

BEFORE THE MINNESOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

Katie J. Sieben
Hwikwon Ham
Audrey C. Partridge
Joseph K. Sullivan
John A. Tuma

Chair
Commissioner
Commissioner
Commissioner
Commissioner

In the Matter of the Application of Xcel Energy
and Echo Zone LLC for a Route Permit for the
North Rochester to Skyway High Voltage
Transmission Line Project in Goodhue County,
Minnesota

SERVICE DATE: August 14, 2026

DOCKET NO. E-002/TL-26-135

The above-entitled matter was considered by the Commission on August 6, 2026, and the following disposition made:

- 1. Determined that an addendum to the applicant Environmental Assessment is not required for the North Rochester to Skyway High Voltage Transmission Line Project.**
- 2. Determined that an extension to the six-month statutory deadline is not necessary.**
- 3. Issued the attached Draft Route Permit prepared by Commission Energy Infrastructure Permitting staff, including the proposed special permit conditions.**
- 4. Requested that an Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) from the Court of Administrative Hearings (CAH) conduct public hearings for the project and prepare a summary of public testimony as expeditiously as possible.**

This Order shall become effective immediately.



BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Sasha Bergman".

Sasha Bergman
Executive Secretary

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.

STATE OF MINNESOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

**ROUTE PERMIT FOR
NORTH ROCHESTER TO SKYWAY HIGH VOLTAGE TRANSMISSION LINE PROJECT**

A HIGH-VOLTAGE TRANSMISSION LINE AND ASSOCIATED FACILITIES

**IN
GOODHUE COUNTY**

**ISSUED TO
NORTHERN STATES POWER COMPANY D/B/A XCEL ENERGY AND ECHO ZONE, LLC**

PUC DOCKET NO. E002/TL-26-135

In accordance with the requirements of Minnesota Statutes Chapter 216I, this route permit is hereby issued to:

NORTHERN STATES POWER COMPANY D/B/A XCEL ENERGY AND ECHO ZONE, LLC

Northern States Power Company d/b/a Xcel Energy and Echo Zone, LLC are authorized by this route permit to construct and operate the North Rochester to Skyway High Voltage Transmission Line Project (Project), an approximately 1.2-mile long double-circuit 345 kilovolt (kV) transmission line that would connect Xcel Energy's North Rochester Substation to four new substation facilities at the proposed Pine Island Industrial Planned Unit Development site, and to expand the existing North Rochester Substation by approximately 11.3 acres in Goodhue County, Minnesota.

The high-voltage transmission line shall be constructed within the route identified in this route permit and in compliance with the conditions specified in this route permit.

Approved and adopted this day of [Month, Year]

BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION

Sasha Bergman, Executive Secretary

To request this document in another format such as large print or audio, call 651-296-0406 or 800-657-3782 (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.

DRAFT PERMIT

Contents

1	ROUTE PERMIT	5
1.1	Pre-emption.....	5
2	TRANSMISSION FACILITY DESCRIPTION	5
2.1	Structures	5
2.2	Conductors	6
2.3	Substations and Associated Facilities.....	6
3	DESIGNATED ROUTE	6
4	RIGHT-OF-WAY	7
5	GENERAL CONDITIONS	8
5.1	Route Permit Distribution	8
5.2	Access to Property	8
5.3	Construction and Operation Practices	8
5.3.1	Field Representative	9
5.3.2	Employee Training	9
5.3.3	Independent Third-Party Monitoring.....	9
5.3.4	Public Services, Public Utilities, and Existing Easements.....	10
5.3.5	Temporary Workspace	10
5.3.6	Noise	10
5.3.7	Aesthetics	10
5.3.8	Soil Erosion and Sediment Control.....	11
5.3.9	Wetlands and Water Resources.....	11
5.3.10	Vegetation Management.....	12
5.3.11	Application of Pesticides.....	12
5.3.12	Invasive Species.....	13
5.3.13	Noxious Weeds.....	13
5.3.14	Roads	13
5.3.15	Archaeological and Historic Resources	14
5.3.16	Avian Protection	14
5.3.17	Drainage Tiles	15
5.3.18	Restoration	15
5.3.19	Cleanup	15
5.3.20	Pollution and Hazardous Wastes	15
5.3.21	Damages.....	15
5.3.22	Facility Lighting.....	16
5.3.23	Dust Control	16
5.3.24	Wildlife Friendly Erosion Control	16

5.4	Electrical Performance Standards	16
5.4.1	Grounding	16
5.4.2	Electric Field	16
5.4.3	Interference with Communication Devices	16
5.5	Other Requirements	17
5.5.1	Safety Codes and Design Requirements	17
5.5.2	Other Permits and Regulations	17
6	SPECIAL CONDITIONS	17
6.1	Data Center Approvals	18
6.2	Tree Clearing Restrictions	18
6.3	Application of Herbicides in Highway Right-of-way	18
6.4	Substation Lighting	18
7	DELAY IN CONSTRUCTION	18
8	COMPLAINT PROCEDURES	18
9	COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS	19
9.1	Pre-Construction Meeting	19
9.2	Plan and Profile	19
9.3	Status Reports	20
9.4	Labor Statistic Reporting	21
9.5	Prevailing Wage	21
9.6	In-Service Date	21
9.7	As-Builts	21
9.8	GPS Data	22
9.9	Right of Entry	22
10	ROUTE PERMIT AMENDMENT	22
11	TRANSFER OF ROUTE PERMIT	22
12	REVOCATION OR SUSPENSION OF ROUTE PERMIT	23

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – Complaint Handling Procedures for Permitted Energy Facilities

Attachment 2 – Compliance Filing Procedures for Permitted Energy Facilities

Attachment 3 – Route Permit Maps

1 ROUTE PERMIT

The Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (Commission) hereby issues this route permit to Northern States Power Company and Echo Zone, LLC (Permittees) pursuant to Minnesota Statutes Chapter 216I. This route permit authorizes the Permittees to construct and operate a an approximately 1.2-mile long double-circuit 345 kV transmission line that would connect Xcel Energy's North Rochester substation to four new substation facilities at the proposed Pine Island Industrial Planned Unit Development (Project Skyway) site, and to expand the existing North Rochester Substation by approximately 11.3 acres (North Rochester to Skyway High Voltage Transmission Line Project, henceforth known as Transmission Facility). The high-voltage transmission line shall be constructed within the route identified in this route permit and in compliance with the conditions specified in this route permit.

1.1 Pre-emption

Pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 216I.18, this route permit shall be the sole route approval required for construction of the Transmission Facility. This route 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 TRANSMISSION FACILITY DESCRIPTION

The Transmission Line and North Rochester substation facilities would be owned and operated by Xcel Energy, and the four Project Skyway substations would be owned and operated by Echo Zone, LLC.

The Transmission Facility is located in the following:

County	Township Name	Township	Range	Section
Goodhue	Pine Island	109N	015W	19, 29, 30

2.1 Structures

The structure types as described in the Permittees' route permit application are detailed in the table below.

Line Type	Structure		Foundation	Height	Span
	Type	Material			
Double-circuit, 345 kV	Double-circuit, double-pole terminal deadends	Steel	Reinforced concrete drilled piers, 8-10 foot diameter.	100-180 feet	150-975 feet
	Double-circuit, single-pole tangent				
	Single-circuit, single-pole terminal deadends.				
	Angle structures with V-string insulators				

2.2 Conductors

The double-circuit, 345 kV HVTL structures will have six single-conductor attachments, which will be 3-phase double-bundled twisted pair 636 kcmil 26/7 ACSR “Grosbeak”. There will be two shield wires per structure, which will be 0.555-inch diameter 48-fiber Optical Ground Wire (OPGW). The spans into the North Rochester Substation and Project Skyway Substations will both have two additional 3/8-inch EHS steel shield wires.

2.3 Substations and Associated Facilities

The substations and associated facilities authorized by this Route Permit include the expansion of the existing North Rochester Substation and the construction of the four Project Skyway Substations at the Project Skyway Data Center site.

Xcel Energy proposes to expand the North Rochester Substation’s footprint directly to the north by approximately 11.3 acres, increasing the total site area to approximately 22 acres. The expansion area will be graveled and fenced to accommodate additional 345 kV lines entering the site and will add 6 new breaker-and-a-half rows, providing capacity for 10 additional line terminations.

The Project Skyway Substations will range in size from approximately 230 to 250 feet wide and 175 to 285 feet in length. In total, the Project Skyway Substations will have a 5.8-acre footprint. The substations would consist of A-frame structures for 345 kV high voltage transmission and terminations, protection equipment, bus schemes, switches, breakers, controls, and transformers to output medium voltage to the industrial campus.

3 DESIGNATED ROUTE

The route designated by the Commission is depicted on the route maps attached to this route permit (Designated Route). The route width approved by this permit varies based on the proposed facilities. The minimum proposed route width is 1,000 feet for the transmission line portions of the project. An expanded route width is proposed around the North Rochester Substation expansion and the Project Skyway Substations.

The route begins at Xcel Energy's North Rochester Substation west of US Highway 52. The Proposed Alignment travels east for approximately 0.64-mile, crossing US Highway 52, then turns south for approximately 0.52-mile, where the route terminates at the southernmost of the four proposed Project Skyway Substations.

The Designed Route includes an anticipated alignment and a right-of-way. The right-of-way is the physical land needed for the safe operation of the transmission line. The Permittees shall locate the alignment and associated right-of-way within the Designated Route unless otherwise authorized by this route permit or the Commission. The Designated Route provides the Permittees with flexibility for minor adjustments of the alignment and right-of-way to accommodate landowner requests and unforeseen conditions.

Any modifications to the Designated Route or modifications that would result in right-of-way placement outside the Designated Route shall be specifically reviewed by the Commission in accordance with Minn. Stat. § 216I.09 and Section 10 of this route permit.

4 RIGHT-OF-WAY

This route permit authorizes the Permittees 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 or alignment.

The anticipated alignment is intended to minimize potential impacts relative to the criteria identified in Minn. Stat. § 216I.05, subd. 11. The final alignment must generally conform to the anticipated alignment identified on the route maps unless changes are requested by individual landowners and agreed to by the Permittees or for unforeseen conditions that are encountered or as otherwise provided for by this route permit.

Any right-of-way or alignment modifications within the Designated Route shall be located so as to have comparable overall impacts relative to the factors in Minn. Stat. § 216I.05, subd. 11, as does the right-of-way and alignment identified in this route permit and shall be specifically identified and documented in and approved as part of the plan and profile submitted pursuant to Section 9.2 of this route permit.

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. Stat. § 216I.05, subd. 11, and the other requirements of this route permit; and for highways under the jurisdiction of the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT), the procedures for accommodating utilities in trunk highway rights-of-way.

5 GENERAL CONDITIONS

The Permittees shall comply with the following conditions during construction and operation of the Transmission Facility over the life of this route permit.

5.1 Route Permit Distribution

Within 30 days of issuance of this route permit, the Permittees shall provide all affected landowners with a copy of this route permit and the complaint procedures. An affected landowner is any landowner or designee that is within or adjacent to the Designated Route. In no case shall a landowner receive this route permit and complaint procedures less than five days prior to the start of construction on their property. The Permittees shall also provide a copy of this route permit and the complaint procedures to the applicable regional development commissions, county environmental offices, and city and township clerks. The Permittees shall file with the Commission an affidavit of its route permit and complaint procedures distribution within 30 days of issuance of this route permit.

5.2 Access to Property

The Permittees shall notify landowners prior to entering or conducting maintenance within their property, unless otherwise negotiated with the landowner. The Permittees shall keep records of compliance with this section and provide them upon the request of Commission staff.

5.3 Construction and Operation Practices

The Permittees shall comply with the construction practices, operation and maintenance practices, and material specifications described in the permitting record for this Transmission Facility unless this route permit establishes a different requirement in which case this route permit shall prevail.

5.3.1 Field Representative

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

The Permittees shall file with the Commission the name, address, email, phone number, and emergency phone number of the field representative at least 14 days prior to the pre-construction meeting. The Permittees shall provide the field representative's contact information to affected landowners, local government units and other interested persons at least 14 days prior to the pre-construction meeting. The Permittees may change the field representative at any time upon notice to the Commission, affected landowners, local government units and other interested persons. The Permittees shall file with the Commission an affidavit of distribution of its field representative's contact information at least 14 days prior to the pre-construction meeting and upon changes to the field representative.

5.3.2 Employee Training

The Permittees shall train all employees, contractors, and other persons involved in the Transmission Facility construction regarding the terms and conditions of this route permit. The Permittees shall keep records of compliance with this section and provide them upon the request of Commission staff.

5.3.3 Independent Third-Party Monitoring

Prior to any construction, the Permittees shall propose a scope of work and identify an independent third-party monitor to conduct Project construction monitoring on behalf of the Commission. The scope of work shall be developed in consultation with and approved by Commission staff. This third-party monitor will report directly to and will be under the control of the Commission with costs borne by the Permittees.

The Permittees shall file with the Commission the approved scope of work and the name, address, email, and telephone number of the third party-monitor at least 14 days prior to commencing any construction or right-of-way preparation and upon any change in contact information that may occur during Project construction and restoration of the right-of-way.

The Permittees shall keep records of compliance with this section and ensure that status reports detailing the construction monitoring are filed with the Commission in accordance with the approved scope of work.

5.3.4 Public Services, Public Utilities, and Existing Easements

During Transmission Facility construction, the Permittees shall minimize any disruption to public services or public utilities. To the extent disruptions to public services or public utilities occur these shall be temporary, and the Permittees shall restore service promptly. Where any impacts to utilities have the potential to occur the Permittees shall work with both landowners and local entities to determine the most appropriate mitigation measures if not already considered as part of this route permit.

The Permittees shall coordinate with county and city road authorities to develop appropriate signage and traffic management during construction. The Permittees shall keep records of compliance with this section and provide them upon the request of Commission staff.

5.3.5 Temporary Workspace

The Permittees 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. The Permittees shall obtain temporary easements outside of the authorized transmission line right-of-way from affected landowners through rental or lease agreements. Temporary easements are not provided for in this route permit.

The Permittees may construct temporary driveways between roadways and transmission structures to minimize impacts by using the shortest route feasible. The Permittees shall use construction mats to minimize impacts on access paths and construction areas. The Permittees shall submit the location of temporary workspaces and driveways with the plan and profile pursuant to Section 9.2.

5.3.6 Noise

The Permittees shall comply with noise standards established under Minn. R. 7030.0010 to 7030.0080. The Permittees shall limit construction and maintenance activities to daytime working hours to the extent practicable.

5.3.7 Aesthetics

The Permittees shall consider input pertaining to visual impacts from landowners or land management agencies prior to final location of structures, rights-of-way, and other areas with the potential for visual disturbance. The Permittees shall use care to preserve the natural landscape, minimize tree removal and prevent any unnecessary destruction of the natural

surroundings in the vicinity of the Transmission Facility during construction and maintenance. The Permittees 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. The Permittees shall place structures at a distance, consistent with sound engineering principles and system reliability criteria, from intersecting roads, highways, or trail crossings.

5.3.8 Soil Erosion and Sediment Control

The Permittees shall implement those erosion prevention and sediment control practices recommended by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) Construction Stormwater Program. If construction of the Transmission 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 Permittees shall obtain a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System/State Disposal System Construction Stormwater Permit from the MPCA that provides for development of a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan that describes methods to control erosion and runoff.

The Permittees 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 Transmission Facility shall be returned to pre-construction conditions.

5.3.9 Wetlands and Water Resources

The Permittees shall develop wetland impact avoidance measures and implement them during construction of the Transmission Facility. Measures shall include spacing and placing transmission structures at variable distances to span and avoid wetlands, watercourses, and floodplains. Unavoidable wetland impacts as a result of the placement of structures shall be limited to the immediate area around the structures. To minimize impacts, the Permittees shall construct in wetland areas during frozen ground conditions where practicable and according to permit requirements by the applicable permitting authority. When construction during winter is not possible, the Permittees shall use wooden or composite mats to protect wetland vegetation.

The Permittees shall contain soil excavated from the wetlands and riparian areas and not place it back into the wetland or riparian area. The Permittees shall access wetlands and riparian areas using the shortest route possible in order to minimize travel through wetland areas and prevent

unnecessary impacts. The Permittees shall not place staging or stringing set up areas within or adjacent to wetlands or water resources, as practicable. The Permittees shall assemble structures on upland areas before they are brought to the site for installation.

The Permittees shall restore wetland and water resource areas disturbed by construction activities to pre-construction conditions in accordance with the requirements of applicable state and federal permits or laws and landowner agreements. The Permittees shall meet the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources, and local units of government wetland and water resource requirements.

5.3.10 Vegetation Management

The Permittees 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.

The Permittees shall remove tall growing species located within the transmission line right-of-way that endanger the safe and reliable operation of the transmission line. The Permittees 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 will not pose a threat to the transmission line or impede construction.

The Permittees shall develop a vegetation management plan (VMP), in coordination with the Vegetation Management Plan Working Group (VMPWG), using best management practices established by the DNR and BWSR. The Permittees shall file the VMP and documentation of the coordination efforts between the Permittees and the DNR with the Commission as part of the plan and profile required in Section 9.2 of the Permit.

5.3.11 Application of Pesticides

The Permittees shall restrict pesticide use to those pesticides and methods of application approved by the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA), DNR, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). 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 Permittees shall contact the landowner at least 14 days prior to pesticide application on their

property. The Permittees may not apply any pesticide if the landowner requests that there be no application of pesticides within the landowner's property. The Permittees shall provide notice of pesticide application to landowners and beekeepers operating known apiaries within three miles of the pesticide application area at least 14 days prior to such application. The Permittees shall use the MDA's Apiary Registry (<https://mn.beecheck.org/map>) to identify known apiaries for purposes of compliance with this condition. The Permittees shall keep pesticide communication and application records and provide them upon the request of Commission staff.

5.3.12 Invasive Species

The Permittees shall employ best management practices to avoid the potential introduction and spread of invasive species on lands disturbed by Transmission Facility construction activities. The Permittees shall develop an Invasive Species Prevention Plan and file it with the Commission at least 14 days prior to the pre-construction meeting. The Permittees shall comply with the most recently filed Invasive Species Prevention Plan.

5.3.13 Noxious Weeds

The Permittees 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 Permittees shall select site appropriate seed certified to be free of noxious weeds. To the extent possible, the Permittees shall use native seed mixes. The Permittees shall keep records of compliance with this section and provide them upon the request of Commission staff.

5.3.14 Roads

The Permittees 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 Transmission Facility. Where practical, existing roadways shall be used for all activities associated with construction of the Transmission Facility. Oversize or overweight loads associated with the Transmission Facility shall not be hauled across public roads without required permits and approvals.

The Permittees shall construct the fewest number of site access roads required. 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 Permittees shall promptly repair private roads or lanes damaged when moving equipment or when accessing construction workspace, unless otherwise negotiated with the affected landowner.

5.3.15 Archaeological and Historic Resources

The Permittees shall make every effort to avoid impacts to archaeological and historic resources when constructing the Transmission Facility. In the event that a resource is encountered, the Permittees 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 Transmission Facility impacts on the resource consistent with State Historic Preservation Office and State Archaeologist requirements.

The Permittees shall develop an Unanticipated Discoveries Plan (UDP) to identify guidelines to be used in the event previously unrecorded archeological or historic properties, or human remains, are encountered during construction, or if unanticipated effects to previously identified archaeological or historic properties occur during construction. The UDP is in addition to and not in lieu of any other obligations that may exist under law or regulation relating to these matters. The Permittees shall file the UDP with the Commission at least 14 days prior to the preconstruction meeting.

The Permittees shall train workers 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 Permittees shall, in accordance with Minn. Stat. Ch. 307 (Private Cemeteries Act), immediately halt construction and promptly notify local law enforcement and the State Archaeologist. The Permittees shall not resume construction at such location until authorized by local law enforcement or the State Archaeologist. The Permittees shall keep records of compliance with this section and provide them upon the request of Commission staff.

5.3.16 Avian Protection

The Permittees in cooperation with the DNR shall identify areas of the transmission line 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. The Permittees shall submit documentation of its avian protection coordination with the plan and profile pursuant to Section 9.2.

5.3.17 Drainage Tiles

The Permittees shall avoid, promptly repair, or replace all drainage tiles broken or damaged during all phases of the Transmission Facility's life. The Permittees shall keep records of compliance with this section and provide them upon the request of Commission staff.

5.3.18 Restoration

The Permittees 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 Facility. 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 Permittees shall file with the Commission a Notice of Restoration Completion.

5.3.19 Cleanup

The Permittees shall remove and properly dispose of all construction waste and scrap from the right-of-way and all premises on which construction activities were conducted upon completion of each task. The Permittees shall remove and properly dispose of all personal litter, including bottles, cans, and paper from construction activities daily.

5.3.20 Pollution and Hazardous Wastes

The Permittees shall take all appropriate precautions to protect against pollution of the environment. The Permittees shall be responsible for compliance with all laws applicable to the generation, storage, transportation, clean up and disposal of all waste generated during construction and restoration of the Transmission Facility.

5.3.21 Damages

The Permittees shall fairly restore or compensate landowners for damage to crops, fences, private roads and lanes, landscaping, drain tile, or other damages sustained during construction. The Permittees shall keep records of compliance with this section and provide them upon the request of Commission staff.

5.3.22 Facility Lighting

The Permittees shall use shielded and downward facing lighting and LED lighting that minimizes blue hue.

5.3.23 Dust Control

The Permittees shall utilize non-chloride products for onsite dust control during construction.

5.3.24 Wildlife Friendly Erosion Control

The Permittees shall use only “bio-netting” or “natural netting” types of erosion control materials and mulch products without synthetic (plastic) fiber additives or malachite green dye.

5.4 Electrical Performance Standards

5.4.1 Grounding

The Permittees 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 milliamperes rms under steady state conditions of the transmission line and to comply with the ground fault conditions specified in the National Electric Safety Code. The Permittees shall address and rectify any induced current problems that arise during transmission line operation.

5.4.2 Electric Field

The Permittees shall design, construct, and operate the transmission line 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 Facility, the Permittees 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 Transmission Facility. The Permittees shall keep records of compliance with this section and provide them upon the request of Commission staff.

5.5 Other Requirements

5.5.1 Safety Codes and Design Requirements

The Permittees shall design the transmission line and associated facilities to meet or exceed all relevant local and state codes, the National Electric Safety Code, and North American Electric Reliability Corporation 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.

5.5.2 Other Permits and Regulations

The Permittees shall comply with all applicable state statutes and rules. The Permittees shall obtain all required permits for the Transmission Facility and comply with the conditions of those permits unless those permits conflict with or are preempted by federal or state permits and regulations.

At least 14 days prior to the pre-construction meeting, the Permittees shall file with the Commission an Other Permits and Regulations Submittal that contains a detailed status of all permits, authorizations, and approvals that have been applied for specific to the Transmission Facility. The Other Permits and Regulations Submittal shall also include the permitting agency name; the name of the permit, authorization, or approval being sought; contact person and contact information for the permitting agency or authority; brief description of why the permit, authorization, or approval is needed; application submittal date; and the date the permit, authorization, or approval was issued or is anticipated to be issued.

The Permittees shall demonstrate that it has obtained all necessary permits, authorizations, and approvals by filing an affidavit stating as such and an updated Other Permits and Regulations Submittal prior to commencing construction. The Permittees shall provide a copy of any such permits, authorizations, and approvals at the request of Commission staff.

6 SPECIAL CONDITIONS

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

6.1 Data Center Approvals

The Permittees may not begin construction of the Transmission Facility until all required local, state, and federal approvals necessary to build the Project Skyway Data Center have been obtained. The Permittees must file documentation of these approvals 14 days prior to the pre-construction meeting for the Transmission Facility.

6.2 Tree Clearing Restrictions

The Permittees shall avoid tree removal from June 1 through August 15 to minimize impacts to nesting bird species and bats, including the federally endangered northern long-eared bat.

6.3 Application of Herbicides in Highway Right-of-way

The Permittees shall not apply broadcast herbicides or chemicals within the highway right-of-way along U.S. 52 without evidence of consultation with the MnDOT Protected Species Program.

6.4 Substation Lighting

The Permittees shall turn off non-essential lighting on substation buildings and associated structures from midnight until dawn during the periods of March 15 to May 31 and August 15 to October 31 to minimize impacts to migratory birds and the Mayfly hatch, to the extent such a lighting scheme does not conflict with Section 5.5.1 of this permit or other applicable safety and security requirements.

7 DELAY IN CONSTRUCTION

If the Permittees have not commenced construction or improvement of the Transmission Facility within four years after the date of issuance of this route permit the Permittees shall file a Failure to Construct Report and the Commission shall consider suspension of this route permit in accordance with Minn. Stat. § 216I.24.

8 COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

At least 14 days prior to the pre-construction meeting, the Permittees shall file with the Commission the complaint procedures that will be used to receive and respond to complaints. The complaint 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 route permit.

Upon request, the Permittees shall assist Commission staff 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 route permit is a failure to comply with the conditions of this route permit. Compliance filings must be electronically filed with the Commission.

9.1 Pre-Construction Meeting

Prior to the start of construction, the Permittees shall participate in a pre-construction meeting with Commission staff to review pre-construction filing requirements, scheduling, and to coordinate monitoring of construction and site restoration activities. Within 14 days following the pre-construction meeting, the Permittees shall file with the Commission a summary of the topics reviewed and discussed and a list of attendees. The Permittees shall indicate in the filing the anticipated construction start date.

9.2 Plan and Profile

At least 14 days prior to the pre-construction meeting, the Permittees shall file with the Commission, and provide the counties where the Transmission Facility, or portion of the Transmission Facility, will be constructed 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 Facility. 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 by this route permit.

The Permittees may not commence construction until the earlier of (i) 30 days after the pre-construction meeting or (ii) until the Commission staff has notified the Permittees in writing that it has completed its review of the documents and determined that the planned construction is consistent with this route permit.

If the Commission notifies the Permittees in writing within 30 days after the pre-construction meeting that it has completed its review of the documents and planned construction, and finds that the planned construction is not consistent with this route permit, the Permittees may submit additional and/or revised documentation and may not commence construction until the Commission has notified the Permittees in writing that it has determined that the planned construction is consistent with this route permit.

If the Permittees intends to make any significant changes in its plan and profile or the specifications and drawings after submission to the Commission, the Permittees shall notify the Commission and county staff 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 route permit.

9.3 Status Reports

The Permittees shall file with the Commission monthly Construction Status Reports beginning with the pre-construction meeting and until completion of restoration. Construction Status Reports shall describe construction activities and progress, activities undertaken in compliance with this route permit, and shall include text and photographs.

If the Permittees does not commence construction of the Transmission Facility within six months of this route permit issuance, the Permittees shall file with the Commission Pre-Construction Status Reports on the anticipated timing of construction every six months beginning with the issuance of this route permit until the pre-construction meeting. The Status Reports shall include information on the Project's Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO) interconnection process, if applicable.

9.4 Labor Statistic Reporting

The Permittees shall file quarterly Labor Statistic Reports with the Commission within 45 days of the end of the quarter regarding construction workers that participated in the construction of the Project. The Labor Statistic Reports shall:

- A. detail the Permittees' efforts and the site contractor's efforts to hire Minnesota workers; and
- B. provide an account of:
 - 1) the gross number of hours worked by or full-time equivalent workers who are Minnesota residents, as defined in Minn. Stat. § 290.01, subd. 7;
 - 2) the gross number of hours worked by or full-time equivalent workers who are residents of other states, but maintain a permanent residence within 150 miles of the Project; and
 - 3) the total gross hours worked or total full-time equivalent workers.

The Permittees shall work with its contractor to determine the suitable reporting metric. The report may not include personally identifiable data.

9.5 Prevailing Wage

The Permittees, its contractors, and subcontractors shall (1) pay no less than the prevailing wage rate as defined in Minn. Stat. § 177.42; and (2) shall be subject to the requirements and enforcement provisions under Minn. Stat. §§ 177.27, 177.30, 177.32, 177.41 to 177.435, and 177.45. The Permittees shall keep records of contractor and subcontractor pay and provide them at the request of Commission staff.

9.6 In-Service Date

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

9.7 As-Built

Within 90 days after completion of construction, the Permittees shall submit to the Commission copies of all final as-built plans and specifications developed during the Transmission Facility construction.

9.8 GPS Data

Within 90 days after completion of construction, the Permittees 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 Facility and each substation connected.

9.9 Right of Entry

The Permittees shall allow Commission designated representatives to perform the following, upon reasonable notice, upon presentation of credentials and at all times in compliance with the Permittees' 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 route permit.

10 ROUTE PERMIT AMENDMENT

The Commission has the authority to modify this route permit at any time. The Permittees may request an amendment of the conditions of this route permit by submitting a request to the Commission in writing describing the amendment sought and the reasons for the amendment. The Commission may amend the conditions after affording the Permittees and interested persons such process as is required under Minn. Stat. § 216I.09.

11 TRANSFER OF ROUTE PERMIT

The Permittees may request at any time that the Commission transfer this route permit to another person or entity (transferee). In its request, the Permittees must provide the Commission with:

- A. the name and description of the transferee;
- B. the reasons for the transfer;

- C. a description of the facilities affected; and
- D. the proposed effective date of the transfer.

The transferee must provide the Commission with a certification that it has read, understands and is able to comply with the plans and procedures filed for the Transmission Facility and all conditions of this route permit. The Commission may authorize transfer of the route permit after affording the Permittees, the transferee, and interested persons such process as is required under Minn. Stat. § 216I.13.

12 REVOCATION OR SUSPENSION OF ROUTE PERMIT

The Commission may initiate action to revoke or suspend this route permit at any time. The Commission shall act in accordance with the requirements of Minn. Stat. § 216I.24, to revoke or suspend this route permit.

ATTACHMENT 1

Complaint Handling Procedures for Permitted Energy Facilities

DRAFT PERMIT

**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. For e-mail reporting, the email

subject line should read “PUC EIP 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 the eDockets system. The eDockets system is located at: <https://efiling.web.commerce.state.mn.us/>. 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 six months 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 people 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 or 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.

DRAFT PERMIT

DRAFT PERMIT

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 the 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 through the eDockets system. The eDockets system is located at: <https://efiling.web.commerce.state.mn.us/>

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. The Commission may request a paper copy or USB drive of filings that are graphic intensive (*e.g.*, maps and engineered drawings), in addition to being electronically filed. If requested, send a paper copy or USB drive to: Executive Secretary, Minnesota Public Utilities Commission, 121 7th Place East, Suite 350, St. Paul, MN 55101-2147.

DRAFT PERMIT

PERMIT COMPLIANCE FILINGS¹

PERMITTEE:

PERMIT TYPE:

PROJECT LOCATION:

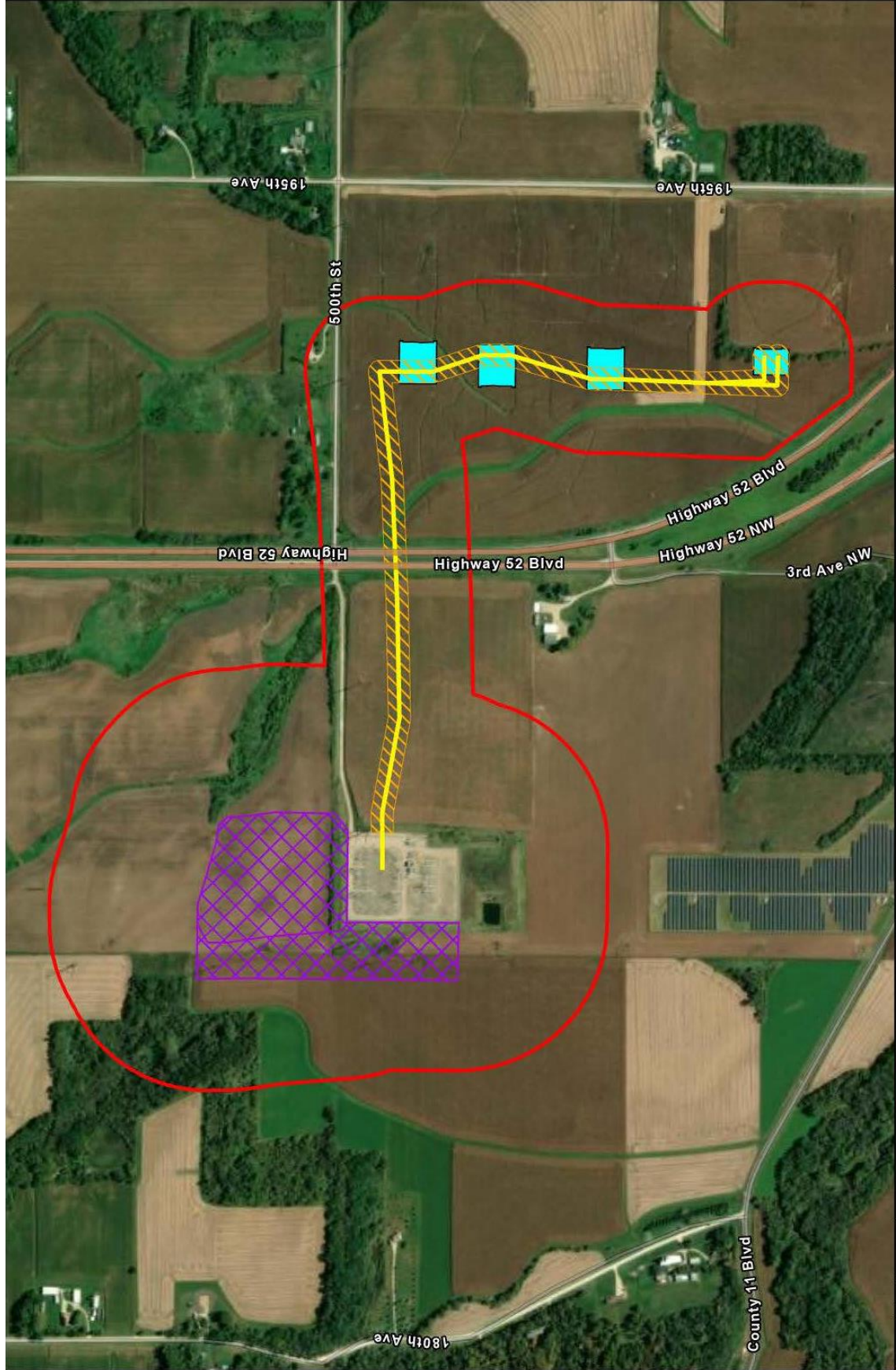
PUC DOCKET NUMBER:

Filing Number	Permit Section	Description of Compliance Filing	Due Date

¹ 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.

