



NOTICE OF PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING

**In the Matter of Proposed 115 kV Transmission Line in Farmington City and Empire Township and Substation in Farmington City, all in Dakota County
(EQB DOCKET No. 04-81-TR-Air Lake-Empire)**

**Dakota County Extension Office
4100 220th Street W, Suite 101
Farmington, Minnesota**

**Thursday
June 24, 2004
7:00 p.m.**

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the Minnesota Environmental Quality Board (EQB) will conduct a public information meeting in the Dakota County Extension Office at 4100 220th Street West, at 7:00 p.m. on **June, 24, 2004**, concerning a proposal by Great River Energy (GRE), Dakota Electric Association (DEA) and Xcel Energy to construct and operate a 115 kilovolt (kV) transmission line and substation in the city of Farmington and Empire Township to improve electrical system reliability. The purposes of the meeting are to provide information to the public about the proposed project, answer questions, and scope an environmental assessment to help identify potentially significant issues and alternatives.

The project involves approximately 9.25 miles of 115 kV transmission line and a new distribution substation. The proposed 115 kV transmission line will connect the existing Xcel Energy Air Lake Substation, a proposed new Xcel Energy/DEA Vermillion River Substation, and the existing GRE/DEA/Xcel Energy Empire Substation. Approximately one-third of the transmission project will be the addition of a second circuit to an existing Xcel Energy's 69 kV transmission line (using existing rights of way). The remaining two-thirds of the transmission line will follow a new route and require acquisition of new rights of way. In accordance with GRE and Xcel Energy's authority under state law, GRE and Xcel Energy may be required to exercise the power of eminent domain.

Under the Power Plant Siting Act (Minnesota Statutes, Sections 116C.51-.697) a route permit from the EQB is required to build a high voltage transmission line (HVTL). The companies applied for a route permit on April 30, 2004, under Minnesota Rules parts 4400.2000 to 4400.2950, which allow for a six-month permitting process for HVTL projects between 100 and 200 kV. As part of the permitting process, the EQB holds a

public meeting on the project and prepares an Environmental Assessment (EA). Public comments on scoping the EA are solicited at the public meeting. The public will also have until Friday, July 9, 2004, to submit written comments to the EQB, attention David Birkholz (see address below).

On May 7, 2004, the EQB Chair accepted the application as substantially complete. Copies of that decision, the application and other relevant documents are publicly available at:

<http://www.eqb.state.mn.us/Docket.html?Id=6237>

Interested persons can also request to be added to the project mailing list at this same site.

The Chair designated EQB staff members David Birkholz (david.birkholz@state.mn.us or 651.296.2878) as project manager and George Johnson (george.johnson@state.mn.us or 651.296.2888) as public advisor in this matter. Inquiries about this project should be directed to Mr. Birkholz or Mr. Johnson at 300 Centennial Building, 658 Cedar Street, Saint Paul, MN 55155, facsimile 651.296.3698 (TTY relay service 800.657.3794).

