Birkholz, David (COMM)

From: Shelley VOUK [rsvouk1@msn.com]
Sent: Friday, February 12, 2010 3:48 PM
To: Birkholz, David (COMM)
Subject: TL-09-1056

I am writing in regards to the proposed route of the CapX 2020 power line. I attended one of the meetings in St. Joseph and was amazed at how the representative from Excel just put his head down and did not want to hear of the proposal along Interstate 94 from Avon through St. John's either above or below ground. I understand that no one wants to lose their home for this project and that no matter where it goes people will be affected but it must go some where with the least amount of impact.

I heard it said how environmentally this will take out heavily wooded areas along I94, the DOT has concerns of the rest stop and businesses may be in the way. I can not see how this would have a greater environmental impact then tearing through woods, bogs, swamps, farm fields, pastures, farmsteads (meaning buildings) especially when it means that we go 20 + miles out of the way versus 8 miles straight along I94. There would be a lot more acres of environmental destruction along the preferred path then a proposal along I94, which of 2 years ago was the preferred route whether any one other then the area citizens wants to admit or not. We had the flyers sent to us.

I also heard that they would have to destroy 25 homes and figure out what to do around some businesses in Avon for this to work. No one wants to see anyone have to move or sell their home but in my view I would say it is much easier to move people to another home that to take away peoples career, way of life and or lively hood as the farmers in the preferred route are about to have happen to them. What about the 40 or so Century farms this will disrupt. My Father and brother live and work their lives on one of these everyday. We may displace 25 homes and families but these homes are a dwelling place not a lively hood meaning these people do not make a living off the land as do farmers like my Father, Mother, Brother and Sister-in-law along with a whole lot of farmers in this path some I know some I do not. This will severely cripple if not destroy these farms and their livelihood as we know the negative impact of these power lines especially in regards to livestock, specifically Dairy. Farmers cannot just pick up and move away in an instant as they make a living off the land working it all their lives to produce food for the rest of us to consume. A home owner lives on their land and pays for it by working at a job somewhere off their property and can easily find a another house to call home. We tend to forget that these farmers produce the food that we enjoy everyday of our lives like no other country in the world and we as consumers take this for granted as we truly believe that the grocery store shelves will never go empty. I know this is true as my wife has heard parents tell their children when asked of them in grocery stores "where does food come from" and all they can say because they are so far removed from the farming aspect is "Well I know that the food will always be on the shelf because that the way its been all my life." I believe along with national experts that if we keep taking land away from our farmers and not allowing them to produce food that one day this country will have empty grocery store shelves and not be able to feed its own people, that would be a travesty.

I also heard you say when asked what price would be paid for the land taken that in the end if a fair price cannot be bargained **Eminent domain** would take affect. Well why cant that be done along I94 as we all have heard who has been against this proposal and the money that can be thrown at trying to keep it a way from them is far greater then the farmers that this line is being proposed through now.

Guess what, these groups do not make their money off the land they actually leave it daily to earn a living so they can pay to live on it when they return home. Farmers do not leave their land daily they nurture the land to feed a people who do not care what happens to the very people who feed them every day or simply do not understand the impact it may have on their availability for food consumption.

It has been said that these groups along I94 are worried about how it will impact the aesthetics of the area. I am not sure what a few more towers and lines will do that the service roads, fences, current power lines and bridges have not already done to the appearance along I94.

We need to look at the I94 corridor not because anyone wants it but because in the greater out look we save farms and food for our children, disrupt far fewer people, with less environmental impact by going 8 miles versus 20+.

Sincerely,
Robert Vouk
19908 Redwood Ridge Rd,
Albany, MN 56307