

Mr. Bill Storm  
Environmental Review Manager  
Dept. of Commerce  
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15 August 2014

Re: PUC Docket 14-21 and DOE Docket No. PP-398 and DOE/EIS-0499

Dear Mr. Storm:

I am an owner of forty acres that lies within the proposed Great Northern Transmission Line corridor. My location is T61N R23W S32 NWSW. This parcel has been in our family since 1933 -- 80+ years. It is remote and quite secluded relative to even today's standards. It has always been a focus where our family gets together for reunions as well as skiing and hunting trips. Furthermore, the land provides resource material necessary for my wood carving artistry. Telephone communications are iffy at best in my area and to make any emergency calls I need to walk one half mile to a hilltop to have 90-95% assurance of telephone contact -- transmission corridors will not help and may jeopardize our safety for emergency situations.

Northern Minnesota has a strong history in managing its forest resource base for economic well-being of its people and communities. Its boreal forest zone is a southern limit of the great North American boreal forest. The continuity and health of Minnesota's boreal forest zone and associated wildlife is constantly being threatened by development activities. We are proud to have confirmed sightings of mink, otter, weasel, fisher, martin, wolverine, and other species over the years. The wildlife populations fluctuate with the characteristics of the forest cover which regenerates after intermittent harvests. Power transmission corridors are not allowed to regenerate.

To reduce the fractionalization of property ownership as well as maintaining continuity of managed forest areas, Minnesota has the *Sustainable Forest Incentive Act* and a strong forest stewardship program to help, in part, small woodland owners. My forty acres are entered into the SFIA program and I am doing my best to pursue the goals of my forest management plan developed by a consultant forester. I value the extent of our boreal forest and appreciate the renewable forest resource. I expect corporate entities to likewise respect and do their best to protect the resource.

Transmission corridors are a blatant insult to our boreal forest zone for perpetuity (by the way, "perpetuity" is a long time). The corridor removes the area from our renewable resource base for our forest-based communities. Future right-of-way management activities require constant intervention by mechanical or chemical actions. The boreal forest does not need more physical and chemical impacts.

It is imperative that these new transmission corridors follow existing right-of-ways to preserve the continuity of our forest resource base and it is imperative that the project

demonstrates that it has done its absolute best to minimize the need for new corridors -- minor cost savings are not an acceptable excuse.

Some options include:

1. One-half to 0.75 miles west of State Highway 65, southward from its junction with State Highway 1. Why not use this corridor, expand slightly if necessary, and minimize impacts to the boreal forest zone for perpetuity? Likewise, minor adjustments elsewhere could make the project more acceptable.

2. The project may be better off going south of Winnipeg to the Fargo/Detroit Lakes area and then east to Duluth -- corridor construction may be less costly while avoiding the boreal forest zone.

3. Why not consider bringing the power line in Canada down to Fort Francis and then follow U.S. Highway 53 directly to Duluth and destinations beyond?

I hope you reconsider the plans for the corridor and do what is best for Minnesota's forest resource base.

Sincerely,

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