

Non-GIS Information

- Temporary workspace and permanent easement typical drawings (greenfield and collocated segments, as applicable). Include typical workspace configurations for road crossings, as applicable.
- Known occurrences of state- or county-listed noxious weeds (see [EDDMapS](#)) in the vicinity of the project. A current state list is available [here](#) and county lists are [here](#). We recommend consulting with the counties directly to verify their list is current.
- Narrative summary of environmental field surveys done to date. Provide an anticipated schedule for completion, if applicable.
 - Cultural Resources
 - Tribal Resources
 - Wetlands and Waterbodies
 - Protected Species / Habitat Assessments
 - Contaminated Materials (Phase I Environmental Site Assessments/Phase II)
 - Noxious/Invasive Weeds
 - Other (specify: _____)
- Summary of agency consultations/communications/public engagement done to date. If none, provide an anticipated schedule.
- Is permanent infrastructure expected to be installed within MnDOT’s ROW? If so, provide details.
- Is travel across/along MnDOT’s ROW anticipated? If so, provide details and anticipated Best Management Practices to be used (e.g., timber matting, erosion/sediment controls, etc.). Describe if any proposed access locations will be permanent or temporary.
- Project Schedule/Major Milestones (Minnesota Public Utilities Commission filing, construction/restoration, in-service date, etc.)
- Vegetation Management Plans
 - Provide existing vegetation management plans, or anticipated vegetation management strategies associated with the long-term maintenance of the corridor. Plans should describe methods, seasonality, frequency of maintenance activities (e.g., annual growing season broadcast herbicide treatments, brushing every five years during dormant season).

Other

- Powerlines:* Utility pole typical drawings (if collocated, include drawings of proposed poles in relation to existing)
 - Typical pole spacing lengths, typical pole type (e.g., H-frame, T-frame, etc.) and material
 - Typical pole footprint and depth
- Pipelines:*
 - Plan and profile typical drawings of workspace configurations showing depth of cover, width of workspaces, topsoil stripping, etc.
 - Pipe diameter and material

Utility Company: Otter Tail Power and Missouri River Energy Services
Project Name: Big Stone South to Alexandria 345kV Transmission Line Project
Early Notification Memo



Minnesota Department of Transportation

Early Notification Memo (Utility Projects)

APPLICANTS: PLEASE RETURN A COMPLETED COPY OF THIS FORM, APPLICANT CHECKLIST, AND SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION TO THE MnDOT OFFICE OF LAND MANAGEMENT (OLM) MANAGER.

Click the checkboxes in left column if your project meets thresholds (click heading link for thresholds). By default, MnDOT's Cultural Resources Unit, Environmental Assessment Unit, Protected Species Review Team, Blowing Snow Control, and District staff will be notified of all Utility ENMs.

	Resource/Area of Concern
<input type="checkbox"/>	Contaminated Materials Management
<input type="checkbox"/>	Regulated Waste and Storage Tanks
<input type="checkbox"/>	Vegetation Review and Survey
<input type="checkbox"/>	Wetlands Coordination
<input type="checkbox"/>	Water Permits—Federal Agencies, Floodplains
<input type="checkbox"/>	Historic Roadside Properties Program
<input type="checkbox"/>	Construction Stormwater and Erosion/Sediment Control
<input type="checkbox"/>	Safety Rest Area Program
<input type="checkbox"/>	Scenic Byways
<input type="checkbox"/>	Railroad
<input type="checkbox"/>	Airport Influence Area
<input type="checkbox"/>	Operations
<input type="checkbox"/>	Design Support
<input type="checkbox"/>	Safety and Operations Management
X	Blowing Snow Control / Snow Fencing
X	Cultural Resources CulturalResources.dot@state.mn.us
X	OES Environmental Assessment Unit / Environmental Review
X	Protected Species Program
X	District Planners Staff to be identified by MnDOT

Utility Company: Otter Tail Power and Missouri River Energy Services
Project Name: Big Stone South to Alexandria 345kV Transmission Line Project
Early Notification Memo

Request for information and early coordination from MnDOT functional groups

The OLM is providing early notification of the proposed utility project described in the subject line of this ENM and is requesting your review of the project. Project information available at this time may be limited, therefore, we recognize that responses are preliminary and may change after reviewing other documents and/or if project details change. However, your early input will help assure that all environmental concerns and interests considered in the development of this project.

Project Description

New 95-105-mile 345-kV transmission line from OTP's existing Big Stone South Substation in South Dakota to MRES's existing Alexandria Substation in Minnesota.

Utility Applicants/ENM Writer: Provide a plain language narrative description of the utility project location and the nature of the proposed work. Include the following project information below, if known:

- Type of utility
 - High voltage transmission lines
 - pole height – 150ft
 - spacing – 4-6 structures per mile (max span in feet?)
 - voltage – 345kV
- Mileage (total and collocated with MnDOT trunk highways):
- Number and locations of state Trunk Highways crossed and/or miles of proposed collocation:
 - Identify any Scenic Byways within 7 miles of the project
- Typical temporary workspace dimensions and depth of excavations:
- Typical permanent easement dimensions:
- General project schedule (if known):
- *Powerlines* – is there a potential to locate poles/infrastructure within MnDOT ROW?

Provide shapefiles, corresponding maps/datasets, and all other information identified in the enclosed *Utility ENM – Supplemental Information Checklist* form. Please return this completed checklist along with this Utility ENM form. Note that you may need to provide some of the supplemental information in a stand-alone document.

Utility Company: Otter Tail Power and Missouri River Energy Services
Project Name: Big Stone South to Alexandria 345kV Transmission Line Project
Early Notification Memo

General Project Information:

District(s): D4, D8
County(ies):
City(ies):
Planned Construction Dates:
Location and Reference Points: Refer to enclosed maps/shapefiles for location of MnDOT Trunk Highway crossings.
Project Phase: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pre-Filing (PUC) <input type="checkbox"/> Post-Filing (PUC) <input type="checkbox"/> MnDOT Permitting Phase <input type="checkbox"/> Post-Construction Monitoring and Maintenance
Additional Comments (PUC docket number, public comment/notice number/date, etc.): <hr/>
Tribal Lands: Is any part of project within a reservation or tribal trust land outside of reservation boundaries? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If yes, list name of reservation(s): _____ Has the tribe(s) been made aware of the proposed project? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown <hr/>

Current Land Use(s): <hr/>
Recreational Resources: <hr/>
<input type="checkbox"/> There are parks, trails, wildlife refuges, state water trails, and/or recreation areas in the project vicinity. If checked above, will this project have impacts on these parks, trails, refuges, and/or recreation area? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown If yes, provide additional details: _____
Environmental Justice
<input type="checkbox"/> There are manufactured home parks, apartment buildings, or other identifiable minority or low-income populations in the project vicinity. If checked above, will this project have any impacts [direct or indirect (e.g., noise)] on any manufactured home parks, apartment buildings, and/or other identifiable minority or low-income populations? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown If checked, please describe what measures are proposed to mitigate impacts to environmental justice communities: <hr/>

Utility Company: Otter Tail Power and Missouri River Energy Services
Project Name: Big Stone South to Alexandria 345kV Transmission Line Project
Early Notification Memo

Additional information, by subject area:

Contaminated Material
<input type="checkbox"/> Project includes grading, excavation within MnDOT ROW. Details: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Project includes access and/or travel across MnDOT ROW. Details: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Project is in or near commercial and/or industrial areas.
<input type="checkbox"/> Project may require groundwater dewatering. Details: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Applicant has information that indicates potentially contaminated sites are located along the corridor (e.g., filling stations, dumps, manufacturing, scrap yards, dry cleaners, etc.)
Other pertinent information regarding contaminated material: _____

Regulated Waste and Storage Tanks
<input type="checkbox"/> Project will include building demolition or relocation.
<input type="checkbox"/> Project will include acquisition of property with above ground discarded regulated materials or waste.
<input type="checkbox"/> Project will produce waste that cannot be turned over to construction contractor as excess material (examples: hazardous waste, sandblasting waste, asbestos containing material).
Other pertinent information regarding regulated waste and storage tanks: _____

Vegetation (Map¹ vegetation of interest along roadsides)
<input type="checkbox"/> Project may occur along Trunk Highways in the specific locations below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highway 2 (Reference post 35-37 and 42-48) • Highway 32 (Reference post 35-37, 49-52, 55-58, and 70-74) • Highway 71 (Reference post 81-83) • Highway 56 (Reference post 8-16) • Highway 102 (Reference post 2-6) • Highway 218 (Reference post 20-44)
<input type="checkbox"/> Project may include soil disturbance within MnDOT right-of-way.
<input type="checkbox"/> Project may include soil disturbance under canopy of existing woody vegetation within or near MnDOT right-of-way.
<input type="checkbox"/> Project is located within an area of known sensitive or protected vegetation identified through the Minnesota Conservation Explorer Planning Tool (within one or more of the following data sets): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Native Plant Community • Minnesota Biological Survey (MBS) Railroad Rights-of-Way Prairies • MBS Site of Biodiversity Significance
<input type="checkbox"/> Project is located within an area of known high priority weed infestation (data available through EDDMapS.org).
<input type="checkbox"/> Project may require staging or access within MnDOT right-of-way.
Other pertinent information regarding vegetation: _____

¹ Google Earth .kmz; only available to MnDOT staff.

Utility Company: Otter Tail Power and Missouri River Energy Services
Project Name: Big Stone South to Alexandria 345kV Transmission Line Project
Early Notification Memo

Wetlands and Waterbodies
<input type="checkbox"/> A level 1 wetland/aquatic resource delineation (i.e., mapping exercise using National Wetlands Inventory data, aerial photography and other off-site methods) has been conducted within the project limits.
<input type="checkbox"/> Based on the level 1 wetland delineation, there are wetlands within the project limits.
Details: _____
Does the project have the potential to temporarily impact wetlands? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown Does the project have the potential to permanently impact wetlands (e.g., fill or type conversion)? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown
Details: _____
Other pertinent information regarding wetlands and waterbodies: _____

Wetland and Waterbody Permits—Federal Agencies
<input type="checkbox"/> An US Army Corps of Engineers Section 404 permit may be needed. If checked, the project may qualify for: <input type="checkbox"/> Regional General Permit <input type="checkbox"/> Individual Permit <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown
<input type="checkbox"/> An US Army Corps of Engineers Section 10 (navigable waters) permit may be needed.
<input type="checkbox"/> US Coast Guard coordination and/or permit may be needed (navigable waters).
Other pertinent information regarding wetland and waterbody permitting: _____

Floodplains
<input type="checkbox"/> The project may impact 100-year floodplains. (see FEMA Maps) Details: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> If yes, will the project involve any work below or immediately adjacent to the 100-year floodplain elevation?
<input type="checkbox"/> If yes, will any aboveground structures or impervious surfaces be located within the floodplain?
Other pertinent information regarding floodplains: _____

Historic Roadside Properties Program
<input type="checkbox"/> Project is near or adjacent to known historic roadside properties on MnDOT right of way. Known properties are listed by District, Trunk Highway, Reference Point and Historic Name (of property) in the Historic Roadside Properties on Minnesota Trunk Highways .
<input type="checkbox"/> Project is near or adjacent to structures/elements in the MnDOT right of way older than fifty years but is not included on list above. Structures/elements include historic walls, historic markers, objects, overlooks, buildings, etc.
Other pertinent information regarding Historic Roadside Properties Program: _____

Construction Stormwater and Erosion/Sediment Control
<input type="checkbox"/> Will the project disturb greater than 1 acre of land and require coverage under the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency's (MPCA) General Permit MNR100001?
<input type="checkbox"/> Will the project disturb (excavation, grading, stockpiling, equipment traffic, compaction) at least 5 acres of MnDOT ROW?
<input type="checkbox"/> Will the project result in discharges to special or impaired waters (refer to MNR100001 for examples)?
<input type="checkbox"/> Will the project disturb slopes steeper than 2.5:1 and ditch gradients greater than 5%?
Other pertinent information regarding Construction Stormwater and Erosion/Sediment Control: _____

Utility Company: Otter Tail Power and Missouri River Energy Services
Project Name: Big Stone South to Alexandria 345kV Transmission Line Project
Early Notification Memo

Safety Rest Area Program

- Project may directly or indirectly impact an existing rest area ([rest area locations](#)), travel information center, wayside, or scenic overlook. This includes temporary closures and disruptions in access to rest area of more than 48 hours.

Other pertinent information regarding Safety Rest Areas:

Scenic Byways

- Project is within 7 miles of a Scenic Byway (maps: Enterprise MnDOT Mapping Application [[EMMA](#)], Right of Way Mapping and Monitoring [[ROWMM](#)]).

If yes, list the Scenic Byway(s) and provide the nearest distance: _____

Height of tallest project structure: _____

Other pertinent information regarding Scenic Byways:

Railroad Coordination and Railroad Agreement (See [map](#) for Rail Safety and Coordination Project Managers)

- Construction activity is expected within 50 feet of the centerline of an individual pair of railroad (RR) tracks
- Project limits are estimated to be within 600 feet of any RR tracks
- Project involves a detour that directs traffic across a RR grade crossing

Other pertinent information regarding Railroads:

Airport Influence Area

- Project is within five (5) miles of an airport. (For Airport locations see Airport Influence Maps: use the 5-mile criterion, not the influence area).

If yes, provide name of airport, and distance/direction from project: _____

Other pertinent information regarding Airports:

Cultural Resources (Historic Properties and Tribal Consultation) Review

Provide narrative summary of relevant information regarding cultural resources, surveys, and agency consultation (*e.g., summary of archaeology, architecture/historic properties surveys to date, status of consultation with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), Minnesota Indian Affairs Council (MIAC), Office of the State Archaeologist (OSA), Tribal partners, etc.*):

Utility Company: Otter Tail Power and Missouri River Energy Services
Project Name: Big Stone South to Alexandria 345kV Transmission Line Project
Early Notification Memo

Protected Species Program Review

Project has a federal nexus (e.g., federal permitting, funding, or crosses federal property).

If so, list federal agencies and associated permitting/funding: _____

The project bisects or borders federally-designated critical habitat for threatened and/or endangered species. For more information, see: [https://gt_FWS_HQ_ES_Critical_Habitat | US Fish and Wildlife Service Open Data \(arcgis.com\)](https://gt_FWS_HQ_ES_Critical_Habitat_US_Fish_and_Wildlife_Service_Open_Data_arcgis.com)

Project occurs within or adjacent (within 0.5 miles) to a bumble bee High Potential Zone. See: <https://www.arcgis.com/home/item.html?id=2716d871f88042a2a56b8001a1f1acae>

The project may involve tree clearing on or near MnDOT ROW.

Yes No Unknown Estimated quantity of tree clearing: _____ acres

For tree clearing timing requirements, please see [Technical Memorandum No. 22-05-ENV-01 May 11, 2022](#).²

Please provide other pertinent information regarding protected species (e.g., summary of agency consultations with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service/DNR, natural resource site assessments, endangered species survey reports, DNR Natural Heritage Information System [NHIS] or USFW Information for Planning and Consultation [IPaC] reviews, etc.): _____

**NOTE TO MnDOT REVIEWERS: SEE SUPPLEMENTAL MAPS AND
INFORMATION REFERENCED IN THESE RESPONSES**

² Technical Memo is in the process of being amended and link to be updated.

From: [Kotch Egstad, Stacy \(DOT\)](#)
To: [OTP Project Management Area](#); [Langston, Todd](#); [Weiers, Jason](#); [Scheidecker, Kevin J.](#); [Laber, Shauna I.](#); [Vinson, George H.](#); [Hanley, Jennifer](#); [Malkin, Devin](#); [Peterson, Monica](#); [Richard Dahl](#); [Brian Zavesky](#); [Oh, Jessica \(DOT\)](#); [Gildersleeve, John \(DOT\)](#); [Illies, Jeff \(DOT\)](#); [Kack, Corey \(DOT\)](#); [Flatau, Jeremy \(DOT\)](#); [Bakken, Shane \(DOT\)](#); [Minske, Daryn \(DOT\)](#); [Lundberg, Thomas \(DOT\)](#); [Hartzheim, Paul \(DOT\)](#); [Carson, Tara \(DOT\)](#)
Cc: [Maanum, Riley K.](#); [Swenson, Jerilyn \(DOT\)](#); [Tracy, Darel](#); [Britz, Jordan](#)
Subject: RE: Big Stone South - Alexandria 345 kV Line Discussion with MNDOT
Date: Friday, December 15, 2023 1:50:00 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.jpg](#)
[image003.jpg](#)
[image004.jpg](#)
[image005.png](#)
[image006.png](#)
[image007.png](#)
[image008.png](#)
[image009.png](#)
[image010.png](#)
[MnDOT D4 STIP CHIP.zip](#)

This is an **EXTERNAL** email. DO NOT open attachments or click links in suspicious email.

As promised, see attached CHIP and STIP information.

Stacy Kotch Egstad
Utility Routing & Siting Coordinator | Office of Land Management
Minnesota Department of Transportation
395 John Ireland Blvd Mailstop 678
St. Paul, MN. 55155
O: 651-366-4635 (Thur)
mndot.gov/



-----Original Appointment-----

From: OTP Project Management Area <OTP_ProjecManagementArea@otpc.com>
Sent: Monday, November 27, 2023 3:27 PM
To: OTP Project Management Area; Langston, Todd; Weiers, Jason; Scheidecker, Kevin J.; Laber, Shauna I.; Vinson, George H.; Hanley, Jennifer; devin.malkin@hdrinc.com; monica.peterson@hdrinc.com; Richard Dahl; Brian Zavesky; Oh, Jessica (She/Her/Hers) (DOT); Kotch Egstad, Stacy (DOT); Gildersleeve, John (DOT); Illies, Jeff (DOT); Kack, Corey (DOT); Flatau, Jeremy (DOT); Bakken, Shane (DOT); Minske, Daryn (DOT); Lundberg, Thomas (DOT); Hartzheim, Paul (DOT); Carson, Tara (DOT)
Cc: Maanum, Riley K.; Swenson, Jerilyn (DOT); Tracy, Darel; Britz, Jordan
Subject: Big Stone South - Alexandria 345 kV Line Discussion with MNDOT
When: Friday, December 15, 2023 11:30 AM-12:20 PM (UTC-06:00) Central Time (US & Canada).
Where: CONF_Project_Management_Room_(Teams Hardware_Enabled)

Some people who received this message don't often get email from ahaugen@otpc.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

This message may be from an external email source.

Do not select links or open attachments unless verified. Report all suspicious emails to Minnesota IT Services Security Operations Center.

Continued discussion with MN DOT to give an update on preliminary routing efforts for the Big Stone South - Alexandria 345 kV line and begin a discussion on potential routing opportunities for the new 345 kV line through the project area along existing state and federal highways. The most current project map showing the current routing corridors can be found on our website at: www.BigStoneSouthtoAlexandria.com

As part of our upcoming discussion, we want to also learn more about the setback requirements that may apply to federal and state highways.

Microsoft Teams meeting

Join on your computer, mobile app or room device

[Click here to join the meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 213 717 486 967

Passcode: R4CAtP

[Download Teams](#) | [Join on the web](#)

[Learn More](#) | [Meeting options](#)

Meeting set up on behalf of Jason Weiers



Alisha Haugen
Administrative Assistant
Transmission Project Management

218-739-8737

ahaugen@otpc.com



***Confidentiality Notice:** The information included in this e-mail and any attachment is intended only for the personal and confidential use of the individual or entity to which they are addressed. This message, including attachments, may be or may contain privileged and confidential customer information. If you as the reader are not the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that you have received this communication in error and that any retention, review, use or distribution of this communication or the information contained in it is strictly prohibited. If you received this e-mail in error, destroy it immediately and please notify the sender of this message.*

From: Kotch Egstad, Stacy (DOT) <stacy.kotch@state.mn.us>

Sent: Thursday, June 6, 2024 8:27 AM

To: Hanley, Jennifer <jennifer.hanley@hdrinc.com>; Langston, Todd <tlangston@otpc.com>; Weiers, Jason <jweiers@otpc.com>; Humburg, Joshua <jhumburg@otpc.com>; Scheidecker, Kevin J. <kscheidecker@otpc.com>; Laber, Shauna I. <slaber@otpc.com>; Vinson, George H. <gvinson@otpc.com>; Malkin, Devin <devin.malkin@hdrinc.com>; Peterson, Monica <monica.peterson@hdrinc.com>; Richard Dahl <richard.dahl@mrenergy.com>

Cc: Maanum, Riley K. <rmaanum@otpc.com>; Tracy, Darel <darel.tracy@powereng.com>; Britz, Jordan <jordan.britz@powereng.com>; Shearer, Melissa S. <mshearer@otpc.com>; Sedarski, Joe <Joe.Sedarski@hdrinc.com>; Raine, Katie <Katie.Raine@hdrinc.com>

Subject: RE: Big Stone South - Alexandria (BSSA) 345 kV Line MNDOT Meeting Summary_20240408

CAUTION: [EXTERNAL] This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Thank you for the quick delivery of notes, much appreciated.

I wanted to clarify/correct something that John G. stated in the meeting regarding pole placement allowance within the US 75 ROW. Poles and foundations **are** allowed within the ROW in that area. However, per standard practices, they would be required to be pushed as far back to the road ROW line as possible.

If discoveries are made during the ENM process that prohibit or alter that allowance, I assume we'd all want to discuss that as soon as possible.

Thanks again for your continued early coordination,

Stacy Kotch Egstad

Utility Routing & Siting Coordinator | Office of Land Management

Minnesota Department of Transportation

395 John Ireland Blvd Mailstop 678

St. Paul, MN. 55155

651-358-0786

mndot.gov/



From: Hanley, Jennifer <jennifer.hanley@hdrinc.com>

Sent: Thursday, April 11, 2024 8:23 AM

To: Langston, Todd <tlangston@otpc.com>; Weiers, Jason <jweiers@otpc.com>; Humburg, Joshua <jhumburg@otpc.com>; Scheidecker, Kevin J. <kscheidecker@otpc.com>; Laber, Shauna I. <slaber@otpc.com>; Vinson, George H. <gvinson@otpc.com>; Malkin, Devin <devin.malkin@hdrinc.com>; Peterson, Monica <monica.peterson@hdrinc.com>; Richard Dahl <richard.dahl@mrenergy.com>; Brian Zavesky <brian.zavesky@mrenergy.com>; Oh, Jessica (She/Her/Hers) (DOT) <jessica.oh@state.mn.us>; Kotch Egstad, Stacy (DOT) <stacy.kotch@state.mn.us>; Gildersleeve, John (DOT) <john.gildersleeve@state.mn.us>; Illies, Jeff (DOT) <jeff.illies@state.mn.us>; Kack, Corey (DOT) <corey.kack@state.mn.us>; Flatau, Jeremy (DOT) <jeremy.flatau@state.mn.us>; Bakken, Shane (DOT) <Shane.Bakken@state.mn.us>; Minske, Daryn (DOT) <daryn.minske@state.mn.us>; Lundberg, Thomas (DOT) <thomas.lundberg@state.mn.us>; Hartzheim, Paul (DOT) <Paul.Hartzheim@state.mn.us>; Carson, Tara (DOT) <tara.carson@state.mn.us>

Cc: Maanum, Riley K. <rmaanum@otpc.com>; Swenson, Jerilyn (DOT) <Jerilyn.Swenson@state.mn.us>; Tracy, Darel <darel.tracy@powereng.com>; Britz, Jordan <jordan.britz@powereng.com>; Shearer, Melissa S. <mshearer@otpc.com>; Sedarski, Joe <Joe.Sedarski@hdrinc.com>; Raine, Katie <Katie.Raine@hdrinc.com>

Subject: Big Stone South - Alexandria (BSSA) 345 kV Line MNDOT Meeting Summary_20240408

Some people who received this message don't often get email from jennifer.hanley@hdrinc.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

This message may be from an external email source.

