

1 **PUBLIC INFORMATION & SCOPING MEETING - 24-68**

2 **WEBEX - April 24, 2024 - 6:00 p.m.**

3 **BEFORE THE MINNESOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION**

4 **AND DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**

5

6 **In the Matter of the Application of Northern States Power**

7 **Company d/b/a Xcel Energy Request for a Certificate of**

8 **Need for Additional Dry Cask Storage at the Prairie**

9 **Island Nuclear Generating Plant Independent Spent Fuel**

10 **Storage Installation**

11

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15 **MPUC DOCKET NO. E002/CN-24-68**

16

17 **Meeting held remotely via:**

18 **Webex and Telephone**

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21 **April 24, 2024**

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25 **COURT REPORTER: Christine Simons, RPR, RMR**

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1 MS. JENNA NESS: All right. It is 6:00
2 here. We have people on, and to respect time, I
3 would like to get started. Thank you so much for
4 taking time out of your night to come to this public
5 meeting today about Prairie Island's nuclear
6 generating plant.

7 I have Jessica Livingston's information
8 on the first slide here. She's also going to drop
9 it into the chat to everyone in case you're having
10 technical difficulties. She will be moderating the
11 comments later on and helping me with the
12 presentation.

13 Everyone who came in is muted upon entry,
14 but after the presentation there will be a chance to
15 comment, and then we will unmute you and allow some
16 questions.

17 Next slide, please.

18 Thank you.

19 And this is just a heads-up page so you
20 know where the chat and mute functions are. You
21 wouldn't be able to unmute until the end, like I
22 said, but chat is in the lower right. Please do
23 make sure that you either send your messages to
24 Jessica or to everyone to make sure your chats are
25 seen.

1 Next slide, please.

2 All right. So this is a public
3 information and scoping meeting for the
4 environmental impact statement on additional storage
5 of spent nuclear fuel for the Prairie Island nuclear
6 generating plant. I'm Jenna Ness, and I am the
7 environmental review manager for this project.

8 Next slide, please.

9 So for the agenda, we're going to give
10 you context of this project, go over at a high level
11 some of regulations that are associated with the
12 project. We'll touch on the nuclear plant's life
13 extension which is related to the project.

14 The main focal point of this meeting is
15 the environmental review, of course, for the
16 project. I will refer to it as the EIS, or the
17 environmental impact statement, throughout the
18 presentation, and then we'll end with questions and
19 comments.

20 Next slide, please.

21 So we have a nice picture on the right
22 here of what the storage at the nuclear plant looks
23 like currently. So this is Prairie Island nuclear
24 generating plant in Red Wing that started operating
25 in 1973. You can see in the middle there, they kind

1 of look like tanks, but I will refer to those as
2 casks or canisters throughout the presentation.
3 That's what we're talking about when we're talking
4 about spent fuel storage, and that's where the
5 nuclear fuel is going right now at the end of its
6 life.

7 Next slide, please.

8 So there's regulation at various levels.
9 First, at the federal level there's the Nuclear
10 Regulatory Commission, or the NRC, and they grant
11 licenses for operation for nuclear plants. Right
12 now Prairie Island nuclear generating plant is
13 authorized through 2034.

14 Separately, the State of Minnesota,
15 through the Public Utilities Commission, grants
16 authorizations to store spent fuel. Right now this
17 plant has authorization through 2034.

18 Next slide, please.

19 So Xcel has a lot of moving parts. Xcel
20 Energy has a lot of moving parts they have to
21 coordinate to accomplish this project. So as we
22 said, they need a license renewal from the NRC, and
23 from the State they need that authorization for the
24 spent fuel. And that's the second goal that's
25 there. It's called a certificate of need, and Xcel

1 Energy needs to demonstrate that this project is
2 needed -- and the Commission needs to grant that --
3 before it can be initiated.

4 Separately, the Commission reviews Xcel
5 Energy's integrated resource plan -- which is a much
6 higher level -- and Prairie Island nuclear
7 generating plant is part of that, but it's not
8 entirely related to this project. And information
9 on that and the certificate of need, we have some
10 representatives here today if you want to tease that
11 out a little bit more at the end of the
12 presentation.

13 So like I said, we're going to focus on
14 the environmental review. The Department of
15 Commerce -- myself -- will prepare the EIS, and then
16 the Commission can use that to aid in their decision
17 on the certificate of need or the authorization to
18 store additional fuel.

19 Next slide, please.

20 So here is that picture again, and this
21 is current day of how many casks Prairie Island
22 nuclear generating plant has stored here. As you
23 can see, it's only using part of this footprint,
24 part of this space, and there is room within the
25 current fence line to add more. They have three

1 different segregated areas, if you can kind of see
2 that, and the third area is just starting to get
3 fuel stored on it.

4 Next slide, please.

5 So as a summary of the request, Xcel
6 Energy has submitted for -- excuse me. I lost
7 track. Their existing license with Xcel Energy goes
8 to 2034, and there's two dates you keep seeing:
9 2033, 2034. That's because there are two generating
10 units at the plants, and they're authorized for two
11 different dates.

12 And Xcel Energy proposes to increase this
13 storage capacity at the nuclear plant to support an
14 additional 20 years of operation, and that would be
15 beyond their current license, so it would have to go
16 through 2054. And as you saw in the previous
17 picture, all that additional storage could go on
18 that same site.

19 Next slide, please.

20 Currently, as we saw on the picture,
21 there are 50 casks loaded in that facility. Coming
22 up I'll be showing a picture of where the new
23 concrete pads would go, and that would allow 34 more
24 casks -- or those pink looking things -- canisters
25 to be loaded in the 2030 to 2050 time frame. And

1 we'll also get into the technology Xcel Energy chose
2 for that fuel storage later, but it is licensed by
3 the NRC, and it is called a welded canister system.

4 Next slide, please.

5 So this is a visualization of the
6 expansion. So where the arrows are pointing, those
7 pads do not exist yet. To orient you north, there's
8 a north arrow in the top right corner. It's
9 pointing towards the bottom left corner. So an
10 additional storage pad could run the entire length
11 on the north side of the storage area, or -- and/or
12 another pad could be constructed next to where one
13 is currently located. And that would be allowed for
14 that future storage and expansion as the plant
15 continues to operate if all of those certifications
16 and licenses are granted.

17 So that would be for the 34 new systems.
18 The current three pads have 50, again. And between
19 2024 and 2025, they can add five additional casks
20 through the end of their current license, and then
21 that new technology can be added in 2026. The
22 Commission has already authorized the technology
23 type for Xcel Energy, so that is not part of the --
24 all of these certifications I've been discussing.

25 Next page, please.

1 So this is a visualization of the
2 technology Xcel Energy chose, if approved, to be
3 used at the Prairie Island nuclear plant beginning
4 in 2026. This technology is being utilized in over
5 1,200 applications in the U.S., and it's a
6 horizontal storage and transportation technology,
7 versus the current casks that you saw are vertical.
8 And as far as the transportation goes, I believe
9 this picture on the right, kind of, visualizes that
10 for you.

11 So a high level overview of the schedule:
12 Xcel Energy has already submitted their integrated
13 resource plan to the Commission in early February,
14 and if that preferred plan goes through the
15 Commission, that will extend the nuclear plant
16 operation -- part of extending the operation for
17 20 years.

18 The additional storage, or the
19 certificate of need application, was also submitted
20 in early February of this year. That is associated
21 with the environmental impact statement we're
22 discussing today. The PUC review could take up
23 until the fourth quarter of 2025.

24 And once all of those things are in
25 place, the NRC application could be submitted in the

1 fourth quarter of 2026. The NRC, the federal
2 agency, would do their own safety and environmental
3 review for them, and it could take up to 24 months,
4 which would bring us all the way up to the fourth
5 quarter of 2028. Which is -- maybe you have the
6 question of why we're starting so early, and Xcel is
7 getting the ball rolling because of this schedule
8 here.

9 Next slide, please.

10 All right. So the Department of
11 Commerce -- that's me -- I will prepare an EIS for
12 the additional spent fuel storage. That will allow
13 the plant to operate through 2054 if the storage is
14 granted. The EIS looks at human health and
15 environmental impacts; discuss methods to minimize
16 and mitigate impacts; and like I said earlier, it
17 can be used by the Commission to help them make
18 their decision on Xcel Energy's request for
19 additional storage in the certificate of need.

