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PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
BLUE EARTH - 1:00 P.M. & 6:00 P.M. - APRIL 24, 2014
FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA

In the Matter of the Applications of ITC Midwest, LLC for
a Certificate of Need and a Route Permit for the
Minnesota-Iowa 345 kV Transmission Line Project in
Jackson, Martin, and Faribault Counties, Minnesota

PUC DOCKET NOS. ET-6675/CN-12-1053
ET-6675/TL-12-1337

Hamilton Hall
209 South Main Street
Blue Earth, Minnesota

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1 (1:00 SESSION.)

2 MR. RAY KIRSCH: I want to welcome you
3 all to the public information meetings for the draft
4 environmental impact statement for the Minnesota to
5 Iowa 345 kV transmission line project.

6 My name is Ray Kirsch, I'm with the
7 Minnesota Department of Commerce.

8 And I'll show you an agenda here. I
9 propose we spend our time together here first of all
10 doing some introductions and then looking at some
11 materials, talking briefly about the proposed
12 project, the state permitting process, the draft
13 environmental impact statement, using it, and then
14 your comments.

15 I apologize, it's a little scratchy. Can
16 you hear me fairly well, or is it just this speaker?
17 Sometimes this speaker seems scratchy. Fairly well?
18 Okay.

19 All right. I propose that these first
20 five things will take us about 20 to 25 minutes, so
21 if you'll bear with me just to bring everybody up to
22 speed on the project, and the rest of the time we'll
23 use for your comments.

24 So, again, my name is Ray Kirsch, I'm
25 with the Minnesota Department of Commerce. The

1 Department of Commerce is charged with conducting
2 environmental review for transmission line
3 facilities in the state of Minnesota.

4 With me today is Suzanne Steinhauer.
5 Suzanne, you might have met her at the front table
6 when you came in. I'd also like to introduce folks
7 from ITC Midwest, the applicant for this project.
8 I'll introduce Amy Ashbacker, who is the project
9 manager for the project. And, Amy, if you can
10 introduce your team?

11 MS. AMY ASHBACKER: Thanks, Ray.

12 As Ray said, my name is Amy Ashbacker
13 with ITC Midwest.

14 I spoke with a few of you prior to the
15 meeting and we also have additional folks here from
16 ITC that are available to chat with you after the
17 meeting, so please don't hesitate to grab any one of
18 these fellows and speak with them about the project.

19 To introduce them, we have Dick Coeur of
20 MBN Engineering, who is our design engineer and
21 assisted in routing. We have Dave Grover from our
22 regulatory department. Joe Berry from our planning
23 department. And Jack Middleton from Burns &
24 McDonnell, who also assisted ITC on the routing with
25 this project.

1 We also have JCG Land Services, who can
2 print out maps for you, 8-1/2-by-11 maps specific to
3 your property of concern, and you can also -- you
4 can take those with you and you can also utilize
5 them to submit comments, as Ray will explain
6 further.

7 Thank you.

8 MR. RAY KIRSCH: Thank you, Amy.

9 When you came in, on the table out front
10 there is a copy of the presentation that I'm going
11 to walk you through. So I think you'll find that
12 helpful, it has some nice maps in it.

13 There's a public comment form out on the
14 table. I'll talk about public comments and how you
15 can send them in. You don't have to use this form,
16 but it has my name and address on the back and you
17 can fold it over and send it in, put a stamp on it.

18 There's a copy of the meeting notice.
19 Likely you received this in the paper -- not in the
20 paper, in the mail. But it has good information, if
21 you didn't receive a notice for some reason I
22 encourage you to pick one up.

23 And finally there are mailing list
24 sign-up cards out on the table out here, many of you
25 are on the project mailing list, but if you're not

1 on the list you can fill one out and turn it in at
2 the table or you can mail it in as a postcard.

3 So, briefly, the proposed project is 73
4 miles of new 345 kV transmission line. It also
5 includes associated facilities. And by that I mean
6 changes at some substations -- sorry -- changes at
7 some substations and some relocation of existing
8 lines. So it includes expanding the Lakefield
9 Junction Substation, constructing a new Huntley
10 Substation, relocating existing 161 and 69 kV lines,
11 and removing the Winnebago Junction Substation.

12 So in a map format, the Lakefield
13 Junction Substation is over here in Jackson County.
14 This map shows several of the routing options as it
15 comes across eastward. This is the Fox Lake area.
16 And then this is the Lake Charlotte area. Here's
17 the city of Fairmont. Routing options further
18 eastward -- excuse me -- further eastward to the
19 Huntley Substation and then south to the Iowa
20 border, two possible substation locations and then
21 south.

22 The project is a large infrastructure
23 project. These transmission line towers can be 130
24 to 190 feet in height, span 700 to 1,000 feet at the
25 distance between poles, and if they would cross your

1 property would require a right-of-way or an easement
2 of 200 feet. This is a picture of a typical
3 structure. There are different kinds of structures
4 that could be used for the project.

5 The project requires two approvals from
6 the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission, a
7 certificate of need and a route permit. And both of
8 these approvals have a process to obtain them, or to
9 bring them before the Commission as specified in
10 Minnesota statutes and rules. Minnesota Rule 7849
11 is for a certificate of need and Minnesota Rule 7850
12 for the route permit.

13 This is a big decision for the Commission
14 to make and they get assistance from state agencies.
15 They get assistance from a number of agencies, but
16 two in particular that are called out in statute and
17 rule.

18 One is the Minnesota Department of
19 Commerce. That's where I'm located. My job is to
20 conduct the environmental review for the project,
21 and by that I mean to catalog the possible impacts
22 of the project and the ways those impacts might be
23 mitigated.

24 The other agency is the Minnesota Office
25 of Administrative Hearings. And the Office of

1 Administrative Hearings assigns administrative law
2 judges to hear matters throughout the state and they
3 will come out and hear this matter, which is this
4 transmission line.

5 The question related to the certificate
6 of need is, is this project needed or is a different
7 project more appropriate for the state of Minnesota?
8 Is this the right size project? Is different
9 voltage or a different endpoint or endpoints
10 appropriate? Is this the right type of project? In
11 other words, it's a transmission line project,
12 should it be a generation project, generating
13 electricity instead of transmitting it? And is it
14 the right time? Is the project needed now or is it
15 needed possibly sometime in the future?

16 If the project is needed, the route
17 permit looks at where it should be located and how
18 it should be constructed. There are routing factors
19 that the Commission uses to determine how the
20 project should be placed and how it should be
21 constructed.

22 In your handout, I've included this page,
23 a page of text which gives you Minnesota Rule
24 7850.4100. It applies a list of the factors, A
25 through N, that the Public Utilities Commission

1 looks at when it makes a routing decision. And if
2 you look at the list, you see impacts on human
3 settlements, effects on public health and safety,
4 effects on land-based economies, such as
5 agriculture, mining, tourism, those types of things.
6 Effects on archaeological and historic resources,
7 et cetera.

8 So those are the factors that the
9 Commission is going to be using when it makes a
10 route determination. Those are the factors that the
11 judge is going to address when he's out here.

12 I've included a schematic here to show
13 you the route width, the right-of-way, and the
14 anticipated alignment. These are terms of art in
15 the Commission's route permit. The route width is
16 the area where the transmission line could be
17 placed, the width where it could be placed. ITC has
18 requested a route width of 1,000 feet for the 345 kV
19 line, so that would be a 1,000-foot width for most
20 parts of the project.

21 The anticipated alignment is where the
22 poles would actually be placed. So as I discussed,
23 there's a 200-foot right-of-way. So the anticipated
24 alignment could move up or down, so to speak, within
25 the right-of-way. I mean, excuse me, within the

1 route width. I apologize. So the anticipated
2 alignment could move within the route width. That's
3 to give you some predictability as to where it's
4 going to go. It also gives some flexibility both
5 for the company who has yet to do their final design
6 and engineering, and for landowners who could have
7 some impacts mitigated by moving the alignment
8 within the route width.

9 This is a flow chart of the state's
10 permitting process. And I'd like to walk you
11 through that so we're all on the same page as to
12 where we are in the process.

13 The applications for this project were
14 submitted to the Public Utilities Commission in
15 March of 2013, last year. They were accepted by the
16 Commission in June.

17 And in July we were out here, and, in
18 fact, we were at Hamilton Hall last July asking you
19 all what are the impacts about this project, what
20 impacts of this project need to be considered so we
21 can make an informed decision. What are you
22 concerned about so we can study those things in an
23 environmental impact statement. We also asked you
24 are there other routing options that you think would
25 be appropriate for the project.

1 We took all that information and we came
2 up with what's called the environmental impact
3 statement scoping decision. It's a table of
4 contents, so to speak, of what we're going to look
5 at, the impacts, the mitigation measures, and the
6 routing alternatives.

7 We issued the draft EIS in March of this
8 year. It's a big document. It comes in two parts.
9 It is a large body of text, which also has graphs
10 and pictures to help you understand the project.
11 And it has a second volume, in an 11-by-17 format, a
12 detailed map book, and it has maps where you can, I
13 think, see very carefully where the line is proposed
14 to go, with the routing options where it's
15 proposed -- it could go, excuse me. And we also
16 have it available on CD. I'll talk more about that
17 in a minute.

18 So now we are out here, April 22nd to
19 24th, having these meetings. And the reason for
20 these meetings is we don't get everything right the
21 first time. So we issue the EIS in draft form and
22 then we ask for your comments so that we can approve
23 it and make a final EIS.

24 So all of your comments today and all of
25 the written comments we receive will go into what's

1 called a final EIS. We anticipate that the final
2 EIS will be issued in July of this year.

3 At the same time, on the left-hand side
4 of the page here, you see that there's a contested
5 case hearing, and by that I mean a public hearing.
6 An administrative law judge will be out here on
7 May 13th and 14th and he will be soliciting your
8 input as to the need for the project and also where
9 it should be located. And if a route permit is
10 issued, what should be in that route permit. So
11 it's your chance to advocate for one of or several
12 of or say you don't like routing options that are in
13 the draft environmental impact statement.

14 The judge will take the final EIS and all
15 of your comments that he receives during the hearing
16 and he will create a report which has findings and
17 conclusions and recommendations. He will make
18 recommendations as to what certificate of need
19 should be issued, he'll make recommendations on a
20 route permit. His recommendations then go to the
21 Minnesota Public Utilities Commission and the
22 Commission will make a decision in the fall of 2014.

23 The administrative law judge's report,
24 that report includes recommendations. They're not
25 binding on the Commission, but the Commission puts a

1 lot of stock on them because they're the ones who
2 asked the judge to go out and listen and gather this
3 information. So the Commission could follow the
4 judge's report or amend it and make it slightly
5 different, but it is the Commission who has the
6 final authority.

7 Here's a listing of the steps in a more
8 tabular form showing where we are and upcoming
9 events. Public hearings in May, the final EIS in
10 July, the judge's report in September, and a
11 Commission decision in the fall of the year.

12 So a little about the draft EIS. The
13 idea behind a draft EIS is informed decision-making.
14 We want to know, when we're making a decision about
15 a large infrastructure project like this, as much as
16 we can about the possible impacts and mitigation
17 measures related to that project. You may not like
18 the decision that the Commission ultimately makes,
19 but we want to make sure that they have the
20 information before them and they understand what the
21 implications of the decision -- what those
22 implications are when they make that decision.

23 It tries to put together comments and
24 facts. It draws together all the information from
25 different agencies, it draws on different databases,

1 it draws on your guidance from last July to look
2 into specific matters.

3 It doesn't advocate. You won't find that
4 the EIS tells you this is the route to go or that's
5 the route to go. It'll tell you about the impacts
6 and mitigations of different routing options
7 relative to the Commission's routing factors, but it
8 doesn't come up with one single answer.

9 It discusses the human and environmental
10 impacts and possible mitigation measures both
11 related to how the project is constructed and where
12 it's located, including route alternatives and route
13 variations. And it discusses the relative merits of
14 routing options. And by that I mean it looks at the
15 options relative to the factors I just showed you, A
16 through N. That's what the Commission is looking
17 at, that's what the judge is looking at.

18 I encourage you to look at the draft EIS
19 either online or here on a CD. If you haven't
20 looked at it, I'm going to give you a -- try to give
21 you an orientation to the document so that hopefully
22 it can be make some sense to you and be more useful
23 to you.

