

APPENDIX A

Notice of Intent to File Under Alternative Permitting Process

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12300 Elm Creek Blvd □ Maple Grove, Minnesota 55369-4718 □ 763-445-5000 □ Fax 763-445-5050 □ www.greatriverenergy.com

June 29, 2015

VIA ELECTRONIC FILING

Mr. Daniel P. Wolf
Executive Secretary
Minnesota Public Utilities Commission
121 7th Place East, Suite 350
St. Paul, MN 55101

**RE: Notice of Intent by Great River Energy to Submit a Route Permit Application under the Alternative Permitting Process
Bull Moose 115 kV Project**

Dear Mr. Wolf:

In accordance with Minnesota Rules 7850.2800 subp. 2, Great River Energy submits this notice of its intent to submit a Route Permit Application under the Alternative Permitting Process for the approximately 2.5-mile long Bull Moose 115 kilovolt (kV) Project (“Project”). The proposed Project is needed to provide power to a new petroleum pump station (Backus Station) being proposed by Enbridge Energy, Limited Partnership (“Enbridge”). Great River Energy intends to submit the route permit application in late July 2015.

On April 24, 2015, Enbridge filed its Certificate of Need and Route Permit Application (Docket No. CN-14-916) for the Line 3 Replacement Project (“L3R”), which is a maintenance and integrity driven pipeline project designed to replace the Enbridge’s existing Line 3 pipeline in Minnesota. The replacement pipeline will follow the Enbridge Mainline System from the North Dakota/Minnesota border in Kittson County to Enbridge’s expanded Clearbrook Station in Clearwater County. The proposed replacement pipeline will then turn south and east to follow existing third-party pipelines, utilities and transportation corridors from Clearbrook to Wrenshall, Minnesota. From that point, the replacement project rejoins the Enbridge Mainline corridor to follow its Mainline System to the Wisconsin/Minnesota border in Carlton County. As part of the L3R Project, eight pump stations will be built. Four of the eight pump stations will be located west of Clearbrook at existing pump station sites, which Enbridge plans to expand to accommodate the installation of these facilities. The remaining four pump stations will be located east of Clearbrook at greenfield station sites.

Enbridge has requested that Great River Energy, in partnership with its member retail distribution cooperatives, provide electric service to four pump stations associated with the L3R Project east of Clearbrook, including the Backus Pump Station near Backus, Minnesota, which is the subject of this letter.

Mr. Daniel Wolf
June 29, 2015
Page 2

Please feel free to give me a call at 763-445-5214 if you have any questions regarding this filing.

Respectfully Submitted,

GREAT RIVER ENERGY

Carole L. Schmidt

Carole L. Schmidt
Supervisor, Transmission Permitting and Compliance

cc: Ray Kirsch, Minnesota Department of Commerce-EERA

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APPENDIX B

Detailed Route Maps

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- Great River Energy
- Anticipated 115 kV transmission line
 - Proposed route (200 feet)
- Minnesota Power
- Existing 115 kV transmission line
 - Existing 230 kV transmission line
 - Existing ±250 kV DC transmission line
 - Anticipated pipeline

Bull Moose 115 kV Project
Appendix B - Detailed Route Maps
Map Sheet 1 of 5

0 50 100 200 Feet

GIS Data sources include:
MNGEO, MNDNR, MNDOT, and Great River Energy.



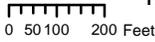
GREAT RIVER ENERGY™



Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AEX, Getmapping, Aerogrid, IGN, IGP, swisstopo, and the GIS User Community

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Bull Moose 115 kV Project
 Appendix B - Detailed Route Maps
 Map Sheet 2 of 5

GIS Data sources include:
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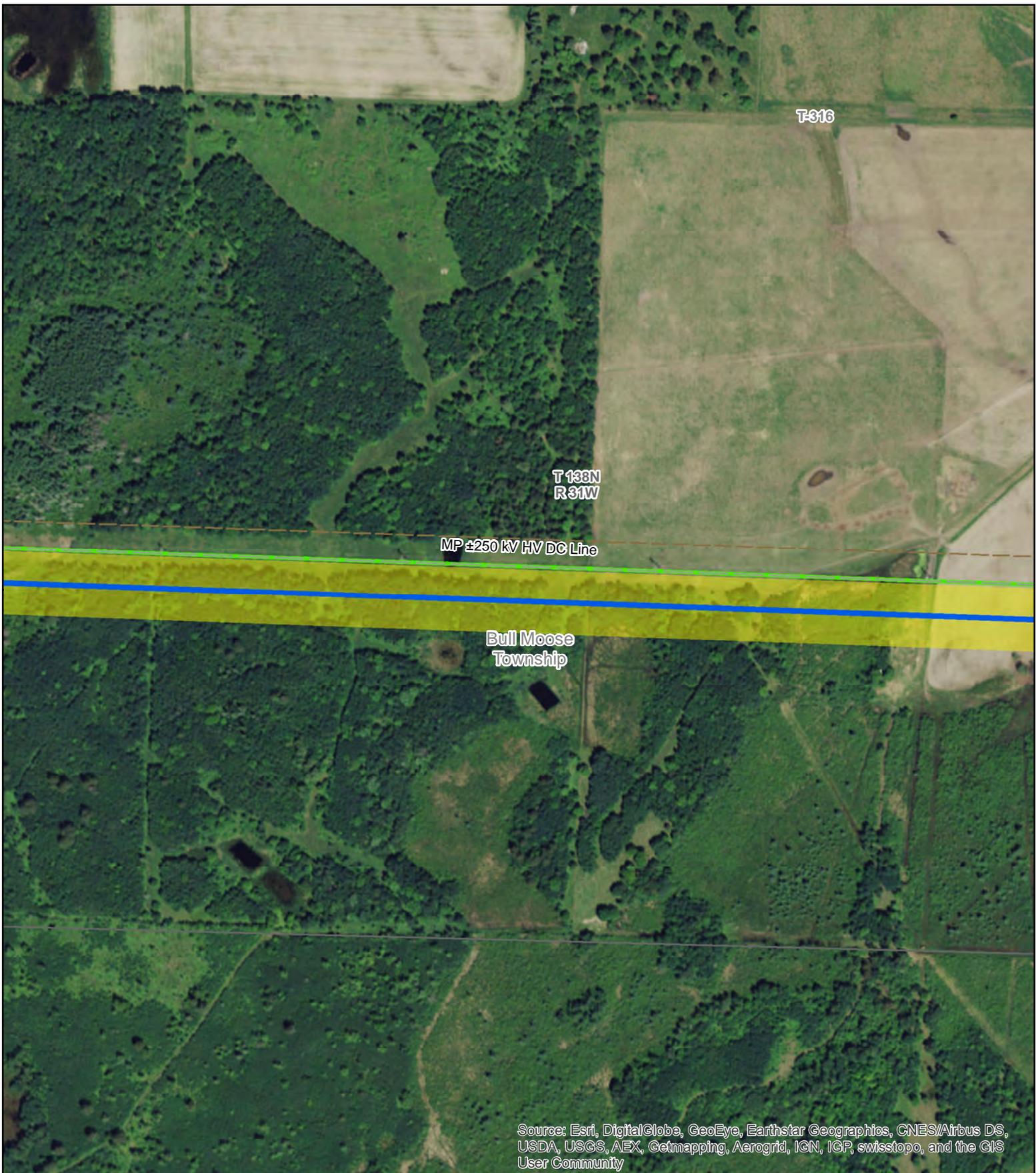
Bull Moose 115 kV Project
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 Map Sheet 3 of 5




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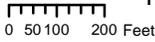
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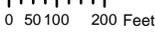


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 **GREAT RIVER ENERGY™**



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- Anticipated pump station
- Anticipated pipeline

Bull Moose 115 kV Project
 Appendix B - Detailed Route Maps
 Map Sheet 5 of 5

 GIS Data sources include:
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APPENDIX C

List of Landowners within Proposed Route

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Landowners within Proposed Route

Cory and Pamela Borman

Bruce and Karen Eveland

Duane and Donna Eveland

Cass County Land Department (Tax Forfeit Land)

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (Foot Hills State Forest)

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APPENDIX D

Agency Correspondence

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12300 Elm Creek Blvd • Maple Grove, Minnesota 55369-4718 • 763-445-5000 • Fax 763-445-5050

May 6, 2015

Mr. Don Berre
Office of Aeronautics
Minnesota Department of Transportation
222 E. Plato Blvd.
St. Paul, MN 55107-1618

RE: Proposed Bull Moose 115 kV Transmission Project - Cass County

Dear Mr. Berre:

Great River Energy is currently gathering data to be used in preparation of a regulatory application necessary to obtain approval to construct the proposed Bull Moose 115 kilovolt (kV) Transmission Project in Cass County (see enclosed fact sheet and map). Great River Energy intends to seek a Route Permit for the Project from the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission. The proposed Project is needed to provide power to a new petroleum pump station (Backus Station) being proposed by Enbridge Energy.

The Project will include approximately 2.5 miles of 115 kV transmission line that will exit the pump station substation, run parallel to Minnesota Power's existing 250 kV direct current (DC) transmission line (on the south side), and then tap the existing Minnesota Power "142" 115 kV transmission line (see fact sheet map). In most cases, round wood transmission structures will be used that will range in height from 70 to 80 feet above ground.

Great River Energy is requesting information on the possible effects of the proposed Project on airports or airstrips in the project area. The proposed Project is over 3 miles from the Backus Municipal Airport and approximately 8 miles from the Pine River Regional Airport.

We would appreciate receiving any written comments from your office by Friday, June 5, 2015. If you have any questions about this proposed project, please contact me at (763) 445-5214. If you wish to respond by e-mail, my address is cschmidt@greenergy.com. Thank you for your attention to this important project.

Sincerely,

GREAT RIVER ENERGY

Carole L. Schmidt
Supervisor, Transmission Permitting and Compliance

Enclosure: Fact Sheet/Project Map

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Bull Moose 115 kV Transmission Line



GREAT RIVER ENERGY
12300 Elm Creek Blvd
Maple Grove, MN 55369-4718
1-888-521-0130
www.greatriverenergy.com



CROW WING POWER
17330 Highway 371 North, PO Box 507
Brainerd, MN 56401
218-829-2827
www.CWPower.com

Project Description/Need

Great River Energy, wholesale electric supplier to Crow Wing Power and 27 other electric cooperatives, proposes to construct a new overhead 115 kilovolt (kV) transmission line that is needed to provide electric power to a new petroleum pump station (Backus Station) being proposed by Enbridge Energy (Enbridge). The Enbridge pump station is part of a pipeline replacement project that will require permits from the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission.

Proposed Project

The 2.5-mile transmission line (see map on back for proposed route) would tap an existing Minnesota Power (MP) 115 kV transmission line approximately four miles south west of the City of Backus. From there the line would run northeast for one half mile to the existing 250 kV Direct Current (DC) transmission line owned by MP. The route would then parallel, on the south side of the DC line, east for two miles. From there the route would cross under the DC line and terminate at the proposed pump station location just west of 48th Ave SW.

The proposed transmission line will consist of wood poles that are 350 to 400 feet apart and 70 to 80 feet above ground. Guy wires and anchors, when necessary, will be used to stabilize poles. Some specialty poles may also be required. The new transmission line will require a 100-foot-wide right of way, 50 feet on each side of the centerline. Trees and vegetation in the right of way will be removed to provide a safe construction, operation and maintenance area.

Permitting

Great River Energy will submit a route permit application for the proposed Project to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (MPUC). During the route permit process, the public and regulatory agencies will have numerous opportunities to provide input on the proposed Project, including public meetings facilitated by the MPUC and Department of Commerce Energy Environmental Review and Analysis (DOC EERA) staff. The DOC EERA will prepare an Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Project. Construction cannot begin until an approved route permit is granted by the MPUC.



*Typical 115 kV
Transmission Structure*

Easements/Trees

Once the project has been approved, Great River Energy will contact landowners to present an easement and offer of compensation. At that time, information will also be shared on tree removal, construction access and practices, and restoration of the right of way.

