

The public meeting will begin shortly

Thank you for your patience

- Upon entry attendees are muted and will remain muted throughout the presentation
- After the presentation, there will be an opportunity to make a comment or ask a question. To indicate that you would like to make a comment, please send a note using the chat function to the meeting host
 - If you are joining by phone, press *3. When it is your turn to speak your line will be unmuted.

Public Information and Environmental Assessment Scoping Meetings

Minnesota Power HVDC Modernization Project Transmission Line Route Permit Application

PUC Dockets: E-015/CN-22-607 and E-015/TL-22-611

August 29 (Cloquet) and August 30 (Online), 2023

Meeting Agenda

- **Introduction and Permit Application Review Process** – Michael Kaluzniak, PUC
- **Project** – Daniel McCourtney, Minnesota Power
- **Environmental Review** – Jenna Ness, Department of Commerce
Energy Environmental Review and Analysis Unit (EERA)
- **Questions and Comments** – moderated by Jenna Ness

Minnesota Public Utilities Commission

The Commission's Role



- The Commission regulates three service industries in Minnesota's economy - electricity, natural gas and telephone.
- The Commission consists of five commissioners appointed by the governor to six-year, staggered terms. Commission staff consists of approximately 50 permanent full-time people.
- The Commission is responsible for ensure electric adequacy, reliability and efficiency. The Commission regulates investor-owned utilities to ensure Minnesotans are charged reasonable rates for power.



PUC Energy Facility Permitting



- The Commission has the authority to issue permits for construction and operation of energy generation facilities and transmission lines.
- Commission staff review evidence, build a record of information, analyze the information, and make recommendations to the five Commissioners who have final say about a given permit decision.
- The Commissioners, after collecting information from the public and interested parties will make the final decision about a project, which carries the weight of law.

Meeting Purpose

Provide information about:

- The proposed project;
- The state's high-voltage transmission line routing permit process.

Provide an opportunity to participate in developing the scope of the Environmental Assessment.

This includes:

- Commenting on potential impacts of the proposed project;
- Commenting on methods to minimize, mitigate, and avoid potential impacts;
- and proposing alternative routes and route segments for consideration.

Permits Required

The proposed project is a **High-Voltage Transmission Line (HVTL)**. In order to construct the project, Minnesota Power must first obtain two permits from the Public Utilities Commission.

A **route permit** is required because the transmission line has a rating of greater than 100 kilovolts and is greater than 1,500 feet in length.

A **certificate of need** is also required for the project to demonstrate a need for the energy from the project and determine its size, type and timing.

Decision Criteria

In determining the route of a high-voltage transmission line, the Commission must consider the characteristics, the potential impacts, and methods to minimize or mitigate the potential impacts of all proposed routes so that it may select a route that minimizes human and environmental impact. Specifically, the Commission must consider impacts on the following:

- Human settlement
- The natural environment and natural resources
- Historical, archaeological, and culturally significant resources
- Existing land use and economies
- Project cost and accessibility
- Sharing or paralleling existing rights-of-way
- Extent to which construction, cleanup, and restoration practices are mitigated through regulatory conditions
- Cumulative potential effects of related or anticipated future pipeline construction
- Relevant applicable policies, rules, and regulations of other federal, state, and local agencies

Estimated Schedule

Process Step	Date
Order Accepting Application	August 8, 2023
★ In-Person Public Information Meeting	August 29, 2023
★ Online Public Information Meeting	August 30, 2023
Close of Scoping Comment Period	September 13, 2023
Commission Review of Alternatives	September-October 2023
EA Scope Issued	September-October 2023
EA Issuance	December 2023-January 2024*
Public Hearing	January/February 2024*
ALJ Report	March/April 2024*
Commission Decision on Permit	May/June 2024*

* Dates are tentative.

Public Comments and Questions

- Give us feedback on this public hearing by scanning the QR code or going to the link:

<https://tinyurl.com/MPUCS>



*This survey is NOT a means to submit a public comment. Staff can help you to file a comment using a different process and form.

