

Sedarski, Joe

From: Chris Miller <chris@togpartners.com>
Sent: Friday, October 13, 2023 9:53 AM
To: Heine, Ellen L
Cc: Sedarski, Joe; contact@mankatomississippirivertransmission.com
Subject: RE: Mankato to Mississippi River Transmission Project

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Hi Ellen,

Thank you for providing this information – I will share it with the members of the MN Mississippi River Parkway Commission, and we will watch for details on the upcoming DPC project.

Thanks again,

Chris Miller, Director
MN Mississippi River Parkway Commission
56 33rd Ave S, #283
St. Cloud, MN 56301
651-341-4196

From: Heine, Ellen L <Ellen.L.Heine@xcelenergy.com>
Sent: Wednesday, October 11, 2023 5:03 PM
To: chris@togpartners.com
Cc: Sedarski, Joe <Joe.Sedarski@hdrinc.com>; contact@mankatomississippirivertransmission.com
Subject: Mankato to Mississippi River Transmission Project

Hi Chris,

I'm contacting you regarding transmission line project that we are developing in southeast Minnesota. We had an overview meeting with several MnDOT staff a couple of weeks ago and they suggested that we reach out to you as our project crosses Highway 61/the Great River Road. The attached letter and map provide more detail about the project, but I wanted to make sure to clarify that this project does not involve any new construction across Highway 62. The "new" 345 kV line in that location will be utilizing the circuit that is currently being operated at 161 kV and there is no need for a change in equipment in that location. However, because the 161 is being displaced that line will need to be relocated. That line is owned by Dairyland Power Cooperative (DPC) and they are currently working on developing route for the line, which will likely cross Highway 61 somewhere Kellogg. I passed your contact info to our connections at DPC and they said they will be sure to connect with you regarding their project as they get further along. Please feel free to reach out to me if you have questions or would like to have a call to discuss any of this information.

Thanks,

Ellen

Ellen Heine
Xcel Energy
Principal Siting and Permitting Agent
414 Nicollet Mall, 414-6A, Minneapolis, MN 55401
P: 612.330.6073 C: 651-247-0957
E: ellen.l.heine@xcelenergy.com

Meeting Minutes

Subject: **Minnesota DNR Meeting
Mankato-Mississippi River Transmission Project (Project)**

Date & Time: 7/17/2023 11:00 am – 12:00 pm

Location: Teams Call (Remote)

Attendees: Ellen Heine, Principal Siting & Land Rights Agent, Xcel Energy
Cynthia Warzecha, DNR, Energy Projects Review
Melissa Collins, DNR, Region 3 Central, Regional Environmental Assessment Ecologist
Lucas Youngsma, DNR, Region 3 Central Area Hydrologist, Lake City
Todd Piepho, DNR, Region 4 South Area Hydrologist, Sakatah
Elizabeth Rasmussen, DNR, Hydrologist
Erynn Jenzen, DNR, Region 4 South Area Hydrologist, Mankato East
James Drake, DNR, Natural Heritage Review, NHIS Review Specialist
Haley Byron, DNR, Region 4 South, Regional Environmental Assessment Ecologist
Joe Sedarski, Senior Project Manager Support, Routing/Siting & Permitting Lead, HDR

This meeting was held to go over the Mankato to Mississippi River Transmission Project (MMRTP or Project) current preliminary route alternatives, discuss high level natural resource concerns, schedule, application, etc.

After introductions, Ellen discussed the overall Project and then walked through each of four route segments making up the Project. She indicated field surveys have not yet been completed; however, site visits have been completed for routing purposes. She reviewed the routes under consideration and shared mapping associated with the Project (and shared this link for attendees).

[Mankato-Mississippi River Transmission Project \(mmrtpproject.com\)](http://mmrtpproject.com)

Ellen indicated the Minnesota portion of the Project consists of a new 345-kilovolt (kV) transmission line from the Wilmarth Substation located in Mankato at the west end of the Project heading east to the West Faribault Substation, the North Rochester Substation and ending at the Mississippi River where it crosses into Wisconsin. This project is part of a larger MISO-identified project (part of the MISO Tranche 1 studied projects) known as LRTP4 (Long Range Transmission Planning) which extends from Mankato, MN to near Tremval, WI.

The proposed Project route alternatives include existing transmission line right-of-way (ROW), greenfield route(s), and upgrades to existing structures to be modified to accommodate the new 345-kV line. Ellen went over the following topics:

- review the Project Study Area and each route segment;
- routing within each segment and Project specific transmission needs for each;
- information on public outreach and communication tasks, expectations and tentative schedule for next open houses;
- permit application preparation and filing timeline;
- GIS mapping data and existing utility corridors; and
- Questions and answers (and action items).

Segment 1

This segment extends from Mankato (Wilmarth Substation) to West Faribault Substation (though the Project does not include connecting into this substation site, but routes by it). Route 1A is likely the, unofficially, Appendix M-2

preferred route which the new 345 kV line would double circuit with an existing 115 kV line. (Update: This line is located within a 75' ROW and additional width would be needed for a double-circuit 345/115 kV). Route 1B follows an existing 69 kV line (Update: typical 69 kV ROW = 50 feet) for most of the route and is the second alternate route being evaluated for this segment. DNR asked how long this route segment is – Ellen said 42-43 miles, depending on eventual route selected. DNR asked if Lands and Minerals group has been contacted yet. Ellen said not yet as it is still pretty early and not sure which route will be selected. Xcel is happy to have early input with comments from DNR on any public land and water crossings (if in basins, DNR will likely comment to move). Melissa Collins is DNR contact for early outreach and coordination – will later bring in DNR Lands & Minerals staff as needed. Krista Howk and Karla Ihns are contacts for Region 4 (east portion of Project).

Ellen reviewed the Project schedule. First round of public open houses were completed in May 2023. The team is working through comments from stakeholders and agencies regarding routing concerns (MnDOT, DNR, etc.). Using this information to refine routes and identify other opportunities, as well as completing engineering review as needed to evaluate. In mid-September 2023 there will be another round of public open houses and stakeholder outreach. Will use this information to identify routes to be included in the Route Permit Application (RPA). Xcel plans to file a combined Certificate of Need (CON) and RPA document with the PUC in late November 2023. PUC permitting process is expected to take 12-18 months.

Segment 4 (discussed below) is trickier part of this Project that involves routing and construction of a new 161 kV line.

DNR asked if Xcel can send GIS shapefiles of existing routes and existing utilities lines. Ellen said yes.

DNR indicates it is paying a lot of attention to ROW expansion, especially at river crossings. They will be looking at tree clearing, etc., as well as at trout stream crossings.

Segment 2

Ellen walked through this segment – Route 2B is a greenfield route crossing mainly ag lands. Route 2A is a partial double-circuit with an existing 69 kV line. Xcel is trying to avoid populated areas so have route segment options around certain locations (e.g., Kenyon bypass route option).

DNR asked if there is a crossing of a WMA; yes, an existing line crosses one and route option includes double-circuit with this line at this time.

Segment 3

This route segment is the existing CapX2020 line from the Mississippi River to North Rochester Substation. Xcel plans to use the existing 161 kV line position on existing structures for the new 345 kV line. This route length is about 44 miles. Two portions of this segment do not require any physical work in the ROW (arms and conductors are in place and conductor is operating at 161 kV, but can be switched to be operated at 345 kV). The middle portion (~15 miles) requires addition of davit arms (on currently empty side of poles) and new 345 kV conductors. No new ROW is needed for Segment 3 for the Project.

DNR was relieved to hear there are expected to be no new ROW, tree clearing, or other impacts from the Project near the river and McCarthy Lake area. Dairyland Power Coop will need to find a new route for the 161 kV line that is being moved off of this route Segment 3.

Segment 4

As mentioned earlier, Segment 4 is trickiest part of the Project and requires finding a new route to move the existing 161 kV line off the CapX2020 line to make room for Segment 3 (convert the existing 161/345 kV to 345/345). Ellen walked through various route options being considered, issues with the Zumbro River crossing, residential and other development, and other routing concerns. Xcel will need a 100 foot wide ROW for this new 161 kV line and current best route options appear to be southernmost route along 75th St NW/Highway 63 (and double-circuiting with existing 69 kV line – there are many distribution lines in this area which Xcel could bury if needed) and north along Highway 52. Many route options are under consideration in this Segment.

DNR indicated the route following Highway 52 looks best from their perspective of avoiding MBS sites and other impacts – DNR asked what Xcel thought. Ellen said Highway 52 does look good but will have to balance with other issues and concerns of this area. This will likely be routed as a combination of double-circuit, a lot of distribution (move or bury), and other greenfield opportunities, but there are some decent options.

DNR suggested looking at route to west from Pine Island, cutting over to 125th, going along CSAH 5, and then to Highway 52. We reviewed by looking at DNR shared screen. Ellen indicated Xcel would not be able to route this way as it would add a significant distance to the transmission line, some doubling back, and difficult to present as a route option (with other options available).

The DNR flagged the MBS sites along the Zumbro River to east of the existing gravel mining area. Ellen indicated there are bike trails to consider; a few years ago, Xcel built a new transmission line along a bike trail (Northern Hills line) and there are not a lot of great linear features to follow in this area at this time.

Ellen said to contact her with any other questions and to continue to informally discuss the Project at this early stage (both DNR and Xcel are open to this; both prefer to do this type of outreach).

Xcel plans to file the combined CON/RPA in late November 2023, which will include all routes under consideration. DNR requested that a formal NHIS request be made and included in the CON/RPA. It is taking about two months to receive a formal response and Xcel will plan accordingly. Xcel will work to make the formal request clear, specific, and narrow down route options as much as possible (e.g., best 2-3 route options) to assist DNR in this formal review.

Action Items:

1. Xcel to send GIS shapefiles to DNR with existing transmission lines (preliminary routes and study area, were sent previously); and,
2. Xcel and DNR will complete follow up questions, answers and continue outreach regarding the Project.

Sedarski, Joe

From: Lueth, Katie
Sent: Tuesday, January 23, 2024 12:48 PM
To: Heine, Ellen L; Sedarski, Joe
Cc: Jones, Daniel
Subject: RE: MCE submittal for MMRT Project - MCE #: 2023-00832
Attachments: 2023-NHletter00832.pdf

Hello All,

Attached is the Natural Heritage Review Letter that was posted on the Minnesota Conservation Explorer site. Please let me know if you would like to discuss anything.

Thank you,
Katie Lueth

Katie Lueth
D 651.214.6149

hdrinc.com/follow-us

From: Heine, Ellen L <Ellen.L.Heine@xcelenergy.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 23, 2024 12:45 PM
To: Barrett, Molly (She/Her/Hers) (DNR) <Molly.Barrett@state.mn.us>
Cc: Sedarski, Joe <Joe.Sedarski@hdrinc.com>; Lueth, Katie <Katie.Lueth@hdrinc.com>
Subject: RE: MCE submittal for MMRT Project - MCE #: 2023-00832

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Thanks Molly!

Ellen Heine
Xcel Energy
P: 612.330.6073 C: 651-247-0957
E: ellen.l.heine@xcelenergy.com

From: Barrett, Molly (She/Her/Hers) (DNR) <Molly.Barrett@state.mn.us>
Sent: Tuesday, January 23, 2024 12:33 PM
To: Heine, Ellen L <Ellen.L.Heine@xcelenergy.com>
Subject: RE: MCE submittal for MMRT Project - MCE #: 2023-00832

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Hi Ellen,

Thank you for your patience. The Natural Heritage Review is now complete, and the letter is posted on Minnesota Conservation Explorer. If you don't have access, I believe you need to reach out to the submitter (Katie Lueth – HDR Inc) to view the NHR letter.

Thank you,
Molly

Molly P Barrett

(she/her/hers)

Natural Heritage Review Specialist | Environmental Review Unit

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

500 Lafayette Road

St. Paul, MN 55155

Phone: 651-259-5086

Email: molly.barrett@state.mn.us

mndnr.gov



From: Heine, Ellen L <Ellen.L.Heine@xcelenergy.com>

Sent: Friday, January 5, 2024 11:07 AM

To: Barrett, Molly (She/Her/Hers) (DNR) <Molly.Barrett@state.mn.us>

Cc: Sedarski, Joe <Joe.Sedarski@hdrinc.com>; Lueth, Katie <Katie.Lueth@hdrinc.com>; Jones, Daniel <Daniel.Jones2@hdrinc.com>; Drake, James F (DNR) <James.F.Drake@state.mn.us>; Joyal, Lisa (DNR) <lisa.joyal@state.mn.us>

Subject: RE: MCE submittal for MMRT Project - MCE #: 2023-00832

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Thanks Molly,

Ok, sounds good. Feel free to reach out at any point if you have questions.

Ellen

Ellen Heine

Xcel Energy

P: 612.330.6073 C: 651-247-0957

E: ellen.l.heine@xcelenergy.com

From: Barrett, Molly (She/Her/Hers) (DNR) <Molly.Barrett@state.mn.us>

Sent: Friday, January 5, 2024 9:53 AM

To: Heine, Ellen L <Ellen.L.Heine@xcelenergy.com>

Cc: Sedarski, Joe <Joe.Sedarski@hdrinc.com>; Lueth, Katie <Katie.Lueth@hdrinc.com>; Jones, Daniel <Daniel.Jones2@hdrinc.com>; Drake, James F (DNR) <James.F.Drake@state.mn.us>; Joyal, Lisa (DNR) <lisa.joyal@state.mn.us>

Subject: RE: MCE submittal for MMRT Project - MCE #: 2023-00832

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Hi Ellen,

Happy New Year to you too! Thank you for reaching out and for your patience. I have started reviewing your project. Currently, we do not need to schedule a Teams call. I'll let you know if that changes.

Thank you,
Molly

From: Heine, Ellen L <Ellen.L.Heine@xcelenergy.com>

Sent: Thursday, January 4, 2024 4:36 PM

To: Drake, James F (DNR) <James.F.Drake@state.mn.us>; Barrett, Molly (She/Her/Hers) (DNR) <Molly.Barrett@state.mn.us>; Joyal, Lisa (DNR) <lisa.joyal@state.mn.us>

Cc: Sedarski, Joe <Joe.Sedarski@hdrinc.com>; Lueth, Katie <Katie.Lueth@hdrinc.com>; Jones, Daniel <Daniel.Jones2@hdrinc.com>

Subject: RE: MCE submittal for MMRT Project - MCE #: 2023-00832

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Happy New Year folks!

I wanted to follow up on this item. Could you let us know if it would be helpful to schedule a Teams call to review the project and any concerns related to protected species? We are planning to submit a draft application to DOC-EERA later this month and file a final in February.

Ellen

Ellen Heine
Xcel Energy

P: 612.330.6073 **C:** 651-247-0957

E: ellen.l.heine@xcelenergy.com

From: Heine, Ellen L

Sent: Monday, November 13, 2023 12:17 PM

To: Drake, James F (DNR) <James.F.Drake@state.mn.us>; Barrett, Molly (She/Her/Hers) (DNR) <Molly.Barrett@state.mn.us>; Joyal, Lisa (DNR) <Lisa.Joyal@state.mn.us>

Cc: Sedarski, Joe <Joe.Sedarski@hdrinc.com>; Lueth, Katie <Katie.Lueth@hdrinc.com>; Jones, Daniel <Daniel.Jones2@hdrinc.com>

Subject: MCE submittal for MMRT Project - MCE #: 2023-00832

Hey Jim, Molly and Lisa,

HDR recently submitted our request within MCE for our Mankato to Mississippi River Transmission Project (MMRP Project). I think the alignment shapefile was submitted within MCE, but have included a zipped file which includes the alignments for each of the four route segments as well as the proposed route widths. As you know the route widths are typically wider than the ultimate easement/right-of-way widths will be (typically 150 feet for the 345 kV segments 1 – 3, and 100 feet for segment 4 which is a 161kV line). The attached shapefiles are separated by segment, but we aren't asking for them to be reviewed separately, just as one project. Please let me know if at some point it would be helpful

Appendix M-2

Mankato – Mississippi River Transmission Project
Certificate of Need and Route Permit Application
E002/CN-22-532 and E002/TL-23-157

to set up a Teams call to go over the info or if there's additional information that would be helpful. I know you all have a long list of projects to review so just hoping to find ways to be helpful or simplify the review process.