Project Schedule

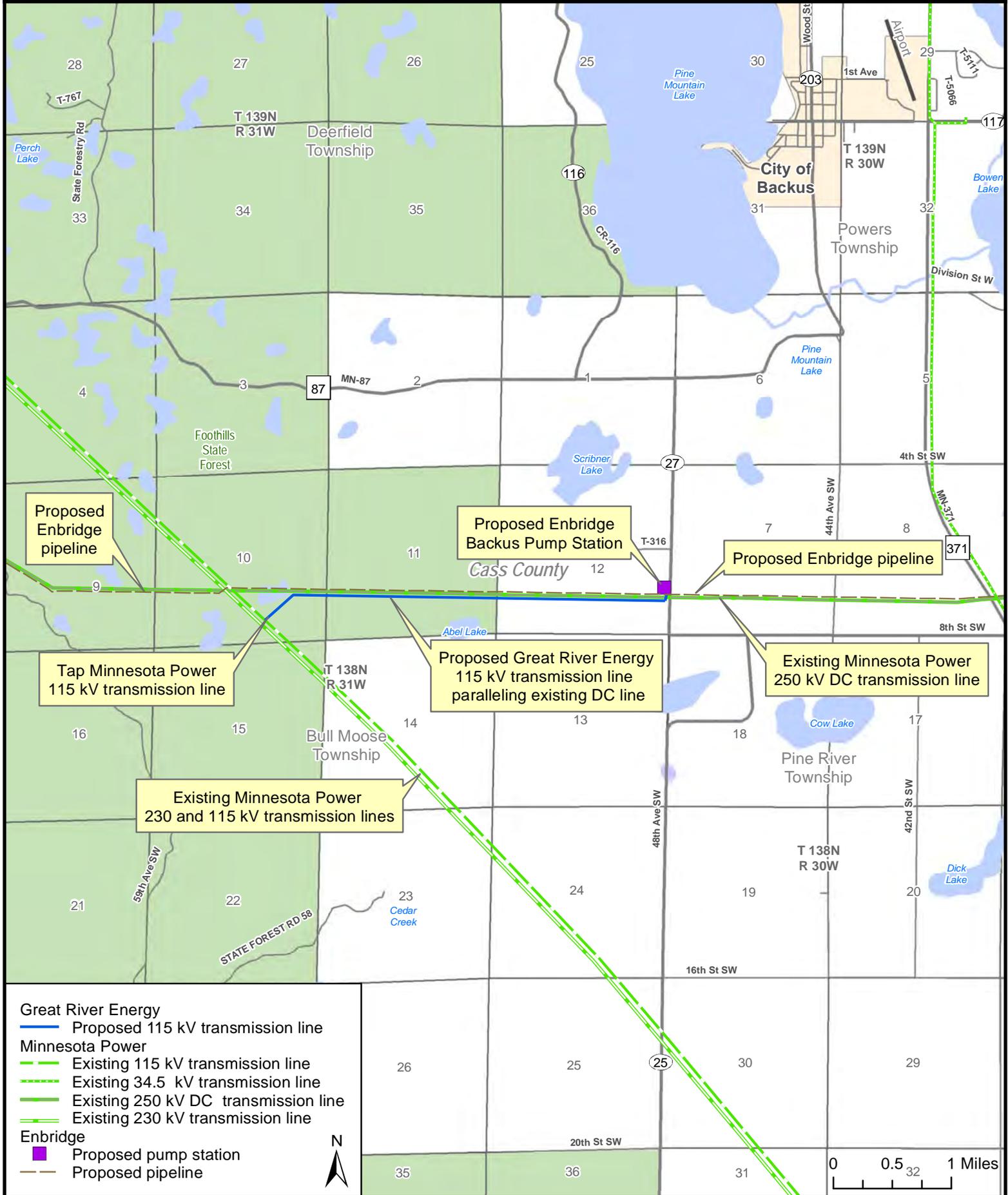
Public contacts and/or notifications -----	2 nd quarter 2015
Project permitting -----	Summer/fall 2015
Survey/design -----	Winter 2015/2016
Easement acquisition/right-of-way permits -----	Spring 2016
Transmission line construction -----	Starts 4 th quarter 2016
Energization -----	Spring 2017

For project updates and information, visit greatriverenergy.com/bullmoose or contact:

Dan Leshner
Sr. Field Representative
Great River Energy – Transmission Land Rights
(763) 445-5975 or (612) 817-9910
dlesher@greenergy.com

Carole Schmidt
Supervisor, Transmission Permitting and Compliance
Great River Energy
763-445-5214
cschmidt@greenergy.com

Proposed Project



From: [Berre, Donald \(DOT\)](#)
To: [Schmidt, Carole GRE-MG](#)
Subject: RE: Bull Moose Project
Date: Thursday, July 09, 2015 6:59:43 AM

Carole,

I have reviewed the sketch of the proposed bull moose project in crow wing county in relation to both the backus and pine river airports.

There should not be any impacts to operations at either airport



12300 Elm Creek Blvd • Maple Grove, Minnesota 55369-4718 • 763-445-5000 • Fax 763-445-5050

May 6, 2015

Ms. Sarah Beimers, Manager
Government Programs and Compliance
Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office
345 Kellogg Boulevard West
St. Paul, MN 55102-1906

RE: Proposed Bull Moose 115 kV Transmission Project - Cass County

Dear Ms. Beimers:

Great River Energy is currently gathering data to be used in preparation of a regulatory application necessary to obtain approval to construct the proposed Bull Moose 115 kilovolt (kV) Transmission Project in Cass County (see enclosed fact sheet and map). Great River Energy intends to seek a Route Permit for the Project from the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission. The proposed Project is needed to provide power to a new petroleum pump station (Backus Station) being proposed by Enbridge Energy.

The Project will include approximately 2.5 miles of 115 kV transmission line that will exit the pump station substation, run parallel to Minnesota Power's existing 250 kV direct current (DC) transmission line (on the south side), and then tap the existing Minnesota Power "142" 115 kV transmission line (see fact sheet map). In most cases, round wood transmission structures will be used that will range in height from 70 to 80 feet above ground.

Merjent conducted a Phase 1A Cultural Resources Assessment of the proposed Project area (see enclosed letter). Merjent reported no previously recorded archaeological sites or previously recorded historic structures in the Project area, and supports the finding that there will be no adverse impact on known or suspected cultural resources as a result of this Project.

The Project will likely **not** require a Section 404 permit from the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). Although there will be some poles in wetlands, we believe the impacts will be below the permitting thresholds. If a permit is required, we understand the USACE will initiate the Section 106 requirements and consult with the SHPO under your joint Programmatic Agreement.

Ms. Sarah Beimers
May 7, 2015
Page 2

We would appreciate receiving any written comments from your office by Friday, June 5, 2015. If you have any questions about this proposed project, please contact me at (763) 445-5214. If you wish to respond by e-mail, my address is cschmidt@grenergy.com.

Thank you for your attention to this important project.

Sincerely,

GREAT RIVER ENERGY

Carole L. Schmidt

Carole L. Schmidt
Supervisor, Transmission Permitting and Compliance

Enclosure: Fact Sheet/Project Map; Merjent Letter

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Bull Moose 115 kV Transmission Line



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Project Description/Need

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Proposed Project

The 2.5-mile transmission line (see map on back for proposed route) would tap an existing Minnesota Power (MP) 115 kV transmission line approximately four miles south west of the City of Backus. From there the line would run northeast for one half mile to the existing 250 kV Direct Current (DC) transmission line owned by MP. The route would then parallel, on the south side of the DC line, east for two miles. From there the route would cross under the DC line and terminate at the proposed pump station location just west of 48th Ave SW.

The proposed transmission line will consist of wood poles that are 350 to 400 feet apart and 70 to 80 feet above ground. Guy wires and anchors, when necessary, will be used to stabilize poles. Some specialty poles may also be required. The new transmission line will require a 100-foot-wide right of way, 50 feet on each side of the centerline. Trees and vegetation in the right of way will be removed to provide a safe construction, operation and maintenance area.

Permitting

Great River Energy will submit a route permit application for the proposed Project to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (MPUC). During the route permit process, the public and regulatory agencies will have numerous opportunities to provide input on the proposed Project, including public meetings facilitated by the MPUC and Department of Commerce Energy Environmental Review and Analysis (DOC EERA) staff. The DOC EERA will prepare an Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Project. Construction cannot begin until an approved route permit is granted by the MPUC.

Easements/Trees

Once the project has been approved, Great River Energy will contact landowners to present an easement and offer of compensation. At that time, information will also be shared on tree removal, construction access and practices, and restoration of the right of way.

Project Schedule

Public contacts and/or notifications -----	2 nd quarter 2015
Project permitting -----	Summer/fall 2015
Survey/design -----	Winter 2015/2016
Easement acquisition/right-of-way permits -----	Spring 2016
Transmission line construction -----	Starts 4 th quarter 2016
Energization -----	Spring 2017



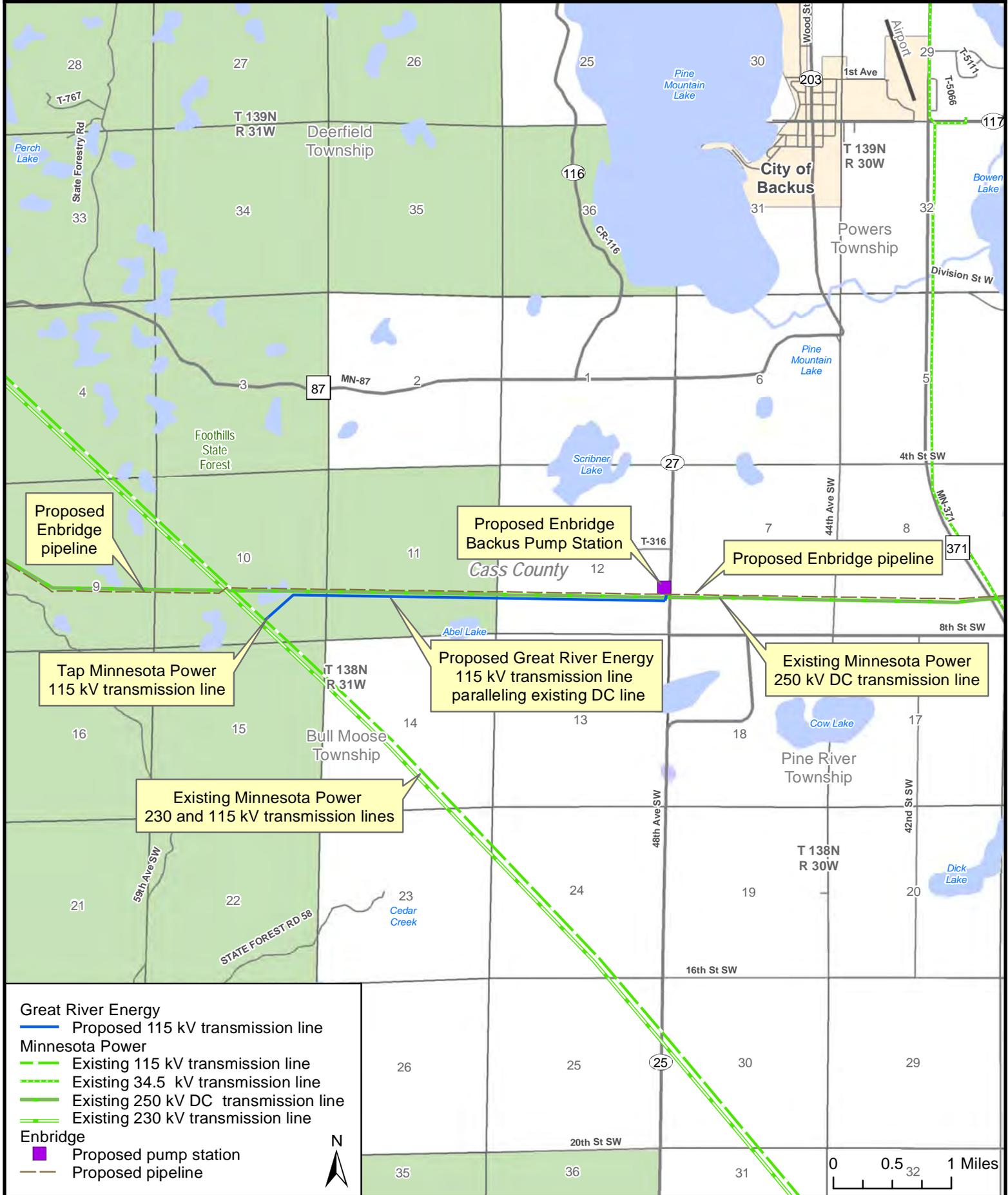
**Typical 115 kV
Transmission Structure**

For project updates and information, visit greatriverenergy.com/bullmoose or contact:

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Carole Schmidt
Supervisor, Transmission Permitting and Compliance
Great River Energy
763-445-5214
cschmidt@greenergy.com

Proposed Project



- Great River Energy
 - Proposed 115 kV transmission line
- Minnesota Power
 - Existing 115 kV transmission line
 - Existing 34.5 kV transmission line
 - Existing 250 kV DC transmission line
 - Existing 230 kV transmission line
- Enbridge
 - Proposed pump station
 - Proposed pipeline





May 6, 2015

Carole Schmidt
Supervisor, Transmission Permitting and Compliance
Great River Energy
12300 Elm Creek Boulevard
Maple Grove, MN 56369-4718

**Re: Phase IA Archaeological Assessment of the proposed Bull Moose 115 kV Transmission Line
Cass County, Minnesota.**

Dear Carole:

Merjent was contacted in April 2015 by Great River Energy to conduct a Phase IA Cultural Resource Assessment of the proposed Bull Moose 115 kV Transmission Line Project (Project). The line is proposed to provide electric power to a proposed petroleum pump station to be constructed in concert with a pipeline replacement project. The proposed construction site for the transmission facility is located in Sections 10, 11, and 12 of Township 138 North, Range 31 West (Bull Moose Township) in Cass County, Minnesota.

