

STATE OF MINNESOTA

MINNESOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

In the matter of the Application of Great River Energy for a Transmission Route Permit under the Alternative Permitting Process for the RDO 115 kV Project in Hubbard County.

**FINDINGS OF FACT,
CONCLUSIONS AND ORDER
ISSUING A ROUTE PERMIT FOR A
115 kV TRANSMISSION LINE**

MPUC Docket No. ET2/TL-06-468

The above-captioned matter came before the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (PUC or Commission) on September 7, 2006, pursuant to an application by Great River Energy (GRE) and the Itasca-Mantrap Cooperative Electrical Association (Itasca-Mantrap) for a route permit to upgrade approximately 2.5 miles of existing 34.5 kilovolt (kV) electric transmission line to a 115 kV High Voltage Transmission Line (HVTL) between the Itasca-Mantrap RDO Substation and the GRE "HP" 115 kV HVTL in Hubbard County, Minnesota. A portion of the proposed transmission line will include approximately one (1) mile of double-circuit 115/34.5 kV line along the south side of Minnesota Trunk Highway (TH) 87. The Applicants propose to upgrade the Itasca-Mantrap RDO Substation within its existing boundaries to allow a 115 kV electrical supply source.

A public hearing was held on Thursday, August 3, 2006, at 6:30 p.m. at the Straight River Township Hall near Park Rapids, Minnesota. Department of Commerce Energy Facilities Permitting Unit Supervisor Deborah Pile served as the hearing examiner. The hearing continued until all persons who desired to speak had an opportunity to do so. The record was kept open for the submission of written comments until August 18, 2006.

STATEMENT OF ISSUE

Should GRE and Itasca-Mantrap be issued a route permit to upgrade approximately 2.5 miles of existing 34.5 kilovolt (kV) transmission line to a 115 kV HVTL between the Itasca-Mantrap RDO Substation and the GRE "HP" 115 kV HVTL and upgrade the RDO Substation in Hubbard County and, if so, what conditions should be imposed?

Based upon all of the proceedings herein, the Commission makes the following:

FINDINGS OF FACT

The Applicants

1. The Applicants are Great River Energy, a generation and transmission cooperative, and; Itasca-Mantrap Cooperative Electrical Association, a distribution cooperative and customer of GRE.

The Project

2. The proposed RDO Project ("Project") consists of upgrading approximately 2.5 miles of existing 34.5 kilovolt (kV) electric transmission line to a 115 kV High Voltage Transmission Line (HVTL) between the Itasca-Mantrap RDO Substation and the GRE "HP" 115 kV HVTL in Hubbard County, Minnesota. A portion of the proposed transmission line will include approximately one (1) mile of double-circuit 115/34.5 kV line along the south side of Minnesota TH 87. The Applicants propose to upgrade the Itasca-Mantrap RDO Substation within its existing boundaries to allow a 115 kV electrical supply source.
3. The project is intended to move the RDO Substation from a 34.5 kV electrical supply source to a 115 kV supply source. GRE indicates the project is one of several intended to improve electric system reliability in the Park Rapids area.

Permitted Route

The route designated by the Commission in the permit is comprised of route segments 1 and 2A as described in detail below, as analyzed in the EA, and shown on the official route map attached to the permit:

- a. **Route Segment 1:** The route will begin at the RDO Substation in Straight River Township Section 12 and follow GRE's existing 34.5 kV ROW east along 150th Street approximately one-half mile until the existing line turns south. The route will follow the existing line alignment as close as practicable southward approximately one mile to TH 87. GRE may acquire additional ROW width in segment 1 not to exceed 100 feet total.
- b. **Route Segment 2A:** The line in segment 2A will be double-circuit 115 kV and 34.5 kV. The route will cross from the north side to the south side of TH 87 near the half section line in Straight River Township Sections 12 and 13. Upon crossing TH 87, the route turns east and runs generally parallel to TH 87 for approximately one mile to the GRE "HP" 115 kV transmission line in Hubbard Township Section 18. GRE is permitted to acquire up to 100 feet of new ROW in segment 2A. GRE shall place transmission line structures no more than 10 feet outside of the TH 87 clear zone or ROW from the point the line crosses TH 87 to the point it meets the existing GRE 34.5 kV ROW east of 159th Avenue. East of 159th Avenue, GRE shall place structures as close as practicable to existing structures.

