

**STATE OF MINNESOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION**

**ROUTE PERMIT FOR A**

**HIGH-VOLTAGE TRANSMISSION LINE AND ASSOCIATED FACILITIES**

**IN**

**SHERBURNE COUNTY**

**ISSUED TO**

**NORTHERN STATES POWER COMPANY (dba XCEL ENERGY)**

**PUC DOCKET NO. E-002/TL-21-189**

In accordance with the requirements of Minnesota Statutes Chapter 216E and Minnesota Rules Chapter 7850 this route permit is hereby issued to:

**Northern States Power Company (dba Xcel Energy)**

The Permittee is authorized by this route permit to construct and operate a 3.2-mile-long 345-kilovolt transmission line between the new Sherco Solar Project West Block Collector Substation and the existing Sherburne County Substation in Sherburne County, Minnesota.

The high-voltage transmission line and associated facilities shall be built within the route identified in this permit and as portrayed on the route maps and in compliance with the conditions specified in this permit.

Approved and adopted this 22nd day of September, 2022

BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION



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Will Seuffert,  
Executive Secretary

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## **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment 1 – Complaint Handling Procedures for Permitted Energy Facilities

Attachment 2 – Route Maps

## **1 ROUTE PERMIT**

The Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (Commission) hereby issues this route permit to Northern States Power Company, doing business as Xcel Energy (Permittee), pursuant to Minnesota Statutes Chapter 216E and Minnesota Rules Chapter 7850. This permit authorizes Northern States Power Company to construct and operate a 3.2-mile-long 345-kilovolt transmission line between the new Sherco Solar Project West Block Collector Substation and the existing Sherburne County Substation in Sherburne County, Minnesota, and as identified in the attached route maps, hereby incorporated into this document.

### **1.1 Pre-emption**

Pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 216E.10, this permit shall be the sole route approval required to be obtained by the Permittee for construction of the transmission facilities and this 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 PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The Sherco Solar West Block high-voltage transmission line is a 3.2-mile-long 345-kilovolt transmission line between the new Sherco Solar Project West Block Collector Substation and the existing Sherburne County Substation in Sherburne County, Minnesota.

### **2.1 Project Location**

County	City or Township Name	Township	Range	Section(s)
Sherburne	Becker	33N	28W	1, 2
		34N	29W	25, 36
Sherburne	Clear Lake Township	34N	29W	26, 27, 35

### **2.2 Substations and Associated Facilities**

The collector substation was authorized in the Site Permit for the up to 460-megawatt Sherco Solar Project (PUC Docket No. E-002/GS-21-191). The location for the substation is denoted on the attached route maps.

## 2.3 Structures

The West Block high-voltage transmission line will be constructed of custom steel single-pole (monopole) structures. Three types of monopole structures will be utilized: tangent, angle, and dead end. These structures are typically used in the following situations:

- Tangent – structures that support straight or nearly straight runs of conductor.
- Angle – structures that turn the conductor approximately 2 to 60 degrees.
- Dead End – structures that turn the conductor approximately 60 to 90 degrees or take the full tension of the line in one direction.

The proposed structures will range in height from approximately 135 to 165 feet tall. The typical spans between structures will be between 900 and 1,100 feet. Because the structures will be built to support an additional circuit in the future, all three structure types will have concrete foundations between 12 and 58 feet deep depending on soil conditions.

Type	Material	Right-of-Way Width (feet)	Height (feet)	Structure Base Diameter (inches)	Foundation Diameter (feet)	Span (feet)
Tangent	Steel	150	135 to 145	66 to 78	7.5 to 8.5	900 to 1,100
Angle	Steel	150	135 to 145	72 to 84	8 to 9	900 to 1,100
Dead End	Steel	150	150 to 165	102 to 120	10.5 to 12	900 to 1,100

## 2.4 Conductors

The conductors for the 345-kilovolt transmission line will consist of two-bundle Dover T-2 aluminum conductor steel reinforced (ACSR) in a vertical configuration with 18-inch spacing. The conductors will have a capacity of 370 megavolt-amperes (MVA) loading.

