

STATE OF MINNESOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

ROUTE PERMIT FOR A  
HIGH-VOLTAGE TRANSMISSION LINE AND ASSOCIATED FACILITIES

IN  
COTTONWOOD, MARTIN AND WATONWAN COUNTIES

ISSUED TO  
BIG BEND WIND, LLC

PUC DOCKET NO. IP7013/TL-19-621

In accordance with the requirements of Minnesota Statutes Chapter 216E and Minnesota Rules Chapter 7850 this route permit is hereby issued to:

**BIG BEND WIND, LLC**

Permittee is authorized by this route permit to construct and operate an approximately 18-mile 161-kV transmission line and associated facilities, to connect the Big Bend Wind Project and/or the Red Rock Solar Project to an existing 345-kV transmission line near the Xcel Energy Crandall Switching Station, plus a step-up substation and a 345 kV segment of less than 1,500 feet to connect the step-up substation to the Crandall Switching Station and the existing Blue Lake-Wilmarth-Interstate Interconnect 345 kV transmission line in Martin County, Minnesota.

The high-voltage transmission line and associated facilities shall be built within the route identified in this permit and as portrayed on the route maps and in compliance with the conditions specified in this permit.

Approved and adopted this 28th day of September, 2022

BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION



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Will Seuffert,  
Executive Secretary

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**ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment 1 – Complaint Handling Procedures for Permitted Energy Facilities

Attachment 2 – Compliance Filing Procedure for Permitted Energy Facilities

Attachment 3 – Route Maps

**1 ROUTE PERMIT**

The Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (Commission) hereby issues this route permit to Big Bend Wind, LLC (Permittee) pursuant to Minnesota Statutes Chapter 216E and Minnesota Rules Chapter 7850. This permit authorizes the Permittee to construct and operate an approximately 18-mile-long 161-kilovolt (kV) transmission line and associated facilities, to connect the Big Bend Wind Project and/or the Red Rock Solar Project to an existing 345-kV transmission line near the Xcel Energy Crandall Switching Station, including a step-up substation and a 345 kV segment of less than 1,500 feet to connect the step-up substation to the Crandall Switching Station and the existing Blue Lake-Wilmarth-Interstate Interconnect 345 kV transmission line in Martin County, Minnesota, and as identified in the attached route maps, hereby incorporated into this document.

**1.1 Preemption**

Pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 216E.10, this permit shall be the sole route approval required to be obtained by the Permittee for construction of the transmission facilities and this permit shall supersede and preempt all zoning, building, or land use rules, regulations, or ordinances promulgated by regional, county, local and special purpose governments.

**2 PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The project is an approximately 18-mile-long 161-kV transmission line and associated facilities, to connect the Big Bend Wind Project and/or the Red Rock Solar Project to an existing 345-kV transmission line near the Xcel Energy Crandall Switching Station in Martin County, Minnesota. The project also includes a step-up substation and a 345 kV segment of less than 1,500 feet to connect the step-up substation to the Crandall Switching Station and the existing Blue Lake-Wilmarth-Interstate Interconnect 345 kV transmission line. The project route is located in Midway and Mountain Lake Townships in Cottonwood County, Odin Township in Watonwan County, and Cedar Township in Martin County.

**2.1 Project Location**

The 161-kV transmission line will connect the Big Bend Wind and/or Red Rock Solar Project Substations at the intersection of 366th Street and 590th Avenue in Midway Township of southeastern Cottonwood County to the Crandall Switching Station in Cedar Township of northwestern Martin County, approximately 10 miles southeast. The route is located in Midway and Mountain Lake Townships in Cottonwood County, Odin Township in Watonwan County, and Cedar Township in Martin County.

## **2.2 Substations and Associated Facilities**

Permittee will build a step-up substation on an approximately five-acre parcel near the intersection of 230th Street and 30th Avenue in Martin County. The step-up substation location is on the opposite side of 230th Street from the Crandall Switching Station. A less-than 1,500 foot 345-kV segment will connect the step-up substation to the existing transmission grid via the Crandall Switching Station.

## **2.3 Structures**

Permittee will use wood or steel monopole structures that generally range in height from 70 feet to 120 feet tall for the Project. Permittee will use four structures that range from 170 feet to 190 feet to facilitate the two crossings above the existing 345-kV transmission line. The transmission design will use three types of structures:

- Dead end: used within the Wind Project Substation and step-up substation;
- Angle: used in locations where the alignment turns; and
- Tangent: for in-line (straight) segments.

## **2.4 Conductors**

The three, single-conductor phase wires will be 795 ACSR (Aluminum Conductor Steel-Reinforced) or a conductor of similar capacity. OPGW (Optical Ground Wire) will be installed above the conductors for lightning protection and communications.

## **3 DESIGNATED ROUTE**

The route designated by the Commission in this permit is the route described below and shown on the route maps attached to this permit. The route is generally described as follows:

The designated route begins at the collocated Wind and Solar Project Substations at the northwest corner of the intersection of 590th Avenue and 360th Street in Cottonwood County. The route travels south on the west side of 590th Avenue for 1.2 miles before turning east on the north side of 370th Street for one mile. The route turns south along the west side of 600th Avenue for two miles before turning east along the north side of 390th Street for one mile and turning south again along 610th Avenue. The route follows the west side of 610th Avenue for a half mile before crossing to the east side of 610th Avenue for an additional half mile before crossing back to the west side of 610th Avenue and continuing for an additional 0.9-mile. The route crosses a parcel line to the east and continues south for 0.15 mile before turning southeast to parallel the Watonwan River for 0.55 mile and then travels east along the parcel line for 0.65 mile to County State Aid Highway (CSAH) 2 (620th Avenue). The route then turns south along the west side of CSAH 2 for half mile before turning east along the south side of CSAH 22 (420th Street) for one mile and then turning south again on the west side of County Road 128. The route

travels south along County Road 128 for three-quarters of a mile before crossing to the east side of the road and paralleling the north side of the Watonwan River through agricultural land for 0.4-mile to the north side of County Road 134 (430th Street). This 0.4-mile segment is proposed to be buried to avoid impacts to a landing strip (see Section 5.1.12). The route continues east on the north side of County Road 134 for three-quarters of a mile before crossing County Road 134 and continuing east for an additional 0.35 mile. The route then travels southeast through agricultural land for approximately 0.5 mile before turning east for 0.1 mile. The route then turns south along a parcel line through agricultural field for 0.5 mile to 250th Street before turning east along the south side of the road for 0.6 mile to the west side of CSAH 9. The route follows CSAH 9 south along the west side for 1.5 miles before turning west for 1.8 miles along agricultural field edges. The route turns south for 0.5 mile to the Step-up Substation along 230th Street. The Commission also designated the Alternate Purple Segment in this permit, which deviates from the designated route at the intersection of 420<sup>th</sup> Street and County Road 128 (630<sup>th</sup> Avenue) in Watonwan County. The Alternate Purple Segment begins at the intersection of 420<sup>th</sup> Street and County Road 128 and follows the south side of 420<sup>th</sup> east for one mile before turning south along a township minimum maintenance road for one mile and rejoining the designated route along 430<sup>th</sup> Street in Watonwan County.<sup>1</sup>

