

NEWS

Invenergy's Grain Belt Express Transmission Line Secures Last of its State Approvals



Like



Comment



Oct 16, 2023



188 views

Source: Gulf Oil & Gas

Missourians and energy consumers across Midwest to see greater energy savings and reliability sooner following today's approval by Missouri Public Service Commission Approved new power delivery configuration provides necessary certainty to support ongoing and upcoming commercial contracting efforts



The \$7 billion, 800-mile Grain Belt Express electric transmission infrastructure project secured approval from the Missouri Public Service Commission (MPSC) for its request to amend its existing Certificate of Convenience and Necessity. The decision marks the last required state siting approval for significant enhancements to the project and provides the necessary certainty about power delivery to support ongoing and upcoming commercial contracting efforts.

For Missouri electric consumers, today's decision provides certainty of power delivery, billions of dollars in additional energy savings, and increased reliability for major grid regions that serve the Show Me state. Across the route states of Kansas,

Missouri, and Illinois, Grain Belt Express will deliver over \$11 billion in energy cost savings over 15 years and enhance reliability for millions of homes and businesses in the Midwest and other regions.

Approvals secured this year from state regulatory commissions authorize Grain Belt Express to be financed and constructed in two phases, which will enable delivery of energy savings and reliability benefits sooner. Grain Belt Express has now acquired 95% of easements for the Phase 1 main line, between southwest Kansas and northeast Missouri.

In response to strong regional demand for access to affordable, reliable power and state officials' calls for more power to be delivered locally, Invenergy Transmission increased the line's capacity to 5,000 megawatts, with 2,500 megawatts flowing to the line's mid-point delivery location in Missouri—a fivefold increase in local delivery compared to the earlier project design. The full delivery capacity of the line is equivalent to roughly four new nuclear power plants to meet regional energy supply and reliability needs.

The MPSC's order stated: "There can be no debate that our energy future will require more diversity in energy resources, particularly renewable resources. We are witnessing a worldwide, long-term and comprehensive movement toward renewable energy. The energy on the Project provides great promise as a source for affordable, reliable, safe, and environmentally-friendly energy that will increase resiliency of the grid. The Project will facilitate this movement in Missouri, will thereby benefit Missouri citizens, and is, with the conditions set out below, in the public interest."

"Securing the necessary state regulatory approvals is another critical step toward Grain Belt Express bringing lower electric bills and greater reliability to consumers in Missouri and across the Midwest," said Shashank Sane, executive vice president and head of transmission at Invenergy. "We thank the state leaders in Kansas, Missouri and Illinois who have thoughtfully considered the tremendous benefits of Grain Belt Express. Invenergy and our project partners remain focused on

responsible and inclusive execution in every facet of development for this historic infrastructure project that will deliver benefits to communities across the American Heartland.”

Also this week, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) acknowledged a request by Grain Belt Express to initiate a new open solicitation process to contract power delivery on Phase 1 of the line. As a merchant transmission project, Grain Belt Express enters into voluntary contracts for power delivery. The process, which could start as early as this year, would be supported by an independent consultant to assist in evaluating bids. In Missouri, 39 communities are already contracted for power delivery from the line from a prior open solicitation.

“Now that Grain Belt Express has received every state approval needed to construct the first phase and 95% of the main line easements are already acquired, we are more confident than ever that 39 communities across Missouri will be able to receive clean, homegrown energy that will save millions in lower electricity costs each year,” said John Twitty, president and CEO of the Missouri Public Utility Alliance, which represents Missouri Hometown Utilities. “Grain Belt Express’s approval in Missouri means families and businesses in these local communities have never been closer to accessing this affordable and reliable power. We are excited to see construction begin.”

In addition to billions in cost savings for energy consumers, Grain Belt Express and the new generation that will interconnect to the line will create 22,300 direct construction jobs while injecting millions of dollars in new local revenue into communities all along the line route. By connecting grid regions that serve 40% of U.S. households and over 25% of Department of Defense installations, Grain Belt Express will be a regional reliability backbone and strengthen national security.

Grain Belt Express milestones that have taken place in the last year in addition to Missouri’s approval, the open solicitation request to FERC, and completing 95% of Phase 1 main line land acquisition include:

In December 2022, the U.S. Department of Energy began the federal environmental review for Grain Belt Express Phase 1. In January 2023, Grain Belt Express selected Siemens Energy Inc. to supply the high-voltage direct current (HVDC) transmission technology for Phase 1 of the project. In March 2023, the Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC) granted Grain Belt Express its Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (CPCN). In April 2023, Invenergy Transmission announced a long-term supply agreement with Prysmian Group North America for up to 12,500 miles of domestically manufactured overhead conductor cable through 2029 to supply Grain Belt Express and other projects. In June 2023, the Kansas Corporation Commission (KCC) granted an amended approval of the Grain Belt Express transmission project to allow for phasing. Invenergy Transmission has reviewed and will comply with the written conditions in the MPSC order as well as fully consider other issues raised by Commissioners during the agenda meeting discussion related to landowner protections. Grain Belt Express is targeting to begin full construction as soon as the start of 2025, pending federal permitting approvals.

