

PUBLIC COMMENTS

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MONDAY, APRIL 19, 2010

7:00 p.m.

In the Matter of Paynesville Wind, LLC, Applications for
a Large Wind Energy Conversion System Site Permit and a
Certificate of Need for the Paynesville Wind Farm in
Stearns County

PUC Docket Numbers: IP-6830/WS-10-49 and
IP-6830/CN-09-1110

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1 MS. BJORKLUND: I believe Larry has some
2 cards back there, do you want to bring them up or --
3 okay. People can speak and come up here or Larry
4 here has a microphone and we can just bring the
5 microphone to you, that might be little easier. I'm
6 not sure how we'll --

7 UNIDENTIFIED: Let's see how long the
8 cord is.

9 MS. BJORKLUND: Yeah, let's see how long
10 the cord is, okay. We might have an issue.

11 The first speaker on our speaker card,
12 and excuse me if I can't pronounce the last names
13 right, but Rosie Lieser.

14 MS. ROSIE LIESER: I didn't expect to be
15 speaking, I just --

16 MS. BJORKLUND: Oh, okay. You don't have
17 to.

18 MS. ROSIE LIESER: That's fine. I do
19 have a question. My question is, where is Geronimo
20 going -- what part are they going to be playing
21 within five years of this?

22 UNIDENTIFIED: We can't hear, it's not
23 on.

24 MS. ROSIE LIESER: What part -- is
25 Geronimo itself, five years from now, going to be

1 playing a part of this particular project? I'm just
2 addressing that, probably.

3 MS. BJORKLUND: Okay. I will turn that
4 over to Justin here.

5 MR. PICKAR: Can you repeat the question
6 one more time?

7 MS. ROSIE LIESER: What part is Geronimo
8 going to be playing, what part are you playing five
9 years from now, who is going to be owning this in
10 the future?

11 MR. PICKAR: I'm going to defer that
12 question to our president, Blake Nixon, on this one.
13 Thanks, Blake.

14 MR. NIXON: Rosie?

15 MS. ROSIE LIESER: Yes.

16 MR. NIXON: Hi, Rosie. Nice to meet you.
17 Geronimo will likely be a minority owner
18 of the project in five years and be active in terms
19 of working with landowners and with the majority
20 owner. We have a strategic partner called Enel, who
21 is likely to be the majority owner.

22 MS. ROSIE LIESER: So you're only a
23 minority owner at that point. They have a
24 40 percent interest in it at the present time; is
25 that correct?

1 MR. NIXON: No, it's not a 40 percent
2 interest.

3 MS. ROSIE LIESER: But do they have the
4 option -- the first option to purchase?

5 MR. NIXON: They have the first option to
6 purchase this project, that's correct.

7 MS. ROSIE LIESER: Okay. My next
8 question is for farmers who are involved, what type
9 of liability will they have to absorb because of one
10 of these being on their land?

11 MS. BJORKLUND: That would be addressed
12 in the easement agreements, I assume, and I'll ask
13 the -- I'll turn this over to the company, but I
14 also would just -- the state does not get involved
15 in --

16 MS. ROSIE LIESER: Right, I understand
17 that.

18 MS. BJORKLUND: -- the contracts, those
19 are between two private parties. But I'll have the
20 company address this issue, if you would like to
21 address it, it's up to you.

22 MR. NIXON: What liabilities are you
23 referring to, anything specifically, Rosie?

24 MS. ROSIE LIESER: Well, just think of
25 the turbine itself on a windy day, probably, you

1 know, snow turning into a little ice, just ice
2 flying from it could be one of them. Somebody -- a
3 landowner -- not a landowner, but somebody who
4 probably rents your land could be affected by that.

5 MR. PICKAR: I can respond regarding ice
6 throws. We site our turbine appropriately given the
7 state and local setback standards. So that ice is
8 not going interfere with, you know, normal activity
9 on the land.

10 MS. ROSIE LIESER: I know normal
11 activity, but that could include snowmobilers,
12 anybody out there doing their land work. There is
13 always liability concern -- you know, that's a
14 concern, and under -- I know everybody who's a
15 landowner here, their farm liability does exclude
16 that.

