

BUTTE, Mont., June 30 MT-NorthWestern-Corp BUTTE, Mont., June 30 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ -- NorthWestern Corporation d/b/a NorthWestern Energy (NYSE: NWE) announced today that it has submitted the Mountain States Transmission Intertie (MSTI) Major Facility Siting Application (MFSA) with the Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ).

The Montana DEQ has 30-days to complete the review of the MFSA application, and notify NorthWestern Energy of any additional information or requirements. Once the MFSA process is completed, NorthWestern Energy will proceed with an environmental review, including an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), under the Montana Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and other various approvals and permits. This process is expected to begin in late August with additional public scoping meetings scheduled in September.

"The filing of this application takes us one step closer toward the realization of the Mountain States Transmission Intertie project, which is designed to facilitate generation development in Montana," said Dave Gates, Vice President Wholesale Operations. "Not only does this project represent a significant growth opportunity for NorthWestern, but it will provide new, which are primarily renewable, generation projects in Montana with the additional path they need to reach potential markets in the West."

According to Rick Walsh, NorthWestern Energy's Manager of Environmental Siting and Permitting, said NorthWestern Energy is also working with the Bureau of Land Management, Forest Service and other state and federal agencies in Montana and Idaho to conduct the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for this project. Additional public input is encouraged in the EIS project. Construction will not begin until the environmental review process is completed -- a process which is expected to take approximately two years.

NorthWestern Energy proposes to construct, operate and maintain the approximately 400-mile 500 kilovolt (kV) transmission line to address the requests for transmission service from customers and to relieve constraints on the high-voltage transmission system in the region. The new transmission line is planned to run from a new substation near Townsend, Montana to a substation near Midpoint, Idaho. A map showing the preferred and alternative routes, along with additional information about the project, is available on our website at <http://www.msti500kv.com>.

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