

APPENDIX L – WEST TRANSMISSION LINE MEMO



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MEMORANDUM

Dakota Range III Wind Project – Transmission Line Summary

TO: Dakota Range III, LLC
FROM: Western EcoSystems Technology, Inc.
DATE: October 25, 2018

Western EcoSystems Technology, Inc. (WEST) has completed several different wildlife surveys for the proposed Dakota Range Projects in eastern South Dakota. The overall Dakota Range Projects have been developed in the Dakota Range I and II and Dakota Range III phases to date. Electricity generated by the Dakota Range III Project would interconnect to the high-voltage transmission grid via an 8-mile long, 345-kV overhead transmission line that will carry the electricity to a switching station connected to the Big Stone South to Ellendale 345-kV transmission line. WEST reviewed the historic data collected within the overall Dakota Range Project areas to inform wildlife resources along the proposed 8-mile, 200-foot wide Dakota Range III Project (Project) transmission line.

Prairie Grouse Leks: Prairie grouse lek surveys were completed in 2016, 2017, and 2018 along the Project transmission line. No leks were located within the transmission line corridor or near the corridor. The closest lek was approximately 3 miles east of the eastern terminus. Details of the lek survey efforts can be found in the lek survey following reports:

Derby, C. 2016. Dakota Range Lek Survey. Technical memo prepared for Apex Clean Energy, Inc. by Western EcoSystems Technology, Inc.

WEST. 2017. Dakota Range I Wind Project – Prairie Grouse Lek Survey Memo. Technical memo prepared for Apex Clean Energy Management, LLC by Western EcoSystems Technology, Inc.

Derby, C. 2018. Prairie Grouse Lek Survey Results for the Dakota Range III Wind Project, Roberts and Grant Counties, South Dakota. Technical report prepared by Western EcoSystems Technology, Inc.

Eagle and Raptor Nests: An eagle and raptor nest survey was completed in 2018 for the Project. This effort included a buffer of 10 miles around the Project for eagle nests and one mile buffer for all raptor nests. Raptor nest surveys were completed within Dakota Range I in 2016 and 2017. No eagle nests were located near the transmission line corridor during any survey. The closest eagle nest was located approximately 5 miles east of the transmission line. No raptor nests were located within the transmission line corridor. One occupied red-tailed hawk nest, one occupied great-horned owl nest, and three inactive/unoccupied unidentified nests



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were located within one mile of the transmission line. Details of the nest survey efforts can be found in the following raptor nest survey reports:

Derby, C. 2016. Dakota Range Raptor Nest Survey. Technical memo prepared for Apex Clean Energy, Inc. by Western EcoSystems Technology, Inc.

WEST. 2017. Dakota Range I Wind Project – Raptor Nest Survey Memo. Technical memo prepared for Apex Clean Energy Management, LLC by Western EcoSystems Technology, Inc.

Derby, C. 2018. Raptor Nest Survey Results for the Dakota Range III Wind Project, Roberts and Grant Counties, South Dakota. Technical report prepared by Western EcoSystems Technology, Inc.

Eagle Use: Eagle use surveys have been completed for the Project as well as Dakota Range I. Point count surveys for both efforts have overlap with the transmission line. No eagles have been observed within the 800-m survey points that overlap the transmission line. The closest bald eagle was observed approximately one mile south east of the line. Details of eagle use survey efforts are in the following reports:

WEST. 2017. Dakota Range I Wind Project – Avian/Eagle Use Summary. Technical memo prepared for Apex Clean Energy Management, LLC by Western EcoSystems Technology, Inc.

WEST. 2018. Dakota Range III Wind Project – Avian/Eagle Use Survey Summary. Technical memo prepared for Dakota Range III, LLC by Western EcoSystems Technology, Inc.

Summary: Based on surveys described above, the Project transmission line corridor does not contain any prairie grouse leks, eagle nests, raptor nests, or documented eagle use.