

October 8, 2025

**VIA E-FILING**

Sasha Bergman  
Executive Secretary  
Minnesota Public Utilities Commission  
121 7th Place East, Suite 350  
St. Paul, MN 55101-2147

**Re: In the Matter of the Application for a Certificate of Need and Route Permit for the Appleton to Benson 115 Kilovolt Transmission Line Project.  
MPUC Docket Nos. ET2,E017,ET6135,E100/CN-24-263 and TL-24-264**

Dear Ms. Bergman:

Great River Energy, Otter Tail Power Company (Otter Tail Power), Western Minnesota Municipal Power Agency (Western Minnesota), Agralite Electric Cooperative (Agralite), and the City of Benson (together, Applicants) submit this response to comments from the Minnesota Department of Commerce (Department)<sup>1</sup> related to the Appleton to Benson 115-kilovolt Transmission Line Project (Project), and specifically, the Applicants' petition for a Certificate of Need.

The Applicants appreciate the Department's thorough review of their Joint Application for a Certificate of Need and Route Permit (Application) and the record in this proceeding. The Applicants agree with the Department's conclusions that the Application satisfies requirements of relevant Certificate of Need statutes and rules, that the Project is needed to reliably serve load in the local area, that the probable result of denial would be an adverse effect upon the future adequacy, reliability, or efficiency of energy supply to the Applicants, to the Applicants' customers, and to the people of Minnesota and neighboring states, and that there is not a more feasible and prudent alternative to the Project.

The Department also recommended a condition that the Commission cap Otter Tail Power's cost recovery for Otter Tail Power's portion of the Project's overall cost.<sup>2</sup> Otter Tail Power does not oppose reporting its share of the overall cost of the Project and requests the opportunity to do so after a route permit is issued, similar to other recent Commission decisions.<sup>3</sup> Specifically, Otter Tail Power requests that the Commission require Otter Tail Power to file a final

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<sup>1</sup> See Department Comments (September 30, 2025) (eDocket No. [20259-223398-01](#)).

<sup>2</sup> See Department Comments at 23 (September 30, 2025) (eDocket No. [20259-223398-01](#)).

<sup>3</sup> See *In the Matter of the Applications of Xcel Energy for a Certificate of Need and Route Permit for the Minnesota Energy Connection Project in Sherburne, Stearns, Kandiyohi, Wright, Meeker, Chippewa, Yellow Medicine, Renville, Redwood, and Lyon counties in Minnesota*, MPUC Docket Nos. CN-22-131, TL-22-132, Order Modifying and Adopting Administrative Law Judge Report, Granting Certificate of Need, and Issuing Route Permit for the Minnesota Energy Connection Project, at Ordering ¶ 6 (June 11, 2025).

cost cap number or cap amount for Otter Tail Power's share of the cost of the Project within 90 days of the Commission's order issuing a route permit.

The Applicants will file their response to public hearing comments and proposed findings of fact and conclusions of law on October 10, 2025, in accordance with the Second Prehearing Order.<sup>4</sup> A copy of this filing is also being served upon the persons as designated on the Official Service List of record. Please let me know if you have any questions regarding this filing.

Sincerely,

*/s/ Haley Waller Pitts*

Haley L. Waller Pitts  
**Direct Dial:** 612.492.7443  
**Email:** [hwallerpitts@fredlaw.com](mailto:hwallerpitts@fredlaw.com)

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<sup>4</sup> See Second Prehearing Order (August 25, 2025) (eDocket No. [20258-222393-01](#)).

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**CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

Breann L. Jurek certifies that on the 8<sup>th</sup> day of October, 2025, she e-filed on behalf of Applicants, a true and correct copy of their Reply to Minnesota Department of Commerce Comments, with the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission via eDockets ([www.edockets.state.mn.us](http://www.edockets.state.mn.us)). Said documents were also served on the Official Service Lists of record on file with the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission and as attached hereto.

Executed on: October 8, 2025

*Signed: /s/ Breann L. Jurek*

Fredrikson & Byron, P.A.  
60 South Sixth Street  
Suite 1500  
Minneapolis, MN 55402

