United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Twin Cities Field Office
4101 East 80th Street
Bloomington, Minnesota 55425-1665

DEC 26 2001

Ms. Michelle F. Bissonette
Project Manager
HDR Engineering, Inc.
Suite 106
600 South Cliff Avenue
Sioux Falls, South Dakota 57104-5320

Dear Ms. Bissonette:

This responds to your October 23, 2001, letter, requesting information on threatened and endangered species in the area of proposed transmission line upgrade from the Chisago County substation to the St. Croix River. The project site is located in Sections 1, 12, 13, 24, 25, 36 of T34N, R21W; Sections 15, 16, 20, 21, 22, 25, 25, 26, 27 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36 of T34N, R20W; Sections 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35 of T34N, R19W; Sections 19, 30 of T34N, R18W; in the Cities of Center City, Lindstrom and Taylors Falls; and Townships of Chisago Lake and Shafer; Chisago County, Minnesota. Xcel Energy is proposing to construct a double to single-circuit 115kV transmission line upgrade from the Chisago substation to the dam at Taylors Falls. The following information responds to potential impacts of the proposed project.

The federally threatened bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) has been documented to nest in the SE1/4 of the SE1/4 of Section 35, T34N, R20W (see enclosed map), southeast of Center City. In addition, the federally endangered winged mapleleaf (*Quadrula fragosa*) and Higgins' eye pearly mussel (*Lampsilis higginsi*) are documented to live in the St. Croix River immediately downstream of the dam at Taylors Falls.

Electric transmission lines pose electrocution hazard to large birds of prey (raptors) that find such structures attractive perching sites. Several effective design techniques have been developed that significantly reduce this hazard. We encourage you to incorporate raptor protection designs whenever practicable. Tower designs using guy wires for support which are proposed to be located in known raptor or waterbird concentration areas or daily movement routes, or in major diurnal migratory bird movement routes or stopover sites, should have daytime visual markers on the wires to prevent collisions by these diurnally moving species. (For guidance on markers, see *Avian Power Line Interaction Committee (APLIC). 1994. Mitigating Bird Collisions with Power Lines: The State of the Art in 1994. Edison Electric Institute, Washington, D.C., 78 pp,* and *Avian Power Line Interaction Committee. 1996. Suggested Practices for Raptor Protection*

on Power Lines. Edison Electric Institute/Raptor Research Foundation, Washington, D.C., 128 pp. Copies can be obtained via the Internet at http://www.eei.org/resources/pubcat/enviro/, or by calling 1-800/334-5453).

Eagle-nesting territories are divided into primary and secondary management zones, within each of which certain human activities have been found to disturb the nesting process. Such disturbance is defined by the restrictions recommended for each zone. The primary zone is the most critical area immediately around the nest. Except under unusual circumstances (e.g.. where a particular pair of eagles is known to be tolerant of closer human activity), the boundary of the primary zone shall not be less than 330 feet from the nest. The size should be adjusted by the actual use of the area around the nest tree to include frequently used perch trees. Where isolated groups of trees are likely to blow down, the primary zone should not be less than 20 acres and the opinion of a qualified forester should be obtained in order to take measures to minimize that likelihood. Major land uses such as logging, the development of new commercial and industrial sites, the building of new homes, road and other construction, and mining are likely to cause disturbance to eagles and, therefore, should not occur within the primary nesting zone. In addition, certain human activities are likely to disturb eagles during the critical period. The critical period is the time between the arrival of adults at the nest site and three weeks after the fledgling of any young. In the Upper Midwest, the critical period will usually fall between March 1 and July 31. During the first twelve weeks of the critical period, eagles are most vulnerable to disturbance.

The purpose of the secondary zone is to further minimize disturbance and will be determined by local topography and resulting visibility from the nest. It lies outside the primary zone and is approximately circular, with a minimum boundary of 660 feet from the nest. If disturbance would be clearly visible from the nest in a particular direction, the secondary zone should extend ¼ mile in that direction. Certain human activities of a permanent nature are likely to disturb eagles, and they should not, therefore, occur within the secondary zone. These include the development of new commercial and industrial sites, the building of new homes, the building of new roads and trails facilitating access to the nest, and the use of chemicals toxic to eagles. Human entry into the secondary zone should be avoided during the critical period.

