Minnesota Public Utilities Commission

Staff Briefing Papers

Meeting Date:	December 19, 2013 ..... Agenda Item *1
Company:	Xcel Energy
Docket No.	E-002/TL-12-1151
	In the Matter of the Application of Xcel Energy for a Route Permit for the Kohlman Lake to Goose Lake 115 kV Transmission Line Upgrade Project in Ramsey County, Minnesota
Issue(s):	Should the Commission find that the environmental assessment and the record created at the public hearing adequately address the issues identified in the scoping decision? Should the Commission issue a route permit identifying a specific route and permit conditions for the Kohlman Lake to Goose Lake 115 kV Transmission Line Project in Ramsey County?
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Relevant Documents

Xcel Energy Application for a Route Permit (9 Parts) ..... January 17, 2013
Commission Order Finding Application Complete ..... March 15, 2013
Environmental Assessment Scoping Decision..... June 26, 2013 (Filed June 27, 2013)
Generic Route Permit Template..... July 23, 2013
Environmental Assessment Report (2 Parts) ..... August 30, 2013
Administrative Law Judge Report ..... November 18, 2013
Department of Commerce Exceptions to Administrative Law Judge Report..... December 3, 2013
Xcel Energy Exceptions to Administrative Law Judge Report ..... December 3, 2013

Attached Documents

Table 1 - Exceptions Proposed to Administrative Law Judge Report
Proposed High-Voltage Transmission Line Route Permit

The attached materials are work papers of the Commission staff. They are intended for use by the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission and are based upon information already in the record unless noted otherwise.

I. Statement of the Issues

Should the Commission find that the environmental assessment and the record created at the public hearing adequately address the issues identified in the scoping decision? Should the Commission issue a route permit identifying a specific route and permit conditions for the Kohlman Lake to Goose Lake 115 kV Transmission Line Project in Ramsey County?

II. Proposed Project Overview

Xcel Energy (Applicant) has proposed to upgrade an existing transmission line running between the Kohlman Lake Substation and the Goose Lake Substation from a single circuit 115 kV to a double circuit 115/115 kV. The project is located in Ramsey County in White Bear Lake Township and the cities of Maplewood, Vadnais Heights, and White Bear Lake.

Specifically, the project involves: 1) removing approximately 2.8 miles of single circuit 115 kV transmission line between the Kohlman Lake Substation and Goose Lake Substation; 2) constructing approximately 2.8 miles of new double circuit 115/115 kV transmission line in approximately the same alignment as the line to be removed; and 3) associated modifications to the Kohlman Lake Substation and Goose Lake Substation.

III. Procedural History

On January 17, 2013, Xcel Energy filed a route permit application under the alternative permitting process[1] for the Kohlman Lake to Goose Lake 115 kV Transmission Line Project.

On March 15, 2013, the Commission accepted the application as complete and referred the application to the Office of Administrative Hearings for summary proceedings under Minn. R. 7850.3800 to develop the record.

On April 23, 2013, a public information and environmental assessment scoping meeting was held at the Best Western White Bear Country Inn in White Bear Lake, Minnesota.

[1] Minn. Stat. § 216E.04; Minn. R. 7850.2800 to 7850.3900.

On June 26, 2013, the deputy commissioner of the Department of Commerce issued the scoping decision for the environmental assessment.

On August 30, 2013, Department of Commerce Energy Facility Permitting (Department) filed its environmental assessment on the project.

On September 10, 2013, a public hearing was held before an administrative law judge (ALJ) at the Best Western White Bear Country Inn in White Bear Lake, Minnesota.

On November 18, 2013, the Office of Administrative Hearings filed the ALJ's Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law and Recommendation.

On December 3, 2013, Xcel Energy and the Department each filed exceptions to the ALJ's Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law and Recommendation.

IV. Statutes and Rules

Under Minn. Stat. § 216E.03, subd. 1, "No person may construct a high-voltage transmission line without a route permit from the commission. A high-voltage transmission line may be constructed only along a route approved by the commission."

Minn. Stat. § 216E.01, subd. 4, defines a high-voltage transmission line as "…a conductor of electric energy and associated facilities designed for and capable of operation at a nominal voltage of 100 kilovolts or more and is greater than 1,500 feet in length." The project as proposed by Xcel Energy would consist of approximately 2.8 miles of new 115/115 kV double circuit transmission line and, therefore, requires a route permit from the Commission.

The proposed project qualifies for alternative review under Minn. Stat. § 216E.04, because it is a high-voltage transmission line between 100 and 200 kV.[2] The alternate review process is a six month process that does require the applicant to propose alternative routes.[3]

Under Minn. Stat. § 216B.243, subd. 2, "No large energy facility shall be sited or constructed in Minnesota without the issuance of a certificate of need by the commission…" Because the proposed transmission line capacity is under 200 kV, is less than ten miles in length and does not cross a state border, a certificate of need is not required.[4]

[2] Minn. Stat. § 216E.04, subd. 2(3).
[3] Minn. Stat. § 216E.04, subd. 7; Minn. Stat. § 216E.04, subd. 3.
[4] Minn. Stat. § 216B.2421, subd. 2.

The proposed project is subject to Minn. Stat. Chapter 216E which requires that high-voltage transmission lines be routed consistent with state policy[5] and in a manner that "minimizes adverse human and environmental impact while insuring continuing electric power system reliability and integrity and insuring that electric energy needs are met and fulfilled in an orderly and timely fashion."[6] The statute also affords the Commission the authority to specify the design, routing, right-of-way preparation, and facility construction it deems necessary, and with any other appropriate conditions when issuing a permit for a high-voltage transmission line.[7]

V. Environmental Assessment

Minn. Stat. § 216E.04, subd. 5, requires the commissioner of the Department of Commerce to prepare an environmental assessment on proposed high-voltage transmission lines between 100 and 200 kV. The environmental assessment must contain information on the potential human and environmental impacts of a proposed project and of alternative sites or routes considered and must address mitigation measures for identified impacts.

On June 26, 2013, the Department filed the environmental assessment scoping decision in accordance with Minn. R. 7850.3700. The scoping decision identified the issues to be addressed including any alternative sites or routes, specific potential project impacts, and a schedule for completion of the environmental assessment.[8] No alternatives were identified for this project.

On August 30, 2013, the Department filed the environmental assessment on the proposed project in accordance with Minn. R. 7850.3700. The environmental assessment contained a comprehensive description of the proposed project; a discussion of potential impacts of the project on the human and natural environment; reasonable mitigation measures that could be implemented to minimize any identified adverse impacts; and required permits and approvals.[9]

VI. Public Hearing

Administrative Law Judge, Barbara L. Neilson with the Office of Administrative Hearings presided over a public hearing conducted on September 10, 2013, at the Best Western White Bear Country Inn in White Bear Lake, Minnesota.

[5] Minn. Stat. § 216E.03, subd. 7.
[6] Minn. Stat. § 216E.02, subd. 1.
[7] Minn. Stat. § 216E.04, subd. 9(b).
[8] Minn. R. 7850.3700, subp. 3.
[9] Minn. R. 7850.3700, subp. 4.

The hearing procedures included a brief presentation to describe the proposed project; an explanation of the process to be followed; introduction of documents to be included in the record; and an opportunity for any person to present comments and to ask questions of the applicant, Department staff, and commission staff. A court reporter was present to transcribe the public hearing. Following the public hearing, a comment period for submission of written comments into the record was open until September 20, 2013.[10]

VII. Administrative Law Judge Report

On November 18, 2013, the Office of Administrative Hearings filed the ALJ's Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law and Recommendation (ALJ Report). The ALJ Report addressed transmission line siting for Xcel Energy's Kohlman Lake to Goose Lake 115 kV Transmission Line Upgrade Project. The ALJ Report included 176 findings of fact, including a summary of public comment and government agency participation (Findings 53 to 68); 15 conclusions of law; and one recommendation. The ALJ summarized her conclusions of law as follows:

> *"The Administrative Law Judge concludes that Xcel Energy has satisfied the criteria set forth in applicable statutes and rules [Minn. Stat.§§ 216E.03 and 216E.04 and Minn. R. Chapter 7850] and recommends that a route permit be granted for the Project."*

The ALJ also concluded that the environmental assessment prepared by the Department "includes the information required by Minn. R. 7850.3700, subp. 4; and was prepared in compliance with the procedures in Minn. R. 7850.3700."[11]

The ALJ's recommendation was as follows:

> *"The Commission should issue to Xcel Energy the following permit for the Project: A route permit for a high voltage transmission line with a route, route width, and anticipated alignment as described herein and depicted on Maps B-1 to B-7 of the Environmental Assessment, between the existing Kohlman Lake Substation and Goose Lake Substation in Ramsey County, Minnesota, and that includes the conditions and mitigation measures set forth above."*

VIII. Exceptions

Consistent with Minn. R. 7829.2700, exceptions to the ALJ Report were filed by the Applicant and the Department within 15 days of the filing of the report.

[10] Minn. Stat § 216E.04, subd. 6; Minn. R. 7850.3800.
[11] ALJ Report Conclusion 8.

A. Xcel Energy Exceptions

On December 3, 2013, the Applicant filed its exceptions to the ALJ Report that requested language modifications to Findings 35, 64, 84, 161, 164; and Conclusion 14. The Applicants exceptions focused on: 1) its preference regarding soliciting landowner input on restoration activities; 2) local government input related to the proposed finish for the new transmission structures; and 3) minor or typographical errors. The Applicant further requested that the Commission adopt the ALJ Report with its identified modifications.[12]

B. Department of Commerce Exceptions

On December 3, 2013, the Department filed its exceptions to the ALJ Report.[13] In its exceptions, the Department largely discussed the generic route permit template filed in this matter and its treatment in the ALJ Report. Specifically, the Department raised the question of whether its suggested modifications to the route permit included in its Initial Arguments and Analysis[14] would be considered by the Commission in its final decision. The Department also requested language modifications to Conclusion 14 of the ALJ Report. Lastly, the Department recommended that the Commission approve a route permit for the project, including the ALJ's recommended permit conditions as modified.

