

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

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



November 4, 2009

Larry Hartman, Project Manager
Minnesota Office of Energy Security
85 7th Place East, Suite 500
St. Paul, MN 55101

RE: Nobles Wind Project PUC Docket Number IP6646/WS-09-584

Dear Mr. Hartman:

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has reviewed the draft site permit for the above-described project and provides the following comments for consideration by the Public Utility Commission.

Section III.D.1 of the draft site permit requires a biological inventory of existing wildlife management areas, scientific and natural areas, recreation areas, native prairies and forests, wetlands, and any other biologically sensitive areas within the site. On previous wind projects there has been some confusion about what is being required as part of this permit condition. Due to the site specific relevance of biological information, the DNR recommends that each project be evaluated independently to determine the specific requirements that are needed as part of a biological inventory.

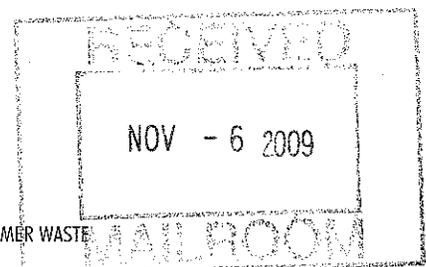
With respect to the Nobles Wind Project, Section E.1 (Project layout, setbacks) of the site permit application indicate that final siting will incorporate the Nobles County Wind Energy Conversion System Regulations setback requirements including 600 feet from public conservation lands and US Fish and Wildlife Service Type 3, 4, and 5 wetlands. It is unclear what is included under public conservation lands, however the DNR would recommend the biological inventory identify these areas to ensure the 600 foot setback is achieved. In previous correspondence on this project the DNR has identified a complex of habitats within Section 4 and 5 of Dewald Township, including Bluebird Prairie WMA, CRP lands, wetlands and Kanaranzi Creek where turbine placement should be avoided. Although the Bluebird Prairie WMA will be subject to the three rotor diameter and five rotor diameter property line setbacks, CRP lands, wetlands and Kanaranzi Creek are examples of additional site specific information that should be included in the biological inventory.

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the draft site permit. Please contact me at (651) 259-5156 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Randall Doneen", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Randall Doneen
Environmental Review Planning Director



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