



**Walter Wright, Jr.**  
wwright@mwlaw.com  
(501) 688.8839

# Enabling Low-Cost Clean Energy/Reliable Service Through Better Transmission Benefits Analysis/Case Study of MISO's Long Range Transmission Planning: American Council on Renewable Energy/Grid Initiative Study

08/12/2022

The American Council on Renewable Energy Macro Grid Initiative published an August 9th analysis titled:

*Enabling Low-Cost Clean Energy and Reliable Service Through Better Transmission Benefits Analysis: A Case Study of MISO's Long Range Transmission Planning ("Analysis")*

The *Analysis* was authored by Rob Gramlich of Grid Strategies LLC.

The Midcontinent independent System Operator (MISO) is an independent, not-for-profit member-based organization whose activities include:

- Managing the generation/transmission of high-voltage electricity across 15 U.S. states and the Canadian province of Manitoba
- Managing the energy markets in the MISO region
- Grid planning for the future

MISO's territory includes a portion of Arkansas. Its southern regional headquarters is located in Little Rock, Arkansas.

The *Analysis* addresses issues such as:

- Identification of best practices for quantifying the benefits of large-scale transmission
- Discussion of MISO's long range transmission process
- Methodologies used to evaluate transmission benefits in what is described as a "first-of-its-kind" study
- Recommendations on areas that can be improved/replicated by other planning entities and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

MISO had approved 18 new transmission lines. This is characterized as the largest transmission expansion to facilitate low-cost clean energy in the United States history.

The referenced transmission lines were estimated to enable approximately 56 gigawatts of new renewables. The *Analysis* states that this was based on:

. . . scenario modeling of state and utility emissions reduction goals that showed carbon emissions falling by more than 60% in 2040 from 2005 levels.

The need to measure potential benefits of transmission expansion to achieve “regulatory approval and stakeholder support” is discussed. However, the *Analysis* notes that the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission does not have standards that address the types of benefits or how they may be measured. As a result, MISO is stated to have developed a set of benefits and methods that it argued would flow from the transmission expansion.

The *Analysis* components include:

- MISO Long Range Transmission Plan (“LRTP”) Benefits and their Quantification
- Comparison to Best Practice Benefits Assessments
- General Assessment of LRTP Benefits Assessment
- Benefits Incidence Analysis
- Implications

A copy of the *Analysis* can be downloaded [here](#).