24 This is a map that is taken from the
25 draft EIS representing the project. So the EIS

1 approach is the project in two segment. The one in
2 orange from here, from the Lakefield to Huntley
3 Substation, and then a second segment in green from
4 the Huntley to the Iowa border. Within those two
5 segments it looks at Routes A and B proposed by ITC
6 Midwest.

7 It also looks at alternatives that use,
8 to a greater or lesser extent, Interstate 90, which
9 is one of the alternatives that was suggested by
10 citizens when we were out here last July. And it
11 also looks at route variations. These are smaller
12 snippets of route that are designed to mitigate a
13 specific impact.

14 So near the Jackson Municipal Airport
15 there are three route variations. At Fox Lake there
16 are six route variations. One from the west side of
17 the lake, one going across the lake with an existing
18 line, and three on the east side of the lake.
19 Again, suggested by citizens, got into the draft
20 EIS, and now available for your comments to the
21 judge and Commission as to what's the best way to
22 go.

23 There are five route variations -- excuse
24 me -- route variations in the Lake Charlotte area.
25 One of them crossing Lake Charlotte where there's an

1 existing crossing, and the other four are going
2 south of the lake. Here's one at Center Creek WMA,
3 one near Blue Earth River just south of the proposed
4 substation -- excuse me, I think the mic went out
5 there. And four of them further south on the way to
6 Iowa. Again, these are suggested by folks and
7 they're in the draft EIS and then could be selected
8 by the Commission for the project.

9 So the draft EIS utilizes the routing
10 factors as a framework for analyzing the impacts.
11 So we get impacts to human settlements, noise,
12 aesthetics, property values, airstrips, public
13 health and safety, land-based economies, which is
14 primarily agriculture in this area, archaeological
15 and historic resources, the natural environment,
16 rare resources, endangered and threatened species,
17 for example. We look at the use of existing
18 rights-of-way and potential costs of the project.

19 The draft EIS is available on the
20 Department of Commerce's website electronically.
21 It's also available on eDockets through the
22 Minnesota Public Utilities Commission's website.
23 We've put it at local libraries, copies at local
24 libraries. There are review copies at the back
25 table here, there are several copies to look at.

1 And as I mentioned before, we have CD copies. If
2 you'd like a CD, if you have a computer and can do
3 that, it's an easy way to get a lot of information
4 to you.

5 If you have any questions about the draft
6 EIS or if you have questions about the process in
7 general, you can always contact me, I'm the
8 environmental review manager for the project. You
9 can also contact Tracy Smetana at the Minnesota
10 Public Utilities Commission. If you were out here
11 last summer you met Tracy, she is the public advisor
12 for this project.

13 You can sign up for the project mailing
14 list. If you sign up for the project mailing list
15 you will get all the notices about upcoming events
16 for the project. You can subscribe to eDockets.
17 That's an electronic docketing system that the state
18 has. You can get an e-mail every time a document is
19 added to the docket. And by docket I mean a big
20 file folder, an electronic file folder.

21 The last topic before we get to your
22 comments is using the draft EIS. I want to walk
23 through some maps with you here in a minute, but I
24 want to talk about how I think the draft EIS could
25 be useful to you.

1 It includes, I'll call it your ideas, the
2 ideas that we received when we were out here last
3 July, and examines them all. So you can use the EIS
4 to talk about the need for the project, to talk
5 about the route permit for the project, where the
6 project should go. To talk about impacts that
7 you're concerned about, and to talk about
8 mitigation, both how the project is constructed and
9 where it's located. Many impacts of the
10 transmission line can be avoided or mitigated by the
11 routing, by going around or avoiding the impact that
12 you're concerned about.

13 So I want to walk through these maps with
14 you for a couple of reasons. One, 'cause I think
15 you should understand ITC Midwest's Modified Route A
16 at the hearing. Two, to a great extent they build
17 on the route variations that you all suggested,
18 citizens suggested, and we examined in the draft EIS
19 and now they're a part of the Modified Route A.
20 And, three, they're examples of what you can do when
21 the administrative law judge comes out and you want
22 to make your case for a specific route or route
23 alternative that you think is appropriate.

24 So there's four of these. Let's spend a
25 little bit of time on them.

1 This is the first of them. This is the
2 most westerly one, so maybe not for folks in this
3 area, but this is the Jackson Municipal Airport
4 area, this is the Des Moines River coming down here.
5 On these maps, on this one and all the others,
6 Route A is in orange with a red line going down the
7 middle like so.

8 In this area, Modified Route A is the
9 blue line. I'm going to show you here this light
10 blue area here. There are three route variations in
11 this area, Jackson Airport, or JA-1, 2 and 3.
12 You'll notice that Modified Route A uses part of
13 what's called Jackson Airport Number 2, so it cuts
14 the corner here, uses part of Jackson Airport 2, and
15 then uses part of Route A to navigate this area near
16 the Jackson airport.

17 This is an example of integrating some of
18 the ideas from citizens, and it also puts together
19 two routing options. Jackson Airport 2, and a
20 little bit of actually what was proposed as Route A,
21 which is what you could do if that's what you think
22 is the most appropriate route for the project.

23 Here's another example from Fox Lake. In
24 the Fox Lake area Route A comes from the west here
25 into the town and city of Sherburn, goes along the

1 south side of I-90, and then comes back up and
2 rejoins an existing 161 line through here.

3 Modified Route A in the light blue stays
4 along the north side of Interstate 90 for a little
5 bit further, then goes to the south and comes right
6 back. It goes up here and then comes across on
7 140th and 130th. You'll notice there's a little
8 FL-4, Fox Lake 4, suggested by -- I don't know, I
9 will say citizens in the Fox Lake area, but I don't
10 know that for sure, just citizens. And the company
11 has decided that Modified Route A improves on
12 Route A in this area. So that's an example of how
13 what was studied in the EIS has been brought
14 forward.

15 Here's an example from the Lake Charlotte
16 area. This is Lake Charlotte here, there's an
17 existing line across the lake, a 161 kV line. Route
18 A -- excuse me. Route A in the orange comes this
19 way on the red line and then down and back up.
20 Modified Route A goes southward over here and then
21 proceeds on 160th Street south of Charlotte Lake and
22 then back up. It uses -- well, it uses several
23 variations, but predominantly Lake Charlotte 5.
24 Again, these are route variations suggested by folks
25 in the Lake Charlotte area. We studied these

1 options and now Modified Route A utilizes Lake
2 Charlotte Number 5.

3 And, lastly, this is an example from the
4 proposed Huntley Substation area. This is the
5 substation area here. This is Route A in the
6 orange. It's an existing 161 line that crosses the
7 Blue Earth River a couple times there. This
8 alternative right here is called HI-1 in the orange
9 dot, was suggested, I think, by the Minnesota
10 Department of Natural Resources as a way to remove
11 these two river crossings in constructing this
12 project.

13 The Modified Route A, again, in the light
14 blue, looks very much like that route alternative
15 and stays along the line here a little bit and takes
16 a slightly different angle, but it's kind of the
17 same ends, which is avoiding those two river
18 crossings. So, again, this is Modified Route A in
19 the area of route variation HI-1.

20 So now to your comments. As I mentioned
21 before, the EIS is issued in draft form so it can be
22 improved through your comments and we can make a
23 final EIS which will go to the judge and the
24 Commission. We'd like to know what we missed, what
25 needs to be clarified, what doesn't make sense, what

1 needs to be added so it's complete and accurate.

2 There are several ways to make comments.
3 You can make comments today, we're going to open it
4 up for comments here in a minute. You can complete
5 and submit a comment form or you can send me a form
6 or a comment in any form. You can comment online on
7 the Department of Commerce Energy Facility website.
8 You can go to submit a comment, it'll show you all
9 the projects that are open for comment and you can
10 click on this project. You can mail, fax, or e-mail
11 me any comment. You have all my contact information
12 on the screen and you have it in your presentation
13 and I do have business cards if you'd like one.

14 The bottom line is comments have to be to
15 me by Friday, May 9th. Friday, May 9th at the end
16 of the day. All modes of commenting are equal, you
17 can do what works for you, just make sure it gets to
18 me by May 9th.

19 We have a court reporter here today so we
20 make sure we get your comments exactly. I'll ask
21 you to come up one speaker at a time. Please limit
22 your comments to a few minutes, if you can. If you
23 have a lot to say we can circle back to you, I just
24 want to make sure everybody has a chance to say what
25 they need to say, get their question or comment in.

1 I'll ask you to state and spell your name
2 for the court reporter. Please maintain respect for
3 others who may have different feelings about the
4 project. And if you can direct your comments and
5 questions to the content of the draft EIS. I
6 realize you may have a question that will help you
7 formulate your comment, please ask them, we have
8 everybody in the room here who knows about the
9 project, I think.

10 I realize you may not have read the draft
11 EIS or had a chance to look at it. If you have a
12 question, ask it nonetheless, 'cause it may not be
13 in the draft EIS, and also you can look at a copy
14 today or in a library or pick up a CD and look at a
15 copy and get your comments to me by May 9th.

16 So I'll leave this up here. What needs
17 to be clarified, what's missing, what do we need to
18 make the final EIS complete and accurate.

19 We had sign-up sheet outside and I'm
20 going to go from that list. We only had one person
21 sign up, but after that I'll do a show of hands so
22 if you have a question or a comment we'll go in that
23 order.

24 All right. Ted Stusse, first on our
25 list.

1 MR. TED STUSSE: S-T-U-S-S-E.

2 Okay. I guess I have to comment on my
3 experience last summer at the Fairmont Knights of
4 Columbus Hall. I went to a meeting and stated my
5 concerns about concrete in the ground, which EPA,
6 Minnesota Pollution Control, whoever you at the
7 state call it, does not allow burying below the
8 water table. If they abandon this line for whatever
9 purpose, we don't know what technology is going to
10 do, I asked what their plan was for the removal of
11 that concrete to satisfy EPA. Because I, as a
12 property owner, do not want that liability on me
13 because I have no idea what's going to happen down
14 the road.

15 My thought is that there probably should
16 be a fund established by the power company to cover
17 cost of removal. You know, they need to maybe have
18 to add to that fund as it goes along because
19 inflation is going to happen.

20 But anyway, I was talking with some other
21 people at the meeting outside in the parking lot,
22 and three ITC employees came out, started making
23 comments about my question, and then started
24 laughing. So, you know, you take that for what it's
25 worth. They claim they're sorry. I'm thinking they

1 are just sorry they got caught. So at that, you
2 know, that's one aspect I've got.

3 Another aspect I have for the judge is
4 why do birds and frogs have more rights than people?
5 He needs to think about that. Because there's a lot
6 of DNR ground that is totally off limits that very
7 easily could be supporting that power line without
8 any financial implications to individual property
9 owners. This is public land and it is partially a
10 public benefit for this line.

11 Thank you.

12 MR. RAY KIRSCH: Thank you for your
13 comments. And I will add to Mr. Stusse's comments
14 that we did discuss in the draft EIS abandonment of
15 the line or decommissioning of the line and how they
16 would extract the poles or dig down and take that
17 wood or concrete out and that's described in the
18 environmental impact statement.

19 Is there anybody else who has a question
20 or comment about the project?

21 Yes, sir, if you could come up. And I'll
22 add here, for the court reporter's help, it helps if
23 you stand on this side so she can actually see you
24 talk while you're talking. I forgot to mention that
25 earlier.

1 MR. TIM STEIER: Thank you. My name is
2 Tim Steier, my last name is spelled S-T-E-I-E-R.

3 I just wanted the project clarified, Ray.
4 This project is being proceeded with because of the
5 wind power generated here in southern Minnesota that
6 needs to be moved out of this area, is that the main
7 focus of this project?

8 MR. RAY KIRSCH: That is part of the
9 project. Also for electrical reliability and --
10 well, I can't think of the other reason. I'll ask
11 ITC to explain the reasons, but we discuss that in
12 the environmental impact statement. Maybe it's
13 congestion on the lines. One second.

14 MS. AMY ASHBACKER: Yeah. That is
15 essentially it. It is considered a multivalued
16 project, meaning there's multiple benefits from the
17 project. And it does include access to lower cost
18 generation, which certainly includes wind farms. So
19 that is a piece of it, but as Ray said, it also
20 reduces congestion on the transmission system and
21 increases reliability.