- If you are calling on your phone, press ***3** to add yourself to the comment queue.
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Thank You

Public Utilities Commission contacts:

Michael Kaluzniak, Staff Analyst

Mike.Kaluzniak@state.mn.us

651-201-2257

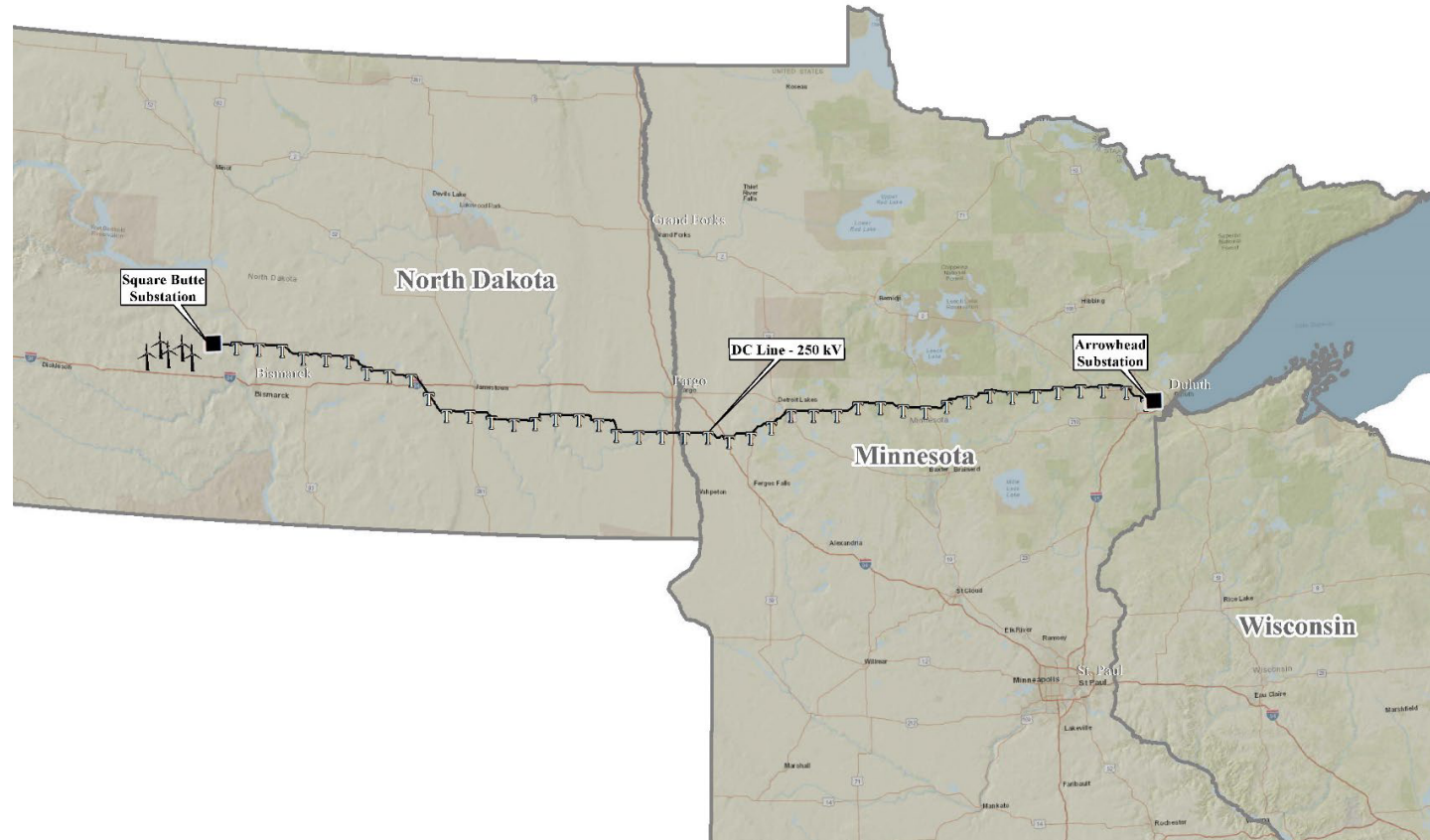
Sam Lobby, Public Advisor

Sam.Lobby@state.mn.us

651-201-2205

MN PUC Webpage: <https://mn.gov/puc/>

Project and Need



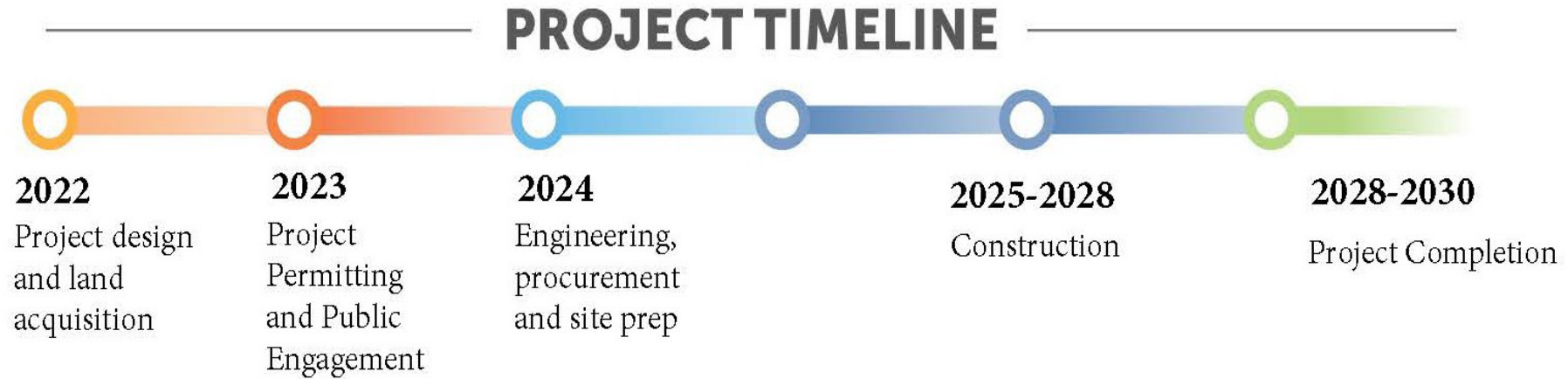
HVDC
MODERNIZATION
PROJECT

Planning for Today & Tomorrow



HVDC
MODERNIZATION
PROJECT

Project Timeline



Public Information and Scoping Meeting

Minnesota Power HVDC Modernization Project

August 29th and 30th, 2023

Docket No. TL-22-611

Jenna Ness, Environmental Review Manager

jenna.ness@state.mn.us

651-539-1693



Agenda

- Who is EERA and what do they do?
- What is Environmental Review?
 - Process
 - Timeline
 - Impacts and mitigation/alternatives/etc.
- How to Comment
 - Topics for Comment
- Questions and Comments today
 - Rules / Etiquette

Department of Commerce will prepare an Environmental Assessment (EA) as technical advisors to the Commission

Objective analysis of the project

- Evaluate potential human and environmental impacts
- Identify strategies to avoid, minimize, or mitigate impacts
- As a neutral third party, we not advocate – just the facts
- Goal is informed decision-making

Scoping - What should the EA include?

Public input focuses the EA on the most relevant information needed to make informed decisions.

- Public input on the “Table of Contents”
 - Human and environmental impacts
 - Strategies to mitigate impacts
 - Alternatives that could mitigate impacts
 - Specific permit conditions
 - Unique characteristics in the project area
- Draft Scoping Document available with issues we plan to cover

Timeline / Next Steps



Site Permit Application Filed **Public Info and Scoping Meetings** Scoping Decision Issued EA Issued – Public Comment Period Public Hearings Findings and Response to Comments Commission Decision on Site Permit

June 2023 August 2023 September 2023 January 2024 February 2024 April 2024 May 2024

How to Comment

- Verbal comments at today's meeting
- Complete and submit a comment sheet
- Comment online: mn.gov/commerce/energyfacilities
- Mail, Fax, or Email a Comment:
 - Jenna Ness
 - Minnesota Department of Commerce
 - 85 7th Place East, Suite 280
 - St. Paul, MN 55101
 - 651-539-1693
 - jenna.ness@state.mn.us
- Comment Period Ends: **September 13, 2023, at 4:30 pm.**

