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MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
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www.energy.mn.gov

Public Comment Sheet
SCOPING MEETING
Minnesota Power Great Northern Transmission Line Project
PUC Docket Numbers: E002/TL-14-21

Name: Richard Myers

Representing:

Address: PO Box 16
Warroad, MN. 56763

Email: warroadmyers2@yahoo.com

Comment:

See attached letter and alternate route suggestions

Jess Myers
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Dick Myers
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"On Beautiful Lake of the Woods"

218-386-1436 - Home
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warroadmyers@mncable.net

Please submit comments to meeting moderator or send to:

William Cole Storm
MDOC
85 7th Place East
Suite 500
St. Paul, MN 55101-2198

Email: bill.storm@state.mn.us
Voice: 651-539-1844
Fax: 651-539-1549

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Comments Continued:

P O Box 16
Warroad, MN 56763
August 10, 2014

William Cole Storm
MDOC
85 7th Place East, Suite 500
St. Paul, MN 55101-2198

Docket Number: E-015/TL-14-21

Dear Mr. Storm and Members of the MDOC Scoping Meeting,

My name is Richard Myers, I live in Warroad, Minnesota. I own property with my son Jess that will be affected by the proposed jump from the orange route to the blue route if this option is used. Please see the red circle on exhibit #1. If this route is used the line will go down the property line between our property and adjoining state land. One half of the right of way will be on our land and one half on state land. This route will require extensive forest cutting and ecological damage to the area.

This area is in the forested area that goes basically between our land and highway 71 to the south, 50 to 75 miles. This area is the major recovery area of the timber wolf and is the home range of the Peppermint Creek wolf pack. There is an area of old growth cedar along this route that the DNR has not allowed to be cut.

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources has recommended the new power line parallel one of the two existing power lines, the 230kV line or the 500kV line. As this new line is built, and future lines are built, it would be better for the environment if one permanent route were established. The present 500kV line appears to be the route that has the least environmental impact now and in the future.

The route choice is of great concern as I have a pacemaker, and as you can see by the enclosed data from Minnesota Power, the magnetic field produced by power lines can interfere with pacemakers. I would be prevented from visiting areas of my land that might be close to the power line. Minnesota Power might suggest moving this portion of the line farther southeast which would put it all on state property.

One of the advantages of owning property near state property is it gives access to additional property on which to enjoy the outdoors. See exhibit 2. Many times when you see real estate for sale it will state, "adjoins X amount of acres of state land". Only if this line were moved south and east to the area of the Archele Forest Road would it not affect the use or value of private land.

I am enclosing several maps showing where the proposed new route would affect my property and another showing the area we have access to that would not be available if the line is only moved a few feet or only up to ½ mile southeast. Exhibit 1 and 2

I am also sending five maps and suggestions for alternate routes for this line that would solve all of the present proposed route questions.

Alternate Route A -This route would be the shortest distance, would be almost entirely over open land. It would have the least ecological impact on the land.

Alternate Route B – This route would be very short and again would go across mostly open land with little effect on the environment.

Alternate route C – This route would move down southeast to the route of the Archele Forest road. This route would be almost entirely on public land.

Alternate Route D – This route would join the 230 kV line route where the 500kV line route are only a mile apart between Roosevelt and Williams and follow the "Blue" route the entire way. The only buildings affected are along Lake of the Woods County road 14 and the line could be constructed to not affect any of these buildings.

Alternate Route E – This route would follow the present 500 kV line and have the least impact on private property and changing the ecology of the land. This would satisfy the recommendation of the DNR that the new route parallel an existing line and establish a corridor for future lines. The question of land definition could be worked out with the DNR or by other means if necessary.

In closing, I have supplied you with much information that I hope will help you in making a decision on routing. I feel all of the alternate routes are more environmentally friendly and make better use of the land for these types permanent structures. Please feel free to contact me if you need further information or have further questions. My son or I would be happy to meet with you if necessary.