Do not select links or open attachments unless verified. Report all suspicious emails to Minnesota IT Services Security Operations Center.

All,

Thanks again for taking the time to discuss the BSSA project with us, we look forward to the continued collaboration with MnDOT as we work through the routing process. The meeting summary is attached. If you have any comments or edits, please let me know.

Jen

Jennifer Hanley, PE*
D 701.353.6139

hdrinc.com/follow-us

*MN, ND, SD, MT and TX

From: [Scheidecker, Kevin J.](#)
To: [Kotch Egstad, Stacy \(DOT\)](#); [Hartzheim, Paul \(DOT\)](#)
Cc: [Hanley, Jennifer](#); [Weiers, Jason](#); [Humburg, Joshua](#); [Brian Zavesky](#); [Brusven, Christina](#); [Sedarski, Joe](#)
Subject: BSSA Project ENM
Date: Friday, August 23, 2024 4:25:34 PM
Attachments: [image002.png](#)
[Outlook-bedh2yo4.png](#)

CAUTION: [EXTERNAL] This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good Afternoon Stacy and Paul,

As follow up to earlier meetings with you concerning the Big Stone South to Alexandria (BSSA) high voltage transmission line project, we have completed the two MnDOT Early Notification Memo forms and prepared other required data and information to supplement this request.

Please use the link below to access a file sharing site where you will find the following (please note some of the shapefiles are quite large):

Utility Project Review ENM (Word document);
Utility ENM Applicant Checklist (Word document);
ENM Resources Table (Excel spreadsheet – table required in the ENM forms);
PDF maps of the ENM areas crossed by the proposed Project (within a labeled folder);
Shapefiles of the ENM areas (areas the Project crosses MnDOT roadways); and,
A series of three shapefiles – Part 1 includes Project Component, Part 2 includes Base Data, and Part 3 includes Resource Data.

Should you have any issues accessing these files, please let us know. We've given you access to these files via your email address as well as the other MNDOT staff that have been in our meetings if you choose to forward the information. If you have any questions about the information being provided or need other information, we are available to discuss and provide as needed.

We anticipate submitting a draft Route Permit Application (RPA) to the MN Department of Commerce for their review in September and will include MnDOT responses in the RPA document.

We appreciate your assistance with the BSSA Project.

[FINAL MnDOT ENM Submittal Docs Aug 23, 2024](#)



Kevin Scheidecker
Senior Environmental Specialist
Environmental Services
Direct: 218-739-8773
kscheidecker@otpc.com



Office of Land Management
395 John Ireland Blvd MS 678
St. Paul, MN 55155

September 23, 2024

Jason Weiers
Manager, Transmission Project Development
Otter Tail Power Company

Re: MnDOT Early Coordination for the 345kV Big Stone South to Alexandria Transmission Project (Project)

Mr. Weiers,

The Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) has performed a cursory review of the Project information available, including information exchanged during multiple Project meetings and via MnDOT's requested Utility Early Notification Memo process. Multiple MnDOT offices and resource groups reviewed the information available to-date and offer the following comments and recommendations for consideration.

Project review information notes that while the overall design currently avoids transmission pole placement within MnDOT trunk highway right-of-way (TH ROW), there may be aerial encroachment of the TH ROW. MnDOT understands the instruction and occasional necessity of Project collocation within existing trunk highway rights-of-way. It is also understood that changes may occur during the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (MPUC) permitting process that could alter the current, proposed route. A permit from MnDOT is required for any utility affecting TH ROW and easements do not apply (pole placement and aerial encroachment of arms, line, or blowout). This in mind, the opportunity to review any Project route changes that affect MnDOT TH ROW is requested.

MnDOT has previously provided the Project team with both the Statewide Capital Highway Investment Plan (CHIP) and the affected District 4 CHIP. Please keep this information in mind, as well as any updates, as you plan and construct this Project. Additionally, MnDOT's District 4 Projects page is found here: [MnDOT Projects - West Central Minnesota District 4](#).

General Transmission Line Routing Considerations

- To avoid sight distance impairment, poles may not be placed within site corners of at-grade road crossings
- Poles are to be placed at a 50-foot minimum from any bridge structure and may require review and approval from MnDOT's District 4 Bridge Office
- Poles must be placed outside of clear zones¹ and should be expected to exist within the outer 5 feet of the TH ROW (for pole collocation, if applicable)

¹ [Clear Zones | FHWA \(dot.gov\)](#) A Clear Zone is an unobstructed, traversable roadside area that allows a driver to stop safely, or regain control of a vehicle that has left the roadway.

- The Project should make every effort to collocate with or otherwise ensure that MnDOT trunk highways are not “boxed in” by existing above ground utility infrastructure for the length of any line that may parallel within road right-of-way²
- Additional location considerations include:
 - Minimizing the need for later adjustments to accommodate future highway improvements
 - Minimizing risk to environmentally sensitive TH ROW areas
 - Permit access for line service or maintenance that minimizes interference to highway traffic

Additional MnDOT district and functional group comments and recommendations can be found in *Attachment 1* of this letter. Special attention should be paid to comments in **bold** as they refer to specific guidance, requested deliverables, or action items that may need to be resolved prior to issuance of any MnDOT downstream permits.

For any new construction associated with this project, including new pole placement, staging, access, and transmission line stringing in areas over/within the state trunk highway system, additional consultation would be required. MnDOT requires adherence to the following statute, rule, policy, and other permitting requirements:

- [MnDOT Utility Accommodation Policy](#)
- [MnDOT Utility Accommodation and Coordination Manual](#)
- [MnDOT Transmission Line Guidelines](#)
- [MnDOT Environmental Requirements](#)

MnDOT appreciates the Project team’s significant early coordination efforts. We recommend continued, close coordination throughout Project planning, permitting and construction as it pertains to Project areas that may affect the state trunk highway system.

Sincerely,

Stacy Kotch Eggstad

Utility Routing & Siting Coordinator | Office of Land Management
Minnesota Department of Transportation
stacy.kotch@state.mn.us

Attachment 1: MnDOT OES & Functional Group Comments

Equal Opportunity Employer

² [MN Rules 8810.3500](#) There shall be only a single pole line on the trunk highway right-of-way on either side of the center line thereof, unless otherwise authorized in the special provisions of the permit for construction.



ATTACHMENT 1

BIG STONE SOUTH TO ALEXANDRIA 345KV PROJECT

MNDOT OES & FUNCTIONAL GROUP COMMENTS

Resource	Comments
Federal and State-listed Protected Species	<p><i>The Applicant should consult with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) with respect to listed species which may occur within the project area, and limit ground disturbances to the extent practical in areas of semi-natural or natural vegetation. State-listed threatened and endangered species may be located along portions of the route along MnDOT right-of-way (ROW). We recommend the Applicant consult with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) to identify recorded locations and conduct species-specific surveys prior to construction to confirm locations prior to identifying pole placement and temporary workspaces. MnDOT requests copies of all biological field survey data/reports within its ROW be submitted to MnDOT.</i></p>
Federal and State-listed Protected Species	<p><i>Herbicide use must be minimized during construction and future maintenance occurring on MnDOT ROW. If used, herbicide must be applied via hand-held spot treatments applied to individual plants. Avoid broadcast applications of herbicides without further consultation to MnDOT Office of Environmental Stewardship. Restrict all activities to avoid the application of insecticides and fungicides on MnDOT ROW.</i></p>
Federal and State-listed Protected Species	<p><i>The Applicant must establish native vegetation in areas that are not proposed to be mowed more than once per year, and must include mowing and spot treatment control to establish seeded vegetation, as shown in the MnDOT Seeding Manual (see https://www.dot.state.mn.us/environment/erosion/vegetation.html)</i></p>
Avian Protection	<p><i>The Applicant should minimize tree clearing/trimming within MnDOT ROW to extent possible. Tree clearing may be restricted to winter months (November 1 - April 14). On MnDOT ROW, additional tree clearing restrictions will typically be included in MnDOT's utility permit. If construction activities occur within the nesting season for migratory birds, conduct pre-construction nest surveys. If active nests are discovered, implement a Migratory Bird Plan to avoid and minimize impacts.</i></p>

<p>Contaminated Materials Management</p>	<p><i>It is the responsibility of the Applicant to identify the potential to encounter contaminated materials (soil/groundwater/vapor) on or within 500-feet of MnDOT ROW. The Applicant should provide to MnDOT all environmental due diligence documents (e.g., desktop review, Phase I Environmental Site Assessments, Phase II), as applicable/available. If access or sampling is proposed in MnDOT's ROW, a permit will be required (see https://www.dot.state.mn.us/utility/forms.html).</i></p> <p><i>Contaminated materials encountered during any work within MnDOT ROW is required to be managed in accordance with applicable federal/state and location regulations and/or guidance documents.</i></p> <p><i>Additional regulatory file review is recommended at the following locations:</i> <i>Pope County: TH 29 south of I-94/TH 29, multiple regulatory sites identified.</i> <i>Swift County: TH 59 at 60th St NW, multiple environmental monitoring wells identified.</i></p>
<p>Regulated Waste and Storage Tanks</p>	<p><i>It is the responsibility of the Applicant to report the presence of aboveground storage tanks (ASTs) within project limits. If ASTs are identified, contact Regulated Materials Staff. Asbestos, solid waste, regulated and/or hazardous waste encountered during construction activities are required to be managed in accordance with applicable federal/state and local regulations and/or guidance documents.</i></p>
<p>Roadside Vegetation Management</p>	<p><i>1. Applicant to develop a Vegetation Management/Pesticide/Revegetation Plan and submit for MnDOT review/approval. Any proposed pesticides and application rates should be submitted to MnDOT for approval (NOTE: Use of herbicides or similar chemistries may be limited to spot treatments via hand tools only [i.e., no equipment mounted broadcast applications]).</i></p> <p><i>a. Herbicide used on MnDOT ROW must be labeled for use on rights-of-way.</i></p> <p><i>b. Pesticide applicators must be state- certified in Categories A and J (see: https://www.mda.state.mn.us/pesticide-fertilizer/pesticide-applicator-license-types).</i></p> <p><i>c. Herbicide records for work on MnDOT's ROW must be provided to the local MnDOT District Offices.</i></p> <p><i>2. Prior to construction, the Applicant should conduct a field survey for noxious weeds in all project workspaces within MnDOT ROW. If any state prohibited or county designated noxious weeds (https://www.mda.state.mn.us/plants-insects/minnesota-noxious-weed-list) are identified within construction workspaces on MnDOT's ROW, the contractor must clean equipment before leaving and/or entering MnDOT ROW to prevent the spread of listed weeds. All efforts must be made to prevent transportation of propagative parts to new areas. Movement of propagative parts of these plants is prohibited by Minnesota Statutes, Section</i></p>

	<p>18.82.</p> <p>3. If transportation of soil or plant parts from the site is necessary, a transportation permit will be required. Questions regarding noxious weed law or noxious weed transportation permits can be directed to the Minnesota Department of Agriculture at emilie.justen@state.mn.us.</p> <p>4. If ground disturbance occurs on MnDOT's ROW, the area must be restored to a similar vegetation cover, except when that vegetation will endanger safe operation or maintenance of the utility/facility. Seeding should match existing surrounding vegetation, and native seed must have a yellow tag through the Source Identified Native Seed Program. Any seed that is to be planted on MnDOT's ROW must be a mix approved in MnDOT's seeding manual: https://www.dot.state.mn.us/environment/erosion/pdf/seedingmanual.pdf.</p> <p>5. MnDOT reserves the right to conduct its own post-construction inspection on MnDOT ROW to verify restoration status prior to the permittee filing their Notification of Restoration Completion with the Commission.</p> <p>6. If trees need to be removed, prior to any work being completed under this permit, a MnDOT Roadside Vegetation Management Unit person should conduct a valuation of the potential impacted vegetation, and the permit requestor will be required to pay MnDOT for the value of any lost resources due to their work.</p>
<p>Wetlands Coordination</p>	<p>Any ground disturbance (e.g., fill, excavation, direct or indirect drainage) of regulated aquatic resources must comply with all applicable federal Clean Water Act Section 404, Minnesota Wetland Conservation Act (WCA), and MNDNR Public Waters Work requirements. If ground-disturbing activities are proposed within MnDOT ROW, MnDOT may require an aquatic resource delineation to be performed throughout the areas of proposed disturbance. The delineation would require approval by MnDOT OES, as the Local Government Unit (LGU) responsible for administering the WCA within state TH ROW.</p> <p>The project must restore any temporary impacts and avoid, minimize, and mitigate any permanent impacts to delineated aquatic resources to the extent required by state and federal law. This includes implementing Best Management Practices (BMPs) during construction to minimize aquatic resource disturbance, including compaction, erosion, and sedimentation.</p> <p>MnDOT reserves the right to conduct field inspections within its ROW.</p>

<p>Water Permits - Federal Agencies, Floodplains</p>	<p><i>*If floodplains are crossed by the project:</i> The Applicant should make efforts to avoid placement of structures or fill in floodplain areas to minimize adverse impacts and increased risk of flooding. The Applicant should engage with local floodplain permitting authorities to determine permitting and other requirements. The project may also involve work affecting waters of the US in which case a Section 404 authorization from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers would be needed.</p>
<p>Cultural Resources</p>	<p>As documented in the Early Notification Memo (ENM) for Utility Projects dated August 23, 2024, the Section titled “Cultural Resources (Historic Properties and Tribal Consultation) Review” notes that “A cultural resource desktop literature review was conducted between December 2023 and May 2024 using inventory files from the Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and the Minnesota Office of the State Archaeologist (OSA) online portals. The research identified previously recorded precontact archaeological sites, architecture/historical properties, and unrecorded historic cemeteries within the Proposed Routes. A stand-alone cultural resource literature review report was not completed.” The MnDOT CRU does not know why a report was not completed documenting the results of the referenced literature review.</p> <p>For the area termed “ENM-1” along I-94 in Douglas County: one unconfirmed (alpha) site lead intersects or is adjacent to MnDOT R/W (21DLf – Section 36, T128N, R38W). This site lead is currently unevaluated for the NRHP. An unrecorded cemetery intersects or is adjacent to MnDOT R/W (Sunset Memorial Cemetery – T128N, R38W) and is recorded at the Township-level.</p> <p>For the area termed “ENM-19” along Highway 12 in Big Stone County: An unrecorded cemetery intersects or is adjacent to MnDOT R/W (Immanuel Lutheran Church, Odessa Immanuel Lutheran Cemetery – Sec. 11, T121N, R45W) and is recorded at the PLS forty level.</p> <p>For the area termed “ENM-21” along US Highway (I) 75/Trunk Highway (TH) 7 in Big Stone County: two recorded archaeological/mortuary sites are intersected or adjacent to MnDOT R/W (21BS0008 – Sec. 15, T121N, R46W & 21BS0009 – Sec. 15, T121N, R46W). Should ground disturbing activities be proposed in this location additional coordination with the Office of the State Archaeologist (OSA) and the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council (MIAC) should be anticipated to be required pursuant to Minn. Stat. 307.08. Per MnDOT policy, additional coordination with interested Tribal Nations should be anticipated to be required. These sites are currently unevaluated for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP).</p>

The Applicant should provide summary of cultural field surveys and coordination with SHPO and other agencies and parties, as applicable, to date when submitting permit requests. If surveys have not been completed, provide an anticipated schedule for completion. If the Applicant is aware of or becomes aware of significant cultural resources findings in or adjacent to MnDOT R/W, please contact our office at CulturalResources.dot@state.mn.us. In addition, the Applicant shall prepare a Post Review Discovery Plan (PRDP1) and submit to MnDOT for review; contact information for CRU staff must be included in the PRDP. This plan should outline the steps to be followed in the event of an unanticipated discovery of archaeological materials, human remains, or burials, and include language specific to the coordination with MnDOT when a discovery is on MnDOT ROW. MnDOT Cultural Resources Unit (CRU) staff should be notified (CulturalResources.dot@state.mn.us) within 24 hours in the event of an unanticipated find on or adjacent to MnDOT property during construction.

Additional archaeological investigations (e.g., literature reviews, reconnaissance surveys [if warranted]) may be required where ground disturbing activities and/or temporary easements may be located within MnDOT ROW. Investigations should include in-field inspections to document areas of soil disturbance and to identify potentially unknown archaeological sites within areas of moderate to high archaeological potential. A PRDP should be developed for the project in advance of construction and be provided to MnDOT CRU.

<p>FHWA National Scenic Byway Program</p>	<p><i>Under Title 23, USC, Section 162, National Scenic Byways Program; Scenic byways are designated as State, National or All-American because they possess one or more of six intrinsic qualities: scenic, cultural, recreational, natural, historic, and archaeological qualities. An analysis of the physical and visual impact on each of these six intrinsic qualities should be conducted at each proposed crossing locations and/or collocated segments and where the proposed utility is within 7 miles of a byway to determine the route with the least adverse impact on the byway routes and corridors. At a minimum, this analysis should include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Streetview Imagery or on-the-ground photographs</i> • <i>Photo / Visual Simulations (existing conditions and post-construction). During early planning phases of project, this may consist of typical drawings/photos of similar projects that have already been constructed. Later in Project design, this should include site-specific assessments depicting photo and visual simulations for users of the byway.</i> <p><i>Each scenic byway has a leaders' group and/or stakeholder group; these groups should be contacted as part of the environmental review process. Scenic easements and areas should be investigated to identify any prohibitions or limitations that apply to land uses in the vicinity of the scenic byway. Relevant state and federal regulations governing scenic byways can be found in the MnDOT Utility Accommodation on Highway Right of Way Policy and Coordination Manual (both of which can be accessed here: https://www.dot.state.mn.us/policy/operations/oe002.html), 23 U.S.C. s. 162, and 23 CFR s. 645.209 (h).</i></p> <p><i>Mitigation measures should be recommended for unavoidable impacts on intrinsic qualities within the scenic byway corridors.</i></p>
<p>Environmental Assessment Unit / Environmental Review</p>	<p><i>If the Project will involve any construction activities within MnDOT ROW, the Applicant (and/or their Contractor) must comply with the following, relating to the conduct of work on the Project or to individuals engaged in work for the Project or employed on the Project:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>(1) All applicable State and Federal laws and regulations</i> <i>(2) Orders and decrees of bodies and tribunals with lawful jurisdiction over the work</i> <i>(3) Such local ordinances as are applicable to the work</i> <p><i>MnDOT's Environmental Assessment Unit reserves the right to request copies of the Applicant's environmental permits for work within its ROW as well as any inspection reports completed by the Applicant and/or its contractor.</i></p>

<p>Soil Erosion and Sediment Control / Stormwater</p>	<p><i>Given the size of the Project, we assume the Applicant will be required to obtain coverage under the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency's (MPCA) Construction Stormwater General Permit (MNR100001). If a portion of the final alignment is located within MnDOT ROW, we request that the Applicant submit a copy of its Construction Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP)/erosion and sediment control details to MnDOT OES for review prior to filing its Notice of Intent for coverage under MPCA's MNR100001. In addition, MnDOT reserves the right to conduct inspections of the project for portions that are within MnDOT ROW during and/or after construction. The Applicant (and/or its contractor) will be the Owner on this permit for any work on MnDOT ROW - MnDOT will not be a co-Applicant.</i></p> <p><i>Soil compaction caused by equipment traffic and haul roads on MnDOT ROW must be mitigated using techniques described in the MnDOT Facility Design Guide Chapter 13 (https://roaddesign.dot.state.mn.us/facilitydesign.aspx).</i></p> <p><i>Temporary and permanent erosion and sediment control measures on MnDOT ROW must follow standards in the MnDOT Facility Design Guide Chapter 13 (https://roaddesign.dot.state.mn.us/facilitydesign.aspx).</i></p> <p><i>Seeding on MnDOT ROW must follow standards in MnDOT Seeding Manual (https://www.dot.state.mn.us/environment/erosion/vegetation.html).</i></p> <p><i>Any erosion control blanket must be free of plastic netting and on the MnDOT Approved Products List for Rolled Erosion Prevention products. In addition, any hydraulic mulch used up-slope of Public Waters must be free of plastic fiber additives.</i></p>
<p>Env Modelling and Testing (Noise)</p>	<p><i>The Applicant needs to take all precautions to avoid impacts to existing noise mitigation devices (e.g., noise walls) and/or applications within MnDOT's ROW. If the Project has the potential to impact noise mitigation infrastructure, please notify MnDOT's Environmental Modelling and Testing Unit group for further guidance.</i></p>
<p>District Permitting Staff</p>	<p><i>Direct coordination with applicable District Permitting Staff will be required for all downstream MnDOT utility permits. MnDOT permitting policies and information can be found at: http://www.dot.state.mn.us/utility/index. The utility owner will be required to apply for a utility accommodation on trunk highway right of way (form 2525) https://olpa.dot.state.mn.us/OLPA/.</i></p> <p><i>No work can be performed on the highway right of way without an issued permit from the District 4 permits office.</i></p>

<p>District Planning Staff</p>	<p><u>State Highway current construction projects:</u> Please note that MnDOT projects on state highways may affect travel routes to the project site, and/or may alter access points. To learn which projects might be in the area please review the current MnDOT construction projects website at https://www.dot.state.mn.us/d4.</p> <p><u>State Highway planned and future projects:</u> MnDOT plans projects along state highways up to 10 years in advance. Please check with District 4's projected ten-year state project list at https://www.dot.state.mn.us/d4/ to see which projects might coincide with your project. Note that project timing can change, particularly for projects that are identified as being planned for 5 to 10 years in the future. You may also reach out to the District Planning contact or District Project Manager for more information.</p> <p><u>Access:</u> Because there is a direct connection between crash rates and access density on state trunk highways, project proposers should plan to utilize access points on local roads whenever possible. Access from MnDOT ROW whether at an existing driveway or new driveway is not guaranteed, and new highway access permits will be required in either case. Please contact District Permitting staff for more information about permit applications, processes, and requirements. A permanent access would not be allowed, but we may allow a temporary access to the right of way after a District review of the proposed entry point.</p>
<p>Design Support / Safety and Operations Management</p>	<p><u>Powerlines:</u> Lateral placement of utility poles or non-crashworthy must be placed outside the roadway's clear zone and should avoid the need for traffic barrier shielding. Any side slope grading within the roadway clear zone must not result in a hazardous geometry for run-off vehicles. Place poles as far out of the clear zone as possible. Additional distance from the roadway is encouraged, for roadway and driver safety. Added poles must not be placed closer to the trunk highway than existing poles. Utility poles/devices must not obstruct intersection sight lines. Appurtenances protruding more than four inches above the ground line shall be located outside the clear zone and as close to the edge of the ROW as practical, and must not obstruct intersection sight lines. Appurtenances within the roadway clear zone must be crashworthy. See MnDOT's Facility Design Guide - Chapter 10 (https://roaddesign.dot.state.mn.us/facilitydesign.aspx) for a definition of "crashworthy" and other pertinent information.</p> <p><u>Route Selection:</u> Note that locating non-crashworthy items along a roadway does not guarantee that they won't be struck by errant vehicles. The clear zone distances are targeted towards allowing approximately 80 to 85 percent of all run-off-the-road vehicles to recover or come to a safe stop. If the routes being considered are otherwise equal, it would be preferable to select the route that places the fewest utility poles within MnDOT right of way.</p>

	<p><i>Access Roads: Additional access points from the trunk highway are discouraged and should be avoided. For proposed access roads, the transverse slope design for permanent access roads connected to the trunk highway must be 1V:6H or flatter on the roadside and 1V:10 or flatter if in the median. See Transverse Slopes in the MnDOT's Facility Design Guide - Chapter 10.</i></p> <p><i>For other technical components and requirements for utility owners regarding the location, design, and methods for installing, adjusting, accommodating, and maintaining utility facilities on such rights of way, please refer to MnDOT Utility Accommodation and Coordination Manual, found here: https://www.dot.state.mn.us/utility/projectdelivery.html.</i></p> <p><i>To understand why these rules and comments exist, intersection related and roadway departure crashes are two of the leading types of fatal and serious injury crashes on Minnesota Roadways. These comments reflect measures needed to continue to prevent these types of crashes. To find out more about Minnesota safety efforts, please see our Strategic Highway Safety Plan: https://www.dot.state.mn.us/trafficeng/safety/shsp/ .</i></p>
Blowing Snow Control / Snow Fences	<p><i>Based on our review, we have identified living and/or structural snow fences in the vicinity of your project - ENM_ID_No. ENM-19. Snow fences have been established in a collaborative effort with landowners to trap snow from blowing across and accumulating on state highways. If the utility project adversely impacts a snow fence causing the loss of blowing snow control functionality, the utility will must work with MnDOT to find a blowing snow control solution. Please refer to http://www.dot.state.mn.us/environment/livingsnowfence/ and Chapter 15D - Design for Blowing Snow Control found in MnDOT Facility Design Guide (https://roaddesign.dot.state.mn.us/facilitydesign.aspx) for more information.</i></p>
Railroad	<p><i>Railroads are private entities that conduct their own permitting process for utility impacts. MnDOT does not have jurisdiction in these areas. It is recommended that project coordination occurs directly with the affected railroad: Minnesota Rail Viewer Application (MnRail).</i></p>
Airport Influence Area	<p><i>No response to-date.</i></p>

Minnesota Indian Affairs Council

DATE	TYPE	FROM	TO	SUBJECT
April 21, 2023	Email/Attachment	Applicants	Minnesota Indian Affairs Council (MIAC)	Proposed BSSA Project request for comments
November 10, 2023	Letter	Applicants	MIAC	Initial outreach for BSSA Project and request for comments
December 4, 2023	Email	MIAC	Applicants	Response to proposed BSSA Project request for comments/request to be a consulting party
June 19, 2024	Email	Applicants	MIAC	Consultation with tribes Attachment: Additional information on the BSSA Project route

From: [Weiers, Jason](#)
To: shannon.geshick@state.mn.us
Cc: [Hanley, Jennifer](#)
Subject: Big Stone South - Alexandria Transmission Line Project
Date: Friday, April 21, 2023 2:25:45 PM
Attachments: [OtterTailPower_BSSA_Open_House_Invite.pdf](#)

CAUTION: [EXTERNAL] This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Greetings Executive Director Geshick,

Several Minnesota energy companies are proposing to build new transmission projects in the Upper Midwest to improve electric reliability, reduce transmission congestion, and increase access to renewable energy in the region.

