NORTH DAKOTA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

OTTER TAIL POWER COMPANY AND MONTANA-DAKOTA UTILITIES CO.
CONSOLIDATED APPLICATION FOR A CERTIFICATE OF CORRIDOR COMPATIBILITY AND ROUTE PERMIT

CASE NO. PU-25-236

DECEMBER 26, 2025

PART III

PREPARED TESTIMONY OF
KEVIN SCHEIDECKER

I. Introduction and Background

Q1. Please state your name, employer, and your business address.

A. My name is Kevin Scheidecker. I am employed by Otter Tail Power Company ("Otter Tail"). My business address is 215 South Cascade Street, Fergus Falls, Minnesota 56537.

Q2. What is your position with Otter Tail?

A. My title is Principal-Environmental Services.

Q3. Please describe your educational and professional background.

A. I have a Bachelor of Science degree in Biological Sciences from North Dakota State University. Early in my career, I worked for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as a biological technician, where I gained experience conducting environmental surveys, coordinating environmental programs, and conducting public outreach. After working for the USFWS, I was a technician and then a manager for local soil and water conservation districts and also served as the basin coordinator for the Red River Basin Commission. In addition to environmental positions, I was a high school science teacher for several years, and worked in the Otter Tail County, Minnesota Assessor's office, initially as an appraiser and then ultimately as the County Assessor. Since joining Otter Tail, my work has focused

on overseeing and coordinating field survey efforts by environmental consultants, engaging in agency consultation, and supporting the preparation of permit applications for infrastructure projects in multiple states. A copy of my resume is attached hereto as Attachment 1.

Q4. What is your role with respect to the JETx Transmission Line Project (the "Project")?

A. I provide support to the Project as a subject matter expert on environmental related items. My support consists of assisting with the drafting of the Project's siting application and other environmental permitting documents, as well as managing the consultants responsible for conducting environmental studies and surveys for the Project. I also assist with outreach and coordination with local, state, federal, and tribal agencies. Finally, I support planning, approval, and execution of the field survey plans including surveys for cultural resources, wetlands, threatened and endangered species, and other wildlife and habitat.

Q5. Are you familiar with the contents of the Consolidated Application for a Certificate of Corridor Compatibility and Route Permit for the Project (the "Application")?

A. Yes. I am familiar with the Application's contents.

Q6. What is the purpose of your testimony?

A. The purpose of my testimony is to provide an overview of the environmental, cultural, and land use analysis conducted for the Project including the agency consultation and coordination and a summary of studies and surveys that have been or will be conducted. Additionally, my testimony discusses the measures that have been or will be implemented to avoid, minimize, and/or mitigate potential impacts to existing land use and the environment.

II. Project Analysis

Q7. Please briefly describe the environmental analysis conducted for the Project.

A. Before the Project's route was selected, environmental and land use data was collected within an approximately 14-mile by 81-mile preliminary routing study area centered around our two end points, the Jamestown Substation and the Ellendale Substation. Data was collected to identify exclusion and avoidance areas, as well as analyze the Commission's selection and policy considerations. Examples of data collected include existing easements, potentially sensitive habitat features, locations of occupied homes and unoccupied buildings, existing utilities and roadways, and existing land uses. This data was used to refine the Project's route and to minimize potential environmental impacts. After the Project's initial data collection, environmental studies and surveys were conducted to further refine the Project's route and minimize potential environmental impacts from the Project.

Q8. Please provide a general description of the Project from a land use perspective.

A. The Project's 150-foot-wide corridor ("Corridor") is comprised mainly (approximately 86 percent) of agriculture land used for cultivated row crops and pastureland. The remaining 14 percent includes wooded areas and tree rows, roadways (developed land), seasonal wetlands and riparian areas, and commercially developed areas around the existing substations.

Q9. What environmental studies and surveys have been conducted for the Project?

A. The Applicants coordinated with state and federal resource agencies regarding environmental surveys and studies that were completed for the project. The Applicants coordinated with the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and ND Game & Fish Department (NDGFD) on the Project's approach to environmental surveys.

