



**STATE OF MINNESOTA**  
Office of Energy Security



Issued: March 9, 2009

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETINGS**

**In the Matter of the Route Permit Application for a 345 kV Transmission Line from Brookings County, South Dakota to Hampton, Minnesota**

**PUC Docket Number: ET2/TL-08-1474**

**PLEASE TAKE NOTICE** that the Minnesota Department of Commerce Office of Energy Security (OES) will conduct public information and environmental impact statement scoping meetings on the route permit application by Great River Energy and Xcel Energy to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (PUC or Commission) for a proposed 237-mile 345 kV transmission line and associated facilities between the existing Brookings County substation near White, South Dakota, and a newly proposed substation near Hampton, Minnesota. The purpose of the meetings is to provide information to the public about the project and to identify issues and alternatives to study in an environmental impact statement (EIS) that will be prepared by OES Energy Facility Permitting (EFP) staff.

<b>Monday, March 30<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Tuesday, March 31<sup>st</sup></b>	<b>Wednesday, April 1<sup>st</sup></b>	<b>Thursday, April 2<sup>nd</sup></b>
<p><b>1:00 PM – 4:00 PM</b></p> <p><b>5:00 PM – 8:00 PM</b> Best Western Marshall Inn 1500 E. College Dr. Marshall, MN 56258</p>	<p><b>5:00 PM – 8:00 PM</b> Midwest Center for Wind Energy 2390 County Highway 1 Hendricks, MN 56136</p>	<p><b>12:00 PM – 3:00 PM</b> Prairie’s Edge Casino &amp; Resort 5616 Prairie’s Edge Lane Granite Falls, MN 56241</p> <p><b>5:00 PM – 8:00 PM</b> Redwood Area Community Center 901 Cook St. Redwood Falls, MN 56241</p>	<p><b>6:00 PM – 9:00 PM</b> Sibley East Junior High Middle Gym 500 Court Ave. Gaylord, MN 55334</p>
<b>Monday, April 6<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Tuesday, April 7<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Wednesday, April 8<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Thursday, April 9<sup>th</sup></b>
<p><b>5:00 PM – 8:00 PM</b> Hog Wild Saloon &amp; Eatery 514 Main St. Henderson, MN 56044</p>	<p><b>5:00 PM – 8:00 PM</b> New Prague High School Commons Area 221 12<sup>th</sup> St. NE New Prague, MN 56071</p>	<p><b>9:00 AM – 12:00 PM</b></p> <p><b>1:00 PM – 4:00 PM</b></p> <p><b>5:00 PM – 8:00 PM</b> Holiday Inn Hotel &amp; Suites 20800 Kenrick Ave. Lakeville, MN 55044</p>	<p><b>5:00 PM – 8:00 PM</b> Grandpa’s Event Center 31846 65<sup>th</sup> Ave. Cannon Falls, MN 55009</p>

**The first hour of each meeting will be an open house.  
An OES presentation, and question and comment period will then follow.**

The public is invited to review the route permit application, learn more about the Commission's permitting process, and ask questions. The first hour of each meeting will be an open house. Brief presentations on the state permitting process and the proposed project will begin at the start of the second hour, followed by an opportunity for public comment. Representatives from the OES and the Applicants will be available for both the open house and presentation portion of the meetings to answer questions. Members of the public will have an opportunity to ask questions, present comments, and propose issues, impacts, and alternatives to be studied in the EIS.

**The OES will accept written comments on the scope of the EIS until April 30, 2009.** Please include PUC Docket No. ET2/TL-08-1474 on your comments. Comments should be mailed, emailed, or faxed to:

Scott Ek  
Project Manager  
Minnesota Office of Energy Security  
85 7<sup>th</sup> Place East, Suite 500  
St. Paul, Minnesota, 55101-2198  
Fax: 651-297-7891  
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Comments may also be submitted on the Commission's energy facility permitting website:  
<http://www.energyfacilities.puc.state.mn.us>

**Project Description.** Great River Energy and Xcel Energy propose to construct and operate a 345 kV transmission line, approximately 237 miles long, beginning at the state's western border near Hendricks, Minnesota, and ending south of the Twin Cities metro area near Hampton, Minnesota. The Applicants have proposed two possible routes for the transmission line – the Applicants' preferred and alternate routes. These routes cross portions of the following counties: Lincoln, Lyon, Yellow Medicine, Chippewa, Redwood, Brown, Renville, Sibley, Le Sueur, Scott, Rice, and Dakota. Construction of the transmission line is proposed to begin in 2011 with completion by 2013.

The Applicants' proposal also includes the construction of four new substations and the expansion of four existing substations. New substations include the Hazel Creek substation near Granite Falls, the Helena substation near New Prague, the Cedar Mountain substation near Franklin, and the Hampton substation near Hampton. Applicants propose using single structure steel poles which would require a 150-foot right-of-way for the majority of the route. There may be limited situations along the route where specialty structures are warranted; these structures would require a right-of-way up to 180 feet in width.

**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 December 29, 2008. The application was accepted as complete by the Commission on January 29, 2009. The Commission has one year from the time the application is accepted to complete the permitting process and make a decision on the route permit.

Route permit applications for high voltage transmission lines are subject to environmental review (Minn. Rules 7849). For this project, EFP staff will prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS). The EIS contains information on the human and environmental impacts of the proposed project and examines mitigating measures for anticipated impacts. To focus the content or “scope” of the EIS, EFP staff conducts public meetings to gather comments and suggestions on the proposed project.

Upon completion of the draft EIS, it will be issued for public review and comment, including public meetings. Comments on the draft EIS will be responded to and included in a final EIS. Concurrent with development of the final EIS, public hearings will be held, presided over by an administrative law judge (ALJ). 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, conclusions, and a recommendation on a route permit for the proposed transmission line.

Notice of the public meetings and public hearings will be published in local newspapers and mailed to persons who register their names on the Department of Commerce project mailing list.

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

**Eminent Domain.** If issued a route permit by the Commission, the Applicants may exercise the power of eminent domain to acquire land for this project pursuant to Minnesota Statute 216E.12.

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

***Department of Commerce, Office of Energy Security***

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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>

***Applicants***

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**Project Documents.** The route permit application submitted by the Applicants contains detailed information about the proposed project. Electronic versions of the application and other documents relevant to this matter are available on the Commission’s website:

<http://energyfacilities.puc.state.mn.us/Docket.html?Id=19860>, and on the Department of Commerce’s eDockets website: <https://www.edockets.state.mn.us/EFiling/search.jsp> (enter the docket number 08-1474).

The route permit application is also available at public libraries in the cities listed below:

Brookings, SD	Redwood Falls	New Ulm
Bird Island	Chaska, MN	Henderson
Montevideo	Shakopee	Granite Falls
Northfield	Montgomery	Lakeville
Ivanhoe	Farmington	Marshall
Hutchinson	Saint Peter	

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).

