



October 27, 2009

Dear Landowner,

You are receiving this letter because your property may be directly or indirectly affected by route alternatives for the proposed Monticello to St. Cloud 345 kilovolt (kV) transmission line project. The route alternatives will be evaluated in an environmental impact statement (EIS), which is being prepared by the Minnesota Office of Energy Security (OES).

This letter provides you with information on the transmission line project, the route permitting process, and future opportunities to participate in the process. We encourage you to familiarize yourself with the proposed project, sign up for the project mailing list, and participate in the route permitting process.

Project

Xcel Energy and Great River Energy filed a route permit application on April 8, 2009, under the full permitting process of the Power Plant Siting Act (Minnesota Statute 216E). The application was accepted as complete by the Commission on May 13, 2009. Under the full permitting process the Commission has one year from the date the application was accepted as complete to make a decision on the route permit.

The applicants are proposing three possible routes for the transmission line, a preferred route and two alternate routes. The project also includes the construction of a new Quarry Substation and the expansion of the existing Monticello Substation. Landowners along those routes were notified at the time of application.

Process

The route permit application is subject to environmental review in accordance with Minnesota Rules 7850.1700 to 7850.2700. The first step in this process was developing the scope of the EIS for the project. The scoping process, which has already been completed, has two primary purposes: (1) to identify issues that are important to communities along the proposed routes for study in the EIS, and (2) to solicit suggestions for route alternatives, beyond those proposed by the applicants, to study in the EIS.

The OES held two public meetings on July 2, 2009, to gather public input on the proposed project and routes. At these meetings, the public had the opportunity to propose route alternatives for consideration in the EIS. Comments were also accepted outside of the public meetings through letters and emails.

An advisory task force comprising local government officials also met over the course of three months. The group recommended alternative routes that have been included in the scope of the EIS. Property records indicate you are located near, or own property on, one or more of these route alternatives. These new route alternatives are described in the October 9, 2009, EIS scoping decision for this project.

Maps of the applicants' proposed routes and of the route alternatives identified during the scoping process are available on the Commission's website at <http://energyfacilities.puc.state.mn.us/Docket.html?Id=19957>. Maps of the route alternatives are attached to this letter.

A draft EIS is currently being prepared by the OES; it will evaluate the potential environmental, economic, social, and human impacts for all of the route alternatives. The draft EIS is scheduled to be issued in January 2010. Once issued, OES staff will hold a public meeting to gather comments and questions on the draft EIS. Comments and responses will be incorporated into a final EIS.

In addition to these public meetings, there will be public hearings conducted along the proposed routes in early 2010. These hearings will be conducted by an Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) from the Minnesota Office of Administrative Hearings. Anyone may speak at the public hearings, present evidence, ask questions of the applicants and OES staff, and submit comments on the proposed project. The ALJ will make a recommendation on a route permit to the Commission. A decision on the route permit by the Commission is not expected before late Spring of 2010.

Participation

Information about this project and the route permitting process is available on the Commission's website at <http://energyfacilities.puc.state.mn.us/Docket.html?Id=19957>, and on the eDockets website at <https://www.edockets.state.mn.us/EFiling/search.jsp> (enter the docket number year "09" and number "246").

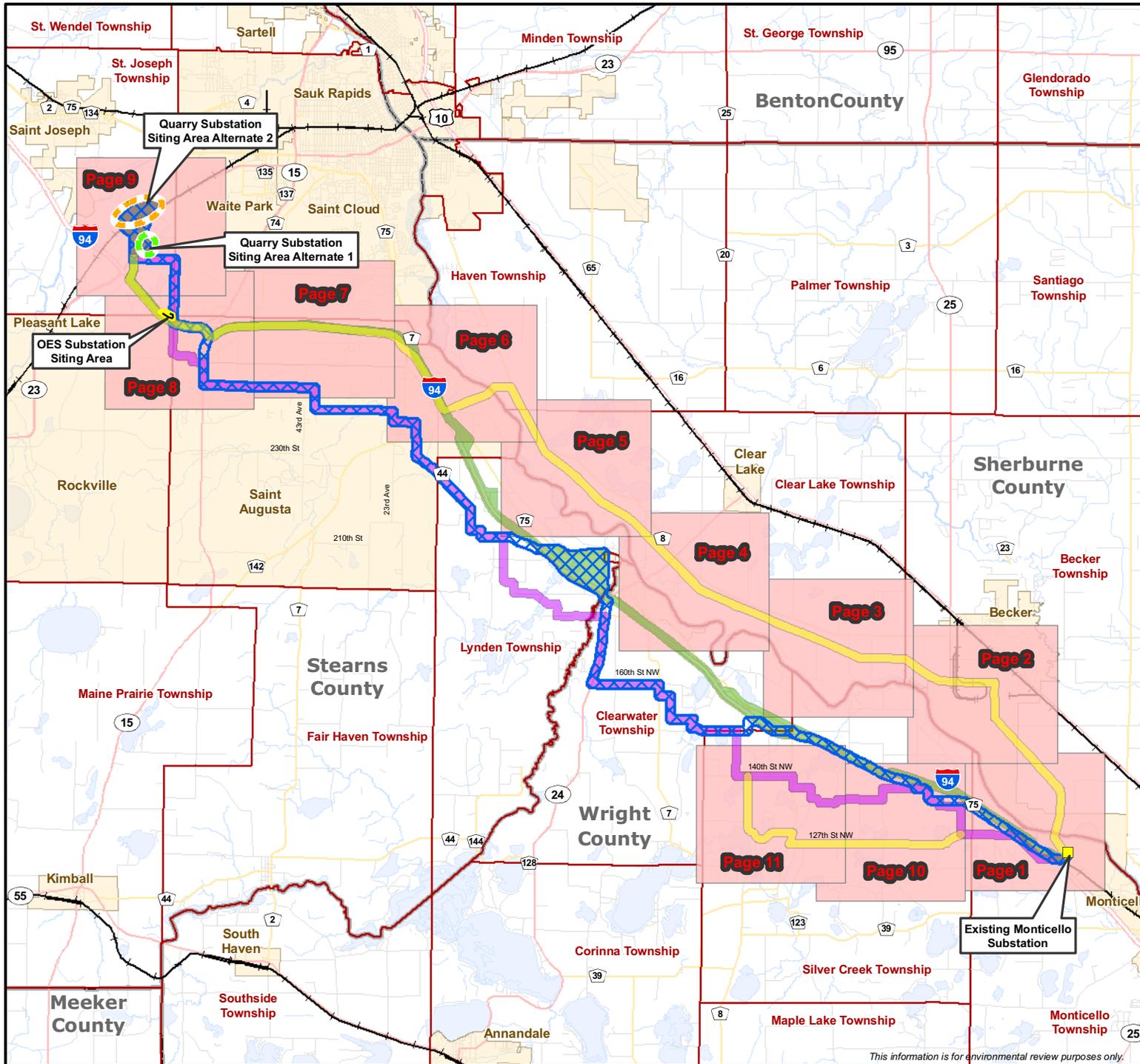
Notice of public meetings and public hearings will be published in local newspapers and mailed to persons who register their names on the OES project mailing list. Persons interested in adding their names to the mailing list for this project should contact the OES project manager or public advisor, or register online at: <http://www.energyfacilities.puc.state.mn.us/#MailingLists>

If you have questions or if you would like further information, please contact:

David Birkholz, Project Manager
(651) 296-2878
david.birkholz@state.mn.us

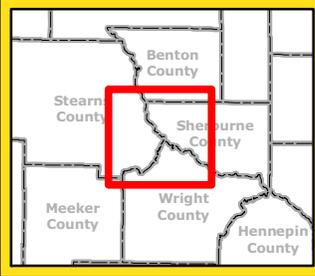
Raymond Kirsch, Public Advisor
(651) 296-7588
raymond.kirsch@state.mn.us







office of
energy security
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Legend

