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27 September 2011

Mr. Darrell Nitschke, Executive Director
North Dakota Public Service Commission
600 East Boulevard, Dept. 408
Bismarck, ND 58505-0480

RE: Request for Jurisdictional Determination
Prairie Substation to Ramsey Substation 230 kV Transmission Line Rebuild Project

Dear Mr. Nitschke:

Great River Energy is seeking a jurisdictional determination on the level of permitting required for the rebuild of an existing 230 kV transmission line between the Minnkota Power Cooperative Prairie Substation near Grand Forks, North Dakota and the Great River Energy Ramsey Substation near Devils Lake, North Dakota. This line was built in 1966; therefore Great River Energy does not hold a route permit for this transmission facility. Great River Energy would like to rebuild the approximately 80 miles of this line in eight segments (see attached Figure 1) over the course of the next eight years. Most of the structures will be rebuilt next to the existing structures, likely within the existing right of way (75 feet either side of the centerline), but certainly within 350 feet either side of the centerline. However, in three of the segments (4, 7, 8), relocation of the line is preferred.

Great River Energy requests that the Public Service Commission determine if a Certificate of Site Compatibility or Route Permit is required for all or parts of this rebuild project. The project is described in more detail below.

Project Description

Great River Energy operates and owns the 230 kV high voltage transmission line from the Stanton Station to the Grand Forks area with substations near Minot, Balta, City of Devils Lake, and Grand Forks, North Dakota. This transmission line provides the outlet for power generated from the Stanton Station, which was placed in service in 1966. Also, the line is part of an integrated electric transmission system that supplies power to the entire region and helps provide electric stability to that system. Great River Energy is planning to replace approximately 80 miles of structures on this transmission line system between the Prairie Substation located in Grand Forks and the Ramsey Substation in Devils Lake, North Dakota. This structure replacement is planned to occur over approximately an eight year period beginning in January 2012. The structures will be designed to accommodate a future conductor size of 954

Mr. Darrell Nitschke
27 September 2011
Page 2

45/7 "Rail" ACSS, planning for a future capacity of 693 MVA from the existing 436 MVA rating. The old conductor will be reused until the need for the additional capacity is realized.

Project Need

The Great River Energy Transmission Construction and Maintenance Department has surveyed this section of the transmission line and has determined that the poles and pole top assemblies are approaching an end of life. A decision was made to keep the reliability of this system to high standards by rebuilding this section of the transmission system to the latest design criteria.

Estimated Project Cost

The total project cost is expected to be approximately \$40 million, spread over eight years.

Segments in which Relocations are Preferred

There are portions of line in three segments of this eighty mile project that are of concern to our Transmission Construction and Maintenance Department and where location of the line is preferred, as described below.

- Segment 4 – Between existing Structures 276 and 283, the landowner has requested that Great River Energy relocate the transmission line to avoid tree stands in the area. This reroute will be less than a mile long, and we believe it will be possible to reroute the line on this landowners' property and still avoid the tree stands of concern.
- Segment 7 – Between existing Structures 450 and 458, the structures need to be protected from ice damage, as they are currently located in a flooded slough. Line crews recommend relocating these structures to the south if possible. This reroute would be approximately two miles long.
- Segment 8 – Between existing Structures 559 and 562, the structures need to be protected from ice damage, as they are currently located in a flooded slough. Line crews recommend relocating this section at a minimum (less than a mile), and have suggested a reroute of most of this segment of line along TH 2 (over 10 miles).

Mr. Darrell Nitschke
27 September 2011
Page 3

Great River Energy has determined that the structures in Segment 3 are in greatest need of replacement; therefore we would like to begin rebuilding that segment as early as January 2012. No reroute areas have been identified in that segment.

Please let me know if you need additional information to make a jurisdictional determination regarding the level of permitting required for this rebuild Project. Because we would like to start the first rebuild segment in a few months and need to get materials ordered, we would really appreciate an expedited response from the Commission if possible. I can be reached at 763-445-5214, or by email at cschmidt@greenergy.com.

We would also be happy to meet with you in person to discuss the Project in more detail. Thank you for your attention to this important transmission project.

