



Minnesota Department of Transportation

RECEIVED AUG 18 2006

Office of Aeronautics
Mail Stop 410
222 East Plato Boulevard
St. Paul, MN 55107-1618

Phone: 651/296-8202
Phone: 651/297-1600
Fax: 651/297-5643
Fax: 651/296-1828

August 11, 2006

Carol L. Schmidt
Environmental Specialist
Great River Energy
17845 E. Highway 10
PO Box 800
Elk River, Minnesota 55330

Subject: Tower 115 kV Transmission Project – St. Louis County

Dear Ms. Schmidt:

I have reviewed the information you submitted regarding the subject transmission line. Based on the information you provided, it appears that you will need to submit a "Notice of Proposed Construction or Alteration" (Form 7460-1) for at least some of the poles or substation structure near Tower, Minnesota. Form 7460-1, Item 77.13(a)(2)(1), indicates that the form must be submitted for any structures that would penetrate a slope of 100:1 for a distance of 20,000 feet from the nearest point of the runway at the nearest airport.

The nearest public airport in this case is the Tower Municipal Airport. The runway at the Tower Municipal Airport is 3,400 feet long. The elevation of the east end of the runway is 1369.85 feet; the elevation of the west end of the runway is 1365.75 feet. The general airport elevation is 1370 feet.

I understand that you are in the preliminary phase, and will be able to identify specific poles and substation that may create a penetration once an alternative is selected, and design begins.

The Airport Zoning Ordinance identifies the limitations of the airport. Zone C extends for a distance of 6,000 feet from the Tower Municipal Airport. Depending on selected alternative, the lines at the northern most end of the project near Tower, MN may fall under this radius. General requirements or restrictions of this airspace can be found in the Aeronautics Rules at:

<http://www.revisor.leg.state.mn.us/arule/8800/2400.html>.

For more specific information, please refer to the Zoning Ordinance for the Tower Airport, or you may contact the Aeronautics Planning Section at 651-296-8202 (toll free: 1-800-657-3922). Kathy Vesely or Deb Sorenson should be able to assist you.

If you have any questions, please contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tracy Schmidt".

Tracy Schmidt
Regional Airport Engineer

An equal opportunity employer



MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE

December 12, 2005

Ms. Carole Schmidt
Great River Energy
PO Box 800
Elk River, MN 55330

RE: Tower 115 kV Transmission Project, new transmission line that would connect a new substation near Tower and a new switching station near Embarrass
Saint Louis County
SHPO Number: 2006-0536

Dear Ms. Schmidt:

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the above project. It has been reviewed pursuant to the responsibilities given the State Historic Preservation Officer by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and the Procedures of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (36CFR800).

Based on available information, we conclude that **no properties** eligible for or listed on the National Register of Historic Places will be affected by the above project.

Please contact Dennis Gimmestad at (651) 296-5462 if you have any questions regarding our review of this project.

Sincerely,

Britta L. Bloomberg
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

RECEIVED OCT 20 2006



MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

State Historic Preservation Office

October 16, 2006

Ms. Carole Schmidt
Great River Energy
PO Box 800
Elk River, MN 55330

Re: Tower 115 kV Transmission Project, new transmission line that would connect a new substation near Tower and a new switching station near Embarrass
Saint Louis County
SHPO Number: 2006-0536

Dear Ms. Schmidt:

We wrote you regarding the above referenced project on 12 December 2005. In that letter, we indicated no historic properties were located in the project area, pursuant to the responsibilities given the Minnesota Historical Society by the Minnesota Historic Sites Act and the Minnesota Field Archaeology Act.

We have now discovered that our review failed to identify a historic property in the project area. The Height of Land Portage is a historic property listed on the National Register of Historic Places. A map showing the property's location is enclosed.

We apologize for this error. We hope that we can work with you and with the Department of Commerce staff to address any potential impacts to this property through the remainder of the project planning process.

Contact me at 651-205-4205 with questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kelly Thagg-Johnson".

 Dennis A. Gimmestad
Government Programs & Compliance Officer

cc: Bill Storm, Department of Commerce



RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Conversation With: Paul Burke **SEH File No.:** A-MNPOW0507.01
 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service - Region 3,
Co/Org: Bloomington Field Office **SEH File Loc:** ENV
Phone No.: 612.725.3548 **Owner's File No.:** _____
Fax No.: _____ **Date/Time:** August 24, 2006 0945
Subject: USFWS Agency Comments for Tower 115kV
Route Permit Application **By:** Brad R. Kovach

Conversation Type:

In Person At SEH At Site Other: _____
 Telephone Incoming Outgoing

Items Discussed:

USFWS Comments on proposed routes and project. The USFWS has no concerns about impacts to Critical Habitat for T & E species; no impacts anticipated on federal Wildlife Refuges, Conservation Easements, WPA's, National Preserves, or other lands under their management. Concerns about potential impacts under the Migratory Bird Act from any new routes removing tree cover can be negated/mitigated by committing to conduct any clearing and grubbing outside of the April 1 to August 15th nesting season. Brad Kovach already addressed this approach in the project documentation. Paul was comfortable that nearly all of the routes follow existing rights-of-way of linear corridors and had no other comments.

