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SCOPING AND INFORMATIONAL MEETING - 14-665
Clearbrook - February 22, 2016 - 6:00 p.m.
BEFORE THE MINNESOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
AND DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

In the Matter of the Application of Minnkota Power
Cooperative, Inc. for a Route Permit under the
Alternative Permitting Process for the
Clearbrook-Clearbrook West Transmission Line in
Clearwater County, Minnesota

MPUC DOCKET NO. ET-6/TL-14-665

Clearbrook Community Center
200 Elm Street SW
Clearbrook, Minnesota

February 22, 2016

COURT REPORTER: Janet Shaddix Elling, RPR

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1 MR. CEZAR PANAIT: Good evening,
2 everybody. Thank you for coming down tonight.

3 This is the Minnesota Public Utilities
4 Commission Public Information and Scoping Meeting.
5 My name is Cezar Panait, I'm a regulatory engineer
6 with the Public Utilities Commission in St. Paul,
7 Minnesota.

8 And tonight we are here to hear from the
9 members of the public on the Minnkota transmission
10 line project, Clearbrook, from Clearbrook to
11 Clearbrook West, and this is in regards to Minnesota
12 Public Utilities Commission Docket Number 14-665,
13 and that's how our electronic filing system is that
14 we have set up with the PUC.

15 The purpose of the meeting tonight is to
16 explain the Commission's review process for this
17 project and also provide information about the
18 project. The applicant will have a chance to speak
19 in detail, more details about that. And, also, we
20 are here to gather information for the environmental
21 review document that will be developed by the
22 Minnesota Department of Commerce, which is our
23 sister state agency that is involved in performing
24 that function for us, the environmental review for
25 an energy facility project such as this transmission

1 line. And, nonetheless, we are here to answer
2 general questions from the public about the process,
3 the process in general or this project in
4 particular.

5 So the Public Utilities Commission. Who
6 is the Public Utilities Commission? We are a state
7 agency. Our main job is to regulate large energy
8 facility projects such as power plants, pipelines,
9 transmission lines. And, also, the PUC regulates
10 in-state, the long-distance -- and long-distance
11 telephone companies, and also investor-owned natural
12 gas utilities, rates, and services.

13 The Commission has five appointed
14 commissioners by the governor. They serve six-year
15 terms, staggered terms, and these commissioners are
16 full-time employees. And the staff, such as myself,
17 we have about 50 staffers, financial analysts,
18 planners, rates analysts, energy facility planners,
19 that help out the process and inform the
20 Commissioners during key decision points.

21 We are here for -- to address the
22 comments and then scoping for a high voltage
23 transmission line. A high-voltage transmission
24 line, Minnesota Statute 216E defines a high voltage
25 transmission line as being a line that operates at

1 100 kilovolts or more and is greater than 1,500 feet
2 in length. For this project that meets these two
3 criteria, they are requiring a route permit from the
4 Minnesota Public Utilities Commission under
5 Chapter -- Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 216E, and
6 Minnesota Rules, part 7850, govern the route permit
7 process for the transmission lines.

8 Who's who? The applicant in this docket
9 is the Minnkota Power Cooperative. And they are the
10 ones that submitted an application for a route
11 permit for the Clearbrook - Clearbrook West
12 transmission -- 115 kilovolt transmission line
13 project.

14 And then we have Minnesota Department of
15 Commerce, which is a state agency, and they have a
16 division called Energy Environmental Review and
17 Analysis, EERA for short. And Mr. Birkholz from the
18 Department of Commerce is here to gather comments
19 and input about the environmental review.

20 And in certain cases we have the Office
21 of Administrative Hearings, OAH for short. It is
22 another state agency that -- they employ
23 administrative law judges. And the judge -- the
24 Commission, in accepting this application as
25 complete back in January, the Commission decided

1 that for the public hearing we'll have a presiding
2 judge from the Office of Administrative Hearings
3 conduct that hearing and gather comments from the
4 members of the public, which will be scheduled later
5 on after the environmental review will be completed.
6 And then the judge, or ALJ for short, will write the
7 report, a summary of public testimony, which was
8 decided by the Commission in this case, for the
9 judge to gather and summarize the comments received
10 during the public hearing.

11 Public Utilities Commission energy
12 facilities planner, that's me, and my role here is
13 to assist in building the record and inform the
14 Commissioners of various sort of docket review
15 stages. For example, in this case the application
16 was submitted and then in January the Public
17 Utilities Commission met and decided that all the
18 regulatory requirements were met and the application
19 has been accepted as complete and that's what
20 triggered the review process.

21 So my job, and, actually, the analyst for
22 this project will be my colleague from St. Paul,
23 Tricia DeBleeckere, who cannot be here tonight, so
24 I'm just substituting for her. And she will be
25 writing the summaries for the Commissioners, which

1 we refer to as briefing papers, at phases where the
2 Commission needs to hear this docket.

3 And then we have a public advisor, which
4 is Tracy Smetana. And Ms. Smetana could not be here
5 tonight, but her role is to help citizens
6 participate in the process, both the certificate of
7 need and the route permit processes.

8 And neither myself or Tricia or Tracy are
9 allowed to give any legal advice, we are not
10 advocating for one party or the other, we are
11 neutral.

12 Some of the factors that are considered
13 in the Public Utilities Commission decision
14 regarding large energy facility projects such as
15 this transmission line are various impacts that a
16 project of this magnitude can have on human
17 settlement, displacement, noise, aesthetics,
18 recreational, public services, and the public health
19 and safety, also. We look at factors, economic
20 factors, such as impact on agriculture, forestry,
21 tourism, mining, any archaeological and historic
22 resources and, also, nonetheless, the impact on the
23 natural environment, which David will talk to later,
24 about the impact on air, water, plants, animals.

25 In making decisions, the Commission looks

1 at different factors that are spelled out in the
2 statute and in the rules. Such as they look at the
3 impact of this project, in particular, any project
4 in general, about how those projects can maximize
5 energy efficiencies in the state of Minnesota. And
6 the projects are designed with future expansion
7 potential. And, also, the Commission looks at
8 existing rights-of-way. There is a statutory
9 preference for following designated rights-of-ways,
10 which could be a road right-of-way, it could be
11 utility-designated rights-of-ways, and also
12 following natural boundaries, such as survey lines,
13 field boundaries, and the like. And, also,
14 electrical system reliability is a major deciding
15 factor for the Commission that they consider. And,
16 also, construction costs, the costs to operate and
17 maintain the line are also looked at.

18 And this is a flow chart of a typical
19 route permit process. These are the various phases
20 of the process from the application until the final
21 decision. So we are past the application
22 acceptance, that was -- the application was accepted
23 back in January 25th. And we are at this stage
24 here, the public information and scoping meeting.

25 So as you can see from the legend, all

1 these -- the star symbol points out the public
2 comment opportunity. So we are at this phase
3 tonight. And there will be a public hearing, also,
4 where the public will have another opportunity and,
5 also, there will be a comment period that extends
6 out -- the initial public comment period closes on
7 March 7th, and then there will be another comment
8 period for the public hearing that will be announced
9 subsequent to this meeting.

10 So the flow chart goes that after this
11 public information and scoping meeting, the
12 Department of Commerce will issue a scoping
13 decision, and I'll allow Mr. Birkholz to talk more
14 about that. And then eventually we'll conclude with
15 the issuance of an environmental assessment report,
16 which is a written document. And then having the
17 report finalized, members of the public will have an
18 opportunity to ask questions and present input as
19 far as whether the environmental document addresses
20 all the issues and concerns that were pointed out
21 earlier during the scoping.

22 And following that there will be a review
23 of the facts and the merits in the docket. And the
24 ALJ issues a summary of public testimony in this
25 docket. And we'll set up the docket for a final

1 agenda meeting. That typically takes between six
2 and nine months for a project of this scope to have
3 from the acceptance until the final decision.

4 And this is the same kind of process, a
5 timeline in a table format for people that want to
6 take a look at a table rather than a flow chart. So
7 these are the same timelines that I captured in
8 dates that were shown on this flow chart earlier.
9 So, again, you can read for yourself, but we are at
10 this phase over here.