Project Description

The proposed Project consists of the construction of approximately 2.5 miles of new 115kV transmission line that would tap into the existing Minnesota Power (MP) 115 kV transmission line approximately four miles southwest of the City of Backus. The proposed line would run northeast for approximately 0.5 mile to the route corridor of an existing 250 kV Direct Current (DC) transmission line owned by Minnesota Power. The proposed line would parallel the DC line towards the east for approximately 2.0 miles, cross under the DC line, and terminate at the proposed pump station location immediately west of 48th Ave SW.

The proposed transmission line will be strung on primarily wood poles approximately 70 to 80 feet above ground and spaced 350 to 400 feet apart. Guy wires and anchors will be used to stabilize poles when necessary. The proposed transmission line will require a 100-foot-wide right of way, 50 feet on each side of the centerline. Trees and vegetation in the right of way will be removed to provide a safe construction, operation and maintenance area.

Literature Review

The main objective in reviewing the cultural resources literature is to identify the recorded cultural sites and assess the potential for unrecorded sites to be located within the defined study area. The standard for considering a cultural property as significant is whether it meets the criteria for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). The initial criterion for such listing is an age of 50 or more years. Beyond age, a property must retain integrity and be associated with significant historic trends, historic

persons, building styles and craftsmanship, or the property must have the potential to provide significant information about the past.

Merjent reviewed and followed the published guidelines for conducting cultural resources literature reviews in Minnesota. The Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), located in the Minnesota History Center in St. Paul, is the record keeper for the state's prehistoric and historic archaeological site files, historic standing structure inventory files, and field survey reports. The Office of the State Archaeologist (OSA), located at Fort Snelling History Center in St. Paul, maintains the records for burial sites within the State.

Merjent examined the current topographic and aerial photo-based maps to understand the modern land use of the Project area and to provide a baseline for examining the historic maps and documents. Several online resources were used to gather information. Merjent staff collected general information online about Cass County and the City of Backus. They also examined primary sources that have been digitized and made available online, such as the original land survey maps and the original land patent records.

In May 2015, Merjent Senior Cultural Resource Specialists Dean Sather examined site files maintained at the OSA and the SHPO.

Previously Recorded Archaeological Resources

An examination of cultural resource investigations conducted within the defined Project area yielded no information regarding previously recorded archaeological sites.

Previously Recorded Standing Historic Structures

A review of the History/Architecture Inventory Files at SHPO was conducted to identify inventoried historic structures recorded within the Project area. This review yielded no information regarding previously recorded/inventoried standing structures.

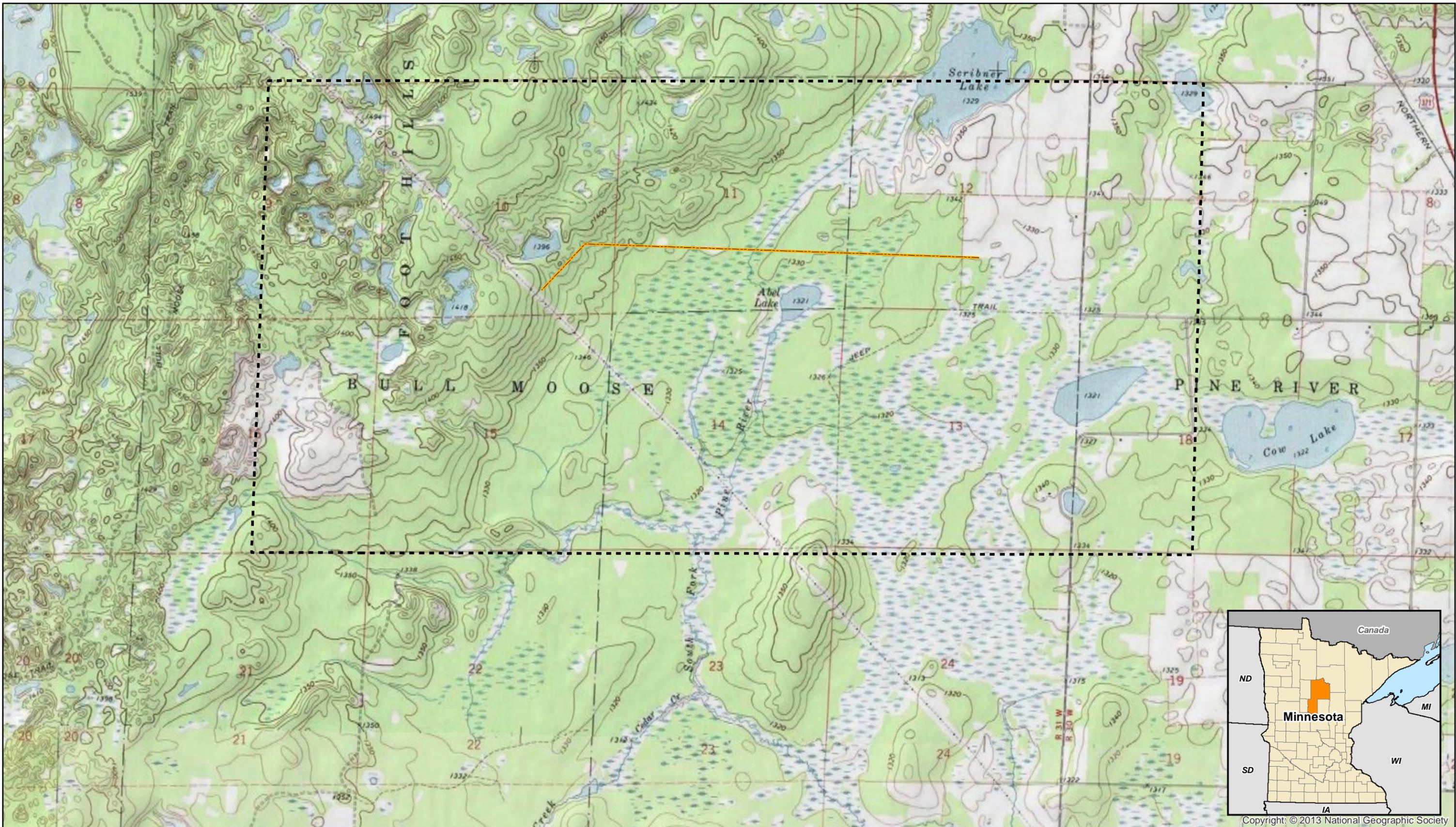
Conclusions

Merjent supports the finding that there will be no adverse impact on known or suspected cultural resources as a result of this Project. Merjent stresses that if construction plans are altered to affect areas that were not previously surveyed or disturbed, these locations should be examined for cultural resources. Further, if human remains are encountered during construction activities, all ground disturbing activity must cease and local law enforcement must be notified. Minnesota Statute 307.08, the Private Cemeteries Act, prohibits the intentional disturbance of human burials. Please contact us if you have questions.

Sincerely,
Merjent, Inc.



Dean T. Sather, MA, RPA
Sr. Cultural Resource Specialist



Copyright: © 2013 National Geographic Society

0 1,000 2,000
 Feet
 1 inch = 2,000 feet



Figure 1
GRE - Bull Moose 115 kV Transmission Project
 Project Route and Review Area
 Cass County, Minnesota

- Project Route
- Review Boundary

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE

June 10, 2015

Ms. Carole Schmidt
Transmission Permitting Analyst
Great River Energy
12300 Elm Creek Blvd.
Maple Grove, MN 55369-4718

RE: Great River Energy Bull Moose 115 kV Transmission Project
Bull Moose Twp., Cass County
T138 R31 S10, 11, 12
SHPO Number: 2015-1956

Dear Ms. Schmidt:

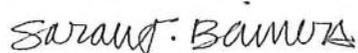
Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the above project. It has been reviewed pursuant to the responsibilities given the Minnesota Historical Society by the Minnesota Historic Sites Act and the Minnesota Field Archaeology Act.

Based on our review of the project information, we conclude that there are **no properties** listed in the National or State Registers of Historic Places, and no known or suspected archaeological properties in the area that will be affected by this project.

Please note that this comment letter does not address the requirements of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and 36CFR800, Procedures of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation for the protection of historic properties. If this project is considered for federal assistance, or requires a federal permit or license, it should be submitted to our office by the responsible federal agency.

Please contact our Compliance Section at (651) 259-3455 if you have any questions regarding our review of this project.

Sincerely,



Sarah J. Beimers, Manager
Government Programs and Compliance



12300 Elm Creek Blvd • Maple Grove, Minnesota 55369-4718 • 763-445-5000 • Fax 763-445-5050

May 6, 2015

Mr. Bill Baer
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Bemidji Regulatory Field Office
4111 Technology Drive, Suite 295
Bemidji, MN 56601

RE: Proposed Bull Moose 115 kV Transmission Project - Cass County

Dear Mr. Baer:

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The Project will include approximately 2.5 miles of 115 kV transmission line that will exit the pump station substation, run parallel to Minnesota Power's existing 250 kV direct current (DC) transmission line (on the south side), and then tap the existing Minnesota Power "142" 115 kV transmission line (see fact sheet map). In most cases, round wood transmission structures will be used that will range in height from 70 to 80 feet above ground.

Great River Energy is requesting information on the possible effects of the proposed project on floodplains, wetlands, and other important natural resources that occur in the project area. The transmission line will not cross any DNR public waters but will cross a number of NWI wetlands (see enclosed map); however, some of the wetlands will be spanned and we believe impacts will be below the permitting thresholds. Great River Energy will work with the Corps and Cass County to address impacts once design details are available.

Merjent conducted a Phase 1A Cultural Resources Assessment of the proposed Project area (see enclosed letter). Merjent reported no previously recorded archaeological sites or previously recorded historic structures in the Project area, and supports the finding that there will be no adverse impact on known or suspected cultural resources as a result of this Project.

Mr. Bill Baer
May 6, 2015
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GREAT RIVER ENERGY

Carole L. Schmidt

Carole L. Schmidt
Supervisor, Transmission Permitting and Compliance

Enclosures: Fact Sheet/Project Map; Hydrologic Features Map; Merjent Letter

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Bull Moose 115 kV Transmission Line



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Proposed Project

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The proposed transmission line will consist of wood poles that are 350 to 400 feet apart and 70 to 80 feet above ground. Guy wires and anchors, when necessary, will be used to stabilize poles. Some specialty poles may also be required. The new transmission line will require a 100-foot-wide right of way, 50 feet on each side of the centerline. Trees and vegetation in the right of way will be removed to provide a safe construction, operation and maintenance area.

Permitting

Great River Energy will submit a route permit application for the proposed Project to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (MPUC). During the route permit process, the public and regulatory agencies will have numerous opportunities to provide input on the proposed Project, including public meetings facilitated by the MPUC and Department of Commerce Energy Environmental Review and Analysis (DOC EERA) staff. The DOC EERA will prepare an Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Project. Construction cannot begin until an approved route permit is granted by the MPUC.

