

the USDA Forest Service a request for authorization to vacate and relocate portions of Mackey (CR 69) and temporary Reno (CR 83) county roads onto NFS lands on March 22, 2011. Vacated road segments will be mined through and subsequently reclaimed.

#### Purpose and Need for Action

The purpose of this action is to relocate the affected segments of Mackey and Reno roads outside of the mining area so that the underlying coal can be mined and to prevent interrupted road services.

#### Proposed Action

The Forest Service proposes to authorize PPRM to construct 6.56 miles of new road on NFS lands. Of the 6.56 miles, 1.25 miles coincides with an existing Forest Service Road—School Creek Road—that will be reconstructed. The environmental analysis will include approximately 250 acres of NFS lands. Road specifications will conform to or exceed current county road standards. Upon completion of the road construction, the final easement would be acquired by Campbell County, and this road will be maintained and operated as part of the county road system. PPRM has initiated formal discussion with Campbell County regarding the relocation, and public hearings were held by the County in November 2010.

#### Responsible Official

Richard Cooksey, Deputy Forest Supervisor, Medicine Bow-Routt National Forests and Thunder Basin National Grassland, 2468 Jackson Street, Laramie, Wyoming 82070 is the Official responsible for making the decision on this action.

#### Nature of Decision To Be Made

The Responsible Official will consider the results of the analysis and then document the final decision in a Record of Decision (ROD). The decision will include a determination on whether or not to authorize the Mackey Road Relocation to occur in the above described lands as proposed by the applicant (PPRM), or to allow an alternative to the proposed action.

#### Preliminary Issues

The Forest Service has identified the following preliminary issues related to the proposed action: (1) Potential impacts to wildlife in the proposed project area; (2) potential impacts to the watershed; (3) potential impacts to cultural and paleontological resources; (4) potential impacts to adjacent private lands; and (5) potential impacts to

livestock grazing permits on the National Grassland.

#### Scoping Process

This notice of intent initiates this phase of the scoping process, which guides the development of the environmental impact statement. Prior to this notice, the Forest Service published a Legal Notice in the *Laramie Boomerang* on May 1, 2011 initiating a 30-day formal comment period. Scoping notices were also mailed to Federal, state, and local government agencies, conservation groups, and individuals who could be impacted by the project.

A draft environmental impact statement (DEIS) will be prepared for comment. The comment period on the DEIS will be 45 days from the date the Environmental Protection Agency publishes the notice of availability in the **Federal Register**. This notice is to inform the public of the proposed action and invite the public to participate by providing any comments or information they may have concerning the proposal. This information will be used to identify important issues and determine the extent of the analysis necessary to make an informed decision on the proposal. Such issues will assist in the formulation of additional alternatives and the development of mitigation measures necessary to reduce impacts.

In addition to this notice, the scoping process included the distribution of letters to interested parties requesting comments on the proposed action, and a public notice was published in area media.

It is important that reviewers provide their comments at such times and in such manner that they are useful to the agency's preparation of the environmental impact statement. Therefore, comments should be provided prior to the close of the comment period and should clearly articulate the reviewer's concerns and contentions.

Comments received in response to this solicitation, including names and addresses of those who comment, will be part of the public record for this proposed action. Comments submitted anonymously will be accepted and considered, however.

Dated: December 9, 2011.

**Misty A. Hays,**

*Deputy District Ranger.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Rural Utilities Service

#### Dairyland Power Cooperative: CapX 2020 Hampton-Rochester-La Crosse Transmission Line Project

**AGENCY:** Rural Utilities Service, USDA.

**ACTION:** Notice of Availability of a Draft Environmental Impact Statement and Notice of Public Hearings.

**SUMMARY:** Notice is hereby given that the Rural Utilities Service (RUS) has prepared a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to meet its responsibilities under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and 7 CFR 1794 related to providing financial assistance to Dairyland Power Cooperative (Dairyland) for its share in the construction of a proposed 345-kilovolt (kV) transmission line and associated infrastructure between Hampton, Minnesota and the La Crosse area in Wisconsin (the proposed project). Dairyland is participating in the proposed project with a number of other utilities (Applicants).

The purpose of the proposed project is to: (1) Improve community reliability of the transmission system in Rochester, Winona, La Crosse, and the surrounding areas, which include areas served by Dairyland; (2) improve the regional reliability of the transmission system; and (3) increase generation outlet capacity.

**DATES:** Written comments on this Draft EIS will be accepted 45 days following the publication of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's notice of receipt of the Draft EIS in the **Federal Register**.

RUS will conduct five public meetings in an open-house format followed by a discussion period: January 9, 2012, Alma High School Gym, S1618 State Rd 35, Alma, Wisconsin; January 10, 2012, Wanamingo Community Center, 401 Main Street, Wanamingo, Minnesota; January 11, 2012, Cannon Falls High School Cafeteria, 820 Minnesota St. E, Cannon Falls, Minnesota; January 12, 2012, American Legion Hall, 215 3rd Street SW., Plainview, Minnesota; and January 13, 2012, Centerville/Town of Trempealeau Community Center, W24854 State Road 54/93, Galesville, Wisconsin.

All meetings will be held as follows: open house from 5:00 to 6 p.m. followed by the discussion period from 6:00 to 8 p.m. local time. A court reporter will be available.

**ADDRESSES:** A copy of the Draft EIS may be viewed online at the following Web

site: <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/UWP-CapX2020-Hampton-Rochester-LaCrosse.html> and at the following repositories:

Alma Public Library, 312 North Main Street, Alma, WI 54610. *Phone:* 608-685-3823.

Arcadia Public Library, 406 E Main Street, Arcadia, WI 54612. *Phone:* 608-323-7505.

Campbell Library, 2219 Bainbridge Street, La Crosse, WI 54603. *Phone:* 608-783-0052.

