



STATE OF MINNESOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

October 28, 2013

Justin D. Markell
RES America Developments Inc.
12 South 6th Street, Suite 930
Minneapolis, MN 55402

Angela Knish
Mower County Environmental Services
1105 8th Avenue NE
Austin, MN 55912

**RE: Local Review of Transmission Line and Substation Facilities Associated with the Pleasant Valley Wind Farm Project in Mower County, Minnesota
Docket No. IP-6828/LR-13-960**

Dear Mr. Markell and Ms. Knish:

This letter confirms that the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (Commission) has received notification that RES America Developments Inc. (RES) has decided to pursue local review approval to construct an overhead 161 kV transmission line with a length of less than 10 miles and one 34.5/161 kV project substation in Sargeant and Pleasant Valley townships in Mower County.

Under the Minn. Stat. Chapter 216E, a route permit from the Commission is required for most high-voltage transmission lines that are greater than 100 kV. However, certain projects may be eligible for review and permitting by local units of government with jurisdiction instead of filing with the Commission. The 161 kV transmission line and substation proposed by RES is eligible for local review pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 216E.05.

RES indicated in its letter that Mower County is the local government unit with jurisdiction to conduct environmental review and permit the proposed project and that Mower County accepted jurisdiction at its October 8th County Board meeting. Under Minn. Stat. § 216E.05, subd. 1(b), a local unit of government may relinquish its jurisdiction by requesting the Commission to assume jurisdiction and make a decision on the permit. The request must be filed within 60 days after an application for the proposed project has been filed.

Under Minn. Rules, part 7850.5300, subp. 5, an environmental assessment must be prepared by the local unit of government with jurisdiction over the project. Specific requirements with regard to the environmental review process include providing an opportunity for the public to participate in the development of the scope of the environmental assessment before it is prepared; publishing notice in the *EQB Monitor* of when the assessment is available for review and of the procedure for commenting on the assessment; and withholding a final decision on the project until at least 10 days after the notice appears in the *EQB Monitor*. A copy of the environmental assessment must be provided to the Commission upon completion, and may be filed using the Commission's efilings system (<https://www.edockets.state.mn.us/EFiling>).

This letter acknowledges that RES has sent the required notice under Minn. Rules, part 7850.5300, subp. 3, to those persons on the Commission's general notification list that a permit has been applied for from the local unit of government.

If you have any questions, please direct them to Scott Ek of the Commission staff at 651-201-2255 or scott.ek@state.mn.us.

Sincerely,

Burl W. Haar
Executive Secretary

Cc: Deb Pile, Department of Commerce