Given the location and type of activity proposed, we have determined that the project is not likely to adversely affect the bald eagle, the winged mapleleaf mussel or the Higgins' eye pearly mussel. This precludes the need for further action on this project as required under section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended. However, if the project is modified or new information becomes available which indicates that listed species may occur in the affected area, consultation with this office should be reinitiated.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment and look forward to working with you in the future.

If you have questions regarding our comments, please call Mr. R. Nicholas Rowse of my staff at (612) 725-3548, extension 210.

Sincerely,

Dan P. Stinnett
Field Supervisor

Enclosure

cc: Ms. Pam Perry, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Brainerd, MN

Route Comparison Tables[1]

Segment	Length (miles)	# of Poles	Corridor Sharing			Total ROW	# of Residences	Residential Distances from Line (feet)				Wetlands Spanned	# of PWI Waters Spanned	# of Scientific and Natural Areas Crossed	# of Recreational Areas Crosse
			Type	Length	%			0-40	40-100	100-200	200-300				
Section 1															
Section 2															
Section 3															
Route Total															

Route Comparison Tables[1]

	Section 1					Section 2					Section 3				
Land Use	**LU%**	**Road ROW**	**Temp Impacts (Poles)**	**Total Temp Impacts**	**Total Perm Impacts**	**LU%**	**Road ROW**	**Temp Impacts (Poles)**	**Total Temp Impacts**	**Total Perm Impacts**	**LU%**	**Road ROW**	**Temp Impacts (Poles)**	**Total Temp Impacts**	**Total Perm Impacts**
Agricultural															
Grassland															
Commercial															
Industrial															
Residential															
Other															
Total															

	Route Totals				
Land Use	**LU%**	**Road ROW**	**Temporary Impacts (Poles)**	**Total Temporary Impacts**	**Total Permanent Impacts**
Agricultural					
Grassland					
Commercial					
Industrial					
Residential					
Other					
Total					

Assumptions:

1. Numbers are represented in acres, unless otherwise indicated.
2. Number of poles was calculated using the anticipated 600-foot span between poles, which was divided into the length of each route and/or route section.
3. Total ROW was calculated using a 45 to 80 width (ROW) depending on the location of the transmission line along the length of each route and/or route section.
4. New Road ROW was calculated using a 20-foot width, which accounts for the temporary construction access road ROW along the each route and/or route section.
5. Temp Impacts (Poles) was calculated assuming a 2000 square foot area around each pole. This number takes into account the Road ROW calculated in Assumption #3, so the impacted area around the pole is not counted twice.
6. Total Temp (Temporary) Impacts is the sum of the Road ROW and Temp Impacts (Poles).
7. Total Perm (Permanent) Impacts is assumed to be 50 square feet per pole.

A FAX MESSAGE FROM THE U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE TWIN CITIES FIELD OFFICE 4101 EAST 80TH STREET BLOOMINGTON, MINNESOTA 55425-1665

