



GREAT RIVER
ENERGY®

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12300 Elm Creek Boulevard • Maple Grove, Minnesota 55369-4718 • 763-445-5000 • 763-445-5050

26 May 2011

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

Re: Application for Approval of Route Permit Amendment

**In the Matter of the Route Permit Application for the Potato Lake 115 kV
Transmission Line and Substation in Park Rapids, Minnesota.
Docket No. ET2/TL-10-86**

Dear Dr. Haar:

Great River Energy, a Minnesota cooperative corporation (“Permittee”) requests that the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (“Commission”) approve a route permit amendment for the Potato Lake 115 kV line and substation project (“Project”) pursuant to Minnesota Rules Chapter 7850.4900.

Specifically, Permittee requests that the route width be expanded north and south of Structure 100 in response to engineering and right of way constraints of the new switch structure (Structure 100) on the Mantrap Sub Tap 34.5 kV line (“PM Line”) (see Map 1, Appendix A).

Permittee believes a route permit amendment to the Route Permit is appropriate because the requested route width expansion (north and south of Structure 100) 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 (see Map 2, Table 1, and Table 2, Appendix A).

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

On November 17, 2010, the Commission issued a Route Permit for the 7.25-mile 115 kV transmission line and associated Itasca-Mantrap 115 kV Substation, north of Park Rapids, Minnesota in Arago, Todd, Lake Emma and Henrietta townships.

Per Route Permit Condition 4.1, a plan and profile is required to start construction. The plan and profile was submitted in phases to facilitate a winter construction timeline:

On February 18, 2011, Commission granted approval for Permittee to proceed with construction between Structures 1 and 42.

On March 21, 2011, Commission granted approval for Permittee to proceed with construction between Structures 43 and 72.

Accordingly, Permittee is preparing to submit the remaining plan and profile between Structures 73 and 100 for Commission approval. The Permittee is requesting an amendment to the Route Permit for a route width modification north and south of Structure 100 to complete the remaining plan and profile for submission. A diagram of the requested modification is attached as Map 1 (see Appendix A).

DISCUSSION

A route permit amendment may be granted to amend any conditions in a route permit. Minn. R. 7850.4900, Subp. 1. The Permittee requesting a route permit amendment 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 ten day period for interested persons to submit comments on the application or to request that the matter be brought to the [C]ommission for consideration." Minn. R. 7850.4900, Subp. 2.

After obtaining the Route Permit from the Commission, the Permittee identified during design that new structures (35A and 35B) on each side of the new switch (on the existing PM Line) would need to be outside the permitted route. The new structures are necessary to accommodate the changed line tension in the PM Line; to eliminate line angles on the switch; and to allow the switch to be located a safe distance from the traveled lanes and just outside of the right of way of County Highways 18 and 4, in Section 5 of Henrietta Township.

The location of the switch and new structures was based on discussions with Hubbard County. New structures 35A and 35B would be located next to existing PM Line structures as shown on attached Map 1 (see Appendix A). In addition, it will be necessary to replace existing PM Line Structures 35 and 36 to accommodate the changed line tension.

The Permittee requests that the Route Permit be amended to authorize the following alignment and route changes outside the designated route:

- Add two new structures (Structures 35A and 35B) and replace two existing structures (Structures 35 and 36) on the existing PM Line (see Map 1, Appendix A).
- Add additional route width north and south of Structure 100: 200 feet westerly of the centerline of County Highway 4 for 457 feet north and 294 feet south of the centerline of County Highway 18 (see Map 1, Appendix A).

The above requested modifications result in comparable overall impacts relative to the factors in Minnesota Rule 7850.4100 as does the permitted route (see Table 1, Table 2 and Map 2, Appendix A).

CONCLUSION

The Permittee requests that the Commission grant an amendment to the Route Permit for the locations described above for the project as shown on enclosed Map 1 (see Appendix A).