The Applicants performed a desktop analysis of wetlands and field wetland delineations. The Project received a jurisdictional determination ("JD") from the USACE in January 2025. It is anticipated that a combined Section 404 and Section 10 permit

application for the James River crossing will be submitted in Q1 or Q2 of 2026 once USACE has reissued its Nationwide Permits.

The Applicants conducted studies and surveys for biological resources such as eagle stick nest surveys, sharp-tailed grouse lek surveys, and a threatened and endangered ("T&E") species habitat evaluation.

Q10. Please describe the coordination that the Applicants have done with the North Dakota State Historic Preservation Office for the Project.

A. Coordination with the North Dakota State Historic Preservation Office (NDSHPO) began in Spring 2023. The first meetings with the NDSHPO were held in September and October 2023 to discuss the Class I literature review and its results, as well as Class III inventory needs for the Project. A series of meetings were held with NDSHPO between February and December of 2024 to discuss the Class III field survey strategy, results and reporting requirements. From February 2025 through October 2025, field surveys were conducted, and initial and revised Class III reports have been submitted to NDSHPO to incorporate their comments. During this time, coordination has remained ongoing with NDSHPO via telephone, email, and various in-person meetings. The Applicants continue to have ongoing communications with NDSHPO regarding the Class III reports and the schedule for follow-up field surveys.

Q11. Please describe the Class I Cultural Resource Study conducted for the Project.

A. The Class I review included a file search of the North Dakota Cultural Resources Survey data files maintained by the NDSHPO, a review of available LiDAR data, and a desktop review of historical and modern aerial imagery to aid in identifying historical farmsteads, understand land use history and potential disturbance, and identifying other potential anomalies that may need to be field surveyed. The Study Area for the Class I review included a minimum of a 0.5-mile buffer from the Project centerline (0.25 miles to either side) as of February 2, 2024. The literature search also included one mile beyond the Study Area. In addition to a review of known cultural resources, a LiDAR analysis was completed for a portion of the Class I Study Area, to supplement the known data and help further inform where a Class III survey should be conducted. The Class I Report was submitted to

NDSHPO in February 2024. NDSHPO responded to the Class I Report on March 28, 2024 with the recommendation to conduct a Class III survey. Since then, there have been several route shifts to accommodate landowners' requests. An updated Class I review was completed in February of 2025 for the Project's route at that time and summarized in the Class III Volume 1 and 2 Reports. The updated Class I review included a file search of the North Dakota Cultural Resources Survey data files maintained by the NDSHPO, review of available LiDAR data, and a desktop review of historical and modern aerial imagery.

Q12. Please describe the Class III Cultural Resource Survey conducted for the Project.

A. A Class III field survey was conducted where right of entry had been obtained from landowners within a 500-foot survey corridor (250 feet to either side of the Route centerline) for areas identified in the Class I review, and in coordination with NDSHPO. Additional Class III surveys were conducted in areas that had potential for cultural resources that may be affected by temporary and/or permanent ground disturbance.

The Class III Report has been broken out into three volumes:

- Volume 1 contains survey results for a majority of the Project Corridor;
- Volume 2 contains survey results for three alignment shifts and updates to reflect some structure placement modifications within the Project Corridor; and,
- Volume 3 (forthcoming) will contain survey results for alignment shifts at and near the James River.

Within Volumes 1 and 2 of the Class III Report, 49 new cultural resources and six previously recorded cultural resources were identified within the Project Corridor.

Q13. What is the current status of the cultural reports?

A. The Class III Reports have been completed for areas that were surveyed and final versions were submitted to NDSHPO: Volume 1 on September 8, 2025, and Volume 2 on October 17, 2025. On September 26, 2025 and November 14, 2025, the Class III Volumes 1 and 2 Reports were accepted by the NDSHPO.

Within the Project Corridor, approximately 10.5 miles remain to be culturally surveyed where right of entry has not been obtained or route changes were made. Prior to

construction occurring on those properties, cultural field surveys will be completed, and an Addendum to the Class III Report (Volume 3) will be filed with the NDSHPO for review. A copy of the Addendum and the determination from NDSHPO will be filed with the Commission for the remaining areas once it is available.

