

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

NORTHERN STATES POWER COMPANY
ADVANCE PRUDENCE – ACQUISITION OF
THE 375 MW MANKATO ENERGY
CENTER AND THE 345 MW MANKATO
ENERGY CENTER II

CASE NO. PU-18-____

APPLICATION FOR TRADE SECRET PROTECTION

Northern States Power Company (Xcel Energy or the Company) respectfully requests the North Dakota Public Service Commission (Commission) enter a trade secret protective order in the above-referenced Case pursuant to Chapter 69-02-09 of the North Dakota Administrative Code. The purpose of the requested protective order is to protect trade secret and commercial information as defined by N.D.C.C. § 44-04-18.4 from public disclosure pursuant to N.D.C.C. § 44-04-18 *et seq.* or any other applicable disclosure laws.

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: **PROTECTED INFORMATION – PRIVATE**.

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

The information for which the Company seeks protection includes cost information, as well as contract terms, regarding the Company's proposal to acquire the 375 MW Mankato Energy Center and the 345 MW Mankato Energy Center II which has been marked as trade secret in our Application for Advance Determination of Prudence in the above-referenced Case.

The Company states that this information is commercial information because it is "information pertaining to buying and 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 N.D.C.C. § 44-04-18.4(2)(a).

The Company further states that the cost information is trade secret because it is information that "(1) [d]erives 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 or use; and (2) [i]s the subject of efforts that are reasonable under the circumstances to maintain the secrecy of the information,” as provided in N.D.C.C. § 44-04-18.4(2)(d). The Company further states that the information sought to be protected meets the definition of “trade secret” set forth in N.D.C.C. § 47-25.1-01(4).

2. An 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 other entities entering into business transactions with the Company in the future. In particular, potential sellers would know what the Company has determined to be the cost range for certain components of its proposed transaction, and, consequently, the cost range could potentially serve as a floor below which no bidder would submit a bid price. Further, non-economic contract terms will provide potential vendors the opportunity to identify non-cost items of importance to the Company. Such a result could be harmful for the Company’s customers.

3. An explanation of 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 Company’s proposal, or to third persons pursuant to nondisclosure agreements 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 known competitors and competitors’ goods and services that are pertinent to the tariff or rate filing.

Other entities with which Xcel Energy enters into business transactions, including the purchasing and selling of assets, could obtain economic value from disclosure of this information.

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

See response to No. 4 above.

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

See response to No. 3 above.

Respectfully submitted this 7th day of December, 2018.

BRIGGS AND MORGAN, P.A.

By: /s/ Zeviel Simpser
Zeviel Simpser (ND ID # 06794)
2200 IDS Center
80 South Eighth Street
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55402-2157
Telephone: (612) 977-8400
Fax: (612) 977-8650