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Minneapolis, MN 55401

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January 14, 2020

**—Via Electronic Filing—**

Ryan Barlow  
Acting Executive Secretary  
Minnesota Public Utilities Commission  
121 7<sup>th</sup> Place East, Suite 350  
St. Paul, MN 55101

RE: REPLY COMMENTS  
APPROVAL OF A WIND ENERGY PURCHASE AGREEMENT WITH INVENERGY  
WIND ENERGY DEVELOPMENT, LLC  
DOCKET NO. E002/M-19-268

Dear Mr. Barlow:

Northern States Power Company, doing business as Xcel Energy, submits these Reply Comments to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (Commission) in response to the Comments received from the Department of Commerce, Division of Energy Resources (Department) on January 8, 2020, and the Commission's Information Request (IR) No. 7 in the above-noted docket.

Specifically, we appreciate the Department's review and support of our proposed Deuel Harvest North Wind PPA.

Additionally, the Company includes here an amendment to the PPA we have negotiated with Seller to amend a certain Condition Precedent related to the timing of Commission approval. In the Supplement we filed on November 25, 2019, we noted that the PPA included terms that led us to request Commission approval no later than January 23, 2020. Recognizing that the Commission may not have the opportunity to fully consider the Petition and any Department or party comments by this date, the Company and Seller have negotiated the attached First Amendment to the PPA that further extends the Condition Precedent for Commission approval to February 14, 2020. To the extent possible, we now ask the Commission to consider and approve the PPA by this date. The PPA Amendment is provided as Attachment A to these Reply Comments.

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Lastly, on January 9, 2020, the Commission requested the Company provide our responses to the Department of Commerce IR Nos. 1-5 as part of our Reply Comments. We provide these responses as Attachment B to these Reply Comments.

Please note, portions of Attachment B to these Reply Comments are marked as “NOT-PUBLIC” as they contain information the Company considers to be trade secret data as defined by Minn. Stat. §13.37(1)(b). This data includes confidential contract terms and/or bid information. The information has independent economic value from not being generally known to, and not being readily ascertainable by, other parties who could obtain economic value from its disclosure or use.

We have electronically filed this document with the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission, and copies have been served on the parties on the attached service lists. Please contact me at (612) 330-6064 or [bria.e.shea@xcelenergy.com](mailto:bria.e.shea@xcelenergy.com) or Amber Hedlund at (612) 337-2268 or [amber.r.hedlund@xcelenergy.com](mailto:amber.r.hedlund@xcelenergy.com) if you have any questions regarding this filing.

Sincerely,

/s/

BRIA E. SHEA  
DIRECTOR, REGULATORY AND STRATEGIC ANALYSIS

Enclosures  
c: Service List

**FIRST AMENDMENT TO  
WIND ENERGY PURCHASE AGREEMENT  
(Deuel Harvest Wind Energy)**

This First Amendment to the Wind Energy Purchase Agreement (the “*First Amendment*”) is entered into as of December 23, 2019, by and between Deuel Harvest Wind Energy, LLC, a Delaware limited liability company (“*Seller*”), and Northern States Power Company, a Minnesota corporation (“*Company*”). Each of Company and Seller are sometimes referred to herein as a “*Party*” and collectively as the “*Parties*”. Capitalized terms not otherwise defined herein shall have the meanings given to such terms in the PPA (as defined below).

RECITALS

WHEREAS, the Parties entered into that certain Wind Energy Purchase Agreement dated as of November 25, 2019, as amended (the “*PPA*”), pursuant to which Company agreed to purchase, and Seller agreed to sell, the Renewable Energy and other associated products and services from the Facility; and

WHEREAS, the Parties desire to amend the PPA, as set forth herein.

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the mutual covenants and agreements set forth in this First Amendment, and for other good and valuable consideration, the receipt and sufficiency of which are hereby acknowledged, the Parties hereby agree as follows:

A. Amendment to the PPA.

1. The Parties hereby agree that Section 6.1(C) of the PPA shall be amended by changing “the date that is 60 Days after the date of this PPA” to “February 14, 2020”.

B. Other Terms and Conditions.

1. Effect of First Amendment. The PPA remains in effect in accordance with its terms. If there is any conflict between the PPA and this First Amendment, this First Amendment shall control.
2. Entire Agreement. This First Amendment along with the PPA constitutes the entire agreement between the Parties relating to the subject matter thereof and shall supersede all other prior and contemporaneous understandings or agreements, both written and oral, between the Parties relating to the subject matter thereof.

3. Choice of Law, Waiver of Jury Trial. This First Amendment shall be governed by Section 13.4 (Governing Law), Section 13.5 (Venue) and Section 13.6 (Waiver of Jury Trial) of the PPA.
4. Captions, Construction. The headings used for the sections and articles herein are for convenience and reference purposes only and shall in no way affect the meaning or interpretation of the provisions of this First Amendment or the PPA. Any term and provision of this First Amendment shall be construed simply according to its fair meaning and not strictly for or against any Party. The Parties collectively have prepared this First Amendment, and none of the provisions hereof shall be construed against one Party on the ground that such Party is the author of this First Amendment or any part hereof.
5. Counterparts. This First Amendment may be executed in counterparts, each of which is an original and all of which constitute one and the same instrument. A signature provided via facsimile or in a .pdf document sent via email shall have the same effect as an original.
6. Any Amendments or Modifications. This First Amendment may only be amended or modified in writing signed by both the Parties.

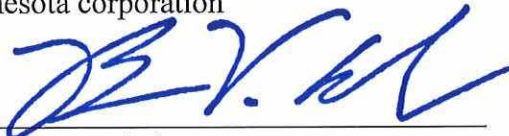
*[Signature Pages to Follow]*

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Parties have caused this First Amendment to be duly executed as of the date first above written.

**COMPANY:**

**NORTHERN STATES POWER COMPANY,**  
a Minnesota corporation

By: \_\_\_\_\_

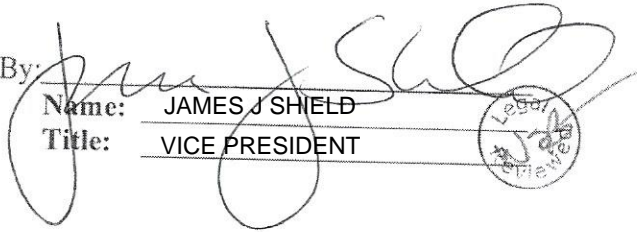


Brian Van Abel  
Senior Vice President  
Finance & Corporate Development  
Xcel Energy Services Inc.  
Authorized signatory for Northern States  
Power Company, a Minnesota corporation

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Parties have caused this First Amendment to be duly executed as of the date first above written.

**SELLER:**

**DEUEL HARVEST WIND ENERGY, LLC**  
a Delaware limited liability company

By:   
Name: JAMES J SHIELD  
Title: VICE PRESIDENT



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Xcel Energy Information Request No. 1  
Docket No.: E002/M-19-268  
Response To: MN Department of Commerce  
Requestor: Steve Rakow  
Date Received: October 7, 2019

---

Question:

Topic:Click or tap here to enter text.

Reference(s):Click or tap here to enter text.

Request:

Please provide a summary of the completeness review of each bid under section 5.1 of the 2019 Wind Solicitation.

Response:

The completeness review ensured compliance with all bid submittal requirements, including payment of the bid fees, sufficient information provided in bid responses, and other requirements. The Northern States Power Company (NSP) 2019 Wind Solicitation Request For Proposals (RFP) evaluation team was split into primary and secondary evaluators to help maintain an unbiased evaluation of the bids received, as well as provide the bidders with an opportunity to remedy any issues identified during the primary evaluation.

In response to the RFP, we received PPA proposals from 9 different project developers, covering 12 different project sites. Each PPA Proposal consisted of multiple price options that varied on the following parameters:

- PPA term (12 years, 20 years or other term)
- Use of union labor (Union or Non Union)
- Expected Commercial Operation Date (COD)
- Flat or escalated pricing

During the initial completeness review, 5 PPA proposals were deemed incomplete:

**Table (DOC-1) 1:  
Initial Completeness Check Incomplete Bid Summary**  
[PROTECTED DATA BEGINS



**PROTECTED DATA ENDS]**

Following the initial completeness check, we sent notices of incompleteness to the bidders identified above. [PROTECTED DATA BEGINS

[PROTECTED DATA ENDS] sent redline PPA documents, so that their proposals passed the final completeness review. The other bidders did not modify their submittals. Therefore, during the final completeness review, the

[PROTECTED DATA BEGINS

[PROTECTED DATA ENDS] listed above were disqualified and excluded from further evaluation. The table below shows a log of the completeness review approved by the Independent Auditor.

**Table (DOC-1) 2:  
Independent Auditor-approved Completeness Review Log**  
[PROTECTED DATA BEGINS



**PROTECTED DATA ENDS]**

Portions of this response are marked as “NOT-PUBLIC” as they contain information the Company considers to be trade secret data as defined by Minn. Stat. §13.37(1)(b). This data includes confidential bid information. The information has independent economic value from not being generally known to, and not being readily



ascertainable by, other parties who could obtain economic value from its disclosure or use.

---

Preparer: Edward Weinberg  
Title: Senior Strategy Asset Planning Consultant  
Department: Resource Planning  
Telephone: 612.342.8965  
Date: October 17, 2019

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Xcel Energy Information Request No. 2  
Docket No.: E002/M-19-268  
Response To: MN Department of Commerce  
Requestor: Steve Rakow  
Date Received: October 7, 2019

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Question:

Topic: Click or tap here to enter text.

Reference(s): Click or tap here to enter text.

Request:

Please provide a summary of the threshold review of each bid under section 5.2 of the 2019 Wind Solicitation.

Response:

The threshold review ensured the PPA Proposals complied with all specific bid requirements including:

- a. RFP project size
- b. RFP project location
- c. RFP project anticipated COD
- d. Interconnection to MISO in the project area
- e. Bidder creditworthiness
- f. Bidder experience
- g. Accounting assessment

Similarly to the completeness review, the RFP evaluation team was split into primary and secondary evaluators to help maintain an unbiased evaluation of the bids received, providing bidders with an opportunity to remedy any issues identified during the primary evaluation.

During the initial threshold review, 14 PPA Proposals were deemed to have not met the threshold review, as their proposals did not meet the minimum threshold requirements related to interconnection. Specifically, the majority of these Proposals either did not include sufficient funds to cover potential transmission interconnection and/or system upgrade costs, or the bidders failed to certify that they would bear the costs of any unidentified transmission interconnection and/or system upgrade costs.

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Following the initial threshold review, notices were sent to all relevant bidders to remedy the threshold non-compliance. Most bidders remedied the non-compliance. Following the final threshold review, however, 4 PPA Proposals remained non-compliant, as shown in the table below:

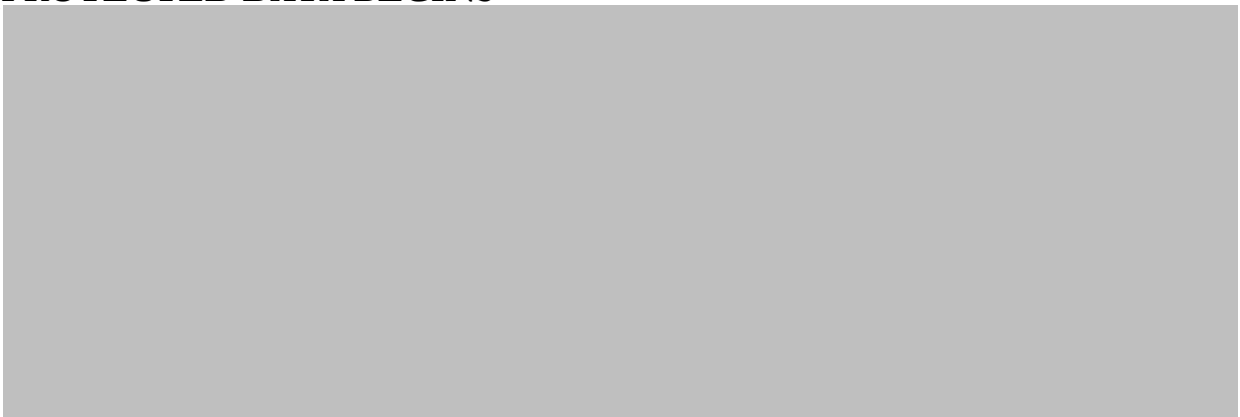
**Table (DOC-2) 1:  
Final Threshold Review Summary of Non-Compliant Proposals**  
[PROTECTED DATA BEGINS



**PROTECTED DATA ENDS]**

These PPA Proposals were disqualified and were excluded from further evaluation or scoring. The table below shows a log of the threshold review that was approved by the Independent Auditor which includes the disqualified projects from the first screen.

**Table (DOC-2) 2:  
Independent Auditor Threshold Review Log**  
[PROTECTED DATA BEGINS



**PROTECTED DATA ENDS]**

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ascertainable by, other parties who could obtain economic value from its disclosure or use.

---

Preparer: Edward Weinberg  
Title: Senior Strategy Asset Planning  
Department: Resource Planning  
Telephone: 612.342.8965  
Date: October 17, 2019

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Xcel Energy Information Request No. 3  
Docket No.: E002/M-19-268  
Response To: MN Department of Commerce  
Requestor: Steve Rakow  
Date Received: October 7, 2019

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Question:

Topic: Click or tap here to enter text.

Reference(s): Click or tap here to enter text.

Request:

Please provide a summary of the Key Parameters Review and Scoring of each bid under section 5.3 of the 2019 Wind Solicitation.

Response:

In total, 10 PPA Proposals, consisting of 31 price options (“Option”), passed the completeness and threshold reviews and proceeded on to the Key Parameters Review and Scoring phase. In this evaluation phase, each qualified Option was scored using the NSP 2019 Wind RFP Evaluation Scoring Calculator and Guidelines Form and the LCOE and Estimated Annual Energy Evaluation Form (the “Forms”). Each Option received a score from 1-10 on the following parameters:

1. Price (as evaluated by the levelized cost of energy, or “LCOE”)
2. Transmission
3. Labor
4. PPA Compliance

Scoring parameters are discussed in more detail below.

*1. Price (LCOE)*

The pricing score constituted 85% of the overall evaluated value of each Option. To evaluate each price Option on a comparable basis, we completed an LCOE analysis using the bid price and PPA term provided.<sup>1</sup> After completing LCOE analysis for all Options, we determined the range of price bids and divided that range into 10 equal bins. Each Option was placed in its relevant price bin and subsequently received a

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<sup>1</sup> Note that, as a result of our threshold review, we ensured each bid included the bidder’s best estimate of potential transmission interconnection and/or network upgrade costs.

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score based on the bin its bid price fell into. For instance, Options in the lowest price bin received 10 points, those in the next lowest cost bin received 9 points, and so on.

2. *Transmission*

The transmission score constituted 5% of the overall evaluated value of each Option. Each Option that included a bidder statement certifying that all transmission and interconnection costs were borne by the bidder received 4 points. The remaining 6 points were allocated depending on the Option's MISO queue position. Options with MISO queue positions in a 2016 study phase received 6 points, those in 2017 received 4 points, those in 2018 received 2 points, and those in 2019 received 1 point.

3. *Labor*

The labor score constituted 5% of the overall value of the Option. Each Option with a union labor bid price received 10 points. Each with a non-union labor bid price received 0 points.

4. *PPA Compliance*

The PPA compliance score constituted 5% of the overall value of each Option. Each Option that included a bidder statement certifying that the bid complied with the NSP Model PPA received 4 points. The remaining 6 points were allocated depending on the number of exceptions noted in section D of the Bidder Form 1: 0 exceptions received 6 points, 1-10 exceptions received 3 points, and more than 10 exceptions received 0 points.

The below table shows a log of the Key Parameters Review and Scoring review that was approved by the Independent Auditor.

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**Table (DOC-3) 1:**

**Independent Auditor-approved Key Parameters Review and Scoring Log  
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Preparer: Edward Weinberg  
Title: Senior Strategy Asset Planning  
Department: Resource Planning  
Telephone: 612.342.8965  
Date: October 17, 2019

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Xcel Energy Information Request No. 4  
Docket No.: E002/M-19-268  
Response To: MN Department of Commerce  
Requestor: Steve Rakow  
Date Received: October 7, 2019

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Question:

Topic: Click or tap here to enter text.

