

## **SUMMARY**

Department of Commerce Energy Environmental Review and Analysis (EERA) staff is responsible for environmental review of all large energy facility permit applications under the Power Plant Siting Act (PPSA). EERA also provides technical assistance to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (Commission) in its permitting process. In 2015, the Commission issued one (1) permit, for the Aurora Distributed Solar Project, under the PPSA. EERA prepared environmental review documents for six (6) other applications during 2015, and conducted numerous compliance reviews of pre-construction, pre-operation and in-service projects. In summary, actions under the PPSA in 2015, included:

- 1 power plant site permit issued
- 6 environmental review documents prepared, five Environmental Assessments (EA) and one Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

## **POWER PLANTS PERMITTED IN 2015**

- Aurora Distributed Solar Project (E6928/GS-14-515)

## **POWER PLANTS CURRENTLY IN THE PERMITTING PROCESS**

- North Star Solar Energy Generation (IP-6943/GS-15-33)
- Marshall Solar Energy Project (IP-6941/GS-14-1052)
- Mankato Energy Center Expansion (IP-6949/GS-15-620)
- Black Dog Unit 6 Project (E002/GS-15-834)

## **TRANSMISSION LINES CURRENTLY IN THE PERMITTING PROCESS**

- Great Northern Transmission Line Project (E015/TL-14-21)
- North Star Solar Energy Transmission (IP-6943/GS-15-33)
- Menahga Area 115 kV Transmission Line Project (ET2, E015/TL-14-797)
- Minnesota Power 16 Line Reroute Project (E015/TL-14-977)
- Motley Area 115 kV Project (ET2/TL-15-204)
- Bull Moose 115 kV Project (ET2/TL-15-628)
- Palisade 115 kV Transmission Project (ET2/TL-15-423)

## **ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENTS RELEASED IN 2015**

- Motley Area 115 kV Project (ET2/TL-15-204); EA released in November 2015
- Menahga Area 115 kV Transmission Line Project (ET2, E015/TL-14-797); EA released in October 2015
- Minnesota Power 16 Line Reroute Project (E015/14-977); EA released in October 2015
- Marshall Solar Energy Project (IP-6941/GS-14-1052); EA released in September 2015
- North Star Solar Energy Generation/Transmission (IP-6943/GS-15-33); EA released in September 2015

## **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENTS RELEASED IN 2015**

- Great Northern Transmission Line Project (E015/TL-14-21); Draft EIS released in June 2015; Final EIS released in October 2015

Docket Number	Project Name	Project Description	Current Status
<b>Power Plant Projects Permitted</b>			
GS-14-515	Aurora Distributed Solar Project	Construction of up to 24 distributed solar facilities ranging in size from 1.5 to 10 MW, with a total project output of approximately 100 MW.	Permit Issued June 30, 2015
<b>Power Plant Projects in Permitting Process</b>			
GS-15-33	North Star Solar Energy Generation	Application for a 100 MW solar generating plant site permit in Chisago County, near North Branch, with an expected operation date in late 2016.	Public Hearing October 7, 2015
GS-14-1052	Marshall Solar Energy Project	Application for a 62.25 MW solar generating plant site permit in Lyon County, east of Marshall, with an expected operation date in late 2016.	Public Hearing October 20, 2015
GS-15-620	Mankato Energy Center Expansion	Application to construct a 345 MW expansion of the Mankato Energy Center in the city of Mankato, Blue Earth County.	Application Accepted October 14, 2015
GS-15-834	Black Dog Unit 6 Project	Application for a 215 MW peaking natural gas-fired combustion turbine at the Black Dog Generating Plant in the city of Burnsville in Dakota County.	Application Submitted October 15, 2015
<b>Transmission Line Projects in Permitting Process</b>			
TL-14-21	Great Northern Transmission Line (Minnesota Power)	Application to construct approximately 220 miles of 500 kV transmission line from Manitoba Hydro in Canada to Grand Rapids in Itasca County.	Final EIS October 30, 2015; Public Hearing August 13, 2015

Docket Number	Project Name	Project Description	Current Status
GS-15-33	North Star Solar Energy Transmission	Application to construct one mile of 115 kV transmission line to connect the North Star Solar Generation Project to the grid at the Chisago Substation.	Public Hearing October 7, 2015
TL-14-797	Menahga Area 115 kV Transmission Line Project (GRE)	Application to construct 22.5 miles of 115 kV line in Becker, Hubbard, and Wadena counties, with support of the MPL "Sebeka" pump station.	Public Hearing October 19, 2015
TL-14-977	Minnesota Power 16 Line Reroute Project	Application to construct approximately three miles of 115 kV line in Saint Louis County to accommodate United Taconite's expanded tailings basin.	Public Hearing October 27, 2015
TL-15-204	Motley Area 115 kV Project (GRE)	Application to construct approximately 16 miles of 115 kV line in Cass, Todd and Morrison counties, with support of the MPL "Fish Trap" pump station.	Public Hearing November 19, 2015
TL-15-628	Bull Moose 115 kV Project (GRE)	Application to construct approximately 2.5 miles of new 115 kV transmission line to serve an Enbridge pump station in Cass County.	Application Accepted October 13, 2015
TL-15-423	Palisade 115 kV Transmission Project (GRE)	Application to construct 13 miles of 115 kV transmission line and a new 115 kV breaker station to serve an Enbridge pump station in Aitkin County.	Application Accepted October 19, 2015
TL-14-665	Clearbrook-Clearbrook West 115 kV Transmission Line (MinnKota)	Application to construction a new 5.3-mile 115 kV line and a new 115/4.16 kV substation to serve an Enbridge pump station in Clearbrook County.	Application Pending