Procedural History

4. On March 22, 2006, GRE notified the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission that it intended to apply for a route permit under the alternative permitting procedures set forth in the Minnesota Rules 4400.2000 to 4400.2950. Exhibit 1.
5. On April 6, 2006, GRE filed with the PUC an application for a route permit for a new 115 kV high voltage transmission line under the alternative review process. Exhibit 2.
6. The DOC EFP staff recommended the Commission accept GRE's application as complete in comments dated April 20, 2006, and the PUC accepted the application as complete on April 21, 2006. Exhibits 4 and 5.
7. On April 14, 2006, GRE mailed notice of filing the route permit application to persons appearing on the Power Plant Siting Act general notification list, local officials, and property owners in compliance with Minnesota Rule 4400.1350, subp. 2. Exhibit 8.
8. On April 25, 2006, the DOC EFP mailed notice to all persons appearing on the project contact list that a public information and scoping meeting on the project would be held May 15, 2006, at the Straight River Township Hall near Park Rapids, Minnesota, from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 pm., as required by Minnesota Rule 4400.1550, subp. 2 and Minnesota Rule 4400.2750, subp. 2. Exhibit 6.
9. On April 29, 2006, the EFP published a notice in the *Park Rapids Enterprise* announcing that a public information and scoping meeting on the project would be held May 15, 2006, at the Straight River Township Hall near Park Rapids, Minnesota, from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 pm, in compliance with Minnesota Rule 4400.1550, subp. 2. Exhibit 7.
10. On May 8, 2006, the *EQB Monitor* published a notice announcing a public information and EA scoping meeting on the project would be held May 15, 2006, at the Straight River Township Hall near Park Rapids, Minnesota from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 pm. Exhibit 9.
11. A public information and scoping meeting on the project was held May 15, 2006, at the Straight River Township Hall in Park Rapids, Minnesota, from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. in accordance with Minnesota Rule 4400.2500. The DOC EFP accepted public comments on the scope of the EA to be prepared for the project, and held the record open for written comments on the EA scope until June 2, 2006, as provided by Minnesota Rule 4400.2750, subp. 2A.
12. Two comment letters were received during the comment period, including a letter from GRE proposing a route alternative. Exhibits 10 and 11.
13. On June 14, 2006, the Commissioner of Commerce issued the EA Scoping Decision establishing the scope of the EA. The EA Scoping Decision was mailed to persons appearing on the project contact list as required by Minnesota Rule 4400.2750, subp. 2B. Exhibit 12.

14. On July 12, 2006, the DOC issued the EA for the project. Exhibit 13.
15. On July 12, 2006, the DOC EPF mailed a notice of availability of the EA and notice of public hearing to persons on the project contact list, as required by Minnesota Rule 4400.2750, subp. 6, to persons representing specific local units of government required to receive notice, as required by Minnesota Statute 116C.57, and to state agencies with permitting authority over the project, as required by Minnesota Rule 4400.2850. Exhibit 14.
16. On July 17, 2006, notice of the availability of the EA and notice of public hearing was published in the *EQB Monitor*, in compliance with Minnesota Rule 4400.2750, subp. 6. Exhibit 16.
17. On July 15 and July 17, 2006, the DOC EFP published notice of the availability of the EA and notice of public hearing in the *Park Rapids Enterprise* as required by Minnesota Rule 4400.2850 and Minnesota Statute 116C.57. Exhibit 19.
18. The public hearing on the EA for the project was held Straight River Township Hall near Park Rapids, Minnesota, from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. with DOC EFP Supervisor Deborah Pile presiding as the hearing examiner. A public comment period was announced and held open until August 18, 2006.
19. Three written comments were received following the public hearing. Exhibits 17, 18 and 20.

Proposed Route and Alternative

20. GRE and Itasca-Mantrap's initial application dated April 6, 2006, proposed a route following GRE's existing 34.5 kV transmission line from the RDO Substation to its terminus at the GRE 115 kV "HP" HVTL in Hubbard County. Exhibit 2.
21. During the EA scoping period, GRE proposed a route alternative following the south side rather than the existing 34.5 kV line ROW on the north side of TH 87 for the double-circuit portion of the new 115 kV line. Exhibit 10.
22. The Commissioner of Commerce Scoping Decision and the EA included a route analysis of the north and south sides of TH 87 for construction of the project. Exhibit 12.

