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THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA

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IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION EL13-028
OF MONTANA-DAKOTA UTILITIES CO.
AND OTTER TAIL POWER COMPANY FOR A
PERMIT TO CONSTRUCT THE BIG STONE
SOUTH TO ELLENDALE 345 kV
TRANSMISSION LINE

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Transcript of Proceedings
June 10, 2014
Volume I, pages 1-144

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BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

GARY HANSON, CHAIRMAN
CHRIS NELSON, VICE CHAIRMAN
KRISTIE FIEGEN, COMMISSIONER

COMMISSION STAFF

John Smith
Karen Cremer
Greg Rislov
Brian Rounds
Katlyn Gustafson

APPEARANCES

Thomas Welk and Jason Sutton, Applicants
Bob Pesall, Intervener
Randall Schuring, Intervener
Bradley Morehouse, Intervener

Reported By Cheri McComsey Wittler, RPR, CRR

1 TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS, held in the
2 above-entitled matter, at the South Dakota State Capitol
3 Building, 500 East Capitol Avenue, Pierre, South Dakota,
4 on the 10th and 11th days of June, 2014.
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1 values which reduced property taxes by other taxpayers,
2 that wouldn't be accounted for in your figures?

3 A. Correct.

4 Q. Is it accurate that none of the impacted counties
5 have come forward in support of this Application?

6 MR. WELK: Objection to the form of the
7 question.

8 MR. PESALL: I'll withdraw the question.

9 Q. Have you received any communication from the county
10 commissions of Day County, Grant County, Roberts County,
11 Brown County, any of the affected counties in support of
12 this Application?

13 A. We have had communications with all three counties.
14 I can't recall, I guess, whether we've gotten any
15 particular correspondence to that effect.

16 Q. But you have received communications from townships
17 that oppose it?

18 A. Yes. There was a couple that did, yes.

19 Q. So would it be fair to say then that the only units
20 of local government that have spoken to you with an
21 opinion have opposed it?

22 A. In writing, yes.

23 Q. With respect to the line itself, do you anticipate
24 any actual interconnection with other lines between the
25 substations at Ellendale or Big Stone?

1 A. We do not.

2 Q. So if there were any generating facilities or wind
3 towers along the line, you wouldn't anticipate that they
4 would connect to this line?

5 A. Not existing facilities, no.

6 Q. Are you aware of any anticipated facilities that
7 would be connecting to this line?

8 A. Not directly, no.

9 Q. So you can't say that there's anyone out there that
10 plans to build a wind farm and connect to this
11 transmission line?

12 A. I can't say that, no.

13 Q. Directing your attention to page 12 on Exhibit 16A
14 on your direct testimony, you give some comments about
15 the selected route. Is it accurate to say that MISO did
16 not pick this route?

17 A. That's correct.

18 Q. MISO's involvement such as it is, is only to propose
19 a connection between Big Stone and Ellendale?

20 A. That's correct.

21 Q. And the first and primary criteria that the
22 Applicants looked at in selecting the particular route on
23 the Application today is cost; is that correct?

24 A. Would you repeat the question?

25 Q. The primary issue that the Applicants were looking

1 A. There's several benefits that can be realized.
2 There's several studies that have been done that identify
3 potential overload to facilities that will no longer be
4 overloaded if this project --

5 Q. Can you hear me okay. I'm just asking what a person
6 on Main Street would see as a difference.

7 MR. SUTTON: Objection. That's argumentative.

8 MR. SMITH: Sustained.

9 Q. With respect to the actual use of the line -- let me
10 turn your attention to your testimony, prefiled
11 testimony. This would be about page 19.

12 A. I need to grab that.

13 Q. Please.

14 A. Page 19?

15 Q. I think so. Let me check my own notes so I make
16 sure I'm directing you to the correct place.

17 In that testimony you indicate the general use and
18 direction for the flow of the project. Am I correct in
19 reading that to conclude that the expectation by the
20 Applicants in this case is that electricity will
21 typically be flowing from northwest around Ellendale to
22 southeast around Big Stone?

23 A. Can you point me to a specific line here? Sorry.
24 What you're asking me rings a bell from data.

25 Q. My notes actually refer to both of those so let me

1 just ask you the question. What is the anticipated flow
2 for this line? Is it from Ellendale, North Dakota to
3 Big Stone?

4 A. Based on my knowledge of the transmission system in
5 this area, the typical direction of flow on this line
6 will be from Ellendale down to Big Stone.

7 The transmission system does experience
8 bidirectional flows depending on a variety of factors,
9 whether it be load levels, transfer levels into different
10 regions, or potentially different transmission or
11 generational use. That all influences power flow.

12 Q. And ultimately, based on the studies, much of that
13 electrical flow is going to consumers in the Twin Cities
14 area; is that correct?

15 A. Not necessarily. Each substation that's
16 interconnected on this project either at Ellendale or
17 Big Stone is an opportunity for the power to flow from
18 the high voltage system to the lower voltage system or
19 from the lower voltage system back up to the high voltage
20 system.

21 I liken it to an interstate system where we have the
22 high voltage grid representing the interstate highway and
23 the lower voltage facility being more the secondary
24 streets. Every time there's a substation along the
25 transmission system it acts as an interchange similar to