



11 April 2011

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

RE: Notice of Intent by Great River Energy and Minnesota Power to Submit a Route Permit Application under the Alternative Permitting Process

Dear Dr. Haar:

Pursuant to Minn. Rules 7850.2800, subp. 2, this letter serves as notice to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (Commission) that Great River Energy and Minnesota Power intend to submit a Route Permit application for the Little Falls 115 kV Transmission Project in Morrison County, Minnesota under the Alternative Permitting processes of Minn. Rules 7850.2800 to 7850.3900.

It is anticipated that the application will be submitted to the Commission in late April or early May 2011.

Please feel free to call if you have any questions regarding this notice.

Sincerely,

GREAT RIVER ENERGY

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Marsha Parlow".

Marsha Parlow
Transmission Permitting Analyst
763-445-5215

MINNESOTA POWER

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Daniel McCourtney".

Daniel McCourtney
Environmental Compliance Specialist II
218-355-3515

c: Deborah Pile, Office of Energy Security

s:\legal\environmental\transmission\projects\75881 Little Falls\Permitting Process\PUCnotltr



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

Ms. Lisa Joyal
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
Natural Heritage and Nongame Research Program
500 Lafayette Road, Box 25
St. Paul, MN 55155

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 Ms. Joyal:

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. The conversion is necessary to improve voltage support in the area.

The DNR Public Waters Inventory (PWI) maps indicate that the new line will not affect any public waterbodies. Although, the DNR Rare Features map indicates two features of interest in the vicinity of the project area. Blanding Turtle areas located in Section 24, T40N, R32W and Section 17, T40N, R30W and the Upland Sandpiper located in Section 19, T40N R30W. However, Great River Energy believes that construction and timing of that construction can keep the impact on these features to a minimum.

Great River Energy is requesting concurrence of its interpretation of the rare features in the vicinity and the possible effects of the new transmission lines on wetlands, threatened and endangered species, and other important state natural resources that occur in the project area. A project description, PWI map and rare features map are enclosed for your information. The proposed line is marked in blue.

Please note that the area office sent us an email in response to our open house notice. I have included their email and the notice for your reference.

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
Transmission Permitting Analyst

Enclosures

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

Proposed Little Falls 115 kV Substation and Transmission Line



GREAT RIVER ENERGY
A The AES Energy Company

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.

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 Commission 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

