



Citizens Energy Task Force (www.cetf.us)

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

CITIZENS GROUP FORMALLY CHALLENGES DECISION ON CAPX2020 POWERLINE NEED AND ENCOURAGES MN & WI RESIDENTS TO ATTEND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT SCOPING MEETINGS THIS WEEK.

Citizens Energy Task Force (CETF) has officially challenged The Certificate of Need (CON) decision for the CapX2020 project: On June 12, 2009, Citizens Energy Task Force (www.cetf.us) submitted an official petition* to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (MPUC), requesting reconsideration of their approval of the La Crosse Line based upon a number of legal errors, including violation of the Minnesota Environmental Policy Act, the Minnesota Environmental Rights Act, Certificate of need law and rules pertaining to power line prohibition areas. Additionally, the US Fish & Wildlife Service has written a letter to CapX, stating that it would not allow for expansion of the existing rights of way across the Mississippi River located at Alma, WI, Winona, MN and La Crescent/La Crosse, WI. For more information on the Petition for Reconsideration, please see "CETF Petition for Reconsideration Backgrounder."

"This is a critical time for the CapX 2020 project and citizens are voicing their concerns," explained Paula Maccabee, attorney for CETF. "The Rural Utility Service/United States Department of Agriculture (RUS/USDA) has announced that it plans to complete an Environmental Impact Statement on the Hampton-La Crosse line of the proposed CapX 2020 high voltage power line project. This Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process will require more thorough investigation and analysis than the job done by the MN Dept. of Commerce for the Certificate of Need proceeding."

A "Scoping Meeting" is the citizen's opportunity to tell the USDA what must be included in the "scope" of the EIS. Residents concerned about the major environmental impacts of a 15-story high voltage power line will share both oral and written comments of concern. Additional requests brought forward from environmental groups and citizens includes a "no-build" alternative, conservation, local generation and local transmission that does not impact the Mississippi Flyway, the Wildlife Refuge, or any of the other protected natural areas.

CETF member Jeremy Chipps of La Crescent, MN said: "The public needs to continue standing up asking the tough questions regarding Capx2020. We must all question the proposed routes and question the efficacy of the entire project, both from a regional and national perspective. I am thrilled that the citizens have decided to move forward toward appealing the Minnesota PUC decision on Certificate of Need."

CETF has presented evidence that supports the decision for a no-build for the Hampton/La Crosse line including decline in energy demand, lack of review of alternatives for electricity and the powerful impact on the environment. The following information is being urged by CETF members attending this week's USDA EIS Scoping Meetings:

1. The EIS should use Xcel Energy's and Dairyland Power's most current forecasts, not old out-of-date information.
2. Conservation, local generation and local transmission can solve any local reliability issues at a much lower cost to ratepayers without damaging the Upper Mississippi River Wildlife Refuge, Scenic Byways and other natural resources;
3. The environmental consequences of coal and coal pollution due to this line need to be evaluated. The La Crosse project should be considered with the Brookings and Fargo power lines in making this environmental review.
4. Power lines cause environmental harm, pose serious visual impacts, electro-magnetic field risks exist related to both hazards to farm lands and increases in cancer (especially childhood leukemia), cause decline in property values, fragmentation of habitat, risks to endangered and rare species and bird mortality along the Mississippi Flyway.

*To view the recent petitions filed pertaining to reconsideration, go to the following link:

<https://www.edockets.state.mn.us/EFiling/edockets/searchDocuments.do?method=eDocketsResult#{99D1CD33-E2E4-452A-9C10-B7FFA4245CCA}> Select Docket: year: 06 and number: 1115

Additional information on the USDA Scoping meetings is available at this link:
<http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm#Dairyland%20Power%20Cooperative,%20Inc>

Here's the link for the RUS/USDA's Notice and Dairyland Power's filings:
<http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>

LOCATIONS AND DATES FOR THE MEETINGS: ALL MEETINGS ARE FROM 6-8 PM

**June 16: Plainview-Elgin-Millville High School
500 West Broadway
Plainview, Minnesota**

**June 17, 2009
Wanamingo Community Center
401 Main Street,
Wanamingo, Minnesota**

**June 18, 2009
City of St. Charles Community Meeting Room
830 Whitewater Avenue
St. Charles, Minnesota**

**June 23, 2009
La Crescent American Legion
509 N. Chestnut
La Crescent, Minnesota**

**June 24, 2009
Centerville/Town of Trempealeau Community Center
W24854 State Road 54/93
Centerville, Wisconsin**

**June 25, 2009
Cochrane-Fountain City High School
S2770 State Road 35
Fountain City, Wisconsin**

If you cannot attend the meetings but want to send comments, the DEADLINE is JUNE 29, 2009. To send written comments, contact: **Stephanie Strength** stephanie.strength@usda.gov

**Stephanie Strength
Environmental Protection Specialist
USDA, Rural Utilities Service
Engineering and Environmental Staff
400 Independence Avenue, SW., Stop 1571,
Washington, DC 20250-1571 (202) 720-0468**

Citizens Energy Task Force – is a grassroots group of more than 200 citizens—and growing fast—who support clean, renewable and sustainable energy. Concerned citizens are encouraged to become members by visiting the website. CETF encourages the public to attend as many of the upcoming routing sessions as possible and voice specific concerns regarding the proposed high voltage lines. For more information: www.cetf.us, www.ilsr.org (view media reports about CapX2020), www.nawo.org CETF Media Media Contact: Jeremy Chipps, Member, 608-317-5700 Attorney Paula Maccabee 651-646-8890