

**BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION  
OF THE STATE OF MISSOURI**



Cheri Meadows,

Complainant,

v.

Grain Belt Express, LLC,

Respondent

**Case No. EC-2025-0136**

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**REPORT AND ORDER**

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**Issue Date:**

October 29, 2025

**Effective Date:**

November 28, 2025



## **REPORT AND ORDER**

This Report and Order denies Complainant, Cheri Meadows', complaint against Respondent, Grain Belt Express LLC (Grain Belt).

### **I. Procedural History**

The Commission granted Grain Belt a certificate of convenience and necessity (CCN) to construct and operate a high voltage direct current transmission line and an associated converter station known as the Grain Belt Express Project (Project).

This authority to construct and operate the Project was granted in the Commission's Report and Order on Remand, Case No. EA-2016-0358, issued March 20, 2019. The Commission subsequently approved Invenergy Transmission LLC's (Invenergy) acquisition of Grain Belt and the Project in File No. EM-2019-0150, effective September 21, 2019. Grain Belt then further sought to amend its CCN in Case No. EA-2023-0017, where the Commission again granted Grain Belt a CCN. The ending result of the appellate process in that case was that the Supreme Court of Missouri denied transfer on January 28, 2025, and the Commission's Order became final and unappealable. That Order approved the proposed route for the Tiger Connector, which will cross over Complainant's property.

On October 15, 2024, Meadows filed a formal complaint against Grain Belt Express opposing the route of Grain Belt Express' alternating current (AC) transmission line, the Tiger Connector, across her property in Callaway County, Missouri. The complaint alleged that Respondent violated the Commission's CCN Order. Specifically, Meadows alleges that Grain Belt violated findings of fact 138 and 140 of the CCN Order, which state as follows:

138. The Project is designed to have a minimal impact to land. In Phase I for the HVDC Main Line approximately 9 acres will be taken out of agricultural production. For Phase I Tiger Connector approximately 0.2 acres will be taken out of agricultural production. And for the Phase II HVDC Main Line, approximately 7 acres will be taken out of agricultural production.

140. The Routing Team for the Project also tried to avoid built-up areas, residences, wetlands, forested areas, center pivot irrigation, and where practical, to follow existing developed corridors such as roads and existing transmission and distribution lines.

Complainant asserts that instead of avoiding uninhabited land to the south of Complainant's property, Respondent routed the Tiger Connector across her property, which contains her residence, mature trees, and an existing overhead electrical line. Meadows states that the land cleared will remove mature trees and existing wildlife habitats. She further states that it would ruin the only section on her property that she could viably parcel. Meadows alleges that instead of having minimal impact to land it will have a major and very negative effect on her property. Meadows worries about the safety of her and her animals if the Grain Belt Express Tiger Connector AC transmission line ever fell onto her existing rural electric cooperative's overhead electric line, which provides electricity to Meadows' residence.

The Commission issued notice of the complaint and directed its staff (Staff) to file a report. The Commission also ordered Respondents to file an answer to the Complaint by November 15, 2024.

Grain Belt filed an answer to Meadows' complaint on November 15, 2024. Grain Belt asserted that Meadows did not identify any law, rule, regulation or Commission order that Grain Belt violated. Grain Belt also argued that the Meadows' complaint is an impermissible collateral attack on a Commission Order because her requested relief was that the approved route for the Tiger Connector be moved to avoid her property. Grain

Belt's answer requested that the Commission dismiss Meadows' complaint for failure to state a claim.

The Staff of the Commission (Staff) filed its initial report on January 17, 2025. Staff's report noted that it did not find a violation of applicable statutes, Commission rules, regulations, or Commission orders. However, at a procedural conference held February 11, 2025, Staff indicated that Meadows' allegations do concern points addressed in the Commission's CCN Order, and, therefore, an evidentiary hearing was proper.

The Office of the Public Counsel (Public Counsel) replied to Grain Belt's motion to dismiss. Public Counsel argued that "[e]ven if a complainant does not cite to a particular law or regulation, the public should still have their cases heard when a complaint explains in practical terms the basis for the complaint, and a law, rule, order, or tariff may be implicated by the allegations raised in the complaint."

Public Counsel noted that Section 386.310, RSMo, provides:

The commission shall have power, after a hearing had upon its own motion or upon complaint, by general or special orders, rules or regulations, or otherwise, to require every person, corporation, municipal gas system and public utility to maintain and operate its line, plant, system, equipment, apparatus, and premises in such manner as to promote and safeguard the health and safety of its employees, customers, and the public.

On March 5, 2025, the Commission denied Grain Belt's motion to dismiss and directed the parties to file a proposed procedural schedule with an evidentiary hearing date. Subsequently, on March 14, 2025, Grain Belt requested reconsideration of the Commission's dismissal.

