

SOUTHWESTERN POWER ADMINISTRATION PRESS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Fritha Ohlson Named Chief Operating Officer of Southwestern
October 24, 2019 Contact:** Beth Nielsen **Phone:** 918-595-6762 **Email:** elizabeth.nielsen@swpa.gov

Tulsa, OK – Fritha Ohlson has been chosen as Senior Vice President and Chief Operating Officer (COO) of Southwestern Power Administration (Southwestern), effective October 13, 2019.

Deputy Administrator Marshall Boyken made the announcement, stating, “Fritha’s extensive range of electric utility experience and organizational knowledge will greatly serve Southwestern, our mission, and our employees and customers.”

Prior to being named COO, Ohlson led both the Division of Resources and Rates and the Division of Power Marketing and Transmission Strategy (Power Marketing). She was also detailed in the COO position from October 2018 through June 2019.

Ohlson began her Federal career in 2006 at Southwestern as a Systems Operations Specialist in what was then the Division of Scheduling and Operations. Her duties initially focused on short-term hydropower scheduling and water resource management, and expanded into analytical support for Southwestern’s activities related to issues impacting fisheries located downstream of the hydropower projects in Southwestern’s marketing area.

Ohlson accepted a promotion in 2009 to a Civil Engineer (Hydrologic) position, which greatly expanded her responsibilities in the areas of long-term resource management and competing uses. In this position, she represented Southwestern on several multi-agency/stakeholder committees and working groups tasked with developing operating plans, managing and coordinating operations, conducting studies, and developing cost-effective solutions to meet diverse water resource interests.

She has also been involved in determining impacts to the hydropower water resource from actual, proposed, or anticipated changes, such as legislation, developing markets, and contractual changes.

As Director of Southwestern’s Resources and Rates Division, Ohlson oversaw management of the hydropower water resource, development of Southwestern’s power and transmission rates, and accounting and invoicing for the energy marketed by the agency.

In her role as Acting Director of Power Marketing, she led a team of Public Utility Specialists in negotiating contracts for power sales, interconnections, transmission service, and reimbursable work.

Her work in both divisions greatly contributed to the success of Southwestern’s multi-million dollar customer funding program, which to date has over 300 completed and ongoing projects to address replacement of major equipment through partial and complete rehabilitations at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers powerplants from which Southwestern markets power.

As COO, Ohlson will lead the Office of Corporate Operations and supervise four divisions by providing senior leadership and direction in the functional areas of resource management, rate design and development, energy accounting and invoicing, power marketing, transmission policy, public affairs, financial management, budgeting, acquisitions, real and personal property, and reinvestment and rehabilitation of the Federal powerplants.

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Administrator Mike Wech says Ohlson is more than up to the task. “Fritha has been a key player in determining the agency’s direction for so many years, in so many areas,” he says. “This appointment is not only richly deserved, it reflects the agency’s commitment to selecting the best possible candidate for the job.”

Before coming to Southwestern, Ohlson worked for Electronic Data Systems as a project manager in software applications development, which supported the engineering and maintenance functions of major airlines.

In addition to being a certified Project Management Professional, she holds a bachelor’s degree in Industrial Engineering and a master’s degree in Engineering and Technology Management from Oklahoma State University.

Ohlson says she looks forward to serving as COO. “I am honored to serve in this new capacity with our customers and other partners, and with the incredible people who work at Southwestern,” she says. “People here are passionate about what they do and appreciative of the customers they work for.”

Ohlson resides in Tulsa, Oklahoma, with her husband and two children.

Southwestern Power Administration is an agency of the U.S. Department of Energy. Its mission is to market and reliably deliver Federal hydroelectric power with preference to public bodies and cooperatives. This is accomplished by maximizing the use of Federal assets to repay the Federal investment and participating with other water resource users in an effort to balance their diverse interests with power needs within broad parameters set by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and implementing public policy. For more information, see <http://www.swpa.gov>.