

APPENDIX C

AGENCY CORRESPONDENCE



GREAT RIVER
ENERGY

12300 Elm Creek Boulevard • Maple Grove, Minnesota 55369-4718 • 763-445-5000 • Fax 763-445-5050 • www.GreatRiverEnergy.com

24 February 2009

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

RE: Revision on Proposed Substation and Transmission Line Construction
Stearns County, Minnesota
T125N, R28W, Section 30
T125N, R29W, Sections 25 & 36
T124N, R29W, Sections 1 & 2

WO# 54331 & 75711

Dear Mr. Boerner:

Last October, I sent you a letter on the Sartell Project proposed by Great River Energy. Due to changes in planning, Great River Energy is adjusting the route of the project. The proposed line is marked in purple (Phase 1) and blue (Phase 2) on the enclosed fact sheet to identify the two phases of the project described below.

- Phase 1: Increase the voltage capacity of the existing Le Sauk distribution substation (owned by Stearns Electric Association), which requires upgrade of a 69 KV line to 115 kV (0.4 mile) in Sections 1 & 2, T124N, R29W. This upgraded line will tap an existing Xcel Energy transmission line to the south of the substation and is proposed to be built in 2009.
- Phase 2: Construct approximately two miles of new 115 kV transmission line to serve a new distribution substation that will be constructed by Stearns Electric Association. This line will be located in Section 30, T125N, R28W and Sections 25 & 36, T125N, R29W in Stearns County, Minnesota. This part of the project is proposed to be built in 2010.

Mr. Dan Boerner
19 February 2009
Page 2

The transmission line will be constructed with single wood poles that will generally range between 70 and 75 feet in height. Great River Energy is requesting information on the possible effects of both proposed phases on airports or airstrips in the project area.

We would appreciate receiving any written comments from your office by Friday, 27 March 2009. If you have any questions about this proposed project, please contact me at (763) 445-5215. If you wish to respond by e-mail, my address is mparlow@greenergy.com. Thank you for your cooperation and assistance.

Sincerely,

GREAT RIVER ENERGY



Marsha Parlow
Transmission Permitting Analyst

Enclosure

**Proposed LeSauk and Sartell 115 kV Transmission Lines
Proposed 115 kV Conversion of LeSauk Distribution Substation
Proposed Sartell 115 kV Distribution Substation**



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12300 Elm Creek Boulevard
Maple Grove, MN 55369-4718
1-888-521-0130
www.greatriverenergy.com



STEARNS ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION
900 East Kraft Drive PO Box 40
Melrose, MN 56352-0040
1-800-962-0655
www.stearnselectric.org

Project Need

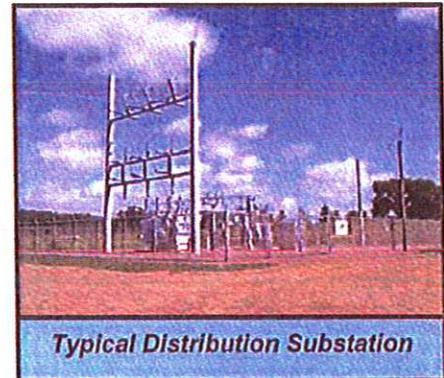
Rapid continuous residential and commercial development in LeSauk Township and the cities of Sartell, Waite Park, St. Joseph and St. Cloud has led to increasing loads on the existing electric distribution system operated by Stearns Electric Association. Despite recent economic slowdown, there is strong evidence that customer demand for electricity will continue to grow at a rapid rate in this area.

To address these needs, Great River Energy proposes to increase the voltage capacity of the existing LeSauk distribution substation (requiring the construction of approximately 0.4 miles of 115 kV transmission line), and to construct approximately two miles of 115 kV transmission line to serve a new distribution substation that will be constructed by Stearns Electric Association.