Meadows replied to Grain Belt's motion for reconsideration on March 21, 2025. In her response, Meadows alleged that Grain Belt deliberately omitted and withheld

information in violation of the Missouri Landowner Protocol's Code of Conduct approved as part of the CCN granted to Grain Belt. These additional allegations were not a part of Meadows' original complaint. Grain Belt moved to strike Meadows' response because it was nonresponsive and asserted new claims not previously made.

At a procedural conference on April 21, 2025, the Regulatory Law Judge noted that Meadows could file another complaint addressing the new allegations, or those allegations could be addressed in this complaint for administrative efficiency. No party objected to incorporating the new allegations and the Commission issued an order directing an answer to the additional allegations, a staff report, and reopening discovery. Grain Belt filed an answer denying Meadows' additional allegations on March 21, 2025.

Staff filed a supplemental report on June 12, 2025, addressing Meadows' additional violations. Staff concluded that Grain Belt had not violated any tariff, rule, statute, or Commission order related to Meadows' complaint or the additional allegations made by Meadows in her March 21, 2025, response to Grain Belt.

The Commission held an evidentiary hearing on August 20, 2025. At the hearing, the Commission admitted the testimony of seven witnesses and received 22 exhibits into evidence. Cheri Meadows and Randy Kleindienst testified for Complainant, Cheri Meadows. Aaron White, Jason Brown, and Kevin Chandler testified for Respondent, Grain Belt. Coty King and Alan Bax testified for Staff. Public Counsel did not have any witnesses or testimony.

Initial post-hearing briefs were filed September 17, 2025, and reply briefs were filed September 25, 2025.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The case is considered submitted as of the date of the final brief pursuant to 20 CSR 4240-2.150(1).

## **II. Outstanding Motions**

After the denial of Grain Belt's motion to dismiss for failure to state a claim, Grain Belt filed a motion for reconsideration. The Commission took that motion with the case but will now deny it as moot considering this order.

On August 22, 2025, Staff filed a motion to late file an exhibit, an attachment to exhibit eight, which appears to be an alternate route proposal for the Grain Belt transmission line. That motion will be denied.

Likewise, Meadows submitted several late-filed exhibits for consideration. Meadows request to late file several exhibits is also denied.

Meadows filed a motion to correct the transcript on September 15, 2025. The Commission will grant Meadows' motion with regard to page 85, line 23, of the transcript, which is corrected to read: "I definitely didn't know I had..." The other two instances Meadows asked to correct are instances where she said east but meant west. The Commission will not amend those instances because they were accurate representations of the questions that she asked witness Brown.

## **III. Preliminary Matter**

At the evidentiary hearing the Commission took official notice of the following documents from Case No. EA-2023-0017:

1. *Report and Order*
2. *Order Denying Application for Rehearing*
3. *Order Setting Local Public Hearings and Directing Notice*
4. Aaron White Direct Testimony
5. Aaron White Surrebuttal Testimony and schedules
6. Andrew Burke Direct Testimony and schedules

#### **IV. Issues**

Meadows, Staff, and Public Counsel put forth the following issues for the Commission's determination:

1. Did Grain Belt violate any applicable statutes, Commission rules, regulations, Commission orders, or Commission decisions arising from allegations in this Complaint?
2. If the Commission determines that Grain Belt violated any applicable statutes, Commission rules, regulations, Commission orders, or Commission decisions arising from allegations in this Complaint, what relief, if any, is appropriate?

Grain Belt disagreed with those issues and submitted its own issues as follows:

1. Did Grain Belt Express fail to follow the siting criteria outlined in the Commission's Report and Order granting Grain Belt Express a certificate of convenience and necessity in File No. EA-2023-0017, specifically (1) has Grain Belt Express not tried to avoid built up areas and residences (Complainant's residence specifically), and (2) is the Grain Belt Express transmission project not designed to have a minimal impact to land (Complainant's land specifically)?
2. Did Grain Belt Express (1) prevent Ms. Meadows from contacting the Commission regarding the route for the Tiger Connector; and/or (2) deliberately omit and withhold information regarding the Commission's route approval process?
3. If the Commission determines that Grain Belt Express violated the four points noted above, what relief, if any, is appropriate?

Section 386.390, RSMo, the Statute governing complaints before the Commission, provides that a person may file a complaint against a utility, regulated by this Commission, setting forth any act or thing done or omitted to be done by any corporation, person or public utility in violation, or claimed to be in violation, of any provision of law subject to the Commission's authority, of any rule promulgated by the Commission, of any utility tariff, or of any order or decision of the Commission. The issues proposed by the parties all fit under the statute governing complaints before the Commission, Section 386.390, RSMo,

which asks whether the utility has acted or failed to act in violation of any law, rule, tariff, or order of the Commission.