IX. Staff Discussion

Commission staff has reviewed the record and reached its conclusions and recommendations based on information provided in Xcel Energy's route permit application, the analysis provided in the environmental assessment on the proposed project, comments and briefs received in this record, and the report of the administrative law judge.

A. Environmental Assessment Completeness

Staff has reviewed the environmental assessment and agrees with the ALJ that the Department has conducted an appropriate environmental analysis of the project for purposes of this route permit proceeding, and that the environmental assessment satisfies Minn. R. 7850.3700. Specifically, the environmental assessment and the record created at the public hearing addresses the issues identified in the scoping decision.[15]

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[12] Xcel Energy, Exceptions to Administrative Law Judge's Report (December 3, 2013), Docket ID 20132-94279-01.
[13] Department of Commerce Energy Environmental Review and Analysis, Exceptions to the Administrative Law Judge's Report (December 3, 2013), Docket ID 201312-94251-01.
[14] Department of Commerce Energy Facility Permitting, Initial Arguments and Analysis (October 8, 2013), Docket ID 201310-92256-01.
[15] Minn. R. 7850.3900, subp 2.

B. Exceptions to ALJ Report

1. Proposed Modifications to ALJ Report

Commission staff has provided the attached table (Table 1) summarizing the proposed modifications to the ALJ Report by the Applicant, the Department, and Commission staff, including staff's reasons for recommending acceptance or rejection of the modifications. Further explanation of staff recommendations are detailed in Section IX.C of this briefing paper.

2. Generic Route Permit Template

Commission staff would like to address questions and concerns raised by the Department regarding the treatment of the generic route permit template filed in this matter.

The purpose of the generic route permit template in this matter was to provide interested parties, persons and governmental agencies an opportunity to review standard permit language early in the review process in order to facilitate greater discussion of the proposed terms and conditions, and to allow additional time for the development of recommendations of different or additional permit language or special conditions specific to the proposed project. The generic permit was also intended to provide the ALJ with a foundation to build on during the hearing process and when preparing the final hearing report and recommendations.

In creating the generic route permit template, staff reviewed previous permits issued by the Commission dating back to 2002. Staff compared the past permits, identified standard language that has been consistent and common to the permits, and removed language that had been inadvertently carried over from previous permits that was specific to a certain project.

The specifics of a high-voltage transmission line route permit are determined on a project-by-project basis. The specifics of each route permit are informed by the record as set forth in the findings of fact, conclusions of law, and recommendation relative to the case. There are, however, a number of standard permit conditions that generally apply to all high-voltage transmission line route permits issued by the Commission.

Ultimately, under Minn. Stat. § 216E.04, subd. 9(b), the Commission has the authority to specify the design, routing, right-of-way preparation, and facility construction it deems necessary, and with any other appropriate conditions when issuing a permit for a high-voltage transmission line.

C. Route Permit Language Modifications

On October 8, 2013, the Department filed Initial Arguments and Analysis[16] on the project during the reply brief and comment period designated by the ALJ in this matter. In its Arguments and Analysis, the Department provided proposed route permit language, including language changes suggested by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MnDNR) in its comment letter submitted during the public hearing process. Commission staff addresses the Department's suggested changes below.

1. Route Permit Organization

In response to the Department's suggestion, Section 4.10 (Special Conditions) of the route permit was moved from the General Conditions section and is now a separate section (Section 5.0). In addition, the Special Conditions section has been amended to include language indicating that the special conditions take precedence over general conditions should there be a conflict with other conditions of the permit.

The Archaeological and Historic Resources and Avian Mitigation sections of the permit were moved from the Other Requirements section and are now separate sections under the General Conditions section (Sections 4.2.9 and 4.2.10, respectively).

2. Structure Characteristics

In response to the Department's suggestion, Section 2.3 (Structures and Conductors) of the permit has been modified to include greater clarification on the structures authorized for the project. The structure characteristics were described in the route permit application and the environmental assessment for the project.[17] The addition is appropriate and is supported by ALJ Finding 43.

3. Plan and Profile Guidance and ROW Fact Sheet

Section 4.1 (Plan and Profile) and Section 4.5 (Notification to Landowners) of the route permit were not modified to include references to the Department of Commerce Energy Facility Permitting's *Plan and Profile Guidance for Transmission Lines* document and the *Rights-of-Way and Easements for Energy Facility Construction and Operation Right-of-Way Fact Sheet*.

[16] Department of Commerce Energy Facility Permitting, Initial Arguments and Analysis (October 8, 2013), Docket ID 201310-92256-01.
[17] Route Permit Application at 21; Environmental Assessment at 13-14.

Commission staff understands that the referenced documents may be of value to the Department, permittees, and landowners; however, staff does not believe the Commission has had an opportunity to review the content of those documents to ensure that the information is consistent with the rules and statutes under which the Commission operates, and that they are in a form approved by the Commission. Staff recommends that the referenced documents be formally reviewed by the Commission before they are considered for inclusion as guidance or reference documents in this and future high-voltage transmission line route permits.

4. Erosion Control

In response to the Department's suggestion, Section 4.2.7 (Erosion Control) of the permit has been modified to include reference to erosion prevention and sediment control practices recommended by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency Construction Stormwater Program. The addition is appropriate and is supported by ALJ Finding 131 and Conclusion 14.

5. Archaeological and Historic Resources

Commission staff does not believe it is appropriate to include the language suggested by the Department concerning the Archaeological and Historic Resources section (Section 4.2.9) of the route permit; therefore, the suggested changes were not included. Staff is confident that the current permit language for that section is sufficient. Furthermore, staff is not aware of any documentation indicating that the language suggested by the Department is consistent with the requirements of the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), and believe it is more prudent to defer to the jurisdiction of SHPO in these matters. The current permit language directs a permittee to contact and consult with SHPO upon encountering a resource, avoid the impact if feasible, and minimize impacts on the resource consistent with SHPO and State Archaeologist requirements.

However, the Archaeological and Historic Resources section has been modified to include the language suggested by the Department that requires training for construction crews regarding the proper handling of historic and cultural resources encountered during construction of the project.

6. DNR Recommendations

In response to the Department's suggestion, Section 4.2.5 (Vegetation Removal) of the route permit has been modified to include suggestions by MnDNR and the Department concerning vegetation management requirements within and adjacent to the transmission line right-of-way. The changes suggested by MnDNR and the Department are appropriate and supported by ALJ Findings 64, 139-142, and Conclusion 14.

Section 4.2.7 (Erosion Control) of the route permit was not modified to include the additional language suggested by MnDNR. Staff believes the existing permit language is sufficient and requires the Permittee to return all areas disturbed during construction of the project to pre-construction conditions. It is generally understood that "pre-construction condition" refers to a state that is equal to or better than what existed prior to the time construction was completed. The existing permit language is consistent with past transmission route permits issued by the Commission.

However, this section of the route permit has been modified to include suggestions by the MnDNR concerning requirements for the seed types used for replanting and restoration, and best management practices relating to invasive species control. The changes suggested by MnDNR are appropriate and supported by ALJ Findings 64 and 139, and Conclusion 14.

MnDNR recommended adding language to Section 4.2.9 (Temporary Work Space) of the route permit to address potential impacts to state-listed endangered, threatened, and special concern species. Rather than modifying Section 4.2.9 as recommended, staff believes it is more appropriate to incorporate the language under Section 5.1.5 (Rare and Unique Resources) and has modified that section accordingly. The changes proposed by MnDNR are appropriate and supported by ALJ Finding 64, and Conclusion 14.

Lastly, the MnDNR suggested adding "with landowner input" to a number of its suggested language modifications.[18] The ALJ indicated that the proposed language modifications may be reasonable; however, suggested that the term "with landowner input" be further clarified to avoid potential misunderstanding concerning the interpretation of the language and what it requires of the permittee in certain situations.[19]

Commission staff does not believe there is a compelling reason to modify the permit language to include "with landowner input" as suggested by MnDNR or "with landowner input as requested" as suggested by the Applicant.[20] Staff believes the permit at Section 4.2.6 (Aesthetics) adequately addresses the issue of landowner input concerning construction, vegetation management, and construction practices as follows:

> *"The Permittee shall consider input pertaining to visual impacts from landowners or land management agencies prior to final location of structures, rights-of-way, and other areas with the potential for visual disturbance. Care shall be used to preserve the natural landscape, minimize tree removal and prevent any unnecessary destruction of the natural surroundings in the vicinity of the project during construction and maintenance.*

[18] ALJ Finding 64.
[19] ALJ Finding 65.
[20] ALJ Finding 65.

> *Structures shall be placed at a distance, consistent with sound engineering principles and system reliability criteria, from intersecting roads, highway, or trail crossings and could cross roads to minimize or avoid impacts."*

Section 4.2.12 (Restoration) of the permit also states:

> *"The Permittee shall restore the right-of-way, temporary work spaces, access roads, abandoned right-of-way, and other public or private lands affected by construction of the transmission line. Restoration within the right-of-way must be compatible with the safe operation, maintenance, and inspection of the transmission line. Within 60 days after completion of all restoration activities, the Permittee shall advise the Commission in writing of the completion of such activities. The Permittee shall fairly compensate landowners for damage to crops, fences, landscaping, drain tile, or other damages sustained during construction."*

Section 4.5 (Notification to Landowners) further states:

> *"The Permittee shall work with landowners to locate the high-voltage transmission line to minimize the loss of agricultural land, forest, and wetlands, and to avoid homes and farmsteads."*

7. Special Conditions

In response to the Department's suggestion, Section 5.0 (Special Conditions) of the route permit has been modified to include the additional special conditions language suggested by the Department which includes language relating to structure finishes, consultation with the railroad authorities, consultations with the Metropolitan Council, wildlife-friendly erosion control materials, and measures for avoiding rare and unique resources, in cooperation with MnDNR. The changes suggested by the Department are appropriate and supported by ALJ Conclusion 14.

