

APPENDIX A

Notices
Commission Correspondence



GREAT RIVER
ENERGY®

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

October 27, 2011

Dr. Burl W. Haar
Executive Secretary
Minnesota Public Utilities Commission
121 7th Place East, Suite 350
St. Paul, MN 55101

RE: Shoal Lake 115 kV Substation and Transmission Line Project

Dear Dr. Haar:

In accordance with the Power Plant Siting Act, Minn. Stat. § 216E.05, subd. 3, this letter, filed via eFiling, serves as the required notice to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (Commission) that Great River Energy has elected to seek local approval to construct approximately 7.75 miles of new 115 kilovolt (kV) overhead transmission line to serve a new substation near Nashwauk in Itasca County, Minnesota (see enclosed fact sheet/map). The project is needed to meet the growing electrical needs in the area.

One of Great River Energy's 28 cooperatives, Lake Country Power, proposes to construct the new "Shoal Lake" 115 kV Substation in Section 4, T57N, R23W just south of County State Aid Highway (CSAH) 56 in Nashwauk Township (see photo of typical substation on fact sheet).

Great River Energy, power supplier to Lake Country Power, proposes to construct approximately 7.75 miles of new overhead 115 kV transmission line to energize this new substation.

The project is divided into two segments as described below:

- The first five miles of transmission line will be double circuited with a new Minnesota Power 230 kV transmission line that will exit the new Minnesota Power McCarthy Lake Substation and run north through Sections 25, 24, 13, 12 and 1 of Nashwauk Township as shown on the fact sheet map. Minnesota Power will own the transmission structures and the 230 kV circuit, and Great River Energy will own the 115 kV circuit that will be strung on the same poles. The 230 kV line was permitted through the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission and an Environmental Impact Statement was prepared for the line.
- Great River Energy will construct the approximately 2.75 miles of new 115 kV transmission line west along CSAH 56 to the Shoal Lake Substation. The line will be constructed using wood poles with horizontal post insulators. When practical, Lake Country Power will attach an upgraded distribution system on wood crossarms (see photo on fact sheet). The poles will generally be 65-75 feet above ground with a 280-400 foot span between poles. Guy wires and anchors will be used to counter angles. Where guys and anchors are not practical, a laminated wood pole or steel pole on foundation may be used.

Dr. Burl W. Haar
October 27, 2011
Page 2

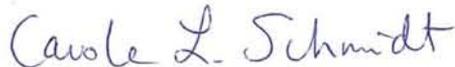
Great River Energy intends to permit the project through Itasca County. A zoning permit application was submitted to the County on October 26, 2011. Itasca County has been informed that it has 60 days to refer the permitting process to the Commission.

Questions regarding this project should be directed to Don Dewey, Itasca County Environmental Services at 218-327-2857; or Carole Schmidt, Great River Energy at 763-445-5214.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

GREAT RIVER ENERGY



Carole L. Schmidt
Supervisor, Transmission Permitting and Compliance

Enclosure

cc: Affidavit of service on: General List of Interested Persons – w/encl.
Don Dewey, Itasca County Environmental Services – w/encl.
Deborah Pile, Department of Commerce – w/encl.

s:\legal\environmental\transmission\projects\3894 Shoal Lake\Shoal Lake PUC\Notttr

Shoal Lake 115 kV substation and transmission line



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



LAKE COUNTRY POWER
2810 Elida Drive
Grand Rapids, MN 55744
1-800-421-9959
www.lakecountrypower.com

Project Need

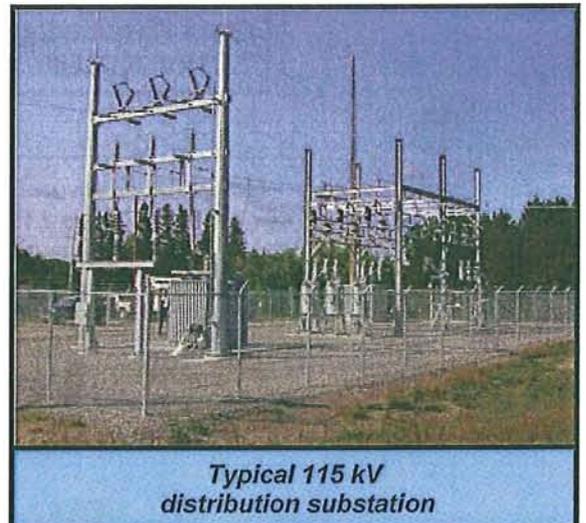
Lake Country Power members north of the City of Nashwauk are currently served by two substations. These substations are energized by a 23,000 volt (23 kV) transmission line built in 1958. This system can no longer support growth or the increasing demand for electric service and at times experiences low voltages.

To increase capacity and improve the electrical service, Lake Country Power will build a new substation in Nashwauk Township. The substation will be energized by a new 115 kV transmission line built by Great River Energy, power supplier to Lake Country Power. The new substation and transmission line will provide a long-term solution to the area's electric needs. The two existing substations will be retired and their electric loads transferred into the new substation.

