

Why is the Project Necessary?

Currently, the Grand Lake-Granby area is served by one 69-kV transmission line and “looped” service between Estes Park and Grand Lake via the 69-kV Adams Tunnel cable. The Adams Tunnel cable has exceeded its predicted useful life, and upon failure, will not be replaced. When the cable fails, the area will be left with only a single high-voltage transmission line. The likelihood of a prolonged, widespread outage on this line is very high. Approximately 6,750 MPEI customers would risk extended power outages, especially during adverse winter weather, due to the lack of alternate transmission circuits to supply the area. The Granby Pumping Plant – Windy Gap transmission line rebuild project is proposed to address the electrical deficiencies that will be created when the cable fails.

The ideal situation would be to have two high-voltage electricity sources – a “looped” or double-circuit service. With a looped or double circuit system, if one line fails, the other line will already be in place to provide an uninterrupted, continuous supply of electricity.

We’re pursuing this project out of concern for your safety and comfort in the event of a failure to the only high-voltage line serving the area. We are pursuing the upgraded, double circuit service to provide you with the most reliable source of electricity.

The Process So Far

Western has been studying a variety of possible solutions since 2004. We’ve considered public and technical input in determining our alternatives and proposed action. Our process has included the following:

- Identification of preliminary alternatives through an analysis of the existing electric system and environmental considerations.
- Direct communication with stakeholders in Grand County, federal agencies, interested community members and business organizations, including regular updates to the Grand County commissioners.
- Public meeting in July 2005 where attendees provided comments on the preliminary alternatives and shared concerns regarding human health and safety, the environment, and private property impacts.



Biologist surveying the existing 69-kV transmission line

- Ongoing study and analysis of feedback on possible alternatives, and meetings with the BLM, USFS, Grand County, and other utility companies.
- We have delayed the project by 6 months in order to conduct additional wildlife surveys, recreation and visual assessments, and analyses of other potential alternatives – all of which were identified by you as important elements of the project.
- Development and distribution of this newsletter and other public information to inform customers of the project status, information on our additional analyses, and to solicit input and feedback.

We have spent considerable effort exploring all possible alternatives. Those considered but eliminated are described below:

Replace the Adams Tunnel power cable

- High costs (money and schedule) to access tunnel
- Specialized resources required to install and maintain high voltage cable systems

Expand the existing Granby Substation (near intersection of Co. Road 40 & U.S. Hwy. 34)

- Greater substation costs and increased visual impacts
- Half of existing line remains as-is: inadequate right-of-way, old construction, and no lightning protection

Expand the existing Willow Creek Pumping Plant Substation (off Co. Road 40, ½ mile from U.S. Hwy. 34)

- Greater substation costs and increased visual impacts
- Half of existing line remains as-is: inadequate right-of-way, old construction, and no lightning protection

Construct new Stillwater Tap Electric Substation (on Co. Road 4, 2 miles from Granby Pumping Plant)

- Greater substation costs and increased visual impacts
- Size of possible site restricted by existing development

Underground installation of Alternatives B or C (all or portions of the route)

- Greater reliability risks in the event of an outage
- Greater installation and maintenance costs
- Increased impacts to wetlands, vegetation, and soil resources

Installation of Alternatives B or C inside of the NCWCD Windy Gap Pipeline and/or under Lake Granby (underwater submarine cable)

- Greater reliability risks in the event of an outage
- Greater installation and maintenance costs

Underground and/or underwater hybrid installation of Alternatives B or C (all or portions of the route)

- Greater reliability risks in the event of an outage
- Greater installation and maintenance costs
- Increased impacts to wetlands, vegetation, and soil resources

Your Thoughts

Several clear messages have emerged from the public meeting and other communications with stakeholders and government agencies. We understand:

- You recognize the need for the project and support a reliable, efficient and long-term solution.
- Visual, recreation and wildlife resources are the most important resources that you want considered.
- You support alternatives that use existing facilities or rights-of-way.
- You are concerned about potential impacts to private property and property values.
- You are concerned about potential impact to existing homes.

