

January 13, 2026

Via eDockets

The Honorable Megan McKenzie
Court of Administrative Hearings
600 North Robert Street
Saint Paul, MN 55164-0620

RE: EIP Comments on Proposed Findings of Fact
Crane and Sandhill Energy Storage Projects
PUC Docket Numbers: IP-7148/ESS-24-406, IP-1749/ESS-24-407
OAH Docket Number: 65-2500-40988

Dear Judge McKenzie,

Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (Commission), Energy Infrastructure Permitting (EIP) staff offers the following comments on the proposed Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law, and Recommendations (Findings) provided by Crane Energy Storage, LLC (Crane Storage) and Sandhill Energy Storage, LLC (Sandhill Storage) for the Crane and Sandhill Energy Storage Projects (projects).¹

EIP staff has reviewed Crane Storage and Sandhill Storage's proposed Findings and believes that they accurately reflect the environmental review and permitting process for the projects. EIP staff recommends the following two amendments to the Findings:

1. **Names of Commenters.** EIP recommends a technical edit to the applicants proposed Finding 54 to include the names of the commenters during the in-person and remote scoping meetings.

54. The Public Information and EA Scoping meetings were held on June 25, 2025 (in-person), and June 26, 2025 (remote). During the in-person meeting one member of the public, **Don Voll**, provided comments expressing concerns about the safety measures, cooperation with the Fire Department, and had a question about connecting to the substation. During the remote meeting one member from IUOE Local 49, **Nathan Runke**, provided comments emphasizing the importance of considering the potential impact of the Projects on local construction workers in the EA.

2. **Public Hearing Locations.** EIP recommends a technical edit to the applicants proposed Finding 64 to distinguish between comments made at the in-person and remote-access public hearings.

64. Public hearings were held on December 2, 2025 (in-person), and December 3, 2025 (remote-access). **During the in-person hearing**, Nathan Runke commented, on behalf of IUOE Local 49, that projects like the Crane Project and Sandhill Project are important to the over 15,000 heavy equipment operators, mechanics, and stationary engineers that are members of IUOE Local 49. **During the remote meeting**,

¹ Crane Energy Storage LLC and Sandhill Energy Storage LLC, *Crane Sandhill - Filing Letter with Proposed Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law, and Recommendations*, December 23, 2025, eDocket No. [202512-226184-01](#)

EIP Reply to Proposed Findings of Fact
PUC Docket Nos. IP-7148/ESS-24-406, IP-1749/ESS-24-407
OAH Docket No. 25-2500-40988

Lucas Franco commented on behalf of LIUNA Minnesota and North Dakota, a construction union of about 14,000 members, to “express strong support for these projects and enthusiasm in general for the projects,” which are “exciting and innovative energy projects that will generate great work opportunities for the local workers.”

EIP staff appreciates the opportunity to comment on the proposed projects.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tessa Kothlow', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Tessa Kothlow
Environmental Review Manager