The identified route widths on the attached route maps provide the Permittee with flexibility for minor adjustments of the alignment or right-of-way to accommodate landowner requests and unforeseen conditions. The final alignment (*i.e.*, permanent and maintained rights-of-way) must be located within this designated route unless otherwise authorized by this permit or the Commission.

#### 4      **RIGHT-OF-WAY**

This Permit authorizes the Permittee to obtain a new permanent right-of-way for the transmission line up to 150 feet in width. The permanent right-of-way is typically 75 feet on both sides of the transmission line measured from its centerline.

The Project's anticipated alignment is intended to minimize potential impacts relative to criteria identified in Minn. R. 7850.4100. The actual right-of-way will generally conform to the anticipated alignment identified on the Route Maps, unless changes are requested by individual landowners and agreed to by the Permittee or for unforeseen conditions that are encountered or as otherwise provided for by this permit.

Any right-of-way modifications within the designated route shall be located so as to have comparable overall impacts relative to the factors in Minn. R. 7850.4100, as does the right-of-way identified in this permit and shall be specifically identified and documented in and approved as part of the plan and profile submitted pursuant to Section 9.1 of this permit.

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<sup>1</sup> During the August 18 Agenda Meeting, the Commission approved a motion to include the purple route segment alternative as an option, along with the Applicant's proposed route.

Where the transmission line parallels existing highway and other road rights-of-way, the transmission line right-of-way shall occupy and utilize the existing right-of-way to the maximum extent possible; consistent with the criteria in Minn. R. 7850.4100 and the other requirements of this permit; and for highways under the jurisdiction of the Minnesota Department of Transportation, the procedures for accommodating utilities in trunk highway rights-of-way.

#### **4.1 Route Width Variations**

Route width variations may be allowed to accommodate the potential site-specific constraints listed below. These constraints may arise from any of the following:

- (a) Unforeseen circumstances encountered during the detailed engineering and design process.
- (b) Federal or state agency requirements.
- (c) Existing infrastructure within the route, including but not limited to railroads, natural gas and liquid pipelines, high voltage electric transmission lines, or sewer and water lines.

Any alignment modifications arising from these site-specific constraints that would result in right-of-way placement outside of the designated route shall be specifically reviewed by the Commission under Minn. R. 7850.4900.

### **5 GENERAL CONDITIONS**

The Permittee shall comply with the following conditions during construction and operation of the transmission line and associated facilities over the life of this permit.

#### **5.1 Permit Distribution**

Within 30 days of permit issuance, the Permittee shall send a copy of the permit and the complaint procedures to any regional development commission, county auditor and environmental office, and city and township clerk in which any part of the route is located.

Within 30 days of permit issuance, the Permittee shall provide all affected landowners with a copy of this permit and the complaint procedures. In no case shall the landowner receive this route permit and complaint procedures less than five days prior to the start of construction on their property. An affected landowner is any landowner or designee that is within or adjacent to the permitted route.

At the time of first contact, the Permittee shall also provide all affected landowners with a copy

of the Department of Commerce's *Rights-of-Way and Easements for Energy Facility Construction and Operation Fact Sheet*.<sup>2</sup>

## **5.2 Access to Property**

The Permittee shall contact landowners prior to entering the property or conducting maintenance within the route, unless otherwise negotiated with the affected landowner.

## **5.3 Construction and Operation Practices**

The Permittee shall follow those specific construction practices and material specifications described in the November 9, 2020 Route Permit Application, and the record of the proceedings unless this permit establishes a different requirement in which case this permit shall prevail.

### **5.3.1 Field Representative**

The Permittee shall designate a field representative responsible for overseeing compliance with the conditions of this permit during construction of the project. This person shall be accessible by telephone or other means during normal business hours throughout site preparation, construction, cleanup, and restoration.

The Permittee shall file with the Commission the name, address, email, phone number, and emergency phone number of the field representative 14 days prior to commencing construction. The Permittee shall provide the field representative's contact information to affected landowners, residents, local government units and other interested persons 14 days prior to commencing construction. The Permittee may change the field representative at any time upon notice to the Commission, affected landowners, local government units and other interested persons.

### **5.3.2 Employee Training and Education of Permit Terms and Conditions**

The Permittee shall inform and educate all employees, contractors, and other persons involved in the construction and ongoing operation of the transmission line of the terms and conditions of this permit.

### **5.3.3 Public Services and Public Utilities**

During construction, the Permittee shall minimize any disruption to public services and public utilities. To the extent disruptions to public services or public utilities occur these will be temporary, and the Permittee will restore service promptly. Where any impacts to utilities have

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<sup>2</sup>[https://apps.commerce.state.mn.us/eera/web/projectfile?legacyPath=/opt/documents/Easements%20Fact%20Sheet\\_08.05.14.pdf](https://apps.commerce.state.mn.us/eera/web/projectfile?legacyPath=/opt/documents/Easements%20Fact%20Sheet_08.05.14.pdf)

the potential to occur the Permittee will work with both landowners and local agencies to determine the most appropriate transmission structure placement.

The Permittee shall consult with landowners, townships, cities, and counties along the route and consider concerns regarding tree clearing, distance from existing structures, drain tiles, pole depth and placement in relationship to existing roads and road expansion plans.

The Permittee shall cooperate with county and city road authorities to develop appropriate signage and traffic management during construction.