Q14. Please discuss the Applicants' Tribal coordination for the Project with respect to cultural resources.

A. The Applicants have voluntarily engaged with Tribes to seek input on Tribal cultural resources. In letters sent in March and September 2023, the Applicants reached out to 15 Tribes who may have historical interests in North Dakota. Of the 15 Tribes, one Tribe has expressed interest in the Project: Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate of the Lake Traverse Reservation, South Dakota. The Applicants' cultural resource consultant and Tribal Cultural Specialists from the Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate Tribe jointly conducted the Class III cultural resource surveys of the Project from May through October 2024. Additionally, the Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate Tribe will be invited to participate in the remaining field surveys.

Q15. Will the Project avoid impacts to cultural resources?

A. Yes. No permanent or temporary impacts to cultural and archaeological resources are anticipated. Project infrastructure has been sited to avoid direct impacts to known National Register of Historic Places ("NRHP")-eligible historic properties, unevaluated cultural resources, and Tribal and Cultural Heritage Resources. Additionally, the Project plans to avoid NRHP-eligible historic properties, unevaluated cultural resources and Tribal and Cultural Heritage Resources identified during supplemental survey of the remaining portions of the Corridor. In NDSHPO's September 26, 2025 and November 14, 2025 correspondence, NDSHPO concurred with the Volume 1 and 2 Report findings that no significant sites will be affected provided the Project takes place in the manner and location as described in the documentation, and all borrow comes from an approved source. Additionally, an Unanticipated Discoveries Plan has been developed to define a process to follow if any unanticipated resources are encountered during construction.

Q16. Please describe the wetland and waterbody surveys conducted for the Project.

A. A desktop wetland delineation was completed in January 2024. Field surveys to delineate wetlands within the Project Corridor were completed between May and September 2024. A field delineation report was finalized and submitted to USACE in December 2024.

Q17. What are the results of the wetland and waterbody surveys?

A. Field surveys resulted in the identification and mapping of a total of 368 aquatic resources, covering approximately 200 acres, within the Project Corridor. The Applicants submitted the field survey results to USACE and received a JD on January 17, 2025, that identified which aquatic resources were determined to be Waters of the United States and subject to USACE oversight. The Project is anticipated to result in up to approximately 51.5 acres of temporary impacts and approximately 0.1 acres of permanent impacts to wetlands. The James River crossing is the only mapped Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) floodplain within the Corridor and will require a local floodplain permit from the Stutsman County Floodplain Administrator.

With respect to surface waterbodies, the Project crosses: Sevenmile Coulee at five different locations; five creeks; the Maple River; and the James River. The James River is classified as a USACE navigable waterbody, and therefore subject to permitting under both Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act with USACE and North Dakota's Sovereign Lands Management by North Dakota Department of Water Resources (NDDWR).

Q18. What is the permitting status for the James River Crossing?

A. To reduce the risk of duplicative reviews or future permit amendments, the Applicants will defer submission of the Section 404 (Clean Water Act) and Section 10 (Rivers and Harbors Act) permit applications for the Project until after USACE completes reauthorization of the Nationwide Permits, anticipated to occur in March2026. The timing of the submission of the Section 404 and Section 10 permit applications for the Project was discussed at a pre-application meeting that the Applicants had with the USACE on October 29, 2025. The USACE approved the Applicants' planned permitting approach at this meeting. The Applicants have begun preparation of an application for authorization to construct the Project within sovereign lands of North Dakota that will be submitted to the NDDWR.

Q19. What avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures do the Applicants plan to implement to mitigate impacts to wetlands and waterbodies?

A. Transmission line structures will be sited above the ordinary high-water mark ("OHWM") of waterbodies such as rivers, streams, and lakes. With respect to potential indirect impacts due to construction activities, the Applicants will obtain coverage under the General Permit for Storm Water Discharges Associated with Construction Activities issued by the ND Department of Environmental Quality (NDDEQ), which includes the development and implementation of a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan ("SWPPP"). The SWPPP will outline best management practices ("BMPs") to control erosion and sedimentation runoff, and BMPs will be implemented to avoid and/or minimize the potential for sediment to reach surface waters. The Applicants will comply with all permit stipulations as required for the USACE Section 10 and NDDWR Sovereign Lands Permit, once received.