In making its recommendations, staff was guided by the state's policy of choosing locations that minimize adverse human and environmental impact while insuring continuing electric power system reliability and integrity and insuring that electric energy needs are met and fulfilled in an orderly and timely fashion (Minn. Stat. § 216E.03, subd. 7).

Commission Decision Alternatives

A. Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law and Recommendation

1. Approve and adopt the ALJ Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law and Recommendation for Xcel Energy's Kohlman Lake to Goose Lake 115 kV Transmission Line Upgrade Project in Ramsey County, Minnesota.

2. Approve and adopt the ALJ Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law and Recommendation for Xcel Energy's Kohlman Lake to Goose Lake 115 kV Transmission Line Upgrade Project in Ramsey County, Minnesota, with modifications to:

    a. Finding 35 as suggested by Xcel Energy.
    b. Finding 64 as suggested by Xcel Energy.
    c. Finding 84 as suggested by Xcel Energy.
    d. Finding 161 as suggested by Xcel Energy.
    e. Finding 164 as suggested by Xcel Energy.
    f. Conclusion 14 as suggested by Xcel Energy.
    g. Conclusion 14 as suggested by the Department.
    h. Conclusion 14 as suggested by Commission staff.

3. Take some other action deemed appropriate.

B. Environmental Assessment

1. Determine that the environmental assessment and the record created at the public hearing addresses the issues identified in the environmental assessment scoping decision.

2. Take some other action deemed appropriate.

C. Transmission Line Route Permit

1. Issue a high-voltage transmission line route permit identifying a specific route and permit conditions to Xcel Energy for the Kohlman Lake to Goose Lake 115 kV Transmission Line Project in Ramsey County.

2. Take some other action deemed appropriate.

Staff Recommendation: A2a, A2c-f, A2h, B1, and C1

TABLE 1
Exceptions Proposed to Administrative Law Judge Report Docket No. E-002/TL-12-1151

Finding or Conclusion No.	Proposer	Proposed Language	Incorporated by Staff	Staff's Reason for Including or Rejecting
Finding 35.	Applicant	The Project is needed to reliably serve electrical loads in the ~~northwest~~ northeast region of the Twin Cities metropolitan area by providing a redundant electrical transmission source to the area.[46] Electrical loads in that region are currently served from three sources: the Chisago County, Kohlman Lake, and Riverside/Terminal substations.[47] Planning studies completed during 2010 for voltage stability and compliance with standards of the North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC) identified this area as vulnerable to severe low voltages and thermal overloads.[48] The Project is necessary to meet NERC planning standards without decreasing load or utilizing operating procedures during transmission outages.[49]	Yes	Clerical/technical modification that provides greater clarification and is supported by the record.
Finding 64.	Applicant	On September 20, 2013, Ms. Schrenzel submitted post-hearing written comments in this proceeding on behalf of the MnDNR. The MnDNR's comments emphasized the presence of the Blanding's Turtle and Western Foxsnakes in the Project area, and requested that wildlife-friendly erosion control materials be used during construction of the Project. The MnDNR noted that it supported the vegetation removal approach set forth in Appendix F of the Application that leaves lower-growing vegetation within the right-of-way, and urged that this practice be used for initial clearing as well as for maintenance activity throughout the life of the Project. The MnDNR further recommended that native seed mixes be used in restoration activities to improve habitat and reduce the possibility of invasive species.[83] With respect to the generic route permit template, the MnDNR made the following language suggestions (new language is underlined): a. 4.2.5, 2nd paragraph - The following language is	No	Staff's reasons for not including the suggested modifications to Finding 64 are included in staff's briefing paper at Section IX.C.6 (i.e., already required).

Finding or Conclusion No.	Proposer	Proposed Language	Incorporated by Staff	Staff's Reason for Including or Rejecting
		suggested: "Certain low growing species can remain in the right-of-way, or native species can be planted, with landowner input that is provided to Xcel Energy... " b. 4.2.7, 1st paragraph, last sentence - The following language is suggested: "All areas disturbed during construction of the facilities shall be returned to equal or better than preconstruction conditions with landowner input that is provided to Xcel Energy." c. 4.2.7, 2nd paragraph - The following language is suggested to be added: "Native seed mixes shall be selected to the extent practical, with landowner input that is provided to Xcel Energy." d. A paragraph should be added about cleaning equipment prior to entering the work site as a best management practice to avoid the spread of invasive species. This practice is now often included in utility plans and would be required for work in state lands. e. 4.2.9 Should include language about avoiding impacts to state-listed species in any temporary work space outside of the permitted route. f. Bird diverters are required on many transmission projects in the Special Conditions section. Including reference to bird diverters in a generic permit condition, while allowing for some flexibility in siting in the special conditions section may provide placeholder for this topic.[84]		

TABLE 1
Exceptions Proposed to Administrative Law Judge Report Docket No. E-002/TL-12-1151

Finding or Conclusion No.	Proposer	Proposed Language	Incorporated by Staff	Staff's Reason for Including or Rejecting
Finding 84.	Xcel Energy	The Proposed Route follows the alignment of the existing single circuit 115 kV transmission line between the Kohlman Lake and Goose Lake substations. The existing transmission line structures are approximately 75 feet above ground. The majority of the structures proposed for the Project will range in height from 80 to 90 feet, with some structures up to 100 feet above ground. In addition, there will be six ~~wires~~ conductors on the new structures instead of the three ~~wires~~ conductors on the existing structures.[105]	Yes	Clerical/technical modification that provides greater clarification and is supported by the record.
Finding 161.	Xcel Energy	The Proposed Route maximizes the use of existing transmission line right-of- way. ~~One hundred percent~~ Nearly all of the Proposed Route is within the right-of-way of the existing transmission line.[193] Xcel Energy anticipates that the new right-of-way for the Project will be needed along the west side of Otter Lake Road near the Goose Lake substation and along the Bruce Vento trail near the Kohlman Lake substation.[193.1] [193.1] Ex. 23 at 10.	Yes	Clerical/technical modification that provides greater clarification and is supported by the record.
Finding 164.	Xcel Energy	The Proposed Route maximizes the use of existing transportation and electrical transmission system rights-of-way. The Proposed Route uses an existing transmission line right-of-way for ~~one hundred percent~~ nearly all of its length, and uses an existing railroad right-of-way for approximately ninety percent of its length. Xcel Energy anticipates that the new right-of-way for the Project will be needed along the west side of Otter Lake Road near the Goose Lake substation and along the Bruce Vento trail near the Kohlman Lake substation.[195.1] The Project endpoints are existing substations, and modifications to the substations shall occur within their existing footprint.[196]	Yes	Clerical/technical modification that provides greater clarification and is supported by the record.

Finding or Conclusion No.	Proposer	Proposed Language	Incorporated by Staff	Staff's Reason for Including or Rejecting
		[195.1] Ex. 23 at 10.		
Conclusion 14.	Xcel Energy	14. It is appropriate for the Route Permit to require the Company to: ~~• consult and coordinate with local governments concerning the preferred finish galvanized or self-weathering of transmission line structures;~~ • consult and coordinate with Ramsey County and the Regional Railroad Authority to ensure that it has the proper land rights to construct the Project; • consult and coordinate with the Metropolitan Council to avoid and mitigate potential impacts to the Council's sewer lines in the Project area; • apply the erosion control measures identified in the MPCA's Stormwater Best Management Practices Manual; • construct the Project consistent with MnDNR recommendations for minimizing impacts to the Blanding's Turtle and for utilizing wildlife-friendly erosion control materials; • comply with the conditions set forth in Finding 63 above, as modified in Finding 64;	Yes	As indicated in Finding 88, "No comments were received from local units of government indicating a preference for a particular type of structure finish."

Finding or Conclusion No.	Proposer	Proposed Language	Incorporated by Staff	Staff's Reason for Including or Rejecting
		• obtain all required local state and federal permits and licenses and comply with the terms of those permits or licenses; and • comply with all applicable rules and regulations.		
Conclusion 14.	Department of Commerce	14. It is appropriate for the Route Permit to require the Company to: • consult and coordinate with local governments concerning the preferred finish-galvanized or self-weathering-of transmission line structures; • consult and coordinate with Ramsey County and the Regional Railroad Authority to ensure that it has the proper land rights to construct the Project; • consult and coordinate with the Metropolitan Council to avoid and mitigate potential impacts to the Council's sewer lines in the Project area; • apply the erosion control measures identified in the MPCA's Stormwater Best Management Practices Manual; • construct the Project consistent with MnDNR recommendations for minimizing impacts to the Blanding's Turtle and for utilizing wildlife-friendly	No	Staff's reasons for not including the suggested modifications to Finding 64 are included in staff's briefing paper at Section IX.C.6.

Finding or Conclusion No.	Proposer	Proposed Language	Incorporated by Staff	Staff's Reason for Including or Rejecting
		erosion control materials; • comply with ~~the~~ those conditions related to the Project and supported by the record set forth in Finding 63 above, as modified in Finding 64; • obtain all required local state and federal permits and licenses and comply with the terms of those permits or licenses; and • comply with all applicable rules and regulations.		
Conclusion 14.	Commission Staff	14. It is appropriate for the Route Permit to require the Company to: • consult and coordinate with local governments concerning the preferred finish-galvanized or self-weathering-of transmission line structures; • consult and coordinate with Ramsey County and the Regional Railroad Authority to ensure that it has the proper land rights to construct the Project; • consult and coordinate with the Metropolitan Council to avoid and mitigate potential impacts to the Council's sewer lines in the Project area; • apply the erosion control measures identified in the MPCA's Stormwater Best Management Practices	Yes	Staff's reasons for including the suggested modifications to Finding 64 are included in staff's briefing paper at Section IX.C.6 (i.e., Adequately addressed in sections 4.2.6, 4.2.12, and 4.5).