Reference(s): Click or tap here to enter text.

Request:

Please identify the projects placed on the short list under section 5.4 of the 2019 Wind Solicitation.

Response:

The project Options with the highest overall value, as determined by the Key Parameters Review and Scoring phase of our RFP evaluation, comprised the final short list comprised. A perfect score in each of the categories (LCOE, Transmission, Labor, and PPA Model Acceptance) would result in an overall value of 100 points. Based on our scoring approach, three Options received a score of 90 points or higher. All remaining Options had overall scores of 77 points or less. Based on this result, NSP shortlisted these top three price options:

- Allete 212 MW Glen Ullin Energy Center #2 Wind Project
- Invenergy 100 MW **[PROTECTED DATA BEGINS** XXXXXXXXXX **PROTECTED DATA ENDS]** Deuel Harvest North Wind Farm Energy Center
- NextEra 100.9 MW Walleye Wind Project

A Portions of this response is marked as “NOT-PUBLIC” as it contains information the Company considers to be trade secret data as defined by Minn. Stat. §13.37(1)(b). This data includes confidential bid information. The information has independent economic value from not being generally known to, and not being readily ascertainable by, other parties who could obtain economic value from its disclosure or use.



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Preparer: Edward Weinberg  
Title: Senior Strategy Asset Planning  
Department: Resource Planning  
Telephone: 612.342.8965  
Date: October 17, 2019

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Xcel Energy Information Request No. 5  
Docket No.: E002/M-19-268  
Response To: MN Department of Commerce  
Requestor: Steve Rakow  
Date Received: October 7, 2019

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Question:

Topic: Click or tap here to enter text.

Reference(s): Click or tap here to enter text.

Request:

Please provide a copy of the Independent Auditor Report discussed in section 1.2 of the 2019 Wind Solicitation.

Response:

Please see Attachment A to this response for a copy of the Independent Auditor Report – entitled “Independent Auditor’s Final Report: Northern States Power Company 2019 Wind Solicitation” and dated September 26, 2019.

Portions of Attachment A are marked as “NOT-PUBLIC” as it contains information the Company considers to be trade secret data as defined by Minn. Stat. §13.37(1)(b). This data includes confidential bid information. The information has independent economic value from not being generally known to, and not being readily ascertainable by, other parties who could obtain economic value from its disclosure or use.

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Preparer: Edward Weinberg  
Title: Senior Strategy Asset Planning  
Department: Resource Planning  
Telephone: 612.342.8965  
Date: October 17, 2019

# Independent Auditor's Final Report: Northern States Power Company 2019 Wind Solicitation

Xcel Energy

September 26, 2019



This report has been prepared for the use of the client for the specific purposes identified in the report. The conclusions, observations and recommendations contained herein attributed to Leidos Engineering LLC (Leidos) constitute the opinions of Leidos. To the extent that statements, information and opinions provided by the client or others have been used in the preparation of this report, Leidos has relied upon the same to be accurate, and for which no assurances are intended and no representations or warranties are made. Leidos makes no certification and gives no assurances except as explicitly set forth in this report.

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Independent Auditor's Report:  
Northern States Power Company  
2019 Wind Solicitation  
Xcel Energy

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Northern States Power Company (“NSP”)<sup>i</sup> retained Leidos Engineering LLC (“Leidos” or “Independent Auditor”) to perform an independent audit of NSP’s 2019 solicitation of wind resources through a Request for Proposals (“RFP”) process. NSP does business as Xcel Energy (“Xcel”) and is seeking to procure up to 200 megawatts (“MW”) of cost-effective wind resources through a power purchase agreement (“PPA”) with one or more power suppliers. This report describes the RFP process followed by Xcel during the solicitation, presents the findings and conclusions of the Independent Auditor, and fulfills the requirement established by the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (“MPUC”) in 2006 for an independent audit of Xcel’s resource acquisition process to help ensure transparent, fair, and equitable procurement of new power supply resources.<sup>ii</sup> This independent audit (the “Audit”) began on February 18, 2019 with a meeting between Xcel and Leidos personnel; continued through the development of RFP documents, the dissemination of RFP documents to potential responders (“potential Bidders”), the receipt of proposals<sup>iii</sup> from responders (the “Bidders”), and the evaluation of proposals; and concluded on May 20, 2019 with the selection of a short-list of Bidders with whom Xcel may enter into closed-door negotiations (the “RFP Process”). The Leidos work as Independent Auditor does not include the monitoring or review of negotiations or their outcomes. The Audit was conducted to comply with the requirements established by the MPUC and provides an independent, systematic, critical review of the RFP Process for certification to the MPUC.

The primary objectives of the Audit were to:

- Assess whether the RFP documents and associated attachments provided sufficient and consistent information for Bidders to prepare competitive proposals;
- Identify any potential bias in evaluation criteria, process, proposal modeling, selection process, or treatment of Bidders/proposals;
- Establish that the evaluation criteria were applied in a fair and unbiased manner and that a consistent, transparent methodology was used to rank proposals;

<sup>i</sup> Northern States Power Company (NSP) is a subsidiary of Xcel Energy, Inc., that serves retail customers in Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota. Throughout this report to enhance readability the term “Xcel” is used to refer to Xcel Energy, Inc. and Northern States Power Company.

<sup>ii</sup> *Order Establishing Resource Acquisition Process Under Minn. Stat. § 216B.2422, Subd. 5, and Requiring Compliance Filing*, Docket No. E-002/RP-04-1752, May 31, 2006, p. 8.

<sup>iii</sup> The term “proposal” is used throughout to refer to all the documents, forms, spreadsheets, maps, reports, data, and information submitted by Bidders for one complete project evaluation. There are several wind projects for which Bidders submitted multiple proposals in various configurations. A separate proposal was required for each project configuration to be evaluated.

- Assess whether the components of the process conformed to accepted industry standards; and
- Identify any irregularities in the RFP Process.

The Audit was led by a Leidos senior consultant experienced in generation resource procurement, renewable resource project evaluation, and integrated resource planning (the Project Manager). The Audit was performed in accordance with industry standards such as those established by the Institute of Internal Auditors. The Leidos economic, financial, engineering, and technical staff reviewed materials provided by Xcel. Where appropriate, Leidos conducted research and independently gathered information to verify assumptions or augment information provided by Xcel. Leidos exchanged emails and held meetings/phone consultations with key Xcel staff involved in this solicitation to clarify and discuss aspects of the RFP documents, process, and evaluation. The professional expertise and knowledge that Leidos gained through conducting similar procurements and performing similar audits on behalf of other clients supplemented these materials and served as the underlying foundation for the Audit.

The role of Leidos in this process was solely that of third-party independent auditor. Leidos reviewed the modeling, due diligence, and evaluation criteria used by Xcel in this procurement process solely for the purpose of identifying irregularities, bias, or discrimination. Although such efforts may have included assessing the reasonableness of various modeling assumptions, Leidos did not perform the role of consulting engineer. Leidos evaluated the procurement *process* not the actual procurement. Leidos does not attest to the validity of the associated assumptions or outcomes. The sole purpose of this report is to comply with MPUC requirements. No other use is expressed or implied. Nothing in this report is a legal opinion.

This report presents the results of the Audit and is organized as follows. Section 1 sets forth the Audit scope and includes a background of the regulatory history, Audit purpose, and Audit parameters. Section 2 presents the Audit approach. Section 3 provides the Audit results. Audit outcomes including findings appear in Section 4.

Table ES-1 below presents Audit results.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**Table ES-1 Audit Results<sup>iv</sup>**

PARAMETER	REQUIREMENT	WAS REQUIREMENT MET?	
<b>I</b>	<b>Bid Documents &amp; Notifications</b>	RFP documents and associated attachments provided adequate and consistent information that Bidders could use to prepare competitive proposals.	Yes
		Information was disseminated to a broad range of potential Bidders to achieve a robust pool of proposals.	Yes
		Xcel's procurement process conformed to representations made in the RFP documents and any post-release announcements.	Yes
		Xcel exercised appropriate control of the Bidder documents post receipt.	Yes
<b>II</b>	<b>Communications</b>	Xcel communicated consistently and transparently with potential and actual Bidders throughout the process.	Yes
		Correspondence between Xcel personnel and potential and actual Bidders did not afford undue advantage or preferential treatment to the potential disadvantage of other Bidders.	Yes
		Bidders received equal and equitable treatment.	Yes

<sup>iv</sup> All findings are based solely on Leidos' review of materials furnished by Xcel as identified, or publicly-available information as cited. Review of additional materials or disclosure of material facts could change the findings stated in this report.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

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	PARAMETER	REQUIREMENT	WAS REQUIREMENT MET?
<b>III</b>	<b>Evaluation Criteria</b>	The evaluation criteria, evaluation process, proposal modeling, selection process, and assumptions used for selecting proposals were free from bias.	Yes
		Xcel's methodology for selecting short-listed Bidders was free from bias.	Yes
		Xcel's modeling, due diligence and evaluation criteria were free from irregularities, bias or potential discrimination.	Yes
<b>IV</b>	<b>Evaluation Process</b>	Xcel's stated evaluation criteria were applied in a fair and unbiased manner and a consistent, transparent methodology was used to rank proposals.	Yes
		The components of the process and the procurement process conformed to accepted industry standards.	Yes
		Xcel's stated evaluation criteria were correctly applied and proposals were evaluated in accordance with Xcel's expressed assumptions and methodology.	Yes

## Section 1 AUDIT SCOPE

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Section 1 sets forth the Audit scope and includes a background of the regulatory history, Audit purpose, and Audit parameters.

### 1.01 Background

This Audit is being conducted pursuant to Xcel's resource acquisition process established in 2006. The revised process emerged from Xcel's 2004 Resource Plan<sup>1</sup> and is based on two tracks. The first track applies to this procurement and is a formal competitive bidding process used to acquire resources from external Bidders. The second more intensive track is used when Xcel proposes to build resources and for procurement of all baseload resources.<sup>2</sup> The first track requires, among other things, use of an independent auditor. This section explains how this requirement was established and provides general information on audit requirements.

Following unsuccessful bidding processes in 1995, 1999, and 2001,<sup>3</sup> Xcel proposed changes to its resource acquisition process in its 2004 Resource Plan.<sup>4</sup> Comments received on Xcel's proposal included an alternate process put forth by the Minnesota Department of Commerce (MDOC)<sup>5</sup> that was ultimately adopted by the MPUC.<sup>6</sup> Under the proposed MDOC Process,<sup>7</sup> Xcel would acquire intermediate, peaking and wind resources through a competitive bidding process that included review by an independent auditor.<sup>8</sup> Use of an independent auditor was to:

...ensure that Xcel's process for obtaining and evaluating responses to the RFP [was] unbiased<sup>9</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *In the Matter of the Petition of Northern States Power Company d/b/a Xcel Energy's Application for Approval of its 2004 Resource Plan*, Docket No. E-002/RP-04-1752, November 1, 2004.

<sup>2</sup> *Compliance Filing In the Matter of the Petition of Northern States Power Company d/b/a Xcel Energy's Application for Approval of its 2005-2019 Resource Plan*, Docket No. E-002/RP-04-1752, August 28, 2006, pp. 2-4.

<sup>3</sup> Refer to the discussion in *Order Seeking More Detailed Proposals*, November 17, 2005, MPUC Docket No. E002/RP-04-1752, p.3.

<sup>4</sup> See *supra* note 1, p. 1.

<sup>5</sup> *Comments of the Minnesota Department of Commerce*, MPUC Docket Nos. E002/RP-04-1752 and E002/RP-00-787, December 17, 2004.

<sup>6</sup> See *supra* note 2.

<sup>7</sup> See *supra* note 3.

<sup>8</sup> *Supplemental Comments of the Minnesota Department of Commerce*, MPUC Docket No. E002/RP-04-1752, November 23, 2005, pp. 3-5.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3.

The MDOC also provided the following details concerning the scope of the independent audit:

The independent audit should explain the steps employed in Xcel's bidding process, the reasonableness of the steps, and Xcel's adherence to the steps.<sup>10</sup>

The difference between an "independent auditor" and an "independent evaluator" was later clarified by MPUC staff: the former evaluates the fairness of the acquisition process while the latter actually selects proposals.<sup>11</sup>

Pursuant to Xcel's 2006 compliance filing, independent auditor certification of the RFP Process occurs within 20 days of Bidder selection—between Step 5: Bidder selection and negotiations, and Step 7: filing for approval with the MPUC.<sup>12</sup>

## 1.02 Purpose

The Audit was conducted to comply with the requirements established by the MPUC and discussed in Section 1.01. The Audit provides an independent, systematic, critical review of the RFP Process for certification to the MPUC.

The primary objectives of the Audit were to:

- Assess whether the RFP documents and associated attachments provided sufficient and consistent information for Bidders to prepare competitive proposals;
- Identify any potential bias in evaluation criteria, process, proposal modeling, selection process, or treatment of Bidders/proposals;
- Establish that the evaluation criteria were applied in a fair and unbiased manner and that a consistent, transparent methodology was used to rank proposals;
- Assess whether the components of the process conformed to accepted industry standards; and
- Identify any irregularities in the RFP process.

The Audit was led by a senior management consultant experienced in generation resource procurement, renewable resource project evaluation, and integrated resource planning. The Audit was performed in accordance with industry standards such as those established by the Institute of Internal Auditors.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid*, p. 3, footnote No. 4.

<sup>11</sup> *Staff Briefing Papers for E002/RP-04-1752 on April 25, 2006*, p. 16.

<sup>12</sup> See *supra* note 2, p. 3.



## 1.03 Parameters

The following sets forth the parameters required to be met by the RFP Process.

### I. Bid Documents & Notifications

- RFP documents and associated attachments provided adequate and consistent information that Bidders could use to prepare competitive proposals.
- Information was disseminated to a broad range of potential Bidders to achieve a robust pool of proposals.
- Xcel's procurement process conformed to representations made in the RFP documents, and any post-release announcements.
- Xcel exercised appropriate control of the Bidder documents post receipt.

### II. Communications

- Xcel communicated consistently and transparently with potential and actual Bidders throughout the process.
- Correspondence between Xcel personnel and potential and actual Bidders did not afford undue advantage or preferential treatment to the potential disadvantage of other Bidders.
- Bidders received equal and equitable treatment.

### III. Evaluation Criteria

- The evaluation criteria, evaluation process, proposal modeling, selection process, and assumptions used for selecting proposals were free from bias.
- Xcel's methodology for selecting short-listed Bidders was free from bias.
- Xcel's modeling, due diligence and evaluation criteria were free from irregularities, bias or potential discrimination.

### IV. Evaluation Process

- Xcel's stated evaluation criteria were applied in a fair and unbiased manner and a consistent, transparent methodology was used to rank proposals.
- The components of the process and the procurement process conformed to accepted industry standards.

- Xcel's stated evaluation criteria were correctly applied and proposals were evaluated in accord with Xcel's expressed assumptions and methodology.

## 1.04 Limitations

The role of Leidos in this process was solely that of third-party independent auditor. Leidos reviewed the modeling, due diligence, and evaluation criteria used by Xcel in this procurement process solely for the purpose of identifying irregularities, bias or discrimination. Although such efforts may have included assessing the reasonableness of various modeling assumptions toward that end, Leidos did not perform the role of consulting engineer. Leidos evaluated the procurement *process* not the actual procurement. Leidos does not attest to the validity of the associated assumptions or outcomes.

The results presented in this report are predicated on information provided and representations made by Xcel. Leidos made reasonable efforts given the nature of this Audit to obtain pertinent information concerning conduct of the RFP Process. Leidos has requested attestation statements of key staff involved. However, Leidos has no means to determine the extent to which material facts concerning the RFP Process have been disclosed nor is this a forensic audit. All findings in this report are based solely on the review by Leidos of materials furnished by Xcel as identified, or publicly-available information as cited. Review of additional materials or disclosure of additional material facts could change the findings stated in this report.

This report documents the Audit for the sole purpose of demonstrating compliance with MPUC requirements as defined in Section 1. No other use is expressed or implied. Nothing in this report is or should be considered a legal opinion.