## 3 DESIGNATED ROUTE

The route designated by the Commission in this permit is the route described below and shown on the route maps in Attachment 3 of this permit. The route is generally described as follows:

From the Sherco Solar Project West Block Collector Substation, the route travels south along 115th Avenue SE (County Road 53) for approximately one-quarter mile, the route proceeds east along the north side of County Road 8 for approximately one mile turns

south and follows along the east side of County Road 52 for one mile before crossing to the west side of the road for one-half mile connecting into the Sherburne County Substation south of 137th Street SE.

The West Block high-voltage transmission line route width is approximately 1,200 feet around the West Collector Substation to allow for flexibility in routing around the facility. The route width is approximately 600 feet between the West Collector Substation and the intersection of River Road SE (CSAH 8) and 125th Avenue SE (County Road 52) where the West Route enters the existing fence line of the Sherco Generating Plant. Inside the fence line, the route width varies between approximately 700 - 1,800 feet to provide flexibility in routing around and near existing transmission lines and the Sherco Generating Plant and associated facilities. The widest route width, approximately 1,800 feet, is around the Sherburne County Substation.

The final alignment must be located within this designated route. The identified route widths on the attached route maps provide the Permittee with flexibility for minor adjustments of the alignment or right-of-way to accommodate landowner requests and unforeseen conditions. The final alignment (*i.e.*, permanent and maintained rights-of-way) will be located within this designated route unless otherwise authorized by this permit or the Commission.

#### **4 RIGHT-OF-WAY**

This Permit authorizes the Permittee 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.

The Project's anticipated alignment is intended to minimize potential impacts relative to criteria identified in Minn. R. 7850.4100. The actual right-of-way will generally conform to the anticipated alignment identified on the route maps, unless changes are requested by individual landowners and agreed to by the Permittee or for unforeseen conditions that are encountered or as otherwise provided for by this permit.

Any right-of-way modifications within the designated route shall be located so as to have comparable overall impacts relative to the factors in Minn. R. 7850.4100, as does the right-of-way identified in this permit, and shall be specifically identified and documented in and approved as part of the plan and profile submitted pursuant to Section 9.1 of this 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. R. 7850.4100 and the other requirements of this permit; and for highways under the jurisdiction of the Minnesota Department of Transportation, the procedures for accommodating utilities in trunk highway rights-of-way.

#### **4.1 Route Width Variations**

Route width variations may be allowed to accommodate the potential site-specific constraints listed below. These constraints may arise from any of the following:

1. Unforeseen circumstances encountered during the detailed engineering and design process.
2. Federal or state agency requirements.
3. Existing infrastructure within the route, including but not limited to railroads, natural gas and liquid pipelines, high voltage electric transmission lines, or sewer and water lines.

Any alignment modifications arising from these site-specific constraints that would result in right-of-way placement outside of the designated route shall be specifically reviewed by the Commission under Minn. R. 7850.4900.

### **5 GENERAL CONDITIONS**

The Permittee shall comply with the following conditions during construction and operation of the transmission line and associated facilities over the life of this permit.

#### **5.1 Permit Distribution**

Within 30 days of permit issuance, the Permittee shall provide all affected landowners with a copy of this permit and the complaint procedures. In no case shall the landowner receive this route permit and complaint procedures less than five days prior to the start of construction on their property. An affected landowner is any landowner or designee that is within or adjacent to the permitted route.

At the time of first contact, the Permittee shall also provide all affected landowners with a copy of the Department of Commerce's Rights-of-Way and Easements for Energy Facility Construction and Operation fact sheet.

## **5.2 Access to Property**

The Permittee shall notify landowners or their designee at least 14 days in advance but not greater than 60 days in advance of entering the property.

## **5.3 Construction and Operation Practices**

The Permittee shall follow those specific construction practices and material specifications described in the *Application for a Site Permit and Two Route Permits for the Sherco Solar Project* dated April 2021, and the record of the proceedings unless this permit establishes a different requirement in which case this permit shall prevail.

### **5.3.1 Field Representative**

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

The Permittee shall file with the Commission the name, address, email, phone number, and emergency phone number of the field representative 14 days prior to commencing construction. The Permittee shall provide the field representative's contact information to affected landowners, residents, local government units and other interested persons 14 days prior to commencing construction. The Permittee may change the field representative at any time upon notice to the Commission, affected landowners, residents, local government units and other interested persons.

