

Work Moving Forward on Midwest Transmission Line Project

(KTNC)-- Work is moving along on the Nebraska portion of a high-voltage power line that will run from Nebraska City to near Kansas City. The Omaha Public Power District is building the part of the Midwest Transmission Project in southeast Nebraska, which runs 45 miles through portions of Otoe, Nemaha, and Richardson counties.

OPPD officials say in the latest project update that they have acquired one-third of the easements necessary for the Nebraska portion of the project. The company says it has passed the 90-percent milestone in designing the transmission line and they have completed environmental surveys for the project and are working with state and federal agencies on securing the necessary permits.

OPPD Environmental Administrator Patrick Finigan says since the line crosses the Missouri River, they had to conduct a study to determine how the project might impact the Northern Long-eared Bat, which could be included on the Endangered Species List as soon as next year. Finigan says they found two Northern Long-eared Bats on the Nebraska side of project.

The Midwest Transmission Project spans 180 miles between Nebraska City and Sibley, Missouri. It's one of the Southwest Power Pool's priority projects, meant to increase the reliability of electrical transmission in the area. Construction is expected to start next summer and the line should be in service in the summer of 2017.

OPPD says they have also begun the process to upgrade two 69-kilovolt lines near the MTP transmission line and have begun contacting landowners who may be impacted by the project.

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