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**WESTAR RECEIVES APPROVAL FROM POWER POOL
FOR HIGH VOLTAGE TRANSMISSION PROJECT**
Investment will strengthen state and regional power grid.

TOPEKA, Kan., March 21, 2013 — Westar Energy, Inc. (NYSE:WR) announced today that the Southwest Power Pool (SPP) granted its approval for the Elm Creek to Summit transmission project to proceed. The line will improve electric reliability and efficiency in the region.

Kelly Harrison, vice president, transmission said, “Ongoing investment in our state and region’s electrical infrastructure not only enhances electric reliability but also provides construction jobs and supports ongoing economic growth.”

Westar Energy will build one-half of a 345-kilovolt transmission line connecting Westar Energy’s Summit Substation, about five miles northeast of Assaria in Saline County, to the Elm Creek Substation, approximately four miles northwest of Aurora in Cloud County. Westar Energy will construct and own the southern half of this line at an expected cost of about \$67 million and ITC Great Plains, in conjunction with Mid Kansas Electric, will construct and own the northern half. The project will also involve upgrades at both substations.

A route application will be filed with the Kansas Corporation Commission later this spring. We expect the KCC to issue a ruling regarding the route later this year.

As part of the SPP planning process, project estimates are refined at multiple steps, each being confirmed as to the economic benefits of the project. The SPP's approval to proceed acknowledges the project will benefit customers across the region. The costs for transmission lines of this voltage are recovered from all customers in the nine state Southwest Power Pool region.

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Westar Energy, Inc. (NYSE: WR) is Kansas' largest electric utility. For more than a century, we have provided Kansans the safe, reliable electricity needed to power their businesses and homes. Every day our team of professionals takes on projects to generate and deliver electricity, protect the environment and provide excellent service to our nearly 700,000 customers. Westar has 7,400 MW of electric generation capacity fueled by coal, uranium, natural gas, wind and landfill gas. We are also a leader in electric transmission in Kansas. Our innovative customer service programs include mobile-enabled customer care, a smart meter pilot project and paving the way for electric vehicle adoption. Our employees live, volunteer and work in the communities we serve.

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

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. The factors that could cause actual results to differ materially from these forward-looking statements include those discussed herein as well as (1) those discussed in the company's Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended Dec. 31, 2010 (a) under the heading, "Forward-Looking Statements," (b) in ITEM 1. Business, (c) in ITEM 1A. Risk Factors, (d) in ITEM 7. Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations, and (e) in ITEM 8. Financial Statements and Supplementary Data: Notes 13 and 15; (2) those discussed in the company's Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q filed Aug. 4, 2011 (a) in ITEM 2. Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations and (b) in Part 1, Financial Information, ITEM 1. Financial Statements: Notes 8 and 9; and (3) other factors discussed in the company's filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission. 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.