#### **5.3.4 Temporary Work Space**

The Permittee shall limit temporary easements to special construction access needs and additional staging, or lay-down areas required outside of the authorized right-of-way. Temporary space shall be selected to limit the removal and impacts to vegetation. Temporary easements outside of the authorized transmission line right-of-way will be obtained from affected landowners through rental agreements and are not provided for in this permit.

Temporary driveways may be constructed between the roadway and the structures to minimize impact using the shortest route possible. Construction mats should be used to minimize impacts on access paths and construction areas.

#### **5.3.5 Noise**

The Permittee shall comply with noise standards established under Minn. R. 7030.0100 to 7030.0080, at all times at all appropriate locations during operation of the facility. Construction and maintenance activities shall be limited to daytime working hours to the extent practicable to ensure nighttime noise level standards will not be exceeded.

#### **5.3.6 Aesthetics**

The Permittee shall consider input pertaining to visual impacts from landowners and land management agencies prior to final location of structures, rights-of-way, and other areas with the potential for visual disturbance. Care shall be used to preserve the natural landscape, minimize tree removal, and prevent any unnecessary destruction of the natural surroundings in the vicinity of the project during construction and maintenance. The Permittee shall work with landowners to locate the high-voltage transmission line to minimize the loss of agricultural land, forest, and wetlands, and to avoid homes and farmsteads. Structures shall be placed at a distance, consistent with sound engineering principles and system reliability criteria, from intersecting roads, highways, or trail crossings.

### **5.3.7 Soil Erosion and Sediment Control**

The Permittee shall implement those erosion prevention and sediment control practices recommended by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) Construction Stormwater Program. If construction of the facility disturbs more than one acre of land or is sited in an area designated by the MPCA as having potential for impacts to water resources, the Permittee shall obtain a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System/State Disposal System (NPDES/SDS) Construction Stormwater Permit from the MPCA that provides for the development of a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) that describes methods to control erosion and runoff.

The Permittee shall implement reasonable measures to minimize erosion and sedimentation during construction and shall employ perimeter sediment controls, protect exposed soil by promptly planting, seeding, using erosion control blankets and turf reinforcement mats, stabilizing slopes, protecting storm drain inlets, protecting soil stockpiles, and controlling vehicle tracking. Contours shall be graded as required so that all surfaces provide for proper drainage, blend with the natural terrain, and are left in a condition that will facilitate re-vegetation and prevent erosion. All areas disturbed during construction of the facilities shall be returned to pre-construction conditions.

### **5.3.8 Wetlands and Water Resources**

Wetland impact avoidance measures that shall be implemented during design and construction of the transmission line will include spacing and placing the power poles at variable distances to span and avoid wetlands, watercourses, and floodplains. Unavoidable wetland impacts as a result of the placement of poles shall be limited to the immediate area around the poles. To minimize impacts, construction in wetland areas shall occur during frozen ground conditions where practicable and shall be according to permit requirements by the applicable permitting authority. When construction during winter is not possible, wooden or composite mats shall be used to protect wetland vegetation. Soil excavated from the wetlands and riparian areas shall be contained and not placed back into the wetland or riparian area. Wetlands and riparian areas shall be accessed using the shortest route possible in order to minimize travel through wetland areas and prevent unnecessary impacts. No staging or stringing set up areas shall be placed within or adjacent to wetlands or water resources, as practicable. Power pole structures shall be assembled on upland areas before they are brought to the site for installation.

Wetland and water resource areas disturbed by construction activities shall be restored to pre-construction conditions in accordance with the requirements of applicable state and federal permits or laws and landowner agreements. All requirements of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR), and local units of government shall be met.

### **5.3.9 Vegetation Management**

The Permittee shall minimize the number of trees to be removed in selecting the right-of-way specifically preserving to the maximum extent practicable windbreaks, shelterbelts, living snow fences, and vegetation in areas such as trail and stream crossings where vegetative screening may minimize aesthetic impacts, to the extent that such actions do not violate sound engineering principles or system reliability criteria.

Tall growing species located within the transmission line right-of-way that endanger the safe and reliable operation of the transmission facility will be removed by the Permittee. The Permittee shall leave undisturbed, to the extent possible, existing low growing species in the right-of-way or replant such species in the right-of-way to blend the difference between the right-of-way and adjacent areas, to the extent that the low growing vegetation that will not pose a threat to the transmission facility or impede construction.

### **5.3.10 Application of Pesticides**

The Permittee shall restrict pesticide use to those pesticides and methods of application approved by the Minnesota Department of Agriculture, DNR, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Selective foliage or basal application shall be used when practicable. All pesticides shall be applied in a safe and cautious manner so as not to damage adjacent properties including crops, orchards, tree farms, apiaries, or gardens. The Permittee shall contact the landowner or designee to obtain approval for the use of pesticide at least 14 days prior to any application on their property. The landowner may request that there be no application of pesticides on any part of the route within the landowner's property. The Permittee shall provide notice of pesticide application to affected landowners and known beekeepers operating apiaries within three miles of the project site at least 14 days prior to such application.

### **5.3.11 Invasive Species**

The Permittee shall employ best management practices to avoid the potential introduction and spread of invasive species on lands disturbed by project construction activities. The Permittee shall develop an Invasive Species Prevention Plan to prevent the introduction and spread of invasive species on lands disturbed by project construction activities and file with the Commission 30 days prior to the pre-construction meeting.

### **5.3.12 Noxious Weeds**

The Permittee shall take all reasonable precautions against the spread of noxious weeds during all phases of construction. When utilizing seed to establish temporary and permanent vegetative cover on exposed soil the Permittee shall select site appropriate seed certified to be free of noxious weeds. To the extent possible, the Permittee shall use native seed mixes. The Permittee shall consult with landowners on the selection and use of seed for replanting.

### **5.3.13 Public Roads**

The Permittee shall advise the appropriate governing bodies having jurisdiction over all state, county, city or township roads that will be used during the construction phase of the project. Where practical, existing roadways shall be used for all activities associated with construction of the facility. Oversize or overweight loads associated with the facility shall not be hauled across public roads without required permits and approvals.

The Permittee shall construct the least number of site access roads it can. Access roads shall not be constructed across streams and drainage ways without the required permits and approvals. Access roads shall be constructed in accordance with all necessary township, county or state road requirements and permits.

The Permittee shall promptly repair private roads or lanes damaged when moving equipment or when accessing construction workspace, unless otherwise negotiated with the affected landowner.

