

Oral Public Meeting Comments Received for the
Sherco South and West Energy Storage Project
Docket No. ESS-25-319

Public Meetings

1. January 13, 2026 – Virtual, On-Line Meeting, 6:00 p.m.
2. January 14, 2026 – Becker, Minn, 6:00 p.m.

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SCOPING & INFORMATIONAL MEETING - 25-319

VIRTUAL - JANUARY 13, 2026 - 6:00 P.M.

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 600 MW Sherco South & West Battery Energy Storage Project in Sherburne County, Minnesota

MPUC DOCKET NO: E002/ESS-25-319

Hearing held remotely via:

Webex & Telephone

January 13, 2026

COURT REPORTER: Christine Simons, RMR, RPR

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1 MS. SAARAH MAXON: Okay. It's 6:05, and
2 I think we can get started. So hi, everyone.
3 Welcome to the meeting on the Sherco South and West
4 Energy Storage Project. My name is Saarah Maxon,
5 and I work for the Public Utilities Commission.

6 This will be the first of two meetings
7 concerning this project, and the second meeting will
8 occur in person tomorrow at the Becker Community
9 Center.

10 So just to give a brief overview of how
11 this meeting will work, I'm giving the initial
12 introduction. Again, my name is Saarah Maxon, and I
13 work for the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission.
14 Next up, I'll pass it off to a representative from
15 Xcel Energy, Jordan, who will be giving a
16 description of the project. And then we'll hand
17 things back over to Emily Johnson, who is also with
18 the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission, to do the
19 primary application review section. And then we'll
20 end the presentation with questions and comments.

21 I saw Tyler come on. Is Jordan on the
22 call, or will you be giving the --

23 MR. TYLER BEEMER: I am his backup. He's
24 delayed on a flight coming back. We were hoping
25 that he would be able to get in, but I am willing

1 and able as the Xcel rep to give the presentation
2 tonight.

3 MS. SAARAH MAXON: Okay. Perfect, then
4 we'll pass it off to you shortly here.

5 So just to set up some ground rules for
6 the meeting, we just ask that everybody be
7 respectful of others, including the presenters and
8 the commenters. We want to make sure that we hear
9 from everyone who wants to comment today.

10 A quick note, we have a court reporter
11 here to record the meeting, including each person's
12 comments. The Commissioners will use this record to
13 help them decide on the docket, but we won't open up
14 the comment period till towards the end of the call.

15 So just to give the explanation of the
16 purpose of today's meeting, we're here to receive
17 public input and compile a record for the
18 Commission's permit decision. You can participate
19 by providing comments or asking questions of our
20 staff about the process or the Applicants about the
21 project. Your comments will be really helpful for
22 the Commission in making a final decision on the
23 permit, and, additionally, any possible permit
24 conditions.

25 We'll go to the next slide here, and so

1 we kind of gave an outline of what our purpose is
2 today with this meeting, but I just wanted to give
3 an overview of what the Public Utilities Commission
4 does. So we regulate electric, natural gas, and
5 landline utilities, and, additionally, we also issue
6 site and route permits for large electrical
7 facilities.

8 So at the Commission, there are five
9 Commissioners who are appointed by the Governor and
10 confirmed by the Senate. They serve on a six-year
11 staggered term, and they are the people who
12 ultimately decide the permit decision.

13 And that kind of wraps up my brief, brief
14 introduction, so I will pass this off to Tyler to
15 take on the Xcel slides. Thank you.

16 MR. TYLER BEEMER: Can everybody hear me
17 okay?

18 (No response.)

19 MR. TYLER BEEMER: I'll take that as a
20 yes.

21 Okay. Again, apologies in advance. Our
22 project manager, Jordan, got delayed on his flight
23 back into Minnesota tonight, so I'll be filling in
24 for him this evening.

25 We're here tonight to talk to about Xcel

1 Energy's proposed battery energy storage project,
2 known as Sherco South and West Energy project.

3 Next slide, please.

4 The project is proposed to have a storage
5 capacity of up to 600 megawatts, and is located
6 adjacent to the existing Sherco power plant in
7 Becker. The battery technology used will be lithium
8 iron phosphate. Battery energy storage projects are
9 designed to store power from the grid during
10 non-peak times and return power back to the grid
11 during peak needs. The project is estimated to
12 create approximately 150 jobs during construction
13 and ten full-time jobs during operation.

14 Next slide, please.

15 The project will occupy approximately
16 46 acres and is sited within a larger 62-acre area
17 shown here in the red outline. Aside from the
18 primary battery components, associated facilities
19 include a new -- excuse me, include a new
20 substation; a short overhead transmission line
21 connecting between the new substation and the
22 existing Sherco substation shown north, just off
23 screen here; a temporary laydown yard; stormwater
24 basins; and perimeter fencing. The project will be
25 located entirely on Xcel Energy owned land. The

1 anticipated schedule has construction starting in
2 quarter 3 of this year, and operational in quarter 4
3 of 2027.

4 Next slide, please.

5 The project plans to utilize PowerTitan
6 2.0 battery units. Shown here is a breakdown of
7 this type of battery unit. Each battery unit is
8 effectively the size of a mobile storage container,
9 such as that of a POD or a U-Haul container.

10 Individual batteries are grouped into
11 racks, which are then subsequently stacked
12 vertically within each battery unit. Separate from
13 the battery units are medium-voltage transformers,
14 which act as a go-between via the battery units and
15 the substation.

