



STATE OF MINNESOTA
Department of Commerce



Issued: March 20, 2012

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING AND
AVAILABILITY OF ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

**In the Matter of the Route Permit Application for the Parkers Prairie
115 kV Transmission Line Project in Otter Tail County, Minnesota**

PUC Docket Number: ET2/TL-11-867 | OAH Docket Number: 7-2500-22631-2

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that a public hearing will be held on behalf of the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (Commission) on the route permit application by Great River Energy for the Parkers Prairie 115 kV transmission line project. The public hearing will be held at the time and location listed below. Ending times reflect the latest a public hearing will run. Hearings may conclude earlier where all attendees have had the opportunity to comment and all other business has been concluded.

PUBLIC HEARING

Tuesday, April 10, 2012 -- 6:00 to 8:30 p.m.

Prairie Event Center
201 East Main Street
Parkers Prairie, MN 56361
(218) 338-4115

The purpose of the hearing is to gather public comments on the most prudent route and alignment for the Parkers Prairie project and issues that should be addressed in a route permit for the project. Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) Richard Luis will preside at the hearing. Any person who would like to comment on the route and alignment for the project or issues that should be addressed in a route permit may do so at the hearing or in writing to Judge Luis.

The hearing record will remain open until **4:30 p.m., Friday, April 27, 2012**, for the receipt of written comments. Please include PUC Docket No. TL-11-867 on all comments. Comments should be mailed, emailed, or faxed directly to Judge Luis at:

The Honorable Richard Luis
Office of Administrative Hearings
PO Box 64620
St. Paul, Minnesota, 55164-0620
Fax: 651-361-7900
Email: routecomments@state.mn.us

Conduct of Hearing. The public hearing will be conducted in accordance with the requirements of the Power Plant Siting Act (Minn. Stat. 216E, Minn. Rules 7850.3800). Members of the public will have an opportunity to offer testimony, submit materials into the record, and ask questions. Any person who wishes to ask a question, but does not want to ask the question personally, may submit it in writing to the ALJ who will then ask the question during the hearing. The hearing will continue until all persons have had the opportunity to offer testimony and ask questions. If necessary, the hearing may be recessed and continued by the ALJ. Upon completion of the hearing, a transcript of the proceedings will be available at the Parkers Prairie City Hall.

At the close of the written comment period, Judge Luis will provide a report including a written summary of testimony given at the hearing along with comments received during the comment period to the Commission. Upon receipt of the ALJ's report, the Commission will make a final decision on the route permit application.

Request for Accommodation. Any person who needs an accommodation for a disability in order to participate in the hearing, and any person who requires an interpreter, including a foreign language interpreter, should promptly notify the Office of Administrative Hearings, P.O. Box 64620, 600 North Robert Street, St. Paul, Minnesota 55164-0620, Phone: (651) 361-7900 (voice) or (651) 361-7878 (TDD).

Environmental Assessment. Department of Commerce, Energy Facility Permitting (EFP) staff has completed an environmental assessment (EA) for the proposed project. The EA analyzes the potential human and environmental impacts of the proposed project as well as possible mitigative measures. Electronic versions of the EA, maps of the proposed project, and other documents relevant to this matter are available for viewing on the Commission's energy facility permitting website: <http://energyfacilities.puc.state.mn.us/Docket.html?Id=32307>. Additionally, documents are available on the Commission's eDockets system: <https://www.edockets.state.mn.us/EFiling/search.jsp> (enter the year "11" and the number "867").

The EA is also available at the location noted below:

Parkers Prairie City Hall
102 North Otter Avenue
Parkers Prairie, MN 56361

Project Description. Great River Energy (GRE) proposes to replace approximately 2.1 miles of an existing 41.6 kV transmission line in Otter Tail County, Minn. with a new line at a voltage of 115 kV. In addition, GRE, in collaboration with Lake Region Electric Cooperative (LREC), proposes to modify and update the existing Parkers Prairie distribution substation, and to connect the substation and new line to an existing GRE 115 kV line through a switch structure (see attached map).

GRE has requested a route width of 300 feet centered on County Road 6 (CSAH 6), which would allow for the new transmission line to be constructed on the north or south side of CSAH 6, or some combination thereof. GRE has indicated the 115 kV line will require a right-of-way (easement) of 100 feet (50 feet on each side of the transmission line). Wood poles, ranging in height from 60 – 85 feet, will be used for the new line. Some specialty poles (e.g., taller poles) may be required at specific

locations. The footprint of the Parkers Prairie distribution substation will be expanded 40 feet to the south to accommodate a new 115 kV transformer.

Project Contacts. If you have questions or would like further information about this project, please contact:

Ray Kirsch, State Permit Manager
651-296-7588
raymond.kirsch@state.mn.us

David Birkholz, Public Advisor
651-296-2878
david.birkholz@state.mn.us

Information about the project may also be obtained by contacting Rick Heuring at 763-445-5979, rheuring@greenergy.com or Marsha Parlow at 763-445-5215, mparlow@greenergy.com, Great River Energy, 12300 Elm Creek Blvd., Maple Grove, MN 55369.

Project Mailing List. Interested persons can add their names to the mailing list for this project by contacting the state permit manager or public advisor, or by registering on-line at: www.energyfacilities.puc.state.mn.us.

This document can be made available in alternative formats (i.e., large print or audio) by calling 651-296-0391 (voice). Persons with hearing or speech disabilities may call us through Minnesota Relay at 1-800-627-3529 or by dialing 711.

