



UTILITIES CO.

A Division of MDU Resources Group, Inc.

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June 21, 2007

Illona Jeffcoat-Sacco
Executive Secretary
North Dakota Public Service Commission
State Capitol
Bismarck, ND 58505

**Re: In the Matter of the Advance Determination of Prudence Application of
Otter Tail Corporation Case No. PU-06-481**

**In the Matter of the Advance Determination of Prudence Application of
Montana-Dakota Utilities Co., a Division of MDU Resources Group, Inc.
Case No. PU-06-482**

Dear Ms. Jeffcoat-Sacco:

On behalf of both Montana-Dakota Utilities Co. (Montana-Dakota) and Otter Tail Power Corporation (Otter Tail), enclosed for filing in the above matters please find the original and seven copies of the following documents:

Case No. PU-06-481 Otter Tail:

1. Rebuttal Testimony of Ward Uggerud
2. Rebuttal Testimony of Mark Rolfes (both cases);
3. Rebuttal Testimony of Tim Rogelstad (both cases);
4. Rebuttal Testimony of Kermit Trout (both cases);
5. Rebuttal Testimony of Jeff Greig (both cases) and
6. Rebuttal Testimony of Bryan Morlock.

Case No. PU-06-482 Montana-Dakota:

1. Rebuttal Testimony of Bruce Imsdahl;
2. Rebuttal Testimony of Mark Rolfes (both cases);
3. Rebuttal Testimony of Tim Rogelstad (both cases);
4. Rebuttal Testimony of Kermit Trout (both cases);
5. Rebuttal Testimony of Jeff Greig (both cases) and
6. Rebuttal Testimony of James Heidell.

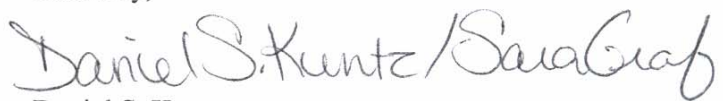
In our June 13, 2007 Notice of Intent to File Rebuttal Testimony, we did not list Mr. Rogelstad, and we had listed Ms. Andrea Stomberg instead of Mr. Imsdahl. At the time of filing we had not identified Mr. Rogelstad as a potential rebuttal witness and have since decided that

Mr. Imsdahl will be addressing identified rebuttal issues and Ms. Stomberg will not be submitting rebuttal testimony. We do not believe these inadvertent omissions cause prejudice to any party.

Please acknowledge receipt by stamping or initialing the duplicate copy of this letter attached hereto and returning the same in the enclosed self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Please let me know if you have any questions. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Daniel S. Kuntz
Associate General Counsel

c: The attached Service List (w/encl.)
Honorable Al Wahl

STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

Otter Tail Corporation, Advance
Determination of Prudence
Application

SERVICE LIST

Montana-Dakota Utilities Co.,
a Division of MDU Resources Group,
Inc., Advance Determination of Prudence
Application

Case Nos. PU-06-481, PU 06-482

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STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

Otter Tail Corporation, Advance
Determination of Prudence
Application

AFFIDAVIT OF SERVICE

Montana-Dakota Utilities Co.,
a Division of MDU Resources Group,
Inc., Advance Determination of Prudence
Application

Case Nos. PU-06-481, PU 06-482

Angie Berger, of Bismarck North Dakota, being sworn, says that on June 21, 2007, a copy of the Rebuttal Testimony filed, in the above referenced cases, has been served upon the North Dakota Public Service Commission and the attached service list via FedEx and email.

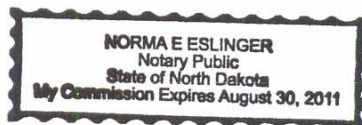


Angie Berger

Subscribed and sworn to before me
this 21st day of June, 2007.



Notary Public



MONTANA-DAKOTA UTILITIES CO.
A Division of MDU Resources Group, Inc.

Before the Public Service Commission of North Dakota

Case No. PU-06-482

Rebuttal Testimony
of
Bruce T. Imsdahl

1 Q. Please state your name and business address.

2 A. My name is Bruce T. Imsdahl and my business address is 400
3 North Fourth Street, Bismarck, North Dakota 58501.

4 Q. By whom are you employed and in what capacity?

5 A. I am the President and CEO of Montana-Dakota Utilities Co.
6 (Montana-Dakota), a Division of MDU Resources Group, Inc.

7 Q. Are you the same Bruce T. Imsdahl who filed direct testimony earlier in
8 this proceeding?

9 A. Yes I am.

10 Q. What is the purpose of your rebuttal testimony?

11 A. The purpose of my rebuttal testimony is to address portions of Mr.
12 Terry Deason's testimony filed on May 31, 2007 on behalf of the advocacy
13 staff of the North Dakota Public Service Commission. In particular I will
14 respond to Mr. Deason's request for clarification regarding what impacts
15 the Big Stone II Station may have on the prospects of future generation in
16 North Dakota. I will also address the conditions Mr. Deason recommends

1 that the Commission consider before granting an advance determination
2 of prudence.

3 Q. What is your response to Mr. Deason's question regarding the impact Big
4 Stone II will have on prospects of future generation in North Dakota?

5 A. While Montana-Dakota's participation in the Big Stone II project has
6 been determined to be the best overall option for providing a reliable and
7 stable resource addition to serve Montana-Dakota's electric customers in
8 the near term, we continue to investigate additional resources for the
9 future. One particular example is the plant under study by Montana-
10 Dakota and three other regional utilities. This group, led by Minnkota
11 Power Cooperative, is currently studying the feasibility of building a jointly
12 owned 500 MW lignite-fueled generating station near Center, North
13 Dakota. The generating station under study would be located at the
14 existing Young Station site. This is but one example of opportunities
15 Montana-Dakota continues to explore in developing reliable and cost
16 effective supply resources for its customers.

17 Q. Would you please address each of the conditions Mr. Deason has
18 suggested the Commission consider before granting an advance
19 determination of prudence of the Big Stone II project?

20 A. Yes. Overall, Montana-Dakota is in agreement with the proposed
21 conditions. As a partner in the Big Stone II project Montana-Dakota
22 provides its commitment to ensuring that 1) periodic informational filings
23 regarding the progress of obtaining all necessary approvals, permits and

1 licenses from other regulatory bodies and advisement of when
2 construction commences will be submitted to the Commission 2)
3 construction cost reporting on a forecasted and actual basis with
4 explanations of deviations including status reports and reporting as
5 deemed appropriate by the Commission 3) the Big Stone II partners will
6 implement specific operational measures to enhance the timely and
7 efficient delivery of coal. Mr. Mark Rolfes on behalf of the Big Stone II
8 project will provide the specifics of this action plan in his rebuttal testimony
9 4) the Big Stone II partners will conduct a study to determine the number
10 and type of rail cars necessary to serve the plant with a report filed with
11 the Commission. Mr. Rolfes will provide the details of this study in his
12 rebuttal testimony and 5) the Big Stone II partners will conduct a study to
13 determine what a cost effective coal inventory level should be taking into
14 account the cost of potential generation curtailments in the event of coal
15 delivery issues. Again, Mr. Rolfes will provide the details of the study in
16 his rebuttal testimony. Montana-Dakota also commits to working with the
17 Commission Staff in developing the appropriate reports that will enable the
18 Commission and its Staff to be apprised in a timely manner and in a
19 fashion that will enable the Commission and its Staff to be aware of the
20 status of this critical project. An affirmative decision from this Commission
21 regarding the prudence of Montana-Dakota's participation in the Big Stone
22 II project will allow Montana-Dakota to move forward with the development
23 of the Big Stone II project in order to bring long term reliability and price

1 stability to its customers. Absent a determination of prudence, Montana-
2 Dakota may be left with shorter term resource solutions in meeting its
3 customers' needs that will unnecessarily subject customers to increased
4 costs and price volatility.

5 Q. Does this complete your rebuttal testimony?

6 A. Yes it does.

CASE NOS. PU-06-481 & PU-06-482
BEFORE THE NORTH DAKOTA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION BY OTTER TAIL POWER CORPORATION D/B/A

OTTER TAIL POWER COMPANY

AND

MONTANA-DAKOTA UTILITIES CO., A DIVISION OF MDU RESOURCES GROUP, INC.

FOR AN ADVANCED DETERMINATION OF PRUDENCE

FOR THE BIG STONE II GENERATING PLANT

REBUTTAL TESTIMONY

OF

MARK ROLFES

PROJECT MANAGER

OTTER TAIL POWER COMPANY

JUNE 21, 2007

REBUTTAL TESTIMONY OF MARK ROLFES

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1 **BEFORE THE NORTH DAKOTA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION**

2 **REBUTTAL TESTIMONY OF MARK ROLFES**

3 **I. INTRODUCTION**

4 **Q: What is the purpose of your rebuttal testimony?**

5 A: The purpose of my rebuttal testimony is to respond to various issues raised in the
6 Direct Testimony of Mr. Terry Deason and the Direct Testimony of Mr. David Schlissel. I
7 will provide additional information regarding the efforts and commitments made by the Big
8 Stone co-owners to take into account potential fuel supply and delivery challenges. I will also
9 respond to statements about the potential for increased costs.

10 **II. FUEL SUPPLY ISSUES**

11 **Q: Have you had an opportunity to review the testimony of Mr. Terry Deason**
12 **relating to the supply of coal to Big Stone?**

13 A: Yes, I have read his testimony and I am aware that fuel supply and delivery are
14 important issues relating to the long term operation of Big Stone II.

