

October 17, 2013

BSSE/ South Dakota Public Utilities Commission

Today's letter, comments, and questions	10/17/13	Pages 1, 2, & 3
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BSSE response letter from our 10/01 letter	10/09/13	Page 6
Second letter to BSSE, signatures & map	10/01/13	Pages 7, 8, 9, & 10
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1 <sup>st</sup> letter to BSSE, signatures & map	7/23/13	Pages 13, 14, 15, & 16

Attached you will find the correspondence we have had with BSSE, beginning with the most current. On October 15, I visited with Terry Fasten by phone, and we agreed to set up a time and place to meet regarding a revision we initiated to move the line that BSSE proposed in our particular area. On October 1, a group of us sent a letter and map (pages 7, 8, 9, & 10) with our ideas and concerns to BSSE. On October 9, we received a letter from Terry Fasten (page 6) that our idea was under consideration for revision and he accepted our invitation to see the route we proposed first hand. Basically our letter of October 1 stated that if the new revision were considered it would benefit seven occupied residences with a possible negative impact on one in Section 29 of Garland Township. Since that time, we have had discussions with that family in section 29 and they signed a statement (page 4) that they would have no problem if the power line traveled along 122<sup>nd</sup> St north of their place and were willing to let the power line be put onto their property on the north edge if need be.

Attached you will also find photo's (page 5) to serve as a visual aid in trying to assess the immensity of the proposed transmission line tower heights as well as the safety concerns when these towers are in close proximity to homes. Bob Heilman in Section 8 is 180' from the road center line and Joel Podoll in section 9 of Garland Township is 195'. Approximately 600' to the east of Joel Podoll is the Western Area Power Line. It is very likely that one of the 150' power poles we were told about at the Tacoma Park meeting would be placed out his picture window so it can clear the WAPA line. Now refer to the 108' tower in the picture (page 5) and add another 42' to that. The house in the photo is 219' from this 108' tower. How far will the BSSE towers be, if they are 150' tall, from Bob Heilman and Joel Podoll? The figures that have been put out through newsletters and meeting have been inconsistent at best. The June newsletter said that the right of way of 150' would mean that the closest home could be 75'. At



the Tacoma Park meeting 300' to homes was discussed by the presenters. So Joel Podoll, as well as Bob Heilman to the west, could have these 130' to 150' poles placed anywhere near their residences, at the discretion of BSSE once they have the easements in place. Joel Podoll's job also depends upon the internet a great deal. He has had numerous internet connection problems that Northern Electric has been trying to correct. Under the current proposal, the BSSE lines and poles will be directly between his residence and Northern Electric towers at Bath SD. Can anyone with BSSE guarantee that these 345 Kv lines will not totally obliterate his internet connections?

Another issue is noise pollution. Arnold and Darlene Dennert, the retired couple that are referred to in the October 1 letter, have a BEP 345 Kv tower out their back door, close enough to hear the crackling of the line consistently. Now the BSSE proposal is to put one closer out their front door which could more than double the noise. Is anyone concerned about how this extra noise pollution will affect them? Does anyone have a solution? Does anyone care?

In a letter to BSSE on July 23, 2013, (pages 13, 14, & 15) we proposed three other ideas for consideration that were denied in a letter from BSSE on September 9, 51 days later, (pages 11 & 12). Had we not brought up at the Tacoma park meeting that we still had no response, we feel we might never have received one. We still think these ideas have some merit because it eliminates some corners, diagonals some lines therefore shortening the distance and saves money. BEP did not have a problem crossing a river 9 times in a diagonal stretch covering 10 mile lines. It kept it away from many residences. Also enclosed with that letter was a map showing the MDU, BEP, and WAPA lines now in our area as well as the newly proposed BSSE line (page 16). These 4 lines, for the most part, would cover a stretch 7 ½ miles wide for 20 miles. Many of the same farmers, ranchers, and residences feel that they being asked to sacrifice again and again. Why should one area be discriminated against and overloaded with transmission lines? Is anyone concerned about the safety of these same individuals that will have to traverse these four lines again and again with equipment, as well as repeated exposure?

We have also studied the issue of devaluation of property and residences in connection with transmission lines. There is one extensive, unbiased study on the internet that was well researched. It also refutes some of the biased studies that are out there. Devaluation can have a significant impact, especially on homes, to the extent that recent mortgages could be higher than the value of the home after appraisals when transmission lines are in close proximity. Two new homes built recently, and one extensive remodel could possibly be devalued to this extent with your lines and poles. We have included a 21 page copy of that study.

The biggest concern we have is in the area of health and safety. If you search the internet, you will find most anything you want to see. Regulators not wanting to admit they failed to protect the health of the public, company executives denying health issues and paying for biased studies to support it, and environmentalists looking for anything to stop these lines. No matter where you stand on this issue there are two facts that are prevalent in most articles out there. One is the high incidence of childhood leukemia near power lines. Both Bob Heilman and Joel Podoll families have children at home, and they are in very close in proximity to the lines now being proposed by BSSE. Can any of you tell us what the actual safe distance in feet is so those living near these lines will not get cancer? Is there a written



guarantee with that? The second is that the more studies that are done the more facts prove that there are health issue concerns for everyone as well as animals. We are at the point today in health involving power lines that we were at 30 years ago with cigarettes as well as second hand smoke. Today we need to proceed on the side of caution for the sake of our children and grandchildren.

