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PUBLIC COMMENTS

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 17, 2010  
6:00 p.m.

In the Matter of the Application for a Route Permit for  
the Bemidji-Grand Rapids 230 kV Transmission Project

PUC Docket Number: E017, E015, ET6/TL-07-1327

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18  
19  
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21  
22  
23  
24  
25

I N D E X

SPEAKER	PAGE
Stephanie Strength	16
Clarence Johnson	19
Rich Morine	21
Dean Sedgwick	22
Vernon Beighley	26
Greg Sorheim	29
Vernon Beighley	30
Sally Sedgwick	30
Dean Sedgwick	32
Vern Beighley	34
Greg Sorheim	36
Katie Haws	36
Cathy Thompson	37
Dean Sedgwick	37
Sally Sedgwick	40
Mark Michalek	41
Vern Beighley	43
Mark Michalek	44
Dean Sedgwick	44
Vern Beighley	45

2

1 MS. STEINHAUER: (Indicating throughout.)  
2 Can everybody hear me? It sounds like it. Good  
3 evening. Thank you for coming to the meeting  
4 tonight. My name is Suzanne Steinhauer. I'm with  
5 the Minnesota Office of Energy Security, and I  
6 represent the Public Utilities Commission.

7 The Public Utilities Commission -- the  
8 Minnesota Public Utilities Commission is the state  
9 permitting agency for transmission -- for a number  
10 of different power facilities, but in this case, for  
11 transmission lines of this size.

12 I've got a couple people with me tonight  
13 and I want to introduce them. In the back near the  
14 window is Jamie MacAlister, and Ray Kirsch near the  
15 map. They are also with the Office of Energy  
16 Security. They're involved in the project. They  
17 can answer some questions, if you have them, about  
18 the project, and also the public review process and  
19 how you can get involved in that.

20 I also have here Stephanie Strength with  
21 USDA Rural Utility Service. The environmental  
22 review for this project is a joint effort between  
23 the state of Minnesota and federal agencies. The  
24 Rural Utility Service is the lead federal agency.

25 We also have a couple folks here, Kay and

1 Cathy Thompson from the Forest Service. They're a  
2 cooperating agency.

3 Is there anyone here from the Corps  
4 tonight? No. Okay.

5 And then there are a number of  
6 representatives from the applicant and -- oh, also,  
7 in the back there's Greg Poremba and Meghan Sweeney.  
8 They're from ERM Consulting, they worked with us in  
9 developing the environmental impact statement.

10 My role in the project is to develop the  
11 record for the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission  
12 to make their decision on. The meeting tonight is  
13 to -- the purpose of the meeting tonight is to  
14 provide an opportunity for the public to ask  
15 questions and provide comments on the completeness  
16 and the accuracy of the draft environmental impact  
17 statement.

18 And the EIS, or environmental impact  
19 statement, serves a slightly different role for the  
20 state and the federal processes. And I think  
21 Stephanie will talk a little bit about some of the  
22 differences.

23 For the state process, the EIS does not  
24 identify a preferred alternative. We've looked  
25 at -- and I'll get into it a little bit later, we've

1 looked at three different route alternatives and a  
2 number of different segment alternatives. And the  
3 information in the EIS tries to present an  
4 apples-to-apples comparison between the  
5 alternatives.

6 The EIS is a large document, and I  
7 realize that probably most people have not had an  
8 opportunity to read it. There are three volumes.  
9 There are copies that are available if you'd like to  
10 take a look at them here. We have some CDs we can  
11 send you home with.

12 But that provides -- for the state  
13 process what it provides is kind of a baseline  
14 comparison of information between the alternatives  
15 that the Commission has to select from and develops  
16 sort of that baseline information.

17 Where it goes from here, there are sort  
18 of two processes. We're here tonight to take  
19 comments on the environmental impact statement. I  
20 realize a number of people probably have comments on  
21 the routes and preferences, and we'll take those and  
22 they'll be part of the record. All of the comments  
23 received tonight or in writing are part of the  
24 record and will be included and responded to in the  
25 final EIS.

1 The state process also moves on from  
2 there into a contested case hearing, and a contested  
3 case hearing is something that's required for all  
4 transmission lines of this size. The assumption, I  
5 think, behind it is the realization that these can  
6 be controversial projects and people probably don't  
7 want to have them near them. But it's to develop  
8 the record to make the best informed decision about  
9 where the route should go and what conditions should  
10 be attached to the permit.

11 The proposed project -- I should  
12 backtrack a little bit. The project has been  
13 proposed by three utilities: Minnkota Power  
14 Cooperative, Minnesota Power, and Otter Tail Power  
15 Company. There are also representatives from those  
16 utilities here tonight.

17 Depending on the route selected, the  
18 route would be between 68 miles -- 68, 69, those  
19 two, the blue and the red line in the center,  
20 generally in the Highway 2 area. And then the  
21 yellow line to the north is about 113 miles.

22 It's, again, 230 kilovolts of  
23 transmission. It would extend from the Wilton  
24 Substation located slightly west of Bemidji to the  
25 Boswell Substation. Both of those substations would

1 be -- they'd add equipment, the Boswell Substation  
2 would be expanded slightly.

3 Depending on the route selected, the  
4 project may also include improvements and expansion  
5 of the existing Cass Lake Substation, or perhaps the  
6 construction of a new substation and the  
7 construction of a new breaker station near Nary.

8 As I mentioned before, the Minnesota  
9 Public Utilities Commission has the responsibility  
10 of permitting any transmission line of this size in  
11 Minnesota. A high voltage transmission line can be  
12 constructed only along a route approved by the  
13 Public Utilities Commission. For purposes of  
14 identification, high voltage is considered anything  
15 higher than 100 kilovolts.

16 Then there are -- the Commission needs to  
17 develop a record to base that decision on, and the  
18 rules are -- they develop a record based on the laws  
19 that are in statute and also administrative rules in  
20 Chapter 7850.

21 So I'll backtrack a little bit. The  
22 utilities submitted an application, a route permit  
23 application, to the Commission in June of 2008. The  
24 application was accepted as complete by the  
25 Commission at the end of June. We were out in the

1 project area in the summer of 2008 for scoping  
2 meetings. The purpose of these scoping meetings was  
3 to gather public input on what routes should be  
4 evaluated in the draft environmental impact  
5 statement and what impacts should be looked at.

6 There were also advisory task force  
7 meetings held also in the project area. The  
8 advisory task force is comprised of members of local  
9 units of government. They made recommendations  
10 about the routes that they wanted to see evaluated  
11 and also the facts that they believe need to be  
12 evaluated.

