

Jo Hafner, Part Owner/Manager
Boulder Beach Resort
15424 County 18
Park Rapids, MN 56470

May 23, 2010

Office of Energy Security
Scott Ek, State Permit Manager
85 7th Place East, Suite 500
St. Paul, MN 55101-2198

Re: Docket TL-10-86

Dear Mr. Ek:

Boulder Beach Resort has been owned and operated by members of my family for 47 years. My parents ran this resort as a mom and pop industry, and my family continues that tradition, creating an "up north" retreat for families and vacationers who come here to get away from their busy lives and enjoy a woodsy lake setting. My children work here, and my grandchildren are growing up on the shores of Potato Lake during the summer months. Four generations are represented when we offer our hospitality to guests and returning customers. We have nearly half a century of experience in the resort industry.

Now Great River tells us they plan to take a 150-foot easement, clear trees within 500 feet of Potato Lake and run a 115kV transmission line through County 18. How do you begin to put a value on the kind of impact that will place on Boulder Beach? They are asking us to take on a heavy burden in an already struggling economy.

There is no doubt that if Great River Energy were to succeed in their request, the visual assault would be devastating to the vacation experience we offer our guests. We cater to young families, and for them to see power lines hovering near their cabins would make any potential parent think twice about booking a week with us. Ours isn't the only business to face losses now and into the future if this transmission line were to come through County 18. A quarter of a mile down the road, our guests visit Logging Camp restaurant as a place to dine. Additionally, another resort is located further down the route and would be directly impacted. Park Rapids relies on tourism as an industry. Potato Lake is a recreational lake in the heart of vacationland. This is no place for transmission towers. Our guests come here to get away from all of that.

If there is truly a need, I, along with my neighbors, am in favor of locating Great River Energy's 115 kV transmission line along a northern alternative route located north of the Potato, Eagle, and Blue Lakes. This route would run from Highway 71 straight east to CSAH 4 near Emmaville. If needed, it could then connect with the Mantrap Substation and still meet the needs of Great River's customers. A substation located in the vicinity of the Highway 71 northern route line would be a preferred site for Great River's future growth needs.

This route connecting Highway 71 and CSAH 4 is made up of primarily county and state land, affecting as few private properties as possible while preserving the aesthetics of

our lake sensitive region and tourism industry.

Thank you for your consideration.

Jo Hafner

Ek, Scott (COMM)

From: Don Hendricks [dongeo@earthlink.net]
Sent: Tuesday, May 11, 2010 10:33 AM
To: Ek, Scott (COMM)
Subject: gre route in hubbard county

mr. ek-----we support an alternate route for the gre power lines--destroying the scenic beauty of highway 18 or 40 doesn't make any sense when hubbard county depends so much on tourism. a direct route from emmaville west to 71 makes more sense to us. thanks, don & georgia hendricks

Ek, Scott (COMM)

From: Jan [jcholtdc@arvig.net]
Sent: Tuesday, June 01, 2010 10:09 AM
To: Ek, Scott (COMM)
Subject: Docket TL-10-86 - Potato River High Transmission Line

Scott,

First I wish to thank you for holding the Task Force Meetings and the Public Hearing on the above project, I learned a lot about this area, my neighbors, and Great River Energy.

After all of the information exchanged I am still wondering why there is such a 'pressing need' for this High Transmission Line that GRE is trying to rush through the process and build it in under 10 mile segments so they do not have to prove 'the need'. I would think that building it in short segments would lead to a poorly planned circular network connecting the system with odd loops (I believe I heard that it appears to be GRE's ultimate goal). Who is the watch dog agency that can and will monitor this type of activity and put a stop to 'skirting the law'.

I do not want this area to become an environmental disaster (as many areas in Minnesota and elsewhere in the US have become) due in part to lack of judgment and poor planning - it will take many, many years to correct (if it can be corrected) if anything done in this environmentally sensitive area is not done with care, proper planning, and attention to detail.