11 Then the comment period following this
12 meeting will close, this is an important date, so if
13 you want to send me comments, propose route
14 alternatives, segment alternatives, please do so by
15 this date.

16 There will be -- these are estimated time
17 dates for when a scoping decision will be issued,
18 and then the report looking to be -- to have the
19 report published by August. And then this is
20 another opportunity for public participation in the
21 project area, probably most likely will be in the
22 same here in Clearbrook in August.

23 And then this is just a -- I'm not going
24 through. This is an example, a sample of a notice,
25 public meeting notice that we issued, and I'm sure

1 people in the room received it. So what's important
2 here is just any time you make comments regarding
3 the project, please don't forget to include the
4 docket number. This is the electronic filing number
5 assigned to this project and it's important to
6 assign the comments to the right docket because we
7 have more than one docket going at the same time.
8 And, also, please try to address the topics open for
9 discussion. Every notice has a list of topics open
10 for discussion.

11 Again, she's pointing out to the
12 importance of the docket number and the comment
13 period. So it's important to submit the comments by
14 the closing. These are just samples. So for this
15 docket, like I mentioned earlier, the public comment
16 period closes on March 7th, by 4:30. This is --
17 we'd like to have the comments in on that close of
18 business on that March 7th date. And, also,
19 pointing out to the topics open for comment. Again,
20 these are just samples. This particular project has
21 certain topics that were made public.

22 Keys to sending your comments. Again, I
23 spoke earlier that it's important to have the right
24 docket number. Try to stay to the topics listed.
25 And, also, if you submit briefing comments, no need

1 to send them twice, the same comments, because we
2 capture them the first time we receive them and give
3 them the proper consideration. And, also, verbal or
4 written comments carry the same weight. So if you
5 choose to do both, you are more than welcome, but
6 not needed. Either will carry the same weight.

7 The Commission's decision is based solely
8 on facts in the record. So if you have any comments
9 that you think are pertinent to this project, some
10 particulars in the area that you live, that you want
11 to make those particulars known to the Commissioners
12 for their decision, please don't forget to include
13 those.

14 And, also, the comments that we receive
15 are public information, so we post them verbatim.
16 So if you would like to for sure put your name and
17 maybe just the city, if not the full address, but
18 any other personalized information, please leave it
19 out, because we won't take it out, it will get
20 posted the way the comments come in.

21 Again, stressing out the deadline. As
22 with any public proceeding, we like to stick to the
23 deadlines.

24 This is a page that talks about how to
25 learn more about the project. So these are various

1 documents that have been set up for this project.

2 So, first of all, this is our web address,

3 minnesotagovernment/publicutilitiescommission. And

4 on that website we have eDockets, you'll see a

5 button, and let's see if she has that in here. No,

6 this is later.

7 So, anyway, so you'll see a button in the
8 middle of the page that asks for to search eDockets.

9 And in that search function you have to enter the

10 two-digit year for the project and the filing number

11 that was assigned to the project, 665 in this case,

12 and then hit button and you will see a list of all

13 documents that are related to that particular

14 docket.

15 And, also, I pointed out -- we have some

16 orange mailing project contact cards, you can fill

17 the information and you will be entered into the

18 project mailing list. And every time there is a new

19 document that arrives in this docket, you'll get a

20 notification about that submission. And so the

21 project milestones and opportunities for citizen

22 participation will be something that members of the

23 public find useful to get involved.

24 And, also, you can sign up to receive

25 e-mail notification or U.S. mail. So the project

1 mailing list is on the table so you can fill it out
2 and leave them there and I'll take them back and
3 you'll be added to the list.

4 Also, if you decide later to sign up, you
5 forgot to do it tonight, it's never too late to sign
6 up. You can basically send an e-mail request to
7 this address, to this address here, or call the
8 number, and your name will be placed on the project
9 mailing list.

10 And if you want to learn more even about
11 the project, you can sign up to receive an e-mail
12 notification every time there is a new document that
13 is filed into the docket. So, again, there is
14 information on our website on how to subscribe,
15 subscribe to receive -- basically, what you will
16 receive, you will receive an e-mail, a short e-mail
17 with an active link and tweaking that link will take
18 you and will open up that particular document that
19 has just been submitted by a party to this docket.
20 So this can get overwhelming, you can receive maybe
21 an unwanted number of e-mails, but if you don't want
22 to do that, that's fine, having your name on the
23 project list will give you opportunities for public
24 participation.

25 This is that -- explains that procedure

1 on how to subscribe. So once on the Commission's
2 website, there's a link where you can subscribe, and
3 will prompt you to fill out these fields. And
4 you'll have to submit -- enter your e-mail address
5 and tie it to the docket that you're interested in
6 and that's how you add your name to the list.

7 And, again, to conclude, these are our
8 contacts here. Tracy Smetana, she's the public
9 advisor, so if you have questions later on about
10 this docket, the various phases that you can
11 participate, Tracy will be the resource to provide
12 that information. And this is my colleague from
13 St. Paul, Tricia, she's the energy facilities
14 planner assigned to this docket, I just substitute
15 for her tonight. So my name is Cezar Panait, but
16 Tricia is the proper contact for this docket going
17 forward.

18 And with that, that concludes my part of
19 the presentation. So I'll hand it over to
20 Mr. Graves from Minnkota to talk a little more about
21 the technical details about the project.

22 MR. JOHN GRAVES: Thank you.

23 My name is John Graves, I'm the
24 environmental manager for Minnkota Power
25 Cooperative, and I'd like to thank everybody for

1 coming this evening. I'm glad to see that we have a
2 crowd versus just one or two people. That's always
3 the more the merrier.

4 We'd like to explain a little bit about
5 the project. Although this is a relatively small
6 project, for the people that may be impacted by it,
7 it's important to them, and that makes it certainly
8 important to us as well. And we have looked at
9 several different potential routes for this
10 particular project and we selected this particular
11 route that we applied for based upon the various
12 criteria in the rules and regulations.

13 And in particular, this particular route
14 that we have selected impacts the least amount of
15 wetlands. You will see that we actually span two
16 wetlands. The other routes, potential routes that
17 we looked at had more wetlands involved. And that's
18 kind of an unwritten rule, you might say, in our
19 business, if we can, number one, we like to stay out
20 of wetlands. Because now having said that, it's not
21 always possible on all projects, we might have to on
22 a large project stick a structure in a wetland. We
23 really don't like to do that because about the time
24 you do that, if there is a problem later on with the
25 transmission line, sure enough it'll probably be on

1 that structure that is in the wetland, which we
2 don't like that, obviously. And so we try and stay
3 away from wetlands as much as we can or we try and
4 span them, if we can, and we do that twice in this
5 particular project.

6 Now to go into more on the project, I'm
7 going to turn it over to Jay Bushy, who is the
8 project manager for this project for Minnkota.

9 MR. JAY BUSHY: Thanks, John.

10 Our project need. The project would
11 provide electric service to our distribution co-op's
12 customer load in Pine Lake Township. We are going
13 to construct a new 115 kV substation, and our
14 transmission line is approximately 5.3 miles.

15 This is a general map. Talk about it.
16 This is Highway 92. We start, we tie in an existing
17 115 line about a mile east of Highway 92, we run
18 along 470th for three miles, and then we turn and go
19 north on 149th for approximately a mile, and then we
20 go cross country to the northwest for about a mile
21 and a quarter up to our new substation up here which
22 is Clearbrook West.

23 Our route. Our route is generally the
24 width -- it varies between 205 and 500 feet. We
25 have two additional areas. An additional area of

1 width in here where we connect, and then up where we
2 go northwest will provide some flexibility to avoid
3 wetlands and to work with landowners.

4 Our right-of-way. The right-of-way for
5 the transmission line will be 100 feet, it's
6 designated as 50 feet on either side of the
7 centerline. Easements will be negotiated with
8 landowners for the required right-of-way.