The Alternatives

Alternative A – No Action

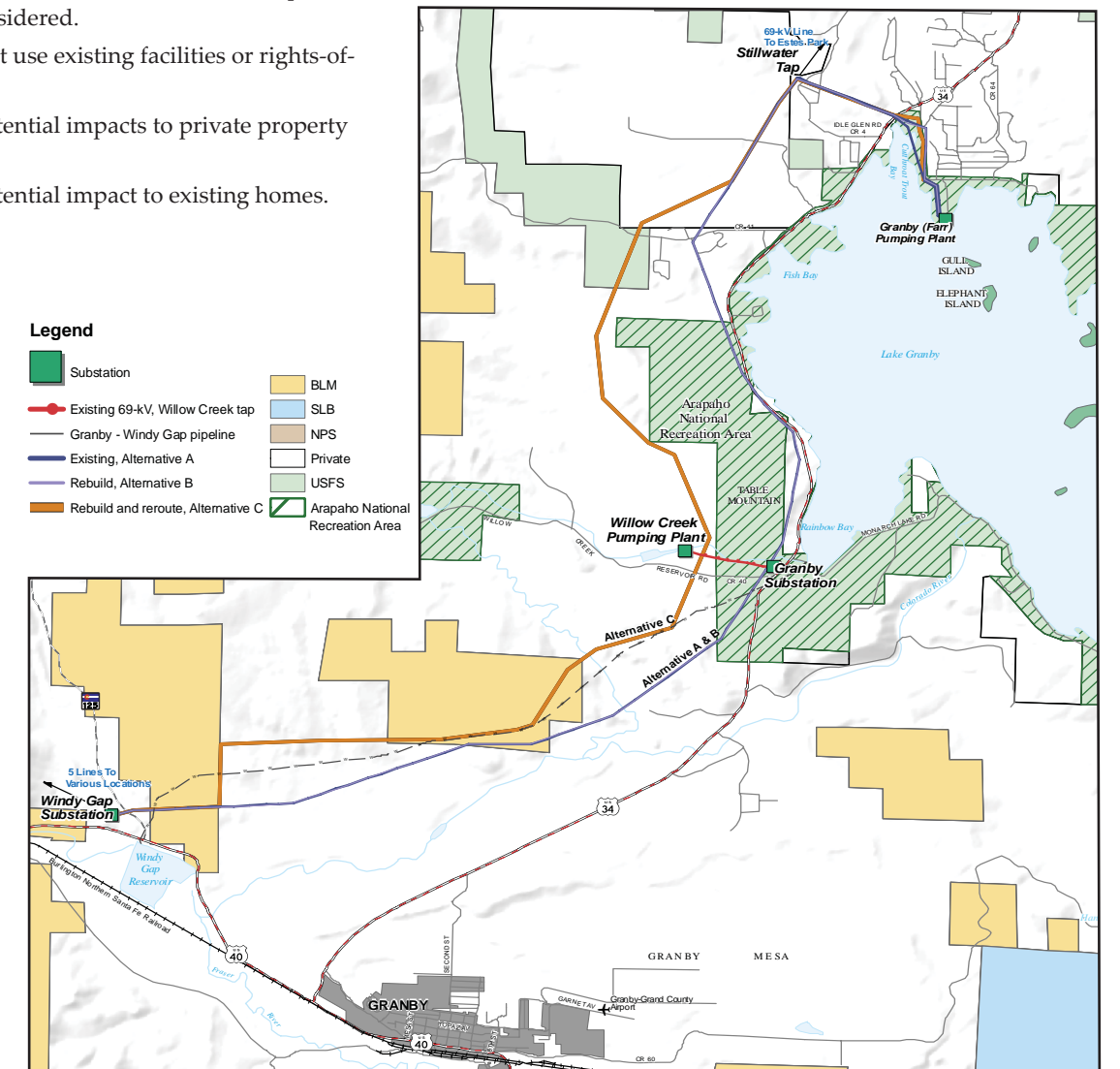
The No Action alternative would not result in upgrades to or rebuilding of the existing transmission line system between the Granby Pumping Plant switchyard and the Windy Gap substation. Only essential maintenance activities would be performed. Structures and hardware components would be maintained, repaired, and/or replaced as required during routine maintenance activities or in the event of emergency outages. Repairs and other maintenance activities would be necessary, in increasing frequency as the transmission line ages.

When the Adams Tunnel cable fails, Western’s Granby Pumping Plant –Windy Gap substation transmission line will be the only source of power for the Grand Lake-Granby area.

Alternative B – Rebuild the Existing Route

Alternative B proposes to rebuild and upgrade the transmission line in the existing ROW. The rebuild and upgrade would include constructing approximately 12 miles of 69- and 138-kV double circuit transmission from the Granby Pumping Plant switchyard to the Windy Gap substation. Substation enhancements would occur at the Granby Pumping Plant, including a new power transformer.

