



Energy Facility Permitting
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PUBLIC COMMENT SHEET

North Rochester to Chester Transmission Line Project

PUC Docket Number: E002/TL-11-800

Name:

Representing:

Alfred & Yvonne Pedersen

Address:

Rochester, Minn. 55906

Email:

4236-125th St. N.E.

Comments:

See attach letters & maps.

Alfred & Yvonne Pedersen

Please submit comments by 4:30pm, December 8 2011 to:

Matthew Langan
 Minnesota Dept. of Commerce
 85 7th Place East
 Suite 500
 St. Paul, MN 55101-2198

Email: matthew.langan@state.mn.us
 Phone: 651-296-2096
 Fax: 651-297-7891

Public Comment Sheet

North Rochester to Chester Transmission Line Project

PUC Docket Number: E002/TL-11-800

Comments:

I have concerns with the preferred route that is being proposed for the 161 kV transmission line between the Chester substation and heading north to connect into the new 345 kV transmission line. The portion of the 161 kV transmission line route that concerns me is the routing located in Sections 4, 9 and 10 in Farmington Township of Olmsted County. The current proposed routing goes from south to north along either side of County Rd 128 NE between sections 9 and 10 for 1 mile then turns left and runs from east to west along 125 St NE between sections 4 and 9 for ½ mile and then connects to the 345 kv transmission in 1 of 3 proposed tap point locations. See attached labeled maps. I want to propose an alternate route that will benefit a number of people that own property in Sections 4, 9 and 10. See attached maps for the proposed alternate route.

The amount 161 kv transmission lines being proposed around the perimeter of Section 9 is 1½ miles. Sections 4 and 10 are adjacent to Section 9 so they share this 1½ miles of transmission lines. The proposed 1½ mile route impacts a total 8 different property owners, 2 residential house sites and the Farmington Town hall. There are 4 property owners (Richard Siem, Lisa Romball, Alfred Thedens, and Reginald Hart) that own parcels of land that could have future building sites (houses) placed on them. The minimum amount of land for a building site is 80 acres. See map for the acreage of each parcel of land.

The proposed alternate on map could provide a route that is ½ mile shorter if the tap location to the 345 kV line would be located in Section 9. This would happen if the modified preferred route of the 345 kV transmission line is chosen to be constructed. If the 161 kV line taps into the 345 Kv line at the Tap 1 or 2 locations then the same amount of 161 kV transmission line will need to be constructed around the perimeter and/or within Section 9 with either route option. The proposed alternate route would only affect 5 property owners, 2 houses and the town hall. The number of property

owners with parcels of land with future building sites (house) are none. See map.

Some other advantages of the alternate proposed route is that it does not cross a wetland that has water in it year round compared to the current route. Refer to maps. The alternate proposed route should be cheaper for the following reasons. First, if the route is ½ mile shorter then less transmission line to be constructed. Secondly, it would not affect the current 69 Kv line as compared to the current proposed route and providing a ½ mile 2 circuit (69 kV and 161 kV) line. Third, there are no property owners affected that have parcels of land that could have future building sites (houses) on them. If there were parcels of land with future building sites affected, the transmission lines could impact desirable locations for the placement of future building sites, which could have a negative impact on the marketable/resale value of the entire parcel of land or change future plans the current owner has for the property. These landowners may request additional compensation when negotiating an easement for the transmission lines to offset the devaluation of the property.

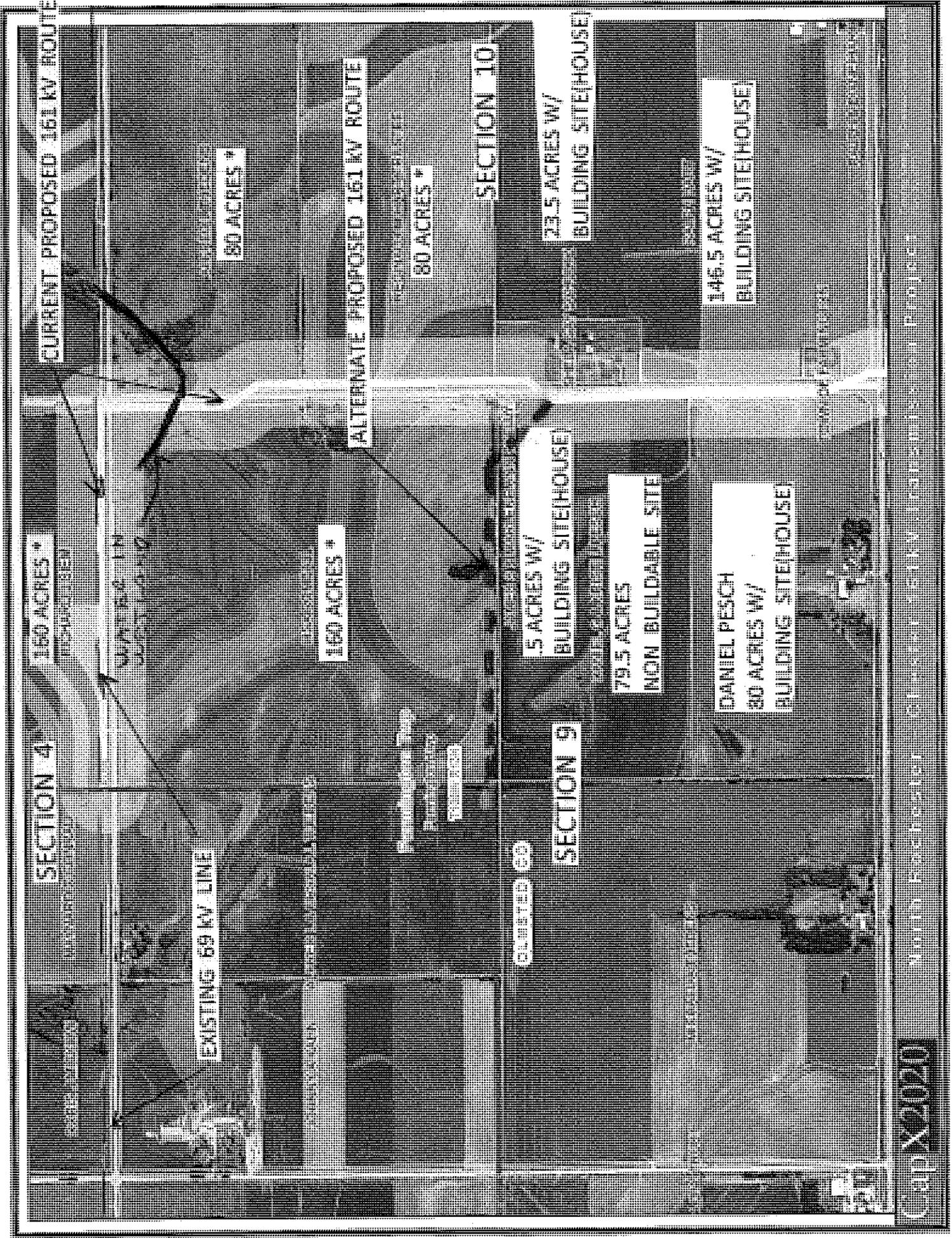
Another advantage to the alternate proposed route is the property owners affected would share more equally the amount of transmission lines along their property. Property owners Lisa Romball and Richard Siem could have transmission lines along 3 sides of that property if the preferred modified route for the 345 kV line is constructed along with the current 161 Kv route. The alternate proposed route would lessen the impact on these properties to only 2 sides for Lisa Romball and Richard Siem but would increase the impact from 1 side to 2 sides for Dan Pesch.

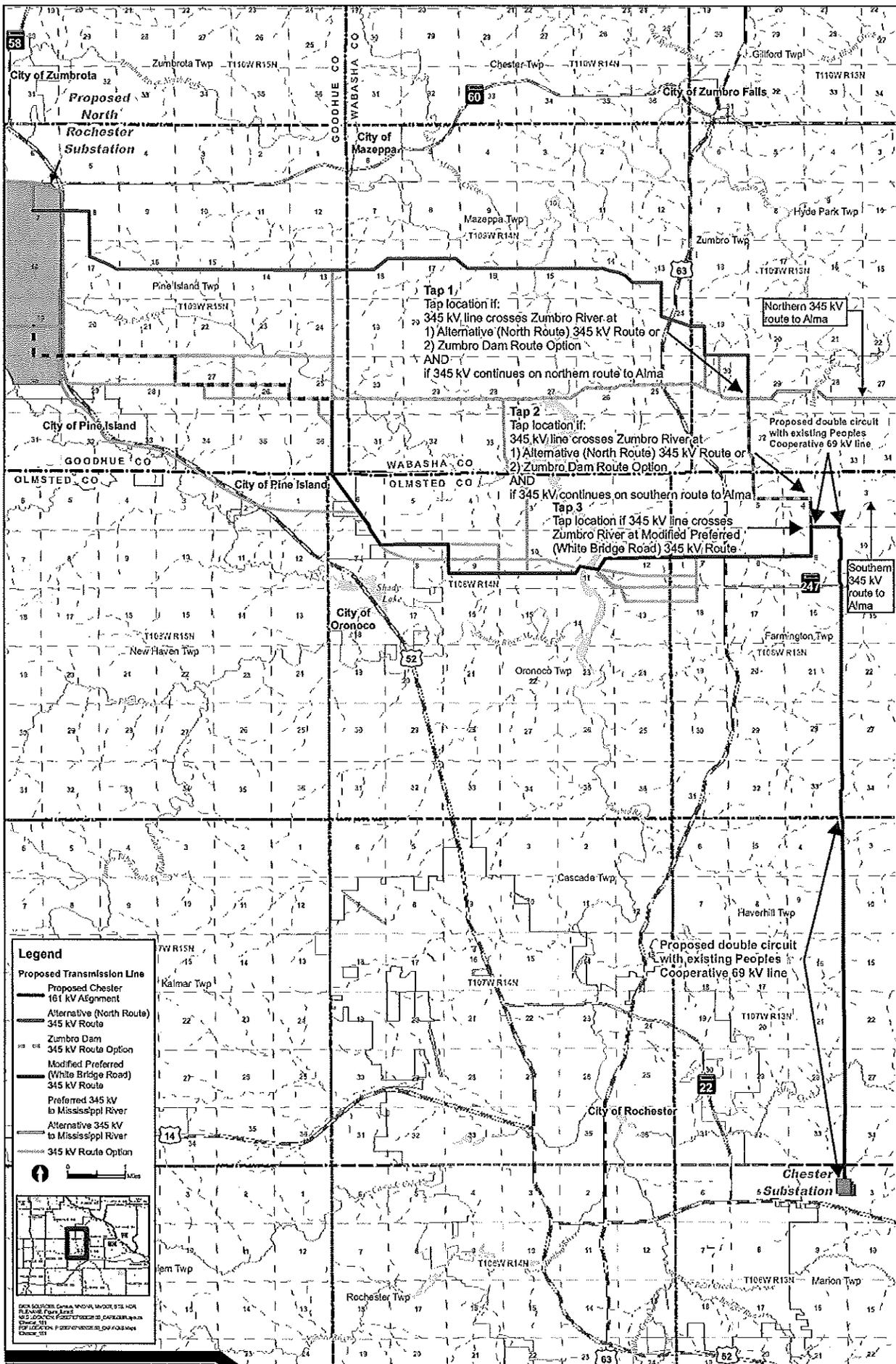
I hope the people receiving this letter take these concerns under consideration and modify the current 161 kV transmission line to the alternate proposed route as identified in this letter and indicated on the maps.

Sincerely,

Alfred C. Zschaler, President
Alfred Zschaler

* PARCELS OF LAND W/ FUTURE BUILDABLE SITES(HOUSES)





To: The Minnesota Department of Commerce

Public Comment Re: North Rochester to Chester Transmission Line Project

PUC Docket Number: E002/TL-11-800

I am writing to you concerning the CapX2020 North Rochester-Chester 161 kV Transmission Line MPUC Docket No. E002/TL-11-800. My husband and I along with our sons and father-in-law live in Olmsted County, Farmington Township, Section 16, on 40th Avenue NE, Elgin, MN. Our address is 10852 40th Ave NE, Elgin, MN 55932. My father-in-law's address is 10848 40th Ave NE, Elgin, MN 55932. Our daughter, son-in-law and their three small children (our grandchildren) ages 7 years old and under also live in Olmsted County, Farmington Township, Section 20 also on 40th Avenue NE. Their address is 9525 40th Avenue NE, Elgin, MN 55932. We have lived and farmed here for 56 years.

I am saddened to see this line come into our township at all. Considering it is coming and has to go somewhere, the CapX preferred proposed route for the 161 kV line which follows along 50th Ave NE in Farmington Township appears to be the best, most practical placement for this line as it follows right of way, roadways and transmission lines 100% of the way and is a straight route to the south Chester Substation. Building and maintenance of the lines along the roadway and existing right of way (ROW) would not disrupt the middle of farms. If you are looking for a route other than 50th Ave NE, then I believe that alternative routes to the east of 50th Ave NE would be more appropriate options than to the west of 50th Ave NE. I OPPOSE any shift of the line to the west of 50th Avenue NE in Farmington Township anywhere closer than one mile to 40th Avenue NE on either side. 40th Avenue NE in Farmington Township is the most populated avenue between Highway 247 and County Road 21 within this area with the greatest number of residences along this road segment compared to 50th Avenue NE or alternative options to the east of 50th Avenue NE in Farmington Township. Also, there are two homes with young children ages 7 years and under residing along 40th Avenue NE within sections 20 and 17 and there are no young children along the preferred proposed 50th Avenue route in Farmington Township. In fact there are very few children at all in Farmington Township and having two families on the same gravel road (40th Avenue NE between Highway 247 and County Road 21 NE) is extremely rare. I oppose any routes closer than 1.0 miles on either side of 40th Avenue NE in Farmington Township as I am extremely concerned about the potential health risks to the children living in this area if the lines are pushed closer.