20 Next slide.

21 Here's the schedule again, maybe a little
22 easier to visualize. We're at -- for the
23 environmental review schedule, we're at the bold
24 green text today at our scoping meeting. After we
25 develop the scope, after taking public input today

1 and through the comment period, we will issue a
2 draft EIS. That could take some time. We're
3 expecting September 2024.

4 The month after that is issued we would
5 have another public comment period and public
6 meetings on the EIS, where the -- you will all be
7 welcome to make comments again. So any changes that
8 might be needed to be made can be made to the final
9 EIS, which about a quarter later could be issued.

10 And then the Commission can make their
11 decision on Xcel Energy's request for the
12 certificate of need for the additional storage. At
13 the earliest this would happen in February, but like
14 we said, it will likely be end of next year.

15 Next slide, please.

16 So this is a scoping meeting, and I just
17 wanted to hone in on, what does that mean? And it's
18 our opportunity to collect public comments on the
19 table of contents of the EIS. Let us know what you
20 think should be discussed and analyzed and anything
21 we may need to be aware of to make informed
22 decisions about this project.

23 So, again, that includes human health and
24 environmental impacts; minimization and mitigation
25 of those impacts. But also if you have any specific

1 studies you think should be included in the EIS or
2 if you think there's any system alternatives to the
3 project that could be analyzed for their impacts and
4 mitigation.

5 Next slide, please.

6 There are many ways to comment. Of
7 course, you can comment at today's meeting. We do
8 have a court reporter online who is documenting
9 everything we're saying today, so you can get it in
10 the record that way. You could also complete and
11 mail me a paper copy. My postal mail address is
12 there, and I can also drop it in the chat if you
13 need it.

14 You can simply e-mail me. My e-mail is
15 also here. And we do have a website where if you go
16 to this link here, you can just press "submit a
17 comment." The comment period ends May 9th, so we
18 are smack-dab in the middle of it right now.

19 Next slide, please.

20 So we're going to go ahead and get ready
21 for commenting. We have to do one speaker at a time
22 for the court reporter. Please state and spell your
23 name for the court reporter. I'll try to remind you
24 as well. And if you can, it's most helpful to
25 direct your comments to the scope of the EIS, but

1 we're also available here for questions. I have
2 myself with Commerce, I have Craig online with the
3 Public Utilities Commission, and there are
4 representatives for Xcel Energy online as well.

5 Next slide.

6 This is just a reminder of where that
7 chat button is. So feel free to either chat
8 everyone, or Jessica Livingston directly, to let
9 them know you'd like to speak.

10 I believe there is already someone in
11 line. Once Jessica gives you the ability to unmute,
12 then you will be able to hit the mute button in the
13 bottom center there as circled by that blue circle.
14 So let's get started, and thank you.

15 MS. JESSICA LIVINGSTON: Okay. We have
16 Carol who wanted to give a comment. So I just
17 unmuted you, Carol. You can go ahead.

18 MS. CAROL OVERLAND: Thank you. I'm
19 Carol Overland, C-A-R-O-L, O-V-E-R-L-A-N-D. Living
20 in Red Wing right near the plant.

21 I have a number of comments. The first
22 is regarding the emergency plan. The emergency plan
23 is not in the application, and we had an issue with
24 this in what -- NSP, at the time, wanted to put
25 nuclear waste in Florence Township, and they had an

1 emergency plan that was absolutely laughable.

2 And so -- and I have articles. I found
3 the box from like 20 -- however many years ago it
4 was. I found the box with all my articles. Now I
5 have to dust them off, but I'll turn in as many as I
6 can. But it's a big deal because what they proposed
7 was absurd.

8 And I know that an emergency plan was
9 recently approved by Red Wing in Goodhue County. I
10 don't know if it was Part 70 or Part 72 or expressly
11 both, but we need to review the Part 72 emergency
12 plan, and it's not in the application.

13 And the section of the application that's
14 supposed to deal with it, Section 12.2.4, it just
15 talks about what is required, but, again, it's not
16 there. It's not in an appendix. We need that.

17 Second, Appendix B and C are dose
18 studies, and the EIS should include Aaron Datesman's
19 shot noise study. I've included that before. I'll
20 include it again because the impacts of low dose and
21 long-term radiation exposures are greater than what
22 has previously been thought. And so this is moving
23 towards demonstrating that, and you need to consider
24 these calculations.

25 And, personally, it's really important to

1 me because my partner, Allen, got acute
2 promyelocytic leukemia, which is believed to be
3 triggered by exposure to radiation and/or toxins.
4 And, you know, he lived for decades across the bay
5 from the Salem Hope Creek nuclear plants and now is
6 living right here with Prairie Island.

7 MS. JENNA NESS: Oh, there she is. Okay.
8 You're back in.

9 MS. CAROL OVERLAND: Oh, where did we cut
10 off?

11 MS. JENNA NESS: I lost you around
12 "leukemia."

13 MS. CAROL OVERLAND: Okay. And this type
14 of leukemia would be caused by -- is believed to be
15 caused by long-term radiation -- I mean, radiation
16 exposures or toxic exposures, and so we're very
17 concerned about that.

18 So application -- at point, you know,
19 Appendix B and C, it should also in the EIS consider
20 the Aaron Datesman shot noise dose information.

21 Appendix I, the nuclear leave-behind
22 study, that's kind of an odd -- a very odd document,
23 and it's basically a "leave us high and dry" study.
24 It concerns me that Xcel is now promoting building
25 two 400-megawatt plants down in Lyon County, and

1 there are natural gas plants, okay, but yet here,
2 you know, we have an 800-megawatt -- I think it's
3 800-megawatt proposal for an alternative for Prairie
4 Island. And that also is about 20-some years old,
5 but it's there, and I think I included that
6 previously. I will include it again. If it's good
7 enough for Lyon County, why not here? You know, why
8 isn't that a reasonable alternative?

9 Next, let's see, costs are really
10 important in this. Costs are the only part of
11 nuclear that the state is allowed to regulate. This
12 Nuclear Regulatory Commission preempts everything
13 else. Nothing about the safety, nothing about
14 environmental, the State can only regulate cost. So
15 the State needs to take a very hard look at costs of
16 what you can regulate.

17 So -- and I urge you to address the full
18 extent of costs, not just the few costs of buying a
19 couple of canisters. I mean, this is important
20 because if the Public Utilities Commission does
21 approve this project, the proposal, we're in for the
22 long term. And what that means is, you know, it
23 implicitly includes all of the decommissioning costs
24 of casks, it includes all the contaminated
25 equipment, it includes building a transfer facility,

1 it includes replacement costs. So it is implicitly
2 preparing us, locking us in to having all these
3 costs. So the Commission should not do this lightly
4 and all those costs should be considered.

5 Also, Xcel has been telling on -- I think
6 it's called indeterminant storage now, not
7 temporary. We're off that term. Anyway, they're
8 counting on storage in Texas or New Mexico. The
9 Texas one, that was declared unconstitutional in
10 Texas, and the belief is that the Nuclear Regulatory
11 Commission does not have jurisdiction or authority
12 to site nuclear waste in Texas. So that is, you
13 know, going to be argued out in the courts. But
14 then just recently, I think it was the end of March,
15 the same thing in New Mexico based upon that Texas
16 decision.

17 So both of the options that they were
18 considering or relying on for indeterminant storage
19 are history, perhaps. They're going to be argued in
20 the courts, and it's not something you can bank on.
21 And, you know, you remember the Mescalero project
22 in, also, New Mexico, and the Gushute project in
23 Utah. You know, these projects, indeterminant
24 storage, temporary storage, they have a history of
25 going south. So we need to take a serious look at

1 that. Because if the PUC does approve this, we're
2 locked in and likely locked into forever storage
3 here, and so we have to do this very carefully.

4 Also, something regarding emergency
5 plans, there was an article in the paper the other
6 day. Let's see, April 12th in the STrib, third
7 paragraph -- and I will include this in my comments
8 in writing -- it says that: The company also says
9 its evacuation planning and oversight was
10 inadequate, admitting to procedural weaknesses and
11 poor communication between departments.

12 And this is regarding the outage where we
13 learned later, very late, that workers drilled
14 through the cables, and that's why the unit went
15 offline. And that's why both units were offline,
16 and that's why the Mississippi froze for the first
17 time in who knows how long.

