



STATE OF MINNESOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

February 19, 2015

Marsha Parlow
Great River Energy
12300 Elm Creek Boulevard
Maple Grove, MN 55369-4718

Kristin Cote
Meeker County
325 North Sibley Avenue
Litchfield, MN 55355-2155

RE: Local Review of Great River Energy's Stockade 115 kV Transmission Line and
Substation Project in Meeker County, Minnesota
Docket No. ET-2/LR-15-166

Dear Ms. Parlow and Ms. Cote:

This letter confirms that the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (Commission) has received Great River Energy's (GRE) letter dated February 17, 2015, indicating that it has elected to pursue local review approval to construct approximately five and one-half miles of new 115 kilovolt (kV) overhead transmission line and a substation in Forest City and Kingston townships, Meeker County, Minnesota.

Under the Minnesota Statutes Chapter 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 transmission line and substation upgrade proposed by GRE is eligible for local review under 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. GRE has indicated that Meeker County is the local government unit with jurisdiction to conduct environmental review and permit the proposed project. GRE has indicated that on November 18, 2014, the Meeker County Board of Commissioners passed a motion authorizing review of the project under its jurisdiction. GRE filed a conditional use permit application for the project with Meeker County on February 11, 2015.

Under Minn. R. 7850.5300, subp. 5, an environmental assessment must be prepared by the local unit of government with jurisdiction over the project. Specific requirements with regard to the environmental review process include providing an opportunity for the public to participate in the development of the scope of the environmental assessment before it is prepared; 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 10 days after the notice appears in the *EQB Monitor*. A copy of the environmental assessment and other relevant documents must be provided to the Commission upon completion. The environmental assessment may be filed using the Commission's electronic filing system (<https://www.edockets.state.mn.us/EFiling>).

This letter acknowledges that GRE has also sent the required notice under Minn. R. 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.

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

Sincerely,

Daniel P. Wolf
Executive Secretary