



Will Seuffert, Executive Secretary

NOTICE OF PUBLIC INFORMATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT SCOPING MEETINGS

Issued: June 24, 2024

In the Matter of the Application of Xcel Energy for a Certificate of Need and Route Permit for the Mankato – Mississippi River 345 kV Transmission Line Project in Southeast Minnesota

Docket Number: E002/CN-22-532, E002/TL-23-157

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (Commission) and Minnesota Department of Commerce will hold public information and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) scoping meetings on the application of Xcel Energy for a certificate of need and a route permit for the Mankato – Mississippi River Transmission Line Project. The proposed Project is a new approximately 130-mile 345-kilovolt (kV) transmission line between the existing Wilmarth Substation in Mankato to the Mississippi River near Kellogg and a new 20-mile 161 kV transmission line between the existing North Rochester Substation near Pine Island and an existing transmission line northeast of Rochester. The Project may cross portions of Blue Earth, Le Sueur, Waseca, Rice, Dodge, Olmstead, Goodhue, Winona, and Wabasha counties and is divided into the four segments described below (see attached Project Overview Map):

- Segment 1: a new 48- to 54-mile 345-kV transmission line between the Wilmarth Substation and a point near the West Faribault Substation;
- Segment 2: a new 34- to 42-mile 345-kV transmission line from a point near the existing West Faribault Substation to the existing North Rochester Substation;
- Segment 3: conversion of 27 miles of existing 161/345-kV transmission line to 345/345-kV operation and installation of a new 16-mile 345-kV circuit on the existing 345/345-kV double-circuit capable structures between the existing North Rochester Substation and the Mississippi River; and
- Segment 4: a new 19.6-to 23.7-mile 161-kV transmission line between the existing North Rochester Substation and the existing 161-kV Chester Line northeast of Rochester.

For this Project, Xcel Energy proposes a route width of 1,000 feet along most of the proposed alignments (500 feet to either side of proposed centerlines), with wider areas (up to 1.25 miles wide) around Project substations, locations with routing constraints, and where route options come together. The 345 kV portion of this Project typically requires a permanent 150-foot-wide right-of-way. For the 161 kV portions of the Project, a 100-foot-wide right-of-way is typically

required.

Xcel Energy indicated that this Project, along with other Long Range Transmission Projects (LRTP) that were studied and approved by the Midcontinent Independent System Operator, Inc. (MISO) are needed to provide reliable, resilient, and cost-effective delivery of energy as the generation resource mix continues to evolve over the coming years. Specifically, this Project and the other LRTP projects in Wisconsin¹ are needed to address loading and congestion issues on the existing 345 kV transmission system across southern Minnesota and Wisconsin.

In-Person Meetings

Meeting Location	Date	Time
Country Inn and Suites 1900 Premier Dr. Mankato, MN 56001	Monday, July 8, 2024	10:00 am (doors open pre-meeting hour) 11:00 am – 1:00 pm (public meeting)
Waterville-Elysian- Morristown High School 500 Paquin St. E. Waterville, MN 56096	Monday, July 8, 2024	5:00 pm (doors open pre-meeting hour) 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm (public meeting)
American Legion - Faribault 112 5 th St NE Faribault, MN 55021	Tuesday, July 9, 2024	10:00 am (doors open pre-meeting hour) 11:00 am – 1:00 pm (public meeting)
Pine Island Public School, High School Commons 223 1 st Ave SE Pine Island, MN 55963	Tuesday, July 9, 2024	5:00 pm (doors open pre-meeting hour) 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm (public meeting)
St. Agnes Church Hall 115 W. Belvidere Ave. Kellogg, MN 55945	Wednesday, July 10, 2024	5:00 pm (doors open pre-meeting hour) 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm (public meeting)

The purpose of the meeting is to: (1) provide information about the proposed project and the state's permitting process; and (2) provide an opportunity to participate in developing the scope of the Environmental Impact Statement, including alternative route segments.

¹ Tremval - Eau Claire - Jump River and Tremval - Rocky Run - Columbia transmission projects both located in Wisconsin.

For the pre-meeting portion of the event, doors will open one hour prior to each meeting to provide attendees an opportunity to review the application, maps, and other materials for the proposed project and ask questions of state staff and the applicant. ***During this time, comments made by attendees will become a part of the record for Commission consideration only if the attendee submits the comment in writing.*** Forms will be available for this purpose.

