



**STATE OF MINNESOTA
Minnesota Department of Commerce**



Issued Date: January 8, 2010

**NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING

**In the Matter of the Northern States Power Company (Xcel Energy)
HVTL Route Permit Application**

Hiawatha Transmission Line Project

PUC Docket Number: E002/TL-09-38

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the Minnesota Office of Energy Security (OES) announces the availability of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Hiawatha Transmission Line Project for public comment, as well as the date, location and time for the public meeting.

Copies of the DEIS can be obtained through the OES Project Manager and maybe viewed at the Public Utilities Commission (Commission) web site:

<http://energyfacilities.puc.state.mn.us/Docket.html?Id=19981>

Copies will also be available for viewing, by January 15, 2010, at the following public libraries:

- Central, 300 Nicollet Mall
- East Lake, 2727 E. Lake St.
- Franklin, 1314 E. Franklin Ave.
- Roosevelt, 4026 28th Ave. S.
- Hosmer, 347 E. 36th St.
- Nokomis, 5100 34th Ave S

The purpose of the meeting is to provide an opportunity for the public to comment on the draft EIS.

Wednesday, February 10, 2010 – 6:00 PM
Plaza Verde
1516 East Lake Street
Minneapolis, MN 550407
612-724-5332

Representatives from the OES and Xcel Energy will be available to answer questions about the permitting process and the proposed project. The OES will accept written comments on the draft EIS until **March 10, 2010**. Written comments should be mailed to Bill Storm (bill.storm@state.mn.us), Minnesota Department of Commerce, 85 7th Place, Suite 500, St. Paul, Minnesota 55101-2198.

Comments may also be submitted on the Commission's energy facility permitting website:

<http://www.energyfacilities.puc.state.mn.us>

Project Description. Xcel Energy proposes to construct two new distribution substations and two 115 kilovolt (kV) transmission lines in south Minneapolis, in an area known as the Midtown District. Xcel Energy has included four separate alternative routes and five design options for consideration in its application. Xcel Energy also identifies two locations for the Hiawatha Substation and two locations for the Midtown Substation.

Review Process. Under the Power Plant Siting Act (Minn. Stat. 216E), a route permit from the Commission is required to build a high voltage transmission line. A route permit application for the project was filed by the Applicant on April 24, 2009. The application was accepted as complete by the Commission on May 21, 2009. The Commission has one year from the time the application is accepted to complete the permitting process and make a decision on the route permit.

Route permit applications for high voltage transmission lines are subject to environmental review (Minn. Rules 7849). For this project, OES staff will prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS). The EIS contains information on the human and environmental impacts of the proposed project and examines mitigating measures for anticipated impacts. To focus the content or "scope" of the EIS, OES staff conducts public meetings to gather comments and suggestions on the proposed project.

Upon completion of the draft EIS, it will be issued for public review and comment, including a public meeting. Comments on the draft EIS will be responded to and included in a final EIS. Concurrent with development of the final EIS, a public hearing will be held, presided over by an administrative law judge (ALJ). Members of the public will have an opportunity to speak at the hearing, present evidence, ask questions, and submit comments. The ALJ will submit a report to the Commission containing findings, conclusions, and a recommendation on a route permit for the proposed transmission line.

Notice of the public meeting and public hearing will be published in local newspapers and mailed to persons who register their names on the OES project mailing list.

Additional information on the route permitting process is available on the Commission's energy facility permitting website: <http://www.energyfacilities.puc.state.mn.us/TransmissionLines.html>

Eminent Domain. If issued a site permit by the Commission, Xcel Energy may exercise the power of eminent domain to acquire land for this project pursuant to Minnesota Stat. 216E.12.

Project Contacts and Mailing Lists. The OES staff is available to assist persons interested in taking part in the permitting process. For more information, contact one of the persons listed below:

Department of Commerce – Office of Energy Security

The OES has designated staff member Bill Storm (651-296-9535, bill.storm@state.mn.us) as project manager and Deborah Pile (651-297-2375, deborah.pile@state.mn.us) as public advisor. You may contact them at: Department of Commerce, Office of Energy Security, 85 7th Place East, Suite 500, St. Paul, MN 55101-2198. Other contact information: Toll-Free: 1-800-657-3794, Fax: 651-297-7891 or TTY: Minnesota Relay Services, 1-800-627-3529, and ask for the DOC.

Xcel Energy

Information about this project is available from Xcel Energy. You can direct questions to RaeLynn Asah (612-330-6512, Raelynn.Asah@xcelenergy.com). Ms. Asah may be contacted in writing at: Xcel Energy, 414 Nicollet Mall, (MP 8), Minneapolis, MN 55401.

Project Mailing Lists

If you would like to have your name added to the OES project mailing list for this project, you may register on line at: <http://energyfacilities.puc.state.mn.us/Docket.html?Id=19981> or contact OES staff at the address above.

Information Availability. Copies of the route permit application, DEIS and other relevant documents are available at:

- <http://www.xcelenergy.com/Company/Transmission/Transmission%20Projects/Pages/HiawathaProject.aspx>
- <http://energyfacilities.puc.state.mn.us/Docket.html?Id=19981>