### **5.3.2 Employee Training and Education of Permit Terms and Conditions**

The Permittee shall inform and educate all employees, contractors, and other persons involved in the construction and ongoing operation of the transmission line of the terms and conditions of this permit.

### **5.3.3 Public Services, Public Utilities, and Existing Easements**

During construction, the Permittee shall minimize any disruption to public services or public utilities. To the extent disruptions to public services or public utilities occur these will be temporary, and the Permittee will restore service promptly. Where any impacts to utilities have



the potential to occur the Permittee will work with both landowners and local agencies to determine the most appropriate transmission structure placement.

The Permittee shall consult with landowners, townships, cities, and counties along the route and consider concerns regarding tree clearing, distance from existing structures, drain tiles, pole depth and placement in relationship to existing roads and road expansion plans.

The Permittee shall cooperate with county and city road authorities to develop appropriate signage and traffic management during construction.

#### **5.3.4 Temporary Workspace**

The Permittee 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. Temporary easements outside of the authorized transmission line right-of-way will be obtained from affected landowners through rental agreements and are not provided for in this permit.

Temporary driveways may be constructed between the roadway and the structures to minimize impact using the shortest route possible. Construction mats should be used to minimize impacts on access paths and construction areas.

#### **5.3.5 Noise**

The Permittee shall comply with noise standards established under Minn. R. 7030.0010 to 7030.0080. Construction and maintenance activities shall be limited to daytime working hours to the extent practicable to ensure nighttime noise level standards will not be exceeded.

#### **5.3.6 Aesthetics**

The Permittee 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. Care shall be used to preserve the natural landscape, minimize tree removal and prevent any unnecessary destruction of the natural surroundings in the vicinity of the project during construction and maintenance. The Permittee 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. Structures shall be placed at a

distance, consistent with sound engineering principles and system reliability criteria, from intersecting roads, highways, or trail crossings.

### **5.3.7 Soil Erosion and Sediment Control**

The Permittee shall implement those erosion prevention and sediment control practices recommended by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency Construction Stormwater Program.

The Permittee 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 facilities shall be returned to pre-construction conditions.

In accordance with Minnesota Pollution Control Agency requirements, the Permittee shall obtain a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES)/State Disposal System (SDS) Construction Stormwater permit from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency.

### **5.3.8 Wetlands and Water Resources**

Wetland impact avoidance measures that shall be implemented during design and construction of the transmission line will include spacing and placing the power poles at variable distances to span and avoid wetlands, watercourses, and floodplains. Unavoidable wetland impacts as a result of the placement of poles shall be limited to the immediate area around the poles. To minimize impacts, construction in wetland areas shall occur during frozen ground conditions where practicable and shall be according to permit requirements by the applicable permitting authority. When construction during winter is not possible, wooden or composite mats shall be used to protect wetland vegetation. Soil excavated from the wetlands and riparian areas shall be contained and not placed back into the wetland or riparian area. Wetlands and riparian areas shall be accessed using the shortest route possible in order to minimize travel through wetland areas and prevent unnecessary impacts. No staging or stringing set up areas shall be placed within or adjacent to wetlands or water resources, as practicable. Power pole structures shall be assembled on upland areas before they are brought to the site for installation.

Areas disturbed by construction activities shall be restored to pre-construction conditions. Restoration of the wetlands will be performed by the Permittee in accordance with the requirements of applicable state and federal permits or laws and landowner agreements.

All requirements of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (wetlands under federal jurisdiction), Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (Public Waters/Wetlands), and County (wetlands under the jurisdiction of the Minnesota Wetland Conservation Act) shall be met.

#### **5.3.9 Vegetation Management**

The Permittee 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.

Tall growing species located within the transmission line right-of-way that endanger the safe and reliable operation of the transmission facility will be removed by the Permittee. The Permittee 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 that will not pose a threat to the transmission facility or impede construction.

#### **5.3.10 Application of Pesticides**

The Permittee shall restrict pesticide use to those pesticides and methods of application approved by the Minnesota Department of Agriculture, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. 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 Permittee shall contact the landowner or designee to obtain approval for the use of pesticide at least 14 days prior to any application on their property. The landowner may request that there be no application of pesticides on any part of the site within the landowner's property. The Permittee shall provide notice of pesticide application to affected landowners and known beekeepers operating apiaries within three miles of the project site at least 14 days prior to such application.