At this time our group is not attempting to stop this line. We are asking for a revision. We understand progress and the need for state revenue. You must also understand that agriculture is still the state's largest revenue, and you must give equal concern to those who live in the country and farm the land and ensure that the progress we make is not at their expense or detriment to their health. In the event that BSSE does not approve our request or one of the previous ideas proposed, we ask that the PUC require them to find an alternate route of their own around the seven residences we have concerns about. Cost should not be an excuse for BSSE as the option they chose was the most expensive by their own standards as listed in the bullet points from the letter we were sent on September 12, 2013. Bullet point one, shortest distance, their own maps show they selected the longest distance. The shortest distance by any standard would have been a route from Ellendale to near the Havana ND area and then diagonal through the Coteau Hills to the Big Stone area saving many corners and approximately 45 miles with savings of possibly \$80 million, over 20% of their entire budget. Their map shows a small area to the southeast that was not given consideration, but why and is the reason factual. The railroad went through that area with no problems, why? Number two, least impact on occupied homes. Their proposal has a large impact on seven of our occupied homes. Three, minimize river crossings. BEP did nine river crossings with no problem and reduced the impact on occupied homes. Four, determining the fewest corner structures required. The route selected had the most corners required. This corner issue was stressed at the Groton meeting by BSSE officials as being costly and something they would like to avoid. Why tell us that and then select it as the preferred route? Many of the facts and figures presented to us over the past year have been contradictory and we don't know why.

We have a question for BSSE. If you purchase an easement of 150' are the poles always placed at 75', in the middle of that easement? Can you place the poles off center to allow room for a parallel line in the future, under the same easement? Is that your intention? Will the poles you currently plan to install handle additional lines in the future, exceeding 345 Kv? Do you have the capability to increase this to a 690Kv line? Does your easement specify none of these things will happen?

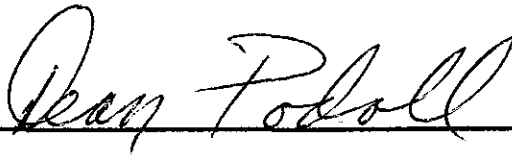
We have a question for the PUC. Is it customary for a company such as BSSE to file a Facility Permit Application with the PUC without having easements in place? Maybe the entire request should be denied until such time as easements are in place. Maybe a law should be passed to make it mandatory before filing. There is a lot of confusion among the landowners up to this point and BSSE appears to have the confidence and attitude that the PUC will give a blanket approval to their requests. Only you know the answer to that.

Thank you all for your consideration in this matter.

October 15, 2013

BSSE

As a resident on Section 29 of Garland Township I have no problem with your proposed power line adjacent to our property on 122<sup>nd</sup> St. As part owner of the remaining property, the rest of my family and I would be willing to discuss allowing your line onto the northern portion of our property if it would help the situation or if the property owner to the north of 122<sup>nd</sup> St. would be in disagreement.



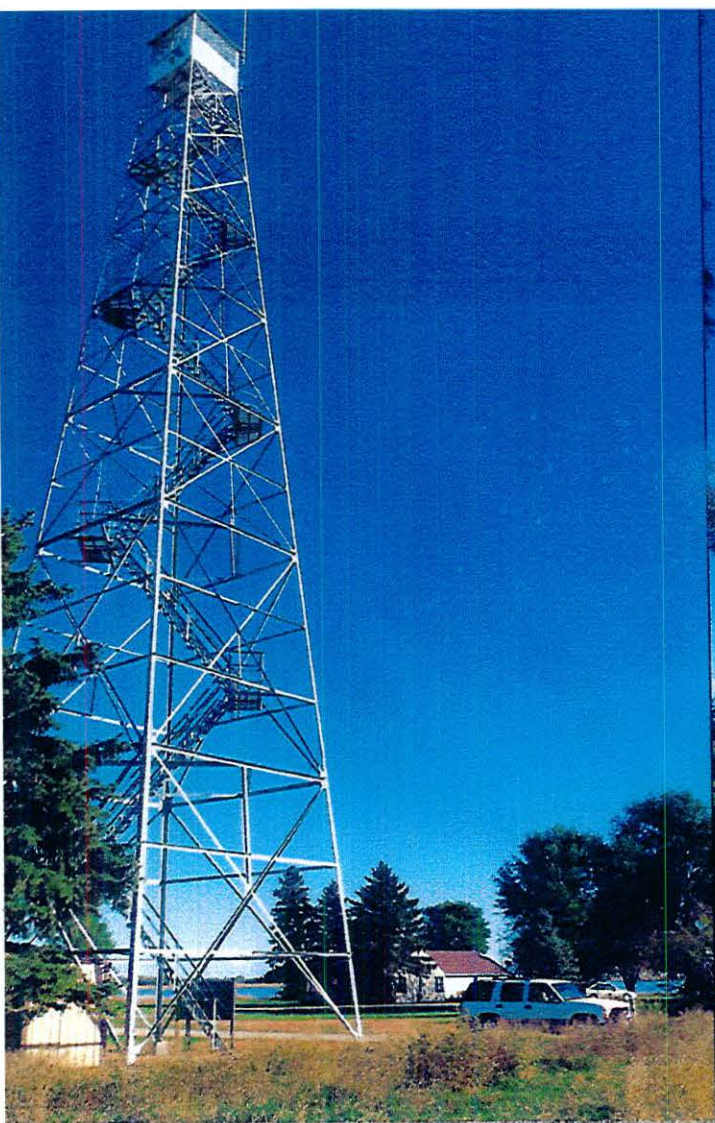
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Dean Podoll