Minnesota Administrative Rules 7850.4100 factors considered are referenced and addressed in points that I make below; I have enclosed a complete list of the 7850.4100 rule and factors considered as reference, please see attached.

Minnesota Administrative Rules 7850.4100 - Addressing factors considered A & B:

First of all, the potential effects on health, especially on our grandchildren (ages 7, 4 and 2 years who live in section 20 along 40th Ave NE in Farmington Township) and on a neighbor with young children also under the age of 7 years who also live on 40th Avenue NE section 17 of Farmington Township, is of grave concern. It is acknowledged in the CapX2020 route application and in review of research that there is sufficiently strong evidence to remain a concern that exposure, especially to small children, from these power line's electro-magnetic fields EMFs, MFs, and ELF's puts human health at potential risk for childhood leukemia and other negative health outcomes. Research suggests there is correlation and association for negative health outcomes especially for children. The negative potential health affects that these power lines pose to my grandchildren's health (who reside along 40th Ave NE in section 20 and frequent section 16 of Farmington Township) and that of additional neighbor children who live in section 17 of Farmington Township, as well as the health of my husband, sons, father-in-law, daughter, son-in-law, myself and neighbors angers and saddens me deeply.

Again, I have reviewed research suggesting that high voltage power lines ARE associated with negative health risks, especially to young children, and whether proven directly or not as a cause of health hazards, given that there are positive correlations and associations with potential negative health risks and illnesses from power lines, I cannot live with the possibility that my grandchildren and my family's

health may be put at risk. This is a risk that we are not willing to accept; I ask you to consider yourself in this same situation. The large majority of the population demographics within Farmington Township consists of residents 50+ years of age; children are the minority and there are very few within the area. Again, with that said, there are two residences along 40th Avenue NE, Farmington Township, section 20 and section 17, where young children reside. I oppose any consideration of the 161 kV line placement any closer than 1.0 miles from 40th Avenue NE, Farmington Township on either side to avoid health threats to these children in sections 20 and 17, and in section 16 where my grandchildren come daily before and after school. There are no young children living along the preferred proposed route along 50th Avenue NE in Farmington Township.

Minnesota Administrative Rules 7850.4100 - Addressing Factors to Consider A, C & E:

For the many farmers in the area (including my husband and son) who have worked hard for many years (and generations) working and farming their land, I also have concerns about the negative impacts of running the 161 kV line cutting through and across farm land. Again, our dairy and crop farm is located in section 16 of Farmington Township. It would not only be devastating to have a power line run through the middle of our farm if the 161 kV line were to be moved at all to the west from its preferred proposed route at 50th Ave NE, but it would also cause major disruption to terraces, strips, tile lines, make it much more difficult to access and farm around the pole structures, cause damage to crops if maintenance is required and make maintenance access much more difficult than if the line is placed on an existing road/ROW as 50th Ave NE (the proposed route) offers. Dairy farms in particular are accessed multiple more times per year in addition to spring planting and fall harvest access times as compared to non-dairy farmers. The proposed 50th Ave NE route does not bisect farm land or fields but follows along road/ROW instead.

Minnesota Administrative Rules 7850.4100 - Addressing Factors to Consider D. Effects on archaeological and historic resources

Where as we believe these things (historic resources) are important and need to be protected to a point, we also do not believe that they should in anyway be put above human health and safety. Historical sites are material things from the past. We need to protect human health and safety, including from these power lines, so that we can ensure the future of our children and families, farming operations and future in general. I urge you in your consideration of any route placement to consider the studied correlations and associations between power lines and potential for negative impacts on human health, especially on children, over and above historic resources.

Minnesota Administrative Rules 7850.4100 - Addressing Factors to Consider G, H, I, J, K, L, M & N:

I believe that the best route should be the one which minimizes environmental impacts; minimizes new right of way (ROW) required; minimizes proximity to residential structures to the extent possible; and also (and primarily) that minimizes exposure of children to this power line.

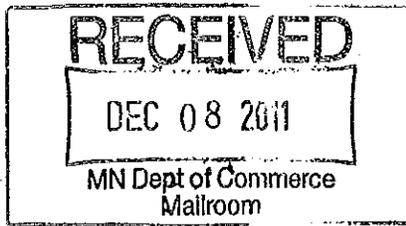
From the beginning of this CapX project we have preferred that this project would not impact Farmington Township at all. Yet, after reviewing route proposals and facing the fact that indeed this line project will be placed somewhere in our "neighborhood", I believe that every consideration should be given to keeping this power line as far away from young children as possible.

Thank you for your time and consideration of the above points.

Sincerely,

Brenda Malwitz

10852 40th Ave NE, Elgin MN 55932



Energy Facility Permitting
 85 7th Place East, Suite 500
 St. Paul, Minnesota 55101-2198
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<http://energyfacilities.puc.state.mn.us>

PUBLIC COMMENT SHEET

North Rochester to Chester Transmission Line Project

PUC Docket Number: E002/TL-11-800

Name:

Evan Malwitz Evan Malwitz

Representing:

Parents Farm Located in section 16
 of Farmington township
 Olmsted Co.

Address:

10852 40th ave. NE Elgin MN 55932

Email:

Comments:

A power line running through our farm would drastically lower the value and make it much more difficult to farm. Although I have heard from Cap & that these power lines do not affect crop, animal, or human health I am not convinced this is true and neither are the rest of our area neighbors. I don't want anything to do with the lines. I especially think power lines should be kept away from children. Overall I am not convinced of our need for power in this area, the whole idea seem like overkill. I feel that the preferred proposed route running North-South along 50th ave NE provides the best option for this route because it follows road-side of way 100% and does not disrupt farmland.

Evan Malwitz

Please submit comments by 4:30pm, December 8 2011 to:

Matthew Langan
 Minnesota Dept. of Commerce
 85 7th Place East
 Suite 500
 St. Paul, MN 55101-2198

Email: matthew.langan@state.mn.us
 Phone: 651-296-2096
 Fax: 651-297-7891

From: [Malwitz, Glenn V.](#)
To: [Langan, Matthew \(COMM\)](#)
Subject: North Rochester to Chester 161 kv transmission line. Comments
Date: Wednesday, December 07, 2011 9:13:33 AM

I feel that since the line will be coming across Farmington Township somewhere that staying on the CapX preferred route 50th Avenue NE at the northern portion of the line would be the most practical. This follows in a straight line to the south Chester Substation, following existing roads and transmission lines and right of way the entire length of the line. I think following the road would be best because of existing lines and right of way 100% of the route, and it would be far less intrusive then cutting across farmland. I feel that if alternate routes are considered that moving the 161 kv line to the East of 50th Ave NE (i.e. such as along 60th Avenue NE or 55th Avenue NE) in Farmington Township would be the best alternative routes because it is less populated to the east of 50th Avenue NE than to the west side and would effect fewer homes, families and children. Sincerely Glenn Malwitz

4514 hwy. 247 NE.
Elgin, MN 55932-9524

Glenn Malwitz

Mech Eng Tech 2
Division Of Engineering
Phone: 507-538-2793
Office: 507-266-4552
Fax: 507-284-5988
E-mail: malwitz.glenn@mayo.edu

Mayo Clinic

200 First Street SW
Rochester, Mn 55905
www.mayoclinic.org

From: [Andy & Julie](#)
To: [Langan, Matthew \(COMM\)](#); thomas.g.hillstrom@excelenergy.com
Subject: Public information meeting in Oronoco last night
Date: Wednesday, November 30, 2011 8:52:43 AM

Mr. Langan and Mr Hillstrom,

I stop by the Oronoco Community Center last night around 8:30 pm and no one was there. Was the meeting cut short?

I am concerned about my GPS/RTK system I use in my farming operation. I have several years of data and information that is critical to my farming operation.

I have several parcels of land that either I own or rent along the proposed route.

How will these high power transmission lines affect my GPS/RTK system?

I have been told by other farmers in similar situations that there could be a concern. (Farmers farming in the Dexter Windmill area and my local GPS/RTK dealer.)

Thank you

Andy Hart
Elgin, MN
507-259-7885

Section 15 Farmington Township, Olmsted County

From: [Beau Kennedy](#)
To: [Langan, Matthew \(COMM\)](#)
Cc: [Suzanne Rohlfig](#)
Subject: PUC Docket No. E002/TL-11-800
Date: Wednesday, November 30, 2011 8:38:39 AM

Hi Matt.

This email is in regards to the N. Rochester to Chester 161kV transmission line proposal that is currently open for public comment.

My wife and I have comment in the past on the Hampton-La Crosse 345kV proposal as individuals as well as members of the North Route Group here in Mazeppa TWP and Zumbro Twp in Wabasha County. Our concerns for placement of a transmission line located on the North Zumbro Crossing (North Route) remain the same for this 161 kV proposal:

- Follow existing utility, transmission, rail, road corridors. there is no existing utility corridor for the majority of the North Route including NO EXISTING crossing of the Zumbro River. Please protect what we have.

- Keep these lines out of the Dorer Hardwood State Memorial Hardwood Forest. Protect this resource from permanent scars across it's landscape.

- Clear cutting the steep slopes on the North Route for these transmission lines would not only increase the amount of erosion, but would also make for maintenance of the lines to be difficult and costly. Access will be an issue.

- Our home is located 270' from the proposed centerline of the North Route and our shed is within 25'. Homes within 1/2 mile from me are located on each side of the proposed centerline making a pinch point for mitigation. please select a route where mitigation and existing corridors are available.

Thank you for allowing us to again comment on this transmission line process.
We hope our comments for the scope of the EA are submitted with sending this email.
Thank you for your time,
Beau Kennedy
507-301-1545

December 6, 2011

State of Minnesota
Energy Facility Permitting
PUC Docket No.
E002/TL-11-800

Dear Mr Langan,

The Mazeppa Township Board has voted unanimously to support the applicants Chester 161kv line from the Southern most tap location on the modified preferred route of the 345kv line. This southern most tap location would be the shortest, most direct route, less expensive, sustain the least amount of impact on the undisturbed natural habitat, and would need the least amount of new ROW.

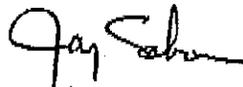
The need of the Chester line project supports Mazeppa Township and Wabasha Countys' original position with regard to the southern most placement of the 345kv-Modified Preferred Route. For your convenience, we are enclosing a copy of our letter to Judge Sheehy and a letter from Wabasha County for your review of our original positions on the CAPX Project.

We ask that you consider the need and benefit versus the burden of this line in your assessment.

Thank you.

Sincerely

Chairman -Jay Sanborn

 12/6/11

John Adams

 12/6/11

David Radtke

 12-6-11

The Honorable Kathleen D. Sheehy
Office of Administrative Hearings
Suite 1700
600 North Robert St.
P.O. Box 64620
St. Paul, MN 55164-0620

RE: In the Matter of the Route for the CapX2020 Hampton-Rochester-La Crosse High Voltage Transmission Line

(MPUC Docket TL-09-1448; OAH Docket 3-2500-21181-2)

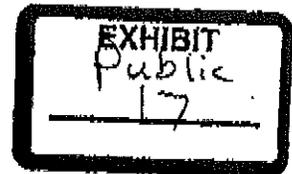
Dear Judge Sheehy:

The Mazeppa Township Board has voted unanimously to support the Modified Preferred Route from the Rochester Substation(S) to La Crosse, using the White Bridge Crossing at the Zumbro River, for the transmission line project. This route uses greater existing ROW, has less impact on undisturbed natural habitat, minimizes impacts to the Richard J. Dorer Memorial Hardwood State Forest, and crosses the Zumbro River at a location where there is existing river crossing infrastructure in place.

The Mazeppa Township Board requests that the Modified Preferred Route be chosen for this project.

Sincerely,

Name 
Title
TOWNSHIP CHAIRMAN



HEIS ID #6



David Johnson
Wabasha County Administrator
WABASHA COUNTY COURTHOUSE
625 JEFFERSON AVENUE
WABASHA, MN 55981-1529
PHONE (651) 565-3001
FAX (651) 565-4592
djohnson@co.wabasha.mn.us

Matthew Langan
Minnesota Dept. of Commerce
85 7th Place East
Suite 500
St. Paul, MN 55101

Dear Mr. Langan,

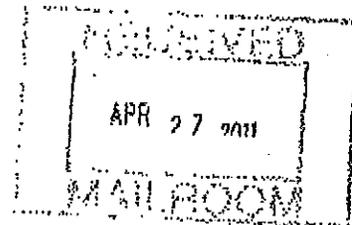
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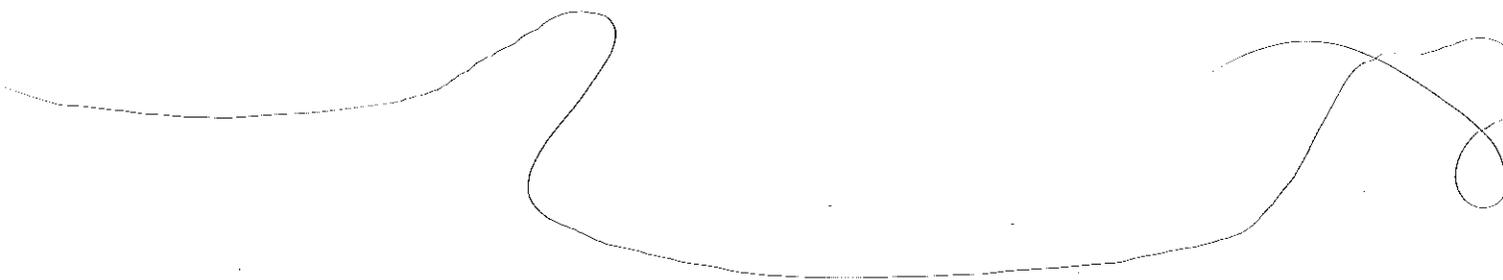
Today the Wabasha County Board of Commissioners voted unanimously to support the Preferred Southern Route, including the White Bridge Crossing, for the Hampton-Rochester-LaCrosse transmission line project as the route most consistent with Wabasha County's Comprehension Land Use Plan and having the least adverse impact on Wabasha County. This route shares the impact more equitably with Olmsted County rather than running the full length of Wabasha County.