Office of Energy Security (OES) Added Route Segments and Substation Siting Area

- OES Route Segment
- OES Substation Siting Area

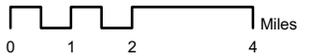
Applicants' Proposed Routes and Substation Siting Areas

- Preferred Route
- Alternate Route A
- Alternate Route B
- Quarry Substation Siting Area Alternate 1
- Quarry Substation Siting Area Alternate 2

- Municipal Boundary
- Township Boundary
- Lakes
- Streams

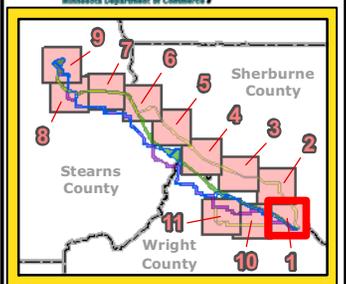
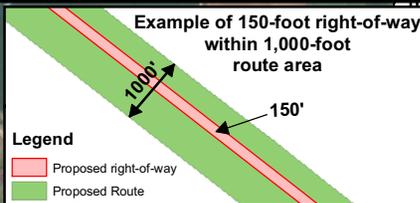
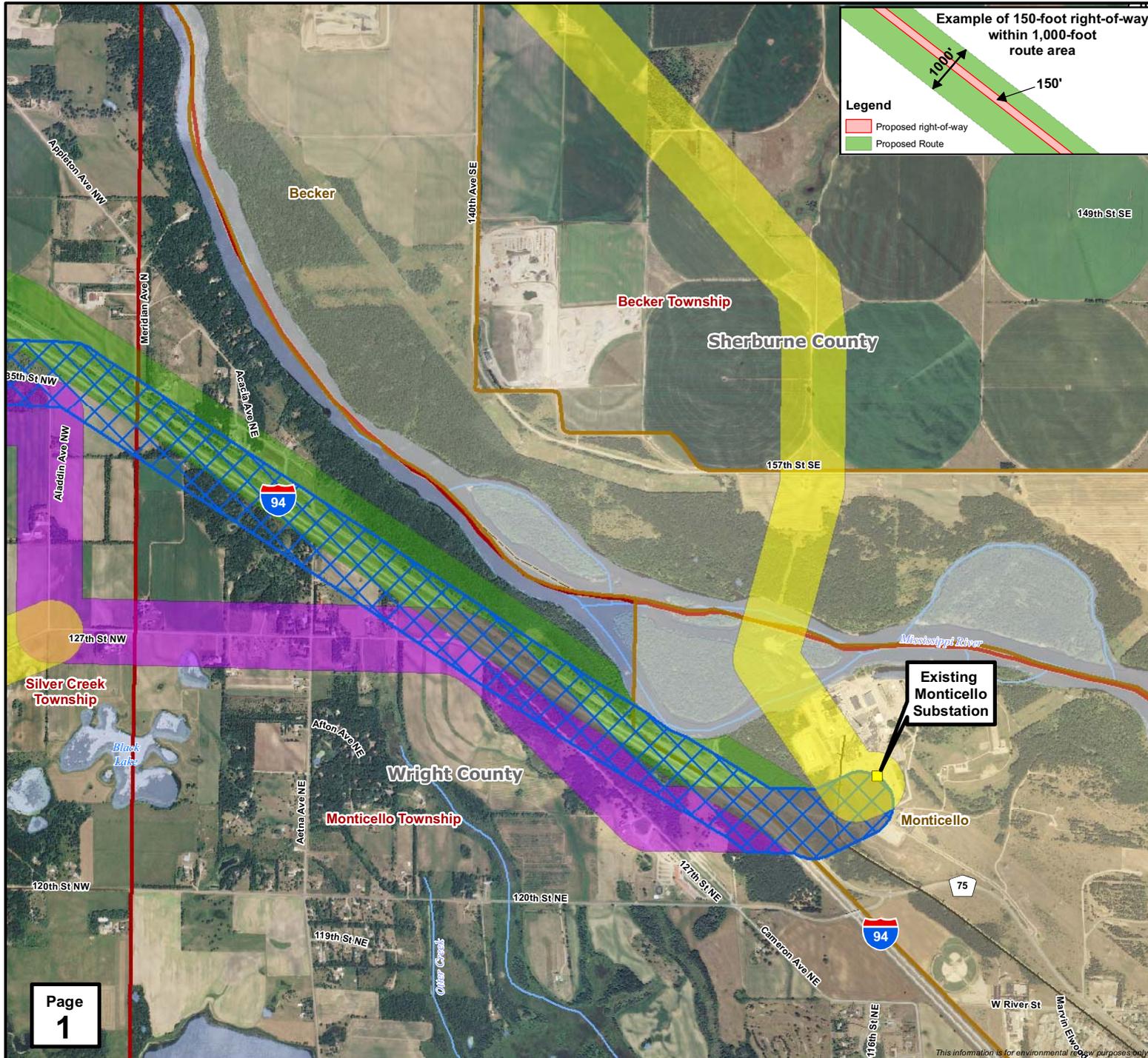


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Additional Route Segments Added by Office of Energy Security

Monticello to St. Cloud 345 kV Transmission Line

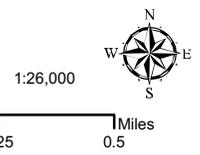


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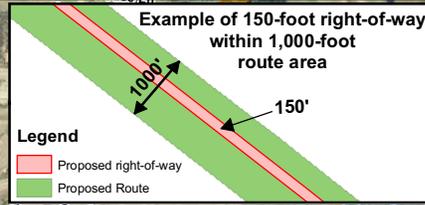
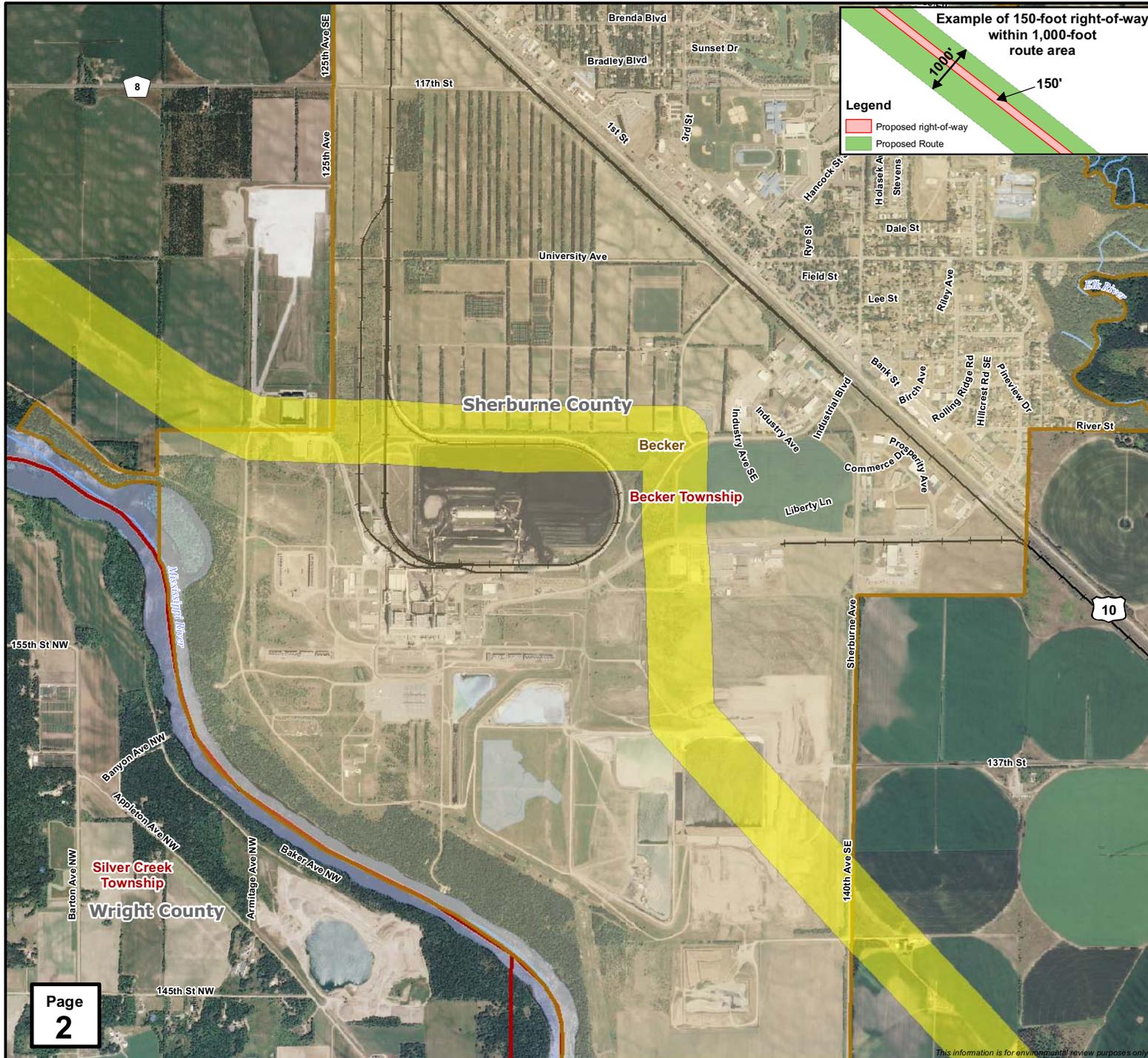
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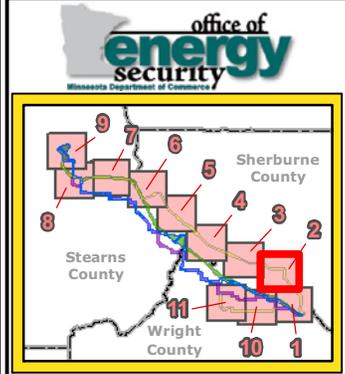
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Monticello to St. Cloud
345 kV Transmission Line