12237 390<sup>th</sup> Ave

Aberdeen SD 57401



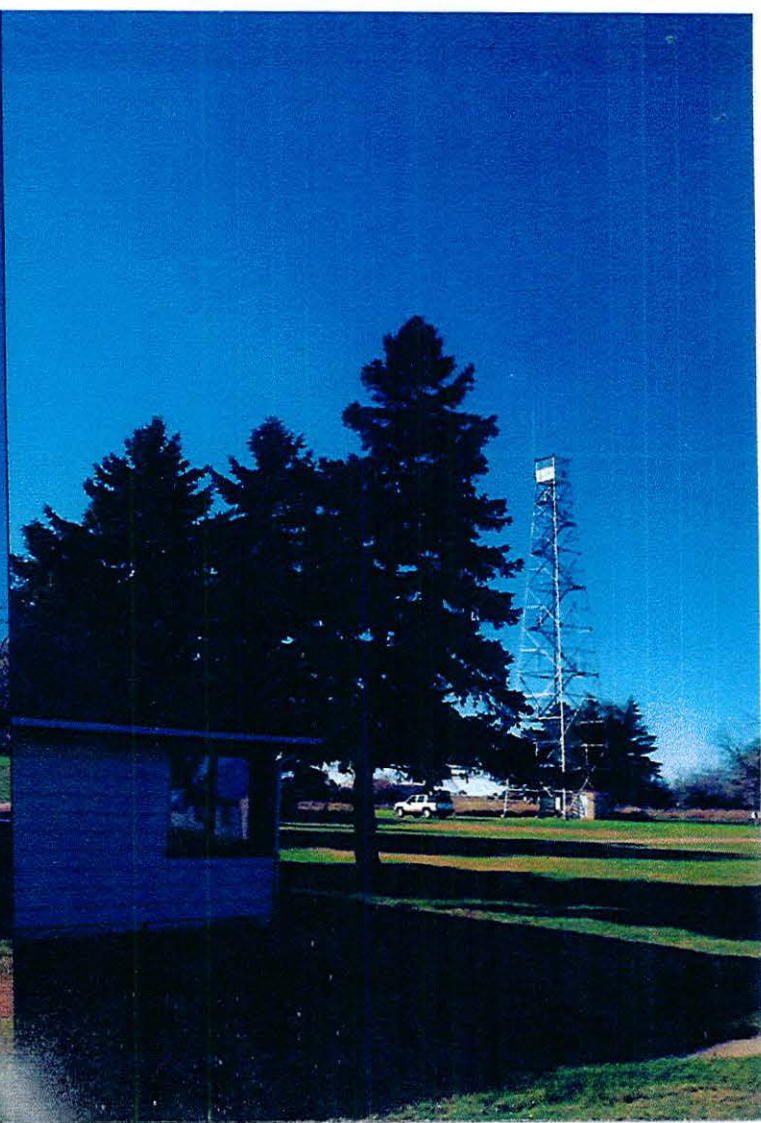


Sand Lake Tower 108' tall

Distance to residence 219'



View from residence front  
to tower



View from behind residence





Big Stone South to Ellendale

October 9, 2013

Lyle and Catherine Podoll  
11957 390<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Westport, SD 57481

**Re: Big Stone South to Ellendale 345kV Transmission Line Project letter received from Joel & Jolynn Podoll, Chris & Caitlin Podoll, Bob & Michelle Heilman, Jason & Becky Podoll, Arnold & Darlene Dennert and Lyle and Catherine Podoll.**

Dear Mr. & Mrs. Lyle and Catherine Podoll;

Thank you for your letter, received on October 3, 2013, requesting the Big Stone South to Ellendale (BSSE) project team to consider a route revision. Your request will be presented to project team members this week for initiation of research into the potential impacts along the proposed route revision.

The project team will also research property ownership along the proposed route revision to assure landowners have been personally contacted regarding the BSSE project. Each landowner will have the opportunity to respond to the proposed route revision.

We anticipate the research, additional landowner contacts and potential routing discussions will be completed within two to three weeks. However, it is possible a formal response from the project team could be slightly delayed due preparation for the upcoming South Dakota Public Utility Commission hearings.

