

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
BEFORE THE
MINNESOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION**

In the Matter of the Petitions of Northern States Power Company d/b/a Xcel Energy and Dairyland Cooperative for Permits to Construct a 115 kV and 161 kV Transmission Line from Taylors Falls to Chisago County Substation

Certificate of Need: Docket Number E-002/CN-04-1176
Route Permit: Docket Number E-002/TL-06-1677

Topics of This Notice

This notice provides the dates, starting times and locations for public hearings for two matters over which the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (PUC) has jurisdiction. In this consolidated proceeding, the hearings will address: (a) whether the proposed transmission line is needed and in the public interest, and (b) the costs, benefits and impacts of various alternative routes for the proposed transmission line.

This notice also provides additional detail about the public hearings and the procedural requirements of the Office of Administrative Hearings for public hearings on large energy facilities. If you have an interest in this project, please read this notice carefully. If you have questions about the project or upcoming hearings, please contact the appropriate person identified in this notice.

General Information Regarding the Project

The applicant has proposed to upgrade two lines: (1) an existing 69 kV line to a 115 kV transmission line between Chisago County Substation and the Lawrence Creek Substation near Taylors Falls, and (2) an existing 69 kV line to a 161 kV transmission line between the Lawrence Creek Substation and the Minnesota-Wisconsin boundary at Taylors Falls. The continuation of the proposed line from St. Croix Falls to Apple River, Wisconsin, is under the jurisdiction of the Wisconsin Public Service Commission. The length of the proposed project within Minnesota is approximately 18 miles.

Authority and Statement of Issues to Be Decided

The Minnesota Public Utilities Commission is authorized by Minnesota Statute § 216B.243, subd. 2, to issue a Certificate of Need for a large energy facility if the applicant can prove that there is a need for the project. A Certificate of Need is a state permit that is issued upon a determination that construction of an energy facility is in the public interest.

The Minnesota Public Utilities Commission is authorized by Minnesota Statute § 216E.02, subd. 2, to designate routes and issue routing permits for designated routes. When the PUC designates a route, it issues a permit for the construction of a high voltage transmission line specifying the design, routing, right-of-way preparation, and facility construction it deems necessary, along with any other appropriate conditions.

The PUC is required by Minnesota Statutes § 216B.243, subd. 4, and 216E.03, subd. 6, to hold public hearings on such applications.

Public Hearings

An Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) from the Minnesota Office of Administrative Hearings will hold public hearings for the PUC to establish a complete and accurate record for the two consolidated proceedings. Any person who would like to comment on the need for the project or the route proposed by the Applicants can do so at the scheduled public hearings or in writing to the ALJ (see below).

Administrative Law Judge

Judge Eric L. Lipman will preside at the hearings. Judge Lipman's address is: Office of Administrative Hearings, 100 Washington Square, Suite 1700, Minneapolis, MN 55401-2138, Fax: 612-349-2665. Judge Lipman can be reached by telephone at 612-341-7601 or by electronic mail at: eric.lipman@state.mn.us.

Public Hearing Schedule

A joint public hearing to receive public testimony in both the need and route matters will be convened in two sessions at:

7:00 PM

Tuesday September 4, 2007 and Wednesday, September 5, 2007

Chisago Lakes Area Library

11754 302nd Street

Chisago City, MN 55012

Evidentiary hearings on the Certificate of Need application will also be held in the library on September 4th and 5th beginning at 9:00 am. Evidentiary hearings on the Route Permit Application will be held in the library on September 6th and 7th beginning at 9:00 am.

Each public hearing session will continue until all persons have had the opportunity to present evidence and question witnesses. If needed, the hearing may be recessed and continued by the ALJ, and additional hearing dates may be established by the ALJ in accordance with Minnesota Rules 1405.1400 to 1405.2300. Written comments on the proposals may be submitted to Judge Lipman, at the address listed above, at any time before **4:30 p.m. on September 14, 2007**. After the close of written comment period, Judge Lipman will prepare a report and make a recommendation to the Public Utilities Commission regarding Xcel Energy's proposal.

Conduct of Hearing

During the public hearings, members of the public may offer either oral or written testimony, offer exhibits for inclusion in the public hearing record, and ask questions of the applicants. Members of the public need not become parties or formal participants in order to participate in the public hearings of either docket, or in the Rule 4400.2850 evidentiary hearings in the Route Docket.

Any person who wishes to question a witness but does not want to ask the questions personally may submit questions in writing to the ALJ, who will then question the witness. Questions may be submitted during the hearing or may be sent to the ALJ in advance of the hearing. For more information about participation as a member of the public, contact the PUC's or DOC's Public Advisor (see below).

Additional Information: For additional information regarding the application for a Certificate of Need, or if you need an accommodation for a disability or a language interpreter, please contact Bret Eknes, Minnesota Public Utilities Commission, 121 7th Place E., Suite 350, St. Paul, MN 55101-2147, telephone: (651) 201-2236.

For additional information regarding the application for a transmission line route, please contact David Birkholz, Project Manager, Minnesota Department of Commerce, 85 7th Place E., Suite 500, St. Paul, MN 55101-2198, telephone: (651) 296-2878, or Deb Pile, Public Advisor, also at the Department of Commerce, telephone:(651-297-2375). A copy of the Permit Application is available at the Chisago Lakes Area Public Library, 11754 302nd Street, Chisago City, and online at: <http://energyfacilities.puc.state.mn.us/Docket.html?Id=18938>. You may register on this same web site to be added to the mailing list associated with this project and to receive copies of future notices.