

NOTICE OF COMMENT PERIOD

Issued: March 14, 2025

In the Matter of the Route Permit Application for the Minnesota Energy Connection Project in Sherburne, Stearns, Kandiyohi, Wright, Meeker, Chippewa, Yellow Medicine, Renville, Redwood, and Lyon Counties in Minnesota

Docket Number: E-002/TL-22-132

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (Commission) is accepting comments on the application of Xcel Energy for a route permit for the Minnesota Energy Connection Project, a new approximately 171- to 174-mile 345-kilovolt (kV) double-circuit transmission line between Sherburne and Lyon counties (MNEC Project).

Questions and Requests

Provide an explanation of the possibility of reconfiguring and/or possibly extending the double circuiting of the three existing 69 kV lines in the area around the Xcel Energy's Preferred Blue Route near the city of Franklin, Minnesota. Specifically, provide a careful technical feasibility, reliability, and cost review of the options described below.

Option 1 (See attached Map 1)

- A. Remove the section of the existing 69 kV line (69 Line B, Green Dash) that runs along State Highway 19 (Hwy 19) and co-locate on the same structures with the existing 69 kV line (69 Line C, Magenta Dash) for the section that runs north along County Road 5 (CR 5). At the intersection of CR5 and 660th Avenue, 69 Line B would be co-located on the same structures with existing 69 kV Line (69 Line A, Orange Dash) along 660th Avenue to the point where Alternative 220 begins. At this point 69 Line B would depart from 69 Line A and would become a single-circuit and utilize either (1) Alternative Route 220, or (2) would follow the not used portion of the Xcel Energy Preferred Blue Route (Blue Route) along 660th Avenue and turn south. Where both options meet with the Blue Route, 69 Line B would be triple-circuited with the new double-circuit 345 kV from that point and proceed to cross the Minnesota River and follow the southern portion of the Franklin Alternative (discussed below in Option 4).

In this case, the Blue Route would use either (1) Alternative 215 or (2) would run south along CR 5 and connect with Alternative 215 with an alignment that runs south of Hwy 19.

- B. Additionally, provide a technical feasibility and cost analysis if the route is not triple circuited and instead crosses the Minnesota River on separate structures, as proposed in the original Blue Route.

Option 2 (See attached Map 1)

- A. Remove the section of the existing 69 Line B that runs along Hwy 19 and co-locate on the same structures with the existing 69 Line A from the substation area and that follows along 660th Avenue. At the point where Alternative 220 begins, 69 Line B would depart from 69 Line A and would become a single-circuit and utilize either (1) Alternative 220, or (2) would follow the not used portion of the Blue Route along 660th Avenue and turn south. Where both options meet with the Blue Route, 69 Line B would be triple-circuited with the new double-circuit 345 kV from that point and proceed to cross the Minnesota River and follow the southern portion of the Franklin Alternative (discussed below in Option 4).

Similar to Option 1, the Blue Route would use either (1) Alternative 215 or (2) would run south along CR 5 and connect with Alternative 215 with an alignment that runs south of Hwy 19.

- B. Additionally, provide a technical feasibility and cost analysis if the route is not triple circuited and instead crosses the Minnesota River on separate structures, as proposed in the original Blue Route.

Option 3 (See attached Map 2)

- A. The Blue Route would use Alternative 214 modified with the new Porter Avenue Alternative (Yellow Line). This option would require the existing 69 Line B to be relocated to the Porter Avenue Alternative and co-located with the new double-circuit 345 kV, but on separate structures.
- B. The Blue Route would use Alternative 214 modified with shifting the existing 69 Line B further west of Porter Avenue within the existing route width allowing the new 345 kV line to be co-located on different structures together to the west of Porter Avenue. This shift would occur south of the farm at the northern end of Porter Avenue and before the homesteaded residence on the east side of Porter Avenue. Understanding that this route would encroach closer on the non-homesteaded abandoned farm and the small outbuilding on the west side of Porter Avenue towards the south end of this alternative. Both of these options keep the new 345 kV line south and east of existing 69 Line B through this area eliminating the need for any crossovers.