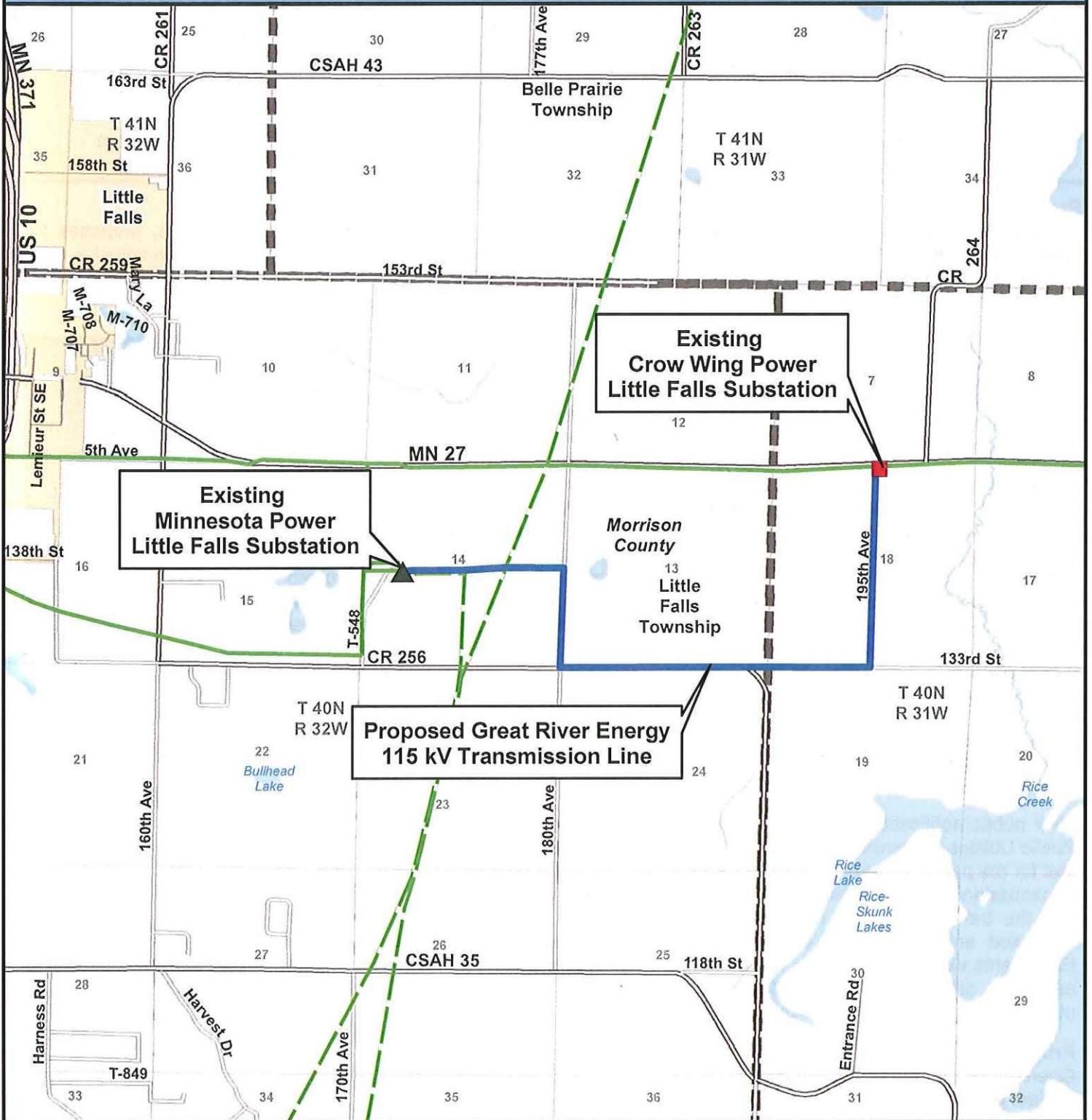


Typical 115 kV
Transmission
Structure



Typical 115 kV
Transmission
Structure
With Distribution
Underbuild

Project Map



Crow Wing Power

■ Existing Distribution Sub

Great River Energy

— Proposed 115 kV Transmission Line

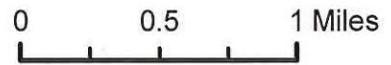
— Existing Single Circuit 69 kV Transmission Line