PAGE 1 OF 2 PAGES

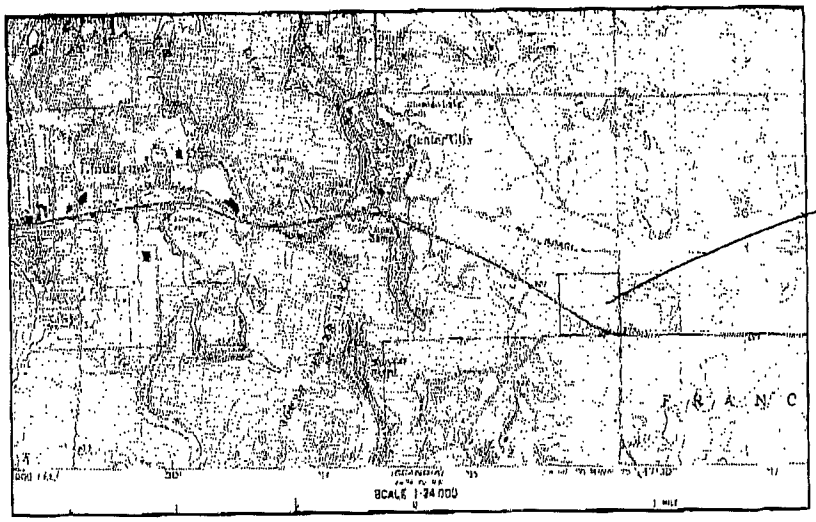
DATE: 5/15/03

FROM: NICK ROWSE - TWIN CITIES FIELD OFFICE PHONE: 612-725-3548 ext.210
FAX: 612-725-3609

TO: Angela Piner - HDR FAX: 763-591-5413

SUBJECT: Xcel Energy Transmission Line Upgrade, Chisago Co.

COMMENTS: The only concern I have is a bald eagle nesting site (see attached map). If you need me to send bald eagle nesting guidelines, please let me know. Other than that nest site, I have no other concerns.



T34N, R20W
SE6E 35
Bald Eagle Nesting
Area.

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
Natural Heritage and Nongame Research Program, Box 25
500 Lafayette Road
St. Paul, Minnesota 55155-40__
Phone: (651) 296-7863 Fax: (651) 296-1811 E-mail: sarah.hoffmann@dnr.state.mn.us

November 20, 2001

Michelle Bissonnette
HDR Engineering, Inc.
6190 Golden Hills Drive
Minneapolis, MN 55416

Re: Request for Natural Heritage information for vicinity of proposed Xcel Energy Transmission Line Upgrade, T34N R18W Sec. 19,30; T34N R19W Sec. 24-35; T34N R20W Sec. 25,26,29-36; and T34N R21W Sec. 1,12,13,24,25; Chisago County
NHNRP Contact #: ERDB 20020435

Dear Ms. Bissonnette,

The Minnesota Natural Heritage database has been reviewed to determine if any rare plant or animal species or other significant natural features are known to occur within an approximate ½-mile radius of the area indicated on the map enclosed with your information request. Based on this review, there are 119 known occurrences of rare species or natural communities in the area searched (for details, see enclosed database printout and explanation of selected fields). Following are specific comments for **only those elements that *may* be impacted** by the proposed project. Rare feature occurrences not listed below are not anticipated to be affected by the proposed project.

- The proposed transmission line route in T34N R21W Section 13 passes through an Oak Forest Natural Community within an area identified by the Minnesota County Biological Survey program as a Site of Biodiversity Significance (please refer to the enclosed Natural Communities and Rare Species Map of Chisago County for more detailed locational information). This community serves as a natural area corridor along the Sunrise River. To protect this Community, disturbance in the area should be minimized in all ways possible. This may include, but is not limited to, the following: (1) As much as possible, operate within already-disturbed areas; (2) Minimize vehicular disturbance in the area (allow only vehicles necessary for installation); (3) Do not park equipment or stockpile supplies in the area; (4) If possible, do work in autumn or winter, to avoid damaging plants during the growing season; (5) Reduce runoff by completing the work as rapidly as possible and using erosion control measures such as straw bales or silt fencing; (6) Revegetate disturbed soil with native species suitable to the local habitat as soon after construction as possible, to decrease the opportunity for exotic species to invade the area.

