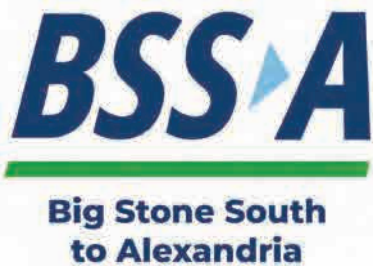


Appendix G

Public Outreach and Open House Materials

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Public Outreach



Website and digital engagement

Website Analytics



Newspaper Advertisement Schedule

Newspaper advertisements

Newspaper	County	Run Dates
Alexandria Echo Press	Douglas County	April 17 & 24, 2023 October 6 & 11, 2023 January 31 & February 7, 2024 June 12 & 19, 2024
Dawson Sentinel	Lac Qui Parle County	April 19 & 26, 2023 October 4 & 11, 2023 January 31 & February 7, 2024 June 12 & 19, 2024
Swift County Extra Shopper	Swift County	April 15 & 22, 2023 October 6 & 13, 2023 February 3 & 10, 2024 June 15 & 22, 2024
Grant County Herald	Grant County	April 18 & 25, 2023 October 4 & 11, 2023 January 30 & February 6, 2024 June 11 & 18, 2024
Ortonville Independent	Big Stone County	April 17 & 24, 2023 October 3 & 10, 2023 January 29 & February 5, 2024 June 10 & 17, 2024
Pope County Tribune	Pope County	April 17 & 24, 2023 January 29 & February 5, 2024 June 6 & 7, 2024
Stevens County Times	Stevens County	April 18 & 25, 2023 October 3 & 10, 2023 January 30 & February 6, 2024 June 11 & 18, 2024
Swift County Monitor	Swift County	April 19 & 26, 2023 October 4 & 11, 2023 January 31 & February 7, 2024 June 12 & 19, 2024
West Central Tribune	Kandiyohi County	April 15 & 22, 2023 October 4 & 11, 2023 February 3 & 10, 2024 June 8 & 17, 2024

Phase 1 Public Open Houses



Mailings and advertisements

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





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

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.

JOIN US!


Social media post

 **Otter Tail Power Company**
★ Favorites · April 24, 2023 · 

Join us this week!

Big Stone South to Alexandria transmission line project open houses:


- Alexandria: Tuesday, April 25, 4-7 p.m.
- Ortonville: Wednesday, April 26, 4-7 p.m.... [See more](#)



BIGSTONESOUTHTOALEXANDRIA.COM

Big Stone South to Alexandria Transmission Line

Minnesota's electric utilities are committed to delivering safe, reliable, cost-effective energy fo...

 4

Newspaper advertisement

Big Stone South to Alexandria Transmission Line

JOIN US!

You're invited to our upcoming public meetings to learn more about the project, ask questions, and provide feedback.

Otter Tail Power Company and Missouri River Energy Services are proposing a new 345-kilovolt transmission line between Otter Tail Power's Big Stone South Substation in South Dakota and a MRES substation in Alexandria, Minnesota. The project will improve electric reliability in the Upper Midwest.

ALEXANDRIA

April 25, 2023

4:00-7:00 p.m.

Holiday Inn
5537 MN-29
Alexandria, MN 56308

ORTONVILLE

April 26, 2023

4:00-7:00 p.m.

Ortonville Community Center
200 Mahoning Avenue
Ortonville, MN 56278

BENSON

April 27, 2023

4:00-7:00 p.m.

McKinney's on Southside
300 14th Street South
Benson, MN 56215









Big Stone South to Alexandria

HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT THE PROJECT?

 www.BigStoneSouthtoAlexandria.com
 connect@bigstonesouthtoalexandria.com
 (800) 599-5587

SCAN ME!

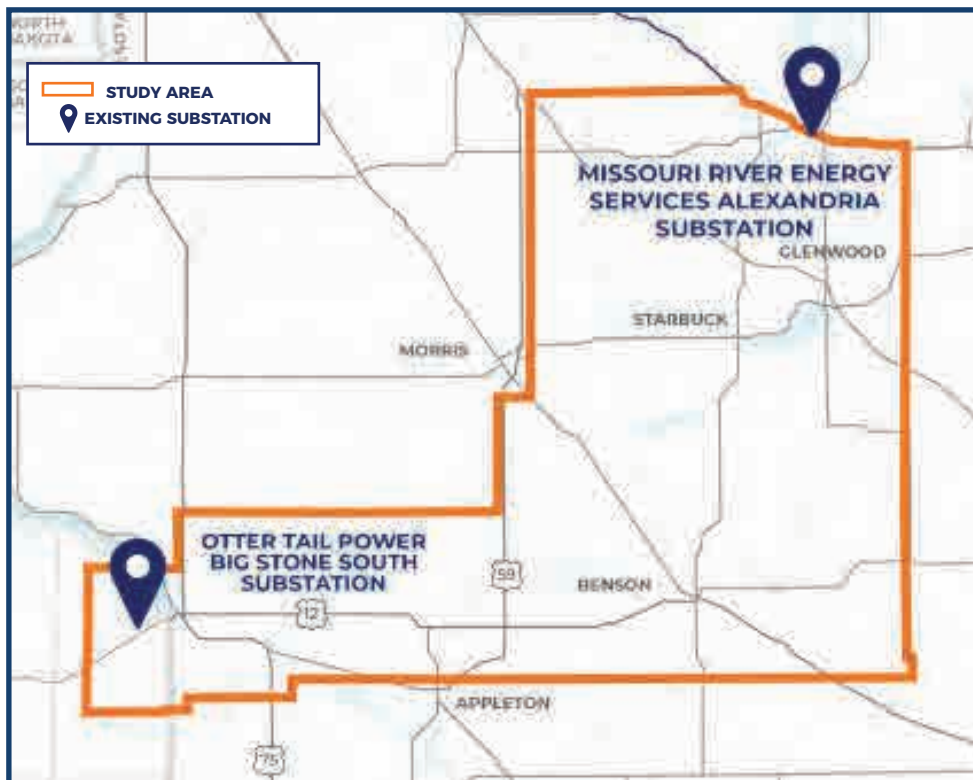


Open house materials

NEW 345-KV TRANSMISSION LINE

Otter Tail Power Company and **Missouri River Energy Services** are proposing a new transmission line to connect the existing Big Stone South substation in northeast South Dakota and the existing Alexandria, Minnesota substation. We will work closely with landowners, communities, and local officials to identify potential routes and file route permits with appropriate regulatory agencies.

The BSSA transmission project will:



The Study Area is subject to refinement during project development.

Routing Process



1.
Define Study Area



2.
Identify Project Corridors

Host Public Open House



3.
Develop Route Alternatives

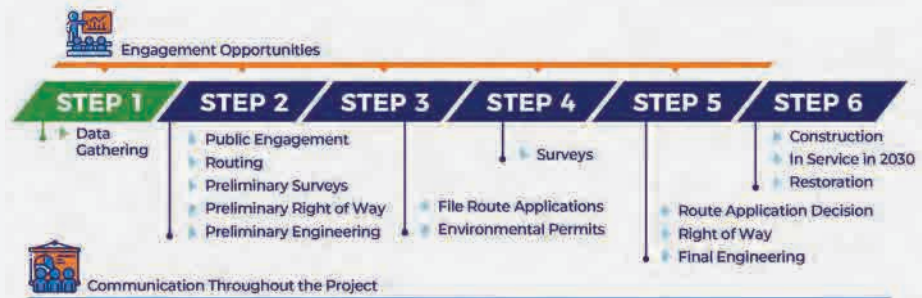
Host Public Open House



4.
Select Preferred Route

Many steps need to take place between now and when the Big Stone South to Alexandria 345-kV Transmission Line is fully operational. See the timeline on the right for a snapshot of how this project will develop and when you will see different milestones!

Processes and timing vary from MN to SD. Our project team will refine the timing of these steps to be in compliance with each respective state's requirements.



We can't do this alone, and we're appreciative of your support and interest in the Big Stone South to Alexandria 345-kV Transmission Line project!

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

Use your phone's camera to scan the QR code.



Project boards



Big Stone South
to Alexandria

WELCOME

PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE



BSSA Big Stone South to Alexandria

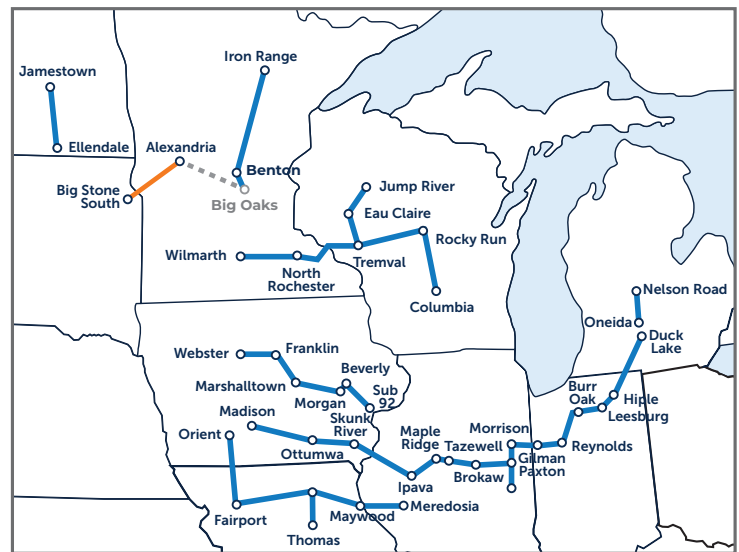
PROJECT DEVELOPMENT



Both Otter Tail Power Company and Missouri River Energy Services belong to the Midcontinent Independent System Operator organization, also referred to as MISO.

MISO is a non-profit, member-based regional transmission organization that provides reliable, cost-effective electric systems and operations; dependable and transparent prices; open access to markets; and planning for long-term efficiency.

MISO has approved 18 new transmission projects throughout the Midwest that are needed by 2030 to ensure a **reliable** and **resilient** transmission system in the future.



BSSA Big Stone South to Alexandria

PROJECT BENEFITS

Otter Tail Power Company and Missouri River Energy Services are proposing a new 345-kilovolt (kV) transmission line between Otter Tail Power's existing Big Stone South Substation and MRES's existing Alexandria Substation.

The project will benefit the region by:



Improving electric reliability



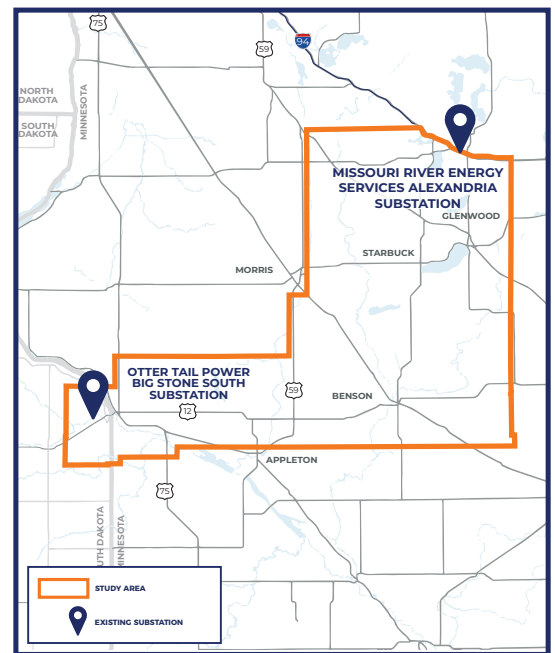
Reducing transmission congestion



Increasing access to renewable energy



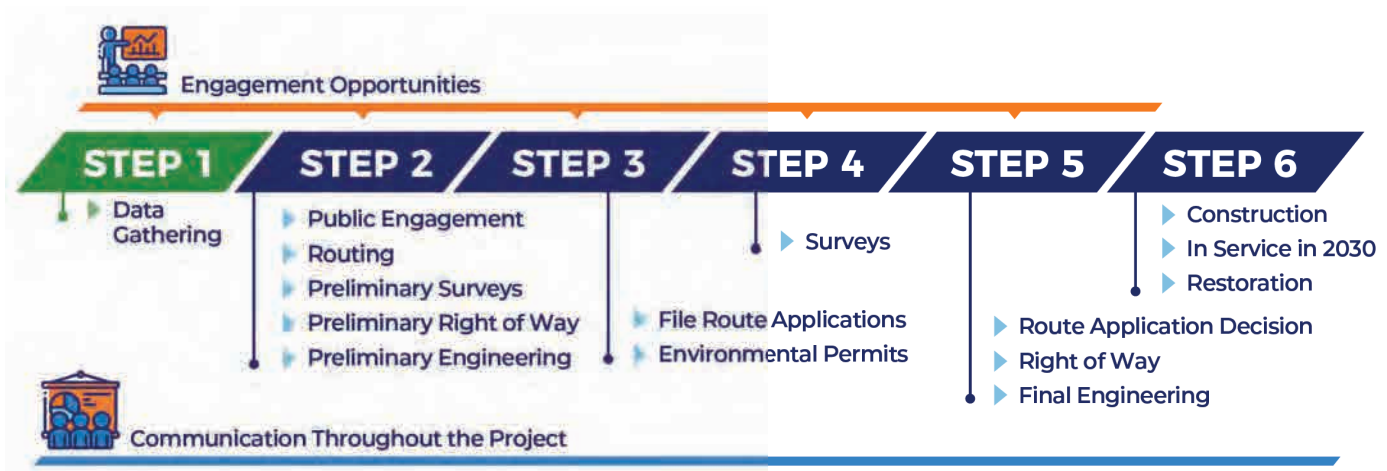
Increasing resiliency to extreme weather conditions



The Study Area is subject to refinement during project development.

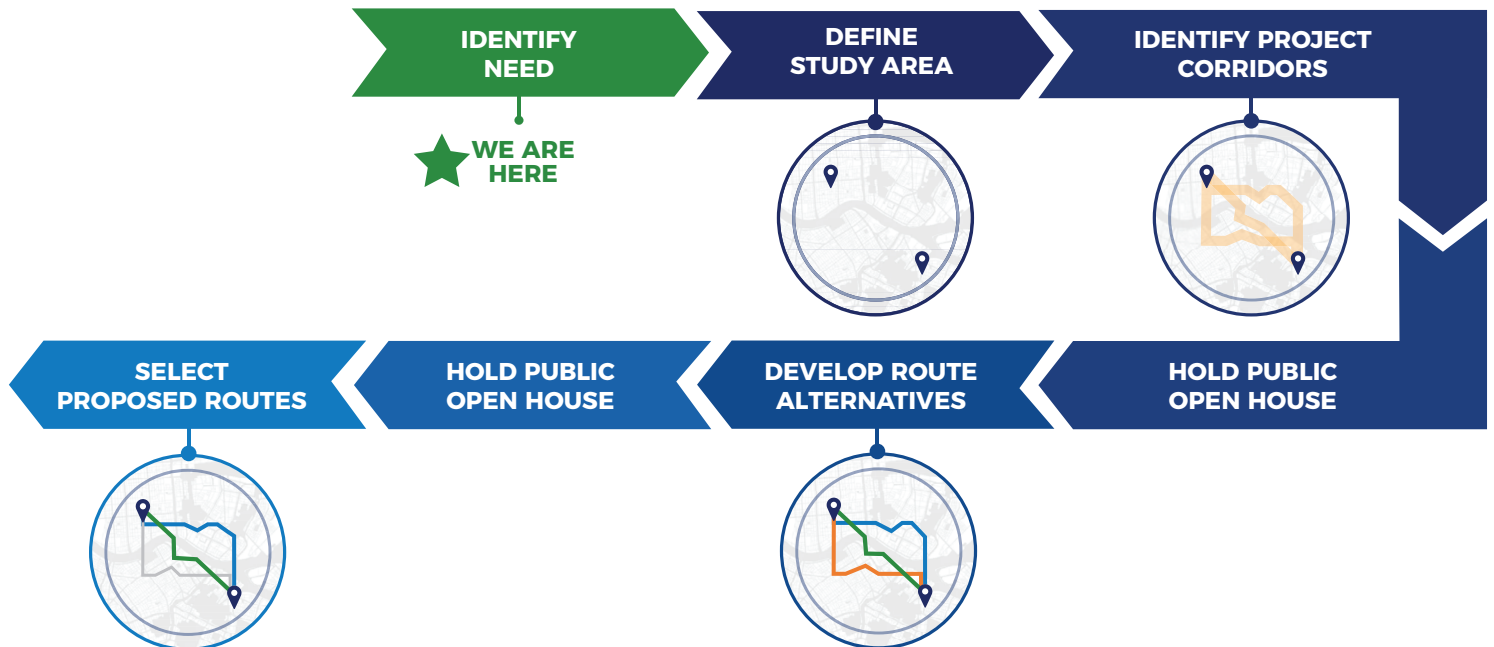


PROJECT DEVELOPMENT STEPS



Processes and timing vary from MN to SD. Our project team will refine the timing of these steps to be in compliance with each respective state's requirements.

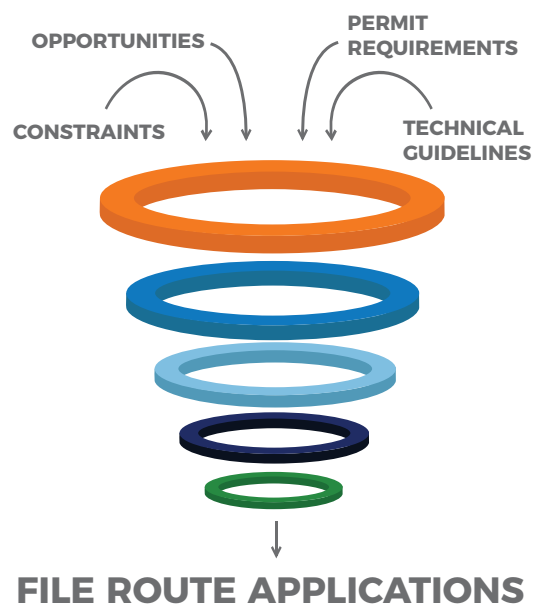
ROUTING PROCESS



ROUTING CONSIDERATIONS

We'll hold meetings with agencies and the public throughout the study area to gather feedback and information helpful to our routing team in developing potential line routes.

After carefully considering that input and evaluating opportunities, constraints, permit requirements, and technical guidelines, we'll identify project corridors.



RIGHT OF WAY ACQUISITION

? What is Right of Way?

Right of way is a portion of land needed for the construction, operation, and maintenance of the transmission line, typically about 150-foot-wide. Right of way is typically secured through negotiation and acquisition of an easement agreement.

? What is an Easement?


An easement is the legal document that allows Otter Tail Power Company and Missouri River Energy Services to construct, survey, and maintain transmission structures and lines on your property.


A **150-foot-wide easement** will be necessary to construct, operate, and maintain the proposed transmission line.


? What is Right of Entry?


To assess potential routes and conduct the necessary environmental, engineering, and geologic studies/surveys, right-of-way agents will work with landowners and residents to acquire a temporary right-of-entry agreement. This agreement does not give permission for construction.

? What can I expect? Right-of-way agents will reach out to landowners in potential routing areas to discuss right-of-way needs.

1  Landowners in the project area will be notified of the project and right-of-way agents will reach out to begin the acquisition process.

2  A right-of-way agent will present the landowner an easement based on the fair market value.

3  We'll work with landowners to resolve any questions or concerns, coming to an agreement to grant an easement.

4  Once the project receives final approval, the utilities construct, operate, and maintain the transmission line.

You will be involved throughout the process, and if you have any questions or concerns, our right-of-way agents will work with you!



PUBLIC OUTREACH

Stay Informed

To stay up-to-date on the project, you can visit our website at:



www.BigStoneSouthtoAlexandria.com

Use your phone's
camera to scan
the QR code.



Get Connected

Our next round of public meetings will be late 2023 – early 2024. We hope you are able to join us as we provide more information regarding the regulatory process for this project.

There will be many opportunities to participate throughout the project development and permitting processes. You can submit feedback, attend public meetings, ask questions, and learn more!



