



AARON MIELKE

Senior GIS/Environmental Consultant



EXPERIENCE

Aaron specializes in project management, routing, permitting and environmental review related to linear corridor projects. He has nearly two decades of experience performing environmental analyst routing and permitting associated with pipelines and high-voltage transmission lines.

In addition to managing and performing analysis for these projects, Aaron works with landowners, the public, tribes and state and federal agencies as well as supporting and attending public meetings to gather input for the routing and permitting process.

Project work

Prairie Island Indian Community; environmental assessment for natural gas pipeline; Minnesota; project manager

- Managed an environmental assessment for a 23-mile-long natural gas pipeline between Dakota County and the Prairie Island Indian Reservation in Goodhue County, Minnesota. Coordinated with the Bureau of Indian Affairs to obtain an easement across BIA land and with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Minnesota Department of Natural Resources to secure a state license for crossing a wildlife management area.

Also worked with tribal leaders and a cultural resources firm to identify and map burial mounds and determine potential pipeline routes. The project received a finding of no significant impact (FONSI) within four months of route selection.

Xcel Energy; route permitting for transmission line; Minnesota; project manager

- Managed Barr's role as lead author for an Xcel route-permit application for a 100-mile, 345 kV transmission line. Supported public outreach and participated in public meetings to gather input

Education

Graduate Certificate, GIS,
University of Wisconsin–Madison,
2005

BS, Natural Resources, University
of Wisconsin–Madison, 2002

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on possible routes. Worked with GIS specialists to collect data, perform analysis, and develop maps to support permit applications; also coordinated development of mailing lists for recipients in the project-notice area. Collaborating with Xcel and state agencies, directed communication, QA/QC, and delivery of a 300-page route-permit application on schedule and under budget.

Minnesota Department of Commerce; transmission line EIS; project manager

- Worked as a third-party consultant for the Minnesota Department of Commerce, evaluating more than a dozen options for the state's route-selection process for a proposed powerline. Managed both development of the EIS and a team of environmental scientists, GIS specialists, and technical writers. Led assessment of alternative routes and reviewed complex issues involving human-health impacts, property values, socio-economic concerns, wetlands, wildlife, and threatened and endangered species. Also coordinated communications among the project team, state agencies, utilities, and the public, and was responsible for the quality and schedule of the final document.

Confidential client; pipeline integrity database; multiple states; GIS lead

- Developed a GIS-based pipeline integrity database. Worked with database developers, web programmers, and environmental specialists to design the database for storing integrity-dig locations along more than 3,000 miles of pipeline in eight states. Helped create a web interface and data-entry form used by environmental specialists to review and update dig forms, inspection records, and monitoring information. In addition, coordinated the import of nearly 10,000 records into the database. Aaron continues to monitor, update, and optimize the system as it is used to review new digs, track inspections, and monitor restoration.

Greater Minnesota Gas; permitting support for natural gas pipeline; Morton, MN; project manager

- Managed permitting work for a 35-mile-long natural gas pipeline serving the Lower Sioux Indian Community near Morton, Minnesota. Coordinated with landowners, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and several additional state and federal agencies to prepare infrastructure-project request forms. Facilitated the cross-ing of property encumbered by wetland reserve easements and performed GIS desktop analyses to identify and optimize the pipeline route and pinpoint additional permitting requirements.

Xcel Energy and Rochester Public Utilities Commission; route permitting for transmission line; Minnesota; GIS lead

- Served as GIS lead on a route permit application for a 161 kV transmission line in southeastern Minnesota. Acquired and managed GIS data from the State Historic Preservation Society, Natural Heritage Information System, and National Wetlands Inventory; developed route alignments; analyzed route impacts to homes; and evaluated cultural and natural resources as well as rare and unique species. Also attended public meetings to collect comments and answer questions about the proposed routes.

Minnesota Department of Commerce; transmission line EIS; GIS lead

- Managed the EIS for the Brookings-to-Hampton segment of a CapX2020 345 kV transmission line. Reviewed environmental data and proposed routes and developed a database and data management tool for collecting, reviewing, and managing public comments (scope development). Also analyzed the potential environmental, cultural, and human impacts of each proposed route and participated in writing the EIS.