- The proposed transmission line in T34N R21W Sections 13 and 24 crosses the South Branch of the Sunrise River and in T34N R19W Sections 19 and 30 crosses the St. Croix River. Several rare mussel species are known to inhabit the Sunrise River in the project vicinity, and numerous mussel species have been reported from the St. Croix River. Freshwater mussels are declining nation-wide and have been described as one of North America's most imperiled groups of animals. In Minnesota, 25 of our 48 native mussel species are listed as either endangered, threatened, or of special concern. The primary reason behind the decline is the degradation of our

lakes and rivers as a result of runoff and physical changes such as damming, channelization, and dredging. This project should not be allowed to affect the water quality of the aforementioned rivers, as mussels are particularly vulnerable to deterioration in water quality, especially increased siltation. All standard precautions available (such as silt fencing and rapid revegetation of disturbed soil) to prevent sediment moving into the river should be taken. Some more precautions which may be taken to ensure no sediment enters the river are listed below. These precautions may or may not be applicable to your particular project: (1) Erodible surfaces should not be left exposed for greater than 1 day if work is not ongoing daily (e.g., work should not commence late in the week if the work is going to be left unfinished over a weekend or over a holiday); (2) Work should not commence if rain is predicted; (3) All wheeled or tracked construction equipment should be restricted to work areas above the stream bank; (4) Fill material should not be stockpiled in the floodplain; (5) Backfill placed below Ordinary High Water (OHW) should consist of clean granular material free of fines, silts, soils, and mud.

- Blanding's Turtles (*Emydoidea blandingii)*, a state-listed threatened species, are reported from the immediate vicinity of the project between the Chisago Substation and Lindstrom. Blanding's Turtles spend much of their time in shallow wetlands (1-3 feet deep), but they nest in open, sandy uplands up to 1 mile from wetlands. Nesting is in June and eggs hatch in September, at which time young turtles enter deep wetlands where they over-winter in soft sediments. Factors believed to contribute to the decline of this species include wetland drainage and degradation, development on upland nesting areas, and possibly collection for the pet trade. In addition, because of the tendency for Blanding's Turtles to travel long distances over land, they are often forced to cross roads in developed areas. Many of the records we have of Blanding's Turtles are from turtles killed crossing roads.

  For your information, I have attached a fact sheet and a flyer about the Blanding's Turtle. The fact sheet is intended to provide you with background information regarding habitat use, life history, and reasons for the specie's decline, as well as recommendations for avoiding and minimizing impacts to this rare turtle. As you will note, there are two lists of recommendations. The first list contains recommendations to prevent harm to turtles during construction work, and is relative to all areas inhabited by Blanding's Turtles. The second column expands on the first column, and contains greater protective measures to be considered for areas known to be of state-wide importance to Blanding's Turtles, or any area where greater protection for turtles is desired. The transmission line segment in T34N R21W Sections 12, 13 and 24 is within such a priority area. These areas have been determined by the DNR to be locations of highest priority for research and management activities, and are relied upon to maintain the species' security in the state Please refer to the second column of recommendations for this area, and to the first column for all other sites. The flyer, which should be given to all contractors working in the area, contains an illustration and description of the Blanding's Turtle, as well as a summary of the recommendations provided in the fact sheet.

- Five-lined Skinks (*Eumeces fasciatus*), a species of special concern are known to occur near Taylors Falls, in the vicinity of the proposed transmission route in T34N R19W Section 25. In Minnesota, habitat for Five-lined Skinks has been characterized as sites on or near granite outcrops or exposed limestone and sandstone outcrops within wooded ravines. Based on your map and cover letter, it appears that the transmission line is to be constructed underground at this location. We are concerned about loss of habitat for this species, as this skink population is disjunct from the remaining populations in the state. We would like to see additional information regarding how large of an area will be disturbed and planned construction methods.

The Natural Heritage database is maintained by the Natural Heritage and Nongame Research Program, a unit within the Division of Ecological Services, Department of Natural Resources. It is continually updated as new information becomes available, and is the most complete source of data on Minnesota's rare or otherwise significant species, natural communities, and other natural features. Its purpose is to foster better understanding and protection of these features.

Because our information is not based on a comprehensive inventory, there may be rare or otherwise significant natural features in the state that are not represented in the database. A county-by-county survey of rare natural features is now underway, and has been completed for Chisago County. Our information about natural communities is, therefore, quite thorough for that county. However, because survey work for rare plants and animals is less exhaustive, and because there has not been an on-site survey of all areas of the county, ecologically significant features for which we have no records may exist on the project area.