Proposed Facilities

This project consists of two related construction phases:

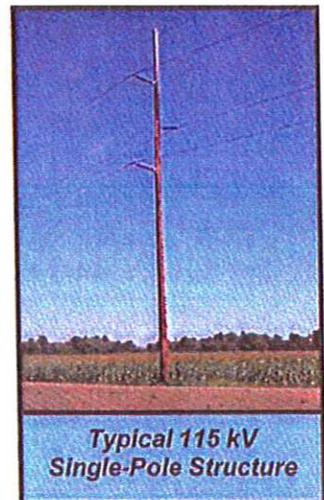
Phase 1: Great River Energy will convert the existing LeSauk Substation from 69 kV to 115 kV. The substation conversion also includes reconstructing an approximately 0.4 mile segment of existing 69 kV transmission line and increasing the voltage to 115 kV. The reconstructed 115 kV transmission line will connect to an existing Xcel Energy transmission line on the north side of County Road 133 in St. Joseph Township (see project map on back). The reconstructed 115 kV transmission line will extend northeasterly along the north side of County Road 133 to the existing LeSauk distribution substation located in the southwest corner of Stearns County Road 133 and 320th Street. This 115 kV transmission line and substation conversion will relieve electric loading issues on the West St. Cloud Substation and relieve low voltage problems in the surrounding electric transmission system.



Typical Distribution Substation

Phase 2: Stearns Electric Association will construct a new Sartell 115 kV distribution substation on three acres located in the northeast corner of Stearns County Roads 133 and 4. The new substation will serve the electric load created by present and future residential and commercial growth in the City of Sartell and surrounding areas.

Great River Energy will construct a two mile segment of 115 kV transmission line (that will generally follow Stearns County Road 133) from the existing LeSauk Substation to the new Sartell Substation. The new transmission line poles will generally be 70-75 feet tall (see photos of typical 115 kV transmission line poles and a typical 115 kV substation). As part of this project, an existing Stearns Electric Association three-phase distribution line located along Stearns County Road 133 will be buried.



Typical 115 kV Single-Pole Structure

This project will be permitted locally through Stearns County in accordance with State Permitting Rules.

