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EQB MONITOR

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT WORKSHEETS

EAW Comment Deadline: April 7, 2010

Project Title: Pipestone Wastewater Treatment Facility Expansion

Description: The city of Pipestone (City) is proposing to expand their existing wastewater treatment facility (WWTF). The City's existing WWTF is a four-cell stabilization pond system with a design 30-day average wet weather flow of 0.60 million gallons per day (mgd). The City is proposing to add two new stabilization ponds adjacent to the existing WWTF, in addition to piping, structures, and other improvements (Project). The Project will increase the design capacity of the WWTF to 0.930 mgd and will allow future commercial, industrial, residential development in the City.

A copy of the Environment Assessment Workshop will be posted on the Minnesota Pollution Control Web site, at the following: <http://www.pca.state.mn.us/news/eaw/index.html>

RGU: Minnesota Pollution Control Agency

Contact Person:

Nancy Drach
Planner Principal
Environmental Review and Feedlot Section
Regional Division
Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
520 Lafayette Road North
St. Paul, Mn 55155-4194
651-757-2317

The *EQB Monitor* is a biweekly publication of the Environmental Quality Board that lists descriptions and deadlines for Environmental Assessment Worksheets, Environmental Impact Statements, and other notices. The *EQB Monitor* is posted on the Environmental Quality board home page at <http://www.eqb.state.mn.us/>.

Upon request, the *EQB Monitor* will be made available in an alternative format, such as Braille, large print, or audio tape. For TTY, contact Minnesota Relay Service at 800-627-3529 and ask for Department of Administration. For information on the *EQB Monitor*, contact:

Minnesota Environmental Quality Board
658 Cedar St., 300 Centennial Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155-1388
Phone: 651-201-2480
Fax: 651-296-3698
<http://www.eqb.state.mn.us>

Project Title: East Central Solid Waste Commission Sanitary Landfill (SW-17) Expansion

Description: The East Central Solid Waste Commission is proposing to expand its existing municipal solid waste sanitary landfill located in Arthur Township, Kanabec County. More or less simultaneously, the Southern Minnesota Municipal Power Agency proposes to install an internal combustion engine/generator set on the site to burn landfill gas and produce electricity for the power grid.

A copy of the Environmental Assessment Worksheet will be posted on the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency Web site, at the following: <http://www.pca.state.mn.us/news/eaw/index.html>

RGU: Minnesota Pollution Control Agency

Contact Person:

William J. Lynott
Planner Principal
Environmental Review and Feedlot Section
Regional Division
Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
520 Lafayette Road North
St. Paul, MN 55155-4194
651-757-2542

Project Title: Cohasset Telecommunication Tower (DL2155)

Description: The proposed project consists of the construction of a 300' self-support telecommunications tower, designed to support up to four carriers, located north of Highway 2 in Cohasset, Itasca County, Minnesota. With the lighting rod the total height will be 310'. The property owner will lease a 100'x100' area for the tower and the equipment will be located within an 80'by 80' fenced, graveled compound. Access will be provided by a gravel drive leading to Highway 2 to the southwest.

RGU: Itasca County

Contact Person:

Donald Dewey
Environmental Services Administrator
123 NE 4th St.
Grand Rapids, MN 55744
Phone: 218-327-2857
Fax: 218-327-7331
Email: don.dewey@co.itasca.mn.us

Project Title: Chaska Creek Corporate Park

Description: Community Asset Development is proposing to develop a corporate business part at Engler Blvd and Hwy 212 in Chaska, MN. The project will include 775,000 sq ft of corporate office, general light industrial, office and mixed use (office/retail) development.

RGU: City of Chaska

Contact Person:

Kevin Ringwald, AICP
Director of Planning and Development
One City Hall Plaza
Chaska, MN 55318
Phone: 952-448-9200
Fax: 952-448-9300
Email: kringwald@chaskamn.com

Project Title: Vermillion River Habitat Rehabilitation Project

Description: The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) proposes a rehabilitation project on the Vermillion River in Dakota County, Minnesota to improve stream habitat for trout and associated cold-water organisms. The project would replace 3,454 feet of previously straightened channel with 4,555 feet of meandering stream, and would restore floodplain connectivity along 2,200 feet of stream on the Vermillion River.

The MDNR will accept written comments on the Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) during the public review and comment period, which concludes Wednesday, April 7, 2010 at 4:30 p.m.