Substation and Transmission Line

Lake Country Power will construct the new "Shoal Lake" Substation (similar to that shown right) on County Highway 56, approximately 3.5 miles west of Minnesota Highway 65 in Nashwauk Township. The substation will be fed by the new transmission line and contain a transformer that will lower the voltage to distribution levels. This substation location was chosen to bring a strong electric source to the middle of the demand area.

Great River Energy will build approximately 7.75 miles of new 115 kV transmission line to energize the Shoal Lake Substation (see map on back). The new 115 kV transmission line will tap the Minnesota Power 115 kV "28" Line (that is to be relocated near the new McCarthy Lake Substation at the corner of Hilltop Road and County Highway 58). For the first five miles Minnesota Power and Great River Energy will construct a double circuit 230/115 kV transmission line sharing common poles. At County Highway 56, Great River Energy's 115 kV transmission line will turn west and parallel the highway for 2.75 miles to the new substation. Where practical, the new line will overtake the existing Lake Country Power distribution system along Highway 56.



*Typical 115 kV
distribution substation*

Poles and Construction

Great River Energy will construct the new line along County Highway 56 using wood poles with horizontal post insulators. The poles will generally be 65-75 feet above ground with a 280-400 foot span between poles. The shorter spans are necessary where Great River Energy overtakes Lake Country Power's distribution system. Where the distribution system is overtaken the distribution line will be attached to the transmission poles on wood crossarms (see photo). Guy wires and anchors will be used to counter angles in the line.

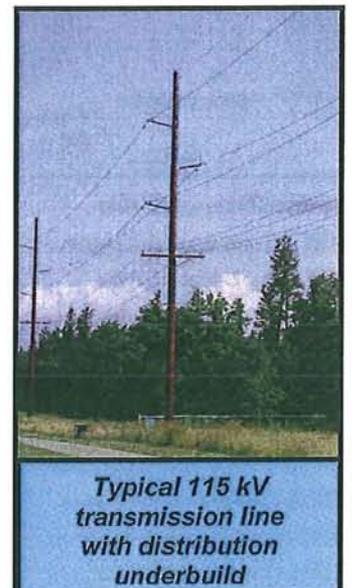
Schedule

Permitting – Fall 2011
Survey/Easement Acquisition/Engineering – Winter 2011-12
Construction – 2012-2013

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

Dale Aukee, Sr. Field Representative
Great River Energy
763-445-5978
or 1-888-521-0130, ext. 5978
daukee@grenergy.com

Derek Howe
Lake Country Power
218-326-7178
or 1-800-421-9959
dhowe@lakecountrypower.com



*Typical 115 kV
transmission line
with distribution
underbuild*

Date last revised: 9/15/2011





Energy Facility Permitting
85 7th Place East, Suite 500
St. Paul, Minnesota 55101-2198
ph 651.296.4026 | fx 651.297.7891
www.energyfacilities.puc.state.mn.us

November 2, 2011

Don Dewey
Itasca County Environmental Services
123 NE 4th St.
Grand Rapids, MN 55744

Carole Schmidt
Great River Energy
12300 Elm Creek Blvd.
Maple Grove, MN 55369

**Re: Local Review of Shoal Lake 115 kV Transmission Line and Substation Project
Commission Docket Number: ET2/LR-11-1061**

Dear Mr. Dewey and Ms. Schmidt,

Greetings. This letter confirms that the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (Commission) has received notification that Great River Energy (GRE) intends to seek local review to construct a new 7.75-mile long 115 kilovolt (kV) transmission line and associated substation (Shoal Lake Substation). The project would be located in Itasca County, near the city of Nashwauk, Minn.

Under the Power Plant Siting Act, a permit from the Commission is required for transmission line projects over 100 kV (Minn. Stat. § 216E). However, local review and permitting is possible for eligible projects (Minn. Stat. § 216E.05). For such projects, a utility may apply to a local unit of government instead of the Commission for a permit to build the project. This letter confirms that GRE's proposed project is eligible for local review.

Based on the proposed location of the project, Itasca County is the local unit of government with jurisdiction to permit the project. GRE indicates that it submitted a zoning permit application to Itasca County for the project on October 26, 2011. A local unit of government may relinquish its permitting jurisdiction by requesting that the Commission assume jurisdiction within 60 days of the filing of an application with the local unit of government (Minn. Rules 7850.5300, Subp. 4).

An environmental review process, including the development of an environmental assessment (EA), must be conducted by a local unit of government with jurisdiction over the project (Minn. Rules 7850.5300). GRE indicates that Itasca County will be responsible for the environmental review process for the proposed Shoal Lake project.