#### **IV. Findings of Fact**

The Commission finds that any given witness's qualifications and overall credibility are not dispositive as to each portion of that witness's testimony. The Commission gives each item or portion of a witness's testimony individual weight based upon the detail, depth, knowledge, expertise, and credibility demonstrated with regard to that specific testimony. Consequently, the Commission will make additional specific weight and credibility decisions throughout this order as to specific items of testimony as are necessary.<sup>2</sup> Any finding of fact reflecting that the Commission has made a determination between conflicting evidence is indicative that the Commission attributed greater weight to that evidence and found the source of that evidence more credible and more persuasive than that of the conflicting evidence.<sup>3</sup>

#### **General Findings of Fact**

1. Grain Belt Express, LLC is an electrical corporation and public utility regulated by this Commission.<sup>4</sup>
2. The Commission approved Grain Belt's CCN Application and Grain Belt was granted a CCN to construct the Project pursuant to Section 393.170.1, RSMo.<sup>5</sup>
3. On September 21, 2019, Invenergy acquired Grain Belt and the Project.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Witness credibility is solely a matter for the fact-finder, "which is free to believe none, part, or all of the testimony". *State ex rel. Public Counsel v. Missouri Public Service Comm'n*, 289 S.W.3d 240, 247 (Mo. App. 2009).

<sup>3</sup> An administrative agency, as fact finder, also receives deference when choosing between conflicting evidence. *State ex rel. Missouri Office of Public Counsel v. Public Service Comm'n of State*, 293 S.W.3d 63, 80 (Mo. App. 2009)

<sup>4</sup> Case No. EA-2023-0017, Report and Order (issued October 12, 2023) Pages 49-50.

<sup>5</sup> Case No. EA-2023-0017, Report and Order (issued October 12, 2023) Page 70.

<sup>6</sup> Case No. EM-2019-0150.

4. On October 15, 2024, Meadows filed a formal complaint against Grain Belt Express opposing the route of Grain Belt Express' transmission line across her property in Callaway County, Missouri.<sup>7</sup>

5. Meadows' property is 20 acres and is 400 feet wide at its widest point. It is a long strip of land that is adjacent to an agricultural field, a soybean field and a pasture.<sup>8</sup> A long driveway runs from County Road 260 to her residence.<sup>9</sup>

6. Grain Belt's transmission route cuts across Meadows' property at the southern end near where her driveway meets County Road 260 at the southern edge of her property. Meadows' house is located more than 1000 feet from the road.<sup>10</sup>

## **Issues**

**Issue 1: Did Grain Belt violate any applicable statutes, Commission rules, regulations, Commission orders, or Commission decisions arising from allegations in this Complaint?**

### **The CCN Order**

7. Meadows alleged that Grain Belt violated the Commission's CCN order by failing to follow two findings of fact in that order.<sup>11</sup> The two findings of fact are as follows:

- a. Finding of Fact 138 states: The Project is designed to have a minimal impact to land. In Phase I for the HVDC Main Line, approximately 9 acres will be taken out of agricultural production. For Phase I Tiger Connector, approximately 0.2 acres will be taken out of agricultural

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<sup>7</sup> The Commission takes official notice of the formal complaint filed by Complainant on October 15, 2024 in this case.

<sup>8</sup> Transcript Vol. 6, Page 40.

<sup>9</sup> Ex. 20, Data Request 3, attachment A.

<sup>10</sup> Ex. 20, Data Request 3, attachment A.

<sup>11</sup> Formal Complaint, filed October 15, 2024.

production. And for the Phase II HVDC Main Line, approximately 7 acres will be taken out of agricultural production.<sup>12</sup>

- b. Finding of Fact 140 states: The Routing Team for the Project also tried to avoid built-up areas, residences, wetlands, forested areas, center pivot irrigation, and where practical, to follow existing developed corridors such as roads and existing transmission and distribution lines.<sup>13</sup>

8. Meadows alleged that the Project will not have a minimal impact on her property, as put forth in Finding of Fact 138 in the CCN Order. She believes it will have major negative impacts to her property.<sup>14</sup>

9. Likewise, Meadows alleges that the routing team failed to avoid built-up areas because the route crosses her property and avoids uninhabited land south of her property.<sup>15</sup>

10. The Grain Belt routing team was restricted by properties to the west and south of Meadows' property. Immediately to the west of her property are multiple residences and agricultural buildings, which limits Grain Belt's ability to move the line south of her property without placing the transmission line closer to another structure. To avoid both Meadows' property and the other structures along County Road 231 (County Road 231 runs perpendicular to Country Road 260 to the west of Meadow's property) Grain Belt would have to place a turning tower to the west of her property in the middle

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<sup>12</sup> Case No. EA-2023-0017, Report and Order (issued October 12, 2023) Page 42.

