

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

**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**

SD PUC DOCKET EL24-015

**PRE-FILED SUPPLEMENTAL DIRECT TESTIMONY OF KEVIN SCHEIDECKER
ON BEHALF OF OTTER TAIL POWER COMPANY
AND WESTERN MINNESOTA MUNICIPAL POWER AGENCY**

October 25, 2024

1 **I. INTRODUCTION**

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3 **Q. Please state your name, employer, and business address.**

4 A. My name is Kevin Scheidecker. I am employed by Otter Tail Power Company
5 (“Otter Tail”). My business address is 215 South Cascade Street, Fergus Falls,
6 Minnesota 56537.

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8 **Q. Did you provide Direct Testimony in this docket on April 15, 2024?**

9 A. Yes.

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11 **Q. What is the purpose of your Supplemental Direct Testimony?**

12 A. The purpose of my Supplemental Direct Testimony is to provide an update on the
13 environmental surveys and additional agency coordination that has been
14 conducted for the South Dakota portion of the Big Stone South to Alexandria 345
15 kilovolt (“kV”) Transmission Line Project (the “Project”) since the Facility Permit
16 Application (“Application”) was filed on April 15, 2024. I will also provide updates
17 regarding the environmental analysis for the Project’s current proposed Route,
18 right-of-way (“ROW”), and Flexibility Area.

19

20 **Q. What exhibits are attached to your Supplemental Direct Testimony?**

21 A. The following exhibits are attached to my Supplemental Direct Testimony:

- 22 • Exhibit A: Supplemental Level I Cultural Resource Letter Report, dated
23 August 20, 2024 (CONFIDENTIAL);
- 24 • Exhibit B: South Dakota State Historical Society/State Historic Preservation
25 Office (“SHPO”) Letter, dated September 11, 2024;
- 26 • Exhibit C: Addendum Level III Cultural Resources Survey Report, dated May
27 2024 (CONFIDENTIAL); and
- 28 • Exhibit D: SHPO Acceptance Letter, dated June 12, 2024.

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30 **II. ROUTE ADJUSTMENTS**

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32 **Q. In Jason Weiers’ Supplemental Direct Testimony, he describes the**
33 **adjustments made to the Project’s Route, ROW, and Flexibility Area**
34 **since the Application was filed in April 2024. Are you aware of this**
35 **testimony?**

36 A. Yes.

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Q. Are the adjustments described in Mr. Weiers’ Supplemental Direct Testimony depicted on the redline comparison maps included in Exhibit A to Mr. Weiers’ testimony?

A. Yes.

Q. Did these Route adjustments affect resource impact estimates in the Application?

A. The analysis of existing resources and potential impacts and avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures in Sections 11.0 through 22.0 remains accurate for the current Project (including the Route adjustments), with a few minor updates. These updates are provided in Exhibit A to Mr. Weiers’ testimony and are discussed further herein. The estimates for temporary and permanent impacts were updated for the current Project to cover the Route adjustments. Overall, the estimated impacts are conservative and similar to those presented in the Application.

Q. Have the adjustments, including the modified Flexibility Area, been field surveyed for wetlands?

A. Yes. The area surveyed for aquatic resources (including wetlands) in the Aquatic Resources Delineation Report (Appendix D to the Application) covers the Route adjustments and the modified Flexibility Area. See the updated analysis in Exhibit A to Mr. Weiers’ testimony.

Q. Have the Route adjustments, including the modified Flexibility Area, been field surveyed for cultural resources?

A. Yes.

The Applicants conducted a Level I records search and review of historical maps and aerial photographs for the current Flexibility Area around the Route adjustment near the Big Stone South Substation. This area is largely already disturbed with the construction of two substations and has been subject to multiple Level III cultural resource surveys in the past few years. The Applicants provided this analysis to SHPO on August 16, 2024 (see **Exhibit A** (Supplemental Level I Cultural Resource Letter Report (confidential))). In a letter dated September 11, 2024, SHPO agreed with the Applicants that this Route adjustment (including the associated Flexibility Area) is not anticipated to impact a historic property which

74 is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (“NRHP”) (see
75 **Exhibit B** (SHPO Letter, dated September 11, 2024)). Accordingly, no further
76 surveys for cultural resources are needed in relation to the adjustment near the Big
77 Stone South Substation.

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79 Level III field surveys for cultural resources were conducted in October 2024 for
80 the portions of the Flexibility Area and ROW not previously surveyed related to the
81 Route adjustment on the parcel owned by Otter Tail, Montana-Dakota Utilities Co.,
82 and NorthWestern Energy just south of U.S. Highway 12 and the Route adjustment
83 along 146th Street. No additional NRHP eligible or potentially eligible cultural
84 resources were identified. The survey results will be included in an addendum
85 cultural resources report documenting the October 2024 cultural field survey
86 efforts.

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88 The Route adjustment right before the South Dakota-Minnesota border was
89 covered in previous Level III cultural resource field surveys.

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91 **III. CULTURAL AND ARCHITECTURAL RESOURCES SURVEY UPDATE**

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93 **Q. Have the Applicants completed the Addendum Level III Cultural**
94 **Resource Survey Report for the April 2024 field surveys for cultural**
95 **resources and historic architectural resources?**

96 A. Yes. As described in the Application, Level III field surveys for cultural resources
97 were conducted in April 2024. A historic architectural resource reconnaissance
98 survey was completed at the same time. The Addendum Level III Cultural
99 Resources Survey Report includes the results from these surveys. The report is
100 provided as **Exhibit C** to my testimony.

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102 **Q. Have the results of the April 2024 cultural and architectural field surveys**
103 **been submitted to the SHPO?**

104 A. Yes. The Addendum Level III Cultural Resources Survey Report was submitted to
105 SHPO on June 6, 2024.

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107 **Q. Has the SHPO provided an acceptance letter?**

108 A. Yes. On June 12, 2024, SHPO provided an acceptance letter for the Addendum
109 Level III Cultural Resources Survey Report. The SHPO letter is provided as
110 **Exhibit D** to my testimony.

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112 **IV. CONCLUSION**

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114 **Q. Does this conclude your Supplemental Direct Testimony?**

115 A. Yes.

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118 Dated this 25th day of October, 2024.

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kevin Scheidecker", written over a horizontal line.

121

122 Kevin Scheidecker

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