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Project Schedule

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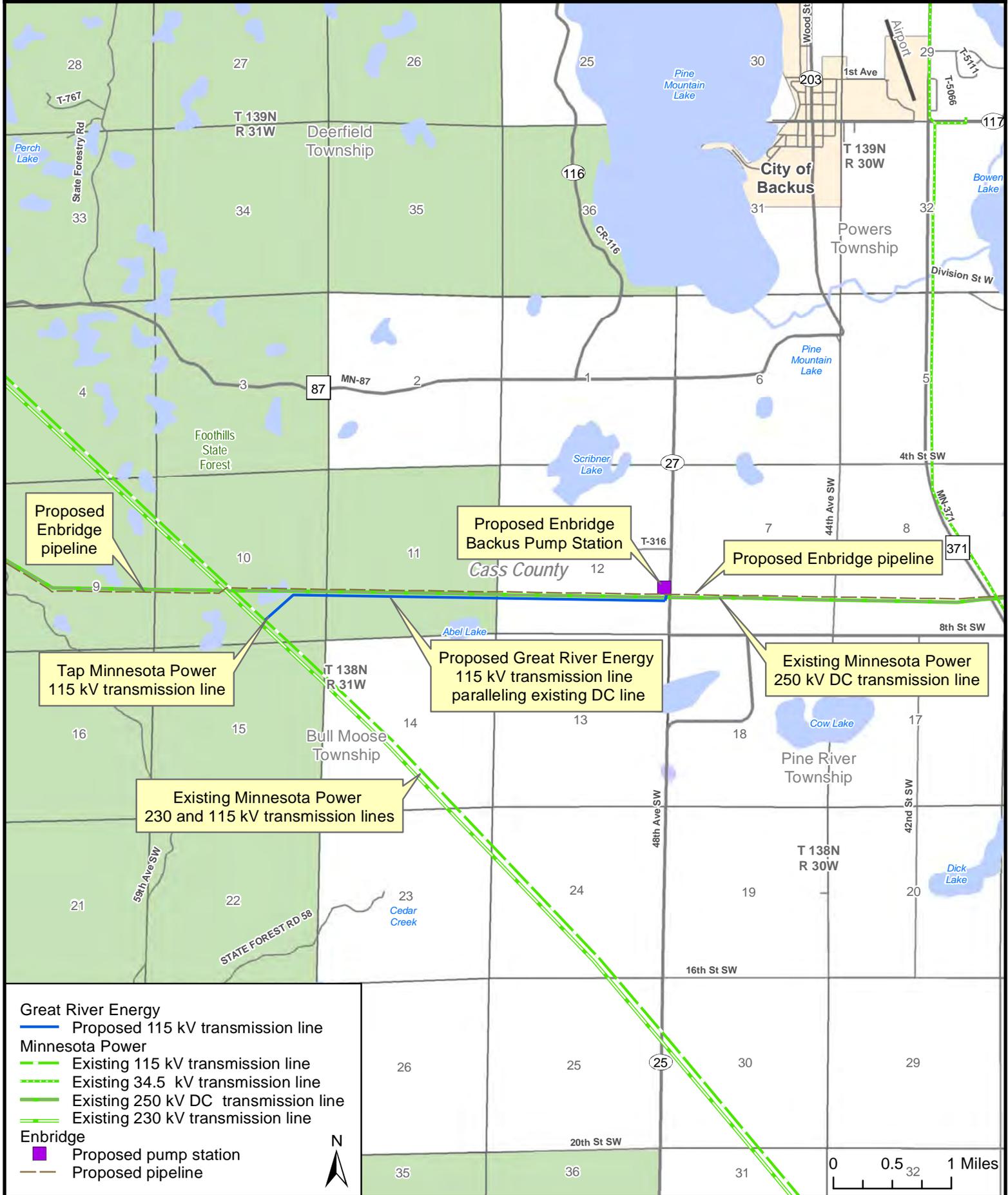
**Typical 115 kV
Transmission Structure**

For project updates and information, visit greatriverenergy.com/bullmoose or contact:

Dan Leshner
Sr. Field Representative
Great River Energy – Transmission Land Rights
(763) 445-5975 or (612) 817-9910
dlesher@greenergy.com

Carole Schmidt
Supervisor, Transmission Permitting and Compliance
Great River Energy
763-445-5214
cschmidt@greenergy.com

Proposed Project



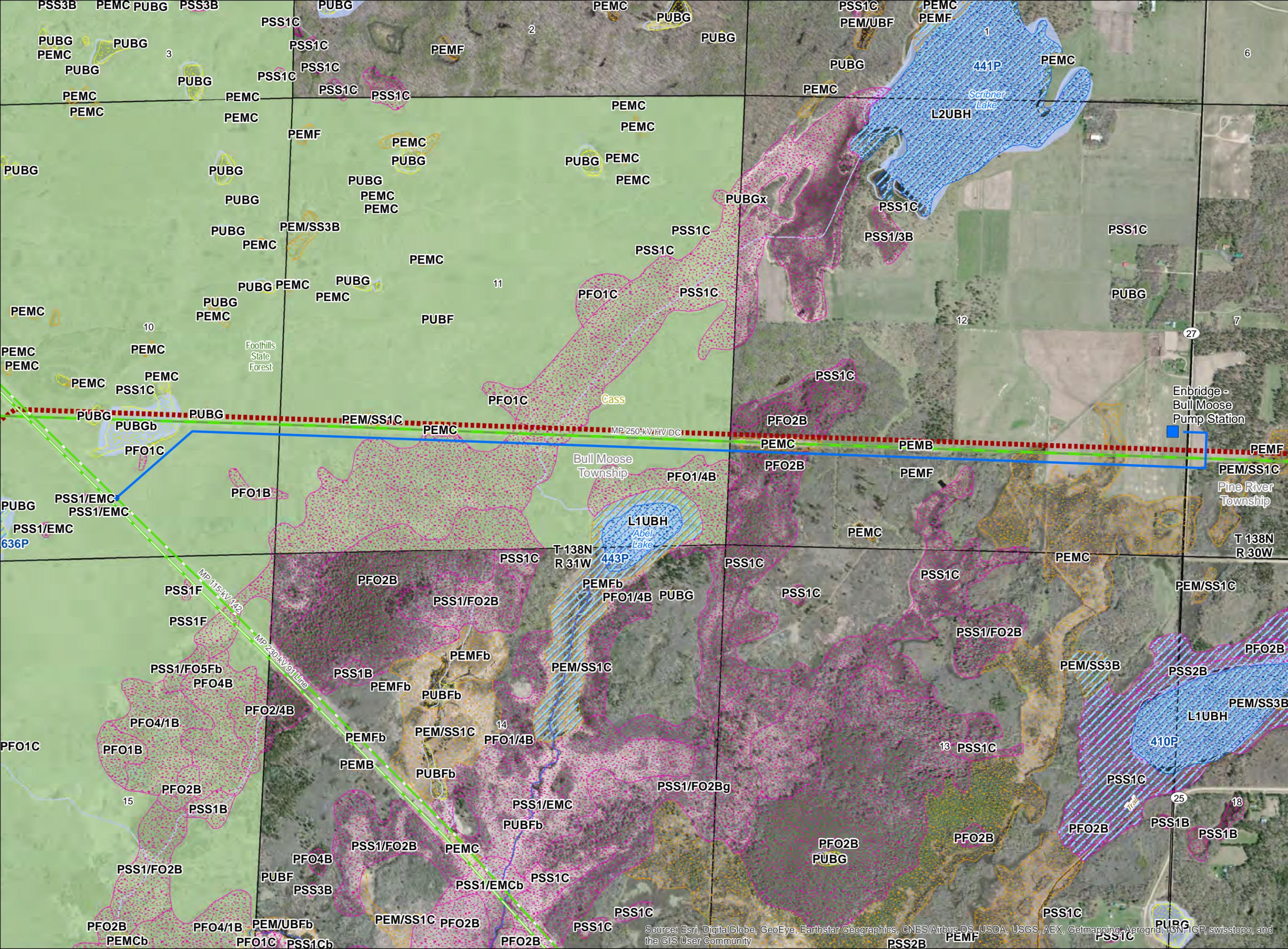
- Great River Energy
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 - Existing 230 kV transmission line
- Enbridge
 - Proposed pump station
 - Proposed pipeline





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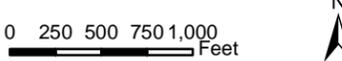
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- NWI Wetlands
- Freshwater Emergent Wetland
 - Freshwater Forested/
 - Freshwater Pond
 - Lake
- MN Public Waters Inventory (PWI)
- Public Water Basin
 - MN Public Watercourse

Updated: 4/28/2015

Data Sources vary between MNDOT, MNDNR, MNGEO and Great River Energy

Aerial Imagery form: ESRI World Imagery Basemap service

Map Projection: UTM, NAD83, Zone15, Meters



Bull Moose Pumping Station 115 kV Line Project

NWI Wetlands and Hydrologic Features

Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AEX, Getmapping, Aerogrid, IGN, IGP, swisstopo, and the GIS User Community



May 6, 2015

Carole Schmidt
Supervisor, Transmission Permitting and Compliance
Great River Energy
12300 Elm Creek Boulevard
Maple Grove, MN 56369-4718

**Re: Phase IA Archaeological Assessment of the proposed Bull Moose 115 kV Transmission Line
Cass County, Minnesota.**

Dear Carole:

Merjent was contacted in April 2015 by Great River Energy to conduct a Phase IA Cultural Resource Assessment of the proposed Bull Moose 115 kV Transmission Line Project (Project). The line is proposed to provide electric power to a proposed petroleum pump station to be constructed in concert with a pipeline replacement project. The proposed construction site for the transmission facility is located in Sections 10, 11, and 12 of Township 138 North, Range 31 West (Bull Moose Township) in Cass County, Minnesota.

Project Description

The proposed Project consists of the construction of approximately 2.5 miles of new 115kV transmission line that would tap into the existing Minnesota Power (MP) 115 kV transmission line approximately four miles southwest of the City of Backus. The proposed line would run northeast for approximately 0.5 mile to the route corridor of an existing 250 kV Direct Current (DC) transmission line owned by Minnesota Power. The proposed line would parallel the DC line towards the east for approximately 2.0 miles, cross under the DC line, and terminate at the proposed pump station location immediately west of 48th Ave SW.

The proposed transmission line will be strung on primarily wood poles approximately 70 to 80 feet above ground and spaced 350 to 400 feet apart. Guy wires and anchors will be used to stabilize poles when necessary. The proposed transmission line will require a 100-foot-wide right of way, 50 feet on each side of the centerline. Trees and vegetation in the right of way will be removed to provide a safe construction, operation and maintenance area.

Literature Review

The main objective in reviewing the cultural resources literature is to identify the recorded cultural sites and assess the potential for unrecorded sites to be located within the defined study area. The standard for considering a cultural property as significant is whether it meets the criteria for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). The initial criterion for such listing is an age of 50 or more years. Beyond age, a property must retain integrity and be associated with significant historic trends, historic

persons, building styles and craftsmanship, or the property must have the potential to provide significant information about the past.

Merjent reviewed and followed the published guidelines for conducting cultural resources literature reviews in Minnesota. The Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), located in the Minnesota History Center in St. Paul, is the record keeper for the state's prehistoric and historic archaeological site files, historic standing structure inventory files, and field survey reports. The Office of the State Archaeologist (OSA), located at Fort Snelling History Center in St. Paul, maintains the records for burial sites within the State.

Merjent examined the current topographic and aerial photo-based maps to understand the modern land use of the Project area and to provide a baseline for examining the historic maps and documents. Several online resources were used to gather information. Merjent staff collected general information online about Cass County and the City of Backus. They also examined primary sources that have been digitized and made available online, such as the original land survey maps and the original land patent records.

In May 2015, Merjent Senior Cultural Resource Specialists Dean Sather examined site files maintained at the OSA and the SHPO.

Previously Recorded Archaeological Resources

An examination of cultural resource investigations conducted within the defined Project area yielded no information regarding previously recorded archaeological sites.

Previously Recorded Standing Historic Structures

A review of the History/Architecture Inventory Files at SHPO was conducted to identify inventoried historic structures recorded within the Project area. This review yielded no information regarding previously recorded/inventoried standing structures.

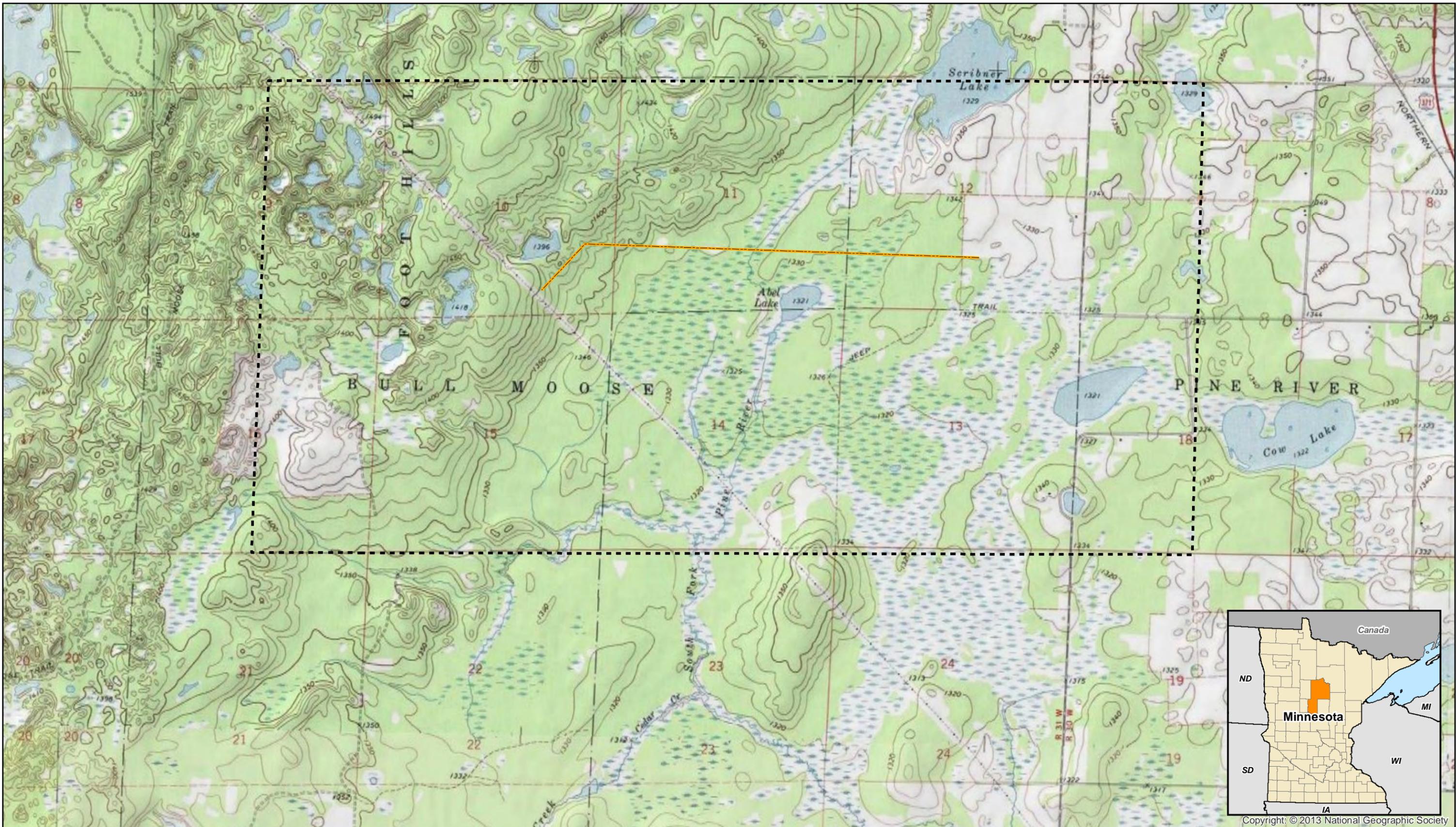
Conclusions

Merjent supports the finding that there will be no adverse impact on known or suspected cultural resources as a result of this Project. Merjent stresses that if construction plans are altered to affect areas that were not previously surveyed or disturbed, these locations should be examined for cultural resources. Further, if human remains are encountered during construction activities, all ground disturbing activity must cease and local law enforcement must be notified. Minnesota Statute 307.08, the Private Cemeteries Act, prohibits the intentional disturbance of human burials. Please contact us if you have questions.

