

**MEETING MINUTES**  
**Northern Lights 2021 Expansion Project**  
**Docket No. PF20-1-000**  
**July 22, 2020**

**Attendees**

**Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC):** Doug Cotton  
**Northern Natural Gas:** Erin Lake, Donna Martens, and Terry Plucker  
**Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA):** Bill Wilde  
**Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MDNR):** Cynthia Warzecha and Margi Coyle  
**Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA):** Steve Roos  
**Stantec:** Susan Knabe and Jake Fahrenkrog

**Summary**

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission staff and representatives of the federal and state agencies listed above met with representatives from Northern Natural Gas via the final regularly scheduled teleconference held Wednesday, July 22, 2020, to discuss the Northern Lights 2021 Expansion Project (Project).

- Northern introduced the Project team and delivered a brief Project update.
- Northern stated it had a good meeting with the MDNR to discuss their comments and concerns for the DAPEA and resource reports.
- Northern and Stantec provided an update on the permitting status of the Project:
  - Northern plans to complete the first presence/absence surveys on the Willmar D branch line extension for rusty patch bumble bee by 7/25/2020. The following three presence/absence surveys will be completed in late July and early August.
  - The final Section 7 consultation will be provided to the USFWS on July 22, 2020.
  - Northern intends to file the joint Utility Regional Permit with the US Army Corps of Engineers and Local Governmental Units in August 2020.
    - The MDNR requested they be included in the Joint application contact list.
  - Project consultations were submitted to the State Historic Preservation Office and Tribal Historic Preservation Office on July 16 and 20, 2020, respectively.
  - Wetland and Project information was submitted via email to Kris Laman of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on July 8, 2020.
  - A MDNR Natural Heritage Information System request was submitted July 17, 2020, for the Project.
  - Northern provided its Blanding's turtle avoidance plan to the MDNR for review July 17, 2020.
  - Northern submitted the noxious weed plan and agricultural impact mitigation plan to the MDA for review July 13, 2020.
  - Northern stated its intent to file the section 7 application with the FERC no later than July 31, 2020, and the Applicant-prepared Draft Environmental Assessment (APDEA) by August 14, 2020.

- Steve Roos, MDA, stated he had reviewed the Project Agricultural Impact Mitigation Plan and would provide a response at a later date. MDA stated its intent to contact other state agencies associated with the Project to determine the need for a third-party monitor on the Project.
  - Northern stated their environmental inspectors (EI) were pulled from a pool of third party inspectors. The EI prepares daily reports which are reviewed by Northern and either weekly or biweekly reports describing construction status, crossings of sensitive areas, problems or noncompliance issues encountered as well as landowner concerns, which are filed with FERC. Northern also stated either FERC staff or third party inspectors representing FERC have been inspecting project sites at least monthly prior to COVID-19. Northern also indicated there is very limited agricultural land being crossed by the Project.
  - The MDNR indicated that Northern's inspection staff and FERC's third-party inspections would satisfy MDNR inspection requirements. The MDNR stated they would request communication from Northern staff directly to them for any Project issues relevant to its permits. The MDNR also stated reporting and communication procedures used on previous Northern projects were sufficient. The MDNR noted Margi Coyle will be the agency's point of contact for the MDNR on this Project.
  - Doug Cotton, FERC, stated that other agencies including MDA and MDNR are able to participate in the routine FERC inspections. FERC inspections are typically completed every 28 days.
- Bill Wilde, MPCA, requested contact information for other cooperating agencies and brief update on the FERC permitting timeline.
  - Northern stated it incorporated the applicable MPCA comments from the Northern Lights 2019/Rochester into the DAPEA for the Northern Lights 2021 project.
  - MPCA stated it would review the Draft Applicant Prepared Environmental Assessment and provide comments to Northern and FERC by August 10, 2020.
- This was the final bi-weekly conference call for the Project.

Document Content(s)

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