

STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

Northern States Power Company
Advance Prudence – 100 MW Aurora Solar, LLC
Application

Case No. PU-15-95

AFFIDAVIT OF SERVICE BY CERTIFIED AND ELECTRONIC MAIL

STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA
COUNTY OF BURLEIGH

Geralyn R. Schmaltz deposes and says that:

she is over the age of 18 years and not a party to this action and, on the **18th day of December, 2015**, she deposited in the United States Mail, at Bismarck, North Dakota, **three** envelopes with certified postage, return receipt requested, fully prepaid, securely sealed and containing a photocopy of:

Order Granting Protection of Information

The envelopes were addressed as follows:

Dave H. Sederquist
Senior Consultant, Regulation and Finance
Xcel Energy Services Inc.
2302 Great Northern Drive
Fargo, ND 58102
Cert. No. 7015 0640 0006 6433 2038

Zeviel T. Simpser
Briggs and Morgan, P. A.
2200 IDS Center
80 South Eighth Street
Minneapolis, MN 55402-2157
Cert. No. 7015 0640 0006 6433 2045

Alison C. Archer
Xcel Energy
414 Nicollet Mall 5th Floor
Minneapolis, MN 55401-1993
Cert. No. 7015 0640 0006 6433 2052

Geralyn R. Schmaltz further deposes and says that on the **18th day of December, 2015**, she electronically mailed **one** photocopy of the same.
The electronic mail was addressed as follows:

SaGonna Thompson-Regulatory Administrator
Xcel Energy
regulatory.records@xcelenergy.com

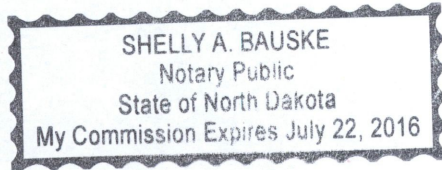
Each address shown is the respective addressee's last reasonably ascertainable post office and electronic mail address.

Subscribed and sworn to before me
this 18th day of December, 2015.

Jeremy R Penney

Shelly A Bauske
Notary Public

SEAL



STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA
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Case No. PU-15-95

ORDER GRANTING PROTECTION OF INFORMATION
December 16, 2015

On February 13, 2015, Northern States Power Company (Xcel or the Company), filed an application for trade secret protection pursuant to North Dakota Administrative Code Section 69-02-09-1 for protection from public disclosure as a "Trade secret" as defined by North Dakota Century Code Section 47-25.1-01(4).

The information for which the Company seeks protection includes cost information, contract terms, confidential bid information and internal modeling results, as well as information from which the foregoing may be derived, regarding the Company's proposal to add 100 MW of solar resources to Company's system, which has been marked as trade secret in the Company's application for Advance Determination of Prudence in the above-referenced case.

The Company states the cost information is trade commercial information because it is "information pertaining to buying or selling of goods and services that has not been previously publicly disclosed and that if the information were to be disclosed . . . would cause substantial competitive injury to the person from which the information was obtained," as provided in North Dakota Century Code Section 44-04-18.4(2)(a).

The Company further states that the cost information is trade secret because it is information that "(1) derives independent economic value, actual or potential, from not being generally known to, and not being readily ascertainable by proper means by, other persons that can obtain economic value from its disclosure; and (2) is the subject of efforts that are reasonable under the circumstances to maintain the secrecy of the information," as provided by North Dakota Century Code Section 44-04-18.4(2)(d). The Company also states that the information sought to be protected meets the definition of "trade secret" set forth in North Dakota Century Code Section 47-25.1-01(4).

The information could have economic value to potential vendors, contractors, and suppliers who may desire to bid for power purchase agreements (PPA)s or other generation resources to the Company in the future. Confidential bid information is also particularly proprietary and has independent economic value to those who provided it. Moreover, potential suppliers would know what the Company has paid under this PPA and bids received in the RFP and, consequently, the price could potentially serve as a

floor, below which no bidder would submit a price. Such a result could be harmful for the Company's customers in North Dakota.

The confidentiality of this information has been maintained by the Company. 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 Company's proposal, or to third persons pursuant to nondisclosure 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. Other entities from which the Company purchases power and generation facilities (or could purchase power and generation facilities in the future) and other utilities would obtain economic value from disclosure of this information. Confidential bid information is also particularly proprietary and has independent economic value to those who provided it.

North Dakota Administrative Code Section 69-02-09-03 requires that the Commission staff examine the information and application and make a recommendation to the Commission.

Staff filed its response on November 24, 2015, agreeing that the NSP's application satisfies the requirements of the North Dakota Century Code for protection of the information which is the subject of this request. The Commission's process provides a means for interested parties to review protected documents upon signing a nondisclosure agreement.

The Commission concludes Northern States Power Company's application satisfies the requirements of the North Dakota Century Code for protection of the information which is the subject of this request.

Order

The Commission orders the February 13, 2015 application of Northern States Power Company for protection of information GRANTED.

PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

 Randy Christmann Commissioner	 Julie Fedorchak Chairman	 Brian P. Kalk Commissioner
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