Written comments should be submitted to Jamie Schrenzel, EAW Project Manager, Environmental Policy and Review Unit, Division of Ecological Resources, Department of Natural Resources, 500 Lafayette Road, St. Paul, Minnesota, 55155-4025. Electronic or e-mail comments may be sent to environmentalrev.dnr@state.mn.us with "Vermillion River EAW" in the subject line. If submitting comments electronically, please include your name and mailing address. Written comments may also be sent by fax to 651-297-1500.

Public review copies of the EAW are available at the following locations:

- MDNR Library, 500 Lafayette Road, St. Paul, MN 55155;
- MDNR Regional Headquarters, 1200 Warner Road, St. Paul, MN 55106;
- Minneapolis Public Library, Government Documents, 300 Nicollet Mall, Minneapolis, MN 55401;
- Farmington Public Library, 508 Third Street, Farmington, MN 55024

The EAW is also posted on the MDNR's website at www.dnr.state.mn.us. (Click on "Public Input," then select "Vermillion River EAW" from the scroll-down list under "Environmental Review"). Additional copies may be requested by calling 651-259-5115.

RGU: Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

Contact Person:

Jamie Schrenzel
EAW Project Manager
Environmental Policy and Review Unit
Division of Ecological Resources
Department of Natural Resources
500 Lafayette Road
St. Paul, MN 55155-4025

EIS NEED DECISIONS

The responsible governmental unit has determined the following projects do not require preparation of an EIS. The dates given are, respectively, the date of the determination and the date the EAW notice was published in the *EQB Monitor*.

- Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, Manox 3 – Manthey Hog Barns, February 12, 2010 (November 30, 2009)
- City of St. Paul, University of Saint Thomas – Anderson Student Center and Anderson Athletic & Recreation Complex, February 26, 2010 (December 14, 2010)

DRAFT SUPPLEMENTAL EIS AVAILABLE**Project Title: Highway 371 Draft Supplemental Final Environmental Impact Statement**

Description: The Draft Supplemental Final Environmental Impact Statement (Draft SFEIS) is available for State Project 1116-22, which involves improvements to Trunk Highway (TH) 371, is available for review. The TH 371 project corridor extends approximately 16-miles from the intersection of Crow Wing County State Aid Highway (CSAH) 18 in Nisswa to the intersection of Cass County Road 2/42 in Pine River. This segment was the subject of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process that was concluded in 2005. This Draft SFEIS was prepared to address recent changes to the preferred alternative, based on a request from the City of Pequot Lakes to change from a through-City design (the 2005 preferred alternative) to a bypass. This Draft SFEIS focuses on analysis of impacts and mitigation in the areas affected by the design change to a bypass of Pequot Lakes; although the Draft SFEIS also includes a re-evaluation of the entire project corridor, to document other minor changes that have occurred since the original Record of Decision (ROD) was signed in 2005.

Copies of the Highway 371 Draft SFEIS are being distributed to those agencies on the current MEQB document review list and others. The comment period will begin on **March 8, 2010** and will extend through **April 16, 2010**. Copies of the Highway 371 Draft SFEIS are available for public review at the following locations and on the project website at <http://www.dot.state.mn.us/d3/projects/hwy371/index.html>

- Mn/DOT District 3 – Baxter Office, 7694 Industrial Park Road, Baxter, MN
- Kitchigami Regional Library, 212 Park Avenue, Pine River, MN
- Pequot Lakes Public Library, 4638 County Road 11, Pequot Lakes, MN

- Brainerd Public Library, 416 5th Street South, Brainerd, MN
- Pine River City Hall, 200 Front Street North, Pine River, MN
- Nisswa City Hall, PO Box 410, Nisswa, MN
- Pequot Lakes City Hall, 4638 County Road 11, Pequot Lakes, MN
- Jenkins City Hall, 33861 Cottage Avenue, Jenkins, MN

Comments on the Draft SFEIS are being requested from individuals on the Minnesota Environmental Quality Board distribution list, as well as from other persons or agencies to whom the proposed project may be of interest. Written comments should be submitted to: James E. Hallgren, Mn/DOT Project Manager, Minnesota Department of Transportation – District 3, 7694 Industrial Park Road, Baxter, MN 56425 or james.hallgren@state.mn.us by 4:00 p.m., April 16, 2010.