## Section 2 AUDIT APPROACH

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### 2.01 Overview

Under the direction and supervision of the Project Manager, Leidos staff reviewed materials provided by Xcel. Where appropriate, Leidos conducted research and independently gathered information to verify assumptions or augment information provided by Xcel. Leidos exchanged emails and held meetings/phone discussions with key Xcel staff involved in this procurement to clarify and discuss aspects of the RFP Process and evaluation. Leidos maintained logs of all efforts conducted in support of this Audit and client correspondences. In addition, email correspondence documented project meetings and phone discussions. The professional expertise and knowledge that Leidos gained through conducting similar procurements and performing similar audits on behalf of other clients supplemented these materials and served as the underlying foundation for the Audit.

### 2.02 Process Description

The Audit commenced with a kickoff meeting on February 18, 2019 during which key members of the Leidos and Xcel teams discussed the RFP Process and established a communications protocol, project schedule, and data transmittal plan. Audit parameters and key details of the procurement process were explored. During the course of the Audit, Leidos held meetings/conference calls with Xcel to discuss progress, coordinate meetings, and obtain clarifications and/or additional materials. Audit team members held internal progress meetings to discuss efforts, identify areas requiring additional investigation, and coordinate review. As the Audit proceeded, additional meetings for specific topics were held with and subsequent data requests made to Xcel.

Upon receipt of proposal materials from Xcel, Leidos established a secure network storage area for all Audit related materials and limited access to Audit team members. Documents received by Leidos were under physical control of Audit team members during the course of the Audit. Leidos maintained a log of materials received from Xcel over the course of the Audit.

Leidos assessed the extent to which RFP documents and associated attachments provided adequate and consistent information that Bidders could use to prepare competitive proposals. Leidos reviewed advanced notifications as well as post-release announcements to assess the level to which information was disseminated to a broad range of potential Bidders to achieve a robust pool of proposals. Leidos assessed the level to which Xcel's procurement process conformed to representations made in the RFP documents and any post-release announcements. Leidos assessed the extent to which Xcel exercised appropriate control of the Bid Documents post receipt.

Leidos sought to identify potential biases in the evaluation criteria, evaluation process, proposal modeling, selection process, and assumptions used for selecting proposals. Leidos evaluated Xcel's methodology for selecting short-listed Bidders. Leidos reviewed Xcel's modeling, due diligence and evaluation criteria to identify irregularities, bias or potential discrimination. Leidos evaluated the extent to which Xcel's stated evaluation criteria were applied in a fair and unbiased manner and that a consistent, transparent methodology was used to rank proposals. Leidos assessed whether the components of the process conformed to accepted industry standards and sought to identify irregularities in the procurement process. Leidos evaluated the extent to which Xcel's stated evaluation criteria were correctly applied and proposals were evaluated in accord with Xcel's expressed assumptions and methodology. Leidos tracked all efforts, cited discrepancies and noted comments via email communication with Xcel.

Leidos requested that Xcel staff provide written attestation statements concerning RFP communications and proposal evaluation. These attestation statements are included in Appendix B.

## 2.03 Audit Team

Leidos was retained by Xcel to conduct this Audit. Leidos assists utilities, energy developers, and financial institutions across the country with the development, analysis, and negotiation of power purchase and sales agreements. The experience of Leidos relative to this engagement includes comprehensive power system planning and analysis and design of generation portfolios. Leidos has a designated group of economists, engineers, analysts, and other professionals who provide a range of energy resource planning and advisory services. Our multidisciplinary staff understands the breadth of technical, financial, regulatory, environmental, and social issues surrounding the electric power industry and can apply this knowledge to guide sound business decisions. Our practitioners have significant forecasting and market modeling experience in many energy-related and resource industries including renewable and fossil-fuel electric generation, fuels, solid waste, and water.

In addition to particular expertise in auditing, the Leidos Audit team for this engagement includes technical specialists in renewable energy, resource procurement, energy market and financial modeling, and resource planning. The Audit was conducted under the direction and supervision of Kevin Favero, a senior management consultant with 46 years of experience in the utility industry including long-term organizational, financial, and resource planning; economic and financial analysis of markets, projects, and portfolios; and in conducting process, operational, and performance audits. He has managed RFP processes for renewable and thermal generation resources, conducted contract negotiations, and prepared technical submittals for wind power interconnection applications. Mr. Favero was supported by Phil Stiles, a senior consultant in power generation at Leidos, specializing in preparation of wind PPA RFPs, evaluation of wind PPA proposals, review and auditing of wind RFP processes, knowledge of turbine technology, with experience in turbine testing, operations, and maintenance; by John Fix, a senior consultant in

capital cost and construction scheduling of wind projects throughout the country, construction monitoring, and preparation of reports for wind project lenders; by Molli Gerken, a registered professional engineer with experience in providing independent engineering environmental reviews identifying permits and approvals required for construction and operation on a variety of wind projects throughout the country; and by Humberto Branco, a senior engineer with experience in evaluating wind generation interconnection studies for the Midcontinent Independent System Operator (“MISO”).

## 2.04 Auditor Role

Leidos conducted this Audit as a third-party independent reviewer of Xcel’s RFP Process. Leidos relied upon the process and criteria defined and established by Xcel. Leidos evaluated the procurement *process* not the actual procurement results. Leidos reviewed the modeling, due diligence, and evaluation criteria used by Xcel in this RFP Process solely for the purposes of identifying irregularities, bias or discrimination and confirming that Xcel consistently and appropriately applied its defined criteria to evaluation of the proposals.

## 2.05 Limitations

The role of Leidos was to independently evaluate the Xcel process. The role of Leidos in this process was solely that of third-party independent auditor. Although such efforts may have included assessing the reasonableness of various modeling assumptions toward that end, Leidos did not perform the role of consulting engineer. Leidos did not perform this Audit in the role of independent evaluator nor was Leidos involved in the selection or ranking of proposals. Leidos does not attest to the validity of the assumptions or outcomes of Xcel’s procurement process. Review of additional materials or disclosure of material facts not currently known could change the findings stated in this report.

Additional limitations appear in Section 1.04.

## 2.06 Disclosure

Leidos discloses that it has served many utilities and project developers within the energy industry, including Xcel and its wholly-owned subsidiaries, and some Bidders and potential Bidders to the 2019 Wind RFP. None of these pre-existing business dealings or relationships impacted the ability of the Leidos Audit team to conduct an independent, unbiased, and critical assessment and evaluation of the RFP Process. Furthermore, the Project Manager did not have communications or a relationship with Xcel or Bidders prior to the onset of the Audit. No Leidos staff enlisted for the Audit were responsible for evaluation of proposals or development of model input or assumptions other than in a review and verification capacity.



## Section 3 AUDIT RESULTS

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This section discusses the RFP Process and presents the results of the Leidos Audit activities.

### 3.01 Overview

The 2019 Wind RFP solicitation, among other items, addressed:

- Eligible Resources;
- Interconnection and Transmission Requirements;
- Transmission and Interconnection Costs;
- Schedule;
- Instruction for Communication with Xcel; and
- Proposal Submittal Deliverable Requirements.

The 2019 Wind RFP allowed for proposals of capacity in the range of 20 MW to 200 MW structured as PPAs.

### 3.02 Bidder Documents and Notifications

On January 7, 2019 and January 10, 2019 Xcel notified the MPUC of the upcoming effort by Xcel to procure new wind resource capacity. On April 10, 2019, Xcel issued the Northern States Power Company 2019 Wind Solicitation: Wind Resources Request for Proposals (the “2019 Wind RFP”) for up to 200 MW of wind energy generation capacity. A notice to the press of the 2019 Wind RFP was delivered through the Xcel Media Relations group to various trade groups including Clean Technica, Energy and Environment News, EnergyCentral.com, EnergyWire, GreenTech Media, Global Renewable News, Intelligent Utility, North American Energy Markets Association, North American Windpower, Public Utilities Fortnightly, Re-Charge, Utility Dive, Windpower Engineering, and Wind Power Magazine. Additionally, the solicitation was made public through the Xcel company website.<sup>17</sup>

The 2019 Wind RFP clearly identified proposal requirements and submittal deadline. It set forth a timeline of events and submittal requirements. Communication protocols and points of contact were included. The 2019 Wind RFP identified eligible resource options, outlined the treatment of transmission and interconnection costs, explained

<sup>17</sup>

[https://www.xcelenergy.com/working\\_with\\_us/renewable\\_developer\\_resource\\_center/wind\\_generation\\_request\\_for\\_proposals](https://www.xcelenergy.com/working_with_us/renewable_developer_resource_center/wind_generation_request_for_proposals)

how multiple proposals for the same project would be treated, provided a model wind PPA, and provided Standard Bidder Forms.

The 2019 Wind RFP documents made available to Bidders on the Xcel company website included the following:

1. The main 2019 Wind RFP document titled “Northern States Power Company 2019 Wind Solicitation: Wind Resources Request for Proposals.” This document provides background information, proposal requirements, and instructions to Bidders on how to submit their proposals. Filename: *NSP-2019-Wind-RFP.pdf*
2. Standard Bidder Forms as Appendix A to the 2019 Wind RFP document titled Proposal Forms and Instructions in Microsoft Excel format. Requested information was required to be completed by the Bidders on standard forms (refer to Table 3-1), one on each workbook tab. Filename: *NSP-2019-Wind-RFP-Bidder-Form.xlsx*.
3. The NSP model power purchase agreement as Appendix B to the 2019 Wind RFP in a document titled “NSP’s Model Wind Power Purchase Agreement” in Microsoft Word and Adobe PDF formats. Filename: *NSP Model Renewable PPA Final 20190409.doc* and *NSP Model Renewable PPA Final 20190409.pdf*.
4. A form for Xcel taxpayer identification number and certification titled “Taxpayer Identification Number and Certification.” Filename: *Form W-9 (Rev. October 2018).pdf*.
5. A document with responses to Bidder questions through April 16, 2019 titled “Q&A Northern States Power Company 2019 Wind Resources RFP April 16, 2019. File name: *QA\_20190416\_Final.pdf*.
6. A document with responses to Bidder questions through April 22, 2019 titled “Q&A Northern States Power Company 2019 Wind Resources RFP April 22, 2019. File name: *QA\_20190422.pdf*.

The standard Bidder Forms workbook tabs are described in Table 3-1 below.



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**AUDIT RESULTS**

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**Table 3-1: Standard Bidder Forms—Workbook Tabs**

Standard Bid Tab Description	
Tab 1	Confidentiality
Tab 2	Bid Certification
Tab 3	Cover Sheet
Tab 4	Pricing 12 Year Term
Tab 5	Pricing 20 Year Term
Tab 6	Pricing Alternative Year Term
Tab 7	Construction
Tab 8	Technical Description
Tab 9	Production Profile
Tab 10	Representation Authorization
Tab 11	Interconnection Details
Tab 12	Creditworthiness
Tab 13	Siting Environmental

### 3.03 Transmission and Interconnection

Xcel limited the geographic location to those projects with an interconnection location within the MISO territory and in one of the three following states where NSP customers or generation resources are located. This “Project Region” included those portions of Minnesota, North Dakota and South Dakota within MISO. Xcel required that Bidders be responsible for all costs associated with interconnecting their proposed projects to the MISO system. Bidders were instructed that they shall arrange and be solely responsible for all costs associated with delivery of energy from their project(s) located within the Project Region, to the point of delivery in their proposals.

Bidders were also asked to provide a list of costs itemized by major components and supporting documentation, such as MISO generator interconnection study reports, MISO optional study reports or Bidder-sponsored interconnection study reports detailing interconnection and transmission costs associated with their RFP Project(s). The Study reports were to include detailed descriptions and cost assumptions for all

interconnection facilities, transmission system upgrades, distribution system upgrades, and transmission system protection facilities needed for the proposed project(s).

Xcel reaffirmed the responsibilities for interconnection costs in a separate email to Bidders. Bidders were asked to confirm their understanding of the requirements. Some Bidders responded affirmatively confirming they understood that they were responsible for all future transmission costs and therefore the proposed price(s) could not be subject to any future adjustments to a higher price. Other Bidders did not confirm that understanding and consideration of their proposals was terminated.

### **3.04 Internal Control of Documents and Information**

The 2019 Wind RFP required that all proposal packages be delivered to the Xcel RFP Project Manager, who is a member of Xcel's Resource Planning team, by 5:00 PM Central Time (CT) on May 1, 2019. Xcel's Resource Planning personnel were responsible for logging all proposal packages received and preserving them unopened until they were opened by the Xcel RFP Project Manager on May 2, 2019. The proposals were stored in a secure environment and were "checked-out" to designated RFP Evaluation Team members, identified in Section 3.08, and logged under a controlled procedure governed by Resource Planning. The electronic versions of the proposals were uploaded to a secure SharePoint site with access limited to the Xcel RFP Evaluation Team and the Independent Auditor.

The RFP Evaluation Team was instructed during meetings and in written documentation not to communicate directly or indirectly with any Bidders. These communication protocols remained in effect throughout the RFP Process until the final short list was established.

### **3.05 Communications with Bidders**

The 2019 Wind RFP specifically discussed communications between Bidders and Xcel, providing specific contact information and stating that all communication was to occur exclusively in written format and only via email. Bidders were instructed to submit inquires to the RFP Project Manager via email at:

[NSP2019WINDRFP@xcelenergy.com](mailto:NSP2019WINDRFP@xcelenergy.com)

and were told they should not attempt to acquire information through any other means including telephone calls to the Xcel. Bidders were notified in the 2019 Wind RFP document that they were responsible for monitoring the RFP website for updated addendums. The evaluation teams were also instructed not to communicate with bidders during the evaluation process, outside of the official email medium and only to ask clarifying questions and/or give the bidders opportunity to cure deficiencies that were identified during the completeness and threshold review.

Xcel established these information policies to ensure that all respondents had the same timely access and knowledge about the RFP and evaluation process. The 2019 Wind RFP document identified the deadlines associated with submitting questions as described in Table 3-2 below.

Xcel did not entertain questions posed in any format other than email. Members of Xcel's RFP Evaluation Team, as identified in Section 3.08, did not have in-person or telephone conversations with Bidders or potential Bidders.

Xcel maintained a log of all inquiries and coordinated the preparation of written responses. Xcel periodically posted responses to questions received from Bidders on the company website. The RFP document stated that Xcel would file responses as an addendum(s) to the RFP. However responses were provided in two documents titled "Q&A Northern States Power Company 2019 Wind Resources RFP" with one dated April 16, 2019 and one dated April 24, 2019 that were not titled as addenda. These documents provided Xcel's answers to Bidders' questions and were filed within the stated April 24, 2019 deadline for posting responses to Bidder questions.

Although Xcel did not follow the stated protocol by failing to provide answers to questions in an addendum format, the Independent Auditor finds this did not impact the completeness of information provided Bidders, responsiveness of Bidders, or the evaluation or results of the RFP process, as the documents provided were easily viewed and accessible. In addition, the documents did not provide any new information and provided restatements or clarifications of what was already provided in the main 2019 Wind RFP document.

As described above, based on some ambiguities in the Bidder proposals, Xcel sent emails as required to all Bidders on May 10, 2019 to confirm that pricing in the proposals was based on the following factors already included in the RFP documents:

- The Model Wind PPA, including the requirement to agree to the right of first offer and purchase option as described in the Model PPA;
- The full cost for all transmission interconnection and system upgrade costs that have been previously identified or that will be identified by MISO; and
- The security fund requirements in the Model Wind PPA including, but not limited to, the pre-commercial operation date ("COD") and post-COD security fund amounts and pre-COD forms of security allowed.

In addition to describing the protocol for questions submittal and responses to be provided, the protocol for Xcel asking clarifying questions, conducting due diligence, submitting information requests, clarifications, and confidentiality were all discussed adequately and appropriately in the RFP.

In support of this Audit, Leidos reviewed all email communications between Xcel and Bidders for the Audit period and found no irregularities or introduction of information that could cause undue bias against, preferential treatment toward, or unfair disadvantage to any particular Bidder or subset of Bidders. Xcel and the Auditor have maintained electronic logs of all email correspondence.

### 3.06 Schedule

The 2019 Wind RFP provided the process schedule appearing in Table 3-2 below and this schedule, through the step identified as "NSP bid evaluation and selection completed," was adhered to.

