



July 27, 2026

Vernon Electric Cooperative  
110 Saugstad Rd.  
Westby, WI 54667

Attn: Vernon Electric Cooperative Membership

Dear Members of Vernon Electric Cooperative:

Thank you for engaging and taking the time to review the enclosed information regarding the MariBell Transmission Project. The Project team has met with stakeholders over the past 10 months to share information and gather input on the MariBell Transmission Project, including open houses held in Westby in November and additional open houses held in Vernon and Crawford Counties in March. We remain committed to ongoing open dialogue with Vernon Electric Cooperative members and all stakeholders, including our member-owner distribution cooperatives, landowners, regulators and local communities.

The Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO), the regional electric grid operator for 15 U.S. states, as well as the Canadian province of Manitoba, approved in Dec. 2024 the second tranche of “Long Range Transmission Plan” projects (known as Tranche 2.1).<sup>1</sup> Consisting of a \$21.8 billion investment for 24 projects across the MISO Midwest region, Tranche 2.1 develops a 3,631-mile 765 kV and 345 kV backbone designed to modernize transmission infrastructure, maintain grid reliability, enable access to new energy resources and meet current and future energy demand. The MariBell Transmission Project is one segment in the larger Tranche 2.1 portfolio – a new 765 kV system connecting the Upper Midwest with the existing 765 kV network running from Illinois to upstate New York – that will support utilities’ ability to continue delivering reliable power to families, farms and businesses across the region.

The advisory resolution adopted by the members of Vernon Electric Cooperative at its Annual Meeting on February 26, 2026, sought additional information on a number of topics related to the MariBell Transmission Project. Please see below for responses and requested information.

**A map of eligible, existing transmission line routes for the considered 765 kV transmission line project through Vernon, Crawford, Sauk and Richland Counties.**

The proposed MariBell transmission line would span portions of Olmsted, Mower, Fillmore and Houston counties in Minnesota and Vernon and Crawford counties in Wisconsin. The MariBell project does not extend into Sauk and Richland counties. A map of potential routes in Vernon and Crawford counties is available at [www.maribelltransmission.com/map](http://www.maribelltransmission.com/map).

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.misoenergy.org/planning/long-range-transmission-planning/>

MISO awarded the BECI (Bell Center – Columbia – Sugar Creek – Illinois/Wisconsin State Line) 765 kV Transmission Project to Transource Energy, LLC – a joint venture between AEP and Evergy. Dairyland is not involved with development of the proposed BECI project, which will traverse Sauk and Richland counties; however, route information is available via the project website: [www.mgs-projects.com/BECI](http://www.mgs-projects.com/BECI)

**Images of all possible tower designs for use with the 765 kV transmission line in Vernon County if sited alone and in combination or with another transmission line.**

Attachment #1 provides information on the type of tower that may be used for the MariBell Transmission Project.

**For each possible tower design, above, please include minimum and maximum height in feet that the towers could be.**

The Project is still in the design phase; however, we expect to utilize steel lattice structures with a height between 150 and 200 feet.

**To scale documentation portraying the minimum and maximum widths, in feet, of required corridors for all possible tower designs and configurations of the 765 kV facility, including guide wires and all other possible protuberances.**

Attachment #1 includes information on the type of tower that may be used for the MariBell Transmission Project, including maximum typical width of corridors.

**Documentation accounting for MISO consideration and decision-making concerning the alternative use of HVDC transmission such as the SOO Green HVDC Link instead of above-ground 765 kV transmission, including the HVDC routes considered.**

According to the 2024 MISO Transmission Expansion Plan (Attachment #2) report, “MISO reviewed impacts of transmission technology concepts with stakeholders at the Planning Advisory Committee in 2023, discussing 345 kV, 765 kV, High Voltage Direct Current (HVDC) and Grid Enhancing Technologies (GETs). This presentation focused on high-level approaches with technology considerations and the potential impact of thermal and absolute limits, given factors like MW per mile cost and loading limits. For many of the new transmission line needs identified in LRTP Tranche 2.1, the necessary line mileages and power transfer requirements suggested that a 765 kV backbone would be the optimal choice at this stage. Grid Enhancing Technologies tend to work best when they are used to solve local issues, and were considered and selected for certain underbuild projects.”<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> 2024 MISO Transmission Expansion Plan, Chapter 2, Page 6

**Vegetation Management documentation and sample contracts describing practices that have been utilized by Dairyland Power Cooperative and NextEra Transmission for previous 765 kV lines including techniques used to prevent soil erosion on steep grades, and other accommodations for organic farming and prairie restorations.**

Vegetation management is a key priority for all long-range transmission projects and is required by the North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC) to ensure safe construction and operation of transmission lines. A vegetation management plan will be submitted and reviewed by the PSCW as part of the application process and prior to project approval.

