



**National Headquarters**

1130 17th Street, N.W. | Washington, D.C. 20036-4604 | tel 202.682.9400 | fax 202.682.1331  
[www.defenders.org](http://www.defenders.org)

June 3, 2022

Martha Williams  
Director  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
1849 C Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Director Williams:

Please find attached a petition signed by over 25,000 people from Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa and several other states joining our request that you prevent the construction of industrial-size transmission towers through the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge (Refuge). Most immediately, we urge the government to decline to pursue the appeal of the district court decision in *National Wildlife Refuge Ass'n v. Rural Utilities Serv.*, No. 21-cv-906-wmc.

As the many signatories to the attached petition attest, there is widespread public support for protecting the fragile and productive habitat within the Refuge, and the proposed transmission towers are manifestly incompatible with protecting those resources. A thorough analysis under the National Environmental Policy Act – especially one that considers an appropriate universe of alternatives that will protect the Refuge – would allow us to find a solution that meets our renewable energy needs without sacrificing an area that is essential to whooping cranes and other migrating and resident species.

Thank you for taking the views of the tens of thousands of refuge supporters who have signed the attached petition into account as you make decisions that will affect the priceless natural resources of the region for years to come.

Very truly yours,

Jamie Rappaport Clark  
President and CEO