To afford an opportunity for all interested persons, agencies and groups to comment on the Draft SFEIS, two public meetings have been scheduled for Monday, March 29, 2010 at the Pequot Lakes High School, 30805 Olson Street, Pequot Lakes, MN 56472 and Tuesday, March 30, 2010 at the Pine River City Hall, 200 Front Street North, Pine River, MN 56474. An open house style hearing will be held from 4:00 to 8:00 p.m. Mn/DOT representatives will be present to answer questions during the open house. Attendees will also be given the opportunity to provide oral testimony to a court reporter at the hearings.

The Draft SFEIS can be made available in alternative formats to individuals by calling the Project Manager at 218-828-5797 or to individuals who are hearing or speech impaired by calling the Minnesota Relay Service at 800-627-3529 or 651-296-9930 TTY. Individuals with a disability who need a reasonable accommodation to participate in the public meeting, please contact the Project Manager or through the Minnesota Relay Service at the telephone numbers listed above, as soon as possible.

RGU: Minnesota Department of Transportation

Contact Person:

James Hallgren
Mn/DOT Project Manager
Minnesota Department of Transportation – District 3
7694 Industrial Park Road
Baxter, MN 56425
Email: james.hallgren@state.mn.us

NOTICES

NOTICE FOR RELEASE OF ST. CLOUD 2035 TRANSPORTATION PLAN

The St. Cloud Draft 2035 Transportation Plan will be available for review and comment Friday, February 12, 2010 (after 3:00 p.m.). The review and comment period will go through the second week of March.

An electronic version of the document in Adobe.pdf format can be downloaded from the St. Cloud Area Planning Organization (APO) website at www.stcloudapo.org. If you do not have the capability to view the electronic version, a free version of Adobe Acrobat (.pdf) Reader software can be downloaded from

<http://www.adobe.com/>. Hard copies of the document are located at the St. Cloud Public Library: 2nd floor reference desk (1300 West St. Germain Street, St. Cloud, MN 56301) and the St. Cloud APO office (1040 County Road 4, St. Cloud, MN 56303).

Written comments on the draft Plan can be sent to the address below. Comments can also be provided by email, phone or fax at 320-252-6557. Please call Kirby Becker if you have questions.

Minnesota Department of Agriculture

Notification of Releases of Genetically Engineered Organisms

File Number	Company	Crop	Project	County
10-NO-009	Pioneer	Soybean	Combinations of the following trait: Altered Fatty Acid Level, Lipid Profile, Starch and Carbohydrate, Metabolism, Feed Properties, Amino Acid Composition, Maturity, Plant Development, Protein and Protein Quality; Increased Yield and Yield Stability, Oil Content, Nitrogen Use Efficiency, and Lysine Level; Nematode, Insect, and Disease Resistance; Herbicide and Drought Tolerance; Improved Nutritional and Animal Feed Quality; Transformation Aids and Markers.	Clay, Redwood
10-NO-010	Monsanto	Canola	Herbicide Tolerance	Stearns
10-NO-011	SES vanderHave	Sugar Beets	Virus Resistance	Polk
10-NO-012	Syngenta	Corn	Drought Tolerance; Improved Stress Tolerance	Goodhue, Mower
10-NO-013	Dow AgroSciences	Corn	Herbicide Tolerance	Otter Tail, Pope, Renville, Sibley, Stearns, Wilkin
10-NO-014	Dow AgroSciences	Soybean	Herbicide Tolerance	Dakota, Fillmore, Renville
10-NO-015	Monsanto	Corn	Yield Increase	Blue Earth, Brown, Freeborn, McLeod, Mower, Rice, Steele
10-NO-016	Betaseed	Sugar Beet	Virus Resistance	Scott (9)
10-NO-017	Monsanto	Canola	Herbicide Tolerance	Stearns, Wilkin
10-NO-018	Monsanto	Canola	Herbicide Tolerance	Otter Tail
10-NO-019	Pioneer	Corn	Combinations of the following	Brown, Blue

