

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
SOUTH DAKOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION**

WHAT: Northern States Power Company d/b/a Xcel Energy and Otter Tail Power Company electric transmission line project
Brookings and Deuel Counties, South Dakota

WHEN: Wednesday, July 31, 2013, at 6:30 p.m. CDT

WHERE: 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)

Pursuant to SDCL 49-41B-15 and 49-41B-16, the South Dakota Public Utilities Commission (Commission) will hold a public input hearing at the above time and place on an application filed by Northern States Power Company d/b/a Xcel Energy and Otter Tail Power Company (Applicants) for a permit to construct the southern portion of the Big Stone South to Brookings County Substation project consisting of approximately 43-miles of 345 kV transmission line facilities in eastern Deuel and Brookings counties and modifications to the existing Brookings County Substation (Project).

At the hearing, Applicants will present a brief description of the Project, following which interested persons may appear and present their questions, views and comments regarding the Application and Project. Pursuant to SDCL 49-41B-15(5), the application is on file in the Brookings County Finance Officer's and Deuel County Auditor's offices and in the Commission's office in Pierre, and the application and all other documents in the case, including detailed Project maps, may also 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.

The parties to this proceeding are currently Applicants and the Commission. Pursuant to SDCL 49-41B-17, any person residing in the area of the project, each municipality, county, and governmental agency in the project area, 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 project area, or any interested person, may be granted formal party status in this proceeding by making written application to the Commission as provided in ARSD 20:10:22:40 on or before August 2, 2013. Application forms for party status will be available at the public input hearing on July 31, 2013, or may be obtained from the Commission or the Commission's web site.

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 1-26, 49-1 and 49-41B and ARSD 20:10:01 and 20:10:22. Absent a contested issue, the Commission will schedule the matter for decision at a regular or special meeting of the Commission.

For approval, Applicants must show that the proposed transmission line 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 are

appropriate. The parties will have the right to appeal the final decision in this case to the appropriate Circuit Court by serving and filing a notice of appeal of the decision in accordance with SDCL 1-26-31, within thirty (30) days after the date of service of the notice of decision in this case.

Pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act, this hearing is being held in a physically accessible location. Please contact the Commission at least 48 hours prior to the hearing if you have special needs so arrangements can be made to accommodate you. The Commission's contact information is: ph (800) 332-1782; fax (866) 757-6031; www.puc.sd.gov; 500 E. Capitol Ave., Pierre, SD 57501.