THE MN PUC PERMITTING PROCESS EXPLAINED



BSSA **Big Stone South** to Alexandria

The Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (MN PUC) determines the final route for proposed transmission lines. The MN PUC will thoroughly review the entire record before making a decision.

- Route Permit Application Review: The MN PUC evaluates the submitted application for the transmission line project.
- **Environmental Impacts Review:** The Energy Environmental Review and Analysis (EERA), which is a unit under the Minnesota Department of Commerce, analyzes impacts of different route options and recommends mitigation measures through an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).
- **Public and Stakeholder Feedback:** Input from the public and other stakeholders is gathered during comment periods, scoping meetings, draft EIS meetings, and public hearings to inform the MN PUC in making a decision.
- Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) Report: An independent report is provided by an ALJ from the Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH) offering recommendations to the MN PUC based on the entire record.

THE PROCESS

During the process, you will have several opportunities to provide input that will help the MN PUC determine the final route of the transmission line. This handout outlines the steps involved in the process, explains how you can participate, and provides guidance on when and how to submit your comments.

APPLICATION REVIEW

After the Route Permit Application is submitted, the MN PUC accepts public comments requesting input on whether the application contains all of the information required to begin the environmental review and permitting process. After considering the comments received, the MN PUC will determine if the application is complete, so the environmental review can begin.



How to provide

period.

Feedback: You can

comments: Mail, email, and online comments via the State's website.

provide comments on the

during a public comment

application's completeness

SCOPING MEETINGS

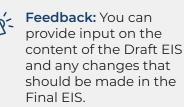
After the Route Permit application is accepted as complete, the MN PUC and EERA will jointly hold public information and scoping meetings throughout the project area. Following the meetings and public comment period, the MN PUC will meet to discuss the scope of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). EERA will then issue a "Scoping Decision" that identifies the route options, potential impacts, and mitigation measures to be evaluated in the Draft EIS.

Feedback: You can provide input on alternative routes, potential impacts, and mitigation measures during a public comment period and in-person scoping meetings that EERA should study in the EIS.

How to provide comments: Inperson, mail, email, and online comments via the State's website.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The EERA will complete and publish a Draft EIS. After this is published, there will be another round of meetings which may be combined with the public hearings and a public comment period to allow the public to comment on the content of the Draft EIS and suggest any changes that should be made in the Final EIS.



How to provide

comments: In-person, mail, email, and online comments via the State's website.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

After the Draft EIS is published, an ALJ will hold public hearings throughout the project area, followed by a public comment period. Advance notice of these public hearings will be provided via mail and newspaper so that you can plan to attend.

Feedback: You can provide comments, ask questions, and also state your preference about the route for the transmission line and suggest conditions that should be included in the route permit. if granted. Comments about a specific Proposed Route Option can also be made at this time.

How to provide comments:

Anyone may speak at the public hearings or provide mail. email. and online comments via the State's website.

the ALJ will the Final EIS and create a report with







ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE REPORT

After the public hearings and comment period. consider the feedback and input collected, review the information presented in recommendations. This report will be sent to the MN PUC to assist them in making their final decision.

PERMIT DECISION

The MN PUC will examine the report provided by the ALJ, including all comments, along with the entire environmental review and permitting record. The MN PUC will schedule and provide notice for a meeting in St. Paul where they make a final route permit decision for the project. You can attend the meeting virtually or in person. At this meeting, the MN PUC will decide on the most appropriate route for the transmission line and appropriate mitigation measures for the project.

The order will be filed in eDockets so everyone can read the decision. Notice of the decision will also be provided to landowners on and adjacent to the designated route to ensure they are aware of the decision.

RECEIVE UPDATES

1. Sign up for the State's project mailing list

- a. Email eservice.admin@state.mn.us or call (651) 201-2246.
- **b.** For the Route Permit mailing list, email consumer.puc@state.mn.us or call (651) 296-0406 or (800) 657-3782.
- c. Please include the docket number (E017, ET10/TL-23-160), your full name, mailing address and email address. You may request to receive notices by email or U.S. Mail.

2. Subscribe to the Docket

a. Visit: www.edockets.state.mn.us/EFiling, select Subscribe to eDockets and follow the prompts to include the docket number (E017, ET10/TL-23-160).

3. Contact the State:

- a. MN PUC Staff Analyst, Sam Lobby, at sam.lobby@state.mn.us or (651) 201-2205 or (800) 657-3782 or visit www.mn.gov/puc
- **b.** MN DOC Environmental Review Manager, Jenna Ness, at jenna.ness@state.mn.us or (651) 539-1693 or (800) 657-3710 or visit www.mn.gov/commerce/energyfacilities

OTHER WAYS TO LEARN MORE

Here are more ways to stay informed, but we highly recommend that landowners subscribe to the state's project list (see the blue box) to receive the most up-to-date information.

1. Our project website website.

2. Talk to a right-of-way agent

information.

3. Local newspapers

newspapers prior to the meeting date.

4. The EERA Project webpage

PROVIDING PUBLIC COMMENTS

A Notice of Public Comment Period is issued whenever the MN PUC opens a comment period for public input. The notice will include prompt questions, key topics, and a guide to what information is most helpful to gather from the public about the case.

Each comment period timeframe is unique depending on where in the process you're providing comments. We encourage people to comment early and visit the MN PUC eDocket site for the latest information.

Mail comments to:

Minnesota Department of Commerce Attn Jenna Ness 85 7th Pace East, Suite 280 Saint Paul MN 55101-2198



Email comments to the Environmental Review Manager: jenna.ness@state.mn.us



Use the online comment form: [PLACEHOLDER FOR LINK]

a. We will continue to share information about the regulatory process and engagement opportunities on our project

a. If you've been in contact with a right-of-way agent, you can reach out to them with your questions or for more

a. Notice of meetings/hearings will be posted in local

a. eera.web.commerce.state.mn.us/web/project/15867

