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## **Public Gets the Chance to Comment on High Voltage Power Lines**

Posted: June 23, 2009 10:28 PM

There's more information about a project that could bring high voltage power lines through the La Crosse area. Leaders of the project which is known as Cap X 2020 have narrowed down where the power lines would go.

There are now just 3 options for where the power lines would cross the Mississippi River from Minnesota to Wisconsin. They are La Crescent, Winona, and Alma. Tuesday night the public had a chance to write down their comments and get their questions answered about the project at an open house.

A long term project aimed at beefing up power in Southern Minnesota and Western Wisconsin is one step closer to finding what it says is the best place for new power lines. "We are asking people, here's what we have narrowed our route options to, please tell us what you think, what are we missing, what do we need to add in," said Tim Carlsgaard, with Cap X 2020.

People are getting the chance to do just that. At an open house by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, people expressed why they're worried about the power lines project.

Jeremy Chipps is with the Citizens Energy Task Force, a group opposing Cap X 2020's plan. He says, while people will listen to what is said, it's what you write that's important. "What does go down on record is the written statements that you can fill out at each table, what you think it important for the environmental impact study," said Chipps.

The environmental impact study is being prepared by the USDA to see if federal money will help fund the project. "We want to bring back the discussion of if this project is really needed," said Chips of the Cap X 2020 project.

Cap X 2020 says more power to the area is needed for future use. "You plan on building transmissions lines for the long term, 20-30 years out," said Carlsgaard.

People who aren't on board with the project say the area does not need big power lines. "What we need is much smaller transmissions systems with smart grid technology embracing renewables," said Chipps.

CapX 2020 will continue to narrow down were it thinks the power lines should go. Then they'll give each Minnesota and Wisconsin their decisions. Cap X 2020 says it will take about a year of reviews and meetings to decide on the best route to get power to Southern Minnesota and Western Wisconsin.

Citizens Energy Task Force recently petitioned the Minnesota Utilities Commission to try and stop the project. If you didn't get a chance to submit a comment and would still like to, you have until July 25. Go to

<http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>

or email to: [Stephanie.strength@wdc.usda.gov](mailto:Stephanie.strength@wdc.usda.gov)