

**STATE OF MINNESOTA  
BEFORE THE MINNESOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION**

Date of Request: April 21, 2008

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Midwest Office (IWLA), Fresh Energy and Minnesota Center for Environmental  
Advocacy (MCEA)*

Please send a second copy of your response to:

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Request Due: May 12, 2008

**In the Matter of the Application of Great River Energy, Northern States Power Company (d/b/a Xcel Energy) and others for Certificates of Need for the Cap X 345–kV Transmission Projects. PUC Docket No. CN-06-1115**

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INFORMATION REQUEST NOS. 27-29 OF WOW, IWLA, FRESH ENERGY, AND MCEA  
TO APPLICANTS

27. Applicants' response to NAWO/ILSR Information Request No. 16 confirms that the CAPX2020 Hampton County-North Rochester-La Crosse 345 KV line is intended to be radial based on the local needs of the Rochester and La Crosse areas. However, studies of the Minnesota-Wisconsin Stability Index (MWSI), which page 7 of Appendix A-2 indicates are now under way, are likely to show that this third 345 KV tie between MN and WI is likely to increase transfer capability between the states, and this should be recognized.
- a) What are the results (or likely results) of this MWSI evaluation which would show benefits beyond those presented in the application?
  - b) As part of the foregoing, would the 345 KV connection to WI (even with radial operation) help as generation outlet for southern MN wind farms already in the MISO queue?

- c) What are typical flows north on the Adams-Prairie Island 345 KV line, and how are these flows impacted by wind generation in southern MN?
- 28.
- a) The proposal to construct the Alma-La Crosse 345 KV portion of the project as double circuit with the existing 161 KV line violates NERC Standard TPL-030-0, stated several times in the application as a practice to be avoided (see Sec 7.2.3). Why is this double circuit configuration recommended if it is inconsistent with NERC rules?
  - b) Threats of shutdown (retirement) of the French Island generating units seem to help substantiate the need for more transmission capacity, but no analysis was provided showing the cost of delaying retirement which could delay the need for new transmission. Please consider the benefit of delayed retirement by including the cost for life extension at French Island or any other generating plant retirement adding to transmission needs. Please show the impact.
  - c) Related to the foregoing, how much help (assuming delayed 345 KV) would be provided to the La Crosse area by ATC constructing a Monroe County-Council Creek 69 KV/161 KV line, which is assumed to be necessary in any event?
29. Applicants' response to our Information Request No. 4 indicates that a short, second 161 KV line from the Byron 345 KV substation to Rochester on separate ROW would serve the Rochester area "...only until approximately 2030..." and goes on to say that a 345 KV line would serve the area until 2050 (mid-century). This indicates that such a relatively small investment could substantially delay a 345 KV source to Rochester by constructing the added 161 KV source as 345 KV and operating it initially as 161 KV.
- a) Assuming that supply issues to the La Crosse area could be handled independent from the Rochester area need, would such a shorter-term solution for the Rochester area cause loading problems on either the Prairie Island-Byron or Adams-Byron 345 KV lines?
  - b) Are there any other shortcomings (other than lack of a supply to La Crosse) of this 161 KV solution which lasts until 2030?