#### **5.3.11 Invasive Species**

The Permittee shall employ best management practices to avoid the potential spread of invasive species on lands disturbed by project construction activities.

#### **5.3.12 Noxious Weeds**

The Permittee 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 Permittee shall select site appropriate seed certified to be free of noxious weeds. To the extent possible, the Permittee shall use native seed mixes. The Permittee shall consult with landowners on the selection and use of seed for replanting.

#### **5.3.13 Roads**

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

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

#### **5.3.14 Archaeological and Historic Resources**

The Permittee shall make every effort to avoid impacts to identified archaeological and historic resources when constructing the transmission facility. In the event that a resource is encountered, the Permittee shall contact and 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 project impacts on the resource consistent with State Historic Preservation Office and State Archaeologist requirements.

Prior to construction, workers shall be trained 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 Permittee shall immediately halt construction and promptly notify local law enforcement and the State Archaeologist. Construction at such location shall not proceed until authorized by local law enforcement or the State Archaeologist.

#### **5.3.15 Avian Protection**

The Permittee in cooperation with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources shall identify areas of the project 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.

#### **5.3.16 Restoration**

The Permittee 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 line. 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 Permittee shall advise the Commission in writing of the completion of such activities.

#### **5.3.17 Cleanup**

All waste and scrap that is the product of construction shall be removed from the right-of-way and all premises on which construction activities were conducted and properly disposed of upon completion of each task. Personal litter, including bottles, cans, and paper from construction activities shall be removed on a daily basis.

#### **5.3.18 Pollution and Hazardous Wastes**

All appropriate precautions to protect against pollution of the environment must be taken by the Permittee. The Permittee shall be responsible for compliance with all laws applicable to the

generation, storage, transportation, clean up and disposal of all wastes generated during construction and restoration of the right-of-way.

#### **5.3.19 Damages**

The Permittee shall fairly restore or compensate landowners for damage to crops, fences, private roads and lanes, landscaping, drain tile, or other damages sustained during construction.

### **5.4 Electrical Performance Standards**

#### **5.4.1 Grounding**

The Permittee 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 Permittee shall address and rectify any induced current problems that arise during transmission line operation.

#### **5.4.2 Electric Field**

The transmission line shall be designed, constructed, and operated 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 line, the Permittee 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 line.

## **5.5 Other Requirements**

### **5.5.1 Safety Codes and Design Requirements**

The transmission line and associated facilities shall be designed 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 Permittee shall comply with all applicable state rules and statutes. The Permittee shall obtain all required permits for the project and comply with the conditions of those permits unless those permits conflict with or are preempted by federal or state permits and regulations. A list of the permits known to be required is included in the permit application. The Permittee shall submit a copy of such permits to the Commission upon request.

## **6 SPECIAL CONDITIONS**

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

### **6.1 Wildlife-Friendly Erosion Control**

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

### **6.2 Dust Control**

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

### **6.3 Loggerhead Shrike**

The Permittee shall avoid the removal of trees and shrubs for the facility between April 1st and July 31st, unless coordinated with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.

#### **6.4 Blanding's Turtle**

The Permittee shall initiate the following measures during construction to avoid and or mitigate for impacts to the Blanding's turtle during construction:

- Avoid wetland impacts during hibernation season, between October 15th and April 15th, unless the area is unsuitable for hibernation.
- Provide the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources developed Blanding's turtle flyer to all contractors working in the area.
- Monitor for turtles during construction and report any sightings to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Nongame Specialist.
- If turtles are in imminent danger, they must be moved by hand out of harm's way, otherwise they are to be left undisturbed.

#### **7 DELAY IN CONSTRUCTION**

If the Permittee has not commenced construction or improvement of the route within four years after the date of issuance of this permit the Permittee shall file a report on the failure to construct and the Commission shall consider suspension of the permit in accordance with Minn. R. 7850.4700.

#### **8 COMPLAINT PROCEDURES**

Prior to the start of construction, the Permittee shall submit to the Commission the procedures that will be used to receive and respond to complaints. The 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 permit.

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



### **9.1 Plan and Profile**

At least 30 days before right-of-way preparation for construction begins on any segment or portion of the project, the Permittee shall provide the Commission 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 line. 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 per this permit.