Sincerely,
Merjent, Inc.



Dean T. Sather, MA, RPA
Sr. Cultural Resource Specialist



0 1,000 2,000
 Feet
 1 inch = 2,000 feet



Figure 1
GRE - Bull Moose 115 kV Transmission Project
 Project Route and Review Area
 Cass County, Minnesota

-  Project Route
-  Review Boundary



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
ST. PAUL DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
180 FIFTH STREET EAST, SUITE 700
ST. PAUL MINNESOTA 55101-1678

REPLY TO
ATTENTION

JUN 15 2015

Operations
Regulatory (2015-01467-TJH)

Carole L. Schmidt
Great River Energy
12300 Elm Creek Blvd
Maple Grove, Minnesota 55369-4718

Dear Ms. Schmidt:

We have received the document entitled "Proposed Bull Moose 115 kV Transmission Project - Cass County", dated May 6, 2015. Due to limited staff and resources, it is unlikely that U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Regulatory staff will review or comment on this document until we receive a jurisdictional determination request, a request for a pre-application consultation meeting, and/or a permit application. In lieu of a specific response, please consider the following general information concerning our regulatory program that may apply to the proposed project.

If the proposal involves activity in navigable waters of the United States, it may be subject to the Corps of Engineers' jurisdiction under Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 (Section 10). Section 10 prohibits the construction, excavation, or deposition of materials in, over, or under navigable waters of the United States, or any work that would affect the course, location, condition, or capacity of those waters, unless the work has been authorized by a Department of the Army permit.

If the proposal involves discharge of dredged or fill material into waters of the United States, it may be subject to the Corps of Engineers' jurisdiction under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (CWA Section 404). Waters of the United States include navigable waters, their tributaries, and adjacent wetlands (33 CFR § 328.3). CWA Section 301(a) prohibits discharges of dredged or fill material into waters of the United States, unless the work has been authorized by a Department of the Army permit under Section 404. Information about the Corps permitting process can be obtained online at <http://www.mvp.usace.army.mil/regulatory>.

The Corps' evaluation of a Section 10 and/or a Section 404 permit application involves multiple analyses, including (1) evaluating the proposal's impacts in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (33 CFR part 325), (2) determining whether the proposal is contrary to the public interest (33 CFR § 320.4), and (3) in the case of a Section 404 permit, determining whether the proposal complies with the Section 404(b)(1) Guidelines (Guidelines) (40 CFR part 230).

If the proposal requires a Section 404 permit application, the Guidelines specifically require that "no discharge of dredged or fill material shall be permitted if there is a practicable

alternative to the proposed discharge which would have less adverse impact on the aquatic ecosystem, so long as the alternative does not have other significant adverse environmental consequences" (40 CFR § 230.10(a)). Time and money spent on the proposal prior to applying for a Section 404 permit cannot be factored into the Corps' decision whether there is a less damaging practicable alternative to the proposal.

If an application for a Corps permit has not yet been submitted, the project proposer may request a pre-application consultation meeting with the Corps to obtain information regarding the data, studies or other information that will be necessary for the permit evaluation process. A pre-application consultation meeting is strongly recommended if the proposal has substantial impacts to waters of the United States, or if it is a large or controversial project.

For further information or to request a pre-application consultation meeting, please contact the Corps' project manager for this project, Tom Hingsberger, at 651-290-5367, or by email at: thomas.j.hingsberger@usace.army.mil.

Sincerely,



for
— Tamara E. Cameron
Chief, Regulatory Branch



12300 Elm Creek Blvd • Maple Grove, Minnesota 55369-4718 • 763-445-5000 • Fax 763-445-5050

May 6, 2015

Mr. Andrew Horton, Habitat Conservation Biologist
United States Department of the Interior
Fish and Wildlife Service
Twin Cities Field Office
4101 American Blvd. East
Bloomington, MN 55425-1665

RE: Proposed Bull Moose 115 kV Transmission Project - Cass County

Dear Mr. Horton:

Great River Energy is currently gathering data to be used in preparation of a regulatory application necessary to obtain approval to construct the proposed Bull Moose 115 kilovolt (kV) Transmission Project (Project) in Cass County (see enclosed fact sheet and map). Great River Energy intends to seek a Route Permit for the Project from the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission. The proposed Project is needed to provide power to a new petroleum pump station (Backus Station) being proposed by Enbridge Energy (Enbridge).

The Project will include approximately 2.5 miles of 115 kV transmission line that will exit the pump station substation, run parallel to Minnesota Power's existing 250 kV direct current (DC) transmission line (on the south side), and then tap the existing Minnesota Power "142" 115 kV transmission line (see fact sheet map). In most cases, round wood transmission structures will be used that will range in height from 70 to 80 feet above ground.

The Fish and Wildlife Service website list for threatened and endangered species in Cass County includes the Canada lynx, Gray wolf, and the Northern long-eared bat (NLEB). Great River Energy does not believe the proposed transmission project will affect either the lynx or gray wolf, or, per study results provided by Enbridge, the NLEB.

Enbridge used desktop analysis to identify areas of potentially suitable NLEB habitat along its preferred pipeline route both west and east of Clearbrook, MN. Data from this analysis were used to select survey target sites, which were reviewed and approved by the USFWS prior to survey. Enbridge conducted presence/absence acoustic surveys in proximity to the Backus Pump Station/Bull Moose transmission line Project area between June 2 and August 9, 2014. There were no acoustic positives within 5 miles of linear survey in either direction of the Backus Pump Station/Bull Moose transmission line Project area. The nearest NLEB acoustic detection was approximately 9.5 miles to the east of the Backus Pump Station/Bull Moose transmission line Project area, in Crow

Mr. Andrew Horton
May 6, 2015
Page 2

Wing County. A companion mist net survey conducted on August 4-5, 2014 was negative at this location.

The DNR Rare features database indicates no rare features intersected by the proposed Project. Trumpeter swans are shown to be present to the south of the Project (see enclosed map).

Great River Energy is requesting concurrence or information on the possible effects of the proposed project on any listed or proposed threatened or endangered species and designated or proposed critical habitat that may be present in the project area.

We would appreciate receiving any written comments from your office by Friday, June 5, 2015. If you have any questions about this proposed project, please contact me at (763) 445-5214. If you wish to respond by e-mail, my address is cschmidt@greenergy.com.

Thank you for your attention to this important project.

Sincerely,

GREAT RIVER ENERGY

Carole L. Schmidt

Carole L. Schmidt
Supervisor, Transmission Permitting and Compliance

Enclosures: Fact Sheet/Project Map; Rare Features Map

s:\legal\environmental\transmission\projects\Bull Moose Project\Agency Correspondence\Bull Moose USFWS\tr 5-6-15.doc

Bull Moose 115 kV Transmission Line



GREAT RIVER ENERGY
12300 Elm Creek Blvd
Maple Grove, MN 55369-4718
1-888-521-0130
www.greatriverenergy.com



CROW WING POWER
17330 Highway 371 North, PO Box 507
Brainerd, MN 56401
218-829-2827
www.CWPower.com

Project Description/Need

Great River Energy, wholesale electric supplier to Crow Wing Power and 27 other electric cooperatives, proposes to construct a new overhead 115 kilovolt (kV) transmission line that is needed to provide electric power to a new petroleum pump station (Backus Station) being proposed by Enbridge Energy (Enbridge). The Enbridge pump station is part of a pipeline replacement project that will require permits from the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission.

Proposed Project

The 2.5-mile transmission line (see map on back for proposed route) would tap an existing Minnesota Power (MP) 115 kV transmission line approximately four miles south west of the City of Backus. From there the line would run northeast for one half mile to the existing 250 kV Direct Current (DC) transmission line owned by MP. The route would then parallel, on the south side of the DC line, east for two miles. From there the route would cross under the DC line and terminate at the proposed pump station location just west of 48th Ave SW.

The proposed transmission line will consist of wood poles that are 350 to 400 feet apart and 70 to 80 feet above ground. Guy wires and anchors, when necessary, will be used to stabilize poles. Some specialty poles may also be required. The new transmission line will require a 100-foot-wide right of way, 50 feet on each side of the centerline. Trees and vegetation in the right of way will be removed to provide a safe construction, operation and maintenance area.

Permitting

Great River Energy will submit a route permit application for the proposed Project to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (MPUC). During the route permit process, the public and regulatory agencies will have numerous opportunities to provide input on the proposed Project, including public meetings facilitated by the MPUC and Department of Commerce Energy Environmental Review and Analysis (DOC EERA) staff. The DOC EERA will prepare an Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Project. Construction cannot begin until an approved route permit is granted by the MPUC.

Easements/Trees

Once the project has been approved, Great River Energy will contact landowners to present an easement and offer of compensation. At that time, information will also be shared on tree removal, construction access and practices, and restoration of the right of way.

Project Schedule

Public contacts and/or notifications -----	2 nd quarter 2015
Project permitting -----	Summer/fall 2015
Survey/design -----	Winter 2015/2016
Easement acquisition/right-of-way permits -----	Spring 2016
Transmission line construction -----	Starts 4 th quarter 2016
Energization -----	Spring 2017



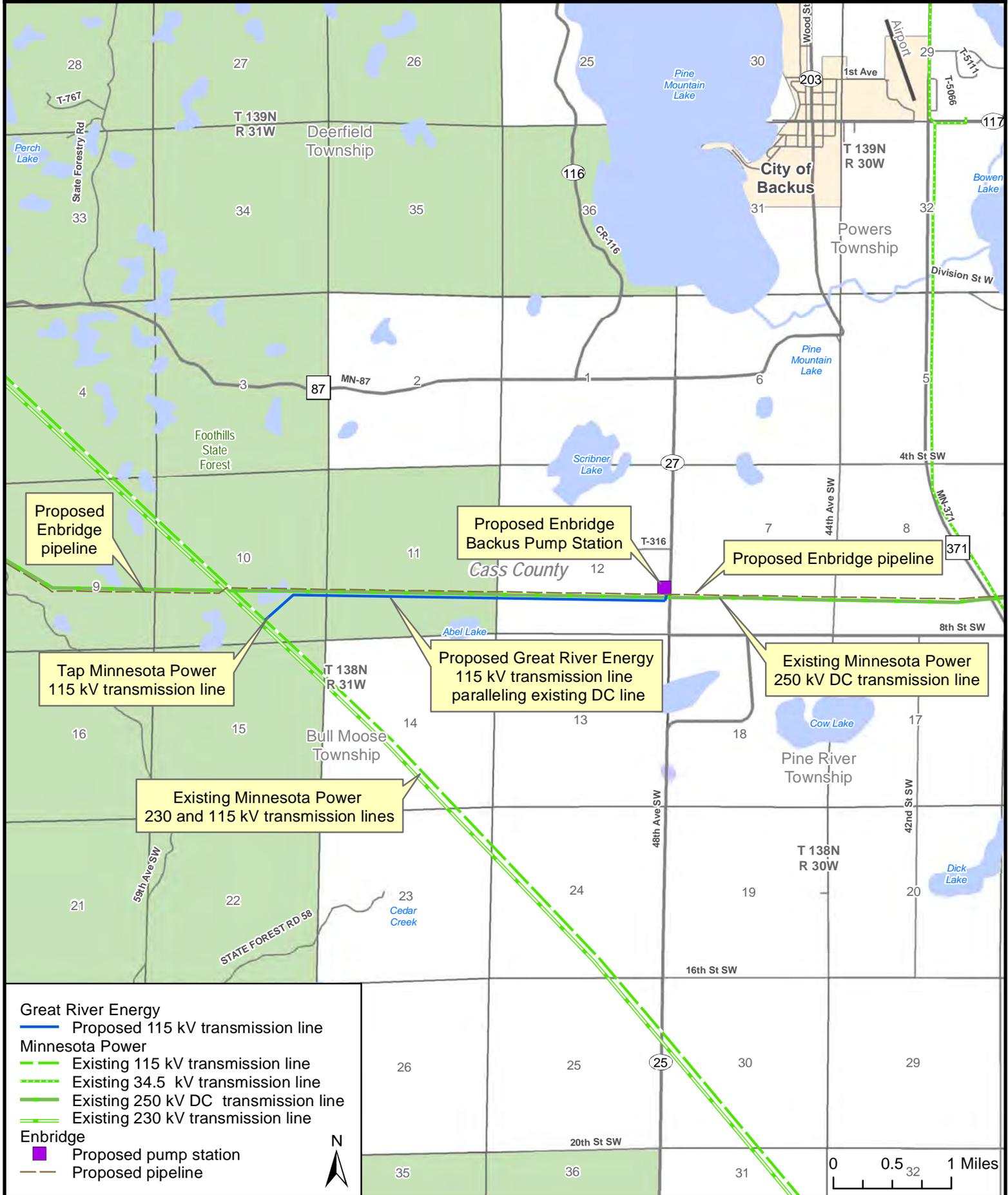
**Typical 115 kV
Transmission Structure**

