STATE OF MINNESOTA
BEFORE THE
PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

Katie Sieben	Chair
Audrey Partridge	Commissioner
Matthew Schuerger	Commissioner
Joseph K. Sullivan	Commissioner
John A. Tuma	Commissioner

IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION FOR A CERTIFICATE OF NEED FOR THE GOPHER TO BADGER LINK 765 KV HIGH VOLTAGE TRANSMISSION LINE PROJECT

MPUC Docket No. ET3, E002/CN-25-121

SUMMARY OF CERTIFICATE OF NEED FILING

On February 6, 2026, Northern States Power Company, doing business as Xcel Energy, and Dairyland Power Cooperative (collectively, Applicants), filed an application with the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (Commission) for a Certificate of Need to construct the Gopher to Badger Link 765 kilovolt (kV) Transmission Line Project (Project). The Project will be part of a 765 kV path connecting Minnesota, South Dakota, Iowa, and Wisconsin, and consists of two segments:

- Segment 1: A single-circuit 765 kV high voltage transmission line between the existing North Rochester Substation and a point near Marion, Minnesota;

- Segment 2: A 765 kV/161 kV double-circuit high voltage transmission line from near Marion, Minnesota, to the Wisconsin border. Segment 2 also includes a new three-circuit breaker 161 kV switching station at a location to be identified in Houston County, Minnesota, as well as minor upgrades at existing 161 kV substations to support operation of the new Project facilities.

The Project is anticipated to be in-service in 2034.

The Project is needed to maintain system reliability amid fundamental changes in demand for electricity as well as the type and amount of generation that is interconnected to the grid within the MISO Midwest subregion. Energy demand is trending up and the type and location of generation resources to serve this electric load demand have fundamentally transformed over the past two decades. As generation types and demands for electricity evolve, so too must the transmission grid, which moves electricity from its point of generation to where it is consumed. The Project is necessary to continue to serve customer demand every minute of every day and to ensure the resiliency of the grid, particularly given the rapid pace of retiring baseload generation.

A copy of the Certificate of Need Application can be found on the Commission's website at http://mn.gov/puc/ in eDockets under Docket Number 25-121. A copy of the application will also be available on the Project's website: https://www.gophertobadgerlink.com/.