

EQB Monitor

Weekly announcements and environmental review notices

Volume 48, Number 14

April 2, 2024

Announcements

Environmental Review: join our roundtable discussion

We want to hear from you! Join The Environmental Quality Board (EQB) for an informal webinar and listening session. EQB is offering two virtual sessions, where we will provide information on the [2024 Mandatory Categories report](#), summarize the feedback we received so far via surveys, and spend most of the time hearing from members of the public, interested organizations, and others. Both listening sessions will cover the same introductory topics, so you do not need to attend both.

Let us know - what types of projects should go through environmental review? Are there changes necessary to the existing project types? Should we consider new categories?

The EQB is required by the legislature to write a report on environmental review mandatory categories every three years. Mandatory categories are in EQB rules; they describe what types of projects need an environmental review. The report describes the purpose of each category and analyzes recommendations for whether that category should be changed. Your feedback will be considered in EQB's drafting on this report which is due to the legislature December 2024. For more information on how to join the roundtable discussions, visit the [Mandatory Categories webpage](#).

Apply now for Public Board Member, Congressional District 7

EQB is looking for Public Board Member representing Minnesota's 7th Congressional District, which covers the majority of Western Minnesota. Serving on the Environmental Quality Board is a unique opportunity to shape environmental issues in Minnesota. Public Board Members bring the voices of Minnesotans from around the state into decision making, helping the Board think in new ways about environmental challenges and solutions. To find out more about our Public Board Member positions, [please visit our website](#) for FAQ. To find your district, visit the [Minnesota maps and districts webpage](#).



Applications must be submitted through the [Minnesota Secretary of State](#). Applicants will need to create an account and fill out an online profile. You are also encouraged to submit a cover letter and resume with your application. These documents can be uploaded when you apply online. Applications encouraged by **May 1st**.

Opportunity for public comment on fish kills protocol

The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) [released a statewide, multi-agency protocol](#) that clearly shows how agencies work together when investigating fish kills in Minnesota. The new guidance includes investigation process, communications expectations, and strategies for reducing fish kills. The MPCA seeks public comment on this draft protocol. In 2023, the Minnesota Legislature passed a law mandating the development of a fish kill response protocol. A fish kill is the unexpected, sudden death of large numbers of fish in a certain area. The fish kills addressed in the new protocol include those related to the discharge or runoff of pollutants from the land through incidents like toxic spills; runoff of manure, pesticides, or fertilizers; and high-temperature wastewater or stormwater discharges.

The public comment period begins March 11 and ends May 10. Members of the public are invited to review the draft protocol and submit comments by visiting [the public comment page](#) or by U.S. mail to: Minnesota Pollution Control Agency c/o Justin Watkins, 7381 Airport View Drive, Rochester, MN 55902. Deadline for public comment, **May 10th**.

Environmental Review and Technical Services Master Contract RFP

The Department of Administration (Admin) has issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) to establish new master contracts for environmental review related services. You can find the solicitation “Event 2000015438” in the [SWIFT Supplier Portal](#), and the event listing “Reference Number PT4348” on the [Admin postings webpage](#). This procurement will result in master contracts that will be available for use by all State Agency and local units of government registered as CPV Members. Responses must be uploaded into the SWIFT Supplier Portal no later than April 16 at 2:00pm. If you have trouble accessing the event or documents, please reach out to the Vendor Helpline at 651-201-8100, option 1, option 1.



Environmental review project notices

EQB publishes environmental review notices provided by responsible governmental units. For more information on a project undergoing environmental review, click on the individual project links below. You can also find information about active projects in your community on the [Environmental Review Projects Interactive Map](#).