Specific requirements with regard to the environmental review process include (Minn. Rules 7850.5300, Subp. 5; see enclosed local review guide):

- (1) Providing an opportunity for the public to participate in the development of the scope of the environmental assessment before it is prepared,
- (2) Publishing notice in the EQB Monitor when the assessment is available for review and the procedure for commenting on the assessment, and
- (3) Withholding a final decision on the project until at least ten days after the notice appears in the EQB Monitor.

Itasca County must provide a copy of the environmental assessment to the Commission when it is completed (Minn. Rules 7850.5300, Subp. 5). Electronic filing (eFiling) of the environmental assessment is encouraged (<https://www.edockets.state.mn.us/EFiling>).

This letter confirms that GRE has sent the required notice to those persons on the Commission's general notification list that a permit has been applied for from a local unit of government (Minn. Rules 7850.5300, Subp. 3).

Please contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,



Ray Kirsch
raymond.kirsch@state.mn.us
651-296-7588

enclosure

cc: Burl Haar, Commission
Bob Cupit, Commission

Local Review of Energy Facilities – A Guide for Governmental Units, Utilities, and Developers

The Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (Commission) has responsibility and authority for the siting and routing of energy facilities in Minnesota, including power plants, transmission lines, wind farms, and pipelines. For certain eligible projects, local review and permitting is possible (Minn. Stat. § [216E.05](#)). For these projects, a utility (or developer) may apply to a local unit of government instead of the Commission for a permit to build the project.

Minnesota Rule [7850.5300](#) provides the procedural requirements that must be followed by local units of governments (LGUs) and by utilities/developers for the local review option. These requirements should be reviewed before initiating a local review process.

Applicant Responsibilities

The utility/developer (applicant) considering local review should first ensure that the project meets the eligibility requirements of Minn. Stat. 216E.05. Second, the applicant should discuss, with the applicable LGU(s), the environmental review process required by Minn. Rule 7850.5300 and the permits that will be required for the project.

The applicant must, within ten days of applying to an LGU for a permit, notify the Commission of their intent to seek local review for the proposed project. The notice should include:

- (1) A complete description of the project,
- (2) A project map,
- (3) The LGU that will be conducting the environmental review for the project,
- (4) The LGU(s) that will need to issue a permit for the project, and
- (5) Contact information for the applicant and LGU(s).

The notice should be electronically filed through the Commission's eDockets system, <https://www.edockets.state.mn.us/EFiling>. Upon filing, the project will be assigned a docket number, which will be used to reference all future documents related to the project.

The applicant must also mail (by post or email) notice to the Commission's general notification list. This is a list of persons who have expressed an interest in local review projects. The list is available by contacting Department of Commerce, Energy Facility Permitting (EFP) staff. EFP staff acts as technical staff to the Commission and ensures compliance with local review procedural requirements. EFP staff contacts are listed on the Commission's [energy facility permitting website](#). The staff person for local review projects is Ray Kirsch, 651-296-7588, raymond.kirsch@state.mn.us.

The notice to the general notification list, with an accompanying affidavit of service, should be electronically filed into the eDockets system (eFiled).

LGU Responsibilities

A local unit of government (LGU) that accepts a local review project¹, must conduct an environmental review of the project before making a permit decision. This review requires the preparation of an environmental assessment (EA). An EA is an environmental review document provided for by the Power Plant Siting Act; it is not an EAW (see Minn. Rule [7850.3700](#)). The environmental review process

¹ An LGU may request that the Commission assume jurisdiction over a project by making a request to the Commission within 60 days of the permit application by the utility/developer, Minn. Rules 7850.5300, Subp. 4.

requires: (1) an opportunity for the public to develop the scope of the EA, and (2) notice in the EQB Monitor when the EA is completed and how persons may view the EA. An LGU may not make a permit decision until citizens have had a chance to review the EA (at least ten days after the EQB Monitor notice).

An environmental assessment should include, in an appendix, the following documents:

- (1) Notice of the EA scoping meeting (e.g., copy of letter, newspaper notice)
- (2) All comments received on the scope of the EA, including citizen comments and agency comments. If no comments were received (e.g., no citizen comments), then this should be noted.
- (3) A scoping decision by the responsible LGU which outlines those topics which will be evaluated and discussed in the EA.

To ensure that citizens are aware of the proposed project and how they can participate, the LGU should provide notice of public meetings (scoping meeting and any other public meetings for the project) through: (1) newspaper notice and (2) direct notice to affected landowners/citizens. The LGU should develop and use a mailing list that includes potentially affected citizens and applicable state agencies. The LGU should use this mailing list to provide notice of the EA's completion and availability for review (in addition to placing notice in the EQB Monitor – most citizens do not regularly read the EQB Monitor).