22 MR. RAY KIRSCH: Thank you, Amy.

23 Does anybody else have a question or a
24 comment?

25 Yes, sir. Please come on up.

1 MR. MORRIS HANSON: My name is Morris
2 Hanson, also known as JR.

3 But I've dealt with the line, the 161,
4 that has gone through my property for 30 years. My
5 concern is, too, if it's abandoned, who takes care
6 of it? All of these companies, these companies go
7 bankrupt, gets sold, where does the responsibility
8 go then? I'd like to know that, that should be
9 answered very succinctly.

10 Also, how we are going to be benefited,
11 what are they going to do if they do this project?
12 How are the landowners going to be taken care of for
13 their loss of farmland over time or any tile
14 structures, anything like that. I would want that
15 to be all looked into because all of that is very
16 much a factor. This is farmland, for the most part.
17 The DNR question was a good point, I would like that
18 answered also.

19 MR. RAY KIRSCH: Right. Those are good
20 comments. Let me add to them briefly.

21 In the draft environmental impact
22 statement, there is an example of what's called an
23 agricultural impact mitigation plan. The company
24 has to work with the Minnesota Department of
25 Agriculture to come up with a mitigation plan for

1 agricultural impacts for this project, and I believe
2 they're currently working on that. So this is an
3 example from a past project. I encourage you to
4 look at it, it's an appendix to the draft EIS to
5 show the type of mitigation that the Department of
6 Agriculture thinks is appropriate, and then that
7 mitigation plan is integrated into the Commission's
8 permit such that it says -- the Commission permit
9 says you must abide by the ag mitigation plan.

10 You can certainly bring that up. Take a
11 look at this example, if there's something that you
12 think is missing, you can certainly bring that up to
13 the judge and discuss that with him.

14 MR. MORRIS HANSON: Is that on the CD?

15 MR. RAY KIRSCH: It's in the CD also.

16 The point about decommissioning is a good one. And
17 maybe it's something to raise with the judge, in
18 that there's also a generic route permit template.
19 So what does the Commission work from when they make
20 a permit, it has a template that talks about these
21 are the typical things in a permit. It can have
22 special conditions and one of those special
23 conditions might be, you know, some sort of plan in
24 case something is abandoned or decommissioned. And
25 that would be something to suggest to the judge, I

1 think this is important in our area. It's for our
2 agriculture, for whatever reason you think it's
3 important, that should be a condition on this permit
4 that the Commission issues.

5 Anybody else have a question or a
6 comment?

7 Yes, sir, please come on up.

8 MR. JEFF MOORE: Jeff Moore, M-O-O-R-E.

9 Jeff Moore -- is this working?

10 There's an alternate substation that most
11 people don't know about. And if that substation
12 would be utilized instead of the one that's out by
13 Huntley, it would bring the mainline down across my
14 parents' property and between there and Riverside
15 Heights. And most people don't realize that that is
16 an alternate route that we are not for. And I'd
17 just like to state that. And it should be made
18 aware, 'cause a lot of people from that housing
19 development and a lot of houses along there it would
20 affect.

21 Thank you.

22 MR. RAY KIRSCH: Thank you for your
23 comments.

24 Anybody else have a comment or a
25 question?

1 Yes.

2 MS. CAROL MOORE: Do you have the ability
3 to bring that up on a map? You didn't get down to
4 the Blue Earth area on your maps.

5 MR. RAY KIRSCH: I don't have a detailed
6 map here, but there are detailed maps in the draft
7 EIS and there are in the back of the room, you can
8 print one out.

9 MS. CAROL MOORE: Right. Thank you.

10 MR. RAY KIRSCH: So the gentleman is
11 correct. So there's a proposed Huntley Substation,
12 there are some alternatives along Interstate 90 that
13 they would use an alternate substation site. And as
14 he points out, it's located there, as he indicated
15 there might be some impacts to people who live in
16 that area and do have farms in that area.

17 MR. JEFF MOORE: There's a lot of housing
18 along that area.

19 MR. RAY KIRSCH: Great. Thank you.

20 Yes, sir.

21 MR. JOHN ROPER: John Roper, Faribault
22 County Commissioner.

23 COURT REPORTER: Can you say your last
24 name again?

25 MR. JOHN ROPER: Roper, R-O-P-E-R.

1 I kind of would like to voice my
2 disappointment in the Department of Commerce for not
3 notifying the county, soil and water or planning of
4 these alternate areas on the substation down by
5 I-90, going along with what Mr. Moore said. And
6 very disappointing.

7 I think you ought to notify the people in
8 the county what you're doing here. It wasn't in any
9 of the notices on the previous meetings that we've
10 had down here with ITC.

11 And so I would like to basically state my
12 disappointment in the Department of Commerce adding
13 to that and not being in the loop.

14 MR. RAY KIRSCH: Thank you. And just
15 to -- Mr. Roper and I talked briefly before the
16 meeting. All of the scoping alternatives that came
17 in, the options that came in after the proposed
18 Route A and B, we gathered all of the landowner
19 names for all of those alternatives and we sent them
20 the scoping decision so they had notice last October
21 of all these alternatives.

22 The property record lists are not
23 entirely up to date, and if you weren't -- if you're
24 near one of the alternatives but it didn't cross
25 your property, you wouldn't necessarily have gotten

1 a notice. And we also did that for this meeting, we
2 send it to all landowners on the landowner list.

3 And I hope we didn't leave the counties
4 out. I sent a copy of the notice and the draft EIS
5 to the planning and zoning in Faribault County, so
6 if the planning and zoning administrator in
7 Faribault County doesn't have a copy of the draft
8 EIS --

9 MR. JOHN ROPER: They say they don't.

10 MR. RAY KIRSCH: Okay. Well, I'll make
11 sure that they have a copy of it, because it was our
12 intention to send it.

13 Anybody else have a question or a
14 comment?

15 Yes, sir. Come on up.

16 MR. RANDY ANDERSON: My name is Randy
17 Anderson. I live in Riverside -- oops -- I live in
18 Riverside Heights and I'm just south of Carol Moore,
19 and there's an alternate route between Carol Moore's
20 house and my house, and our two houses are probably
21 1,000 feet apart. And the line jogs south towards
22 my house, and according to that map back there, it
23 looks like it's going to be 100 or 200 feet away
24 from my house. And if Jeff Moore wouldn't have come
25 in my office this morning at 11:00 and informed me

1 of this meeting, I wouldn't have known anything
2 about it. First I've heard about this line coming
3 within just very darn close to my house was two
4 hours ago. So a little bit disappointing, going
5 along with what John Roper said. If you're going to
6 be 100 or 200 feet from somebody's house, maybe they
7 should be on the list of notifications. So that's
8 it. And I'm not in favor of that alternate route
9 being that close to my house.

10 MR. RAY KIRSCH: Thank you very much for
11 your comments.

12 Does anybody else have a question or a
13 comment?

14 Yes, ma'am. Please come on up.

15 MS. CAROL MOORE: My name is Carol Moore,
16 M-O-O-R-E.

17 I just wanted to elaborate a little bit
18 more on John Roper's comment and Randy's. I'm one
19 of the houses involved, so I did receive the maps.
20 But in asking around my neighborhood, I understand
21 why I received the notification, because I think I
22 would have to grant an easement. But also the
23 landowner all around me I'm sure received an
24 easement, he doesn't live in the area. Across the
25 highway from me the landowner is from eastern

1 Minnesota, he does not live in the area. I'm sure
2 he received a notice. But all the people in
3 Riverside Heights who would be viewing these lines
4 should be notified. They're not landowners where
5 these poles would specifically be installed;
6 however, aesthetically you could not get in an area
7 for this option one and two that's more populated.
8 So I think you have to back up and notify people who
9 will be looking at this. This is a housing
10 development that has been built. I don't know
11 exactly, John, how many homes are out there.

12 MR. JOHN ROPER: 26 homes, built in 1954.

13 MS. CAROL MOORE: 26 homes, and since
14 1954. And I've been in my home, which the line jogs
15 to the south of me to keep from going right over the
16 top of me. Therefore, I believe that you should
17 update your mailing list to the property owners in
18 these houses, not just the landowners where the
19 poles would go. I think that's what's happened
20 maybe.

21 Thank you.

22 MR. RAY KIRSCH: Thank you. That's a
23 good suggestion. And I think you're correct. I
24 mean, we asked for the property records for those
25 folks who would have to grant an easement where we

1 crossed the property, but that doesn't include
2 somebody who is 1,000 feet away and might have to
3 look at that and I understand your concern. I
4 understand that.

5 Is there anybody else who has a question
6 or a comment today?

7 Yes, please.

8 MS. CAROL OVERLAND: Carol Overland,
9 O-V-E-R-L-A-N-D. I represent No CapX 2020 and
10 Citizens Energy Task Force.

11 For people who aren't getting notice,
12 this has been an issue in prior transmission
13 proceedings, and I'd encourage you to like go
14 door-to-door and have the neighbors call Commerce to
15 get on the list, to go online to the PUC site, and
16 to subscribe so that you'll get notice of everything
17 that's filed on this. Because that's about the only
18 way to really be on top of what's going on. Really,
19 I'd encourage you to do that.

20 Another very important issue is the
21 facility is not needed. This is a private company
22 and they want to build this line, it is not -- well,
23 for every reference to it's for wind, it's not just
24 for wind. Transmission lines under the law need to
25 serve whatever is there and so it will serve

1 comments. And thank you for reminding me about the
2 project mailing list and the eDockets.

3 So we do have the orange mailing list
4 cards outside. You could certainly sign folks up
5 and encourage them to do that. And the electronic
6 docketing system that the State of Minnesota has, if
7 these folks that you mentioned who are near the line
8 have e-mail or Internet access -- not everybody
9 does, I understand that -- they can sign up to get
10 information about this project from here on out
11 every time something is added to the docket for the
12 project.

13 Yes, sir. Please come on up.

14 MR. AL ROESLER: My name is Al Roesler.

15 I'm looking at the proposal on change for
16 the power transmission line running south of the new
17 proposed Huntley Substation. Instead of crossing an
18 existing line that's always been there for a number
19 of years, it's coming diagonally across the farm
20 field and then jogging back diagonally across the
21 same farm field to get in line where it's always
22 been.

23 And I just haven't read the environmental
24 impact study, but I see where there's actually going
25 to be some long-term degradation of the farmland

1 value and of being able to farm around it. And I
2 don't know why that's necessary that we cut diagonal
3 lines in an alternative plan. This is in section 23
4 of Verona Township.

5 MR. RAY KIRSCH: Thank you for your
6 comments. And I don't mean to -- just to be sure,
7 that the Modified Route A is the company's
8 preference, and that doesn't mean that their
9 balancing of looking at those factors is the proper
10 balancing. So there's also impacts to widening that
11 route at the crossing of the river, there's impacts
12 to go around the agricultural fields.

13 I would encourage you to tell the judge
14 and to ultimately tell the Public Utilities
15 Commission as to your balancing, this is how I view
16 those factors. I know there's impacts on both
17 sides, but, Judge, this is more important to me, and
18 there's already an existing crossing, you ought to
19 use that. I'm just paraphrasing what you might say,
20 so make sure that you come and say that.

21 Now, is there anybody else who has a
22 comment or a question here today?

23 UNIDENTIFIED: The judge will be here on
24 the 13th?

25 MR. RAY KIRSCH: Yes. The administrative

1 law judge is the Honorable James LaFave, he'll be
2 here on the 13th and the 14th. I believe on the
3 13th he is here in the afternoon in Blue Earth, in
4 Jackson the evening of the 13th, and on the 14th,
5 both afternoon and evening in Fairmont. So
6 hopefully you can have availability to attend.
7 There will also be a comment period for the judge,
8 so there will be a chance for you to submit comments
9 if you can before the judge or if you think of
10 something afterwards.

11 Does anybody else have a question or a
12 comment?

13 Yes, in the back, Miss Murphy.

14 MS. HELEN LEE MURPHY: My name is Miss
15 Helen Lee Murphy, M-U-R-P-H-Y.

16 I'm from Blue Earth, but you might wonder
17 why -- I live now in Sherburn, why I'm here today.
18 I might bring you a word of encouragement, because a
19 lot of people have spoken to me about why is this
20 needed, that this company has to come in and use our
21 farmland and our roads.

22 I'll tell you the history of my
23 experience. We all received papers and maps, but we
24 did not see the dip into Sherburn until last July at
25 this meeting. When I asked for a picture of my home

1 I saw that red line behind my house, and I asked
2 what is this line? And my answer was this is the
3 new transmission line. And then, of course, I
4 became startled. So Mr. Kirsch -- is something
5 wrong here?

