



STATE OF MINNESOTA
Department of Commerce



Issued: October 4, 2011

NOTICE OF PERMIT AMENDMENT REQUEST

In the Matter of the Xcel Energy Application for a High Voltage Transmission Line Route Permit for the Pleasant Valley to Byron 161 kV Transmission Line Project in Dodge Olmsted and Mower counties (PUC Docket Number: E002/TL-09-1315)

On June 30, 2011, Xcel Energy (Permittee) applied for a Permit Amendment to make an alignment adjustment outside the route designated in their Route Permit to construct the Pleasant Valley to Byron transmission project. The Permittee supplied additional information on October 3, 2011.

In an Order issued March 3, 2011, the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (Commission) issued a High Voltage Transmission Line Route Permit to Northern States Power (dba Xcel Energy) for the Pleasant Valley to Byron 161 kV Transmission Line Project, authorizing the Permittees to:

- Make modifications at the existing Pleasant Valley Substation in Pleasant Valley Township, Mower County, and a substation in the city of Byron, Olmsted County, to accommodate the proposed 161 kV transmission line; and
- Build the Pleasant Valley to Byron 161 kV Transmission Line, consisting of an approximately 16-mile line that will be constructed primarily on single-pole, self-weathering steel structures within a 400-foot route width.

According to Minn. Rule 7850.4900 subp. 1, the Commission may amend any of the conditions in a route permit for a high voltage transmission line.

According to Minn. Rule 7850.4900 subp. 2, interested persons may submit comments on the Permit Amendment. **A comment period will be open through October 19, 2011.** Comments need to be emailed, faxed or mailed to Matthew Langan (see address below) by 4:30 p.m. on that date. Please refer to docket number "09-1315" in all correspondence. Following the comment period, the request will go before the Commission for a decision.

The alignment adjustment requested by the Permittee is discussed in their Permit Amendment application, which includes a map of the area in question. The application can be viewed at the Commission website:

<http://energyfacilities.puc.state.mn.us/Docket.html?Id=25695>

Or by entering "Year" as "09" and "Number" as "1315" at eDockets:

<https://www.edockets.state.mn.us/EFiling/search.jsp>

For further information, please contact:

Matthew Langan, State Permit Manager
Energy Facilities Permitting
Minnesota Department of Commerce
85 7th Place E., Suite 500
St. Paul, Minnesota 55101-2198
ph 651-296-2096, fax 651-297-7891
matthew.langan@state.mn.us

This document can be made available in alternative formats (i.e., large print or audio) by calling 651-296-0391 (voice.) Persons with hearing or speech disabilities may call us through Minnesota Relay at 1-800-627-3529 or by dialing 711.

June 30, 2011

VIA ELECTRONIC FILING and U.S. MAIL

Dr. Burl W. Haar
Executive Secretary
Minnesota Public Utilities Commission
350 Metro Square Building
121 Seventh Place East
St. Paul, MN 55101

Re: Application for Approval of Route Permit Amendment, Structures 41, 42, and 43

***In the Matter of the Application for a Route Permit for the Pleasant Valley to Byron
161 kV Transmission Line Project
MPUC Docket No.: E002/TL-09-1315***

Dear Dr. Haar:

Northern States Power Company, a Minnesota Corporation, (“Permittee”), requests a route permit amendment for the Pleasant Valley to Byron 161 kV Project (“Project”) pursuant to Minnesota Rule 7850.4900. Specifically, Permittee requests that the route width be expanded in one area in response to concerns raised by an affected landowner. Permittee believes a route permit amendment to the Route Permit is appropriate because the proposed route width expansions between structures 41 - 43 will result in comparable overall impacts relative to the factors in Minnesota Rule 7850.4100 as does the route identified in the Route Permit for the Project.

Procedural History

On March 3, 2011, the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (“Commission”) issued a Route Permit for the Project identifying both a permitted route and an anticipated alignment for the Project. Shortly thereafter, Permittee initiated right-of-way discussions with landowners. One landowner, Daniel A. Thoe, raised concerns over the placement of structures 41 – 43 along the proposed alignment and requested that these structures be placed 40 feet off the eastern edge of the Thoe property.

