

# EQB Monitor

**Weekly announcements and environmental review notices**

Volume 48, Number 10  
2024

March 5,

## Announcements

### 2024 Environment and Energy Report Card

We are happy to announce the publication of the 2024 [Environment and Energy Report Card](#)! Discover key insights on Minnesota's environmental health and energy progress. The report provides a snapshot of Minnesota's environment, including valuable information for the public and policymakers. From air quality to renewable energy initiatives, this report sheds light on the interagency work being done to improve our state's environmental quality and areas for improvement. To find out more information or compare metrics from previous years, see the [report card webpage](#).

### Join our environmental review team!

Apply now for the EQB Technical Assistance and Energy Transitions Office Support position. This position will be responsible for providing technical assistance to responsible governmental units in completing environmental review, and will also work closely with the Department of Employment and Economic Development to support Minnesota's Energy Transition communities. Apply by March 25 at the [State of Minnesota Careers website](#) (Job ID 74540).

**We are hiring!**

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ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY BOARD



## 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](#).

### [Richards Gravel Pit](#)

**Location (city/township; county):** Flowing Township; Clay

**Process:** EAW

**Step:** EIS need decision

**Responsible governmental unit decision:** Negative (EIS not ordered)

**Responsible governmental unit record of decision date:** February 27, 2024

**Project description:** Richards Family Partnership LLP is proposing to expand an existing mine from 101.7 acres to a total of 159 acres. This nonmetallic mineral mine, producing sand and gravel, is located in Flowing Township, Clay County.

**Link to public documents:** [Richards Gravel Pit 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

## **Minnesota Power HVDC Modernization Project**

**Location (city/township; county):** Hermantown, St. Louis

**Process:** Alternative review

**End of comment period:** March 28, 2024

**Notice title:** Public And Evidentiary Hearings, Availability Of Environmental Assessment & Comment Period

**Notice description:** Public and evidentiary hearings on Minnesota Power's certificate of need and route permit for the HVDC Modernization Project will be held Wednesday, March 13th at noon online and at 6 p.m. at Solway Town Hall. A judge will reside over the hearing where information about the project will be presented and the public will have the opportunity to ask questions or make a public comment. In addition, the environmental assessment (EA) has been issued and is available for the project. The EA analyzes the potential human and environmental impacts of the proposed project and possible mitigation measures. Written public comments will be accepted through March 28, 2024, at 4:30 p.m. and may be submitted:

Online: <https://mn.gov/puc/get-involved/public-comments/>

Email: [consumer.puc@state.mn.us](mailto:consumer.puc@state.mn.us).

US Mail: Minnesota Public Utilities Commission Consumer Affairs Office 121 7th Place East, Suite 350 Saint Paul, MN 55101

**Project description:** To modernize the Minnesota terminal of the existing Square Butte high voltage direct current (HVDC) line that runs from North Dakota to Northeast Minnesota, a new terminal, new substation, and three high voltage transmission lines, each less than one mile, are proposed on a new site near the existing Arrowhead Substation in St. Louis County, Minnesota.

**Location of public documents:** Duluth Public Library, 520 W Superior St. Duluth, MN 55802

**First public meeting date, time, location:** March 13, 2024, 12:00 p.m., Online meeting

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

**First public meeting additional details:** Telephone: 1-855-282-6330

Webinar Access Code (if needed): 2480 502 1666

Webinar Password: qAeZJhvH849 (72395484 from phones and video systems)

**Second public meeting date, time, location:** March 13, 2024, 6:00 p.m., Solway Town Hall, 4029 Munger Shaw Road, Cloquet, MN 55720

**Responsible governmental unit and contact:** Minnesota Department of Commerce, [Jenna Ness](#), 651-539-1693

## **Pipestone Pipeline Reroute Project**

**Location (city/township; county):** Pipestone, Pipestone

**Process:** Alternative review

**End of comment period:** April 9, 2024

**Notice title:** Notice Of Availability of Comparative Environmental Analysis and Public Meetings

**Notice description:** PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the Minnesota Department of Commerce (Department) on behalf of the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (Commission) has released a comparative environmental analysis (CEA) for the proposed Magellan Pipeline Reroute Project in Pipestone County, Minnesota.

**Project description:** The purpose of this project is to relocate the pipeline right-of-way (ROW) and future operating and maintenance activities off federal lands managed by the USFWS and NPS. Per Magellan's application, the ROW permit to cross these federal lands that was granted to Magellan's predecessor has expired, and the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) has determined that it will not issue a renewed ROW permit for this section of the existing pipeline. Magellan proposes to construct an approximately 1.3 mile long, 8-inch outside diameter pipeline to replace approximately 0.74 mile of existing pipeline that has been decommissioned. The applicant has requested a 200-foot-wide route width for the project which will encompass temporary workspace (up to 45 feet in upland areas and 30 feet in wetland areas) and permanent ROW (up to 40 feet in upland and wetland areas).

