

Appendix D
Agency Letters



February 9, 2007

Mr. Tom Balcom, Environmental Review Supervisor
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
500 Lafayette Road, Box 25
St. Paul, MN 55155

RE: Bemidji – Grand Rapids 230 kV Transmission Line

Dear Mr. Balcom:

On behalf of Otter Tail Power Company, Minnesota Power, and Minnkota Power Cooperative (Applicants) HDR Engineering, Inc. (HDR) requests your comment on the above-mentioned project for potential effects. This request is made pursuant to Minn. Rules 4400.1150, Subp. 3.

HDR is currently gathering information for the Applicants as they prepare to apply to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (PUC) for a Certificate of Need and Route Permit. Minn. Statutes 116C.57, subd. 2c require that an Environmental Impact Statement be prepared prior to the PUC granting a permit for the facility. The project will also require review under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA); the Applicants anticipate that the Rural Utilities Service will be the lead agency for NEPA review.

The proposed project is located in northern Minnesota in Itasca, Cass, Hubbard, and Beltrami counties. The Applicants propose to construct a 230 kilovolt (kV) transmission line between the Boswell Substation, located west of Cohasset, Minnesota and the Wilton Substation, located west of Bemidji, a distance of approximately 70 miles. At this point, the Applicants are evaluating two corridors and no preferred route has been identified.

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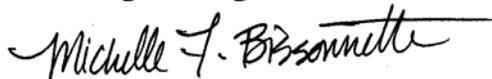
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| | Great Valley | 146 W | 34 N | 1-3, 10-15, 22-25 |

We would appreciate receiving comments by March 15, 2007 to allow time to incorporate them into information provided at open house meetings that will be held in the project area this spring. If you require additional information or have questions regarding this matter, please do not hesitate to contact us.

The Applicants expect to file an application at the PUC in the fall of 2007 and will be seeking ongoing feedback from you and your agency as this project proceeds through review. Your comments on the project will assist the Applicants, HDR and the PUC in their review of the project. If you require further information or have questions regarding this matter, please do not hesitate to contact us. Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

HDR Engineering, Inc.



Michelle F. Bissonnette
Vice President
763-278-5910
Michelle.Bissonnette@hdrinc.com



Suzanne Steinbauer
Environmental Planner
763-591-5434
Suzanne.Steinbauer@hdrinc.com

Enclosures: Project Location Map

cc: Al Koeckeritz, Otter Tail Power
Bob Lindholm, Minnesota Power
John Graves, Minnkota Power
Mark Plank, RUS
File

February 9, 2007

Mr. Herb Nelson,
 Bureau of Indian Affairs
 Whipple Federal Building
 One Federal Drive, Room 550
 Fort Snelling, MN 55111

RE: Bemidji – Grand Rapids 230 kV Transmission Line

Dear Mr. Nelson:

On behalf of Otter Tail Power Company, Minnesota Power, and Minnkota Power Cooperative (Applicants) HDR Engineering, Inc. (HDR) requests your comment on the above-mentioned project for potential effects. This request is made pursuant to Minn. Rules 4400.1150, Subp. 3.

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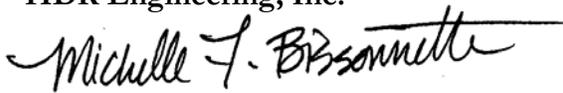
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Sincerely,

HDR Engineering, Inc.



Michelle F. Bissonnette
 Vice President
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Michelle.Bissonnette@hdrinc.com



Suzanne Steinbauer
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 763-591-5434
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Enclosures: Project Location Map
 cc: Al Koeckeritz, Otter Tail Power
 Bob Lindholm, Minnesota Power
 John Graves, Minnkota Power
 Mark Plank, RUS
 File



February 9, 2007

Ms. Cathy Thompson
Chippewa National Forest
200 Ash Avenue NW
Cass Lake, MN 56633

RE: Bemidji – Grand Rapids 230 kV Transmission Line

Dear Ms. Thompson:

On behalf of Otter Tail Power Company, Minnesota Power, and Minnkota Power Cooperative (Applicants) HDR Engineering, Inc. (HDR) requests your comment on the above-mentioned project for potential effects. This request is made pursuant to Minn. Rules 4400.1150, Subp. 3.

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 Bob Lindholm, Minnesota Power
 John Graves, Minnkota Power
 Mark Plank, RUS
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February 9, 2007

Mr. Ralph Augustin,
US Army Corps of Engineers
190 5th Street East
St. Paul, MN 55101

RE: Bemidji – Grand Rapids 230 kV Transmission Line

Dear Mr. Augustin:

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 Bob Lindholm, Minnesota Power
 John Graves, Minnkota Power
 Mark Plank, RUS
 Tamara Cameron - USACE
 File

February 9, 2007

Mr. Paul Burke
 US Fish and Wildlife Service
 4101 East 80th Street
 Bloomington, MN 55425

RE: Bemidji – Grand Rapids 230 kV Transmission Line

Dear Mr. Burke:

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February 9, 2007

Mr. Lynn Eaton
Minnesota Department of Transportation
District 2
3920 Highway 2 West
Bemidji, MN 56601

RE: Bemidji – Grand Rapids 230 kV Transmission Line

Dear Mr. Eaton:

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The Applicants and HDR would like you to comment on the proposed route corridors, in particular any concerns related to potential effects to social, economic or natural resources and potential conflicts with any known transportation improvement plans in the region. We are also requesting comment on the project from Mn/DOT's District 1 office. Construction of the facilities will occur within the corridors indicated on the attached project location map, and shown in the following table:

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Mike Robinson – Mn/DOT District 1
File

February 9, 2007

Mr. Mike Robinson
Minnesota Department of Transportation
District 1
1123 Mesaba Avenue
Duluth, MN 55811

RE: Bemidji – Grand Rapids 230 kV Transmission Line

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The proposed project is located in northern Minnesota in Itasca, Cass, Hubbard, and Beltrami counties. The Applicants propose to construct a 230 kilovolt (kV) transmission line between the Boswell Substation, located west of Cohasset, Minnesota and the Wilton Substation, located west of Bemidji, a distance of approximately 70 miles. At this point, the Applicants are evaluating two corridors and no preferred route has been identified.

The Applicants and HDR would like you to comment on the proposed route corridors, in particular any concerns related to potential effects to social, economic or natural resources and potential conflicts with any known transportation improvement plans in the region. We are also requesting comment on the project from Mn/DOT's District 2 office. Construction of the facilities will occur within the corridors indicated on the attached project location map, and shown in the following table:

| County | Township Name | Township | Range | Sections |
|-----------|--------------------------|----------|-------|---------------------------------------|
| Itasca | Cohasset | 55 W | 26 N | 3-6, 8-10 |
| | Cohasset | 56 W | 26 N | 19, 28-34 |
| | Deer River | 56 W | 27 N | 4, 9-10, 14-16, 21-27, 35-36 |
| | Deer River | 57 W | 27 N | 33-34 |
| | Morse | 145 W | 25 N | 13-36 |
| | Unorganized | 145 N | 26 N | 29, 34, 24 |
| Cass | Wahnena | 144 W | 25 N | 1-7, 11-12 |
| | Unorganized | 144 W | 26 N | 1-12 |
| | Unorganized | 144 W | 27 N | 1-4, 6, 12 |
| | Unorganized | 144 W | 28 N | 1-6 |
| | Ottertail Peninsula (NE) | 144 W | 29 N | 1-11 |
| | Ottertail Peninsula (NW) | 144 W | 30 N | 1-12 |
| | Wilkinson | 144 W | 31 N | 1-6, 10-12 |
| | Unorganized | 145 W | 26 N | 24, 29-36 |
| | Unorganized | 145 W | 27 N | 19, 25-36 |
| | Unorganized | 145 W | 28 N | 19-36 |
| | Unorganized | 145 W | 29 N | 13-36 |
| | Unorganized | 145 W | 30 N | 7-25, 29-36 |
| | Pike Bay | 145 W | 31 N | 3-36 |
| | Hubbard | Farden | 145 W | 32 N |
| Helga | | 145 W | 33 N | 1-5, 8-13, 15-17, 20-23, 25-28, 33-36 |
| Hart Lake | | 144W | 32N | 1-12 |
| Guthrie | | 144W | 33N | 1-3, 10-12 |
| Beltrami | Frohn | 146 W | 32 N | 30, 31 |
| | Bemidji | 146 W | 33 N | 6-8, 16-36 |
| | Great Valley | 146 W | 34 N | 1-3, 10-15, 22-25 |

