

East-West Tie Transmission Project (EWT)

The East-West Tie Transmission Project (the Project) in Northwestern Ontario will consist of a new, approximately 280-mile (450-km), double-circuit, 230-kilovolt (kV) transmission line.

The proposed Project will generally parallel an existing double-circuit, 230-kV transmission line that connects the Wawa Transformer Station to the Lakehead Transformer Station near Thunder Bay, ON, including a connection midway in Marathon, ON. The project is being developed by NextBridge Infrastructure (NextBridge), a partnership between affiliates of Enbridge, NextEra Energy Canada and OMERS Infrastructure.

The NextBridge partnership was established to participate in the Ontario transmission market. Collectively, the partnership submitted a proposal to the Ontario Energy Board (OEB) for the planning, development, construction, ownership, operation and maintenance of the East-West Tie (EWT) Transmission Project (the Project) in Northwestern Ontario (the Northwest). On August 7, 2013 NextBridge was designated by the OEB to develop the EWT line and to file a Leave to Construct (LTC) application. NextBridge is committed to consulting with all interested community members, First Nations and Métis communities, elected officials and municipal staff, agencies, landowners and other stakeholders in a clear and mutually respectful manner throughout the life of the Project.

The Project generally parallels an existing double-circuit 230-kV transmission line corridor (the existing East-West Tie) but avoids some sensitive features crossed by the existing line, including Pukaskwa National Park. The Preferred Route is approximately 280 miles (450 km) long. The proposed right-of-way for the Project is expected to be typically up to 210 ft. (64 m) in width, however, additional space may be required for; conductor stringing and tensioning, water body crossings, angles in the route, areas where long spans are required, and/or locations with poor soil conditions that dictate the use of longer anchors.

The Project is required to ensure the long-term reliability of the electricity supply in the Northwest. Industrial activities in the area, particularly in the mining sector, are expected to drive strong electricity demand growth in the coming decade. Coupled with changes to the electricity supply in the area, the Independent Electricity System Operator (IESO) has identified supply needs for the Northwest, which can be met with additional transmission or generation. The IESO analyzed these alternatives and recommended expansion of the EWT based on technical, economic and other considerations. On March 2, 2016, Ontario declared that the construction of the EWT is needed as a priority project.

The initial target in-service date for the Project was the first half of 2018. On September 30, 2014, the IESO (formerly the Ontario Power Authority), sent a letter to the OEB. In that letter, the IESO proposed that the development schedule for the Project be extended to work toward a 2020 in-service date. In OEB Decision and Order Number EB-2015-0216, dated November 19, 2015, an updated Extended Development Schedule with a new Project in-service date of 2020, filed with the OEB by NextBridge Infrastructure on June 24, 2015, was approved. The new target in-service date for the Project is 2020.

For more information on the new East-West Tie project, please visit NextBridge.ca