

**BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA**

IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION OF)	NOTICE OF APPLICATION;
XCEL ENERGY AND OTTER TAIL POWER)	ORDER FOR AND NOTICE OF
COMPANY FOR A PERMIT TO CONSTRUCT)	PUBLIC INPUT HEARING;
THE BIG STONE SOUTH TO BROOKINGS)	NOTICE OF OPPORTUNITY TO
COUNTY 345 KV TRANSMISSION LINE)	APPLY FOR PARTY STATUS
)	
)	
)	EL13-020

On June 3, 2013, Northern States Power Company, a Minnesota Corporation d/b/a Xcel Energy (Xcel) and Otter Tail Power Company (Otter Tail) (Applicants) jointly filed with the South Dakota Public Utilities Commission (Commission) an Application for a Project Permit for the Big Stone South to Brookings County 345 kV Transmission Line Project (Application). The Application requests Commission approval of a permit to construct the southern portion of the Big Stone South to Brookings County Substation transmission line in Deuel and Brookings Counties and make modifications to the existing Brookings County Substation (Project). On January 16, 2007, in Docket EL06-002, the Commission issued a Decision and Order Approving Stipulation and Granting Permit to Construct a transmission line which will now constitute the northern portion of the Big Stone South to Brookings County Substation line. On July 31, 2012, in Docket EL12-045, the Commission issued an Order Approving Transfer of Construction Permit to allow the transfer of the permit issued in Docket EL06-002 from the Big Stone II partners to Otter Tail. On May 10, 2013, in Docket EL12-063, the Commission issued an Order Granting Withdrawal; Order Approving the Joint Motion for Approval of Stipulation; Order Granting Certification approving Otter Tail's certification that the approximately 33 mile northern portion of the Big Stone South to Brookings County 345 kV transmission line in Grant and Deuel Counties continues to meet the conditions upon which the permit in Docket EL06-002 was granted. The Project will extend the northern transmission line segment permitted in Docket EL06-002 approximately 43-miles south to the Brookings County Substation. The Commission has jurisdiction over this matter pursuant to SDCL Chapter 49-41B and ARSD Chapter 20:10:22.

Pursuant to SDCL 49-41B-15 and 49-41B-16, **the Commission will hold a public hearing on the Application on Wednesday, July 31, 2013, at 6:30 p.m. CDT in Meeting Room 110 A-B, McCrory Gardens Education & Visitors Center, 631 22nd Ave., Brookings, S.D., (take Exit 132 off I-29, then west on 6th St. (Hwy 14) to 22nd Ave., then north).** The purpose of this public input hearing will be to hear public comment regarding the transmission line permit Application and the Project. At the hearing, Applicants will present a brief description of the Project, following which interested persons may appear and present their views, comments and questions regarding the Application. A copy of the Application is on file with the Brookings County Finance Officer and Deuel County Auditor pursuant to SDCL 49-41B-15(5) and at the Commission's office in Pierre, and the Application and all other documents in the case, including detailed maps of the Project, may be accessed on the Commission's web site at www.puc.sd.gov under Commission Actions, Commission Dockets, Electric Dockets, 2013 Electric Dockets, EL13-020.

Pursuant to SDCL 49-41B-17 and ARSD 20:10:22:40, the parties to this proceeding are currently the Applicants and the Commission. Any person residing in the area of the Project; each municipality, county, and governmental agency in the area where the Project is proposed to be sited; any non-profit organization, formed in whole or in part to promote conservation or natural beauty, to protect the environment, personal health or other biological values, to preserve historical sites, to promote consumer interests, to represent commercial and industrial groups, or to promote the orderly development of the area in which the Project is to be sited; or any interested person, may be granted party status in this proceeding by making written application to the Commission. Applications for party status will be available at the public input hearing or may be obtained from the

Commission's web site or by contacting the Commission. Applications for party status must be received by the Commission on or before August 2, 2013.

Following the public input hearing, the Commission may schedule one or more subsequent formal evidentiary hearings conforming to SDCL Chapter 1-26 to consider any issues raised by any intervening party, Commission Staff, or the Commission itself. At such formal hearing, all parties will have the opportunity to appear, present evidence and cross-examine the other parties' witnesses and exercise all other rights afforded by SDCL Chapters 1-26, 49-1, and 49-41B and ARSD 20:10:01 and 20:10:22, including rights of appeal to the courts. Absent a contested issue, the Commission will schedule the matter for decision at a regular or special meeting of the Commission.

For approval, the Applicants must show that the proposed transmission Project will comply with all applicable laws and rules, will not pose a threat of serious injury to the environment nor to the social and economic condition of inhabitants or expected inhabitants in the siting area, will not substantially impair the health, safety or welfare of the inhabitants, and will not unduly interfere with the orderly development of the region with due consideration having been given to the views of governing bodies of affected local units of government. Based upon these factors, the Commission will decide whether the permit should be granted, denied or granted upon such terms, conditions or modifications of the construction, operation or maintenance as the Commission finds appropriate. It is therefore

ORDERED, that the Commission will hold a public input hearing on Wednesday, July 31, 2013, at 6:30 p.m. CDT in Meeting Room 110 A-B, McCrory Gardens Education & Visitors Center, 631 22nd Ave., Brookings, S.D. It is further

ORDERED, that pursuant to SDCL 49-41B-17 and ARSD 20:10:22:40, applications for party status must be filed on or before August 2, 2013, and that pursuant to SDCL 49-41B-17.1, a party who wishes to receive personal service of all material filed in this matter shall make a specific request to the Commission for personal service, which may be included in the application for party status.

Pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act, this hearing will be held in a physically accessible location. Please contact the Public Utilities Commission at 1-800-332-1782 at least 48 hours prior to the hearing if you have special needs so arrangements can be made to accommodate you.

Dated at Pierre, South Dakota, this 5th day of June, 2013.

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE	
The undersigned hereby certifies that this document has been served today upon all parties of record in this docket, as listed on the docket service list, by facsimile or by first class mail, in properly addressed envelopes, with charges prepaid thereon.	
By:	<u>Joy Lashley</u>
Date:	<u>6.5.13</u>
(OFFICIAL SEAL)	

BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION:

Gary Hanson

GARY HANSON, Chairman

Chris Nelson

CHRIS NELSON, Commissioner

Kristie Fiegen

KRISTIE FIEGEN, Commissioner