13 That information, through the public  
14 comment, also the advisory task force and agency  
15 review, all came together and the OES, Office of  
16 Energy Security, issued a scoping decision in March  
17 of 2009. And the scoping decision identified the  
18 routes that -- the three routes that you see here  
19 and the issues that would be addressed in that  
20 environmental impact statement. And so over the  
21 course of the last year we developed the draft  
22 environmental impact statement, that was issued in  
23 February of this year.

24 Which brings us to the draft public  
25 meetings in the yellow box down there. As I

1 mentioned earlier, there will also be, at the end of  
2 next month, April 21st through 23rd, in the project  
3 area a series of contested case hearings. Those  
4 hearings will be presided over by an administrative  
5 law judge and will continue to develop the record.

6 And he will, based on the record, based  
7 on the information in the EIS, based on the comments  
8 received on the EIS, based on the testimony received  
9 during the hearing -- and those hearings are open to  
10 the public. You can come and offer your opinion on  
11 the route.

12 That's an opportunity -- the meeting here  
13 is intended to get comments that are more geared  
14 toward the information. The contested case hearing  
15 is an opportunity for people to advocate on a  
16 particular route. If you want to make a statement  
17 about your route preference, we'll certainly take  
18 those here.

19 But at the contested case hearing, the  
20 applicants will be advocating for what they believe  
21 is the best route. There are opportunities for  
22 people to ask questions of them and provide  
23 information on why they believe that route or  
24 another route should be selected.

25 So, again, the comments received in the

1 public meetings that we're -- that we're having this  
2 week and any written comments received by April 26th  
3 will be included in the final environmental impact  
4 statement, and we'll provide responses to those  
5 comments.

6 That goes into the record. All that  
7 information, as I said before, is provided to the  
8 judge. The judge, based on that record, will make a  
9 recommendation to the Public Utilities Commission on  
10 the route that should be selected and any conditions  
11 that should be attached to the permit.

12 The Public Utilities Commission will  
13 consider the recommendation of the judge. It may  
14 not follow it exactly, but they will certainly take  
15 his recommendation seriously and issue a final  
16 permit for the route. The permit, as I mentioned  
17 before, will identify where the route's going and  
18 what conditions should be attached to the route  
19 permit.

20 And this slide just kind of reiterates  
21 where we are, how we've gotten to here, the draft  
22 EIS information meetings, and the comments, which  
23 are due April 26th.

24 Moving forward, then, to the next phase,  
25 going on simultaneous to the public comment for the

1 draft is the contested case hearings. The comment  
2 period for the contested case hearings is to be  
3 determined, and if you -- I hope that people were  
4 able to sign in in the back. If you checked the  
5 box, you'll receive notice of when, the location,  
6 and comment time lines for the contested case  
7 hearings. And the notice will also be published in  
8 area newspapers.

9 And getting back to the draft EIS, the  
10 EIS evaluated three route alternatives. Routes --  
11 we labeled them Route 1, which is the red line;  
12 Route 2, the blue line. Those are, again, generally  
13 in the Highway 2 area and follow for the most part  
14 existing either highway or pipeline easements, some  
15 transmission lines. And then Route 3, which is the  
16 northern yellow alternative, follows for the most  
17 part existing transmission lines there.

18 The EIS also evaluated 20 different  
19 segment alternatives, which are shown as the dotted  
20 lines. Some of these are very small, located on the  
21 eastern end of Routes 1 and 2 and connect Routes 1  
22 and 2. So they provide an opportunity for the line  
23 maybe to cross between those two alternatives.

24 The applicants requested a  
25 1,000-foot-wide route, within which they would

1 prepare a right-of-way of -- they've requested a  
2 right-of-way of 125 feet. Right-of-way and easement  
3 are terms that are used kind of interchangeably, but  
4 basically that represents what the cleared -- the  
5 area that would need to be cleared and maintained  
6 for construction and operation of the line.

7 They've requested a 125-foot  
8 right-of-way. We continue to evaluate that. There  
9 may be areas where it should be narrower -- there  
10 may be areas where the route should be narrower.  
11 That's part of what the record that we're building  
12 is.

13 But we asked the applicants to -- within  
14 the much larger route to identify what we called a  
15 feasible 125-foot right-of-way. That doesn't mean  
16 that's necessarily where the line would go along  
17 that route, but it provides an initial look at what  
18 appears to be, from the outset, an engineering -- a  
19 route that's feasible to construct from an  
20 engineering perspective and allows us to compare  
21 across all the different criteria to compare those  
22 routes.

23 And the criteria that we looked at, that  
24 we compared on the routes, are -- there are 21  
25 criteria. Aesthetics, air quality, geology and

1 soils, water resources, floodplains, wetlands,  
2 biological resources, species of special concern --  
3 which are threatened and endangered species or  
4 biologically significant communities -- cultural  
5 resources, land use, socioeconomic, environmental  
6 justice, recreation and tourism, agricultural,  
7 forestry, mining, community services, utility  
8 systems, traffic and transportation, safety and  
9 health, and noise.

10 There are paper copies of the EIS  
11 available on the side for you to look at. As I  
12 mentioned, we have a limited number of CD copies we  
13 can send you away with. If questions come up later,  
14 there are hard copies available at local libraries.  
15 There are also copies of them -- if you have  
16 Internet access, you can look at the EIS on our  
17 website. Our website also has information on the  
18 process generally.

19 Coming back, the intent or the focus on  
20 tonight's meeting is to try to make sure that the  
21 information contained in the EIS is, to the best of  
22 our ability, accurate and complete. I'd ask you to  
23 focus your comments tonight on the content of the  
24 draft EIS, and specifically the accuracy and  
25 completeness of the data.

1 We'll take oral comments. Stephanie will  
2 have a brief presentation. We'll take oral comments  
3 after that. I don't know if anybody -- there were  
4 green cards at the back, and if you gave those to  
5 somebody we'll take those speakers first.

6 I'm sorry. I forget to introduce our  
7 court reporter here. She's here, she's taking a  
8 transcript of the meeting. To provide an accurate  
9 public record, we'd ask you to please use the  
10 microphone, to state and spell your name, to speak  
11 clearly so that she can hear and that we have an  
12 accurate record, because I'm the one who goes back  
13 and I listen -- or, fortunately, I can look at the  
14 transcript now. I don't have to listen to many  
15 hours of tape recordings. But that's helpful to me  
16 if you can speak clearly so she has an accurate  
17 record. We can get your comments and respond to  
18 those in the final.

19 I ask you also, and I'm sure you will, to  
20 be respectful of everyone here. I imagine a number  
21 of people have very strong opinions about what they  
22 think about the line, where they think it would  
23 be -- where they think it would best be, and other  
24 people have just as strong and just as heartfelt  
25 opinions about -- that may differ from yours. So

1 please be respectful.

2 I'd ask you to try to limit your comments  
3 to five minutes in order to allow everybody a chance  
4 to speak. Christine will be preparing transcripts  
5 and those will be available for review.