During the meeting, state staff and the applicant will both make presentations. State staff will explain the permitting and environmental review processes, and the applicant will provide an overview of the proposed project. Following the presentations, attendees will have the opportunity to offer oral and written comments for the record. The meetings will end when all attendees have had the opportunity to comment and all other business has been concluded, or the scheduled end time of the meeting, whichever occurs first. The information presented will be the same at all in-person and online meetings.

If any reasonable accommodation is needed to enable you to fully participate in these meetings, please contact the Commission at 651-296-0406 or 1-800-657-3782 at least one week in advance of the meeting. To find out if a meeting is canceled due to bad weather or other call 1-855-731-6208 or visit mn.gov/puc.

Online Meetings via WebEx

Date: Thursday, July 11, 2024

Time: 12 pm

Join by WebEx (Webinar) Link: <https://minnesota.webex.com>

Webinar Number: 2496 636 2882

Webinar Password: MNPUC (66782 when dialing from a phone or video system)

Join by Phone: 1-855-282-6330 Toll Free **Access Code:** 2496 636 2882

Date: Thursday, July 11, 2024

Time: 6 pm

Join by WebEx (Webinar) Link: <https://minnesota.webex.com>

Webinar Number: 2495 522 4864

Webinar Password: MNPUC (66782 when dialing from a phone or video system)

Join by Phone: 1-855-282-6330 Toll Free **Access Code:** 2495 522 4864

If you are joining the meeting via WebEx and would like to ask a question or make a comment during the designated portion of the meeting, use the chat or raised-hand functions to send a

message to the meeting moderator. If you are joining the meeting by phone, press *3 on your phone. When it is your turn to speak, your line will be unmuted, and you will be able to ask questions and provide comments.

Additional information and instructions are available at:

<https://mn.gov/puc/activities/meetings/webex/>

Comment Period

Written comments will be accepted through **August 1, by 4:30 p.m.** Please include the docket number in all communications. Comments received after the close of the comment period may or may not be considered by the Commission.

Topics for Comment

- Are there other ways to meet the stated need for the project, for example, a different size project or a different type of facility?
- What potential human and environmental impacts of the proposed project should be considered in the EIS?
- Are there any methods to minimize, mitigate, or avoid potential impacts of the proposed project that should be considered in the EIS?
- Are there any alternative routes or route segments that should be considered in the EIS to address or mitigate potential impacts associated with the proposed project?
- Are there any unique characteristics of the proposed project area that should be considered in the EIS?

Submit Comments

Online: <https://mn.gov/commerce/energyfacilities/#comment>

Email: richard.davis@state.mn.us

U.S. Mail: Richard Davis
Minnesota Department of Commerce
85 7th Place East, Suite 280
St. Paul, MN 55101

Comments will be made available to the public via the Commission's website, except in limited circumstances consistent with the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act. The Commission and the Department of Commerce do not edit or delete personal identifying information from submissions.

Additional Information

Minnesota Statutes and Rules. This project is being reviewed under Minnesota Statutes chapters 216B and 216E, and Minnesota Rules chapters 7849 and 7850. The rules and statutes are available for review at: www.revisor.mn.gov

Review Process. Information on the review processes for certificates of need and site and route permits for large electric power facilities is available on the Commission's website at: <https://mn.gov/puc/activities/energy-facilities/>

Filing Requirements. Utilities, telecommunications carriers, official parties, and state agencies are required to file documents using the Commission's electronic filing system (eFiling). All parties, participants, and interested persons are also encouraged to use eFiling: mn.gov/puc/edockets, select *Go to eDockets* and follow the prompts.

Full Case Record. See all documents filed in this matter via the Commission's website at mn.gov/puc/edockets, select *Go to eDockets*, enter the year and docket number 22-532 for the certificate of need or 23-157 for the route permit, and select *Search*.

Subscribe to the Docket. To receive email notification when new documents are filed in this matter visit: <https://www.edockets.state.mn.us/EFiling>, select *Subscribe to Dockets*.

Project Mailing List. Sign up to receive notices about project milestones and opportunities to participate or change your mailing preference. Email eservice.admin@state.mn.us or call 651-201-2246 with the docket number (22-532 or 23-157), your name, mailing address, and email address.

