PUBLIC COMMENTS

MONDAY, APRIL 6, 2009

5:00 p.m.

In the Matter of the Route Permit Application for a 345 kV Transmission Line from Brookings County, South Dakota to Hampton, Minnesota

PUC Docket Number ET2/TL-08-1474

Hog Wild Saloon & Eatery
514 Main Street
Henderson, Minnesota

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MR. EK: So we'll open it up to questions. I guess what I'll do is go around, if you just want to raise your hand. And you're going to have to kind of bear with me here. And also, when I get to you, if you could state your name and spell it for the court reporter and try to speak as close as you can into the microphone so that she can be sure to get down what you have. And I'll try to stand by you because we only have one mic, unfortunately, and -- so we can get the back and forth questioning and comment.

I see Delores back there.

MS. HAGEN: I'll come up.

MR. EK: Oh, no, that's all right.

MS. HAGEN: Dolores Hagen, D-O-L-O-R-E-S, Hagen, H-A-G-E-N.

Hello, everybody. I've got three pieces of information I'd like on the record. There has been a petition on the Henderson website, it has five articles -- very specific articles. I don't think I'm going to try to -- there's too many people here to waste the time to read them all, but I'll supply it to the court reporter, would that be better? Would that be better? I think it would be.

The subject is eagles, the wetlands, the

resident eagles, the migrating birds, the nesting habitat, the groundwater potential disruption, economic impact, and human habitat, and the articles are delineated in a paragraph each. I'll give this to the -- everybody who signed the petition knows what's on it.

There are 481 individual people who have signed this petition asking that this route for the crossing of the Minnesota River at Le Sueur be discounted as unacceptable. The other area -- by the way, I'm holding -- the petitions are still out in the field and the additional people who signed the petition, in addition to the 481, will be added before the deadline, which is the 30th of April.

The third element -- or second element I'd like to bring up are letters from both governmental and civic organizations in the area. I have a letter from the Henderson Area Chamber of Commerce, the Henderson Township Supervisors, the Audubon Society of Minnesota, the Henderson Lions Club, Tyrone Township, Minnesota River Valley Scenic Byway Alliance, and the mayor of Henderson, Minnesota. And again, I won't read the letters, everybody here would like to comment, so we'll just ask the court reporter to enter them into the

record.

The third item, there is a considerable amount of information available to you here, but some of it is in error and I would like the record to be cleared. If you go to section 10 of the information provided here, or if you go on the website, you will find information that is wrong. The United States Fish and Wildlife Service in early December submitted a letter to the engineering firm suggesting their analysis would recommend the Le Sueur crossing for the Minnesota River as opposed to the alternative site.

Since that letter has been written, they have been down here -- nine people, from both the DNR and Fish and Wildlife, have been down here at the request of the head of that department to reevaluate that situation and to hold in abeyance their original decision. In other words, hang onto to your hat, folks, we haven't made a decision yet. That isn't what the papers you will read say. I just want you to know that what's in those papers just ain't true, they're still making up their mind.

And that's all I have, Scott can have her back.

MR. EK: I just want to clarify for

Dolores, that the -- just want to make sure that you get those comments in, make sure that we get those comments before the 30th, certainly, for sure. And I know you talked to me about that, but just to get it on the record.

And the topics -- I forget, though, the topics you rattled off that would be looked at and have studied, they're in the record. All of them that you mentioned are something that we will be studying. And you're indeed correct, the Fish and Wildlife Service contacted me with their request for abeyance on that original letter, and it wouldn't be reflected in the permit application or any documents, it's relatively new.

And I haven't heard any new news on what's going on, but there -- Dolores is correct, there was an abeyance letter from the Fish and Wildlife Service, just to clarify that.

And I think I've got all that.

Yes, sir, if you could state your name and spell it, please.

MR. STRAUB: My name is Art Straub, S-T-R-A-U-B. Two, two and a half -- 222 and a half South Second Street, city of Le Sueur. I'm also a taxpayer in Tyrone Township and in the city of

Le Sueur.

I want to thank every single one of you for being here this evening to show the people in power how concerned you are. Thank you for coming tonight.

Once upon a time, there was a guy by the name of Jesus and he lived about 2,000 years ago, I think. And this week some Christians, some people, remember that time. And, you remember, he was crucified. And the week when he was walking up to the cross, a bunch of woman came along and said -- they were weeping over Jesus. And Jesus said, weep not for me, but for your children.

And that's who I weep for tonight. I'm an old bird, I can go tomorrow and it's okay. But I weep for these little people whose lives and land and beauty and all of that is affected by what's happening by this particular transmission line.

Thank you, young man.

MR. EK: Thank you, Mr. Straut (phonetic), was it?

MR. STRAUB: Straub.

MR. EK: Straub. Thank you for your comments.

Additional comments, concerns?

Let me run around here. If you could spell and state your name.

MR. ZIPPEL: Hello, I am Nolan Zippel, N-O-L-A-N, Z-I-P-P-E-L.

I am 15 years old and I'm a freshman at the Minnesota New Country School. I believe that CapX 2020 should be rerouted because of the negative effect it will have on wildlife and public health. CapX 2020 will destroy local wildlife habitats that is home to herons, muskrats, and migrating waterfowl, and is the feeding grounds for several bald eagles.

It has been shown that electromagnetic fields from these lines mess with animals' natural compasses and cause cancer. How will this affect migrating birds? By building this line, you will be destroying the feeding grounds for hundreds of animals, as well as the protected bald eagle. We must preserve this land for future generations.

MR. EK: I just want to say that's fantastic that you're getting involved in the project. I commend you, that's excellent.

MS. SAVANNAH ZIPPEL: Hi, my name is Savannah Zippel, S-A-V-A-N-N-A-H, Zippel, Z-I-P-P-E-L. I am 13 years old and I go to the

Minnesota New Country School.

I'm here to talk about the Cap 2020 X (sic) power line. Have any of you ever driven by Bucks Lake in the wintertime and noticed all the mature and immature bald eagles sitting on the ice? I know I have, and it's such an amazing sight. When my mom was younger, they didn't have any bald eagles because of the pesticides, they are now finally making a comeback. Why do we want stop that with the Cap 2020 X power line?

Bald eagles are only some of the amazing wildlife in Henderson. When my mom drives us to school, we always see owls, hawks, and don't forget the little black squirrels. I have to mention the 2008 Christmas Bird Count in Henderson. Sven Sundgaard came down from KARE 11 news to film a Simply Science show about the bird count. So, you see, if we lose all our wildlife in town, we are also losing a part of our community.

Thank you.

MR. EK: And again, that's great, fantastic. And just to let you know, those are topics that we'll study in depth, especially for the areas that are being proposed to cross, just as you identified. And what's kind of neat -- or neat

about this, is EISs don't come along all that often, so we can -- in an EIS, we can dig really deep into some of these subjects that we don't normally -- or are not normally able to in smaller documents.

But thank you for your comment, excellent.

Yes, sir. If you could state your name and spell it.

MR. MESSERLI: Allen Messerli, A-L-L-E-N, M-E-S-S-E-R-L-I.

Change the subject a little bit here, I'm questioning the proliferation of the right-of-ways. It seems like even though I read in the news media that there's a growing recognition that right-of-ways should be shared, there's resistance to that from parties that are submitting suggestions. And it seems like there's an opportunity here to share a right-of-way, or multiple right-of-ways, especially with railroads or highways, and I'll say railroads, specifically.

It looks, in looking at details in your maps, that you're trying to minimize the impact on existing homes. It makes sense, I understand that. It was on the list -- number one on the list, I think, for impacts. However, this is a future

1 project and I think it's important to look at the
2 future and where homes could be or will be in the
3 future.
4 I live in the Twin Cities area, even
5 though I have land in this area that's impacted.
6 And we have power lines near existing residences by
7 the thousands and we have new residences and new
8 businesses being built right by power lines. So I
9 submit that you could reduce your milage a lot by
10 going straight east from Gibbon and following the
11 railroad.
12 And I also think you should reconsider
13 using an existing crossing. We have some really
14 cool technology that originates from a Minnesota
15 company that lets you put lots more power over the
16 same size poles with new technology lines. Why
17 create a new river crossing if you could use an
18 existing one?
19 MR. EK: Good -- very good comment, sir.
20 Just to let you know, the rail line idea,
21 following the rail line, that has come up more than
22 once in the -- especially the Gibbon area, just as
23 you suggested. So that will also be in the
24 comments.
25 You brought up one other item -- oh, the

1 future development. Now, this is why we, at the
2 Office of Energy Security, want to work with the
3 local governments, the counties, the cities, and
4 hopefully we hear from, you know, private developers
5 as well and receive their comments about future
6 development, about, you know, the city's comp plans,
7 future plans, what's going on, so we can take a look
8 at that in the EIS and determine, you know, the
9 impacts that a route would have in those certain
10 areas that are marked for future development and so
11 forth.
12 So yes, that's important that we get the
13 word out to the cities and local governments,
14 counties, and regional development commissions to
15 let us know what their future -- your future
16 communities are planning so you can plan around
17 that.
18 MR. MESSERLI: People don't want to build
19 near railroads any more than they want to build near
20 power lines, so it makes sense to share that.
21 MR. EK: Yeah, exactly. And I'll let
22 Craig talk on that, but I know a lot of this project
23 they are focussing on sharing road right-of-ways.
24 I'm not too certain what the percentage is on
25 sharing railroad right-of-ways, so maybe Craig could

answer that question.

MR. POORKER: Sure. I guess I neglected to talk about some of the criteria that we heard about at our open houses and work group meetings. But, of course, number one was homes and proximity to homes and impacts to occupied homes. And what we heard from people a lot was, do our best to follow existing corridors, whether it was roadways, whether it was railroads or major highways.