9 Our structures. We either use single
10 pole wood or steel. They are going to be
11 approximately 65 to 95 feet above the ground.
12 There's a section of the line where it will replace
13 the existing distribution line. That distribution
14 line that exists there will be buried and our line
15 will replace it. Our typical spacing for our poles
16 are between 300 and 350 feet. We are going to
17 use -- and I'll show those in the next slide coming
18 up, we're going to use three-pole structures where
19 we have to span wetlands. We're going to put two of
20 them in the span of the large wetland. And then we
21 have three additional ones where we have to cross
22 the existing pipeline just to provide greater
23 flexibility for the pipeline and to stay out of the
24 right-of-way.

25 This here on the left is our single pole

1 structures, that's a typical picture of them. This
2 is our typical three-pole structure right in this
3 area here on the right.

4 I'll talk about our construction process
5 a little bit. First of all, what we'll do is the
6 right-of-way will be staked and we'll get into
7 staking clearing limits where trees exist where
8 we'll have to take those down to construct the line.
9 Then we'll be getting into our -- our contractors
10 will be getting into tree clearing, another
11 contractor will be coming and delivering poles, and
12 then they'll be setting the structures. Two final
13 stages will be when they string the wire, or
14 conductor, we call it, and then site restoration.

15 That pretty much wraps up my
16 presentation, but I will talk about our project
17 contacts. John Graves is our environmental manager.
18 Myself, Jay Bushy. And then our right-of-way and
19 property manager, Brian Hoffart, who is not at the
20 meeting tonight.

21 So that pretty much ends my presentation
22 and I'll turn it over to Mr. Birkholz to go ahead
23 with his.

24 MR. DAVID BIRKHOLZ: It's not bad enough
25 to try to move when you're at this age, you've got

1 to get here when it's 20 degrees in the room. It's
2 not working, though, for me.

3 As I have been introduced at least a
4 couple times over the events here tonight, I'm David
5 Birkholz and I'm another separate party involved in
6 the review of this project. I'm with the Department
7 of Commerce.

8 What I'm going to talk about and what
9 we're going to talk about going forward, and
10 hopefully that includes your comments here tonight,
11 is scoping the EA. Let me explain what that is.

12 In the first place, I'm with a unit
13 that's called the Environment --

14 MS. CAROL OVERLAND: It changes every
15 year.

16 MR. DAVID BIRKHOLZ: Why do you think I
17 have to stop and ask?

18 The Energy Environmental Review and
19 Analysis division. But the real aspect is that we
20 do work cooperatively with the Public Utilities
21 Commission, and the work comes together in the end,
22 but we are separate. We are not -- we do not work
23 in the same agency, we do not perform the same
24 tasks, and we do not control each other's work in
25 that regard. The other thing to make clear is that

1 we don't work for the applicant. We work to make
2 the process as efficient, as does the PUC, for
3 everybody. But we work -- we do not work for them.

4 And the other thing is, as Cezar said, we
5 don't advocate. In our group, our process is
6 defined. If a project is put into place, what's the
7 best way to do it, and what are the impacts that we
8 might come across on the way.

9 The thing that we're going to be doing
10 tonight is gathering comments about an environmental
11 assessment. In a project this size, which is
12 shorter, but it's also a 115 kV line, it's not like
13 the big -- the big 365 kV lines going -- or 345 kV
14 lines going up and down 94, or the 230 lines going
15 across for the Bemidji project. On those there
16 would be an environmental impact statement. This is
17 an environmental assessment, but one should not be
18 confused, it still does cover the same issues. We
19 still want to ask the same questions, we still want
20 to find out the same information, it's just a
21 slightly different process under the statutes in
22 Minnesota. And what are we trying to find out?
23 Well, we're trying to find out two things. The
24 impact on natural environment, and also the social
25 impact, the impact on the human environment.

1 So there's three ways to deal with
2 impacts. One is avoiding impacts, if you can. As
3 John said, if you don't go in the wetland, that's an
4 avoidance of an impact. So that's one option.
5 Otherwise, if there's not avoiding, there's
6 minimizing. You make the impact as small as
7 possible. Or if there is no way, in some cases, as
8 you well know and I'll be straight up, you don't put
9 in a major industrial infrastructure without there
10 being an impact at some level. And our job is to
11 find out what's going to be the arrangement that
12 makes the least impact. And so what we can do --
13 when there are unavoidable impacts, what we can do
14 to mitigate those.

15 The law in Minnesota gives the following
16 descriptions of what the EA is going to look like.
17 I don't think I put -- I don't think I put the rule
18 down here, but you don't need the rule, I think it's
19 7850.3700. But when you're stopping to think about
20 what you're going to give to us in comments tonight,
21 this is something to remember. This is something
22 we're going to do, all of these things.

23 Now, filling in the details amongst those
24 items is what we want to do when we come to the
25 people who live in a particular place, who are going

1 to be the ones who live under the impact of a
2 particular project, then we want to have your input
3 on what are the real-life impacts behind those
4 statutory and rule statements. What is the
5 real-life impact of the words on the paper.

6 So what we're going to do is we're going
7 to develop a scope of the EA. And this first step
8 of the scope of the EA is gathering all the
9 information. We have the information from the
10 application, we've reviewed that. We have the ideas
11 that we need to look at under the law. We're here
12 to gather the ideas that you have, the knowledge
13 that you have locally to contribute to the scope.
14 And what the scope is just going to be is that's
15 going to be -- it's not exactly an outline, but it
16 shows the depth and the breadth of the environmental
17 assessment and what are the actual things to be
18 considered. Because that becomes a major part of
19 the record, and all the decisions in the project
20 become -- are finally decided on what the final
21 record is. So it's places like this where we define
22 what the discussion is, is where you want to have
23 your initial input.

24 What else we're going to talk about, as
25 you can well read, is the schedule. Probably

1 sometime in August, that's anticipated at this time,
2 things can come up, but that's the plan. We'll talk
3 about what's going into the EA, we'll talk about
4 what's not going into the EA. Things that don't go
5 into the EA are things that are not under the
6 auspices of the Public Utilities Commission, like
7 transactions between the utility and individual
8 landowners for rights-of-way, things like that.
9 We'll point out the things that aren't actually a
10 part of the environmental assessment.

11 I have brought and put on the table over
12 here, and please grab one on the way back, there's
13 one for everyone. I've done up what I would call a
14 draft scoping document. This isn't exactly what a
15 scoping document is going to be, but as you're
16 thinking about making your written comments -- I
17 mean, you can comment here tonight, but if you want
18 to take this home and look at it, it may spur you to
19 think of other things. I've done a synopsis of what
20 the project is, of how the system works, and the
21 things that we would normally cover in here and the
22 things that we're looking for from you. So please
23 feel free to grab that and scan it or look at it.
24 There are copies for everyone down there on that
25 table.

1 So, again, we're going to be putting
2 together the scope. Along with the impacts on human
3 and natural environments, the other thing that we're
4 looking for from the local input is do you have
5 alternative ideas for routes. The company has
6 evaluated several routes and they've come up with
7 their best idea for a route. That may be the best
8 route, but we will evaluate that route, but we also
9 want to hear from the public, from you, if you have
10 concepts for alternative routes.

11 I've had a couple things mentioned to me
12 already, but it doesn't do any good for the record
13 if they're mentioned to me. I mean, feel free to
14 call me and talk to me at any time, but the comments
15 need to be put on paper and entered into the record
16 so we officially have that on hand. So that's one
17 of the major things. Then we can take the routes
18 and put them side by side and see where the impacts
19 are and which may or may not have a greater impact.

20 When we're asking for a route, it's
21 always something that -- it's always something a
22 little more than you want it someplace else besides
23 right by my house, which is the first thing that I
24 think everyone would think. At least I would. But
25 check out this list on your own time. These things

1 are all written down on the papers, that's why we
2 write these down, so you can go back and check
3 these. But there's particular things that you want
4 to look for when you want to identify a route.

5 Be very specific, just don't -- the best
6 thing I can say is the last word on that slide.
7 Give me a map. And then tell me why you wanted that
8 route instead of another route. And in telling me
9 why, tell me what are you mitigating. What is this
10 doing to mitigate or to minimize or to avoid those
11 impacts better than the route that the company is
12 suggesting. So we'll look at those routes, and the
13 more information you can provide, the better. I
14 know we're not -- we're not transmission engineers,
15 we don't have the staff to design routes, but it
16 doesn't have to be the route from start to finish.
17 It can be a section of the route. It can be a
18 change in the route. It can be something that makes
19 sense to you, something so that you can transmit
20 those issues into my head. Again, to do that they
21 need to be on paper.

