

CAPX 2020

MORE WIND ENERGY ON THE WIRES

To curb the effects of climate change, we must begin to meet our energy needs with renewable resources. In Minnesota, the most promising source of renewable energy is wind.

The lack of transmission infrastructure is the most significant long-term barrier to wind energy development.

With the right conditions, the CapX 2020 power lines will provide the necessary infrastructure to support the development of Minnesota's wind resources.



Coping with Climate Change

Minnesota set ambitious renewable energy standards for all utilities in 2007. Xcel Energy, for example, is required to obtain 30 percent of its total energy from renewable resources by 2020, with at least 25 percent of total energy coming from wind. The state's capacity to generate and deliver wind energy must be further developed to meet these goals. CapX 2020 will put some of Minnesota's richest wind regions on the high voltage grid.

Wind Energy in the Upper Midwest

Wind power is one of the fastest growing methods of generating electricity in the U.S. Wind is particularly desirable because of its light environmental impact and potential for economic growth. In 2008, the energy estimated to be generated by wind will reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 29 million tons -- equivalent to taking 5 million cars off the road. Farmers and ranchers may continue their usual activities after wind turbines are installed on their land, and wind projects can bring high-wage jobs and tax revenues to rural areas.

Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota and Iowa combined have approximately one-third of the total onshore wind energy potential in the lower 48 states. In 2007, Minnesota ranked 3rd nationally in installed wind capacity. However, without a transmission infrastructure the great potential of our wind resources will not be realized.

The CapX 2020 Plan

If approved, CapX 2020 will be the first major expansion of Minnesota's high-voltage transmission system in 25 years. The proposed transmission lines will run through some of the state's most wind-rich regions.

Necessary Conditions

A coalition of environmental and renewable energy groups in favor of the CapX 2020 plan are recommending conditions be added to the project to ensure the new transmission lines facilitate as much renewable energy as possible.

For More Information Contact:

Mary Marrow • Staff Attorney, MCEA • mmarrow@mncenter.org • (651) 223-5969
Beth Soholt • Director, Wind on the Wires • [bsoholt@windonthewires.org](mailto:bsoholt>windonthewires.org) • (651) 644-2400
Chuck Laszewski • Communications Director, MCEA • claszewski@mncenter.org • (651) 223-5969



Minnesota Center for
Environmental Advocacy

26 East Exchange Street - Suite 206
Saint Paul, MN 55101-1667