The Permittee may not commence construction until the 30 days has expired or until the Commission has advised the Permittee in writing that it has completed its review of the documents and determined that the planned construction is consistent with this permit. If the Permittee intends to make any significant changes in its plan and profile or the specifications and drawings after submission to the Commission, the Permittee shall notify the Commission 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 permit.

### **9.2 Status Reports**

The Permittee shall report to the Commission on progress during finalization of the route, design of structures, and construction of the transmission line. The Permittee need not report more frequently than monthly. Reports shall begin with the submittal of the plan and profile for the project and continue until completion of restoration.

### **9.3 Notification to Commission**

At least three days before the line is to be placed into service, the Permittee shall notify the Commission of the date on which the line will be placed into service and the date on which construction was complete.

### **9.4 As-Builts**

Within 90 days after completion of construction, the Permittee shall submit copies of all final as-built plans and specifications developed during the project.

## **9.5 GPS Data**

Within 90 days after completion of construction, the Permittee 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 line and each substation connected.

## **10 PERMIT AMENDMENT**

This permit may be amended at any time by the Commission. Any person may request an amendment of the conditions of this permit by submitting a request to the Commission in writing describing the amendment sought and the reasons for the amendment. The Commission will mail notice of receipt of the request to the Permittee. The Commission may amend the conditions after affording the Permittee and interested persons such process as is required.

## **11 TRANSFER OF PERMIT**

The Permittee may request at any time that the Commission transfer this permit to another person or entity. The Permittee shall provide the name and description of the person or entity to whom the permit is requested to be transferred, the reasons for the transfer, a description of the facilities affected, and the proposed effective date of the transfer.

The person to whom the permit is to be transferred shall provide the Commission with such information as the Commission shall require to determine whether the new Permittee can comply with the conditions of the permit. The Commission may authorize transfer of the permit after affording the Permittee, the new Permittee, and interested persons such process as is required.

## **12 REVOCATION OR SUSPENSION OF THE PERMIT**

The Commission may initiate action to revoke or suspend this permit at any time. The Commission shall act in accordance with the requirements of Minn. R. 7850.5100, to revoke or suspend the permit.

**ATTACHMENT 1**

Complaint Handling Procedures for Permitted Energy Facilities

**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](mailto:consumer.puc@state.mn.us). For e-mail reporting, the

subject line should read “PUC EFP 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 Will Seuffert, Executive Secretary, Public Utilities Commission, using the eDockets system. The eDockets system is located at: <https://www.edockets.state.mn.us/EFiling/home.jsp>. 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 one year 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 persons if it determines that the

