



Power Delivery NEPA Siting & Permitting



Vision

To support the siting and regulatory permitting process for Dairyland Power Cooperative's Power Delivery Division by engaging in cross functional collaboration, while utilizing principles of sustainability to foster internal and external stakeholder expertise to meet and exceed member expectations and compliance standards of local, state and federal agencies.



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

What is NEPA?

- The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) is a federal law that requires all federal agencies to consider the potential effects of proposed actions to the human and natural environments
- NEPA promotes better agency decision making by ensuring that information is available to officials and the public before the agency decides whether and how to undertake a major federal action
- Through the NEPA process, the public has an opportunity to learn about the proposed action and to provide information and comments

Levels of Documented NEPA Analysis

Determined by scope and budget

- **Categorical Exclusion (CE)**
No or minimal impacts to the environment and impacts typically occur on previously disturbed land. No public involvement required. An Environmental Report (ER) may or may not be required to document the lack of impacts
- **Environmental Assessment (EA)**
Concise public document used by the lead federal agency to determine whether to issue a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) to the environment or prepare an Environmental Impact Statement
- **Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)**
Comprehensive report of significant impacts to inform the appropriate agency decision maker and the public of reasonable alternatives to the applicant's proposal

**NEPA analysis required for USDA Rural Utility Services (RUS) funded projects*

Siting Process Considerations

Dairyland Power Cooperative Power Delivery division uses a cross functional and collaborative approach to siting transmission line, substation and telecommunication projects. Considerations that are taken into account include: electric system planning, economics, land rights, environmental, engineering, regulatory and constructability.

Siting Goals

- Maximize the use of opportunity areas
- Minimize the use of constraint areas

Preliminary Corridor Identification

Step 1. Define the project study area by its beginning and end points

Step 2. Conduct an opportunity and constraint analysis

Primary Opportunities:

- Existing utility corridor
- Railroad corridor
- Transportation corridors
- Road right-of-way
- Section lines
- Field edges

Primary Constraints:

- Residential areas
- Bodies of water/wetlands
- Topography
- Irrigated agriculture
- Conservation areas
- Critical plant or wildlife habitats
- Cultural or historical properties

Step 3. Identify preliminary corridors from the analysis

Step 4. Seek internal and external feedback on the preliminary corridor with project stakeholders

Route Refinement Phase

Step 1. Identify and address specific concerns by cross functional stakeholders, government permitting agencies and the public to refine analysis of proposed routes and segments

Step 2. Conduct a comparative analysis of the preferred and alternative routes

Step 3. Present comparative analysis to project team and public (if scoping required) for decision on preferred and alternative routes

Step 4. Carry the preferred and alternative routes forward to prepare the RUS NEPA documents

NEPA Process

Step 1. Prepare a Notice of Intent (NOI)

Step 2. Conduct public scoping meeting and solicit public comments, if required

Step 3. Prepare NEPA documents

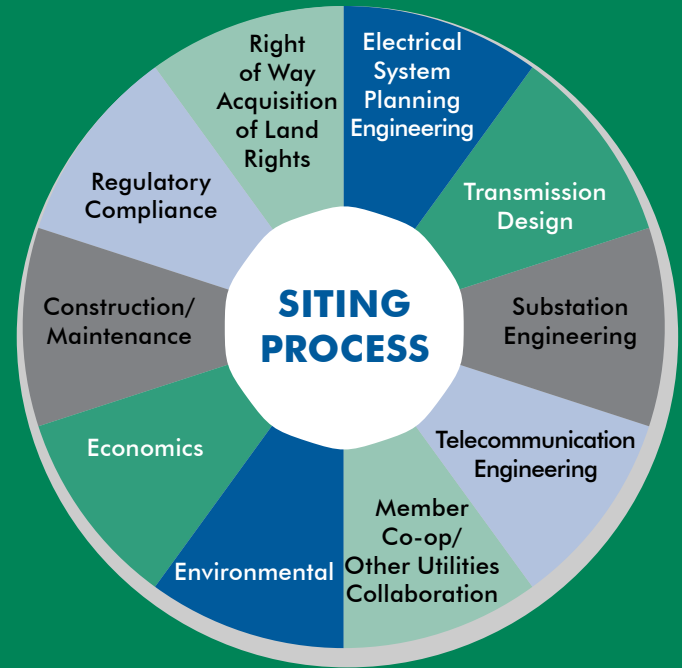
NEPA analysis compiled by Dairyland Power Cooperative fully discloses potential effects of the proposed action and alternative project routes.

Areas of analysis include, but are not limited to:

- Land use
- Human, health and safety
- Soils, floodplains
- Water resources
- Wetlands
- Air quality
- Agricultural operations
- Protected, threatened, endangered or sensitive wildlife
- Cultural, historic, tribal and visual resources
- Social justice

Step 4. Federal agency determination

Step 5. NEPA complete



Common Siting Terms

Corridor: A strip of land to be evaluated for possible transmission routes

Route: A pre-existing specific alignment of transmission line within a defined right-of-way (ROW)

Segment: Portions of a route that can be pieced together in various ways to form the optimal alignment

Opportunity: A favorable location for siting a project. Although preferred for siting, rarely present along an entire proposed route

Constraint: A location that should be avoided, to the extent possible, when siting a project

Scoping: An early and open process to identify significant environmental issues deserving of study, de-emphasize insignificant issues and determine the scope of the environmental review process



Permitting

Information from the siting process, environmental field assessments and archeological surveys will be used to seek permits from local, state and federal agencies. Pre-application consultations will be held with each permitting authority to identify any concerns and issues relevant to the permitting authority.



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