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September 14, 2011

**VIA OVERNIGHT DELIVERY**

Mr. Darrel Nitschke  
Executive Secretary  
North Dakota Public Service Commission  
600 E. Boulevard Ave., Dept. 408  
Bismarck, North Dakota 58505-0480

**RE: Minnesota Power's Letter of Intent to Construct Transmission Facility and Request to Shorten the One-Year Time Requirement for Filing Application**

Dear Mr. Nitschke:

Minnesota Power, an operating division of ALLETE, Inc.,<sup>1</sup> is pleased to announce its plans to construct an extension of its existing 230 kV transmission line near Center, North Dakota.<sup>2</sup> The extension of the 230 kV transmission line will serve as a generator outlet for potential wind projects by ALLETE's newly created subsidiary, ALLETE Clean Energy in Oliver, Morton, and Mercer counties as well as any other entities, subject to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's transmission open access requirements.

The purpose of this letter is to: (1) notify the North Dakota Public Service Commission ("Commission") of Minnesota Power's intent to construct the transmission facility as required by N.D.C.C. § 49-22-07.1 and (2) request the Commission shorten the one-year waiting period between this notification and when applications for a Certificate of Corridor Compatibility and a Route Permit can be submitted as established by N.D. Admin. Code 69-06-03-01 to one day. This request is made pursuant to N.D.C.C. § 49-22-07.2.

<sup>1</sup> Minnesota Power is an operating division of ALLETE, Inc. ALLETE's Certificate of Good Standing issued by the North Dakota Secretary of State was provided to the Commission in a letter dated May 16, 2011 in Case No. PU-11-57.

<sup>2</sup> Case No. PU-09-587.



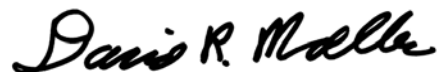
Specifically, Minnesota Power is proposing to request Commission approval for a transmission facility to be located in and along an approximately 11 mile corridor that will interconnect a new substation located in Mercer County and the Bison Wind Project Substation. N.D. Admin. Code 69-06-03-02(1). Attachment A is a map of the proposed 230 kV transmission line extension route. N.D. Admin. Code 69-06-03-02(2). Minnesota Power anticipates initial site work construction to commence by spring 2012, contingent on obtaining all necessary approvals from the Commission and local governments, and be completed in fall 2012. N.D. Admin. Code 69-06-03-02(3).

ALLETE Clean Energy's wind energy projects and any other potential transmission customer would utilize the proposed 230 kV transmission line extension and Minnesota Power's existing 230 kV Bison – Square Butte Line No. 84 to interconnect at the Square Butte 230 kV Substation. Energy generated by ALLETE Clean Energy will be transmitted via Minnesota Power's 250kV DC Line and the existing AC transmission system as available and will be used for sale to ALLETE Clean Energy's customers. N.D. Admin. Code 69-06-03-02(1). Minnesota Power estimates that the 230 kV transmission line extension and new substation will cost approximately \$10 million, depending on final project design. N.D. Admin. Code 69-06-03-02(4).

Minnesota Power expects to file the applications in early October 2011 in order to obtain Commission approval in winter 2012. Therefore, Minnesota Power respectfully requests pursuant to N.D.C.C. § 49-22.07.2 that the Commission shorten the one-year waiting period between filing this letter of intent and the siting application to one day. N.D. Admin. Code. 69-06-03-01. The original and ten copies of this waiver application are being filed with the Commission as required by N.D. Admin. Code 69-06-06-01.2.

If you have any questions, or need additional information, please contact me at the above-listed number.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David R. Moeller". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

David R. Moeller

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Attachment

c: Eric Norberg, ALLETE Clean Energy  
Brad Oachs, Minnesota Power  
Jim Atkinson, Minnesota Power

# ALLETE - Minnesota Power