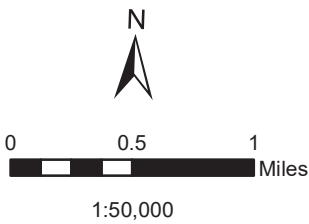
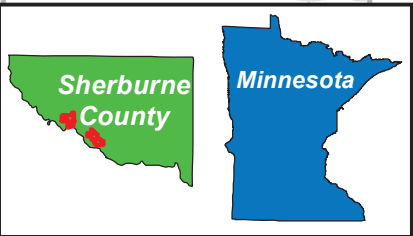
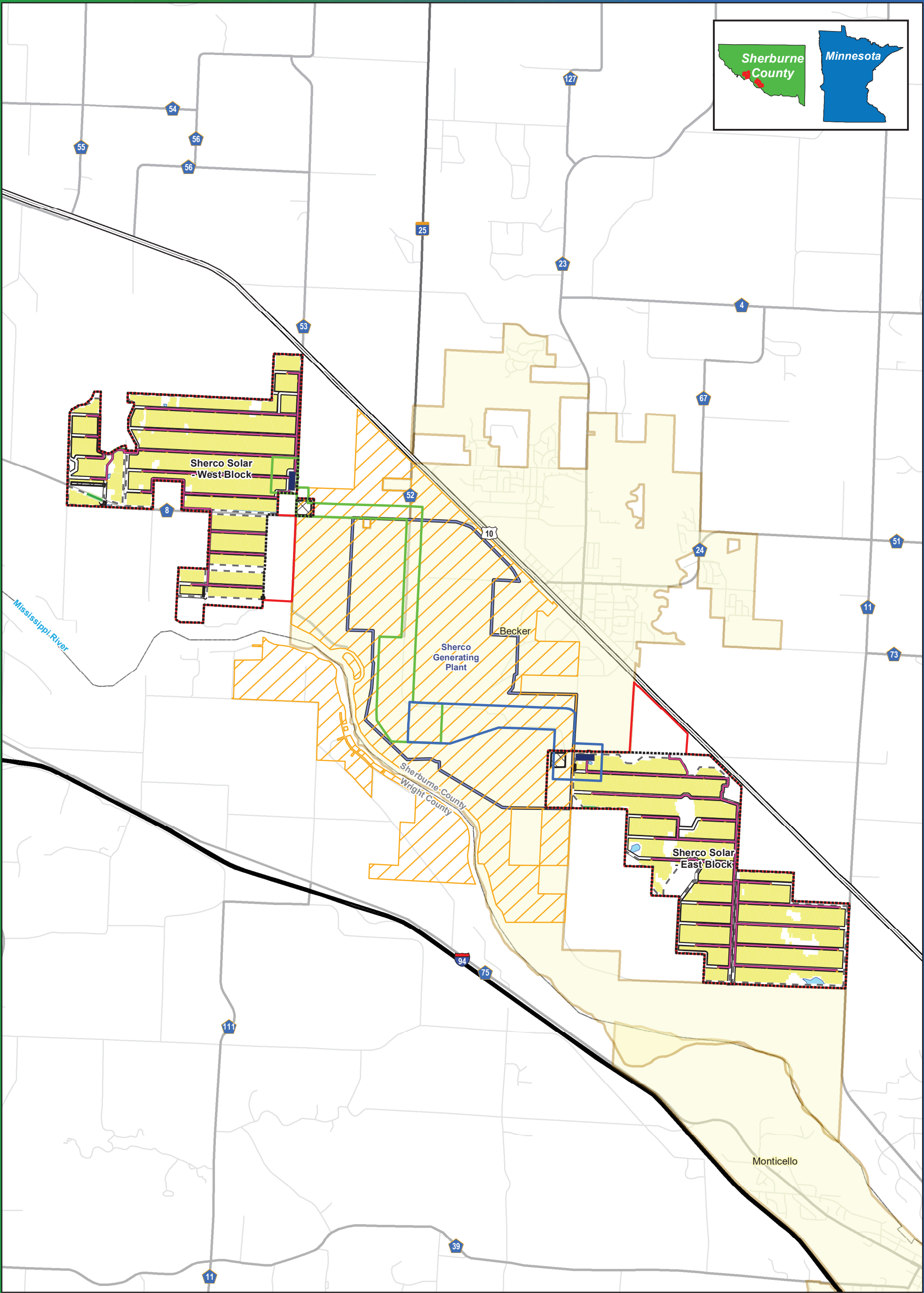
complaint is a substantial complaint. With respect to such complaints, the permittee and complainant shall be required to submit a written summary of the complaint and its current position on the issues to the Commission. Staff will set a deadline for comments. As necessary, the complaint will be presented 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 (voice messages are acceptable) or [consumer.puc@state.mn.us](mailto: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.

