



## Formal Natural Heritage Review - Cover Page

See next page for results of review. A draft watermark means the project details have not been finalized and the results are not official.

**Project Name:** Maple Grove Area 115kV Transmission Line Project

**Project Proposer:** Xcel Energy

**Project Type:** Utilities, Transmission (electric, cable, phone)

**Project Type Activities:** Tree Removal; Waterbody or watercourse impacts (e.g., dewatering, discharge, excavation, fill, runoff, sedimentation, changes in hydrology)

**TRS:** T119 R22 S4, T119 R22 S5, T119 R22 S8, T119 R22 S9

**County(s):** Hennepin

**DNR Admin Region(s):** Central

**Reason Requested:** PUC Site or Route Application

**Project Description:** The project involves 1.6 to 2.2 miles of new 115 kV transmission line and a new West Maple Grove Substation. The project will break the existing transmission ...

**Existing Land Uses:** Suburban/industrial, forested, agricultural, wetland

**Landcover / Habitat Impacted:** Suburban/industrial, forested, agricultural, wetland

**Waterbodies Affected:** Rush Creek and wetlands would be crossed by the project.

**Groundwater Resources Affected:** Impacts to groundwater are not anticipated.

**Previous Natural Heritage Review:** No

**Previous Habitat Assessments / Surveys:** No

### SUMMARY OF AUTOMATED RESULTS

Category	Results	Response By Category
Project Details	Comments	Tree Removal - Recommendations
Ecologically Significant Area	No Comments	No Further Review Required
State-Listed Endangered or Threatened Species	No Comments	No Further Review Required
State-Listed Species of Special Concern	Comments	Recommendations
Federally Listed Species	Comments	RPBB High Potential Zone



Minnesota Department of Natural Resources  
Division of Ecological & Water Resources  
500 Lafayette Road, Box 25  
St. Paul, MN 55155-4025

October 14, 2024

Project ID: MCE #2024-00870

Jessica Butler  
Barr Engineering Company  
4300 MarketPointe Drive, Suite 200  
Minneapolis, MN 55435

RE: Automated Natural Heritage Review of the proposed Maple Grove Area 115kV Transmission Line Project  
See Cover Page for location and project details.

Dear Jessica Butler,

As requested, the above project has been reviewed for potential effects to rare features. Based on this review, the following rare features may be adversely affected by the proposed project:

*Project Type and/or Project Type Activity Comments*

- The Natural Heritage Information System (NHIS) tracks bat roost trees and hibernacula plus some acoustic data, but this information is not exhaustive. Even if there are no bat records listed below, all of Minnesota's bats, including the federally endangered northern long-eared bat ([Myotis septentrionalis](#)), can be found throughout Minnesota. During the active season (approximately April-November) bats roost underneath bark, in cavities, or in crevices of both live and dead trees. Tree removal can negatively impact bats by destroying roosting habitat, especially during the pup rearing season when females are forming maternity roosting colonies and the pups cannot yet fly. To minimize these impacts, the DNR recommends that tree removal be avoided from June 1 through August 15.

*Ecologically Significant Area*

No ecologically significant areas have been documented in the vicinity of the project.

*State-Listed Endangered or Threatened Species*

No state-listed endangered or threatened species have been documented in the vicinity of the project.

*State-Listed Species of Special Concern*

Taxonomic Group	Common Name	Scientific Name	Water Regime	Habitat	Federal Status
Vertebrate Animal	Acadian Flycatcher	Empidonax vireescens		Mesic Hardwood Forest	
Vertebrate Animal	Big Brown Bat	Eptesicus fuscus		Mesic Hardwood Forest, Floodplain Forest, Fire Dependent Forest	
Vertebrate Animal	Little Brown Myotis	Myotis lucifugus		Floodplain Forest, Floodplain Forest, Mesic Hardwood Forest	

- The above table identifies state-listed species of special concern that have been documented in the vicinity of your project. If suitable habitat for any of these species occurs within your project footprint or activity impact area, the project may negatively impact those species. To avoid impacting state-listed species of special concern, the DNR recommends modifying the location of project activities to avoid suitable habitat or modifying the timing of project activities to avoid the presence of the species. Please visit the [DNR Rare Species Guide](#) for more information on the habitat use of these species and recommended measures to avoid or minimize impacts. Species-specific comments, if any, appear below.

