

BEFORE THE MINNESOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

David Boyd
J. Dennis O'Brien
Thomas Pugh
Phyllis Reha
Betsy Wergin

Chair
Commissioner
Commissioner
Commissioner
Commissioner

In the Matter of the Route Permit
Application for the South Bend to Stoney
Creek 115 Kilovolt (kV) Transmission Line
and Substation Project

ISSUE DATE: April 21, 2009

DOCKET NO. ET-2, E-002/TL-08-734

**FINDINGS OF FACT, CONCLUSIONS
OF LAW, AND ORDER ISSUING A
ROUTE PERMIT TO GREAT RIVER
ENERGY AND XCEL ENERGY**

The above-captioned matter came before the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (Commission) on April 16, 2009, for action on an application by Great River Energy and Northern States Power d/b/a Xcel Energy (Applicants), for a route permit to construct a new 8-mile transmission line and two new substations in Rapidan Township and Mankato Township in Blue Earth County.

A public hearing was held on February 23, 2009, at the Mankato Armory in Mankato, Minnesota. The hearing was presided over by Judge Kathleen D. Sheehy, Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) for the Minnesota Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH). The hearing continued until all persons who desired to speak had done so. The comment period closed on March 9, 2009, at 4:30 p.m.

STATEMENT OF ISSUE

Should the Commission find that the Environmental Assessment (EA) and the record adequately address the issues identified in the scoping decision? Should the Commission issue a route permit identifying a specific route and permit conditions for the South Bend to Stoney Creek 115 kilovolt Transmission Line and Substation?

Based upon all of the proceedings herein, the Commission makes the following:

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APPLICANTS

1. The Applicants are Great River Energy, a not-for-profit generation and transmission cooperative based in Maple Grove, Minnesota, and Xcel Energy, an investor-owned utility headquartered in Minneapolis, Minnesota.
2. Great River Energy will construct, own and operate the Stoney Creek Substation and rebuild, own and operate a 115 kV line from the Pohl Road Tap along Stadium Road to the Pohl Substation. Xcel Energy Power will construct, own, and operate the South Bend Substation, the 161 kV connection, the rebuilt 115 kV line to the Stoney Creek Substation and the rebuilt 115 kV facilities to the Pohl Road Tap.

THE PROJECT

3. The Applicants propose to construct approximately eight miles of 115 kV transmission line and build two new substations. The route permit application, maps, appendices, and other documents relevant to the proposed project were made available to the public through the Commission’s Energy Facility Permitting and eDockets websites.¹
4. The project is located in Rapidan and Mankato Townships in Blue Earth County.
5. The purpose of the project is to maintain reliable electric service in the Mankato area. There are several critical contingencies under which customers are at risk of service interruptions. The project is designed to address these deficiencies and enhance the local electrical system.

¹ Documents relevant to the proposed South Bend-Stoney 115 kV Transmission Line and Substation Project are on the Commission’s Energy Facilities Permitting website at <http://energyfacilities.puc.state.mn.us/Docket.html?Id=19642>. EDocket filings can be searched by entering 08-734 at <https://www.edockets.state.mn.us/EFiling/search.jsp>.

6. The majority of the new line will be constructed using single circuit, weathering steel single poles, with horizontal post construction. Wood structures will be used for the Pohl Road Tap section of 115 kV transmission line. Steel, double circuit structures with davit arms will be used for the 115 kV/69 kV section of the project. A few two-pole, weathering steel H-frame structures will be used in areas where the existing 69 kV structures are H-frames.
7. The conductor for the 115 kV sections of the project will be a single 795 MCM 26/7 ACSS. The 69 kV lines will have 336 MCM 26/7 ACSR conductor. The single-circuit structures will be direct embedded. All self-supporting structures will have drilled pier concrete foundations. Different structure types will result in varying span lengths. The average spans for the single pole structures will be approximately 275 to 325 feet. The average spans for the H-frame structures will be approximately 400 to 700 feet.
8. The route proposal can be divided into the following segments:
 - a. Segment 1 - South Bend Substation. A new South Bend Substation, located one-quarter mile east of the intersection of Highway 33 and Huffy Lane, initially containing two transformers (one 115-161 kV, 167 MVA unit and one 115-69 kV, 47 MVA unit), four 115 kV circuit breakers, 115 kV switches, one 69 kV breaker, other associated electrical equipment and steel structures supporting the electrical equipment. Also, as part of this segment, a short 161 kV connection (less than 100 feet) will be constructed between the South Bend Substation and the existing Xcel Energy-owned Wilmarth-Winnebago 161 kV line.
 - b. Segment 2 - Rebuild of 69 kV line to a 115 kV line from South Bend Substation to Ballard Corner Switches. The 4.0 miles of the 69 kV transmission line from the proposed South Bend Substation to the Ballard Corner Switches will be rebuilt to 115 kV standards. The new line will be constructed using the same configuration and spans as the existing facilities to keep the conductors within the existing easements.
 - c. Segment 3 - Rebuild of 69 kV Line from Ballard Corner Switches to Stoney Creek Substation. The two miles of existing 69 kV line from the Ballard Corner Switches to the proposed Stoney Creek Substation will be rebuilt as a double circuit 115 kV/69 kV transmission line. This new double-circuit line will be located within the existing easement area.
 - d. Segment 4 - Stoney Creek Substation. The proposed location of the Stoney Creek Substation will place a Great River Energy breaker station and substation at the southwest corner of Pohl Road and 200th Street. The new substation will initially consist of one transformer (115/69 kV, 70 MVA), three 115 kV circuit breakers, three 69 kV circuit breakers, 115 kV

and 69 kV switches, other associated electrical equipment and steel structures supporting the electrical equipment.

- e. Segment 5 – Stoney Creek Substation to Pohl Road Tap 115 kV Line. Rebuild of 2.0 miles of 69 kV line between the proposed Stoney Creek Substation, the Pohl Road Tap and the Pohl Road Substation to 115 kV standards. The line will be designed so that no additional right-of-way is required.
9. The Applicants request a right-of-way width of up to 75-foot wide, with a route width of 200 feet to manage difficult placements. Applicants, however, will rebuild the transmission lines for the Project within the existing 50-foot right-of-way wherever reasonably possible. When the line is parallel to a roadway, poles will generally be placed approximately five feet within the private right-of-way. Therefore, a little less than half of the line right-of-way will share the existing road right-of-way, resulting in an easement of lesser width required from the landowner. In general, the structures will be placed as close to the property line as practical. For the Project, 4 of the 8 miles (50 percent) would be parallel to existing roadways and 4 of the 8 miles (50 percent) will be cross-country transmission lines.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

10. On June 25, 2008, the Applicants filed a letter with the Commission noticing their intent to submit a route permit application under the alternative permitting process set forth in Minn. Rules, parts 7849.5500 to 7849.5720.
11. On August 7, 2008, the Applicants filed a route permit application for an eight-mile 115 kV transmission line and substation project to be constructed in the townships of Rapidan and Mankato in Blue Earth County.²
12. The Commission determined that the project is eligible for the alternative permitting process of the Power Plant Siting Act, Minn. Stat. § 216E.04 and Minn. Rules, part 7849.5500, and accepted the application as complete on September 15, 2008.
13. On October 24, 2008, the Office of Energy Security (OES) and the Applicants mailed a Notice of Application for a Route Permit and Public Information and Scoping Meeting to those persons whose names are on the general list maintained by the Commission for this purpose, local and regional officials, and property owners in compliance with Minn. Rules, part 7849.5550.³

² Exhibit 1 (Application)

³ Exhibit 2

14. The Applicants published Notice of Application for a Route Permit and Public Information and Scoping Meeting in the *Mankato Free Press* on October 29, 2008.⁴
15. OES published a Notice of Application for a Route Permit and Public Information and Scoping Meeting in the *EQB Monitor* on November 3, 2008.⁵
16. In accordance with Minn. Rules, part 7849.5570, OES staff held a public information and Environmental Assessment scoping meeting on November 12, 2008, at the National Guard Armory and Community Center in Mankato to discuss the project with the public and gather public input for the scope of the EA to be prepared. Sixteen local residents attended the meeting.
17. The public comment period on the scope of the EA closed on November 26, 2008. The OES received three comment letters during the scoping comment period.⁶
18. Two letters from Mankato Township officials⁷ voiced preference for an alternative to the Applicants' proposed placement of the Stoney Creek Substation. The alternative would require an alteration of two miles of the route as well. Applicants' had reviewed the alternative, "SC-2" as defined in the application, and rejected the same for consideration for the Project. The alternative was brought forward into the Scoping Decision.
19. The Scoping Decision for the EA was signed by the Director of the OES on December 11, 2008, and was filed with the Commission and made available to the public,⁸ as provided in Minn. Rules, part 7849.5700, subpart 3.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

