



27 February 2007

### **Additional Transmission Line Route Alternatives to be Studied**

Minnesota Power (MP), Duluth, and Great River Energy (GRE), Elk River (collectively the “Applicants”) are proposing to construct a high voltage transmission line, substation, and switching station to improve system reliability for customers in the Tower, Ely, Babbitt, Embarrass, and Lake Vermilion area. On December 22, 2006, MP and GRE submitted a Route Permit application for the project to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (Commission) pursuant to the Alternative Permitting Process contained in Minn. Rules 4400.2000 to 4400.2950, and Minn. Stat. §§ 216E.01 to 216E.18 (the Minnesota Power Plant Siting Act).

MP and GRE have studied the power service to the region and the Commission determined in an order dated May 25, 2006 that new electrical facilities are needed to meet existing electric load and future electric load requirements. The proposed plan to address the transmission system voltage issues in the area includes the following:

- GRE will construct and own approximately 14 miles of new 115 kV transmission line from near Tower, MN to near Embarrass, MN.
- MP will construct and own a new 115/46 kV substation near Tower and two 46 kV lines from the new Tower Substation to the existing 46 kV system serving the area. The substation would be designed for future addition of 69 kV facilities to serve GRE’s growing needs in the west Lake Vermilion area.
- MP will construct and own a new 115 kV switching station to be located adjacent to the two MP 115 kV lines near Embarrass.

MP and GRE, as public utilities, have been granted the right to exercise eminent domain by the State of Minnesota for projects deemed to be for the public good. MP and GRE plan to acquire voluntary easements through fair negotiations with landowners along the route determined by the Commission.

The Minnesota Department of Commerce (DOC) prepares an Environmental Assessment (EA) on the project and the Commission is required to make a permit decision within six months of accepting the Route Permit application. As part of its process, the DOC held a public meeting at the Embarrass Town Hall on February 13, 2007. This meeting served as the scoping meeting for the EA, in which the public had an opportunity to comment on the scope of the EA and suggest alternative routes for evaluation.

**You are receiving this letter because during the February 13 meeting and a subsequent meeting in Tower with a smaller landowner group on February 21, two alternative “citizen” routes were proposed that are outside the Applicants’**

**proposed HVTL route. These alternatives are located in the northern portion of the project as shown on the attached map. MP and GRE wanted to ensure that the landowners that may potentially be affected by these alternative routes were notified and given time to provide comment to the DOC. The deadline for submitting comments on the scope of the Environmental Assessment has been extended to March 9, 2007. You may submit your comments to:**

Bill Storm, State Planning Director  
Energy Planning and Advocacy  
Routing & Siting Unit  
Minnesota Department of Commerce  
85 7th Place East, Suite 500  
St. Paul, MN 55101-2198  
651-296-9535

The Commission will hold a public hearing on the application in the Tower-Embarrass area once the EA has been completed.

For more information about the Route Permit application or to have your name included on the contact list for this project, contact. You may also add your name to the project interest list at:

