



STATE OF MINNESOTA
Public Utilities Commission & Department of Commerce

Notice of Public Meeting and Revised Draft Site Permit

Issued: April 18, 2011

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission accepted a change in size (from 101 MW to 200 MW) for the proposed Prairie Rose Wind project on April 8, 2011. In accepting the change in size, the Commission required an additional comment period to be established and an additional public meeting to be held in the vicinity of the project. The Commission also accepted and issued a revised draft site permit for the project which now includes additional turbines inside the same proposed site boundaries. The comment period and the public comment meeting are intended to allow members of the public to express their concerns and opinions on the need for and the siting of the proposed Prairie Rose project and its increase in size. The revised draft site permit is intended to establish the conditions necessary to mitigate the environmental and human impacts resulting from the construction and operation of the project.

The Public Comment Meeting will attempt to address the following: (1) whether the proposed Project is needed and in the public interest, and (2) issues related to the proposed siting of the Project. The meeting will be held at the time and location listed below. **The ending time reflects the latest the public comment meeting will run.** The meeting may conclude earlier if all attendees have had the opportunity to comment and all other business has been concluded.

MEETING DATE & LOCATION

May 19, 2011
7:00 PM – 10:00 PM

Memorial Hall

101 East Wall Street
Jasper, MN 56144

Facilities Planner Bret Eknes from the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission will preside at the hearing. Any person who would like to comment on the need for the Project or the proposed siting can do so at the hearing or in writing to Bret Eknes, Minnesota Public Utilities Commission, 121 7th Place East, Suite 3:50, St. Paul, MN 55101-2147; (fax) 651-297-7073; email: bret.eknes@state.mn.us.

Written Comments. Written comments on the merits of the Certificate of Need or on the contents of the Draft Site Permit should be submitted to Mr. Eknes at the address listed above. **Comments will be accepted through Friday, May 27, 2011.** Mailed comments must be postmarked by this date. Faxed and delivered comments must be received by 4:30 p.m. on this date.

Purpose and Conduct of the Meeting. The purpose of the public comment meeting is to receive input about the Project. During the meeting, members of the public may offer either oral or written testimony, offer exhibits for inclusion in the public record and ask questions of the applicant and agency representatives. Any person who wishes to ask questions, but does not want to ask the questions personally, may submit them in writing to Mr. Eknes who will then ask the question during the meeting.

Interested persons may comment on the Certificate of Need and Site Permit Applications, Environmental Report, Draft Site Permit or on the Project generally. The meeting will continue until all persons have had the opportunity to offer testimony and ask questions. If needed, the meeting may be recessed and continued by Mr. Eknes. The comments received at the meeting or filed within the comment period will be considered by the Commission in its final deliberations of the certificate of need and site permit applications.

Request for Accommodation. Any person who needs an accommodation for a disability in order to participate in the hearing, and any person who requires an interpreter, including a foreign language interpreter, should promptly notify the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission using the Contact Information for Mr. Eknes below.

Environmental Report. The Department of Commerce Energy Facility Permitting has completed and issued an environmental report for the proposed Prairie Rose Wind Farm. The environmental report addresses potential human and environmental impacts of the proposed project and alternatives. For a copy of the environmental report, please see project contacts and information below.

Draft Site Permit. On March 28, 2011 the Commission issued an order approving a revised draft site permit for distribution and public comment. For a copy of the draft site permit, please see project contacts and information below.

Project Description. The project for which the certificate of need and site permit is being requested includes the following:

1. A wind turbine layout consisting of up to 124 (updated from 67) turbines, depending on turbine specifications; the size change application describes the possible use of General Electric 1.6 MW or Vestas 1.8 MW (updated from General Electric 1.5 MW, Vestas 1.8 MW or Siemens 2.3 MW) wind turbines;
2. Associated facilities, including gravel access roads, an electrical collection system, permanent meteorological towers, one step-up substation, a Sonic (SODAR) or Light (LIDAR) Detection and Ranging unit and an O&M building.

The Project area consists of approximately 35,335 acres located in Denver, Rose Dell and Springwater Townships in Rock County and Elmer and Eden Townships in Pipestone County. The Applicant has acquired easements, or made lease agreements, for the Project on approximately 23,145 acres in the townships.

The project has an associated 24-mile 115 kV transmission system, with up to 7 miles in Minnesota, which would connect to the Split Rock Substation near Brandon, South Dakota (see IP-6838/TL-10-134). An application for an HVTL route permit was filed on March 10, 2011.

Eminent Domain. 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. In order to proceed with this Project, the Applicant must obtain a certificate of need and a site permit from the Commission. The Commission is authorized by Minnesota Statutes section 216B.243, to issue a certificate of need for a large wind energy facility if the applicant can demonstrate that there is a need for the Project. A certificate of need is a state permit that is issued upon a determination that construction of an energy facility is in the public interest. The Commission is required by Minnesota Statutes section 216B.243, subdivision 4, to hold a hearing on the application for a certificate of need.

The Commission is authorized by Minnesota Statutes section 216F.04 to issue large energy conversion system (LWECS) site permits for certain wind energy facilities. When the Commission designates a site, it issues a site permit for the construction of a facility 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 section 216F.05 and Minnesota Rule 7854.0900 to hold a public meeting on an application for a site permit for an LWECS.

Contested Case Hearing Request. Any person may request a contested case hearing on the certificate of need or the site permit applications. All requests must be filed by Friday, May 27, 2011. The person requesting the contested case hearing must list the issues sought to be addressed in the hearing and the reason that 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 holding of the contested case hearing will aid it in making a final decision on whether or not to authorize construction of the Project.

Project Contacts and Information. For more information on the **Certificate of Need**, please contact:

Bret Eknes, Facilities Planner
Minnesota Public Utilities Commission
121 7th Place E., Suite 350
St. Paul, MN 55101-2147
Phone: (651) 201-2236
bret.eknes@state.mn.us

For additional information regarding the **Site Permit** application, or to place your name on the project mailing list maintained for this project, please contact:

David Birkholz, State Permit Manager
Minnesota Department of Commerce
85 7th Place East, Suite 500
St. Paul, MN 55101
Phone: (651) 296-2878
Fax: (651) 297-7891
david.birkholz@state.mn.us

Jamie MacAlister, Public Advisor
MN Department of Commerce
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The certificate of need application and environmental report can be found on the eDockets website: <https://www.edockets.state.mn.us/EFiling/search.jsp> (enter the year “10” and the number “80”). The LWECS site permit application and draft site permit can also be found on the eDockets website (enter the year “10” and the number “425”).

The site permit application, draft site permit, environmental report, and other relevant documents, including Minnesota’s statutes and rules governing the site permitting process, are also available on the Commission’s energy facility permitting website at:

<http://www.energyfacilities.puc.state.mn.us/Docket.html?Id=28286>

Copies of the applications are also available for review at the county courthouses of Pipestone and Rock counties; city offices in Luverne and Pipestone; and with the township clerks of Denver, Eden, Elmer, Rose Dell and Springwater.

Questions regarding the Prairie Rose Wind farm and its permit application can also be directed to the applicant by contacting:

Patrick Smith
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7650 Edinborough Way, Suite 725
Edina, MN 55435
Phone: (952) 988-9000
patrick@geronimowind.com

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This document can be made available in alternative formats (i.e., large print or audio) by calling 651.296.0406 (voice). Persons with hearing or speech disabilities may call us through Minnesota Relay at 1.800.627.3529 or by dialing 711.