

Case No. EC-2025-0136

Cheri Meadows, Complainant

v.

Grain Belt Express, LLC, Respondent

Cheri Meadows Rebuttal to 11-15-24 Response to Formal Complaint Filing by Grain Belt Express

I. My Formal Complaint Clarified

1. My formal complaint was filed to the Missouri Public Service Commission on the grounds that Grain Belt Express violated its own proclamations of the Tiger Connector route being designed to have minimal impact to land and avoiding residential areas in order to get permission from the PSC to build the Tiger Connector line. I stand firmly behind that claim and my evidence supports why Grain Belt should slightly move the Tiger Connector route off of my property to a less invasive and safer route slightly south of me.
2. On line 14 of Grain Belts "RESPONSE TO FORMAL COMPLAINT" Grain Belt states that **"Ms. Meadows requests that the Commission require Grain Belt Express to move the Tiger Connector 600 feet south of its current path across her driveway. After a thorough investigation, consistent with its obligations under the new CCN Order and the approved Protocols, Grain Belt Express cannot accommodate this move. Moving the path of the Tiger Connector 600 feet south would impact the northeast corner of a parcel owned by a new landowner with whom Grain Belt Express has had no contact, given that such landowner's property is not impacted by Tiger Connector."** The "600 ft." estimate of how far the line needed to be moved I used in my original filing was only that, an estimate, as I do not own survey equipment or any other way to get an exact measurement. However, according to Google maps, it is only around 500 ft. from the centerline of the current route across my property to the centerline of my proposed route. (see paragraph 5)
3. Also on line 14 of Grain Belt's "RESPONSE TO FORMAL COMPLAINT" Grain Belt states **"...Moving the path of the Tiger Connector 600 feet south would impact the northeast corner of a parcel owned by a new landowner with whom Grain Belt Express has had no contact, given that such landowner's property is not impacted by Tiger Connector."** According to page 21 of the 'Transmission Line Route Selection Study' Schedule AB-2, there is

the following section about contacting landowners within 1,000 ft. of the centerline of any Potential Routes:

Landowner Notification Letters

Landowner notification letters were mailed directly to landowners within 1,000 feet of the centerline of any Potential Routes. The letters contained information for each meeting, Project information, and how landowners could leave comments for the Project team. A total of 283 notifications were mailed to landowners across the Study Area. Copies of the notification can be found in the testimony of Kevin Chandler.

On pages 8 and 9 from his own direct PSC testimony, Kevin Chandler from Grain Belt testified to the PSC:

Q. How were stakeholders identified?

A. After Potential Routes for the Tiger Connector were developed, our team created notification boundaries to identify potentially affected parcels and landowners. This boundary was established 1,000 feet from all potential centerlines of the Potential Routes running through Callaway, Audrain, and Monroe Counties. The fact that Grain Belt says in their rebuttal to my formal complaint that they can't move the line because they've had no contact with the landowner's property that is located (according to Google maps) approximately 500 ft. (from the centerline of the route over my property) is contradictory to Grain Belt's own approved protocols and testimony to the PSC about contacting landowners within 1,000 ft. of the centerline of Potential Routes.

4. On page 8, line 20, Grain Belt quoted the Routing Team as stating:

"It is not possible to optimally minimize all potential impacts at all times. There are often inherent tradeoffs in potential impacts with every routing decision...."

- How many other residential properties along Grain Belt's proposed routes with extraordinarily long (1/4 mile or longer) drives with only one entry/exit to their homes with no clear path out stand to potentially be blocked by a fallen line?
- How many other properties along Grain Belts proposed routes will subject the landowner and their pets to EMF and toxic chemicals sprayed to keep the vegetation down on part of their property that they will traverse directly under nearly every single day? See attached picture [On a walk down the drive with the animals.pdf]
- How is being more concerned about not running the line through the small corner of a cow pasture a better tradeoff than not potentially killing or causing serious harm or loss of property to a next-door residential landowner?

5. Attached is a picture [Prop Pic of Full Southern View 11-24-24.pdf] taken with my drone that unequivocally shows how wide open and uninhabited the area south of my property is compared to my narrow, yet dense and well traveled area of land that Grain Belt intends to run their Tiger Connector line through. Also attached is a Google map of this same area [Proposed Alternative Route of Tiger Connector Line.pdf] where I've drawn a line showing an alternative and reasonable route (in light blue) that will keep the line off of my property and over my drive and existing electrical line, while only slightly varying from its current route that is shown in white with x-marked black towers. As you can see, this proposed route will not negatively affect any other residences in the vicinity, while excluding my property from massive tree and wildlife habitat removal, toxic vegetative spraying, as well as crossing over my drive and existing electrical line. It will also allow me to continue freely using without worry the only path I have on my property to walk safely with my animals outside of the yard.

6. In their defense of moving the line, Grain Belt stated on page 9, line 23 of their response, **"...potentially take the line closer than is preferable to a pond on that landowner's property."** Why does Grain Belt prefer not to put their line near a nearby landowners' pond, but refuses to move their line away from my property, where I and my animals will be walking up to and directly underneath their line and my animals will potentially play in and drink from my ditches containing water that has whatever chemicals they will be spraying to inhibit vegetative growth mixed in it? See attached [On a walk down the drive with the animals.pdf]

7. On page 10, lines 25 and 26 of their response, Grain Belt says micro-siting was discussed with me. That is absolutely false. I had never heard of the word "micro-siting" before it was mentioned by a staff member in the PSC office I contacted about trying to get approval from the PSC for Grain Belt to move their line off of me after I became concerned about a falling line blocking my drive, knocking out my electricity and potentially causing my house to catch on fire with no way to fight it, seeing just how large a swath of land 150 feet was via survey stakes, and knowing that it will all be sprayed with toxic chemicals, as well as EMF exposure and just overall devastation to my property and the beauty of it.

