

11-915 - AFTERNOON SESSION - DECEMBER 1, 2011

STATE OF MINNESOTA

ENERGY FACILITY PERMITTING

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In the Matter of the Route Permit Application for the  
Enterprise Park to Crooked Lake 115 kV Transmission Line  
Project in Anoka County

MPUC DOCKET NO. 11-915

Anoka City Hall  
2015 First Avenue  
Anoka, Minnesota

December 1, 2011

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I N D E X

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LOIS WITTE	4
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1           MR. LANGAN: What we'll do is we'll open  
2           it up to comments and questions. And, again, either  
3           one are fair game. I'll try to answer them the best  
4           I can, whether it's something about the project or  
5           the State's review of this. We do have -- you know,  
6           Mark and his team can answer some of the questions  
7           that you may have as well. And, like I say, if you  
8           don't -- if you're not prepared to make a comment  
9           today, don't worry about it. You have until the  
10          19th. And verbal and written comments are viewed  
11          equally, so you're not missing an opportunity. But  
12          we'd like to open it up for comments and for  
13          questions.

14                 So I think with this group, we'll just do  
15          a show of hands, if anybody would like to start.  
16          Again, if you have a comment or question, if you'd  
17          state your name and spell your last name and then  
18          just speak slowly so the court reporter can  
19          accurately transcribe what your comment or question  
20          is.

21                 Okay. With that, does anybody have a  
22          comment or a question?

23                 Yes, please. Can you -- I'm sorry, we  
24          need you to step up to the microphone so the court  
25          reporter --

1 MS. WITTE: This is a simple question. I  
2 think I know the answer. Lois Witte, W-I-T-T-E.  
3 When you said the poles with distribution are 250 to  
4 300 feet apart, does that mean where there is a  
5 distribution line going to a home or business?

6 MR. LANGAN: That's a good question.

7 And, Mark, maybe you want to answer that,  
8 sort of that configuration question for her.

9 MR. STROHFUS: Yeah, that's correct. If  
10 you drive around your neighborhood right now, you'll  
11 see distribution lines, you'll see poles out there.  
12 And, specifically, let's just pull up one of the  
13 maps.

14 MR. LANGAN: Sure.

15 MR. STROHFUS: So, you know, I'm aware  
16 that there is distribution lines on both sides of  
17 Seventh Avenue here.

18 MS. WITTE: Okay. So they would be 250  
19 to 300 feet apart?

20 MR. STROHFUS: Yeah. And that's a  
21 general number.

22 MS. WITTE: Yeah, right. Approximately.

23 MR. STROHFUS: Yeah, approximately. When  
24 we go ahead and after they -- what happens after the  
25 route permit is issued, we go into the next phase of

1 our project, which is to do some surveying. And  
2 some of that survey work we've already done, where  
3 we've used LIDAR.

4 Haven't we already?

5 MR. HEURING: Yeah.

6 MR. STROHFUS: So we've done aerial  
7 surveying. We've done LIDAR. It's light  
8 emitting -- and I don't remember what the rest of it  
9 is, but it's a very interesting way to get surveys  
10 now, so we see where everything's at. Then our  
11 drafting technicians will kind of start laying on  
12 the location of the line. They look at the maximum  
13 spans that are needed or are possible, the minimum  
14 spans that we can -- we have to do to make sure  
15 there's enough support for that line itself, and we  
16 gain distribution on there. So the line can't sag  
17 down too low, because when the line gets -- when  
18 it's -- when there's a lot of energy flowing through  
19 the line on a hot summer day, it's a metal line, and  
20 it will expand and sag down. So we don't want that  
21 line sagging down and touching the other lines  
22 causing short circuits.

23 So, yeah, that's what we're looking at.  
24 But when we put in those poles or those lines, we  
25 try to put them in convenient locations for people.

1 We won't put one in the middle of somebody's  
2 driveway because -- so, you know, we -- quite often  
3 we prefer to put them in the corners of lots and  
4 along property lines rather than right through the  
5 middle of somebody's yards.

6 MS. WITTE: And then one other question.  
7 In here it said Anoka Municipal Utility may choose  
8 to bury some of the distribution lines. So are you  
9 saying that Anoka may bury some of the lines?

10 MR. STROHFUS: Yeah, rather than do an  
11 under-build on those, there is an option they could  
12 get buried. So then, you know, rather than having  
13 that crossarm on the pole, the line itself will be  
14 buried.

15 MS. WITTE: That's it. Thank you.

16 MR. STROHFUS: Thank you.

17 MR. LANGAN: Thank you.

18 Other questions or comments?

19 Yes, please. And I'll ask you to come up  
20 to the microphone. Thank you.

21 MS. OFTELIE: I'm kind of embarrassed to  
22 ask this. My name is Sarah O-F-T-E-L-I-E. I'm just  
23 confused like why there has to be -- like if this  
24 one needs to be bigger, needs more power, that it  
25 can't just be built? Like I'm just confused as to

1           why it has to be coming from here to here and not  
2           just have its own. I don't get it. So...

3                     MR. LANGAN: No, that's a very good  
4           question. Thank you. Yeah. But I will ask GRE to  
5           answer that, because they're qualified to do so.

6                     MR. STROHFUS: Yeah, you know, the power  
7           is -- electric energy is produced at central power  
8           stations here where maybe, I'm sure, go up the road  
9           on Highway 10, what have we got, High Bridge and  
10          Riverside power stations owned by Xcel Energy. Our  
11          old headquarters up in Elk River station has a  
12          garbage burner there that we use to produce the  
13          electricity. That has to be hooked up to a  
14          transmission line. And so we have to have some  
15          source connected up to that.

16                    I suppose we could -- you know, one  
17          option would be to build a new transmission line all  
18          the way from the closest power station, but that  
19          gets to be fairly expensive. Just by way of  
20          perspective, this line is about 5.8 miles long.

21                    Our current cost -- where are we at,  
22          Chuck, our cost estimates, do you remember?

23                    MR. LUKKARILA: 7.8 million.

24                    MR. STROHFUS: Yeah, I was going to say  
25          about \$8 million. You know, so the next closest

1 power source, if you -- you know, where to really  
2 hook up would be to go all the way up to Elk River.  
3 It increases the cost of that power line. And as  
4 ratepayers that impacts every homeowner and  
5 business. Our goal as a utility is to provide,  
6 first of all, reliable power, keep the lights on.  
7 Provide quality power. And that's kind of a funny  
8 term for people to hear, but we want to maintain the  
9 voltages on the transmission line and the  
10 distribution systems, because businesses and  
11 industries' equipment and, actually, a lot of your  
12 home equipment now is very sensitive to fluctuations  
13 in the voltage levels. So we call that power  
14 quality.

15 So the whole -- so we have existing  
16 transmission lines coming out of these power  
17 stations now. They web across the entire state.  
18 And a lot of them are also interconnected with each  
19 other. So, you know, other than building a direct  
20 line again from the power station up here, which  
21 isn't practical, we simply hook up to the existing  
22 power system, the transmission system, and bring  
23 that power in. It's kind of like throwing an  
24 extension cord onto an outlet.

