



Power Plant Siting Act 2012 Year in Review

Permitted Energy Facilities

In 2012, Department of Commerce Energy Facility Permitting staff assisted the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (Commission) in permitting 13 energy facilities and prepared 6 required environmental review documents.

- 9 transmission lines with issued permits
- 2 wind farms with issued permits plus 2 wind farms with pending permit issuance orders
- 6 environmental review documents (4 Environmental Assessments and 2 Environmental Reports)
- annual compliance reviews for 15 projects (4 resolved; 11 pending)

Post-Permit Issuance Activity

In 2012, the Energy Facility Permitting staff provided numerous pre-construction and pre-operation compliance reviews, coordinated as needed with other government agencies, including those listed below as examples, among others.

Pre-Construction Compliance Filing Review

- Fargo to St. Cloud 345 kV Transmission Line
- Brookings to Hampton 345 kV Transmission Line
- Hampton to Rochester to La Crosse 345 kV and 161 kV Transmission Line
- Southwest Twin Cities Glencoe to Waconia 115 kV Transmission Line Upgrades
- Hiawatha 115kV Transmission Line
- Savanna 115 kV Transmission Line Rebuild Project
- Orono Substation Expansion and 115 kV Transmission Line
- Little Falls 115 kV Transmission Line
- Lakeswind Power Plant less than 50 MW Wind Project
- Prairie Rose 200 MW Wind Project and 115 kV Transmission Line
- CWS Wind Farm 30.75 MW Wind Project

Pre-Operation Compliance Filing Review

- Prairie Rose 200 MW Wind Project
- CWS Wind Farm 30.75 MW Wind Project
- Big Blue Wind Farm 36 MW Wind Project

2012 Focus Areas

- Integrated compliance system including
 - guidance
 - annual compliance reviews (see pages 7-8 for details)
 - development of tracking structures and

- assessment of energy production compliance reporting for all wind projects that resulted in framing a standard reporting format.
- Continued cooperation with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Minnesota Department of Natural Resources on avian and bat issues, which will culminate in guidance for avian and bat survey protocols.
- Continued cooperation with Minnesota Pollution Control Agency resulting in wind project guidance for noise study protocol.
- Guidance for transmission line plan and profile and wind preconstruction compliance filings.
- Framing for improved use of Geographic Information System tools.

2013 Focus Areas

- Clearly delineate Energy Facility Permitting role in siting processes and update standard operating procedures accordingly.
- Promote inclusive hearing processes and expand outreach to local governments.
- Establish routine communication mechanisms with organizations such as utilities, permittees and wind trade associations.
- Increase staff capability and implementation for improved use of Geographic Information System tools.

Energy Projects Under Review

- Black Dog to Savage 115 kV Transmission Line Project, TL- 11-795, Environmental Assessment released in 2012.
- Hollydale 115 kV Transmission Line Project, TL-11-152, Environmental Impact Statement planned for 2013.
- Hollydale 115 kV Transmission Line Project, CN- 12-113, Environmental Report in process.
- Southwest Twin Cities Chaska Area 69 kV to 115 kV Transmission Line Project, TL-12-401 and CN- 11-826, Environmental Assessment in process.
- Scott County Substation to Bluff Creek to Westgate 115 kV Transmission Line Project, TL-11-948 and CN-11-332, Environmental Assessment in process.
- Ellerth Windpark 98.9 MW Wind Project, WS-11-608 and CN 11-112, Environmental Report released in 2012.

Anticipated Energy Projects and Amendments

- Elko, New Market and Cleary Areas 115 kV Transmission Line Upgrade Project, TL-12-1245 and CN-12-1235.
- Kohlman Lake to Goose Lake 115 kV Transmission Line Project, TL-12-1151.
- Line 39 Relocation of 115 kV Transmission Line, TL-12-1123.
- Great Northern Transmission Line Project, CN-12-1163.
- ITCM Minnesota to Iowa 345 kV Transmission Line Project, TL-12-1337 and CN-12-1053.
- EcoHarmony Wind Project, petition for amendment, WS-08-973; CN docket is 08-961.
- Paynesville Wind Project, petition for amendment, WS-10-49; CN docket is 09-1110.
- Pleasant Valley Wind Project, petition for amendment, WS-09-1197; CN docket is 09-937.

Annual Compliance Reviews

Annual compliance reviews will be completed for all remaining active energy facility dockets.



