

For Immediate Release
February 3, 2011

Contact: Minnesota Public Utilities
Commission
Dan Wolf
Telephone: 651.201.2217
Fax: 651.297.7073
Web: www.puc.state.mn.us

**MINNESOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION VOTES TO APPROVE FINAL
SEGMENT OF ELECTRICAL TRANSMISSION LINE FROM BROOKINGS, SOUTH
DAKOTA TO HAMPTON, MINNESOTA**

St. Paul, Minnesota - The Minnesota Public Utilities Commission met today and, after hearing final oral arguments and public comments, issued a route permit setting a specific route and permit conditions for the remaining segment of the CAPX2020 345kV transmission line project from Brookings, South Dakota to Hampton, Minnesota.

The Commission approved the route denoted as the “Gibbon Crossover Route” for the approximately 70-mile segment connecting the previously approved Cedar Mountain substation near Franklin, Minnesota and the Helena substation west of New Prague, Minnesota. This route will involve crossing the Minnesota River west of Belle Plaine parallel to an existing 69 kV transmission line crossing the river.

Last July, while approving the rest of the transmission line route, the Commission deferred taking final action on the route for a second Minnesota River crossing. That issue was returned to the Office of Administrative Hearings where an Administrative Law Judge heard further testimony and received additional input from the parties and government agencies regarding this crossing in light of appropriate actions to protect wildlife in the area.

Great River Energy and Xcel Energy filed a route permit application on December 29, 2008, for approximately 240 miles of new 345 kV transmission line and associated facilities between the existing Brookings County Substation near White, South Dakota and a newly proposed substation near Hampton, Minnesota. While construction will be finished in phases, it is anticipated that construction of the transmission line will begin in 2012 and the line will be operational by early 2015.

This project is part of a larger transmission undertaking termed CapX2020 which calls for building four lines across Minnesota totaling more than 700 miles. In addition to this segment, other projects filed with the Commission are a 28-mile, 345kV line from Monticello to St. Cloud, which was approved by the Commission in July of 2010; a 345 kV, 250-mile line from St. Cloud to Fargo, North Dakota; a 70-mile, 230 kV transmission line from Bemidji, Minnesota to Grand

Rapids, Minnesota; and a 150-mile, 345 kV line from Hampton, Minnesota to LaCrosse, Wisconsin. The last two proposals continue under review by the Commission.

A final written order formally documenting the Commission's decision will be issued in several weeks. That order in docket ET2/TL-08-1474 will be available on the Commission's website via the Commission's [e-Dockets](#) system.