

DRIFTLESS DEFENDERS RESOLUTION IN OPPOSITION TO THE PROPOSED CARDINAL-HICKORY CREEK TRANSMISSION LINE

10 December 2018

Whereas, the American Transmission Company, ITC Midwest, and Dairyland Power Cooperative have proposed construction of a 125-mile 345 kV high voltage transmission line from Dubuque County, Iowa, to Middleton, Wisconsin, known as the Cardinal-Hickory Creek transmission line; and,

Whereas, there is no demonstrated need for the proposed CHC transmission line since electricity demand is flat or declining in Wisconsin, the reliability of Wisconsin's grid is ranked among the top ten in the nation, most power outages occur in the distribution portion of the grid, and as the grid grows larger and more centralized it becomes more vulnerable to severe weather conditions or cyber attack; and,

Whereas, Wisconsin's electric rates have risen to almost the highest in the Midwest since the construction of transmission lines, and Wisconsin utility customers along with utility customers throughout the Mid-continent Area must pay the \$500 million-plus capital expense construction costs while the for-profit transmission line company investors will receive a 10.2% guaranteed annual rate of return; and,

Whereas, the electrical demands of central and southwest Wisconsin can be better met by development of local resources, more cost-effective non-transmission alternatives, energy efficiency, wind power, solar power, demand response, battery storage, and use of modern, emerging technologies; and,

Whereas, both the preferred and alternate routes of the proposed Cardinal-Hickory Creek transmission line would cut through the Driftless Area of Southwest Wisconsin, a geologically-unique area due to lack of glaciation in the last Ice Age, and a unique eco-region and special scenic landscape with rolling hills, rock bluffs, and deep river valleys nestled in woodland, farmland, prairie, and riparian habitats; and,

Whereas, the preferred and alternate routes would run through or pass near, and thereby disrupt or destroy, many important natural, recreational, and cultural resources, including Governor Dodge State Park, Dodgeville and Wyoming Oak Woodlands/Savanna Conservation Opportunity Area, Military Ridge State Trail, Blue Mounds State Park, Blackhawk Lake Recreation Area, Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge, Pecatonica State Trail, Ice Age National Scenic Trail, Military Ridge Prairie Heritage Area, Pleasant Valley Conservancy State Natural Area, Erbe Grassland Preserve, Belmont Prairie State Natural Area, and numerous sensitive watersheds including Grant River, Platte River, Jack Oak Slough, Cassville Slough, and Black Earth Creek among others; and,

Whereas, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources considers the Military Ridge Prairie Heritage Area of utmost priority for landscape-scale grassland protection and management, and this area has been identified by the Nature Conservancy as critical for the protection of Midwest prairie remnants and area-sensitive species including endangered and threatened grassland birds; and,

Whereas, many tourists come to the Driftless Area in large part due to the beautiful natural setting and opportunities for extensive outdoor recreational opportunities such as fishing, hiking, biking, birding, skiing, snowshoeing, kayaking, and others; and the robust area economy this tourism supports will be negatively impacted; and,

Whereas, farming operations in the Driftless Area will be severely compromised due to land fragmentation; organic farms and agro-tourism will be negatively impacted; and quality production fields, forests, and waterways will be damaged; and,

Whereas, the proposed CHC transmission line will have significant negative impacts on real estate and property values, property tax revenue, and overall rural development; and,

Therefore, be it resolved that Driftless Defenders is OPPOSED to the construction and operation of the Cardinal-Hickory Creek transmission line and calls on the Wisconsin Public Service Commission, governor, and state legislature to deny approval and not grant any permits, certificates, or other approvals of this unneeded project.

Adopted by Driftless Defenders Leadership Team
this 10th day of December, 2018


Lea Dolan Stroncek, President