Otter Tail Power Company (Otter Tail Power) and Missouri River Energy Services (MRES) are partnering to develop, construct, and co-own a 345-kilovolt (kV) transmission line (the Project) from Big Stone South to Alexandria. The Big Stone South – Alexandria project will involve a new transmission line between the Big Stone South substation near Big Stone City, South Dakota to the Alexandria Substation near Alexandria, Minnesota. The Project Area being studied for the new 345 kV line is located in Big Stone County, South Dakota, and Swift, Stevens, Grant, Pope, and Douglas Counties in Minnesota.

The Big Stone South – Alexandria project is part of a larger Big Stone South – Alexandria – Big Oaks project, with the Alexandria – Big Oaks project being led by Xcel Energy.

The Big Stone South – Alexandria – Big Oaks project is one of eighteen new transmission projects identified in the Upper Midwest that is needed to increase transmission system capability, mitigate current capacity issues, and improve electric system reliability throughout the region. Otter Tail Power and MRES plan to submit a Route Permit Application to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission in Q4 2024 and a Facility Permit Application to the South Dakota Public Utilities Commission at a future point in time yet to be determined. At this early stage of the project, it is unknown if Section 106 compliance may be needed.

Currently, Otter Tail Power and MRES are in the preliminary planning stages, which include high-level planning, initial public involvement, and data collection. As these preliminary planning stages progress, we would appreciate the opportunity to meet and discuss the project with you. There will be communication soon to provide additional project detail and discuss opportunities to meet. However, we wanted to make you aware that we're hosting public open houses next week in Alexandria, Ortonville, and Benson, Minnesota and would like to invite you and your members to attend if you have the availability (see attached invitation). We are planning additional open houses in late 2023 and again in 2024 once corridors and routes are developed.

We look forward to partnering with you on this important project.

Thanks,

Jason

Jason Weiers

Manager, Transmission Project Development

Otter Tail Power Company

215 South Cascade Street

Fergus Falls, MN 56537

(218)739-8311

jweiers@otpc.com

Big Stone South to Alexandria

Otter Tail Power Company and **Missouri River Energy Services** are proposing a new 345-kilovolt (kV) transmission line between Otter Tail Power's Big Stone South Substation in South Dakota and a substation owned by Missouri River Energy Services in Alexandria, Minnesota.

This project will **improve electric reliability, increase resiliency to extreme weather conditions, reduce transmission congestion, and increase access to renewable energy** in the region.

A lot has to happen before the Big Stone South to Alexandria 345-kV transmission line can be placed in service.

We are developing route options for the proposed line and look forward to your input.



▲ Study area is subject to change.

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT STEPS



Engagement Opportunities

STEP 1

▶ Data Gathering

STEP 2

- ▶ Public Engagement
- ▶ Routing
- ▶ Preliminary Surveys
- ▶ Preliminary Right of Way
- ▶ Preliminary Engineering

STEP 3

- ▶ File Route Applications
- ▶ Environmental Permits

STEP 4

- ▶ Right of Way
- ▶ Surveys

STEP 5

- ▶ Route Application Decision
- ▶ Final Engineering

STEP 6

- ▶ Construction
- ▶ In Service by 2030
- ▶ Restoration



Communication Through Construction



HDR

1601 Utica Avenue South, Suite 600
St. Louis Park, MN 55416-3400

Join us at an open house to learn about the Big Stone to Alexandria 345-kV transmission line proposed by Otter Tail Power Company and Missouri River Energy Services.

LEARN MORE ON THE INSIDE



SCAN ME!

HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT THE PROJECT?

www.BigStoneSouthtoAlexandria.com
connect@bigstonesouthtoalexandria.com
(800) 598-5587

ALEXANDRIA
April 25, 2023
4:00-7:00 p.m.
Holiday Inn
5637 MN-29
Alexandria, MN 56308

ORTONVILLE
April 26, 2023
4:00-7:00 p.m.
Ortonville Community Center
200 Monroe Ave
Ortonville, MN 56278

BENSON
April 27, 2023
4:00-7:00 p.m.
McKinney's on Southside
300 14th Street South
Benson, MN 56215

JOIN US!

You're invited to an open house for the Big Stone South to Alexandria 345-kV transmission line project. This project will improve electric reliability, increase resiliency to extreme weather conditions, reduce transmission congestion, increase access to renewable energy, and improve long-term electric reliability in the region.

November 10, 2023

Shannon Geshick, Executive Director
Minnesota Indian Affairs Council
161 St. Anthony Avenue, Suite 919
St. Paul, MN 55103

Re: Request for Input for the Proposed Big Stone South to Alexandria Transmission Line Project (BSSA)

Dear Executive Director Geshick,

Otter Tail Power Company (Otter Tail) and Missouri River Energy Services, on behalf of Western Minnesota Municipal Power Agency (Western Minnesota), are partnering to develop, construct, and co-own a new, approximately 100-mile, 345-kilovolt (kV) high voltage transmission line that will connect Otter Tail's existing Big Stone South 345-kV substation near Big Stone City, South Dakota to Western Minnesota's existing Alexandria 345-kV substation near Alexandria, Minnesota (referred to as the Project or BSSA). The Project is a segment of one of eighteen new transmission projects identified in the Upper Midwest by the Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO)¹ that is needed to ensure electric reliability, reduce transmission congestion, increase access to low-cost energy, and increase system resiliency to extreme weather events. The Project will be in Grant County, South Dakota and potentially in Big Stone, Lac qui Parle, Swift, Stevens, Pope, and Douglas Counties, Minnesota depending on the final route identified through the state permitting processes in Minnesota and South Dakota. Otter Tail and Western Minnesota were applicants to a Certificate of Need application that was filed with the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (MN PUC) on September 29, 2023, and plan to submit a Route Permit application with the MN PUC in the fourth quarter of 2024 as well as a Facility Permit application with the South Dakota Public Utilities Commission in the second quarter of 2024. Depending on a variety of factors, construction of the Project is anticipated to start in 2027 and end in either 2030 or 2031.

Otter Tail and Western Minnesota started public engagement efforts in the second quarter of 2023 through a series of public meetings and has continued routing efforts since that time with a second round of public meetings recently occurring throughout the Project area over the past month. Otter Tail and Western Minnesota, with our consultants' help, have identified potential corridors as shown on the enclosed map. These corridors were based on: (1) an analysis of publicly available data; (2) stakeholder feedback and comments; (3) engineering and constructability best practices; (4) environmental considerations; and (5) regulatory rules and guidelines. These corridors are planning to be refined into a preferred route in which Otter Tail and Western Minnesota will seek to obtain a 150-foot-wide easement from landowners for the construction, operation, and maintenance of the proposed 345-kV transmission line.

We request your review of the corridors identified for the Project to help identify opportunities and constraints as we move towards defining a preferred route. We are particularly interested in any property located within or adjacent to the corridors which your agency may own or have an interest in. We would also appreciate being made aware of any proposed developments your agency may be contemplating within the corridors in addition to any information that might assist us in our siting analysis and studies. To help us identify potential concerns or opportunities in our on-going routing analysis, we request that you please provide us with any information pertaining to the Project by December 11, 2023. Verbal, written or email responses should be sent to:

¹ See more information at www.misoenergy.org.

HDR, Inc.
Attn: Jennifer Hanley
51 N Broadway, Suite 550
Fargo, ND 58102
Jennifer.hanley@hdrinc.com
701-353-6139

Future opportunities for input will also be available. As the Project progresses, we are planning to have additional consultations with agencies, other jurisdictions, and landowners as we develop and refine a preferred route.

If you desire further information regarding the proposed Project, please contact me at 218-739-8311 or jweiers@otpc.com or our lead environmental consultant, Jennifer Hanley of HDR, Inc., at 701-353-6139 or jennifer.hanley@hdrinc.com. In addition, further information about the Project can also be found on our website at www.BigStoneSouthtoAlexandria.com.

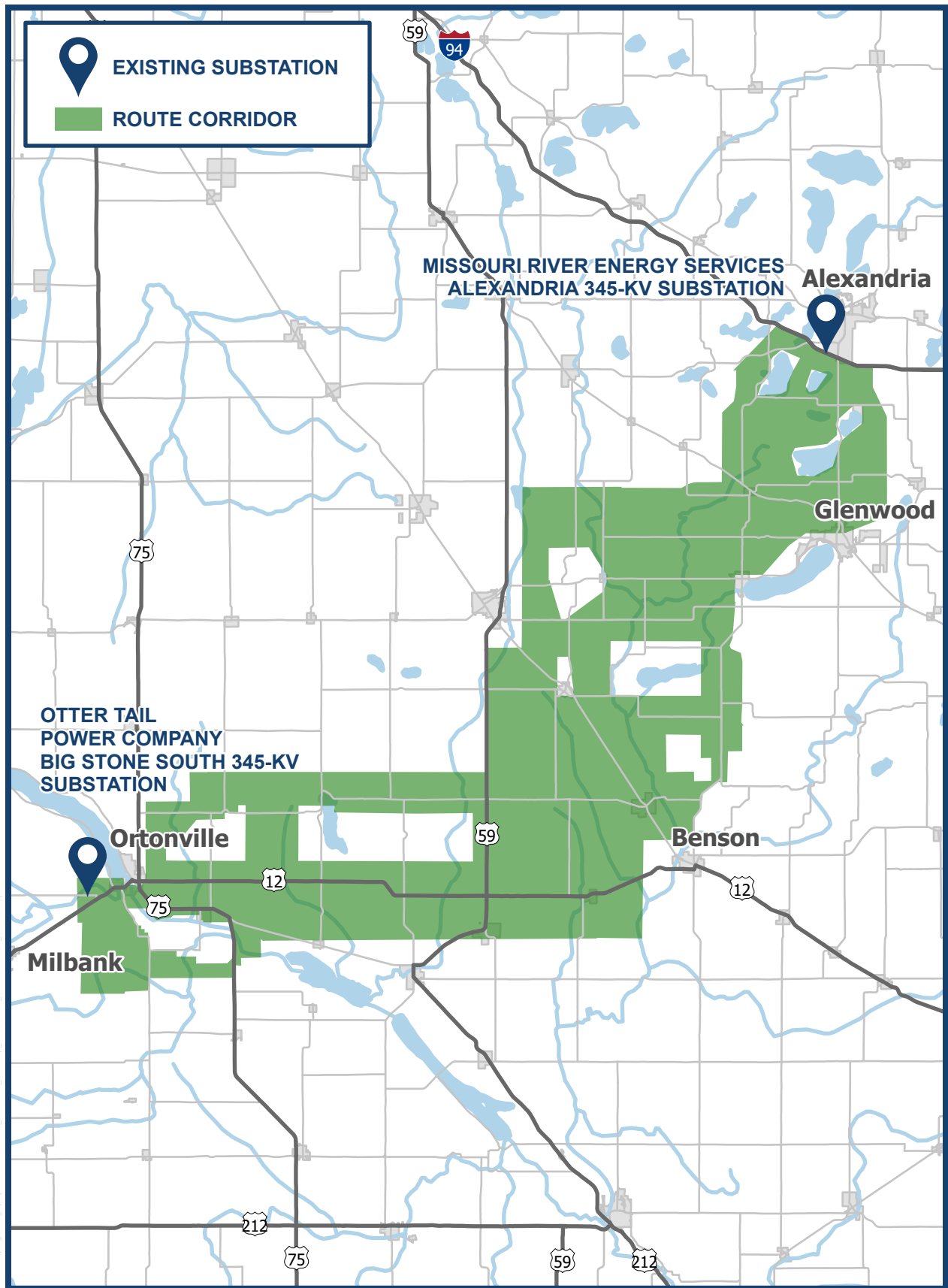
We appreciate and value your input in our on-going efforts to minimize effects to socioeconomics, avoid known culturally significant sites, protect natural resources, and utilize opportunities to parallel existing infrastructure corridors where feasible and look forward to your feedback and continued coordination.

Sincerely,

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

Jason Weiers
Manager, Transmission Project Development

Enclosure: BSSA Corridor Map



▲ Route corridor is marked in green on the map above and subject to change.

From: [Reynolds, John \(MIAC\)](#)
To: [Weiers, Jason](#); [Hanley, Jennifer](#)
Cc: [Cerde, Melissa \(MIAC\)](#)
Subject: Request for Information, Inclusion as Consulting Party, 12/04/23
Date: Monday, December 4, 2023 2:03:49 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

This is an **EXTERNAL** email. DO NOT open attachments or click links in suspicious email.

Hello,

I am a Cultural Resource Manager with the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council (MIAC). Our office recently received a Request for Input for the Proposed Big Stone South to Alexandria Transmission Line Project. The provided materials do not offer a specific route, list potential damages/ground disturbances, and offer information on planned cultural resource management consultation and fieldwork. MIAC requests to remain a consulting party, and that materials continue to be provided to our office for sufficient review. Once sufficient information has been received, a formal review can be provided. Please reply for any questions.

Thank you.

John Reynolds
Cultural Resources Manager
Minnesota Indian Affairs Council
161 St. Anthony Avenue, Ste. 940
Saint Paul, MN 55103

C: 651-724-3325
O: 651-724-3325
E: John.Reynolds@state.mn.us
mn.gov/indianaffairs



From: [Scheidecker, Kevin J.](#)
To: [shannon.geshick](#)
Cc: [Hanley, Jennifer](#); [Weiers, Jason](#)
Subject: Big Stone South to Alexandria Transmission Project
Date: Wednesday, June 19, 2024 12:48:15 PM
Attachments: [image.png](#)
[Outlook-tasyrip.png](#)
[BSSA_routes_sent_20240614.zip](#)
[OTP_BSSA_Phase4_Mtg_Handout_DRAFT_20240611.pdf](#)

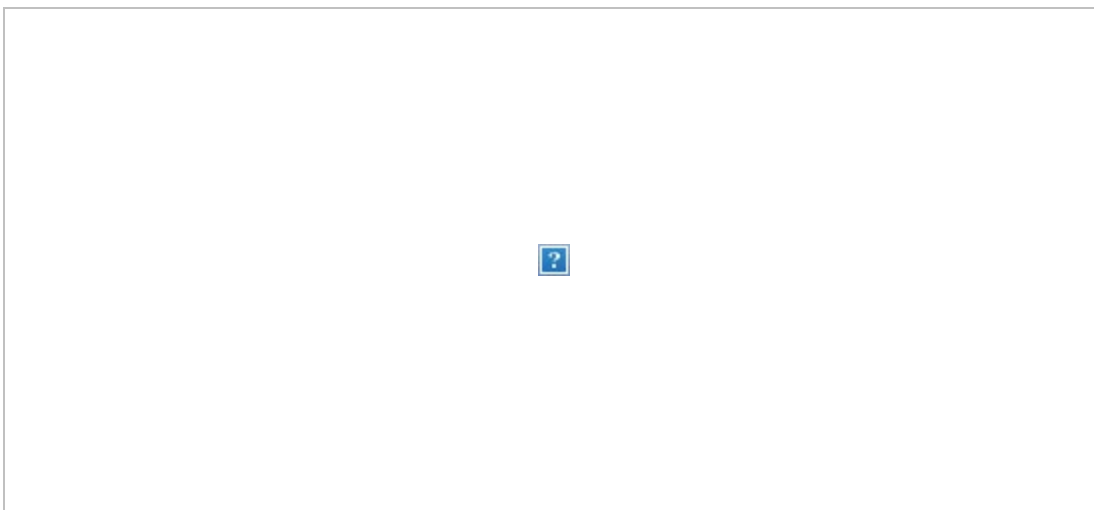
CAUTION: [EXTERNAL] This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Executive Director Geshick,

Thank you for your interest to partner with us as we develop the Big Stone South to Alexandria 345-kV routes that will be presented in our Route Permit Application that will be submitted to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission in the fourth quarter of this year.

Attached is a GIS shapefile of the proposed route segments that will be presented at the open houses the last week of June (see schedule below) as well as a handout that provides some additional project information. We will be accepting comments on these proposed route segments through July 15, 2024 to identify the proposed routes that we will include in the Route Permit Application.

Please let us know if and how you would like to participate in the development of our project. We can be available to discuss the project, it's current status and our schedule at your convenience.



Thank you,

Jason



Jason Weiers, P.E.
Manager, Trans. Project Development
Direct: 218-739-8311
jweiers@otpc.com

Confidentiality Notice: The information included in this e-mail and any attachment is intended only for the personal and confidential use of the individual or entity to which they are addressed. This message, including attachments, may be or may contain privileged and confidential customer information. If you as the reader are not the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that you have received this communication in error and that any retention, review, use or distribution of this communication or the information contained in it is strictly prohibited. If you received this e-mail in error, destroy it immediately and please notify the sender of this message.

Minnesota Public Utilities Commission

DATE	TYPE	FROM	TO	SUBJECT
August 22, 2023	Meeting	N/A	N/A	Meeting between the Applicants and the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (PUC)

Minnesota Pollution Control Agency

DATE	TYPE	FROM	TO	SUBJECT
October 26, 2023	Email	Applicants	Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA)	Initial consultation for the BSSA Project
October 26, 2023	Email	MPCA	Applicants	Response to initial consultation for the BSSA Project
November 10, 2023	Letter	Applicants	MPCA	Initial outreach for BSSA Project and request for comments
December 4, 2023	Email	MPCA	Applicants	Updated MPCA contact information for the BSSA Project

From: Scheidecker, Kevin J. <kscheidecker@otpc.com>
Sent: Thursday, October 26, 2023 2:54 PM
To: King, Matthew (MPCA) <Matthew.King@state.mn.us>
Subject: Big Stone South to Alexandria Transmission Project

You don't often get email from kscheidecker@otpc.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

This message may be from an external email source.

Do not select links or open attachments unless verified. Report all suspicious emails to Minnesota IT Services Security Operations Center.

Good Afternoon,

If you haven't already received something you will soon be receiving correspondence regarding the Otter Tail Power/Missouri River Energy Services new transmission line project. This project proposes to connect Otter Tail Power's Big Stone South Substation in northeast South Dakota and Missouri River Energy Services Substation in Alexandria. I am reaching out to you to introduce myself as the environmental specialist with Otter Tail Power that will be working on routing and the environmental aspects of the project along with our other partners and consultants. It is our intention to engage all the agencies and stakeholders early on in the process in order to develop this project in the most effective way possible. We will be reaching out on a more personal level at some point and trying to arrange meetings to allow us to elicit comments, discuss permitting and allow for feedback opportunities.

Thank you in advance for your time and attention. Please let us know if there are others we should be contacting or feel free to forward this email on to other that should receive it. I look forward to working with you in the near future.



Kevin Scheidecker
Senior Environmental Specialist
Environmental Services
Direct: 218-739-8773
kscheidecker@otpc.com

NOTICE: This email (including attachments) is covered by the Electronic Communications Privacy Act, 18 U.S.C. 2510-2521. This email may be confidential and may be legally privileged. If you are not the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that any retention, dissemination, distribution, or copying of this communication is strictly prohibited. Please reply back to the sender that you have received this message in error, then delete it. Thank you

From: [King, Matthew \(MPCA\)](#)
To: [Scheidecker, Kevin J.](#)
Subject: RE: Big Stone South to Alexandria Transmission Project
Date: Thursday, October 26, 2023 5:12:40 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)

This is an **EXTERNAL** email. DO NOT open attachments or click links in suspicious email.

Dear Kevin Scheidecker,

Thanks for reaching out to me. Please feel free to contact me with any questions, comments, concerns etc. related to stormwater compliance. Please add Todd Smith todd.smith@state.mn.us and Mike Findorff michael.findorff@state.mn.us whom are the MPCA Senior Stormwater Engineers to your contact list.

Thanks,

Matt King | Environmental Specialist
Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA)
Municipal Stormwater | Construction Stormwater
714 Lake Ave # 220 | Detroit Lakes, MN | 56501
[218-846-8103](tel:218-846-8103) | www.pca.state.mn.us



From: Scheidecker, Kevin J. <kscheidecker@otpc.com>
Sent: Thursday, October 26, 2023 2:54 PM
To: King, Matthew (MPCA) <Matthew.King@state.mn.us>
Subject: Big Stone South to Alexandria Transmission Project

You don't often get email from kscheidecker@otpc.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

This message may be from an external email source.

Do not select links or open attachments unless verified. Report all suspicious emails to Minnesota IT Services Security Operations Center.

Good Afternoon,

If you haven't already received something you will soon be receiving correspondence regarding the Otter Tail Power/Missouri River Energy Services new transmission line project. This project

proposes to connect Otter Tail Power's Big Stone South Substation in northeast South Dakota and Missouri River Energy Services Substation in Alexandria. I am reaching out to you to introduce myself as the environmental specialist with Otter Tail Power that will be working on routing and the environmental aspects of the project along with our other partners and consultants. It is our intention to engage all the agencies and stakeholders early on in the process in order to develop this project in the most effective way possible. We will be reaching out on a more personal level at some point and trying to arrange meetings to allow us to elicit comments, discuss permitting and allow for feedback opportunities.

