

EQB Monitor

EQB announcements and Environmental review notices

Volume 46, Number 3

January 18, 2022

EQB announcements



Join us for the January EQB and ERIS meeting

We invite you to join the Environmental Quality Board (EQB) and Environmental Review Implementation Subcommittee (ERIS) from 1:00-4:00 pm on January 19, 2022.

The EQB will meet first to discuss a study on Federal Clean Water Act Section 404 Assumption. At approximately 2:00 pm, ERIS will meet to discuss the proposed framework and metrics for the Climate Change and Environmental Review Pilot Program.

[Visit the January Board meeting page](#) for more information.

Registration open for participation in Climate Change and Environmental Review Pilot Program

EQB is seeking local responsible governmental units (RGUs) and consultants interested in participating in a pilot program that will assess the efficiency and effectiveness of climate information by testing a draft revised Environmental Assessment Worksheet. Participants will benefit from shared learning as well as training provided by technical experts.

Registration is open to all RGUs and consultants, regardless of whether you are actively reviewing a project. This cohort-based program will begin in early 2022. [Register now!](#)

If you are not eligible to register, but would like to receive updates about the Pilot Program, please [sign-up here](#).

Environmental review notices



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](#).

Owatonna Residential Development

Location: Owatonna Township, Steele County

Process: Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW)

Step: EAW Available

End of Comment Period: February 17, 2022

Project Description: The Owatonna Residential Development project is proposed on 17.3 acres of primarily agricultural land in Owatonna Township, Minnesota. Land use surrounding the project includes commercial, residential, and agricultural land. The proposed project will include five 3 story apartment buildings with a total of 276 housing units, surface parking lots, and detached structured garages along with complimentary interior and exterior amenity spaces. The project will also include dog parks, a play area, trails, landscaping, and a stormwater pond.

First Public Meeting Date, Time, Location: February 8, 2022, 5:30 PM, Owatonna Planning Commission, City Council Chamber, City Hall, 540 West Hills Circle, Owatonna, MN 55060

First Public Meeting Additional Details: Meets on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month at 5:30 p.m. in the City Council Chamber at City Hall.

Link to Public Documents: [Owatonna Residential Development EAW](#)

Location of Public Documents: City Hall, 540 West Hills Circle, Owatonna, MN 55060

Responsible Governmental Unit (RGU) and Contact: City of Owatonna, [Greg Kruschke](#), 507-774-7317

Trott Brook Crossing

Location: Ramsey, Anoka County

Process: EAW

Step: Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) Need Decision

RGU Decision: Negative (no EIS ordered)

Record of Decision Date: December 14, 2021

Link to Public Documents: No link to documents provided. See RGU contact information below.

Location of Public Documents: City of Ramsey, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, MN 55303

RGU and Contact: City of Ramsey, [Bruce Westby](#), 763-433-9826

Duluth Reliability Loop Project

Location: Duluth, Proctor, and Hermantown, St. Louis County

Process: Alternative Review

Notice Title: Notice of Public Meetings and Comment Period

Notice Description: On October 21, 2021, Minnesota Power (Applicant) submitted applications to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission for a Certificate of Need and a High-Voltage Transmission Line (HVTL) Route Permit for their proposed Duluth Loop Reliability Project (Project). Minnesota Power indicated that the Project is needed to replace the system support once provided by coal-fired baseload generators located along Minnesota's North Shore by addressing severe voltage stability concerns, relieving transmission line overloads, and enhancing the reliability of Duluth-area transmission sources.

Project Description: Minnesota Power is proposing to construct the Duluth Loop Reliability Project, which will include: (1) construction of about 14 miles of new 115 kV transmission line between the Ridgeview, Haines Road, and Hilltop Substations; (2) construction of a new approximately one-mile extension connecting an existing 230 kV transmission line to the Arrowhead Substation; (3) upgrades to the Ridgeview, Hilltop, Haines Road, and Arrowhead substations; and (4) reconfiguration, rebuild, and upgrade to existing transmission lines and communications infrastructure in the Project area. Minnesota Power intends to construct, own, and maintain the Duluth Loop 115 kV and 230 kV Transmission Line Project.

In order to construct the Duluth Loop Reliability Project, the Applicant must be granted both a certificate of need and a route permit from the Commission.

Links to Public

Documents: <https://apps.commerce.state.mn.us/eera/web/project/14652>
<https://www.mnpower.com/DuluthLoop>

Location of Public Documents: Duluth Public Library, 520 W Superior Street, Duluth, MN 56802

First Public Meeting Date, Time, Location: January 26, 2022, 6:00 PM, AAD Shrine Meeting & Event Center, 5152 Miller Trunk Hwy, Hermantown, MN 55811

First Public Meeting Additional Details: Link to Google Map:
<https://g.page/AADshrine?share>

Second Public Meeting Date, Time, Location: January 27, 2022, 6:00 PM, remotely

Second Public Meeting Virtual Link: minnesota.webex.com

Second Public Meeting Additional Details:

Event Number: 2498 333 8007, Password: MNPUC

Telephone: 1-855-282-6330, Conference ID: 2498 333 8007

The public meeting is an opportunity for the public to ask questions and submit recommendations to be included in the Environmental Assessment. Following the written comment period associated with the public information and scoping meeting, the Department of Commerce will prepare an Environmental Assessment (EA) scoping decision. Once the EA scoping decision is issued, the Department will prepare the EA. Upon completion of the EA, a public hearing will be held. The hearing will be conducted by an administrative law judge (ALJ) from the Office of Administrative Hearings. The Commission is expecting to make a final decision on the applications by Fall of 2022.

The Public Comment Period for the project will remain open until February 4, 2022 at 4:30 PM. Comments may be submitted via:

Online: <https://apps.commerce.state.mn.us/eera/web/page/home#comment>

Email: bill.storm@state.mn.us

U.S. Mail: Bill Storm, Environmental Review Manager, Minnesota Department of Commerce, 85 7th Place East, Suite 500, St. Paul, MN 55101

Information on the application review process and documents related to the proposed project including materials from the public meeting and applications are available on the Department of Commerce website or at the Commission's website at mn.gov/puc, select eDockets, enter the year (21) and the docket number (140) for the Certificate of Need or docket number (141) for the Route Permit, and select Search.

RGU and Contact: Public Utilities Commission, [Cezar Panait](mailto:Cezar.Panait@puc.state.mn.us), 651-201-2207

Submit an environmental review notice to the *Monitor*

The *EQB Monitor* is published every Tuesday at 12:00 pm. Submissions to the [EQB Monitor](#) are due by 4:00 pm 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:

[Use the EQB Monitor submission form](#)

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

The *EQB Monitor* is a weekly publication announcing environmental review documents, public comment periods and other actions of the Environmental Quality Board. For more information on environmental review, please visit the [EQB website](#) or contact us at env.review@state.mn.us.



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