20. The Environmental Assessment⁹ was made available on January 31, 2009, and was filed with the Commission on February 2, 2009.
21. Notice of the availability of the EA was sent to the project list¹⁰ on February 2, 2009, and published in the *EQB Monitor*¹¹ on February 9, 2009.
22. The EA evaluated the Applicants' proposed route along with the Mankato Township route segment alternative that was also identified in the Applicants' route permit application. The alternative reroutes the line along 200th Street to

⁴ Exhibit 3

⁵ Exhibit 4

⁶ Exhibit 5

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Exhibit 6

⁹ Exhibit 7 (Environmental Assessment)

¹⁰ Exhibit 8

¹¹ Exhibit 9

CSAH 90. The alternative places the new Stoney Creek Substation at the NW corner of the intersection of CSAH 90 and Pohl Road.

23. The EA was prepared in accordance with Minn. Rules, part 7849.5700, subpart 4, and contained all the information required. The EA detailed the work needed to be performed for the Project, potential impacts and mitigation measures. No significant impacts requiring extraordinary mitigation measures were identified in the EA. Mitigation measures were detailed for the limited impacts (and potential impacts) caused by the Project.

PUBLIC HEARING

24. On February 12, 2009, the OES mailed a Notice of Public Hearing to those persons whose names are on the OES project contact list,¹² and local and regional officials,¹³ and property owners in compliance with Minn. Stat. § 216E.03, subdivision 6.
25. Pursuant to Minn. Stat. §s 216E.03, subdivision 6, the Applicants published Notice of Public Hearing in the *Mankato Free Press* on February, 13, 2009.¹⁴
26. Applicants filed the Direct Testimony of Timothy Rogers, Xcel Energy Senior Permitting Analyst, on February 20, 2009.¹⁵ Mr. Rogers restated the Applicants’ preference for the proposed route in that it maximizes existing transmission corridors, minimizes environmental impact and minimizes new right-of way acquisition.¹⁶
27. Mr. Roger’s testimony updated the housing counts and cost estimates published in the EA. Updated figures are described in the table below comparing the route and alternate relative impacts:¹⁷

Criteria	Proposed Route	Township Alternative
Residences within 100 feet of new or existing lines	0	0
Residences within 100-200 feet of new or existing lines	7	3
Length along existing easements/corridor sharing (mi.)	3	1

¹² Exhibit 10
¹³ Exhibit 11
¹⁴ Exhibit 12
¹⁵ Exhibit 13
¹⁶ Ibid., p. 9
¹⁷ Ibid., p. 8

Criteria	Proposed Route	Township Alternative
Length of new easement acquisition (mi.)	0	2
Total Length (mi.)	3	3
Transmission Line Cost (million)	\$2.57	\$2.45

28. Mr. Roger's testimony noted a modification of the Applicants' proposal near 193rd Street where the transmission line crosses the Le Sueur River. Due to anticipated construction issues on the river bank along the existing transmission alignment, Applicants are requesting to rebuild the line approximately 250 feet to the north.¹⁸
29. Administrative Law Judge Kathleen D. Sheehy presided over the public hearing conducted on February 23, 2009. The public hearing was held at the National Guard Armory and Community Center in Mankato. The Judge provided an opportunity for members of the public to ask questions or comment on the proposed project verbally and to submit questions and comments in writing.
30. Approximately 22 members of the public attended the public hearing. All persons who desired to speak were afforded a full opportunity to make a statement on the record.
31. Pursuant to Minn. Rules, part 7849.5710, subpart 3, Minnesota Office of Energy Security, Energy Facility Permitting project manager David Birkholz, along with public advisor Suzanne Steinhauer, appeared at the public hearing and described the alternative route permitting process, the proposed project, and introduced the environmental assessment and other pertinent documents for the record.
32. Timothy Rogers appeared at the public hearing on behalf of Xcel Energy and testified about the proposed project. Valerie Herring and Lisa Agrimonti, Attorneys at Law, Briggs and Morgan, appeared on behalf of Xcel Energy.
33. Kodi Church appeared at the public hearing on behalf of Great River Energy and responded to questions about the proposed project.
34. A comment period was open until March 9, 2009, for receipt of comments.
35. The hearing transcript was filed on March 5, 2009.
36. The ALJ filed the Summary of Public Comment on March 19, 2009. A total of five written comment letters were submitted to the ALJ.¹⁹

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 11

¹⁹ Exhibits 15-19

37. Applicants described their intended change for the LeSueur River crossing intended to accommodate construction along the steep river bank by moving the alignment 250 feet north at that location.²⁰ Applicants testified that the affected landowners have no objections to this modification. During the hearing, there were no objections to this proposed change.²¹
38. Oral comments received at the hearing indicated both objection and support for the proposed route and objection and support for the Mankato Township alternate route. The ALJ report contains a summary of all public comments received at the hearing.
39. Mankato Township contended the potential commercial development along CSAH 90 would have fewer impacts from a transmission line than the potential residential development along 200th Street.²² In response, Applicants offered a Mankato Township zoning map into the record demonstrating that the areas north and south of 200th Street are still zoned for agricultural use.²³
40. Property owners around the substation areas expressed concerns about potential damage to drainage tile during construction. Mr. Rogers of Xcel Energy responded that engineers would work to ensure that the drain tile was intact and remained operational following construction.²⁴
41. In response to concerns about visual impacts of the Stoney Creek Substation, Ms. Church of Great River Energy responded they would work with neighboring landowners to determine the appropriate screening necessary following receipt of a permit. The ALJ noted such conditions are typical in Commission permits.²⁵
42. In post-hearing comments, the Applicants stated that Great River Energy had executed an option agreement to purchase property at 200th Street and Pohl Road in October 2003, for use as a possible location for a 69 kV breaker station. The property was chosen for its location at the convergence of Xcel Energy's Century-Ballard Corner Switches 69 kV line along 200th Street and Great River Energy's BE-MD 69 kV line along Pohl Road.²⁶
43. The Mankato Township Board advised Great River Energy that the township zoning ordinance prohibits construction of electrical substations within the township, except in areas zoned light industrial. Great River Energy requested a general zoning ordinance amendment to permit construction of electrical

²⁰ Transcripts, p. 12

²¹ ALJ *Summary of Public Comments* (ALJ) #2

²² ALJ #8

²³ ALJ #9, Exhibit 14

²⁴ ALJ, #14

²⁵ Transcript, p. 25

²⁶ Exhibit 19

substations within the township. Great River Energy purchased the property in question in 2004. The Township Board denied the zoning amendment request²⁷

44. Applicants since developed a more comprehensive plan to address the reliability issues in the Mankato area, i.e., the proposal presented in this docket, which includes construction of two new substations. Great River Energy retained its ownership in the property as a location for one of these two new substations.²⁸
45. In the Application, Applicants requested use of single pole and H-frame structures for this Project. In addition to these structures, Applicants have subsequently requested in comments that the Commission allow Applicants the flexibility to use weathering steel Y-frame structures.²⁹ These Y-frame structures are proposed (1) beginning near the intersection of 193rd Street and Sunset Village Road and continuing east/northeast to a location east of Indian Lake Road and (2) to replace one single-circuit 69 kV structure located north of the proposed Stoney Creek Substation along Pohl Road.
46. These Y-frame structures are very similar to the H-frame structures that were described in the Application except that Y-frame structures are single pole rather than double pole structures. These Y-frame structures are self-supporting structures with drilled pier concrete foundations. The foundation diameter for the Y-frame structures is six to eight feet. The structure height and the average span between structures for a Y-frame structure is the same as an H-frame structure, 60-80 feet and 400-700 feet, respectively.

POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION

47. The proposed transmission line will be designed to meet or exceed all requirements of the National Electric Safety Code,³⁰ which is the utility safety standard that applies to all transmission lines. In addition, the substation facilities will be fenced, and access will be limited to authorized personnel.
48. The issue of electric and magnetic fields was discussed in the environmental assessment.³¹ A number of national and international health agencies (The Minnesota Department of Health, The World Health Organization, The National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences) have generally concluded in their research that there is insufficient evidence to prove a connection between electric and magnetic fields exposure and health effects. Research has not been able to establish a cause and effect relationship between exposure to magnetic fields and

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Exhibit 19

³⁰ Application, p. 29

³¹ Environmental Assessment (EA), pp. 21-26

human disease, nor a plausible biological mechanism by which exposure to electric and magnetic fields could cause disease.

49. Short-term exceedance of daytime noise standards due to construction would be intermittent and temporary in nature. Construction activities will be limited to daytime working hours; therefore the nighttime noise level standards will not be exceeded.³²
50. Long-term noise impacts from the project are not anticipated and mitigation measures are not necessary. The noise produced by the 115 kV transmission line is less than normal outdoor background levels (~30 dB(A) or less). The noise from a substation transformer at full voltage is estimated at 75 dB(A) at two meters. The nearest occupied home from South Bend Substation is 1,200 feet away and from the proposed Stoney Creek Substation is 500 feet away.³³
51. The project's transmission line and structures will add to the changing landscape of the area and will be visible to residents living near the route and to drivers using public roads adjacent to the route. However, the proposed route follows the existing transmission line, and the proposed structures would be similar to, but slightly taller than the existing structures along the route.³⁴
52. Effort will be made to construct the substations in an area on the property that is as far out of view from neighboring properties as possible.³⁵ Public comments about aesthetic impacts were voiced at the hearing. Applicants responded they would work with neighboring landowners to determine the appropriate screening for the substations following permitting.³⁶
53. Temporary driveways may be constructed between the roadway and the structures to minimize impact by using the shortest route possible. Construction mats may also be used to minimize impacts on access paths and construction areas. Furthermore, transmission line route permits will require project related land impacts to be restored to pre-construction condition upon project completion. The Applicants will compensate landowners for any yard/landscape, crop damage or soil compaction that may occur during construction and will work with landowners to minimize impacts to farming operations along the proposed route.³⁷
54. There are no state or federal parks, recreational areas, or state-owned lands located within the project area. The Red Jacket Trail runs within 1,400 feet to the

³² EA, p. 18

³³ EA, p. 18

³⁴ EA, p. 19

³⁵ EA, p. 19

³⁶ ALJ #10

³⁷ Application, pp. 36-40

- north and west of the proposed South Bend Substation site. Screening the substation from this resource could mitigate visual impact on the trail.³⁸
55. Impacts to transportation would be localized and short term. Conductors and overhead wire stringing operations will use guard structures to eliminate potential delays. When appropriate, lead vehicles will accompany the movement of heavy equipment. Traffic control barriers and warning devices will be used when appropriate.³⁹
56. There will be no significant impacts to air quality; therefore, no mitigation is necessary.
57. The Minnesota Historical Society State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) reviewed the proposed project area and determined there was a good probability that unreported archaeological properties may be present within the proposed substation areas. A survey was recommended. Xcel Energy and Great River Energy will survey the two proposed substation areas for buried archaeological resources. The Commission will be informed of any future correspondence Xcel Energy has with SHPO.⁴⁰
58. Larger disturbed areas of one acre or more (proposed substation sites) will be regulated by a National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit and Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) prepared for the project. Mitigation under the NPDES includes implementation of the SWPPP with the appropriate erosion control methods developed specifically for the site. The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) issues combined NPDES/State Disposal System permits for construction sites, industrial facilities and municipal separate storm sewer systems. Compliance with the MPCA stormwater program would be a condition of the route permit (Permit Condition IV.H.2.).
59. The proposed route will cross the LeSueur River near 193rd Street. The Applicants will be required to obtain a DNR license to cross public waters. Compliance with this permit would be a condition of the route permit (Permit Condition IV.H.2.).
60. MnDOT requires the Application for a Utility Permit on County and State Highways for right-of-way for the vast majority of utility placements and relocations. Utility owners use this form to request permission to place, construct and reconstruct utilities within trunk highway right of way, whether longitudinal, oblique, or perpendicular to the centerline of the highway.
61. There are no listed native plant communities or areas of high biodiversity located within or near the project area. The Minnesota County Biological Survey has identified a Sugar Maple-Basswood Forest native plant community as a site of Moderate Biodiversity Significance. The Applicants would implement the DNR

³⁸ EA, p. 19

³⁹ EA, p. 20

⁴⁰ Application, p. 67

recommended BMP when working in this community (Permit Condition IV.K.4).⁴¹

62. There are no Wildlife Management Areas along the proposed route or adjacent to the proposed substations. Displacement of wildlife during construction will be minor and temporary in nature. No long-term effects related to displacement are anticipated; therefore no mitigation measures are required.⁴²
63. Radio, television, and communication system interference is not anticipated. No mitigation is necessary.
64. Socioeconomic impacts will be primarily positive. The project will create short-term construction expenditures in the area and increased electric service reliability in the Project area and the surrounding region.

SUMMARY OF HUMAN AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS AND COMMITMENT OF RESOURCES

65. The route and alternative analyzed in the environmental assessment have human and environmental impacts, some of which are unavoidable if the project is permitted and built. Neither route evaluated is expected to cause an irreversible or irretrievable commitment of resources other than the resources committed to construction.
66. The Applicants estimate that the route will cost approximately \$18.77 million as proposed; the alternative is estimated to cost \$18.65 million.⁴³ While Great River Energy already owns the property for the proposed Stoney Creek Substation location, Applicants estimate the alternative would cost them an additional \$125,000 for land acquisition.⁴⁴
67. Concerning the proposal for the Ballard Switches to Stoney Creek portion:
 - a. The proposed line uses existing right-of-way along an existing transmission corridor.
 - b. The line goes through a short section of rural residential-zoned property and in its remainder through agricultural-zoned property.
 - c. Mankato Township anticipates residential development in the area.⁴⁵
 - d. The city of Mankato and Mankato School District have purchased land approximately one-half mile to one mile north of 200th Street.

⁴¹ EA, p. 31

⁴² EA, p. 31

⁴³ Application, p. 17 and Exhibit 13, p. 8

⁴⁴ Application, p. 26

⁴⁵ Transcript, p. 19

68. Concerning the Mankato Township alternative:

- a. The alternative creates a new transmission corridor, requiring two miles of new right-of-way.
- b. The line crosses agricultural-zoned property.
- c. The existing distribution along 200th Street would remain after removing the transmission to CSAH 90.⁴⁶
- d. A bike trail runs parallel to the alternate along CSAH 90.

69. Nothing in the Environmental Assessment found reason that a transmission and substation project as proposed by the Applicants would not be feasible. Equally, the alternative segment proposed by Mankato Township is also feasible.⁴⁷

APPLICABLE STATUTORY CONDITIONS

70. Minnesota Statutes § 216B.243, subdivision 2, states that no large energy facility shall be sited or constructed in Minnesota without the issuance of a certificate of need by the Commission. Minnesota Statutes § 216B.2421, subdivision 2(3) defines a “large energy facility” as any high voltage transmission line with a capacity of 100 kV or more with more than ten miles of length or that crosses a state line. Because the proposed Project is less than 10 miles in length, no certificate of need is required.

71. Minnesota Statutes § 216E.03, subdivision 7, and Minn. Rules, part 7849.5910, provide considerations in designating sites and routes and determining whether to issue a permit for a large electric power generating plant or a high voltage transmission line.

⁴⁶ Exhibit 19

⁴⁷ EA, p. 35

Based on the Findings of Fact the Commission makes the following:

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

1. Any of the foregoing Findings more properly designated as Conclusions are hereby adopted as such.
2. The Public Utilities Commission has jurisdiction over the subject matter of this proceeding pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 216E.03, subdivision 2.
3. The project qualifies for review under the alternative permitting process of Minn. Stat. § 216E.04 and Minn. Rules, part 7849.5500.
4. The Applicants, the Office of Energy Security, and the Public Utilities Commission have complied with all procedural requirements of law.
5. The Office of Energy Security has completed an Environmental Assessment of this project as required by Minn. Stat. § 216E.04, subdivision 5, and Minn. Rules, part 7849.5700.
6. The Public Utilities Commission has considered all the pertinent factors relative to its determination of whether a route permit should be approved as required by Minn. Stat. § 216E.03, subdivision 7, and Minn. Rules, part 7849.5910.
7. The conditions included in the route permit are reasonable and appropriate.

