



Modernizing Our Electric Grid, Creating Jobs

Posted by Neal Kemkar on October 05, 2011 at 06:10 PM EDT

Today the Obama Administration [announced](#) it would accelerate the permitting and construction of seven proposed electric transmission lines. This move will speed the creation of thousands of construction and operations jobs while transforming the Nation's electric system into a modern, 21st century grid that is safer and more secure, and gives consumers more energy choices. This announcement follows in a long line of this Administration's initiatives that demonstrate the commitment to job creation and modernizing America's infrastructure. See what stakeholders are saying below:

Pam Eaton, Deputy Vice President for Public Lands, The Wilderness Society:

"Building responsibly-sited power lines to access world-class renewable resources can put thousands of Americans to work, bring cost-effective clean power to people who need it, and help some of the rural counties in the West hardest hit by the economic downturn. We are counting on the Administration to focus its laser-beam attention on those lines that will truly bring our best renewable energy resources online efficiently and effectively with special attention to safeguarding our unique Western landscapes and communities."

David G. DeCampli, president of PPL Electric Utilities, and Ralph LaRossa, president of PSE&G:

"We applaud the administration's efforts to ensure that high-priority electric infrastructure projects are built and placed in service in a timely way. The Susquehanna-Roseland transmission line will improve electric service reliability for millions of people. As an added benefit, its construction will create thousands of jobs."

Tom C. Wray, Project Manager, SunZia LLC:

"The SunZia Transmission Project welcomes the creation of the Administration's Rapid Response Team and its focus on federal agency process improvements for environmental reviews and permit issuances. The preparation of SunZia's Draft Environmental Impact Statement is in its 27th month and the prospect for interagency cooperation to obtain expeditious review is a very positive development. The RRTT's coordination and oversight is a needed and welcome evolution in what can become an otherwise an unnecessarily lengthy, difficult process."

Carl Zichella, Director of Western Transmission, NRDC:

"The Obama administration believes, and so does NRDC, that we can accelerate transmission approvals without cutting corners on environmental or cultural reviews. This pilot program

demonstrates that enhanced coordination can play a critical role in accomplishing the President's clean energy goal and cut emissions in the West by 80% in 2050. We look forward to contributing, both through the interconnection planning efforts now underway and directly with the agencies implementing the program."

See CEQ's [initiatives](#) for more information on the Rapid Response Team for Transmission.

Neal Kemkar is Deputy Associate Director for Energy and Climate Change at the White House Council on Environmental Quality