



STATE OF MINNESOTA
Office of Energy Security



Issued: June 16, 2010

NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF DRAFT SITE PERMIT

**In the Matter of Paynesville Wind, LLC, for a
Large Wind Energy Conversion System Site Permit
for the 95 MW Paynesville Wind Farm in Stearns County**

PUC Docket Number: IP-6830/WS-10-49

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (Commission) in an Order dated June 4, 2010, issued a Draft Site Permit for public review and comment for the Paynesville Wind Farm (Project).

Project Description

Paynesville Wind, LLC (Applicant) proposes a Large Wind Energy Conversion System (LWECS) of 95 megawatts (MW). Depending on which turbines are selected, the wind turbine layout will consist of 42 to 63 turbines with a hub height of 80 meters (263 feet) and a rotor diameter of 82.5 meters (270 feet) if the General Electric 1.5 MW wind turbines are selected, 90 meters (295 feet) if the Vestas 1.8 MW wind turbines are selected, or 101 meters (331 feet) if the Siemens 2.3 MW wind turbines are selected. In addition to the wind turbines, the Project would include access roads, a meteorological tower, a Sonic Detection and Ranging unit or Light Detection and Ranging unit, an electrical collection system, one substation, one transmission line, and an operations and maintenance building. Power will ultimately be delivered to the existing Paynesville substation.

Proposed Site Location

The Project area (shown in the accompanying map) consists of approximately 15,000 acres located in Stearns County in Zion, Paynesville, Spring Hill, and Lake Henry townships. The Project area is located north of Paynesville and southeast of Lake Henry. Approximately 11,500 acres are under the Applicant's control via wind easements.

Eminent Domain for Paynesville Wind Farm

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

Authority and Statement of Issues to Be Decided

To proceed with this Project, the Applicant must obtain both a certificate of need (CN) and a site permit from the Commission. The Commission is authorized by Minnesota Statute section 216B.243, subdivision 2, to issue a CN for a large energy facility if the Applicant can

demonstrate there is a need for the Project. As part of the CN proceeding, the Commission will hold a public hearing on the CN application and environmental report, presided over by an Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) from the Office of Administrative Hearings.

The Commission is authorized by Minnesota Statutes sections 216E.02, subdivision 2, and 216F.04(a), to designate sites and issue site permits for LWECs. When the Commission designates a site, it issues a site permit for the construction of a project specifying the design, location, preparation, and operation of the facility, along with any other appropriate conditions it deems necessary.

The Commission is required by Minnesota Statutes sections 216B.243, subdivision 4, and 216F.05(3) to hold public meetings and hearings on the permit applications. It is anticipated that the public meeting for the Draft Site Permit will be combined with the public hearing on the CN proceeding in Docket No. IP-6830/CN-09-1110. A date has not been scheduled. Notice of the public hearing will be published in local newspapers and mailed to people who register on the Office of Energy Security, Energy Facility Permitting (OES EFP) Project Mailing List.

The record that is developed through the public participation and hearing process will be presented to the Commission for a final decision.

Public Comment Period

Public comment on the Draft Site Permit will be accepted through the end of the public hearing comment period, which will be announced in the separate Notice of Public Hearing and will run at least through July 2010. This hearing also fulfills the public information meeting requirements of Minnesota Rule 7854.0900.

Comments on the Draft Site Permit may be mailed, emailed, or faxed to Ingrid Bjorklund (see contact information below). All comments received will be submitted to the ALJ for inclusion in the record of this proceeding. If you would like to offer comments directly to the ALJ, this can be done at the hearing or when the hearing notice becomes available.

Contested Case Hearing Request

Any person may request a more formal contested case hearing on the site permit proceeding for this project pursuant to Minnesota Rule 7854.0900. All contested case hearing requests must be filed in writing with OES EFP or the ALJ by the close of the public hearing comment period. Persons requesting the contested case hearing must list the issues to be addressed in the hearing and the reason why a contested case hearing is required to resolve those issues. The Commission shall order a contested case hearing if it finds that a material issue of fact has been raised and that the contested case hearing will aid it in making a final decision on whether to authorize construction of the project.

Project Contacts and Information

The Draft Site Permit, site permit application, and other documents relevant to the proposed project are available on the Commission's website:

<http://energyfacilities.puc.state.mn.us/Docket.html?Id=25836>, and on the Department of Commerce's eDocket website: <https://www.edockets.state.mn.us/EFiling/search.jsp> (enter the docket number 10-49 for the Site Permit documents or 09-1110 for the CN documents).

Copies of the applications are also available for review at the: Auditor's Offices in Stearns County; City Offices in Paynesville and Lake Henry; Township Clerks of Paynesville, Zion, Spring Hill, and Lake Henry; and the Paynesville Public Library in Stearns County.

Questions about the Project and the Public Utilities Commission's permitting process may be directed to:

Ingrid Bjorklund, State Permit Manager
Minnesota Office of Energy Security
85 7th Place East, Suite 500
St. Paul, MN 55101
(651) 297-7039
Fax: 651-297-7891
ingrid.bjorklund@state.mn.us

Larry Hartman, Public Advisor
Minnesota Office of Energy Security
85 7th Place East, Suite 500
St. Paul, MN 55101
(651) 296-5089
Fax: 651-297-7891
larry.hartman@state.mn.us

People interested in adding their names to the EFP Project Mailing List for this Project should contact the state permit manager, public advisor, or register online at:

<http://energyfacilities.puc.state.mn.us/Docket.html?Id=25836>

Questions about the Paynesville Wind Farm and its permit applications can also be directed to the Applicant by contacting Justin Pickar by email at justin@geronimowind.com or Patrick Smith at patrick@geronimowind.com or by calling 952-988-9000. The address for Geronimo Wind Energy is 7650 Edinborough Way, Suite 725, Edina, MN 55435.

This document can be made available in alternative formats (i.e., large print or audio tape) by calling 651- 201-2202 (Voice) or 1-800-627-3529 (TTY relay service).

Attachment 1