And if we couldn't follow a roadway or a railroad, to try to follow field lines or property lines if we had to go cross country away from an existing corridor of some other kind. And we were doing our best to not impact agriculture, we've been hearing a lot about that. Of course, people don't -- do not want poles in their fields, which is kind of why we opted to go with a single-pole structure rather than a lattice structure or an H-frame, so that we would minimize that impact to agriculture.

So we're doing our best. The railroad and Highway 19, we've heard a lot about trying to follow that. The unfortunate thing about following railroads and highways is that's where all the towns are. And we made a conscious decision to not go

through urban areas, through cities. So that presents us with a problem because that's where the cities are, are along the railroads which are along the highways.

But that is a good comment that we've heard from others as well, and I'm sure that that's something that the Office of Energy Security's going to be looking at.

MR. EK: Does that answer your question, sir?

MR. MESSERLI: (Nods head.)

MR. EK: Yes, sir.

MR. FAHEY: My name is Kevin Fahey, I live at 30286 C. Highway 25.

Last summer they ran a pipeline north of my house, which I wasn't too happy about. And now, I might get a power line on the south side of my house and I'm not real happy about that. There's no beauty in a power line and the value of the land's going to go down. Who's going to buy my place with all this stuff around? I wouldn't want it, would you?

MR. POORKER: Well, I think that's why people are here. I think that's why people are here, is because they probably do not want a power

line by their house. And so that's -- no matter what answer I give, it wouldn't be the right one. And I understand that, when it comes to land values, we do have to acquire easements for this project. And those easements -- we do have to make an easement payment for any property that we cross.

And we have to -- our payments are based on land values, and we also pay for crop damage, if we do that, we pay for soil compaction, impacts to your property values, we have to pay for all of that. So it's a significant discussion that we have with any property owner that we do affect.

MR. EK: Just to add to that, that topic of property values and how this would affect property values has also come up many, many times in this past week at many of the public meetings. And so it sounds to me it's like something we will -- well, it is something we will be focussing on a lot more than, you know, we have been in the past for items like this.

I can't give you an answer on property -- you know, what happens with property values, and that's something that would be looked at in the environmental impact statement and addressed there. And then you would also have an opportunity to

say -- what we put out in that draft EIS is garbage or incorrect, you still have that other comment period so we can address your comment and hopefully give you the right answer -- or the correct answer.

And at the same time, I suggest you submit -- we have the folks back there that will print out a map. You can suggest an alternative for where you might want this line to go instead of going on your property. If we don't receive that, we're not going to know. Actually, you did give your address and so forth, so we will know. But I would encourage you to go ahead and submit a map as well.

Does that answer your question, sir?

MR. FAHEY: Sure.

MR. EK: Yes, sir, just a moment. If you could state and spell your name.

MR. TRONAU: Clint Tronau, C-L-I-N-T, T-R-O-N-A-U. I live in Renville County, in Camp Township, Sections 20 and 21. And it overlooks the river bottom.

My grandfather bought the farm in 1933 and he put a spring in on the bottom of the hill for everybody to get water at. This line is proposed to go within 150 feet or so of that, I don't know if it

will affect the water quality or not. But our family has also spent money on a chain-link fence, that's so we can overlook from our farm site down into the river bottom, and also on drainage down in the river bottom land that we own.

There is an old bridge that crosses right below our place, and the counties have said that they will not replace it when it deteriorates. I think that this area is on its way to becoming more natural, and I'm really disappointed to hear that I'd be looking over my chain-link fence at a big power line.

And I'm sure we've all heard the term NIMBY, not in my backyard. I do have a power line already in my backyard that was put in '56, and now they want to put one in on my side yard. I've looked at the alternative route where they cross the river and I think it would be better there.

That's about all I have to say. Thank you.

MR. EK: Thanks for your comment, sir.

I just wanted to just clarify, that was -- you talked about the crossing, that's County Road 8, is that --

MR. TRONAU: 3.

MR. EK: 3, the big yellow section there down at the bottom, am I thinking of the right area where they're going to take out that bridge eventually, it's underwater right now?

MR. TRONAU: Yeah, it's underwater.

MR. EK: Is that -- okay. Okay. I just wanted to clarify, we've looked at that, and we received, from one of the local governments similar information about the future of that bridge that crosses there. But it sounds like you did a very nice job getting your comments in the record, so we'll definitely take a look at that. Thank you.

Additional comments?

MR. KOTASEK: Hi, Paul Kotasek, K-O-T-A-S-E-K, Tyrone Township.

And I was just curious, is this a single-circuit or a double-circuit structure, and if it will be used for future corridor -- for bringing different lines on these poles -- on the structure? And the effect the magnetic field will be on this 345- to 1,000-volt (sic) line, such as on -- the effect on people in the area, pacemakers and medical devices if people live really close to these lines.

And why does it have to go through such a populated area with all these residents?

1 MR. EK: I'll address the electric and
2 magnetic fields. You know, we've done plenty of
3 EAs, EISs. We've looked at that, different sized
4 line, 115, 69s, 345s, there's research, of course,
5 as you know -- and I know I'm not going to convince
6 anybody, but we do look at both sides of it. And
7 they say there -- the correlation is very small when
8 it comes to cancer risk.
9 But -- and in that same breath, because
10 it is small and it has not been defined, we continue
11 to look at new research that comes out. I mean,
12 we're talking sometimes the research that's been
13 looked at is 30 years old. So what is kind of great
14 about this environmental impact statement is we have
15 an opportunity to look at the new data, new
16 findings, new literature, new everything when it
17 comes to EMF. We will look at -- we do look at the
18 impacts on pacemakers.
19 We had a gentleman at another meeting, I
20 don't know what the device does, but it's a vagus
21 nerve stimulator for a disease his son has, which is
22 something new I had never heard of. It's something
23 we'll certainly be looking at.
24 The electric and magnetic fields, as
25 it -- as it could impact radio signals, televisions

signals, GPS units, has come up for the tractors -- or the farmers, the combines, how they do the GPS. We're going to look at that as well when it comes to EMF. So, you know, I can't tell you, you know, there is not EMF, but I can tell you the risk, thus far in literature, is known to be little. And I know there's both -- there's two sides to it. However, this is a great opportunity for the state to take another look at that information and update that information with regards to this project.

I'll let Craig answer the double-circuit question you had and the corridor question.

MR. POORKER: Thanks. The portion from Lyon County substation, just east of Marshall to just east of here, either in Helena Township or Derrynane Township, where we're looking for a substation site in that area, depending on if we get told to take the preferred or alternate route, that portion is going to be -- we have proposed to be double-circuit. And that -- again, that's from Lyon County substation to the Helena area, Helena Township area.

The rest of it we had proposed to be single-circuit, but through the certificate of need process, there were some intervenors that said that

perhaps we should build this a double-circuit as well, the remainder from Lyon County west to Brookings County and also from Helena east to Hampton. They said perhaps we should think about building that double-circuit because of all the new wind generation that's coming on line in, especially, southwest Minnesota, South Dakota, and southern parts of Minnesota.

Corridor sharing. So when we did this easement for this transmission line, when we -- should this be approved, we have to get easements, and the easement that we acquire is for this transmission line only and that's it. The rights that we acquire from a landowner would be the right to build it, maintain it, and to operate it, and that's it.

It's still private property and nobody else can do anything with that. They can't put a bike trail on it, they can't bury a telephone or cable line in it, unless they get an easement from you. So that's the only thing our easement allows, is for this transmission line only.

Does that answer your question?

MR. KOTASEK: Can you explain what the difference between a single and double is?

MR. POORKER: A single- and double-circuit?

MR. KOTASEK: (Nods head.)

MR. POORKER: A double-circuit line is just basically two transmission lines on one pole, two sets of transmission lines. A single-circuit would be just one, so with a single-circuit you would have three wires plus two shield wires. And with a double-circuit, you'll have six wires, three on each side, and then two shield wires on top of that for lightning protection.

MR. EK: Does that answer your question?

MR. KOTASEK: (Nods head.)

MR. EK: Yes, sir, if you could state your name and spell it, please.

MR. REINHARDT: I'm Roger Reinhardt from Nessel Township, R-E-I-N-H-A-R-D-T, Reinhardt.

I'm concerned about -- I live fairly close to that line that's going to be there and I farm the land along the side of it. What about a pacemaker? Would a pacemaker not work decent? They've got to work good or not at all, you can't be just about, maybe not quite working, but they've got to be working -- work or not at all.

MR. EK: Very good question, and you're

very right. I can say we've looked at that and, you know, off the top of my head, I know it depends on, you know, whether it's an older unit or a newer unit and there's different aspects. We do look at that, it's come up a couple times throughout the meetings and we'll look at how EMF, or electric and magnetic fields, would impact a pacemaker. We've pulled documents from Medtronic and Guidant and so forth to get more information on the potential impacts -- on what they would have a pacemaker.

I can't -- to be honest with you, I can't answer right off the top of my head exactly what a line would do, that's what the EIS -- yeah, that's what the EIS will look into. What we've found in the past, the newer models, no, there is no impact to pacemakers. I forgot the term, but I know some of the older models, there may be some problems. I can't go into specifics or details because I don't know them. But I do know the newer models that they've been designing are not impacted by the EMF from a transmission line. However, that's a -- we do study that and we'll study it in depth.

And I apologize I can't answer that question completely for you tonight.

Yes, ma'am.

MS. LEHMAN: Hi, I'm Renee Lehman, L-E-H-M-A-N. I live on 314 Doppy Lane.

Our backyard abuts to 169 and our home will probably be less than 200 feet away from this. What's the noise effect and the stray voltage to my family and our health? And I have horses and how is that going to affect, you know, our situation of being that close to the power line?

MR. EK: I'm sorry. How many feet away?

MS. LEHMAN: Well, they said it's probably less than 200 feet, 300 feet.

MR. EK: 200 feet. Well, noise from transmission lines is minimal. You can usually never hear it. When you can hear it the most is when you have a light mist or a fog in the air, that's when you can hear that crackle.

MS. LEHMAN: But you can hear it.