25 This is the main power source, Crooked

1 Lake. It has 115 kilovolt feeder lines coming into  
2 it, which probably connect up to 345 kilovolt  
3 systems somewhere along the line, and those 345  
4 kilovolt systems eventually connect up into the  
5 power station itself.

6 So, again, keeping things cheap as  
7 possible -- not cheap, but least inexpensive, cost  
8 effective, yeah, because it's not. We look at  
9 closest source we can connect up to. And that's  
10 really this one, this particular station  
11 (indicating). And then we have to look at whether  
12 or not that particular substation has the capacity.

13 So part of the planning process, again,  
14 Dave looks at how much energy is being drawn off of  
15 this substation and can we draw additional power off  
16 of it, enough between the Enterprise Park  
17 substation.

18 Did that answer your question? I talked  
19 for way too long on that question, I think. We can  
20 talk afterwards too. Maybe it will help. Maybe it  
21 won't.

22 Let me just pull this map up. So this  
23 gets confusing, but these red lines and green lines  
24 you see here, this is the existing high voltage  
25 transmission system that we have in the area. This

1 is Anoka. So our project is really between about  
2 this point here and this point here (indicating).  
3 So this again was 5.8 miles. The low -- the nearest  
4 power station, again is up in Elk River, way up here  
5 (indicating), so you can get some perspective on  
6 distance. And this is the line, we call this the EP  
7 line. It's a 69 kV. And tapping into that is this  
8 green line currently owned by Anoka Municipal  
9 Utilities. That's what we call the kW line. And  
10 that's what feeds the Enterprise Park substation  
11 right now. So there is no existing connection  
12 between these two systems.

13 This is just a small picture of the  
14 transmission system. It's one of the things -- you  
15 know, I've been working at Great River Energy for  
16 about 12 years now. The transmission system is  
17 just -- it's very complicated, and it's just amazing  
18 what -- you know, what people have built over the  
19 last, I don't even know how many years, 50, 60,  
20 70 years.

21 MR. LANGAN: Okay. Other questions or  
22 comments?

23 Okay. If there are none, I'll thank you  
24 for coming today. Again, the comment period is open  
25 until December 19th. So I encourage you to get in

1 any comments that you have by then. That can be on  
2 issues or impacts that you want our office to study  
3 about this line and that you want the Public  
4 Utilities Commission to consider when they are  
5 approving a line and setting permit conditions, and  
6 then any other either -- you know, again, this could  
7 be a route alternative, a totally new route from  
8 point A to point B, or it could be a minor tweak.  
9 We call those alternative route segments. So we  
10 would happily look at those as well.

11 When you send those in, reminder to be as  
12 specific as possible and to provide justification  
13 for why we should take a look at that alternate  
14 route or route segment.

15 If -- I assume everyone is able to pick  
16 up the handouts, but make sure that you pick up that  
17 meeting notice with my contact information on it.  
18 If anyone has a question, either before the 19th or  
19 at any time from now until May at the end of our  
20 review, always feel free to contact me, and I'll be  
21 happy to answer your questions.

22 Okay. Thanks everyone for coming today,  
23 and thanks again.

24 (Proceedings concluded at 1:57 p.m.)  
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11-915 - EVENING SESSION - DECEMBER 1, 2011

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SPEAKER	PAGE
Jan Dooper	3
Tom Raddoh1	5
John Holt	20
Unidentified	22

1 MR. LANGAN: With that, we'll open it up  
2 for any comments or questions that you may have  
3 tonight.

4 We will ask that you come up to the  
5 microphone to speak, it's easier for the court  
6 reporter to accurately keep notes on what you --  
7 what your comments or questions are. And just as a  
8 refresher, please speak your name and spell your  
9 last name and speak slowly so that we can record  
10 what you're saying. And I think with this group we  
11 can just go by a show of hands if anybody wants to  
12 step up and make a comment or ask a question.

13 The gentleman in the back had his hand up  
14 first. Sir, please.

15 MR. JAN DOOPER: Okay.

16 MR. LANGAN: Thank you.

17 MR. JAN DOOPER: My name is Jan Dooper,  
18 spelled J-A-N, D-O-O-P-E-R. And I'm on the advisory  
19 committee for the City of Anoka. And I have a  
20 question for Mr. Langan. Several questions.

21 The engineer on this project is the  
22 utility regulation, is that involved in the type of  
23 things they want and what the GRE has proposed, and  
24 are there any controversies about that?

25 MR. LANGAN: I just want to make sure I

1 get your question correct. Are there any  
2 controversies about what Great River Energy has  
3 proposed?

4 MR. JAN DOOPER: Yes. Are you involved  
5 in the construction process in any way?

6 MR. LANGAN: I myself am not involved in  
7 the construction of the projects, no. I work for  
8 the Department of Commerce and we'll be doing the  
9 environmental review of the project to see what kind  
10 of impacts and then mitigation measures there may be  
11 for those impacts. And I also come out and host  
12 public meetings and ask for the public's involvement  
13 in that review for the Public Utilities Commission.

14 MR. JAN DOOPER: Okay. So it looks like  
15 now there won't be any big controversies in the  
16 future on the type of construction?

17 MR. LANGAN: We will often learn if there  
18 are controversies with any of the projects by the  
19 end of the comment period, and people have a chance  
20 to write in by December 19th. If there are folks  
21 that would like to see a different route or have a  
22 particular concern, we would know by the time  
23 December 19th rolls around when they've submitted  
24 their comments.

25 MR. JAN DOOPER: Okay. My second

1 question. Are you involved in the financing of this  
2 project or is that left up to GRE and their  
3 partners?

4 MR. LANGAN: We are not involved in the  
5 financing.

6 MR. JAN DOOPER: You are not involved in  
7 financing. Okay. Those are my questions.

8 MR. LANGAN: Okay. Thank you.

9 Sir.

10 MR. TOM RADDHILL: My name is Tom Raddoh1,  
11 R-A-D-D-O-H-L. And I'm a homeowner at Grant Street  
12 and Sixth Avenue.

13 And I guess some of my concerns,  
14 basically, I'd like to have this in someone else's  
15 backyard rather than my own. But barring that, my  
16 big concern is, you know, right-of-way size,  
17 routing.

18 The property behind my property is  
19 undeveloped and it's owned by the City of Anoka and  
20 I would prefer to see the easement within that  
21 undeveloped property rather than on my own property,  
22 on the west side of my property.

23 I know on the south side of the property  
24 Great River Energy is proposing crossing the street  
25 at an angle, which I'm not opposed to, I would

1           just -- I guess I would like to be informed of  
2           exactly what that entails and the easements  
3           involved.

4                       I guess my question, first of all, would  
5           be to you, Matt. Will anybody on the mailing list  
6           be notified of all the steps in the review process  
7           if we're on the mailing list?

