Proposed Little Falls 115 kV Substation and Transmission Line

GREAT RIVER ENERGY
12300 Elm Creek Boulevard
Maple Grove, MN 55369
1-888-521-0130
www.greatriverenergy.com

CROW WING POWER
177330 Highway 371 North
Brainerd, MN 56401
1-800-648-9401
www.cwpower.com

Project Need

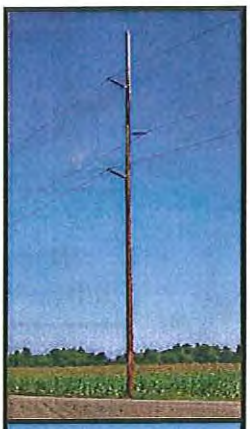
Great River Energy, power supplier to Crow Wing Power and 27 other distribution cooperatives, proposes to upgrade Crow Wing Power's existing 34.5 kV Little Falls Substation to 115,000 volts (115 kV) and construct a new 115 kV transmission line source extending from Minnesota Power's existing Little Falls Substation to Crow Wing Power's existing Little Falls Substation (see back). This upgrade will benefit the Little Falls area and is needed to:

- Improve the reliability of electric service
- Reduce the risk of problems associated with low voltage

The area is now served by Crow Wing Power's 34.5 kV Little Falls Substation, which is served by Minnesota Power's 34.5 kV transmission line along T.H. 27. This line will remain intact after the project is constructed.

Planned Project

The single circuit poles will typically be single-pole wood structures with horizontal post insulators (see top photo). Guy wires with anchors and possibly two-pole or steel structures may be required in limited areas if needed for long spans or if soil conditions would require them. The transmission line will carry three energized wires and one non-energized optical ground wire for lightning protection, which will also provide communications between the electrical facilities. In some areas, Crow Wing Power's distribution lines may be underbuilt on cross-arms on the transmission line structures (see bottom photo). Structures without underbuild will generally be 60 to 75 feet in height with 300- to 400-foot spans. Those with underbuild will generally be 70-85 feet in height with 250- to 300-foot spans.



Typical 115 kV Transmission Structure

The project will require modifications at Minnesota Power's Little Falls Substation and a new 115 kV transformer will replace the existing 34.5 kV transformer at Crow Wing Power's Little Falls Substation.

After public notification and an open house, Great River Energy will apply to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commision for a Route Permit. Great River Energy will request a width of 300 feet for the permit corridor, although the easement width will only be 50 feet on each side of the transmission centerline, within the permitted corridor. Once the project has received approval and the transmission line route is finalized, survey will be performed. Landowners will be contacted and a fair offer of compensation will be presented along with the easement. Easements will allow the poles to be located on private property, although the majority of the easement area will still be available for uses such as agricultural cultivation, underground utilities, fencing and access drives.

Typical 115 kV Transmission Structure With Distribution Underbuild

Project Schedule

Open house and public notifications.....November/December 2010
Project permitting.....Fall 2011
Easement acquisition.....Fall/Winter 2011
Construction.....Early 2012

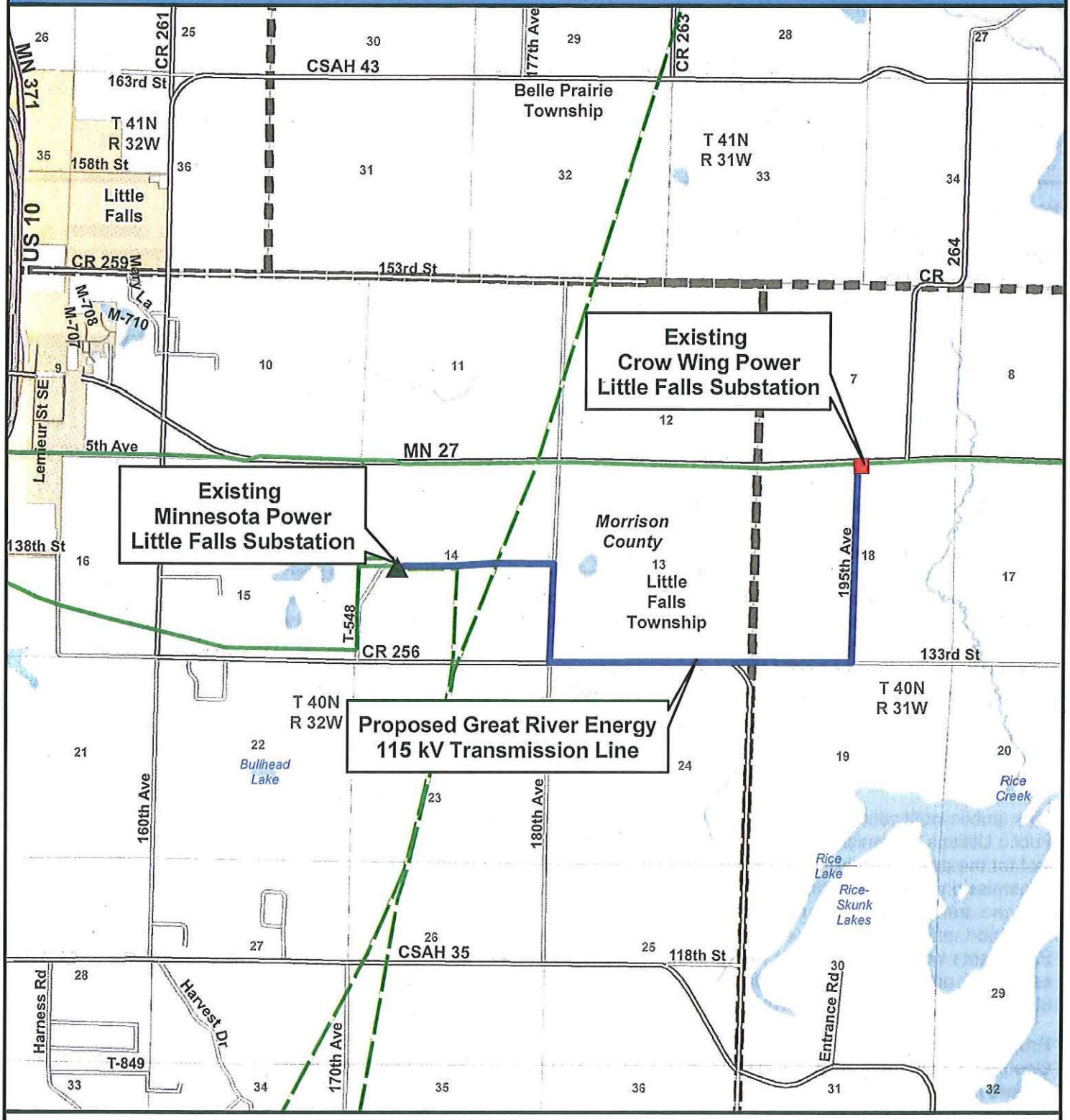
For ongoing status updates, visit www.greatriverenergy.com/LittleFalls or contact:

Michelle Lommel
Great River Energy
763-445-5977 or 1-888-521-0130 ext. 763-445-5977
mlommel@grenergy.com

Rob Moser
Crow Wing Power
(218) 825-2827 or 1-800-648-9401
moser@cwpower.com

Date last revised: 11/23/2010

Project Map



Crow Wing Power

- Existing Distribution Sub

Great River Energy

- Proposed 115 kV Transmission Line
- Existing Single Circuit 69 kV Transmission Line

Minnesota Power

- Transmission Substation
- 34.5 kV Transmission Line
- 115 kV AC Transmission Line

0 0.5 1 Miles

N

GREAT RIVER ENERGY

A Touchstone Energy Cooperative

Date last revised: 11/23/2010

Minnesota Department of Transportation

Office of Aeronautics
Mail Stop 410
222 East Plato Boulevard
Saint Paul, MN 55107-1618

Phone: 651-234-7200
Fax: 651-234-7261

RECEIVED DEC 1 0 2010

December 9, 2010

651 234-7247

Ms. Marsha Parlow
Transmission Permitting Analyst
Great River Energy
12300 Elm Creek Boulevard
Maple Grove, Minnesota 55369-4718

Subject: **Proposed Little Falls 115kV Transmission Line Construction**
Morrison County, Minnesota

Dear Ms. Parlow:

We have reviewed your proposal for the new Great River Energy 115kV transmission line construction near Little Falls in Morrison County, Minnesota. We do not anticipate any effect on the operation of publicly-owned airports; therefore the Office of Aeronautics has no objection to the proposed project.

If you have any questions regarding this matter, please call me.

Sincerely,

Gene R. Scott

Gene R. Scott, P.E.
Regional Airport Engineer
gene.scott@state.mn.us

GREAT RIVER
ENERGY®

12300 Elm Creek Boulevard • Maple Grove, Minnesota 55369-4718 • 763-445-5000 • Fax 763-445-5050 • www.GreatRiverEnergy.com

7 December 2010

Mr. Nick Rowse, Habitat Conservation Biologist
United States Department of the Interior
Twin Cities Field Office
4101 East 80th Street
Bloomington, MN 55425-1665

RE: Proposed Little Falls Transmission Line Construction
Morrison County, Minnesota
T 40 N, R32W, Sections 13 and 14
T 40 N, R31W, Section 18

WO# 75881

Dear Mr. Nick Rowse:

Great River Energy is proposing a new 115 kilovolt (kV) transmission line project near Little Falls in Morrison County, Minnesota. The line is to support the 115 kV conversion of the 34.5 kV Crow Wing Power Little Falls Substation located in Section 18 of Little Falls Township. The conversion is necessary to improve voltage support in the area. Please note, on November 23rd a notice of our December 6th open house was sent to Tony Sullins.

The Fish and Wildlife Service website (http://www.fws.gov/Midwest/Endangered/LISTS/minnesot-cty.html) indicates that the Gray Wolf is listed on the threatened and endangered list in Morrison County, Minnesota. Great River Energy is requesting concurrence or information on the possible effects of the proposed project on any listed or proposed threatened or endangered species and designated or proposed critical habitat that may be present in the project area. A project description has been included for your review. The proposed line is marked in blue.

We would appreciate receiving any written comments from your office by Friday, 7 January 2011. If you have any questions about this proposed project, please contact me at (763) 445-5215. If you wish to respond by e-mail, my address is mparlow@grenergy.com. Thank you for your cooperation and assistance.

Sincerely,

GREAT RIVER ENERGY

Marsha Parlow

Marsha Parlow
Transmission Permitting Analyst

Enclosure

S:\Member Services\Environmental\Transmission\Projects\75881 Little Falls\Agency Letters\Little Falls FWS.doc

Proposed Little Falls 115 kV Substation and Transmission Line

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- Improve the reliability of electric service
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The area is now served by Crow Wing Power's 34.5 kV Little Falls Substation, which is served by Minnesota Power's 34.5 kV transmission line along T.H. 27. This line will remain intact after the project is constructed.

Typical 115 kV Transmission Structure

Planned Project

The single circuit poles will typically be single-pole wood structures with horizontal post insulators (see top photo). Guy wires with anchors and possibly two-pole or steel structures may be required in limited areas if needed for long spans or if soil conditions would require them. The transmission line will carry three energized wires and one non-energized optical ground wire for lightning protection, which will also provide communications between the electrical facilities. In some areas, Crow Wing Power's distribution lines may be underbuilt on cross-arms on the transmission line structures (see bottom photo). Structures without underbuild will generally be 60 to 75 feet in height with 300- to 400-foot spans. Those with underbuild will generally be 70-85 feet in height with 250- to 300-foot spans.