22 This is just a simple thing, but
23 sometimes, if it's someplace where you live, you
24 know the impacts better than anybody, than somebody
25 from Grand Forks or somebody from St. Paul. So, you

1 know, it may or may not be a better choice to go
2 slightly away from a particular highway, it may or
3 may not be possible, but there's no reason not to
4 look at it. And it may be the right thing to do.

5 I'm really adept here. Oh, good grief.
6 Great. You know what, you have your handout there,
7 that's really a good thing. I don't know if we can
8 get that back or not, but it doesn't really matter.
9 There's been a lot of us talking already tonight,
10 and I think the whole point of having you come out
11 and us come out is so that we can talk back and
12 forth together. So we really want to get your
13 input.

14 I have lots of contact information on
15 here, that's already in your hands, I'm not going to
16 go over it again.

17 The one thing that was on the list is
18 that we are going to -- the one thing we are going
19 to do, is in addition to talking to you, we're going
20 to talk to affected state agencies. And that's the
21 Department of Natural Resources, the Minnesota
22 Pollution Control, perhaps. Whatever agencies are
23 going to have an impact, we will communicate back
24 and forth with them. They'll also be having input
25 into what the scope of the environmental assessment

1 is going to be.

2 I also had on my handout another
3 timeline, but Cezar has already given you a specific
4 timeline. This depends on how it goes, but it's not
5 written in stone at this time, but this is the
6 direction.

7 The thing I want to point out that's the
8 most important discussion in this regard is that you
9 have essentially two input points in this process.
10 And you don't want to miss it. Tonight is the start
11 of one of them, where you can make your comments on
12 the record, or you can, between now and March 7th,
13 make your comments in written form and send them to
14 me. At different stages along the way comments go
15 to different places, things go a different way, but
16 at this point when the Department of Commerce is
17 putting together the scope, all the comments should
18 come to me. The comments that you make tonight are
19 going to be on the record. We brought Janet with
20 us, and so, again, we're not standing here, you're
21 not standing telling me something and actually
22 counting on me to remember, because as you can see,
23 the clarity and the continuity of that thinking
24 might not be what you're looking for. But the --
25 oh. Thank you, John.

1 But here I've also starred those. In
2 addition to the pointing out that there are two, I
3 point out that we're early. This is still early.
4 This is still the beginning of the process. So we
5 have a lot of conversations and discussion that can
6 go forward.

7 I will point out the second comment
8 period is the public hearing, as Cezar pointed out.
9 That will be back here. That's another time when
10 you can actually come before the judge. Tonight you
11 can come and say anything you want, but the things
12 that I suggest concentrating on are what are we
13 going to look at to review the project.

14 When you come to the public hearing
15 you'll be able to come before a judge, an
16 administrative law judge, and say this is how I feel
17 about the project and what's happened so far and
18 what people have learned from the environmental
19 research and what we've learned from what we've gone
20 through to date, and you tell that to a judge and
21 put that on the record.

22 The Public Utilities Commission is a
23 public open meeting, but it's not really the place
24 to make the comments into the system. We want to
25 make them when they can really count, which is, as I

1 mentioned at the very outset, when we're building
2 that record. The record that we're going to put
3 together that the Commissioners will take all that
4 information that we've put together and make the
5 best decision possible. So concentrate on those two
6 dates. And, again, I urge you, don't waste your
7 opportunities to have input at that point.

8 Just one thing about this. This is our
9 website. And you can take this home, and take home
10 copies of this for your neighbors who didn't have a
11 chance to come or had something else scheduled for
12 tonight. This is an alternative way to follow
13 along. I strongly suggest that you get your name on
14 the project list, that's one thing, but we at
15 Commerce keep our own website of the business that's
16 afoot. And what we try to do is narrow it down to
17 the things, the steps that we think that are crucial
18 to what we're evaluating, but also the things that
19 are crucial to what you might want to be looking at.
20 So I'm not suggesting that you not use the other
21 sources, they are there for you, you should use
22 them, but sometimes eDockets will have a lot of
23 documents that you have to float through and sort
24 through and try to figure out what to look at, but
25 stop by there and see if that's useful to you, and

1 if they are, just keep up on that page as the time
2 goes by.

3 Just to mention to you one more
4 opportunity. I printed out a comment form. And,
5 again, this comment form is up on this desk as well.
6 So when you grab that draft scoping document, grab a
7 copy of this. This is one when you can contact and
8 send me information. It's not the only way. You
9 can do it however you want. Send me an e-mail. If
10 you go online to our website that I had up before or
11 this one here, you can make comments online. So
12 it's convenient to do however you'd like. This is
13 just convenient because it's here and it has my
14 address already on it.

15 Otherwise, any time I'm happy to talk to
16 you and hear what you have to say as we go in the
17 process, but in order to get comments into what the
18 scope is, and the scope is what the environmental
19 assessment becomes, so it's a real order, so the
20 comments that design the scope, that design the
21 environmental assessment, those comments are due
22 March 7th. So that's a date I want you to keep in
23 mind.

24 So I'm hoping this is helping to assist
25 you in getting your comments in because we do want

1 to hear from you. If you have all papers, okay, you
2 have all the papers, you have all the comments, I
3 will leave this speaking about it and repeating it
4 for the night and leave the meeting open to your
5 comments.

6 Now, how this is going to proceed is we'd
7 like you to come down, okay, and use the microphone.
8 And one of the reasons is so everybody can hear, and
9 another reason is so we can have Janet here, come
10 and give her your name, spell your name, and then
11 make your comments.

12 Again, as Cezar said, these are official.
13 If you make comments here tonight and you don't want
14 to send them in, that's fine, they're equal. They
15 are all part of the record. If you come and speak
16 tonight and you think of something else that you
17 want to add later, it's more than fine to do both,
18 send letters too. Again, give some time either
19 tonight or over time over the next couple weeks to
20 think about that route alternative, if you have one,
21 if you think that might help the process. And if
22 you have trouble putting that together, talk to me,
23 you have my number. But remember the date March 7th
24 and we welcome your input starting now.

25 MS. CAROL OVERLAND: Are you --

1 MR. DAVID BIRKHOLZ: Please.

2 MR. CEZAR PANAIT: You can sit over here
3 and we have another microphone.

4 MS. CAROL OVERLAND: I definitely want a
5 microphone. There's one for you. And here's one
6 for you. Here's your official record copy. Here's
7 one for you.

8 Carol Overland, O-V-E-R-L-A-N-D. I'm
9 here on behalf of the Erie-Bourdeaux estate, and
10 with me today are a couple members of the family and
11 they'll be speaking, also. I'm going to address the
12 legal issues.

13 Also, for the record, I affirm that I
14 will tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing
15 but the truth.

16 First, in this packet that I handed out,
17 there's an important rule in Minnesota, 7850.4200,
18 factors excluded from consideration. And when the
19 PUC has issued a certificate of need, under the
20 routing side of things, they're prohibited from
21 addressing issues of size, type, and timing, or
22 questions of alternative system configurations. And
23 what's important about this is there is no
24 certificate of need, so there is no prohibition.
25 And in this particular case there are some very

1 important issues, especially of timing, and also
2 alternative system configurations that should be
3 considered.

4 And timing, that's the first document
5 that I have in my handout, and I will be also
6 submitting written comments that might draw this
7 together a little bit better. But, the next
8 document that I've got is an August 6th, 2014
9 comments from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
10 in the Sandpiper docket, and the document is eDocket
11 number 20148-102081-01. And in that document it
12 brings up the proposition of having the tank farm
13 that they're wanting to build up at the end of this
14 project, looking at putting that in Crookston. And
15 that is one of the alternatives that is going to be
16 addressed in the Sandpiper line, so this is not a
17 done deal. We are looking at a transmission
18 project, which takes not that much time to put up
19 compared to a pipeline, and the pipeline route that
20 it is dependent on and the pipeline tank farm that
21 it is dependent on are not a done deal, not even
22 close, and that project has been delayed till at
23 least 2019, according to Enbridge, it will have to
24 go through a full EIS, there's a lot of time before
25 this project will be useful.

