SCOPING AND INFORMATIONAL MEETING - 21-140 & 21-141 VIRTUALLY BY WEBEX - JANUARY 27, 2022 BEFORE THE MINNESOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION AND DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE In the Matter of the Application of Minnesota Power for a Certificate of Need and a Route Permit for the Duluth Loop Reliability Project MPUC DOCKET NO. 21-140 & 21-141 Virtually by WebEx January 27, 2022 - 6:00 p.m. COURT REPORTER: Christine Simons, RPR, RMR

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MS. PAULA HOENA: My name is Paula Hoena. Thank you for attending tonight's public meeting. I will be the cohost, along with Cezar Panait, for the Duluth Loop Project tonight.

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If you are a member of the public and you 5 wish to comment after the presentation is completed, 6 you can go ahead and chat me. If you are part of 7 the Webex session, if you're logged on with video 8 and audio, I will go ahead and put your name in the 9 queue for that. And then you will be able to 10 self-unmute and turn on your video in order to make 11 your public comment at that time. 12

If you are connected via audio only and 13 you would -- and you wish to comment, you can press 14 15 star 3 on your keypad to raise your hand. I will then put you in the queue and identify you by the --16 17 well, we would start with the first six digits of your phone number, but it looks like the two callers 18 we have right now have the same first six digits, so 19 we'll go from there. So star 3 to raise your hand, 20 21 and then also star 3 to lower your hand.

If you are a member of the public and you need something throughout the meeting, go ahead and chat me, Paula Hoena, cohost, and I will facilitate when I am able. If not, I will connect you with

1 Cezar, and we will help you out as much as we can. 2 With that, I'll turn it over to our 3 panelists for this evening. I'll be on mute if you need any help, but I will turn off my video and 4 microphone. 5 But, note, as the host, I can turn on and 6 turn off your microphone, but I can only stop your 7 video. I'm not able to start it for you. Note, we 8 will not be taking any comments through the chat. 9 If you would like to make a comment, there will be 10 additional information within the presentation, how 11 to do that online. Otherwise, you are welcome to 12 make a comment, also, tonight through your video or 13 audio connection. 14 15 Thank you very much, and I'll let Cezar take it away. Thanks, everybody. 16 17 Cezar. 18 MR. CEZAR PANAIT: Thank you, Paula. And good evening, everyone. My name is 19 20 Cezar Panait. I am an engineer with the Minnesota 21 Public Utilities Commission, Energy Facilities 22 Planning Unit. 23 And before I go into the presentation, I just do have a couple of reminders. First of all, 24 25 the reason we are asking people to make the

questions or comments verbally is because we have a court reporter who is attending the meeting, and she is Christine Simons.

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And I would ask everyone to please speak clearly, and state your name, first and last name, whenever you ask a question or make a comment for the court reporter to be able to transcribe that information accurately.

9 And the second reminder I would like to make is that since this is a virtual meeting, we 10 cannot hand over copies of the PowerPoint 11 12 presentation. So I just want to remind people that the copies of the presentation are available on 13 the -- on either the Department of Commerce project 14 website, which there's a link to it in the meeting 15 notice that we sent out. And, also, if you go to 16 17 the eDockets, the 21-140 or 21-141, there are copies 18 of the presentation in eDockets, also.

So with that being said, I want to welcome everybody to the public information and environmental review scoping meeting. This is on Minnesota Power's application for a high-voltage transmission line. The name is Duluth Loop Reliability Project in Duluth, and the docket numbers are E015/CN-21-140 and TL-21-141.

And just a remainder that tonight's presentation is the same that we gave last night in person in Duluth, Minnesota, when we hosted the first of the two-series meetings. So the same information was presented last night. We are giving the same presentation, again, tonight virtually. So with that, I'd like to draw attention

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to the purpose of tonight's meeting. 8 So as you can -- you could read in the notice, the meeting is 9 about giving information about this proposed 10 project, for people to learn about what the 11 12 Commission review process for this application -actually, we have two applications that the 13 Commission is conducting the public review. 14 And 15 those are the CN and TL. TL, the transmission line, versus the certificate of need that I mentioned 16 17 earlier.

18 So the agenda for tonight, I will go give 19 an overview of the Public Utilities Commission, the 20 review process. And then we'll turn it over to 21 Mr. Jim Atkinson with Minnesota Power to talk about 22 the specifics, characteristics of the project, and 23 construction timeline and any other information that 24 they have prepared.

And we'll go next to Mr. Bill Storm. He

is an environmental review manager with the Minnesota Department of Commerce, and he will talk about the second purpose of tonight's meeting is to gather input on the environmental review that the Department of Commerce is conducting on this project on behalf of the Commission.

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7 And, now, item four, the last but not the 8 least, would be to open up for questions from the 9 members of the public, questions and comments on the 10 project and the process.

So with that, the role of the Commission, 11 the Public Utilities Commission regulates 12 13 investor-owned utilities in Minnesota, mainly power companies, gas companies, to make sure that 14 15 customers are charged reasonable rates for power and The Commission does regulate, also, landline 16 qas. 17 telecommunications carriers in the state, Century Link and Frontier to name a few. 18

19And another big part of what the20Commission does regularly is to -- besides21regulating the rates, is to issue permits on large22energy facilities, such as this transmission line,23when they need to be approved for construction.24And another part of the Commission's25business is to also issue permits for routing of the

petroleum pipelines and natural gas pipelines in the state.

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So the permitting -- the permitting of a 3 project -- so in order for the Commission to make a 4 decision on a project like this, the Commission 5 conducts a public review process. And the 6 combination of that is to find the question whether the project should be granted a certificate of need, 8 and that is the justification for the project, on this high-voltage transmission line project. 10

And, then, concurrently with that, the 11 Commission will also look at issuing a route permit 12 where the transmission line should go in. 13

So the public process that I was 14 15 mentioning means gathering information, developing the record of information, and then the 16 17 Commission -- we, staff members, kind of analyze that information, and then summarize it and make 18 some recommendations for the five Commissioners, who 19 ultimately are the ones that issue a decision 20 21 whether the permit application should be granted or 22 not.