Legend

- Proposed right-of-way
- Proposed Route



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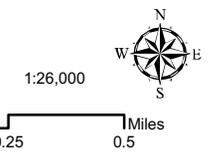
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Applicants' Proposed Routes and Substation Siting Areas

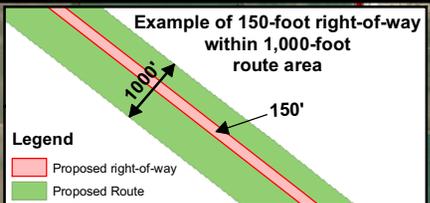
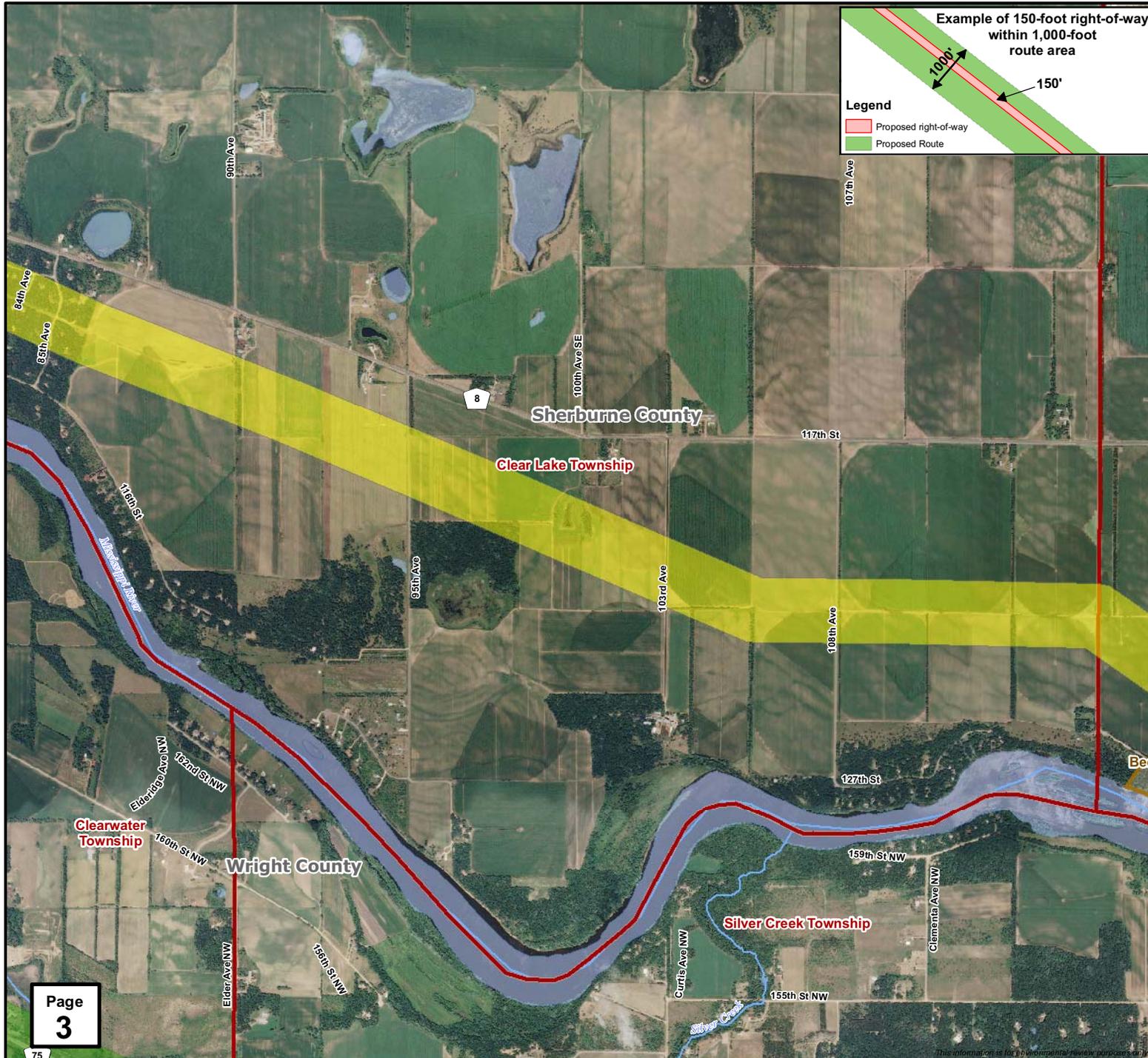
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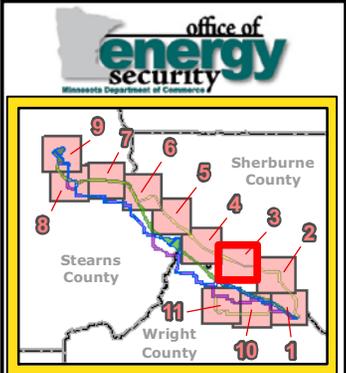
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**Monticello to St. Cloud
345 kV Transmission Line**



