From: Andrew_Horton@fws.gov
To: Storm, Bill (COMM);
Subject: PUC Docket No. TL-10-249
Date: Thursday, March 24, 2011 12:59:17 PM

Mr. Bill Storm,

I have reviewed the proposed project for the upgrade and expansion of Xcel Energy's Waconia Transmission Line in Carver County, MN. There are no endangered species found in Carver County, Minnesota, protected under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). There is a confirmed 2005 record of a bald eagle nest located on the north side of Rice Lake and within 900 feet of the project area. We do not anticipate any adverse impacts to the bald eagle or nest, however, following The National Bald Eagle Management Guidelines (http://www.fws.gov/midwest/eagle/guidelines/guidelines.html) will help minimize disturbance of important eagle use areas (nesting, foraging, and wintering areas). We recommend the following:

- Utilize a double circuit transmission line design that is wider than the wingspan of eagles and other large birds to reduce the possibility of electrocution. If this is not feasible, we recommend that perch guards be placed on utility line poles near areas of high eagle concentration to prevent bird electrocution.
- Insulate poles and wires to reduce the risk of electric shock to birds.
- If any new nests are discovered within 660 feet of the project area, please contact this office to determine if an eagle permit is necessary.
- In addition to these bald eagle recommendations, we recommend that the swan diverter located along Rice Lake be extended to the northeast until it reaches 160th street. This will provide better protection from collision for birds crossing between Hydes Lake and Rice Lake.

If project plans change, additional information on listed or proposed species becomes available, or new species are listed that may be affected by the project, consultation should be reinitiated. Thank you for your cooperation in meeting our joint responsibilities under the Endangered Species Act. If you have any further questions, please contact me at (612) 725-3548 x2208.

Sincerely,
Andrew Horton

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