## Section 3

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**Table 3-2: 2019 Wind RFP Schedule**

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Date</b>
RFP Issued	April 10, 2019
Deadline for submitting questions from Bidders	April 18, 2019
NSP will post responses to Bidder questions as addenda	April 24, 2019
Bid submittal deadline, 5:00 pm CT	May 1, 2019
NSP bid evaluation and selection completed	May 17, 2019
Contract negotiations completed	July 10 2019
Regulatory filing with the MPUC	July 2019
Anticipated Regulatory Approval	Q4 2019

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### 3.07 Evaluation Process Overview

Xcel and the Independent Auditor worked together to establish a detailed approach for the RFP process including proposal evaluation.

Xcel used a three-phased approach to evaluate proposals responding to the RFP:

- 1) Completeness Review
- 2) Threshold Review
- 3) Key Parameters Review and Scoring

These phases are described in more detail in Section 3.09.

Only those proposals that passed the Completeness Review and the Threshold Review were further evaluated by a Key Parameters Review and Scoring. Xcel identified the following key parameters for use in evaluating the RFP proposals with the associated weighting for scoring:

- |                   |     |
|-------------------|-----|
| 1) Pricing        | 85% |
| 2) Transmission   | 5%  |
| 3) Labor          | 5%  |
| 4) PPA Compliance | 5%  |

The evaluation teams were comprised of Xcel employees. The core RFP Evaluation Team was comprised of individuals from Xcel's Resource Planning group and was responsible for RFP document development and issuance, document control, and managing the three evaluation phases.

Various Bidders submitted multiple business arrangements for the same wind project. Xcel reviewed these arrangements as separate proposals.

### **3.08 Xcel RFP Evaluation Team**

The following tables list all of the individuals included in the RFP evaluation as well as their specific roles in conducting or contributing to the evaluation phases. The RFP Evaluation Team, comprised of those individuals in Table 3-3, was responsible for RFP Issuance, the Completeness Review, the Threshold Review, the Key Parameters Review and Scoring, and Document Control.

Section 3

**Table 3-3: Xcel RFP Resource Planning Team Members,  
Key Personnel and Role in RFP Process**

<b>Name Title</b>	<b>Company</b>	<b>Role</b>
<b>Jonathan Adelman AVP Strategic Resource and Business Planning</b>	Xcel Energy	Executive Management oversight
<b>PJ Martin Director Resource Planning &amp; Bidding</b>	Xcel Energy	Direct RFP preparations and execution, manage internal management communications and primary evaluator
<b>Patrick Bourke Director Strategic Asset Planning</b>	Xcel Energy	Assistance with bid opening and secondary evaluator
<b>Edward Weinberg Senior Consultant Strategic Asset Planning</b>	Xcel Energy	RFP Project Manager. Day-to-day management of RFP execution including logging, proposal screening, development of proposal short list and supporting recommendation, bidder communication and internal RFP progress communication and secondary evaluator
<b>Mary Morrison Senior Resource Planning Analyst</b>	Xcel Energy	Assistance with RFP logging, proposal screening, bidder communication and primary evaluator
<b>Jon Landrum Manager Resource Planning Analytics</b>	Xcel Energy	LCOE modeling
<b>Keith Howe Resource Planning Analyst I</b>	Xcel Energy	Assistance with RFP logging, proposal screening, bidder communication and primary evaluator
<b>Mark Christner Resource Planning Analyst I</b>	Xcel Energy	General assistance with RFP process as needed

In addition to the core RFP Evaluation Team, certain Xcel subject matter experts were used to conduct additional due diligence in an effort to evaluate key components of proposals, as described in more detail in Section 3.09. These other team members and their roles are shown in Table 3-4.

**AUDIT RESULTS**

**Table 3-4: Other Non-Price and Completeness and Threshold Assessment Evaluators/Contributors**

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Name Title</b>	<b>Company</b>	<b>Role</b>
<b>PPA Compliance</b>	Tara Fowler Manager Renewable Energy Power Purchases	Xcel Energy	Due diligence feedback regarding PPA compliance
<b>Transmission</b>	Randy Oye Transmission Analyst	Xcel Energy	Due diligence feedback regarding transmission
<b>Counterparty Credit Review</b>	Mark Breese Director Contract & Credit Strategy	Xcel Energy	Due diligence feedback regarding counterparty credit review
<b>Permit Appeal</b>	Jennifer Smith Assistant General Counsel	Xcel Energy	Due diligence feedback regarding permit appeal
<b>General Permitting</b>	Matt Langan Principal Agent, Siting & Land Rights	Xcel Energy	Due diligence feedback regarding general permitting
<b>Environmental Compliance</b>	Pat Flowers Manager Environmental Services	Xcel Energy	Due diligence feedback regarding environmental compliance

### 3.09 Evaluation Phases

#### 3.9.1 Completeness Review and Threshold Review

Upon opening the proposals, at least two RFP Resource Planning Team individuals reviewed each proposal to confirm that all information required had been included and that each proposal met the completeness and threshold criteria identified in the RFP.

The Completeness Review ensures compliance with all bid submittal requirements such as fees, sufficient information provided in bid responses, etc.

The Threshold Review ensures the bidder and RFP Project complies with all specific bid requirements including the following:

- 1) RFP Project size
- 2) RFP Project location
- 3) RFP Project anticipated commercial operation date
- 4) Interconnection to MISO in the project area
- 5) Bidder creditworthiness
- 6) Bidder experience
- 7) Accounting assessment

The evaluation team contacted any Bidders who did not pass the initial Completeness Review and Threshold Review and allowed Bidders a two-business-day window to address any deficiencies with some limited leeway if a good-faith effort was made. If the deficiencies were not addressed in a timely manner, the projects were disqualified and no longer considered for short listing. Information deficiencies were logged electronically and Xcel notified the Bidders of the deficiencies via e-mail. The e-mail provided a list of the deficiencies and the specific date by which the Bidder must correct the deficiency.

The Completeness Review and Threshold Review were documented for each project proposal on an Excel spreadsheet.

Xcel and the Independent Auditor have maintained electronic logs of all Completeness Reviews and Threshold Reviews conducted. Xcel maintained a log of all deficiency emails sent and Bidder responses received, which the Independent Auditor has reviewed. Of the 55 separate proposals received, six were deemed disqualified from further consideration due to being incomplete.

Of the remaining 49 that met the completeness requirements, 18 failed the threshold requirements, leaving 31 proposals that received additional evaluation as described below.

### **3.9.2 Analyses of Bid Documents**

Each proposal was reviewed by Xcel evaluators to document in Excel spreadsheet and/or email form the characteristics of the projects requiring additional due diligence relative to transmission, finance, permitting and environmental, and PPA compliance issues.

### **3.9.3 Key Parameter Review: Pricing**

As a part of the Key Parameter Review, Xcel evaluated the RFP Project pricing. Xcel calculated the levelized cost of energy (“LCOE”) for all PPA proposals that met all Completeness and Threshold Criteria requirements.

The objective of the LCOE calculations was to identify projects that will have the lowest total cost of purchased electricity to Xcel. The LCOE for the PPAs was calculated using the proposed energy generated and PPA payments. The discount rate used was 6.53 percent, which is the Xcel weighted average cost of capital as used for Xcel resource planning analyses.



The Independent Auditor reviewed the LCOE model and confirms that it provided a fair and reasonable evaluation of the LCOE from the proposed projects. The assumptions, inputs, and calculations are the sole responsibility of Xcel. As the Auditor, Leidos reviewed assumptions, inputs, and calculations to determine that the model was working as intended and being applied fairly and uniformly.

The LCOE modeling was completed using a 12-year or 20-year evaluation period as applicable for the proposal. None of the Bidders proposed an alternative contract period length.

The LCOE calculations were based on costs at the point of delivery. No proposals were assigned a cost or credit for MISO inter-zonal transmission costs, congestion costs, or costs incurred due to curtailment.

The LCOE values for all of the proposals were ranked from lowest cost to highest cost in 10 LCOE groups with each LCOE group having an equal range of LCOE costs. Each group was given a score of 1 to 10 in order, with the top LCOE group (with the lowest LCOE costs) given a score of 10 and the bottom LCOE group (with the highest LCOE costs) given a score of 1.

A ranking based on the LCOE results was prepared for each individual project by assigning a score based on the LCOE group for that project using the above approach.

The LCOE scoring constituted 85 percent of the overall evaluation scoring. The remaining 15 percent included the three non-price scoring categories as described below.

Xcel and the Independent Auditor have maintained electronic logs of all LCOE/Price Review spreadsheet models for each proposal that passed the Completeness and Threshold Review.

### **3.9.4 Non-Price/Qualitative Review and Scoring**

The Key Parameter Review included a Non-Price/Qualitative Review. The Key Parameter Review was structured to mitigate against the introduction of bias or the perception of bias in the evaluation of RFP responses. To that end, all proposal information was maintained in a locked room with only the RFP Evaluation Team members having access.

In the Key Parameter Review and Scoring, all projects were scored using the NSP 2019 Wind RFP Wind RFP Scoring Evaluation Form. In addition to being scored for pricing as describe above, Projects were scored in the following non-price areas:

- 1) Transmission (certification of Bidder bearing all costs and MISO queue position);
- 2) Labor (constructed and operated with Union or Non-Union Labor); and
- 3) PPA Compliance (accepting the Model PPA or detailing all exceptions).

For the transmission scoring, Bidders that certified all transmission and interconnection costs are borne by the Bidder received 4 points. Projects received

6 points for a 2016 MISO queue position, 4 points for a 2017 queue position, 2 points for a 2018 queue position, and 1 point for a 2019 queue position. The transmission score constituted 5 percent of the overall evaluation scoring.

Proposals with union labor for construction and operation received 10 points and proposals with non-union labor received 0 points. The labor score constituted 5 percent of the overall evaluation scoring.

Proposals with Bidder certification that the bid complies with the NSP Model PPA (except for exceptions taken) received 4 points. Proposals with 0 exceptions received 6 points, with 1 to 10 exceptions received 3 points, and with more than 10 exceptions received 0 points. The PPA compliance score constituted 5 percent of the overall evaluation scoring.

The LCOE scoring constituted the balance (85 percent) of the overall evaluation scoring as described above.

In the form, evaluators selected “yes” or “no” answers to all of the questions associated with each area. Based on the “yes” or “no” answers, the form then auto-calculated an overall non-price score for each project.

Leidos reviewed the evaluation spreadsheet to confirm that it calculated costs as described above.

As described above, the evaluation scoring was well-defined and did not require much subjective evaluation. However, for any items in question, evaluators were asked to give justification for their answers within the written comments box in each form section. Evaluators were also expected to provide written comments for each section in which they provided specific detail on any major risks associated with a project as well as a recommendation as to how to proceed given their assessment of the project characteristics. This qualitative assessment is meant to supplement the Non-Price rankings but was not used in any way as part of the determination of scores or rankings as part of the RFP evaluation process.

Xcel and the Independent Auditor have maintained electronic logs of all Non-Price/Qualitative evaluation forms for proposals included in this phase of the evaluation.

### 3.9.5 Final Ranking

The results of the LCOE/Price Review and Non-Price/Qualitative Review were used to develop the final ranking of proposals and determine the short list of proposals to proceed to negotiations. As described above, the final scoring weighted the LCOE and Non-Price scores as follows:

LCOE	85%
Transmission	5%
Labor	5%
PPA Model Acceptance	<u>5%</u>
Total	100%

**PROTECTED DATA SHADED**

A score at the top of all of the above categories would result in an overall evaluated score of 100. Based on the above scoring, three companies had proposals that received a score of 90 or higher: Allete Clean Energy (Allete), Invenergy, LLC (Invenergy), and NextEra Energy Resources, LLC (NextEra).

All of the other proposals had overall scores that were less than 77.

The three short list proposals, all of which had a score of 90 or higher, are:

- Allete 212 MW Glen Ullin Energy Center #2 Wind Project
- Invenergy 100 MW [REDACTED] Deuel Harvest North Wind Farm Energy Center (short list backup)
- NextEra 100.9 MW Walleye Wind Project (short list backup)

Xcel and the Independent Auditor have maintained electronic logs of all ranked LCOE/Price and Non-Price/Qualitative evaluation scores. The Independent Auditor verifies the selection of the short-listed proposals.

### 3.10 Summary of Audit Activities

Leidos reviewed the RFP process and supporting documentation provided by Xcel for accuracy, consistency, fairness and any evidence of potential bias in the evaluation and overall selection process. Table 3-5 below provides a summary checklist of Leidos audit activities from the creation of RFP documents to the review of the methodology, assumptions, criteria, and models used by Xcel to shortlist proposals.

Section 3

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**Table 3-5: Activities Conducted in Performance of Audit**

<b>Audit Activities</b>	
Review of all RFP documents, forms, addendums, news release, notices, and RFP Bidder questions asked and answered. Provision of comments and suggested edits, as necessary.	Review and verification of Xcel's RFP process document. Provision of comments and suggested edits, as necessary.
Review of 1) LCOE spreadsheet model, 2) Completeness & Threshold Review evaluation spreadsheet, 3) Non-Price/Qualitative Scoring evaluation spreadsheet and 4) Final short list project rankings spreadsheet for completeness, functionality, and accuracy of formulas and calculations.	Review of proposal documents to confirm appropriate and accurate characterization of proposals within the LCOE spreadsheet model, and the Non-Price/Qualitative Review Form.
Review of proposal material to confirm results of Completeness and Threshold Review are accurate and causes and outcomes documented.	Review of results of LCOE spreadsheet model for each proposed project.
Review of proposal material to confirm results of the Non-Price/Qualitative Review are accurate and causes and outcomes documented.	Review and verification of Final Ranking of proposals and confirm short-list selected Bidders.
Review of all correspondence between Xcel and Bidders.	

## Section 4 AUDIT OUTCOMES

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This section presents the outcomes of the Audit based on review by Leidos as discussed in this report.

### 4.01 Observations

Based on efforts in support of the Audit as discussed in the preceding sections, Leidos makes the following observations concerning the RFP Process.

#### I. RFP Documents & Notifications

Xcel's RFP documents clearly communicated enough information for Bidders to adequately prepare competitive proposals. Xcel used multiple channels to distribute the RFP notice and provided adequate time for Bidders to prepare submissions. Xcel's RFP defined a reasonable schedule and identified key project milestones. Xcel provided detailed information on submittal requirements as well as materials for Bidders to use through its website. Xcel also provided contact information. In all these respects Leidos observes that Xcel's RFP conforms to industry standards.

Relative to industry practice, Xcel materially adhered to the process outlined in its 2019 Wind RFP. With the exception of not providing answers to questions in addendum format, Xcel followed the schedule and protocol presented to Bidders.

In response to its solicitation, Xcel received proposals for 55 different project configurations from nine separate Bidders. Bidders were able to submit competitive and responsive proposals that conformed to the requirements of the RFP. In this respect, Leidos observes that Xcel's RFP Documents and notifications achieved intended goals.

#### II. Communications

Xcel's code of conduct with respect to handling proposals was consistent with industry practice and provided an appropriate standard of care. Xcel kept communications with Bidders limited to only what was necessary to conduct the evaluation and in a documented email format. The Independent Auditor requested attestations concerning Bidder communications and relationships from Xcel evaluation personnel, which are found in Appendix B. Based on these efforts Leidos is of the opinion that Xcel's communications were appropriate and were consistent with intended goals for conduct of this RFP Process.

### III. Evaluation Criteria

Xcel's evaluation criteria were reasonable and correctly applied. Xcel applied the evaluation criteria across each proposal submitted in an equitable and consistent manner.

### IV. Evaluation Process

Xcel's evaluation process was rigorous, robust, and consistent. Xcel administered the process professionally and was thorough in its efforts. Leidos observes that Xcel's process afforded each proposal equitable care and consideration. Leidos reviewed Xcel's evaluation efforts and found that Xcel consistently applied its stated criteria and evaluation methodology to shortlisted and non-shortlisted projects.

## 4.02 Conclusions

Based on efforts in support of the Audit, the Independent Auditor reaches the following conclusions concerning both the RFP Process and the Audit process. The Independent Auditor was satisfied by the level of review and analysis every proposal received. Xcel's efforts were well documented, detailed, and candid. The comments and conclusions of reviewers were well reasoned and documented. The models developed by Xcel were robust, well organized, and represent quality work products. The overall RFP Process was well executed, well documented, and consistent. Xcel devoted significant resources to administration of the RFP Process and the Independent Auditor is of the opinion that these efforts deserve proper regard in this report.