**ATTACHMENT 2**  
Route Maps



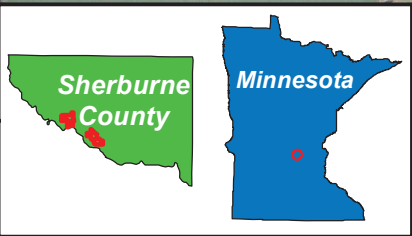
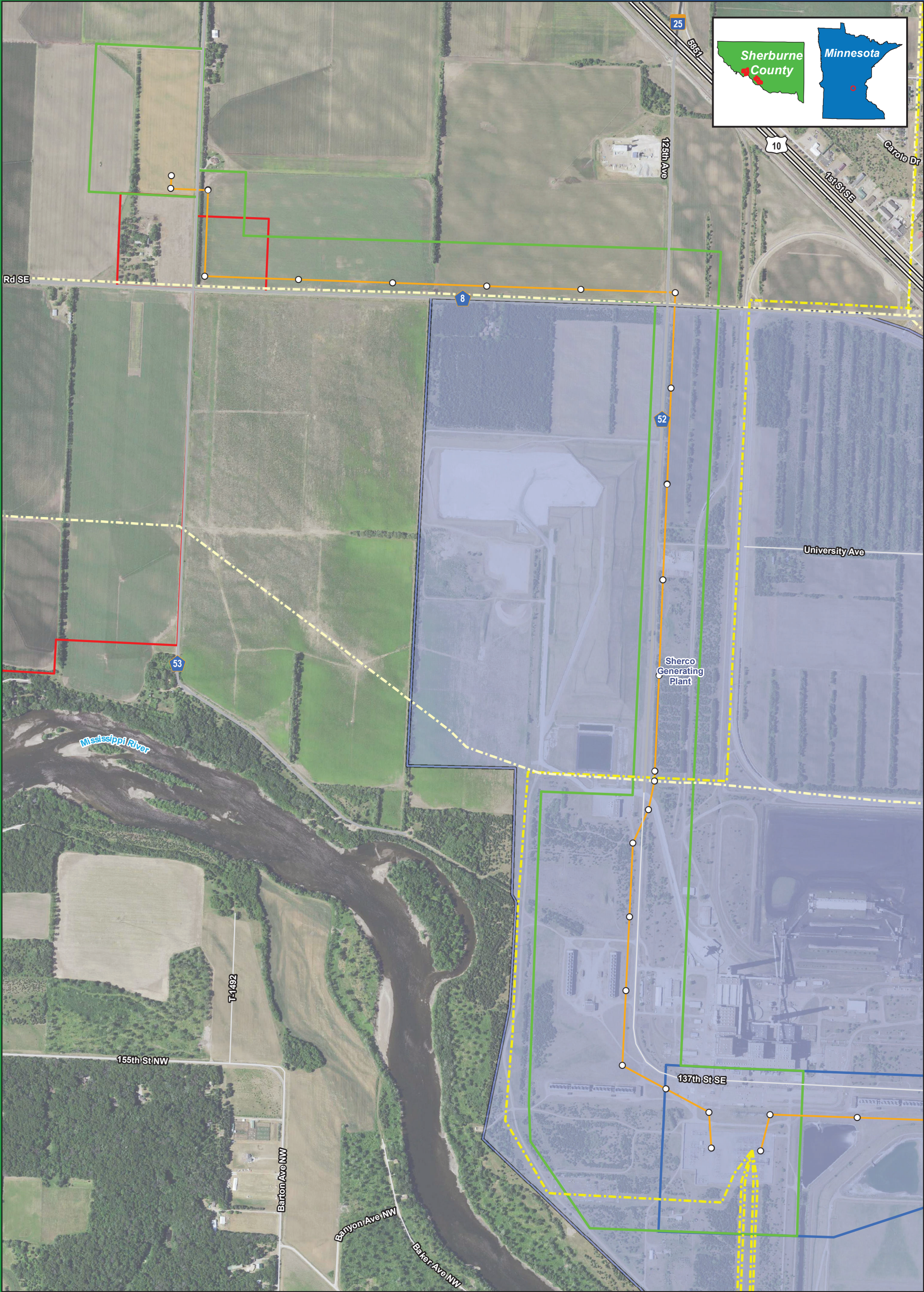


**Route Map 1  
Overall Project Layout**

**PUC Docket Nos E-002GS-21-191,  
TL-21-190, and TL-21-189**

- |                         |                           |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| Access Road             | Inverter                  |
| Collection Line         | West Collector Substation |
| Vegetation Screening    | Laydown Area              |
| Xcel Owned Property     | Security Fence            |
| Sherco East HTVL Route  | Solar Array               |
| Sherco West HTVL Route  | Stormwater Basin          |
| Solar Project Area      | City/Town                 |
| Alternative 1A          | County Boundary           |
| Sherco Generating Plant |                           |





0 0.125 0.25 Miles

1:12,000

**Route Map 2**  
**West Block HVTL Route**  
**PUC Docket No E-002/TL-21-189**

- Preliminary Structures
- Application Alignment
- Sherco West HTVL Route
- Sherco East HTVL Route
- Solar Project Area
- Sherco Generating Plant
- - - Existing Transmission Line
- - - Existing 345 kV Transmission Line