What Supporters are Saying: “Lower energy costs are a major advantage for Missouri businesses, but it will only remain so if we can continue to increase our energy supply to meet demand and modernize the grid through state-of-the-art energy projects like the Grain Belt Express,” said Ray McCarty, president and CEO of Associated Industries of Missouri. “The approval of this transmission line and the ability to bring five times as much power to Missouri as originally planned, will not only help us tap a significant source of domestic energy, but it will also help improve reliability and affordability for the Missouri business community. We applaud the Missouri Public Service Commission’s action today that will benefit all Missouri consumers, including manufacturers and other businesses all across Missouri.”

“Grain Belt Express is essential to addressing regional reliability concerns and helping bring energy cost relief to Illinois,” said Mark Denzler, president and CEO of the Illinois Manufacturers’ Association. “You can’t have a strong business climate if manufacturers are worried about the reliability and cost of their power

supply. In providing billions in energy cost relief to Illinois energy consumers, this project will have a lasting, positive impact on our economy for the long-term, while creating new jobs and manufacturing capacity in the short-term.”

“Grain Belt Express securing it’s last state approvals is a significant step for families and businesses across the Midwest,” said Gabe Tabak, senior counsel of American Clean Power (ACP). “Transmission projects like Grain Belt Express are essential to unlocking clean energy development, improving reliability, and delivering affordable electricity to customers.”

“To harness the tremendous potential of our wind power in Kansas, we need to stay focused on upgrading our grid and transmission infrastructure,” said Joann Knight, executive director of the Dodge City/Ford County Development Corporation. “The Grain Belt Express will help boost local economies throughout our state and ensure that we can continue to provide domestic energy solutions throughout the Midwest.”

“As the demand for electricity continues to grow, the reliability of the U.S. grid is more important than ever,” said Karen Onaran, president and CEO of the Electricity Consumers Resource Council (ELCON). “Interregional transmission projects like Grain Belt Express are key to our country’s ability to move power great distances and dependably support the needs of large industrial users of electricity, businesses, and homeowners. We hope that federal regulators will prioritize the review of these types of critical infrastructure projects.”

“Amid the growing electricity needs of American life, the U.S. will require a vastly expanded and modernized grid. The Grain Belt Express project is an important piece of increasing our nation’s transmission capacity,” said Christina Hayes, executive director of Americans for a Clean Energy Grid. “We thank the Missouri Public Service Commission for recognizing the importance of transmission through their approval of Grain Belt Express, and applaud Invenergy’s work to provide clean, reliable, and affordable energy to consumers across the Midwest.”

“Renew Missouri applauds the decision of the Missouri Public Service Commission to move forward the interests of reliability and clean energy to Missourians throughout the state. Transmission is not only the backbone to the strength of the grid, transmission will also lead to unlocking renewable energy’s potential,” said James Owen, executive director for Renew Missouri. “This decision to allow the Grain Belt Express to extend its line is a victory for the future of energy in our state.”

“Through our long-term supply agreement with Invenergy Transmission that will expand domestic manufacturing capacity of advanced transmission conductor technology, we are proud to support the unique Grain Belt Express transmission project,” said Brian DiLascia, Senior Vice President of Power Distribution at Prysmian Group North America. “Making historic investments like this in America’s infrastructure will bolster the competitive advantage of U.S. manufacturing today and in the future.”

“High-voltage direct current (HVDC) lines like Grain Belt Express are a key component of the energy transition, delivering clean power efficiently from where it is generated to customers that need it,” said Matt Neal, Vice President of Grid Solutions North America at Siemens Energy, the preferred supplier of HVDC transmission technology for Phase 1 of Grain Belt Express. “We need a streamlined regulatory process for these lines to be able to deliver the abundance of new energy sources being built throughout the country. With this approval, we look forward to getting shovels in the ground and moving forward with this project.”

🔗 [clean power](#) 🔗 [generation](#) 🔗 [grid](#) 🔗 [nuclear generation](#)
🔗 [renewables](#) 🔗 [utility business](#) 🔗 [wind power](#)

RELATED NEWS



TUNE IN: Insights on Making the Most of the IIJA with Duke Energy's Cynthia Klein on the Energy Central Power Perspectives Podcast

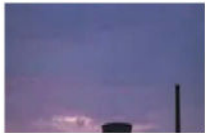
Maine PUC Issues Order Lifting Suspension Involving Central Maine Power



Power generation drops 32.31% to 2,775MW



Lithuania to send Ukraine equipment from its own power plants



PARLIAMENT ADOPTS REFORM OF THE EU ELECTRICITY MARKET

Cody Leis promoted to electric utilities director for the city of Statesville