8                       MR. LANGAN: Yes.

9                       MR. TOM RADDHOL: Okay. And then as far  
10          as, you know, having this route in somebody else's  
11          property, I look at the map and I look at the  
12          existing Crooked Lake transmission substation and  
13          where the proposed route parallels on the south side  
14          of Highway 10 and I am questioning why can't we  
15          cross Highway 10 on County Road 79 and up to  
16          Grant -- beyond Grant Street, and I'm not sure  
17          exactly what the cross street is, but I know that it  
18          goes behind the Walmart area.

19                      I notice that by this map it looks like  
20          it crosses a wetland and I'm wondering, is it more  
21          important to preserve wetlands or is it more  
22          important to preserve private property when it comes  
23          to the assessment process? And in that route you're  
24          actually crossing two blocks that are developed and  
25          in the proposed route you're going through more,



1 about rejected routes, we can certainly do that.

2 MR. LANGAN: Okay. I think that's fine,  
3 if you want to talk about the items that are in the  
4 application and the decision-making there. And we  
5 still have your comments on record, I think you're  
6 in support of those, it sounds like, two routes,  
7 that you were -- the two different route segments  
8 that you were talking about there.

9 MR. TOM RADDHILL: Those two route  
10 segments would have less impact on me personally. I  
11 don't know if they're better routes or economically  
12 viable routes, I guess I'd leave that up to you guys  
13 to determine that.

14 I guess what I would like is a fair  
15 assessment of those routes by yourself. I know that  
16 Great River has probably looked at them and seen  
17 what the possibilities are like and have proposed  
18 their route for a purpose. I guess I don't  
19 necessarily mind their route, and it sounds like  
20 they have a fair plan for crossing the intersection  
21 at the street just south of mine, which is Grant.  
22 And that's my big concern, because this power line  
23 goes by my property on two sides and so I don't want  
24 it to have a strong impact on the value of my  
25 property. And that's my main concern, is to protect

1 that right. And so I'd like those routes  
2 considered, although I, you know, I don't believe  
3 that Great River Energy has just dismissed them out  
4 of hand, I'm sure they've given them consideration.

5 MR. LANGAN: We have those comments on  
6 the record. I will look at those routes. Mark can  
7 offer some comments if those are routes you've  
8 looked at before but, nonetheless, they'll be part  
9 of the comments that I've received and I can look at  
10 that myself as well.

11 MR. TOM RADDOHL: And I have a couple  
12 other questions. And Mark has talked to me about  
13 this prior to the meeting, but I'll ask them just so  
14 other people can probably hear it.

15 One is considering if they do choose to  
16 go south of my property and cut across the Grant  
17 Street at an angle, you know, is there a certain  
18 span that they'll be considering? Will there be  
19 underbuild in that particular instance? What kind  
20 of an impact will it have on my property values? Am  
21 I going to have a big steel pole? Am I going to  
22 have a laminate pole? Is there a -- are there  
23 possibilities of having underground lines? What are  
24 the alternatives to -- you know, these things aren't  
25 real -- real pretty to have sitting in your property

1 or behind your property or whatever. What can we do  
2 to minimize the impact on my personal property?

3 MR. LANGAN: Great. And, Mark, if you  
4 want to answer those three items.

5 MR. STROHFUS: Sure. I'm going to pull  
6 up a map here.

7 MR. LANGAN: Sure.

8 MR. STROHFUS: I'll move this map over  
9 here. And I tried to follow some of the routes  
10 you're suggesting. I think I have them right, but  
11 if I don't, you direct me.

12 So one of them is called County Road 79,  
13 I think. So, yes, it's this, County Road 79 is what  
14 we call the 11th Avenue route and it proceeds up.  
15 We did look at that. It was actually fairly high on  
16 our initial list because there's an existing  
17 distribution line that runs through there. However,  
18 as you go through there, you'll notice that we have  
19 several blocks of residential properties through  
20 here. We have some, although this is quite a ways  
21 off where the line would go, we have Wilson  
22 Elementary School over here and then we have a  
23 number of residential properties in here, as we came  
24 up here where the line would have to cross over. So  
25 one of the things we don't like to impact is

1 people's lives, we don't like to impact people's  
2 personal homes. A business or industry is more  
3 willing and accepting to have us around, they're not  
4 concerned as much with the aesthetics of a  
5 transmission line being in their yard.

6 By the way, my first home I lived in for  
7 ten years had a 345 kilovolt transmission line in  
8 the backyard. I moved a mile, mile and a half down  
9 the road, that line is now across the street from  
10 me. I sit out and talk to my neighbors all the  
11 time, we talk about things going on in the  
12 neighborhood. Once they're there, you don't really  
13 notice them. That's a personal opinion, but you're  
14 going to have to have your own personal opinion.

15 So, again, the idea is to minimize the  
16 impacts to residential properties, I think that's a  
17 key issue. There are issues with wetlands. This  
18 wetland is not particularly problematic to avoid,  
19 but really it was the fact that we had a number of  
20 homes in here, a number of homes in here, and we had  
21 the elementary school, which tends to be a sensitive  
22 area when it comes to high voltage lines.

23 So those were some of the primary reasons  
24 we rejected that route. Also, when the route came  
25 up and had to turn to the west here through this

1 area, the Anoka County highway department is in the  
2 process of upgrading this particular section of the  
3 road, the curve, and they've done some work already,  
4 they've done some soil surveys, they've done some  
5 borings, and the soil quality in this area is very  
6 poor and so it would make it difficult to put the  
7 lines in and it's going to make it more costly.

8 Again, we like to avoid impacting  
9 residential homes, but at the same time our goals as  
10 a power supplier are to provide reliable power at  
11 reasonable costs. So we have to look at every cost  
12 increase along the way. Because it's the ratepayers  
13 that pay those cost increases. It's a tough thing  
14 to balance at times, but we try to do our best.

15 So there's homes here and cost increases.  
16 So that gave a little negative tick on it. Are  
17 there homes along our proposed route? Yes, there  
18 are. We can't avoid every single home out there.  
19 But I think when you look at our proposed route  
20 we've done a pretty good job in avoiding homes.  
21 There's a few in here, yes, we have this whole  
22 stretch here where we can go across the road, it's  
23 undeveloped on the west side of Seventh Avenue and  
24 it provides a lot of space there. Again, I think  
25 once the line is up, people will pretty much deal

1 with it like they deal with every other distribution  
2 line, telecommunication system that's out there.  
3 You drive by it, you don't really notice it.

4 You get up along here, it's primarily  
5 commercial/residential property along Bunker Lake  
6 Road. We could have a couple homes in here that  
7 we're close to and, again, commercial/industrial in  
8 here and all industrial on the way down. So, again,  
9 you know, there's -- we can't avoid every home out  
10 there, but I think we've done a pretty good job.

11 I think you were suggesting -- oh, let's  
12 hit the railroad first. That's a good one.  
13 Because, you know, when we first looked at this  
14 project we thought that would be a great route. The  
15 shortest distance between two points is a straight  
16 line and we've got a straight line pretty much going  
17 right down the rail corridor. That's a cost issue.  
18 You know, a short distance means the whole line is  
19 cheaper. However, the city of Anoka is an older  
20 community, it is very developed. The rail, I don't  
21 know when this actually went in, but it was part of  
22 the early economy of the region here and a lot of  
23 things are built very close to that line. We need  
24 easements for every particular piece of property,  
25 not just on residential property. We like that

1 easement to be 25 to 30 feet, 35 feet on both sides  
2 of the line, so we're talking about a 50 to 70 foot  
3 corridor.