Thank you for your invitation to meet in person and your willingness to show us the proposed route revision. We appreciate the offer and gladly accept. Please contact me at (701-271-4851) to arrange a date and time for this meeting.

Thank you for your participation in the Big Stone South to Ellendale project. If you have additional questions or comments you would like us to address, please contact us again.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Terry Fasteen'.

Terry Fasteen  
KLJ ROW Services

**Cc: Joel & Jolynn Podoll, Chris & Caitlin Podoll, Bob & Michelle Heilman, Jason & Becky Podoll, Arnold & Darlene Dennert, Lyle & Catherine Podoll and Senator Jason Frerichs, Representative Dennis Feickert, and Representative Susan Wismer**

October 1, 2013

Henry Ford, Montana Dakota Utilities

Dean Pawlowski, Otter Tail Power Company

In reference to your letter of September 12, 2013 we find that your comments lack any concern for the residences involved. Your bullet points are merely a repetition of the literature that you have sent.

On the subject of the residences we were concerned about, your data is totally incorrect. The residence along the western edge of Section 18 Westport Township has been vacant since the 1990's and is not listed as owner/occupied at the courthouse. The residence on the NW corner of Section 20 Garland Township is also not listed as owner/occupied and has been vacant since at least February of 2013. There is also a new residence on the north edge of Section 22 Garland Township that has been occupied since 2010 that your records did not indicate until the owner recently brought it to your attention. As this is a \$340 million project, did anyone actually drive the route's you proposed to see firsthand how residences would be affected?

We are enclosing a map with another option for consideration. If you would like to send a representative to this area, we would be glad to show you this proposal in person. Now your proposed line is coming into Westport Township on 388<sup>th</sup> Ave to 120<sup>th</sup> St. Arnold and Darlene Dennert reside near this corner and your line would be approximately 375 yards out their front door. Just for the record, they now have a Basin Electric Power line out their back door. A huge four cornered steel tower. We would propose that you stop at the quarter line ½ mile north of 120<sup>th</sup> St on 388<sup>th</sup> Ave and go east on Section 7 of Westport Township to the west edge of 389<sup>th</sup> Ave. There is one residence across the road in Section 8 of Garland Township which has been vacant since the late 1990's and likely could remain that way. The line could then go south for 2 ½ miles along sections 7, 18, and 19 of Westport Township to the corner of 389<sup>th</sup> Ave and 122<sup>nd</sup> St. Remember that the residence in Section 20 of Garland Township is vacant. This vacant residence also sets approximately 120 yards back from the road as compared to Bob Heilman in Section 8 at 60 yards and Joel Podoll in Section 9 at 65 yards. Joel also has a Western Area Power line in close proximity to his buildings now. For safety and health reasons alone this proposal should be considered.

For the remaining 2 ½ miles east along 122<sup>nd</sup> St we could have the option of putting the line directly on the township road which is not maintained at this time. This would keep the line and poles off any

landowner property, the township could vacate the road and the landowners would have the benefit of using the remaining property. The Garland Township Chairman said this could be considered. In checking with the State Association of Townships this has been done with transmission lines in other parts of the state and has worked well.

This proposal would have a net benefit to seven occupied residences that are now within 1/2 mile of your proposed line, two of these within 60 and 65 yards of the road. The two vacant residences would have neither a negative or positive, remembering that the one vacant property, if were to become occupied, would still be back twice the distance of the two mentioned above. There could be one negative for the residence on Section 29 of Garland Township, but this residence is approximately 600 yards from 122<sup>nd</sup> St and is also behind a shelterbelt and would not be as visible and would also minimize health and safety issues.

Just as a reminder I would like mention again that two of the residences we have been discussing already are in close proximity to BEP and WAPA lines and this alone should warrant additional consideration for their well being.

We ask that you please give serious thought to this proposal.

Thank you.

- Cc. Senator Jason Frerick
- Representative Dennis Feickert
- Representative Susan Wismer