MR. EK: Right. And -- but when -- I guess when it's raining the hardest, that's when you would hear the most crackle. However, the rain drowns out that crackle so you can't hear the crackling.

And what it's called is the corona effect, and what that is is there could be problems with the line, oxidation and so forth. And so when

1 the moisture -- it's a moisture problem and that's
2 when you hear the noise on conductors, on the
3 transformers, and so forth.
4 But studies we've done, it's well below
5 state noise levels -- any transmission line is well
6 below state required noise levels. And at
7 200 feet -- I guess I don't have the figure off the
8 top of my head, but I would suspect no, it wouldn't
9 be a noise problem.
10 And I forget your second question.
11 MS. LEHMAN: The health issues and then
12 the stray voltage with animals, you know, I have
13 horses and stuff. And just being that close to
14 them, you know, if they expand. Just our concerns
15 about -- you know, that's -- our backyard's there,
16 we have a fence that overlooks 169, and now this big
17 tower that's going to be right there, are we not
18 going to be able to enjoy that anymore because it's
19 that close to the power line?
20 MR. EK: Yeah. So one, it's an
21 aesthetics issue for you and you did provide your --
22 well, yeah, you don't want to look at it, of course.
23 MS. LEHMAN: Yeah.
24 MR. EK: The EMF I just addressed and,
25 you know, once -- electric and magnetic fields, the

further you get away -- they're the strongest when you're right below and underneath the lines. And these lines are going to be 40 or 50 -- hanging 40 to 50 feet above, they're strongest. And as you move away, they weaken. So I believe at 200 feet they get very, very weak.

Minnesota has -- its guidance, the PUC, for electric fields is eight kilovolts per meter. I can't say at 200 feet -- I believe at 200 feet it would be less than that. Magnetic fields, Minnesota does not have any guidance or rule on what it should be. But we do analyze that in the EIS and we will take a look at that with respect to proximity to homes.

And you bring up the issue of stray voltage, that's also come up a lot when we were out in the western portion of the state because we have a lot of farmers out there, cattle farmers and so forth. And that comes down to a grounding issue a lot of times, to make sure it's properly -- the transmission line's properly grounded, or items on your property are properly grounded so there isn't that induced voltage.

And in our permit it is -- pretty much every permit that's put out specifies that the power

company or applicant, whoever it may be, is required to come out and fix that stray voltage problem if one exists. And that's also a subject that we take a look at in the EIS.

Yes.

MS. HAGEN: Dolores Hagen, D-O-L-O-R-E-S, Hagen, H-A-G-E-N. This time for Henderson Feathers.

Several people have come up to me in the last ten minutes asking me to stress something I neglected to talk about and that's the scenic byway and the tourism aspect of what Henderson is about to enter into this coming year. It has been for two years and hopes to continue, which is a serious tourism effort on behalf the scenic byway and the tourism of the valley that we sit in about to be intersected by a power line.

The major nature of this entire effort is Bucks Lake, and as you know, the preferred route sits right on top of Bucks Lake, right through the middle of it. The heron rookeries would be gone, the eagle alert would be gone, we would no longer be able to invite people to stand under a power line.

EPA will tell you pregnant women, don't even drive under one. It would no longer be a tourism attraction, it couldn't be. We could no

longer take children down there for Nature Neighbors, it's our education program that we run out of Henderson. It would be a tragedy to lose those things.

I just want you to know that we think there is another place to cross the Minnesota River other than the Le Sueur crossing. You've got one on the books, consider that one.

MR. EK: Dolores, I suspect we'll be hearing from DNR and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service when it comes to the scenic byways and the areas you mentioned.

And also, all of you here, by all means, suggest an alternative to the river crossing Dolores is mentioning, it just helps to know. The more comment letters we get, the more important we know, you know, that subject, that area, that alternative is to the folks in this community or communities that we've already seen.

I'm trying to get around the room here. Yes, sir, if you could state your name and spell it, please.

MR. RUHLAND: Steve Ruhland, S-T-E-V-E R-U-H-L-A-N-D.

East of here a little bit, Derrynane

Township, you're paralleling an existing 345 volt (sic) line for three miles. The new line would be less than a mile away from it the whole way, why can you not follow the existing line?

And another thing, this line is being sold to the public as bringing wind energy. Well, a North Dakota State study says it's effective 20 to 30 percent of the time. Wind doesn't blow at night, usually. What power's running through it the rest of the time?

MR. EK: Yeah. You bring up the need issue on the wind, I'll let Craig address the double-circuiting issue. But you bring up a need issue, and I should point out that there is another docket for this project and it focuses on the need of this transmission line. What we're here tonight doing is looking at routing on -- if the project's needed, where the route would go.

I believe on the 15th and 16th -- April 15 and 16, the Public Utilities Commission will be taking oral arguments on the 15th and deliberating on the 16th on whether this project is indeed needed. If they decide it's not needed, this routing process no longer goes forward, it's done. If it's needed, then we continue with the process.

And need is part of that -- the wind energy, you say. Power lines, they don't segregate, they don't distinguish between different types of energy.

MR. RUHLAND: What I'm saying is, it sounds better to the public to say, oh, this will be clean energy when it's not going to be only clean energy. Every article ever written about it says it's for wind energy.

MR. EK: You're correct, it is for wind energy, and that is one of the main components. If you go under the need part of the project, wind energy is one of the main components. And it's to grab the wind energy -- and I'm not part of the need process, I'm just going off of the e-mails and stuff I read, but it's to grab that energy on the Buffalo Ridge, which is in southwest Minnesota. There's a lot of wind turbines coming on line, and from my understanding, they need a transmission highway to get that energy from those centers -- those wind centers. It's a big wind center, from what I understand.

But you are correct, transmission lines -- you can't say we're only going to have wind on this transmission line and not some other type of energy, it's all energy flowing through. So you're

right, when the wind's not blowing, then there is a different energy being generated and transmitted through the line.

Let me have Craig answer the double-circuit issue you were referring to.

MR. POORKER: Mr. Ruhland, I think you're referring to the 345 kV line that's out there, that's the one that kind of runs northwest and southwest, right, on the big lattice structure, or H-frame structures, I think, also.

And the Minnesota rules tell us that we do have to look at existing corridors, whether they're roadways or even transmission lines. And that one we elected to not follow because of the diagonal situation that that runs through and it runs through a lot of open fields and that was something we tried to avoid as much as we could.

And as far as other existing transmission lines, whether they're 69 kV or 115 kV, which is more prevalent out there and there are quite a few of those. Because this line is going to be a double-circuit -- or built to double-circuit, we think -- it makes it difficult to hang a third line on there, or to make it a triple circuit. It just would be a mammoth structure, there just isn't

enough room for all that.

It also creates a safety and maintenance hazard for anybody that's working on those transmission lines because of having three sets of transmission lines possibly energizing each other. They would have to shut the whole system down in order to work on one set of lines. So that's the reason that we do not often follow existing lines.

However, crossing the Minnesota River, that is something that we do have to look at. And Fish and Wildlife Service and the DNR have told us that they are -- they do not want a brand new crossing across the river if we can help it. And so -- in fact, that's the -- the Belle Plaine crossing does cross where there's a 69 kV line and if that one is selected, we probably would triple-circuit that one for a short distance before they break off again.

MR. EK: I just want to make sure your questions were answered.

MR. RUHLAND: I guess what I'm getting from that is that the wildlife is probably more important than the people, correct?

MR. POORKER: I'm not sure what that's directed at, but when we cross the Minnesota River,

it's because the Fish and Wildlife Service wants us to cross where there is existing transmission line because they don't want to disturb any more habitat than is necessary. That's why we do have to look for other crossings of the Minnesota River where there's already some kind of disturbance. So is wildlife more important than people? I would say not.

MR. EK: I'll get over there in a moment, sir. Just, if you could state your name.

MR. GENELIN: My name is Greg Genelin, G-E-N-E-L-I-N.

It's probably been answered in an indirect way, but would cellphones be affected? I'm sure they would somewhat, and you're going right by a big tower up there on top of the bluffs. And not counting all the other people that have bad reception already, we're having to feed to some of cell sites, isn't that going to jam a lot worse? And we've already got bad -- you can't get reception in Henderson, hardly. I mean, to me it's going to affect the cell site -- you know, that cell site, also. Unless you can prove it don't, I imagine it would.

MR. EK: I can say in the past studies

we've done, it doesn't. It's not the -- it's not the electric lines that affect your cell phone, it's more of the tower placement. I mean, I live in the Cities, I come -- I'm driving through there and I have plenty of dropout areas. And there's plenty of power lines running everywhere, it's a matter of towers, your service provider.

We've looked at that, that was one of the subjects I had up there and it's a subject that we'll continue to look at. But from past studies we've done, we haven't found that to be an impact, if that answers your question.

MR. GENELIN: (Nods head.)

MR. EK: Yes, sir. I feel like a talk show host. If you could state your name and spell it, please, sir.

MR. MAY: John May, J-O-H-N, M-A-Y. Twenty-nine -- 28097 320th Street.

I'm kind of questioning the route selection in my area of the township, Tyrone, this side of the river. I can look a couple miles to the east and a couple miles to the west and I see, like, 12, 14, 16 houses 100 feet from the right-of-way, which puts them 150 feet (sic) from the power line. And I guess -- and then you go a little further and

there's probably another half a dozen that are within a couple hundred feet from the road. And we follow roads and people build along roads, so I don't -- it doesn't make much sense.

And then another observation, you know, when he got talking about cancer and the book's still open and whatever, and I guess my observation of the thing would be, if they do put this power line down 320th Street, we're the guinea pigs for the cancer research, I guess.

MR. EK: Just to answer your question -- I'm glad you got your address on there and so forth, and so that's an area that we can -- we have on record, we can be sure to look at.