4 The railroad will not allow us to overlap  
5 their existing easements so they have a double track  
6 line here and they have easements that are probably  
7 on the order of 60 feet off that and so now we need  
8 to go another 25 feet, so now you're 85 feet. And  
9 if you've ever walked along the rail here, there  
10 isn't 80 feet. In fact, there's some places where  
11 facilities are built right up to that. One of them  
12 is the old grain elevator that sits right in here  
13 that's pretty much along the railroad track. The  
14 other major pinch points on that is certainly  
15 Schwartzman's Metals, they have a 20-foot wall built  
16 right up to the railroad, and we can't simply slip  
17 over to the other side of the railroad tracks there  
18 because we have a school district building and we  
19 have early childhood education facilities there. So  
20 really, because of the congestion here, we threw  
21 that out as a nonviable route.

22 The railroad also has issues with  
23 electrical interference with their controls and  
24 traffic signals and so they've been fairly adamant  
25 in conversations with us that they don't think that

1           this is a viable route, that this particular route  
2           is too congested already and they have serious  
3           concerns about electrical interference on their  
4           system.

5                         That was two of the routes. Oh, the  
6           other one -- and, you know, your home sits right  
7           here. Were you suggesting going straight up Seventh  
8           Avenue? Was that one of them?

9                         MR. TOM RADDOHL: No, I was suggesting  
10          you follow the train line to Fourth Avenue and  
11          then -- Fourth Avenue is where the Anoka light rail  
12          station is.

13                        MR. STROHFUS: Yeah, so that would be --  
14          I think this is Fourth Avenue right here then.

15                        MR. TOM RADDOHL: Correct.

16                        MR. STROHFUS: Yeah, Fourth Avenue, and  
17          so I guess we hadn't really evaluated that. We can  
18          talk about that a little bit internally, I suppose.  
19          My initial reaction is you're doing this, and so  
20          you're kind of doubling up on the distance at least  
21          for this section of line which, again, adds costs.

22                        MR. TOM RADDOHL: It costs to you, but at  
23          the same time it has the least amount of impacts to  
24          personal property that's developed currently.

25                        MR. STROHFUS: Yeah.

1 MR. TOM RADDOHL: And my first proposal,  
2 you were talking about running that directly all the  
3 way up to Bunker, and I'm not proposing that you run  
4 it all the way up to Bunker. Can I approach the  
5 map?

6 MR. STROHFUS: Yeah.

7 MR. TOM RADDOHL: Okay. What I'm  
8 proposing is you just run it across Highway 10.  
9 This is undeveloped property. You know, you're  
10 talking the east and west side of Highway 7 -- or  
11 Seventh Avenue here, you can do the same thing over  
12 here, you can work on the east side of 11th Avenue  
13 and you're not interfering with all this developed  
14 property. This is undeveloped where you go up here  
15 through this swamp land and then you're only dealing  
16 with two blocks of developed land, rather than  
17 you're looking at four blocks here of developed  
18 properties. And my proposal would be to run it up  
19 here, run it across at Garfield and then to the west  
20 side of Seventh and up.

21 MR. STROHFUS: Sure. And we did look at  
22 some kind of variance on that. First of all,  
23 expanding this wetland is a little bit problematic,  
24 it's a fairly large space, and if we have  
25 maintenance issues in the summertime it would be

1           difficult to get out there and fix that. Generally  
2           we would not put a pole in the middle of a wetland  
3           and be able to span that distance. So that's one  
4           issue.

5                        The second issue is getting through the  
6           neighborhoods over here. The fortunate thing for us  
7           and the fortunate thing probably for you as the  
8           homeowner is that you have nothing behind your home.  
9           All of these cross streets have homes fronting on  
10          Garfield on both sides. We looked at Grant Street  
11          as well. Both of those streets have homes on both  
12          sides fronting on that street with fairly shallow  
13          front yards. Again, you think about a 25 foot  
14          easement, and you want the pole a couple feet off  
15          the curb line, so that puts the easement pretty much  
16          up to their front door, their front stoop. Whereas,  
17          again, fortunate for us, unfortunate for you,  
18          probably, we have plenty of space back here. We put  
19          that easement right along your property line, it  
20          doesn't impact anything you want to do with your  
21          property except that in your case we will have a  
22          slight corner cutting off there probably. So I  
23          think when we drove down these roads we said this is  
24          infeasible.

25                        So did I miss anything?

1 MR. TOM RADDOHL: No.

2 MR. STROHFUS: Okay.

3 MR. TOM RADDOHL: Oh, my other question  
4 was underbuild and the possibility of, you know,  
5 what is the possible span across, you know, if you  
6 have to go across Grant Street at an angle, are you  
7 going to have the 75-foot easement, are you going to  
8 try to maintain that, will you be -- you had talked  
9 about using a better pole, a laminate type or --

10 MR. STROHFUS: I would guess, and we had  
11 one of the construction managers, we had taken him  
12 on a tour of the route and looked at it and he felt  
13 that, you know, without any engineering  
14 calculations, he kind of just looked at it and said,  
15 yeah, I'm pretty sure we can take one corner of the  
16 property and diagonal across behind your house. So  
17 there would be pole on the corner, the span would be  
18 behind your house ideally 25 to 30 feet off your  
19 back property line and off Grant Street. So from a  
20 feasibility standpoint, it looks pretty good.

21 Again, you know, the next step after we  
22 get the permit from the Public Utilities Commission  
23 is we're going to do some hard core engineering,  
24 we're going to get some survey work done. We have  
25 already done some aerial survey work already. And

1           then we're going to decide, if this is the route  
2           that they permit us for, basically our first stab is  
3           at the poles and exactly where the line would  
4           traverse.

5                       MR. TOM RADDOHL:  And just to get this on  
6           the record because we have a stenographer here, your  
7           preference would be, because of the City of Anoka  
8           owns the undeveloped land to the west of my  
9           property, your preference would be to get your  
10          easement from that undeveloped property in  
11          preference to dealing with private ownership on the  
12          eight properties that adjoin the City of Anoka land?

13                      MR. STROHFUS:  Yeah.  And, again, we  
14          stopped on the corner by your property, we stood out  
15          there with several people that are actually in this  
16          room tonight and decided that the best option in our  
17          mind is to put it such that the edge of the  
18          easement, you know, sits right on your back property  
19          line.  So, yeah, it will be 25 to 30 feet off that,  
20          35 feet off your back property line is where the  
21          centerline would go.

22                      MR. TOM RADDOHL:  Thank you.

23                      MR. LANGAN:  Okay.  I just wanted to say  
24          that I did -- I wanted Mark to come up here and talk  
25          about it because I know that a lot of planning and

1 work has gone into developing this route over the  
2 last couple years before they even applied to our  
3 office and the Public Utilities Commission for the  
4 permit, but we too will look at the routes you  
5 proposed. I think Mark gave a good explanation  
6 about some of the things they ran into. But we can  
7 also look into this through the environmental  
8 assessment and perhaps sort of flush out what some  
9 of those issues are too.

