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September 9, 2014

**Via Electronic Filing**

Dr. Burl W. Haar  
Executive Secretary  
Minnesota Public Utilities Commission  
350 Metro Square Building  
121 Seventh Place East  
St. Paul, Minnesota 55101

**Re: Route Permit Compliance Filing: August Status Report and Complaints Summary  
for Hampton-Rochester-La Crosse Transmission Line Project  
PUC Docket No. E002/TL-09-1448**

Dear Dr. Haar:

On May 30, 2012, the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission granted Northern States Power Company, doing business as Xcel Energy, ("Permittee") a Route Permit for the Hampton - Rochester - La Crosse Transmission Line Project ("Project"). The purpose of this letter is to provide an update on project status for the month of August.

Construction continued on the North Rochester to Mississippi River construction spread throughout the month of August. Foundation construction has been completed on this construction spread. Line crews have set structures from 50-110 and line has been strung from 67-110. They continue to haul and set structures from 1-49. All foundations and line construction is complete between structures 111 to 224 and restoration continues on that portion of the project.

Environmental monitors have been on site throughout the month to monitor construction activities, stormwater controls and compliance with permit conditions. The environmental monitors' report is included with this letter.

The landowner liaison continues to work with landowners and construction crews to address any questions or concerns that arise during construction. Issues are typically addressed the same day they are reported. There were no complaints received during the month of August that were not addressed right away.

Please feel free to contact me at (612) 330-6073 or [ellen.l.heine@xcelenergy.com](mailto:ellen.l.heine@xcelenergy.com) if you have any questions regarding this filing.

Sincerely,



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A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ellen Heine".

Ellen Heine  
Xcel Energy  
Compliance and Permitting Analyst



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## Environmental Monitor Monthly Report

**Date:** 9/2/2014

**Location:** Olmsted and Wabasha Counties

**Environmental Monitor(s):**  
Andrew Welch, Kari Kerwin, Sarah Middleton

**Segment:** Northern Rochester to Alma

**Contact #:** (608) 807-9806

**Site Conditions:** Sunny, Rain, 70-80s

### Current Phase of Construction:

Foundations: Aldridge Electric (AE) is 100% complete for the project as of August 14, 2014.

Tree clearing: All tree clearing has been completed

Transmission: MJ Electric (MJ) has completed structures 49-112 as of August 25, 2014.

Restoration: Dahn has been working between structures 113-176 for final restoration. They have also been removing matting and biologs in areas that are 70% vegetated. Dahn also repairs perimeter controls and BMPs as needed. Dahn also completed the matting and stabilization needed to access the peninsula section near structure 228 for the Mississippi River Crossing. Final restoration for the project is now at 28% complete as of August 27, 2014.

### Work Performed:

In August Aldridge Electric (AE) completed foundations at structures 38 through structure 1. All work was complete as of August 14, 2014. They continue to move equipment out of Doane Laydown Yard.

MJ Electric (MJ) completed hauling structures west through structure 22 and the framing of structures west through 30. Also, structures 48-80 have been set in place. MJ has completed the stringing of 67-87.

Dahn construction has been working mainly on permanent restoration for structures 113-176. In addition, Dahn has been following behind MJ to secure any soil that has been moved to create crane pads by either placing perimeter controls (bio-logs) and/or removing soil piles. Dahn has also been providing temporary stabilization in areas by hydroseeding and seeding/ laying straw as seen in the pictures provided. Many structures have reached 70% perennial vegetation and have met the criteria to be removed from the SWPPP inspection. All structures found in green on the attached spreadsheet have been removed from inspection.

Wright Tree (Wright) has completed all clearing necessary on the project.

### Compliance Issues:

In August there were several issues with the amount of dirt that has been moved to accommodate MJ's crane. Large crane pads have been created at most structure sites. There have also been many modifications to the access routes to structure sites. The two primary concerns are erosion control and the mixing of subsoil. After many meetings, we believe we have found a resolution, as MJ is now responsible for the placement of perimeter controls around any modifications made. In our meetings with MJ, we instructed them to segregate any topsoil moved. They are also responsible for the rough grade of any moved soil back to the original location. Dahn will then do the final restoration. There remain concerns that long term effects of the mixing of subsoil will result in crop loss for land owners.

