

May 5, 2025

Mr. Will Seuffert, Executive Secretary
Minnesota Public Utilities Commission
127 7th Place East, Suite 350
Saint Paul, MN 55101-2147

RE: Alternatives Identified During Scoping Comment Period
Midwater BESS Project
Docket Nos. IP-7138/ESS-24-294; IP-7138/TL-24-295

Dear Mr. Seuffert,

Department of Commerce, Energy Environmental Review and Analysis (EERA) staff has completed the environmental assessment scoping process in the following matter:

In the Matter of the Joint Application of Midwater BESS, LLC for a Site Permit and Route Permit for the up to 150 MW Midwater Energy Storage Project and Associated 161 kV Transmission Line in Freeborn County, Minnesota.

Midwater BESS, LLC, (Applicant) submitted their joint application for a site and route permit on November 19, 2024.¹ The application was accepted by the Public Utilities Commission as substantially complete on January 21, 2025.²

The scoping comment period for the environmental assessment (EA) was open from February 7, 2025, through April 21, 2025. Public meetings for the project were held in-person in Albert Lea, Minnesota, on February 18, 2025, followed by a virtual meeting held on February 19, 2025, and an additional in-person meeting in Glenville, Minnesota, on April 7, 2025.

During the comment period, as well as during public meetings, EERA received written and oral comments from the public, state and local units of government, a professional union, and the Applicant.³ None of these comments suggested an alternative site for the proposed Midwater

¹ November 11, 2024, Midwater BESS, LLC, joint site and permit application, eDockets Nos. [202411-212161-01](#) through 202411-212161-14.

² January 21, 2025, Public Utilities Commission Order accepting the Midwater BESS, LLP joint application for a site and route permit as substantially complete, eDocket No. [20251-214166-01](#).

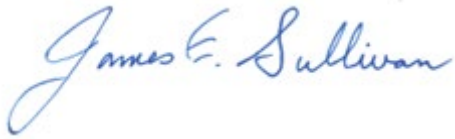
³ Written comments from the public received on the Scope of the Environmental Assessment, eDockets Nos. [20253-216746-01](#) (Batch 1); [20253-216747-01](#) (Batch 2); [20254-218151-01](#) (Batch 3); [20254-218408-01](#) (Batch 4). Oral comments received on the Scope of the Environmental Assessment, eDockets Nos. [20253-216765-01](#) (Albert Lea Meeting); [20253-216766-01](#) (Virtual Meeting); [20254-218333-01](#) (Glenville Meeting); [20255-218578-01](#) (Batch

battery energy storage facility (BESS) facility or an alternative route for the associated 161 kV transmission line.

Accordingly, EERA staff recommends that the Commission authorize EERA to include in the scoping decision for the EA solely the proposed BESS site and transmission line route identified by the Applicant in its joint application.

EERA staff is available to answer any questions the Commission may have.

Sincerely,



James E. Sullivan
Environmental Review Manager
Energy Environmental Review and Analysis

5 - Written comments and materials submitted by the public at the Glenville Meeting). Written comments from state and local units of government included: Minnesota Department of Transportation ([20253-216207-01](#)); Minnesota Department of Natural Resources ([20253-216145-01](#) and [20253-216145-02](#)); Minnesota Pollution Control Agency ([20254-217720-01](#)); Freeborn County, Minnesota ([20254-217825-01](#)); Butler County, Iowa ([20254-217701-01](#)); Shell Rock Lake Township ([20254-217456-01](#)); and the Shell Rock River Watershed District ([20254-218094-01](#)). Written comments were also provided by the IUOE Local 49 and NCSRC of Carpenters ([20254-217919-01](#)) and the Applicant ([20254-217951-01](#)).