Thank you in advance for your time and attention. Please let us know if there are others we should be contacting or feel free to forward this email on to other that should receive it. I look forward to working with you in the near future.



Kevin Scheidecker
Senior Environmental Specialist
Environmental Services
Direct: 218-739-8773
kscheidecker@otpco.com

NOTICE: This email (including attachments) is covered by the Electronic Communications Privacy Act, 18 U.S.C. 2510-2521. This email may be confidential and may be legally privileged. If you are not the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that any retention, dissemination, distribution, or copying of this communication is strictly prohibited. Please reply back to the sender that you have received this message in error, then delete it. Thank you

November 10, 2023

Matthew King, NPDES Coordinator
Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
714 Lake Ave., Suite 220
Detroit Lakes, MN 56501

Re: Request for Input for the Proposed Big Stone South to Alexandria Transmission Line Project (BSSA)

Dear Mr. King,

Otter Tail Power Company (Otter Tail) and Missouri River Energy Services, on behalf of Western Minnesota Municipal Power Agency (Western Minnesota), are partnering to develop, construct, and co-own a new, approximately 100-mile, 345-kilovolt (kV) high voltage transmission line that will connect Otter Tail's existing Big Stone South 345-kV substation near Big Stone City, South Dakota to Western Minnesota's existing Alexandria 345-kV substation near Alexandria, Minnesota (referred to as the Project or BSSA). The Project is a segment of one of eighteen new transmission projects identified in the Upper Midwest by the Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO)¹ that is needed to ensure electric reliability, reduce transmission congestion, increase access to low-cost energy, and increase system resiliency to extreme weather events. The Project will be in Grant County, South Dakota and potentially in Big Stone, Lac qui Parle, Swift, Stevens, Pope, and Douglas Counties, Minnesota depending on the final route identified through the state permitting processes in Minnesota and South Dakota. Otter Tail and Western Minnesota were applicants to a Certificate of Need application that was filed with the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (MN PUC) on September 29, 2023, and plan to submit a Route Permit application with the MN PUC in the fourth quarter of 2024 as well as a Facility Permit application with the South Dakota Public Utilities Commission in the second quarter of 2024. Depending on a variety of factors, construction of the Project is anticipated to start in 2027 and end in either 2030 or 2031.

Otter Tail and Western Minnesota started public engagement efforts in the second quarter of 2023 through a series of public meetings and has continued routing efforts since that time with a second round of public meetings recently occurring throughout the Project area over the past month. Otter Tail and Western Minnesota, with our consultants' help, have identified potential corridors as shown on the enclosed map. These corridors were based on: (1) an analysis of publicly available data; (2) stakeholder feedback and comments; (3) engineering and constructability best practices; (4) environmental considerations; and (5) regulatory rules and guidelines. These corridors are planning to be refined into a preferred route in which Otter Tail and Western Minnesota will seek to obtain a 150-foot-wide easement from landowners for the construction, operation, and maintenance of the proposed 345-kV transmission line.

We request your review of the corridors identified for the Project to help identify opportunities and constraints as we move towards defining a preferred route. We are particularly interested in any property located within or adjacent to the corridors which your agency may own or have an interest in. We would also appreciate being made aware of any proposed developments your agency may be contemplating within the corridors in addition to any information that might assist us in our siting analysis and studies. To help us identify potential concerns or opportunities in our on-going routing analysis, we request that you please provide us with any information pertaining to the Project by December 11, 2023. Verbal, written or email responses should be sent to:

¹ See more information at www.misoenergy.org.

HDR, Inc.
Attn: Jennifer Hanley
51 N Broadway, Suite 550
Fargo, ND 58102
Jennifer.hanley@hdrinc.com
701-353-6139

Future opportunities for input will also be available. As the Project progresses, we are planning to have additional consultations with agencies, other jurisdictions, and landowners as we develop and refine a preferred route.

If you desire further information regarding the proposed Project, please contact me at 218-739-8311 or jweiers@otpc.com or our lead environmental consultant, Jennifer Hanley of HDR, Inc., at 701-353-6139 or jennifer.hanley@hdrinc.com. In addition, further information about the Project can also be found on our website at www.BigStoneSouthtoAlexandria.com.

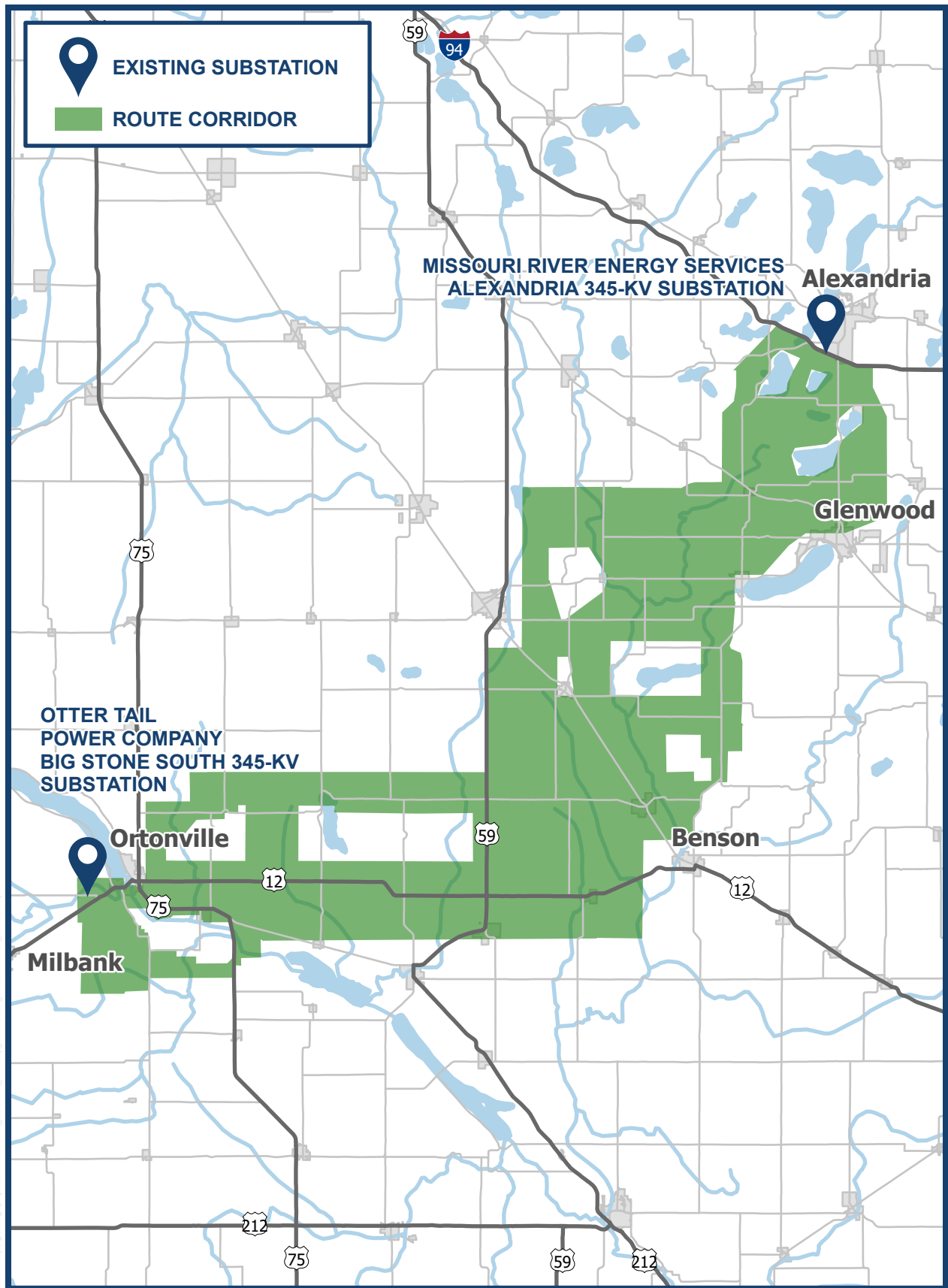
We appreciate and value your input in our on-going efforts to minimize effects to socioeconomics, avoid known culturally significant sites, protect natural resources, and utilize opportunities to parallel existing infrastructure corridors where feasible and look forward to your feedback and continued coordination.

Sincerely,



Jason Weiers
Manager, Transmission Project Development

Enclosure: BSSA Corridor Map



▲ Route corridor is marked in green on the map above and subject to change.

From: [Green, Chris \(MPCA\)](#)
To: [Weiers, Jason](#)
Subject: FW: Mail: Image_022
Date: Monday, December 4, 2023 1:02:07 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[Image_022.pdf](#)

This is an **EXTERNAL** email. DO NOT open attachments or click links in suspicious email.

Hey Jason,

I'm the new Triage Coordinator for MPCA ER. Please send any EAWs/EISs to me so that I can route them to agency experts for comment.

Chris Green
Project Manager
Environmental Review
Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
504 Fairgrounds Rd Suite 200
Marshall MN 56258-1688
Office: 507-476-4258
Cell: 507-696-9718
Chris.Green@state.mn.us

NOTICE: This email (including attachments) is covered by the Electronic Communications Privacy Act, 18 U.S.C. 2510-2521. This email may be confidential and may be legally privileged. If you are not the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that any retention, dissemination, distribution, or copying of this communication is strictly prohibited. Please reply back to the sender that you have received this message in error, then delete it. Thank you.

From: Card, Dan (MPCA) <dan.card@state.mn.us>
Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 11:38 AM
To: Findorff, Michael (MPCA) <michael.findorff@state.mn.us>
Cc: Green, Chris (MPCA) <chris.green@state.mn.us>
Subject: FW: Mail: Image_022

Thanks Mike,

This looks like an early engagement request for comment; not a triage EAW review yet.

FYI – Chris Green is now coordinating our triage EAW reviews, so I am forwarding this for future reference.

Chris can reach out to Jason Weiers to send the EAW when ready for Chris to coordinate review.

Dan

From: Findorff, Michael (MPCA) <michael.findorff@state.mn.us>
Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 10:38 AM
To: Card, Dan (MPCA) <dan.card@state.mn.us>
Subject: FW: Mail: Image_022

Hi Dan – not sure who is the Agency should get this, but my supervisor suggested I send it your way.

Mike

From: Findorff, Michael (MPCA)
Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 9:51 AM
To: Smith, Brandon E (MPCA) <brandon.e.smith@state.mn.us>; Anderson, Ryan (MPCA) <ryan.anderson@state.mn.us>
Subject: FW: Mail: Image_022

Hi Brandon and Ryan – do either of you know who I should forward this letter to?

Mike

From: Findorff, Michael (MPCA)
Sent: Thursday, November 16, 2023 1:54 PM
To: Smith, Brandon E (MPCA) <brandon.e.smith@state.mn.us>
Cc: Anderson, Ryan (MPCA) <ryan.anderson@state.mn.us>
Subject: FW: Mail: Image_022

Hey Brandon – do you know who I should forward this letter to? I'm definitely not the one to answer their request.

Mike

From: Hood, Olivia (MPCA) <Olivia.Hood@state.mn.us>
Sent: Thursday, November 16, 2023 10:25 AM
To: Findorff, Michael (MPCA) <michael.findorff@state.mn.us>
Subject: Mail: Image_022

Dear MPCA Employee,

Attached is the image(s) of your paper mail that is in your Fifth Floor mailbox/hanging folder in the

filing cabinet to the left of the mailboxes (currently labeled MAIL). After the mail is scanned, it is returned to your Fifth Floor mailbox/hanging folder.
If there is a question regarding the image(s), please give me the image number when you contact me.

Thank you!

Olivia Hood *(she/her)*

Office & Administrative Specialist | Industrial/Municipal BSU 2

Email: Olivia.Hood@state.mn.us



NOTICE: This email (including attachments) is covered by the Electronic Communications Privacy Act, 18 U.S.C. 2510-2521. This email may be confidential and may be legally privileged. If you are not the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that any retention, dissemination, distribution, or copying of this communication is strictly prohibited. Please reply back to the sender that you have received this message in error, then delete it. Thank you

Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office

DATE	TYPE	FROM	TO	SUBJECT
November 10, 2023	Letter	Applicants	Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)	Initial outreach for BSSA Project and request for comments
December 28, 2023	Email/Letter	SHPO	Applicants	Recommendations on the BSSA Project

November 10, 2023

Sarah Beimers, Environmental Review Manager
Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office
Administration Bldg #203, 50 Sherburne, Ave.
St Paul, MN 55155

Re: Request for Input for the Proposed Big Stone South to Alexandria Transmission Line Project (BSSA)

Dear Ms. Beimers,

Otter Tail Power Company (Otter Tail) and Missouri River Energy Services, on behalf of Western Minnesota Municipal Power Agency (Western Minnesota), are partnering to develop, construct, and co-own a new, approximately 100-mile, 345-kilovolt (kV) high voltage transmission line that will connect Otter Tail's existing Big Stone South 345-kV substation near Big Stone City, South Dakota to Western Minnesota's existing Alexandria 345-kV substation near Alexandria, Minnesota (referred to as the Project or BSSA). The Project is a segment of one of eighteen new transmission projects identified in the Upper Midwest by the Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO)¹ that is needed to ensure electric reliability, reduce transmission congestion, increase access to low-cost energy, and increase system resiliency to extreme weather events. The Project will be in Grant County, South Dakota and potentially in Big Stone, Lac qui Parle, Swift, Stevens, Pope, and Douglas Counties, Minnesota depending on the final route identified through the state permitting processes in Minnesota and South Dakota. Otter Tail and Western Minnesota were applicants to a Certificate of Need application that was filed with the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (MN PUC) on September 29, 2023, and plan to submit a Route Permit application with the MN PUC in the fourth quarter of 2024 as well as a Facility Permit application with the South Dakota Public Utilities Commission in the second quarter of 2024. Depending on a variety of factors, construction of the Project is anticipated to start in 2027 and end in either 2030 or 2031.

Otter Tail and Western Minnesota started public engagement efforts in the second quarter of 2023 through a series of public meetings and has continued routing efforts since that time with a second round of public meetings recently occurring throughout the Project area over the past month. Otter Tail and Western Minnesota, with our consultants' help, have identified potential corridors as shown on the enclosed map. These corridors were based on: (1) an analysis of publicly available data; (2) stakeholder feedback and comments; (3) engineering and constructability best practices; (4) environmental considerations; and (5) regulatory rules and guidelines. These corridors are planning to be refined into a preferred route in which Otter Tail and Western Minnesota will seek to obtain a 150-foot-wide easement from landowners for the construction, operation, and maintenance of the proposed 345-kV transmission line.

We request your review of the corridors identified for the Project to help identify opportunities and constraints as we move towards defining a preferred route. We are particularly interested in any property located within or adjacent to the corridors which your agency may own or have an interest in. We would also appreciate being made aware of any proposed developments your agency may be contemplating within the corridors in addition to any information that might assist us in our siting analysis and studies. To help us identify potential concerns or opportunities in our on-going routing analysis, we request that you please provide us with any information pertaining to the Project by December 11, 2023. Verbal, written or email responses should be sent to:

¹ See more information at www.misoenergy.org.

HDR, Inc.
Attn: Jennifer Hanley
51 N Broadway, Suite 550
Fargo, ND 58102
Jennifer.hanley@hdrinc.com
701-353-6139

Future opportunities for input will also be available. As the Project progresses, we are planning to have additional consultations with agencies, other jurisdictions, and landowners as we develop and refine a preferred route.

If you desire further information regarding the proposed Project, please contact me at 218-739-8311 or jweiers@otpc.com or our lead environmental consultant, Jennifer Hanley of HDR, Inc., at 701-353-6139 or jennifer.hanley@hdrinc.com. In addition, further information about the Project can also be found on our website at www.BigStoneSouthtoAlexandria.com.

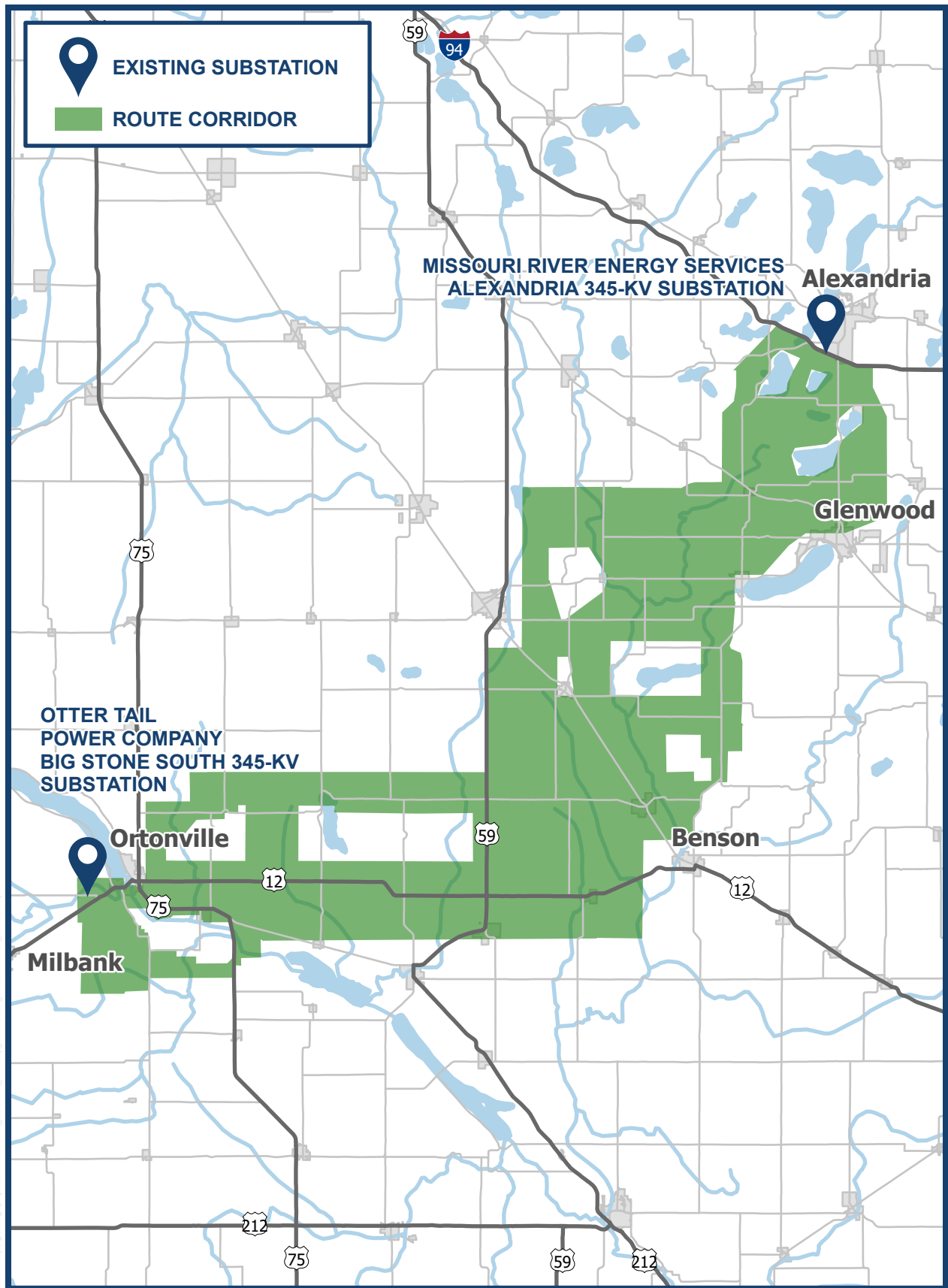
We appreciate and value your input in our on-going efforts to minimize effects to socioeconomics, avoid known culturally significant sites, protect natural resources, and utilize opportunities to parallel existing infrastructure corridors where feasible and look forward to your feedback and continued coordination.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jason J. Weiers". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Jason Weiers
Manager, Transmission Project Development

Enclosure: BSSA Corridor Map



▲ Route corridor is marked in green on the map above and subject to change.

From: [Beimers, Sarah \(ADM\)](#)
To: [Hanley, Jennifer](#)
Subject: SHPO Comment Letter: 2024-0166 BSSA Big Stone South to Alexandria Transmission Line Project, Multiple Counties, Minnesota
Date: Thursday, December 28, 2023 4:04:20 PM
Attachments: [2024-0166.pdf](#)

CAUTION: [EXTERNAL] This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Jennifer,
Thank you for the opportunity to review the above-referenced project.
Attached is our December 28, 2023 comment letter.
Please contact me if you'd like to discuss further.
Sarah

Sarah Beimers (she/her) | **Environmental Review Program Manager**
State Historic Preservation Office
Minnesota Department of Administration

December 28, 2023

VIA EMAIL ONLY

Jennifer Hanley
HDR Inc.
51 North Broadway, Suite 550
Fargo ND 58102

RE: Big Stone South to Alexandria Transmission Line Project (BSSA)
Construction of a 345-kV Transmission Line from Big Stone South Substation in South Dakota to
Western Minnesota's Existing Alexandria Substation in Douglas County
Multiple Counties, Minnesota
SHPO Number: 2024-0166

Dear Ms. Hanley,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the above referenced project. Information received in our office on November 13, 2023 from Jason Weiers, BSSA, has been reviewed pursuant to the responsibilities given the State Historic Preservation Office by the Minnesota Historic Sites Act (Minn. Stat. 138.665-666) and the Minnesota Field Archaeology Act (Minn. Stat. 138.40).

Please note that this comment letter does not address the requirements of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and 36 CFR Part 800. If the project will be utilizing any federal assistance, then the lead federal agency will need to initiate consultation with our office. Be advised that comments and recommendations provided by our office for this state-level review may differ from findings and determinations made by the federal agency as part of review and consultation under Section 106.

According to BSSA's November 10th letter, we understand that Otter Tail Power Company and Missouri River Energy Services, on behalf of Western Minnesota Municipal Power Agency, are proposing to construct a new, approximately 100-mile, 345 kV high voltage transmission line from Big Stone City in South Dakota to Alexandria, Minnesota. A map of the possible route corridor for this transmission line was provide with BSSA's November 10th letter and we have been requested to provide information regarding any property our agency "may have an interest in" in order to assist with the transmission line siting analysis.

Because the geographic area for this project is very large, as a first step, utilizing data available through data request and also our office's newly launched MnSHIP application, as well as site data from the Office of the State Archaeologist, we recommend completion of a background literature review to identify currently inventoried historic/architectural properties, including those currently designated in the National or State Register of Historic Places and recorded archaeological sites within the route corridor area.

As part of this initial study, we also recommend that a Phase Ia archaeological assessment be completed. If as a result of this assessment, a Phase I reconnaissance archaeological survey is

MINNESOTA STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE

50 Sherburne Avenue ■ Administration Building 203 ■ Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155 ■ 651-201-3287

mn.gov/admin/shpo ■ mnshpo@state.mn.us

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND SERVICE PROVIDER

recommended, then this survey should be conducted. Any Phase I survey must meet the requirements of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Identification and Evaluation and should include an evaluation of National Register eligibility for any properties that are identified. For a list of consultants who have expressed an interest in undertaking this type of research and archaeological surveys, please visit the website <http://www.mnhs.org/shpo/preservation-directory>, and select "Archaeologists, Contract" in the "Specialties" box.

The Project should consider not only direct impacts to designated historic properties and archaeological sites, but also any potential indirect impacts as well. The analysis completed for what are commonly referred to as "indirect impacts" should take into account any introduction of visual, atmospheric, or audible elements that may have an effect on characteristics that qualify the property for listing in the National or State Registers of Historic Places. Indirect effects can also include changes to a historic property's use or access to a historic property.