### SWPPP:

Dahn has been making progress on SWPPP repairs, but still have outstanding items to address. Crews are focusing on final stabilization along the ROW and temporary stabilization in the areas that MJ has completed.



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#### **Agricultural Summary:**

Much of the ROW from 111-224 has been planted with row crop agriculture, which is acting as final stabilization for portions of the line that is complete and as temporary stabilization for 143-176. Permanent stabilization for 113-176 began the week of July 14 and is still underway.

Many modifications by MJ Electric may result in long term crop damage from the mixing of subsoil. The area of primary concern lies between structures 48-110. It is a large area with agriculture near many of the sites. These effects may not be realized for some time.

#### **Areas of deeper compaction and other agricultural issues observed since beginning construction:**

Nearest structure or span	Issue
7-9	Rutting in Right of Way
48-110	Continuous rutting and back-blading, the constant modification of structure sites may result in mixing of subsoil.
46	Rutting at construction site.
112-113	A two feet deep gully developed between 112 and 113 due to snow melt following rutting in the access path. This area will be restored and de-compacted as soon as site conditions allow.
117	Hill and fence line need to be restored to original grade to keep water from flowing between properties
118	Terrace needs to be reshaped to hold water.
121-123	One foot rutting
124-130	(2013) AE bladed off 4" of wet topsoil to get better traction for vehicles. AE was directed to not do that again as it will lead to deeper compaction.
136-138	one foot rutting in the low area between 137-138
162	Fence destroyed by snow plowing and needs repair
172-176	one to two feet of rutting on access by MJ for the wire pull.
180	Spring gate destroyed at property boundary
193-200 Access	2' compaction from MJ accessing site. Work was shut down in that area to re-assess access at the end of March. 193 access will be matted 4/1. Subsoil mixing observed from 193-195 due to spring rutting prior to the shutdown.
212	MJ crane got stuck at the structure and was dragged out by another piece of equipment.

#### **- Attached Photos**

## Photo Log



**Photo – 1**

**Date: 8/07/2014**

**Location:** The peninsula section near STR 228

**Description:** This is the wetland near structure 228 prior to construction



**Photo – 2**

**Date: 8/11/2014**

**Location:** The peninsula section near STR 228

**Description:** Entrance construction and matting placement



**Photo – 3**

**Date: 8/18/2014**

**Location:** The peninsula section near STR 228

**Description:** Completion and stabilization of peninsula access



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**Photo – 4**

**Date: 8/14/2014**

**Location:** STR 128

**Description:** Final restoration of 128 looking west



**Photo – 5**

**Date: 8/15/2014**

**Location:** STR 199

**Description:** Final restoration of 199 looking west



**Photo – 6**

**Date: 8/15/2014**

**Location:** STR 189

**Description:** Final restoration of 189 looking west

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**Photo – 7**

**Date: 8/15/2014**

**Location:** STR 177

**Description:** Final restoration of 177 looking west



**Photo – 8**

**Date: 8/18/2014**

**Location:** STR 118

**Description:** Final restoration of 118 looking east



**Photo – 9**

**Date: 8/18/2014**

**Location:** STR 57

**Description:** Setting of structure 57



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**Photo – 10**

**Date: 8/18/2014**

**Location:** STR 61

**Description:** Setting of structures 61 looking west



**Photo – 11**

**Date: 8/18/2014**

**Location:** STR 67

**Description:** Setting of structure 67 where the line crosses the Zumbro River



**Photo – 12**

**Date: 8/18/2014**

**Location:** STR 84

**Description:** Long view of newly set structures looking west



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**Photo – 13**

**Date: 8/26/2014**

**Location:** Access STR 30-31

**Description:** Dahn continues to come in and Stabilize until work resumes in this area



**Photo – 14**

**Date: 8/26/2014**

**Location:** Access near STR 17

**Description:** Dahn hydroseeded cleared area for stabilization along access and near stream



**Photo – 15**

**Date: 8/27/2014**

**Location:** STR 84

**Description:** Dahn has seeded entire ROW with seed and covered with straw for temporary stabilization

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**Photo – 16**

**Date: 8/27/2014**

**Location:** STR 51

**Description:** The setting of structure 51