23 And that is done through a public hearing, which is conducted in St. Paul, Minnesota, 24 25 at the Commission headquarters in Downtown St. Paul.

1 And once a permit is issued, it carries 2 the weight of the law. Of course, there are options for reconsideration of a permit decision, but that's 3 beyond tonight's scope. So people that feel that 4 the permit decision is reached in error or that 5 something is missing about the project, there's 6 ways, judicial review -- to ask for the 7 reconsideration first and then the judicial review 8 for a permit -- Commission permit decision. 9 And, then, just a flow diagram to be able 10 to -- and I'm hoping people will be able to see my 11 cursor here moving on the screen. So we have like a 12 block diagram to the main phases of this project. 13 You can see when the application was filed back in 14 15 October last year. And then this green box, this is the 16 17 phase that we are currently in. We are conducting this public information and environmental scoping 18 meeting, and then green signifies this is an 19 opportunity for the public to provide input and make 20 21 comments and ask questions.

And then, also, there'll be a second opportunity for the public to provide input on the project. And that is later on in the summer during the public hearing, which will be held sometime in

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1 July in the project area in Duluth and, also, might 2 there be a virtual also, dual meetings. And then -- I'm sorry, but I won't read 3 every one of these blocks. I'm hoping that most 4 people are able to see the presentation. 5 So following tonight's meeting, briefly, 6 there'll be a scoping -- environmental review 7 scoping determination made by the Department, and 8 Bill will talk about that. And then the process --9 the draft, the EA document itself, will be released 10 sometime. 11 12 And after that, it will go to the public hearing, and then we'll get an Administrative Law 13 Judge assigned on this case. And that judge will be 14 15 able to preside over the public hearing, and then write the report with findings and recommendations 16 17 on the project. And the report will be submitted to the 18 Commission via eFiling, and then the Commission 19 takes into consideration the complete record. 20 Not 21 just the ALJ's report, but public comments, the 22 stakeholder comments, namely local and state 23 They comment on our project also. agencies. And the entire process will take about 12 months for the 24 Commission to render a final decision. 25

1 Moving on, so I talked about the two 2 permits that this project requires. I talked about the certificate of need one. So on this slide you 3 can see some of the statutory and rule --4 administrative rule requirements that the Commission 5 is looking -- when deciding a certificate of need 6 permit application should be granted or not. 7 8 And the factors are captured in the statutes and rules. Some of the factors the 9 Commission is looking for are the benefits of the 10 project, whether the project enhances environmental 11 quality, and increases the reliability of energy 12 supply in Minnesota and the region. 13 The Commission is also required by law to 14 15 look at the possible alternatives to satisfy that

16 energy demand for the project, including but not
17 limited to, maybe other projects that offer
18 different efficiencies or operating an existing
19 facility. So these are some of the factors that the
20 Commission is looking at.

21 And then moving on to the route permit 22 side, which is the second permit this project 23 requires before being allowed to start construction. 24 Again, we have Statute 216E governing the Power 25 Plant Siting Act for route and site permits, and

then the Administrative Rule 7850. 1 2 So, similarly, the Commission is looking at some factors when making the determination, and 3 those factors are whether the project will 4 contribute to conserving resources and minimizing 5 the environmental impacts, minimizing human 6 settlements, and trying to avoid land use conflicts. 7 And not the least, whether the project is 8 an efficient project, will it be cost effective, and 9 whether it contributes to the security of the power 10 supply in the electric transmission infrastructure 11 in the state. 12 In this table here, we are looking at the 13 table of all the same major milestones, part of the 14 15 application review process that were given on the previous two slides earlier. So major milestones 16 17 included when the certificate of need and the HVTL 18 route permit applications were filed, and that happened in October last year. 19 20 And then the Commission accepted the 21 applications. Meaning, the information that the 22 rules require an applicant to include as part of the 23 application satisfied and met all the requirements. And then we are going to the public 24 25 information and environmental scoping meeting

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tonight, which is January 27th.

And then after that, there'll be a scope of EA determined sometime in March, April. Followed by the actual EA document being released sometime in June, and then the public hearing in the project area, I mentioned, July. And then the reports from the Administrative Law Judge will be released sometime in September.

9 And then the Commission will meet one 10 more time in an open meeting, a public-hearing-type 11 meeting, to make a determination and decide on each 12 one of these individual permit applications.

13 So with that, this is just an example. 14 If people that want to find out more information 15 about the project, they can go either to the 16 Department -- I mean, the Minnesota Department of 17 Commerce. They create a project-specific website 18 for each one of these applications, and that's what 19 the left half of the screen shows.

If you go to that link, which is given in the notice of the meeting, there's a hyperlink in there. You click on that, or you type it in. This is where you -- the landing page, and they have information here about main documents associated with the project.