Discussion of Comments and Testimony

23. The DOC EFP received written comments from the following entities or persons following the public information and scoping meeting on the project on May 15, 2006: Great River Energy and Audrey Schmitz. Exhibits 10 and 11.
24. Ms. Schmitz commented that her family has owned about 150 acres of land on the south side of TH 87 on the east end of the proposed project for many years. Due to transmission line and road construction, the family's land has been impacted several times. She does not feel that it would be fair to upgrade the line on this property. She

indicated that her daughter had planned to build a retirement home on this parcel in the future. Ms. Schmitz indicated that the north side of TH 87 (segment 2) is preferable. Exhibit 11.

25. At the public hearing on the project on August 3, 2006, Mr. Adam Sokolski appeared on behalf of the DOC EFP, made a brief presentation about the project, about the permitting process, and the EA.
26. Mr. Gary Ostrom appeared for GRE and spoke about the route and purpose of the upgraded transmission line.
27. Approximately 12 members of the public attended the August 3, 2006, public hearing. All persons who desired to speak were afforded a full opportunity to make a statement on the record.
28. Several questions about the transmission line routing process and the proposed project were asked by persons attending the hearing. Mr. Sokolski and Mr. Ostrom answered each question.
29. Mr. Dennis Thompson, a resident on the north side of TH 87 along the proposed route, indicated that he strongly supported the route alternative (segment 2A) which would place the new transmission line further from his home and several additional homes on the north side of TH 87. He emphasized the importance of the data in the project EA which indicates that route segment 2A would reduce impacts at homes on the north side of TH 87 by moving the new, double-circuit line across the highway. Mr. Thompson also called Mr. Sokolski after the hearing to reiterate his support of segment 2A.
30. Ms. Audrey Schmitz indicated her preference for placing the proposed line on the north side of TH 87 (segment 2).
31. The DOC EFP received written comments from the following entities or persons following the public hearing: Minnesota Department of Transportation, Audrey Schmitz, and Dennis Thompson. Exhibits 17, 18 and 20.
32. In written comments, Ms. Schmitz reiterated her preference for routing the project on the north side of TH 87 (segment 2) and that her daughter had planned to build a retirement home on this parcel in the future. Ms. Schmitz also disagreed with a statement in the EA indicating that all the property along segment 2A was owned by the RDO Company. Exhibit 18.
33. DOC EFP staff consulted the Hubbard County property records web site to determine the ownership of the parcel Ms. Schmitz references in order to determine if landowners were properly notified. County records indicate this parcel was sold by Ms. Schmitz and her family to the RDO Company in 2004, and that the RDO Company is the landowner of record. GRE representatives indicated to staff that the Schmitz family and the RDO Company have a verbal agreement to deed back to the family a portion of the land sold to the company in 2004.

34. In written comments dated August 8, 2006, the Minnesota DOT indicated that it does not have an official ROW for TH 87 along the western three quarters of a mile portion of the project along segments 2 and 2A. DOT indicated that it has an official ROW of 60 feet on the north and 75 feet on the south side of TH 87 along the eastern quarter mile along route segments 2 and 2A. Exhibit 17.
35. In written comments dated August 15, 2006, Mr. Dennis Thompson reiterated his support of routing the project along the south side of TH 87 (segment 2A). He indicated that segment 2A reduces impacts to several homes on the north side of the highway. Exhibit 20.

Applicable Statutory Conditions

36. Minnesota Statute 116C.57, subd. 4 provides the following:

The Commission's site and route permit determinations must be guided by the state's goals to conserve resources, minimize environmental impacts, minimize human settlement and other land use conflicts, and ensure the state's electric energy security through efficient, cost-effective power supply and electric transmission infrastructure. To facilitate the study, research, evaluation and designation of sites and routes, the Commission shall be guided by, but not limited to, the following considerations:

- (1) Evaluation of research and investigations relating to the effects on land, water and air resources of large electric power generating plants and high voltage transmission lines and the effects of water and air discharges and electric and magnetic fields resulting from such facilities on public health and welfare, vegetation, animals, materials and aesthetic values, including baseline studies, predictive modeling, and evaluation of new or improved methods for minimizing adverse impacts of water and air discharges and other matters pertaining to the effects of power plants on the water and air environment;
- (2) Environmental evaluation of sites and routes proposed for future development and expansion and their relationship to the land, water, air and human resources of the state;
- (3) Evaluation of the effects of new electric power generation and transmission technologies and systems related to power plants designed to minimize adverse environmental effects;
- (4) Evaluation of the potential for beneficial uses of waste energy from proposed large electric power generating plants;
- (5) Analysis of the direct and indirect economic impact of proposed sites and routes including, but not limited to, productive agricultural land lost or impaired;

