

**MONTANA-DAKOTA UTILITIES CO.  
SOUTH DAKOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION  
DATA REQUEST (SET 1) TO MONTANA-DAKOTA UTILITIES CO.  
ISSUED: MARCH 29, 2020 - RESPONSES DUE: APRIL 13, 2020  
EL20-010 - TRANSMISSION RIDER**

**1-1. Pursuant to SDCL 40-34A-25.3(4), please provide the Company's efforts to ensure the lowest reasonable costs to ratepayers regarding the Dickinson Loop Line Project.**

**Response:**

Montana-Dakota has requested bids from qualified engineering consultants. The selection of an engineering consulting firm is chosen based on price, familiarity with Company standards and practices, experience, and qualification. A summary of bids is shown in the table below, including the proposal of Power Engineers, the consultant on this project. While Power Engineers' bid is more than MBN Engineering's bid, Montana-Dakota expects the overall cost will be less due to Power Engineers familiarity with Company standards and practices and past experience with that firm.

Dickinson Loop Line	
Engineering Consultant	
HDR	\$ 422,500
MBN Engineering	192,900
Power Engineers	269,913
Ulteig Engineers	311,150

Montana-Dakota creates a list of qualified construction contractors that are allowed to bid on transmission line projects. This qualification process involves safety records, financial qualifications, specific construction experience, and the location of crews and company offices. Montana-Dakota has requested bids from qualified construction contractors. This project was bid by two qualified contractors, see Response No. 1-1 Attachment A. High Voltage has been selected as the construction contractor.

Montana-Dakota purchases most line material through annual purchasing agreements or alliance agreements. This is the case with transmission poles, conductor, and hardware. Round wood transmission poles are purchased through a manufacturer that submits a bid to supply all round wood poles for the Company for the year at a set price. Conductor and hardware is purchased through Border States Electric, where a selection process of best price and lead times determines what material is bought from Montana-Dakota approved suppliers.