The Wabasha County Board of Commissioners is requesting that the Preferred Southern Route be chosen for this project.

Sincerely,

David Johnson
County Administrator
Wabasha County, Minnesota
Phone: 651-565-3096
Fax: 651-565-3159







December 8, 2011

Matthew Langan
State Permit Manager
Minnesota Department of Commerce
85 7th Place East, Suite 500
St. Paul, Minnesota, 55101-2198

Re: Route Permit Application and Environmental Assessment Scoping for the North Rochester to Chester 161 kV Transmission Line Project in Goodhue, Wabasha, and Olmsted Counties [PUC Docket No. E002/TL-11-800]

Dear Mr. Langan:

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has reviewed the Route Permit Application and considered scoping for the Environmental Assessment (EA) for the North Rochester to Chester 161 kV Transmission Line Project in Goodhue, Wabasha, and Olmsted Counties. Please consider the following comments regarding natural resources located along the proposed routes.

As detailed in the Route Permit Application, the Applicant proposes to place the North Rochester-Chester 161 kV Transmission Line on the same poles as the Hampton-Rochester-La Crosse 345 kV Transmission Project (HRL Project) for the east-west segment portion of the project for 13 to 19 miles. This segment of the route consists of two route alternatives and one route option that has yet to be determined and is being evaluated in the environmental impact statement in MPUC Docket No. E002/TL-09-1448; OAH Docket No. 3-2500-21181-2.

The DNR has participated in the Hampton-Rochester-La Crosse 345 kV transmission line. In the most recent DNR comment letter dated June 29, 2011 (enclosed), the DNR reiterated the recommendation that crossing of public waters be generally located where there is existing infrastructure. In addition, the DNR considers the potential effects of the crossing to existing natural resources which includes rare features that may be affected. As this pertains to the three Zumbro River crossings, two route alternatives and one route option currently under consideration, and in using the criteria above, the DNR recommended utilizing the White Bridge Road crossing. The DNR continues to support this recommendation.

For the purposes of the North Rochester-Chester 161 kV transmission line project, referring to the three Tap locations and the Chester Route North-South Segment, the White Bridge Road crossing would result in Applicant utilizing the Tap 3 location. The Tap 3 location would also result in the least amount of new pole construction before meeting up with the North-South segment.

The DNR requests shapefiles of the proposed route(s). As indicated in the Route Permit Application, the Applicant may need to complete surveys for plants or other species to help



further define sensitive and rare feature locations in the area. This also includes the potential for the placement of bird diverters. The DNR encourages that shapefiles of the Applicants proposed areas for surveys and bird diverters be provided prior to or included with the environmental assessment. In addition, discussion of survey methodology, and structure type and location, are also encouraged as early in the process as possible.

Although the Applicant has a current license with the DNR to access the Natural Heritage Information System for recorded information on rare and unique features, the DNR requests that the quarry records included in the Route Permit Application discussion, be verified for accuracy. The Applicant should contact Lisa Joyal, Natural Heritage Review Coordinator, at Lisa.joyal@state.mn.us. In addition, the License agreement number should be included in the appropriate sections for reference.

The Natural Heritage Information System quarry identified the potential for Blanding's turtles to be within the proposed project area. Avoidance and mitigation measures the Applicant proposes should be identified directly in the environmental assessment. A list of avoidance and mitigation measures is detailed in the Blanding's turtle flyer and fact sheet enclosed with this letter for your reference.

The Route Permit Application acknowledges that staging or stringing area locations may require vegetation clearing, disturbance, and grading. The DNR recommends that staging/stringing area locations are defined in the environmental assessment so that potential effects to natural resources may be evaluated during the environmental review process. The DNR encourages that any disturbed areas be revegetated soon after disturbance to minimize unfavorable species from establishing. Soil should not be left exposed.

The DNR encourages wildlife friendly erosion control mesh to be used during and following construction activities. Plastic mesh, particularly when placed where there are known locations of reptiles or amphibians may be detrimental or even fatal to wildlife. A flyer is enclosed with this letter for your reference.

The DNR encourages wetland and waterbody construction to occur under frozen ground conditions to minimize impacts to vegetation and habitat. The Applicant has proposed this as a possible mitigation option. The DNR encourages the Applicant to provide a more focused detailed discussion on minimization and mitigation options that are relevant to the proposed construction timeline for the project. It should also be noted that there are different types of construction matting that are available. The Applicant should use construction matting appropriate for the habitat and wetland/waterbody type that is being impacted.

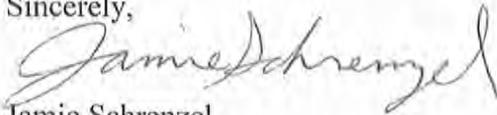
As stated on page 6-27 of the Route Permit Application, "To minimize impacts to trees along the Proposed Route, the Applicant would only remove trees located within the ROW...or that that would impact the safe operation of the facility." The DNR encourages the Applicant to avoid impacts to forested areas and to minimize tree removal to the extent possible. This topic should be discussed for specific forested areas in the EA.

Vegetation maintenance practices should be discussed in detail in the EA. The DNR requests coordination with the Department of Commerce and the project proposer when vegetation maintenance occurs in or near sensitive areas such as public water crossings and where rare features or native plant communities may be located.

The DNR suggests discussing in the EA the alignment of new poles in comparison to the existing locations of poles for the Peoples Cooperative line. For example, will the poles be placed in the same locations and how will the new line vary from the existing line in size and span?

The DNR appreciates the opportunity to provide comments regarding the North Rochester to Chester Transmission Project. Please contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,



Jamie Schrenzel
Principal Planner
Environmental Review Unit
(651) 259-5115

Enclosures: 4

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

500 Lafayette Road • St. Paul, MN • 55155-40



June 29, 2011

Judge Kathleen D. Sheehy
Office of Administrative Hearings
P.O. Box 64620
600 North Robert Street
St. Paul, Minnesota 55164-0620

Re: Hampton-Rochester-La Crosse 345 kV and 161 kV Transmission Line Project
[PUC Docket Number: E002/TL-09-1448; OAH Docket No. 3-2500-21181-2]

Dear Judge Sheehy:

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has reviewed the Route Permit Application and Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Hampton-Rochester-La Crosse Transmission Line Project and has provided testimony during the Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH) evidentiary hearing. The attached comments regarding the DEIS, dated April 29, 2011, are included for analysis and consideration in the administrative record and findings of fact. In addition to these comments, further clarification is provided, as requested by parties in the evidentiary hearing, regarding DNR comments about possible Zumbro River crossings in Segment 3 of the project.

As stated in previous comment letters, the DNR recommends crossings of public waters to generally be located where there is existing infrastructure. For example, the Zumbro River should be crossed where existing infrastructure exists and there is the least impact to resources from clearing or construction activities. The Zumbro River crossing at the white bridge in Segment 3 appears to result in the least impact from clearing, and utilizes an existing river crossing.

Specifically, there are three Zumbro River crossings included in the project record: the north crossing, which is a greenfield crossing, a middle crossing at a dam, and the southernmost crossing at the white bridge. As stated above a crossing with no existing infrastructure such as the northernmost crossing is not encouraged. The northernmost crossing also has Natural Heritage Information System (NHIS) records of a state-listed threatened turtle in the vicinity of the crossing. There is also a Minnesota County Biological Survey (MCBS) Site of Biodiversity Significance ranked as Moderate near the crossing. The Zumbro River crossing near the dam is located next to an MCBS Site of Biodiversity Significance ranked as High. Rare species in the area include state-listed special concern American ginseng (plant), and state-listed special concern moschatel (plant). The southernmost white bridge crossing would affect an MCBS site of Biodiversity Significance ranked as Moderate and one ranked as Below. To avoid a greenfield crossing, the northernmost route is not recommended. Considering a comparison of rare species, MCBS site presence and ranking, and a general goal of reducing deforestation between the two crossings with existing infrastructure, the DNR recommends utilizing the white bridge crossing in this area rather than the crossing at the dam.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input regarding the Hampton-Rochester-La Crosse Transmission Line Project. Please contact me with any questions regarding the attached comments, evidentiary hearing testimony, or additional information provided in this letter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Jamie Schrenzel'.

Jamie Schrenzel
Principal Planner
Environmental Review Unit
(651) 259-5115

Enclosures: 1

Judge Sheehy 6/29/2011



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CAUTION



BLANDING'S TURTLES MAY BE ENCOUNTERED IN THIS AREA

The unique and rare Blanding's turtle has been found in this area. Blanding's turtles are state-listed as Threatened and are protected under Minnesota Statute 84.095, Protection of Threatened and Endangered Species. Please be careful of turtles on roads and in construction sites. For additional information on turtles, or to report a Blanding's turtle sighting, contact the DNR Nongame Specialist nearest you: Bemidji (218-308-2641); Grand Rapids (218-327-4518); New Ulm (507-359-6033); Rochester (507-280-5070); or St. Paul (651-259-5764).

DESCRIPTION: The Blanding's turtle is a medium to large turtle (5 to 10 inches) with a black or dark blue, dome-shaped shell with muted yellow spots and bars. The bottom of the shell is hinged across the front third, enabling the turtle to pull the front edge of the lower shell firmly against the top shell to provide additional protection when threatened. The head, legs, and tail are dark brown or blue-gray with small dots of light brown or yellow. A distinctive field mark is the bright yellow chin and neck.

**BLANDING'S TURTLES DO NOT MAKE GOOD PETS
IT IS ILLEGAL TO KEEP THIS THREATENED SPECIES IN CAPTIVITY**

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS FOR AVOIDING AND MINIMIZING IMPACTS TO BLANDING'S TURTLE POPULATIONS

(see Blanding's Turtle Fact Sheet for full recommendations)

- This flyer should be given to all contractors working in the area. Homeowners should also be informed of the presence of Blanding's turtles in the area.
- Turtles that are in imminent danger should be moved, by hand, out of harms way. Turtles that are not in imminent danger should be left undisturbed to continue their travel among wetlands and/or nest sites.
- If a Blanding's turtle nests in your yard, do not disturb the nest and do not allow pets near the nest.
- Silt fencing should be set up to keep turtles out of construction areas. It is critical that silt fencing be removed after the area has been revegetated.
- Small, vegetated temporary wetlands should not be dredged, deepened, or filled.
- All wetlands should be protected from pollution; use of fertilizers and pesticides should be avoided, and run-off from lawns and streets should be controlled. Erosion should be prevented to keep sediment from reaching wetlands and lakes.
- Roads should be kept to minimum standards on widths and lanes.
- Roads should be ditched, not curbed or below grade. If curbs must be used, 4" high curbs at a 3:1 slope are preferred.
- Culverts under roads crossing wetland areas, between wetland areas, or between wetland and nesting areas should be at least 36 in. diameter and flat-bottomed or elliptical.
- Culverts under roads crossing streams should be oversized (at least twice as wide as the normal width of open water) and flat-bottomed or elliptical.
- Utility access and maintenance roads should be kept to a minimum.
- Because trenches can trap turtles, trenches should be checked for turtles prior to being backfilled and the sites should be returned to original grade.
- Terrain should be left with as much natural contour as possible.
- Graded areas should be revegetated with native grasses and forbs.
- Vegetation management in infrequently mowed areas -- such as in ditches, along utility access roads, and under power lines -- should be done mechanically (chemicals should not be used). Work should occur fall through spring (after October 1st and before June 1st).

Endangered, Threatened, and Special Concern Species of Minnesota

Blanding's Turtle
(Emydoidea blandingii)

Minnesota Status: Threatened
Federal Status: none

State Rank¹: S2
Global Rank¹: G4

HABITAT USE

Blanding's turtles need both wetland and upland habitats to complete their life cycle. The types of wetlands used include ponds, marshes, shrub swamps, bogs, and ditches and streams with slow-moving water. In Minnesota, Blanding's turtles are primarily marsh and pond inhabitants. Calm, shallow water bodies (Type 1-3 wetlands) with mud bottoms and abundant aquatic vegetation (e.g., cattails, water lilies) are preferred, and extensive marshes bordering rivers provide excellent habitat. Small temporary wetlands (those that dry up in the late summer or fall) are frequently used in spring and summer -- these fishless pools are amphibian and invertebrate breeding habitat, which provides an important food source for Blanding's turtles. Also, the warmer water of these shallower areas probably aids in the development of eggs within the female turtle. Nesting occurs in open (grassy or brushy) sandy uplands, often some distance from water bodies. Frequently, nesting occurs in traditional nesting grounds on undeveloped land. Blanding's turtles have also been known to nest successfully on residential property (especially in low density housing situations), and to utilize disturbed areas such as farm fields, gardens, under power lines, and road shoulders (especially of dirt roads). Although Blanding's turtles may travel through woodlots during their seasonal movements, shady areas (including forests and lawns with shade trees) are not used for nesting. Wetlands with deeper water are needed in times of drought, and during the winter. Blanding's turtles overwinter in the muddy bottoms of deeper marshes and ponds, or other water bodies where they are protected from freezing.