Any resulting cultural resources reports should include maps with clearly defined project areas including the location of the transmission line, tower size and style, laydown yards, collector lines, access roads, and any other above-ground equipment structures in relation to any identified historic/architectural properties and archaeological sites. The report should discuss ways in which the project will avoid impacting, both directly and indirectly, any historic properties and archaeological sites that are identified.

We look forward to future consultation regarding this project. If you have any questions regarding our review of this project, please contact me at sarah.beimers@state.mn.us.

Sincerely,



Sarah J. Beimers
Environmental Review Program Manager

State Representatives

DATE	TYPE	FROM	TO	SUBJECT
November 10, 2023	Letter	Applicants	State Senator-District 9	Initial outreach for BSSA Project and request for comments
			State Senator-District 12	
			State Senator-District 15	
			State Representative-District 9A	
			State Representative-District 9B	
			State Representative-District 12A	
			State Representative-District 12B	
			State Representative-District 15A	

November 10, 2023

Jordan Rasmussen
State Senator- District 9
State Senate
2409 Minnesota Senate Bldg.
St Paul, MN 5515555155

Re: Request for Input for the Proposed Big Stone South to Alexandria Transmission Line Project (BSSA)

Dear Mr. Rasmussen,

Otter Tail Power Company (Otter Tail) and Missouri River Energy Services, on behalf of Western Minnesota Municipal Power Agency (Western Minnesota), are partnering to develop, construct, and co-own a new, approximately 100-mile, 345-kilovolt (kV) high voltage transmission line that will connect Otter Tail's existing Big Stone South 345-kV substation near Big Stone City, South Dakota to Western Minnesota's existing Alexandria 345-kV substation near Alexandria, Minnesota (referred to as the Project or BSSA). The Project is a segment of one of eighteen new transmission projects identified in the Upper Midwest by the Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO)¹ that is needed to ensure electric reliability, reduce transmission congestion, increase access to low-cost energy, and increase system resiliency to extreme weather events. The Project will be in Grant County, South Dakota and potentially in Big Stone, Lac qui Parle, Swift, Stevens, Pope, and Douglas Counties, Minnesota depending on the final route identified through the state permitting processes in Minnesota and South Dakota. Otter Tail and Western Minnesota were applicants to a Certificate of Need application that was filed with the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (MN PUC) on September 29, 2023, and plan to submit a Route Permit application with the MN PUC in the fourth quarter of 2024 as well as a Facility Permit application with the South Dakota Public Utilities Commission in the second quarter of 2024. Depending on a variety of factors, construction of the Project is anticipated to start in 2027 and end in either 2030 or 2031. Otter Tail and Western Minnesota started public engagement efforts in the second quarter of 2023 through a series of public meetings and has continued routing efforts since that time with a second round of public meetings recently occurring throughout the Project area over the past month. Otter Tail and Western Minnesota, with our consultants' help, have identified potential corridors as shown on the enclosed map. These corridors were based on: (1) an analysis of publicly available data; (2) stakeholder feedback and comments; (3) engineering and constructability best practices; (4) environmental considerations; and (5) regulatory rules and guidelines. These corridors are planning to be refined into a preferred route in which Otter Tail and Western Minnesota will seek to obtain a 150-foot-wide easement from landowners for the construction, operation, and maintenance of the proposed 345-kV transmission line.

We request your review of the corridors identified for the Project to help identify opportunities and constraints as we move towards defining a preferred route. We are particularly interested in any property located within or adjacent to the corridors which your agency may own or have an interest in. We would also appreciate being made aware of any proposed developments your agency may be contemplating within the corridors in addition to any information that might assist us in our siting analysis and studies. To help us identify potential concerns or opportunities in our on-going routing analysis, we request that you please provide us with any information pertaining to the Project by December 11, 2023. Verbal, written or email responses should be sent to:

¹ See more information at www.misoenergy.org.

HDR, Inc.
Attn: Jennifer Hanley
51 N Broadway, Suite 550
Fargo, ND 58102
Jennifer.hanley@hdrinc.com
701-353-6139

Future opportunities for input will also be available. As the Project progresses, we are planning to have additional consultations with agencies, other jurisdictions, and landowners as we develop and refine a preferred route.

If you desire further information regarding the proposed Project, please contact me at 218-739-8311 or jweiers@otpc.com or our lead environmental consultant, Jennifer Hanley of HDR, Inc., at 701-353-6139 or jennifer.hanley@hdrinc.com. In addition, further information about the Project can also be found on our website at www.BigStoneSouthtoAlexandria.com.

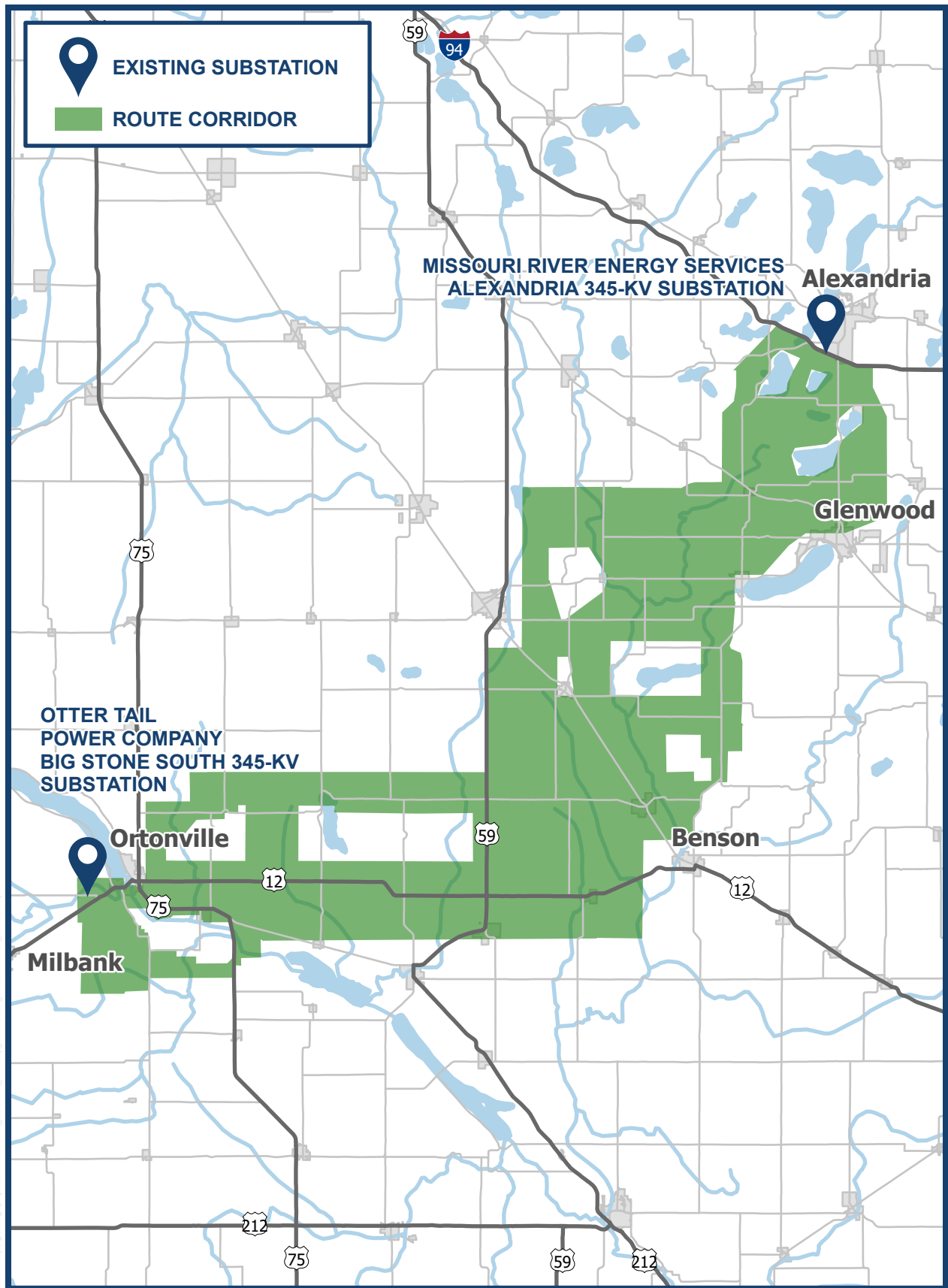
We appreciate and value your input in our on-going efforts to minimize effects to socioeconomics, avoid known culturally significant sites, protect natural resources, and utilize opportunities to parallel existing infrastructure corridors where feasible and look forward to your feedback and continued coordination.

Sincerely,



Jason Weiers
Manager, Transmission Project Development

Enclosure: BSSA Corridor Map



▲ Route corridor is marked in green on the map above and subject to change.

Tribal Governments

DATE	TYPE	FROM	TO	SUBJECT
April 21, 2023	Email/Attachment	Applicants	Tribes	Proposed Big Stone South to Alexandria (BSSA) Project request for comments
April 21, 2023	Email	Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community	Applicants	Response to initial outreach for BSSA Project
April 21, 2023	Email	Iowa Tribe of Kansas and Nebraska	Applicants	Response to initial outreach for BSSA Project
April 22-27, 2023	Email	Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe (The Mille Lacs Band of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe)	Applicants	Response to proposed BSSA Project request for comments
June 27, 2023	Meeting	N/A	N/A	Meeting between the Applicants and Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate of the Lake Traverse Reservation
February 5, 2024	Email	Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe (The Mille Lacs Band of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe)	Applicants	Response to initial outreach for the BSSA Project
February 16, 2024	Meeting	N/A	N/A	Meeting between the Applicants and Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate of the Lake Traverse Reservation
June 19, 2024	Email/Attachment	Applicants	Tribes	Consultation with tribes Attachment: Additional information on the BSSA Project route
June 24, 2024	Letter	Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe THPO	Applicants	Response to Additional Information on the BSSA Project
July 2, 2024	Email	Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community, Minnesota	Applicants	Response to BSSA Project Route and Continued Coordination

From: Weiers, Jason <JWeiers@otpc.com>
Sent: Friday, April 21, 2023 1:43 PM
To: deputythpo@badriver-nsn.gov
Cc: Hanley, Jennifer <Jennifer.Hanley@hdrinc.com>
Subject: Big Stone South - Alexandria Transmission Line Project

CAUTION: [EXTERNAL] This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Greetings Deputy Tribal Historic Preservation Officer Plucinski,

Several Minnesota energy companies are proposing to build new transmission projects in the Upper Midwest to improve electric reliability, reduce transmission congestion, and increase access to renewable energy in the region.

Otter Tail Power Company (Otter Tail Power) and Missouri River Energy Services (MRES) are partnering to develop, construct, and co-own a 345-kilovolt (kV) transmission line (the Project) from Big Stone South to Alexandria. The Big Stone South – Alexandria project will involve a new transmission line between the Big Stone South substation near Big Stone City, South Dakota to the Alexandria Substation near Alexandria, Minnesota. The Project Area being studied for the new 345 kV line is located in Big Stone County, South Dakota, and Swift, Stevens, Grant, Pope, and Douglas Counties in Minnesota.

The Big Stone South – Alexandria project is part of a larger Big Stone South – Alexandria – Big Oaks project, with the Alexandria – Big Oaks project being led by Xcel Energy.

The Big Stone South – Alexandria – Big Oaks project is one of eighteen new transmission projects identified in the Upper Midwest that is needed to increase transmission system capability, mitigate current capacity issues, and improve electric system reliability throughout the region. Otter Tail Power and MRES plan to submit a Route Permit Application to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission in Q4 2024 and a Facility Permit Application to the South Dakota Public Utilities Commission at a future point in time yet to be determined. At this early stage of the project, it is unknown if Section 106 compliance may be needed.

Currently, Otter Tail Power and MRES are in the preliminary planning stages, which include high-level planning, initial public involvement, and data collection. As these preliminary planning stages progress, we would appreciate the opportunity to meet and discuss the project with you. There will be communication soon to provide additional project detail and discuss opportunities to meet. However, we wanted to make you aware that we're hosting public open houses next week in Alexandria, Ortonville, and Benson, Minnesota and would like to invite you and your members to attend if you have the availability (see attached invitation). We are planning additional open houses in late 2023 and again in 2024 once corridors and routes are developed.

We look forward to partnering with you on this important project.

Thanks,

Jason
Jason Weiers
Manager, Transmission Project Development
Otter Tail Power Company
215 South Cascade Street
Fergus Falls, MN 56537
(218)739-8311
jweiers@otpc.com

Big Stone South to Alexandria

Otter Tail Power Company and **Missouri River Energy Services** are proposing a new 345-kilovolt (kV) transmission line between Otter Tail Power's Big Stone South Substation in South Dakota and a substation owned by Missouri River Energy Services in Alexandria, Minnesota.

This project will **improve electric reliability, increase resiliency to extreme weather conditions, reduce transmission congestion, and increase access to renewable energy** in the region.

A lot has to happen before the Big Stone South to Alexandria 345-kV transmission line can be placed in service.

We are developing route options for the proposed line and look forward to your input.



▲ Study area is subject to change.

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT STEPS



Engagement Opportunities

STEP 1

▶ Data Gathering

STEP 2

- ▶ Public Engagement
- ▶ Routing
- ▶ Preliminary Surveys
- ▶ Preliminary Right of Way
- ▶ Preliminary Engineering

STEP 3

- ▶ File Route Applications
- ▶ Environmental Permits

STEP 4

- ▶ Right of Way
- ▶ Surveys

STEP 5

- ▶ Route Application Decision
- ▶ Final Engineering

STEP 6

- ▶ Construction
- ▶ In Service by 2030
- ▶ Restoration



Communication Through Construction



HDR

1601 Utica Avenue South, Suite 600
St. Louis Park, MN 55416-3400

Join us at an open house to learn about the Big Stone to Alexandria 345-kV transmission line proposed by Otter Tail Power Company and Missouri River Energy Services.

LEARN MORE ON THE INSIDE



SCAN ME!

HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT THE PROJECT?

www.BigStoneSouthtoAlexandria.com
connect@bigstonesouthtoalexandria.com
(800) 598-5587

ALEXANDRIA
April 25, 2023
4:00-7:00 p.m.
Holiday Inn
5637 MN-29
Alexandria, MN 56308

ORTONVILLE
April 26, 2023
4:00-7:00 p.m.
Ortonville Community Center
200 Monroe Ave
Ortonville, MN 56278

BENSON
April 27, 2023
4:00-7:00 p.m.
McKinney's on Southside
300 14th Street South
Benson, MN 56215

JOIN US!

Your input is needed for the Big Stone South to Alexandria 345-kV transmission line project. This project will improve electric reliability, increase resiliency to extreme weather conditions, reduce transmission congestion, increase access to renewable energy, and improve long-term electric reliability in the region.

-----Original Message-----

From: Alan Kelley <akelley@iowas.org>
Sent: Friday, April 21, 2023 3:18 PM
To: Weiers, Jason <JWeiers@otpc.com>
Subject: Re: Big Stone South - Alexandria Transmission Line Project

This is an EXTERNAL email. DO NOT open attachments or click links in suspicious email.

Jason send me the Information and I will see what I can do to help you out.

Thanks Alan

On Fri, Apr 21, 2023 at 2:56 PM Lance Foster <lfoster@iowas.org> wrote:

>

>

>

> ----- Forwarded message -----

> From: Weiers, Jason <JWeiers@otpc.com>

> Date: Fri, Apr 21, 2023 at 12:52 PM

> Subject: Big Stone South - Alexandria Transmission Line Project

> To: lfoster@iowas.org <lfoster@iowas.org>

> CC: Hanley, Jennifer <jennifer.hanley@hdrinc.com>

>

>

> Greetings Tribal Historic Preservation Officer Foster,

>

>

>

> Several Minnesota energy companies are proposing to build new transmission projects in the Upper Midwest to improve electric reliability, reduce transmission congestion, and increase access to renewable energy in the region.

>

> Otter Tail Power Company (Otter Tail Power) and Missouri River Energy Services (MRES) are partnering to develop, construct, and co-own a 345-kilovolt (kV) transmission line (the Project) from Big Stone South to Alexandria. The Big Stone South – Alexandria project will involve a new transmission line between the Big Stone South substation near Big Stone City, South Dakota to the Alexandria Substation near Alexandria, Minnesota. The Project Area being studied for the new 345 kV line is located in Big Stone County, South Dakota, and Swift, Stevens, Grant, Pope, and Douglas Counties in Minnesota.

>

> The Big Stone South – Alexandria project is part of a larger Big Stone South – Alexandria – Big Oaks project, with the Alexandria – Big Oaks project being led by Xcel Energy.

>

> The Big Stone South – Alexandria – Big Oaks project is one of eighteen new transmission projects identified in the Upper Midwest that is needed to increase transmission system capability, mitigate current capacity issues, and improve electric system reliability throughout the region. Otter Tail Power and MRES plan to submit a Route Permit Application to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission in Q4 2024 and a Facility Permit Application to the South Dakota Public Utilities Commission at a future point in time yet to be determined. At this early stage of the project, it is unknown if Section 106 compliance may be needed.

>

> Currently, Otter Tail Power and MRES are in the preliminary planning stages, which include high-level planning, initial public involvement, and data collection. As these preliminary planning stages progress, we would appreciate the opportunity to meet and discuss the project with you. There will be communication soon to provide additional project detail and discuss opportunities to meet. However, we wanted to make you aware that we're hosting public open houses next week in Alexandria, Ortonville, and Benson, Minnesota and would like to invite you and your members to attend if you have the availability (see attached invitation). We are planning additional open houses in

late 2023 and again in 2024 once corridors and routes are developed.

>
> We look forward to partnering with you on this important project.
>
> Thanks,
>
> Jason
>
>
>
> Jason Weiers
>
> Manager, Transmission Project Development
>
> Otter Tail Power Company
>
> 215 South Cascade Street
>
> Fergus Falls, MN 56537
>
> (218)739-8311
>
> jweiers@otpc.com

>
>
>
> --
> Lance M. Foste
> Vice Chairman / THPO / Director of Ioway Tribal National Park Iowa
> Tribe of Kansas and Nebrask
> 3345 B Thrasher R
> White Cloud, KS 6609
> email: lfoster@iowas.org
> phone: 1-785-595-3258

--
Alan Kelley
Deputy THPO
Iowa Tribe of KS & NE
3345 Thrasher RD
White Cloud KS 66094
785-351-0080

From: Leonard Wabasha (TO) <leonard.wabasha@shakopeedakota.org>
Sent: Friday, April 21, 2023 1:31 PM
To: Weiers, Jason <JWeiers@otpc.com>
Subject: RE: Big Stone South - Alexandria Transmission Line Project

This is an **EXTERNAL** email. DO NOT open attachments or click links in suspicious email.

Dear Jason Weiers

Thank you the opportunity to consult with your project at such an early stage. Please keep us informed.

Have a Great day, respectfully,



LEONARD WABASHA

Director of Cultural Resources • Cultural Resources
Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community
d: 952.496.6120
[shakopeedakota.org](mailto:leonard.wabasha@shakopeedakota.org)
Leonard.Wabasha@shakopeedakota.org

The Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community is a federally recognized, sovereign Indian tribe located southwest of Minneapolis/St. Paul. With a focus on being a good neighbor, good steward of the earth, and good employer, the SMSC is committed to charitable donations, community partnerships, a healthy environment, and a strong economy.

From: Weiers, Jason <JWeiers@otpc.com>
Sent: Friday, April 21, 2023 1:23 PM
To: Leonard Wabasha (TO) <leonard.wabasha@shakopeedakota.org>
Cc: Hanley, Jennifer <jennifer.hanley@hdrinc.com>
Subject: Big Stone South - Alexandria Transmission Line Project

This message came from **outside the organization**. Do Not click on links, open attachments or respond unless you know the content is safe.

Greetings Tribal Historic Preservation Officer Wabasha,

Several Minnesota energy companies are proposing to build new transmission projects in the Upper Midwest to improve electric reliability, reduce transmission congestion, and increase access to renewable energy in the region.

Otter Tail Power Company (Otter Tail Power) and Missouri River Energy Services (MRES) are partnering to develop, construct, and co-own a 345-kilovolt (kV) transmission line (the Project) from Big Stone South to Alexandria. The Big Stone South – Alexandria project will involve a new transmission line between the Big Stone South substation near Big Stone City, South Dakota to the Alexandria Substation near Alexandria, Minnesota. The Project Area being studied for the new 345 kV line is located in Big Stone County, South Dakota, and Swift, Stevens, Grant, Pope, and Douglas Counties in Minnesota.

The Big Stone South – Alexandria project is part of a larger Big Stone South – Alexandria – Big

Oaks project, with the Alexandria – Big Oaks project being led by Xcel Energy.

The Big Stone South – Alexandria – Big Oaks project is one of eighteen new transmission projects identified in the Upper Midwest that is needed to increase transmission system capability, mitigate current capacity issues, and improve electric system reliability throughout the region. Otter Tail Power and MRES plan to submit a Route Permit Application to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission in Q4 2024 and a Facility Permit Application to the South Dakota Public Utilities Commission at a future point in time yet to be determined. At this early stage of the project, it is unknown if Section 106 compliance may be needed.

Currently, Otter Tail Power and MRES are in the preliminary planning stages, which include high-level planning, initial public involvement, and data collection. As these preliminary planning stages progress, we would appreciate the opportunity to meet and discuss the project with you. There will be communication soon to provide additional project detail and discuss opportunities to meet. However, we wanted to make you aware that we're hosting public open houses next week in Alexandria, Ortonville, and Benson, Minnesota and would like to invite you and your members to attend if you have the availability (see attached invitation). We are planning additional open houses in late 2023 and again in 2024 once corridors and routes are developed.

We look forward to partnering with you on this important project.

Thanks,

Jason

Jason Weiers

Manager, Transmission Project Development

Otter Tail Power Company

215 South Cascade Street

Fergus Falls, MN 56537

(218)739-8311

jweiers@otpc.com

The information contained in this message is confidential. If you are not the intended recipient, dissemination or copying of this information is prohibited.
If you have received this communication in error, please notify the sender and delete the message from your system. Thank you!

Raine, Katie

From: Weiers, Jason <JWeiers@otpc.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 27, 2023 8:01 AM
To: Charlie Lippert
Cc: Hanley, Jennifer; Susan Klapel
Subject: RE: Big Stone South - Alexandria Transmission Line Project

CAUTION: [EXTERNAL] This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good Morning Charlie,

I wanted to let you know that we are also reaching out to all of the federally recognized Tribes in MN, as well as other Tribes outside of MN with historical ties to the defined project area that have been identified for the Big Stone South – Alexandria Transmission Line Project.

I thought I would also pass along a bit more information on the location of the Alexandria Substation given the challenges with locating it. Another way of identifying it might be to use the following coordinates:

- 45°50'51.39" North
- 95°25'21.12" West

The Google Earth snapshot below has the Alexandria Substation circled in red (near the middle of the picture).

Hopefully this helps clear up any confusion on the endpoint substation for both the Big Stone South – Alexandria section and the Alexandria – Big Oaks section of the project!

Thanks again for your engagement during the early stages of this project!

Jason



From: Charlie Lippert <Charlie.Lippert@millelacsband.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 25, 2023 4:10 PM
To: Weiers, Jason <JWeiers@otpco.com>
Cc: Hanley, Jennifer <jennifer.hanley@hdrinc.com>; Susan Klapel <Susan.Klapel@millelacsband.com>
Subject: RE: Big Stone South - Alexandria Transmission Line Project

This is an **EXTERNAL** email. DO NOT open attachments or click links in suspicious email.

Miigwech (thank you) Jason.