15 **Q: Have Otter Tail Power, Montana Dakota Utilities, and Northwestern Public**
16 **Service, the owners of Big Stone Unit I, experienced any fuel delivery problems at the**
17 **Big Stone facility?**

18 A: Yes. At certain times during the spring of both 2005 and 2006, we did not receive the
19 expected shipments of coal and our supplies diminished to the point that in 2006 we operated
20 at less than normal capacity. This has been the only serious reduction in generation that has
21 been required since the Burlington Northern took over operation in the early 1980's. We have
22 worked with the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway ("BNSF") to address this matter. The

1 BNSF has increased the number of shipments and upgraded a number of its facilities. Mr.
2 Brautovich discusses the Railway's responsive actions in his testimony. The owners have
3 also added a third train set.

4 **Q: At page 37 of his testimony, Mr. Deason describes a number of operational**
5 **measures that Otter Tail might take to minimize coal delivery problems. Have you**
6 **begun to implement any of these measures?**

7 A: Yes, we have implemented these operational measures at Big Stone I. The Fuel
8 Supervisor continually monitors train cycle times and uses this information to plan deliveries.
9 Also future delivery needs are projected well in advance. Also part of the changes planned
10 for the coal yard with the addition of Unit II will make it easier to move coal into and out of
11 the coal yard thus making the third suggestion much more practical to implement. Finally Big
12 Stone II has not done the analysis yet regarding the purchase of aluminum cars. I can report
13 that all past analyses have shown the superiority of the lighter cars and the Big Stone II co-
14 owners will seriously consider acquisition of the lighter cars. Also, as Otter Tail's Vice
15 President Ward Uggerud stated in his Rebuttal Testimony, the Big Stone II Co-Owners are
16 committed to follow up on the suggestions by Mr. Deason.

17 **Q: What is the company planning to do about expanding the storage capability to**
18 **increase the coal inventory target level?**

19 A: We are looking into that issue. We have not decided yet what target level to establish
20 when Big Stone Unit II goes into operation. We have a couple more years of operation of
21 Unit I to rely on before we have to decide on the target level. We have the room on site to

1 afford more than 30 days supply if we decide that is appropriate. This is a matter that we will
2 continue to investigate and to report on as we follow up with Mr. Deason's recommendations.

3 **Q: At pages 19-21 of his Direct Testimony, Mr. David Schlissel asserts that the Big**
4 **Stone co-owners have failed to properly consider the risks and the cost impacts of coal**
5 **deliverability problems. What response do you have?**

6 A: Mr. Schlissel's criticism is unfounded. His basic complaint is that the co-owners have
7 not made the same assumptions he would make in analyzing the various generation
8 alternatives. We are fully aware that fuel supply and delivery disruptions can affect the
9 operation and the cost of the energy produced by the facility. Fuel supply risks will exist
10 regardless of what type of plant is proposed and what kind of fuel is burned. The costs of
11 every type of fuel can go up or down. Mr. Schlissel recognizes at page 21 of his testimony
12 that Burns & McDonnell did look at the potential effect of cost increases on various
13 generation alternatives. The co-owners have responsibly taken into account that the cost of
14 fuel, whatever it is, may go up, and that availability of the fuel is an important consideration.
15 We not only have taken these risks into account, we are addressing the absolute need for a
16 reliable coal supply on a number of fronts, as recognized by Mr. Deason and explained by Mr.
17 Uggerud and me in our testimony.

18 **III. ESTIMATED COSTS**

19 **Q: At page 11 of his testimony, Mr. Schlissel states that the Big Stone co-owners,**
20 **including Otter Tail Power and Montana-Dakota Utilities, have assumed there will be**
21 **no further capital cost increases in the Big Stone Project before it is completed. Is that**
22 **right?**

1 A: No, it is not, and I and other witnesses explained that in the Minnesota proceeding.
2 The owners believe, and Black & Veatch has advised, that the capital cost of Big Stone Unit
3 II will increase by approximately 6% per year because of inflation for any delay in the
4 Commercial Operation Date, and there are still final design decisions that we expect will have
5 some minor effect on cost.

6 **Q: Mr. Schlissel asserts at pages 14-15 of his testimony that the cost of Big Stone**
7 **Unit II has gone up another \$199 million. Is that an accurate statement?**

8 A: No, that is not accurate, and I explained the reason why in the Minnesota proceeding.
9 I will reiterate what I said in Minnesota. I believe they got that figure from an August 24,
10 2006 Black & Veatch document entitled “Owners’ Alternatives for Financial Risk
11 Commitments Prior to CON and PSD.” In that document, Black & Veatch set forth four
12 possible cases for continuation of the Big Stone II project. Black & Veatch estimated that
13 Case 3 would result in a delay in the in-service date to May 2012. With costs expected to
14 escalate at 6 percent, and with increased project team and Black & Veatch costs, the delay
15 was estimated to add \$199 million to the project cost. Black & Veatch subsequently
16 indicated their understanding that the Applicants were electing Case 3. However, the
17 Applicants have had ongoing discussions with Black & Veatch resulting in a project path that
18 differs from the August 2006 Black & Veatch Case 3. In particular, the August Case 3 stated
19 that no activities would be undertaken by Black & Veatch other than as necessary to support
20 permitting, with the result that the earliest procurement (for the boiler) would be issued for
21 bid in October 2007. In contrast, under the present plan the owners have instructed Black &

1 Veatch to take needed actions to be ready to enter into critical contracts upon receipt of the
2 final critical permit.

3 **Q: Can you once again state for the record what the co-owners' best estimate for the**
4 **cost of Big Stone Unit II is?**

5 A: Our best estimate is that Big Stone Unit II will cost \$1.361 billion, excluding the cost
6 of transmission, if the in service date is 2011. But for a number of reasons we expect the in
7 service date will be delayed at least one year. We believe this will increase the cost of the
8 plant by 6%. If the in service date is delayed further, we expect the costs to go up
9 approximately \$7 million per month.

10 **IV. COMMERCIAL OPERATION DATE FOR UNIT II**

11 **Q: Mr. Schlissel asserts at page 13 of his direct testimony that “project documents**
12 **reveal that that . . . actual commercial operation date for the Big Stone II Project [is]**
13 **July 1, 2013.” Is that right?**

14 A: No.

15 **Q: What is the anticipated commercial operation date for Big Stone II?**

16 A: The actual commercial operation date is dependent on when permitting is complete,
17 which is beyond the direct control of the project. But if permitting is completed later this year
18 as anticipated, we would expect to have commercial operation in mid 2012.

19 **Q: Does this conclude your rebuttal testimony?**

20 A: Yes.

CASE NOS. PU-06-481 & PU-06-482
BEFORE THE NORTH DAKOTA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION BY OTTER TAIL POWER CORPORATION D/B/A

OTTER TAIL POWER COMPANY

AND

MONTANA-DAKOTA UTILITIES Co., A DIVISION OF MDU RESOURCES GROUP, INC.

FOR AN ADVANCED DETERMINATION OF PRUDENCE

FOR THE BIG STONE II GENERATING PLANT

REBUTTAL TESTIMONY

OF

TIMOTHY ROGELSTAD

MANAGER OF DELIVERY PLANNING

OTTER TAIL POWER COMPANY

JUNE 21, 2007

REBUTTAL TESTIMONY OF TIMOTHY ROGELSTAD

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II. 345 KILOVOLT CAPABILITY 1

1 **BEFORE THE NORTH DAKOTA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION**

2 **REBUTTAL TESTIMONY OF TIMOTHY ROGELSTAD**

3 **I. INTRODUCTION**

4 **Q: What is the purpose of your rebuttal testimony?**

5 A: The purpose of my rebuttal testimony is to respond to the Direct Testimony of Mr.
6 Terry Deason regarding the proposed new transmission lines and to provide some additional
7 information regarding the benefits realized by the construction of the Big Stone to Granite
8 Falls line at 345 kV capability.

9 **II. 345 KILOVOLT CAPABILITY**

10 **Q: Why have the Big Stone co-owners decided to build the Granite Falls line to 345**
11 **kV capability?**

12 A: In the course of conducting transmission planning to determine what was needed to
13 interconnect the new Big Stone II facility to the grid, we looked not only at the Big Stone
14 needs but also at how the transmission would fit into other long-range regional plans and at
15 what other transmission needs might be present in the region.

16 After we completed the initial interconnection studies for the Big Stone Unit II
17 project, we looked at what other transmission needs that could benefit from the Big Stone
18 transmission corridor. We also looked at how the Big Stone Unit II Transmission
19 Interconnection Project fit into long-range regional plans. The CapX 2020 Vision

1 Plan,¹ for example, identified two 345 kV transmission lines from the Dakotas into
2 Minnesota. The Big Stone to Granite Falls transmission line advances that portion of the
3 CapX 2020 Vision Plan. We also realized, of course, that the Dakotas and southwestern
4 Minnesota were good wind resource areas and we knew that there was not enough
5 transmission available to handle additional amounts of wind energy.

6 Knowing that a higher voltage line would provide additional transmission for a
7 number of purposes, we began to look at some of the specific impacts of constructing a larger
8 line. Initially, we determined that if the line was going to be larger than needed specifically
9 for Big Stone, a 345 kV capability would be the only likely upgrade. We found that
10 constructing the Granite Falls line to 345 kV capability would not require any significant new
11 right-of-way over the 230 kV line. We determined that line losses would be measurably less
12 with the line operated at 345 kV rather than at 230 kV. And we found that a 345 kV line
13 would cost approximately \$25 to \$30 million more than a 230 kV line out of a total cost for
14 transmission of approximately \$110 million for transmission interconnection costs, and out of
15 a total for both transmission interconnection *and* transmission delivery service facilities of
16 \$238 million.