6 And, again, at that back table there are  
7 comment sheets. I would encourage you to take those  
8 sheets with you. We're accepting written comments  
9 until April 26th. If you comment tonight, if you  
10 think of something later, please do send your  
11 comments in.

12 You can send multiple comments in. I  
13 know sometimes you leave and -- or at least for me,  
14 I leave the meetings and things occur to me later or  
15 you talk to your neighbors and there are other  
16 questions or things that you want to know about,  
17 provide the comments.

18 You don't have to use this sheet. You  
19 can fax them, you can e-mail, you send it to me in  
20 the mail, but I encourage you to take this sheet  
21 just because it does provide the contact information  
22 in one fairly concise form. My address is -- my  
23 cards, I believe, are at the back. You can mail or  
24 e-mail your comments to me. You can also submit  
25 them directly on our website. Again, the comment --

1 the written comment period closes at 4:30 on  
2 April 26th.

3 I'm going to turn it over to Stephanie  
4 now, and then we'll open it up for comments.

5 MS. STRENGTH: Good evening, everybody.  
6 Can you all hear me in the back? Yes. My name's  
7 Stephanie Strength. I'm with the U.S. Department of  
8 Agriculture, Rural Utilities Service. We're part of  
9 Rural Development, formerly known as REA.

10 We are working with the state of  
11 Minnesota to jointly prepare this EIS so that you  
12 don't see multiple versions of that document and  
13 multiple editions of this meeting to comment in.  
14 We're trying to simplify the process and work  
15 together.

16 In addition to being joint agencies, as  
17 the lead with the state, we also have several  
18 cooperating agencies. In this case, we have the  
19 Chippewa National Forest, Forest Service, and the  
20 Corps of Engineers, as well as Leech Lake Band of  
21 Ojibwe.

22 For the Forest Service and the Leech Lake  
23 Band of Ojibwe the involvement is due to the  
24 crossing of their land, and so there is a permit  
25 that would have to be issued to allow that for any

1 of the routes chosen. For the Corps of Engineers,  
2 their involvement is due to the potential impacts to  
3 wetlands or to waters in the United States.

4 RUS is involved because we provide  
5 financing assistance to rural utilities to provide  
6 power, water, other utilities at a lower interest  
7 rate to rural America. In this case, Minnkota Power  
8 Cooperative has approached us for financing  
9 assistance.

10 If we were to agree to finance, that's  
11 considered a federal action. And we have to do  
12 what -- in this case, an environmental impact  
13 statement to meet the requirements under the  
14 National Environmental Policy Act. The other  
15 federal agencies also have the same requirement due  
16 to their permit activities, which is why we're all  
17 working together to do this environmental impact  
18 statement.

19 There have been several opportunities for  
20 public involvement so far with the state through the  
21 scoping process and now today with the draft EIS.  
22 Any of the comments received will be viewed by all  
23 of the federal agencies, as well as the state, and  
24 considered and addressed in the final environmental  
25 impact statement.

1 After the final EIS is released for  
2 review, there will also be notices and a chance for  
3 the public to review. After that process, after the  
4 release of the FEIS, the final environmental impact  
5 statement, is where the state and the federal  
6 process splits a little bit. They go through a  
7 process where the judge makes a recommendation and  
8 it goes on and then the PUC makes a decision.

9 In the case of the agencies, each of the  
10 agencies will need to make -- the federal agencies  
11 will each need to make a decision on what they would  
12 agree to permit or, in our case, to finance, as well  
13 as conditions on how this project could be  
14 constructed. So each of the agencies would publish  
15 that decision. It's called a record of decision.  
16 It would be in the newspapers where tonight's  
17 meeting was located as well as the Federal Register.

18 In addition to the National Environmental  
19 Policy Act which requires this environmental impact  
20 statement, there's also something called Section  
21 106. And that is where we take comments -- there's  
22 a public involvement part of that where we take  
23 comments on cultural resource impacts, historic  
24 properties.

25 If you comment in the EIS process, your

**Commenter 37 – Clarence Johnson**

19

1        comments will also be considered in that review. So  
2        you don't need to worry about commenting in more  
3        than one location, they will be shared throughout  
4        all the agencies and meet all the requirements.

5                Suzanne has given you the OES website.  
6        There's also RUS's website where you can see the  
7        direct links to documents that we have put out and  
8        the notices that have been put out by the federal  
9        agencies and where you can download the documents  
10       like the draft environmental impact statement.

11               You can also comment directly to me. The  
12       one-page handout that has USDA at the top of it, on  
13       the back is located all of my contact information as  
14       well as the website. And as she had mentioned, you  
15       can e-mail them in, fax them, send them by mail, you  
16       can even call.

17               Yeah. That's the last one. So I'll turn  
18       it over to you, and we'll go to the comment period.

19               MS. STEINHAEUER: Thank you.

20               The only person that I have who's  
21       preregistered is Clarence Johnson. Either come up  
22       to the mic or I can bring the mic out to you.

23               MR. JOHNSON: I've only got a short  
24       statement -- or a question, I should say.

25               MS. STEINHAEUER: Can you say --

**Responses**

**Commenter 37 – Clarence Johnson**

1 MR. JOHNSON: And it's not on the EIS.  
2 UNIDENTIFIED: He's got a bad leg.  
3 MR. JOHNSON: The question I had was, in  
4 looking at the routes I was wondering, why that  
5 northern route instead of a direct route that would  
6 be more economical?  
7 UNIDENTIFIED: That's what we're all  
8 wondering.  
9 MS. STEINHAUER: (Indicating throughout.)  
10 Thanks. As I mentioned earlier, the applicants  
11 applied for two alternative routes generally in the  
12 central corridor. Based on the scoping comments  
13 that we received and the agency review, we -- there  
14 were some issues identified with some of those  
15 routes that the agencies determined it would be  
16 better to have something that was different to look  
17 at and provide a comparison.  
18 The scoping process for RUS is a little  
19 bit different, and in that process the applicants  
20 looked at a number of different larger study areas  
21 called corridors. One was in this Highway 2 area,  
22 one was generally in this northern area. And then  
23 there's two -- there was one along Highway 200 and  
24 then one that went further south. In the RUS  
25 scoping decision, which is available on their

**Responses**

**Comment 37-1**

Please refer to the comment response from Ms. Steinhauer that appears directly below the comment. A discussion of the scoping process appears in Section 1.4 of the EIS.

37-1

**Commenter 38 – Rich Morine**

21

1 website, they go into a little bit more detail about  
2 why these alternatives and why this was included.

