



**STATE OF MINNESOTA**  
Office of Energy Security



Issued: March 11, 2010

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING**

**In the Matter of the Route Permit Application for a 161 kV Transmission Line and  
Associated Facilities in Fillmore County, Minnesota.**

**PUC Docket Number: IP-6688/TL-09-601**

**PLEASE TAKE NOTICE** that a public hearing will be held on behalf of the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (Commission) on the route permit application submitted by EcoEnergy, LLC (EcoEnergy) for a proposed 161 kilovolt (kV) transmission line and associated facilities in Fillmore County, Minnesota, at the location listed below.

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**Wednesday, March 24, 2010**  
**Harmony Fire Department**  
**910 Main Avenue South**  
**Harmony, Minnesota 55939**  
**6:00 p.m.**

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**Administrative Law Judge.** Administrative Law Judge Steve Mihalchick will preside at the hearing. Judge Mihalchick's address is: Office of Administrative Hearings, P.O. Box 64620, St. Paul, MN 55164, phone: 651-361-7844, email: [steve.mihalchick@state.mn.us](mailto:steve.mihalchick@state.mn.us).

**Written Comments.** Written comments regarding whether or not a route permit should be granted for the proposed project should be submitted directly to Judge Mihalchick at the address above by **4:30pm, April 8, 2010**. Written comments should include the Docket Number (IP-6688/TL-09-601) for this proceeding.

**Purpose of Hearing.** The purpose of the public hearing is to receive public comments on the application for a route permit for the proposed project. Upon closure of the public comment period Judge Mihalchick will compile the record for the Commission to consider in making a final decision on the route permit requested. The Commission will make a final decision on the permit at a subsequent meeting.

**Conduct of Hearing.** The public hearing will be conducted in accordance with the requirements of the Power Plant Siting Act, Minnesota Statute 216E.04, subd. 6, and the rules of the Commission, Minnesota Rules parts 7850.2800 to 7850.3900, for projects of the size and type proposed.

Office of Energy Security (OES) staff will be present at the hearing and make a brief presentation describing the project and will introduce into the record a number of documents relating to the project, including the route permit application, the environmental assessment, and certain procedural documents. Representatives of EcoEnergy will also be present to offer their evidence by way of testimony and exhibits. In addition, members of the public will have an opportunity to ask questions of OES staff and EcoEnergy representatives, to make statements, and to offer written comments and material into the record. Members of the public are not required to file any papers in advance of the hearing in order to participate.

**Request for Accommodation.** Any person who needs an accommodation for a disability in order to participate in the hearing, and any person who requires an interpreter, including a foreign language interpreter, should promptly notify the Office of Administrative Hearings, P.O. Box 64620, 600 North Robert Street, St. Paul, Minnesota 55164-0620, Phone: (651) 361-7900 (voice) or (651) 361-7878 (TDD).

**Project Description.** The project involves the construction of an 8.5-mile 161 kV transmission line, a substation in Bristol Township, and a switching station in Harmony Township. The proposed transmission line route would originate at a newly constructed substation (EcoHarmony West substation), head east along County Highway 44 for approximately four and one half miles to 305<sup>th</sup> Avenue where it would turn south one mile to 120<sup>th</sup> Street where it would head east three miles to the switching station. Two alternate route segments were proposed during the environmental scoping process (see attached map.)

**Route Permit.** No person may construct a high-voltage transmission line without a route permit from the Commission (Minnesota Statute 216E.03, subd. 2). A high-voltage transmission line is defined as any conductor of electric energy and associated facilities designed for and capable of operating at a voltage of 100 kV or more and greater than 1,500 feet in length. Associated facilities include, but are not limited to, insulators, towers, substations, switches, and terminals.

The project is eligible for consideration under the alternative permitting process (Minnesota Rule 7850.2800) of the Power Plant Siting Act (Minnesota Statute 216E.04, subd. 2). The alternative permitting process is shorter than the full permitting procedures and does not require the applicant to propose any alternative sites or routes to the preferred site or route, but does require the applicant to disclose rejected route alternatives and an explanation of why they were rejected.

**Environmental Assessment.** The Department of Commerce Office of Energy Security (OES) has prepared an environmental assessment (EA) on the proposed project to cover the environmental review requirements for the route permit process. The EA addresses the potential impacts of the proposed transmission line and two alternate route segments. Electronic versions of the EA and other documents relevant to this matter are available for viewing and download on the Commission's energy facility permitting website at: <http://energyfacilities.puc.state.mn.us/Docket.html?Id=24696>, or on eDockets at: <https://www.edockets.state.mn.us/EFiling/search.jsp> (search on year "09" and number "601").

**Additional Information.** For more information about the process, the proposed project, or to place your name on the project mailing list, contact the OES project manager or public advisor at:

Matthew Langan, State Permit Manager  
Minnesota Office of Energy Security  
85 7<sup>th</sup> Place East, Suite 500  
St. Paul, MN 55101-2198  
(651) 296-2096  
matthew.langan@state.mn.us

Suzanne Steinhauer, Public Advisor  
Minnesota Office of Energy Security  
85 7<sup>th</sup> Place East, Suite 500  
St. Paul, MN 55101-2198  
(651) 297-2888  
suzanne.steinhauer@state.mn.us

**Mailing List.** Any person may add his or her name to the mailing list maintained by OES for future mailings regarding this project. If you would like to receive notice of the Commission's final decision in this matter please add your name to the mailing list. Names can be added to the list by contacting the OES project manager or by registering on the Commission website at: <http://energyfacilities.puc.state.mn.us/Docket.html?Id=24696>.

This document can be made available in alternative formats (i.e., large print or audio tape) by calling 651-201-2202 (Voice) or 1-800-627-3529 (TTY relay service).

