



LOWER MINNESOTA RIVER WATERSHED DISTRICT

Executive Summary for Action

Lower Minnesota River Watershed District Board of Managers Meeting
Wednesday, January 17, 2024

Agenda Item

Item 6. B. - CenterPoint Pipeline Abandonment (LMRWD No. 2023-026)

Prepared By

Linda Loomis, Administrator

Summary

The LMRWD has received an application from ERM (Environmental Resource Management) on behalf of CenterPoint Energy, regarding abandonment of a pipeline. Young Environmental Consulting Group has performed an initial review of documents provided for the project.

A summary of the review is attached for the Board's information. No action is currently required by the Board of Managers.

Attachments

Technical Memorandum – CenterPoint Pipeline Abandonment (LMRWD No. 2023-026) dated January 3, 2024

Recommended Action

No action recommended

Technical Memorandum

To: Marcus Green, Consultant 2, Scientist
Environmental Resource Management (ERM)

Kevin Trushenski, Community Development Assistant
City of Burnsville

CC: Linda Loomis, Administrator
Lower Minnesota River Watershed District (LMRWD)

From: Erica Bock, Water Resources Scientist
Della Schall Young, PMP, CPESC, CTF, Principal Scientist

Date: January 3, 2024

Re: CenterPoint Pipeline Abandonment (LMRWD No. 2023-026)

The City of Burnsville (City) provided notification of a new Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for CenterPoint Energy to allow work within the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Floodplain and Shoreland of the Minnesota River and Black Dog Lake to abandon its existing 16-inch diameter (natural gas) steel transmission line located at 1400 Black Dog Road East and 11500 12th Avenue South, Burnsville, MN (Figure 1). The project's engineer, ERM, provided site plans for review. The City asked for review of the comments and response to Marcus Green, ERM, by January 3, 2024.

The proposed project consists of abandoning approximately 8,886 feet of its existing Portland Line steel natural gas transmission line. The existing 16-inch-diameter transmission line will be filled and abandoned beneath Black Dog Lake, the Minnesota River, and within the boundaries of the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge. The project anticipates disturbing 0.08 acres, which includes six excavations to complete the abandonment procedures. All the excavation locations will be backfilled. The project is located within the High Value Resource Area (HVRA), Steep Slopes Overlay District (SSOD), and Minnesota River floodplain in both Hennepin and Dakota counties and the cities of Burnsville and Bloomington. The applicant proposes to begin pipeline abandonment in June 2024 and it is anticipated that it will take several weeks to complete.

The City has its municipal permit for Rule B: Erosion and Sediment Control and Rule F: Steep Slopes Overlay District. Therefore, the project will require an LMRWD Individual Permit for Rule C: Floodplain and Drainage Alteration. The purpose of this memo is to summarize the preliminary review that Young Environmental Consulting Group (Young

Environmental) has completed in response to the City’s request for comments on the CenterPoint CUP application and to provide preliminary recommendations to the prospective applicant. This does not address review required across the river in the City of Bloomington.

Summary

Project Name: CenterPoint Pipeline Abandonment

Purpose: Abandonment of natural gas pipeline within the SSOD, HVRA, floodway, and floodplain

<u>Project Size:</u>	Area Disturbed
	0.08 acres

Location: 1400 Black Dog Road
Burnsville, MN 55337

LMRWD Rules: Rule C – Floodplain and Drainage Alteration

Recommended Board Action: Information Only

Discussion

The LMRWD received the following documents for review:

- Burnsville Conditional Use Permit Amendment, by CenterPoint Energy; dated November 28, 2023; received December 21, 2023.
- Plans and documentation, by CenterPoint Energy and ERM; dated November 21, 2023; received December 21, 2023.
- Project narrative; received December 21, 2023.
- Site Plan, by CenterPoint Energy; dated October 19, 2023; received December 21, 2023.

Rule C – Floodplain and Drainage Alteration

The LMRWD requires the applicant to provide documentation that the proposed floodplain fill will not cause an increase in the 100-year water surface elevations. The project is located within the Minnesota River floodway, as seen on the FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) Panel 27037C0070E (effective December 2, 2011) with a 100-year flood elevation of 715.0 feet National Geodetic Vertical Datum of 1929 (NGVD 29) at cross-section T.

The project anticipates 31 cubic yards of excavation in the floodway located near Black Dog Road, with an additional 14 cubic yards of excavation within the floodplain near CenterPoint Energy's Dakota Station Facility. CenterPoint plans to install a temporary 3,000-square-foot workspace, which will be utilized to access the excavation. Final grading proposes to restore the excavation sites to pre-construction contours.

To comply with Rule C, the applicant must provide a no-rise certification signed by a professional engineer and supporting calculations to demonstrate that the proposed impacts (although temporary) will not result in a loss of flood conveyance capacity or cause a rise in the 100-year flood elevation of the Minnesota River. We recommend the prospective applicant review [LMRWD Rule C](#), Sections 4.4 and 4.5 for further information regarding compliance.

Additional Considerations

The project proposes excavation within wetlands on the project site. Excavation dewatering may be required in the wetland areas. We request that the applicant provide additional information about whether the project has undergone a Wetland Conservation Act (WCA) review. All discharge plans must be routed to areas where there is no standing water through sediment bags and weed-free hay-bale structures to prevent sediment introduction into the adjacent wetlands.

A previous nearby CenterPoint project, 2022 MBL Nicollet River Crossing (LMRWD No. 2022-002), experienced groundwater flows during trenching activities. The contractor backfilled the trench with native soils and compacted the material to prevent further seepage. There was no further evidence of groundwater seepage. The LMRWD is increasingly concerned about the potential negative impacts of deep excavations on groundwater.

