



STATE OF MINNESOTA
Office of Energy Security



Issued: March 3, 2009

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
AND AVAILABILITY OF
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

**In the Matter of the Route Permit Application for a 115/69 Kilovolt (kV) Transmission Line
Rebuild from a Newly Proposed West New Ulm Substation to the Existing Fort Ridgley Substation**

PUC Docket Number: E-002/TL-08-956

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the Minnesota Department of Commerce Office of Energy Security (OES) will hold a public hearing on behalf of the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (Commission) on the route permit application by Xcel Energy for a 115/69 kV transmission line rebuild and new substation in Brown and Nicollet counties, Minnesota.

PUBLIC HEARING
Tuesday, March 24, 2009 - 6:30 P.M.

New Ulm Civic Center
1212 North Franklin Street
New Ulm, Minnesota 56073

Project Description. Xcel Energy is proposing to construct a new, 4.2-mile 115 kV transmission line between a newly proposed West New Ulm Substation in Brown County, Minnesota, and the existing Fort Ridgley Substation in Nicollet County, Minnesota. Approximately 3.8 miles or 90 percent of the new 115 kV transmission line will be constructed along the existing Fort Ridgley 69 kV transmission line alignment using double circuit 115/69 kV structures that would accommodate both the new 115 kV and the existing 69 kV on a single structure alignment. The proposed project also involves the construction of a new substation (West Ulm Substation) north of New Ulm in Brown County, Minnesota, and modifications to the existing Fort Ridgley Substation. (Figure 1).

Environmental Assessment. OES has completed an environmental assessment (EA) on the proposed project. The EA addresses the potential human and environmental impacts of the proposed project and evaluates two alternatives (Figures 2 and 3). Electronic versions of the EA and other documents relevant to this matter are available for viewing and download on the PUC website or eDockets at:

<http://energyfacilities.puc.state.mn.us/Docket.html?Id=19744>

or

<https://www.edockets.state.mn.us/EFiling/search.jsp> (enter Docket Number 08-956).

Conduct of Hearing. The public hearing will be conducted in accordance with the requirements of the Power Plant Siting Act, Minnesota Statute 216E.04, and Minnesota Rule 7849.5710. The Honorable Raymond R. Krause, Administrative Law Judge, will preside over the hearing.

OES staff will be present at the hearing and make a brief presentation about the project and introduce into the record a number of documents relating to the project. Representatives of the applicant (Xcel Energy) will be present to offer evidence and to answer questions. Members of the public will have an opportunity to ask questions of OES staff and the applicant, to make statements, and to offer written comments and material into the record.

The record will remain open until **4:30 P.M., Monday, April 6, 2009**, for interested persons to submit written comments to the Administrative Law Judge. Comments must be submitted directly to Judge Krause:

The Honorable Raymond R. Krause
Office of Administrative Hearings
P.O. Box 64620
St. Paul, Minnesota 55164-0620
ray.krause@state.mn.us