Energy Facility Permitting 2012 Permitted Transmission Line Projects

| Docket Number | Project Name | Project Description | Commission Decision and Date of Order |
|---|---|--|--|
| Permitted Transmission Line Projects | | | |
| 10-134 | Prairie Rose 115 kV Transmission Line (Prairie Rose Transmission, LLC) | Construction of an approximately 7 mile, 115 kV transmission line in Rock County from the Prairie Rose Wind Farm substation to the Minnesota- South Dakota border where the line continues for a total of approximately 30 miles. Environmental Assessment released in 2011. | Route Permit Issued January 13, 2012 |
| 09-38 | Hiawatha 115kV Transmission Line (Xcel) | Construction of an approximately 1.5 mile, 115 kV underground transmission line and two substations in Hennepin County from the Hiawatha West substation to the Midtown North substation. Environmental Impact Statement filed in 2010. Environmental Report released in 2011. | Route Permit Issued February 10, 2012 |
| 10-1307 | Savanna 115 kV Transmission Line (Great River Energy and Minnesota Power) | Construction of a new 115 kV transmission line in St. Louis and Carlton Counties between the new Savanna switching station and the Cedar Valley switching station; new 115 kV line between the Savanna switching station and the Cromwell substation; and upgraded 69 kV line between the Gowan substation and the Cromwell substation. Total of approximately 37 miles of new and upgraded transmission line. Environmental Assessment released in 2011. | Route Permit Issued March 7, 2012 |

| Docket Number | Project Name | Project Description | Commission Decision and Date of Order |
|----------------------|--|--|--|
| 11-318 | Little Falls 115 kV Transmission Line (Great River Energy and Minnesota Power) | Construction of approximately 3.8 miles of 115 kV transmission line in Morrison County between the Minnesota Power Little Falls substation and the Crow Wing Power Little Falls substation. Environmental Assessment released in 2012. | Route Permit Issued March 26, 2012 |
| 11-223 | Orono Substation Expansion and New 115 kV Transmission Line (Xcel) | Construction of approximately 0.6 miles of 115 kV transmission line in Hennepin County and replacement of existing Orono substation. Environmental Assessment released in 2011. | Route Permit Issued April 6, 2012 |
| 09-1448 | Hampton to Rochester to La Crosse 345 kV and 161 kV Transmission Line (Xcel) | Construction of approximately 80 miles of 345 kV transmission line, approximately 15 miles of 161 kV transmission line and new North Rochester Substation in Dakota, Goodhue and Olmsted Counties. Environmental Impact Statement filed in 2011. Environmental Report released in 2008. | Route Permit Issued May 30, 2012 |
| 11-915 | Enterprise Park to Crooked Lake 115 kV Transmission Line (Great River Energy) | Construction of approximately 5.8 miles of 115 kV transmission line in Anoka County from the Enterprise Park substation to the Crooked Lake Substation. Environmental Assessment released in 2012. | Route Permit Issued August 24, 2012 |
| 11-867 | Parkers Prairie 115 kV Transmission Line (Great River Energy) | Construction of approximately 2.1 miles of 115 kV transmission line in Otter Tail County from the Parkers Prairie substation to a connection with Great River Energy's existing Inman to Alexandria line. Environmental Assessment released in 2012. | Route Permit Issued August 28, 2012 |

| Docket Number | Project Name | Project Description | Commission Decision and Date of Order |
|--|---|---|--|
| 11-800 | North Rochester to Chester 161 kV Transmission Line (Xcel) | Construction of approximately 29 miles of 161 kV transmission line in Goodhue and Olmsted Counties. Environmental Assessment released in 2012. | Route Permit Issued September 12, 2012 |
| Transmission Line Route Permit Amendments and Minor Alterations | | | |
| 09-1056 | Fargo to St. Cloud 345 kV Transmission Line (Xcel and GRE) | Request for 10 minor changes to the approved route (January 2012); request for a minor route alteration and a route adjustment to relocate the line outside the designated route (April 2012). | Approved, January 9, 2012 April 12, 2012 |
| 08-712 | Southdale to Searcyville 115 kV Transmission Line (GRE and Minnesota Power) | Request for 2 minor changes to the approved route. | Approved, February 2, 2012 |
| 08-1474 | Brookings to Hampton 345 kV Transmission Line (GRE and Xcel) | Request for 3 changes to clarify the provisions of the route permit and to authorize additional conductors at the crossing of Interstate 35 (February 2012); request for 4 minor changes to the approved route (July 2012); request for a minor change to use specialty structures (September 2012); and request for a minor change to the approved route (October 2012). | Approved, February 29, 2012 July 10, 2012 September 10, 2012 October 15, 2012 |
| 12-898 | ITC Midwest Heron Lake to Lakefield Junction 161 kV Transmission Line Reroute and Rebuild (ITC Midwest) | Request for a minor change to rebuild the Heron Lake to Lakefield Junction 161 kV transmission line. | Approved, October 10, 2012 |



