

FORD OPENING STATEMENT

My name is Gregory L. Ford. I am Director of Engineering, Design, and Document Services in the Energy Supply and Construction Department at Xcel Energy. I provided pre-filed Direct Testimony on behalf of Xcel Energy, describing our proposal to complete development and construction of the 200 MW Courtenay Wind Farm. My testimony describes steps necessary to complete the Project in 2016 to meet the current deadline for the federal Production Tax Credit.

The Company has made good progress on important preliminary aspects of the development and we are on-track to commence construction promptly to support completion in 2016. We will, of course, wait until the Commission has granted our request for a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity and transferred the Certificate of Site Compatibility to the Company before commencing active construction. Steps we have accomplished thus far include:

- The Company has all of the major contracts in place necessary to construct the Project, including the (i) Purchase and Sale Agreement with Geronimo, (ii) Turbine Supply Agreement with Vestas, (iii) Engineering, Procurement and Construction Contract with Wanzek and (iv) Generator Interconnection Agreement with MISO and Otter Tail.
- Wanzek is actively moving forward with important pre-construction activities under the EPC Contract necessary to keep the Project on track.
- The FERC proceeding on the GIA has been resolved and withdrawn, allowing the interconnection work to move forward.
- We are in the process of completing an amendment to the GIA, based on updated study work, that reduce the network upgrade costs from \$11 to \$9 million.
- We executed a settlement with Minnkota ensuring the Project has transmission delivery access at costs consistent with what we assumed in our filing. Resolving the Minnkota dispute was a critical path item for us to be able to meet the 2016 PTC deadline.
- We have undertaken substantial detailed work on the real estate rights, environmental review, other items necessary to support Project completion.

Because of the good progress we have made, in late June we were able to complete the purchase of the Courtenay Project from Geronimo on schedule – this means that Xcel Energy now owns the Project and is fully in control of all aspects of the development.

Finally, the Company is actively engaged in the Project area on pre-construction activities. We are working constructively with landowners and the community to ensure good relationships and a smooth construction process. We have begun micro-siting activities in consultation with local stakeholders. As that proceeds, we will work with your Staff to develop and present any proposed amendments to the Certificate of Site Compatibility to accommodate any necessary or advantageous changes.

We appreciate the Commission's review of our ADP Application and are hopeful that your approval will be forthcoming so that we can proceed promptly to the construction phase. I would be happy to answer any questions the Commissioners or Staff may have. Thank you.

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