Thanks,

Ellen

Ellen Heine

Xcel Energy

Principal Siting and Permitting Agent

414 Nicollet Mall, 414-6A, Minneapolis, MN 55401

P: 612.330.6073 C: 651-247-0957

E: ellen.l.heine@xcelenergy.com



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

January 23, 2024

Correspondence # MCE 2023-00832

Katie Lueth
HDR Inc

RE: Natural Heritage Review of the proposed **Mankato – Mississippi River Transmission Project**, Blue Earth, Goodhue, Le Sueur, Nicollet, Olmsted, Rice, Wabasha, and Waseca Counties

Dear Katie Lueth,

As requested, the [Minnesota Natural Heritage Information System](#) has been reviewed to determine if the proposed project has the potential to impact any rare species or other significant natural features. Based on the project details provided with the request, the following rare features may be impacted by the proposed project:

Ecologically Significant Areas

- The proposed project **crosses multiple state lands**. Please contact the MN DNR Regional Environmental Assessment Ecologist for the Central region (Melissa Collins, melissa.collins@state.mn.us) and for the Southern region (Haley Byron, haley.byron@state.mn.us) with subject line MCE-2023-00832 to discuss any concerns they may have regarding this project.
- The proposed project is **within an old-growth forest in T109N R22W Section 18 within the Townsend Woods Scientific and Natural Area (SNA)**. Old-growth forests are natural forests that have developed over a long period of time, generally at least 120 years, without experiencing severe, stand-replacing disturbances such as fires, windstorms, or logging. Old-growth forests are a unique, nearly vanished piece of Minnesota's history and ecology; less than 4% of Minnesota's old-growth forests remain. **Given the ecological significance of this area, disturbance should be minimized to the extent feasible.** Please contact the MN DNR Regional Ecologist for the Southern Region 4 (Megan Benage, megan.benage@state.mn.us) with subject line MCE-2023-00832 to discuss any concerns she may have regarding this project.

- Several lakes in the vicinity of the project have been identified as a Lake of Biological Significance. Lakes of Biological Significance were ranked as Outstanding (**Lily Lake** and **Mississippi River - U.S. Lock & Dam #5 Pool**), High (**Fish Lake**), or Moderate (**Tetonka Lake**, **Eagle Lake**, and **Madison Lake**) based on unique plant and animal presence. It is important that **effective erosion prevention and sediment control practices be implemented and maintained near lakes throughout the project**. Indirect impacts, such as the introduction or spread of invasive species, should also be considered and minimized.
- Many calcareous fens [**Holden 1 West** (13336), **Wanamingo 22** (29025), **Kasota 7** (34551), **McCarthy Lake** (31975), **Haverhill 19** (31983), and **Lime 30** (38219)] have been documented in within five miles of the proposed project. A calcareous fen is a rare and distinctive peat-accumulating wetland that is legally protected in Minnesota. The Wetlands Conservation Act (WCA), authorized by Minnesota Statutes, section 103G.223, states that calcareous fens may not be filled, drained, or otherwise degraded, wholly or partially, by any activity, except as provided for in a management plan approved by the commissioner of the Department of Natural Resources. Many of the unique characteristics of calcareous fens result from the upwelling of groundwater through calcareous substrates. Because of this dependence on groundwater hydrology, calcareous fens can be affected by nearby activities or even those several miles away. For more information regarding calcareous fens, please see the [Calcareous Fen Fact Sheet](#). To minimize stormwater impacts, please refer to the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency's [General Principles for Erosion Prevention and Sediment Control](#) in the Minnesota Stormwater Manual. Please note that calcareous fens are "Special Waters" and a [buffer zone](#) may be required.

Calcareous fens may be impacted by activities within the fen, activities that affect surface water flows (e.g., stormwater flow, erosion), or activities that affect groundwater hydrology (e.g., groundwater pumping, contamination, discharge, or excavation). **To ensure compliance under WCA, please contact the Calcareous Fen Program Coordinator, Keylor Andrews (Keylor.Andrews@state.mn.us).**

- The Minnesota Biological Survey (MBS) has identified **26** Sites of Biodiversity Significance within the project boundary: **4** Outstanding, **8** High, and **14** Moderate. Sites of Biodiversity Significance have varying levels of native biodiversity and are ranked based on the relative significance of this biodiversity at a statewide level. Factors taken into account during the ranking process include the number of rare species documented within the site, the quality of the native plant communities in the site, the size of the site, and the context of the site within the landscape. Sites ranked as Outstanding contain the best occurrences of the rarest species, the most outstanding examples of the rarest native plant communities, and/or the largest, most intact functional landscapes present in the state. Sites ranked as High contain very good quality occurrences of the rarest species, high quality examples of the rare native plant communities, and/or important functional landscapes. Sites ranked as Moderate contain occurrences of rare species and/or

moderately disturbed native plant communities, and/or landscapes that have a strong potential for recovery. Please see your MCE generated Conservation Planning Report for a comprehensive list of MBS Sites of Biodiversity Significance.

There are many MN DNR Native Plant Communities (NPCs) within 330 feet of the proposed project. There are 23 unique types of Native Plant Communities; 9 are ranked S2 which is considered **imperiled**, 10 are ranked S3 which is considered **vulnerable to extirpation**, 3 are ranked S4 which is considered **uncommon but not rare**, and 1 is ranked S5 which is considered **secure, widespread, and abundant** in Minnesota. Please see your MCE generated Conservation Planning Report for a comprehensive list of Native Plant Communities in your proposed project area.

Activities in road rights-of-way can negatively affect adjacent native plant communities, especially through the introduction of invasive plant species. As such, disturbance near these ecologically significant areas should be minimized. Actions to minimize disturbance may include, but are not limited to, the following recommendations:

- Avoid working in MBS Sites and rare (S1-S3) Native Plant Communities.
- As much as possible, operate within already-disturbed areas.
- Retain a buffer between proposed activities and the MBS Sites.
- Confine construction activities to the opposite side of the road from the MBS Sites. If this is not feasible, confine construction activities to the existing road rights-of-way.
- Minimize vehicular disturbance in the area (allow only vehicles necessary for the proposed work).
- Do not park equipment or stockpile supplies in the area.
- Do not place spoil within MBS Sites or other sensitive areas.
- If possible, conduct the work under frozen ground conditions.
- Inspect and clean all equipment prior to bringing it to the site to prevent the introduction and spread of invasive species.
- Use effective erosion prevention and sediment control measure.
- Revegetate disturbed soil with [native species suitable to the local habitat](#) as soon after construction as possible.
- Use only weed-free mulches, topsoils, and seed mixes. Of particular concern is birdsfoot trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*) and crown vetch (*Coronilla varia*), two invasive species that are sold commercially and are problematic in prairies and disturbed open areas, such as roadsides.

Construction in streambeds, lakes, and wetlands should be avoided whenever possible. We recommend spanning waterbodies and wetlands to avoid such areas. We also recommend:

- Work in watercourses should be conducted during low flow whenever possible.
- Winter construction in frozen soils is the preferred method for line placement in wetlands.
- Wetland basins, lake beds, and stream/riverbeds should be restored to preconstruction contours. The work should not promote wetland drainage.

The Minnesota Biological Survey (MBS) considered the area surrounding the proposed project for a Site of Biodiversity Significance. There are **17 areas** that were determined to be Below the minimum biodiversity threshold for statewide significance. This area, however, may have conservation value at the local level as habitat for native plants and animals, corridors for animal movements, buffers surrounding higher quality natural areas, or as areas with high potential for restoration of native habitat. **As such, indirect impacts from surface runoff or the spread of invasive species should be considered during project design and implementation.**

MBS Sites of Biodiversity Significance and DNR Native Plant Communities can be viewed using the Explore page in [Minnesota Conservation Explorer](#) or their GIS shapefiles can be downloaded from the [MN Geospatial Commons](#). Please contact the [NH Review Team](#) if you need assistance accessing the data. Reference the [MBS Site Biodiversity Significance](#) and [Native Plant Community](#) websites for information on interpreting the data. To receive a list of MBS Sites of Biodiversity Significance and DNR Native Plant Communities in the vicinity of your project, create a [Conservation Planning Report](#) using the Explore Tab in [Minnesota Conservation Explorer](#).

- If the Wetland Conservation Act (WCA) is applicable to this project, please note that wetlands within High or Outstanding MBS Sites of Biodiversity Significance and/or Native Plant Communities (NPC) may qualify as “Rare Natural Communities” under this Act. Minnesota Rules, part 8420.0515, subpart 3 states that a wetland replacement plan for activities that modify a rare natural community must be denied if the local government unit determines the proposed activities will permanently adversely affect the natural community. If the proposed project includes a wetland replacement plan under WCA, please contact your [DNR Regional Ecologist](#) for further evaluation. For technical guidance on Rare Natural Communities, please visit [WCA Program Guidance and Information](#).

State-listed Species

- The [loggerhead shrike](#) (*Lanius ludovicianus*), a state-listed endangered bird, has been documented in the vicinity of the project site. Loggerhead shrikes use grasslands that contain short grass and scattered perching sites such as hedgerows, shrubs, or small trees. They can be found in native prairie, pastures, shelterbelts, old fields or orchards, cemeteries, grassy

roadsides, and farmyards. Minnesota's Endangered Species Statute (Minnesota Statutes, section 84.0895) and associated Rules (Minnesota Rules, part 6212.1800 to 6212.2300 and 6134) prohibit the take of endangered or threatened plants or animals, including their parts or seeds, without a permit. Given the potential for this species to be found in the vicinity of the project, **tree and shrub removal must not occur within potential habitat during the breeding season, April through July.**

If avoiding tree or shrub removal within potential habitat from April through July is not feasible, a qualified surveyor will need to conduct a survey for active nests before any trees or shrubs will be removed. Requirements for surveys and lists of DNR certified lists of surveyors can be found at the [Natural Heritage Review website](#). Survey results should be sent to the NH Review Team at Reports.NHIS@state.mn.us with subject line [MCE-2023-00832](#); survey results are valid for 3 years. Please contact the NH Review team at Review.NHIS@state.mn.us with subject line [MCE-2023-00832](#) if you have any questions regarding this species.

- [Blanding's turtles](#) (*Emydoidea blandingii*) and [wood turtles](#) (*Glyptemys insculpta*), both state-listed threatened species, have been documented in the vicinity of the proposed project and may be encountered on site. Both species are semi-aquatic, spending time both on land and in water. Any added fatality can be detrimental to these populations of turtles, as these turtles have a low reproduction rate that depends upon a high survival rate to maintain population levels.

This project has the potential to impact these rare turtles through direct fatalities and habitat disturbance/destruction due to excavation, fill, and other construction activities associated with the project. Minnesota's Endangered Species Statute (Minnesota Statutes, section 84.0895) and associated Rules (Minnesota Rules, part 6212.1800 to 6212.2300 and 6134) prohibit the take of threatened or endangered species without a permit. As such, **the following avoidance measures are required:**

- Avoid wetland and aquatic impacts during hibernation season, between September 15th and April 15th, if the area is suitable for hibernation.
- Erosion and sediment control should be limited to [wildlife friendly erosion control](#) to avoid the inadvertent take of Blanding's turtles.
- Hydro-mulch products should not contain any materials with synthetic (plastic) fiber additives, as the fibers can re-suspend and flow into waterbodies.
- Construction areas, especially aquatic or wetland areas, should be thoroughly checked for turtles before the use of heavy equipment or any ground disturbance.
- Check any holes that have been left unattended for prolonged periods for turtles before being filled.

- The [Blanding's turtle flyer](#) must be given to all contractors working in the area. Illegal collection is a concern with wood turtles; therefore, please do not post any signs that would bring attention to the presence of wood turtles.
- Monitor for turtles during construction. Report any sightings to Reports.NHIS@state.mn.us; please include date, observer, location, and photograph of the turtles.
- If turtles are in imminent danger, they must be moved by hand out of harm's way, otherwise they are to be left undisturbed. Please see [Helping Turtles Across the Road](#) for guidelines on how to move turtles safely out of danger.
- If the above avoidance measures are not feasible, please contact Review.NHIS@state.mn.us with subject line MCE-2023-00832 as further action may be needed.

For additional information, see the [Blanding's turtle fact sheet](#), which describes the habitat use and life history of this species. The fact sheet also provides two lists of recommendations for avoiding and minimizing impacts to this rare turtle. **Please refer to both lists of recommendations and apply those that are relevant to your project.**

- [Timber rattlesnake](#) (*Crotalus horridus*), a state-listed threatened species, have been reported from the vicinity of the proposed project and may be encountered on site. In Minnesota, the ideal habitat for this species is forested bluffs, south-facing rock outcrops, and bluff prairies, particularly in the Mississippi River Valley. Nearby forests, prairies, and agricultural lands are used as summer feeding grounds.

Timber rattlesnake mortality in Minnesota is most commonly caused by poaching, vehicle collisions, and habitat destruction. The loss of a single adult, especially a female, can impact the population significantly. Minnesota's Endangered Species Statute (Minnesota Statutes, section 84.0895) and associated Rules (Minnesota Rules, part 6212.1800 to 6212.2300 and 6134) prohibit the take of threatened or endangered species without a permit. As such the following avoidance measures are **required**:

- **Crews working in the area should be advised that if they encounter any snakes, the snakes should not be disturbed.**
- **Erosion and sediment control should be limited to [wildlife friendly erosion control](#) to avoid the inadvertent take of timber rattlesnakes.**
- If the above avoidance measures are not feasible, please contact Review.NHIS@state.mn.us with subject line MCE-2023-00832 as further action may be needed.

Timber rattlesnake precautions may include, but are not limited to, the following recommendations:

- Wear appropriate personal protection equipment, such as thick pants, boots, and leather gloves.
 - Care should be taken around stockpiled materials as snakes may be using these materials as shelter.
 - Report any sightings to Reports.NHIS@state.mn.us; please include date, observer, location, and photograph of the timber rattlesnake.
- Many rare aquatic species, including state-listed endangered and threatened species, have been documented in the project vicinity. These species are vulnerable to deterioration in water quality, particularly increased siltation. Minnesota’s Endangered Species Statute (Minnesota Statutes, section 84.0895) and associated Rules (Minnesota Rules, part 6212.1800 to 6212.2300 and 6134) prohibit the take of threatened or endangered species without a permit. **Therefore, it is important that stringent erosion prevention and sediment control practices are maintained throughout the duration of the project to prevent adverse debris and material from impacting downstream populations.** As per proposed project details, waterbodies will be spanned, and no work is proposed within the water. If project details change and work within water is proposed, please submit a new Natural Heritage Review request as our requirements may change.
 - Many rare plant species, including state-listed endangered and threatened species, have been documented in the project vicinity. The table below lists state-listed plant species within the project vicinity; species found within the proposed project area are marked with an asterisk (*). **All known occurrences of state protected plant species and all potential habitats must be avoided.** If this is not feasible, a qualified surveyor will need to (1) resurvey known occurrences and (2) determine if suitable habitat exists within the activity impact area and, if so, conduct a survey prior to any project activities.

Minnesota’s Endangered Species Statute (Minnesota Statutes, section 84.0895) and associated Rules (Minnesota Rules, part 6212.1800 to 6212.2300 and 6134) prohibit the take of threatened or endangered species without a permit. Surveys must be conducted by a qualified surveyor and follow the standards contained in the [Rare Species Survey Process](#) and [Rare Plant Guidance](#). Visit the [Natural Heritage Review](#) page for a list of certified surveyors and more information on this process. Project planning should take into account that any botanical survey needs to be conducted during the appropriate time of the year, which may be limited. Please consult with the NH Review Team at Reports.NHIS@state.mn.us with subject line MCE-2023-00832, if you have any questions regarding this process.