With respect to wetlands, the Project has been designed to minimize permanent and temporary impacts to the greatest extent practicable. Based on the current design, potential impacts to jurisdictional wetlands would be within the threshold for authorization under the USACE Nationwide Permit ("NWP") program without pre-construction notification. The Applicants will comply with applicable NWP requirements to minimize potential wetland impacts. The Applicants received data from the USFWS regarding the location of USFWS wetland easements. The Project has been designed to avoid all temporary and permanent impacts to wetlands within USFWS wetland easements.

Additional mitigation measures are discussed in Sections 6.11.2 and 6.12.2 of the Application.

Q20. Please discuss the Applicants' efforts to avoid, minimize, and/or mitigate potential impacts to groundwater resources.

A. No groundwater resources will be used for construction of the Project. Permanent impacts to groundwater resources are not anticipated and any potential impacts to existing groundwater resources due to construction would be negligible and temporary.

Q21. Please discuss the Applicants' assessment with respect to vegetation present within the Project Corridor and measures the Applicants has taken to avoid, minimize, and/or mitigate adverse impacts.

A. Within the Corridor, land cover and land use are primarily agricultural. According to the National Land Cover Database (USGS 2022a), the top three land cover types that are present in the Corridor are cultivated cropland (approximately 66% of the Corridor), hay/pastureland (20% of the Corridor), and herbaceous land (6% of the Corridor). All other land cover types account for the remaining approximate 8% of the Corridor (USGS 2022a).

A desktop analysis was performed to assess potential grassland habitats within the Corridor. Temporary and permanent impacts on unbroken grasslands have been avoided to the extent practicable. The Applicants have performed habitat surveys in consultation with USFWS and NDGFD and have avoided placing permanent infrastructure within grasslands that may be habitat for protected species. Approximately 0.2 acres of permanent impacts are anticipated from structures to areas categorized as unbroken grasslands within the Corridor. Areas temporarily disturbed by construction activities will be re-seeded to native vegetation following coordination with the Natural Resources Conservation Service and landowners, with an approved native seed mix.

Prior to beginning construction activities within the Corridor, construction equipment and vehicles will be cleaned to prevent the spread of noxious and invasive weeds. Although not required by Stutsman, LaMoure, or Dickey Counties, the Applicant's Vegetation Management Plan (included as Appendix F of the Application) will be implemented during construction and reclamation activities to establish protocols for controlling the spread of noxious weeds. In addition, the Applicants will coordinate with local weed boards along the Project's Route.

An inventory of trees and shrubs was completed within the Corridor, where access had been granted during biological and wetland field surveys in 2024. Most of the trees and shrubs in the Corridor were planted by landowners and farmers as windbreaks and property line delineators. Prior to any tree removal, a final inventory will be completed. Impacts will be mitigated by complying with the Commission's Tree and Shrub Mitigation Specifications governing replacement.

Q22. Please describe the Applicants' assessment with respect to wildlife, wildlife habitat, and avian species.

A. Studies and surveys for biological resources included: eagle stick nest surveys, sharp-tailed grouse lek surveys, and a T&E species habitat evaluation. The eagle stick nest survey was completed in May 2023, and subsequent reports will be completed again in coordination with USFWS for each year there will be planned active construction during the nesting season. A sharp-tailed grouse lek survey plan was submitted to NDGFD in March 2024. Surveys were conducted with a report submitted to NDGFD in June 2024. Subsequent lek surveys will be completed in coordination with NDGFD for each year there will be planned active construction during lek season. A T&E species habitat survey plan was submitted to USFWS in January 2024 with a report completed in December 2024. The results of these surveys have been used, and will continue to inform, structure siting along the Project's route.

Q23. Please discuss the Applicants' assessment related to avian species and measures the Applicants have taken to avoid, minimize, and/or mitigate adverse impacts.

A. No significant impacts to eagles and other raptor species are anticipated. Applicants conducted a stick nest survey in 2024 and will complete another survey in the spring prior to the start of each active construction season. In total, 13 stick nests were documented in the 2024 field survey. If a new nest within a USFWS-recommended buffer of the Corridor is found, active construction will be avoided in that area during the specific species nesting season, or until the nest is abandoned.