The LGU which leads the environmental review process must provide a copy of the EA to the Commission when completed. The EA should be electronically filed. An LGU does not need to submit the permit that it issues for the project to the Commission.

eFiled Documents

Based on Minnesota Rule 7850.5300 and the above discussion of applicant and LGU responsibilities, the documents that should be eFiled for a local review project include:

- (1) Applicant's notice to the Commission
- (2) Applicant's notice to the general notification list with affidavit of service
- (3) Notice in the EQB Monitor of the availability of the environmental assessment
- (4) The environmental assessment for the project

Assistance from EFP Staff

After the applicant provides notice to the Commission and to the general notification list, EFP staff will send a letter to the applicant and applicable LGU(s) (1) affirming that the project is eligible for local review, (2) recognizing one LGU as responsible for the environmental review of the project, and (3) noting those LGUs which must issue a permit or approval for the project.

EFP staff is available to assist applicants and LGUs with questions concerning the local review process. Additionally, applicants and LGUs can review previous local review projects on the Commission's energy facility permitting website, see [Local Review](#).

Frequently Asked Questions

- (1) *What if a proposed project affects several LGUs, e.g., County A, County B, and City C?*

Each LGU will likely have a specific permit which is required for the project. For example, County A and County B may need to issue a conditional use permit; City C may need to issue a facility permit. However, there is only one environmental review process for the project; one EA is developed. The LGUs affected must agree on the LGU that will lead the environmental review process. This LGU will

create the EA. All of the LGUs will then use the EA in making their permitting decisions. Thus, by agreement, County A could develop the EA for the project. County A, County B, and City C would all use this EA to make their respective permitting decisions.

- (2) *Can an applicant email notice to those persons on the general notification list that have provided email addresses?*

Yes, notice can be provided by email. The State of Minnesota provides notice by regular mail and solicits email addresses only for backup contact information. However, applicants can provide notice by a combination of email and regular mail. If an email address bounces, a regular mail address should be used.

- (3) *How does an LGU place a notice in the EQB Monitor?*

The EQB Monitor is a biweekly publication managed by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. Notices for the EQB Monitor should be sent to: EQB.Monitor@state.mn.us. Staff contacts and the EQB publishing schedule are available on the EQB website: www.eqb.state.mn.us.

- (4) *How does an LGU electronically file documents?*

Instructions for electronically filing (eFiling) documents with the Commission are included on the eDockets website: <https://www.edockets.state.mn.us/EFiling>. Click on "eFiling Help," <http://www.commerce.state.mn.us/eDocFile/eFilingHelp.html>.



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August 25, 2011

Dr. Burl W. Haar
Executive Secretary
Minnesota Public Utilities Commission
121 7th Place East, Suite 350
St. Paul, MN 55101

Re: Application for Approval of Route Permit Amendment

**In the Matter of the Route Permit Application for the Essar Steel Transmission Project in Itasca County, Minnesota
Docket No. E280/TL-09-512**

Dear Dr. Haar:

Pursuant to Minn. Rules 7850.4900, Minnesota Power respectfully requests that the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission ("Commission") approve a route permit amendment for the Essar Steel Transmission Project. The Commission granted Minnesota Power and Nashwauk Public Utilities Commission a Route Permit in an order dated August 2, 2010.

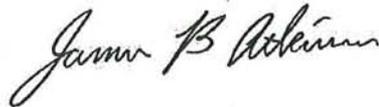
Specifically, Minnesota Power requests the additional authority to build the southerly five (5) miles of Route 1 with double-circuited structures to accommodate Great River Energy's proposed 115 kV Shoal Lake Project (see attachment A). The proposed design envisions employing either of two variations of double-circuit wood H-frame structures (see attachments B and C) capable of carrying both circuits on a 130' right-of-way. This proposed change of design is contingent upon reaching agreement with Great River Energy. Therefore, the authority the Commission granted to construct a stand-alone 230kV line in this area remains necessary.

An amendment to the Route Permit is warranted because its overall effect upon the routing factors listed in Minn. Rules 7850.4100 would be negligible while its potential to minimize effects of the Shoal Lake Project are significant. The proposed double-circuit structures are somewhat taller than the single-circuit structures originally contemplated, but their use in this five mile-long corridor will eliminate the need for an additional 85' right-of-way strip adjacent to Minnesota Power's planned 130' easement. The net effect is 52 acres less land being cleared and permanently encumbered by easement. Moreover, the proposed structure types are roughly the same height as the single pole steel double-circuit structures detailed in the June 2009 Route Permit Application.

Minnesota Power believes that the criteria set forth in Minn. Rules 7850.4900, subp. 2 has been met by the enclosed information and respectfully requests the Commission utilize the notice and comment process set forth in this rule.

