

Land Before Lines

Forensic audit, version 2: the 345-kV corridor across Kansas, Oklahoma, and Missouri, and the load nobody will name

What the project is in all three states, the documented trail behind a quiet Neosho data center, what permits exist and what permits do not, what public and tribal land sits in the way, who is already fighting it, what actually works, and how to rebuild the site around it.

Prepared for Steve Bishop. Research current as of September 17, 2026. Supersedes the September 17 version 1.

This is research, not legal advice. Every filing decision should go through a Missouri, Oklahoma, or Kansas eminent domain lawyer. "Not found" means the public record did not turn it up, not that it does not exist. Every figure carries its source in section 12.

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1. Bottom line

Twelve findings that change how the campaign should talk and where it should push.

1. **The line is real, funded, and ordered by SPP across three states.** Southwest Power Pool approved a roughly 316-mile 345-kV path (Buffalo Flats near Wichita to Delaware, Oklahoma to Monett to North Branson, Missouri) in its 2024 Integrated Transmission Plan. Notifications to Construct have gone to Evergy, AEP, and Empire District Electric (Liberty). The stated need is winter storm reliability (Uri 2021, Elliott 2022), not a customer. Do not fight the need finding head-on; *Transource v. DeFrank* (3d Cir. 2025) says states cannot deny an RTO-approved line for lack of need.
2. **Nobody has named a Neosho data center, but the trail is documented.** Neosho's city manager confirmed a call "earlier this year from someone looking to build a data center" and asking about industrial park property; that call is why the city passed a one-year moratorium on July 7, 2026. Newton County held a closed real estate session on June 15, 2026. Liberty told the PSC on September 11, 2026 that two prospective large-load customers already have completed SPP interconnection applications and its pipeline is "measured in the hundreds of megawatts." Algonquin's CEO told investors Missouri is "in the heat map" of data center interest. Missouri American Water bought Neosho's water and sewer on September 3, 2026 and wants an 828-acre, 20 million gallon per day reservoir southwest of Granby. None of these is a developer's name. Together they are exactly what a quiet project looks like from the outside.
3. **The reason it is quiet is structural, and the site should say so.** Newton County has no zoning, so a data center on unincorporated land needs no public vote. The city moratorium stops at the city limits. Water and sewer decisions now sit with a PSC-regulated private company, not the council. Chapter 100 bonds run through the Newton County Industrial Development Authority. Liberty's large-load customers are covered by a protective order. The power line is the only piece of this that has to happen in public. That is the campaign's advantage: use the public piece to pry open the private one.
4. **Liberty has no Missouri PSC permit case for this line, and may never file one.** No Certificate of Convenience and Necessity docket exists. Under 20 CSR 4240-20.045, transmission built inside a utility's own certificated territory does not trigger a construction CCN. The Missouri lever is to test whether every mile of the route is inside Empire's certificated retail territory; any segment in co-op or municipal territory requires a line CCN with landowner notice and a public meeting. The 2022 landowner protections (150 percent for farmland, farmer commissioner, 150 percent offer rule) are written to apply to lines that have a CCN, so demanding one is in landowners' interest.
5. **Oklahoma has a permit gate and the clock is running.** Under the 2025 High Voltage Electric Transmission Facility Act (17 O.S. 850-851) AEP Oklahoma Transmission Company needs a Certificate of Authority before building, and under 27 O.S. 7(C) it needs that certificate before it can condemn. PUD 2026-000047 (NEOTEP West, filed June 19, 2026): public comment closes November 9, hearing November 13. PUD 2026-000068 (NEOTEP East, filed August 21, 2026): hearing not set. The certificate is deemed granted if the OCC does not act within 200 days, about January 5, 2027 for West and about March 9, 2027 for East. The OCC says it has no routing authority, so protests must be about cost, alternatives, tribal consent, water, and public interest.
6. **Kansas already moved the route once, and there is a second round now.** On May 12, 2026 the Kansas Corporation Commission approved Evergy's 133-mile Buffalo Flats line only west of US-77 in Cowley County and denied the Flint Hills segment east of it for "insufficient evidence," ordering a new routing study with "strong consideration" of a route paralleling US-166. The new public hearing is November 19, 2026; written comments are due by 5 p.m. December 2, 2026; the KCC must decide by

March 4, 2027. Kansas law (K.S.A. 66-1,178) bars eminent domain until the siting permit issues. This is the only regulatory win in the whole corridor so far and it came from landowners building a record.

7. **Liberty has picked a Missouri route.** Liberty's public ArcGIS map has carried a single "Proposed Route" layer since August 13, 2026. Our reading: the Newton County segment tracks the southern preliminary alternative, running about 2.5 miles north of downtown Neosho, past Granby, then west past Seneca to the state line about 2 miles southwest of town. East of Newton County it follows the existing Monett to Aurora to Reeds Spring 161-kV corridor through Lawrence, Barry, and Stone counties. McDonald and Jasper are not crossed. Liberty told the county the timeline "has been pushed back to October of 2028."
8. **No federal land is crossed, but the creeks carry federal review.** Shoal Creek, Spring River, and Elk River carry designated critical habitat for the Neosho mucket and rabbitsfoot mussels and sit on the Corps of Engineers' Missouri sensitive-waters list; every crossing requires a pre-construction notification with Endangered Species Act and Section 106 review. Newton County is karst; the Neosho National Fish Hatchery spring holds the Ozark cavefish and forces individual consultation. In Kansas, the Verdigris River (Montgomery County) carries the same mussel habitat if the US-166 re-route drifts east. In Oklahoma, the Neosho (Grand) River crossing is a Section 10 navigable water.
9. **Tribal land is the Oklahoma wildcard.** NEOTEP East runs inside the Cherokee Nation Reservation (Nowata and Craig) and through the recognized reservations of the Quapaw, Peoria, Miami, Ottawa, and Wyandotte nations in Ottawa County. Fee land is still fee land, but any trust or restricted tract requires consent and a BIA right-of-way under 25 CFR Part 169 and cannot be condemned. AEP says only that it "engaged with tribal leaders." Nobody has mapped the trust tracts against the centerline.
10. **Water is the second quiet project.** Missouri American Water's Baynham Branch Reservoir (Corps permit SWL-2019-00034, public notice April 3, 2025) would flood 828 acres on a Shoal Creek tributary southwest of Granby, yield about 20 million gallons a day, and carry eminent domain. Its president has talked about serving "nearly a million people" in southwest Missouri. A 20 MGD reservoir and a 345-kV line landing in the same township is either a coincidence or a site plan. Ask.
11. **Pushback exists in all three states but is thin on filings.** Protect Rural Missouri (Steve Roark), Protect Rural Oklahoma (Natalie and Ben Bullard), and Kansas landowners (Vance Freeman, Samantha Ferensik, Hunter Ferguson, attorney James Zakoura) are organized. Twelve landowner intervenors are on the Kansas docket. No lawsuit, PSC filing, or county resolution was found in Missouri; whether anyone has entered the Oklahoma cases could not be confirmed.
12. **The site's biggest problems are a broken bare domain, a missing rights page, one state missing, and no way to reach people back.** Section 11 has the list; the rebuild prompt is delivered as a separate file.

