



STATE OF MINNESOTA
Office of Energy Security



Issued: January 21, 2009

In the Matter of the Noble Flat Hill Windpark I, LLC (Applicant) Applications for a Large Wind Energy Conversion System (LWECS) Site Permit, a 230 kV High Voltage Transmission Line (HVTL) Route Permit and a Certificate of Need (CN) for the Noble Flat Hill Windpark I Project (Project) in Clay County.

PUC Docket Numbers: IP-6687/WS-08-1134; TL-08-988; and CN-08-951

NOTICE OF PUBLIC INFORMATION AND SCOPING MEETING

Noble Flat Hill Windpark I, LLC has applied to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (Commission) for a Certificate of Need for a Large Electric Power Generating Plant (LEPGP), a Site Permit for a large wind energy conversion system up to 201 megawatts (MW) and a Route Permit for an approximately 9.5 to 11.5 miles long, 115 kilovolt (kV) high voltage transmission line in Clay County. The Commission has accepted these applications as compete. The Minnesota Office of Energy Security (OES) Energy Facilities Permitting Unit (EFP) will prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on the Project. A public information and EIS scoping meeting will be held at the location listed below:

**February 4, 2008 at 6:00 p.m.*
Glyndon Community Hall/Senior Center
212 Partridge Ave S
Glyndon, Minnesota 56547**

***There will be an open house from 6:00 to 6:30 p.m.;
a formal meeting will commence at 6:30 p.m.**

The purpose of the public meeting is to provide information to the public about the proposed Project, to take public comment and input on the draft Site Permit issued by the Commission and to take public comment and input on the scope of the EIS that will be prepared for the applications. The public information meeting will follow an open-house format until 6:30 p.m., when the OES will make a formal presentation. The public is invited to review the applications for the projects, learn more about the Commission review process, offer comments and ask questions.

Project

The Project is a Large Wind Energy Conversion System, as defined by the Wind Siting Act, Minn. Stat. 216F.01. The Project is located in Clay County, Minnesota, and will be up to 201 megawatts in size, consisting of up to 134, 1.5 MW General Electric wind turbine generators. The Project is depicted on the attached maps. Associated facilities include access roads, a Substation, an Operations and Maintenance building, a wind electrical collection system, and a new 230 kV transmission line.

The Applicant is currently in discussions with various parties regarding the potential execution of a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) or a financial energy hedge by the Project. The applicant expects it would execute a PPA or financial hedge at or before commencement of construction of the Project. The Applicant's goal is to complete the construction of the Project and achieve a commercial operation date of December 2010.

Applicant

Noble Flat Hill Windpark I, LLC, is an indirect wholly-owned subsidiary of Noble Environmental Power (NEP). The Applicant is an independent power producer and renewable energy company founded in 2004 in response to growing demand for clean, renewable sources of energy. NEP has approximately 3,850 MW of wind parks in operation or under development in Minnesota and seven other states, including New York, New Hampshire, Vermont, Maine, Michigan, Texas, and Wyoming. NEP is based in Essex, Connecticut, and is majority-owned by JPMorgan Partners Fund, which is managed by CCMP Capital.

Public Review Process

Three separate Commission approvals are required to build the Noble Flat Hill Windpark and Transmission Project. First, the Applicant must obtain a Certificate of Need under Minnesota Statute 216B.243. Secondly, a Site Permit for a large wind energy conversion system under Minnesota Statutes Chapter 216F is required. In addition, a Route Permit for a high voltage transmission line under Minnesota Statutes Chapter 216E is also required.

The Applicant filed a Route Permit Application on August 29, 2008, that was accepted by the Commission on September 26, 2008. The Applicant filed its LWECs Site Permit Application and a CN Application on October 17, 2008. The Commission accepted the Applications and issued a Draft Site Permit on December 23, 2008. The Applications and draft Site Permit are available from the Commission web site and persons listed below. Landowners and governments inside the LWECs Project boundary will receive a copy of the Site Permit Application directly from the Applicant.