Minnesota Power

▲ Transmission Substation

— 34.5 kV Transmission Line

— 115 kV AC Transmission Line

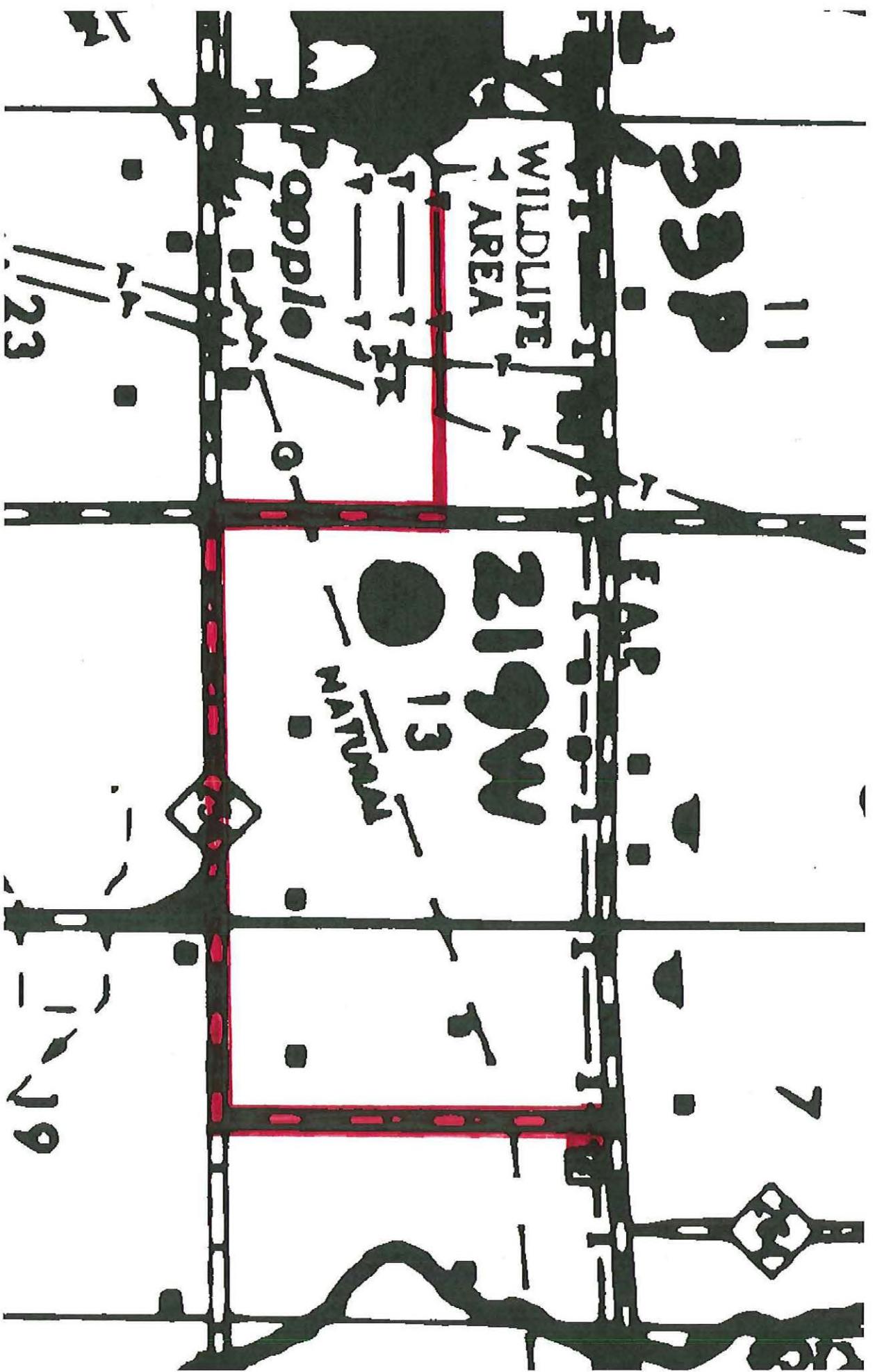


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Date last revised: 11/23/2010

