

PLAINS – STILES RELIABILITY UPGRADE ELECTRIC TRANSMISSION LINE REBUILD PROJECT

OVERVIEW

American Transmission Company is proposing to rebuild aging transmission lines that link northeastern Wisconsin to the Upper Peninsula of Michigan.

NEED FOR THE PROJECT

The most chronic problem on the ATC system is the limited ability to transfer electricity between Wisconsin and the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. The transmission lines in the region are aging, operating at their limits and often overloaded. Congestion and limitations on these lines sometimes requires generators on the system to redispatch power – using more expensive or less-efficient power plants – costing ATC customers millions of dollars each year. There is limited ability to schedule maintenance on the lines, resulting in reduced reliability and increased operating costs.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

ATC is proposing to rebuild and upgrade 69 and 138 kV lines in Oconto and Marinette counties in Wisconsin, and Menominee and Dickinson counties in Michigan, between now and 2006. Most portions of these lines were built in the 1920s. Because the facilities are so critical to system operations that they cannot be taken out of service for extended periods of time, ATC will use a phased approach to construction. The phased approach will minimize the need for temporary lines to bypass facilities in need of upgrading.

The following projects are included in the Plains–Stiles reliability upgrade:

- **West Marinette – Amberg** – This 45-mile line will be rebuilt within the existing corridor and the portion of the line between West Marinette and White Rapids substations will be upgraded to 138 kV operation. The line runs along a corridor that passes through the towns of Amberg, Wagner, Porterfield and Peshtigo in Marinette County, Wisconsin, and in the towns of Lake, Menominee, Holmes and Mellen, and the City of Menominee, all in Menominee County, Michigan. Construction is scheduled for 2004/2005.
- **Plains – Amberg** – This 22-mile 138 kV line will be rebuilt using a temporary bypass line that will be constructed in the existing right-of-way. The line uses a corridor that begins at the Plains Substation in Quinnesec, Michigan, and runs through the towns of Niagara, Pembine, Beecher and Amberg in Marinette County, Wisconsin. Construction is scheduled for 2004/2005.
- **Amberg – Stiles** – Completion of the West Marinette – Amberg line will facilitate the rebuilding of the 44-mile Amberg – Stiles 138 kV line without the use of a temporary bypass line. Construction is scheduled for 2005/2006.

(continued)

REGULATORY APPROVAL

ATC must seek regulatory approval from the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin. ATC expects to file an application for a Certificate of Authority from the PSCW in April 2004. The application begins a multi-disciplinary regulatory review to determine if the project is needed and its impact on the local environment and communities. Additional permits may be needed from the Department of Natural Resources.

CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE ISSUES

ATC will pay for any crop damages and/or physical damages to property resulting from the construction and maintenance of its transmission lines. Certain construction practices are used to reduce the spread of invasive species and the transmittal of agricultural pests and diseases. Post-construction inspections assure proper restoration. ATC controls weeds and brush in the transmission corridor, and herbicidal chemicals are used only with landowner permission. While tall-growing trees are prohibited, ATC encourages the presence of certain kinds of plants and low-growing trees in the transmission corridor.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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