**Link to public documents:** [Pipestone Pipeline Reroute Project documents](#)

**Location of public documents:** Department of Commerce, 85 7th Place East Saint Paul, MN 55101

**First public meeting date, time, location:** March 19, 2024, 1:00 p.m., The Hiawatha Lodge, 805 3rd Ave NW, Pipestone, MN 56164

**Second public meeting date, time, location:** March 19, 2024, 6:00 p.m., The Hiawatha Lodge, 805 3rd Ave NW, Pipestone, MN 56164

**Third public meeting date, time, location:** March 20, 2024, 6:00 p.m., Online meeting

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

**Third public meeting additional details:** Join by Webex

Time: 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Webinar Number: 2488 398 0430

Webinar Link: Pipestone DCEA Meeting

Webinar Password: GxqNyXkg673 (49769954 from phones and video systems)

Join By Phone Telephone Number: 1-855-282-6330 Access Code: 2488 398 0430

If you are joining the meeting online using WebEx and would like to ask a question or make a comment during the designated portion of the meeting, raise your hand using the button at the bottom of the screen or press \*3 if you are joining by phone. When it is your turn to speak your line will be unmuted and you will be able to ask questions and provide comments. The chat function is also available if you are having technical issues and our meeting moderator is available to support. If any reasonable accommodation is



needed for you to fully participate in these meetings, please contact the Department at 651-539-1839 at least one week in advance of the meeting.

**Responsible governmental unit and contact:** Minnesota Department of Commerce, [Larry Hartman](#), 651-539-1839

### **Xcel Energy Alexandria to Big Oaks 345 kV Transmission Project**

**Location (city/township; county):** Becker, Sherburne

**Process:** Alternative review

**Notice title:** Notice of Environmental Assessment Scoping Decision

**Notice description:** The Minnesota Department of Commerce has issued the scoping decision for the environmental assessment (EA) that will be prepared for the proposed Xcel Energy Alexandria to Big Oaks 345 kV Transmission Project in Central Minnesota. The EA will be prepared by the Department's Energy Environmental Review and Analysis staff and will address the potential human and environmental impacts of the project. The scoping decision identifies those issues that will be studied, as well as those that will not be addressed.

**Project description:** The applicants filed a combined certificate of need and route permit application with the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission to string approximately 105-108 miles of 345 kV transmission line on existing double-circuit capable structures from the existing Alexandria Substation in Alexandria, Douglas County to the proposed Big Oaks Substation on the north side of the Mississippi River in Becker, Sherburne County, Minnesota. New transmission lines will be required across the Mississippi River to connect the new transmission line to the Big Oaks Substation.

**Location of public documents:** Golden Rule Building, 85 7th Place East St. Paul, MN 55101

**Responsible governmental unit and contact:** Minnesota Department of Commerce, [Jenna Ness](#), 651-539-1693

## **General notices**

Notices published in this section may be required under Minnesota Statute or Rule.

### **MnDOT US 52 PEL Study (SP 2506-86) - Opportunity for public comment on Concepts Analysis**

**Notice description:** The Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) initiated a Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) study for US Highway 52 (US 52) in 2022. US 52 connects the Twin Cities Metropolitan region to Rochester, MN. This PEL study will focus on the segment of US 52 from Hader to Zumbrota; an eight-mile length of roadway. The purpose of this PEL study is to provide a review of access concepts for

consideration in a future environmental review process. After the purpose and need document was developed and reviewed in 2023, the study has developed and analyzed concepts with specific evaluation criteria that were established as part of the study's documentation. The Concepts Analysis Technical Memorandum is available for public comment. See link to additional information to access the document. Printed copies of the document will be available at the Zumbrota Public Library and the Van Horn Public Library.

**Public meeting date, time, location:** May 1, 2024, 5:00 p.m., Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Zumbrota, 25 E 1st St, Zumbrota, MN 55992

**Public meeting additional details:** The US 52 PEL Study team will hold a public meeting from 5pm to 7pm on Wednesday, May 1st, 2024, at the Zumbrota VFW. This will be the third and final public meeting for this PEL Study. Meeting content will include presenting the findings of the concepts analysis process and answering any questions or comments.

**Link to additional information:** [MnDOT US 52 PEL Study additional information](#)

**Contact:** Minnesota Department of Transportation, [Tom Austin](#), 507-286-7559

## 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.

Date	Location	County	Waterbody	Species	Count
2/21/2024	Minneapolis	Hennepin County	Minnesota River	Silver Shad, White Sucker	100-150

## 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](mailto: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](mailto:env.review@state.mn.us).



Environmental Quality Board | [eqb.state.mn.us](http://eqb.state.mn.us)

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