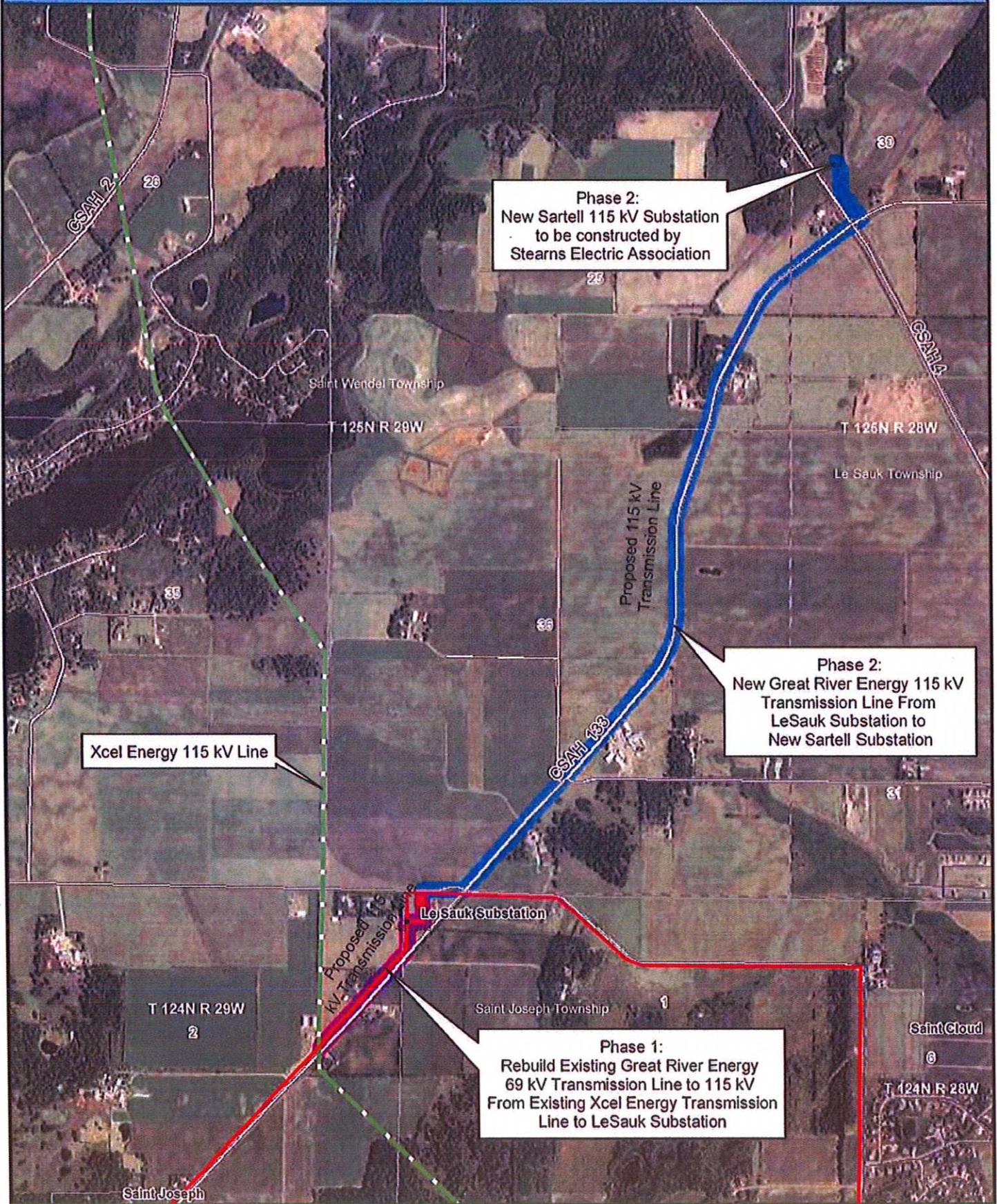
Schedule	Public Meetings	Spring/Summer 2009
	Local Permitting Phases I and II	Spring/Summer 2009
	Easement Acquisition Phase I	Spring 2009
	Construction Phase I	Fall 2009
	Easement Acquisition Phase II	Spring/Summer 2010
	Construction Phase II	Fall 2010
	Energization Phase II	Winter 2010

Contacts

Rick Heuring
Great River Energy
1-888-521-0130, #5979
Direct Dial 763-445-5979
rheuring@grenergy.com

Tim Weir
Stearns Electric Association
1-800-962-0655
Direct Dial 320-256-1604
tweir@stearnselectric.org

PROJECT MAP



Phase 2:
New Sartell 115 kV Substation
to be constructed by
Stearns Electric Association

Phase 2:
New Great River Energy 115 kV
Transmission Line From
LeSauk Substation to
New Sartell Substation

Xcel Energy 115 kV Line

Phase 1:
Rebuild Existing Great River Energy
69 kV Transmission Line to 115 kV
From Existing Xcel Energy Transmission
Line to LeSauk Substation

LeSauk Substation

Proposed 115 kV Transmission Line

Proposed 115 kV
Transmission Line

Saint Joseph

Saint Cloud

Saint Joseph Township

Saint Wendel Township

Le Sauk Township

T 124N R 29W
2

T 124N R 28W

T 125N R 29W

T 126N R 28W

Parlow, Marsha GRE/MG

From: Dan Boerner [Dan.Boerner@dot.state.mn.us]
Sent: Tuesday, March 24, 2009 2:09 PM
To: Parlow, Marsha GRE/MG
Subject: project modification - Fwd: new transmission lines - LeSauk substation and new Sartell
...Re: FW: Sartell Project - Number 54331

Hi Marsha,

The modification to the plan for this project (letter dated 24FEB2009) looks insignificant as it relates to the impacts on nearby airports. Our office has no objection to the project.

>>> Dan Boerner 12/9/2008 3:14:16 PM >>>
Marsha,

Regarding the propose new transmission lines, in the area of the LeSauk substation and to the new Sartell substation. Private airports are about 2.5 miles away. I don't see that this project will adversely affect the two airports, so our office has no objection to the project.