We would appreciate receiving comments by March 15, 2007 to allow time to incorporate them into information provided at open house meetings that will be held in the project area this spring. If you require additional information or have questions regarding this matter, please do not hesitate to contact us.

The Applicants expect to file an application at the PUC in the fall of 2007 and will be seeking on-going feedback from you and your agency as this project proceeds through review. Your comments on the project will assist the Applicants, HDR and the PUC in their review of the project. If you require further information or have questions regarding this matter, please do not hesitate to contact us. Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,
HDR Engineering, Inc.



Michelle F. Bissonnette
Vice President
763-278-5910
Michelle.Bissonnette@hdrinc.com



Suzanne Steinbauer
Environmental Planner
763-591-5434
Suzanne.Steinbauer@hdrinc.com

Enclosures: Project Location Map

cc: Al Koeckeritz, Otter Tail Power
Bob Lindholm, Minnesota Power
John Graves, Minnkota Power
Mark Plank, RUS
Lynn Eaton, Mn/DOT District 2
File

February 9, 2007

Mr. Dennis Gimmestad
 Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office
 345 Kellogg Boulevard West
 St. Paul, MN 55102

RE: Bemidji – Grand Rapids 230 kV Transmission Line

Dear Mr. Gimmestad:

On behalf of Otter Tail Power Company, Minnesota Power, and Minnkota Power Cooperative (Applicants) HDR Engineering, Inc. (HDR) requests your comment on the above-mentioned project for potential effects. This request is made pursuant to Minn. Rules 4400.1150, Subp. 3.

HDR is currently gathering information for the Applicants as they prepare to apply to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (PUC) for a Certificate of Need and Route Permit. . Minn. Statutes 116C.57, subd. 2c require that an Environmental Impact Statement be prepared prior to the PUC granting a permit for the facility. The project will also require review under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA); the Applicants anticipate that the Rural Utilities Service will be the lead agency for NEPA review.

The proposed project is located in northern Minnesota in Itasca, Cass, Hubbard, and Beltrami counties. The Applicants propose to construct a 230 kilovolt (kV) transmission line between the Boswell Substation, located west of Cohasset, Minnesota and the Wilton Substation, located west of Bemidji, a distance of approximately 70 miles. At this point, the Applicants are evaluating two corridors and no preferred route has been identified.

The Applicants and HDR would like you to comment on the proposed route corridors, in particular any concerns related to potential effects to cultural resources. Construction of the facilities will occur within the corridors indicated on the attached project location map, and shown in the following table:

| County | Township Name | Township | Range | Sections |
|--------|--------------------------|----------|-------|------------------------------|
| Itasca | Cohasset | 55 W | 26 N | 3-6, 8-10 |
| | Cohasset | 56 W | 26 N | 19, 28-34 |
| | Deer River | 56 W | 27 N | 4, 9-10, 14-16, 21-27, 35-36 |
| | Deer River | 57 W | 27 N | 33-34 |
| | Morse | 145 W | 25 N | 13-36 |
| | Unorganized | 145 N | 26 N | 29, 34, 24 |
| Cass | Wahnena | 144 W | 25 N | 1-7, 11-12 |
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| | Ottertail Peninsula (NE) | 144 W | 29 N | 1-11 |

| County | Township Name | Township | Range | Sections |
|----------|--------------------------|----------|-------|---------------------------------------|
| | Ottertail Peninsula (NW) | 144 W | 30 N | 1-12 |
| | Wilkinson | 144 W | 31 N | 1-6, 10-12 |
| | Unorganized | 145 W | 26 N | 24, 29-36 |
| | Unorganized | 145 W | 27 N | 19, 25-36 |
| | Unorganized | 145 W | 28 N | 19-36 |
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| Hubbard | Pike Bay | 145 W | 31 N | 3-36 |
| | Farden | 145 W | 32 N | 1-18, 20-27, 31-36 |
| | Helga | 145 W | 33 N | 1-5, 8-13, 15-17, 20-23, 25-28, 33-36 |
| | Hart Lake | 144W | 32N | 1-12 |
| Beltrami | Guthrie | 144W | 33N | 1-3, 10-12 |
| | Frohn | 146 W | 32 N | 30, 31 |
| | Bemidji | 146 W | 33 N | 6-8, 16-36 |
| | Great Valley | 146 W | 34 N | 1-3, 10-15, 22-25 |

We would appreciate receiving comments by March 15, 2007 to allow time to incorporate them into information provided at open house meetings that will be held in the project area this spring. If you require additional information or have questions regarding this matter, please do not hesitate to contact us.

The Applicants expect to file an application at the PUC in the fall of 2007 and will be seeking on-going feedback from you and your agency as this project proceeds through review. Your comments on the project will assist the Applicants, HDR and the PUC in their review of the project. If you require further information or have questions regarding this matter, please do not hesitate to contact us. Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

HDR Engineering, Inc.



Michelle F. Bissonnette
Vice President
763-278-5910
Michelle.Bissonnette@hdrinc.com



Suzanne Steinbauer
Environmental Planner
763-591-5434
Suzanne.Steinbauer@hdrinc.com

Enclosures: Project Location Map

cc: Al Koeckeritz, Otter Tail Power
Bob Lindholm, Minnesota Power
John Graves, Minnkota Power
Mark Plank, RUS
File



February 9, 2007

Ms. Shirley Nordrum
Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe
6530 US Highway 2 NW
Cass Lake, MN 56633

RE: Bemidji – Grand Rapids 230 kV Transmission Line

Dear Ms. Nordrum:

On behalf of Otter Tail Power Company, Minnesota Power, and Minnkota Power Cooperative (Applicants) HDR Engineering, Inc. (HDR) requests your comment on the above-mentioned project for potential effects. This request is made pursuant to Minn. Rules 4400.1150, Subp. 3.

HDR is currently gathering information for the Applicants as they prepare to apply to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (PUC) for a Certificate of Need and Route Permit. . Minn. Statutes 116C.57, subd. 2c require that an Environmental Impact Statement be prepared prior to the PUC granting a permit for the facility. The project will also require review under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA); the Applicants anticipate that the Rural Utilities Service will be the lead agency for NEPA review.