Clear cutting a 300 to 500 foot swath of trees to build a transmission line is not a good idea (trees are one of the answers to combat global warming), placing the lines across a fly way for Trumpeter Swans, American Eagles, Egrets, many species of hawks is not a good idea, taking away a landowners right to a buildable lot is not a good idea, placing landowners, their families, and guests that close to the stray emf's is not a good idea.

I think it odd - at the first meeting held by GRE we were told that the line was going through and we had no say in the matter. We were never told about the process and our right to have our thoughts and feeling heard. The members of the Todd Township Board were basically told (about a month earlier than the landowners) that GRE had 'decided' where they wanted the line and GRE was going to take our land and build the line and we could not stop them. Not a way to win supporters for the project.

Early on GRE said the area under the lines could not have any trees on it as they needed access to the lines at all times, I was told that they would come through and mow the area every couple of years (as many of us said they could not use chemicals on our properties). At the Public Hearing I heard one of the GRE people say that trees or bushes not over 15 feet high would be allowed so which is it and why the change? I do not trust GRE not to use chemicals on my property to keep the trees from re-growing.

I do remember one comment at the Public Hearing that was using the clear cutting as a 'positive' - using the area as a forest fire break to protect the forest between County 40 and the east-west section of 71. Is there a place in that area that a line as a fire break could be installed or is it all marsh and wetlands?

After the Public Hearing I heard someone suggest that the High Transmission Line be run west along the 34 corridor using the existing easements to Snellman and then it could go straight up to Piney Point without having to dodge lakes and wetlands - has

6/1/2010

that been looked at as an alternative?

There are wide cleared corridors on both 71 and County 4 - why is the line not planned to go up one of those corridors? Or have it go up both corridors to create a loop providing power to more areas - I am sure those areas north of us that have lakes are or will be growing and will need the power (within the next 20 to 40 years).

I am OPPOSED to the High Transmission Line as it now stands - IF it can be proven that there really is a NEED for it and that this is the only possible route then I want it to be buried along the stretches that the current distribution line is buried. I realize putting the underground will mean the removal of some trees but at least we would not have to look at the visual pollution of the poles and lines - the visual pollution is very pronounced along 34 east of Park Rapids where GRE recently finished installing some lines - not the sight one wants to see when they are being welcomed to the northwoods.

I moved here after I retired to live in a beautiful wilderness - not one cut up by high transmission lines and other forms of visual blight/pollution. I hope you can help us keep this visual blight/pollution from destroying our northwoods and help us protect our precious environment and the wildlife we share it with.

Jan Holt
14911 County 18
Park Rapids, MN

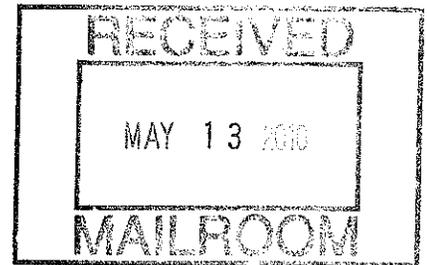


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May 10, 2010

Office of Energy Security
Scott Ek, State Permit Manager
85 7th Place E., Suite 500
St. Paul, MN 55101-2198

CASE # 53884-TS
DOCKET # TL-10-86



Dear Mr. Ek:

In earlier letters sent to you by property owners from the Potato Lake area, they mentioned the many lakes in our county. Because of these lakes, Hubbard County is a popular tourist area and an enticing place to purchase a cabin or RV lot, build a retirement home or stay at a resort.

Up until 2009, our service territory had an annual growth rate of five percent. During that time, Itasca-Mantrap Co-op. Electrical Ass'n. was hard pressed to keep up with the requested new services, let alone rebuild our existing main lines and substations. The economic slowdown is allowing us to catch up on our system reliability upgrades.