3 And I'm going to open it up to hands now.  
4 If you could please identify yourself and spell your  
5 name so the court reporter --

6 MR. MORINE: Rich Morine, M-O-R-I-N-E.

38-1

7 I was just curious why, like, you got the  
8 yellow route going close to Blackduck, and then down  
9 to the east of that you've got the purple route  
10 going through and back up again. And that one goes  
11 very close to my land. Of course, it's going to be  
12 different for everybody, it's close for some and far  
13 for others. But it seems funny that it would drop  
14 down and go back up again.

15 MS. STEINHAUER: Thanks. The purple  
16 lines that show up on your map -- that are on the  
17 overview maps are, we call them alternative  
18 segments, and there are a number of them that are  
19 considered in the EIS just to develop some  
20 alternatives around areas that may have routing  
21 issues.

38-2

22 MR. MORINE: I don't like that  
23 alternative.

24 MS. STEINHAUER: Okay. Thank you.

25 Yes. If you can please identify yourself

**Responses**

**Comment 38-1**

Thank you for your comment. It has been noted and included in the record for this EIS.

**Comment 38-2**

Thank you for your comment. It has been noted and included in the record for this EIS.

**Commenter 39 – Dean Sedgwick**

22

1 and spell your name so that the court reporter can  
2 hear, please.

3 MR. SEDGWICK: Sure. Dean Sedgwick,  
4 S-E-D-G-W-I-C-K.

5 When you looked at your justification for  
6 this line, did you consider any energy generation  
7 sources as a reason for this line?

8 MS. STEINHAUER: The Minnesota route  
9 approval process -- there are two processes.  
10 There's the route, which is where it's going to go  
11 and how it will be constructed, and then there's  
12 also something called a certificate of need.

13 When utilities propose to construct a  
14 line they have to demonstrate that there's a need  
15 for it. They -- part of what's required for the  
16 utilities to supply and also for the state to look  
17 at is what other kind of alternatives, and there is  
18 a generation alternative that was considered.

19 That summarized -- why we did not pursue  
20 that alternative, that's summarized in, I believe  
21 it's Chapter 2 of the EIS. But the Commission made  
22 a determination that there is a need for  
23 transmission and then that need cannot be met by  
24 adding generation. The project doesn't include any  
25 generation.

**Responses**

**Comment 39-1**

Please refer to the comment response from Ms. Steinhauer that appears directly below the comment. A discussion of generation alternatives considered but not evaluated in the EIS appears in Section 2.3.1 of the EIS.

39-1

1           In some cases, there are other  
2 transmission lines which are constructed in order to  
3 provide an outlet for a particular generation  
4 source. This line has been proposed and the Public  
5 Utilities Commission approved it because of the need  
6 for reliability in the Greater Bemidji/Northern  
7 Minnesota area.

8           MS. STRENGTH: And for the federal  
9 agencies, there was a preliminary document prepared,  
10 it's also on the RUS website, where -- at the very  
11 beginning where we start when a project comes to us  
12 is first they tell us there's a problem. That's  
13 what the need is. We need to demonstrate what this  
14 problem is. Then there are the ways to meet this  
15 problem, to fix it.

16           And first, you have to look at, can you  
17 do things like generation, can you do things like  
18 conservation, or is it something like transmission  
19 that's necessary. Then if transmission is  
20 determined necessary, which was demonstrated in the  
21 document of our agency, what size and then where  
22 should it go. And then the final decision to be  
23 made after you decide where it should go is how it  
24 should be constructed.

25           So we've tried to lay out all of these

## Responses

**Commenter 39 – Dean Sedgwick**

24

1 decisions through the different documents on the  
2 website and would welcome, you know, any input on  
3 that.

4 MS. STEINHAUER: Yes.

5 MR. SEDGWICK: Same person. When you  
6 look at this routing, you have the right to  
7 condemnation. Why would you be looking at all of  
8 the alternatives when you could basically pick the  
9 cheapest, lowest-cost alternative and address the  
10 environment issues and then just condemn the  
11 property and build the line?

12 What's the purpose of going through some  
13 of these options? And you've already eliminated one  
14 option, so why would you not just focus on the one  
15 main corridor and follow through on that?

16 MS. STEINHAUER: When the Commission  
17 makes their route determination, they need to  
18 evaluate -- I believe there are 14 different  
19 criteria and provide values for all of them.  
20 There -- they weigh them all. There are a number of  
21 different factors, cost is one of them, and  
22 environment and social impacts are other concerns.  
23 They need to develop a record. They have to have a  
24 rational base for their decision. So what there is  
25 in the record so far are some alternatives for them

**Responses**

**Comment 39-2**

Please refer to the comment response from Ms. Steinhauer that appears directly below the comment.

39-2

**Commenter 39 – Dean Sedgwick**

25

1 to consider.

2 Back to your question of condemnation.

3 The route that's approved by the Public Utilities  
4 Commission does provide the applicants with -- give  
5 them eminent domain. In order to pursue that, the  
6 applicants must first approach the landowner and try  
7 to reach a negotiated settlement with them on an  
8 easement, which is a use for a portion of the  
9 property. If they can't reach a negotiated  
10 arrangement with them, they can then proceed to  
11 eminent domain proceedings.

12 Another thing that is somewhat unique to  
13 transmission lines of this size, for transmission  
14 lines of over 200 kilovolts, which this is, the  
15 owner can request that the utility buy not just the  
16 easement, but the parcel outright. And there's some  
17 limitations to that, but it's called the Buy the  
18 Farm provision. It's in statute.

19 MR. SEDGWICK: Why didn't you just move  
20 this right up to 345 or some larger voltage? As  
21 long as you're bringing in power and reliability  
22 into that area, why did you pick just 245 kV (sic)?

23 MS. STEINHAUER: The applicants did their  
24 engineering studies and that's what they believe is  
25 needed. When the Commission and RUS engineering

**Responses**

**Comment 39-3**

Please refer to the comment response from Ms. Steinhauer that appears directly below the comment.

39-3

**Commenter 40 – Rich Morine; Commenter 41 – Vernon Beighley**

**Responses**

1 reviewed that application, I think they agreed that  
2 230 is the appropriate voltage.  
3 If other people have questions, I want to  
4 provide them with that.  
5 MR. MORINE: I just wanted to add, I sit  
6 here and I look at that purple -- around town, we  
7 talk about rational, that goes right through all  
8 kinds of farm ground and close to homes. And to me,  
9 that wouldn't be rational at all when you go close  
10 to town and where it's not going to hurt property  
11 values. Thank you.  
12 MS. STEINHAUER: Thank you.  
13 MR. BEIGHLEY: Vernon Beighley,  
14 B-E-I-G-H-L-E-Y.  
15 Question one is how many houses -- homes,  
16 actual homes, are impacted by a line on these  
17 proposed routes? I know the yellow route has a  
18 number of homes, especially on that east road and  
19 stuff going out of Blackduck that is going to be  
20 impacted, even a little to the south, which is where  
21 I'm located.  
22 There are routes that they could take to  
23 go south further that would put them basically  
24 through either federal or state forestry land, which  
25 is public land. I know the forestry don't like to

40-1

41-1

41-2

**Comment 40-1**

Thank you for your comment. It has been noted and included in the record for this EIS.