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The Applicants and HDR would like you to comment on the proposed route corridors, in particular any concerns related to potential effects to social, economic and natural resources. Construction of the facilities will occur within the corridors indicated on the attached project location map, and shown in the following table:

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| | Unorganized | 145 N | 26 N | 29, 34, 24 |
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| | Ottertail Peninsula (NE) | 144 W | 29 N | 1-11 |

| County | Township Name | Township | Range | Sections |
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| | Ottertail Peninsula (NW) | 144 W | 30 N | 1-12 |
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| | Unorganized | 145 W | 26 N | 24, 29-36 |
| | Unorganized | 145 W | 27 N | 19, 25-36 |
| | Unorganized | 145 W | 28 N | 19-36 |
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| | Hart Lake | 144W | 32N | 1-12 |
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| | Frohn | 146 W | 32 N | 30, 31 |
| | Bemidji | 146 W | 33 N | 6-8, 16-36 |
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Sincerely,

HDR Engineering, Inc.



Michelle F. Bissonnette
 Vice President
 763-278-5910
Michelle.Bissonnette@hdrinc.com



Suzanne Steinbauer
 Environmental Planner
 763-591-5434
Suzanne.Steinbauer@hdrinc.com

Enclosures: Project Location Map

cc: Al Koeckeritz, Otter Tail Power
 Bob Lindholm, Minnesota Power
 John Graves, Minnkota Power
 Mark Plank, RUS
 Steve Mortenson, Leech Lake Band

Richard Robinson, Leech Lake Band
 File



February 9, 2007

Mr. Lee Coe
Red Lake Watershed District
102 Main Avenue North
PO Box 803
Thief River Falls, MN 56701

RE: Bemidji – Grand Rapids 230 kV Transmission Line

Dear Mr. Coe:

On behalf of Otter Tail Power Company, Minnesota Power, and Minnkota Power Cooperative (Applicants) HDR Engineering, Inc. (HDR) requests your comment on the above-mentioned project for potential effects. This request is made pursuant to Minn. Rules 4400.1150, Subp. 3.

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The Applicants and HDR would like you to comment on the proposed route corridors, in particular any concerns related to potential effects to social, economic and natural resources. Construction of the facilities will occur within the corridors indicated on the attached project location map, and shown in the following table:

| County | Township Name | Township | Range | Sections |
|--------|--------------------------|----------|-------|------------------------------|
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| | Cohasset | 56 W | 26 N | 19, 28-34 |
| | Deer River | 56 W | 27 N | 4, 9-10, 14-16, 21-27, 35-36 |
| | Deer River | 57 W | 27 N | 33-34 |
| | Morse | 145 W | 25 N | 13-36 |
| | Unorganized | 145 N | 26 N | 29, 34, 24 |
| Cass | Wahnena | 144 W | 25 N | 1-7, 11-12 |
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| | Ottertail Peninsula (NE) | 144 W | 29 N | 1-11 |

| County | Township Name | Township | Range | Sections |
|----------|--------------------------|----------|-------|---------------------------------------|
| | Ottertail Peninsula (NW) | 144 W | 30 N | 1-12 |
| | Wilkinson | 144 W | 31 N | 1-6, 10-12 |
| | Unorganized | 145 W | 26 N | 24, 29-36 |
| | Unorganized | 145 W | 27 N | 19, 25-36 |
| | Unorganized | 145 W | 28 N | 19-36 |
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| | Pike Bay | 145 W | 31 N | 3-36 |
| Hubbard | Farden | 145 W | 32 N | 1-18, 20-27, 31-36 |
| | Helga | 145 W | 33 N | 1-5, 8-13, 15-17, 20-23, 25-28, 33-36 |
| | Hart Lake | 144W | 32N | 1-12 |
| | Guthrie | 144W | 33N | 1-3, 10-12 |
| Beltrami | Frohn | 146 W | 32 N | 30, 31 |
| | Bemidji | 146 W | 33 N | 6-8, 16-36 |
| | Great Valley | 146 W | 34 N | 1-3, 10-15, 22-25 |

We would appreciate receiving comments by March 15, 2007 to allow time to incorporate them into information provided at open house meetings that will be held in the project area this spring. If you require additional information or have questions regarding this matter, please do not hesitate to contact us.

The Applicants expect to file an application at the PUC in the fall of 2007 and will be seeking on-going feedback from you and your agency as this project proceeds through review. Your comments on the project will assist the Applicants, HDR and the PUC in their review of the project. If you require further information or have questions regarding this matter, please do not hesitate to contact us. Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

HDR Engineering, Inc.



Michelle F. Bissonnette
 Vice President
 763-278-5910
Michelle.Bissonnette@hdrinc.com



Suzanne Steinbauer
 Environmental Planner
 763-591-5434
Suzanne.Steinbauer@hdrinc.com

Enclosures: Project Location Map

cc: Al Koeckeritz, Otter Tail Power
 Bob Lindholm, Minnesota Power
 John Graves, Minnkota Power
 Mark Plank, RUS
 File



February 9, 2007

Ms. Janet Ekholm
Mississippi Headwaters Board
Cass County Courthouse
P.O. Box 3000
Walker, MN 56484

RE: Bemidji – Grand Rapids 230 kV Transmission Line

Dear Ms. Ekholm:

On behalf of Otter Tail Power Company, Minnesota Power, and Minnkota Power Cooperative (Applicants) HDR Engineering, Inc. (HDR) requests your comment on the above-mentioned project for potential effects. This request is made pursuant to Minn. Rules 4400.1150, Subp. 3.

HDR is currently gathering information for the Applicants as they prepare to apply to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (PUC) for a Certificate of Need and Route Permit. . Minn. Statutes 116C.57, subd. 2c require that an Environmental Impact Statement be prepared prior to the PUC granting a permit for the facility. The project will also require review under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA); the Applicants anticipate that the Rural Utilities Service will be the lead agency for NEPA review.

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| County | Township Name | Township | Range | Sections |
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HDR Engineering, Inc.



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Suzanne Steinbauer
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Enclosures: Project Location Map

cc: Al Koeckeritz, Otter Tail Power
 Bob Lindholm, Minnesota Power
 John Graves, Minnkota Power
 Mark Plank, RUS
 File



February 9, 2007

Mr. Bill Lorenzen
United States Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service
375 Jackson Street, Suite 600
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55101

RE: Bemidji – Grand Rapids 230 kV Transmission Line

Dear Mr. Lorenzen:

On behalf of Otter Tail Power Company, Minnesota Power, and Minnkota Power Cooperative (Applicants) HDR Engineering, Inc. (HDR) requests your comment on the above-mentioned project for potential effects. This request is made pursuant to Minn. Rules 4400.1150, Subp. 3.

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Suzanne Steinbauer
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Enclosures: Project Location Map

cc: Al Koeckeritz, Otter Tail Power
Bob Lindholm, Minnesota Power
John Graves, Minnkota Power
Mark Plank, RUS
File



February 9, 2007

Mr. John Hippchen
Minnesota Department of Transportation
Office of Aeronautics
222 E. Plato Blvd.
St. Paul, MN 55107-1618

RE: Bemidji – Grand Rapids 230 kV Transmission Line

Dear Mr. Hippchen:

On behalf of Otter Tail Power Company, Minnesota Power, and Minnkota Power Cooperative (Applicants) HDR Engineering, Inc. (HDR) requests your comment on the above-mentioned project for potential effects. This request is made pursuant to Minn. Rules 4400.1150, Subp. 3.