#### *Federally Listed Species*

- The area of interest overlaps with a U.S Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Rusty Patched Bumble Bee [High Potential Zone](#). The [rusty patched bumble bee](#) (*Bombus affinis*) is federally listed as endangered and is likely to be present in suitable habitat within High Potential Zones. From April through October this species uses underground nests in upland grasslands, shrublands, and forest edges, and forages where nectar and pollen are available. From October through April the species overwinters under tree litter in upland forests and woodlands. The rusty patched bumble bee may be impacted by a variety of land management activities including, but not limited to, prescribed fire, tree-removal, haying, grazing, herbicide use, pesticide use, land-clearing, soil disturbance or compaction, or use of non-native bees. If applicable, the DNR recommends reseeding disturbed soils with native species of grasses and forbs using [BWSR Seed Mixes](#) or [MnDOT Seed Mixes](#). To ensure compliance with federal law, please conduct a federal regulatory review using the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's online [Information for Planning and Consultation \(IPaC\) tool](#). Please note that all projects, regardless of whether there is a federal nexus, are subject to federal take prohibitions. The IPaC review will determine if prohibited take is likely to occur and, if not, will generate an automated letter. The [USFWS RPBB guidance](#) provides guidance on avoiding impacts to rusty patched bumble bee and a key for determining if actions are likely to affect the species; the determination key can be found in the appendix.

The Natural Heritage Information System (NHIS), a collection of databases that contains information about Minnesota's rare natural features, is maintained by the Division of Ecological and Water Resources, Department of Natural Resources. The NHIS is continually updated as new information becomes available, and is the most complete source of data on Minnesota's rare or otherwise significant species, native plant communities, and other natural features. However, the NHIS is not an exhaustive inventory and thus does not represent all of the occurrences of rare features within the state. Therefore, ecologically significant features for which we have no records may exist within the project area. If additional information becomes available regarding rare features in the vicinity of the project, further review may be necessary.

For environmental review purposes, the results of this Natural Heritage Review are valid for one year; the results are only valid for the project location and the project description provided on the cover page. If project details change or construction has not occurred within one year, please resubmit the project for review before initiating project activities.

The Natural Heritage Review does not constitute project approval by the Department of Natural Resources. Instead, it identifies issues regarding known occurrences of rare features and potential impacts to these rare features. For information on the environmental review process or other natural resource concerns, you may contact your [DNR Regional Environmental Assessment Ecologist](#).

Thank you for consulting us on this matter, and for your interest in preserving Minnesota's rare natural resources.

