office of energy security
Minnesota Department of Commerce

In the Matter of the Route Permit Application for a 345 kV Transmission Line from Brookings County, South Dakota, to Hampton, Minnesota.

LAKE MARION TO HAMPTON ADVISORY TASK FORCE DECISION AND CHARGE PUC Docket ET2/TL-08-1474

The above-entitled matter came before the Director of the Department of Commerce Office of Energy Security (OES) for a decision on the appointment of an advisory task force (ATF) to advise the Public Utilities Commission (Commission) on the application by Great River Energy and Xcel Energy for a route permit for the Brookings County – Hampton 345 kV transmission line project.

WHEREAS, the applicants submitted an application for a route permit for the Brookings County – Hampton 345 kV transmission line project on December 29, 2008; and

WHEREAS, Minn. Stat. 216E.08 provides for the establishment of an ATF to assist the Commission in carrying out its duties. Under the statute, the Commission shall provide guidance to the ATF in the form of a charge; and

WHEREAS, Minn. Stat. 216E.08 establishes that an ATF be comprised of at least one representative from each of the following: Regional development commissions, counties and municipal corporations, and one town board member from each county in which a route is proposed to be located. This rule further stipulates that no officer, agent, or employee of the applicant shall serve on the advisory task force; and

WHEREAS, on January 29, 2009, the Commission authorized the OES to establish an ATF(s) and develop a structure and charge for the ATF(s); and

THEREFORE, having reviewed this information, the OES makes the following determination with regard to the need for and charge to an ATF relating to this matter.

Lake Marion to Hampton Advisory Task Force Authorization

As authorized by the Commission, the OES establishes an ATF to assist in identifying impacts and route alternatives to be evaluated in the environmental impact statement (EIS) prepared by OES Energy Facilities Permitting (EFP) staff for the proposed Brookings County – Hampton transmission line project. The Lake Marion to Hampton ATF members will be solicited, as required by Minn. Stat. 216E.08, Subpart 1, from the following governmental units:

- Metropolitan Council
- Dakota County
- Rice County
- Scott County
- City of Elko New Market
- City of Hampton
- City of Lonsdale
- Castle Rock Township
- Cedar Lake Township
- Empire Township
- Eureka Township
- Greenvale Township
- Hampton Township
- New Market Township
- Sciota Township
- Vermillion Township
- Waterford Township
- Webster Township
- Wheatland Township

In addition, the ATF will include:

- Five private citizens, who live, work, or own property on or near the proposed project

The ATF will comprise no more than 20 members.

The OES charges the advisory task force as follows:

1. ATF members will assist the OES in identifying impacts and issues in the area of concern that should be evaluated in the EIS.

2. ATF members will assist the OES in identifying alternative transmission line routes or substation locations in Dakota, Rice, and Scott counties that may maximize positive impacts and minimize or avoid negative impacts of the project in the area of concern.

ATF members are expected to participate with OES staff in up to three meetings and to assist staff with the development of a summary of the task force's work including their preferences or recommendations, if any. Meetings will be facilitated by OES staff or a facilitator engaged by OES staff.

The Lake Marion to Hampton ATF will expire upon issuance of the EIS scoping decision.

OES EFP staff is directed to appoint, as appropriate, members of the ATF and to begin work on the above-noted charge.

Signed this 6th day of March, 2009

STATE OF MINNESOTA
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
OFFICE OF ENERGY SECURITY

William Glahn, Director