			trait: Altered Fatty Acid Level, Lipid and Oil Profile, Starch Content and Metabolism, Feed Properties, Amino Acid Composition, Maturity, Plant Development, Protein and Fiber Quality, Stalk Attributes, and Cell Wall; Enhanced Yield; Increased Yield and Yield Stability, Oil Content, Nitrogen Use Efficiency, and Lysine and Starch Level; Insect and Disease Resistance; Herbicide, Heat, and Drought Tolerance; Improved Digestibility, Nutritional and Animal Feed Quality; Reduced Phytate and Plant Growth; Transformation Aids and Markers.	Earth, Chippewa, Chisago, Clay, Fillmore, Isanti, Kandiyohi, Lyon, Meeker, Mille Lacs, Morrison, Mower, Murray (3), Olmsted, Otter Tail, Pine, Pope, Redwood, Renville, Sherburne, Sibley, Stearns, Stevens, Swift, Todd, Wabasha, Waseca, Yellow Medicine
10-NO-020	Monsanto	Soybean	Herbicide Tolerance, Modified Oil Composition	Blue Earth, Clay (4), Grant, Kandiyohi, Redwood (4), Sibley
10-NO-021	Monsanto	Corn	Drought Tolerance	Blue Earth, Brown, Freeborn, McLeod, Mower, Rice, Steele

For more information contact Mary Hanks, Minnesota Department of Agriculture, 625 Robert St N., St. Paul, MN 55155, 651/201-6277, mary.hanks@state.mn.us.

STATE OF MINNESOTA Office of Energy Security

Notice of Public Hearings

**In the Matter of the Minnesota Power & Nashwauk Public Utilities Commission
Application for a HVTL Route Permit**

Essar Steel Transmission Line Project

**PUC Docket Number: E280/TL-09-512
OAH Docket Number – 8-2500-20664-2**

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that Public Hearings will be held concerning Minnesota Power (MP) and Nashwauk Public Utilities Commission's (NPUC) Application to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission

(Commission) for a high voltage transmission line (HVTL) Route Permit for the Essar Steel Transmission Line project in Itasca County.

The combined public hearing and evidentiary hearing will be held on April 7, 2010, at the location and times listed below.

Wednesday, April 7, 2010
Taconite Community Center
26 Haynes Street
Taconite, MN 55786

Afternoon Session begins at 2:00 p.m.
Evening Session begins at 6:00 p.m.

Administrative Law Judge Eric L. Lipman will preside at the hearing.

Deadline for written public comments to the Administrative Law Judge on the Route Permit application must be received at the Office of Administrative Hearings by **4:30 p.m. on April 19, 2010**. The mailing address is:

Honorable Eric L. Lipman,
Administrative Law Judge
P.O. Box 64620
600 North Robert Street
Saint Paul, MN 55164-0620
Facsimile 651-361-7936

Please include the PUC Docket Number – E-280/TL-09-512, and the OAH Docket Number – 8-2500-20664-2, on all correspondence.

Purpose of the Public Hearing. The purpose of the public hearing is to receive comments from members of the public and to compile the record for the Commission to consider in making a final decision on the transmission line route permit request. The ALJ will write a report and make a recommendation to the Commission on which route to authorize and on any appropriate permit conditions. The Commission will make a final decision on the route permit at a subsequent Commission meeting.

Project Description. NPUC and MP propose to construct four 230 kV transmission lines and two 230 kV substations. The purpose of the project is to supply reliable electric power to a single source entity - Essar Steel Minnesota (ESM). ESM has obtained state approvals to reactivate the former Butler Taconite mine by developing new facilities, including a taconite pellet plant and steel production plant. The Essar taconite pellet facility is expected to commence initial operation by early 2011, with initial steel plant operation planned for early 2014, at which time the projected demand would be approximately 300 megawatts. Additionally, ESM has site approvals for a second steel slab melt line, which would increase the ESM facilities' total electric power requirements to approximately 500-550 megawatts if constructed and at full operation.

The four routes would require approximately 37 miles of new transmission lines.

Route Permit. Under the Power Plant Siting Act (Minn. Statute 216E, subd. 2), a route permit from the Commission is required to build a high-voltage transmission line. A high-voltage transmission line is a conductor of electric energy and associated facilities designed for and capable of operation at a nominal voltage

of 100 kilovolts (kV) or more and is greater than 1,500 feet in length. A route permit application for the proposed 230 kV transmission line project was filed by the applicants on June 1, 2009, and was accepted as complete by the Commission on June 29, 2009. The Office of Energy Security (OES) staff prepared a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on the proposed project. The Draft EIS discusses potential impacts of the project, evaluates alternatives, and suggests mitigation.