<sup>13</sup> Case No. EA-2023-0017, Report and Order (issued October 12, 2023) Page 42.

<sup>14</sup> Formal Complaint, filed October 15, 2024.

<sup>15</sup> Formal Complaint, filed October 15, 2024.

of an agricultural field. This could lead to increased tree clearing and would impact a new landowner.<sup>16</sup>

11. Among conditions approved in the Commission's CCN Order are the conditions that the CCN is limited to the construction of the transmission line in the location specified in Grain Belt's application unless it obtains a written agreement from the landowner for a particular property.<sup>17</sup>

12. Pursuant to the conditions agreed to by Grain Belt and Staff, Grain Belt may deviate from the approved route by up to 500 ft. without obtaining a variance from the Commission. However, the deviation must stay within the approved property boundaries and not involve a new landowner.<sup>18</sup>

13. In response to Meadows' concerns, Grain Belt shifted the route of the transmission line 94 feet further south from her residence.<sup>19</sup>

### **Safety of the Project**

14. At the evidentiary hearing, Meadows testified that she is concerned that if Grain Belt's transmission line ever fell, it could bring down the rural electric cooperatives line that provides electricity to her home and that she would die.<sup>20</sup>

15. Meadows testified that she contacted her rural electric cooperative and asked what would happen if the Grain Belt transmission line ever fell on her existing electric line. She was told that nothing could happen, or it could burn her house down.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Ex. 30, Response to Staff Data Request No. 0003.

<sup>17</sup> Case No. EA-2023-0017, Report and Order (issued October 12, 2023), Conditions Agreed to by Grain Belt Express Clean Line LLC and The Staff of The Missouri Public Service Commission.

<sup>18</sup> Case No. EA-2023-0017, Report and Order (issued October 12, 2023), Conditions Agreed to by Grain Belt Express Clean Line LLC and The Staff of The Missouri Public Service Commission.

<sup>19</sup> Transcript Vol. 6, Page 197.

<sup>20</sup> Transcript Vol. 6, Pages 38.

<sup>21</sup> Transcript Vol. 6, Pages 38.

16. Meadows' house is 100 percent electric with a well for water. She testified that if the transmission line fell and caused Meadows' residence to catch fire, she would be unable to put it out because she could not pump water and the downed transmission line would block her driveway preventing her from leaving or from receiving assistance.<sup>22</sup>

17. Meadows provided a list of potential risks from the transmission line crossing her property.<sup>23</sup>

- a. Risk of the transmission line falling;
- b. Risk of a fallen transmission line blocking her driveway;
- c. Risk of (electric and magnetic field) EMF exposure;
- d. Risk of transmission line falling on her electric cooperative's line causing her residence to catch fire;
- e. Risk of exposure to toxic chemicals to prevent vegetative growth ;
- f. Risk of cellular phone signal being reduced or interfered with;
- g. Risk of death from fallen transmission line or transmission line caused house fire;
- h. Risk of losing residence, belongings, and car in house fire;
- i. Loss of only subdividable land due to the transmission line crossing a portion of her property that could be subdivided;
- j. Risk of reduced property value;
- k. Loss of 200 ft. by 400 ft. portion of wildlife habitat;
- l. Loss of privacy due to removed trees.

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<sup>22</sup> Transcript Vol. 6, Page 39.

<sup>23</sup> Ex. 7, Potential Risks to My Property and Residence From the Tiger Connector Line.

18. Aaron White, Senior Director of Transmission Engineering at Invenergy, is a licensed engineer in Utah, and has more than ten years' experience designing transmission lines.<sup>24</sup> His role at Invenergy is to ensure that the Project is designed safely and properly.<sup>25</sup>

19. White credibly testified that it is unlikely that the transmission line would cause Meadows' residence to catch fire. The design standards used for high voltage and extra high voltage are extremely stringent.<sup>26</sup>

20. Under a broken wire scenario, the structures supporting the line are designed to deal with imbalances from a wire break.<sup>27</sup>

21. Invenergy's highest priority in design, construction, and operations is the safety of its workers and the public.<sup>28</sup>

22. The National Electric Safety Code (NESC) sets the minimum safety requirements for distribution and transmission underground and overhead.<sup>29</sup>

23. Invenergy designs its transmission lines above minimum required standards.<sup>30</sup>

24. White credibly testified that there are design standards for an extreme wind event. An extreme wind event is one that recurs approximately every 100 years. For Callaway County, Missouri, (where Meadows resides) Invenergy not only designed for 94

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<sup>24</sup> Transcript Vol. 6, Page 97.

<sup>25</sup> Transcript Vol. 6, Page 104.

<sup>26</sup> Transcript Vol. 6, Pages 98-99.

<sup>27</sup> Transcript Vol. 6, Pages 115-116.