Discussion

A route permit amendment may be granted to modify the route width in a route permit. Minn. R. 7850.4900, Subp. 1.¹ Permittees requesting a route permit modification must submit an application for the route permit amendment. Minn. R. 7850.4900, subp. 2. After receiving the application, the Commission is authorized to approve a route permit amendment after providing “at least a 10-day period for interested

¹ The Commission has previously approved requested changes to an approved route width through the route permit amendment process, Minnesota Rule 7850.4900. *In the Matter of the Application for a Route Permit for the Monticello to St. Cloud 345 kV Transmission Line Project*, Order, Docket No. E-002, ET-2/TL-09-246 (March 4, 2011) (approving permit amendment widening the route width and altering alignment). Should the Commission determine that such request should be processed pursuant to Minnesota Rule 7850.4800, the minor alteration rule; Permittee requests that the Commission accept this request as being made under Minnesota Rule 7850.4800.

persons to submit comments on the application or request the matter be brought to the [C]ommission for consideration.” Minn. R. 7850.4900, Subp. 2.

Structures 41, 42, and 43 and associated spans connecting these structures are not located within the approved route. Permittee requests that the Route Permit be amended to accommodate an alignment modification for these spans as shown on the enclosed map, Map 1.

The alteration in the alignment between structures 40 – 44 would place structures 41, 42, and 43 outside the approved route and shift the alignment approximately 325 feet to the east, at its greatest distance, from the alignment that was identified in the Route Permit. The alignment change was requested by the affected landowner, Mr. Thoe, and is contained within his property.

The overall impacts relative to the factors in Minnesota Rule 7850.4100 are similar to the impacts associated with the approved route. Both alignments traverse agricultural land for the same distance. Neither impacts a sensitive environmental resource. In comparison to the approved alignment, the home nearest to the modified alignment will be approximately 1,350 feet away, 200 feet closer than it was on the approved route.

Conclusion

For the reasons set forth above, Permittee requests that the Commission grant an amendment to the Route Permit for the alignment described above for the Project and authorize construction along the proposed alignment shown on the enclosed Map 1. Please contact Thomas Hillstrom at (612) 330-6538 thomas.g.hillstrom@xcelenergy.com if you have any questions about this filing.

Sincerely,



James Fritz
Permitting Analyst
Xcel Energy
Minneapolis, MN 55401

Enclosures

cc: w/enclosure
Donald A. Thoe
Matt Langan, Minnesota Department of Commerce Office of Energy Security



September 30, 2011

414 Nicollet Mall
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55401-1993

Dr. Burl W. Haar
Executive Secretary
Minnesota Public Utilities Commission
121 7th Place East, Suite 350
St. Paul, MN 55101-2147

RE: Application for Approval of Route Permit Amendment, Structures 41, 42 and 43

*In the Matter of the Application for a Route Permit for the Pleasant Valley to Byron
161 kV Transmission Line Project
PUC Docket No. E002/TL-09-1315*

Dear Dr. Haar:

On June 30, 2011, Northern States Power Company ("Xcel Energy"), a Minnesota Corporation and wholly-owned subsidiary of Xcel Energy Inc. filed a request for an amendment to the Pleasant Valley to Byron route permit issued on March 3, 2011.

Recently, Department of Commerce Energy Facility Permitting staff requested additional information. This letter provides that information. Enclosed are two graphics, an overview map and a map showing detail of the area for which the route permit amendment is being requested. Also attached is a table presenting potential impacts from the original route and for the proposed alignment