Temporary impacts to migratory birds will be limited to the duration of construction activities and minimized or avoided by conducting a clearing search ("sweep") for nesting migratory birds, with an emphasis on grassland nesting species during the primary nesting season, and no more than seven days prior to construction activities commencing. If an active nest is identified, construction activities will not commence within a minimum buffer, to be determined in coordination with USFWS, around the active nest to avoid impacts to nesting migratory birds. The buffer will be maintained until the nest is verified as abandoned, or the migratory bird nesting season ends.

Permanent impacts to avian species will be minimized by the Applicants incorporating relevant Avian Power Line Interaction Committee (APLIC) suggested practices throughout design, construction, operation, and maintenance of the Project ("APLIC 2012").

Q24. Please discuss the Applicants' assessment related to sharp-tailed grouse and the measures the Applicants have taken to avoid, minimize, and/or mitigate adverse impacts.

A. Temporary and permanent impacts to grasslands suitable for sharp-tailed grouse nesting habitat are anticipated to be minimal. A lek survey plan was developed in March 2024 and approved by NDGFD in April 2024. Surveys were conducted with a report submitted to NDGFD in June 2024. Biologists observed 11 leks with six of those being verified as active for the 2024 season. To mitigate potential impacts, surveys for sharp-tailed grouse leks will be conducted again in the spring prior to the start of each active construction season. To the extent that active leks are identified during surveys, seasonal construction restriction dates will be determined in coordination with NDGFD, generally March 15 through May 15, and construction will be limited to designated hours during the day that are outside the prime lekking period to avoid impacts.

Q25. Please discuss the Applicants' assessment related to bat species and the measures the Applicants have taken to avoid, minimize, and/or mitigate adverse impacts.

A. Based on the low amount of forested habitat impacted by the Project, and no known hibernacula within the Corridor, impacts to bat species are anticipated to be negligible. No collision risk associated with the Project is anticipated. To mitigate potential impacts, tree removal and trimming will occur from November 1 to April 14, outside of the summer roosting period of concern for bats. Based on consultation with the USFWS, if tree removal would need to occur within the April 15 - October 31 time frame, trees greater than 3-inch diameter at breast height would be surveyed for suitable habitat prior to removal.

Q26. Please describe the Applicants' assessment with respect to threatened and endangered species, federally designated critical habitat, rare and unique resources.

A. The Applicants consulted with the USFWS, USACE, and NDGFD regarding survey plans for the Project and received concurrence from these entities regarding the planned survey approach and the Applicants' findings. The Applicants utilized the USFWS Information for Planning and Conservation ("IPaC") tool to assess threatened and endangered species that could potentially exist within the Corridor. Six species were identified. There is no federally designated critical habitat for any species present within the Corridor or Study Area.

Northern Long Eared Bat ("NLEB") was identified as potentially occurring within the Corridor. There is no known designated critical habitat for the NLEB in North Dakota. Due to the limited potential summer roosting habitat within the Corridor and mitigation to remove trees outside of the roosting/maternity season, the species' short migration periods, and no known hibernacula in North Dakota, no impacts to NLEB are anticipated. Although adverse impacts are not anticipated, the Applicants will avoid impacting potential summer roosting/maternity habitat for NLEB to the extent feasible by limiting the period of tree removal to the suggested tree removal period from November 1 to April 14, following coordination with USFWS.

Dakota skipper was identified as potentially occurring within the Corridor. Adverse impacts to the Dakota skipper are not anticipated. The closest designated critical habitat is approximately 50 miles east of the Corridor. The USFWS has a potential Dakota skipper habitat geospatial file that was provided to the Applicants to help identify areas where the Dakota skipper has the most potential to occur. This data identified 31.2 acres of potential habitat within the Project Corridor. Biologists completed field assessments between May and September 2024 within areas noted as potential habitat and throughout the Project Corridor. Based on the assessments, there are approximately 4.1 acres of field-verified suitable reproductive habitat for the Dakota skipper located within the 150-foot-wide Corridor. The Project has been sited to avoid permanent impacts to identified suitable reproductive Dakota skipper habitat.