17 **Q: Please briefly explain the distinction between transmission “interconnection**
18 **service” and transmission “delivery service.”**

¹ CapX 2020 is an effort of eight Minnesota and regional utilities including Otter Tail, who are putting focus and direction into strengthening the region’s high voltage transmission system to better serve growing demand, enhance reliability, and provide generation outlet opportunities. The CapX 2020 Vision Plan is a report that was completed in May 2005, after an extensive planning effort to identify projects that may be needed to meet customer demand well into the future - perhaps as much as 8000 MW of generation. Based on several different hypothetical generation expansion scenarios, the Vision Plan sets forth a proposal for construction of over 1600 miles of 345 kV transmission lines in North Dakota and Minnesota at a cost of over \$1.2 billion.

1 A: *Interconnection service* is access to the necessary transmission lines to safely and
2 reliably allow a generating facility to connect to the grid. Transmission *delivery service* is
3 access to the transmission grid to actually move the energy from the generator to different
4 points on the transmission grid, including delivery of energy from Big Stone Unit II to the co-
5 owners' customers.

6 **Q: Why has a distinction between interconnection service and delivery service**
7 **developed?**

8 A: The distinction between “interconnection transmission service” and “transmission
9 delivery service” has developed because in 1992, Congress made the wholesale generation
10 market open to free competition – i.e., the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC),
11 which has jurisdiction over the transmission of electric energy in interstate commerce, would
12 no longer regulate the *sales* of (as opposed to the transmission of) electric energy in interstate
13 commerce. In order to make good on that goal, however, FERC believed it needed to open up
14 the transmission system so that persons who controlled the transmission system (i.e., utilities,
15 who also owned competing generation facilities) could not unfairly discriminate against
16 competitors by keeping them from having “open and comparable access” to the transmission
17 grid. And FERC did just that by adopting Order No. 888 and related orders and rulemakings.

18 **Q: What has been the result of this opening up of the transmission grid?**

19 A: In the evolution of open access, FERC has found that while open access and Order No.
20 888 resolved for the most part the problems associated with parties obtaining comparable
21 transmission service (i.e., comparable transmission *delivery* service), certain generators were
22 still having difficulties getting access to the grid in the first place – i.e., having difficulty

1 getting *interconnection* service. Thus the FERC devised a process that utilities must
2 undertake in response to a generator’s request for interconnection service. That process
3 requires that utilities (and Regional Transmission Organizations such as the Midwest
4 Independent System Transmission Operator) undertake a study and identify the necessary
5 transmission facilities that would need to be constructed and placed in service before the
6 generator can interconnect to the system.

7 **Q: Are interconnection service requirements and delivery service requirements**
8 **evaluated separately when a new generating facility is proposed?**

9 A: Yes, the FERC requires that they be evaluated separately, and they have been in this
10 matter. Transmission delivery service requires its own study process, separate from the
11 interconnection study process. And while the study process for delivery service is similar to
12 that for interconnection, the transmission delivery service study process evaluates likely
13 impacts of new generation on the transmission network over a much larger geographical area
14 than does the interconnection study process – i.e., one that includes service to the generator’s
15 ultimate customers.

16 Another important distinction is that there are different “queues” for interconnection
17 service and delivery service. In MISO, requests for interconnection far outnumber requests
18 for delivery service. And the FERC has made clear that obtaining interconnection service
19 does not guarantee delivery service – and vice versa – obtaining transmission delivery service
20 does not guarantee interconnection service.

21 **Q: Is the Big Stone to Granite Falls line part of the proposed interconnection**
22 **facilities or transmission service delivery facilities?**

1 A: The Granite Falls line is part of the proposed interconnection facilities. We do not
2 anticipate any of the transmission delivery service facilities to be sized at 345 kV standards.

3 **Q: When do the Big Stone co-owners anticipate that the Granite Falls line will be**
4 **operated at 345 kV?**

5 A: Once Big Stone Unit II goes into operation, the Granite Falls line will operate initially
6 at 230 kV. The co-owners anticipate that a new 345 kV line being proposed by the CapX
7 utilities from southwestern Minnesota through the Granite Falls area and on to the Twin Cities
8 will be constructed and in operation sometime after 2012, and after Big Stone comes online.
9 Once that new 345 kV line becomes available, the Big Stone line can be energized to 345 kV.

10 **Q: Will the Big Stone to Granite Falls 345 kV line become part of the MISO**
11 **Transmission Expansion Plan (MTEP)?**

12 A: Yes, we believe that MISO will include all of the Big Stone II Transmission facilities
13 in MTEP. At a recent MISO Planning Sub-committee, June 19, 2007, MISO staff indicated
14 that the Big Stone Unit II interconnection facilities will become part of MTEP once an
15 interconnection agreement is signed.

16 **Q: What is the significance if MISO includes the facilities in its MTEP?**

17 A: Once the MISO Board of Directors approves the plan and the facilities in the plan,
18 MISO will have determined that the facilities in the plan are prudent and necessary for
19 providing reliable transmission service. Equally important, by having a transmission project
20 approved in MTEP, cost recovery of those facilities is allowed under the MISO tariff.

21 **Q: What is the co-owners' schedule for constructing the transmission lines?**

1 A: The co-owners intend to bring the Granite Falls online in fall of 2010 and the Morris
2 230 kV line online in early 2012. Construction will begin with the segment from Big Stone to
3 the Canby substation in Minnesota, followed by the Canby to Granite Falls portion.
4 Completing the Granite Falls line first provides capacity on the system above what is already
5 present to accommodate the fact that the Morris line has to be taken out of service during
6 construction, thus incurring less risk of service interruption to customers served by the Morris
7 line.

8 **Q: Is it prudent to spend the additional money to build the Granite Falls line to 345**
9 **kilovolt specifications when a 230 kV line would handle the Big Stone energy output?**

10 A: Yes. Because part of an efficient transmission regional plan is to build one that will
11 facilitate the development of new generation resources in the region, sizing the Big Stone to
12 Granite Falls line at 345 kV is prudent. MISO agrees with this. Regional planning has long
13 identified the need to increase the transmission capability from the Dakota's in order to
14 deliver both new coal and wind resources, including through the findings of regional studies
15 such as the Lignite Vision 21 Transmission study, MISO's Northwest Exploratory Study and
16 the CapX Vision Study. Each of these studies identified the need to build 345 kV
17 transmission facilities from the Dakota's. Building the Granite Falls line at 345 kV advances
18 a portion of those long range plans. If we build just the minimum facilities required to
19 interconnect Big Stone Unit II (i.e., 230 kV line from Big Stone to Granite Falls), we would
20 need to have to build another 345 kV line some place else in the vicinity at 345 kV these long
21 range plans. Building the Granite Falls line at 345 kV is the first step in the build-out of an

1 efficient transmission system from the Dakota's, one of the primary purpose of which is to
2 enhance the ability of adding new generation in the Dakotas.

3 **Q: At page 29, line 13, of his testimony, Mr. Deason is referring to your direct**
4 **testimony when he states: "... the transient stability problem that arises when large**
5 **amounts of generation are connected to distant loads with less than optimal**
6 **transmission." Do you believe there is less than optimal transmission in the region?**

7 A: No, from the perspective of the existing system, the system has been optimized.
8 However, from the perspective of adding additional generators to the transmission system,
9 there will need to be additional transmission necessary to optimize the system. With the Big
10 Stone Unit II transmission plan, we have developed an optimal plan that takes into
11 consideration some of the regional needs. I believe Mr. Deason may have misinterpreted my
12 statement of a weak transmission system as meaning less than optimal, and that is not what I
13 intended. A weak transmission system can be adequate, but a weak system will need to be
14 expanded to add more generation or load.

15 **Q: Does this conclude your rebuttal testimony?**

16 A: Yes.

CASE NOS. PU-06-481 & PU-06-482
BEFORE THE NORTH DAKOTA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION BY OTTER TAIL POWER CORPORATION D/B/A

OTTER TAIL POWER COMPANY

AND

MONTANA-DAKOTA UTILITIES CO., A DIVISION OF MDU RESOURCES GROUP, INC.

FOR AN ADVANCED DETERMINATION OF PRUDENCE

FOR THE BIG STONE II GENERATING PLANT

REBUTTAL TESTIMONY

OF

KERMIT TROUT

VICE PRESIDENT – SENIOR PROJECT MANAGER

BLACK AND VEATCH CORPORATION

JUNE 21, 2007

REBUTTAL TESTIMONY OF KERMIT TROUT

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I. INTRODUCTION 1

1 **BEFORE THE NORTH DAKOTA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION**

2 **REBUTTAL TESTIMONY OF KERMIT TROUT**

3 **I. INTRODUCTION**

4 **Q: At page 7 of Direct Testimony filed on behalf of Mark Trechock and Dakota**
5 **Resource Council (“DRC”) in this proceeding, David A. Schlissel notes there are risks**
6 **and uncertainties associated with building “fossil plants,” including coal and natural gas**
7 **fired plants, and also risks and uncertainties associated with renewable alternatives. Do**
8 **you agree with Mr. Schlissel that risks and uncertainties attend each approach to power**
9 **supply planning?**

10 **A: Yes.**

11 **Q: Do you agree with Mr. Schlissel that the Big Stone II Project owners failed to**
12 **consider the risks and uncertainties regarding the potential for further capital cost**
13 **increases affecting the Project?**

14 **A: No.**

15 **Q: Please explain your answer.**

16 **A: The Big Stone II Project owners have included allowances for escalation of capital**
17 **costs as well as allowances in the form of contingencies for those risks and uncertainties.**
18 **While it is difficult to predict actual escalation and cost increases, reasonable allowances for**
19 **both have been included in the capital cost estimates.**

20 **Q: Mr. Schlissel asserts that the Big Stone II Project owners, including Otter Tail**
21 **Power Company (“Otter Tail”) and Montana-Dakota Utilities (“Montana-Dakota”)**
22 **have skewed the results of their capital cost analyses by failing to recognize that the**

1 **impact of the factors that have led to increases in the estimated costs of Big Stone II will**
2 **not be as great in the case of alternatives to Big Stone II, such as natural gas and**
3 **renewables, including wind. Do you agree with this assertion?**

4 A: No.

5 **Q: Please explain your answer.**

6 A: The factors that impacted the increases in the estimated costs of Big Stone II, such as
7 engineered equipment price increases, commodity price increases, and labor increases for
8 example, will impact all types of generating plants. All power projects use engineered
9 equipment, commodities like copper and steel, and labor for constructing the plants.