Name		Status		Habitat	
Common	Scientific	State	Federal	Habitat	Water Regime
Dwarf Trout Lily	<i>Erythronium propullans</i>	END	END	Mesic Hardwood Forest, Floodplain Forest	terrestrial
Sweet-smelling Indian Plantain	<i>Hasteola suaveolens</i>	END		Marsh, Wet Meadow/Carr, River Shore	wetland
Butternut	<i>Juglans cinerea</i>	END		Mesic Hardwood Forest	terrestrial
Tuberous Indian Plantain *	<i>Arnoglossum plantagineum</i>	THR		Upland Prairie	terrestrial
Clasping Milkweed	<i>Asclepias amplexicaulis</i>	THR		Savanna, Upland Prairie	terrestrial
Stream Parsnip	<i>Berula erecta</i>	THR		Small Rivers and Streams, Non-forested Rich Peatland, Wet Meadow/Carr	aquatic, wetland
Davis' Sedge	<i>Carex davisii</i>	THR		Floodplain Forest	wetland
Prairie Bush Clover	<i>Lespedeza leptostachya</i>	THR	THR	Upland Prairie, Rock Outcrop	terrestrial
Glade Mallow *	<i>Napaea dioica</i>	THR		Small Rivers and Streams, Floodplain Forest	wetland
One-flowered Broomrape	<i>Orobanche uniflora</i>	THR		Savanna, Upland Prairie, Mesic Hardwood Forest, Fire Dependent Forest	terrestrial
Tuberclad Rein Orchid	<i>Platanthera flava var. herbiola</i>	THR		Wet Meadow/Carr, Savanna, Lowland Prairie	wetland
Hooded Arrowhead	<i>Sagittaria montevidensis ssp. calycina</i>	THR		Rivers and Streams, River Shore, Lake Shore, Marsh	aquatic, wetland
Edible Valerian	<i>Valeriana edulis var. ciliata</i>	THR		Wet Meadow/Carr, Non-forested Rich Peatland, Lowland Prairie, Upland Prairie, Rock Outcrop, Cliff	terrestrial, wetland

* = Known to occur within the project area. Please see your license for specific locations.

- 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 nearby, all seven 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.**
- 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.

Federally Protected 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](#).**

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.

- As mentioned above dwarf trout lily and prairie bush clover are both federally listed. These were documented in the vicinity of the project but not within the project area.
- **To ensure compliance with federal law, conduct a federal regulatory review using the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (USFWS) online [Information for Planning and Consultation \(IPaC\) tool](#).**

Environmental Review and Permitting

- Please include a copy of this letter and the MCE-generated Final Project Report in any state or local license or permit application. Please note that measures to avoid or minimize disturbance to the above rare features may be included as restrictions or conditions in any required permits or licenses.

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 project description provided with the request. If project details change or the project has not occurred within one year, please resubmit the project for review within one year of 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. Visit the [Natural Heritage Review website](#) for additional information regarding this process, survey guidance, and other related information. 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,



Molly Barrett
Natural Heritage Review Specialist
Molly.Barrett@state.mn.us

Cc: [Melissa Collins](#), Regional Environmental Assessment Ecologist, Region 3 (Central)
Cc: [Haley Byron](#), Regional Environmental Assessment Ecologist, Region 4 (South)
Cc: [Amanda Weise](#), Regional Ecologist, Region 3 (Central)
Cc: [Megan Benage](#), Regional Ecologist, Region 4 (South)
Cc: [Keylor Andrews](#), Calcareous Fen Program Coordinator
Cc: [Jennie Skancke](#), Wetlands Program Coordinator
Cc: [Cynthia Warzecha](#), Energy Projects Review

Sedarski, Joe

From: Bring, Jennifer
Sent: Friday, February 16, 2024 1:21 PM
To: MN_ADM_ENV Review SHPO
Cc: Heine, Ellen L; Sedarski, Joe; Koski, Laura Joreen
Subject: Mankato to Mississippi River Transmission Project - Cultural Resources Literature Review

Hello,

In May of 2023, initial introductory letters regarding the Mankato to Mississippi River Transmission Project. Since then we have continued cultural resources studies for the project to inform evaluation of routes and the Route Permit Application. A Cultural Resources Literature Review has been completed for the project. The literature review report and a Request for Review form can be access at the link below:

 [Literature Review to SHPO 20240216](#)

Please let us know if you have issues accessing the files or have any questions. We look forward to continued coordination with your office.

Best,
Jenny

Jennifer Bring

*Environmental Section Manager MN/WI
Senior Environmental Scientist/Project Manager*

HDR

1601 Utica Ave. S. Suite 600
St. Louis Park, MN 55416
M 651.324.0432
Jennifer.Bring@hdrinc.com

hdrinc.com/follow-us

Sedarski, Joe

From: Roos, Stephan (MDA) <stephan.roos@state.mn.us>
Sent: Wednesday, February 7, 2024 11:17 AM
To: Heine, Ellen L
Cc: Sedarski, Joe
Subject: RE: Draft AIMP for MMRT Project
Attachments: AIMP_DRAFT_MMRT Jan 2024 - SR edits.docx

CAUTION: [EXTERNAL] This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hi Ellen,
I've finished my review. Overall, the document is great and there is only one comment/addition that I'm proposing. I included a pretty thorough comment for it in the attached document. I plan to ask that this section be added to all future transmission line AIMPs from all project proposers.
I'd be happy to discuss the addition I'm requesting with you if you have questions or would prefer to rephrase the addition.
Thanks,
Steve

Steve Roos
Environmental Planner
Energy and Environment Section
Agricultural Marketing and Development Division
Minnesota Department of Agriculture
625 Robert Street North
Saint Paul, MN 55155-2538
Ph: 651-201-6631 office



www.mda.state.mn.us

From: Heine, Ellen L <Ellen.L.Heine@xcelenergy.com>
Sent: Monday, February 5, 2024 2:23 PM
To: Roos, Stephan (MDA) <stephan.roos@state.mn.us>
Cc: Sedarski, Joe <Joe.Sedarski@hdrinc.com>
Subject: RE: Draft AIMP for MMRT Project

Sounds good! Let me know if you have any questions or concerns.

Ellen Heine
Xcel Energy
P: 612.330.6073 C: 651-247-0957
E: ellen.l.heine@xcelenergy.com

From: Roos, Stephan (MDA) <stephan.roos@state.mn.us>
Sent: Monday, February 5, 2024 11:20 AM

To: Heine, Ellen L <Ellen.L.Heine@xcelenergy.com>

Subject: RE: Draft AIMP for MMRT Project

EXTERNAL - STOP & THINK before opening links and attachments.

Hi Ellen,

Thanks for sending this over – I may actually get to review it this week and get my comments back to you.

Steve

From: Heine, Ellen L <Ellen.L.Heine@xcelenergy.com>

Sent: Monday, February 5, 2024 8:29 AM

To: Roos, Stephan (MDA) <stephan.roos@state.mn.us>

Cc: Sedarski, Joe <Joe.Sedarski@hdrinc.com>

Subject: Draft AIMP for MMRT Project

This message may be from an external email source.

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Hi Steve,

We are getting close to a final draft for our Mankato to Mississippi River Transmission Project. Wanted to send this draft AIMP over to you to give you a chance to review and potentially provide comments prior to our filing our application. It will be identified as draft in the application but we thought it would still be good to check in with you. This is modeled off of the recent Minnesota Energy Connection project AIMP, so should look somewhat familiar, but I've made a few edits for clarity and such.

One note: we haven't included any maps in the AIMP at this point but there is an overview and an interactive map available at the project web site here:

[Mankato-Mississippi River Transmission Project \(mmrtproject.com\)](http://mmrtproject.com)

Let me know if you'd like to schedule some time to discuss.

Thanks,

Ellen

Ellen Heine

Xcel Energy

Principal Siting and Permitting Agent

414 Nicollet Mall, 414-6A, Minneapolis, MN 55401

P: 612.330.6073 C: 651-247-0957

E: ellen.l.heine@xcelenergy.com

Sedarski, Joe

From: Nachtigal, Sherri (She/Her/Hers) (MPCA) <sherri.nachtigal@state.mn.us>
Sent: Wednesday, October 18, 2023 1:29 PM
To: Sedarski, Joe; Heine, Ellen L; Griffin, Stephanie
Cc: Delaney, Chelsea (MPCA)
Subject: RE: Mankato-Mississippi River Transmission Project (MMRTP) -Summit Demolition Landfill
Attachments: SW-254 Engineering Plan Set 6-30-2021 (1).pdf

CAUTION: [EXTERNAL] This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Attached is a set of plans for the Pilgrim Demo Landfill. I said I'd send the annual report, but this set should have what I believe you need. We're happy to provide you with any additional items/information you feel you need, so let me know if that's the case.

Thanks.

Sherri Nachtigal, P.E. |she, her, hers

Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) - Rochester
Resource Management and Assistance Division
7381 Airport View Dr SW | Rochester, MN | 55902
Voice Phone: 507-206-2600 | Cell Phone: 507-251-7665
Email: sherri.nachtigal@state.mn.us | www.pca.state.mn.us



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From: Nachtigal, Sherri (She/Her/Hers) (MPCA)
Sent: Wednesday, October 18, 2023 9:16 AM
To: Sedarski, Joe <Joe.Sedarski@hdrinc.com>; Heine, Ellen L <ellen.l.heine@xcelenergy.com>; Griffin, Stephanie <Stephanie.Griffin@hdrinc.com>
Subject: RE: Mankato-Mississippi River Transmission Project (MMRTP) -Summit Demolition Landfill

FYI

Sherri Nachtigal, P.E. |she, her, hers

Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) - Rochester
Resource Management and Assistance Division
7381 Airport View Dr SW | Rochester, MN | 55902
Voice Phone: 507-206-2600 | Cell Phone: 507-251-7665
Email: sherri.nachtigal@state.mn.us | www.pca.state.mn.us

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From: Sedarski, Joe <Joe.Sedarski@hdrinc.com>

Sent: Monday, October 2, 2023 11:16 AM

To: Matt Ledvina <mattledvina@comcast.net>; Nachtigal, Sherri (She/Her/Hers) (MPCA) <sherri.nachtigal@state.mn.us>

Cc: Randy Westman <rwestman18@gmail.com>; Heine, Ellen L <ellen.l.heine@xcelenergy.com>; Fordice, Randy L <Randy.L.Fordice@xcelenergy.com>; Stevenson, Grant D <grant.stevenson@xcelenergy.com>; contact@mankatomississippirivertransmission.com; Bentz, Nick <Nicholas.Bentz@hdrinc.com>

Subject: RE: Mankato-Mississippi River Transmission Project (MMRTP) -Summit Demolition Landfill

You don't often get email from joe.sedarski@hdrinc.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hi again – resending my email with correct email for you Sherri (apologies for that!).

Joe

Joe Sedarski, PE, JD

Sr. Environmental PM / Sr. Technical Advisor

HDR

1601 Utica Avenue South, Suite 600

St. Louis Park, MN 55416-3400

D 763.591.6684 **M** 612.214.6658

Joe.Sedarski@hdrinc.com

hdrinc.com/follow-us

From: Sedarski, Joe

Sent: Monday, October 2, 2023 10:16 AM

To: Matt Ledvina <mattledvina@comcast.net>

Cc: Randy Westman <rwestman18@gmail.com>; Sherri Nachtigal <sherri.nachtigal@pca.state.mn.us>; Heine, Ellen L <ellen.l.heine@xcelenergy.com>; Fordice, Randy L <Randy.L.Fordice@xcelenergy.com>; Stevenson, Grant D <grant.stevenson@xcelenergy.com>; contact@mankatomississippirivertransmission.com

Subject: RE: Mankato-Mississippi River Transmission Project (MMRTP) -Summit Demolition Landfill

Hi Matt – good to speak with you too about MMRTP and the closed landfill. When Ellen returns to the office a week from today we'll review meeting days/times and circle back you (and others on Sherri's initial email) with more details on times for this.

Thanks again for your time this morning,

Joe

Joe Sedarski, PE, JD

Sr. Environmental PM / Sr. Technical Advisor

HDR

1601 Utica Avenue South, Suite 600

St. Louis Park, MN 55416-3400

D 763.591.6684 **M** 612.214.6658

Joe.Sedarski@hdrinc.com

From: Matt Ledvina <mattledvina@comcast.net>
Sent: Monday, October 2, 2023 10:10 AM
To: Sedarski, Joe <Joe.Sedarski@hdrinc.com>
Cc: Randy Westman <rwestman18@gmail.com>; Sherri Nachtigal <sherri.nachtigal@pca.state.mn.us>
Subject: Mankato-Mississippi River Transmission Project (MMRTP) -Summit Demolition Landfill

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Hi Joe,

Good to speak with you this morning concerning the project and the proposed route through the Summit Demolition Landfill site. As I indicated, I am assisting Randy Westman with the ongoing post-closure activities for the site. I was previously involved (from 1987) in the site operations and solid waste permitting/compliance when the site was being actively developed.

Randy and I would be available for a meeting during the week of October 16 to review the new project as it relates to the site. An in-person meeting in Mankato would be preferred.

Thanks,

Matthew Ledvina, P.E.
Gestalt Engineering, LLC
612 669-8589



----- Original Message -----

From: Randy Westman <rwestman18@gmail.com>
To: Matt Ledvina <mattledvina@comcast.net>
Date: 09/30/2023 9:51 AM CDT
Subject: Fwd: Mankato-Mississippi River Transmission Project (MMRTP) - follow up to your comments

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Sedarski, Joe" <>
Date: September 29, 2023 at 6:36:34 PM CDT
To: "Nachtigal, Sherri (She/Her/Hers) (MPCA)" <sherri.nachtigal@state.mn.us>
Cc: "Heine, Ellen L" <ellen.l.heine@xcelenergy.com>, "Bentz, Nick" <Nicholas.Bentz@hdrinc.com>, contact@mankatomississippirivertransmission.com, "Fordice, Randy L" <Randy.L.Fordice@xcelenergy.com>, "Stevenson, Grant D" <grant.stevenson@xcelenergy.com>, "Lundstrom, Justin J" <justin.j.lundstrom@xcelenergy.com>, "Delaney, Chelsea (MPCA)"

<Chelsea.Delaney@state.mn.us>, rwestman18@gmail.com

Subject: RE: Mankato-Mississippi River Transmission Project (MMRTP) - follow up to your comments

Thanks very much for this information and schedules Sherri.

I'll follow up with you on meeting dates on Monday Oct 9th when Ellen returns to office and we can confirm a date and time then with folks here.

Have a great weekend,

Joe

Joe Sedarski, PE, JD

Sr. Environmental PM / Sr. Technical Advisor

HDR

1601 Utica Avenue South, Suite 600

St. Louis Park, MN 55416-3400

D 763.591.6684 **M** 612.214.6658

Joe.Sedarski@hdrinc.com

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From: Nachtigal, Sherri (She/Her/Hers) (MPCA) <sherri.nachtigal@state.mn.us>

Sent: Friday, September 29, 2023 4:01 PM

To: Sedarski, Joe <Joe.Sedarski@hdrinc.com>

Cc: Heine, Ellen L <ellen.l.heine@xcelenergy.com>; Bentz, Nick <Nicholas.Bentz@hdrinc.com>; contact@mankatomississippirivertransmission.com;

Fordice, Randy L <Randy.L.Fordice@xcelenergy.com>; Stevenson, Grant D

<grant.stevenson@xcelenergy.com>; Lundstrom, Justin J

<justin.j.lundstrom@xcelenergy.com>; Delaney, Chelsea (MPCA)

<Chelsea.Delaney@state.mn.us>; rwestman18@gmail.com

Subject: RE: Mankato-Mississippi River Transmission Project (MMRTP) - follow up to your comments

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Hi,

I'm available on either date, but not between 1-2:30pm. I can attend a virtual meeting only.

