



STATE OF MINNESOTA  
Office of Energy Security



Issued: March 18, 2011

**NOTICE OF DRAFT SITE PERMIT ISSUANCE  
AND  
PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING**

**In the Matter of the Site Permit Application for the Black Oak Wind Farm,  
a 42 Megawatt Large Wind Energy Conversion System in Stearns County**

**PUC Docket No. IP6853/WS-10-1240**

**PLEASE TAKE NOTICE** that the Minnesota Department of Commerce, Office of Energy Security (OES) will hold a public information meeting on the application by Black Oak Wind, LLC (Black Oak Wind), to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission for a site permit to build and operate a 42 megawatt large wind energy conversion system (LWECS) near Sauk Centre, Minnesota (see attached map).

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**PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING**

Thursday, April 7, 2011 – 6:00 p.m.

Sauk Centre City Hall  
320 Oak Street South  
Sauk Centre, Minnesota 56378

To be preceded by an Open House hosted by  
Black Oak Wind, LLC  
2:30 to 5:30 p.m.

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The purpose of the public information meeting is to provide information about the proposed project and to solicit public comment on the site permit application submitted by Black Oak Wind and the draft site permit issued by the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (Commission). Black Oak Wind, LLC, is a wholly owned subsidiary of Geronimo Wind Energy, LLC. Office of Energy Security, Energy Facility Permitting (EFP) staff will provide an overview of the state's wind energy site permitting process and the draft site permit. Representatives of Geronimo Wind will be present to answer questions about the proposed project. **Prior to the public information meeting, Black Oak Wind, LLC, will host an open house beginning from 2:30 to 5:30 at the same location.**

**Public Comments.** In addition to receiving comments at the public information meeting, EFP staff will also accept written comments on the proposed project, site permit application, and draft site permit until **4:30 p.m., Friday, April 22, 2011**. Please include Docket Number IP6853/WS-10-1240 on your comments.

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Comments should be mailed, faxed, or emailed to:

Suzanne Steinhauer  
State Permit Manager  
Minnesota Office of Energy Security  
85 7<sup>th</sup> Place East, Suite 500 | St. Paul, Minnesota | 55101-2198  
Fax: (651) 296-2568 | email: [suzanne.steinhauer@state.mn.us](mailto:suzanne.steinhauer@state.mn.us)

Comments may also be submitted electronically: <http://www.energyfacilities.puc.state.mn.us>

**Project Description.** The proposed site is comprised of approximately 7,100 acres of agricultural land in Ashley and Raymond townships in Stearns County, located approximately five miles southwest of Sauk Centre. Black Oak Wind, in its LWECS application, states that approximately 6,565 acres are under site control. Depending upon the turbine model selected and final layout, approximately 13.5 to 20 acres would be converted to turbines and associated infrastructure.

Black Oak Wind is considering three turbine models; depending upon the actual turbine model selected the Project may be comprised of 26 General Electric 1.6 xle 1.6 MW turbines, 23 Vestas V90 1.8 MW turbine, or 14 Vestas V112 3.0 MW turbine. Depending upon turbine models selected, towers would range from 262 to 328 feet (80 to 100 meters), with rotor diameters of 270 to 367 feet (82.5 to 112 meters), for a total height of 397 to 492 feet (121 to 150 meters). The project would also require associated facilities identified in the permit application, such as electric feeder and collection lines, a project substation, turbine access roads, an operations and maintenance facility, and two permanent meteorological towers.

The project would interconnect with the electrical grid at Great River Energy's Black Oak substation. The applicant intends to seek a permit from Stearns County for a project substation and a 69 kV transmission line to connect the project substation with GRE's Black Oak substation. Black Oak Wind anticipates that the project will begin commercial operation in late 2012.

**Review Process.** EFP staff, on behalf of the Commission, is initiating the permit review process for this project under the Wind Siting Act (Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 216F) and the Wind Permitting Rules (Minnesota Rules 7854).

The applicant filed an application with the Commission for a LWECS site permit on December 6, 2010. The Commission accepted the application as complete in its order of January 14, 2011. An amended LWECS site permit application, containing updated information required by the Commission, was filed on January 14, 2011. EFP staff solicited comments on issues to be considered in developing a draft site permit for this project until February 11, 2011. Staff prepared a draft site permit for consideration by the Commission. On March 11, 2011, the Commission issued an Order approving the draft site permit for distribution and public comment and authorized EFP staff to implement the public participation process outlined in Minnesota Rules 7854.0900. Upon completion of this process, EFP staff will present the record of this matter to the Commission for a final permit decision. Under the LWECS siting process, environmental review is incorporated into the development of the site permit application and the site permit itself; there is no separate environmental review document prepared on the project.

**Contested Case Hearing Request.** Any person may request a more formal contested case hearing on the site permit proceeding for the LWECS pursuant to Minnesota Rules 7854.0900. All contested

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case hearing requests must be filed with the Commission in writing by **4:30 p.m., Friday, April 22, 2011.**

The person requesting the contested case hearing must list the issues sought 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 holding of the contested case hearing will aid the Commission in making a final decision on whether to authorize construction of the project.

**Eminent Domain.** Black Oak Wind 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 LWECS facility must be in the form of voluntary easements or lease agreements between individual landowners and Black Oak Wind.

**Project Documents.** Electronic versions of the site permit application, the draft site permit and other documents relevant to this matter are available on the Commission's website: <http://energyfacilities.puc.state.mn.us/Docket.html?Id=30578> and on the Department of Commerce's eDockets website: <https://www.edockets.state.mn.us/EFiling/search.jsp> (enter "10" and "1240" docket number).