10 **Q: At pages 18 - 19 of his Direct Testimony, Mr. Schlissel attempts to paraphrase**
11 **Black & Veatch's cost analysis by saying, "However, Black & Veatch further explained**
12 **that simple cycle and combined cycle equipment costs have remained steady because the**
13 **demand for combustion turbines 'is relatively low'." Is this a fair summary of your**
14 **analysis?**

15 A: No. Mr. Schlissel's statement needs quite a bit of additional context for it to be
16 understood as anything but misleading. It is true that the costs of some components of simple
17 and combined cycle natural gas "equipment" have not increased at the same rate that costs
18 have increased for the major components of large pulverized coal-fired plants. The
19 implication, however, that natural gas plants have not experienced dramatic cost increases is
20 simply wrong. In addition, Mr. Schlissel notes that the labor cost element of the capital cost of
21 a new natural gas plant is low relative to the labor cost component of a coal plant. While this
22 point is true in isolation, in the overall scheme of things it can lead to wrong conclusions.

1 **Q: Why do you say that?**

2 A: The difficulty with comparing the future capital and busbar costs of alternative
3 generating resources is, as Mr. Schlissel acknowledges, uncertainty. Estimating such costs is,
4 inherently, an exercise in speculation and the application of one's best judgment based on
5 history, experience and existing conditions. Magnifying the problem is the fact that
6 conditions change over time, in many cases, over relatively short periods of time. Thus, we
7 know today that if the Big Stone II Project owners decided to build a 630 MW CCGT plant
8 instead of a 630 MW supercritical pulverized coal plant, their labor and equipment costs
9 likely would be lower, but over the long-haul, their fuel costs would be dramatically higher.
10 Whether these costs differentials would be great enough on a present value basis to justify
11 switching to a natural gas project involves the exercise of one's best professional judgment. I
12 find it significant that Mr. Schlissel has not advocated, and is not advocating here, that the Big
13 Stone II Project owners build a natural gas plant instead of a supercritical pulverized coal
14 plant.

15 **Q: What market conditions have led to increases in the estimated costs of renewable**
16 **supply-side alternatives such as wind, which Mr. Schlissel references at page 18 of this**
17 **direct testimony?**

18 A: The increased demand for the wind turbine technology has created some of the same
19 market conditions as with other engineered equipment; that is, the demand for that equipment
20 has put pressure on the manufacturing capacity. In addition, cost increases are due to several
21 other factors:

22 – Euro/Dollar exchange rate, as most wind turbines are manufactured in Europe

- 1 – Steel/Concrete/Copper price increases
- 2 – Transportation Costs (Oil)
- 3 -- General increases in construction costs.

4 **Q: Could you provide Black & Veatch’s current assessment of the relative capital**
5 **costs of wind turbines and supercritical coal plants adjusted for capacity factor and**
6 **expected useful life?**

7 A: No. An answer to this question as raised wouldn’t be practical. It’s like mixing apples
8 (capital costs) with oranges (operating costs) directly. However, by making various
9 assumptions, busbar cost or life-cycle cost comparisons (which is what the BSP II owners
10 have done) can be made to include operational factors such as capacity factor and useful life
11 with initial capital costs. Those life cycle type of analyses provide a better comparison than
12 relative capital costs.

13 **Q: It has been nearly six months since you testified in the Minnesota transmission**
14 **Certificate of Need proceeding. Have market conditions affecting the cost of the major**
15 **components of the Big Stone II plant materially changed since you testified?**

16 A: While no specific assessment has been completed in the last few months, I believe that
17 the allowances included previously for escalation and contingency are still valid. Nothing
18 from a cost estimate impact has materially changed since then.

19 **Q: Does this conclude your testimony?**

20 A: Yes.

CASE NO. PU-06-481/482

BEFORE THE NORTH DAKOTA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION BY OTTER TAIL POWER CORPORATION D/B/A

OTTER TAIL POWER COMPANY

FOR AN ADVANCED DETERMINATION OF PRUDENCE

FOR THE BIG STONE II GENERATING PLANT

AND

IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION BY MONTANA-DAKOTA UTILITES Co., A DIVISION

OF MDU RESOURCES GROUP, INC.

FOR AN ADVANCED DETERMINATION OF PRUDENCE

FOR THE BIG STONE II GENERATING PLANT

REBUTTAL TESTIMONY

OF

JEFF GREIG

**GENERAL MANAGER, BUSINESS & TECHNOLOGY
SERVICES**

BURNS & MCDONNELL

JUNE 21, 2007

REBUTTAL TESTIMONY OF JEFF GREIG

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1 **BEFORE THE NORTH DAKOTA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION**

2 **REBUTTAL TESTIMONY OF JEFF GREIG**

3 **I. INTRODUCTION**

4 **Q: Please state your name and business address.**

5 A: My name is Jeffrey (Jeff) J. Greig. My business address is Burns & McDonnell
6 Engineering Co., 9400 Ward Parkway, Kansas City, MO, 64114.

7 **Q: By whom are you employed, and in what capacity?**

8 A: I am employed by Burns & McDonnell Engineering Company. I am the General
9 Manager of the Business & Technology Services Division of the company.

10 **Q: What are your responsibilities in your current position?**

11 A: The Business & Technology Services Division is a consulting group specializing in
12 generation resource planning, transmission planning, financial and rate analyses, project
13 development services, information management and technology consulting, security
14 consulting, and energy services. We consult with utilities, government agencies, and private
15 companies.

16 **Q: What is your educational background?**

17 A: I have Bachelors Degrees in Finance and Economics from Eastern Illinois University,
18 and a Masters Degree in Economics from Iowa State University.

19 **Q: What is your employment history?**

20 A: I have 20 years of experience as a consultant in the electric power industry. My
21 background includes generation resource planning, feasibility studies, siting studies, market
22 assessments, project development, and asset due diligence.

1 **Q: Have you provided written testimony in other state proceedings regarding the**
2 **proposed Big Stone Unit II?**

3 A: Yes I did. I provided testimony before the South Dakota, and the Minnesota Public
4 Utilities Commission regarding the Big Stone Unit II project and proposed transmission
5 interconnection facilities. My testimony here is based in part on my previous work and
6 testimony in those states.

7 **Q: Have you testified in other proceedings related to large energy facilities?**

8 A: Yes. I have provided written and oral testimony before the Wisconsin Public Service
9 Commission regarding a site certificate for a gas-fired project. I have provided written and
10 oral testimony before the Ohio Power Siting Board regarding a site certificate for a gas-fired
11 project. I have prepared written testimony regarding a site certificate and rate principles filing
12 presented to the Iowa Utilities Board. I have prepared written testimony regarding power
13 supply planning for the New Mexico Public Regulation Commission. I have prepared written
14 testimony regarding a generation asset transfer for the Illinois Commerce Commission, and I
15 have provided written and oral testimony regarding a generation asset transfer for the Federal
16 Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC).

17 **II. PURPOSE AND SUMMARY**

18 **Q: What is the purpose of your testimony?**

19 A: The purpose of my testimony is to explain the analysis that Burns & McDonnell did to
20 evaluate the economics of various baseload generation technologies and to describe the results
21 of that analysis and to respond to certain points raised by Mr. Terry Deason in his Direct

1 Testimony. I also explain some errors in Mr. Schlissel's testimony about the Burns &
2 McDonnell work.

3 **Q: Please summarize your testimony.**

4 A: Burns & McDonnell was hired by the Big Stone co-owners to evaluate the economies
5 of various baseload generation technologies. Burns & McDonnell developed capital cost,
6 performance, and O&M cost estimates for the different technologies in the initial studies.
7 These cost estimates were input into an economic model to determine the cost of generating a
8 unit of electricity for each baseload technology. We determined that a supercritical
9 pulverized coal plant, like Big Stone Unit II, represented the lowest cost baseload generation
10 technology for both investor-owned and publicly-owned utilities of the technologies
11 considered.

12 We also prepared a subsequent report in October 2006 with updated costs to determine
13 the busbar cost for three different baseload generation options: a 630 MW Big Stone Unit II
14 supercritical pulverized coal plant, a 500 MW combined cycle gas turbine ("CCGT") plant,
15 and a 500 MW combination CCGT plus market purchases of wind energy. We utilized the
16 most recent cost estimates prepared by Black & Veatch. Our updated analysis continued to
17 demonstrate that the Big Stone Unit II supercritical pulverized coal plant has the lowest
18 busbar costs on a \$/MWh basis of the three options, for both investor-owned utilities and
19 public power utilities.

20 I respond to the issues raised by Terry Deason in his testimony, where he compares
21 the Burns & McDonnell work with analyses completed by James Heidell for Montana-
22 Dakota. I do not find that there are any serious inconsistencies between our work and Mr.

1 Heidell’s work, and indeed, the fact that we both reach the same conclusion under different
2 assumptions, strengthens the conclusion that Big Stone Unit II is a least cost alternative.

3 In order to clarify some misstatements by Mr. Schlissel about our analysis of the
4 estimated costs of the Big Stone project and a natural gas/wind combination alternative, I
5 explain how we did our analysis and that our assumptions regarding the size of a natural gas
6 plant as an alternative to Big Stone and the value of the Production Tax Credit were
7 appropriate.

