NOTICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT AVAILABILITY

Issued: March 31, 2008

In the Matter of the Application of Great River Energy, Northern States Power Company (d/b/a Xcel Energy) and Others for a Certificate of Need for the CapX 2020 345 kV Transmission Projects (PUC Docket No. ET-2, E002/CN-06-1115)

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the Environmental Report (ER) for the proposed CapX 2020 Group 1 Transmission Projects (Project) has been completed and is available for review by the public. The ER addresses potential human and environmental impacts of the proposed high voltage transmission lines (HVTL) project and alternatives. Copies of the ER and other relevant project documents are accessible at:

http://energyfacilities.puc.state.mn.us/Docket.html?Id=19120

Copies can also be accessed on eDockets by searching year "06" and number "1115" at:

https://www.edockets.state.mn.us/EFiling/DocumentSearch.do

Paper copies may be requested from the Minnesota Department of Commerce Office of Energy Security staff listed at the end of this notice.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed transmission lines would connect substations in the following locations:

- A 250-mile line between Fargo, North Dakota, and Monticello.
- A 200-mile line from a substation near Brookings, South Dakota, to a new substation near Hampton; plus a related line between Marshall and Granite Falls.
- A 150-mile line running from a new substation near Hampton to Rochester and continuing to La Crosse, Wisconsin.

These transmission lines are part of a longer-term plan intended to strengthen the transmission network to meet demand for electrical power anticipated in Minnesota and parts of surrounding states by 2020 and to increase access to renewable energy sources. In addition, the project is intended to address community service reliability concerns in several communities including Rochester, St. Cloud, the Alexandria area and the Red River Valley.

Specific routes that the transmission lines would follow, if approved, have not yet been proposed by the CapX 2020 utilities. The transmission line routes will be reviewed through a separate PUC permitting process expected to begin sometime in 2008.

PUC CERTIFICATE OF NEED REVIEW PROCESS

The Project is a "large energy facility" as defined in Minnesota Statute 216B.2421, subp. 2 and a Certificate of Need from the Public Utilities Commission is required for such a project under Minnesota Statute 216B.243. On August 16, 2007, Xcel Energy and Great River Energy filed a Certificate of Need application for the project.

The Office of Energy Security Energy Facility Permitting Unit prepares an Environmental Review for Certificate of Need proceedings before the Public Utilities Commission, as per Minnesota Rules 7849.7010-7100.

Public hearings will be held across the state in June (notice will be mailed separately). Under state law, this PUC proceeding is the only time at which the "no-build" alternative and the size, type, and timing of a new generating facility will be considered. These items will not be addressed in any subsequent PUC Site Permit process.

Project Contacts and Information

For more information about the process, the project or to place your name on the project mailing list, contact David Birkholz (651-296-2878 or david.birkholz@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.