



# STATE OF MINNESOTA

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June 24, 2009

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The Honorable Richard C. Luis  
Administrative Law Judge  
Office of Administrative Hearings  
PO Box 64620  
St. Paul, MN 55164-0620

Re: In the Matter of the Route Permit Application by Great River Energy and Xcel Energy for a 345 kV Transmission Line from Brookings County, South Dakota to Hampton, Minnesota, OAH Docket No. 7-2500-20283-2, PUC Docket No. ET-2/TL-08-1474

Dear Judge Luis:

On June 5, 2009, you issued the First Prehearing Order in this proceeding. The First Prehearing Order established a procedural schedule to be followed, which, among other things, scheduled June 22, 2009 as the date for the EIS Scoping Document to be issued by the Director of the Minnesota Office of Energy Security ("OES"). This date was established based on the OES Energy Facility Permitting ("EFP") Staff's best estimate at the time of the prehearing conference.

The OES EFP Staff was unable to complete the review of scoping comments by June 22, 2009; EFP Staff now estimates that the Scoping Decision will be issued by the end of June. The public response following the public information meetings has been massive, with numerous proposals for route alternatives, each of which must be reviewed sufficiently to determine whether it is appropriately included in the scope of environmental review. Because the basis to a good environmental impact statement ("EIS") is provided by the Scoping Decision, it is critical to have sufficient time to ensure that all comments are thoroughly reviewed.

The OES EFP Staff does not believe this delay will affect any of the remaining dates in the procedural schedule. Please do not hesitate to call me with any questions you may have concerning this or other matters.

Sincerely,

**s/ Karen Finstad Hammel**

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**Re: *In the Matter of the Application of the Route Permit Application by Great River Energy and Xcel Energy for a 345 kV Transmission Line from Brookings County, South Dakota to Hampton, Minnesota***

**Commission and ALJ**

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