However, I suggest that you go and either print out a map or submit a comment tonight or through, you know, the methods I explained earlier to let us know if there's a different route or we should jumps sides of the road and so on and so forth. And maybe talk to your neighbors as well, you mentioned there were quite a few other folks in the area and that would be good information for me to have so we can take a look at that.

Other questions? You, yes, ma'am.

MS. GILL: Jeanne Gill, last name,

G-I-L-L.

I just had a question about the property values, he was saying that, you know, people could maybe be reimbursed, I don't know how that works. So, you know, this power line goes through this property and now it's going to devalue their property. But what about, like, say, for me, the proposed route -- I mean, I'm -- it's not through my property, but the right-of-way is at the edge of my property, that's still going to affect my property values. I mean, how am I going to be reimbursed for that? Because obviously nobody's going to want to buy my place and look out, you know, the window and see a power line.

MR. EK: That's a question Craig will need to answer, the state doesn't get into the whole reimbursement process and so forth and the easement process, but Craig can answer that.

MR. POORKER: Unfortunately, there's not a good answer for that one. We do have to -- but it's an aesthetic situation and that's what this meeting -- you need to get that comment in because aesthetics are one of the criteria that we look at when we're routing a transmission line, amongst everything else. So that is an issue for landowners

and I understand that.

But unfortunately, under -- and maybe this will change some day, proximity to homes, if it's -- it could be close to a home, but the right-of-way doesn't -- isn't on your property, that's an issue and one that we wrestle with. So I don't know what a good answer is, but then again, through the state process, maybe -- maybe through the EIS or when we get a route permit, it could be addressed in there as well.

MS. GILL: If it doesn't have to do with, like, you or whatever, who -- you know, if it doesn't have anything to do with you and whatever, how -- I mean, I don't understand why I should have to take the extra effort to now figure out what I'm going to do because my property value is going down. Taxes aren't going to go down, my value's going to go down. And I don't feel that I should have to make this extra effort to contact the state and all this kind of stuff. Why should I have to do that, you know, just because I have to fight tooth and nail just to get my property value up?

MR. POORKER: Again, I don't know what a good answer is. I think it's -- this is a convenient time for you to make that comment on

aesthetic value and property value, this is a good time to be doing it.

MR. EK: May I add, you do have -- just because it is not on your property, or if it's on the adjacent property, you still have the opportunity to suggest an alternative to that route. And I'm suspecting we're going to have many, many alternatives and I'm wondering how we're going to put them all together, but that's part of this process.

And that would be one way for you to get a comment in and say there's a better way to place this line instead of this location. And my house -- the visual impacts, aesthetics have become more important as we've been permitting transmission lines and looking at applications, you know, in Minnesota. So it's something that's really become important, as well as proximity to homes has come up many times.

Yes, sir. Yes, sir.

MR. SCHNEIDER: My name is John Schneider and I live up in the Country View Addition up by where Scott's Helicopter Service was or the state wayside rest is.

I have not seen, you know, where it's

1 going to cross there. They're talking in the paper,
2 it was about -- only talking about the sewage ponds,
3 well, we're up from that. There's probably, I'm
4 guessing, 40 units up in that area. We don't know
5 where it's coming across, I've never seen anything
6 definitive enough to -- but I'm a property owner,
7 that's why I'm here. Sorry for being late.
8 The other thing is, what about
9 underground, has that been brought up? Like I said,
10 I'm sorry for being late.
11 MR. EK: Underground's been brought up.
12 I'm not familiar offhand with the -- are you --
13 Craig, do you know the area?
14 MR. POORKER: Yeah, the area of Scott's
15 Helicopter, I believe, is up 169, up at the top of
16 the hill, near the airport, is it?
17 MR. SCHNEIDER: The Green Giant sign --
18 MR. POORKER: Yup.
19 MR. SCHNEIDER: -- is about a quarter
20 mile from it.
21 MR. POORKER: Okay. Okay.
22 MR. SCHNEIDER: 169 comes up and goes up
23 the hill.
24 MR. POORKER: Yup. This area is one that
25 we've heard from several people, people up on Doppy

Lane, up at the top of the hill when we get east of Le Sueur, and this is one that we really wrestle with. Our route right there is a little bit wider than 1,000 feet because we don't have a good idea exactly where we can cross there. We're hoping that maybe from this process we can get a better idea of where we can get up 169 or by the wayside rest or somewhere up that way to get to Helena or Derrynane Township. So that is one that we're struggling with.

MR. GENELIN: I don't know if people know that or not -- if you've got concerns, like my address, people back there are printing out the exact location of that thing, then there's no argument. And then if you want to complain about it, you just fill out the paperwork on the back and send it back.

MR. EK: Yeah. Actually, you're right. And even more so, the idea was to have that map on the front so people could actually draw in that alternative route to where they'd like to see it go. So that gives us an even better idea of, you know, where you might like to see it go.

MR. GENELIN: I'm Greg Genelin, I talked a little bit ago. I live at 32487 316th Street and

yeah, I will be looking at it, I'm in the right-of-way.

MR. SCHNEIDER: Yeah. It's right here where it's proposed, there's -- here's where the housing unit is (indicating), that is close.

And as you mentioned, his sister lives right across the street from me. But this is what I had not ever seen, you know.

MR. GENELIN: One of the major property owners -- or developers here, this was going to be a housing development area that kind of fell through, that big vacant field there was all going to be developed. And in fact, it was in the process of being developed, they put in a new sewer and everything, that's going to be a whole potential --

I know Mr. Lull (phonetic) doesn't want to build it no more, do you? He couldn't sell a lot there if your life depended on it. That was a housing development and now you're going to have a power line on top of the bad economy. So --

MR. EK: And then you did bring up the subject of undergrounding, undergrounding can be done with certain size lines. This is a 345-kilovolt line, it's a rather large line. Technology out there today kind of prohibits

1 undergrounding lines of this size primarily because
2 of the heat they generate. It creates construction
3 problems. One, you're going to have construction
4 undergrounding the line. Two, it's just the
5 technology to keep those lines cool. And there is a
6 financial cost, it is very expensive to underground
7 these lines.
8 At the same time, should there be --
9 should there be a problem in the line, should
10 something happen, it's much more difficult to find
11 the problem in an underground line than it is on an
12 above line. So if there are problems and power goes
13 out, there's going to be, one, a hard time finding
14 where that problem is. Two, additional construction
15 to dig up that line, may it be in a road, road
16 right-of-way, whatnot, so -- to fix that problem.
17 So at this point, it's really a
18 prohibitive-type thing, technology has not caught up
19 to that idea yet, to underground lines, especially
20 of this size. There are -- you know, they do
21 underground your distribution lines and so forth,
22 but when you get to these higher voltages, it's just
23 prohibitive.
24 And I think -- I don't know if Craig
25 wants to add to the undergrounding issue, or did

I --

MR. POORKER: (Shakes head.)

MR. EK: Okay.

MR. SCHNEIDER: How big is -- how big would the line be? I caught one about that big around (indicating) in Waseca probably 40 years ago, I ran into it with a dozer.

But your ground temperature is probably at 40 degrees, so I don't see where temperature would be that big of a factor, you know, if you're down there six feet -- and at least six feet.

MR. EK: Yeah. No. And I'm no electrical engineer and I wasn't talking about the size diameter of the line, I'm talking about voltages -- the kilovolts. The higher the kilovolts, the hotter the line.

And I guess I can't answer your question on whether you go down far and it's colder. I do know that -- you know, say a 115-kilovolt line, they're encasing those in concrete with -- liquid-filled concrete to keep them cool. And that's a 115, so we're talking about a 345 here in this case, which would be much hotter. And so that's the problem that they have when trying to underground -- underbuild -- underground a line of

this size. So --

Comments?

I think this gentleman had his hand up right here, actually. If you could spell, state your name.

MR. PLONSKE: Greg Plonske, P-L-O-N-S-K-E.

There's nothing really -- that really scares me, but I am concerned about the health. You know, he was saying 30 years ago they had studies. Well, 30 years ago cigarettes weren't as dangerous. I learned to respect electricity and standing in a stock train when I was this big (indicating) with a flailing minnow that my father used to go fishing all the time with, I held it onto an electric fence while I was standing in the water, it woke me up.

And like I said, I'm not afraid, but the health issues -- you know, I'm concerned. And we're, you know -- a lot of, you know, people are concerned about animals. I am an animal lover, to the contrary of what I just said. I'm just concerned. I'm 50 years old and this concerns me, being that close to a power line. You know, I don't need a -- like John was saying, you know, you look down to the east and to the west, I mean, they're

not long driveways anymore, they're right on the road. And it's just -- the power line's just going to be too close.

And I went on record this way because I am not good at going on records other ways. So --

MR. EK: Thank you, sir. Again, very good comment, and all I can say is -- reiterate that this is our opportunity, here at the State of Minnesota, to again take a look at that data and enrich it, go through it again, get the new data. I don't have answers for you, you know -- you know, proximity to homes and so on and so forth.

And I understand your concern and it's a valid concern. All I can say is, I'm glad for this opportunity to take a stronger look at this EMF issue, and you're not the -- this has come up quite a bit. So it is going to be a big issue and a strong issue that we will be taking a look at when considering routing this line.

MR. PLONSKE: Well, I have no other thoughts on where it should go, that's not my expertise, you know. It's just -- I guess the expertise that I have is maybe our farm and the farms close to me. Like I said, I'm an animal lover. I don't think that we should be -- you know,

we're on the same boat here, we're both concerned about the same issue and I don't think it should be an animal/human deal. But I know everybody has their concerns and I understand their thoughts, too.

MR. EK: Thank you. Good comment, sir.

Yes, sir, if you could spell and state your name.

MR. FOX: I'm Jim Fox, J-I-M, F-O-X. We live on 420 Doppy, and it's right next to the highway there.

In the proposed line that you have, it's going right through our property, right through the woods of our property. You asked about an alternative route, there is no alternative route up in that area. Your highway's on one side and you've got all the houses on the other side, so there is no alternative route.