**Comment 41-1**

The number of homes located in proximity to the Route Alternatives appears in Table 3.11-10 of the EIS. A discussion of impacts to homes and structures appears in Section 3.11.2 of the EIS.

**Comment 41-2**

Thank you for your comment. It has been noted and included in the record for this EIS.

**Commenter 41 – Vernon Beighley**

41-3

1 give up land, but neither does anybody else.  
2 And this is public land. I'm just  
3 wondering why they didn't propose a route  
4 cross-country and bypass the impact on individuals  
5 and their livelihood. Which a lot of their  
6 livelihood is invested in their homes, which a  
7 transmission line right at your front door is going  
8 to decrease property values.

41-4

9 And like I talked to the one gentleman  
10 back here (indicating) earlier, if the transmission  
11 line goes across the road from me, I have no real  
12 legal recourse to recoup what I would lose in  
13 property value of my home. And there's going to be  
14 a lot of other people in the same boat I'm in, which  
15 is unfortunate.

41-5

16 The second question is, I'm opposed to  
17 the yellow line -- or route, how many homes are  
18 impacted going either the blue or the red? You said  
19 a lot of that is following existing right-of-ways  
20 already, are a lot less homes involved?

21 MS. STEINHAUER: Thank you. With respect  
22 to the number of homes potentially affected, I can't  
23 provide you right now with the number of homes.  
24 What we did is we looked -- and we can go over the  
25 EIS later. All of the routes would be within --

**Responses**

**Comment 41-3**

Thank you for your comment. It has been noted and included in the record for this EIS. Sections 2.1.2, 2.2, and 2.3 discuss the scoping process for deciding which alternatives were evaluated in the EIS. The OES and RUS scoping decisions are included in Appendix A. A discussion of potential impacts to property values appears in Section 3.11.2 of the EIS.

**Comment 41-4**

Thank you for your comment. It has been noted and included in the record for this EIS. A discussion of potential impacts to property values appears in Section 3.11.2 of the EIS.

**Comment 41-5**

Please see response to Comment 41-1, which addresses the same concern.

**Commenter 41 – Vernon Beighley**

1       there are homes within some number of feet within  
2       all of those proposed center lines.  
3               Those homes can be clustered in certain  
4       areas and that's why we tried to look at what they  
5       called the feasible right-of-way to see if moving  
6       that right-of-way -- which may have been good from  
7       an engineering perspective or may have, for  
8       instance, avoided species, if moving that  
9       right-of-way would potentially minimize the impact  
10       to homes.  
11               But I can't provide you with the number  
12       of homes, the comparison, right now. We can look at  
13       the EIS later, that is addressed.  
14               MR. BEIGHLEY: Just if -- that  
15       west-to-east route between Blackduck/Alwood, if  
16       that were to drop down through forestry land, you  
17       would impact almost zero amount of homes and it  
18       would be on government land without invading upon  
19       the private citizen. I just question why they  
20       haven't considered that.  
21               UNIDENTIFIED: For an alternate.  
22               MS. STEINHAUER: I'll take that as a  
23       comment. The routes that were developed tried to  
24       follow existing rights-of-way. They are not the  
25       same as existing rights-of-way, but we did try to

41-6

**Responses**

**Comment 41-6**

Thank you for your comment. It has been noted and is included in the record for this EIS. Route Alternative 3 was developed to follow existing corridor to the extent possible. The section between Blackduck and Alwood would primarily follow existing roadway rights-of-way.

**Commenter 41 – Vernon Beighley;  
Commenter 42 – Greg Sorheim**

1 consolidate them. That as one of the factors that  
2 the Commission looks at.

3 MR. BEIGHLEY: But you're sure making an  
4 impact on a lot of people by putting it along  
5 that -- a main road where there are houses when they  
6 could be avoided.

7 MS. STEINHAUER: Thank you.

8 MR. SORHEIM: Greg Sorheim,  
9 S-O-R-H-E-I-M.

10 I'm just wondering what's the cost  
11 difference between going up and over and the  
12 straight-away routes that go through? And also, the  
13 pipeline just got done running through there, why  
14 can't they go over the top of that, the  
15 right-of-ways are already there?

16 MS. STEINHAUER: Thank you. With respect  
17 to the cost differential, there are tables in the  
18 EIS. I believe for these two routes the costs are  
19 pretty similar. I think they were 68 or 69 million,  
20 something in that range. Less than 70, between 65  
21 and 70, and then the cost for the longer route is  
22 99 million.

23 With respect to the pipeline  
24 rights-of-way, the transmission can't go directly  
25 over a pipeline right-of-way, but the routes that

**Responses**

**Comment 42-1**

Please refer to the comment response from Ms. Steinhauer that appears directly below the comment.

**Comment 42-2**

Please refer to the comment response from Ms. Steinhauer that appears directly below the comment.

42-1

42-2

**Commenter 43 – Vernon Beighley;  
Commenter 44 – Sally Sedgwick**

43-1

1 are down there do parallel pipeline rights-of-way,  
2 and so that is one thing that we're looking at.

3 MR. BEIGHLEY: What's the reason for  
4 that, why can't they go over pipeline right-of-way?

5 MS. STEINHAUER: There's a safety issue  
6 in the conduction -- conductivity issue with the  
7 metal in the pipeline and electricity.

8 MS. SEDGWICK: Sally Sedgwick.

44-1

9 I have a couple of questions. One is --  
10 and I apologize if this is was addressed before I  
11 came in, in the EIS was the preferred -- a preferred  
12 route identified?

13 And the second question is, if you look  
14 at the yellow route between 46 and 2, that's all  
15 territory that is neither Minnkota or Minnesota  
16 Power. And it seems to me that kind of -- if  
17 Minnesota Power and Minnkota are the applicants, why  
18 are they sending it through -- why would they even  
19 consider sending it through such a long route over  
20 territory that isn't served by them?

44-2

21 MS. STEINHAUER: Thank you. The first  
22 question about the draft EIS, for the state process  
23 we do not in the EIS identify a preferred  
24 alternative. The applicants have identified for the  
25 contested case hearing a preferred alternative.

**Responses**

**Comment 43-1**

Please refer to the comment response from Ms. Steinhauer that appears directly below the comment. A discussion of the potential impacts of the Project on pipelines appears in Section 3.18.2 of the EIS.

**Comment 44-1**

Please refer to the comment response from Ms. Steinhauer that appears directly below the comment. Please see response to Comment 31-1, which addresses the same concern.

**Comment 44-2**

Please refer to the comment response from Ms. Steinhauer that appears directly below the comment.