The project will require modifications at Minnesota Power's Little Falls Substation and a new 115 kV transformer will replace the existing 34.5 kV transformer at Crow Wing Power's Little Falls Substation.

After public notification and an open house, Great River Energy will apply to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commision for a Route Permit. Great River Energy will request a width of 300 feet for the permit corridor, although the easement width will only be 50 feet on each side of the transmission centerline, within the permitted corridor. Once the project has received approval and the transmission line route is finalized, survey will be performed. Landowners will be contacted and a fair offer of compensation will be presented along with the easement. Easements will allow the poles to be located on private property, although the majority of the easement area will still be available for uses such as agricultural cultivation, underground utilities, fencing and access drives.

Typical 115 kV Transmission Structure With Distribution Underbuild

Project Schedule

Open house and public notifications.....November/December 2010
Project permitting.....Fall 2011
Easement acquisition.....Fall/Winter 2011
Construction.....Early 2012

For ongoing status updates, visit www.greatriverenergy.com/LittleFalls or contact:

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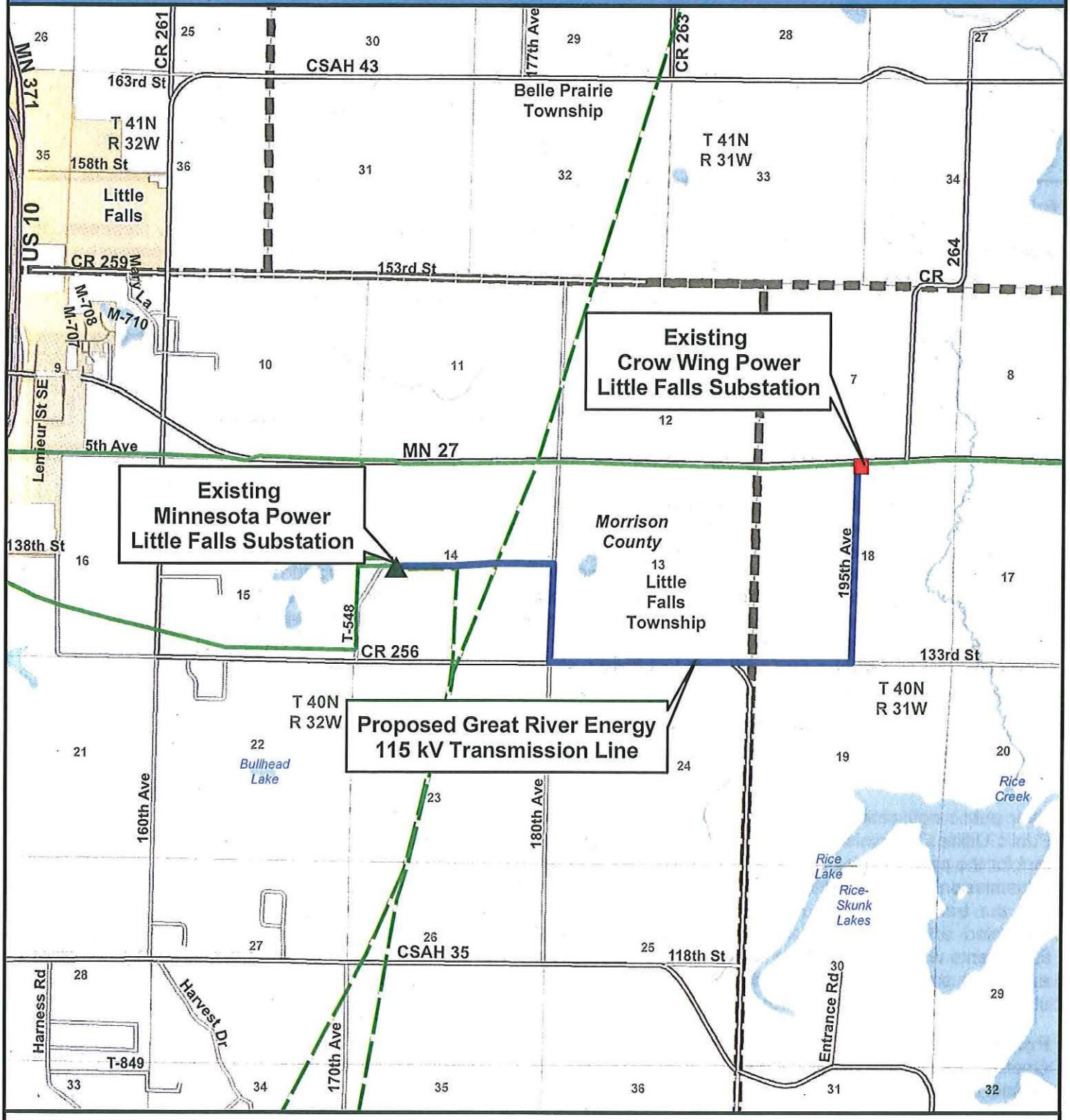
Great River Energy
763-445-5977 or 1-888-521-0130 ext. 763-445-5977
mlommel@grenergy.com

Rob Moser
Crow Wing Power
(218) 825-2827 or 1-800-648-9401
moser@cwpower.com

Date last revised: 11/23/2010

Project Map



Crow Wing Power

- Existing Distribution Sub

Great River Energy

- Proposed 115 kV Transmission Line
- Existing Single Circuit 69 kV Transmission Line

Minnesota Power

- Transmission Substation
- 34.5 kV Transmission Line
- 115 kV AC Transmission Line

0 0.5 1 Miles

N

GREAT RIVER ENERGY

A Touchstone Energy Cooperative

Date last revised: 11/23/2010

Parlow, Marsha GRE-MG

From: Andrew_Horton@fws.gov
Sent: Friday, January 07, 2011 11:41 AM
To: Parlow, Marsha GRE-MG
Cc: Paul_Soler@fws.gov
Subject: Proposed Little Falls Transmission Line Construction

Marsha Parlow
Transmission Permitting Analyst
Great River Energy
12100 Elm Creek Boulevard
Maple Grove, MN 55369

Dear Ms. Parlow,

Our records indicate there are no federally listed or proposed species and/or designated or proposed critical habitat within the action area of the proposed project. The project area does run along a half mile portion of the authorized acquisition boundary for Crane Meadows National Wildlife Refuge and is within a half mile of refuge owned lands. Crane Meadows National Wildlife Refuge is an important bird area for migratory waterfowl and sandhill cranes. The whooping crane is also an occasional visitor to the refuge during migration and is currently listed as a nonessential, experimental population and protected under certain provisions of the Endangered Species Act (for more information please refer to http://www.fws.gov/midwest/whoopingcrane/).

