



*Janet St. Honigley for*  
Daniel P. Wolf, Executive Secretary  
Public Utilities Commission



## NOTICE OF PUBLIC INFORMATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT SCOPING MEETING

*Issued: April 10, 2015*

**In the Matter of the Combined Application of North Star Solar PV LLC for a Site Permit and Route Permit for the North Star Solar Electric Power Generating Plant and Associated 115 kV High-Voltage Transmission Line in Chisago County, Minnesota**

**Public Utilities Commission (PUC) Docket Number:** IP-6943/GS-15-33

**Date:** April 30, 2015

**Time:** 6:00 pm

**Location:** Lent Town Hall  
33155 Hemingway Avenue  
Stacy MN 55079

**Bad weather?** Find out if a meeting is canceled. Call (toll-free) 1-855-731-6208 or 651-201-2213 or visit [mn.gov/puc](http://mn.gov/puc)

### Project Description

- North Star Solar PV, LLC (North Star) proposes to build a 100 megawatt (MW) solar energy facility on approximately 800 acres within the city of North Branch and Lent and Sunrise Townships in Chisago County.
- The proposed project includes construction of a ½ mile 115 kilovolt (kV) transmission line to connect the project to the Chisago Substation.

### Meeting Information

- The meeting starts on time.
- Arrive a few minutes early so you have time to sign in, pick up materials, and find a seat.
- State agency staff run the meeting.
- Public Utilities Commission, Department of Commerce, and North Star Solar staff will be available to answer questions about the permitting process and the project.
- People will be able to offer oral comments, written comments, or both into the record.

- Comments received at the meeting and during the comment period will be used to develop the environmental assessment for this project.
- Learn more about participating at a public meeting at [mn.gov/puc/aboutus/index.html](http://mn.gov/puc/aboutus/index.html)

## Submit Comments

### Topics Open for Public Comment:

- What potential human and environmental impacts of the proposed solar generation and transmission project should be studied in the environmental assessment?
  - Are there any specific methods or potential changes to the proposed project that serve to avoid, minimize or mitigate the potential impacts that should be studied in the environmental assessment?
  - Are there specific alternative sites or routes that should be addressed in the environmental assessment? In proposing an alternative site, please bear in mind that North Star does not have the right of eminent domain, and that the landowner would need to be willing to sell or lease the site. In addition, alternative sites should be of similar size to the proposed site relatively flat and open with unimpeded views of the sun.
- Department of Commerce staff will also review the ability of any proposed alternative to interconnect to the transmission system.

### Comment Period

- Comments received through May 15, 2015
- Please include the PUC Docket Number (15-33) in all communications.

**Online**      [mn.gov/commerce/energyfacilities/#comment](http://mn.gov/commerce/energyfacilities/#comment)

**Email**      [david.birkholz@state.mn.us](mailto:david.birkholz@state.mn.us)

**U.S. Mail**      David Birkholz, Environmental Review Manager  
Minnesota Department of Commerce  
85 7<sup>th</sup> Place East, Suite 500  
St. Paul MN 55101

**Fax**      651-539-0109

**Important**      Comments will be made available to the public via the Public Utilities Commission’s and the Department of Commerce’s websites, except in limited circumstances consistent with the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act. Personally identifying information is not edited or deleted from submissions.

## Process Information

Before the project can be built, the Public Utilities Commission (Commission) must approve site and route permits. The Commission accepted North Star Solar’s site and route permit application at

an April 2015 meeting. This means the company submitted all the information required to begin the review process. The Commission's decision-making process takes about six to nine months.

Department of Commerce Energy Environmental Review and Analysis staff will prepare an environmental assessment for this project. The environmental assessment will review the potential human and environmental impacts of the proposed project and alternatives, as well as ways to address impacts.

After the environmental assessment is issued, there will be a public hearing. An Administrative Law Judge will preside over the public hearing. People will be able to speak at the hearing, ask questions, and submit comments about the project.

After the public hearing, the Commission will review all the information in the record, including written comments and comments received at the public hearings. The Commission will schedule a meeting to make a final decision on the site and route permits for this project, expected by January 2016.

**Eminent Domain:** If issued a site and route permit by the Commission, North Star Solar will not have the power of eminent domain to take land for this project.

## How to Learn More

### Department of Commerce Project Website:

<http://mn.gov/commerce/energyfacilities/Docket.html?Id=34064>

**Project Mailing List:** Sign up to receive notices about project milestones and opportunities to participate (meetings, comment periods, etc.).

Contact [docketing.puc@state.mn.us](mailto:docketing.puc@state.mn.us) or 651-201-2204 with the docket number (15-33), your name, mailing address, and email address.

**Full Case Record:** All documents filed in this docket are available via the Commission's website at [mn.gov/puc](http://mn.gov/puc), select *Search eDockets*, enter the year (15) and the docket number (33), select *Search*.

**Subscribe to the Docket:** Subscribe to receive email notifications when new documents are filed. Note - subscribing may result in a large number of emails.

1. [mn.gov/puc](http://mn.gov/puc)
2. Select green box *Subscribe to a Docket*
3. Type your e-mail address
4. For *Type of Subscription*, select *Docket Number*
5. For *Docket Number*, select 15 in the first box, type 33 in the second box
6. Select *Add to List*
7. Select *Save*

**Public Libraries:** The site and route permit application is available at the following public libraries:

- Chisago Lakes Area Library, 11754 302<sup>nd</sup> Street, Chisago City
- North Branch Area Library, 6355 379<sup>th</sup> Street, North Branch
- Wyoming Area Giese Memorial Library, 26885 Forest Boulevard, Wyoming

**Minnesota Statutes and Rules:** This project is being reviewed under Minnesota Statute 216E.04 and Minnesota Rules Chapter 7850, available at [www.revisor.mn.gov](http://www.revisor.mn.gov).

## Project Contacts

**Public Utilities Commission Public Advisor**

Tracy Smetana at [consumer.puc@state.mn.us](mailto:consumer.puc@state.mn.us), 651-296-0406 or 1-800-657-3782

**Public Utilities Commission Energy Facilities Planner**

Scott Ek at [scott.ek@state.mn.us](mailto:scott.ek@state.mn.us) or 651-201-2255

**Department of Commerce Environmental Review Manager**

David Birkholz at [david.birkholz@state.mn.us](mailto:david.birkholz@state.mn.us), 651-539-1838 or 1-800-657-3794

**North Star Solar Project Contact**

Chase Whitney at [chase.whitney@communityenergyinc.com](mailto:chase.whitney@communityenergyinc.com) or 303-444-1412

This document can be made available in alternative formats (e.g., large print or audio) by calling 651-296-0406 (voice). Persons with hearing or speech disabilities may call us through their preferred Telecommunications Relay Service.

If any reasonable accommodation is needed to enable you to fully participate in these meetings (e.g., sign language, foreign language interpreter, large print materials), please contact the Commission at 651-296-0406 or 1-800-657-3782 at least one week in advance of the meeting.

# Project Map