Going to the coordinates given, I see a shopping center there, with substations about 1 mile to the east and to the west. But it doesn't matter because with either substation, the Big Stone South to Alexandria segment project area within the Band's Usual and Accustomed places is roughly 70 square miles, with possibly less than 10 miles of actual transmission. We will ask our new Tribal Historic Preservation Officer who starts later this week on the level of involvement for this segment.

And, as said previously, we are interested in the Alexandria to Big Oaks section of the project, but due to where it is, our scope most likely will be limited to impacts on our cultural resources unless our Commissioner directs us otherwise to

address other issues beyond that, such as bird migration, fish spawning grounds impact, etc. where impacts to fish and wildlife in the project area may impact their availability within our 1837 Treaty of St. Peters (7 Stat. 536) ceded territory (Royce Area 242) where our Tribal citizens hunt, fish, and gather.

Niin sa
Charlie L.



From: Weiers, Jason <JWeiers@otpc.com>
Sent: April 25, 2023 10:05 AM
To: Charlie Lippert <Charlie.Lippert@millelacsband.com>
Cc: Hanley, Jennifer <jennifer.hanley@hdrinc.com>; Susan Klapel <Susan.Klapel@millelacsband.com>
Subject: RE: Big Stone South - Alexandria Transmission Line Project

Charlie,

I appreciate the information that you shared below.

I am following up with the coordinates of the Alexandria Substation.

- Latitude: 45.842320
- Longitude: -95.385847

Please let us know if you have any additional questions!

Best Regards,

Jason

Jason Weiers
Manager, Transmission Project Development
Otter Tail Power Company
215 South Cascade Street
Fergus Falls, MN 56537
(218)739-8311
jweiers@otpc.com

From: Charlie Lippert <Charlie.Lippert@millelacsband.com>
Sent: Monday, April 24, 2023 8:07 AM
To: Weiers, Jason <JWeiers@otpc.com>
Cc: Hanley, Jennifer <jennifer.hanley@hdrinc.com>; Susan Klapel <Susan.Klapel@millelacsband.com>
Subject: RE: Big Stone South - Alexandria Transmission Line Project

Mino-gigizheb (good morning) Jason.

Miigwech (thank you) for the phone message. If you are able to send me the latitude and longitude of the Alexandria substation, that would be helpful.

From a technical aspect, I have to examine the project and substation location compared to the approximate line formed from the headwaters of Grove Lake in Pope County to the headwaters of Leven Lake to the headwaters of Chippewa Lake in Douglas County as a screening exercise, since no traditional boundaries are ever absolute. And then it would be our THPO who then makes the determination if we act or not. Speaking of our THPO, Terry Kemper is no longer with us. Currently our Executive Director Susan Klapel is serving as our interim Tribal Historic Preservation Officer, with our THPO Assistants Adrian Bugg and Luther Sam assisting her assess situations. Ms. Klapel may be reached by phone at 322-532-7442. She has been included as a cc in this e-mail, so you may also contact her that way.

On paper, all this area I have described are part of Royce Area 289, which as far as the United States are concerned, is part of Dakota Land Cession area, and in the 1825 Treaty of Prairie du Chien (7 Stat. 272), Ojibwe had resolved the area is Dakota territory. The Line in that area runs from the headwaters of Sauk River to the headwaters of Long Prairie River to the head of Otter Tail Lake, which puts the Alexandria substation clearly in Dakota territory. However, the Line serves as an approximate mid-line between the southern-most boundaries of Ojibwe Usual and Accustomed Places and the northern-most boundaries of the Dakota Usual and Accustomed Places, basically, splitting the differences as evenly as possible. Consequently, as an Ojibwe Tribe, politically and from treaty rights aspects, we need to defer issues south of that Line to our Dakota friends. But, as said, since there are areas south of the Prairie du Chien Line are part of our Usual and Accustomed Places, we still hold interest for Cultural Resources protection. And it would be our THPO that determines how aggressively we protect the area or not, based on cultural and historical information they have.

Niin sa
Charlie L.



From: Charlie Lippert <Charlie.Lippert@millelacsband.com>
Sent: April 21, 2023 2:15 PM
To: Weiers, Jason <JWeiers@otpc.com>
Cc: Hanley, Jennifer <jennifer.hanley@hdrinc.com>
Subject: Re: Big Stone South - Alexandria Transmission Line Project

Miigwech (thank you) Jason.

Since this project does not cross into the 1837 Treaty of St. Peters (7 Stat. 536) ceded territory (Royce Area 242), the only interest the Mille Lacs Band would have for this project would be for protection of our Cultural Resources for our Usual and Accustomed Places which the project segment from Big Stone to Alexandria may or may not cross, as I'm not entirely sure where exactly the Alexandria substation is. Can you provide me with its coordinates of the substation? And, on Monday, I can check it against our records to verify if this segment in the vicinity of Alexandria is within our area of interest.

The project segment from Alexandria to the new Big Oaks substation, too, is outside of 1837 ceded territory, but the area the segment passes through is within our Usual and Accustomed Places for Cultural Resources protection. So for this segment, I will be assisting our Tribal Historic Preservation Office with the technical review and assessment.

Miigwech miinawaa (thank you again).

Niin sa

Charlie L.

From: Weiers, Jason <JWeiers@otpc.com>

Sent: Friday, April 21, 2023 1:27:37 PM

To: charlie.lippert@millelacsband.com <charlie.lippert@millelacsband.com>

Cc: Hanley, Jennifer <jennifer.hanley@hdrinc.com>

Subject: Big Stone South - Alexandria Transmission Line Project

Greetings Air Quality Specialist Lippert,

Several Minnesota energy companies are proposing to build new transmission projects in the Upper Midwest to improve electric reliability, reduce transmission congestion, and increase access to renewable energy in the region.

Otter Tail Power Company (Otter Tail Power) and Missouri River Energy Services (MRES) are partnering to develop, construct, and co-own a 345-kilovolt (kV) transmission line (the Project) from Big Stone South to Alexandria. The Big Stone South – Alexandria project will involve a new transmission line between the Big Stone South substation near Big Stone City, South Dakota to the Alexandria Substation near Alexandria, Minnesota. The Project Area being studied for the new 345 kV line is located in Big Stone County, South Dakota, and Swift, Stevens, Grant, Pope, and Douglas Counties in Minnesota.

The Big Stone South – Alexandria project is part of a larger Big Stone South – Alexandria – Big Oaks project, with the Alexandria – Big Oaks project being led by Xcel Energy.

The Big Stone South – Alexandria – Big Oaks project is one of eighteen new transmission projects identified in the Upper Midwest that is needed to increase transmission system capability, mitigate current capacity issues, and improve electric system reliability throughout the region. Otter Tail Power and MRES plan to submit a Route Permit Application to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission in Q4 2024 and a Facility Permit Application to the South Dakota Public Utilities Commission at a future point in time yet to be determined. At this early stage of the project, it is unknown if Section 106 compliance may be needed.

Currently, Otter Tail Power and MRES are in the preliminary planning stages, which include high-level planning, initial public involvement, and data collection. As these preliminary planning stages progress, we would appreciate the opportunity to meet and discuss the project with you. There will be communication soon to provide additional project detail and discuss opportunities to meet. However, we wanted to make you aware that we're hosting public open houses next week in Alexandria, Ortonville, and Benson, Minnesota and would like to invite you and your members to attend if you have the availability (see attached invitation). We are planning additional open houses in late 2023 and again in 2024 once corridors and routes are developed.

We look forward to partnering with you on this important project.

Thanks,

Jason

Jason Weiers

Manager, Transmission Project Development

Otter Tail Power Company

215 South Cascade Street

Fergus Falls, MN 56537

(218)739-8311

jweiers@otpc.com

From: Charlie Lippert <Charlie.Lippert@millelacsband.com>
Sent: Monday, February 5, 2024 3:53 PM
To: Weiers, Jason <jweiers@otpc.com>
Cc: Hanley, Jennifer <jennifer.hanley@hdinc.com>; Susan Klapel <Susan.Klapel@millelacsband.com>; Mike Wilson <Mike.Wilson@millelacsband.com>
Subject: RE: Big Stone South - Alexandria Transmission Line Project

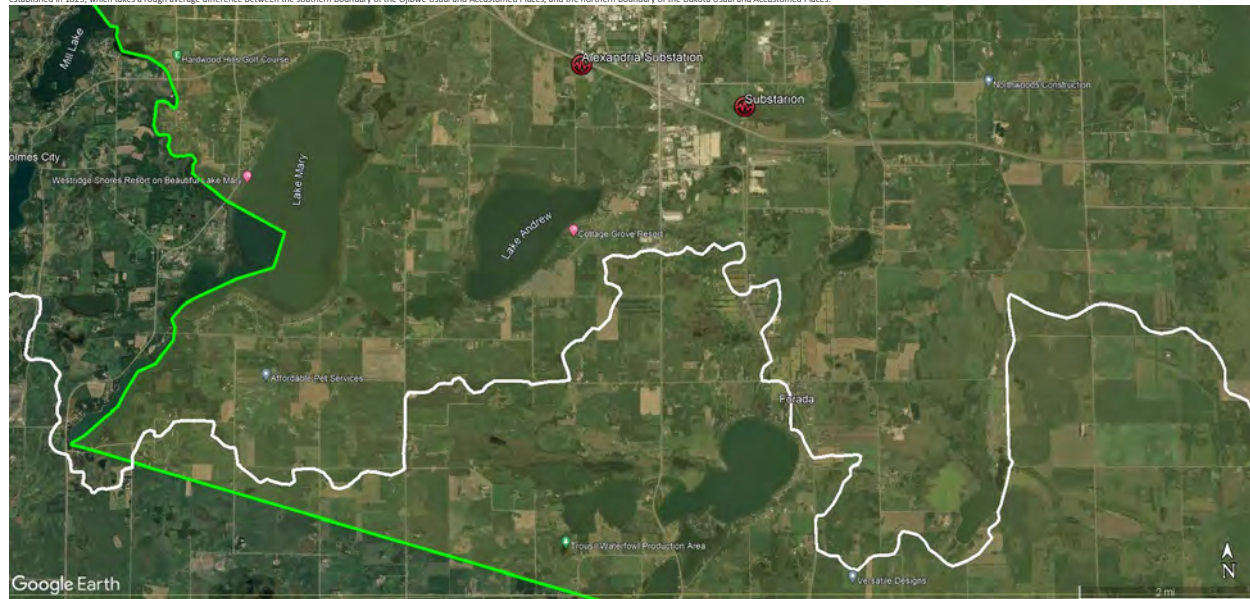
This is an EXTERNAL email. DO NOT open attachments or click links in suspicious email.

Boozhoo Jason,
Migwech for keeping us in the loop regarding the project development.
I see that there is a series of open houses scheduled for this month.
I doubt that the 1 or others here at the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe DNR will be attending any of them.
However, once the route has been selected, I strongly encourage you to communicate with our Mike Wilson, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer, and together with other THPOs in the area, plan for a Tribal Monitor to be present on site during construction. The Dakota Bands would be interested for the 1851CT and for their 1837CT, while the Ojibwe Bands for the 1847CT, but for the Mille Lacs Band, due to our historical ties and anticipating fuzzy boundaries, I would encourage you to coordinate with Mike for the Cyrus-Starbuck to Alexandria stretch, and for the Alexandria to Big Oaks stretch.
Migwech minawaa, and good luck on your project.
Nin
Charlie L.



From: Charlie Lippert
Sent: April 27, 2023 10:33 AM
To: Weiers, Jason <jweiers@otpc.com>
Cc: Hanley, Jennifer <jennifer.hanley@hdinc.com>; Susan Klapel <Susan.Klapel@millelacsband.com>
Subject: RE: Big Stone South - Alexandria Transmission Line Project

Boozhoo Jason,
Attached below is a GoogleEarth image of our 1847 Treaty of Fond du Lac (9 Stat. 904) ceded territory (Royce Area 268) in green, and the southern-most boundaries of our Usual and Accustomed Places in White. As you can see the two don't quite match as land cession was based on the Prairie du Chien Line established in 1825, which takes a rough average difference between the southern boundary of the Ojibwe Usual and Accustomed Places, and the northern boundary of the Dakota Usual and Accustomed Places.



As you can see, only a small segment of the Big Stone South - Alexandria Transmission Line is within our area of interest. Possibly under 10-miles.
Our new Tribal Historic Preservation Officer starts tomorrow. He will review this and will provide the rest of us with guidance.
And as said, from a technical standpoint, we use these boundaries for screening purposes only, but actual Tribal presence will vary greatly.

Nin
Charlie L.



From: Weiers, Jason <jweiers@otpc.com>
Sent: April 27, 2023 7:01 AM
To: Charlie Lippert <Charlie.Lippert@millelacsband.com>
Cc: Hanley, Jennifer <jennifer.hanley@hdinc.com>; Susan Klapel <Susan.Klapel@millelacsband.com>
Subject: RE: Big Stone South - Alexandria Transmission Line Project

Good Morning Charlie,

I wanted to let you know that we are also reaching out to all of the federally recognized Tribes in MN, as well as other Tribes outside of MN with historical ties to the defined project area that have been identified for the Big Stone South - Alexandria Transmission Line Project.

I thought I would also pass along a bit more information on the location of the Alexandria Substation given the challenges with locating it. Another way of identifying it might be to use the following coordinates:

- 45°50'51.39" North

- 95°25'21.12" West

The Google Earth snapshot below has the Alexandria Substation circled in red (near the middle of the picture).

Hopefully this helps clear up any confusion on the endpoint substation for both the Big Stone South – Alexandria section and the Alexandria – Big Oaks section of the project!

Thanks again for your engagement during the early stages of this project!

Jason



From: Charlie Lippert <Charlie.Lippert@millelacsband.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 25, 2023 4:10 PM
To: Weiers, Jason <jweiers@otpc.com>
Cc: Hanley, Jennifer <jennifer.hanley@hdrc.com>; Susan Klapel <susan.klapel@millelacsband.com>
Subject: RE: Big Stone South - Alexandria Transmission Line Project

This is an EXTERNAL email. DO NOT open attachments or click links in suspicious email.

Migwech (thank you) Jason,

Going to the coordinates given, I see a shopping center there, with substations about 1 mile to the east and to the west. But it doesn't matter because with either substation, the Big Stone South to Alexandria segment project area within the Band's Usual and Accustomed places is roughly 70 square miles, with possibly less than 10 miles of actual transmission. We will ask our new Tribal Historic Preservation Officer who starts later this week on the level of involvement for this segment.

And, as said previously, we are interested in the Alexandria to Big Oaks section of the project, but due to where it is, our scope most likely will be limited to impacts on our cultural resources unless our Commissioner directs us otherwise to address other issues beyond that, such as bird migration, fish spawning grounds impact, etc. where impacts to fish and wildlife in the project area may impact their availability within our 1837 Treaty of St. Peters (7 Stat. 536) ceded territory (Royce Area 242) where our Tribal citizens hunt, fish, and gather.

Nin sa
 Charlie L.



From: Weiers, Jason <jweiers@otpc.com>
Sent: April 25, 2023 10:05 AM
To: Charlie Lippert <Charlie.Lippert@millelacsband.com>
Cc: Hanley, Jennifer <jennifer.hanley@hdrc.com>; Susan Klapel <susan.klapel@millelacsband.com>
Subject: RE: Big Stone South - Alexandria Transmission Line Project

Charlie,

I appreciate the information that you shared below.

I am following up with the coordinates of the Alexandria Substation.

- Latitude: 45.842320
- Longitude: -95.385847

Please let us know if you have any additional questions!

Best Regards,

Jason

Jason Weiers
 Manager, Transmission Project Development
 Otter Tail Power Company
 215 South Cascade Street
 Fergus Falls, MN 56537
 (218)739-8311
jweiers@otpc.com

From: Charlie Lippert <Charlie.Lippert@millelacsband.com>
Sent: Monday, April 24, 2023 8:07 AM
To: Weiers, Jason <jweiers@otpc.com>
Cc: Hanley, Jennifer <jennifer.hanley@hdrc.com>; Susan Klapel <susan.klapel@millelacsband.com>
Subject: RE: Big Stone South - Alexandria Transmission Line Project

This is an EXTERNAL email. DO NOT open attachments or click links in suspicious email.

Mino-g@zheb (good morning) Jason,

Migwech (thank you) for the phone message. If you are able to send me the latitude and longitude of the Alexandria substation, that would be helpful.

From a technical aspect, I have to examine the project and substation location compared to the approximate line formed from the headwaters of Grove Lake in Pope County to the headwaters of Leven Lake to the headwaters of Chippewa Lake in Douglas County as a screening exercise, since no traditional boundaries are ever absolute. And then it would be our THPO who then makes the determination if we act or not. Speaking of our THPO, Terry Kemper is no longer with us. Currently our Executive Director Susan Klapel is serving as our interim Tribal Historic Preservation Officer, with our THPO Assistants Adrian Bugg and Luther Sam assisting her assess situations. Ms. Klapel may be reached by phone at 322-532-7442. She has been included as a cc in this e-mail, so you may also contact her that way.

On paper, all this area I have described are part of Royce Area 289, which as far as the United States are concerned, is part of Dakota Land Cession area, and in the 1825 Treaty of Prairie du Chien (7 Stat. 272), Ojibwe had resolved the area is Dakota territory. The Line in that area runs from the headwaters of Sauk River to the headwaters of Long Prairie River to the head of Otter Tail Lake, which puts the Alexandria substation clearly in Dakota territory. However, the Line serves as an approximate mid-line between the southern-most boundaries of Ojibwe Usual and Accustomed Places and the northern-most boundaries of the Dakota Usual and Accustomed Places, basically, splitting the differences as evenly as possible. Consequently, as an Ojibwe Tribe, politically and from treaty rights aspects, we need to defer issues south of that line to our Dakota friends. But, as said, since there are areas south of the Prairie du Chien line are part of our Usual and Accustomed Places, we still hold interest for Cultural Resources protection. And it would be our THPO that determines how aggressively we protect the area or not, based on cultural and historical information they have.

Nin sa
 Charlie L.



From: Charlie Lippert <Charlie.Lippert@millelacsband.com>
Sent: April 21, 2023 2:15 PM
To: Weiers, Jason <jweiers@otpc.com>
Cc: Hanley, Jennifer <jennifer.hanley@hdrc.com>
Subject: Re: Big Stone South - Alexandria Transmission Line Project

Migwech (thank you) Jason,

Since this project does not cross into the 1837 Treaty of St. Peters (7 Stat. 536) ceded territory (Royce Area 242), the only interest the Mille Lacs Band would have for this project would be for protection of our Cultural Resources for our Usual and Accustomed Places which the project segment from Big Stone to Alexandria may or may not cross, as I'm not entirely sure where exactly the Alexandria substation is. Can you provide me with its coordinates of the substation? And, on Monday, I can check it against our records to verify if this segment in the vicinity of Alexandria is within our area of interest.

The project segment from Alexandria to the new Big Oaks substation, too, is outside of 1837 ceded territory, but the area the segment passes through is within our Usual and Accustomed Places for Cultural Resources protection. So for this segment, I will be assisting our Tribal Historic Preservation Office with the technical review and assessment.

Migwech minawaa (thank you again).
Niin sa
Charlie L.

From: Weiers, Jason <jweiers@otpc.com>
Sent: Friday, April 21, 2023 1:27:37 PM
To: charlie.lippert@millelacsband.com; charlie.lippert@millelacsband.com
Cc: Hanley, Jennifer <jennifer.hanley@hdinc.com>
Subject: Big Stone South - Alexandria Transmission Line Project

Greetings Air Quality Specialist Lippert,

Several Minnesota energy companies are proposing to build new transmission projects in the Upper Midwest to improve electric reliability, reduce transmission congestion, and increase access to renewable energy in the region.

Otter Tail Power Company (Otter Tail Power) and Missouri River Energy Services (MRES) are partnering to develop, construct, and co-own a 345-kilovolt (kV) transmission line (the Project) from Big Stone South to Alexandria. The Big Stone South – Alexandria project will involve a new transmission line between the Big Stone South substation near Big Stone City, South Dakota to the Alexandria Substation near Alexandria, Minnesota. The Project Area being studied for the new 345 kV line is located in Big Stone County, South Dakota, and Swift, Stevens, Grant, Pope, and Douglas Counties in Minnesota.

The Big Stone South – Alexandria project is part of a larger Big Stone South – Alexandria – Big Oaks project, with the Alexandria – Big Oaks project being led by Xcel Energy.

The Big Stone South – Alexandria – Big Oaks project is one of eighteen new transmission projects identified in the Upper Midwest that is needed to increase transmission system capability, mitigate current capacity issues, and improve electric system reliability throughout the region. Otter Tail Power and MRES plan to submit a Route Permit Application to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission in Q4 2024 and a Facility Permit Application to the South Dakota Public Utilities Commission at a future point in time yet to be determined. At this early stage of the project, it is unknown if Section 106 compliance may be needed.

Currently, Otter Tail Power and MRES are in the preliminary planning stages, which include high-level planning, initial public involvement, and data collection. As these preliminary planning stages progress, we would appreciate the opportunity to meet and discuss the project with you. There will be communication soon to provide additional project detail and discuss opportunities to meet. However, we wanted to make you aware that we're hosting public open houses next week in Alexandria, Ortonville, and Benson, Minnesota and would like to invite you and your members to attend if you have the availability (see attached invitation). We are planning additional open houses in late 2023 and again in 2024 once corridors and routes are developed.

We look forward to partnering with you on this important project.

Thanks,
Jason

Jason Weiers
Manager, Transmission Project Development
Otter Tail Power Company
215 South Cascade Street
Fergus Falls, MN 56537
(218)739-8311
jweiers@otpc.com

From: Scheidecker, Kevin J. <kscheidecker@otpc.com>
Sent: Wednesday, June 19, 2024 12:02 PM
To: Dianne Desrosiers <dianned@swo-nsn.gov>
Cc: Hanley, Jennifer <jennifer.hanley@hdrinc.com>; Weiers, Jason <jweiers@otpc.com>; Wayne Cloud <waynec@swo-nsn.gov>
Subject: Big Stone South to Alexandria Transmission Project

Dear THPO Desrosiers,

Thank you for your interest to partner with us as we develop the Big Stone South to Alexandria 345-kV routes that will be presented in our Route Permit Application that will be submitted to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission in the fourth quarter of this year.

Attached is a GIS shapefile of the proposed route segments that will be presented at the open houses the last week of June (see schedule below) as well as a handout that provides some additional project information. We will be accepting comments on these proposed route segments through July 15, 2024 to identify the proposed routes that we will include in the Route Permit Application.

Please let us know if and how you would like to participate in the development of our project. We can be available to discuss the project, it's current status and our schedule at your convenience.

Dates and Locations

| **Alexandria | June 24, 2024**

- **3:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.**
Broadway Ballroom
115 30th Ave E
Alexandria, MN 56308

| **Glenwood | June 25, 2024**

- **3:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.**
Central Square
105 2nd Ave NE, Suite 111
Glenwood, MN 56334

| **Benson | June 26, 2024**

- **3:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.**
Benson High School
1400 Montana Ave
Benson, MN 56215

| **Ortonville | June 27, 2024**

- **3:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.**
Sioux Historic Pavilion
1079 Lakeshore Drive
Ortonville, MN 56278

Thank you,

Jason



Jason Weiers, P.E.

Manager, Trans. Project Development

Direct: 218-739-8311

jweiers@otpco.com

Confidentiality Notice: The information included in this e-mail and any attachment is intended only for the personal and confidential use of the individual or entity to which they are addressed. This message, including attachments, may be or may contain privileged and confidential customer information. If you as the reader are not the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that you have received this communication in error and that any retention, review, use or distribution of this communication or the information contained in it is strictly prohibited. If you received this e-mail in error, destroy it immediately and please notify the sender of this message.