With respect to the Audit process—an effort that is by definition extra burden and work for all who participated—the Audit team received cooperative and cordial treatment from Xcel. The data and information requested from Xcel were delivered promptly and in order. Bidder communications provided to the Independent Auditor were organized and appear to be complete. Throughout the course of the Audit, the Independent Auditor often asked questions of and requested additional information from Xcel. The Independent Auditor also worked with Xcel and where necessary requested specific changes to the RFP Process be made to ensure fairness, equitable treatment, and an unbiased outcome. In all cases, Xcel listened, was cooperative, and spent considerable time and effort promptly and effectively responding. Xcel expedited answers to the Independent Auditor despite considerable pressure to complete analyses in support of a tight timeframe to move onto active Bidder negotiations. The Independent Auditor commends Xcel staff for their professionalism, support, and cooperation.

**AUDIT OUTCOMES**

**4.03 Findings**

The following table summarizes the findings of the Audit of the RFP Process.

**Table 4-1: Audit Findings<sup>18</sup>**

PARAMETER	REQUIREMENT	WAS REQUIREMENT MET?	
<b>I</b>	<b>Bid Documents &amp; Notifications</b>	RFP documents and associated attachments provided adequate and consistent information that Bidders could use to prepare competitive proposals.	Yes
		Information was disseminated to a broad range of potential Bidders to achieve a robust pool of proposals.	Yes
		Xcel's procurement process conformed to representations made in the RFP documents and any post-release announcements.	Yes
		Xcel exercised appropriate control of the Bidder documents post receipt.	Yes
<b>II</b>	<b>Communications</b>	Xcel communicated consistently and transparently with potential and actual Bidders throughout the process.	Yes
		Correspondence between Xcel personnel and potential and actual Bidders did not afford undue advantage or preferential treatment to the potential disadvantage of other Bidders.	Yes
		Bidders received equal and equitable treatment.	Yes

<sup>18</sup> All findings are based solely on the review by Leidos of materials furnished by Xcel as identified, or publicly-available information as cited. Review of additional materials or disclosure of additional material facts could change the findings stated in this report.

Section 4

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	PARAMETER	REQUIREMENT	WAS REQUIREMENT MET?
III	Evaluation Criteria	The evaluation criteria, evaluation process, proposal modeling, selection process, and assumptions used for selecting proposals were free from bias.	Yes
		Xcel's methodology for selecting short-listed Bidders was free from bias.	Yes
		Xcel's modeling, due diligence and evaluation criteria were free from irregularities, bias or potential discrimination.	Yes
IV	Evaluation Process	Xcel's stated evaluation criteria were applied in a fair and unbiased manner and a consistent, transparent methodology was used to rank proposals.	Yes
		The components of the process and the procurement process conformed to accepted industry standards.	Yes
		Xcel's stated evaluation criteria were correctly applied and proposals were evaluated in accord with Xcel's expressed assumptions and methodology.	Yes



**Appendix A**  
**2019 Wind**  
**RFP**

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For reference, attached is the 2019 Wind RFP main document released on April 10, 2019 by Xcel.

# Northern States Power Company

## 2019 Wind Solicitation

### Wind Resources Request for Proposals



**RFP Issue Date: April 10, 2019**

**Proposals Due: May 1, 2019**

**RFP Website: [www.xcelenergy.com/NSP2019WINDRFP](http://www.xcelenergy.com/NSP2019WINDRFP)**

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Proposal Forms and Instructions

### ***Appendix B***

NSP's Model Wind Power Purchase Agreement

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12. Creditworthiness
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### **Notice of Disclaimer**

The information contained in this Request for Proposals ("RFP") for wind energy resources has been prepared solely to assist bidders in deciding whether or not to submit competitive, responsive bids. Northern States Power Company ("NSP" or the "Company") does not represent this information to be comprehensive or to contain all of the information that a respondent may need to consider in order to submit a proposal. None of the Company, its affiliates, or their respective employees, directors, officers, customers, agents and consultants makes, or will be deemed to have made, any current or future representation, promise or warranty, express or implied, as to the accuracy, reliability or completeness of the information contained herein, or in any document or information made available to a respondent, whether or not the aforementioned parties knew or should have known of any errors or omissions, or were responsible for their inclusion in, or omission from, this RFP.

The Company reserves the right to modify, supplement or withdraw this RFP at any time, whether due to changes in law or otherwise, and including by issuing one or more addenda to this RFP during this solicitation, which addenda shall become a part of this RFP. No part of this RFP and no part of any subsequent correspondence by the Company, its affiliates, or their respective employees, directors, officers, customers, agents or consultants shall be taken as providing legal, financial or other advice or as establishing a contract or contractual obligation. Contractual obligations on the part of the Company will arise only if and when definitive agreements have been approved and executed by the appropriate parties having the authority to approve and enter into such agreements. The Company reserves the right to request from a respondent (a.k.a., bidder) information that is not explicitly detailed in this document, obtain clarification from bidders concerning proposals, conduct contract development discussions with selected respondents, conduct discussions with members of the evaluation team and other support resources as described in this RFP and in compliance with all FERC Code of Conduct rules and provide data to and conduct discussions with the Independent Auditor ("IA") as necessary for the IA to satisfy the IA's role.

The Company will, in its sole discretion and without limitation, evaluate proposals and proceed in the manner the Company deems appropriate, which may include deviation from the Company's expected evaluation process, the waiver of any requirements and the request for additional information. The Company reserves the right to reject any, all or portions of any proposal received for failure to meet any criteria set forth in this RFP or otherwise and to accept proposals other than the lowest cost proposal. The Company also may decline to enter into any agreement with any bidder, terminate negotiations with any bidder or abandon the RFP process in its entirety at any time, for any reason and without notice thereof. Respondents that submit proposals agree to do so without legal recourse against the Company, its affiliates, or their respective employees, directors, officers, customers, agents or consultants for rejection of their proposals or for failure to execute an agreement for any reason. The Company and its affiliates shall not be liable to any respondent or other party in law or equity for any reason whatsoever for any acts or omissions arising out of or in connection with this RFP. Each respondent waives any right to challenge any valuation by the Company of its proposal in any court of law or equity. By submitting its proposal, each respondent waives any right to challenge any determination of the Company to select or reject its proposal. Each respondent, in submitting its proposal, irrevocably agrees and acknowledges that it is making its proposal subject to and in agreement with the terms of this RFP.

Each respondent shall be liable for all of its costs incurred to prepare, submit, respond or negotiate its proposal and any resulting agreement and for any other activity related thereto, and the Company shall not be responsible for any of the respondent's costs.

## **Section 1. Introduction**

Northern States Power Company ("NSP" or the "Company"), an operating company subsidiary of Xcel Energy Inc., is issuing this Request for Proposals ("RFP") to seek proposals for wind generation projects. The Company is seeking low cost energy wind resources to help support new programs for its customers.

Through this RFP process, NSP intends to procure wind generation ("RFP Project(s)") via Power Purchase Agreements ("PPA"). All projects must have or will have an interconnection location within MISO in one of the following states where NSP customers or generation resources are located: Minnesota, North Dakota or South Dakota ("Project Region").

The Company is asking that proposals be submitted by 5:00 pm CT on May 1, 2019 ("Proposal Due Date").

### **1.1 Purpose and Scope**

The Company is requesting proposals for wind resources that achieve commercial operation in 2020 and 2021. The Company has a target to procure 100 MW from wind resources that reach commercial operation in 2020 and 100 MW from wind resources that reach commercial operation in 2021, but will evaluate all proposals received through this RFP and is open to exceeding this target depending on the proposals received. The amount of generation that the Company may acquire from this RFP depends on, among other things, the quality of bids received in response to this solicitation and economic value to NSP customers.

### **1.2 Regulatory Context**

Docket E002/RP-04-1752 from the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission ("MPUC") requires that an Independent Auditor ("IA") conduct an independent review of the Company's evaluation and selection process in response to this solicitation. The Company will work cooperatively with the IA and shall provide the IA immediate and continuing access to all documents and data reviewed, used, or produced by the utility in this solicitation and evaluation. The IA will provide a written report regarding their assessment of the Company's evaluation and selection process, which will be filed with the MPUC.

All projects selected in this RFP process will be subject to review and approval by the various regulatory commissions in the states in which the Company operates.

### **1.3 Contacts**

All correspondence and questions regarding this RFP should be directed, via email only, to the RFP Project Manager at:

NSP2019WINDRFP@xcelenergy.com

See Section 4.4 for more information.

The NSP 2019 Wind Solicitation webpage can be found at:

**<http://www.xcelenergy.com/NSP2019WINDRFP>**

#### **1.4 Acronyms**

**ASC** stands for Accounting Standards Committee

**COD** stands for Commercial Operating Date

**DPP** stands for Definitive Planning Phase

**FASB** stands for Financial Accounting Standards Board

**MISO** stands for Midcontinent Independent System Operator

**MPUC** stands for Minnesota Public Utilities Commission

**NSP** stands for Northern States Power

**POD** stands for Point Of Delivery

**POI** stands for Point Of Interconnection

**PPA** stands for Power Purchase Agreement

**RFP** stands for Request For Proposals

**ROFO** stands for Right Of First Offer

### **Section 2. Eligible Project Information**

#### **2.1 Eligible Project Structure**

The Company will consider only PPAs as eligible project structure. The Company has a strong preference for RFP Projects that utilize union labor for its construction and operations and requests the bidders to provide separate pricing in the Pricing Forms for utilizing union and non-union labor.

PPAs will include rights to all energy, capacity, and environmental attributes for a specified \$/MWh price.

All PPA proposals shall include a bid price that is fully compliant with NSP's Model Wind Power Purchase Agreement (Appendix B). PPAs must also include any desired written exceptions to the Model Wind Power Purchase Agreement if applicable and the corresponding price reduction for each written exception the bidder would like the Company to consider.

## **2.2 Product Description**

**RFP Project Type:** A PPA proposal must be for a new, to-be-built wind resource, or a repowered wind resource facility, only.

A repowered wind resource facility means any refurbished, retrofitted, or otherwise modified wind power generating facility previously existing, provided such refurbishment, retrofit, or other modification (a) is completed after the regulatory approval date, (b) commenced at least ten (10) years after the facility was originally placed in service, (c) can meet the requirements to qualify for the production tax credit pursuant to 26 U.S.C. § 45 or the investment tax credit pursuant to 26 U.S.C. § 48; and (d) such generating facility will consist of refurbished, retrofitted, replaced, or otherwise modified components such that the value of such new components will be not less than 50% of the original value of the components.

**Product:** The Company is seeking PPA wind agreements that convey all energy, capacity and environmental benefits generated from a proposed project.

**Contract Length:** Each proposal needs to include pricing for a twelve (12) year contract term length, and pricing for a twenty (20) year contract term length. Bidders are requested to submit the twelve (12) year pricing in Form 4, and the twenty (20) year pricing in Form 5. Bidders can submit additional proposals with alternative contract term lengths, extending from twelve (12) to twenty-five (25) years by indicating the contract term on item 8 of Form 3 and the pricing on Form 6.

**Minimum Project Size:** Each RFP Project must have a nameplate electric rating greater than or equal to 20 MW. A project will be defined as a complete, commercially operable, wind powered electric generating plant, including all facilities necessary to generate and deliver energy into MISO at a single point of interconnection by the expected online date.

**Interconnection:** The RFP Project must have a Point of Interconnection ("POI") location within MISO in one of the following states where NSP customers or generation resources are located: Minnesota, North Dakota or South Dakota ("Project Region"). The proposal can identify the POI as the Point of Delivery ("POD") or the bidder can elect to choose a different POD on the MISO system also located in the Project Region. If the



bidder elects a different POD, bidder is responsible for all costs associated with delivery from the POI to the POD.

**Expected Online Date:** The Company has a target to procure 100 MW from RFP Projects that are expected to achieve commercial operation by December 31, 2020, and 100 MW from RFP Projects that are expected to achieve commercial operation by December 31, 2021.

### **2.3 PPA Pricing**

Forms 4-6 provide the pricing template for PPA proposals. All pricing must be in terms of current year United States dollars, also referred to as escalated or nominal dollars. For example, a \$50 per megawatt-hour ("MWh") energy price proposal for 2020 means that in 2020 energy from the facility will be purchased at a rate of \$50/MWh.

The Pricing Forms (4-6) requests pricing with assumptions that: 1) the RFP Project will qualify for federal tax incentives applicable to the proposed technology and to the proposed in-service date and, 2) that existing federal tax incentives will be applicable to the RFP Project even if those incentives are due to expire or decline by the time of the proposed in-service date. Respondents should describe the federal tax incentive assumptions made in their Energy Payment Rates in the notes section in Forms 4-6.

All PPA proposals shall include a bid price that is fully compliant with the NSP's Model Wind Power Purchase Agreement (Appendix B).

Proposal pricing must include the full cost for all transmission interconnection and system upgrade costs that have been previously identified or that will be identified by MISO.

The Company's preference is for fixed price proposals that contain a fixed base price and a fixed annual escalator. Respondents may not submit proposals with variable base year pricing.

### **2.4 Relevant Bidder Experience**

All proposals must describe the respondent's qualifications and experience in developing, constructing, commissioning and operating generation facilities similar to the proposed project(s), including the experience, qualifications and safety record of key personnel who will manage development and an overview of utility scale project(s) the respondent has developed during the last 5 years. If a project team is in place, the proposal should identify the members of the team who will be responsible for design, siting, permitting, financing, construction, and operation of the facility; if such a group is not in place, the proposal must set forth the respondent's plan for assembling such team (including process and timing).

## **2.6 Regulatory Approvals**

At the completion of the bid evaluation and contract negotiation process, the Company will file the signed transactional agreements with the necessary regulatory commissions in the states in which the Company operates for all necessary review and approvals.

## **2.7 ROFO / Purchase Option**

The Model PPA includes a Right of First Offer ("ROFO") that, subject to specific conditions, may be exercised by the Company. In addition, the Model PPA provides the Company with an option that specifies that the Company can purchase the facility at a specified time or times during the PPA term. The Company is requiring bidders to agree to the ROFO and purchase option as described in the Model PPA.

## **2.8 Contract Accounting**

All contracts proposed to be entered into as a result of this RFP will be assessed by the Company for appropriate accounting and/or tax treatment. Respondents shall be required to supply promptly to the Company any and all information that the Company requires in order to make such assessments.

The Company has specific concerns regarding PPA proposals received in response to this RFP that could result in either (i) a contract that must be accounted for by the Company as a capital lease or an operating lease pursuant to Financial Accounting Standards Board ("FASB") Accounting Standards Codification ("ASC") 840 or as a finance lease or an operating lease under FASB ASC 842, or (ii) consolidation of the seller or assets owned by the seller onto the Company's balance sheet pursuant to the variable interest entity requirements of FASB ASC 810. The following shall therefore apply to any proposal submitted pursuant to this RFP:

- The Company is unwilling to be subject to any accounting or tax treatment that results from a PPA's capital lease, finance lease or consolidated variable interest entity classification. As a result, in their proposal(s), respondents shall (i) state that the respondent has considered applicable accounting standards in regard to capital leases, finance leases and variable interest entities, (ii) summarize any changes that the respondent proposes to the Model PPA in order to attempt to address these issues, and (iii) state that, to the respondent's knowledge and belief, the respondent's proposal will not result in such treatment as of the date of the proposal.
- As applicable, the Company will not execute a PPA without confirmation from the Company's external auditors that the PPA will not be classified as a capital lease, finance lease or a consolidated variable interest entity.

By submitting a proposal, each respondent agrees to make available to the Company at any point in the bid evaluation process any financial data associated with the respondent and its

proposed RFP Project so the Company may independently verify the respondent's information in the above matters. Financial data may include, but shall not be limited to, data supporting the economic life (both initial and remaining) of the facility, the fair market value of the facility, and any and all other costs (including debt specific to the asset being proposed) associated with the respondent's proposal. The Company may also use financial data contained in the respondent's financial statements (e.g. income statements, balance sheets, etc.) as may be necessary.

### **Section 3. Transmission and Interconnection Requirements**

#### **3.1 General Information**

The Company will only consider RFP Projects with a point of interconnection ("POI") located within the Project Region as defined previously.

The Company will consider all RFP Projects that have filed for an interconnect agreement with MISO, regardless of status within the Definitive Planning Phase ("DPP") of the MISO generator interconnection process.