Electronic versions of the Route Permit Application, Draft EIS, and other documents relevant to this matter are available for viewing or download at the Commission website at:

<http://energyfacilities.puc.state.mn.us/Docket.html?Id=24526> or eDockets at:

<https://www.edockets.state.mn.us/EFiling/search.jsp> (“09” year and “512” number).

Office of Administrative Hearing Rules. The ALJ will conduct the contested case hearings in accordance with Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 14, and the Office of Administrative Hearings procedural rules for the Commission’s energy facility permitting process (Minnesota Rules, Chapter 1405). The applicable statutes and rules are available on the Office of the Revisor of Statutes webpage at: <https://www.revisor.mn.gov>. Statutes and rules may also be purchased at Minnesota’s Bookstore, 660 Olive St., St. Paul, Minn. 55155, or telephone at (651) 297-3000.

Conduct of Hearing. At the start of each hearing session, the ALJ will explain the procedural rules for the hearing, including the sequence for providing testimony and questioning witnesses. Members of the public may participate without the necessity of intervening as a party. Representation by legal counsel is permitted but not required for anyone participating in these hearings. Participation includes: a) offering direct testimony; b) offering testimony or other material in written form at or following the hearing; and c) questioning witnesses.

Any person who wishes to question a witness, but does not want to ask the questions, may submit questions in writing to the ALJ, who will then question the witness. Questions may be submitted during the hearing or may be sent to the ALJ in advance of the hearing. A transcript of the proceedings will also be available.

Request for Accommodation. Any person who needs an accommodation for a disability in order to participate in the hearing, and any person who requires an interpreter, including a foreign language interpreter, should promptly notify the Office of Administrative Hearings, P.O. Box 64620, 600 North Robert Street, St. Paul, Minnesota 55164-0620, Phone: (651) 361-7900 (voice) or (651) 361-7878 (TDD).

Continuation of Hearing. The ALJ may elect to recess the hearing and set additional days for hearing, if necessary.

Identified Parties and Intervention. Persons interested in intervening in these proceedings had until March 10, 2010, (Pre-hearing Order, October 28, 2009) to file a Petition for Intervention with the ALJ (See Minn. Rules Part 1400.6200). Only the Applicants were named as a party by the date of this notice.

Eminent Domain. If issued a HVTL Route Permit by the Commission, MP and NPUC may exercise the power of eminent domain to acquire land for this project pursuant to Minnesota Statute 216E.12.

Project Contacts and Mailing Lists. The OES has appointed staff to assist persons interested in taking part in the permitting process. For more information, contact one of the persons listed below:

Department of Commerce – Office of Energy Security

The OES has designated staff member Bill Storm (651-296-9535, bill.storm@state.mn.us) as project manager and Deborah Pile (651-297-2375, deborah.pile@state.mn.us) as public advisor. You may contact them at: Department of Commerce, Office of Energy Security, 85 7th Place East, Suite 500, St. Paul, MN 55101-2198. Other contact information: Toll-Free: 1-800-657-3794, Fax: 651-297-7891 or TTY: Minnesota Relay Services, 1-800-627-3529, and ask for the DOC.

OES Legal Counsel. Karen Finstad Hammel, Minnesota Attorney General's Office, 1400 Bremer Tower, 445 Minnesota Street, St. Paul, MN 55101-2127, Phone 651-757-1248, Fax 651-297-1138, karen.hammel@state.mn.us

This document can be made available in alternative formats; i.e. large print or audio tape by calling (651) 201-2202 (Voice) or 1-800-627-3529 (TTY relay service).

**In the Matter of the Northern States Power Company (Xcel Energy)
Application for a HVTL Route Permit**

Hiawatha 115 kV Transmission Line Project

PUC Docket Number: E002/TL-09-38

OAH Docket Number: 5-2500-20599-2

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that Public Hearings will be held April 5th and 6th, 2010, at the location and times listed below concerning Xcel Energy's Application to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (Commission) for a high voltage transmission line (HVTL) Route Permit for two new distribution substations and two 115 kilovolt (kV) transmission lines in south Minneapolis, in an area known as the Midtown District.

Afternoon Session

Monday, April 5, 2010, 2:00 PM

Tuesday, April 6, 2010, 2:00 PM

Plaza Verde

1516 East Lake Street

Minneapolis, MN 55407

612-724-5332

Evening Session

Monday, April 5, 2010, 7:00 PM

Tuesday, April 6, 2010, 7:00 PM

Plaza Verde

1516 East Lake Street

Minneapolis, MN 55407

612-724-5332

Administrative Law Judge Beverly Jones Heydinger will preside at the hearing.