10 So I appreciate your comments, thanks, we  
11 have them on the record, and we'll look into those  
12 alternative routes and segments and see if they're  
13 viable or are there fatal flaws with them as in some  
14 of the cases that Mark has provided. So our office  
15 will take a look at it. I appreciate your comments.

16 MR. TOM RADDHOL: Thank you.

17 MR. LANGAN: Okay. Anyone else with  
18 comments or questions? Please, sir.

19 MR. JOHN HOLT: Hi. John Holt, H-O-L-T.  
20 I live on Aldrich Circle, my back yard butts up to  
21 Seventh Avenue.

22 Mark answered my question earlier and so  
23 did the gentleman in the back that the route is  
24 going to be on the west side of Seventh Avenue.

25 A couple questions. You were talking

1           about where you over take a line. My service comes  
2           right off the sidewalk on the east side of Seventh.  
3           Now, is that line going to be moved to the west  
4           side? Just a question.

5                         And then the other question is that I'm  
6           straight across from the state garage, okay. My  
7           understanding is you're going to have to take all  
8           those trees out. It's going to make a big noise  
9           problem, especially this time of the year. Those  
10          trees give us a lot of coverage from noise from the  
11          state garage, loading sand out, bringing sand in,  
12          with all the beepers and stuff.

13                        So that's the only two questions I have.

14                        MR. LANGAN: Okay.

15                        MR. JOHN HOLT: Thank you.

16                        MR. LANGAN: Thank you.

17                        Mark, do you want to answer that?

18                        MR. STROHFUS: Yeah. We're aware that  
19          there's two distribution lines on Seventh Avenue,  
20          one on the east side and one on the west side. And  
21          I believe the one on the west side belongs to Anoka  
22          Municipal Utilities and on the east side it belongs  
23          to Connexus. Do you get your --

24                        MS. GAIL HOLT: No, the city.

25                        MR. JOHN HOLT: The city.

1                   MR. STROHFUS: Okay. But the answer is  
2 probably no, those lines, at least as far as we see  
3 it, will stay on the east side, and just the ones on  
4 the west side would be under built onto the new  
5 transmission line.

6                   I'm sorry, I forgot, what was the second  
7 question?

8                   MR. JOHN HOLT: The trees.

9                   MR. STROHFUS: The trees, yes. We're  
10 aware that there's trees on the west side there.  
11 That's one of the things we like to avoid, is  
12 cutting trees. But, again, it's one of those things  
13 that we can't always avoid doing. There's going to  
14 be a tree somewhere and unfortunately there will be  
15 some trees cut in front of the MnDOT garages there.

16                   MR. JOHN HOLT: Thank you.

17                   MR. LANGAN: Okay. Thank you.

18                   Anyone else with a comment or questions  
19 either about the project itself or how our office  
20 reviews the project?

21                   UNIDENTIFIED: I'm trying to find a map  
22 of where this is actually going in Anoka here and  
23 we'll look at it later. Oh, thank you. Got it.

24                   MR. LANGAN: Okay. And, again, what we  
25 have, both on our website as well as at some of the

1 local libraries, and we'd be happy to provide to you  
2 not only a map like you see up here that shows the  
3 entire route that's being proposed, but in that  
4 application there are detailed maps that zoom in  
5 much more closely. So there's a set of, you know,  
6 maybe ten maps depicting this. And so that  
7 application, again, you can find on our website or  
8 at the libraries and it really zeros in and you can  
9 see with much greater clarity where the proposed  
10 route is going to go. So if this is not to scale  
11 and you're looking for those better scale maps, they  
12 are available. And, again, if you do have a route  
13 alternative or a route segment alternative, you can  
14 feel free to use those maps, just print them off  
15 from our website and you can submit that to me.

16 UNIDENTIFIED: So Seventh Avenue --

17 MR. LANGAN: Excuse me. We have a court  
18 reporter taking notes for us so --

19 UNIDENTIFIED: Sure.

20 MR. LANGAN: So if you'd like to make a  
21 comment, we'd ask you to please come up to the  
22 microphone.

23 UNIDENTIFIED: Well, forget it. I think  
24 I can see it on the map here.

25 MR. LANGAN: If you don't want to step up

1 and make a comment, we'll be around after the  
2 meeting tonight and we'll be happy to talk with you.

3 COURT REPORTER: He is speaking loud  
4 enough, I can hear him.

5 MR. LANGAN: Sir, would you like to try  
6 to give your comment from there?

7 UNIDENTIFIED: Okay. So it's just going  
8 across Johnson Park to Sixth Avenue and then north  
9 from there?

10 MR. STROHFUS: Yeah, that's correct. Our  
11 conceptual alignment, our preferred alignment is to  
12 stay along the Highway 10 right-of-way as close as  
13 possible through Johnson Park on the east side of  
14 Sixth Street. So we put a pole in the southeast  
15 corner of -- actually, the northwest corner of  
16 Johnson Park, but on the east side of Sixth Avenue,  
17 Sixth Street, and then we head straight north.

18 UNIDENTIFIED: So at Highway 10 will it  
19 be underground?

20 MR. STROHFUS: No, everything will be  
21 above ground.

22 UNIDENTIFIED: How about over Johnson  
23 Park, will that be over?

24 MR. STROHFUS: Overhead, yes.

25 UNIDENTIFIED: Right through the middle

1 of it?

2 MR. STROHFUS: No, again, along the --

3 UNIDENTIFIED: Okay. Yep, I know where  
4 you're talking about.

5 MR. STROHFUS: Along the fence line, the  
6 MnDOT fence line, we'll have to be 15 feet off that,  
7 or 20 feet. I think when we looked at it originally  
8 we thought we might be able to span the whole park  
9 there with two, but we may have to put a third pole  
10 right in the middle there.

11 UNIDENTIFIED: So it stops at Sixth  
12 Avenue and goes over the highway at Sixth Avenue  
13 there?

14 MR. STROHFUS: Yes, and we stay on the  
15 east side of Sixth Avenue.

16 UNIDENTIFIED: That's all I needed to  
17 know. That's what we're here for.

18 MR. LANGAN: Other questions or comments?

19 Okay. If not, as I said, we'll be around  
20 if anyone wants to ask us some questions  
21 individually.

22 Just a couple -- a few key things to  
23 remember. You may have heard me say this too many  
24 times already, but any comments are due to me by  
25 December 19th on any alternative routes that you'd

1           like to propose or if you want to make comments on  
2           issues that -- or impacts that you want our office  
3           to study, those are due December 19th.

4                        The best way to stay in touch with the  
5           review process is to get on our project mailing  
6           list. You can do that here at the front table  
7           tonight or you can just give me a call and I'll sign  
8           you up.

9                        All the project information is available  
10          on our website and at two or three public libraries  
11          in the immediate area and so that's a good place  
12          to -- a couple good places to access that  
13          information.