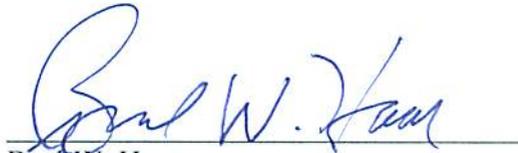
Based on the Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law contained herein and the entire record of this proceeding, the Commission hereby makes the following:

ORDER

1. The Environmental Assessment and record created at the public hearing address the issues identified in the Environmental Assessment Scoping Decision.
2. A route permit is hereby issued to Xcel Energy and Great River Energy to construct approximately eight miles of 115 kV transmission line connecting a new Xcel Energy South Bend Substation on the west end in Rapidan Township; through a new Great River Energy Stoney Creek Substation in Mankato Township; ending at the east end at the existing Pohl Substation, all in Blue Earth County. The Applicant's are issued a right-of-way width of up to 75 feet along a 200-foot wide proposed route, following the alignment of the existing 69 kV transmission line, except as otherwise specified in the route permit. Applicants are also permitted to construct two substations as per their proposal.
3. The route permit shall be issued in the form attached hereto, with maps showing the approved route and substation locations and with appropriate conditions.

Approved and adopted this 21st day of April 2009.

BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION



Burl W. Haar,
Executive Secretary

STATE OF MINNESOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

**ROUTE PERMIT FOR CONSTRUCTION OF A HIGH
VOLTAGE TRANSMISSION LINE AND TWO SUBSTATIONS
IN
BLUE EARTH COUNTY, MINNESOTA
ISSUED TO
GREAT RIVER ENERGY AND XCEL ENERGY**

PUC DOCKET No. ET-2, E-002/TL-08-734

In accordance with the requirements of Minnesota Statutes Chapter 216E and Minnesota Rules Chapter 7849, this route permit is hereby issued to:

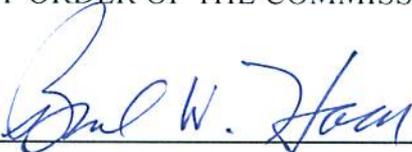
GREAT RIVER ENERGY AND XCEL ENERGY

Great River Energy and Northern States Power Company d/b/a Xcel Energy are authorized by this route permit to construct a new eight mile 115 kilovolt (kV) high voltage transmission line located within Blue Earth County in the State of Minnesota, from a new South Bend Substation in Rapidan Township, through a new Stoney Creek Substation in Mankato Township, to the existing Pohl Road Substation.

The transmission line and substation project shall be built within the route identified in this permit and as portrayed on the attached, official route maps, and in compliance with the conditions specified in this permit.

Approved and adopted this 21st day of April 2009

BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION



Burl W. Haar,
Executive Secretary

This document can be made available in alternative formats (i.e. large print or audio tape) by calling 651.201.2202 (voice). Persons with hearing or speech disabilities may call us through Minnesota Relay at 1.800.627.3529 or by dialing 711.

I. ROUTE PERMIT

The Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (Commission or PUC) hereby issues this route permit to Xcel Energy and Great River Energy (Permittees) pursuant to Minnesota Statutes Chapter 216E and Minnesota Rules Chapter 7849. This permit authorizes the Permittees to rebuild approximately eight miles of 69 kV transmission line to an 115 kV high voltage transmission line between a new South Bend Substation in Rapidan Township, through a new Stoney Creek Substation in Mankato Township, to the existing Pohl Road Substation.

II. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Permittees are authorized to construct a project comprising two new substations and three separate line segments as noted below:

South Bend Substation

The new Xcel Energy South Bend Substation is to be located one-quarter mile east of the intersection of Highway 33 and Huffly Lane and will contain two transformers (one 115-161 kV, 167 megavolt ampere (MVA) unit and one 115-69 kV, 47 MVA unit), four 115 kV circuit breakers, 115 kV switches, one 69 kV breaker, other associated electrical equipment and steel structures supporting the electrical equipment. A new 24 feet by 40 feet electrical equipment control building will be installed on the site. The electrical equipment enclosure will contain all control systems for the substation. An area approximately 350 feet by 460 feet will be graded and fenced for the new substation. The overall substation size will be approximately seven to ten acres. This area includes setbacks, access roads, stormwater ponds and potential transmission line structures. The substation will be designed to accommodate possible future expansion. A new driveway will be installed for the substation along the existing 69 kV line right-of-way going east from CSAH 33.

Also, as part of this segment, a short 161 kV connection (less than 100 feet) will be constructed between the South Bend Substation and the existing Xcel Energy–owned Wilmarth–Winnebago 161 kV line. New transmission line right-of-way of 75 feet will be required for this connection.

South Bend to Ballard Corner Switch

The four miles of the 69 kV transmission line from the proposed South Bend Substation to the Ballard Corner Switches will be rebuilt to 115 kV standards. The new line will be constructed using the same structure configuration (single pole/H-frame) and spans as the existing facilities to keep the conductors within the existing easements. A single 795 Aluminum Conductor Steel Supported (ACSS) conductor per phase will be installed. Weathering steel poles will be used for all structures. All angle structures will be self-supporting, using concrete foundations.

Y-frame structures will be employed (1) beginning near the intersection of 193rd Street and Sunset Village Road and continuing east/northeast to a location east of Indian Lake Road and (2) to replace one single-circuit 69 kV structure located north of the proposed Stoney Creek Substation along Pohl Road. The structure height and the average span between structures for a Y-frame structure are 60-80 feet and 400-700 feet, respectively.

Ballard Corner Switch to Stoney Creek

The two miles of existing 69 kV line from the Ballard Corner Switches to the proposed Stoney Creek Substation will be rebuilt as a double-circuit 115 kV/69 kV transmission line. A single 795 ACSS conductor per phase will be installed for the 115 kV transmission line and a single 336 ACSR conductor per phase will be installed for the 69 kV transmission line. This new double-circuit line will be located within the existing easement area. Direct-embedded weathering steel poles with davit arms will be used for the tangent structures. Self-supporting weathering steel poles with davit arms on concrete foundations will be used for all angle and dead-end structures. The line will be designed to minimize the need for additional right-of-way.

Stoney Creek Substation

The new Great River Energy Stoney Creek Substation will locate a breaker station and substation at the southwest corner of Pohl Road and 200th Street.

The new substation will initially consist of one transformer (115/69 kV, 70 MVA), three 115 kV circuit breakers, three 69 kV circuit breakers, 115 kV and 69 kV switches, other associated electrical equipment and steel structures supporting the electrical equipment. A new 20 feet by 24 feet electrical equipment control building will contain all electrical equipment and control systems for the substation. An area approximately 500 feet by 350 feet will be graded and approximately 240 feet by 160 feet will be fenced for the new substation. A driveway exists at the site off of 200th Street that will be used for access to the Stoney Creek Substation.

Stoney Creek to Pohl

The final segment will consist of rebuilding two miles of 69 kV line between the proposed Stoney Creek Substation, the Pohl Road Tap and the Pohl Road Substation to 115 kV standards. A single 795 ACSS conductor per phase will be installed. Direct embedded weathering steel poles will be used for all tangent structures. Self-supporting weathering steel poles with concrete foundations will be used for all angle and dead-end structures. The line will be designed so that no additional right-of-way is required.

III. DESIGNATED ROUTE/SITE

The designated route is intended to upgrade an existing 69 kV transmission line. In order to maximize the Permittees' ability to accommodate individual landowners' needs, a route width of 100 feet on either side of the existing centerline is approved. The approved right-of-way (ROW) width for the selected segments is 75-feet. Substation site allowances are as noted in the descriptions above.

Applicants, however, will rebuild the transmission lines for the Project within the existing 50-foot right-of-way wherever reasonably possible. When the line is parallel to a roadway, poles will generally be placed approximately five feet within the private right-of-way. Therefore, a little less than half of the line right-of-way will share the existing road right-of-way, resulting in an easement of lesser width required from the landowner.