<sup>28</sup> Transcript Vol. 6, Page 101.

<sup>29</sup> Transcript Vol. 6, Pages 108-109.

<sup>30</sup> Transcript Vol. 6, Page 99.

miles per hour wind, but also designed for other wind events, like a tornado, and ice events that are not part of the required code design standards.<sup>31</sup>

25. In the event of abnormal or fault conditions the controls and equipment are designed to deenergize the line in approximately a tenth of a second.<sup>32</sup>

26. Design constraints are the same throughout the Grain Belt transmission line. The design constraint at the edge of the right-of-way are 2 kV per meter. The design constraint for the right-of-way over Meadows' driveway are approximately less than one kV per meter. The EMF limits on Meadows' driveway are between 50 milligals and 250 milligals. Some household appliances, such as a microwave, a vacuum cleaner, and a hairdryer would fall within that range.<sup>33</sup>

27. Pursuant to the conditions agreed to by Grain Belt and Staff and approved by the Commission, prior to commencing construction, Grain Belt will notify all landowners in writing of the Transmission Vegetation Management Policy and of the specific vegetation treatments for each landowner's property. Grain Belt will personally meet with each landowner who requests such a meeting to determine if the landowner does or does not want herbicides used on the landowner's property. If the landowner does not want herbicides used, Grain Belt will not use them.<sup>34</sup>

28. Cell phones operate at a higher frequency than transmission lines. Cell phones operate at megahertz, while transmission lines operate at 60 hertz. White credibly testified that because cell phones and transmission lines operate at different frequencies,

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<sup>31</sup> Transcript Vol. 6, Page 99.

<sup>32</sup> Transcript Vol. 6, Pages 101-102.

<sup>33</sup> Transcript Vol. 6, Page

<sup>34</sup> Case No. EA-2023-0017, Report and Order (issued October 12, 2023), Conditions Agreed to by Grain Belt Express Clean Line LLC and The Staff of The Missouri Public Service Commission.

the transmission line would not interfere with a cell phone's capabilities if they are operating correctly.<sup>35</sup>

### **Meadows' Additional Allegations**

29. On March 21, 2025, Meadows replied to Grain Belt's March 14, 2025 request for reconsideration of the Commission's order denying Grain Belt's motion to dismiss for failure to state a claim. In that reply, Meadows made new additional complaint allegations that Grain Belt deliberately omitted and withheld information about the Commission's role in approving the route for the Tiger Connector.<sup>36</sup>

30. The Tiger Connector is an approximately 40 mile long AC transmission line traversing south from the converter station in Monroe County, through Audrain County, and terminating in Callaway County at points of interconnection with the Midcontinent Independent System Operator, Inc. (MISO) system.<sup>37</sup>

31. Grain Belt mailed 283 notification letters to all landowners potentially affected by alternate routes being considered for the Tiger Connector to a public meeting.<sup>38</sup>

32. From July 14 through July 25 of 2022, advertisements for the public meetings appeared in newspapers in Monroe, Audrain, and Callaway Counties in Missouri.<sup>39</sup>

33. Between July 14 and July 27 of 2022, Grain Belt held four in-person public meetings in Audrain and Callaway Counties.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Transcript Vol. 6, Page 111.

<sup>36</sup> Ex. 104, Binder, Grain Belt Express LLC's Response to Complainant's Additional Allegations.

<sup>37</sup> Case No. EA-2023-0017, Report and Order (issued October 12, 2023) Pages 9-10.

<sup>38</sup> Ex. 104, Binder, Timeline of Correspondence Between Grain Belt Express and Cheri Meadows.

<sup>39</sup> Ex. 104, Binder, Timeline of Correspondence Between Grain Belt Express and Cheri Meadows.

<sup>40</sup> Ex. 104, Binder, Timeline of Correspondence Between Grain Belt Express and Cheri Meadows.

34. Jason Brown, Director of Local and Community Affairs at Invenergy, credibly testified that he first met Meadows at an open house in Callaway County, Missouri. That open house was held on July 26, 2022. Brown was available at the open house to answer questions.<sup>41</sup>

35. Brown recalled spending significant time with Meadows explaining the Project and process.<sup>42</sup>

36. Brown had several phone conversations with Meadows. Brown credibly testified that he had explained numerous times to Meadows that he had no authority to move the transition line.<sup>43</sup>

37. Meadows told Brown that she wanted the transmission line off her property. Brown testified that he told her several times that he did not think that was possible, but that Grain Belt might be able to move the transmission line a little further from her residence.<sup>44</sup>

38. Brown testified that he did not know how Meadows could not understand the process. Brown explained what the Project was, the timeline, and the process to a lot of people in Missouri. Brown testified that he could not even count the number of times he had the same conversation with Meadows.<sup>45</sup>

39. On August 18, 2022, Grain Belt mailed notice letters to every landowner along the proposed route for the Tiger Connector. That notice explained that Grain Belt

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<sup>41</sup> Transcript Vol. 6, Page 136, and Ex. 104, Binder, Timeline of Correspondence Between Grain Belt Express and Cheri Meadows.

