



*your lines. your lights.*

*your community.*



JULY 2010

## Spearville-Axtell Phase I

345 KV TRANSMISSION LINE PROJECT

### Letter from the President

Dear Friends,

We are pleased to bring you the first of what will be a series of newsletters to help keep you informed about the progress of the Spearville-Axtell high-voltage transmission line, also known as the KETA Project. This project is intended to improve the reliability and efficiency of the regional grid and to make more affordable energy available. Because this project is so important to our region, we will use this newsletter to provide regular updates on its progress. After all, it is a critical link to your lines, your lights and your community.

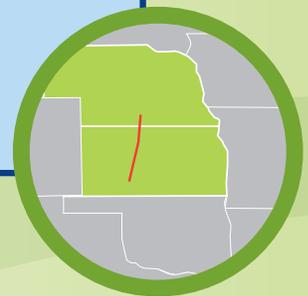
Our communication with you began in December 2008 when ITC Great Plains conducted community open house events to obtain public input on several potential routes for Phase I of the line, the 89-mile segment from Spearville to the Post Rock (formerly Knoll) substation near Hays. The Kansas Corporation Commission approved our siting application in July 2009.

The land acquisition process is now underway and we are negotiating easements along the line route. We have met with many of you in Pawnee, Ford, Hodgeman, Edwards and Rush counties and are very grateful for your continued willingness to work with our land agents from Universal Field Services. We are pleased with the progress we've made acquiring easements, and appreciate the cordial nature of our conversations. Thank you for your cooperation and support.

Transmission line design has begun and construction is expected to start in October of this year. The Phase I segment from Spearville to Post Rock is projected to go into service in June of 2012.

We appreciate our partnerships with landowners and pledge to continue working with you throughout the line's design and construction process, and certainly throughout the life of this important project. Our focus on maintenance and ongoing system reliability focuses on best-in-class performance and safety.

Thank you for your continued interest in the Spearville-Axtell line. Going forward, we plan to provide ongoing communications. We hope you find these regular communications helpful and informative. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact us toll-free at (877) ITC-ITC9 or [SKAfeedback@itctransco.com](mailto:SKAfeedback@itctransco.com). You also can find information on our web site, [www.itcgreatplains.com](http://www.itcgreatplains.com). ■



Project Area

Sincerely,

*Carl A. Huslig*

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President, ITC Great Plains



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## Answers to Your Questions

### **Q: *What will the line look like?***

**A.** Phase I of the Spearville-Axtell line is expected to be built primarily with single tubular-steel poles in order to minimize the impact on land use (see photo, right). The height of the structures will vary based on terrain, clearances to the ground, objects under the line and structure spacing, but will typically range between 100 and 150 feet. The span lengths between structures will be approximately 700 to 1,100 feet, with an average span of 900 feet. Structure placement and span lengths can be adjusted in cultivated fields to minimize interference with the operation of center-pivot irrigation systems.

### **Q: *Who is paying for this line?***

**A.** Construction will be financed by ITC Great Plains. Because the line will benefit the entire region in terms of improved reliability, increased efficiency and lower costs, ITC Great Plains will recover its costs for building, owning, operating, and maintaining the line through rates approved by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission and charged to transmission customers in the Southwest Power Pool (SPP) footprint, which includes Kansas, Oklahoma and parts of Nebraska, Texas, New Mexico, Arkansas and Missouri. These federally-regulated charges are not based upon the amount of power that actually flows on the transmission line.

### **Q: *Will this line be safe?***

**A.** 345-kV transmission lines have operated safely in Kansas and across the entire country, around people and animals, for many years. The KETA 345-kV line will be built to exceed all applicable safety standards, similar to the many miles of existing ITC lines that have an excellent record for safe operation. Any electrical and environmental effects of the transmission line will be mitigated by good design practices, which include the careful selection of key design elements such as conductor diameter, height and spacing.

Transmission lines of this voltage class were first built in the United States in the 1950s. Today there are more than 65,000 miles of these lines across the country, including 2,809 miles of 345-kV lines in Kansas. These lines represent well more than one million mile-years of safe operation. If there were some sort of significant adverse effect on the health of people or animals around these lines, it would be very well known by now.

ITC now owns and safely operates 2,939 miles of 345-kV lines, and new lines are being built across the country at the rate of approximately 300 miles every year. We can provide references to third-party studies that further address these questions.

### **Q: *Will the line adversely affect the operation of my cell phone?***

**A.** Normal cellular phone communications will be unaffected by the operation of the line. Hundreds of cellular phone base station antennas are located on high voltage transmission towers all across the country, including 345-kV lines. If the proximity to high voltage transmission lines was any detriment to the operation of cell phone technology, the cell sites could not be located on transmission towers.

