Birkholz, David (COMM)

From: DENNIS HEINEN [den9702000@yahoo.com]
Sent: Wednesday, February 10, 2010 9:42 PM
To: Birkholz, David (COMM)
Subject: TL-09-1056

Hello,

I am writing in regards to the CapX Southern Preferred Route Segment. I'm hoping you really look at the comments people send. My name is Dennis Heinen. My physical address is 17960 260 st, Richmond MN with a mailing of PO BOX 442, Cold Spring MN 56320. The southern route would go right past my house, if not on top of it depending on which side of the road. My wife and I just built our dream house 4 years ago. We are starting a family and are very, very concerned about what effect the electromagnetic fields may have on our children being so close to the lines. I have read many articles about what it does, so dont try to say it doesnt do any physical harm. I am also upset because I was hoping to buy my dads farm (he lives at 17604 260 st) in the future and now because of the possibility of the southern route another dream of mine is being destroyed. I cant understand why the possibility of the line being placed underground seems so low. It appears that Xcel and anyone else who will gain from this would rather put money in their pockets then care about the peoples lives they will ruin. This doesnt include what it will do to the beauty of the landscape out here and property values.
I have worked hard my whole life just to be able to live out here and someday farm the land and now It is all being taken away. To me, the logical thing to do would be to bury the line from Albany to the future substation. The cost will be shared by all the people in the state anyhow in the long run. So please dont take what I have worked for and destroy it.

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Fargo to St. Cloud 345kV Transmission Line Project
PUC Docket No. E002, ET2/TL-09-1056

Mr. David Birkholz
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The Purpose of my comments is to identify potential alternatives to and impacts of the proposed project that should be fully addressed in the Environmental Report being prepared by the Department of Commerce. So please consider all that is mentioned below.

It makes no sense that the CapX2020 utilities didn't consider an I-94 route from Freeport to St. Cloud. The DEIS has to include this as an alternative and provide detailed information on this potential route. In order not to create a straw man out of the I-94 route, the DEIS should consider slight deviations from the I-94 corridor and short stretches of underground power line in order to address particularly sensitive areas while keeping on the Interstate corridor as much as possible.

I support the recommendation of Stearns County in their letter of November 4, 2009 that the preferred route be located as close to the current I-94 freeway corridor as possible in order to affect as few homes and businesses as possible. The DEIS must consider this alternative in the area from Freeport to St. Cloud. What the utilities proposed is incomplete and doesn't fit state law.

We purchased our 35 acre property on September 18th , 2009. We have many plans for the 35 acres. We have a 2 year old and another baby due any time now. This was one of the reasons we moved to the country. We wanted to have our children grow up with lots of area to play and to learn how to live and work on a farm. We also have plans of starting a organic grass feed beef, Chicken and produce farm. I also have plans of starting a daycare in the future. . This will allow me to stay home with my children. After living here for a few weeks we heard from one of the neighbors about a power line that may be going along the back of our property. If these power lines run through our property we will not be able to utilize our plans of organic farming or a daycare. We cannot even put in a irrigation system to water the crops. Our land would not be of use for what we purchased it for. We also would not be able to sell for what we purchased it for because of the lower property values that come with power lines on your property. It takes time to do all of these things that we planed to do. It is all on hold now until we find out what will happen. If it does go along our property Capx2020 has taken away our way of life and rights to our land.

Below are more of my concerns and research that I have found on these issues. Please consider all that I have written and alternative routes.

1) Aesthetic and Visual Pollution – The towers supporting CAPX2020 transmission line are 175-foot, galvanized, single pole structures. The galvanized, single poles of the tangent structures range 3-4 feet diameter, with corner structures ranging 4-5 feet in diameter. The right-of-way, which measures 150 feet in width, is frequently cleared of all vegetation except grass or other low-growing plants. Depending upon topography, forests, and other factors a transmission line may be visible from a distance of three miles or more. In fact, those who study the effect of new transmission lines on views commonly begin their analysis three miles out. Such a scene detracts from the scenery of an otherwise natural view in a rural, undisturbed environment.

