

Oral Public Meeting Comments Received on the
Scope of the Environmental Assessment for the
Blue Lake BESS Project
Docket No. E002/ ESS-25-214

Public Meetings

1. September 10, 2025 – Virtual, On-Line Meeting, 6:00 p.m.
2. September 11, 2025 – Shakopee, Minnesota, 6:00 p.m

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PUBLIC INFORMATION AND SCOPING MEETING - 25-214
WEBEX - SEPTEMBER 10, 2025 - 6:00 p.m.
BEFORE THE MINNESOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

In the Matter of the Application of Northern States Power Company d/b/a Xcel Energy for an up to 135.5 MW Battery Energy Storage System Site Permit for the Blue Lake Battery Energy Storage Project in Scott County, Minnesota

MPUC DOCKET NOS. E002/ESS-25-214

Meeting held remotely via:
Webex and Telephone

September 10, 2025

COURT REPORTER: Christine Simons, RMR, RPR

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I N D E X

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1 MR. JACQUES HARVIEUX: All righty. Good
2 evening, and welcome to the public information and
3 environmental assessment scoping meeting for the
4 Xcel Energy Blue Lake battery energy storage, or
5 BESS. The project -- the docket for the project is
6 E002/ESS-25-214. Please provide this docket number
7 to any correspondence you send the Commission.

8 My name is Jacques Harvieux, and I am the
9 lead analyst on the project from the Minnesota
10 Public Utilities Commission. And the Public
11 Utilities Commission is the decision-making body
12 that is neither for, nor against, the project, with
13 the sole purpose of managing the permitting process
14 of applications submitted to the Commission and
15 collecting information.

16 With me tonight is Suzanne Steinhauer,
17 the environmental review manager from the
18 Commission; and Jordan Clitty from Xcel Energy. And
19 a court reporter, Christine Simons, who will be
20 creating a transcript of tonight's meeting.

21 The meeting agenda for tonight will be an
22 introduction of the permit application review
23 process by myself, and then we will go to a
24 description of the proposed project by Xcel Energy.
25 Lastly, we will end with the environmental review

1 requirements by Suzanne Steinhauer, and then we will
2 open it up for questions and comments.

3 Xcel Energy is seeking a site permit for
4 a battery energy storage system with a power rating
5 of up to 135.5 megawatts and associated facilities.
6 The site is located on approximately 70 acres in
7 Shakopee, Scott County, Minnesota. The required
8 permits for the project is a site permit. Because
9 if an energy storage system is 10 megawatts or
10 larger, it falls under the authority of the
11 Minnesota Public Utilities Commission for a site
12 permit.

13 In making a site permit decision, the
14 Commission considers factors listed in rule and
15 statute. Generally factors considered include the
16 conservation of resources and minimization of
17 environmental impacts; the minimization of human
18 settlement and other land-use conflicts; to ensure
19 an efficient, cost-effective, and secure power
20 supply and electric transmission infrastructure; the
21 cost of the project and its accessibility; the
22 sharing or paralleling of existing rights-of-way;
23 and to the extent of which construction, cleanup,
24 and restoration practices are mitigated through
25 regulatory conditions.

1 This is a diagram of the process for the
2 permitting process. We are currently here at the
3 public information scoping meeting. And tomorrow
4 night we will be holding another meeting in person
5 at the Shakopee Community Center. This is an
6 estimated schedule and timeline of the permitting
7 process. We are here (indicating). From here, we
8 will tentatively be issuing a scoping decision for
9 the project in November of 2025.

10 From here, we'll go to a description of
11 the proposed project by the applicant.

12 MR. JORDAN CLITTY: All right. So hello,
13 my name is Jordan Clitty. I'm the project manager
14 with Xcel Energy. I'm located in Minneapolis,
15 Minnesota, and I'll be going through a couple of
16 slides here, I'll give a little background on the
17 battery energy storage project here at Blue Lake.

18 If you want to go to the next slide.

19 So as you covered there in the opening
20 there, this is a 135.5 megawatt, 542 megawatt hour
21 battery energy storage site, four-hour duration.
22 It's located on our site, the existing facilities
23 there with the Blue Lake Peaking Plant in Shakopee,
24 Minnesota. Again, this is a lithium ion battery
25 site. Specifically, lithium iron phosphate, more

1 commonly known as an LFP batteries.

2 This will have a substation. There's
3 another drawing here where you'll see the breakdown
4 of a substation, and then a small 115-kV
5 transmission line that goes directly adjacent to the
6 substation that are existing on-site already. So
7 we'll have a collection substation, and then tie in
8 with the point of interconnect directly adjacently
9 to the project site, which you'll see on the next
10 slide.

11 So as mentioned earlier, the broader site
12 permit application covered a 70-acre site. What
13 you're looking at here with that red outline is the
14 larger proper site, but then our key facilities,
15 there is a much smaller acreage, or usage. So it's
16 closer to 12 acres with the site features, which
17 includes the temporary laydown site, which is the
18 yellow block to the south; the battery unit and
19 associated equipment, so the battery unit; the
20 medium-voltage transformer skids, and some other
21 smaller equipment that are on-site; and the primary
22 battery unit block.

23 And that pink block is that substation or
24 collection substation there I mentioned, and then
25 that short gen-tie. You can see if you look in a

1 little closer there, but the black and yellow line,
2 essentially, is that short gen-tie there connecting
3 the POI with the existing substation there.

4 So, basically, that pink block is our
5 collection substation, and then that ties in with
6 that transmission line to, kind of, that center
7 picture where all those yellow lines are connected
8 at the center of the screen with the point of
9 interconnect, essentially, which is our existing
10 substation there at the Blue Light facility -- Blue
11 Lake facility.

12 Just for an estimated timeline, too, so
13 our proposed start of construction is in Q2 of 2026,
14 with an estimated operation or commercial operation
15 date of Q2 of 2027. So a little over a year
16 timeline from start of construction to inservice or
17 commercial operation date there of this project.

18 So just a couple representation images of
19 what a typical energy storage site would look like.
20 So to the left there, these aren't our specific
21 enclosures, but this is pretty similar of what our
22 site -- you know, a representation would look like,
23 where we have battery energy storage system
24 enclosures, coupled with the medium-voltage
25 transformer skids.

1 This particular image has both the string
2 inverters and medium-voltage transformer skids
3 there. Our string inverters are actually inside our
4 battery enclosures. But overall, relatively, this
5 is a pretty representative image of what, you know,
6 can look -- or a typical energy storage system looks
7 like. So it's a 20-foot container, roughly, I
8 think, ten feet high, again, coupled with the
9 medium-voltage transformer skids.

10 And then we will have one structure, so
11 to the right there, like we said, we have an 115-kV
12 transmission line that goes from our collection
13 substation to the POI, and we will have one
14 structure in between those two. And just to the
15 right there is kind of the representative image of
16 what that would look like there in the structure.

17 As part of the site permit application,
18 we've done a handful of environmental reviews
19 required for the permit application process. We've
20 done, you know, cultural and resource assessments.
21 We've done wetland studies; there's no wetlands in
22 our area. We have habitat and cultural resources
23 impacts -- or no cultural or suitable habitat
24 impacts there. The project area will meet, you
25 know, all the noise requirements for the battery

1 system.

2 We have our typical preconstruction
3 permits, such as those for stormwater control will
4 be applied for ahead of the construction activities.
5 Like we said, starting Q2 next year. So we'll get
6 required permits and applications there in advance
7 of that.

8 We will be doing some more rigorous and
9 detailed safety training throughout the process. So
10 as we progress through design, there's a couple of
11 different safety mechanisms that we do with, you
12 know, local authorities having jurisdiction. One of
13 them is called the hazard mitigation analysis,
14 another one is called emergency response plan.

15 So we'll get with, you know, local fire
16 departments and AHJs in the area and talk through
17 the site-specific safety hazards and, you know,
18 emergency response plans as we progress through the
19 site. So that will come later on, I think we're
20 anticipating that in Q1 of 2026. I should note,
21 too, right, we did conduct a tree inventory
22 evaluation, and we will be coordinating with the
23 city the Shakopee for that.

24 So we have conducted geotech. We're
25 still doing some more on-site, but geotech will

1 continue, and that's going obviously going to drive
2 site design as we're progressing through that.
3 We're approaching 60 percent design currently.

4 And as far as the equipment goes, some of
5 the longer lead items, such as the main power
6 transformers, already have been procured. We are
7 working on the rest of the procurements, such as the
8 battery energy storage system enclosures and other
9 key components.

10 Construction, again, typical activities
11 will include, you know, site prep with clearing and
12 grading, implementing the stormwater controls for
13 construction, and post-construction as well;
14 construction access roads and fencing; installing
15 underground electrical communication systems;
16 setting the battery enclosures and equipment. And
17 then, you know, establishing and maintaining
18 vegetation once all the equipment is in place, and
19 restoring and establishing that as applicable there
20 to the site.

21 So once the site is in service, like we
22 said, you know, it's Q2 of 2027, we can have up to
23 three on-site personnel or full-time employees for
24 this site. It will be 24/7 monitored remotely as
25 well. So we'll have the monitoring, we'll have the

1 cameras on-site, we'll have, you know, the SCADA for
2 the real-time controls that can be accessed
3 anywhere. We'll be conducting routine electrical
4 equipment inspections and preventative maintenance
5 activities throughout the life of the project, which
6 is anticipated to be 20 years for this project.

7 We'll follow good housekeeping and
8 maintain access roads, vegetation, fences, and
9 gates. We will be inspecting both the site and the
10 transmission line there, again, with that minor
11 transmission line from our collection substation to
12 the point of interconnect substation.

13 I mentioned this already, right, but we
14 have our emergency response plan, you know, once
15 we're in service, and we'll do this in advance of
16 our construction or operations date there,
17 discussing that emergency response plan with the
18 local AHJ.

19 And then we do have, as part of this
20 permit accounted for already, future augmentation.
21 So within that block I was showing earlier, we are
22 accounting for future augmentation. Which is,
23 essentially, just adding more battery enclosures to
24 that area. So we have the space reserved and
25 planned for to allow for that future augmentation.

1 Which essentially over time, obviously, batteries
2 degrade, right? So we're going to be adding units
3 to maintain that 135.5-megawatt output into the POI.

4 Perfect. Any questions, comments,
5 concerns?

6 MR. JACQUES HARVIEUX: We'll save all
7 that for the end, but yeah.

8 MR. JORDAN CLITTY: Okay.

9 MS. SUZANNE STEINHAUER: Good evening.
10 My name is Suzanne Steinhauer. I am also with the
11 Public Utilities Commission. I am the environmental
12 review manager for the project.

13 Next slide, please.

14 The agenda for tonight, the things that
15 we'll hit, I think between Jacques and Jordan, they
16 talked about the project. So what I'm going to hit
17 here is a little bit more information on what is
18 environmental review, how to comment, and then the
19 main point of the meeting is to take your questions
20 and comments today.

21 Next slide, please.

22 So the environmental review staff will
23 prepare an environmental assessment, or an EA, for
24 the project. The thing I want to convey is that the
25 EA is an objective analysis of the project. It

1 evaluates potential human and environmental impacts
2 and looks at strategies to avoid and mitigate
3 impacts. It does not advocate either for or against
4 the project. The goal of the EA is to pull together
5 the facts to lead to good decision-making.

6 Can you scroll back a little bit,
7 Jacques, please?

8 Yeah. The goal of the EA is to -- the EA
9 is not a decision document. It provides information
10 the decision-makers need to make an informed
11 decision, and that everybody can use to better
12 understand the proposed project and impact.

13 I think two more slides. Next slide,
14 please.

15 So scoping, which is the previous slide,
16 because the EA is not an exhaustive study, we need
17 to focus it. And we use the scoping process to
18 gather information from citizens, local governments,
19 interested other agencies, interested people to
20 develop the outline of the EA that identifies the
21 issues, impacts, and potential mitigation that we'll
22 study.

23 So we're looking for public input on what
24 the EA should contain. Maybe not the detail, but
25 the table of contents there. What are the potential

1 human and environmental impacts, what are the unique
2 characteristics within the project area that should
3 be considered, strategies to avoid, minimize, and
4 mitigate impacts and specific permit conditions.