The MPCA hydrologist should also be invited (Chelsea Delaney). I've added her to this email chain, and she appears to also be available on the 9th and the 16th. Please include her on the meeting invite.

Also, the landowner should be available for the meeting. His name is Randall Westman, representing Lime Valley Greenhill, LLC. His email is rwestman18@gmail.com which I've also added to this email chain. He has a consultant that he works with, but he will need to provide you with that information if he wants him included in the meeting.

Existing rules related to postclosure are at the following links:

<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/rules/7035.2645/>

<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/rules/7035.2655/>

The existing Closure Document is over 27MB in size so I'm unable to attach it to this email (our limit is 25 MB). We are in the process of amending the document. Also, the Closure Certification Report that has additional information is over 42 MB in size.

I will work with file staff to prepare a 'file share' for these documents so that you can retrieve them electronically.

Sherri Nachtigal, P.E. |she, her, hers

Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) - Rochester

Resource Management and Assistance Division

7381 Airport View Dr SW | Rochester, MN | 55902

Voice Phone: 507-206-2600 | Cell Phone: 507-251-7665

Email: sherri.nachtigal@state.mn.us | www.pca.state.mn.us



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From: Sedarski, Joe <Joe.Sedarski@hdrinc.com>
Sent: Friday, September 29, 2023 3:24 PM
To: Nachtigal, Sherri (She/Her/Hers) (MPCA) <sherri.nachtigal@state.mn.us>
Cc: Heine, Ellen L <ellen.l.heine@xcelenergy.com>; Bentz, Nick <Nicholas.Bentz@hdrinc.com>; contact@mankatomississippirivertransmission.com;
Fordice, Randy L <Randy.L.Fordice@xcelenergy.com>; Stevenson, Grant D <grant.stevenson@xcelenergy.com>; Lundstrom, Justin J <justin.j.lundstrom@xcelenergy.com>
Subject: Mankato-Mississippi River Transmission Project (MMRTP) - follow up to your comments

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Good afternoon Ms. Nachtigal,

HDR is working with Ellen and others on the Xcel Energy team for the MMRTP Project. We appreciate receiving your comments regarding the MMRTP proposed project located in south-central/eastern Minnesota via the Project web portal. We did receive your map/figure indicating the proposed transmission line route option (highlighted orange) and we are wondering if you have GIS or a kmz of the landfill area as well that you could share with us. We can include that in our GIS data and evaluate this more closely with you.

Also, if you can share any other information concerning restrictions or other land use requirements for the landfill area, copy of the applicable property deed(s), etc., we appreciate that as well.

Finally, we would like to set up an hour meeting to go over this with you and provide more information regarding the overall Project and permitting matters. Do you have availability the week of Oct 9th or Oct 16th (and if so, please send us some dates/times that work for you). We can set up a virtual or in-person meeting from there.

Thanks again for your review of this and time to further discuss!

Have a great weekend,

Joe

Copy of comments from web portal –

Hi,

I submitted an online comment on the MM RTP website. I'm following up with this email to provide my contact information, and discuss that the orange transmission line in the red box below. It is currently shown crossing a permitted closed unlined demolition landfill known as the Summit Ave. Demo Landfill, SW-387. Since this is a landfill regulated by MPCA, any disturbance of the final cover or use of the landfill that is different from what has been previously approved must be additionally reviewed and approved by MPCA. Updated plans for any modification along with the appropriate modification forms need to be submitted for this review. Subsequently, the information previously filed with the property deed will need to be amended, and resubmitted to MPCA. I am working on revising the current Closure Document, so any amendments to current plans can be included with that if the timing works out.

We now know through groundwater monitoring that unlined landfilling of construction and demolition waste causes groundwater impacts. MPCA is currently working on updated construction and demolition landfill rules that will be more protective of human health and the environment. Maintaining the cover systems on landfills already closed is important in being able to shed surface waters and reducing how much precipitation passes through the waste. MPCA will assess any future changes at the landfill to ensure the integrity of the cover remains intact.

Please contact me if you need any additional information.

Hi, I'm a solid waste permit engineer for the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. The proposed route shows the power line crossing a closed unlined demolition landfill. This is the Summit Avenue Demolition Landfill, SW-387. It is regulated by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. Any disturbance of the cover or change in its post-closure use must be approved by MPCA prior to any activity to ensure the use/activity won't potentially cause an increased impact to groundwater. It's the landowner's duty (i.e. Randy Westman) to provide information to MPCA and get our approval for any changes to the closed facility. Please contact me if you need any further information regarding the demolition landfill: Sherri Nachtigal, 507-251-7665, sherri.nachtigal@state.mn.us

Joe Sedarski, PE, JD

Sr. Environmental PM / Sr. Technical Advisor

HDR

1601 Utica Avenue South, Suite 600

St. Louis Park, MN 55416-3400

D 763.591.6684 **M** 612.214.6658

Joe.Sedarski@hdrinc.com

hdrinc.com/follow-us



Sedarski, Joe

From: Heine, Ellen L <Ellen.L.Heine@xcelenergy.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 16, 2024 12:20 PM
To: Johnson, Jeff; Vogel, Paul; John N. Peterson
Cc: Fordice, Randy L; Stevenson, Grant D; Lundstrom, Justin J; Sedarski, Joe; Schultz, Kyle; Sturos, Alec; todd.obermoeller@powereng.com; Lyon, Jesse W; Thill, Anna M
Subject: RE: Mankato Airport / Xcel Energy MMRT Project

CAUTION: [EXTERNAL] This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Understood. Thanks for letting us know.

Ellen Heine
Xcel Energy

P: 612.330.6073 **C:** 651-247-0957
E: ellen.l.heine@xcelenergy.com

From: Johnson, Jeff <jjohnson@mankatomn.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, January 16, 2024 10:16 AM
To: Heine, Ellen L <Ellen.L.Heine@xcelenergy.com>; Vogel, Paul <pvogel@mankatomn.gov>; John N. Peterson <john.peterson@tkda.com>
Cc: Fordice, Randy L <Randy.L.Fordice@xcelenergy.com>; Stevenson, Grant D <grant.stevenson@xcelenergy.com>; Lundstrom, Justin J <Justin.J.Lundstrom@xcelenergy.com>; Sedarski, Joe <Joe.Sedarski@hdrinc.com>; Schultz, Kyle <kyleschultz@mankatomn.gov>; Sturos, Alec <alec.sturos@powereng.com>; todd.obermoeller@powereng.com; Lyon, Jesse W <Jesse.W.Lyon@xcelenergy.com>; Thill, Anna M <Anna.M.Thill@xcelenergy.com>
Subject: RE: Mankato Airport / Xcel Energy MMRT Project

EXTERNAL - STOP & THINK before opening links and attachments.

Good morning Ellen,

Thank you for contacting me last week. Unfortunately we do not wish to amend the avigation easements along 230th Street.

Jeffrey E. Johnson

Director of Public Works / City Engineer

City of Mankato

Intergovernmental Center | 10 Civic Center Plaza | Mankato, MN 56001

Office: (507) 387-8640 | **Mobile:** (507) 995-6389

Signal/WhatsApp: +1 (507) 995-6389



Leading the way as a prosperous, diverse, regional community.
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From: Heine, Ellen L <Ellen.L.Heine@xcelenergy.com>

Sent: Friday, January 12, 2024 3:14 PM

To: Johnson, Jeff <jjohnson@mankatomn.gov>; Vogel, Paul <pvogel@mankatomn.gov>; John N. Peterson <john.peterson@tkda.com>

Cc: Fordice, Randy L <Randy.L.Fordice@xcelenergy.com>; Stevenson, Grant D <grant.stevenson@xcelenergy.com>; Lundstrom, Justin J <Justin.J.Lundstrom@xcelenergy.com>; Sedarski, Joe <Joe.Sedarski@hdrinc.com>; Schultz, Kyle <kyleschultz@mankatomn.gov>; Sturos, Alec <alec.sturos@powereng.com>; todd.obermoeller@powereng.com; Lyon, Jesse W <Jesse.W.Lyon@xcelenergy.com>; Thill, Anna M <Anna.M.Thill@xcelenergy.com>

Subject: RE: Mankato Airport / Xcel Energy MMRT Project

Caution: Think Security – This email originated from an external source. Be cautious with any links or attachments.

Jeff, John and Paul,

I just wanted to follow back up with you and close the loop on this. Since the avigation easements extend all the way to the northwest edge of Eagle Lake it looks like there is no opportunity for us to route a transmission line through there. We spent a little time looking into possible undergrounding the new 345 kV, but there are so many cost and reliability implications that it's not a viable option. The language in the avigation easements clearly would not allow for an above ground transmission line along 230th St. but I thought it would be important to check back in to see if there is any opportunity to amend the easements to allow for a line to follow the road there. It would be about 0.4 miles across easement lands and would be designed to meet FAA clearance requirements. I attached a map showing the location. I expect the answer is no, but just wanted to be sure to ask the question and not assume.

We do have a route alternative that cuts south and then follows the Sakatah Singing Hills trail where it cuts across the narrow part of Eagle Lake, but there are concerns with that option too, so I wanted to make sure I checked back on the off chance there's a way to use the north route. Below is a screenshot showing what that would look like, with some very messy red arrows I drew in to show that route option (the yellow lines are our existing 115 kV line 0832, which is undergrounded for that one span where it crosses at the SE corner of the airport). There's also an option that continues east along the trail rather than heading back north to the 115 kV corridor.

Let me know if you have questions or want to meet to discuss.

Thanks,

Ellen



Ellen Heine

Xcel Energy

P: 612.330.6073 C: 651-247-0957

E: ellen.l.heine@xcelenergy.com

From: Johnson, Jeff <jjohnson@mankatomn.gov>

Sent: Wednesday, October 25, 2023 11:46 AM

To: Heine, Ellen L <Ellen.L.Heine@xcelenergy.com>; John N. Peterson <john.peterson@tkda.com>; Sturos, Alec <alec.sturos@powereng.com>; todd.obermoeller@powereng.com; Lyon, Jesse W <Jesse.W.Lyon@xcelenergy.com>; Vogel, Paul <pvogel@mankatomn.gov>

Cc: Fordice, Randy L <Randy.L.Fordice@xcelenergy.com>; Stevenson, Grant D <grant.stevenson@xcelenergy.com>; Lundstrom, Justin J <Justin.J.Lundstrom@xcelenergy.com>; Sedarski, Joe <Joe.Sedarski@hdrinc.com>; Konz, Mark

<mkonz@mankatomn.gov>; Schultz, Kyle <kyleschultz@mankatomn.gov>

Subject: RE: Mankato Airport / Xcel Energy MMRT Project

Some people who received this message don't often get email from jjohnson@mankatomn.gov. [Learn why this is important](#)

EXTERNAL - STOP & THINK before opening links and attachments.

Good morning, Please see the attached avigation easements for the requested parcels from the ALP for the proposed MMRT Project. If you need any further information, please feel free to contact me at any time.

They all pretty much read the same as the following:

A perpetual avigation easement and right-of-way for the unobstructed and unrestricted flight of aircraft in, through and across the airspace over and above the following described tracts or parcels of land, at any altitude or height above the surface of such tracts, whereby the owners and occupants of such land, and all successors and assigns of such owners and occupants (hereinafter collectively called the "Owners") shall be precluded from erecting, maintaining, or allowing any building, structure or object to remain or be placed upon such land, provided that the Owners shall specifically retain the right to use such land for seasonal crop farming purposes, and whereby the Owners shall be precluded from using or suffering the lands to be used in such a manner as might attract or bring together an assembly of persons upon such land, excluding farming or harvesting activities, which avigation easement shall be subject to any and all existing easements of record; the right of the Owners to maintain, repair and replace fences existing upon such lands as of the 10th day of October, 1978; the right of the Owners to operate farm machinery upon such lands in connection with permitted farming activities; the right of the Owners to maintain, repair and replace all tile lines and drainage facilities existing upon such lands as of the 10th day of October, 1978. The responsibility for the removal of any trees not hereafter planted by the owners shall be that of the petitioner, and the cost of such removal shall be borne solely by the petitioner; and

Jeffrey E. Johnson

Director of Public Works / City Engineer

City of Mankato

Intergovernmental Center | 10 Civic Center Plaza | Mankato, MN 56001

Office: (507) 387-8640 | **Mobile:** (507) 995-6389

Signal/WhatsApp: +1 (507) 995-6389



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-----Original Appointment-----

From: Heine, Ellen L <Ellen.L.Heine@xcelenergy.com>

Sent: Wednesday, October 18, 2023 11:07 AM

To: Heine, Ellen L; John N. Peterson; Sturos, Alec; todd.obermoeller@powereng.com; Lyon, Jesse W; Johnson, Jeff; Vogel, Paul

Cc: Fordice, Randy L; Stevenson, Grant D; Lundstrom, Justin J; Sedarski, Joe; Konz, Mark; Schultz, Kyle

Subject: Mankato Airport / Xcel Energy MMRT Project

When: Wednesday, October 25, 2023 11:00 AM-11:50 AM (UTC-06:00) Central Time (US & Canada).

Where: Microsoft Teams Meeting

Caution: Think Security – This email originated from an external source. Be cautious with any links or attachments.

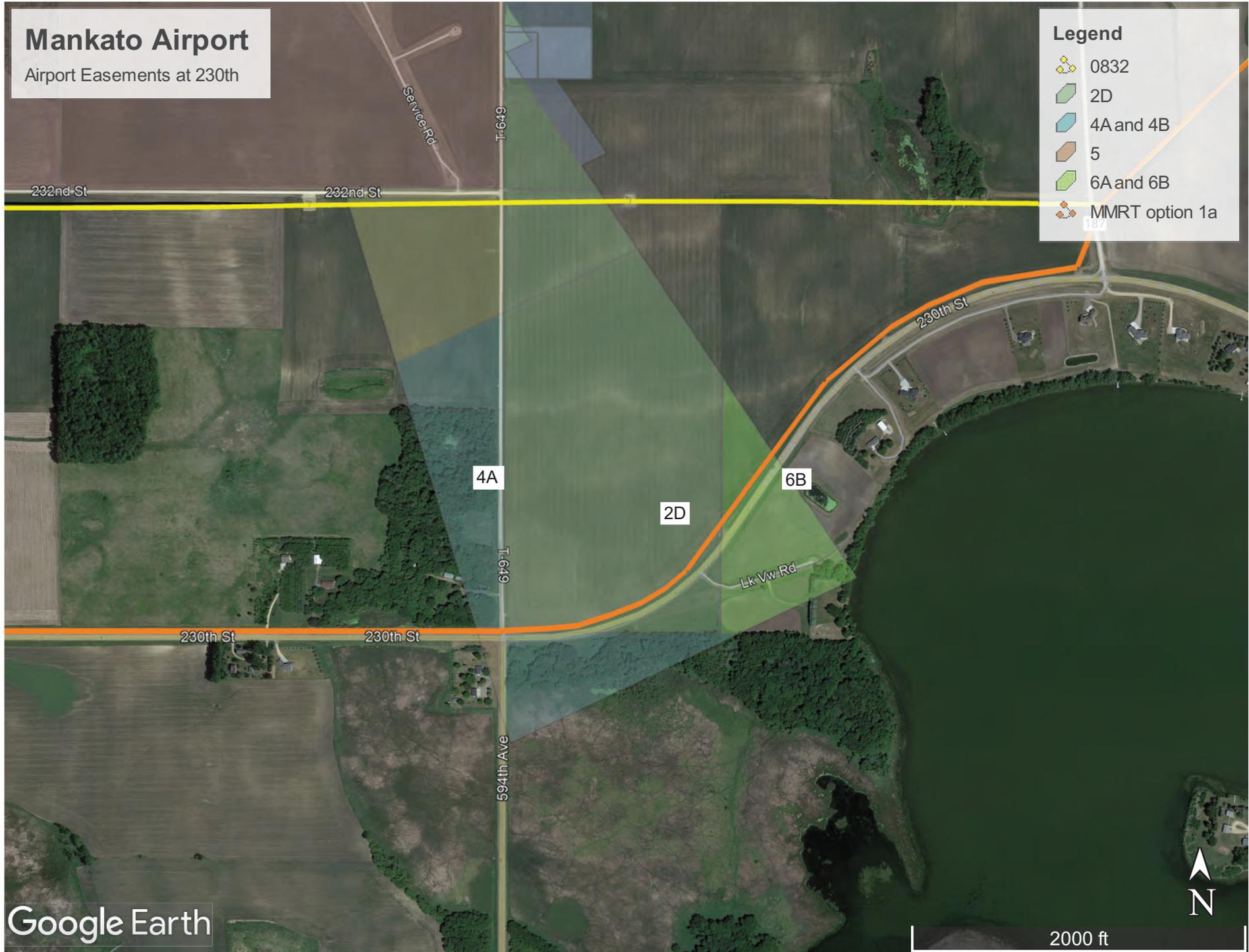
Hoping this time works for folks at the City. Please feel free to forward to anyone else who needs to attend.

