

SWTC Proposes San Manuel Interconnect Project

The purpose of this newsletter.

Southwest Transmission Cooperative, Inc. (SWTC) is planning to construct new electrical facilities in your area. This newsletter:

- Provides information about the project.
- Discusses details of the project approval process.
- Provides resources to obtain additional information.

Who are Southwest Transmission Cooperative, Inc. (SWTC) and Trico Electric Cooperative, Inc. (Trico)?

SWTC is a non-profit transmission cooperative owned by six Class A members. These Class A members are non-profit distribution cooperatives that deliver power at retail to the rural areas of Arizona and other parts of the Southwest. Trico is a Class A member of SWTC and serves portions of Pima, Pinal, and Santa Cruz counties within Arizona. SWTC transmits power to Trico primarily from the Arizona



(Photo of the San Manuel Interconnect Project area)

Electric Power Cooperative Apache Generating Station, located near Cochise, Arizona.

What are we proposing to do?

SWTC proposes to construct, operate, and maintain a new double-circuit 115-kV transmission line which will be built to 230-kV specifications in San Manuel, Pinal County, Arizona. The 115-kV line is being built to 230-kV specifications using 230-kV post insulators in the event of future demand. The establishment of a new transmission line will allow the Apache Generating Station to transmit power to southeastern Pinal County, San Manuel Substation, via a small fraction of the existing Arizona Public Service (APS) 115-kV system.

Why are we doing it?

The proposed project is necessary to support existing local electric needs. SWTC has proposed the San Manuel Interconnect project to support increased loads in southeastern Pinal County due to population growth in the area. It is anticipated that the ability to deliver power from Westwing Substation, located in the Phoenix area, to San Manuel Substation will become more constrained as population growth and development continues. The addition of the new transmission line will allow a direct transmission path from Apache Station to the San Manuel Substation rather than transmitting power from the Westwing Substation to southeastern Pinal County.

What will it look like?

The new double-circuit 115-kV transmission line will originate at the existing SWTC Apache to Hayden 115-kV transmission line and proceed approximately 4.5 miles west to the existing APS San Manuel Substation. A

total of 27 self-weathering steel structures which will extend approximately 120 feet above ground will be used on this project. In addition to the installation of the structures, SWTC will build 3 separate access roads for the construction and maintenance of the new transmission line.

Additionally, a 46-kV line will be adjoined to the new structures for 3 of the 4.5 miles on BHP, Inc. property. The existing 46-kV line will be removed after the installation of the new lines.

What has happened so far?

SWTC follows an extensive process when locating new facilities. Currently, SWTC is submitting Applications for Regulatory Approvals. The stages of the siting process are described below:

Stage 1: Determine Need

SWTC Planning and Engineering Departments identify the need for improved reliability in an area.

Stage 2: Identify Feasible Alternatives

Engineering and Environmental Departments select route alternatives that appear compatible with surrounding land uses, and meet safety and engineering requirements.

Stage 3: Scoping

SWTC staff meets with governmental agencies to identify any concerns with the proposed alternatives. Additionally, in this stage information scoping letters are sent to various agencies.

Stage 4: Detail Study of Alternatives

Collect information from a variety of sources including cultural and biological surveys, photo simulations, meetings with agencies, and aerial imagery.

Stage 5: Alternative Selection

Use the information collected during Stage 3 and Stage 4 for alternative selection. Selection criteria are based on biological and cultural resources, visual resources, system/engineering requirements, and compatibility with surrounding land uses. The Preferred Alternative is selected after considering and comparing potential impacts (e.g. environment, land uses, visual) between different routes.

Stage 6: Application for Regulatory Approvals

Prepare and submit applications to appropriate agencies. See the section titled "What approvals are required?"

What is the Preferred Alternative?

SWTC has selected a preferred alternative for the new transmission line. The route selected was the result of many meetings, conversations, and studies. The Preferred Alternative transmission line alignment will ultimately be presented to the Arizona Corporation Commission's Arizona Power Plant and Transmission Siting Committee for approval.

Selection of the Preferred Alternative considered many factors and compared each alternative's advantages and disadvantages. The differences between the alternatives showed that the Alternative Considered but Not Analyzed Action was more costly, potentially more environmentally damaging, and would require more time to permit and construct than the Preferred Alternative. The Preferred Alternative is the proposition previously stated, and is depicted on the Project Area Map (available at www.southwesttransmission.coop).

What approvals are required?

Bureau of Land Management

SWTC has applied for right-of-way (ROW) from Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to cross lands managed by this agency. ROW is granted by the BLM after SWTC prepares an Environmental Assessment that documents project planning and scoping. This report must comply with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969. This process will include the BLM entering into formal consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

USDA, Rural Utilities Service

SWTC will receive funding for this project from the Rural Utilities Service (RUS). As part of the funds approval process, SWTC will have to document compliance with NEPA. In this instance this process is being conducted by the BLM. RUS will adopt BLM's NEPA document for compliance.

Arizona Corporation Commission

The Arizona Power Plant and Transmission Line Siting Committee will exam SWTC's application for a Certificate of Environmental Compatibility (CEC). Following these deliberations, the Committee makes a recommendation to the Arizona Corporation Commission (Commission) regarding the CEC. The recommendation to the Commission may also include proposed conditions and/or restrictions. Subsequently, the Commission makes a final determination on the CEC application. The Commission votes on the CEC matter in a public proceeding and may accept, reject or modify the Committee's recommendations.

Arizona State Land Department

A portion of the transmission line is proposed for construction on lands administered by the agency. The Arizona

State Land Department must grant an easement for construction on State-owned lands.

When will the project be complete?

SWTC plans to begin construction in September 2009 and construction will last approximately 6 months. The line is anticipated to be in service by March 2010.

Where can more information be obtained?

SWTC will host a public open house on Tuesday, March 10, 2009 from 5:30 pm – 7:00 pm at the BHP Conference Center located at 111 W. 5th Avenue in San Manuel.

Southwest Transmission Cooperative, Inc. environmental staff can be contacted for more information or you may visit our website at www.southwesttransmission.coop.

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