1 Or if you prefer to take a look at all 2 the documents that have been filed on this docket ever since the project started, you can use our 3 eDocket system -- which is the electronic filing 4 system of the Minnesota Public Utilities 5 Commission -- and by plugging in the numbers 21-140. 6 And this is just like a snapshot of what you see, 7 the first page of the -- when accessing that 8 9 website. With that, I think my role is done for 10 Thank you for participating, and I'm going to 11 now. 12 turn it over to Mr. Jim Atkinson from Minnesota Power to talk about the project. 13 Jim. 14 15 MR. JIM ATKINSON: Thank you, Cezar. Yeah, you can probably go to the next slide. 16 17 So my name is Jim Atkinson. I work for I'm its environmental and real 18 Minnesota Power. estate manager, and my job has two parts. 19 The first 20 one is to site and permit new energy facilities, new 21 infrastructure projects like the Duluth Loop 22 Reliability Project. 23 And then I also provide some strategic oversight of our real estate services department, 24 25 and they are the ones that actually acquire land

1 rights necessary to build facilities like this. So 2 I'm involved in both parts of that. The Duluth Loop Reliability Project is 3 just what it sounds like. It's all about enhancing 4 reliability. And the need stems from a transition 5 that Minnesota Power has been making over the last 6 several years away from coal-fired generation 7 sources to more renewable energy. And what we've 8 done is we've taken out of service several baseload 9 coal-fired plants, mainly along the North Shore of 10 Lake Superior. 11 12 And as a result, we're seeing some of the things that those baseload generators did provide 13 for the local transmission network, and we have some 14 15 voltage stability concerns and some line -transmission line overloading that needs to be 16 17 corrected. And we're -- what this project proposes to do is solve that by adding redundant connections 18 and new connections to the transmission network. 19 Next slide, please. 20 21 There's a few different parts to it. The 22 main one, I would say, is 14 miles of new 115 kV 23 transmission line, and that would connect several substations in Duluth and also right on the edge of 24 Hermantown and Duluth. And 14 miles of that would 25

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all follow existing transmission lines. So the routing is pretty straightforward in this project. We're collocating virtually the entire length of the project.

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And, also, the line that we're -- the lines, I should say, the circuits that we're collocating with are all subject to being rebuilt at the same time or substantially enhanced. So it really -- when it comes down to it, at the end of the day, we're probably talking about 28 miles of new 115 kV transmission line, but on a 14-mile route.

13 There's also higher voltage components to this project, which is a 230 kV transmission line 14 into the Arrowhead substation. And what that will 15 do is connect an existing 230 kV line and break it 16 17 into two separate circuits, and what that does is greatly reduce the amount of miles that are exposed 18 to potential events that could cause an outage. 19 And by doing that, it enhances the bulk transmission in 20 21 the Duluth area.

There's going to be some upgrades to a few of our substations that will happen along with this project. And then, also, as I previously mentioned, the reconfiguration and the rebuild and

1 upgrades of the existing transmission lines that 2 we're following. My dogs are barking. I apologize in 3 advance if that happens, I'll mute briefly and I'll 4 5 get back on. Sorry. So as I mentioned, also, previously that 6 a significant portion, really all of it, with the 7 exception of the 230 kV route -- or part of that is 8 being collocated with existing transmission line, 9 though part of it is being rerouted as well. 10 So that kind of diminishes the overall percentage below 11 100, but there's going to be two lines on the 115 kV 12 for virtually the entire length. 13 Next slide, Cezar. 14 15 And you can see the -- everything on the Duluth Loop Project is on this map, but the majority 16 17 of what you're looking at is the 115 kV build. And 18 that starts or stops, however you want to look at it, at the Ridgeview substation at the north. 19 And that's one of Duluth's northern-most neighborhoods 20 21 of Kenwood where that's located. 22 And it makes it way through, essentially, 23 the big box retail section of Duluth and Hermantown. And then it gets into Hermantown for probably, 24 roughly, half of the length, and then back into 25

Duluth on the south end. And it ends at our Hilltop 1 2 substation, which is just east of the Proctor city limits by a half to three-quarters of a mile. 3 To the west of the 115 kV route, you can 4 see a very short section there. That's less -- just 5 under a mile of 230 kV build to connect from the 6 Arrowhead substation up to the existing 230 kV line 7 I already mentioned. So that's the project. 8 9 Next slide. Next slide. I'm not going to describe all the 10 Yeah. twists and turns of the route, but like I mentioned 11 before, it's almost entirely collocated with 12 existing circuits and connects several substations. 13 Next slide. 14 You can see a better view of the 230 kV 15 build. The tan-yellowish area represents the 16 17 Arrowhead substation. That's a pretty large facility of ours that has several yards, different 18 voltages, and even a DC line converter. 19 20 But, anyway, that's where we'll connect 21 the 230 kV yard. We'll build a, roughly, one-mile 22 230 kV build and split the existing line into two 23 separate circuits. Most of that is on Minnesota Power fee-owned land, but there'll be just a short 24 25 piece that we'll have to get the right-of-way for

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1 it. 2 Next slide. The route width -- well, I should start 3 with what a route is, but the route is the area 4 within which we're asking to be able to site. 5 So the circuits that we're proposing and the width of 6 that kind of depends on how certain we are that 7 we're able to accomplish what we want to do within 8 what we can see as an intended center line. 9 So if it's more uncertain, you might see 10 a wider route in some sections because of different 11 12 factors that could confound our plans and cause us to look for new alignments. And -- but, basically, 13 it varies anywhere from about 500-feet wide to up to 14 15 1,800 feet at the widest point. But that doesn't mean that we're going to build something that wide. 16 17 It just gives us some flexibility in the final 18 siting. Next slide. 19 20 Right-of-way is what we'll actually need for construction. And that's where we will actually 21 22 need to buy an easement from individual landowners, 23 and in some cases agencies, to provide for the -- us the rights that we need in order to actually go in, 24 25 construct, build, operate, and maintain the new

1 facility. 2 On a 115 kV line by itself, we need about 100 feet of right-of-way. If you put two of them 3 next to each other, we could fit two on 160 feet, so 4 there's some right-of-way savings there as well. 5 On a 230 kV transmission line, we need a 6 little bit more. We need 130-foot-wide 7 right-of-way, and -- but that only applies to, 8 basically, one mile or less of this project. 9 Next slide. 10 You can see the two most common types of 11 structures we anticipate using on this project, and 12 the one on the left is our wood H-frame, 13 direct-embedded structures. And you see those all 14 15 over the state and quite a bit around Duluth and Hermantown already. 16 17 And most of our existing circuits that 18 we're following look just like that. They can span anywhere from 500 to 1,000 feet. So they can be set 19 20 pretty far apart, depending upon the terrain and other factors. 21 Like I mentioned, they're directly 22 23 embedded into the soil, so they're pretty straightforward construction. And usually we're 24 using those on the 115 kV, which means that we're 25

