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April 28, 2008

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

Jennifer Buckentine
Stearns County Environmental Services
705 Courthouse Square, Room 343
St Cloud, MN 56303

Re: Richmond to Farming 115 kV Transmission Line Upgrade – Local Review
PUC Docket Number: ET2/LR-08-465

Dear Ms. Schmidt and Ms. Buckentine,

This letter confirms that the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (PUC) has received notification that Great River Energy (GRE) proposes to seek local review to upgrade an existing 69 kilovolt (kV) transmission line to operate at 115 kV. The transmission line is approximately six miles long and located in Stearns County, MN.

This project falls under the Power Plant Siting Act, Minnesota Statute § 216E, and Minnesota Rules Chapter 7849, which require a permit from the PUC for transmission line projects over 100 kV. However, for eligible projects, local review and permitting is possible. A utility may apply to those local units of government that have jurisdiction over the project for a permit to build the project instead of applying to the PUC. The proposed 115 kV transmission line upgrade is eligible for local review (Minn. Stat. § 216E.05, Minn. Rules 7849.6200).

Great River Energy has indicated that Stearns County is the local unit of government with jurisdiction to permit the project. A conditional use permit application was submitted to the county on April 22, 2008. A local unit of government may relinquish its jurisdiction by requesting the PUC to assume jurisdiction within 60 days of the filing of an application with the local unit of government (Minn. Rules 7849.6200, subp. 4).

An environmental review process, including the development of an environmental assessment, must be conducted by the local unit of government with jurisdiction over the project. This letter

acknowledges that Stearns County is the Responsible Government Unit for GRE's proposed project and associated environmental review.

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 ten days after the notice appears in the EQB Monitor. Stearns County must also provide a copy of the environmental assessment to the PUC when it is completed (Minn. Rules 7849.6200, subp. 5).

Finally, this letter confirms that Great River Energy has sent the required notice to those persons on the PUC general notification list that a permit has been applied for from the local unit of government (Minn. Rules 7849.6200, subp. 3).

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me by phone or email.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ray Kirsch', written in a cursive style.

Ray Kirsch
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