



*Janet L. Homzaley for*  
Daniel P. Wolf, Executive Secretary

STATE OF MINNESOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARINGS**

*Issued: July 23, 2015*

**In the Matter of** the Application of Minnesota Power for a Route Permit for the Great Northern Transmission Line Project in Roseau, Lake of the Woods, Beltrami, Koochiching and Itasca Counties

**Public Utilities Commission (PUC) Docket Number:** E-015/TL-14-21

**Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH) Docket Number:** 65-2500-31637

<b>DATE</b>	<b>TIME</b>	<b>LOCATION</b>
Wednesday, August 5, 2015	11:00am	Roseau Civic Center 121 Center Street East Roseau, MN 56754
Wednesday, August 5, 2015	6:00pm	Roseau Civic Center 121 Center Street East Roseau, MN 56754
Thursday, August 6, 2015	11:00am	Lake of the Wood School 236 15 <sup>th</sup> Ave. Southwest Baudette, MN 56623
Thursday, August 6, 2015	6:00pm	Littlefork Community Center 220 Main Street Littlefork, MN 56653
Wednesday, August 12, 2015	11:00am	Kelliher Old School Center 243 Clark Avenue North (Highway 72) Kelliher, MN 56650
Wednesday, August 12, 2015	6:00pm	Bigfork School – Small Gym 100 Huskie Boulevard Bigfork, MN 56628
Thursday, August 13, 2015	11:00am	Timberlake Lodge 144 Southeast 17th Street Grand Rapids, MN 55744
Thursday, August 13, 2015	6:00pm	Timberlake Lodge 144 Southeast 17th Street Grand Rapids, MN 55744

**Bad weather?** Find out if a meeting is canceled. Call (toll-free) 1-855-731-6208 or 651-201-2213 or visit [mn.gov/puc](http://mn.gov/puc)

## Project Description

Minnesota Power, an operating division of ALLETE, Inc., is applying to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (Commission) for a Route Permit to construct the Great Northern Transmission Line. The project includes construction of an approximately 220-mile long, 500 kilovolt (kV) alternating current transmission line between the Minnesota-Manitoba border and the existing Blackberry Substation near Grand Rapids, Minnesota. The proposed project also includes associated substation facilities and transmission system modifications at the Blackberry Substation site, and a 500 kV series compensation station within, or adjacent to, the final approved route.

The project is part of a joint effort with Manitoba Hydro to construct a new Canada-United States transmission interconnection. The project is intended to provide hydropower and wind storage energy products to Minnesota Power's customers and provide up to 883 megawatts of transfer capacity from the line. The project is participant-funded. Manitoba Hydro has proposed to construct and have sole ownership of the Canadian portion of the new interconnection. Minnesota Power will construct the Minnesota portion of the line.

The project is being proposed to fulfill the applicant's power purchase agreement with Manitoba Hydro, to meet regional energy demand, strengthen system reliability and to increase the applicant's generation diversity and renewable portfolio. In a separate proceeding, Minnesota Power must obtain a Presidential Permit from the U.S. Department of Energy for the international border crossing.

## Public Hearing Information

- Public hearings start on time.
- Please arrive early so you have time to sign in, pick up materials, and find a seat.
- Administrative Law Judge Ann C. O'Reilly will preside over the hearings.
- Representatives of the Public Utilities Commission, Department of Commerce (DOC), and Minnesota Power will be available to explain and answer questions about the route permitting process, the proposed routes and route alternatives, and the project as a whole.
- You may add verbal comments, written comments, or both into the record.
- The hearings will continue until all persons have had an opportunity to offer testimony and ask questions. The hearings may conclude earlier where all attendees have had the opportunity to comment and all other business has been conducted.
- Learn more about participating at a public hearing at:  
[http://mn.gov/puc/documents/pdf\\_files/014372.pdf](http://mn.gov/puc/documents/pdf_files/014372.pdf)

## Submit Comments

### Topics for Public Comment:

- Should a route permit be issued for the project?
- What are the appropriate locations and impacts of the route and its alternatives?
- What are the environmental and human impacts of each route under consideration and how can these impacts be addressed?
- Should any specific permit conditions be placed on this project?
- Are there other project-related issues or concerns?

Please note that the Commission determined that the project is needed and reasonable by granting a certificate of need for the project on June 30, 2015 (Commission Docket E-015/CN-12-1163).

**Comment Period:** Comments accepted through September 1, 2015 at 4:30pm.

*Comments must be received by 4:30pm on the close date*

*Comments received after comment period closes may not be considered*

**Online** Visit [mn.gov/puc](http://mn.gov/puc), select *Speak Up!*, find this docket, and add your comments to the discussion.

**U.S. Mail** Persons without internet access may send comments by U.S. Mail to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission, 121 7<sup>th</sup> Place East, Suite 350, St. Paul MN 55101.

