

The Commission met on **Thursday, August 12, 2021** with Chair Sieben and Commissioners Means, Schuerger, and Tuma present.

The following matters were taken up by the Commission:

**E-002/M-13-867**

**In the Matter of the Petition of Northern States Power Company, d/b/a Xcel Energy, for Approval of Its Proposed Community Solar Garden Program.**

Commissioner Schuerger moved that the Commission take the following actions:

1. Extend the residential adder for Xcel Energy's community solar garden (CSG) program for an additional two years for all projects in value of solar (VOS) vintage years 2021 and 2022 at the current rate of \$0.015/kilowatt-hour.
2. Require Xcel Energy to file an initial residential adder evaluation report by May 1, 2022, documenting CSG project and subscription data for VOS vintage years 2017-2021, and a final evaluation report by May 1, 2023, documenting CSG project and subscription data for vintage years 2017-2022.
3. Require Xcel Energy to include the following information as part of the evaluation reports on an ongoing basis:
  - a. Document CSG project and subscription data by VOS vintage year, including a breakdown by subscriber class of the number of active subscriptions and the capacity associated with these subscriptions.
  - b. The current number of residential subscribers uploaded to the Salesforce portal for each VOS vintage year reported on.
  - c. The most currently available metrics for one month as reported in Table 3 of Xcel Energy's quarterly CSG update report. These metrics include: the number of active subscriptions, the number of active subscribers, DC capacity allocation, AC monthly production allocation (kilowatt-hours), and incremental bill credits. Xcel Energy should report these metrics for a snapshot month as close to the date of the evaluation report as possible.
  - d. The total number of Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) recipients, who are participating in the CSG program and receiving bill credits, for each of the VOS vintage years for which Xcel Energy reports.
4. Require Xcel Energy to file a CSG on bill payment proposal for only vetted community solar developers that considers and incorporates vetting criteria that will ensure greater

local benefits, low income participation, consumer protection contracts, and co-ownership and/or profit sharing with subscribers or local nonprofits. This proposal should be based on stakeholder input and filed by May 1, 2022.

5. Require Xcel Energy to work with stakeholders to update its process for subscriber address transfers to avoid or reduce subscription period gaps created by Xcel Energy's validation requirements at new addresses.

The motion passed 4—0.

**E-002/C-21-125**

**In the Matter of the Formal Complaint and Request for Expedited Relief by SunShare, LLC Against Northern States Power Company dba Xcel Energy Regarding OsterSun Project.**

Commissioner Schuerger moved that the Commission take the following actions:

1. Find the Commission has jurisdiction over the issues raised in the complaint filed by SunShare, LLC, regarding the Oster Sun Project.
2. Open an investigation of SunShare's OsterSun formal complaint as it relates to the interconnection cost estimate and require Northern States Power Company d/b/a Xcel Energy (Xcel) to file an answer pursuant to Minn. R. 7829.1800.
3. Pursuant to Minn. R. 7829.1275, vary the periods set forth in Minn. R. 7829.1800 for good cause shown, as follows:
  - a. Xcel shall file an answer to SunShare's complaint by August 23, 2021.
  - b. SunShare shall file a reply to Xcel's answer by September 2, 2021.

The motion passed 4—0.

**E-002/C-21-126**

**In the Matter of the Formal Complaint and Request for Expedited Relief by SunShare, LLC Against Northern States Power Company dba Xcel Energy regarding CleodSun Project.**

Commissioner Schuerger moved that the Commission take the following actions:

1. Find the Commission has jurisdiction over the issues raised in the complaint filed by SunShare, LLC, regarding the CleodSun Project.

2. Open an investigation of SunShare's CleodSun formal complaint as it relates to the interconnection cost estimate and require Northern States Power Company d/b/a Xcel Energy (Xcel) to file an answer pursuant to Minn. R. 7829.1800.
3. Pursuant to Minn. R. 7829.1275, the Commission varies the periods set forth in Minn. R. 7829.1800 for good cause shown, as follows:
  - a. Xcel shall file an answer to SunShare's complaint by August 23, 2021.
  - b. SunShare shall file a reply to Xcel's answer by September 2, 2021.

The motion passed 4—0.

**IP-6997/CN-18-699; IP-6997/WS-18-700; IP-6997/TL-18-701**

**In the Matter of the Applications of Plum Creek Wind Farm, LLC for a Certificate of Need, Site Permit, and Route Permit for an up to 414 MW Large Wind Energy Conversion System and 345 kV Transmission Line in Cottonwood, Murray, and Redwood Counties, Minnesota.**

Commissioner Tuma moved that the Commission take the following actions:

1. Approve and adopt the ALJ Report.
2. Determine that the Final EIS is adequate, in that it: (i) addresses the issues and alternatives raised in scoping; (ii) provides responses to substantive comments received on the Draft EIS, and (iii) was prepared in compliance with Minn. R. 7850.1000 to 7850.5600.
3. Issue a certificate of need for the 414-megawatt Plum Creek large wind energy conversion system and associated 345-kilovolt high-voltage transmission line.
4. Issue a site permit for the 414-megawatt Plum Creek large wind energy conversion system with the additional conditions recommended in the ALJ Report with the following modifications and additions:
  - a. Require the permittee to obtain necessary aviation permits for structures that are considered to be an obstruction to safety of flight from MnDOT Aeronautics and the FAA as applicable at least 14 days prior to the preoperation meeting.
  - b. Require the permittee to develop a project wide Shadow Flicker Management Plan that reduces shadow flicker exposure to less than 30 hours per year for all occupied residences. The plan must be filed at least 14 days prior to the pre-operation

meeting. As an alternative to this 30 hour requirement, the permittee may file proof of specific alternative agreed on mitigations or waiver for impacted individual residences.

- c. Direct Staff to include these requirements in the permit.
  - d. Changes to 5.6.2 as proposed by staff on page 12 of briefing papers.
5. Issue a route permit for the 345-kilovolt high-voltage transmission line along Plum Creek's Green-Blue Route as recommended in the ALJ Report with the exception that Blue Segment E continuing along County Road 10 north of 160th Street shall be the designated route. The route width at this segment is expanded to the West to encompass the proposed blue route segment that went west along 160th Street for half-mile, then north along a private drive one quarter of a mile and then finally headed back east on the field line to County Road 10. If the applicant is not able to construct along the designated route, it shall file a minor alteration pursuant to Minn. R. 7850.4800 with supporting analysis taking into account the factors identified in Minn. R. 7850.4100, and an explanation of its efforts to construct along the designated route.
  6. Require Plum Creek to report annually to the Commission regarding the activities (i.e., contributions and distributions) of the Plum Creek Community Fund.
  7. Authorize Commission staff to modify the ALJ Report and the proposed site and route permits to correct typographic and formatting errors, improve consistency, and ensure agreement with the Commission's final order in the matter.

The motion passed 4—0.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

**APPROVED BY THE COMMISSION: October 20, 2021**



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**Will Seuffert, Executive Secretary**