BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA

IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION BY XCEL ENERGY FOR A PERMIT UNDER THE SOUTH DAKOTA ENERGY CONVERSION AND TRANSMISSION FACILITIES ACT TO CONSTRUCT 6.5 MILES OF 115 KV TRANSMISSION LINE AND ASSOCIATED MODIFICATIONS TO THE BROOKINGS SUBSTATION	)	**ORDER GRANTING PARTY STATUS** **EL08-001**

On January 31, 2008, Northern States Power Company, a Minnesota Corporation d/b/a Xcel Energy (Xcel) filed an Application for a Facility Permit to construct the following facilities: (i) a new 6.5 mile 115 kV transmission line from the Brookings County Substation near the city of White to the Minnesota/South Dakota border; and (ii) modifications to the Brookings County Substation to accommodate the new 115 kV line. The application comprises the western portion of the Buffalo Ridge Incremental Generation Outlet project which connects the Brookings County Substation to the Yankee Substation northwest of Lake Benton, Minnesota.

On February 27, 2008, 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 March 31, 2008.

At its regularly scheduled meeting of April 8, 2008, the Commission reviewed an application for party status received from the Brookings County Commission on March 31, 2008. The Commission finds that it has jurisdiction over this matter pursuant to SDCL 49-41B, specifically 49-41B-17, and further finds that the Brookings County Commission's application for party status shall be granted. It is therefore

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

Dated at Pierre, South Dakota, this 9th day of April, 2008.

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: Delaine Kolbo

Date: 4/11/08

(OFFICIAL SEAL)

BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION:

GARY HANSON, Chairman

STEVE KOLBECK, Commissioner

DUSTIN M. JOHNSON, Commissioner