Respectfully submitted,

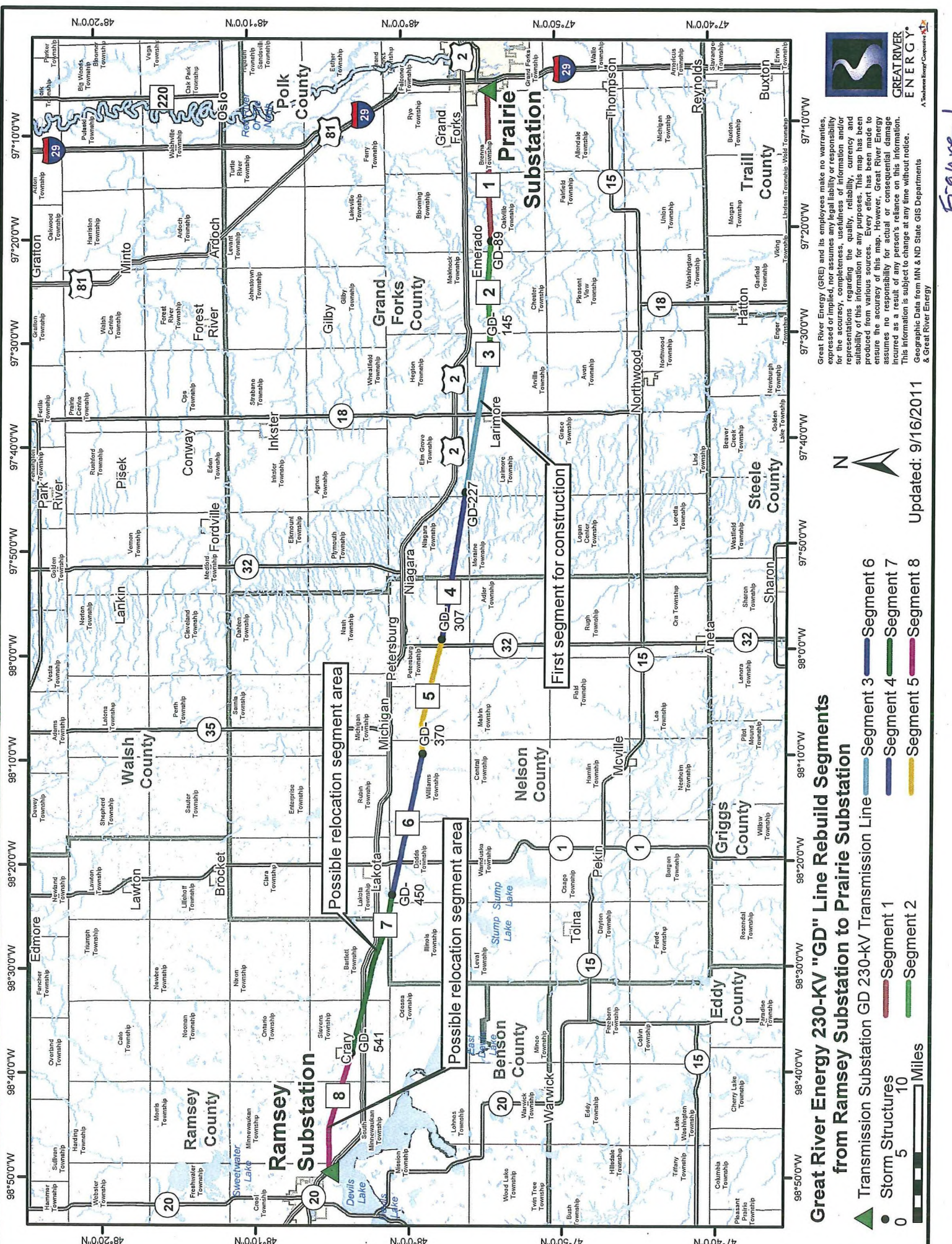
GREAT RIVER ENERGY



Carole L. Schmidt
Supervisor, Transmission Permitting and Compliance

Attachment

C: Jerry Lein, ND PSC
Chuck Lukkarila, GRE



Great River Energy 230-KV "GD" Line Rebuild Segments from Ramsey Substation to Prairie Substation

- ▲ Transmission Substation GD 230-kV Transmission Line
- Storm Structures
- 0 Miles
- 5 Miles
- 10 Miles

- Segment 1
- Segment 2
- Segment 3
- Segment 4
- Segment 5
- Segment 6
- Segment 7
- Segment 8

Updated: 9/16/2011

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Figure 1