Deadline for written public comments to the Administrative Law Judge on the Route Permit application must be received at the Office of Administrative Hearings by **4:30 p.m.** on **May 11, 2010**. The mailing address is:

Beverly Jones Heydinger,

Administrative Law Judge

P.O. Box 64620

600 North Robert Street

Saint Paul, MN 55164-0620

routecomments.oah@state.mn.us

Facsimile 651-361-7936

Please include the PUC Docket Number – E-002/TL-09-38, and the OAH Docket Number – 15-2500-20599-2, on all correspondence.

Purpose of the Public Hearing. The purpose of the public hearing is to receive comments from members of the public and to compile the record for the Commission to consider in making a final decision on the transmission line route permit request. The ALJ will write a report and make a recommendation to the Commission on which route to authorize and on any appropriate permit conditions. The Commission will make a final decision on the route permit at a subsequent Commission meeting.

Project Description. Xcel Energy proposes to construct two new distribution substations and two 115 kilovolt (kV) transmission lines in south Minneapolis, in an area known as the Midtown District. Xcel Energy has included four separate alternative routes and five design options for consideration in its application. Xcel Energy also identifies two locations for the Hiawatha Substation and two locations for the Midtown Substation.

Route Permit. Under the Power Plant Siting Act (Minn. Statute 216E, subd. 2), a route permit from the Commission is required to build a high-voltage transmission line. A high-voltage transmission line is a conductor of electric energy and associated facilities designed for and capable of operation at a nominal voltage of 100 kilovolts (kV) or more and is greater than 1,500 feet in length. A route permit application for the proposed 115 kV transmission line project was filed by the applicants on April 24, 2009, and was accepted as complete by the Commission on May 26, 2009. The Office of Energy Security (OES) staff prepared a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on the proposed project. The Draft EIS discusses potential impacts of the project, evaluates alternatives, and suggests mitigation.

Electronic versions of the Route Permit Application, Draft EIS, and other documents relevant to this matter are available for viewing or download at the Commission website at:

<http://energyfacilities.puc.state.mn.us/Docket.html?Id=19981> or eDockets at:
<https://www.edockets.state.mn.us/EFiling/search.jsp> (“09” year and “38” number).

Office of Administrative Hearing Rules. The ALJ will conduct the contested case hearings in accordance with Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 14, and the Office of Administrative Hearings procedural rules for the Commission’s energy facility permitting process (Minnesota Rules, Chapter 1405). The applicable statutes and rules are available on the Office of the Revisor of Statutes webpage at: <https://www.revisor.mn.gov>. Statutes and rules may also be purchased at Minnesota’s Bookstore, 660 Olive St., St. Paul, Minn. 55155, or telephone at (651) 297-3000.

Conduct of Hearing. At the start of each hearing session, the ALJ will explain the procedural rules for the hearing, including the sequence for providing testimony and questioning witnesses. Members of the public may participate without the necessity of intervening as a party. Representation by legal counsel is permitted but not required. Participation includes: a) offering direct testimony; b) offering testimony or other material in written form at or following the hearing; and c) questioning witnesses.

Any person who wishes to question a witness, but does not want to ask the questions, may submit questions in writing to the ALJ, who will then question the witness. Questions may be submitted during the hearing or may be sent to the ALJ in advance of the hearing. A transcript of the proceedings will also be available.

Request for Accommodation. Any person who needs an accommodation for a disability in order to participate in the hearing, and any person who requires an interpreter, including a foreign language interpreter, should promptly notify the Office of Administrative Hearings, P.O. Box 64620, 600 North Robert Street, St. Paul, Minnesota 55164-0620, Phone: (651) 361-7900 (voice) or (651) 361-7878 (TDD).

Continuation of Hearing. The ALJ may elect to recess the hearing and set additional days for hearing, if necessary.

Evidentiary Hearing. The evidentiary hearings for the parties on the HVTL Route Permit Application will convene in the Public Utilities Commission Large Hearing Room, 121 7th Place East, St. Paul, Minnesota on April 12, 2010, beginning at 9:30 am and shall continue on April 13-16, April 19-21, April 26-30, and May 3-4, 2010, as necessary to complete the presentation of the evidence.

