



100 East Grand Avenue, Suite 230, Des Moines, IA 50309
515.282.5300, itc-holdings.com

414 Nicollet Mall, Minneapolis, MN 55401
Toll free 800.895.4999, xcelenergy.com

January 17, 2018

--Via Electronic Filing--

Daniel P. Wolf
Executive Secretary
Minnesota Public Utilities Commission
121 7th Place East, Suite 350
St. Paul, MN 55101

RE: APPLICATION TO THE MINNESOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
FOR A CERTIFICATE OF NEED FOR THE HUNTLEY-WILMARTH 345 kV
TRANSMISSION LINE PROJECT
DOCKET NO. E-002, ET6675/CN-17-184

Dear Mr. Wolf:

Northern States Power Company, doing business as Xcel Energy, and ITC Midwest LLC (collectively, the Applicants) respectfully submit this Certificate of Need application to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (Commission) for the Huntley –Wilmarth 345 kV Transmission Line Project (Project). This Project consists of an approximately 50-mile 345 kilovolt (kV) transmission line between Xcel Energy’s existing Wilmarth Substation north of Mankato, Minnesota and ITC Midwest’s Huntley Substation south of Winnebago, Minnesota, and the necessary modifications to the existing Wilmarth and Huntley substations to accommodate this new 345 kV transmission line. Route alternatives for the proposed transmission line traverse Blue Earth, Faribault, Martin, and Nicollet counties in Minnesota.

The Huntley-Wilmarth Project was studied, reviewed, and approved by the Midcontinent Independent System Operator, Inc.’s (MISO) Board of Directors as a Market Efficiency Project (MEP) in December 2016 as part of its annual Transmission Expansion Plan (MTEP16) report. As an MEP, the Huntley-Wilmarth Project will help relieve the current transmission congestion in the Minnesota/Iowa border area which will increase market access to lower cost energy generation, provide economic benefits, strengthen the regional grid, and reduce curtailments of wind generators.

Daniel P. Wolf
January 17, 2018
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Copies of this application are being served on the persons on the attached distribution list as provided in Minn. Rules 7849.0200, Subp. 2. A short summary of our application is being distributed as required by Minn. R. 7829.2500, Subp. 3.

The Applicants anticipate filing a Route Permit for the Project with the Commission in the coming weeks (Docket No. TL-17-185). Pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 216B.243, subd. 4, Applicants request that the Certificate of Need and Route Permit proceedings be combined because it would be feasible, more efficient, and in the public interest.

The application processing fee, as required by Minn. R. 7849.0210, Subp. 1, is being sent under separate cover.

If you have questions or need additional information, please contact either Bria Shea, Director, Regulatory and Strategic Analysis at bria.e.shea@xcelenergy.com or 612-330-6064, or Tim Tessier, Manager-Regulatory Strategy at ttessier@itctransco.com or 515-282-5300 ext. 455.

SINCERELY,



TERESA MOGENSEN
SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT, TRANSMISSION
XCEL ENERGY SERVICES INC. ON BEHALF OF
NORTHERN STATES POWER COMPANY, A MINNESOTA CORPORATION



KRISTA K. TANNER
PRESIDENT, ITC MIDWEST LLC
VICE PRESIDENT, ITC HOLDINGS CORP.

cc: Service List

**STATE OF MINNESOTA
BEFORE THE
MINNESOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION**

| | |
|-------------------|--------------|
| Nancy Lange | Chair |
| Dan Lipschultz | Commissioner |
| Matthew Schuerger | Commissioner |
| Katie J. Sieben | Commissioner |
| John A. Tuma | Commissioner |

IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION OF
XCEL ENERGY AND ITC MIDWEST LLC
FOR THE HUNTLEY–WILMARTH 345 kV
TRANSMISSION LINE PROJECT

Docket No E-002, ET-6675/CN-17-184

**SUMMARY OF
CERTIFICATE OF NEED FILING**

On January 17, 2018, Northern States Power Company, doing business as Xcel Energy, and ITC Midwest LLC (collectively, the Applicants) filed an application with the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (Commission) for a Certificate of Need to construct the Huntley – Wilmarth 345 kV Transmission Project (Huntley – Wilmarth Project or Project). The Huntley – Wilmarth Project consists of an approximately 50-mile 345 kV transmission line between Xcel Energy’s existing Wilmarth Substation north of Mankato, Minnesota, and ITC Midwest’s Huntley Substation south of Winnebago, Minnesota, and the necessary modifications to the existing Wilmarth and Huntley substations to accommodate this new 345 kV transmission line. Route alternatives for the proposed transmission line traverse Blue Earth, Faribault, Martin, and Nicollet counties in Minnesota.

The Huntley – Wilmarth Project was studied, reviewed, and approved by the Midcontinent Independent System Operator, Inc.’s (MISO) Board of Directors as a Market Efficiency Project (MEP) in December 2016 as part of its annual Transmission Expansion Plan (MTEP16) report. As an MEP, the Huntley – Wilmarth Project will help relieve the current transmission congestion in the Minnesota/Iowa border area which will improve the efficiency of MISO’s energy market resulting in lower wholesale energy costs. The Project will also improve the deliverability of wind generation as it will reduce curtailments, allowing the maximum amount of this low-cost renewable generation to meet customer demands. Reducing curtailments improves energy delivery, reduces system generation costs, and provides environmental benefits in the form of lower carbon emissions. Finally, the Project will improve the robustness of the regional backbone transmission system by

improving the efficient delivery of energy and enabling the system to better withstand contingencies under multiple future scenarios.

A copy of the Certificate of Need Application can be found on the Commission's website at <https://mn.gov/puc/> by clicking on "eDockets" on the right side of the website, entering "17" and "184" in the "Docket Number" boxes, and then clicking "Search." A copy of the application will also be available on the Project's website: <http://www.huntleywilmarth.com/>.

IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION OF
NORTHERN STATES POWER COMPANY AND
ITC MIDWEST LLC FOR CERTIFICATE OF
NEED FOR THE HUNTLEY-WILMARTH 345
KV TRANSMISSION LINE PROJECT

DOCKET No. E002, ET6675/CN-17-184

Theresa Senart certifies that on the 17th day of January, 2018, she filed a true and correct copy of the **Filing Summary and Application to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission for a Certificate of Need for the Huntley-Wilmarth 345 kV Transmission Line Project** by posting the same on www.edockets.state.mn.us. Said Application for a Certificate of Need has also been served via U.S. Mail or e-mail as designated on the Official Service List on file with the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission in the above-referenced docket. Said Application has also been served via U.S. Mail or via courier on the Minnesota Department of Commerce and the Residential Utilities Division of the Office of the Attorney General as required by Minnesota Rule 7829.2500, subpart 3 and as indicated on the attached lists. Said Application has also been served via U.S. Mail or courier on the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission and state agencies with regulatory responsibilities in connection with the proposed facility as required by Minnesota Rule 7849.0200, subpart 2 and as indicated on the attached lists.