IV. PERMIT CONDITIONS

The Permittees shall comply with the following conditions during construction of the transmission line and associated facilities and the life of this permit.

A. Plan and Profile. At least 14 calendar days before right-of-way preparation for construction begins, the Permittees shall provide the Commission with a plan and profile of the right-of-way and the specifications and drawings for right-of-way preparation, construction, cleanup, and restoration for the transmission line. The Permittees may not commence construction until the 14 days has expired or until the Commission has advised the Permittees in writing that it has completed its review of the documents and determined that the planned construction is consistent with this permit. If the Permittees intends to make any significant changes in its plan and profile or the specifications and drawings after submission to the Commission, the Permittees shall notify the Commission at least five days before implementing the changes. No changes shall be made that would be in violation of any of the terms of this permit.

B. Construction Practices.

1. Application. The Permittees shall follow those specific construction practices and material specifications described in the Great River Energy and Minnesota Power Application to the Public Utilities Commission for a Route Permit, dated July 17, 2008, and as described in the environmental assessment and findings of fact, unless this permit establishes a different requirement, in which case this permit shall prevail.

2. Field Representative. At least 10 days prior to commencing construction, the Permittees shall advise the Commission in writing of the person or persons designated to be the field representative for the Permittees with the responsibility to oversee compliance with the conditions of this permit during construction. The field representative's address, phone number, and emergency phone number shall be provided to the Commission and shall be made available to affected landowners, residents, public officials and other interested persons.

The Permittees may change its field representative at any time upon written notice to the Commission.

3. Local Governments. The Permittees shall cooperate with county and city road authorities to develop appropriate signage and traffic management during construction.

4. Cleanup. All waste and scrap that is the product of construction shall be removed from the area and properly disposed of upon completion of each task. Personal litter, including bottles, cans, and paper from construction activities shall be removed on a daily basis.

5. Vegetation Removal in the Right-of-Way. The Permittees shall minimize the number of trees to be removed in selecting the right-of-way. As part of construction, low growing brush or tree species are allowable within and at the outer limits of the easement area. Taller tree species that endanger the safe and reliable operation of the transmission

facility need to be removed. To the extent practical, low growing vegetation that will not pose a threat to the transmission facility or impede construction should remain in the easement area.

6. Erosion Control. The Permittees shall implement reasonable measures to minimize runoff during construction and shall promptly plant or seed, erect silt fences, and/or use erosion control blankets in non-agricultural areas that were disturbed where structures are installed. All areas disturbed during construction of the facilities will be returned to their pre-construction condition.

7. Temporary Work Space. The Permittees shall limit temporary easements to special construction access needs and additional staging or lay-down areas required outside of the authorized right-of-way.

8. Restoration. The Permittees shall restore the right-of-way, temporary work spaces, access roads, abandoned right-of-way, and other private lands affected by construction of the transmission line. Restoration within the right-of-way must be compatible with the safe operation, maintenance, and inspection of the transmission line. Within 60 days after completion of all restoration activities, the Permittees shall advise the Commission in writing of the completion of such activities. The Permittees shall compensate landowners for any yard/landscape, crop damage, soil compaction, or other that may occur during construction.

9. Notice of Permit. The Permittees shall inform all employees, contractors, and other persons involved in the transmission line construction of the terms and conditions of this permit.

C. Periodic Status Reports. Upon request, the Permittees shall report to the Commission on progress regarding finalization of the route, design of structures, and construction of the transmission line. The Permittees need not report more frequently than quarterly.

D. Complaint Procedure. Prior to the start of construction, the Permittees shall submit to the Commission, the procedures that will be used to receive and respond to complaints. The procedures shall be in accordance with the requirements set forth in the complaint procedures attached to this permit.

E. Notification to Landowners. The Permittees shall provide all affected landowners with a copy of this permit at the time of the first contact with the landowners after issuance of this permit.

The Permittees shall contact landowners prior to entering the property or conducting maintenance along the route and avoid maintenance practices, particularly the use of fertilizer, herbicides, or pesticides, inconsistent with the landowner's or tenant's use of the land.

The Permittees shall work with landowners to locate the high voltage transmission lines to minimize the loss of agricultural land, forest, and wetlands, and to avoid homes and farmsteads.

F. Completion of Construction.

- 1. Notification to Commission.** At least three days before the line is to be placed into service, the Permittees shall notify the Commission of the date on which the line will be placed into service and the date on which construction was complete.
- 2. As-Builts.** Upon request of the Commission, the Permittees shall submit copies of all the final as-built plans and specifications developed during the project.
- 3. GPS Data.** Within 60 days after completion of construction, the Permittees shall submit to the Commission, in the format requested by the Commission, geo-spatial information (GIS compatible maps, GPS coordinates, etc.) for all above ground structures associated with the transmission lines, each switch, and each substation connected.

G. Electrical Performance Standards.

- 1. Grounding.** The Permittees shall design, construct, and operate the transmission line in a manner that the maximum induced steady-state short-circuit current shall be limited to five milliamperes, root mean square (rms) alternating current between the ground and any non-stationary object within the right-of-way, including but not limited to large motor vehicles and agricultural equipment. All fixed metallic objects on or off the right-of-way, except electric fences that parallel or cross the right-of-way, shall be grounded to the extent necessary to limit the induced short circuit current between ground and the object so as not to exceed one milliampere rms under steady state conditions of the transmission line and to comply with the ground fault conditions specified in the National Electric Safety Code.
- 2. Electric Field.** The transmission line shall be designed, constructed, and operated in such a manner that the electric field measured one meter above ground level immediately below the transmission line shall not exceed 8.0 kV/m rms.
- 3. Interference with Communication Devices.** If interference with radio or television, satellite or other communication devices is caused by the presence or operation of the transmission line, the Permittees shall take whatever action is prudently feasible to restore or provide reception equivalent to reception levels in the immediate area just prior to the construction of the line.

H. Other Requirements.

- 1. Applicable Codes.** The Permittees shall comply with applicable requirements of the National Electric Safety Code including clearances to ground, clearance to crossing utilities, clearance to buildings, right-of-way widths, erecting power poles, and stringing of transmission line conductors.
- 2. Other Permits.** The Permittees shall comply with all applicable state rules and statutes. The Permittees shall obtain all required local, state and federal permits for the project and comply with the conditions of these permits. A list of the required permits is

included in the route permit application and the environmental assessment. The Permittees shall submit a copy of such permits to the Commission upon request.

3. Pre-emption. Pursuant to Minnesota Statutes 216E.10, subdivisions 1 and 2, this route permit shall be the sole route approval required to be obtained by the Permittees and this permit shall supersede and preempt all zoning, building, or land use rules, regulations, or ordinances promulgated by regional, county, local and special purpose government.

J. Delay in Construction. If the Permittees have not commenced construction or improvement of the route within four years after the date of issuance of this permit, the Commission shall consider suspension of the permit in accordance with Minn. Rules, part 7849.5970.

K. Special Conditions.

1. Substation Construction. Around the substation areas, Permittees shall ensure that the drain tile is intact and remains operational following construction. Effort shall be made to construct the substations in an area on each property that is as far out of view from neighboring properties as possible. Permittees shall work with neighboring landowners to determine the appropriate screening necessary. Efforts will be made to screen the South Bend Substation from the Red Jacket Trail.

2. Historic Resources. Permittees shall survey the two proposed substation areas for buried archaeological resources. The Commission shall be informed of any future correspondence Permittees have with the State Historic Preservation Office in respect to the project.

3. Use of Existing Right-of-Way. While Permittees are granted a 200-foot route, the Application was based on rebuilding the upgraded transmission line within existing right-of-way; therefore, the Permittees shall submit an explanation for any change from placement within the existing right-of-way when filing the Plan and Profile.

4. DNR Best Management Practices (BMP). Permittees shall implement DNR BMPs when working within a Sugar Maple-Basswood Forest native plant community identified by the Minnesota County Biological Survey as a site of moderate Biodiversity.

5. Route Adjustment. In the South Bend to Ballard Switches route segment near 193rd Street where the transmission line crosses the Le Sueur River, due to the anticipated difficulty for construction equipment and vehicles to gain safe access to the existing structures located on the steep slope along the river bank, Applicants are authorized to rebuild the line approximately 250 feet to the north. The route will then follow a field edge line and return to the existing right-of-way as per the first attached map of this Route Permit.

