

Responsible Government Unit

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Energy Environmental Review and
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Project Applicant

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Project Representatives

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The Project is proposed due to ceasing operations of Unit 2 of the Sherco Generating Plant which will cease operations by the end of 2023. The Commission previously approved ceasing operations of Unit 2 and upon cessation, existing interconnection capacity must be repowered or retired by Xcel Energy under the Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO) generating facility replacement process.

The Applicant states that the Project will replace a portion of the nearly 700 MW of energy generated by Unit 2 of the Sherco Generating Plant. The Applicant states that this plan represents a key milestone step in Xcel Energy's clean energy transition, which targets 100 percent carbon free electricity by 2050 and 80 percent less carbon by 2030. The addition of this resource will increase the solar energy produced on Xcel Energy's system by more than 40 percent from currently expected levels and increase the system to a total of approximately 40 percent renewable energy.

Xcel Energy has indicated that they decided to accelerate its plans to add solar generation capacity at the Sherco Generating Plant in response to the Commission's Inquiry into Utility Investments that May Assist in Minnesota's Economic Recovery from the COVID-19 Pandemic.

According to the Applicant, NG Renewables and Xcel Energy were each developing solar generation facilities adjacent to the Sherco Generating Plant prior to issuance of the RFP. NG Renewables was developing a project to the west of the Sherco Generating Plant and had secured purchase options and leases through its subsidiary, Sherco Solar, LLC (Sherco Solar) sufficient to site up to 230 MW of solar generating capacity. Xcel Energy was developing a project to the east of the Sherco Generating Plant and had secured land leases through an affiliate sufficient to site up to 230 MW of solar generating capacity. NG Renewables and Xcel Energy elected to combine the two developments into one project, the Project, with the goal of providing up to 460 MW of solar energy capacity being requested by Xcel Energy in the RFP in a timely manner to maximize job creation during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Additional materials related to this project and its permitting proceedings are available on the Department's website: <http://mn.gov/commerce/energyfacilities> and on the State of Minnesota's

eDockets system: <https://www.edockets.state.mn.us/EFiling/search.jsp> (enter the year “21” and the number “191,” “190,” or “189”).

Persons interested in receiving future notices about this project can place their names on the project mailing list by contacting docteting.puc@state.mn.us or 651-201-2246 and providing the docket number (18-699, 18-700, or 18-701), their name, email address, and mailing address. Please indicate how you would like to receive notices – by email or U.S. mail.

This document can be made available in alternative formats (i.e., large print or audio) by calling 651-539- 1530 (voice).