



## Public Service Commission of Wisconsin

For Immediate Release  
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# PSC Approves Rhinelander Transmission Line

MADISON – Today, the Public Service Commission approved a new electric transmission line to ensure reliability and meet increasing power demands in the Rhinelander area.

The American Transmission Company (ATC) submitted an application to construct and operate a proposed 115 kilovolt electric transmission line to meet the growing electrical power demands in the greater Rhinelander area. The actual growth in the area has exceeded the 1999 forecast and, under peak demands, the existing system facilities are inadequate to reliably serve customers in parts of Lincoln, Oneida and Langlade counties.

The Commission was presented with two possible routes for the 115 kilovolt transmission line. It granted the application and decided on the route from Skanawan to Highway 8 that costs approximately \$8.2 million, which is about \$1.4 million less than a second alternative, impacts fewer acres of woodland and wetland, reduces tree clearing, lowers lifetime maintenance costs of the line, and shares the easement of the existing line 100% of the route.

The Commission decided that ATC will also need to meet the following requirements in order to protect the environment.

1. Construction equipment needs to be cleaned when moving from one wetland area to another so as not to introduce invasive plant species, such as purple loosestrife. ATC will also perform post-construction inspections of the wetlands in years immediately following construction. Inspections will continue for a number of years and ATC will remove any infestations resulting from construction.
2. ATC will use appropriate erosion control methods to ensure streams are protected.
3. ATC will protect the threatened species of wood turtle by constructing silt fences on the perimeter of the construction zone in areas where wood turtles are likely to be found. River banks should not be disturbed from November to March along the entire length of the project area.

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4. ATC will protect the threatened species of osprey. When a transmission structure is being used by nesting osprey, construction should be delayed until nesting is complete and the young have left the nest. Construction is restricted within 300 feet of an active osprey nest. Where old structures are supporting osprey nests, new replacement structures can be fitted with artificial nesting structures or a dedicated nesting structure can be erected near the location of the old nest.
5. ATC will work with the landowners to re-vegetate released easements and areas disturbed by construction of the electric transmission line.
6. ATC will restore and grade, to its original condition or better, any property adversely affected by construction of the project.

Construction of the transmission line begins in October 2004 and is expected to be completed by June 2005.

ATC filed its application on June 16, 2003, and estimated the cost of project between \$8,175,600 and \$9,597,200. Public and technical hearings were held on October 13, 2003, in Rhinelander, Wisconsin. The testimony from the hearings was part of the record developed for the Commission to review as it considered all the different aspects of the proposed application. A written order detailing the decisions made today by the Commission will be completed by the end of the year.

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