



Citizens Energy Task Force (www.cetf.us)

Media Contact: Jeremy Chipps 608-317-5700
Attorney: Paula Maccabee: 651- 646-8890

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***CAPX2020 UTILITIES ANNOUNCE RIVER CROSSING THROUGH WILDLIFE REFUGE
CITIZENS GROUP CHALLENGES NEED FOR HIGH VOLTAGE POWER LINE.***

ST. PAUL, MN. January 22, 2010—

A proposed ultra high voltage power line would cross Minnesota's Great River Road National Scenic Byway and would run through the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge. Even though the utilities are required by Minnesota law to have at least one alternative, they have provided no alternate route across the Mississippi River and no alternative that would avoid the National Wildlife Refuge.

Eleven CapX2020 utilities, including Xcel Energy and Dairyland Power have filed an application for a permit to construct the 345 kV power line from Rochester, Minnesota to La Crosse, Wisconsin. After crossing the Mississippi River, the CapX2020 power line would connect at Alma, Wisconsin and would either travel South along the River Road (Hwy 53) to Holmen, and La Crosse or extend due east from Alma to Arcadia, and then divert south through Blair, Galesville and Holmen to La Crosse. This should be of grave concern to these communities of Western Wisconsin.

The massive power line is part of a \$2 billion dollar network of ultra high voltage lines starting in South Dakota and North Dakota and running 600 miles to Wisconsin. A proposal for a connecting line from La Crosse to Madison has also been announced by American Transmission Corporation. The nearly 15-story steel structures (170 feet tall) are larger than any power lines in the region.

Citizens Energy Task Force (CETF) has filed a legal challenge to the certificate of need for the CapX2020 power lines and the La Crosse line in particular with the Minnesota Court of Appeals. CETF has argued that the CapX2020 power lines are not needed and that the LaCrosse portion of the power lines would cause harm to the environment, including impacts to migratory birds, the Scenic Byway and the Upper Mississippi National Wildlife and Fish Refuge that lower voltage more local transmission solutions would avoid. [Details on the appeal here: <http://cetf.us/wp-content/uploads/2009/10/cetf-appeal-brief.pdf>]

“The La Crosse CapX2020 power line is not needed, it causes serious environmental harm that lower voltage and local energy solutions would avoid and it is in conflict with state and federal regulations protecting wildlife refuges,” explained CETF attorney Paula Maccabee. “The fact that the CapX2020 utilities have proposed no alternatives for the Mississippi River crossing is also inconsistent with Minnesota law. This project has serious problems and should not move forward.”

Recently, a nationally-recognized expert on the health impacts of high voltage power lines testified in Minnesota that magnetic fields generated by high voltage power lines are associated with serious health problems. Dr. David Carpenter--a public health physician trained at Harvard Medical School and Director of the Institute for Health and the Environment (State University of New York at Albany) detailed startling connections between these magnetic fields and childhood leukemia, brain cancer, Alzheimer's disease and ALS (Lou Gehrig's Disease). Dr. Carpenter's complete testimony is available by clicking: <http://justchangelaw.com/uploads/CarpenterDirect:Schedules.pdf>

A community educational effort has been launched to inform citizens of MN and WI about the importance of an energy future that involves local, clean renewable energy. Read more at: www.powerlinetruth.org

Citizens Energy Task Force – is a non-profit grassroots organization of more than 300 citizens from both Wisconsin and Minnesota—and growing fast—who support clean, renewable and sustainable energy. Concerned citizens are encouraged to become members by visiting the website. www.cetf.us, (to view media reports about CapX go to: www.ilsr.org)