The Company reserves the right to reject any RFP Project proposal that does not include the full cost responsibility to the bidder of any known or potential interconnection costs or network upgrades that may be required by MISO and/or that does not include interconnection studies supporting interconnection and transmission requirements including technical description and estimated costs of network upgrades from studies completed or underway.

#### **3.2 MISO Transmission and Interconnection Process**

Bidders shall include the applicable MISO queue number(s) in their proposal as well as other interconnection information.

Bidder shall be responsible for all costs associated with interconnecting the RFP Project to the MISO system. Bidders must provide a list of costs itemized by major components and supporting documentation, such as MISO generator interconnection study reports, MISO optional study reports or bidder-sponsored interconnection study reports detailing interconnection and transmission costs associated with their RFP Project(s).

Study reports shall include detailed descriptions and cost assumptions for all interconnection facilities, transmission system upgrades, distribution system upgrades, and transmission system protection facilities needed for the RFP Project to comply with all MISO requirements and NSP's Model Wind Power Purchase Agreement (Appendix B).

Bidders should also identify any contingent facilities required for interconnection and to support meeting commercial operation requirements.

Bidder shall arrange and be solely responsible for all costs associated with delivery of energy from the RFP Project, located within the Project Region, to the POI in proposal.

Additionally, the bidder shall be responsible for all costs incurred in transmitting energy from the proposed generating facility to the POD, if the POD is different from the POI.

## **Section 4. Content Requirements and Submission Procedure**

### **4.1 Schedule Estimate**

NSP's objective is to complete proposal evaluations, selections and contract negotiations as set forth below:

#### **NSP's 2019 WIND RFP SCHEDULE**

<b>RFP Issued</b>	<b>April 10, 2019</b>
<b>Deadline for submitting questions from bidders</b>	<b>April 18, 2019</b>
<b>NSP will post responses to bidder questions</b>	<b>April 24, 2019</b>
<b>Proposal Due Date, 5:00 pm CT</b>	<b>May 1, 2019</b>
<b>NSP bid evaluation and selection completed</b>	<b>May 17, 2019</b>
<b>Contract negotiations completed</b>	<b>July 10, 2019</b>
<b>Regulatory filing with the Minnesota PUC</b>	<b>July 2019</b>
<b>Anticipated Regulatory Approval</b>	<b>Q4 2019</b>

### **4.2 Minimum Requirements for Proposals**

This section describes the minimum requirements that all proposals must satisfy to be eligible for consideration in this solicitation. Unless the Company in its sole discretion elects otherwise, proposals that do not comply with these requirements will be deemed ineligible and will not be considered further. The Company reserves the right to reject any bid and all bids.

- Proposals must include all applicable content requirements described in Section 4.6, including clear and complete written descriptions of all information requested and completed forms.
- Proposals must clearly specify all pricing terms in accordance with Section 4.6.

- Proposals must demonstrate an acceptable level of development and technology risk, as determined by the Company's evaluation team.
- Bid respondents must demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Company that they can meet the security requirements contained in the Model PPA.
- Proposals must clearly demonstrate any financing requirements and an indicative financing structure (construction and permanent) for any proposed resources that will be delivered under the proposals. Respondents should include a description of how current financial markets are likely to impact the respondent's ability to access the debt and tax equity markets.
- Each respondent must present clear and sufficient proof that it has or can secure an adequate and confirmed supply of generation equipment sufficient (at a minimum) to meet the required proposal.
- Respondents must provide the required bid fee (described in Section 4.5) for each proposal submitted.
- All respondents are expected to provide truthful and accurate statements as part of their bids. Any false statements will result in project disqualification.
- No respondent may act through partnership, joint venture, consortium, or other association or otherwise act in concert with any other person unless it provides written notification of such to the Company as part of its proposal.
- For new RFP Projects, proposals must clearly specify whether the respondent is expecting to use union labor for the construction and operations of the RFP Project. The Company has a strong preference for contracting with RFP Projects that use union labor for construction and operations.

#### **4.3 Proposal Submission Deadline**

All proposals will be accepted until 5:00 P.M. Central Time on the dates indicated in Section 4.1. All proposals must be transmitted by express, certified or registered mail, or hand delivered to the following address:

**NSP 2019 Wind RFP  
Attn: RFP Project Manager  
Xcel Energy Services Inc.  
414 Nicollet Mall, 401-8  
Minneapolis, MN 55401**

Proposals received later than the due date and time indicated will be rejected and returned unopened unless the Company determines, at its sole discretion, to consider such proposals.

For each proposal submitted, bidders must provide a complete, signed original proposal, one (1) additional paper copy and two (2) separate USB flash drives that include all proposal documents in electronic format.

Proposals must be submitted in a sealed package with the following information shown on the package:

**Response to NSP 2019 Wind RFP  
Confidential Sealed Bid Proposal**

The respondent's company name and address must be clearly indicated on the package containing the proposal and if a bidder submits multiple project proposals they must all be clearly marked and differentiated.

**4.4 Information Policy**

To obtain additional information about this RFP, potential respondents as well as all other parties may only submit inquiries to the RFP Project Manager via email at:

NSP2019WINDRFP@xcelenergy.com

Potential respondents as well as all other parties should not attempt to acquire information through any other means including telephone calls to the Company. The Company will maintain a log of all inquiries and coordinate the preparation of written responses. The Company will periodically post responses to questions on the RFP website and these responses will be filed as addendums to the RFP. The deadline for submitting questions is 5:00 pm CT on April 18, 2019; questions will no longer be accepted after this time. All filed addendums will be posted by 5:00 CT on April 24, 2019. Bidders are responsible for monitoring the RFP website for updated addendums. The Company has established this information policy to ensure that all respondents have the same timely access and knowledge about the bidding and evaluation process.

**4.5 Bid Evaluation Fees**

Each bidder shall pay by wire transfer on or before the Proposal Due Date a fee of \$5,000 for each proposal submitted. A separate bid evaluation fee is required for projects on the same site with different COD, turbine, pricing, contract term (except for the separate 12-year and 20-year contract term pricing) or MW size. However, a separate bid evaluation fee is *not* incurred for providing separate union and non-union pricing in Forms 4-6 within the same proposal, provided all other terms are the same. Projects on *different* sites, regardless of similarities in size, COD, or contract term, also require a separate \$5,000 bid fee for proposal evaluation and due diligence through RFP completion. Bid fees shall be paid by wire transfer to NSP. In response to a Bidder sending an email to the 2019 Wind RFP email address, NSP2019WINDRFP@xcelenergy.com, no earlier than 10 business days prior to the Proposal

Due Date, the Company will email a response with wire transfer instructions. No cashier's checks will be accepted.

The Company will not refund any bid fees associated with any bid, regardless of the success or failure of that bid.

#### **4.6 Proposal Content Requirements**

This section outlines the content and format requirements for all proposals submitted in response to this RFP. Unless the Company in its sole discretion elects otherwise, proposals that do not include the information requested in this section will be deemed ineligible for further consideration, unless the information requested is not applicable or relevant to a given proposal. The Company reserves the right to conduct any further due diligence it considers necessary to fully understand and evaluate proposals.

Bidders are encouraged to provide as much information as possible to assist in the evaluation of their proposals. A complete proposal will include a complete, signed original proposal, one (1) additional paper copy and two (2) separate USB flash drives assembled in the following format:

##### **Section 1 – Executive Summary**

Bidders shall provide an RFP Project summary and overview including narrative that addresses why their proposal provides value to NSP and its customers. Bidder shall also provide detail on background and experience in developing large scale wind energy projects as well as any applicable references (including contact name, contact number and project name) from projects where the Bidder has completed development and construction of a large scale wind facility.

##### **Section 2 –Standard Bidder Forms (Appendix A)**

Bidders shall complete all forms in Appendix A (Forms 1-13) and provide all information that is applicable to bidders' respective RFP Project(s). Standard Bidder Forms will be made available on the Company's website at the following link:

**<http://www.xcelenergy.com/NSP2019WINDRFP>**

Below is a list and brief description of each form:

**Form 1: Confidentiality Agreement:** All bidders will submit a Confidentiality Agreement and agree not to disclose or disseminate any highly confidential information and return all Highly Confidential Information to the Company at the conclusion of the solicitation process.

**Form 2: Bid Certification:** Bidders must certify that:

- a. All statements and representations made in bidder's proposal are true,
- b. The bidder accepts as applicable NSP's Model Wind Power Purchase Agreement (Appendix B) except as specifically noted in writing,
- c. The applicable accounting standards in regard to capital lease, finance lease, and variable interest entities have been considered and that, to the bidder's knowledge, the bidder's proposal will not result in capital lease, finance lease, or variable interest entities treatment to the Company, and that
- d. The proposal pricing submitted in Forms 4-6 includes the full cost for all transmission interconnection and system upgrade costs previously identified or that will be identified by MISO and any costs associated with delivering energy from the POI to the POD if applicable, except as specifically noted in Section (D) of the same Form
- e. The bidder identifies and accepts all RFP addenda issued by NSP.

**Form 3: Cover Sheet:** Bidders will provide basic RFP Project description and company information including contact information, RFP Project name, location, nameplate capacity, etc.

**Forms 4 – 6: Pricing:** For all proposals, bidders must complete Forms 4 and 5 (pricing for 12-year term and pricing for 20-year term), and provide Estimated Annual Energy Production (MWh) for each year of the proposed PPA Terms, net of expected degradation impacts, if any, and Energy Payment Rates (\$/MWh) for each year of the proposed PPA Terms and for using union labor and non-union labor separately (the submission of non-union labor pricing is optional). All dollar amounts should be entered in nominal United States dollars. Price proposals must contain a fixed base price and a fixed annual escalator. Any and all price escalations must be fully explained. If bidder proposes more than one pricing option, a separate bid and attendant bid fee must be submitted, with exception of the separate union labor and non-union labor pricing option, and with exception of the separate 12-year and 20-year Terms.

Bidders should indicate on item (E) of Forms 4, 5 and 6 the use of union or non-union labor for each component of the construction and operations of the RFP Project. For any component that will use non-union labor, bidders are requested to provide additional information on the incremental costs of performing this component with union labor instead.

All pricing is expected to be fully compliant with NSP's Model Wind Power Purchase Agreement (Appendix B) unless otherwise noted. Estimated Annual Energy Production should be as delivered at the POD.

Bidders must offer firm pricing valid through May 17, 2019, the projected RFP completion date, or, if proposal is selected for negotiations, either the completion of negotiations or the issuance of an Order from the appropriate state regulatory commission approving the contract resulting from their proposal, whichever is later. Indicative pricing in a proposal will not be acceptable.



**Form 7: Construction:** Bidders are to provide proposed dates for each significant construction milestone, as shown on a detailed development schedule provided with the proposal. Milestones should be based on the requirements to achieve the proposed commercial operation date. The dates for the major milestones should also be indicated on Bidder Form 7. See NSP's Model Wind Power Purchase Agreement (Appendix B) for defined terms.

**Form 8: Technical Descriptions:** The proposal must include all pertinent technical information for the RFP Project including detailed turbine information and facility information. Bidders are requested to attach or provide detail from any third party pre-construction energy production reports for proposed wind sites.

**Form 9: Energy Production Profile:** Assuming the Facility had been in commercial operation during 2016, 2017, and 2018, the proposal must provide an estimate of the annual energy production for each of these years utilizing whatever historical meteorological data are available for the site, or a nearby site with similar meteorological characteristics. Proposals must include the average expected hourly generation from the RFP Project for each month. Estimated Annual Energy Production should be as delivered to the POD and net of any expected plant degradation over time. Time is hour ending, Central Standard Time; do not adjust for daylight savings time. Explain fully the meteorological data, and source, used for the annual estimates.

**Form 10: Representation Authorization:** Proposals must include a signed Representation Authorization and Consent form. Signature of this form by the undersigned customer serves as notice of voluntary written consent allowing Xcel Energy Services, Inc. to engage in non-public transmission/interconnection related discussions associated with the possible future power purchase between MISO and the undersigned customer. Xcel Energy Services, Inc. will maintain and protect the confidentiality of all information received from MISO pertaining to the undersigned customer's transmission/interconnection facilities.

**Form 11: Interconnection Details:** Proposals must include all pertinent MISO or bidder prepared studies including generator interconnection request information, generation interconnection study information, generation interconnection agreement information, MISO document links and information, general project transmission information, congestion and curtailment analyses, and a point of contact for all transmission related information.

Bidders must also provide a summary of all anticipated interconnection and/or system upgrade costs included in their proposal pricing including financial analyses related to any costs expected to be incurred with regard to interconnection, including the cost of installing the interconnection facilities, the network upgrades, distribution upgrades, affected system upgrades, and system protection facilities that have been identified, and a discussion of any unknown or contingent network upgrades for which the RFP Project may be responsible. Bidders are requested to attach third party studies on projected interconnection/system upgrade costs related to the RFP Project(s).

**Form 12: Creditworthiness:** Proposals must include detail and address all questions regarding financial aspects of all projects including financing information, credit history, and legal claims.

**Form 13: Siting Environmental:** PPA bids must provide all requested details regarding site control, permitting, environmental studies, and legal claims.

### **Section 3 – Contract Exceptions (Appendix B)**

In this section, respondents are required to clearly document any exceptions to NSP's Model Wind Power Purchase Agreement (Appendix B) by providing a redline version of the agreement with their Proposal and reason for taking each exception(s). Bidders must also provide a cost reduction estimate for each noted exception.

#### **4.7 Clarification of Proposals**

While evaluating proposals, the Company may request clarification or additional information about any item in the proposal. Such requests will be sent via email to respondents identified on Form 3 by the RFP Project Manager, typically, and respondents are required to provide a written or electronic response back to the RFP Project Manager within two (2) business days, or the Company may deem the respondent to be non-responsive and either suspend or terminate evaluation of the associated proposal. Respondents are encouraged to provide an alternate point of contact to ensure a timely response to clarification questions.

Any amendment, modification, addenda, or clarification to a bid are binding and will be treated the same as any original RFP document. The Company will only accept amendments, modifications, or addenda to a bid in response to a request for clarification from the Company.

Bidders are responsible for carefully examining and understanding all RFP documents and requirements, nature of the work to be performed, and any other requirements listed in this RFP document. A lack of understanding or ignorance of these requirements will in no way relieve the bidder of obligations of their bid or of any resulting contract.

#### **4.8 Confidentiality**

Respondents are allowed to identify any information in their proposals that respondents claim should be considered to be confidential or proprietary. Nonetheless, the Company reserves the right to release all proposals to its affiliates and such affiliates' agents, advisors, consultants for purposes of proposal evaluation. The Company will, to the extent required by law, advise each agent, advisor or consultant that receives such claimed confidential information of its obligations to protect such information. In addition, all information, regardless of its confidential or proprietary nature, will be subject to review by the MPUC and other governmental authorities

and courts with jurisdiction, and may be subject to legal discovery. It is not the Company's intent to enter into any separate confidentiality, non-disclosure, or similar agreements as a condition to receiving a respondent's proposal.

Bidders should clearly identify each page and piece of information claimed by Bidder to be confidential, trade secret or non-public information. Bidders must provide written justification for any such claim(s). Bidders acknowledge and agree that notwithstanding its designation of certain materials as confidential, trade secret or non-public, NSP will have the right in its sole discretion to disclose such materials provided to it by a Bidder in any regulatory proceeding or as required by law.

#### **4.9 Addenda to RFP**

Any additional responses required from respondents as a result of an Addendum to this RFP shall become part of each proposal. Respondents must list all Addenda issued by NSP at the bottom of the Bid Certification Form (Form 2).

### **Section 5. Evaluation Objectives and Approach**

The objective of the Company's evaluation is to identify portfolios of proposals that meet the resource objectives identified in the solicitation in a reliable and cost-effective manner.

An evaluation team, made up of various groups within Xcel Energy Services and the Company will evaluate proposals; however, the Company reserves the right to retain the services of outside experts to assist in the evaluation of proposals. The RFP Project Manager may contact respondents directly, via email, at any point during the evaluation process for the purposes of clarifying proposals.

The Company will use a three phased approach to evaluating bid proposals offered in the RFP. The three phases include:

- a. Completeness review
- b. Threshold review
- c. Key parameters review and scoring

Based upon the results of the complete evaluation, the Company will determine which proposals will be included in the final selection.

