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Xcel Energy
Docket No.: E002, ET2/CN-06-1115
Response To: Paula Maccabee Information Request No. 17
Citizens Energy Task Force
Date Received: May 2, 2008

Question:

A. The Application states at page 4.40 that community reliability needs do not dictate the timing of the proposed Twin Cities - Brookings County 345 kV transmission line. Do Applicants agree that community reliability needs alone would not justify construction of the Twin Cities - Brookings County project? Explain.

B. The Application states at page 4.40 that the Twin Cities - Brookings County 345 kV project is primarily based on the need to add generation outlet capacity in southwestern Minnesota to accommodate increasing amounts of available wind energy generation.

1) In determining that the Twin Cities- Brookings County transmission line was needed to provide generation outlet capacity for available wind generation, did Applicants model scenarios based on specific wind generation amounts and locations? If so, please state the amounts and locations included in the modeling and, to the extent known, state the name of the wind project and developer/owner associated with the wind generation.
2) Were the amounts and locations of wind generation for which generation outlet capacity was modeled the amounts and locations specified in the Attachment to Applicants' Response to NAWO Information Request 12?
3) How did Applicants determine which amounts and locations of wind generation should be considered in modeling the need for transmission to provide generation outlet capacity? Please state the methods used to derive the generation scenarios modeled, including the individuals and resourced consulted.

Response:

A. Applicants agree that immediate community reliability service issues do not, alone, justify the need the for the Twin Cities – Brookings County 345 kV Project. However, the proposed project configuration meets immediate regional reliability and generation outlet needs and has been optimized to address the foreseeable local community service issues that are seen in other growing communities such as St. Cloud and Rochester. The proposed facilities address long-term reliability needs by including several intermediate terminals (substations) that will provide local electrical system support. The substation connections in the project area result in a synergistic benefit that ties the generation outlet need with a longer-term strategy to build out the system in a more coordinated fashion.

B 1. A certain generation pattern was assumed in the Southwest Minnesota Study and is shown on the attached page which was taken from Appendix D-1A "Buffalo Ridge Area Generation Pattern," at page 40 to Volume 2 of the Southwest Minnesota Study.

B 2. No. See response to B 1.

B 3. The Southwestern Minnesota Study team determined the generation location and amounts at each site. The sites were spread throughout the Buffalo Ridge area based on engineering judgment. It was also assumed that the development would be split fairly evenly between the northern and southern areas of the Buffalo Ridge.

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