LIFE HISTORY

Individuals emerge from overwintering and begin basking in late March or early April on warm, sunny days. The increase in body temperature which occurs during basking is necessary for egg development within the female turtle. Nesting in Minnesota typically occurs during June, and females are most active in late afternoon and at dusk. Nesting can occur as much as a mile from wetlands. The nest is dug by the female in an open sandy area and 6-15 eggs are laid. The female turtle returns to the marsh within 24 hours of laying eggs. After a development period of approximately two months, hatchlings leave the nest from mid-August through early-October. Nesting females and hatchlings are often at risk of being killed while crossing roads between wetlands and nesting areas. In addition to movements associated with nesting, all ages and both sexes move between wetlands from April through November. These movements peak in June and July and again in September and October as turtles move to and from overwintering sites. In late autumn (typically November), Blanding's turtles bury themselves in the substrate (the mud at the bottom) of deeper wetlands to overwinter.

IMPACTS / THREATS / CAUSES OF DECLINE

- loss of wetland habitat through drainage or flooding (converting wetlands into ponds or lakes)
- loss of upland habitat through development or conversion to agriculture
- human disturbance, including collection for the pet trade* and road kills during seasonal movements
- increase in predator populations (skunks, raccoons, etc.) which prey on nests and young

*It is illegal to possess this threatened species.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR AVOIDING AND MINIMIZING IMPACTS

These recommendations apply to typical construction projects and general land use within Blanding's turtle habitat, and are provided to help local governments, developers, contractors, and homeowners minimize or avoid detrimental impacts to Blanding's turtle populations. **List 1** describes minimum measures which we recommend to prevent harm to Blanding's turtles during construction or other work within Blanding's turtle habitat. **List 2** contains recommendations which offer even greater protection for Blanding's turtles populations; this list should be used *in addition to the first list* in areas which are known to be of state-wide importance to Blanding's turtles (contact the DNR's Natural Heritage and Nongame Research Program if you wish to determine if your project or home is in one of these areas), or in any other area where greater protection for Blanding's turtles is desired.

List 1. Recommendations for all areas inhabited by Blanding's turtles.	List 2. Additional recommendations for areas known to be of state-wide importance to Blanding's turtles.
GENERAL	
A flyer with an illustration of a Blanding's turtle should be given to all contractors working in the area. Homeowners should also be informed of the presence of Blanding's turtles in the area.	Turtle crossing signs can be installed adjacent to road-crossing areas used by Blanding's turtles to increase public awareness and reduce road kills.
Turtles which are in imminent danger should be moved, by hand, out of harms way. Turtles which are not in imminent danger should be left undisturbed.	Workers in the area should be aware that Blanding's turtles nest in June, generally after 4pm, and should be advised to minimize disturbance if turtles are seen.
If a Blanding's turtle nests in your yard, do not disturb the nest.	If you would like to provide more protection for a Blanding's turtle nest on your property, see "Protecting Blanding's Turtle Nests" on page 3 of this fact sheet.
Silt fencing should be set up to keep turtles out of construction areas. It is <u>critical</u> that silt fencing be removed after the area has been revegetated.	Construction in potential nesting areas should be limited to the period between September 15 and June 1 (this is the time when activity of adults and hatchlings in upland areas is at a minimum).
WETLANDS	
Small, vegetated temporary wetlands (Types 2 & 3) should not be dredged, deepened, filled, or converted to storm water retention basins (these wetlands provide important habitat during spring and summer).	Shallow portions of wetlands should not be disturbed during prime basking time (mid morning to mid- afternoon in May and June). A wide buffer should be left along the shore to minimize human activity near wetlands (basking Blanding's turtles are more easily disturbed than other turtle species).
Wetlands should be protected from pollution; use of fertilizers and pesticides should be avoided, and run-off from lawns and streets should be controlled. Erosion should be prevented to keep sediment from reaching wetlands and lakes.	Wetlands should be protected from road, lawn, and other chemical run-off by a vegetated buffer strip at least 50' wide. This area should be left unmowed and in a natural condition.
ROADS	
Roads should be kept to minimum standards on widths and lanes (this reduces road kills by slowing traffic and reducing the distance turtles need to cross).	Tunnels should be considered in areas with concentrations of turtle crossings (more than 10 turtles per year per 100 meters of road), and in areas of lower density if the level of road use would make a safe crossing impossible for turtles. Contact your DNR Regional Nongame Specialist for further information on wildlife tunnels.
Roads should be ditched, not curbed or below grade. If curbs must be used, 4 inch high curbs at a 3:1 slope are preferred (Blanding's turtles have great difficulty climbing traditional curbs; curbs and below grade roads trap turtles on the road and can cause road kills).	Roads should be ditched, not curbed or below grade.

ROADS cont.	
Culverts between wetland areas, or between wetland areas and nesting areas, should be 36 inches or greater in diameter, and elliptical or flat-bottomed.	Road placement should avoid separating wetlands from adjacent upland nesting sites, or these roads should be fenced to prevent turtles from attempting to cross them (contact your DNR Nongame Specialist for details).
Wetland crossings should be bridged, or include raised roadways with culverts which are 36 in or greater in diameter and flat-bottomed or elliptical (raised roadways discourage turtles from leaving the wetland to bask on roads).	Road placement should avoid bisecting wetlands, or these roads should be fenced to prevent turtles from attempting to cross them (contact your DNR Nongame Specialist for details). This is especially important for roads with more than 2 lanes.
Culverts under roads crossing streams should be oversized (at least twice as wide as the normal width of open water) and flat-bottomed or elliptical.	Roads crossing streams should be bridged.
UTILITIES	
Utility access and maintenance roads should be kept to a minimum (this reduces road-kill potential).	
Because trenches can trap turtles, trenches should be checked for turtles prior to being backfilled and the sites should be returned to original grade.	
LANDSCAPING AND VEGETATION MANAGEMENT	
Terrain should be left with as much natural contour as possible.	As much natural landscape as possible should be preserved (installation of sod or wood chips, paving, and planting of trees within nesting habitat can make that habitat unusable to nesting Blanding's turtles).
Graded areas should be revegetated with native grasses and forbs (some non-natives form dense patches through which it is difficult for turtles to travel).	Open space should include some areas at higher elevations for nesting. These areas should be retained in native vegetation, and should be connected to wetlands by a wide corridor of native vegetation.
Vegetation management in infrequently mowed areas -- such as in ditches, along utility access roads, and under power lines -- should be done mechanically (chemicals should not be used). Work should occur fall through spring (after October 1 st and before June 1 st).	Ditches and utility access roads should not be mowed or managed through use of chemicals. If vegetation management is required, it should be done mechanically, as infrequently as possible, and fall through spring (mowing can kill turtles present during mowing, and makes it easier for predators to locate turtles crossing roads).

Protecting Blanding's Turtle Nests: Most predation on turtle nests occurs within 48 hours after the eggs are laid. After this time, the scent is gone from the nest and it is more difficult for predators to locate the nest. Nests more than a week old probably do not need additional protection, unless they are in a particularly vulnerable spot, such as a yard where pets may disturb the nest. Turtle nests can be protected from predators and other disturbance by covering them with a piece of wire fencing (such as chicken wire), secured to the ground with stakes or rocks. The piece of fencing should measure at least 2 ft. x 2 ft., and should be of medium sized mesh (openings should be about 2 in. x 2 in.). It is *very important* that the fencing be **removed before August 1st** so the young turtles can escape from the nest when they hatch!

REFERENCES

- ¹Association for Biodiversity Information. "Heritage Status: Global, National, and Subnational Conservation Status Ranks." NatureServe. Version 1.3 (9 April 2001). <http://www.natureserve.org/ranking.htm> (15 April 2001).
- Coffin, B., and L. Pfannmuller. 1988. Minnesota's Endangered Flora and Fauna. University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 473 pp.

REFERENCES (cont.)

- Moriarty, J. J., and M. Linck. 1994. Suggested guidelines for projects occurring in Blanding's turtle habitat. Unpublished report to the Minnesota DNR. 8 pp.
- Oldfield, B., and J. J. Moriarty. 1994. Amphibians and Reptiles Native to Minnesota. University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 237 pp.
- Sajwaj, T. D., and J. W. Lang. 2000. Thermal ecology of Blanding's turtle in central Minnesota. *Chelonian Conservation and Biology* 3(4):626-636.

Looming Issue with Plastic Mesh/Netting in Erosion Control Products

Plastic mesh netting is a common material in erosion control products. It is utilized to hold loose fibrous materials in place (EG straw) until vegetation is established. These products have been used extensively and are successful for reducing soil erosion, benefitting both soil health and water quality. Unfortunately there is a negative side of this component: It is increasingly being documented that it poses dangers to reptiles, amphibians, and mowing machinery.

Potential Problems:

- Plastic netting lays on the surface long after other components have decomposed.
- Plastic mesh netting can result in entanglement and death of a variety of reptiles (snakes, frogs, toads, and turtles). Ducklings have also been documented entangled in the netting.
- Road maintenance machinery can snag the plastic mesh and pull up long lengths into machinery, thus binding up machinery and causing damage and/or loss of time cleaning it out.

Suggested Alternatives:

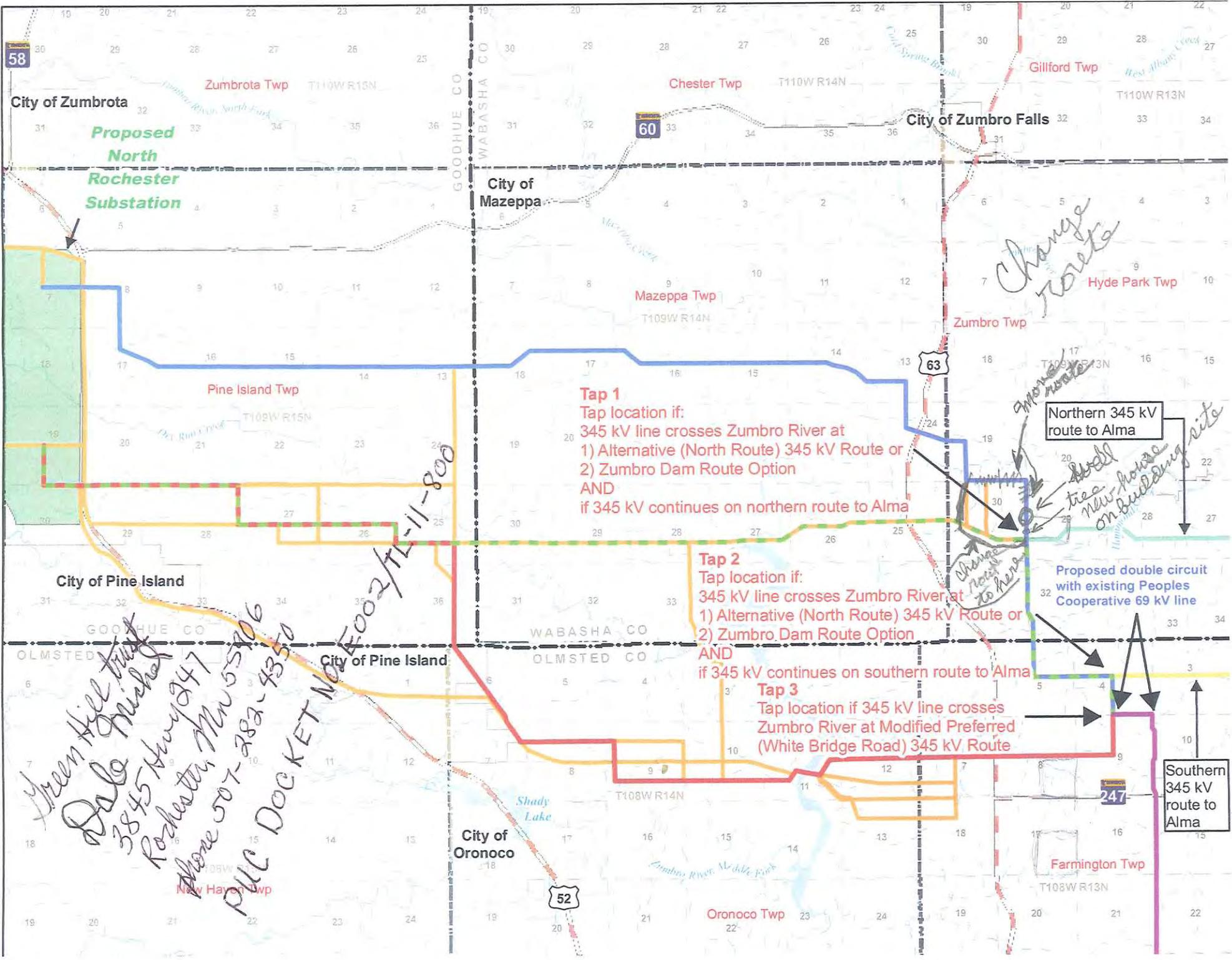
- Do not use in known locations of reptiles or amphibians that are listed as Threatened or Endangered species.
- Limit use where reptiles are likely (near wetlands, lakes, watercourses, or rock outcrops).
- Use rapidly degradable material in all components of erosion control blanket, netting or biologs (fiber rolls) that are to be left on site as part of final stabilization.
- Use types with smaller mesh size (smaller than ½") or use types with non-welded netting.



Areas near wetlands, lakes, watercourses or rock outcrops are likely habitat for reptiles and amphibians and may not be suitable for plastic mesh erosion control materials.