**Commenter 44 – Sally Sedgwick**

31

1           That's not part -- all of their -- their  
2 preferred alternative is a mixture of Routes 1 and  
3 2, and all of these segments are addressed -- there  
4 is information in the EIS. But the EIS -- for the  
5 OES, we don't -- we're not an advocacy. It's not  
6 our project. Our objective is to build a record.  
7 So we will not make a recommendation in the EIS.

8           And then with respect to the -- I believe  
9 you're talking about this portion (indicating) of  
10 the yellow line not being in the service territory.  
11 It does follow an existing Great River Energy 69 kV  
12 line. Utility -- with your high voltage  
13 transmission, it's not always exactly in their  
14 service territory.

15           MS. SEDGWICK: But Minnkota isn't Great  
16 River Energy.

17           MS. STEINHAUER: That is correct. The  
18 reason why there's a state permitting process is a  
19 recognition that transmission lines above a certain  
20 size meet a state need, and in order to meet that it  
21 may mean that it goes outside of a particular  
22 service territory. But I'll take your comment.  
23 Thank you.

24           I see you, I want to make sure that other  
25 people have an opportunity to comment.

**Responses**

**Commenter 45 – Dean Sedgwick**

1 MR. SEDGWICK: Thank you. Dean Sedgwick,  
2 again.

3 What is the state need for this line,  
4 really? And then number two, what role does,  
5 really, the PUC and the OES and DOC play in choosing  
6 this overall line? Those acronyms, so everybody  
7 knows, Public Utilities Commission, the Office of  
8 Energy Security, and then the Department of  
9 Commerce. And they're pretty much related, so maybe  
10 you can explain that.

11 MS. STEINHAUER: I believe the first  
12 question is what role does the state have in  
13 determining the need for a project or the route.  
14 For transmission lines over 100 kilovolts, which  
15 this project is, the permit -- they can't be  
16 constructed without a permit from the Minnesota  
17 Public Utilities Commission.

18 The Public Utilities Commission is  
19 comprised of five Commissioners. They are appointed  
20 by the governor. They serve staggered terms so  
21 they're not all appointed by the same governor and  
22 they are bipartisan.

23 The Minnesota Department of Commerce has  
24 two functions that provide advice to the Minnesota  
25 Public Utilities Commission. One is they serve

**Responses**

**Comment 45-1**

A discussion of Project purpose and need appears in Sections 1.1, 1.2.6, and 2.1.1 of the EIS.

**Comment 45-2**

A discussion of the role of the PUC and RUS in the EIS and environmental review process appears in Section 1.3 of the EIS.

45-1

45-2

**Commenter 45 – Dean Sedgwick**

33

1 as -- the Office of Energy Security that I work for,  
2 or Energy Facilities Permitting group, develops --  
3 as I mentioned earlier, develops the record on  
4 routes and sites for transmission lines and power  
5 projects.

6 We provide -- we staff the meetings like  
7 this to get public comments and to develop the --  
8 review documents and develop the record for the  
9 Commission to make that decision on. There's  
10 another -- excuse me, another branch of the Office  
11 of Energy Security that serves as advocates for  
12 ratepayers on rate cases and on determining the  
13 need.

14 When the Commission determines there's a  
15 need for a project, it's understood then that the  
16 ratepayers will pay for that project.

17 MR. SEDGWICK: And the other part.

18 MS. STEINHAUER: I'm sorry. I'm not very  
19 quick on my feet, if you could please repeat the  
20 other question.

21 MR. SEDGWICK: What's the real benefit to  
22 the area for the construction of this line in either  
23 of those corridors?

24 MS. STEINHAUER: All of the lines  
25 would -- by linking the Wilton Substation and the

**Responses**

**Comment 45-3**

A discussion of Project purpose and need appears in Sections 1.1, 1.2.6, and 2.1.1 of the EIS.

45-3

**Commenter 45 – Dean Sedgwick;  
Commenter 46 – Vernon Beighley**

34

1       Boswell Substation would provide reliability of the  
2       bulk power system. Some may do it better than  
3       others, and that's one of the factors that the  
4       Commission will consider.

5               MR. SEDGWICK: But at this point you  
6       don't have a reliability issue, so what reliability  
7       issues are they trying to address?

8               MS. STEINHAUER: That's been -- that is  
9       summarized generally in the environmental impact  
10       statement and it's been addressed in more detail in  
11       the need determination.

12               The utilities are responsible for  
13       providing reliable electric service to all of their  
14       customers. Part of that responsibility is they have  
15       to start planning and looking at not just what the  
16       need is now, but what the need will be in the  
17       future. When they demonstrate the need, they have  
18       to provide forecasts of what the electric load is  
19       and provide justification for the forecast.

20               MR. BEIGHLEY: Vern Beighley again.

21               I just did a quick mental calculation in  
22       my head just trying to count up how many houses are  
23       involved between Blackduck and just the county line,  
24       I believe the number is 27 or 28 homes.

25               Most of those homes lie within about

**Responses**

**Commenter 46 – Vernon Beighley**

46-1

1 250 feet of the road, there's a couple of them that  
2 sit back a little further. But if you're going to  
3 be putting that right along the road, this  
4 transmission line just about sits on people's homes.

5 There was one other thing, too, but I  
6 forgot it right now. So I'll think on that again.

7 MS. STEINHAUER: Thank you.

8 There are certain electric standards that  
9 the utilities have to build to. They cannot  
10 construct a transmission line over people's homes,  
11 that's one of the routing factors that we look at,  
12 and we'd certainly weigh whether homes would need to  
13 be moved.

14 I mean, in some cases you may be able to  
15 adjust the route of the line and in some cases you  
16 may not be able to, and that would be a very serious  
17 factor that would be considered by the Commission.

46-2

18 MR. BEIGHLEY: Now I remembered. Just  
19 out of curiosity, have you calculated what it costs  
20 to purchase the right-of-way for this line into your  
21 figures that you already quoted, and if you have,  
22 what kind of costs are you talking about reimbursing  
23 landowners along this route?

24 MS. STEINHAUER: The answer to the first  
25 part of your question is the costs that I quoted are

**Responses**

**Comment 46-1**

A discussion of distance to homes appears in Section 3.11.2 of the EIS, specifically Table 3.11-10.

**Comment 46-2**

Please refer to the comment response from Ms. Steinhauer that appears directly below the comment.

**Commenter 46 – Vernon Beighley;  
Commenter 47 – Greg Sorheim; Commenter 48 – Katie Haws**

1 just the construction and permitting costs, they do  
2 not include the acquisitions of right-of-way. The  
3 Commission does not adjudicate or get involved in  
4 the right-of-way negotiations between the utility  
5 and the landowner. There are representatives from  
6 the utilities and you can talk to them about how  
7 that's calculated and what the payments may be.

