

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA

IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION
OF SCS CARBON TRANSPORT LLC FOR
A PERMIT TO CONSTRUCT A CARBON
DIOXIDE PIPELINE.

HP24-001

DIRECT TESTIMONY OF

ROSS PLUCKER, TURNER COUNTY, SD

ON BEHALF OF

SUMMIT CARBON SOLUTIONS, LLC

EXHIBIT #

December 13, 2024

1 **Q. Please state your name and business address for the record.**

2 A. My name is Ross Plucker. My address is 45976 272nd Street, Chancellor, South Dakota
3 57015.

4 **Q. What is your occupation?**

5 A. I am a Turner County farmer.

6 **Q. Please briefly describe your operation.**

7 A. In the past, my father owned a commission firm at the Sioux Falls Stockyards in Sioux
8 Falls called Adams and Doherty. I worked there for 23 years while I farmed. Now, I solely farm,
9 and my farming operation includes corn, soybeans, alfalfa, and I have about 85 head of stock
10 cows that I calve out. Then, I fatten those calves in a feedlot just north of my house.

11 **Q. Please describe your affiliation with Summit, POET, and NuGen Energy?**

12 A. I sell corn to both POET in Chancellor and NuGen in Marion every year. My connection
13 with Summit is a) I am a believer in their carbon sequestration, and b) the “NuGen spur” is
14 projected to go across a quarter of ground that I own.

15 **Q. What is the basis for your testimony?**

16 A. My basis for the testimony would be the fact that I feel the ethanol industry in the state of
17 South Dakota, especially in my area, has been a huge advantage to the farming community in the
18 last 20 years. I am heavily invested in ethanol and other types of renewable fuel – specifically
19 corn and soybean. I have not had the opportunity to work with renewable wind energy yet. I
20 feel that, as a cattle producer and row crop farmer, ethanol has greatly benefited me in my
21 operation as far as the feed stocks that I get from ethanol and the investment in it – not only on
22 the dividend side of the investments but also on the price appreciation in the corn market.

1 **Q. Why is the Summit project necessary for you/your neighbors/South**
2 **Dakota/Ethanol?**

3 A. I feel the project is necessary for the fact to keep ethanol viable. My future has probably
4 10, give or take, years left in it, but the future of the people who will rent my ground or carry on
5 in the ag industry, even after I am retired from it, is going to be a huge benefit, I think.

6 **Q. What does Summit mean to you in terms of opportunities to grow your operation?**

7 A. I am a believer in sustaining what we have, and I think there is room for everything. I
8 feel that, with the ethanol industry, I am probably more in favor of today and the sustainable
9 aviation fuel to come, and that market is going to be huge.

10 **Q. What context is missing from the concerns stated by others?**

11 A. It concerns me a little bit if we want to speak on a “what if” basis. What if the state of
12 South Dakota is the only state that doesn’t have a pipeline or a way to sequester this carbon?
13 What is that going to do to our grain markets? What is it going to do to our feed markets? What
14 is it going to do to our cattle industry? I am really concerned about that. I do not really think it
15 makes any difference if you are a believer in the green deal or not or if you are a believer in
16 combustible fuels versus electric cars.

17 **Q. What fears do you have if the project is not completed?**

18 A. Some of these plants, like GEVO, are going to mix and make aviation fuel. It is my
19 concern that we will not give them a chance in this state if we do not have this pipeline. If
20 Nebraska, Iowa, North Dakota, and Minnesota approve it and we are left out, what is that going
21 to do to our ethanol and soybean industry. I really am concerned about that. To me, when you
22 build something like this, you have to keep feeding it and let it grow. If we do not allow this to
23 happen and it becomes stagnant, where do we go from here? We have already proven the food

1 versus fuel and fiber debacle. We have got \$3.00 corn again. It is just a matter of we, as farmers,
2 were not denied the opportunity to increase our yields in our farming practices. Why is the
3 ethanol industry being denied this to grow its footprint for fuel? To me, if we lose this, it will be
4 a detriment to our industry and our way of life in South Dakota.

5 **Q. Has your county acted against the project?**

6 A. As of now, I have not heard of anything. No. I am not on the Board of Commissioners,
7 but I am on the Township Board of Home Township, so I closely follow them with building
8 permits and projects. Turner County Commissioners have basically stood back and let the local,
9 which would be the townships, handle a lot of it.

10 **Q. How do you feel about that? How do you feel about other counties which have tried**
11 **to stop the project?**

12 A. I feel there is a strong reason that some of these counties have acted against the project. I
13 am going to specifically use Lincoln County and the name Carla Lems in my example. When
14 Navigator came on board and tried to get a pipeline, they hired out-of-state realtors that, right or
15 wrong, came up here trying to push the Navigator project through in a very fast fashion, and I
16 think they stepped on some toes. I do not really think that they, Navigator, were given a chance
17 to express themselves as a company. They were expressed through these realtors that they hired.
18 My take on it, which may be wrong, since I have talked with many people that were in the line of
19 Navigator that were not necessarily in favor of this. When I gave them my dealings with
20 Summit, it was a way, way different experience than what they had. Navigator came in and
21 started using the term eminent domain, which was just wrong in how they approached it. They
22 ended up not doing their project. The way I look at it is that Summit came in to finish this
23 project, and they had to deal with how Navigator handled things. I think Summit, in a sense, is

1 being punished for some things that they would handle differently. I do not think that is fair to
2 Summit, especially since they have been way more respectful and professional.

3 **Q. Do you have safety concerns about the Summit project?**

4 A. I do not have any safety concerns with the project.

5 **Q. Is your ground part of the Summit project?**

6 A. Yes.

7 **Q. How was your easement experience? Were you fairly treated and compensated?**

8 A. For my easement experience, I have dealt with Annette Steilen, a realtor from Alexandria,
9 South Dakota, and it could not have been more pleasant. She is incredible, and everything that
10 concerned me, everything that was brought up on the table, and even some things that I did not
11 think about she brought up. This whole experience with her has been incredible. I have even
12 given her name to several people who were dealing with Navigator on their land. Just a couple
13 of hours of talking with Annette completely changed their mind on this whole thing. We have
14 not come to compensation yet as we are still in the process of it, but the negotiation side of it has
15 been extremely professional. Never have I ever felt pushed into this. Never has the term
16 “eminent domain” ever come into any of our conversations.

17 **Q. Does your ground currently have other easements?**

18 A. No.

19 **Q. What has been your overall experience with easements, both Summit and others?**

20 A. As I stated above, my experience with the easement process have been very good, and I
21 am very satisfied with it.

22 **Q. Does this conclude your testimony?**

23 A. Yes.

1

2 Dated this 11th day of November, 2024.

3

4

5 */s/ Ross Plucker*

6 Ross Plucker