A hard copy of the LWECS application and draft site permit are also available for public review at the auditor's offices in Stearns County; the city offices in Sauk Centre; the township offices in Ashley and Raymond townships, and at the public library in the Sauk Centre.

**Mailing List.** Persons interested in adding their names to the mailing list for this project should contact the project manager, public advisor, or register online at: <http://energyfacilities.puc.state.mn.us/#MailingLists>.

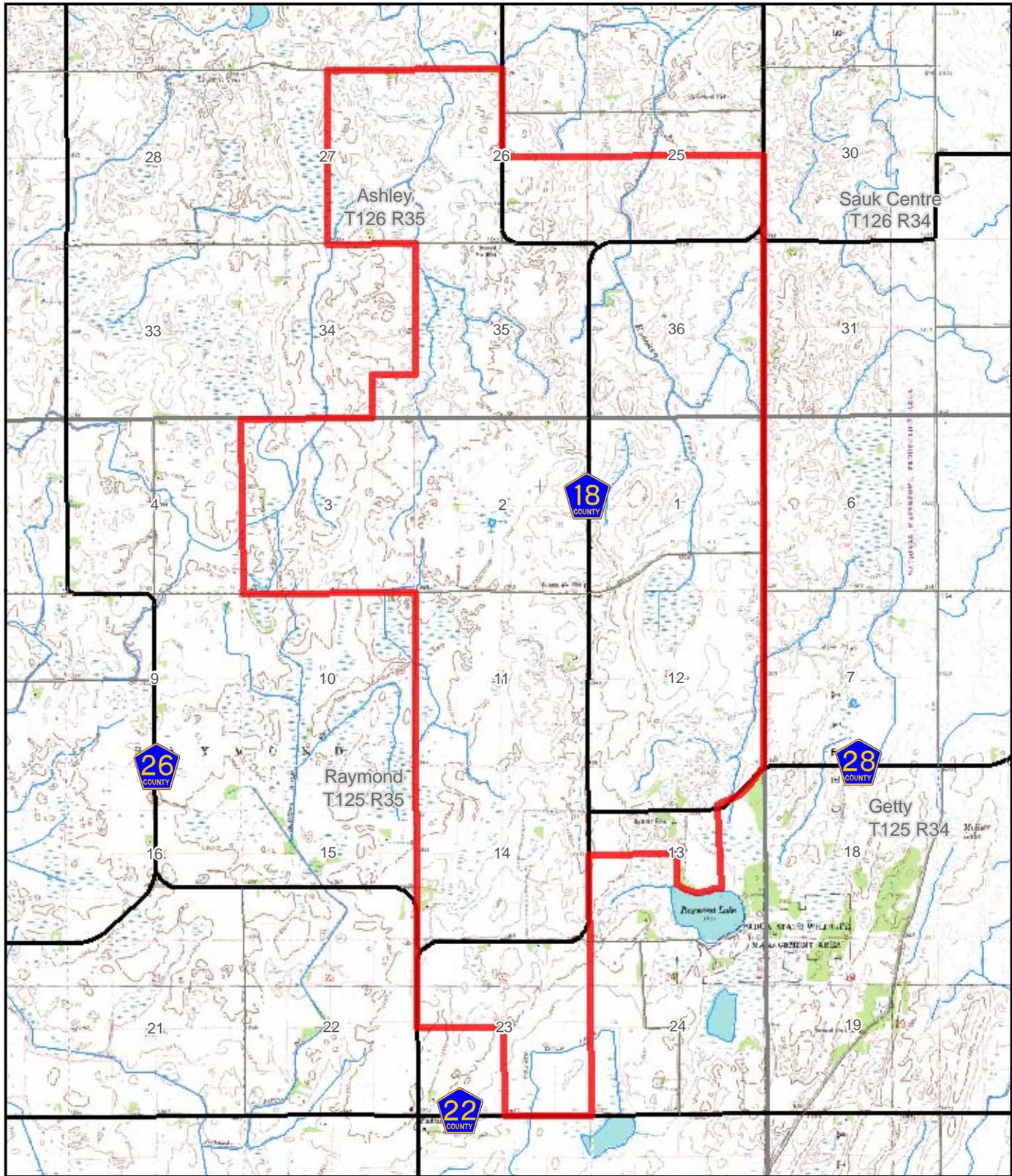
**Project Contacts.** For more information about the permit process and the proposed project please contact:

Suzanne Steinhauer , State Permit Manager  
Energy Facility Permitting  
Minnesota Office of Energy Security  
85 7<sup>th</sup> Place East, Suite 500  
St. Paul, MN 55101-2198  
(651) 296-2888  
[suzanne.steinhauer@state.mn.us](mailto:suzanne.steinhauer@state.mn.us)

Ray Kirsch, Public Advisor  
Energy Facility Permitting  
Minnesota Office of Energy Security  
85 7<sup>th</sup> Place East, Suite 500  
St. Paul, MN 55101-2198  
(651) 296-7588  
[raymond.kirsch@state.mn.us](mailto:raymond.kirsch@state.mn.us)

Questions about the LWECS permit application may also be directed to the applicant by contacting the company's representative, Karyn O'Brien, Geronimo Wind Energy, LLC, 7650 Edinborough Way, Suite 7250. (952)988-9000. [karyn@geronimowind.com](mailto:karyn@geronimowind.com).

This document can be made available in alternative formats (i.e., large print or audio) by calling 651-296-0391 (voice). Persons with hearing or speech disabilities may call us through Minnesota Relay at 1.800.627.3529 or by dialing 711.



- Project Boundary
- 24k Streams
- Cities
- Townships

**Figure 4-1**  
**Project Location Map**

Black Oak Wind Farm  
Stearns County, MN