Questions or comments about the project?

connect@bigstonesouthtoalexandria.com
(800) 598-5587

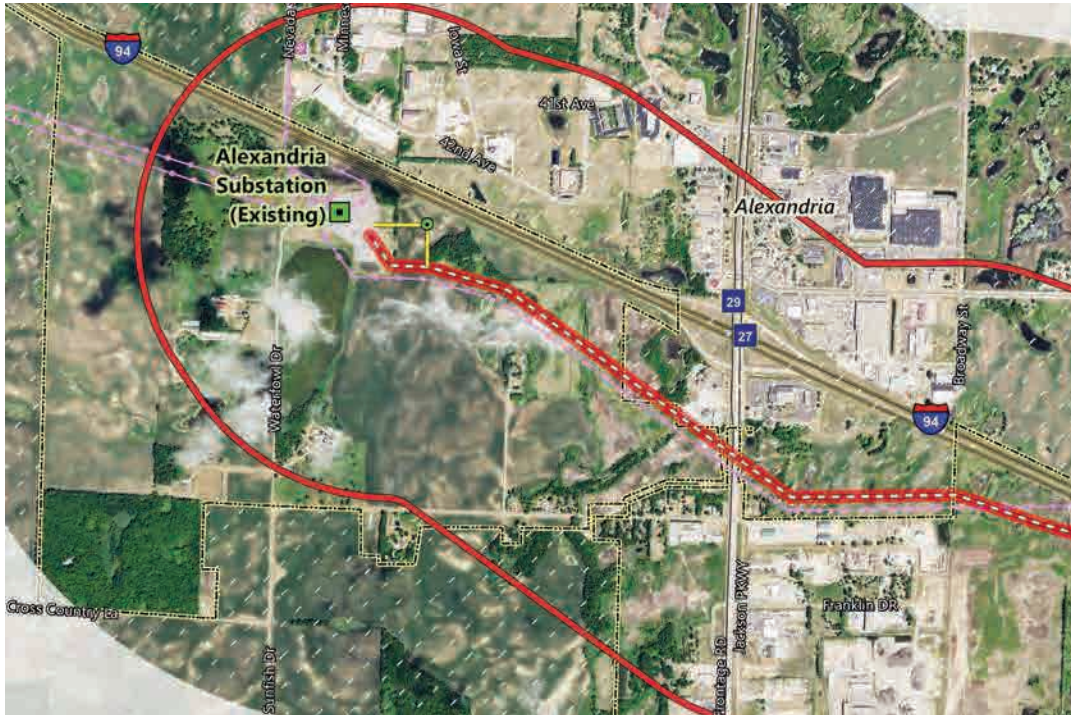


Media coverage

NEWS

Transmission project proposed in Alexandria area

On Tuesday, April 11, at the Holiday Inn members of the public were able to get information and talk to officials about the project.



This map shows a portion of the area affected by an upcoming Alexandria-to-Becker transmission project. Contributed photo



By **Travis Gulbrandson**

April 19, 2023 at 8:24 AM

 Share

 News reporting

ALEXANDRIA — An open house was held last week in Alexandria on the Alexandria-to-Becker transmission project.

On Tuesday, April 11, at the Holiday Inn members of the public were able to get information and talk to officials about the project.

The project would put a 345-kV transmission line between the Alexandria substation and the planned Big Oaks substation, proposed to be built near the retiring Sherco power plant near Becker.

The transmission line project is designed to connect new renewable energy to the grid and enhance reliability. The bulk of construction would involve adding a second circuit to existing transmission structures from the completed CapX2020 project.

"We're able for the most part to add power lines onto existing structures," said Randy Fordice, spokesperson for Xcel Energy. "There will be I think 50 new structures or foundations that we'd have to build where we'd have two-pole structures versus the one-pole structure that you would see on most of I-94.

"But for the most part, it's just adding that second wire between Alexandria and Becker," he said.

Additionally, the Alexandria substation will be connected to the Big Stone South substation in South Dakota, Fordice said.

"This is probably one of the more straightforward projects that we'll ever do because we have the existing infrastructure in place, versus looking for a new point A to point B route, which is how most of our projects are," Fordice said.

A certificate of need will also be required to be filed with the state of Minnesota for the entire route from South Dakota to Becker, Fordice said.

"That tends to take about 10 to 15 months for the state review process," he said.

Following approval, there will be additional public hearings, along with a more detailed design and engineering, with construction to begin some time in the later 2020s, Fordice said.


"The technical, expected in-service date is 2030, but there's additional equipment that needs to be installed. The substation and things like that," he said. "We've got good lead time, but there's so much transmission being built, we wanted to make sure we can get out and start doing this early."

Richard Dahl of Missouri River Energy Services said another public meeting will take place in Alexandria on April 25, and more public outreach meetings will come later.

A route permit is also expected to be filed for the project in the fourth quarter of 2024, he said.

"There's a lot more work to be done," he said.

The open house was hosted by Xcel Energy.

 Share

 News reporting



By **Travis Gulbrandson**(<https://www.echopress.com/TravisGulbrandson>)

Travis Gulbrandson covers several beats, including Osakis School Board and Osakis City Council, along with the Brandon-Evansville School Board. His focus will also be on crime and court news.



Instagram (https://www.instagram.com/echo_press/)



Facebook

Visit (<https://www.facebook.com/echopress>)


[Travis Gulbrandson](#)

Phase 2 Public Open Houses



Mailings and advertisements

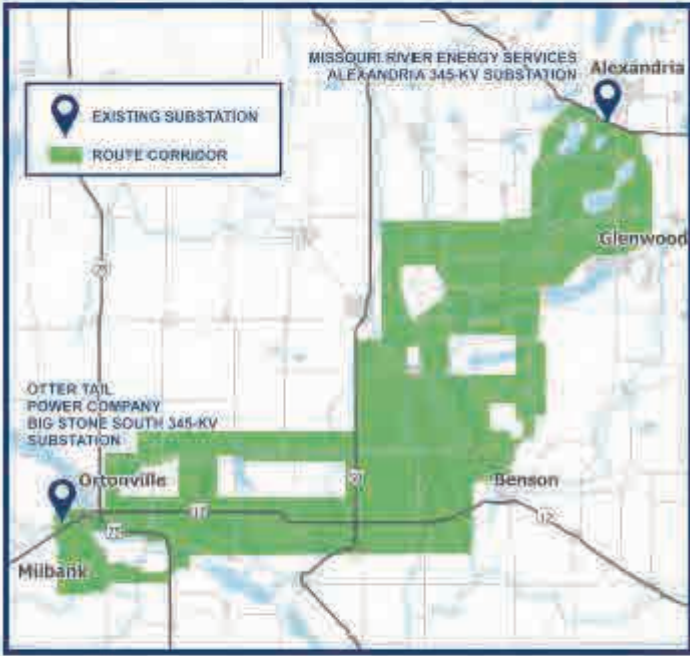
Postcard mailer





Big Stone South to Alexandria

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 run between Otter Tail Power Company's Big Stone South Substation in South Dakota and the Alexandria substation owned by Missouri River Energy Services near Alexandria, Minnesota.

This project will improve electric reliability, increase resiliency to extreme weather events, reduce transmission congestion, and increase access to low cost energy in the region.




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





ROUTING PROCESS


- 1




DEFINE STUDY AREA
- 2




IDENTIFY PROJECT CORRIDORS
- 3




**WE ARE HERE
HOST PUBLIC OPEN HOUSES**
- 4



DEVELOP ROUTE CORRIDOR
- 5




HOST PUBLIC OPEN HOUSES
- 6



SELECT PROPOSED ROUTE


PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

Developing and constructing a transmission line is a multi-year effort. We are gathering public feedback to refine the route corridor and select a proposed route, and we'll continue coordinating with landowners, local governments, agencies, and other stakeholders. The new line is tentatively scheduled to be in service in 2030-2031.




Engagement Opportunities

STEP 1	STEP 2	STEP 3	STEP 4	STEP 5	STEP 6
Data Gathering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Engagement Routing Preliminary Surveys Preliminary Right of Way Preliminary Engineering 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Right of Way Surveys File Route Applications Environmental Permits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Route Application Decision Final Engineering 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construction In Service In 2030-2031 Restoration 	



We are here
Communicate Project Updates Throughout Construction

Scan the QR code to visit the project website.





C/O 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 South to Alexandria 345-kV transmission line proposed by Otter Tail Power Company and Missouri River Energy Services.

LEARN MORE ON THE INSIDE



SCAN ME
WITH YOUR
PHONE
CAMERA

HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT THE PROJECT?

www.BigStoneSouthtoAlexandria.com

connect@bigstonesouthtoalexandria.com

(800) 598-5587

ALEXANDRIA

Oct. 23, 2023
3:00-6:00 p.m.
Broadway Ballroom Events Center
115 30th Ave E, Alexandria, MN 56308

MILBANK

Oct. 16, 2023
3:00-6:00 p.m.
Milbank Community Room
1001 E. 4th Ave, Ste 301
Milbank, SD 57252

BENSON

Oct. 17, 2023
3:00-6:00 p.m.
Benson Golf Club
2222 Atlantic Ave
Benson, MN 56215

ORTONVILLE

Oct. 24, 2023
3:00-6:00 p.m.
Ortonville Community Center
200 Monroe Ave, Ortonville, MN 56278

GLENWOOD

Oct. 18, 2023
3:00-6:00 p.m.
Central Square
105 2nd Ave NE, Ste 111
Glenwood, MN 56334

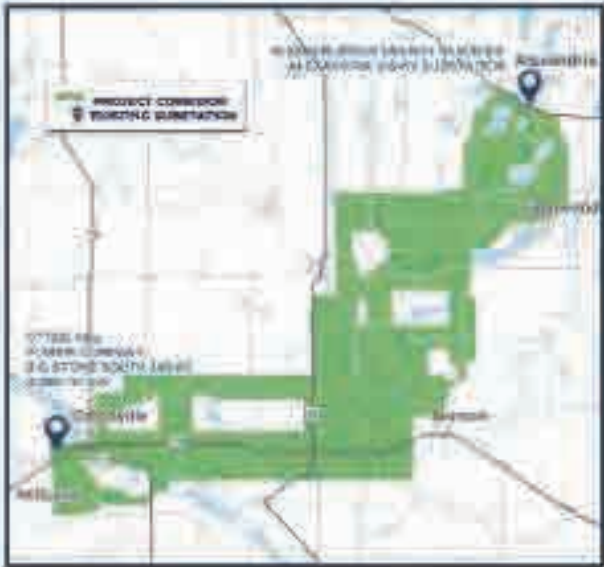
The Big Stone South to Alexandria (BSSA) transmission line will help ensure electric reliability, increase resiliency to extreme weather events, reduce transmission congestion, and increase access to low cost energy in the region. You're invited to our upcoming open houses to learn more about the project and provide your input to our team.

Social media advertisement

Facebook Feeds Expand

Offer Tail Power Company Sponsored

We're partnering with Missouri River Energy Services (representing Western Minnesota Municipal Power Agency) to [See more](#)



bigstonesouthtoalexandria.com

Big Stone South to Alexandria transmission [Learn more](#)

3

Like Comment Share

Newspaper advertisement

Big Stone South to Alexandria

Join Us!

Provide Input for the Big Stone South to Alexandria Transmission Line

MILBANK

Oct. 16, 2023 3:00-6:00 p.m.

Milbank Community Room
1001 E. 4th Ave., Suite 301
Milbank, SD 57252

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 run between Otter Tail Power Company's Big Stone South Substation in South Dakota and the Alexandria Substation owned by Missouri River Energy Services near Alexandria, Minnesota.

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

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Alexandria, MN 56308

ORTONVILLE

Oct. 24, 2023 3:00-6:00 p.m.

Ortonville Community Center
200 Monroe Ave
Ortonville, MN 56278

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

HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT THE PROJECT?

www.BigStoneSouthtoAlexandria.com

connect@bigstonesouthtoalexandria.com

(800) 588-5587

CAN'T MAKE IT?
You can still provide input in several ways:

- Request a mailed or emailed information packet
- Set up a meeting with our project team
- Leave a comment on our online map at www.BigStoneSouthtoAlexandria.com

Open house materials

Project handout

BSSA Big Stone South to Alexandria

Otter Tail Power Company and Missouri River Energy Services (representing Western Minnesota Municipal Power Agency) are partnering to develop, construct, and own a new 480-kilovolt (KV) transmission line. The Big Stone South to Alexandria transmission line (BSSA) will run between Otter Tail Power Company's Big Stone South Substation in South Dakota and the Alexandria Substation owned by Missouri River Energy Services near Alexandria, Minnesota.

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

ROUTING PROCESS

DEFINE STUDY AREA

IDENTIFY PROJECT CORRIDORS

**WE ARE HERE
HOST PUBLIC OPEN HOUSES**

DEVELOP ROUTE CORRIDOR

HOST PUBLIC OPEN HOUSES

SELECT PROPOSED ROUTE

MONOPOLE

Image shows an example of a similar double-circuit structure.

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

Developing and constructing a transmission line is a multi-year effort. We are gathering public feedback to refine the route corridor and select a proposed route, and we'll continue coordinating with landowners, local governments, agencies, and other stakeholders. The new line is tentatively scheduled to be complete in either 2030 or 2031.

Engagement Opportunities

STEP 1

Data Gathering

STEP 2

Public Engagement
Routing
Preliminary Surveys
Preliminary Right of Way
Preliminary Engineering
MN Certificate of Need Filed

We are here

STEP 3

File SD Facility Permit Application
File MN Route Permit Application
Environmental Permits

STEP 4

Right of Way
Surveys

STEP 5

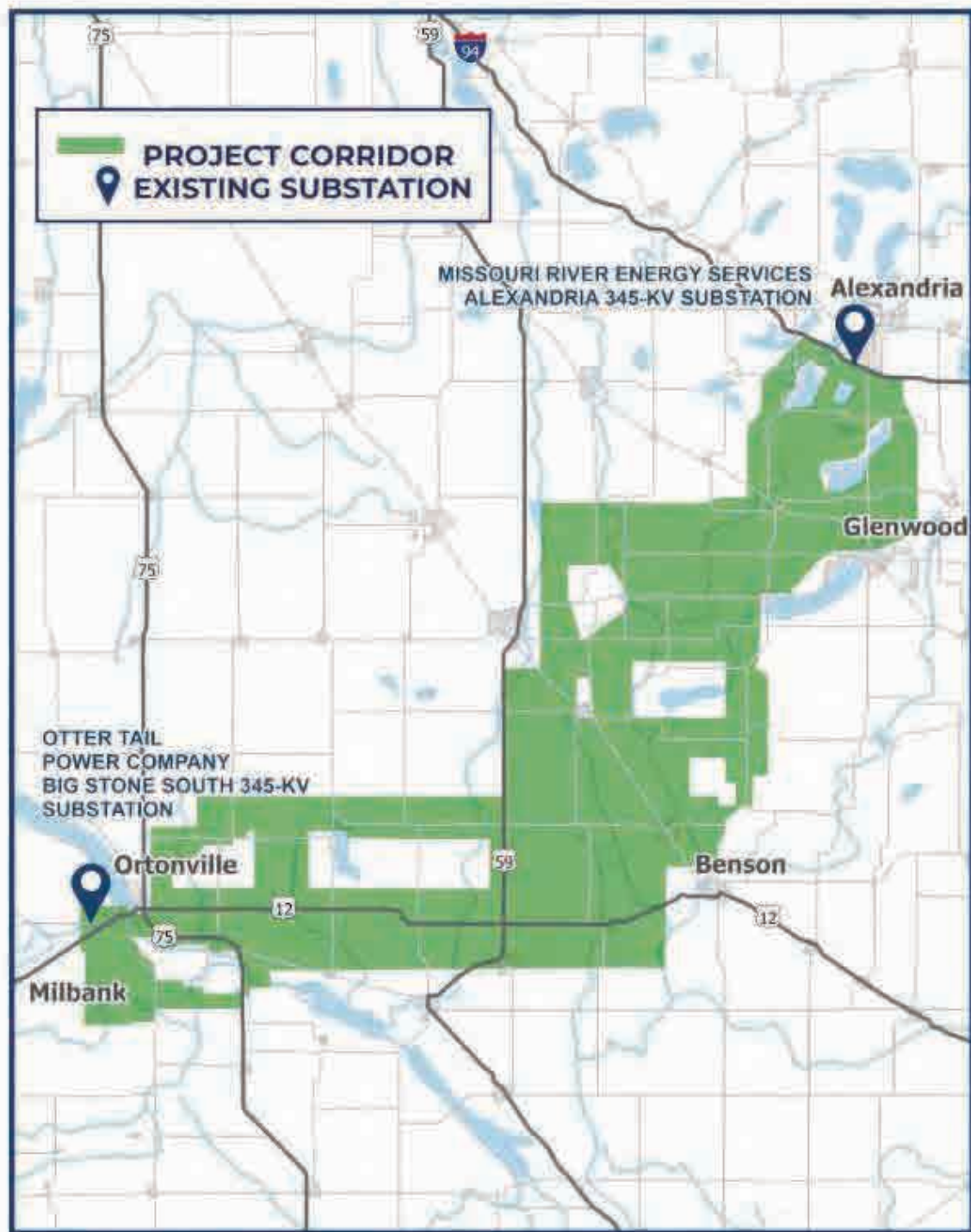
Permit Decisions
Final Engineering

STEP 6

Construction
In Service in 2030-2031
Restoration

Communicate Project Updates Throughout Construction

Scan the QR code to visit the project website.



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



WELCOME

PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE

SECOND ROUND





Big Stone South to Alexandria

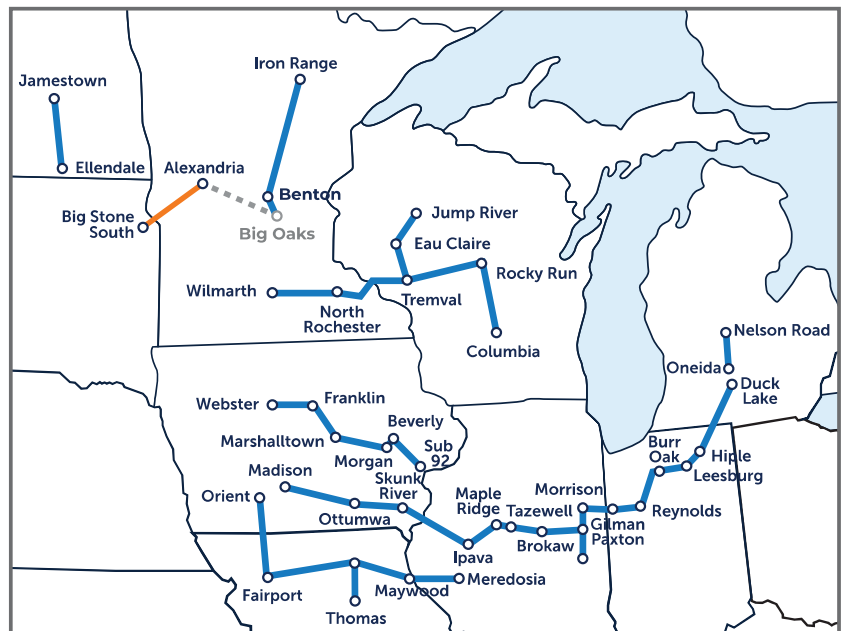
PROJECT DEVELOPMENT



Both Otter Tail Power Company and Missouri River Energy Services are members of the Midcontinent Independent System Operator, also referred to as MISO.

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MISO has approved 18 new transmission projects throughout the Midwest that are needed by 2030 to ensure a **reliable** and **resilient** transmission system in the future.



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 run between Otter Tail Power Company's Big Stone South Substation in South Dakota and the Alexandria Substation owned by Missouri River Energy Services near Alexandria, Minnesota.