1 And at this point it's a project to
2 nowhere and it has not been decided. So this should
3 not even be going forward until that pipeline --
4 it's established where that route is going to be.
5 It's very possible that tank farm may be in
6 Crookston and not at what is called Clearbrook West.
7 Okay, that's document number 2.

8 Document number 3 is from the Biennial
9 Transmission Projects report, and you can find that
10 on minnelectrans.com. Also, all of this information
11 will be posted on legelectric.org. And why this
12 Biennial Transmission Project's report is important,
13 is that if you're looking at alternatives, this page
14 13, which is the first page of the handout, says
15 that there was a closed loop -- a Clearbrook looped
16 service study, and in that there were some
17 alternatives evaluated. And this was regarded as
18 the favorite option by the applicants. And it's
19 important that these alternatives be included in the
20 EIS.

21 And so we have a chance to look at what
22 these alternatives are, how -- what they did, what
23 they didn't do, how that would fit, and how that
24 might better -- well, what the impacts would be and
25 how those would measure up compared to what they're

1 proposing. So I want to see that those alternatives
2 that were addressed in the Clearbrook looped service
3 study included. I have requested a copy from
4 Minnkota, from an engineer who was listed on the
5 site, I have not heard a peep back, but I will be on
6 that. And I trust that the Department of Commerce
7 will also get a copy of that study and include that
8 and consider those alternatives in the record.

9 And, also, this -- it's not clear in the
10 application, this is like the Menahga project, which
11 was built south of here for the Sandpiper Pipeline,
12 and this is also for the Sandpiper Pipeline, and
13 it's kind of not really admitted or discussed. But
14 it's like that 800-pound gorilla sitting in the
15 corner. And on page 87 it's clear in this Biennial
16 Transmission Project report, due to the development
17 of a new pump station load near Clearbrook, a new
18 load service needs to be established. And it's just
19 very clear that that is what this is for. And
20 that's repeated on page 48 a couple of times.

21 Moving on to the third document that I
22 have here, and I'm going through the documents
23 before I have some other comments. The third
24 document is a cover sheet and a selected page of an
25 MPCA EAW for the Clearbrook tanks project. Now,

1 that is for a project adding to the tank farm that
2 is just southeast of Clearbrook on the edge of town
3 here. And what's important here is, looking at
4 phased-in connected projects, that's something that
5 the environmental assessment should do.

6 And on five it lists this particular
7 project, the Clearbrook - Clearbrook West 115 kV
8 transmission line, as a connected project to that
9 Clearbrook tanks project. It also lists the Menahga
10 transmission project, the Motley 115 kV transmission
11 project, and there are other projects, too. In a
12 PUC docket, it was docket number 14-320, it listed
13 about five transmission projects that are connected
14 with pipeline projects. And I think there are also
15 additional ones connected to the Sandpiper project
16 that need to be considered. All of these same
17 connected projects need to be addressed in the
18 environmental review for this project.

19 And then the next document that I have is
20 Appendix G-3 of the Sandpiper application, it's the
21 facility design. And I have the cover and page 1
22 included, which shows the location of the Clearbrook
23 terminal, and that is then referenced -- you see
24 Klongerbo Lake there, and this shows that, yes,
25 indeed, this is what's going to be at the other end

1 of this transmission line. And that's important,
2 it's a phase-connected project. And the record
3 should also note the wetlands in that area, not only
4 where this tank farm is proposed to be put, which is
5 really questionable, but also all through the cross
6 country part of this project, it's extreme wetlands,
7 everywhere you go there are wetlands. And
8 applicants are requesting a 900-foot -- not
9 alignment, a corridor, to be able to find some
10 wiggle room to put this project in. And that's
11 because it is wetlands, and there are also seven
12 pipelines there already and now they want to put
13 another two pipelines in, and then they want to put
14 a transmission line over and above that and that is
15 extreme in the least.

16 The next document that I have is -- it's
17 a Commerce EERA draft scoping document for
18 Sandpiper. This was filed in eDockets, it's number
19 201511-115707-01. And, again, this notes the
20 necessity to address cumulative impacts for
21 transmission for pipelines. They are in the
22 Sandpiper Pipeline likely to and should address all
23 the cumulative transmission impacts, and this, as
24 one of those lines, this project, the environmental
25 review for that should address the pipeline and the

1 cumulative other transmission projects associated
2 with all these pumping stations that are going to be
3 needed.

4 And I've also included a geographical
5 system map and the Red River Valley transmission
6 system from Minnkota Power. What's really important
7 in this environmental review is that the
8 transmission system in the area be looked at. There
9 was supposed to be -- there was a 2007 transmission
10 map that the EQB or Minnesota planning put together,
11 and there's supposed to be a 2014 update. I can't
12 find it online, but that 2014 update should be
13 incorporated into the environmental review so you
14 can see how this project would fit into the system
15 that's there and what other ways of getting at this
16 area might be if there were ever a need, if they did
17 decide to put a tank farm in there or a need for a
18 pumping station, that that can be used and should be
19 looked at.

20 I'd also like to refer you, when you work
21 on the scoping issue, to Figure 2 of the
22 application, which is alternative routes considered.
23 That should be added to the scope of each of those
24 alternative routes, should be added to the scope.
25 But, in particular, alternative route 3, which goes

1 along 74 -- well, actually, this would be a hybrid.
2 Well, alternative route 3, but also a hybrid route
3 going from the substation southeast of Clearbrook,
4 in that tank farm, across 74, County Road 74, and
5 take that over to County Road 73, where it turns up
6 and goes north, then it takes a little draw to the
7 left and it goes around the Erie-Bourdeaux gravel
8 pit down there. And then crosses over to the west
9 side of the road on 73, keep it on the south side
10 where there's that little jog, and then the west
11 side of the road going up 73 up to the tank farm
12 substation. And I will include a drawing on a map
13 of that. So that would be like a hybrid, sort of
14 the route, and then adding -- just continue
15 following 74 going west.

16 And another option would be to go past
17 Taflin Lake Road a bit and then go north cross
18 country for that little section there, to go on the
19 west side, there's a home there at the other corner,
20 and so to go west of that. And, again, I'll put a
21 map of that option, too, as an alternative route.

22 Let's see. Overall, though, this project
23 is premature because it's for a power -- it's for
24 power and pipeline pumping stations, and those
25 pumping stations aren't even permitted, we don't

1 even know if the tank farm will be there. So it's a
2 little ridiculous. Because if they do decide to
3 move the tank farm over to Crookston, which would
4 also be environmentally beneficial, because they're
5 looking at the area it's planned for is a wetland,
6 if they moved it over to Crookston there would be no
7 reason to put a transmission line in here.

8 So, let's see. Connected actions need to
9 be included. In my written comments I will include
10 a list of what I see as phased and connective
11 actions here, particularly all these different
12 transmission lines, including Elko-New Market,
13 Palisade, Bull Moose, Motley area, and there are
14 many more, I think.

15 Excuse me.

16 Also, we don't see -- in this map, when
17 you talk about phased and connected actions, in the
18 maps in the application we don't see the many
19 pipelines. And even just like looking at the
20 Erie-Bourdeaux land that they own, they have seven
21 pipelines there now. They're looking at building
22 another two --

23 MS. DAWN BOURDEAUX: No, there's eight.

24 MS. CAROL OVERLAND: Hm?

25 MS. DAWN BOURDEAUX: There's eight.

1 MS. CAROL OVERLAND: There's eight.
2 There's eight lines, seven in a group, one separate,
3 and then they want to add the Sandpiper next to one
4 that's already there. So seven pipelines closely
5 together in -- I mean, it'll be nine pipelines in
6 two corridors, which are very close together. And
7 then adding a transmission line above ground on top
8 of that. And that is really extreme. And you don't
9 see that from these maps and that should be shown in
10 these maps, and the EIS -- or the environmental
11 assessment must consider that, where they're trying
12 to go cross country, there's such devastating
13 infrastructure already there, that this is just
14 adding insult to injury.

15 Also, I have a question about whether --
16 the environmental review should consider the impact
17 of transmission lines if they are parallel with
18 pipelines and the potential for corrosion and what
19 that means. You need to take a look at that. As I
20 understand it, there is a high potential for
21 corrosion, and if there were to be a pipeline leak,
22 which has already happened in this area, and we will
23 provide in further comments documentation of
24 pipeline leaks in the area. And leak is just too
25 nice of a word, it doesn't express what happens when

1 there is a pipeline failure and you can't clean it
2 up. And that's another issue about going cross
3 country. You don't have access to it if it's cross
4 country, if it's by a road you'll have a better
5 chance of having access to it. If it's going cross
6 country through wetlands, it's going to be really
7 hard, you know, to get to the transmission line.
8 But we will address the pipeline leak issue because
9 there could be a corrosive impact of transmission
10 lines on the pipeline.

11 Also, I'm wondering, is RUS financing
12 this project?

13 MR. JOHN GRAVES: Yes, ma'am.

14 MS. CAROL OVERLAND: They are. Okay.
15 Will there be an RUS environmental assessment?

16 MR. JOHN GRAVES: Yes, ma'am. An
17 environmental report.

18 MS. CAROL OVERLAND: An environmental
19 report. And when will that be happening?

20 MR. JOHN GRAVES: That will be filed
21 shortly.

22 MS. CAROL OVERLAND: Do you know if
23 Dennis Rankin is handling it?

24 MR. JOHN GRAVES: Yes, ma'am.

25 MS. CAROL OVERLAND: That was just a

1 guess. And will there be a comment period for the
2 public on that?

3 MR. JOHN GRAVES: On the environmental
4 report, I believe so.

5 MS. CAROL OVERLAND: I think so, too.

6 MR. JOHN GRAVES: I can't swear to it.
7 If it's an environmental assessment that definitely
8 does; the environmental report, I don't recall right
9 off.

10 MS. CAROL OVERLAND: And I think my
11 understanding of it, we're dealing with this down in
12 Onalaska, and as I understand, if there's enough
13 public interest, it could boot it up so there could
14 be a public comment period. So it's good to know
15 that that's happening.

16 MR. JOHN GRAVES: There is an
17 environmental report, though, for sure.

18 MS. CAROL OVERLAND: Thank you. Good.

19 Also, there was discussion of burying
20 distribution lines in -- where, if this project were
21 to go over an area where there is currently a
22 distribution line, then it would be buried, and I
23 think that the environmental assessment should cover
24 the potential of just doing an underbuild. That may
25 be a way to decrease costs or it might be something

1 to consider.

2 The application also discusses easement
3 acquisition. And the environmental review should
4 address whether easements have been acquired thus
5 far, and if there are, what percentage and where.
6 Because as this project is premature, because we
7 don't know where Sandpiper is going to go, we don't
8 know if there's going to be a tank farm there or in
9 Crookston, that that should be -- that's premature,
10 and that's on the applicants, that's the risk that
11 they're taking, but the environmental assessment
12 should address whether easements have been acquired,
13 what percentage, and where.

14 There's also an issue of local vendors,
15 contractors, and workers, and that there may be some
16 increased employment, but it would be good to know
17 as far as socioeconomic impacts, though, if they
18 would be local people hired or if they would be
19 shipped in from somewhere else. And whether they're
20 union or not, that should be in the environmental
21 assessment.

22 I'm almost done here.

23 Oh, and the environmental review should
24 also address agriculture land removed from
25 production. For example, on the Erie-Bourdeaux

1 property, if the transmission line were to go
2 through there, and then with the pipeline, it's
3 going to be really hard to farm there. And that's
4 long term it's going to be hard to farm. Once you
5 put a transmission line in, that has a permanent
6 impact. And then there are also temporary impacts
7 of if it's built, you know, then where do the cows
8 go when you're building it, and that kind of thing
9 needs to be considered, the under construction
10 impacts and the permanent impacts of this project.

11 Also, access roads and lay-down for the
12 transmission, I don't see them on a map anywhere and
13 that should be there.

14 And I also saw you said the Sandpiper
15 information from the historical society, and I'm not
16 sure if that's sufficient because it's a slightly
17 different area. And so, you know, not all of this
18 is right on the Sandpiper easement. So I think that
19 that would be -- the environmental review should
20 include fresh historical society review, because
21 it's not identical, it's just shared in part.

22 I think for now that covers what I have
23 for today. But I will have written comments before
24 the 7th.

25 Any questions? No?

1 Okay. That's it. Thank you.

2 Oh, one more thing. This will be very
3 quick. I noticed in the schedule, the release of
4 the environmental assessment, and then below that
5 was public hearing. And it's really important to
6 make sure that the environmental assessment comes
7 out before the public hearing so that we can comment
8 on it. Yeah, it may be a duh, but I've had cases
9 where the environmental assessment doesn't come out
10 until everything is all done.

11 MR. DAVID BIRKHOLZ: Our environmental
12 assessment will be out before the public hearing.

13 MS. CAROL OVERLAND: I can quote you on
14 that? Great. It doesn't always happen that way.

15 Thank you.

16 MR. CEZAR PANAIT: Thank you,
17 Ms. Overland.

18 In looking at the sign-in sheet, there
19 was one other person, Dawn Bourdeaux, that indicated
20 that she wanted to speak, so we will invite her over
21 to address and present some comments.

22 MS. DAWN BOURDEAUX: Hi. Dawn Bourdeaux,
23 B-O-U-R-D-E-A-U-X, D-A-W-N. I am a trustee for the
24 Erie-Bourdeaux Family Revocable Trust.

25 I'm here in regards to -- I'll give the

1 parcel numbers, MN-CL-014.000, MN-OL-013.000, and
2 also property number MN-CL-011.000. Out of this,
3 the parcel number MN-CL-014.000 has been in my
4 family for 98 and a half years. It will become a
5 century farm in just a little over a year and we
6 will be able to qualify for a 100-year farm.

7 With that, in the county of Clearwater
8 County, there's 42 others listed. As our family, we
9 want that honor. We've worked hard, we've seen
10 hardships, we've seen ups and downs, and we've had
11 such wonderful, wonderful memories of this farm and
12 of this land.

13 Eight out of the nine children, my dad
14 was born on that property. Like I said, it has
15 provided 98 and a half years agricultural living for
16 our family. On that land we have 14 areas that are
17 considered restricted use, we have wetlands, and we
18 also have eight current pipelines going through.
19 It's already hard to farm this land.

20 When Enbridge started approaching my
21 parents, and my mom has passed away back in 2013,
22 the homestead has always been off limits. This is
23 our heritage. This also needs to be considered for
24 the scope. There's lots of wildlife. We have
25 eagles nests, we have 12 Trumpeter Swans, the

1 muskrats, the deer. On the lake, on the Erie Lake
2 it's got springs, so it's opened at different parts
3 throughout the entire year. On a couple of sides of
4 the lake are springs. On the one side is very rare,
5 we have a hot spring. How many of you would like to
6 have a hot spring on your property? It's warm
7 water. That provides water all year for our cattle.
8 They don't have to go and open up a river or a lake,
9 that hot spring the cattle walk back to every day.
10 The amount of ducks and everything else for wildlife
11 is immaculate. It's awesome. It's a piece of -- a
12 place where you have peace.

13 Along with that, my grandpa Oscar Erie
14 was the clerk for Pine Lake Township for over 40
15 years. He started in 1928. During that time it was
16 a main corridor for people in Pine Lake Township to
17 come because he was the recorder of every birth and
18 every death that happened within the township and
19 then that was passed along to the county.

20 With that, since he was the clerk,
21 anything that needed to be paid for, he had to give
22 an order. Those people had to come to him before
23 they could get a check from Melvin Hemnes
24 (phonetic). My grandpa was also a fire warden. He
25 started in 1940. He was done in 1966 and my dad

1 took over in 1967 and is currently a fire warden.