Finding or Conclusion No.	Proposer	Proposed Language	Incorporated by Staff	Staff's Reason for Including or Rejecting
		Manual; • construct the Project consistent with MnDNR recommendations for minimizing impacts to the Blanding's Turtle and for utilizing wildlife-friendly erosion control materials; ~~• comply with the conditions set forth in Finding 63 above, as modified in Finding 64;~~ • obtain all required local state and federal permits and licenses and comply with the terms of those permits or licenses; and • comply with all applicable rules and regulations.		

STATE OF MINNESOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

ROUTE PERMIT FOR CONSTRUCTION OF A HIGH-VOLTAGE TRANSMISSION LINE AND ASSOCIATED FACILITIES

IN
RAMSEY COUNTY

ISSUED TO
XCEL ENERGY

PUC DOCKET NO. E-002/TL-12-1151

In accordance with the requirements of Minnesota Statutes Chapter 216E and Minnesota Rules Chapter 7850, this route permit is hereby issued to:

XCEL ENERGY

Xcel Energy is authorized by this route permit to construct approximately 2.8 miles of new double circuit 115 kV/115 kV transmission line between the Kohlman Lake and Goose Lake substations in Ramsey County, Minnesota.

The transmission line and associated facilities shall be built within the route identified in this permit and as portrayed on the official route maps, and in compliance with the conditions specified in this permit.

Approved and adopted this ____ day of _____

BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION

_____
Burl W. Haar,
Executive Secretary

CONTENTS

FIGURES

ATTACHMENTS

1.0 ROUTE PERMIT

The Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (Commission) hereby issues this route permit to Xcel Energy (Permittee) pursuant to Minnesota Statutes Chapter 216E and Minnesota Rules Chapter 7850. This permit authorizes Xcel Energy to construct approximately 2.8 miles of new double circuit 115 kV/115 kV transmission line between the Kohlman Lake and Goose Lake substations in Ramsey County, Minnesota, and as identified in the attached route permit maps, hereby incorporated into this document.

2.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Project includes removing approximately 2.8 miles of existing 115 kV single circuit transmission line and structures[1], rebuilding a new 115 kV/115 kV double circuit transmission line in approximately the same alignment as the existing 115 kV transmission line to be removed, reconductoring a span of existing single circuit 115 kV line between existing structures 124 and 123, and modifications to the Kohlman Lake and Goose Lake substations.

2.1 Project Location

The Project extends from the Kohlman Lake Substation located south of Highway 694 in the city of Maplewood, north through the cities of White Bear Lake and Vadnais Heights, to the Goose Lake Substation located northwest of the intersection of White Bear Parkway and Otter Lake Road in White Bear Township.

2.2 Associated Facilities and Substations

Modifications to the Kohlman Lake and Goose Lake substations will occur within the existing substation footprints and will include new and modified 115 kV breakers, disconnects, and controls.

2.3 Structures and Conductors

The structures authorized for the project be will single pole galvanized or self-weathering steel davit arm structures capable of supporting two 115 kV circuits. The structures will be 80 to 100 feet in height with average span of 300 to 500 feet between structures and will be supported by a 6-foot diameter by 25-foot deep drilled pier concrete foundation. Specialty structures authorized for the project will be two dead-end structures, one running angle structure, and one tangent structure capable of supporting two 115 kV circuits and designed for distribution underbuild.

[1] The project includes the removal of approximately 41 existing structures (2 lattice tower structures and 39 steel pole structures), several wooden poles, and all associated guy wires, anchors, and poles.

The specialty structures will be 90 to 100 feet in height and will be supported by an approximately 8-foot diameter by 30-foot deep drilled pier concrete foundation.

The phase wires will be 795-kcmil 26/7 aluminum core steel supported (ACSS) conductor or a conductor of similar capacity. A shield wire will be installed above the conductors for lightning protection.

The transmission line and associated facilities shall be designed to meet or exceed all relevant local and state codes, the National Electric Safety Code (NESC), and North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC) requirements. This includes standards relating to clearances to ground, clearance to crossing utilities, clearance to buildings, strength of materials, clearances over roadways, right-of-way widths, and permit requirements. The transmission line shall be equipped with protective devices to safeguard the public if an accident occurs.

3.0 DESIGNATED ROUTE

The route designated by the Commission in this permit is the route described below and shown on the route maps attached to this permit. The route is generally described as follows:

The route exits the Kohlman Lake Substation and proceeds northward along a section of the Bruce Vento Trail and across Interstate 694. The route proceeds northward along the eastern edge of the Burlington Northern Santa Fe railroad right-of-way, crossing over County Road E. The route then jogs westward toward Otter Lake Road, with circuit #1 joining Xcel Energy Line 0885 and circuit #2 joining Xcel Energy Line 5519. Circuit #2 proceeds along Otter Lake Road to the Goose Lake Substation.

The route width approved by this permit is 200 feet wide; 100 feet on each side of the existing transmission line centerline; and 100 feet on each side of the most direct path connecting existing structures #124 and #629. The identified route width will provide the Permittee with flexibility for minor adjustments of the specific alignment or right-of-way to accommodate landowner requests and unforeseen conditions. The final alignment (i.e., permanent and maintained rights-of-way) will be located within this designated route unless otherwise authorized below.

3.1 Right-of-Way

The approved right-of-way width for the project is up to 75 feet. The Permittee will utilize its existing rights-of-way associated with the single circuit 115 kV transmission line being replaced to the greatest extent possible.

This permit anticipates that the right-of-way will generally conform to the anticipated alignment as noted on the attached route permit maps unless changes are requested by individual landowners or unforeseen conditions are encountered or are otherwise provided for by this permit.

Any alignment modifications within the designated route shall be located so as to have comparable overall impacts relative to the factors in Minn. R. 7850.4100, as does the alignment identified in this permit, and shall be specifically identified and documented in and approved as part of the plan and profile submitted pursuant to section 4.1 of this permit.

Where the transmission line route parallels existing highway and other road rights-of-way, the transmission line right-of-way shall occupy and utilize the existing right-of-way to the maximum extent possible, consistent with the criteria in Minn. R. 7850.4100, the other requirements of this permit, and for highways under the jurisdiction of the Minnesota Department of Transportation (Mn/DOT) rules, policies, and procedures for accommodating utilities in trunk highway rights-of-way.

4.0 GENERAL CONDITIONS

The Permittee shall comply with the following conditions during construction of the transmission line and associated facilities over the life of this permit.

4.1 Plan and Profile

At least 30 calendar days before right-of-way preparation for construction begins on any segment or portion of the project, the Permittee shall provide the Commission with a plan and profile of the right-of-way and the specifications and drawings for right-of-way preparation, construction, structure specifications and locations, cleanup, and restoration for the transmission line. The documentation shall include maps depicting the plan and profile including the right-of-way, alignment, and structures in relation to the route and alignment approved per this permit.

The Permittee may not commence construction until the 30 days has expired or until the Commission has advised the Permittee in writing that it has completed its review of the documents and determined that the planned construction is consistent with this permit. If the Permittee intends to make any significant changes in its plan and profile or the specifications and drawings after submission to the Commission, the Permittee shall notify the Commission at least five days before implementing the changes. No changes shall be made that would be in violation of any of the terms of this permit.

4.2 Construction Practices

The Permittee shall follow those specific construction practices and material specifications described in Xcel Energy's application to the Commission for a route permit for the *Kohlman Lake to Goose Lake Rebuild from 115 kV Single Circuit to 115/115 kV Double Circuit Transmission Line Project*, dated January 2013, unless this permit establishes a different requirement in which case this permit shall prevail.

4.2.1 Field Representative

At least 14 days prior to commencing construction, the Permittee shall advise the Commission in writing of the person or persons designated to be the field representative for the Permittee with the responsibility to oversee compliance with the conditions of this permit during construction.

The field representative's address, phone number, emergency phone number, and email shall be provided to the Commission and shall be made available to affected landowners, residents, public officials and other interested persons. The Permittee may change the field representative at any time upon written notice to the Commission.

4.2.2 Local Governments

During construction, the Permittee shall minimize any disruption to public services or public utilities. To the extent disruptions to public services or public utilities occur these would be temporary and the Permittee will restore service promptly. Where any impacts to utilities have the potential to occur the Permittee will work with both landowners and local agencies to determine the most appropriate transmission structure placement.

The Permittee shall cooperate with county and city road authorities to develop appropriate signage and traffic management during construction.

4.2.3 Cleanup

All waste and scrap that is the product of construction shall be removed from the area and properly disposed of upon completion of each task. Personal litter, including bottles, cans, and paper from construction activities shall be removed on a daily basis.

4.2.4 Noise

Construction and routine maintenance activities shall be limited to daytime working hours, as defined in Minn. R. 7030.0200, to ensure nighttime noise level standards will not be exceeded.

4.2.5 Vegetation Removal

The Permittee shall minimize the number of trees to be removed in selecting the right-of-way specifically preserving to the maximum extent practicable windbreaks, shelterbelts, living snow fences, and vegetation in areas such as trail and stream crossings where vegetative screening may minimize aesthetic impacts, to the extent that such actions do not violate sound engineering principles or system reliability criteria.

Tall growing species located within the transmission line right-of-way that endanger the safe and reliable operation of the transmission facility will be removed by the Permittee. The Permittee shall leave undisturbed, to the extent possible, existing low growing species in the right-of-way or replant such species in the right-of-way to blend the difference between the right-of-way and adjacent areas, to the extent that the low growing vegetation that will not pose a threat to the transmission facility or impede construction.

The Permittee shall avoid construction and maintenance practices, particularly the use of fertilizer, herbicides or other pesticides, that are inconsistent with the landowner's or tenant's use of the land.

4.2.6 Aesthetics

The Permittee shall consider input pertaining to visual impacts from landowners or land management agencies prior to final location of structures, rights-of-way, and other areas with the potential for visual disturbance. Care shall be used to preserve the natural landscape, minimize tree removal and prevent any unnecessary destruction of the natural surroundings in the vicinity of the project during construction and maintenance. Structures shall be placed at a distance, consistent with sound engineering principles and system reliability criteria, from intersecting roads, highway, or trail crossings and could cross roads to minimize or avoid impacts.