**Documentation of siting and other accommodations that Dairyland Power Cooperative and NextEra Transmission have made in prior construction to minimize noise and light pollution associated with corona discharge from a 765 kV transmission line under high humidity and high transmission load conditions.**

We intend to use materials to minimize noise levels, following all applicable federal guidelines and local noise ordinances. On average, and depending on weather conditions, audible sound levels would be in the 20-decibel range, equivalent to the light rustling of leaves, which is generally considered quiet and well below levels that would cause disturbance or hearing concerns. Additionally, the line will comply with the National Electric Safety Code and IEEE for corona discharge mitigation to manage corona effects within viewshed communities.

**Documentation describing practices to accommodate persons, homesteads or farms negatively affected by stray currents resulting from the grounding, transmission and electromagnetic currents created by this 765 kV line that may or may not be directly adjacent to proposed line.**

Stray voltage concerns from landowner owned and maintained low-voltage electrical systems in and around outbuildings are not associated with high-voltage transmission lines. High-voltage transmission lines can produce electric and magnetic fields (EMF); however, EMF diminish rapidly as distance increases from the transmission line's conductors. We take seriously the community's EMF concerns and will utilize comprehensive mitigation measures and practices, including:

- Meeting all National Electric Safety Code requirements for clearances
- Identifying any equipment or structures that need to be considered in mitigation design and planning
- Grounding any fencing or metal structures inside the right-of-way

- Ongoing assessment for the operating life of the transmission line to address any change in usage that would require mitigation
- Further, appropriate measures to mitigate stray voltage occurrences where the MariBell project crosses or runs parallel to existing distribution circuits

For more than 40 years, studies have been conducted to determine whether EMF cause adverse health effects and this research has been examined by leading public health authorities and public health organizations, including the World Health Organization, U.S. National Cancer Institute and Health Canada. Based on their evaluations of the large body of scientific research, these organizations found that the scientific research does not show that exposure to EMF causes or contributes to cancer or any other disease or illness.

Your resolution also requested:

**Dairyland Power Cooperative provide a presentation on proposed 765 kV transmission line and allow time for group question and answer with Vernon Electric Cooperative members.**

**Support Vernon Electric Cooperative members having the opportunity to present their concerns of the proposed 765 kV transmission line to the Dairyland Power Cooperative Board.**

**Support the study and implementation of local power generation – both renewable and nonrenewable – to create a more stable grid less dependent on large transmission lines that bring power outside of our control and that is not supporting Wisconsin jobs and economy.**

The MariBell project team is always available to answer questions and address concerns. The team provided multiple opportunities for community members to learn more about the project at open houses in November, public meetings in March and presentations to county boards, township meetings and civic organizations. Additionally, up-to-date project information is readily available at [www.maribelltransmission.com](http://www.maribelltransmission.com). Dairyland and GridLiance Heartland will continue to share information through these public channels as the project moves forward. Questions and requests for information are best directed to the project team at [connect@maribelltransmission.com](mailto:connect@maribelltransmission.com) or by phone: (608) 895-0799. Further, the MariBell project team is more than willing to provide a presentation on the project to Vernon Electric's membership, with adequate time allotted for member questions, and will begin identifying potential presentation dates and times.

Dairyland takes community concerns seriously. We appreciate the request in this resolution for members of Vernon Electric Cooperative to present concerns directly to the Dairyland Power Cooperative board of directors regarding the project. While board meetings are traditionally not open to the public, we are exploring opportunities for the Dairyland board to hear directly

from members of our distribution cooperatives as well as the request to initiate a study on local power generation and implementation. We look forward to continuing this conversation in the weeks ahead.

We appreciate members sharing their views on local generation and economic impacts. Dairyland's planning process is designed to consider reliability, cost, sustainability and regional coordination, and we will continue to evaluate a range of options to best serve our members today and in the future.

Sincerely,

The MariBell Project Team  
Dairyland Power Cooperative  
3200 East Avenue S.  
La Crosse, Wis. 54601  
P: (608) 895-0799  
[MariBell Transmission](#)