<http://energyfacilities.puc.state.mn.us/>

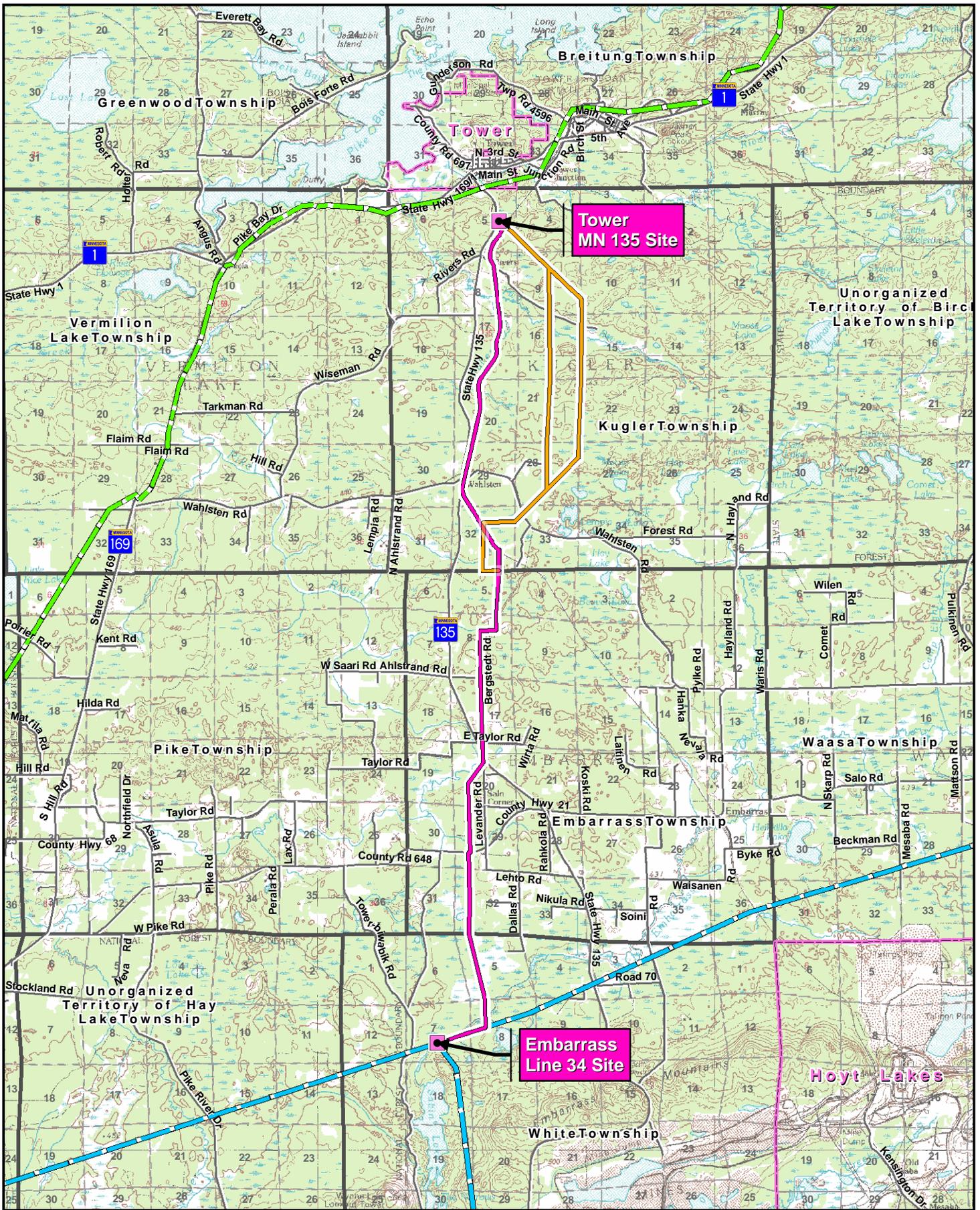
Ms. Deborah Pile is the public advisor on this project. You may contact her at the address listed above or call 651-297-2375.

Current information about the project and a copy of the Route Permit application are available online at [www.GreatRiverEnergy.com](http://www.GreatRiverEnergy.com). Click on the "Projects & Studies," then "Power Lines," buttons on the home page. Copies of the application are also available at the Tower City Hall, 602 Main Street and the Embarrass Town Hall, 7503 Levander Road. Information on the project may also be obtained by calling Bob Lindholm at 218-722-5642, ext. 3342 or Carole Schmidt at 763-241-2272, or emailing [rlindholm@allete.com](mailto:rlindholm@allete.com) or [projects@grenergy.com](mailto:projects@grenergy.com).

Sincerely,

MINNESOTA POWER

GREAT RIVER ENERGY



Project Number  
AMNPOW0507.01

February  
2007

**Legend**

- Proposed Substation Sites
- HVTL Proposed Route (300ft width)
- HVTL Proposed Public Land Route (300ft width)
- Existing MP 46kV Transmission Line
- Existing MP 115kV Transmission Line
- Roads
- PLS Section Lines (+/- 50' to 200')
- Municipal Boundaries
- Civil Township Boundaries

Map Document: (S:\K\MM\mpow\050700\GIS\AMNPOW050700\Figure 6-1 Proposed Route 8\_5x11 P.mxd)  
2/27/2007 -- 9:47:54 AM

Source: USGS, MNDNR, LMC, EOB, MNDOT, and SEH.  
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Projection:  
UTM, Zone 15, Meters  
NAD83

**Minnesota Power  
Great River Energy**

Figure 1-3

**Proposed  
Route**