### **5.3.14 Archaeological and Historic Resources**

The Permittee shall make every effort to avoid impacts to identified archaeological and historic resources when constructing the transmission facility. In the event that a resource is encountered, the Permittee shall consult with the State Historic Preservation Office and the State Archaeologist. Where feasible, avoidance of the resource is required. Where not feasible, mitigation must include an effort to minimize project impacts on the resource consistent with State Historic Preservation Office and State Archaeologist requirements.

Prior to construction, workers shall be trained about the need to avoid cultural properties, how to identify cultural properties, and procedures to follow if undocumented cultural properties, including gravesites, are found during construction. If human remains are encountered during construction, the Permittee shall immediately halt construction and promptly notify local law enforcement and the State Archaeologist. Construction at such location shall not proceed until authorized by local law enforcement or the State Archaeologist.

### **5.3.15 Avian Protection**

The Permittee in cooperation with the DNR shall identify areas of the project where bird flight diverters will be incorporated into the transmission line design to prevent large avian collisions attributed to visibility issues. Standard transmission design shall incorporate adequate spacing of conductors and grounding devices in accordance with Avian Power Line Interaction Committee standards to eliminate the risk of electrocution to raptors with larger wingspans that may simultaneously come in contact with a conductor and grounding devices.

### **5.3.16 Restoration**

The Permittee shall restore the right-of-way, temporary workspaces, access roads, abandoned right-of-way, and other public or private lands affected by construction of the transmission line. Restoration within the right-of-way must be compatible with the safe operation, maintenance, and inspection of the transmission line. Within 60 days after completion of all restoration activities, the Permittee shall advise the Commission in writing of the completion of such activities.

### **5.3.17 Cleanup**

All waste and scrap that is the product of construction shall be removed from the right-of-way and all premises on which construction activities were conducted and properly disposed of upon completion of each task. Personal litter, including bottles, cans, and paper from construction activities shall be removed on a daily basis.

### **5.3.18 Pollution and Hazardous Wastes**

All appropriate precautions to protect against pollution of the environment must be taken by the Permittee. The Permittee shall be responsible for compliance with all laws applicable to the generation, storage, transportation, clean up and disposal of all wastes generated during construction and restoration of the right-of-way.

### **5.3.19 Damages**

The Permittee shall fairly restore or compensate landowners for damage to crops, fences, private roads and lanes, landscaping, drain tile, or other damages sustained during construction.

## **5.4 Electrical Performance Standards**

### **5.4.1 Grounding**

The Permittee shall design, construct, and operate the transmission line in a manner so that the maximum induced steady-state short-circuit current shall be limited to five milliamperes root mean square (rms) alternating current between the ground and any non-stationary object within the right-of-way, including but not limited to large motor vehicles and agricultural equipment. All fixed metallic objects on or off the right-of-way, except electric fences that parallel or cross the right-of-way, shall be grounded to the extent necessary to limit the induced short-circuit current between ground and the object so as not to exceed one milliampere rms under steady state conditions of the transmission line and to comply with the ground fault conditions specified in the National Electric Safety Code (NESC). The Permittee shall address and rectify any induced current problems that arise during transmission line operation.

#### **5.4.2 Electric Field**

The transmission line shall be designed, constructed, and operated in such a manner that the electric field measured one meter above ground level immediately below the transmission line shall not exceed 8.0 kV/m rms.

#### **5.4.3 Interference with Communication Devices**

If interference with radio or television, satellite, wireless internet, GPS-based agriculture navigation systems or other communication devices is caused by the presence or operation of the transmission line, the Permittee shall take whatever action is necessary to restore or provide reception equivalent to reception levels in the immediate area just prior to the construction of the line.

### **5.5 Other Requirements**

#### **5.5.1 Safety Codes and Design Requirements**

The transmission line and associated facilities shall be designed to meet or exceed all relevant local and state codes, the NESC, and North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC) requirements. This includes standards relating to clearances to ground, clearance to crossing utilities, clearance to buildings, strength of materials, clearances over roadways, right-of-way widths, and permit requirements. The transmission line shall be equipped with protective devices to safeguard the public if an accident occurs.

#### **5.5.2 Other Permits and Regulations**

The Permittee shall comply with all applicable state rules and statutes. The Permittee shall obtain all required permits for the project and comply with the conditions of those permits unless those permits conflict with or are preempted by federal or state permits and regulations. A list of the permits known to be required is included in the permit application. The Permittee shall submit a copy of such permits to the Commission upon request.

## **6 SPECIAL CONDITIONS**

Special conditions shall take precedence over other conditions of this permit should there be a conflict.

#### **6.1 Independent Third-Party Monitor**

Prior to any construction, the Permittee shall propose a scope of work and identify one independent third party agency monitor on behalf of the Department of Commerce. The scope of work shall be developed in consultation with and approved by the Department of Commerce.

This third-party monitor will report directly to and will be under the control of the Department of Commerce with costs borne by the Permittee. The Permittee shall file with the Commission the scope of work 30 days prior to commencing construction and the name, address, email, phone number, and emergency phone number of the third-party monitor 14 days prior to commencing any construction or right-of-way preparation and upon any change that may occur during the construction of the project and restoration of the right-of-way.

## **7      DELAY IN CONSTRUCTION**

If the Permittee has not commenced construction or improvement of the route within four years after the date of issuance of this permit the Permittee shall file a report on the failure to construct and the Commission shall consider suspension of the permit in accordance with Minn. R. 7850.4700.

## **8      COMPLAINT PROCEDURES**

Prior to the start of construction, the Permittee shall submit to the Commission the procedures that will be used to receive and respond to complaints. The procedures shall be in accordance with the requirements of Minn. R. 7829.1500 or Minn. R. 7829.1700, and as set forth in the complaint procedures attached to this permit.

Upon request, the Permittee shall assist the Commission with the disposition of unresolved or longstanding complaints. This assistance shall include, but is not limited to, the submittal of complaint correspondence and complaint resolution efforts.

## **9      COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS**

Failure to timely and properly make compliance filings required by this permit is a failure to comply with the conditions of this permit. Compliance filings must be electronically filed with the Commission.