Henrichs Rustic Acres Project

Location (city/township; county): Orange; Douglas

Process: Petition

Step: Responsible governmental unit assigned

Responsible governmental unit and contact: Douglas County, [Dave Rush](#), 320-762 -2903

[Doran Creek Stream Rehabilitation Project](#)

Location (city/township; county): Doran; Wilkin

Process: EAW

Step: EIS need decision

Joint federal and state review: Yes

Responsible governmental unit decision: Negative (EIS not ordered)

Responsible governmental unit record of decision date: March 26, 2024

Project description: The proposed project would rehabilitate approximate 19.25 miles of Doran Creek. Years of uncontrolled runoff have resulted in significant sediment deposition in the channel. The existing stream channel and valley is currently choked with several feet of sediment and no longer functions as a perennial or intermittent stream. Doran Creek is now a flashy and flood-prone ephemeral waterway functioning as a marshy wetland system within a historic stream valley. This has led to loss of hydraulic function, loss of aquatic wildlife habitat, and frequent flooding of adjacent fields. The Doran Creek Stream Rehabilitation Project will rehabilitate Doran Creek and restore its natural stream flow by reestablishing the channel and floodplain corridor through the removal of the accumulated sediment from the channel while completing minor regrading of the banks to restore the floodplain and create a stable condition.

Location of public documents: Bois de Sioux Watershed District, 704 Hwy 75, Wheaton, MN 56296

Responsible governmental unit and contact: Bois de Sioux Watershed District, [Jamie Beyer](#), 320-563-4185

[Green Gravel Pit Project](#)

Location (city/township; county): Hagen Township; Clay

Process: EAW

Step: EIS need decision

Responsible governmental unit decision: Positive (EIS ordered)

Responsible governmental unit record of decision date: March 25, 2024

Project description: RJ Zavoral & Sons, Inc. proposes to expand the existing, approximately 36.4-acre, Green Gravel Pit Expansion Project in Hagen Township, Clay County, Minnesota. The approximately 14.4-acre expansion Project would provide for mining, storage, and distribution of gravel aggregate.

Link to public documents: [Green Gravel Pit Project EIS need decision](#)

Location of public documents: Clay County Government Center, 3510 12th Ave S, Moorhead, MN 56560

Responsible governmental unit and contact: Clay County, [Matt Jacobson](#), 218-299-7330

[Maple Creek Habitat Enhancement Project](#)

Location (city/township; county): Preble Township; Fillmore

Process: EAW

Step: EIS need decision

Responsible governmental unit decision: Negative (EIS not ordered)

Responsible governmental unit record of decision date: March 20, 2024

Project description: Minnesota Trout Unlimited (MNTU) proposes to conduct a stream habitat enhancement project at Maple Creek located approximately 0.75 miles north of Choice, Fillmore County, Minnesota to address floodplain abandonment, accelerated bank erosion, and degraded instream habitat to restore the ecological and hydrologic functions of the creek and adjacent floodplain. The project will include reconnecting the creek with the floodplain, installing grade control riffles to limit channel incision, installing woody material and boulders for instream habitat, and restoring native riparian vegetation. The project area occurs within the Choice Wildlife Management Area (WMA) and the Choice Aquatic Management Area (AMA). The project will be entirely funded by the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Fund (OHF) program that was secured by MNTU.

Link to public documents: [Maple Creek Habitat Enhancement Project EIS need decision](#)

Location of public documents: Department of Natural Resources, 500 Lafayette Road North, St Paul, MN 55155

Responsible governmental unit and contact: Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, [Becky Horton](#), 651-259-5122

[Brookings - Hampton 2nd Circuit Transmission Project](#)

Location (city/township; county): New Prague; Dakota, Lincoln, Lyon, Scott

Process: Alternative review

End of comment period: April 18, 2024

Notice title: Notice of Public Hearing, Availability of Environmental Report, and Public Comment Period

Notice description: The Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH) and the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (Commission) will hold public hearings on the applications for a certificate of need (Docket 23-200) and a minor alteration to the original route permit (Docket 08-1474) for portions of the 345-kilovolt (kV) Brookings to Hampton High Voltage Transmission Line (HVTL) (Projects, collectively). The applications were filed by Northern States Power Company d/b/a Xcel Energy, Central Minnesota Municipal Power Agency, Great River Energy, Otter Tail Power Company, and Western Minnesota Municipal Power Agency (Applicants). The Western Segment is approximately 59.5 miles, and the Eastern Segment is approximately 39 miles between the Brookings Substation in White, South Dakota and the Lyon County Substation near Marshall, Minnesota, and between the Helena Substation in Scott County, Minnesota and the Hampton Substation near Hampton, Minnesota.