2. What changed since version 1

- **Data center posture.** Version 1 said keep the data center claim off the site. That was right about naming a developer and wrong about the subject. The documented trail (city manager's admission, closed county session, Liberty's sworn testimony, the water deal) belongs on the site as a ledger of facts and records requests. The rule becomes: publish documents, not rumors, and publish every request and every answer.
- **Kansas added.** Full section 5, Kansas rows in the permits and land tables, Kansas dates in the 30-day plan, and a Kansas page in the site prompt.
- **Liberty testimony read.** Direct quotes from the September 11, 2026 filings in ET-2026-0184 are in section 3. The tariff is suspended until February 8, 2027; Liberty asked for a decision by January 31, 2027.
- **Water added.** Missouri American Water's purchase of Neosho's systems and the Baynham Branch Reservoir are new to this version.
- **County politics added.** Mark Bridges won the August 4, 2026 Republican primary for presiding commissioner with 53.8 percent over Richard Davidson and incumbent Daniel Swem; he takes office January 2027. Commissioner Mark Knight said a county zoning vote is "possibly" spring 2027. Candidate Cheryle Perkins called for a six-month county moratorium.
- **Timeline corrections.** Liberty told Newton County the project timeline "has been pushed back to October of 2028" (KSN, July 10, 2026). The Cassville Democrat reported a \$750 million figure on August 11, 2026 versus \$500 million to \$600 million in March. Pin Liberty down in writing on both.

3. Follow the load: the Neosho data center trail

Everything below is from a public document or an on-record statement. Confidence is marked. Nothing here names a developer, and the site should not either until a document does.

The trail, in date order

Date	What happened	Source	Confidence
January 16, 2026	Liberty files notice of intent to file a large-load tariff case (ET-2026-0184).	PSC EFIS	High
January 2026	Governor Kehoe signs Executive Order 26-02 supporting AI and data center development.	Cassville Democrat	High
"Earlier this year" 2026	Someone calls the City of Neosho "looking to build a data center" and asks about industrial park property. Name not disclosed.	City Manager David Kennedy to Joplin Globe, July 9; KSN July 8	High that the call happened; identity unknown
June 11, 2026	Newton County posts a closed Special Business Meeting for June 15, 10 a.m., topic "Real Estate," under RSMo 610.021(2) (records may be closed while public knowledge "might adversely affect the legal consideration").	newtoncountymo.com/notices	High that it occurred; subject unknown
June 17, 2026	Newton County Commission calendar: "Data Center Meeting, Jefferson City." This matches the Missouri Association of Counties data center summit that day, where Governor Kehoe spoke. Who attended: not found.	County notices; Missouri.net; KCUR	High
June 24, 2026	PSC approves Missouri American Water's \$34.5 million purchase of Neosho's water and wastewater systems (WA-2026-0072). MAW president Rich Svindland talks about a Newton County reservoir that could "serve nearly a million people in the future."	Joplin Globe June 25; PSC	High
July 7, 2026	Neosho City Council unanimously passes a one-year data center moratorium, inside city limits only. Kennedy: "Right now, we're just not ready." Mayor Workman: the city is "trying to get a jump ahead." Ordinance number not found.	Joplin Globe July 9; KZRG July 8; KSN July 8	High
July 9, 2026	At a Protect Rural Missouri town hall, Commissioner Mark Knight: "We're talking to attorneys to see what's legal and what's not." County zoning "possibly" spring 2027. Presiding Commissioner Swem: "working with legal counsel to see what options there are at the county level to control or regulate data centers."	KSN July 10; Joplin Globe July 5 and 9	High

Date	What happened	Source	Confidence
July 28 and August 13, 2026	Newton County closed sessions under 610.021(1) (legal).	County notices	High that they occurred; subject unknown
August 4, 2026	Mark Bridges wins the Republican primary for presiding commissioner (53.8 percent). Swem finishes third.	KOAM	High
August 11, 2026	County calendar: "Liberty Stakeholder Update, Joplin." Same day, Liberty's Nate Morris tells the Cassville Democrat "We're not planning these upgrades with data centers in mind," while acknowledging future users could use the system.	County notices; Cassville Democrat	High
August 14, 2026	Algonquin Power CEO Rod West on the Q2 call: Missouri "is in the heat map of interest of the types of load that are consistent with data center interest," and "I would not and cannot disclose any conversation around any potential or existing pipeline."	Earnings call transcript	High
September 3, 2026	Missouri American Water closes on Neosho's water and sewer systems.	PR Newswire	High
September 11, 2026	Liberty files its large-load application and testimony. See quotes below. Also files a motion for protective order, meaning confidential schedules exist.	PSC EFIS ET-2026-0184	High
September 14, 2026	PSC suspends the tariff until February 8, 2027 and sets an intervention deadline (date is in the order; the PSC default is 30 days).	PSC EFIS	High
September 15, 2026	County calendar: "Liberty Utilities regarding Transmission Project, Lampo Building," 2 p.m., same day as Liberty's public open house.	County notices	High

What Liberty said under oath

Aaron Doll, Vice President, Energy Supply Services, direct testimony, September 11, 2026: "Yes, there are currently two prospective customers in Liberty's interconnection queue that would fall under Liberty's proposed Schedule TS-LL. Applications for interconnection are complete for both customers; one as an SPP Attachment AQ and one as an SPP Attachment AX." And: "Yes, Liberty has received inquiries from other potential Large Load customers who are interested in locating in our service territory."

