

# Mississippi River Parkway Commission of Minnesota

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**Members of the House:** Sheldon Johnson (DFL – 67B) – Chair; Greg Davids (R – 31B) **Members of the Senate:** David Senjem (R – 29), Sandra Pappas (DFL – 65) **State Agency Appointees:** Robin Kinney – Agriculture, Frank Pafko – Transportation, Don Frerichs – Explore Minnesota Tourism, Greg Murray – Natural Resources, Open – Historical Society **Regional Appointees:** Jack Frost – Lake Itasca to Grand Rapids, John Schaubach – Grand Rapids to Brainerd, Karl Samp – Brainerd to Elk River, Paul Labovitz – Elk River to Hastings, Sheronne Mulry – Hastings to Iowa Border **Member at Large:** Andrew Golfis

May 20, 2010

Matthew Langan  
Office of Energy Security  
Minnesota Department of Commerce  
85 7<sup>th</sup> Place East, Suite 500  
St. Paul, MN 55101-2198

RE: CapX 2020 Hampton-Rochester-La Crosse Transmission Line Project, PUC Docket No. TL-09-1448

Dear Mr. Langan:

The mission of the Mississippi River Parkway Commission of Minnesota (MN-MRPC) is to promote, preserve and enhance the resources of the Mississippi River Valley and to develop the highways and amenities of the Great River Road. The CapX 2020 Hampton-Rochester-La Crosse Transmission Line Project includes potential routes negatively impacting the Great River Road, a National Scenic Byway in ten states. Our Commission requests that the information below and attached map be included in the scope of the Environmental Impact Statement for the project.

The Great River Road has achieved the esteemed designation of a National Scenic Byway because it possesses characteristics of regional significance demonstrating intrinsic qualities in at least one of the following areas – archaeological; cultural; historic; natural; recreational; and scenic. It is imperative for our state to protect the byway, its intrinsic qualities and the river it celebrates for current and future byway travelers. The grandeur of the Great River Road experience in this specific area runs from bluff top to bluff top and great care is needed in planning, executing and maintaining the line to minimize vegetative disruption, in both areas of perpendicular crossing and parallel alignment on both the Minnesota and Wisconsin sides of the river. Many travelers complete a loop through the two states, and the main visual experience involves the complete river valley. Negative impacts on one side of the river also impact the other side of the river and its travelers. Our partners, the Wisconsin MRPC, should be involved in discussions about the Mississippi River crossing and line locations in Wisconsin. Alignment or combining of processes to determine line locations in the two states would be recommended by the MN-MRPC.

We ask that decision makers, in keeping with non-proliferation statutes, utilize all possible strategies to avoid, minimize and mitigate any impact to the Great River Road and Mississippi River corridors; and exercise due diligence in assessing potential impacts to the Great River Road. Cumulative impacts to the Great River Road and the Mississippi River throughout Minnesota should also be considered related to all CapX2020 transmission line segments being considered. The MN-MRPC requests a video visual impact simulation of the proposed lines and associated vegetation impacts from the vantage point of both the car traveler and bicyclists in motion along the Great River Road. The Commission also requests consideration of less visible options including underground lines in the area crossing the Mississippi River, similar to what was done in the area of the St. Croix Scenic Byway.

We appreciate your consideration, and offer our Commissioners and technical advisors to provide further information as the process continues. The Commission's commitment to assisting in achieving a successful outcome is evidenced by the current participation of Sheronne Mulry on the Advisory Task Force. Please add the MN-MRPC to your stakeholder list for communications as this project continues, and keep us informed of actions taken.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sheldon Johnson / cm". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Representative Sheldon Johnson, Chair

enclosure

cc: Tom Sorel, Mn/DOT  
Mike Barnes, Mn/DOT  
Dave Seykora, Mn/DOT  
Val Svensson, Mn/DOT  
Sheronne Mulry, MN-MRPC  
Al Lorenz, WI-MRPC



CapX2020



# CAPX2020 Areas of Potential Great River Road Impacts Hampton to La Crosse

01-03-2010  
Source: Proposed Routes Based on Information Obtained From:  
<http://www.capx2020.com>  
Highway Linework, County Shapefile and Municipal Boundary Info: Mn/DOT Basemap  
Intrinsic Qualities:  
Great River Road Development Plan 2000  
Cartography: Josh Kuhn, 651-366-3884 & Andy Trcka, 651-366-3877

**Proposed CAPX2020 Routes**

- Hampton Rochester LaCrosse 116KV
- Hampton Rochester LaCrosse 161 and 345KV
- Hampton Rochester LaCrosse 345KV

**Intrinsic Qualities**

- Museum
- Fishing Pier
- City Park
- Golf\_Course
- Festival
- Dam
- Historical Property
- Rest Area
- Campground
- Boat Access
- Picnic Area
- Trailhead
- Great River Road
- Other Scenic Byway
- Trail
- State Park

**Road Type**

- Interstate Highway
- U.S. Highway
- MN Highway
- Mississippi River
- State Forest