Otter Tail Power Company and Missouri River Energy Services (representing Western Minnesota Municipal Power Agency) are partnering to develop, construct, and co-own a new 345-kilovolt (kV) transmission line. The Big Stone South to Alexandria transmission line (BSSA) will connect Otter Tail Power Company's Big Stone South Substation near Big Stone City, South Dakota, to the Alexandria Substation owned by Missouri River Energy Services near Alexandria, Minnesota.

This project is needed to ensure electric reliability, increase resiliency to extreme weather events, reduce transmission congestion, and increase access to low-cost energy in the region.

MONOPOLE

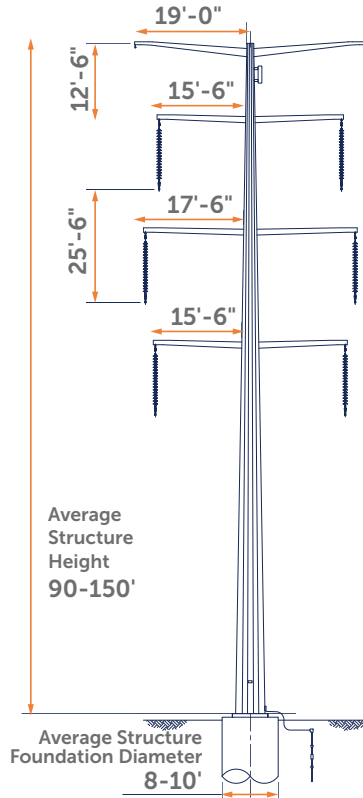
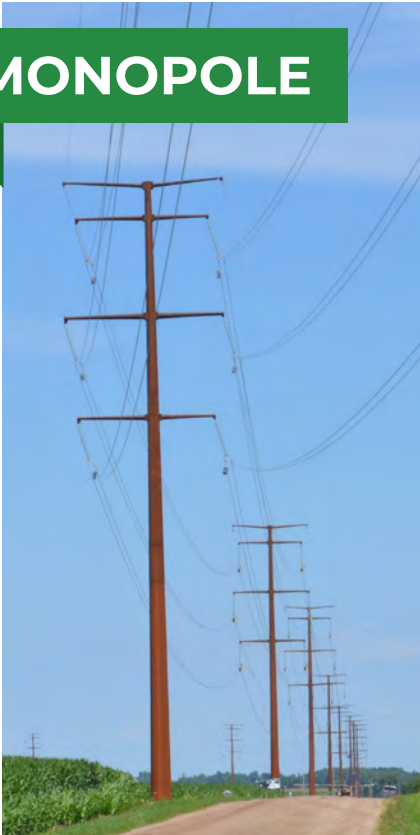


Image shown is an example of a similar double-circuit structure.

ROUTING PROCESS

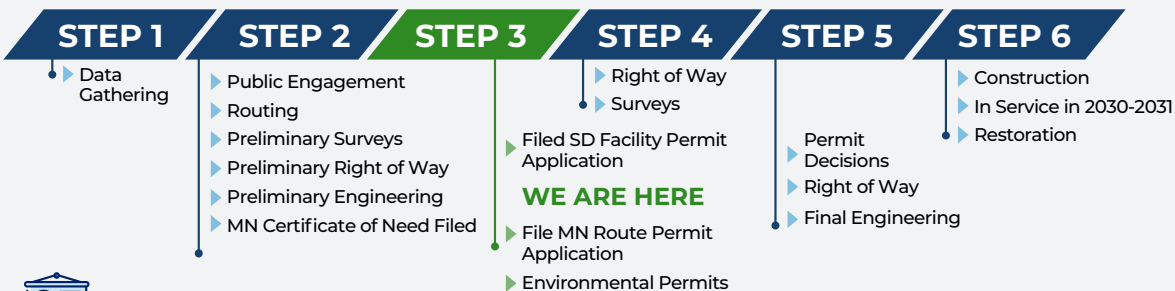
- DEFINE STUDY AREA
- BEGIN AGENCY & LOCAL GOVERNMENT OUTREACH
- HOST PUBLIC OPEN HOUSES
- IDENTIFY PROJECT CORRIDORS
- HOST PUBLIC OPEN HOUSES
- DEVELOP ROUTE CORRIDORS
- HOST PUBLIC OPEN HOUSES
- DEVELOP PROPOSED ROUTE SEGMENTS
- WE ARE HERE** HOST PUBLIC OPEN HOUSES
- FILE PROPOSED ROUTES IN MN

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

Developing and constructing a transmission line is a multi-year effort. We are gathering public feedback on the route corridors to help us develop a proposed route. We'll continue coordinating with landowners, local governments, agencies, and other stakeholders throughout the development process. The new line is tentatively scheduled to be complete in 2030 or 2031.



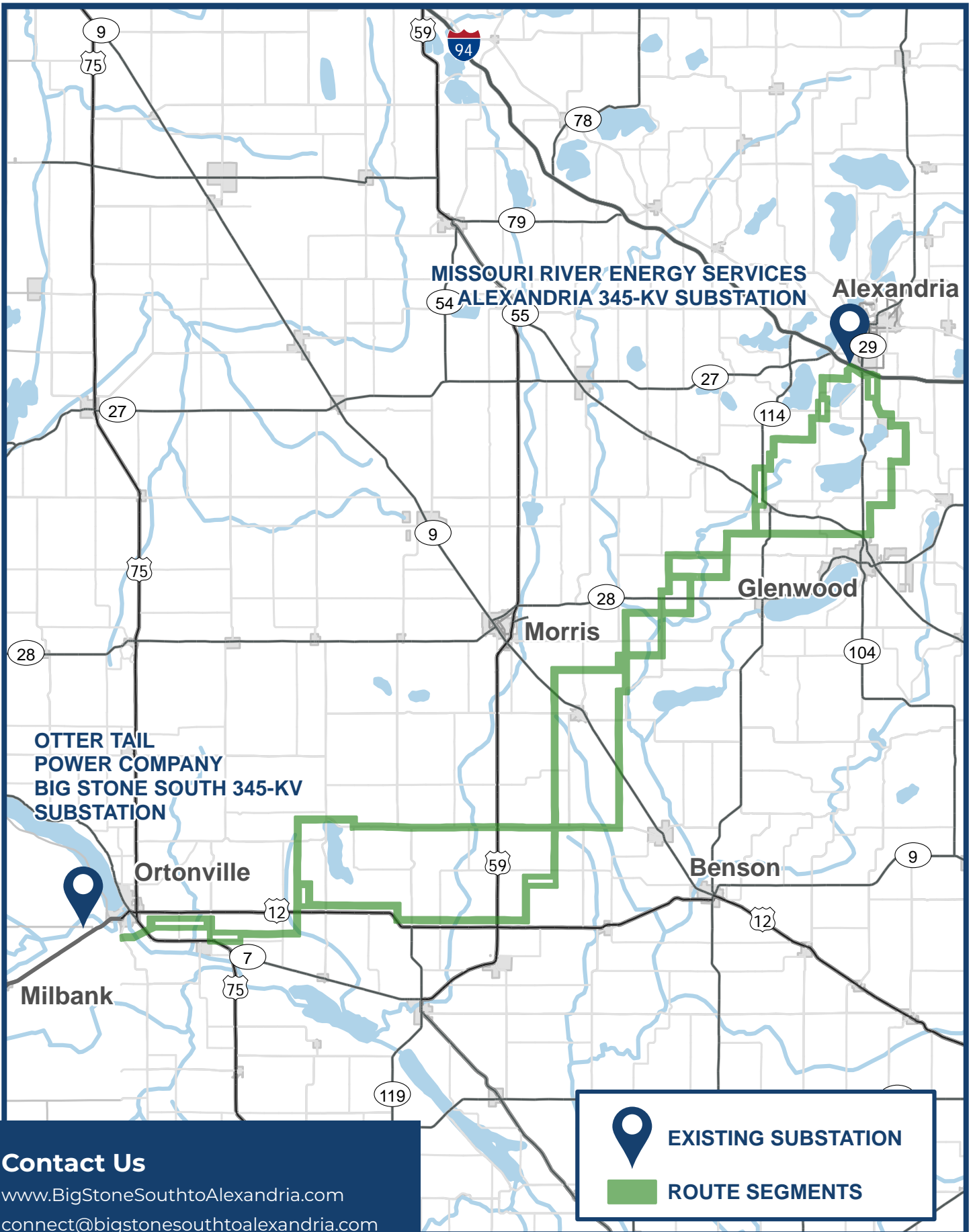
Engagement Opportunities



Communicate Project Updates Throughout Construction

Scan the QR code to visit the project website.






Contact Us

www.BigStoneSouthtoAlexandria.com
connect@bigstonesouthtoalexandria.com
 (800) 598-5587

 EXISTING SUBSTATION
 ROUTE SEGMENTS

 Route segments are marked in green on the map above and are subject to change.



LEECH LAKE BAND OF OJIBWE

Tribal Historic Preservation Office

Gina M Lemon, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer

Anita M Cloud, Tribal Historic Preservation Assistant

June 24, 2024

Via Internet

Otter Tail Power Company &
Missouri River Energy Services
Attn: Kevin J. Scheidecker, Senior Environmental Specialist
215 S Cascade St.
Fergus Falls, MN 56587

RE: Project #; BBS▶ A, Big Stone to Alexandria Transmission Line Project

Develop, construct, and co-own a new 345-kilovolt (kV) transmission line. The Big Stone South to Alexandria transmission line (BSSA) will connect Otter Tail Power Company's Big Stone South Substation near Big Stone City, South Dakota, to the Alexandria Substation owned by Missouri River Energy Services near Alexandria, MN.

Various Co.'s, MN & SD.

LL THPO No. 24-308-NCRI

Dear Kevin J. Scheidecker,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the above referenced project. This has been reviewed pursuant to the responsibilities given to the Tribal Historic Preservation Officer (THPO) by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended in 1992, and the Procedures of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (38CFR800).

I have reviewed the documentation. After careful consideration of our records, I have determined that the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe does not have any recorded historic properties, within this area. ** This does not mean there are not any cultural resources present, at this time. **

Should any human remains or suspected human remains be encountered, all work shall cease and the following personnel should be notified immediately: County Sheriff's Office, Office of the State Archaeologist, and the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe along with other interested parties.

Please note the above determination does not "exempt" future projects from Section 106 review. In the event of any other tribe notifying you of an issue or us (LLBO) of concerns for this specific project, we may reenter into the consultation process.

You may contact me at (218) 335-2940 if you have questions regarding our review of this project. Please refer to the **LL-THPO Number** as stated above in all correspondence with this project.

Respectfully submitted,

Gina M Lemon

Tribal Historic Preservation Officer

CC; Jason Weiers, Manager, Project Development.

Leech Lake Tribal Historic Preservation Office - Established in 1996

190 Sailstar Drive NE * Cass Lake, MN 56633

Gina.lemon@llojibwe.net

From: Leonard Wabasha (TO) <leonard.wabasha@shakopeedakota.org>

Sent: Tuesday, July 2, 2024 3:10 PM

To: Scheidecker, Kevin J. <kscheidecker@otpc.com>

Subject: RE: Big Stone South to Alexandria Transmission Project

EXTERNAL

Good Afternoon Kevin, Yes, message received and we will be leaving direct consultation to those Tribes closer to the project area... Thanks and Have a Great Day!!



LEONARD WABASHA

Tribal Historic Preservation Officer • Cultural Resources

Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community

d: 952.496.6120

shakopeedakota.org

Leonard.Wabasha@shakopeedakota.org

The Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community is a federally recognized, sovereign Indian tribe located southwest of Minneapolis/St. Paul. With a focus on being a good neighbor, good steward of the earth, and good employer, the SMSC is committed to charitable donations, community partnerships, a healthy environment, and a strong economy.



Local Government Units

Minnesota Counties

DATE	TYPE	FROM	TO	SUBJECT
April 7, 2023	Meeting	N/A	N/A	Meeting between the Applicants and the Douglas County Board of Commissioners
April 7, 2023	Meeting	N/A	N/A	Meeting between the Applicants and the Grant County Board of Commissioners
May 16, 2023	Meeting	N/A	N/A	Meeting between the Applicants and the Lac qui Parle County Board of Commissioners
June 13, 2023	Meeting	N/A	N/A	Meeting between the Applicants and the Pope County Board of Commissioners
June 20, 2023	Meeting	N/A	N/A	Meeting between the Applicants and the Stevens County Board of Commissioners
June 20, 2023	Meeting	N/A	N/A	Meeting between the Applicants and the Big Stone County Board of Commissioners
July 5, 2023	Meeting	N/A	N/A	Meeting between the Applicants and the Swift County Board of Commissioners
August 8, 2023	Meeting	N/A	N/A	Meeting between the Applicants and Pope County Board of Commissioners
October 10, 2023	Meeting	N/A	N/A	Meeting between the Applicants and the Pope County Board of Commissioners
October 17, 2023	Meeting	N/A	N/A	Meeting between the Applicants and the Douglas County Board of Commissioners
October 17, 2023	Meeting	N/A	N/A	Meeting between the Applicants and the Lac qui Parle County Board of Commissioners
November 10, 2023	Letter	Applicants	Big Stone County Douglas County Pope County Stevens County Swift County Lac qui Parle County	Initial outreach for BSSA Project and request for comments

DATE	TYPE	FROM	TO	SUBJECT
November 21, 2023	Meeting	N/A	N/A	Meeting between the Applicants and the Big Stone County Board of Commissioners
November 21, 2023	Meeting	N/A	N/A	Meeting between the Applicants and the Stevens County Board of Commissioners
December 19, 2023	Meeting	N/A	N/A	Meeting between the Applicants and the Grant County Board of Commissioners
March 19, 2024	Meeting	N/A	N/A	Meeting between the Applicants and Swift County Board of Commissioners
March 19, 2024	Meeting	N/A	N/A	Meeting between the Applicants and Stevens County Board of Commissioners
April 9, 2024	Meeting	N/A	N/A	Meeting between the Applicants and Pope County Board of Commissioners
April 9, 2024	Meeting	N/A	N/A	Meeting between the Applicants and Douglas County Board of Commissioners
April 16, 2024	Meeting	N/A	N/A	Meeting between the Applicants and Big Stone County Board of Commissioners
May 7, 2024	Meeting	N/A	N/A	Meeting between the Applicants and the Big Stone County Board of Commissioners
May 14, 2024	Meeting	N/A	N/A	Meeting between the Applicants and the Pope County Board of Commissioners
May 21, 2024	Meeting	N/A	N/A	Meeting between the Applicants and the Swift County Board of Commissioners
June 5, 2024	Meeting	N/A	N/A	Meeting between the Applicants and the Douglas County Board of Commissioners
June 18, 2024	Meeting	N/A	N/A	Meeting between the Applicants and Stevens County Board of Commissioners

November 10, 2023

Darren Wilke
Director
Big Stone County
20 SE 2nd St.
Ortonville, MN 5627856278

Re: Request for Input for the Proposed Big Stone South to Alexandria Transmission Line Project (BSSA)

Dear Mr. Wilke,

Otter Tail Power Company (Otter Tail) and Missouri River Energy Services, on behalf of Western Minnesota Municipal Power Agency (Western Minnesota), are partnering to develop, construct, and co-own a new, approximately 100-mile, 345-kilovolt (kV) high voltage transmission line that will connect Otter Tail's existing Big Stone South 345-kV substation near Big Stone City, South Dakota to Western Minnesota's existing Alexandria 345-kV substation near Alexandria, Minnesota (referred to as the Project or BSSA). The Project is a segment of one of eighteen new transmission projects identified in the Upper Midwest by the Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO)¹ that is needed to ensure electric reliability, reduce transmission congestion, increase access to low-cost energy, and increase system resiliency to extreme weather events. The Project will be in Grant County, South Dakota and potentially in Big Stone, Lac qui Parle, Swift, Stevens, Pope, and Douglas Counties, Minnesota depending on the final route identified through the state permitting processes in Minnesota and South Dakota. Otter Tail and Western Minnesota were applicants to a Certificate of Need application that was filed with the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (MN PUC) on September 29, 2023, and plan to submit a Route Permit application with the MN PUC in the fourth quarter of 2024 as well as a Facility Permit application with the South Dakota Public Utilities Commission in the second quarter of 2024. Depending on a variety of factors, construction of the Project is anticipated to start in 2027 and end in either 2030 or 2031. Otter Tail and Western Minnesota started public engagement efforts in the second quarter of 2023 through a series of public meetings and has continued routing efforts since that time with a second round of public meetings recently occurring throughout the Project area over the past month. Otter Tail and Western Minnesota, with our consultants' help, have identified potential corridors as shown on the enclosed map. These corridors were based on: (1) an analysis of publicly available data; (2) stakeholder feedback and comments; (3) engineering and constructability best practices; (4) environmental considerations; and (5) regulatory rules and guidelines. These corridors are planning to be refined into a preferred route in which Otter Tail and Western Minnesota will seek to obtain a 150-foot-wide easement from landowners for the construction, operation, and maintenance of the proposed 345-kV transmission line.

We request your review of the corridors identified for the Project to help identify opportunities and constraints as we move towards defining a preferred route. We are particularly interested in any property located within or adjacent to the corridors which your agency may own or have an interest in. We would also appreciate being made aware of any proposed developments your agency may be contemplating within the corridors in addition to any information that might assist us in our siting analysis and studies. To help us identify potential concerns or opportunities in our on-going routing analysis, we request that you please provide us with any information pertaining to the Project by December 11, 2023. Verbal, written or email responses should be sent to:

¹ See more information at www.misoenergy.org.

HDR, Inc.
Attn: Jennifer Hanley
51 N Broadway, Suite 550
Fargo, ND 58102
Jennifer.hanley@hdrinc.com
701-353-6139

Future opportunities for input will also be available. As the Project progresses, we are planning to have additional consultations with agencies, other jurisdictions, and landowners as we develop and refine a preferred route.

If you desire further information regarding the proposed Project, please contact me at 218-739-8311 or jweiers@otpc.com or our lead environmental consultant, Jennifer Hanley of HDR, Inc., at 701-353-6139 or jennifer.hanley@hdrinc.com. In addition, further information about the Project can also be found on our website at www.BigStoneSouthtoAlexandria.com.

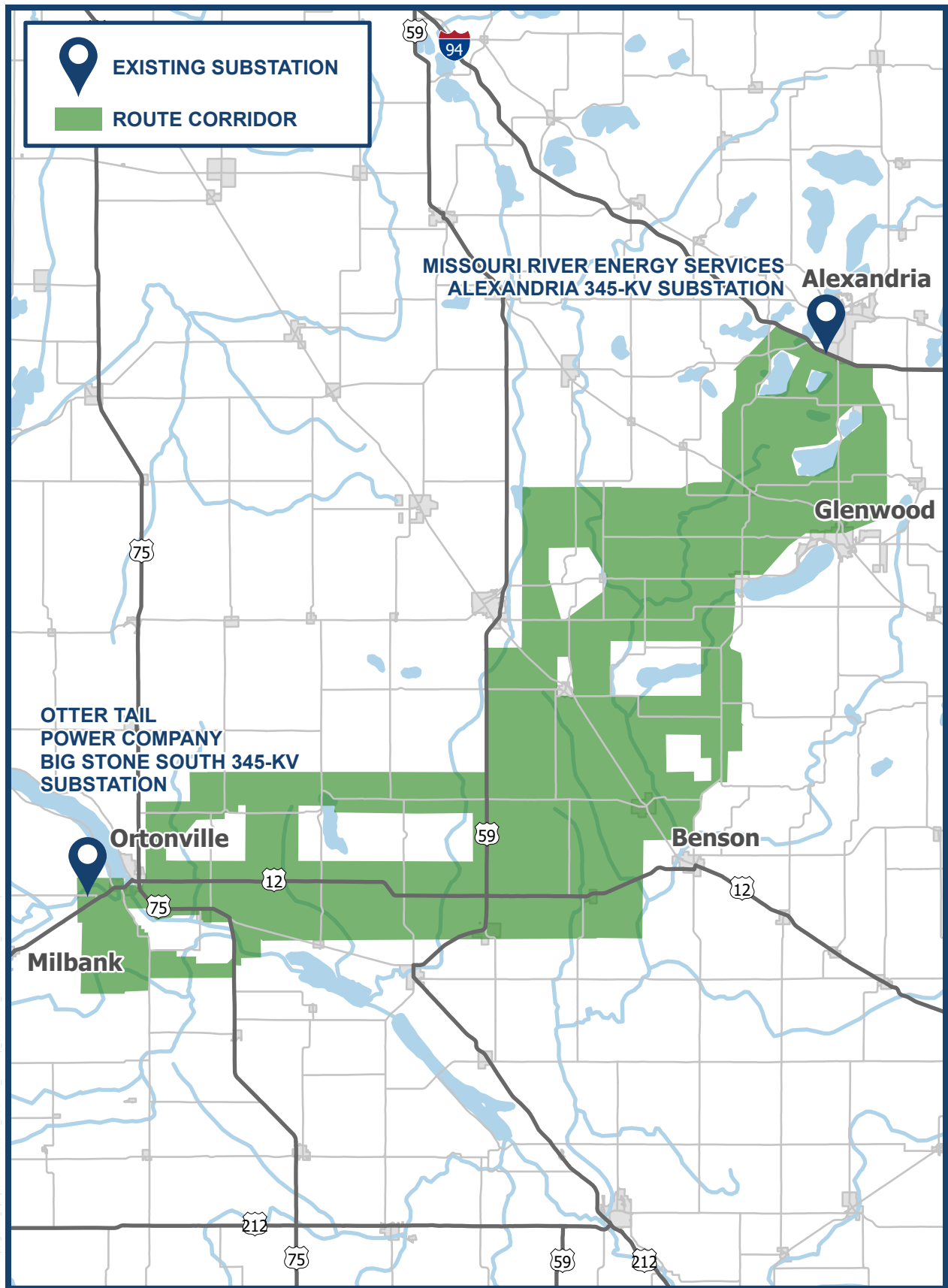
We appreciate and value your input in our on-going efforts to minimize effects to socioeconomics, avoid known culturally significant sites, protect natural resources, and utilize opportunities to parallel existing infrastructure corridors where feasible and look forward to your feedback and continued coordination.

Sincerely,



Jason Weiers
Manager, Transmission Project Development

Enclosure: BSSA Corridor Map



▲ Route corridor is marked in green on the map above and subject to change.