- (6) Evaluation of adverse direct and indirect environmental effects that cannot be avoided should the proposed site and route be accepted;
- (7) Evaluation of alternatives to the applicant's proposed site or route proposed pursuant to subdivisions 1 and 2;
- (8) Evaluation of potential routes that would use or parallel existing railroad and highway rights-of-way;
- (9) Evaluation of governmental survey lines and other natural division lines of agricultural land so as to minimize interference with agricultural operations;
- (10) Evaluation of the future needs for additional high voltage transmission lines in the same general area as any proposed route, and the advisability of ordering the construction of structures capable of expansion in transmission capacity through multiple circuiting or design modifications;
- (11) Evaluation of irreversible and irretrievable commitments of resources should the proposed site or route be approved; and
- (12) When appropriate, consideration of problems raised by other state and federal agencies and local entities.

If the Commission's rules are substantially similar to existing regulations of a federal agency to which the utility in the state is subject, the federal regulations must be applied by the Commission.

No site or route shall be designated which violates state agency rules.

Applicable Rule Considerations

37. Minn. Rules part 4400.3150 provides as follows:

In determining whether to issue a permit for a large electric power generating plant or a high voltage transmission line, the Commission shall consider the following:

- (1) Effects on human settlement, including, but not limited to, displacement, noise, aesthetics, cultural values, recreation, and public services;
- (2) Effects on public health and safety;
- (3) Effects on land-based economies, including, but not limited to, agriculture, forestry, tourism, and mining;
- (4) Effects on archaeological and historic resources;

- (5) Effects on the natural environment, including effects on air and water quality resources and flora and fauna;
- (6) Effects on rare and unique natural resources;
- (7) Application of design options that maximize energy efficiencies, mitigate adverse environmental effects, and could accommodate expansion of transmission or generating capacity;
- (8) Use or paralleling of existing rights-of-way, survey lines, natural division lines, and agricultural field boundaries;
- (9) Use of existing large electric power generating plant sites;
- (10) Use of existing transportation, pipeline, and electrical transmission systems or rights-of-way;
- (11) Electrical system reliability;
- (12) Costs of constructing, operating, and maintaining the facility which are dependent on design and route;
- (13) Adverse human and natural environmental effects which cannot be avoided; and
- (14) Irreversible and irretrievable commitments of resources.

Potential Impacts

38. The proposed project is located immediately south of Park Rapids, Minnesota. The area between the RDO Substation and the GRE “HP” 115 kV HVTL line is a mixture of irrigated agricultural land, mixed conifer and deciduous wood lots, and the Lamb Weston RDO potato processing facility and landfill, which is an industrial land use. The general area contains active farmsteads, rural residential homes, and seasonal recreational homes. The general area has many lakes, rivers and streams supporting a vibrant regional tourism industry, including the Straight River, a designated trout stream. The Park Rapids municipal airport is approximately one mile northwest of the RDO Substation site and the Park Rapids city limits is approximately 2-3 miles directly north of the project route. The area contains several 34.5 kV electrical lines, including the line proposed in the Application for upgrade, as well as, one major 115 kV transmission line. U.S. Highway 71 runs generally north-south approximately one half to two miles west of the proposed project route.
39. During construction of the project, there may be small positive socioeconomic impacts on the community due to the expenditures of the construction crews in the local community. In addition, if the project achieves the reliability improvements that GRE suggests, electric customers in the area will enjoy a more reliable electrical system. Enhanced

reliability may prevent economic losses at area residences, public services, and businesses due to unplanned disruptions or outages on the existing 34.5 kV system.

