

**NOTICE OF INFORMATIONAL MEETINGS,  
PUBLIC AND EVIDENTIARY HEARINGS, AND  
AVAILABILITY OF DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

Issued: May 13, 2025

**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**

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

**OAH Docket Number:** 65-2500-40099

**PLEASE TAKE NOTICE** that the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (Commission) will hold public hearings on the application of Xcel Energy for a certificate of need and a route permit for the Mankato – Mississippi River Transmission Line Project (MMRT). 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 approximately 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, Olmsted, Goodhue, Winona, Wabasha, and Steele 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 20 to 24-mile 161-kV transmission line between the existing North Rochester Substation and the existing 161-kV Chester Line northeast of Rochester.

The applicant has requested 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, in 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 Planning (LRTP) projects 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 from aging coal-fired generation plants to renewable energy sources. Specifically, this Project and the other LRTP projects in Wisconsin<sup>1</sup> are needed to address loading and congestion issues on the existing 345 kV transmission system across southern Minnesota and Wisconsin.

#### In-Person Meetings/Hearings

Date	Time	Location
May 27, 2025	10 am - 11 am Open House 11 am – 1:30 pm Public Hearing	Country Inn and Suites by Radisson 1900 Premier Dr. Mankato, MN 56001
May 27, 2025	5:30 pm – 6:30 pm Open House 6:30 pm – 9:00 pm Public Hearing	Waterville High School 500 E Paquin St. Waterville, MN 56096
May 28, 2025	10 am – 11 am Open House 11 am – 1:30 pm Public Hearing	Eagles Club Owatonna 141 E Rose St. Owatonna, MN 55060
May 28, 2025	5 pm - 6 pm Open House 6 pm – 8:30 pm Public Hearing	Zumbrota VFW Post 5727 25 E 1st St. Zumbrota, MN 55992
May 29, 2025	5 pm – 6 pm Open House 6 pm – 8:30 pm Public Hearing	Faribault American Legion Post 43 112 5th St. NE Faribault, MN 55021

Public hearings commence at the time stated above and end as soon as the last person present has had the opportunity to speak, or the end time stated above, whichever occurs first.

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

If any reasonable accommodation is needed to enable you to fully participate in these hearings, 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 hearing is canceled due to bad weather or other call 1-855-731-6208 or visit [mn.gov/puc](https://mn.gov/puc).

### **Online Meeting/Hearing via WebEx**

**Date:** May 29, 2025

**Time:** 9 am – 12 pm

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

**Webinar Number:** 2492 633 3729    **Webinar Password:** MNPUC

**Join by Phone:** 1-855-282-6330 Toll Free    **Access Code:** 2492 633 3729

The virtual hearing will commence at 9:00 a.m. and conclude as soon as the last person present has had an opportunity to speak, or at the designated end time, whichever occurs first.

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/>

### **Open House**

Doors will open one hour prior to each public hearing. Attendees will have an opportunity to review maps and materials on the proposed MMRT Project and ask questions of Xcel Energy and state staff. Discussions and questions posed during the open house do not become part of the official record. Comments are received only during the public hearing. Members of the public may, however, leave written comments with Commission staff during the open house, which will be offered into the official record when the public hearing begins. Forms will be available for this purpose.

### **Public Hearing Information**

The public hearings will be presided over by the Honorable Ann O'Reilly, an administrative law judge from the Office of Administrative Hearings, who will provide the Commission with findings of fact, conclusions of law, and a recommendation.

The purpose of the public hearings is to obtain public input on the proposed project and the draft EIS, and compile the record for the Commission to consider in making a final decision on the certificate of need and route permit applications. Specifically, interested persons will have the opportunity to: (1) ask questions of state staff and the applicant; (2) offer oral and written comments on the merits of the proposed project and on the draft EIS; and (3) suggest possible conditions to be considered for inclusion in a route permit.

- Comments received at the hearings and during the comment period will be used to inform the record and help the Commission make its final decision.
- The information presented will be the same at all in-person and online hearings.
- The hearings 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 hearing, whichever occurs first. **Therefore, it is important to arrive at the start of the public hearing.**
- Members of the public may participate without the necessity of intervening as a party; representation by legal counsel is permitted but not required.