46-3

8 MR. BEIGHLEY: But you have no idea that  
9 you could enlighten us with what it is?

10 MS. STEINHAUER: I do not know what the  
11 going rate is.

47-1

12 MR. SORHEIM: Who pays for this line,  
13 this extra \$30 million involved? Greg Sorheim. Is  
14 that -- that's the taxpayers, right, that pay for  
15 this extra 30 million?

16 MS. STEINHAUER: It would be the  
17 ratepayers.

18 MR. SORHEIM: Um-hmm. Okay.

48-1

19 MS. HAWS: Katie Haws, H-A-W-S,  
20 K-A-T-I-E.

21 I was just wondering if the Forest  
22 Service had expressed a preference for either of the  
23 three routes?

24 MS. STEINHAUER: I'll have to let the  
25 Forest Service answer that question.

**Responses**

**Comment 46-3**

Please refer to the comment response from Ms. Steinhauer that appears directly below the comment.

**Comment 47-1**

Please refer to the comment response from Ms. Steinhauer that appears directly below the comment.

**Comment 48-1**

Please refer to the comment response from Ms. Thompson that appears directly below the comment.

**Commenter 49 – Dean Sedgwick**

37

1 MS. THOMPSON: This is Cathy Thompson.  
2 We have not selected a preferred route at this time.  
3 We're waiting for public comments and additional  
4 data at this time.

49-1

5 MR. SEDGWICK: Dean Sedgwick again.  
6 I'm a little confused at something. You  
7 come to a meeting and you propose a set of routes  
8 and you haven't selected a definite preferred route  
9 option. And then the forestry hasn't selected a  
10 route and yet we're, as people living in this area,  
11 probably much more impacted than most of the  
12 individuals that are associated with this process.

13 Yet you're in a position to basically  
14 decide how you want to route something that so far I  
15 haven't seen any verification that indicates that  
16 it's needed nor that the options were really, truly  
17 vetted out.

18 And yet, the forestry comes here -- and  
19 I've gone through this in other routing exercises  
20 and seen the forestry say yes, we don't want it on  
21 our property right away and pick a route, I mean,  
22 immediately. And why is it that in this case you  
23 can't come up with some firm definition so that the  
24 people here can have some idea as to what's really  
25 going to happen?

**Responses**

**Comment 49-1**

Please refer to the comment response from Ms. Steinhauer and Ms. Strength that appears directly below the comment.

## Commenter 49 – Dean Sedgwick

38

1           In the case of where I live, which is  
2 east of 46, this routing goes right through our  
3 yard. It would probably go right through lakes,  
4 right on the edge of lakes, and there's no real  
5 easily buildable route that is an alternative if you  
6 choose that direction. And you'll probably wipe  
7 homesteads or houses out completely because of the  
8 width of this transmission corridor.

9           So I think it behooves the government  
10 entities who do have a very significant input into  
11 this to lay the cards on table and say, yeah, we  
12 would rather go this way or that way or none of the  
13 routes look good and describe what their rationale  
14 is.

15           But, you know, at this point in time, why  
16 have the meeting if nobody is willing to stand up  
17 and say, yeah, we really want this route because of  
18 these reasons?

19           MS. STEINHAUER: Thank you for your  
20 comment. I can certainly appreciate that. The  
21 position of the OES is that we don't advocate for a  
22 route. The contested case hearings that will be  
23 held, there will be one at Blackduck. I don't know  
24 the location.

25           The utilities have identified a preferred

## Responses

1 alternative generally in that Highway 2 area. They  
2 will be advocating for that route. I will not be  
3 advocating for a route, but I'll be asking questions  
4 to help develop the record. At that point, or any  
5 time between now and then, any member of the public  
6 or any agency can advocate for a route.

7 MS. STRENGTH: In terms of a federal  
8 perspective, there are, as she mentioned earlier,  
9 about 21 resource areas that we have to look at that  
10 there could be impacts to. And none of the agencies  
11 are going to make a premature decision before we've  
12 assessed those impacts and come to the public and  
13 put out the information and put out our analysis to  
14 make sure that we're not missing something along the  
15 way that would help us to make a better decision.

16 So I understand that it's frustrating to  
17 have so many steps in the process. But really, the  
18 purpose is to make the best decision possible. As I  
19 say, I don't live in your backyard so I don't know  
20 what's there, so we have to come out and find this  
21 information out. We have find out what studies are  
22 needed, we have to find out what information we  
23 still have to gather or if there's something that we  
24 have missed.

25 So I understand that it's a frustrating

## Responses

**Commenter 49 – Dean Sedgwick;  
Commenter 50 – Sally Sedgwick**

1 process at times, but it is done to try to make the  
2 best decision possible. Thank you.

3 MR. SEDGWICK: In response to that, has  
4 NERC or MISO or FERC or any of those groups come out  
5 and actually talked about the reliability needs for  
6 this line? Have you based your assessments on the  
7 need for this line from anything that you're seeing  
8 right now in terms of line reliability by MISO?

9 MS. STRENGTH: In terms of our agency,  
10 there are many steps they have to go through -- that  
11 the bar has to go through in order to justify a need  
12 for a project. And that's with all sorts of -- you  
13 know, MISO and FERC and industry standards as far as  
14 how they have to justify it.

15 They do long-term load forecasts over a  
16 certain period of time. There have been a lot of  
17 studies that have been done to justify the need for  
18 this project, and there's, you know, several  
19 preliminary studies on our website as well as on the  
20 OES's website that address it in great detail.

21 MS. STEINHAUER: Oh, I'm sorry.

22 MS. SEDGWICK: I'm Sally Sedgwick, again.

23 Just as a note to develop the record, the  
24 reason there is an existing transmission line along  
25 this northern route was told to us because that's

**Responses**

**Comment 49-2**

Please refer to the comment response from Ms. Strength that appears directly below the comment.

**Comment 50-1**

A discussion of the Federally Preferred Alternative appears in Sections 2 and 5 of the EIS.

49-2

50-1

Commenter 50 – Sally Sedgwick; Commenter 51 – Mark Michalek

Responses

50-1  
(cont.)

1 what the largest -- that's the route the largest  
2 landowner wanted, and that was the Forest Service.  
3 So it's very important how the Forest Service comes  
4 down, at least as far as the northern route.

5 MS. STEINHAUER: Thank you.

6 MR. MICALLEK: Mark Michalek,  
7 M-I-C-H-A-L-E-K.

51-1

8 And if you've got an existing power line  
9 to run it by already, what are your setbacks from  
10 your power line to that one? If you've got the  
11 highway running on one side, it's most definitely  
12 got to be on the inside. So what would it be to an  
13 existing power line already, how far would you go  
14 further?