Joel & Jolynn Podoll  
39010 120<sup>th</sup> St.  
Westport SD 57481

Jolynn Podoll  
Joel Podoll

Chris & Caitlin Podoll  
39135 121<sup>st</sup> St.  
Columbia SD 57433

Caitlin Podoll  
Chris Podoll

Bob & Michelle Heilman  
38954 120<sup>th</sup> St.  
Westport SD 57481

Bob Heilman  
Michelle Heilman

Arnold & Darlene Dennert  
38778 120<sup>th</sup> St.  
Westport SD 57481

Arnold Dennert  
Darlene Dennert

Jason & Becky Podoll  
11954 390<sup>th</sup> Ave.  
Westport SD 57481

Jason Podoll  
Becky Podoll

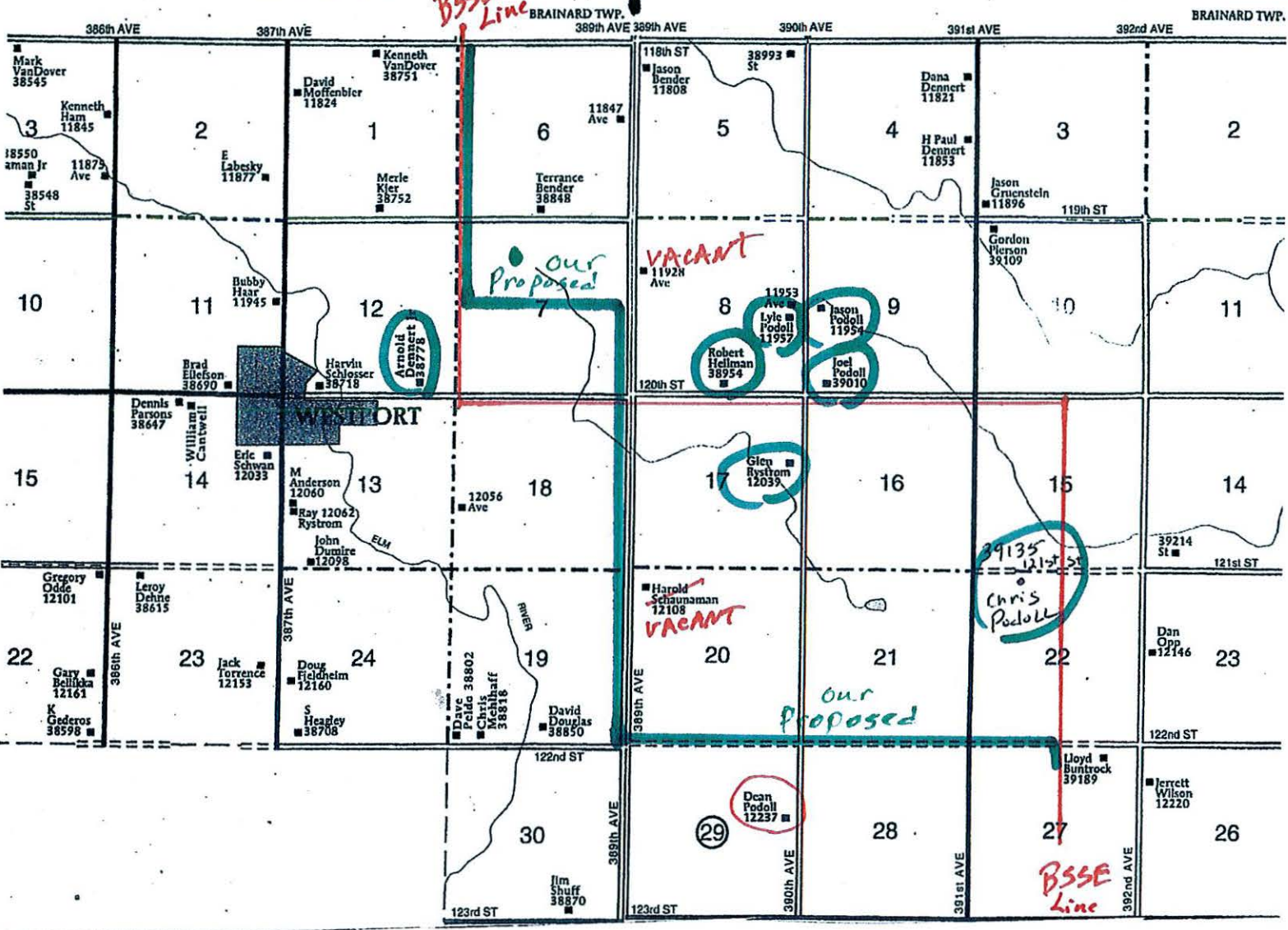
Lyle & Catherine Podoll  
11957 390<sup>th</sup> Ave.  
Westport SD 57481

Lyle Podoll  
Catherine Podoll

# WESTPORT

# GARLAND

BSSE Line



⑦ within 1/2 mile

① 600 yards





Big Stone South to Ellendale

September 12, 2013

Lyle & Catherine Podoll  
11957 390<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Westport, SD 57481

**RE: Big Stone South to Ellendale (BSSE) Response to Mailed Comment  
Joel & Jolynn Podoll, Bob & Michelle Heilman, Jason & Becky Podoll,  
Lloyd & Joan Buntrock, Chris & Caitlin Podoll, Lyle & Catherine Podoll**

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Podoll,

Thank you for mailing your comments. You stated your concerns about the Big Stone South to Ellendale transmission line being routed where three other transmission lines are already present. You are concerned that your properties and residences may lose value. You presented three options for routing the BSSE transmission line that you believe will affect fewer people and less farmland, and you noted homes that you believe to be vacant. We have recreated your suggested alternative routes on the enclosed map, as shown by three dashed lines. Please let us know if our interpretation is incorrect. We have also highlighted properties identified in our database as belonging to you.