8 **III. ROLE OF BURNS & MCDONNELL**

9 **Q: What role did Burns & McDonnell play in evaluating the Big Stone proposal?**

10 A: Burns & McDonnell conducted three separate studies for the proposed Big Stone Unit
11 II owners to evaluate the economics of various technologies for generating electricity. As part
12 of the Applicants’ due diligence to construct Big Stone Unit II, Otter Tail Power Company
13 (“Otter Tail”) asked Burns & McDonnell to conduct a first study, referred to as the Phase I
14 study, to examine several different technologies for generating baseload electricity. As part of
15 that study, Burns & McDonnell developed capital cost, performance, and O&M cost estimates
16 for the different technologies. Of the technologies considered, the Phase I study
17 recommended that a supercritical pulverized coal plant, such as Big Stone Unit II, represented
18 a low cost generation technology.

19 Burns & McDonnell utilized the work from the first study to conduct a second study,
20 called “Analysis of Baseload Generation Alternatives – Big Stone Unit II” (“Baseload
21 Generation Alternatives Study”) in which an expanded set of generation alternatives,
22 including integrated gasification combined cycle (IGCC) technology, were evaluated. The

1 Baseload Generation Alternatives Study confirmed that a 600 MW pulverized coal plant
2 represented the lowest cost baseload generation alternative. A copy of this report was
3 included as Exhibit MR-1 attached to the Direct Testimony of Mark Rolfes.

4 Finally, Burns & McDonnell updated the busbar cost analysis for three different
5 generation options: the 630 MW Big Stone Unit II supercritical pulverized coal plant, a 500
6 MW combined cycle gas turbine (“CCGT”) plant, and a 500 MW combination CCGT plus
7 market purchases of wind energy. We utilized the most recent cost estimates prepared by the
8 project’s design engineer Black & Veatch. Our updated analysis continued to show that the
9 Big Stone Unit II supercritical pulverized coal plant has the lowest per MWh busbar costs of
10 the three options, for both investor-owned utilities and public power utilities. This report,
11 entitled “Revised Analysis of Baseload Generation Alternatives” (“Revised Baseload
12 Analysis”) dated October 2, 2006, was also attached to the Direct Testimony of Mark Rolfes,
13 Exhibit MR-2.

14 **Q: What cost and performance assumptions were used by Burns & McDonnell in**
15 **the Revised Baseload Analysis?**

16 A: The capital cost estimate provided to Burns & McDonnell by Otter Tail for the Big
17 Stone Unit II project was \$1.366 billion excluding transmission construction. The net output
18 of the Big Stone Unit II project was a nominal 630 MW net to reflect the new estimate of the
19 dependable capacity that will be available from the project, and the net heat rate was
20 estimated at 9,095 Btu/kWh.

1 **Q: What were the cost and performance assumptions provided to Burns &**
2 **McDonnell for the CCGT project?**

3 A: Black & Veatch prepared a report entitled, "Supply-Side Technology Study" dated
4 August 2006. The capital cost estimate for a generic 2 x 1 GE 7FA CCGT project was
5 estimated in 2006\$ at \$281 million (\$562/kW) plus \$56.2 million of owner's costs. The net
6 output of the CCGT project was 500 MW net, and the net heat rate was estimated at 6,704
7 Btu/kWh.

8 **Q: Does the difference in size between the 630 MW supercritical PC unit and the 500**
9 **MW CCGT unit materially impact the results?**

10 A: No. The nominal size of the supercritical PC unit and the CCGT unit are common
11 block sizes of the technologies that are employed in the market. The economic evaluation
12 was prepared on a busbar basis and expressed in terms of \$/MWh of energy production. This
13 allows the results to be compared directly. The objective of the Revised Baseload Analysis
14 was to update the results for recent cost estimates and the nominal 630 MW supercritical PC
15 unit and 500 MW CCGT unit cost estimates prepared by Black & Veatch were the most
16 recent cost information available at the time.

17 **Q: What was the basis for the cost of wind resources used in the Revised Baseload**
18 **Analysis Report?**

19 A: For the CCGT plus market purchase of wind energy alternative, it was assumed that
20 non-firm wind energy would be purchased from independent power developers at a levelized
21 cost of \$60/MWh for a 2012 in-service date. These purchases would displace an equivalent
22 amount of energy that would otherwise be generated at the CCGT. The \$60/MWh does not

1 include the current federal Production Tax Credit (“PTC”). While the PTC was renewed in
2 2007 for one year, it may not be available in 2012 as a subsidy to lower the cost of wind
3 energy. Burns & McDonnell estimated that current new wind farm development in the
4 Midwest region costs \$40/MWh in 2006 with the PTC in place. This compares with the
5 \$36/MWh estimated as 2005\$ costs in the original Baseload Generation Alternatives Study.
6 The price of wind turbines has increased significantly within the last two years due to material
7 costs such as steel and copper, and market factors. Assuming a conservative escalation rate of
8 2.5% per annum in the cost of wind farms, the estimated 2012 cost of wind energy is
9 \$46.39/MWh if the PTC is extended. Both scenarios were evaluated.

10 **Q: Mark Rolfes has testified that the cost of Big Stone II will increase by 6%/year if**
11 **the in-service date of the plant is delayed. Does your 2.5%/year assumption for wind**
12 **generation mean that the cost of wind farms is increasing slower than Big Stone II costs?**

13 A: No. We expect the busbar \$/MWh costs of wind energy and other alternatives will be
14 largely affected by the same global market pressures on materials and labor that Big Stone II
15 will experience. My point is that, even using a conservative 2.5% per annum escalation rate
16 on the cost of wind generation, Big Stone II is still the cost-effective choice. If I had used a
17 higher escalation rate assumption for wind generation, Big Stone II would have looked even
18 better.

19 **Q: What was the purpose of including the wind resource with the CCGT**
20 **alternative?**

21 A: For the CCGT project plus wind case, the 500 MW CCGT plant is the baseload
22 alternative being compared to the supercritical PC plant. Both are reliable, dispatchable

1 generation resources that can be operated to meet baseload capacity and energy requirements.
2 Wind is not a baseload resource because it does not produce dependable generation year-
3 round at high capacity factors. Hence, our analysis did not assume construction of a wind
4 resource. The wind component was added to the CCGT project alternative to enhance its
5 economic performance by displacing higher cost gas-fired energy production with non-firm
6 wind energy when available. The evaluation was focused on comparing baseload project
7 alternatives, not developing combinations of resources on a system basis as a substitute for
8 utility resource planning efforts.

9 **Q: What was the assumption regarding the capacity factor of the wind resource?**

10 A: The evaluation assumed that non-firm wind energy would be available to displace the
11 equivalent of a 40 percent capacity factor for the CCGT plant. In this regard, the assumption
12 was optimistic for typical wind farm production. Nevertheless, we utilized the 40 percent
13 estimate to be conservative in testing Big Stone Unit II's economics against alternatives.

14 **Q: What is the impact of the PTC on the price of wind power?**

15 A: The value of the PTC in reducing wind costs is approximately \$22/MWh in most
16 applications. We have reflected a cost of wind of \$60/MWh in 2012 in the absence of the
17 PTC in an effort to be more than fair in our assumptions regarding how the wind energy
18 market may react in the future to the expiration of the tax credit. The expiration of the PTC
19 could result in the cost of new wind development being \$66/MWh or higher in 2012.

20 **Q: Were the financing assumptions in the Revised Baseload Analysis for the two**
21 **different ownership structures the same as used in the prior studies?**

22 A: Yes.

1 **Q: Were the other key operating and economic assumptions the same?**

2 A: Yes, with the exception that the fuel cost forecasts were updated based on 2006
3 information.

4 **Q: What was the basis for the fuel cost forecasts used in the October 2006 Revised**
5 **Baseload Analysis?**

6 A: The Powder River Basin (“PRB”) fuel cost forecast was provided by Otter Tail.
7 Initially we used a cost of \$1.31/MMBtu in 2011. In this round of examination, we used a
8 cost of \$1.71/MMBtu in 2010 for the overall delivered cost for PRB coal.

9 For natural gas, in September 2006, the NYMEX futures price for Henry Hub natural
10 gas commodity supply in 2011 was \$7.20/MMBtu. A conservative transportation cost of
11 \$0.40/MMBtu was added to this supply cost for a delivered cost of \$7.60/MMBtu in 2011.

12 **Q: What were the specific results reported in the Revised Baseload Analysis?**

13 A: For the public power utility ownership model, the lowest cost generation alternative
14 was the 630 MW supercritical Big Stone Unit II project with an estimated levelized busbar
15 cost of \$56.38/MWh over the 2012 to 2031 planning period. The CCGT plus market
16 purchases of the wind energy alternative was \$77.77/MWh, which is 38% higher than the Big
17 Stone Unit II project. For the investor-owned utility ownership model, the lowest cost
18 generation alternative was also the 630 MW supercritical Big Stone Unit II project with an
19 estimated levelized busbar cost of \$69.62/MWh over the 2012 to 2031 planning period. The
20 CCGT plus market purchases of the wind energy alternative was \$80.78/MWh, which is 16%
21 higher than the Big Stone Unit II project.

1 **IV. RESPONSE TO TERRY DEASON TESTIMONY**

2 **Q: At page 15 of his testimony, Mr. Terry Deason indicated that it was not clear why**
3 **in the CCGT + Wind alternative, Burns & McDonnell assumed the wind component**
4 **would be a power purchase. Can you explain that assumption?**

5 A: Yes. There were two primary reasons for this assumption. First, the majority of wind
6 generation developed in the U.S. has been implemented by independent power producers and
7 sold to electric utilities under power purchase agreements. So this assumption reflects how
8 the industry has currently evolved for the most part. Secondly and more importantly, we were
9 preparing an analysis that could be used by both investor-owned utilities and public power
10 utilities since this was consistent with the types of ownership entities involved in the Big
11 Stone II project. We wanted to capture the value of the current production tax credit. Since
12 public power utilities are generally tax-exempt utilities, the assumption that the wind
13 component was developed by an independent power producer that could take full advantage
14 of the current PTC – i.e., a developer with a full tax appetite - was reasonable.