14                      With that, I just want to thank you all  
15          for your comments and good questions tonight and  
16          thanks for coming out and we'll be around if you  
17          have any additional questions.

18                      Thank you.

19

20

21

22

23

24

25



Energy Facility Permitting  
85 7<sup>th</sup> 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

### Enterprise Park to Crooked Lake Transmission Line Project

PUC Docket Number: ET2/TL-11-915

Name:

Coal + John Holt

Representing:

Address:

3544 Aldrich Cir Anoka

Email:

gjholtz3@comcast.net

Comments:

Due to trees being removed at the State Garage this will cause increased incredible noise from the state, city + city vehicles and equipment. Can it be required that a sound barrier wall be built on the west side to help block the extra noise that will no longer be buffered by the trees.

Please submit comments by 4:30pm, December 19, 2011 to:

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

Email: [matthew.langan@state.mn.us](mailto:matthew.langan@state.mn.us)  
Phone: 651-296-2096  
Fax: 651-297-7891



Energy Facility Permitting  
 85 7<sup>th</sup> 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

### Enterprise Park to Crooked Lake Transmission Line Project

PUC Docket Number: ET2/TL-11-915

Name: THOMAS REDMANN Representing: ANOKA HIGH SCHOOL  
ANOKA-HEWNERIN ISD # 11

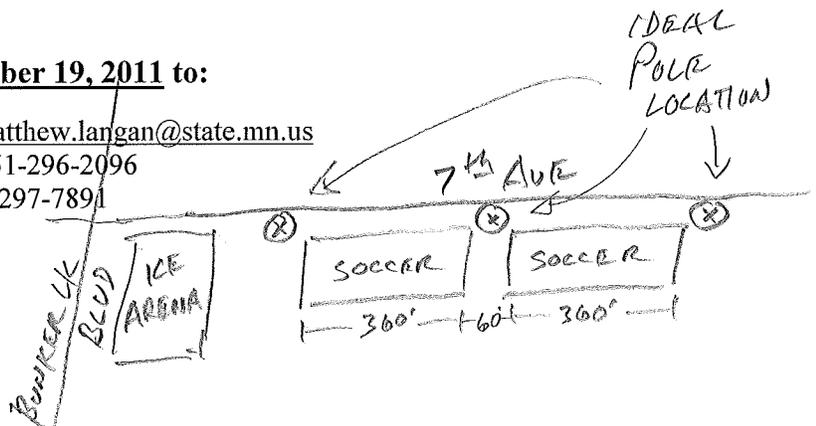
Address: AHS  
3939 N. 7<sup>th</sup> AVE ANOKA Email: TOM.REDMANN@ANOKA.K12.MN.US  
 MY OFFICE 2727 N. FERRY ST. ANOKA

Comments: THE PROPOSED ROUTE FOR THE ENTERPRISE PARK  
115 KV SUBSTATION AND TRANSMISSION LINE WILL HAVE  
THE LINE ON THE WEST SIDE OF 7<sup>th</sup> AVE. ANOKA HIGH  
SCHOOL HAS SOCCER FIELDS RUNNING PARALLEL TO 7<sup>th</sup>  
AVE. I HAVE 2 CONCERNS: (1) THAT THE POWER LINE  
BE INSTALLED AS CLOSE TO 7<sup>th</sup> AS POSSIBLE AS TO  
NOT LOSE THE SAFE USE OF THESE FIELDS. (2) THE  
LOCATION OF THE POLES WOULD IDEALLY BE INSTALLED  
OUTSIDE THE END LINES AND BETWEEN THE TWO  
FIELDS. (SEE SKETCH BELOW.)  
QUESTION: WILL THERE BE DISTRIBUTION LINES ON THE  
POLES?

Please submit comments by **4:30pm, December 19, 2011** to:

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

Email: [matthew.langan@state.mn.us](mailto:matthew.langan@state.mn.us)  
 Phone: 651-296-2096  
 Fax: 651-297-7891





**Minnesota Department of Transportation**

**Office of Land Management**

395 John Ireland Boulevard  
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Phone: 651-366-4635

Fax: 651-366-3450

[stacy.kotch@state.mn.us](mailto:stacy.kotch@state.mn.us)

Mailstop 678

December 19<sup>th</sup>, 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 Enterprise Park to Crooked Lake  
115 kV Transmission Line Project in Anoka County  
PUC Docket No. E002/TL-11-915

Dear Mr. Langan,

On November 14<sup>th</sup>, 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 Great River Energy (GRE) for the Enterprise Park to Crooked Lake 115 kV Transmission Line Project in Anoka County. 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 GRE'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.

A review of the route permit application shows that the proposed 115 kV transmission line crosses and runs parallel to trunk highway (TH) 10 in the City of Anoka. MnDOT has concerns about the area where the proposed line parallels the south side of the TH 10/7<sup>th</sup> Ave interchange. It is unclear from the route permit application whether the proposed HVTL will be close enough to occupy a portion of current MnDOT right-of-way and how it may impact the highway and its users.

Additionally, as stated in a letter to GRE dated January 19<sup>th</sup>, 2011, there are possible future interchange improvements at TH 10 and Thurston Ave, access improvements as identified in the Interregional Corridor Management Plan (IRC CMP) on the west side of the study area and a possible future 6 lane freeway facility (corridor vision identified in the IRC CMP). These future plans may be affected by the transmission line and substation location proposals. 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 GRE 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 Buck Craig, Metro Permits at 651-234-7911 or [Buck.Craig@state.mn.us](mailto:Buck.Craig@state.mn.us) .

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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.

Sincerely,



Stacy Kotch  
Utility Transmission Route Coordinator  
Minnesota Department of Transportation

An Equal Opportunity Employer



December 19, 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 for the Enterprise Park to Crooked Lake 115 kV Transmission Line Project [PUC Docket No. ET2/TL-11-915]

Dear Mr. Langan:

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has reviewed the Route Permit Application for the Enterprise Park to Crooked Lake 115 kV Transmission Line Project in Anoka County. We appreciate the opportunity to provide the following comments regarding the project and suggestions for scoping for the Environmental Assessment (EA).

The EA should include a description of if, where, and how the project developer plans to minimize removal of vegetation. For example, any specific techniques for minimizing impacts to forested areas should be included with a description of the specific area and planned techniques. If any special vegetation management practices are proposed near waterbodies, these should also be discussed with the location and vegetation management plans included. The EA should also include a discussion of invasive species management plans in areas where there will be vegetation disturbance.

The Rum River is a state designated Minnesota Wild and Scenic River Chapter 6105. Please see the following links:

[https://www.revisor.mn.gov/rules/?id=6105&view=chapter&keyword\\_type=all&keyword=wild+and+scenic+rivers&redirect](https://www.revisor.mn.gov/rules/?id=6105&view=chapter&keyword_type=all&keyword=wild+and+scenic+rivers&redirect) and

[http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/waters/watermgmt\\_section/wild\\_scenic/wsivers/rum.html](http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/waters/watermgmt_section/wild_scenic/wsivers/rum.html) .

