

State of Minnesota
Court of Administrative Hearings
For the Public Utilities Commission

In the Matter of the Application for a Certificate of Need for the PowerOn Midwest 765 kV and
345 kV High Voltage Transmission Line Project

MPUC Docket No. E002, ET2, ET6675/CN-25-117

CAH Docket No.: 28-2500-41617

Direct Testimony of Jason Standing

August 13, 2026

1 **I. INTRODUCTION AND QUALIFICATIONS**

2

3 **Q. Please state your name and business address.**

4 A. My name is Jason Standing. My business address is 414 Nicollet Mall, Minneapolis,
5 Minnesota 55401.

6

7 **Q. By whom are you employed and in what capacity?**

8 A. I am employed as a Director of Strategic Transmission Planning for Xcel Energy Services
9 Inc., the service company for Xcel Energy Inc. (Xcel Energy).

10

11 **Q. Please briefly describe your educational background and professional experience.**

12 A. I obtained a B.S. in Electrical Engineering from the North Dakota State University, Fargo,
13 North Dakota in 1999. In 2011, I obtained a Masters of Business Administration from the
14 University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, Minnesota. I received my Professional Engineer
15 license from the State of Minnesota in 2012. I have worked for Xcel Energy since 2004 in
16 the transmission area. I have been in my current position since 2025. Prior to joining Xcel
17 Energy, I was an engineer in various roles for different companies. In these various roles,
18 I have had roles of increasing responsibility in distribution planning, system protection,
19 substation design, field engineering, and project management.

20

21 **Q. What are your responsibilities as a Director for Transmission Planning at Xcel
22 Energy?**

23 A. My current responsibilities include managing the Transmission Planning Department for
24 Xcel Energy, which includes Northern States Power Company-Minnesota and Northern
25 States Power Company-Wisconsin, collectively the NSP Companies.

26

27 **Q. For whom are you testifying?**

28 A. I am testifying on behalf of Great River Energy, Northern States Power Company, doing
29 business as Xcel Energy, and ITC Midwest LLC (collectively, Applicants), in support of

1 their Joint Certificate of Need Application (Application) to the Minnesota Public Utilities
2 Commission (Commission) for the PowerOn Midwest Project (Project).

3
4 **Q. What is your role with respect to the Project?**

5 A. I am the planning engineer representing Xcel Energy in all planning analyses provided in
6 this docket. Xcel Energy, Great River Energy and ITC Midwest LLC collaborated on the
7 analyses in support of the Certificate of Need Application.

8
9 **II. TESTIMONY OVERVIEW**
10

11 **Q. How is your Direct Testimony organized?**

12 A. My Direct Testimony is organized as follows:

- 13 • Section III: Xcel Energy and Project Ownership
- 14 • Section IV: Project Need

15
16 **Q. What schedules are attached to your Direct Testimony?**

17 A. The following schedule is attached to my Direct Testimony:

- 18 • **Schedule 1**: Statement of Qualifications

19
20 **Q. Are you sponsoring any sections and appendices of the Application?**

21 A. Yes, I am sponsoring the following sections of the Application:

- 22 • Section 1.3 – Project Ownership, as it concerns Xcel Energy
- 23 • Section 1.12 – Applicants’ Request and Contact Information, as it concerns Xcel
24 Energy
- 25 • Section 2.3.3 – North Rochester
- 26 • Section 2.3.4 – Hampton
- 27 • Section 2.5.4 – Rate Impact – Xcel Energy
- 28 • Appendix D – Xcel Energy Revenue Requirement
- 29 • Appendix F.2 – Xcel Energy July 2025 Annual Electric Utility Forecast Report

- Appendix G – Demand Side Management and Conservation, as it concerns Xcel Energy

III. XCEL ENERGY AND PROJECT OWNERSHIP

Q. Please provide a brief overview of Xcel Energy.

A. Xcel Energy is a public utility that generates electrical power and transmits, distributes, and sells power to residential and business customers within service territories assigned by state regulators in parts of Minnesota, Wisconsin, South Dakota, North Dakota, and the upper peninsula of Michigan. The NSP Companies own and operate the five-state integrated NSP System pursuant to the terms of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC)-approved Interchange Agreement. The NSP Companies have about 1.8 million electric customers in the upper Midwest.

