



USFWS Response - Maple Grove 115 kV Transmission Line Project

From O'Brien, Katie E <katie_obrien@fws.gov>
Date Mon 12/1/2025 9:30 AM
To Hicks, Logan (He/Him/His) (PUC) <Logan.M.Hicks@state.mn.us>
Cc Tawes, Robert <robert_tawes@fws.gov>

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Dear Mr. Hicks:

We received your October 31, 2025, letter outlining the proposed 2-mile Maple Grove 115 kV Transmission Line Project. It appears the proposed line would follow existing road rights of way which minimizes habitat fragmentation. I would encourage you to visit our IPaC site <https://ipac.ecosphere.fws.gov/> to assist you in your environmental review (i.e., generate a species list and additional technical assistance information). There may be waterfowl and other migratory bird use of the nearby Elm Creek Reserve, Eagle Lake, and Fish Lake Regional Park, as well as the Mississippi River. While current interpretation of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act is that there is no incidental take, voluntary installation of bird diverters on the line in that area could help reduce collision mortality:

- Install visibility enhancement devices (e.g., marker spheres, spirals, suspended devices, bird diverters) placed in varying configurations, depending on the line design and location; large diameter wire may also increase line visibility.
- If a “problem pole” is identified (i.e., documented avian collision, electrocution, problem nest material, or high risk of avian mortality), we recommend retrofitting the pole by: 1) covering jumper wires, conductors, and equipment; 2) discouraging perching in unsafe areas (e.g., perch guards); 3) reframing; 4) replacing a structure; or 5) providing safe alternatives for perching and nesting (e.g., nesting platforms).
- When collisions cannot be reduced by another method, such as line marking or managing surrounding lands, the configuration of an existing line can sometimes be changed to minimize collisions. Options for changes might include: 1) lowering the height of the lines (e.g., below the tree line); 2) changing the wire diameter; 3) bundling wires; 4) using spacers to improve visibility; 5) rearranging wire configuration (e.g., converting from vertical to horizontal); 6) changing the structure type to increase its visibility; or 7) decreasing span length (e.g., by adding a pole mid-span).

Thank you for your on-going collaboration with our office for conservation,
Katie

Katie O'Brien
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[Minnesota-Wisconsin Ecological Services](#)

From: Hicks, Logan (He/Him/His) (PUC) <Logan.M.Hicks@state.mn.us>
Sent: Friday, October 31, 2025 1:42 PM
To: Hicks, Logan (He/Him/His) (PUC) <Logan.M.Hicks@state.mn.us>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public Utilities Commission Energy Project Notification - Maple Grove 115 kV Transmission Line Project - E002/TL-24-427

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Greetings,

Please see the attached Notification Memo for the submitted draft route permit application for the Maple Grove 115 kV Transmission Line Project located in Hennepin County, Minnesota.

While this notification memo is worded toward relevant State agencies, it is also being provided to all Tribal personnel listed under the eDockets service list, so they are also aware of the submitted draft application.

Should you have any questions or comments, feel free to reach out.

Thank you,
Logan

Logan Hicks

Energy Infrastructure Permitting

[Public Utilities Commission](#)

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