From:	Smith, Julie A (OE)
To:	"JWachtler@barr.com"; "CFeigum@barr.com"; Storm, Bill (COMM)
Subject:	Fw: DOE Docket # PP-398 for Great Northern Transmission Line - corrected comments
Date:	Thursday, August 14, 2014 7:20:21 AM

Scoping comment.

From: John & Ann [mailto:lucky.finder@frontier.com]
Sent: Thursday, August 14, 2014 08:18 AM Eastern Standard Time
To: Smith, Julie A (OE)
Subject: DOE Docket # PP-398 for Great Northern Transmission Line - corrected comments

From: John Dunn, Mauston, WI
To: Julie Ann Smith, Office of Electricity Delivery and Energy Reliability (OE-20), U.S. Department of Energy
Date: 08/12/2014
Subject: DOE docket PP-398 and DOE EIS 0499 – Great Northern Transmission Line Proposal

Dear Ms. Smith,

This is written for consideration of the scope of the Environmental Impact Statement for the Great Northern Transmission Line – docket PP-398 – EIS 0499. My understanding is that the comment period has been extended to August 15. However, the DOE website does not reflect this; it says public comment opportunities: none available at this time. This may result in a few less comments being received.

The proposed Great Northern Transmission Line is being billed as a 750MW line while the conductor sizing, I believe, is for much much greater capacity. This needs to be addressed.

To my recollection, news and press releases are saying that the Great Northern Transmission Line would bring electricity to Wisconsin. Additionally, I believe this has been said in connection with the Wisconsin Public Service Corporation. The proposed line stops short of the Wisconsin border by 70 miles or so. Minnesota Power plans included the line running to the Arrowhead substation; this piece, “phase II” is said to be on hold. Other planning documents have entertained a line running into Michigan. Naturally there are concerns about segmentation and deception being involved in how these lines are orchestrated in segments. There is some fact finding to be done concerning this and it should be included in the EIS.

Even the proposed 750MW capacity is much greater than the 250MW Minnesota Power has in power-purchase-agreements. The terms and conditions of these power purchase agreements are not know to the public. When does the introductory offer end? When will Manitoba stop subsidizing and undercutting so it can make this marketing gamble profitable? It’s not known if Minnesota Power will actually use the 250MW, if it will resell that or if other energy will be freed up for market elsewhere. What about the other 500MW plus the capacity above and beyond the 750MW? Are the purposes and intents for the Great Northern Transmission line being honestly and accurately presented?

The EIS needs to consider that the Great Northern Transmission Line is a segment of a much larger project. The environmental impacts and cumulative effects of the complete package need to be considered.

Cumulative effects of Manitoba Hydro also should be considered and of the way the hydro system is operated – augmented flow program. The effects upon and perception of Manitoba ratepayers need to be considered. Are we spoiling good relations as ugly Americans? Think of regular people. Are the representations made for the Great Northern Transmission Line consistent on both ends or are there inconstancies?

How about energy efficiency in the United States? We are doing what we need to with less energy and great gains are still to be made in the area of energy efficiency. These energy efficiency gains will be beneficial to our economy and to the environment. This is in contrast to the negative impacts to be realized with the Great Northern Transmission Line and building/operating hydro electric system in Manitoba. Compare the dollars that stay in and benefit local communities in the United States as opposed sending those dollars out of the country and the burden of debt that comes with these mega projects.

Developers will recoup their costs so ultimately this burden of debt is upon electric customers.

Likewise, how about the development of sustainable renewable energy locally, closer to where it is used in the United States? It's about the same situation and local sustainable renewables should take precedence. It doesn't have the negative social and environmental impacts as the proposed Great Northern Transmission Line. Local sustainable renewable energy has greater economic, social, environmental, reliability and resiliency benefits. The benefits and impacts of local, distributed generation are applied proportionately which is much fairer. Local sustainable renewable energy is also much less wasteful.

The EIS needs to consider and address a greater range of affected parties. It is not justice to cop out and only inform a minimal number of people. For example, the towers would easily become a focal point in the immediate foreground (0 to 0.25 miles) and foreground (0.25 to 0.6 mile distances. On flatter ground towers will be easily recognizable and create visual clutter at 0.6 to 2.5 mile distances and from overlooks at greater distances. This alone would affect property values, business and tourism over a large area and the communities. A greater numbers of people need to be recognized as affected parties and get notice.

The EIS needs come to a correct assessment of the lines capacity and emergency rating. EMF levels should be calculated at the full rated capacity and emergency rating as well as lesser levels of use.

The most recent information on corona discharge, ionized particles and UV light visible to animals including but not limited to migrating birds needs to be sought out and considered.

There is much yet to be understood about wetlands and their foundational role in our ecology. Wetlands and the value need not to be discounted. Applying the precautionary principle would be wise.

I apologize for the brevity of these comments owing to the limited time I was able to devote. I thank you for your service and for considering these comments along with the comments of others.

Sincerely,

John Dunn
Mauston, WI