

From: PUC

Sent: Tuesday, February 12, 2019 5:05 PM

To: [REDACTED]

Subject: EL18-045

Ms. Eilers,

Thank you for sharing your views about a transmission siting permit request before the South Dakota Public Utilities Commission. You did not name the specific project or docket your message references, but I believe it to be the Flying Cow docket, EL18-045, given the area you reference.

You mention concerns about eagle nests in the area. There are not laws preventing a substation or transmission line from being constructed near an eagle nest. As you are likely aware, eagles are protected under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act and an eagle nest cannot be removed or destroyed during construction. Typically, wildlife agencies recommend a buffer be established between construction activities and active eagle nests during the breeding season.

You suggest requiring electric lines be buried. High voltage transmission lines like the ones proposed for this project are buried underground only in unique circumstances. This is due to the high cost of burying a transmission line. Burying distribution lines – those connecting to transmission lines – is not as costly and that may be feasible for an electric cooperative in certain circumstances. The owner and operator of the transmission line will be responsible for all costs associated with maintenance of the line and tax payers will not be burdened by those costs.

This Siting Guide helps explain the commission's processing of siting dockets such as this: <http://puc.sd.gov/commission/dockets/electric/2018/el18-045/el18-045sitinghandout.pdf>.

Your views will be considered as the commission works through the permit request review process. I encourage you to follow along as this docket, <http://puc.sd.gov/Dockets/Electric/2018/el18-045.aspx>, is considered and new information is

received. Your message and my response will be posted under Comments and Responses in the docket so my fellow commissioners and other interested individuals can read them.

Gary Hanson, Chairman
South Dakota Public Utilities Commission
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