

# Northern Environmental Council Corporate Award, 1972--Response<sup>1</sup>

K. A. Carlson

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Duluth, Minnesota 55801

It is with sincere appreciation and gratitude that I accept this wonderful recognition given the Minnesota Power and Light Company today by the Northern Environmental Council. To me personally this carries greater importance because I represent not only our management, but also about 1,200 employees, 20,000 shareholders and 90,000 customers. All these people so important to our operations have in a real way contributed to the policies and practices MP&L follows. I am also appreciative of the fact that in a small way I have had an active part in working, planning and cooperating with responsible environmental and conservation individuals and organizations, such as you people represent, in attempting to assure that electric power generation, distribution, and servicing can be accomplished in a manner that enhances the quality of life in Northern Minnesota with minimal detrimental impact on the environment.

We are not satisfied that what we have done in the past has been sufficient to satisfy your environmental goals, but we at MP&L have genuinely attempted to carry out and improve upon the basic philosophy that we are stewards, not owners, of the earth's resources. We shall continue to do so.

Frankly, I don't think that we could operate any other way if we wanted to, in what we call the great Northland. Most of us who live in this area—and this includes a sizable number of our customers and shareholders—are here because we want to be. We appreciate clean air and water and outdoor recreation. Our life style is geared to a good environment.

I am confident that MP&L reflects not only the electric utility industry in the way it operates, but also other industries in our state and nation. We, a private enterprise, must assume leadership in our commitment to strive for a quality environment. We must also continue to maintain an active dialogue with environmental and conservation groups such as you represent in order to assure your members, which include many of our own employees and shareholders, that our commitment to preserving and enhancing our quality of life is real and genuine and that this can be accomplished in a manner that will satisfy the needs and desires of both society and industry. In this way we share the position that environmental matters are of prime responsibility.

In closing, may I assure you that this is a very treasured award to all of us at MP&L. It carries with it a responsibility on our part to do even a better job than we have in the past. It is with great pleasure that we receive it.

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<sup>1</sup>Response to award presented at the annual meeting of the Northern Environmental Council in Duluth, Minnesota on 28 October 1972.