Charlotte Emery, Senior Director, Rates and Regulatory Affairs: Liberty "has already been approached by several Large Load entities and developers expressing interest in locating within Liberty's service territory." Liberty's pipeline is "measured in the hundreds of megawatts rather than many gigawatts as cited by Ameren Missouri and Evergy." "A single 300 MW Large Load customer could increase Liberty's energy by as much as 50% in the near term." Large load "could potentially double or even triple the electric load served by Liberty today."

Liberty's application asks for an order by January 31, 2027 because "prospective Large Load customers often evaluate multiple potential locations and place significant value on certainty regarding the timing of infrastructure development, resource procurement, and regulatory approvals."

What the SPP attachments mean, in plain words [verify against the SPP tariff before publishing]: Attachment AQ is the process for adding a new delivery point for load that can be served with existing resources; Attachment AX is the provisional process for a large load that does not yet have enough generation designated to serve it. Two completed applications means two real projects with real engineering, not inquiries. Liberty's large-load threshold is 25 MW. Liberty is in the small-utility tier of the 2025 law (fewer than 250,000 customers, so its large-load threshold is 50 MW under RSMo 393.130.7; Liberty set its own tariff line at 25 MW). A single customer that raises the whole utility's energy 50 percent is hyperscale-campus scale, not a factory. That is our inference, not Liberty's statement.

None of the three testimonies names a county, a substation, or a customer. The confidential schedules probably do. That is what discovery is for.

Why quiet works here

- Newton County has no zoning. A data center on unincorporated land needs building permits at most. Commissioner Knight said the county "hate[s] to go to county zoning" and a vote is at best spring 2027.
- Neosho's moratorium stops at the city limits. The call the city got asked about the industrial park; a developer told no in town simply moves to the county.
- Water and sewer are now Missouri American Water's, a PSC-regulated company. Capacity letters and special contracts do not go through a council vote.
- Chapter 100 bonds and abatements run through the Newton County Industrial Development Authority, which few people watch. Grow Neosho (NABIFI) markets Chapter 100 at "\$5 million plus 100 jobs." Neosho is an Enhanced Enterprise Zone (designated 2006).
- Liberty's customers are under a protective order at the PSC, and Liberty says it will not name them until "we were at a point in alignment with that customer to say something public."
- The power line is regulated in public in all three states. It is the one piece that cannot hide.

Records requests that force it open (Missouri Sunshine Law, RSMo 610)

Send in writing, cite RSMo 610.023, ask for electronic copies, and ask for the specific 610.021 subsection for anything withheld. Date range October 1, 2025 to present unless noted. A closed real estate record becomes public once the deal is done or abandoned; ask whether it is.

Custodian	Ask for
Newton County Clerk (101 S. Wood St., Neosho; commission 417-451-8223)	Minutes, motions, and votes of the June 15, 2026 closed "Real Estate" session and the July 28 and August 13 closed "Legal" sessions. All correspondence, letters of intent, NDAs, and calendar entries involving any data center, large load, hyperscale, or "confidential project," or with Liberty, Grow Neosho, Joplin Regional Partnership, Missouri Partnership, DED, site selectors, or the County IDA. Attendee list and reimbursements for the June 17 Jefferson City meeting. Materials from the August 11 Liberty Stakeholder Update and the September 15 Liberty meeting. Outside counsel engagement letters on data center regulation. The July 9, 2026 Norway Road annexation file.
Newton County Industrial	All minutes, inducement resolutions, applications, and Chapter 100 or bond

Custodian	Ask for
Development Authority (ask the clerk who holds records)	inquiries since January 1, 2025.
City of Neosho (City Clerk; City Manager David Kennedy)	The July 7, 2026 moratorium ordinance and bill number, staff report, and Planning and Zoning draft regulations. All emails, call logs, and notes about the data center inquiry and the industrial park property (January 1 to July 7, 2026). Any NDA. Any 2026 closed-session minutes under 610.021(2). Any will-serve or capacity letter for a site over 50 acres.
Missouri Department of Economic Development	All Missouri One Start, Missouri Works, Chapter 100 review, or RSMo 144.810 data center exemption records referencing Newton County, Neosho, Seneca, Granby, or Diamond since 2025; any site visit records for Newton County; the current data center annual report.
Missouri DNR	Major Water User registrations filed for Newton County since January 1, 2025; any construction permit applications for industrial water, wastewater, or land disturbance over one acre in Newton County; all 401 certification correspondence on SWL-2019-00034.
Missouri PSC (Sunshine applies to the Commission and Staff)	Non-confidential data request responses in ET-2026-0184 and WA-2026-0072. Then intervene, or ask the Office of the Public Counsel (1-866-922-2959) to serve data requests for the identity, megawatts, county, and substation of the two queued customers and the "hundreds of megawatts" pipeline.
Corps of Engineers, Little Rock District (FOIA)	The full SWL-2019-00034 application, purpose and need, and demand projections for the Baynham Branch Reservoir.
Harry S Truman Coordinating Council (Region M council of governments, a public body)	Any data center prospect briefings in 2026.

What a volunteer checks every week

- Newton County Recorder index (ncrecorder.org/search): new deeds, options, memoranda of option, and easements to Empire District Electric or Liberty; LLC grantees; townships around Seneca, the Neosho industrial park, Granby and Baynham Branch, Diamond, and the I-49 and US-60 interchanges.
- Newton County Assessor and Collector parcel searches for ownership changes and parcel consolidations.
- Missouri Secretary of State business search for new LLCs with Joplin or Neosho registered agents or national registered-agent addresses.
- newtoncountymo.com/notices for weekly schedules and closed-session postings (the June 15 session appeared only there). neoshomo.gov/agendacenter for council and Planning and Zoning packets.
- PSC EFIS: ET-2026-0184, ER-2026-0260, WA-2026-0072, and any new Liberty EA case.
- DNR Major Water User system and issued permits page; Corps Little Rock public notices.
- Joplin Globe (John Hacker, Debby Woodin), KSN/KODE (Dustin Lattimer), KOAM, KZRG, Cassville Democrat (Sheila Harris), missouridatacenters.org.