The enclosed results of the database search are provided in two formats: index and full record. To control the release of locational information which might result in the damage or destruction of a rare element, both printout formats are copyrighted.

The index provides rare feature locations only to the nearest section, and may be reprinted, unaltered, in an Environmental Assessment Worksheet, municipal natural resource plan, or report compiled by your company for the project listed above. If you wish to reproduce the index for any other purpose, please contact me to request written permission. Copyright notice for the index should include the following disclaimer:

> "Copyright (year) State of Minnesota, Department of Natural Resources. This index may be reprinted, unaltered, in Environmental Assessment Worksheets, municipal natural resource plans, and internal reports. For any other use, written permission is required."

The full-record printout includes more detailed locational information, and is for your personal use only. If you wish to reprint the full-record printouts for any purpose, please contact me to request written permission.

Please be aware that review by the Natural Heritage and Nongame Research Program focuses only on *rare natural features*. It does not constitute review or approval by the Department of Natural Resources as a whole. If you require further information on the environmental review process for other wildlife-related issues, you may contact your Regional Environmental Assessment Ecologist, Mike North, at (218) 828-2433.

An invoice for the work completed is enclosed. You are being billed for map and database search and staff scientist review. Please forward this invoice to your Accounts Payable Department. Thank you for consulting us on this matter, and for your interest in preserving Minnesota's rare natural resources.

Sincerely,

Sarah Hoffmann

Sarah D. Hoffmann
Endangered Species Environmental Review Coordinator

encl: Database search results
Rare Feature Database Print-Outs: An Explanation of Fields
Fact sheets: Blandin's Turtles, Five-lined Skink
Natural Communities and Rare Species Map: Chisago County
Invoice

cc: Mike North, Regional Environmental Assessment Ecologist
Pam Perry, Regional Nongame Specialist

Rare Features Database Print-outs: An Explanation of Fields

The Rare Features database is part of the Natural Heritage Information System, and is maintained by the Natural Heritage and Nongame Research Program, a unit within the Section of Ecological Services, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR).

Field Name: [Full (non-abreviated) field name, if different]. Further explanation of field.

-C-

CBS Site: [County Biological Survey site number]. In each county, the numbering system begins with 1.

CLASS: A code which classifies features by broad taxonomic group: NC = natural community; SA = special animal; SP = special plant; GP = geologic process; GT = geologic time; OT = other (e.g. colonial waterbird colonies, bat hibernacula).

Cty: [County]. Minnesota counties (ordered alphabetically) are numbered from 1 (Aitkin) to 87 (Yellow Medicine).

CURRENT STATUS: Present protection status, from 0 (owner is not aware of record) to 9 (dedicated as a Scientific and Natural Area).

-D-

DNR Region: 1=NW, 2=NE, 3=E Central, 4=SW, 5=SE, 6= Minneapolis/St. Paul Metro.

DNR Quad: [DNR Quadrangle code]. DNR-assigned code of the U.S. Geologic Survey topographic map on which the rare feature occurs.

-E-

ELEMENT or Element: See "Element Name (Common Name)"

Element Name (Common Name): The name of the rare feature. For plant and animal species records, this field holds the scientific name, followed by the common name in parentheses; for all other elements (such as plant communities, which have no scientific name) it is solely the element name.

EO RANK: [Element Occurrence Rank]. An evaluation of the quality and condition of natural communities from A (highest) to D (lowest).

EO Size: [Element Occurrence Size]. The size in acres (often estimated) of natural communities.

-F-

FED STATUS: [Federal Status]. Status of species under the Federal Endangered Species Law: LE=endangered, LT=threatened, C=species which have been proposed for federal listing.

Federal Status: See "FED STATUS"

Forestry District: The Minnesota DNR's Division of Forestry district number.