18 So given that even the company admits its
19 evacuation planning and oversight was inadequate,
20 this, again, is a heads-up that we need to really be
21 checking that emergency plan. So the EIS needs to
22 look at that. That is something that affects us
23 right here in Red Wing, and, you know, very
24 concerned about it.

25 Also, the maps that are in the

1 application, note please, the small little -- the
2 lines. The small radius of those circles. And that
3 should be enlarged and impacts beyond, you know, I
4 think like a 25- and 50-mile radius should be
5 considered.

6 So that is it for now for me. Thank you
7 for having me comment.

8 MS. JENNA NESS: Yes. Thank you, Carol,
9 and if you think of anything else, please message
10 Jessica. Personally, I heard you referring to
11 appendices, and I just want to make sure that you're
12 talking about the certificate of need
13 application (indiscernible) --

14 THE REPORTER: Jenna --

15 MS. CAROL OVERLAND: Yes. I don't think
16 there --

17 THE REPORTER: Jenna, you --

18 MS. CAROL OVERLAND: I don't believe that
19 there --

20 THE REPORTER: Jenna, you were cutting
21 out.

22 MS. JENNA NESS: Okay.

23 MS. CAROL OVERLAND: I understand the
24 question.

25 MS. JENNA NESS: Oh, no. Our court

1 reporter was just saying I wasn't being loud enough.
2 That's all, Carol.

3 MS. CAROL OVERLAND: Okay. And regarding
4 those, when I was saying Appendix A and B and
5 Appendix I, that specifically was including the
6 application. I don't believe that there are
7 appendices in the scoping decision, are there?

8 MS. JENNA NESS: The scoping EAW, yes,
9 that I released.

10 MS. CAROL OVERLAND: Oh, the scoping EAW.
11 Got it.

12 MS. JENNA NESS: The appendices, yeah.

13 MS. CAROL OVERLAND: Okay. I'm referring
14 to the application appendices. Yeah.

15 MS. JENNA NESS: Okay. Thank you.

16 MS. CAROL OVERLAND: Thanks.

17 MS. JENNA NESS: I will turn my
18 microphone up in the settings as well. Please yell
19 at me again if you need to.

20 Jessica, do we have anyone else who would
21 like to make a comment?

22 MS. JESSICA LIVINGSTON: We do not.

23 MS. JENNA NESS: Okay. Well, we will
24 wait for people to think. It's not only public
25 comments, you can also ask questions.

1 So, Carol, I know you made a lot of
2 comments, but if you have specific questions you
3 would like answered, now is a good time for that as
4 well.

5 MS. JESSICA LIVINGSTON: And if anybody
6 has questions, feel free to message me, and I can
7 unmute you.

8 MS. JENNA NESS: Yes, thank you.

9 MS. JESSICA LIVINGSTON: Okay. Carol
10 just messaged that she has a question, so I will
11 unmute you. Thank you.

12 MS. CAROL OVERLAND: Thank you. This is
13 pretty easy, but it's a question directed at Xcel.
14 What do we have to do to get a copy of the emergency
15 plan?

16 MS. AMANDA JEPSON: Jenna, I can take
17 that.

18 This is Amanda Jepson, A-M-A-N-D-A,
19 J-E-P-S-O-N. I am the project manager for the
20 certificate of need for Xcel Energy. We do have
21 copies of the emergency plan, and we can provide
22 those at a later date.

23 Jenna, you and I can discuss what format
24 we want to provide that information in.

25 So, yes, we can provide that, Carol, so

1 it's available to you.

2 MS. CAROL OVERLAND: Should I send a
3 formal request for that, like an info request or
4 something or --

5 MS. AMANDA JEPSON: I think we captured
6 it here, but, Jenna, I'll let you respond to that.

7 MS. JENNA NESS: It sounds to me like
8 Xcel is okay with sharing it and sharing it during
9 the comment period. Please interrupt me if that's
10 not the case.

11 MS. AMANDA JEPSON: Yes. I agree, Jenna.

12 MS. JENNA NESS: Okay. If that's the
13 case, do you want it to be in the docket, Carol?

14 MS. CAROL OVERLAND: Yes.

15 MS. JENNA NESS: Okay.

16 MS. CAROL OVERLAND: Yeah.

17 MS. JENNA NESS: Then, I don't think you
18 need to submit a formal request if Xcel is willing
19 to put it in the docket and with the cover page
20 explaining, then that will work.

21 MS. CAROL OVERLAND: That would be great,
22 and especially if it's in the docket with enough
23 time for us to review and then comment before the
24 end of the comment period.

25 MS. JENNA NESS: Right.

1 MS. CAROL OVERLAND: And not a quick
2 read, but, you know, a couple days would be nice.

3 MS. JENNA NESS: Agreed. I mean, I'm
4 sure it is robust.

5 MS. CAROL OVERLAND: I hope so. We'll
6 see. Thank you.

7 MS. JENNA NESS: Absolutely.

8 We'll keep waiting here to see if anybody
9 else who is online has a question or a comment.
10 Again, looking for things to help us with the scope
11 of the EIS. So, for instance, Carol mentioned
12 radiation exposure and alternatives for the project,
13 things like that.

14 Jessica, it sounds like we don't have
15 anything else as of right now?

16 MS. JESSICA LIVINGSTON: We do not.

17 MS. JENNA NESS: Okay. I want to remind
18 people that the comment due date is May 9th. You
19 can always submit a comment into the record outside
20 of the comment period. That won't necessarily fit
21 in the process. But I do want to mention that after
22 a draft EIS is issued, we will have another round of
23 public meetings, and you will be able to see what
24 kind of analysis was made and what kind of
25 conclusions were drawn based on that analysis and

1 make more comments and ask more questions.

2 Okay. I want to wait one more minute.

3 MS. JESSICA LIVINGSTON: We have another
4 question from Carol.

5 MS. JENNA NESS: Great.

6 MS. CAROL OVERLAND: Hello, again.
7 Speaking of scheduling -- and you're talking about a
8 comment period for the EIS. Now, what about a
9 comment period for the certificate of need? How is
10 that schedule going to work? And when -- do you
11 have any idea when the hearing will be on that?

12 MS. JENNA NESS: So I might hand this
13 over to Craig. At a high level, they would try to
14 coincide them as much as possible, and the comment
15 period right now is related to the scope for the
16 environmental review.

17 Craig, do you have a better answer to
18 help me out here?

19 MR. CRAIG JANEZICH: Say, Carol, Jenna,
20 we -- I have not talked to Bret yet about a date of
21 when that process would start. Certainly I can talk
22 to Bret about it and send you an e-mail, if -- when
23 we have a better -- after I talk to him and have a
24 better idea, if that's okay.

25 MS. CAROL OVERLAND: Oh, sure. No

1 problem.

2 MR. CRAIG JANEZICH: Okay. Yeah. No
3 problem.

4 MS. JENNA NESS: Yeah. And as I'm sure
5 you know, they can't make a decision on the
6 certificate of need until the entire environmental
7 review process is complete, so that schedule at
8 least is quite drawn out.

9 MS. CAROL OVERLAND: Well, thank you.
10 That's good.

11 MS. JENNA NESS: I'll give it another
12 minute here. I know it takes people time to kind of
13 process and formulate their questions, especially
14 after all the additional information you've heard.

15 Last call.

16 Jessica, how is the chat looking?

17 MS. JESSICA LIVINGSTON: We have no more
18 questions.

19 MS. JENNA NESS: Okay. Well, again, I
20 appreciate everybody coming, spending time out of
21 their night, and for the comments. It's always
22 better to get comments and make our process better,
23 so -- and always feel free to e-mail me directly if
24 you think of a question after this meeting,
25 Jenna.Ness@state.mn.us. You can find me on the

1 website, too, if you can't write that down quick.
2 And there's also an in-person meeting in Red Wing
3 tomorrow at the Red Wing Ignite Building at 6:00 if
4 you would like to come to that as well.

5 Thank you, everyone. Unless one of the
6 co-hosts here has any last comments, I think we will
7 convene the meeting.

8 Hearing none, have a good night,
9 everyone.

10 (Public comment concluded.)
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	12:2;23:12	11:21	4:25;6:3,16,23;7:1;	26:6
A	always (3) 23:19;25:21,23	B	8:19,21;10:17;11:8, 10:12:7,9,12,14,16, 24:13:17;14:6;16:14, 16:17:20;20:25;21:6, 16,21,23,25;23:19; 24:21;25:25	coincide (1) 24:14
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1 SCOPING AND INFORMATION MEETING - PUC 24-68

2 APRIL 25, 2024 - 6:00 P.M.

3 BEFORE THE MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

4

5 In the Matter of the Application of Northern
6 States Power Company d/b/a Xcel Energy Request
7 for a Certificate of Need for Additional Dry Cask
8 Storage at the Prairie Island Nuclear Generating
9 Plant Independent Spent Fuel Storage
10 Installation.