1 talking about 100-foot-wide right-of-way. 2 The structure on the right is a monolithic steel structure, and that can be used on 3 all types of circuits of different voltages. 4 But it's typically used where there's more congestion, 5 less space, more other-infrastructure that we're 6 trying to work around, that sort of thing. 7 8 And it's built on concrete pier foundations. So it's a much more expensive thing to 9 build, but it's also far more robust. And it gives 10 you that opportunity to save space and have a higher 11 12 degree of reliability. 13 Next slide. So once we are done permitting, we have a 14 15 route permit and a certificate of need, we're going to go after land rights. So we'll have to meet with 16 17 every landowner that we have to -- that we're proposing to impact and secure rights from those 18 individuals to provide us the corridor that we need 19 to build on. 20 And then that line construction will 21 22 happen in a couple of phases. The first thing we've 23 got to do is clear the right-of-way, and then we have to stake it. The center line structure 24 locations, guy wire locations, all that sort of 25

thing has to be laid out after final engineering 1 2 determines where they will be. And then the second -- after that, then it involves going in and 3 assembling and setting structures. 4 Once we're done with that, the final 5 phase is stringing of conductor and associated 6 7 communications cable that goes on the top, also the 8 shield wires. 9 Next slide. And that's all I have. Again, here's my 10 contact information. Anyone can reach me anytime 11 12 they want. I could even provide my cell phone, which is 218-343-9119. You can reach me on that 13 just, virtually, anytime. So please give me a call 14 15 if you have any further questions. Thank you very much. I'll hand it over 16 17 to Bill Storm now. 18 MR. BILL STORM: Good evening. My name is Bill Storm, and I work for the Department of 19 Commerce. And the group inside the Department of 20 21 Commerce is the Energy Environmental Review and 22 Analysis, referred to as EERA or EERA (different 23 pronunciation). 24 And our role in this process is we, the 25 Department, determines the scope of the

1 environmental document we need to prepare, and we 2 also prepare the document. And that's basically our 3 role.

> Okay. Cezar, next.

As Cezar mentioned, this project requires 5 two approvals from the Commission, one for the 6 certificate of need and one for the route permit. 7 Both of them individually require an environmental 8 An ER, or an environmental 9 review in a document. report, for the CN portion, and an EA, environmental 10 assessment, for the route portion. 11

Next.

The Department will prepare the 13 Okay. environmental assessment. We will prepare one 14 15 document, but the document will cover the responsibilities under the certificate of need rules 16 17 and under the transmission line route permit rules. So it will be one document that will incorporate 18 19

both the ER and the EA.

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Next, Cezar.

21 The goal of the environmental Okay. 22 review, what an environmental review is all about, 23 is it's to gather information so the decisionmakers, the Commission, the Public Utilities Commission, can 24 25 have that information to use when they make their

determination.

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There's two components to environmental review, scoping -- and scoping is what we're doing tonight and throughout the comment period, and it goes until February 4th.

And then there's the actual document, and it's to provide an objective assembly of the facts. The document does not have -- advocate for or against the project. It's basically just to lay out the facts as we understand them from the potential impacts to the environment and to the built environment.

Next, Cezar.

Again, we're at scoping. That's what we're doing tonight. Scoping involves gathering information from agencies, from stakeholders, and from the citizens to get a better understanding of what are their concerns, what do they want me to study in the documents. So it's basically an opportunity to gather information.

Okay, Cezar.

You can't see it because we're not
physically available, but for each of my projects, I
always put out what's called a draft scoping
document, and it's sort of a draft of what I think

the scope will look like. You can view it as a 1 2 table of contents, and it's sort of generic in And it is available both on eDockets and on 3 nature. the Commerce website that Cezar referred to. 4 As I said, scoping, we're looking for two 5 One of the things is, what issues or things. 6 concerns do the public or the stakeholders or the 7 agencies want to make sure I incorporate into my 8 9 document. So I look at that -- I look at this 10 document sort of like a bare Christmas tree, and I'm 11 12 asking the public and the stakeholders, what ornaments do you want me to hang on the tree? 13 An example is, you know, on a previous docket, somebody 14 15 knew there was a rare buttercup species that was along the proposed line, and they wanted to make 16 17 sure that I accounted for that in the document. And 18 that just shows you, like, what the ornaments you can hang on the tree. 19 20 Next, Cezar. The rules also allow, not only for me to 21 22 gather issues and concerns that the public wants, 23 but also alternatives. You may have an issue, a specific feature, site feature that you think the 24 25 only way to mitigate the potential impacts of

putting a transmission line through is to avoid it. And you avoid that by either proposing that I study an alternative route or alternative route segment or changes to the proposed alignment.

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So we -- during this scoping process, I ask the public, if you have a concern, a site-specific concern, and you think the only way to address it is to avoid it, you can propose alternative routes, alternative route segments, or changes to the proposed alignment.

