



GREAT RIVER
ENERGY®

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

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

January 13, 2015

Mr. Dan Wolf
Executive Secretary
Minnesota Public Utilities Commission
121 7th Place East, Suite 350
St. Paul, MN 55101

RE: Proposed St. Stephen Substation and Transmission Line Upgrade

Dear Mr. Wolf:

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 upgrade existing transmission infrastructure near St. Stephen in Stearns County, Minnesota.

The existing electrical system in the St. Stephen, Minnesota area (consisting of distribution lines, transmission lines and substations), is approaching its electrical capacity to reliably deliver electricity to the area consumers. Great River Energy and its' member cooperative Stearns Electric Association (SEA) have therefore identified a need to upgrade an existing distribution substation and transmission line to improve and maintain reliable service on the distribution grid in this area.

Great River Energy presently operates the 69 kV "ST-SST" transmission line that extends 4.75 miles west from SEA's St. Stephen distribution substation and then continues 1.75 miles south to the SEA Brockway distribution substation. The upgrade of the easternmost 1.25 miles of this transmission line to 115 kV and the conversion of the St. Stephen distribution substation to 115 kV will provide improved reliability to both the St. Stephen and Brockway distribution substations. The westernmost 5.25 miles of the existing "ST-SST" line will be de-energized and left standing in its present location to potentially provide transmission service in the future.

The proposed project is located in Sections 14, 15, 22 and 23, T126N, R29W and the upgraded transmission line will follow the same route as the existing 69 kV transmission line. A project description/site map is enclosed for your information.

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Great River Energy intends to permit the project through Stearns County. A Conditional Use Permit application for the project was submitted to the county on January 5, 2015. Stearns 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 Jennifer Buckentine, Stearns County Environmental Services Department, at 320-656-3613; Rick Heuring of Great River Energy at 763-445-5979; or me 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: Special Service List - General List 7850.2100 -1A – w/encl.
Jennifer Buckentine, Stearns County Environmental Services – w/encl.
Deborah Pile, Department of Commerce – w/encl.
Rick Heuring, GRE – w/encl.

St. Stephen 115 kV Transmission Line Upgrade



GREAT RIVER ENERGY
12300 Elm Creek Blvd
Maple Grove, MN 55369-4718
763-445-5000
www.greatriverenergy.com



STEARNS ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION
900 E. Kraft Drive, P.O. Box 40
Melrose, MN 56352-0040
320-256-4241
www.stearnselectric.org

Project Description/Need

Great River Energy, wholesale electric supplier to Stearns Electric Association (SEA), is proposing to rebuild a short segment of existing 69 kilovolt (kV) transmission line to 115 kV, and SEA is proposing to convert an existing 69 kV substation to operate at 115 kV near the city of St. Stephen in Stearns County, Minn. The system upgrade is needed to improve electric system reliability in the area.

Great River Energy currently operates the 69 kV "ST-SST" transmission line that extends 4.75 miles west from SEA's St. Stephen distribution substation and then continues 1.75 miles south to the SEA Brockway distribution substation (see map on back). The upgrade of the easternmost 1.25 miles of this transmission line to 115 kV and the conversion of the St. Stephen distribution substation to 115 kV will provide improved reliability to both the St. Stephen and Brockway distribution substations. The westernmost 5.25 miles of the existing "ST-SST" line will be de-energized and left standing in its present location to potentially provide transmission service in the future.

Proposed Project

This project will include constructing a new transmission line termination structure and replacing the existing 69 kV transformer with a new 115 kV transformer at the St. Stephen Substation, and rebuilding approximately 1.25 miles of the ST-SST line to 115 kV. The project also includes installing a new 3-way switch structure at the proposed interconnection with an existing 115 kV transmission line (at 100th Avenue). The new 115 kV transmission line will utilize 477 ACSR conductor attached to single wood poles 60-80 feet in height (see photo). The spacing between the new poles will be approximately 400 feet.

Proposed Route

After exiting the SEA St. Stephen distribution substation, the new 115 kV transmission line will follow the same route as the existing 69 kV transmission line along the north side of Stearns County Road 131 (see map on back).

Project Schedule

Great River Energy will seek approval for this project through Stearns County.

Public contacts and/or notifications -----	Fall 2014
Project permitting -----	Late 2014 - early 2015
Survey/design -----	2015
Easement acquisition/right-of-way permits -----	2015
Transmission line construction -----	2016
Energization -----	Summer 2016