s/Theresa A. Senart
Theresa Senart

Service List for MPUC Docket No. E002,ET6675/CN-17-184: Paper Service – U.S. Mail
(includes copies required by Minn. R. 7829.2500, subp. 3)

Matt Steinrueck
Clean Water Action
330 Second Ave S, Ste 420
Minneapolis, MN 55401

Kristen Eide Tollefson
R-CURE
28477 N Lake Ave
Frontenac, MN 55026

Colleen Mueller
22186 State Hwy 4
Paynesville, MN 56362

Thomas Davis
1161 50th Ave
Sherburn, MN 56171

Requested a paper copy via mail

Jason Larsen
9370 345th Avenue
Blue Earth, MN 56013

Service List for MPUC Docket No. E002,ET6675/CN-17-184: Hand Delivery
(includes copies required by Minn. R. 7829.2500, subp. 3)

Daniel P. Wolf (orig. + 3 and CD)
MN Public Utilities Commission
350 Metro Square Building
121 7th Place East
St. Paul, MN 55101

Sharon Ferguson
MN Department of Commerce
85 7th Place East
Suite 500
St. Paul, MN 55101-2198

Raymond Kirsch (2 copies and 2 CDs)
Environmental Review Manager, Energy
Environmental Review and Analysis
Department of Commerce
Suite 500
85 Seventh Place East
St. Paul, MN 55101

Linda Jensen
Assistant Attorney General
Office of Minnesota Attorney General
1400 Bremer Tower
445 Minnesota Street
St. Paul, MN 55101

Dr. Steve Rakow (3 copies and 1 CD)
MN Department of Commerce
85 7th Place East
Suite 500
St. Paul, MN 55101-2198

Ian Dobson
Assistant Attorney General
Office of Minnesota Attorney General
Residential Utilities Division
1400 Bremer Tower
445 Minnesota Street
St. Paul, MN 55101

State Agencies—U.S. Mail – USB only
(copies required by Minn. R. 7849.0200, subp. 2)

Patrice Jensen
Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
520 Lafayette Road
St. Paul, MN 55155-4194

Cynthia Warzecha
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
500 Lafayette Road
St. Paul, MN 55155-4040

David Bell
Minnesota Department of Health
P.O. Box 64975
St. Paul, MN 55164-0975

Bob Patton
Minnesota Department of Agriculture
625 Robert Street North
St. Paul, MN 55155-2538

Stacy Kotch Egstad
Minnesota Department of Transportation
395 John Ireland Boulevard
St. Paul, MN 55155-1899

Sarah Beimers
Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office
345 Kellogg Blvd West
St. Paul, MN 55102

| First Name | Last Name | Email | Company Name | Address | Delivery Method | View Trade Secret | Service List Name |
|----------------|--------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| Christopher | Anderson | canderson@allete.com | Minnesota Power | 30 W Superior St Duluth, MN 558022191 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17-184 |
| James J. | Bertrand | james.bertrand@stinson.com | Stinson Leonard Street LLP | 50 S 6th St Ste 2600 Minneapolis, MN 55402 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17-184 |
| David | Birkholz | david.birkholz@state.mn.us | MN Department of Commerce | Suite 500 85 7th Place East St. Paul, MN 551012198 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17-184 |
| Michelle F. | Bissonnette | michelle.bissonnette@hdrinc.com | HDR Engineering, Inc. | Golden Hills Office Center 701 Xenia Ave S Ste 600 Minneapolis, MN 55416 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17-184 |
| B. Andrew | Brown | brown.andrew@dorsey.com | Dorsey & Whitney LLP | Suite 1500 50 South Sixth Street Minneapolis, MN 554021498 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17-184 |
| PUC | CAO | consumer.puc@state.mn.us | Public Utilities Commission | Consumer Affairs Office 121 7th Place E Suite 350 St. Paul, MN 55101 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17-184 |
| Generic Notice | Commerce Attorneys | commerce.attorneys@ag.state.mn.us | Office of the Attorney General-DOC | 445 Minnesota Street Suite 1800 St. Paul, MN 55101 | Electronic Service | Yes | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17-184 |
| Bill | Cook | bcook@rpu.org | Rochester Public Utilities | 4000 East River Road NE Rochester, MN 55906 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17-184 |
| John | Crane | johncranefishing@gmail.com | Fishing | 1250 Wee Gwaus DR SW Bemidji, MN 56601 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17-184 |
| George | Crocker | gwillc@nawo.org | North American Water Office | PO Box 174 Lake Elmo, MN 55042 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17-184 |
| | | | | | | | |

| First Name | Last Name | Email | Company Name | Address | Delivery Method | View Trade Secret | Service List Name |
|------------|----------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| Carl | Cronin | Regulatory.records@xcelenergy.com | Xcel Energy | 414 Nicollet Mall FL 7 Minneapolis, MN 554011993 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17-184 |
| Thomas | Davis | N/A | - | 1161 50th Ave Sherburn, MN 56171 | Paper Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17-184 |
| Patricia | DeBleekere | tricia.debleeckere@state.mn.us | Public Utilities Commission | Suite 350 121 Seventh Place East St. Paul, MN 55101 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17-184 |
| Ian | Dobson | Residential.Utilities@ag.state.mn.us | Office of the Attorney General-RUD | 1400 BRM Tower 445 Minnesota St St. Paul, MN 551012130 | Electronic Service | Yes | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17-184 |
| John E. | Drawz | jdrawz@fredlaw.com | Fredrikson & Byron, P.A. | Suite 4000 200 South Sixth Street Minneapolis, MN 554021425 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17-184 |
| Cory | Dutcher | cory.dutcher@ge.com | GE Power and Water | 1 River Rd. Bldg. 37-413 Schenectady, NY 12345 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17-184 |
| Kristen | Eide Tollefson | N/A | R-CURE | 28477 N Lake Ave Frontenac, MN 55026-1044 | Paper Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17-184 |
| Scott | Ek | scott.ek@state.mn.us | Public Utilities Commission | 121 7th Place East Suite 350 St. Paul, MN 55101 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17-184 |
| Kate | Fairman | kate.frantz@state.mn.us | Department of Natural Resources | Box 32 500 Lafayette Rd St. Paul, MN 551554032 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17-184 |
| | | | | | | | |