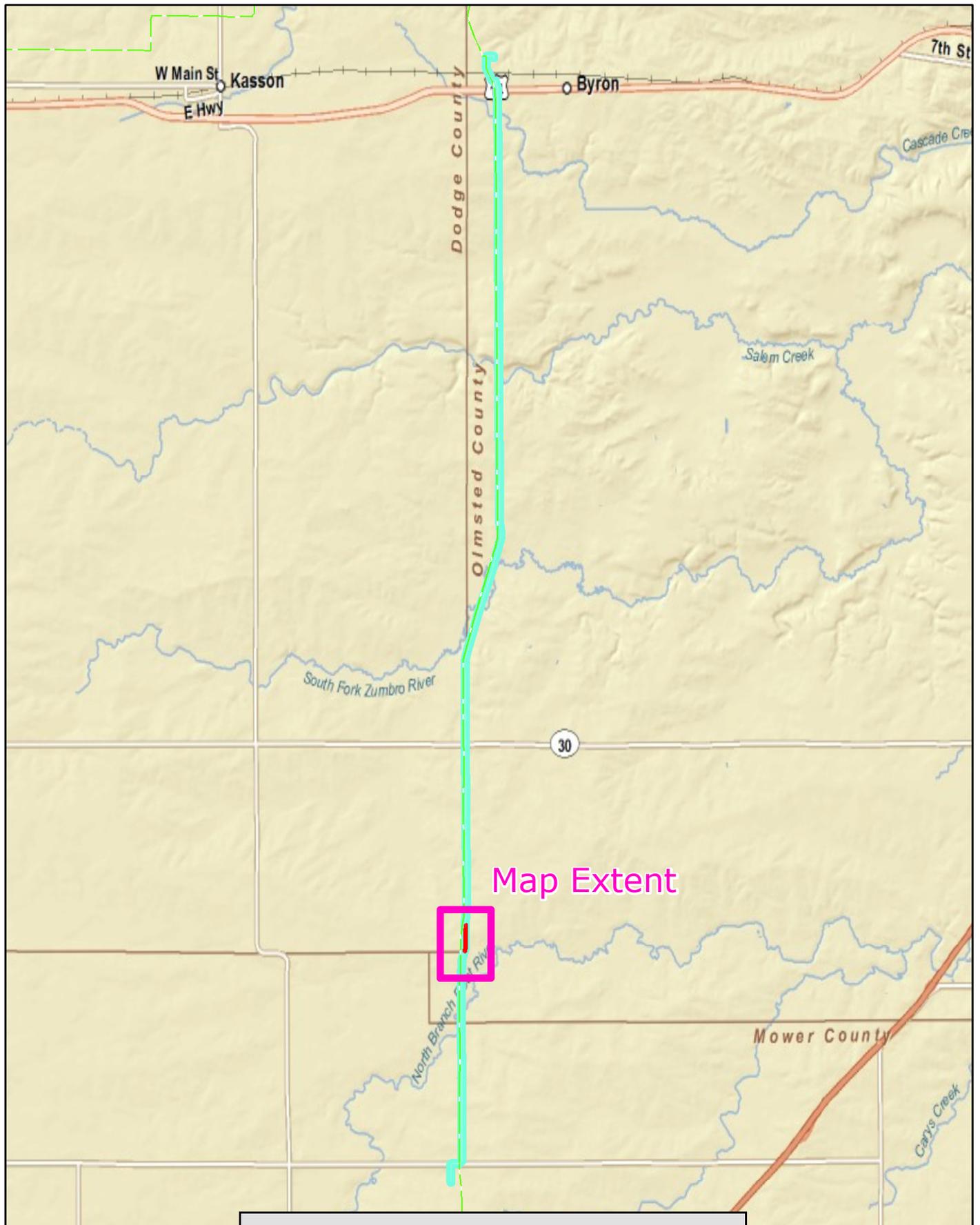
Please call me at (612) 330-6538 if you have any questions regarding this filing.

Sincerely,

Thomas G. Hillstrom
Routing Team Leader

Enclosures

Cc: Matt Langan, Department of Commerce Energy Facilities Permitting



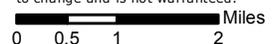
Map 1
 Proposed Alignment Modification at
 Thoe Property
 Proposed Pleasant Valley to Byron
 Transmission Line

