

Minnesota Department of Commerce

NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING

**In the matter Tower/Embarass Area 115 Kilovolt Transmission Line / Substation
Project for Minnesota Power and Great River Energy in Saint Louis County,
Minnesota (PUC Docket No. E015/TL-05-867)**

Embarrass Town Hall,
7503 Levander Road,
Embarrass, Minnesota

Thursday
December 8, 2005
4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the Minnesota Department of Commerce (DOC) will conduct a public information meeting in the Embarrass Town Hall at 7503 Levander Road in Embarrass from **4:00 to 8:00 p.m. on December 8, 2005**, concerning a proposal by Minnesota Power (MP) and Great River Energy (GRE) to construct and operate a 115 kilovolt (kV) single-circuit transmission line in Saint Louis County. This Project is part of a series of transmission projects that will upgrade existing transmission lines to 115 kV service in the area between Tower and Embarrass to meet increased electrical service demands and ensure reliable electric service in these areas. MP and GRE have already held public information meetings in the area.

The purpose of the meeting to discuss the environmental issues of most importance in this project, to inform the public of the Tower area of the project and to gather public input into the scope of the Environment Report DOC staff will prepare on the project. The meeting provides the public with an opportunity to ask questions about the project and to suggest alternatives and impacts to address in the Environmental Report.

Staff will conduct the meeting and describe the state's transmission route permitting process. Please note that the authority for high voltage transmission line (HVTL) permits was transferred to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (PUC) from the Minnesota Environmental Quality Board on July 1, 2005, and responsibility for conducting the public review process was assigned to the DOC. Representatives of the applicant, MP and GRE, will be at the meeting to describe the proposed project and answer questions.

Proposed Project Description

The line will be approximately 14 miles long. Minnesota Power and Great River Energy are proposing two geographically separated projects at the same time as part of a submission for approval under the Biennial Report that was filed with the Public Utilities Commission on November 1, 2005. One project called the Tower area 115 kV Transmission project would upgrade existing 46 kV lines in the Tower-Ely area by building 14 miles of 115 kV line in Saint Louis County.

The PUC has six months from November 1, 2005 to complete the process and make a decision on the project.

DOC Environmental Report

The Environmental Report is a written document that describes the human and environmental impacts of the proposed facility, alternatives to the project, and methods to mitigate anticipated adverse impacts. The Environmental Report must be prepared before the PUC can make a decision on the certificate of need application. The DOC will provide the public with an opportunity to participate in the determination of the scope of the Environmental Report. Public comment can be made to the address below until January 10, 2004. Once the scope is determined, the staff will prepare the Environmental Report by no later than March 1, 2006. The Environmental Report will be introduced into the record at a public hearing and staff will be available to answer questions about information in the Report.

Project Contacts

DOC staff member George Johnson (george.johnson@state.mn.us or 651 296-2888) can provide pertinent information regarding this matter, including the certificate of need application and the Environmental Report when it is completed, can be accessed at <http://www.eqb.mn.us> or by contacting George Johnson at DOC-EFP, 85 7th Place East , Suite 500, Saint Paul, Minnesota 55101-2198.

Mailing List

Any person may add his or her name to a mailing list maintained by the DOC for future mailings regarding the Tower-Badoura projects. Names can be added to the list by contacting Mr. Johnson or electronically by visiting the PUC-EFP website: <http://energyfacilities.puc.state.mn.us/Docket.html?Id=17803>