8. On page 13, line 34, Grain Belt contends **"Transmission line failure is exceedingly rare."** While that may be true, "rare" still means that it does happen, even to lines built according to industry standards. In my formal complaint I shared nine links to instances of line failure that I found during a quick internet search. Due to so many unusual variables, a line failure in my particular situation on my property could be devastating. Living in a very rural area, having a long driveway off of a lightly traveled gravel road where my earth contact home only has one side that can be exited from, and that cannot be seen from the road could all contribute to catastrophe. With everything I own contained in my home, including (currently) eight of my nine pets possibly inside at the time, there is no good outcome from a line failure that could cause a fire. We are not talking about a line failure down the road

causing electricity to go out for a few hours or a few cows to be electrocuted. Instead, we are talking mayhem. My concern is my driveway being blocked by the Tiger Connector line and the local electric line it fell on, not having electricity, and my house burning down from all of it. The only way to avoid the possibility of any risk is to avoid the risk.

9. On page 14, line 36 of their response, Grain Belt indicates that because construction hasn't started yet, they don't have any metrics for emergency response or repair of their Grain Belt Express or Tiger Connector lines. What is the metric on their other high-voltage transmission lines they've built? Do they anticipate it taking an hour, five hours, or five days or longer to repair a downed power line and/or tower? This is pertinent information for someone whose property stands to be so greatly affected by a line falling on their Tiger Connector line.

10. On page 15, line 38 Grain Belt said the following:

“Ms. Meadows’ complaint raises concerns regarding the potential health impacts to herself and her animals from being in close proximity to the Tiger Connector. These concerns are unfounded and have been rebutted many times by experts in the environmental health field”

Grain Belt then goes on on line 41 to contradict themselves by citing Docket No. 24-GBEE-790-STG where Staff summarized its findings, referring to a U.S. National Institute of Health publication ‘EMF, Electric and Magnetic Fields Associated with the Use of Electric Power’, stating **“It discusses health-related concerns about EMF but concludes the overall scientific evidence for human health risk from EMF exposure is low.”**

Low risk is risk. The only way to ensure there is no risk is to remove the possibility of all risk, which is the Tiger Connector not being placed over a heavily used area of my property where my animals and I walk daily. Attached is a study [Effect of High Voltage Trans Lines on Humans and Animals.pdf] from an International Journal of Novel Research and Development article from August 2023 titled ‘Effect of High Voltage Transmission Lines on Human Health, Plant Life, and Animal Life’.

11. My pets and I are already subjected to EMF daily via a smart phone, smart tv's, a wireless router, laptop and wireless printer, and a smart meter. Taking a walk down the drive has been our escape from all of the electronic radiation we are subjected to day in and day out. If Grain Belt puts the Tiger Connector across my drive, where I will be walking, mowing, and/or driving under it daily, sometimes multiple times daily year-around, there will be no escape from it. Small amounts of anything do add up. If the line was moved south, we would all continue to give our bodies a break from it.

12. On page 17, line 45, Grain Belt makes reference to my complaint being filed so long after the New CCN Order was approved. My formal complaint was only filed after I had worked for months talking to, meeting with, and trying to get Grain Belt to move the line. I had no idea that they couldn't just see the incredible negative impact their line was going to have on my property and my life and agree to move it. It was only after I was finally told by my contact at Grain Belt, Jason Brown during one of our phone conversations in June or July that the line couldn't be moved off of my property because the route had been approved by the PSC that I began to feel like I'd been getting strung along as getting the line moved had been my objective since I first talked to him specifically at the public hearing in Fulton, MO on July 27th in 2022. After being told it was PSC's decision about the route, I then asked him if I could contact the PSC and request that the line be moved. He said that he couldn't tell me that I couldn't contact them. That set me on the path of looking into how to go about getting the PSC to allow or make Grain Belt move their line. I did not understand how the PSC worked or the process, so it has been a time-consuming challenge to get in contact with the right people in the right department and follow the process for getting this line moved. It was certainly not a planned "attack" as Grain Belt calls it and if they had been honest and forthcoming from the beginning, we both could have saved each other a lot of time, as Grain Belt offering to move the line a few feet does nothing to remove the devastation to my property or any of the risks that this line will bring to me, my animals, or our health from the Tiger Connector being placed over our heads. By their own admission on page 10, line 26, Grain Belt notes that I was in talks with them as far back as March 28, 2024, so clearly, my talks with them about a new route have been going on since at least that date.
13. On August 8, 2024, the Illinois Appellate Court rescinded Grain Belt's certificate of public convenience and necessity (CPCN). Below is an excerpt from the ruling:

"¶ 34 Ultimately, there was no showing that GBX as it was situated at the time of the Commission's hearing and decisions was financially able to finance and construct the project. In fact, GBX acknowledged before the Commission that it had no customers for the project, had secured no bank commitments, no Department of Energy commitments, etc. It asked the Commission to speculate as to its future capability, and the Commission improperly obligated."

After seeing this ruling, and knowing Missouri PSC was probably closely watching this given how contentious this line has been to so many landowners opposed to having their land just taken from them for a speculative project, I thought something may happen with the line, delaying it, or stopping it, so I wasn't sure it was necessary that I continue with filing. That delay also added to the lateness of my formal complaint filing. See attached [IL Permit for Grain Belt to Build Line Rescinded on 8-8-24.pdf]