4.2.7 Erosion Control

The Permittee shall implement those erosion prevention and sediment control practices recommended by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) Construction Stormwater Program.

The Permittee shall minimize erosion and sedimentation during construction and shall employ perimeter sediment controls, protect exposed soil by promptly planting, seeding, using erosion control blankets and turf reinforcement mats, stabilizing slopes, protecting storm drain inlets, protecting soil stockpiles, and controlling vehicle tracking. Contours shall be graded as required so that all surfaces provide for proper drainage, blend with the natural terrain, and are left in a condition that will facilitate re-vegetation and prevent erosion. All areas disturbed during construction of the facilities shall be returned to pre-construction conditions.

When utilizing seed to establish temporary and permanent vegetative cover on exposed soil the Permittee shall select site appropriate seed certified to be free of noxious weeds. To the extent possible, the Permittee shall use native seed mixes. The Permittee shall consult with landowners on the selection and use of seed for replanting.

The Permittee shall employ best management practices to avoid the potential spread of invasive species within and adjacent to the right-of-way during construction and maintenance of the transmission lines.

Where larger areas of one acre or more are disturbed or other areas designated by the MPCA, the Permittee shall obtain a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES)/State Disposal System (SDS) Construction Stormwater permit from the MPCA.

4.2.8 Wetlands and Water Resources

Wetland impact avoidance measures that shall be implemented during design and construction of the transmission line will include spacing and placing the power poles at variable distances to span and avoid wetlands, watercourses, and floodplains. Unavoidable wetland impacts as a result of the placement of poles shall be limited to the immediate area around the poles. To minimize impacts, construction in wetland areas shall occur during frozen ground conditions. When construction during winter is not possible, wooden or composite mats shall be used to protect wetland vegetation. Soil excavated from the wetlands and riparian areas shall be contained and not placed back into the wetland or riparian area.

Wetlands and riparian areas shall be accessed using the shortest route possible in order to minimize travel through wetland areas and prevent unnecessary impacts. No staging or stringing set up areas shall be placed within or adjacent to wetlands or water resources, as practicable. Power pole structures shall be assembled on upland areas before they are brought to the site for installation. Areas disturbed by construction activities shall be restored to pre-construction conditions.

All requirements of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (wetlands under federal jurisdiction), Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (Public Waters/Wetlands), and County (wetlands under the jurisdiction of the Minnesota Wetland Conservation Act) shall be met.

4.2.9 Archaeological and Historic Resources

The Permittee shall make every effort to avoid impacts to identified archaeological and historic resources when installing the high-voltage transmission line on the approved route. In the event that a resource is encountered, the Permittee shall contact and consult with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). Where feasible, avoidance of the resource is required. Where not feasible, mitigation must include an effort to minimize project impacts on the resource consistent with SHPO and State Archaeologist requirements.

Prior to construction, workers shall be trained about the need to avoid cultural properties, how to identify cultural properties, and procedures to follow if undocumented cultural properties, including gravesites, are found during construction.

4.2.10 Avian Mitigation

The Permittee's standard transmission design shall incorporate adequate spacing of conductors and grounding devices in accordance with Avian Power Line Interaction Committee standards to eliminate the risk of electrocution to raptors with larger wingspans that may simultaneously come in contact with a conductor and grounding devices.

4.2.11 Temporary Work Space

The Permittee shall limit temporary easements to special construction access needs and additional staging or lay-down areas required outside of the authorized right-of-way. Temporary space shall be selected to limit the removal and impacts to vegetation.

Temporary easements outside of the authorized transmission line right-of-way will be obtained from affected landowners through rental agreements and are not provided for in this permit.

Temporary driveways may be constructed between the roadway and the structures to minimize impact using the shortest route possible. Construction mats should also be used to minimize impacts on access paths and construction areas.

4.2.12 Restoration

The Permittee shall restore the right-of-way, temporary work spaces, access roads, abandoned right-of-way, and other public or private lands affected by construction of the transmission line. Restoration within the right-of-way must be compatible with the safe operation, maintenance, and inspection of the transmission line. Within 60 days after completion of all restoration activities, the Permittee shall advise the Commission in writing of the completion of such activities.

The Permittee shall fairly compensate landowners for damage to crops, fences, landscaping, drain tile, or other damages sustained during construction.

4.2.13 Notice of Permit

The Permittee shall inform all employees, contractors, and other persons involved in the transmission line construction of the terms and conditions of this permit.

4.3 Periodic Status Reports

The Permittee shall report to the Commission on progress regarding finalization of the route, design of structures, and construction of the transmission line. The Permittee need not report more frequently than monthly.

4.4 Complaint Procedures

Prior to the start of construction, the Permittee shall submit to the Commission the procedures that will be used to receive and respond to complaints. The procedures shall be in accordance with the requirements set forth in the complaint procedures attached to this permit.

4.5 Notification to Landowners

The Permittee shall provide all affected landowners with a copy of this permit and, as a separate information piece, the complaint procedures at the time of the first contact with the landowners after issuance of this permit. The Permittee shall contact landowners prior to entering the property or conducting maintenance along the route.

The Permittee shall work with landowners to locate the high-voltage transmission line to minimize the loss of agricultural land, forest, and wetlands, and to avoid homes and farmsteads.

4.6 Completion of Construction

4.6.1 Notification to Commission

At least three days before the line is to be placed into service, the Permittee shall notify the Commission of the date on which the line will be placed into service and the date on which construction was complete.

4.6.2 As-Builts

Within 60 days after completion of construction, the Permittee shall submit copies of all final as-built plans and specifications developed during the project.

4.6.3 GPS Data

Within 60 days after completion of construction, the Permittee shall submit to the Commission, in the format requested by the Commission, geo-spatial information (e.g., ArcGIS compatible map files, GPS coordinates, associated database of characteristics) for all structures associated with the transmission line and each substation connected.

4.7 Electrical Performance Standards

4.7.1 Grounding

The Permittee shall design, construct, and operate the transmission line in a manner so that the maximum induced steady-state short-circuit current shall be limited to five milliamperes root mean square (rms) alternating current between the ground and any non-stationary object within the right-of-way, including but not limited to large motor vehicles and agricultural equipment.

All fixed metallic objects on or off the right-of-way, except electric fences that parallel or cross the right-of-way, shall be grounded to the extent necessary to limit the induced short-circuit current between ground and the object so as not to exceed one milliampere rms under steady state conditions of the transmission line and to comply with the ground fault conditions specified in the NESC. The Permittee shall address and rectify any induced current problems that arise during transmission line operation.

4.7.2 Electric Field

The transmission line shall be designed, constructed, and operated in such a manner that the electric field measured one meter above ground level immediately below the transmission line shall not exceed 8.0 kV/m rms.

4.7.3 Interference with Communication Devices

If interference with radio or television, satellite, wireless internet, GPS-based agriculture navigation systems or other communication devices is caused by the presence or operation of the transmission line, the Permittee shall take whatever action is feasible to restore or provide reception equivalent to reception levels in the immediate area just prior to the construction of the line.

4.8 Other Requirements

4.8.1 Applicable Codes

The Permittee shall comply with applicable NERC planning standards and requirements of the NESC including clearances to ground, clearance to crossing utilities, clearance to buildings, right-of way widths, erecting power poles, and stringing of transmission line conductors.

4.8.2 Other Permits

The Permittee shall comply with all applicable state rules and statutes. The Permittee shall obtain all required permits for the project and comply with the conditions of these permits. A list of the required permits is included in the permit application. The Permittee shall submit a copy of such permits to the Commission upon request.

4.8.3 Pre-emption

Pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 216E.10, this route permit shall be the sole approval required to be obtained by the Permittee for construction of the transmission facilities and this permit shall supersede and preempt all zoning, building, or land use rules, regulations, or ordinances promulgated by regional, county, local and special purpose government.

4.9 Delay in Construction

If the Permittee has not commenced construction or improvement of the route within four years after the date of issuance of this permit the Permittee shall file a report on the failure to construct and the Commission shall consider suspension of the permit in accordance with Minn. R. 7850.4700.

5.0 SPECIAL CONDITIONS

The Permittee shall provide a report to the Commission as part of the plan and profile submission that describes the actions taken and mitigative measures developed regarding the project and the following special conditions. Special conditions shall take precedence over other conditions of this permit should there be a conflict.

5.1.1 Railroad Authority

The Permittee shall consult and coordinate with Ramsey County and the Regional Railroad Authority to ensure that it has proper land rights to construct the project.

5.1.2 Metropolitan Council

The Permittee shall consult and coordinate with the Metropolitan Council Interceptor Engineering Department prior to construction to ensure potential impacts to multiple Council wastewater interceptors is avoided.

5.1.3 Wildlife-Friendly Erosion Control Materials

The Permittee, in cooperation with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, shall use wildlife-friendly erosion control materials in areas known to be inhabited by wildlife species (birds, small mammals, reptiles, and amphibians) susceptible to entanglement in plastic netting.[2]

[2] http://files.dnr.state.mn.us/eco/nongame/wildlife-friendly-erosion-control.pdf

5.1.4 Rare and Unique Resources

The Permittee shall follow measures and recommendations for avoiding and minimizing impacts to Blanding's turtle populations as outlined in the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Environmental Review Fact Sheet Series for the Blanding's Turtle.[3] Construction and maintenance personnel will be made aware of rare resources and plant communities during pre-construction meetings to minimize potential disturbance. The Permittee shall avoid impacts to state-listed endangered, threatened, and special concern species in all areas of the project including temporary workspaces associated with the project.

6.0 PERMIT AMENDMENT

This permit may be amended at any time by the Commission. Any person may request an amendment of the conditions of this permit by submitting a request to the Commission in writing describing the amendment sought and the reasons for the amendment. The Commission will mail notice of receipt of the request to the Permittee. The Commission may amend the conditions after affording the Permittee and interested persons such process as is required.

