

CLEAR LAKE TOWNSHIP

P.O. BOX 305

CLEAR LAKE, MN. 55319

Beverly Jones Heydinger
Office of Adm. Hearings
P.O. Box 64620
St Paul, Mn. 55164-0620

RECEIVED
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ADMINISTRATIVE
HEARINGS

Dear Ms. Heydinger:

This letter contains comments from the Clear Lake Township regarding the proposed Monticello to St. Cloud 345 kV transmission line known as alternate route D. At our February 16th Township Board meeting the Board did pass a resolution opposing the placement of the transmission line on the east side of the Mississippi River. The following are the concerns of the Board.

Clear Lake Township is primarily a farming community which consists of crop farmers growing corn, soybeans and specialty crops such as potatoes, pinto beans, sweet corn, strawberries and blue berries. As this area has sandy soil the farmers use irrigation systems for watering the crops and can produce crops with yields that compare with the heavier soils. The township has continued to support the farmers through zoning laws that prevent housing developments from overtaking the crop producing acres. The proposed alternate D route for this transmission line goes directly through this farm land affecting 36 irrigation systems. There presently is a 115 kV transmission line running through this route which was installed in the 1950's and the farmers have designed the pivot irrigation systems to work around them. With another transmission line coming down this same route, pole settings will not align with the present pole settings and the irrigation systems will not be able to function. We are told that the proposed transmission line would require a 150 foot easement and with the 75 foot easement that is already in place for the 115 kV line there is no foreseeable way that the center pivot irrigation systems could operate. Without the water there would be no crops which would ultimately lead to farmers requesting changes in the zoning laws so as they could sell the land to housing developers. We believe this country cannot afford to continue to lose food producing acres.

The alternate D transmission line would run on the easterly border and parallel to the Clear Lake Township Park which consists of 36 acres and it would run directly through the Sherburne County Park, known as Mississippi River Park, which is located in Clear Lake Township and consists of 63 acres. This alternate D route runs through the Wild and Scenic River District and the Natural Heritage Information Systems shows there are 15 different threatened or endangered species within one mile of route D.

The proposed route D would cross the Mississippi River at two locations which would not only have an affect on the Wild and Scenic River District through excavation for the pole settings, but would create added costs to the project. If the other proposed route were implemented there would be no river crossings.

We as a township feel that as there presently is an 115kV transmission line running through this Township that placing new lines in this same vicinity may not be a good idea from both a homeland security perspective and/or as protection against natural events.

We would like to bring attention to the fact that Clear Lake Township was never notified by either the State of Minnesota or by the power companies that a transmission line route was being considered in our township. This was learned through a newspaper article. We were not asked to participate on the Advisory Task Force which was established by the Mn. Office of Energy Security nor were we asked for any input in the discussions. None of the members of the Advisory Task Force are residents of Sherburne County.

We thank you for allowing us to provide our comments and hope you will give them strong consideration.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jack R. Gallagher". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "G".

Jack Gallagher
Board Chairman
Clear Lake Township
P.O. Box 305
Clear Lake, Mn. 55319