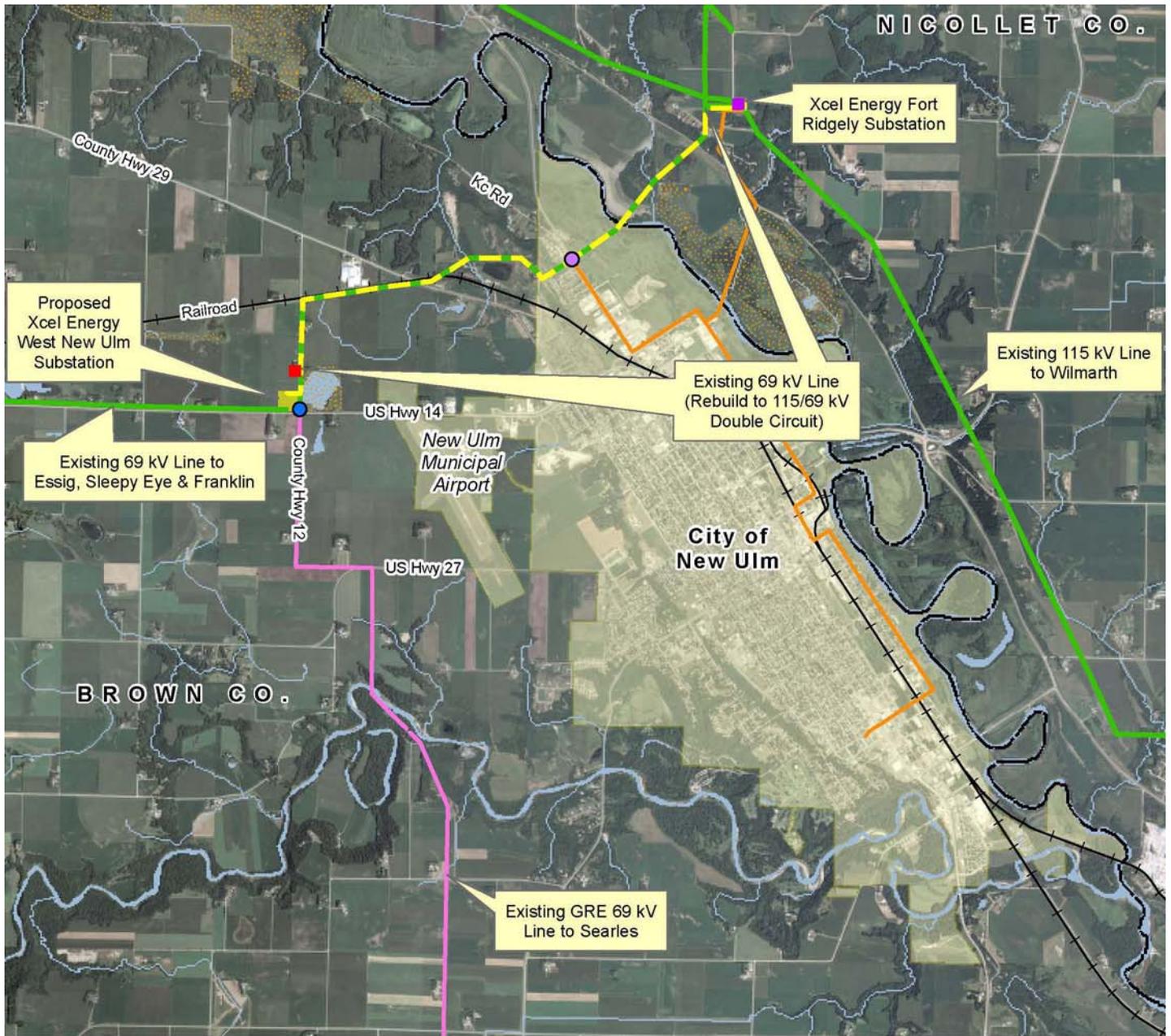
The Administrative Law Judge will provide OES staff a written summary of testimony given at the hearing along with comments received during the prescribed comment period. The Commission will make a final decision on the route permit application after receipt of the complete record.

Additional Information. For more information about the process, the project, or to place your name on the project mailing list, please contact:

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Mailing List. Any person may add his or her name to the mailing list maintained by OES for future mailings regarding this project. If you would like to receive notice of the Commission's final decision in this matter please add your name to the mailing list. Names can be added to the list by contacting the project manager or by registering on the PUC website at: <http://energyfacilities.puc.state.mn.us/Docket.html?Id=19744>.

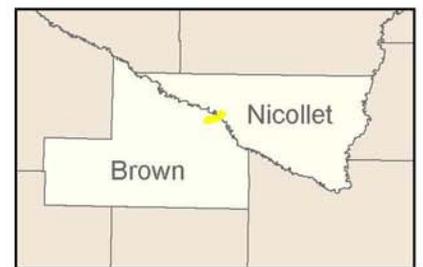
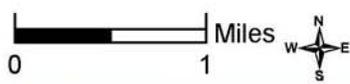


Proposed West New Ulm Substation and 115/69 kV Transmission Line Rebuild Project

Brown and Nicollet counties, MN

Legend

- | | |
|--|--|
| Existing Substation - Fort Ridgely | GRE Transmission Line |
| Existing Substation - Brown Co. REA | New Ulm Public Utilities Transmission Line |
| New Ulm Switch | Railroad |
| GRE Switch | MN DNR Wildlife Area |
| Proposed Xcel Energy 115/69 kV Transmission Line | Waterbody |
| Proposed Xcel Energy West New Ulm Substation | River/Stream |
| Xcel Energy Transmission Line | County Boundary |
| | City Boundary |



Map taken from West New Ulm to Fort Ridgely 115/69 kV Transmission Line Rebuild Project Application to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission for a Route Permit. Northern States Power. August 29, 2008.

