

10.0 AGENCY INVOLVEMENT, PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND PERMITS/ APPROVALS NEEDED

10.1 Agency Contacts

Several agencies were contacted for their input on the Project, including the MDNR, SHPO, MNDOT, USFWS, USACE and Tribal groups. Responses are provided in Appendix C.

10.2 Public Participation Opportunities

MP and GRE held several public meetings prior to and as a part of the submittal of the Certification Application (November 2005) and the Route Permit Application (December 2006). The dates and locations for the public information meetings and the Department of Commerce Environmental Report Scoping meeting are:

- July 21, 2005 Tower Civic Center
- August 3, 2005 Embarrass Town Hall
- September 29, 2005 Embarrass Town Hall
- December 8, 2005 Environmental Report Scoping Meeting
Embarrass Town Hall
- August 17, 2006 Tower Civic Center

The information meetings were an “Open House” arrangement that facilitated an informal opportunity for landowners to ask questions about any aspect of the Project.

10.3 Identification of Landowners

The list of landowners identified to be within or adjacent to the Proposed Route and/or substation/switching station sites is provided in Appendix D.

10.4 Required Permits and Approvals

A list of permits potentially required for the Project is provided in Table 10-1.

10.4.1 Local Approvals

Road Crossing Permits

These permits may be required to cross or occupy county, township and city road right-of-way.

Table 10-1 Permits/Approvals That May Be Required

Permit	Jurisdiction
LOCAL APPROVALS	
Road Crossing Permits	County, Township
Land Permits	County, Township, City
Building Permits	County, Township, City
Over-width Load Permits	County, Township, City
Driveway/Access Permits	County, Township, City
STATE OF MINNESOTA APPROVALS	
Route Permit (Alternative Review Process)	Commission
Utility Permit (highway crossings)	MNDOT
License to Cross Public Waters	MDNR – Division of Lands and Minerals
License to Cross State Lands	MDNR – Division of Lands and Minerals
National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit	MPCA
Section 401 Water Quality Certification	MPCA
FEDERAL APPROVALS	
Section 404 Approval	USACE
Environmental Approval	RUS

Lands Permits

These permits may be required to occupy county, township and city lands, such as park lands, watershed districts and other properties owned by these entities.

Building Permits

These permits may be required by the local jurisdictions for substation/switching station construction.

Over-width Loads Permits

These permits may be required to move over-width loads on county, township or city roads.

Driveway/Access Permits

These permits may be required to construct access roads or driveways from county, township or city roadways.

10.4.2 State of Minnesota Approvals

Route Permit (Alternative Review Process)

A Route Permit under the Alternative Process requires the Applicants to be eligible as outlined in Minnesota Rules 4400.2000.

Utility Permit

A permit from the MNDOT is required for construction, placement or maintenance of utility lines to be placed adjacent or across the highway right-of-way. These permits would be acquired once the line design is completed.

License to Cross Public Waters/State Lands

The MDNR Division of Lands and Minerals regulates utility crossings over, under or across any state land or Public Water identified on the Public Waters and Wetlands maps. A license to cross Public Waters is required under Minn. Stat. § 84.415 and Minn. Rules Chapter 6135 (see letter of June 24, 2005, Appendix C). The Applicants work closely with the MDNR on these permits and would file for them once the line design is complete.

NPDES Permit

An NPDES permit is required for stormwater discharges associated with construction activities that result in soil disturbance equal to or greater than one acre at a site. A requirement of the permit is to develop and implement a SWPPP, which includes BMPs to minimize discharge of pollutants from the site. The Applicants would review the need for an NPDES permit for work at the Tower Substation and the Embarrass Switching Station.

10.4.3. Federal Approvals

Section 404 Approval

Utilities require Section 404 approval from the USACE when filling of a wetland or water of the United States is required. Section 404 approvals are not expected to be required for this Project.

Section 401 Certification

A Section 401 Water Quality Certification is required when federal approval for a project is required (i.e., RUS or a USACE Individual Permit).

RUS Approval

A utility that requests financial assistance from the RUS must demonstrate environmental compliance and obtain environmental approval prior to construction of a transmission line.