The reason for building the Potato Lake substation is not future growth; the substation is needed to serve the growth that has already occurred and exists today; it is this growth that is causing voltage support concerns and an increasing probability of reliability issues in the Potato Lake and surrounding areas. We can only stretch our main distribution lines so far away from our substations before the voltage begins to deteriorate. We presently have several inline voltage regulators to maintain proper voltage in this area.

The same people who like this lakes area are adding onto their cabins and making them year round homes, installing hot tubs, electric heat, big screen TVs, computers and many other appliances, thereby increasing the loading on our already taxed feeder lines. From the letters you received, you can see that these homes are enjoyed by several generations of family members, which causes more loading on our lines than a plain single family dwelling.

It is this type of growth that makes the location of our Potato Lake substation so critical. The existing proposed Potato Lake substation is centrally located within the load area that it will serve. When we see economic recovery and the trend for purchasing property in the North Country returns, it is the people who live around Potato Lake who will see the ill effects of not having this substation in place.

I understand that our projects sometimes evoke emotion among the property owners, and we do the best we can to find solutions that work for both property owners and our system needs. That said, Itasca-Mantrap's responsibility is to serve our members with the proper voltage and reliable service they expect from us. I urge you to keep the technical information we have provided at the forefront of your decision-making process. We welcome any questions you may have.

Sincerely,



Michael Monsrud, President-CEO

Minnesota Public Utilities Commission
121 7th Place E. Suite 350
St. Paul, MN 55101-2147



Dear Members of the Commission

I am writing about the Docket # TL-10-86

I own property that is listed for the new 115kv power line. It is dishearting to think Great River Energy would destroy a section of my forest and hobby farm. I wish you would reconsider and proceed with the new proposed route traveling down CR 40 it is a shorter and less forest would need to be destroyed.

Please help us preserve our health, land and way of life.

Sincerely,

Dean Kimball
14705 CR18
Park Rapids MN 56470



Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative
The power of human connections



June 1, 2010

Mr. Scott Ek
Office of Energy Security
Energy Facility Permitting
85 7th Place East, Suite 500
St. Paul, Minnesota 55101-2198

Dear Mr. Ek:

Itasca-Mantrap Coop Electrical Assn. (I-M) recognizes the concerns expressed by some residents regarding the need for the proposed Potato Lake Substation and its location. This letter is intended to respond to those concerns.

In a nutshell, the Potato Lake substation is necessary to meet increased electrical energy demand created by a more than 6 percent annual member load growth over the past decade. This unprecedented growth, due to both new and existing I-M members, has stressed the existing electric distribution system serving the areas along Potato Lake, Portage Lake, Eagle Lake, Fish Hook Lake, and Island Lake to the point where a new substation is required.

I-M's top priorities are to provide reliable, economic and safe electricity to our cooperative members. Part of that responsibility includes planning, building and maintaining our distribution lines and substation equipment.

I-M utilizes an independent engineering consultant to develop both short (2 year), and long (30 year) range construction work plans. The results of both these plans combine to alert us to current and future problems with system loading, reliability, and low voltage issues on our system. In addition, these plans provide detailed engineering analysis with recommendations of when and where new distribution lines or substations will be needed to meet our Members power requirements, along with the financial impacts.

The I-M 2002 Long Range Plan, prepared by MEI Engineering, Inc., identified the future need for a new substation, called Eagle Lake (re-named as Potato Lake), sometime around the year 2020. But because we also do a short range Construction Work Plan every two years, it was identified in 2006 that our members' actual load requirements had already reached the 2020 load projections.

So as a result, our 2007-2008 two year construction work plan first identified the critical need for the Potato Lake substation project, and also determined that the Potato Lake substation needed to be located north of Park Rapids, very near the intersection of State Highway 71 and Hubbard County Road 40. Ongoing communication and planning for this substation location has occurred during the last four years with Great River Energy, our transmission system provider. Specifically, the selected Potato Lake substation site, strategically located by Itasca-Mantrap, addresses the following areas of immediate concern:

First, it will reduce the normal loading on three of our other adjacent substations. When we continually overload large and expensive substation transformers it shortens their life, and every year we have an increasing chance of failure, resulting long multi-hour power outages for many members. If a failure were to occur, these large substation transformers are very expensive, and take several months to build and re-install. We are a “winter peaking electric cooperative system”, which means these excessive loads occur on the Itasca-Mantrap system in the winter months of December, January, and February during the coldest nights. Exhibit I1 illustrates the peak load growth on I-M’s Mantrap substation, and the overload condition that currently exists on the transformer.