Please contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

GREAT RIVER ENERGY



Marsha Parlow
Transmission Permitting Analyst

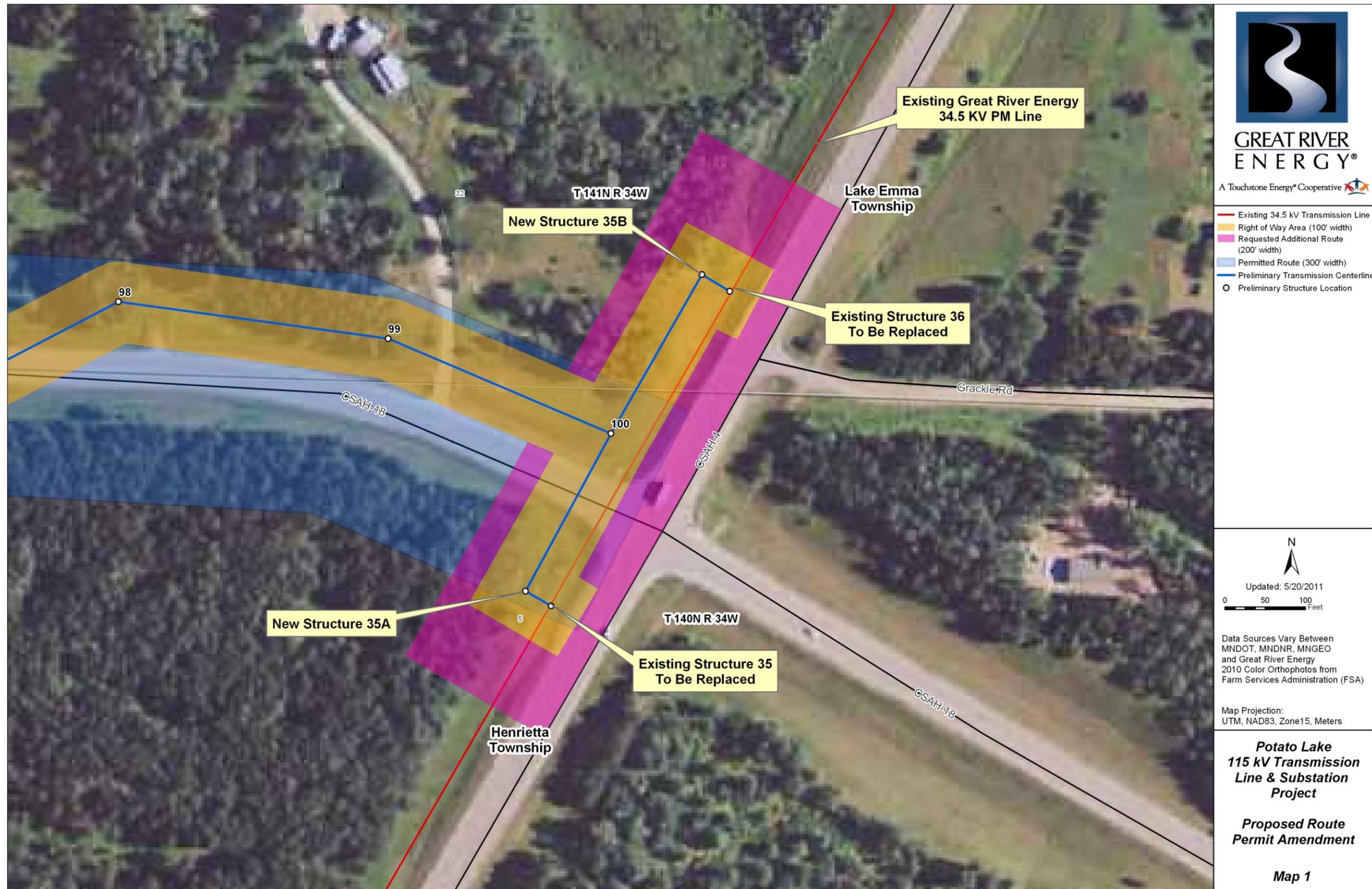
c: Scott Ek, Department of Commerce Office of Energy Security
Michelle Lommel, Great River Energy