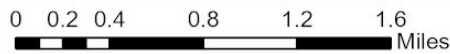
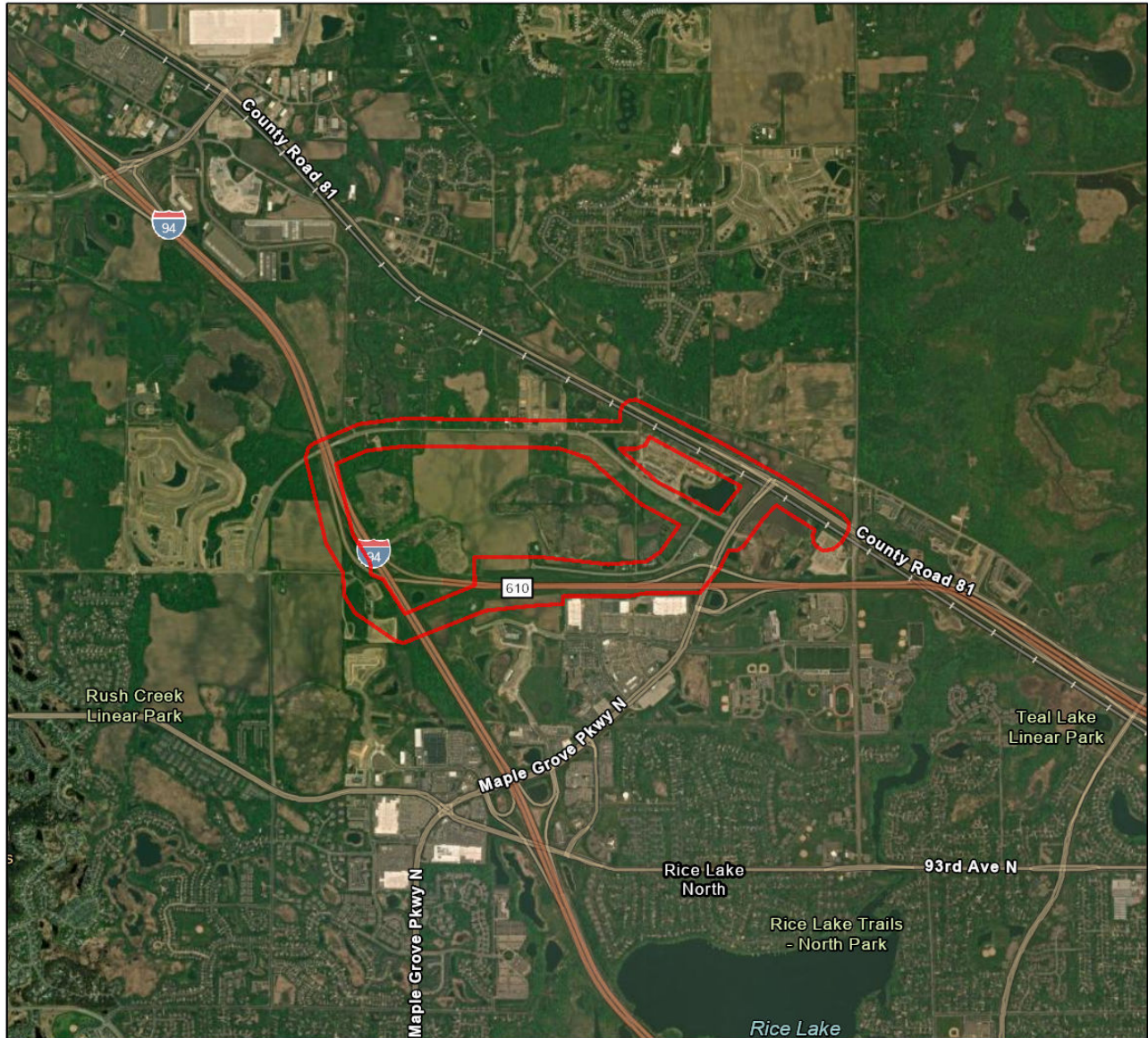
Sincerely,

*Jim Drake* Jim Drake  
Natural Heritage Review Specialist  
[James.F.Drake@state.mn.us](mailto:James.F.Drake@state.mn.us)

Links: USFWS Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) tool  
[Information for Planning and Consultation \(IPaC\) tool](#)  
DNR Regional Environmental Assessment Ecologist Contact Info  
[https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/eco/ereview/erp\\_regioncontacts.html](https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/eco/ereview/erp_regioncontacts.html)

# Maple Grove Area 115kV Transmission Line Project

## Aerial Imagery With Locator Map



 Project\_Boundary

Project Type: Utilities, Transmission (electric, cable, phone)

Project Size (acres): 309.48

County(s): Hennepin

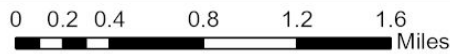
TRS: T119 R22 S4, T119 R22 S5, T119 R22 S8, T119 R22 S9

Esri, TomTom, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, EPA, USFWS  
City of Maple Grove, Metropolitan Council, MetroGIS, Three Rivers Park District,  
Esri, TomTom, Garmin, SafeGraph, GeoTechnologies, Inc, METI/NASA, USGS,



# Maple Grove Area 115kV Transmission Line Project

USA Topo Basemap With Locator Map



 Project\_Boundary

Project Type: Utilities, Transmission (electric, cable, phone)

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County(s): Hennepin

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