Minnesota Cities and Townships

DATE	TYPE	FROM	TO	SUBJECT
November 10, 2023	Letter	Applicants	City of Ortonville	Initial outreach for BSSA Project and request for comments
			City of Odessa	
			City of Holloway	
			City of Danvers	
			City of Clontarf	
			City of Hancock	
			City of Starbuck	
			City of Lowry	
			City of Glenwood	
			City of Forada	
			City of Alexandria	
			Holmes City Township	
			Moe Township	
			La Grand Township	
			Lake Mary Township	
			Hudson Township	
			Hoff Township	
			Langhei Township	
			Walden Township	
			Blue Mounds Township	
			New Prairie Township	
			White Bear Lake Township	
			Minnewaska Township	
			Nora Township	
			Ben Wade Township	
Reno Township				
Leven Township				
Swan Lake Township				
Framnas Township				

DATE	TYPE	FROM	TO	SUBJECT
			Hodges Township	
			Morris Township	
			Damen Township	
			Horton Township	
			Moore Township	
			Hegbert Township	
			Shible Township	
			Fairfield Township	
			Tara Township	
			Moyer Township	
			Clontarf Township	
			Six Mile Grove Township	
			Marysland Township	
			Benson Township	
November 14, 2023	Meeting	N/A	N/A	Meeting between the Applicants and Lake Mary Township
December 11, 2023	Email	Fairfield Township	Applicants	Comments on proposed corridor for the BSSA Project
February 20, 2024	Meeting	N/A	N/A	Meeting between the Applicants and Lake Mary Township
March 26, 2024	Meeting	N/A	N/A	Meeting between the Applicants and Big Stone Township
July 17, 2024	Meeting	N/A	N/A	Meeting between the Applicants and Lake Mary Township, MN

November 10, 2023

Gene Hausauer
Mayor
City of Ortonville
751 Highland Hwy
Ortonville, MN 5627956279

Re: Request for Input for the Proposed Big Stone South to Alexandria Transmission Line Project (BSSA)

Dear Mr. Hausauer,

Otter Tail Power Company (Otter Tail) and Missouri River Energy Services, on behalf of Western Minnesota Municipal Power Agency (Western Minnesota), are partnering to develop, construct, and co-own a new, approximately 100-mile, 345-kilovolt (kV) high voltage transmission line that will connect Otter Tail's existing Big Stone South 345-kV substation near Big Stone City, South Dakota to Western Minnesota's existing Alexandria 345-kV substation near Alexandria, Minnesota (referred to as the Project or BSSA). The Project is a segment of one of eighteen new transmission projects identified in the Upper Midwest by the Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO)¹ that is needed to ensure electric reliability, reduce transmission congestion, increase access to low-cost energy, and increase system resiliency to extreme weather events. The Project will be in Grant County, South Dakota and potentially in Big Stone, Lac qui Parle, Swift, Stevens, Pope, and Douglas Counties, Minnesota depending on the final route identified through the state permitting processes in Minnesota and South Dakota. Otter Tail and Western Minnesota were applicants to a Certificate of Need application that was filed with the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (MN PUC) on September 29, 2023, and plan to submit a Route Permit application with the MN PUC in the fourth quarter of 2024 as well as a Facility Permit application with the South Dakota Public Utilities Commission in the second quarter of 2024. Depending on a variety of factors, construction of the Project is anticipated to start in 2027 and end in either 2030 or 2031. Otter Tail and Western Minnesota started public engagement efforts in the second quarter of 2023 through a series of public meetings and has continued routing efforts since that time with a second round of public meetings recently occurring throughout the Project area over the past month. Otter Tail and Western Minnesota, with our consultants' help, have identified potential corridors as shown on the enclosed map. These corridors were based on: (1) an analysis of publicly available data; (2) stakeholder feedback and comments; (3) engineering and constructability best practices; (4) environmental considerations; and (5) regulatory rules and guidelines. These corridors are planning to be refined into a preferred route in which Otter Tail and Western Minnesota will seek to obtain a 150-foot-wide easement from landowners for the construction, operation, and maintenance of the proposed 345-kV transmission line.

We request your review of the corridors identified for the Project to help identify opportunities and constraints as we move towards defining a preferred route. We are particularly interested in any property located within or adjacent to the corridors which your agency may own or have an interest in. We would also appreciate being made aware of any proposed developments your agency may be contemplating within the corridors in addition to any information that might assist us in our siting analysis and studies. To help us identify potential concerns or opportunities in our on-going routing analysis, we request that you please provide us with any information pertaining to the Project by December 11, 2023. Verbal, written or email responses should be sent to:

¹ See more information at www.misoenergy.org.

HDR, Inc.
Attn: Jennifer Hanley
51 N Broadway, Suite 550
Fargo, ND 58102
Jennifer.hanley@hdrinc.com
701-353-6139

Future opportunities for input will also be available. As the Project progresses, we are planning to have additional consultations with agencies, other jurisdictions, and landowners as we develop and refine a preferred route.

If you desire further information regarding the proposed Project, please contact me at 218-739-8311 or jweiers@otpc.com or our lead environmental consultant, Jennifer Hanley of HDR, Inc., at 701-353-6139 or jennifer.hanley@hdrinc.com. In addition, further information about the Project can also be found on our website at www.BigStoneSouthtoAlexandria.com.

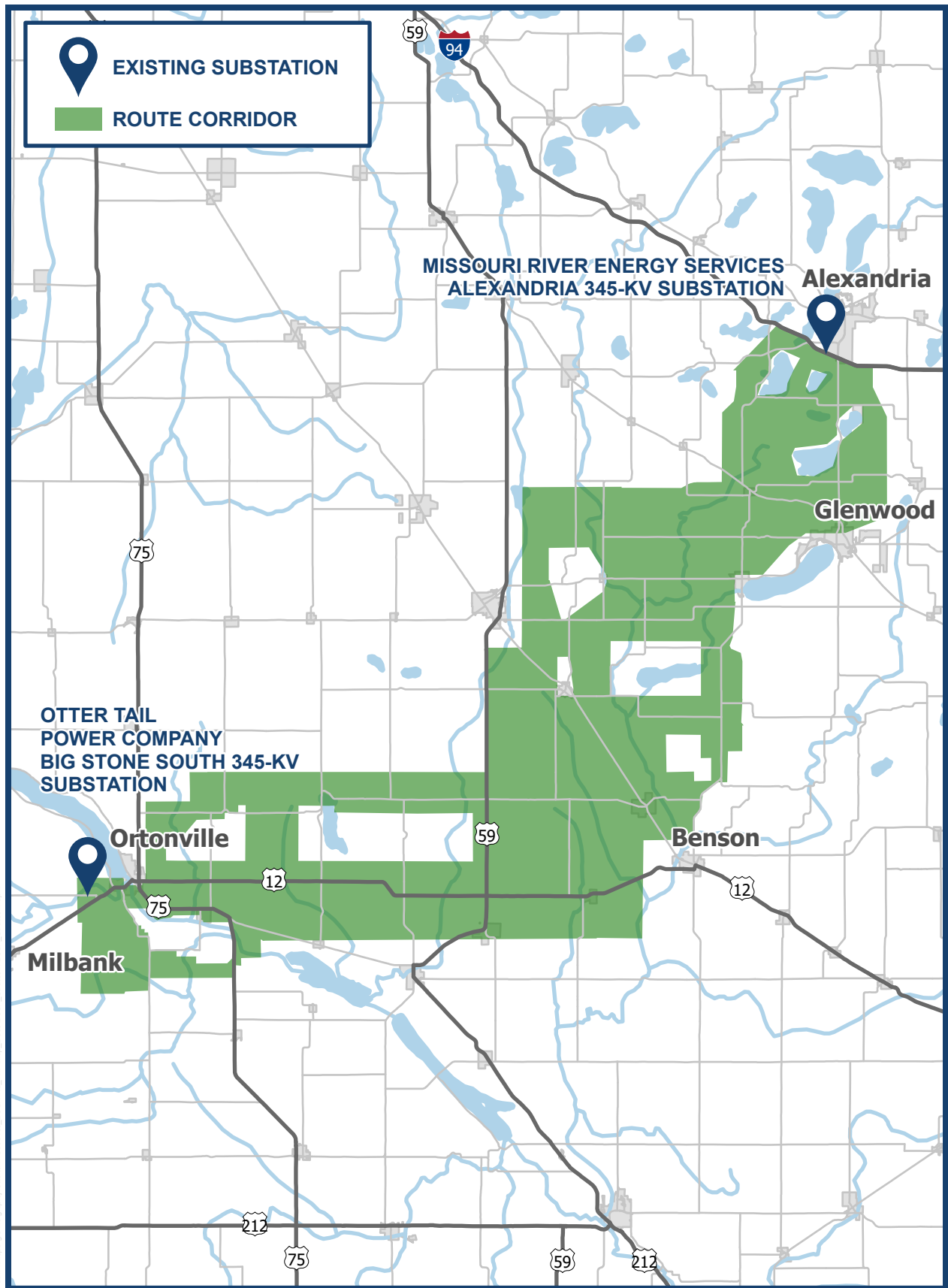
We appreciate and value your input in our on-going efforts to minimize effects to socioeconomics, avoid known culturally significant sites, protect natural resources, and utilize opportunities to parallel existing infrastructure corridors where feasible and look forward to your feedback and continued coordination.

Sincerely,



Jason Weiers
Manager, Transmission Project Development

Enclosure: BSSA Corridor Map



▲ Route corridor is marked in green on the map above and subject to change.

From: [Douglas and Alicia Schliep](#)
To: [Hanley, Jennifer](#)
Subject: Corridor Concerns
Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 10:24:12 AM
Attachments: [CCF12112023_00000.jpg](#)

You don't often get email from daschliep@fedtel.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: [EXTERNAL] This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Jennifer,

In response to the notification sent to Fairfield Township, Swift County, MN, a map has been attached to this email regarding the proposed corridor. There are multiple parcels within the township that have center irrigation pivots on them, indicated on the attached map. We are also concerned buried power lines for these irrigators, and the large amount of existing drain tile that is also buried within parcels in the township. Please consider these factors when establishing a power line route.

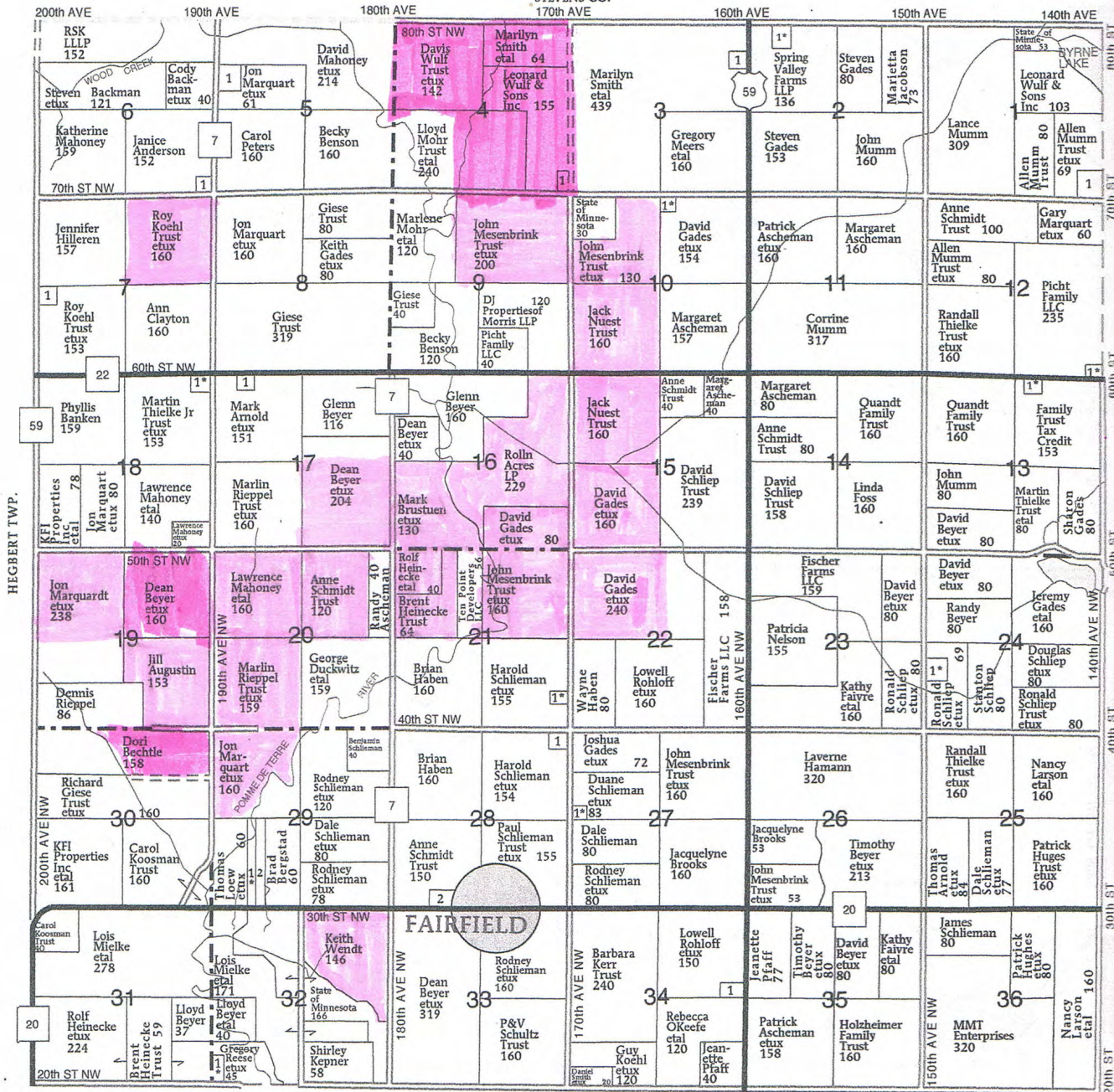
Thank you,

Doug Schliep

Fairfield Township-Chair

(Landowners)

STEVENS CO.



irrigators

FAIRFIELD TOWNSHIP

- SECTION 1**
1. Mumm, Lance 14
- SECTION 2**
1. Koehl, Guy etux 10
- SECTION 3**
1. Radke, Dale 12
- SECTION 4**
1. Spring Valley Farms LLP 5
- SECTION 5**
1. Rinckenberger, Robert 15
- SECTION 6**
1. Marquart, Randy 8

- SECTION 7**
1. Fairfield Genetics Inc 7
- SECTION 10**
1. Peterson, Craig etux 6
- SECTION 12**
1. Picht Trust 5
- SECTION 13**
1. Moser, Renae etal 7
- SECTION 17**
1. Fairfield Genetics Inc 7
- SECTION 18**
1. Anderson, William etux 5

- SECTION 21**
1. Ascheman, William etux 5
- SECTION 24**
1. Schliep, Douglas etux 11
- SECTION 27**
1. Hilbrands, Matthew etux 6
- SECTION 28**
1. Schliep, Daniel 6
2. Evangelical Lutheran Church 15

- SECTION 29**
1. Schlieman, Harold etux 20
- SECTION 32**
1. Hennen, James etux 10
- SECTION 34**
1. Farmco Supply LLP 11

Other LGUs

DATE	TYPE	FROM	TO	SUBJECT
November 10, 2023	Letter	Applicants	Big Stone Area Growth (BSAG)	Initial outreach for BSSA Project and request for comments
			Ortonville Economic Development Authority (EDA)	
			Big Stone City Development Corporation	
			Big Stone Soil and Water Conservation District (Big Stone SWCD))	
			Douglas County SWCD	
			Pope County SWCD	
			Stevens County SWCD	
			Swift County SWCD	
			Lac qui Parle County SWCD	
			Yellow Bank Watershed District	
			Bois De Sioux Watershed District	
			Board of Managers-Upper Minnesota River Watershed District	
November 16, 2023	Email	Pope County SWCD	Applicants	Response to proposed BSSA Project request for comments
July 17, 2024	Meeting	N/A	N/A	Meeting between the Applicants and the Audubon Society

November 10, 2023

Vicki Oakes
Ortonville EDA
987 US Highway 12
Ortonville, MN 56278

Re: Request for Input for the Proposed Big Stone South to Alexandria Transmission Line Project (BSSA)

Dear Ms. Oakes,

Otter Tail Power Company (Otter Tail) and Missouri River Energy Services, on behalf of Western Minnesota Municipal Power Agency (Western Minnesota), are partnering to develop, construct, and co-own a new, approximately 100-mile, 345-kilovolt (kV) high voltage transmission line that will connect Otter Tail's existing Big Stone South 345-kV substation near Big Stone City, South Dakota to Western Minnesota's existing Alexandria 345-kV substation near Alexandria, Minnesota (referred to as the Project or BSSA). The Project is a segment of one of eighteen new transmission projects identified in the Upper Midwest by the Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO)¹ that is needed to ensure electric reliability, reduce transmission congestion, increase access to low-cost energy, and increase system resiliency to extreme weather events. The Project will be in Grant County, South Dakota and potentially in Big Stone, Lac qui Parle, Swift, Stevens, Pope, and Douglas Counties, Minnesota depending on the final route identified through the state permitting processes in Minnesota and South Dakota. Otter Tail and Western Minnesota were applicants to a Certificate of Need application that was filed with the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (MN PUC) on September 29, 2023, and plan to submit a Route Permit application with the MN PUC in the fourth quarter of 2024 as well as a Facility Permit application with the South Dakota Public Utilities Commission in the second quarter of 2024. Depending on a variety of factors, construction of the Project is anticipated to start in 2027 and end in either 2030 or 2031. Otter Tail and Western Minnesota started public engagement efforts in the second quarter of 2023 through a series of public meetings and has continued routing efforts since that time with a second round of public meetings recently occurring throughout the Project area over the past month. Otter Tail and Western Minnesota, with our consultants' help, have identified potential corridors as shown on the enclosed map. These corridors were based on: (1) an analysis of publicly available data; (2) stakeholder feedback and comments; (3) engineering and constructability best practices; (4) environmental considerations; and (5) regulatory rules and guidelines. These corridors are planning to be refined into a preferred route in which Otter Tail and Western Minnesota will seek to obtain a 150-foot-wide easement from landowners for the construction, operation, and maintenance of the proposed 345-kV transmission line.

We request your review of the corridors identified for the Project to help identify opportunities and constraints as we move towards defining a preferred route. We are particularly interested in any property located within or adjacent to the corridors which your agency may own or have an interest in. We would also appreciate being made aware of any proposed developments your agency may be contemplating within the corridors in addition to any information that might assist us in our siting analysis and studies. To help us identify potential concerns or opportunities in our on-going routing analysis, we request that you please provide us with any information pertaining to the Project by December 11, 2023. Verbal, written or email responses should be sent to:

¹ See more information at www.misoenergy.org.

HDR, Inc.
Attn: Jennifer Hanley
51 N Broadway, Suite 550
Fargo, ND 58102
Jennifer.hanley@hdrinc.com
701-353-6139

Future opportunities for input will also be available. As the Project progresses, we are planning to have additional consultations with agencies, other jurisdictions, and landowners as we develop and refine a preferred route.

If you desire further information regarding the proposed Project, please contact me at 218-739-8311 or jweiers@otpc.com or our lead environmental consultant, Jennifer Hanley of HDR, Inc., at 701-353-6139 or jennifer.hanley@hdrinc.com. In addition, further information about the Project can also be found on our website at www.BigStoneSouthtoAlexandria.com.

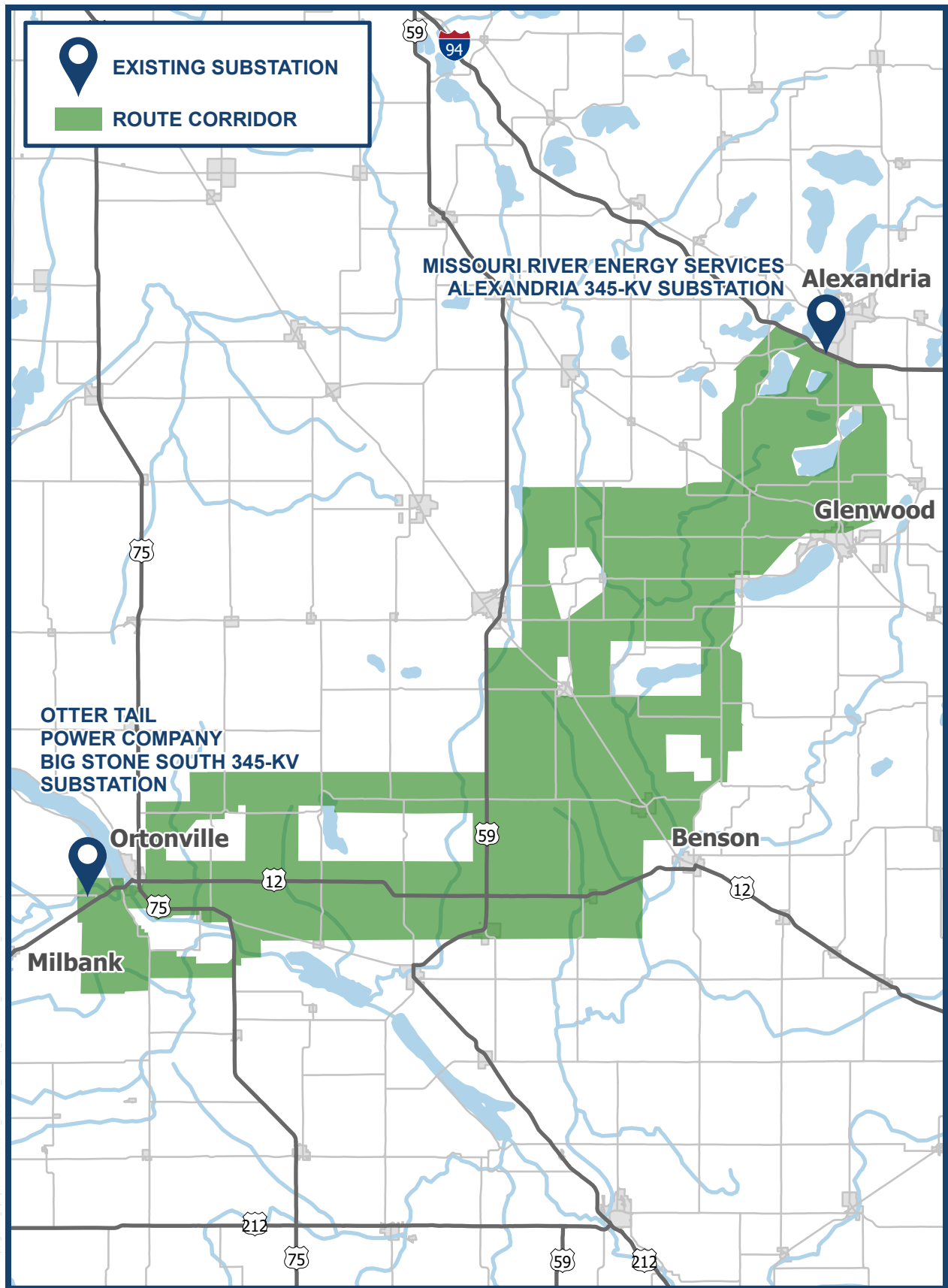
We appreciate and value your input in our on-going efforts to minimize effects to socioeconomics, avoid known culturally significant sites, protect natural resources, and utilize opportunities to parallel existing infrastructure corridors where feasible and look forward to your feedback and continued coordination.

Sincerely,



Jason Weiers
Manager, Transmission Project Development

Enclosure: BSSA Corridor Map



▲ Route corridor is marked in green on the map above and subject to change.

Hanley, Jennifer

From: Kovarik, Holly - FPAC-NRCS, MN <Holly.Kovarik@mn.nacdnet.net>
Sent: Thursday, November 16, 2023 3:20 PM
To: Weiers, Jason; Hanley, Jennifer
Cc: Kovarik, Holly - FPAC-NRCS, MN; Hofstad, Steve (BWSR)
Subject: Big Stone South to Alexandria Transmission Line Project

Importance: High

You don't often get email from holly.kovarik@mn.nacdnet.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: [EXTERNAL] This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good Afternoon,

I am responding to your letter dated 11-10-2023. Any proposed construction activity will need to comply within the corridor of the project with the Wetland Conservation Act. Project design plans that identify areas of work in Pope County will be needed for our office to review.

Sincerely,

Holly Kovarik
District Manager
Pope SWCD
1680 Franklin Street North
Glenwood, MN 56334
(320) 634-5327 Phone
www.popeswcd.org

This electronic message contains information generated by the USDA solely for the intended recipients. Any unauthorized interception of this message or the use or disclosure of the information it contains may violate the law and subject the violator to civil or criminal penalties. If you believe you have received this message in error, please notify the sender and delete the email immediately.