Monarch butterfly was identified as potentially occurring within the Corridor. Adverse impacts to the Monarch butterfly are not anticipated. The Monarch butterfly has

been designated as a candidate species rather than being officially listed or proposed for listing under the Endangered Species Act. Because the Monarch butterfly is a candidate species, there is no federally designated critical habitat. Areas identified as potentially suitable habitat for Dakota skipper within the Survey Area were also evaluated for Monarch butterflies. The Project has been sited to avoid permanent impacts to identified suitable Monarch habitat.

Piping plover was identified as potentially occurring within the Corridor. No adverse impacts are anticipated to the piping plover. The closest designated critical habitat for the piping plover is located approximately 10 miles from the Corridor within Arrowwood National Wildlife Rescue. No potential piping plover habitat was identified within the Corridor during a habitat evaluation conducted in 2024; and there were no incidental observations of piping plover during habitat evaluations and other field studies.

Rufa red knot was identified as potentially occurring within the Corridor. No adverse impacts to the Rufa red knot are anticipated. Rufa red knot are a rare occurrence in North Dakota and lack available habitat within the Corridor. Furthermore, there is no designated critical habitat in North Dakota and no known stopover habitat for the Rufa red knot within the Corridor. Likewise, there were no incidental observations of the Rufa Red Knot during habitat evaluations and other field studies conducted in 2024.

Whooping crane was identified as potentially occurring within the Corridor. No adverse impacts are anticipated to the whooping crane. Habitat evaluations were completed within the Corridor in 2024 and there were no incidental observations of whooping crane during habitat evaluations. However, based on the field survey, there is potential whooping crane stopover habitat within the Corridor. To reduce the risk of potential avian collisions, the Applicants will incorporate relevant APLIC suggested practices through the design, construction, operation, and maintenance of the Project. The Applicants, in coordination with USFWS, will also develop a Line Marking Plan that will analyze the Project and determine where bird flight diverters should be placed along structure spans to provide visibility and minimize collision risk for whooping crane and other avian species.

Q27. Are there any additional environmental studies and/or surveys yet to be completed for the Project?

A. Yes. There are 3.8 acres within the Corridor that will need to be field surveyed to assess whether suitable Dakota skipper reproductive habitat is present. These surveys will be conducted once access is available from landowners.

Q28. Please discuss the Applicants' assessment related to geologic resources and measures the Applicants will implement to avoid, minimize, and/or mitigate potential impacts.

A. The Applicants reviewed ND Geological Survey (NDGS) Landslide Deposits and the US Geological Survey Landslide Overview Map. A one-mile Study Area generally centered on the route was evaluated for geologic resources. The Project Corridor is located in an area that has a low susceptibility and low incidence of landslides. There are historic landslide deposits in the Study Area but none are located within the Corridor. One sand/gravel pit is located within the Corridor. The Applicants have coordinated with the landowner to avoid impacts to current and future operations of this pit. The Applicants are not aware of any other extractive resources located within the Corridor.

Prior to construction, the Applicants will conduct geotechnical soil borings at transmission line structure locations. This information will be incorporated into the structure foundation design to ensure the design is appropriate for the soil conditions.

Q29. Are you familiar with the Commission's designated Exclusion Areas, Avoidance Areas, Selection Criteria, and Policy Criteria identified in North Dakota Administrative Code Chapter 69-06-08 applicable to the Project?

A. Yes. The studies and surveys conducted for the Project included an assessment of the Commission's Siting Criteria.

Q30. Are any Exclusion Areas located within the Project Corridor?

A. Yes. Archaeological and Cultural Heritage sites, as identified through a Class I Literature Search and a Class III Cultural Resources Inventory are present in the Corridor. The Project has been sited to avoid impacts to these sites. As previously discussed, the Applicants have coordinated appropriate buffers and avoidance with NDSHPO. No additional Exclusion Areas are located within the Project Corridor.

Q31. Are any Avoidance Areas located within the Project Corridor?

