

Winthrop to Bell 69-kV transmission line rebuild

Great River Energy, wholesale electric supplier to McLeod Cooperative Power Association, is planning to rebuild an existing 12.1-mile 69-kilovolt (kV) transmission line located in McLeod County in two phases (see map on back). This rebuild is necessary to improve the reliability of the area transmission system, and reduce risks associated with low voltage and system overloading.

Overview

Phase 1 includes approximately 7 miles of the existing transmission line extending from McLeod Cooperative Power Association's Sumter Substation in Collins Township to the Bell Substation in Hassan Valley Township. Phase 2 covers 5.1 miles, beginning at the Winthrop Substation in Penn Township and ending at the Sumpter Substation. Much of the existing line is located within the east State Highway 15 right-of-way (ROW). The rebuilt line is proposed to shift onto private property on the east side in most areas. In areas with smaller residential parcels or environmentally sensitive features, the line may remain within the Highway 15 ROW.

Wood poles will be used for most of the route, with steel or laminate poles installed in select locations based on engineering needs. Pole placement will be designed to avoid interference with agricultural operations to the extent practicable. Vegetation within the easement will need to be removed to allow construction access and to ensure the safe operation and maintenance of the line, and these activities will be reviewed with landowners during easement negotiations.



Typical 69-kV single circuit structure

Permits/easements and public involvement

Great River Energy will acquire easements for the transmission line, as well as any temporary construction needs outside of the permanent easement. The transmission line typically requires a 70 foot wide easement, with 35 feet on each side of the centerline. Permitting with road authorities, environmental agencies, and other utilities will begin once the project has local approval and preliminary design is complete. Great River Energy held an open house in September 2025 and plans to move forward with the CUP application with McLeod County. Once the CUP is approved and preliminary design is completed, Great River Energy will contact landowners to review construction access and practices, easement and compensation details, vegetation removal and restoration.

Schedule

Notifications	Summer 2025
Survey/design	Summer 2026
Easements/permits	Fall 2026 – Spring 2027
Phase 1 construction	2027
Phase 2 construction	2028

Quick facts

Length – Approximately 12.1 miles (phase 1 = 7 miles, phase 2 = 5.1 miles)

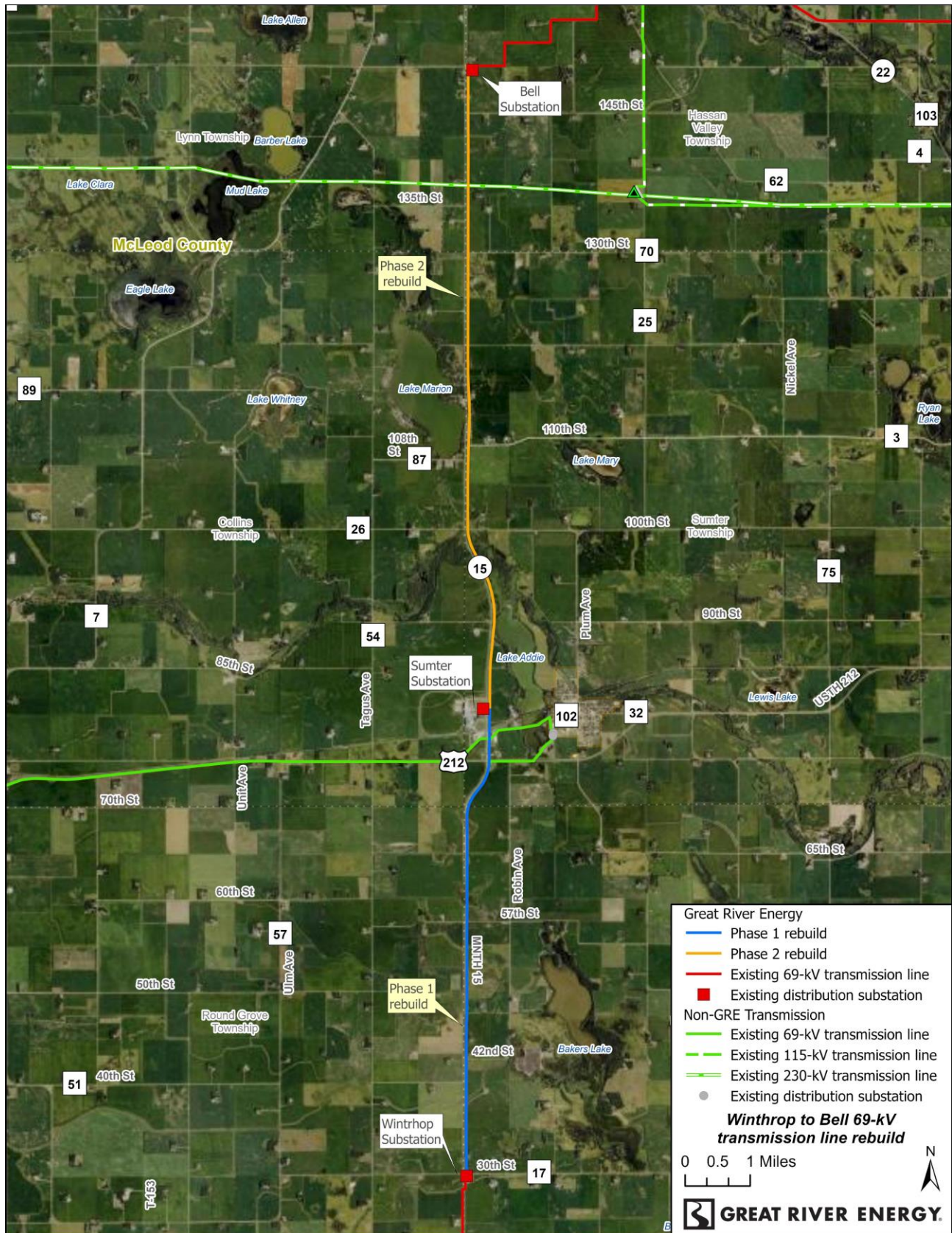
Voltage – 69-kV

Poles – Primarily wood; steel and/or laminate where needed for engineering design

Spans – 350 to 450 feet apart

Right of way – 70 feet wide (35 feet each side of transmission centerline)

Proposed project



Great River Energy representatives

For project updates and information, visit greatriverenergy.com/WinthroptoBell or contact:

Nicole Rietz
Field Representative | Land Rights
763-954-9179 | nrietz@grenergy.com

Marcus Green
Transmission Permitting Specialist | Transmission Permitting
763-445-5984 | mgreen@grenergy.com