Legend

- Proposed right-of-way
- Proposed Route



Legend

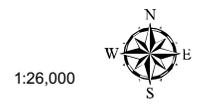
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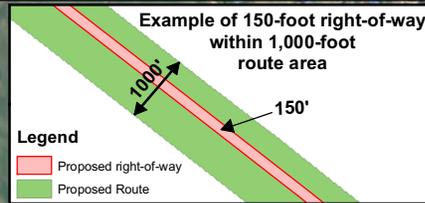
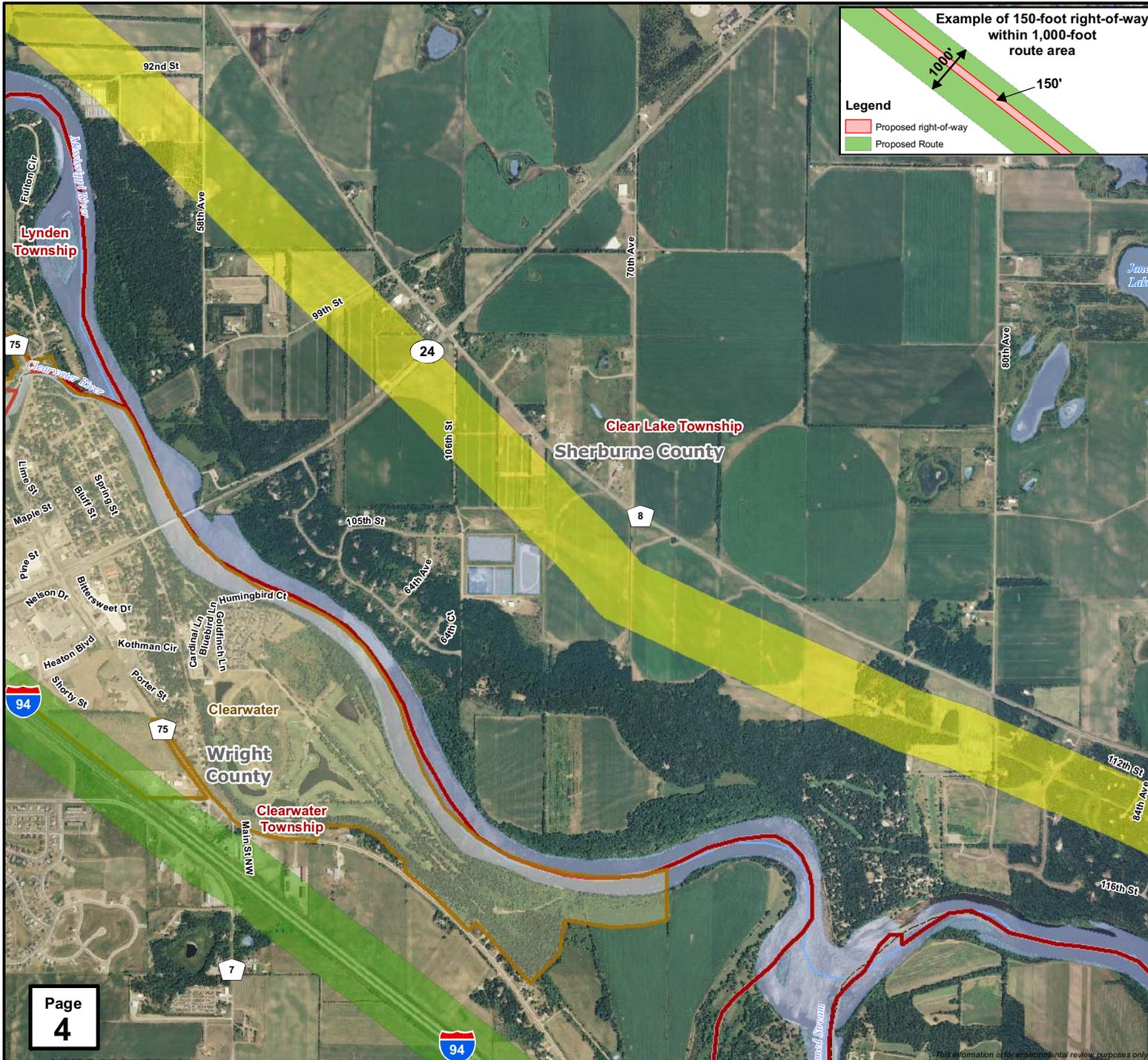
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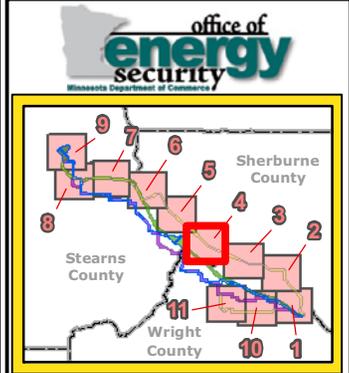


Additional Route Segments Added by Office of Energy Security

Monticello to St. Cloud
345 kV Transmission Line

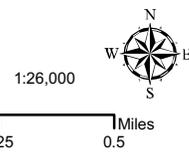


Legend
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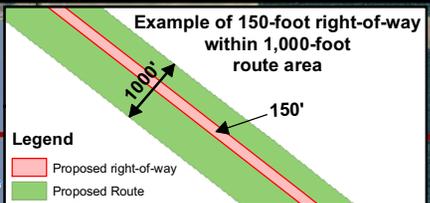
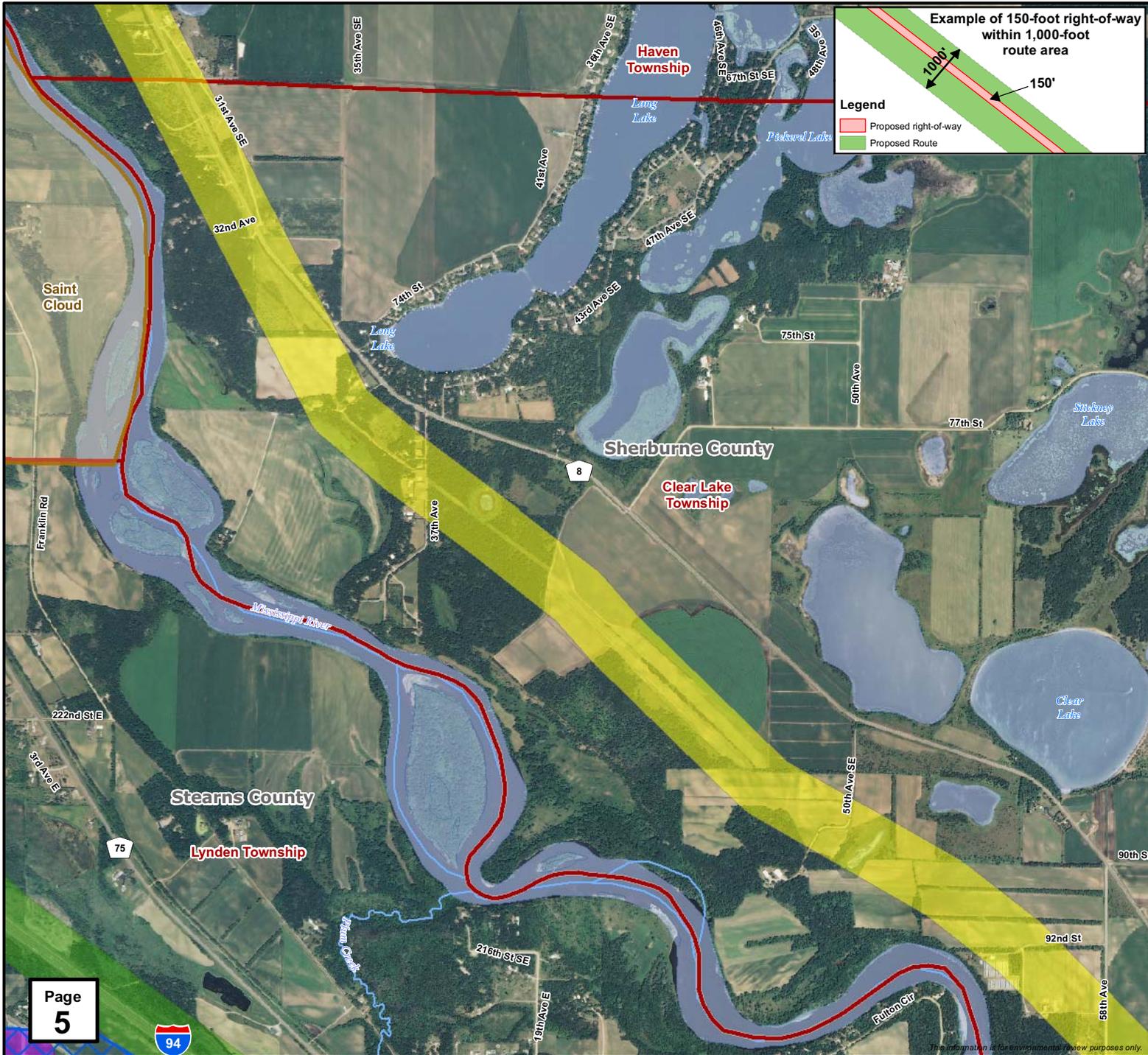
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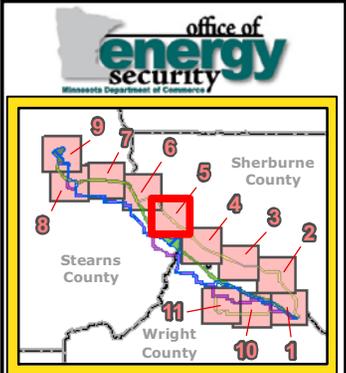
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Monticello to St. Cloud
 345 kV Transmission Line



