

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARINGS AND AVAILABILITY OF DRAFT PERMIT

In the Matter of the Application of Xcel Energy and Echo Zone LLC for a Route Permit for the North Rochester to Skyway High Voltage Transmission Line Project in Goodhue County, Minnesota.

PUC Docket Number: E002/TL-26-135
CAH Docket Number: 24-2500-42002

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (Commission) will hold public hearings on the route permit application of Northern States Power Company, doing business as Xcel Energy, and Echo Zone LLC, a subsidiary of Google LLC (Applicants) for the North Rochester to Skyway 345 kilovolt (kV) Transmission Line Project (Project).

The Applicants propose to construct an approximately 1.2-mile long double-circuit 345 kV transmission line that would connect Xcel Energy's North Rochester Substation to four new substation facilities at the proposed Pine Island Industrial Planned Unit Development site. The Applicants also propose to expand the existing North Rochester Substation, currently on a footprint of 10 acres, by approximately 11.3 acres. The transmission line and North Rochester Substation expansion will be owned and operated by Xcel Energy and the four Project Skyway substations will be owned and operated by Google.

The Applicants have requested a route width of 1,000 feet for the transmission line, 500 feet on either side of the centerline, with an expanded route width around the North Rochester Substation and Project Skyway substations. The Applicants stated that the required right-of-way for the transmission line is 150 feet. Structures utilized for the project will be made of steel and range from 100 to 180 feet in height. Spans between structures will range from 150 to 975 feet. The Applicants propose to start construction in May 2027 with an in-service date of December 2029.

You may find information on the project, including the application, which includes the environmental assessment on the project and the Commission's draft permit, on the Commission's website at: <https://puc.eip.mn.gov/web/project/26135>.

In-Person Public Hearing

Date: Monday, September 14, 2026

Time: 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
The hearing ends when all present attendees have commented **or at 8:00 p.m., whichever comes first**. Please arrive at the start time to ensure participation.

Location: Pine Island American Legion
108 1st Ave SE, Pine Island, MN 55963
<https://maps.app.goo.gl/3ckjxcoNwdQi2CpC9>

If any reasonable accommodation is needed to enable you to fully participate in these hearings, please contact the Commission at 651-296-0406 or 1-800-657-3782 at least one week in advance of the hearing. To find out if a hearing is canceled due to bad weather or another reason, call 1-855-731-6208 or visit mn.gov/puc.

Online Hearing

Date: Tuesday, September 15, 2026

Time: 6:00 P.M. to 8:00 P.M.

The hearing ends when all present attendees have commented **or at 8:00 p.m., whichever comes first**. Please arrive at the start time to ensure participation.

Join by WebEx (Webinar) Link: <https://minnesota.webex.com/minnesota/j.php?MTID=m27844859a90147e68c8a08212faaaec7>

Webinar Number: 2486 478 6456
Webinar Password: MnPUC! (667820 when dialing from a phone)
Join by Phone: 1-415-655-0003 **Access Code:** 2486 478 6456

If you are joining the hearing via WebEx and would like to ask a question or make a comment during the designated portion of the hearing, use the raised-hand function or the chat function to send a message to the hearing moderator. If you are joining the hearing by phone, press *3 on your phone. When it is your turn to speak, your line will be unmuted, and you will be able to ask questions and provide comments.

Additional information and instructions are available at <https://mn.gov/puc/activities/meetings/webex/>

Public Hearing Information

The public hearings will be presided over by the Honorable Kristien R.E. Butler, an administrative law judge with the Court of Administrative Hearings, who will provide the Commission with a summary of public testimony.

The purpose of the public hearings is to obtain public input on the proposed transmission line project and compile the record for the Commission to consider in making a final decision on the route permit application. Specifically, interested persons will have the opportunity to: (1) ask questions of state staff and the applicants; (2) offer oral and written comments on the merits of the proposed project; and (3) suggest possible changes to the draft permit, including revised or new conditions to be considered for inclusion in the route permit.

- Comments received at the hearings and during the comment period will be used to inform the record and help the Commission make its final decision.
- The presentations by Commission staff and the applicants will be the same at the in-person and online hearings.
- The hearings will end when all present attendees have had the opportunity to comment and all other business has been concluded, or at the scheduled end time of the hearing, whichever occurs first. **Accordingly, it is recommended that all interested persons arrive at the scheduled start time.**
- Members of the public may participate without the necessity of intervening as a party representation by legal counsel is permitted but not required. Information regarding intervening as a party can be found on the Commission's website at: <https://mn.gov/puc/get-involved/how-to-intervene/>.

Comment Period

Written comments will be accepted through **Friday, September 25, 2026, by 4:30 p.m.** Please include the docket number in all communications. Comments received after the close of the comment period may or may not be considered by the Commission.

The Applicants will file proposed findings of fact by October 2, 2026. Members of the public may comment on the Applicants' proposed findings of fact through **Friday, October 9, 2026, by 4:30 p.m.**

Submit Comments

Online: mn.gov/puc/get-involved/public-comments
Email: consumer.puc@state.mn.us
U.S. Mail: Consumer Affairs Office
 Minnesota Public Utilities Commission
 121 7th Place East, Suite 350
 St. Paul, MN 55101

Comments will be made available to the public via the Commission's website, except in limited circumstances consistent with the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act. The Commission does not edit or delete personal identifying information from submissions.

Additional Information

Minnesota Statutes and Rules. This project is being reviewed under Minnesota Statutes, chapter 216I. Statutes are available for review at: revisor.mn.gov.

Review Process. Information on the review processes for large energy infrastructure facilities is available on the Commission’s website at: puc.eip.mn.gov.

Filing Requirements. Utilities, telecommunications carriers, official parties, and state agencies are required to file documents using the Commission’s electronic filing system (eFiling). All parties, participants, and interested persons are also encouraged to use eFiling:

mn.gov/puc/edockets, select Sign In/Register and follow the prompts.

Full Case Record. See all documents filed in this matter via the Commission's website at: <https://efiling.web.commerce.state.mn.us>, select Search Documents enter the docket number (26-135), and select Search.

Subscribe to the Docket. To receive email notification when new documents are filed in this matter visit: edockets.state.mn.us, select Subscriptions.

Project Mailing List. Sign up to receive notices about project milestones and opportunities to participate or change your mailing preference. Email eservice.admin@state.mn.us or call 651-201-2246 with the docket number (26-135), your name, mailing address, and email address.

Project Website: <https://puc.eip.mn.gov/web/project/26135>

Related Commission Dockets. On April 14, 2026, Xcel Energy filed a petition with the Commission for approval of an Electric Service Agreement (ESA) between itself and Echo Zone, LLC, a subsidiary of Google LLC (Google), pursuant to Minn. Stat. 216B.05. The docket number for the ESA is E002/M-26-170. Written comments regarding Xcel Energy’s petition for an ESA will be accepted through September 8, 2026. To see all documents regarding the ESA, go to the Commission’s website at: mn.gov/puc/edockets, select *Go to eDockets*, enter 26-170 under Docket #s, and select *Search*.

Contacts

Public Utilities Commission

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To request this document in another format such as large print or audio, call 651-296-0406 (voice). Persons with a hearing or speech impairment may call using their preferred Telecommunications Relay Service or email consumer.puc@state.mn.us for assistance.