<sup>42</sup> Transcript Vol. 6, Page 142.

<sup>43</sup> Transcript Vol. 6, Page 147.

<sup>44</sup> Transcript Vol. 6, Page 150.

<sup>45</sup> Transcript Vol. 6, Page 144.

would be filing a final proposed route for approval by the Commission. That notice provided a docket number and contact information for Staff and Public Counsel.<sup>46</sup>

40. The Commission held four local public hearings to take public comments from March 6 through 8, 2023.<sup>47</sup>

41. An agent for Contract Land Staff (CLS) attempted unsuccessfully to contact Meadows four times on behalf of Grain Belt from February to March of 2023.<sup>48</sup>

42. On March 20, 2023, CLS sent a standard easement letter to Meadows.<sup>49</sup>

43. On May 24, 2023, Brown spoke by phone with Meadows and Callaway County Commissioner Randy Kleindienst.<sup>50</sup>

44. An evidentiary hearing was held on June 5-8, 2023, in Case No. EA-2023-0017. The parties submitted initial briefs on July 7, 2023, and reply briefs on July 14, 2023.<sup>51</sup> The case was deemed submitted for the Commission's decision.<sup>52</sup>

45. Meadows' first call to Grain Belt was on June 26, 2023, after the close of evidence in Case No. EA-2023-0017. Brown talked to Meadows for approximately eight minutes.<sup>53</sup>

46. On August 4, 2023, Brown called Meadows and spoke with her for approximately 24 Minutes.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Ex. 104, Binder, Timeline of Correspondence Between Grain Belt Express and Cheri Meadows.

<sup>47</sup> Ex. 104, Binder, Timeline of Correspondence Between Grain Belt Express and Cheri Meadows.

<sup>48</sup> Ex. 104, Binder, Timeline of Correspondence Between Grain Belt Express and Cheri Meadows.

<sup>49</sup> Ex. 104, Binder, Timeline of Correspondence Between Grain Belt Express and Cheri Meadows.

<sup>50</sup> Ex. 104, Binder, Timeline of Correspondence Between Grain Belt Express and Cheri Meadows.

<sup>51</sup> Case No. EA-2023-0017, Report and Order (issued October 12, 2023), Page 6.

<sup>52</sup> The record of a case shall stand submitted for consideration by the commission after the recording of all evidence or, if applicable, after the filing of briefs or the presentation of oral argument." Commission Rule 20 CSR 4240-2.150(1).

<sup>53</sup> Ex. 104, Binder, Grain Belt Express LLC's Response to Complainant's Additional Allegations.

<sup>54</sup> Ex. 104, Binder, Timeline of Correspondence Between Grain Belt Express and Cheri Meadows.

47. On November 16, 2023, CLS sent another standard easement to Meadows addressing the CCN granted in Case No. EA-2023-0017.<sup>55</sup>

48. On February 26, 2024, Brown spoke by phone with Meadows for approximately 36 minutes.<sup>56</sup>

49. On March 21, 2024, Brown called Meadows and spoke with her for approximately six minutes.<sup>57</sup>

50. On March 25, 2024, Brown spoke with Meadows by phone for approximately six minutes and on March 25, 2024, Brown spoke with Meadows by phone for approximately 12 minutes.<sup>58</sup>

51. On March 28, 2024, representatives of Grain Belt met with Meadows at her residence. At that meeting, it was explained that it would not be possible to move the line off her property because that would introduce a new landowner, which is prohibited by the CCN order.<sup>59</sup>

52. On June 12, 2024, Brown and Meadows spoke by phone for approximately 53 minutes.<sup>60</sup>

53. Meadows' first email to a Grain Belt representative occurred on June 17, 2024, a year after the close of evidence in Case No. EA-2023-0017.<sup>61</sup>

**Issue 2: If the Commission determines that Grain Belt violated any applicable statutes, Commission rules, regulations, Commission orders, or Commission decisions arising from allegations in this Complaint, what relief, if any, is appropriate?**

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<sup>55</sup> Ex. 104, Binder, Timeline of Correspondence Between Grain Belt Express and Cheri Meadows.

<sup>56</sup> Ex. 104, Binder, Timeline of Correspondence Between Grain Belt Express and Cheri Meadows.

<sup>57</sup> Ex. 104, Binder, Timeline of Correspondence Between Grain Belt Express and Cheri Meadows.

<sup>58</sup> Ex. 104, Binder, Timeline of Correspondence Between Grain Belt Express and Cheri Meadows.