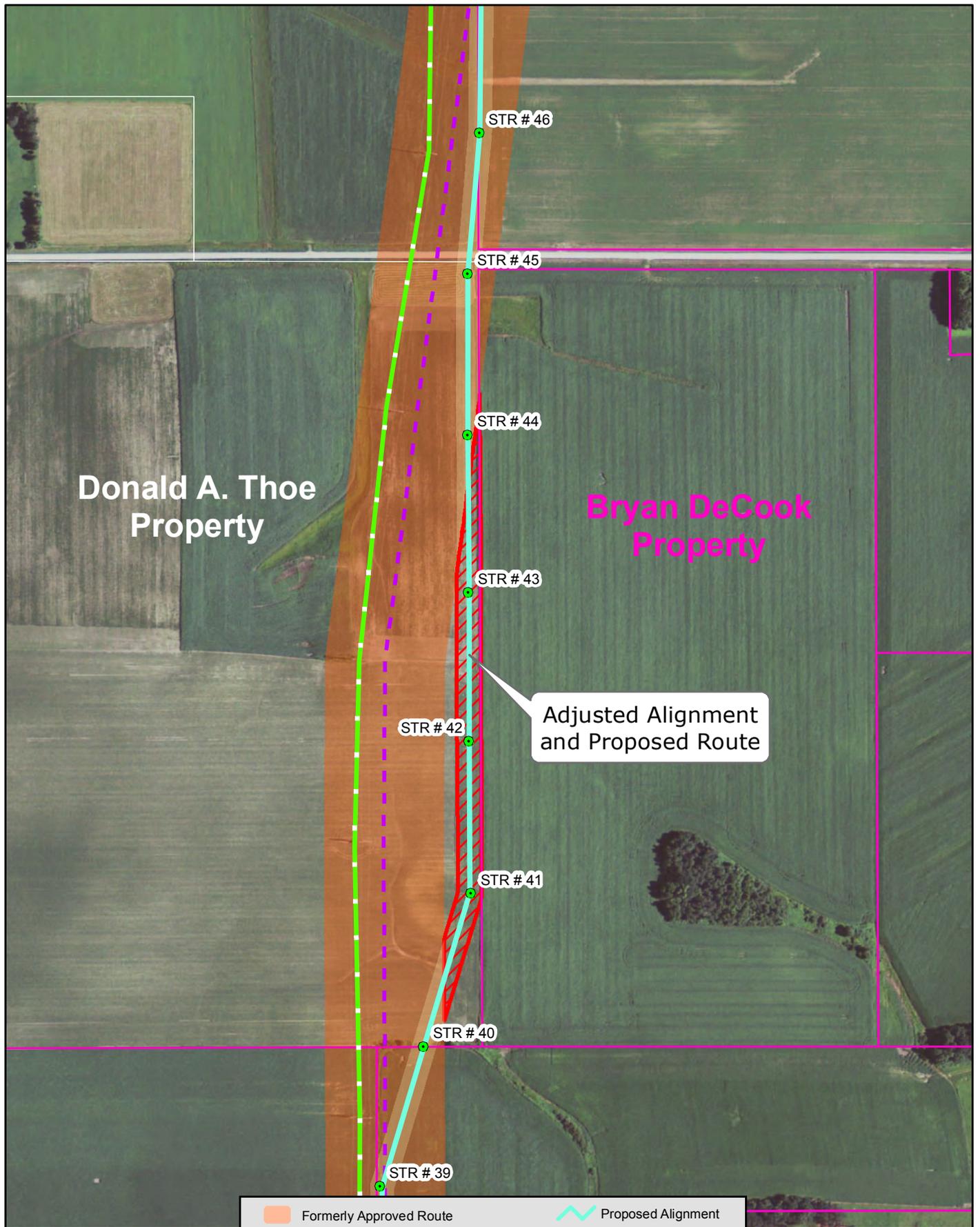
September 28, 2011

	Proposed Alignment		Existing Xcel Line #0979 (345 kV)
	Structure Location		ROW Outside Formerly Approved Route
	Map Extent		



DISCLAIMER: This information is believed to be correct but is subject to change and is not warranted.





Donald A. Thoe Property

Bryan DeCook Property

Adjusted Alignment and Proposed Route

- STR #46
- STR #45
- STR #44
- STR #43
- STR #42
- STR #41
- STR #40
- STR #39

	Formerly Approved Route		Proposed Alignment
	80 ft. ROW		Structure Location
	ROW Outside Formerly Approved Route		Olmsted County Parcel
	Existing Xcel Line #0979 (345 kV)		Dodge County Parcel
	Formerly Approved Alignment		

Map 2
 Proposed Alignment Modification at Thoe Property
 Proposed Pleasant Valley to Byron Transmission Line

September 28, 2011

DISCLAIMER: This information is believed to be correct but is subject to change and is not warranted.