The project will benefit the region by helping to:



Ensure electric reliability



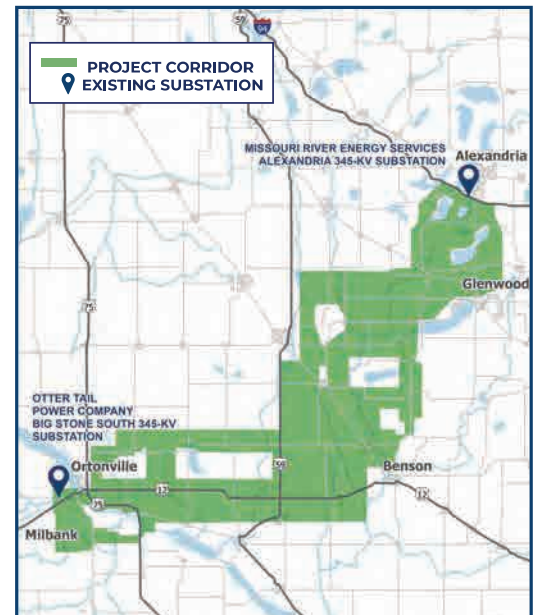
Reduce transmission congestion



Increase access to low-cost energy

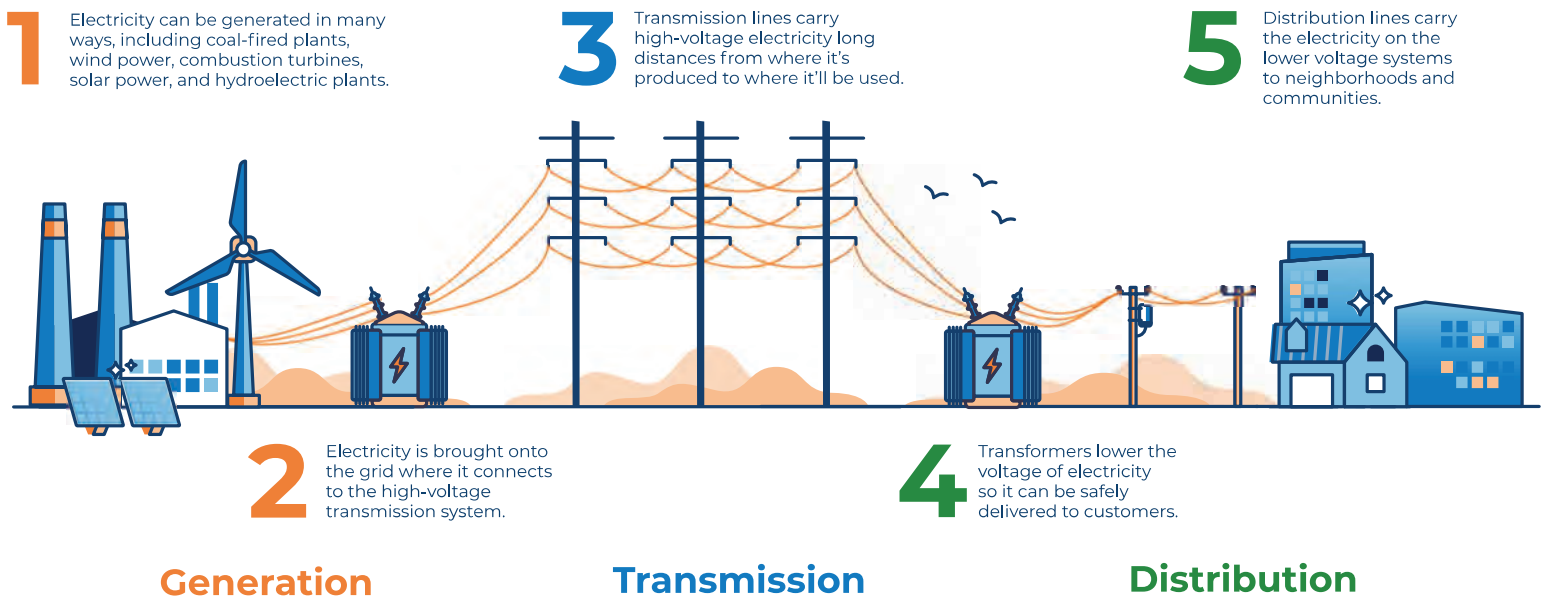


Increase resiliency to extreme weather events

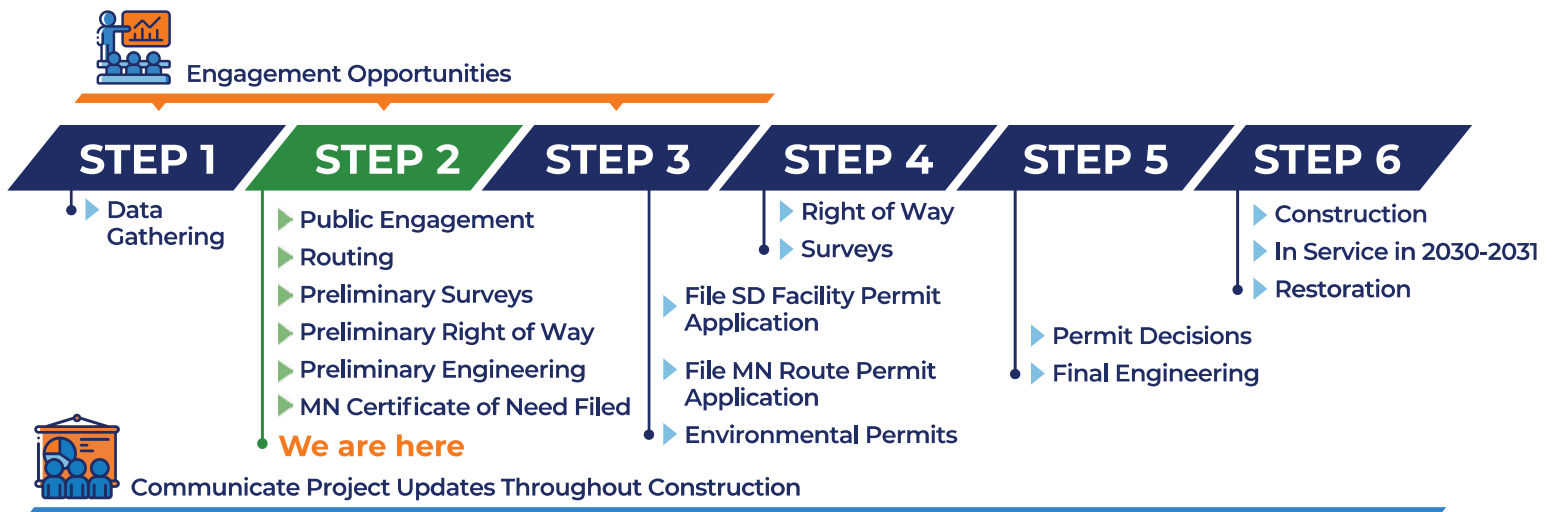


▲ Project corridor is marked in green on the map above and is subject to change.

TRANSMISSION BASICS



PROJECT DEVELOPMENT STEPS



Processes and timing may vary from MN to SD. Our project team will refine the timing of these steps to be in compliance with each respective state's requirements.

The BSSA transmission line will be constructed in both Minnesota and South Dakota, and the two states have different processes and timelines. Both states consider compliance with relevant laws and rules, as well as its potential impacts on the environment, inhabitants in the routing area, and orderly development of the region. After we've filed, the PUCs in each state will provide opportunities for additional feedback through public meetings and hearings.



MINNESOTA

Two major approvals must be obtained from the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (MN PUC) before a high voltage transmission line can be built: a Certificate of Need and a Route Permit. The Certificate of Need proceeding examines whether the proposed facilities are necessary and what the appropriate size, configuration and timing of the project should be. In a separate Route Permit proceeding, the MN PUC determines the route and design of the line.



CERTIFICATE OF NEED

► Public meetings



ROUTE PERMIT

► Public meetings
► Public hearings



ROUTE PERMIT APPLICATION DECISION

Estimated timeline is 18-24 months from time of route permit application filing anticipated in Q4 of 2024.



SOUTH DAKOTA

There is one major approval that needs to be obtained from the South Dakota Public Utilities Commission (SD PUC) before a high voltage transmission line can be built: a Facility permit. The SD PUC reviews routing applications for high voltage transmission lines, and if approved, issues an order granting a Facility Permit authorizing the construction and operation of the facility.



FACILITY PERMIT

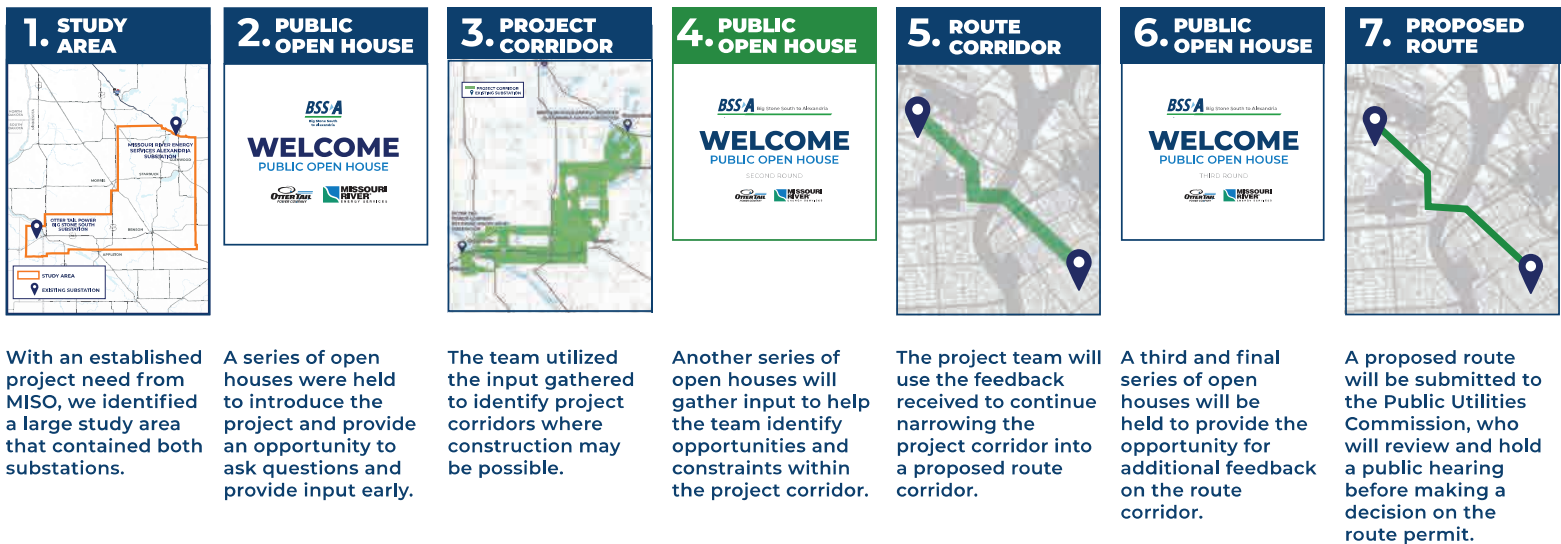
► Public hearing



FACILITY PERMIT APPLICATION DECISION

To be completed within 12 months from time of facility permit application filing anticipated in early Q2 of 2024.

WE ARE HERE



TRANSMISSION STRUCTURE

MONOPOLE

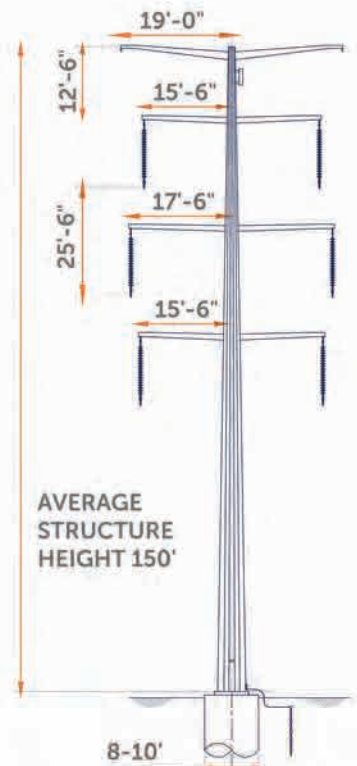


Image shown is an example of a similar double-circuit structure.

The typical structure will be 150 feet tall.

The structure type may vary across the project but primarily will be comprised of single pole, self-weathering steel with double circuit capability, meaning it can support a second set of conductors.

There will be three phases of conductors and two overhead shield wires—one will be an optical ground wire (OPGW) and the other stranded steel (overhead ground wire).



CONSTRUCTION PROCESS

ONGOING OUTREACH

Long before construction begins, right-of-way agents will be out coordinating with landowners, local government agencies, and other stakeholders. You will be involved throughout the process, and if you have any questions or concerns, our project team will work with you!

1.



Surveys

2.



Temporary Access

3.



**Foundation Drilling
& Pouring**

4.



Structure Setting

5.



Conductor Stringing

6.



Restoration

? What is Right of Way?

Right of way is a portion of land needed for the construction, operation, and maintenance of the transmission line. Typically a width of 150 feet is needed for a 345-kV transmission line. Right of way is typically secured through negotiation and acquisition of an easement agreement.

? What is Right of Entry?

To assess potential routes and conduct the necessary environmental, engineering, and geologic studies/surveys, right-of-way agents will work with landowners and residents to acquire a temporary right-of-entry agreement. This agreement does not give permission for construction.

? What is an Easement?

An easement is the legal document that allows Otter Tail Power Company and Missouri River Energy Services to construct, operate, and maintain transmission structures and lines on your property.

A **150-foot-wide easement** will be necessary to construct, operate, and maintain the proposed 345-kV transmission line.

- ?** Right-of-way agents will reach out to landowners in potential routing areas to discuss right-of-way needs.

1



Landowners in the project area will be notified of the project, and right-of-way agents will reach out to begin the acquisition process.

2



A right-of-way agent will present the landowner an easement based on the fair market value.

3



We'll work with landowners to resolve any questions or concerns and reach an agreement to grant an easement.

4



Once the project receives final approval, the utilities will construct, operate, and maintain the transmission line.

You will be involved throughout the process, and if you have any questions or concerns, our project team will work with you!

Stay Informed

To stay up-to-date on the project, you can visit our website at:



www.BigStoneSouthtoAlexandria.com

Use your phone's
camera to scan
the QR code.



Get Connected

Our next round of public meetings will be early 2024. We hope you are able to join us as we provide more information regarding the development of this project.

There will be many opportunities to participate throughout the project development and permitting process. You can submit feedback, attend public meetings, ask questions, and learn more!



Questions or comments about the project?

connect@BigStoneSouthtoAlexandria.com
(800) 598-5587

Media coverage

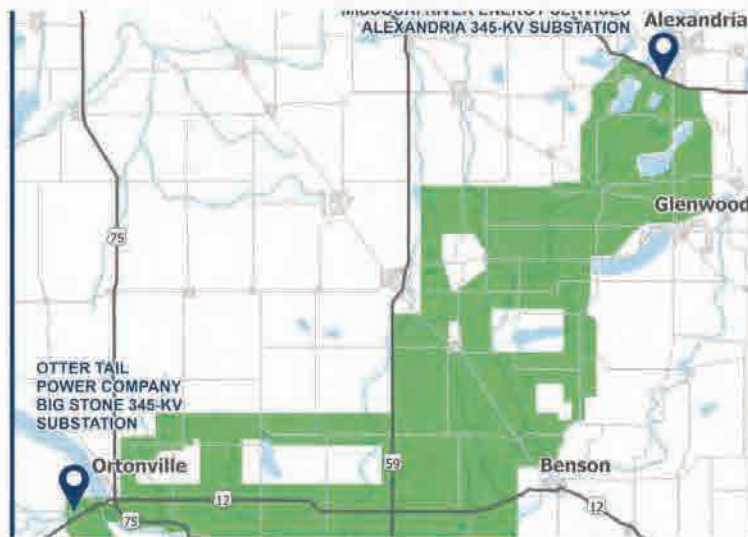
Media Coverage – Alexandria Echo Press

ECHO PRESS

NEWS LOCAL

Open house to provide information on transmission project that runs through Alexandria

It will take place Monday, Oct. 23 at the Broadway Ballroom, 115 30th Ave. E, Alexandria, from 3 to 6 p.m.



Otter Tail Power and Missouri River Energy Services are proposing a new transmission line to connect Otter Tail Power's Big Stone South Substation in northeast South Dakota and Missouri River Energy Service's Substation in Alexandria. Contributed map / Otter Tail Power and Missouri River Energy Services



By **Al Edenloff**

October 17, 2023 at 5:07 PM

Share

News reporting

ALEXANDRIA — An open house to provide more information about a proposed transmission line project — referred to as the Big Stone South to Alexandria route — will take place on Monday, Oct.

<https://www.echopress.com/news/local/open-house-to-provide-information-on-transmission-project-that-runs-through-alexandria?auth0Authentication...>

1/4

23 at the Broadway Ballroom, 115 30th Ave. E, Alexandria, from 3 to 6 p.m.

Other open houses are taking place in Milbank, Benson, Glenwood and Ortonville.

"Following public feedback from this spring, we've narrowed the project's study area to a project corridor," said Rebecca Michael, communications manager for Otter Tail Power Company, in a news release. "We're looking forward to sharing this information and hearing feedback from local landowners."

As reported in the Oct. 6 Echo Press, several Upper Midwest energy companies [filed plans on Friday, Sept.](#)

29(<https://www.echopress.com/news/proposed-power-project-goes-through-alexandria-area>), with the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission to move forward with the transmission project in Minnesota and northeastern South Dakota.

The companies said the project, estimated to cost between \$600 and \$680 million, will deliver reliable energy to customers as older fossil fuel-based plants retire in the coming years and open new pathways for additional renewable energy proposed in the Upper Midwest.

The 345-kilovolt Big Stone South-Alexandria-Big Oaks project consists of two segments, with one running from Big Stone City, South Dakota, to Alexandria (western segment), and the other running from Alexandria to Becker, Minnesota (eastern segment).

The transmission project will provide additional capacity to mitigate current capacity issues, maintain electric system reliability, relieve congestion on the grid, and allow more low-cost wind power from western Minnesota and the Dakotas to reach customers throughout the region, according to the energy companies. Renewable energy has no fuel costs and contributes to

<https://www.echopress.com/news/local/open-house-to-provide-information-on-transmission-project-that-runs-through-alexandria?auth0Authentication...>

2/4

a diversified energy mix, which helps energy companies provide cost-effective electricity for customers, the companies said.

“This project will allow us to continue to operate a reliable transmission grid, bring low-cost, renewable energy to homes and businesses, further reduce carbon emissions and focus on meeting our customers’ energy needs,” the utilities said. “We look forward to working with our state regulators, landowners and local officials to make this project a reality.”

The Big Stone South-Alexandria-Big Oaks project will help ensure continued electric reliability and improved system resilience in the Upper Midwest, according to the utilities. In recent years, utilities have added new renewable energy, such as wind and solar, and several fossil fuel plants are expected to retire in the coming years as they reach the end of their expected useful lives.

As plants are retired, new transmission is needed to deliver energy from where it is generated, particularly widespread renewable energy, to where it is consumed, the utilities said. The project also supports efforts to meet each energy company’s carbon reduction goals and will help move towards meeting Minnesota’s carbon-free energy standard.

The eastern segment proposes stringing a new transmission circuit primarily on existing structures originally built as part of the CapX2020 Fargo-St. Cloud and St. Cloud – Monticello projects between Alexandria and a new substation on Xcel Energy property near the Sherco power plant in Becker.

The western segment from Big Stone South to Alexandria proposes a new transmission line between Otter Tail Power’s Big Stone South substation in South Dakota and the Alexandria substation owned by Missouri River Energy Services.

The utilities jointly filed a Certificate of Need application for both segments and a Route Permit application for the eastern segment.

<https://www.echopress.com/news/local/open-house-to-provide-information-on-transmission-project-that-runs-through-alexandria?auth0Authentication...> 3/4

The western segment Route Permit application is expected to be filed in 2024 following a robust public outreach process, which is ongoing. Project participants include Great River Energy, Minnesota Power, Missouri River Energy Services (which has 61 utility members, including ALP Utilities in Alexandria), Otter Tail Power Company and Xcel Energy.

Share

News reporting

Tags

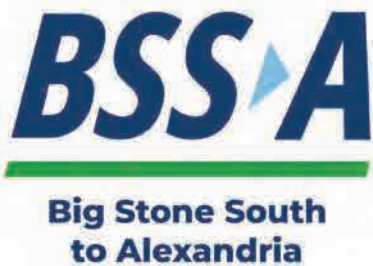


By **Al Edenloff**([https://www.echopress.com/Al Edenloff/](https://www.echopress.com/Al%20Edenloff/))

Al Edenloff is the editor of the twice-weekly Echo Press. He started his journalism career when he was in 10th grade, writing football and basketball stories for the Parkers Prairie Independent.