MR. EK: There is, however, the alternative route to that preferred route.

MR. FOX: Yeah, that's correct.

MR. EK: Correct. So you know, I don't know where you stand, of course, you don't want the line, I'm sure. But a comment that you might have is, well, then I would prefer the alternative route over the preferred and that would be a valid comment

that we -- we take those -- have already received quite a few of those comments for areas along the western portion of the state.

MR. FOX: You asked on the map, here, several other people to draw in an alternative route if you don't want it in your property. Well, this section here (indicating), there is no other area to put it.

MR. EK: And just to let you know, you're not limited to that yellow area, you do know that you can have them zoom out on that map. That yellow area is just the route width, that's just what's being proposed. You can go well outside that yellow area and down a different road, or well north of that area down into -- you don't need -- you're not limited to that yellow shaded area by any means when you suggest an alternative.

That goes for everyone, even on the blue alternative route. So I understand what you're saying, you feel like it's kind of landlocked there, but you're not limited to go -- have it sweep down further, sweep up north, however you might see it better suit your needs.

Yes, sir. If you could state and spell your name.

MR. TUREK: Terry Turek, T-U-R-E-K. It's 34085 316th Street.

And if I'm hearing correctly, most people either don't want it at all or they'd rather see the alternative site. And I'm just wondering, kind of like -- it's sort of like a win/lose situation, so it's twofold. How often do these applications get denied so that means there would be no power line? Or if you have the facts as far as how often is the alternative route used rather than the preferred one when you do these alternative and preferred routes?

Do you have numbers to back up how many times they're denied in the first place, and number two, how many times is the alternative site used rather than the preferred one?

MR. EK: Yeah, that's a very good question. And to be honest with you, no, I don't have the numbers on whether a route's needed or whether a route's not needed. I don't know, there's so many that go through. And to honest with you, I'm relatively new so I can't look back at the history of --

MR. FOX: What about him?

MR. EK: Well, he's the Applicant, we're the state, we're the ones who look at the

applications and --

MR. FOX: Do they always get approved? In other words, are they rubber stamped right -- what I'm trying to get at, are they always approved, do they always get what they want, so to speak? Or is there -- I mean, is this worth it to question should a power line even be put through?

MR. EK: That's very important and I stated that over and over, the public comments that are received are very important. I can give you an example of a project I just did up north in the Brainerd/Baxter area. There was an outpouring of comments about folks that didn't want the line going up a certain county road where they live that was proposed by an applicant. Because of the public outpouring, because of the good, effective comment writing, they were able to suggest an alternative route that wasn't even in the application that suited their needs.

And because they wrote so many comments, wrote them well, the facts backed things up, the Public Utilities Commission took that into consideration and did, indeed, change that route. And this was three, four weeks ago, so public comments are very important and they will -- they

will have an impact on what you see today.

And there are many times where the -- what you see in the application -- the routes you see in the application look nothing like what the actual final route would be permitted as.

I can't give you percentages. I mean, that's really tough for me to throw those out right now, but they do change and they do change because of public comment. I can tell you that, that that is a fact.

Yes, sir -- I mean, yes, ma'am.

MS. LATZKE: I'm Marlyes Latzke, 31568 411 (sic), Le Sueur, Minnesota.

And yes, this power line does impact our property because we're farmers and there's generations of farmers that it's affecting. Well, what I want to know is, you commented tonight, you didn't do the impact if they need it (sic), the electricity. Well, this seems kind of funny to put our input into this when you don't even know if you need the electricity, is what I understood, and it might be something different.

And I think that's unfair to the public, to cram it down our throats and then, you as the -- putting this electric line in, you stand and sell

1 this electricity and make billions of dollars. And
2 we farm and -- townspeople have these lines going
3 past our place, and we really don't have a say. You
4 say, put it on another alternative route. Well,
5 we're not going to have it, but give it to somebody
6 else? That's really being very unchristian, too.
7 MR. EK: Well, first off, I work with the
8 state, so we're not building the transmission lines.
9 We're looking at the application, reviewing them,
10 and ensuring that they're good applications and
11 reviewing the environmental part of it.
12 When it comes to need, this is very
13 common in many, many dockets that go through, where
14 the need and the routing piggyback each other. So
15 as I said, yes, the route -- the need has not been
16 decided.
17 At the same time, this is not uncommon.
18 I understand what you're saying, that it's the horse
19 coming before the cart kind of situation. However,
20 it's been done in the past many, many times and, as
21 I said, in the next week they could decide if it's
22 needed, if it's not needed. If it's not needed,
23 this routing ends, there's no need for public
24 comment.
25 However, it's still important for you to

comment, because if they do decide it's needed, then your comments are put into this routing process so we can ensure that this is done correctly.

MS. LATZKE: You also stated that you came to all the townships, we happen to be on the board and you didn't come to us, and that was Kelso Township. So I know there was a letter sent out to the -- not every landowner and I think that's unfair to state you came to the township when you didn't.

MR. EK: I guess I'm not sure what you're referring to.

MS. LATZKE: Well, you said you came to a specific township and we happen to be in the route with a township. You did not come to our meetings. My husband's on the board and I'm on the board, I didn't see any of you coming to any of our meetings.

MR. EK: Tonight I did not state that, the state --

MS. LATZKE: He did.

MR. EK: Oh, well, okay. There you go, this is the Applicant and they -- this is separate from the state's process that we're doing tonight. They had their own meetings, and maybe Craig can address that.

MR. POORKER: Yeah. As the Applicant, we

1 attended a lot of meetings. What I meant to say was
2 that we did not attend every township, because there
3 are, like, 400 townships, I think, in our corridor.
4 But we did send a letter to every township saying to
5 them that if you want a presentation from us, give
6 us a call, send us an e-mail, and we will do that.
7 So any township that asked us, we were there.
8 We did, however, attend a lot of township
9 officers' association -- county township officers
10 associations, and we covered a lot of them that way.
11 But if anybody has ever asked us to give a
12 presentation to any civic organization, a township,
13 a city, a county, we were there to give a
14 presentation.
15 MR. EK: Yes, ma'am.
16 MS. REINHARDT: Vicki Reinhardt,
17 V-I-C-K-I, R-E-I-N-H-A-R-D-T.
18 You commented about how many people are
19 here tonight. I look around this room and I see
20 friends and family and relatives. All I can say for
21 all of us is, we don't want this here.
22 MR. EK: Thank you. And all I can say,
23 comment noted. Thank you very much.
24 Yes, ma'am.
25 MS. DEBRA ZIPPEL: My name is

Debra Zippel, Z-I-P-P-E-L. 32365 316th Street, Sand Prairie. I also I want to make a couple comments.

I appreciate this democratic process, but the reason we came to this lovely community was through eminent domain, where I sat through several meetings of promises by government and the band I got -- you know, you've got one year and you're out.

But my positive comment is, even though I'm worried about aesthetics, I'm worried about property value because it is near my house. I want people to take a look at the town of Henderson. I am so privileged to be a citizen of Henderson and have my children raised here.

I cannot believe the level of education that people have given me, the amount of caring, the amount of involvement in their community, the amount of farmers -- the way they respect the habitat. The grassroots program, the Ney Center was brought by -- by citizens, not by government, not by tax money. Friends of Rush River, again, grassroots.

Bucks Lake -- if you look at this town and if you went to different towns, you can see that these small towns are dying. Henderson is unique, Henderson took its assets and built itself up. And part of that is the tourism, and they've spent a

long -- a long and hard time trying to do this and with one fell swoop, you can destroy that. And in these economic times, when Mr. Obama, our president, stands up there and says, we need people to get involved, we need people at grassroots. This town has done that and I really want the government to take a look at this.

Thank you.

MR. EK: Thank you. That's a wonderful comment. As I said, it is -- it is the biggest meeting we've had and it's wonderful. Thank you for your comment.

Yes, sir.

MR. HERRMANN: My name is Tom Herrmann, H-E-R-R-M-A-N-N. I live at 23485 Stoppelmann Boulevard, which is located on the alternative route, which is in direct line of the Minnesota River crossing and Blakely Township.

If -- from what I gathered here, most of you people here are down here to save the eagles and all the birds and stuff. If we get that done, my wife Shirley and I live in direct line, I guess you would say. I guess one of my questions are, do you erect these power lines right over the top of the house? And from what I've gathered from everything

here, that's where it's going.

My next question is, I don't care about the value of my property, are you going to buy my property, because I will not live underneath a power line?

And I would like it on the record that I'm opposed to this.

MR. EK: Thank you, sir.

Craig.

MR. POORKER: All right. Thanks for your question. We are not going directly over anybody's house and that's why we have a 1,000-foot route corridor right now. That's why we proposed that, so that we do have flexibility and we do have room to jump a road if we have to. We are not going to have any homes within our right-of-way.

The question on will we buy you out? Minnesota statute does allow that, it's called Buy the Farm and that is a decision that you as a landowner can make if you do indeed want to do something like that. And it goes through the eminent domain process to acquire that, but that is an option for landowners, to buy out the contiguous property.

MR. EK: I just want to make sure your

question was answered.

MR. HERRMANN: Yes, it was.

MR. EK: Other questions, comments?

Yes, ma'am. Just a moment.

MS. ASLAKSON: My name's Jean Aslakson, A-S-L-A-K-S-O-N.

We moved out -- we lived in Chaska for 30 years, we moved out here five years ago. We live within 1,000 feet of the oil pipeline that just came through. Now they want to put this wire -- this power line on our property, and I am opposed to it. And I am on the alternate route and I just want you to know I am opposed to it and I'd appreciate it if you'd find another place to put it.

Thanks.

MR. EK: So -- just so I could clarify for the record, you're on the alternate route?

MS. ASLAKSON: Yup.

MR. EK: So you would prefer the preferred route or --

MS. ASLAKSON: The preferred route or somewhere else.

MR. EK: Okay.

