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## **Bemidji-Grand Rapids transmission line energized and in service**

*70-mile line part of CapX2020 initiative to improve regional reliability*

CASS LAKE – September 17, 2012 – The western segment of the new Bemidji-Grand Rapids 230 kilovolt transmission line was energized and placed in service today. The eastern segment of the line was energized last month. “Today’s successful commissioning directly benefits people in north central Minnesota by providing long-term reliable electric service,” said Rod Scheel, Vice President, Asset Management, for Otter Tail Power Company, the utility that led construction of this CapX2020 project.

The 70-mile line connects the Wilton Substation near Bemidji and the Boswell Substation near Grand Rapids, allowing more electricity to flow to and from the region and relieving bottlenecks that sometimes occurred during periods of high demand.

Significant high-voltage transmission capacity had not been added to north central Minnesota for more than 30 years. “Besides enhancing reliability, the 230 kilovolt line provides additional capacity to serve the area’s growing demand for electricity and wind energy development in Western Minnesota and the Dakotas,” Scheel said. “And when you look at all the CapX2020 projects being built, you see that this multi-utility initiative is implementing a comprehensive plan that will help keep electric service to customers in the Upper Midwest among the most affordable and reliable in the nation.”

Partners in the project include Otter Tail Power Company and Minnesota Power which will each operate a segment of the line, Minnkota Power Cooperative, Inc. and Great River Energy, which will each maintain a segment of the line, and Xcel Energy.

## **CapX2020 update**

Construction is underway on the Fargo-St. Cloud 345 kilovolt project between Alexandria and St. Cloud. On September 12, the North Dakota Public Service Commission approved the Route Permit for the North Dakota portion of the Fargo - St. Cloud 345 kilovolt Project. Construction started in April 2012 on the Brookings County-Hampton 345 kilovolt Project. Regulatory permits for the Hampton-Rochester-La Crosse, Wisconsin 345 kilovolt project have been approved; construction will start in Minnesota in early 2013.

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**About CapX2020**

CapX2020 is a joint initiative of 11 investor-owned, cooperative and municipal utilities in Minnesota and the surrounding region to upgrade and expand the electricity transmission grid to ensure continued reliable and affordable service. The CapX2020 projects include the three 345 kilovolt transmission lines and the 230 kilovolt line described above. These projects represent the largest development of new transmission in the Upper Midwest in 30 years. They are projected to cost nearly \$2 billion and cover a distance of more than 700 miles. For more project information, visit [www.capx2020.com](http://www.capx2020.com).

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