Regional context

- Joplin, Jasper County: about 600 acres at Wildwood Ranch annexed and rezoned February 17, 2026 for developer Jimmer Pinjuv; a lawsuit was filed in March; Pinjuv reportedly said "Liberty has no excess power." Joplin adopted data center regulations (closed-loop cooling, \$1,000 annual license) around September 2026.
- Sarcoxie, Jasper County: Geronimo Power hyperscale park with about 2,000 acres of solar. The county commission opposed Chapter 100 in March 2026 and is reportedly reconsidering at Geronimo's request (KOAM, September 3, 2026). Opposition group: Southwest Missouri Citizens Against Data Centers.
- Statewide: no data center legislation passed in the 2026 session; a statewide moratorium rally hit the Capitol September 16, 2026; Cedar County paused solar, wind, and data centers for one year on September 15, 2026.
- Kansas: Sedgwick County has paused data center applications since January 2026, now extended to December 24, 2026. Evergy reports a 2 to 3 gigawatt large-load pipeline.

4. What the project actually is, all three states

The SPP order

SPP's 2024 ITP Assessment Report (January 24, 2025) describes a 345-kV overlay "from Buffalo Flats to Delaware to Monett to North Branson to enhance robustness and resiliency of the transmission system in the southern Missouri area near Branson to address recent extreme winter weather events." The SPP Board approved the 2024 ITP portfolio October 29, 2024; NTC-C 220886 records Board approval of the two long new lines on February 4, 2025. Facilities at 345 kV are allocated 100 percent region-wide on load share, which is why Liberty says its customers pay about 3 percent and Evergy says Kansas Central ratepayers pay about \$5.5 million of \$493 million.

Segment	Owner	Miles	Cost	Status
Buffalo Flats (KS) to Delaware (OK)	Evergy Kansas Central (Kansas miles) and AEP (Oklahoma miles, NEOTEP West)	154.6 (SPP); 133 in Kansas (Evergy); about 34 in Oklahoma (AEP)	\$484.1 million (ITP); \$493 million (Evergy); Evergy share \$363.1 million, AEP share \$113.3 million (NTCs)	NTC 220937 (AEP) and NTC 220938 (Evergy), September 22, 2025. KCC approved Kansas segment west of US-77 only, May 12, 2026; new hearing November 19, 2026. OCC PUD 2026-000047 for the Oklahoma miles
Delaware (OK) to Monett (MO)	AEP (68 Oklahoma miles, NEOTEP East) and Empire (Missouri miles)	114.5 (SPP)	\$342.6 million (ITP)	NTC-C 220886 to AEP, March 21, 2025. OCC PUD 2026-000068. No unconditional NTC for this segment found
Monett to North Branson	Empire (Liberty)	47.2 (SPP) / 50.4 (NTC)	\$213.7 million line plus \$28.3 million Monett substation; total \$252,564,853	NTC 220948 to Empire, November 7, 2025
161-kV rebuilds and 69-to-161 conversions	Empire (Liberty)	About 79 (Liberty)	About \$135 million combined	NTC 220903 to Empire, June 24, 2025

Missouri: Liberty (Empire District Electric)

- About 90 miles of new 345-kV line from the Oklahoma line near Seneca to Monett, then to a new North Branson substation. About 20 to 25 miles of new right-of-way, essentially all in Newton County. East of Newton County Liberty says it will use existing 161-kV easements.
- Easement width 150 feet. Structures: Liberty said 80 to 120 feet in March 2026; opposition says 125; one Globe story said 130.

- Cost: \$500 million to \$600 million for the 345-kV work (March 2026), \$750 million reported August 2026. Liberty customers about 3 percent. The 161-kV work \$250 million to \$300 million.
- Timeline: 161-kV Ozark to Branson construction early 2027. SPP in-service date November 12, 2029. Liberty told landowners 2030 and told the county the timeline moved to October 2028 for the project start.
- Route: single proposed route since August 13, 2026. Newton, Lawrence, Barry, Stone. McDonald and Jasper not crossed (our GIS reading of Liberty's public layer).
- Open houses: Neosho March 12; Aurora June 9; Pierce City June 10; Reeds Spring June 11; Neosho September 15, 2026. Contact transmission.projects@libertyutilities.com. Map built by Burns and McDonnell, project 178566.

Company chain for the easement argument: Ozark Power and Water Company (1913) to Empire District Electric Company (1927) to Liberty (Algonquin, 2017).

Oklahoma: AEP Oklahoma Transmission Company (NEOTEP)

- Northeast Oklahoma Transmission Enhancement Project. East: 68 miles, Delaware Substation (Nowata County) east across northern Nowata and Craig, then southern Ottawa County south of Miami, ending at the Missouri line southwest of Seneca. West: about 34 miles from Delaware north past Copan to the Kansas line.
- Structures 100 to 135 feet, right-of-way 150 feet, spans 850 to 1,300 feet. Counties: Washington, Nowata, Craig, Ottawa. North of Oologah Lake and Grand Lake.
- Schedule: OCC decision early 2027; right-of-way talks early 2027 to spring 2028; construction summer 2028 to late 2029.
- Open houses September 9 (Bartlesville), 15 (Nowata), 16 (Vinita), 17 (Miami). Contact Erika Rivera, 833-214-4653, psa_outreach@aeptransmission.com.

5. Kansas

The project

- Evergy Kansas Central, "Buffalo Flats to Delaware" 345-kV line. About 133 miles from the Buffalo Flats Substation (W. 13th St. N. and N. 279th St. W., near Garden Plain, Sedgwick County) through Sumner, Cowley, and Chautauqua counties to the Oklahoma line north of Delaware, Oklahoma. AEP builds the Oklahoma miles.
- Structures: steel monopoles or H-frames, 100 to 140 feet, spans 700 to 1,200 feet; testimony cited "at least 205" towers. Right-of-way width: not published.
- Cost \$493 million. Kansas allocation 16 percent; Evergy Kansas Central 9.36 percent; about \$5.5 million to Kansas Central ratepayers, about \$3.37 a year for a residential customer in 2029. SPP claims about \$2 million a year in fuel and congestion savings.
- Schedule (Evergy page): western permit approved May 12, 2026; KCC decision on the updated eastern route by March 4, 2027; construction Sedgwick fall 2027, Sumner and Cowley spring 2028, Chautauqua summer 2028; complete December 2029.
- Project page: evergy.com/partner-with-us/transmission-projects/buffalo-flats. Map: experience.arcgis.com/experience/45c71df9dd6c43c6832937574ff6b802. Contact 316-261-6700, buffaloflats@evergy.com.