#	First Name	Last Name	Email	Organization	Agency	Address	Delivery Method	Alternate Delivery Method	View Trade Secret	Service List Name
1	Lisa	Agrimonti	lagrimonti@fredlaw.com	Fredrikson & Byron, P.A.		60 South Sixth Street Suite 1500 Minneapolis MN, 55402-4400 United States	Electronic Service		No	24-263CN-24-263
2	Cody M.	Bauer	cbauer@fredlaw.com	Fredrikson & Byron, P.A.		60 South 6th Street, Suite 1500 Minneapolis MN, 55402 United States	Electronic Service		No	24-263CN-24-263
3	Generic	Commerce Attorneys	commerce.attorneys@ag.state.mn.us	Office of the Attorney General - Department of Commerce		445 Minnesota Street Suite 1400 St. Paul MN, 55101 United States	Electronic Service		Yes	24-263CN-24-263
4	Sharon	Ferguson	sharon.ferguson@state.mn.us	Department of Commerce		85 7th Place E Ste 280 Saint Paul MN, 55101-2198 United States	Electronic Service		No	24-263CN-24-263
5	Thomas	Hoffman	thoffman@agralite.com	Agralite Electric Cooperative		320 Highway 12 SE Benson MN, 56215 United States	Electronic Service		No	24-263CN-24-263
6	Breann	Jurek	bjurek@fredlaw.com	Fredrikson & Byron PA		60 S Sixth St Ste 1500 Minneapolis MN, 55402 United States	Electronic Service		No	24-263CN-24-263
7	Kris	Koch	kkoch@otpco.com	Otter Tail Power Company		215 S. Cascade Street Fergus Falls MN, 56537 United States	Electronic Service		No	24-263CN-24-263
8	Stephen	Kowal	skowal@bensonmnlaw.com	Wilcox Law Office, P.A.		1150 Wisconsin Avenue Benson MN, 56215 United States	Electronic Service		No	24-263CN-24-263
9	David C.	McLaughlin	dmclaughlin@fluegellaw.com	Western Minnesota Municipal Power Agency		129 2nd Street Ortonville MN, 56278 United States	Electronic Service		No	24-263CN-24-263
10	Generic Notice	Residential Utilities Division	residential.utilities@ag.state.mn.us	Office of the Attorney General - Residential Utilities Division		1400 BRM Tower 445 Minnesota St St. Paul MN, 55101-2131 United States	Electronic Service		Yes	24-263CN-24-263
11	Will	Seuffert	will.seuffert@state.mn.us	Public Utilities Commission		121 7th Pl E Ste 350 Saint Paul MN, 55101 United States	Electronic Service		Yes	24-263CN-24-263
12	Mark	Strohfus	mstrohfus@greenergy.com	Great River Energy		12300 Elm Creek Boulevard Maple Grove MN, 55369-4718 United States	Electronic Service		No	24-263CN-24-263
13	Haley	Waller Pitts	hwallerpitts@fredlaw.com	Fredrikson & Byron, P.A.		60 S Sixth St Ste 1500 Minneapolis MN, 55402-4400 United States	Electronic Service		No	24-263CN-24-263

#	First Name	Last Name	Email	Organization	Agency	Address	Delivery Method	Alternate Delivery Method	View Trade Secret	Service List Name
14	Brian	Zavesky	brianz@mrenergy.com	Missouri River Energy Services		3724 West Avera Drive P.O. Box 88920 Sioux Falls SD, 57108-8920 United States	Electronic Service		No	24-263CN-24-263

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1	Lisa	Agrimonti	lagrimonti@fredlaw.com	Fredrikson & Byron, P.A.		60 South Sixth Street Suite 1500 Minneapolis MN, 55402-4400 United States	Electronic Service		No	24-264TL-24-264
2	Cody M.	Bauer	cbauer@fredlaw.com	Fredrikson & Byron, P.A.		60 South 6th Street, Suite 1500 Minneapolis MN, 55402 United States	Electronic Service		No	24-264TL-24-264
3	Generic	Commerce Attorneys	commerce.attorneys@ag.state.mn.us	Office of the Attorney General - Department of Commerce		445 Minnesota Street Suite 1400 St. Paul MN, 55101 United States	Electronic Service		Yes	24-264TL-24-264
4	Sharon	Ferguson	sharon.ferguson@state.mn.us	Department of Commerce		85 7th Place E Ste 280 Saint Paul MN, 55101-2198 United States	Electronic Service		No	24-264TL-24-264
5	Thomas	Hoffman	thoffman@agralite.com	Agralite Electric Cooperative		320 Highway 12 SE Benson MN, 56215 United States	Electronic Service		No	24-264TL-24-264
6	Breann	Jurek	bjurek@fredlaw.com	Fredrikson & Byron PA		60 S Sixth St Ste 1500 Minneapolis MN, 55402 United States	Electronic Service		No	24-264TL-24-264
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8	Stephen	Kowal	skowal@bensonmnlaw.com	Wilcox Law Office, P.A.		1150 Wisconsin Avenue Benson MN, 56215 United States	Electronic Service		No	24-264TL-24-264
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