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December 3, 2008

PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

-VIA E-MAIL & U.S. MAIL-

Darrell Nitschke, Executive Director
North Dakota Public Service Commission
State Capitol Building, Dept 408
600 East Boulevard
Bismarck, ND 59505-0480

Re: APPLICATION OF NORTHERN STATES POWER COMPANY, A MINNESOTA CORPORATION, FOR TRADE SECRET PROTECTION IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANY'S APPLICATION FOR A CERTIFICATE OF PUBLIC CONVENIENCE AND NECESSITY AND ADVANCED DETERMINATION OF PRUDENCE FOR THE 150 MW MERRICOURT WIND PROJECT

Dear Mr. Nitschke:

Enclosed in the above referenced matter is an original and seven (7) copies of Northern States Power Company's, a Minnesota corporation ("Xcel Energy" or the "Company"), Application for Trade Secret Protection in the Matter of the Company's Application for a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity and Advanced Determination of Prudence to construct, own and operate a 150 MW wind project in the counties of McIntosh and Dickey North Dakota. We anticipate construction of the Merricourt Wind Project to begin in late 2010 with commercial operation targeted for December 2011.

The filing contains cost information, contract terms and internal modeling results as discussed in our attached application. We believe that disclosure of this information will provide economic value to potential vendors, contractors and suppliers and as a result could result in higher costs for our customers if this information is disclosed.

As a result, we believe it is important that our request for trade secret protection be granted in order that we can minimize costs to our customers. We look forward to working with the Commission to answer any questions they may have in granting this determination. Thank you in advance for your review of this filing.

Sincerely,

James R. Alders
Director, Regulatory Administration

Enclosures
cc: Service List

2 **PU-08-908** Filed: 12/3/2008 Pages: 6
**Application for Trade Secret Protection - 150 Mw
Merricourt Wind Project**

**BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA**

IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION OF
NORTHERN STATES POWER COMPANY, A
MINNESOTA CORPORATION, FOR A
CERTIFICATE OF PUBLIC CONVENIENCE
AND NECESSITY AND ADVANCED
DETERMINATION OF PRUDENCE FOR THE
150 MW MERRICOURT WIND PROJECT

CASE No. PU-_____

APPLICATION FOR TRADE SECRET PROTECTION

Northern States Power Company, a Minnesota corporation (“Xcel Energy” or the “Company”) respectfully moves the North Dakota Public Service Commission (the “Commission”) for entry of a trade secret protective order pursuant to § 69-02-09-01 of the North Dakota Administrative Code. The purpose of the requested protective order is to protect against public disclosure of trade secret information filed in the above-referenced application as defined by N.D.C.C. § 47-25.1-01(4).

1. A general description of the nature of the information sought to be protected.

Cost information, contract terms and internal modeling results regarding the Merricourt Wind Project as marked in our Application for a Certificate of Public Convenience and Advance Determination of Prudence in the above referenced docket.

2. Explanation of why the information derives independent economic value, actual or potential, from not being generally known to other persons.

The information could have economic value to potential vendors, contractors and suppliers who may desire to bid projects to the Company in the future. Further, our competitors may use such information against our interests in the future.

3. An explanation why the information is not readily ascertainable by proper means by other persons.

The confidentiality of this information has been maintained by Xcel Energy. The information is not disclosed to the public or to persons other than employees or authorized agents who need to know the information to fulfill their responsibilities in

connection with the Merricourt Wind Project or to third persons pursuant to agreement to maintain the confidentiality of the information.

The Company has requested that this information be treated as trade secret in all of its regulatory filings and other sharing of this information with governmental entities.

4. **A general description of the persons or entities that would obtain economic value from disclosure or use of the information.**

Wind developers, entities from which we purchase power, and other utilities would obtain economic value from disclosure of this information.

5. **A specific description of known competitors and competitor's goods and services that is pertinent to the tariff or rate filing.**

See response to No. 4.

6. **A description of the efforts used to maintain the secrecy of the information.**

See response to No. 3.

In accordance with Section 69-02-09-02 of the North Dakota Administrative Code, one copy of the trade secret material is provided in the enclosed sealed envelope which is labeled: **TRADE SECRET – PRIVATE**.

Respectfully submitted this 3rd day of December, 2008

Northern States Power Company,
a Minnesota corporation

By: James Alders

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

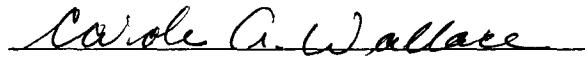
I, Carole A. Wallace, hereby certify that I have this day served copies or summaries of the foregoing document on the attached list of persons by delivery by hand or by causing it to be placed in the U.S. Mail at Minneapolis, Minnesota.

CASE NO. PU _____
MERRICOURT & NOBLES WIND PROJECTS

Distributed to:

- In Re: Xcel Energy's Initial Distribution List as of 12-3-2008 for the Merricourt and Nobles Wind Project Applications

Dated this 3rd day of December, 2008



Carole A. Wallace

Xcel Energy CON for Merricourt Wind Project
Application

PC _____

Initial Distribution List: 12-3-2008

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