#### **5.1 Completeness Review**

The completeness review ensures compliance with all bid submittal requirements (fees, sufficient information provided in bid responses, etc.)

## **5.2 Threshold Review**

The threshold review ensures the bidder and RFP Project complies with all specific bid requirements including:

- a. RFP Project size
- b. RFP Project location
- c. RFP Project anticipated commercial operation date
- d. Interconnection to MISO in the Project Area
- e. Bidder creditworthiness
- f. Bidder experience
- g. Accounting assessment

Any proposal that does not meet the above threshold requirements, based on an analysis of all supporting information and data in the bid forms, will be excluded from further evaluation.

## **5.3 Key Parameters Review and Scoring**

The Company has identified the following key parameters to evaluate the RFP Projects with:

- a. Pricing
  - b. Transmission
  - c. Labor
  - d. PPA Compliance
- 
- a. **Pricing:** The Company will score proposals' pricing using a Levelized Cost of Electricity (LCOE) methodology based on RFP project pricing and energy production projections. The proposal pricing score will constitute 85% of the overall evaluated value of each proposal.
  - b. **Transmission:** The Company will provide a score to each proposal based on the proposal's transmission access plan feasibility and arrangements and its transmission upgrade schedule assessment. The transmission score will constitute 5% of the overall evaluated value of each proposal.
  - c. **Labor:** The Company will provide a score to each proposal based on the proposal's intended use of union or non-union labor during construction and operations of the RFP Project, noting the Company's preference for the use of union labor. The labor score will constitute 5% of the overall evaluated value of each proposal.
  - d. **PPA Compliance:** The Company will provide a score to each proposal based on its Compliance with NSP's Model Wind Power Purchase Agreement (Appendix B). The PPA Compliance score will constitute 5% of the overall evaluated value of each proposal.

#### **5.4 Final Project Selection**

Upon completion of the key parameters scoring, the Company will develop a short-list of RFP Projects based on the overall evaluated value of each proposal, while considering its target of procuring 200 MW from a portfolio of wind resources that reach commercial operation before the end of 2021. The Company will then proceed to negotiate contracts in good faith with selected bidders and develop applicable state regulatory filings for review and approval to proceed with contract execution.

## **Appendix A**

### *Proposal Forms and Instructions*

As discussed in Section 4, the completed forms, attachments and narrative topic discussions, will comprise a complete proposal. The contents of each form and any special instructions for completing the forms are described in section 4.6. These forms can be downloaded from the RFP web site and are expected to be completed and submitted in Microsoft Excel format.

If additional space is needed to elaborate on information requested on any form, please attach additional sheets with the heading "Form [ ] – Additional Information."

If certain information is requested that does not apply to the proposal, the respondent must indicate that the information is not applicable. If appropriate, the respondent should explain why the information is not applicable.

In addition to submitting a complete, signed original proposal and one (1) additional paper copy, respondents must also include two (2) separate USB flash drives with electronic copies of all completed Forms in executable format, i.e. not PDF.

## **Appendix B**

***NSP's Model Wind Power Purchase Agreement  
See file titled Model Wind PPA.doc***

## Appendix B Attestations

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This is the Appendix B that is a part of the Leidos Independent Auditor's Final Report.

The Appendix B that is a part of the NSP 2019 Wind Resources RFP is not included with this document.

The attached RFP Process attestations were provided by members of the Xcel evaluation teams. Those evaluation team members directly responsible for the rankings of the projects and the creation of the final short list were required to attest they agree and endorse the evaluation determinations. Other team members did not have to attest to this as they were not directly involved in the rankings or creation of the final short list.



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NSP 2019 WIND RFP PROCESS  
EVALUATION PERSONNEL  
ATTESTATION STATEMENT

I, <sup>[name]</sup> EDWARD WEINBERG, hereby state that I am employed in the capacity of <sup>[job title]</sup> SENIOR CONSULTANT STRATEGIC ASSET PLANNING by Xcel Energy, located at <sup>[address]</sup> 414 NICOLET MALL 401-8. As such, I attest to the following concerning Xcel Energy's 2019 Wind RFP process during the period from issuance of the RFP on April 10, 2019 and up until selection on MAY 17<sup>TH</sup> 2019 of the short list projects that will move forward with negotiations ("RFP Process"):

1. My role in the aforementioned RFP Process consists of <sup>[description of role]</sup> EVALUATION OF BIDS.

2. I am making the attestations herein on behalf of myself.

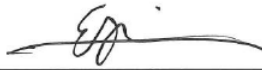
- a. Any relationship(s) I may have with Bidders responding to this RFP has not biased the RFP process for or against any proposal nor afforded them information pertinent to the RFP process that was not otherwise available to all Bidders.
- b. The evaluation process adhered to what was outlined in the RFP document and Xcel's internal RFP process documents without any material or significant changes or deviations.
- c. During the evaluation process all proposers were given an equal opportunity to ensure that all materials required to be submitted under the requirements of the RFP were submitted to Xcel prior to the completion of scoring.
- d. I do not have a conflict of interest or perceived conflict of interest with any of the Bidders, their agents, partner firms or companies, or subcontractors (collectively "partners"). I have no direct or indirect family members among the employees, managers, or owners of any of the proponents or partners. For purposes of this document, family is defined as related to by direct current marriage, spouse, children, legal guardian, or adoption.
- e. I did not have any contact or communication with proponents or proponents' partners during the evaluation, for any reason other than what could be considered required email communication responding and acknowledging questions and answers and making follow up inquiries to

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gain necessary data and information. All email communications were logged.

- f. I have fairly evaluated each proposal and I have conducted my evaluation in a manner that ensures a fair and competitive process and avoids the appearance of impropriety. Although I have discussed my findings, opinions, and scores with the other members of the evaluation teams and have considered their findings, opinions, and scores; I have conducted my evaluation independently and the scores I have given represent my assessment of the proposals. I have not been coerced, influenced, or asked to change my scores by any person in any way.
  - g. I have thoroughly reviewed the proposal material provided to me for my purpose in the evaluation process and have scored each proposal fully and completely to the best of my ability. I have read the required proposal to evaluate against the agreed-upon criteria.
3. I have read the above and realize that I will be required to sign item 4 at the completion of the evaluation process. To be signed and dated prior to the evaluation process:

Signature: 

Printed Name: EDWARD WEINBERG

Date: 05/02/19

4. All information is true and correct, to the best of my knowledge, information and belief. To be signed and dated after the evaluation process:

Signature: 

Printed Name: EDWARD WEINBERG

Date: 06/04/2019

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NSP 2019 WIND RFP PROCESS  
EVALUATION PERSONNEL  
ATTESTATION STATEMENT

I, <sup>[name]</sup> Mary Morrison, hereby state that I am employed in the capacity of <sup>[job title]</sup> Resource Planning Analyst by Xcel Energy, located at <sup>[address]</sup> 414 Nicollet Mall - 401-8. As such, I attest to the following concerning Xcel Energy's 2019 Wind RFP process during the period from issuance of the RFP on April 10, 2019 and up until selection on May 17<sup>th</sup> of the short list projects that will move forward with negotiations ("RFP Process"):

1. My role in the aforementioned RFP Process consists of <sup>[description of role]</sup> Evaluation of Bids.

2. I am making the attestations herein on behalf of myself.
  - a. Any relationship(s) I may have with Bidders responding to this RFP has not biased the RFP process for or against any proposal nor afforded them information pertinent to the RFP process that was not otherwise available to all Bidders.
  - b. The evaluation process adhered to what was outlined in the RFP document and Xcel's internal RFP process documents without any material or significant changes or deviations.
  - c. During the evaluation process all proposers were given an equal opportunity to ensure that all materials required to be submitted under the requirements of the RFP were submitted to Xcel prior to the completion of scoring.
  - d. I do not have a conflict of interest or perceived conflict of interest with any of the Bidders, their agents, partner firms or companies, or subcontractors (collectively "partners"). I have no direct or indirect family members among the employees, managers, or owners of any of the proponents or partners. For purposes of this document, family is defined as related to by direct current marriage, spouse, children, legal guardian, or adoption.
  - e. I did not have any contact or communication with proponents or proponents' partners during the evaluation, for any reason other than what could be considered required email communication responding and acknowledging questions and answers and making follow up inquiries to

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gain necessary data and information. All email communications were logged.

- f. I have fairly evaluated each proposal and I have conducted my evaluation in a manner that ensures a fair and competitive process and avoids the appearance of impropriety. Although I have discussed my findings, opinions, and scores with the other members of the evaluation teams and have considered their findings, opinions, and scores; I have conducted my evaluation independently and the scores I have given represent my assessment of the proposals. I have not been coerced, influenced, or asked to change my scores by any person in any way.
  - g. I have thoroughly reviewed the proposal material provided to me for my purpose in the evaluation process and have scored each proposal fully and completely to the best of my ability. I have read the required proposal to evaluate against the agreed-upon criteria.
3. I have read the above and realize that I will be required to sign item 4 at the completion of the evaluation process. To be signed and dated prior to the evaluation process:

Signature: Mary Morrison  
Printed Name: Mary Morrison  
Date: 5/2/19

4. All information is true and correct, to the best of my knowledge, information and belief. To be signed and dated after the evaluation process:

Signature: Mary Morrison  
Printed Name: Mary Morrison  
Date: 8/4/19

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NSP 2019 WIND RFP PROCESS  
EVALUATION PERSONNEL  
ATTESTATION STATEMENT

I, <sup>[name]</sup> Keith Howe, hereby state that I am employed in the capacity of <sup>[job title]</sup> Resource Planning Analyst by Xcel Energy, located at <sup>[address]</sup> 401 Nicollet Mall. As such, I attest to the following concerning Xcel Energy's 2019 Wind RFP process during the period from issuance of the RFP on April 10, 2019 and up until selection on May 17<sup>th</sup>, 2019 of the short list projects that will move forward with negotiations ("RFP Process"):

1. My role in the aforementioned RFP Process consists of <sup>[description of role]</sup> Evaluating Bids.

2. I am making the attestations herein on behalf of myself.
- Any relationship(s) I may have with Bidders responding to this RFP has not biased the RFP process for or against any proposal nor afforded them information pertinent to the RFP process that was not otherwise available to all Bidders.
  - The evaluation process adhered to what was outlined in the RFP document and Xcel's internal RFP process documents without any material or significant changes or deviations.
  - During the evaluation process all proposers were given an equal opportunity to ensure that all materials required to be submitted under the requirements of the RFP were submitted to Xcel prior to the completion of scoring.
  - I do not have a conflict of interest or perceived conflict of interest with any of the Bidders, their agents, partner firms or companies, or subcontractors (collectively "partners"). I have no direct or indirect family members among the employees, managers, or owners of any of the proponents or partners. For purposes of this document, family is defined as related to by direct current marriage, spouse, children, legal guardian, or adoption.
  - I did not have any contact or communication with proponents or proponents' partners during the evaluation, for any reason other than what could be considered required email communication responding and acknowledging questions and answers and making follow up inquiries to

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gain necessary data and information. All email communications were logged.

- f. I have fairly evaluated each proposal and I have conducted my evaluation in a manner that ensures a fair and competitive process and avoids the appearance of impropriety. Although I have discussed my findings, opinions, and scores with the other members of the evaluation teams and have considered their findings, opinions, and scores; I have conducted my evaluation independently and the scores I have given represent my assessment of the proposals. I have not been coerced, influenced, or asked to change my scores by any person in any way.
  - g. I have thoroughly reviewed the proposal material provided to me for my purpose in the evaluation process and have scored each proposal fully and completely to the best of my ability. I have read the required proposal to evaluate against the agreed-upon criteria.
3. I have read the above and realize that I will be required to sign item 4 at the completion of the evaluation process. To be signed and dated prior to the evaluation process:

Signature: Kathy Howe

Printed Name: Kathy Howe

Date: 5/2/19

4. All information is true and correct, to the best of my knowledge, information and belief. To be signed and dated after the evaluation process:

Signature: Kathy Howe

Printed Name: Kathy Howe

Date: 6/4/19

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NSP 2019 WIND RFP PROCESS  
EVALUATION PERSONNEL  
ATTESTATION STATEMENT

I, <sup>[name]</sup> Patrick M. Bourke, hereby state that I am employed in the capacity of <sup>[job title]</sup> Director, Strategic Asset Planning by Xcel Energy, located at <sup>[address]</sup> 401 Nicollet Mall, Minneapolis, MN 55401. As such, I attest to the following concerning Xcel Energy's 2019 Wind RFP process during the period from issuance of the RFP on April 10, 2019 and up until selection on May 17, 2019 of the short list projects that will move forward with negotiations ("RFP Process"):

1. My role in the aforementioned RFP Process consists of <sup>[description of role]</sup> Evaluating bids.

2. I am making the attestations herein on behalf of myself.
- a. Any relationship(s) I may have with Bidders responding to this RFP has not biased the RFP process for or against any proposal nor afforded them information pertinent to the RFP process that was not otherwise available to all Bidders.
  - b. The evaluation process adhered to what was outlined in the RFP document and Xcel's internal RFP process documents without any material or significant changes or deviations.
  - c. During the evaluation process all proposers were given an equal opportunity to ensure that all materials required to be submitted under the requirements of the RFP were submitted to Xcel prior to the completion of scoring.
  - d. I do not have a conflict of interest or perceived conflict of interest with any of the Bidders, their agents, partner firms or companies, or subcontractors (collectively "partners"). I have no direct or indirect family members among the employees, managers, or owners of any of the proponents or partners. For purposes of this document, family is defined as related to by direct current marriage, spouse, children, legal guardian, or adoption.
  - e. I did not have any contact or communication with proponents or proponents' partners during the evaluation, for any reason other than what could be considered required email communication responding and acknowledging questions and answers and making follow up inquiries to

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gain necessary data and information. All email communications were logged.

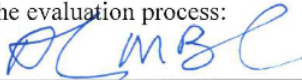
- f. I have fairly evaluated each proposal and I have conducted my evaluation in a manner that ensures a fair and competitive process and avoids the appearance of impropriety. Although I have discussed my findings, opinions, and scores with the other members of the evaluation teams and have considered their findings, opinions, and scores; I have conducted my evaluation independently and the scores I have given represent my assessment of the proposals. I have not been coerced, influenced, or asked to change my scores by any person in any way.
  - g. I have thoroughly reviewed the proposal material provided to me for my purpose in the evaluation process and have scored each proposal fully and completely to the best of my ability. I have read the required proposal to evaluate against the agreed-upon criteria.
3. I have read the above and realize that I will be required to sign item 4 at the completion of the evaluation process. To be signed and dated prior to the evaluation process:

Signature: 

Printed Name: Patrick M. Bourke

Date: 5/2/19

4. All information is true and correct, to the best of my knowledge, information and belief. To be signed and dated after the evaluation process:

Signature: 

Printed Name: Patrick M. Bourke

Date: 6/4/19



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NOT PUBLIC DATA EXCISED

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NSP 2019 WIND RFP PROCESS  
EVALUATION PERSONNEL  
ATTESTATION STATEMENT

I, <sup>[name]</sup> PJ Martin, hereby state that I am employed in the capacity of <sup>[job title]</sup> Director, Resource Planning by Xcel Energy, located at <sup>[address]</sup> 401 Nicollet. As such, I attest to the following concerning Xcel Energy's 2019 Wind RFP process during the period from issuance of the RFP on April 10, 2019 and up until selection on May 17<sup>th</sup> of the short list projects that will move forward with negotiations ("RFP Process"):

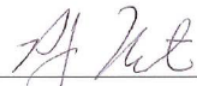
1. My role in the aforementioned RFP Process consists of <sup>[description of role]</sup> Direct RFP, manage internal communications, and primary evaluator.
2. I am making the attestations herein on behalf of myself.
  - a. Any relationship(s) I may have with Bidders responding to this RFP has not biased the RFP process for or against any proposal nor afforded them information pertinent to the RFP process that was not otherwise available to all Bidders.
  - b. The evaluation process adhered to what was outlined in the RFP document and Xcel's internal RFP process documents without any material or significant changes or deviations.
  - c. During the evaluation process all proposers were given an equal opportunity to ensure that all materials required to be submitted under the requirements of the RFP were submitted to Xcel prior to the completion of scoring.
  - d. I do not have a conflict of interest or perceived conflict of interest with any of the Bidders, their agents, partner firms or companies, or subcontractors (collectively "partners"). I have no direct or indirect family members among the employees, managers, or owners of any of the proponents or partners. For purposes of this document, family is defined as related to by direct current marriage, spouse, children, legal guardian, or adoption.
  - e. I did not have any contact or communication with proponents or proponents' partners during the evaluation, for any reason other than what could be considered required email communication responding and acknowledging questions and answers and making follow up inquiries to

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gain necessary data and information. All email communications were logged.

