

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

IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION OF XCEL ENERGY FOR A CONSTRUCTION PERMIT TO BUILD 9.6 MILES OF THE SPLIT ROCK TO LAKEFIELD JUNCTION 345 KV TRANSMISSION LINE AND ADD FACILITIES TO THE SPLIT ROCK SUBSTATION)	NOTICE OF APPLICATION; ORDER FOR AND NOTICE OF PUBLIC INPUT HEARING; NOTICE OF OPPORTUNITY TO APPLY FOR PARTY STATUS EL05-023
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On August 26, 2005, Northern States Power Company d/b/a Xcel Energy (Xcel) filed an application for a new 345 kilovolt Split Rock - Lakefield Junction transmission line and a substation upgrade east of Sioux Falls. Xcel is requesting a permit to construct a new 345 kV transmission line from its Split Rock Substation located near the Angus Anson generating station east of Sioux Falls north .6-mile to the north side of I-90, then east on the north side of I-90 for 4.6 miles to Western Area Power Administration's (WAPA) existing White-Sioux City 345 kV line and a new 345 kV line on the south side of I-90 from the WAPA White-Sioux City line east 4.5 miles to the Minnesota border. The project would also upgrade Xcel's existing Splitrock Substation east of Sioux Falls to accommodate the new 345 kV interconnection. The entirety of the new line construction and substation facilities to be upgraded are located in Minnehaha County east of Sioux Falls along or near I-90 from Exit 402 to the Minnesota line. The line will comprise the western portion of an 86-mile 345 kV transmission line between Split Rock Substation and the Lakefield Junction Substation east of Lakefield, Minnesota.

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 Xcel's application on Thursday, September 22, 2005, at 7:00 p.m. CDT in the Marquee Room at Tailgators, 1013 North Splitrock Boulevard at the I-90 exit, Brandon, South Dakota. The purpose of the hearing will be to hear public comment regarding Xcel's application. At the public input hearing, Xcel 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 Minnehaha County Auditor pursuant to SDCL 49-41B-15(5) and the Commission's office in Pierre and the application and all other documents in the case may be accessed on the Commission's web site at www.puc.sd.gov under "Commission Actions," "Commission Dockets," "2005 Electric Dockets," "EL05-023."

Pursuant to SDCL 49-41B-17 and ARSD 20:10:22:40, the parties to this proceeding are currently Xcel and the Commission. Further, each municipality, county, and governmental agency in the area where the facility 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 facility 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.

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. Absent a contested issue, the Commission will schedule the matter for decision at a regular or special meeting of the Commission.

For approval, Xcel must show that the proposed transmission upgrade 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 Thursday, September 22, 2005, at 7:00 p.m. CDT, in the Marquee Room at Tailgators, 1013 North Splitrock Boulevard at the I-90 exit, Brandon, South Dakota; and 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 October 25, 2005; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, 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. Absent such a specific request, the County Auditor for Minnehaha County is designated by law as the agent for service of process upon all parties to this proceeding residing in Minnehaha County.

Pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act, this hearing is being 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 9th day of September, 2005.

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: Tina Douglas

Date: 9-9-05

(OFFICIAL SEAL)

BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION:

Gary Hanson
GARY HANSON, Chairman

Robert K. Sahr
ROBERT K. SAHR, Commissioner

Dustin M. Johnson
DUSTIN M. JOHNSON, Commissioner