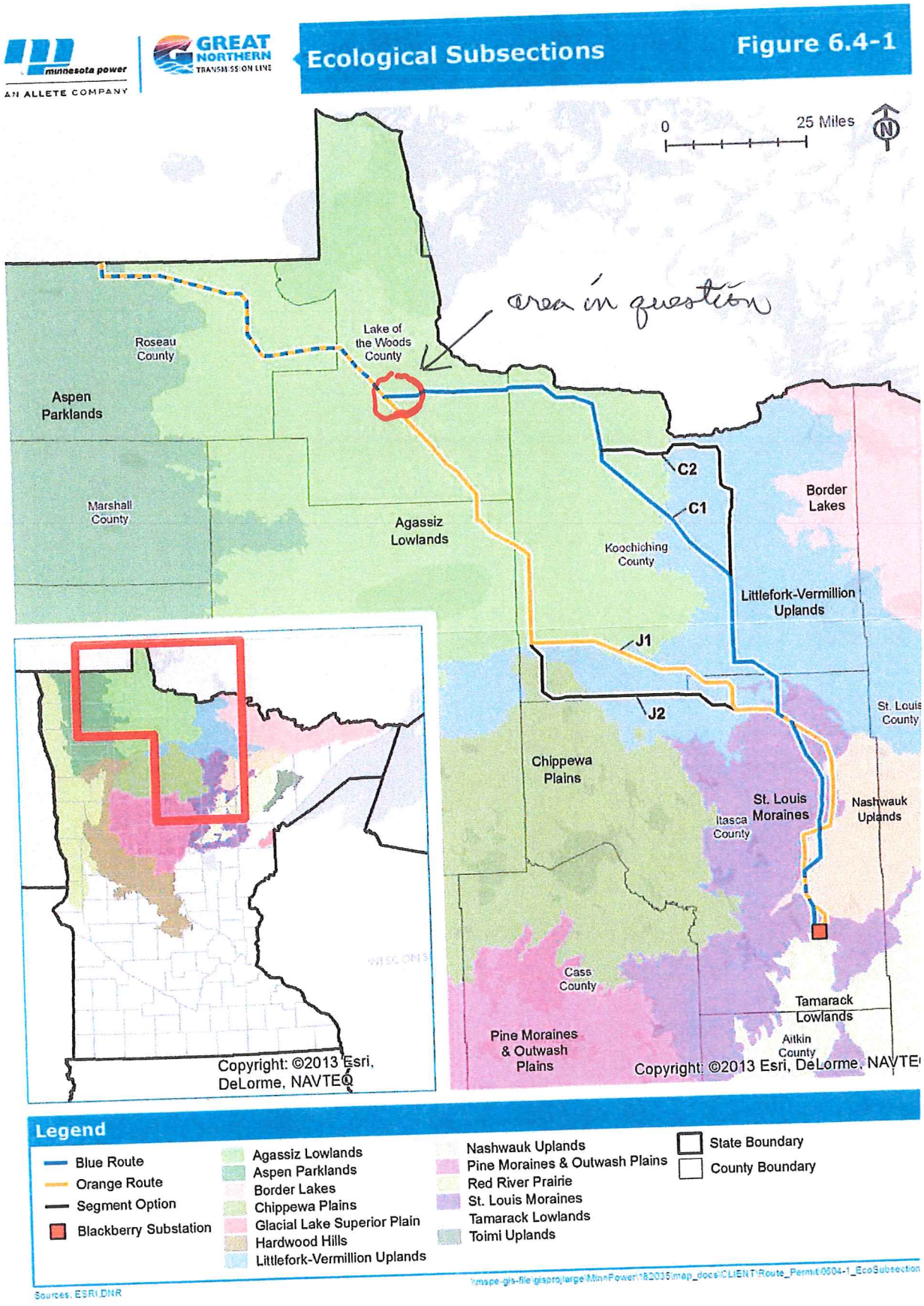
Thank you for your help and consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Dick Myers

Richard Myers

Exhibit (1)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GREAT NORTHERN TRANSMISSION LINE
Ecological Subsections
Figure 6.4-1
0
25 Miles
N
area in question
Roseau County
Lake of the Woods County
Aspen Parklands
Marshall County
Agassiz Lowlands
C2
C1
Border Lakes
Koochiching County
Littlefork-Vermillion Uplands
J1
J2
St. Louis County
Chippewa Plains
St. Louis Moraines
Itasca County
Nashwauk Uplands
Cass County
Tamarack Lowlands
Aitkin County
Pine Moraines & Outwash Plains
Copyright: ©2013 Esri, DeLorme, NAVTEQ
Copyright: ©2013 Esri, DeLorme, NAVTE
Legend
Blue Route
Orange Route
Segment Option
Blackberry Substation
Agassiz Lowlands
Aspen Parklands
Border Lakes
Chippewa Plains
Glacial Lake Superior Plain
Hardwood Hills
Littlefork-Vermillion Uplands
Nashwauk Uplands
Pine Moraines & Outwash Plains
Red River Prairie
St. Louis Moraines
Tamarack Lowlands
Toimi Uplands
State Boundary
County Boundary
Sources: ESRI, DNR
\\mspe-gis-file\gisproj\large\MinnPower\182035\map_docs\CLIENT\Route_Permit\0604-1_EcoSubsection