Option 4 (See attached Map 3)

Option 4 (Franklin Alternative) would include the co-location of the two newly proposed 345 kV lines with Xcel Energy's existing 69 kV line (69 Line B) on triple-circuit structures from approximately the intersection of County Road 5 and State Highway 19 following a portion of Route Alternative 215 and the Blue Route across the Minnesota River to where the Blue Route intersects with Porter Avenue. In addition, the portion of the existing 69 kV line along Alternative Route 214 would be relocated and triple-circuited with the newly proposed 345 kV lines.

Additional Questions

- What design changes would be necessary to accommodate triple circuiting in the identified areas (*e.g.*, structure specifications and right-of-way requirements)?
- Could design changes be made at the Minnesota River crossing to include H-frame structures that may provide a horizontal crossing plane?

Comment Period: Initial comment period closes **March 20, 2025**, at 4:30 p.m.

Reply comment period closes **March 24, 2025**, at 4:30 p.m.

Please include the docket number in all communications. Comments received after the close of the comment period may or may not be considered by the Commission.

Important. This notice of comment includes questions for the applicant (Xcel Energy). However, all interested persons and participants are invited to submit comments to the record. Both the applicant and responding parties are asked to raise any objection to consideration of the information by the Commission in their response.

Submit Comments

Online: mn.gov/puc/get-involved/public-comments

Email: consumer.puc@state.mn.us

U.S. Mail: Consumer Affairs Office
Minnesota Public Utilities Commission
121 7th Place East, Suite 350
St. Paul, MN 55101

Comments will be made available to the public via the Commission's website except in limited circumstances consistent with the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act. The Commission does not edit or delete personal identifying information from submissions.

Additional Information

Review Process. Information on the review processes for certificates of need, site permits, and route permits for large electric power facilities is available on the Commission's website at: mn.gov/puc/activities/energy-facilities.