7.0 TRANSFER OF PERMIT

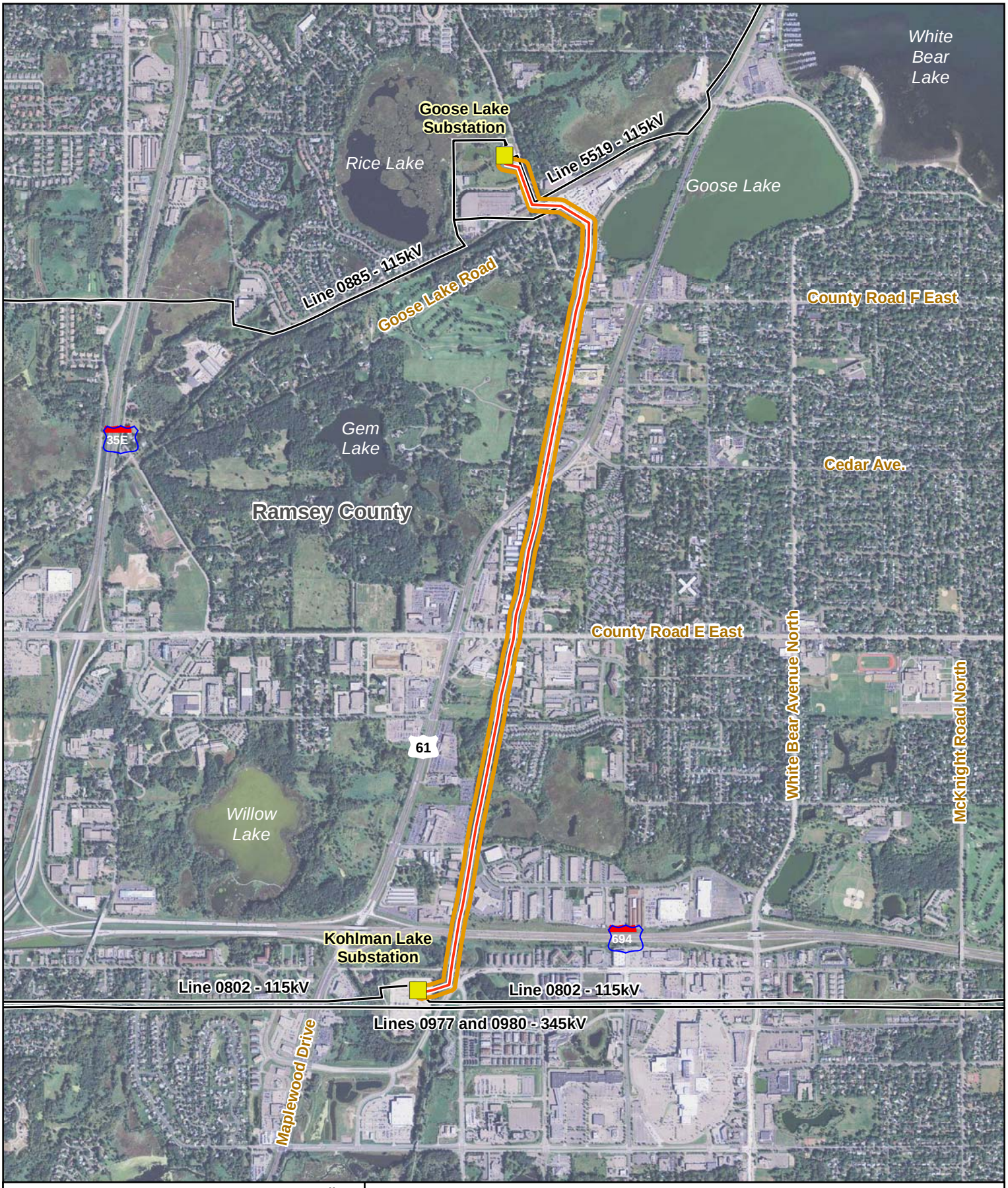
The Permittee may request at any time that the Commission transfer this permit to another person or entity. The Permittee shall provide the name and description of the person or entity to whom the permit is requested to be transferred, the reasons for the transfer, a description of the facilities affected, and the proposed effective date of the transfer.

The person to whom the permit is to be transferred shall provide the Commission with such information as the Commission shall require to determine whether the new Permittee can comply with the conditions of the permit. The Commission may authorize transfer of the permit after affording the Permittee, the new Permittee, and interested persons such process as is required.

8.0 REVOCATION OR SUSPENSION OF THE PERMIT

The Commission may initiate action to revoke or suspend this permit at any time. The Commission shall act in accordance with the requirements of Minn. R. 7850.5100, to revoke or suspend the permit.

[3] http://files.dnr.state.mn.us/natural_resources/animals/reptiles_amphibians/turtles/blandings_turtle/factsheet.pdf



Xcel Energy Substation

Proposed Kohlman Lake to Goose Lake Rebuild to Double Circuit 115kV

Existing Xcel Energy Transmission Lines

Route Width

N W E S

0 1,000 2,000 Feet

1 inch = 2,000 feet

Overview Map

Kohlman Lake to Goose Lake 115 kV Project

Source: Department of Commerce Environmental Assessment for Kohlman Lake to Goose Lake 115/115 Transmission Project (August 2013), Maps B1 to B-7

Existing Xcel Energy Substation

New Double Circuit (Circuit #1 and Circuit #2)

New Double Circuit (Circuit #2 and Existing Line 5519)

Existing Xcel Energy Transmission Lines

Route Width - 200 Feet

Sewer System

N

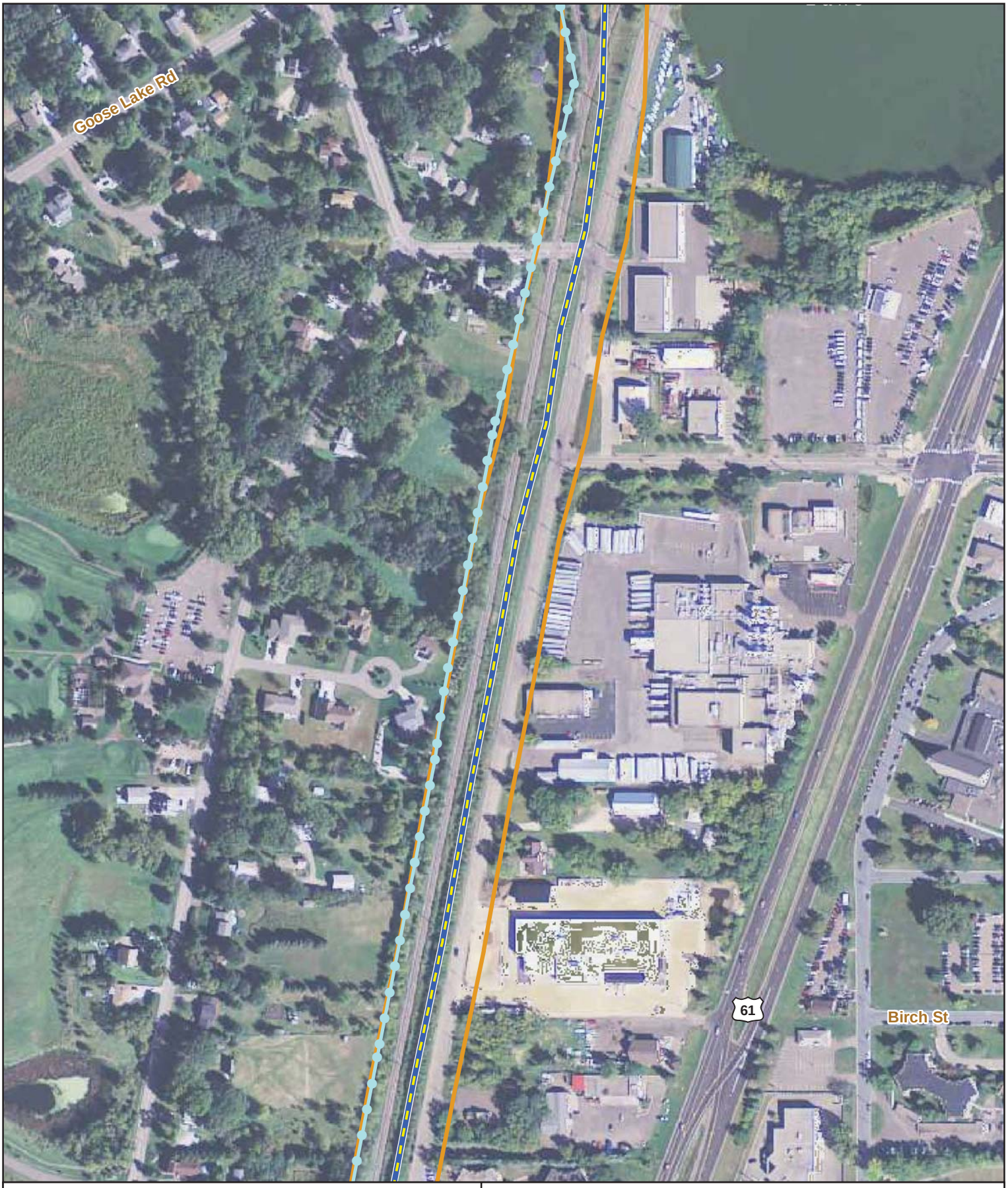
1 inch = 300 feet

0 150 300 Feet

Route Map 1

Kohlman Lake to Goose Lake 115 kV Project

Source: Department of Commerce Environmental Assessment for Kohlman Lake to Goose Lake 115/115 Transmission Project (August 2013), Maps B1 to B-7



Existing Xcel Energy Substation

New Double Circuit
(Circuit #1 and Circuit #2)

New Double Circuit
(Circuit #2 and Existing Line 5519)