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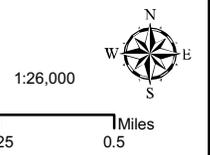
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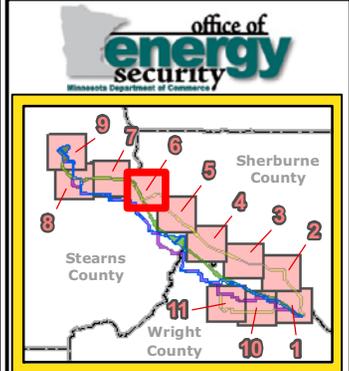
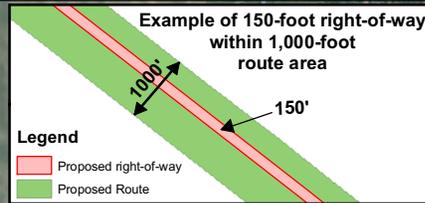
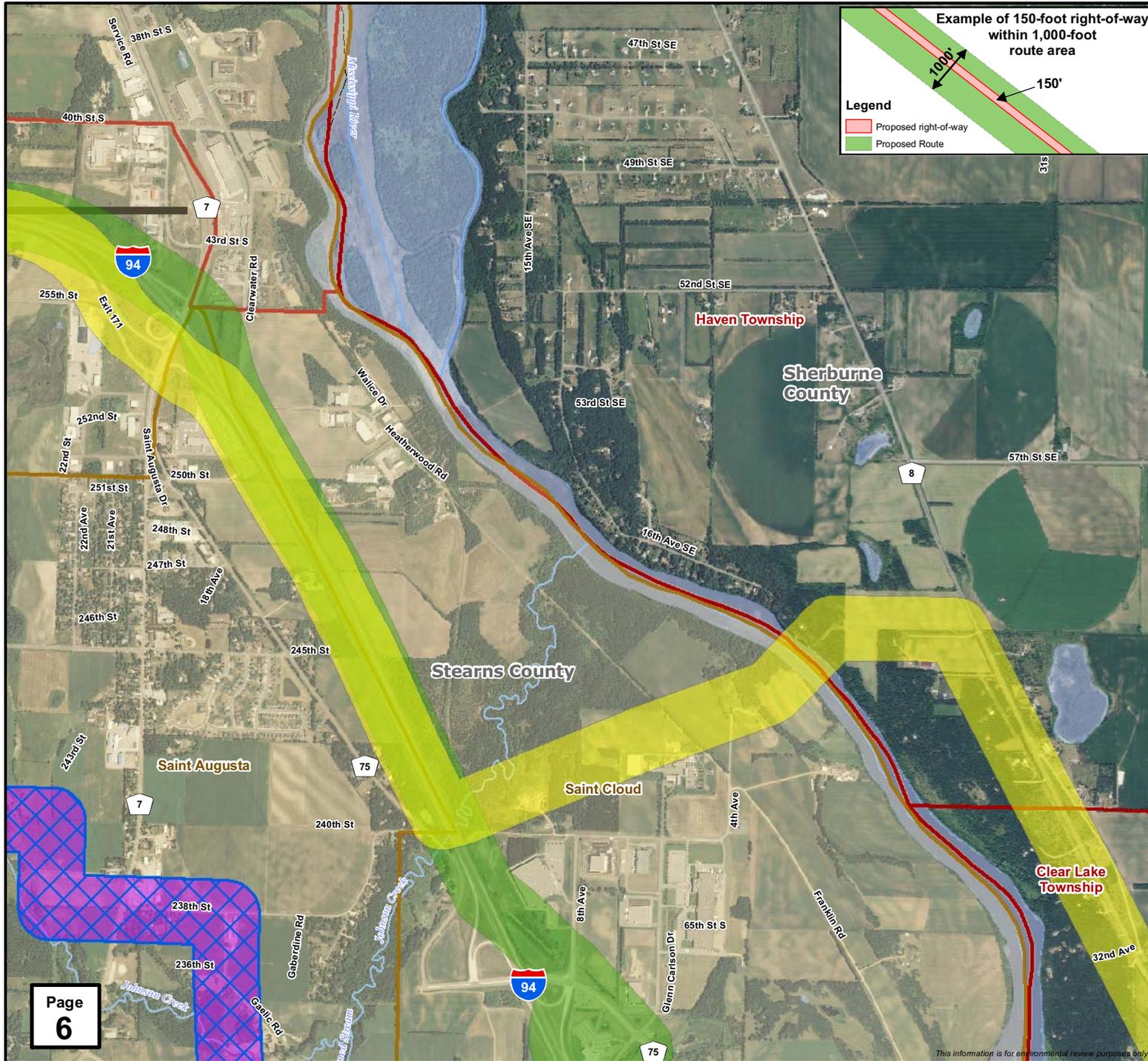
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Additional Route Segments Added by Office of Energy Security

Monticello to St. Cloud
345 kV Transmission Line





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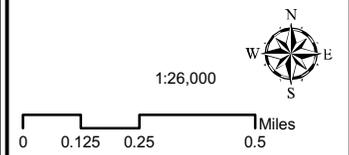
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Municipal Boundary