The law

- K.S.A. 66-1,178(a): no utility may begin construction "or exercise the right of eminent domain" on a line of 230 kV or more and five miles or more "without first acquiring a siting permit from the commission." Landowners within 660 feet of centerline get certified-mail notice with a copy of the application. Kansas is the only one of the three states where the siting permit is a true precondition to condemnation on the utility side of the line (Oklahoma's rule is new and Missouri has none for in-territory lines).
- K.S.A. 66-1,180: the KCC decides "the necessity for and the reasonableness of the location," considering benefit to consumers in and outside Kansas and economic development, and "may condition such permit" to "best protect the rights of all interested parties." The 2025 HB 2040 set a 180-day decision clock.
- Eminent domain: K.S.A. 17-618 and 26-501 et seq. Three court-appointed appraisers; appeal within 30 days to a jury trial de novo on compensation only (26-508); before-and-after valuation with severance, view, trees, fences, and crops as factors (26-513); attorney fees only if the utility appeals and loses, or abandons (26-509).

The docket: 26-EKCE-148-STG

Date	Event
November 14, 2025	Application filed.
January 7 and 8, 2026	Public hearings, Sedan High School and Southwestern College, Winfield (123 attended). Comments through January 23.
February 5, 2026	Twelve landowner intervenors admitted, including Freeman Land and Cattle, Spring Hill Farm LLC, R5 Land and Cattle LLC, and Bull Oil Company LLC. No county, Farm Bureau, or

Date	Event
	conservation group found as intervenor. Attorney James Zakoura represented several landowners.
March 11 to 12, 2026	Evidentiary hearing, Topeka.
May 12, 2026	Unanimous order. Route from Buffalo Flats to US-77 in Cowley County approved. Portion east of US-77 to the state line denied for "insufficient evidence to determine whether the route is reasonable." Every ordered to do a new routing study "with strong consideration given to a route that follows or parallels the U.S. 166 Right of Way to the maximum extent feasible," to amend its landowner protocols, and to communicate with oil and gas operators. Order language: the Commission "takes seriously any activity that has the potential to permanently and adversely affect the Flint Hills or other unique ecological regions of the state."
Summer 2026	Every releases new eastern alternatives; landowners say several still "carve new utility corridors through intact prairie north of Highway 166" (Hunter Ferguson, Cedar Vale).
August 31, 2026	Landowner meeting, Cedar Vale (Samantha Ferensik; Ben Bullard of Protect Rural Oklahoma).
November 19, 2026	New KCC public hearing, location to be announced. Zoom testimony requires registration by noon the day before.
December 2, 2026, 5 p.m.	Written comment deadline.
By March 4, 2027	KCC decision on the eastern route.

What won in Kansas

- A record: three days of evidentiary hearing, expert testimony on tallgrass prairie ("After these prairies are disturbed, you can't graze them for three years," Vance Freeman), ancient trees, oil and gas operations, and landowner protocol failures.
- A specific alternative: parallel US-166. Regulators can order a study of a named corridor; they cannot act on "somewhere else."
- Ecology framed as a state asset, not a personal grievance: "The remaining four percent of the Tallgrass prairie, two-thirds of which is in Kansas, is a national treasure."
- Pre-existing rights: Commissioner Dwight Keen singled out "protection of the property rights of landowners and others who have pre-existing rights to access and use the land."

Kansas hooks

- Etzanoa, the ancestral Wichita city at Arkansas City: opponents say "several proposed routes cross areas associated with Etzanoa." Any Corps nexus triggers Section 106 consultation with the Wichita and Affiliated Tribes, Osage Nation, and Kaw Nation (Cowley, Chautauqua, and Montgomery were Osage Diminished Reserve until 1870).
- Mussel critical habitat: Verdigris River (Montgomery and Wilson counties) and Fall River carry Neosho mucket habitat; the Neosho River carries rabbitsfoot. Relevant if the US-166 route drifts toward Coffeyville.
- Lesser prairie-chicken protections were removed in February 2026 and its range is western Kansas; do not lean on it.

- Sedgwick County data center moratorium runs to December 24, 2026; Kansas SB 98 (2025) gives data centers a 20-year sales tax exemption at \$250 million investment.

How to act in Kansas

- Comments: kcc-connect.kcc.ks.gov/s/public-comments citing docket 26-EKCE-148-STG; public.affairs@kcc.ks.gov; 1-800-662-0027; by mail to KCC Office of Public Affairs and Consumer Protection, 1500 SW Arrowhead Rd., Topeka, KS 66604. Deadline December 2, 2026.
- Intervene: written petition under K.A.R. 82-1-225 showing legal interests "may be substantially affected," filed through KCC-Connect at least three days before hearing. Docket room 785-271-3266. Citizens' Utility Ratepayer Board (curb.kansas.gov) represents residential ratepayers.
- Counties: Cowley commissioners voiced opposition in 2025; Chautauqua, Sumner, and Sedgwick have not acted formally. Ask each for a resolution supporting the US-166 corridor and existing rights-of-way.

6. Permits: what they have and what they do not

Missouri

Approval	Status	What it means
SPP Notification to Construct	Issued (NTC 220903, June 24, 2025; NTC 220948, November 7, 2025)	The regional need finding exists. Fight route, cost, procedure, and water, not need.
PSC line CCN (RSMo 393.170.1, 20 CSR 4240-20.045)	No case filed as of September 17, 2026	Likely not required inside Empire's certificated territory (Empire v. Cox). Required for any segment outside it. Overlay the route on the PSC utility locator for New-Mac Electric, Ozark Electric, Barry Electric, White River Valley Electric, and Monett municipal territory. If any mile is outside, file an RSMo 386.390 complaint.
PSC large-load tariff (ET-2026-0184)	Filed September 11, 2026; tariff suspended to February 8, 2027; intervention deadline in the September 14 order	The one live Liberty docket. Intervene or push OPC to serve data requests on the two queued customers.
County road assent (RSMo 229.100)	Not found for Newton, Lawrence, Barry, Stone	Required before poles cross a county road. Not a veto after Grain Belt v. Chariton County (2024), but that case relied on a PSC route determination that does not exist here. Counties can set crossing standards, bonding, timing, and repair conditions now.
Corps Section 404 (Nationwide Permit 57)	Not found	PCN mandatory for Shoal Creek, Spring River, Elk River, Indian Creek, North Fork Spring River (Missouri Regional Condition 5) and wherever listed species or historic properties may be affected. Little Rock District, Branson office, 417-213-4796.
MoDNR 401 certification	Not found	Individual 401 with public notice on 303(d) impaired reaches; Shoal Creek and Spring River carry mining-metals impairments.
USFWS ESA consultation	Not found	Missouri determination key v2.0 (February 2026) excludes actions affecting caves, sinkholes, or their hydrology. Newton County is karst. Hearrell Spring at the Neosho National Fish Hatchery holds Ozark cavefish.
Eminent domain filings	None found	Expected 2027 or later. Missouri has no permit precondition for an in-territory utility line.
Baynham Branch Reservoir (Missouri American Water)	Corps public notice April 3, 2025 (SWL-2019-00034); no DNR 401 request received as of the DNR page	A separate federal permit process with its own comment rights, in the same township as the new right-of-way.

