

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
SOUTH DAKOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION**

**WHAT: Great River Energy and Northern States Power, d/b/a Xcel Energy
Transmission Line Project (CapX2020 Project)
Brookings County, South Dakota**

WHEN: Thursday, January 6, 2011, at 6:30 p.m. CDT

**WHERE: Swiftel Center, Daktronics Banquet Room A, 824 32nd Ave, Brookings, South
Dakota (East of I-29 on 6th St. (Hwy 14) at Exit 132)**

Pursuant to SDCL 49-41B-15 and 49-41B-16, the South Dakota Public Utilities Commission (Commission) will hold a public input hearing at the above time and place on an application filed by Great River Energy and Northern States Power, d/b/a Xcel Energy (CapX2020) for a permit to construct the South Dakota portion of the Brookings County – Hampton 345 kilovolt (kV) Project (Project) consisting of 345 kV transmission line facilities and substation connections between the Brookings County Substation and the Hampton 345 kV Substation near Hampton, MN southeast of the Twin Cities. The Project is being proposed by a group of utilities, the CapX2020 Transmission Initiative utilities, who have joined together to identify and construct needed transmission facilities in the Upper Midwest. Great River and Xcel are part of CapX2020. The South Dakota portion of the Project consists of a 10.6-mile 345 kV transmission line between the Brookings County Substation near White, South Dakota and the South Dakota/Minnesota border and associated modifications at the existing Brookings County Substation.

At the hearing, CapX2020 will present a brief description of the Project, following which interested persons may appear and present their questions, views and comments regarding the application. Pursuant to SDCL 49-41B-15(5), the application is on file in the Brookings County Auditor's office and in the Commission's office in Pierre and the application and all other documents in the case, including detailed Project maps, may also be accessed on the Commission's web site at www.puc.sd.gov under Commission Actions, Commission Dockets, Electric Dockets, 2010 Electric Dockets, EL10-016.

The parties to this proceeding are currently CapX2020 and the Commission. Pursuant to SDCL 49-41B-17, any person residing in the area of the project, each municipality, county, and governmental agency in the project area, any non-profit organization formed in whole or in part to promote conservation or natural beauty, to protect the environment, personal health or other biological values, to preserve historical sites, to promote consumer interests, to represent commercial and industrial groups, or to promote the orderly development of the project area, or any interested person, may be granted formal party status in this proceeding by making written application to the Commission as provided in ARSD 20:10:22:40 on or before January 24, 2011. Application forms for party status will be available at the public input hearing on January 6, 2011, or may be obtained from the Commission.

Following the public input hearing, the Commission may schedule one or more subsequent formal evidentiary hearings conforming to SDCL Chapter 1-26 to consider any issues raised by any intervening party, Commission Staff or the Commission itself. At such formal hearing, all parties will have the opportunity to appear, present evidence and cross-examine the other parties' witnesses and exercise all other rights afforded by SDCL 1-26, 49-1 and 49-41B and ARSD 20:10:01 and 20:10:22. Absent a contested issue, the Commission will schedule the matter for decision at a regular or special meeting of the Commission.

For approval, CapX2020 must show that the proposed transmission line project will comply

with all applicable laws and rules, will not pose a threat of serious injury to the environment nor to the social and economic condition of inhabitants or expected inhabitants in the siting area, will not substantially impair the health, safety or welfare of the inhabitants, and will not unduly interfere with the orderly development of the region with due consideration having been given to the views of governing bodies of affected local units of government. Based upon these factors, the Commission will decide whether the permit should be granted, denied or granted upon such terms, conditions or modifications of the construction, operation or maintenance as the Commission finds are appropriate. The parties will have the right to appeal the final decision in this case to the appropriate Circuit Court by serving and filing a notice of appeal of the decision in accordance with SDCL 1-26-31, within thirty (30) days after the date of service of the notice of decision in this case.

Pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act, this hearing is being held in a physically accessible location. Please contact the Commission at least 48 hours prior to the hearing if you have special needs so arrangements can be made to accommodate you. The Commission's contact information is: ph (800) 332-1782; fax (866) 757-6031; www.puc.sd.gov; 500 E. Capitol Ave., Pierre, SD 57501.