Q. Is Xcel Energy developing any 765 kilovolt (kV) facilities outside of the State of Minnesota?

A. Southwestern Public Service Company, another wholly owned electric utility subsidiary of Xcel Energy Inc. located in Texas and New Mexico, was issued two 765 kV projects by the Southwest Power Pool. One project called Potter – Crossroads – Phantom is an approximately 350-mile 765 kV line that runs from Amarillo, Texas to southeast New Mexico. The second project called Crawfish Draw – Phantom is an approximately 239-mile 765 kV line that runs from the Lubbock, Texas area to southwest New Mexico. Both lines terminate at the same substation in southeast New Mexico.

Q. What is Xcel Energy's role with respect to the Project?

A. Xcel Energy is developing and will own part of LRTP 22 in both South Dakota and Minnesota, LRTP 24, and LRTP 25, each of which is part of the PowerOn Midwest Project.

1 **Q. Describe Xcel Energy's ownership of the PowerOn 765 kV transmission facilities.**

2 A. Xcel Energy will own and operate approximately 45 percent of the 765 kV transmission
3 line running from the South Dakota/Minnesota border and the Lakefield Junction
4 Substation in Jackson County, Minnesota (LRTP 22). The final ownership percentages will
5 depend on the actual costs of LRTP 22. Xcel Energy will own and operate 50 percent of
6 the Pleasant Valley to North Rochester 765 kV transmission line (LRTP 24). Xcel Energy
7 will also own and operate the North Rochester Substation, including its expansion as part
8 of the Project.
9

10 **Q. What is Xcel Energy's ownership of the 345 kV transmission facilities?**

11 A. Xcel Energy will own and operate 100 percent of the Pleasant Valley to North Rochester
12 345 kV transmission line and will own and operate 64 percent of the North Rochester to
13 Hampton 345 kV transmission line. Xcel Energy will continue to own and operate the
14 Hampton Substation.
15

16 **Q. Will Xcel Energy complete expansions of its substation facilities as part of the**
17 **Project?**

18 A. Yes. Xcel Energy will expand its existing North Rochester Substation in Goodhue County
19 for the 765 kV and 345 kV facilities and its existing Hampton Substation in Dakota County
20 for the 345 kV line.
21

22 **IV. PROJECT NEED** 23

24 **Q. Did Xcel Energy participate in the Midcontinent Independent System Operator, Inc.**
25 **(MISO) process that resulted in LRTP Tranche 2.1?**

26 A. Yes, Xcel Energy participated in the MISO LRTP process that developed the Tranche 2.1
27 portfolio of projects. Xcel Energy participated in the development of the MISO Futures
28 process that developed the load forecast used in the analysis. Xcel Energy was involved
29 in the transmission project portfolio development and subsequent refinement to the current
30 Tranche 2.1 portfolio.

1 **Q. In evaluating the need for the Project, did Applicants consider the impact of data**
2 **centers on its load?**

3 A. As discussed in the Direct Testimony of Mr. Matt Ellis, MISO did not consider data center
4 load as part of the 2023 forecasts that supported the evaluation of the Tranche 2.1 portfolio.
5 This means that MISO determined the PowerOn Project is needed regardless of whether
6 data centers are built in Minnesota.

7
8 **Q. Does Xcel Energy serve any data center loads?**

9 A. Xcel Energy, as a public utility, has an obligation to serve all customers requesting service,
10 including data centers. In serving data centers, Xcel Energy and the customer enter into an
11 electric service agreement and an interconnection agreement, which is consistent with
12 standards set forth by Minnesota law and Xcel Energy's Commission-approved tariff.
13 These agreements ensure that adding these customers to Xcel Energy's system will not
14 harm other Minnesota customers.

15
16 **Q. Even though data centers did not drive the need for the PowerOn Project, would data**
17 **centers potentially use the transmission capacity the Project creates?**

18 A. Yes.

19
20 **Q. How would that occur?**

21 A. The Project is expected to be in service in 2034. If a data center or any other customer is
22 receiving service after 2034 from a load serving entity such as Xcel Energy, the energy it
23 uses would very likely travel across a portion of the Project. Moreover, studies for the data
24 center interconnection would assume the Project is in service, and the capacity it provides
25 will be available in 2034.