15 **Q: Mr. Deason continued at page 15 of his Direct Testimony that there may be an**
16 **inconsistency between the cost estimate and escalation rate for wind assumed by Burns**
17 **& McDonnell and the assumptions in that regard made by Mr. Heidell in Montana-**
18 **Dakota’s Generation Expansion Plan Analysis? Is there an inconsistency?**

19 A: Yes, apparently there is an inconsistency. We have estimated that the cost of wind
20 will increase, and Mr. Heidell has assumed that it will decrease.

21 **Q: Does that inconsistency change any of your conclusions?**

1 A: No it does not. Indeed, the fact that Montana-Dakota's Generation Expansion Plan
2 Analysis was based on a declining capital cost for wind and still recommended the inclusion
3 of the Big Stone II project in the generation expansion plan only strengthens the conclusion
4 that Big Stone is least cost, since under both higher wind capital cost assumptions and lower
5 cost assumptions, Big Stone II still comes out as least cost.

6 It may not have been unreasonable to assume that costs may decline at the time of
7 Montana-Dakota's analysis. There had been some cost reduction in the 2002-2006 timeframe
8 in the industry. However, I continue to believe that the cost of wind will increase in the next
9 few years. The significant amount of wind development currently ongoing in the U.S. and
10 around the world combined with significant cost escalation in labor and key material
11 commodities such as steel and copper have caused price increases in the costs of installing
12 new wind generation, not decreases. Several of the prominent manufacturers of wind turbines
13 such as GE, Seimens, Vestas and Mitsubishi are currently sold out of manufacturing
14 capability until 2009. The high market demand for these units plus the significant cost
15 escalations that have impacted all types of generation projects, including wind, have increased
16 wind costs recently and we believe there are no fundamental drivers in place that would
17 mitigate these factors. Burns & McDonnell believes the assumption of only a 2.5% annual
18 escalation in the current cost of wind generation is conservative.

19 **Q: In his testimony at pages 15-16, Mr. Deason points out that another potential**
20 **inconsistency between Burns & McDonnell and Montana-Dakota is the assumed**
21 **capacity factor for wind generation. Is there any inconsistency here?**

1 A: I don't believe so, because as Mr. Deason correctly notes, the assumptions reflect
2 different factors. Burns & McDonnell's assumption of a 40% capacity factor from the wind
3 component is used to reduce the amount of higher cost gas-fired generation from the CCGT
4 plant. The 40% capacity factor assumption is conservative for wind generation performance.
5 Mr. Heidell's assumption references the expected capacity contribution of wind generation
6 during Montana-Dakota's peak. It may or may not be consistent with Burns & McDonnell's
7 40% overall capacity factor assumption.

8 **Q: Yet another apparent inconsistency pointed out by Mr. Deason related to the**
9 **capacity benefits for wind. Did Burns & McDonnell assume no capacity contribution**
10 **for the wind component in the CCGT + Wind alternative?**

11 A: No, I don't agree with the characterization that the wind component was expressly
12 assumed to have no capacity value. I need to explain the purpose of our studies and the
13 results to understand why this is a misconception of our work.

14 First, the purpose of our analysis was to compare the economics of baseload
15 generation alternatives. In the CCGT + Wind alternative, the CCGT plant is the baseload
16 alternative being compared to the Big Stone II project, not the wind energy purchase. Both
17 plant alternatives – i.e., both the super-critical coal plant and the natural gas CCGT - offer
18 firm, reliable, dispatchable capacity that can be operated at a high capacity factor to provide
19 energy. A *non-firm* wind component was added to enhance the overall economics of the
20 CCGT project by displacing higher cost gas-fired energy. It was not the purpose of our
21 studies to replace utility resource planning efforts that would evaluate a number of supply-
22 side and demand-side resources in combination that could meet a utility's overall capacity and

1 energy needs. Both Otter Tail and Montana-Dakota conducted separate resource planning
2 analysis and that information, as I understand, has been introduced in this proceeding.

3 Second, Burns & McDonnell has noted concerns about assuming that the wind
4 component in the CCGT + Wind case should have a firm capacity value without addressing
5 transmission costs. The Baseload Generation Alternatives Study included a busbar analysis.
6 It is reasonable to compare the busbar costs of a similar sized coal unit such as Big Stone II
7 with a gas unit such as a CCGT plant. However, it is not reasonable to assume that hundreds
8 of MW of wind generation should be combined with the CCGT plant with no additional
9 transmission upgrade costs for the wind component added.

10 Finally, Burns & McDonnell did prepare an economic analysis assuming a 15%
11 capacity value is assigned to the wind component in the CCGT + Wind case (even though no
12 additional transmission costs were included). The results of this analysis indicated no change
13 in the conclusion that the Big Stone II project remained a lower cost alternative, and the
14 overall costs of the CCGT + Wind case actually changed very little. This case is driven by
15 the high costs of gas-fired generation and not capacity value assumptions for wind (even
16 incorrectly ignoring transmission impacts).

17 **Q: Finally, at pages 19-20 of his testimony, Mr. Deason questions whether Burns &**
18 **McDonnell and Montana-Dakota have made inconsistent assumptions regarding the**
19 **future price of natural gas. Can you clarify this point for us?**

20 A: I do not know the specific detail of how Mr. Heidell or PA Consulting made their
21 natural gas cost forecasts, but the difference is likely explained by the timeframe in which the
22 two analyses were prepared. Mr. Deason correctly notes that forecasting fuel costs is

1 difficult, particularly for a volatile commodity such as natural gas. Burns & McDonnell
2 believes its natural gas cost forecast remains reasonable, but also recognizes that the PA
3 Consulting forecast could also be viewed as reasonable at the time it was prepared.
4 Significantly, under both cost forecasts, the conclusion reached is that the Big Stone II project
5 is a lower cost baseload alternative.

6 I can explain how we made our forecasts. Burns & McDonnell referenced the
7 NYMEX natural gas futures pricing as a base point for its forecast. In the original Baseload
8 Generation Alternatives Study prepared in September 2005, the price for natural gas was
9 estimated at \$7.00/MMBtu for 2011. In the Revised Baseload Analysis prepared in October
10 2006, the NYMEX futures for natural gas commodity was \$7.20/MMBtu for 2011. A
11 transportation component was added in both analyses. For comparison, the 2011 NYMEX
12 futures for natural gas is \$8.16/MMBtu in June 2007, a 13% increase from less than one year
13 ago. Natural gas prices have continued to rise in the futures market, and it is not unexpected
14 that price forecasts at different times can be different.

15 **V. RESPONSE TO DAVID SCHLISSEL TESTIMONY**

16 **Q: In the testimony of David Schlissel on behalf of the Dakota Resource Council at**
17 **page 71, he claims that Burns & McDonnell biased the CCGT + Wind alternative in the**
18 **Analysis of Baseload Generation Alternatives studies by assuming that a 600 MW**
19 **natural gas-fired combined cycle facility would be required to backup the wind**
20 **component. Is this correct?**

21 A: No, Mr. Schlissel continues to try and mischaracterize the Burns & McDonnell
22 Baseload Generation Alternatives Study. No where in the report does it state that 100%

1 backup capacity is required for wind generation. As outlined earlier, the purpose of the
2 analysis was to compare *baseload* alternatives. The two baseload alternatives under
3 comparison were the coal-fired Big Stone II project and a gas-fired CCGT plant. Those
4 alternatives are directly comparable as both are capable of providing firm, reliable, baseload
5 capacity to a system. Wind is not a baseload resource. However, wind energy was
6 incorporated into the CCGT + Wind alternative on a non-firm basis to reduce the need to
7 dispatch the higher cost gas resource when wind energy was available. Mr. Schlissel tries to
8 characterize the alternative as a wind alternative with gas-fired backup, which is incorrect. It
9 is gas-fired capacity with supplemental, non-firm wind to lower energy costs. The results
10 indicated that the proposed Big Stone II project was a lower cost baseload alternative than the
11 CCGT + Wind case, with or without an extension of the federal PTC included in the cost of
12 wind.

13 **Q: In Mr. Schlissel's direct testimony, he states that assuming a 100% capacity**
14 **backup natural gas plant is required is inconsistent with Otter Tail's 2006-2020**
15 **Resource Plan, which credits wind with a capacity value of approximately 15 percent in**
16 **the summer and approximately 20 percent in the winter. Does this imply Burns &**
17 **McDonnell should have incorporated a capacity value into their analysis?**

18 A: No. First, let me emphasize that the purpose of our baseload generation alternatives
19 studies was to compare the economics of baseload generation alternatives. Within the CCGT
20 + Wind alternative, the wind component was added as a non-firm energy resource to lower
21 the overall costs. As indicated, Burns & McDonnell did not prepare resource planning studies
22 for each of the utilities that evaluated a combination of supply-side and demand-side

1 resources. Each of the utilities prepared additional generation expansion evaluations with
2 underlying assumptions regarding supply side alternatives. Each of those more
3 comprehensive analyses confirmed the Big Stone II project as part of the recommended
4 generation expansion plan.