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<sup>61</sup> Ex. 104, Binder, Timeline of Correspondence Between Grain Belt Express and Cheri Meadows.

54. Meadows asks that the Commission order Grain Belt to move the Tiger Connector 600 feet south, off of her property.

### **V. Conclusions of Law**

A. Grain Belt is a public utility as defined by Section 386.020(43), RSMo.

B. Grain Belt is an electrical corporation as defined by Section 386.020(15), RSMo.<sup>62</sup> Therefore, it is subject to the Commission's jurisdiction pursuant to Chapters 386 and 393, RSMo.

C. Section 386.390, RSMo provides that a person may file a complaint against a regulated utility setting forth any act or thing done or omitted to be done by any public utility in violation of any provision of law subject to the Commission's authority, any rule promulgated by the commission, any utility tariff, or any order or decision of the commission. Therefore, the Commission has authority over this complaint.

D. Section 386.310 RSMo, provides that the Commission shall have power, after a hearing had upon its own motion or upon complaint to require every public utility to maintain and operate its line, plant, system, equipment, apparatus, and premises in such manner as to promote and safeguard the health and safety of its employees, customers, and the public.

E. Section 393.170, RSMo concerning CCNs provides that no electrical corporation shall begin construction of an electric plant without first having obtained the permission and approval of the Commission. It also provides that the Commission may by its order impose such conditions as it deems reasonable and necessary.

F. Section 386.550, RSMo, provides that in all collateral actions or

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<sup>62</sup> File No. EA-2016-0358, Report and Order on Remand, page 37.

proceedings the orders and decisions of the commission which have become final shall be conclusive.

G. Complainant bears the burden of proof to show by a preponderance of evidence that Respondents have violated a law subject to the Commission's authority, a Commission rule, or an order of the Commission.<sup>63</sup>

## **VI. Decision**

Meadows' original complaint was that Grain Belt failed to follow two findings of fact in the Commission's CCN order. Grain Belt asserts that findings of fact cannot be violated as they are not conditions ordered but are merely support for the Commission's decision. Grain Belt asserts that findings of fact are not a law, rule, order or Commission decision that Grain Belt must comply with and therefore Meadows' complaint should be dismissed.

Section 536.090, RSMo, requires that findings of fact be stated separately from conclusions of law and include a concise statement of the findings on which the agency bases its order. Case law further clarifies that, "findings of fact be sufficiently definite and certain or specific under the circumstances of the particular case to enable the court to review the decision intelligently and ascertain if the facts afford a reasonable basis for the order without resorting to the evidence."<sup>64</sup> Therefore, findings of fact are not an order or condition of the Commission, but are the facts on which the Commission's decision is based.

Meadows' complaint that Grain Belt violated two findings of fact in the

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<sup>63</sup> *State ex rel. GS Technologies Operating Co., Inc. v. Public Service Comm'n*, 116 S.W.3d 680, 693 (Mo. App. 2003). Stating that in cases "complainant alleges that a regulated utility is violating the law, its own tariff, or is otherwise engaging in unjust or unreasonable actions, . . . the burden of proof at hearing rests with the complainant."

<sup>64</sup> *Glasnapp v. State Banking Bd.*, 545 S.W.2d 382, 387 (Mo. App. 1976).

Commission's *Report and Order* in Case No. EA-2023-0017 is a collateral attack on that CCN Order. A collateral attack is a challenge to an existing Commission order. Collateral attacks on Commission orders are not permitted under Missouri law. Section 386.550, RSMo, provides that in all collateral actions or proceedings final Commission orders are conclusive. The Commission must deny Meadows' complaint that Grain Belt violated two findings of fact because that complaint is an impermissible collateral attack on the Commission's CCN Order.

Public Counsel stated that the public interest is best served by allowing the public to file complaints, even if there is no citation to a law or regulation. Public Counsel argues that the public should have their cases heard when a complaint explains in practical terms the basis for the complaint, and a law, rule, order, or tariff may be implicated by the allegations raised in the complaint. Public Counsel notes that Meadows questions the safety of the Grain Belt transmission line crossing her property. Therefore, the Commission will also address this safety claim.

Meadows makes several claims regarding the safety of the Grain Belt transmission line. Meadows provided numerous articles in support of her alleged risks. Two things are evident from the evidentiary hearing: the first being that Meadows does not want a transmission line crossing her property, the second being that she is genuinely concerned about her safety and the safety of her animals. However, the Commission must deny her safety complaint.

Most of the safety risks that Meadows is concerned about involve a downed line blocking her driveway or hitting her existing rural electric cooperative overhead line. She

is concerned that her house would catch fire if the Grain Belt transmission line fell. However, Meadows' concerns, while genuine, are not reasonable.