Given the proximity of the project to the Crane Meadows National Wildlife Refuge, we recommend that bird flight diverters be installed on the shield wire along a mile stretch of the transmission line along 133rd St. and 195th Ave, located in the SW 1/4 of Section 18, Township 40, Range 31.

If project plans change, additional information on listed or proposed species becomes available, or new species are listed that may be affected by the project, consultation should be reinitiated. This concludes section
7 consultation for proposed construction at the above location. Thank you for your cooperation in meeting our joint responsibilities under section 7 of the Endangered Species Act. If you have any further endangered species questions, please contact me at (612) 725-3548 x2208.

Sincerely,

Andrew Horton
Fish and Wildlife Biologist
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Twin Cities ES Field Office
4101 American Blvd East
Bloomington, MN 55425-1665
(612) 725-3548 ext. 2208

GREAT RIVER ENERGY®

12300 Elm Creek Boulevard • Maple Grove, Minnesota 55369-4718 • 763-445-5000 • Fax 763-445-5050 • www.GreatRiverEnergy.com

7 December 2010

Mr. Leo Garbowski
US Army Corps of Engineers
Brainerd Field Office
10867 East Gull Lake Dr. NW
Brainerd, MN 56401

RE: Proposed Little Falls Transmission Line Construction
Morrison County, Minnesota
T 40 N, R32W, Sections 13 and 14
T 40 N, R31W, Section 18

WO# 75881

Dear Mr. Baer:

Great River Energy is proposing a new 115 kilovolt (kV) transmission line project near Little Falls in Morrison County, Minnesota. The line is to support the 115 kV conversion of the 34.5 kV Crow Wing Power Little Falls Substation located in Section 18 of Little Falls Township. The conversion is necessary to improve voltage support in the area. Please note, on November 23rd a notice of our December 6th open house was sent to Tamara Cameron.

Great River Energy is requesting information on the possible effects of the proposed project on floodplains, wetlands, and other important natural resources that occur in the project area. The transmission line will not span any DNR public waters. Although there are wetlands in the vicinity of the line (see enclosed map), there will be no dredging and filling and impacts from pole placement will be very minimal. A project description and NWI map has been included for your review. The proposed line is marked in blue.

Great River Energy is requesting concurrence of its interpretation of the possible effects of the new transmission line on wetlands that occur in the project area. We would appreciate receiving any written comments from your office by Friday, 7 January 2011. If you have any questions about this proposed project, please contact me at (763) 445-5215. If you wish to respond by e-mail, my address is mparlow@grenergy.com. Thank you for your cooperation and assistance.

Sincerely,

GREAT RIVER ENERGY

Marsha Parlow

Marsha Parlow
Transmission Permitting Analyst

Enclosures

S:\Member Services\Environmental\Transmission\Projects\75881 Little Falls\Agency Letters\Little Falls ACE.doc

Proposed Little Falls 115 kV Substation and Transmission Line

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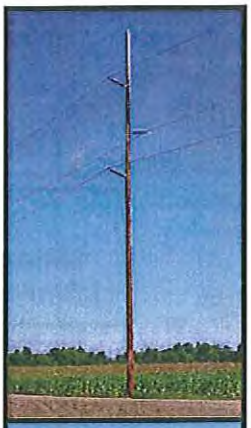

Typical 115 kV Transmission Structure

Planned Project

The single circuit poles will typically be single-pole wood structures with horizontal post insulators (see top photo). Guy wires with anchors and possibly two-pole or steel structures may be required in limited areas if needed for long spans or if soil conditions would require them. The transmission line will carry three energized wires and one non-energized optical ground wire for lightning protection, which will also provide communications between the electrical facilities. In some areas, Crow Wing Power's distribution lines may be underbuilt on cross-arms on the transmission line structures (see bottom photo). Structures without underbuild will generally be 60 to 75 feet in height with 300- to 400-foot spans. Those with underbuild will generally be 70-85 feet in height with 250- to 300-foot spans.

The project will require modifications at Minnesota Power's Little Falls Substation and a new 115 kV transformer will replace the existing 34.5 kV transformer at Crow Wing Power's Little Falls Substation.

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After public notification and an open house, Great River Energy will apply to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commision for a Route Permit. Great River Energy will request a width of 300 feet for the permit corridor, although the easement width will only be 50 feet on each side of the transmission centerline, within the permitted corridor. Once the project has received approval and the transmission line route is finalized, survey will be performed. Landowners will be contacted and a fair offer of compensation will be presented along with the easement. Easements will allow the poles to be located on private property, although the majority of the easement area will still be available for uses such as agricultural cultivation, underground utilities, fencing and access drives.