I do have certain rules that you have to 11 12 do. You have to submit your concept during the comment period, which ends February 4th. 13 You have to be mitigating a specific impact. It can't be, 14 15 you know, I just don't want it in my yard. It has to be, I have an ancient grove of cedars, or I have 16 17 something unique about my property. It doesn't have 18 to be on your property, it could be somewhere else. A feature that you think is going to be impacted and 19 you think the only way to mitigate that impact is to 20 avoid it and avoid it by going around it. 21

You have to be specific in nature. This is kind of a hard bar. You have to tell me, okay, what is the alternative you're talking about. And a lot of times if people have an issue that's on the

1 ground, a feature that they want to avoid, they'll 2 call me and we'll talk about it. And I'll help them 3 come up with an alternative segment that we can study, and then the Commission can weigh whether 4 they think it's worth permitting that alternative 5 rather than what the applicant wants. 6 And the last one is, it has to meet the 7 need of the applicant. You can't give me an 8 alternative that doesn't meet their need because I'm 9 just not going to study that. 10 11 Next, Cezar. 12 And as I showed you with the draft scoping document, as I showed you with issues and 13 concerns, this is also to show you that -- your 14 15 alternatives. And an example is, again, it's the bare Christmas tree, what generic line items or 16 17 branches on that tree are alternatives to be studied. 18 And the example given there is the Cotton 19 River alignment alternative. And that was another 20 21 alignment where the proposed route was crossing the 22 Cotton River, and the DNR didn't like how it was 23 crossing the river. The way the river meanders, it was crossing it multiple times. And they wanted me 24 25 to study an alternative segment, a short segment, a

1 couple miles that went around, but only crossed the 2 river once, and that's an example. Next slide. 3 Okay. I'm just going to run through a 4 couple examples for you. This is a different 5 docket, different project. The applicant proposed a 6 route, and I think it was on 135 up near Tower, 7 8 where they wanted to run the transmission line along -- it's the purple route on that diagram 9 there. I know it's small, but they wanted to run 10 the route between the road and the homes. 11 12 And the citizens there -- a group of 13 citizens there knew that the land behind them to the east of them was all tax-forfeited land and was 14 15 public land. And they came to me and they said, well, we think the transmission line is a 16 17 public-purpose item, infrastructure, why don't we 18 put it on public land? Bill, would you study this orange route that puts it east? And I agreed. 19 Ι thought that made sense. We studied it, and in 20 21 fact, at the final decision, the Commission did 22 approve that orange route. So they changed it of 23 what the applicant was looking for. 24 Next slide, Cezar. This is that Cotton River one I 25 Okay.

was talking about here where the proposed route was going to cross the Cotton River at a spot that the DNR didn't like, thought it was too many crossings for the meandering of the river. So they asked me to study this little, short alternative that only crossed the river once.

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7 In this case, I did study it. It did 8 make it in the scope. But in this case, the final 9 decision, there were two routes on the table, the 10 red and the blue route, and the Commission picked 11 the blue route. So the issue ended up being moot, 12 but it did make it into my scope and it did make it 13 into my environmental document.

Next one, Cezar.

Again, this is where the concern was a historic property. This is, I think, down in the Shakopee area. The purple line that you see that's on the north side of this diagram, that was the proposed route, and it went right in front of a historical building.

21 And some of the citizens were concerned 22 that it would take away from the nature of that 23 building. So they asked, Bill, could we look at two 24 alternative route segments? One pushing it across 25 the street, and then another one running it a little

further south and up a railroad right-of-way. That made sense. Historic buildings are something we like to try to keep the integrity of, and it did make it into scope.

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I did study it, but when it was laid out in front of the Commission at the final decision, they didn't think the impact -- the potential impact was raised high enough to depart. So they did approve the purple route that the applicant was requesting.

But those are three examples to give you 11 12 an idea of what we're talking about when we're 13 talking about alternative routes and route segments. 14

Next slide.

15 As I said, the Department of Okay. Commerce will prepare the document for this project. 16 17 The document will describe the project purpose and any alternatives. Any alternatives that make it 18 into the scope, it will assess the potential human 19 and environmental impacts. 20 It identifies ways to 21 mitigate potential impacts. So we usually look at 22 the impacts and how to deal with them in a manner 23 of, how can we minimize the impact, how can we mitigate the impact, and can we avoid the impacts? 24 So that's sort of what the environmental 25

document will do, and like I said, it doesn't 1 2 advocate. It just lays out the facts. 3 Okay. Cezar, next. And as I said, part of what we're 4 Okay. here to do tonight and during the comment period is 5 I'm trying to get the public stakeholders, scoping. 6 downstream agencies to give me the information that 7 I can recommend be in the scope. 8 9 And the scope is basically a table of contents, the scope, so I can put that to my 10 Commissioner. It's the Commissioner of the 11 12 Department of Commerce that makes the scoping They'll look at it. They'll either agree 13 decision. or disagree or make some changes, but eventually the 14 15 scope will be released, and that scope dictates what I'll study. 16 17 So what I'm asking the people tonight is 18 to give me your comments. If you have local knowledge of something you want to make sure I 19 account for in the document, this is your 20 21 opportunity to give those to me. 22 And you can mail, fax, e-mail. You can 23 qo to our website. There's a comment little button on our website, so you can put a comment in 24 25 electrically. The comment period ends February 4th,

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1 so your comments got to be in by then. 2 Next, Cezar. Well, this sort of pertains to when I was 3 doing these things in person, but I guess a little 4 bit of it pertains to now. Just be polite and some 5 of the things that we learned in kindergarten, how 6 to treat each and how to speak. You know, when 7 you're making a comment, try to follow those 8 9 quidelines. Keep your comments, you know, brief, 10 maybe five minutes. If we can get through 11 12 commenters and you want to come back and comment again, you can follow the instructions that Paula 13 gave you and comment again. 14 15 Next slide, Cezar. 16 Just a reminder, focus your comments. 17 I'm looking for comments on what issues you want me 18 to study, what local features you want to make sure I account for, any alternatives you want me to look 19 20 at, and those are the comments that I'm looking to 21 qet. 22 Again, I know I'm hammering you on this, 23 but, again, February 4th, that's the -- the comment 24 period ends on that date. 25 Next, Cezar.