Please include the Commission's docket number in all communications.

**Important** Comments will be made available to the public via the Public Utilities Commission's website, except in limited circumstances consistent with the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act. The Commission does not edit or delete personal identifying information from submissions.

## Process Information

Minnesota Power must obtain a route permit from the Public Utilities Commission before the project can be built. The purpose of the hearing is to compile the record for the Commission to consider in making its decision on the route permit and identify any conditions that should be included in the route permit to minimize impacts of the project.

The Minnesota Department of Commerce and the U.S. Department of Energy jointly drafted an environmental impact statement for this project. The Draft Environmental Impact Statement reviewed the potential human and environmental impacts of the proposed project and alternatives, as well as ways to address impacts. The Draft Environmental Impact Statement was issued on June 19, 2015.

The Administrative Law Judge will use all information presented at the public hearings and entered into the record of this case, including public comments, to write a report for the Commission (ALJ Report). The ALJ Report will include findings of fact, conclusions of law and recommendations including preferred route alternatives and conditions or provisions for the route permit.

After the submission of the ALJ's Report, the Commission will review all of the information in the record, including written comments and comments received at the public hearings. The Commission's final decision on the route permit for this project is expected by March 2016.

**Eminent Domain:** If the Commission issues a route permit, Minnesota Power may use the power of eminent domain to get land for this project.

## How to Learn More

### Department of Commerce Project Website:

<http://mn.gov/commerce/energyfacilities/Docket.html?Id=33847>

**Project Mailing List:** Sign up to receive notices about project milestones and opportunities to participate (meetings, comment periods, etc.). Contact [docketing.puc@state.mn.us](mailto:docketing.puc@state.mn.us) or 651-201-2204 with the docket number (14-21), your name, mailing address and email address.

**Full Case Record:** All documents filed in this docket are available via the Commission's website at [mn.gov/puc](http://mn.gov/puc), select *Search eDockets*, enter the year (14) and the docket number (21), select *Search*.

**Subscribe to the Docket:** Subscribe to receive email notifications when new documents are filed. Note - subscribing may result in a large number of emails.

1. [mn.gov/puc](http://mn.gov/puc)
2. Select green box *Subscribe to a Docket*
3. Type your e-mail address
4. For *Type of Subscription*, select *Docket Number*
5. For *Docket Number*, select 14 in the first box, type 21 in the second box
6. Select *Add to List*
7. Select *Save*

**Public Libraries:** The route permit application and draft environmental impact statement are available at the following public libraries:

- Baudette Library, 110 1st Street SW, Baudette
- Blackduck Public Library, 72 1st Street SE, Blackduck
- Bovey Public Library, 402 2nd Street, Bovey
- Calumet Library, 932 Gary Street, Calumet

- Coleraine Public Library, 203 Cole Street, Coleraine
- Duluth Public Library, 520 W Superior Street, Duluth
- Grand Rapids Public Library, 140 NE 2nd Street, Grand Rapids
- Greenbush Public Library, PO Box 9, Greenbush
- International Falls Public Library, 750 4th Street, International Falls
- Marble Public Library, 302 Alice Avenue, Marble
- Northome Public Library, 12064 Main Street, Northome
- Roseau Public Library, 121 Center Street E, Suite 100, Roseau
- Warroad Public Library, 202 Main Avenue NE, Warroad
- Williams Public Library, 350 Main Street, Williams

Copies of the documents will also be available for review prior to and at the public hearings.

### **Minnesota Power Project Information**

- [www.greatnortherntransmissionline.com](http://www.greatnortherntransmissionline.com) or 1-877-657-9934

**Minnesota Statutes and Rules:** This project is being reviewed under Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 216E and Minnesota Rules, Chapters 7829 and 7850, available at [www.revisor.mn.gov](http://www.revisor.mn.gov).

## **Project Contacts**

### **Public Utilities Commission Public Advisor**

Tracy Smetana at [consumer.puc@state.mn.us](mailto:consumer.puc@state.mn.us), 651-296-0406 or 1-800-657-3782

### **Public Utilities Commission Energy Facilities Planner**

Michael Kaluzniak at [mike.kaluzniak@state.mn.us](mailto:mike.kaluzniak@state.mn.us), or 651-201-2257