Snakes get caught in the plastic mesh



Tap 1
 Tap location if:
 345 kV line crosses Zumbro River at
 1) Alternative (North Route) 345 kV Route or
 2) Zumbro Dam Route Option
 AND
 if 345 kV continues on northern route to Alma

Tap 2
 Tap location if:
 345 kV line crosses Zumbro River at
 1) Alternative (North Route) 345 kV Route or
 2) Zumbro Dam Route Option
 AND
 if 345 kV continues on southern route to Alma

Tap 3
 Tap location if 345 kV line crosses
 Zumbro River at Modified Preferred
 (White Bridge Road) 345 kV Route

Southern
 345 kV route to
 Alma

Northern 345 kV
 route to Alma

Proposed double circuit
 with existing Peoples
 Cooperative 69 kV line

Change route

Approved route

Well trees new house on building site

Change route to here

*Green Hill tract
 Dale Michael
 3845 Hwy 247
 Rochester, MN 55906
 phone 507-282-4350
 PUC DOCKET NO. F002/TL-11-800*

To: The Minnesota Department of Commerce regarding public comment for the North Rochester to Chester 161 kV Transmission Line Project

PUC Docket Number: E002/TL-11-800

Submitted by: Mitchell Walch, 9525 40th Ave NE, Elgin, MN, Section 20 of Farmington Township, Olmsted County

Regarding the CapX2020 161 kV North Rochester to Chester transmission line project, I feel that if it has to go somewhere through Farmington Township on the north end that the current proposed route following 50th Ave NE in Farmington Township is the best option of placement for the line. This route along 50th Ave NE follows 100% of the way existing right of way along existing road ways with existing transmission lines. This is also the least populated route especially through Farmington Township so would have the least impact on residences and environment overall.

I reside on 40th Ave NE in section 20 of Farmington Township with my wife and three children ages 7, 4 and 2. There is another home also on 40th Avenue NE section 17 with young children. Also, 40th Ave NE in Farmington Township has the most homes/residences and is the most populated avenue within the area around the proposed route which is one mile away. I am against the 161 kV line coming any closer than a one mile distance to 40th Ave NE in Farmington Township as it is the most populated area around the proposed route and I do not believe that more people than necessary should be any more closely impacted by this line and also don't want children in particular exposed any closer than one mile for concern of health hazards associated with living near these lines. 45th Avenue NE in Farmington Township would also not be acceptable as this would place the line only a half a mile away from 40th Ave NE which again is highly populated with homes, families and children and also 45th Avenue would be much more intrusive and less convenient as it would place the line through the middle of farm land/fields placing a major burden on farming operations including 3 dairy farms and the line would come less than 75 feet from at least two homes just on one small stretch that cannot be avoided not to mention multiple other homes that would also be much nearer than the proposed route. I want to be clear that 40th Ave NE and 45th Ave NE are NOT favorable options for this line placement at all; they have been previously studied and eliminated by capx as potential route options because they did not meet the best criteria and they need to remain eliminated. There should be no consideration of any shift of the route to the west of the proposed 50th Ave NE location in our township.

Again, the 50th Ave NE CapX preferred proposed route placement for the 161 kv line through Farmington Township and continuing in a straight shot to the Chester Substation to the south appears all things considered to minimize impacts on all levels, be the most feasible route option along right of way 100% which would make install and any necessary repair/maintenance easiest, appears would be the most cost efficient with a straight route no turns and least populated so less impact on fewer people and no children in our township. If necessary, any alternative route options considered through Farmington Township would be best placed to the east side of 50th Avenue NE (i.e. 60th Ave NE, 55th Ave NE) if the placement at 50th Ave NE does not occur for some reason, as to the east it is less populated and no children compared to an opposite shift to the west.

Sincerely,
Mitch Walch

9525 40th Ave NE, Elgin, MN 55932

(507)-288-3310



Minnesota Department of Transportation

Office of Land Management

395 John Ireland Boulevard

Saint Paul, MN 55155

Mailstop 678

Phone: 651-366-4635

Fax: 651-366-3450

stacy.kotch@state.mn.us

December 8th, 2011

Matthew Langan, State Permit Manager

Minnesota Office of Energy Security

85 7th Place East, Suite 500

St. Paul, MN 55101

RE: In the Matter of the Route Permit Application for the North Rochester to Chester
161 kV Transmission Line Project in Goodhue, Wabasha, and Olmsted Counties
PUC Docket No. E002/TL-11-800

Dear Mr. Langan,

On November 8th, 2011 the Minnesota Office of Energy Security (OES) issued a Notice of Public Information and Scoping meeting and a request for public comment on the scope of the environmental assessment (EA) relating to the route permit application by Xcel Energy for the North Rochester to Chester 161 kV Transmission Line Project in Goodhue, Wabasha, and Olmsted Counties. The Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) has reviewed the application regarding the proposed project and submits the following comments in response to the Notice.

MnDOT appreciates the opportunity to comment on the scope of the EA. MnDOT wishes to participate in the development of the EA so that it will contain a thorough evaluation of the effects various route proposals may have on the state transportation system. MnDOT's fundamental interest is to ensure that the EA identifies and quantifies, to the extent possible, any impacts the proposed high voltage transmission line (HVTL) may have on the safety of the transportation system, the effectiveness of the operations or maintenance of the state trunk highway system and any additional costs that may be imposed on the state trunk highway fund as a result of the location of the proposed HVTL.

MnDOT's approach to the HVTLs such as those involved in the Xcel's proposal is to work to accommodate these HVTLs within or as near as feasible to the trunk highway rights of way, based on an evaluation of the specific locations to ensure that appropriate clearance is maintained to preserve the safety of the traveling public and highway workers and the effective operation of the highway system now and in the foreseeable future. MnDOT has adopted a formal policy and procedures for accommodation of utilities on the highway rights-of-way (Utility Accommodation Policy"). A copy of MnDOT's policy can be found at <http://www.dot.state.mn.us/utility/files/pdf/appendix-b.pdf>

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MnDOT's policy seeks to permit utilities to occupy portions of the highway rights-of-way where such occupation does not put the safety of the traveling public or highway workers at risk or unduly impair the public's investment in the transportation system.

MnDOT District 6 staff attended the scoping meeting on November 29, 2011 in Oronoco. Information from that meeting and a review of the route permit application shows that the east/west proposed 161 kV transmission line is to be carried on the planned CAPX 2020 345 kV transmission line structures, and about one-half of the north/south connections will be carried by an existing 69 kV line route. Outside of the crossings of trunk highway (TH) 247, TH 63 and TH 52, there are no apparent MnDOT concerns with this proposal. The EA should assess the relationship of the placement of the proposed utility poles and the location of the highway activities for both the current traveled way and the future traveled way since future improvements to the highway may change the proximity of the proposed HVTL and make the line close enough to occupy a portion of the highway right of way.

Highway crossings by utilities generally do not pose insurmountable difficulties in issuing a permit, and MnDOT routinely grants such permits to a variety of types of utilities. These permits usually have conditions associated with them, such as placement of the poles so that they do not become a physical obstruction that might be struck by an errant vehicles or block the visibility of traffic. MnDOT also does not permit utilities to run diagonally across intersections and prefers that crossings occur as close to right angles as possible. MnDOT has a long history of working with Xcel and other utilities to establish appropriate conditions in locations where the utility seeks to cross a trunk highway.

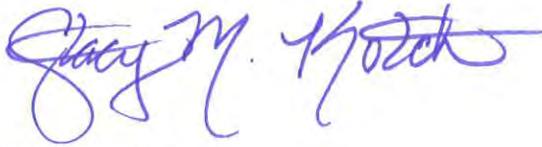
Any HVTL construction work, including delivery or storage of structures, materials or equipment that may affect MnDOT right of way is of concern such that MnDOT should be involved in planning and coordinating such activities. If work is required within MnDOT right-of-way for temporary or permanent access, please coordinate with Thomas Streiff, District 6A Permits, at 507-286-7592 or Thomas.Streiff@state.mn.us and Terry Condon, District 6B Permits, at 507-446-5505 or Terry.Condon@state.mn.us.

MnDOT has a continuing interest in working with the OES to ensure that possible impacts to highways, airports, waterways, rail lines and the environmentally significant areas of highway right-of- way are adequately addressed. We appreciate the opportunity to provide these comments.

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Sincerely,



Stacy Kotch
Utility Transmission Route Coordinator
Minnesota Department of Transportation
Enclosures

cc: Bob Hutton - D6 Planning
Mark Schoenfelder - D6 Planning
Tom Streiff - D6 Permits
Terry Condon - D6 Permits
Tom Hillstrom - Xcel Energy

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Matthew Langan
Minnesota Department of Commerce
85 7th Place East, Suite 500
St. Paul, MN 55101

Dale and Suzanne Rohlving
2310 15th Avenue NW
Rochester, MN 55901

RE: PUC Docket # E002/TL-11-800

December 8, 2011

Dear Mr. Langan,

We thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Chester Line Project, associated with the CAPX2020 HVTL Project.

Our concerns remain the same as those for the North Route Alternate crossing of the Zumbro River, as the Chester Line is proposed to be co-located with the 345 kV route chosen. Briefly, some of those concerns with any additional line would include the following:

- Crossing of the Zumbro River where no infrastructure exists
- Crossing the Zumbro River at a point the MN DNR advised against
- Easement through environmentally sensitive areas on both sides of the Zumbro River: Forests, forested wetland, DNR sited areas of significant biodiversity and heritage, fragmentation of habitat
- Impairment of visual aesthetics/recreational opportunities
- Blaze the greatest percentage of new ROW
- Cross through "pinch point" of homes in Mazeppa
- Transect/impact five tree farms
- More line within the Statutory Boundaries of the Richard J. Dorer Memorial Hardwood State Forest
- Utilization of a route less suitable for future expansion

Another point to mention is the added line length if the northern most Tap Point is utilized. Approximately 3 ½ additional miles of 161 kV line would incur a greater cost of installation and maintenance, and a larger amount of new ROW. Also worth noting is the more difficult slope and grade associated with this segment.

We respectfully thank you for your inclusion of the above mentioned items in your scope of the EA for the Chester Line Project.

Sincerely,

Dale and Suzanne Rohlving

Public Comment Sheet

North Rochester to Chester Transmission Line Project

PUC Docket Number: E002/TL-11-800

Comments:

I have concerns with the preferred route that is being proposed for the 161 kV transmission line between the Chester substation and heading north to connect into the new 345 kV transmission line. The portion of the 161 kV transmission line route that concerns me is the routing located in Sections 4, 9 and 10 in Farmington Township of Olmsted County. The current proposed routing goes from south to north along either side of County Rd 128 NE between sections 9 and 10 for 1 mile then turns left and runs from east to west along 125 St NE between sections 4 and 9 for ½ mile and then connects to the 345 kv transmission in 1 of 3 proposed tap point locations. See attached labeled maps. I want to propose an alternate route that will benefit a number of people that own property in Sections 4, 9 and 10. See attached maps for the proposed alternate route.

The amount 161 kv transmission lines being proposed around the perimeter of Section 9 is 1½ miles. Sections 4 and 10 are adjacent to Section 9 so they share this 1½ miles of transmission lines. The proposed 1½ mile route impacts a total 8 different property owners, 2 residential house sites and the Farmington Town hall. There are 4 property owners (Richard Siem, Lisa Romball, Alfred Thedens, and Reginald Hart) that own parcels of land that could have future building sites (houses) placed on them. The minimum amount of land for a building site is 80 acres. See map for the acreage of each parcel of land.

The proposed alternate on map could provide a route that is ½ mile shorter if the tap location to the 345 kV line would be located in Section 9. This would happen if the modified preferred route of the 345 kV transmission line is chosen to be constructed. If the 161 kV line taps into the 345 Kv line at the Tap 1 or 2 locations then the same amount of 161 kV transmission line will need to be constructed around the perimeter and/or within Section 9 with either route option. The proposed alternate route would only affect 5 property owners, 2 houses and the town hall. The number of property

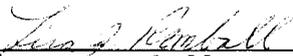
owners with parcels of land with future building sites (house) are none. See map.

Some other advantages of the alternate proposed route is that it does not cross a wetland that has water in it year round compared to the current route. Refer to maps. The alternate proposed route should be cheaper for the following reasons. First, if the route is ½ mile shorter then less transmission line to be constructed. Secondly, it would not affect the current 69 Kv line as compared to the current proposed route and providing a ½ mile 2 circuit (69 kV and 161 kV) line. Third, there are no property owners affected that have parcels of land that could have future building sites (houses) on them. If there were parcels of land with future building sites affected, the transmission lines could impact desirable locations for the placement of future building sites, which could have a negative impact on the marketable/resale value of the entire parcel of land or change future plans the current owner has for the property. These landowners may request additional compensation when negotiating an easement for the transmission lines to offset the devaluation of the property.

Another advantage to the alternate proposed route is the property owners affected would share more equally the amount of transmission lines along their property. Property owners Lisa Romball and Richard Siem could have transmission lines along 3 sides of that property if the preferred modified route for the 345 kV line is constructed along with the current 161 Kv route. The alternate proposed route would lessen the impact on these properties to only 2 sides for Lisa Romball and Richard Siem but would increase the impact from 1 side to 2 sides for Dan Pesch.