Existing Xcel Energy
Transmission Lines

Route Width - 200 Feet

Sewer System

N

1 inch = 300 feet

0 150 300 Feet

Route Map 2

Kohlman Lake to Goose Lake 115 kV Project

Source: Department of Commerce Environmental Assessment for Kohlman Lake to Goose Lake 115/115 Transmission Project (August 2013), Maps B1 to B-7

Existing Xcel Energy Substation

New Double Circuit
(Circuit #1 and Circuit #2)

New Double Circuit
(Circuit #2 and Existing Line 5519)

Existing Xcel Energy
Transmission Lines

Route Width - 200 Feet

Sewer System

N

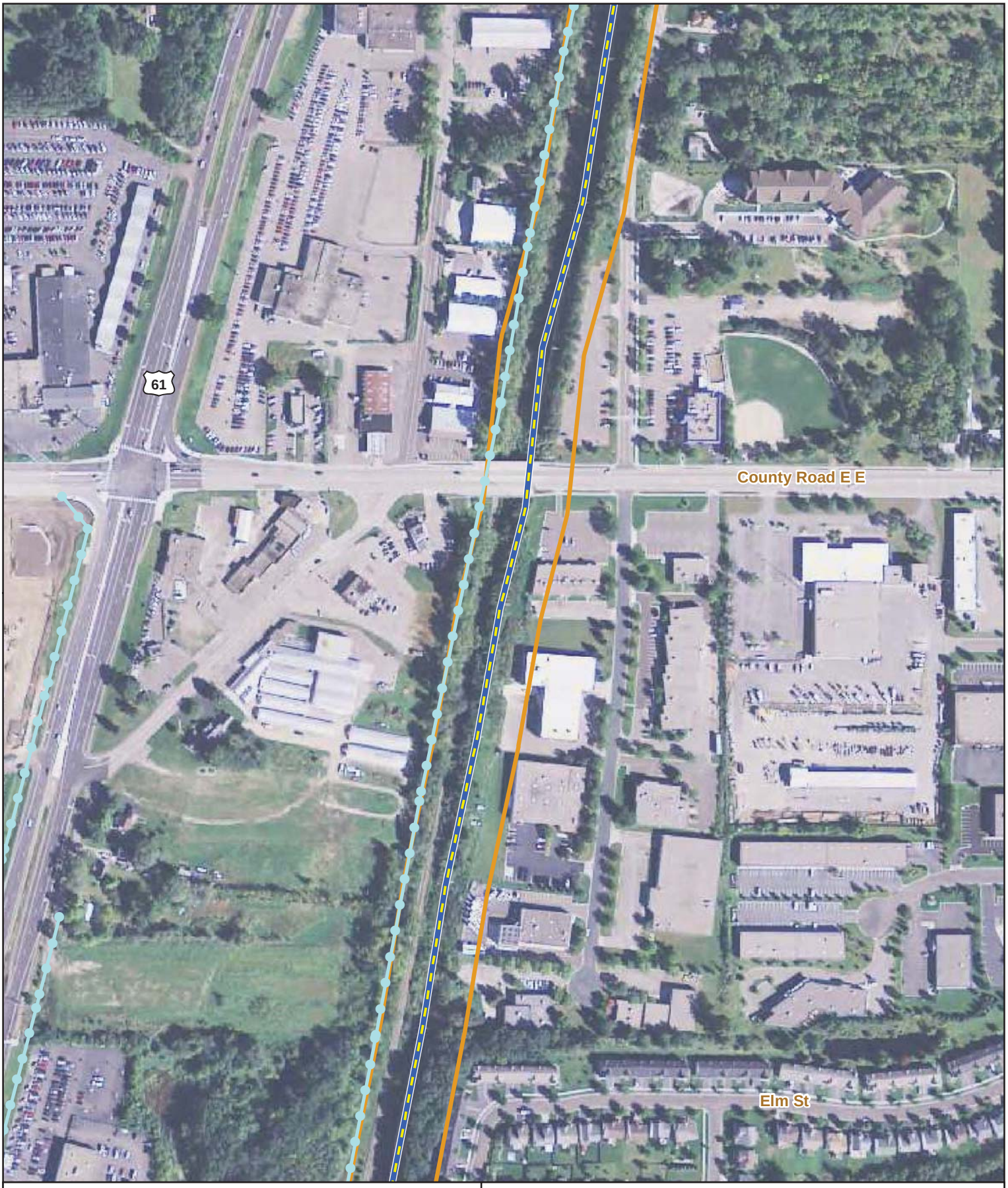
1 inch = 300 feet

0 150 300 Feet

Route Map 3

Kohlman Lake to Goose Lake 115 kV Project

Source: Department of Commerce Environmental Assessment for Kohlman Lake to Goose Lake 115/115 Transmission Project (August 2013), Maps B1 to B-7



Existing Xcel Energy Substation

New Double Circuit
(Circuit #1 and Circuit #2)

New Double Circuit
(Circuit #2 and Existing Line 5519)

Existing Xcel Energy
Transmission Lines

Route Width - 200 Feet

Sewer System

N

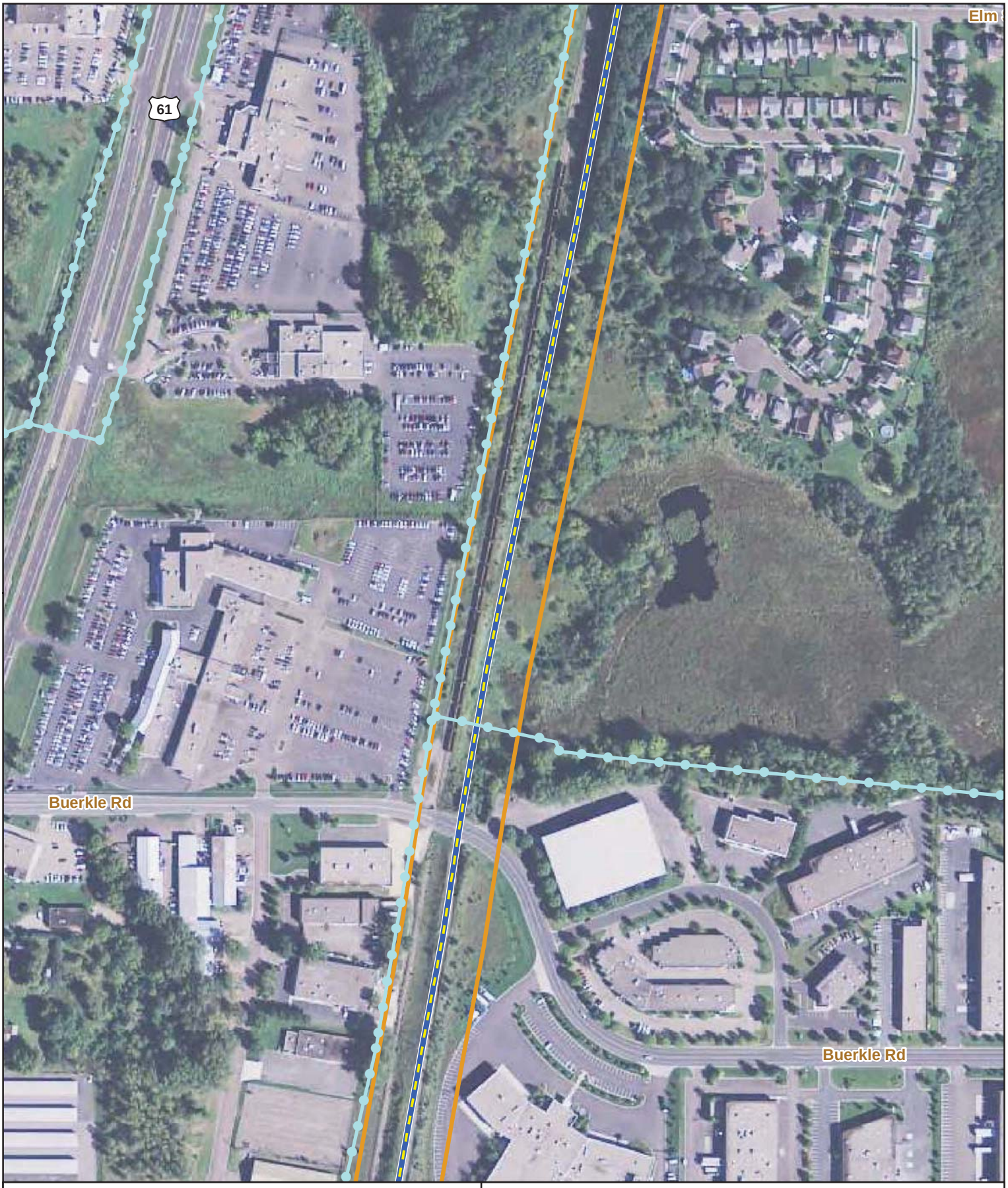
1 inch = 300 feet

0 150 300 Feet

Route Map 4

Kohlman Lake to Goose Lake 115 kV Project

Source: Department of Commerce Environmental Assessment for Kohlman Lake to Goose Lake 115/115 Transmission Project (August 2013), Maps B1 to B-7



Existing Xcel Energy Substation

New Double Circuit
(Circuit #1 and Circuit #2)

New Double Circuit
(Circuit #2 and Existing Line 5519)