5 The assumption that the wind component in the CCGT + Wind case should have a
6 firm capacity value assumes that transmission capacity exists for delivery of wind energy to
7 the utility's load. The Baseload Generation Alternatives Study was based on a busbar
8 analysis comparison of alternatives. It was reasonable to compare the busbar costs of a
9 similar sized coal unit such as Big Stone II with a gas unit such as a CCGT plant. However,
10 Mr. Schlissel argues that hundreds of MW of wind generation should be combined with the
11 CCGT plant and receive capacity credit, but no additional transmission upgrade costs for the
12 wind component need to be added to the analysis. In fact, on page 73 of his direct testimony,
13 Mr. Schlissel is critical of the study results of combining 600 MW of CCGT capacity with
14 600 MW of wind. He argues that a case with 800 MW or 1,200 MW of wind should have
15 been studied, and that wind should have received a capacity credit. But he ignores the cost
16 impact 1,200 MW of wind would have on transmission upgrades in order to receive capacity
17 credit.

18 **Q: Did Burns & McDonnell prepare any analyses that assumed wind was assigned a**
19 **capacity value?**

20 A: Yes. In order to evaluate the Mr. Schlissel's claim that the capacity value assumption
21 was a material bias in the study, Burns & McDonnell waived the above criteria in an
22 evaluation presented in the South Dakota hearing. An analysis was prepared assuming a 15%

1 capacity value is assigned to the wind component in the CCGT + Wind case (even though no
2 additional transmission costs were included), and a smaller capacity of gas-fired generation is
3 constructed. The results of this analysis indicated no change in the conclusion that the Big
4 Stone II project remained a lower cost alternative, and the overall costs of the CCGT + Wind
5 case actually changed very little.

6 **Q: In his direct testimony, at page 74, Mr. Schlissel states that Burns & McDonnell**
7 **understates the levelized value of the PTC at \$12/MWh. Do you believe that you have**
8 **understated the levelized value of the PTC?**

9 A: No. Mr. Schlissel has used the fact that Burns & McDonnell reflected conservative
10 assumptions regarding the cost of wind without the PTC to draw incorrect conclusions. In the
11 September 2005 Baseload Generation Alternatives Study, the 2005\$ cost estimate for wind
12 was assumed to be \$38/MWh with the PTC, and \$50/MWh without the PTC. In the Revised
13 Baseload Analysis prepared in October 2006, the 2012\$ cost for wind was estimated at
14 \$46.39/MWh (\$40/MWh in 2006\$ escalated 2.5% annually) with the PTC and \$60/MWh
15 without the PTC. Burns & McDonnell reflected lower values for the cost of wind without the
16 PTC to be conservative in the analysis. Mr. Terry Deason recognized in his testimony on
17 page 14 that a value of \$66/MWh for the cost of wind without the PTC was justified.

18 If these higher values were used, the economics of the Big Stone II project relative to
19 the CCGT + Wind case would improve if the PTC expires as scheduled and is not extended.
20 If Mr. Schlissel is suggesting that the \$23/MWh - \$28/MWh figures quoted in his testimony
21 should be subtracted from the \$60/MWh wind cost estimate, to result in a 2012\$ cost of

1 \$32/MWh - \$37/MWh assuming the PTC is extended, he is displaying a fundamental lack of
2 understanding of generation resource costs and would be misleading the Commission.

3 **Q: On page 74 Mr. Schlissel states that the September 2005 Baseload Generation**
4 **Alternatives Study did not include the currently estimated cost of the Big Stone II**
5 **Project and/or any greenhouse gas regulations. Is this correct?**

6 A: No. The September 2005 Baseload Generation Alternatives Study included the
7 current cost estimate of the Big Stone II project and other resources available at that time. In
8 the October 2006 Revised Baseload Analysis, the cost estimate of the Big Stone II project and
9 other resource alternatives was updated based on the best available information at that time.
10 Both studies included an evaluation of greenhouse gas costs that are consistent with the
11 adopted regulatory values of the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission.

12 **Q: Does this conclude your rebuttal testimony?**

13 A: Yes.

**BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA**

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)
**In the Matter of the Application of Montana-
Dakota Utilities Co., a Division of MDU)
Resources Group, Inc., For an Advance)
Determination of Prudence of Montana-Dakota's)
Participation & Ownership Interest in the Big)
Stone II Generating Station)**

Case No. PU-06-482

REBUTTAL TESTIMONY OF James A. Heidell

June 21, 2007

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1 ***I. INTRODUCTION***

2 **Q. Please state your name, title, and business address.**

3 **A.** My name is James A. Heidell. I am a Managing Consultant at PA Consulting
4 Group, Inc. ("PA"), a global management and technology consulting firm. My
5 business address is PA Consulting Group, 1700 Lincoln Street Suite 4600,
6 Denver, Colorado 80203

7 **Q. Did you prepare pre-filed direct testimony in this proceeding?**

8 **A.** Yes.

9 **Q. What is the purpose of your rebuttal testimony?**

10 **A.** The purpose of my rebuttal testimony is explain differences in assumptions
11 between the Burns & McDonnell Baseload Generation Alternatives Study and
12 Montana-Dakota regarding the specific issues that staff witness Mr. Terry
13 Deason raised as a concern. I also address the criticisms of the PA modeling
14 that Mr. David Schlissel puts forth in his direct testimony on behalf of the Dakota
15 Resource Council.

16 **Q. How is your rebuttal testimony organized?**

17 **A.** I first provide a summary of my rebuttal testimony. In Section II I address the
18 potential issues with the PA analysis that Mr. Deason identified in his direct
19 testimony. In Section III I point out that Mr. Schlissel's allegations are without
20 merit regarding the characterization of PA's analysis.

1 **Q. Do the assumption differences raised by Mr. Deason indicate any**
2 **inconsistencies in PA's analysis in support of Montana-Dakota's**
3 **identification of Big Stone II as the preferred new resource?**

4 **A.** No. The differences in the assumptions result from Montana-Dakota and Burns
5 & McDonnell performing separate and independent analyses of the economics of
6 the Big Stone II power plant. These differences result from using slightly different
7 modeling approaches and data sources. While the assumptions are different, I
8 do not consider them to be inconsistent. The Montana-Dakota analysis with
9 regards to gas costs and the cost of wind represent conservative assumptions at
10 the time that the analysis was first developed. In addition, in November 2006 I
11 also examined the impact of generation resources becoming more expensive
12 and hence have already investigated the impact of a cost increase in Big Stone
13 II.

14 **Q. Mr. Schlissel, at page 65 of his direct testimony, asserts that the PA**
15 **modeling is flawed, how do you respond?**

16 **A.** Mr. Schlissel's assertion that the PA analysis is flawed appears to be based upon
17 my analysis showing Big Stone II as having a lower capacity factor than what
18 others are forecasting. This is not a flaw, the PA analysis shows the capacity
19 factor of the plant in relationship to how it will be used to meet Montana- Dakota's
20 retail load based upon its base load forecast. The analysis shows that Big Stone
21 II is the preferred resource using the restrictive assumption that the plant will not
22 be used for wholesale market sales. Additional generation from the plant for off-
23 system sales has the potential to create additional value for Montana-Dakota's
24 customers.

1 Mr. Schlissel also implies on page 67 of his testimony that making more wind
2 units available would result in the Montana-Dakota resource model selecting
3 wind instead of Big Stone II. The scenario of modeling up to 200 MW of
4 available wind was investigated and Mr. Schlissel's conclusion is not correct.
5 The fact that Mr. Schlissel has been able to create some alternative scenarios
6 where Big Stone II is not the most cost effective option is not surprising.
7 However, I disagree with his assumptions regarding the level of conservation
8 penetration, the likelihood that only coal plants will increase in cost, and that
9 Montana-Dakota necessarily has the option to take a smaller share of the coal
10 plant. Therefore, I believe Mr. Schlissel has drawn incorrect conclusions.

11 **II. ASSUMPTION ISSUES RAISED BY MR. DEASON**

- 12 **Q. Is Mr. Deason correct in indicating that PA modeled new wind as**
13 **generation resources owned by Montana-Dakota as opposed to power**
14 **purchase agreements (PPAs)?**
- 15 **A.** PA modeled the Java Wind and Montana wind projects as PPAs while additional
16 wind was modeled as Montana-Dakota owned resources to compete with
17 thermal generation and conservation. Additional wind can be modeled in the
18 optimization process as either a contract, or as a generation option. The
19 approach used is not considered significant to the outcome of the analysis in that
20 the Strategist optimization of the new resource mix considers both purchased
21 power contracts and generation assets.

1 **Q. Did PA model the production tax credit?**

2 **A.** In the case of the wind PPAs, PA's analysis assumed that the owner of the wind
3 project would realize the full benefit of any production tax credit (PTC), to the
4 extent that the credit is in existence and available to the project. The price of the
5 contract reflected the price that would be paid by Montana-Dakota. PA did not
6 assume that Montana-Dakota would receive the PTC for any wind generation
7 units it added under the least cost optimization. The PTC was not included in
8 that the likely horizon for addition of new wind resources was beyond the then
9 current 2008 life of the PTC.

10 **Q. Is it possible that the PTC will be extended beyond 2008?**

11 **A.** The PTC has been extended multiple times so it is possible that it will be
12 extended beyond 2008. In fact, a five year extension was recently passed by the
13 Senate Finance Committee and is intended to be included in this year's energy
14 legislation. However, while I did not assume the PTC extension, I used a
15 relatively low cost of new wind units. The PTC is a subsidy and the extent that
16 the subsidy might be needed should also be considered in the context of the cost
17 of new wind turbines. At \$1,200 / kW for a wind turbine, wind becomes much
18 more competitive with the alternative thermal generation options.

19 **Q. Do you agree with Mr. Deason's suggestion that your assumption of \$1,200**
20 **/ kW for new wind units in 2011 is inconsistent with the direction of wind**
21 **costs?**

22 **A.** In the short run, the cost of new wind turbines appears to be increasing in cost as
23 opposed to declining in cost. This trend is similar to the trend of cost escalation
24 that has impacted the construction cost of new thermal generation. The

1 assumption that the wind units will become cheaper is based upon corresponding
2 assumptions that there will be more wind plant production facilities and the near-
3 term situation of significant demand with limited supply will ease. There is
4 certainly the possibility that wind units will not come down in price relative to
5 other generation resources. However, this would result in the model selecting
6 less wind resources rather than more resources.