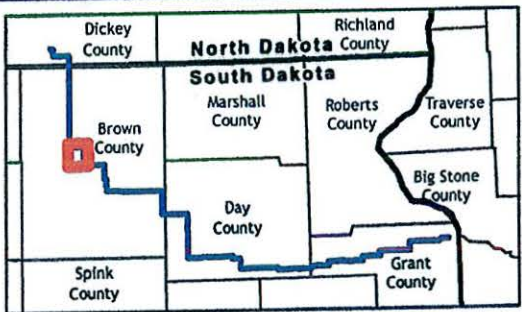
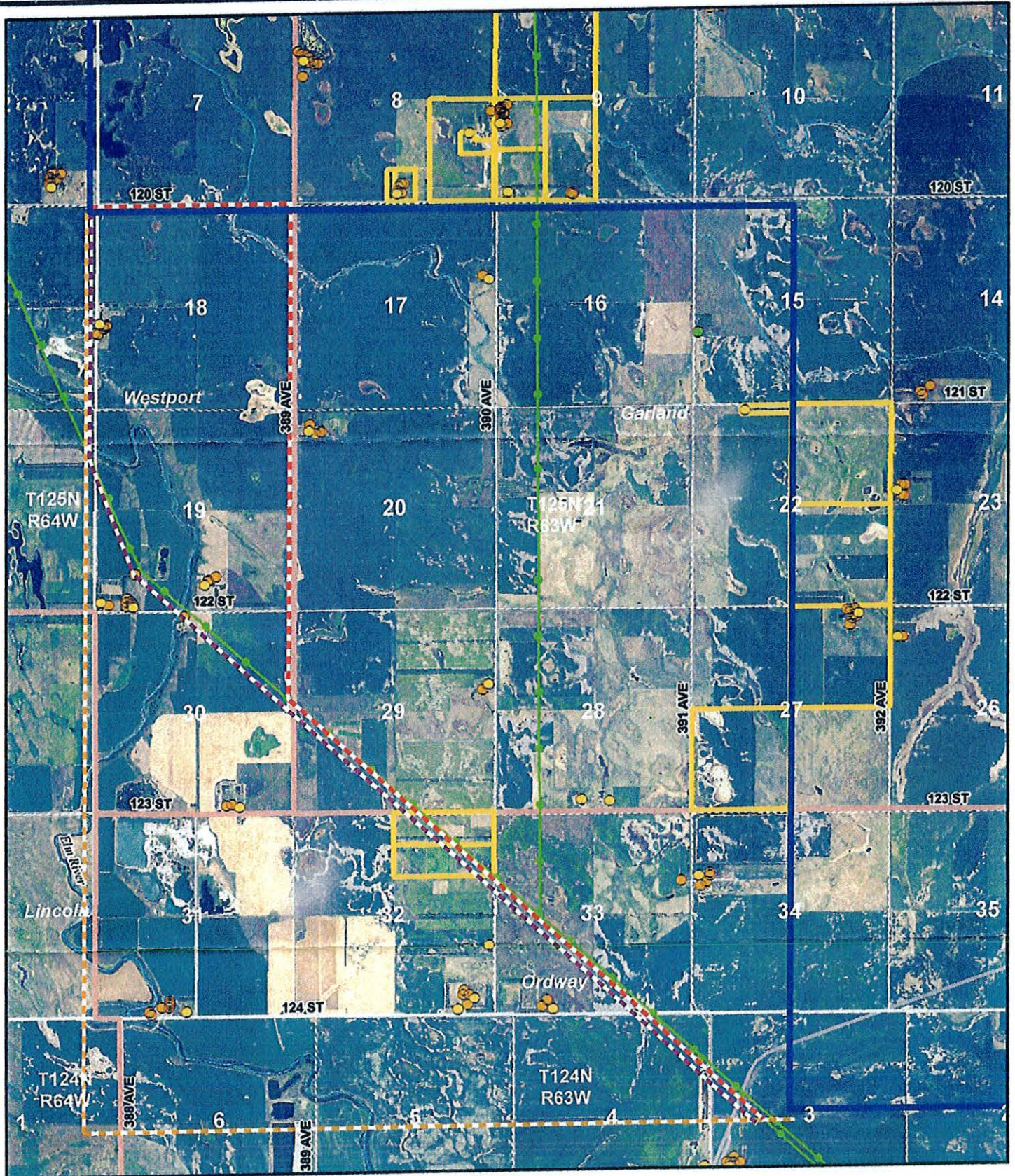
The preferred route is the result of a nearly one-year route-development process that included public participation, agency and tribal coordination in both South Dakota and North Dakota, and environmental and engineering considerations. We selected this route because it was the most suitable route for balancing the input we received and for meeting federal, state and project routing criteria, which included:

- Finding the shortest distance between two substation endpoints.
- Determining the least impacts to occupied homes.
- Minimizing river crossings.
- Determining the least impacts to federal and state protected lands and archaeological resources.
- Determining the fewest corner structures required.
- Minimizing impacts to irrigation.

We understand your concern. However, we believe the preferred route is preferable to your proposed alternatives. Your first alternative includes two or three additional crossings of the existing transmission lines and additional crossings of the Elm River that meanders back and forth across 388<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Additionally, with both the preferred route and the first alternative route you suggest, the number of homes within a quarter section of the transmission line does not differ significantly.

Of the three homes you identified as vacant, our data show two as occupied (along the western edge of Section 18 and in the NW corner of Section 20 of Westport Township).