The application states that Great River Energy will follow recommendations to minimize erosion and other impacts at the Rum River Crossing. Please see the attached document with information regarding erosion control matting. As stated above, vegetation management practices should be proposed in the EA and the DNR can provide any feedback for the Rum River crossing.

Also, because the Rum River is a Minnesota Wild and Scenic River, the EA should discuss in more detail what effects the crossing would have on the north or south side of Bunker Lake Blvd/CSAH 116, which is also in the area of the River Bend Park. Preliminary review suggests that the north-side crossing would result in more tree clearing in an area identified as a Type 7 wetland area (Wooded Swamp). Removal of the woody vegetation in this area would leave the backwater area more exposed to the roadway and may result in Wetland Type conversion.

Section 8.5.3 Natural Vegetation, last paragraph, incorrectly uses the term “fauna” to discuss vegetation. This should be corrected to “flora” in the EA.

The application states that Great River Energy will adhere to DNR recommendations regarding Blanding’s turtles. The DNR appreciates these efforts. The EA should refer to the attached Blanding’s turtle recommendations and should clarify whether all or a subset of the recommendations are proposed.

Section 8.5.4 Wildlife/Rare and Unique Natural Resources, Rare and Unique Features states, "Based on the DNR public database..." The application is likely referring to the Natural Heritage Information System, which is a database accessible with a license or by making a request to the DNR. The second paragraph in the Rare and Unique Features section references locations of Blanding's turtles in manner that describes the location of a rare species too obviously. The DNR recommends removing this reference in any further publication of the application and not including a similar reference in the EA. From the perspective of DNR reviewers, a figure with Blanding's turtle locations is unnecessary.

The EA states that the project proposer will address avian issues with the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). Consultation with both the USFWS and the DNR is encouraged during the environmental review and Public Utilities Commission permitting process.

The EA should include proposed bird diverter locations, type and spacing information. The DNR recommends locating diverters at the Rum River crossing. Diverters should extend 500 feet on either side of the crossing as birds flight paths may not exactly follow the footprint of the river, but also include the riparian zone.

Parcel 313223230001 identified on Map E is owned by the State of Minnesota. DNR research into parcel ownership is indicating that it is unclear what agency administers this land. The EA should indicate any additional ownership information the project developers have collected. State ownership should be further explained in the EA as it may identify the need for a License to Cross Public Lands and Waters or may indicate whether transmission development is compatible with State of Minnesota responsibilities associated with this land.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments. Please contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,



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

Enclosures: 2

**From:** [Schrenzel, Jamie \(DNR\)](#)  
**To:** [Langan, Matthew \(COMM\)](#)  
**Cc:** [Doperalski, Melissa \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Anoka RTC - 2 parcels  
**Date:** Tuesday, December 20, 2011 12:10:18 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)  
[image002.png](#)  
[image004.png](#)  
[DNR-CommentsEnterpriseParkTransmissionApplication111219.pdf](#)

---

Matt,

I wanted to update you on the final comment in the DNR comment letter sent yesterday. We thought that some state land included along the Enterprise Transmission Project was possibly administered by the DNR but our databases conflicted on that point. So I checked into it further with the MN Department of Administration. The response below indicates the Department of Human Services owns the land and the Department of Administration administers the land functions.

Thanks,  
Jamie Schrenzel  
(651) 259-5115

---

**From:** Faragher, Denise (ADM)  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 20, 2011 10:49 AM  
**To:** Schrenzel, Jamie (DNR)  
**Subject:** RE: Anoka RTC - 2 parcels

The Department of Human Services does own the two parcels that are depicted in the string of e-mails below. The Dept. of Administration does administer the land functions for DHS. Can you tell me if there is a notice or an action item connected to your request?

Denise S. Faragher  
MN Dept. of Administration  
(p) 651-201-2549

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**From:** Schrenzel, Jamie (DNR)  
**Sent:** Monday, December 19, 2011 4:26 PM  
**To:** Faragher, Denise (ADM)  
**Subject:** Anoka RTC - 2 parcels

Thanks for your assistance!

Jamie

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**From:** Faragher, Denise (ADM)  
**Sent:** Monday, December 19, 2011 4:22 PM  
**To:** Schrenzel, Jamie (DNR)  
**Subject:** RE: PIN - Request

I thought it would be a fairly short project, but of course it is not. Human Services owns the property just to the South of the 2 parcels you inquired about, but I still have not figured out who owns the land you inquired about. The files take up about 20 inches in my drawer and are not labeled well, I need to look through it more. I'll get back to you as soon as I can.

Denise S. Faragher  
MN Dept. of Administration  
(p) 651-201-2549

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**From:** Schrenzel, Jamie (DNR)  
**Sent:** Monday, December 19, 2011 2:39 PM  
**To:** Faragher, Denise (ADM)  
**Subject:** FW: PIN - Request

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**From:** Doperalski, Melissa (DNR)  
**Sent:** Monday, December 19, 2011 11:06 AM  
**To:** Schrenzel, Jamie (DNR)  
**Subject:** FW: PIN - Request

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**From:** Doperalski, Melissa (DNR)  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 13, 2011 4:45 PM  
**To:** Zoch, Jean M (DNR)  
**Subject:** RE: PIN - Request

It needs to be entered in as [31-32-24-24-0001](#)

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**From:** Zoch, Jean M (DNR)  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 13, 2011 4:28 PM  
**To:** Doperalski, Melissa (DNR)  
**Subject:** RE: PIN - Request

The county's website is saying that the pin does not exist. I am leaving for the day so I can check further tomorrow.

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**From:** Doperalski, Melissa (DNR)  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 13, 2011 4:20 PM  
**To:** Zoch, Jean M (DNR)  
**Subject:** RE: PIN - Request

This is what Anoka Counties website says...nothing much of help here that I can pick up on but you are used to looking at this info so maybe it will make more sense to you.

[https://prtinfo.co.anoka.mn.us/\(ibejla32mkpc3ovz0y5heg55\)/search.aspx](https://prtinfo.co.anoka.mn.us/(ibejla32mkpc3ovz0y5heg55)/search.aspx)

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**From:** Zoch, Jean M (DNR)  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 13, 2011 4:11 PM