Daniel P. Boerner, P.E.
Minnesota Department of Transportation
Office of Aeronautics
Regional Airport Engineer
Mail Stop 410
phone: (651) 234-7244
fax: (651) 234-7261
<http://www.dot.state.mn.us/aero/>
e-mail dan.boerner@dot.state.mn.us

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phone: (651) 234-7244
fax: (651) 234-7261
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e-mail dan.boerner@dot.state.mn.us

>>> "Parlow, Marsha GRE/MG" <mparlow@greenergy.com> 12/8/2008 8:54 AM >>>
Hi Dan,

I know you may be busy. I was checking in to see if you had a chance to review?

The closest airport I have found near this project is the Guggenberger Airport in Sartell. That airport is approximately 2.1 nm east of our project.



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12300 Elm Creek Boulevard • Maple Grove, Minnesota 55369-4718 • 763-445-5000 • Fax 763-445-5050 • www.GreatRiverEnergy.com

24 February 2009

Mr. Dennis A. Gimmestad
Government Programs & Compliance
Minnesota Historical Society
345 Kellogg Blvd. West
St. Paul, MN 55102-1906

RE: Revision on Proposed Substation and Transmission Line Construction
Stearns County, Minnesota
T125N, R28W, Section 30
T125N, R29W, Sections 25 & 36
T124N, R29W, Sections 1 & 2

WO# 54331 & 75711

Dear Mr. Gimmestad:

Last November, I sent you a letter on the Sartell Project proposed by Great River Energy. Due to changes in planning, Great River Energy is adjusting the route of the project. Westwood Professional Services reviewed the change in the route and concluded that the new route will not warrant a formal Phase I Cultural Resource Survey. I have included the report that addresses the route change.

An updated project description and map is also included for your review. The proposed line is marked in purple (Phase 1) and blue (Phase 2) to identify the two phases of the project described below.

- Phase 1: Increase the voltage capacity of the existing Le Sauk distribution substation (owned by Stearns Electric Association), which requires upgrade of a 69 KV line to 115 kV (0.4 mile) in Sections 1 & 2, T125N, R29W. This upgraded line will tap an existing Xcel Energy transmission line to the south of the substation and is proposed to be built in 2009.
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Mr. Dennis A. Gimmestad
19 February 2009
Page 2

Great River Energy is requesting concurrence with its interpretation on the possible effects on cultural and historic properties in the vicinity of both proposed phases of the project. We would appreciate receiving any written comments from your office by Friday, 27 March 2009. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at (763) 445-5215. If you wish to contact me by e-mail, my address is mparlow@greenergy.com.

Sincerely,

GREAT RIVER ENERGY



Marsha Parlow
Transmission Permitting Analyst

Cc: Britta L. Bloomberg, Minnesota Historical Society

Enclosure

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**Proposed LeSauk and Sartell 115 kV Transmission Lines
 Proposed 115 kV Conversion of LeSauk Distribution Substation
 Proposed Sartell 115 kV Distribution Substation**



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STEARNS ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION
 900 East Kraft Drive PO Box 40
 Melrose, MN 56352-0040
 1-800-962-0655
 www.stearnslectric.org

Project Need

Rapid continuous residential and commercial development in LeSauk Township and the cities of Sartell, Waite Park, St. Joseph and St. Cloud has led to increasing loads on the existing electric distribution system operated by Stearns Electric Association. Despite recent economic slowdown, there is strong evidence that customer demand for electricity will continue to grow at a rapid rate in this area.

