



Batch E-Filing for Docket 25-126 9 Comments

1. Carla Brunsvold
2. Dale Bierbaum
3. Darrell Richardson
4. Jim Klavetter
5. John/Norma Pries
6. Mike Keefe
7. Rachel Smith
8. Steve Uthke
9. Wendy Jensen

From: [Wufoo](#)
To: [Staff, CAO \(PUC\)](#)
Subject: Submitted Public Comment Form
Date: Sunday, August 3, 2025 5:37:55 PM

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Name *	Carla Brunsvold
Address	<input type="checkbox"/> 2007 County Road 102 Northeast Eyota, MN 55934 United States
Phone Number	(507) 251-8870
Email	purplecarla@icloud.com
Provide the docket's number.	IP7156/GS-25-126
Leave a comment on the docket. *	As a property owner less than a mile away from the proposed Lemon Hill Solar Project in Viola Township, I am requesting a Citizens Advisory Taskforce be formed to ensure that Environmental Impact Studies be completed that will address the concerns of groundwater pollution, and impacts to endangered species like the snapping turtle.

From: [Wufoo](#)
To: [Staff, CAO \(PUC\)](#)
Subject: Submitted Public Comment Form
Date: Friday, August 1, 2025 10:39:39 AM

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Name *	Dale Bierbaum
Address	<input type="checkbox"/> 1414 42 Hwy NE Eyota, MN 55934-2301 United States
Phone Number	(507) 272-0518
Email	dbierbaum@centurylink.net
Provide the docket's number.	25-126

Leave a comment on the docket. *

Dear Public Utility Board members,

I am writing a follow up to my original letter in order to address a couple of items regarding the Lemon Hill Solar Project purposed for Viola Township in Olmsted County. I am primarily concerned over the solar panels that would be infringing on many of my neighbors and using construction practices that could potentially harm our water supply.

With the local government units (township/county) having no input or control, individuals are left to defend their concerns given this platform. So I ask that you give our local landscape and water supply a second look. Myself and several of those friends and neighbors I represent on the Viola Township Board would like to see the Public Utility Commission ask for input/studies from specific groups. Although there are number of concerns regarding the project, the biggest concern is the threat to our water supply. The construction process which would essentially break up the Karst bedrock and allow runoff water to access the ground water. This same threat exists in the event of a hail or wind storm. The contents of the solar panels would follow the same path as run off water seeps into the groundwater

For this reason, I would like to see the Public Utility Commission to ask for an Advisory Task Force. I would ask that the Lemon Hill Solar Project be reviewed by the Minnesota DNR and most certainly the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. Honestly, I am surprised that the application to your group does not ask for these and I feel that it is an important part of the process.

I am also concerned over the most recent posting from Lemon Hill. They stated that there was only limited concern from locals. In fact, nearly every letter written and submitted raised concerns over ground water. With this much concern, I believe there is a need for a task force.

Again, Thank you for this opportunity to voice my thoughts and opinions.

Dale Bierbaum, Viola Township Treasurer

From: [Wufoo](#)
To: [Staff, CAO \(PUC\)](#)
Subject: Submitted Public Comment Form
Date: Sunday, August 3, 2025 8:46:22 AM

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Name *	Darrell Richardson
Provide the docket's number.	25-126
Leave a comment on the docket. *	Viola And Haverhill Township solar farm project. Please appoint or establish a citizen advisory committee for this project to study the project's environmental impact on neighbouring farms.

From: [Wufoo](#)
To: [Staff, CAO \(PUC\)](#)
Subject: Submitted Public Comment Form
Date: Sunday, August 3, 2025 3:07:58 PM

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Name *	Jim Klavetter
Address	<input type="checkbox"/> 6505 cty road 24 ne ELGIN, MN 55932 United States
Phone Number	(504) 273-4368
Email	klavjim3@gmail.com
Provide the docket's number.	#25-126

Leave a comment on the docket. *

My name is Jim Klavetter, a resident, landowner and Township Supervisor in Viola Township, Olmsted County, MN. As a supervisor I have had many interactions with our residents regarding the Lemon Hill Solar Project. One of the concerns I keep hearing about is the complexity of filing a comment to the PUC. Many of our residents are elderly and have problems navigating the system to submit their concerns and prefer to do letters and mail them in. My concern is the comment period opened on July 9th and was set to close July 23rd, before being extended to August 5th. Initially we were told it was a 60-day comment period, and I am questioning the change in procedure. I earlier requested the need for an EIS to be performed on this project due the shallow karst soils that could be fractured when installing the panels supports 15 to 20 feet deep causing contaminants to enter into our already fragile groundwater system. Since that request, many are pointing out the wetlands, waterways, springs and streams that are on the proposed sites. Ranger Power has not shared the routing of the transmission lines with the township or the local residents. I am very familiar with many of the parcels the proposed panels would be placed on and know they will have to cross many of wetlands, waterways and streams to connect them. This greatly concerns me with our karst soils and rolling hills. Will they be fracturing the bedrock in the shallow soils to place these lines also? Plus, what type of containment structures or buffers will be in place to protect the streams if severe weather strikes and damages these panels? Since on a project of over 50 megawatts, the county and townships oversight has been given to you, the Public Utilities Commision, I am requesting an Advisory Task Force be appointed to insure the health and safety of our residents. Respectfully, Jim Klavetter

