

BADGER COULEE TRANSMISSION LINE PROJECT — UNDERSTANDING THE STATE REGULATORY REVIEW PROCESS

DETERMINING ROUTES FOR NEW 345-KILOVOLT ELECTRIC TRANSMISSION LINES

When American Transmission Co. files its regulatory application with the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin, the company is required to submit at least two route options for the proposed Badger Coulee transmission line. The process of identifying routes for new electric transmission lines has been an inclusive and interactive one that has played out over more than two years. We started with a large study area that included dozens of options that took maximum advantage of existing corridors including existing electric and gas lines, federal and state highways, railroads and recreational trails. Input from government agencies, the public, community leaders and landowners was combined with ATC's evaluations to narrow the many possibilities to just two routes.

Our final two proposed routes balance community input with environmental impacts, constructability, current and future land use, project cost, and specific electric system needs. The next step is for the PSC to evaluate the project need and route options. Public involvement continues as the project enters the state regulatory process.

REGULATORY REVIEW

The PSC will conduct an independent review of the project to determine if the project is needed, hold public and technical hearings in which the public can get involved, and determine the route for the line. The PSC works with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources to create an Environmental Impact Statement, which is a detailed analysis of how the project might affect the environment.

The PSC also will work with the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection to create an Agricultural Impact Statement, which is a detailed analysis of how the project might affect agricultural lands. If approved, the PSC will issue an order that specifies terms and conditions that must be met for construction.

Other agencies, including the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of Defense, Army Corps of Engineers and Wisconsin Department of Transportation also may provide input on the project during the regulatory review phase.

WHAT IS THE PSC?

The PSC is an independent state regulatory agency, whose mission is to ensure that safe, sufficient and reasonably priced utility services are being provided to all of Wisconsin's customers. The PSC oversees regulation of more than 1,100 Wisconsin public utilities that provide electric, heat, telephone, and water and sewer services throughout the state.

GETTING INVOLVED

The public is encouraged to provide input and ask questions about any case before the PSC.

- **Review the case docket:** Each case is assigned an identification number and all documents associated with the case are available at www.psc.wi.gov. The docket number for the Badger Coulee project is 137-CE-160. Input can be uploaded into the Public Comments section. This input is included in the case record and is reviewed as the PSC prepares its decision.



- **Request to be added to PSC and applicant mailing lists:** The PSC public notification letter, which identifies the proposed project, is mailed to affected property owners that are within 300 feet of the proposed centerline, along with government officials, libraries, media, and other relevant agencies at the beginning of the PSC review process. Individuals also may access the PSC website (www.psc.wi.gov) and make the request to the PSC docket coordinator.
- **Attend a PSC scoping meeting:** These informal events facilitated by the PSC and DNR, give the public a chance to learn about the proposed project and review process, and to ask questions and talk directly with the PSC or DNR staff.
- **Review the draft Environmental Impact Statement:** The draft EIS will be issued for public comment and posted on the PSC website (www.psc.wi.gov), and then a final EIS will be posted prior to the public hearings.
- **Submit comments to the PSC and the DNR:** These comments are retained and taken into consideration during the review process.
- **Attend a public hearing:** Individuals may testify at public hearings. The testimony becomes part of the record used by the PSC to make its decision.
- **Attend a technical hearing:** PSC staff and others formally involved in the case (known as parties) provide testimony and exhibits, and the final EIS is also submitted. Testimony submitted by subject matter experts becomes part of the record and aids the PSC in making its decision.

While many of the comments and questions are taken into consideration regarding a project, the PSC ultimately decides whether the line will be built, how it will be designed and where it will be placed. Once the PSC had made its decision, it is described in a written order for the project.

ANTICIPATED REGULATORY REVIEW SCHEDULE

Project application submitted to the PSC..... Early 2013
 PSC holds public and technical hearings for the project2013-2014
 PSC makes decision..... 2014

PSC CONTACT INFORMATION

Public Service Commission of Wisconsin
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Information current as of June 2017



www.atc-projects.com