



April 17, 2024

Honorable Suzanne Todnem
Administrative Law Judge
Office of Administrative Hearings
PO Box 64620
Saint Paul, MN 55164-0620

Via Electronic Filing

RE: PUC Staff Proposed Procedural Schedule


In the Matter of the Certificate of Need and Route Permit Applications for the Minnesota Energy Connection Project in Sherburne, Stearns, Kandiyohi, Wright, Meeker, Chippewa, Yellow Medicine, Renville, Redwood, and Lyon counties in Minnesota, OAH Docket No. 23-2500-39782, PUC Docket No. E-002/TL-22-132

Judge Todnem:

In accordance with the Amended Notice of Prehearing Conference dated March 8, 2023, please find the attached procedural schedule proposed by Minnesota Public Utilities Commission staff (PUC staff).

It is PUC staff's understanding that Xcel Energy, the applicant in this matter, is in agreement with the proposed schedule.

Sincerely,


Scott Ek

**Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (Commission or PUC)
PUC Staff Proposed Schedule: Minnesota Energy Connection (MNEC) Project**

In the Matter of the Certificate of Need and Route Permit Applications for the Minnesota Energy Connection Project in Sherburne, Stearns, Kandiyohi, Wright, Meeker, Chippewa, Yellow Medicine, Renville, Redwood, and Lyon counties in Minnesota

PUC Dockets: E-002/TL-22-132
OAH Docket: 23-2500-39782

Milestone	Date	Interval	Notes
Department of Commerce Energy Environmental Review and Analysis (EERA) Comments and Recommendations on Scoping Process	04/19/2024		
Commission Meeting: Scope of Alternatives	05/02/2024		
EERA Issues EIS Scope	05/13/2024	10 days after Commission's verbal decision on scope of alternatives.	Interval taken from EERA's Application Completeness Comments and Recommendations at Table 2 dated November 17, 2023 (EERA November 17 Comments).
Deadline to Intervene	06/17/2024		Xcel Energy requested that the intervention deadline occur after the EIS scope but before Applicant's direct testimony.
Applicant Files Direct Testimony	07/15/2024		
Draft EIS Issued	09/10/2024	120 days after EIS scope.	Interval taken from EERA November 17 Comments.

Milestone	Date	Interval	Notes
All Parties File Rebuttal Testimony	09/17/2024	7 days after Draft EIS is issued.	Suggested by Xcel Energy.
All Parties File Surrebuttal Testimony	09/24/2024	7 days after rebuttal.	Suggested by Xcel Energy.
All Parties File and Exchange Prehearing Filings (<i>i.e.</i> , exhibit lists)	09/27/2024		
<p>In-Person Joint Draft EIS Information Meetings and Public Hearings</p> <p>Day 1: Two meetings/hearings (~10 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. and ~5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.). Locations to be determined.</p> <p><i>PUC Staff Recommends the following locations: Monticello, Wilmar or Litchfield, Redwood Falls, Marshall, Granite Falls, and Kimble or Eden Valley</i></p>	10/02/2024	At least 20 days after Draft EIS is issued.	<p>Information meeting not to be held sooner than 20 days after Draft EIS issuance (Minn. R. 7850.2500, subp. 8).</p> <p>At least a portion of the hearing must be held in a county where the proposed HVTL would be located (Minn. R. 7850.2600, subp. 1).</p>
<p>In-Person Joint Draft EIS Information Meetings and Public Hearings</p> <p>Day 2: Two meetings/hearings (~10 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. and ~5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.). Locations to be determined.</p>	10/03/2024		
<p>In-Person Joint Draft EIS Information Meetings and Public Hearings</p> <p>Day 3: Two meetings/hearings (~10 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. and ~5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.). Locations to be determined.</p>	10/08/2024		
Online Joint Draft EIS Information Meeting and Public Hearing (~6:00 p.m. start time).	10/09/2024		

Milestone	Date	Interval	Notes
Evidentiary Hearings (PUC Hearing Rooms, St. Paul)	Week of October 14, 2024		Number of days to be determined.
Close of Draft EIS Information Meeting and Public Hearing Comment Period	10/29/2024	20 days after last day of public hearings.	<p>Not less than 10 days (DEIS Information Meeting, Minn. R. 7850.2500, subp. 8).</p> <p>Not less than 10 days (Public Hearing, Minn. R. 7850.3800, subp. 3D).</p> <p>At a date set by the ALJ (Hearing, Minn. R. 1405.1400).</p> <p>PUC Staff recommends 20 days from last day of public hearings, which is consistent with the public information meetings.</p>
Post Hearing Briefing Filed by All Parties and Proposed Findings and Responses to Hearing Comments Filed by Applicant	11/18/2024	20 days after close of Draft EIS/public hearing comment period.	
Post Hearing Reply Briefing and Revised Findings Filed by All Parties (Revised Findings Submitted as Underline/Strikethrough of Applicant's Proposed Findings)	12/09/2024	20 days after post hearing briefs.	
Final EIS Issued	12/13/2024	45 days after close of Draft EIS/public hearing comment period.	Interval taken from EERA November 17 Comments.
Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) Files Report	01/13/2025	30 days after Final EIS issuance.	