

**Birkholz, David (COMM)**

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**From:** Seykora, Dave (DOT)  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 16, 2010 2:15 PM  
**To:** Birkholz, David (COMM); Pile, Deborah (COMM)  
**Cc:** Sheldon Johnson; 'Andy Golfis'; Chris Miller; Zoff, Carol (DOT)  
**Subject:** CapX2020 - Monticello to St. Cloud Route Application  
**Attachments:** GRR Mitigation.docx

Deb and David,

In follow-up to our discussions last week concerning mitigation opportunities associated with the Great River Road, enclosed please find several paragraphs that Mn/DOT and MN-MRPC jointly propose for inclusion in the draft route permit. If you have any questions about the proposed text, please don't hesitate to call me to discuss it.

Thank you for your attentiveness to the subject of mitigation of the impacts of the HVTL near the Great River Road, which is a matter of great significance to MN-MRPC and Mn/DOT.

Dave

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6/25/2010

## **Proposed Text of Route Permit Special Conditions**

**Great River Road National Scenic Byway Mitigation.** The Permittee shall make every effort to minimize the impact of the project on the six intrinsic qualities for which the Great River Road received National Scenic Byway designation when installing the high voltage transmission line on the approved route. The Permittee shall consult with Mn/DOT and the Minnesota Mississippi River Parkway Commission (MN-MRPC ) regarding final structure locations, construction methods that minimize damage to vegetation along the Great River Road that can be preserved, installation of replacement vegetation to limit visual impacts from surrounding areas, and other methods to minimize any negative impact or maximize any positive impact on the Great River Road and the Mississippi River/byway travelers' experience.

The Permittee shall, to the extent possible, preserve the natural and cultural landscape and use design, construction, operation and maintenance techniques and procedures to prevent unnecessary destruction, scarring, or defacing of vegetation in the right-of-way and the adjacent setting in the vicinity of the project.

In consultation with Mn/DOT and MN-MRPC, the Permittee will:

- Install vegetative buffers to limit visual impacts to Great River Road and Mississippi River travelers, including but not limited to where the HVTL route parallels, crosses or is seen from the byway or the river. These buffers may occur within the byway, I-94 or HVTL rights-of-way.
- Adjust the HVTL alignment to minimize its parallel proximity to the byway and river (e.g., retaining a buffer strip of trees at poles 2 – 18).
- Adjust crossings to minimize disturbance to the setting and to byway and river traveler viewsheds (emphasis at poles 16-23, 27-30, 35-38, and 47-53).
- Select plants that will reflect native river species, and will limit native species cultivars.
- Design plantings that will reflect a natural layout and avoid geometric configurations.
- Design plantings that will maximize opportunities to restore trees.
- Maximize opportunities to install maximum height vegetation in relation to the areas of swing and sag of the conductors (e.g., taller trees closer to poles, large shrubs and low trees at locations of maximum sag.)

**Vegetation Removal in the Right-of-Way.** The Permittee shall minimize the number of trees to be removed in selecting the right-of-way and designing a prescribed removal plan for construction. All woody vegetation to be removed will be marked in the field and approved by Mn/DOT. Sentinel vegetation to remain will be marked prior to and maintained during construction within and at the outer limits of the easement area. The Permittee shall remove only taller trees within the HVTL right-of-way that endanger the safe and reliable operation of the transmission facility. To the maximum extent practical, low growing vegetation that will not pose a threat to the transmission facility or impede construction will remain undisturbed in the HVTL right-of-way. Should removal of vegetation require herbicide application, the Permittee shall coordinate with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to avoid the potential of directly or indirectly affecting native prairie and rare plant species.