



STATE OF MINNESOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

September 13, 2013

Marsha Parlow
Great River Energy
12300 Elm Creek Boulevard
Maple Grove, MN 55369

Wayne Smith
Nobles County Public Works
960 Diagonal Road
P.O. Box 187
Worthington, MN 56187

RE: Local Review of Great River Energy's 115 kV Transmission Line Rebuild Project in Silver Bay, Minnesota, PUC Docket No. ET-2/LR-13-786

Dear Ms. Parlow and Mr. Smith:

This letter confirms that the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (Commission) has received Great River Energy's (GRE) letter dated September 12, 2013, indicating that it has elected to pursue local review approval to rebuild approximately 4 miles of 69 kilovolt (kV) transmission line to 115 kV in the city of Worthington and Lorain Township, Nobles County, Minnesota.

Under the Minn. Stat. § 216E, a route permit from the Commission is required for most high-voltage transmission lines that are greater than 100 kV. However, certain projects may be eligible for review and permitting by local units of government with jurisdiction instead of filing with the Commission. The 115 kV transmission line rebuild proposed by GRE is eligible for local review pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 216E.05.

Under Minn. Stat. § 216E.05, subd. 1(b), a local unit of government may relinquish its jurisdiction by requesting the Commission to assume jurisdiction and make a decision on the permit. The request must be filed within 60 days after an application for the proposed project has been filed. On July 3, 2013, Nobles County confirmed that it will serve as the local government unit with jurisdiction to conduct environmental review and permit the proposed project in accordance with state law.

GRE filed a conditional use permit application for the project with Nobles County on August 30, 2013. GRE also sent the required notice under Minn. Rules, part 7850.5300, subp. 3, to those persons on the Commission's general notification list that a permit has been applied for from the local unit of government.

It is noted that prior to GRE's submittal of the conditional use permit application, Nobles County prepared an environmental assessment for the proposed project in accordance with Minn. Rules, 7850.5300, subp. 5, that was subsequently approved by the County Board on September 3, 2013. Remaining requirements with regard to the environmental review process include publishing notice in the *EQB Monitor* of when the assessment is available for review and of the procedure for commenting on the assessment, and withholding a final decision on the project until at least ten days after the notice appears in the *EQB Monitor*. A copy of the environmental assessment must also be provided to the Commission upon completion, and may be filed using the Commission's electronic filing system (<https://www.edockets.state.mn.us/EFiling>).

If you have any questions, please direct them to Scott Ek (651-201-2255 or scott.ek@state.mn.us) of the Commission staff.

Sincerely,

Burl W. Haar
Executive Secretary

Cc: Deb Pile, Department of Commerce