| First Name | Last Name | Email | Company Name | Address | Delivery Method | View Trade Secret | Service List Name |
|------------|-------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| Annie | Felix Gerth | annie.felix-gerth@state.mn.us | | Board of Water & Soil Resources 520 Lafayette Rd Saint Paul, MN 55155 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17-184 |
| Sharon | Ferguson | sharon.ferguson@state.mn.us | Department of Commerce | 85 7th Place E Ste 280 Saint Paul, MN 551012198 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17-184 |
| Annette | Fiedler | phydev@swrdc.org | Southwest Regional Development Comm. | 2401 Broadway Ave Ste 1 Slayton, MN 56172 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17-184 |
| Karen A | Gebhardt | kageb1@gvtel.com | | 43901 253rd Ave Leonard, MN 56652-4026 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17-184 |
| David | Grover | dgrover@itctransco.com | ITC Midwest | 901 Marquette Avenue Suite 1950 Minneapolis, MN 55402 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17-184 |
| Larry | Hartman | Larry.Hartman@state.mn.us | Department of Commerce | 85 7th Place East, Suite 500 St. Paul, MN 55101 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17-184 |
| Charles | Healy | chuckh@electrotech-inc.com | ElectroTech, Inc | 7101 Madison Ave Minneapolis, MN 55427 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17-184 |
| Kimberly | Hellwig | kimberly.hellwig@stoel.com | Stoel Rives LLP | 33 South Sixth Street Suite 4200 Minneapolis, MN 55402 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17-184 |
| Valerie | Herring | vherring@briggs.com | Briggs and Morgan, P.A. | 2200 IDS Center 80 S. Eighth Street Minneapolis, MN 55402 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17-184 |
| | | | | | | | |

| First Name | Last Name | Email | Company Name | Address | Delivery Method | View Trade Secret | Service List Name |
|------------|-----------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| Michael | Hoppe | il23@mtn.org | Local Union 23, I.B.E.W. | 932 Payne Avenue St. Paul, MN 55130 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17-184 |
| Kari | Howe | kari.howe@state.mn.us | DEED | 332 Minnesota St, #E200 1ST National Bank Bldg St. Paul, MN 55101 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17-184 |
| Alan | Jenkins | aj@jenkinsatlaw.com | Jenkins at Law | 2265 Roswell Road Suite 100 Marietta, GA 30062 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17-184 |
| Richard | Johnson | Rick.Johnson@lawmoss.com | Moss & Barnett | 150 S. 5th Street Suite 1200 Minneapolis, MN 55402 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17-184 |
| Scott | Johnson | Scott.Johnson@ci.medina.mn.us | City of Medina | 2052 County Road 24 Medina, MN 55340-9790 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17-184 |
| Michael | Kaluzniak | mike.kaluzniak@state.mn.us | Public Utilities Commission | Suite 350 121 Seventh Place East St. Paul, MN 55101 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17-184 |
| Mark J. | Kaufman | mkaufman@ibewlocal949.org | IBEW Local Union 949 | 12908 Nicollet Avenue South Burnsville, MN 55337 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17-184 |
| Bruce | King | bruce@ranww.org | Realtors, Association of Northwestern WI | Suite 3 1903 Keith Street Eau Claire, WI 54701 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17-184 |
| Ray | Kirsch | Raymond.Kirsch@state.mn.us | Department of Commerce | 85 7th Place E Ste 500 St. Paul, MN 55101 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17-184 |
| Thomas | Koehler | TGK@IBEW160.org | Local Union #160, IBEW | 2909 Anthony Ln St Anthony Village, MN 55418-3238 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17-184 |

| First Name | Last Name | Email | Company Name | Address | Delivery Method | View Trade Secret | Service List Name |
|------------|-----------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| Stacy | Kotch | Stacy.Kotch@state.mn.us | MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION | 395 John Ireland Blvd. St. Paul, MN 55155 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17-184 |
| Michael | Krikava | mkrikava@briggs.com | Briggs And Morgan, P.A. | 2200 IDS Center 80 S 8th St Minneapolis, MN 55402 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17-184 |
| Karen | Kromar | karen.kromar@state.mn.us | MN Pollution Control Agency | 520 Lafayette Rd Saint Paul, MN 55155 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17-184 |
| Douglas | Larson | dlarson@dakotaelectric.com | Dakota Electric Association | 4300 220th St W Farmington, MN 55024 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17-184 |
| Kim | Lindquist | kim.lindquist@ci.rosemount.mn.us | | 2875 145th St W Rosemount, MN 55068 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17-184 |
| Paula | Maccabee | Pmaccabee@justchangela w.com | Just Change Law Offices | 1961 Selby Ave Saint Paul, MN 55104 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17-184 |
| Pam | Marshall | pam@energycents.org | Energy CENTS Coalition | 823 7th St E St. Paul, MN 55106 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17-184 |
| Susan | Medhaug | Susan.medhaug@state.mn.us | Department of Commerce | Suite 280, 85 Seventh Place East St. Paul, MN 551012198 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17-184 |
| Brian | Meloy | brian.meloy@stinson.com | Stinson, Leonard, Street LLP | 50 S 6th St Ste 2600 Minneapolis, MN 55402 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17-184 |
| Kevin | Mixon | kevin.mixon@state.mn.us | Department of Natural Resources | 261 HWY 15 S New Ulm, MN 56073 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17-184 |

| First Name | Last Name | Email | Company Name | Address | Delivery Method | View Trade Secret | Service List Name |
|------------|-----------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| Andrew | Moratzka | andrew.moratzka@stoel.com | Stoel Rives LLP | 33 South Sixth St Ste 4200 Minneapolis, MN 55402 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17-184 |
| Debra | Moynihan | debra.moynihan@state.mn.us | MN Department of Transportation | 395 John Ireland Blvd MS 620 St. Paul, MN 55155-1899 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17-184 |
| Colleen | Mueller | N/A | | 22186 State Hwy 4 Paynesville, MN 56362 | Paper Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17-184 |
| David | Niles | david.niles@avantenergy.com | Minnesota Municipal Power Agency | 220 South Sixth Street Suite 1300 Minneapolis, Minnesota 55402 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17-184 |
| Kate | O'Connell | kate.oconnell@state.mn.us | Department of Commerce | Suite 50085 Seventh Place East St. Paul, MN 551012198 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17-184 |
| Carol A. | Overland | overland@legalectric.org | Legalelectric - Overland Law Office | 1110 West Avenue Red Wing, MN 55066 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17-184 |
| Bob | Patton | bob.patton@state.mn.us | MN Department of Agriculture | 625 Robert St N Saint Paul, MN 55155-2538 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17-184 |
| Kevin | Peterson | kjp@ibew160.org | IBEW Local 160 | 1109 Northway Lane NE Rochester, MN 55906 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17-184 |
| Angela | Piner | angela.piner@hdrinc.com | HDR, Inc. | Suite 600 701 Xenia Avenue South Suite 600 Minneapolis, MN 55416 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17-184 |