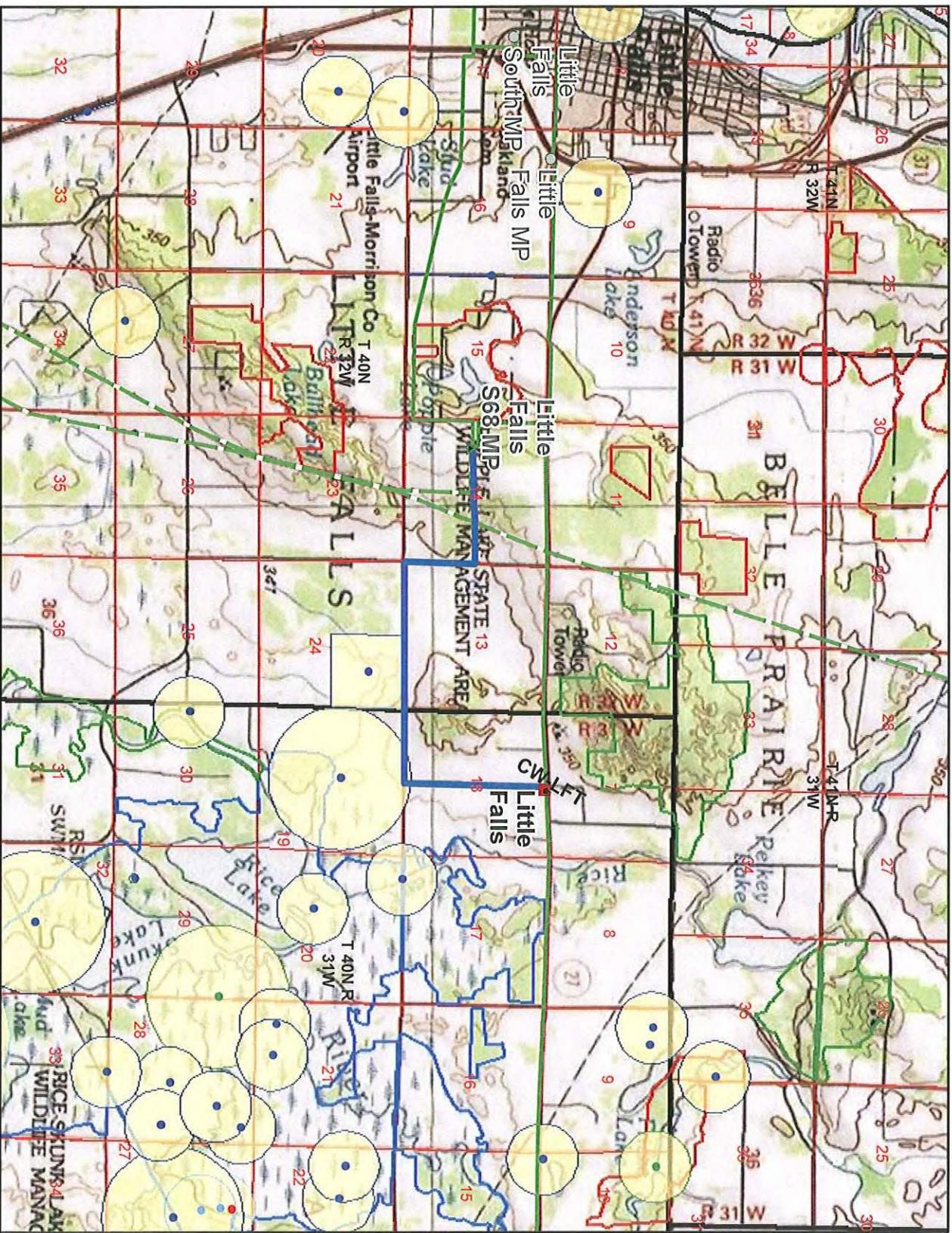


Rare Features in the Vicinity of the Little Falls 115 kV Transmission Line Conversion Project

Township T40N R31/32W

Section 13, 14, 18, 19 24

County: Morrison



- Legend**
- Proposed Crow Wing Power Distribution Substation
 - Proposed GRE Overhead Transmission Line
 - 115 kV Transmission Line
 - Rare Natural Features Points
 - Vertebrate Animal
 - Terrestrial Community - Other Classification
 - Invertebrate Animal
 - Nonvascular Plant
 - Vascular Plant
 - Animal Assemblage
 - Fungus
 - Other (Ecological)
 - Rare Natural Features Polygons
 - Vertebrate Animal
 - Terrestrial Community - Other Classification
 - Invertebrate Animal
 - Nonvascular Plant
 - Vascular Plant
 - Animal Assemblage
 - Fungus
 - Other (Ecological)
 - Sites of Biodiversity Significance
 - Outstanding
 - High
 - Moderate
 - Below

0.50 0.25 0 0.5 Miles



Little Falls
115 kV Transmission Line
Conversion

Updated: 12/7/2010
 Rare Features from the MN DNR Natural Heritage Data Set: 01/05/2009
 *24k Digital Raster Graphic from the ESRI USGS Topo Image Service

Parlow, Marsha GRE-MG

From: Joyal, Lisa (DNR) [Lisa.Joyal@state.mn.us]
Sent: Wednesday, January 26, 2011 9:39 PM
To: Parlow, Marsha GRE-MG
Subject: RE: Proposed Little Falls Transmission Line construction, Little Falls, MN

I have reviewed the information that was submitted regarding the above project, and have the following comment:

- Blanding's turtles (*Emydoidea blandingii*), a state-listed threatened species, have been reported from the vicinity of the proposed project and may be encountered on site. If Blanding's turtles are found on the site, please remember that state law and rules prohibit the destruction of threatened or endangered species, except under certain prescribed conditions. If turtles are in imminent danger they should be moved by hand out of harm's way, otherwise they should be left undisturbed.