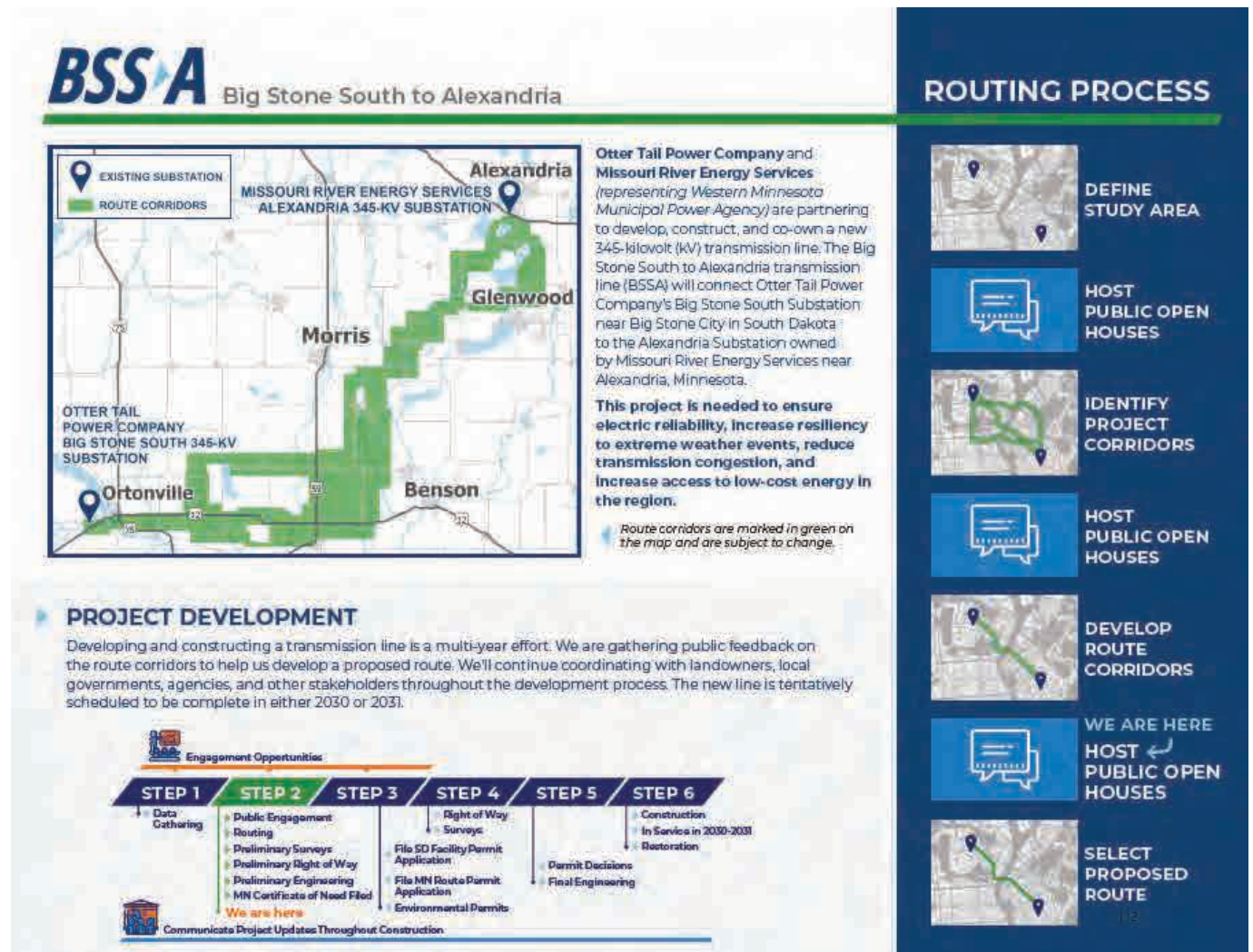
Twitter (<https://twitter.com/@AlEdenloff>) Instagram (https://www.instagram.com/echo_press/) Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/echopress>)

Phase 3 Public Open Houses



Mailings and advertisements

Postcard mailer





C/O HDR
1601 Utica Avenue South, Suite 600
St. Louis Park, MN 55416-3400

JOIN US FOR AN OPEN HOUSE

You're invited to our upcoming open houses to learn more about the project and provide your input to our team.

ORTONVILLE

Feb. 12, 2024 3:00-6:00 p.m.
Community Center
200 Monroe Ave, Ortonville, MN 56278

ALEXANDRIA

Feb. 13, 2024 3:00-6:00 p.m.
Holiday Inn
5637 Hwy 29 S, Alexandria, MN 56308

GLENWOOD

Feb. 20, 2024 3:00-6:00 p.m.
Central Square
105 2nd Ave NE, Ste T11, Glenwood, MN 56334

BIG STONE CITY

Feb. 21, 2024 3:00-6:00 p.m.
New American Legion
14521 485th Ave, Big Stone City, SD 57216

BENSON

Feb. 22, 2024 3:00-6:00 p.m.
McKinney's on Southside
300 14th St S, Benson, MN 56215

If we need to cancel due to inclement weather, we'll reschedule for the same time and location exactly two weeks later. Please check our website or call us for day-of updates.

QUESTIONS?

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



SCAN ME

Newspaper advertisement

Big Stone South to Alexandria

Join us!

Provide input for the Big Stone South to Alexandria transmission line

ORTONVILLE

Feb. 12, 2024
 3:00-6:00 p.m.

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 200 Monroe Ave
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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 in 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.

ROUTE CORRIDORS
 EXISTING SUBSTATION

▲ Route corridors are mapped in green on the map above and are subject to change.

If we need to cancel due to inclement weather, we'll reschedule for the same time and location exactly two weeks later. Please check our website or call us for day-of updates.

QUESTIONS?

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


CAN'T MAKE IT?

You can still provide input in several ways:

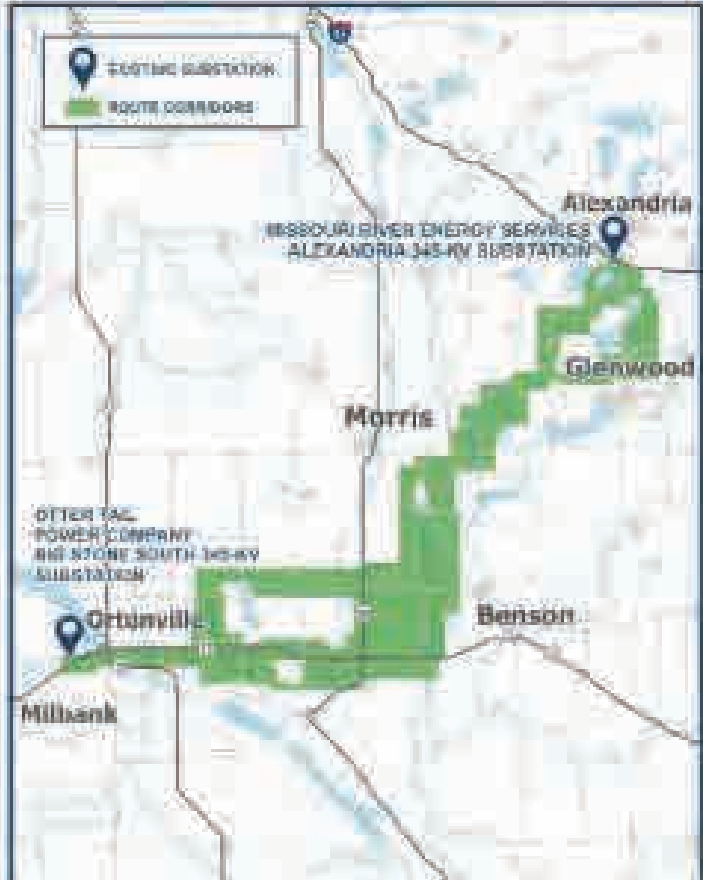
- Request a mailed or emailed information packet.
- Set up a meeting with our project team.
- Leave a comment on our online map.

www.BigStoneSouthtoAlexandria.com

Social media ad


 **Otter Tail Power Company**
Sponsored




We're partnering with Missouri River Energy Services (representing Western Minnesota Municipal Power Agency) to [See more](#)



bigstonesouthtoalexandria.com

Big South Stone to Alexandria Transmission... [Learn more](#)

 4 [2 comments](#) [1 share](#)

 Like  Comment  Share

Email invite

From: [Big Stone South to Alexandria](#)
To: [Dominguez, Ruben](#)
Subject: [TEST] You're invited to attend our Big Stone South to Alexandria transmission line (BSSA) project open houses
Date: Thursday, January 4, 2024 2:52:32 PM

You don't often get email from connect@bigstonesouthtoalexandria.com. [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.



Hello,

Otter Tail Power Company (Otter Tail Power) and **Missouri River Energy Services** (MRES), (on behalf of Western Minnesota Municipal Power Agency), invite you to attend our upcoming open houses for the Big Stone South to Alexandria transmission line (BSSA) project. Please join us to learn more about the project and provide your input to our team:



Ortonville

Monday, February 12, 2024

3 p.m. - 6 p.m.

Community Center

200 Monroe Ave, Ortonville, MN 56278



Alexandria

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

3 p.m. - 6 p.m.

Holiday Inn

5637 Hwy 29 S, Alexandria, MN 56308

Glenwood

Tuesday, February 20, 2024

3 p.m. - 6 p.m.



Central Square

105 2nd Ave NE, Ste 111, Glenwood, MN 56334



Big Stone City

Wednesday, February 21, 2024

3 p.m. - 6 p.m.

New American Legion

14521 485th Ave, Big Stone City, SD 57216



Benson

Thursday, February 22, 2024

3 p.m. - 6 p.m.

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300 14th St S, Benson, MN 56215

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- Calling (800) 598-5587.

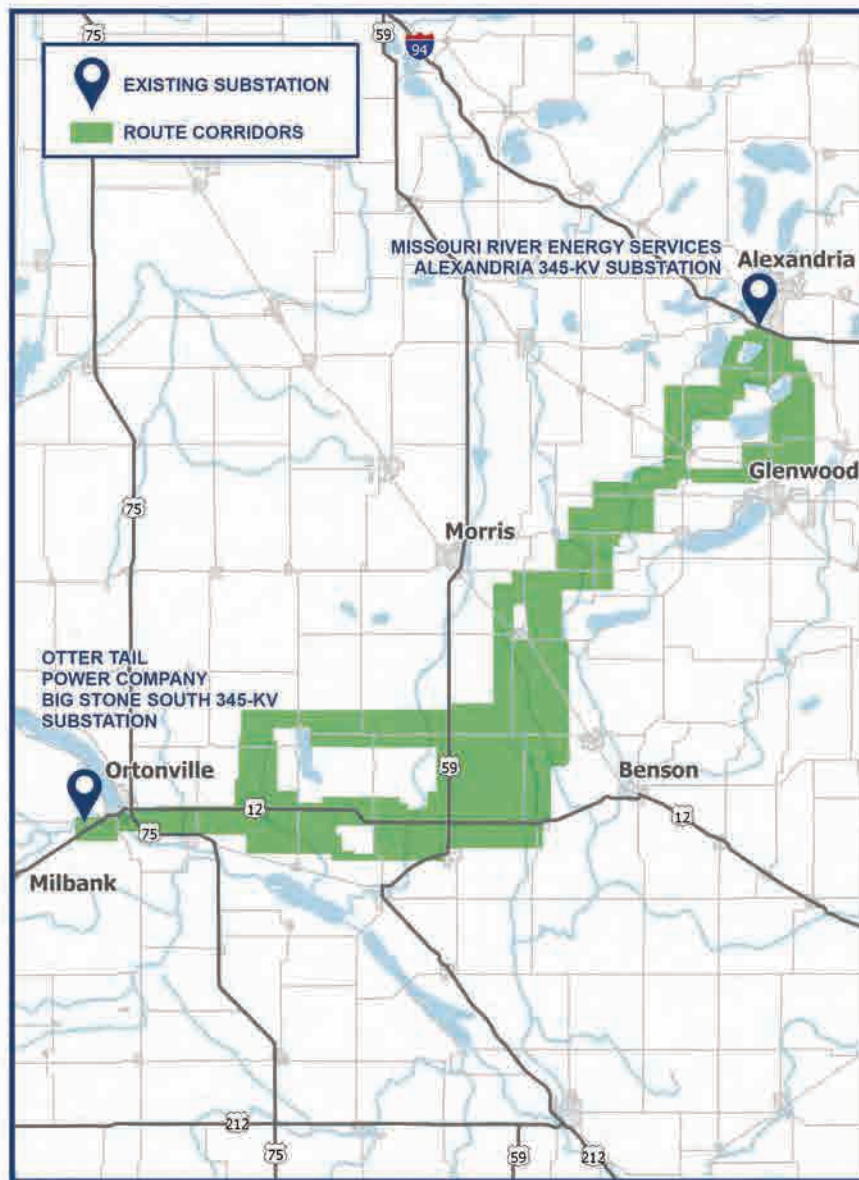
Through any of these outreach options, you can request a mailed or emailed information packet, set up a meeting with our project team, or leave a message.

We look forward to connecting with you!

Sincerely,

Jason Weiers

Manager, Transmission Project Development



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

More about the project

Otter Tail Power and MRES 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 in 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.

The BSSA project is one of 18 transmission projects recently identified by the Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO), our regional grid operator, as part of the first phase of the multi-year Long-Range Transmission Planning (LRTP) initiative. These LRTP projects are needed to ensure a reliable and resilient transmission system in the future.

Developing and constructing transmission lines takes many years, and we're currently proposing an in-service date in 2030 or 2031. Otter Tail Power and MRES began coordinating with landowners and residents, local governments, agencies, and other interested stakeholders in spring 2023 and will continue to seek input from stakeholders throughout the development process.

Would you like to change how you receive these emails?

Please [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this mailing list](#).

January 17, 2024

Re: You're invited to attend our Big Stone South to Alexandria transmission line (BSSA) project open houses

Dear Stakeholder,

Otter Tail Power Company (Otter Tail Power) and Missouri River Energy Services (MRES), (on behalf of Western Minnesota Municipal Power Agency), invite you to attend our upcoming open houses for the BSSA project. We're providing you information in advance of notifying the communities and constituents about these open houses so you can be prepared if you're contacted with questions. We expect you'll receive an official invitation to these open houses the week of January 22, 2024.

Based on input gathered during the open houses in April and October 2023, coordination with interested agencies, and review of technical data and requirements, we have narrowed project corridors to route corridors. The upcoming open houses will help us refine the route corridors into a proposed route and an alternative route. We'll include these routes in our Route Permit application to be filed with the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission in the fourth quarter of 2024. We'll also include the routes in our Facility Permit application to be filed with the South Dakota Public Utilities Commission in the second quarter of 2024. **The enclosed map shows our route corridors.** Detailed maps will also be available at the open houses.

The table below lists our upcoming open house dates, times, and locations. We will not have a formal presentation but instead, encourage you to come when it works best for your schedule. Each open house will provide the same information, including project displays and detailed maps to review and collect input.

City	Date	Time	Location
Ortonville	Monday, February 12	3:00 – 6:00 p.m.	Community Center 200 Monroe Ave Ortonville, MN 56278
Alexandria	Tuesday, February 13	3:00 – 6:00 p.m.	Holiday Inn 5637 Hwy 29 S Alexandria, MN 56308
Glenwood	Tuesday, February 20	3:00 – 6:00 p.m.	Central Square 105 2 nd Ave NE, Ste 111 Glenwood, MN 56334
Big Stone City	Wednesday, February 21	3:00 – 6:00 p.m.	New American Legion 14521 485 th Ave Big Stone City, SD 57216
Benson	Thursday, February 22	3:00 – 6:00 p.m.	McKinney's on Southside 300 14 th St S Benson, MN 56215

If you or any constituents cannot attend an open house, we encourage you to connect with us by:

- Visiting www.BigStoneSouthtoAlexandria.com to leave a comment on our online map.
- Emailing connect@bigstonesouthtoalexandria.com.
- Calling (800) 598-5587.

Through any of these outreach options, you can request a mailed or emailed information packet, set up a meeting with our project team, or leave a message.

More about the project:

Otter Tail Power and MRES are partnering to develop, construct, and co-own a new 345-kilovolt (kV) transmission line, known as the BSSA project. The new line will connect Otter Tail Power's Big Stone South substation near Big Stone City, South Dakota, to a substation owned by Missouri River Energy Services near Alexandria, Minnesota. The BSSA 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. In addition, the BSSA project will create construction jobs and provide economic benefits to local areas through tax revenues.

The BSSA project is one of 18 transmission projects recently identified by the Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO), our regional grid operator, as part of the first phase of the multi-year Long-Range Transmission Planning (LRTP) initiative. These LRTP projects are needed to ensure a reliable and resilient transmission system in the future.

Developing and constructing transmission lines takes many years, and we're currently proposing an in-service date in 2030 or 2031. Otter Tail Power and MRES began coordinating with landowners and residents, local governments, agencies, and other interested stakeholders in spring 2023 and will continue to seek input from stakeholders throughout the development process.

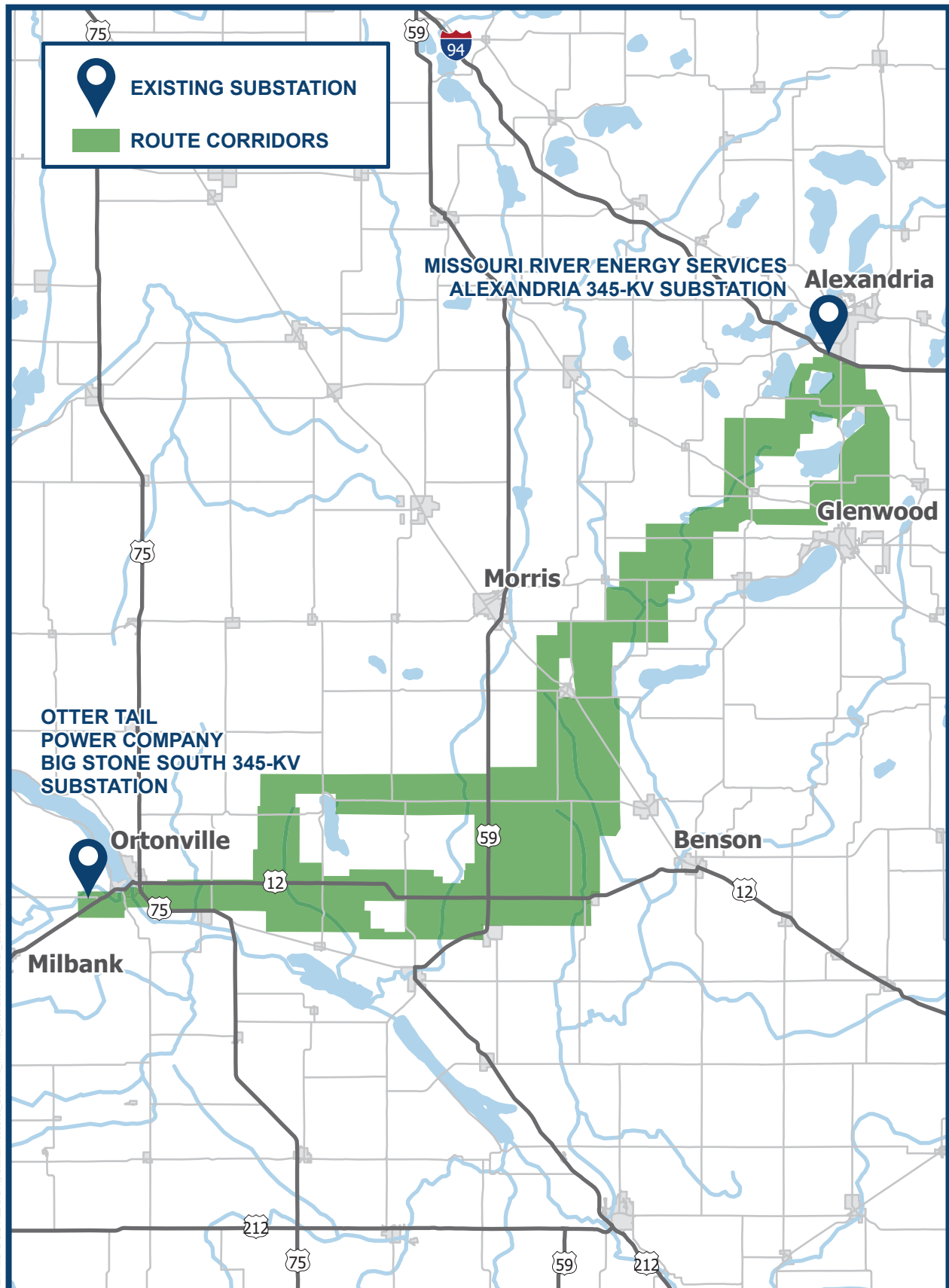
We look forward to connecting with you!

