



Public Utilities Commission

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NEWS RELEASE

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PUC AFFIRMS NEED FOR SOUTHERN COLORADO TRANSMISSION LINE

DENVER – The Colorado Public Utilities Commission (PUC) today affirmed an administrative law judge’s recommended decision granting Tri-State Generation and Transmission and Xcel Energy authority to jointly construct new electric transmission facilities in southern Colorado.

The PUC upheld the judge’s finding that the applicants had demonstrated a “present or future need” for construction of the project and that existing facilities are not reasonably adequate. The proposed, 150-mile San Luis Valley-Calumet-Comanche Transmission project is intended to improve system reliability in the San Luis Valley and facilitate the delivery of renewable resource generation in southern Colorado to the Denver metro load center.

The PUC removed a condition recommended by the judge that would have required at least 700 megawatts (MW) of generation to be interconnected with the project within 10 years from the date the line is placed in service, or Xcel would have to refund 50 percent of the money it collected from its ratepayers to fund the project.

“It is difficult to build a robust renewable energy system unless you are willing to build transmission, to some extent, on the promise of future development,” PUC Chairman Ron Binz said.

The proposed project involves construction of three new, high-voltage transmission line segments that would connect electrical substations from north of Alamosa to Pueblo. The project also includes a new substation to be built near Walsenburg.



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