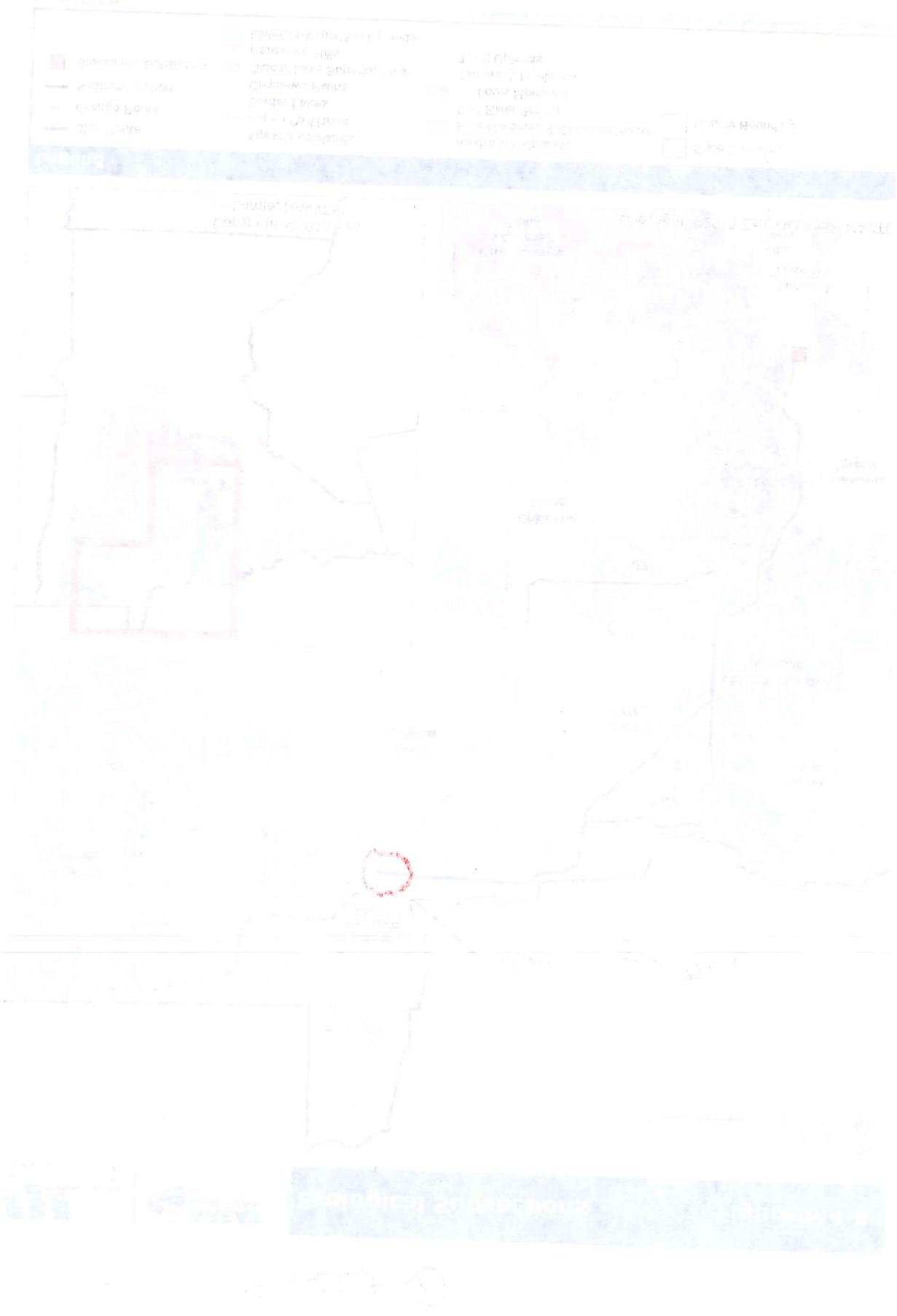
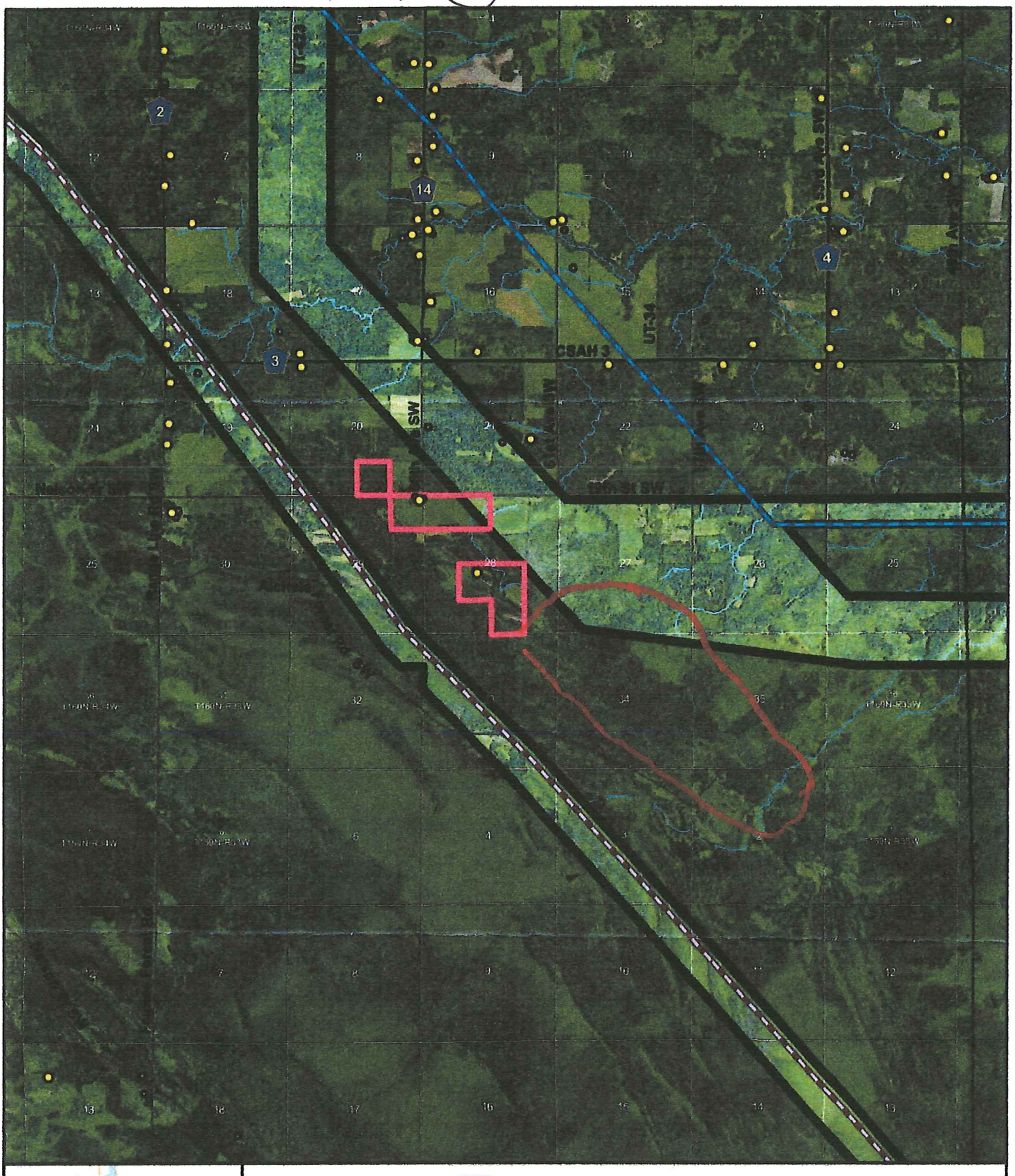


