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EKPC will seek Kentucky Court of Appeals ruling to proceed with power line to maintain reliable electric service

EKPC has filed notice that it will seek a Kentucky Court of Appeals order to proceed with an electric transmission line project needed to maintain reliable service for thousands of homes in southeastern Madison County.

Berea College owns more than 9,000 acres of property in southern Madison County and has refused to agree to an easement allowing construction of a power line on the property. EKPC's proposal would affect 15.6 acres owned by Berea College. After several attempts to negotiate with college officials, EKPC sought to acquire an easement through eminent domain.

A recent Madison Circuit Court ruling blocked EKPC's use of eminent domain to acquire an easement on Berea College's property. EKPC is appealing that court ruling.

"EKPC works hard to treat all property owners fairly and minimize the overall impact of the project while always providing reliable, affordable electric service," said Craig Johnson, EKPC's chief operating officer and Executive Vice president.

The project, known as the Three Links to Big Hill transmission line, will help maintain reliable electric service in southeastern Madison County and alleviate system constraints. Currently, most electric cooperative members in the vicinity are served from a substation that feeds 4,100 homes and businesses, more than any other substation in EKPC's system. The substation is close to becoming overloaded. The planned Big Hill substation will serve approximately 1,500 meters from a new 8.5-mile transmission line feeding electricity from the south.

EKPC is purchasing easements from property owners along the route of the line. Easements allow EKPC to construct and maintain the power line, while the property owner continues to own the land.

Just over 1 mile of EKPC's proposed route would cross property owned by Berea College.

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“Practically every land owner considers their property to be unique and exceptional,” Johnson said. “EKPC strives to objectively consider the impacts of many potential routes and determine a route that minimizes the overall impact.”

EKPC has committed to take numerous steps to minimize the impact of the project:

- EKPC is committed to mechanically clearing and using mechanical maintenance methods for the entirety of the line’s right-of-way rather than using herbicides to control woody vegetation.
- EKPC plans to use weathered-steel poles, which have the appearance of wood.
- The transmission line will be approximately 1 mile from the closest overlook at the Pinnacles hiking trails. Much of the view of the line from the Pinnacle will be screened by Pilot Knob.
- EKPC has acquired a site for the substation. It will be located approximately 1,000 feet off of Red Lick Road. EKPC plans to plant trees around the perimeter of the substation to screen the view.

Learn more about the project at <https://www.ekpc.coop/big-hill-three-links>

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East Kentucky Power Cooperative is a not-for-profit, member-owned cooperative providing wholesale electricity to 16 owner-member distribution cooperatives that serve 1.2 million Kentucky residents at 579,000 homes, farms, businesses and industries across 89 counties. EKPC provides power through coal-fueled plants located in Mason and Pulaski counties; natural gas-fueled plants in Clark and Oldham counties; renewable energy plants in Barren, Boone, Clark, Greenup, Hardin and Pendleton counties; and nearly 3,000 miles of transmission lines. Together, EKPC and its 16 owner-member cooperatives are known as Kentucky's Touchstone Energy Cooperatives. Visit EKPC at www.ekpc.coop.

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