

August 12, 2002

Mr. John Webster
Manager-Natural Gas Division
Hutchinson Utilities Commission
225 Michigan Street
Hutchison, MN 55350

RE: EQB Request for Additional Information on the Hutchinson Utilities Commission
Application for Partial Exemption and Pipeline Routing Permit

Dear Mr. Webster:

On August 8, 2002, representatives of HUC, and staff from the Department of Agriculture and the EQB met to discuss and review the status of the proposed Trimont to Hutchinson natural gas pipeline.

One of the items we discussed in detail was the need for additional information on route alternatives. Specifically, EQB and the Department of Agriculture staff are requesting that HUC provide detailed information on alternative pipeline routes that were considered by HUC. Specifically we are requesting that HUC provide equivalent information on alternative routes that was provided for HUC's preferred route in accordance with Minn. Rules, parts 4415.0140 to 4415.0145. This would include types of land uses and features crossed or affected such as: rivers, streams, wetlands, railroads, roads (township, county and state), vegetation, areas of special concern or significance, human settlement, population density or any other features that are present on the alternative routes.

Route alternatives that this information needs to be provided for include, but are not limited to: a) the Highway 15 alternative; b) existing rights-of-way; and c) route segments that do a better job of paralleling or following the half section line. Did HUC look at a different starting point other than the immediate Trimont area? For example did HUC examine the area east of Trimont along the Northern Border Pipeline? If you did, please identify that alternative also. If you examined and rejected other alternatives, please identify them.

It would be useful if you could provide this information in a digital format that can be transferred to the aerial photos that were provided to EQB staff by the Land Management Information Center. It would also be helpful if this information could be generated in a table format that would allow us to evaluate the differences between routes or route segments.

EQB staff has also identified several areas where it might be possible to be on the half section line or along roadways. EQB staff can provide those proposals to LMIC and they can provide them to HUC in a digital format, or we can try to provide them to you on a map. Please advise me of your preference.

If you have any questions regarding this request, please contact me at your earliest convenience at 651-296-5089. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Larry B. Hartman
EQB Staff

C: Bruce Hanson
Alan Mitchell
Bob Patton
Mike Sullivan