Sincerely,



Jason Weiers
Otter Tail Power Company
Manager, Transmission Project Development

Enclosure: BSSA Route Corridors Map



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

Open house materials

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

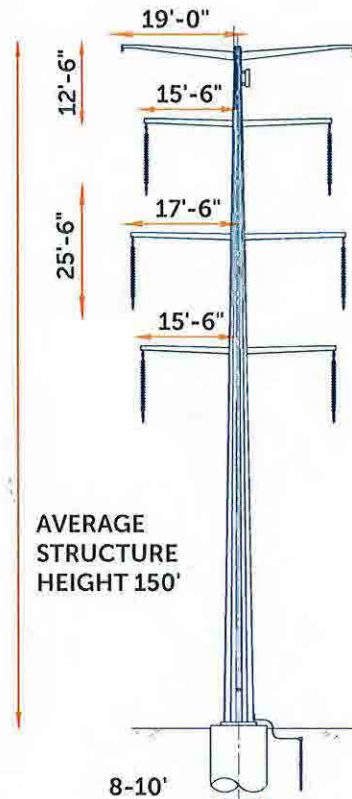
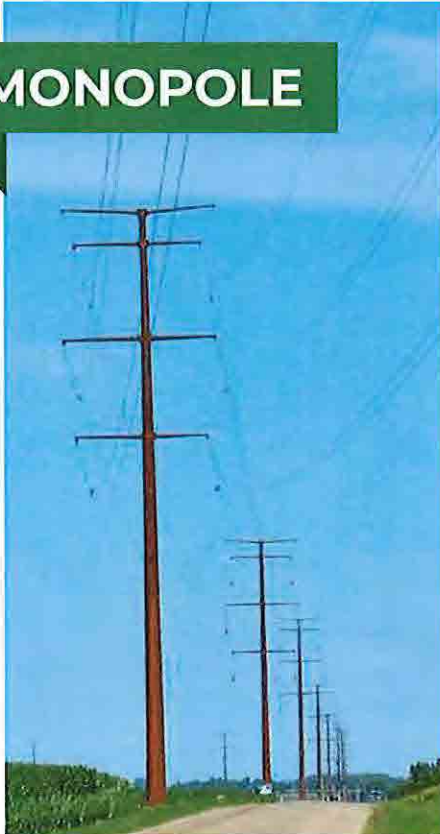


Image shown is an example of a similar double-circuit structure.

ROUTING PROCESS



DEFINE STUDY AREA



HOST PUBLIC OPEN HOUSES



IDENTIFY PROJECT CORRIDORS



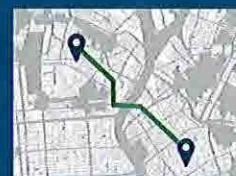
HOST PUBLIC OPEN HOUSES



DEVELOP ROUTE CORRIDORS



WE ARE HERE HOST PUBLIC OPEN HOUSES



SELECT PROPOSED ROUTE

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.

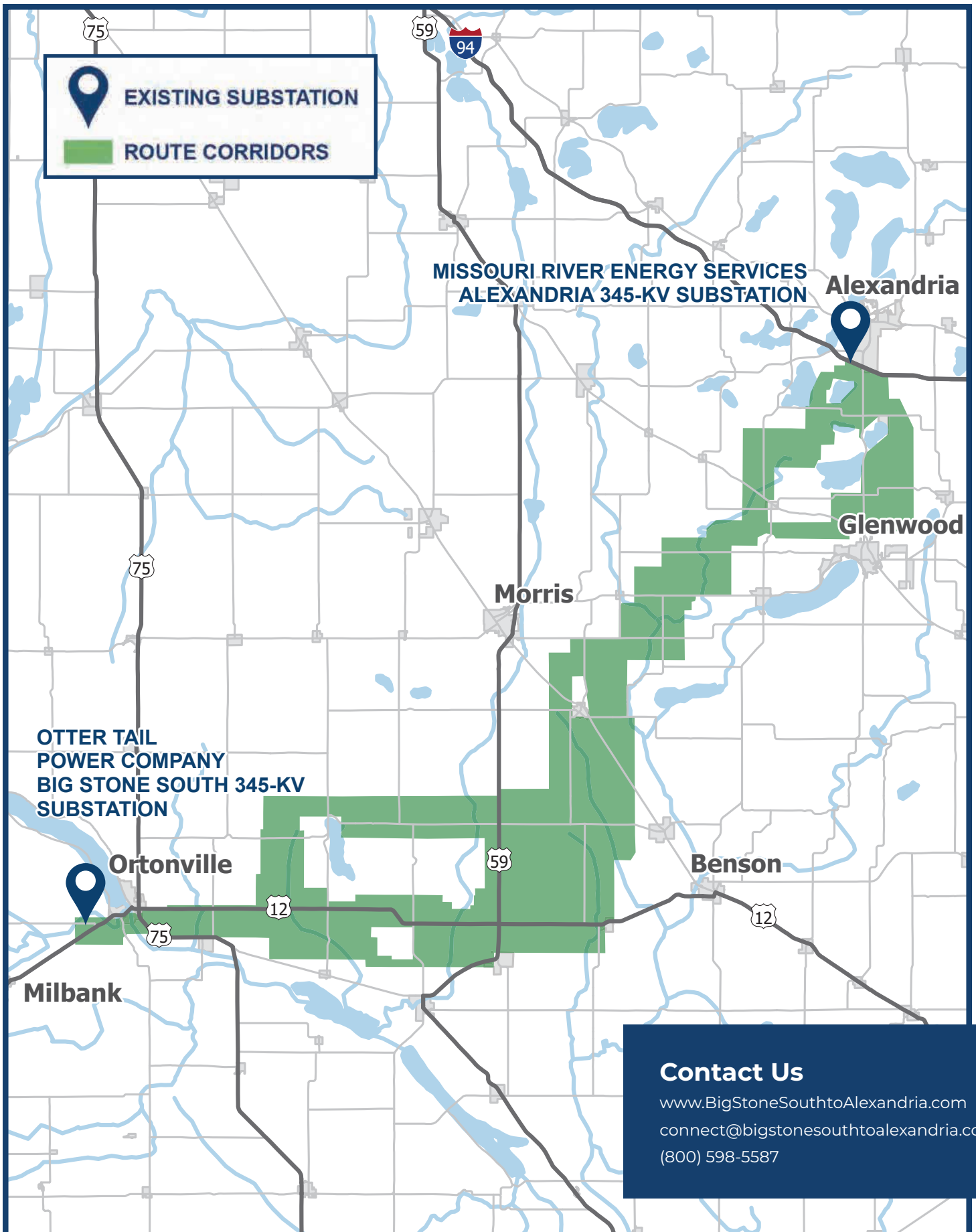


Engagement Opportunities



Scan the QR code to visit the project website.





Contact Us

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



WELCOME

PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE





Big Stone South to Alexandria

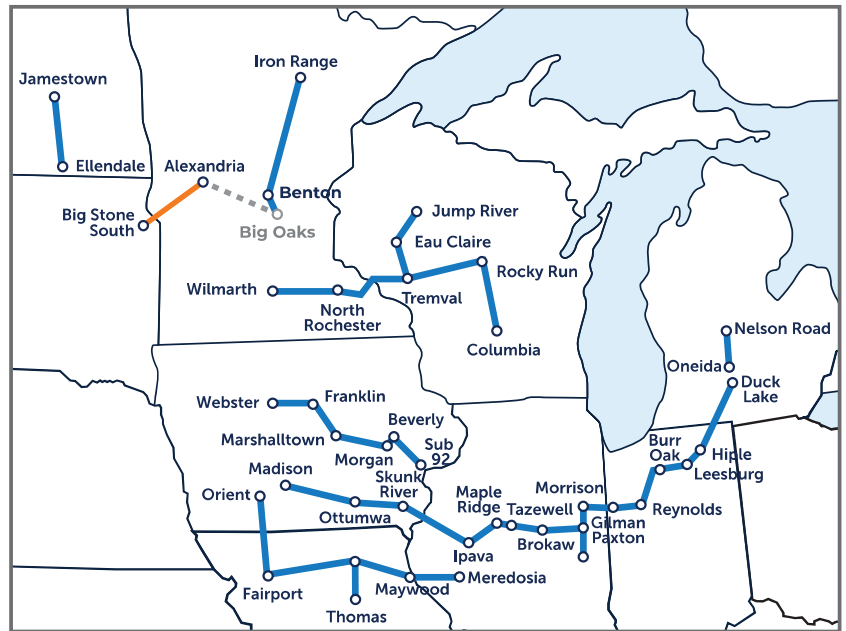
PROJECT DEVELOPMENT



Both **Otter Tail Power Company** and **Missouri River Energy Services** are members of the Midcontinent Independent System Operator, also referred to as **MISO**.

MISO is a non-profit, member-based regional transmission organization that provides reliable, cost-effective electric systems and operations; dependable and transparent prices; open access to markets; and planning for long-term efficiency.

MISO has approved 18 new transmission projects throughout the Midwest that are needed to ensure a **reliable** and **resilient** transmission system in the future.



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.

The project will benefit the region by helping to:



Ensure electric reliability



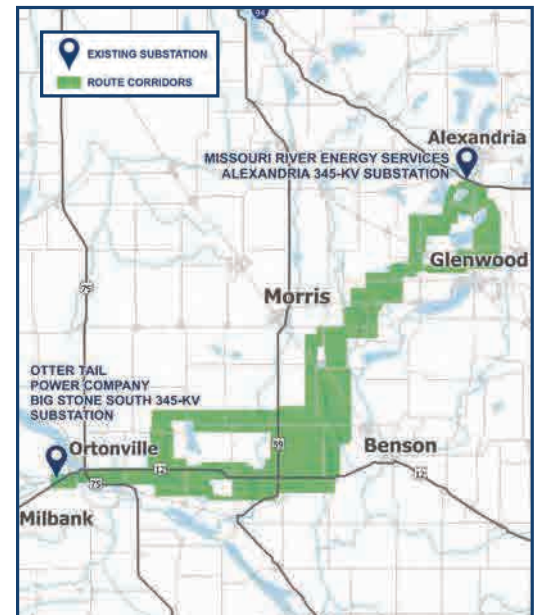
Reduce transmission congestion



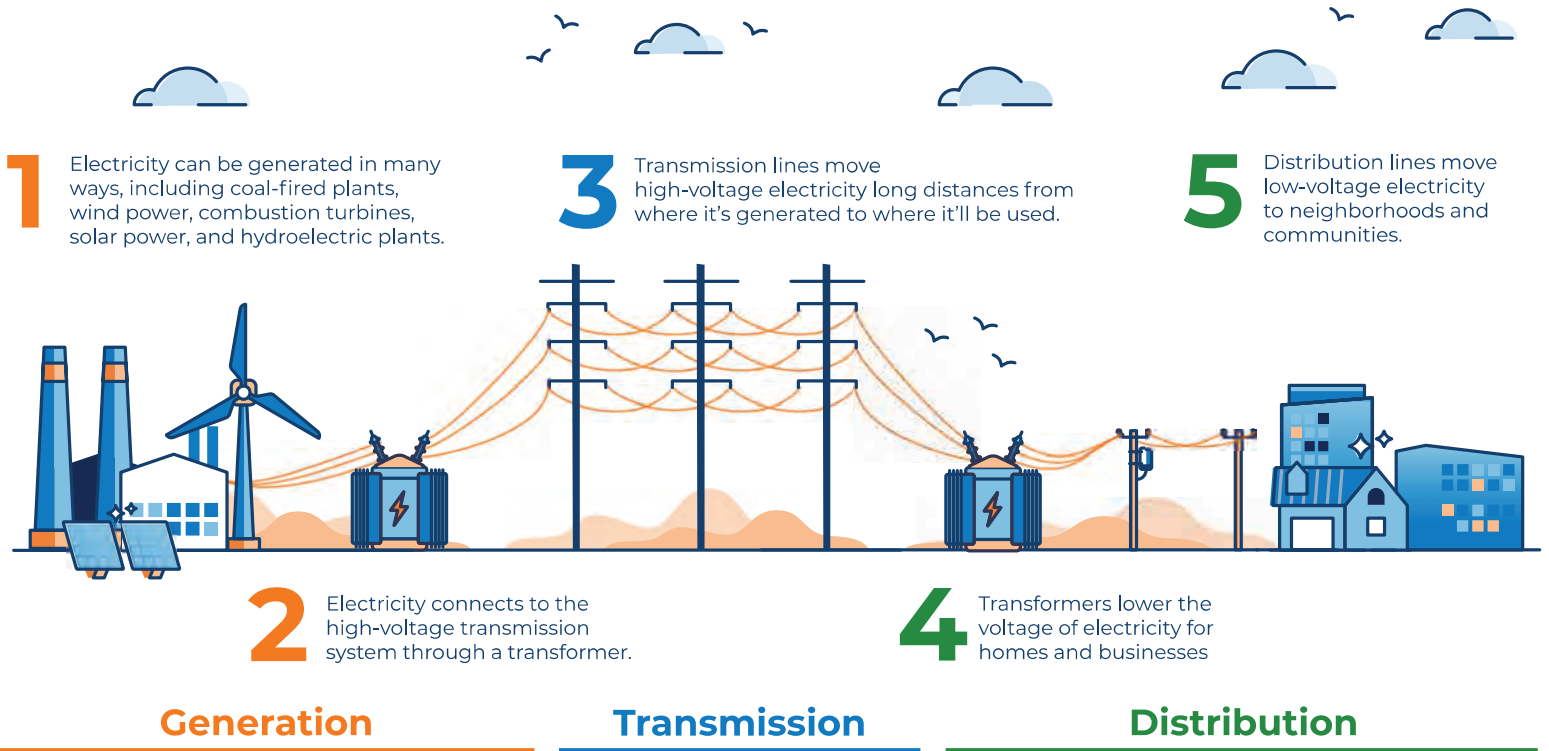
Increase access to low-cost energy



Increase resiliency to extreme weather events



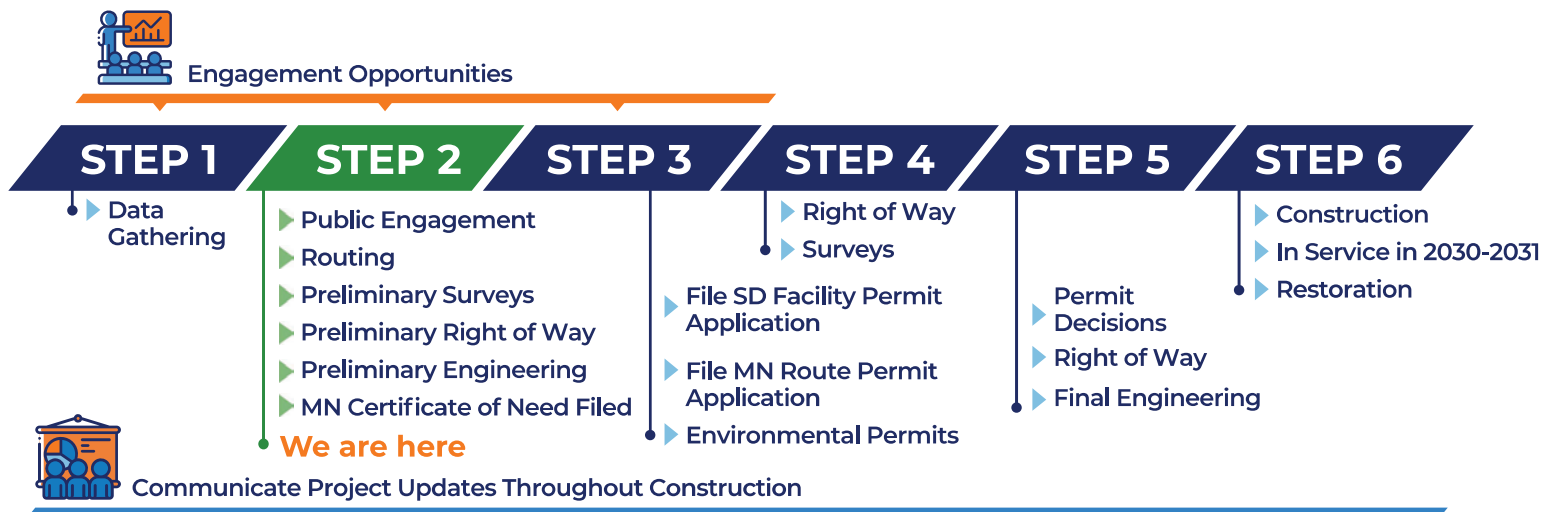
▲ Route corridors are marked in green on the map above and are subject to change.





Big Stone South to Alexandria

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT STEPS



Processes and timing may vary from Minnesota to South Dakota. Our project team will refine the timing of these steps to comply with each respective state's requirements.



The BSSA transmission line will be constructed in both **Minnesota** and **South Dakota**, and the two states have different processes and timelines. Both states consider compliance with relevant laws and rules, as well as potential impacts on the environment, residents in the routing area, and orderly development of the region. After we've filed, the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) in each state will provide opportunities for additional feedback through public hearings.



MINNESOTA

Two major approvals must be obtained from the **Minnesota (MN) PUC** before a high-voltage transmission line can be built: a Certificate of Need and a Route Permit. The Certificate of Need proceeding examines whether the proposed facilities are necessary and what the appropriate size, configuration, and timing of the project should be. In a separate Route Permit proceeding, the MN PUC determines the route of the line.



Certificate of Need

- ▶ Public hearings



Route Permit

- ▶ Public hearings



Route Permit Application Decision

- ▶ Estimated timeline is 18-24 months from time of Route Permit application filing. We plan to file in Q4 of 2024.



SOUTH DAKOTA

There is one major approval that needs to be obtained from the **South Dakota (SD) PUC** before a high-voltage transmission line can be built: a Facility Permit. The SD PUC reviews applications for high-voltage transmission lines, and if approved, issues an order granting a Facility Permit authorizing the construction and operation of the facility.



Facility Permit

- ▶ Public hearings



Facility Permit Application Decision

- ▶ To be completed within 12 months from time of Facility Permit application filing. We plan to file in Q2 of 2024.



1. STUDY AREA

With an established project need from MISO, we identified a large study area that contained both substations.



2. PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE

We held open houses to introduce the project and provide stakeholders an opportunity to ask questions and provide input.



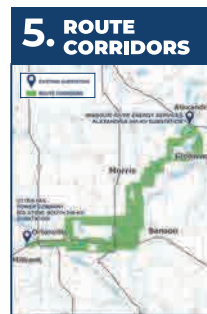
3. PROJECT CORRIDORS

The team utilized the input gathered to identify project corridors where construction may be possible.



4. PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE

We held another series of open houses to gather input from stakeholders to help the team identify opportunities and constraints within the project corridors.



5. ROUTE CORRIDORS

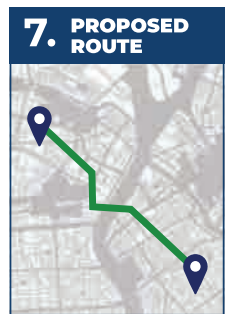
The project team used the feedback received to continue narrowing the project corridors into route corridors.

WE ARE HERE



6. PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE

We're holding another series of open houses to gather feedback on the route corridors to help us develop a proposed route.



7. PROPOSED ROUTE

We'll submit a proposed route to the Minnesota and South Dakota Public Utilities Commissions, which will review and hold public hearings before making a decision on the state permit applications.

TRANSMISSION STRUCTURE

MONOPOLE



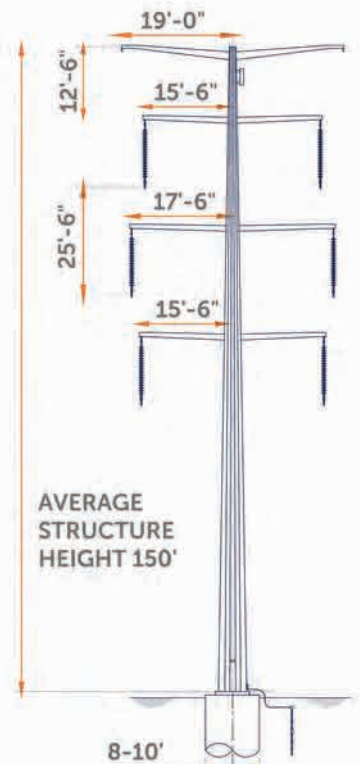
Image shown is an example of a similar double-circuit structure.

The typical structure will be 150 feet tall.

The structure type may vary across the project but primarily will be comprised of single pole, self-weathering steel with double-circuit capability.

Otter Tail Power Company and **Missouri River Energy Services** expect to only install one circuit at this time.