PLEASANT VALLEY TO BYRON ROUTE ADJUSTMENT COMPARISON

		PROPOSED ROUTE ADJUSTMENT	COMPARABLE PORTION OF APPROVED ROUTE TO PROPOSED ROUTE ADJUSTMENT
	Length of Route (miles)	0.5	0.5
	Acres NWI Wetlands within ROW	0.56	0.75
	Percent of ROW - NWI Wetlands	2%	
	Number of NWI Wetlands within ROW	2	2
	Acres of NWI Freshwater Emergent Wetlands within ROW	0.56	0.75
	Percent of ROW - NWI Freshwater Emergent Wetlands		
	Acres of NWI Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetlands within ROW	0	0
	Percent of ROW - NWI Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetlands	0%	0%
	Acres of NWI Freshwater Pond Wetlands within ROW	0	0
	Percent of ROW - Freshwater Pond Wetlands	0%	0%
	Acres of NWI Lake within ROW	0	0
	Percent of ROW - NWI Lakes	0%	0%
	Acres of NWI Riverine within ROW	0	0
	Percent of ROW - NWI Riverine Wetlands	0%	0%
	Estimated Number of Poles in NWI Wetlands*	0	0
	Acres of Temporary NWI Wetland Impacts (1-Acre/Pole)	0	0
	Sq. Feet of Permanent NWI Wetland Impacts (55-Sq. Feet/Pole)	0	0
	Acres of Permanent NWI Wetland Impacts	0	0
	Number of Intermittent Stream, Drainage, or Waterway Crossings within ROW	1	1
	Number of PWI Intermittent Stream, Drainage, or Waterway Crossings within ROW	0	0
	Number of Perennial Stream, Drainage, or Waterway Crossings within ROW	0	0
	Number of PWI Perennial Stream, Drainage, or Waterway Crossings within ROW	0	0
	Number of Other Stream, Drainage, or Waterway Crossings within ROW	0	0
	Number of Other PWI Stream, Waterway, or Drainage Crossings within ROW	0	0
	Number of PWI Lake and Wetland Crossings within ROW	0	0
	Acres of PWI Lakes and Wetlands within ROW	0	0
	Percent of ROW - PWI Wetlands		
	Estimated Number of Poles in PWI Wetlands*	0	0
	Acres of Temporary PWI Wetland Impacts (1-Acre/Pole)	0	0
	Sq. Feet of Permanent PWI Wetland Impacts (55-Sq. Feet/Pole)	0	0
	Acres of Permanent PWI Wetland Impacts	0	0
	Acres of (100-year) Floodplain within ROW	0	0
	Percent of ROW - 100-Year Floodplain	0%	0%
	Estimated Number of Poles in 100-Year Floodplain*	0	0
	Acres of Temporary 100-Year Floodplain Impacts (1-Acre/Pole)	0	0
	Sq. Feet of Permanent 100-Year Floodplain Impacts (55-Sq. Feet/Pole)	0	0
	Acres of Permanent 100-Year Floodplain Impacts	0	0
	Acres of Restorable Wetlands within ROW	0	0
	Percent of ROW - Restorable Wetlands	0%	0%
	Number of Water Wells within ROW	0	0
LAND USE AND OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES WITHIN THE RIGHT-OF-WAY			
General	Length of Route (miles)	0.5	0.5
	Length Paralleling Existing ROWs (miles)	0	0.5
	Percent of Route Paralleling Existing ROWs	0%	100%
	Length Paralleling Existing Linear Features (miles)	0.5	0.5
	Percent Paralleling Existing Linear Features	0%	100%
	Number of Acres in Representative 80-Foot ROW	4.8	4.8
Agricultural Land Use	Acres of Agricultural Land Use within ROW	4.8	4.8
	Percent of ROW - Agricultural Land	100%	100%
	Acres of Special Protection Agricultural Land Use within ROW	0	0
	Percent of ROW - Special Protection Agricultural Land	0%	0%
	Estimated Number of Poles in Agricultural Land*	0	0
	Acres of Temporary Agricultural Land Impacts (1-Acre/Pole)	7	7
	Sq. Feet of Permanent Agricultural Land Impacts (1,000-Sq. Feet/Pole)	7,000	7,000
	Acres of Permanent Agricultural Land Impacts within ROW	0	0
	Acres of CRP Lands within ROW	0	0
Percent of ROW - CRP Lands	0%	0%	