MS. ASLAKSON: We're on the alternate.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: We're on the

alternate on Highway 25. On the back of that (indicating), we'll fill it out and send it in.

MR. EK: Great. That's what I was just going to suggest. Thank you. And then we do have your comment on record.

Yes, sir.

MR. SLATER: My name is Rodger Slater, I'm also on the alternative route and I have the pipeline, right across the road from their house.

So, a couple questions. First of all, I'm vehemently opposed to either alternative. Second of all, the easement is 150 feet; is that correct? Why does it to have be 150 feet? Now, according to your maps, the pipeline (sic) -- or the power line will run parallel, right along Highway 25 for half to three-quarters of a mile or more and it's going to be running alongside of the pipeline, would that be correct? So I have a 50-foot easement for the pipeline plus another 150-foot easement for the power line; is that correct?

MR. EK: I can't answer that right -- I don't know the exact area, I'd have to look on a map with you.

But just to answer your first question, the 150-foot easement for the power line, that's a

safety code standard. It's kind of a standard for a line that size, the National Electric Safety Code. And it's due to blowout and so forth and to keep trees out of the way and vegetation. And so, yeah, that's pretty standard, 150 feet for a line this size, 345 kilovolts.

With -- to answer your question, is it next to the pipeline? I would have to look at a map. Maybe if you want to meet me after the comment and answer period, we can take a look.

MR. SLATER: (Nods head.)

MR. EK: I could get Craig and we could find that out.

MR. SLATER: All I want to say is, also, that we're very much against it, the alternative route.

MR. EK: Thank you, sir.

Yes, ma'am.

MS. STRAUB: My name's Janet Straub, S-T-R-A-U-B. I'm from Tyrone Township and my address is 29031 320 Street (sic).

A couple things that I want to say that I've kind of thought about while we were doing this, we have the people from the alternate route, we have the preferred route people. It's sort of like we're

fighting back and forth, and I don't think that we should have to do that. I do agree with the woman back there, just because it's been done like this all the time where they do both of them together, it seems it creates a lot of stress, dissension, and that kind of thing, and maybe they should make a change on how they do their process.

The other thing that I want to get down is, I'm on that 320 Street road also, and not only are there places that are -- that you can see going both ways, there are houses that are, like, almost right next to the road, and I'd say at least a half dozen of those. So if you're going to keep them out of the urban area, you're not gaining anything by putting it where you have now put the preferred route.

So I want that on record. And thank you very much.

MR. EK: Thank you, ma'am. And your comment on the need and the routing, one going before the other, unfortunately, I don't rate that high --

MS. STRAUB: No.

MR. EK: -- and can't make those changes.

MS. STRAUB: Thank you.

MR. EK: But you do have it on the record.

MS. STRAUB: Yes. Someone should listen to it.

MR. EK: No. And to be honest with you, it has come up and it is quite an odd thing, I think, myself.

MS. STRAUB: And I guess, also, you're saying we're then the responsible people to say don't put it by my -- don't put it in my yard. But then I'm supposed to say, put it in your yard, and that's very unfair, unfair to all of us.

MR. EK: And I wholeheartedly agree, because that's kind of the position I'm in sometimes and I don't like it myself. But at the same time, as much -- it's up to you as much -- you know, if you do not want to impact your neighbor -- and I understand that, we're all Minnesotans, we don't want to -- we're good people, we don't want to affect our neighbors.

But at the same time, if you have a problem, you definitely need to point it out to us and maybe there is even a better solution that we might be able to look at with that so maybe it wouldn't affect your neighbors or yourself.

So if we don't receive -- what I'm trying to say is, if we don't receive anything, we won't know. And I'm sorry the burden's on you, it is. It just is. But that's the important part of the whole thing. If we didn't have these public comment periods, that would mean that the State's just going ahead and putting it wherever they like without comment from the people. So it is important and I understand -- I understand. It's no fun saying here, there.

Other comments?

Yes, ma'am. If you could please state your name.

MS. RIST: My name's Linda Rist, L-I-N-D-A, R-I-S-T. I live at 316th Street, right above Bucks Lake.

I did write a short comment here. It says, I live on a century farm dating back to the 1800's, which is located on the southwest corner of Section 23, Henderson Township, Sibley County.

Our bluff overlooks Bucks Lake, as does our neighbor's. We have feeders and we have established black squirrels with a project that started with only five in 2001 and they have even gone across the river as far as Pumpkin Hill.

We feel our area should not be the preferred route. This edge of Henderson Township has remained untouched and has provided to be (sic) a sanctuary for our birds. The large marsh area with the muskrat mounds have provided nesting for the Canadian (sic) geese and other waterfowl. The tall trees, some alive, are giving nesting and refuge. Some dead and dying are hosting the grubs and the bugs for the piliated woodpeckers and other birds. The brush -- oh, the brush that even houses the smallest of birds and the reeds that give red-winged blackbirds their perch. Our rookery is 11 nests strong. The tree is very high, overpowers most of the surrounding trees, giving way to the public view of the egrets and other small natural habitat without being disturbed.

Bucks Lake is located along Highway 93 next to the marshland. It is a place where you don't have to crawl under a fence or walk down a long path, parking and observing is right off the road. The enjoyment of viewing the birds, from small children to the aged adults, is something to be embraced and cherished, not disrupted by high-line poles.

The eagles were few 20 years ago, but now

that Bucks Lake has become a stopover, a feeding area, and the nesting for about seven eagles along the river valley -- seven eagle nests, I'm sorry.

What will happen if this area does become the chosen route? Will the eagles get fewer and fewer? Will our rookery stay established? Will our birds be disrupted by the magnetic fields, and will the birds fly into the high-line wires? This has been all considered in the planning of the -- this should all be considered in the planning of the route.

It's a scenic route along Highway 93, birdwatchers and passerbys (sic) enjoy the serenity of the lake and the birds. Henderson has promoted birding on their website and Henderson newspapers. Children are taken on field trips to observe the birds, buses have come to observe the eagles. For these reasons, we are asking you to please consider a route -- to reroute the Cap 2020 (sic) project to a different route.

We went through eminent domain also, and it's very hard to fight. And we moved back down here to our home farm hoping everything would stay. Now, Henderson Township has been very good with trying to keep a lot of that bluff the way it should

be. They've really considered everything that's down there, they do treasure it. And Henderson does take very good care, but Henderson is finally getting on the map to be a bird town, to be a natural, little, quiet town. And it's gotten to be very popular down here and everybody has showed up just because they care, and it shows they care. And I wish you would really consider this.

MR. EK: All right. It will be considered and I suggest you hand that in tonight.

MS. RIST: Pardon?

MS. EK: The comment, do you plan on handing that in tonight?

MS. RIST: Yes.

MR. EK: Okay. Great.

MS. RIST: I also have another question, that who will -- if the storm pond gets drilled into and something goes wrong, who is going to be responsible? The City of Le Sueur owns it, are they going to be up -- the ones for litigation?

I'm worried about the contamination of groundwater to both the wildlife and humans. The land's owned by the City of Le Sueur, you will have -- Cap 2020 will have the easement, will they be responsible for any litigation or will Le Sueur

be legally responsible?

MR. EK: That gets down to a legal question, but it would be -- it would be my understanding, if the Applicants are constructing a pole and do damage, it would be -- fall upon the Applicants. But we would get to that and that would obviously be a complicated question, certainly. Certainly. But that, I believe, is a comment you brought up in the ATF as well?

MS. RIST: Yes, it is.

MR. EK: Could I ask -- I had one of the citizens come up and ask if the folks around the back and sides could be a little quieter for their neighbors so they could hear the comments, please.

Yes, sir.

MR. GROTHE: Ron Grothe, G-R-O-T-H-E.

The comment was made that the lines are designed to stay away from towns and so forth, but yet the current line runs into the city limits of Le Sueur and the city limits goes quite a ways to the north with a lot of development on the north side of that. So my question is, why was it -- why is it developed so close to Le Sueur?

And it has been mentioned that possibly some communities would be trying to buy some of the

power off from this end and reduce their energy costs, and is that a true statement?

MR. EK: Craig.

MR. POORKER: I think that the question was, what purpose or what benefit is there for the communities, probably, along the transmission line?

MR. GROTHE: The current line -- I'll try to restate. Right now, the line goes right through the city limits of Le Sueur.

MR. POORKER: Yes.

MR. GROTHE: So the question is, if you're trying to avoid cities, railroads, whatever, then why was it designed to go across a very sensitive environmental area like Bucks Lake and then through the city of Le Sueur, the limits, where it is quite populated through there and the potential for a lot of population down the road is there?

And secondly, is there some connection to where a city could run a line off from that to save energy costs down the road, could that have some political implications in that siting process?

MR. POORKER: All right. Your first question was -- I've got to go backwards.

MR. GROTHE: City limits.

MR. POORKER: Okay. Why are we going through city limits? The city limits of Le Sueur are really unique because it is long and narrow. And so we do go through some it. And again, we tried our best to stay away from homes as best we could. So, you know, with -- the city has, I think, along the railroad tracks and between the highway, there's a strip through there, and then up Highway 169, also. So it was pretty difficult just because of the geography of the city of Le Sueur.

And then also the question is, what benefit is there for cities, existing cities, or existing electric utilities, the co-ops? We do propose to build four new substations along the project and also expand four other substations. And those are the off ramps, if you will, where we can unload some of the electricity as we go along.

An example is, Marshall has grown significantly in southwest Minnesota. We have voltage problems around the Franklin area where we propose to build a new substation. So those are not just off ramps, but also onramps for some of that other energy that may come on line.

And with Minnesota's renewable energy standard of 25 percent by the year 2025, I think

we're going to see a lot of opportunity for new generation on there that has to be clean, of course, or renewable, and these substations are going to serve that.

But can a city tap into this substation? Not necessarily. However, we will be able to serve our co-ops or distribution companies in there that may run some 115-kV lines to get to their distribution system. So there is some local benefit all along the project where we have the proposed substations.

