

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

500 Lafayette Road • St. Paul, MN • 55155-40



May 15, 2009

Mr. Larry Hartman
MN Department of Commerce
85 7th Place East, Suite 500
St. Paul, MN 55101-2198

RE: EcoHarmony West Wind, LLC, LWECS Site Permit Application
PUC Docket No. IP 6688/WS-08-973

Dear Mr. Hartman:

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has reviewed the Large Wind Energy Conversion System Site Permit Application and Draft Site Permit for the EcoHarmony West Wind, LLC project in Fillmore County, MN. With respect to potential impacts to natural resources, DNR offers the following comments.

The DNR met with the applicant in the Fall of 2008. At that meeting, DNR discussed viewsheds in the project area, particularly the potential to alter the historically significant view from the Forestville State Park, which is close to the western boundary of the project. Cherry Grove Wildlife Management Area and Cherry Grove Blind Valley Scientific and Natural Area also are close to the project area. The applicant suggested a viewshed analysis was feasible. DNR recommends that a viewshed analysis be completed by the applicant so that the DNR can work with the applicant to avoid turbine placement that would negatively affect important viewsheds.

We also discussed turbine setback and height requirements, karst topography, bat mortality, and the Natural Heritage Information System review. DNR understands the applicant plans to conduct bat surveys in the project area in Spring 2009 by installing bat recorders on a meteorological tower and continuously logging bat movement. The timing of the survey would capture the bat migration and breeding season. The applicant also would sample on eight transects from mid-July into October. DNR recommends bat surveys be carried out by the applicant as part of the pre-construction biological monitoring.

Thank you for the opportunity to review the Permit Application. Should you have any questions about this comment letter, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Randall Doneen', written over a horizontal line.

Randall Doneen, Planning Director
Environmental Review Unit
Division of Ecological Resources
(651) 259-5156