The existing single circuit 69-kV H-frame wood pole transmission line would be upgraded to a double-circuit line using single-column steel poles designed for 138-kV operation. Western intends to place the new steel poles in the exact locations of the existing wood poles in the same ROWs. No new ROWs would be required for this alternative, however the existing 30-foot ROW would be widened to 100 feet to accommodate construction, maintenance and operation of the upgraded line.



This alternative would provide looped, double circuit transmission in the Grand Lake-Granby area in the existing, expanded ROW.

Alternative C – Proposed Action

Alternative C proposes to rebuild and upgrade the Granby Pumping Plant – Windy Gap transmission line. Segments of the proposed rebuild and upgraded transmission line would be constructed on new ROWs. The proposed action would:

- Remove approximately 12 miles of existing single circuit 69-kV H-frame wood pole transmission line.
- Construct approximately 12 miles of 69- and 138-kV double circuit transmission line.
- Construct a new 138/69-kV Granby Pumping Plant Switchyard, consisting of: two breaker 138-kV main and transfer busses; 50 MVA 138/69-kV power transformers.
- Install a new 69-kV breaker at the existing 69/6.9-kV Granby Pumping Plant Switchyard, and new 69-kV switches at Stillwater Tap.

Granby Pumping Plant – Windy Gap Transmission Line Rebuild Project

Western Area Power Administration

October 2006

Alternative C would provide looped, double circuit transmission in the Grand Lake-Granby area in a combination of existing, expanded and new ROWs. This alternative would move the transmission line corridor to areas that are less visually sensitive.

For more information, visit www.wapa.gov/transmission/infragranby.htm.

What's Next?

A second public meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 15, 2006 from 4:00 to 7:00 pm, at Mountain Parks Electric's Community Room in Granby. At this meeting we'll explain the alternatives and ongoing studies in more detail, answer any questions, and hear additional comments and suggestions. The input received from this round of public consultation will enable us to evaluate our proposed and alternative actions.

Project Schedule

Public Meeting #1	July 2005
Additional Siting and Environmental Studies	Summer 2005 - Fall 2006
Public Meeting #2	November 15, 2006
Draft EA	January 2007
Final EA	Spring 2007
Right-of-Way Aquisition and Construction	Summer 2007 - Winter 2009
In-service	January 2009

For more information, please contact:

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Dear Customer:

Our first public meeting on July 28, 2005 was a great success. We were pleased to have your feedback on the preliminary alternatives and the aspects of the area's unique environment you value most. As a result of the input received at the meeting, our project team decided to delay the project in order to best address your comments through additional resource analyses and alternative considerations. We hope that this newsletter will highlight the input received, our major findings and the project alternatives.

Those of you in attendance at the open house, and others we've met since then, have expressed a true appreciation of the need to provide the Granby - Grand Lake area with a more reliable electricity supply. Currently, the area is served by the Granby Pumping Plant-Windy Gap 69-kV transmission line and the Alva B. Adams Tunnel 69-kV electric cable. This cable currently provides a second source of electrical power to the area from Grand Lake to Granby by allowing looped transmission service between the Estes Park and Windy Gap substations. The Adams Tunnel cable has exceeded its predicted useful life (40 years) and, upon failure, will not be replaced. The failure of the Adams Tunnel cable system will leave large parts of the Grand Lake-Granby area with only a one-way or radial transmission supply. Without an additional high-voltage source of power, the area risks an extended

power outage if something were to happen to the existing line. A rebuild and upgrade of the transmission line is our answer to providing Grand County customers with a reliable, long-term solution.

Since the public meeting in July 2005, our primary goal has been to better understand the affected resources, refine alternatives and identify a proposed action. In cooperation with the U.S. Forest Service, our goal is to select a route that balances the need for reliable electric service with public input, environmental sensitivity, economic feasibility and the fulfillment of legal and regulatory requirements. The U.S. Forest Service is a cooperating agency in the preparation of the Environmental Assessment.

We invite you to attend our next Open House on Wednesday, November 15, 2006, from 4:00 to 7:00 pm, at Mountain Parks Electric's Community Room in Granby.

The purpose of the meeting will be to share the results of our studies and hear your thoughts about the project alternatives. We look forward to seeing you there.

Sincerely,

Western Area Power Administration

Aerial view of the existing 69-kV transmission line