Mankato Airport

Airport Easements at 230th

Legend

- 0832
- 2D
- 4A and 4B
- 5
- 6A and 6B
- MMRT option 1a



Google Earth

2000 ft

Concerns on XCEL Energy Mankato-Mississippi River Transmission Project by

Beth Proctor, Lime Township Supervisor phone:507-304-0487

Email:windsongarabiansws@gmail.com

AIRPORT SAFETY CONCERNS

The Mankato Airport is the base for a very successful aviation program at MN State University -Mankato.

This airport has the **second highest** number of touch and go (take off and landings) in Minnesota. Only Minneapolis/St. Paul Airport has more take off and landings by experienced pilots not students.

The high energy transmission line could possibly interfere with communication between planes and planes-ground. In addition, the preferred location for the control tower is close to the proposed transmission line.

The proposed transmission in proximity to the airport would increase the risk of accidents for students and other customers of the airport.

KARST GEOLOGY, LANDFILL AND DRINKING WATER

Karst is a special type of landscape that is formed as water dissolves rocks--mainly limestone--creating underground passageways. Surface water can quickly make its way below ground through the resulting cracks and crevices of the "Swiss Cheese" rock and water infiltration to groundwater is immediate.

The potential northern route from the Wilmarth substation goes through Lime Township. The township has a large amount of Karst within 10 Ft. of ground water. In Figure 1 Pollution Sensitivity Blue Earth County **the largest rust colored area is Lime Township** (<https://www.blueearthcountymn.gov/DocumentCenter/View/3407/WaterPlanUpdateSummary?bidId=>, map page 9; <https://www.pca.state.mn.us/water/karst-minnesota>).

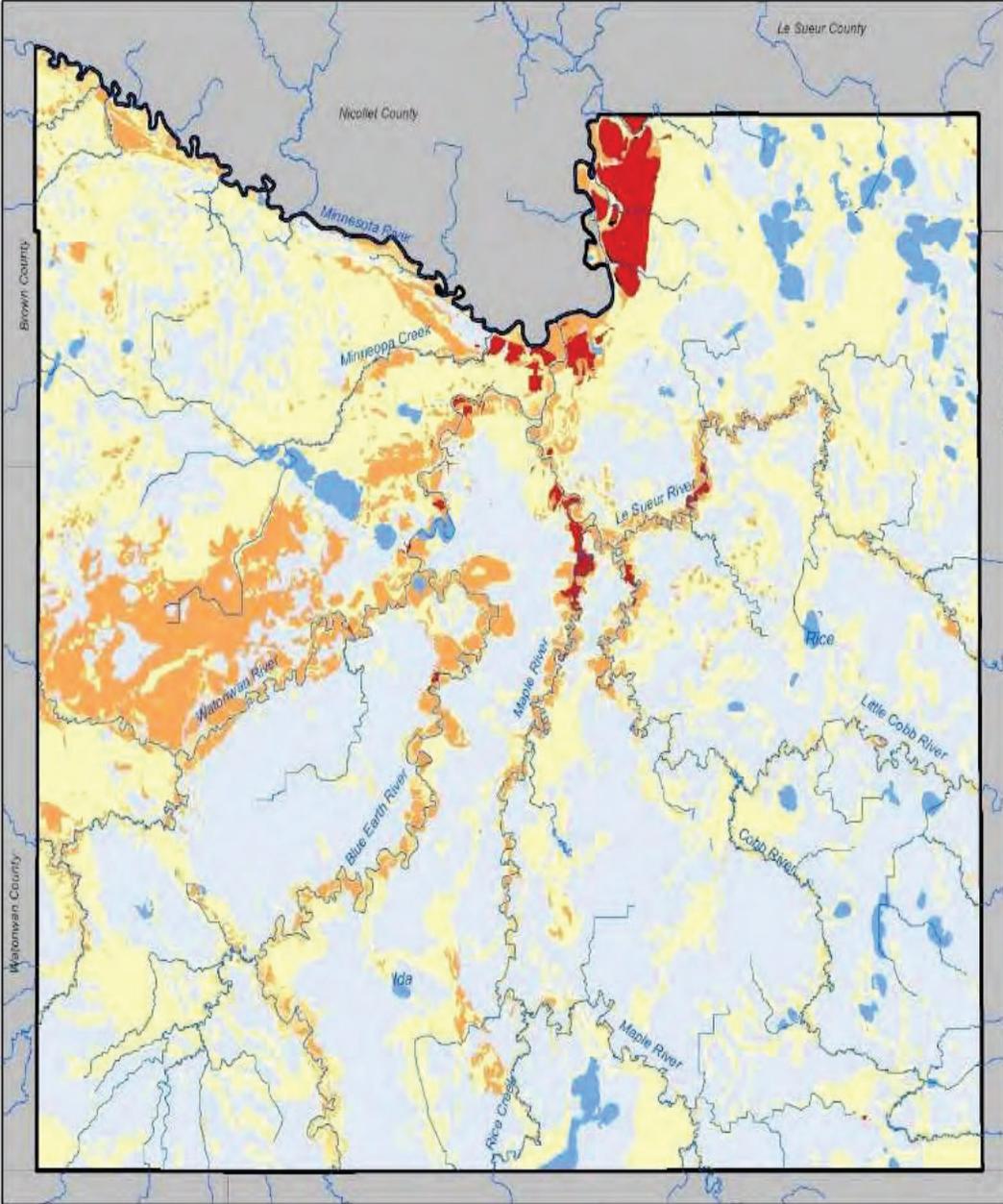
Groundwater is the source of drinking water in Lime Township. This karst area is directly over the Jordan Aquifer.

How deep do the supports for the transmission line go into the ground?

From the enlarged map I received at the open house, it appears that the transmission line is going across part of the Summit Avenue Demolition Landfill. WHY build a transmission line on top of/across or even close to a Landfill???? Will you puncture any liners or barriers allowing material to leak out?? Do you have information on this site?? What was allowed and what is the probability that material that WAS NOT allowed found its way into the site?

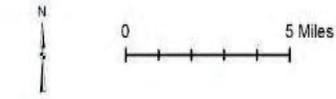
Installing a transmission line through/near a landfill and a karst geology area in general will just increase the potential for contamination of residents drinking water.

Pollution Sensitivity of Near-Surface Materials



Pollution Sensitivity: Estimated vertical travel time through near-surface materials

 High: hours to a week	 Karst ¹
 Moderate: a week to weeks	 Bedrock
 Low: weeks to months	 Water
 Very Low: months to a year	



Prepared By: Blue Earth County
2016

Source: Geologic Atlas of Blue Earth County - Part B
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
2016

¹ Karst allows a direct, very rapid exchange between surface water and groundwater and significantly increases groundwater contamination risk from surface pollutants.

This pollution sensitivity model assumes a 10-foot-deep water table and vertical travel of possible pollutants through unsaturated, near-surface materials.

https://www.pca.state.mn.us/sites/default/files/Evaluation-of-Emerging-Contaminant-Data-at-Solid-Waste-Facilities_02132020.pdf

ENVIRONMENTAL SENSITIVE AREAS in Lime Township

Lime Township contains Blue Earth County's only calcareous fen

https://files.dnr.state.mn.us/eco/wetlands/calcareous_fen_list.pdf

The Fen is located between 3rd Ave and the MN River, close to the path of the transmission line.

Calcareous fens are considered "rare, amazing and irreplaceable" by the MN DNR and are the most protected type of wetland in Minnesota.

(https://files.dnr.state.mn.us/natural_resources/water/wetlands/calcareous_fen_fact_sheet.pdf)

Endangered and threatened species found in the calcareous fen are listed below:

Hairy fimbry *Fimbristylis puberula* State endangered

Sterile sedge *Carex sterilis* State threatened

Hair-like beak rush *Rhynchospora capillacea* State threatened

Beaked spikerush *Eleocharis rostellata* State threatened

Whorled nutrush *Scleria verticillata* State threatened

Cut-leaf water parsnip *Berula erecta* State threatened

Edible valerian *Valeriana edulis* State threatened

Twig rush *Cladium mariscoides* State special concern

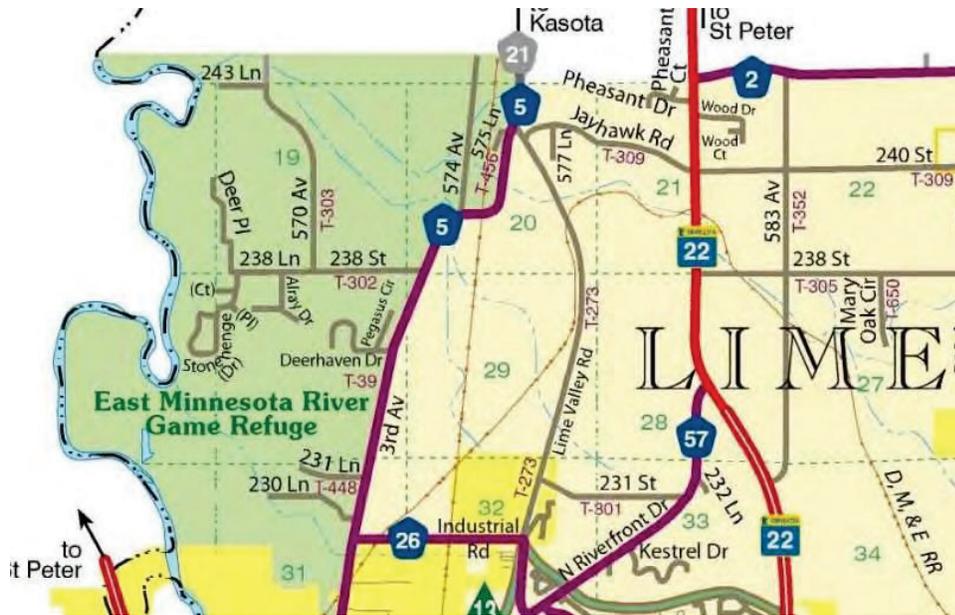
Small white lady's-slipper *Cypripedium candidum* State special concern

Wild sweet William *Phlox maculata* State special concern

https://files.dnr.state.mn.us/natural_resources/water/wetlands/calcareous_fen_fact_sheet.pdf

Approximately 2,500 acres of the township between the Minnesota River to 3rd Ave have been set aside as the Eastern Minnesota River Game Refuge (Figure 2) and has rare plants and 2 animals.

Figure 2 Game Refuge (extends into Le Sueur County)



Minutes

Project:	Xcel Energy, MM RTP		
Subject:	Meeting with Lime Township		
Date:	Tuesday, November 28, 2023		
Location:	Microsoft Teams Meeting		
Attendees:	Xcel Energy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Randy Fordice • Ellen Heine • Anna Thill 	HDR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joe Sedarski • Nick Bentz 	Lime Township <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beth Proctor • Karl

Agenda:

Primary concerns from Beth:

- DNR calcareous fen
 - Check project email inbox for contact info for DNR
- Landfill
- Airport

Updates/Actions Taken by Xcel Energy since open houses:

Xcel Energy met with MPCA

- Beth requests reaching out to Minnesota State Aviation program
 - Minnesota State University – Mankato
 - Impacted by the proposed route

Xcel Energy met with landfill owner

- We'll look to place structures in areas that were unmined area near the landfill
 - Line will likely be north along an existing corridor
- How deep will structures be placed?
 - Ellen: Still looking at options to reduce overall impacts
 - May look at other aspects that wouldn't require using large concrete platforms
 - Beth: Concerned about drinking water – Jordan aquifer
 - Landfill is leaking – according to Beth
 - Worried depth of structures would exacerbate issues
 - Concerns about reservoir (former quarry/former mining area) located just within the aquifer

Additional Areas to note

DNR game refuge

- From 3rd Ave to Minnesota River

Wetlands

- Located east of 3rd Ave, between railroad tracks and Lime Valley Road.

Action Items/Next Steps

- Reach out to Minnesota State University – Mankato to discuss any potential concerns with route near the Mankato Airport.

Sedarski, Joe

From: Sedarski, Joe
Sent: Saturday, February 24, 2024 10:55 AM
To: Sedarski, Joe
Subject: FW: MMRT Project Segment 4
Attachments: 01-2023 Resolution 2024-07.pdf

From: Heine, Ellen L <Ellen.L.Heine@xcelenergy.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 18, 2024 12:15 PM
To: Fordice, Randy L <Randy.L.Fordice@xcelenergy.com>; contact@mmrtproject.com; Sedarski, Joe <Joe.Sedarski@hdrinc.com>; Bentz, Nick <nicholas.bentz@hdrinc.com>
Subject: FW: MMRT Project Segment 4

CAUTION: [EXTERNAL] This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Ellen Heine
Xcel Energy
P: 612.330.6073 C: 651-247-0957
E: ellen.l.heine@xcelenergy.com

From: Dale Thomforde <superthomforde@aol.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 18, 2024 12:09 PM
To: Heine, Ellen L <Ellen.L.Heine@xcelenergy.com>
Cc: Sara Rudquist <cascadetownclerk@outlook.com>; oronocomn.township@gmail.com; Ryland Eichhorst <reichhorst@oronoco.com>
Subject: MMRT Project Segment 4

You don't often get email from superthomforde@aol.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

EXTERNAL - STOP & THINK before opening links and attachments.

Good morning Ellen,

Thank you for the presentation you and Randy gave to the Oronoco City Council last Tuesday evening. It was well done and informative.

Recently the Oronoco Town Board and Cascade Town Board adopted resolutions requesting the MMRT Project Route Permit application include at least one alternative for the new single circuit 161 KV line that essentially follows the existing CapX2020 transmission line route from the North Rochester Substation to the Chester Junction. This route would also alleviate the concerns the City of Oronoco has with the transmission line route cutting through their planned Lake Shady park.

Attached is a copy of the resolution adopted by the Cascade Town Board on January 8, 2024. I haven't yet received a copy of a similar resolution adopted by the Oronoco Town Board, but I will forward a copy to you after I receive it.

Using the CapX2020 line route has several advantages, including it requires the least mileage of construction and the least impact to local residents. This route would require about 16.2 miles of

construction of new 161 KV transmission line, while combinations of the Option 4 East and Option 4 West routes would require construction about 19.5 to 23.6 miles of transmission line.

My understanding is that the one of the main drawbacks of using the CapX2020 route is the crossing of Lake Zumbro. This was done previously with the larger 2x345 KV transmission lines, and the area where the crossing was made does appear to have space for another 100 feet easement for the construction of an additional 161 KV transmission line.

If there are additional people or agencies that I should notify of these resolutions by municipal bodies, please let me know and I will contact them. Until the application is filed, it is probably premature to contact any state agencies.

If you would like to further discuss issues any complications with essentially following the CapX2020 transmission line route, I am available any time.