40. The project will not displace any residential homes or businesses.
41. The project will create only nominal corona or noise impacts and no mitigation measures are necessary.
42. The existing 34.5 kV line and ROW have a visual impact on surrounding areas. Since the RDO Project is a transmission line upgrade along or near existing ROW, the proposed project will incrementally change visual impacts. No adverse visual impact is expected for the proposed RDO Project.
43. The RDO Project will be designed in compliance with local, state, National Electrical Safety Code (NESC), Rural Utilities Service (RUS), and GRE standards regarding clearance to ground, clearance to crossing utilities, clearance to buildings, strength of materials, and ROW widths. GRE construction crews and/or contract crews will comply with local, state, NESC, RUS, and GRE standards regarding installation of facilities and standard construction practices. Established company and industry safety procedures will be followed during and after installation of the transmission line. This will include clear signage during all construction activities.
44. The proposed transmission line will be equipped with protective devices to safeguard the public from the transmission line if an accident occurs, such as if a structure or conductor falls to the ground. The protective devices are breakers and relays located where the line connects to the substation. The protective equipment will de-energize the line should such an event occur. In addition, the RDO Substation is and will continue to be fenced and access limited to authorized personnel. The proposed tap and switch structure at the GRE "HP" 115 kV HVTL will be constructed more than 35 feet above the ground on a transmission switch structure similar to, but stronger than a typical transmission pole (Exhibit 13, Figure 5). Proper signage will be posted warning the public of the risk of coming into contact with the energized equipment.
45. The issue of electric and magnetic field ("EMF") exposure is discussed in the EA. Exhibit 13 at 15-17. There is at present insufficient evidence to demonstrate a cause and effect relationship between EMF exposure and adverse health effects. There are no state or federal health-based exposure standards. The Minnesota Department of Health recommends avoiding exposures about which there are questions of safety or health, at least to the extent that an activity can be avoided easily or cheaply. The Department has stated that it is prudent to continue to monitor research in this area.
46. GRE calculates that the maximum ground level magnetic field expected when the new line is conducting electricity under peak operating conditions is approximately 25.2 milligauss directly below the double-circuit portion of line, and as low as .4 milligauss at normal operating conditions 100 feet from the single circuit portion of the line. The only two states that have established standards are Florida (a 150 milligauss limit) and New

York (a 200 milligauss limit). The maximum magnetic field expected from the new line is well below those limits.

47. In the past, the Commission and the Minnesota Environmental Quality Board have included a condition in high voltage transmission line permits limiting electric field exposure to 8 kV per meter at one meter above ground. This permit condition was designed to prevent serious hazard from shocks when touching large objects, such as semi tractor trailers or large farm equipment under extra high voltage transmission lines of 500 kV or greater. The proposed line would create a maximum field of approximately 1.6 kV per meter at one meter above the ground, which is well below this limit.
48. The new transmission line structures along the route will not cause recreational impacts. Guy wires will be equipped with safety shields to prevent snowmobiles or off-highway vehicles from coming into contact with them. However, there will be no direct impacts to the recreational resources in the area, nor will the proposed project reduce the number of and quality of recreational opportunities in the area.
49. To minimize loss of farmland and to ensure reasonable access to the land near the poles along route segment 2A, GRE intends to place the transmission structures (poles) approximately five to ten feet outside of the TH 87 clear zone or ROW. Along segment 1, GRE will place transmission structures as close as practicable to the existing 34.5 kV structures to minimize farmland impacts. The Company will compensate landowners for crop damage and soil compaction that occurs as a result of the project. Soil compaction will be addressed by compensating the farmer to repair the ground or by using contractors to chisel plow the site.
50. The Park Rapids Municipal Airport is located approximately one mile northwest of the RDO Substation and the western terminus of the proposed project. GRE has consulted with the Minnesota DOT, Office of Aeronautics requesting information on the proposed project's potential effect on airports or airstrips in the project area. The DOT Regional Airport Engineer indicated that the proposed RDO project would not have an impact on area airports and indicated that the Office did not have any objection to the RDO Project.
51. The existing and proposed lines parallel public roadways for approximately two (2) miles. However, the proposed line will not affect road transportation systems except for possible minor and temporary impacts during the construction period. GRE will be required to obtain a license or amend its current license to cross TH 87 from DOT and may need a similar permit from the respective township or Hubbard County for other road crossings.
52. The project will not impact any active mining operations, and there is no forested land-based industry within the vicinity of the project.