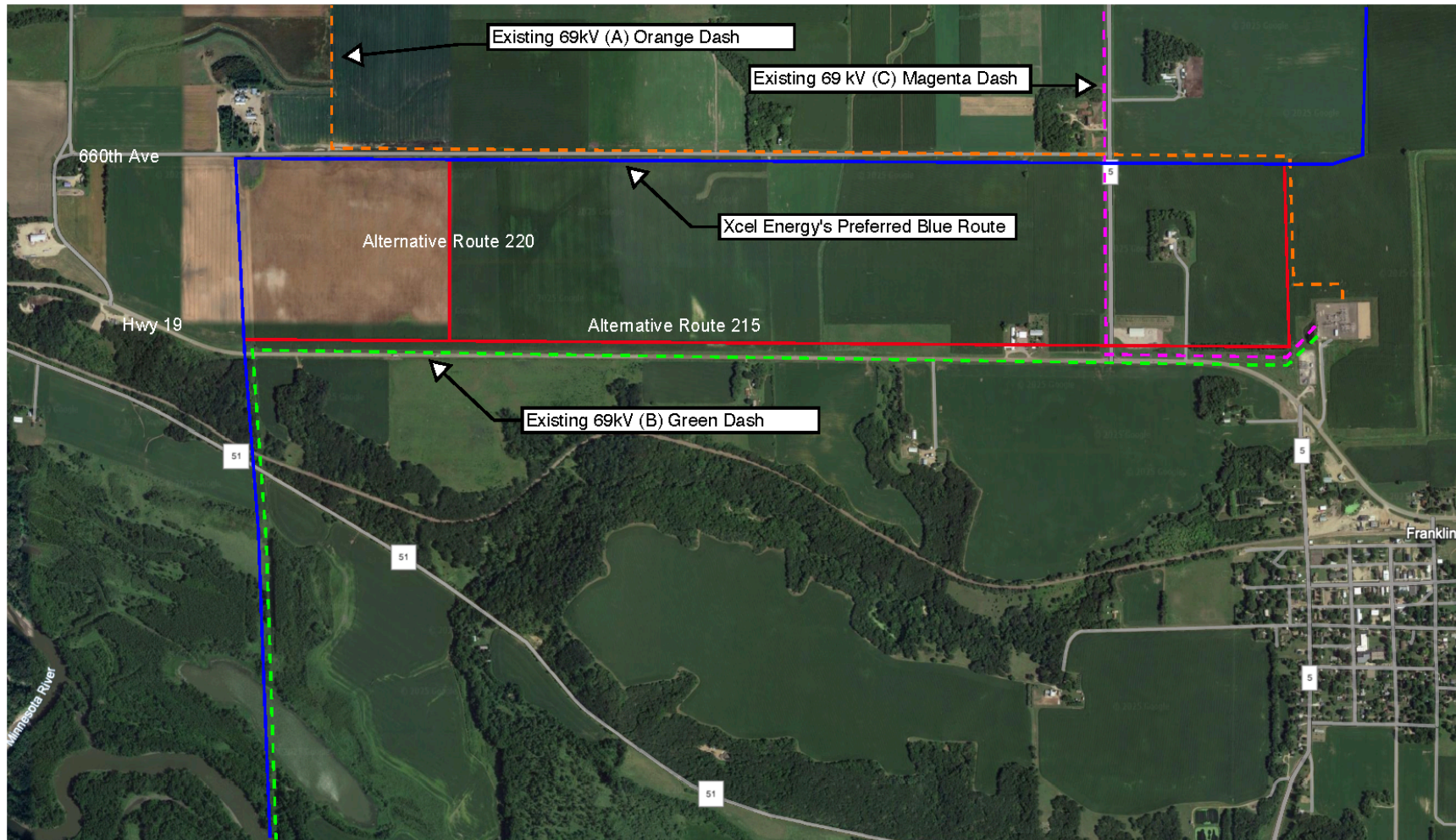
Filing Requirements. Utilities, telecommunications carriers, official parties, and state agencies are required to file documents using the Commission's electronic filing system (eFiling). All parties, participants, and interested persons are also encouraged to use eFiling at: edockets.state.mn.us.

Full Case Record. See all documents filed in this matter via the Commission's website at mn.gov/puc/edockets, select *Go to eDockets*, enter the docket number (22-132), and select *Search*.

Questions about these dockets or Commission process and procedure? Contact Commission staff, Scott Ek at scott.ek@state.mn.us or 651-539-1070.