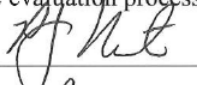
- f. I have fairly evaluated each proposal and I have conducted my evaluation in a manner that ensures a fair and competitive process and avoids the appearance of impropriety. Although I have discussed my findings, opinions, and scores with the other members of the evaluation teams and have considered their findings, opinions, and scores; I have conducted my evaluation independently and the scores I have given represent my assessment of the proposals. I have not been coerced, influenced, or asked to change my scores by any person in any way.
  - g. I have thoroughly reviewed the proposal material provided to me for my purpose in the evaluation process and have scored each proposal fully and completely to the best of my ability. I have read the required proposal to evaluate against the agreed-upon criteria.
3. I have read the above and realize that I will be required to sign item 4 at the completion of the evaluation process. To be signed and dated prior to the evaluation process:

Signature: 

Printed Name: PJ Martin

Date: 5/2/19

4. All information is true and correct, to the best of my knowledge, information and belief. To be signed and dated after the evaluation process:

Signature: 

Printed Name: PJ Martin

Date: 6/4/19

## CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I, Jim Erickson, hereby certify that I have this day served copies of the foregoing document on the attached list of persons.

xx by depositing a true and correct copy thereof, properly enveloped with postage paid in the United States mail at Minneapolis, Minnesota

xx electronic filing

**Docket No.        E002/M-19-268**

Dated this 14<sup>th</sup> day of January 2020

/s/

---

Jim Erickson  
Regulatory Administrator

First Name	Last Name	Email	Company Name	Address	Delivery Method	View Trade Secret	Service List Name
David	Aafedt	daafedt@winthrop.com	Winthrop & Weinstine, P.A.	Suite 3500, 225 South Sixth Street  Minneapolis, MN 554024629	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_19-268_M-19-268
Christopher	Anderson	canderson@allete.com	Minnesota Power	30 W Superior St  Duluth, MN 558022191	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_19-268_M-19-268
Alison C	Archer	aarcher@misoenergy.org	MISO	2985 Ames Crossing Rd  Eagan, MN 55121	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_19-268_M-19-268
Mara	Ascheman	mara.k.ascheman@xcenergy.com	Xcel Energy	414 Nicollet Mall Fl 5  Minneapolis, MN 55401	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_19-268_M-19-268
Ryan	Barlow	ryan.barlow@state.mn.us	Public Utilities Commission	121 7th Place East Suite 350  St. Paul, MN 55101214	Electronic Service	Yes	OFF_SL_19-268_M-19-268
Tracy	Bertram	tbertram@ci.becker.mn.us		12060 Sherburne Ave Becker City Hall Becker, MN 55308-4694	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_19-268_M-19-268
James J.	Bertrand	james.bertrand@stinson.com	STINSON LLP	50 S 6th St Ste 2600  Minneapolis, MN 55402	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_19-268_M-19-268
Jessica	Beyer	jbeyer@greatermankato.com	Greater Mankato Growth	1961 Premier Dr Ste 100  Mankato, MN 56001	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_19-268_M-19-268
Michael J.	Bull	mbull@mncee.org	Center for Energy and Environment	212 Third Ave N Ste 560  Minneapolis, MN 55401	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_19-268_M-19-268
James	Canaday	james.canaday@ag.state.mn.us	Office of the Attorney General-RUD	Suite 1400 445 Minnesota St. St. Paul, MN 55101	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_19-268_M-19-268

First Name	Last Name	Email	Company Name	Address	Delivery Method	View Trade Secret	Service List Name
Thomas	Carlson	thomas.carlson@edf-re.com	EDF Renewable Energy	10 2nd St NE Ste. 400  Minneapolis, Minnesota 55413	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_19-268_M-19-268
John	Coffman	john@johncoffman.net	AARP	871 Tuxedo Blvd.  St. Louis, MO 63119-2044	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_19-268_M-19-268
Generic Notice	Commerce Attorneys	commerce.attorneys@ag.state.mn.us	Office of the Attorney General-DOC	445 Minnesota Street Suite 1800  St. Paul, MN 55101	Electronic Service	Yes	OFF_SL_19-268_M-19-268
Riley	Conlin	riley.conlin@stoel.com	Stoel Rives LLP	33 S. 6th Street Suite 4200 Minneapolis, MN 55402	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_19-268_M-19-268
George	Crocker	gwillc@nawo.org	North American Water Office	PO Box 174  Lake Elmo, MN 55042	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_19-268_M-19-268
James	Denniston	james.r.denniston@xcelenergy.com	Xcel Energy Services, Inc.	414 Nicollet Mall, Fifth Floor  Minneapolis, MN 55401	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_19-268_M-19-268
John	Farrell	jfarrell@ilsr.org	Institute for Local Self-Reliance	2720 E. 22nd St Institute for Local Self-Reliance Minneapolis, MN 55406	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_19-268_M-19-268
Sharon	Ferguson	sharon.ferguson@state.mn.us	Department of Commerce	85 7th Place E Ste 280  Saint Paul, MN 551012198	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_19-268_M-19-268
Mike	Fiterman	mikefiterman@libertydiversified.com	Liberty Diversified International	5600 N Highway 169  Minneapolis, MN 55428-3096	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_19-268_M-19-268

First Name	Last Name	Email	Company Name	Address	Delivery Method	View Trade Secret	Service List Name
Edward	Garvey	edward.garvey@AESLconsulting.com	AESL Consulting	32 Lawton St Saint Paul, MN 55102-2617	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_19-268_M-19-268
Janet	Gonzalez	Janet.gonzalez@state.mn.us	Public Utilities Commission	Suite 350 121 7th Place East St. Paul, MN 55101	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_19-268_M-19-268
J Drake	Hamilton	hamilton@fresh-energy.org	Fresh Energy	408 St Peter St Saint Paul, MN 55101	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_19-268_M-19-268
Annete	Henkel	mui@mnuutilityinvestors.org	Minnesota Utility Investors	413 Wacouta Street #230 St. Paul, MN 55101	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_19-268_M-19-268
Patrick	Hentges	phentges@mankatomn.gov	City Of Mankato	P.O. Box 3368 Mankato, MN 560023368	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_19-268_M-19-268
Michael	Hoppe	il23@mtn.org	Local Union 23, I.B.E.W.	932 Payne Avenue St. Paul, MN 55130	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_19-268_M-19-268
Alan	Jenkins	aj@jenkinsatlaw.com	Jenkins at Law	2950 Yellowtail Ave. Marathon, FL 33050	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_19-268_M-19-268
Linda	Jensen	linda.s.jensen@ag.state.mn.us	Office of the Attorney General-DOC	1800 BRM Tower 445 Minnesota Street St. Paul, MN 551012134	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_19-268_M-19-268
Richard	Johnson	Rick.Johnson@lawmoss.com	Moss & Barnett	150 S. 5th Street Suite 1200 Minneapolis, MN 55402	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_19-268_M-19-268
Sarah	Johnson Phillips	sarah.phillips@stoel.com	Stoel Rives LLP	33 South Sixth Street Suite 4200 Minneapolis, MN 55402	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_19-268_M-19-268

First Name	Last Name	Email	Company Name	Address	Delivery Method	View Trade Secret	Service List Name
Mark J.	Kaufman	mkaufman@ibewlocal949.org	IBEW Local Union 949	12908 Nicollet Avenue South  Burnsville, MN 55337	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_19-268_M-19-268
Thomas	Koehler	TGK@IBEW160.org	Local Union #160, IBEW	2909 Anthony Ln  St Anthony Village, MN 55418-3238	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_19-268_M-19-268
Frank	Kohlasch	frank.kohlasch@state.mn.us	MN Pollution Control Agency	520 Lafayette Rd N.  St. Paul, MN 55155	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_19-268_M-19-268
Michael	Krikava	mkrikava@briggs.com	Briggs And Morgan, P.A.	2200 IDS Center 80 S 8th St Minneapolis, MN 55402	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_19-268_M-19-268
Peder	Larson	plarson@larkinhoffman.com	Larkin Hoffman Daly & Lindgren, Ltd.	8300 Norman Center Drive Suite 1000 Bloomington, MN 55437	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_19-268_M-19-268
Douglas	Larson	dlarson@dakotaelectric.com	Dakota Electric Association	4300 220th St W  Farmington, MN 55024	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_19-268_M-19-268
Kavita	Maini	kmaini@wi.rr.com	KM Energy Consulting, LLC	961 N Lost Woods Rd  Oconomowoc, WI 53066	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_19-268_M-19-268
Pam	Marshall	pam@energycents.org	Energy CENTS Coalition	823 7th St E  St. Paul, MN 55106	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_19-268_M-19-268
Mary	Martinka	mary.a.martinka@xcelenergy.com	Xcel Energy Inc	414 Nicollet Mall 7th Floor Minneapolis, MN 55401	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_19-268_M-19-268

First Name	Last Name	Email	Company Name	Address	Delivery Method	View Trade Secret	Service List Name
Daryl	Maxwell	dmaxwell@hydro.mb.ca	Manitoba Hydro	360 Portage Ave FL 16 PO Box 815, Station Main Winnipeg, Manitoba R3C 2P4  Canada	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_19-268_M-19-268
Brian	Meloy	brian.meloy@stinson.com	STINSON LLP	50 S 6th St Ste 2600  Minneapolis, MN 55402	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_19-268_M-19-268
Joseph	Meyer	joseph.meyer@ag.state.mn.us	Office of the Attorney General-RUD	Bremer Tower, Suite 1400 445 Minnesota Street St Paul, MN 55101-2131	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_19-268_M-19-268
Stacy	Miller	stacy.miller@minneapolismn.gov	City of Minneapolis	350 S. 5th Street Room M 301 Minneapolis, MN 55415	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_19-268_M-19-268
David	Moeller	dmoeller@allete.com	Minnesota Power	30 W Superior St  Duluth, MN 558022093	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_19-268_M-19-268
Andrew	Moratzka	andrew.moratzka@stoel.com	Stoel Rives LLP	33 South Sixth St Ste 4200  Minneapolis, MN 55402	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_19-268_M-19-268
Alan	Muller	alan@greendel.org	Energy & Environmental Consulting	1110 West Avenue  Red Wing, MN 55066	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_19-268_M-19-268
Carl	Nelson	cnelson@mncee.org	Center for Energy and Environment	212 3rd Ave N Ste 560  Minneapolis, MN 55401	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_19-268_M-19-268
J	Newberger	jnewberger1@yahoo.com	State Rep	14225 Balsam Blvd  Becker, MN 55308	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_19-268_M-19-268



First Name	Last Name	Email	Company Name	Address	Delivery Method	View Trade Secret	Service List Name
David	Niles	david.niles@avantenergy.com	Minnesota Municipal Power Agency	220 South Sixth Street Suite 1300 Minneapolis, Minnesota 55402	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_19-268_M-19-268
Carol A.	Overland	overland@legalelectric.org	Legalelectric - Overland Law Office	1110 West Avenue  Red Wing, MN 55066	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_19-268_M-19-268
Jeff	Oxley	jeff.oxley@state.mn.us	Office of Administrative Hearings	600 North Robert Street  St. Paul, MN 55101	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_19-268_M-19-268
Greg	Pruszinske	gpruszinske@ci.becker.mn.us	City of Becker	PO Box 250 12060 Sherburne Ave Becker, MN 55308	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_19-268_M-19-268
Generic Notice	Residential Utilities Division	residential.utilities@ag.state.mn.us	Office of the Attorney General-RUD	1400 BRM Tower 445 Minnesota St St. Paul, MN 551012131	Electronic Service	Yes	OFF_SL_19-268_M-19-268
Kevin	Reuther	kreuther@mncenter.org	MN Center for Environmental Advocacy	26 E Exchange St, Ste 206  St. Paul, MN 551011667	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_19-268_M-19-268
Richard	Savelkoul	rsavelkoul@martinsquires.com	Martin & Squires, P.A.	332 Minnesota Street Ste W2750  St. Paul, MN 55101	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_19-268_M-19-268
Larry L.	Schedin	Larry@LLSResources.com	LLS Resources, LLC	332 Minnesota St, Ste W1390  St. Paul, MN 55101	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_19-268_M-19-268
Janet	Shaddix Elling	jshaddix@janetshaddix.com	Shaddix And Associates	7400 Lyndale Ave S Ste 190  Richfield, MN 55423	Electronic Service	Yes	OFF_SL_19-268_M-19-268

First Name	Last Name	Email	Company Name	Address	Delivery Method	View Trade Secret	Service List Name
Joshua	Smith	joshua.smith@sierraclub.org		85 Second St FL 2  San Francisco, California 94105	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_19-268_M-19-268
Jessie	Smith	jseim@piic.org	Prairie Island Indian Community	5636 Sturgeon Lake Rd  Welch, MN 55089	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_19-268_M-19-268
Ken	Smith	ken.smith@districtenergy.com	District Energy St. Paul Inc.	76 W Kellogg Blvd  St. Paul, MN 55102	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_19-268_M-19-268
Beth H.	Soholt	bsoholt@windonthewires.org	Wind on the Wires	570 Asbury Street Suite 201  St. Paul, MN 55104	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_19-268_M-19-268
Anna	Sommer	ASommer@energyfuturesgroup.com	Energy Futures Group	PO Box 692  Canton, NY 13617	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_19-268_M-19-268
Mark	Spurr	mspur@fvbenergy.com	International District Energy Association	222 South Ninth St., Suite 825  Minneapolis, Minnesota 55402	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_19-268_M-19-268
Byron E.	Starns	byron.starns@stinson.com	STINSON LLP	50 S 6th St Ste 2600  Minneapolis, MN 55402	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_19-268_M-19-268
James M	Strommen	jstrommen@kennedy-graven.com	Kennedy & Graven, Chartered	200 S 6th St Ste 470  Minneapolis, MN 55402	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_19-268_M-19-268
Robert	Stupar	rob.stupar@enel.com	Enel Green Power North America, Inc.	816 Connecticut Avenue NW  Suite 600 Washington, DC 20006	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_19-268_M-19-268

First Name	Last Name	Email	Company Name	Address	Delivery Method	View Trade Secret	Service List Name
Eric	Swanson	eswanson@winthrop.com	Winthrop & Weinstine	225 S 6th St Ste 3500 Capella Tower Minneapolis, MN 554024629	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_19-268_M-19-268
Lynnette	Sweet	Regulatory.records@xcelenergy.com	Xcel Energy	414 Nicollet Mall FL 7  Minneapolis, MN 554011993	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_19-268_M-19-268
Douglas	Tiffany	tiffa002@umn.edu	University of Minnesota	316d Ruttan Hall 1994 Buford Avenue St. Paul, MN 55108	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_19-268_M-19-268
Thomas	Tynes	jjazynka@energyfreedomcoalition.com	Energy Freedom Coalition of America	101 Constitution Ave NW Ste 525 East  Washington, DC 20001	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_19-268_M-19-268
Lisa	Veith	lisa.veith@ci.stpaul.mn.us	City of St. Paul	400 City Hall and Courthouse 15 West Kellogg Blvd. St. Paul, MN 55102	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_19-268_M-19-268
Julie	Voeck	julie.voeck@nee.com	NextEra Energy Resources, LLC	700 Universe Blvd  Juno Beach, FL 33408	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_19-268_M-19-268
Samantha	Williams	swilliams@nrdc.org	Natural Resources Defense Council	20 N. Wacker Drive Ste 1600 Chicago, IL 60606	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_19-268_M-19-268
Joseph	Windler	jwindler@winthrop.com	Winthrop & Weinstine	225 South Sixth Street, Suite 3500  Minneapolis, MN 55402	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_19-268_M-19-268
Patrick	Zomer	Patrick.Zomer@lawmoss.com	Moss & Barnett a Professional Association	150 S. 5th Street, #1200  Minneapolis, MN 55402	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_19-268_M-19-268