-G-

GLOBAL RANK: The abundance of an element globally, from G1 (critically imperiled due to extreme rarity on a world-wide basis) to G5 (demonstrably secure, though perhaps rare in parts of its range). Global ranks are determined by the Conservation Science Division of The Nature Conservancy.

-I-

INTENDED STATUS: Desired protection status. See also "CURRENT STATUS." If a complete list of protection status codes is needed, please contact the Natural Heritage Program.

-L-

LAST OBSERVED or Last Observed Date or Last Observation: Date of the most recent record of the element at the location.

Latitude: The location at which the occurrence is mapped on Natural Heritage Program maps. NOTE: There are various levels of precision in the original information, but this is not reflected in the latitude/longitude data. For some of the data, particularly historical records, it was not possible to determine exactly where the original observation was made (e.g. "Fort Snelling", or "the south shore of Lake Owasso"). Thus the latitude/longitude reflect the mapped location, and not necessarily the observation location.

Legal: Township, range and section numbers.

Long: [Longitude]. See NOTE under "Latitude"

-M-

MANAGED AREA or Managed Area(s): Name of the federally, state, locally, or privately managed park, forest, preserve, etc., containing the occurrence, if any. If this field is blank, the element probably occurs on private land. If "(STATUTORY BOUNDARY)" occurs after the name of a managed area, the location may be a private inholding within the statutory boundary of a state forest or park.

Map Sym: [Map Symbol].

MN STATUS: [Minnesota Status]. Legal status of plant and animal species under the Minnesota endangered species law:

END=endangered, THR=threatened, SPC=special concern, NON= no legal status, but rare and may become listed if declines continue. This field is blank for natural communities and colonial waterbird nesting sites, which have no legal status in Minnesota, but are tracked by the database.

-N-

NC Rank: [Natural Community Rank].

-O-

Occ #: [Occurrence Number]. The occurrence number, in combination with the element name, uniquely identifies each record.

OCCURRENCE NUMBER: See "Occ #"

OF OCCURS: The number of records existent in the database for each element within the area searched.

Ownership: Indicates whether the site is publicly or privately owned; for publicly owned land, the agency with management responsibility is listed.

-P-

Precision: Precision of locational information of occurrence: C (confirmed) = known within 1/4 mile radius, U (unconfirmed) = known within 1/2 mile, N (non-specific) = known within 1 mile, G (general) = occurs within the general region, X (unmappable)=location is unmappable on USGS topographic quadrangles (often known only to the nearest county), O (obscure/gone)=element no longer exists at the location.

PS: [Primary Section]. The section containing all or the greatest part of the occurrence.

-Q-

Quad Map: See "DNR Quad"

-R-

Rec #: [Record number].

RNG or Rng: [Range number].

-S-

SECTION or Section: [Section number(s)]. Some records are given only to the nearest section (s), but most are given to the nearest quarter-section or quarter-quarter-section (e.g., SWNW32 denotes the SW1/4 of the NW1/4 of section 32). A "0" is used as a place holder when a half-section is specified (e.g., 0N03 refers to the north 1/2 of section 3). When a occurrence crosses section boundaries, both sections are listed, without punctuation (e.g., the NE1/4 of section 19 and NW1/4 of section 20 is displayed as "NE19NW20").

Site: A name which refers to the geographic area within which the occurrence lies. If no name for the area exists (a locally used name, for example), one is assigned by the County Biological Survey or the Natural Heritage Program.

Source: The collector or observer of the rare feature occurrence.

S RANK: [State Rank]. A rank assigned to the natural community type which reflects the known extent and condition of that community in Minnesota. Ranks range from 1 (in greatest need of conservation action in the state) to 5 (secure under present conditions). A "?" following a rank indicates little information is available to rank the community. Communities for which information is especially scarce are given a "U", for "rank undetermined". The ranks do not represent a legal status. They are used by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources to set priorities for research, inventory and conservation planning. The state ranks are updated as inventory information becomes available.