Project description: The Project proposes to install a second 345 kV circuit on double-circuit-capable structures on approximately 88 miles of the Minnesota portion of the existing 345 kV Electric Transmission Line between the Brookings County Substation in Brookings County, South Dakota and the Hampton Substation in Dakota County, Minnesota (Original Brookings Line). Although the Original Brookings Line crosses the state, the Project will only impact portions of the line in Lincoln, Lyon, Scott, and Dakota counties. In addition to the new circuit, the Project will also install 11 new structures to facilitate the addition of the second circuit; three new structures to allow the circuit to enter and exit existing substations, and eight new structures to allow the line to maintain its horizontal configuration near Airlake Airport in Dakota County. The Project's improvements are generally confined to the existing transmission right-of-way.

Link to public documents: [Brookings - Hampton 2nd Circuit Transmission Project documents](#)

Location of public documents: Minnesota Department of Commerce St. Paul, MN 55101

First public meeting date, time, location: April 1, 2024, 11:30 a.m., Holiday Inn Lakeville, 20800 Kenrick Avenue, Lakeville, MN, 55044

Second public meeting date, time, location: April 1, 2024, 6:00 p.m., EverSpring Inn & Suites, 1500 East College Drive, Marshall, MN, 56258

Third public meeting date, time, location: April 4, 2024, 6:00 p.m., Online meeting

Third public meeting virtual link: [Join online meeting](#)

Third public meeting additional details: Webinar Number: 2497 396 2026 Call-In Number 1-855-282-6330 US Toll Free Access Code: 2497 396 2026 Password: r8vD8cnHxb9 (78838264 from phones and video systems) If you are joining the meeting by WebEx and would like to ask a question or make a comment during the designated portion of the meeting, use the chat function to send a message to the meeting moderator. If you are joining the meeting by phone, press *3 on your phone. When it is your turn to speak, your line will be unmuted, and you will be able to ask questions and provide comments. Additional information and instructions are available at: <https://mn.gov/puc/activities/meetings/webex/>.

Responsible governmental unit and contact: Minnesota Department of Commerce, [Suzanne Steinhauer](#), 651-539-1843

Fish kill reports

Minnesota Duty Officer reports pertaining to fish kills are summarized in the following table, in accordance with 103G.216, REPORTING FISH KILLS IN PUBLIC WATERS, Subd. 2 Reporting Requirement. These reports were received via the Minnesota Duty Officer prior to the submission deadline for this edition of the EQB Monitor. They represent the raw data/information provided by callers. For more information regarding fish kills in Minnesota see the [Department of Natural Resources](#). Call the Minnesota Duty Officer at 651-649-5451 or 800-422-0798 to report fish kills.

No fish kill reports were received since the last publication.

Submit a notice to the *EQB Monitor*

The *EQB Monitor* is a weekly publication announcing environmental review documents, public comment periods and other actions of the Environmental Quality Board. The *EQB Monitor* is published every Tuesday at noon. Submissions to the [EQB Monitor](#) are due by 4:00 p.m. on the Tuesday one week prior to the intended publication date. Please see the [EQB Monitor schedule](#) for more details.

To submit a notice for publication:

[Access the EQB monitor submission service](#)

Questions? Contact EQB by phone at 651-757-2873 or email us at EQB.Monitor@state.mn.us.

For more information on environmental review, please visit the EQB website or contact us at env.review@state.mn.us.



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