

July 7, 2026

VIA ELECTRONIC FILING

Ms. Leah Mohr
Executive Secretary
South Dakota Public Utilities Commission
500 E. Capitol Ave.
Pierre, SD 57501-5070

Re: Restoration Plan for Transmission Lines Impacted by June 29, 2026 Storm

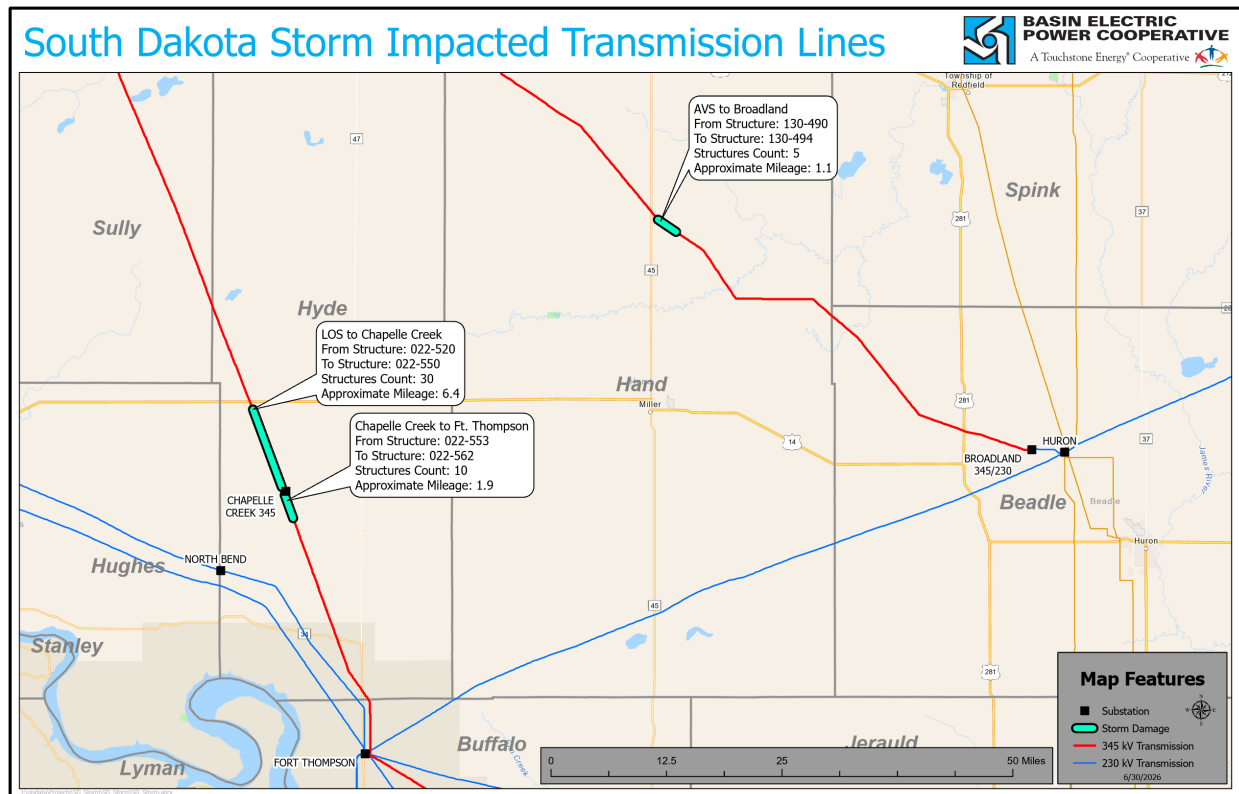
Dear Ms. Mohr:

On June 29, 2026, parts of South Dakota experienced winds as high as 131 miles per hour. The thunderstorms struck and damaged segments of three 345 kilovolt (kV) transmission lines owned and operated by Basin Electric Power Cooperative (BEPC). BEPC provides this filing to inform the South Dakota Public Utilities Commission (Commission) of the damages and BEPC's planned restoration work.

The Impacts of the Storm

The figure below shows the number of structures taken out of service on each of the three impacted transmission lines: AVS to Broadland, Chapelle Creek to Fort Thompson, and LOS to Chapelle Creek. All three lines are 345 kV and were constructed in the 1970s before a facility permit was required under SDCL Chapter 49-41B.¹ The storm damaged a total of 45 structures.

¹ See SDCL Ch. 49-41B; SDCL 49-41B-4 (requiring permit for facility for which construction began on or after July 1, 1979).



Restoration Work

BEPC immediately began taking restoration steps due to the urgent need to return the lines to service. Demolition and removal of damaged/fallen structures are currently underway. On Monday, July 6, 2026, BEPC began mobilizing structures for the AVS to Broadland line.