11

12

13 MPUC DOCKET NO. E002/CN-24-68

14

15

16 Red Wing, Minnesota
17 April 25, 2024
18 6:00 - 7:00 p.m.

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COURT REPORTER: Jackie Young, RPR

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1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 MS. JENNA NESS: We are going to get
3 started with the meeting. Thank you everybody
4 for taking time out of your day to come here
5 tonight.

6 I'm Jen Ness. I'm with the Department
7 of Commerce, and I am the environment review
8 project manager on this project, the
9 Prairie Island nuclear generating plant.

10 This is the environmental impact
11 scoping meeting. We are taking public input today
12 on what can be in the EIS or the Environment
13 Impact Statement. We'll go over the context of
14 the process, which is additional spent fuel
15 storage at the nuclear plant. We'll go over
16 regulations at a high level that are associated
17 with this project. We'll talk about some related
18 requests that Xcel Energy has in with the state
19 and how the environmental review will go. That's
20 the main focus point of this presentation, and
21 then we'll have questions and comments from you
22 all.

23 So context of the project. This is a
24 picture of what it looks like current day . We
25 also have poster boards over there if you want to

1 take a closer look after the presentation.

2 The middle here, they kind of look like
3 tanks. I'll be referring to those as casks or
4 canisters throughout the presentation. That is
5 where the fuel is stored right now at the plant.

6 So the Prairie Island nuclear
7 generating plant started operating in 1973, it's
8 in Red Wing, and this project is for this area,
9 which is called the independent spent fuel storage
10 installation.

11 So there's a couple of different layers
12 of regulations on the federal level. The Nuclear
13 Regulatory Commission, or the NRC, licenses
14 nuclear plants to continue operation, and right
15 now Prairie Island nuclear generating plant is
16 licensed through 2034.

17 The Minnesota, at our state level,
18 Public Utilities Commission, also authorizes
19 spent fuel storage. That currently is authorized
20 through 2034 as well.

21 Okay. So we talked about that license
22 renewal that Xcel will need from the NRC to
23 continue operating the plant. Xcel Energy also
24 has to submit a Certificate of Need to the Public
25 Utilities Commission. It's basically a request

1 to authorize them to store additional fuel.

2 There's also, related to this project,
3 the Integrated Resource Plan that Xcel Energy has
4 recently submitted as well, and as part of that
5 plan, this project is a component of that. And
6 the Commission also goes through and takes a look
7 at and approves that.

8 And the Department of Commerce, so
9 that's myself, I will prepare the EIS and the
10 Commission can use that to aid in their decision
11 on the Certificate of Need or that authorization
12 for more fuel storage.

13 So here is that picture again. You can
14 see there's kind of three concrete areas here.
15 Those are the three pads. They're called pads
16 that Xcel Energy has set up right now for fuel
17 storage. Two of them are full, and this third
18 one is just starting with storage, but they will
19 get to their limit soon here.

20 So Xcel Energy, in their applications
21 to the Commission, have talked about how they
22 believe this project is in the best interests of
23 their customers, the state, and the environment.
24 They are going to propose or have proposed to
25 increase the spent fuel storage at the plant for

1 another 20 years of operation beyond the existing
2 license, which would bring us to 2054, and that
3 would allow for that additional storage to be
4 added with no increase to the facility.

5 So in that picture earlier, there is a
6 fence line, and we'll talk about that again, but
7 that fence line doesn't need to be expanded or
8 anything. There's space there currently for
9 future storage.

10 Currently there are 50 casks loaded at
11 the facility in those concrete pads we talked
12 about. An additional 34 casks can be loaded in
13 the 2030 to '50 timeframe if the project is
14 approved, and it is -- the technology Xcel Energy
15 chose is a welded canister style, and I'll show
16 you a picture of that in a minute.

17 So here -- I don't know if that's kind
18 of -- I think you can see that. These two pads
19 don't exist yet. This is the visualization of
20 what they will be like. This north arrow is
21 showing north this way. So up to one to two pads,
22 they would be authorized to construct. They would
23 go here and/or here. And they would be stored in
24 a similar fashion. That would support the 34 new
25 systems requested.

1 Five additional casks can be added to
2 this existing pad here through their current
3 licensing or authorization, and ten of the new
4 technology can also be stored there in 2026. New
5 technologies do not need to be approved by the
6 Commission because they have already been approved
7 previously.

8 This is a picture of what the new
9 technology look like -- looks like. It's in
10 utilization in over 1,200 places in the U.S.
11 It's both a transportation and storage system. As
12 you can see, there is wheels here, and it's a
13 horizontal style instead of a vertical style like
14 the current storage system. And that would be
15 used beginning in 2026.

16 So like we were talking about earlier,
17 Xcel Energy has filed early -- in early February
18 of this year their Integrated Resource Plan. That
19 review is ongoing. That preferred plan includes
20 extending the nuclear plant's life another 20
21 years of operation.

22 That additional storage application or
23 Certificate of Need was also submitted in early
24 February of this year. That is related to the
25 Environmental Impact Statement I will be writing.

1 It can take a while, so that review might not be
2 complete until the fourth quarter of 2025. And
3 once that's kind of all buttoned up, Xcel Energy
4 can submit their license renewal to the NRC in
5 the fourth quarter of 2026.

6 That would include its own
7 environmental review with Human Health and Safety,
8 and that can also take up to 24 months. So that
9 pushes us all the way out to the fourth quarter
10 of 2028, which is why this process is getting
11 started what might seem to be early.

12 So I'll prepare an EIS related to that
13 additional fuel that will allow the plant to
14 continue operating, so they kind of work together,
15 and that EIS will look at human health and
16 environmental impacts, methods to mitigate those
17 impacts, and can be used, again, by the Commission
18 to aid in their decision on the Certificate of
19 Need.

20 Here's a high-level timeline of the
21 environmental review process. We are at the green
22 point here, April, doing our scoping meetings for
23 the document. We hope to get the draft EIS issued
24 in September. The months following we'll have a
25 public comment period and we'll have meetings

1 again if people want to comment or think the draft
2 EIS needs something better or anything added to
3 it. And then we would make any changes as
4 warranted and issue the final EIS about a quarter
5 after that.

6 At the earliest, the Commission can
7 make a decision on that Certificate of Need in
8 February of 2025 if all those dates line up. The
9 environmental review does need to be completed
10 first.

11 Okay. So down to what this meeting is
12 really for, is public information but also
13 scoping. An easy way to say that is what is the
14 table of contents of our environmental impact
15 statement, what do we need as the state when we're
16 preparing this to know to make informed decisions
17 about the project, are there any alternatives to
18 the project that you know of that could mitigate
19 impacts that we could write about, are there any
20 studies specifically that we should include in
21 that document, and, again, any human health and
22 environmental impacts.

23 We do cover a lot in those documents,
24 but they're -- that's why we come for public
25 comments as well to make sure we get everything

1 we need.

2 Okay. There is a lot of ways to make
3 public comments. The comment period ends May 9th,
4 so we're in the middle of it. You can send postal
5 mail to me. If you have a copy of the
6 presentation, you have all this information. You
7 can go on our website and submit there. You can
8 e-mail me directly, and I do have paper comment
9 sheets if you would prefer to just write it down
10 today.

11 Okay. So we do have a court reporter
12 with us today, so we're going to need one speaker
13 at a time for people who would like to speak, and
14 if you do want to speak, please just state your
15 name, your first and last name, for the court
16 reporter, and the most helpful comments are those
17 that are directed towards the scope of the
18 Environmental Impact Statement.

19 So that's just a reminder of what the
20 scope means.

21 All right. I know that was a lot of
22 information dumped on you all at once so, but I
23 know there is one person in line who would like
24 to speak. I'll double-check that list, but,
25 Carol, would you like to come up and make your

1 comments, please?