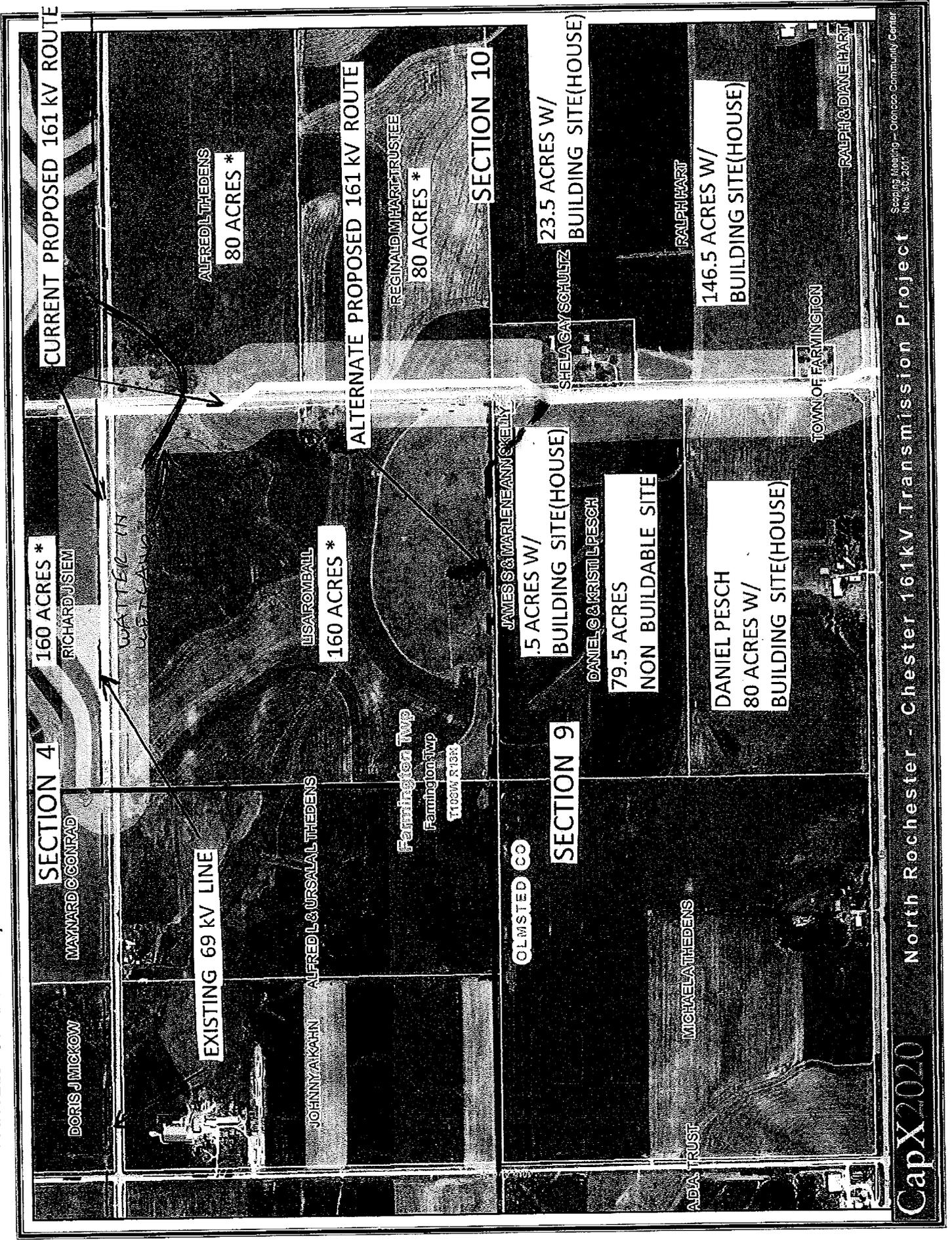
I hope the people receiving this letter take these concerns under consideration and modify the current 161 kV transmission line to the alternate proposed route as identified in this letter and indicated on the maps.

Sincerely,



Lisa J. Romball

* PARCELS OF LAND W/ FUTURE BUILDABLE SITES(HOUSES)



Section 9 Meeting - Oroeco Community Center
Nov 30 2011

North Rochester - Chester 161kV Transmission Project

CapX2020

To: The Minnesota Department of Commerce

Re: Public Comment for the North Rochester to Chester Transmission Line Project

PUC Docket Number: E002/TL-11-800

Submitted by: Sara Walch

Address: 9525 40th Ave NE, Elgin, MN located in Section 20 of Farmington Township, Olmsted County

My name is Sara Walch and I reside in Section 20 of Farmington Township of Olmsted County along 40th Avenue NE with my husband and three young children ages 7 and under. Our address is 9525 40th Avenue NE, Elgin, MN 55932. My family farm where my parents, brothers, grandfather and uncle reside and farm is also located on 40th Ave NE in Section 16 of Farmington Township in Olmsted County.

I am writing regarding the proposed 161 kV North Rochester to Chester line as part of the CapX2020 project. While we would prefer not to have this line anywhere within Farmington Township, when looking at options for placement I support the current proposed route following north-south along 50th Avenue NE starting in Farmington Township and continuing straight south to the Chester Substation as the most reasonable, best option as also studied and determined the preferred route by CapX. This provides the most direct route, following entirely along existing road and transmission line right-of-way throughout the route. Another advantage of this route is that it does not cut through/across farm land but instead runs on right-of-way/road side the entire route so it does not disrupt farming. Also, being that the line would run entirely on road side/right-of-way, installing and maintaining the line would be easy to access. Although I don't like to see it go near anyone in our area, this route (50th Avenue NE) is the least populated roadway around the considered area in Farmington Township and therefore would impact fewer people (including no children) compared to other areas within Farmington Township.

Again, I feel that the proposed 50th Avenue NE route for the 161 kV line is the most practical, as well as the most economical, choice for placement and should remain the preferred proposed route. If alternative routes need to be considered beyond 50th Ave NE through Farmington Township, then moving to the east side of 50th Avenue NE in Farmington Township would offer the next best alternative options to place this line (i.e. 60th or 55th Avenue NE). To the east of 50th Ave NE there are fewer homes compared to the opposite direction (west) which is more populated and includes young children.

I am against any shift of the power line to the west of 50th Avenue NE in Farmington Township. I would oppose this because this would shift it less than one mile distance to 40th Avenue NE which is the most densely populated road segment around 50th Avenue NE and includes two homes with young children under the age of 7 years old; both of these homes are located along 40th Avenue NE, sections 20 and 17 in Farmington Township. There are very few children residing in Farmington Township at all so this area (40th Ave NE) should be avoided. I would have significant concern about potential negative health consequences, especially for children, if this line was placed anywhere to the west of 50th Avenue NE exposing these children to high voltage power lines which research and CapX acknowledge has shown correlations and associations between exposure to such lines and negative health outcomes especially for children. Also, considering that 40th Ave NE is the most populated road in Farmington Township around the proposed route, if the power line were pushed any closer than one mile away at 50th Ave NE this would impact more people in terms of health, aesthetic considerations, property value, etc. I would also hate to see the line cut across/through fields especially at 45th Avenue and oppose any shift of the line there also. This would place the line only 1/2 mile from the densely populated 40th Ave NE where two families (including my own) with young children reside. It would also come within less than 75 feet of at least two homes (one on Hwy 247 and the other on Co Rd 21) which could not be avoided. Additionally this would cut through my parent's dairy and crop farm making it very difficult to farm the land, wrecking terraces and strips, maintenance would be difficult, etc. and dairy farm land has to be accessed multiple more times per year than non-dairy farms so there would be greater exposure and burden of the line here

and for two other dairy farms along the 45th Ave NE area. As one of several previously studied and eliminated alternative route options, 45th Ave NE also was found by CapX to have the highest percentage of route not following transmission line, roads or property lines of all of the alternative routes/segments studied.

For these reasons I emphasize again that I oppose any shift of the 161 kV line to the west of the proposed 50th Ave NE location in Farmington Township. I feel that looking at all things considered, if the line has to come through Farmington Township at all then the preferred proposed 50th Ave NE route starting in Farmington Township is the most practical option in that it follows existing right-of-way/road/transmission lines 100% of the time, is the least populated route including no children directly affected, does not cut across farm land, is a straight route to the Chester Substation destination and would most convenient and economical route to install/build and maintain. If alternative route options are needed beyond 50th Ave NE through Farmington Township, they would be best placed to the east of 50th Ave NE.

Thank you for your time.

Respectfully submitted,

Sara Walch

9525 40th Ave NE

Elgin, MN 55932

507-288-3310

Robert and Betty Seidlitz
5209 County Road 2nd Northeast
Elgin, Minnesota 55932
November 17, 2011

Matt Langan
Minnesota Department of Commerce
65 Seventh Place East - Suite 500
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55101-2198

To: Matt Langan
From: Robert and Betty Seidlitz
Farmington Township, section 32, Olmsted County, Minnesota

Our 1875 barn (known as the Benike Family Barn) was placed on the National Register of Historic Places. We are enclosing a copy of the letter we received from the Minnesota Historical Society.

After talking to the Minnesota Historical Society, we realize that it would have to be approved by someone at the Historical Society as to whether any poles can be on our land and also the visual effect this would have. We do not know what effect this would be on this Chester line. You may have to contact the Minnesota Historical Society - they are looking into it.

Robert and Betty Seidlitz
(507) 282-6604





October 31, 2011

Betty J. and Robert J. Seidlitz
5209 County Road 21 NE
Elgin, Minnesota 55932

RE: Benike Family Barn, 5209 County Road 21 NE, Farmington Township, Olmsted County

Dear Betty and Robert Seidlitz:

I am pleased and honored to congratulate you upon the entry of the Benike Family Barn in the National Register of Historic Places. The National Register, as you know, is a listing of districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects considered to be worthy of preservation. An information sheet describing the program is enclosed. The property was listed on October 7, 2011.

By recognizing the significance of your property and planning for its preservation you are participating in a national movement which aims to preserve, for the benefit of future generations, our cultural heritage.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact Susan Roth, National Register Historian, at 651-259-3451, susan.roth@mnhs.org or 345 Kellogg Blvd. W., St. Paul, MN 55102. Again, congratulations on receiving this important designation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Britta L. Bloomberg'.

Britta L. Bloomberg
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

Enclosures: Copy of National Register Nomination Form
National Register Program
National Register Plaque Information

cc: Olmsted County Board of Commissioners, c/o County Administration, Government Ctr., 151 4th St. SE,
Rochester, MN 55904
President, The History Center of Olmsted County, 1195 West Circle Dr. SW, Rochester, MN 55902
Mr. Richard Siem, Chair, Farmington Township Board, 3038 NE 125th St., Rochester, MN 55906
Gemini Research, 15 East Ninth Street, Morris, MN 56267

From: vlad_sokolov@g.com
To: [Langan, Matthew \(COMM\)](#)
Subject: Comments and Questions Regarding N-S Chester Branch of CapX 2020 Project
Date: Thursday, December 08, 2011 3:16:26 PM
Attachments: [161-kV-Underground-Transmission-Line.pdf](#)

REFERENCE DOCUMENT: PUC Docket No. E002/TL-11-800

Dear Mr. Langan,

Per the request for public comments regarding the N-S 161 kV Chester Branch of the CapX 2020 Project we would like to submit the following question and comments regarding the proposed transmission line.

Questions:

1. Has an underground 161kV line been considered for at least a portion of the (north - south) Chester Branch transmission line? If not, why not?

To minimize the impact on the houses and properties just south of Viola Rd (which includes the Sokolovs, Wickershams, Ereths, Hawkins, Ogilvies, Nordstroms and Rinks) the recommendation would be to transfer the line from the towers just north of Viola Rd to an underground section passing the residences cited (along the same N-S right-of-way as proposed to date) and returning to the overhead towers just south of the Wickersham residence (less than 1/2 mile).

Reference to an example of an existing underground 161 kV line can be found at: http://www.burnsmed.com/Resource_/Project/1650/ProjectPdf/161-kV-Underground-Transmission-Line.pdf . This pdf is also attached to this email.

2. If the right-of-way (easement) is 80 ft for the proposed line could this easement width be expanded to greater than 80 feet in the future? If so, by how much?

3. Once the transmission line "alignment" is set, does the the 600-ft *route width* loose its legal valditiy, or does it continue into the future (for potential future line capacity expansion)?

4. Since the existing 69kV transmission line structure also serves as a distribution network for electric service to the local residences, once the new line is installed when will the residents be notified of the new distriubtion configuration (additional wooden poles, how many, how tall, etc.)?

Comments:

One item that in our opinion has not been brought up for sufficient discussion is the reason for the proposed expansion of the electric network. Who will it serve in the future? Where is the projected energy consumption increase expected?

Sincerely,

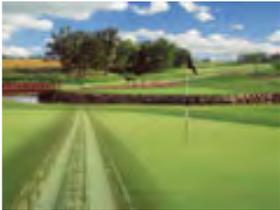
Vladimir and Bonnie Sokolov
5016 Viola Rd. NE
Rochester, MN 55906

161-kV Underground Transmission Line

Location: Kansas City, Mo.

Client: Aquila Inc. (now
Kansas City Power & Light)

Completion Date: 2002



PROJECT SUMMARY

Burns & McDonnell was the design-build firm for Aquila's 161-kV underground transmission line. This underground cable is the first XLPE solid dielectric cable installed in Aquila's transmission system.

SERVICES PROVIDED

- Engineering
- Procurement
- Construction management

PROJECT BACKGROUND AND DESCRIPTION

Burns & McDonnell furnished equipment and materials, managed the trenching and concrete encased conduit system and installed the cable.

Installation of approximately one mile of underground transmission line to replace a previously existing overhead line. The underground line was needed because a new golf course and subdivision were built on previously undeveloped property.

The overhead line carried 69-kV. Eventual plans called for upgrading the line to 161-kV. Therefore, the new underground line was installed as a 161-kV line in anticipation of future needs.

To allow for easy access, the underground line was re-routed to run adjacent to an existing road. Golf course aesthetics played a role in construction as well. The developer requested that a line of trees on the edge of the greens be avoided. In order to do this, Burns & McDonnell designed a 3-ft. diameter x 340-ft long boring through solid limestone to accommodate the new duct bank. The routing was further complicated by the discovery of some archeologically sensitive areas containing pre-Civil war graves.

The 161-kV underground transmission cable is a XLPE cable with 1500 kcmil copper conductor and a corrugated copper sheath. The project included 5800' of underground reinforced concrete ductbank with four (4) 6" pvc ducts and one (1) 2" pvc duct for future fiber optic cable, a substation termination structure and foundation, and a deadend/termination structure and foundation which ties back into the overhead line. One splice was required in the middle of the line due to pulling strength requirements and cable reel limitations. The splice was housed by a 8' wide x 20' long x 8' deep precast manhole.

Managing construction power outages were an added concern. To avoid replacing additional structures on the overhead portion of the project, the riser structure/deadend structure was placed directly beneath the existing overhead line. During construction, this would require several line outages. During the peak of the summer, power outages are difficult to initiate without causing difficulties for people who rely on this power source. We limited our outages by outlining all of the tasks required for outages and completing most of the construction tasks requiring outages at the end of the project, prior to energization of the new underground line.

