

NOTICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AVAILABILITY AND PUBLIC HEARING

August 3, 2006 ♦ 6:30 – 7:30 pm
Straight River Township Hall
11971 129th Avenue
Menahga, MN 56464

In the Matter of the Application of Great River Energy and Itasca-Mantrap Cooperative Electrical Association for a Route Permit for the RDO Project Transmission Line and Substation in Hubbard County
PUC Docket Number: ET2/TL-06-468

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Great River Energy (GRE) and Itasca-Mantrap Cooperative Electrical Association RDO transmission project has been completed and is available to the public. The EA addresses potential human and environmental impacts of the proposed high voltage transmission line (HVTL) project.

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the Minnesota Department of Commerce (DOC) will hold a Public Hearing on the above matter on August 3, 2006, at the Straight River Township Hall south of Park Rapids, Minnesota. The hearing will begin at 6:30 pm.

Project Description. GRE and Itasca-Mantrap have applied for a transmission line route permit from the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (PUC) for the RDO Transmission Project. GRE and Itasca-Mantrap propose to upgrade approximately 2.5 miles of existing 34.5 kilovolt (kV) transmission line to a 115 kV High Voltage Transmission Line (HVTL) near Park Rapids, Minn. They also propose to upgrade the Itasca-Mantrap RDO substation to allow a 115 kV electrical supply source.

Environmental Assessment. The DOC completed and made available to the public the EA on July 12, 2006. Copies of the permit application and the EA are available for public review at the Itasca-Mantrap Cooperative Electrical Association offices in Park Rapids, at the DOC offices in St. Paul, by requesting a copy from the DOC, and electronically on the PUC website below:

<http://energyfacilities.puc.state.mn.us/Docket.html?Id=18517>

Purpose of Hearing. The purpose of the public hearing is to compile a complete record for the PUC to consider in making a final decision on the route permit application. Upon closure of the public comment period, DOC Staff will write a report and make a recommendation to the PUC on which route to authorize and any appropriate permit conditions. The PUC will make a final decision on the permit at a subsequent Commission meeting.

Conduct of Hearing. The hearing will be presided over by Deborah Pile of the DOC Energy Facility Permitting unit in accordance with the requirements of the Power Plant Siting Act, Minnesota Statutes 116C.51 to 116C.69, rules of the Public Utilities Commission (PUC), and Minnesota Rules 4400.2000 to 4400.2950, for projects of the size and type proposed in this matter.

DOC staff will be present at the hearing, will make a brief presentation about the project and introduce into the record a number of documents relating to the project, including the Application, the EA, and certain procedural documents. Representatives of the applicant utilities, GRE and Itasca-Mantrap, will be present to offer evidence and to answer questions. Members of the public will have an opportunity to ask questions of DOC staff and the Applicants, to make statements, and to offer written comments and material into the record. Members of the public are not required to file any papers in advance of the hearing in order to participate and public comments made at the hearing will be included in the record. There is no advance sign-up process. The Hearing Examiner will call on those who want to speak.

Public Comment Period. The record in this case will remain open until August 18, 2006 for interested persons to submit written comments.

More Information. Questions or comments can be directed to:

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Mailing List. Any person may add his or her name to the mailing list maintained by the DOC for future mailings regarding this project, including notice of when this matter is scheduled for a PUC final route permitting decision. Names can be added to the list via the website listed above or by contacting the DOC staff persons named above.

Dated: July 12, 2006