For your information, I have attached a Blanding's turtle fact sheet that describes the habitat use and life history of this species. The fact sheet also provides two lists of recommendations for avoiding and minimizing impacts to this rare turtle. **Please refer to the first list of recommendations for your project.** If greater protection for turtles is desired, the second list of additional recommendations can also be implemented. The attached flyer should be given to all contractors working in the area.

Thank you for notifying us of this project, and for the opportunity to provide comments.

Lisa Joyal

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Lisa Joyal  
Natural Heritage Review Coordinator  
NHIS Data Distribution Coordinator  
Division of Ecological and Water Resources  
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources  
500 Lafayette Road, Box 25  
St. Paul, MN 55155

phone: 651-259-5109  
[lisa.joyal@state.mn.us](mailto:lisa.joyal@state.mn.us)  
[www.mndnr.gov/eco](http://www.mndnr.gov/eco)





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7 December 2010

Ms. Mary Ann Heidmann  
Manager of Government Programs & Compliance  
Minnesota Historical Society  
345 Kellogg Blvd. West  
St. Paul, MN 55102-1906

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 Ms. Heidmann:

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 23<sup>rd</sup> a notice of our December 6<sup>th</sup> open house was sent to the compliance section.

Great River Energy is requesting information on the possible effects of the proposed project on cultural and historic properties in the project area. A project description/map is 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 or concerns, please contact me at (763) 445-5215. If you wish to contact me by e-mail, my address is [mparlow@greenergy.com](mailto:mparlow@greenergy.com).

Sincerely,

GREAT RIVER ENERGY

Marsha Parlow  
Transmission Permitting Analyst

Cc: Britta L. Bloomberg, Minnesota Historical Society

Enclosure

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# Proposed Little Falls 115 kV Substation and Transmission Line



GREAT RIVER ENERGY  
A Public Service Company

**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:

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## Planned Project

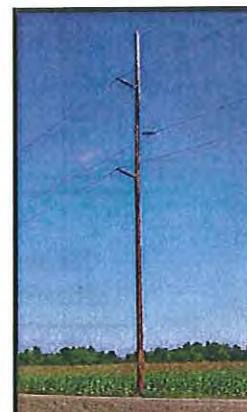
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## Project Schedule