A. Yes. Historical Resources as identified through a Class I Literature Search and a Class III Cultural Resources Inventory are present in the Project Corridor and will be avoided by the Project. The NDSHPO has agreed with the Applicants' proposed buffers and avoidance measures to avoid impacts. There is one occupied residence located within 500-feet of the Project route. A waiver from this landowner has been obtained and is located in Appendix B of the Application. No additional Avoidance Areas are located within the Project Corridor.

Q32. Please address the Applicants' evaluation with respect to the Commission's Selection Criteria.

A. The Applicants anticipate no significant adverse impacts to the Commission's Selection Criteria. An evaluation of the Commission's Selection Criteria is located in Section 3.4 of the Application.

Q33. Please address the Applicants' evaluation with respect to the Commission's Policy Criteria.

A. The Applicants have maximized the benefits set forth in the Commission's Policy Criteria to the greatest extent possible. An evaluation of the Commission's Policy Criteria is located in Section 3.5 of the Application. During construction, environmental inspectors will conduct periodic inspections to monitor construction activities and ensure compliance with the conditions of the siting certificates and other permits. Construction staff will undergo training prior to starting work, such as how to interpret constraint maps, how to recognize certain species like whooping cranes and eagles, and communication protocol if a nest is found.

Q34. As part of the Applicants' assessment, did the Applicants solicit feedback on the Project from the local, state, and federal agencies and entities designated in Commission rule under North Dakota Administrative Code Section 69-06-01-05?

A. Yes. Copies of agency correspondence is located in Appendix E of the Application. Additional correspondence has occurred with NDSHPO and USACE since the submittal

of the Application and has been filed with the Commission.

Q35. Are there any remaining environmental permits or approvals needed for the Project?

A. Yes. As previously discussed, the joint Section 404/Section 10 Permit previously mentioned is in progress with USACE, along with the 401 Water Quality Certification from NDDEQ, which will be applied for jointly and are currently anticipated to be submitted in Q2 2026. A Sovereign Lands Permit is also required for crossing the James River from the NDDWR and is anticipated to be submitted in Q2 2026.

III. Conclusion

Q36. Based on your knowledge of the Project, will the Project's construction, operation, and maintenance produce minimal adverse effects on the environment and human welfare?

A. Yes. As detailed in the Application, the Project's supplemental filings, and my direct pre-filed testimony and the pre-filed testimony of Jason Weiers and Robert Frank, the Project has been designed to avoid and/or minimize impacts to the greatest extent possible. The Applicants conducted a thorough review of the Project to avoid environmentally and culturally sensitive areas and areas where there could be adverse impacts to human welfare. Where such areas cannot be avoided completely, the Applicants are committed to taking appropriate measures to minimize any adverse effects.

Q37. Based on your knowledge of the Project, is it compatible with environmental preservation and the efficient use of resources?

A. Yes. The Project will be constructed, operated, and maintained in a manner that will protect the environment and natural resources.

Q38. Does this conclude your direct testimony?

A. Yes.

ATTACHMENT 1

Kevin Scheidecker
Principal, Environmental Services
Otter Tail Power Company
215 South Cascade Street
Fergus Falls, MN 56537

Education

North Dakota State University, Fargo, ND 58105
Biological Sciences, Bachelor of Science

North Dakota State University, Fargo, ND 58105
Science Teaching Certification with additional coursework in chemistry and physics

Licenses and Certifications

Design of Construction SWPPP
Expires May, 2027

Professional Experience

Otter Tail Power Company, Fergus Falls, MN
Principal, Environmental Services, Environmental Services Dept. 2023 - present

- Finalize and execute environmental field survey plans for transmission facilities needed to support applications to the SD and MN Public Utility Commissions and ND Public Service Commission.
- Understand and advise other project team members on the federal, state and local permits, licenses and certifications needed for transmission projects including being responsible for the coordination with applicable agencies.
- Support drafting of environmental permit applications and license applications to various agencies, LGU's and stakeholders and subsequent activities including information requests and providing hearing testimony to the MN and SD Public Utility Commissions and ND Public Service Commission.
- Assist with the development of Request for Proposal's to solicit consultants to carry out development of project study areas and routing for transmission projects.
- Coordinate work with environmental consultants to ensure goals and scope of work are met.
- Obtain certification to complete and inspect SWPPP's as part of compliance with NPDES permitting for various projects within Otter Tail Power and ensure compliance with permit conditions.
- Attend and participate in public open houses to present information on various transmission projects.
- Designated as the subject matter expert for information requests relative to environmental and cultural information as part of commission filings within ND, SD and MN.