Energy Facility Permitting 2012 Wind Projects: Permitted and Amendments

| Docket Number | Project Name | Project Description | Commission Decision and Date of Order |
|--|--|---|---------------------------------------|
| Permitted Wind Projects | | | |
| 10-438 | Prairie Wind Energy Project (Prairie Wind Energy, LLC) | A 100 MW wind project in Otter Tail County. Environmental Report filed in 2011. | Site Permit Issued March 19, 2012 |
| 11-863 | CWS Wind Farm Project (CWS Wind Farm, LLC) | A 30.75 MW wind project in Nobles County. Separate environmental review document not required. | Site Permit Issued May 1, 2012 |
| 10-1240 | Black Oak Wind Farm (Black Oak Wind, LLC) | A 42 MW wind project in Stearns County. Environmental Report (combined with Getty Wind Project) released in 2012. | Pending Order |
| 11-831 | Getty Wind Project (Getty Wind Company, LLC) | A 40 MW Wind Project in Stearns County. Environmental Report (combined with Black Oak Wind Project) released in 2012. | Pending Order |
| Wind Site Permit Amendments and Transfers with Conditions | | | |
| 09-830 | West Stevens Wind Project (West Stevens Wind, LLC) | Request to extend the timeframe for obtaining a power purchase agreement and to begin construction of a 20 MW wind project in Stevens County. | Approved, February 29, 2012 |
| 05-1220 | Jeffers Wind 20 Project (Jeffers Wind 20, LLC) | Request for permit transfer to Jeffers Wind 20, LLC. | Approved, May 10, 2012 |
| 11-863 | CWS Wind Farm Project (Zephyr Wind, LLC) | Request for permit transfer to Zephyr Wind, LLC. | Approved, July 18, 2012 |
| 09-360 | Morgan Wind Farm (Morgan Wind Acquisition Group, LLC) | Request to extend the timeframe for obtaining a power purchase agreement and to begin construction of a 31.5 MW wind project in Redwood and Brown Counties. | Approved, July 26, 2012 |



Energy Facility Permitting 2012 Annual Compliance Review

| Project Name | Docket Number | Annual Review Letter E-Filed | Requested Items Resolved or Pending |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|------------------------------|--|
| Flat Hill Windpark I Wind Project | 08-1134 | 3/23/2012 | Compliance filings required by date of review had been e-filed. |
| Morgan Wind Project | 09-360 | 3/26/2012 | Resolved. Petition to amend 5/18/2012, PUC Order to amend 7/26/12. |
| Lake Country Wind Project | 10-798 | 3/26/2012 | Resolved. 4/2/2012 e-filed notification to local residents. |
| | | 11/5/2012 | Pending reply; requested by 2/8/2013. Meeting held at permittee request. |
| Bitter Root Wind Farm Project | 08-1448 | 3/28/2012 | Pending reply; requested by 12/2/2012. |
| | | 10/29/2012 | Pending reply; requested by 12/2/2012. |
| West Stevens Wind Project | 09-830 | 3/29/2012 | Resolved. PUC Order amended to extend on 1/29/2012. Also complete documentation of notice to local residents and government e-filed on 11/28/2012. |
| | | 11/19/2012 | Resolved. Complete documentation of notice to local residents and government e-filed on 11/28/2012. |
| Glacial Ridge Wind Project | 07-1073 | 3/30/2012 | Pending reply. Scheduled for next review in January 2013. |
| Pleasant Valley Wind Project | 09-1197 | 3/30/2012 | Resolved. Complete documentation of notice to local residents and government e-filed on 10/8/2012. |
| | | 10/8/2012 | Resolved. E-filed petition for modification or amendment on 10/25/2012. PUC amendment decision pending. |
| Comfrey Wind Project | 07-318 | 10/29/2012 | Pending reply; requested by 1/15/2013. |
| Paynesville Wind Project | 10-49 | 10/29/2012 | Pending reply or PUC action on amendment request. |
| Grand Meadow Wind Project | 07-839 | 10/31/2012 | Pending reply; requested by 12/15/2012. |
| Wapsipinicon Wind Project | 07-839 | 10/31/2012 | Pending; reply received; response being reviewed. |
| Elm Creek I Wind Project | 07-388 | 11/19/2012 | Pending reply; requested by 1/15/2013. |

| Project Name | Docket Number | Annual Review Letter E-Filed | Requested Items Resolved or Pending |
|---|----------------------|-------------------------------------|---|
| EcoHarmony West Wind Project | 08-973 | 11/19/2012 | Pending reply or PUC action on amendment request. |
| Ridgewind Power Partners Wind Project | 06-1327 | 12/4/2012 | Pending reply; requested by 1/31/2013. |
| Elm Creek II Wind Project | 09-553 | 12/12/2012 | Pending reply; requested by 1/31/2013. |
| 6 Additional Reviews Anticipated by End of Year. | | | |