Oklahoma

Approval	Status	What it means
OCC Certificate of Authority, NEOTEP West (PUD 2026-000047)	Filed June 19, 2026. Comment closes November 9. Hearing November 13. Deemed granted about January 5, 2027 without an order	Noticed landowners become parties by entry of appearance (OAC 165:5-9-4(d)(2)). Others move to intervene. Protect Rural Oklahoma reported a July 31 protest deadline; confirm against the procedural order.
OCC Certificate of Authority, NEOTEP East (PUD 2026-000068)	Filed August 21, 2026. Hearing TBD. Deemed granted about March 9, 2027 without an order	Same procedure. Statutory county public meeting within 90 days of newspaper notice. This case covers the Seneca handshake.
Eminent domain	Barred until the certificate issues (27 O.S. 7(C), effective November 1, 2025)	Until early 2027 nothing can be taken in Oklahoma. Survey access was upheld in Transource v. Holloway (2024).
BIA right-of-way (25 CFR 169)	Unknown	Tribal consent for tribal land, majority-owner consent for allotments, BIA approval with NEPA and Section 106. Cannot be condemned around. BIA Miami Agency 918-715-4295.
Corps 404 and Section 10	Not found	Neosho (Grand) River crossing is a Section 10 water in Tulsa District; PCN mandatory. EPA Region 6 conditions NWP 57 in Indian country with a 30-day advance erosion plan.
GRDA / FERC Pensacola boundary	Unknown	GRDA is on annual licenses; FERC ordered the boundary redrawn near Miami. A structure inside the boundary requires FERC approval.

Kansas

Approval	Status	What it means
KCC siting permit (K.S.A. 66-1,178), western segment to US-77	Granted May 12, 2026	Eminent domain is now legally available west of US-77 in Sedgwick, Sumner, and western Cowley; easement talks were scheduled to begin January 2027.
KCC siting permit, eastern segment US-77 to the state line	Denied May 12, 2026; re-study underway; hearing November 19; comments to December 2; decision by March 4, 2027	No condemnation east of US-77 until a new permit issues. The record built now decides the route.
Corps 404 (Tulsa District, Kansas regional conditions)	Not found	Arkansas, Walnut, Caney, and possibly Verdigris crossings; mussel habitat only in the Verdigris and Fall rivers.
Section 106	Not found	Etzanoa area near Arkansas City; Osage, Kaw, and Wichita consultation with any federal nexus.

7. Federal, state, and tribal land

Nothing on current maps crosses federal fee land in any state. The federal permits that stop lines (refuge compatibility, Park Service right-of-way, Forest Service special use) attach only to federal land. What is near the corridor:

Place	Distance (our reading)	Hook
George Washington Carver National Monument (NPS, Diamond)	About 3.7 miles	Section 106 visual effects if a Corps PCN is nearby.
Neosho National Fish Hatchery and Ozark Cavefish NWR (USFWS, inside Neosho)	Route about 2.5 miles north of downtown	Karst and spring recharge force individual ESA consultation; any crossing needs a refuge permit and compatibility determination.
Shoal Creek, Spring River, North Fork Spring River	Crossed or adjacent	Neosho mucket critical habitat; mandatory PCN; in-stream work windows.
Baynham Branch and Shoal Creek southwest of Granby	In the corridor	Proposed 828-acre reservoir with its own Corps and DNR process.
Elk River and Indian Creek (McDonald County)	About 13 to 19 miles	Not crossed by the current layer.
Table Rock Lake Corps land	About 5 miles from North Branson	Section 408 only if the corridor touches project land.
Roaring River, Big Sugar Creek, Mark Twain NF, Pea Ridge, Wilson's Creek	14 to 35 miles	Not in play.
MDC areas: Fort Crowder (2,323 acres), Diamond Grove Prairie (861), Capps Creek, Talbot, Pilot Knob, Wire Road	Fort Crowder and Diamond Grove Prairie are nearest the Newton County alignment	Conservation Commission land is not condemned in practice; federal-aid land adds a federal approval.
Cherokee Nation Reservation (Nowata, Craig, most of Washington)	Route inside it	Tribal codes, EPA Indian-country 401 conditions, Cherokee THPO consultation.
Quapaw, Peoria, Miami, Ottawa, Wyandotte reservations; Eastern Shawnee, Seneca-Cayuga, Modoc lands (Ottawa County)	Route through the cluster south of Miami	Densest historical allotment area on the corridor. Any trust tract on the centerline is a BIA action and cannot be condemned.
Tar Creek Superfund site (north of Miami)	Route passes south of Miami; overlap not verified	EPA, ODEQ, and Quapaw coordination under CERCLA.
Ozark Plateau NWR (closed cave tracts, Ottawa and Delaware counties)	Locations not published	Ask the refuge manager. A refuge crossing is the strongest federal-land hook that exists.
Flint Hills tallgrass prairie and Cross Timbers (Cowley,	The rejected Kansas segment crossed 35 miles	Already moved the KCC once.

Place	Distance (our reading)	Hook
Chautauqua)	of it	
Etzanoa (Arkansas City)	Several Kansas alternatives cross associated areas	Section 106 with Wichita and Affiliated Tribes, Osage, Kaw.

8. Who is already fighting it

Missouri

- **Protect Rural Missouri** (protectruralmissouri.org, info@protectruralmissouri.org). Steve Roark, Circle R Ranch, Neosho. About 6,000 flyers in April 2026; May 7 and July 9 town halls at the Lampo Center with speakers from Kansas and Oklahoma. Advice given: do not allow surveyors, do not sign, do not talk to Liberty without a lawyer. Its site argues the line makes the region "the target for every additional industrial project looking for a place to plug in."
- Named landowners: Steve Roark; Cody Gostwick. Liberty's response: eminent domain is "a tool of last resort"; more existing easements will be used east of Newton County (the one concession so far).
- Not found: any lawsuit, PSC filing, county resolution, or legislator on record. Newton County is debating zoning; the incoming presiding commissioner (Bridges, January 2027) has not stated a position on the line.