For project updates and information, visit greatriverenergy.com/bullmoose or contact:

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Sr. Field Representative
Great River Energy – Transmission Land Rights
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dlesher@greenergy.com

Carole Schmidt
Supervisor, Transmission Permitting and Compliance
Great River Energy
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Proposed Project



- Great River Energy
 - Proposed 115 kV transmission line
- Minnesota Power
 - - - Existing 115 kV transmission line
 - - - Existing 34.5 kV transmission line
 - Existing 250 kV DC transmission line
 - - - Existing 230 kV transmission line
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 - Proposed pump station
 - - - Proposed pipeline





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- Great River Energy
- Proposed 115 kV Transmission Line
 - Minnesota Power (MP)
 - - - Existing 115 kV Transmission Line
 - - - Existing 230 kV Transmission Line
 - - - Existing 250 kV Transmission Line
 - Enbridge
 - Proposed Pump Station
 - - - Pipeline
 - MN Rare Natural Feature (NHIS)
 - Protection Status
 - Special Concern
 - Not listed

Updated: 4/28/2015

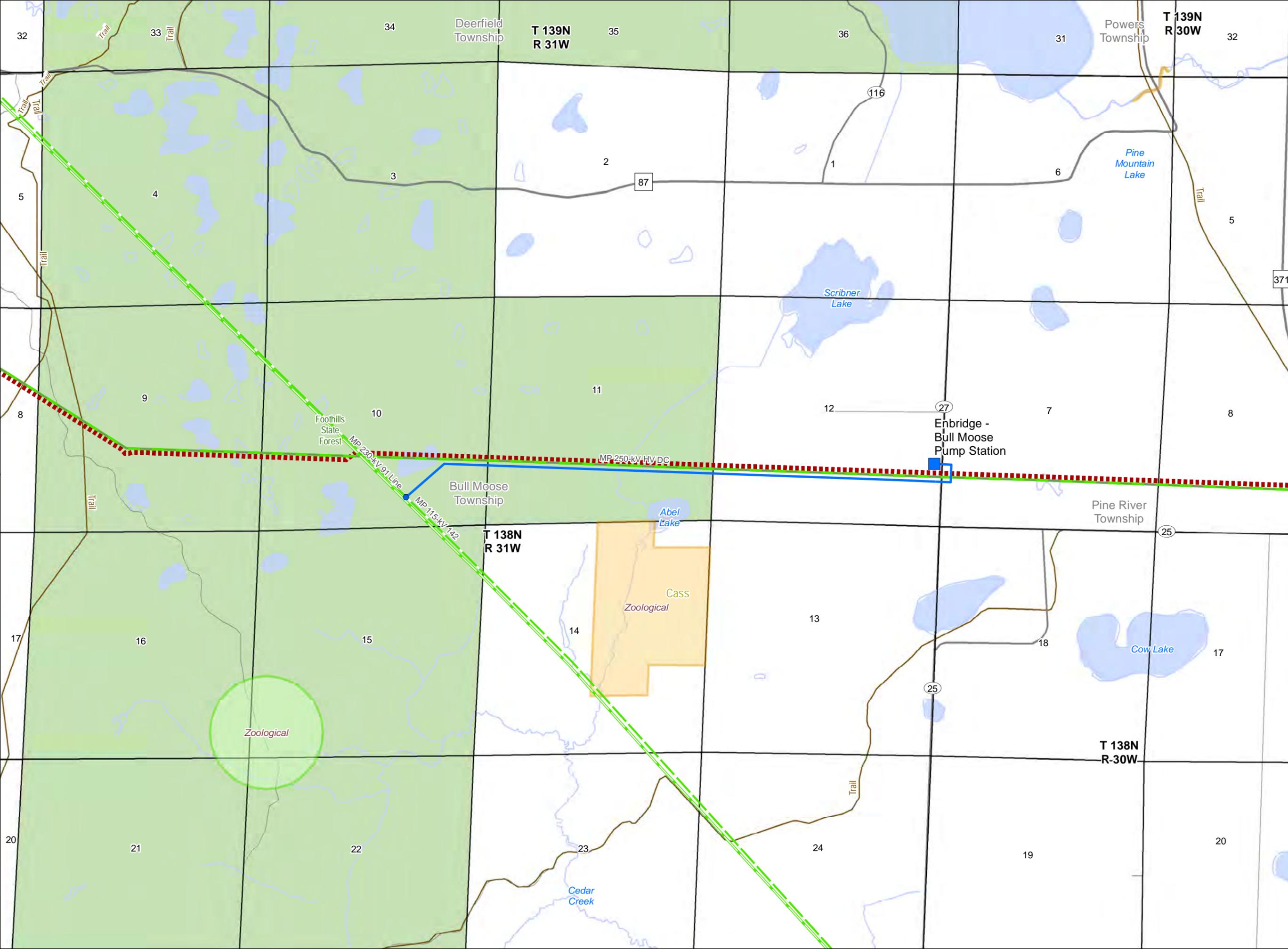
Data Sources Vary Between MNDOT, MNDNR, MNGEO and Great River Energy
 Rare Features Heritage data from MNDOT
 Topo scanned image maps from the United States Geological Survey (USGS)

Map Projection:
 UTM, NAD83, Zone15, Meters
 *Copyright (2014), State of Minnesota, Department of Natural Resources. Rare features data included here were provided by the Division of Ecological Resources, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR), and were current as of (12-10-2014). These data are not based on an exhaustive inventory of the state. The lack of data for any geographic area shall not be construed to mean that no significant features are present."



Bull Moose Pumping Station 115 kV Line Project

Rare Features



From: [Horton, Andrew](#)
To: [Schmidt, Carole GRE-MG](#)
Subject: RE: Bull Moose 115kV Transmission Project - Cass County
Date: Monday, June 15, 2015 5:58:38 AM

Carole,

I have reviewed your project proposal for Bull Moose 115kV Transmission Upgrade in Cass County, Minnesota. For the county listed, the following species may occur:

Cass	Canada lynx (<i>Lynx canadensis</i>)	Threatened	Northern forest
	Gray wolf <i>Canis lupus</i>	Threatened	Northern forest
	Northern long-eared bat <i>Myotis septentrionalis</i>	Threatened	Hibernates in caves and mines - swarming in surrounding wooded areas in autumn. Roosts and forages in upland forests during spring and summer.

We have no known records for federally listed or proposed species and/or designated or proposed critical habitat within the action area. The project area is also not within a quarter mile of any known roost trees or hibernacula for the northern long-eared bat.

As you have noted, there have been three acoustic survey sites along your project area that failed to detect the northern long-eared bat in 2014. Habitat in the area still appears to be suitable for the species and any tree removal that may occur during the species' active season (April 1-September 30) has the potential to take the northern long-eared bat. We recommend that any tree removal at this location be conducted outside the the summer roost period for the species. Between the months of October 1st and March 30th, we would not anticipate the northern long-eared bat to be present in the action area.

Under the Interim 4(d) Rule, any incidental take would not be prohibited provided the project can be defined as "Routine Maintenance" or "Limited Expansion of Existing Rights-of-way and Transmission Corridors." In order to be considered "Limited Expansion" the expansion must be "...of a corridor or ROW by up to 100 feet (30 m) from the edge of an existing cleared corridor or ROW..." Incidental take will not be prohibited provided the following conservation measures are adhered to, the activity must: 1) occur more than 0.25 mile (0.4 kilometer) from a known, occupied hibernacula; 2) avoid cutting or destroying known, occupied roost trees during the pup season (June 1-July 31); and avoid clearcuts (and similar harvest methods, e.g., seed tree, shelterwood, and coppice) within 0.25 mile (0.4 kilometer) of known, occupied roost trees during the pup season (June 1-July 31). Please refer to Threatened with an Interim 4(d) Listing Rule for additional information regarding the the northern long-eared bat Threatened designation and Interim 4(d) Rule exemptions.

<http://www.fws.gov/midwest/endangered/mammals/nleb/pdf/FRnlebFinalListing02April2015.pdf>

Additionally, Under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918, as amended, it is unlawful to take, capture, kill, or possess migratory birds, their nests, eggs, and young. If migratory birds are known to nest on any structures or habitat which may be disturbed by project construction, activities (e.g., tree removal) should begin and be completed before the initiation of the breeding season for those species or after breeding has concluded. Generally, we recommend that any habitat disturbance occur before May 1 or after August 30 to minimize potential impacts to migratory birds, but please be aware that some species may initiate nesting before May 1.

If project plans change, additional information on listed or proposed species becomes available, or new species are listed that may be affected by the project, our office should be contacted. This concludes our technical assistance review of the proposed action at the above location. If you have any further endangered species questions, please contact Andrew Horton at andrew.horton@fws.gov or (612) 725-3548 x2208.

Thank you,

Andrew Horton
Twin Cities Ecological Services Field Office
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
4101 American Blvd East
Bloomington, MN 55425-1665
(612) 725-3548 ext. 2208



12300 Elm Creek Blvd • Maple Grove, Minnesota 55369-4718 • 763-445-5000 • Fax 763-445-5050

May 6, 2015

Ms. Lisa Joyal
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
Natural Heritage and Nongame Research Program
500 Lafayette Road, Box 25
St. Paul, MN 55155

RE: Proposed Bull Moose 115 kV Transmission Project - Cass County

Dear Ms. Joyal:

Great River Energy is currently gathering data to be used in preparation of a regulatory application necessary to obtain approval to construct the proposed Bull Moose 115 kilovolt (kV) Transmission Project in Cass County (see enclosed fact sheet and map). Great River Energy intends to seek a Route Permit for the Project from the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission. The proposed Project is needed to provide power to a new petroleum pump station (Backus Station) being proposed by Enbridge Energy.

The Project will include approximately 2.5 miles of 115 kV transmission line that will exit the pump station substation, run parallel to Minnesota Power's existing 250 kV direct current (DC) transmission line (on the south side), and then tap the existing Minnesota Power "142" 115 kV transmission line (see fact sheet map). In most cases, round wood transmission structures will be used that will range in height from 70 to 80 feet above ground.

The transmission line will not cross any DNR public waters (see enclosed hydrologic features map). The line is proposed to cross through a small portion of the Foot Hills State Forest in Section 10, T138N, R31W; Great River Energy will work with the DNR regarding crossing this forest.

The DNR Rare features database indicates no rare features intersected by the proposed Project. Trumpeter swans are shown to be present to the south of the Project (see enclosed rare features map).

Enbridge used desktop analysis to identify areas of potentially suitable NLEB habitat along its preferred pipeline route both west and east of Clearbrook, MN. Data from this analysis were used to select survey target sites, which were reviewed and approved by the USFWS prior to survey. Enbridge conducted presence/absence acoustic surveys in proximity to the Backus Pump Station/Bull Moose transmission line Project area between June 2 and August 9, 2014. There were no acoustic positives within 5 miles of linear

Ms. Lisa Joyal
May 6, 2015
Page 2

survey in either direction of the Backus Pump Station/Bull Moose transmission line Project area. The nearest NLEB acoustic detection was approximately 9.5 miles to the east of the Backus Pump Station/Bull Moose transmission line Project area, in Crow Wing County. A companion mist net survey conducted on August 4-5, 2014 was negative at this location.