Township Boundary

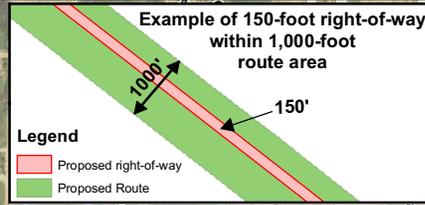
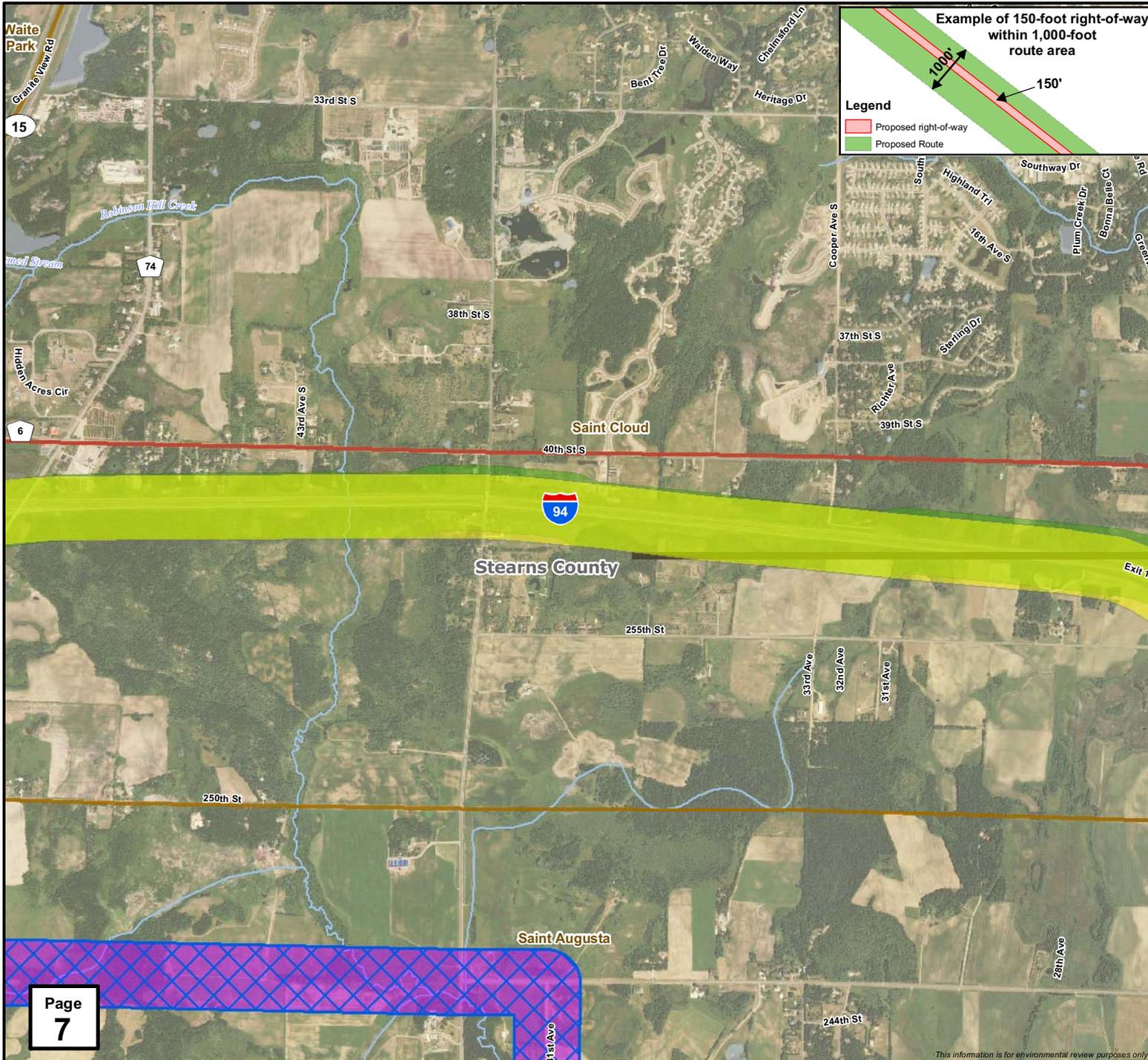
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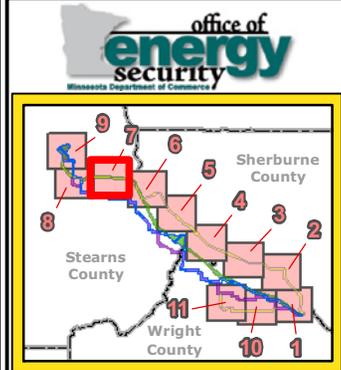
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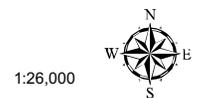
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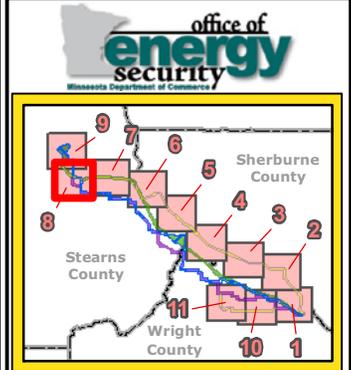
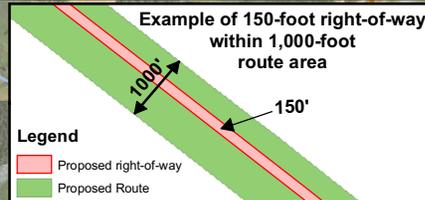
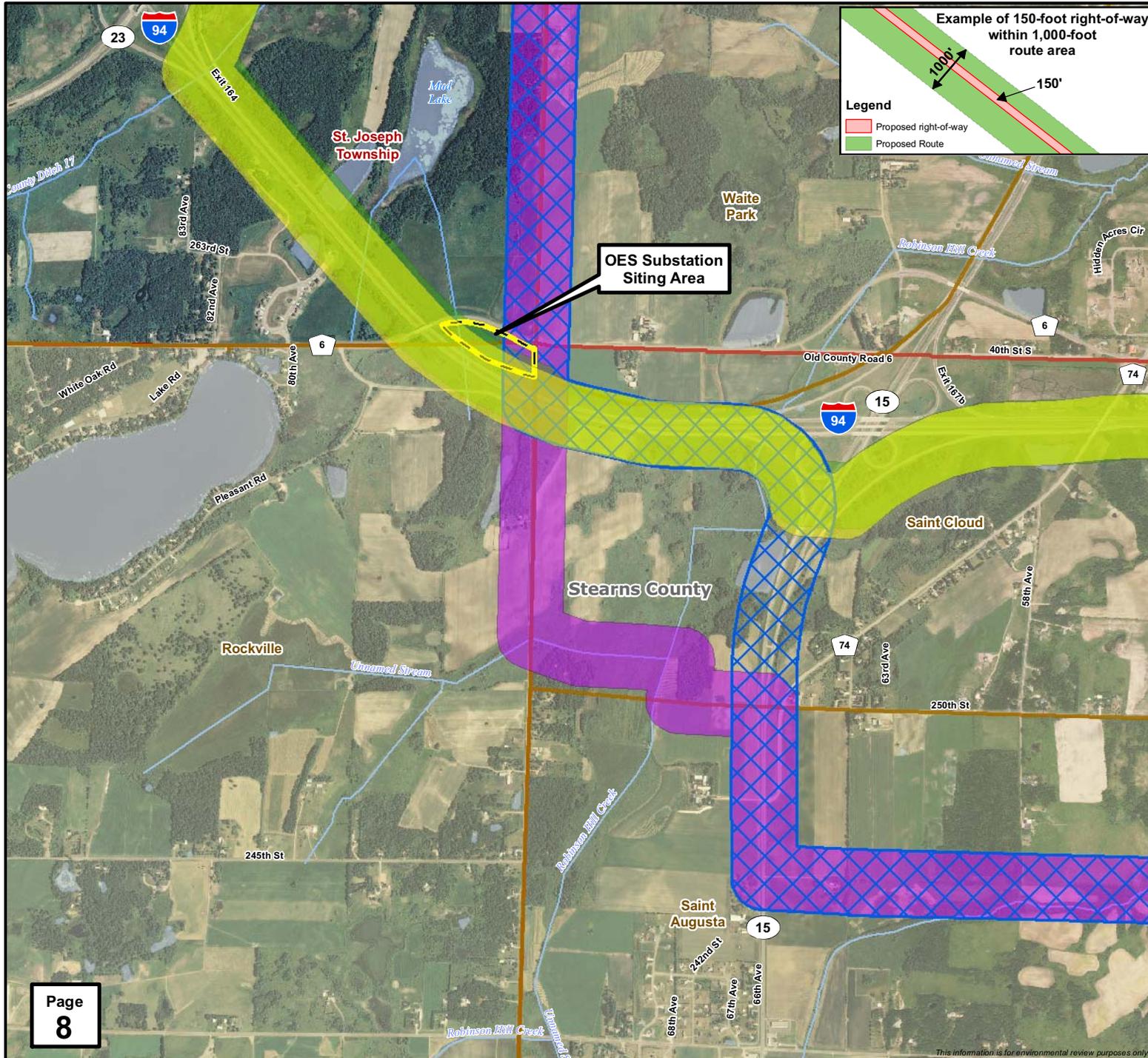
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- Other Features:**
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Additional Route Segments Added by Office of Energy Security

Monticello to St. Cloud 345 kV Transmission Line

This information is for environmental review purposes only.