7 **Q. Please explain the difference between the capacity factor and capacity**
8 **accreditation that you assumed for wind energy.**

9 **A.** The capacity factor of a wind project represents the average hourly energy,
10 calculated on an annual basis, divided by the peak output of the wind project. In
11 the resource modeling that I performed, I assumed that the capacity factor of
12 each wind project is 52% which appears to be comparable to the 40% capacity
13 factor used in the Burns & McDonnell report.

14 The assumed accredited summer capacity is an estimate, based upon MISO
15 standards, of the relative capacity factor coincident with the summer peak hours.
16 The accredited capacity is assumed to be 23% and is based upon an assumed
17 wind speed profile analyzed in conjunction with a wind turbine power curve.

18 **Q. Why is the assumed accredited summer capacity lower than the overall**
19 **capacity factor?**

20 **A.** The simplified answer is that the wind does not blow at a constant speed during
21 all hours of the year and the higher capacity factor indicates that the wind is
22 relatively stronger during periods outside of the summer on-peak period.

1 **Q. Does Mr. Deason's comments regarding Big Stone II cost escalation**
2 **change your conclusions?**

3 **A.** Mr. Deason notes two different cost estimates for Big Stone II provided by the
4 project sponsors. The first estimate is a busbar cost of \$2,168 / kW in 2012 and
5 the second estimate is for \$2,300 / kW in 2013. The later estimate reflects a cost
6 escalation of 6.5% assuming a thirteen month delay in the project.¹ First, I note
7 that Mr. Mark Rolfes in his rebuttal testimony indicates that the cost of \$2,168 is
8 a 2011 nominal cost of the power plant without transmission. The first cost
9 referenced by Mr. Deason is actually lower than what was used in my analysis.
10 My analysis is based upon inputs entered in the model in 2006 dollars with an
11 assumed annual inflation rate of 2.5% per annum. The 2006 cost that I started
12 with is \$2,051 / kW, excluding transmission. This results in the model assuming
13 a cost of \$2,378 / kW in 2012. Therefore, the assumption of higher inflation
14 relative to Mr. Rolfes' assumption in the period of 2006 – 2011 and lower inflation
15 for 2012 essentially nets out resulting in the Strategist runs assuming Big Stone II
16 costs consistent with the current estimates.

17 As a point of reference, I also ran a case where all the generation options
18 increase in cost 10% and concluded that does not change the result of the
19 analysis; Big Stone II is still part of the least cost mix identified by the Strategist
20 model.

¹ Testimony of Mr. Deason, pp 16 – 17.

1 **Q. Do you agree with Mr. Deason’s observation that there are “quite large”**
2 **differences between the gas forecast used by Burns & McDonnell and the**
3 **forecast used by PA?**

4 **A.** I agree that the PA forecast is lower, but I do not endorse the characterization
5 that the difference is “quite large”.² There is uncertainty about future gas costs
6 and that uncertainty is one of the factors that should be considered in the choice
7 of relying on gas resources versus coal-fired generation resources. The PA
8 forecast is based upon a long-term consensus forecast of Henry Hub gas that is
9 adjusted for a basis differential and transportation costs assuming that new gas-
10 fired generation units bypass transportation charges associated with the local
11 distribution company (LDC). The consensus forecast is based upon fundamental
12 gas price forecasts prepared by the Energy Information Administration (EIA),
13 Global Insight, and Strategic Energy and Economic Research (SEER).

14 **Q. Would the results of your analysis change if you used the higher gas prices**
15 **used by Burns & McDonnell?**

16 **A.** While I did not run the higher gas scenario, my opinion is that Big Stone II would
17 still be part of the least cost generation mix identified by Strategist. The higher
18 gas prices would result in the natural gas fired generation resources being less
19 attractive compared to the coal plant option.

² Testimony of Mr. Deason P 21.

1 **III. REBUTTAL OF DIRECT TESTIMONY OF MR. SCHLISSEL**

2 **Q. Do you agree with Mr. Schlissel's characterization that the PA analysis is**
3 **flawed because it has lower forecasted capacity factors for Big Stone II**
4 **than the capacity factor forecasts of the other co-owners?**

5 **A.** No. Mr. Schlissel's allegation on page 65 of his testimony lacks any foundation.
6 I explicitly modeled the Big Stone II resource excluding off-system sales. The
7 capacity factor reflects how Big Stone II would be used to serve the Montana-
8 Dakota retail load. I purposely tested whether Big Stone II is part of the least
9 cost mix without relying on off-system sales. If off-system sales were
10 incorporated into the modeling, I anticipate that the capacity factor modeled in
11 Strategist would be higher.

12 **Q. How would inclusion of off-system sales change your analysis?**

13 **A.** First, I think it is important to clarify the role of off-system sales and joint
14 ownership and how it would impact Montana-Dakota. As a jointly owned unit, I
15 would anticipate that the optimization of the unit would consider a number of
16 factors including the energy requirements of the other co-owners as well the
17 wholesale market prices. Therefore, it is likely that the plant would operate at a
18 higher capacity factor than my analysis suggests it would operate at as a stand-
19 alone unit serving only Montana-Dakota retail load. If the plant operates at a
20 higher capacity factor then it will create the opportunity for off-system sales for
21 Montana-Dakota. Those additional sales will create additional value to Montana-
22 Dakota and its customers and that value is not reflected in my analysis. These
23 factors lead me to conclude that the coal plant is a more attractive option than
24 numerically reported in the Strategist results.

1 **Q. Do you agree with Mr. Schlissel's characterizations that the alternative**
2 **Strategist runs that Synapse performed corrected "major errors in the**
3 **modeling inputs"?**

4 **A.** I disagree with the characterization made by Mr. Schlissel's on page 66 of his
5 testimony. Mr. Schlissel presents the results of six alternative scenarios which
6 presumably address what he concludes are "major errors". I address these
7 scenarios below.

8 **Q. Does increased availability of wind resources change the results of the**
9 **analysis and result in wind being selected over Big Stone II?**

10 **A.** In November 2006, I reviewed Mr. Schlissel's same allegation in the proceeding
11 before the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission that increasing the availability
12 of wind changes the results of the analysis. I tested this assumption by allowing
13 the model to select more wind resources (up to almost 200 MW in 31 MW
14 increments). The result was that the selection of resources did not change. In
15 fact, upon completion of my modeling, I held a follow-up discussion with Synapse
16 staff in which I indicated that I could not replicate their results. On that call,
17 Synapse staff concluded that they had made an error in their modeling. In the
18 Minnesota proceeding, Mr. Schlissel corrected his testimony and clarified that
19 increasing wind availability does not result in displacing Big Stone II.

20 **Q. Will changing the size of Montana-Dakota's participation in Big Stone II**
21 **change the results of the analysis?**

22 **A.** I did not run that scenario so I cannot confirm Mr. Schlissel's conclusion.
23 However, I have some comments on the scenario described by Mr. Schlissel.
24 First of all, his scenario name is misleading in that he describes this scenario as

1 “Increased Wind Availability” on page 69 of his testimony. In addition, on page
2 67 of his testimony when he describes his sensitivity analyses, he indicates that
3 “in each of these scenarios we made no other changes to the model”. This
4 scenario appears to be about changing the size of Montana-Dakota’s
5 participation in Big Stone II and potentially other changes as well. It is interesting
6 to note that Mr. Schlissel indicates that under his scenario Big Stone II was still
7 selected, but at a lower participation rate.

8 **Q. Does it make sense to test the economics of Montana-Dakota participating**
9 **in Big Stone II at a lower level of participation?**

10 **A.** Based upon my discussions with Montana-Dakota, I did not test the economics of
11 a lower participation rate since I was informed that it was not a realistic option.
12 Testing options that are not reasonably available to the utility does not have
13 value. On page 69 of Mr. Schlissel’s testimony he describes how he ran
14 Strategies allowing the model to pick the Big Stone II coal plant in 11.6 MW
15 shares. Mr. Schlissel has not identified whether it is practical for Montana-
16 Dakota to participate at that level. In fact, my understanding is that is not a real
17 option for Montana-Dakota.

18 **Q. Will increasing DSM displace Big Stone II in the Strategist optimization?**

19 **A.** There are certainly a set of assumptions regarding the cost and availability of
20 DSM that could result in displacing Big Stone II. However, I do not agree that
21 since Montana-Dakota does not endorse Mr. Schlissel’s assumptions regarding
22 DSM that there is a major error in the analysis. Montana-Dakota identified
23 potential DSM programs and associated costs based upon its knowledge of its
24 customer base and service territory. Those assumptions are reflected in my

1 analysis. Alternatively, I am not aware of any studies that Mr. Schlissel
2 performed to reflect the potential cost and penetration of conservation as it would
3 specifically apply to Montana–Dakota.

4 **Q. Will increasing the cost of Big Stone II by 10% without changing the costs**
5 **of the other alternatives change the selection of the least cost resource in**
6 **the Strategist simulation?**

7 **A.** It is possible that increasing the cost of the coal option without changing any
8 other inputs could result in not selecting Big Stone II in the least cost mix. Again,
9 I think Mr. Schlissel's suggestion that this is somehow a major error in the
10 analysis is inappropriate. Mr. Schlissel has made an assumption without
11 presenting any facts as to why he thinks it is likely that only the cost of Big Stone
12 II will increase and not the cost of other resource options. Based upon my
13 experience and discussions with other clients, the construction cost of all
14 generation resources are under short-term pressure.

15 **Q. Does this conclude your testimony?**

16 **A.** Yes.