| First Name | Last Name | Email | Company Name | Address | Delivery Method | View Trade Secret | Service List Name |
|------------|------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| Larry | Rebman | larryemls@hotmail.com | EMLS, Inc | PO Box 122 Appleton, MN 56208 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17-184 |
| Margaret | Rheude | Margaret_Rheude@fws.gov | U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service | Twin Cities Ecological Services Field Office 4101 American Blvd. E. Bloomington, MN 55425 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17-184 |
| Richard | Savelkoul | rsavelkoul@martinsquires.com | Martin & Squires, P.A. | 332 Minnesota Street Ste W2750 St. Paul, MN 55101 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17-184 |
| Tom | Schmitz | tschmitz_rph@yahoo.com | | N/A | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17-184 |
| Rachelle | Schmitz | rrneevil@yahoo.com | | N/A | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17-184 |
| Rod | Schumacher | rod.schumacher@is-grp.com | I&S Group | 115 E Hickry St Suite 300 Mankato, MN 56001 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17-184 |
| David | Shaffer | david.shaffer@startribune.com | | 425 Portland Minneapolis, MN 55488 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17-184 |
| Bria | Shea | bria.e.shea@xcelenergy.com | Xcel Energy | 414 Nicollet Mall Minneapolis, MN 55401 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17-184 |
| Tom | Slukich | tom@nationalconductor.com | National Conductor Constructors | 18119 Hwy 371 North Braiderd, MN 56401 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17-184 |
| Ken | Smith | ken.smith@districtenergy.com | District Energy St. Paul Inc. | 76 W Kellogg Blvd St. Paul, MN 55102 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17-184 |
| | | | | | | | |

| First Name | Last Name | Email | Company Name | Address | Delivery Method | View Trade Secret | Service List Name |
|------------|-------------|---------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------|
| Adam | Sokolski | adam.sokolski@iberdrolare n.com | Avangrid Renewables | 527 Marquette Avenue Suite 1600 Minneapolis, MN 55402 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17- 184 |
| Byron E. | Starns | byron.starns@stinson.com | Stinson Leonard Street LLP | 50 S 6th St Ste 2600 Minneapolis, MN 55402 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17- 184 |
| Mike | Steckelberg | msteckelberg@grenergy.co m | Great River Energy | 12300 Elm Creek Boulevard Maple Grove, MN 553694718 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17- 184 |
| Matt | Steinrueck | BADEMAIL- msteinrueck@cleanwater.o rg | Clean Water Action | 330 Second Ave S Suite 420 Minneapolis, MN 55401 | Paper Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17- 184 |
| Mark | Strohfus | mstrohfus@grenergy.com | Great River Energy | 12300 Elm Creek Boulevard Maple Grove, MN 553694718 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17- 184 |
| Carl | Strohm | cjsmg@sbcglobal.net | SBC Global | 105 East Edgewood Ave Indianapolis, IN 46227 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17- 184 |
| James M. | Strommen | jstrommen@kennedy- graven.com | Kennedy & Graven, Chartered | 470 U.S. Bank Plaza 200 South Sixth Street Minneapolis, MN 55402 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17- 184 |
| Tom | Swafford | tswafford@umsi.us | Utility Mapping Services, Inc | 3947 E Calvary Rd Suite 103 Duluth, MN 55803 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17- 184 |
| Eric | Swanson | eswanson@winthrop.com | Winthrop & Weinstine | 225 S 6th St Ste 3500 Capella Tower Minneapolis, MN 554024629 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17- 184 |
| | | | | | | | |

| First Name | Last Name | Email | Company Name | Address | Delivery Method | View Trade Secret | Service List Name |
|------------|------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| Todd | Tadych | ttadych@atcllc.com | American Transmission Company LLC | 5303 Fen Oak Dr Madison, WI 53718 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17-184 |
| Steve | Thompson | stevet@cmpasgroup.org | Central Minnesota Municipal Power Agency | 459 S Grove St Blue Earth, MN 56013-2629 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17-184 |
| Lisa | Veith | lisa.veith@ci.stpaul.mn.us | City of St. Paul | 400 City Hall and Courthouse 15 West Kellogg Blvd. St. Paul, MN 55102 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17-184 |
| Caren | Warner | caren.warner@state.mn.us | Department of Commerce | 85 7th Place East Suite 500 St. Paul, MN 55101-2198 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17-184 |
| Cynthia | Warzecha | cynthia.warzecha@state.mn.us | Minnesota Department of Natural Resources | 500 Lafayette Road Box 25 St. Paul, Minnesota 55155-4040 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17-184 |
| Elizabeth | Wefel | eawefel@flaherty-hood.com | Missouri River Energy Services | 3724 W Avera Drive PO Box 88920 Sioux Falls, SD 57109-8920 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17-184 |
| Daniel P | Wolf | dan.wolf@state.mn.us | Public Utilities Commission | 121 7th Place East Suite 350 St. Paul, MN 551012147 | Electronic Service | Yes | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17-184 |
| Hans | van Lingen | hans.vanlingen@enel.com | Enel Green Power North America | 1 Tech Drive Suite 220 Andover, MA 01810 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_17-184_CN-17-184 |

**STATE OF MINNESOTA
BEFORE THE
MINNESOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION**

| | |
|-------------------|--------------|
| Nancy Lange | Chair |
| Dan Lipschultz | Commissioner |
| Matthew Schuerger | Commissioner |
| Katie J. Sieben | Commissioner |
| John A. Tuma | Commissioner |

IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION OF
XCEL ENERGY AND ITC MIDWEST LLC
FOR THE HUNTLEY–WILMARTH 345 kV
TRANSMISSION LINE PROJECT

Docket No E-002, ET-6675/CN-17-184

**SUMMARY OF
CERTIFICATE OF NEED FILING**

On January 17, 2018, Northern States Power Company, doing business as Xcel Energy, and ITC Midwest LLC (collectively, the Applicants) filed an application with the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (Commission) for a Certificate of Need to construct the Huntley – Wilmarth 345 kV Transmission Project (Huntley – Wilmarth Project or Project). The Huntley – Wilmarth Project consists of an approximately 50-mile 345 kV transmission line between Xcel Energy’s existing Wilmarth Substation north of Mankato, Minnesota, and ITC Midwest’s Huntley Substation south of Winnebago, Minnesota, and the necessary modifications to the existing Wilmarth and Huntley substations to accommodate this new 345 kV transmission line. Route alternatives for the proposed transmission line traverse Blue Earth, Faribault, Martin, and Nicollet counties in Minnesota.

The Huntley – Wilmarth Project was studied, reviewed, and approved by the Midcontinent Independent System Operator, Inc.’s (MISO) Board of Directors as a Market Efficiency Project (MEP) in December 2016 as part of its annual Transmission Expansion Plan (MTEP16) report. As an MEP, the Huntley – Wilmarth Project will help relieve the current transmission congestion in the Minnesota/Iowa border area which will improve the efficiency of MISO’s energy market resulting in lower wholesale energy costs. The Project will also improve the deliverability of wind generation as it will reduce curtailments, allowing the maximum amount of this low-cost renewable generation to meet customer demands. Reducing curtailments improves energy delivery, reduces system generation costs, and provides environmental benefits in the form of lower carbon emissions. Finally, the Project will improve the robustness of the regional backbone transmission system by

improving the efficient delivery of energy and enabling the system to better withstand contingencies under multiple future scenarios.

A copy of the Certificate of Need Application can be found on the Commission's website at <https://mn.gov/puc/> by clicking on "eDockets" on the right side of the website, entering "17" and "184" in the "Docket Number" boxes, and then clicking "Search." A copy of the application will also be available on the Project's website: <http://www.huntleywilmarth.com/>.

IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION OF
NORTHERN STATES POWER COMPANY AND
ITC MIDWEST LLC FOR CERTIFICATE OF
NEED FOR THE HUNTLEY-WILMARTH 345
KV TRANSMISSION LINE PROJECT

DOCKET No. E002, ET6675/CN-17-184

Theresa Senart certifies that on the 17th day of January, 2018, she filed a true and correct copy of **Filing Summary for the Application to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission for a Certificate of Need for the Huntley-Wilmarth 345 kV Transmission Line Project** by posting on www.edockets.state.mn.us. Said document was also served via U.S. Mail or e-mail as designated on the Official Service List on file with the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission in the above-referenced docket. Said document was also served via U.S. Mail or email as designated on the General Service List on file with the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission as required by Minnesota Rule 7829.2500, subpart 3 and as indicated on the attached service list. Said document was also served via U.S. Mail or email as required by Minnesota Rule 7829.2500, subpart 3 on those persons who were parties to Northern States Power Company's last general rate case (Docket No. 15-826) as indicated on the attached service list.

s/Theresa A. Senart
Theresa Senart

| First Name | Last Name | Email | Company Name | Address | Delivery Method | View Trade Secret | Service List Name |
|-------------|-----------|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|------------------------|
| David | Aafedt | daafedt@winthrop.com | Winthrop & Weinstine, P.A. | Suite 3500, 225 South Sixth Street Minneapolis, MN 554024629 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_15-826_Official |
| Christopher | Anderson | canderson@allete.com | Minnesota Power | 30 W Superior St Duluth, MN 558022191 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_15-826_Official |
| Alison C | Archer | aarcher@misoenergy.org | MISO | 2985 Ames Crossing Rd Eagan, MN 55121 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_15-826_Official |
| Mara | Ascheman | mara.k.ascheman@xcelenenergy.com | Xcel Energy | 414 Nicollet Mall Fl 5 Minneapolis, MN 55401 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_15-826_Official |
| Gail | Baranko | gail.baranko@xcelenergy.com | Xcel Energy | 414 Nicollet Mall 7th Floor Minneapolis, MN 55401 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_15-826_Official |
| Ryan | Barlow | Ryan.Barlow@ag.state.mn.us | Office of the Attorney General-RUD | 445 Minnesota Street Bremer Tower, Suite 1400 St. Paul, Minnesota 55101 | Electronic Service | Yes | OFF_SL_15-826_Official |
| James J. | Bertrand | james.bertrand@stinson.com | Stinson Leonard Street LLP | 50 S 6th St Ste 2600 Minneapolis, MN 55402 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_15-826_Official |
| William A. | Blazar | bblazar@mnchamber.com | Minnesota Chamber Of Commerce | Suite 1500 400 Robert Street North St. Paul, MN 55101 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_15-826_Official |
| James | Canaday | james.canaday@ag.state.mn.us | Office of the Attorney General-RUD | Suite 1400 445 Minnesota St. St. Paul, MN 55101 | Electronic Service | Yes | OFF_SL_15-826_Official |
| Jeanne | Cochran | Jeanne.Cochran@state.mn.us | Office of Administrative Hearings | P.O. Box 64620 St. Paul, MN 55164-0620 | Electronic Service | Yes | OFF_SL_15-826_Official |

| First Name | Last Name | Email | Company Name | Address | Delivery Method | View Trade Secret | Service List Name |
|----------------|--------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|------------------------|
| John | Coffman | john@johncoffman.net | AARP | 871 Tuxedo Blvd. St. Louis, MO 63119-2044 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_15-826_Official |
| Generic Notice | Commerce Attorneys | commerce.attorneys@ag.state.mn.us | Office of the Attorney General-DOC | 445 Minnesota Street Suite 1800 St. Paul, MN 55101 | Electronic Service | Yes | OFF_SL_15-826_Official |
| Corey | Conover | corey.conover@minneapolismn.gov | Minneapolis City Attorney | 350 S. Fifth Street City Hall, Room 210 Minneapolis, MN 554022453 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_15-826_Official |
| Carl | Cronin | Regulatory.records@xcelenergy.com | Xcel Energy | 414 Nicollet Mall FL 7 Minneapolis, MN 554011993 | Electronic Service | Yes | OFF_SL_15-826_Official |
| Joseph | Dammel | joseph.dammel@ag.state.mn.us | Office of the Attorney General-RUD | Bremer Tower, Suite 1400 445 Minnesota Street St. Paul, MN 55101-2131 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_15-826_Official |
| James | Denniston | james.r.denniston@xcelenergy.com | Xcel Energy Services, Inc. | 414 Nicollet Mall, Fifth Floor Minneapolis, MN 55401 | Electronic Service | Yes | OFF_SL_15-826_Official |
| Ian | Dobson | Residential.Utilities@ag.state.mn.us | Office of the Attorney General-RUD | 1400 BRM Tower 445 Minnesota St St. Paul, MN 551012130 | Electronic Service | Yes | OFF_SL_15-826_Official |
| Rebecca | Eilers | rebecca.d.eilers@xcelenergy.com | Xcel Energy | 414 Nicollet Mall - 401 7th Floor Minneapolis, MN 55401 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_15-826_Official |
| John | Farrell | jfarrell@ilsr.org | Institute for Local Self-Reliance | 1313 5th St SE #303 Minneapolis, MN 55414 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_15-826_Official |

| First Name | Last Name | Email | Company Name | Address | Delivery Method | View Trade Secret | Service List Name |
|------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|------------------------|
| Sharon | Ferguson | sharon.ferguson@state.mn.us | Department of Commerce | 85 7th Place E Ste 280 Saint Paul, MN 551012198 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_15-826_Official |
| Stephen | Fogel | Stephen.E.Fogel@XcelEnergy.com | Xcel Energy Services, Inc. | 816 Congress Ave, Suite 1650 Austin, TX 78701 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_15-826_Official |
| Edward | Garvey | garveyed@aol.com | Residence | 32 Lawton St Saint Paul, MN 55102 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_15-826_Official |
| Janet | Gonzalez | Janet.gonzalez@state.mn.us | Public Utilities Commission | Suite 350 121 7th Place East St. Paul, MN 55101 | Electronic Service | Yes | OFF_SL_15-826_Official |
| Kimberly | Hellwig | kimberly.hellwig@stoel.com | Stoel Rives LLP | 33 South Sixth Street Suite 4200 Minneapolis, MN 55402 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_15-826_Official |
| Michael | Hoppe | il23@mtn.org | Local Union 23, I.B.E.W. | 932 Payne Avenue St. Paul, MN 55130 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_15-826_Official |
| Julia | Jazynka | jjazynka@energyfreedomcoalition.com | Energy Freedom Coalition of America | 101 Constitution Ave NW Ste 525 East Washington, DC 20001 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_15-826_Official |
| Alan | Jenkins | aj@jenkinsatlaw.com | Jenkins at Law | 2265 Roswell Road Suite 100 Marietta, GA 30062 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_15-826_Official |
| Linda | Jensen | linda.s.jensen@ag.state.mn.us | Office of the Attorney General-DOC | 1800 BRM Tower 445 Minnesota Street St. Paul, MN 551012134 | Electronic Service | Yes | OFF_SL_15-826_Official |