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| Itasca | Cohasset | 55 W | 26 N | 3-6, 8-10 |
| | Cohasset | 56 W | 26 N | 19, 28-34 |
| | Deer River | 56 W | 27 N | 4, 9-10, 14-16, 21-27, 35-36 |
| | Deer River | 57 W | 27 N | 33-34 |
| | Morse | 145 W | 25 N | 13-36 |
| | Unorganized | 145 N | 26 N | 29, 34, 24 |
| Cass | Wahnena | 144 W | 25 N | 1-7, 11-12 |
| | Unorganized | 144 W | 26 N | 1-12 |
| | Unorganized | 144 W | 27 N | 1-4, 6, 12 |
| | Unorganized | 144 W | 28 N | 1-6 |
| | Ottertail Peninsula (NE) | 144 W | 29 N | 1-11 |

| County | Township Name | Township | Range | Sections |
|----------|--------------------------|----------|-------|---------------------------------------|
| | Ottertail Peninsula (NW) | 144 W | 30 N | 1-12 |
| | Wilkinson | 144 W | 31 N | 1-6, 10-12 |
| | Unorganized | 145 W | 26 N | 24, 29-36 |
| | Unorganized | 145 W | 27 N | 19, 25-36 |
| | Unorganized | 145 W | 28 N | 19-36 |
| | Unorganized | 145 W | 29 N | 13-36 |
| | Unorganized | 145 W | 30 N | 7-25, 29-36 |
| | Pike Bay | 145 W | 31 N | 3-36 |
| Hubbard | Farden | 145 W | 32 N | 1-18, 20-27, 31-36 |
| | Helga | 145 W | 33 N | 1-5, 8-13, 15-17, 20-23, 25-28, 33-36 |
| | Hart Lake | 144W | 32N | 1-12 |
| | Guthrie | 144W | 33N | 1-3, 10-12 |
| Beltrami | Frohn | 146 W | 32 N | 30, 31 |
| | Bemidji | 146 W | 33 N | 6-8, 16-36 |
| | Great Valley | 146 W | 34 N | 1-3, 10-15, 22-25 |

We would appreciate receiving comments by March 15, 2007 to allow time to incorporate them into information provided at open house meetings that will be held in the project area this spring. If you require additional information or have questions regarding this matter, please do not hesitate to contact us.

The Applicants expect to file an application at the PUC in the fall of 2007 and will be seeking on-going feedback from you and your agency as this project proceeds through review. Your comments on the project will assist the Applicants, HDR and the PUC in their review of the project. If you require further information or have questions regarding this matter, please do not hesitate to contact us. Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

HDR Engineering, Inc.



Michelle F. Bissonnette
Vice President
763-278-5910
Michelle.Bissonnette@hdrinc.com

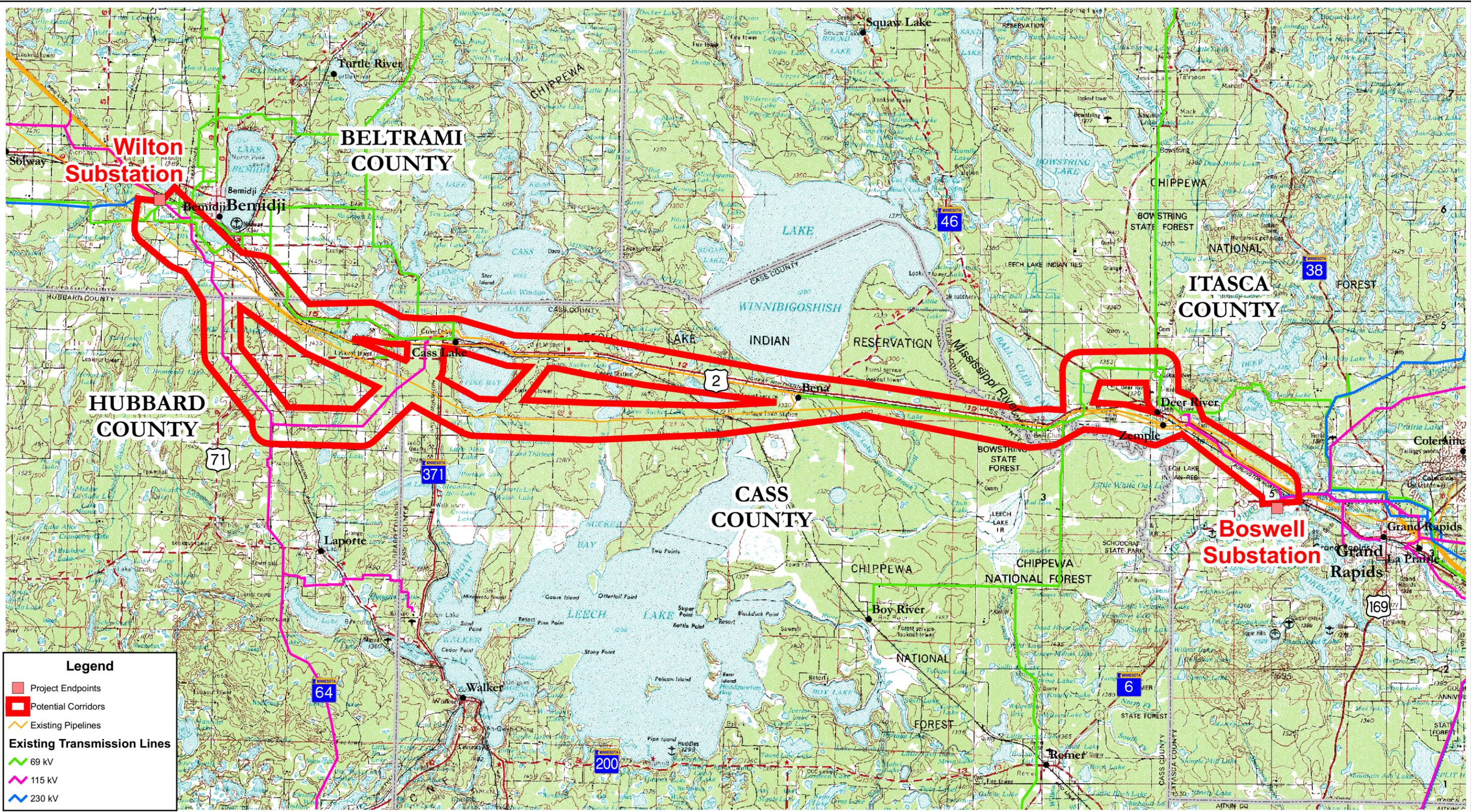


Suzanne Steinbauer
Environmental Planner
763-591-5434
Suzanne.Steinbauer@hdrinc.com

Enclosures: Project Location Map

File

cc: Al Koeckeritz, Otter Tail Power
Bob Lindholm, Minnesota Power
John Graves, Minnkota Power
Mark Plank, RUS



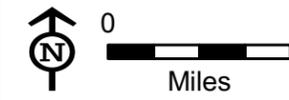
Map Document: (N:\gisproj\Otertail\48496\map_docs\mxd\Bem_GR_overview_map_010507.mxd) 1/23/2007 4:25:20 PM

Legend

- Project Endpoints
- Potential Corridors
- Existing Pipelines

Existing Transmission Lines

- 69 kV
- 115 kV
- 230 kV



Project Overview Map
 230 kV Bemidji to Grand Rapids Transmission Line Project
 Otter Tail Power Company, Minnkota Power Cooperative & Minnesota Power



OTTER TAIL
POWER COMPANY



Minnkota Power
COOPERATIVE, INC.
Your Touch on Energy® Partner



minnesota power
AN ALLETE COMPANY

From: [Bissonnette, Michelle](mailto:Michelle.Bissonnette@otpc.com)
To: akoeckeritz@otpc.com; [Bob Lindholm \(ALLETE\)](mailto:Bob.Lindholm@ALLETE.com); jgraves@minnkota.com;
CC: [Current, Rhonda](mailto:Current,Rhonda@snehk@otpc.com); snehk@otpc.com; [Steinhauer, Suzanne](mailto:Steinhauer,Suzanne@otpc.com);
Subject: FW: Bemidji-Grand Rapids HVTL Project / 230 kV Transmission Line
Date: Tuesday, February 20, 2007 9:44:33 AM
Attachments:

For your files

-----Original Message-----

From: Rex Bordson [<mailto:Rex.Bordson@dot.state.mn.us>]
Sent: Tuesday, February 20, 2007 9:35 AM
To: Bissonnette, Michelle
Cc: Duane Hill
Subject: Bemidji-Grand Rapids HVTL Project / 230 kV Transmission Line

February 20, 2007

Michelle F. Bissonnette
HDR Engineering Inc.
701 Xenia Ave. South, Suite 600
Minneapolis, MN 55416

Subject: Bemidji-Grand Rapids HVTL Project / 230 kV Transmission Line

Dear Ms. Bissonnette:

After reviewing the proposed route corridors for the 230 kV transmission line from Bemidji to Grand Rapids and with the information available to us at this time we are unable to comment on any impact the proposed line may have on the Minnesota Department of Transportation.