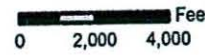




- Preferred Route
- Proposed Route 1
- Proposed Route 2
- Proposed Route 3
- Commenters Area of Interest
- Dwelling - Occupied
- Dwelling - Unknown/Vacant
- Ag/Other Structure
- Electric
- River/Stream
- Township Boundary

**Big Stone South to Ellendale  
345 kV Transmission Line Project**

Commenter - Westport-Garland  
Township Landowners



**Disclaimer:**  
This map shows the current preferred route for the BSSE project. Changes may occur as the project progresses. The final route will be determined following the state permitting process along with survey and final engineering.



July 23, 2013

Al Koeckeritz, Otter Tail Power

Chad Miller, Montana- Dakotas Utilities Co.

A group of us have some concerns about the proposed BSSE Transmission Line that is coming through our area. We are not opposed to the line as we have several through our area already, but the placement of the portion along 120<sup>th</sup> St. east and south of Westport and in both Westport and Garland townships. By the enclosed maps, you can see that there are already three transmission lines that cross 120<sup>th</sup> St. from NWPS on 384<sup>th</sup> Ave., BEP east of 387<sup>th</sup> Ave., and WAPA east of 390<sup>th</sup> Ave. That is three transmission lines in approximately 6 ¼ miles, and now you are proposing an additional 3 ½ miles along 120<sup>th</sup> St. We have six residences that are less than ½ mile from your proposed line, and two that will likely have it in their backyard or out their front door.

We are mostly small farms or residences and three of us already have BEP and WAPA through our property. Even if the proposed line does not come through our property, we feel the close proximity along with the other lines we already have will further devalue our small properties and residences. There seems to be a corridor in the north half of Brown County that must bear the brunt of all these transmission lines, with the MDU from Barnard north there continues to be three lines within a six or seven mile width all the way to the North Dakota border. There are twenty miles east, here in Brown County, that do not have any transmission lines. It appears that our corridor continues to be discriminated against, and everyone in this area must continue to work around these lines. Each additional line will further devalue our property. We can only surmise that the property values in this area are less than those to the east, but that is not a legitimate reason to continue to decimate and devalue this area. We think it is time for our legislators to consider legislation like our neighboring states which adequately compensates land owners and residences for the devaluation of their property and overloading one area with transmission lines, especially from a transmission line that is of no direct benefit to them.

We hope you will consider some of the alternate routes we have proposed. The first proposal will start at the corner of 388<sup>th</sup> Ave. and 120<sup>th</sup> St. you could continue a direct line 4 ½ miles south and go 4 ½ miles east to connect with your proposed route that direction with no additional corners. We know there is the issue of the river, but BEP crossed it with steel towers so we know it can be done and will affect far fewer people and less farmland. The second proposal would be to continue south of 120<sup>th</sup> St. on 388<sup>th</sup> Ave. approximately 1 ¼ miles, by a long time vacant farm, and then parallel the BEP towers for approximately five miles until you meet up with your proposed route going east. BEP and WAPA paralleled towers starting in section 33 of Ordway Township for about ten miles to the south east. This would put additional towers on a small parcel of section 32 in Ordway township that one of us owns, but that would be preferable to running through several residences, and here again this would affect less farmland. This



route would shorten the line and save money. One presenter at the Groton meeting said they did not like to parallel lines because of storms, which does not make any sense as the parallel poles were not affected by severe storms in the '80s, but did take down lines from both BEP and WAPA that were two miles apart. This would also support moving the lines to the east part of Brown County so a storm would not take out all three or four lines that are in close proximity to each other. Common sense should dictate that decision. Now the issue of corners will probably come up. At the meeting in Groton, the presenter on several occasions stressed the fact that they try to stay away from making corners as they are expensive. If they do corners, they like them no more than one per ten miles. We would like to point out, if our calculations are correct, from Ellendale to south east of Groton there are eleven corners and it appears that eight of these are less than ten miles apart. It begs to question why a route would be chosen that directly contradicts what they so adamantly stressed at the meeting would be too costly. Our point is that the cost of adding one or two corners should not be a consideration to make some minor route changes as the corners were not a consideration in your selection of the preferred route. We have also included proposed route changes for you to consider that would not add corners.

We the following are property owners that reside in close proximity to the proposed transmission line along and two miles south of 120<sup>th</sup> St. in both Westport and Garland Townships. We ask that you review this residential area and make minor adjustment in this portion of the route, possibly from one of the suggestions listed above.