### **Q: *Why wasn't this line taken down mile roads or even along section lines instead of cutting across valuable land?***

**A.** The proposed route attempts to minimize impacts to residents, their land and the natural environment while providing a technically viable and cost-effective transmission line. We try to stay on section and half-section lines in areas of cultivation wherever possible. This is not always possible due to the need to avoid residences and other structures, as well as the fact that the termination points of the line are not directly north-south, thus requiring some east-west movement. We seek to place east-west movement on land that is not cultivated where possible.

In some cases the line may cross over fields with center pivot irrigation, but we have attempted to place our route where it will not interfere with the operation of those systems. We will work with landowners to avoid conflicts. These factors are also balanced with the need to keep electric transmission rates as low as possible.



## Transmission Lines and Agriculture

**Ongoing use of your land:** Vehicles, equipment and livestock generally will be free to pass under the new lines, and in most cases property owners will be able to use their land for the same purposes they used it prior to construction of the line. We are committed to working with you throughout the siting, design and construction process to attempt to minimize impacts to your property.

**Operation of GPS-guided agriculture equipment:** Normal reception of GPS signals will not be affected by the operation of the line. However, some GPS equipment itself may not be shielded adequately for its electronics to always function properly in the electrical environment directly under the line. This is rare, and no action is warranted in anticipation of a problem. But if you have some evidence that GPS-guided precision agriculture is not working properly under a transmission line, please contact ITC Great Plains for advice.

**Access to your property:** We will work with you to establish favorable points of ingress and egress to the right of way during construction. After construction is completed, ITC will attempt to notify landowners when access is needed for non-emergency maintenance or other purposes related to the line. We will keep gates closed to keep livestock in.

**Oil and gas development:** The line easement or right-of-way width is determined to provide for safe clearances to normally anticipated activities adjacent to the line. Well drilling, which involves tall structures, requires additional clearance from the line and is not permitted within our easements. However, modern drilling techniques allow for considerable variability in the location of the drilling rig, so no practical impediment would be anticipated for the development of any underground petroleum resource. Tanks associated with oil wells are prohibited within the easements. ■

## About ITC Great Plains and the Spearville-Axtell Project

ITC Great Plains, based in Topeka, Kansas, is a transmission-only utility seeking to build a more robust electric transmission system providing access to reliable, non-discriminatory, competitive and low-cost energy throughout the SPP region. We are a subsidiary of ITC Grid Development, LLC, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Michigan-based ITC Holdings Corp., the nation's first and largest independent transmission provider. ITC Great Plains is focused on playing a major role in transmission in Kansas and the region. This commitment is helping to establish a reliable, robust regional transmission grid. ITC Great Plains holds transmission-only utility status in Kansas and Oklahoma with the authority to construct, own, operate, and maintain a regulated, high voltage transmission system.

The Spearville-Axtell (KETA) project will provide access to more reliable, efficient and affordable electricity in Kansas and the Midwest. It also will help ease congestion across the transmission network, addressing the lack of high-voltage transmission lines in central and western Kansas which causes inefficiencies in the grid and does not allow power to flow in the most efficient manner. ■



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Return Service Requested

## Spearville-Axtell Phase I

345 KV TRANSMISSION LINE PROJECT



### FAST FACTS:

- Line length:** 89 miles, Spearville to Hays
- Line route:** Ford, Hodgeman, Edwards, Pawnee, Rush and Ellis counties
- Voltage:** 345,000 (345 kV)
- Right-of-way width:** 150 feet
- Structure type:** Steel monopole, single-circuit
- Towers per mile:** Typically six
- Substations:** Spearville, Post Rock (near Hays)

### KEY DATES & TIMELINE:

- December 9 & 10, 2008** – ITC hosted Community Open Houses
- July 13, 2009** – Kansas Corporation Commission approved Phase I route
- January 2010 thru January 2012** – Right-of-way negotiations and engineering design
- October 2010 thru April 2012** – Line and substation construction
- June 1, 2012** – Energize Phase I – Spearville to Hays
- December 2012** – Target date for completion of entire line from Spearville to Axtell, Nebraska



## ITC Great Plains is Committed to...

- Working closely with communities and local governments to ensure the siting and construction process is open and transparent, and citizens feel they are true participants in the process.
- Improving Kansas' electricity transmission infrastructure to further improve reliability.
- Creating the most efficient and cost-effective transmission system for the Kansas consumer.
- Ensuring affordable energy is available to Kansas to support economic development and attract business to the state.
- Constructing a more robust transmission system across the state.