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**VIA ELECTRONIC FILING**

Dr. Burl W. Haar  
Executive Secretary  
Minnesota Public Utilities Commission  
121 7<sup>th</sup> Place East, Suite 350  
St. Paul, MN 55101-2147

Re: *In the Matter of the Request by Minnesota Power for a Route Permit for the Great Northern Transmission Line*  
Minnesota Power's Reply Comments on Advisory Task Force  
MPUC Docket No. E015/TL-14-21  
OAH Docket No. 65-2500-31637

Dear Dr. Haar:

Minnesota Power files these comments in response to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission's ("Commission") August 12, 2014 Notice ("Notice") requesting comments on the Minnesota Department of Commerce ("Department"), Energy Environmental Review and Analysis's ("EERA") recommendation to reconsider the establishment of the Advisory Task Force ("ATF") for the Great Northern Transmission Line (the "Project"). Minnesota Power had previously welcomed the EERA's recommendation that the Commission establish three ATFs and stated in its May 30, 2014 comments: "Minnesota Power believes that advisory task forces are fully consistent with the Company's approach in developing the Project as was recently recognized by the White House." The Commission adopted the EERA's recommendation and established three ATFs consistent with the statutory framework under Minn. Stat. § 216E.08, subd. 1.

Minnesota Power has worked with the EERA to provide contact information and arrange meeting venues to facilitate the ATFs and appreciates the EERA's efforts in trying to move the process forward as outlined in EERA's August 8, 2014 Comments. Minnesota Power agrees with the EERA's recommendation:

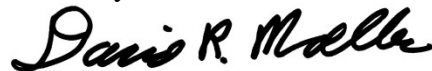
Given the information described above, EERA staff concludes that establishment of ATFs for the GNTL should not be further pursued. Pending Commission consideration of this conclusion, EERA staff will continue to

work with the nine interested persons directly to assure that their concerns are recorded and considered, and assist them in developing potential alternative route segments should they so desire.

In addition, to the reasons cited by EERA for the very limited response rate for participation in the ATFs, Minnesota Power would also note for the Commission's consideration that in accordance with Minn. Stat. § 216E.03, subd. 3a and 3b, Minnesota Power sent notice to each local unit of government within which a route may be proposed by Minnesota Power with an opportunity for a preapplication consultation meeting. See Minnesota Power's March 13, 2014 compliance filing in this Docket. No local unit of government requested Minnesota Power hold such a consultation meeting. Minnesota Power believes this was in part because of the extensive preapplication outreach that had already occurred, including ensuring that local units of government were part of the development of route alternatives and were well informed about the Project. Those efforts are fully documented in Minnesota Power's Route Permit Application. Minnesota Power believes the public outreach to date, including the Department EERA's efforts regarding the ATFs, is fully consistent with Minn. Stat. § 216E.08, subd. 2 that the Commission "shall adopt broad spectrum citizen participation as a principle of operation."

Minnesota Power looks forward to continuing its active engagement for the Great Northern Transmission Line with the Commission, the Department, and other stakeholders. Please contact me if you have any questions or need additional information.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David R. Moeller". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

David R. Moeller  
Senior Attorney  
Minnesota Power



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