V. PERMIT AMENDMENT

The permit conditions in Section IV may be amended at any time by the Commission. Any person may request an amendment of the conditions of this permit by submitting a request to the Commission in writing describing the amendment sought and the reasons for the amendment. The Commission will mail notice of receipt of the request to the Permittees. The Commission may amend the conditions after affording the Permittees and interested persons such process as is required.

VI. TRANSFER OF PERMIT

The Permittees may request at any time that the Commission transfer this permit to another person or entity. The Permittees shall provide the name and description of the person or entity to whom the permit is requested to be transferred, the reasons for the transfer, a description of the facilities affected, and the proposed effective date of the transfer. The person to whom the permit is to be transferred shall provide the Commission with such information as the Commission shall require to determine whether the new Permittees can comply with the conditions of the permit. The Commission may authorize transfer of the permit after affording the Permittees, the new Permittees, and interested persons such process as is required.

VII. REVOCATION OR SUSPENSION OF THE PERMIT

The Commission may initiate action to revoke or suspend this permit at any time. The Commission shall act in accordance with the requirements of Minn. Rules, part 7849.6010, to revoke or suspend the permit.

**PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
COMPLAINT REPORT PROCEDURES FOR
HIGH VOLTAGE TRANSMISSION LINES**

1. Purpose

To establish a uniform and timely method of reporting complaints received by the Permittee concerning the permit conditions for site preparation, construction, cleanup and restoration, special conditions, other requirements, and resolution of such complaints.

2. Scope

This reporting plan encompasses complaint report procedures and frequency.

3. Applicability

The procedures shall be used for all complaints received by the Permittee.

4. Definitions

Complaint – A statement presented by a person expressing dissatisfaction, resentment, or discontent as a direct result of the high voltage transmission line and associated facilities. Complaints do not include requests, inquiries, questions or general comments.

Telephone Complaint – A person presenting a complaint by telephone shall indicate whether the complaint relates to (1) a substantive routing permit matter, (2) a high voltage transmission line location matter, or (3) a compensation matter. All callers must provide the following information when presenting a complaint by telephone: (1) name; (2) date and time of call; (3) phone number; (4) email address (if available); (5) home address; (6) parcel number.

Substantial Complaint – Written complaints alleging a violation of a specific route permit condition that, if substantiated, could result in permit modification or suspension pursuant to the applicable regulations.

Person – An individual, partnership, joint venture, private or public corporation, association, firm, public service company, cooperative, political subdivision, municipal corporation, government agency, public utility district, or any other entity, public or private, however organized.

5. Responsibilities

Everyone involved with any phase of the high voltage transmission line is responsible to ensure expeditious and equitable resolution of all complaints. It is therefore necessary to establish a uniform method for documenting and handling complaints related to this high voltage transmission line project. The following procedures will satisfy this requirement:

- A. The Permittee shall document all complaints by maintaining a record of all applicable information concerning the complaint, including the following:
 - 1. Name of the Permittee and project.
 - 2. Name of complainant, address and phone number.
 - 3. Precise property description or tract numbers (where applicable).
 - 4. Nature of complaint.
 - 5. Response given.
 - 6. Name of person receiving complaint and date of receipt.
 - 7. Name of person reporting complaint to the Commission and phone number.
 - 8. Final disposition and date.

- B. The Permittee shall assign an individual to summarize complaints for transmittal to the Commission.

6. Requirements

The Permittee shall report all complaints to the Commission according to the following schedule:

Immediate Reports – All substantial complaints shall be reported to the Commission by phone or by e-mail the same day received or on the following working day for complaints received after working hours. Such reports are to be directed to high voltage transmission line permit compliance at the following: DOC.energypermitcompliance@state.mn.us or 1-800-657-3794. Voice messages are acceptable.

Monthly Reports – By the 15th of each month, a summary of all complaints, including substantial complaints received or resolved during the preceding month. Such summaries shall be sent to Dr. Burl W. Haar, Executive Secretary, Minnesota Public Utilities Commission, Metro Square Building, 121 7th Place East, Suite 350, St. Paul, MN 55101-2147. A copy of each complaint shall be sent to Permit Compliance, Minnesota Department of Commerce, 85 7th Place East, Suite 500, St. Paul, MN 55101-2198.

Unresolved Complaints – The Permittee shall submit all unresolved complaints to the Commission for resolution by the Commission, where appropriate, no later than 45 days after the date of the submission.

7. Complaints Received by the Commission

Copies of complaints received directly by the Commission from aggrieved persons regarding site preparation, construction, cleanup, restoration, operation and maintenance shall be promptly sent to the Permittee.

Initial Screening – Commission staff shall perform an initial evaluation of unresolved complaints submitted to the Commission. Complaints raising substantive routing permit issues shall be processed and resolved by the Commission. Staff shall notify Permittee and the complainant if it determines that the complaint is a substantial complaint. With respect to such complaints, each party shall submit a written summary of its position to the Commission no later than ten days after receipt of the staff notification. Staff shall present briefing papers to the Commission, which shall resolve the complaint within twenty days of submission of the briefing papers.

Condemnation/Compensation Issues – If the Commission’s staff initial screening determines that a complaint raises issues concerning the just compensation to be paid to landowners on account of Permittee acquisition of high voltage transmission line easements, staff shall recommend to the Executive Secretary that the matter be resolved under the provisions of Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 117. If the Executive Secretary concurs, he shall so report to the Commission and the matter shall be dealt with in the high voltage transmission line condemnation proceedings as an issue of just compensation.

**MINNESOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
COMPLIANCE FILING PROCEDURE
FOR PERMITTED ENERGY FACILITIES**

1. Purpose

To establish a uniform and timely method of submitting information required by Commission energy facility permits.

2. Scope and Applicability

This procedure encompasses all compliance filings required by permit.

3. Definitions

Compliance Filing – A sending (filing) of information to the Commission, where the information is required by a Commission site or route permit.

4. Responsibilities

A) The permittee shall eFile all compliance filings with Dr. Burl Haar, Executive Secretary to the Commission, through the Department of Commerce (DOC) eDocket system. The system is located on the DOC website:
<https://www.edockets.state.mn.us/EFiling/home.jsp>

General instructions are provided on the website. Permittees must register on the website to eFile documents.

B) All filings must have a cover sheet that includes:

- 1) Date
- 2) Name of submitter / permittee
- 3) Type of Permit (Site or Route)
- 4) Project Location
- 5) Project Docket Number
- 6) Permit Section Under Which the Filing is Made
- 7) Short Description of the Filing

