

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

**IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION
OF OTTER TAIL POWER COMPANY FOR
A FACILITY PERMIT FOR THE BIG STONE
SOUTH TO HANKINSON TO BISON 345 KV
TRANSMISSION LINE PROJECT**

**ORDER ASSESSING
FILING FEE; ORDER
AUTHORIZING EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR TO ENTER INTO
CONSULTING CONTRACTS**

EL26-028

On September 8, 2026, the South Dakota Public Utilities Commission (Commission) received an Application from Otter Tail Power Company (Applicant) for a Transmission Facility Permit for an electric transmission line in Grant and Roberts Counties, South Dakota. Specifically, Applicant proposes to construct a new 345kV electric transmission line ("the Project"). The South Dakota portion of the Project consists of approximately 71 miles of 345 kV transmission line that runs from the existing Big Stone South Substation located west of Big Stone City, South Dakota, to the South Dakota – North Dakota border at a location northeast of New Effington, South Dakota, between Lien and Victor Townships. The Project will consist of single-circuit transmission structures constructed on steel, single-pole (monopole) structures. The Project will also involve modifications to the existing Big Stone South Substation to accommodate new breaker positions, switches for the new single-circuit 345 kV transmission line, and relocation of the 345 kV Big Stone South to Ellendale termination into the substation. Facility components will also include temporary laydown/staging areas, pulling/tensioning sites, and access roads. The Project is expected to be located along 1,286.4 acres of right-of-way located in South Dakota. The Project would have a 150-foot right-of-way along the length of the transmission line. The Project estimates construction costs between \$190.6 to \$228.7 million and is expected to start construction in 2030, complete in 2033, and in service by the first quarter of 2034. SDCL 49-41B-12 provides for a filing fee to be assessed to cover the Commission's actual cost of investigating, reviewing, processing, and serving notice of the Application. Using an estimated construction cost of \$190,600,000, the maximum fee chargeable, as calculated pursuant to statute, is \$295,300. Using an estimated construction cost of \$228,700,000, the maximum fee chargeable is \$314,350.

On September 10, 2026, the Commission electronically transmitted notice of the filing and the intervention deadline of November 9, 2026, to interested persons and entities on the Commission's PUC Weekly Filings electronic listserv. As of the date of this order, no petitions to intervene have been filed.

The Commission has jurisdiction over this matter pursuant to SDCL Chapter 49-41B, specifically 49-41B-12.

At its regularly scheduled meeting on September 22, 2026, the Commission considered this matter. The Commission voted unanimously to assess a filing fee not to exceed \$314,350 for actual expenses incurred in processing this Application and to authorize the executive director to enter into necessary consulting contracts. It is therefore

ORDERED, that Applicant shall be assessed a filing fee in an amount up to the statutory

limit of \$314,350, to account for actual expenses incurred in review of this filing. It is further

ORDERED, that the executive director shall have the authority to enter into necessary consulting contracts.

Dated at Pierre, South Dakota, this 23rd day of September 2026.

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>Logan Schaffner</u>
Date:	<u>9/23/2026</u>

BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION:

Chris Nelson

CHRIS NELSON, Chairman

Kristie Fiegen

KRISTIE FIEGEN, Commissioner

Gary Hanson

GARY HANSON, Commissioner