Existing Xcel Energy
Transmission Lines

Route Width - 200 Feet

Sewer System

N

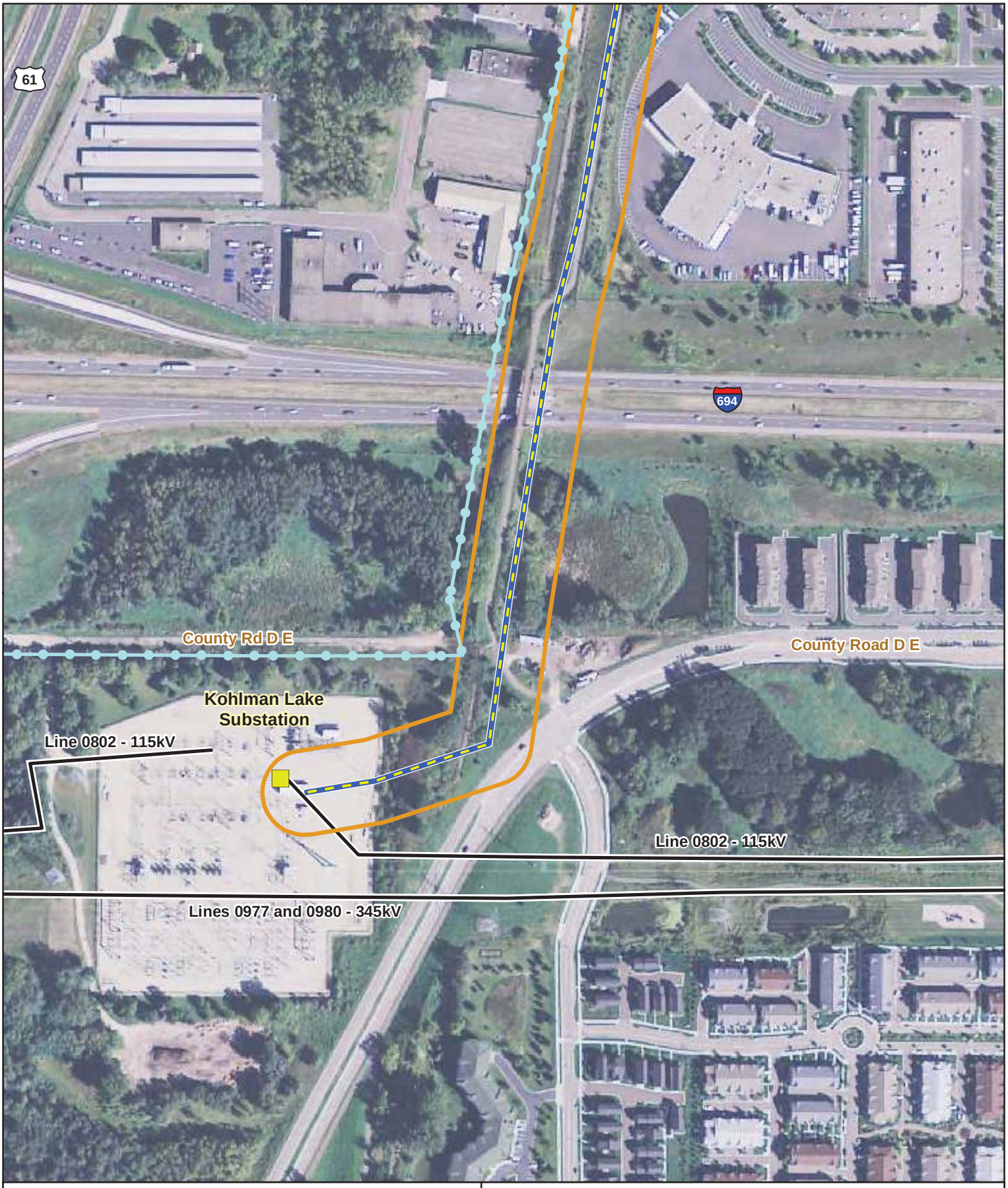
1 inch = 300 feet

0 150 300 Feet

Route Map 5

Kohlman Lake to Goose Lake 115 kV Project

Source: Department of Commerce Environmental Assessment for Kohlman Lake to Goose Lake 115/115 Transmission Project (August 2013), Maps B1 to B-7



Existing Xcel Energy Substation

New Double Circuit
(Circuit #1 and Circuit #2)

New Double Circuit
(Circuit #2 and Existing Line 5519)

Existing Xcel Energy
Transmission Lines

Route Width - 200 Feet

Sewer System

N

1 inch = 300 feet

0 150 300 Feet

Route Map 6

Kohlman Lake to Goose Lake 115 kV Project

Source: Department of Commerce Environmental Assessment for Kohlman Lake to Goose Lake 115/115 Transmission Project (August 2013), Maps B1 to B-7

MINNESOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
COMPLAINT HANDLING PROCEDURES FOR
HIGH-VOLTAGE TRANSMISSION LINES

A. Purpose

To establish a uniform and timely method of reporting complaints received by the permittee concerning permit conditions for site preparation, construction, cleanup and restoration, operation, and resolution of such complaints.

B. Scope

This document describes complaint reporting procedures and frequency.

C. Applicability

The procedures shall be used for all complaints received by the permittee and all complaints received by the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (Commission) under Minn. R. 7829.1500 or Minn. R. 7829.1700 relevant to this permit.

D. Definitions

Complaint: A verbal or written statement presented to the permittees by a person expressing dissatisfaction or concern regarding site preparation, cleanup or restoration or other route and associated facilities permit conditions. Complaints do not include requests, inquiries, questions or general comments.

Substantial Complaint: A written complaint alleging a violation of a specific permit condition that, if substantiated, could result in permit modification or suspension pursuant to the applicable regulations.

Unresolved Complaint: A complaint which, despite the good faith efforts of the permittee and a person, remains to both or one of the parties unresolved or unsatisfactorily resolved.

Person: An individual, partnership, joint venture, private or public corporation, association, firm, public service company, cooperative, political subdivision, municipal corporation, government agency, public utility district, or any other entity, public or private, however organized.

E. Complaint Documentation and Processing

1. The permittee shall designate an individual to summarize complaints for the Commission. This person's name, phone number and email address shall accompany all complaint submittals.

2. A person presenting the complaint should to the extent possible, include the following information in their communications:

    a. name, address, phone number, and email address;
    b. date of complaint;
    c. tract or parcel number; and
    d. whether the complaint relates to a permit matter or a compliance issue.

3. The permittee shall document all complaints by maintaining a record of all applicable information concerning the complaint, including the following:

    a. docket number and project name;
    b. name of complainant, address, phone number and email address;
    c. precise description of property or parcel number;
    d. name of permittee representative receiving complaint and date of receipt;
    e. nature of complaint and the applicable permit condition(s);
    f. activities undertaken to resolve the complaint; and
    g. final disposition of the complaint.

F. Reporting Requirements

The permittee shall commence complaint reporting at the beginning of project construction and continue through the term of the permit. The permittee shall report all complaints to the Commission according to the following schedule:

Immediate Reports: All substantial complaints shall be reported to the Commission the same day received, or on the following working day for complaints received after working hours. Such reports are to be directed to the Commission's Consumer Affairs Office at 1-800-657-3782 (voice messages are acceptable) or consumer.puc@state.mn.us. For e-mail reporting, the email subject line should read "PUC EFP Complaint" and include the appropriate project docket number.

Monthly Reports: By the 15th of each month, a summary of all complaints, including substantial complaints received or resolved during the preceding month, shall be filed to Dr. Burl W. Haar, Executive Secretary, Public Utilities Commission, using the eDockets system. The eDockets system is located at: https://www.edockets.state.mn.us/EFiling/home.jsp

If no complaints were received during the preceding month, the permittee shall file a summary indicating that no complaints were received.

G. Complaints Received by the Commission

Complaints received directly by the Commission from aggrieved persons regarding site preparation, construction, cleanup, restoration, operation and maintenance shall be promptly sent to the permittee.

H. Commission Process for Unresolved Complaints

Commission staff shall perform an initial evaluation of unresolved complaints submitted to the Commission. Complaints raising substantial permit issues shall be processed and resolved by the Commission. Staff shall notify the permittee and appropriate persons if it determines that the complaint is a substantial complaint. With respect to such complaints, each party shall submit a written summary of its position to the Commission no later than ten (10) days after receipt of the staff notification. The complaint will be presented to the Commission for a decision as soon as practicable.

I. Permittee Contacts for Complaints and Complaint Reporting

Complaints may filed by mail or email to:

Northern States Power Company d/b/a Xcel Energy
Sean Lawler, Associate Land Rights Agent
414 Nicollet Mall, MP-7B
Minneapolis, MN 55401
(612) 330-1956
Sean.W.Lawler@xcelenergy.com

This information shall be maintained current by informing the Commission of any changes by eFiling, as they become effective.

MINNESOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
COMPLIANCE FILING PROCEDURE FOR
PERMITTED ENERGY FACILITIES

A. Purpose

To establish a uniform and timely method of submitting information required by the Commission energy facility permits.

B. Scope and Applicability

This procedure encompasses all compliance filings required by permit.

C. Definitions

Compliance Filing: A filing of information to the Commission, where the information is required by a Commission site or route permit.

D. Responsibilities

1. The permittee shall eFile all compliance filings with Dr. Burl W. Haar, Executive Secretary, Public Utilities Commission, through the eDockets system. The eDockets system is located at: https://www.edockets.state.mn.us/EFiling/home.jsp

General instructions are provided on the eDockets website. Permittees must register on the website to eFile documents.

2. All filings must have a cover sheet that includes:

    a. Date
    b. Name of submitter/permittee
    c. Type of permit (site or route)
    d. Project location
    e. Project docket number
    f. Permit section under which the filing is made
    g. Short description of the filing

3. Filings that are graphic intensive (e.g., maps, engineered drawings) must, in addition to being eFiled, be submitted as paper copies and on CD. Paper copies and CDs should be sent to: 1) Dr. Burl W. Haar, Executive Secretary, Minnesota Public Utilities Commission, 121 7th Place East, Suite 350, St. Paul, MN 55101-2147, and 2) Department of Commerce, Energy Environmental Review and Analysis, 85 7th Place East, Suite 500, St. Paul, MN 55101-2198.

The Commission may request a paper copy of any eFiled document.

PERMIT COMPLIANCE FILINGS[1]

PERMITTEE:
PERMIT TYPE:
PROJECT LOCATION:
PUC DOCKET NUMBER:

Filing Number	Permit Section	Description of Compliance Filing	Due Date

[1] This compilation of permit compliance filings is provided for the convenience of the permittee and the Commission. It is not a substitute for the permit; the language of the permit controls.