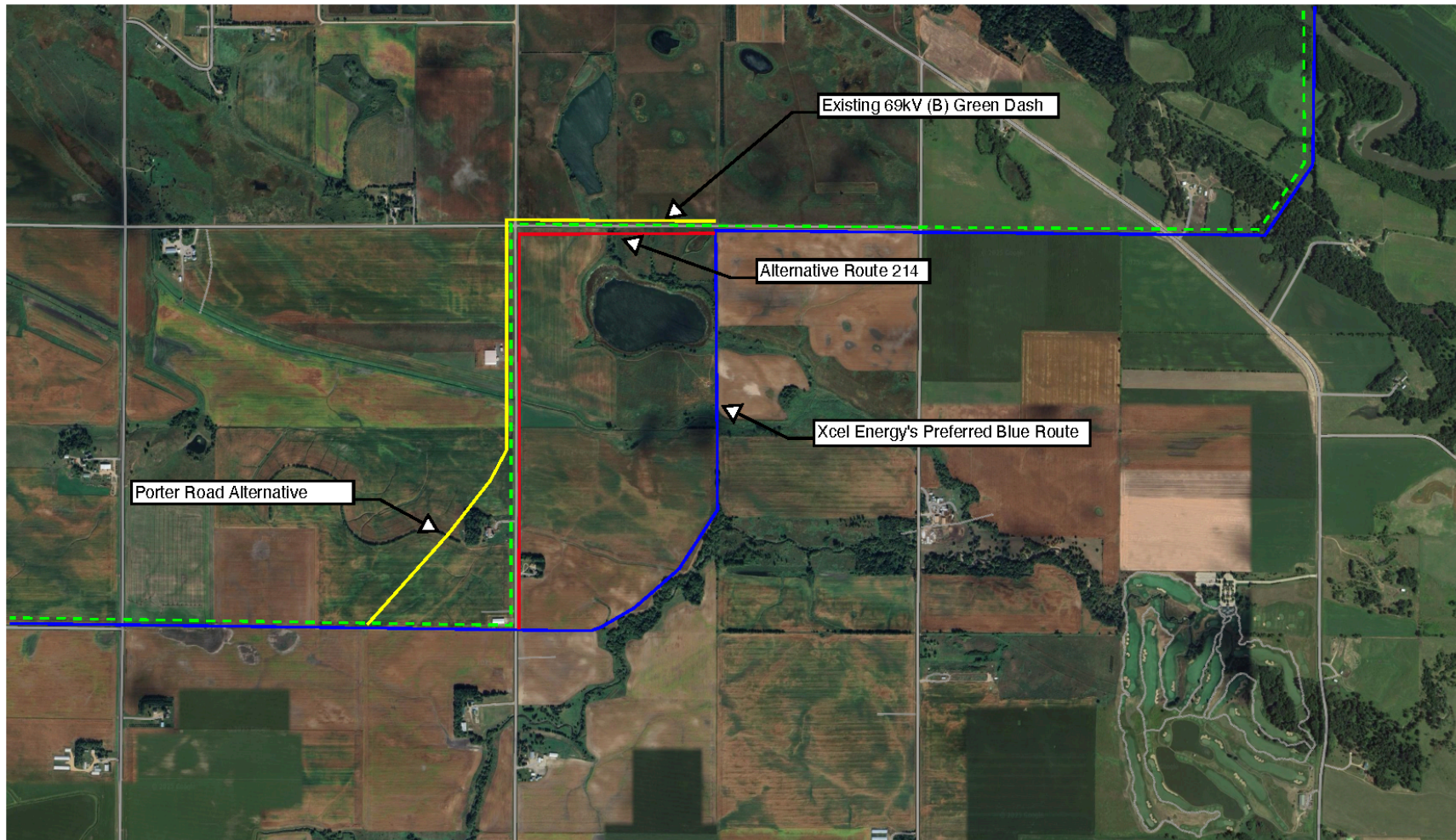
To request this document in another format such as large print or audio, call 651-296-0406 (voice). Persons with a hearing or speech impairment may call using their preferred Telecommunications Relay Service or email consumer.puc@state.mn.us for assistance.

Map 1
Existing 69 Co-Location Alternatives (Options 1 and 2)



