



Nebraska Public Power District
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June 2015

R-Project 345,000-Volt



Transmission Line PROJECT

Right-Of-Entry Process Underway

Since announcing the final route for the R-Project transmission line in January, representatives, on behalf of NPPD, have been contacting landowners along the route to obtain right-of-entry agreements. The right-of-entry agreement will allow NPPD and its representatives access across property to conduct a variety of preliminary activities prior to the time easements are acquired. The right-of-entry is also an opportunity for landowners to meet project members on-site and provide input on locating structures and identifying access routes to use to design the line, as well as discussing any farming/ranching operational concerns that must be considered. Right-of-Way Agents will also begin landowner discussions regarding tree removal and off right-of-way access agreements where necessary.

Survey work

Surveyors will locate section corners, fences, utility (communication, electric, etc.) crossings, water tanks and windmills, and other items for consideration when designing the line. They will also stake locations where structures have been preliminarily spotted and complete site surveys at these locations.

Engineering

Engineers will view structure locations, access routes, line crossings, staging areas, pulling stations, and other parameters as they consider line design and construction needs. The engineers value input from landowners in their effort to design the line and consider construction practices to best minimize impact to the property.

Soil borings will also be acquired periodically along the line route. These samples will then be used to determine foundation and helical pier sizes necessary to support the structures. The borings are six inches in diameter and will be backfilled when completed.

Environmental assessments

Environmental assessments are currently scheduled to be primarily conducted from June through September. Surveys will be completed for the Blowout Penstemon, the Western Prairie Fringed Orchid and the Small White Lady Slipper (another orchid species). Additional surveys will be completed to more accurately identify wetland areas and potential cultural resource areas.

Surveys for the Blowout Penstemon will be completed by using a helicopter and viewing approximately 80 specific blowout areas from the air. The blowouts identified have been determined to potentially provide suitable habitat for Blowout Penstemon. Surveys are scheduled to take place during the June flowering period, specifically on June 17-18 with June 19 as an alternate day to account for bad weather. For this survey, a Blowout Penstemon expert will be on board the helicopter, which will fly a path along the final project line route.

NPPD is also very aware of potential concerns of spooking livestock and will avoid concentrations of cattle and horses.

Q&A

Q. Will the Blowout Penstemon survey cover the entire route or in just certain areas?

A. The survey will be of specific blowouts identified by aerial imagery in Lincoln, Logan, Thomas, Blaine, Loup and Garfield counties.

Q. What is the value of the environmental survey?

A. The survey results will be used to direct construction activities away from the federally listed endangered plant species, therefore minimizing or eliminating impact.

Q. Will the helicopter land at or near each blowout?

A. No, the surveys will be completed by air. As with any aerial work, there is always a possibility of a need to land in an emergency situation.

Q. Will NPPD adjust structure locations?

A. Local adjustments to structure locations will be made when possible to accommodate landowner operations and minimize impact to the property.

Q. Will landowners be notified prior to personnel accessing property on site?

A. Right-of-Way Agents will contact landowners prior to anyone accessing property to describe the activities and a time frame for the work.

Q. How will access routes be determined?

A. Engineers will view aerial photography to establish preliminary routes and then field verify these routes on-site. Existing trails will be used where possible, as well as routes recommended by landowners.

Q. Will damages be created by these preliminary activities?

A. NPPD does not expect any of the preliminary activities to cause property damage; however, if damage would occur, NPPD will restore property and compensate landowners for any loss.

NPPD opens Thedford field office

NPPD recently opened a field office in Thedford to house some of the R-Project right-of-way agents and provide a place for landowners to visit to get questions answered. The office is located at **39315 Highway 2** and the phone number is **308.645.2318**.

Please note that the office is not staffed at all times. If you have questions and would like to stop in the office, please first contact your respective right-of-way agent to set up a time.

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