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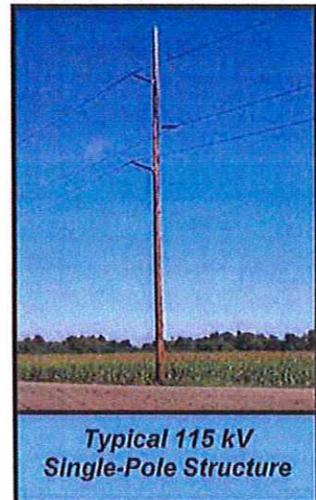
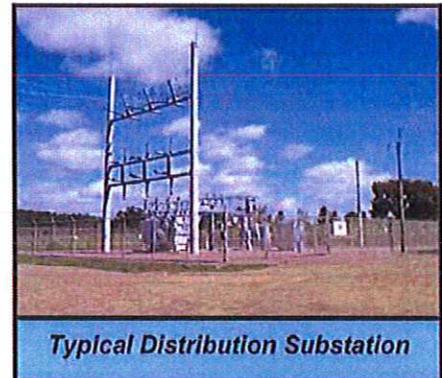
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Phase 2: Stearns Electric Association will construct a new Sartell 115 kV distribution substation on three acres located in the northeast corner of Stearns County Roads 133 and 4. The new substation will serve the electric load created by present and future residential and commercial growth in the City of Sartell and surrounding areas.

Great River Energy will construct a two mile segment of 115 kV transmission line (that will generally follow Stearns County Road 133) from the existing LeSauk Substation to the new Sartell Substation. The new transmission line poles will generally be 70-75 feet tall (see photos of typical 115 kV transmission line poles and a typical 115 kV substation). As part of this project, an existing Stearns Electric Association three-phase distribution line located along Stearns County Road 133 will be buried.



This project will be permitted locally through Stearns County in accordance with State Permitting Rules.

Schedule	Public Meetings	Spring/Summer 2009
	Local Permitting Phases I and II	Spring/Summer 2009
	Easement Acquisition Phase I	Spring 2009
	Construction Phase I	Fall 2009
	Easement Acquisition Phase II	Spring/Summer 2010
	Construction Phase II	Fall 2010
	Energization Phase II	Winter 2010

Contacts
 Rick Heuring
 Great River Energy
 1-888-521-0130, #5979
 Direct Dial 763-445-5979
 rheuring@grenergy.com

Tim Weir
 Stearns Electric Association
 1-800-962-0655
 Direct Dial 320-256-1604
 tweir@stearnslectric.org

November 12, 2008

Westwood Professional Services
7699 Anagram Drive
Eden Prairie, MN 55344

MAIN 952-937-5150
FAX 952-937-5822
TOLL FREE 1-888-937-5150
EMAIL wps@westwoodps.com
www.westwoodps.com



Marsha Parlow
Transmission Permitting Analyst
Great River Energy
12300 Elm Creek Boulevard
Maple Grove, MN 56369-4718

**Re: Phase IA Archaeological Assessment of the Sartell 115 kV Transmission Line (ST-SRT) and Substation, Le Sauk and St. Wendel Townships, Stearns County, Minnesota
File 20081115.00**

Dear Marsha:

Westwood Professional Services (Westwood) was contracted in June 2008 by Great River Energy (GRE) to conduct a Phase IA Archaeological Assessment of a proposed construction location for the new Sartell 115 kV distribution substation and two-mile long 115 kV transmission line. The line is being built to meet increasing loads on the existing local electric distribution system. The proposed construction site for the facilities is located in Sections 25 and 36 of Township 125 North, Range 29 West (St. Wendel Township) and Section 30 of Township 125 North, Range 28 West (Le Sauk Township) Stearns County, Minnesota.

Project Description

The proposed project consists of two related phases. The first involves the conversion of the existing Le Sauk Substation from a 69 kV to 115 kV facility. This process will include the conversion of an existing 69kV transmission line to a 115 kV transmission line. The line will extend to the north and east along the northern edge of CH 133 to the existing Le Sauk Substation located in the southwestern quadrant of Stearns County Road 133 and 320th Street.

The second phase of the project involves the construction of a new Sartell 115 kV Substation on three acres located in the northeastern quadrant of Stearns County Road 133 and Stearns County Road 4. A 115 kV transmission line will be constructed between the Le Sauk Substation and the new Sartell Substation. The new 115 kV line will replace an existing 69 kV transmission line that roughly parallel Stearns County Road 133, while the existing 69 kV line will be buried along the comparable route. The new 115 kV transmission line will be emplaced with new, 70-75 foot tall single-pole structures.