2 We have numerous wetlands which bring
3 great concerns. My brother, David, is on the
4 Gonvick Fire Department. They have talked at
5 numerous lengths, what would happen if somebody got
6 hurt, how would we get a vehicle out there?
7 Especially if the field wasn't plowed. You can't
8 come in from the one direction because it's wetland.
9 And if you come in from other ways, you got wetlands
10 in that, too.

11 For this tank farm to work, Enbridge is
12 asking a lot of property, that this needs to be
13 included in the scope with the power lines. If
14 everything were to go through from the Erie Lake all
15 the way past the seven lines would be easements.
16 What happens to future expansions which has already
17 been stated in their deal? We already know other
18 projects Enbridge wants to expand on, what does that
19 leave us with?

20 A farm that's been providing for us and
21 to provide for us in the future. That's the way our
22 life has been. We're farmers. My dad and my
23 grandpa would always talk about -- 'cause in the
24 property that Enbridge bought there's a bottomless
25 swamp. My dad and grandpa will talk about -- I

1 think it was in 1954, how the big yellow cat went
2 down. They stuck a pole 20 feet down and could not
3 find it. It's still buried. What impact
4 environmentally does that have when the water tables
5 are already so high?

6 We have been told by contractors for
7 Enbridge, when dad and David have been out there
8 working, be careful, there is pipes that are only
9 six inches, buried six inches underneath, and they
10 go to four foot. They can't give exacts, but
11 they've said you cannot go down deep. That already
12 provides hardship when you're trying to farm and
13 need to be able to till the land.

14 As I said, this farm means so much just
15 not to my immediate family, but to the family, my
16 dad's brothers and sisters. At one of our family
17 reunions that we had a few years back, they handed
18 out little bags of soil and this is what it said on
19 the soil. This soil is from the Erie family farm.
20 It is rich in success, hard work, and family love.
21 Spread this dirt in your flower garden and you will
22 always be close to your Erie heritage and home.
23 This has been very emotional.

24 As Carol said earlier, we have a gravel
25 pit, too. My dad will be 87 here in less than two

1 months. How do you want to be living your life at
2 that age? There's been times when he's had two or
3 three contractors every day of the week out asking
4 for something. Between Enbridge, Minnkota,
5 contractors wanting gravel. Why don't you ask
6 yourself how would you feel? Would you want that
7 when you're 86 years old? That's caused tremendous
8 hardship and heartache on our family. We lost my
9 mother all of a sudden and we get scared with him
10 now. The pressures and harassment he's received is
11 unbelievable. And it's all been documented by a
12 lawyer.

13 We have worked with Enbridge on so much.
14 They have easement to go straight through for the
15 Sandpiper, we don't know what's going to happen for
16 the rest of this because they are asking for one of
17 our best fields. How are we supposed to survive?
18 That's all something that we look at.

19 Many of us like wildlife, many of us like
20 our four-wheelers, my family is no different.
21 Hunting is a huge aspect between my uncles, cousins,
22 second cousins, that come to this farm, these
23 different farms. They took 12 deer last winter
24 between all the ones who visited. That's the amount
25 of wildlife that is there.

1 I'd like to read a letter that my
2 brother, Mark, has written up. And there's
3 environmental reviews that should be included as
4 well.

5 Some say farmers don't care about their
6 land and are consistently aiming to make it more
7 productive without considering the impacts. This
8 couldn't be further from the truth for our family
9 farm. The original farmstead has been in our family
10 for almost 100 years. It's been our pride and our
11 joy and it's part of our family's past, present, and
12 future. Watching a sunset with cows and crops
13 filling the view is so extremely peaceful, or seeing
14 a deer in the distance or a bald eagle flying
15 overhead. And then my favorite, a white swan
16 swimming in the lake always makes me feel very
17 privileged to be stewards of such a beautiful piece
18 of land. As a kid I spent a lot of time with my
19 grandpa and his passion for the land was passed down
20 to my dad and my siblings. And grandpa probably got
21 his passion from great grandpa. I have deep and
22 wonderful memories of being on this farm. Respect
23 of the land runs deep in my family.

24 And that is most certainly true. When I
25 was talking with my brother, Mark, last week, we

1 have two building sites. One that he would like to
2 build on and one that my husband and I are planning
3 on building on as well. If the pipe, with all the
4 expansions, and if these power lines go in, we will
5 lose our building sites.

6 Like I said, there is 42 other farms that
7 are century farms. We are soon there. We should be
8 able to have the same honor. We should be able to,
9 after all the years of working, seeing a tornado go
10 through and the barn being destroyed, pieces half a
11 mile away, rebuilding it, we should be able to do
12 what we would like, too.

13 Besides the numerous wetlands, I can tell
14 you this summer, when I was walking around, the gate
15 was left open by somebody who was doing some
16 surveying and we were looking for the cattle. As I
17 was walking around Erie Lake, the eagle and her four
18 babies were not even 20 feet above me. That is so
19 wonderful and such a precious gift and memory that I
20 have.

21 It's been an honor that I'm a steward for
22 this property and for this land and I'm so grateful
23 it provided for my growing up. The memories are
24 unbelievable, just as like most of you can say about
25 your house or your land that you may own. Some of

1 us only own it for a short time, but think of the
2 roots and the history that this homestead holds for
3 Pine Lake Township with the recording of births and
4 so much more.

5 So in the environmental review, please
6 consider all the wetlands, the restricted use
7 already, the eight lines, nine with the Sandpiper,
8 the safety for humans, our heritage, all the
9 springs, eagle nests, the 12 swans that my dad will
10 count just like cattle, and how this farm has
11 provided income for us. If it's restricted in that,
12 how do we make our payments? There's only so much
13 burden you can put on a farmer. He needs to be able
14 to farm it and make a profit and be able to use it.

15 Thank you.

16 MR. CEZAR PANAIT: Thank you,
17 Ms. Bourdeaux.

18 And with that, we don't have anybody else
19 that indicated, that signed up. But more or less,
20 that doesn't mean that we won't invite other people
21 to speak.

22 Come right here, sir.

23 MR. JIM GUSTAFSON: Jim Gustafson, J-I-M,
24 G-U-S-T-A-F-S-O-N. And I will make this brief.

25 We are a landowner along the route also.

1 The power line will cross about 800 feet of our
2 property. We did sign the easement. It won't have
3 any impact on our property whatsoever, it goes along
4 the road on the north side of our property and it's
5 no problem for us.

6 I do want to make one comment. And I
7 feel sorry for the Eries, and I'm sure there are
8 other people who would adverse -- this project will
9 adversely affect like any project will adversely
10 affect. But one thing, and I'm sure we all drove
11 cars here tonight, we all got gas in our cars, when
12 we go home you turn on your switch and you have
13 lights on your house, we all have power, we all have
14 gas for our cars. I mean, power doesn't get from
15 point A to point B magically. It's like oil don't
16 get from point A to point B magically, it has to go
17 someplace.

18 And I have full confidence that Minnkota
19 Power did due diligence to select the best route
20 possible. And I know it affects some people more
21 than other people, it went through our property, it
22 doesn't affect us none. And it does affect the
23 Eries, I'm sure it does, we've heard that. But, I
24 mean, it has to go from point A to point B somehow
25 and that's my only comment, I guess.

1 That's all I have to say. It does pass
2 through our property and we see no adverse effect
3 for us, but I'm sure we have a different situation
4 than the Eries, but it does have to have some kind
5 of route, there's no magic route for it, so that's
6 all I got to say.

7 MR. CEZAR PANAIT: Okay. Thank you for
8 your comments.

9 Anybody else? We are here to take your
10 comments and input for this project, so we kindly
11 invite everybody to say a few words if you so wish.

12 David, do you want to make closing
13 comments?

14 MR. DAVID BIRKHOLZ: Just to emphasize
15 the March 7th date.

16 MR. CEZAR PANAIT: So you heard it,
17 March 7th, 4:30 p.m., is the closing of the open
18 comment period for this phase of the project, which
19 is building the environmental assessment scoping,
20 the content of what should go into the environmental
21 assessment report. Things that impact and potential
22 mitigation measures and even alternative routes that
23 you see as being less impactful in comparison to the
24 applicant's proposed route. And it doesn't have to
25 be a complete alternative from the beginning until

1 the end, you can propose short segments that would
2 mitigate some stated impacts.

