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Xcel Energy seeks new solar projects near Sherco power plant

Projects will help spur economic recovery from COVID-19 recession

MINNEAPOLIS (Jan. 4, 2021) – Xcel Energy is seeking proposals to add approximately 500 megawatts of new large-scale solar near the existing Sherco Power Plant in Becker, Minn. The new renewable energy will continue the company's efforts to lead the clean energy transition while also providing jobs that will help the economy recover from COVID-19.

"As a national leader in wind energy for more than a decade, and the first major utility to announce a vision to provide 100% carbon-free electricity, we are now accelerating our plans for solar projects near the Sherco Power Plant," said Chris Clark, president, Xcel Energy-Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota. "The Minnesota Public Utilities Commission asked for energy projects that could put people back to work, and these new solar projects will deliver those jobs and investments for our customers and communities."

If approved by the Commission, the solar projects will create nearly 400 union construction jobs and about 25 permanent positions. The new solar installations, which will use existing transmission interconnections at the site, are expected to be operational by 2024, following the retirement of the first Sherco coal unit; the company plans to fully retire all coal operations in the state by 2030.

"Our employees at Sherco and the Becker area have played a vital role over many decades in powering the region," said Clark. "These new solar projects will help the community make a smooth transition and provide new jobs and capital investments as we wind down the use of coal in Minnesota." As Xcel Energy retires coal plants in the Upper Midwest, the company plans to manage its workforce through attrition, retirements and retraining and do so without layoffs.

Request for Proposal Details

As part of the project, Xcel Energy will accept proposals from solar developers that provide the opportunity to acquire projects of at least 75 MW that can interconnect to the transmission infrastructure at the Sherco site; proposals offering a power purchase agreement will not be accepted. Proposals will be accepted until 5 p.m. on February 2, 2021. Projects must be built using union workforce, and responses should include information about using diverse suppliers and workforce, including those owned by women, minorities or veterans. The full request can be viewed at xcelenergy.com/ShercoSolarRFP. Questions can be directed to Xcel Energy by email at ShercoSolarRFP@xcelenergy.com.

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About Xcel Energy

Xcel Energy (NASDAQ: XEL) provides the energy that powers millions of homes and businesses across eight Western and Midwestern states. Headquartered in Minneapolis, the company is an industry leader in responsibly reducing carbon emissions and producing and delivering clean energy solutions from a variety of renewable sources at competitive prices. For more information, visit [xcelenergy.com](https://www.xcelenergy.com) or follow us on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).