There will be three phases of conductors and two overhead shield wires — one will be an optical ground wire (OPGW) and the other stranded steel (overhead ground wire).



CONSTRUCTION PROCESS

ONGOING OUTREACH

Long before construction begins, right-of-way agents will be coordinating with landowners, local government officials, and other stakeholders. You will be involved throughout the process, and if you have any questions or concerns, our project team will work with you!

1.



Surveying

2.



Temporary Access

3.



**Foundation Drilling
& Pouring**

4.



Structure Setting

5.



Conductor Stringing

6.



Restoration

? What is Right of Way?

Right of way is a portion of land needed for the construction, operation, and maintenance of the transmission line. Typically a width of 150 feet is needed for a 345-kilovolt (kV) transmission line. Right of way is typically secured through negotiation and acquisition of an easement agreement.

? What is Right of Entry?

To assess potential routes and conduct the necessary environmental and engineering studies/surveys, right-of-way agents will work with landowners and residents to acquire a temporary right-of-entry agreement. This agreement does not give permission for construction.

? What is an Easement?

An easement is the legal document that allows Otter Tail Power Company and Missouri River Energy Services to construct, operate, and maintain transmission structures and lines on your property.

A **150-foot-wide easement** will be necessary to construct, operate, and maintain the proposed 345-kV transmission line.

- ?** Right-of-way agents will reach out to landowners in potential routing areas to discuss right-of-way needs.

1



We'll notify landowners in the project area, and right-of-way agents will reach out to begin the acquisition process.

3



We'll work with landowners to resolve any questions or concerns and reach an agreement to grant an easement.

2



A right-of-way agent will present the landowner an easement based on fair market value.

4



Once the project receives final approval, the utilities will construct, operate, and maintain the transmission line.

You will be involved throughout the process, and if you have any questions or concerns, our project team will work with you!

Stay Informed

To stay up-to-date on the project, visit our website at:



www.BigStoneSouthtoAlexandria.com

Use your phone's
camera to scan
the QR code.



Get Connected

There will be many opportunities to participate throughout the project development and permitting process. You can submit feedback, attend public meetings, ask questions, or request an information packet to learn more!



Questions or comments about the project?

connect@BigStoneSouthtoAlexandria.com

(800) 598-5587

Media coverage

Media Coverage – West Central Tribune

Advertisement



West Central Tribune, Willmar, Minn.

Landowners check out proposed Big Stone South power line routes through western Minnesota

Tom Cherveny, West Central Tribune, Willmar, Minn.

February 27, 2024 · 4 min read



Feb. 27—BENSON

— Landowners are taking advantage of the opportunity to provide early input as

Otter Tail Power Company

and

Missouri River Energy Services

review two possible routes for a proposed 345-kilovolt transmission line to connect substations at

Big Stone City, South Dakota, and Alexandria, Minnesota.

There were 81 attendees for an open house meeting on Thursday, Feb. 22 in Benson. It was the fifth in a series of voluntary open houses hosted by the utilities for landowners along the proposed routes for the line.

Attendance was also considered to be good at input meetings held at Alexandria (72), Ortonville (42), Glenwood (84), and Big Stone City (23), according to Otter Tail. Landowners can also view the proposed routes and their property's location in the proposed corridors on an online site, where comments can also be provided.

Input

for Otter Tail Power. "It's a lot easier to make adjustments to the route now," Weiers told the West Central Tribune.

The utilities are required by state law to propose two routes for the line. If the project is approved by the

Public Utilities Commission

, it will also select which of the routes to permit.

The two utilities are proposing a line that is estimated to be 95 miles to 105 miles in length. It will consist mainly of 150-foot-tall steel monopoles. The utilities will be seeking a permit for a single circuit on the poles, but they will be constructed so that a second circuit could be added.

The

project

c

arries an estimated cost ranging from \$400 million to \$500 million, which includes upgrades to the two substations. The stations will carry power from the

Big Stone power plant

as well as other generators, including wind and solar, according to Weiers.

The project is among 18 new transmission lines being proposed in the Upper Midwest states that are part of a regional power network overseen by the

Midcontinent Independent System Operator

, known as MISO. A 2022 preliminary planning document estimated the total cost for the lines at \$10.3 billion.

This and the other lines are all part of an effort to improve reliability on the network, reduce congestion, increase resiliency and increase access to low-cost energy, according to Weiers.

The proposed Big Stone South line will be able to carry power from Otter Tail Power's Big Stone power plant and renewable energy generators in western Minnesota and eastern South Dakota to Alexandria and the entire grid.

electrical demand and loads during summer and winter, and the flow of electricity from west to east and east to west varies, he explained.

There is currently "congestion" on the network that is curtailing the ability of wind, solar and other generators to place power on the grid, he said. If this project is approved, the increased capacity would allow for more renewable energy development. At this time, plans call only for access to the line at the substations at the two end points.

The Big Stone South to Alexandria line would connect to an eastern segment known as the Alexandria-Big Oaks project being proposed by Great River Energy, Minnesota Power, Missouri River Energy Services, Xcel Energy and Otter Tail Power. The Big Oak utilities are seeking to add a second, 345-kilovolt circuit to the CapX2020 line connecting Fargo, North Dakota, to St. Cloud/Monticello.

Weiers and company officials at the open house emphasized that the current process is aimed at identifying a route that minimizes impact on landowners. The process of seeking easements for the route from landowners will begin only once the PUC identifies a route.

At the meeting in Benson, landowners peered at maps on computers showing their lands and the wide swath of land in play for the possible routes. Company officials recorded the concerns of the landowners, who typically expressed their desire to see the line as far as possible from their homes and to avoid paths that would disrupt agricultural activities.

Landowners had plenty of questions as well, from whether the line would adversely affect their land values to how deep will the concrete bases will be for the towers.

Not surprisingly, most were not eager to see a new transmission line crossing the agricultural landscape. Said one, who asked to remain anonymous: "Seems farmers are always taking the brunt for the urban areas."

Otter Tail Power and Missouri River Energy Services are planning to submit an application for the route to the PUC in late 2024. The permitting process is expected to take two years. If all goes as planned, construction could start in late 2027 or 2028 with an in-service goal for 2030 or 2031.

Otter Tail Power and Missouri River Energy Services host open house in the process of developing a route for a 345-kilovolt transmission line from Big Stone City, South Dakota, to Alexandria.



WCTRIB.COM

Landowners check out proposed Big Stone South power line routes through western Minnesota

👍 Like

💬 Comment

➦ Share



Write a comment...



128



Phase 4

Project Open House



Mailings and advertisements

Postcard mailer



HDR

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

JOIN US FOR AN OPEN HOUSE

You're invited to our upcoming open houses to review the route segments that will make up the two proposed routes we'll include in our route permit application to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (MN PUC). The MN PUC will then review the application and determine the route. More details on the back.



▶ **SCAN ME!**

▶ Visit www.bigstonesouthtoalexandria.com to learn more or scan the QR code above.

Otter Tail Power Company (OTP) and Missouri River Energy Services (MRES) (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 OTP's Big Stone South Substation near Big Stone City in South Dakota to the Alexandria Substation owned by MRES near Alexandria, Minnesota.



Open House Details and Locations

▶ ALEXANDRIA

📅 **Monday, June 24, 2024** ⌚ **3–6 p.m.**
 📍 **Broadway Ballroom**
 115 30th Ave E, Alexandria, MN 56308

▶ GLENWOOD

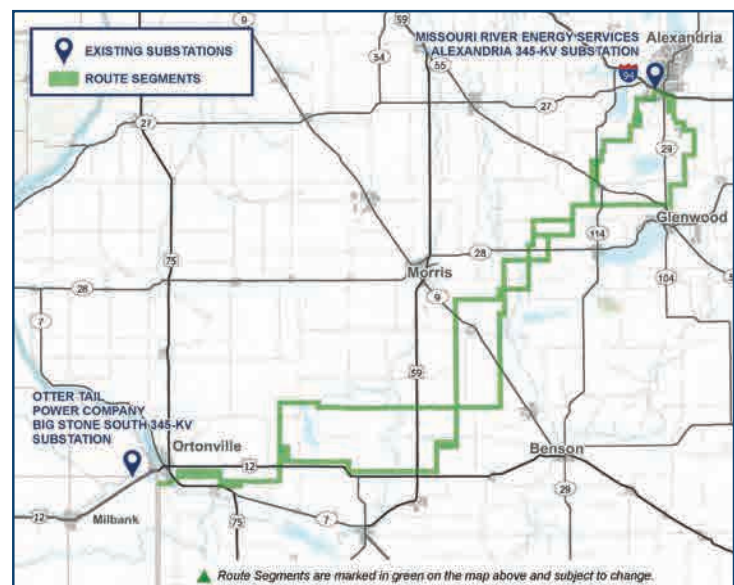
📅 **Tuesday, June 25, 2024** ⌚ **3–6 p.m.**
 📍 **Central Square**
 105 2nd Ave NE, Suite 111, Glenwood, MN 56215

▶ BENSON

📅 **Wednesday, June 26, 2024** ⌚ **3–6 p.m.**
 📍 **Benson High School**
 1400 Montana Ave, Benson, MN 56215

▶ ORTONVILLE

📅 **Thursday, June 27, 2024** ⌚ **3–6 p.m.**
 📍 **Sioux Historic Pavilion**
 1079 Lakeshore Dr, Ortonville, MN 56278



Can't make it to an open house? Connect with us to request a mailed or emailed information packet, set up a meeting with our project team, leave a message, or provide a comment on our online map.

✉ connect@bigstonesouthtoalexandria.com

☎ (800) 598-5587

🌐 Visit www.bigstonesouthtoalexandria.com

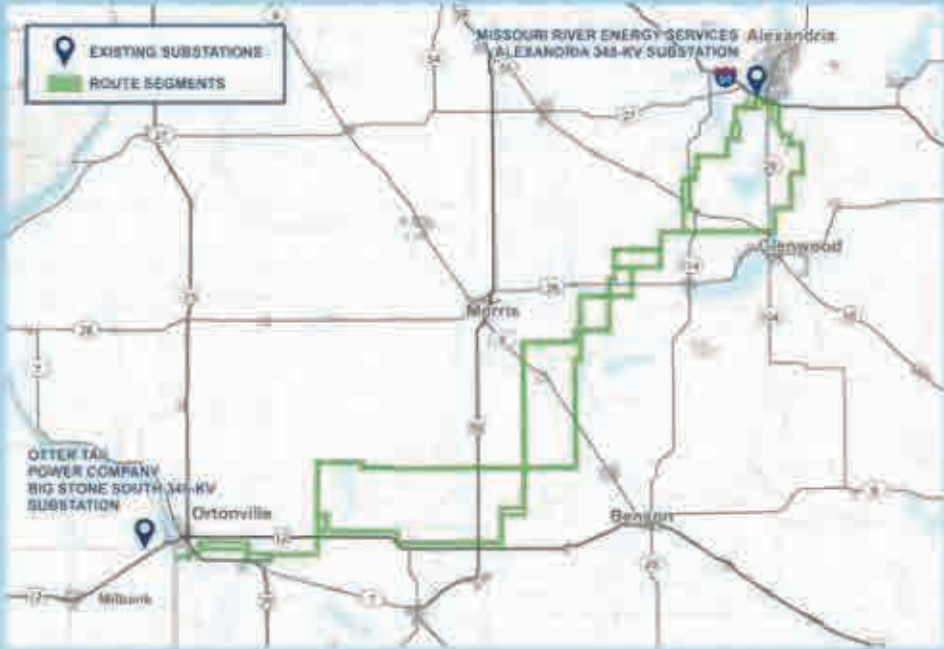
Social media post

 **Otter Tail Power Company**
Published by Ollie Otterson

June 17

We're partnering with Missouri River Energy Services (representing Western Minnesota Municipal Power Agency) to develop, construct, and co-own a 345-kilovolt (kV) transmission line. This project will help ensure the transmission grid continues to provide reliable, cost-effective electricity to customers across the region.

Please join us at an open house to learn more about the project, review our proposed route segments, ask questions, and provide feedback.



BSS A Big Stone South to Alexandria

Review proposed route segments for the Big Stone South to Alexandria transmission line at our public open houses.

Dates and locations:

BIGSTONESOUTHTOALEXANDRIA.COM

Learn about the Big Stone South to Alexandria transmission line.

[Learn more](#)

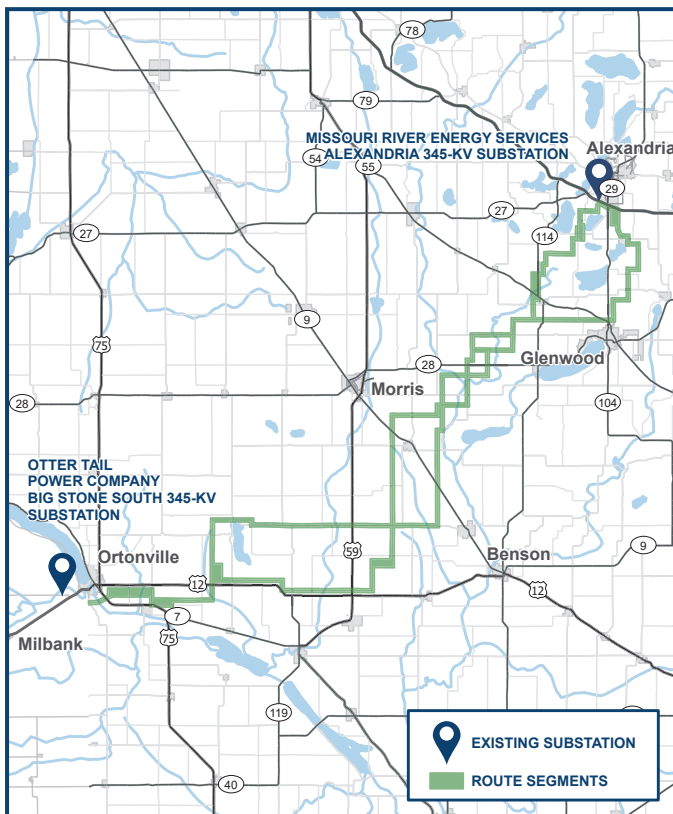
A proposed project for a new transmission line to connect Otter Tail Power's ...

Join us!

Review the route segments that will make up the two proposed routes we'll include in our route permit application to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (MN PUC). The MN PUC will then review the application and determine the route.

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 in 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.



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

ALEXANDRIA

June 24, 2024 3-6 p.m.
Broadway Ballroom
115 30th Ave E
Alexandria, MN 56308

GLENWOOD

June 25, 2024 3-6 p.m.
Central Square
105 2nd Ave NE, Ste 111
Glenwood, MN 56334

BENSON

June 26, 2024 3-6 p.m.
Benson High School
1400 Montana Ave
Benson, MN 56215

ORTONVILLE

June 27, 2024 3-6 p.m.
Sioux Historic Pavilion
1079 Lakeshore Drive
Ortonville, MN 56278

QUESTIONS?

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

CAN'T MAKE IT?

You can still provide input in several ways:

- Request a mailed or emailed information packet.
- Set up a meeting with our project team.
- Leave a comment on our online map.

Email invite

From: [Big Stone South to Alexandria](#)
To: [Dominguez, Ruben](#)
Subject: [TEST] You're invited to attend our Big Stone South to Alexandria transmission line (BSSA) project open houses
Date: Monday, June 3, 2024 3:58:25 PM

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

WARNING: [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.



Hello,

Otter Tail Power Company (Otter Tail Power) and **Missouri River Energy Services** (MRES), (on behalf of Western Minnesota Municipal Power Agency), invite you to attend our upcoming open houses for the Big Stone South to Alexandria transmission line (BSSA) project. Please join us to review the route segments that will make up the two proposed routes we'll include in our route permit application to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission:



Alexandria
Monday, June 24, 2024
3 p.m. - 6 p.m.
Broadway Ballroom
115 30th Ave E, Alexandria, MN 56308



Glenwood
Tuesday, June 25, 2024
3 p.m. - 6 p.m.
Central Square
105 2nd Ave NE, Ste 111, Glenwood, MN 56334

Benson
Wednesday, June 26, 2024



3 p.m. - 6 p.m.

Benson High School

300 14th St S, Benson, MN 56215



Ortonville

Thursday, June 27, 2024

3 p.m. - 6 p.m.

Sioux Historic Pavilion

1079 Lakeshore Dr, Ortonville, MN 56278

Can't make it? You can still connect with us by:

- Visiting www.BigStoneSouthtoAlexandria.com to leave a comment on our online map.
- Emailing connect@bigstonesouthtoalexandria.com.
- Calling **(800) 598-5587**.

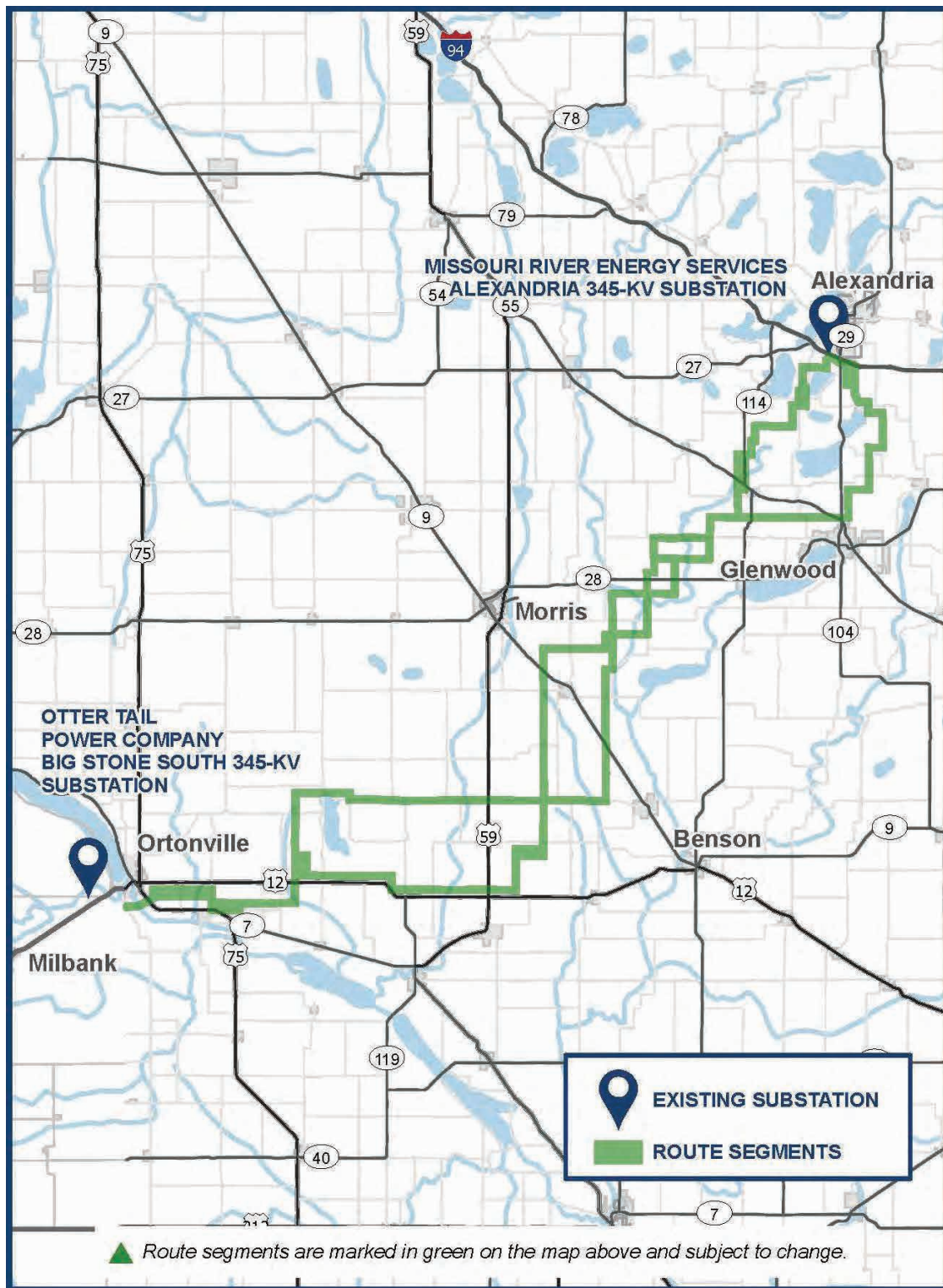
Through any of these outreach options, you can request a mailed or emailed information packet, set up a meeting with our project team, or leave a message.

We look forward to connecting with you!