2) Adverse Effects on Home and Property Value – Several studies indicate a negative impact from HVTL's on Property Values. The changes can reflect a range between a 6.3 - 53.8% reduction in the value of property's adjacent to an HVTL. In an article published in the Journal of Real Estate Research, appraisers indicated residential property values can be affected to varying degrees by transmission lines and that market values of these properties is, on average, 10.01% lower than the market values for comparable properties not subject to the influence of HVTL's,

3) Health and Human Effects (ElectroMagnetic Fields) - There is a growing consensus that the electromagnetic field (EMF) emitted by transmission lines pose a genuine health threat. In 2006 the State of Maryland concluded: *"Studies have consistently shown increased risk for childhood leukemia associated with ELF magnetic fields..."* A 2005 study conducted in England and Wales showed that one out of every hundred or so cases of childhood leukemia occurring within 2,000 feet of a high-voltage.

Dr. David Carpenter, Director, Institute for Health and the Environment at the University of Albany, New York**,** an expert in the areas of EMF's, in a testimony to the State of Minnesota, Public Utilities Commission, indicated a STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT association between EMF/ELF and Childhood Leukemia. In adults, Dr. Carpenter references evidence for a relation between EMF exposure and adult cancer and neurodegenerative diseases is "sufficiently strong".

1) Adverse Effects on Agricultural Operations and Livestock - Due to the rural nature of the proposed Preferred and Alternate A "North" Routes, agricultural operations will undoubtedly be significantly affected. Primary agricultural production crops include corn, soybeans, oats, wheat, sugar beets, and alfalfa/hay. Primary livestock found within the Preferred and Alternate A "North" Routes include dairy cattle, beef cattle, sheep, swine and poultry. The permanent impacts associated include pole placement, while temporary impacts during construction may include soil compaction, disruption of agricultural practices (e.g., center pivot irrigation) and crop damages within the right-of- way at proposed structure location, locations of permanent access, and other work areas. While farmers will be compensated for their loss of productive agricultural land, the loss of productive land, in and of itself, can have lasting effects on a farm's overall

production in future years. There are also "nuisance effects", such as the induced charges in electric fence lines and vehicles building electric charges directly under HVTL's. In addition, CAPX2020 does not recommend refueling of vehicles directly under HVTL's.

There is also growing evidence to suggest the negative effects of HVTL's and EMF's on milk production and animal behavior. In 2004, the 12th International Conference on Production Diseases in Farm Animals, Michigan State University cited several examples of decreases in milk production of up to 50%. Dairy farmers have experienced the problem of cows dancing, stepping, tail-switching, and kicking off milkers, resulting in incomplete milking, declining milk production, and impaired health performance. There also is no opportunity for a organic farm to exist in the line of the project.

ALTERNATIVES

The Interstate I 94 corridor as an Alternative Route

- Primary Route Alternative: The inclusion of Interstate 94 in the Environmental Impact Study, from Freeport to St. Cloud as an alternative route, with slight route detours or modifications, including short-distance under-grounding, to accommodate high-population density or problematic areas.

Locating an Alternative Route in the least "harmful" location of Stearns County

- Secondary Route Alternative: The inclusion in the Environmental Impact Study of an alternative route which more closely parallels the Interstate 94 corridor than the current Preferred and Alternate A "North" Routes. This route should be of shorter distance as it diverts from I-94 and utilize existing rights of way, such as roads and existing transmission corridors, to the fullest extent possible to comply with Minnesota's Policy on Non-Proliferation.

Under-Grounding

The use of under-grounding or 'burying" of HVTL's, especially in geographic areas with sensitive environments and ecologies or scenic viewpoints has been utilized in other projects. A HVTL project in Chisago County utilized HVTL under-grounding to avoid the sensitive and scenic areas of the St. Croix River. Under the State of Connecticut Law, new construction of HVTL's in urban areas must utilize under-grounding to minimize affects on human settlements and reduce EMF exposure in buffer zones near residential areas, schools and playgrounds. Technologies, such as under-ground "Super-conductors", provide for high-efficiency, high-voltage electrical transmission, 0% EMF exposure and minimize required rights-of-way (25 feet vs.150 feet). Additionally, under-grounding offers minimal impact on area aesthetics and avoids the contentious battles between citizens, townships and cities pertaining to HVTL placements. The utilization of under-grounding should be considered, at least for short-distances in problematic areas, as part

of the Melrose to South St. Cloud portion of the CAPX2020 Fargo to St. Cloud HVTL project.

Thank you for your consideration of my comments.

Sincerely,

David Heinen

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