### **9.1    Plan and Profile**

At least 30 days before right-of-way preparation for construction begins on any segment or portion of the project, the Permittee shall provide the Commission with a plan and profile of the right-of-way and the specifications and drawings for right-of-way preparation, construction, structure specifications and locations, cleanup, and restoration for the transmission line. The documentation shall include maps depicting the plan and profile including the right-of-way, alignment, and structures in relation to the route and alignment approved per this permit.

The Permittee may not commence construction until the 30 days has expired or until the Commission has advised the Permittee in writing that it has completed its review of the documents and determined that the planned construction is consistent with this permit. If the

Permittee intends to make any significant changes in its plan and profile or the specifications and drawings after submission to the Commission, the Permittee shall notify the Commission at least five days before implementing the changes. No changes shall be made that would be in violation of any of the terms of this permit.

#### **9.2 Status Reports**

The Permittee shall report to the Commission on progress during finalization of the route, design of structures, and construction of the transmission line. The Permittee need not report more frequently than monthly. Reports shall begin with the submittal of the plan and profile for the project and continue until completion of restoration. Reports shall describe construction activities and progress and activities undertaken in compliance with this permit. Reports shall include text and photographs.

#### **9.3 In-Service Date**

At least three days before the facility is to be placed into service, the Permittee shall notify the Commission of the date on which the facility will be placed into service and the date on which construction was completed.

#### **9.4 As-Builts**

Within 90 days after completion of construction, the Permittee shall submit copies of all final as-built plans and specifications developed during the project.

#### **9.5 GPS Data**

Within 90 days after completion of construction, the Permittee shall submit to the Commission, in the format requested by the Commission, geo-spatial information (e.g., ArcGIS compatible map files, GPS coordinates, associated database of characteristics) for all structures associated with the transmission line and each substation connected.

#### **9.6 Right of Entry**

The Permittee shall allow Commission designated representatives to perform the following, upon reasonable notice, upon presentation of credentials and at all times in compliance with the Permittee's site safety standards:

- (a) To enter upon the facilities easement of the property for the purpose of obtaining information, examining records, and conducting surveys or investigations.
- (b) To bring such equipment upon the facilities easement of the property as is necessary to conduct such surveys and investigations.

- (c) To sample and monitor upon the facilities easement of the property.
- (d) To examine and copy any documents pertaining to compliance with the conditions of this permit.

## **10 PERMIT AMENDMENT**

This permit may be amended at any time by the Commission. Any person may request an amendment of the conditions of this permit by submitting a request to the Commission in writing describing the amendment sought and the reasons for the amendment. The Commission will mail notice of receipt of the request to the Permittee. The Commission may amend the conditions after affording the Permittee and interested persons such process as is required.

## **11 TRANSFER OF PERMIT**

The Permittee may request at any time that the Commission transfer this permit to another person or entity. The Permittee shall provide the name and description of the person or entity to whom the permit is requested to be transferred, the reasons for the transfer, a description of the facilities affected, and the proposed effective date of the transfer. The person to whom the permit is to be transferred shall provide the Commission with such information as the Commission shall require to determine whether the new Permittee can comply with the conditions of the permit. The Commission may authorize transfer of the permit after affording the Permittee, the new Permittee, and interested persons such process as is required.

## **12 REVOCATION OR SUSPENSION OF THE PERMIT**

The Commission may initiate action to revoke or suspend this permit at any time. The Commission shall act in accordance with the requirements of Minn. R. 7850.5100, to revoke or suspend the permit.

**ATTACHMENT 1**  
Complaint Handling Procedures for Permitted Energy Facilities

**MINNESOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION  
COMPLAINT HANDLING PROCEDURES FOR  
PERMITTED ENERGY FACILITIES**

**A. Purpose**

To establish a uniform and timely method of reporting and resolving complaints received by the permittee concerning permit conditions for site or route preparation, construction, cleanup, restoration, operation, and maintenance.

**B. Scope**

This document describes complaint reporting procedures and frequency.

**C. Applicability**

The procedures shall be used for all complaints received by the permittee and all complaints received by the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (Commission) under Minn. R. 7829.1500 or Minn. R. 7829.1700 relevant to this permit.

**D. Definitions**

**Complaint:** A verbal or written statement presented to the permittee by a person expressing dissatisfaction or concern regarding site or route preparation, cleanup or restoration, or other permit conditions. Complaints do not include requests, inquiries, questions or general comments.

**Substantial Complaint:** A written complaint alleging a violation of a specific permit condition that, if substantiated, could result in permit modification or suspension pursuant to the applicable regulations.

**Unresolved Complaint:** A complaint which, despite the good faith efforts of the permittee and a person, remains unresolved or unsatisfactorily resolved to one or both of the parties.

**Person:** An individual, partnership, joint venture, private or public corporation, association, firm, public service company, cooperative, political subdivision, municipal corporation, government agency, public utility district, or any other entity, public or private; however organized.

## **E. Complaint Documentation and Processing**

1. The permittee shall designate a representative responsible for filing complaints to the Commission's eDocket system. This person's name, phone number and email address shall accompany all complaint submittals. The name and contact information for the representative shall be kept current in eDockets.
2. A person presenting the complaint should, to the extent possible, include the following information in their communications:
  - a. name, address, phone number, and email address;
  - b. initial date of the complaint;
  - c. tract, parcel number, or address of the complaint;
  - d. a summary of the complaint; and
  - e. whether the complaint relates to a permit violation, a construction practice issue, or other type of complaint.
3. The permittee shall document all complaints by maintaining a record of all applicable information concerning the complaint, including the following:
  - a. docket number and project name;
  - b. name of complainant, address, phone number and email address;
  - c. precise description of property or parcel number;
  - d. name of permittee representative receiving complaint and date of receipt;
  - e. nature of complaint and the applicable permit condition(s);
  - f. summary of activities undertaken to resolve the complaint; and
  - g. a statement on the final disposition of the complaint.

## **F. Reporting Requirements**

The permittee shall commence complaint reporting at the beginning of project construction and continue through the term of the permit, unless otherwise required below. The permittee shall report all complaints to the Commission according to the following schedule:

**Immediate Reports:** All substantial complaints shall be reported to the Commission the same day received, or on the following working day for complaints received after working hours. Such reports are to be directed to the Commission's Consumer Affairs Office at 1-800-657-3782 (voice messages are acceptable) or [consumer.puc@state.mn.us](mailto:consumer.puc@state.mn.us). For e-mail reporting, the email subject

line should read “PUC EFP Complaint” and include the appropriate project docket number.