From: [Wufoo](#)
To: [Staff, CAO \(PUC\)](#)
Subject: Submitted Public Comment Form
Date: Monday, August 4, 2025 8:13:40 AM

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Name *	John/Norma Pries
Address	<input type="checkbox"/> 1511 Hwy 42 NE Eyota, MN 55834 United States
Phone Number	(507) 421-1359
Email	npries@aol.com
Provide the docket's number.	25-126
Leave a comment on the docket. *	We would like to request a citizens advisory task force be created to look into environmental, karst region and neighborhood impact from this project. Thank you, John and Norma

From: [Wufoo](#)
To: [Staff, CAO \(PUC\)](#)
Subject: Submitted Public Comment Form
Date: Monday, August 4, 2025 8:31:38 AM

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Name *	John/Norma Pries
Address	<input type="checkbox"/> 1511 Hwy 42 NE Eyota, MN 55934 United States
Phone Number	(507) 421-1359
Email	NPries@aol.com
Provide the docket's number.	25-126
Leave a comment on the docket. *	Please see attached
Attach a File	<div> snapping_turtle_letter_john_pries_final.docx 38.21 KB • DOCX</div>

August 03, 2025

To the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission,

I am writing to raise a serious concern about the preservation of snapping turtles in and around Viola Township. As a long-time resident and farmer in this area, I have observed firsthand the importance of these ancient reptiles to our local ecosystem. Snapping turtles are not only fascinating creatures that have roamed our wetlands and waterways for millions of years—they also play a vital role in maintaining the health of our environment.

Snapping turtles act as nature's cleanup crew, feeding on carrion, aquatic vegetation, and small invertebrates. By doing so, they help prevent the spread of disease and maintain a balanced food chain. They are especially important in farm country, where their presence contributes to the ecological integrity of nearby ponds, streams, and wetlands that also benefit local agriculture. Unfortunately, their slow reproductive rate, combined with increasing habitat destruction, puts them at great risk. Female snapping turtles take over a decade to reach maturity, and when nesting habitat is disturbed or lost, entire generations can be wiped out.

Viola Township's rural roads, tilled fields, and encroaching development already pose significant challenges to their survival. Proposed land-use changes—especially those involving large-scale industrial projects—would only increase these pressures. The destruction of nesting areas, increased road traffic, and disruption of seasonal movement patterns all endanger snapping turtle populations that have thrived here for centuries.

I strongly urge the Commission and other regulatory agencies to consider these impacts when evaluating development proposals in the region. The long-term health of southeastern Minnesota's wildlife and waterways depends on protecting species like the snapping turtle. Simple, science-based conservation steps—such as preserving wetlands, implementing seasonal protections, and reducing runoff—can make a major difference in supporting their survival.

These animals deserve a place in our shared landscape. We have a duty to ensure they are not driven out by shortsighted decisions or unchecked development. I hope you will take this matter seriously and prioritize the protection of snapping turtle habitat in your planning decisions.

Sincerely,

John Pries
Viola Township farmer

Docket 25-126

Please accept this letter as an objection to the Lemon Hill solar project.

This concern also aligns with Minnesota's broader environmental preservation goals. The state has long prioritized the protection of native species and the maintenance of healthy ecosystems, particularly in sensitive areas like those found in Viola Township. Snapping turtles are an integral part of our natural heritage, and their continued decline would represent a significant failure in environmental stewardship. Given the increasing pressures on their habitat from land development and industrial use, I respectfully request that a formal environmental impact study be conducted to fully assess the fragility of this region and the consequences of further disruption. A thorough scientific review will help ensure that any decisions made are grounded in sound ecological understanding and long-term sustainability.

From: [Mike Keefe](#)
To: [Staff, CAO \(PUC\)](#)
Subject: Lemon Hill project, 25-126
Date: Saturday, August 2, 2025 9:58:40 AM
Attachments: [Commission Letter Mike Keefe Updated.docx](#)

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Dear Members of the Commission,

I respectfully request your careful consideration of the letter submitted by the law firm Fredrikson & Byron, dated July 30, 2025, titled Completeness Reply Comments.

In my view, the letter contains statements that are not reflective of the facts and may misrepresent the public's engagement in this matter.

Specifically, on page three under the section Advisory Task Force, the second paragraph begins with the statement:

"As of the close of the initial comment period on application completeness, no local government official or member of the public has requested an advisory task force or suggested a scope or topics for review."

I believe this assertion is both misleading and dismissive of the substantial public input that has already been submitted. It does not accurately reflect the record and minimizes the community's legitimate concerns.