Best regards,

Dale Thomforde
New Haven Township Supervisor
superthomforde@aol.com
507-226-1082

**RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF A
MMRT PROJECT SEGMENT 4 ROUTE**

Township, Olmsted County, Minnesota – Resolution #2024-01

WHEREAS, the Mankato-Mississippi River Transmission (MMRT) Project includes new and upgraded transmission lines, broken into four segments; and

WHEREAS, the MMRT Project Segment 4 includes about 20 miles of new single-circuit 161 kV transmission line (Segment 4) between the existing North Rochester Substation near Pine Island and an existing transmission line northeast of Rochester, which is being relocated from its existing alignment to install the new 345 kV infrastructure; and

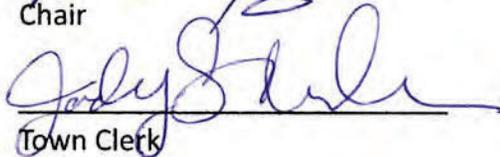
WHEREAS, the current Route Option 4 East and Route Option 4 West may impact New Haven Township, Oronoco Township, Cascade Township, Pine Island Township, Farmington Township, Haverhill Township, the City of Pine Island, and the City of Oronoco;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Oronoco Town Board supports including in the Route Permit application for the Segment 4 proposed transmission line with the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission, at least one alternative for the new single-circuit 161 kV line that includes essentially following the existing CapX2020 transmission line route from the North Rochester Substation to the Chester Junction.

Adopted by the Oronoco Town Board on the 8 day of January, 2024



Chair



Town Clerk

PROPOSED DRAFT TO BE CONSIDERED
RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF A
MMRT PROJECT SEGMENT 4 ROUTE

Cascade Township, Olmsted County, Minnesota – Resolution #2024-____

WHEREAS, the Mankato-Mississippi River Transmission (MMRT) Project includes new and upgraded transmission lines, broken into four segments; and

WHEREAS, the MMRT Project Segment 4 includes about 20 miles of new single-circuit 161 kV transmission line (Segment 4) between the existing North Rochester Substation near Pine Island and an existing transmission line northeast of Rochester, which is being relocated from its existing alignment to install the new 345 kV infrastructure; and

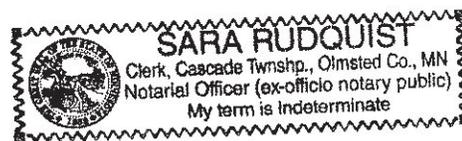
WHEREAS, the current Route Option 4 East and Route Option 4 West may impact New Haven Township, Oronoco Township, Cascade Township, Pine Island Township, Farmington Township, Haverhill Township, the City of Pine Island, and the City of Oronoco;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Cascade Town Board supports including in the Route Permit application for the Segment 4 proposed transmission line with the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission, at least one alternative for the new single-circuit 161 kV line that includes essentially following the existing CapX2020 transmission line route from the North Rochester Substation to the Chester Junction.

Adopted by the Cascade Town Board on this ETB day of January, 2024.

Supervisor Michael Black

Attest: Sara Rudquist
Clerk



Sedarski, Joe

From: Sedarski, Joe
Sent: Saturday, February 24, 2024 10:59 AM
To: Sedarski, Joe
Subject: FW: MMRT Project Segment 4
Attachments: Pine Island Twsp Resolution re segment 4 route.pdf

From: Dale Thomforde <superthomforde@aol.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 25, 2024 8:04 AM
To: Heine, Ellen L <Ellen.L.Heine@xcelenergy.com>
Cc: rmiller@bevcomm.com; dandharndt@gmail.com
Subject: Re: MMRT Project Segment 4

You don't often get email from superthomforde@aol.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

EXTERNAL - STOP & THINK before opening links and attachments.

Good morning,

Attached is a copy of the resolution adopted by the Pine Island Township Town Board on January 23, 2024.

You should now have copies of similar resolutions from Cascade Township, Oronoco Township, and Pine Island Township.

If there are any questions, please contact me any time.

Best regards,

Dale Thomforde
New Haven Township Supervisor
superthomforde@aol.com
507-226-1082

On Thursday, January 18, 2024 at 12:09:15 PM CST, Dale Thomforde <superthomforde@aol.com> wrote:

Good morning Ellen,

Thank you for the presentation you and Randy gave to the Oronoco City Council last Tuesday evening. It was well done and informative.

Recently the Oronoco Town Board and Cascade Town Board adopted resolutions requesting the MMRT Project Route Permit application include at least one alternative for the new single circuit 161 KV line that essentially follows the existing CapX2020 transmission line route from the North Rochester Substation to the Chester Junction. This route would also alleviate the concerns the City of Oronoco has with the transmission line route cutting through their planned Lake Shady park.

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My understanding is that the one of the main drawbacks of using the CapX2020 route is the crossing of Lake Zumbro. This was done previously with the larger 2x345 KV transmission lines, and the area where the crossing was made does appear to have space for another 100 feet easement for the construction of an additional 161 KV transmission line.

If there are additional people or agencies that I should notify of these resolutions by municipal bodies, please let me know and I will contact them. Until the application is filed, it is probably premature to contact any state agencies.

If you would like to further discuss issues any complications with essentially following the CapX2020 transmission line route, I am available any time.

Best regards,

Dale Thomforde
New Haven Township Supervisor
superthomforde@aol.com
507-226-1082

PROPOSED DRAFT TO BE CONSIDERED
RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF A
MMRT PROJECT SEGMENT 4 ROUTE

Pine Island ^{Goodhue} Township, ~~Olsted~~ County, Minnesota – Resolution #2024-_____

WHEREAS, the Mankato-Mississippi River Transmission (MMRT) Project includes new and upgraded transmission lines, broken into four segments; and

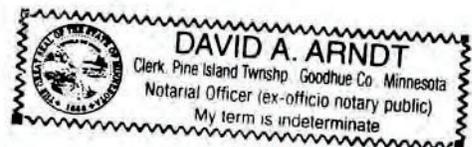
WHEREAS, the MMRT Project Segment 4 includes about 20 miles of new single-circuit 161 kV transmission line (Segment 4) between the existing North Rochester Substation near Pine Island and an existing transmission line northeast of Rochester, which is being relocated from its existing alignment to install the new 345 kV infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, the current Route Option 4 East and Route Option 4 West may impact New Haven Township, Oronoco Township, Cascade Township, Pine Island Township, Farmington Township, Haverhill Township, the City of Pine Island, and the City of Oronoco;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Pine Island Town Board supports including in the Route Permit application for the Segment 4 proposed transmission line with the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission, at least one alternative for the new single-circuit 161 kV line that includes essentially following the existing CapX2020 transmission line route from the North Rochester Substation to the Chester Junction.

Adopted by the Pine Island Town Board on this 13 day of JAN, 2024.

Don Butcher chair
David A. Arndt



Sedarski, Joe

From: Sedarski, Joe
Sent: Saturday, February 24, 2024 10:58 AM
To: Sedarski, Joe
Subject: FW: MMRT Project Segment 4
Attachments: Pine Island Twsp Resolution re segment 4 route.pdf; Oronoco Twsp signed Resolution in support of a MMRT project segment 4 route.pdf; 01-2023 Resolution 2024-07.pdf; Re: 161 kV alternatives/resolutions to follow CapX line

From: Dale Thomforde <superthomforde@aol.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 25, 2024 8:04 AM
To: Heine, Ellen L <Ellen.L.Heine@xcelenergy.com>
Cc: rmiller@bevcomm.com; dandharndt@gmail.com
Subject: Re: MMRT Project Segment 4

You don't often get email from superthomforde@aol.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

EXTERNAL - STOP & THINK before opening links and attachments.

Good morning,

Attached is a copy of the resolution adopted by the Pine Island Township Town Board on January 23, 2024.

You should now have copies of similar resolutions from Cascade Township, Oronoco Township, and Pine Island Township.

If there are any questions, please contact me any time.

Best regards,

Dale Thomforde
New Haven Township Supervisor

superthomforde@aol.com

507-226-1082

On Thursday, January 18, 2024 at 12:09:15 PM CST, Dale Thomforde <superthomforde@aol.com> wrote:

Good morning Ellen,

Thank you for the presentation you and Randy gave to the Oronoco City Council last Tuesday evening. It was well done and informative.

Recently the Oronoco Town Board and Cascade Town Board adopted resolutions requesting the MMRT Project Route Permit application include at least one alternative for the new single circuit 161

KV line that essentially follows the existing CapX2020 transmission line route from the North Rochester Substation to the Chester Junction. This route would also alleviate the concerns the City of Oronoco has with the transmission line route cutting through their planned Lake Shady park.

Attached is a copy of the resolution adopted by the Cascade Town Board on January 8, 2024. I haven't yet received a copy of a similar resolution adopted by the Oronoco Town Board, but I will forward a copy to you after I receive it.

Using the CapX2020 line route has several advantages, including it requires the least mileage of construction and the least impact to local residents. This route would require about 16.2 miles of construction of new 161 KV transmission line, while combinations of the Option 4 East and Option 4 West routes would require construction about 19.5 to 23.6 miles of transmission line.

My understanding is that the one of the main drawbacks of using the CapX2020 route is the crossing of Lake Zumbro. This was done previously with the larger 2x345 KV transmission lines, and the area where the crossing was made does appear to have space for another 100 feet easement for the construction of an additional 161 KV transmission line.

If there are additional people or agencies that I should notify of these resolutions by municipal bodies, please let me know and I will contact them. Until the application is filed, it is probably premature to contact any state agencies.

If you would like to further discuss issues any complications with essentially following the CapX2020 transmission line route, I am available any time.

Best regards,

Dale Thomforde
New Haven Township Supervisor

superthomforde@aol.com

507-226-1082

Sedarski, Joe

From: Dale Thomforde <superthomforde@aol.com>
Sent: Friday, January 26, 2024 1:48 PM
To: Heine, Ellen L
Subject: Re: 161 kV alternatives/resolutions to follow CapX line

You don't often get email from superthomforde@aol.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

EXTERNAL - STOP & THINK before opening links and attachments.

Thank you for your reply.

The existing CapX2020 route does go through a small section of the Prairie Island Indian Community property (PIDs 840622039648 and 840624039647).

It appears this could be avoided with a new 161 KV line by shifting the route to the east from the CapX2020 route around PIIC properties.

Thank you for your consideration of this alternative route.

Best regards,

Dale Thomforde
New Haven Township Supervisor
superthomforde@aol.com
507-226-1082

On Friday, January 26, 2024 at 09:49:37 AM CST, Heine, Ellen L <ellen.l.heine@xcelenergy.com> wrote:

Supervisor Thomforde,

Thank you for reaching out and sending the information regarding your community's recent resolutions (Pine Island Twp. Oronoco Twp., Cascade Twp.) requesting a route option for the new 161 KV project that would parallel the existing CapX2020 project.

During our route development process throughout 2023 we evaluated numerous options to relocate the 161 kV infrastructure (that currently resides on the existing CapX2020 infrastructure), including paralleling the existing transmission line. In recent months we have focused on other route options that appear to be more appropriate for the project, including an option along Highway 52 and another further to the west. We continue to have concerns about locating the new line alongside the existing route due to impacts to the Zumbro River crossing, proximity to existing homes, and other factors. But based on feedback from local governments in the area we will review the option again to determine if that route alternative is a viable option.

As part of the application, we include the feedback we received from landowners, stakeholders and local governments about route alternatives, and that will include discussion of the recommendations to parallel the CapX2020 infrastructure for this portion of the project.

Thanks again for your input and participation, and please let us know if there are any additional questions we can answer.

Ellen

Ellen Heine
Xcel Energy

Principal Siting and Permitting Agent

414 Nicollet Mall, 414-6A, Minneapolis, MN 55401
P: 612.330.6073 C: 651-247-0957

E: ellen.l.heine@xcelenergy.com



COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE AGENDA

COUNTY BOARD ROOM
GOVERNMENT CENTER
RED WING, MN

JANUARY 16, 2024
8:30 A.M.

Join on your computer, mobile app or room device

[Click here to join the meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 266 673 214 074
Passcode: wknxqK

OR CALL IN
[+1 872-240-8960,,925976225#](#)

PHONE CONFERENCE ID: 925 976 225#

Mankato-Mississippi River Transmission Line Project

Documents:

[MMRT_Presentation_Goodhue_1-9-2024.pdf](#)

From: [Benck, Andrea](#)
To: [Heine, Ellen L](#); [Fordice, Randy L](#)
Cc: [Lexvold, Ross L](#)
Subject: RE: Xcel Energy presentation
Date: Wednesday, January 10, 2024 9:03:36 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

EXTERNAL - STOP & THINK before opening links and attachments.

Good morning- Yes, I just published the agenda/packet. You are the only item presenting at the 8:30 a.m. meeting.

Below is a link to the agenda/packet:

<https://co.goodhue.mn.us/AgendaCenter/ViewFile/Agenda/1799?html=true>



Andrea Benck, *She/Her* | Assistant to the Administrator
Administration | 509 W. 5th Street Red Wing, MN 55066
P: 651-385-3251 | **E:** andrea.benck@co.goodhue.mn.us
[Facebook](#) | [Jobs](#)

From: Heine, Ellen L <Ellen.L.Heine@xcelenergy.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 10, 2024 9:01 AM
To: Benck, Andrea <andrea.benck@co.goodhue.mn.us>; Fordice, Randy L <Randy.L.Fordice@xcelenergy.com>
Cc: Lexvold, Ross L <Ross.L.Lexvold@xcelenergy.com>
Subject: RE: Xcel Energy presentation

Thanks Andrea,

Is there an agenda? Or should we assume we are “on” at 8:30?

Ellen

Ellen Heine
Xcel Energy
P: 612.330.6073 **C:** 651-247-0957
E: ellen.l.heine@xcelenergy.com

From: Benck, Andrea <andrea.benck@co.goodhue.mn.us>
Sent: Wednesday, January 10, 2024 8:52 AM
To: Fordice, Randy L <Randy.L.Fordice@xcelenergy.com>
Cc: Lexvold, Ross L <Ross.L.Lexvold@xcelenergy.com>; Heine, Ellen L <Ellen.L.Heine@xcelenergy.com>
Subject: RE: Xcel Energy presentation

EXTERNAL - STOP & THINK before opening links and attachments.

Great! Thanks Randy. The Committee of the Whole meeting starts at 8:30 a.m. and is in the county board room.



Andrea Benck, *She/Her* | Assistant to the Administrator
Administration | 509 W. 5th Street Red Wing, MN 55066
P: 651-385-3251 | **E:** andrea.benck@co.goodhue.mn.us
[Facebook](#) | [Jobs](#)

From: Fordice, Randy L <Randy.L.Fordice@xcelenergy.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 10, 2024 8:20 AM
To: Benck, Andrea <andrea.benck@co.goodhue.mn.us>
Cc: Lexvold, Ross L <Ross.L.Lexvold@xcelenergy.com>; Heine, Ellen L <Ellen.L.Heine@xcelenergy.com>
Subject: Xcel Energy presentation

You don't often get email from randy.l.fordice@xcelenergy.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

External Email - Use caution opening links or attachments!

Hi Andrea,

I've attached the presentation for next week's board meeting. Ellen Heine and Ross Lexvold will be there to deliver the presentation and answer any questions the board may have.

NOTICE: This e-mail and any files transmitted with it are intended only for the use and viewing of the individual or entity to which they are addressed. If you are not the intended recipient, please immediately notify the sender of the transmission error and then promptly delete this message from your computer system. Please be advised that e-mail correspondence to and from Goodhue County may be public data subject to the Minnesota Data Practices Act and may be disclosed to third parties.