**Monthly Reports:** During project construction, restoration, and operation, a summary of all complaints, including substantial complaints received or resolved during the preceding month, shall be filed by the 15th of each month to Will Seuffert, Executive Secretary, Public Utilities Commission, using the eDockets system. The eDockets system is located at: <https://www.edockets.state.mn.us/EFiling/home.jsp>. If no complaints were received during the preceding month, the permittee shall file a summary indicating that no complaints were received.

If a project has submitted twelve consecutive months of complaint reports with no complaints, monthly reports can terminate by a letter to eDockets notifying the Commission of such action. If a substantial complaint is received (by the company or the Commission) following termination of the monthly complaint report, as noted above, the monthly reporting should commence for a period of one year following the most recent complaint or upon resolution of all pending complaints.

If a permittee is found to be in violation of this section, the Commission may reinstate monthly complaint reporting for the remaining permit term or enact some other commensurate requirement via notification by the Executive Secretary or some other action as decided by the Commission.

#### **G. Complaints Received by the Commission**

Complaints received directly by the Commission from aggrieved persons regarding the permit or issues related to site or route preparation, construction, cleanup, restoration, or operation and maintenance will be promptly sent to the permittee.

The permittee shall notify the Commission when the issue has been resolved. The permittee will add the complaint to the monthly reports of all complaints. If the permittee is unable to find resolution, the Commission will use the process outlined in the Unresolved Complaints Section to process the issue.

#### **H. Commission Process for Unresolved Complaints**

Complaints raising substantial and unresolved permit issues will be investigated by the Commission. Staff will notify the permittee and appropriate persons if it determines that the complaint is a substantial complaint. With respect to such complaints, the permittee and

complainant shall be required to submit a written summary of the complaint and its current position on the issues to the Commission. Staff will set a deadline for comments. As necessary, the complaint will be presented to the Commission for consideration.

#### **I. Permittee Contacts for Complaints and Complaint Reporting**

Complaints may be filed by mail or email to the permittee's designated complaint representative, or to the Commission's Consumer Affairs Office at 1-800-657-3782 (voice messages are acceptable) or [consumer.puc@state.mn.us](mailto:consumer.puc@state.mn.us). The name and contact information for the permittee's designated complaint representative shall be kept current in the Commission's eDocket system.

**ATTACHMENT 2**

Compliance Filing Procedures for Permitted Energy Facilities

**MINNESOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION  
COMPLIANCE FILING PROCEDURE FOR  
PERMITTED ENERGY FACILITIES**

**A. Purpose**

To establish a uniform and timely method of submitting information required by Commission energy facility permits.

**B. Scope and Applicability**

This procedure encompasses all known compliance filings required by permit.

**C. Definitions**

**Compliance Filing:** A filing of information to the Commission, where the information is required by a Commission site or route permit.

**D. Responsibilities**

1. The permittee shall file all compliance filings with Will Seuffert, Executive Secretary, Public Utilities Commission, through the eDockets system. The eDockets system is located at:  
<https://www.edockets.state.mn.us/EFiling/home.jsp>

General instructions are provided on the eDockets website. Permittees must register on the website to file documents.

2. All filings must have a cover sheet that includes:
  - a. Date
  - b. Name of submitter/permittee
  - c. Type of permit (site or route)
  - d. Project location
  - e. Project docket number
  - f. Permit section under which the filing is made
  - g. Short description of the filing

3. Filings that are graphic intensive (e.g., maps, engineered drawings) must, in addition to being electronically filed, be submitted as paper copies and on CD. Paper copies and CDs should be sent to: 1) Will Seuffert, Executive Secretary, Minnesota Public Utilities Commission, 121 7th Place East, Suite 350, St. Paul, MN 55101-2147, and 2) Department of Commerce, Energy Environmental Review and Analysis, 85 7th Place East, Suite 500, St. Paul, MN 55101-2198.

The Commission may request a paper copy of any electronically filed document.

