



Frequently Asked Questions | Western Spirit Transmission



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What is the relationship between the Renewable Energy Transmission Authority of New Mexico and Pattern Development?

The Renewable Energy Transmission Authority of New Mexico and Pattern Development are in a joint relationship for the development and construction of the proposed Western Spirit Transmission LLC project.

How long is the transmission line?

Western Spirit Transmission LLC estimates that the Western Spirit line will be approximately 150 miles long.

What is a right-of-way?

A right-of-way is a legal arrangement to allow use of a portion of property for a specific purpose, such as an easement for a transmission line or an access road.

What is the width of the right-of-way?

Western Spirit Transmission LLC estimates that the right-of-way for the Western Spirit line will be 150 feet wide.

Can participating landowners drill for oil and gas on their property?

Yes, provided that the drill site is not located within the right-of-way of the transmission line.

Can participating landowners extract gravel or other surface minerals from their land?

Yes, provided that the pit is not located within of the transmission right-of-way and does not interfere with the project's ability to maintain surface access to the line and does not interfere with access to the line.

Will Western Spirit Transmission LLC be able to sell or reassign my easement for another use such as a pipeline?

No. The easement agreement will specify that Western Spirit Transmission LLC can use the easement solely in connection with an electric transmission line.

What is the time frame for the line?

Negotiations for right-of-way agreements will continue in 2019 with construction estimated to begin in 2020.

Are transmission lines able to span waterways and wetlands?

Yes. Often the length of a transmission line is long enough that tower structures can avoid sensitive areas like wetlands and bodies of water.

Will the project study potential avian impacts?

We will perform bird surveys to find potential threatened and endangered species, including some species of eagles.

Has a route been selected?

Yes

How many phases of the project are planned?

The project is planned to be completed in one phase.

What happens if the line changes ownership?

Any changes in the ownership of the Western Spirit Transmission LLC or of the line would require the new owner to honor existing agreements.

Will herbicides be used in the right-of-way corridor?

If used, chemical vegetation management will be compliant with federal, state and/or county-approved control measures. Western Spirit Transmission LLC plans to use local contractors to handle any necessary vegetation management.

How do we set up a meeting with you?

You can contact us by email at westernspirit@patternenergy.com or by phone at (505) 375-1324. You can also send us a message through our contact portal on our website: westernspirittransmission.com.

Can landowners install fencing within the easement right-of-way?


Yes, provided that Western Spirit Transmission LLC and its contractors continue to have access to the right of way.

Can farming and ranching continue in the easement area or under the line?

Yes. Western Spirit Transmission LLC will acquire easements, but the land will still belong to the landowners and can be used for activities such as farming, grazing, and other activities that do not interfere with the operation of the line.

Farming of row crops can continue under the lines. There will be sufficient clearance under the transmission line to grow full-height crops (up to about 10 feet tall), not including tree crops, and to operate standard farm equipment.

Ranching and grazing are totally compatible and will not be restricted. Less than 1% of the total easement area for the project will be occupied by structure footprints.



What can be planted in the easement area?

Crops less than 10 feet tall may be grown safely under power lines. The easement area can also be used for pasture and grazing lands. Western Spirit Transmission LLC must comply with the public safety standards of National Electrical Safety Code and North American Electric Reliability Corporation Standards to ensure the reliable operation of the transmission line. These standards place restrictions on tree height under and around transmission lines.

Can hunting occur near the transmission line or within the right-of-way?

Hunting is one of many compatible outdoor recreational activities that can occur within and adjacent to the transmission line right-of-way.

How will Western Spirit Transmission LLC acquire right-of-way for this project?

Western Spirit Transmission LLC and the Renewable Energy Transmission Authority of New Mexico (RETA) will acquire an easement from landowners. The easement will grant RETA certain surface rights over a specific portion of the property. Participating landowners will not be asked to sell their land. Easement agreements will be negotiated individually with each landowner and will consider many factors including, but not limited to:

- » Existing uses of the land (e.g., crops vs. grazing vs. residential)
- » Type and number of structures that will be placed on the land
- » The requirement for future access rights to the land
- » Environmental conditions

Western Spirit Transmission LLC requires that its representatives follow a Code of Conduct, which provides that all representatives treat every landowner with consideration and respect. In addition, Western Spirit Transmission LLC strives to build and maintain long-lasting relationships with landowners by working in a respectful and collaborative manner for the life of the project.

How much will Western Spirit Transmission LLC pay for the right of-way?

Western Spirit Transmission LLC is committed to compensating landowners fairly and seeks to reach voluntarily negotiated agreements with 100% of the landowners along the line's route. The landowner compensation package will include an easement payment, based on the size of the easement required and market value of the land, and an additional payment for each structure placed on the landowner's property. Other payments may be made in certain circumstances, including for:

- » Crop damage
- » Commercially marketable
- » Irrigation interference

How will the market value of the land be determined?

Western Spirit Transmission LLC will engage a certified independent appraisal firm to determine each easement's fair market value per acre based on a market data study, which will analyze recent arms-length sales in the area for similar types of land.

What is the payment structure for the Western Spirit line?

Easement payments are made in two lump sum installments. The first installment is paid upon a landowner's execution of an option. The second lump sum is paid when Western Spirit Transmission LLC exercises the option.

How close can the transmission line be to a home? Can any structure be within your right-of-way?

Western Spirit Transmission LLC and RETA will attempt to identify potential routes as far from homes as possible, while also taking into account other routing criteria.

Habitable structures are not allowed within the right-of-way.

Will homes be located within the easement?

No. In order to comply with National Electrical Safety Code requirements and good utility practice, habitable structures may not be located within a transmission line right-of-way.

What if damages occur to fencing or other property during construction or maintenance?

Western Spirit Transmission LLC will either repair or compensate landowners, at the landowner's election, for damages to improvements or personal property that occur during the construction or maintenance of the line on their property.

What classifications of land does the Western Spirit Transmission line expect to cross?

Right-of-way acquisition for a project of this size and located in the State of New Mexico involves both private and State Trust lands; however, the majority of our route passes primarily through private land.

When will landowners receive easement payments?

Representatives are available to begin discussion of compensation for easements with affected landowners. A portion of the compensation for easements will be paid as soon as landowners sign an option, and the remainder will be paid prior to or simultaneously with the exercise of the option and recording of the easement. This second installment is expected to be paid prior to start of construction. Structure payments also will be paid prior to start of construction.

How are the Renewable Energy Transmission Authority of New Mexico and Pattern Development involved in the Western Spirit Transmission Line?

The Western Spirit Transmission Line is currently under joint development by the Renewable Energy Transmission Authority of New Mexico (RETA) and Pattern Development.

Disclaimer

Please note that this information is provided for informational purposes only in order to be responsive to stakeholders' questions and attempt to generate additional transparency around Pattern Development's renewable energy development efforts in New Mexico. Also note that this outline does not represent legal confirmation of the terms of the Western Spirit Transmission LLC Option Agreement for Easement and Grant of Easement (the "Agreement"). The Agreement supersedes this outline in the event of any discrepancy.

**For more information please
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