MR. EK: Okay. We have a gentleman over here who's been waiting patiently that I have missed. If you could spell and state your name, sir.

MR. BOHLKE: Wayne Bohlke, B-O-H-L-K-E.

How many people in this room were around when we had the Highland Creek project versus the Rush River project, any of you? Oh, very interesting. Would you raise your hand if you were there? I'd like to see how many.

Okay. Let me tell you about that, that's when NSP wanted to put a plant down here, either on the Rush River or on Highland Creek, this was 30-some years ago. I think -- is it, Mr. Turek? I

1 think that's the question he was asking. Yes, you
2 can beat them, Mr. Turek, indeed you can. And what
3 they try to do is to divide you and get one
4 community or one section of the community against
5 the other.
6 Further, in this project, they bifurcated
7 it even further by saying, well, it hasn't been
8 approved by the Public Utilities Commission yet.
9 Now, why would you go through all this expense of
10 doing all of these meetings and all of this project
11 if you weren't real sure the PUC was going to
12 approve this thing?
13 So you really can't believe what they're
14 telling you. And it was the same when we fought the
15 Highland Creek project. And we got it moved out of
16 the Rush River project and they went up to Highland
17 Creek. Much to their surprise, some of us showed up
18 up there from this area, and they didn't get to put
19 their plant in the Highland Creek either.
20 So all we have to do is stick together.
21 The thing they have to prove and the thing you have
22 to make them prove is, why do you need this? And
23 why is it coming all the way through here and who is
24 it going to serve? It isn't going to serve you, I
25 can guarantee you that.

1 Now, the other thing they won't talk
2 about is, what's the transmission line losses?
3 Maybe this gentleman would like to address that,
4 coming all the way from out here and in. And I'm an
5 engineer, so I know what happens on transmission
6 line losses, they're huge, aren't they? Very huge.
7 Right? Yeah, they are.
8 But it's more profitable, easier for --
9 those companies got together so they have a big
10 conglomerate, basically, and now it's called a
11 co-op. They're co-oping because they can put a lot
12 of power together to run over the little people and
13 that's what's going on.
14 And these little people can raise enough
15 cane, just don't let them wear you out. That's what
16 they'll do, all these meetings, all this stuff going
17 on. Fortunately, we have people like Mr. Straub
18 here who leads the band in stopping this sort of
19 thing. And you need to fight it, you need to stop
20 it, and the only way you're going to do it is by
21 hanging in there with them all the way to the PUC
22 and make it clear that it's not going through.
23 MR. EK: Thank you for your comment, sir.
24 Additional comments? In the back here,
25 if you can spell and state your name.

MR. REINITZ: My name's Josh Reinitz, R-E-I-N-I-T-Z. I live at 30083 290th Street.

I just wanted to say I completely respect and know personally many of the people who are impacted by this line and I completely support you. I want to just come here tonight to make the State aware of -- we've all heard about Bucks Lake, I love Bucks Lake. I wanted the State to be aware of some ecological and wildlife areas on the east side of the river, too.

And I live out there and we are -- I'm personally -- my farm is about four miles north of the proposed route. But still, like you said, there's a chance that, you know, somebody could propose it well outside of the yellow areas.

But I just wanted to make people aware of the fact that there's the Ney Nature Center across the river, I sit on the board of that. Just below that, there's the old community of East Henderson, the railroad tracks going into Le Sueur, pristine river bluffs, and north of there, there is -- into Scott County there's all sorts -- up and down the bluffs for probably about five miles, there is DNR land, county land, and proposed heartland.

So -- and also, below -- below the Ney

Nature Center over here (indicating), there is also a large wetland, almost a small lake, that also has eagles. There's plenty of eagles on this side of the river, too.

And also, my farm is right at the confluence of Henderson Station Road, Pumpkin Hill Road, and 290th Street, they kind of branch off to there. It's heavily wooded, heavily -- there's a lot of deep, wooded ravines in there. I don't see it as being realistic that it could go through the ravines there, but I think people can do anything if they want to.

So just for the record, I would state that, stay away from these sensitive areas and the deep, wooded ravines and bluff lands.

MR. EK: Thank you. Thank you. That was a very good comment and thanks for pointing those out. So now we have those in the record to take a look at, I appreciate it.

Yes, sir.

MR. KOEPP: Brent Koepp, K-O-E-P-P. First name Brent, B-R-E-N-T. I live off 13150 245th Street, which is off of German Road in Blakely Township. And I have a lot of my neighbors here on German Road as well.

We're on the alternate route. And a gentleman, Tom Herrmann, just spoke, too, where it crosses the river -- which is going to go over his house, but there's already a crossing by Belle Plaine. But I guess the question we're kind of wondering is, why the line, you know, zigzags, you'd think it would stay out of the metro area, it would come south and then come into the metro area.

It just seems like we're affecting a lot of -- you hear Henderson, it's getting pretty close to Belle Plaine. And if you look at, like, Shakopee, how Shakopee expanded to the south, and guess what runs in that area? A power line, and look at it. And I guess the concern is, why are we so close to residential?

Same thing with the gentleman from Le Sueur. I understand follow the right-of-way, roadways, things like that, but that's where people live, too. So I'm going on the record that we oppose this alternate route.

Thank you.

MR. EK: Thank you, sir. Actually, I'm going to run over here, I think this gentleman's been waiting.

State and spell your name.

MR. AMBERSON: My name is Darrel Amberson, the last name is spelled A-M-B-E-R-S-O-N. I live at 32388 308th Lane in Henderson Township.

Maybe I'm missing something obvious here, and I wasn't here when the meeting started, but I don't understand that, if there is an increased need causing -- increased need for the electricity, which is the obvious part of the project, why are we, as a state, transmitting electricity across two-thirds of the state?

If that's really the need, and I suspect it's coming from the metro, why is there not a power plant being built closer to the metro rather than disrupting the lives of all these good people?

MR. EK: That's a very good question and, unfortunately, I work on the routing side of the whole issue, but I guess I can add a little on the need. A main focus of this project is wind power. And so you have areas in Minnesota -- and one of them is Buffalo Ridge in southwest Minnesota, it's a rich, rich wind resource. Throughout the country, it's well known for its wind resource.

There's a lot of wind generation companies coming on line in that area, and in order

to get that wind on to the transmission grid -- that's what this proposed power line would do, it would allow for a transmission highway from those high-wind areas -- high resource wind (sic) areas to get onto a transmission line, to hit those populated centers in Minnesota, Marshall, all the way to the Twin Cities and so forth.

But I'm not on the need side, so that's about the best I can explain when it comes to that. So --

MR. AMBERSON: The gentleman from the -- over here, just mentioned earlier an increased need in the Marshall area, why don't we use the wind power energy down in that area and then put a power plant closer to the metro area? I suspect that the truth of the matter is that it has more to do with bureaucracy, regulation, and being easier to build power plants in South Dakota.

Why instead, don't we as a state, or entities, go to the legislature and address the legislative regulatory issues and do what makes more sense for our population, instead of, again, putting all these people through this?

MR. EK: Good comment. Good comment, sir.

Additional comments, concerns?

Yes, sir.

MR. SCHULTZ: Yes. My name is Derek Schultz, I live in Blakely and Belle Plaine Townships.

The group is doing a pretty good job here of addressing a lot issues. One issue that I have a concern with is, they say that they need a 150-foot corridor for this power line for a safety factor, but in both the primary and alternate routes you have chosen, you choose to run the power line with another utility, an oil line. My past experience with petroleum, petroleum products and electricity really don't mix too well.

MR. EK: Yeah, that's a good question.

Craig, do you know, are -- routing along -- sharing easements with the pipeline?

MR. POORKER: Sure. I'm not sure where exactly we're paralleling the petroleum line, the MinnCan line, right? Is that the one you're referring to?

MR. SCHULTZ: (Nods head.)

MR. POORKER: We don't follow that very often. But as far as just -- it's a small stretch and I believe it's probably on a cross-country

stretch, not along a roadway.

But the petroleum -- they do have concerns with corrosion on their pipes, it's not explosion. That's not what it is, it's -- I don't know that it's even explosive.

But they do have concerns with grounding and induced current underground and things like that. That is an issue that does have to be dealt with the petroleum company and has to be taken care of and mitigated before we could place something alongside the petroleum pipeline.

MR. SCHULTZ: So we've done a lot of nature studies and whatnot, but have we really done very many studies where we're mixing these utilities in that narrow of a corridor? Because there are -- like I said, it's not just a -- you know, a quarter-mile, it's, you know, probably a mile or two or whatever, where these lines -- where this power line would share the same corridor and they're right on top of each other.

MR. POORKER: Right. And that's something that we have to negotiate with the petroleum pipeline company. I don't know that our easements could even overlap. I think there has to be some distance between them, that's something we'd

have to work out with the petroleum company. Whether or not you can even overlap easements and be that close, I'm not sure.

But they do have -- there are some studies that have been done, but I'm not sure about that distance that has to separate the two.

MR. EK: May I suggest, then -- well, I guess what you're suggesting is something to take a look at -- for us to take a look at at the State is, is that -- the pipeline right-of-way and the safety concerns with a transmission line right-of-way and overlap or paralleling and what is the safety issues when it comes to that. And that's something that should be studied in an EIS, correct?

MR. SCHULTZ: Right. Have we had enough research, or is Murphy's Law going to rule?

MR. EK: Okay. Thank you very much, sir, very good comment.

Additional comments? Let me run around and I'll circle around here.

MR. McKAY: My name's Bruce McKay, that's M-C-K-A-Y. I live at 29976 290th Street.

And my comment is in regards to the -- I guess a few times tonight there's been comments made that one of the marketing schemes for pushing this

through is the fact that it would be mainly, if not totally, used for transferring wind turbine power from the South Dakota area to the Twin City area. But if you look at the documents, there's nothing in there that says that it's going to be limited to that.

