



Energy Facility Permitting
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NOTICE OF PUBLIC INFORMATION AND SCOPING MEETINGS

In the Matter of the Applications for a Route Permit and Certificate of Need for the Chaska Area 115 kV Transmission Line Project

PUC Docket Numbers: E002/CN-11-826 and E002/TL-12-401

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the Minnesota Department of Commerce Energy Facility Permitting will conduct public information and environmental assessment (EA) scoping meetings at the times and location listed below, on the certificate of need and high voltage transmission line (HVTL) route permit applications (RPA) submitted by Northern States Power (Xcel Energy) and Great River Energy (GRE) to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (Commission) for the proposed Chaska Area 115 kV transmission line project. The purpose of the meetings is to provide information to the public about the project and to identify issues and alternatives to study in an EA that will be prepared by the Energy Facility Permitting (EFP) staff.

Public Information and Scoping Meetings

Wednesday, September 26, 2012

Afternoon Session – 2:00 p.m.

Evening Session – 6:00 p.m.

**Chaska City Hall
Council Chambers
One City Hall Plaza
Chaska, MN 55318
952-448-9200**

During the meetings, EFP staff will give a presentation about the state's high voltage transmission line permitting process, certificate of need process, the proposed project, and how the public can participate. Xcel Energy and Great River Energy (Applicants) will have representatives at the public meetings who can answer general questions about the proposed project. Members of the public will have an opportunity to ask questions, present comments, and propose issues, impacts and alternatives to be studied in the EA.

Review copies of the route permit application, certificate of need application, permitting process flowcharts, and comment forms will be available at the meetings. Each meeting will offer the same process and information, so interested persons need attend only one of the meetings.

The EFP staff will accept written comments on the scope of the EA until Friday, October 12, 2012. Please include PUC Docket Number TL-12-401 on all comments. Comments should be mailed, emailed, or faxed to:

Bill Storm
State Permit Manager
Minnesota Department of Commerce
Energy Facility Permitting
85 7th Place East, Suite 500
St. Paul, Minnesota, 55101-2198
Fax: 651-297-7891
bill.storm@state.mn.us

Comments may also be submitted on the Energy Facility Permitting website:

<http://mn.gov/commerce/energyfacilities/>

Project Description. The project is located in eastern Carver County and northern Scott County near and within the city of Chaska, and through Laketown, Dahlgren, and Jackson townships. The western end of the project area is located in Dahlgren Township, Carver County, west of Aue Lake at existing structure #142. The project extends north along the existing Great River Energy MV-VTT line through Laketown Township, and east through the city of Chaska. The project route continues across the Minnesota River into Jackson Township in Scott County to the eastern terminus of the project at the Scott County Substation.

The proposed project covers approximately 12.75 miles, contains six segments, and primarily follows existing transmission line rights-of-way (ROW).

Project construction is expected to begin in third quarter 2013; the project is expected to be completed with an in-service date of early in 2014.

Review Process. Two separate Commission approvals are required to build the Chaska Area 115 kV transmission line project – a certificate of need (CN) and a HVTL route permit.

The Applicants submitted a CN application to the Commission on May 15, 2012 and a HVTL route permit application on July 11, 2012. The CN application was accepted as complete by the Commission in an order dated August 21, 2012. The RPA was accepted as complete by the Commission in its regularly scheduled meeting on August 14, 2012.

Environmental Review. The EFP is responsible for conducting the environmental review for CN applications submitted to the Commission (Minn. Rules 7849.1200). EFP staff typically prepares an environmental report (ER) prior to the Commission's determination of need for a proposed project. An ER examines the potential human and environmental impacts of a proposed project, alternatives to the project, and potential mitigative measures.

The EFP is also responsible for conducting the environmental review for route permit applications to the Commission (Minn. Rules 7850.3700). Environmental review for a project of this size requires the preparation of an environmental assessment (EA). An EA examines the potential human and environmental impacts of a proposed project, alternative routes for the project, and potential mitigative measures.

As two concurrent environmental reviews are required – one for the CN application and one for the route permit application – EFP has elected to combine the environmental review for the two applications (Minn. Rules 7849.1900). Thus, an environmental assessment (EA) will be prepared to meet the requirements of both review processes.

Public Hearing. After completion of the EA, a public hearing will be held. The hearing will be presided over by an administrative law judge (ALJ) from the Office of Administrative Hearings. Members of the public will have an opportunity to speak at the hearing, present evidence, ask questions, and submit comments. Notice of the public hearing will be published in local newspapers and mailed to persons who register their names on the EFP project mailing list (see below).

Upon completion of the environmental review and hearing process, the records compiled for each proceeding (CN and route permit) will be presented to the Commission for final decisions. This review process is the only process during which alternatives to the project will be considered, including the “no build” alternative and alternatives related to the size, type, timing, and configuration of the project.

Eminent Domain. If issued a route permit by the Commission, the Applicants may exercise the power of eminent domain to acquire land for this project pursuant to Minnesota Statute 216E.12.

Project Mailing List. Persons should contact the state permit manager or public advisor (noted below) or register online at: <http://mn.gov/commerce/energyfacilities/> to get their name on the project mailing list. Persons on the mailing list will receive notices of meetings/hearings and notices of document availability for this project. **If you do not register to be on the mailing list you will not receive correspondence regarding this project after this notice.** Registration to the project mailing list is voluntary and may be done at any time.

Project Documents. A more detailed description of the proposed project is contained in the certificate of need and route permit applications. Electronic versions of these documents are available on the Energy Facility Permitting website:

<http://mn.gov/commerce/energyfacilities/Docket.html?Id=32771>

Additionally, these documents are available on the Commission’s eDockets system: <https://www.edockets.state.mn.us/EFiling/search.jsp> (enter the year “12” and the number “401” for the route permit application and enter the year “11” and the number “826” for the CN application).

The CN and route permit applications are also available at the public libraries noted below:

Carver County Public Library 4 City Hall Plaza Chaska, MN 55318	Shakopee Public Library 235 Lewis Street Shakopee, MN 55379
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Project Contacts. EFP staff member Bill Storm (651-296-9535, bill.storm@state.mn.us) has been designated as State Permit Manager. You may contact him at: Department of Commerce, Energy Facility Permitting, 85 7th Place East, Suite 500, St. Paul, MN 55101-2198. Other contact information: Toll-Free: 1-800-657-3794, Fax: 651-297-7891 or TTY: Minnesota Relay Services, 1-800-627-3529, and ask for the DOC.

Public Utilities Commission. Michael Kaluzniak (651-201-2257, Fax: 651-297-7073, michael.kaluzniak@state.mn.us) has been named Public Advisor for the route permit. The public advisor is available to answer questions from the public about the permitting process. The public advisor cannot give legal advice or other advice that may affect the legal rights of the person being advised and cannot act as an advocate on behalf of any person. His mailing address is 121 7th Place East, Suite 350, St. Paul, Minnesota 55101-2147.

Xcel Energy. Information about this project is available from Xcel Energy. You can direct questions to Sage Tauber (612-330-2909, sage.tauber@xcelenergy.com). Ms. Tauber may be contacted in writing at: Xcel Energy, 414 Nicollet Mall, (MP 8A), Minneapolis, MN 55401.

Great River Energy. Information about this project is available from GRE. You can direct questions to Carole Schmidt (763-4453-5214, cschmidt@greenergy.com). Ms. Schmidt may be contacted in writing at: GRE, 12300 Elm Creek Boulevard, Maple Grove, MN 55369

This document can be made available in alternative formats; i.e. large print or audio tape 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.