53. The RDO Project will utilize existing utility easements or ROW or new easements on private property directly adjacent to TH 87. As such, no impacts are expected on economic development opportunities from the construction of the proposed RDO Project under the two route scenarios.
54. The Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) concluded that no properties eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places will be affected by the RDO Project. The SHPO did not indicate if previously unidentified historic properties are likely to be found in the project area. No impact is expected to these resources.
55. The only potential air emissions from a 115 kV transmission line result from corona and are limited. During construction of the proposed transmission line and substation there will be limited emissions from vehicles and other construction equipment, and fugitive dust from ROW clearing. Adverse impacts to the surrounding environment will be minimal because of the short and intermittent nature of the emission and dust-producing construction phases.
56. During construction there is the possibility of sediment reaching surface waters as the ground is disturbed by transmission structure construction and removal, ROW clearing and construction traffic. No infill of wetlands or public waters is proposed for the RDO Project. The surface water resource that could be affected by construction of the transmission line is the Straight River, which is a Minnesota Public Water stream and also a designated trout stream.
57. GRE will follow standard erosion control measures such as using silt fencing to prevent impacts to adjacent water resources. In addition, GRE will follow any mitigation measures that The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) requires as part of the License to Cross the Straight River. Once the project is complete it will have no impact on surface water quality.
58. GRE does not anticipate placing transmission structures in wetlands for this project, nor are wetlands present along the existing ROW or proposed route alternative. The proposed project is not expected to affect ground water.
59. Electrocutation of large birds, such as raptors, is a concern related to transmission and distribution lines generally. Electrocutation occurs when birds with large wingspans come in contact with either two conductors or a conductor and a grounding device. RUS and GRE design standards will ensure that adequate conductor spacing is provided to eliminate the risk of raptor electrocutation and the company may implement specific raptor protection measures as necessary. As such, electrocutation should not be a concern related to the proposed project.
60. Incremental impacts to trees and vegetation will occur where the upgraded transmission line parallels the south side of TH 87 and as the line follows existing ROW north-south across the Straight River. A width of 70 – 100 feet (35 – 50 feet each side of the center line) along the existing line currently is cleared of trees for the existing 34.5 kV line.

Some additional tree clearing will be required along the south side of TH 87, although most of the land along segment 2A is cultivated farm land without trees.

61. GRE contacted the DNR and Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) to determine if the proposed project would affect any endangered species or native plant communities. Both agencies indicated that the proposed project would not impact such species.
62. Segment 2A will move the proposed line further away from three homes currently within approximately 110 feet of the existing line. By increasing the distance between homes and the proposed line, segment 2A will reduce the following impacts: noise, visual intrusion, EMF exposure, tree clearing on residential lands and the inconvenience of having a transmission line in one's front yard.
63. Segment 2A will slightly increase impacts at one home. The existing line passes approximately 200 – 250 feet from this home where the line crosses from the north side to the south side of TH 87. Segment 2A will mean that a longer length of line will pass at the same approximate distance from this home and trees will be removed.

Costs

64. GRE has done a preliminary estimate of the cost of the project, which is \$1.35 million.

Environmental Assessment

65. The environmental assessment addressed the issues identified in the Commerce Commissioners' Scoping Decision.

Based on the foregoing Findings of Fact, the Commission makes the following:

CONCLUSIONS

1. Any of the foregoing Findings more properly designated as Conclusions are hereby adopted as such.
2. The Commission has jurisdiction over the subject matter of this proceeding pursuant to Minnesota Statute 116C.57, subdivision 2.
3. The GRE RDO Project qualifies for review under the Alternative Review Process of Minnesota Statute 116.575 and Minnesota Rules parts 4400.2000 to 4000.2950.
4. The Applicant and the DOC EFP have complied with all procedural requirements required by law.

5. The DOC has completed an environmental assessment on this project as required by Minnesota Statute 116C.575, subdivision 5 and Minnesota Rule 4400.2750, and considered all the pertinent factors in determining whether the route should be approved.

6. The conditions included in the route permit are reasonable and appropriate.

Based on the Findings of Fact and Conclusions contained herein and the entire record of this proceeding, the Commission hereby makes the following:

ORDER

A route permit is hereby issued to Great River Energy and Itasca-Mantrap Cooperative Electrical Association to upgrade approximately 2.5 miles of existing 34.5 kilovolt (kV) transmission line to a 115 kV High Voltage Transmission Line (HVTL) between the Itasca-Mantrap RDO Substation and the GRE "HP" 115 kV HVTL in Hubbard County. The route permit authorizes the Applicants' proposed modifications to the RDO Substation to allow for a 115 kV electrical source. The route permit shall be issued in the form attached hereto, with a map showing the approved route.

Approved and adopted this _____ day of September, 2006

BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION

Burl W. Haar,
Executive Secretary