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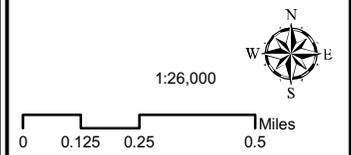
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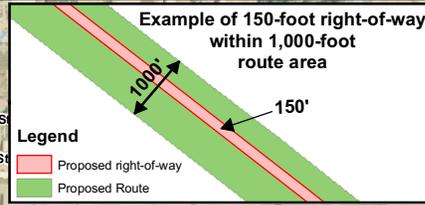
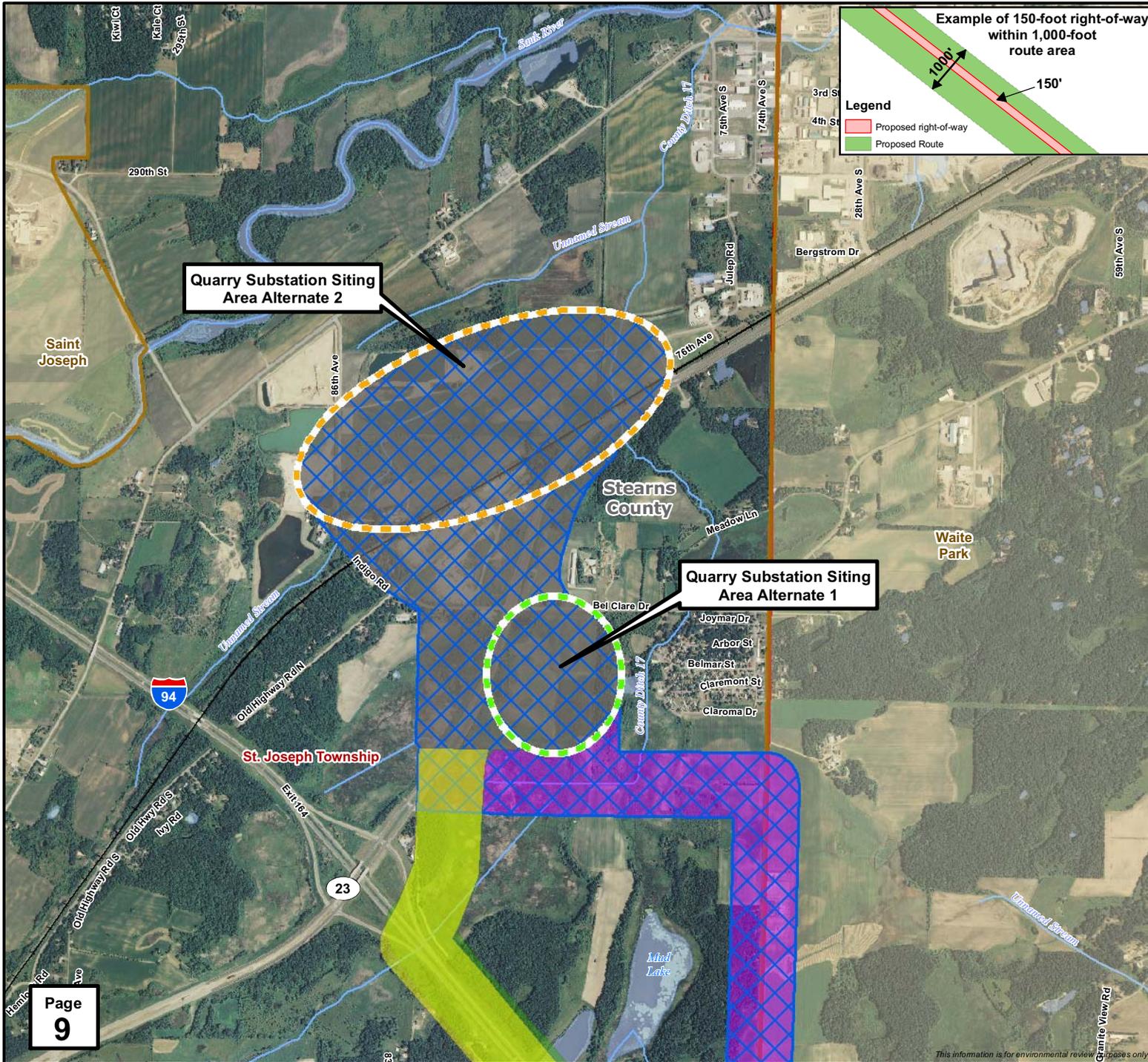
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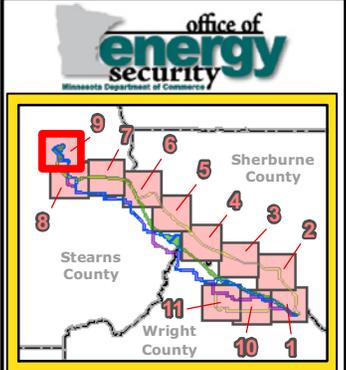


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Monticello to St. Cloud 345 kV Transmission Line

