

Sullivan, Jim (COMM)

From: Kuskie, Melissa (She/Her/Hers) (DNR)
Sent: Tuesday, September 24, 2024 4:37 PM
To: Sullivan, Jim (COMM)
Subject: RE: PUC Docket Numbers: ET2/CN-22-416; E015, ET2/TL-22-415

Dear Mr. Sullivan,

It has come to our attention that there has been confusion by some parties around the comments submitted by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) regarding the Environmental Assessment (EA) of Minnesota Power and Great River Energy's 180-mile double circuit 345kV transmission line from Itasca County to Benton County (Northland Reliability Project), specifically as to whether the DNR is requesting that an environmental impact statement (EIS) be required. I am sending this communication to clarify what we intended to convey in our August 5, 2024, letter with respect to the EA content and process. The DNR is not requesting an EIS. Minnesota Environmental Quality Board rules clearly specify that the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (PUC) is the responsible governmental unit for transmission line projects, and also identify that environmental review for transmission lines be conducted in accordance with Minn. R. 7849.1000 to 7849.2100 and 7850.1000 to 7850.5600. The DNR acknowledges that as the responsible governmental unit, the PUC is responsible for ensuring compliance with environmental review processes, including the alternative review provisions in chapter 7849 and 7850.

Thank you,
Melissa

Melissa Kuskie
(she/her/hers)
Deputy Director | Ecological & Water Resources Division

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
500 Lafayette Road N
Saint Paul, MN 55155
Phone: 651-724-2297
Email: melissa.kuskie@state.mn.us
mndnr.gov

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