1 There's one new -- if you go to our 2 website, in addition to being able to make a 3 comment, there's a comment button there, but we're also trying this. It's like a Metrocrest survey. 4 You'll see a little scoping survey button. 5 And you can click on that link, and it will take you to this 6 And it's basically a way for you to input 7 page. some information about the project, and then it 8 puts -- it comes to me directly. So it's just a new 9 10 feature we're trying, so you'll see that when you go to our web page. 11 12 Next, Cezar. This is the final slide just to 13 Okay. leave up so you know what the contact information 14 You know, sort of what I'm asking you to 15 is. comment on, all the contact information. 16 17 And with that, I'm done, Cezar, and you 18 and Paula can turn it over to comments and questions to the public. 19 20 MS. PAULA HOENA: Thanks, Bill. 21 Again, if you would like to make a 22 comment and you are connected to the Webex via audio 23 and video, you can go ahead and chat me with your name and that you'd like to comment, and I'll put 24 25 you in the queue.

1 If you are our lone call-in person and 2 you'd like to comment, please press star 3 on your phone to raise your hand, and I can go ahead and 3 4 unmute you. So feel free to, you know, chat me or 5 raise your hand, and we'll get you in the queue to 6 comment. 7 The information that Bill mentioned is 8 9 also found on our public-facing calendar on the Public Utilities Commission website, including the 10 slide deck and the comment link -- or the survey 11 link, I should say. And so that information is 12 accessible through our calendar on our website as 13 well. 14 15 So go ahead and feel free to chat me and I'll put you in the queue, and we'll get our 16 17 comments collected this evening. 18 Sorry. I got muted somehow. Okay. I was speaking and nobody could hear me. 19 Dan Belden, you had your hand up, would you like to comment? 20 21 I've unmuted you if you'd like to speak. 22 MR. DAN BELDEN: Sure. Can you hear me? 23 MS. PAULA HOENA: Yes, I can. Thank you. 24 MR. DAN BELDEN: Thank you. Yeah. I got 25 into the meeting just a little late. I work for the

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1 Western Lakes Superior Sanitary District in Duluth. 2 It's a wastewater treatment facility, and I was asked to just kind of tune into the meeting. 3 I know we have a large interceptor -- a 4 wastewater interceptor that runs -- would cross your 5 route that you are proposing. And I know that one 6 of our engineers in our office indicated that she 7 may have already submitted comments or been 8 9 contacted by someone in the recent past regarding this project, and I don't know if anybody listening 10 would be aware of that. 11 12 But I guess, you know, we have looked at the -- I looked at the route as it is proposed on 13 the maps in the public notice that went through, and 14 15 it looks like you would be crossing overhead. We're located, again, right along Highway 53 in the Haines 16 17 Road location where you guys would be crossing. 18 And I guess, really, our biggest interest is -- would be if there's going to be poles that 19 20 would be installed anywhere near our inceptor, of 21 And so I guess that would be my only course. 22 question or comment. 23 MS. PAULA HOENA: I think you're muted, 24 Cezar. Hold on. There you go. 25 MR. CEZAR PANAIT: I was just trying to

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invite Jim Atkinson to see if he wants to comment. 1 2 MR. JIM ATKINSON: This is Jim. Sure. 3 Can you hear me okay? MS. PAULA HOENA: 4 Yes, we can. MR. DAN BELDEN: 5 Yeah. 6 MS. PAULA HOENA: Thanks, Jim. 7 MR. JIM ATKINSON: Thanks for the 8 question, Dan. And, yes, we are aware of your 9 project on the -- right along the corridor there, and we have actually had at least one Webex meeting 10 with -- I can't think of the name right off the 11 12 top --13 Possibly Diane Matthews. MR. DAN BELDEN: 14 MR. JIM ATKINSON: That's probably right. 15 MR. DAN BELDEN: Yeah. 16 MR. JIM ATKINSON: Yeah, I think that is. 17 MR. DAN BELDEN: Yeah. 18 MR. JIM ATKINSON: And provided us some data. 19 20 MR. DAN BELDEN: Okay. 21 MR. JIM ATKINSON: So we're working 22 diligently to make sure that our engineered design 23 of the structure locations avoids your project. 24 MR. DAN BELDEN: That sounds awesome. 25 Thank you very much.

1 MR. JIM ATKINSON: You're welcome. Thank 2 you. MS. PAULA HOENA: All right. 3 Thanks so much, Dan. 4 5 Next, we have Allen Widell, or I apologize if I'm not saying your name correctly. 6 Allen, go ahead and comment. You are unmuted. 7 8 Are you there, Allen? You had made a 9 comment in the chat, and we're not able to take any sort of comments via the chat. They all do need to 10 be spoken. Otherwise, you are free to comment 11 12 online per Bill Storm's instruction. 13 So I'll leave you unmuted for a couple more minutes here and feel free to speak. 14 MR. CEZAR PANAIT: If Allen is not able 15 to speak, can you go ahead and read the question 16 17 publicly so we can hear it and the court reporter? 18 MS. PAULA HOENA: Yeah. He just chatted: Appendix J-3, page 18 of 23. 19 Hello. I'm not sure 20 what he's referring to as I'm not familiar with the 21 document that he's referring to, but maybe one of 22 you can take that. 23 Oh, he says, I'm so sorry. I don't have a mic, is what he is saying. 24 25 So, Allen, can you let me know a little

1 bit more about what your question is? 2 Well --MR. JIM ATKINSON: I'm quessing that's 3 probably the part of the map book that shows the 4 route affecting his property, would be my guess. 5 MS. PAULA HOENA: He has chatted: 6 Wondering if that is part of the double-circuit 7 line? Wondering if that is part of the 8 9 double-circuit line? MR. JIM ATKINSON: Yeah, it could -- hold 10 I might have some information here. 11 on a second. 12 MS. PAULA HOENA: Okay. Thanks so much. MR. JIM ATKINSON: Okay. So here I am 13 looking at the map I just got from our awesome 14 15 consultant who is also listening in and found his name on the route map. So anyway, yes. 16 The answer 17 is yes, that is the double circuit with the existing 71 line. 18 MS. PAULA HOENA: All right. 19 I'll wait to see -- he did say thank you to me. 20 I'll see if 21 he has anything else to say. 22 Is there anybody else who would like to 23 comment? We don't have anybody else in the queue 24 currently. Feel free to raise your hand. 25 Oh, our call-in user would like to make a