6 MR. RAY KIRSCH: It is cutting in and
7 out.

8 MS. HELEN LEE MURPHY: I asked Mr. Kirsch
9 if it does cause cancer. And he said yes right away
10 and found papers from their own book about the cause
11 of, particularly, leukemia in children. And then,
12 of course, I was highly alarmed, because other
13 causes are still being debated. And so that whole
14 weekend I was really alarmed.

15 Then I went to the city office of
16 Sherburn that next Monday morning and they did not
17 know that it was coming into the city of Sherburn.
18 They had been told the previous winter that it was
19 north of I-90. And so then we discovered that the
20 Assembly of God Church, which is only 120 feet away
21 from I-90, was also being informed that their
22 property values would be practically exterminated,
23 you might say.

24 So then -- this where I bring you a word
25 of encouragement. We had a big campaign in

1 Sherburn. I read every single word in that draft in
2 the library, it took lots of hours, and I found out
3 lots of things and I'd like to read some of those to
4 you today.

5 The proposed Route A, which the electric
6 company prefers, does extend into the fire
7 department, the Assembly of God Church, the school
8 district athletic fields as well as the school
9 gardens. Into our homes, into businesses, into a
10 whole area which on a map at that time did not look
11 like it even belonged to Sherburn because the city
12 streets weren't there, but it is a part of the
13 property.

14 But I really was upset when I found out
15 in the book that six departments in Minnesota were
16 involved in the process of making these routes. The
17 Department of Agriculture, the Historical Society,
18 Natural Resources, Transportation, Pollution
19 Control, Water and Soil Resources, but not the
20 Department of Health.

21 Then I found that the Department of
22 Transportation will not permit the physical location
23 of any utility lines or structures to encroach the
24 vegetation requirements at rest areas. So rest
25 areas are protected for aesthetic reasons.

1 Aesthetic is another word for beauty. Another,
2 also, pole structures may not be placed near native
3 prairie grasses. In Martin County, prairie bush
4 clover is a threatened species and it's protected by
5 the federal government and no pole or conductor or
6 lines may be near that grass.

7 Also, I found that historical remains
8 such as aboriginal mounds, artifacts, ancient burial
9 grounds are also protected. Then I also found that
10 the migratory birds who travel twice a year -- we
11 live there all the time, but the birds are
12 protected.

13 Then I found that the Minnesota Statute
14 216E.01, subdivision 8, does give a route a width of
15 up to 1.25 miles with a right-of-way for the
16 transmission facilities. But my neighbor, who is a
17 real estate gentleman, measured from I-90, the
18 freeway, which is the property where we live,
19 straight down to Old Highway 16, and that's actually
20 a mile and a quarter.

21 The city office got alarmed when I told
22 them and I showed them that once that easement is
23 there, that we were seeing in the draft, that they
24 could put those poles any place they please because
25 ITC was requesting a route width of 1,800 feet near

1 I-90 and Highway 4.

2 Then we also found references in the
3 draft that there was a second 345 kV line mentioned
4 numerous times in the book for the future expansion.
5 And somebody asked the question today, yes, the wind
6 power, they're going to build 125 more turbines in
7 Cottonwood and Jackson County to the west of us, it
8 looks like a forest over there of trees, you might
9 say, of windmills, and that's going to be
10 transferred, as far as the book says, to the Cities,
11 to Austin and down to Iowa. And we've also heard in
12 the last few days to Madison, Wisconsin, as well as
13 Des Moines. And so that's wind power, and there's
14 constant references in the books to future
15 generation, future wind power.

16 And so I learned now yesterday that on
17 these arms, Mr. Kirsch explained this and the
18 engineers as well, the poles are going to have --
19 the new poles will only have one arm, 345 kV, but
20 the other arm will be empty for future expansion.
21 And it's all mentioned constantly in the book about
22 the future and the potential.

23 Also, I found in the book that eagles,
24 alive or dead, nests or eggs, are protected. Now,
25 we had people in Sherburn walking on cloud nine when

1 they found out that there was an eagle's nest on the
2 north side of Temperance Lake, and they said, well,
3 the eagles will protect as. But then I checked with
4 the law enforcement gentleman who lives north of
5 Sherburn and he said no, he said he's law
6 enforcement, but in Fairmont the electric companies
7 did knock down eagles' nests when they put up some
8 lines.

9 So electricity is to be into our city,
10 and you might say, well, now, that's been modified.
11 But I'm not completely comfortable because the only
12 city that was impacted was Sherburn. Imogene,
13 Welcome, Granada, Huntley is at .9, according to the
14 first map, unless that's been changed, and Blue
15 Earth and Fairmont, no other city has been impacted
16 like the city of Sherburn. So we sent over 220
17 comments. And that's why I want to encourage you
18 today to get active. This is wonderful, as I said
19 yesterday, we live in a democracy, we're supposed to
20 have a free government, right, we pay our taxes, we
21 deserve to be heard. And I can't wait to meet Judge
22 LaFave and we need to comment.

23 Now, we have a deadline of May 9th to
24 send our comments in to Mr. Kirsch, and then he said
25 after Judge LaFave is here for two days then we have

1 until May 30 to contact Judge LaFave. After that,
2 we're finished. Unless we have a lawyer
3 representing us in the Twin Cities, where the
4 Department of Commerce meets. I checked with that.
5 If I would have had a lawyer and met the deadline by
6 January 15, it would have cost me \$50,000.

7 I want to read you a page, page 12.
8 Someone said to me yesterday, Miss Murphy, you're
9 saying a few things that aren't quite right. I
10 said, sir, I'm reading everything from your draft.
11 It is either my own handwriting or I have a printed
12 copies, but I want to read this.

13 A number of diseases. Now, the first
14 draft had cancer, but now the second draft, and
15 there's been three books and Mr. Kirsch showed you
16 the second book, and on Good Friday the third book
17 came and that was testimony by these gentlemen and
18 Amy up here, and I read every single word except the
19 last chapter, that's an economic calculus book by a
20 graduate of Harvard who ITC has hired, and that's
21 the cost impact.

22 And so then I learned a couple days ago
23 that our rates are going to go up because we're the
24 customers. And the word they use in the draft is
25 ratepayers.

1 But these are the disease. Depression --
2 excuse me. Cancers in children and adults,
3 depression, suicide, reproductive dysfunction,
4 developmental disorders. And I'm a teacher. I
5 can't tell you how often, and it's really sad how
6 many children we meet in our schools that have
7 really have brain difficulty in learning. It's
8 really sad.

9 Immune diseases, nerve diseases. Then it
10 goes on to say, however, electric power brings such
11 positive health, social and economic benefits that
12 it outweighs the uncertainty of these diseases, and
13 that really scares me. So that's why here in
14 Sherburn we were very active.

15 And now we're happy with the news we
16 found out last Friday when the testimonies arrived
17 from these five people from ITC that they all
18 recommend that the route not go into the city of
19 Sherburn. But we're not going to trust it because
20 we're going to keep on working until the May 30
21 deadline. We are welcome, Mr. Kirsch says, to
22 attend the evidentiary hearings in St. Paul, but the
23 Department of Commerce and the other lawyers for all
24 the groups get the judge, the hearing, but at that
25 time we aren't allowed to speak.

1 Another thing I want to say is the book
2 is full of prudent routing and minimal effect to
3 aesthetics, to noise, to health, to property values,
4 they want to avoid residences and businesses and
5 other things where citizens congregate. They want
6 to be harmonious to human settlement and activities,
7 those things were very encouraging to read.

8 Also, on noise, Mr. Kirsch explained the
9 air quality, I will have him explain that, because
10 it does affect the ozone layer with the active
11 electricity, and the book does have on page 55 that
12 there is a cracking or hissing noise particularly in
13 damp weather and also on a calm time there's also a
14 hissing sound that could be present.

15 Also, Mr. Roper mentioned that -- and I
16 was disturbed, I called the Martin County zoning
17 office and I was told, well, they just handle septic
18 systems, hog lots, and setback of homes from lakes.
19 And then I asked, well, who is your employer? Well,
20 Martin County. Well, that's us. But then I read a
21 paragraph in the draft from the ITC that there is a
22 law in Minnesota that allows plant siting which
23 would override any county or local ordinance. And
24 if I read that wrong, I'm open to any correction if
25 I'm not reading right. But I think I am.

1 And I'm just about finished here. I have
2 all my notes.

3 We were also disturbed with the lack of
4 time. Last July 18 at the 1:00 meeting I found out
5 it was dipping into Sherburn. We had until
6 August 2nd. People had weddings, people were going
7 on vacations, but we did send 220 comments.
8 Particularly the Assembly of God Church, they sent
9 over 80, I got about 60 that I mailed from people,
10 and we were able to convince ITC. So I commend them
11 and they gave me hope of encouragement.

12 I can sense some of the problems that
13 people have with this. First of all, is it really
14 needed? That's a basic question. First they have
15 to have permission, like in school, you have to have
16 permission first and then you may do something. And
17 that's what we demand. That they show that they
18 have that need.

19 And now I'm asking from today on, we just
20 have until May 9th to get our comments in, as
21 Mr. Kirsch says, at 4:30. But then we have, once
22 the judge comes, then we have that opportunity until
23 May 30 to send our things in.

24 But I want to read this sentence. We are
25 disturbed that animals, plants, prairie grass, rest

1 areas, ancient ruins, artifacts, wells, over by
2 Jackson airstrips. There's two people in Martin
3 County that have their own airplanes, they have
4 their own airstrips and that was accommodated for
5 them, are protected, but not human life, the highest
6 form and order of life on earth.

7 I must tell you, I went back to my house
8 after the meeting last night -- it was the first
9 night, and a lady said, she said, Miss Murphy, you
10 said that human beings are the highest form of
11 creation on this earth. I didn't have a chance to
12 answer her, but she said you should put down animals
13 and people are on the same level. And I thought,
14 lady, does a cat drive an airplane? Can a dog be a
15 lawyer? Et cetera. But anyway, I know we're
16 working with the public, but that's true.

17 And I was so proud of one of my former
18 students. She's now a young mother of three
19 children and she has a degree in science and physics
20 and chemistry, and she spoke about that they have a
21 farm north of Sherburn that they're worried about.
22 And she said, knowing her chemistry like she does
23 and her science, she said electric power does damage
24 cells. And she has three little tiny children. But
25 the born and the unborn. And I alluded already, the

1 problem we teachers see in school is autism, and I
2 could tell you stories about children I had in
3 school, and it's so sad. Something is wrong. What
4 is it?

5 Just like Martin County is full of
6 cancer. That's the very first thing I said to Mr.
7 Kirsch last July 18. I said, Mr. Kirsch, Martin
8 County is full of cancer and you're going to dip
9 this into the city of Sherburn where people are
10 living? Now we have that modified route. And I
11 informed the students that live north of Sherburn,
12 and they come to me and said, Miss Murphy, you can't
13 have that come north. I said it shouldn't go near
14 anybody's home. As one gentleman said today,
15 people's lives are much more important, and we are
16 the highest form of creation on this earth.

17 I also have to give credit to ITC,
18 Michael Hook, because the word Sherburn was way down
19 by Old Highway 16, and these people in the Twin
20 Cities, the governor and the five-person commission
21 and Judge LaFave, they don't know Sherburn from a
22 dot on the map. And the title is way down here by
23 Highway 16, but the city property starts right away
24 at I-90 and that's where we live and the fire
25 department and all these businesses, et cetera.

1 So, Michael Hook, you're here today, I
2 saw you walk in, Michael. Would you stand up and
3 take credit for this? There he is. Michael said
4 there's a different template and he's got the word
5 Sherburn up now by I-90, because it doesn't look
6 like a city, and it can't be streets because it's a
7 highway corridor, it's a state highway. But we are
8 a part of the city. And so we really appreciate
9 that.

10 So they are accommodating and we
11 sincerely hope that there's accommodation there and
12 that this modification will help all of us. Because
13 we want to preserve our health and our property
14 values.