OES EFP Review

The OES EFP unit is responsible for conducting public meetings and environmental review for the CN Application under Minnesota Rule 7849.7030. OES EFP normally prepares an Environmental Report (ER) prior to the Commission's determination of need

for a LEPGP or HVTL Project. An ER considers size, type, timing, voltage and system configurations and general environmental impacts of a project.

The OES EFP unit is also responsible for conducting the public participation process for the Site and Route Permit Applications. Environmental review for the Site Permit is addressed in the Site Permit Application and the draft Site Permit. Human, social and environmental impacts raised in public comments may be addressed by adding or modifying specific conditions of the draft Site Permit.

Environmental review for an HVTL project of the size of this Project requires the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). In this Project, the Director of the Office of Energy Security has elected to combine environmental review for all the applications. An EIS (in lieu of an ER) will be prepared as provided for under Minn. Rule 7849.7100, supd. 2. The EIS will still include an analysis of alternatives as required Minn. Rule 7849.7060.

Public Hearing

After completion of the EIS, the OES and PUC will hold a public hearing on the Applications which will be presided over by an Administrative Law Judge from the Office of Administrative Hearings. At least part of the hearing will be a contested case hearing on the Route Application. Notice of the public hearing will be published in local newspapers and mailed to persons who register their names on the project mailing list with OES. Persons interested in adding their names to this mailing list should contact the OES EFP project manager or register on the Commission webpage cited below.

Public Comment Period

Public comment on the Draft Site Permit, possible project impacts or alternatives, and HVTL route alternatives will be solicited at the public meeting. OES EFP will accept written comments on any of these elements of the Noble Flat Hill Windpark and Transmission Project until 4:30 p.m. on February 25, 2009. During the comment period, any person may request a contested case hearing on the LWECS Site Permit Application pursuant to Minn. Rule 7836.0900, subp. 5. All written comments and requests should be mailed or e-mailed to David Birkholz (see below).

Upon completion of the public participation and hearing process, the records compiled in each proceeding will be presented to the Commission for final decisions on the Applications.

Eminent Domain for Noble Flat Hill Windpark I

The Applicant does not have the power of eminent domain to acquire the land or wind right for the large wind energy conversion system. Wind and land rights necessary to build the facility must be in the form of voluntary easements or lease agreements between landowners and the Applicant.

The Applicant has not requested authority from the Commission to exercise the power of eminent domain in acquiring right-of-way for the high voltage transmission line.

Project Contacts and Information

For more information about the process, the Project or to place your name on the Project mailing list, contact the persons listed below. Other contact information: Toll-Free Tel: 1-800-657-3794, Fax: 651-297-7891 or TTY: Minnesota Relay Service, 800-627-3529, and ask for the DOC.

<p>OES Project Manager David Birkholz 651-296-2878 david.birkholz@state.mn.us</p> <p>OES Public Advisor Raymond Kirsch 651-296-7588 raymond.kirsch@state.mn.us</p> <p>Minnesota Office of Energy Security 85 7th Place E., Suite 500 St. Paul, Minnesota 55101-2198</p>	<p>Commission Public Advisor (Certificate of Need) Bret Eknes 651-201-2236 bret.eknes@state.mn.us</p> <p>Minnesota Public Utilities Commission 121 7th Place E., Suite 350 St. Paul, Minnesota 55101-2147</p>
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Copies of the applications and other relevant documents are accessible at:

<http://energyfacilities.puc.state.mn.us/Docket.html?Id=19766>
<http://energyfacilities.puc.state.mn.us/Docket.html?Id=19714>

Any person may add his or her name to a mailing list maintained by the OES EFP for future mailings regarding the Noble Flat Hill Windpark and Transmission Project. Names can be added to the list by contacting Mr. Birkholz or electronically by visiting the Energy Facilities Permitting websites above. (You only need to register on one or the other of the above sites).

Finally, questions about the Noble Flat Hill Windpark and Transmission Project can also be directed to the Applicant by contacting Mr. Michael Beckner at 860-581-5010 or becknerm@noblepower.com.