## **PERMIT COMPLIANCE FILINGS<sup>3</sup>**

**PERMITTEE:** Big Bend Wind, LLC

**PERMIT TYPE:** High-Voltage Transmission Line Route Permit

**PROJECT LOCATION:** Cottonwood, Watonwan, and Martin counties, Minnesota

**PUC DOCKET NUMBER:** IP7013/TL-19-621

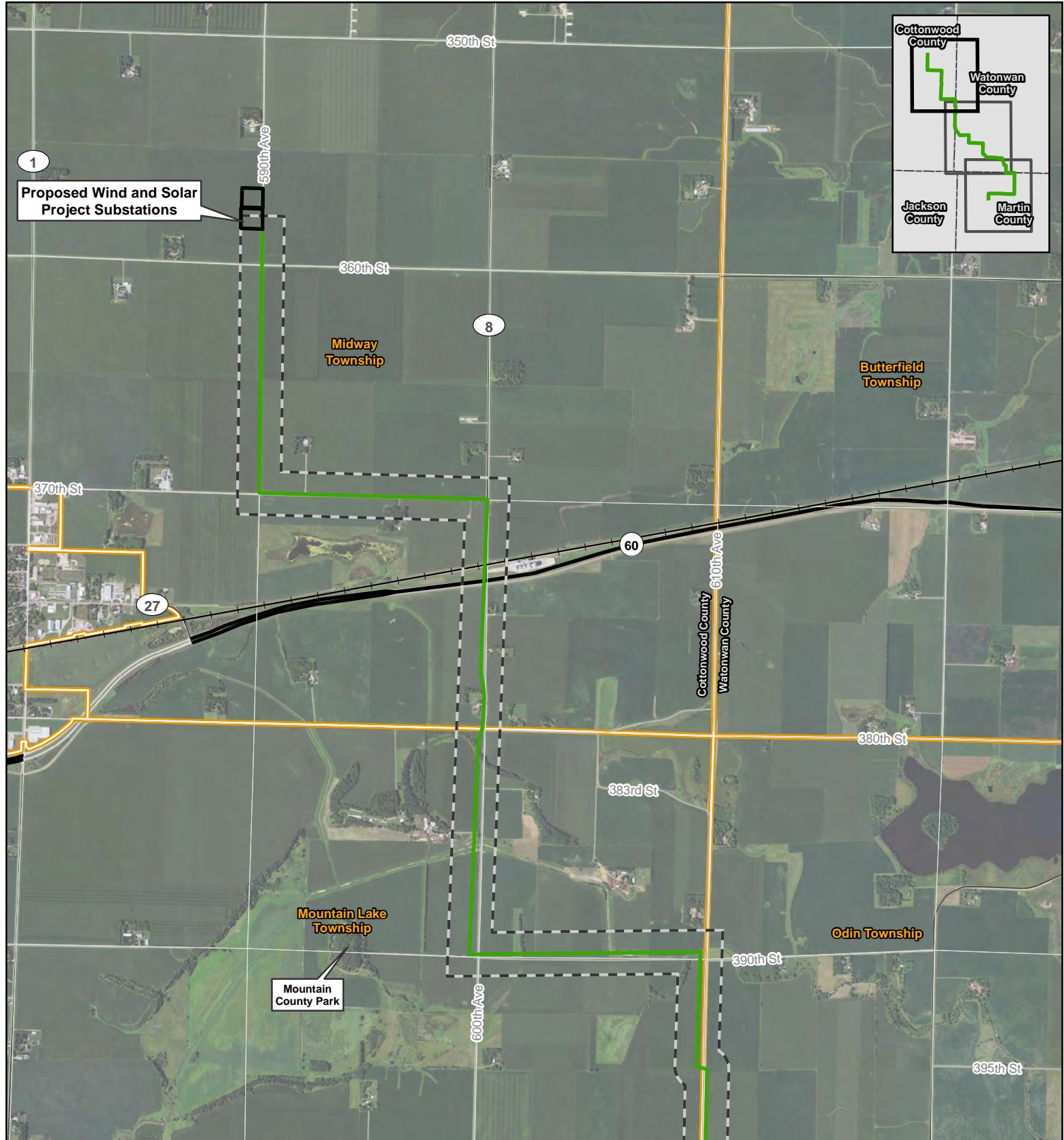
Filing Number	Permit Section	Description of Compliance Filing	Due Date
1.	5.1	Permit Distribution	30 days after permit issuance
2.	5.3.1	Field Representative	14 days prior to commencing construction
3.	5.3.10	Application of Pesticides	Notice 14 days prior to application
4.	5.3.11	Invasive Species Prevention Plan	30 days prior to commencing construction
5.	5.3.16	Site Restoration Report	60 days after completion of all restoration activities
6.	5.5.2	List of Other Required Permits	Upon request
7.	6.1	Independent Monitor Scope of Work	30 days prior to construction
8.	6.1	Independent Monitor Contact Info	14 days prior to construction
9.	7	Delay in Construction	Four years after permit issuance, as necessary

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<sup>3</sup>This compilation of permit compliance filings is provided for the convenience of the permittee and the Commission. It is not a substitute for the permit; the language of the permit controls.

Filing Number	Permit Section	Description of Compliance Filing	Due Date
10.	8	Complaint Procedures	Prior to commencing construction
11.	9.1	Plan and Profile	30 days prior to commencing construction
12.	9.2	Status Reports	Monthly through restoration
13.	9.3	Notice of Operation and Completion of Construction	Three days prior to commercial operation
14.	9.4	As-Builts	90 days after construction is complete
15.	9.5	GPS Data	90 days after construction is complete
16.	Complaint Reporting	Monthly Complaint Reports	See Route Permit Attachment 1
17.	Complaint Reporting	Immediate Complaint Reports	By the following day throughout the life of the permit

**ATTACHMENT 3**  
Route Maps



A scale bar at the bottom left shows distances of 0, 0.25, and 0.5 miles. Below the scale bar is the text "1:36,000".

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For Environmental Review Purposes Only

