

EXHIBIT A



October 24, 2024

VIA CERTIFIED MAIL

Brandon & Jada Schmieg



Re: In the Matter of the Application by Otter Tail Power Company and Western Minnesota Municipal Power Agency For a Facility Permit for a 345-kV Transmission Facility and Associated Facilities in Grant County, South Dakota
EL 24-015

Dear Landowner:

On April 15, 2024, Otter Tail Power Company (Otter Tail) and Western Minnesota Municipal Power Agency (Western Minnesota), through its agent Missouri River Energy Services (MRES) (together, Applicants) submitted a Facility Permit Application to the South Dakota Public Utilities Commission (Commission) for the portion of the Big Stone South to Alexandria 345 kilovolt (kV) Transmission Line Project located within South Dakota (the Project). A public input meeting was held on the Application on May 29, 2024. You did not previously receive notice of the Application or public input meeting because your property was not within one-half mile of the Project footprint.

On behalf of the Applicants, I am providing notice that following adjustments to the Project's proposed route, your property is now located within one-half mile of the proposed Project footprint. Enclosed is a copy of the Commission's public input meeting notice (that was issued for the May 29, 2024 meeting), as well as a map showing the location of the current Project.

Pursuant to SDCL § 49-41B-5.2, the Applicants' Application is on file in the Auditor's office in Grant County. In addition, the Application and other documents in the case, as well as a recording of the May 2024 public input meeting, may be accessed on the Commission's website at www.puc.sd.gov under Commission Actions, Commission Dockets, Electric Dockets, 2024 Electric Dockets, EL 24-015.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jason J. Weiers".

Jason Weiers
Manager, Transmission Project Development
Otter Tail Power Company

Enclosures

**BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA**

IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION BY)	NOTICE OF APPLICATION;
OTTER TAIL POWER COMPANY AND)	ORDER FOR AND NOTICE OF
WESTERN MINNESOTA MUNICIPAL POWER)	PUBLIC INPUT MEETING;
AGENCY FOR A FACILITY PERMIT FOR A 345-)	NOTICE OF OPPORTUNITY TO
KV TRANSMISSION FACILITY AND)	APPLY FOR PARTY STATUS
ASSOCIATED FACILITIES IN GRANT COUNTY,)	
SOUTH DAKOTA)	EL24-015

On April 15, 2024, the South Dakota Public Utilities Commission (Commission) received a facility permit application (Application) from Otter Tail Power Company (Otter Tail) and Western Minnesota Municipal Power Agency (Western Minnesota), through its agent, Missouri River Energy Services (MRES) (collectively, Applicants). Applicants propose to construct a 345-kilovolt (kV) transmission line and associated facilities including substation upgrades (Project) within South Dakota. The Project, known as the Big Stone South to Alexandria Transmission Line Project, originates at Otter Tail's existing Big Stone South Substation, located approximately 2 miles west of Big Stone City, South Dakota in Big Stone Township and connects to a substation near Alexandria, Minnesota. The South Dakota portion of the Project consists of approximately 3.5 miles of transmission line beginning in Section 24, Township 121N, Range 47W, Grant County, South Dakota, extending east and south to the Minnesota border. Applicant anticipates construction to commence in 2027 or 2028 and be completed in either 2030 or 2031. Applicant estimates the total construction cost of the proposed Project in South Dakota to be approximately \$41.4 million.

The Commission has jurisdiction over this matter pursuant to SDCL Chapters 1-26 and 49-41B and ARSD Chapter 20:10:22.

Pursuant to SDCL 49-41B-15 and 49-41B-16, **the Commission will hold a public input meeting on Wednesday, May 29, 2024, at 5:30 p.m., CDT, at the Big Stone American Legion, 14521 485th Ave., Big Stone City, South Dakota.**

The purpose of the public input meeting will be to hear public comments regarding the Application and the Project. At the meeting, Applicants will present a brief description of the Project, after which interested persons may appear and present their views, comments, and questions regarding the Application. A copy of the Application is on file with the Grant County Auditor and at the Commission's office in Pierre. The Application and all other documents in the docket, including detailed maps of the Project, may be accessed on the Commission's website at puc.sd.gov under Commission Actions, Commission Dockets, Electric Dockets, 2024 Electric Dockets, EL24-015 or by contacting the Commission in person at the Capitol Building, 500 E. Capitol Ave., Pierre, SD, or by phone at (605) 773-3201 to request a copy.

Pursuant to SDCL 49-41B-17 and ARSD 20:10:22:40, the parties to this proceeding are currently the Applicant and the Commission Staff. Each municipality, county, and governmental agency in the area where the facility is proposed to be sited; or any person residing in the area where the facility is proposed to be sited, or any directly interested person, may be granted party status in this proceeding by making timely written application to the Commission. Applications for party status will be available at the public input hearing or may be obtained from the Commission's website or by contacting the Commission. **Applications for party status must be filed with the Commission on or before 5:00 p.m., CDT, June 14, 2024.** The Commission will also accept comments in writing

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from anyone, either by mail, personal delivery, or e-mail until the time of the decision. You only need to apply for party status if you want to participate formally in the case by putting on actual testimony or other factual evidence, conducting discovery, cross-examining witnesses, making legal arguments, and to preserve your right to appeal to the courts if you do not believe the Commission's decision is legally correct. You do not need to have party status in order to submit written comments.

Following the public input meeting, the Commission may schedule a formal evidentiary hearing conforming to SDCL Chapter 1-26 to consider issues raised by any party or the Commission itself. At such a 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 Chapters 1-26, 49-1, and 49-41B and ARSD Chapters 20:10:01 and 20:10:22, including rights of appeal to the courts.

For approval, Applicants must show that the proposed 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 a permit to construct should be granted, denied, or granted upon such terms, conditions, or modifications of the construction, operation, or maintenance as the Commission finds appropriate. It is therefore

ORDERED, that the Commission will hold a public input meeting on the Application and Project on **Wednesday, May 29, 2024, at 5:30 p.m., CDT, at the Big Stone American Legion, 14521 485th Ave., Big Stone City, South Dakota.** It is further

ORDERED, that pursuant to SDCL 49-41B-17 and ARSD 20:10:22:40, **applications for party status should be filed on or before 5:00 p.m., CDT, on June 14, 2024.**

Pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act, this meeting will be held in a physically accessible location. Please contact the Public Utilities Commission at (605) 773-3201 at least 48 hours prior to the meeting if you have special needs so arrangements can be made to accommodate you.

Dated at Pierre, South Dakota, this 16th day of April 2024.

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE	
The undersigned hereby certifies that this document has been served today upon all parties of record in this docket, as listed on the docket service list, electronically or by mail.	
By:	<u><i>Kristie Fiegen</i></u>
Date:	<u>16 April 2024</u>

BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION:

Kristie Fiegen
KRISTIE FIEGEN, Chairperson

Gary Hanson
GARY HANSON, Commissioner

Chris Nelson
CHRIS NELSON, Commissioner

Figure 1. Project location