Exhibit (2) Public area available



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HUNTING LAND

Heavily wooded 20 acres just south of Onamia 4/10 of a mile from 56 square miles of state land. Mobile home with well and septic. Call Ron at Edina Realty 612-770-1273. p-32

ATV, snowmobilers, hunters. Post & beam cabin at the end of the road in NE MN. acreage plus hundreds more acres and trails. Membership in private lake, brook trout. $79k. 218-475-2191. p-35

161 acres and 80 acres with beautiful, proven whitetail deer habitat near Lac Qui Parle refuge NW of Montevideo. Dwelling optional. Pheasants, wild turkey and Canadian geese, 145 acres cropland can be leased to provide good income. Terms available to qualified buyer on 161 acre unit. www.hellergrouplandsales.com Brian Fernholz, realtor 320-226-4504, 1 Stop Realty, Inc., Heller Group, PO Box 26, Olivia, MN 56277. p-39

160 acre farm off I-94 near Alexandria, MN area. 69 acres tillable, remainder in hunting land & building site. Older 3 br. home and several sheds. Only $375,000. Call Paul at 320-762-8850 for details. Alexandria Property Group. p-32

44 excellent hunting & recreational wooded acres in NE Hubbard County. Over 1 mile of brush-cut trails through mostly poplar, birch and oak. Less than 3 acres of swampy ground. Borders 80 acres of wooded County land on the SE corner. Fishing bonus, located less than 10 miles from over a dozen lakes including Pike Bay, Cass Lake and Steamboat Lake. 44 acres for $59,000. Call Pete at 406-295-4892. p-33

Hunting compound for family. "Wild turkey meadow" & deer farm * safe, good neighbors, St. land 1/2 mile food plots, heated family stands, trails, 2 yr. new cabin, sleeps 9, water, elec, 3/4 bth furnished. 40 groomed acres, 1 1/2 hr N of TC $135,000. Call or e-mail 612-390-2911 bizvalue@lcp2.net Long time owner, agent. p-37

116 acres hunting land 30 minutes N Detroit Lakes complete with private 10 acre pond $116,000. Shelly 612-220-4862. p-38

138 wooded acres of prime hunting land. Bruno area. 2 private ponds.14x66 hunting shack, drilled well. MLS #4480131 $184,900. Knutson Real Estate, Inc. 320-629-6500. p-32

33 wooded acres great for hunting & recreation Includes one room cabin w/electrical. New York Mills, MN $75,900. New Horizons Realty 218-346-7767. p-41

29 acres of hunting, recreational land. Close to Otter Tail & Walker Lakes, camper negotiable. Richville, MN $89,500. New Horizons Realty 218-346-7767. p-41

140 ac. Camper, trails, great hunting, ATV, snowmobile, contract for deed avail. E of Ascove, Ernie CBB bizvalue@1cp2.net MLS #4483448. 612-390-2911 cel. p-34

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GREAT NORTHERN TRANSMISSION LINE

December 13, 2013

Richard Myers
PO Box 16
Warroad, MN 56763-0016

RE: Great Northern Transmission Line Response to Mailed Comment

Dear Mr. Myers,

Thank you for your comment dated November 21, 2013. We appreciate your participation in the Great Northern Transmission Line Project. In your comment, you stated your preference for the Project to follow existing corridors instead of establishing a new corridor and suggested that the Project parallel the 230 kV line to the north of your property. You also stated that you have concerns about health impacts due to high voltage transmission lines, and in particular, impacts to pacemakers.

We have enclosed a map of your property relative to the nearest Route Alternatives. The long, straight stretches of Route Alternatives on this map are 1,000 to 3,000 feet wide. However, the final route's right-of-way will only be 200 feet wide.

Throughout the Project, Minnesota Power has made routing decisions based on State routing guidelines, industry best-practice routing criteria, engineering and environmental considerations, along with stakeholder and landowner feedback like yours. In order to minimize impacts to the extent practicable, we are trying to follow existing features such as transmission lines, roadways, and divisions of land such as property lines, section lines, and ditches. Minnesota Power is reviewing data and feedback received at our most recent public meetings as well, and could make adjustments to the Route Alternatives shown on the attached map prior to filing their Route Permit Application. In early 2014, Minnesota Power anticipates submitting two or more Final Routes in a Route Permit Application to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission/Department of Commerce and in a Presidential Permit Application to the United States Department of Energy. Those agencies will review the applications, complete environmental evaluations, and make final decisions on the route.