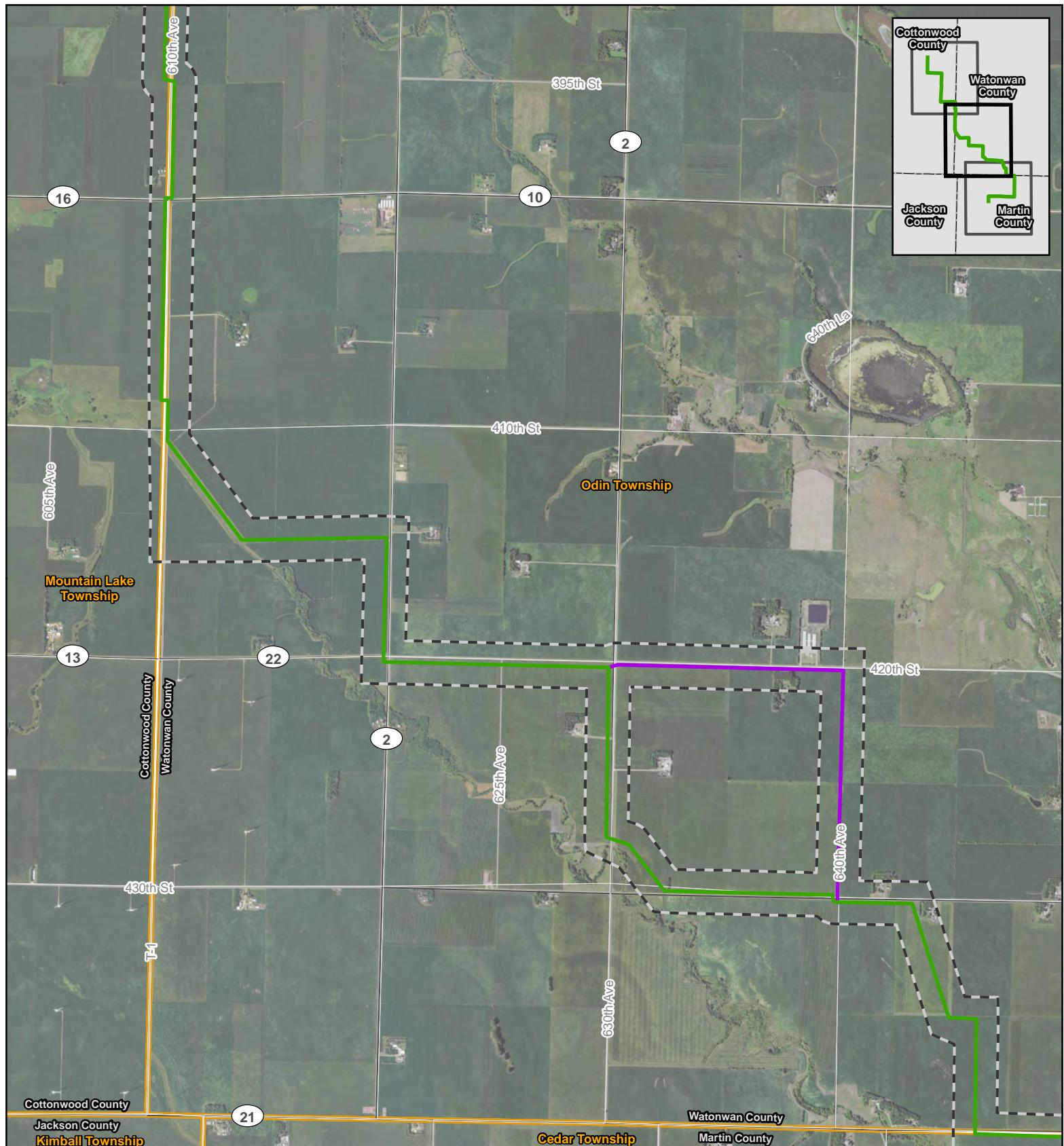


## Detailed Route Maps

# **Big Bend 161kV Transmission Line Project**

## **Cottonwood, Watonwan and Martin Counties, Minnesota**

- Proposed Route
- Proposed Route Width
- City/Township



0 0.25 0.5 Miles  
1:36,000

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For Environmental Review Purposes Only

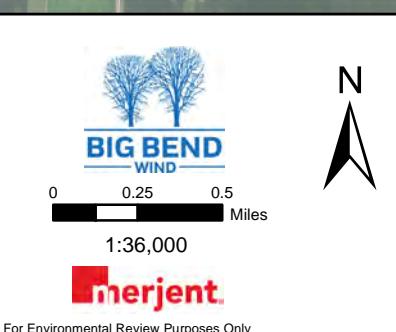
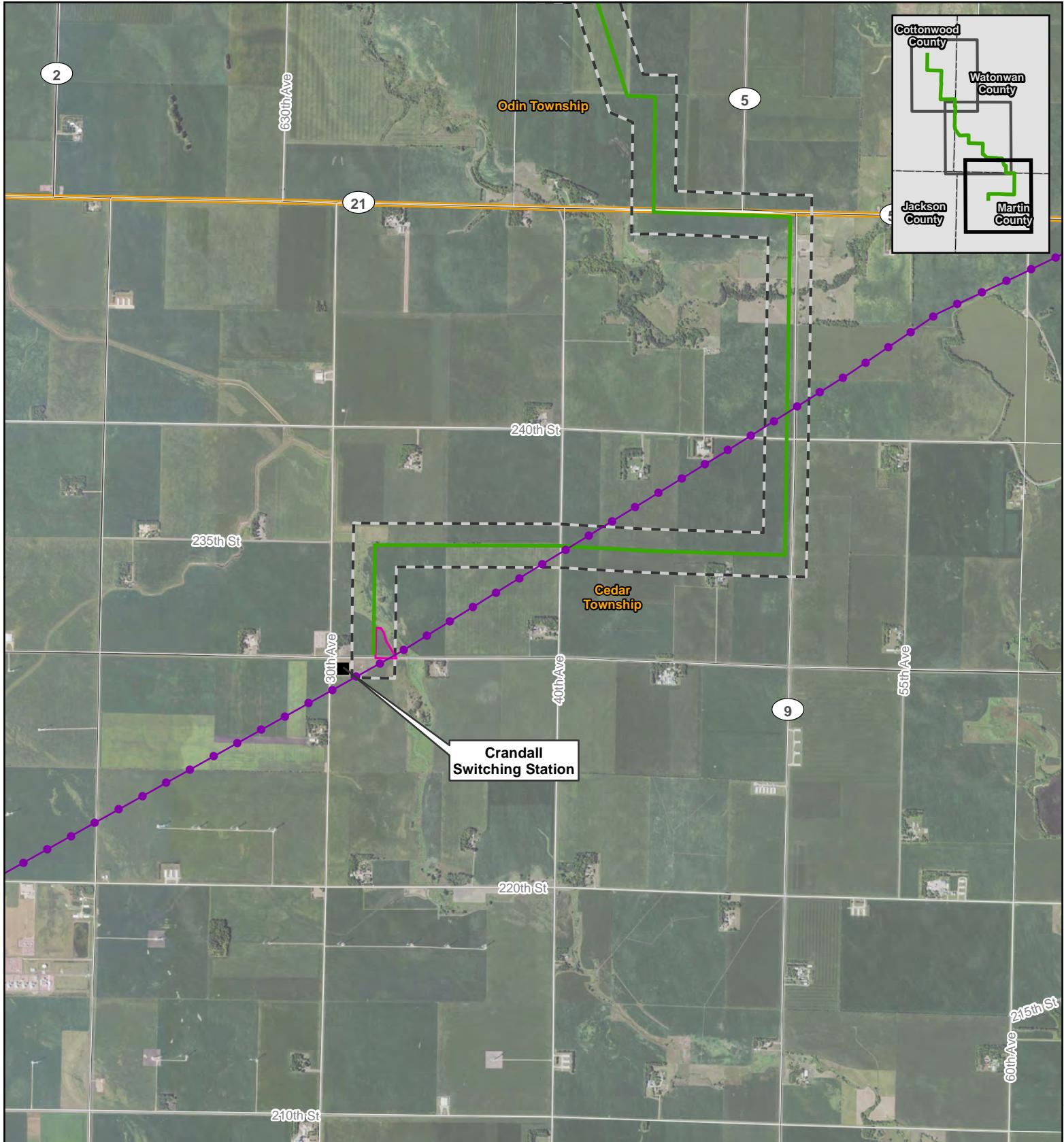


## Detailed Route Maps

# **Big Bend 161kV Transmission Line Project**

## **Cottonwood, Watonwan and Martin Counties, Minnesota**

- Proposed Route
- Alternate Purple Segment
- Proposed Route Width
- City/Township



## Detailed Route Maps

### Big Bend 161kV Transmission Line Project

#### Cottonwood, Watonwan and Martin Counties, Minnesota

- Proposed Route
- Proposed Route Width
- Proposed Step-up Substation
- City/Township
- Existing 345 kV Transmission Line