District 1 does have a small Transportation Improvement Plan scheduled for 2011 that consists of a thick bituminous overlay on T.H. 2 east bound and west bound for approx. 8 miles from Cohasset to Deer River. Other than that we have no other construction plans scheduled for the area.

Please keep us informed of the proposed project developments and the final route selection as information comes available so we can continue to provide you with our comments.

If you have any questions, please call me at (218) 725-2779. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Rex Bordson
Right-of-Way Permits Supervisor / District PUC Contact

Rex Bordson
District 1 Permits Supervisor
MN. Dept. of Transportation
1123 Mesaba Ave. Duluth, MN. 55811
E-mail : rex.bordson@dot.state.mn.us
Office Phone # (218) 725-2779
Cell Phone # (218) 428-9735
Fax # (218) 723-4874

FEB 23 2007

HDR Engineering, Inc.



Natural Resources Conservation Service
375 Jackson Street, Suite 600
St. Paul, MN 55101-1854

Phone: (651) 602-7900
FAX: (651) 602-7914

File Code: 190-15-13

February 21, 2007

Michelle F. Bissonnette, Vice President
HDR Engineering, Inc.
701 Xenia Avenue South, Suite 600
Minneapolis, MN 55416

IN REPLY REFER TO: Proposed Bemidji – Grand Rapids 230 kV Transmission Line, Otter Tail Power Company, Minnesota Power, and Minnkota Power Cooperative

Dear Ms. Bissonnette:

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has reviewed the above referenced project. The project sponsors are not USDA program benefit recipients, thus the wetland conservation provisions of the 1985 Food Security act, as amended are not applicable. It should be noted, however, that actions by a non-USDA participant third party (project sponsor) which impact agricultural wetlands owned or operated by USDA participants, may jeopardize the owner/operators USDA eligibility. If such impacts are anticipated, the owner/operator should contact the county Farm Service Agency (FSA) office to consider an application for a third party exemption in whichever county any such impacted private farmland may occur.

If as a result of your proposal, you are affecting agricultural lands, and if any federal monies are involved, it is a requirement that a Farmland Policy Protection Act (FPPA) site assessment *Farmland Conversion Impact Rating (Form AD-1006)* be appropriately filed. Because of the location and type of activity proposed, this project may impact agricultural lands. FPPA land evaluations are conducted by local NRCS personnel who review the project for possible effects on unique, prime or statewide important farmland in various areas of the state as follows:

For Hubbard and Beltrami Counties, refer a specific FPPA request along with your cover letter and project map to:

Rodney B. Heschke, Area Resource Soil Scientist,
USDA NRCS, 2017 Highway #59 SE,
Thief River Falls, MN 56701

For Cass County:

Mike Lieser, Area Resource Soil Scientist
USDA NRCS
1004 Frontier Drive
Fergus Falls, MN 566537

For Itasca County:

Michael J. Walczynski, ARSS
USDA NRCS
4915 Matterhorn Drive
Duluth, MN 55811

These three Soil Scientists will be the ones you need to contact with your cover letter and the Project Location Map to determine prime or unique farmlands, or land within an agricultural reserve to complete the *Farmland Conversion Impact Rating (Form AD-1006)* for both the proposed projects EIS and NEPA guidelines in regards to our agency review and compliance responsibilities for projects involving federal funds. If you have any questions in regards to this procedure, please feel free to call me at 651-602-7883, or email me at: bill.lorenzen@mn.usda.gov .

Sincerely,



WILLIAM E. LORENZEN
Environmental Review/Justice Coordinator

cc: Suzanne Steinhauer, Environmental Planner, HDR, Minneapolis, MN
Rodney Heschke, ARSS, NRCS, Thief River Falls, MN
Michael Lieser, ARSS, NRCS, Fergus Falls, MN
Michael Walczynski, ARSS, NRCS, Duluth, MN



MISSISSIPPI HEADWATERS BOARD

MAR 07 2007

HDR Engineering, Inc.

CASS COUNTY COURTHOUSE • PO BOX 3000 • WALKER MN 56484-3000

PHONE 218-547-7263

TOLL FREE 1-888-547-3301 EXT 263

FAX 218-547-7376

E MAIL cass.mhb@co.cass.mn.us

WEB SITE www.mississippiheadwaters.org

Date: Wednesday, February 28th, 2007

To: HDR Engineering, Inc.
Attn: Michelle F. Bissonnette
701 Xenia Ave South, Suite 600
Minneapolis, MN 55416

RE: Review/comment request

To Michelle F. Bissonnette:

This board would first like to acknowledge receipt of your 'request for comment' letter and thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on a proposed projects potential environmental affect in regard to installation of a transmission line.

After review and discussion on this topic at the Mississippi Headwaters Board meeting on February 16th, we would like to express that this board has no concerns with your plans to construct and bury a much need line as long as you intend to proceed with the least environmental damage and impact in and around the Mississippi River Headwaters. From the literature you provided, it appears to be aligned with the standards imposed by Minn. Statutes 116C.57, subd. 2c and in keeping with NEPA efforts to protect our land and waters. Its stewardship like this that helps lessen the opportunity for resource degradation due to inaccurate information and poor planning and makes the job we are mandated to do much easier.

Again, we would like to thank you for your champion efforts to keep all affected parties abreast of your project plan and progress by enouncing your intentions.

If you need MHB to further review this or any project and you have questions, please feel free to contact the Mississippi Headwaters Board office at: cass.mhb@co.cass.mn.us

Sincerely,

Virgil Foster

Mississippi Headwaters Board Chair





MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE

RECEIVED
MAR 14 2007
HDR Engineering, Inc.

March 14, 2007

Ms. Michelle Bissonnette
Vice President
HDR Engineering
701 Xenia Avenue South, Suite 600
Minneapolis, MN 55416

RE: Proposed Bemidji-Grand Rapids 230 kV transmission line
Itasca, Cass, Hubbard and Beltrami Counties
SHPO Number: 2007-1273

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).

This project is located, in part, within Leech Lake Reservation boundaries, the Leech Lake Tribal Historic Preservation Office has assumed Section 106 responsibilities for all historic properties other than buildings and structures. Therefore, you need to consult with the THPO regarding survey needs within the reservation.

For those portions of the project outside the reservation, we recommend that a cultural resource survey be completed. Since our office also addresses historic buildings and structures within the reservation, we recommend that buildings and structures be surveyed within the reservation boundaries as well.

Please contact us at (651) 259-3455 if you have any questions regarding our review of this project.