Electric and magnetic fields (EMF) have been known to interfere with some pacemakers and other implanted medical devices, causing them to inappropriately trigger. Transmission lines are only one of a number of sources of electromagnetic interference (EMI). Sources of EMI documented by medical personnel include radio-controlled model cars, slot machines, car engines, digital cellular phones, anti-theft security systems, radiation therapy, and high voltage electrical systems and devices. Medical studies have been limited, but research shows a wide range of responses for the threshold at which pacemakers and other implanted devices responded to an external EMI source. The results for each unit depended on

the make and model of the device, the patient height, build, and physical orientation with respect to the electric field. The exposure to EMF, and therefore, the potential for EMI, directly beneath a 500 kV transmission line is no greater than that received from some common household appliances. The main risk factors for medical devices include device sensitivity, distance from the source, and field strength and orientation. We have also enclosed additional information regarding EMF to this email for your reference. For further information, please go to the Resources Tab of our website (www.greatnortherntransmissionline.com/resources/) and review the references listed under the frequently asked question "What impacts will the line have on pacemakers?"

Thank you again for your input to the Project. If you have additional comments or questions, please contact us again through the mail, through our website (www.greatnortherntransmissionline.com), email address (info@greatnortherntransmissionline.com), or information hotline (877-657-9934).

Sincerely,

The Great Northern Transmission Line Team

Richard Myers – Warroad

Alternate Route A

This alternate route is the shortest route between the orange and blue routes if Minnesota Power continues to propose a jump between the orange route and blue routes.

There are absolutely no buildings or farms within at least ¼ mile from the proposed route.

There is almost entirely open land from the orange route to County road 14, then approximately 180 acres of fores,t and then open land all the way to the blue line and would cover a length of approximately 2 ½ to 3 ¼ miles. This is a short less ecologically impacting route.

Alternate Route A

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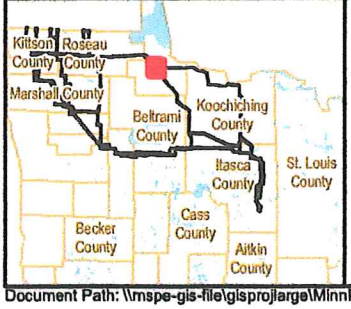
Richard Myers – Warroad

Alternate route B

Alternate route B is a short route, approximately 3 ¼ miles. This route is also very ecologically clear, one half of the 3 mile route is through open land.

The are no dwellings along the route that would be close to or affected by the route.

Alternate Route B



Commenter's Area of Interest
Phase I: Route Alternative
Residence
Structure
County Boundary
City / Township Boundary
River / Stream
Waterbody

Existing Transmission
230kV AC
500kV AC

0 1 Miles

Richard Myers

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GREAT NORTHERN TRANSMISSION LINE

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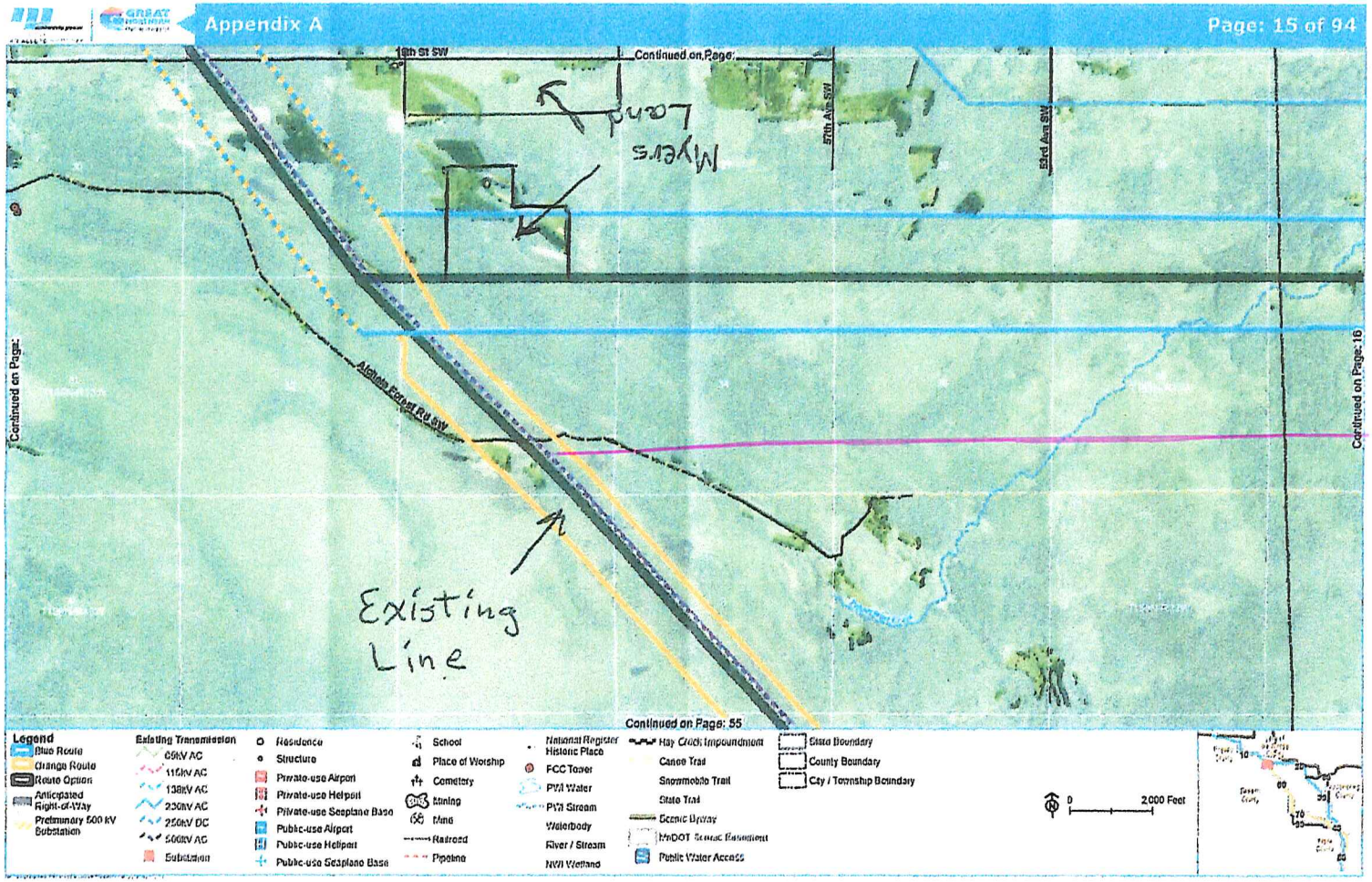
Richard Myers – Warroad