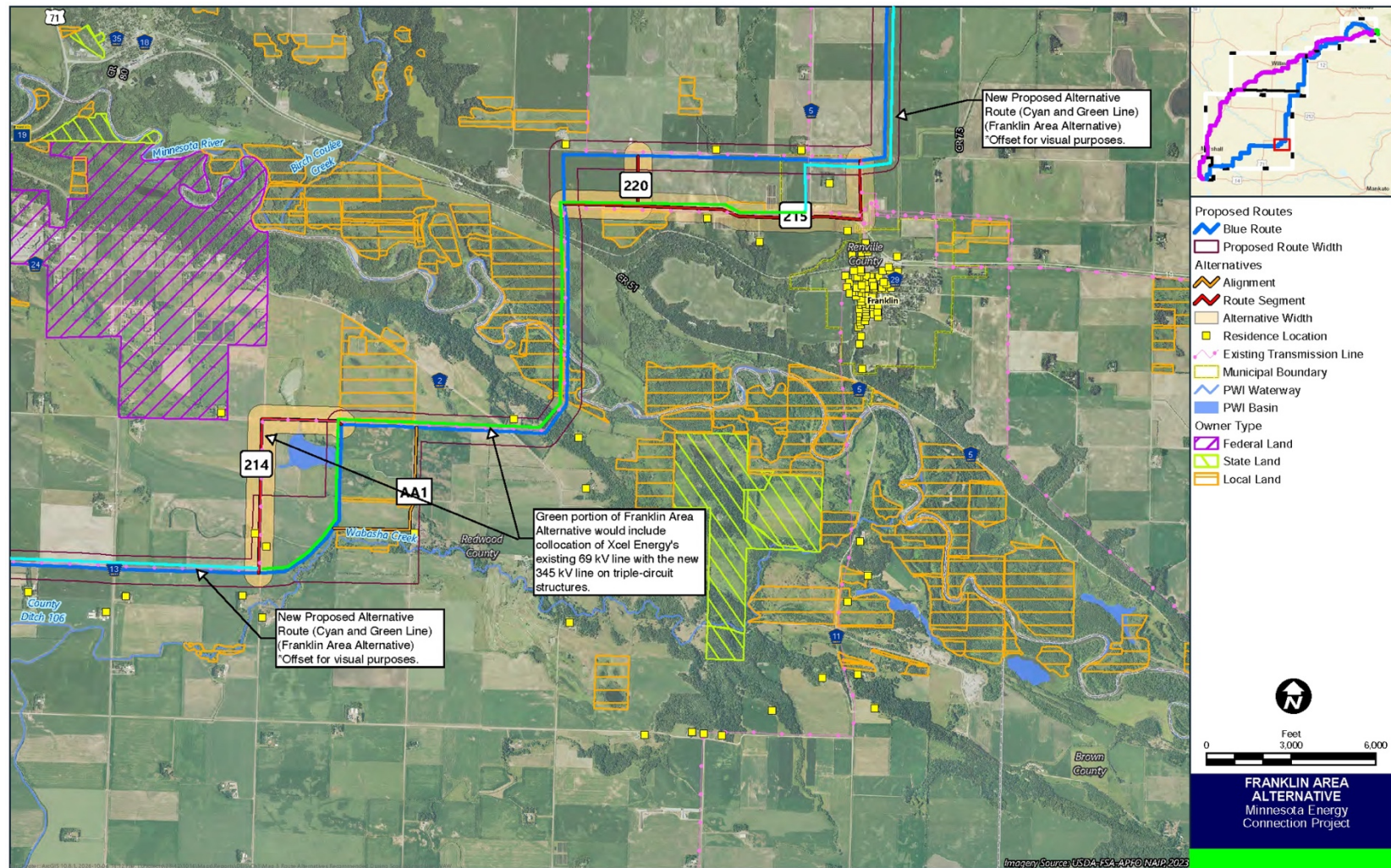
Lines on map are not exact and are for discussion purposes only.

Map 2
Porter Avenue Alternative (Option 3)



Lines on map are not exact and are for discussion purposes only.

Map 3
Franklin Alternative (Option 4)



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#	First Name	Last Name	Email	Organization	Agency	Address	Delivery Method	Alternate Delivery Method	View Trade Secret	Service List Name
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4	Todd	Boonstra	todd_boonstra@fws.gov	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service		22274 615th Ave Litchfield MN, 55355 United States	Electronic Service		No	22-132Official
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11	Kate	Fairman	kate.fairman@state.mn.us		Department of Natural Resources	Box 32 500 Lafayette Rd St. Paul MN, 55155-4032 United States	Electronic Service		No	22-132Official
12	Annie	Felix Gerth	annie.felix-gerth@state.mn.us			Board of Water & Soil Resources 520 Lafayette Rd Saint Paul MN, 55155 United States	Electronic Service		No	22-132Official