1 comment. So call-in user 218-3891, I will unmute 2 Go ahead, you are unmuted. You can make you now. 3 your comment. MR. JOHN BODELL: Thank you. 4 Okay. This 5 is more of a question than a comment, I guess, but it would be for Jim. I currently have a Minnesota 6 Power easement through my property, and I believe 7 it's on that same line that he was talking about. 8 It's colored magenta, so that's the double -- the 9 double-line transmission line, is that correct, on 10 your map? 11 12 MR. JIM ATKINSON: I think so. Is it in the vicinity of Mogie Lake? 13

14 MR. JOHN BODELL: I'm past that. I'm 15 actually where the line runs to the west and it cuts 16 north right on that corner section.

17MR. JIM ATKINSON: Oh, sure. Well,18there's another intersection just north of that19where the double circuit would end and the 71 line20goes to the west.

MR. JOHN BODELL: Yes, correct. I'm
right where the double-circuit line cuts north.
MR. JIM ATKINSON: Oh, okay.
MR. JOHN BODELL: I guess my question is,
are they planning on using the existing poles there

1 for the new -- or are they doing something else? 2 MR. JIM ATKINSON: It will be something If you're on the double-circuit section, 3 different. it's going to be all new structures, and even where 4 we're continuing north after that. And it's going 5 to be separate circuits on parallel -- you know, 6 parallel to each other. It will be the new build, 7 and then the old -- the preexisting circuit will be, 8 more or less, rebuilt as well. 9 So --MR. JOHN BODELL: 10 I mean -- okay. Go ahead, I'm sorry. 11 12 MR. JIM ATKINSON: Sure. I was just saying, by the time we're done, it's going to be two 13 new lines. But where you are, it's going to be two 14 new circuits on one new set of structures it sounds 15 16 like. 17 MR. JOHN BODELL: Okay. So will that require a wider easement than is currently there? 18 And I believe it's 100-foot easement, at least, if 19 20 you know. 21 MR. JIM ATKINSON: Yeah. I believe that 22 we're good on right-of-way width there. 23 MR. JOHN BODELL: Okay. 24 MR. JIM ATKINSON: You know, there's 25 still information we're gathering --

1 MR. JOHN BODELL: Yeah. 2 MR. JIM ATKINSON: -- and engineering to do, but we believe we have sufficient width there. 3 MR. JOHN BODELL: 4 Okay. Excellent. Ι 5 appreciate the information. THE REPORTER: And before the caller 6 hangs up --7 8 MS. PAULA HOENA: Could you identify 9 yourself and spell your name, please, for the court 10 reporter? MR. JOHN BODELL: Yeah. 11 It's John, J-O-H-N, B-O-D-E-L-L, Bodell. 12 13 MS. PAULA HOENA: All right. Thank you 14 so much. Appreciate it. 15 MR. JOHN BODELL: Yup, thank you. 16 MS. PAULA HOENA: All right. 17 Next, we have Fred Schmitz. Fred, when I 18 unmute you, could you please spell your name for the court reporter. Go ahead and make your comment or 19 20 question now. Thank you so much. 21 MR. FRED SCHMITZ: Yes. My name last is 22 S-C-H-M-I-T-Z. 23 And I'm just inquiring on the property on the Swan Lake Road for the Duluth Bible Church. 24 IS 25 that running parallel to the road on Swan Lake Road

1 then? Is it -- I mean, there's been talk about 2 possibly building on that site, and I'm just wondering how that would affect that. 3 MR. JIM ATKINSON: Yeah. 4 I'm not sure I have the location figured out here. 5 I'm looking for it right now. 6 MR. FRED SCHMITZ: I know there's a 7 8 substation there. 9 MR. JIM ATKINSON: Yeah, the Swan Lake sub? 10 MR. FRED SCHMITZ: Yeah. 11 The line's going MR. JIM ATKINSON: 12 straight south from there, the proposed route, and 13 would cross -- you know, it goes straight south and 14 15 would cross Arrowhead Road. 16 MR. FRED SCHMITZ: Okay. Okay. 17 MR. JIM ATKINSON: Is that the vicinity 18 you're talking about then? MR. FRED SCHMITZ: I'm just trying to --19 20 you know, I'm not real familiar with the site up 21 there, that's the problem. 22 MR. JIM ATKINSON: That's okay. 23 MR. FRED SCHMITZ: Sorry. MR. JIM ATKINSON: From the Swan Lake 24 25 substation, I'm just getting a little closer to

things here.

1 2 MR. FRED SCHMITZ: I think it's right on -- that's right on the back side of Costco's 3 4 property, somewhere in there. 5 MR. JIM ATKINSON: Sure, yeah. It's in that vicinity. It would be northeast of Costco, the 6 7 Swan Lake substation, and the proposed route goes 8 straight south from there. It crosses Arrowhead 9 Road --MR. FRED SCHMITZ: 10 Okay. MR. JIM ATKINSON: -- and then 11 southwesterly over to Miller Trunk, or Highway 53. 12 MR. FRED SCHMITZ: So if I'm thinking 13 right, it's running parallel to that property line 14 15 then? MR. JIM ATKINSON: Yeah. I'm trying to 16 17 find where the church is. Is this church property 18 out front on Arrowhead Road? MR. FRED SCHMITZ: No, it's on Swan Lake 19 20 Road. It doesn't go that far to Arrowhead. 21 MR. GAGE RITCHIE: Hey, this is I'm with real 22 Gage Richie from Minnesota Power. 23 estate services. I've got my GIS pulled up, and I can try to help out here real quick. 24 25 MR. JIM ATKINSON: That would be great,