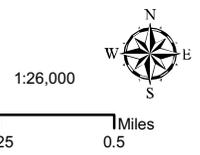


Legend
 Proposed right-of-way
 Proposed Route



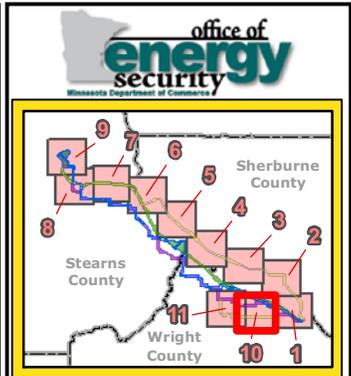
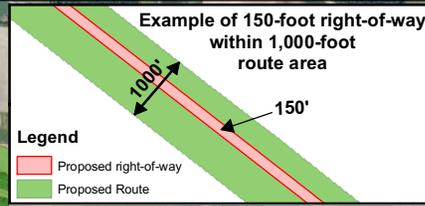
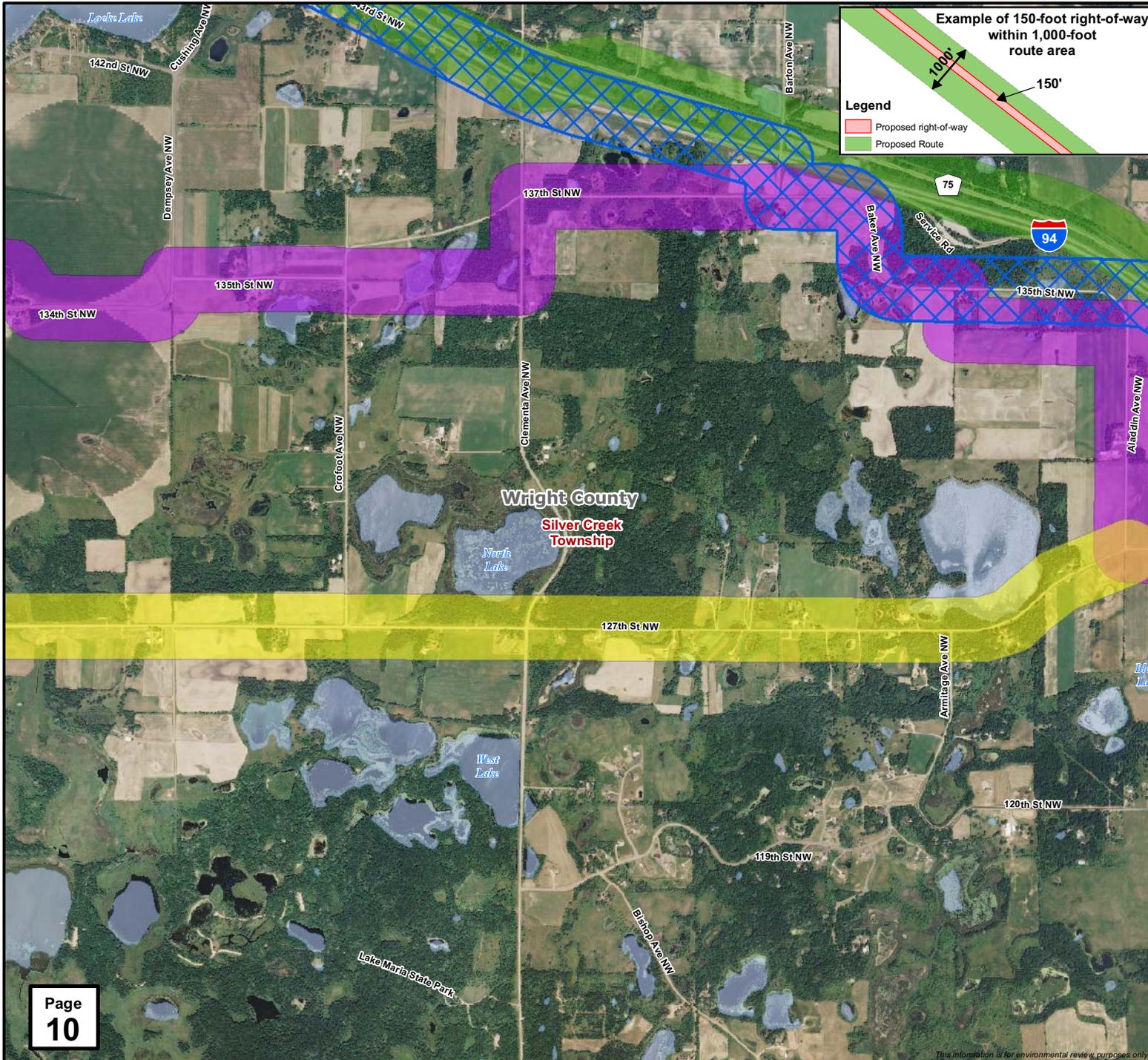
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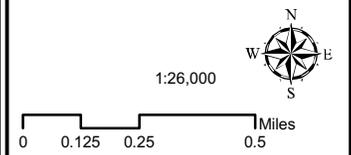
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Municipal Boundary

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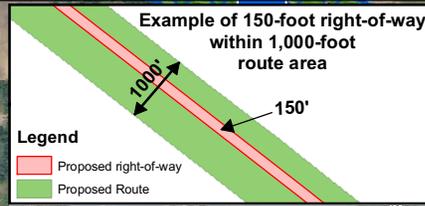
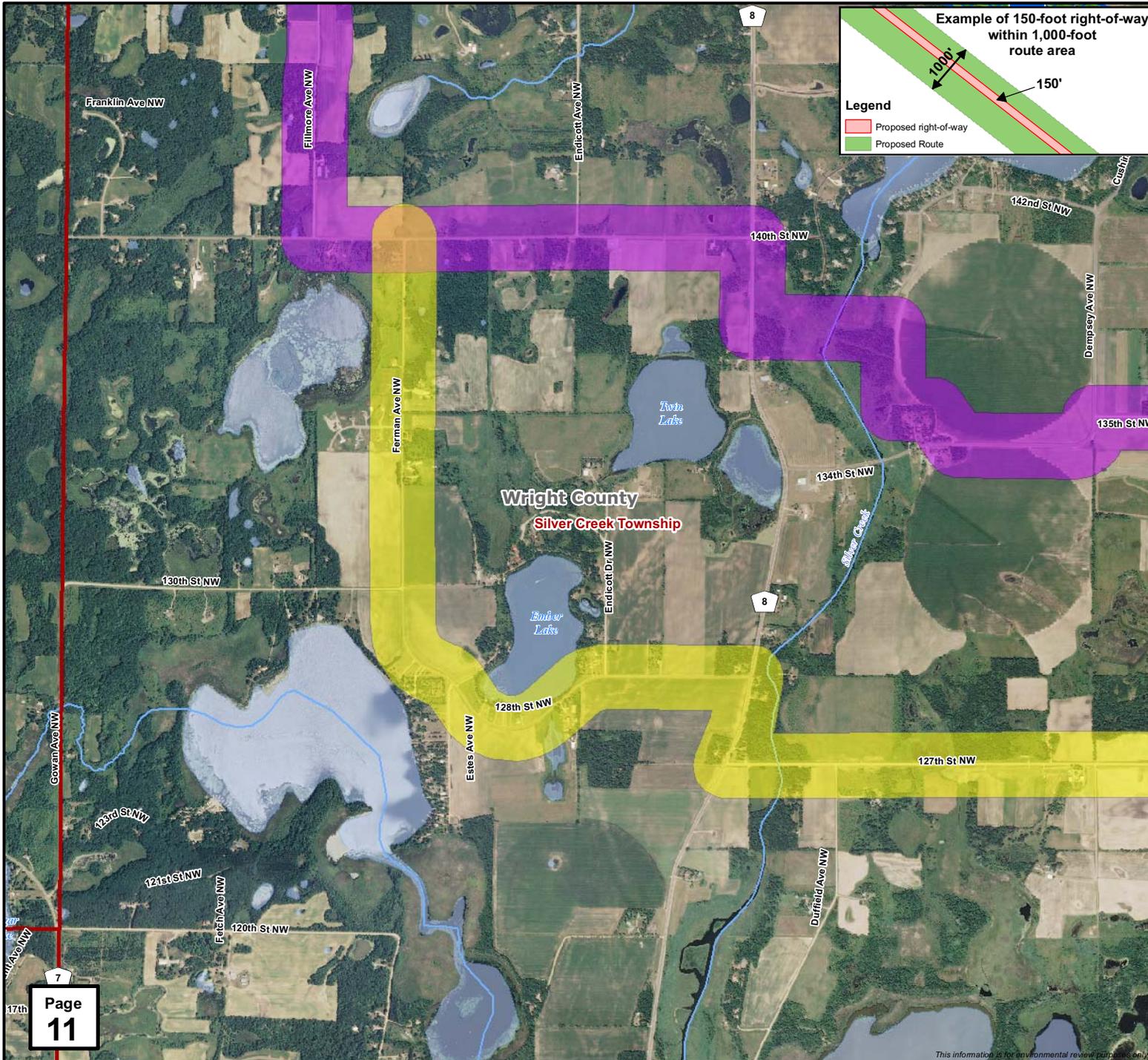
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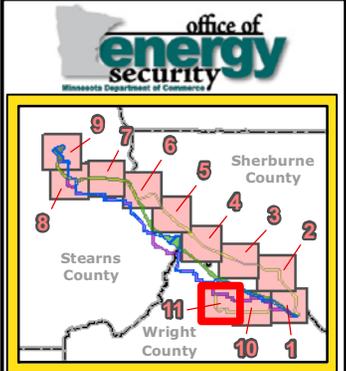
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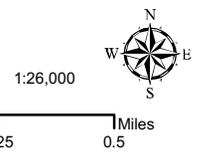
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