| First Name | Last Name | Email | Company Name | Address | Delivery Method | View Trade Secret | Service List Name |
|------------|------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|------------------------|
| Sarah | Johnson Phillips | sarah.phillips@stoel.com | Stoel Rives LLP | 33 South Sixth Street Suite 4200 Minneapolis, MN 55402 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_15-826_Official |
| Mark J. | Kaufman | mkaufman@ibewlocal949.org | IBEW Local Union 949 | 12908 Nicollet Avenue South Burnsville, MN 55337 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_15-826_Official |
| Thomas | Koehler | TGK@IBEW160.org | Local Union #160, IBEW | 2909 Anthony Ln St Anthony Village, MN 55418-3238 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_15-826_Official |
| Michael | Krikava | mkrikava@briggs.com | Briggs And Morgan, P.A. | 2200 IDS Center 80 S 8th St Minneapolis, MN 55402 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_15-826_Official |
| Peder | Larson | plarson@larkinhoffman.com | Larkin Hoffman Daly & Lindgren, Ltd. | 8300 Norman Center Drive Suite 1000 Bloomington, MN 55437 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_15-826_Official |
| Douglas | Larson | dlarson@dakotaelectric.com | Dakota Electric Association | 4300 220th St W Farmington, MN 55024 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_15-826_Official |
| Matthew P | Loftus | matthew.p.loftus@xcelenergy.com | Xcel Energy | 414 Nicollet Mall FL 5 Minneapolis, MN 55401 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_15-826_Official |
| Paula | Maccabee | Pmaccabee@justchangela.w.com | Just Change Law Offices | 1961 Selby Ave Saint Paul, MN 55104 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_15-826_Official |
| Peter | Madsen | peter.madsen@ag.state.mn.us | Office of the Attorney General-DOC | Bremer Tower, Suite 1800 445 Minnesota Street St. Paul, Minnesota 55101 | Electronic Service | Yes | OFF_SL_15-826_Official |
| Kavita | Maini | kmaini@wi.rr.com | KM Energy Consulting LLC | 961 N Lost Woods Rd Oconomowoc, WI 53066 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_15-826_Official |

| First Name | Last Name | Email | Company Name | Address | Delivery Method | View Trade Secret | Service List Name |
|------------|-----------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|------------------------|
| Pam | Marshall | pam@energycents.org | Energy CENTS Coalition | 823 7th St E St. Paul, MN 55106 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_15-826_Official |
| Mary | Martinka | mary.a.martinka@xcelenergy.com | Xcel Energy Inc | 414 Nicollet Mall 7th Floor Minneapolis, MN 55401 | Electronic Service | Yes | OFF_SL_15-826_Official |
| Joseph | Meyer | joseph.meyer@ag.state.mn.us | Office of the Attorney General-RUD | Bremer Tower, Suite 1400 445 Minnesota Street St Paul, MN 55101-2131 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_15-826_Official |
| David | Moeller | dmoeller@allete.com | Minnesota Power | 30 W Superior St Duluth, MN 558022093 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_15-826_Official |
| Andrew | Moratzka | andrew.moratzka@stoel.com | Stoel Rives LLP | 33 South Sixth St Ste 4200 Minneapolis, MN 55402 | Electronic Service | Yes | OFF_SL_15-826_Official |
| David | Niles | david.niles@avantenergy.com | Minnesota Municipal Power Agency | 220 South Sixth Street Suite 1300 Minneapolis, Minnesota 55402 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_15-826_Official |
| Carol A. | Overland | overland@legalectric.org | Legalelectric - Overland Law Office | 1110 West Avenue Red Wing, MN 55066 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_15-826_Official |
| Jeff | Oxley | jeff.oxley@state.mn.us | Office of Administrative Hearings | 600 North Robert Street St. Paul, MN 55101 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_15-826_Official |
| Kevin | Reuther | kreuther@mncenter.org | MN Center for Environmental Advocacy | 26 E Exchange St, Ste 206 St. Paul, MN 551011667 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_15-826_Official |
| Amanda | Rome | amanda.rome@xcelenergy.com | Xcel Energy | 414 Nicollet Mall FL 5 Minneapolis, MN 55401 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_15-826_Official |

| First Name | Last Name | Email | Company Name | Address | Delivery Method | View Trade Secret | Service List Name |
|------------|----------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|------------------------|
| Richard | Savelkoul | rsavelkoul@martinsquires.com | Martin & Squires, P.A. | 332 Minnesota Street Ste W2750 St. Paul, MN 55101 | Electronic Service | Yes | OFF_SL_15-826_Official |
| Inga | Schuchard | ischuchard@larkinhoffman.com | Larkin Hoffman | 8300 Norman Center Drive Suite 1000 Minneapolis, MN 55437 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_15-826_Official |
| Janet | Shaddix Elling | jshaddix@janetshaddix.com | Shaddix And Associates | 7400 Lyndale Ave S Ste 190 Richfield, MN 55423 | Electronic Service | Yes | OFF_SL_15-826_Official |
| Ken | Smith | ken.smith@districtenergy.com | District Energy St. Paul Inc. | 76 W Kellogg Blvd St. Paul, MN 55102 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_15-826_Official |
| Byron E. | Starns | byron.starns@stinson.com | Stinson Leonard Street LLP | 50 S 6th St Ste 2600 Minneapolis, MN 55402 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_15-826_Official |
| James M. | Strommen | jstrommen@kennedy-graven.com | Kennedy & Graven, Chartered | 470 U.S. Bank Plaza 200 South Sixth Street Minneapolis, MN 55402 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_15-826_Official |
| Eric | Swanson | eswanson@winthrop.com | Winthrop & Weinstine | 225 S 6th St Ste 3500 Capella Tower Minneapolis, MN 554024629 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_15-826_Official |
| Lisa | Veith | lisa.veith@ci.stpaul.mn.us | City of St. Paul | 400 City Hall and Courthouse 15 West Kellogg Blvd. St. Paul, MN 55102 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_15-826_Official |
| Scott M. | Wilensky | scott.wilensky@xcelenergy.com | Xcel Energy | 7th Floor 414 Nicollet Mall Minneapolis, MN 554011993 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_15-826_Official |