Cannon Falls Library, 306 West Mill Street, Cannon Falls, MN 55009. *Phone:* 507-263-2804.

Dairyland Power Cooperative, 500 Old State Highway 35, Alma, WI 54610. *Phone:* 608-685-4497.

Galesville Public Library, 16787 South Main Street, Galesville, WI 54630. *Phone:* 608-582-2552.

Holmen Area Library, 103 State Street, Holmen, WI 54636. *Phone:* 608-526-4198.

Kenyon Public Library, 709 2nd Street, Kenyon, MN 55946. *Phone:* 507-789-6821.

Riverland Energy Cooperative, N28988 State Road 93, Arcadia, WI 54612. *Phone:* 608-323-3381.

Rochester Public Library, 101 2nd Street SE., Rochester, MN 55904. *Phone:* 507-328-2300.

Shirley M. Wright Memorial Library, 11455 Fremont Street, Trempealeau, WI 54661. *Phone:* 608-534-6197.

Tri-County Electric, 31110 Cooperative Way, Rushford, MN 55971. *Phone:* 507-864-7783.

La Crosse Public Library, 800 Main Street, La Crosse, WI 54601. *Phone:* 608-789-7100.

Onalaska Public Library, 741 Oak Avenue, South, Onalaska, WI 54650. *Phone:* 608-781-9568.

People's Cooperative Services, 3935 Hwy 14 E., Rochester, MN 55903. *Phone:* 507-288-4004.

Plainview Public Library, 345 1st Avenue Northwest, Plainview, MN 55964. *Phone:* 507-534-3425.

Van Horn Public Library, 115 SE. 3rd Street, Pine Island, MN 55963. *Phone:* 507-356-8558.

Xcel Energy, 5050 Service Drive, Winona, MN 55987. *Phone:* 507-457-1236.

Xcel Energy, 1414 West Hamilton Avenue, Eau Claire, WI 54701. *Phone:* 715-839-2621.

Zumbrota Public Library, 100 West Avenue, Zumbrota, MN 55992. *Phone:* 507-732-5211.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:** To obtain copies of the Draft EIS or for further information, contact: Stephanie Strength, Environmental Protection

Specialist, USDA, Rural Utilities Service, 1400 Independence Avenue SW., Room 2244, Stop 1571, Washington, DC 20250-1571, or email [stephanie.strength@wdc.usda.gov](mailto:stephanie.strength@wdc.usda.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) are participating in the EIS as cooperating agencies, with RUS as the lead Federal agency. The Draft EIS addresses the construction and operation of the proposed project, which, in addition to the 345-kV transmission line and associated infrastructure, includes 161-kV transmission lines in the vicinity of Rochester, Minnesota; construction of two new and expansion of three substations, with a total transmission line length of approximately 150 miles. Counties through which the proposed project may pass include Dakota, Goodhue, Wabasha, and Olmsted in Minnesota, and La Crosse, Trempealeau, and Buffalo in Wisconsin. The Draft EIS also addresses rebuilding an existing Dairyland 39-mile long 161-kV line that extends from Alma to north La Crosse, Wisconsin, which may be co-located in whole or in part with the 345-kV line.

Among the alternatives addressed in the Draft EIS is the No Action alternative, under which the proposed project would not be undertaken. Additional alternatives addressed in the Draft EIS include route alternatives also considered in the EISs prepared for the Proposed project by the states of Minnesota and Wisconsin. RUS has carefully studied public health and safety, environmental impacts, and engineering aspects of the Proposed project.

RUS used input provided by government agencies, private organizations, and the public in the preparation of the Draft EIS. RUS will prepare a Final EIS that considers all comments received on the Draft EIS. Following the 30-day comment period for the Final EIS, RUS will prepare a Record of Decision (ROD). Notices announcing the availability of the Final EIS and the ROD will be published in the **Federal Register** and in local newspapers.

In accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and its implementing regulation, "Protection of Historic Properties" (36 CFR 800) and as part of its broad environmental review process, RUS must take into account the effect of the proposed project on historic properties. Pursuant to 36 CFR 800.2(d)(3), RUS is using its procedures for public involvement under NEPA to meet its responsibilities

to solicit and consider the views of the public during Section 106 review. Any party wishing to participate more directly with RUS as a "consulting party" in Section 106 review may submit a written request to the RUS contact provided in this notice.

The proposed project involves unavoidable impacts to wetlands and floodplains; this Notice of Availability also serves as a statement of no practicable alternatives to impacts on wetlands and floodplains, in accordance with Executive Orders 11990 and 11988, respectively (see Draft EIS Sections 3.2 and 3.5).

Any final action by RUS related to the proposed project will be subject to, and contingent upon, compliance with all relevant Federal, State and local environmental laws and regulations, and completion of the environmental review requirements as promulgated in RUS' Environmental Policies and Procedures (7 CFR 1794).

**Nivin Elgohary,**

*Assistant Administrator, Electric Programs, Rural Utilities Service.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request

The Department of Commerce will submit to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for clearance the following proposal for collection of information under the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. Chapter 35).

*Agency:* Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA).

*Title:* Focus Groups on Minority-Owned Business Growth, Opportunities and Barriers to Global Commerce.

*OMB Control Number:* 0640-0027.

*Form Number(s):* None.

*Type of Request:* Regular submission (reinstatement with change of a previously approved information collection).

*Number of Respondents:* 100.

*Average Hours per Response:* 3 hours.

*Burden Hours:* 300.

*Needs and Uses:* The U.S. Department of Commerce's National Advisory Council on Minority Business Enterprise has been working on recommendations for the Secretary of Commerce on domestic and global growth strategies and programs for minority-owned businesses. The recommendations are also in support of the President's National Export