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



Typical 115 kV Transmission Structure



Typical 115 kV Transmission Structure With Distribution Underbuild

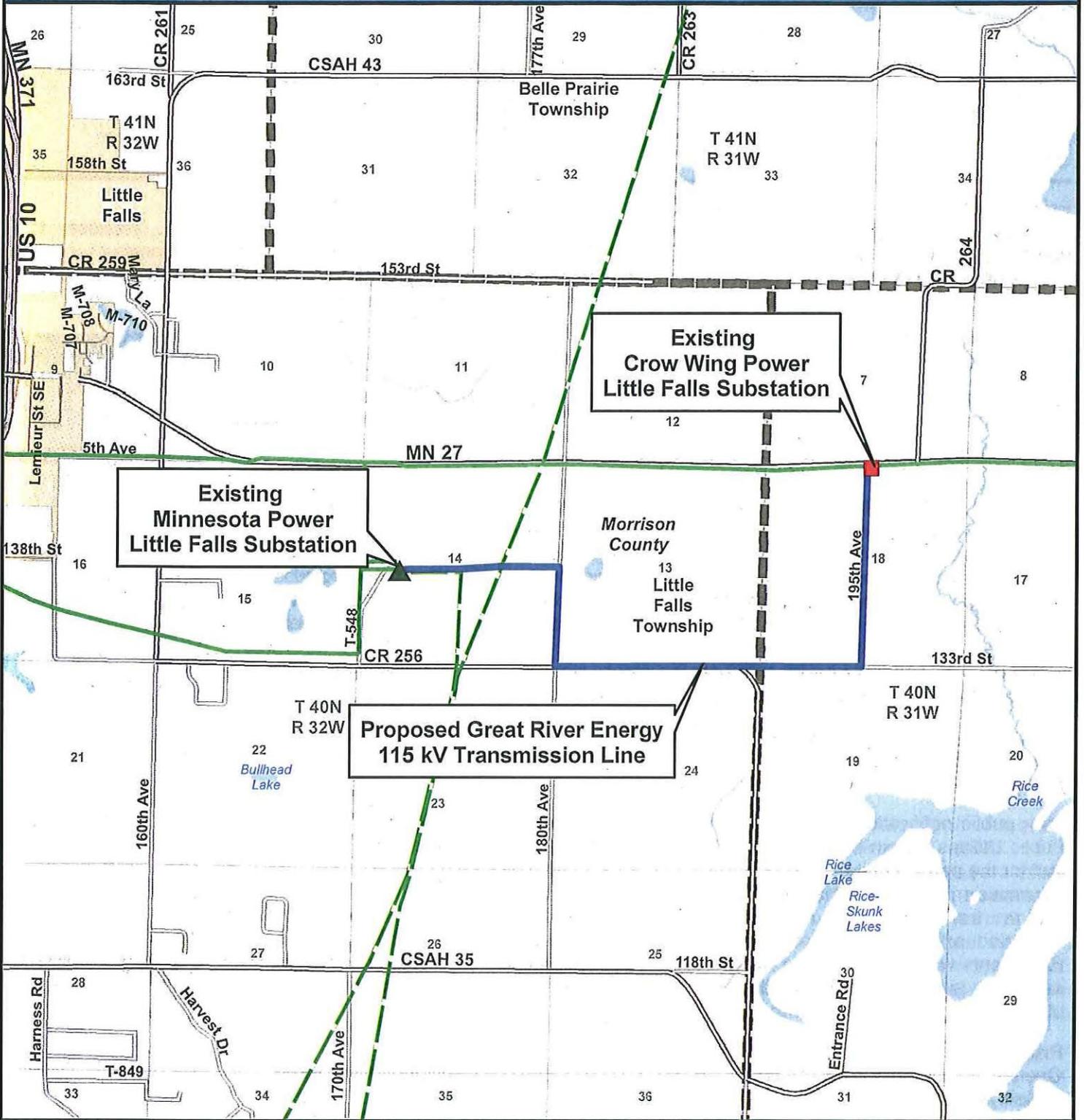
For ongoing status updates, visit [www.greatriverenergy.com/LittleFalls](http://www.greatriverenergy.com/LittleFalls) or contact:

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

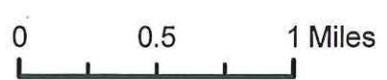
— Existing Single Circuit 69 kV Transmission Line

**Minnesota Power**

▲ Transmission Substation

— 34.5 kV Transmission Line

--- 115 kV AC Transmission Line



**GREAT RIVER ENERGY**  
A Touchstone Energy Cooperative



Date last revised: 11/23/2010



STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE

December 30, 2010

Ms. Marsha Parlow  
Transmission, Permitting & Compliance  
Great River Energy  
12300 Elm Creek Blvd.  
Maple Grove, MN 55369-4718

RE: Construction of Little Falls Transmission Line and Modification of the Existing Little Falls Substation  
T40 R31 S18-19 & T40 R32 S13-14, 24, Morrison County  
SHPO Number: 2011-0787

Dear Ms. Parlow:

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the above project. It has been reviewed pursuant to the responsibilities given the Minnesota Historical Society by the Minnesota Historic Sites Act and the Minnesota Field Archaeology Act.

Based on our review of the project information, we conclude that there are no properties listed on the National or State Registers of Historic Places, and no known or suspected archaeological properties in the area that will be affected by this project.