APPENDIX A

Maps and Tables

Great River Energy
Route Amendment Request
Docket No. ET2/TL-10-86

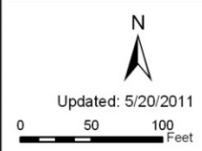
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- Existing 34.5 kV Transmission Line
- Right of Way Area (100' width)
- Requested Additional Route (200' width)
- Permitted Route (300' width)
- Preliminary Transmission Centerline
- Preliminary Structure Location



Updated: 5/20/2011

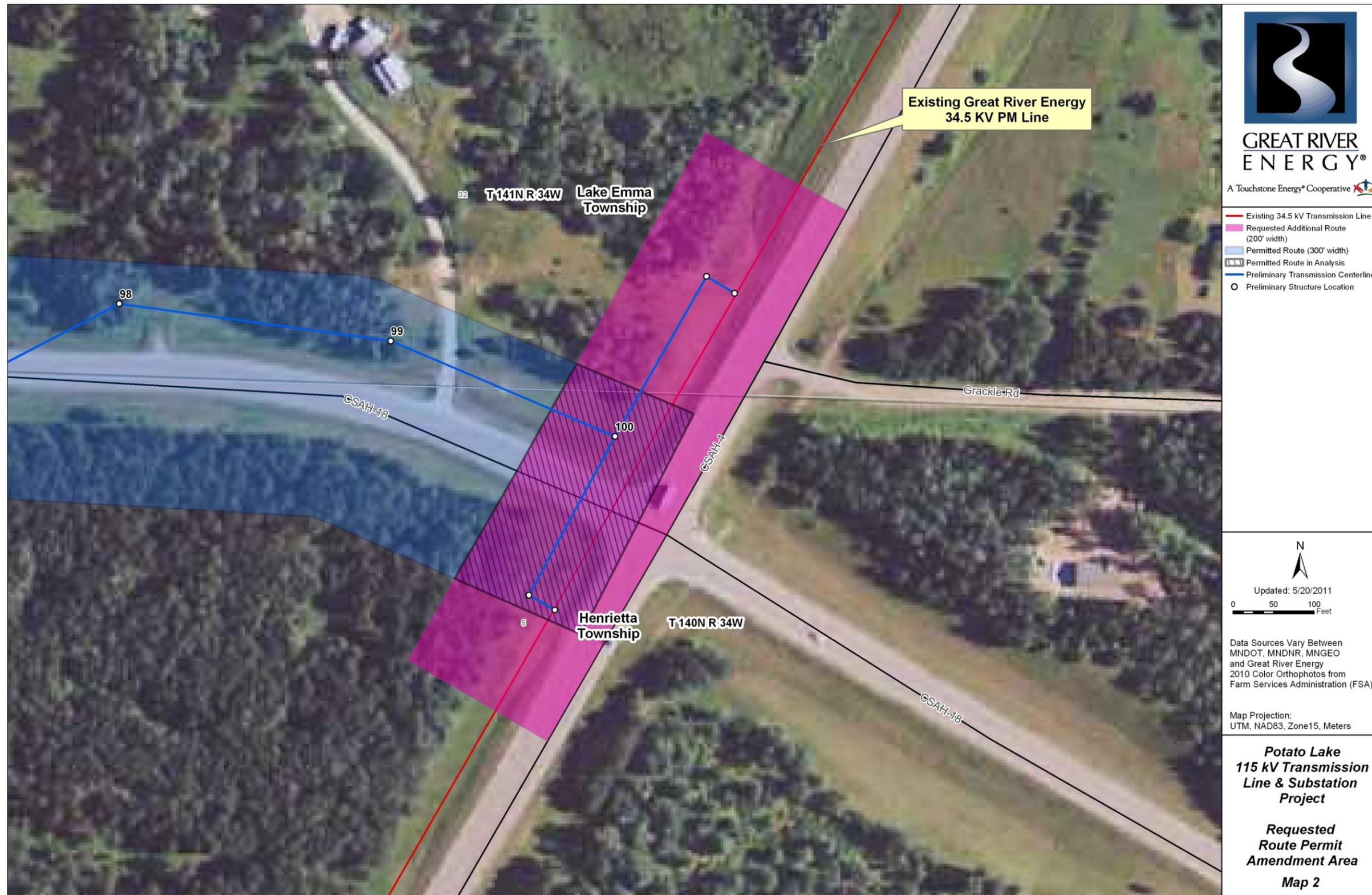
Data Sources Vary Between MNDOT, MNDNR, MNGEO and Great River Energy 2010 Color Orthophotos from Farm Services Administration (FSA)