Otter Tail County, Fergus Falls, MN
County Assessor, Assessor's Department 2022 - 2023

- Direct the analysis, listing, valuing, and classifying of all real and personal property in the County by monitoring assessment levels and uniformity. Defend property assessments during the Local Board of Appeals and County Board of Appeals.
- Supervise, plan, and coordinate the assessment staff activities to ensure work is being performed.
- Appraise complex commercial, industrial, and income producing properties by completing physical inspections of new, existing, and remodeled property and structures.
- Compile and analyze market data to allow reliable estimates of value by interviewing the buyers and sellers of each sale to produce an accurate sales study.

Chief Deputy Assessor, Assessor's Department 2018 - 2022

- Perform complete physical inspections of new, existing and remodeled property and structures. Collect information on condition, quality, age and size in order to determine market value and classification of property or structure being considered.
- Assist the County Assessor in supervising, planning and coordinating assessment staff. Assist in planning duties to delegate to appraisers in areas of assessment, application and strategy of current law. Implement changes in scheduling, field work, develop reference manual and policies, organization skills, problem solving, recommending and setting up staff meetings.
- Assist the County Assessor with interviewing candidates, analyzing results from interviews, organization and discussion with County Assessor on choosing candidate.

Appraiser, Assessor's Department 2011 - 2018

- Perform physical field inspections and measurements of non-income producing and non-commercial properties and buildings according to Otter Tail County Assessor Quintile Review Policy.
- Value, classify, monitor, and maintain assessments of parcels while maintaining records.
- Inspect and update records on valuations in CAMA System.
- Review and respond to complaints related to assessments and classification.

Perham School District, Perham, MN
Science Teacher, Perham High School 2005 - 2010

- Taught high school chemistry, physics, physical science and environmental studies while following MN teaching standards.
- Develop comprehensive curriculum with cohort of science teachers in high school.
- Performed other extracurricular duties as assigned such as advising and coaching.

Red River Basin Commission, Moorhead, MN
Basin Coordinator 2003 - 2005

- Manage a coalition of local, state, provincial, federal and private stakeholders with a goal to develop a long-term, basin-wide plan that lays out priorities for all stakeholders in the Red River Basin.
- Serve as the principle contact to government agencies and other private organizations, for the development of a Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program application to be approved by the State of MN and submitted to USDA for approval.
- Build and maintain productive relationships and open communication with Congressional delegation and staff, and key federal, state and local public officials.

Fillmore Soil and Water Conservation District, Preston, MN
District Manager 1997 - 2003

- Manage and coordinate daily SWCD activities to implement annual and long-range plans, staffing needs and budgets for the SWCD.
- Supervise and direct SWCD personnel, schedules weekly staff meetings, annual performance reviews, and updates personnel policies.
- Assure that a monthly written financial report is prepared for the Supervisors review and approval and monitors the financial position of the district throughout the year.
- Identify sources and recommend actions to the Board to secure operating funds for the SWCD.

Goodhue Soil and Water Conservation District, Goodhue, MN
District Technician 1993 - 1997

- Coordinate, process, and promote CREP and RIM programs.
- Conduct spot checks and status reviews as required.
- Create and maintain an inventory of current, future and potential Agriculture Best Management Practices.
- Serve as SWCD representative for Wetland Conservation Act Technical Evaluation Panel.
- Coordinate the District Tree Program.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Jamestown, ND and Fergus Falls, MN
Biological Technician 1991 - 1993

- Collect samples and data from field sites including migratory bird nesting data, game bird species data and invertebrate data.
- Work with private landowners using private lands programs such as wetland restorations, grazing plans and native grass restorations to create new habitat and improve existing habitat.
- Conduct public outreach for private lands programs.