

Over Hill, Over Dale, IMPLO® Hits the Project TrAIL™



December's newsletter is dedicated to those who risk their lives building our nation's electrical infrastructures.



When West Virginia University was looking to name their football team, they needed look no further than the view from the window for inspiration. The "Mountaineers" is an apt name for a team from a state with the natural beauty of hilly topography. Although the landscape makes for picturesque views, it can be a nightmare when it comes to stringing transmission lines.

The TrAIL* project (**Trans-Allegheny Interstate Line**) had its share of challenges, but clearly the terrain through which this line travels was near the top of that list. Running south from Pennsylvania below the Pittsburg area, through the midsection of West Virginia and turning eastward, ending in Virginia, this 151 mile, 3-bundle, 500kV line required *250 miles of access roads*. The topography and resulting access road requirements had an unforeseen impact on the original project strategy.

Due to the long stretches and hilly terrain, it was conceptualized that longer reels of the 1113 Finch conductor would be utilized to reduce setups and speed the project along. However, after bringing in the first long reels, the access roads were found incapable of supporting the additional weight. Thus, shorter reel lengths were going to be necessary to reduce the load weight.

The need to revert to shorter reel lengths would appear to be a set-back for the contractor, but not so much as it turned out that IMPLO® products were specified on the project. IMPLO splices have the ability to pass through travelers and as a result can be made at the tensioner side of a pull and strung into place along with the conductor. This process saved countless additional miles of access roads that would have been required to install traditional compression splices. It also allowed for the stringing to continue with little slow down and without having to do additional work later on.

The result of using IMPLO technology improved the stringing operation time by an estimated 55%, even with the shorter reels, compared to the original goal with the longer reels. Not only did IMPLO technology speed up the stringing process, the overall impact on project time was to help bring its completion in under schedule. Further, without the need to build more access roads, the beauty of the West Virginia mountains was preserved.

IMPLO technology was a clear benefit to everyone involved in the TrAIL project. The contractor was able to beat estimates and the utility has a higher quality line, on-line sooner than anticipated. IMPLO technology once again surpasses all expectations!

*TrAIL™ is a registered trademark of Allegheny Energy. For more information on the TrAIL project, visit www.aptrailinfo.com.
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