

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
SOUTH DAKOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION**

WHAT: Montana-Dakota Utilities Co. and Otter Tail Power Company Big Stone South to Ellendale electric transmission line project
Brown, Day, and Grant Counties, South Dakota

WHEN: Thursday, October 17, 2013, at noon, 12:00 p.m. CDT

WHERE: Centennial Rooms of the Student Center on the campus of Northern State University, 1200 South Jay Street, Aberdeen, S.D. Parking available without permit in the lot along Washington Street between 12th and 14th Avenues - driving directions and map at
<http://www.northern.edu/about/pages/directions.aspx>
<http://www.northern.edu/about/PublishingImages/wirelessmap.pdf>

WHEN: Thursday, October 17, 2013, at 7:00 p.m. CDT

WHERE: Community Room of the Milbank Visitor Center, 1001 East Fourth Avenue, Milbank, S.D.

Pursuant to SDCL 49-41B-15 and 49-41B-16, the South Dakota Public Utilities Commission (Commission) will hold a public input hearing at the above times and places on an Application for an Energy Facility Permit filed jointly on August 23, 2013, by Montana-Dakota Utilities Co. and Otter Tail Power Company (jointly, the Applicants) for the Big Stone South to Ellendale 345 kV Transmission Line project (Application). The Application requests Commission approval of a permit to construct a 345-kilovolt (kV) transmission line of approximately 150 to 160 miles in South Dakota (Project). The line will cross the South Dakota and North Dakota border in Brown County, South Dakota and extend south and east through Brown, Day, and Grant counties to the Big Stone South Substation in Grant County, South Dakota near Big Stone City. Modifications to the South Dakota Facility may occur depending on the final route permitted, land rights, and final engineering design. On August 23, 2013, Applicants also filed a Motion to Schedule Prehearing Conference.

At the public input hearing, Applicants will present a brief description of the Project, following which interested persons may appear and present their questions, views and comments regarding the Application and Project. Pursuant to SDCL 49-41B-15(5), the Application is on file in the Brown, Day, and Grant County Auditors' offices and in the Commission's office in Pierre, and the Application and all other documents in the case, including detailed Project maps, may also be accessed on the Commission's web site at www.puc.sd.gov under Commission Actions, Commission Dockets, Electric Dockets, 2013 Electric Dockets, EL13-028.

The parties to this proceeding are currently Applicants and the Commission. Pursuant to SDCL 49-41B-17, any person residing in the area of the Project, each municipality, county, and governmental agency in the Project area, any non-profit organization formed in whole or in part to promote conservation or natural beauty, to protect the environment, personal health or other biological values, to preserve historical sites, to promote consumer interests, to represent commercial and industrial groups, or to promote the orderly development of the project area, or any interested person, may be granted formal party status in this proceeding by making written application to the Commission as provided in ARSD 20:10:22:40 on or before October 22, 2013. Application forms for party status will be available at the public input hearing on October 17, 2013, or may be obtained from the Commission or the Commission's web site.

Following the public input hearings, the Commission may schedule a formal evidentiary hearing conforming to SDCL Chapter 1-26 to consider any issues raised by any intervening party, Commission Staff, or the Commission itself. At such formal hearing, all parties will have the opportunity to appear, present evidence and cross-examine the other parties' witnesses and

exercise all other rights afforded by SDCL 1-26, 49-1 and 49-41B and ARSD 20:10:01 and 20:10:22. Absent a contested issue, the Commission will schedule the matter for decision at a regular or special meeting of the Commission.

For approval, Applicants must show that the Project will comply with all applicable laws and rules, will not pose a threat of serious injury to the environment nor to the social and economic condition of inhabitants or expected inhabitants in the siting area, will not substantially impair the health, safety or welfare of the inhabitants, and will not unduly interfere with the orderly development of the region with due consideration having been given to the views of governing bodies of affected local units of government. Based upon these factors, the Commission will decide whether the permit should be granted, denied or granted upon such terms, conditions or modifications of the construction, operation or maintenance as the Commission finds are appropriate. The parties will have the right to appeal the final decision in this case to the appropriate Circuit Court by serving and filing a notice of appeal of the decision in accordance with SDCL 1-26-31, within thirty (30) days after the date of service of the notice of decision in this case.

Pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act, these hearings are being held in physically accessible locations. Please contact the Commission at least 48 hours prior to the hearing if you have special needs so arrangements can be made to accommodate you. The Commission's contact information is: ph (800) 332-1782; fax (866) 757-6031; www.puc.sd.gov; 500 E. Capitol Ave., Pierre, SD 57501.