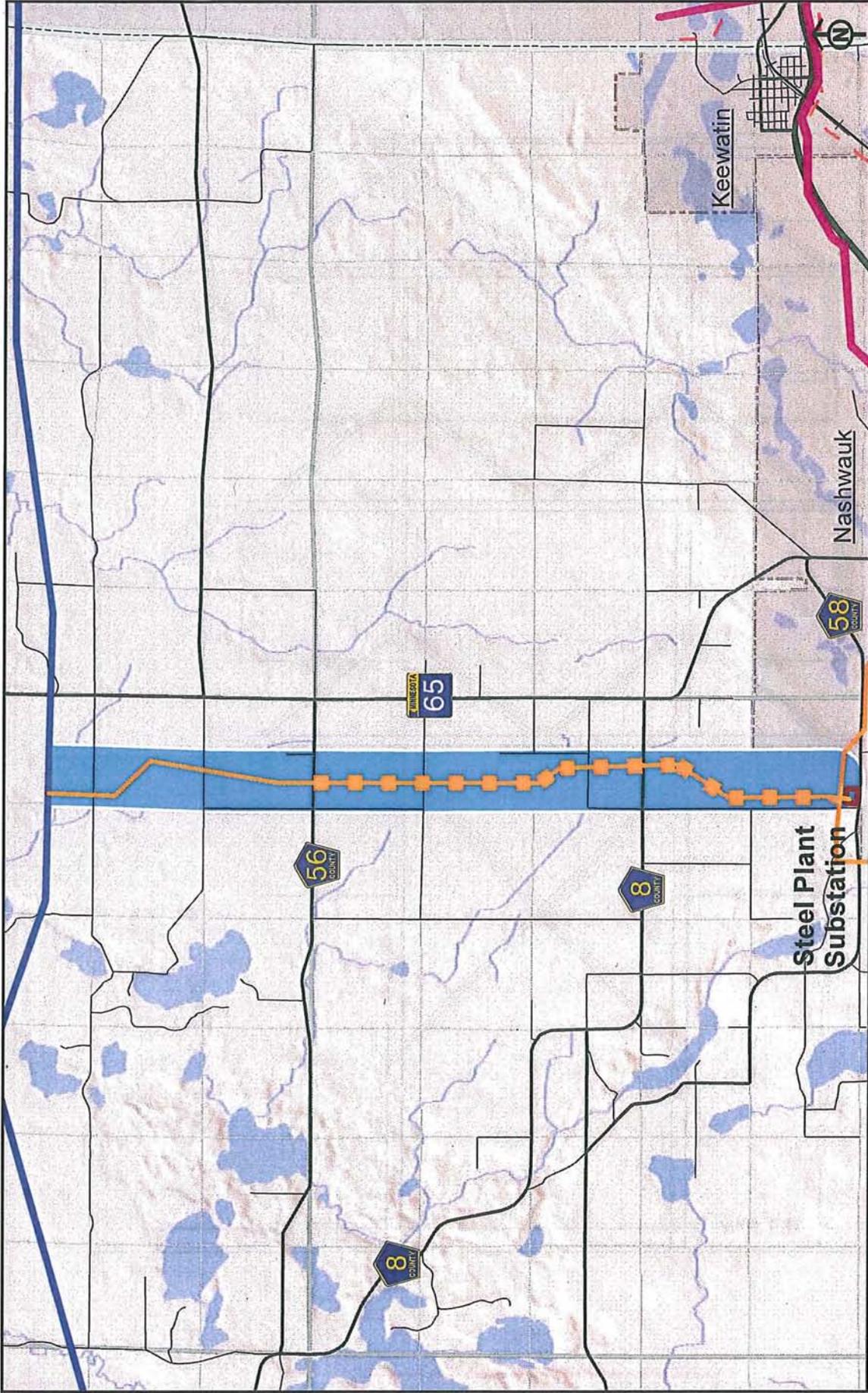
Please contact me 218-343-9119 or jbatkinson@allete.com with any questions.