16 Next slide, please.

17 These photos give a good idea of battery
18 unit scale. On the left is a good representation of
19 what a typical utility-scale battery storage project
20 looks like. The one on the left is a photo of a
21 PowerTitan battery unit from a recent Xcel battery
22 storage project in Colorado.

23 Next slide, please.

24 Here are some general representative
25 photos of both a single-circuit transmission line

1 structure and a fenced substation that best provides
2 a visual of what these components will look like for
3 this project.

4 Next slide, please.

5 Battery storage safety is a critical
6 aspect that the battery manufacturer and Xcel Energy
7 take under consideration during all phases of the
8 project life. Battery units have a fire resistant
9 enclosure; adaptive cooling management systems;
10 multistage fire alarms; venting panels; smoke, heat,
11 and gas detection capabilities; and other
12 multiple-level battery management systems.

13 The project will be continuously
14 monitored from a remote diagnostic center, with the
15 ability to control and, most importantly, instantly
16 shut down and isolate individual units. The project
17 design follows industry standards for unit
18 separation spacing and overall equipment layout,
19 which minimizes the risk of fire spread.

20 The project will have an emergency
21 response plan, which includes quarterly safety
22 drills and procedures for fire and medical
23 situations. The emergency response plan will be
24 coordinated with local emergency response teams
25 ahead of construction.

1 Next slide.

2 The project completed several
3 environmental and cultural resources studies. As a
4 result, there are no anticipated impacts to
5 wetlands, waterways, protected species, suitable
6 habitat, or cultural resources as a result of the
7 project. The project is also designated to meet
8 Minnesota noise standards during operation.

9 Sorry, I'm getting a call here. I'm
10 going to ignore it.

11 Additional permits to secure ahead of
12 construction, such as those associated with
13 stormwater control, will be coordinated currently
14 with the Public Utilities Commission permitting
15 process. Lastly, Xcel will continue to engage with
16 the city of Becker, including for emergency response
17 planning and construction logistics.

18 As a part of the site permit application
19 process with the Public Utilities Commission, Xcel
20 completed an environmental assessment, which
21 considers a variety of topics, including but not
22 limited to, those listed here on the left. Each
23 topic is assessed to determine if impacts are
24 anticipated, and if so, what mitigation measures may
25 be applicable for avoidance or minimization.

1 An example is for considering impacts to
2 soil slash ground surface, which would result in
3 unavoidable impacts for -- from construction grading
4 and clearing. Mitigation measures for this include
5 implementation of stormwater best management
6 practices as part of an overall stormwater pollution
7 prevention plan.

8 The environmental assessment is included
9 as Section 5 of the project site permit application
10 document, which is available publicly on the Public
11 Utilities Commission's eDockets website, as shown
12 here in the lower right. The project docket number
13 is 25-319.

14 Next slide, please.

15 A high-level cadence following project
16 permitting involves preconstruction activities, such
17 as finalizing project design and equipment
18 procurements. Subsequent construction activities
19 include mobilization, installation of stormwater
20 controls, laying underground electrical and
21 communication infrastructure, installing aboveground
22 battery and electrical components, and establishing
23 vegetation in temporarily disturbed areas.

24 During the operation phase, approximately
25 ten on-site staff will be assigned to the project.

1 Daily monitoring of the systemwide components will
2 be supplemented via a remote diagnostics center
3 mentioned earlier. Equipment will be regularly
4 inspected by on-site staff, and the site will be
5 maintained in a good housekeeping state to allow
6 proper use and operation of access roads, fences,
7 gates, lighting, and surrounding vegetation. The
8 transmission line will also be inspected regularly.

9 Emergency response planning will be
10 adapted with input from local emergency response
11 teams. The project accounts for future
12 augmentation, meaning that over the course of the
13 life of the project, additional battery units will
14 come online to account for battery degradation and
15 will allow the project to maintain a consistent
16 600-megawatt storage capacity throughout its
17 operational life.

18 Next slide, please.

19 Again, the site permit and the
20 incorporated environmental assessment are available
21 to the public via the Public Utilities Commission's
22 eDocket website. The project docket number is
23 25-319.

24 If you have additional questions for
25 Xcel, please contact Jordan. His e-mail address is

1 shown here. Thank you for your time, and I'll hand
2 it back over to Commission staff.

3 MS. EMILY JOHNSON: All right. Thank you
4 so much, Tyler.

5 And thank you to all those who are online
6 tonight. We appreciate your participation. My name
7 is Emily Johnson. I'm also with the Public
8 Utilities Commission. I am the environmental review
9 manager assigned to this project.

10 When the Commission decides on a permit,
11 we consider the potential human and environmental
12 impacts and ways to reduce or mitigate those
13 impacts, kind of like Tyler discussed in his slides.
14 Many of those considerations come from the input
15 received during the public comment period. So it's
16 really important that you participate if you have
17 any ideas on things that could mitigate those
18 impacts that you're concerned about.

19 Additionally, our staff are engaged
20 throughout the life of the project to monitor
21 compliance with the permit. So that's really
22 important for you to understand that we are engaged
23 throughout the whole process.

24 So next slide, please.

25 So the permit process starts with a

1 sample permit. A sample permit contains permit
2 conditions for all standard energy storage system
3 projects, and the sample permit has been posted on
4 eDockets as well, so you can find it there. A draft
5 permit is then developed specific to the proposed
6 project. So a draft permit identifies where and how
7 the permittee might construct the project and
8 operate the project.

9 The comments that we receive during the
10 comment periods help us to develop special
11 conditions for the draft permit, and also refine the
12 standard conditions that are standard in the sample
13 permit itself that get carried over to the draft
14 permit. It's important to note that a draft permit
15 does not allow applicants to construct the project.
16 Instead, it just provides a starting point for the
17 Commission to consider.

18 So next slide, please.

19 This is just a visual of what I just
20 talked about. So we start out with a sample permit,
21 we then draft a permit specific to that project, and
22 then the final permit is the one that the
23 Commissioners, essentially, make a decision on at
24 the end of the permitting process.

25 Next slide.

1 So by law, applications must include an
2 environmental assessment -- and Tyler spoke about
3 this as well -- that includes information on the
4 environmental and human impacts and ways to mitigate
5 those identified impacts. The applicant has
6 provided this in Chapter 5 of their application.
7 This is also available online.

8 And as you heard, they have discussed
9 some of the impacts analyzed in their EA. And so
10 tonight and through the comment period, we are
11 looking for any input on additional impacts,
12 mitigation measures, or unique characteristics that
13 might be missing from the EA that was provided.

14 Next slide.

15 So tonight we're talking about what
16 topics you could cover in your comments. We're
17 looking for information on if there are any
18 potential human and environmental impacts, unique
19 characteristics, or mitigation measures for the
20 proposed project that might need development in an
21 EA addendum. So an EA addendum is something that
22 Commission staff would prepare to cover anything
23 that might be missing from the filed EA from the
24 applicant.

25 And, further, are there any methods to

1 minimize, mitigate, or avoid any potential impacts
2 that the Commission needs to include as conditions
3 of a draft site permit?

4 So if you go ahead and review the sample
5 permit that's available online and you see that
6 there's something missing that you would like
7 addressed as a permit condition, this is your chance
8 to give us that input through the comment period.
9 Some examples of mitigation could include specific
10 construction techniques to minimize impacts,
11 vegetative screening, or additional natural resource
12 surveys that might need to be done, et cetera. So
13 we would then take that input and consider that in
14 the need of an EA addendum or a draft permit
15 condition.

16 Next slide.

17 So how to comment: You can provide
18 verbal comments at today's meeting or tomorrow in
19 person. You could complete and submit a written
20 comment sheet. You can comment online at our
21 website by scrolling to the "filing a comment" tab
22 at the link provided here. You can also e-mail your
23 comments to me or mail them directly to me as well.
24 The comment period ends January 26th at 4:30 p.m.

25 Next slide.

1 So what happens next? Based on the
2 information in the record, including your comments,
3 the Commission will make two preliminary
4 determinations: Is an environmental assessment
5 addendum necessary before a hearing is held? And
6 the second is, what conditions should the Commission
7 include in a draft permit? And that will be made
8 available to the public for review at the public
9 hearing and for comment after as well.

10 Next slide.

11 So this slide outlines the key milestones
12 in the State permit's -- the State's site permit
13 review process. The Commission has accepted the
14 application as complete on December 19th, which
15 officially started the review process. The rows
16 highlighted in blue represent opportunities for
17 public comment, and the star represents where we are
18 currently at in the process. So we're holding these
19 public information meetings today and tomorrow, and
20 the comment period will remain open through
21 January 26th.

22 In February or March -- and based on
23 public input -- the Commission will issue a draft
24 site permit and decide whether an EA addendum is
25 needed. Public hearings will follow in late winter

1 or spring, along with a second public comment
2 period. Timing of public hearings will depend on
3 whether the Commission needs to prepare an addendum
4 or not. The Commission may preside over the
5 hearing, or request that an Administrative Law Judge
6 oversee the hearings and prepare either a full
7 report or a summary of comments.

8 The Commission will consider the entire
9 record before making a decision on the site permit,
10 and this will occur in either spring or summer of
11 2026, depending on those other factors that could
12 affect the timing. That permit decision will be
13 made in an open public meeting setting that you are
14 more than welcome to attend in person or virtually.

15 Next slide, please.

16 So now we are going to move on to the
17 comment portion of this meeting. So we do have a
18 court reporter present, so we ask that you please
19 state and spell your first and last name. We ask
20 that you speak loudly and clearly so the court
21 reporter can hear you. We ask that you also
22 maintain respect for others who might want to share
23 their opinion. And remind you that reasonable
24 people can disagree and there may be differences of
25 opinion, but that's why we're here, is to hear

1 everyone's opinion.

2 To ensure everyone is heard, we'll limit
3 our comments to five minutes initially. I don't
4 know that that'll be an issue tonight because there
5 doesn't seem to be too many people on. If there's
6 time after everyone has been heard, you may speak
7 again.

8 To indicate that you would like to ask a
9 question or provide a comment, to those on Webex,
10 click the raise-your-hand button or select a chat
11 message to indicate -- send a chat message
12 indicating you want to speak. To those who are
13 calling in on the phone, you can press *3. Thank
14 you.

15 Okay. I'm not seeing any hands raised,
16 but we'll give it definitely five more minutes at
17 least to see if anyone would like to speak. You can
18 gather your thoughts and share as you feel
19 comfortable. This is also a really great
20 opportunity, not only to make comments, but also to
21 just ask questions, if you have any questions about
22 the project.

23 Okay. Jacob Sanders has raised a hand,
24 and it looks like you are unmuted, so you can go
25 ahead. Jacob, are you there? I can kind of hear

1 something, but -- oh, it looks like he's been muted
2 again. Okay. Jacob, you're unmuted again.

3 I am not hearing you. I'm not sure if
4 it's an audio issue. Jacob, if you're still on, you
5 may put your question in the chat, and we can read
6 it out loud as well. It looks like -- oh, here he
7 is.

8 Okay. So Jacob Sanders put in the chat:
9 Issues with microphone. I just had a comment to
10 say, Tyler from Burns McDonald had reached out
11 previously, and we provided comments to questions
12 they had asked us about the project previously.

13 Okay. Thank you for that.

14 So anybody else who would like to speak
15 or put something in the chat to speak, you can raise
16 your hand or comment in the chat.

17 MS. CHRISTINA BRUSVEN: Emily, maybe to
18 just provide an assist to Jacob, he's with the city
19 of Becker. And the "Tyler" he's referring to is
20 Tyler Beemer, who provided the presentation. And
21 that comment and exchange is in the appendix to the
22 application.

23 MS. EMILY JOHNSON: Thank you.

24 Okay. I think we will leave this open
25 just for ten minutes and just allow people to speak

1 if they still want to. So in that time, just raise
2 your hand. We will definitely keep going if more
3 people want to provide comments. But for now, we'll
4 just allow about ten minutes, and if nobody has
5 anything else, we can adjourn.

6 Yeah. Saarah, you can go back to the
7 slide with the questions here to give people
8 something to think about here if they want to make a
9 comment. And certainly you can comment about other
10 things than what is listed here, or, again, you can
11 ask questions.

12 Okay. So here we go, so Fernando
13 Rodriguez has put a question in the chat. Fernando,
14 would you want to come on and speak? For the court
15 reporter, it might be easier. Fernando, we have
16 unmuted you. Otherwise, I can read it off.

17 Okay. Fernando says he has a cold, so he
18 can't speak. Fernando Rodriguez, for the court
19 reporter, his name is spelled F-E-R-N-A-N-D-0;
20 Rodriguez, R-O-D-R-I-G-U-E-Z. And Fernando asks:
21 Is the battery storage facility components
22 U.S.-made? The reason I ask is because I believe
23 the federal government may have recently restricted
24 battery storage technologies manufactured abroad.

25 And I'm going to hand this to the

1 Applicant to answer.

2 MR. TYLER BEEMER: Can you hear me? I
3 know we're having some mute issues.

4 MS. EMILY JOHNSON: Yes. I can hear you,
5 Tyler.

6 MR. TYLER BEEMER: Christy, feel free to
7 jump in here if you need to.

8 MS. CHRISTINA BRUSVEN: No, go ahead.

9 MR. TYLER BEEMER: Candidly, that would
10 be a question for our project manager. I believe
11 that they are assembled in the U.S. In terms of
12 where their origin is, I can't speak to whether I
13 know they're U.S.-made, per se.

14 Again, the specific units that we're
15 modeling are PowerTitan. The manufacturer is
16 SunGrow, who is a pretty standard battery
17 manufacturer for utility-type scale projects. So
18 that is a -- that is a question that Xcel would be
19 happy to get back to the Commission and Fernando on,
20 but I don't want to speak to something and
21 speculate. Again, I'm not 100 percent certain on
22 where the sourced components are from.

23 MS. CHRISTINA BRUSVEN: And, Tyler, I
24 think that's something that we could probably find
25 out between today and tomorrow's in-person meeting.

1 MR. TYLER BEEMER: Yeah.

2 MS. CHRISTINA BRUSVEN: And so, perhaps,
3 we can add that information in the presentation
4 tomorrow, so that it's in the transcript and
5 available to everyone.

6 MS. EMILY JOHNSON: Great, thank you.
7 And thank you, Fernando, for your
8 question.

9 The floor is still open. So anyone who
10 wants to make a comment or ask a question, again,
11 you can raise your hand or type in the chat that you
12 want to ask a question. We would love to have you
13 come on and speak as well.

14 So Saarah is putting up my contact
15 information here as well. My e-mail is
16 Emily.Johnson1@state.mn.us, and my work address
17 where you can send me mail as well.

18 So, again, the comment period ends
19 January 26th at 4:30 p.m. You're more than welcome
20 to use any of these methods to get your comments in.
21 So, hopefully, you can take what we've talked about
22 tonight and think about it for a while, and if you
23 have more comments, you're definitely welcome to
24 submit them anytime prior to January 26th at
25 4:30 p.m.

1 We'll keep this open for another few
2 minutes, and if we don't have anyone else, we'll
3 probably just end the meeting. But, again, raise
4 your hand, put it in the chat, and, again, if you're
5 calling in the on the phone, you can just hit *3.

6 Okay. Well, it's been a couple minutes,
7 and I haven't seen anybody interested in commenting.
8 So I'm going to put it out there one more time, *3
9 if you're on the phone; there's a hand if you're in
10 the Webex meeting or put it in the chat.

11 Okay. Well, hearing none, I think we can
12 probably wrap up this meeting. So I just want to
13 thank everyone who participated tonight or came and
14 listened to our presentation.

15 Saarah, if you would go to the last
16 slide.

17 Just important reminders: Comments will
18 be made available to the public via eDockets at the
19 end of the comment period. The Commission does not
20 edit or delete personal identifying information from
21 submissions, so keep that in mind when you go to
22 submit an online comment. And the written comment
23 period closes on January 26th, so make sure you get
24 your comments in by that date.

25 And if you choose to attend in person

1 tomorrow, we look forward to also seeing you there
2 in Becker. So thank you, again, everyone.

3 (Public comment concluded.)
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SCOPING & INFORMATIONAL MEETING - 25-319

BECKER - JANUARY 14, 2026 - 6:00 P.M.

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 600 MW Sherco South & West Battery Energy Storage Project in Sherburne County, Minnesota

MPUC DOCKET NO: E002/ESS-25-319

Becker Community Center
11500 Sherburne Avenue
Becker, Minnesota 55308

January 14, 2026

COURT REPORTER: Christine Simons, RMR, RPR

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1 MS. SAARAH MAXON: Well, good evening,
2 everyone. Welcome to the public information and
3 scoping meeting for the Sherco South and West Energy
4 Storage Project. This is the second of two meetings
5 we're holding at this stage. The last one -- or the
6 first one was last night, and that was a virtual
7 meeting.

8 So just to give a brief overview of what
9 the presentation's going to look like, I'm giving a
10 brief introduction. My name is Saarah Maxon, and I
11 work for the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission.
12 Next up, we'll pass off the description of the
13 project to the Xcel Energy representative, Jordan,
14 over here on my right, before we take it back, and
15 Emily Johnson, my colleague at the Minnesota Public
16 Utilities Commission, will continue the
17 presentation. And then we'll wrap up with an
18 opportunity to ask questions or provide comments.

19 So it's a pretty small group. I don't
20 know if this will be that big of a deal or not, but
21 we'd just ask that you be respectful of everyone
22 here, including the presenters and commenters. We
23 just want to make sure that we're able to hear from
24 everyone who wants to comment today.

25 And, additionally, we're going to take

1 turns commenting, so one person at a time. Our
2 court reporter, Christine, is here to record the
3 meeting, including each person's comments. And just
4 so you know, the Commissioners use this record to
5 help them decide on the permit decision.

6 So the purpose of today's meeting is
7 really just to receive public input and help compile
8 the record for the Commission's permit decision, as
9 I just mentioned. So what you can do here is you
10 can ask us, Minnesota Public Utilities Commission
11 staff, questions about the review process, or you
12 can ask the Applicant about the proposed project.

13 And, additionally, it's an opportunity to
14 share oral or written comments, including thoughts
15 on the project, additional information needs, and
16 possible permit conditions.

17 And if I'm not speaking loud enough, just
18 raise your hand, and I'll try and increase the
19 volume.

20 But just a very quick explanation, at the
21 Public Utilities Commission, we regulate electric,
22 natural gas, and landline telephone utilities.
23 Additionally, we issue site and route permits for
24 large energy facilities, which is why we're here.
25 This is a battery storage project.

1 And the Commission consists of five
2 Commissioners. These Commissioners are appointed by
3 the Governor, and they serve on six-year staggered
4 terms. But, ultimately, these are the people who
5 decide on the permits, and also for rate cases and
6 other utility matters.

7 So thank you, and I'll pass it off to
8 Jordan to talk about the project.

9 MR. JORDAN CLITTY: Thank you very much.
10 As stated, my name is Jordan Clitty. I'm with Xcel
11 Energy as a project manager on this project, and
12 we'll get into our PowerPoint here.

13 So this is a 600-megawatt --
14 2,400-megawatt -- battery energy storage project
15 located on our Becker facility. For those in the
16 area, Sherco -- the coal plant over here in town --
17 has retiring units. Unit 2's already retired; Unit
18 1 is retiring here at the end of 2026. These
19 units -- battery units are a combination of surplus,
20 replacement, and potentially ERAS. We have some
21 ERAS applications in the queue. So these projects,
22 again, are utilizing the lithium iron phosphate
23 technology. It's common here in the battery energy
24 storage industry here.

25 Approximately 150 jobs -- construction --

1 will be created through these with our EPC partner,
2 which is Blattner.

3 Yeah. And then for those that may have
4 attended other past public discussions in the Becker
5 area, we've talked, you know, these are Sherco South
6 and West. It could be viewed as a -- as we do in
7 the application, kind of as a sole project. They're
8 technically two separate projects with different
9 regulatory paths, but collectively it will be
10 treated and viewed as it is in the application as a
11 joint, you know, continuous Sherco BESS project.

12 You can go to the next slide here.

13 Here you can see a close-up here again.
14 This is on existing company property, just south of
15 our Sherburne County substation there. So we have a
16 short gen-tie, you can see it. It's hard, maybe, to
17 see for some folks in the room, but on the large map
18 afterwards, if you want to look, it's that dotted
19 black and yellow line. You know, approximately, I
20 think we say 600 feet, so a short jaunt with the
21 transmission line from the pink there, which is the
22 project substation.

23 Within that, that's encompassing four
24 main power transformers and some HV breakers in a
25 switchyard. And then to the west. Or left-hand

1 side, there in that image, the green dots, what
2 you're looking at are the battery energy storage
3 enclosures themselves, as well as the medium-voltage
4 transformer skids and other various equipment, as
5 needed, there throughout the site.

6 This is a 345-kV transmission line, and
7 we're looking to start construction, upon the site
8 permit and required applications approval, here
9 later this year with an inservice date of Q4 2027.

10 Here's a breakout, just, of a little more
11 clarity with what these enclosures specifically are.
12 Specifically, these are SunGrow PowerTitan 2.0
13 battery enclosures, which are encompassed of --
14 you've got the battery cells themselves, which are
15 composed in the modules there. And then those
16 modules are stacked in the enclosures themselves and
17 create the racks, as you can see.

18 And in this particular model, you can
19 have broken out power conversion systems, which
20 convert the DC to AC power as a separate unit, but
21 in this instance, it's integrated with the enclosure
22 itself. So at the bottom of that, as you can see in
23 that image, it actually has the power conversion
24 system at the bottom. Which is then tied to the
25 medium-voltage transformer that steps up voltage to

1 34.5, which runs to the main power -- or main power
2 transformers at the substation to step it up to the
3 interconnection voltage.

4 Continuing on here, so just some
5 representative images here of what, you know, a
6 typical BESS layout looks like. So they look like
7 shipping containers. As you can see there on the
8 left, and then you can see the medium-voltage
9 transformer skids as well that these are paired
10 with, you know, in groups.

11 So our site-specific has four BESS
12 enclosures per each medium-voltage transformer skid.
13 And then the image on the right there, you can see
14 just a little close-up shot. Specifically, this is
15 actually one of our units out in Colorado, the exact
16 same technology, PowerTitan 2.0, at one of our
17 Colorado facilities.

18 Here's just some representative images
19 there of the transmission lines. Again, note that
20 this is a very short transmission line on our
21 company property going from the substation to the
22 Sherburne County substation there, 345-kV as stated,
23 but just some representative images there of what
24 that looks like.

25 Just to highlight, you know, some of the

1 safety features here we have. We, you know, meet
2 all the required standards as part of the various
3 battery requirements, from implementation and
4 construction of these sites. In fact, we go above
5 and beyond in several instances. You know, we
6 follow the NFPA 68, which has deflagration panels
7 installed on these battery equipments; and then also
8 have the NFPA 69, which is automated ventilation
9 systems.

10 24/7 monitoring, we'll have cameras
11 viewing the site 24/7. We'll have, you know,
12 operations, and then the ability to access and view
13 the site remotely with monitoring ongoing. We have
14 ventilation, smoke, heat, combustible gas detection;
15 a multilevel battery management system; and several
16 other, you know, safety integrations as we work
17 through design with the safety, you know, at the
18 forefront here.

19 We will be working to develop both the
20 hazard mitigation analysis and emergency response
21 plan that we'll discuss here with the AHJs in this
22 specific area, and work to, you know, communicate
23 that as we work with Blattner and our partner,
24 SunGrow, for who we're procuring the equipment with,
25 to develop that HMA and emergency response plan.

1 Again, HMA is the hazard mitigation analysis.

2 So we did -- an array of environmental
3 and cultural resource assessments have been
4 completed. Upon that, there were no wetlands,
5 protect species, suitable habitat, or cultural
6 resource impacts anticipated.

7 We did do some noise studies with the
8 equipment already, and no noise issues or concerns
9 there with our equipment. We do have some noise
10 mitigation efforts implemented with our vendor for
11 this site. We will, you know, follow the typical
12 preconstruction permits, such as those for the
13 stormwater control, as mentioned there, and will be
14 applied ahead of construction activities commencing
15 there on-site.

16 An environmental assessment was completed
17 as part of the site permit application. Topics
18 considered and evaluated in the EA include, but not
19 limited to, you can see kind of the whole host of
20 items there, with visual and aesthetic resources,
21 public health, safety, noise, air quality, and so
22 on.

23 Again -- and we say this at the end --
24 but there is a link, too, for the EA that you can
25 actually see on the docket site there and listed

1 here in the link. Obviously with the application,
2 you can see and click on that in much more detail if
3 you want.

4 Each topic is assessed to determine if
5 there are impacts anticipated, and then if there are
6 impacts, what mitigation efforts there are applied
7 and how -- avoidance or minimization we take to --
8 to minimize those impacts.

9 As mentioned, we're looking upon site
10 permit and approval here through the processes, both
11 in the regulatory and the site permit application
12 here. Planning to start construction later this
13 year, mobilizing to site, again, with Blattner as
14 our EPC partner. So they're our construction
15 partner here in this instance.

16 You know, some of the very first
17 activities are setting up the laydown yard, getting
18 the site graded and cleared there for construction
19 to start, and starting to offload and receive some
20 of the major components and equipment, such as our
21 main power transformers, potentially later this year
22 or early next year. Following that will be the
23 receiving of the BESS enclosures and various
24 equipment there, and then install of all that.

25 For operations and maintenance, we do

1 have, I believe, up to ten on-site staff workers
2 after this is in service at the -- the Q4 in 2027
3 there. We'll have daily monitoring, as we said
4 before, of equipment and systems from the remote
5 diagnostics through the SCADA systems, following the
6 routine maintenance and inspections provided from
7 our OEM, again, which is SunGrow here in the system.

8 Follow good housekeeping to maintain
9 access roads, vegetation, fences, gates, and
10 lighting. We'll, you know, conduct various
11 inspections, not only on our BESS equipment, but on
12 the transmission lines as well. And, of course, as
13 mentioned we will develop the emergency response
14 plan. And if there are any changes or updates,
15 we'll continue that engagement with the community
16 there and the AHJs for continuing to keep those
17 folks -- those key stakeholders up to date there
18 with any changes and updates with those emergency
19 response plans.

20 I think questions are at the end, so --

21 MS. SAARAH MAXON: Yeah.

22 MR. JORDAN CLITTY: -- thank you.

23 MS. EMILY JOHNSON: Well, I'll take over
24 from here. My name is Emily Johnson. I also work
25 for the Public Utilities Commission. I am an

1 environmental review manager, and I've been assigned
2 to this project. So I'll walk you through a little
3 bit tonight about how you can have input on the
4 project and guide the permitting process as we make
5 the decision on the permit as the Commission.

6 So when the Commission decides on a
7 permit, we consider all the human and environmental
8 impacts that a project may have and ways to reduce
9 those impacts or mitigate them. Many of those
10 considerations come from the input we receive during
11 the public comment period. So it's really important
12 that you participate if you have any ideas on things
13 that could mitigate some of the impacts that you
14 know of. Additionally, our staff are engaged
15 throughout the life of the project to monitor
16 compliance with the permit.

17 Next slide.

18 So the permit process starts with a
19 sample permit, and we actually have copies of the
20 sample permit for a standard energy storage system
21 project out front here if you're interested as you
22 leave.

23 So a sample permit contains all the
24 permit conditions for these types of projects that
25 we see. So the process also includes a draft

1 permit, and that's where we take the sample permit
2 and we make it specific to the project itself. So
3 we -- we are able to refine some of those standard
4 permit conditions, and then also propose some
5 special permit conditions to address specific
6 concerns for that project.

7 So the draft permit identifies where and
8 how the permittee might construct and operate the
9 project, including describing the project, and then
10 the proposed permit conditions for that project.
11 Comments we receive help us develop those conditions
12 and refine the standard conditions I talked about
13 before.

14 And it's really important to note here
15 that a draft permit does not allow the Applicant to
16 construct the project. Instead, it's just a
17 starting point for the Commission to consider as
18 they consider the permit. So here is just a visual.
19 We go from the sample permit -- that, again, is the
20 same for all these types of projects -- we develop
21 it into a draft permit for that site specificity,
22 and then, ultimately, the Commission will decide on
23 the final permit.

24 So by law, all applications must include
25 an environmental assessment. The Applicant gave

1 kind of an overview of that. And that EA gives
2 information on human and environmental impacts and
3 ways to mitigate those impacts, and it was included
4 as Chapter 5 of their application.

5 So as you heard, they discussed some of
6 those that we know of for this project, and as part
7 of this process, we are looking for any input on
8 additional impacts, mitigation measures, or unique
9 characteristics to the site that might be missing
10 from the EA. So we strongly encourage you to take a
11 look at it online, review it during this comment
12 period, and provide any input you have specific to
13 the local area. The EA and the application are also
14 available here tonight if you want to flip through
15 that.

16 So topics for comment, and this is kind
17 of what we're looking for to help guide our process.
18 So are there any potential human and environmental
19 impacts, unique characteristics, or mitigation
20 measures for the proposed project that you think
21 require further analysis and development in an EA
22 addendum? And that's something that our staff would
23 prepare.

24 And, then, are there any practical
25 methods to minimize, mitigate, or avoid the

1 potential impacts that the Commission should include
2 or consider as conditions in a draft site permit?

3 So examples of this mitigation could
4 include specific construction techniques to minimize
5 impacts, vegetative screening, or additional natural
6 resource surveys that you think might be necessary,
7 or anything else you can think of. And then we
8 would take these and address them further in an EA
9 addendum or a draft permit condition as we deem
10 necessary and practicable.

11 So how to comment: You can provide
12 verbal comments at tonight's meeting. You can
13 complete and submit a written comment form. We have
14 copies of those outside. You can also comment
15 online at this link, and scroll down to "filing a
16 comment" tab. You can e-mail me directly. My
17 e-mail is Emily.Johnson1@state.mn.us, and my card is
18 out front as well. You can also mail me personally
19 physical mail, and the comment period ends
20 January 26th at 4:30 p.m.

21 So what happens next? Based on the
22 information in the record, including the comments we
23 received during this comment period, the Commission
24 will make two preliminary determinations: Is an
25 environmental assessment addendum necessary before a

1 hearing is held? And what conditions should the
2 Commission include in a draft permit? Which will be
3 made available to the public for review and comment
4 at a public hearing later in the process.

5 Next slide. Thank you.

6 So this slide outlines the key milestones
7 in the State's permit review process. The
8 Commission accepted the application as complete on
9 December 19th, which officially started the process
10 for our review. The rows highlighted in blue
11 represent the opportunities for public comment, and
12 the star represents where we are currently at in the
13 process. We are holding these public information
14 meetings, and the comment period will remain open
15 through January 26th.

16 In February or March -- and based on
17 public input -- the Commission will issue a draft
18 site permit and decide whether an EA addendum is
19 needed. Public hearings will then follow in late
20 winter or spring, along with a second public comment
21 period. Timing of the public hearings will depend
22 on whether the Commission needs to prepare an
23 addendum to the EA. The Commission may preside over
24 the hearing, or request that an Administrative Law
25 Judge oversees the hearings and prepares either a

1 full report or a summary of comments.

2 The Commission will then consider the
3 entire record before making a decision on the site
4 permit in either spring or summer of 2026, and that
5 permit decision will be made in an open public
6 meeting that you can attend in person or virtually.

7 Next slide.

8 So we are going to now -- oh, sorry, I
9 have it different. So some commenting etiquette,
10 we're going to move into the comment portion of the
11 meeting. So we ask that we only have one speaker at
12 a time come up, and we'll ask that you please state
13 and spell your name for the court reporter clearly,
14 please.

15 And then we're going to ask you to limit
16 comments to a few minutes. I don't think we'll have
17 any trouble with timing tonight. There's not many
18 people here, but you can come back once everyone has
19 had a chance to speak as well. And then, of course,
20 we just ask that you maintain respect for others.
21 We understand that there might be differences of
22 opinion, but, ultimately, we're here to hear
23 everyone's opinion. So hopefully we can just
24 respect each other in that way.

25 Okay. So I think we will start with

1 Nathan Runke, who has signed up already, and then we
2 can open it up for anyone else.

3 MR. NATHAN RUNKE: Hi. I'm Nathan Runke,
4 that's N-A-T-H-A-N, R-U-N-K-E. I'm with the
5 International Union of Operating Engineers,
6 Local 49. I'm just here to make sure that in the
7 environmental assessment that they make sure to
8 cover the local job creation it has for construction
9 workers. I know the other sections of Sherco, the
10 construction that's gone on here have been extremely
11 beneficial for members like ours. I'm sure the
12 other trades would agree, and I'm just looking to
13 see that that be represented in the assessment as
14 well for this one.

15 So thank you.

16 MS. EMILY JOHNSON: Thank you.

17 Anyone else who would like to speak,
18 you're more than welcome to come up.

19 Going once -- we will be around to answer
20 questions afterwards, as well as the Applicant, so
21 please feel free to do so.

22 Okay. Seeing none, some important
23 reminders are that public comments will be made
24 available to the public via our eDocket system
25 online. The Commission does not edit or delete

1 personal identifying information from submissions.
2 So if you go and enter your comment online, just be
3 aware of that when you're entering certain
4 information. And then, again, the written comment
5 period closes on January 26th.

6 And maybe we can put up my contact again,
7 just one more time.

8 And, of course, both of our cards are
9 outside. So if you have any questions at all about
10 the process, feel free to contact us; and about the
11 project, you can definitely contact the Applicant.

12 Thank you all for coming. We appreciate
13 you taking the time. I hope you have a great night
14 and get home safe.

15 (Public comment concluded.)
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A	<p>applied (2) 10:14;11:6 appointed (1) 5:2 appreciate (1) 20:12 approval (2) 7:8;11:10 Approximately (2) 5:25;6:19 area (4) 5:16;6:5;9:22; 15:13 around (1) 19:19 array (1) 10:2 assessed (1) 11:4 assessment (5) 10:16;14:25;16:25; 19:7,13 assessments (1) 10:3 assigned (1) 13:1 attend (1) 18:6 attended (1) 6:4 automated (1) 9:8 available (3) 15:14;17:3;19:24 avoid (1) 15:25 avoidance (1) 11:7 aware (1) 20:3</p>	<p>black (1) 6:19 Blattner (3) 6:2;9:23;11:13 blue (1) 17:10 both (3) 9:19;11:10;20:8 bottom (2) 7:22,24 breakers (1) 6:24 breakout (1) 7:10 brief (2) 3:8,10 broken (1) 7:19</p>	<p>6:13;8:14 coal (1) 5:16 colleague (1) 3:15 collectively (1) 6:9 Colorado (2) 8:15,17 combination (1) 5:19 combustible (1) 9:14 coming (1) 20:12 commencing (1) 10:14 comment (18) 3:24;13:11;15:11, 16;16:11,13,14,16,19, 23;17:3,11,14,20; 18:10;20:2,4,15 commenters (1) 3:22 commenting (2) 4:1;18:9 comments (9) 3:18;4:3,14;14:11; 16:12,22;18:1,16; 19:23 Commission (19) 3:11,16;4:10,21; 5:1;12:25;13:5,6; 14:17,22;16:1,23; 17:2,8,17,22,23;18:2; 19:25 Commissioners (3) 4:4;5:2,2 Commission's (1) 4:8 common (1) 5:23 communicate (1) 9:22 community (1) 12:15 company (2) 6:14;8:21 compile (1) 4:7 complete (2) 16:13;17:8 completed (2) 10:4,16 compliance (1) 13:16 components (1) 11:20 composed (1) 7:15 concerns (2) 10:8;14:6 concluded (1)</p>	<p>20:15 condition (1) 16:9 conditions (9) 4:16;13:24;14:4,5, 10,11,12;16:2;17:1 conduct (1) 12:10 consider (5) 13:7;14:17,18;16:2; 18:2 considerations (1) 13:10 considered (1) 10:18 consists (1) 5:1 construct (2) 14:8,16 construction (10) 5:25;7:7;9:4;10:14; 11:12,14,18;16:4; 19:8,10 contact (3) 20:6,10,11 containers (1) 8:7 contains (1) 13:23 continue (2) 3:16;12:15 Continuing (2) 8:4;12:16 continuous (1) 6:11 control (1) 10:13 conversion (2) 7:19,23 convert (1) 7:20 copies (2) 13:19;16:14 County (2) 6:15;8:22 course (3) 12:12;18:19;20:8 court (2) 4:2;18:13 cover (1) 19:8 create (1) 7:17 created (1) 6:1 creation (1) 19:8 cultural (2) 10:3,5 currently (1) 17:12</p>
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