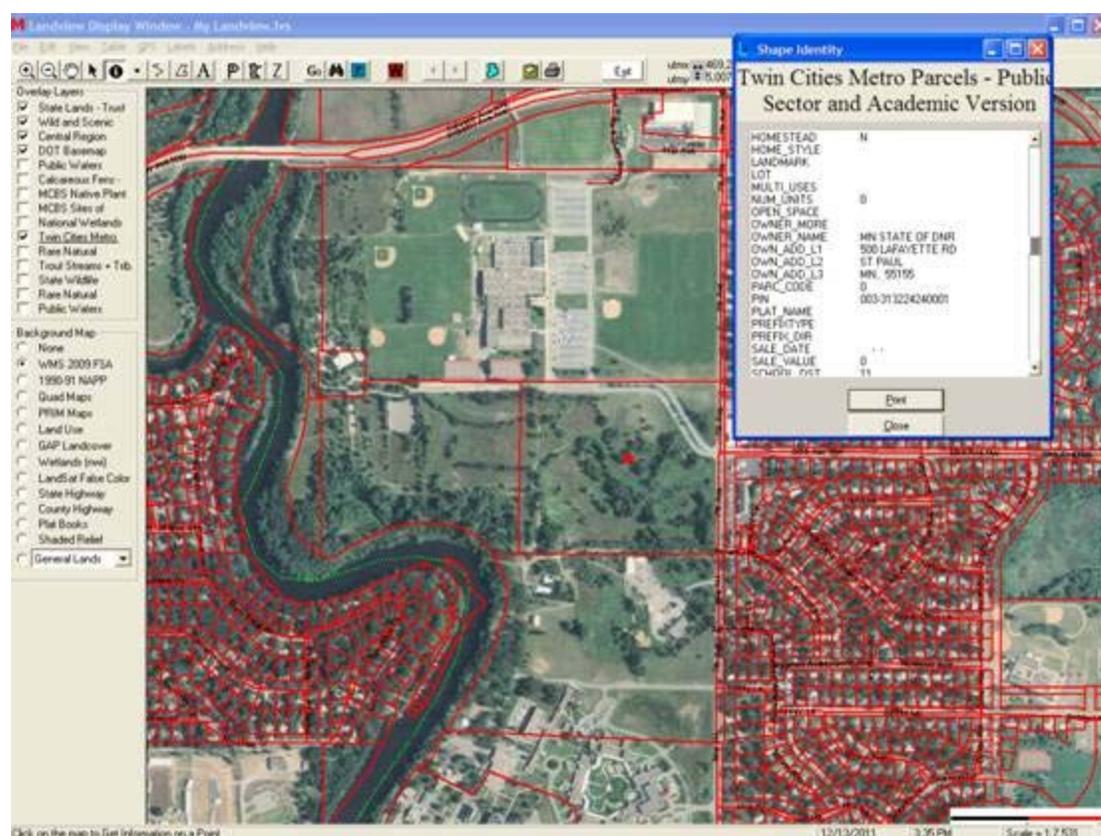
**To:** Doperalski, Melissa (DNR)  
**Subject:** RE: PIN - Request

The land records doesn't show that DNR has land in that area. I wonder why on landview when clicking on the parcel it show DNR owned land. The overlay layers in landview is not indicating that it is owned by DNR. I think I am confused too. I wonder if checking with the county's website would help.

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**From:** Doperalski, Melissa (DNR)  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 13, 2011 3:38 PM  
**To:** Zoch, Jean M (DNR)  
**Subject:** RE: PIN - Request

This is why I am confused????



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**From:** Zoch, Jean M (DNR)  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 13, 2011 3:35 PM  
**To:** Doperalski, Melissa (DNR)  
**Subject:** RE: PIN - Request

Melissa,  
DNR does not own any land in Section 31.

Jean

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**From:** Doperalski, Melissa (DNR)

**Sent:** Tuesday, December 13, 2011 3:07 PM  
**To:** Zoch, Jean M (DNR)  
**Subject:** PIN - Request

I have two parcels that are identified on the Twin Cities Metro Parcels layer as State of Minnesota property – owned by the DNR. I can't find on any other layers though which Division is in charge with the management/ownership of these parcels.

Both parcels are located in Anoka County, T32, R24, Sec 31

PINs

003-313224240001

003-313224230001

This is for a Route Permit / EA review for the Enterprise Park 115 kV Project.



Melissa Doperalski  
Region 3 Environmental Assessment Ecologist  
Department of Natural Resources  
651.259.5738  
[melissa.doperalski@state.mn.us](mailto:melissa.doperalski@state.mn.us)

# Looming Issue with Loose Net Plastic Mesh 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.

## 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:

- Use biodegradable material in all components of erosion control blanket and biologs (fiber rolls) that are to be left on site as part of final stabilization. Areas with a 2:1 slope or flatter can be considered for this option.
- Smaller mesh size.
- Limit use where reptiles are likely (near wetlands, lakes or watercourses).



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



Snakes get caught in the plastic mesh

## Environmental Review Fact Sheet Series

### Endangered, Threatened, and Special Concern Species of Minnesota

# Blanding's Turtle

(*Emydoidea blandingii*)

Minnesota Status: Threatened  
Federal Status: none

State Rank<sup>1</sup>: S2  
Global Rank<sup>1</sup>: 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, racoons, 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 <sup>st</sup> and before June 1 <sup>st</sup> ).	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 1<sup>st</sup>** so the young turtles can escape from the nest when they hatch!

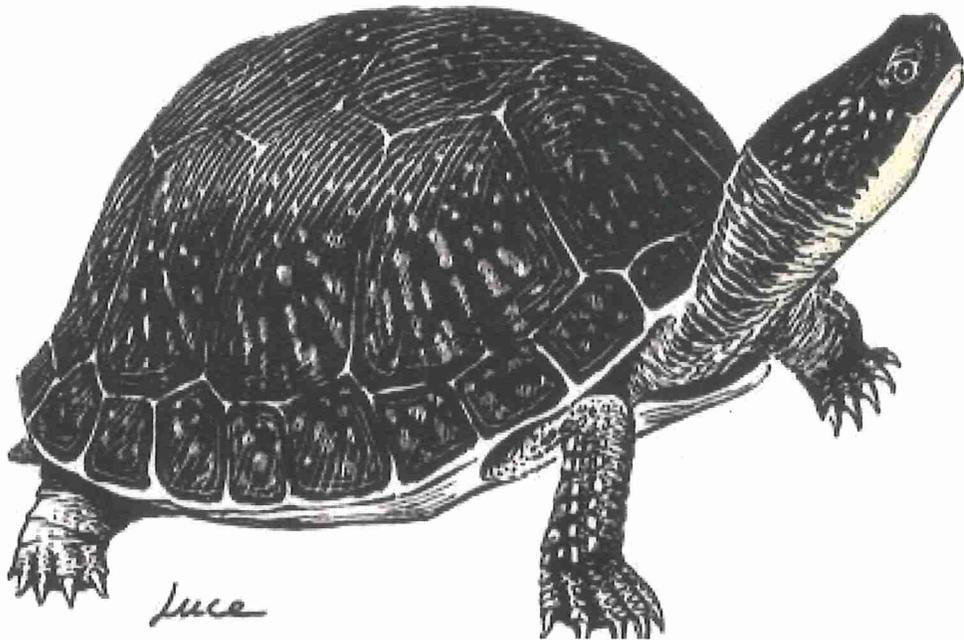
#### REFERENCES

- <sup>1</sup>Association 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.

# 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 a State Threatened species 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.

Illustration by Don Luce, from Turtles in Minnesota, Natural History Leaflet No. 9, June 1989, James Ford Bell Museum of Natural History

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

*(see Environmental Review Fact Sheet Series for full recommendations)*

- A flyer with an illustration of an adult 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.
- 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 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.
- Blanding's turtles do not make good pets. It is illegal to keep this threatened species in captivity.
- 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 1<sup>st</sup> and before June 1<sup>st</sup>).