Best Regards,



James B. Atkinson
Supervisor, Environmental Siting and Permitting

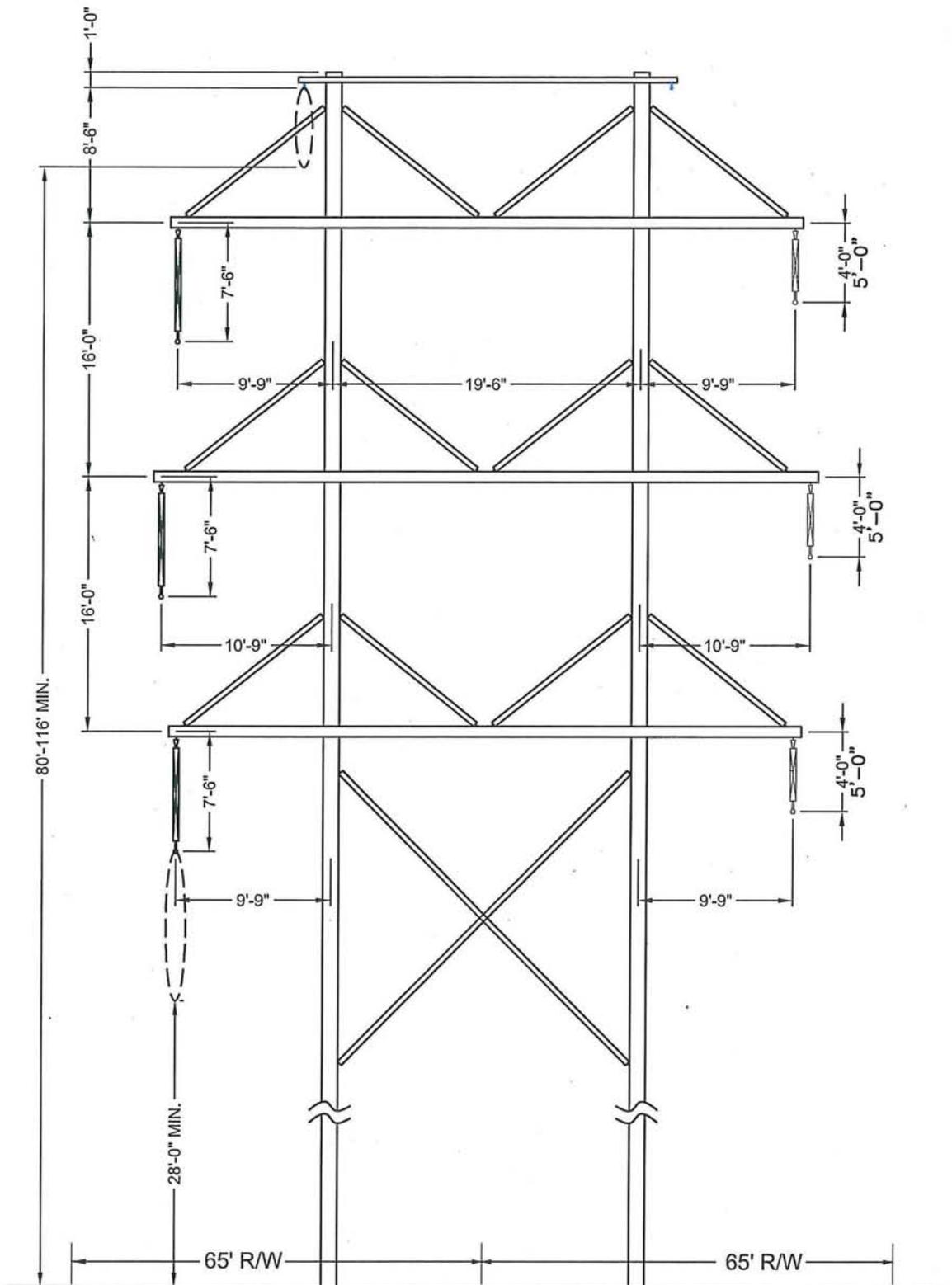
c: Bill Storm, Energy Facility Permitting
Bob Cupit, Minnesota Public Utilities Commission



Route 1 Overview

Nashwauk 230 kV Route Application
Nashwauk PUC
HDR

- Steel Substation
- Proposed Centerline - Double Circuit
- Proposed Centerline - Single Circuit
- Route 1
- Pipeline
- 230kV Transmission
- 69kV Transmission
- 115kV Transmission
- Proposed Substation
- Existing Substation
- Municipal Boundary



TYPICAL 230KV/115KV H-FRAME-OPTION 1

STATE OF MINNESOTA)
) ss
COUNTY OF ST. LOUIS)

AFFIDAVIT OF SERVICE VIA
ELECTRONIC FILING

Kristie Lindstrom of the City of Duluth, County of St. Louis, State of Minnesota, says that on the 25th day of August, 2011, she served Minnesota Power's Application for Approval of Route Permit Amendment in Docket Number E280/TL-09-512 to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission and the Energy Resources Division of the Minnesota Department of Commerce of via electronic filing. The remaining persons listed on the attached service list were served as so indicated on the list.

/s/ Kristie Lindstrom

Subscribed and sworn to before
me this 25th day of August, 2011.

