

**STATE OF ILLINOIS
ILLINOIS COMMERCE COMMISSION**

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Petition for a Certificate of Public)
Convenience and Necessity, pursuant)
to Section 8-406.1 of the Illinois Public)
Utilities Act, and an Order pursuant to)
Section 8-503 of the Public Utilities Act,)
to Construct, Operate and Maintain a)
New High Voltage Electric Service Line)
and Related Facilities in the Counties of)
Adams, Brown, Cass, Champaign,)
Christian, Clark, Coles, Edgar, Fulton,)
Macon, Montgomery, Morgan, Moultrie,)
Pike, Sangamon, Schuyler, Scott and)
Shelby, Illinois.)

Docket No. 12-0598

WIND ON THE WIRES' BRIEF ON EXCEPTIONS

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WIND ON THE WIRES' BRIEF ON EXCEPTIONS

NOW COMES Wind on the Wires through its Brief on Exceptions, under Section 200.830 of the Rules and pursuant to the Administrative Law Judge's cover letter to the Proposed Order, dated July 3, 2013. Wind on the Wires' exceptions focus is on the Proposed Order's decision to disapprove the Pawnee to Pana to Mount Zion segment of the line and the new or expanded substations at Pana, Mount Zion and Kansas.

I. Exception No. 1: Resolution of Route from Pawnee to Pana to Mount Zion

The Proposed Order rejects the three routes proposed by Ameren Transmission Company of Illinois ("ATXI") from Pawnee to Pana. In doing so, the Proposed Order relies on Staff's argument that an existing 345kV line from Pawnee to Kincaid to Mount Zion appears to be a suitable replacement at a lower cost than any of the routes ATXI proposes from Pawnee to Pana to Mount Zion. (ALJ Proposed Order at 82-83, 132). This would require ATXI to build a Kincaid to Mount Zion segment and that such a line could provide the same benefit to the Decatur area as ATXI's proposal. (Id. at 81).

The Multi Value Project lines, which the Illinois Rivers Project is one, have been analyzed by Midcontinent ISO ("MISO") since the Regional Generation Outlet Study – which was more than five years ago. In 2011, MISO selected the Illinois Rivers Project transmission line as a Multi Value Project because it was optimally designed to improve reliability in the central Illinois area (MISO Exhibit 1.0(Webb) at 19-20), provide a positive benefit to cost ratio, and increase the development of local (within Illinois) and regional wind energy that is needed for utilities within the MISO footprint to comply with

their state renewable portfolio standards.¹ ATXI and Wind on the Wires demonstrate how the Illinois Rivers Project fosters a competitive electric and renewable energy market within Illinois. (See *generally*, WOW IB at 6-18; and ATXI Exhibit 9.0(R)(Frame) and 9.5(2d Rev.)). These are key factors of the certificate of public convenience and necessity (“CPCN”) in Section 8-406.1 (220 ILCS 5/8-406.1) and no party disputes that the line meets these standards. A key remaining issue, however, is the approval of the route alignment from Pawnee to Pana to Mount Zion.

It appears that the Proposed Order’s disapproval of the Pawnee to Pana to Mount Zion segments is going to result in a delay in the overall approval of the project, since this issue may need to be re-evaluated through a rehearing. We encourage the Commission to move as expeditiously as possible to resolve this matter. The Illinois Rivers Project is critical for allowing wind development in central Illinois and adjacent states (MISO Exhibit 2.0(Webb) at 17 and 28) and lowering wholesale market prices for central Illinois electric consumers. (ATXI Exhibit 9.0 and 9.5(2d Rev.)(Frame)). Wind developers plan the development and in-service date of their wind farms to coincide with access to transmission lines. Some segments of the Illinois Rivers Project are projected to be in-service in 2016 and the entire project to be in-service in 2018/2019. Delay in the approval of the Illinois Rivers Project delays or even puts at risk wind energy development along the proposed route, delaying and putting at risk the reliability and economic benefits to electric consumers in central Illinois. (MISO Exhibit 2.0

¹ MISO witness Webb described the purpose of Multi Value Projects as follows:

“The overall goal for the MVP portfolio analysis was to design a transmission portfolio which takes advantage of the linkages between local and regional reliability and economic benefits to promote a competitive and efficient electric market within MISO.” (MISO Exhibit 1.0 (Webb) at 18).

(Webb) at 19 and 24-25 (addressing economic benefits); and ATXI Exhibit 2.0 (Kramer) at 25-28 (addressing reliability benefits)). Delaying the approval of this project, therefore, has a number of adverse impacts: it creates uncertainty around wind developer's timelines for development of their projects near and adjacent to the proposed project, it delays or puts at risk the local economic benefits to Illinois from wind development (WOW Exhibit 1.0(Goggin) at 29 (discussing widespread investment in local economy), and it delays or puts at risk the wholesale market benefits to central Illinois electric consumers that range from \$8 to \$36 million per year over the next twenty years (ATXI Exhibit 9.5(2d Rev.) (Frame)).

If the Commission is not going to approve an alignment for the Pawnee to Mount Zion portion of the Project, it appears that such a finding would not be because the line fails to meet the CPCN requirements but because the record lacks sufficient facts to identify a preferred alignment. Wind on the Wires did not address the routing alignment, and given the concerns Wind on the Wires has stated above our members have an interest in this issue being addressed as expeditiously as possible. Therefore, in the event the Commission disapproves of the Pawnee to Pana to Mount Zion alignment, Wind on the Wires asks that the Commission clearly state its findings and concerns so we can determine the most expeditious manner in which to provide the Commission the information it needs to make an informed decision.

PROPOSED REPLACEMENT LANGUAGE: None

II. CONCLUSION

WHEREFORE, if an alignment for the Pawnee to Mount Zion portion of the Project is not approved, Wind on the Wires' requests that the Commission clearly state its findings and concerns so we can determine the most expeditious manner in which to provide the Commission the information it needs to make an informed decision in a subsequent proceeding.

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