### **Department of Commerce Environmental Review Manager**

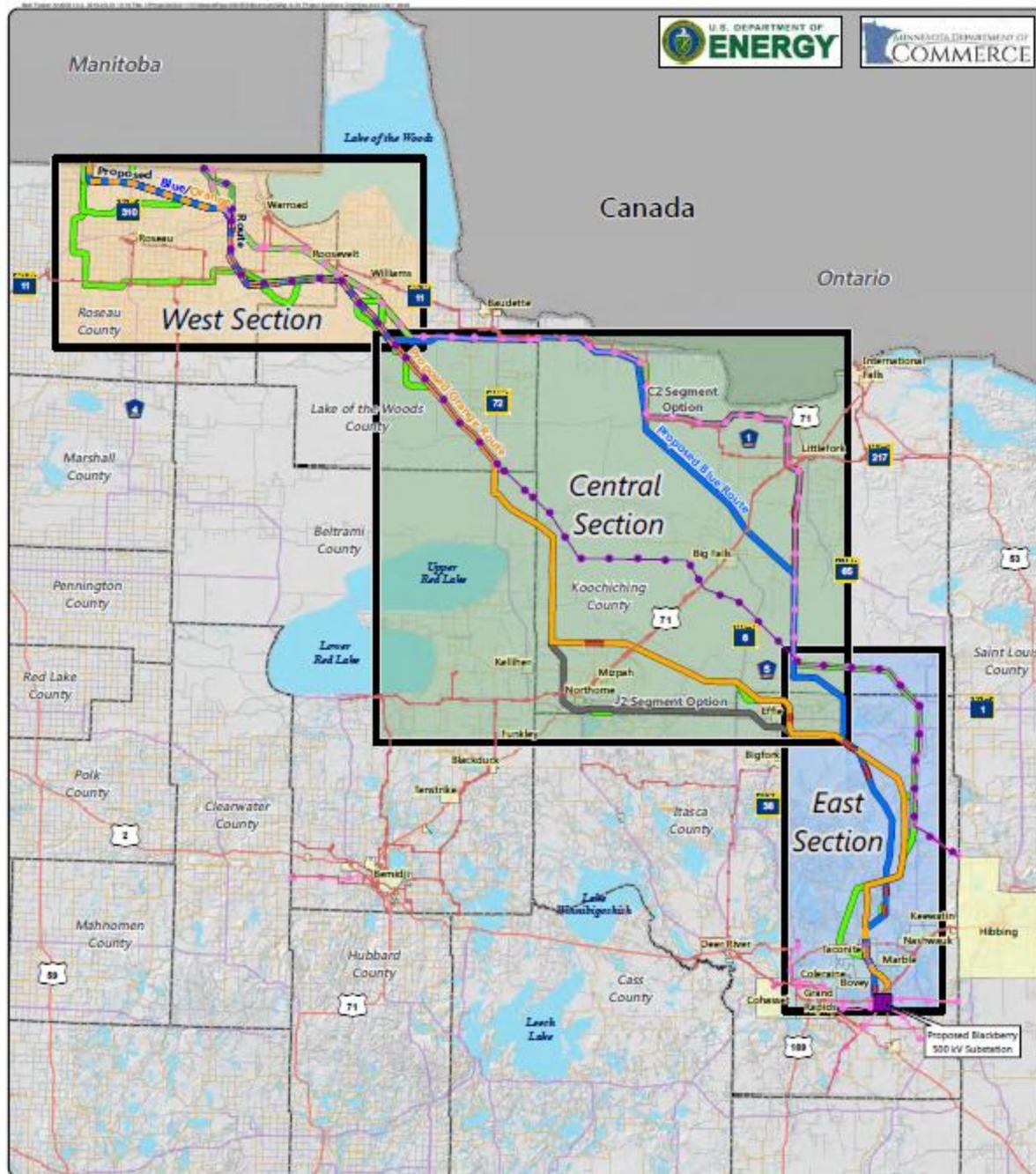
Bill Storm at [bill.storm@state.mn.us](mailto:bill.storm@state.mn.us), 651-539-1844 or 1-800-657-3794

### **Minnesota Power Project Contact**

Jim Atkinson at [jbatkinson@allete.com](mailto:jbatkinson@allete.com), or 218-343-9119

If any reasonable accommodation is needed to enable you to fully participate in these meetings (e.g., sign language or large print materials), please contact the Office of Administrative Hearings at 651-361-7000 (voice) or 651-361-7878 (TTY) at least one week in advance of the meeting.

This document can be made available in alternative formats (e.g., large print or audio) by calling 651-296-0406 (voice). Persons with hearing or speech disabilities may call us through their preferred Telecommunications Relay Service.



- |                                       |                                    |                        |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------|
| Proposed Blackberry 500 kV Substation | <b>Alternatives</b>                | Municipal Boundary     |
| Project Section                       | Route Variation                    | County Boundary        |
| <b>Proposed Routes</b>                | Route Variation Hop                | International Boundary |
| Blue/Orange Route                     | Alignment Modification             |                        |
| Blue Route                            | <b>Existing Transmission Lines</b> |                        |
| Orange Route                          | 69 or 115 kV                       |                        |
| Segment Option                        | 230 kV                             |                        |
|                                       | 500 kV                             |                        |

Map S-2  
**PROJECT SECTIONS OVERVIEW**  
 Great Northern Transmission Line  
 Draft Environmental Impact Statement

0 Miles 10 20