The California ISO Board of Governors approved an addendum to the organization’s 2022-2023 Transmission Plan to conditionally allow development of a 285-mile link in a transmission pathway that will ultimately deliver renewable energy from the Northwest to California and the Southwest. The project will also enable Idaho Power to import additional energy into its system.

- The 500-kilovolt [Southwest Intertie Project – North (SWIP North)] transmission line will eventually open up more than 1,100 megawatts (MW) of new energy capacity to the California ISO system.
- The ISO Board approval on Dec. 14, 2023 is a major step toward augmenting grid interconnectivity and resource diversity across the Western United States.
- It supports California’s goal of accessing clean wind resources from Idaho.
- It enables Idaho Power to import additional energy into its system.
- The project will improve reliability by creating a parallel path to the California Oregon Intertie (COI) line, reduce congestion costs on the COI and renewable resource curtailment, and it would enable the export of excess solar from California.
- The ISO’s approval is contingent on several conditions, including:
  - the California Public Utilities Commission reaffirming the need for Idaho wind resources;
  - the Idaho Public Utilities Commission approving Idaho Power’s participation in the project;
  - the ISO’s approval of the project sponsor’s [LS Power] application to become a participating transmission owner;
  - and LS Power’s rate approval by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC).
- Final decisions on the project by the ISO Board and the FERC are expected in late 2024.
- If all the conditions are met, the SWIP North line is projected to be operational in 2027.
The ISO’s work on SWIP North has been driven by California’s resource planning process that identifies interest in renewable resources in Idaho.

These and other projects the ISO has been advancing will provide additional reliability, resilience and economic value for California and the West.

Details of the project

The SWIP North line would connect the Robinson Summit substation in central Nevada to the Midpoint substation in Idaho, and will extend the 231-mile One Nevada Line (ON Line) that connects to the ISO system at the Harry Allen substation just north of Las Vegas.

There is an existing capacity sharing agreement between LS Power and NV Energy on ON Line and SWIP North that is governed by a Transmission Use and Capacity Exchange Agreement. Upon satisfaction of the ISO Board’s conditions, and upon construction of SWIP North, the arrangement would result in the following capacity entitlements:

- NV Energy would assume 952.5 MW of southbound capacity and 847.5 MW of northbound capacity.
- Idaho Power would assume 500 MW of northbound capacity.
- The remaining Great Basin Transmission entitlements in both directions will be assumed by the ISO (1,117.5 MW in southbound and 572.5 MW northbound).

The SWIP North line is currently estimated to cost about $1 billion. If the ISO and Idaho Power eventually participate, the ISO will be responsible for 77.2% of the overall project costs and Idaho Power for a 22.8% share of the costs associated with its portion of northbound capacity. Project costs will be reviewed regularly and will ultimately be subject to FERC rate approval.