15 If you look at the maps you're going to
16 see red circles, green circles, orange circles, and
17 communities on it, and I said, oh, wonderful,
18 people. No, it's plant communities. Another circle
19 says animals with vertebrae. Another circle,
20 animals with no vertebrae. Another circle, plants,
21 vascular plants, all protected by the DNR. And I
22 can't tell you how often I read the DNR, oh, no, DNR
23 is unlikely to allow a path here because of the
24 animals. And you can't imagine, there's pages and
25 pages of foxes and the squirrels, all the animals

1 are listed. And that's why we were so highly upset,
2 that someone has been asleep for a while in Sherburn
3 because they're right over our heads. And yet the
4 animals were protected. Until we spoke up and we're
5 not going to rest, though, as I said, until
6 September 2014 when the judge sends us a letter in
7 the mail.

8 I think I'm just about done here. Oh,
9 pacemakers. Anybody with a pacemaker, a fibrillator
10 [sic], or an AM radio will be affected by the
11 electronic communication. And the Assembly of God
12 Church is about 200 feet away -- 120 feet away,
13 excuse me, from I-90, and they say in the book that
14 they won't go near, it has to be 200 feet away from
15 a residence. But right away that Assembly of God
16 Church would be a loss. And, of course, the people
17 were thinking if they would protect the eagles, they
18 would protect them.

19 Now, this cost comes between 207, Route B
20 is the cheapest, 196 million it says here. Also, my
21 physics teacher tells me that if you go to your
22 charts, the electric and magnetic fields, the
23 milligauss is three, above that is not safe for
24 human beings. And I asked some of these engineers
25 to show me 25 feet on one side, 25 feet on another,

1 but that depends upon which arm of the pole has the
2 higher voltage on it, the amps. I said educate me,
3 teach me so I understand that, and I still have a
4 few more questions to ask.

5 That's why I want Mr. Kirsch to comment
6 on the air quality. I also want to ask, what does
7 ITC mean and who owns it, where are they
8 headquartered? I know I've read different states
9 that they are in, but where are they headquartered?

10 Another thing, too, I asked yesterday
11 where are these lines going to go and I guess they
12 really don't know yet because until the route is
13 finally chosen.

14 Also, we have a local veterinarian that
15 she has seen cancer in cows from electricity. She's
16 still active as a surgeon. So, as I said, we're
17 very hopeful that the ITC will continue to modify
18 the concerns we've heard today and we'll hear again
19 tonight.

20 So far this modified map now stays north
21 of I-90 and doesn't dip into the city of Sherburn.
22 So public action and to be proactive is so critical.
23 And I think, too, I talked to someone last night
24 that called me when I got back, and in this area
25 we're so trusting that nobody would harm us, because

1 we wouldn't harm anybody else. But I think we have
2 to stand up. And, as I said, send your comments in,
3 write letters, and attend the meetings. So thank
4 you.

5 Okay, Mr. Kirsch, would you kindly tell
6 us about the air quality, please?

7 MR. RAY KIRSCH: Yes, Miss Murphy.

8 In the draft EIS we cover a lot of public
9 health and safety issues and one of them we cover is
10 air quality. Transmission lines, when they have
11 ionization around them, create ozone, which can be
12 connected with nitrous oxides and create smog. And
13 the amount they produce is very small. And so in
14 most rural areas and the air quality in this area is
15 very good, so there will be no impact upon human
16 health from ozone that is not good for breathing.

17 I would add that if this was maybe in the
18 Twin Cities area or a metropolitan area where there
19 is a lot of other ozone and nitrous oxide emissions
20 maybe it could come into play, it's not a very big
21 emission, but those cities are near -- they're near
22 the national standards for those pollutants.

23 I will just add to Miss Murphy's
24 comments. We did discuss electromagnetic fields in
25 the draft EIS, and we have charts and tables that

1 talk about that. But we do not anticipate adverse
2 health impacts with the project due to
3 electromagnetic fields.

4 And we also talk about, as she mentioned,
5 people who have defibrillators or some sort of
6 stimulator or something for your heart or other
7 parts of your body, we talk about that there and we
8 don't anticipate impacts.

9 And she mentioned the Sherburn and the
10 1.25 miles, she is correct that the statute allows
11 for a route width that wide, but we don't have that
12 situation here, ITC is basically requesting a route
13 within 1,000 feet. And there are some areas where
14 the route is slightly larger because there's some
15 uncertainty about how the routing would proceed and
16 that's common.

17 MS. HELEN LEE MURPHY: What does it mean,
18 ITC?

19 MR. RAY KIRSCH: Oh, yes, I forgot. I'll
20 ask ITC what ITC means.

21 MS. AMY ASHBACKER: Originally, ITC stood
22 for International Transmission Company. At this
23 point it's just the reference to the holding company
24 which ITC Midwest operates under. ITC has four
25 operating companies and our headquarters are in

1 Michigan, Novi, Michigan, where we have METC and ITC
2 Transmission which operate out of Michigan. ITC
3 Midwest, which we are, and we are proposing this
4 project, we're out of -- Cedar Rapids is our
5 headquarters, and then we also have ITC Great Plains
6 which operates out of Kansas.

7 MR. RAY KIRSCH: Great. Thank you, Amy.

8 Is there anybody else who has a question
9 or a comment today?

10 All right. I'm not seeing any hands.
11 But I'm going to go back to this slide to remind you
12 that if you have a question or a comment, you have
13 to give it to me by May 9th, Friday, May 9th, at the
14 end of the day.

15 Other questions or comments?

16 All right. Well, I want to thank you all
17 for coming, I appreciate it very much, and our
18 meeting is adjourned.

19 (1:00 session concluded at 2:22 p.m.)

20 (6:00 SESSION.)

21 MR. RAY KIRSCH: Good evening, folks.
22 Welcome to the public information meetings on the
23 draft environmental impact statement for the
24 Minnesota to Iowa 345 kV transmission line project.

25 My name is Ray Kirsch, I'm with the

1 Minnesota Department of Commerce and I'd like to
2 welcome to you tonight's meeting.

3 Here's how I propose we spend the next 20
4 to 25 minutes of our time, and then we'll open it up
5 for comments. I would like to do some
6 introductions, talk about some of the materials out
7 on the table out here. Bring everybody up to speed
8 on the proposed project, the state's permitting
9 process. Talk about the draft environmental impact
10 statement, that's the reason why we're out here.
11 Using the draft EIS, how it could be of value to
12 you. And then your comments.

13 As I said, my name is Ray Kirsch, I'm
14 with the Minnesota Department of Commerce, Energy
15 and Environmental Review and Analysis. That's not
16 quite right, but you get the idea.

17 Our group is charged with conducting
18 environmental review for transmission line
19 facilities, like that proposed by ITC Midwest.

20 I'd like to introduce some folks from ITC
21 Midwest who are here tonight. I'll start with Amy
22 Ashbacker, who is the project manager. Amy, if you
23 would introduce yourself and your team.

24 MS. AMY ASHBACKER: Thank you.

25 As Ray said, my name is Amy Ashbacker,

1 and I'm the project manager for ITC Midwest on this
2 project.

3 We have several other personnel here this
4 evening with ITC Midwest and some representatives of
5 ITC. And we hope if you have any questions
6 following this meeting, we'll be in the back and you
7 can catch myself or any of these gentlemen up here,
8 and I'll introduce them.

9 First we have Jack Middleton, with
10 Burns & McDonnell, who assisted in the routing of
11 this project. We have Dave Grover of our regulatory
12 department. Joe Berry with our planning department.
13 And Dick Coeur, with MBN Engineering, who is a
14 design engineer and also assisted with the project
15 routing.

16 In the back we have JCG Land Services,
17 and I know some of you have been back there already,
18 they can assist you in picking out a map that you
19 can take with you and you can also use that map to
20 submit as comment, as Ray will explain further.

21 Thank you.

22 MR. RAY KIRSCH: All right. Thank you,
23 Amy.

24 When you came in there were a few things
25 on the desk out there. One is the presentation,

1 which I'm going to walk through with you this
2 evening. It has some nice maps in it that I think
3 you will find helpful.

4 There's a comment form out on the table
5 so you can do comments tonight, but you can also
6 send in comments through May 9th, you can use this
7 form to send in your comment or something similar.

8 Also out on the table is the notice for
9 tonight's meeting, you've likely received this
10 notice in the mail already, but it has good
11 information. If you'd like a copy of it you can
12 pick one up on the table.

13 And, lastly, there's a mailing list
14 sign-up card out on the table, this orange card. If
15 you're not sure you're on the mailing list or you
16 want to make sure, you can fill one of these out and
17 give it back to me or put a stamp on it and mail it
18 to the Public Utilities Commission and they'll make
19 sure that you get on the project mailing list.

20 The project is 73 miles long and it's a
21 new 345 kV transmission line in Jackson, Martin, and
22 Faribault Counties. It also includes what we call
23 associated facilities -- expanding the existing
24 Lakefield Junction Substation, constructing a new
25 Huntley Substation, which will replace the existing

1 Winnebago Substation which will be removed, and then
2 relocating some transmission lines so that they all
3 connect at the Huntley Substation.

4 So here's an overview map of the project.
5 Here is the Lakefield Junction Substation over here
6 in Jackson County, which already exists. The
7 project would then flow eastward. There's several
8 routing options depicted here. This is the Fox Lake
9 area and the city of Sherburn right here. And then
10 eastward further to the Fairmont area, and Lake
11 Charlotte is right up here and the Rutland
12 Substation right up here next to Lake Charlotte.
13 And then further east to the Blue Earth River area
14 where there's a proposed Huntley Substation site, an
15 alternate site. The project connects to the
16 substation and then flows south to the Iowa border.

17 The project does continue on into Iowa,
18 but the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission only
19 has jurisdiction to permit this part of the project,
20 the part in Iowa is permitted by the Iowa Utilities
21 Board. They do need to meet, though, and connect
22 right there.

23 The transmission line poles are a large
24 infrastructure. They are 130 to 190 feet tall. The
25 span depends on where they're located, but could be

1 700 to 1,000 feet between the poles. The
2 right-of-way required, which is the easement that
3 would be required if it crossed your property would
4 be 200 feet in width. This is a typical 345-161 kV
5 double-circuit structure, which means on one side it
6 has 345 kV lines and on the other 161. I'm not sure
7 I'm pointing to the right one, but you get the idea.
8 There's one on one side and one on the other.

9 In order to build this project, ITC
10 Midwest needs two approvals from the Minnesota
11 Public Utilities Commission. One, a certificate of
12 need and, two, a route permit.

13 The certificate of need process is
14 spelled out in statute and rule. Minnesota Rule
15 7849, and the route permitting process is Minnesota
16 Rule 7850.

17 This is a big decision for the
18 Commission, for the State of Minnesota, and they get
19 help from state agencies. A number of state
20 agencies, but two are called out in particular in
21 the process.

22 One, the Minnesota Department of
23 Commerce, where I am located, is called out to do
24 the environmental review. And by that I mean
25 looking at the possible impacts of the project and

1 how they might be mitigated, including route
2 alternatives to what's been proposed.

3 The second is the Minnesota Office of
4 Administrative Hearings. The Office of
5 Administrative Hearings conducts hearings throughout
6 the state on a variety of matters. They send
7 administrative law judges out, and the
8 administrative law judge will come out for this
9 project and take your testimony and comments on the
10 project.

11 So I'll say a little bit more about each
12 of those approvals. The certificate of need
13 question is, is this project needed or is a
14 different project more appropriate for the state of
15 Minnesota? And that could be a project of a
16 different size, so a different length transmission
17 connecting at different endpoints than what's been
18 noticed here, or a different voltage. A different
19 type of project, so instead of a transmission line
20 project, a generating plant that generates
21 electricity. Or the timing of the project. Is this
22 project needed now or is it needed at some time in
23 the future.

24 If the project is needed, the question is
25 where should it be located and how should it be

1 constructed. And that is answered in the route
2 permit. If the Commission issues a route permit it
3 will discuss both of those questions.

4 The Commission is guided by Minnesota
5 Rule 7850 and, in particular, Minnesota Rule
6 7850.4100. And if you look at your presentation
7 packet, I've included those factors on this page, it
8 looks sort of like this, several lines of text. And
9 it gives the factors A through N that the Commission
10 looks at when making a decision on a route permit.
11 Effects on human settlement, effects on public
12 health and safety, effects on land-based economies.
13 That's our term for agriculture, forestry, tourism,
14 mining. Effects on archaeological and historic
15 resources. Effects on the natural environment. So
16 you can go down the list and you see these are the
17 factors that the Commission needs to consider when
18 it's going to issue a route permit.