Map Projection:
 UTM, NAD83, Zone15, Meters

**Potato Lake
 115 kV Transmission
 Line & Substation
 Project**

**Proposed Route
 Permit Amendment**

Map 1



Analysis of the potential impacts on the human and natural environment

Tables 1 and 2 below demonstrate that the environmental impacts of the requested route amendment are very similar to those of the permitted route (see Map 2). Please note that Table 1 shows higher impact on forested land for the requested route amendment. However, the impact will only involve the clearance of the right of way between Structures 35A and 35B.

The requested route amendment will be subject to the same protections, construction procedures, mitigation strategies, and terms of the Route Permit issued to Great River Energy and under the Avian Mitigation Plan. The land will be returned to as near its pre-construction condition as practical after the construction of the Potato Lake transmission line. The shift has been discussed and agreed to by the affected landowners.

Table 1 Requested Route Amendment along County Highway 4 for the Potato Lake Transmission Line Project at Structure 100				
	Units	Permitted Route North and South of Structure 100 (Hatched Area on Map 2)	Requested Amended Route North and South of Structure 100 (Both Hatched and Pink Areas on Map 2)	Difference (Pink Area on Map 2)
Total Length	Feet	88	615	527
Length Parallel to Existing Rights-of-Way	Feet	88	615	527
Roads Crossed	Number	0	1	1
Parcels Crossed	Number	1	2	1
Residences within 150 feet of the Transmission Line	Number	0	0	0
Wetlands Crossed	Number	0	0	0
Land Use^a				
Forested Land Crossed	Acres	0.26	0.86	0.60
Agricultural Land Crossed	Acres	0.29	1.53	1.24
Developed Land Crossed	Acres	0.00	0.00	0.00
Wetlands Crossed	Acres	0.00	0.00	0.00
Open Land Crossed (Grassland)	Acres	0.49	1.09	0.60

^a Data based on <http://deli.dnr.state.mn.us/metadata.html?id=L390000102101>
Wetland boundaries based on National Wetland Inventory Maps.

Table 2	
Route Comparison of the Requested Route Amendment	
Human settlement	The requested route amendment will not have any greater impact on human settlement than the permitted route.
Existence and density of populated areas	The requested route amendment will not impact any additional populated areas.
Existing and planned future land use	The requested route amendment will change mostly agricultural and forested areas. Affected land will be restored or compensation provided to the landowners.
Management plans	The same management plans will apply to this requested route amendment as to the permitted route.
Natural environment	The requested route amendment will impact additional 0.60 acres in forested areas. No additional wetlands will be affected.
Public and designated Lands (including but not limited to natural areas, wildlife habitat, water, recreational lands),	The requested route amendment will not impact these categories of land.
Lands of historical archeological, and cultural significance	The requested route amendment will not impact any of these lands.
Economies within the alternative, such as agricultural, commercial or industrial, forestry, recreational, and mining operations	The requested route amendment will have minimal impact on these lands.
Transmission line cost and accessibility	Transmission line cost and accessibility will not be changed by this requested route amendment.
Use of existing rights-of-way and rights-of-way sharing or paralleling	The transmission line, once installed, will continue to parallel close to the right-of-way of County Highway 4 and the existing Mantrap Sub Tap 34.5 kV line.
Natural resources and features	The requested route amendment will have minimal impact on additional natural resources or features.
Extent to which impacts are subject to mitigation through regulatory control and permit conditions	The same regulatory controls, mitigation measures and permit conditions will apply to the requested route amendment as the permitted route.
Cumulative potential effect of related or anticipated future transmission line construction	No change.