Department of Commerce Website:

<https://eera.web.commerce.state.mn.us/web/project/15507>

Contacts

Public Utilities Commission

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Trevor Culbertson, Public Advisor, trevor.culbertson@state.mn.us or 651-201-2195

Department of Commerce

Richard Davis, Environmental Review Manager, richard.davis@state.mn.us or 651- 539-1846

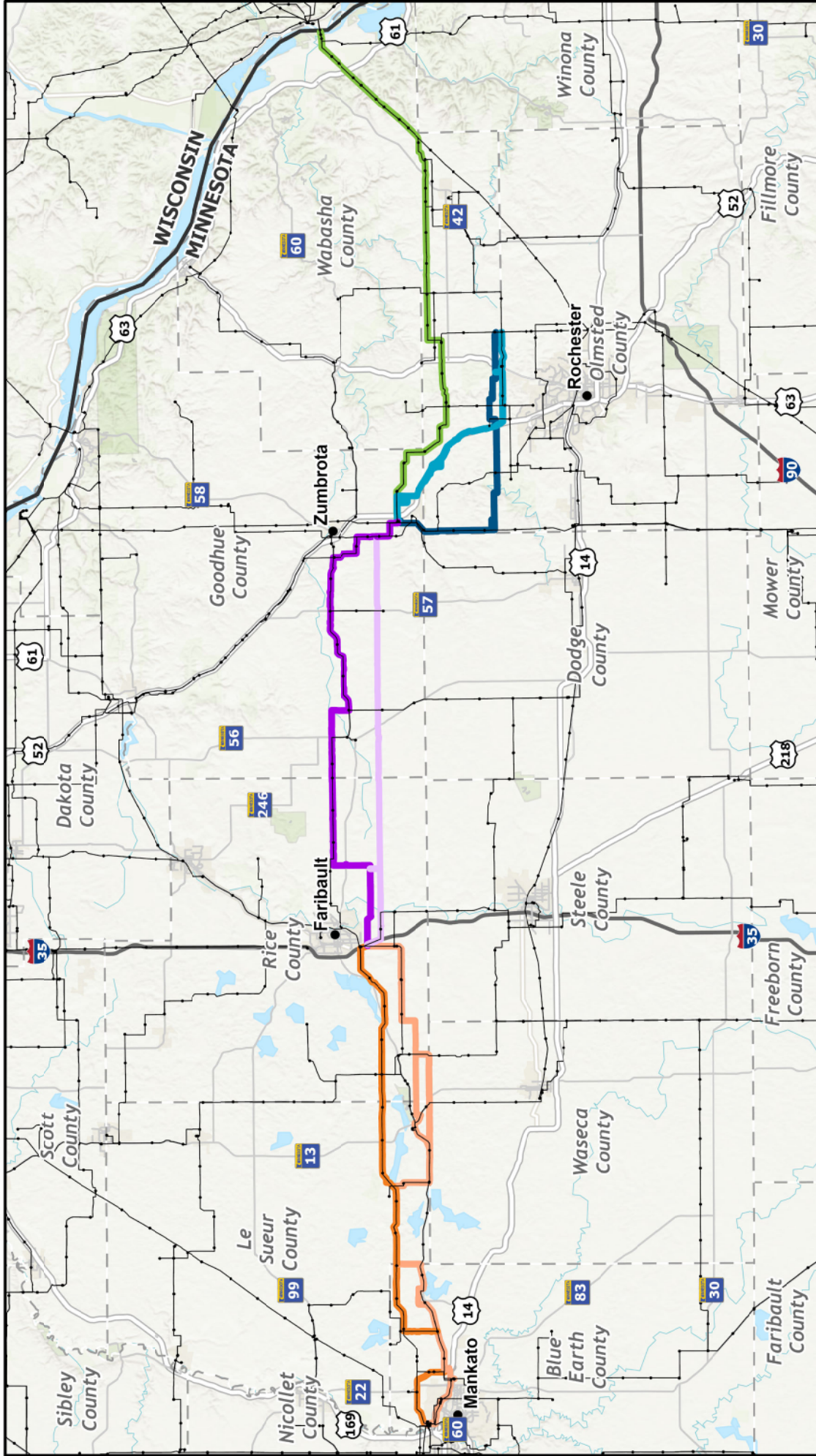
Xcel Energy

Ellen Heine, Principal Siting and Permitting Agent, ellen.l.heine@xcelenergy.com or 612-330-6073

To request this document in another format such as large print or audio, call 651-296-0406 (voice). Persons with a hearing or speech impairment may call using their preferred Telecommunications Relay Service or email consumer.puc@state.mn.us for assistance.

Project Overview Map

FIGURE 1-1 PROJECT OVERVIEW



LEGEND

Proposed Route Option

- 1 North
- 1 South
- 2 North
- 2 South
- 3
- 4 East
- 4 West

Existing Transmission

- Line
- Interstate Highway
- U.S. Highway
- State Highway

State Boundary

- State Boundary
- County Boundary

Xcel Energy®

MANKATO-MISSISSIPPI RIVER TRANSMISSION PROJECT

0 5 10 Miles