Identified Parties and Intervention. Persons interested in intervening in these proceedings had until January 20, 2010, (Pre-hearing Order, December 7, 2009) to file a Petition for Intervention with the ALJ (See Minn. Rules Part 1400.6200). The parties to this proceeding are: the Applicant, Midtown Greenway Coalition, City of Minneapolis, Crew2, Inc., Hennepin County, Little Earth of United Tribes, Longfellow Community Council, Seward Neighborhood Organization, Corcoran Neighborhood Organization, Phillips West Neighborhood Organization, Wells Fargo Bank, Midtown Phillips Neighborhood Association, and East Phillips Improvement Coalition.

Eminent Domain. If issued a HVTL Route Permit by the Commission, Xcel Energy may exercise the power of eminent domain to acquire land for this project pursuant to Minnesota Statute 216E.12.

Project Contacts and Mailing Lists. The OES has appointed staff to assist persons interested in taking part in the permitting process. For more information, contact one of the persons listed below:

Department of Commerce – Office of Energy Security

The OES has designated staff member Bill Storm (651-296-9535, bill.storm@state.mn.us) as project manager and Deborah Pile (651-297-2375, deborah.pile@state.mn.us) as public advisor. You may contact them at: Department of Commerce, Office of Energy Security, 85 7th Place East, Suite 500, St. Paul, MN 55101-2198. Other contact information: Toll-Free: 1-800-657-3794, Fax: 651-297-7891 or TTY: Minnesota Relay Services, 1-800-627-3529, and ask for the DOC.

OES Legal Counsel. Karen Finstad Hammel, Minnesota Attorney General's Office, 1400 Bremer Tower, 445 Minnesota Street, St. Paul, MN 55101-2127, Phone (651) 757-1248, Fax (651) 297-1138, karen.hammel@state.mn.us.

This document can be made available in alternative formats; i.e. large print or audio tape by calling (651) 201-2202 (Voice) or 1-800-627-3529 (TTY relay service).

**STATE OF MINNESOTA
Office of Energy Security**

Issued: February 23, 2010

NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

NOTICE OF PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETINGS

In the Matter of the Application for a Route Permit for the Bemidji-Grand Rapids 230kV Transmission Project

PUC Docket Number: E017, E015, ET6/TL-07-1327

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the Minnesota Department of Commerce Office of Energy Security (OES) and United States Department of Agriculture, Rural Utilities Service (RUS) announce the availability of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the proposed Bemidji-Grand Rapids 230kV transmission line project. The OES and RUS will hold public informational meetings to provide an opportunity for the public to comment on the Draft EIS. Ending times reflect the latest the meetings will run. Meetings may conclude earlier where all attendees have had the opportunity to comment and all other business has been concluded.

PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING DATES & LOCATIONS

March 16, 2010 (Tuesday)	March 17, 2010 (Wednesday)	March 18, 2010 (Thursday)
1:00 P.M. – 4:00 P.M. & 6:00 P.M. – 9:00 P.M.	1:00 P.M. – 3:00 P.M. American Legion Vets Club 12 1 st Street NE Deer River, MN	6:00 P.M. – 9:00 P.M.
Hampton Inn 1019 Paul Bunyan Dr. S, State Highway 197 Bemidji, MN	6:00 P.M. – 9:00 P.M. Senior Center 24 1 st Street SE Blackduck, MN	Leech Lake Tribal College 6945 Little Wolf Road NW Cass Lake, MN

Public Information Meeting. The first half hour of each meeting will be an open house. Following the open house, a formal public information and comment meeting will begin with brief presentations on the DEIS by OES and RUS staff. Members of the public will have an opportunity to ask questions and provide comments on the Draft EIS after the OES and RUS presentations. Representatives from the OES, RUS, and the Applicants will be available for both the open house and presentation portion of the meeting to answer questions. A court reporter will also be present during the formal portion of each meeting to transcribe any verbal comments from the public.

The OES will accept written comments on the Draft EIS until **Monday, April 26, 2010**. Please include Docket No. TL-07-1327 on your comments. Comments should be mailed, emailed, or faxed to:

Suzanne Steinhauer
Project Manager
Minnesota Office of Energy Security
85 7th Place East, Suite 500
St. Paul, Minnesota, 55101-2198
Fax: 651-297-7891
Suzanne.steinhauer@state.mn.us

Comments may also be submitted online via the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission's (Commission) energy facility permitting website at: <http://energyfacilities.puc.state.mn.us/publicComments.html>

Project Documents. The Draft EIS discusses the potential human and environmental impacts of the proposed project and evaluates three (3) route alternatives and 20 segment alternatives identified in the EIS scoping decision.