Project Schedule

Open house and public notifications.....November/December 2010
Project permitting.....Fall 2011
Easement acquisition.....Fall/Winter 2011
Construction.....Early 2012

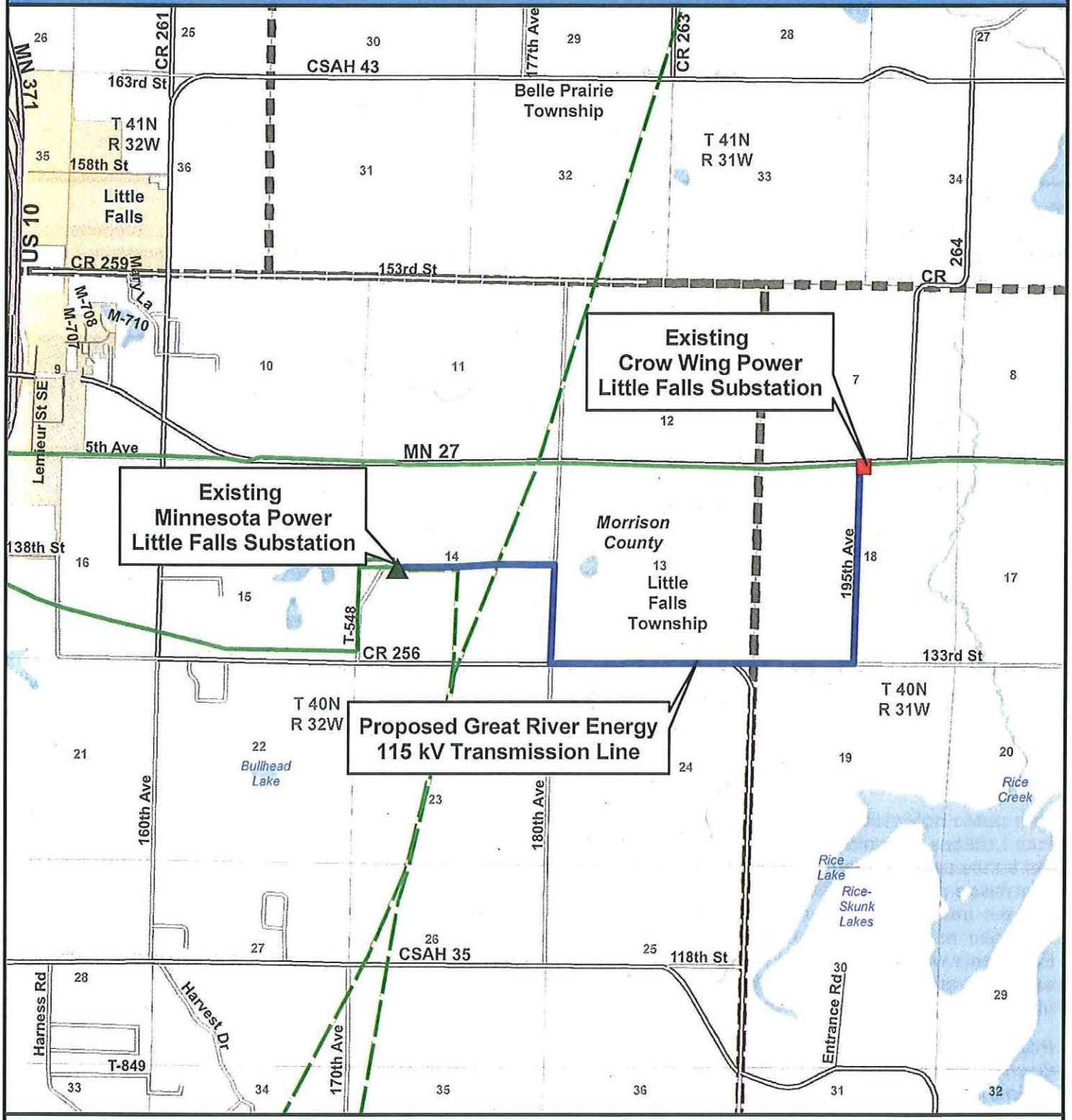
For ongoing status updates, visit www.greatriverenergy.com/LittleFalls or contact:

Michelle Lommel
Great River Energy
763-445-5977 or 1-888-521-0130 ext. 763-445-5977
mlommel@grenergy.com

Rob Moser
Crow Wing Power
(218) 825-2827 or 1-800-648-9401
moser@cwpower.com

Date last revised: 11/23/2010

Project Map



Crow Wing Power

- Existing Distribution Sub

Great River Energy

- Proposed 115 kV Transmission Line
- Existing Single Circuit 69 kV Transmission Line

Minnesota Power

- Transmission Substation
- 34.5 kV Transmission Line
- 115 kV AC Transmission Line