PROJECT FEATURES

- First XLPE solid dielectric cable

- 1500 kcmil copper conductor and corrugated copper sheath

Engineering, Architecture, Construction, Environmental and Consulting Solutions



Energy Facility Permitting
 85 7th Place East, Suite 500
 St. Paul, Minnesota 55101-2198
 1.800.657.3794 / 651.296.4026
 FAX 651.297.7891 TTY 651.297.3067
<http://energyfacilities.puc.state.mn.us>

PUBLIC COMMENT SHEET

North Rochester to Chester Transmission Line Project

PUC Docket Number: E002/TL-11-800

Name:

Representing:

MIKE THEDENS

Address:

Email:

4313 HWY 247 NE

mthedens01@yahoo.com

Comments:

I HAVE CONCERNS WITH ROUTING OF THE 161 KV TRANS-
MISSION LINE IN SECTION 4, 9, & 10 OF FARMINGTON TOWNSHIP
IN OLMSTED COUNTY. PLEASE READ THE LETTER AND MAPS
ATTACH FOR ~~REAS~~ MY CONCERNS ALONG W/ AN ALTERNATE
PROPOSED ROUTE. BESIDES THE ATTACHED LETTER I
WOULD LIKE TO SHARE THAT MY FAMILIES INTENTIONS
ARE TO HAVE ONE OF SOHS BUILD A HOUSE IN SECTION
10 ON MY DAD'S (ALFRED THEDENS) 80 ACRES. THE LOCATION
WE DESIRE TO PLACE A HOUSE IS ON THE WEST SIDE OF
THE PROPERTY WHERE THE ~~GOO~~ CURRENT PROPOSED 161 KV
LINE IS BEING ROUTED. THIS ONE MAIN REASON I SUPPORT
THE ALTERNATE ROUTE IN THE ATTACHED LETTER MAPS.

Please submit comments by 4:30pm, December 8 2011 to:

Matthew Langan
 Minnesota Dept. of Commerce
 85 7th Place East
 Suite 500
 St. Paul, MN 55101-2198

Email: matthew.langan@state.mn.us
 Phone: 651-296-2096
 Fax: 651-297-7891

SEE
 BACK FOR
 CONTINUATION

- ALSO MY ³ SONS AND I PHEASANT & DEER HUNT BOTH 80 ACRES PARCELS OF MY DAD'S ~~80~~ (ALFRED THEDENS) PROPERTY AND ALSO MY COUSIN'S (LISA ROMBALL) 160 PARCEL OF LAND. WE VERY MUCH ENJOY THE TIME WE ~~ARE~~ OUT HUNTING AND PART OF THAT IS THE SCENERY/LANDSCAPE WE ARE IN. SEEING TRANSMISSION LINES IN MULTIPLE LOCATIONS AS CURRENTLY BEING PROPOSED WOULD BE A NEGATIVE TO THE SCENERY/LANDSCAPE FOR THE AREA. ALSO MY SONS AND I INTEND TO TAKE OWNERSHIP OF ~~MY DAD'S~~ MY DAD'S (ALFRED THEDENS) PROPERTY AND POSSIBLY MY COUSIN'S (LISA ROMBALLS) WHEN SHE DECIDES TO SELL THE 160 PARCEL OF LAND THAT IS BETWEEN MY DAD'S (2) 80 ACRES PARCELS OF LAND. ~~SO~~ IF THAT WOULD HAPPEN THEM BETWEEN ME AND MY SONS WE WOULD HAVE 3 ^(MIKE THEDENS) LOCATIONS THAT TRANSMISSION LINES SEPARATE THE ~~PROTCO~~ PROPERTIES ~~BE~~ BECAUSE THE 395 LINE ~~SEPARATES~~ WITH THE MODIFIED PREFERRED ROUTE SEAPARATES ~~MY~~ MY DAD'S 80ACRE FARM FROM MY FARM AND LISA ROMBALLS ~~AND~~ THEN THE 161 ~~LINE~~ ~~SEPARATES~~ SEPARATES ~~MY~~ MY DAD OTHER 80 ACRES IN SECTION ¹⁰ ~~10~~ ~~FROM~~ LISA ROMBALLS IN SECTION 9. THE FARM I LIVE ON IS A CENTRY FARM AND MY FAMILY ~~HAS~~ LIVED/~~IN SECTION 9~~ OWNED LAND IN SECTIONS 9 & 10 FOR MANY YEARS AND I WOULD LIKE TO

Postage
Required

TO: Matthew Langan
Minnesota Dept. of Commerce
85 7th Place East
Suite 500
St. Paul, MN 55101-2198

THINK THAT SHOULD HAVE SOME IMPACT ON THE ROUTING OF THESE TRANSMISSION LINES THAT APPEAR BEING TO ~~GO~~ BE GOING TO HAPPEN WETHER WE AS LAND OWNERS LIKE IT OR NOT. ~~PLEASE~~ PLEASE TAKE ALL OF THIS INFORMATION INTO CONSIDERATION

THANK YOU,
MIKE THEDENS

Public Comment Sheet

North Rochester to Chester Transmission Line Project

PUC Docket Number: E002/TL-11-800

Comments:

I have concerns with the preferred route that is being proposed for the 161 kV transmission line between the Chester substation and heading north to connect into the new 345 kV transmission line. The portion of the 161 kV transmission line route that concerns me is the routing located in Sections 4, 9 and 10 in Farmington Township of Olmsted County. The current proposed routing goes from south to north along either side of County Rd 128 NE between sections 9 and 10 for 1 mile then turns left and runs from east to west along 125 St NE between sections 4 and 9 for ½ mile and then connects to the 345 kv transmission in 1 of 3 proposed tap point locations. See attached labeled maps. I want to propose an alternate route that will benefit a number of people that own property in Sections 4, 9 and 10. See attached maps for the proposed alternate route.

The amount 161 kv transmission lines being proposed around the perimeter of Section 9 is 1½ miles. Sections 4 and 10 are adjacent to Section 9 so they share this 1½ miles of transmission lines. The proposed 1½ mile route impacts a total 8 different property owners, 2 residential house sites and the Farmington Town hall. There are 4 property owners (Richard Siem, Lisa Romball, Alfred Thedens, and Reginald Hart) that own parcels of land that could have future building sites (houses) placed on them. The minimum amount of land for a building site is 80 acres. See map for the acreage of each parcel of land.

The proposed alternate on map could provide a route that is ½ mile shorter if the tap location to the 345 kV line would be located in Section 9. This would happen if the modified preferred route of the 345 kV transmission line is chosen to be constructed. If the 161 kV line taps into the 345 Kv line at the Tap 1 or 2 locations then the same amount of 161 kV transmission line will need to be constructed around the perimeter and/or within Section 9 with either route option. The proposed alternate route would only affect 5 property owners, 2 houses and the town hall. The number of property

owners with parcels of land with future building sites (house) are none. See map.

Some other advantages of the alternate proposed route is that it does not cross a wetland that has water in it year round compared to the current route. Refer to maps. The alternate proposed route should be cheaper for the following reasons. First, if the route is ½ mile shorter then less transmission line to be constructed. Secondly, it would not affect the current 69 Kv line as compared to the current proposed route and providing a ½ mile 2 circuit (69 kV and 161 kV) line. Third, there are no property owners affected that have parcels of land that could have future building sites (houses) on them. If there were parcels of land with future building sites affected, the transmission lines could impact desirable locations for the placement of future building sites, which could have a negative impact on the marketable/resale value of the entire parcel of land or change future plans the current owner has for the property. These landowners may request additional compensation when negotiating an easement for the transmission lines to offset the devaluation of the property.

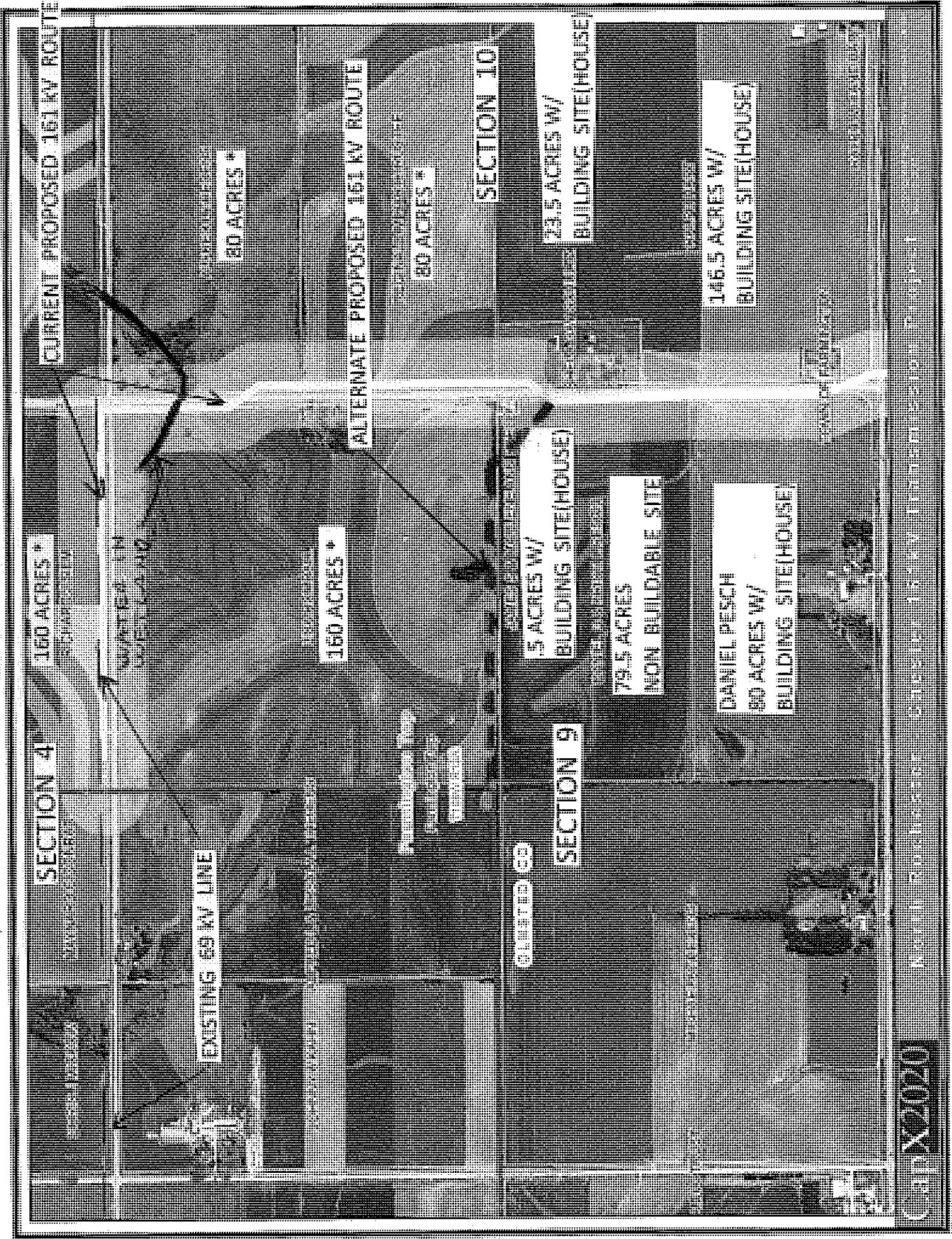
Another advantage to the alternate proposed route is the property owners affected would share more equally the amount of transmission lines along their property. Property owners Lisa Romball and Richard Siem could have transmission lines along 3 sides of that property if the preferred modified route for the 345 kV line is constructed along with the current 161 Kv route. The alternate proposed route would lessen the impact on these properties to only 2 sides for Lisa Romball and Richard Siem but would increase the impact from 1 side to 2 sides for Dan Pesch.

I hope the people receiving this letter take these concerns under consideration and modify the current 161 kV transmission line to the alternate proposed route as identified in this letter and indicated on the maps.

Sincerely,

Mike & Connie Thedens

* PARCELS OF LAND W/ FUTURE BUILDABLE SITES(HOUSES)



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MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
ENERGY FACILITIES PERMITTING
PUBLIC INFORMATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
SCOPING MEETING

In the Matter of the Route Permit Application for the
North Rochester to Chester 161 kV Transmission Line
Project in Goodhue, Wabasha, and Olmsted Counties

PUC Docket No: E-002/TL-11-800

Oronoco Community Center
114 2nd Street NW
Oronoco, Minnesota

Met, pursuant to notice, at 6:00 in the
evening on November 29, 2011.

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I N D E X

WITNESS	PAGE
DAVID LOWE	5
MIKE THEDENS	6
BONNIE SOKOLOV	11
SUZANNE ROHLFING	14

1 MR. LANGAN: Okay. So what I'd like to
2 do is if anyone has a comment or a question, if you
3 would, just come up. And this -- again, the
4 questions can be on the project itself, and Tom and
5 his group can answer those. If you have questions
6 about the state review process, I'm happy to answer
7 those for you.

8 Again, we have the court reporter here.
9 If anybody had arrived late after I had talked about
10 that, we'll ask that you come to the front, if
11 you're able, and speak -- speak your name and spell
12 your last name and speak slowly. And we'll get your
13 comments recorded here so that I can have them as
14 I'm putting together the scope of the environmental
15 assessment.

16 But maybe just before we do that, we
17 should answer the first question that we had. And
18 I'll just hand it over to you, Tom.