Oklahoma

- **Protect Rural Oklahoma** (protectruralok.com, 918-244-5870). Natalie Bullard and Ben Bullard. Meetings in Welch (September 4) and Cedar Vale, Kansas (August 31). "Unified refusal is our single most powerful tool." Lists Senators Michael Bergstrom and Julie Daniels and Representatives Rusty Cornwell, Steve Bashore, Judd Strom, and John Kane. Whether it has filed in the OCC cases is unconfirmed.
- Landowners on camera: Jason Bryan, Kelli and Russell Fent, Shelby Bergman (Wyandotte Farm School), Greg Bryan. Common ask: "use a right-of-way that's already utilized." Not found: any tribal government statement, legislator statement, or Tulsa World coverage.

Kansas

- Twelve landowner intervenors on the docket; attorney James Zakoura. Vance Freeman (9,000 acres, Cedar Vale), Samantha Ferensik, Hunter Ferguson (Derby Informer op-ed, August 12, 2026: "KCC must put Kansans before corporations"). Stand 4 the Land Kansas (stand4thelandkansas.com) is the statewide property-rights group; Virginia Crossland-Macha spoke in Neosho in May, though the group's site does not mention Buffalo Flats. Cowley County commissioners voiced opposition in 2025.

Legislation to watch

- Oklahoma SB 1929 (2026): \$2 per linear foot annual payment to landowners; passed committee February 26; final disposition not found. SB 1854 died.
- Missouri: nothing enacted in 2026; SB 4 (2025) created the large-load tariff duty and IRP rulemaking (EW-2026-0091). Representative Brad Christ asked the PSC on September 14 to verify whether data centers drive Ameren's rate case.
- Kansas: HB 2728 (2026, uniform KCC siting standards limiting local control) died in committee; SB 262 and HB 2187 (good-faith offer, narrow public use) never got hearings. Kansas has twice rejected utility right-of-first-refusal bills; House leaders wrote FERC opposing the utilities' bid to end competitive bidding.

9. Best ways to fight it, ranked

Ranked by what has actually moved a route or a schedule in comparable fights, weighted for what is open now.

Tier 1: the three state siting cases

- **Kansas (hearing November 19, comments December 2).** Build on the May 12 win. Name the US-166 corridor and existing rights-of-way as the alternative. Get Cowley and Chautauqua county resolutions. Put Etzanoa and Section 106 in the record. File comments by December 2 and intervene if you are within 660 feet.
- **Oklahoma (comment November 9, hearing November 13; East TBD).** Every noticed landowner enters an appearance. Ask the Attorney General's Utility Regulation Unit (405-521-3921) to demand SPP's need study, alternatives, refined costs, and the tribal consent status. Argue public interest, cost, existing corridors, and 17 O.S. 851 compliance. Pull the three completed Certificate of Authority orders to see what conditions the OCC has imposed.
- **Missouri (no case, so make one).** Overlay the route on Empire's certificated territory; demand a CCN for any out-of-territory mile; file an RSMo 386.390 complaint if refused. Intervene in ET-2026-0184 and serve data requests on the two queued customers. Request a local public hearing the moment any Liberty docket opens.

Tier 2: force the load into the open

- File the Sunshine requests in section 3 this month. Publish every request, every response, and every denial with its 610.021 subsection on the site. Silence is a story too.
- Ask the Office of the Public Counsel to serve data requests in ET-2026-0184 for the county, substation, megawatts, and in-service date of the two queued customers. OPC represents ratepayers and does not need standing.
- Comment in the Corps process for Baynham Branch Reservoir (SWL-2019-00034) and ask for the demand projections under FOIA. A 20 MGD reservoir has a customer list.
- Ask Newton County commissioners, on the record, whether the June 15 real estate session concerned land for a data center or a substation, and whether the county has signed an NDA. The question is public even if the answer is closed.

Tier 3: county commissions

- Missouri: adopt written RSMo 229.100 crossing standards now; pass a resolution asking Liberty to file a CCN; consider the six-month county moratorium Cheryle Perkins proposed while zoning goes to a vote.
- Oklahoma: the statutory county meeting under 17 O.S. 851 is the county's chance to file its own comments. Kansas: county resolutions supporting the US-166 corridor.

Tier 4: the easement fight (Missouri)

- Pull every Ozark Power and Water and Empire easement on the Monett to Branson corridor. Read for single "line" versus "lines," stated width, voltage or structure language, tree-cutting rights, assignment, and the chain of title.

- Pre-2006 easements are governed by common law: the holder may not materially increase the burden, and gaps go to the landowner (Barfield v. Sho-Me Power, 8th Cir. 2017; Carroll Electric v. Lambert, Mo. App. 2012). RSMo 523.283 (expanded use) and 523.282 (blanket easements void) cover paper signed after August 28, 2006, meaning any new form Liberty asks people to sign now. Refuse "amendments."

Tier 5: water, species, and tribal review

- Write the Corps Little Rock and Tulsa districts before any PCN is filed, identifying critical habitat reaches and karst features, and ask for individual permits at those crossings. Ask MoDNR for individual 401 on impaired reaches. Both create comment periods.
- Notify the Osage, Quapaw, Cherokee, Peoria, Shawnee, Delaware, Wichita, and Kaw historic preservation offices and ask them to request consulting-party status for every federal action in all three states.
- Map restricted allotments in Ottawa County through the BIA Miami Agency and tribal realty offices; ask each tribe whether OK Transco has requested consent.

Tier 6: compensation

- Missouri: 125 percent for a homestead taking, heritage value for 50-year family land, 150 percent for farmland when a CCN applies; 30 days after the RSMo 523.250 notice to propose an alternative location (523.265); dismissal with fees if the process skips a step (523.256).
- Oklahoma: three commissioners; 30 days to except, 60 to demand a jury; fees shift if the verdict beats the award by 10 percent; right-to-take challenges must be raised in the 30-day exceptions.
- Kansas: three appraisers; 30 days to appeal to a jury; compensation only; fees only if the utility appeals and loses or abandons.