1 **Q. Does Xcel Energy have protections in place to safeguard against residential customers**
2 **having to subsidize the cost and energy usage from data centers or other large load**
3 **entities?**

4 A. Yes. In June 2025, Xcel Energy filed a petition with the Commission in Docket No.
5 E002/M-25-289 for approval of a Large Load Tariff and received approval in June 2026.
6 Essentially, the tariff ensures that large load customers pay their fair share of the energy
7 that they use, along with the costs of new infrastructure needed to serve them. The tariff
8 ensures that customers pay all costs attributable to adding its expected load, and include
9 protections—like a Minimum Monthly Bill, credit support requirements, and an Exit Fee—
10 that all serve to insulate other customers from potential impacts of adding this load to the
11 system.

12
13 **V. CONCLUSION**
14

15 **Q. Does this conclude your Direct Testimony?**

16 A. Yes.

Jason T. Standing

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Xcel Energy, Minneapolis, MN | 2025–Current

Director of Strategic Transmission Planning

- Lead a team of transmission experts across Xcel service territory to develop long-term plans to ensure reliable transmission operations
- Coordination of diverse groups of contributors to develop regional and local plans
- Serve as expert witness in state permitting and regulatory process
- Develop future planning needs to address future transmission grid needs

Xcel Energy, Minneapolis, MN | 2019–2025

Manager Transmission Planning, NSP/NSPW

- Lead a team of transmission experts to develop long-term plans to ensure reliable transmission operations
- Coordination of diverse groups of contributors to develop regional and local plans
- Serve as expert witness in state permitting and regulatory process

Xcel Energy, Minneapolis, MN | 2015–2019

Principal Transmission Planning Engineer

- Lead Transmission Planning engineer for the Twin Cities area
- Responsible for training new Transmission Planning engineers
- Involved in local and regional policy with states and RTOs
- Develop computer programming skills and incorporate into Transmission Planning

Xcel Energy, Minneapolis, MN | 2014–2015

PROMOD Planning Engineer

- Provide Production Cost Modeling for the NSP area
- Evaluate transmission project impacts to generation
- Congestion analysis

Xcel Energy, Minneapolis, MN | 2004–2014

Senior Specialty Transmission Planning Engineer

- Responsible for leading and improving the Constructability I process for which all new transmission projects must be approved through
- Lead Technical expert for the Hiawatha Certificate of Need
- Lead the MISO MTEP process for NSP and NSPW areas
- Involved with neighboring and regional entities to create cost effective solutions to the regional and bulk transmission issues
- Work closely with MISO to ensure Xcel Energy's interests are being heard through multiple working groups

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APP- ____ (Standing)

Direct Schedule 1

Wunderlich-Malec Systems, Minnetonka, MN | 2002–2003

Project Manager

- Managed the design, electrical system analysis, and procurement for substation projects
- Responsible for delivering cost analysis to the customer, preparing equipment bids, while monitoring expenses
- Provided field support for the construction team to ensure that the substation was delivered on time and to the customer's satisfaction

Design Engineer

- Lead design engineer for the American Transmission Company's new 69 kV substation
- Lead engineer responsible for accurate settings of the system protection relays
- Responsible for ensuring the NEC codes were followed
- Created new drawing sets while updating old drawing sets to ensure accuracy for the customer

Sebesta Blomberg and Associates, Roseville, MN | 2000–2002

Project Engineer

- Commissioning specialist whose duties included creating test sheets for various types of electrical equipment, field visits, overseeing testing specialists at the Pentagon and other commercial sites
- Design engineer who used creative problem-solving techniques to redesign customer's 230 kV and 115 kV breaker control panels.
- Developed load flow and system protection studies

Alliant Energy, Madison, WI | 1999–2000

Distribution Systems Planner

- Responsible for running load flow analysis for the southern Wisconsin electrical distribution and transmission systems
- Involved in maintaining and updating existing computer models to reflect changes to the physical system
- Prepared cost analysis reports for management

EDUCATION

B.S. in Electrical Engineering, North Dakota State University, Fargo, ND | 1999
MBA, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN | 2011
Professional Engineer, Minnesota PE | 2012

COMPUTER EXPERIENCE

PSSE, PROMOD, Synergi, SKM Power Tools, Microsoft Office

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APP- ____ (Standing)

Direct Schedule 1