Alternate Route C

This route would move southeast along the Orange Route and would then go east at the area of the Archele Forest Road. This route would move the jump over to the Blue route farther south and would be on public land, be approximately the same length as the route a mile north. As an alternate route this would not affect private property.

Alternate Route C



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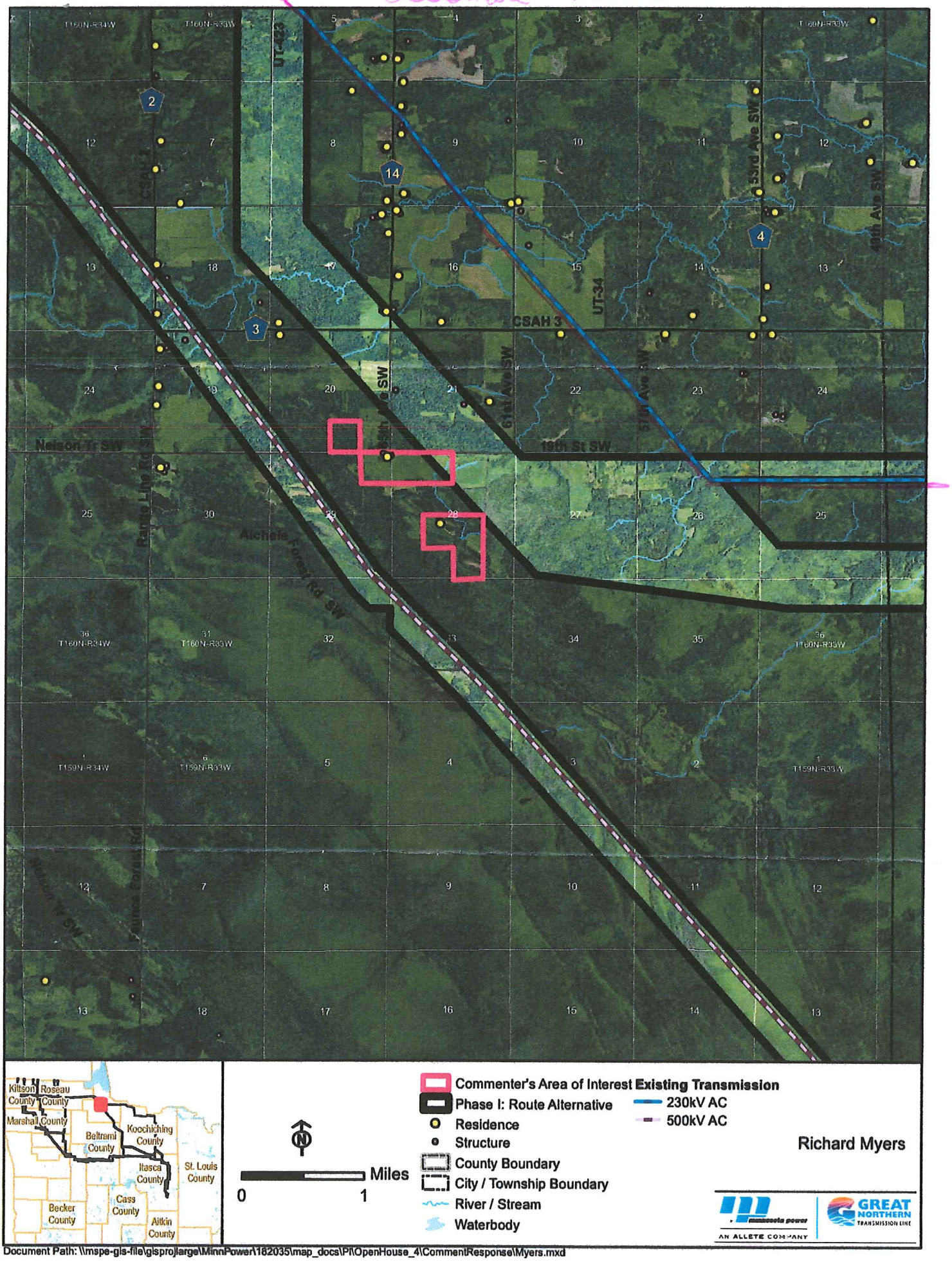
Richard Myers – Warroad