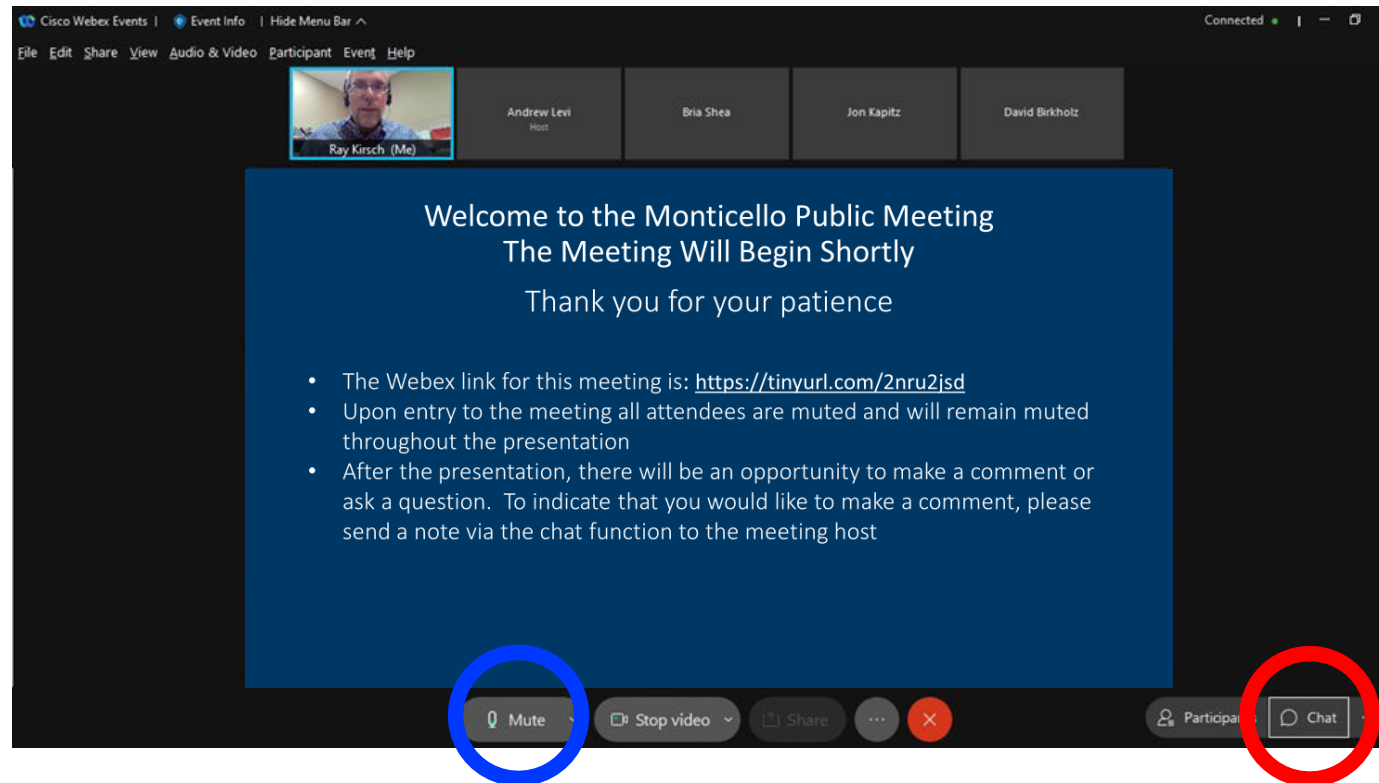
Commenting Etiquette

- One speaker at a time
- Please state and spell your name for the court reporter
- Please limit comments to a few minutes
- Maintain respect for others
- Direct your comments / questions to the scope of the environmental assessment

Scope of the Environmental Assessment

- “Table of Contents”
 - What do we need to know in order to make informed decisions?
- Human and environmental impacts
- Strategies to mitigate impacts
- Alternatives to the project that could mitigate impacts

Chat and Mute Functions



To send a message to the host indicating you would like to ask a question or submit a comment **click the “Chat” button.**

After you are unmuted by the host, you can mute and unmute yourself **using the “Mute” button.**

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