

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Grid North Partners utilities to implement 19 electric transmission upgrades to reduce system congestion

Transmission upgrades will increase access to renewable generation in Upper Midwest

Minneapolis — (Oct. 11, 2023) — Grid North Partners utilities have identified 19 transmission project upgrades expected to be built over the next three years. These projects, which span Minnesota and touch eastern South Dakota, will enable more low-cost renewable energy to be delivered from western Minnesota to customers throughout the region by reducing congestion on the transmission system.

“We have individually made several improvements to our systems to reduce congestion, but working together has allowed us to holistically study the system and identify these additional 19 solutions that can be quickly implemented on a coordinated basis,” Grid North Partners said in a joint statement. “This work will help us maintain reliable service, keep electric prices low and achieve clean energy goals for customers and members.”

Transmission congestion has become an increasingly noticeable issue, particularly in western Minnesota, in part due to the construction of new energy generation resources outpacing the construction of new transmission lines. Congestion is a limitation on the electric transmission system preventing the most economic energy generation, often low-cost renewable energy, from being delivered to customers throughout the region. When the transmission system is unable to move electricity from the most economic generation, market prices rise and the lowest-cost generation often needs to be curtailed, resulting in higher electricity costs.

The 19 identified projects are estimated to cost approximately \$130 million. They are planned to be built over the next three years and are expected to provide economic savings for customers in excess of the investment. These savings help ensure continued access to low-cost electricity for utility customers and cooperative members throughout the region.

Grid North Partners is a broad mix of 10 investor-owned and not-for-profit cooperative and municipal utilities working together to ensure continued safe, reliable and cost-effective electric service to customers in the Upper Midwest. The Grid North Partners include Central Municipal Power Agency/Services (CMPAS), Dairyland Power Cooperative (DPC), Great River Energy (GRE), Minnesota Power (MP), Missouri River Energy Services (MRES), Otter Tail Power Company (OTP), Rochester Public Utilities (RPU), Southern Minnesota Municipal Power Agency (SMMPA), WPPI Energy and Xcel Energy.

–MORE –

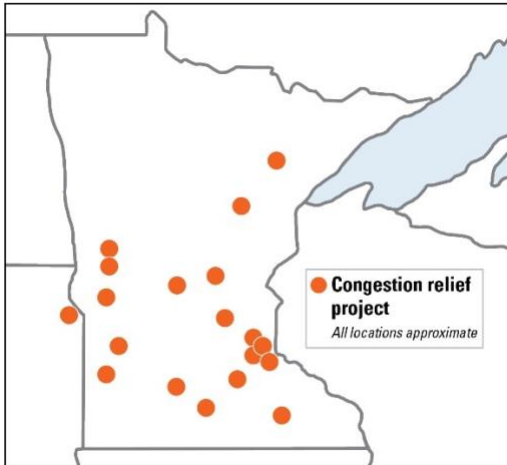
Project information

Grid North Partners utilities will reach out to the regional transmission grid operator, MISO, and their respective communities about each of these upcoming projects, which primarily include upgrading existing transmission lines and substations to increase system capacity.

ID	Project	Length (mi)	Owner	Counties
1	CapX2020 Brookings 2 nd 345 kV Circuit	60	Xcel Energy/GRE/OTP/MRES/CMPAS	Lincoln, Lyon
2	CapX2020 Helena 2 nd 345 kV Circuit	39	Xcel Energy/GRE/OTP/MRES/CMPAS	Scott, Dakota
3	Hoot Lake-Fergus Falls 115 kV	2	OTP/MRES	Otter Tail
4	Morris-Grant County 115 kV	24	MRES	Grant, Stevens
5	Franklin-Ft Ridgely-Swan Lake 115 kV	39	Xcel Energy	Nicollet
6	Swan Lake-Wilmarth 115 kV	16	Xcel Energy	Nicollet
7	Red Rock-Raptor 115 kV	7	Xcel Energy	Washington
8	AAR* - Johnson Jct.-Morris 115 kV	15	GRE/OTP	Big Stone, Stevens
9	Canby-Granite Falls 115 kV	39	OTP	Yellow, Medicine
10	AAR* - Inman-Elmo-Parkers Prairie-Miltona-Alexandria 115 kV	34	GRE/OTP	Otter Tail, Douglas
11	AAR* - Mud Lake-Benton 230 kV	51	GRE/MP	Crow Wing, Morrison, Benton
12	Rogers Lake-High Bridge 115 kV	0.5	Xcel Energy	Ramsey, Dakota
13	Wakefield-St. Cloud 115 kV	18	Xcel Energy	Stearns
14	Pleasant Valley-Byron 161 kV	17	Xcel Energy/GRE/SMMPA	Mower, Dodge, Olmsted
15	Big Stone-Blair 230 kV	33	OTP	Grant, Deuel (South Dakota)
16	Coon Creek-Terminal 345 kV	14	Xcel Energy	Anoka, Ramsey
17	Coon Creek-Kohlman Lake 345 kV	20	Xcel Energy	Anoka, Ramsey

18	AAR* - Forbes-Iron Range 230 kV	34	MP	St. Louis, Itasca
19	AAR* - Blackberry-Riverton 230 kV	67	MP	Crow Wing, Aitkin, Itasca

**Ambient adjusted rating*



Contacts for media inquiries:

Xcel Energy: 612-215-5300

Great River Energy:

Lori Buffington

LBuffington@GREnergy.com

763-486-9266