Thank you,

Joel & Jolynn Podoll  
 39010 120<sup>th</sup> St.  
 Westport SD 5748


Bob & Michelle Heilman  
 38954 120<sup>th</sup> St.  
 Westport SD 57481

*Joel Podoll*  
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*Jolynn Podoll*  
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*Bob Heilman*  
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*Michelle Heilman*  
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Jason & Becky Podoll  
11954 390<sup>th</sup> Ave.  
Westport SD 57481

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Becky Podoll

Lloyd & Joan Buntrock  
39189 122<sup>nd</sup> St.  
Columbia SD 57433

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
  
\_\_\_\_\_

Chris & Caitlin Podoll  
39135 121<sup>st</sup> St.  
Columbia SD 57433

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Caitlin Podoll

Lyle & Catherine Podoll  
11957 390<sup>th</sup> Ave.  
Westport SD 57481

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
  
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cc: Senator Jason Frerichs  
Representative Dennis Feickert  
Representative Susan Wismer

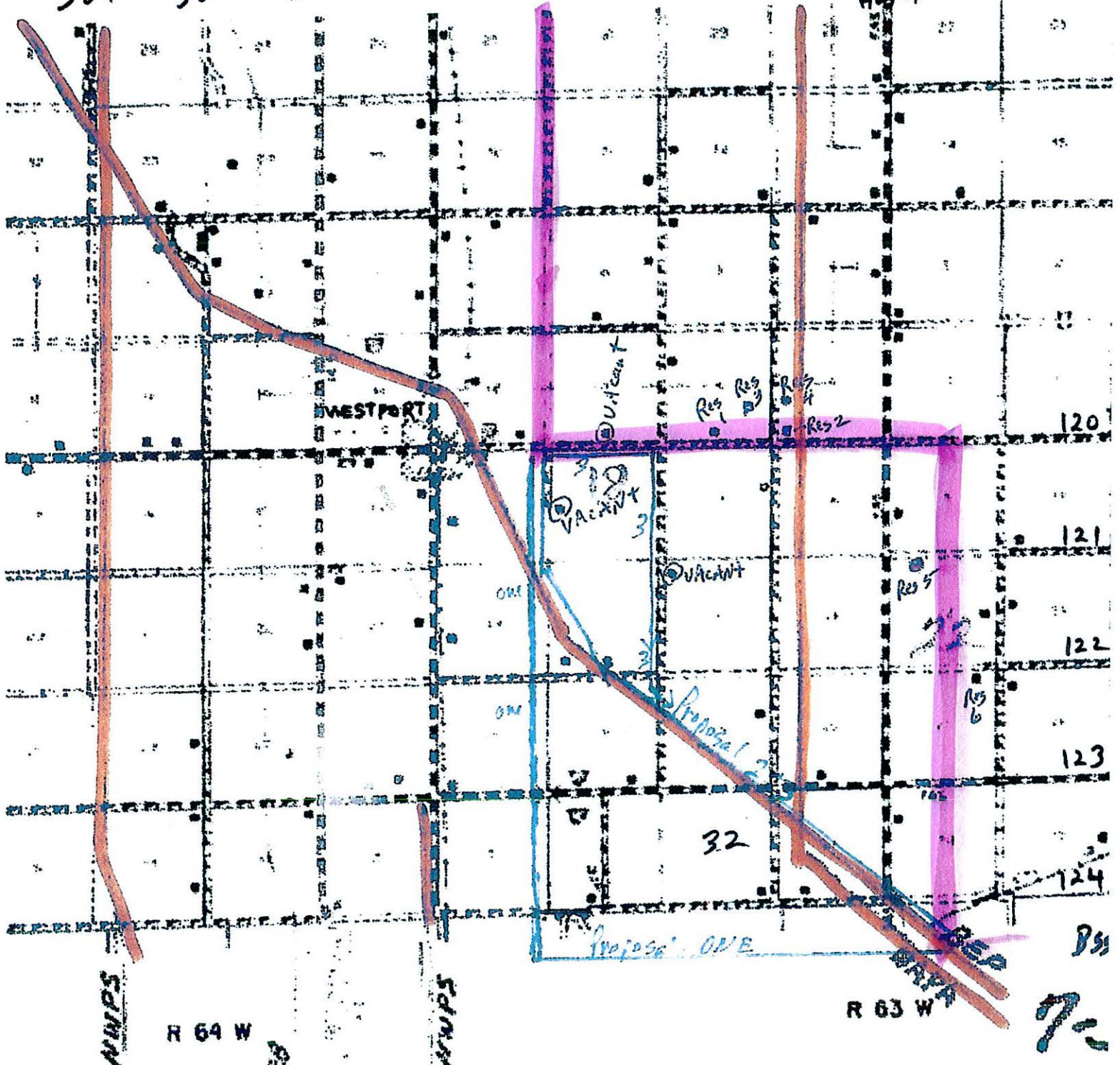
Proposed BSE

original

WAPA

BEP

384 385 386 387 388 389 390 391 392



MDU  
 WAPA - Western Area Power  
 BEP - Basin Electric Power

From 384<sup>th</sup> Av 7 1/2 miles to 391 1/2  
 only 2 miles are not affected by  
 either dissecting or parallel lines  
 proposed on 120<sup>th</sup> St.



NW Brown Co

BSEE

WAPA

16A

NW Brown Co

T 128 N

Are 4 Lines excessive?  
Are we risking the health of those living in this corridor?

T 127 N

T 126 N

T 125 N

T 124 N

SPHERSON COUNTY

NDL

4 Lines 6 1/2 mi

5 Lines in 7 3/4 mi

4 Lines 7 1/2 mi

BASE

