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**WESTAR ENERGY ANNOUNCES COMMITMENT TO NEW TRANSMISSION
PROJECTS**

Investments will support system reliability, growth of renewable energy.

TOPEKA, Kan., Oct. 26, 2010 — Westar Energy, Inc. (NYSE WR) today announced that it is committed to developing over the next decade the most significant additions to Kansas' electrical transmission network in history.

Westar Energy named multiple projects that have been studied by the Southwest Power Pool to ensure long-term regional reliability, enable the growth of renewable energy, reduce emissions, use existing transmission corridors and assure cost efficient production and transmission of electricity. Potential project locations and their approximated lengths include:

- A 70 mile line from Jeffrey Energy Center, near St. Marys, to Iatan Energy Center, near Atchison;
- A 90 mile line from Jeffrey Energy Center to Manhattan to Concordia;
- A 60 mile line from Concordia to Salina;
- A 100 mile line from Salina to Hays;
- A 45 mile line from Jeffrey Energy Center to Swissvale;
- A 160 mile line from Hutchinson to Great Bend to Spearville;

- A 80 mile line from Wichita to Rose Hill; and
- A 40 mile line from Wolf Creek nuclear plant, near Burlington, to Emporia.

These projects are all contemplated at 345 kilovolts as identified by the Southwest Power Pool for further study and, if approved, construction may begin at various times in the next decade. The SPP is a federally approved regional transmission organization with members in Kansas and eight other states. At the appropriate time, each of the projects will be subject to siting authority by the Kansas Corporation Commission.

Bill Moore, Westar's president and chief executive officer said, "Transmission is critical to maintaining Kansas' position as an energy leader. I look forward to working with our officials and regulators to complete these projects in accordance with the Southwest Power Pool's plans."

Westar said that in addition to the factors listed above, new laws are driving the need for a better electric grid, including one in Kansas that require utilities to have more electricity come from renewable sources. A national renewable energy standard is also under consideration.

"Kansas is finding many wind projects stymied by limited transmission capacity," Kelly Harrison, Westar Energy vice president of transmission operations and environmental services, said.

Kansas leaders provided their support for the projects:

Kansas Governor Mark Parkinson noted, "Just over the last few years, Kansas' wind industry has flourished with public and private support statewide. However, if we are to truly unlock our wind energy potential, new transmission is needed to bring this power to the rest of the state and the region."

Kansas Lieutenant Governor Troy Findley, chair of the Governor's Subcabinet on Energy said, "The dedication and coordination of our state and local leaders, as well as our private sector

stakeholders, is critical in order to further Kansas' transmission priorities and capitalize on our state's wind energy potential."

Senator Sam Brownback, who serves on the U.S. Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, added, "It's exciting to see Kansas benefit from a thoughtful approach to energy policy, where public officials and our Kansas companies continue to work together to meet our state's energy needs. This will help grow our economy, create jobs, and build infrastructure for a better future for Kansas.

Kansas House Utilities Committee Chairman Rep. Carl Holmes, R-Liberal, said, "I am pleased the SPP recognizes the importance of these projects. Robust transmission resources to move electricity within the region are important to meeting Kansans' electricity needs for many years to come."

Westar will continue to collaborate with the SPP, neighboring transmission owners and market participants in identifying cost effective projects and getting them approved, in the right sequence, at the right time and with assurance they are built efficiently.