3 So with that, if there are no more people
4 that would like to speak tonight, thank you again
5 for coming out tonight and taking the time from your
6 busy schedules to provide input. And we'll come
7 here again sometime in August, I believe, for the
8 public hearing.

9 Thank you again. Good night.

10 (Meeting concluded at 7:31 p.m.)

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<p style="text-align: center;">A</p> <p>able (9) 29:15;38:9;48:6; 51:13;54:8,8,11; 55:13,14</p> <p>above (4) 18:11;38:14;42:7; 54:18</p> <p>acceptance (2) 8:22;10:3</p> <p>accepted (2) 6:19;8:22</p> <p>accepting (1) 5:24</p> <p>access (3) 43:3,5;46:11</p> <p>according (1) 34:23</p> <p>acquired (2) 45:4,12</p> <p>acquisition (1) 45:3</p> <p>across (3) 21:8,15;40:4</p> <p>actions (3) 41:8,11,17</p> <p>active (1) 14:17</p> <p>actual (1) 23:17</p> <p>actually (6) 6:21;16:15;24:9; 28:21;29:10;40:1</p> <p>add (3) 15:6;32:17;42:3</p> <p>added (3) 14:3;39:23,24</p> <p>adding (4) 37:1;40:14;42:7,14</p> <p>addition (2) 27:19;29:2</p> <p>additional (4) 17:25,25;18:21; 37:15</p> <p>address (17) 4:21;11:8;12:17; 13:2;14:7,7;15:4; 31:14;33:11;38:20, 22,25;43:8;45:4,12, 24;47:21</p> <p>addressed (3) 34:16;36:2;37:17</p> <p>addresses (1) 9:19</p> <p>addressing (1) 33:21</p> <p>adept (1) 27:5</p> <p>Administrative (4) 5:21,23;6:2;29:16</p> <p>admitted (1)</p>	<p>36:13</p> <p>adverse (2) 56:8;57:2</p> <p>adversely (2) 56:9,9</p> <p>advice (1) 7:9</p> <p>advisor (2) 7:3;15:9</p> <p>advocate (1) 21:5</p> <p>advocating (1) 7:10</p> <p>aesthetics (1) 7:17</p> <p>affect (4) 56:9,10,22,22</p> <p>affected (1) 27:20</p> <p>affects (1) 56:20</p> <p>affirm (1) 33:13</p> <p>afoot (1) 30:16</p> <p>again (20) 10:9;11:11,19,22; 12:21;14:13;15:7; 25:1;26:20;27:16; 28:20;30:6;31:5; 32:12,18;38:19; 40:20;58:4,7,9</p> <p>age (2) 19:25;52:2</p> <p>agencies (2) 27:20,22</p> <p>agency (6) 3:23;4:7;5:15,22; 20:23;34:9</p> <p>agenda (1) 10:1</p> <p>agricultural (1) 48:15</p> <p>agriculture (2) 7:20;45:24</p> <p>ahead (1) 19:22</p> <p>aiming (1) 53:6</p> <p>air (1) 7:24</p> <p>alignment (1) 38:9</p> <p>ALJ (2) 6:6;9:24</p> <p>allow (1) 9:13</p> <p>allowed (1) 7:9</p> <p>almost (2) 45:22;53:10</p> <p>along (9) 17:18;25:2;28:14;</p>	<p>30:13;40:1;49:13,19; 55:25;56:3</p> <p>alternative (13) 25:5,10;30:12; 32:20;33:22;34:2; 39:22,24,25;40:2,21; 57:22,25</p> <p>alternatives (9) 10:14,14;34:15; 35:13,17,19,22;36:1,8</p> <p>Although (1) 16:5</p> <p>always (9) 16:2,21;25:21,21; 47:14;48:22;50:23; 51:22;53:16</p> <p>amongst (1) 22:23</p> <p>amount (3) 16:14;49:10;52:24</p> <p>Analysis (2) 5:17;20:19</p> <p>analyst (1) 6:21</p> <p>analysts (2) 4:17,18</p> <p>animals (1) 7:24</p> <p>announced (1) 9:8</p> <p>anticipated (1) 24:1</p> <p>Appendix (1) 37:20</p> <p>applicant (3) 3:18;5:8;21:1</p> <p>applicants (3) 35:18;38:8;45:10</p> <p>applicant's (1) 57:24</p> <p>application (13) 5:10,24;6:15,18; 8:20,21,22;23:10; 36:10;37:20;39:22; 41:18;45:2</p> <p>applied (1) 16:11</p> <p>appointed (1) 4:13</p> <p>approaching (1) 48:20</p> <p>approximately (3) 17:14,19;18:11</p> <p>archaeological (1) 7:21</p> <p>area (13) 10:21;12:10;17:25; 19:3;38:3;39:8,16; 41:5,13;42:22,24; 44:21;46:17</p> <p>areas (2) 17:25;48:16</p> <p>around (3)</p>	<p>40:7;54:14,17</p> <p>arrangement (1) 22:11</p> <p>arrives (1) 13:19</p> <p>aspect (2) 20:19;52:21</p> <p>assessment (21) 9:15;21:11,17; 23:17;24:10;27:25; 31:19,21;37:5;42:11; 43:15;44:7,23;45:11, 21;47:4,6,9,12;57:19, 21</p> <p>assign (1) 11:6</p> <p>assigned (3) 11:5;13:11;15:14</p> <p>assist (2) 6:13;31:24</p> <p>associated (1) 39:1</p> <p>August (5) 10:19,22;24:1;34:8; 58:7</p> <p>auspices (1) 24:6</p> <p>avoid (2) 18:2;26:10</p> <p>avoidance (1) 22:4</p> <p>avoiding (2) 22:2,5</p> <p>away (4) 17:3;27:2;48:21; 54:11</p> <p>awesome (1) 49:11</p> <p style="text-align: center;">B</p> <p>babies (1) 54:18</p> <p>back (13) 5:25;8:23;14:2; 24:12;26:2;27:8,11, 23;29:9;36:5;48:21; 49:9;51:17</p> <p>bad (1) 19:24</p> <p>bags (1) 51:18</p> <p>bald (1) 53:14</p> <p>barn (1) 54:10</p> <p>based (2) 12:7;16:11</p> <p>basically (2) 14:6,15</p> <p>beautiful (1) 53:17</p> <p>become (2)</p>	<p>23:20;48:4</p> <p>becomes (2) 23:18;31:19</p> <p>beginning (2) 29:4;57:25</p> <p>behalf (1) 33:9</p> <p>behind (1) 23:3</p> <p>below (1) 47:4</p> <p>Bemidji (1) 21:15</p> <p>beneficial (1) 41:4</p> <p>besides (2) 25:22;54:13</p> <p>best (7) 21:7;25:7,7;26:5; 30:5;52:17;56:19</p> <p>better (7) 26:11,13,24;27:1; 34:7;35:24;43:4</p> <p>Biennial (3) 35:8,12;36:15</p> <p>big (3) 21:13,13;51:1</p> <p>Birkholz (9) 5:17;9:13;19:22,24; 20:5,16;33:1;47:11; 57:14</p> <p>birth (1) 49:17</p> <p>births (1) 55:3</p> <p>bit (4) 16:4;19:5;34:7; 40:17</p> <p>boot (1) 44:13</p> <p>born (1) 48:14</p> <p>both (3) 7:6;12:5;32:17</p> <p>bottomless (1) 50:24</p> <p>bought (1) 50:24</p> <p>boundaries (2) 8:12,13</p> <p>BOURDEAUX (6) 41:23,25;47:19,22, 22;55:17</p> <p>B-O-U-R-D-E-A-U-X (1) 47:23</p> <p>breadth (1) 23:16</p> <p>Brian (1) 19:19</p> <p>brief (1) 55:24</p> <p>briefing (2) 7:1;11:25</p>

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