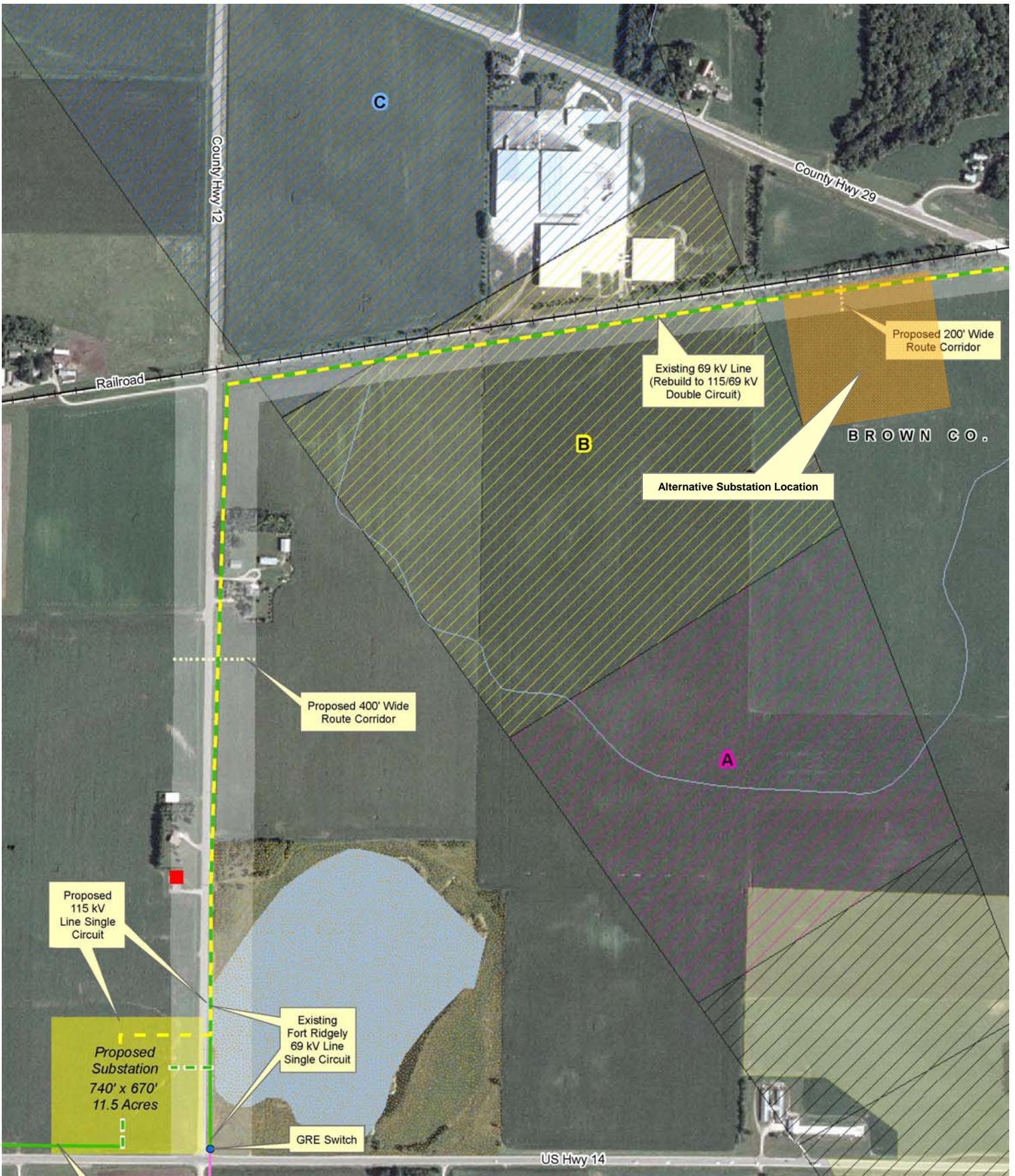
Figure 1
Proposed Route Overview



Base map taken from West New Ulm to Fort Ridgley 115/69 kV Transmission Line Rebuild Project Application to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission for a Route Permit, Northern States Power, August 29, 2008.

- Proposed Route
- Existing 69 kV Transmission Line
- Existing New Ulm PUC Transmission Line
- Roberts Alternative

Figure 2
Roberts Alternative



Base map taken from West New Ulm to Fort Ridgely 115/69 kV Transmission Line Rebuild Project Application to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission for a Route Permit. Northern States Power. August 29, 2008.

Figure 3
Substation Location Alternative