In October, 2008, Westwood Senior Cultural Resource Specialist Dean T. Sather examined site files maintained at the Office of the State Archaeologist (OSA), and the Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). According to the archaeological site files at the OSA, there are no recorded historical structures within one mile of the proposed construction locations.



In October, 2008, Senior Cultural Resource Specialists Dean T. Sather and Steven J. Blondo conducted a site visit to assess general conditions of the proposed construction areas and transmission line routes. The proposed construction site of the new Sartell Substation is located within a tilled agricultural field. The nearest permanent water source is located more than one mile to the northwest.

The route of the proposed 115 kV line that will parallel Stearns County State Aid Highway (CSAH) 133 will occupy a previously established route that is currently occupied by the existing 69 kV line. The existing 69 kV line is located entirely within the ditch that parallels the County Road and the adjacent edge of the plowed agricultural fields. The new 115 kV line is proposed to be located along this pre-existing route. The existing transmission line crosses Stearns County Road 133 several times along the route, primarily in order to avoid crossing occupied residential farmsteads.

Warnert Family Century Farm

Located in the SW ¼ of Section 2, Township 125 North, Range 29 West, towards the southern end of the proposed project route on the east side of CSAH 133, is the Farmstead of the Warnert Family. A small brass plaque located near the driveway entrance to the farmstead identifies the farm as a Minnesota Century Farm. Archival research conducted at both SHPO and OSA yielded no information regarding this farmstead or any other such property in the location of the Warnert Farm.

Documentary information regarding the Warnert Farm was obtained from the Minnesota Farm Bureau website (www.fbmn.org). The Minnesota Century Farm program is a joint venture of the Minnesota Farm Bureau and the Minnesota State Fair that recognizes farms that have been in operation in excess of 100 years, are in excess of 50 acres in size, and are actively farmed. According to a data sheet available on-line, the Warnert Farm was established in 1879 and has been owned and operated by members of the Warnert Family since that time. Further information suggested that the Stone Residence located on the farmstead was constructed in 1862.

Findings

Based on the information compiled through both the record search and field visit, it is Westwood's opinion that the completion of a formal Phase I Cultural Resource Survey for the defined project area is **not warranted** due to several factors.

First, the construction location of the new substation at the northern end of the project is situated within a tilled agricultural field. Further, the location is immediately adjacent to a municipal composting facility, surrounded by several farmstead residential lots, and near the intersection of CSAH 133 and CSAH 4. It is likely that the location of the proposed new substation has experienced significant disturbance by prior construction events and ongoing agricultural processes.

Second, the proposed 115 kV transmission line is designed to replace an existing 69 kV line that parallels the route of CSAH 133. The replacement poles will be located

Marsha Parlow
November 12, 2008
Page 3



within the existing landscaped ditch adjacent to the roadbed or along the immediate edge of plowed agricultural fields adjacent to the ditch. It is not anticipated that the proposed construction will impact property that has not been previously disturbed through road construction and maintenance efforts or through ongoing agricultural processes.

Third, the proximity of the proposed new 115 kV transmission line to any existing structures along the proposed route will not represent new or additional visual impacts on the area, as it will be replacing a previously constructed 69 kV transmission line.

Conclusions

Westwood supports the finding that there will be no adverse impact on known or suspected historic properties as a result of this project. Westwood 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,

WESTWOOD PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

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

RECEIVED MAR 18 2009



March 17, 2009

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

RE: WO# 54331 & 75711
Revision on proposed substation and transmission line construction
Sartell Project
T125 R28 S30, T125 R29 S25 & S36 & T124 R29 S1 & S2
Stearns County
SHPO Number: 2009-0523

Dear Ms. Parlow:

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.

We previously reviewed this project on 18 December 2008. You have now informed us of a revision in the scope of work (your letter of 24 February 2009). Based on our review of these revisions, we conclude that there are no properties listed on 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 with reference to the assisting federal agency.

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

Sincerely,



Britta L. Bloomberg
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer