

From: [Wufoo](#)
To: [Staff, CAO \(PUC\)](#)
Subject: Submitted Public Comment Form
Date: Thursday, September 10, 2026 9:33:20 PM

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Name *	JoAnn Burkard
Provide the docket's number. *	25-117
Leave a comment on the docket. *	To the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (MPUC), Please see the Resolution that was recently unanimously passed by the Summit Lake Township Board. We strongly oppose the Certificate of Need for the PowerOn Midwest 765kV Transmission Project. The Resolution that was passed by our Township Board is attached to this email. Sincerely, JoAnn Burkard Summit Lake Township Clerk
Attach a File	 summit_lake_resolution_re_poweron_midwest.pdf 1.04 MB • PDF

**SUMMIT LAKE TOWNSHIP BOARD
NOBLES COUNTY, MINNESOTA**

RESOLUTION NO. 2026-02

A RESOLUTION OPPOSING THE CERTIFICATE OF NEED FOR THE POWERON MIDWEST 765kV TRANSMISSION PROJECT AS PROPOSED, AND AUTHORIZING SUBMISSION OF FORMAL COMMENTS TO THE MINNESOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION IN DOCKET NO. 25-117.

WHEREAS, Great River Energy, ITC Midwest LLC, and Xcel Energy (collectively, the “Applicants”) have filed an application with the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (“Commission”) for a Certificate of Need for the PowerOn Midwest project, a proposed 765kV high-voltage transmission line, in Docket No. 25-117; and

WHEREAS, Summit Lake Township, located in Nobles County, Minnesota, lies within the identified study area for this project and is a neighboring Township to the proposed current route. There are minimum maintenance roads within the Township that the Township does not currently grade nor gravel on a seasonal basis nor plow for snow; and

WHEREAS, the Township Board is concerned that construction and long-term maintenance access for a 765kV transmission line will require roads to be maintained to a higher standard, resulting in new and unfunded recurring costs to the Township for snow removal, gravel, and road maintenance that were not contemplated in the Township’s budget or levy; and

WHEREAS, construction activity associated with the project is likely to damage the surface and subgrade of Township roads, and the Applicants have not identified who will bear the cost of restoring those roads to a usable condition following construction; and

WHEREAS, the Applicants and the Midcontinent Independent System Operator (“MISO”) have identified a claimed need for up to 10,000 megawatts of additional transmission capacity in Minnesota, without providing the Township or the public a specific, itemized breakdown of how much of that capacity is intended to serve Minnesota load directly, as opposed to facilitating the transfer or export of power across state lines; and

WHEREAS, MISO’s own long-range transmission planning documents indicate that Minnesota electricity demand has been flat for many years, and that future load growth is substantially attributable to data centers and other large, single site loads rather than to baseline residential, commercial, and agricultural demand; and

WHEREAS, residents of Summit Lake Township near the proposed route face significant impacts from this project, including but not limited to permanent visual impacts, ongoing noise, electric and magnetic field (EMF) exposure concerns, disruption to agricultural drain tile systems, soil compaction, and diminished property values driven by both the physical presence of the line and real and perceived health concerns; and

WHEREAS, under Minnesota law and Commission practice, once a Certificate of Need is granted for a high-voltage transmission line, questions of need, alternatives, and line configuration are generally foreclosed from further consideration at the subsequent route permit stage, making it necessary for the Township to raise these concerns at the Certificate of Need stage of this proceeding; and

WHEREAS, the Township Board finds that the Applicants have not adequately demonstrated that this project, at the scale and voltage proposed, is necessary to meet Minnesota’s own electricity needs, or that reasonable alternatives, including transmission upgrades, lower-voltage lines, or generation sited closer to demand have been fully explored and ruled out;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Summit Lake Township Board formally opposes the Certificate of Need for the PowerOn Midwest 765kV transmission project as currently presented, and requests that the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission require the Applicants to fully justify the need for this project, including a specific breakdown of intended in-state use versus interstate transfer, and a specific accounting of the extent to which

forecasted demand growth is attributable to data centers or other large single-site loads;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Township Board requests the Commission require the Applicants to identify all township and county roads within the study area that are minimum-maintenance or otherwise below a standard adequate for construction and long-term maintenance traffic, and to enter into a binding road-use and restoration agreement with each affected road authority, addressing both construction-related damage and any ongoing maintenance burden created by the project, prior to the issuance of any route permit;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Township Board requests the Commission fully evaluate reasonable alternatives to the proposed 765kV line, including transmission system upgrades, lower-voltage transmission lines, and generation sited closer to the areas of demand, before granting a Certificate of Need;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Township Board is very concerned for our residents and requests the Commission weigh the impact described herein, including the negative visual impacts of lines this size, noise from the transmission lines, EMF Exposure, drain tile disruption, soil compaction, stress on our farming families, and property devaluations, as part of its review of this Certificate of Need application;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Township Clerk is directed to submit this Resolution, along with any accompanying comments, to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission for including in the official record of Docket No. 25-117, and to the Township's state legislators and Nobles County Board of Commissioners for their information and support;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this Resolution does not constitute the Township's position on any specific proposed route, and that the Township Board intends to submit a separate comment addressing route-specific concerns once route alternatives are finalized.

The foregoing Resolution was moved by Stuart Rogers, seconded by Curt Leung, and upon vote being taken thereon, the following voted in favor thereof:

Curt Leung, Harlan Klein, Stuart Rogers, and the following voted against the same:

and adopted this 9th day of September, 2026.

Curt Leung
Board Chair, Summit Lake Township

ATTEST:

Paul Burkard
Township Clerk, Summit Lake Township

Summit Lake Township

Nobles County, State of Minnesota

Summit Lake Township Board, Nobles County, Minnesota urges PowerOn Midwest to halt current planning in southwest Minnesota and keep Summit Lake Township off all proposed routing maps.
Summit Lake Township Board of Supervisors, Nobles County, Minnesota

September 9, 2026

Minnesota Public Utilities Commission
121 7th Place East, Suite #350
Saint Paul, MN 55101
Consumer.puc@state.mn.us
Scott.ed@state.mn.us

RE: PowerOn Midwest 765kV Transmission Routing in Summit Lake Township, Minnesota

To the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (MPUC) and PowerOn Midwest Project Leadership,

The Summit Lake Township Board of Supervisors, acting on behalf of our residents, officially issues this letter of formal opposition to the routing and construction of the proposed 765kV transmission lines in southwest Minnesota. The proposed line does not currently run through our township; however, we are in extremely close proximity to neighboring townships in which the lines are being proposed. On September 9, 2026, the Board passed a resolution opposing this project of the 765kV transmission lines and the massive supporting infrastructure that will severely degrade our area in numerous ways:

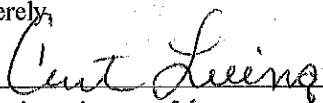
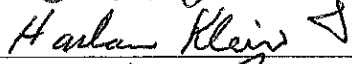
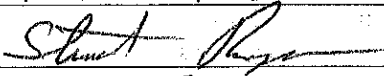
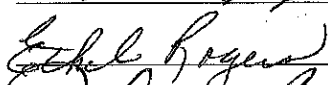
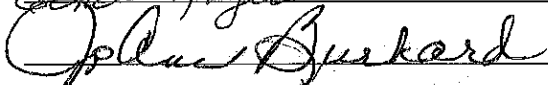
- **Homes, Church, and Places of Business:** We have the small community of Reading within our township, along with 3 operational daycares and other small businesses. Proximity to these lines during construction, ongoing maintenance activities, and daily operations negatively impact our property and business owner's rights to privacy, creates safety hazards, and places undue burden on our residents. It would also limit the ability of residents to expand their business or farming operations.
- **Health and Well-Being of Residents:** Additional concerns are being raised of the health and well-being of our residents and those who attend daycares within our township. The dangers of these high-voltage lines are extremely concerning, as they have an effect on overall health, development, reproductive organs, pacemakers, diabetic insulin pumps, etc.
- **Agriculture & Livestock:** Our township consists of vital, productive, agricultural land. The towers will disrupt modern heavy-equipment navigation and impede the drainage systems in place throughout our county. The large structures will interfere with aerial applicators where electromagnetic fields can cause GPS and other control system malfunctions. Furthermore, electromagnetic fields and stray voltage associate with extra-high voltage lines are known to pose dangerous health and behavioral risks to livestock.
- **Township Roads, Maintenance, and Costs:** Even though the proposed route is not currently in Summit Lake Township, the amount of traffic that would be coming through our township would increase. This would severely impact the condition and maintenance of our roads, impacting the structure and increasing maintenance costs. The increase in traffic will have an impact on the quality of life of our residents and new and unfunded costs to the township will occur. There are many concerns that this line would decrease the population in our township, which in turn would decrease funding to help fund the maintenance needed on our roads.
- **Water Flow & Drainage:** The construction of massive tower foundations and access roads throughout our area threatens to alter natural water flow, cause severe soil erosion, and disrupt established agricultural drainage and tiling systems.
- **Interference with Radio and GPS Communications:** The intense electromagnetic fields (EMF) generated by a 765kV transmission line are documented to cause electromagnetic interference. This will disrupt critical farm equipment that relies on radio frequencies, including two-way radios used by farm crews, emergency services, and modern precision agriculture systems that depend on clear GPS signals for planting and

harvesting.

- **Interference with Other Electronics:** It has been reported that residents living in close proximity to high voltage lines have difficulty with equipment used in small milking operations. Their equipment won't work when within a certain range of these lines. It has also been reported that people with electronic sewing machines cannot use embroidery machines or a stitch regulator when living within a certain range of these massive power lines.
- **Streams, Wetlands, Wildlife, Birds, Pollinator Habitats, Scenic Viewsheds, and Recreation:** Installing a 765kV transmission line permanently alters the local landscape, sedimentation, reduces watershed quality, and imposes potential EMP-related limitations on recreation use. Additionally, intense electromagnetic fields and wide right-of-way can alter habitat and navigation cues of wildlife, negatively impacting wildlife. This includes, but is not limited to, the red-necked pheasant, bald eagle, gray owl, other birds of prey, honey bees, monarch butterflies, Topeka Shiner minnow, white tail deer, and wild turkeys, which are all living in our township and neighboring townships. An industrial corridor will cause massive view disruption, scar the landscape, and ruin the recreational experience for residents and visitors.
- **Noise and Vibration:** Extra-high voltage lines are known to generate consistent, disruptive audible noise (ex. buzzing and humming) and corona discharge, particularly in damp weather. This will destroy the rural benefits and quiet atmosphere that our residents currently enjoy. Our residents chose to live in a rural area to have a quiet environment.
- **Property Values:** The sheer size and number of structures (5 towers per mile) will fundamentally alter the rural character of Summit Lake Township and neighboring townships throughout Nobles County. The visual and audio disruption, as well as the potential for health risks, will lead to substantial and permanent decline in property values for homes, places of business, and working farms.

Given these irreversible and severe negative impacts, the Summit Lake Township strongly opposes this project. The attached resolution was passed in Summit Lake Township on September 9, 2026.

Sincerely,

	Chairman
	Supervisor
	Supervisor
	Treasurer
	Clerk