

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Rural Utilities Service Announces Public Scoping Meetings for the Center to Grand Forks Transmission Line Project

GRAND FORKS, N.D. – The Rural Utilities Services (RUS), an Agency of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development Utilities, has announced a series of six public scoping meetings for the Center to Grand Forks transmission line project proposed by Minnkota Power Cooperative, Inc. (Minnkota). Minnkota is a generation and transmission cooperative headquartered in Grand Forks, N.D.

Minnkota has proposed the construction of approximately 260 miles of 345 kilovolt (kV) transmission line from Center to Grand Forks, N.D. to secure additional energy from Milton R. Young 2, a 455-megawatt (MW) coal-fired plant near Center, N.D., owned by Square Butte Electric Cooperative.

To bring the energy generated by Young 2 into the Red River Valley, Minnkota will construct a new 345-kilovolt (kV) transmission line from Center to Grand Forks. Building the new transmission line will enable the existing DC transmission line from the Milton R. Young Station to carry more renewable wind energy.

The purpose of these open houses will be to provide information regarding Minnkota's proposed project, answer questions, and collect comments regarding potential environmental concerns.

Meeting dates and locations:

- ▶ **Monday, November 16, 2009**
 - **Grand Forks, N.D.**, Alerus Center, Eagle Room 10, 1200 S 42nd St, 5 - 8 pm
- ▶ **Tuesday, November 17, 2009**
 - **Cooperstown, N.D.**, Cooperstown City Hall, 611 9th St. 10 am - 1 pm
 - **Carrington, N.D.**, The Chieftain Conference Center Tee Pee Room 60, 4th Ave S, Highway 281, 5 - 8 pm
- ▶ **Wednesday, November 18, 2009**
 - **McClusky, N.D.**, McClusky Community Hall, 117 Ave B North, 10 am - 1 pm
 - **Wilton, N.D.**, City of Wilton Memorial Hall, 10 Dakota Ave, 5 - 8 pm
- ▶ **Thursday, November 19, 2009**
 - **Center, N.D.**, Civic Center Building, 312 N Lincoln Ave, 5 - 8 pm

An Alternatives Evaluation Study (AES) and a Macro-Corridor Study (MCS), prepared by Minnkota will be available for review at the public meetings, and at a number of locations throughout the corridor; a list of viewing locations as well as the studies themselves can be found online at www.minnkota.com (look for the CGF project link) and on RUS web site at <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/ea.htm>.

Comments concerning the potential environmental impacts and related review of this project are encouraged and will be incorporated into RUS' Environmental Assessment for this project. Written comments will be accepted until December 18, 2009 and can be submitted at any of the public meetings or to Dennis Rankin, USDA Rural Development - Utilities Program at:

1400 Independence Avenue, SW

Washington, DC 20250-1571

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For more information please visit www.minnkota.com or call Minnkota's toll free project information line at 800-473-5679.

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