Please note that this comment letter does not address the requirements of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and 36CFR800, Procedures of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation for the protection of historic properties. If this project is considered for federal assistance, or requires a federal permit or license, it should be submitted to our office with reference to the assisting federal agency.

Please contact our Compliance Section at (651) 259-3455 if you have any questions regarding our review of this project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Britta L. Bloomberg'.

Britta L. Bloomberg  
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer



May 16, 2011

Westwood Professional Services  
7699 Anagram Drive  
Eden Prairie, MN 55344  
MAIN 952-937-5150  
FAX 952-937-5822  
TOLL FREE 888-937-5150  
EMAIL wps@westwoodps.com  
www.westwoodps.com



Marsha Parlow  
Great River Energy  
2300 Elm Creek Blvd.  
Maple Grove, MN 55369

**Re: Cultural Resource Literature Review for the Proposed Little Falls 115 kV Transmission Project, Morrison County, Minnesota.**

Dear Ms. Parlow:

Westwood Professional Services, Inc. (Westwood) was contracted by Great River Energy to conduct cultural resources literature review of the location of a proposed transmission line and new substation. The proposed transmission line route examined will be approximately 4 miles in length and is located in Little Falls Township (T 40N, R 32W) and Agram Township (T 40N, R 31W) in Morrison County, MN. The review consisted of an examination of resources including historic mapping and archaeological site files.

On May 16, 2011, Westwood Senior Cultural Resource Specialist Dean T. Sather conducted a background literature search of the proposed transmission line route and a one-mile buffer at the Office of the State Archaeologist (OSA) located at Fort Snelling in St. Paul, MN, and the Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) located at the Minnesota History Center in St. Paul, MN. Archaeological site files were examined to obtain a list of all previously recorded archaeological sites within the proposed project area. Other sources examined included the Andreas' Illustrated Atlas of Minnesota, 1874 and the historic Trygg maps.

No archaeological sites or documented historical structures have been recorded within the proposed route or within the one-mile buffer. As evidenced by the archival research there are few potentially eligible structures currently inventoried and any historic structures within the proposed project area will not experience any adverse visual impact. While no cultural resource sites have been located within the proposed project area a series of mound features have been recorded along the shores of Rice Lake approximately 2 miles southeast of the project area. One of the listed sites has been included as part of a National Register Historic District.



Ms. Marsha Parlow  
May 16, 2011  
Page 2



Upon review of the archaeological sites and survey data compiled for the defined project area, Westwood concludes that the paucity of recorded archaeological sites along the proposed route are not necessarily indicative of a lack of cultural resources in the area, but instead may reflect the lack of survey. Due to the proximity of mound features the route has an estimated moderate to high potential for cultural resources. However, we concur with the findings of the Minnesota SHPO summarized in their letter issued December 30, 2010, that no known or suspected archaeological properties will be affected by this project.

Sincerely,

WESTWOOD PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dean T. Sather'.

Dean T. Sather, MA, RPA  
Senior Cultural Resource Specialist





12300 Elm Creek Boulevard • Maple Grove, Minnesota 55369-4718 • 763-445-5000 • Fax 763-445-5050 • [www.GreatRiverEnergy.com](http://www.GreatRiverEnergy.com)

7 December 2010

Gene Scott  
Office of Aeronautics  
Minnesota Department of Transportation  
222 E. Plato Blvd.  
St. Paul, MN 55107-1618

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. Scott:

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.

The transmission line will be constructed with single wood poles that will generally range between 60 and 85 feet in height. Great River Energy is requesting information on the possible effects of the proposed project on airports or airstrips in the project area. A project description is enclosed for your information. The proposed line is marked in blue.

From my research, I find that the closest airports to the project are the public airports, Little Falls/Morrison County-Lindbergh Field Airport (2.1 nm W) and Ray's Miller AAF Airport (8.9 nm NNW).

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](mailto:mparlow@GREnergy.com). Thank you for your cooperation and assistance.

Sincerely,

GREAT RIVER ENERGY

Marsha Parlow  
Transmission Permitting Analyst

Enclosure

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