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22	Dawn S	Marsh	dawn_marsh@fws.gov	U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service		Minnesota-Wisconsin Field Offices 4101 American Blvd E Bloomington MN, 55425 United States	Electronic Service		No	22-132Official
23	James	Mortenson	james.mortenson@state.mn.us		Office of Administrative Hearings	PO BOX 64620 St. Paul MN, 55164-0620 United States	Electronic Service		No	22-132Official
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26	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	22-132Official
27	Stephan	Roos	stephan.roos@state.mn.us		Minnesota Department of Agriculture	625 Robert St N Saint Paul MN, 55155-2538 United States	Electronic Service		No	22-132Official
28	Christine	Schwartz	regulatory.records@xcelenergy.com	Xcel Energy		414 Nicollet Mall FL 7 Minneapolis MN, 55401-1993 United States	Electronic Service		No	22-132Official
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38	Alan	Whipple	sa.property@state.mn.us		Minnesota Department Of Revenue	Property Tax Division 600 N. Robert Street St. Paul MN, 55146-3340 United States	Electronic Service		No	22-132Official
39	Jonathan	Wolfgram	jonathan.wolfgram@state.mn.us		Office of Pipeline Safety	445 Minnesota St Ste 147 Woodbury MN, 55125 United States	Electronic Service		No	22-132Official

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3	Annie	Felix Gerth	annie.felix-gerth@state.mn.us			Board of Water & Soil Resources 520 Lafayette Rd Saint Paul MN, 55155 United States	Electronic Service		No	Agency Reps
4	Chris	Green	chris.green@state.mn.us	Minnesota Pollution Control Agency		504 Fairgrounds Rd Suite 200 Marshall MN, 56258 United States	Electronic Service		No	Agency Reps
5	Todd	Green	todd.a.green@state.mn.us		Minnesota Department of Labor & Industry	443 Lafayette Rd N St. Paul MN, 55155-4341 United States	Electronic Service		No	Agency Reps
6	Chad	Konickson	chad.konickson@usace.army.mil	U.S.Army Corps of Engineers		332 Minnesota St. Suite E1500 Saint Paul MN, 55101 United States	Electronic Service		No	Agency Reps
7	Stacy	Kotch Egstad	stacy.kotch@state.mn.us		MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION	395 John Ireland Blvd. St. Paul MN, 55155 United States	Electronic Service		No	Agency Reps
8	Dawn S	Marsh	dawn_marsh@fws.gov	U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service		Minnesota-Wisconsin Field Offices 4101 American Blvd E Bloomington MN, 55425 United States	Electronic Service		No	Agency Reps
9	Stephan	Roos	stephan.roos@state.mn.us		Minnesota Department of Agriculture	625 Robert St N Saint Paul MN, 55155-2538 United States	Electronic Service		No	Agency Reps
10	Jayme	Trusty	execdir@swrdc.org	SWRDC		2401 Broadway Ave #1 Slayton MN, 56172 United States	Electronic Service		No	Agency Reps
11	Jen	Tyler	tyler.jennifer@epa.gov	US Environmental Protection Agency		Environmental Planning & Evaluation Unit 77 W Jackson Blvd. Mailstop B-19J Chicago IL, 60604-3590 United States	Electronic Service		No	Agency Reps
12	Isaac	Weston	isaac.weston@state.mn.us			null null, null United States	Electronic Service		No	Agency Reps
13	Alan	Whipple	sa.property@state.mn.us		Minnesota Department Of Revenue	Property Tax Division 600 N. Robert Street	Electronic Service		No	Agency Reps

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						St. Paul MN, 55146-3340 United States				
14	Jonathan	Wolfgram	jonathan.wolfgram@state.mn.us		Office of Pipeline Safety	445 Minnesota St Ste 147 Woodbury MN, 55125 United States	Electronic Service		No	Agency Reps

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