0 0.5 1 Miles

N

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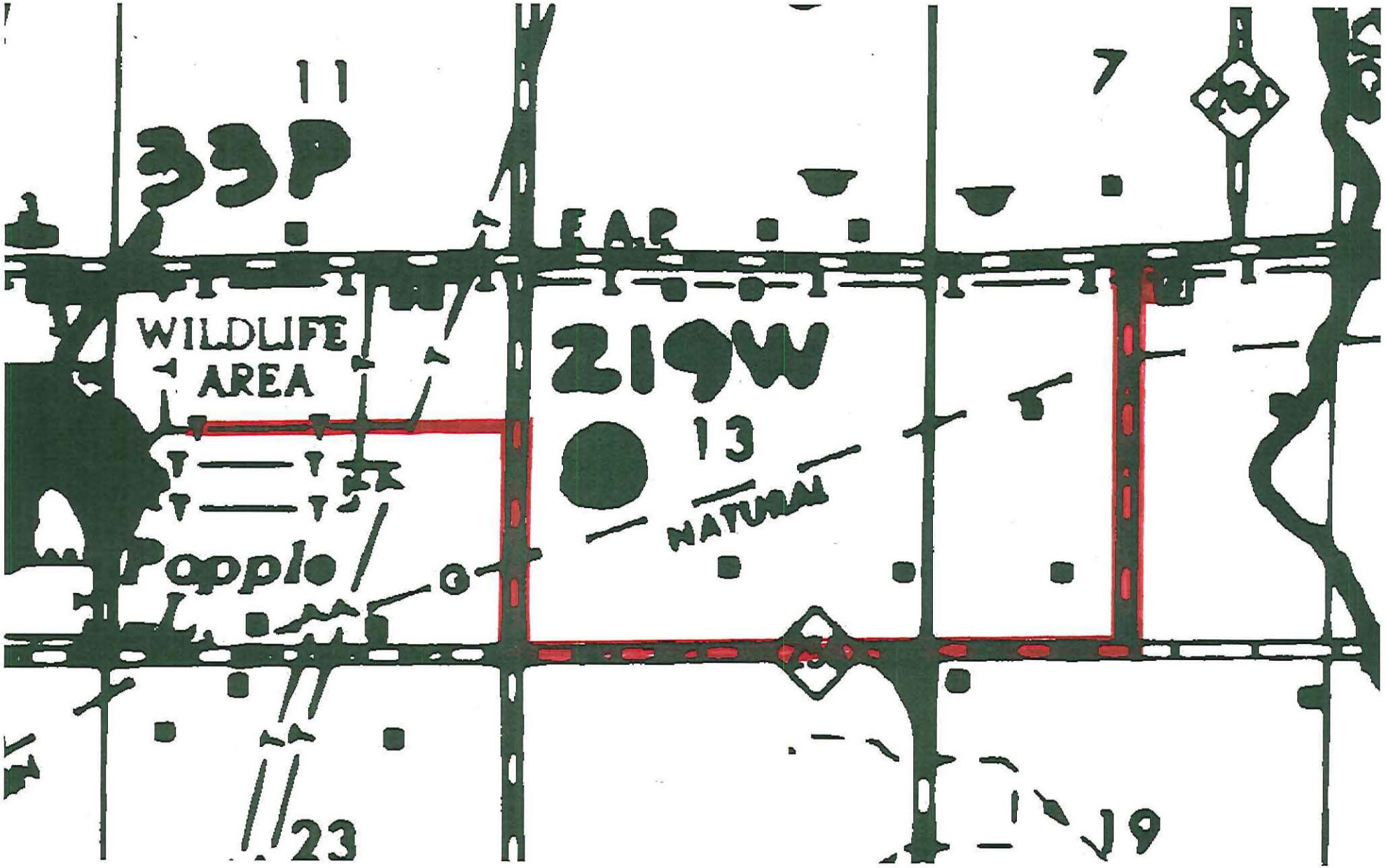
Date last revised: 11/23/2010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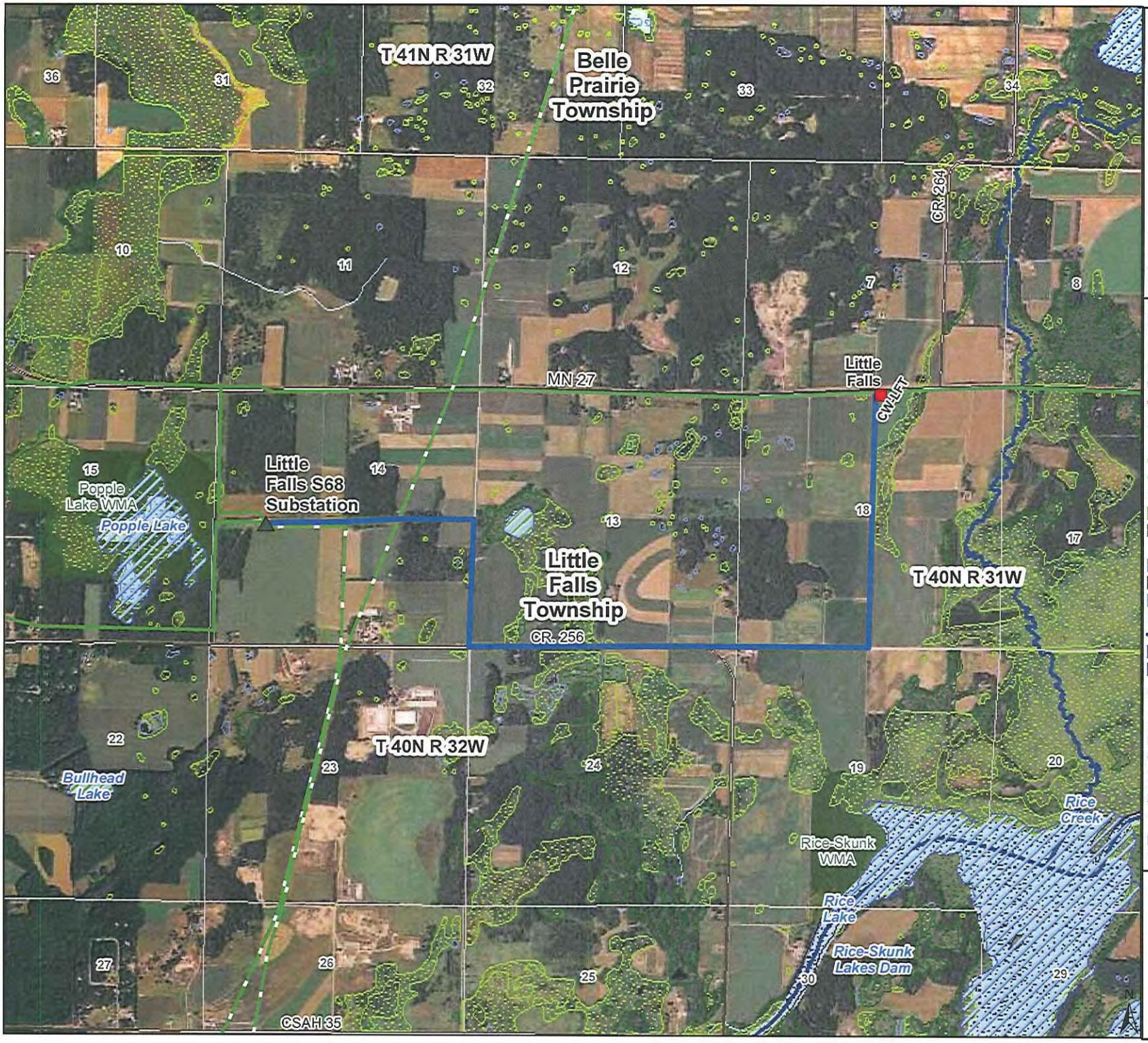