PLEASANT VALLEY TO BYRON ROUTE ADJUSTMENT COMPARISON

		PROPOSED ROUTE ADJUSTMENT	COMPARABLE PORTION OF APPROVED ROUTE TO PROPOSED ROUTE ADJUSTMENT
Land Use	Acres of Residential Land Use within ROW	0	0
	Percent of ROW - Residential Land Use	0%	0%
	Acres of Recreational/Open Space/Park Land Use within ROW	0	0
	Percent of ROW - Recreational/Open Space/Park Land Use	0%	0%
	Acres of Commercial/Business/Institutional/Public Land Use within ROW	0	0
	Percent of ROW - Commercial/Business/Institutional/Public Land Use	0%	0%
	Acres of Industrial Land Use within ROW	0	0
	Percent of ROW - Industrial Land Use	0%	0%
	Acres of Transitional/Growth Area Land Use within ROW	0	0
	Percent of ROW - Transitional/Growth Area Land Use	0%	0%
	Acres of County-Identified Municipal Land Use within ROW	0	0
	Percent of ROW - County-Identified Municipal Land Use	0%	0%
	Estimated Number of Poles in Non-Agricultural Land*	0	0
	Acres of Temporary Non-Agricultural Land Impacts (1-Acre/Pole)	0	0
	Sq. Feet of Permanent Non-Agricultural Land Impacts (55-Sq. Feet/Pole)	0	0
	Acres of Permanent Non-Agricultural Land Impacts	0	0
	Number of Center Pivot Irrigation Systems within ROW	0	0
	Acres of Wooded Lands within ROW	0	0
	Percent of ROW - Wooded Lands	0%	0%
	Number of Daycare Facilities within ROW	0	0
Number of FCC Antenna Structures within ROW	0	0	
Trails and Scenic Byways	Number of State Trail Crossings within ROW	0	0
	Parallel Miles to State Trails	0	0
	Number of County Trail Crossings within ROW	0	0
	Parallel Miles to County Trails	0	0
	Number of Scenic Byway Crossings within ROW	0	0
	Parallel Miles to Scenic Byways	0	0
Airports/Landing Strips	Number of Airports/Landing Strips within 5-Miles	0	0
	Located within Instrument Approach to Airport	0	0
	Miles to Nearest Airport/Landing Strip	>2	>2
	Number of VOR Sites within ROW	0	0
Cultural (Mining/ Land Aggregate) Historical	Total Number of Aggregate Source Pits within ROW	0	0
	Number of Prospective Aggregate Source Pits within ROW	0	0
	Number of Commercial Aggregate Source Pits within ROW	0	0
	Number of NRHP Sites within ROW	0	0
Number of Known Historic Structures within ROW	0	0	
Number of Known Archaeological Sites within ROW	0	0	
RESIDENTIAL AND NON-RESIDENTIAL STRUCTURES/BUILDINGS, SENSITIVE MANAGEMENT AREAS AND CONSERVATION			
Number of Residences / Non-Residences within ROW	Number of Residential Structures within 0-75 Feet of Alignment	0	0
	Number of Residential Structures within 75-150 Feet of Alignment	0	0
	Total Number of Residential Structures within 150 Feet of Alignment	0	0
	Number of Residential Structures within 150-300 Feet of Alignment	0	0
	Number of Residential Structures within 300-500 Feet of Alignment	0	0
	Total Number of Residential Structures within 500 Feet of Alignment	0	0
	Number of Non-Residential Structures within 150 Feet of Alignment	0	0
USFWS Easements	Number of USFWS Easements within ROW	0	0
	Total Acres of USFWS Easements within ROW	0	0
	Acres of USFWS Wetland Easements within ROW	0	0
	Acres of USFWS Grassland Easements within ROW	0	0
	Acres of USFWS Farmers Home Administration Easements within ROW	0	0
	Acres of USFWS Other Easements within ROW	0	0
MN County Biological Survey	Total Acres of MCBS Sites of Biodiversity Significance within ROW	0	0
	Number of MCBS Sites of Biodiversity Significance within ROW	0	0
	Acres of Moderate MCBS Sites of Biodiversity Significance within ROW	0	0
	Acres of High MCBS Sites of Biodiversity Significance within ROW	0	0
	Acres of Outstanding MCBS Sites of Biodiversity Significance within ROW	0	0
MC BS Native	Number of MCBS Native Plant Communities within ROW	0	0
	Acres of MCBS Native Plant Communities within ROW	0	0
MCBS Railroad ROW	Number of MCBS Railroad ROW Prairies	0	0
	Linear Feet of Fair MCBS Railroad ROW Prairies within ROW	0	0
	Linear Feet of Good MCBS Railroad ROW Prairies within ROW	0	0
MN Land Trust	Linear Feet of Very Good MCBS Railroad ROW Prairies within ROW	0	0
	Number of MN Land Trust Conservation Easement Crossings within ROW	0	0
BWSR RIM Easements	Acres of MN Land Trust Conservation Easements within ROW	0	0
	Number of BWSR RIM Easement Crossings within ROW	0	0
Caic area	Acres of BWSR RIM Easements within ROW	0	0
	Number of Calcareous Fens within ROW	0	0
Sensitive Management Areas and Resources	Acres of Calcareous Fens within ROW	0	0
	Number of Waterfowl Production Areas within ROW	0	0
	Acres of Waterfowl Production Areas within ROW	0	0
	Number of Wildlife Management Areas within ROW	0	0
	Acres of Wildlife Management Areas within ROW	0	0
	Number of Scientific Natural Areas within ROW	0	0
	Acres of Scientific Natural Areas within ROW	0	0
	Number of Known Occurrences of Threatened and Endangered Species within ROW	0	0
	Number of Trout Stream Crossings within ROW	0	0
Acres of Prairie Bank Easements within ROW	0	0	