



**Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
Division of Ecological & Water Resources
500 Lafayette Road
St. Paul, MN 55155-4040**

September 20, 2022

Consumer Affairs Office
Minnesota Public Utilities Commission
121 7th Place East, Suite 350
St. Paul, MN 55101

RE: In the Matter of the Application of Great River Energy for a Route Permit to Rebuild the Existing 69kV ST-WW Transmission Line to 115kV in Stearns County, PUC Docket Number: ET-2/TL-22-235

Dear Consumer Affairs Staff,

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has reviewed the route permit application for a Route Permit to Rebuild the Existing 69kV ST-WW Transmission Line to 115kV in Stearns County. Our agency offers the following comments:

Limited early coordination with the DNR has occurred on this transmission line rebuild project. Typically, the project proposer works with our agency's Regional Environmental Assessment Ecologist to identify potential natural resource impacts prior to submitting a permit application to the Public Utilities Commission. The Draft Natural Heritage Review, provided in Appendix E, may not be used to meet the requirements for permitting, licensing, or formal environmental review. Further route details are necessary for the DNR to fully analyze potential natural resource impacts. Additional information, such as pole placement, will allow our agency to provide feedback on any route alternatives and to recommend permit conditions prior to permit approval.

The DNR appreciates the opportunity to comment on the completeness of the route permit application for this transmission line rebuild project. If you have questions about our agency's comments, I may be reached at 651-259-5078 or cynthia.warzecha@state.mn.us.

Sincerely,

/s/ Cynthia Warzecha

Energy Projects Planner

CC: Scott Ek, Minnesota Public Utilities Commission
Jamie MacAlister, Minnesota Department of Commerce
Melissa Collins, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

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