Second, it will solve power quality and reliability issues. Since the proposed Potato Lake substation site has been selected near present and future load centers as determined by recent peak load readings, and recommended by both short and long range planning studies, this selected location mitigates voltage drop problems at member homes; mitigates equipment loading problems on distribution equipment and adjacent substation equipment; improves reliability by reducing miles of line exposure on existing distribution lines; and minimizes the number of customers potentially impacted by substation and feeder outages. The attached exhibits M1 and M2, illustrate the customer density and customer energy usage in the areas to be served by the proposed Itasca-Mantrap Potato Lake substation site.

Third, it will give us much needed back-up capabilities when we need to transfer load from one of our other adjacent substations or feeders during emergencies and scheduled maintenance. This is very important to the I-M members, particularly in the winter months when being without electricity, ultimately heat, for extended periods of time is not an option.

In addition, the location of the new substation is optimally located from an economic point of view, because it intercepts existing distribution lines, and will not require significant construction of new distribution lines. Compared to other alternative site locations, the selected site is the least cost alternative for I-M members.

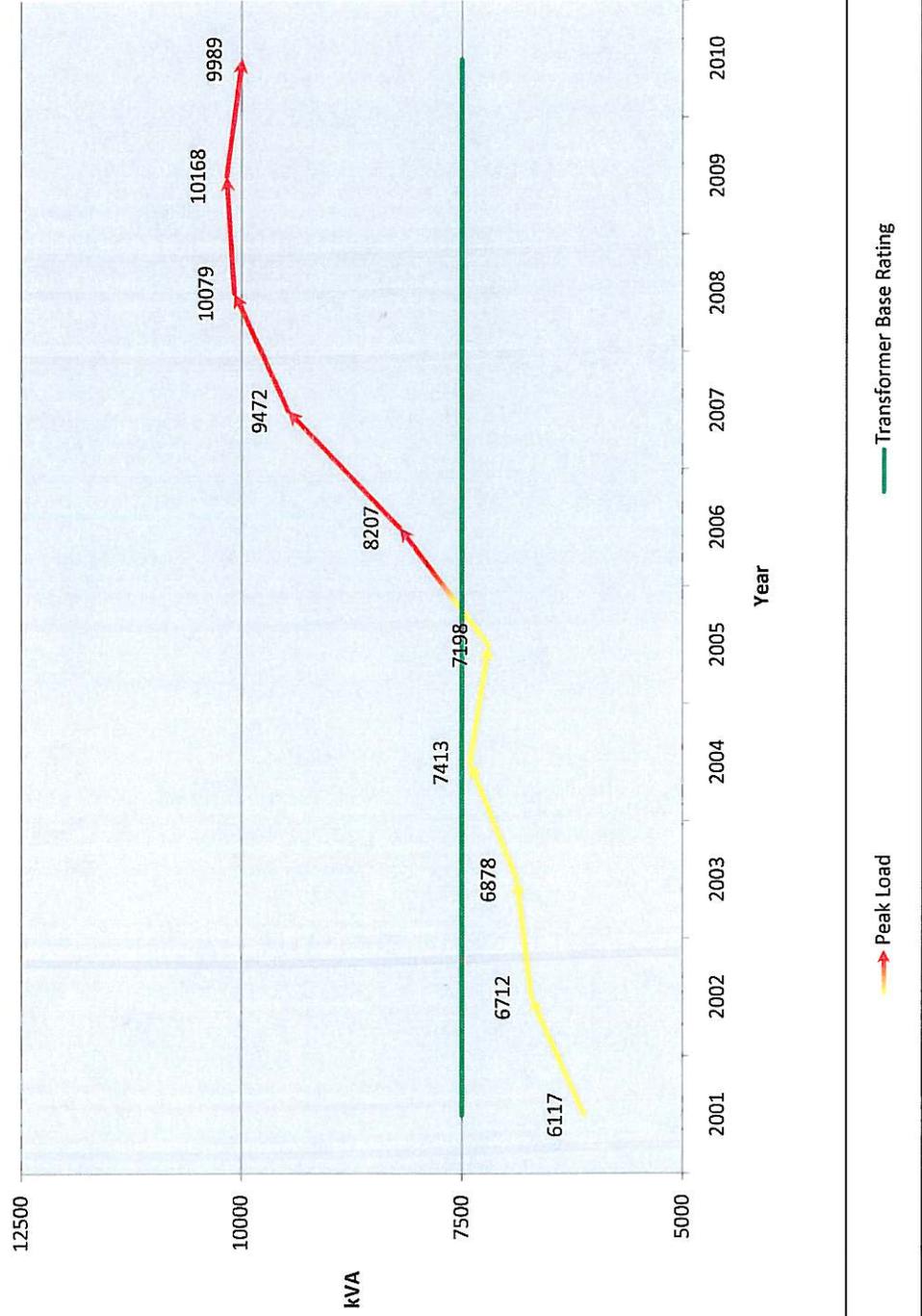
The alternative substation site locations proposed by the Advisory Task Force (ATF) would place the substation approximately 4.3 miles away from the bulk of the customer load that the proposed Potato Lake substation is intended to serve. As a result, the ATF alternative sites are unreasonable as they would fail to address the reliability and power quality concerns that the new Potato Lake substation site is intended to address. In effect, the alternative sites proposed by the ATF would defeat the intended purpose of the substation.