Alternate Route D

This route would follow the blue route from west of Williams. There are no homes or farms interfered with on this route. There are farms and homes along county 14 but if the line goes on the west side of the present 230kV line, there is on one home that the line will go closer than the present 230kV line. One farm the line would go approximately ¼ mile north and at one home the line would go approximately 1 block northeast of the buildings. There are no dwellings anywhere else on this route.

This is the blue route Minnesota power wants to connect with and this route would build the new line entirely paralleling the present line as the DNR has recommended.



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Richard Myers – Warroad

Alternate Route E

This route would follow and parallel the orange route all the way southeast to near Effie where it would join up with the blue route on the final destination near Grand Rapids.

This route has the least public impact, goes through many open bog areas, uses more public land, and satisfies the DNR recommendation of paralleling one of the two present lines.

Since the original 500kV line was constructed 30 years ago some of the area on the route of the 500kV has been declared Scenic and Natural Area. The DNR should be contacted to obtain a variance to have the new line parallel the old line as the DNR recommended. The fact there is already a line through this area should be a perfect reason to put the new line there rather than ecologically establish a completely new corridor. This could be obtained by direct negotiation with the DNR, or by other means if necessary.

Alternate Route E

minnesota power
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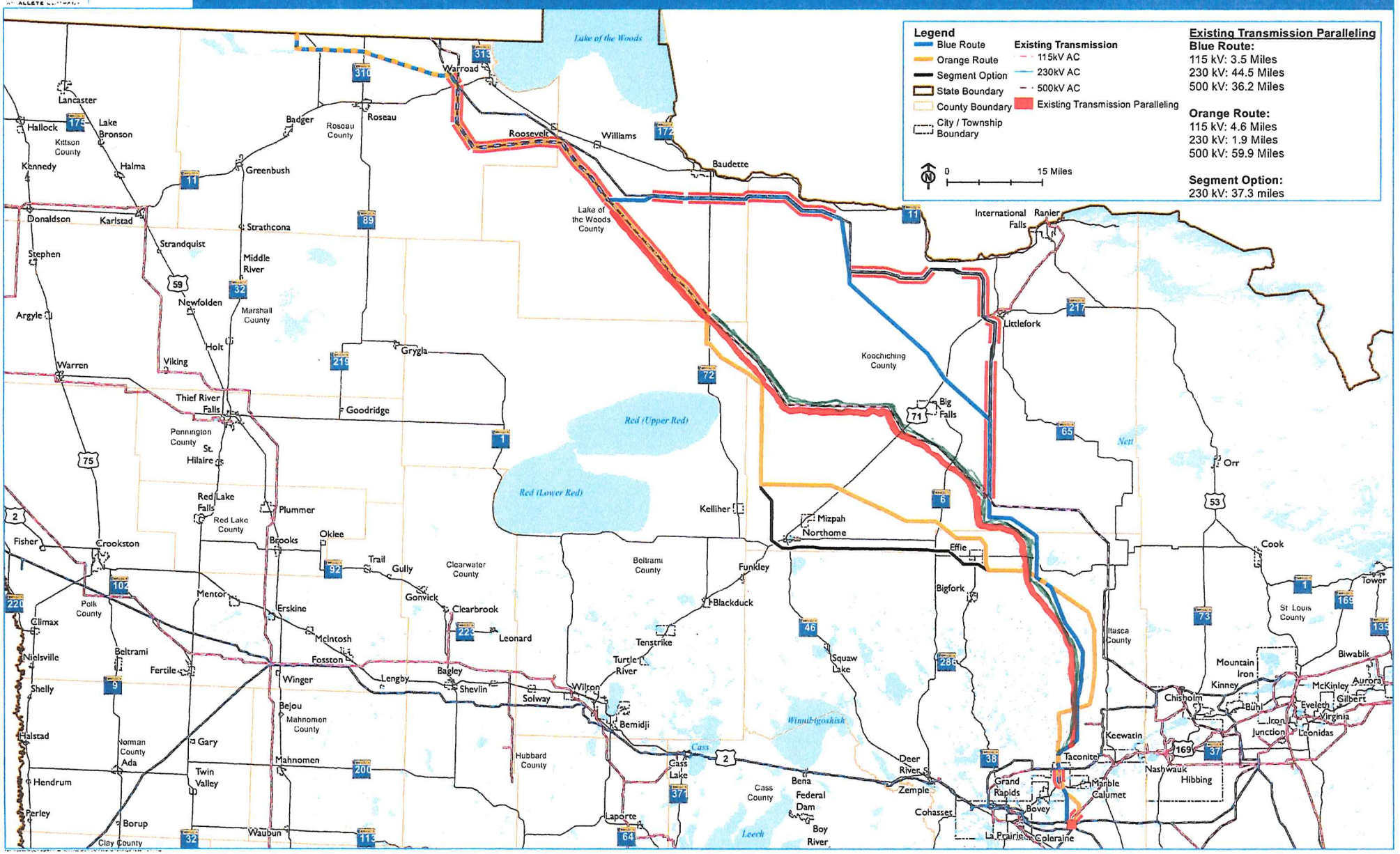
GREAT NORTHERN TRANSMISSION INC

Existing Transmission Line Paralleling



Because of features such as, resident locations, extent of private land ownership, minimal opportunities to co-locate, and changes in topography and ecology, the GNTL project complexity factors weigh in favor of a task force.