Sincerely,

Dennis A. Gimmestad
Government Programs & Compliance Officer

cc: Gina Papasodora, Leech Lake THPO



Minnesota Department of Transportation

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

RECEIVED

MAR 21 2007

HDR Engineering, Inc.

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

March 19, 2007

Ms. Michelle Bissonnette
Vice President, HDR Engineering
701 Xenia Avenue South, Suite 600
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55416

Subject: Bemidji – Grand Rapids 230 kV Transmission Line

Dear Ms. Bissonnette:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed routes for the subject transmission line, and, per our telephone conversation on March 14, 2007, a short extension of the comment period deadline. I have reviewed the map and letter, and found several potential impacts to airports in the vicinity of the proposed line.

The area of primary concern is in the vicinity of Bemidji, which is particularly sensitive. There are potential impacts to the runway approach surfaces, electronic navigational aid devices, and Airport Zoning. The FAA will require filing a Form 7460-1 (<http://forms.faa.gov/forms/faa7460-1.pdf>) for proposed construction in the vicinity of the Bemidji Regional Airport. Our Planning section will want to work with you in regard to the airport land use zoning limitations.

The airport at Nary could also be impacted, along with numerous seaplane bases and private airstrips along the entire corridor. I am enclosing a copy of the Minnesota 2006-2007 Aeronautical Chart, which shows airports open to the public, for your reference. We will be happy to provide more detailed information.

We would appreciate the opportunity for further comment, and want to work closely with you as the project progresses.

If you have any questions, please contact me.

Sincerely,

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

Tracy Schmidt, P.E.
Regional Airport Engineer

Enclosure



Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe

George Goggeye, Chairman

Arthur "Archie" LaRose, Secretary/Treasurer

District I Representative

Ms. Robbie Howe

District II Representative

Lyman L. Losh

District III Representative

Donald "Mick" Finn

March 22, 2007

HDR Engineering

Attn: Michelle Bissonnette

701 Xenia Avenue South, Suite 600

Minneapolis, MN 55416

Re: **Proposed Bemidji-Grand Rapids – 230 kV Transmission Line**

Leech Lake Reservation – Beltrami, Cass, Hubbard, and Itasca Counties, Minnesota

LL-THPO Number: 07-13

Dear Ms. Bissonnette:

Thank you for the opportunity to review and 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 (36CFR800).

This project has been reviewed with regard to potential historic properties. There are numerous known sites reported near the project parameters. There is a very high probability that unreported properties may be present within the project area. **Therefore, it is recommended that an archaeological survey and a Traditional Cultural Properties (TCP) survey of the project area be completed.** The survey must meet the requirements of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Identification and Evaluation, and should include an evaluation of National Register eligibility for any properties, which are identified.

You may contact Thor Olmanson, Archaeologist/Heritage Sites Program Director at (218) 335-8095 if you would like the Band's Archaeological Firm to conduct any archaeological survey work.

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

Respectfully submitted,


Gina M. (Papasodora) Lemon
Tribal Historic Preservation Officer

Leech Lake Tribal Historic Preservation Office – Established in 1996

An office within the Division of Resources Management

115 Sixth St., Suite E * Cass Lake, Minnesota 56633

(218) 335-2940 * FAX (218) 335-2974

llthpo@hotmail.com



Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe

George Goggeye, Jr., Chairman

Arthur "Archie" Larose, Secretary/Treasurer

District I Representative
Robbie M Howe

District II Representative
Lyman L. Losh

District III Representative
Donald "Mick" Finn

Date: March 26, 2007

Michele F. Bissonette, Vice President
HRD Engineering
701 Xenia Avenue South, Suite 600
Minneapolis, MN 55416

Re: Leech Lake Band's preferred route for Power line

Dear Ms. Bissonette

The Band wants to commend Otter Tail Power, Minnesota Power, and Minnkota Power (collectively "the Utilities") for recognizing the Band's authority and sovereignty by requesting our comments and concerns regarding potential impacts and effects of proposed projects on our cultural and natural resources.

Being good neighbors as well as being cognizant of the electrical needs of Bemidji and the surrounding area, the Band agreed to communicate with the Utilities to fairly, openly, and honestly share information on the need and preferred location for the proposed power project. The Band's main focus in any discussion regarding a proposed power project is balancing the interest in having optimal electrical services provided to the north-central Minnesota region while ensuring that the Band's natural environment is minimally impacted.

To this regard, the Band directed our Division of Resource Management staff to spearhead the comment portion of the process. As the Utilities are well aware, if there is a determination that the most feasible route for the proposed power line is across Leech Lake Reservation, there will be many other issues outside of potential impact to our resources and environment that must be discussed. For example, the Band is aware that many people have a deep-seated fear that electromagnetic fields radiating from power lines may cause numerous medical problems, including leukemia and other cancers. In addition, the Band expects that there will be Band members in opposition to the routing of this project across the reservation for aesthetic reasons.

It is the understanding of the Band that other alternative routes were researched prior to the decision to pursue a connection with the Boswell Substation in Cohasset, Minnesota. The Band requests further consideration of all possible alternative routes that would alleviate the need to run power lines across the Reservation. It is the Band's understanding that one of the previously considered alternatives would have been an upgrade of the power line from the Bedora Substation, thereby providing regional access to electrical power being generated by wind turbines in North or South Dakota. The

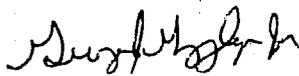
Bedora

Band respectfully requests to review the information regarding the pros and cons of this alternative.

Finally, there is uncertainty and concern regarding the width of the proposed corridor because of the resulting feasibility of locating the proposed power line along the existing Enbridge pipeline corridor. This petroleum corridor is already scheduled to have another pipeline laid adjacent to the existing one. Obviously, locating this number of utilities along one corridor will have a huge impact on the wildlife habitat on the Chippewa National Forest and on the homelands of the Leech Lake Ojibwe people.

In conclusion, a preliminary review of the currently proposed power line corridor by the Band's cultural, environmental, and natural resources staff indicates that the proposed corridor will impact tribal hunting areas, traditional gathering areas, and other areas of cultural significance.

Sincerely



George Goggeye Jr, Chairman
LEECH LAKE BAND OF OJIBWE



3824 Moberg Dr. NW
Suite 101
Bemidji, Minnesota
56601

March 27, 2007

HDR Engineering, Inc.
701 Xenia Ave. South
Suite 600
Minneapolis, MN
55416

(Attn: Suzanne Steinhauer)

Ref: (Bemidji – Grand Rapids 230kV Transmission Line)

Dear Ms. Steinhauer

On March 26th, 2007 we received a copy of a letter you submitted to MnDot Aeronautics, dated February 9th, 2007 concerning the proposed routing of the transmission line. We have several concerns with this proposal and they are:

- a. The failure to provide the airport, which has zoning authority over a considerable portion of the routes you are proposing, a request for review and comment. Further, as of this date the city of Bemidji and as far as we can determine Beltrami County were not provided opportunity to comment either.
- b. The proposed route may have detrimental effects on the instrument landing systems at the Airport and communications equipment also essential for the safe operations of the airport
- c. Further, without exact routing and engineering information the physical impact caused by the height of the transmission line and towers/poles associated with the line can not be assessed for impact to the approach and departure routes.

As a result of the above concerns and the lack of information to formulate an informed review, we must initially oppose the placement and routing of the system. This opposition will be reviewed once adequate routing and design information is provided and we are able to have our engineering firm and the FAA assess the information and design for impact on the Airport.