Once restored, the lines will have the same nameplate carrying capacity. The status of the lines as transmission facilities will not change. All poles will be constructed with the existing rights-of-way. These circumstances are the same as those the Commission analyzed in Docket No. EL17-031.²

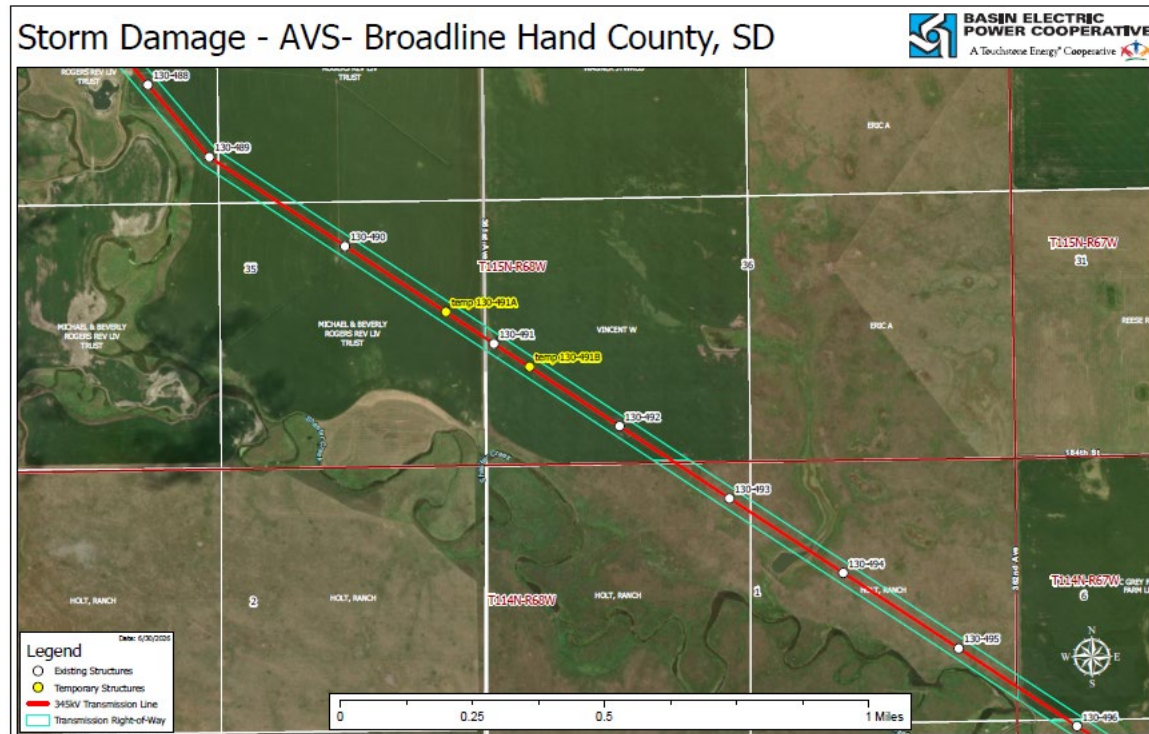
In Docket No. EL17-031, the Commission reasoned that the rebuilding of a transmission line that “1) does not involve an increase in the line’s nameplate carrying capacity; 2) does not change the line’s status as a transmission facility; and 3) will occur within the line’s existing rights-of-way,” does not meet the definition of a “modification” under SDCL 49-41B-2.2 and therefore does not meet the definition of construction pursuant to SDCL 49-41B-2(5). The Commission concluded

² See *In the Matter of Black Hills Power, Inc. dba Black Hills Energy’s Petition for Declaratory Ruling Regarding Whether a Permit is Required for a Rebuild of a 230kV Transmission Line Constructed in 1963*, Docket No. EL17-031 (hereafter cited as “*Black Hills Power Petition for Declaratory Ruling*”).

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that no facility permit was required.³ BEPC therefore believes that no facility permit is required for the planned restoration work.⁴

BEPC will restore the AVS to Broadland line using temporary structures on the existing alignment, as shown in the figure below:



Temporary structures will be installed around one of the damaged structures, then those temporary structures will be removed after the permanent structure is rebuilt.

BEPC will restore the Chapelle Creek to Fort Thompson and LOS to Chapelle Creek transmission lines with a one-for-one pole replacement. The old tower foundations will be removed after the lines are re-constructed.

³ See *Black Hills Power Petition for Declaratory Ruling*, Declaratory Ruling Regarding Rebuild of a 230kV Transmission Line, at 1-2 (Sept. 5, 2017).

⁴ The Commission may also waive compliance with SDCL Chapter 49-41B upon notice by a utility that facilities have been damaged as the result of a natural disaster and the facility needs to be repaired or replaced to promote the public health, safety or welfare. SDCL 49-41B-23. If a facility permit were required, a waiver would be warranted under this provision.

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Conclusion

BEPC will continue to work dilligently to restore the three 345 kV lines promptly. Should the Commission have any questions about this filing, please contact Ryan King, Environmental Coordinator at BEPC, 701.426.9469 or RKing@becpc.com.

Sincerely,

FREDRIKSON & BYRON, P.A.

/s/ Lisa M. Agrimonti

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