| First Name | Last Name | Email | Company Name | Address | Delivery Method | View Trade Secret | Service List Name |
|------------|-----------|---------------------------|-------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|------------------------|
| Samantha | Williams | swilliams@nrdc.org | Natural Resources Defense Council | 20 N. Wacker Drive Ste 1600 Chicago, IL 60606 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_15-826_Official |
| Joseph | Windler | jwindler@winthrop.com | Winthrop & Weinstine | 225 South Sixth Street, Suite 3500 Minneapolis, MN 55402 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_15-826_Official |
| Cam | Winton | cwinton@mnychamber.com | Minnesota Chamber of Commerce | 400 Robert Street North Suite 1500 St. Paul, Minnesota 55101 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_15-826_Official |
| Daniel P | Wolf | dan.wolf@state.mn.us | Public Utilities Commission | 121 7th Place East Suite 350 St. Paul, MN 551012147 | Electronic Service | Yes | OFF_SL_15-826_Official |
| Patrick | Zomer | Patrick.Zomer@lawmoss.com | Moss & Barnett a Professional Association | 150 S. 5th Street, #1200 Minneapolis, MN 55402 | Electronic Service | No | OFF_SL_15-826_Official |

| First Name | Last Name | Email | Company Name | Address | Delivery Method | View Trade Secret | Service List Name |
|-------------|-------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------------|
| James J. | Bertrand | james.bertrand@stinson.com | Stinson Leonard Street LLP | 50 S 6th St Ste 2600 Minneapolis, MN 55402 | Electronic Service | No | SPL_SL__General List 7850.2100-1A |
| David | Birkholz | david.birkholz@state.mn.us | MN Department of Commerce | Suite 500 85 7th Place East St. Paul, MN 551012198 | Electronic Service | No | SPL_SL__General List 7850.2100-1A |
| Michelle F. | Bissonnette | michelle.bissonnette@hdrinc.com | HDR Engineering, Inc. | Golden Hills Office Center 701 Xenia Ave S Ste 600 Minneapolis, MN 55416 | Electronic Service | No | SPL_SL__General List 7850.2100-1A |
| B. Andrew | Brown | brown.andrew@dorsey.com | Dorsey & Whitney LLP | Suite 1500 50 South Sixth Street Minneapolis, MN 554021498 | Electronic Service | No | SPL_SL__General List 7850.2100-1A |
| PUC | CAO | consumer.puc@state.mn.us | Public Utilities Commission | Consumer Affairs Office 121 7th Place E Suite 350 St. Paul, MN 55101 | Electronic Service | No | SPL_SL__General List 7850.2100-1A |
| Bill | Cook | bcook@rpu.org | Rochester Public Utilities | 4000 East River Road NE Rochester, MN 55906 | Electronic Service | No | SPL_SL__General List 7850.2100-1A |
| John | Crane | johncranefishing@gmail.com | Fishing | 1250 Wee Gaus DR SW Bemidji, MN 56601 | Electronic Service | No | SPL_SL__General List 7850.2100-1A |
| George | Crocker | gwllc@nawo.org | North American Water Office | PO Box 174 Lake Elmo, MN 55042 | Electronic Service | No | SPL_SL__General List 7850.2100-1A |
| Carl | Cronin | Regulatory.records@xcelenergy.com | Xcel Energy | 414 Nicollet Mall FL 7 Minneapolis, MN 554011993 | Electronic Service | No | SPL_SL__General List 7850.2100-1A |
| Thomas | Davis | N/A | - | 1161 50th Ave Sherburn, MN 56171 | Paper Service | No | SPL_SL__General List 7850.2100-1A |

| First Name | Last Name | Email | Company Name | Address | Delivery Method | View Trade Secret | Service List Name |
|------------|----------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Patricia | DeBleekere | tricia.debleeckere@state.mn.us | Public Utilities Commission | Suite 350 121 Seventh Place East St. Paul, MN 55101 | Electronic Service | No | SPL_SL__General List 7850.2100-1A |
| John E. | Drawz | jdrawz@fredlaw.com | Fredrikson & Byron, P.A. | Suite 4000 200 South Sixth Street Minneapolis, MN 554021425 | Electronic Service | No | SPL_SL__General List 7850.2100-1A |
| Cory | Dutcher | cory.dutcher@ge.com | GE Power and Water | 1 River Rd. Bldg. 37-413 Schenectady, NY 12345 | Electronic Service | No | SPL_SL__General List 7850.2100-1A |
| Kristen | Eide Tollefson | N/A | R-CURE | 28477 N Lake Ave Frontenac, MN 55026-1044 | Paper Service | No | SPL_SL__General List 7850.2100-1A |
| Scott | Ek | scott.ek@state.mn.us | Public Utilities Commission | 121 7th Place East Suite 350 St. Paul, MN 55101 | Electronic Service | No | SPL_SL__General List 7850.2100-1A |
| Annette | Fiedler | phydev@swrdc.org | Southwest Regional Development Comm. | 2401 Broadway Ave Ste 1 Slayton, MN 56172 | Electronic Service | No | SPL_SL__General List 7850.2100-1A |
| Karen A | Gebhardt | kageb1@gvtel.com | | 43901 253rd Ave Leonard, MN 56652-4026 | Electronic Service | No | SPL_SL__General List 7850.2100-1A |
| Larry | Hartman | Larry.Hartman@state.mn.us | Department of Commerce | 85 7th Place East, Suite 500 St. Paul, MN 55101 | Electronic Service | No | SPL_SL__General List 7850.2100-1A |
| Charles | Healy | chuckh@electrotech-inc.com | ElectroTech, Inc | 7101 Madison Ave Minneapolis, MN 55427 | Electronic Service | No | SPL_SL__General List 7850.2100-1A |

| First Name | Last Name | Email | Company Name | Address | Delivery Method | View Trade Secret | Service List Name |
|------------|-----------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Kimberly | Hellwig | kimberly.hellwig@stoel.com | Stoel Rives LLP | 33 South Sixth Street Suite 4200 Minneapolis, MN 55402 | Electronic Service | No | SPL_SL__General List 7850.2100-1A |
| Valerie | Herring | vherring@briggs.com | Briggs and Morgan, P.A. | 2200 IDS Center 80 S. Eighth Street Minneapolis, MN 55402 | Electronic Service | No | SPL_SL__General List 7850.2100-1A |
| Scott | Johnson | Scott.Johnson@ci.medina.mn.us | City of Medina | 2052 County Road 24 Medina, MN 55340-9790 | Electronic Service | No | SPL_SL__General List 7850.2100-1A |
| Michael | Kaluzniak | mike.kaluzniak@state.mn.us | Public Utilities Commission | Suite 350 121 Seventh Place East St. Paul, MN 55101 | Electronic Service | No | SPL_SL__General List 7850.2100-1A |
| Bruce | King | bruce@ranww.org | Realtors, Association of Northwestern WI | Suite 3 1903 Keith Street Eau Claire, WI 54701 | Electronic Service | No | SPL_SL__General List 7850.2100-1A |
| Stacy | Kotch | Stacy.Kotch@state.mn.us | MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION | 395 John Ireland Blvd. St. Paul, MN 55155 | Electronic Service | No | SPL_SL__General List 7850.2100-1A |
| Karen | Kromar | karen.kromar@state.mn.us | MN Pollution Control Agency | 520 Lafayette Rd Saint Paul, MN 55155 | Electronic Service | No | SPL_SL__General List 7850.2100-1A |
| Kim | Lindquist | kim.lindquist@ci.rosemount.mn.us | | 2875 145th St W Rosemount, MN 55068 | Electronic Service | No | SPL_SL__General List 7850.2100-1A |
| Paula | Maccabee | Pmaccabee@justchangela.w.com | Just Change Law Offices | 1961 Selby Ave Saint Paul, MN 55104 | Electronic Service | No | SPL_SL__General List 7850.2100-1A |
| Brian | Meloy | brian.meloy@stinson.com | Stinson, Leonard, Street LLP | 50 S 6th St Ste 2600 Minneapolis, MN 55402 | Electronic Service | No | SPL_SL__General List 7850.2100-1A |

