

For Immediate Release  
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**MINNESOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION  
VOTES TO APPROVE  
ELECTRICAL TRANSMISSION LINE IN SOUTHEAST 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 Minnesota portion of the CapX2020 project from Hampton, Minnesota-Rochester, Minnesota-La Crosse, Wisconsin involving 345kV and 161 kV transmission lines.

The Commission approved a route comprised of three segments:

Segment 1: The 345 kV line will originate at the Hampton Substation in southern Dakota County and continue along Highway 52 to a new substation north of Pine Island in Goodhue County. The Commission chose to have the line follow the modified Highway 52 corridor in Cannon Falls, recognizing that MnDOT is considering building new highway infrastructure such as interchanges or railroad overpasses.

Segment 2: This segment is a 161 kV line that would connect a new substation north of Pine Island in Goodhue County to an existing substation in northwestern Rochester in Olmsted County.

Segment 3: The final portion of the project is a 345 kV line running from the new substation north of Pine Island to a Mississippi River Crossing near Kellogg, Minnesota. The Commission chose a route alternative that would cross Zumbro Lake along the existing White Bridge Road corridor. The line would then follow an existing transmission line corridor northeast towards Kellogg, Minnesota before crossing the Mississippi River to Alma, Wisconsin.

Xcel Energy filed a route permit application on January 19, 2010 for approximately 150 miles of new 345 kV and 161 kV transmission lines and associated facilities between La Crosse, Wisconsin 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 late 2012 and the line will be operational by late 2015. The Wisconsin portion of the project is being reviewed by the Wisconsin Public Service Commission.

This project is part of a larger transmission undertaking termed CapX2020 which calls for building four lines in Minnesota totaling more than 700 miles. CapX2020 is a joint initiative of 11 transmission-owning utilities in Minnesota and the surrounding region. In addition to this segment, other related projects reviewed earlier by 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, which was approved by the Commission in June of 2011; a 70-mile, 230 kV transmission line from Bemidji, Minnesota to Grand Rapids, Minnesota, which was approved by the Commission in October of 2010; and a 240-mile, 345 kV line from Hampton, Minnesota to Brookings, South Dakota, which was finalized by the Commission in February of 2011. The segment approved today is the last one needing a route permit for the projects currently proposed or underway in CapX2020.

A final written order formally documenting the Commission's decision will be issued in several weeks. That order in docket E002/TL-09-1448 will be available on the Commission's website via the Commission's eDockets system.