Overview

January 2024

In Minnesota and the Upper Midwest

The Mankato-Mississippi River Transmission Project is one of several long-range transmission project identified by MISO, the regional grid operator, to support energy needs in Minnesota and throughout the region. Transmission line projects, like this one, strengthen the grid by:



TOP COMMENT TOPICS



Routing
122 Comments



Information Request
92 Comments



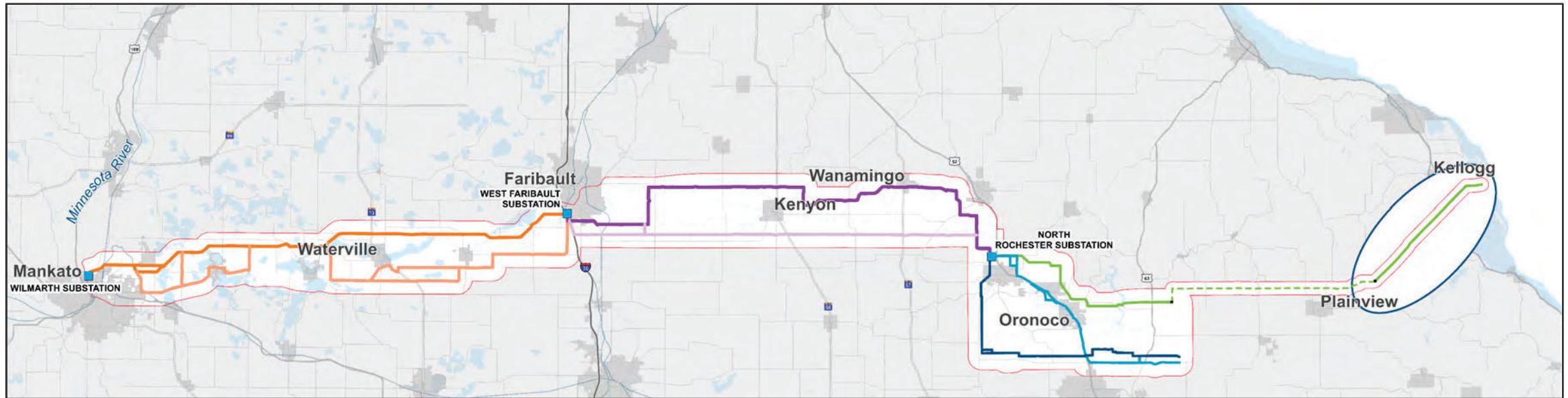
Proximity to
Homes/Structures
70 Comments



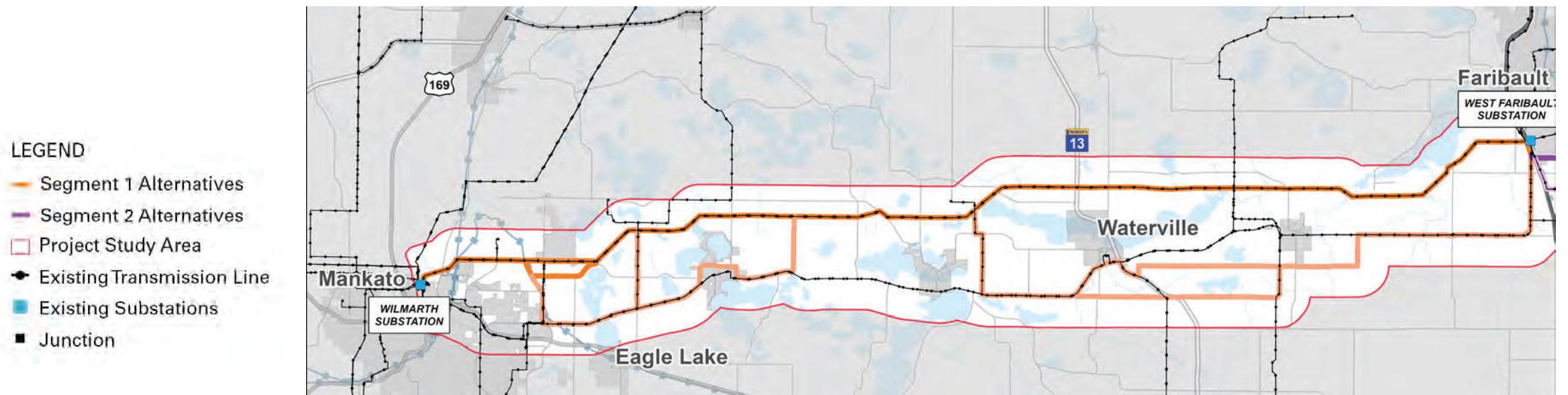
Environmental Impacts
35 Comments



General
20 Comments



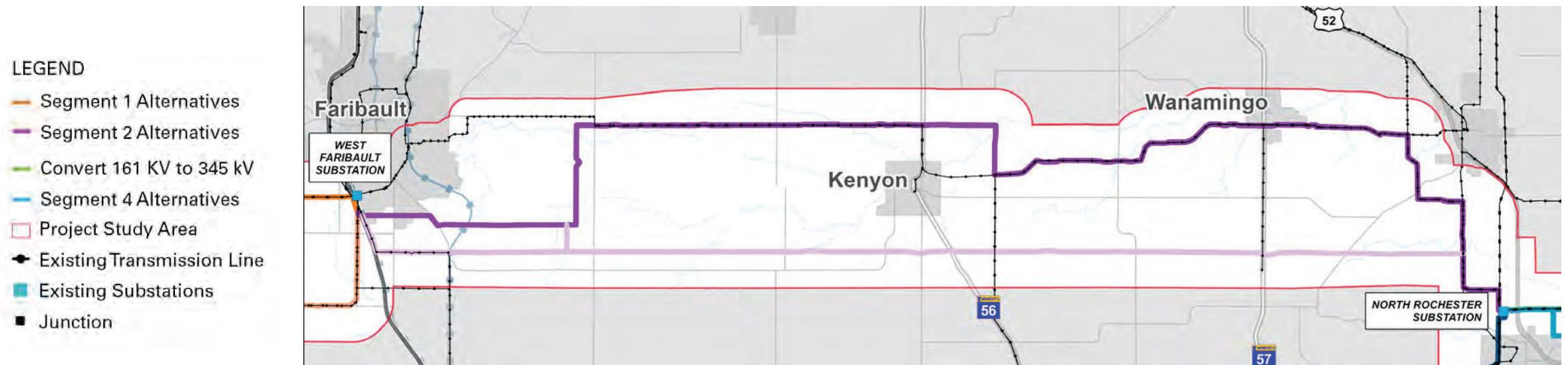
Build about 40 miles of 345 kV transmission lines in existing transmission corridors between the Wilmarth Substation in Mankato and the West Faribault Substation in Faribault.



Project Segments

Segment 2

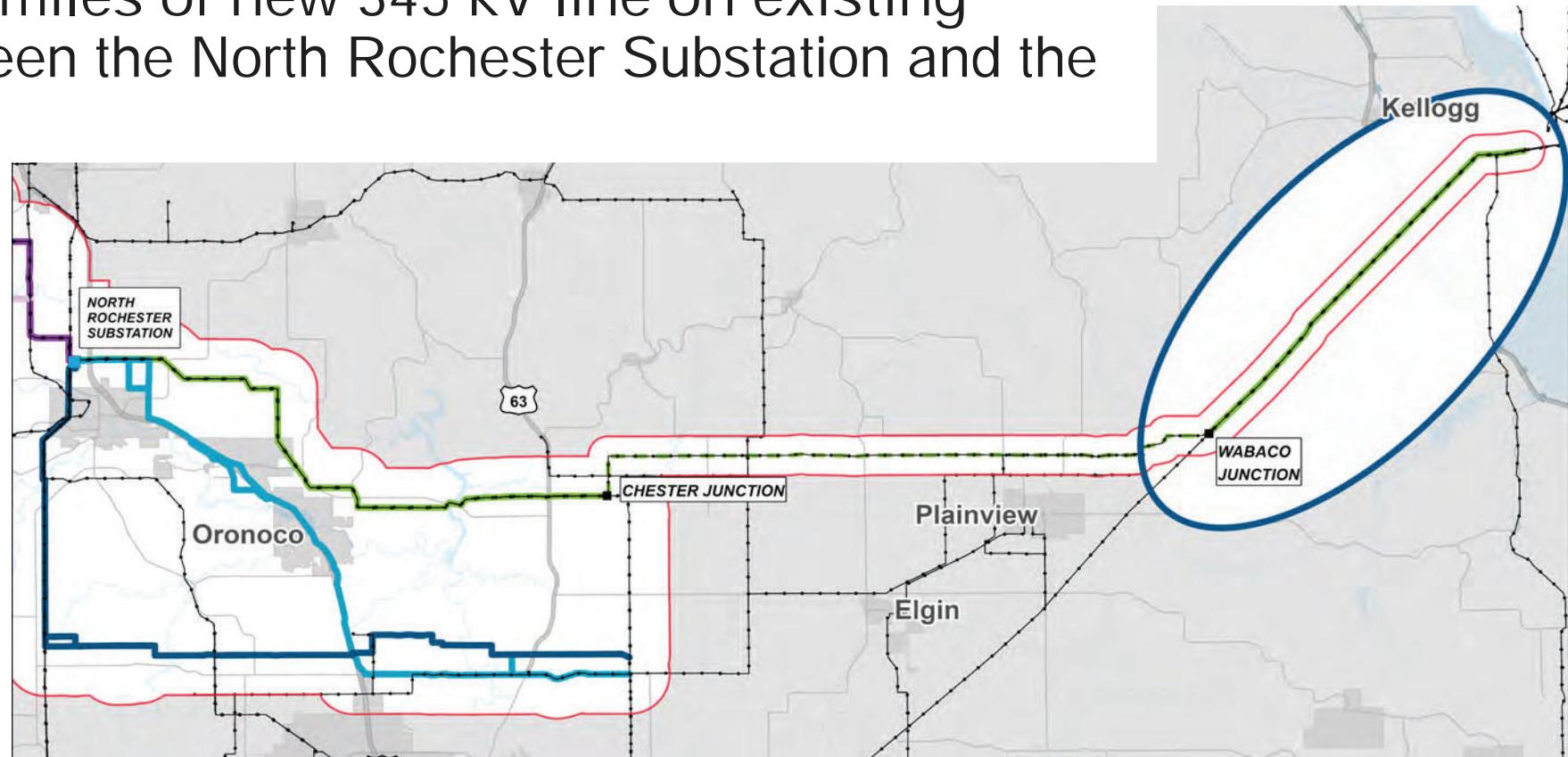
Build about 35-40 miles of 345 kV transmission lines in either a new corridor and/or in existing transmission corridors from near the West Faribault Substation to the North Rochester Substation near Pine Island.



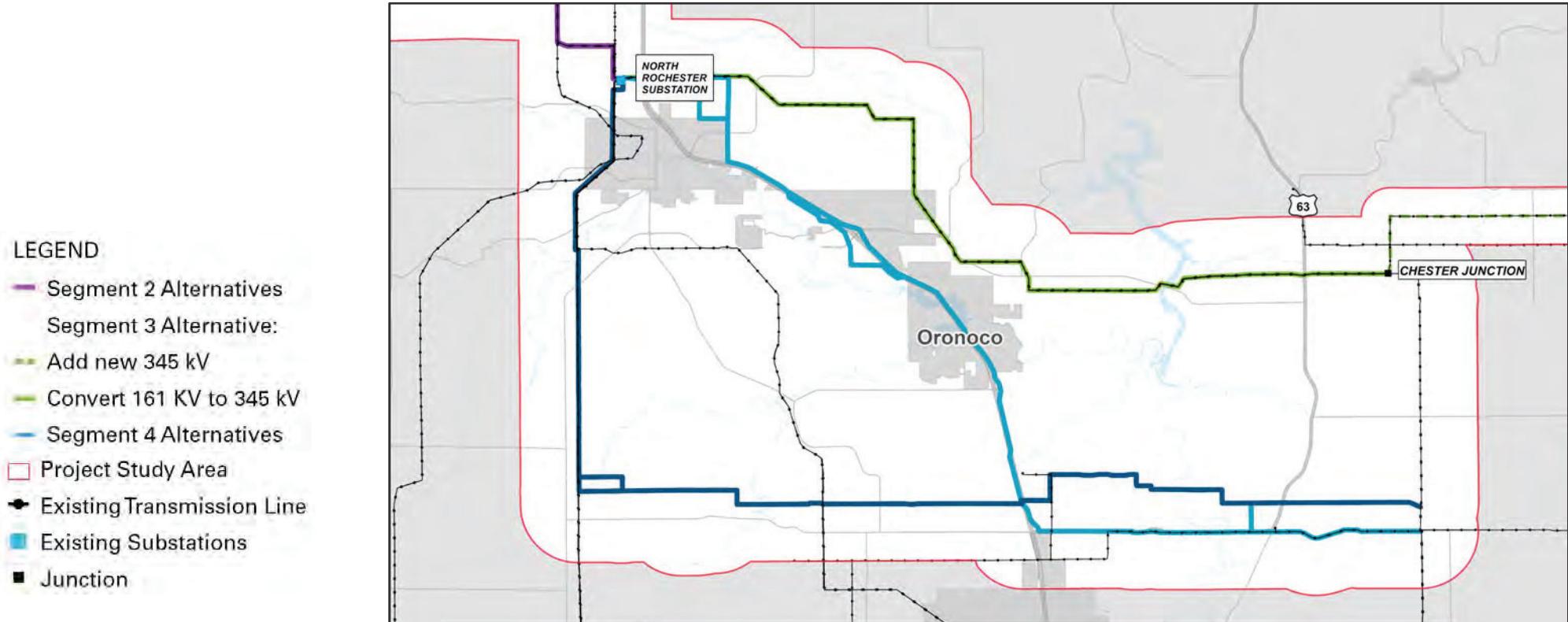
Convert about 26 miles of 161 kV line to 345 kV line and install about 16 miles of new 345 kV line on existing structures between the North Rochester Substation and the Mississippi River.

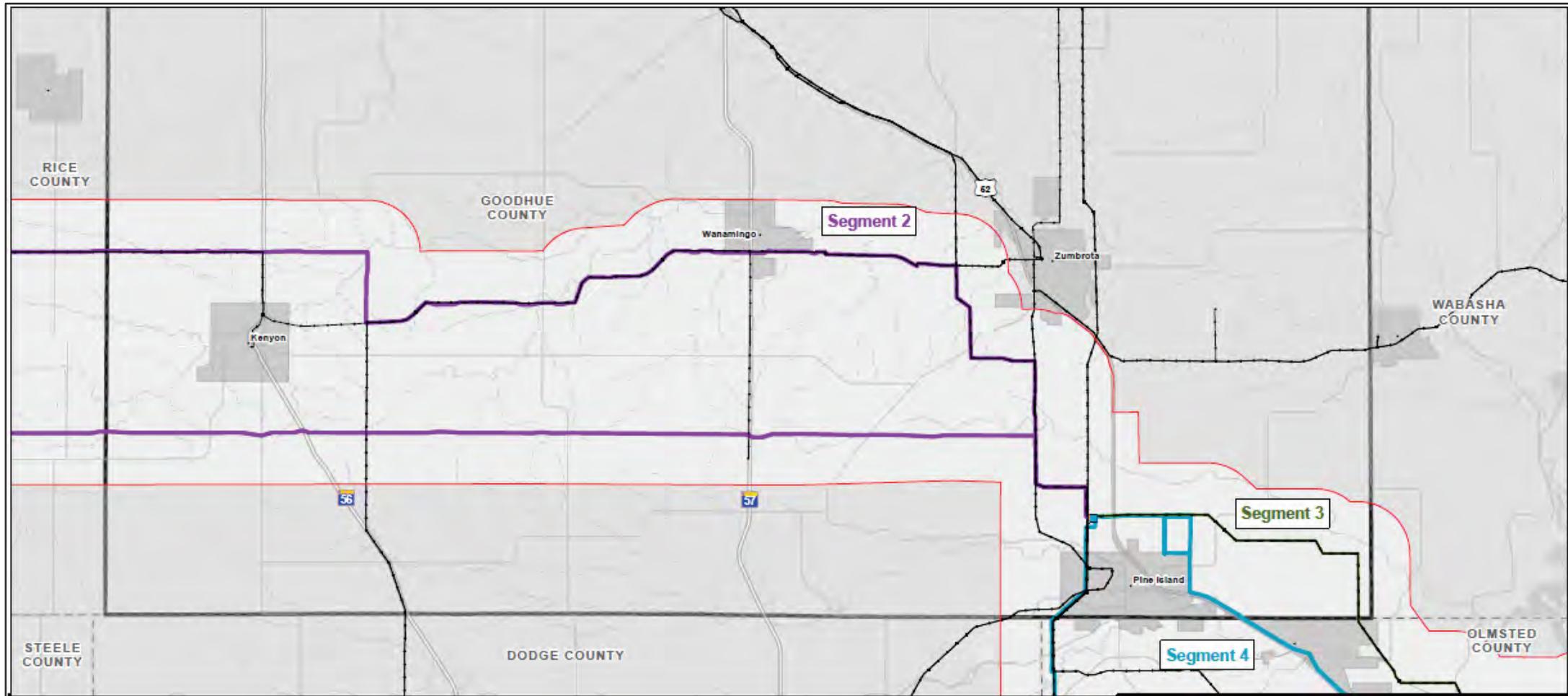
LEGEND

- Segment 2 Alternatives
- Segment 3 Alternative:
- Add new 345 kV
- Convert 161 KV to 345 kV
- Segment 4 Alternatives
- Project Study Area
- DPC 161 kV Alternatives Study Area
- Existing Transmission Line
- Existing Substations
- Junction



Build about 20 miles of a new single-circuit 161 kV line from the North Rochester Substation to an existing transmission line northeast of Rochester.





