



GREAT RIVER
ENERGY®

17845 East Highway 10 • P.O. Box 800 • Elk River, Minnesota 55330-0800 • 763-441-3121 • Fax 763-241-2366

1 August 2007

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

RE: Proposed Richmond to Farming 115 kV Transmission Line Upgrade
Stearns County, Minnesota

Dear Mr. Groehler:

Great River Energy (GRE) is in the process of preparing an environmental report for a six-mile transmission line rebuild project near Richmond in Stearns County, Minnesota. Existing and future electric load growth in this area has raised concerns that the existing 69 kV system would become overloaded under emergency outage conditions in the western St Cloud area of GRE's transmission system,

GRE presently operates a 69 kV transmission line that extends from Richmond to Stearns Electric Association's (SEA) Farming distribution substation located six miles north of Richmond and also directly feeds SEA's Big Fish distribution substation. GRE is proposing to rebuild this 69 kV line with a heavier conductor size, which would remove the line overload concerns, boost the reliability of the transmission line, and better serve the existing and future load growth in the area

Due to anticipated future transmission system upgrades from 69 kV to 115 kV in the greater St Cloud area, this rebuild project will be permitted, designed and built to 115 kV standards, but will initially operate at 69 kV until the adjoining transmission systems are upgraded to 115 kV. The new line will be constructed with single wood poles that will be 60-75 feet in height. The spacing between the new poles will be approximately 350 feet.

The project is located in Sections 24, 25, 36, T124N, R31W; and Sections 1, 12 and 13, T123N, R31W, and it will generally follow the same route as the existing 69 kV transmission line. A project description/site map is enclosed for your information.

GRE is requesting information on the possible effects of the proposed project on airports or airstrips in the project area.

We would appreciate receiving any written comments from your office by Friday, August 31, 2007. If you have any questions about this proposed project, please contact me at (763) 241-2272. If you wish to respond by e-mail, my address is cschmidt@greenergy.com. Thank you for your cooperation and assistance.

Sincerely,

GREAT RIVER ENERGY

Carole L. Schmidt
Supervisor, Transmission Permitting and Compliance

Enclosure

h:\cschmidt\Richmond-Farming\RFMND0

www.GreatRiverEnergy.com

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2 August 2007

Mr. Tom Hingsberger
Department of the Army
Corps of Engineers
St. Paul District, Attn: CO-R
190 Fifth Street East
St. Paul, MN 55101-1638

RE: Proposed Richmond to Farming 115 kV Transmission Line Upgrade
Stearns County, Minnesota

Dear Mr. Hingsberger:

Great River Energy (GRE) is in the process of preparing an environmental report for a six-mile transmission line rebuild project near Richmond in Stearns County, Minnesota. Existing and future electric load growth in this area has raised concerns that the existing 69 kV system would become overloaded under emergency outage conditions in the western St. Cloud area of GRE's transmission system,

GRE presently operates a 69 kV transmission line that extends from Richmond to Stearns Electric Association's (SEA) Farming distribution substation located six miles north of Richmond and also directly feeds SEA's Big Fish distribution substation. GRE is proposing to rebuild this 69 kV line with a heavier conductor size, which would remove the line overload concerns, boost the reliability of the transmission line, and better serve the existing and future load growth in the area

Due to anticipated future transmission system upgrades from 69 kV to 115 kV in the greater St. Cloud area, this rebuild project will be permitted, designed and built to 115 kV standards, but will initially operate at 69 kV until the adjoining transmission systems are upgraded to 115 kV. The new line will be constructed with single wood poles that will be 60-75 feet in height. The spacing between the new poles will be approximately 350 feet

The project is located in Sections 24, 25, 36, T124N, R31W; and Sections 1, 12 and 13, T123N, R31W, and it will generally follow the same route as the existing 69 kV transmission line. A project description/site map is enclosed for your information.

The route is almost entirely located on the east side of Stearns County State Aid Highway (CSAH) 9 between Richmond and SEA's Farming distribution substation. There are three isolated areas where the new line will be shifted five to seventeen feet easterly of its present location to comply with applicable CSAH minimum clear zone requirements.

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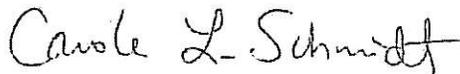
Mr. Tom Hingsberger
2 August 2007
Page 2

GRE 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 span one DNR public water. GRE will apply to the DNR Division of Lands and Minerals for a license to cross that water. Although there are wetlands in the vicinity of the line (see enclosed map), there will be no dredging and filling and impacts from pole placement will be minimal.

We would appreciate receiving any written comments from your office by Friday, August 31, 2007. If you have any questions about this proposed project, please contact me at (763) 241-2272. If you wish to respond by e-mail, my address is cschmidt@greenergy.com. Thank you for your cooperation and assistance.