And I don't know if anybody's aware of that or not, but I became aware of it last week. And I was told on August 26, 2008, at the New Prague public meeting that it was going to be restricted only to wind turbine-generated power, so this came as a surprise to me last week.

And I guess I need to go on the record to say that I believe it should be restricted to only that. So that's my comment.

MR. EK: That's a good comment. And it was brought up earlier, and the fact is, yes, this transmission line, that's one of the components is to get the wind energy. But, however, at the same time, I think I told folks this before, that, you know, transmission lines, they can't -- they can't shut off different types of energy, segregate what's going to be transmitted through a line.

So you can't necessarily say we're only going to have wind on one line or we're only going

to have hydropower only or we're only going to have coal. It's wherever the energy's coming from, wherever it's going. And this transmission line would -- you know, depending on what's moving along that line, it could be coming from a number of those sources.

MR. McKAY: Yes. I understand that, but my comment is more aimed at preventing connection to the Big Stone II cogeneration or some other typical generation out in South Dakota where the regulations are less restricting and so forth.

MR. EK: Yeah. That's come up a lot through phone calls and e-mails, and to my understanding, it has nothing to do with the Big Stone II power plant, this transmission line project.

MR. McKAY: So does that mean there's a guarantee that that's not going to happen?

MR. EK: That what's not going to happen?

MR. McKAY: That those cogeneration plants will not be routing with this transmission line?

MR. EK: I guess I can't say that, because this transmission line does hook into the White substation, which is in Brookings, South

Dakota. And I do believe there is a line that would come down from the Big Stone into the White power substation. So again, I can't say -- you know, power lines don't segregate what power can be on the line. So yeah --

MR. McKAY: The other example of this is, you referred to the wind turbine farms that are in southwest Minnesota already, and the lines that serve that area do have a restriction in their permitting that says that it must be just wind turbine-generated power. And something similar to that could be part of this, but it's not at the current time. So I believe without that restriction that the power line should be not allowed to go.

MR. EK: Thank you, sir.

If you could state and spell your name.

MS. WEISZ: Hi, my name is Karen Weisz. The last name is W-E-I-S-Z.

And I'm new to this. I'm here because of my mother's property, power of attorney for her. And I've heard a lot of angry, frustrated people tonight and I know a lot of people have left. And maybe this is simpler, in my mind, than it should be, but for the record, I think we should have a show of hands for anybody who is not opposed to

these power lines, so that they can actually show that this is something that we value. And like I said, it's just a matter of record, again. But a lot of people have signed in, if this many people have shown up and want to voice their opinion, anyone not opposed should raise their hand now and then we'll count how many people want these power lines. And you know, this is a beginning, I guess.

Thank you.

MR. EK: Thanks for your comment. It's a good idea. Unfortunately, I don't think we can sit and count hands for a vote.

MS. WEISZ: I don't think you'll have any.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Nobody raised their hand.

MR. EK: There we go, then we have it on record that nobody raised there hand.

MR. SHIBLY: Count me in for raising my hand.

Levon Shibly, 34637 306th Street. I live just out on the other side of Rush River Park. The line's going to be going probably about a half mile or so to the west of my place.

I'd like to think of myself as an

environmentalist and I don't particularly care for power lines. I don't think they're beautiful things and I have the benefit, possibly, of being an engineer and working with electricity and heavy-duty magnets, as a matter of fact, also. So I know, you know, what basically most of the risks are that we face with electrical fields and magnetic fields. And while there is a risk, when you compare it to most of the other things we face in our life, it's probably minimum (sic).

I have concerns about where the power line's going to be going. I think that this is a good thing that we have democratic processes like this where we get together and address issues like whether or not it should go through Bucks Lake, or whether it would be better to take the northern route and go through the already existing route by Belle Plaine.

But I use electricity, I think it makes our lives 100 percent better -- or thousands of percents better than it would be if we didn't have electricity. And there's costs that go with it and things like this power line are one of the costs. So we have to get together as a democratic society and deal with these issues, and that's what this is

and that's why I'm here.

MR. EK: Thank you, sir.

Any more comments?

Yes, sir.

MR. KACZENMEYER: Mark Kaczenmeyer, and I'm north of Le Sueur in -- K-A-C-Z-E-N-M-E-Y-E-R.

And my concerns are the power line coming up through a residential area or the growth district out in Le Sueur. I can't understand why Le Sueur would even tolerate you coming through something that is their growth district there. Not only that, the heavy flyways that are up in there, Scott, do you know about that?

And I can't understand why Le Sueur would even want you up in there with your power lines, because that is their future growth up in there for housing and it's been designated that way.

Thank you very much.

MR. EK: Good comment, sir. And we have yet to receive a comment letter from Le Sueur, but I'm sure we will be receiving -- and as Dolores had said earlier, we will be in consult with DNR, U.S. Fish and Wildlife, the Board of Soil and Water Resources. All those entities, they're required to work with us and provide us that information to

answer that question, why is it going through -- or why is it proposed to go through Le Sueur? And that's something we'll do in the EIS.

But that's a very good question. Thank you.

MR. SCHNEIDER: That would also affect the President's landing area, the President of the United States.

John Schneider, again. The President of the United States, George Bush, landed on his property when he came to visit us down here.

MR. EK: So the power line would get in his way?

MR. SCHNEIDER: (Nods head.)

MR. EK: He's no longer president.

MR. SCHNEIDER: Well, I'm in contact with the new man, we'll try and bring him in.

MR. EK: Additional questions?

Yes, sir. If you could spell and state your name.

MR. LEITCHMAN: Dave Leitchman, L-E-I-T-C-H-M-A-N, Aberdeen Avenue in Scott County.

You say you're here tonight to listen to the comments from all the people. I would like to know why the PUC and your department has fought to

have a task force formed in every county that's affected by the line? You want to hear our comments, but yet we can't form task forces in every county, they won't allow it. They only allowed one task force in Dakota County and you can't approve -- got one in Scott County to listen to us.

And maybe you should tell when the next meeting is on the task force, maybe some of these people would like to come to the meeting because the task force is what's going to decide a lot.

This is just to appease everybody, this meeting here. They want to listen to us, nothing's going to get done with this meeting. We need to go after them, we need the task force, and we need to change the eminent domain laws. That's what's got to done.

But maybe you could tell them about the task force.

MR. EK: Yeah. I'm afraid everything you said was very far from the truth.

MR. LEITCHMAN: No. No. No. No.

MR. EK: Yes, sir. All the comments that are received by you citizens are just as important as anything -- anything we receive during a task force. So don't let this gentleman lead you to

1 believe that your comments aren't heard. It's very
2 important, that's why we hold these meetings.
3 As for not having task forces, the PUC
4 gave us, the Office of Energy Security, the right to
5 assemble some task forces. We've assembled two task
6 forces, one in the Lake Marion to Hampton area,
7 which is I guess between Elko New Market and
8 Hampton. The other one is the -- from here,
9 Henderson, Minnesota River crossing, to New Prague.
10 At that same time, we sent out canvassing
11 letters to all the counties, all the townships, all
12 the large cities, all the regional development
13 commissions. Unfortunately, we did not receive the
14 correct response or the -- to put out task forces in
15 those areas.
16 Statutory rules require we need certain
17 individuals from local government units to be on
18 task forces in order to create them. Fortunately,
19 down here in the Cities, it was overwhelming. We
20 had the task forces completely filled with all the
21 members that we requested. Out in the western
22 portion of the state, we did not receive the
23 required number of local government officials that
24 wanted to have a task force put together.
25 And again, your comments -- the task

force does not decide this -- it is not the only entity that decides where this project goes or where it's routed or what issues are important. The task force helps and assists, and mainly it's the local government units that are part of that task force that we got to earlier that will help us to define their future growth, their comprehensive plans, and what they plan to do in your areas so we can manage this route to coordinate with their future plans.

So I do suggest, put in your comments. They're very important, just as important as anything the task force puts out.

MR. LEITCHMAN: It's a bunch of bull. You know, I'm telling you, you did not allow a task force to be formed in every county. You say you notified everybody, you didn't notify them that they wanted to have a task force. You know, you wouldn't allow a task force. There should be one in every county that the line goes through, you should be listening to the people.

When you leave tonight, what do we got here? You know, how are you going to fight this? We've got a task force meeting next week here in Henderson. What is it, Thursday? Thursday, you know, come to it. This has got to be fought all the

way. No. It's going to be over in the old school building, over there. Next week, next Thursday.

The City of Le Sueur wants it, they -- yeah, at the task force, they want it to come through. You know, they've got a corridor.

MR. EK: Thanks for your comments, sir.

Additional comments, questions?

Yes, sir.

MR. WILLIAMS: Brian Williams, 33315 322nd Street, Le Sueur.

Just one question I have as far as, have they looked at -- the City of Le Sueur's done a lot of improvements here recently to the airport, have they looked at the flight pattern, how that might affect the flight pattern and all of the long-range plans for the airport?

MR. EK: That's something that we'll look at with the City of Le Sueur and MnDOT, FAA, and figure out the issues when -- those issues that are involved and that will be included in the EIS.

And Craig, do you know anything about the airport and negotiations with them?

MR. POORKER: Not that particular airport, but that's information that we found very useful and got a lot that information from our open

houses and our work group meetings. Because there are a lot of airstrips out there, too, that are owned by private landowners that we didn't know about. So we got that from the open houses and from the work groups and we do have to be in contact with the FAA and with MnDOT about all the airports -- any airports and what their plans may be.

MR. EK: Thank you, sir.

Additional comments, concerns, alternatives you'd like to raise?

Well, with that, then, I suggest you grab a comment form in the front or any of the forms that have our information on them. And I do suggest you submit comments.

Again, the comment period closes April 30 and, again, I told you the ways you can submit comments: Mail, e-mail, online, also give me a call and we can work that through. You're also more than welcome to submit a comment directly to us tonight and we can put that in the record.

So, thank you.

(Meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.)