The Big Stone South-Brookings County project is a 70-mile, 345 kV transmission line between a new Big Stone South substation near Big Stone City, S.D., and the Brookings County substation near Brookings, S.D. Xcel Energy and Otter Tail Power Company are joint owners of the transmission line and CapX2020 partners.

The first phase of soil borings in Grant, Deuel and Brookings counties were completed in July 2014. Crews from Terracon, a CapX2020 contractor, will resume work on the remaining 300 borings in late October. Land agents will contact affected landowners in advance of crews entering their property.

Each boring will take approximately three to four hours to complete. The holes will be filled with a mixture of soil cuttings and/or bentonite clay. Topsoil will be replaced in the top two feet of each boring. Crews will do their best to limit property disturbance. Disturbed areas will be restored and landowners will be compensated if crops are damaged as a result of the soil boring activities. Soil borings are expected to be completed in early 2015. Once final pole locations are determined, surveyors will place stakes at each pole location and define limits of tree clearing and right-of-way boundaries.

A soil boring between four to eight inches in diameter and approximately 50 feet deep is drilled at proposed structure locations to determine the mechanical properties of the soil and finalize design.
Background:
On February 18, 2014, The South Dakota Public Utilities Commission granted a facility permit for the southern 40-mile portion of the project from just north of Gary to the existing Brookings County substation about 12 miles east of Brookings. A Facility Permit was granted in January 2007 and recertified in April 2013 for the northern portion stretching from just west of Big Stone City to just east of Gary, S.D. To view Facility Permit documents, visit the SD PUC website at http://www.puc.sd.gov/ and search for EL12-063 and EL13-020.

Construction on the Big Stone South-Brookings County transmission line is expected to start in late 2015 and be complete in 2017. Visit CapX2020.com for more information.

Project Need
The Big Stone South-Brookings County project is one of 16 multi-value projects approved by the Midcontinent Independent System Operator in December 2011. The multi-value projects will help expand and enhance the region’s transmission system, reduce congestion, provide access to affordable energy sources, as well as meet public policy requirements.