19 I'll mention it here and later on in the
20 program that there's not a formula for how these are
21 balanced one against the other. So sometimes there
22 could be a route that has impacts on human
23 settlement, but if you choose another route it has
24 impacts on agricultural land, and there has to be
25 some sort of balancing between those impacts. And

1 ultimately the Commission has to decide what that
2 balance is and they're looking for your help in
3 making that balance.

4 I've included here a schematic which has
5 some terms of art that the Commission uses. Route
6 width, right-of-way, and anticipated alignment. A
7 route width is the width of the route that will be
8 permitted by the Commission. In this case, as an
9 example, ITC Midwest has asked in most places for a
10 1,000-foot route width for their transmission line.
11 The anticipated alignment is where the actual poles
12 and lines will be placed and that right-of-way is
13 200 feet, as I mentioned. So that alignment and
14 right-of-way can actually move up and down or bounce
15 side to side within the route.

16 The Commission is charged to provide
17 predictability about where it's going to go, but
18 flexibility such if you're the landowner there and
19 maybe you want to move it to the top of that route
20 to mitigate a particular impact, that can be
21 accommodated. Or maybe the company comes out and
22 has to do some final engineering and there are soil
23 borings or other engineering matters that make them
24 want to move one way or another within the route.
25 So it gives a little bit of play within the route

1 going forward.

2 This is a state permitting flow chart in
3 total. I want to walk you through the pieces of it
4 which you have in your presentation just so
5 everybody is on the same page as to where we are and
6 where we're going.

7 In March of last year ITC Midwest
8 submitted their certificate of need and route permit
9 applications to the Commission and they were
10 subsequently accepted as complete. In July of last
11 year we were out here, in fact, we were actually in
12 this room at Hamilton Hall, and we took comments
13 from folks who were here on what impacts do we need
14 to know about this project, what mitigation measures
15 do we need to consider, what routing options or
16 route alternatives do we need to look at going
17 forward.

18 We took all those comments and we put
19 them all in a table of contents for the draft EIS,
20 which we call the scope, or what is going to be in
21 the draft EIS. That decision was issued in October
22 of last year and we've been working on the draft EIS
23 since then. We issued the draft EIS in March, so
24 about one month ago. It's a fairly stout document.
25 This is the first volume of it with text and graphs

1 and maps describing all the routing options. And
2 there's a second volume, which is a detailed map
3 book, so it comes in two parts. It has 11-by-17
4 maps that are fairly detailed so that you can see
5 your residences and outbuildings and property in
6 relation to all the options.

7 So that brings us to where we are on the
8 flow chart, to today, taking comments on the draft
9 EIS and holding these meetings. We will take all of
10 the comments we receive on the draft EIS and we will
11 respond to them in a final EIS. The idea here is
12 that there are things that we might have missed or
13 did not explain very well, or just were not accurate
14 somehow. And we want your comments to make that
15 better so that we can issue a final EIS.

16 At the same time this is going on, next
17 month, May 13th and 14th, an administrative law
18 judge from the Office of Administrative Hearings
19 will be out here soliciting your opinion as to the
20 need for the project and, if it's needed, where it
21 should be routed. So how you think those factors
22 should be balanced one against the other and give
23 the judge your opinion as to how the project should
24 be routed. And, also, if there are impacts related
25 to the construction of the project. If you have

1 agricultural land and you're concerned about
2 drainage or drain tile and you think there needs to
3 be special provisions in the route permit to discuss
4 that. Let the judge know that, bring that up, bring
5 that to his attention.

6 The judge will take all of the record,
7 all the comments and the final EIS and create a
8 report. It will include findings and conclusions
9 and recommendations. The recommendations will be on
10 the certificate of need and on the route permit.

11 The whole of the judge's report and the
12 record then goes to the Public Utilities Commission.
13 I didn't mention the date, I'm sorry. The
14 administrative law judge's report is anticipated in
15 September 2014, of this year. The whole package
16 then goes to the Commission and the Commission will
17 make a decision on the need and the route permit in
18 the fall of 2014.

19 The judge's report is a recommendation.
20 It is not binding on the Commission. The Commission
21 can amend it or make some other decision.
22 Nonetheless, I will tell you that the judge's report
23 carries a lot of weight with the Commission because
24 the Commission has asked the judge to come out and
25 get your opinion, and they assume that when the

1 judge comes out that you will come out and tell the
2 judge and that the judge will do a faithful
3 representation of what he hears and bring that back
4 to the Commission.

5 These are the same steps in a tabular
6 format, indicating the dates that have occurred or
7 are occurring, but the public hearings coming up in
8 May, the final EIS in July, the judge's report in
9 September, and the Commission meeting in the fall
10 later this year.

11 I want to talk a little bit about the
12 draft EIS. The point of having a draft EIS is
13 informed decision-making. This is a large project
14 for the State of Minnesota, it's a large project for
15 the counties, for your cities here. The reason we
16 do this type of environmental review is so that we
17 have the facts as best as we can gather them before
18 us when we make a decision.

19 You may or may not like the decision that
20 the Commission ultimately makes, but through this
21 process we hope to guarantee that the Commission at
22 least has the information before them and they know
23 the implications of the decisions they're making.
24 So they're making an informed decision.

25 The EIS is designed to provide a common

1 set of facts. It doesn't advocate. You'll find
2 information about different routing options in the
3 draft EIS, it doesn't say this is by far the way to
4 go, this is where the project should be located. It
5 may say there's more impacts over here than over
6 here with respect to agriculture. There's more
7 archaeological resources over here, but there are
8 none in the right-of-way over here. It doesn't tell
9 you how to balance them or what that tells you in
10 total, so it doesn't advocate, but it will talk
11 about each of the options.

12 It talks about the human and
13 environmental impacts and possible mitigation
14 measures. Mitigation measures for construction and
15 mitigation measures related to actual location and
16 to other things unrelated to construction.

17 The route, the alignment within that
18 route, the route width, where the project is
19 located -- in the EIS it is described by routes,
20 route alternatives and route variations. We use
21 those three terms and I'll get more into that in a
22 minute. The EIS also talks about the relative
23 merits of routing options and takes all the routing
24 options and compares them to the Minnesota rules
25 factors which we just talked about, A through N.

1 I can't take you page by page through the
2 EIS here, but I can give you a quick guide to help
3 you use the draft EIS. And to do that I've pulled
4 out a map of the draft EIS. This is a depiction of
5 the project. In the draft EIS there's, you know,
6 there's some introductory materials, it talks about
7 the regulatory framework, what's been proposed,
8 system alternatives, and then it talks about impacts
9 and mitigation measures generally and then impacts
10 and mitigation measures related to the project
11 specifically.

12 It looks first at this orange area from
13 Lakefield to Huntley, this is called the segment
14 number one or the Lakefield to Huntley segment. The
15 second segment is from Huntley to Iowa, depicted
16 here in green. So generally it talks about the
17 orange segment, Lakefield to Huntley, then the green
18 segment, Huntley to Iowa. Within that it talks
19 about Route A and Route B as proposed by the
20 company. It also talks about route alternatives
21 that use Interstate 90 to a greater or lesser
22 extent, known as the I-90 route alternatives. And
23 then it also speaks to route variations, smaller
24 pieces of route designed to mitigate specific
25 impacts.

1 At the Jackson Municipal Airport right
2 here, the route kind of bumps up like this to
3 accommodate the Jackson Airport now and into the
4 future. There are three route variations here
5 suggested by citizens when we were out here last
6 July.

7 At Fox Lake there are six route
8 variations, again suggested by citizens when we were
9 out here last July. Two on the west side of the
10 lake, one across the lake where there's an existing
11 line, and three on the east side of the lake.

12 At Lake Charlotte there are five route
13 variations, again, suggested by citizens when we
14 were out here last July. One going across the lake
15 where there's an existing line and four going to the
16 south of the lake.

17 There's one at the Center Creek WMA,
18 Route B. There's one route variation just south of
19 the proposed Huntley Substation site, and there are
20 four more variations from here down to the Iowa
21 border addressing various impacts as you go down to
22 the Iowa border. So two segments -- one, two -- and
23 within that route alternatives and route variations.

24 And for all of those we walk through the
25 list and talk about human impacts -- excuse me,

1 impacts to human settlements, noise, aesthetics,
2 property values, impacts to public health and
3 safety, impacts to land-based economies and
4 archeological and historic resources. Impacts to
5 the natural environment, plants and animals,
6 wetlands, water resources. Rare and unique natural
7 resources, threatened and endangered species that
8 may be in the area, and the use of existing
9 rights-of-way and cost.

10 The draft EIS is available electronically
11 on the Department of Commerce website. It's also
12 available on the Minnesota Public Utilities
13 Commission website. You go to their website and
14 follow through to the eDockets, which is an
15 electronic docketing system for the State of
16 Minnesota, you can find it there. It's also
17 available in print at local libraries. We have
18 several review copies on the table behind you here
19 that are laid out that you can look at. And we have
20 several copies on CD. Let me hold one up here.
21 Several copies on a compact disk, which are out on
22 the table here, and if you'd like a copy we can
23 certainly give you one tonight. If you have a
24 computer you can pop this in, it has all the maps,
25 all the text, all the graphics that are in these two

1 volumes right here.

2 If you have any questions about the draft
3 EIS or about the permitting process in general at
4 any time, you can contact me. There's my contact
5 information. You can contact the public advisor for
6 this project, Tracy Smetana, who is at the Minnesota
7 Public Utilities Commission. If you were here last
8 July you saw Tracy as we co-presented at that time.

9 You can sign up for the project mailing
10 list. Again, these orange cards out on the table.
11 You can fill one out and make sure you're on the
12 mailing list so you can keep abreast of the project.
13 You can also subscribe to eDockets, which is the
14 electronic docketing system for the State of
15 Minnesota. If you subscribe there, you'll get an
16 e-mail every time a document is added to the docket.
17 And by the word docket I mean a big electronic
18 folder where all the documents are kept.

19 The last topic I want to cover before we
20 get to your comments is using the draft EIS. The
21 reason we do a draft EIS is to, as I said, work to
22 get a common set of facts, but also to enable you to
23 have those facts, as well as the decision-makers, to
24 advocate based on those facts. To come to the judge
25 when the judge is here next month and ultimately to

1 the Commission where your words will flow. To talk
2 about the need for the project, to talk about what
3 belongs in the route permit. What are the impacts
4 you're concerned about, how could they be mitigated.
5 Is there something that needs to be in the permit
6 about how the project is constructed. Does the
7 permit need to describe where the project is
8 located, do you have a preference for that.

9 So all the information in the draft EIS,
10 which we built off of your comments, can be used to
11 try and answer those questions. Each of you may
12 have a different answer as to perhaps where the
13 project should be located. You may have some
14 different ideas about how it should be constructed.
15 But you have a set of facts that you can use to
16 bring before the judge if you wish, or you can use
17 any other ideas that you have to bring before the
18 judge and advocate for your case.

19 I want to walk through several maps, four
20 maps tonight, that are related to ITC Midwest
21 Modified Route A. And I want to do this for a
22 couple reasons. First of all, I think you should
23 understand where Modified Route A is going at the
24 public hearing. Two, to know that the modifications
25 that ITC is proposing going into the hearing are to

1 a great extent based on routing options looked at in
2 the draft EIS that you suggested and adopted by
3 them. Some variations and differences, but we'll
4 talk a little bit about that. And, third, they're
5 examples of what you can do when the judge comes out
6 next month as far as advocating for a route or a
7 route alternative that you'd like to see. So there
8 are four of these, and we'll just spend a few
9 seconds on them.

10 And this first one we'll have to get
11 oriented a little bit. So on these maps there's a
12 lot of lines and I'll try to guide you through this.

13 In the orange area here, that area, is
14 the original Route A as proposed by ITC Midwest.
15 And it has a red line as the anticipated alignment
16 for that. And you can see, this is -- I'm sorry,
17 I'll back up. This is in the Jackson Airport area
18 west of here where it kind of bumps up, where it
19 comes up, over, and then back down. The Modified
20 Route A in this area, which is indicated by this
21 light blue line right here, and then you'll notice
22 that it is slightly modified from what A is. It
23 uses this segment right here. And if you'll note --
24 it's hard to see -- it says JA-2, which is Jackson
25 Airport Route Variation 2. So this is a suggestion

1 that came from citizens when we were out here and
2 ITC has cut the corner, so to speak, here, and uses
3 that portion of it. And the rest of this is really
4 a portion of Route A with a difference in alignment
5 here to accommodate a well and some animal housing
6 units. But it's a combination of JA-2, a route
7 variation you all suggested in the original Route A.
8 And you can put two pieces of routing options
9 together like that, and you may do so if you think
10 that's the best way to go when the judge is here.

