



Minnkota Cooperative to join alliance with MP, Great River

Minnkota Power Cooperative, Inc., has agreed to work with Minnesota Power, Inc. and Great River Energy to form an alliance to optimize about 4,000 megawatts of generation assets. The alliance will also combine the power supply assets and customer loads for all three companies and will result in a larger resource base to help mitigate risk in volatile power markets.

MPEX, a division of Minnesota Power, will provide power trading, least cost supply and risk management services for the combined operations. The initial agreement between Minnesota Power and Great River Energy was announced last November.

"This is the right thing to do in today's energy marketplace," said Dave Loer, president and CEO of Minnkota Power Cooperative. "We at Minnkota are pleased to be working with two innovative companies to help create this alliance that will help us meet the needs of our customers."

The companies plan to complete the details of the alliance by the summer of 2000.

Jim Van Epps, Great River Energy CEO and Bob Edwards, executive vice-president of Minnesota Power, welcome Minnkota's participation. "Both our companies have worked with Minnkota for years and their participation would further strengthen the alliance," the executives said.

Headquartered in Elk River, Minnesota, Great River Energy is a consumer-owned generation and transmission cooperative and Minnesota's second largest utility in terms of generating capacity. Great River Energy provides low-cost electrical energy and related services to its 29 member distribution cooperatives in Minnesota and Wisconsin.

Minnkota Power Cooperative, Inc. is a consumer-owned generation and transmission cooperative serving 12 distribution cooperatives. Minnkota's service area, approximately 35,000 square miles, is in northwestern Minnesota and eastern North Dakota with a population of 300,000. Its generating facilities are among the lowest cost producers of electric energy in the country.

Minnesota Power is a multi-services company with corporate headquarters in Duluth, Minnesota. Minnesota Power holdings include the second largest wholesale automobile auction network in North America; the leading provider of independent auto dealer inventory financing; the largest private water utilities in Florida and North Carolina; significant real estate holdings in Florida and a low-cost electric utility that serves some of the largest industrial customers in the United States.