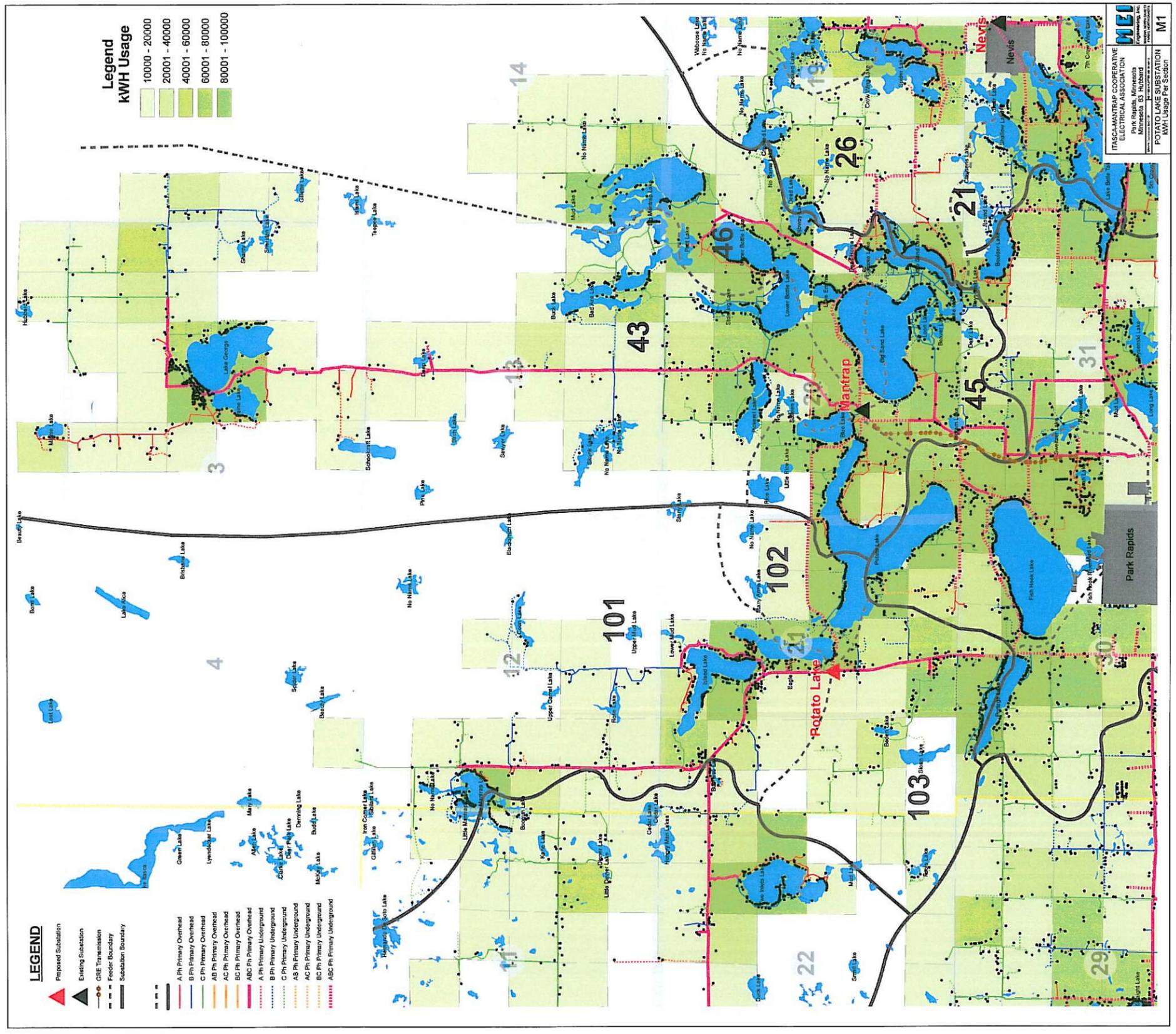
Cooperatively,



Tony Nelson
Engineering Manager
Itasca-Mantrap CEA

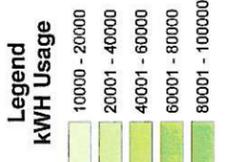
Mantrap Substation Peak Loading History





LEGEND

- ▲ Replaced Substation
- ▲ Existing Substation
- GRE Transmission
- - - Feeder Boundary
- Substation Boundary
- A Ph Primary Overhead
- B Ph Primary Overhead
- C Ph Primary Overhead
- AB Ph Primary Overhead
- AC Ph Primary Overhead
- BC Ph Primary Overhead
- ABC Ph Primary Overhead
- A Ph Primary Underground
- B Ph Primary Underground
- C Ph Primary Underground
- AB Ph Primary Underground
- AC Ph Primary Underground
- BC Ph Primary Underground
- ABC Ph Primary Underground



MEI
MEI ENGINEERING, INC.
 Park Rapids, Minnesota
 Minnesota, 53 Hubbard
 218-838-3333
 www.mei-engineering.com

POTATOLAKE SUBSTATION
 kWh Usage Per Section

M1

GRE 115 kV Transmission Line Project
June 1, 2010

Mr. Scott Ek
State Permit Manager
Energy Facility Permitting
Office of Energy Security
Email: scott.ek@state.mn.us

Dear Mr. Ek:

Please include the following in the record of public comments on the GRE Transmission Line Project.

On Alternate Routes:

There is still a great need for further and detailed study of alternate routes. I believe that not all of the suitable alternatives have been studied in the short time allowed for this activity. I understand that MN has indicated a preference for following existing right-of-way when constructing power lines. However, this is not a hard and fast rule. I noted on my travel to my permanent residence in Faribault, MN after the Task Force Public Hearing that just south of Park Rapids there are transmission lines that travel across country and through lowland and swamp areas. The possibility for the same type of routing should be considered here as a means to minimize the impact on residents, valuable shoreline property and the environment. The ease of construction and lowest cost to the Power Company should not be the governing factor in deciding the route. The value of esthetic factors and the cost to impacted residents and landowners can and should be considered in determining the overall cost/benefit of the project.