#### **Comment Period**

Written comments will be accepted through **June 10, 2025, at 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**

- What information needs to be clarified or included in the draft EIS to ensure that the final EIS is complete and accurate?
- Should the Commission grant a certificate of need for the proposed MMRT Project?
- Should the Commission grant a route permit for the proposed MMRT Project?
- If granted, what additional conditions or requirements should be included in a route permit?

#### **Submit Comments**

<b>Online</b>	<a href="https://mn.gov/puc/consumers/public-comments">https://mn.gov/puc/consumers/public-comments</a>
<b>Email</b>	<a href="mailto:consumer.puc@state.mn.us">consumer.puc@state.mn.us</a>
<b>U.S. Mail</b>	Consumer Affairs Office Minnesota Public Utilities Commission 121 7th Place East, Suite 350

St. Paul, MN 55101

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

### **Draft Environmental Impact Statement**

The Minnesota Department of Commerce (Department) has prepared a draft EIS for the proposed MMRT Project. The purpose of the draft EIS is to provide information on the potential human and environmental impacts of the proposed MMRT Project, suggest possible mitigation for identified impacts, and evaluate the alternatives contained in the scoping decision.

The draft EIS is available for review and download at the online locations provided below:

- Department of Commerce website:  
<https://eera.web.commerce.state.mn.us/web/project/15507>
- Commission's eDockets System: eDockets - Search Documents · eFiling

Print copies of the draft EIS are available for viewing at the following public libraries:

- Blue Earth County Library, 100 E. Main Street, Mankato, MN 56001
- Buckham Memorial Library, 11 Division Street E., Faribault, MN 55201
- Zumbrota Public Library, 100 West Avenue, Zumbrota, MN 55992
- Rochester Public Library, 101 2nd Street SE, Rochester, MN 55904
- Plainview Public Library, 345 1st Avenue NW, Plainview, MN 55964
- Owatonna Public Library, 105 N Elm Ave, Owatonna, MN 55060
- Waseca Le Sueur Library, 408 State St N, Waseca, MN 56093
- Dodge Center Library, 13 1st Ave NW, Dodge Center, MN 55927
- Erin Cavell **(flash drive)**  
Environmental Conservation Library  
Hennepin County Library – Minneapolis  
Central Government Documents – 2nd Floor, 300 Nicollet Mall, Minneapolis, MN 54401
- Hennepin County Library – Minneapolis **(flash drive)**  
Central Business/Science/Gov Docs – 2nd Floor  
300 Nicollet Mall, Minneapolis, MN 54401
- The Legislative Reference Library  
645 State Office  
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., St. Paul, MN 55155

St. Paul, MN 55101

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- Plainview Public Library, 345 1st Avenue NW, Plainview, MN 55964
- Owatonna Public Library, 105 N Elm Ave, Owatonna, MN 55060
- Waseca Le Sueur Library, 408 State St N, Waseca, MN 56093
- Dodge Center Library, 13 1st Ave NW, Dodge Center, MN 55927
- Erin Cavell **(flash drive)**
  - Environmental Conservation Library
  - Hennepin County Library – Minneapolis
  - Central Government Documents – 2nd Floor, 300 Nicollet Mall, Minneapolis, MN 54401
- Hennepin County Library – Minneapolis **(flash drive)**
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  - 300 Nicollet Mall, Minneapolis, MN 54401
- The Legislative Reference Library
  - 645 State Office
  - 100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., St. Paul, MN 55155

**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](mailto: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.

### **Questions about these dockets or Commission process and procedure?**

#### **Public Utilities Commission**

Cezar Panait, Energy Facilities Planner, [cezar.panait@state.mn.us](mailto:cezar.panait@state.mn.us) or 651-201-2207  
Jacques Harvieux, Public Advisor, [jacques.harvieux@state.mn.us](mailto:jacques.harvieux@state.mn.us) or 651-201-2233

#### **Department of Commerce**

Richard Davis, Environmental Review Manager, [richard.davis@state.mn.us](mailto:richard.davis@state.mn.us) or 651-539-1846

#### **Xcel Energy**

Ellen Heine, Principal Siting and Permitting Agent, [ellen.l.heine@xcelenergy.com](mailto: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](mailto:consumer.puc@state.mn.us) for assistance.

### **Project Overview Map**

[Insert map]