We recognize the critical need for electrical infrastructure to support the growth and demands of the region, but equally important is the airport and its continued safe and effective operations. We are currently in the second year of a four year effort to upgrade and position the airport for the current demands and expected growth. Including this year the community, state and federal government have or will have invested over \$14M in infrastructure improvements with another approximately \$7-8M in the next 2-3 years. The Airports viability and improvements can not be put at risk by a poorly informed decision on placement and design of the proposed transmission line.

Please feel free to contact me at my office. The numbers and e-mail address are at the bottom of the letter.

Sincerely,

Harold M. Van Leeuwen, Jr
Manager, Bemidji Regional Airport

cc: MnDot Office of Aeronautics
City of Bemidji Planning

Harold M. Van Leeuwen, Jr.
3824 Moberg Dr. NW Suite 101
Office (218) 444-2438

Manager
Bemidji, Minnesota
Fax (218) 444-2473

Bemidji Regional Airport
56601
Cell (218) 209-9531



United States Department of Agriculture
Rural Development
Washington, DC

JUN 18 2007

Mr. Herb Nelson
Bureau of Indian Affairs
Whipple Federal Building
One Federal Drive, Room 550
Ft. Snelling, Minnesota 55111

RE: Bemidji to Grand Rapids 230 kV Transmission Line Proposal

Dear Mr. Nelson:

The purpose of this memorandum is to outline the roles, responsibilities, and procedures of the federal agencies involved in the environmental review process associated with a proposed 230 kV line between Bemidji, Minnesota and Grand Rapids, Minnesota (the Proposal). The Proposal is proposed by Minnkota Power Cooperative, Inc. (Minnkota Power) and two other Minnesota utilities, Otter Tail Power Company (Otter Tail Power) and Minnesota Power (Minnesota Power).

The Rural Utilities Services (RUS), U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), the U.S. Forest Service (USFS), Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) (collectively, the federal agencies) have met and discussed the Proposal and concluded that it requires an Environmental Assessment (EA) pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), 42 U.S.C. §§ 4321-4347 and 40 C.F.R. §§ 1500-1508 and in accordance with the respective agency regulations. Based on discussions, RUS has offered to serve as the lead agency for the federal environmental review process and the other agencies have agreed to serve as cooperating agencies in that effort.

As the lead agency, and in consultation with the Minnesota Department of Commerce (DoC), RUS will develop the scope for the environmental review process. In doing so, input from the other federal agencies will be sought and incorporated as appropriate. RUS will also be responsible for coordinating the environmental review process with the DoC, which is preparing a state required Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Proposal. To minimize duplication of effort, RUS and DoC have agreed to jointly prepare one environmental review document that complies with federal and state requirements. As cooperating agencies, USACE, USFS, BIA, and USFWS agree to provide RUS with timely input necessary to ensure that the jointly prepared environmental review document with the DoC adequately addresses all issues of their respective agencies.

Committed to the future of rural communities.

"USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender."
To file a complaint of discrimination write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W.,
Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (800)795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD).

In addition, USACE has agreed to initiate and be responsible for managing the Section 106, National Historic Preservation Act, consultation process with all appropriate parties including the Leech Lake Band and any other affected or interested Indian Tribes. The Section 106 consultation will focus on the transmission route(s) included in the environmental review document. USACE will seek and incorporate input of RUS, BIA, USFS, and USFWS in managing the Section 106 consultation process.

The federal agencies' points of contact for the Proposal are:

| | |
|----------------|--|
| Mark S. Plank | Rural Utilities Service 1400 Independence Ave. SW Mail Stop 1571, Room 2242 Washington, DC 22050-1571 202-720-1649 mark.plank@wdc.usda.gov |
| Tamara Cameron | U.S. Army Corps of Engineers St. Paul District, Regulatory Branch 190 5 th Street East St. Paul, MN 55101 651-290-5197 tamara.e.cameron@mvp02.usace.army.mil |
| Cathy Thompson | U.S. Forest Service Chippewa National Forest 200 Ash Ave. N.W. Cass Lake, MN 56633 218-335-8655 cjthompson@fs.fed.us |
| Paul Burke | U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Twin Cities Ecological Field Office 4101 East 80 th St. Bloomington, MN 55425-1655 612-725-3548 paul_burke@fws.gov |
| Herb Nelson | Bureau of Indian Affairs Whipple Federal Building One Federal Drive, Rm. 550 Ft. Snelling, MN 55111 612-725-4510 |

As discussed in our May 17, 2007 meeting, establishing roles and responsibilities for lead and cooperating agencies for environmental impact analyses prepared in accordance with NEPA are normally formalized in executed agreements; however, since this Proposal is not classified as a federal Environmental Impact Statement it was felt that a memorandum outlining general roles and responsibilities would be adequate. Please review the above and let me know if you have any concerns regarding the responsibilities or procedures outlined above. In the absence of any objection, we will proceed, as agreed, in accordance with this memorandum.

If you have any questions, please contact me at the contact information above.

Mark S. Plank

MARK S. PLANK
Director
Engineering and Environmental Staff

Cc: Division File EES-Plank

EES:MPlank:draft:6/14/07:720-1649:final:kjg:6/15/07
Recall:S:KGross:EES:Bemidji Memo to federal Agencies060807.doc

JUN 15 2007

Ms. Tamara Cameron
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
St. Paul District, Regulatory Branch
190 5th Street East
St. Paul, Minnesota 55101

RE: Bemidji to Grand Rapids 230 kV Transmission Line Proposal

Dear Ms. Cameron:

The purpose of this memorandum is to outline the roles, responsibilities, and procedures of the federal agencies involved in the environmental review process associated with a proposed 230 kV line between Bemidji, Minnesota and Grand Rapids, Minnesota (the Proposal). The Proposal is proposed by Minnkota Power Cooperative, Inc. (Minnkota Power) and two other Minnesota utilities, Otter Tail Power Company (Otter Tail Power) and Minnesota Power (Minnesota Power).

The Rural Utilities Services (RUS), U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), the U.S. Forest Service (USFS), Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) (collectively, the federal agencies) have met and discussed the Proposal and concluded that it requires an Environmental Assessment (EA) pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), 42 U.S.C. §§ 4321-4347 and 40 C.F.R. §§ 1500-1508 and in accordance with the respective agency regulations. Based on discussions, RUS has offered to serve as the lead agency for the federal environmental review process and the other agencies have agreed to serve as cooperating agencies in that effort.

As the lead agency, and in consultation with the Minnesota Department of Commerce (DoC), RUS will develop the scope for the environmental review process. In doing so, input from the other federal agencies will be sought and incorporated as appropriate. RUS will also be responsible for coordinating the environmental review process with the DoC, which is preparing a state required Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Proposal. To minimize duplication of effort, RUS and DoC have agreed to jointly prepare one environmental review document that complies with federal and state requirements. As cooperating agencies, USACE, USFS, BIA, and USFWS agree to provide RUS with timely input necessary to ensure that the jointly prepared environmental review document with the DoC adequately addresses all issues of their respective agencies.

In addition, USACE has agreed to initiate and be responsible for managing the Section 106, National Historic Preservation Act, consultation process with all appropriate parties including the Leech Lake Band and any other affected or interested Indian Tribes. The Section 106 consultation will focus on the transmission route(s) included in the environmental review document. USACE will seek and incorporate input of RUS, BIA, USFS, and USFWS in managing the Section 106 consultation process.