DRAFT PERMIT

ATTACHMENT 3
Route Permit Map



- Route Width
- Proposed Alignment
- Proposed HVTL Right-of-way
- North Rochester Substation Expansion Area
- Proposed Project Skyway Substations

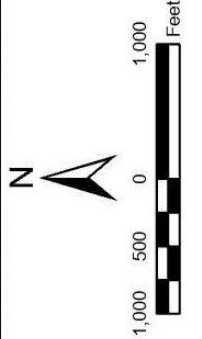


Figure 1: Route Overview
North Rochester to Skyway
HVTL Project
Goodhue County, Minnesota

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I, Robin Benson, hereby certify that I have this day, served a true and correct copy of the following document to all persons at the addresses indicated below or on the attached list by electronic filing, electronic mail, courier, interoffice mail or by depositing the same enveloped with postage paid in the United States mail at St. Paul, Minnesota.

Minnesota Public Utilities Commission ORDER

Docket Numbers: **E-002/TL-26-135**

Dated this **14th** day of **August, 2026**

/s/ Robin Benson

#	First Name	Last Name	Email	Organization	Agency	Address	Delivery Method	Alternate Delivery Method	View Trade Secret	Service List Name
1	Sasha	Bergman	sasha.bergman@state.mn.us		Public Utilities Commission	121 7th Pl E Ste 350 St. Paul MN, 55101 United States	Electronic Service		Yes	26-135 Official
2	Matthew	Bock	matt.boch@kutakrock.com	Kutak Rock		124 West Capitol Avenue, Suite 2000 Little Rock AR, 72201 United States	Electronic Service		No	26-135 Official
3	Christina	Brusven	cbrusven@fredlaw.com	Fredrikson Byron		60 S 6th St Ste 1500 Minneapolis MN, 55402-4400 United States	Electronic Service		No	26-135 Official
4	Mike	Bull	mike.bull@state.mn.us		Public Utilities Commission	121 7th Place East, Suite 350 St. Paul MN, 55101 United States	Electronic Service		Yes	26-135 Official
5	Samantha	Bump	samantha.bump@state.mn.us		Department of Natural Resources	500 Lafayette Rd, Box 25 Division of Ecological & Water Resources Saint Paul MN, 55155-4025 United States	Electronic Service		No	26-135 Official
6	Generic	Commerce Attorneys	commerce.attorneys@ag.state.mn.us		Office of the Attorney General - Department of Commerce	445 Minnesota Street Suite 600 St. Paul MN, 55101 United States	Electronic Service		Yes	26-135 Official
7	Sharon	Ferguson	sharon.ferguson@state.mn.us		Department of Commerce	85 7th Place E Ste 280 Saint Paul MN, 55101-2198 United States	Electronic Service		No	26-135 Official
8	Ellen	Heine	ellen.l.heine@xcelenergy.com	Xcel Energy		414 Nicollet Mall, MP-8 Minneapolis MN, 55401 United States	Electronic Service		No	26-135 Official
9	Valerie	Herring	vherring@taftlaw.com	Taft Stettinius & Hollister LLP		2200 IDS Center 80 S. Eighth Street Minneapolis	Electronic Service		No	26-135 Official

#	First Name	Last Name	Email	Organization	Agency	Address	Delivery Method	Alternate Delivery Method	View Trade Secret	Service List Name
						MN, 55402 United States				
10	Stacy	Kotch Egstad	stacy.kotch@state.mn.us		MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION	395 John Ireland Blvd. St. Paul MN, 55155 United States	Electronic Service		No	26-135 Official
11	Christine	Marquis	regulatory.records@xcelenergy.com	Xcel Energy		414 Nicollet Mall MN1180-07- MCA Minneapolis MN, 55401 United States	Electronic Service		No	26-135 Official
12	Carol A.	Overland	overland@legalelectric.org	Legalelectric - Overland Law Office		1110 West Avenue Red Wing MN, 55066 United States	Electronic Service		No	26-135 Official
13	Shantal	Pai	spai@fredlaw.com	Fredrikson & Byron, PA		60 S 6th Street, Minneapolis, MN 55407 Minneapolis MN, 55417- 1208 United States	Electronic Service		No	26-135 Official
14	Generic Notice	Residential Utilities Division	residential.utilities@ag.state.mn.us		Office of the Attorney General - Residential Utilities Division	1400 BRM Tower 445 Minnesota St St. Paul MN, 55101-2131 United States	Electronic Service		Yes	26-135 Official
15	Lauren	Steinhaeuser	lauren.steinhaeuser@xcelenergy.com	Northern States Power Company dba Xcel Energy		414 Nicollet Mall, 401-08 Minneapolis MN, 55401 United States	Electronic Service		No	26-135 Official