2 MS. CAROL OVERLAND: I think Alan
3 probably got on the list as well.

4 MS. JENNA NESS: Yes, you're right. I
5 did not see that.

6 MS. CAROL OVERLAND: Carol Overland,
7 O-v-e-r-l-a-n-d, Red Wing.

8 First a correction from yesterday. I
9 misread the article from the Star Tribune of
10 April 12th where it says its evacuation planning
11 and oversight. I thought it was evacuation
12 planning and oversight and it's really excavation.
13 So I wanted to correct that.

14 But I'm turning this article in about
15 the cutting of the cables and the outage for three
16 months or so. So that's one I'm turning in.

17 The next thing will be the natural gas
18 conversion plan and the feasibility study for
19 conversion of Prairie Island to natural gas fired
20 generation, and it does have a rough review of
21 costs, keeping in mind that this was 2002. So 22
22 years ago. Things are changed.

23 So to comments. The NRC has
24 jurisdiction over everything. It preempts
25 everything except for costs. That's the only

1 thing that the Minnesota PUC can address, is
2 costs. So it's really important that
3 socioeconomic issues be addressed, and I don't
4 see that in the scoping.

5 MS. JENNA NESS: Let me look.

6 MS. CAROL OVERLAND: But I could be
7 wrong on that, too, but it has to be the focus
8 because it's the only thing that Minnesota can
9 have a -- make a determination about.

10 So those socioeconomic costs should
11 include, for example, the utility and personal
12 property tax. That's a really big deal here in
13 Red Wing, as it is in Monticello, and we should
14 have in that, to address costs, what has been
15 received, let's say, annually from 2020 to 2024,
16 and specifically for Goodhue County, the City of
17 Red Wing, and the school district, which are all
18 divided amongst.

19 And then what will approval of these
20 casks do to the utility and personal property tax.
21 I presume, because it will be added in, it would
22 increase, but we should know how much more
23 specifically and when that will occur, the
24 timeline for that.

25 Also, again, I wanted to note that this

1 storage facility is a Part 72 storage facility,
2 not a Part 50 that is integrated into the plan.
3 So a concern is that if they should shut down,
4 what happens to Part 72, you know. It's -- it's
5 separate. It is a legally separate entity issue.
6 So what happens if it would shut down.

7 And that relates, I think, also to the
8 Appendix I in the application. That's the leave
9 behind study. You know, what exactly does that
10 mean, and that's something that is really
11 important for the EIS to look at, is what does
12 that mean.

13 Also, in the IRP, you mentioned the
14 IRP, and Xcel came to the city council recently;
15 February, I think, and brought up the IRP. There
16 were several slides on that, and then also the dry
17 cask. I have the -- the little PowerPoint, so I
18 want to enter that into the record as well
19 because this is important.

20 I mean, this is lobbying, this is
21 promotion, and one of the Certificate of Need
22 issues is promotion of whatever makes this project
23 necessary, and they are promoting it by going
24 around to the city council, to all the local
25 jurisdictions, and promoting this project. So

1 that's something that should be considered. Under
2 the statute it's one of the criteria that that's
3 something that the Commission needs to look at.

4 And so what are the lobbying costs for
5 2023 and 2004 in Red Wing and all these other
6 jurisdictions. Not just their big lobbying cost,
7 which is reported to the Energy Finance Board, but
8 individually for Red Wing, Goodhue County, and the
9 school district, the ones where the personal
10 property taxes goes to.

11 And it's very important that it be
12 clear that if the Commission agrees to this
13 proposal, we're locked in until 2054, and then
14 that also means that we're locked into going
15 forward this way, which means decommissioning,
16 decommissioning costs. It means -- like the
17 casks that are not usable, they have to unload
18 those casks so they buy different casks, unload
19 them, put them in, and then what happens to those
20 old casts. If they're contaminated, what's going
21 to happen there, what does that cost. What does
22 it cost to build that transport facility you have
23 on the screen, that cement thing.

24 I see casks and those pads, but where
25 is the thing to stick them in. Where is that? I

1 don't see that in the plan there. And that's a
2 necessary part of the plan. And what does it
3 cost.

4 What will it cost to handle the
5 contaminated equipment. What will it cost to
6 handle all the radioactive things that will have
7 to be addressed. And then what is the cost of
8 replacing the canisters and the transfer of the
9 canisters. The different placement of natural
10 gas.

11 Also, this is premature because, again,
12 they have storage until 2033. Why do they need
13 to be done, why do they want to be done in the
14 fourth quarter of '28 with the NRC. Why is that?
15 That's not necessary. And things change, and
16 that's why it's important that we put this on
17 hold because, for example, the Court of Appeals
18 for the Fifth Circuit vacated first the Texas
19 interim storage, indeterminate storage, whichever,
20 they vacated that. And, yeah, it's going to be
21 argued out in court. That's going to take a long
22 time.

23 So who knows. I mean, Xcel has been
24 relying on that as a place to put the spent fuel,
25 but is that realistic? Who knows? But, yeah,

1 they're also looking at New Mexico. Well,
2 New Mexico vacated at the end of last month. So
3 is it realistic to start now when things change.
4 They're banking on New Mexico or Texas, and those
5 aren't really in the works and they're going to
6 be argued throughout the courts. So we'll see
7 what happens.

8 But it makes no sense to be licensing
9 this, doing a Certificate of Need.

10 Oh, I want to make clear too. On the
11 IRP, are they requesting certification in the IRP?
12 My concern about that goes to their Lyon County
13 to Sherco line, which they were arguing that,
14 well, it was approved in the IRP so therefore we
15 don't need a Certificate of Need, and that didn't
16 fly. But could the same thing happen here? It
17 should be really concrete.

18 I haven't seen that it was actually
19 certified, but, you know, this is an ongoing
20 problem right now with the Lyon County to Sherco
21 line. So we should be really clear in this
22 proceeding and in the IRP that they are not asking
23 for certification.

24 So I think that's it for now. Thank
25 you.

1 MS. JENNA NESS: Thank you. Thank you,
2 Carol.

3 We also have Alan, so if you want to be
4 on the mailing list, just write your name, but
5 feel free to give your comments when you're ready.

6 MR. ALAN MULLER: Am I supposed to do
7 something with this?

8 MS. JENNA NESS: Yes. I shouldn't have
9 brought it up now, but if you want to be on the
10 mailing address, we'll need an address.

11 MR. ALAN MULLER: Okay.

12 MS. JENNA NESS: Okay. Thank you.

13 And then just a reminder, state your
14 name for the court reporter.

15 MR. ALAN MULLER: Okay.

16 MS. JENNA NESS: Thank you.

17 MR. ALAN MULLER: My name is Alan
18 Muller. I reside at 1110 West Avenue in Red Wing,
19 which is a few blocks from here.

20 COURT REPORTER: Could you spell both
21 names, please, your first and last?

22 MR. MULLER: I beg your pardon?

23 COURT REPORTER: Spell your first and
24 last name.

25 MR. MULLER: A-l-a-n, M-u-l-l-e-r.

1 Okay. Was that clear enough?

2 COURT REPORTER: Um-uhm.

3 MR. ALAN MULLER: Okay. I noticed that
4 there are only two people signed up here to
5 comment. Is that really the totality of it?

6 MS. JENNA NESS: Yes, for now.
7 Sometimes people just comment.

8 MR. ALAN MULLER: Okay. They weren't
9 inspired by it or they would be here.

10 MS. JENNA NESS: Or they do it online.
11 Some people don't like public speaking.

12 MR. ALAN MULLER: I suppose I've been
13 involved to some degree in nuclear power industry
14 controversies for around 50 years, and one of the
15 things that strikes me is that Minnesota, some
16 decades ago, built an honorable history of trying
17 to have the health and other consequences of
18 nuclear power plants factored into the permitting
19 process. And although the federal government and
20 the industry largely prevailed, Minnesotans tried,
21 and it's distressing to me to see that now all
22 too often the feeling I get is that regulators are
23 acting as stenographers for the applicant.
24 That's, I think discreditable and undignified, to
25 put it mildly.

1 If we look at this, NSP, and I would
2 like to compliment NSP, I think they're one of
3 the most artfully managed facilities in the
4 country. They almost always outsmart regulators
5 and politicians because they take a long-term view
6 of getting their way. But that doesn't mean again
7 that the state should simply rollover to that.

8 There is no license in place that
9 allows operation up into the 1050s. I don't see
10 any indication that there ever will be; although
11 there may. You know, that's more -- more or less
12 a matter of federal jurisdiction. But I don't see
13 the sense of considering an application for
14 operation beyond the time horizon of the
15 facilities. It seems to me that that might be a
16 little bit like if I'm 13 years old and I apply
17 for a driver's license, hopefully the license
18 people are going to say, well, please come back
19 in a few years when you're within our period of
20 allowing that.