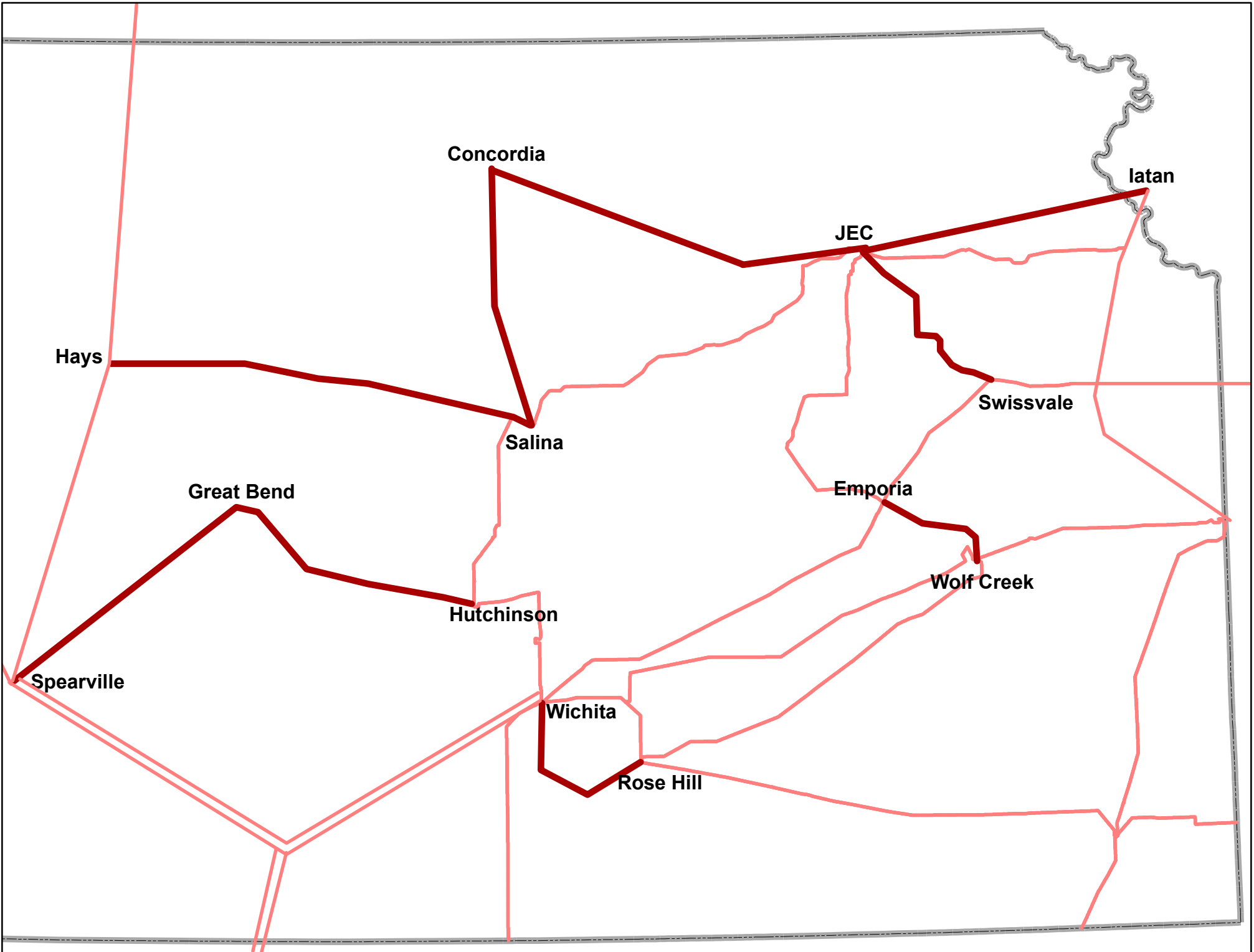
At the appropriate time, Westar will begin working with the landowners, communities and environmental experts interested in SPP-approved projects. Harrison said, "We understand the importance of working with the people we might affect while doing business. Just as we've proved as we recently completed two large transmission projects, success only comes when everyone works together with respect for each other, our Kansas communities and our environment."

A map of the proposed projects is available at www.WestarEnergy.com. The proposed projects are shown in dark red.

Westar Energy, Inc. (NYSE: WR) is the largest electric utility in Kansas, providing electric service to about 686,000 customers in the state. Westar Energy has about 7,100 megawatts of electric generation capacity and operates and coordinates more than 35,000 miles of electric distribution and transmission lines.

For more information about Westar Energy, visit us on the Internet at <http://www.WestarEnergy.com>.

Forward-looking statements: Certain matters discussed in this news release are “forward-looking statements.” The Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995 has established that these statements qualify for safe harbors from liability. Forward-looking statements may include words like “believe,” “anticipate,” “target,” “expect,” “pro forma,” “estimate,” “intend,” “guidance” or words of similar meaning. Forward-looking statements describe future plans, objectives, expectations or goals. Although Westar Energy believes that its expectations are based on reasonable assumptions, all forward-looking statements involve risk and uncertainty. Therefore, actual results could vary materially from what we expect. Please review our Form 10-K for the period ended Dec. 31, 2009 and our Form 10-Q for the period ended June 30, 2010 for important risk factors that could cause results to differ materially from those in any such forward-looking statements. Any forward-looking statement speaks only as of the date such statement was made, and the company does not undertake any obligation to update any forward-looking statement to reflect events or circumstances after the date on which such statement was made except as required by applicable laws or regulations.



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