15 MS. STEINHAUER: The applicant's proposal  
16 for areas that would run along existing transmission  
17 lines would be to -- they've asked for a 125-foot  
18 right-of-way. There may be portions when that could  
19 be narrower but that's what they've asked for and  
20 that's what we'll start to question. And their  
21 proposal is to build it parallel to the existing  
22 transmission lines.

23 From our perspective, we need to develop  
24 a record to see if there are opportunities to build  
25 them on the same set of structures or to share

**Comment 51-1**

Please refer to the comment response from Ms. Steinhauer that appears directly below the comment.

Commenter 51 – Mark Michalek

42

1 right-of-way. There may be some paralleling, there  
2 may be some opportunity to slightly overlap, but  
3 we'd also want to develop a record to see if they  
4 could be constructed on the same set of structures  
5 and consolidate those rights-of-way to some extent.

6 MR. MICALLEK: But you'd never go towards  
7 the highway, would you, there being that  
8 right-of-way?

9 MS. STEINHAUER: For --

10 MR. MICALLEK: To go around homes versus  
11 moving homes or going over the top of homes, you  
12 certainly wouldn't go over the top of a house, would  
13 you?

14 MS. STEINHAUER: You can't construct over  
15 the top of the homes. The reason that the  
16 applicants have given for asking for a 1,000-foot  
17 right (sic) is to wiggle the lines around homes or  
18 to meet landowner preferences.

19 Generally the lines can't be  
20 constructed -- MnDOT's been very clear that on trunk  
21 highways they can't be constructed within  
22 right-of-way. There may be some opportunities on  
23 county roads to use some of the county right-of-way,  
24 and that's one thing we need to develop a better  
25 record of.

Cont. from  
51-1

Responses

**Commenter 52 – Vernon Beighley**

1 I want to make sure that people have the  
2 opportunity to speak and to offer comments tonight,  
3 but I also want to respect your time. We'll be  
4 available afterwards to try to answer questions and  
5 we can go over some of the information that's in the  
6 EIS, if that's helpful to you. And then written  
7 comments we'll take until April 26th.

8 Is there anyone else, I'm going to --

9 MR. BEIGHLEY: I'm Vern Beighley. I  
10 would like to know how many homes are impacted  
11 within a quarter of a mile of the power line on each  
12 of the routes that you've done, and you must have  
13 that somewhere in your records.

14 MS. STEINHAUER: I'd be happy to go over  
15 that in the EIS. I don't have the figures off the  
16 top of my head.

17 MR. BEIGHLEY: Because I would like to  
18 know, and also your little alternative routes, how  
19 many homes are impacted there as well versus the  
20 proposed routes.

21 MS. STEINHAUER: I'd be happy to go over  
22 that with you and then we can take a look at the  
23 EIS. That is in the record, and then if you want to  
24 take a look at that and you want to add some homes,  
25 that's the kind of comment that would be helpful to

**Responses**

**Comment 52-1**

A discussion of the number of homes within certain distances of the feasible ROW for each Route Alternative appears in Table 3.11-10.

52-1

**Commenter 53 – Mark Michalek; Commenter 54 – Dean Sedgwick**

**Responses**

53-1

1 us in developing that.  
2 MR. MICHALEK: Mark Michalek. How do you  
3 ask people that have lived there all their lives to  
4 move?

5 MS. STEINHAUER: I think to the extent  
6 possible, we try to route around people's homes.  
7 But all of the routes evaluated would come near  
8 somebody's home. I think it's probably fair to say  
9 that if there was a real easy, clean route it  
10 probably would have been constructed by now, and  
11 that's why we're in this evaluation process.

12 I understand how frustrating it is for  
13 you, but there are a number of factors that we  
14 need to -- that we need to bring to the Commission  
15 to consider and allow them to weigh.

16 MR. SEDGWICK: Thank you. Dean Sedgwick  
17 again.

54-1

18 Did you consider any types of advanced  
19 technologies instead of the traditional, just 230 kV  
20 lines, overhead building? I mean, did you look at  
21 anything? If energy density is the problem that  
22 you're dealing with, how much additional looks did  
23 you give to other technologies that have been  
24 developed recently?

25 MS. STEINHAUER: Thank you. In the need

**Comment 53-1**

Thank you for your comment. It has been noted and included in the record for this EIS. A description of the property acquisition process appears in Section 2.4.3 of the EIS.

**Comment 54-1**

Please refer to the comment response from Ms. Steinhauer that appears directly below the comment. A discussion of generation alternative considered but not evaluated in the EIS appears in Section 2.3.1.

**Commenter 55 – Vernon Beighley**

45

1 evaluation, again, it's summarized in some of the  
2 RUS studies. And in the EIS we looked at  
3 generation, we looked at demand-side management. We  
4 didn't -- there aren't, to my knowledge and nobody's  
5 brought to the record thus far, advanced  
6 transmission technologies that are commercially  
7 viable at this scale.

8 Any other comments?

55-1 | 9 MR. BEIGHLEY: Do you know what type  
10 you're going with? One pole or two poles or metal  
11 ones, what are you going with?

12 MS. STEINHAUER: The applicants have  
13 proposed for the majority of the line the two-pole  
14 or H-frame structures. Those would, for the most  
15 part, probably be wood. They'd be in the range of  
16 70 to 100 feet tall.

17 They've also proposed as an alternative  
18 the single-pole structures, which would most likely  
19 be metal. They'd be -- that's the illustration on  
20 the top (indicating), and they would most likely be  
21 metal. They may be -- there are a number of  
22 different finishes available, but most likely it  
23 will be galvanized, which is the shiny, or what's  
24 called a COR-TEN finish, which is the brown, kind of  
25 rusty -- people don't like it when I call it rusty,

**Responses**

**Comment 55-1**

Please refer to the comment response from Ms. Steinhauer that appears directly below the comment. A discussion of Project structures appears in Section 2.4.1 of the EIS.

**Commenter 55 – Vernon Beighley**

46

1 but the brown metal.

2 MR. BEIGHLEY: Do you ever get in places  
3 where you put your local company lines below yours,  
4 the same pole?

5 MS. STEINHAUER: The question was are  
6 there instances where you'd put the local company --  
7 or the lower voltage distribution or lower  
8 voltage transmission lines on the same poles, and  
9 yes, there are some instances where that happens.  
10 And that would be something that the Commission may  
11 recommend.

12 Comments, going once, going twice, going  
13 three times?

14 And as I mentioned, we are available  
15 afterwards and we'll try to answer your questions.  
16 Please take some of the material and the comment  
17 sheets. We would appreciate written comments, and  
18 those will all be part of the record. The comment  
19 deadline closes April 26th.

20 Thank you very much.

21 (Public comment concluded.)  
22  
23  
24  
25

**Responses**

**Comment 55-2**

Please refer to the comment response from Ms. Steinhauer that appears directly below the comment.

55-2