5 The general table of contents may look
6 similar between projects. What we're looking for
7 tonight and in the comment period are comments on
8 this particular project in this particular place.
9 And then, also, if there's any information in the
10 application that's missing or mischaracterized.

11 So the next slide, please.

12 So the opportunity to provide verbal
13 comments is at tonight's meeting or at tomorrow's
14 meeting. After that, the comments need to be
15 written, and you can do that a couple of different
16 ways. You can complete and submit a comment sheet,
17 you can comment online at the Public Utilities
18 Commission website. You can mail or e-mail a
19 comment, and my contact information is here. It's
20 also in the notice. The thing to remember is that
21 the comment period ends on September 25th.

22 Next slide, please.

23 So the commenting etiquette, we'll ask
24 for one speaker at a time, please. Please state and
25 spell your name for the court reporter so that we

1 have an accurate record of the proceedings and the
2 meeting. And the please limit your comments to a
3 few minutes. Maintain respect for others.
4 Reasonable people can disagree on projects, and we
5 see that a lot. And then to direct your comments
6 and questions to the scope of the environmental
7 assessment.

8 And we'll leave this slide up here as a
9 reference to help focus the comments. What should
10 we look for as far as the scope, the table of
11 contents; what do we need to know to make informed
12 decisions; the human and environmental impacts;
13 strategies to mitigate those impacts; and unique
14 characteristics of the project area.

15 So all that said, we'll open it for
16 comments or questions. I don't see any attendees.

17 MR. JACQUES HARVIEUX: Yeah, I don't see
18 anybody right now. I do also have this slide at the
19 end.

20 And I also apologize, Suzanne. During
21 your presentation, my hand slipped on accident
22 there. We had it up near the end too early.

23 MS. SUZANNE STEINHAUER: No problem. I
24 was afraid that I had taken control, so we're good.

25 MR. JACQUES HARVIEUX: So I do have this

1 as well, and this will be in the handout when we are
2 in person tomorrow night.

3 Jordan, I know you have your slide with
4 your contact information. This is the contact
5 information that's in your guys' application, do you
6 still want this in here?

7 MR. JORDAN CLITTY: I think so. I think
8 that's fine.

9 MS. CHRISTY BRUSVEN: Jacques.

10 MR. JORDAN CLITTY: Oh, go ahead.

11 MS. CHRISTY BRUSVEN: Yeah. Jacques,
12 this is Christy Brusven. Yes, we still want that
13 information. Jordan and Jody are both contacts for
14 the project.

15 MR. JACQUES HARVIEUX: Yeah, okay. Cool.

16 Well, that's all I've got. We do not
17 have any attendees, so we can close the meeting.

18 Suzanne, do you got anything else?

19 MS. SUZANNE STEINHAEUER: No, I don't have
20 anything. Thanks for coming.

21 MR. JACQUES HARVIEUX: Short and sweet.

22 Thank you, all. We'll see you tomorrow night.

23 (End of public comment.)

24

25

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SCOPING MEETING

MPUC E-002/ESS-25-214

BEFORE THE COURT OF ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS
FOR THE MINNESOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

In the Matter of the Application of
Northern States Power Company d/b/a Xcel Energy for
an up to 135.5 MW Batter Energy Storage System Site
Permit for the Blue Lake Battery Energy Storage
Project in Scott County, Minnesota

Held at Shakopee Community Center
1255 Fuller Street South
Shakopee, MN 55379

September 11, 2025
6:00 P.M.

Jonna Schrupp, Stenographic Court Reporter

1 MR. JACQUES HARVIEUX: Hello, this is
2 Jacques Harvieux with the Minnesota Public Utilities
3 Commission. It is about 6:15 p.m. No attendees
4 have shown up at the scheduled start time of six
5 p.m., so we going to adjourn the meeting. Everybody
6 have a good night.

7 MS. SUZANNE STEINHAUER: We'll note for
8 the record that the presentations for tonight were
9 presented yesterday, so there's a recording of that
10 presentation and the presentations will be filed in
11 the docket.

12 MR. JACQUES HARVIEUX: Thank you.

13 MS. SUZANNE STEINHAUER: The meeting is
14 adjourned.

15 (Proceedings concluded at 6:17 p.m.)
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