

Out of the Line of Fire

CVEA Meets Huge Milestone with the Completion of the Thompson Pass Relocation Project

CVEA realized a very important milestone September 24, 2014, when the re-routed section of the transmission line through Thompson Pass was energized for the first time.

Since 2010, CVEA has kept the members aware of the avalanche issue on Thompson Pass and what your Cooperative is doing about it. In late 2011, CVEA commissioned an analysis of seven mitigation options. Moving the line to safety, out of the avalanche zone, was chosen as the best alternative.

Construction of the new line, a segment nearly four miles long, started in earnest on July 15 when the first of the new transmission line poles was set. Crews worked six days a week, sometimes in less than optimal weather conditions, to erect 30 new structures along the new route.

Now that the re-routed line is operational, the segment of the old line that has been susceptible to avalanches over the years stands inactive awaiting tear

down this winter.

Since construction of the original transmission line through Thompson Pass in 1981, avalanches have destroyed portions of this line along the eastern side of the Richardson Highway five different times with repair costs of \$2,675,000.

Completion of the construction phase of this project culminates years of intensive efforts by CVEA, working in conjunction with state agencies and with input from concerned groups in the area, to arrive at a solution that considered input from all parties.

Selection of the constructed route considered multiple points of view and took years to develop and approve.

Now that the line has been re-routed, survivability of the transmission line through Thompson Pass has been significantly enhanced, which translates directly into increased reliability by eliminating the likelihood of service interruption and unplanned expenditures caused by avalanches on Thompson Pass.

Moving the line out of the avalanche zone also eliminates the safety risk associated with Cooperative employees working to repair the transmission line in avalanche conditions.

CVEA is proud to have completed this very important project; improving employee safety and reliability for all Cooperative customers.

If you have questions regarding this topic or any CVEA issue, please contact Sharon Crisp at 822-5506, 835-7005, or crisp@cvea.org. ■



New transmission line structures along the Richardson Highway, heading towards Valdez

Photo by Dale Orvedahl



Top left, new and old structures at the South end
Middle left, view of new and old structures on South end
Bottom left, new structures looking North
Top right, installation of new structure
Bottom right, installing cable on new structures

Photos by Dale Orvedahl