/s/ Jodi Nash

Notary Public - Minnesota
My Commission Expires Jan. 31, 2015

First Name	Last Name	Email	Company Name	Address	Delivery Method	View Trade Secret	Service List Name
Bryan	Adams	badams.nashwauk@mcshi.com	Nashwauk Public Utilities Commission	301 Central Avenue Nashwauk, MN 55769	Paper Service	No	OFF_SL_9-512_1
Julia	Anderson	Julia.Anderson@state.mn.us	Office of the Attorney General-DOC	1400 BRM Tower 445 Minnesota St St. Paul, MN 551012131	Electronic Service	Yes	OFF_SL_9-512_1
Sharon	Ferguson	sharon.ferguson@state.mn.us	Department of Commerce	85 7th Place E Ste 500 Saint Paul, MN 551012198	Electronic Service	Yes	OFF_SL_9-512_1
Burl W.	Haar	burl.haar@state.mn.us	Public Utilities Commission	Suite 350 121 7th Place East St. Paul, MN 551012147	Electronic Service	Yes	OFF_SL_9-512_1
Karen Finstad	Hammel	Karen.Hammel@state.mn.us	Office of the Attorney General-DOC	1400 BRM Tower 445 Minnesota Street St. Paul, MN 551012131	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_9-512_1
Stacy	Kotch	Stacy.Kotch@state.mn.us	MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION	395 John Ireland Blvd. St. Paul, MN 55155	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_9-512_1
John	Lindell	agorud.ecf@state.mn.us	Office of the Attorney General-RUD	900 BRM Tower 445 Minnesota St St. Paul, MN 551012130	Electronic Service	Yes	OFF_SL_9-512_1
Robert	Lindholm	rindholm@allete.com	Minnesota Power	30 West Superior Street Duluth, MN 55802	Paper Service	No	OFF_SL_9-512_1
Eric	Lipman	eric.lipman@state.mn.us	Office of Administrative Hearings	PO Box 64620 St. Paul, MN 551640620	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_9-512_1
David	Moeller	dmoeller@allete.com	Minnesota Power	30 W Superior St Duluth, MN 558022093	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_9-512_1
Carol A.	Overland	overland@legalelectric.org	Legalelectric - Overland Law Office	1110 West Avenue Red Wing, MN 55066	Paper Service	No	OFF_SL_9-512_1

BEFORE THE MINNESOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

Ellen Anderson
J. Dennis O'Brien
Phyllis Reha
David Boyd
Betsy Wergin

Chair
Commissioner
Commissioner
Commissioner
Commissioner

Bryan Adams
Nashwauk Public Utilities Commission
301 Central Avenue
Nashwauk, MN 55769

SERVICE DATE: September 30, 2011

DOCKET NO. E-280/TL-09-512

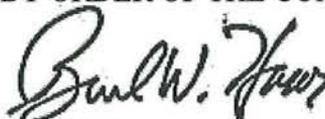
In the Matter of the Application for a HVTL Route Permit for the Essar Steel Transmission Project

The above entitled matter has been considered by the Commission and the following disposition made:

Approved the Amendment Request.

The Commission agrees with and adopts the recommendations of the Department of Commerce which are attached and hereby incorporated in the Order.

BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION



Burl W. Haar
Executive Secretary



This document can be made available in alternative formats (i.e. large print or audio) by calling 651.296.0406 (voice). Persons with hearing or speech disabilities may call us through Minnesota Relay at 1.800.627.3529 or by dialing 711.



STATE OF MINNESOTA
Department of Commerce



BEFORE THE MINNESOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE
ENERGY FACILITY PERMITTING STAFF

DOCKET NO. E280/TL-09-512

Meeting Date: September 28, 2011.....Agenda Item #

Company: Minnesota Power/Nashwauk Public Utilities Commission

Docket No. PUC Docket Number: E280/TL-09-512
**In the Matter of the Application for a HVTL Route Permit for the
Essar Steel Transmission Project.**

Issue(s): Should the Commission amend the HVTL Route Permit?

DOC Staff: William Cole Storm.....651-296-9535

Relevant Documents (in Commission Packet).

- | | | |
|----|-------------------------------------|-----------------|
| 1. | MP/NPUC's HVTL Permit Application | May 29, 2009 |
| 2. | Commission Order for a Route Permit | August 3, 2010 |
| 3. | MP's Request for a Permit Amendment | August 25, 2011 |

The enclosed materials are work papers of the Department of Commerce Energy Facility Permitting Staff. They are intended for use by the Public Utilities Commission (Commission) and are based on information already in the record unless otherwise noted.

This document can be made available in alternative formats (i.e., large print or audio) by calling 651-296-0391 (voice). Persons with hearing or speech disabilities may call us through Minnesota Relay at 1-800-627-3529 or by dialing 711.

Documents Attached.

1. Permit Amendment Map
2. GRE Comment Letter dated September 15, 2011

(Note: Relevant documents and additional information can be found on eDockets (E280/TL-09-512) or the PUC Facilities Permitting website:

<http://energyfacilities.puc.state.mn.us/Docket.html?Id=24526>

Statement of the Issue

Should the Commission grant Minnesota Power's (MP) request for a modification of the Essar Steel HVTL Route Permit?

Introduction and Background

On June 1, 2009, MP and Nashwauk Public Utilities Commission (NPUC) made a joint application to the Commission for a HVTL route permit for the proposed Essar Steel Transmission Project. The Essar Steel Transmission Project consist of four 230 kV transmission lines and two 230 kV substations located in Itasca County.

In an Order issued August 2, 2010, the Commission designated and issued a HVTL route permit for the Essar Steel Transmission Line Project.