Alternate Route Proposals:

Just south (about ¼ mile) of Co. Route 18, Fortune Drive goes west starting at Co Route 1. Fortune Drive goes through mainly second growth oak. There are driveways off the road to a few homes, but the right-of-way could be chosen to avoid major impact to those homes. Fortune Drive appears to dead end into undeveloped land. Going further west through the undeveloped land allows crossing the river between Potato and Fish Hook Lakes south of the bridge on Co. Route 18. A further improvement is to cross farmland starting from Co Route 4 to join directly to Fortune Drive. It then becomes possible to turn the transmission line north to match up with either of the northward extensions prior to connecting to the western section along 280th street. This avoids putting any transmission line along Co Route 18 and preserves the scenic beauty along that

route. It avoids impacting lakeshore properties, the three homes close to the highway and Boulder Beach Resort.

The Task Force has proposed a Northern Route. Evidence given at the Public Hearing indicated that the direct route west from Emmaville passed through major portions of swamp and may be impractical. However, it must be possible with some minimum of study to determine if these swamp areas could be avoided by choosing a westerly route from Emmaville that a used the higher elevations and avoided the swamps. Therefore, this route can be given further study. A study of the plat book showed only five property owners along the east west portion of that route. The DNR and Hubbard County owned major portions. The route north from the Mantrap substation is Co Route 4 has an existing service line. Therefore, the impact on property owners along that part of the route will be less than the taking of new right-of-way along Co. Route 18.

It is very likely that there are other routes that offer reduced impact on current residents.

It appears obvious that the Power Company only looked at routes where the cost to them would be a minimum and the cost to residents would be a maximum. I believe that routing should be more thoroughly studied using a concept of total cost – a cost benefit analysis that includes the cost to residents and tot he environment.

Need Based Analysis:

There appear to be serious questions about the need for the project. We have heard reported of off-the-record comments from power company employees that the true time-need for a transmission line may be 30 – 40 years and that the substation location is not optimum or preferred by GRE. These comments, although not official power company policy, should be given some credibility and at least offer evidence that the power company may have ulterior motives in progressing the project at this time.

Thus, there is a good argument that a need study should be initiated – even though it is not required by statute. I believe that such a study could be ordered by the state regulatory agencies even though not required as a matter of course by statute.

Itasca Mantrap power has agreed to have a public meeting to justify their proposals and need. The approvals for the project should not be granted until this occurs. Also, the record of this meeting and the public comment it generates should also become part of the record and decision process for this project.

There are many questions to be addressed. Why was installation of a substation started without any means of supplying power? What is the basis for claimed

power need for the area? Was the recent economic downturn factored into the analysis? What are the present long-term prospects for development for the projected area? Are there alternative means to supplying power to the substation or are there alternative means to supplying the projected growth needs? What is the actual growth in power usage for the area? We have heard reports that the growth is actually negative for the recent past. Will this negative trend reverse or continue?

Growth for growth's sake does not make good economic sense and if unjustified leads to higher supply cost. There is no justification for construction of facilities with 30-year time frame based need. Even a 5 or 10-year time frame can be questioned. If a project can be completed in one year, then timing only needs to be one to two years ahead of the need. Waiting also gives a chance to develop more data regarding growth trends and true need.

There are alternative ways to meet need. Conservation is one means. People can use the new energy efficient lighting. Electric heating of all kinds can be based on off-peak loading – this makes the entire system more efficient.

Summary:

In summary, there are serious questions about need and route choice that deserve further study before approval of this project is given. A further study of need and route choice will serve to benefit both sides (Power Company and impacted residents). I am urging delay of the project until these issues can be further clarified and the project can be better justified.

Respectfully,

Larry O. Jones
South Potato Lake Shore Owner
15482 Co. Road 18

3033 Circle Bluff Trail
Faribault, MN 55021