| First Name | Last Name | Email | Company Name | Address | Delivery Method | View Trade Secret | Service List Name |
|------------|-----------|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Kevin | Mixon | kevin.mixon@state.mn.us | Department of Natural Resources | 261 HWY 15 S New Ulm, MN 56073 | Electronic Service | No | SPL_SL__General List 7850.2100-1A |
| Andrew | Moratzka | andrew.moratzka@stoel.com | Stoel Rives LLP | 33 South Sixth St Ste 4200 Minneapolis, MN 55402 | Electronic Service | No | SPL_SL__General List 7850.2100-1A |
| Colleen | Mueller | N/A | | 22186 State Hwy 4 Paynesville, MN 56362 | Paper Service | No | SPL_SL__General List 7850.2100-1A |
| Kate | O'Connell | kate.oconnell@state.mn.us | Department of Commerce | Suite 50085 Seventh Place East St. Paul, MN 551012198 | Electronic Service | No | SPL_SL__General List 7850.2100-1A |
| Carol A. | Overland | overland@legalectric.org | Legalelectric - Overland Law Office | 1110 West Avenue Red Wing, MN 55066 | Electronic Service | No | SPL_SL__General List 7850.2100-1A |
| Kevin | Peterson | kjp@ibew160.org | IBEW Local 160 | 1109 Northway Lane NE Rochester, MN 55906 | Electronic Service | No | SPL_SL__General List 7850.2100-1A |
| Angela | Piner | angela.piner@hdrinc.com | HDR, Inc. | Suite 600 701 Xenia Avenue South Suite 600 Minneapolis, MN 55416 | Electronic Service | No | SPL_SL__General List 7850.2100-1A |
| Larry | Rebman | larryemls@hotmail.com | EMLS, Inc | PO Box 122 Appleton, MN 56208 | Electronic Service | No | SPL_SL__General List 7850.2100-1A |
| Margaret | Rheude | Margaret_Rheude@fws.gov | U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service | Twin Cities Ecological Services Field Office 4101 American Blvd. E. Bloomington, MN 55425 | Electronic Service | No | SPL_SL__General List 7850.2100-1A |
| Tom | Schmitz | tschmitz_rph@yahoo.com | | N/A | Electronic Service | No | SPL_SL__General List 7850.2100-1A |

| First Name | Last Name | Email | Company Name | Address | Delivery Method | View Trade Secret | Service List Name |
|------------|-------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Rachelle | Schmitz | rmeevel@yahoo.com | | N/A | Electronic Service | No | SPL_SL__General List 7850.2100-1A |
| Rod | Schumacher | rod.schumacher@is-grp.com | I&S Group | 115 E Hickry St Suite 300 Mankato, MN 56001 | Electronic Service | No | SPL_SL__General List 7850.2100-1A |
| David | Shaffer | david.shaffer@startribune.com | | 425 Portland Minneapolis, MN 55488 | Electronic Service | No | SPL_SL__General List 7850.2100-1A |
| Tom | Slukich | tom@nationalconductor.com | National Conductor Constructors | 18119 Hwy 371 North Braiderd, MN 56401 | Electronic Service | No | SPL_SL__General List 7850.2100-1A |
| Adam | Sokolski | adam.sokolski@iberdrolaren.com | Avangrid Renewables | 527 Marquette Avenue Suite 1600 Minneapolis, MN 55402 | Electronic Service | No | SPL_SL__General List 7850.2100-1A |
| Mike | Steckelberg | msteckelberg@greenergy.com | Great River Energy | 12300 Elm Creek Boulevard Maple Grove, MN 553694718 | Electronic Service | No | SPL_SL__General List 7850.2100-1A |
| Matt | Steinrueck | BADEMAIL-msteinrueck@cleanwater.org | Clean Water Action | 330 Second Ave S Suite 420 Minneapolis, MN 55401 | Paper Service | No | SPL_SL__General List 7850.2100-1A |
| Mark | Strohfus | mstrohfus@greenergy.com | Great River Energy | 12300 Elm Creek Boulevard Maple Grove, MN 553694718 | Electronic Service | No | SPL_SL__General List 7850.2100-1A |
| Carl | Strohm | cjsmg@sbcglobal.net | SBC Global | 105 East Edgewood Ave Indianapolis, IN 46227 | Electronic Service | No | SPL_SL__General List 7850.2100-1A |
| Tom | Swafford | tswafford@umsi.us | Utility Mapping Services, Inc | 3947 E Calvary Rd Suite 103 Duluth, MN 55803 | Electronic Service | No | SPL_SL__General List 7850.2100-1A |

| First Name | Last Name | Email | Company Name | Address | Delivery Method | View Trade Secret | Service List Name |
|------------|------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Eric | Swanson | eswanson@winthrop.com | Winthrop & Weinstine | 225 S 6th St Ste 3500 Capella Tower Minneapolis, MN 554024629 | Electronic Service | No | SPL_SL__General List 7850.2100-1A |
| Todd | Tadych | ttadych@atcllc.com | American Transmission Company LLC | 5303 Fen Oak Dr Madison, WI 53718 | Electronic Service | No | SPL_SL__General List 7850.2100-1A |
| Steve | Thompson | stevet@cmpasgroup.org | Central Minnesota Municipal Power Agency | 459 S Grove St Blue Earth, MN 56013-2629 | Electronic Service | No | SPL_SL__General List 7850.2100-1A |
| Caren | Warner | caren.warner@state.mn.us | Department of Commerce | 85 7th Place East Suite 500 St. Paul, MN 55101-2198 | Electronic Service | No | SPL_SL__General List 7850.2100-1A |
| Cynthia | Warzecha | cynthia.warzecha@state.mn.us | Minnesota Department of Natural Resources | 500 Lafayette Road Box 25 St. Paul, Minnesota 55155-4040 | Electronic Service | No | SPL_SL__General List 7850.2100-1A |
| Elizabeth | Wefel | eawefel@flaherty- hood.com | Missouri River Energy Services | 3724 W Avera Drive PO Box 88920 Sioux Falls, SD 57109-8920 | Electronic Service | No | SPL_SL__General List 7850.2100-1A |
| Hans | van Lingen | hans.vanlingen@enel.com | Enel Green Power North America | 1 Tech Drive Suite 220 Andover, MA 01810 | Electronic Service | No | SPL_SL__General List 7850.2100-1A |