GREAT RIVER ENERGY®

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Crow Wing Power
- Existing Distribution Sub
- Proposed Distribution Substation

Great River Energy
- Proposed 115 kV Transmission Line
- Existing 69 kV Transmission Line

Minnesota Power
- Transmission Substation
- 34.5 kV Transmission Line
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NWI Wetlands
- Freshwater Emergent Wetland
- Freshwater Forested/ Shrub Wetland
- Freshwater Pond
- Lake
- Riverine
- Lakes and Rivers
- PWI River
- Public Water Basin
- Public Water Wetland

0 0.25 0.5 Miles

Data Sources Vary Between MNDOT, MNDNR, MNGEO and Great River Energy
National Wetlands Inventory (NWI)
PWI & Riparian Area from MN DNR
2010 Color Orthophotos from Farm Services Administration (FSA)

Map Projection:
UTM, NAD83, Zone15, Meters

Little Falls 115 kV Conversion Project Hydrologic Features

Updated: May 12, 2010

RECEIVED JAN 2 4 2011

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
ST. PAUL DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
180 FIFTH STREET EAST
ST. PAUL, MN 55101-1678

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

January 20, 2011

Operations
Regulatory (2010-05172-LAG)

Ms. Marsha Parlow
Great River Energy
12300 Elm Creek Boulevard
Maple Grove, Minnesota 55369-4718

Dear Ms. Parlow:

We have reviewed the information submitted for your project to upgrade an existing electrical substation and construct a new 115kV transmission line near the City of Little Falls in Morrison County, Minnesota. You requested information on the possible effects of the project with respect to various natural resources in the project area.

This response is limited to the Corps regulatory jurisdiction and permitting requirements, and does not address specific environmental impacts or mitigation.

The project would need a Department of the Army (DOA) permit, under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, if the work involves a discharge of dredged or fill material into any water of the United States, including most wetlands. A review of the National Wetland Inventory mapping suggests that there are several wetlands in the project area.

The project would need a DOA permit, under Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act, if the work involves a navigable water of the United States. A preliminary review of the project map indicates that there are no navigable waters of the United States in the project area.

If the project would include any temporary placement of excavated or fill material into a waterbody or wetland, the applicant may also need authorization for that work.

Applications for permit may be addressed to the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, Regulatory Branch, 10867 East Gull Lake Dr. NW, Brainerd, Minnesota 56401. If you have any questions, contact Leo Grabowski in our Brainerd office at (218) 829-8402. In any correspondence or inquiries, please refer to the Regulatory number shown above.

Sincerely,

Leo Grabowski

for Tamara E. Cameron
Chief, Regulatory Branch

GREAT RIVER ENERGY®

12300 Elm Creek Boulevard • Maple Grove, Minnesota 55369-4718 • 763-445-5000 • Fax 763-445-5050 • www.GreatRiverEnergy.com

November 23, 2010

WO# 68601
CW-LL Line

Jamie Schrenzel, Planner Principal
MN Dept of Natural Resources
Env Policy & Review Unit
500 Lafayette Rd
St. Paul, MN 55155

Subject: Proposed Little Falls 115 kV Transmission Line Project
Open House Notification

Great River Energy is the wholesale electric provider to Crow Wing Power and 27 other distribution cooperatives in Minnesota and Wisconsin. We are writing to inform you of a 115 kV transmission line and substation upgrade project. This notice is being sent to invite you to attend an open house about the project.

The proposed project is needed to improve the reliability of electric service and reduce problems associated with low voltage. The project consists of:

- Upgrading the existing Crow Wing Power Little Falls Substation from 34.5 kV to 115 kV
- Constructing a new 115 kV transmission line which will provide the new source to the upgraded substation
- Adding a 115 kV breaker and related equipment at Minnesota Power's existing Little Falls Substation

Additional project information and a map of the proposed transmission line route are provided on the enclosed fact sheet.

You are encouraged to attend the open house to learn more information about the project or have your questions answered by a utility representative. If you are an agency such as the Corps of Engineers or the DNR, this notice is of a general nature and you may or may not have an interest in this project. Our environmental department will be contacting you with details of the project and if permits are needed from your agency a formal application will be submitted. The open house is being held:

Monday, December 6, 2010 from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m.
Little Falls Township Hall
15132 Gordon Circle, Little Falls, MN 56325

No formal presentation is planned; you are encouraged to come any time during the hours indicated. If you have any questions or comments, please contact Michelle Lommel of Great River Energy at 763-445-5977 or toll free at 1-888-521-0130 ext. 763-445-5977 or by e-mail at mlommel@grenergy.com. Ongoing updates will be available at www.greatriverenergy.com/LittleFalls.