19 MR. HILLSTROM: So I got -- what I did
20 was I opened up the permit application from the
21 CapX2020 website, and I scrolled down to -- it's
22 Figure 7 in the permit application. And, by the
23 way, we do have a couple copies, paper copies of the
24 permit application right in the back of the room
25 there if you're interested in looking at that. And,

1 like Matt said, it's at the libraries. I just
2 pulled it off the Internet as Matt was speaking.
3 And this is a schematic drawing of what the double
4 circuit structure would look like. And Grant gave
5 me the figures. The existing 69-kilovolt line is in
6 the neighborhood of 65 feet tall, and the distance
7 between poles on that line is 275 feet.

8 Now, the proposed line where it's a
9 single 161 circuit, the poles would be in the
10 neighborhood of 70 to 105 feet tall. Where it's a
11 double circuit 161 and 69 where you have both
12 circuits on one pole, the poles would be in the
13 neighborhood of 85 to 120 feet tall. And in both of
14 those cases, 161 alone or 161 with a 69 double
15 circuit, the poles would be between four hundred and
16 seven feet -- 400 and 700 feet apart.

17 And I believe I have another schematic
18 that shows just the single circuit structure, what
19 that would look like. And that's Figure 8 in the
20 permit application.

21 MR. LANGAN: Okay. Ray is occupied back
22 there, so I think what I'll just do is if it's
23 okay -- did anybody sign a speaker comment card that
24 wanted to speak and needed to get going earlier
25 tonight? Okay.

1 Well, if you -- if you would, if anybody
2 then wants to speak, offer a comment or ask a
3 question, you can just raise your hand and come on
4 up to the front.

5 Sir.

6 MR. LOWE: Do I have to come up there?

7 MR. LANGAN: Please do.

8 MR. LOWE: My name is David Lowe,
9 L-O-W-E, and I'm a nearby landowner. And first off,
10 just let me say I'm not totally convinced of the
11 need for this entire project with the way the
12 electricity is going. So I'm going on record as
13 saying I'm not convinced we need any of this, and
14 there may be better ways to do it.

15 And I think the worst part of this whole
16 process is that it pits neighbor against neighbor.
17 So, yea, wow, I'm excited because the route now
18 doesn't run right next to my house, but it runs
19 right next to my neighbor's house. And I just can't
20 stand that process. So I'm going to say --
21 unfortunately, I'm going to go on record to say I
22 like the proposed line. It's the most direct route.
23 It seems to me like there's less right-of-way to
24 acquire. It makes the most sense to me. You're
25 going over in half -- over half that route you're

1 just replacing lines. And it sounds like you're
2 going to end up putting in less poles, in some cases
3 only about 20 to 30 feet taller. So I would go on
4 record as saying I like the proposed route.

5 MR. LANGAN: Thank you.

6 Sir.

7 MR. THEDENS: Hi, my name is Mike
8 Thedens, T-H-E-D-E-N-S. And I live on the northern
9 route, northern part of this section here
10 (indicating), on Section 9 where the 161 is proposed
11 to come in through there. And I guess this whole
12 project and process, like I said, I agree with the
13 last gentleman, it's not very much fun, because it's
14 neighbor against neighbor and everything else and
15 you really don't want to make -- put something on
16 your neighbor. Nobody wants it in their backyard.

17 I have a lot of concerns with how it
18 affects my property, my dad's property, and also my
19 cousin's property. We all live in Section 9. Right
20 now -- we'll find out in the next few days with the
21 345 line what's going to happen there. But if the
22 modified preferred route happens there, that line is
23 going to put -- in Section 9, that's going to put a
24 mile of transmission line in Section 9 alone, going
25 right through the middle of it. It's splitting my

1 property, putting a power transmission line between
2 me and my dad's.

3 This 161 line, if both those preferred
4 routes happen that they're talking about, and they
5 use tab 3, Section 9 alone is going to have the most
6 impact of transmission line of any section in the
7 entire route. It's going to have two-and-a-half
8 miles either around the perimeter or going within
9 it.

10 So everywhere I go in that property,
11 whether my kids want to build a house on there in
12 the future -- my parents have two 80-acre parcels of
13 land, one is in Section 9 and the other one is in
14 Section 10, which is going to be running right along
15 that road where the 161 kV line is going to go,
16 that's -- they're going to have three-quarters of a
17 mile, I believe it is -- well, actually, they'll
18 have about a mile between the two properties of
19 transmission lines. They're going to be greatly
20 affected by the property values of their land.
21 They're getting hit on their building site on the
22 south end and on the east end. And also it would
23 separate -- my cousin's is sandwiched between my
24 parents' two 80 acres in Section 9 and Section 10.
25 They're up in the northwest section of Section 9.

1 Their property would get hit on three sides with
2 transmission lines. It just seems like that area
3 there is getting so impacted. It just -- to me it's
4 kind of a little bit overkill.

5 Like I said, where I live my -- it's a
6 century farm. My great grandfather lived there. He
7 homesteaded that. My dad lived there where he
8 lives -- either where I live or where he lives
9 currently all his life. My cousins owned that many,
10 many years. All this land has been in the family
11 for many years. Just these last years and stuff, I
12 pheasant hunt, I deer hunt on all those adjoining
13 properties. Everywhere I go, whether it's my land,
14 my dad's land, or my cousin's land, I'm going to be
15 walking near a transmission line on every single
16 piece of property. We've got 320, 420 -- 480 acres,
17 and every piece of property somewhere along its
18 property line or wherever is going to get hit.

19 The other questions I have concerning
20 that, if this thing does get -- does happen, you
21 know, I sure hope we take into consideration the
22 land values, especially when you're hitting people's
23 property on more than one side, two or three sides
24 of a person's property. Property valuation of that
25 entire farm or parcel of land is going to be more

1 than just the width of that length of line of what
2 you're talking for an easement.

3 Fences, are they going to be replaced --
4 that's another concern I have -- between parcels of
5 land? You come in there, you're going to clean
6 everything up? All the old fence lines are going to
7 come out, the trees are going to come out, which is
8 fine. That cleans it up somewhat on the property
9 line issues. Are the fences going to be cleaned up?
10 Are we going to be compensated for that fairly if
11 they don't get put back in?

12 So there's -- and another thing I'm
13 concerned with, like I said -- I was telling one of
14 the other ladies there that deals with the easements
15 and rights-of-way, either on my cousin's land, if
16 they ever sold their property, or my dad's other 80
17 that doesn't have a building site on it -- in
18 Farmington Township that's what you have to have is
19 80 acres to build, to have a buildable building
20 site -- my sons I would hope that, as they get
21 older -- I have one in the Air Force now, and he's
22 not too many years from deciding what he's going to
23 do -- if he wants to build a house out there, how
24 far away does he have to be from the transmission
25 line, If he builds on that 80 acres that doesn't

1 have a building site on it now? And he's going to
2 have that in his front yard. Where if he built now,
3 it wouldn't there be. Now he's going to be -- now
4 he's got to decide can I put my house there, if he
5 wanted to build there, or do I have to go somewhere
6 else?

7 Same thing with my cousin's property,
8 that's an old abandoned building site. If somebody
9 wanted to buy that, if somebody wanted to build
10 there, where would they go? They got it on three
11 sides of their property. No matter where they go,
12 they're going to have a transmission to look at when
13 they look out their front window.

14 So I guess I just have a lot of concerns
15 with that, because it just is going to greatly
16 affect how the landscape of the property is going to
17 be and how the land values are going to be. I guess
18 that's my main concerns.

19 MR. LANGAN: Okay. Thank you, sir.
20 Excuse me, you were talking about Section 9. And I
21 just want to make sure it's on the record what
22 township?

23 MR. LOWE: Farmington.

24 MR. LANGAN: Farmington Township. Thank
25 you.

1 Yes, ma'am.

2 MS. SOKOLOV: My name is Bonnie Sokolov,
3 S-O-K-O-L-O-V. And I have kind of a couple more
4 practical questions, I guess. We live in the more
5 southern part of the route in Haverhill Township in
6 Olmsted County. And I asked about the height of the
7 power lines, current, and all of that. That was
8 very, very helpful. I'd also be interested to know
9 what our current easement and right-of-way are with
10 those lines right now compared to what the proposed
11 easement and right-of-way will be again so that we
12 have that.

13 And then another practical piece. This
14 line that is currently there from Peoples
15 Cooperative Services runs along the frontage of our
16 front yard. And so we really are looking at
17 replacing that with this new line. We currently get
18 our power and our electricity from Peoples from the
19 pole that is there right now. How is that going to
20 change in terms if you're putting the spans, you
21 know, 5-, 700 feet apart instead of the 200 that
22 they are now? There are a number of houses along
23 that line. You know, there's a pole there with a
24 transformer, and each house is tapping off of that.
25 I'm just also curious how that will change for us.

1 Thank you.

2 MR. LANGAN: Thank you for those. And I
3 think those are good questions that we'll -- now
4 that we have those on the record, we'll make sure
5 that those make it into the environmental assessment
6 so that all can see what the comparisons are between
7 what's there existing and what is planned. But
8 maybe we can get you an answer right now to that.

9 MR. HILLSTROM: Yeah, I can clarify a
10 little bit. I'll start with the second half of your
11 question. The power to your home comes not from the
12 69-kilovolt line, but from the lower-voltage
13 distribution line. And that is sometimes built on
14 separate smaller poles, maybe on the other side of
15 the road, or sometimes it's possibly hooked onto the
16 same pole that carries that 69-kilovolt line. And
17 we -- we'll have to deal with the distribution lines
18 in some way. And if it's already connected to the
19 69-kilovolt line, chances are it will be connected
20 to the line that would hold both the 161 and 69 and
21 the distribution line.

22 There are other ways that it could be
23 dealt with. Sometimes it can be buried because it's
24 a low enough voltage line that it can be buried. We
25 haven't gotten that far in the engineering to know

1 exactly what would happen to that distribution line,
2 but we would have to figure it out. Obviously we
3 have to keep service to your home, so we will have
4 to figure that out. It may be different in
5 different circumstances.

6 As far as the easement that's out there
7 today, I'm not exactly sure the width of that
8 easement. But whatever the width of that current
9 easement is it's not sufficient for the new line.
10 We would have to purchase a new easement to build
11 our new line, even if it does follow that existing
12 69 line. So the width of that existing 69 line is
13 sort of irrelevant.

14 But we do -- we do have people here that
15 may know the answer to that.

16 Gary or Sarah, do you know how wide the
17 existing easement is for the 69 line?

18 MR. FITTERER: I'm Gary Fitterer,
19 F-I-T-T-E-R-E-R, engineering manager for Peoples
20 Cooperative Services. Typically for our
21 transmission line, the 69 K volt lines we have
22 easements 40 feet. So 20 feet in the center.
23 Sometimes it's a little wider, but no more than
24 60 feet wide.

25 MR. LANGAN: Thank you.

1 Other questions or comments?

2 Yes, please.

3 MS. ROHLFING: Suzanne Rohlring,
4 S-U-Z-A-N-N-E, R-O-H-L-F-I-N-G. I'm wondering,
5 Matt, if you could comment, when you refer to making
6 comments that the PUC would be interested in looking
7 at, are there some guidelines or factors that people
8 could utilize for that? Thank you.

9 MR. LANGAN: Now, there's someone who's
10 been following our other project for the last year.
11 Thank you for bringing that up.

12 And part of that answer requires reading
13 state rule, which is not a lot of fun for some. But
14 it's a short section, I assure you, and it's real
15 useful. You can go onto the Minnesota Legislature's
16 website, click on rules, and look at Chapter 7850,
17 and it's part 4100. And what that does is it lists
18 out all of the factors that the Public Utilities
19 Commission needs to consider when issuing a route
20 permit or selecting a route to permit. I believe
21 that's -- it's about 14 items long. And that's
22 going to include how much -- how much existing
23 right-of-way is used by a route or various routes
24 that you're looking at, what are the environmental
25 impacts along a route or several routes, how many

1 homes are within a certain distance from the
2 proposed right-of-way.

3 And if you look at that list, you can
4 really -- you can kind of start to formulate what
5 the PUC uses in terms of their criteria for siting
6 these transmission lines. And so as you look at
7 those, if you know that you have some of those
8 environmental or -- or some of those environmental
9 impacts that would occur as a result of the line and
10 you know of ways to avoid those or to mitigate those
11 impacts, those would be useful comments.

12 Again, if there is an alternative route
13 or an alternative route segment that you'd like to
14 propose and you're looking for reasons to generate
15 why that is, you can use some of those factors that
16 are listed in that state rule.

17 But just to speak about them generally,
18 again, they're looking at environmental impacts,
19 they're looking at human impacts associated with the
20 line, they look at the cost of the line, again use
21 of right-of -- existing right-of-way, cultural
22 resource issues that may be in the area. And so
23 that's all of the factors that the Commission needs
24 to consider when they're issuing a route. So that
25 can be useful in forming your comments or supporting

1 an alternative route that you may want to provide
2 for us.

3 Okay. Other questions or comments?

4 Okay. If there are none, we'll hang
5 around for a while. And if anyone wants to take a
6 look at maps or speak to us individually, we're
7 happy to do that. We'll hang around.

8 A couple of things to take away. Make
9 sure that you grab a handout -- the handouts that
10 are available out there. I encourage you to sign up
11 for the project mailing list, which anybody that
12 came late, it's a project-specific mailing list. It
13 doesn't -- you won't get notices for every project
14 that we're working on around the state, but just for
15 this project. But it let's you know when meetings
16 or comment deadlines are coming up.

17 Let's see. Comments on the scope of this
18 on what issues you want us to study or any other
19 routes you want us to study are due to me by
20 December 8th. And all of my contact information is
21 on the meeting notice so you can get in touch with
22 me.

23 And then I guess, finally, if at any
24 point that you have any questions about the project
25 or how the state reviews this, feel free and call

1 me. I'd be happy to talk with you about that and
2 answer any questions you have.

3 Okay. With that, we'll hang around, if
4 anybody wants to speak with us individually. Thanks
5 very much for coming out tonight.

6 (Proceedings concluded at 7:03 p.m.)

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