- **Known or Anticipated Controversy.** As previously noted, the CN environmental review process for the GNTL has already been initiated and the scope for the *Environmental Report* released. In developing the scope for the CN process, EERA staff held six public information/scoping meetings across the proposed project area. The meetings were well attended, with approximately 90 people attending and 20 individuals taking the opportunity to speak on the record. A court reporter was present to document oral statements.[10] The deadline for written comments was March 14, 2014; 28 written comments were received.[11]

  The vast majority of the comments received, both oral and written, were more relevant to the routing process, meaning that they dealt with issues that are route specific (i.e., paralleling existing infrastructure, potential impacts to specific parcels, sites or features, the so called "buy the farm" provisions of the law, and maximizing use of public lands). Many of these commentators spoke against the GNTL project for a variety of reasons.

  Given the interest expressed in the routing of the GNTL during the CN process, EERA staff anticipates that the public participation and controversy concerning the project during the routing proceedings will be high.

- **Sensitive Resources.** The project area is located within three Ecological Provinces and five Ecological Subsections, as classified by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. The area includes a range of landscape types and vegetation communities that change drastically from west to east, with generally open, limited forest communities to the west and increasingly forested vegetation types toward the east.

  Preliminary data indicates that the predominant landcover type traversed by the Orange Route is upland deciduous forest followed closely by shrubland. Lowland coniferous forest is the predominant landcover type crossed by the Blue Route, followed closely by upland deciduous forest and shrubland. Fragmentation of vegetation communities occurs when linear corridors comprised of new community types bisects existing contiguous blocks of vegetation. The result is the creation of smaller fragmented areas of these communities. Low shrubby or grassland communities are less susceptible to structure alterations associated with transmission lines. Total forest type coverage is 35,742 acres (55.0 percent) for the Orange Route and 39,641 acres (55.4 percent) for the Blue Route.

  Information in the route permit application reveal that the Orange Route crosses 5,652 acres of Wildlife Management Area (WMA) lands in four different WMAs, while the Blue Route crosses 2,005 acres of WMA lands in five different WMAs. The application

[10] Oral Comments Received During Scoping, eDocket No. 20143-97374- 01
[11] Written Comments Received During Scoping, eDocket No. 20143-97379- 01 to -02

states that one designated area of lowland hardwood Old Growth Forest is located within the Orange Route and the Blue Route.

Avoiding some of these resources may result in routing through areas with few or no existing transmission line rights-of-way.

Based on the above analysis, EERA staff believes that the advisory task force option is warranted for the Minnesota Power GNTL project.

In drawing this conclusion, EERA staff considered whether one, two or several task forces would be more appropriate, and whether it made sense to focus a task force on a particular portion of the project (e.g., a specific natural resource) or the entire project. For projects similar,[12] shorter,[13] and longer[14] in length, the Commission has authorized a single task force. For three recent projects, the Commission has authorized task forces focused on specific natural resources or specific areas of complexity along a route.[15]

EERA staff believes that given the dramatic changes in land use, population density, and ecology across the project area that multiple advisory task forces are warranted for the GNTL project. Several characteristics within the project area (land use, population density and ecology) appear to align themselves with the three Ecological Provinces (Aspen Parklands, Agassiz lowlands, and St. Louis Moraines) that occur across the project area. These coupled with the breaks in the segments of the proposed orange and blue route alternatives make for convenient break between advisory task focus areas, as note on the attached map.

EERA staff believes that three advisory task forces, divided in this manner, is logistically feasible and is preferable for gathering input from the counties, cities, and townships potentially affected.

EERA staff is recommending the establishment of three advisory task forces, one each for the west third, central third and east third of the project area. A proposed structure and charge for the Commission's consideration is attached.

EFP Staff Recommendation

EFP staff recommends that the Commission accept the route permit application for MP's Great Northern Transmission Line project as substantially complete. Additionally, EERA staff recommends that the Commission authorize the Department to establish three advisory task forces for the project consistent with the Department's draft structure and charge.

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[12] Bemidji to Grand Rapids 230 kV Transmission Line Project, at 68 miles in length (TL-07-1327).
[13] Monticello to St. Cloud 345 kV Transmission Line Project, at 28 miles in length (TL-09-246).
[14] Fargo to St. Cloud 345 kV Transmission Line Project, at 170 miles in length (TL-09-1056).
[15] Brookings County to Hampton 345 kV Transmission Line Project with task forces focused on the Minnesota River crossing and the southern metro area (TL-08-1474); Fargo to St. Cloud 345 kV Transmission Line Project with a task force focused on the Avon Hills region along Interstate 94 (TL-09-1056); Hampton – Rochester – La Crosse 345 kV and 161 kV Transmission Line Project with task forces focused on the Highway 52 corridor and the crossings of the Zumbro River and Mississippi River (TL-09-1448).