Sincerely,

Jason Weiers

Manager, Transmission Project Development



More about the project

Otter Tail Power and MRES 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 in 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.

The BSSA project is one of 18 transmission projects recently identified by the Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO), our regional grid operator, as part of the first phase of the multi-year Long-Range Transmission Planning (LRTP) initiative. These LRTP projects are needed to ensure a reliable and resilient transmission system in the future.

Developing and constructing transmission lines takes many years, and we're currently proposing an in-service date in 2030 or 2031. Otter Tail Power and MRES began coordinating with landowners and residents, local governments, agencies, and other interested stakeholders in spring 2023 and will continue to seek input from stakeholders throughout the development process.

Would you like to change how you receive these emails?

Please [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this mailing list](#).

April 22, 2024

Re: Update on the Big Stone South to Alexandria transmission line (BSSA) project

Dear Stakeholder,

Otter Tail Power Company (Otter Tail Power) and Missouri River Energy Services (MRES) (on behalf of Western Minnesota Municipal Power Agency) are reaching out to you with some updates regarding the BSSA project. We understand that your constituents and communities rely on you for information, which is why we wanted to give you the details before notifying the community about the upcoming open houses. You should expect to receive an official invitation to these open houses being held the week of June 24, 2024.

Open House Information

Landowners, stakeholders, and community members are invited to our upcoming open houses to see the two route corridors we'll present in our route permit application to be filed with the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (MPUC) in the fourth quarter of 2024. This fourth phase of open houses will help us continue building relationships with landowners and answer questions about the filing, real estate, and construction. The enclosed map shows our Proposed Routes. Detailed maps will also be available at the open houses and on the website beginning on June 3.

The table below lists our upcoming open house dates, times, and locations. We will not have a formal presentation but instead, encourage attendees to come when it works best for their schedule.

City	Date	Time	Location
Alexandria	Monday, June 24	3:00 – 6:00 p.m.	Broadway Ballroom 115 30th Ave E, Alexandria, MN 56308
Glenwood	Tuesday, June 25	3:00 – 6:00 p.m.	Central Square 105 2nd Ave NE, Ste 111 Glenwood, MN 56334
Benson	Wednesday, June 26	3:00 – 6:00 p.m.	Benson High School 1400 Montana Ave, Benson, MN 56215
Ortonville	Thursday, June 27	3:00 – 6:00 p.m.	Sioux Historic Pavilion 1073 Lake Shore Drive, Ortonville, MN

Communicating With Constituents

When your constituents and communities reach out for information regarding the project, here are some facts you can use to respond to their inquiries.

- **Engagement:** Open house information is included on the other side of this letter. You can also direct them to our website to view previous engagement materials and upcoming events.
- **Outreach:** We have planned various outreach activities for the upcoming open houses such as sending postcards to landowners, social media and newspaper advertisements, and emails to keep the community informed and engaged. Postcards with open house information will be arriving in mailboxes in early June.
- **Can't attend the open houses?** Visit the project website to learn more, leave a comment on the interactive map, leave a message on the hotline, or email the project team.
- **Schedule:** The project team plans to submit a route application with the MPUC in late 2024. The MPUC will review the application and hold public meetings and hearings before making a decision on a final route. The anticipated timeframe for a decision is mid to late 2026. Following this, easement acquisition will begin in Minnesota.
- **Frequently asked questions:** Visit the project website to see more FAQs.

Additional Project Meetings

The Minnesota Public Utilities Commission is planning to hold public meetings in June for the Certificate of Need application. Some of your constituents may receive invitations to attend those meetings. It's important to note that the PUC meetings are distinct from the open houses mentioned in this letter. The purpose of the PUC meetings is to examine whether the proposed facilities are necessary and to determine the appropriate size, configuration, and timing of the project. On the other hand, the open houses are related to the routing of the project.

Project Details

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.

If you or any constituents have questions and cannot attend an open house, feel free to reach out to us:

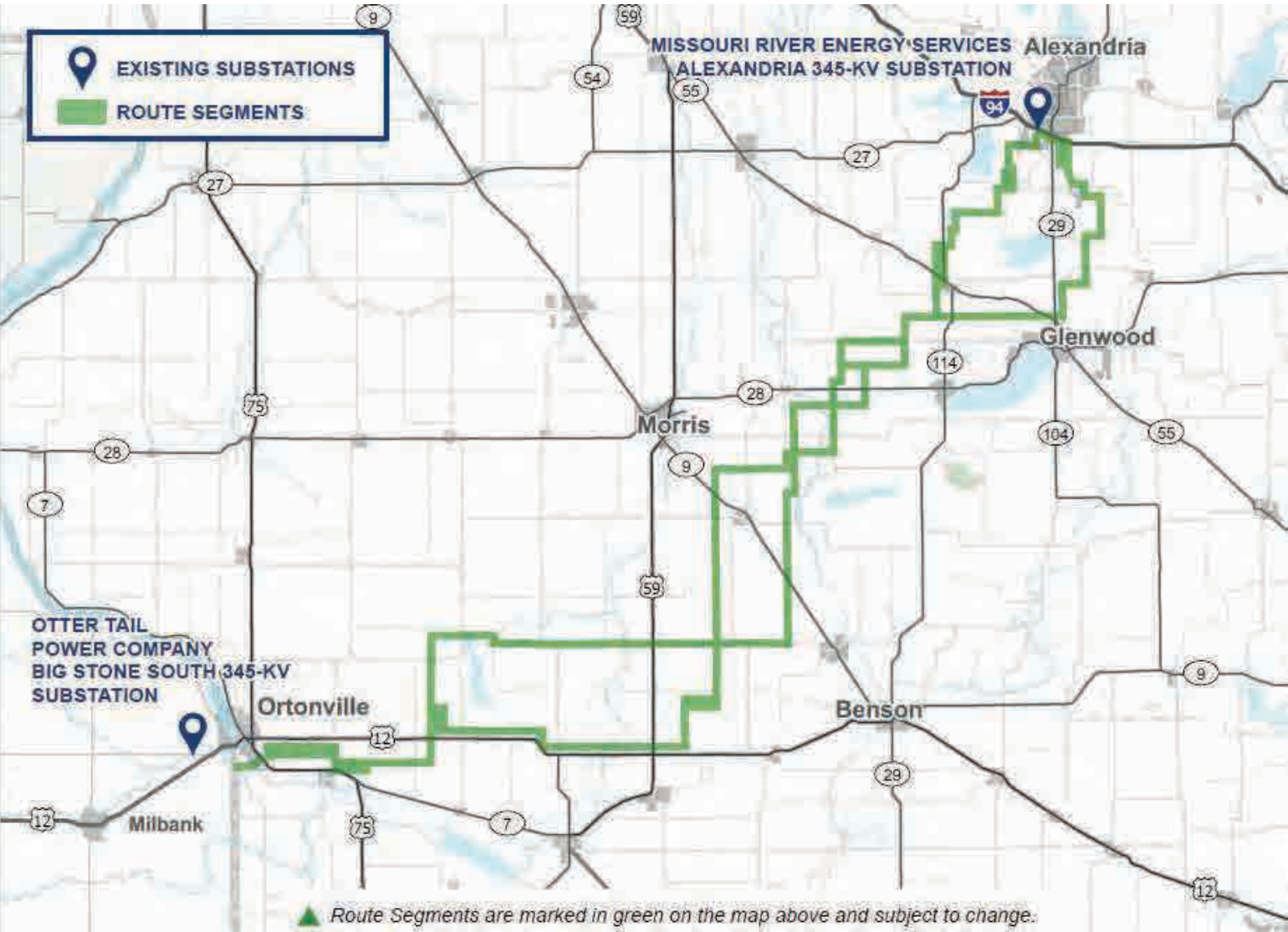
- Website: www.BigStoneSouthtoAlexandria.com
- Email: connect@bigstonesouthtoalexandria.com.
- Hotline: (800) 598-5587

We look forward to connecting with you!

Sincerely,

Jason Weiers, Otter Tail Power Company
Manager, Transmission Project Development
Enclosure: BSSA Proposed Routes Map

Map attachment in stakeholder outreach letter



Open house materials

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

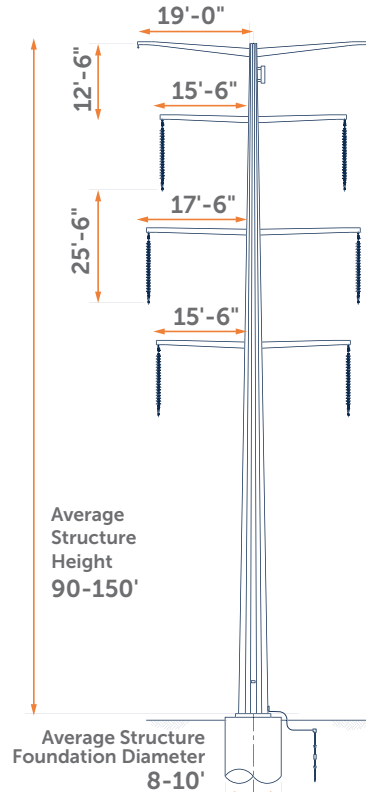


Image shown is an example of a similar double-circuit structure.

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

STEP 1

▶ Data Gathering

STEP 2

- ▶ Public Engagement
- ▶ Routing
- ▶ Preliminary Surveys
- ▶ Preliminary Right of Way
- ▶ Preliminary Engineering
- ▶ MN Certificate of Need Filed

STEP 3

- ▶ Right of Way
- ▶ Surveys
- ▶ Filed SD Facility Permit Application
- WE ARE HERE**
- ▶ File MN Route Permit Application
- ▶ Environmental Permits

STEP 4

STEP 5

- ▶ Permit Decisions
- ▶ Right of Way
- ▶ Final Engineering

STEP 6

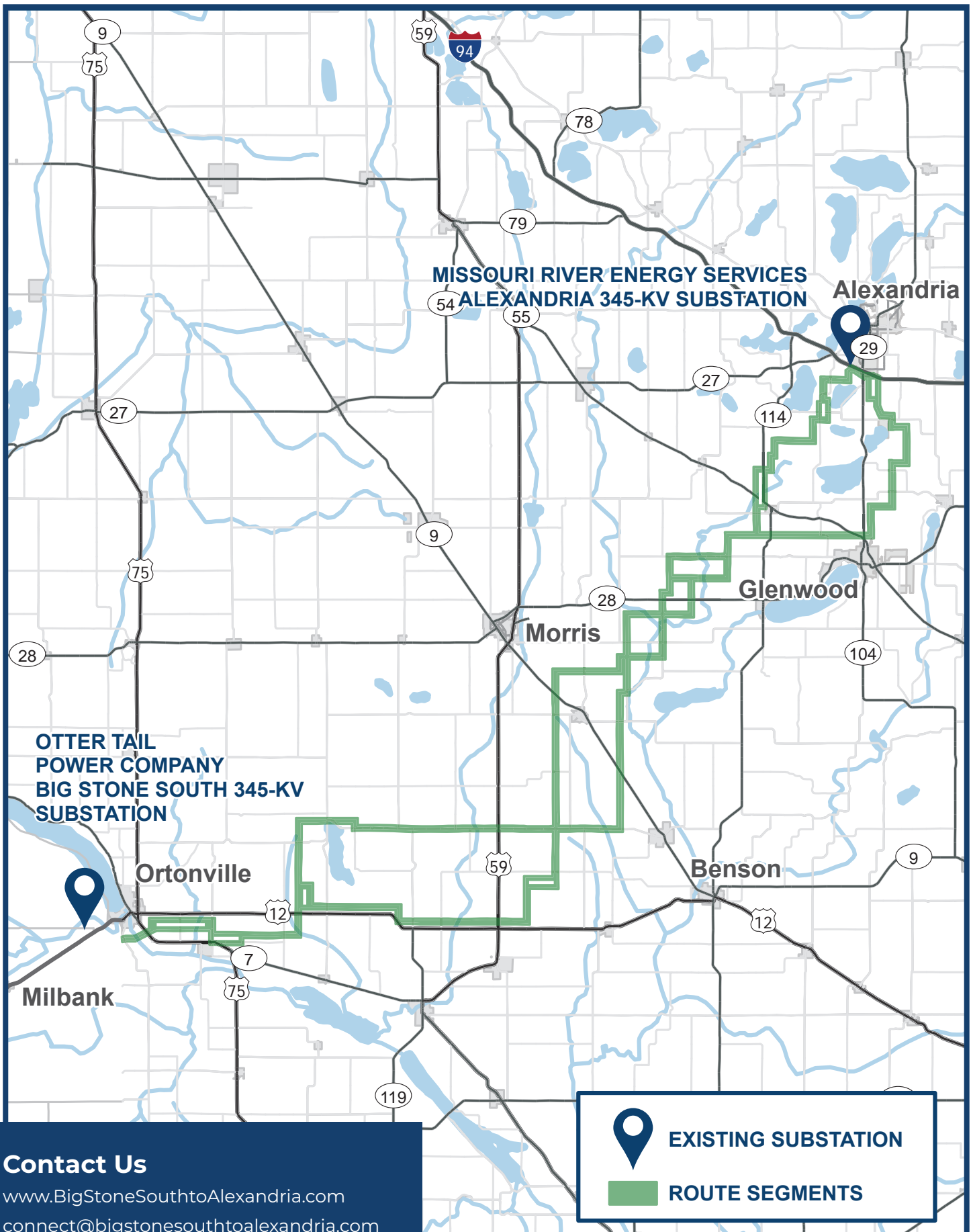
- ▶ Construction
- ▶ In Service in 2030-2031
- ▶ Restoration



Communicate Project Updates Throughout Construction

Scan the QR code to visit the project website.





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

Project boards



WELCOME

PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE





Big Stone South to Alexandria

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT



Both **Otter Tail Power Company** and **Missouri River Energy Services** are members of the Midcontinent Independent System Operator, also referred to as **MISO**.

MISO is a non-profit, member-based regional transmission organization that provides reliable, cost-effective electric systems and operations; dependable and transparent prices; open access to markets; and planning for long-term efficiency.

MISO has approved 18 new transmission projects throughout the Midwest that are needed to ensure a **reliable** and **resilient** transmission system in the future.



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.

The project will benefit the region by helping to:



Ensure electric reliability



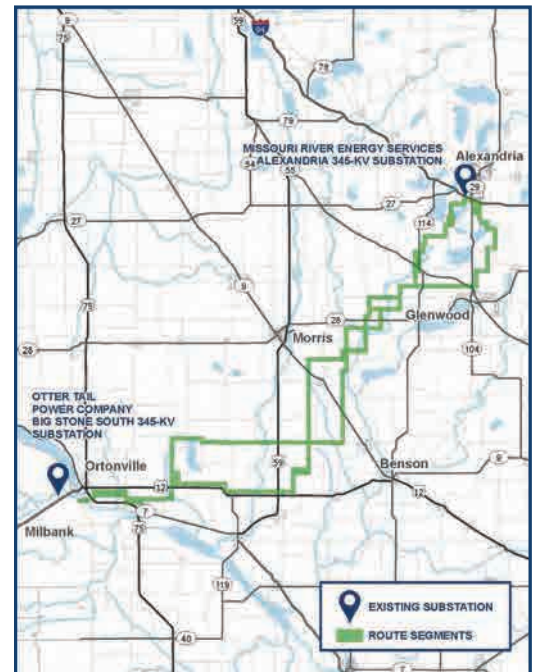
Reduce transmission congestion



Increase access to low-cost energy

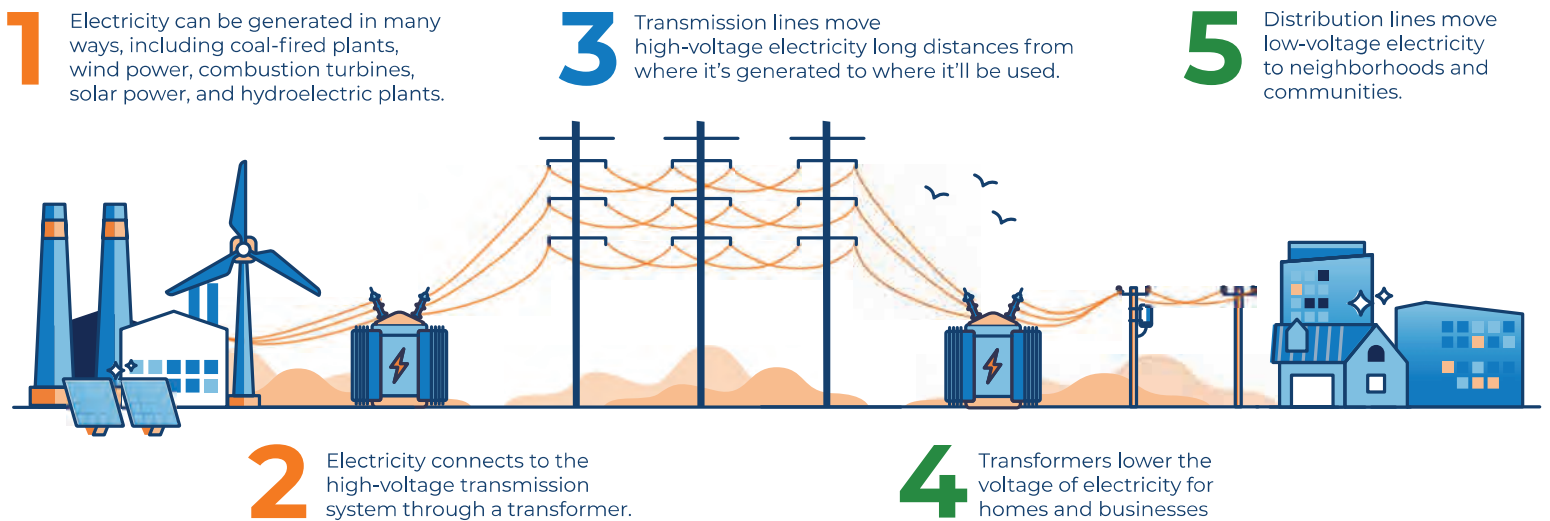


Increase resiliency to extreme weather events



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

TRANSMISSION BASICS



Generation

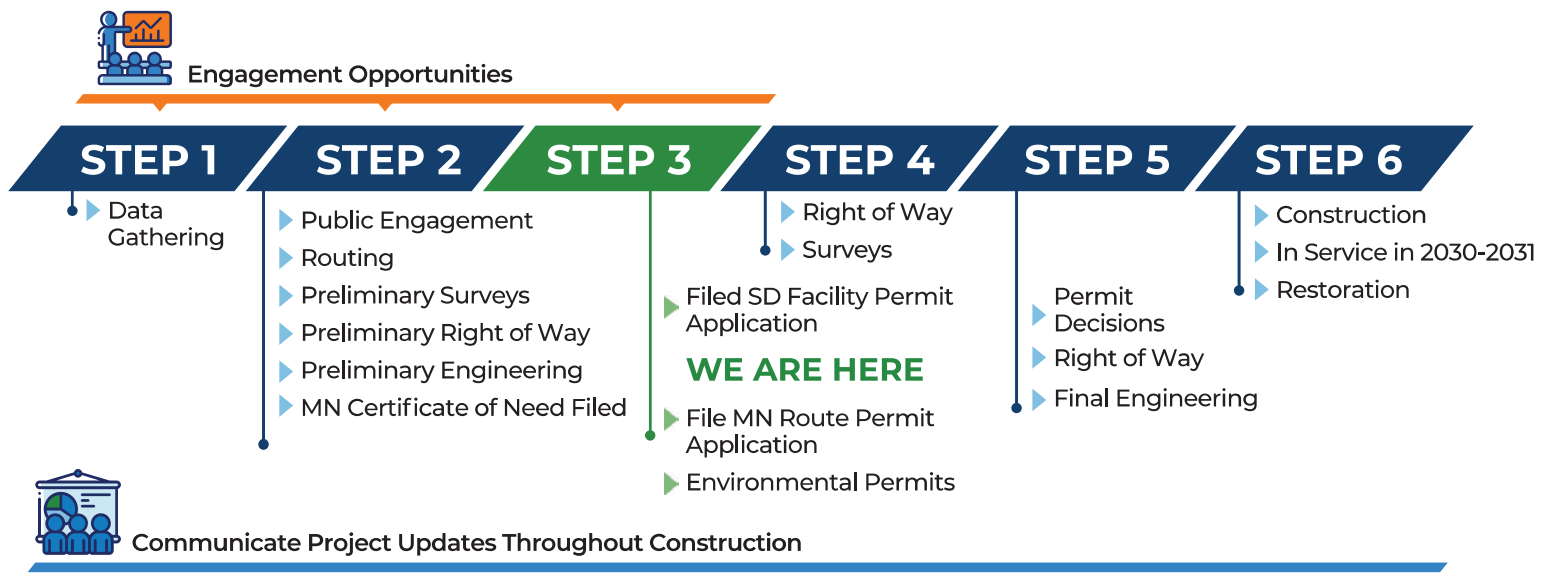
Transmission

Distribution



Big Stone South to Alexandria

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT STEPS



Processes and timing may vary from Minnesota to South Dakota. Our project team will refine the timing of these steps to comply with each respective state's requirements.