Direct Dial (763) 445-5977 E-Mail mlommel@grenergy.com FAX (763) 445-6777

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Typical 115 kV Transmission Structure

Planned Project

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Typical 115 kV Transmission Structure With Distribution Underbuild

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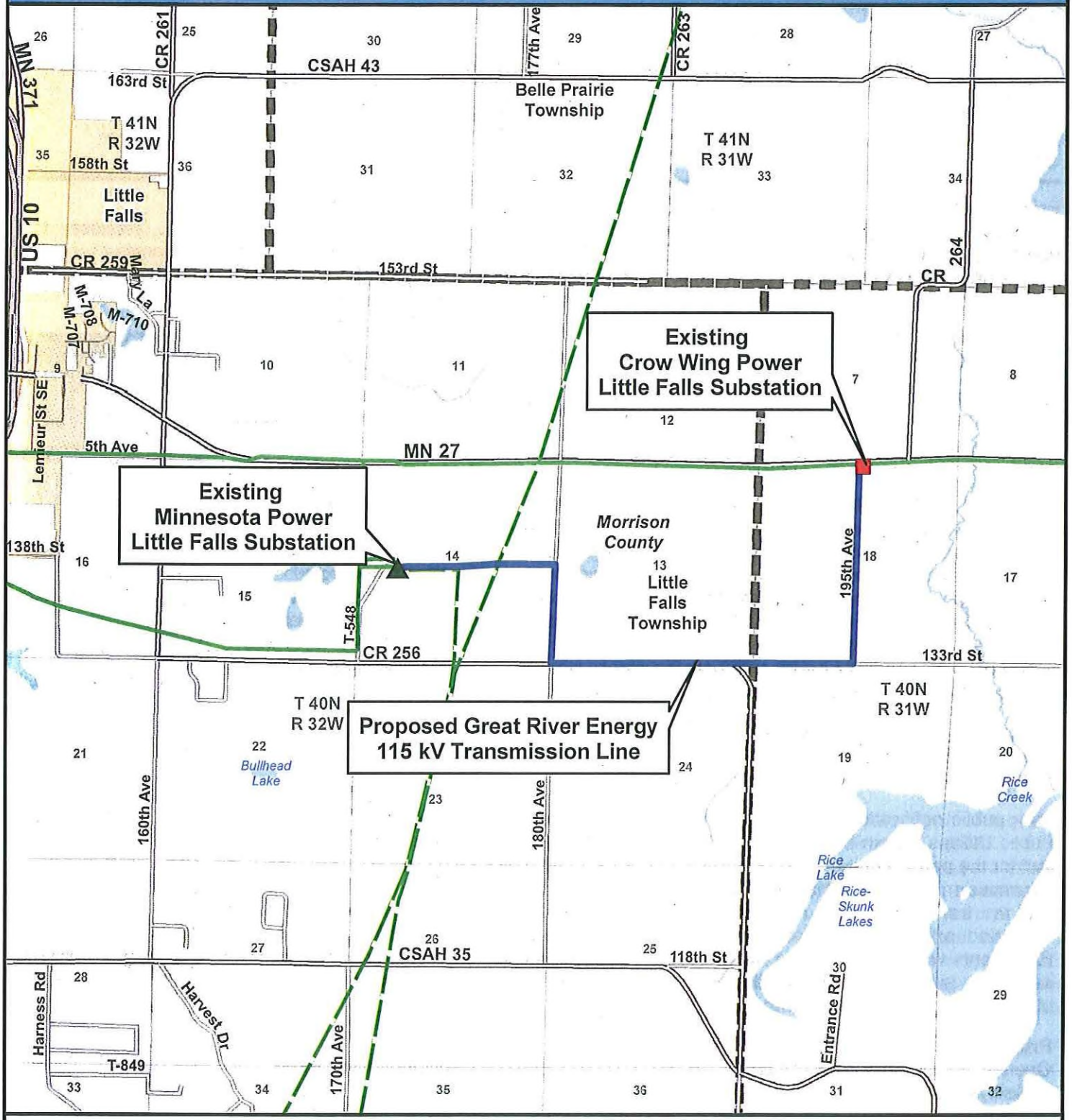
Date last revised: 11/23/2010

Project Map



Crow Wing Power

- Existing Distribution Sub

Great River Energy

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- Existing Single Circuit 69 kV Transmission Line

Minnesota Power

- Transmission Substation
- 34.5 kV Transmission Line
- 115 kV AC Transmission Line

0 0.5 1 Miles

N

GREAT RIVER ENERGY
A Touchstone Energy Cooperative

Date last revised: 11/23/2010

Parlow, Marsha GRE-MG

From: Lommel, Michelle GRE-MG
Sent: Tuesday, November 30, 2010 10:06 AM
To: Liddell, Beau L (DNR)
Cc: Parlow, Marsha GRE-MG; Barthel, Toshana GRE-MG
Subject: RE: Great River Energy proposed 115 kV transmission project in Little Falls area

Beau,

Thank you for your response to the notice we sent out. I have copied Marsha Parlow, who will be working on the permitting with the PUC for the project. She also handles our DNR water crossing permits. I have also copied Tosha Barthel, who handles all of our other land crossing permits.

We'll review your recommendation and follow-up with you if we need additional information or clarification. We are all familiar with the large bird diverters.

Regards,

Michelle Lommel
Sr. Field Representative, Land Rights

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From: Liddell, Beau L (DNR) [mailto:Beaulin.Liddell@state.mn.us]
Sent: Monday, November 29, 2010 11:51 AM
To: Lommel, Michelle GRE-MG
Subject: Great River Energy proposed 115 kV transmission project in Little Falls area

Hi Michelle, got the notification in the mail regarding this project. I will not be attending. We generally handle environmental review on these projects internally rather than attending informational meetings.

Just a heads-up that when it comes time for me to comment internally on this project, I will recommend that large swan diverters be installed on the lines since the project occurs close to the Rice-Skunk wetland complex which attracts thousands of waterfowl every spring and fall, including swans and sandhill cranes. With the proximity to the wetland complex and the fact that sandhill cranes and geese routinely use the airspace throughout the project area, especially when flying to and from feeding fields, I will recommend placing diverts on almost the entire length of the line. I recommend spacing diverters every 25 feet if there will be only one line, or since this is likely a multiple line system, spacing can be staggered along the various lines so that any given 25' span of the entire transmission line would have a diverter on it.

There are some implementation examples of swan diverters in the area in case you're not familiar with them. The closest is a small span across the Platt River just south of Royalton along highway 10 which shows how diverters should be staggered on a multiple line system.

Thanks for the opportunity to comment.

Beau Liddell
Area Wildlife Supervisor
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