Monticello-St. Cloud 345 kV transmission line

PROJECT UPDATE

Project overview
The Monticello-St. Cloud 345 kilovolt (kV) transmission line was energized and placed in service on December 21, 2011. The 28-mile line runs between the new Quarry Substation northwest of St. Cloud and the existing Monticello Substation. It is double circuit capable, and constructed primarily of single pole steel structures.

Project need
The last major upgrade to the region’s electric transmission infrastructure took place 30 years ago. Since then, the population has grown, home sizes have nearly doubled, and appliance and electric device usage have increased exponentially. The result: Energy usage has increased. The Monticello-St. Cloud 345 kV transmission line reinforces the electric grid to help serve the growing St. Cloud region, improve regional reliability and add capacity for future generation, including renewable.

The Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (MN PUC) must grant two approvals before construction – a Certificate of Need (CoN) and a Route Permit. The CapX2020 utilities were granted a CoN from the MN PUC on May 22, 2009 for all three 345 kV projects. To view CoN documents, including an environmental report prepared by the Department of Commerce, Office of Energy Security (OES), visit the MN PUC’s website at www.puc.state.mn.us and search for eDocket 06-1115. The MN PUC can also be reached at 1-800-657-3782.

Project quick facts
- 345 kV line, double circuit capable
- 28 miles
- In-Service – December 2011

The first of 157 transmission structures was erected on Highway 75 near the Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant. Poles are between 140 and 170 feet tall and about 1,000 feet apart. Typically, a 150-foot wide right-of-way is required. Single pole steel structures were primarily used to reduce land impacts; some locations required two-pole structures.
Project route

The project was granted a Route Permit (docket ET-2, E002/TL-09-246) from the MN PUC on July 8, 2010. To view Route Permit documents, visit the MN PUC’s website at www.puc.state.mn.us and search for eDocket 09-246.

What’s next

Phase 2 of the Fargo to St. Cloud 345 kV project continues between St. Cloud and Alexandria. The nearly 80 mile transmission line is scheduled to be energized in May 2014. Work on the Phase 3, 345 kV transmission line between Alexandria and Fargo is also underway and scheduled to be complete in 2015.

About CapX2020

CapX2020 is a joint initiative of 11 transmission-owning utilities in Minnesota and the surrounding region formed to upgrade and expand the electric transmission grid to ensure continued reliable and affordable service. The CapX2020 projects include four proposed 345 kV transmission lines and a 230 kV line.

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