

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

IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION OF)	ORDER GRANTING PARTY
XCEL ENERGY FOR A FACILITIES PERMIT TO)	STATUS
BUILD 9.65 MILES OF THE BUFFALO RIDGE)	
TO BROOKINGS COUNTY 115 KV)	EL05-028
TRANSMISSION LINE, TWO 0.4 MILE)	
BROOKINGS COUNTY TO WHITE 345 KV)	
TRANSMISSION LINES, THE BROOKINGS)	
COUNTY SUBSTATION AND TO ADD)	
FACILITIES TO THE WHITE SUBSTATION)	

On December 2, 2005, Northern States Power Company, a Minnesota Corporation d/b/a Xcel Energy (Xcel) filed an application for a Construction Permit to build the following facilities: (i) two new 0.4 mile 345 kilovolt (kV) transmission lines connecting the Western Area Power Administration White Substation located southeast of White, South Dakota, and a new Xcel Energy Brookings County Substation; (ii) a new 345 kV/115 kV Brookings County Substation located approximately 0.4 miles east of the White Substation; (iii) a new 9.65 mile 115 kV transmission line from the Brookings County Substation to the Minnesota/South Dakota border; and, (iv) improvements to the White Substation to accommodate the new 345 kV lines. The application comprises the western portion of the Buffalo Ridge - White transmission project which connects the White Substation to the Buffalo Ridge Substation southeast of Lake Benton, Minnesota.

On December 9, 2005, the Commission issued its Notice of Application; Order for and Notice of Public Input Hearing; Notice of Opportunity to Apply for Party Status in this docket. The notice provided that pursuant to SDCL 49-41B-17 and ARSD 20:10:22:40, 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 on or before January 31, 2006.

At its regularly scheduled meeting of February 28, 2006, the Commission reviewed an application for party status received from the Brookings County Commission after the intervention deadline. The Commission finds that it has jurisdiction over this matter pursuant to SDCL 49-41B, specifically 49-41B-17, finds pursuant to ARSD 20:10:01:15.02 that good cause exists to allow intervention after the deadline, and further finds that Brookings County Commission's application for party status shall be granted. It is therefore

ORDERED, that Brookings County Commission shall, hereafter, be considered a party in this matter.

Dated at Pierre, South Dakota, this 16th day of March, 2006.

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: Rosaline Kalbo

Date: 3/17/06

(OFFICIAL SEAL)

BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION:

Robert K. Sahr
ROBERT K. SAHR, Chairman

Dustin M. Johnson
DUSTIN M. JOHNSON, Commissioner

Gary Hanson
GARY HANSON, Commissioner