Sincerely,

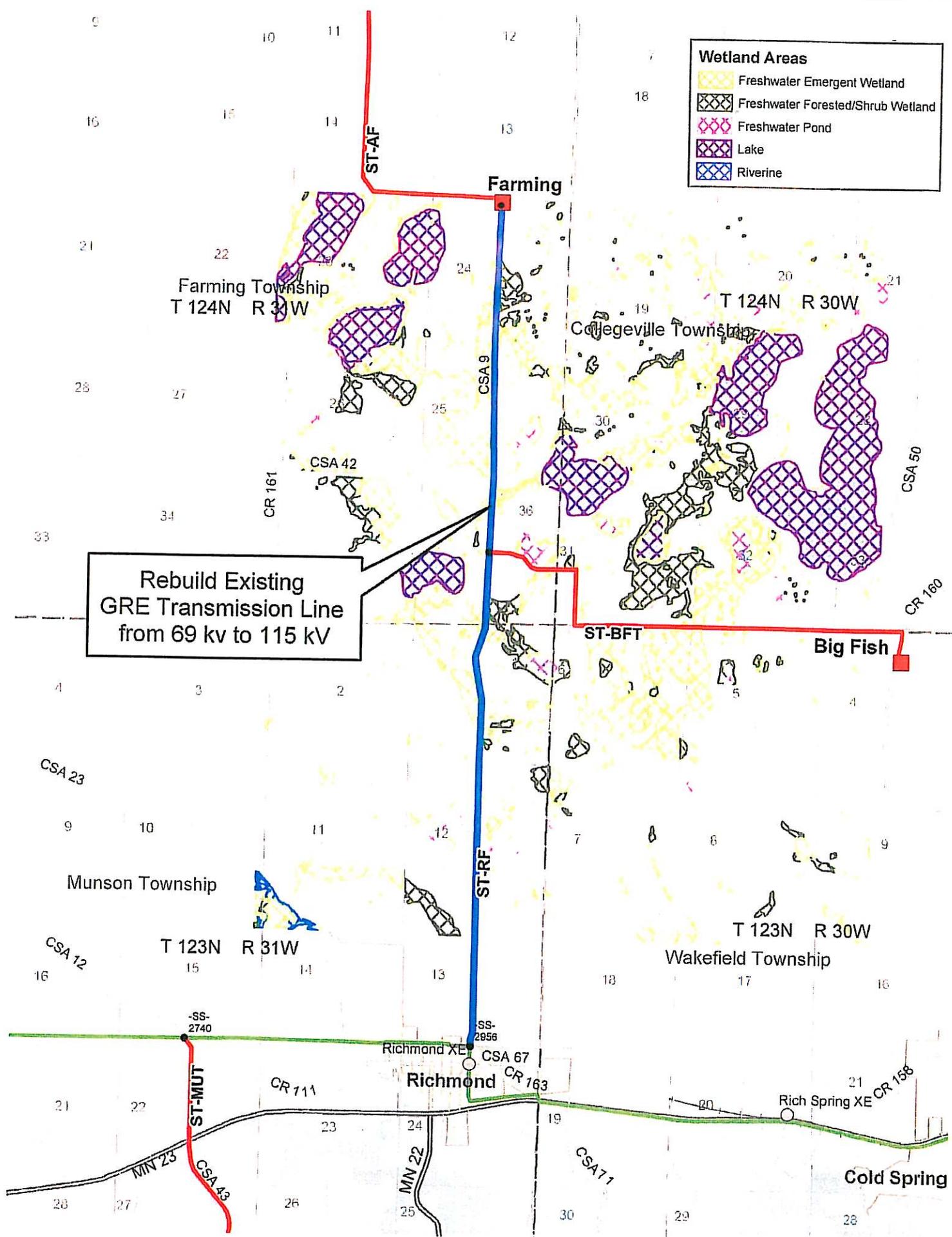
GREAT RIVER ENERGY



Carole L. Schmidt
Supervisor, Transmission Permitting and Compliance

Enclosures

h:\cschmidt\Richmond-Farming\RFDOA



Wetland Areas	
	Freshwater Emergent Wetland
	Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetland
	Freshwater Pond
	Lake
	Riverine

Rebuild Existing
GRE Transmission Line
from 69 kv to 115 kv

Letters from Agencies

Schmidt, Carole GRE/ER

From: Lisa Joyal [Lisa.Joyal@dnr.state.mn.us]
Sent: Thursday, August 30, 2007 3:37 PM
To: Schmidt, Carole GRE/ER
Subject: Richmond to Farming 115 kV Transmission Line Upgrade

I have reviewed your assessment of the potential for the above project to impact rare features. I concur with your assessment that the project will not negatively affect any known occurrences of rare features. The reference number for this correspondence is ERDB #20080176. Thank you for consulting us on this matter, and for your interest in preserving Minnesota's rare natural resources.

