

CapX2020

Delivering electricity you can rely on

*Central Minnesota Municipal Power Agency
Dairyland Power Cooperative
Great River Energy
Minnesota Power
Minnkota Power Cooperative
Missouri River Energy Services
Otter Tail Power Company
Rochester Public Utilities
Southern Minnesota Municipal Power Agency
Wisconsin Public Power Inc.
Xcel Energy*

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CapX 2020 Proposed Transmission Line Projects

Delivering reliable electricity for the future

CapX 2020 is a joint initiative of 11 transmission-owning utilities in Minnesota and the surrounding region to expand the electric transmission grid to ensure continued reliable service to 2020 and beyond. The CapX 2020 utilities include cooperatives and investor-owned and municipal utilities.

Project need

The region is experiencing tremendous job and population growth, leading to a steady increase in electricity usage. In Minnesota alone, electricity consumption has nearly doubled since 1980, according to data from the state's Department of Commerce. The last major upgrade of the electric transmission infrastructure in the Upper Midwest took place nearly 30 years ago.

Planning studies show that customer demand for electricity will increase by 4,000 to 6,000 megawatts (MW) by 2020 – more than today's system has the capacity to deliver. The proposed new transmission lines would be built in phases designed to meet the growth in electricity demand, as well as to support renewable energy expansion. The first group of CapX 2020 projects (see map) is made up of three proposed 345-kilovolt (kV) transmission lines, one 230-kV line and associated substations. Group 1 proposed projects include:

- A 200-mile, 345-kV transmission line between the Brookings, SD, area and the Southeast Twin Cities, plus a related 345-kV line between Marshall and Granite Falls, MN
- A 250-mile, 345-kV transmission line between Fargo, ND, and St. Cloud and Monticello, MN

- A 150-mile, 345-kV transmission line between the Southeast Twin Cities and Rochester, MN, continuing to La Crosse, WI
- A 70-mile, 230-kV transmission line between Bemidji and Grand Rapids in North Central Minnesota

Minnesota Certificate of Need (CON) process

The regulatory process for these lines is under way. The CapX 2020 utilities filed a Certificate of Need (CON) application in August 2007 with the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (MN PUC) for the three 345-kV projects. A separate CON application was filed for the 230-kV transmission line in March 2008.

As part of the CON process, the utilities provide data concerning the projections of electric usage to demonstrate the need for the proposed lines. The MN PUC will consider this information in determining whether the lines are needed.

The CON approval process generally takes 15 to 18 months and provides many opportunities, including public meetings and hearings, for individuals, interested parties and governments to provide input to the MN PUC, as well as to receive information from CapX 2020 about the proposals.

Regulators in North Dakota, South Dakota and Wisconsin also will determine whether portions of the proposed lines in their states are needed.

Project routing

While the MN PUC is assessing the need for the transmission lines, the utilities are working with local governments, landowners, electric cooperatives and other stakeholders to evaluate potential routes. In addition to state approval

of the need for the projects, each project also requires regulatory approval for the specific routes for the lines.

In Minnesota, a Route Permit application must be filed with the MN PUC for each project, proposing a recommended route and alternatives. The MN PUC makes the final decision on routes for the lines, taking into account recommendations from all participating parties. Similar review, permit and approval processes are required for project lines and facilities from the North Dakota, South Dakota and Wisconsin commissions.

Federal approval

Permits and approvals are required from several federal agencies before the lines can be built. Federal agencies will prepare Environmental Impact Statements before they issue permits.

The CapX 2020 utilities are committed to working with all interested parties during the need and routing processes.

Stay Informed

The best way to participate is to stay informed. Follow progress on the individual agency Web sites and on the CapX 2020 Web site at www.capx2020.com.

Minnesota PUC: To view CapX 2020 filings, go to the PUC's Web site at www.puc.state.mn.us, click on E-documents on the left-hand side, click on Search documents, and search for docket 06-1115. In the search field, "06" stands for the year 2006 (when the first CapX 2020 document was filed). Use "06" for the year and "1115" in the second field, then press the search button.

North Dakota Public Service Commission: Can be contacted at (701) 328-2400 or by visiting www.psc.state.nd.us

South Dakota Public Utilities Commission: Can be contacted at (605) 773-3201 or via the Web at www.puc.sd.gov.

Public Service Commission of Wisconsin: Can be contacted at (888) 816-3831 or www.psc.wi.gov

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