White credibly testified for Grain Belt that for projects involving high voltage and extra high voltage transmission lines, such as the Grain Belt Project, the design standards are stringent. Grain Belt has designed the Project to exceed those NESC minimum standards. The design additionally accounts for tornados and ice. It is unlikely that the transmission line will break above Meadow's property. If the line were to break, it would deenergize in a tenth of a second. White testified that it was extremely unlikely that the transmission line would cause a fire. There is possibly some level of risk that a line will break and fall on Meadows' property, but that risk is negligible.

Meadows also argues that the exposure to herbicides used to clear vegetation would be harmful to her and her animals. However, pursuant to the conditions approved by the Commission in the CCN Order, Meadows can request that Grain Belt not use herbicides and Grain Belt must comply.

Meadows also asserts that EMF exposure is unsafe. However, testimony indicates that the amount of EMF exposure would be similar to a small household appliance like a hair dryer, microwave, or vacuum cleaner. The Commission is not persuaded that Meadows' safety risks rise to the level of a violation of the Commission's CCN Order. Meadows' proposed safety risks are speculative and unlikely to occur, and her concerns over the loss of being able to subdivide her land, the loss of a windbreak, and lost property value, while presumably legitimate concerns, are not safety concerns. The Commission will deny these claims.

Meadows' complaint was amended without objection to add the additional claim

that Grain Belt prevented her from contacting the Commission regarding the route for the Tiger Connector and deliberately omitted and withheld information regarding the Commission's route approval process.

Grain Belt provided a timeline of its known interactions with Meadows, and to the degree possible, the content of those interactions. That timeline, along with Brown's testimony, demonstrated that Meadows was aware of the Grain Belt Project prior to its approval and was proactive in attempting to have the transmission line moved off her property. Meadows was informed of the Commission's routing process at least six times and had the same opportunity as other landowners to participate in Case No. EA-2023-0017 and express her concerns with the proposed route. Evidence shows that Meadows participated in at least one of Grain Belt's open house meetings and had numerous contacts with Brown concerning the impact of the Project on her property. Evidence further shows that Grain Belt listened to Meadows' concerns and responded by moving the transmission line 94 feet south to locate the line further from her residence.

The Commission finds no merit to the assertion that Grain Belt prevented Meadows contacting the Commission, or that it purposely omitted or withheld information about the Commission approval process. The Commission will deny this claim.

Meadows has not convinced the Commission that Grain Belt violated any provision of law subject to the Commission's authority, any rule promulgated by the Commission, any utility tariff, or any order or decision of the Commission. Therefore, Complainant has failed to meet their burden of proof, and the Commission must rule in favor of Respondent.

The Commission does not need to address the second issue about what relief is appropriate, because the Commission has not found a violation that would require relief.

Any relief not specifically granted in this order is denied. Any requests for reconsideration of this order pursuant to 20 CSR 4240-2.160(2) or any application for rehearing of this order pursuant to Section 386.500.1, RSMo, shall be filed prior to the effective date of this order. The denial of an application for rehearing under Section 386.500, RSMo, is a prerequisite to filing a notice of appeal in an appropriate appellate court pursuant to Section 386.510 RSMo. If a motion for reconsideration or rehearing is granted, the Commission will make appropriate orders at that time.

**THE COMMISSION ORDERS THAT:**

1. Meadows' complaint is denied.
2. Meadows' motion to correct the transcript is granted in part, as put forth in the body of this order.
3. Any motion not specifically granted is denied.
4. This order shall become effective on November 28, 2025.



**BY THE COMMISSION**

*Nancy Dippell*

Nancy Dippell  
Secretary

Hahn, Ch., Coleman, Kolkmeier,  
and Mitchell CC., concur.

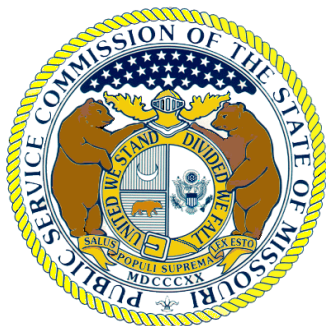
Clark, Senior Regulatory Law Judge

**STATE OF MISSOURI**

**OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION**

**I have compared the preceding copy with the original on file in this office and I do hereby certify the same to be a true copy therefrom and the whole thereof.**

**WITNESS my hand and seal of the Public Service Commission, at Jefferson City, Missouri, this 29<sup>th</sup> day of October 2025.**



*Nancy Dippell*

**Nancy Dippell**  
**Secretary**

**MISSOURI PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION**

**October 29, 2025**

**File/Case No. EC-2025-0136**

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**Enclosed find a certified copy of an Order or Notice issued in the above-referenced matter(s).**

**Sincerely,**



**Nancy Dippell  
Secretary**

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Recipients listed above with a valid e-mail address will receive electronic service. Recipients without a valid e-mail address will receive paper service.