Gage. 1 2 MR. GAGE RITCHIE: Did you say Duluth Bible Church? 3 MR. FRED SCHMITZ: 4 Yes. 5 MR. GAGE RITCHIE: Which is located right behind Costco? 6 7 MR. FRED SCHMITZ: Yes. 8 MR. GAGE RITCHIE: And it butts up 9 against Swan Lake Road, so that is just west of our Swan Lake sub, and there does not appear to be any 10 proposed work on that parcel. It looks like it's 11 12 about a 12-and-a-half acre parcel. 13 MR. FRED SCHMITZ: Yes. MR. JIM ATKINSON: Yeah, that's -- yeah. 14 15 Thank you very much, Gage. So now I know where it Yeah, we won't be -- our proposed route does 16 is. 17 not affect that. 18 MR. FRED SCHMITZ: Okay. All right. 19 Thank you very much. 20 MR. JIM ATKINSON: Thank you. 21 MS. PAULA HOENA: All right. Is there 22 anybody else that would like to comment? I do see 23 that we have a new call-in user. If you are a 24 call-in user and you would like to make a comment, 25 star 3 to raise your hand. And then we can unmute

1 you and get your comment or your question in. 2 All right. Oh. Who is echoing? All I think we have a feedback loop. 3 right. So call-in user 218-390, go ahead and 4 5 state your name and spell it for us, please, for the 6 court reporter, and then you can do your comment or question. 7 8 MR. ALLEN WIDELL: Hi, this is Allen 9 Widell. I actually sent you a chat message here and I didn't have a mic, so I called in. 10 MS. PAUL HOENA: 11 Okay. 12 MR. ALLEN WIDELL: My last name is 13 W-I-D-E-L-L. And my question is for Jim. 14 I know we 15 talked about the Appendix J --16 MS. PAULA HOENA: Are you there, Allen? 17 MR. ALLEN WIDELL: I am. 18 MS. PAULA HOENA: We can't hear you 19 anymore. Can you hear us? 20 MR. ALLEN WIDELL: Hello? 21 MS. PAULA HOENA: Are you there? 22 MR. ALLEN WIDELL: Hello? I am here. 23 MS. PAULA HOENA: Okay. Something weird 24 happened there. 25 MR. ALLEN WIDELL: Yeah, I think I got

1 muted. Anyways --2 MS. PAULA HOENA: All right. Let's try 3 again. MR. ALLEN WIDELL: 4 I'm sorry. My question is for Jim. When I talk about that double 5 circuit, I'm assuming that is, you know, the 6 7 route -- the part of the route that I live on. From 8 what I understand from the documents I was looking at, that will be -- it's a double H-pole right now. 9 10 Is there going to be two of those, or is it going to be replaced with a monopole structure? 11 12 MS. PAULA HOENA: You were muted somehow, 13 Jim. Can you speak again, please? MR. JIM ATKINSON: I was going to say, 14 the double circuit would be a steel monolithic 15 16 structure. 17 MR. ALLEN WIDELL: Okay. That's just what I wanted to confirm. 18 That's what I thought, but I wanted to be sure. 19 20 UNIDENTIFIED: That's the big steel 21 poles. 22 MR. ALLEN WIDELL: I'm sorry? 23 MS. PAULA HOENA: Oh, I think we just 24 have a couple people with their mics unmuted. 25 MR. ALLEN WIDELL: Okay.

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1 MS. PAULA HOENA: Is that your question, 2 Allen? Yeah, my question --3 MR. ALLEN WIDELL: right now it's an H-pole, and I just wanted to check 4 if it's going to be a double H-pole, where two are 5 side-by-side, or replaced with the steel pole, but 6 it sounds like the steel pole is what the plan is. 7 8 MS. PAULA HOENA: All right. Thanks so 9 much. MR. ALLEN WIDELL: All right. Thank you. 10 11 MS. PAULA HOENA: You're welcome. 12 All right. Anybody else who would like to make a comment, if you're on the Webex, go ahead 13 and raise your hand or chat me. Otherwise, we don't 14 15 have anybody in the queue right now. MR. CEZAR PANAIT: If we don't have 16 17 anymore questions, does anybody need to make any closing from Minnesota, or Bill from the Department? 18 MR. JIM ATKINSON: If there's no other 19 20 questions, I guess I would just reiterate that if 21 anyone has -- thinks of anything in the future, if 22 they want to talk about the route or right-of-way 23 acquisition or anything like that, they can reach me 24 at 218-343-9119. MR. BILL STORM: And, Cezar, I would also 25

1 add for me, if anybody wants to make a comment or 2 needs help in developing a comment or wants to talk about alternatives or any of the issues, my contact 3 information is there. You can contact me by phone 4 anytime. And just a reminder that the formal 5 6 comment period closes on February 4th. 7 MS. PAULA HOENA: All right. I don't see 8 any other commenters at this point. So it's up to 9 you, Cezar, whether you want to call it a day or 10 not. MR. CEZAR PANAIT: Yes. Thank you for --11 12 everyone for participating tonight and for the useful questions and comments you presented. 13 So with no further questions in the queue, I think we 14 15 can conclude this meeting. Thank you, again, everybody for participating, and have a great 16 17 evening. All right. 18 MS. PAULA HOENA: Thanks 19 everybody. Have a great evening. 20 MR. BILL STORM: Thanks, everybody. 21 (Matter concluded at 7:04 p.m.) 22 23 24 25

### Held Virtually by Webex January 27, 2022

Public Information and	Scoping Meeting		1	January 27, 2022
	a and and (2)	analasina (2)	andia (1)	0.12
	against (2)	apologize (2)	audio (4)	9:13
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