Tier 7: politics and SPP

- Grain Belt lost its \$4.9 billion DOE loan guarantee in July 2025 on a "who benefits" story. Here that story is: regional ratepayers fund the line, a private campus captures the capacity, the county gets no vote, and the landowners get a 150-foot strip.
- SPP's Regional State Committee can seek Board re-evaluation of an NTC-C project whose refined estimate exceeds the plus or minus 30 percent band. Liberty's number went from \$500 million to \$600 million to a reported \$750 million. Ask Missouri and Oklahoma commissioners to demand the refined estimates.

What does not work

- Denying need. County vetoes after a state permit. Health claims without a source. A named data center nobody can document.

10. The next 30 days

When	What	Who
This week	Fix the bare domain. Publish the three-state clock page. Add the Kansas page.	Site
This week	File Sunshine requests to Newton County, the IDA, and the City of Neosho (section 3). Publish them.	A named Missouri resident; the site hosts the templates
This week	Pull the OCC procedural orders for PUD 2026-000047 and 2026-000068; publish the East protest deadline when it posts.	Protect Rural Oklahoma; site
By the deadline in the September 14 order (PSC default is 30 days)	Intervene in ET-2026-0184 or get OPC to serve data requests on the two queued customers.	Missouri landowner group with counsel
October	Overlay the Missouri route on Empire's certificated territory; draft the RSMo 386.390 complaint if any mile is outside.	Counsel
October	Newton, Lawrence, Barry, Stone commissions: 229.100 crossing standards and a CCN resolution. Ask about the June 15 session on the record.	Landowners by county
October	Record-pull Ozark Power and Water and Empire easements on the Monett to Branson corridor.	Volunteers plus a title company
October	Letters to Corps Little Rock and Tulsa, MoDNR, USFWS, and eight tribal historic preservation offices. FOIA to the Corps on SWL-2019-00034.	Site provides templates
October	BIA Miami Agency and tribal realty offices: has OK Transco applied for any right-of-way over trust land?	Protect Rural Oklahoma
By November 9	OCC comments on NEOTEP West. Pack the November 13 hearing.	Everyone
November 19	KCC public hearing on the Kansas re-route. Send Missouri and Oklahoma people to testify that the corridor is one project.	Coalition
By December 2	KCC written comments citing 26-EKCE-148-STG.	Everyone

11. Audit of landbeforelines.com

What is working

- The voice. "An easement is not a handshake" and "Sitting quiet counts as yes" are the best lines in this fight on any side of any state line.
- The five-question letter as the core action. The house rules against invented numbers and cancer claims. The complete share kit. Missouri and Oklahoma treated as one fight.

What is broken or stale

- **The bare domain fails.** <https://landbeforelines.com> returns a certificate mismatch; only www loads. Every yard sign and handbill prints the bare domain. Fix first.
- **rights.html is a 404.** The easement argument has no page.
- **Kansas is missing.** The site says "Missouri and Oklahoma are the same fight." It is three states, one SPP order, and Kansas is the state that already won a round and has the next hearing.
- **The data center is handled as a rumor to avoid.** The stakes page says the fight "does not need a mystery Neosho data center to be real." True, and now incomplete. The city manager's admission, the closed county session, Liberty's sworn testimony about two queued customers, and the water deal are documented. A "Follow the load" page with a facts ledger and published records requests is honest, defensible, and more impactful than silence. The rule changes from "do not mention it" to "documents only, and show your requests."
- **The route is picked.** The Missouri page still says routes are in play. Liberty's map has shown one since August 13.
- **Only one OCC case is listed.** PUD 2026-000047 and its November 9 and 13 dates are missing, as is the 200-day rule and the fact that the OCC has no routing authority.
- **The Missouri PSC instruction is incomplete.** There may never be a case. Say why, what to demand, and name ET-2026-0184.
- **Construction dates are blurred.** "Construction talk starts in 2027" is the 161-kV date. The 345-kV line is 2028 to 2030.
- **Sources page lacks the primary documents.** No SPP report, NTC letters, OCC or KCC pages, statutes, testimony, or critical habitat rule.
- **No way to reach people back.** No form, list, analytics, or mailto. Three deadlines in the next 11 weeks cannot be pushed to anyone.
- **Water is absent.** The stakes page says "water is the inheritance" and does not mention an 828-acre reservoir proposed in the same township.

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Kansas Reflector, KCC stops Flint Hills routing (May 12, 2026) <https://kansasreflector.com/2026/05/12/kansas-utility-regulators-stop-transmission-line-path-through-endangered-grasslands/>

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Cowley Post, KCC rejects eastern portion (May 12, 2026) <https://www.cowleypost.com/local/kcc-rejects-eastern-portion-of-evergys-proposed-transmission-line-route/>

KAKE, Chautauqua County meeting (August 31, 2026) https://www.kake.com/home/chautauqua-county-landowners-pack-community-meeting-over-evergy-transmission-line/article_f60f57e0-570b-43c3-b0e2-786a429eeec.html

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Utility Dive, DOE cancels Grain Belt loan (July 2025) <https://www.utilitydive.com/news/doe-cancels-conditional-loan-commitment-grain-belt-express/753828/>

Protect Rural Missouri <https://protectruralmissouri.org/>

Protect Rural Oklahoma <https://protectruralok.com/>

Stand 4 the Land Kansas <https://stand4thelandkansas.com/>

Land Before Lines (current site) <https://www.landbeforelines.com/>

Not found or unverified

- Any named Neosho or Newton County data center developer, site, acreage, or megawatt figure; any land sale or LLC tied to one; the subject of the June 15, 2026 closed county session.

- The megawatts, county, or substation of Liberty's two queued large-load customers (confidential schedules not read); the exact ET-2026-0184 intervention deadline (EFIS refused the order PDF; the docket shows the tariff suspended to February 8, 2027).
- Any Missouri PSC CCN docket for the 345-kV line; any RSMo 229.100 county assent; any MoDOT, Corps, USFWS, or MoDNR application in any state.
- Whether the Oklahoma route touches trust or restricted allotments; whether OK Transco has applied to the BIA; the East case protest deadline and hearing date; the OCC application PDFs.
- The text of the KCC May 12, 2026 order and Evergy's June 12 schedule filing (KCC systems refused automated access); the November 19 hearing venue; Evergy's right-of-way width.
- Press coverage of the September 15, 2026 Neosho open house; the Neosho moratorium ordinance number; the final disposition of Oklahoma SB 1929.
- Whether the Monett to Branson corridor touches Table Rock Corps land or Mark Twain National Forest.