21 So I think that this application, this
22 process is effective on that very simple and
23 fundamental level. You ought to put it in a file
24 drawer and forget about it and let NSP come back
25 if and when they ever have a license to operate

1 up to this time.

2 Now, aside from that, if we look at the
3 paper trail that this facility has, it's
4 extensive. It's been operating for a long time.
5 Increasing age increases the possibility of some
6 kind of a major accident.

7 I understand that not very long ago a
8 contractor of Prairie Island severed some control
9 cables. I don't know the details, but we know
10 from other documents that there's a recognized
11 inundation risk associated with these facilities
12 being downstream from dams operated by the Corps
13 of Engineers.

14 So just looking at the immediate
15 situation involving the plant, I -- I don't see
16 any justification for proceeding with this. But
17 the environmental review is supposed to take a
18 broader look at the consequences, possible
19 consequences of the proposed action, and they
20 include such things as increased radiation,
21 cumulative radiation dosing.

22 It should be noted that Red Wing, most
23 of Minnesota, in fact, but Red Wing in particular
24 is a high radon area, and with the old housing
25 stock, many people are exposed to radiation in

1 the course of their daily lives, and one ought to
2 consider very seriously whether it's desirable to
3 continue or increase that.

4 The city has not taken, nor the state
5 really, taken any, or the county, taken any strong
6 measures to have people's residences evaluated for
7 radiation hazards. Some people have, but it's
8 purely voluntary and at the homeowner's expense.

9 It's also pretty obvious that if
10 someone operates such a plant for a longer period
11 of time, there will be additional mining of
12 uranium associated with that. And, in fact, the
13 uranium industry is seeking to reopen or expand
14 mining activities in Virginia and the Navajo
15 Nation and other places. It's not a secret that
16 the health consequences to workers in that
17 industry are severe; again, often involving cancer
18 of the lungs.

19 This is the sort of broader view that
20 the state should be taking, though, of the
21 proposed action. Do we want to facilitate the
22 continued operation of the plant without
23 considering more broadly the consequences.

24 And so that -- the scope, I believe,
25 although it does have some sound elements to it,

1 needs to be broadened in its range.

2 I don't want to go on for a long time
3 here, but it seems that there are only two people
4 signed up, so I will go on a little bit longer.

5 The history of the cask storage
6 facility in Red Wing is an interesting one,
7 somewhat complicated politically, if not
8 technically. This storage -- nuclear storage
9 facility is located within the city limits of
10 Red Wing, as I understand it. If we ask
11 ourselves, well, what does the city, what do
12 residents -- how do residents feel about this,
13 are they concerned, and one could say, well, if
14 there are only two people speaking up, maybe not,
15 but when I look around, I see many people who, I
16 believe, are affiliated with the nuclear industry.

17 So any comments coming from the
18 municipal government should be regarded, in fact,
19 as testimony of Xcel Energy once removed. The
20 city has never, to my knowledge, and I've been
21 interested in this point for approaching 20 years,
22 made any effort to inform its residents of the
23 positions it takes on this issue or, for that
24 matter, any other environmental issue.

25 Picking up trash on Earth Day may be a

1 comforting thing for some people, but it's not
2 responsive to the actual health and environmental
3 challenges that this community faces.

4 We ought to be looking to shut down the
5 operation. We ought to be looking at some
6 credible future for this nuclear waste storage
7 facility. As far as I know, there are no plans
8 to move it, to bury it, but now we have a proposal
9 to expand it. This doesn't make any sense.

10 That's putting the cart before the horse.

11 So I think I'll end with that, that in
12 my opinion this entire proceeding is misconceived,
13 it ought not to be happening, and if it -- Let's
14 just shut it down. That's essentially my
15 recommendation. We don't need more nuclear waste
16 stored in Red Wing.

17 It is possible, though, to have a great
18 deal to say about the general fate of the nuclear
19 industry; and if you look at the situation, the
20 economics of the situation, which generally are
21 determined what happens, rhetoric aside, the
22 costs of nuclear power has accelerated rapidly.
23 Every attempt to build new nuclear capacity, at
24 least in North America and Western Europe, has
25 proven to be much more expensive and much more

1 time consuming than was promised.

2 And more than likely the building of
3 green-fueled nuclear plants in the United States
4 is politically and economically impossible. So as
5 a sort of alternative, the industry is trying to
6 revive and expand and continue the operation of
7 the existing facilities.

8 MS. JENNA NESS: Thank you.

9 MR. ALAN MULLER: That's all. That's
10 enough for me.

11 MS. JENNA NESS: Thank you. And we can
12 wrap back around, too, but let's --

13 MR. ALAN MULLER: I didn't hear you.

14 MS. JENNA NESS: We can come back
15 around, but let's see if anyone else has comments
16 as well. I don't know if that spurred anything
17 for anybody who would like to speak or make a
18 public comment. I am here if you have questions
19 about the process.

20 Yeah.

21 MR. PETER HAVERLANDT: My name is Pete
22 Haverlandt.

23 MS. JENNA NESS: Pete, would you be
24 able to come up here just so our court reporter
25 can hear you better.

1 MR. PETER HAVERLANDT: Okay.

2 MS. JENNA NESS: Thank you. And then
3 if you could spell your last name for her as well.

4 MR. PETER HAVERLANDT: Sure. Yep.

5 MS. JENNA NESS: Thanks.

6 MR. PETER HAVERLANDT: It's
7 H-a-v-e-r-l-a-n-d-t.

8 The only thing I would like to comment
9 on, too, is it looks like we're looking to
10 maintain the status quo pretty much with the
11 existing power plant that we have there, and I'm
12 wondering, there's been so many advances since
13 that plant was built and, you know, there's
14 generating facilities that can reprocess the waste
15 that we're storing in the casks.

16 I'm wondering if there isn't anything
17 on the horizon as far as plans to build a new
18 facility that could reprocess that and lessen the
19 toxicity of it. I would think something could be
20 done that way.

21 And, you know, it keeps going through
22 my mind all the billions we're spending, our
23 country is spending on wars and that, man, we
24 could be building new facilities across the
25 country and that. You know, I would like to see

1 something like that happen.

2 And, you know, I realize that our --
3 our facility on Prairie Island has had a -- I
4 think you'd almost call it a stellar record in
5 that as far as maintenance and -- and its capacity
6 and what have you, but I've been harping for quite
7 some time to different people and that about
8 getting rid of the thing and utilizing the new
9 technology and that, and nobody seems to want to
10 talk about it, you know. I can't figure out why,
11 you know.

12 So I guess that's all I have there.

13 MS. JENNA NESS: Thank you.

14 MR. PETER HAVERLANDT: Thank you.

15 MS. JENNA NESS: Yes, we certainly look
16 for the newest studies that we can incorporate
17 into the Environmental Impact Statement.

18 Does anybody else have final comments
19 or thought of anything else?

20 MR. ALAN MULLER: Will the transcript
21 of this be available?

22 MS. JENNA NESS: Yes. I can e-mail it
23 to you when it's available if you'd like.

24 MR. ALAN MULLER: Okay.

25 MS. JENNA NESS: Sure. Repeat your

1 name again, please.

2 MS. CAROL OVERLAND: Again, Carol
3 Overland.

4 I went through like a table of contents
5 and cost is not here anywhere, and then I flipped
6 through quickly -- Now, I don't have my computer
7 so I can't do a search for socioeconomics.

8 MS. JENNA NESS: I'm sorry. I thought
9 you were talking about the economics and the --

10 MS. CAROL OVERLAND: Yeah, and that's
11 where it should be, but like this is the scoping
12 and environmental assessment worksheet. Shouldn't
13 that be in there?

14 MS. JENNA NESS: Yes, it is. Well --

15 MS. CAROL OVERLAND: Cost is not here.

16 MS. JENNA NESS: Oh, costs.

17 MS. CAROL OVERLAND: Costs.

18 MS. JENNA NESS: That will be partially
19 in the EIS under socioeconomics.

20 MS. CAROL OVERLAND: It will be in
21 there?

22 MS. JENNA NESS: But the scoping and
23 environmental assessment worksheet doesn't have a
24 cost section in it.

25 MS. CAROL OVERLAND: It could. It

1 should.