- Xcel Energy will develop and own the infrastructure in Segments 1 and 2.
- All project partners will participate in Segments 3 and 4.
- All segments will be permitted together.
- Dairyland Power will develop and permit a related project separately: the relocation of the 161 kV portion east of Plainview.





2022

- Project identified by MISO



2023

- Route development process begins
- Public and stakeholder engagement
- Preliminary engineering



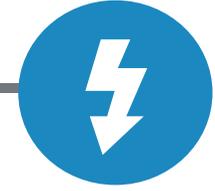
2024-2026

- Submit Certificate of Need and Route Permit Application
- Minnesota permitting review (including public engagement)
- Final engineering
- Negotiate with landowners to secure easements
- Obtain other required permits
- Continued public and stakeholder engagement



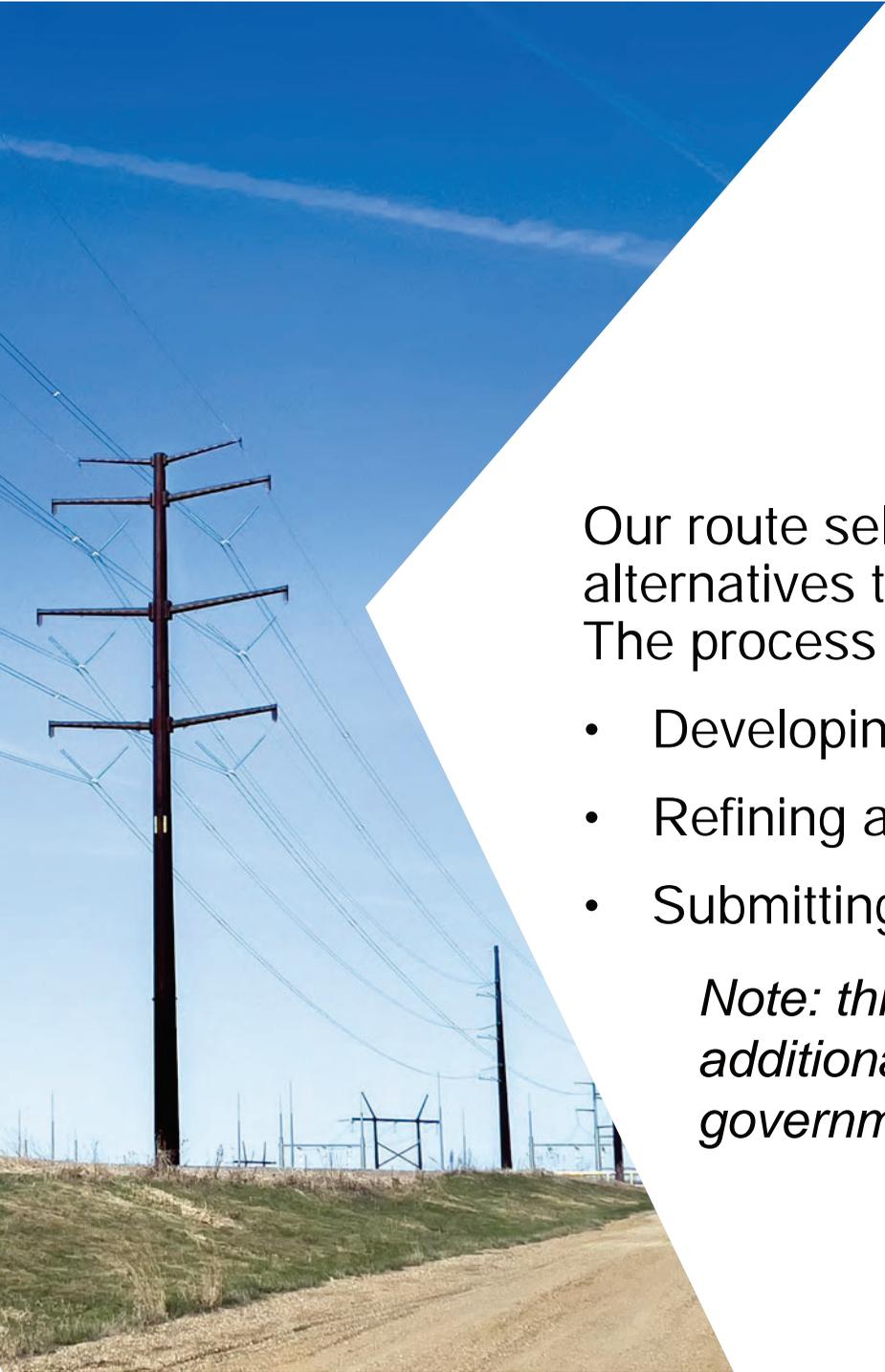
2026-2028

- Construction



2028

- In-service and restoration



Our route selection process is a multi-step analysis that identifies route alternatives that minimize impacts to humans and the environment.

The process generally includes:

- Developing preliminary route options.
- Refining and field verifying preliminary route options – we are here.
- Submitting proposed routes to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission.

Note: this process is flexible and steps may be revisited based on additional data and feedback from landowners, the public, local governments, Native American Tribes and resource agencies.

We expect to apply for a combined Certificate of Need and Route Permit with the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (PUC) in early 2024.

This describes why the project is needed, the issues building it will solve, and includes details such as engineering, operational details, environmental impacts and alternatives considered before submitting the application.

Route Permit Application

This type of project requires at least two feasible proposed routes. The application includes proposed routes, significant information about each route option, including construction, maintenance and operations considerations, the land use considerations that went into developing the route, and other factors that were evaluated.

Landowners, local officials and other stakeholders can also submit written comments to the PUC.

Following this process, the PUC will hold a public meeting to decide on the Certificate of Need and Route Permit, with a decision expected in 2024 or 2025. The PUC may select one option, or a combination of the options identified.

Easements are a permanent right authorizing a utility to use the Right-of-Way (ROW) to build and maintain a transmission line.

Landowners are paid fair market value for the easement and can continue to use the land for most purposes so long as their use does not interfere with the operation and maintenance of the transmission line.

Right-of-Way

A right-of-way (ROW) is the actual land area acquired for a specific purpose, such as a transmission line, roadway or other infrastructure.

Land uses in the easement area may be restricted based on types of activity, but after construction, agricultural activities can continue outside of the small area occupied by the transmission structures.

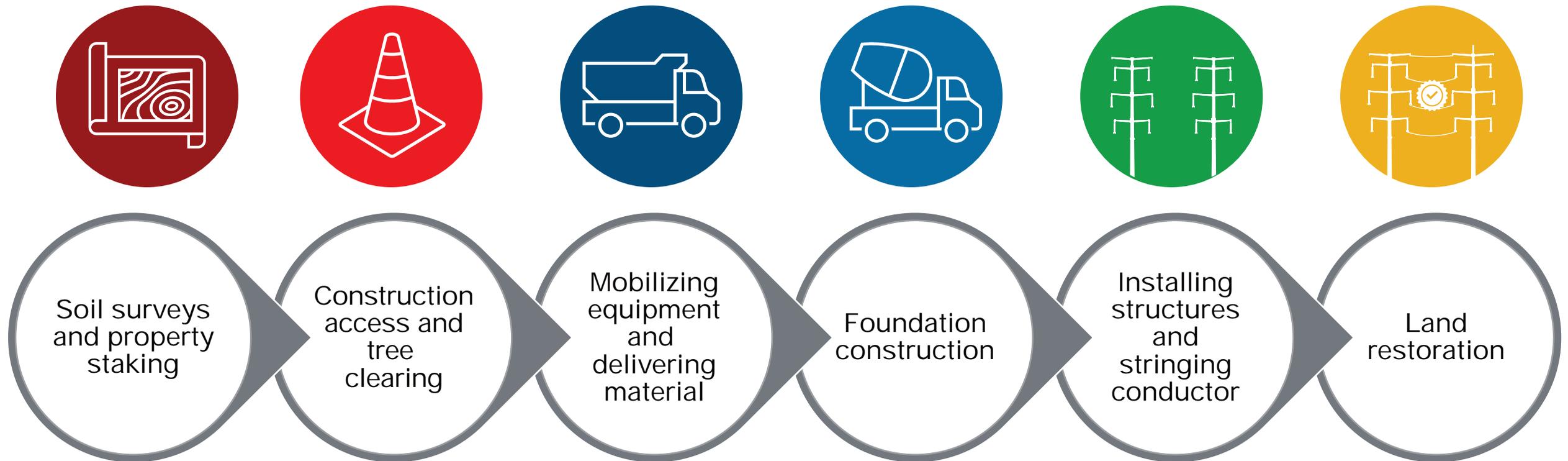


Our anticipated design includes:

- Steel transmission structures
- Single-pole style for most structures
- Typical pole height is 100-150 feet, depending on the terrain
- 345 kV segments
 - Typical ROW width is 150 feet
 - 800 – 1,200 feet between structures
- 161 kV segments
 - Typical ROW width is 80 – 100 feet
 - 300 – 500 feet between structures

Typical Construction Process

Our typical transmission line construction process includes the following steps:



CONNECT WITH US!

If you have questions or need more information, our team will collect your feedback through our website, email and hotline. We'll respond to your comment as quickly as possible.

- Visit: mmrtproject.com
- Email: contact@mmrtproject.com
- Call: 800-853-3365



Sedarski, Joe

From: Fordice, Randy L <Randy.L.Fordice@xcelenergy.com>
Sent: Monday, February 26, 2024 10:58 AM
To: Heine, Ellen L; Bentz, Nick; Sedarski, Joe; contact@mmrtproject.com
Subject: FW: Oronoco Presentation Last Night
Attachments: 2024-04 Resolution MMRT Project signed.pdf

CAUTION: [EXTERNAL] This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

FYI

From: Ranae While <rwhile@Oronoco.com>
Sent: Monday, February 26, 2024 10:56 AM
To: Heine, Ellen L <Ellen.L.Heine@xcelenergy.com>; Fordice, Randy L <Randy.L.Fordice@xcelenergy.com>; Ryland Eichhorst <reichhorst@Oronoco.com>
Cc: Shirley Slater-Schulte <admin@Oronoco.com>
Subject: RE: Oronoco Presentation Last Night

Some people who received this message don't often get email from rwhile@oronoco.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

EXTERNAL - STOP & THINK before opening links and attachments.

Hello

Here is a signed copy of our Resolution that was passed on February 20.

Ranae While
Deputy Clerk
rwhile@oronoco.com
507-367-4405

City of Oronoco
115 2nd St NW
PO Box 195
Oronoco, MN 55960
Oronoco.com

From: Heine, Ellen L <Ellen.L.Heine@xcelenergy.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 17, 2024 10:31 AM
To: Fordice, Randy L <Randy.L.Fordice@xcelenergy.com>; Ryland Eichhorst <reichhorst@Oronoco.com>
Cc: Ranae While <rwhile@Oronoco.com>; Shirley Slater-Schulte <admin@Oronoco.com>
Subject: RE: Oronoco Presentation Last Night

I second what Randy said. Glad we could help answer some questions.

Last night I mentioned that we have several fact sheets on the project web site, so wanted to get that link to you as well. The page starts with the FAQ section, and if you scroll down just a bit there are links to the fact sheets in pdf format.

[Library \(mmrtproject.com\)](http://mmrtproject.com)

Ellen Heine

Xcel Energy

P: 612.330.6073 C: 651-247-0957

E: ellen.l.heine@xcelenergy.com

From: Fordice, Randy L <Randy.L.Fordice@xcelenergy.com>

Sent: Wednesday, January 17, 2024 10:06 AM

To: Ryland Eichhorst <reichhorst@Oronoco.com>; Heine, Ellen L <Ellen.L.Heine@xcelenergy.com>

Cc: Ranae While <rwhile@Oronoco.com>; Shirley Slater-Schulte <admin@Oronoco.com>

Subject: RE: Oronoco Presentation Last Night

Mayor Eichhorst,

Thanks for inviting us last night. It was great to hear directly from the council and your constituents and be able to answer their questions.

As we discussed, the regulatory process will kick off in earnest over the next weeks and months when the application is filed and the state begins its review with the Environmental Impact Statement scoping meetings. Both Xcel Energy and the State of Minnesota will notify landowners and local governments as those milestones move forward.

If you or your council members or constituents have questions in the meantime, please do reach out.

Thanks again and have a great day.

From: Ryland Eichhorst <reichhorst@Oronoco.com>

Sent: Wednesday, January 17, 2024 10:01 AM

To: Fordice, Randy L <Randy.L.Fordice@xcelenergy.com>; Heine, Ellen L <Ellen.L.Heine@xcelenergy.com>

Cc: Ranae While <rwhile@Oronoco.com>; Shirley Slater-Schulte <admin@Oronoco.com>

Subject: Oronoco Presentation Last Night

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Randy and Ellen,

Thank you very much for coming to Oronoco and sharing your presentation and comments. We appreciate hearing about the background of the project, as well as the process going forward.

Please stay in touch as the project moves forward through the various steps.

Regards,

Ryland

**CITY OF ORONOCO, MINNESOTA
CITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 2024-04**

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF A MMRT PROJECT SEGMENT 4 ROUTE

WHEREAS, the Mankato-Mississippi River Transmission (MMRT) Project includes new and upgraded transmission lines, broken into four segments;; and

WHEREAS, the MMRT Project Segment 4 includes about 20 miles of new single-circuit 161 kV transmission line (Segment 4) between the existing North Rochester Substation near Pine Island and an existing transmission line northeast of Rochester, which is being relocated from its existing alignment to install the new 345kV infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, the current Route Option 4 East and Route Option 4 West may impact New Haven Township, Oronoco Township, Cascade Township, Pine Island Township, Farmington Township, Haverhill Township, the City of Pine Island, and the City of Oronoco;

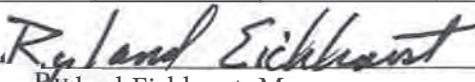
NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

That the City Council of the City of Oronoco supports including in the Route Permit application for the Segment 4 proposed transmission line with the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission, at least one alternative for the new single-circuit 161 kV line that includes essentially following the existing CapX2020 transmission line route from the North Rochester Substation to the Chester Junction.

PASSED by the City Council of the City of Oronoco this 20th day of February 2024

COUNCIL MEMBER	AYE	NAY	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
Ryland Eichhorst, Mayor	X			
Paul Pendergrass		X		
Jim Richards	X			
Jim Phillips	X			
Erv DeVlaeminck	X			

ATTEST:


Ryland Eichhorst, Mayor


Ranae While, Deputy Clerk