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**Staff Investigation Report and Recommendation****Case No.:** 08-974-EL-BTA**Project:** Amendment to Don Marquis 138 kV Loop #1 (Original Case No. 07-715-EL-BTX) Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need**Applicant:** Columbus Southern Power Company**Report Date:** September 19, 2008**Waiver Requests:** None**Inspection Date(s):** September 5, 2008**Staff Assigned:** J. Pawley, T. Walton and S. Malone (OEPA)**Summary of Staff Recommendations (see report text for discussion):**

Application: ☐ Approval ☐ Disapproval ☒ Approval with Conditions  
 Waiver: ☐ Approval ☐ Disapproval ☒ Not Applicable

**Summary of Staff Recommended Conditions (see report text for discussion):**

- 1.) That the Applicant shall comply with the stipulated conditions of the original OPSB Certificate 07-715-EL-BTX pertinent to this project (such as requirements for installing and maintaining erosion and sedimentation control measures, flagging wetland areas, having an environmental specialist on site when working in or near environmentally-sensitive areas, and the development of an internal process for preserving woody riparian area vegetation during future right-of-way maintenance work for this line) as approved by the Board June 2, 2008.
- 2.) That the Applicant shall obtain all necessary state and federal permits necessary for the construction of this project prior to the commencement of construction.
- 3.) That the Applicant shall discuss details of tree clearing parameters specific to this project at a pre-construction meeting, which Staff shall attend.

**Projected Docket Closure Date (if approved by the Board):** June 30, 2011**Investigation Report**

**Project Description:** This project consists of relocating a segment of transmission line of the Preferred Route approved by the Ohio Power Siting Board (OPSB) June 2, 2008 in Case No. 07-715-EL-BTX. The Applicant states that this route modification is at the request of the property owner, the US Department of Energy (DOE). The original transmission line as approved would conflict with expansion plans of the DOE. The new route would parallel an existing transmission line corridor (Ohio Valley Electric Corporation, or OVEC) that runs on DOE property. The requested reroute is 1.46 miles and is located entirely on DOE property. No other property owners should be impacted

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with this modification. Construction of the originally approved Don Marquis transmission line project has not yet commenced.

**Site Description:** The project is located on DOE property in Pike County, Ohio. Land use includes wooded areas and open field. The proposed alignment for this amendment would predominately follow an existing OVEC transmission line corridor. The DOE Piketon property is used for industrial purposes.

**Discussion/Comments/Concerns:** In this vicinity on DOE property, the original line segment is 1.07 miles. The original line segment crossed no wetlands, three streams, no ponds, and included approximately 7.36 acres of clearing for the right-of-way. Additionally, two Threatened and Endangered (T&E) plant species were located within the right-of-way. By comparison, the proposed segment in this Amendment is 1.46 miles, crosses one wetland (Category 1), two streams and two ponds, would include approximately 9.16 acres of clearing for the right-of-way, and no T&E plant species were identified in the right-of-way.

Staff finds that while the Amended segment will include more clearing, the nature of the clearing is different, as it is immediately adjacent to an existing cleared transmission line corridor as opposed to opening a new corridor through dense woodlots. The amended section would cross a wetland and two ponds. One of the ponds appears to be a man made pond on the Piketon DOE site. Finally, the amended route would reduce the overall number of stream crossings by one, and would alleviate concern about T&E plant impacts raised in the original application.

The original case contained stipulated conditions pertaining to wetland flagging, clearing parameters, and other items to minimize environmental impacts. Since the terrain is similar and many of the issues raised in the original application are applicable in this proposed amended segment, all conditions (where applicable) should also be adhered to with this portion of the line. With the adherence of the conditions recommended herein, the construction of this project should pose only minimal negative social and environmental impacts.