Minnesota Power is requesting that the High-Voltage Transmission Line (HVTL) route permit be amended so that the southerly five mile section (from the McCarthy Lake Substation north to County Highway 56) of Route 1 can be constructed with double-circuited towers within the approved 130 foot right-of-way. The purpose of the amendment is to allow the accommodation of a portion of the proposed Great River Energy (GRE) Shoal Lake 115 kV HVTL on the double-circuited towers, thereby eliminating the need for an additional 85 foot right-of-way adjacent to MP's permitted HVTL for the GRE line. The double-circuit towers would be 80 to 116 feet tall, as opposed to the permitted tower height of 60 to 80 feet.

Regulatory Process and Procedures

Between the Commission's determination of the Essar Steel HVTL Route Permit Application as complete (Order date June 29, 2009) and the Commission's Order issuing a HVTL Route Permit to MP and NPUC (August 3, 2010) for the Essar Steel Transmission project, the HVTL Route Permit Application was reviewed and processed under the Full Review Procedures (Minnesota Rules 7850.1700) of the Power Plant Siting Act (Minnesota Statutes 216E.001 to 216E.18).

Those procedures included an initial public information/scoping meeting (July 29, 2009), development of a scoping decision (October 26, 2009), preparation of Environmental Impact Statement (May 28, 2010), and a public hearing (April 7, 2010). The ALJ released his report

(Findings of Fact, Conclusions and Recommendation) on June 3, 2010. The Findings indicated that the permitting process has been conducted in accordance with Minnesota Rules, identified route impacts and mitigation measures, and drew conclusions based on the record.

Permit Amendment Process

The permit amendment process is outlined in Minn. Rule 7850.4900. The Rule states that the commission may amend any of the conditions, such as the route and/or alignment, in a route permit for a high voltage transmission line issued by the Commission upon request of any person. The person requesting an amendment of a condition in a route permit shall submit an application to the commission in writing describing the amendment sought and the reasons for the amendment.

In a letter on August 25, 2011, MP requested an amendment to the original permit issued in the above matter, pursuant to Minn. Rule 7850.4900.

The Commission is required to mail notice of receipt of the application to those persons on the general list and to those persons on the project list if such a list exists. The Commission is also required to provide at least a ten-day period for interested persons to submit comments on the request.

The Energy Facility Permitting (EFP) staff mailed notice of the request to the General Notification List and the Essar Steel Project List on September 1, 2011. The comment period was open through September 15, 2011.

One comment letter was received. Great River Energy submitted a comment letter in support of the proposed amendment.

The Commission is required to decide within ten days after close of the public comment period whether to approve the amendment request. The Commission is required to notify the applicant in writing of the Commission's decision and send a copy of the decision to any person who requested notification or filed comments on the request.

EFP Staff Analysis and Comments

The EFP staff has reviewed the request submitted by MP. The proposed change in the tower to a double-circuited structure will not result in additional impacts to human health or environmental welfare outside those that were identified in the record. The net effect of this amendment is the potential to reduce the amount of land (by 52 acres) that would be cleared and permanently encumbered by easement to accommodate the GRE Shoal Lake project.

The existing HVTL Route Permit includes measures to ensure the line is constructed in a safe, reliable manner and that impacts are minimized or mitigated.

Commission Decision Options

- A. Approve the Amendment Request.**
- B. Deny the Amendment Request.**
- C. Make some other decision deemed more appropriate.**

EFP Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends Options A.



Route 1
 Nashwauk 230 kV Route Application
 Nashwauk Public Utilities Commission





GREAT RIVER
ENERGYSM

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

September 15, 2011

Mr. Bill Storm
Site Permit Manager
Department of Commerce
Energy Facility Permitting
85 7th Place East, Suite 500
St. Paul, MN 55101-2198

RE: Comments on Minnesota Power Permit Amendment Request
Essar Steel Transmission Line Project; PUC Docket no. E280/TL-09-512

Dear Mr. Storm:

On August 2, 2010, the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (Commission) designated and issued a HVTL route permit for the Essar Steel Transmission Line Project, authorizing Minnesota Power to construct four new 230 kV transmission lines in Itasca County.

On August 25, 2011, the Commission received a Petition from Minnesota Power to amend the route permit to allow the southerly five-mile section of Route 1 to be constructed with double circuit structures within the approved 130-foot right-of-way. The purpose of the amendment is to accommodate a portion of a proposed Great River Energy "Shoal Lake" 115 kV HVTL on the double circuit structures, eliminating the need for an additional 85-foot right-of-way for the Great River Energy line adjacent to Minnesota Power's permitted HVTL.

Great River Energy supports this amendment request and believes that collocating the two lines on double circuit structures reduces impacts on both human and environmental resources. Great River Energy is pursuing permitting of the Shoal Lake Project through Itasca County.

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

Sincerely,

GREAT RIVER ENERGY

Carole L. Schmidt

Carole L. Schmidt
Supervisor, Transmission Permitting and Compliance

cc: Deb Pile, Minnesota Department of Commerce-Energy Facilities Permitting

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