Dear readers,

As the seasons change and winter starts knocking on our door, now is an important time for our team to collect information along the project route. Here’s what’s happening:

- We’re continuing surveys to identify trees, historical and cultural resources, eagle and raptor nests, prairie butterflies, and more.
- We’re meeting with landowners to discuss easements and land access points.
- We’re gearing up for tree clearing, which will begin later in 2015.

We still plan to kick off construction next summer. To learn more about the construction process, read your landowner packet, watch for our next newsletter, or visit BSSETransmissionLine.com.

The BSSE project team
COMMUNITY COMMITMENT SPOTLIGHT

BSSE project team built pollinator garden and kiosk at wildlife refuge

In September the BSSE project team purchased and constructed a pollinator garden and kiosk at the Waubay National Wildlife Refuge. Since 2012, we’ve consulted with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which manages the refuge, on various topics.

The declining bee population is an important issue, and we’re hoping this small project has a big impact by encouraging visitors to plant their own pollinator gardens. In the spring, area students will plant pollinator-friendly flowers in the garden and the project will install the informational sign on the kiosk.

EASEMENTS

Watch for your easement package in the mail

We began the easement acquisition process and hope to mail all easement packages before December 15, 2015.

What’s in my easement package?
You’ll receive the Exercise of Option letter, easement area exhibit map, easement document, easement payment agreement, and W-9.

I received my easement package. What should I do next?

1. Review the documents.
2. Sign the:
   • Easement document (must be signed with a notary present)
   • Easement payment agreement
   • W-9 form
3. Return the completed easement documents to:

   Vicki Severson
   Otter Tail Power Company
   PO Box 496
   Fergus Falls, MN 56538-0496

If you have questions, call your land agent at the phone number listed on your letter. Once we receive the documents, we’ll issue your payment within 60 days.
SAFETY SPOTLIGHT

Some trees outside of the project right-of-way will need to be trimmed or removed. These trees are referred to as danger trees because they lean toward the right-of-way or are tall enough to pose danger to the line. We trim or remove these trees to reduce potential damage caused by falling limbs or trees.

This winter we’ll clear trees located within the 150-foot right-of-way in preparation for construction. This map identifies areas along the final route that require tree clearing.
DID YOU KNOW?

In early November we plan to resume soil borings. And we’ll conduct environmental surveys throughout construction. Here are a few examples of what we look for:

**Piping plover nests in wetlands**
From May through June we’ll survey land within a half mile of the route to determine if it’s a suitable habitat for the piping plover nests. If we find suitable habitat, we’ll observe the wetland from a distance and determine if piping plover nests are present.

**Nesting birds in construction areas**
From April through August we’ll survey pasture and grassland areas within the right-of-way for active ground bird nests. If a nest is present, construction will be restricted in that area.

**Grouse lek**
From March through June we’ll walk pasture and grassland areas, where active construction is occurring, to watch for the presence of a lek. If a lek is present, construction will be restricted in that location. A lek is an area where grouse gather together for nesting and mating.

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**Want to find out more or provide feedback?**

If you have additional comments or questions, feel free to contact us.

**Visit our website**
BSSETransmissionLine.com

**Call our information line**
1-888-283-4678

**Email us**
info@BSSETransmissionLine.com

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**Project Basics**

- New 345-kV transmission line
- End points: Ellendale Substation and Big Stone South Substation
- Project owners: Otter Tail Power Company and Montana-Dakota Utilities Co.
- In service in 2019
- Approximate cost: $293 million to $370 million