Great River Energy is requesting concurrence of its interpretation of the rare features in the vicinity and the possible effects of the new transmission line and substation on wetlands, threatened and endangered species, and other important state natural resources that occur in the project area. A Data Request Form is enclosed for your information; the shape file will be sent via email.

We would appreciate receiving any written comments from your office by Friday, June 5, 2015. If you have any questions about this proposed project, please contact me at (763) 445-5214. If you wish to respond by e-mail, my address is cschmidt@greenergy.com.

Thank you for your attention to this important project.

Sincerely,

GREAT RIVER ENERGY

Carole L. Schmidt

Carole L. Schmidt
Supervisor, Transmission Permitting and Compliance

Enclosures: Fact Sheet/Project Map; Hydrologic Features Map; Rare Features Map;
Data Request Form; Shapefile via email

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Bull Moose 115 kV Transmission Line



GREAT RIVER ENERGY
12300 Elm Creek Blvd
Maple Grove, MN 55369-4718
1-888-521-0130
www.greatriverenergy.com



CROW WING POWER
17330 Highway 371 North, PO Box 507
Brainerd, MN 56401
218-829-2827
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Project Description/Need

Great River Energy, wholesale electric supplier to Crow Wing Power and 27 other electric cooperatives, proposes to construct a new overhead 115 kilovolt (kV) transmission line that is needed to provide electric power to a new petroleum pump station (Backus Station) being proposed by Enbridge Energy (Enbridge). The Enbridge pump station is part of a pipeline replacement project that will require permits from the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission.

Proposed Project

The 2.5-mile transmission line (see map on back for proposed route) would tap an existing Minnesota Power (MP) 115 kV transmission line approximately four miles south west of the City of Backus. From there the line would run northeast for one half mile to the existing 250 kV Direct Current (DC) transmission line owned by MP. The route would then parallel, on the south side of the DC line, east for two miles. From there the route would cross under the DC line and terminate at the proposed pump station location just west of 48th Ave SW.

The proposed transmission line will consist of wood poles that are 350 to 400 feet apart and 70 to 80 feet above ground. Guy wires and anchors, when necessary, will be used to stabilize poles. Some specialty poles may also be required. The new transmission line will require a 100-foot-wide right of way, 50 feet on each side of the centerline. Trees and vegetation in the right of way will be removed to provide a safe construction, operation and maintenance area.

Permitting

Great River Energy will submit a route permit application for the proposed Project to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (MPUC). During the route permit process, the public and regulatory agencies will have numerous opportunities to provide input on the proposed Project, including public meetings facilitated by the MPUC and Department of Commerce Energy Environmental Review and Analysis (DOC EERA) staff. The DOC EERA will prepare an Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Project. Construction cannot begin until an approved route permit is granted by the MPUC.



*Typical 115 kV
Transmission Structure*

Easements/Trees

Once the project has been approved, Great River Energy will contact landowners to present an easement and offer of compensation. At that time, information will also be shared on tree removal, construction access and practices, and restoration of the right of way.

Project Schedule

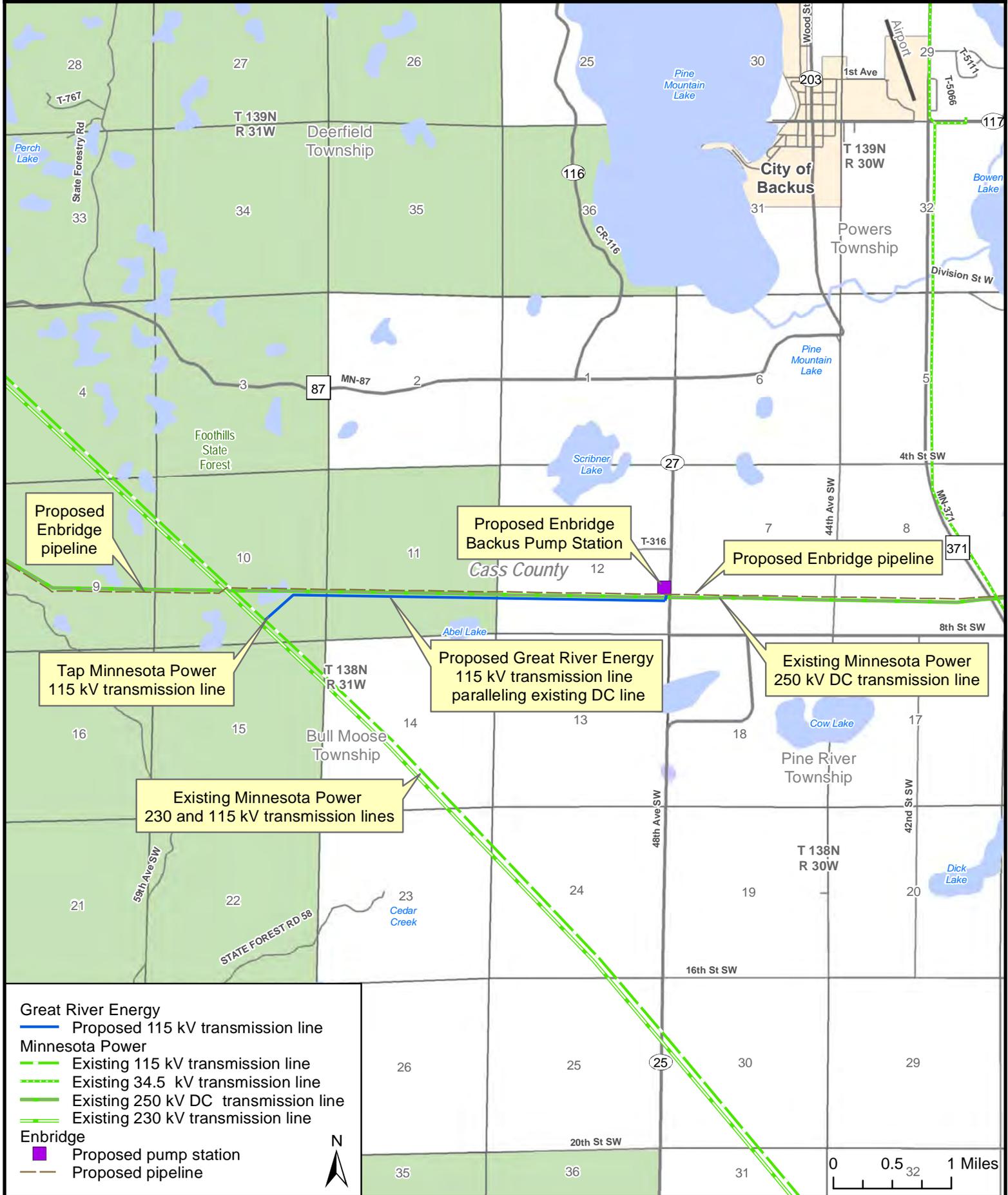
Public contacts and/or notifications -----	2 nd quarter 2015
Project permitting -----	Summer/fall 2015
Survey/design -----	Winter 2015/2016
Easement acquisition/right-of-way permits -----	Spring 2016
Transmission line construction -----	Starts 4 th quarter 2016
Energization -----	Spring 2017

For project updates and information, visit greatriverenergy.com/bullmoose or contact:

Dan Leshar
Sr. Field Representative
Great River Energy – Transmission Land Rights
(763) 445-5975 or (612) 817-9910
dlesher@greenergy.com

Carole Schmidt
Supervisor, Transmission Permitting and Compliance
Great River Energy
763-445-5214
cschmidt@greenergy.com

Proposed Project



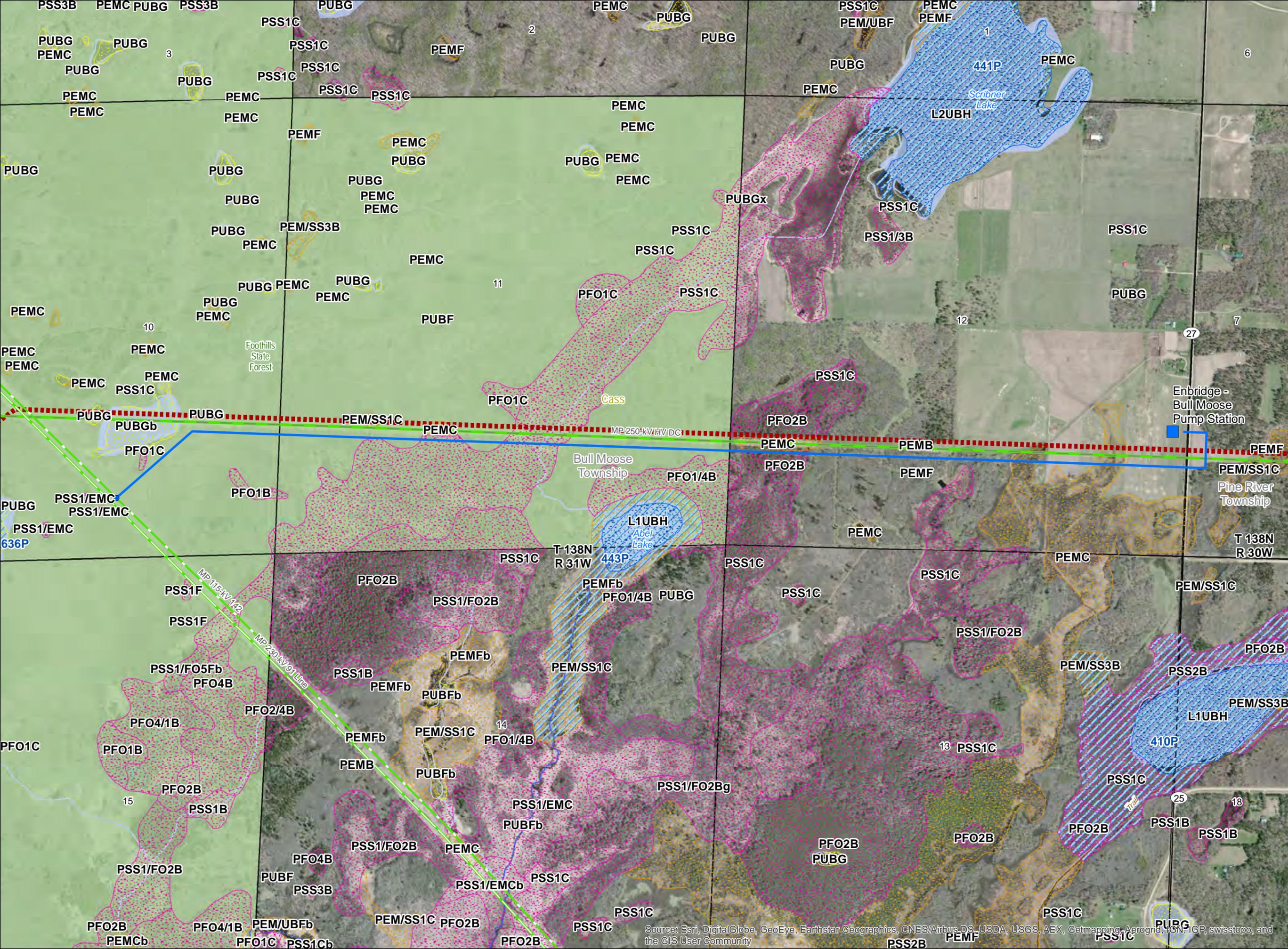
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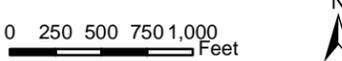
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- NWI Wetlands
- Freshwater Emergent Wetland
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- MN Public Waters Inventory (PWI)
- Public Water Basin
 - MN Public Watercourse

Updated: 4/28/2015

Data Sources vary between MNDOT, MNDNR, MNGEO and Great River Energy

Aerial Imagery form: ESRI World Imagery Basemap service

Map Projection: UTM, NAD83, Zone15, Meters



Bull Moose Pumping Station 115 kV Line Project

NWI Wetlands and Hydrologic Features

Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AEX, Getmapping, Aerogrid, IGN, IGP, swisstopo, and the GIS User Community



GREAT RIVER ENERGY

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

Great River Energy

Proposed 115 kV Transmission Line

Minnesota Power (MP)

Existing 115 kV Transmission Line

Existing 230 kV Transmission Line

Existing 250 kV Transmission Line

Enbridge

Proposed Pump Station

Pipeline

MN Rare Natural Feature (NHIS)

Protection Status

Special Concern

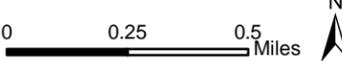
Not listed

Updated: 4/28/2015

Data Sources Vary Between MNDOT, MNDNR, MNGEO and Great River Energy Rare Features Heritage data from MNDOT Topo scanned image maps from the United States Geological Survey (USGS)