2 MS. JENNA NESS: That's the EIS report,
3 Environmental Impact Report.

4 MS. CAROL OVERLAND: Yeah, and I
5 commented on the socioeconomics. I won't get into
6 that more.

7 There's also no -- I don't see no
8 action alternative in here or alternatives.

9 MS. JENNA NESS: It's in the draft
10 scope.

11 MS. CAROL OVERLAND: Draft scope.

12 MS. JENNA NESS: Correct.

13 MS. CAROL OVERLAND: And it's not in
14 the environmental assessment worksheet?

15 MS. JENNA NESS: Yeah, that is a
16 template that we use.

17 MS. CAROL OVERLAND: And then who wrote
18 this?

19 MS. JENNA NESS: That was me.

20 MS. CAROL OVERLAND: This is something
21 you wrote?

22 MS. JENNA NESS: Yes.

23 MS. CAROL OVERLAND: Okay. But there's
24 nothing in there about no action alternatives, so
25 how will people know --

1 MS. JENNA NESS: Because it's in the
2 scope.

3 MS. CAROL OVERLAND: -- to comment on
4 it?

5 MS. JENNA NESS: Because it's in the
6 draft scope.

7 MS. CAROL OVERLAND: It feels to me
8 like there's a lot of holes that it could fall
9 through. Okay.

10 MS. JENNA NESS: I can take a look at
11 the notice with you after the meeting and see if
12 there's a better way I could have wrote the
13 notice.

14 Okay. Yeah. Go ahead, Alan, and
15 please restate your name.

16 MR. ALAN MULLER: Okay. I'm the same
17 guy I was the last time I talked.

18 I just want to note here that Section
19 10 of the draft Environmental Impact Statement has
20 a section entitled Issues Outside the Scope of the
21 EIS. For example, A is the appropriateness of NRC
22 regulations for spent nuclear fuel storage
23 technology.

24 Potential impacts associated with the
25 nuclear fuel cycle, and I won't read them all, but

1 pretty much everything that I have previously said
2 should be considered is -- is categorically
3 excluded in this draft, which pretty much
4 guarantees that you're setting us up for a
5 bureaucratic exercise without substance, and I
6 hope -- I would suggest that the entire Section 10
7 be deleted from this draft, and instead there
8 ought to be a section discussing the scope needed
9 to capture the actual concerns and impacts of this
10 application.

11 MS. JENNA NESS: Comment noted.

12 MR. ALAN MULLER: Okay. That's all.

13 Thank you.

14 MS. JENNA NESS: Yes. Sure.

15 MS. CAROL OVERLAND: Okay. Let's go
16 off the scope, the draft scope.

17 MS. JENNA NESS: Yes.

18 MS. CAROL OVERLAND: If you look at --
19 the EIS will not address the following topics:
20 The appropriateness of NRC regulations for spent
21 fuel and nuclear storage technology. In the
22 Certificate of Need process, perhaps not the
23 environmental review, but where will it be
24 addressed? Because two jurisdictions -- I mean,
25 two of the -- two proposed plants that were

1 licensed -- storage facilities that were licensed
2 by the NRC were declared unconstitutional at the
3 NRC, they were vacated, so that, to me, sounds a
4 bit much, and that should take those court cases
5 into account.

6 And maybe -- you know, you're saying it
7 shouldn't be in the EIS, but it needs to be
8 somewhere.

9 MS. JENNA NESS: The alternative
10 storage locations are under Section 7.

11 MS. CAROL OVERLAND: Correct, but
12 they're not alternative storage locations.

13 MS. JENNA NESS: We have --

14 MS. CAROL OVERLAND: They're not --

15 MS. JENNA NESS: -- a storage container
16 in Texas and Yucca Mountain and Skull Valley, and
17 whatever else is being offered out there right now
18 is what we can look at.

19 MS. CAROL OVERLAND: But C1, the
20 proposal -- proposed high tech storage in New
21 Mexico, that one's that was vacated. Andrews
22 County, Texas, that was vacated. The proposed
23 project and storage with the Goshutes, that was
24 withdrawn eons ago. I mean, I was working on
25 that back in 2002.

1 Economic -- I mean, these are things
2 that are -- I think they're there to be
3 considered, but they're not considerable. They
4 don't exist. So that's misplaced.

5 Also the radiation. Well, again,
6 Minnesota has nothing to do with environmental
7 review according to the NRC, but economics we do.
8 Economic analysis of generation alternatives, but
9 it says here this is something not to be
10 considered, it says outside the scope. But
11 economic analysis of generation alternatives is
12 something -- like we have a natural gas
13 alternative plan that was developed by Xcel and
14 NSP at the time. Why would economic analysis of
15 generation alternatives be off the table?

16 MS. JENNA NESS: So PUC or Xcel,
17 correct me if I'm wrong, but I believe that's
18 addressed under the IRP and CN process.
19 Environmental review is connected to those.

20 MS. CAROL OVERLAND: But this is not
21 the IRP. And, again, I bring up the issue of
22 conflation with IRP and Certificate of Need, which
23 we're going through with the Lyon County Sherco
24 project, and it's something that if they're going
25 to license more storage, they need to look at

1 that.

2 They are the ones that included that
3 Appendix I, the -- What was it called now? The
4 Leave Behind Study, which is all about the costs
5 and interconnection and costs and things like that
6 for a generation to replace Prairie Island.

7 Well, that's in their application, so
8 it needs to be considered. They're offering it
9 and there are very realistic issues to look at and
10 that needs to be there. So I'll argue that in the
11 comments.

12 And the appropriateness of NRC
13 regulations and standards for radiation exposure.
14 That is something that is also changing right now,
15 and I introduced previously in my comments the
16 Datesman study about shot noise and the
17 demonstrated increased impact of long-term
18 radiation exposure, low-level long-term radiation
19 exposure, and the impacts are much higher than
20 what was believed previously.

21 And so that E doesn't make sense
22 either. If you're looking at, you know,
23 cumulative impacts in particular, that's something
24 that should be looked at - long-term radiation.

25 You know, and, again, transportation,

1 there is nothing in here about those big cement
2 things that they're going to put the casks into.
3 So we need that in the application. We need
4 information on that.

5 Will we be able to do information
6 requests or are we going to be regarded as being a
7 party, we have to be a party to make those
8 requests?

9 MS. JENNA NESS: Again, Craig --

10 MR. CRAIG JANEZICH: I'm not sure
11 about that. What I can say about costs generally
12 in the --

13 COURT REPORTER: Could you please speak
14 up a little bit?

15 MR. CRAIG JANEZICH: Oh, I'm sorry. I
16 should say my name and spell that too. Craig
17 Janezich. Last name is J-a-n-e-z-i-c-h, and I
18 work with the Public Utilities Commission. I'm
19 the facilities planner.

20 Costs, more broadly speaking, are --
21 are studied by the economics unit, and let me
22 just --

23 MS. CAROL OVERLAND: The EER?

24 MR. CRAIG JANEZICH: No, it comes
25 before the Commission.

1 MS. CAROL OVERLAND: Well, right, but
2 the EER does the background work and then --

3 MR. CRAIG JANEZICH: Yes. That's
4 correct. The last -- so you'll want to look at
5 the last study that was done just to see what was
6 included in there. That would be 20A35, and I can
7 write that down for anybody who is interested in
8 it. Okay.

9 MS. CAROL OVERLAND: What about 08510?

10 MR. CRAIG JANEZICH: Well, I'm not as
11 familiar with that.

12 MS. CAROL OVERLAND: Okay. Because
13 that was 2009 but it wouldn't involve '21 and '22.

14 MR. CRAIG JANEZICH: The most recent
15 one is 2085.

16 MS. CAROL OVERLAND: Okay.

17 MR. CRAIG JANEZICH: The next study and
18 our accrual assumptions will be due on
19 December 1, 2024. There will be a comment period
20 associated with that. That will include more
21 analysis of the costs overall with this project
22 and -- and the facility itself.

23 MS. CAROL OVERLAND: And to me that's
24 problematic, because if the Commission is going
25 to be approving this project, how can that be

1 done responsibly without that information?

2 MR. CRAIG JANEZICH: Well, this --

3 MS. CAROL OVERLAND: Because it ties us
4 into doing it.

5 MR. CRAIG JANEZICH: Right. This
6 project and the timing of it is -- I think we need
7 to --

8 MS. CAROL OVERLAND: There's a link to
9 the IRP, but there's supposed to be a link to that
10 docket.

11 MR. CRAIG JANEZICH: The -- Right.
12 The information, I -- I have it in my briefing
13 paper that I submitted to the Commission for
14 review. So if you look at that, that's where the
15 number is, and my analysis is where I bring up
16 the point that you made about costs and that sort
17 of thing.