Electronic versions of the Draft EIS and other documents relevant to this matter are available for viewing and downloading on the Commission's website: <http://energyfacilities.puc.state.mn.us/Docket.html?Id=19344>, and on the Department of Commerce's eDockets website: <https://www.edockets.state.mn.us/EFiling/search.jsp> (enter year "07" and docket number "1327").

Or on the RUS website, under Minnkota Power Cooperative:

<http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm#Minnkota%20Electric%20Cooperative,%20Inc.0>

The Draft EIS is also available at public libraries in the cities listed below:

- Bemidji
- Blackduck
- Bovey
- Cass Lake
- Coleraine
- Grand Rapids
- Longville
- Walker

Project Description. Otter Tail Power Company, Minnesota Power, and Minnkota Power Cooperative, Inc. (Applicants) propose to construct and operate a 230 kV transmission line between the Wilton substation just west of Bemidji, Minnesota, and the Boswell Substation in Cohasset, just west of Grand Rapids, Minnesota. The Applicants have proposed two possible routes for the transmission line, and a third route was added for consideration based on input from local, state, and federal agencies and the public. The proposed routes for the transmission line primarily follow existing rights-of-way and cross portions of Beltrami, Hubbard, Cass and Itasca counties.

The Project would include improvements to the Wilton and Boswell substations. Depending upon the route selected, the Project may also include modifications to the existing Cass Lake Substation, construction of a new substation in the Cass Lake area, and construction of a new 115 kV breaker station near Nary, Minnesota.

Review Process. Under the Power Plant Siting Act (Minn. Stat. 216E), a route permit from the Commission is required to build a high voltage transmission line. A route permit application for the project was filed by the Applicants on June 4, 2008. The application was accepted as complete by the Commission on June 30, 2008.

Route permit applications for high voltage transmission lines are subject to environmental review (Minn. Rules 7850). OES staff conducts this review on behalf of the Commission and develops a record upon which a route permit decision

can be made by the Commission. In addition to state review, the project is subject to federal environmental review under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The United States Department of Agriculture, Rural Utilities Service (RUS) is the lead agency for the federal environmental review with Division of Resource Management of the Leech Lake Reservation, the Chippewa National Forest, and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers participating as cooperating agencies. Pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act 36 CFR § 800.2(d)(3), RUS is using its procedures for public involvement under NEPA to meet its responsibilities to solicit and consider the views of the public during Section 106 review. Accordingly, comments submitted on the draft EIS will inform RUS decision making in Section 106 review. OES and RUS have collaborated to create a joint draft EIS for this project. Scoping meetings for the EIS were held in the project area in August, 2008, and public comments were accepted from July 22, 2008, through September 30, 2008. The OES issued an EIS scoping decision on March 31, 2009; this decision was modified on February 5, 2010. RUS issued a Scoping Decision/Report in December, 2009.

On February 23, 2010, OES and RUS released the draft EIS. Comments received during the draft EIS public information meetings and during the draft EIS comment period (February 23, 2010, to April 26, 2010) will be reviewed, responded to, and included in a final EIS. The final EIS will be part of the record upon which the Commission makes a route permit decision. The Federal Agencies will issue a Record of Decision following a 30-day public comment period on the Final EIS.

Public hearings on the Bemidji- Grand Rapids 230kV transmission line route permit will be held in the Project area at a date to be determined, and will be presided over by an administrative law judge (ALJ). A separate notice of these public hearings will be published in newspapers of general circulation throughout the proposed project area. Members of the public will have an opportunity to speak at the hearings, present evidence, ask questions, and submit comments. The ALJ will submit a report to the Commission containing findings of fact, conclusions, and a recommendation on a route permit for the proposed transmission line.

Additional information on the transmission line route permitting process is available on the Commission's energy facility permitting website: <http://www.energyfacilities.puc.state.mn.us/TransmissionLines.html>

Project Mailing List. Persons interested in adding their names to the Department of Commerce mailing list for this project should contact the OES project manager, public advisor, or register online at: <http://www.energyfacilities.puc.state.mn.us/#MailingLists>

Project Contacts. If you have questions or if you would like further information about this project please contact:

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