Sincerely,

Lisa

~~~~~  
Lisa Joyal  
Endangered Species Environmental Review Coordinator  
NHIS Data Distribution Coordinator  
Natural Heritage and Nongame Research Program  
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources  
500 Lafayette Road, Box 25  
St. Paul, MN 55155

phone: 651-259-5109  
fax: 651-296-1811  
lisa.joyal@dnr.state.mn.us  
www.mndnr.gov/eco

**Schmidt, Carole GRE/ER**

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**From:** Nick\_Rowse@fws.gov  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 29, 2008 2:53 PM  
**To:** Schmidt, Carole GRE/ER  
**Subject:** Re: Richmond-Farming project

Carole Schmidt  
Supervisor, Transmission Permitting and Compliance  
Great River Energy  
17845 East Highway 10  
Elk River, MN 55330

Dear Carole:

I've reviewed the proposed project, which is to rebuild a 69 kV transmission line that extends from Richmond, Minnesota to a distribution substation located six miles north of Richmond with a heavier conductor size. No federally listed species or critical habitat are documented within the proposed project area.

Sincerely,  
Nick Rowse  
Fish and Wildlife Biologist  
Twin Cities ES Field Office  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
4101 American Blvd. E.  
Bloomington, MN 55425-1665  
612-725-3548 x210

"Schmidt, Carole  
GRE/ER"  
<cschmidt@GREnerg  
y.com>

<Nick\_Rowse@fws.gov>

To

cc

01/24/2008 05:10  
PM

Subject

Richmond-Farming project

Hi Nick - I know you guys are overbooked but I am wondering if you could take a quick look at this project that we sent out back in August. Thanks  
- Carole

Supervisor, Transmission Permitting and Compliance  
Great River Energy  
763-241-2272

[attachment "RichmondToFarming115kVTransmissionLineUpgradeFactSheet-05-03-2007.pdf" deleted by Nick Rowse/R3/FWS/DOI] [attachment "RFFWS.doc" deleted by Nick Rowse/R3/FWS/DOI]



Minnesota Department of Transportation

RECEIVED JAN 28 2008

Office of Aeronautics  
Mail Stop 410  
222 East Plato Boulevard  
St. Paul, MN 55107-1618

Phone: 651/234-7200  
Fax: 651/234-7261

January 25, 2008

Ms. Carole L. Schmidt, Supervisor  
Transmission Permitting and Compliance  
Great River Energy  
17845 East Hwy 10  
P.O. Box 800  
Elk River, MN 55330-0800

**Subject: Proposed 115kV Transmission Line Upgrade – Richmond to Farming  
In Stearns County, Minnesota**

Dear Ms. Schmidt:

We have reviewed your proposal for the Great River Energy 115kV Transmission Line Upgrade project near Richmond MN. We do not anticipate any effect on publicly-owned airports, therefore the Office of Aeronautics has no objection to the proposed project.

If you have any questions regarding this matter, please e-mail or call me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dan Boerner', written over a horizontal line.

Daniel P. Boerner, P.E.  
Regional Airport Engineer

dan.boerner@dot.state.mn.us  
Phone (651) 234-7244  
FAX (651) 234-7261

## Schmidt, Carole GRE/ER

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**From:** Hingsberger, Thomas J MVP [thomas.j.hingsberger@usace.army.mil]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 13, 2007 9:32 AM  
**To:** Schmidt, Carole GRE/ER  
**Subject:** RE: Transmission project

Carole,

We have received the Richmond to Farming 115 kV Transmission Line Upgrade fact sheet. Please consider the following general information concerning our regulatory program that may apply to this proposed project.

If the proposal involves deposition of dredged or fill material into waters of the United States, including discharges associated with mechanical land clearing, 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 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.

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.

Sincerely,

Tom Hingsberger  
Metro Permits Section, CEMVP-OP-R  
Corps of Engineers, St. Paul District  
190 East Fifth Street, Suite 401  
St. Paul, MN 55101-1638  
Phone: 651-290-5367  
Fax: 651-290-5330  
[thomas.j.hingsberger@usace.army.mil](mailto:thomas.j.hingsberger@usace.army.mil)  
<http://www.mvp.usace.army.mil/regulatory>

-----Original Message-----

**From:** Schmidt, Carole GRE/ER [mailto:cschmidt@GREnergy.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, November 12, 2007 4:17 PM  
**To:** Hingsberger, Thomas J MVP  
**Subject:** Transmission project

Hi Tom - I am looking for a response from you folks regarding the attached project. I know you guys are swamped too, but we need to prepare an environmental report and are wondering if you have any issues with this line upgrade. Thanks!



RECEIVED SEP 11 2007

MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE

September 9, 2007

Ms. Carole Schmidt  
Great River Energy  
PO Box 800  
Elk River, MN 55330-0800

RE: Proposed Richmond to Farming 115 kV Transmission Line Project  
Stearns County  
SHPO Number: 2007-2859

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 State Historic Preservation Officer by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and the Procedures of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (36CFR800).

Based on available information, we conclude that **no properties** listed on or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places will be affected by this project

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