

Montana Electric Co-ops: *Transmission Needs and Challenges*



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Topics

- Co-ops' transmission ownership
- Upgrades underway
- New projects: What's Ahead

Co-ops: Mostly transmission “renters”

- NWE, BPA & WAPA
- 2,547 miles of transmission, much of it “sub-transmission”
- Over 50,000 miles of distribution

Upgrades underway

- 70-mile upgrade – northwest Montana – Flathead Electric – doubling capacity. 2010 completion.
- New 100 kV line – Billings area – Yellowstone Valley Electric. Nearly complete.
- 27-mile, 115 kV line near Sidney – Completed end of July.



What's Ahead

1. High-voltage lines: Serve new oil pipeline

- TransCanada Keystone Oil Pipeline
 - 4 electric co-ops affected
 - 250 MW total power requirement
 - Nearly 160 miles 115kV line

2. BPA: *Western Montana* co-ops

- Ability to deliver additional power to western Montana co-ops - currently problematic
 - Co-ops examining resource options to meet load growth post 2011
 - Poor economy reduced additional needs 2012-2014. Possible exception: Flathead Electric
 - BPA working with co-ops on resource forecasts to ensure transmission system planned meet needs.

3. WAPA transmission needs

- DC intertie at Miles City
 - 200 MW capacity east to west
 - 150 MW west to east
 - At capacity both directions
- Congested path – 161 kV line from Fort Peck to Havre
 - Not problematic, but new resource could create need.