Big Stone South to Alexandria

REGULATORY PROCESS

The BSSA transmission line will be constructed in both **Minnesota** and **South Dakota**, and the two states have different processes and timelines. Both state processes are compliant with relevant laws and rules, and consider potential impacts on the environment, residents in the routing area, and orderly development of the region. After we've filed, the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) in each state will provide opportunities for additional feedback through public hearings.



MINNESOTA

Two major approvals must be obtained from the **Minnesota (MN) PUC** before a high-voltage transmission line can be built: a Certificate of Need and a Route Permit. The Certificate of Need proceeding examines whether the proposed facilities are necessary and what the appropriate size, configuration, and timing of the project should be. In a separate Route Permit proceeding, the MN PUC determines the route of the line.



Certificate of Need

- Public hearings



Route Permit

- Public hearings



Route Permit Application Decision

- Estimated timeline is 18-24 months from time of Route Permit application filing. We plan to file in Q4 of 2024.

We filed our facility permit in South Dakota!





Big Stone South to Alexandria

ROUTING PROCESS

WE ARE HERE



BEGIN AGENCY AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT OUTREACH



TRANSMISSION STRUCTURE

MONOPOLE



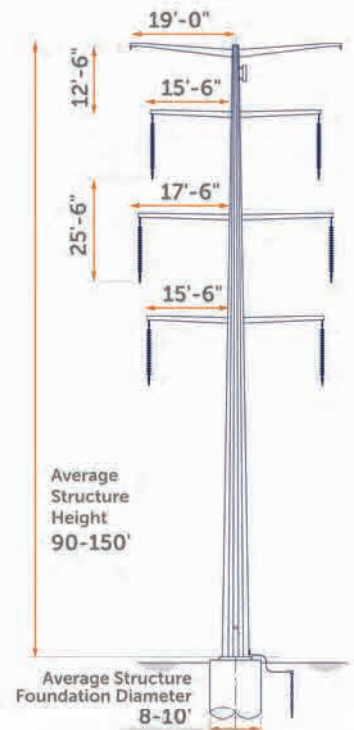
Image shown is an example of a similar double-circuit structure.

The typical structure will be 150 feet tall.

The structure type may vary across the project but primarily will be comprised of single pole, self-weathering steel with double-circuit capability.

Otter Tail Power Company and **Missouri River Energy Services** expect to only install one circuit at this time.

There will be three phases of conductors and two overhead shield wires — one will be an optical ground wire (OPGW) and the other stranded steel (overhead ground wire).



CONSTRUCTION PROCESS

ONGOING OUTREACH

Long before construction begins, right-of-way agents will be coordinating with landowners, local government officials, and other stakeholders. You will be involved throughout the process, and if you have any questions or concerns, our project team will work with you!

1.



Surveying

2.



Temporary Access

3.



**Foundation Drilling
& Pouring**

4.



Structure Setting

5.



Conductor Stringing

6.



Restoration

? What is Right of Way?

Right of way is a portion of land needed for the construction, operation, and maintenance of the transmission line. Typically a width of 150 feet is needed for a 345-kilovolt (kV) transmission line. Right of way is typically secured through negotiation and acquisition of an easement agreement.

? What is Right of Entry?

To assess potential routes and conduct the necessary environmental and engineering studies/surveys, right-of-way agents will work with landowners and residents to acquire a temporary right-of-entry agreement. This agreement does not give permission for construction.

? What is an Easement?

An easement is the legal document that allows Otter Tail Power Company and Missouri River Energy Services to construct, operate, and maintain transmission structures and lines on your property.

A **150-foot-wide easement** will be necessary to construct, operate, and maintain the proposed 345-kV transmission line.

? Right of way agents will reach out to landowners to begin the right of entry process

1



We'll notify landowners in the project area, and right-of-way agents will reach out to request right of entry.

3



We'll work with landowners to resolve any questions or concerns.

2



Once the project receives the final approval with a determined route, a right-of-way agent will present the landowner with an easement offer based on fair market value.

4



The utilities will construct, operate, and maintain the transmission line.

You will be involved throughout the process, and if you have any questions or concerns, our project team will work with you!

Stay Informed

To stay up-to-date on the project, visit our website at:



www.BigStoneSouthtoAlexandria.com

Use your phone's
camera to scan
the QR code.



Get Connected

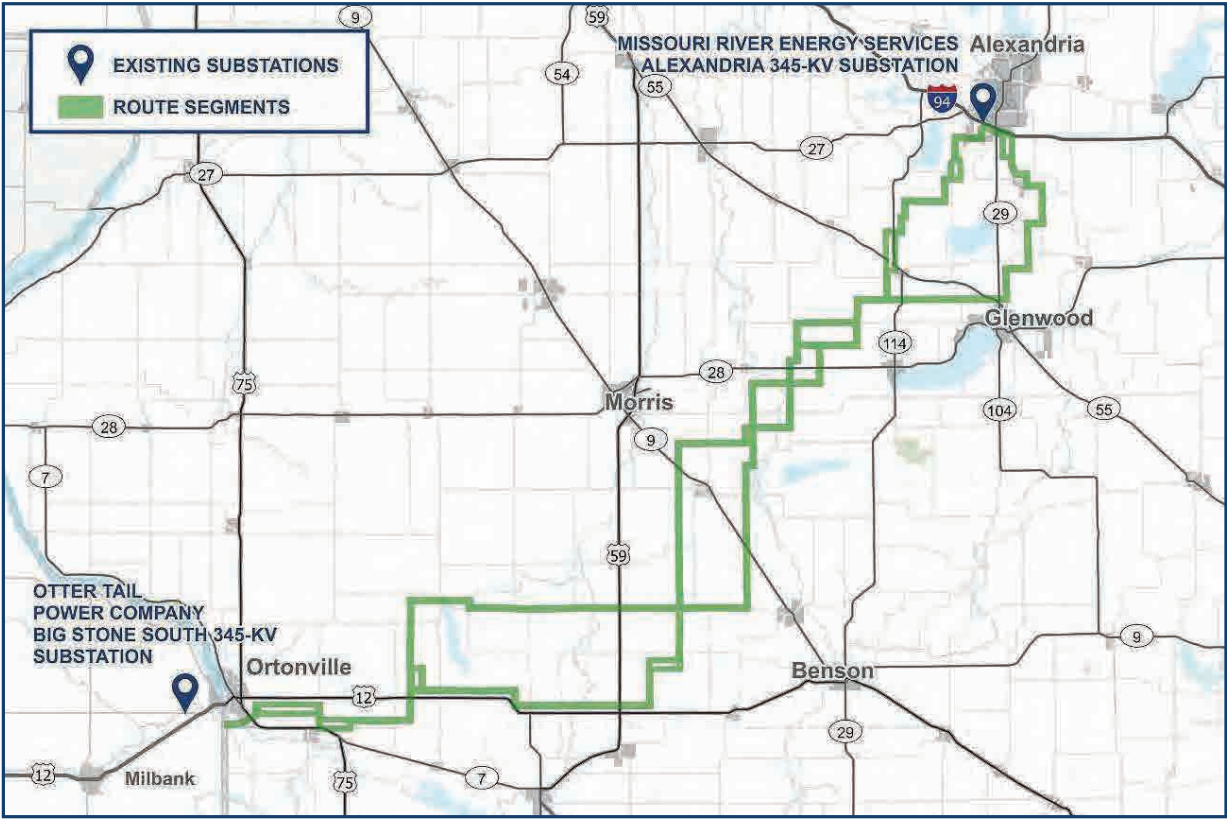
There will be opportunities to participate throughout the project development and permitting process. You can submit feedback, attend public meetings, ask questions, or request an information packet to learn more!



Questions or comments about the project?

connect@BigStoneSouthtoAlexandria.com

(800) 598-5587



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



Media coverage

MEDIA COVERAGE

Pope County Tribune

Powerline open house is June 25 in Glenwood

Otter Tail Power Company (Otter Tail Power) and Missouri River Energy Services (MRES), (on behalf of Western Minnesota Municipal Power Agency), invite the public to attend upcoming open houses for the Big Stone South to Alexandria transmission line (BSSA) project. At the Open Houses the public can review route segments that will make up the two proposed routes to be included in a route permit application to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission.

The open house schedule includes one at Central Square in Glenwood on Tuesday, June 25 from 3 to 6 p.m. and in Benson

from 3 to 6 p.m. at the Benson High School on Wednesday, June 26.

Otter Tail Power and MRES 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 in South Dakota to the Alexandria Substation owned by Missouri River Energy Services near Alexandria.

Developing and constructing transmission lines takes many

years, and this is currently proposing for an in-service date in 2030 or 2031.

Otter Tail Power and MRES began coordinating with landowners and residents, local governments, agencies, and other interested stakeholders in spring 2023 and will continue to seek input from stakeholders throughout the development process. More information can be found at www.BigStoneSouthtoAlexandria.com

Full article can be found: <https://pctribune.com/2024/06/powerline-open-house-is-june-25-in-glenwood>

Swift County Times

Landowners can now see detailed maps of BSSA routes

By Reed Afinson

Landowners in Swift, Stevens, Pope, Otter Tail, Douglas and Big Stone counties now have a detailed map of two potential routes for the Big Stone South to Alexandria 345Kv transmission line.

An interactive online map allows property owners to zoom into the area within the proposed corridor with enough detail to see the buildings on their farm site in relation to the transmission line's path.

While the corridor routes started out very wide, they have now been narrowed to 1,000 feet.

Last week, Missouri River Energy Services and Otter Tail Power Company conducted a series of open houses to meet with landowners whose property could be within the transmission line's final corridor through western Minnesota.

It was also an opportunity for citizens with an interest in or concerns about the powerline to ask questions of the Missouri River and Otter Tail staff.

The meetings were conducted in Benson, Glenwood, Alexandria and Ortonville. Large maps of property parcels and potential powerline route were available with staff ready to explain the details. Computer presentations were also available with staff showing how residents could access the maps and find their parcels on it in relation to the proposed routes.

There are currently two routes from Big Stone City, S.D., to Alexandria under study by Missouri River and Otter Tail. There are a few segments along the route where there is a single path proposed. In these very

short stretches, the options were logistically limited for routing the powerline.

Two routes are required by the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (PUC), which will give final approval for the path of the transmission line. Now that the public meeting phase of the project has been completed, the companies will be finalizing their proposal for PUC review.

Otter Tail and Missouri River are expecting to hear from the PUC in 2026 on the routing permits with construction starting in 2027-2028. The power could be energized by 2030.

The Big Stone South to Alexandria line will be 95 to 105 miles long with 4 to 5 miles in South Dakota and between 90 and 100 in Minnesota.

From Big Stone City, the proposed route follows closely along U.S. Highway 12 as it passes just south of Ortonville and continues east. It will turn north on the west side of Correll with one potential route turning east again south of Artichoke Lake before turning north from the U.S. 12 corridor just east of U.S. Highway 59.

The other option is for the powerline to continue north before heading east on the north side of Artichoke Lake.

The two routes intersect west of Clontarf and then head north with one going on the west side of Hancock and the other north on the east side of Hancock.

They intersect northeast of Hancock again and then the two follow a fairly similar route northeast passing by Starbuck to the west before making their way to Alexandria.

The poles will be able to hold two lines, but the current project only involves one.

Otter Tail says the new power line will allow more low-cost renewable energy to flow from the generation resources to customers and reduce congestion on the existing transmission system created by an increasing amount of renewable energy trying to access the power grid.

Evidence of the construction of the 345kV power line spurring interesting renewable energy projects has already proven true.

Unofficially at the Benson meeting last Thursday were representatives of Apex Clean Energy, the company proposing to construct an estimated 40 5 megawatt to 6-megawatt wind turbines, producing 200 megawatts of power, in western Swift County.

Landowners have been meeting with Apex representatives as the company looks to sign leases for the sites where their windmills will be constructed.

Solar energy companies are also looking at western Swift County.

There were a wide variety of factors taken into consideration for placement of the routes, Joshua Humberg, who will be the project manager for the power line construction, told the Swift County Board of Commissioners in late May. Many of those factors involved agriculture.

"We are trying to avoid areas with a large number of center pivot irrigators. Where we do interact with land involving irrigators, we are working with the landowners to make sure we are outside the radiuses of them, so we don't

interfere with their field irrigation,” he said.

An Environmental Assessment Public Hearing hosted by the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (PUC) took place in Benson June 13 as it gathers public testimony on the proposed routes.

Otter Tail and Missouri River will be signing leases with landowners on whose property the power poles will be placed and the along with the powerlines will be strung.

“What we plan on doing is going out and engaging landowners, more than likely, on both of these routes just to make sure we are hearing their interests and desires before we have the route permits,” Humberg explained to commissioners in May.

“What we typically do with easements is give a one-time payment for the full value of the land underneath the 150-foot-wide swath for the entire route of the transmission line,” he said.

Crop damage payments are also part of the payment package.

“The landowner retains the land, so it is almost like us buying it and giving it back at appraised value,” Humberg said.

If the powerline follows a highway right of way, Otter Tail has to make sure that it sits back away from any future construction projects, Humberg said.

In the easement area, which will be 150-feet wide, there is an area 75 feet on either side of the centerline of the pole structure and the powerline, Jason Weiers, manager of transmission project development at Otter Tail Power Company told commissioners in March.

“That 150-foot easement is intended to provide that safety buffer. When you look at the impacts of the magnetic fields, the electric fields, coming off a

transmission line, by the time you get out to that 75-foot distance to the edge of the right of way, that strength has dissipated to the point where it is no longer a problem,” he explained.

There is a minimum clearance requirement for safety of 30 feet between the lowest part of a wire and the ground, he said.

“Do you have to adjust the route any worry about stray voltage for livestock,” Commissioner Larry Mahoney, District 4-Fairfield Township, asked Weiers at a March meeting.

“We get that question quite a bit from landowners,” Weiers said. “That is something we are mindful of. We do see the potential for inducing voltage on fence lines, waterers, especially when we see the powerline paralleling fences. It is not such a big deal if we cross (one) at a 90-degree angle.

“Those are things we would certainly be willing to do testing on with local landowners to make sure that we don’t have any potential issues with livestock,” he said.

What kind of voltage can occur off of a fence under a power line like that? Mahoney asked.

“Generally, we shouldn’t have any safety concerns,” Weiers told him. “This is going to come down the landowner’s judgement on it. If the cattle are acting a little weird, give us a call and we will come out and do some testing. If the levels are above acceptable limits, then we definitely want to do some mitigation, which will involve some grounding to dissipate that stray voltage to the ground without harming the animals.”

U.S. Highway 12 is one of the linear features that offers a path that could minimize landowner impacts. Part of the corridor could also follow U.S. Highway 59. At the same time, he added, these major highways can have a lot of houses

built along them. “We want to be mindful of staying away from houses,” he said.

Full article can be found: <https://stevenscountytimes.com/landowners-can-now-see-detailed-maps-of-bssa-routes/>

Ortonville Independent

Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor:

I attended a meeting with Otter Tail Power and Missouri River Energy about the proposed power line going east out of Ortonville. I was told their normal procedure is to follow the right of way, which will be along Hwy 12. They do that until the line gets to land owned by the M.S. Fish and Wildlife, then the Fish and Wildlife stopped the line from going on the right of way by their land. So the power company turned the line south for about one and a half miles, and then again turned east going across private land for a number of miles to get past wildlife land and then going back north to the original route. All of this at extra cost.

We as private land owners have no right like our tyrannical Fish and Wildlife to say no if approved. This power line would go right through not only my tillable acres, but also the people east of me. This disrupts how we can farm and our income, and this is a forever disruption for us. It also goes through two of my 40 acre parcels of native prairie that they claim to want. These prairie lands have never seen anything except to be hayed or grazed, and now will be torn up by the equipment installing the power line, plus the power line will be there forever. Hypocrisy!

What makes the right of way along Fish and Wildlife more valuable than our land and livelihood and also my native prairie? They don't need to give a reason to say no. If they say the powerline would disturb wildlife, well I also have wildlife on my land. There is a major powerline going through the refuge from Ortonville south and it was there before the refuge and is still there, so there is a precedent of power lines on or near wildlife land and

having no impact on wildlife.

Unlike the Fish and Wildlife, we as private landowners actually pay taxes on owned land, not a small percentage. It not only affects this power line, so ask your township, county, and even state and federal people how this tyrannical agency affects how our roads are built and repaired. Highway 12 rebuilt a couple of years ago is another prime example of Fish and Wildlife control.

To everyone, you might not think this affects you, but when a government agency can have this kind of control, we are not living in a country with freedoms. If anyone has one or more of these towers on their land and offers to sell the land to Fish and Wildlife, does anyone believe that they would refuse to buy the land because of a power line on it?

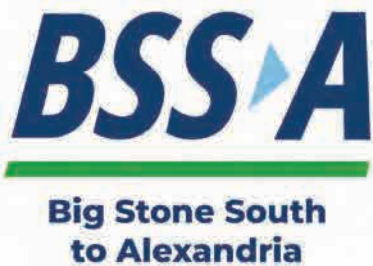
A little bit of history between me and the Fish and Wildlife. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, I was just starting farming on my parents farm west of Odessa. My parents who both passed away in 1969 and 1970 made it through the depression and bought their farm. They not only farmed, but worked extra jobs to pay for it and raise us three children. I was out in the field working one afternoon when a car came driving across the field to me. He was from the government and gave an offer, and I could accept it or they, through eminent domain, take it and get paid nothing. That was freedom back even then, and not for a road or anything like that, but a wildlife refuge. We were told many lies in the process. Then to see the beautiful brick house I was raised in demolished and for what? Now this power line is destroying our land and hurting our livelihood because Fish and Wildlife have unlimited power.

So if anyone thinks they can give me a reason to like and get along with Fish and Wildlife, Don't Even Try! So none of this affects you so why care. If you love freedom, You Will Care!

Marlow Klepel
Odessa

Full article can be found: <https://www.ortonvilleindependent.com/Letters.html>

Comment Summary



Public comments were collected in a variety of ways, both in-person and virtually. The tables below indicate the number of comments, regarding any topic, received during all phases of public engagement and through which channel; or the number of comments by category.

Number of Comments

Channel	Number of Comments
Agency email	1
Comment Form	26
Comment Map (Phase 4 Open Houses)	53
Email	29
Field Staff	10
Hotline	61
Mailed Letter	12
One-on-One Meeting	1
Phone Call	2
Project Email	4
Webform Comment	33
Webform Comment from Map Page	85
Grand Total	317

Public comments were coded to various topics depending on their content, with no rank preference given. Because of this, some comments had multiple topics coded to them. Listed below are all the topics mentioned across all public comments received and the number of comments they appeared in.

Total Categories in all Comments

Topic	Number of Comments
Aerial Spraying	6
Air Quality	1
Airfield	2
Aviation	2
Cell phone signal blockage	1
Communication	16
Community Impact	4
Construction	9
Cost	6
Cultural Resources	3
Drain Tiles	16
Easement Payment	13
EMF	12
Energy Transition	2
Environmental Impacts (General)	14
Future Development (Planning/Operations/Domestic)	4
General Project	35
Hunting/Fishing	1
Information Request	60
Land Use	82
Mailing List Request	7
Construction Materials	1
Mapping Request	5
Meeting Request	3
Noise	1
Permitting	1
Pivot Irrigation	15
Property Access	4
Property Damage	2
Property Values	30
Proximity to Homes	69
Recreation	9
Reliability	1
Renewable Energy	6
Routing	110
ROW	23
Safety	13

Stray Voltage	3
Trees	3
Utilities	3
Visual Impacts	18
Visual/Aesthetic	3
Water	1
Wetlands and Water Resources	12
Wildlife	21
Grand Total	653

Note: The topics listed in this table reflect all the points mentioned in the comments. For instance, 10 comments may cover 23 distinct topics.