FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION

Office of Energy Projects
Division of Dam Safety and Inspections
Chicago Regional Office

In reply refer to: P-2056

October 17, 2026

Via Electronic Mail

Mr. Donald Hartinger
Plant Director, Renewable Operations – Hydro
Xcel Energy
Donald.R.Hartinger@xcelenergy.com

Re: St. Anthony Falls Hydroelectric Project (FERC No. 2056)
- 2025 FERC Dam Safety Inspection – Post-Inspection
- October 8, 2025 Construction Inspection – Post-Inspection
- March 2025 Dam Safety Surveillance Monitoring Report
- December 26, 2024 – Extension of Time Request – Eastman Tunnel Abandonment

Dear Mr. Hartinger:

The Dam Safety Inspection (DSI) of the St. Anthony Falls Hydroelectric Project, FERC No. 2056, was conducted by Mr. Paul Kokoszka and me on September 11, 2025. On that day, all project structures were inspected, and no deficiencies were observed that would require immediate remedial action.

Be advised that we may provide you with additional comments that may develop as a result of our preparation of the dam safety inspection report. Thank you for the assistance provided by your staff during the inspections.

Additionally, the FERC received the March 2025 Dam Safety Surveillance and Monitoring Report (DSSMR), which was filed with the March 31, 2025 letter. The DSSMR indicated that the dam is safe, that the exiting instrumentation and dam safety surveillance monitoring program is appropriate for the identified critical Potential Failure Modes (PFMs), and that the inspections and instrumentation data collection have been completed in accordance with the Dam Safety Surveillance Monitoring Plan (DSSMP). The Chief Dam Safety Engineer concluded that the dam is safe for continued operation, mentioning the plans for installation of a secant cutoff wall in 2025, as discussed below. We reviewed the 2025 DSSMR have the following comments:

1. The secant cutoff wall construction project, which was authorized with our June 23, 2025 letter, began on July 11, 2025 and was in progress at the time of the 2025 DSI. The intent of this construction project is to address the active seepage through the Hennepin Island Earth Dam (HIED) embankment that manifests on the downstream slope during elevated reservoir pool levels, as reported in the March 2025 DSSMR. The secant pile cutoff wall will provide a long-term seepage control in the structure by extending through the variable embankment fill and weathered bedrock surface and embed into the low-permeability, competent limestone layer for the full length of the HIED.

   During the 2025 DSI inspection, the Xcel's and Barr Engineering's onsite personnel responsible for implementing the Quality Control Inspection Plan, confirmed that the work was being performed in accordance with the plans and specifications reviewed by FERC and progressing as intended without any dam safety issues developing as a result.

   Also, on October 8, 2025 Mr. Kokoszka conducted a Construction Inspection focusing on the Hennepin Island Earth Dam (HIED) embankment and the ongoing secant cutoff wall construction project. On that day, the HIED and adjoining structures were inspected, and no deficiencies were observed that would require immediate remedial action.

2. Piezometers PZ-1 and PZ-2 were abandoned in place and two new piezometers PZ-1R and PZ-2R were installed in the HIED in 2025. The purpose of the work was to replace existing piezometers that are along the anticipated secant pile cutoff wall and use the new piezometers to provide long-term pore water pressure readings to confirm effectiveness of the secant pile cutoff wall. As noted in our March 20, 2025 letter, the Dam Safety Surveillance and Monitoring Plan (DSSMP) must be updated by **April 1, 2026** with the boring logs and piezometer installation details. Furthermore, action and threshold levels for the new piezometers should be established and documented in the DSSMP by **April 1, 2027**.

3. A maximum threshold level for Piezometer PZ-5 was reportedly established as elevation 794.0 feet based on historic maximums. The new threshold should be documented as part of the DSSMP update due **April 1, 2026**.

4. The March 2025 DSSMR fulfills the annual requirement under Chapter 14 – Appendix K of the FERC's Engineering Guidelines. The next submittal of the DSSMR is due by **April 1, 2026**.

5. The plan and schedule to address the outstanding Independent Consultant's 2024 Part 12D recommendations, provided in Table 1 of the DSSMR remains

acceptable and satisfies the requirement of 18 C.F.R., Part 12, Subpart D, § 12.41 (a)(2).

Finally, your December 26, 2024, letter requested an extension of time (EOT) to provide a plan to evaluate options for abandoning the east and west branches of the Eastman Tunnel. The due date for filing the plan was December 31, 2024. An EOT until the ongoing study of the Government Cutoff Wall is completed, citing that the study will provide a better understanding of the benefits and risks posed by the tunnels so that proper plan to deal with them can be prepared. This request is justified; therefore, your EOT request is granted. The status of this study should be provided as part of the next DSSMR.

File your submittal using the Commission's eFiling system at https://www.ferc.gov/ferc-online/overview. When eFiling, select Hydro: Dam Safety and Chicago Regional Office from the eFiling menu. The cover page of the filing must indicate that the material was eFiled. For assistance with eFiling, contact FERC Online Support at FERCOnlineSupport@ferc.gov, (866) 208-3676 (toll free), or (202) 502-8659 (TTY).

You may contact Mr. Paul Kokoszka at (312) 596-4457 (paul.kokoszka@ferc.gov) or me at (312) 596-4430, if you have any questions regarding this letter.

Sincerely,

KEVIN GRIEBENOW

Digitally signed by KEVIN GRIEBENOW
Date: 2025.10.17 07:25:45 -05'00'

Kevin Griebenow, P.E.
Regional Engineer