



**STATE OF MINNESOTA
Minnesota Department of Commerce**



**NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF THE
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

**In the Matter of the Xcel Energy and Dairyland Power Cooperative
Applications for a Route Permit and a Certificate of Need
for the Chisago County to Apple River 115/161 kV HVTL Project**

Issued August 20, 2007

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the Environmental Assessment (EA) has been completed for the Chisago Transmission project and is available to the public. The EA addresses potential human and environmental impacts of the proposed high voltage transmission line (HVTL) project and alternatives. Copies of the EA and other relevant documents are accessible at:

<http://energyfacilities.puc.state.mn.us/Docket.html?Id=18938>

Paper copies must be requested from the Minnesota Department of Commerce (DOC) staff listed at the end of this notice.

Project Description

Xcel Energy proposes to upgrade the existing 69 kV transmission line from the Chisago County Substation to the St. Croix River in Taylors Falls, Minnesota to higher voltages. The project would rebuild the 69 kV to 115 kV beginning west of Lindstrom to a new Lawrence Creek Substation west of Taylors Falls. The line would be rebuilt to 161 kV from that point to where it crosses the St. Croix River into Wisconsin. The line would be undergrounded down the embankment to the river.

The transmission line upgrades are primarily along existing rights-of-way; however, a small section of new alignment would be required for the project to interconnect the new substation to the existing transmission system. A minor addition to the footprint of the Lindstrom Substation and minor modifications to the existing Chisago County, Lindstrom and Shafer substations would also be required to accommodate the new transmission lines.

PUC Review Process

Xcel Energy and Dairyland Power Cooperative have submitted an Application for a Certificate of Need and an Application for a Route Permit to the Public Utilities Commission. DOC has been assigned to hold public meetings and prepare an environmental assessment (EA) of the proposed transmission lines under the alternative review process found in Minnesota Rules Chapter 4400.

DOC has prepared the EA, analyzing the environmental impacts and alternatives to the proposed transmission project and proposed route. The EA considers issues related both to the need for the project and issues related to routing.

A Public Hearing presided over by Administrative Law Judge Eric Lipman from the Office of Administrative Hearings will be held in Lindstrom, MN beginning September 4, 2007. Notice of the hearing will be published in local newspapers and mailed to persons receiving this notice by U.S. Mail.

Project Contacts and Information

For more information about the process, the project or to place your name on the project mailing list, contact the DOC project manager, David Birkholz (Tel: 651-296-2878 or david.birkholz@state.mn.us) or Deborah Pile (Tel: 651-297-2375 or deborah.pile@state.mn.us) Department of Commerce, 85 7th Place East, Suite 500, Saint Paul, Minnesota 55101-2198. Other contact information: Toll-Free Tel: 1-800-657-3794, Fax: 651-297-7891 or TTY: Minnesota Relay Service, 800-627-3529, and ask for the DOC.