BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

OF THE STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA

IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION BY SWEETLAND WIND FARM, LLC FOR FACILITY PERMITS FOR A WIND ENERGY FACILITY AND A 230-KV TRANSMISSION FACILITY IN HAND COUNTY, SOUTH DAKOTA

AFFIDAVIT OF MARK WENGIERSKI IN SUPPORT OF REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF TRANSMISSION LINE ADJUSTMENTS

EL 19-012

STATE OF COLORADO)
) SS
COUNTY OF BOULDER)

- I, Mark Wengierski, being first duly sworn on oath, state and allege as follows:
- 1. I am the Project Manager for the Sweetland Wind Farm and associated 230 kV Transmission Line ("Project"), which is owned and being developed by Sweetland Wind Farm, LLC ("Sweetland"). I have the authority to provide this affidavit on behalf of Sweetland.
- 2. I am providing this Affidavit pursuant to paragraph 25 of the Settlement Stipulation approved by the South Dakota Public Utilities Commission ("Commission") in its July 31, 2019 Order Granting Joint Motion for Approval of Settlement Stipulation; Order Granting Permit to Construct Facility; Notice of Entry ("Order") in the above-referenced docket.
- 3. Since issuance of the Order, Sweetland has determined that an adjustment to a portion of the 230 kV Gen-Tie Line is needed that extends outside of the 150-foot-wide right-of-way, which is a material change. The change is necessary to accommodate a request by the Western Area Power Administration ("WAPA"). WAPA has requested an approximately 1.5-mile-long segment of the Gen-Tie Line be shifted to avoid crossing WAPA's existing Fort Thompson to Huron 230 kV transmission line with which the Project will interconnect. The 1.5-mile-long segment of the Gen Tie Line approved by the Commission parallels the south side of WAPA's existing Fort Thompson to Huron 230-kV transmission line, which would require crossing over WAPA's existing line twice. WAPA has requested adjusting this segment of the Gen Tie Line to instead parallel the north side of WAPA's existing Fort Thompson to Huron 230-kV line. Re-routing the Gen-Tie Line to avoid crossing the existing WAPA line avoids the potential that both lines would need to be deenergized in the event the upper line is damaged and falls on the lower line. Additionally, line crossings add an additional layer of risk to maintenance workers when performing maintenance and repair to either line. Thus, the Gen-Tie Line adjustment will improve reliability and safety.

- 4. An overview map showing the 230 kV Gen-Tie Line route, with the proposed adjustments, is provided as **Exhibit A** (public and confidential versions). **Exhibit A** shows the Gen-Tie Line centerline approved by the Commission (black dashed line) and the currently proposed transmission line centerline (solid purple line).
- 5. The adjusted Gen-Tie Line right-of-way (as shown in **Exhibit A**) has been surveyed for wetlands and cultural resources, and **Exhibit A** identifies the locations of cultural resources (confidential version only) and wetlands in relation to adjusted Gen-Tie Line right-of-way. The Gen-Tie Line structures will be sited so as to avoid cultural resources and wetlands. The adjusted Gen-Tie Line route was surveyed for wetlands during 2018/2019 field surveys and for cultural resources in March 2022. Attached is a copy of Addendum 5 to the Level III Intensive Cultural Resource Survey Report (**Exhibit B**) (confidential) and the Wetland Delineation Report (**Exhibit C**), which include the results of survey work conducted for the adjusted 230 kV Gen-Tie Line.
- 6. All landowners within one-half mile of the proposed 230 kV Gen-Tie Line route were sent notice of the Project prior to the public input hearing held on April 25, 2019. **Exhibit A** shows those parcels within one-half mile of the original Project boundary (blue line), as well as land ownership information.
- 7. All modifications are located on land under lease, easement, or option for the Project.
- 8. The adjusted Gen-Tie Line route will cross the southeast corner of parcels subject to two U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service ("USFWS") easements. WAPA and the USFWS prepared a Supplement to the Environmental Assessment ("SEA") (SEA, DOE-EA-2095-S1) to analyze potential impacts of the newly proposed Gen-Tie Line route that were not previously analyzed in the 2021 Environmental Assessment. WAPA and the USFWS identified no significant impacts to environmental resources or the human environment, either individually or cumulatively with other actions in the general area that would result from the proposed Gen-Tie Line route adjustment. Sweetland is in the process of securing a Right of Way Permit from the USFWS that will authorize temporary construction disturbance and installation of three wooden H frame transmission line structures on the USFWS easements.
- 9. With respect to the Project, including the proposed Gen-Tie Line adjustment, Sweetland will comply with the Commission's Order and all other applicable regulations and requirements.
- 10. Based on the foregoing, Sweetland requests approval of the proposed transmission line adjustments.

FURTHER AFFIANT SAYETH NOT.

Dated this 3 day of October 2022.

Mark Wengierski

Subscribed and sworn to before me on this 3 day of October 2022.

Notary Public

My Commission Expires: 9/22/2015

JANELLE GIBBONS
Notary Public
State of Colorado
Notary ID # 20214037609
My Commission Expires 09-22-2025