11 Let's look at another example from Fox
12 Lake. This is Fox Lake here. Route A, in the
13 orange, came down, and the alignment dipped a little
14 bit right here into the city of Sherburn on the
15 south side, crossing back over and then up to the
16 existing 161 line right here. This is Route B in
17 the kind of aqua color.

18 Modified Route A in the blue line stays
19 on the north side of Interstate 90 right here, then
20 crosses over slightly, comes back up, and then goes
21 east on 140th and then north on 130th to here. And
22 you'll notice the little number here, that's Fox
23 Lake 4. That's route variation Fox Lake 4. But the
24 difference, Fox Lake 4 stays on the north side here
25 and then it dips to the south, but that's

1 essentially the same route variation with that
2 slight difference in alignment, so a suggestion that
3 you folks put in, citizens put in, to use globally,
4 you all put into the record and we studied in the
5 draft EIS and the impacts are discussed there and
6 that's what the company is proposing as Modified
7 Route A going into the hearing.

8 There's a third example. This is in the
9 Lake Charlotte area. This is Lake Charlotte here.
10 There's an existing line that crosses the lake right
11 here. Route A as proposed in the application came
12 over and then south, east again, and then back north
13 to the existing line. Modified Route A, the light
14 blue line, comes south a little bit earlier and
15 doesn't go quite as far south, comes along this road
16 here and then back up to the existing 161 line. It
17 uses a number of route variations, but primarily
18 Lake Charlotte 5, which is one of the route
19 variations that was suggested by citizens, studied
20 in the draft EIS, and now incorporated into Modified
21 Route A by the company.

22 And this is the last map I'll show you.
23 This is near the Blue Earth River. The proposed
24 Huntley Substation site is right here, this is the
25 Blue Earth and winding its way around. The existing

1 line crosses the Blue Earth River twice, once here
2 and then once here, and then comes down. And the
3 company had originally proposed following that. A
4 route variation was suggested, which comes out and
5 goes around that so that it doesn't cross the river.
6 ITC Midwest Modified Route A comes very similar to
7 that, with a slightly different angle there and then
8 comes back. So very similar to what's called HI-1
9 in the draft EIS, which was a suggestion for a route
10 variation going into the draft EIS.

11 So you can see how there's sort of a
12 continuum between what was suggested, what's studied
13 in the draft EIS, and then what has been picked up
14 by ITC Midwest.

15 I'll just say, then the next step is,
16 which can be done by you, if you want to advocate
17 for any of the route variations in here or you want
18 to build on Modified Route A as the company's
19 proposed it, or whatever you think is the most
20 appropriate for the project, you can bring that
21 forward to the judge.

22 So now to the last item on our agenda,
23 which is your comments. As I mentioned, the draft
24 EIS is issued in draft, the EIS is issued in draft
25 form, a draft EIS, so that we can bring it out to

1 capture your comments, so I'll ask that we go one
2 speaker at a time. Please limit your comments to a
3 few minutes. If you have more to say we'll come
4 back to you. Please state and spell your name for
5 the court reporter so we get that right.

6 Please maintain respect for others, they
7 may have a different opinion about the project or a
8 routing for the project so please be civil, and
9 please direct your comments or questions to the
10 contents of the draft EIS to the extent you can.

11 Two points on that. You may have a
12 question that helps you formulate a comment. So you
13 may need to know something first before you really
14 have a comment, or you may just have some questions
15 in general. We have a lot of folks who are very
16 knowledgeable about the project, please don't
17 hesitate to ask a question. Now is the time, while
18 we're all in the same room. Second, I realize you
19 may not have had a chance to look at the draft EIS.
20 You may have looked at it online, maybe you haven't,
21 or maybe you don't have availability to look at it
22 online and can't make it to the library, for
23 whatever reason, I understand that. So ask a
24 question as best you can, pick up a CD on your way
25 out and take it home with you and look at it. You

1 have until May 9th to send me a comment, so
2 hopefully that's time for you to get a chance to
3 look at it and make a comment.

4 So I'll leave this slide up to try and
5 guide our thoughts on what needs to be clarified,
6 what's missing, how can we make this document as
7 complete and accurate as it can be for you all, for
8 the judge, and ultimately for the Commission so that
9 they can make a good decision.

10 And I forgot to bring the sign-up sheet
11 in, but I don't think anybody signed up to speak.
12 Did anybody sign up to speak? I don't think so.
13 Nobody. Thanks, Amy.

14 So we'll go a show of hands for anybody
15 who has a question or a comment tonight about the
16 draft EIS or any other thing that we can try and
17 answer tonight over here about the project or the
18 process? We're all here, so now is your chance to
19 grab us.

20 I'll mention that at the back of the
21 room, I didn't mention this again, since Amy
22 mentioned it, but we do have folks at the back of
23 the room who can print you out a map, zoom in on an
24 area or a parcel of land that you're interested in.
25 You can use that to make a comment to me. For

1 instance, I don't see this on the map already, or
2 I've got a question about did you account for the
3 impacts of this wetland, or whatever you might want
4 to say.

5 You can also use it to get ready for the
6 judge. So you can have a map of that and you can be
7 preparing, so to speak, your thoughts for May when
8 the judge is out here to say, I've looked at this,
9 Judge, I have a map of my property, here's some of
10 the route options that I don't think are very good,
11 here's some of the routing options that I think are
12 more appropriate.

13 Anybody have a question or a comment, if
14 you'd like to come forward.

15 Miss Murphy.

16 MS. HELEN LEE MURPHY: Miss Helen
17 H-E-L-E-N, L-E-E, M-U-R-P-H-Y. Thank you.

18 I'm from the Sherburn area. And I think
19 it's imperative to know that your comments do work.
20 Because when we found out last summer, just a year
21 ago, last July, that it was dipping into the city of
22 Sherburn right over our fire department, a Kum & Go
23 station, a church, close to the schools, close to
24 residences, lots of activity where people live. And
25 the very first question I asked Mr. Kirsch after I

1 saw that it does this cause cancer and he said yes,
2 it does. Particularly leukemia in children. And he
3 proceeded to find for me a copy of the electric
4 company's page to show me that it did show leukemia,
5 particularly in children.

6 So I went back to the city of Sherburn, I
7 informed the mayor and the city council, so we had a
8 big drive, we had two weeks, by August 2nd, to get
9 all those comments in the mail. But we think it
10 worked. Because we're grateful now that according
11 to the Modified Route A that it's not coming into
12 the city of Sherburn, which alleviates our anguish
13 very, very much. But we hope it stays that way.
14 Because according to their testimony that was handed
15 out to me last Good Friday from the library in our
16 town, it was issued on February 24, the preferred
17 route is the Modified Route A, but Route A is their
18 second preferred route and that would come into the
19 city of Sherburn.

20 So we're going to be very active between
21 now and May 9. And, of course, the squeeze of time
22 has been hard on us because of the income tax time,
23 Holy Week, Easter, men in the field, we would like
24 another week, but the Department has said May 9 is
25 our deadline to get comments in. So we're going to

1 be very busy.

2 I do want to let you know when I went to
3 the library last July this is what I found. That
4 the ITC had six Minnesota departments that helped
5 them with their statement. Agriculture, Historical
6 Society, Natural Resources, Transportation,
7 Pollution Control, Water and Soil Resources, but not
8 the Department of Health. I went on to further find
9 that they protect -- excuse me. They protect rest
10 areas because of aesthetic reasons. They protect
11 our native prairie grass, which is in Martin County
12 called prairie bush clover, so no construction may
13 be near that prairie grass. They also protect
14 aboriginal mounds, artifacts, ancient burial
15 grounds, prehistoric ruins, but the people weren't
16 protected. That disturbed us very much.

17 Then we also saw that the DNR protected
18 the migratory birds that travel twice a year, yet we
19 live here all year long and we weren't protected. I
20 tried to get through to the Department of Health and
21 I didn't succeed. All I got was a recording and
22 about 50 sites that I tried to call the ones that I
23 thought was the most appropriate.

24 Then we found out that, too, as
25 Mr. Kirsch agrees, that once the state of Minnesota

1 gives an easement, and I have the number here
2 216E.01, subdivision 8, they give a whole mile and a
3 quarter. So once the electric company gets this
4 easement, they can go way down to Highway 16, which
5 is half of Sherburn. And so we're very worried
6 about that because we have a school district and
7 students as well as their football field and two
8 buildings.

9 Also, they're allowed a route width of
10 1,800 feet near I-90 and Highway 4, and they want to
11 put the structures -- and they have to, by Minnesota
12 Department of Transportation rules, they have to
13 start at least 100 feet away from the right-of-way
14 and that took them to the front door of the
15 schoolhouse. My next-door neighbor is a real estate
16 gentleman and he measured it. He wanted to be
17 accurate because he knew we were very, very
18 concerned.

19 Also, throughout the first book that I
20 was reading -- I read all three, but the first book
21 that we had last summer stated that there's a
22 possible future expansion, and that's due to the
23 fact that we have more turbines now in Jackson and
24 Cottonwood, 125 more turbines are going to be built
25 that will take out 35,000 more acres of crop

1 production land, and so that generation of
2 electricity, that's why I've learned now yesterday
3 that they put these new poles in, there will be 345
4 on one arm, the other arm will be empty so that
5 could be used for future expansion. And those two
6 added together, the 161 we already have and two 345
7 in the future, that's 850,000 kilovolts of
8 electricity and our people are really scared about
9 that.

10 So then we found out, too, we found out
11 in the last couple days that it is not just marketed
12 to the Twin Cities and to Austin and to Iowa, but
13 also to Des Moines and to Madison, Wisconsin. And
14 of course the lady in Jackson asked yesterday, well,
15 the people in this territory who live where the wind
16 is on our property and on our farms, will they get a
17 reduction or a credit on their electric bills. And
18 we were told that our bills will probably go up.
19 There's a word they use, it's ratepayer, and that
20 means customers of electricity.

21 And we were also disturbed because
22 Sherburn was the only city that was impacted.
23 Huntley, according to the first book, is 3.9 miles
24 into our city, not Imogene or Welcome or Granada or
25 Blue Earth, but our little town was impacted. But

1 we think now we have a change, it's all open to
2 whatever the judge determines with the Commission
3 and, of course, the recommendations of the electric
4 company and the recommendations of the Department of
5 Commerce. So we won't really know until September
6 2014. That's why the comments before May 9 are very
7 important.

8 This is a page from the second book. The
9 first book mentions cancer, but this book also
10 mentions cancers in children and adults, depression,
11 suicide, reproductive dysfunction, developmental
12 disorders, and then it goes on to say electric power
13 brings lots of benefits, social and economic
14 benefits therefore those things shouldn't be
15 compromised. But health is compromised. So we have
16 to be very concerned that this Modified Route A does
17 go through, and the big point is it doesn't go near
18 residences or anyplace where people congregate.

19 Also, as I mentioned, it's near this
20 church, and the church would be probably miserable,
21 because the church is 120 feet away from it. The
22 city of Sherburn, the city property starts right at
23 I-90. And Mr. Michael Hook here, who belongs with
24 ITC, saw to it that on the next map the word
25 Sherburn is there because the people in the Twin

1 Cities, the judge and the five-person commission and
2 governor, don't even recognize that they have the
3 city streets down low where the name is, but up
4 towards I-90 the streets couldn't be put in because
5 of the highway state rules, and so therefore we have
6 homes and a school and the fire department. It
7 looks awful from the air, it looks like a wasteland
8 or like a park. So we're glad now that that name is
9 going to be in a different place.

10 And then we're pleased with the fact that
11 now they're going to be inspecting the animals and
12 plants, prairie grass, rest areas, ancient
13 artifacts, airstrips. Yes, there a couple people
14 who own airstrips in northeast Martin County, and
15 because they have planes that was accommodated, and
16 the wells in Jackson County. And so we're pleased
17 that human life all of a sudden is going to be
18 protected, the highest form of life on this earth.

19 And also the fact that Mr. Kirsch will
20 speak to the air quality of the ozone with the
21 electricity, and it's also the noise situation. And
22 the book does say that the molecules ionize and
23 cause a cracking and hissing noise that may be
24 audible during damp weather and even on calm
25 evenings. So minimal to aesthetics, minimal to

1 human environments, minimal to health, minimal to
2 noise.