The MBL Nicollet River Crossing project also identified threatened and endangered species. We request that the applicant provide a status update about any reviews or coordination that has been completed to minimize potential disturbances to threatened and endangered species (i.e. a cultural resources review).

Because the project has proposed excavation locations within the City of Bloomington, we request that the applicant provide an update on project coordination that has occurred with the City of Bloomington. The LMRWD will require project approval from both the City of Burnsville and the City of Bloomington before issuing a permit.

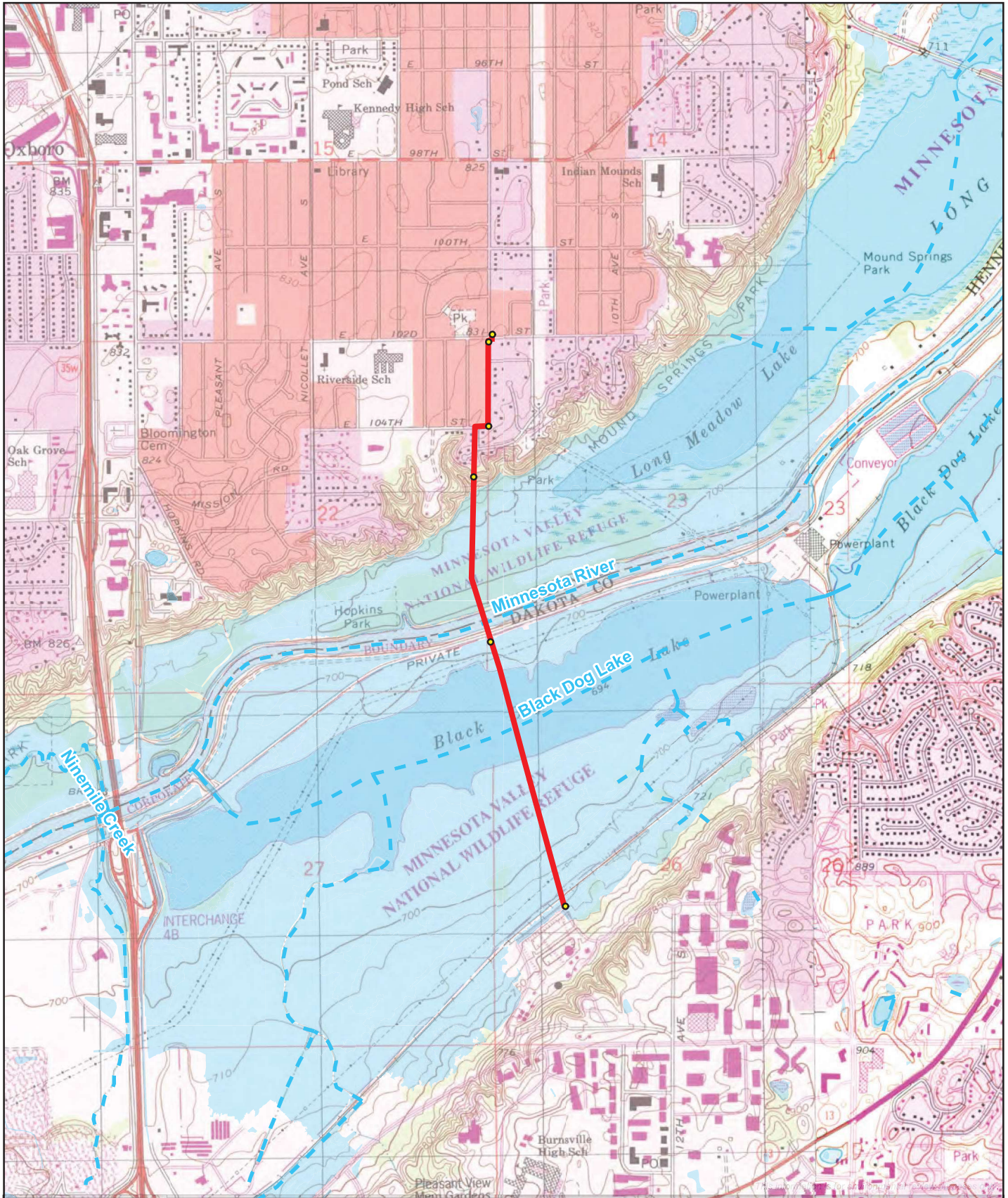
Recommendations

No board action is required at this time. As presented, CenterPoint Energy must obtain an LMRWD Individual Project permit before the start of construction activities for the applicable LMRWD rules. We offer the following summarized comments to the project to help facilitate the permit review process:

- Review LMRWD [Rule C](#), especially the “Criteria” and “Required Information” and “Exhibits” sections to determine the requirements for compliance.
- For compliance with LMRWD Rule C, provide a no-rise certification signed by a professional engineer and calculations to demonstrate that the proposed excavation and access road (although temporary) would not result in a loss of flood conveyance capacity nor cause a rise in the 100-year flood elevation of the Minnesota River.
- The LMRWD will require approval from the City of Burnsville and the City of Bloomington.
- The LMRWD will require a status update on the WCA review information once available.
- The LMRWD will require a status update about any cultural resources review that may have occurred in the project area.
- The LMRWD encourages early coordination for complex projects and suggests scheduling a pre-application meeting to discuss the LMRWD permitting process and requirements.

Attachments

- Figure 1—Project Location



- Excavation Sites
- Proposed Pipeline Abandonment
- NWI Wetlands
- River/Stream

1:24,000

0 1,000 2,000
Feet

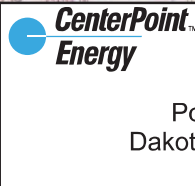


Figure 1
Site Location Map
 Portland Line Abandonment Project
 Dakota and Hennepin Counties, Minnesota