



**MINNESOTA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY BOARD  
NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE REPORT:  
XCEL ENERGY SOUTHWEST MINNESOTA 345 KV AND 115 KV  
TRANSMISSION LINES**

**Docket No.: 03-73-TR-XCEL**

**PLEASE TAKE NOTICE** that the Minnesota Environmental Quality Board (EQB) has received the Administrative Law Judge's (ALJ) report and route recommendation for two new Xcel Energy transmission lines and a new substation to be located in Southwest Minnesota. The project consists of the following three major parts: (1) an approximately 85-mile long 345 kilovolt transmission line from the Split Rock Substation near Sioux Falls, South Dakota to the Lakefield Junction Substation in Jackson County, Minnesota, (2) a 40-mile 115-kilovolt transmission line from a new Nobles County Substation near Reading, Minnesota to the existing Chanarambie Substation in Murray County, Minnesota, and (3) the new substation in Nobles County that connects the two new transmission lines.

**ALJ Recommendation.** For the 345-kV line the ALJ recommended Xcel Energy's preferred "Modified Interstate" route, which largely follows I-90. For the 115-kV line, the ALJ recommended Xcel Energy's preferred "Modified East" route—except in northern Wilmont Township in Nobles County. The ALJ Report is only a recommendation. The final route decision is the responsibility of the EQB, a 16-member state agency made up of six citizen members and the heads of ten state agencies.

**Document and Map Availability.** Copies of the ALJ's report, maps of recommended routes, and other material are available from the EQB at 651-296-2571. The information is also on-line at <http://www.eqb.state.mn.us/Docket.html?Id=6466>. The documents are also available at the following libraries: Rock County Library (Luverne), Adrian Library, Nobles County Library (Worthington), Jackson County Library (Lakefield), Fulda Memorial Library, Slayton Public Library; and Chandler City Hall.

**Exceptions Due June 3, 2005.** The ALJ's report will be used by the EQB as a major factor in their final route permit decision. However, EQB staff may also recommend a different route, different parts of routes, or different permit conditions than recommended by the ALJ. Further, the public is invited to file comments or recommend other alternatives to the routes and permit conditions proposed by the ALJ. Exceptions and comments should be mailed to the EQB Chair by June 3 at the following address:

Mr. Robert Schroeder, Chair  
Environmental Quality Board  
3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Centennial Building  
658 Cedar Street  
St. Paul, MN 55155

**Final Decision June 16, 2005 in St. Paul.** The EQB is scheduled to make a final route decision at a public meeting in St. Paul on June 16, 2005. That EQB meeting is scheduled to be in Room 5, State Office Building, (just west of the Capitol), in Saint Paul starting at 9:00 a.m. Members of the public are invited to attend and testify if they wish.

**Contested Case Hearing.** The Minnesota Power Plant Siting Act requires that a project of this size must have formal contested case hearings by an Administrative Law Judge before the EQB may make a final route decision. The ALJ held the contested case hearings on these dates and at these locations in southwest Minnesota:

- Lakefield Senior Citizen Center, 112 South Main Street, March 1, 2005
- Wilmont Community Center, 316 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue, March 2, 2005
- Luverne Rock County Library, 201 West Main Street, March 3, 2005
- Chandler City Center, 241 4<sup>th</sup> Street, March 4, 2005

There was an afternoon session and an evening session at each location.

**Eminent Domain Authority.** After the EQB issues the route permit, Xcel Energy will negotiate with landowners for the purchase of easements for the required right-of-way. There may be circumstances where Xcel Energy will exercise the power of eminent domain in accordance with its authority under state law. See Minn. Stat. § 116C.63. Information on Xcel's right of way procedure (and their entire permit application) is available online at [www.xcelenergy.com](http://www.xcelenergy.com). Click on the "About Energy" button on the Home Page and then select "Transmission Projects." Information may also be obtained by emailing [pamela.jo.rasmussen@xcelenergy.com](mailto:pamela.jo.rasmussen@xcelenergy.com) or writing to Pam Rasmussen at 1414 W. Hamilton Avenue, P.O. Box 8, Eau Claire, WI 54702-0008 or by calling Ms. Rasmussen at 1-800-238-7968.

**EQB Public Advisor.** Questions about how to participate in the EQB final decision, including questions regarding how to submit exceptions and comments on the final route and ALJ Report, can be directed to the EQB public advisor George Johnson (651-296-2888); [george.johnson@state.mn.us](mailto:george.johnson@state.mn.us). The public advisor is available to answer questions about how to effectively participate in EQB's decision-making, but does not provide legal advice.