

NOTICE

The Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) has completed its environmental assessment of the proposed Western Area Power Administration Wolf Point, Montana to Williston, North Dakota Transmission Line Rebuild. Western is proposing to rebuild a 95-mile segment of 115-kV transmission line between the Wolf Point substation, west of Wolf Point, Montana, and the Williston Substation, west of Williston, North Dakota. The proposed project would improve transmission reliability and extend the useful life of the transmission line by replacing existing wood-pole structures, insulators, ground wires, and conductor with new components that would meet 230-kV design standards. The rebuilt line would be operated at 115-kV.

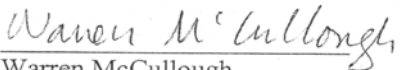
DEQ has evaluated the proposed project to determine substantive compliance with the Montana Major Facility Siting Act (75-20-101, et seq., MCA). In conjunction with this notice, DEQ adopts the Western Environmental Assessment for the Wolf Point, MT to Williston, ND Transmission Line Rebuild, as supplemented by the DEQ Supplemental EA for this document, as the DEQ EA for the proposed project. In conjunction with this notice, DEQ issues a Determination of Compliance with the Siting Act. The DEQ Determination of Compliance may be viewed on the DEQ website at <http://www.deq.state.mt.us/pcd/emb/ea.asp>.

Copies of the DEQ EA were available for public review and comment from October 23, 2003 to November 7, 2003. One comment was received and is addressed as follows.

Comment: Tribes on the Fort Peck Indian Reservation have a requirement for contractors to employ a specified percentage of their workforce when working on projects within the reservation. This helps reduce high unemployment rates. The draft EA indicates there will be little employment benefit to local communities. Tribal members were employed when Western upgraded the Fort Peck to Wolf Point line. Did you consider these tribal employment requirements?

Response: Western proposes to use its own crews to rebuild the existing line. Unlike past projects in the area, contractors will not be used for this project. Consequently the tribal employment requirements for contractors do not apply.

Based on information presented in the DEQ EA, DEQ has determined that the proposed rebuild of the Montana portion of Western's Wolf Point, Montana to Williston, North Dakota transmission line will comply with the substantive standards of the Siting Act if Western rebuilds, maintains, and operates the transmission line in compliance with the conclusions and findings stated therein.


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11/25/03
Date