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PPM breaks ground on MinnDakota wind farm for Xcel Energy

PORTLAND, Ore. – PPM Energy, ScottishPower’s (NYSE: SPI) competitive U.S. energy business, and Xcel Energy today announced the start of construction of the 150-megawatt (MW) MinnDakota Wind Power Project in Brookings County in South Dakota and Lincoln county in Minnesota.

“PPM Energy is delighted to bring online a fourth wind power project for customers of Xcel Energy,” said Raimund Grube, PPM Energy’s managing director of development in the Mid-Continent. “We thank Xcel Energy and their customers for making this project possible. We applaud Governor Rounds and the South Dakota Public Utilities Commissioners for their vision in laying the groundwork that enables wind power development in South Dakota. We also want to thank the South Dakota and Minnesota Congressional delegations for their help that enabled the MinnDakota project to receive recent FAA approval.”

Governor Rounds says, “South Dakota is pleased to host the largest installation to date of wind energy. The MinnDakota project taps yet another one of South Dakota’s resources – wind – and represents further diversification of our rural economies. In particular, the project will yield significant benefits to the local economy in Brookings County with new job opportunities and an expanding tax base. South Dakota is committed to ensuring the investment environment for wind energy in the state remains strong and looks forward to further expansion of wind energy in the state.”

MinnDakota will span the wind resource-rich area on the border of South Dakota and Minnesota with approximately 50 MW located in South Dakota and 100 MW in Minnesota. The 50 MW will be the largest installation of wind power in South Dakota, a state with vast wind resources but transmission issues that, until now, have made it difficult to get the power from the wind to cities and other electrical loads.

Power generated by the MinnDakota project will be delivered under a long-term contract to customers of Xcel Energy. The MinnDakota project interconnects at Xcel’s newly approved Yankee substation. Xcel Energy’s recent and ongoing transmission upgrades in the upper Midwest have helped make MinnDakota and similar future wind projects possible.

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"As the nation's number one provider of wind energy to retail customers, Xcel Energy will rely on South Dakota to help us double our portfolio of wind generation by the end of next year," said Paul Bonavia, President of Xcel Energy's Utilities Group. "We look forward to partnering with our friends from PPM Energy on this important project."

MinnDakota will use 100 GE 1.5 MW turbines in Minnesota and South Dakota. Construction is scheduled for completion by the end of 2007.

While the project spans approximately 15,000 acres owned by 70 landowners, the actual footprint of the turbines uses less than two percent of the total acreage. The remainder continues to be used for growing corn and soybeans and grazing cattle. The project is expected to create approximately 200 jobs during construction. In addition to the creation of 10-12 full-time jobs in the community, the project initially is expected to provide several hundred thousand dollars a year in property tax revenues annually.

About PPM Energy

PPM Energy (www.ppmenergy.com) now has nearly 2000 megawatts of wind energy in operation or under construction. The strength of its renewable project pipeline has allowed the company to increase its 2010 target by more than 50 percent to at least 3,500 megawatts developed or controlled by PPM Energy. PPM Energy balances its supply portfolio with sales to wholesale customers, placing almost all of its output in long-term contracts. Major customers include the cities of Seattle, Sacramento, Eugene, Pasadena, and Anaheim as well as investor-owned utilities such as Xcel Energy and Pacific Gas & Electric Company and the federal Bonneville Power Administration. PPM Energy also creates innovative new products to meet customer needs, such as operations and maintenance services and build-own transfers.

About Xcel Energy

Xcel Energy (NYSE: XEL) is a major U.S. electricity and natural gas company with regulated operations in eight Western and Midwestern states. Xcel Energy provides a comprehensive portfolio of energy-related products and services to 3.3 million electricity customers and 1.8 million natural gas customers through its regulated operating companies. Company headquarters are located in Minneapolis. More information is available at www.xcelenergy.com.

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