Follow-Up Required:

Address in route permit application.

Please contact the writer if errors are contained in this record, or if relevant information has been omitted.

c: Carole Schmidt, GRE
 Bob Lindholm, Minnesota Power/Allete

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1/04



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
ST. PAUL DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
190 FIFTH STREET EAST
ST. PAUL MN 55101-1638

January 23, 2006

Operations
Regulatory (2006-17-TWP)

Mr. Robert Lindholm
Minnesota Power
30 west Superior Street
Duluth, Minnesota 55802

Ms. Carole Schmidt
Great River Energy
17845 East Highway 10
P.O. Box 800
Elk River, Minnesota 55330

Dear Mr. Lindholm and Ms. Schmidt:

We have reviewed information about your proposed Tower Project in St. Louis County, Minnesota.

We believe that you may need a Department of the Army permit(s) for this activity. The discharge of dredged or fill material into any water of the United States, including most wetlands, is subject of Army Corps of Engineers jurisdiction under the Federal Clean Water Act.

Department of the Army general permit GP/LOP-98-MN authorizes certain activities associated with utility line discharges without the requirement to notify the Corps, as follows: Discharges of dredged or fill material associated with excavation, backfilling or bedding for electric, natural gas, fiber-optic, water and stormwater and sanitary sewer lines, including associated outfall and intake structures, provided that there is no change in preconstruction contours, no landclearing in more than 10,000 square feet of forested wetlands, and the portion of the utility line that is in waters of the U.S., including wetlands, is not more than 500 feet long. The utility project may not cause any wetland drainage.

Utility line projects which do not meet the criteria specified above, would require written authorization from the Corps. They may be eligible for authorization under the other GP/LOP-98-MN procedures, or may require a Corps individual permit.

If you have any questions, contact Tim Peterson in our Twp Harbors office at (218) 834-6630. In any correspondence or inquiries, please refer to the Regulatory number shown above.

Sincerely,



For Robert J. Whiting
Chief, Regulatory Branch

Enclosure

United States Department of Agriculture



Natural Resources Conservation Service
230 1st Street S, Suite 104
Virginia, MN 55792-2669

*Helping People
Help the Land*

RECEIVED AUG 18 2006

Phone: (218)741-3937
FAX: (218)741-9407

August 16, 2006

Carole Schmidt
Great River Energy
17845 E Highway 10
PO Box 800
Elk River MN 55330

RE: Tower 115 kV Transmission Project – St. Louis County

Dear Ms. Schmidt:

I have reviewed the proposed routes for the 115 kV transmission project in the Tower area. Enclosed you will find preliminary soil maps in the area of the proposed line. I have highlighted soil map units within or near the corridors that are soils of statewide importance. There are no prime or unique soils in the corridors.

I have also included a conversion legend that can be used to find additional information about the soils in the area. Because our soil survey is in progress, we are not on web soil survey but you may want to visit the Soil Data Mart for additional information. See <http://soildatamart.nrcs.usda.gov/Default.aspx>.

If you need additional information from our office please feel free to contact us.

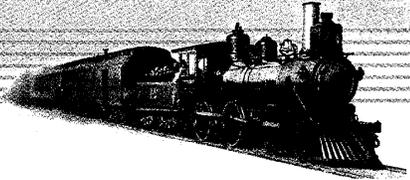
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Marjorie A. Sella".

Marjorie A Sella
District Conservationist

Enc.

**St. Louis & Lake Counties
REGIONAL RAILROAD AUTHORITY**



November 17, 2005

Bob Lindholm
Minnesota Power
30 West Superior Street
Duluth, MN 55802

Carole Schmidt
Great River Energy
PO Box 800
Elk River, MN 55330

Re: Tower Area 115 kV Transmission Project

Dear Ms. Schmidt and Mr. Lindholm:

We have been aware of the proposed transmission line planned between Embarrass and Tower and have reviewed the proposed transmission line corridor.

We would like to make you aware of a project we have been working on called Mesabi Trail which is a planned recreation trail located between Grand Rapids and Ely. For the most part, this trail is in place between Grand Rapids and Biwabik/Giants Ridge and plans are being developed for further trail extension from Giants Ridge to Embarrass, see enclosed map.

In year 2002, we performed an East Segment Trail Routing Study of possible trail locations between Biwabik and Ely, a copy of selected pages of that study are enclosed. The study identified the former DM&IR Railroad grade between Embarrass and Tower as a possible location for Mesabi Trail and also falls within the proposed transmission line corridor. We have not furthered this work and at this time, is only a conceptual location for the trail.

Mesabi Trail has been located adjacent to existing Minnesota Power transmission lines in areas between the cities of Eveleth and Gilbert and from Mt. Iron to Kinney and we believe the trail and transmission corridors are compatible. We ask that if you select the former DM&IR Railroad grade as the location for the proposed transmission line, Mesabi Trail be considered for collocation within this corridor, thank you.