18 But I understand your concern with the
19 timing certainly.

20 MS. CAROL OVERLAND: And it just --

21 MR. CRAIG JANEZICH: And I think it is
22 something to put on the record.

23 MS. CAROL OVERLAND: You bet I will. I
24 am.

25 MR. CRAIG JANEZICH: I know. I know.

1 But, yeah. I think when you look at timing, they
2 would like us to do it by the end of 2025, but it
3 will really depend on when the estimate is done
4 and the info process will follow that.

5 MS. CAROL OVERLAND: Yes.

6 MR. CRAIG JANEZICH: So, you know,
7 we'll see -- I don't know when the accrual
8 estimates will be done because that's another
9 public process certainly, so I don't know about
10 the timing. I can't speak to that.

11 MS. CAROL OVERLAND: And that's
12 problematic.

13 MR. CRAIG JANEZICH: Yes.

14 MS. CAROL OVERLAND: I'll underline it.
15 Okay. I'll shut up now.

16 MS. JENNA NESS: Thank you, Carol, for
17 your comments.

18 Yeah. Go ahead, Alan.

19 MR. ALAN MULLER: I'd like to note
20 again, commenting on the draft that's been
21 circulated, that there's a Section 5, potential
22 impacts and mitigation measures-radiological. The
23 EIS will discuss potential radiological impacts
24 related to the proposed additional storage, but
25 then when we go over to Section 10, the EIS will

1 not address the following topics:

2 A. The appropriateness of NRC
3 regulations for spent fuel storage technology; and

4 B. Potential impacts associated with
5 the nuclear fuel cycle.

6 So to me this seems quite
7 contradictory, and if you all have some ideas of
8 what the boundaries are between what you're
9 willing to include in the EIS and not willing,
10 they ought to be described in some detail, because
11 as it is, it just doesn't make sense to me.

12 MS. JENNA NESS: Okay.

13 MR. ALAN MULLER: I can cite a number
14 of other examples, but you ought to review the
15 entire document for internal consistency.

16 MS. JENNA NESS: Okay. So we are going
17 to cover radiological impacts in the EIS. We're
18 going to look at studies. We're going to talk
19 about mitigation. We're going to talk about the
20 rates that the Department of Health has looked
21 over.

22 What A is saying in Section 10 is that
23 we're not going to say that we like NRC's
24 regulations or not or if we think they're good
25 enough or not.

1 We'll mention the regulations, we'll
2 mention the results, and we'll compare them to
3 guidelines and other studies. But what we're
4 saying in A there is that we're not going to
5 comment on NRC's -- whether we think their
6 regulations are good enough or not.

7 MR. ALAN MULLER: What would be the
8 measure, then, of what impacts are acceptable and
9 what impacts are not acceptable?

10 MS. JENNA NESS: Well, we look at the
11 thresholds that are established, and I've already
12 looped in the Department of Health to compare what
13 we have from Xcel Energy for their study to make
14 sure that study was performed correctly, that it's
15 sound and representative, and compare it to the
16 thresholds we do have.

17 I would have to look at the scoping EAW
18 to be really specific about those thresholds, but
19 there are human health thresholds that we are
20 comparing them to.

21 MR. ALAN MULLER: And you consider them
22 to be fundamentally different from the
23 appropriateness of NRC regulations, which is --

24 MS. JENNA NESS: Those are the -- I
25 guess can you please rephrase your question? I

1 think I'm getting confused.

2 MR. ALAN MULLER: Okay. I don't
3 find -- I mean, I realize you're trying to be
4 responsive to what I said, and I don't want to be
5 argumentative about that, but I don't see that
6 you're really doing that.

7 There's a long history of boundary
8 drawing around what aspects of nuclear plants are
9 under state regulation and what are under
10 exclusively federal regulation, and maybe that's
11 something that you're planning to discuss, but if
12 you go and look at the history of this,
13 Minnesota, several decades ago, was a player in
14 those controversies and attempted to establish
15 health-based radiological standards that were
16 more strict than the industry controlled Nuclear
17 Regulatory Commission or Atomic Energy Commission
18 established or chose to establish.

19 And I would think it would be very
20 becoming of you all to try to recognize that
21 tradition and continue it. I don't see -- you
22 know, every day I see some sort of document
23 arguing that the NRC is captured by industry. I
24 believe that it is an example of regulatory
25 capture. And every day pretty much I see an

1 example of the Public Utilities Commission acting
2 as the agent of the applicants rather than of
3 public interest. I don't like that either. It's
4 not what Minnesotans are paying for and have a
5 right to expect.

6 And that -- that doesn't mean
7 individuals working in the system aren't doing
8 everything that they can do to be productive
9 regulators, but I think it's long past time that
10 some people begin to question the adequacy of that
11 and the general trajectory of regulation in
12 Minnesota.

13 MS. JENNA NESS: I hear what you're
14 saying, and I apologize. I got flustered earlier.
15 What I should have said is that I need to look
16 back at the scoping EAW so I can give you what I
17 can be absolutely sure is the correct answer for
18 what those thresholds are. I relied heavily on
19 the Department of Health to ensure that that
20 information was up to their standards.

21 As far as what you had just said, it's
22 not the answer you want, but unfortunately that's
23 outside the scope of what I can do in a government
24 document.

25 MR. ALAN MULLER: I'll give you an

1 example. I have a little bit of exposure to
2 controversies involving Three Mile Island, and the
3 official position there has been that the release
4 of radioactivity from that melting down reactor
5 wasn't sufficient to affect people's health, and
6 that's been the official line now, you know, for
7 several decades.

8 However, there's also a growing
9 literature looking at the situation from an
10 epidemiological point of view and actually
11 finding, you know, a different result. That --
12 that when you start to count and you look at the
13 incidents and so on and so forth of cancers and
14 noncancer illness, the argument that this event
15 did, in fact, harm the community health is
16 growing. It gets stronger. Pretty much the
17 literature on that point is piling up.

18 And so that is what could be considered
19 sufficient to question whether, in fact, the
20 conventional way of looking at these things is
21 sufficient to whether there might, in fact, be
22 substantial health impacts associated with the
23 Prairie Island reactors.

24 MS. JENNA NESS: Okay.

25 MR. ALAN MULLER: That's -- I mean,

1 there's literature to look at.

2 MS. JENNA NESS: Yeah.

3 MR. ALAN MULLER: I'm not making it up.

4 MS. JENNA NESS: Of course. What I was
5 going to say is, if you can send me anything to
6 look at, I will, and I will be doing my own
7 research on top of what my group has already
8 established to make sure we have the most recent
9 but also reputable information.

10 MR. ALAN MULLER: I can do that.

11 MS. JENNA NESS: Yeah. I can give you
12 my business card or you have it in the Power Point
13 too, but either way.

14 MR. ALAN MULLER: Okay. I'm going to
15 keep my mouth shut from now on. I appreciate
16 being laughed at by the representatives of the
17 applicant.

18 MS. JENNA NESS: I haven't seen a
19 thing.

20 MS. CAROL OVERLAND: I have a simple
21 one.

22 MS. JENNA NESS: Sure.

23 MS. CAROL OVERLAND: You referred to
24 the Department of Health information, and I'm a
25 little leery of that because of the way the

1 Commission treated the Department of Health's wind
2 noise study, but aside from that, I'm looking and
3 I've seen footnotes to the Minnesota Well Index
4 and Environmental Monitoring Report.

5 Are there other different Department of
6 Health reports and are those cited in here or can
7 you cite them?

8 MS. JENNA NESS: Yes, they are cited.

9 MS. CAROL OVERLAND: So everything that
10 you're relying on from the Department of Health is
11 cited?

12 MS. JENNA NESS: Absolutely.

13 MS. CAROL OVERLAND: Okay. Thank you.

14 MS. JENNA NESS: All right. I'll give
15 it a little bit of stewing time. But any last
16 comments for us to consider?

17 I'll be sticking around after the
18 meeting if you want to keep talking too.

19 Okay. Thank you everyone so much
20 sincerely for taking time out of your night.

21
22 (Proceedings concluded at 6:59 p.m.)

23 * * *

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