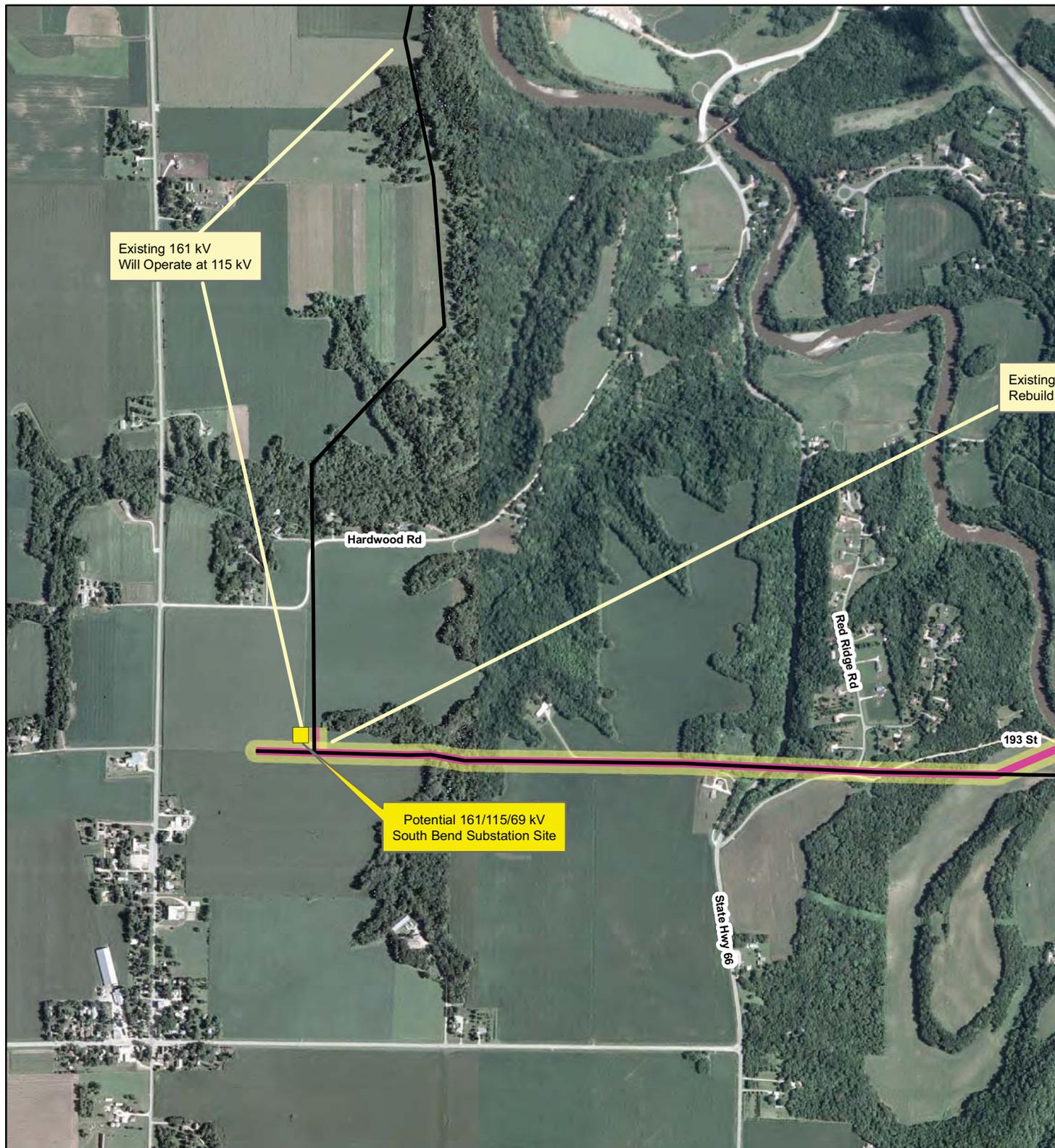
C) Filings that are graphics intensive (e.g., maps or plan and profile) must, in addition to being eFiled, be submitted as paper copies and on CD. Copies and CDs should be sent to: 1) Dr. Burl W. Haar, Executive Secretary, Minnesota Public Utilities Commission, 121 7th Place East, Suite 350, St. Paul, MN, 55101-2147, and 2) Office of Energy Security, Energy Facility Permitting, 85 7th Place East, Suite 500, St. Paul, MN, 55101-2198. Additionally, the Commission may request a paper copy of any eFiled document.

PERMIT COMPLIANCE FILINGS¹

PERMITTEES: Great River Energy and Xcel Energy
PERMIT TYPE: Transmission Route Permit
PROJECT LOCATION: Blue Earth County
PUC DOCKET NUMBER: ET-2, E-002/TL-08-734

Filing Number	Permit Section	Description	Due Date
1	IV.A.	Submit Plan and Profile of the right-of way and design specifications.	At least 14 days prior to right-of-way clearing
2	IV.B.2.	Name Field Representative to oversee compliance with permit conditions.	At least 10 days prior to commencing construction
3	IV.D	Submit Complaint Procedure to be used to receive and respond to complaints.	Prior to the start of construction
4	IV.F.1.	Provide Notification to Commission of construction completeness and in-service date.	At least 3 days before the line is placed into service
5	IV.F.3.	Submit GPS Data of structures, lines and substations.	Within 60 days after completion of construction

¹ This compilation of permit compliance filings is provided for the convenience of the permittee and the Commission. However, it is not a substitute for the permit; the language of the permit controls.



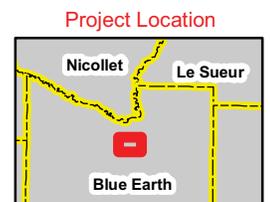
Data Sources:
NSP and MN DNR

Disclaimer: This information is believed to be correct
but is subject to change and is not warranted.

**Project Location Map
Segment 1
Mankato Loop**

LEGEND

-  Transmission Line Rebuild Section
-  Existing Transmission Line
-  200 ft Route Width
-  Proposed Substation





Existing 69 kV
Rebuild to 115 kV

Existing 69 kV
Rebuild to Double Circuit

Data Sources:
NSP and MN DNR
Disclaimer: This information is believed to be correct but is subject to change and is not warranted.

**Project Location Map
Segment 2
Mankato Loop**

LEGEND

-  Transmission Line Rebuild Section
-  Existing Transmission Line
-  200 ft Route Width
-  Proposed Substation



Existing 69 kV
Rebuild to 115/69kV
Double Circuit

Potential 115/69 kV Stoney Creek
Substation Site and
69 kV Breaker Station

200th St

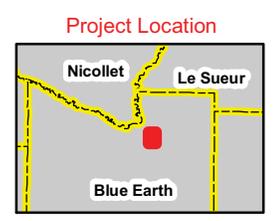
Pohl Rd

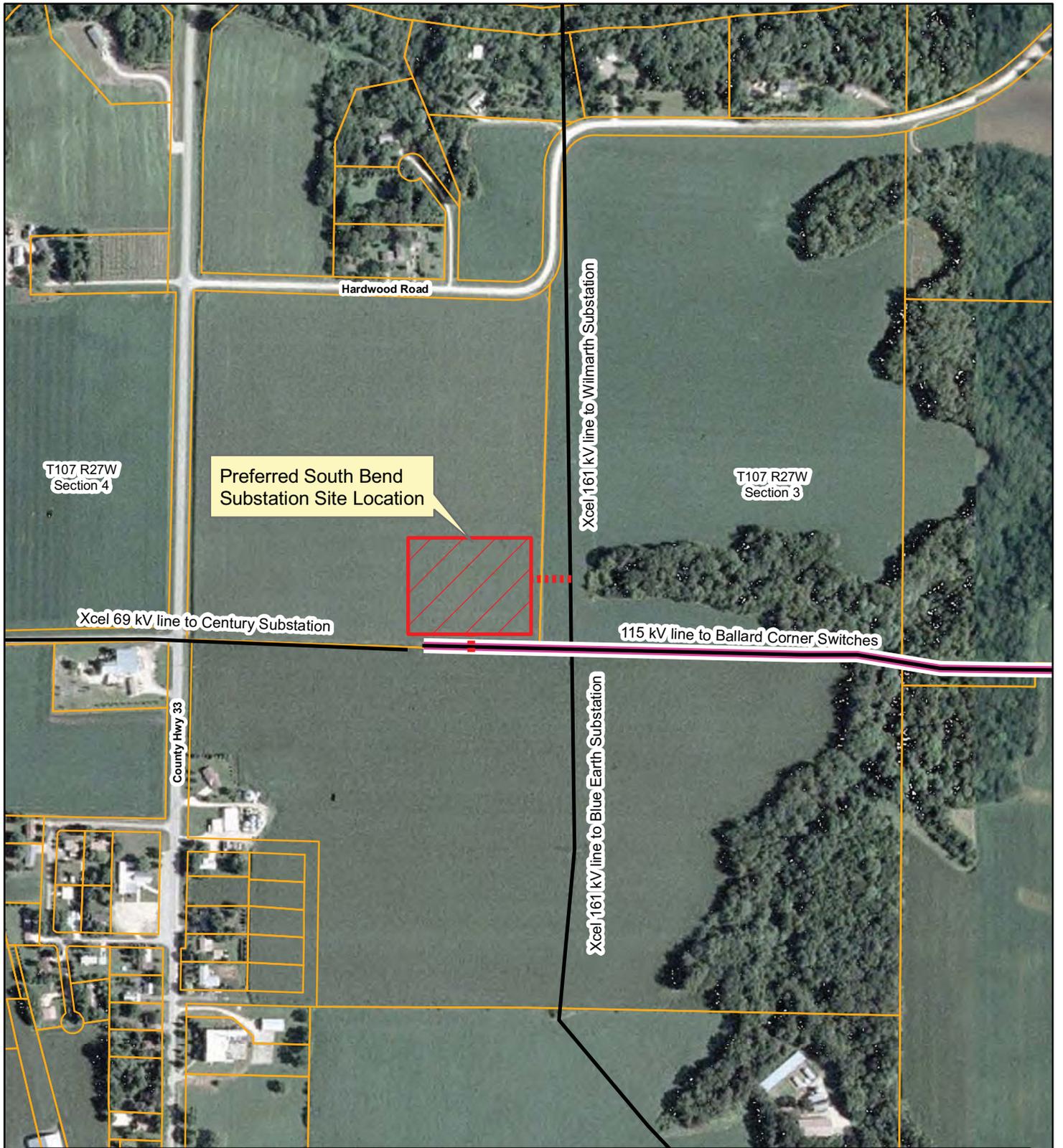
Data Sources:
NSP and MN DNR
*Disclaimer: This information is believed to be correct
but is subject to change and is not warranted.*

