

APPENDIX A

APPLICANT'S NOTICE LETTER TO COMMISSION OF INTENT TO
USE ALTERNATIVE PERMITTING PROCESS



414 Nicollet Mall
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55401-1993

March 17, 2011

--Via Electronic Filing--

Dr. Burl W. Haar
Executive Secretary
Minnesota Public Utilities Commission
121 Seventh Place East, Suite 350
St. Paul, MN 55101

Re: Notification of Intent to File Route Permit Application Under the Alternative Permitting Process for the Proposed Orono Substation Expansion and Transmission Line Project

Dear Dr. Haar:

In accordance with Minnesota Rule 7850.2800, Subpart 2, Northern States Power Company, a Minnesota corporation (Xcel Energy), hereby notifies the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (PUC) of its intent to submit an application for a route permit for the Orono Substation Expansion and Transmission Line Project (Project) pursuant to the alternative permitting procedures in Minnesota Rules 7850.2800 to 7850.3700.

The proposed Project includes rebuilding the existing 69 kilovolt (kV) Orono Substation to 115 kV and constructing up to one mile of new double circuit 115 kV transmission line to connect the planned substation to existing 115 kV transmission Line 0831, located in the City of Orono, Hennepin County, Minnesota. The Project is needed to increase the operating voltage from 69 kV to 115 kV which will improve local and system reliability, reduce the risk of overloads, and allow for additional load growth in the future.

Xcel Energy plans to file the application in April 2011 and will work with PUC and Office of Energy Security staff to address any questions and/or comments in order to expedite application acceptance and completion of the environmental assessment.

If you have questions, please contact me at (612) 330-6435.

Sincerely,

Joseph G. Sedarski
Senior Permitting Analyst

cc: Deborah Pile, Office of Energy Security
Bob Cupit, Minnesota Public Utilities Commission
Timothy G. Rogers, Xcel Energy
Paul J. Lehman, Xcel Energy
Christopher B. Clark, Xcel Energy