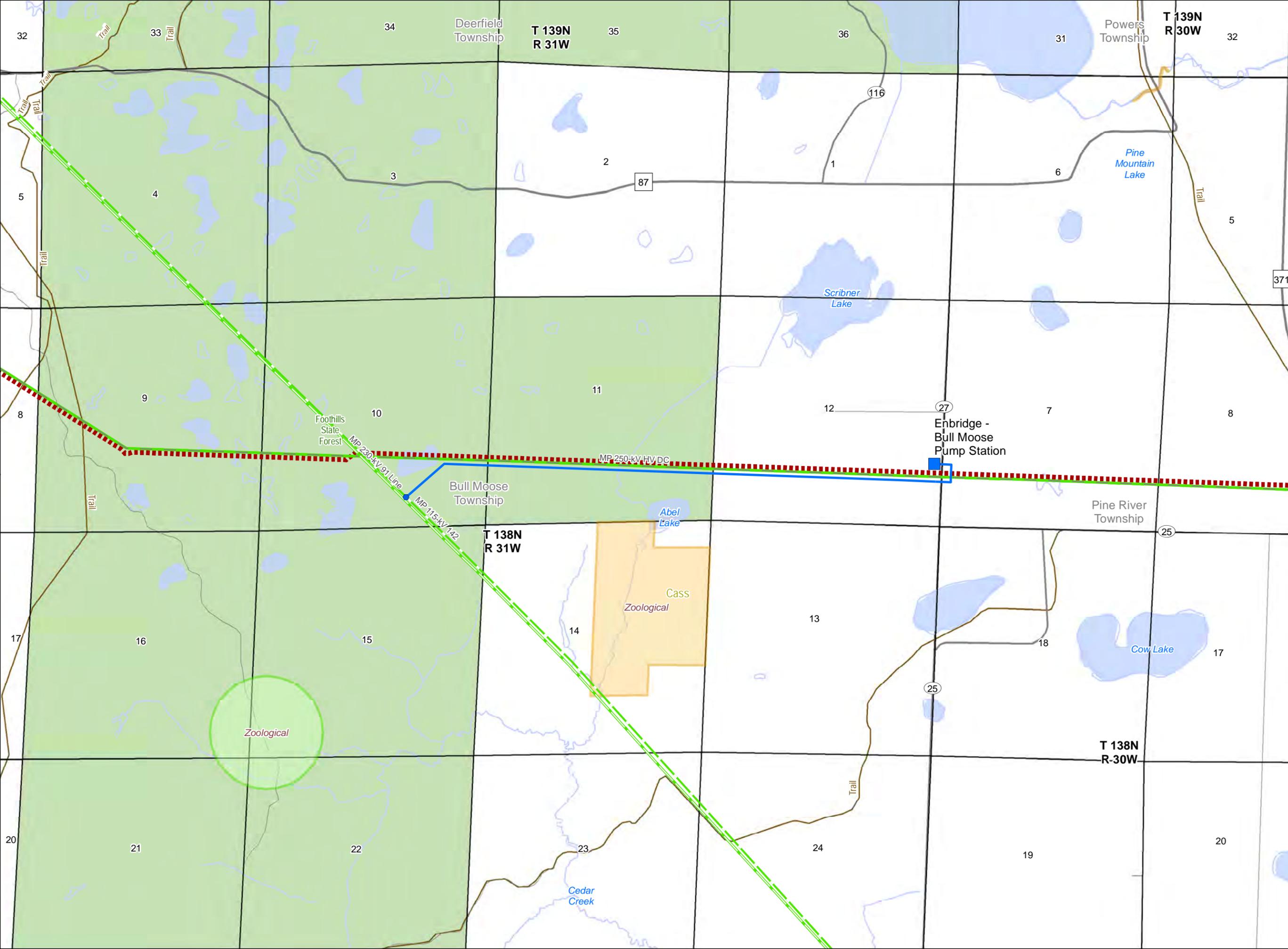
Map Projection: UTM, NAD83, Zone15, Meters

"Copyright (2014), State of Minnesota, Department of Natural Resources. Rare features data included here were provided by the Division of Ecological Resources, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR), and were current as of (12-10-2014). These data are not based on an exhaustive inventory of the state. The lack of data for any geographic area shall not be construed to mean that no significant features are present."



Bull Moose Pumping Station 115 kV Line Project

Rare Features





Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

Division of Ecological and Water Resources, Box 25

500 Lafayette Road

St. Paul, Minnesota 55155-4025

Phone: 651-259-5109 E-mail: lisa.joyal@state.mn.us

July 9, 2015

Correspondence # ERDB 20150366

Ms. Carole Schmidt
Great River Energy
12300 Elm Creek Boulevard
Maple Grove, MN 55369-4718

RE: Natural Heritage Review of the proposed Bull Moose 115 kV Transmission Line,
T138N R31W Sections 10-12, Cass County

Dear Ms. Schmidt,

As requested, the Minnesota Natural Heritage Information System (NHIS) has been queried to determine if any rare species or other significant natural features are known to occur within an approximate one-mile radius of the proposed project. Based on this query, rare features have been documented within the search area (for details, see the enclosed database reports; please visit the Rare Species Guide at <http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/rsg/index.html> for more information on the biology, habitat use, and conservation measures of these rare species). Please note that the following **rare features may be adversely affected** by the proposed project:

- Trumpeter swans (*Cygnus buccinator*), a state-listed species of special concern, have been documented nesting in the vicinity of the proposed project. These rare birds may be at risk for colliding with or being electrocuted by overhead transmission lines. The DNR recommends the use of bird diverters on overhead lines near lakes and rivers, or other areas that may attract large concentrations of waterfowl. Please contact Nathan Kestner, Regional Environmental Assessment Ecologist, at 218-308-2672 for regional input on recommended placement of bird diverters.
- The northern long-eared bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*), a state-listed species of special concern, can be found throughout Minnesota. During the winter this species hibernates in caves and mines, and during the active season (approximately April-October) it roosts underneath bark, in cavities, or in crevices of both live and dead trees. Activities that may impact this species include, but are not limited to, wind farm operation, any disturbance to hibernacula, and destruction/degradation of habitat (including tree removal). The NHIS does not contain any known occurrences of northern long-eared bat roosts or hibernacula within an approximate one-mile radius of the proposed project. It is my understanding that acoustic and mist net surveys conducted for this project were also negative.
- The proposed line crosses a Northern Mesic Hardwood Forest within the Foot Hills State Forest in T138N R31W Section 10 (see map). This type of native plant community is uncommon but not rare in Minnesota.

- Please include a copy of this letter in any DNR license or permit application.

The Natural Heritage Information System (NHIS), a collection of databases that contains information about Minnesota's rare natural features, is maintained by the Division of Ecological and Water Resources, Department of Natural Resources. The NHIS is continually updated as new information becomes available, and is the most complete source of data on Minnesota's rare or otherwise significant species, native plant communities, and other natural features. However, the NHIS is not an exhaustive inventory and thus does not represent all of the occurrences of rare features within the state. Therefore, ecologically significant features for which we have no records may exist within the project area. **If additional information becomes available regarding rare features in the vicinity of the project, further review may be necessary.**

The enclosed results include an Index Report of records in the Rare Features Database, the main database of the NHIS. To control the release of specific location data, the report is copyrighted and only provides rare features locations to the nearest section. The Index Report may be reprinted, unaltered, in any environmental review document (e.g., EAW or EIS), municipal natural resource plan, or report compiled by your company for the project listed above. If you wish to reproduce the Index Report for any other purpose, please contact me to request written permission.

For environmental review purposes, the results of this Natural Heritage Review are valid for one year; the results are only valid for the project location (noted above) and the project description provided on the NHIS Data Request Form. Please contact me if project details change or for an updated review if construction has not occurred within one year.

The Natural Heritage Review does not constitute review or approval by the Department of Natural Resources as a whole. Instead, it identifies issues regarding known occurrences of rare features and potential effects to these rare features. To determine whether there are other natural resource concerns associated with the proposed project, please contact your DNR Regional Environmental Assessment Ecologist (contact information available at http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/eco/ereview/erp_regioncontacts.html). Please be aware that additional site assessments or review may be required.

Thank you for consulting us on this matter, and for your interest in preserving Minnesota's rare natural resources. An invoice will be mailed to you under separate cover.

Sincerely,



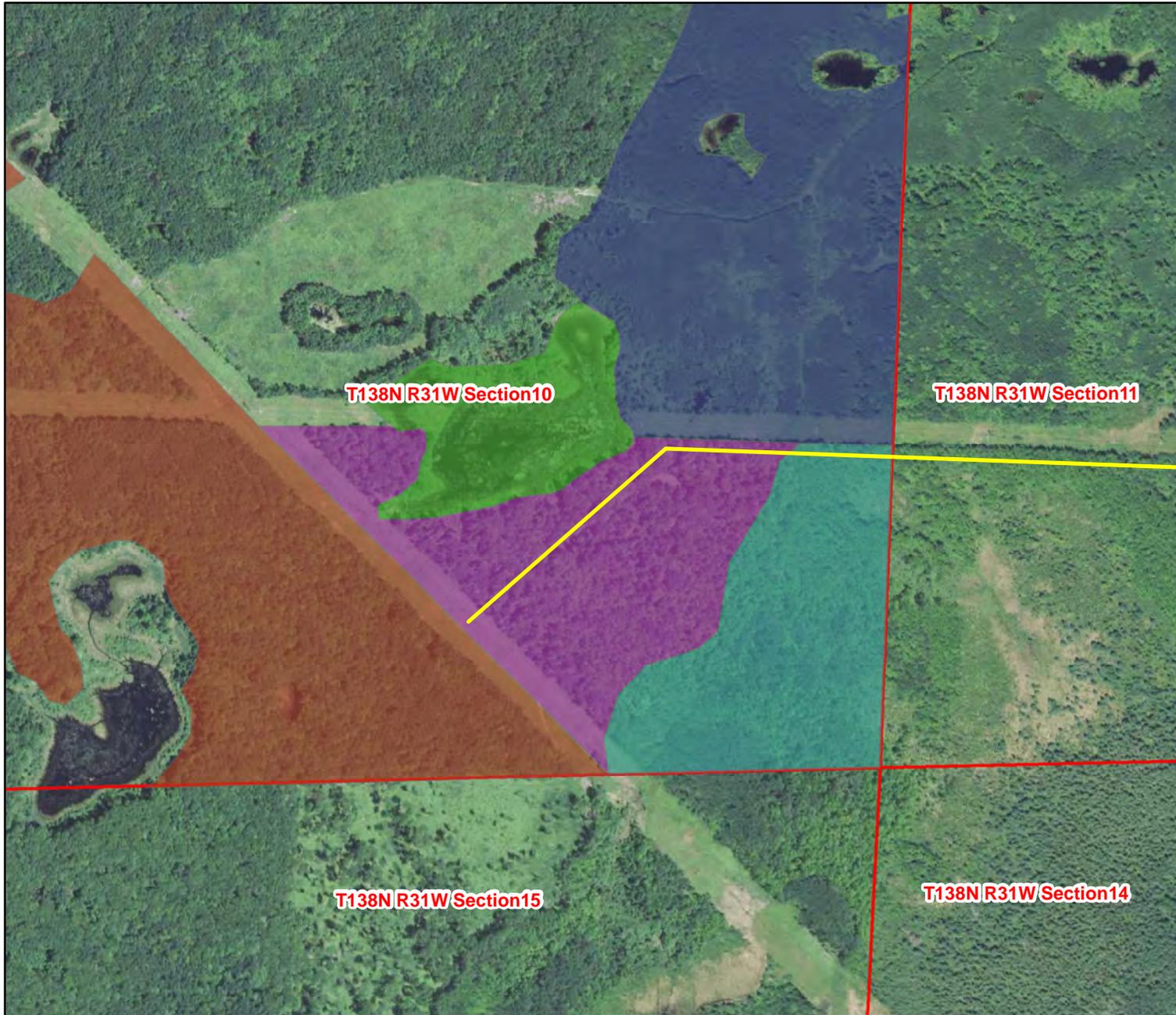
Lisa Joyal
Endangered Species Review Coordinator

enc. Rare Features Database: Index Report
Map

cc: Nathan Kestner
Christine Herwig

**ERDB# 20150366 - Bull Moose 115 kV Line
T138N R31W Sections 10-12
Cass County**

GIS shapefiles of MBS Sites of Biodiversity Significance and MBS Native Plant Communities can be downloaded from the DNR Data Deli at <http://deli.dnr.state.mn.us>.



Legend

-  GRE Bull Moose Route
- Native Plant Communities**
-  Central Dry-Mesic Oak-Aspen Forest
-  Northern Mesic Hardwood Forest
-  Northern Wet Ash Swamp
-  Northern Wet Meadow/Carr
-  Oak - Aspen - Red Maple Forest
-  PLS Section



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Rare Feature, Prairie Railroad Survey, Native Plant Community, and Sites of Biodiversity Significance data are from the Natural Heritage Information System. The absence of rare features for a particular location should not be construed to mean that the DNR is confident rare features are absent from that location.