**Project Location Map
Segment 3
Mankato Loop**

LEGEND

-  Transmission Line Rebuild Section
-  Existing Transmission Line
-  200 ft Route Width
-  Proposed Substation
-  Existing Substation



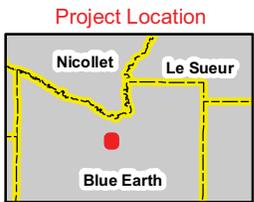


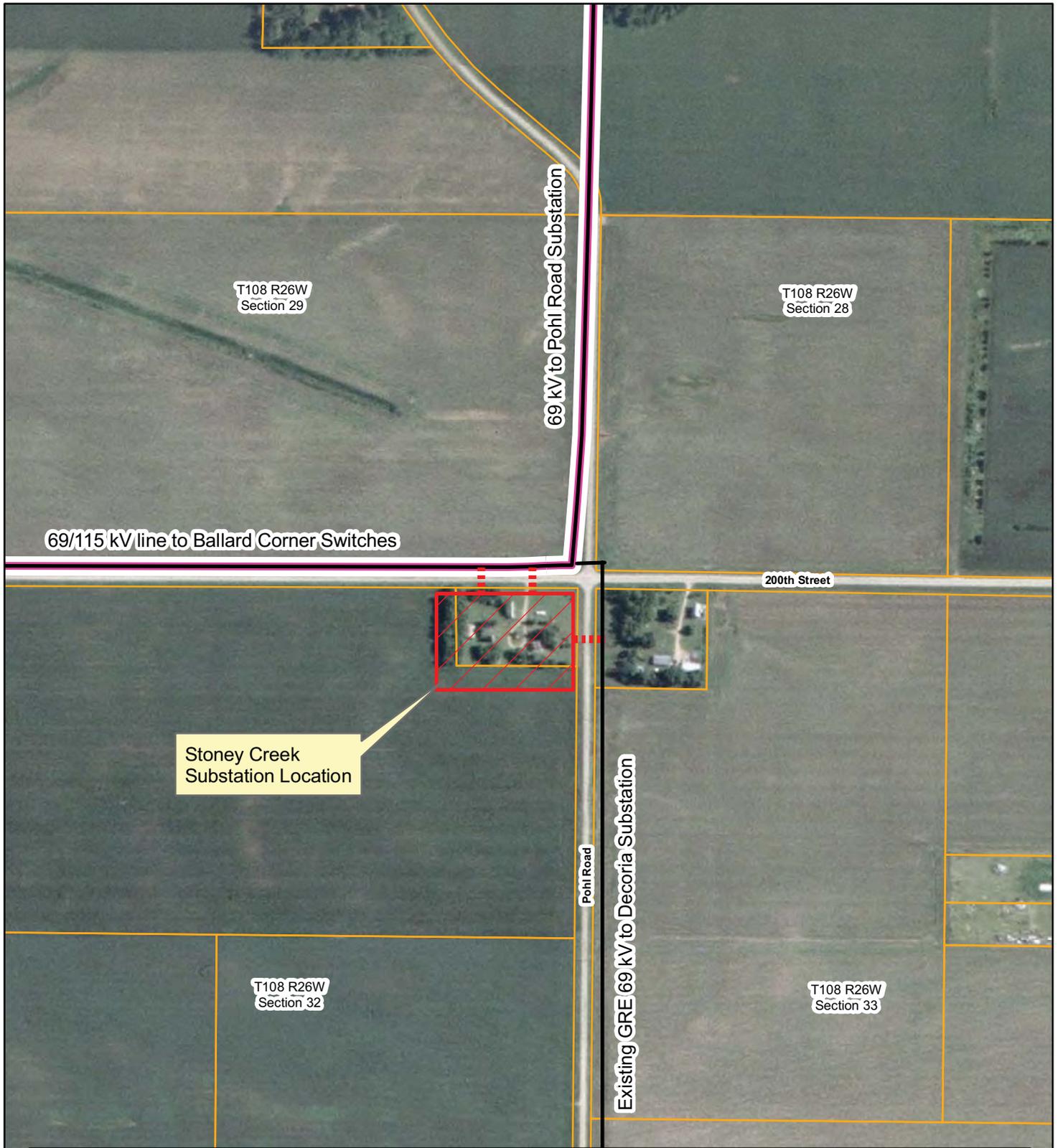
Data Sources:
 NSP, MN DNR, and Blue Earth Co.
 Disclaimer: This information is believed to be correct
 but is subject to change and is not warranted.

**South Bend Substation Location
 Mankato Loop**

LEGEND

-  Transmission Line Rebuild Section
-  Existing Transmission Line
-  Preferred Substation Location
-  Blue Earth County Parcel Boundary





Stoney Creek Substation Location

69/115 kV line to Ballard Corner Switches

69 kV to Pohl Road Substation

200th Street

Pohl Road

Existing GRE 69 kV to Decoria Substation

T108 R26W Section 29

T108 R26W Section 28

T108 R26W Section 32

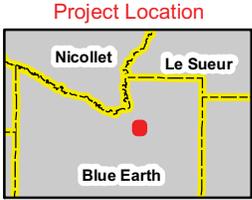
T108 R26W Section 33

Data Sources:
NSP, MN DNR, and Blue Earth Co.
Disclaimer: This information is believed to be correct but is subject to change and is not warranted.

Stoney Creek Substation Location
Mankato Loop

LEGEND

-  Transmission Line Rebuild Section
-  Existing Transmission Line
-  Substation Location
-  Blue Earth County Parcel Boundary



STATE OF MINNESOTA)
)SS
COUNTY OF RAMSEY)

AFFIDAVIT OF SERVICE

I, Robin Benson, being first duly sworn, deposes and says:

That on the 21st day of April, 2009 she served the attached

FINDINGS OF FACT, CONCLUSIONS OF LAW, AND ORDER ISSUING A ROUTE PERMIT TO GREAT RIVER ENERGY AND XCEL ENERGY.

MNPUC Docket Number: ET-2,E-002/TL-08-734

- XX By depositing in the United States Mail at the City of St. Paul, a true and correct copy thereof, properly enveloped with postage prepaid
- XX By personal service
- XX By inter-office mail

to all persons at the addresses indicated below or on the attached list:

Bob Cupit
Docketing - OES
Julia Anderson - OAG
John Lindell- OAG

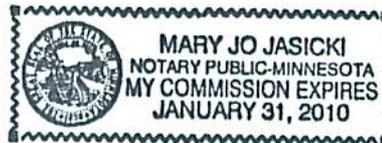
Robin Benson

Subscribed and sworn to before me,

a notary public, this 21st day of

April, 2009.

Mary Jo Jasicki
Notary Public



10:
MN PUC

Burl W. Haar
MN Public Utilities Commission
Suite 350
121 7th Place East
St. Paul MN 55101-2147

20:
Dept. of Commerce

Sharon Ferguson
MN Department Of Commerce
Suite 500
85 7th Place East
St. Paul MN 55101-2198

30:
Inter-Office Mail

Julia Anderson
MN Office Of The Attorney General
1400 BRM Tower
445 Minnesota Street
St. Paul MN 55101-2131

John Lindell
OAG-RUD
900 BRM Tower
445 Minnesota Street
St. Paul MN 55101-2130

40:
Regular Postal Mail

Kodi Jean Church
Great River Energy
12300 Elm Creek Boulevard
Maple Grove MN 55369-4718

Timothy G. Rogers
Xcel
414 Nicollet Mall
Minneapolis MN 55401-1993