3 Well, I hope the judge will take the
4 recommendation now of the ITC company, if they come
5 in. And I had lots of people yesterday and today
6 and the day before today, do they really need to
7 have this. It's like the information in school. Do
8 they really need to have this route? That's the
9 first thing that has to be accomplished, is to get
10 the need from the law judge. And they say all
11 throughout the books, avoid residences, businesses,
12 and places where people congregate, they want to be
13 harmonious with human settlements and activities and
14 I hope they continue with that.

15 Also, I was going to be a little bit
16 upset with our local Martin County ordinance, that
17 they didn't protect us more, but then I read in the
18 draft that Minnesota law does permit an electric
19 companies to supersede and override any local or
20 county ordinance, and that disturbed us a little bit
21 also.

22 Also, there's an electric and magnetic
23 field charts in these books. And I've been educated
24 about milligauss, which means the effect of the
25 particular magnetic field. The electric field can

1 be stopped by trees and buildings, but the magnetic
2 field can pass through anything. And this is what
3 we're disturbed about as far as human health is
4 concerned. I had the physics teacher in our high
5 school look at this map for me and she told me
6 anything above three milligauss is harmful to human
7 health. And so I've inquired a little bit more and
8 tried to be educated a bit.

9 And I can't help but think we do have a
10 democracy, and this is our time to ask questions.
11 Because some people in Sherburn, well, this -- once
12 you're off the cliff you can't go back. If this
13 goes through, if it goes through it'll be too late
14 for anybody to get upset. That's why Mr. Kirsch
15 announced that by May 9 he wants comments. That's
16 his deadline. But then the judge will be here in
17 our territory May 13 and 14, two meetings in one
18 day, and then Fairmont for two meetings, so just
19 four. Now they had six. And until May 30 we have
20 the opportunity to write our letters to the judge.
21 And the people who work in that office say the judge
22 does read everything. Well, I hope he does.

23 And we want to get to talk to him
24 personally. I like the fact that Mr. Kirsch said to
25 have a map of the area you're concerned about.

1 Well, I was concerned, because when I saw where the
2 word Sherburn was, my reaction would have been,
3 well, they're a long distance from where I-90 is,
4 that line won't harm anybody. Well, right by I-90
5 is the city property, where our homes are,
6 businesses are there, the church is there, the fire
7 department. We actually have an assisted living for
8 senior citizens just over to the far east of it, and
9 the school gardens and the school football field and
10 the school property. In fact, the school
11 superintendent came Tuesday noon and spoke at the
12 first meeting at Fairmont for our school.

13 So the point is, as I said, those of you
14 here in Faribault County, Blue Earth and Winnebago,
15 might say Sherburn doesn't bother you, you're not
16 concerned about that, but I'm giving these facts to
17 you so that you know that we feel maybe we have
18 accomplished -- we have 220 comments that went out
19 that were all summarized in the second book, and
20 we'd like to think we had an influence on the
21 variations. I hear they go around wells in Jackson,
22 they go around animal confinement buildings, they go
23 around airstrips, commercial land use around
24 Fairmont, the municipal airport at Jackson. Well,
25 maybe we're people, too, and Sherburn will be

1 protected. And so far this Modified Route A or
2 Route B would not affect the city of Sherburn as a
3 whole. Because if it would go into the city of
4 Sherburn it would -- well, people would be moving
5 away. I know that for a fact, 'cause they said that
6 to me, they're not going to stay here with
7 electricity over our heads.

8 Also, maybe, Mr. Kirsch, could I ask you
9 a pointed question right before, and he's both a
10 lawyer and an engineer so he can speak to the facts
11 of the milligauss, he can speak to the fact that you
12 look at the chart, it would be 25 feet one distance
13 will be one reading, and 25 feet another distance
14 will be another reading, and that's, as I understand
15 it, it's according to the voltage and the amps on
16 which side of the pole represents it here and so
17 that needs to be clarified.

18 Also, I read often in the book that our
19 wind out here, and we had it yesterday, a strong
20 wind, our wind is a rich wind, our wind is a prime
21 wind, they love our wind in southern Minnesota. And
22 that's what we're concerned about, and that's
23 because they want to market it on to the far east.
24 And one lady said yesterday, as I mentioned, maybe
25 we could get a reduction on that.

1 Another thing to notice on those maps,
2 you see a red circle, an orange circle, and a green
3 circle. And I was real pleased when I read the word
4 communities in the legend, I thought, oh, people.
5 No, that was an animal circle, they have a circle
6 for animals with vertebrae, a circle for animals
7 with no vertebrae, they have a circle for
8 communities, that was plant communities, a circle
9 for vascular plants. And I thought what's going on
10 here, it's all DNR.

11 And I will tell you this, I went to see a
12 DNR law enforcement gentleman north of Sherburn, and
13 he said, oh, Miss Murphy, because the Assembly of
14 God people found out that there were eagles on the
15 north shore of Temperance Lake, and they thought if
16 they protect them, they will protect us. And,
17 ironically, this gentleman told me that in Fairmont
18 when they put up electric lines, if they found an
19 eagle's nest they knocked them down to get federal
20 permits and just disposed of them. Because I did
21 find even in the book that eagles, even if the
22 eagle's dead, even the eggs, even the nest is
23 federally protected, but yet we humans weren't and
24 so I was disturbed by that.

25 Also, I mentioned the church, and there's

1 also a phrase in the book that the future expansion
2 of I-90 could be a factor in relation to the
3 location of the line. So we're very, very
4 concerned.

5 And we've also read in the Fairmont
6 Sentinel that the DNR received \$10,000 to buy land
7 north of Sherburn, they call it Four Corners, which
8 is a DNR area, wildlife area, and I heard through
9 people who teach school in Trimont, and here, who
10 gave the DNR that \$10,000, it's in the Trimont
11 paper, I've got the clipping, the ITC Midwest, and
12 that was supposed to be Route B. And I thought
13 what's going on here, 'cause Route B was supposed to
14 be an alternate route. Yet throughout the book
15 about five or six times we have the phrase, the DNR
16 is most unlikely going to give permission to cross
17 any lake or any WMA.

18 And I was really upset to see all the
19 animals that are protected. The fox squirrel, the
20 skunk, all the animals are listed, but we weren't
21 protected. I was really disturbed. And I wanted to
22 talk to the Department of Health and I couldn't.

23 But now, as I said, our hopes are higher
24 now, because it looks like on the modified map that
25 they're not coming into the city of Sherburn. But

1 we're not going to rest. We're going to have lots
2 of comments in by May 9. And Mr. Kirsch assures us
3 that every one is read, and then he said the judge
4 will be reading everything that he gets on paper.
5 And the lawyers say that, that it's important to
6 have written material on record. And so we have the
7 address and the papers there to write to him.

8 So I think I've covered everything here.
9 Mr. Kirsch will talk about the air quality and also
10 if he could explain a little bit about the
11 milligauss so we understand how to read those
12 charts.

13 Okay. Thank you.

14 MR. RAY KIRSCH: Thank you, Miss Murphy.

15 I'll first address those questions and
16 then a few other comments.

17 So Miss Murphy and I had talked
18 previously and what she mentions is that in the
19 public health and safety section of the draft EIS we
20 talk about possible air impacts. Because the
21 ionization around the transmission line can create
22 ozone and ozone can combine with nitrous oxide to
23 create smog. And the amount of ozone created is
24 relatively small in comparison to other sources.
25 And in rural areas and most places in the state of

1 Minnesota, our air quality is very good and has
2 actually improved in the last 25 years. So there's
3 not an anticipated impact to air quality, but we do
4 discuss it.

5 I'll mention that if perhaps we were in
6 the Twin Cities where there is much more ozone and
7 smog possibility, and we're actually very near the
8 federal standards, then maybe the transmission line
9 would have more of an impact.

10 To your question about magnetic fields.
11 We do discuss in the draft EIS the estimated
12 magnetic fields and electric fields for the project.
13 All about EMF and all the studies that have been
14 done about that. And there's no adverse health
15 impacts anticipated from this project as a result of
16 EMF, but there is a lot of information in there and
17 there's also an appendix that talks about the
18 different health organizations that have studied
19 this over the years.

20 And, finally, I will note that Miss
21 Murphy is correct that in statute the route width
22 can be up to a mile and quarter, that's what
23 Minnesota statute says, but ITC is not suggesting a
24 route width of that width. The route width they're
25 requesting for the 345 kV line is 1,000 feet, so

1 it's not very large, it's just 1,000 feet, and the
2 poles would have to be within that 1,000 feet.
3 Smaller, there might be one or two areas where it's
4 slightly larger at Fox Lake, 1,800 feet or something
5 like that because there's uncertainty about the
6 route, and for the 161 lines and smaller lines the
7 route width is even smaller.

8 So I think I covered all those comments I
9 wanted to make there. I thank you for your
10 comments, Miss Murphy.

11 Is there anybody else who has a question
12 or comment?

13 Yes, Miss Murphy.

14 MS. HELEN LEE MURPHY: Maybe you could
15 clarify the 161 on one side of the pole and 345 on
16 another, if the lines that are there, correct, if
17 you put a new line in it'll be 345 and the other
18 side will be empty; is that correct?

19 MR. RAY KIRSCH: Yes. Miss Murphy raises
20 a point about the structure. So I won't put the map
21 up, but Route A as proposed by ITC Midwest follows
22 predominantly the existing 161 line in the area
23 north of I-90, and if you were to put a 345 and a
24 161 together, one would hang on one side of the pole
25 and one would hang on the other.

1 There are some instances along the route
2 where it does not follow an existing transmission
3 line. And there's also large portions of Route B,
4 if that were selected, where there is not an
5 existing transmission line. If that were selected
6 by the Commission or in those areas where there
7 isn't a transmission line, the pole would be put up,
8 345 kV lines would be put on one side, and the other
9 side would be left blank, there would be nothing
10 there. So that's the way the structures would look.

11 As Miss Murphy points out for those
12 structures or any of the structures, if sometime in
13 the future there was the need for more transmission
14 in this area, some of those poles could be used or
15 not for future transmission lines, but that would
16 all be subject to the planning process that the
17 Midcontinent Independent System Operator, the
18 regional transmission operator, and then if they
19 approve it, then going through the state of
20 Minnesota to get a certificate of need and getting a
21 route permit. And so you'd have to go through the
22 same process again in order to use those poles.

23 Yes, Miss Murphy.

24 MS. HELEN LEE MURPHY: I have another
25 question. If it was 161 on one side and 345 on

1 another, will they put the 345 farther away where
2 people would be, and the 161 closest so they would
3 do less damage, correct?

4 MR. RAY KIRSCH: So you're saying the
5 sides switch in order to accommodate where the
6 people are?

7 MS. HELEN LEE MURPHY: Do they do that?

8 MR. RAY KIRSCH: I don't think they do.
9 I'll ask ITC Midwest. Do you understand the
10 question? So I suppose if the line with the 345 is
11 on one side of the pole and the 161, would they
12 switch at any time?

13 MS. AMY ASHBACKER: They could,
14 potentially.

15 MR. RAY KIRSCH: For any reason?

16 MS. AMY ASHBACKER: Well, the reason that
17 you're specifying is a lesser impact. Because we
18 don't anticipate impacts from either the 161 or the
19 345, we wouldn't put one circuit on one side of the
20 pole for that reason. That said, they certainly may
21 swap and switch as the line is navigated through the
22 route just depending on where the connections need
23 to be made to the substations, and the 161 might
24 need to veer off, so they could be on either side
25 and at this point we have no way of knowing what

1 that will be.

2 MR. RAY KIRSCH: Thank you.

3 Does anybody else have a question or a
4 comment tonight? I'm going to back up a slide here.
5 Oops.

6 We're all here in the room, we have all
7 the, quote, unquote, experts, folks who know about
8 the project.

9 I'm not seeing any hands so I'm just
10 going to remind everybody that if you have a
11 comment, get it to me by the end of the day on
12 Friday, May the 9th. Whatever mode works for you,
13 whatever is most expedient, but has to be to me by
14 May the 9th.

15 I'm not seeing any further hands, any
16 other questions or comments, so I'm going to thank
17 you all for coming out, I very much appreciate it,
18 and our meeting is adjourned. Thank you all for
19 coming out.

20 (6:00 session concluded at 7:05 p.m.)

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