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American Transmission Co. sponsors study of transmission options to move renewable energy across Upper Midwest

PEWAUKEE, Wis. – American Transmission Co., along with American Electric Power (NYSE: AEP), MidAmerican Energy Holdings Co. (MECH), Exelon Corp. (NYSE: EXC), NorthWestern Energy (NYSE:NWE), and MidAmerican Energy Co., a subsidiary of MEHC, is sponsoring a comprehensive study of the transmission infrastructure needed in the Upper Midwest to support renewable energy development and transport that energy to consumers in markets to the east. The study, known as the Strategic Midwest Area Renewable Transmission Study (SMARTransmission Study), gets under way immediately.

The sponsors have retained Quanta Technology LLC to evaluate extra-high voltage transmission alternatives and provide recommendations for new transmission development in the Upper Midwest, including North Dakota, South Dakota, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Minnesota, Ohio, Wisconsin and Michigan's Upper Peninsula. Quanta will conduct an analysis of transmission alternatives analyzing the impact and quantifying the economic benefits of several transmission options. The SMARTransmission Study is scheduled for completion in January 2010, and results will be shared with the Midwest Independent Transmission System Operator and PJM Interconnection, the Regional Transmission Organizations operating in these states.

"The region under study has some of the richest renewable wind potential in the U.S.," said John Procario, ATC president and chief executive officer. "Harvesting this Midwestern wind potential and bringing the resulting electric generation to market requires an upgrade to the transmission system in the heart of the nation. Studying the transmission options at the regional level is key to identifying the most economic options."

Procario said, "The results of the SMARTransmission Study could further provide an input into the Upper Midwest Transmission Development Initiative and other studies – efforts we also support for determining the best options for transmission facilities to help states and the region meet renewable energy goals. And by participating in this and other studies, we can identify projects that will benefit all energy users in the Midwest."

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The outcome of the SMARTransmission Study in combination with other studies currently being performed by MISO will be used as input to the regional transmission planning processes and result in transmission projects being identified. Ultimately, RTOs and states must approve the scope and timing of any new transmission projects.

While the SMARTransmission Study will identify generally how new transmission facilities should interconnect with the existing system, it will not specifically identify any of the physical geographic routes.

The partners will provide opportunities for interested stakeholders to engage in the study.

ATC owns, operates, builds and maintains the high-voltage electric transmission system serving portions of Wisconsin, Michigan, Minnesota and Illinois. Formed in 2001 as the nation's first multi-state transmission-only utility, ATC has invested \$2 billion to improve the adequacy and reliability of its infrastructure. ATC now is a \$2.5 billion company with 9,350 miles of transmission lines and 510 substations. The company is a member of the Midwest ISO regional transmission organization, and provides nondiscriminatory service to all customers, supporting effective competition in energy markets without favoring any market participant. For more information, visit our Web site at www.atcllc.com.

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