14 municipalities and some of the largest industrial customers in the United States. More information can be found at www.mnpower.com. ALE-CORP

The statements contained in this release and statements that ALLETE may make orally in connection with this release that are not historical facts, are forward-looking statements. Actual results may differ materially from those projected in the forward-looking statements. These forward-looking statements involve risks and uncertainties and investors are directed to the risks discussed in documents filed by ALLETE with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

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