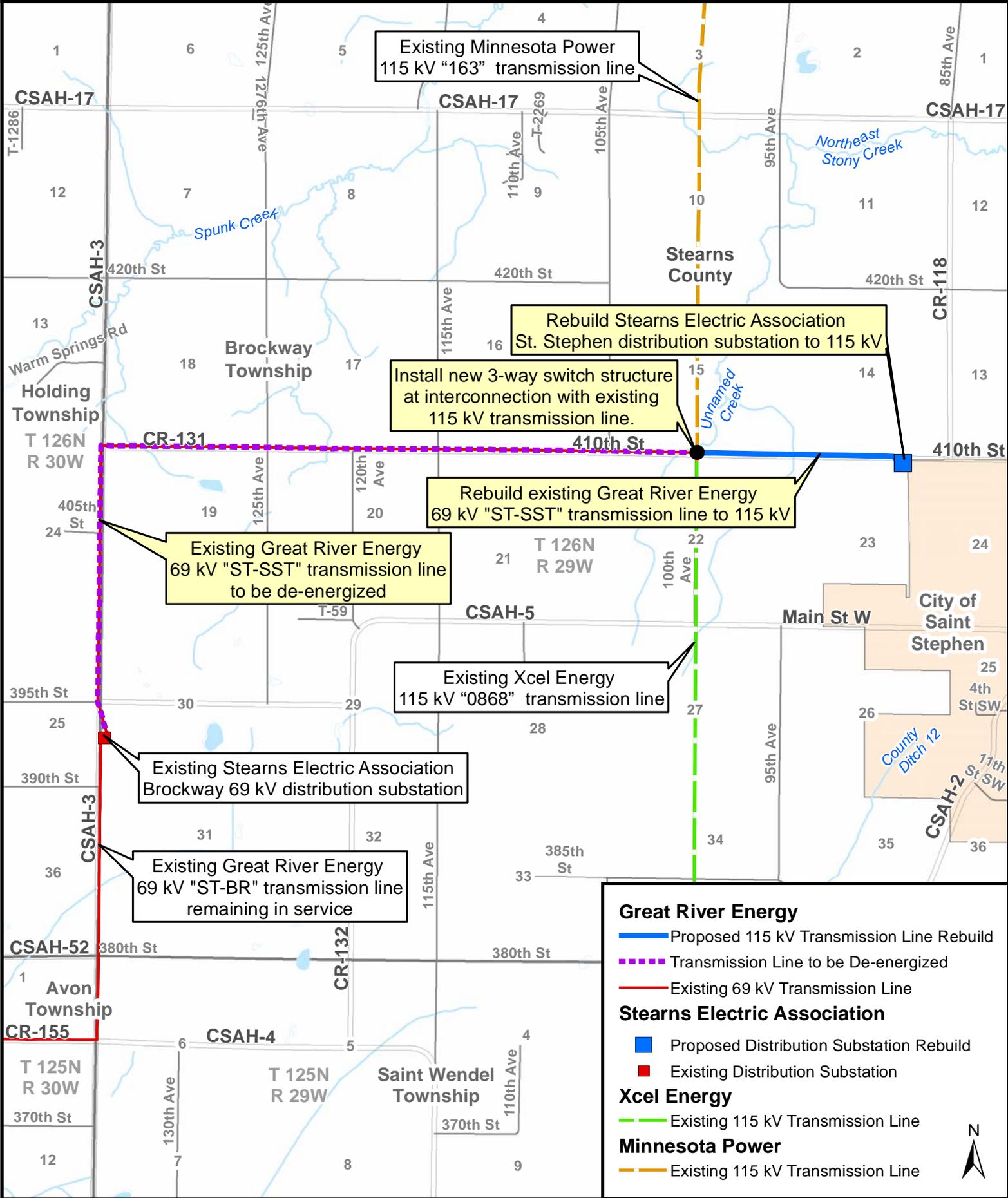
Typical 115 kV Wood Structure

For project updates and information, please contact:

Rick Heuring
Great River Energy
(763) 445-5979
rheuring@grenergy.com

Tim Weir
Stearns Electric Association
(320) 256-1604
tweir@stearnselectric.org

Proposed Project



AFFIDAVIT OF MAILING

STATE OF MINNESOTA)
) ss. Notice by Great River Energy of Election to
COUNTY OF HENNEPIN) Seek Local Approval of the St. Stephen 115
) kV Transmission Line Upgrade in Stearns
) County, Minnesota

I, Cheri J. Finseth, hereby certify that on the 13^h day of January, 2015, I directed to be sent via U.S. Mail a true and correct copy of the following notice to all persons on the attached mailing list (those on the Special Service List - General List 7850.2100-1A requesting paper service), by depositing same, postage prepaid mail, in the United States mail:

Notice by Great River Energy of Election to Seek Local Approval of the St. Stephen 115 kV Transmission Line Upgrade in Stearns County, Minnesota

Cheri J. Finseth

Subscribed and sworn to before me this
13th day of January, 2015.

Victoria Ely
NOTARY PUBLIC



Michelle Bissonnette
HDR Engineering Inc
701 Xenia Ave S Ste 600
Minneapolis MN 55416

Thomas Davis
1161 50th Ave
Sherburn MI 56171

Kristen Eide Tollefson
R-CURE
PO Box 129
Frontenac MN 55026

Colleen Mueller
22186 State Hwy 4
Paynesville MN 56362