

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

**IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION BY NORTHERN STATES POWER
COMPANY, DOING BUSINESS AS XCEL ENERGY, AND OTTER TAIL POWER
COMPANY FOR A FACILITY PERMIT FOR A 765 KV TRANSMISSION FACILITY
AND ASSOCIATED FACILITIES IN GRANT, DEUEL, AND BROOKINGS COUNTIES,
SOUTH DAKOTA**

SD PUC DOCKET _____

**PRE-FILED DIRECT TESTIMONY OF TIM MAUSETH
ON BEHALF OF NORTHERN STATES POWER COMPANY, DOING BUSINESS AS XCEL
ENERGY, AND OTTER TAIL POWER COMPANY**

September 4, 2026

I. INTRODUCTION AND QUALIFICATIONS

Q. Please state your name, employer, and business address.

A. My name is Tim Mauseth. I am employed by Northern States Power Company, doing business as Xcel Energy (Xcel Energy). My business address is 414 Nicollet Mall, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Q. What is your position with Xcel Energy?

A. I am employed as a Principal Land Agent.

Q. Briefly describe your educational and professional background.

A. I graduated from Augsburg College in 2002 with a bachelor of arts in urban studies. I began my professional career in real estate in 2003 at First Republic Title where I was an abstractor/recording specialist. In 2007, I became a land acquisition/title agent with ProSource Technologies. I joined Xcel Energy for the first time in 2009 as a land agent, a role I held until 2013. After spending two years in non-real estate positions, I rejoined Xcel Energy as a real estate consultant. I spent eight years in that role until I was promoted to the position of senior land agent in November 2024. My statement of qualifications is attached as Schedule 1.

Q. What is your role with the Project.

A. I am the principal land agent responsible for obtaining the requisite land rights for the transmission line and the electric expansions of the Brookings County Substation. I have been involved in landowner outreach for the Project since June of 2025.

II. PURPOSE OF TESTIMONY

Q. What is the purpose of your Direct Testimony?

A. The purpose of my Direct Testimony is to describe the land acquisition process for the Project and the current status of land rights acquisition.

1 **Q. What exhibits are attached to your Direct Testimony?**

2 A. The following exhibit is attached to my Direct Testimony:

- 3 • **Schedule 1**: Statement of Qualifications.
4

5 **Q. Please identify which sections of the Application you are sponsoring for the record.**

6 A. I am sponsoring the following portions of the Application:

- 7 • Section 3.4: Land Rights Acquisition
8 • Section 9.4.2: Land Rights Acquisition (refers back to Section 3.4)
9 • Section 9.4.6: Restoration Procedures
10 • Section 10.3: Substation Expansion Sites Considered
11 • Section 10.4: Reliance on Eminent Domain
12

13 **III. ACQUISITION PROCESS**
14

15 **Q. Is Xcel Energy responsible for acquiring land rights for the Project?**

16 A. Xcel Energy is responsible for obtaining land rights for the two Brookings County
17 Substation expansions and the transmission line from Big Stone South to Brookings to
18 border. Otter Tail Power Company (OTP) is responsible for the Big Stone South Substation
19 expansion.
20

21 **Q. Please generally describe the Applicants' land rights acquisition process.**

22 A. The land rights acquisition process includes multidisciplinary efforts, including, among
23 other things, title searches, contacts with the landowners, land rights document preparation,
24 discussions and negotiations with landowners, and completion of land rights agreements,
25 including options for easements, and/or other agreements as necessary to support the initial
26 survey needs of the Project and construction, operation, and maintenance of the Project.
27 Additional information is included in Section 3.4 and Section 9.4.2 of the Application.
28

29 **Q. What is the current status of right-of-way acquisition for the Project?**

30 A. Xcel Energy has secured rights for the expanded 765 kilovolt (kV) Brookings County
31 Substation expansion areas and negotiating with Basin Electric Power Cooperative for the

expanded 345 kV Brookings County Substation. OTP has secured rights for the Big Stone South Substation. For the Proposed Route in the Application, transmission line easements across 293 parcels are required. As of August 31, 2026, 88 options for easements have been obtained.

Q. Will the Project require waivers from any landowners in Deuel County to meet the 2,000-foot setback?

A. Yes. For the Proposed Route, the Applicants are seeking nine waivers. As of August 31, 2026, we have obtained five waivers.

Q. Do the Applicants expect to use eminent domain for the Project?

A. The Applicants' objective with all transmission projects is to acquire voluntary agreements for all required easements. The Applicants will continue to work toward that goal on this Project. However, given the uncertainty with local permitting requirements and the size of the Project, the Applicants anticipate that eminent domain will need to be used for the Project.

Q. Please discuss the reasons Xcel Energy selected the site that it did for the Brookings County 765 kV Substation Expansion.

A. The existing Brookings County Substation is surrounded by existing infrastructure (Deer Creek Station, substations, transmission lines, roads), natural features (valleys, hills, creek), and other constraints. Further, voluntary acquisition of additional land immediately adjacent to the existing substation did not appear to be a realistic possibility, based on outreach to those landowners. Because of these constraints, it is not feasible to construct the 765 kV Substation Expansion immediately adjacent to the existing substation footprint. As described in Section 10.3 of the Application, the Project team considered multiple potential sites for the Brookings County 765 kV Substation Expansion, and ultimately selected a site with a willing landowner, suitable terrain, and lack of other constraints present elsewhere.

1 **Q. Does this conclude your Direct Testimony?**

2 A. Yes.

3

4 Dated this 4th day of September, 2026.

5

6 /s/ Tim Mauseth

7 Tim Mauseth