The federal agencies' points of contact for the Proposal are:

| | |
|----------------|--|
| Mark S. Plank | Rural Utilities Service 1400 Independence Ave. SW Mail Stop 1571, Room 2242 Washington, DC 22050-1571 202-720-1649 mark.plank@wdc.usda.gov |
| Tamara Cameron | U.S. Army Corps of Engineers St. Paul District, Regulatory Branch 190 5 th Street East St. Paul, MN 55101 651-290-5197 tamara.e.cameron@mvp02.usace.army.mil |
| Cathy Thompson | U.S. Forest Service Chippewa National Forest 200 Ash Ave. N.W. Cass Lake, MN 56633 218-335-8655 cjthompson@fs.fed.us |
| Paul Burke | U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Twin Cities Ecological Field Office 4101 East 80 th St. Bloomington, MN 55425-1655 612-725-3548 paul_burke@fws.gov |
| Herb Nelson | Bureau of Indian Affairs Whipple Federal Building One Federal Drive, Rm. 550 Ft. Snelling, MN 55111 612-725-4510 |

As discussed in our May 17, 2007 meeting, establishing roles and responsibilities for lead and cooperating agencies for environmental impact analyses prepared in accordance with NEPA are normally formalized in executed agreements; however, since this Proposal is not classified as a federal Environmental Impact Statement it was felt that a memorandum outlining general roles and responsibilities would be adequate. Please review the above and let me know if you have any concerns regarding the responsibilities or procedures outlined above. In the absence of any objection, we will proceed, as agreed, in accordance with this memorandum.

If you have any questions, please contact me at the contact information above.

Mark S. Plank

MARK S. PLANK
Director
Engineering and Environmental Staff

Cc: Division File EES-Plank

EES:MPlank:draft:6/14/07:720-1649:final:kjg:6/15/07
Recall:S:KGross:EES:Bemidji Memo to federal Agencies060807.doc



**United States Department of Agriculture
Rural Development**
Washington, DC

JUN 15 2007

Mr. Paul Burke
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Twin Cities Ecological Field Office
4101 East 80th Street
Bloomington, Minnesota 55425-1655

RE: Bemidji to Grand Rapids 230 kV Transmission Line Proposal

Dear Mr. Burke:

The purpose of this memorandum is to outline the roles, responsibilities, and procedures of the federal agencies involved in the environmental review process associated with a proposed 230 kV line between Bemidji, Minnesota and Grand Rapids, Minnesota (the Proposal). The Proposal is proposed by Minnkota Power Cooperative, Inc. (Minnkota Power) and two other Minnesota utilities, Otter Tail Power Company (Otter Tail Power) and Minnesota Power (Minnesota Power).

The Rural Utilities Services (RUS), U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), the U.S. Forest Service (USFS), Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) (collectively, the federal agencies) have met and discussed the Proposal and concluded that it requires an Environmental Assessment (EA) pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), 42 U.S.C. §§ 4321-4347 and 40 C.F.R. §§ 1500-1508 and in accordance with the respective agency regulations. Based on discussions, RUS has offered to serve as the lead agency for the federal environmental review process and the other agencies have agreed to serve as cooperating agencies in that effort.

As the lead agency, and in consultation with the Minnesota Department of Commerce (DoC), RUS will develop the scope for the environmental review process. In doing so, input from the other federal agencies will be sought and incorporated as appropriate. RUS will also be responsible for coordinating the environmental review process with the DoC, which is preparing a state required Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Proposal. To minimize duplication of effort, RUS and DoC have agreed to jointly prepare one environmental review document that complies with federal and state requirements. As cooperating agencies, USACE, USFS, BIA, and USFWS agree to provide RUS with timely input necessary to ensure that the jointly prepared environmental review document with the DoC adequately addresses all issues of their respective agencies.

In addition, USACE has agreed to initiate and be responsible for managing the Section 106, National Historic Preservation Act, consultation process with all appropriate parties including the Leech Lake Band and any other affected or interested Indian Tribes. The Section 106 consultation will focus on the transmission route(s) included in the environmental review document. USACE will seek and incorporate input of RUS, BIA, USFS, and USFWS in managing the Section 106 consultation process.

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Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (800)795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD).

The federal agencies' points of contact for the Proposal are:

| | |
|----------------|--|
| Mark S. Plank | Rural Utilities Service 1400 Independence Ave. SW Mail Stop 1571, Room 2242 Washington, DC 22050-1571 202-720-1649 mark.plank@wdc.usda.gov |
| Tamara Cameron | U.S. Army Corps of Engineers St. Paul District, Regulatory Branch 190 5 th Street East St. Paul, MN 55101 651-290-5197 tamara.e.cameron@mvp02.usace.army.mil |
| Cathy Thompson | U.S. Forest Service Chippewa National Forest 200 Ash Ave. N.W. Cass Lake, MN 56633 218-335-8655 cjthompson@fs.fed.us |
| Paul Burke | U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Twin Cities Ecological Field Office 4101 East 80 th St. Bloomington, MN 55425-1655 612-725-3548 paul_burke@fws.gov |
| Herb Nelson | Bureau of Indian Affairs Whipple Federal Building One Federal Drive, Rm. 550 Ft. Snelling, MN 55111 612-725-4510 |

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Mark S. Plank

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Director

Engineering and Environmental Staff

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**United States Department of Agriculture
Rural Development**
Washington, DC

Ms. Cathy Thompson
U.S. Forest Service
Chippewa National Forest
200 Ash Avenue, N.W.
Cass Lake, Minnesota 56633

JUN 15 2007

RE: Bemidji to Grand Rapids 230 kV Transmission Line Proposal

Dear Ms. Thompson:

The purpose of this memorandum is to outline the roles, responsibilities, and procedures of the federal agencies involved in the environmental review process associated with a proposed 230 kV line between Bemidji, Minnesota and Grand Rapids, Minnesota (the Proposal). The Proposal is proposed by Minnkota Power Cooperative, Inc. (Minnkota Power) and two other Minnesota utilities, Otter Tail Power Company (Otter Tail Power) and Minnesota Power (Minnesota Power).

The Rural Utilities Services (RUS), U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), the U.S. Forest Service (USFS), Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) (collectively, the federal agencies) have met and discussed the Proposal and concluded that it requires an Environmental Assessment (EA) pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), 42 U.S.C. §§ 4321-4347 and 40 C.F.R. §§ 1500-1508 and in accordance with the respective agency regulations. Based on discussions, RUS has offered to serve as the lead agency for the federal environmental review process and the other agencies have agreed to serve as cooperating agencies in that effort.

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Committed to the future of rural communities.

In addition, USACE has agreed to initiate and be responsible for managing the Section 106, National Historic Preservation Act, consultation process with all appropriate parties including the Leech Lake Band and any other affected or interested Indian Tribes. The Section 106 consultation will focus on the transmission route(s) included in the environmental review document. USACE will seek and incorporate input of RUS, BIA, USFS, and USFWS in managing the Section 106 consultation process.

The federal agencies' points of contact for the Proposal are:

| | |
|----------------|--|
| Mark S. Plank | Rural Utilities Service 1400 Independence Ave. SW Mail Stop 1571, Room 2242 Washington, DC 22050-1571 202-720-1649 mark.plank@wdc.usda.gov |
| Tamara Cameron | U.S. Army Corps of Engineers St. Paul District, Regulatory Branch 190 5 th Street East St. Paul, MN 55101 651-290-5197 tamara.e.cameron@mvp02.usace.army.mil |
| Cathy Thompson | U.S. Forest Service Chippewa National Forest 200 Ash Ave. N.W. Cass Lake, MN 56633 218-335-8655 cjthompson@fs.fed.us |
| Paul Burke | U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Twin Cities Ecological Field Office 4101 East 80 th St. Bloomington, MN 55425-1655 612-725-3548 paul_burke@fws.gov |
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