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December 21, 2022

Jamie MacAlister, Environmental Review Manager
Minnesota Department of Commerce
85 7th Place East, Suite 280
Saint 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, Minnesota
PUC Docket Number: ET-2/TL-22-235

Dear Ms. MacAlister,

On November 21st, 2022, the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (PUC) and the Minnesota Department of Commerce (DOC) issued a Notice of Public Information and Environmental Assessment Scoping Meetings on the route permit application of Great River Energy (GRE) for its proposed transmission line rebuild project in the city of St. Joseph and in St. Joseph and Wendell townships in Stearns County, Minnesota. The Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) has reviewed the application regarding the proposed project and submits the following comments in response to the Notice.

Based on the information provided in the Permit Application, and from conversations with GRE staff, it appears that the proposed rebuild project does not directly affect current MnDOT right-of-way. Should alternate routes be proposed during the scoping process, MnDOT would need to reevaluate those proposal(s) as MnDOT does have right-of-way *near*¹ the project area. As stated in supplemental information provided in this docket ([202211-190847-01](#)), MnDOT has been in communication with GRE to confirm any current or planned right-of-way.

GRE may need to apply for oversize/overweight hauling permits during construction of this project. OSOW hauling information and permit applications can be found here: [OSOW PERMITS](#)

Because MnDOT's highway construction activities could impact the Applicant's plans to haul oversize loads to the proposed site, the Applicant will need to coordinate with MnDOT when planning such loads - [MnDOT District 3 Projects](#). This coordination includes, but is not limited to, State Project construction, holiday travel restrictions, seasonal load limits, vertical and width restrictions and new changes to escort requirements for oversized vehicles [Chapter 100 - MN Laws](#).

¹ MnDOT's District 3B portion of the Railbank /Lake Wobegon Trail starts at CR 133 and goes west to Osakis. The right of way on the trail in St Joe is 50 feet on each side from centerline of the trail or 100 ft total.

Any MnDOT permits applied for as a part of this project may not be issued until the PUC has issued an approved route permit for this project. All applicable permitting, traffic control and construction coordination efforts should be made through Keith Peterson, Roadway/Regulation Transportation Specialist, in the District 3B Permits Office at 320-223-6523 or Keith.Peterson@state.mn.us.

MnDOT has a continuing interest in working with the PUC, the DOC EERA and GRE to ensure that possible impacts to the entire state trunk highway system, traveling public and environmentally significant areas of concern are adequately addressed.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments.

Sincerely,

Stacy Katch Egstad

Utility Routing and Siting Coordinator
Minnesota Department of Transportation
Office of Land Management