State Status: See "MN STATUS"

-T-

TWP or Twp: [Township number].

-V-

Verification: A reflection of the reliability of the information on which the record is based. The highest level of reliability is "verified," which usually indicates a collection was made or, in the case of bird records, nesting was observed. Plant records based on collections made before 1970 are unverified.

Voucher: The museum or herbarium where specimens are maintained, and the accession number assigned by the repository. In the case of bald eagles, this is the breeding area number.

-W-

Wildlife Area: The Minnesota DNR's Section of Wildlife administrative number.

Data Security

Locations of some rare features must be treated as sensitive information because widespread knowledge of these locations could result in harm to the rare features. For example, wildflowers such as orchids and economically valuable plants such as ginseng are vulnerable to exploitation by collectors; other species, such as bald eagles, are sensitive to disturbance by observers. For this reason, we prefer that publications not identify the precise locations of vulnerable species. We suggest describing the location only to the nearest section. If this is not acceptable for your purposes, please call and discuss this issue with the Environmental Review Specialist for the Heritage and Nongame Research Program at 651/296-7863.

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
Natural Heritage and Nongame Research Program, Box 25
500 Lafayette Road
St. Paul, Minnesota 55155-40__
Phone: (651) 296-7863 Fax: (651) 296-1811 E-mail: sarah.hoffmann@dnr.state.mn.us

April 11, 2003

Michelle Bissonnette
HDR Engineering, Inc.
6190 Golden Hills Drive
Minneapolis, MN 55416

Re: Request for Natural Heritage information for vicinity of proposed Xcel Energy Transmission Line Upgrade, Chisago County
NHNRP Contact #: ERDB 20020435-2

Dear Ms. Bissonnette,

I received your letter dated March 24, 2003 inquiring as to whether we have any additional information or concerns related to the above referenced transmission line upgrade. We do not have any further comments on the project at this time. Thank you for consulting us on this matter, and for your interest in preserving Minnesota's rare natural resources.

Sincerely,

Chandra Cowett for

Sarah D. Hoffmann
Endangered Species Environmental Review Coordinator

MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE

RECEIVED

DEC - 4 2001

HDR Engineering, Inc.

November 21, 2001

Ms. Michelle F. Bissonnette
HDR Engineering, Inc.
Suite 106
600 S. Cliff Avenue
Sioux Falls, SD 57104-5320

RE: Xcel Energy, transmission line upgrade
HDR Project No. 06794-076-164
Chisago County
SHPO Number: 2002-0417

Dear Ms. Bissonnette

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).

There are numerous recorded archaeological sites in the project area. A more detailed assessment of the specific project work and the need for survey should be completed.

Contact our office at 651-296-5462 with questions or concerns. Please refer to the SHPO Number above in any correspondence.

Sincerely,

Dennis A. Gimmestad
Government Programs and Compliance Officer

MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

April 30, 2003

Ms. Michelle Bissonnette
HDR Engineering
6190 Golden Hills Drive
Minneapolis, MN 55416-1567

Re: Xcel Energy, Transmission Line Upgrade
Chisago County
SHPO Number: 2002-0417

Dear Ms. Bissonnette:

Thank you for your letter regarding the above referenced project.

Your letter indicates that you are now addressing the need for surveys of the project area. You have completed the data search for recorded and listed properties. Given the nature of the project work, it may be sufficient to take into account the previously recorded archaeological sites without any additional survey. However, since you are presumably more familiar with the details of the project and the current conditions in the project area, we would appreciate your recommendation about the need for archaeological survey and/or architectural surveys.

In addition, any federal agencies with Section 106 responsibilities should be identified at this time so that they can be involved in survey decisions. This will help to avoid unnecessary delays at a later stage.

We look forward to working with you in completing this review. Contact us at 651-296-5462 with questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Dennis A. Gimmestad
Government Programs & Compliance Officer

345 Kellogg Boulevard West / Saint Paul, Minnesota 55102-1906 / Telephone 651-296-6126