Sincerely,

Bob Manzoline
Director

801 SW Hwy 169 - Suite 4 - Chisholm, MN 55719-0627
Phone 218-254-0086 - Fax 218-254-7972





STATE OF
MINNESOTA
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Region II Headquarters
1201 East Highway 2
Grand Rapids, Minnesota 55744

June 24, 2005

Carole Schmidt
Great River Energy
17845 E. Highway 10
PO Box 800
Elk River, MN 55330

Dear Ms. Schmidt:

Thank you for contacting the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) on June 1, 2005 concerning the **Tower 115 kV Transmission Line Project** being considered in St. Louis County. Your letter indicated that Great River Energy & Minnesota Power will be seeking certification for this project and that you are currently gathering data to be used in preparation for several applications and approvals.

This is a reply to your inquiry about permits needed to cross state land. A "License for Utility to Cross State Land" is required for any state land administered by DNR anticipated to be crossed by this transmission line. A separate "License for Utility to Cross Public Waters" is required if public waters are crossed by this project. A separate water crossing license would probably be issued for all the water crossings related to the project. Both the land and water crossing licenses would be subject to Department review and approval. Utility licenses will be not issued until after environmental review is completed.

Future questions regarding land and water license applications can be directed me at 218-999-7894. Prior to submitting your license applications, please contact me to review the license application process.

Please note that your letter has been forwarded to Tom Balcom and Matt Langan of the Environmental Review section in the Department. Future questions about environmental concerns related to your proposal can be directed to Matt Langan at 651-297-3359.

Sincerely,

Joe Rokala
Northeast Lands & Minerals Regional Supervisor

Cc: Alan Jones, Forestry - St. Paul
Mike Magnuson, Forestry - Tower
Paul Peterson, Forestry - Grand Rapids
Greg Kvale, Forestry - Brainerd
Matt Langan, Ecological Services - St. Paul

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe



George Goggeye, Chairman
Arthur "Archie" LaRose, Secretary/Treasurer

District I Representative
Burton "Luke" Wilson

District II Representative
Lyman L. Losh

District III Representative
Donald "Mick" Finn

September 12, 2005

RECEIVED SEP 19 2005

Great River Energy
Attn: Carole Schmidt
17845 E. Highway 10
P. O. Box 800
Elk River, MN 55330

RE: **Proposed Tower 115 kV Transmission Project**
St. Louis County, Minnesota
LL-THPO Number: 05-199-NCRI

Dear Ms. Schmidt:

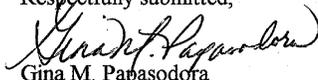
Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the above-referenced project. It has been reviewed pursuant to the responsibilities given the Tribal Historic Preservation Officer by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended in 1992 and the Procedures of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (38CFR800).

I have reviewed the documentation; after careful consideration of our records, I have determined that the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe does not have any concerns regarding sites of religious or cultural importance in this area.

Should any human remains or suspected human remains be encountered, all work shall cease and the following personnel should be notified immediately in this order: County Sheriff's Office and Office of the State Archaeologist.

You may contact me at (218) 335-2940 if you have questions regarding our review of this project. Please refer to the LL-THPO Number as stated above in all correspondence with this project.

Respectfully submitted,



Gina M. Papisodora
Tribal Historic Preservation Officer

Leech Lake Tribal Historic Preservation Office * Established in 1996
6530 U.S. 2 NW * Cass Lake, Minnesota 56633
(218) 335-2940 * FAX (218) 335-2974
llthpo@hotmail.com



BOIS FORTE
Reservation Tribal Council

5344 Lakeshore Dr. • Box 16 • Nett Lake, MN 55772 • 218-757-3261 • FAX 218-757-3312

September 15, 2005

RECEIVED SEP 19 2005

Carol L. Schmidt
Great River Energy
17845 E. Highway 10
P.O. Box 800
Elk River, MN 55330

RE: Tower 115 kV Transmission Projects

Dear Ms. Schmidt;

This letter is in response to notification of the proposed Tower 115kV Transmission Project in St. Louis County, Minnesota. The Bois Forte Band appreciates the opportunity to comment on this project.

The Bois Forte Band is unaware of any cultural resources within the proposed right-of-way. The area through which the proposed trail is routed was inhabited by members of the Bois Forte Band prior to Euro-American settlement. Band members continued to use the area for hunting, gathering plants, sugaring and fishing sporadically through the latter half of the 19th century. Therefore, the proposed Transmission project has the potential to impact cultural resources affiliated with the Bois Forte Band and an archaeological inventory is recommended within the right-of-way.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to comment on this project. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 218-753-6017 or rozeberens@yahoo.com.

Sincerely;

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rosemary Berens".

Rosemary Berens
Tribal Historic Preservation Officer

cc Barbara Brodeen
Bill Latady