For your consideration, I offer the following examples:

1. On July 18, 2025, Faheena Keefe submitted a letter to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission stating, "Please order a detailed study of the karst region and focus on our groundwater before our groundwater is contaminated."
2. On July 21, 2025, I submitted a second letter to the Commission specifically requesting an "independent and in-depth study of our groundwater and the karst region."
3. On July 21, 2025, Deborah Klavetter wrote, "I am asking for an environmental impact assessment to be done and made public before it becomes an environmental disaster."
4. On July 23, 2025, Thomas Shea, the largest dairy farmer in Viola Township, stated, "We are respectfully asking for a very detailed study of stray voltage that would undoubtedly come from this project."
5. On July 23, 2025, Viola Township Chairman James Klavetter concluded his letter by writing, "It is for this reason (groundwater) I respectfully request an Environmental Impact Statement to be done for the protection of all our residents."

These examples clearly demonstrate that numerous individuals and officials have requested further review and raised specific concerns. There is also strong implied support for the formation of an Advisory Task Force and a broad call for environmental studies,

assessments, and review.

Given the volume and substance of these requests, it is evident that the community has actively engaged and voiced a desire for further examination. These concerns deserve to be acknowledged and carefully considered.

Respectfully,

Mike Keefe
Dover, Minnesota

Lemon Hill project, docket # 25-126

From: [Wufoo](#)
To: [Staff, CAO \(PUC\)](#)
Subject: Submitted Public Comment Form
Date: Saturday, August 2, 2025 8:04:16 AM

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Name *	Rachel Smith
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Provide the docket's number.	25-126
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Leave a comment on the docket. *

Requesting a citizens advisory task force regarding the proposed Lemon Hill Solar project around Viola, MN for the following concerns:

* seeking alternate site NOT with in site of a residence. Would you want your home surrounded by panels/substation?

* please do Not put farmland out of production-where else do you plan on growing food?

* please do Not disturb terraced land and waterways that were out in place to conserve our precious topsoil

*please do not risk contaminating or springs/groundwater- our future generations depend on it

Thankyou

From: [Wufoo](#)
To: [Staff, CAO \(PUC\)](#)
Subject: Submitted Public Comment Form
Date: Sunday, August 3, 2025 10:37:18 PM

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Name *	Steve Uthke
Address	<input type="checkbox"/> 2211 County Road 107 NE EYOTA, MN 55934 United States
Phone Number	(507) 545-2747
Email	sluthke@yahoo.com
Provide the docket's number.	25-126

Leave a comment on the docket. *

I am concerned about the Lemon Hill Solar project that is proposed for Viola and Haverhill townships in Olmsted County, MN. My concerns are:

- These townships are part of the karst region in southeast Minnesota. The karst topography is prone to water contamination -- any project of this size must surely require an environmental impact study.
- All, or at least a significant number, of the landowners who plan to participate in this project do not live near the land that is to be used. They will not be looking out their windows or driving by on a daily basis to see and experience this industrial-sized solar panel scenery.
- The map associated with this project shows that a number of landowners who are NOT participating in this project are completely, or close to completely, surrounded by this project. It appears there are no set-back regulations in place. Therefore, these landowners, who used to look out at farm fields, would be forced to look at row upon row of solar panels, if this project moves forward. Their land values are undoubtedly to be affected by such scenery.
- I am concerned about the later need to clean up the site of this industrial-sized project. Who will be responsible for safe and complete removal of obsolete solar panels and finding a destination for them? This would seem to be a potentially high-cost removal project -- if the solar project owner were to go bankrupt, who would pay for this? Perhaps removal costs and clean-up should be locked in at the start of this project.

With these unresolved concerns, I want to recommend that this project NOT move forward.

Sincerely,
Steve Uthke

From: [Wufoo](#)
To: [Staff, CAO \(PUC\)](#)
Subject: Submitted Public Comment Form
Date: Friday, August 1, 2025 2:51:19 PM

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Name *	Wendy Jensen
Address	<input type="checkbox"/> 3105 COUNTY ROAD 102 NE Eyota, MN 55934 United States
Phone Number	(507) 517-4069
Email	wendy3105@gmail.com
Provide the docket's number.	25-126

Leave a comment on the docket. *

I placed a comment previously regarding my opposition to Ranger Power's Lemonhill solar project in Viola and Haverhill Townships in Olmsted County. I have since read the letter from Ranger Power's attorney in which it states that "no local government official or member of the public has requested an advisory task force or suggested a scope or topics for review." I am therefore requesting the commission appoint a citizen advisory task force. I am also requesting the commission appoint a third party to do a study on the impact of driving hundreds of steel beams 15-20 feet into the fragile karst topography which is well known in our region and how that will effect water flow in the project area and possible contamination to private wells in the region. In the majority of the proposed area, karst is only 10 feet below the surface.

Thank you for the opportunity to voice my concerns.
Wendy Jensen