17 MR. PICKAR: I understand the question
18 quite well. I'm going to hand this one over to
19 Patrick. Patrick can respond a little more -- or
20 Christy, sorry.

21 MS. BRUSVEN: That's okay. Hi,
22 Christy Brusven from Fredrikson and Byron.

23 In the lease provisions, as Ingrid
24 mentioned, there's an indemnification provision
25 which is between the company and the landowner.

1 That provides that the company will indemnify the
2 landowner for any related liability from the
3 operation of the wind farm itself. And then the
4 company will also maintain insurance.

5 MS. ROSIE LIESER: Which company,
6 Geronimo?

7 MS. BRUSVEN: Geronimo.

8 MS. ROSIE LIESER: Okay. What about
9 future?

10 MS. BRUSVEN: If the project gets
11 transferred from Geronimo to a different majority
12 owner, those leases are also assigned to that
13 majority owner and those lease provisions will stay
14 the same. So that indemnification provision will
15 follow to the future owner, including the insurance
16 obligations.

17 MS. BJORKLUND: Okay. The next speaker
18 is Donna Torey or Tovey. Oh, there we go.

19 MS. TOREY: Is Geronimo a subsidiary of
20 Enel Green Power?

21 MS. BJORKLUND: Again, I'm going to turn
22 this one over to Justin.

23 MS. TOREY: And if so, why is an
24 Italian-based company harnessing wind in the U.S.A.?
25 I don't understand that.

1 MS. BJORKLUND: Well, I'll add something
2 before I turn it over. There are many, many wind
3 companies that are across -- you know, they're all
4 over, a lot of them are in Europe, a lot in the
5 United States, and they can -- they may own other
6 businesses. I mean, it's not uncommon for that, but
7 let me turn that over to Justin.

8 MR. PICKAR: Thanks, Ingrid.

9 I'm going to hand this one over to
10 Blake Nixon to talk about our relationship with
11 Enel. Thank you.

12 MR. NIXON: I'm sorry, ma'am, your name
13 again?

14 MS. TOREY: Donna.

15 MR. NIXON: Donna, hi. Nice to meet you
16 Donna.

17 We're not a subsidiary of Enel Green
18 Power. Enel Green Power has a North American
19 subsidiary, it's called Enel North America. It's
20 based in Andover, Massachusetts. They have roughly
21 300 employees, 290-plus of which are Americans.

22 And their interest in American wind is
23 purely as an investor. They see it as a very good
24 investment opportunity. Enel North America owns a
25 minority stake of Geronimo, so our majority

1 ownership still stays with the founding group
2 including our founder Noel, who's a Minnesota
3 resident and grew up on a farm in southwest
4 Minnesota and is the root of our company, as well as
5 myself and some others.

6 MS. TOREY: I guess I still don't
7 understand that. I mean, America should be
8 harnessing our own wind.

9 But anyway, another thing I want to
10 mention is what about our land value? I mean, if we
11 have these things all over around us, behind us, in
12 front of us, what's that going to do to our land
13 values, our homes, our property?

14 And, you know, no matter what kind of
15 name you want to put on it, in the long run you kind
16 of are raping the land and it's going to be there
17 for an eternity, the scars and everything else that
18 goes with that, even if you put a pretty name on it.

19 MS. BJORKLUND: Property values -- the
20 impact wind farms have on property values is
21 something I hear a lot about and it's something the
22 state looks at. The studies that we've reviewed so
23 far, there's the Lawrence Berkeley, that's the most
24 recent, that is funded by the Department of Energy,
25 was the most comprehensive study.

1 They found that in general it's hard to
2 make a link that wind farms reduce property values.
3 However, that's not to say that it doesn't happen in
4 isolated cases. The property values, the concern,
5 again, is something we're aware of, a lot of people
6 have concerns about this.

7 That is something we will be discussing
8 in the environmental report for the certificate of
9 need and we can make a point to put it in the
10 scoping decision to address those concerns of
11 property values.

12 Does that answer your question?

13 MS. TOREY: No, not really. Because I
14 believe that it's going to devalue our land and our
15 property and there's really no way around that. I
16 mean, we came here 18 years ago and I would have
17 never looked at the place if there was all kinds of
18 wind turbines around, I would have never bought the
19 place.

20 MS. BJORKLUND: Well, your concerns are
21 very important, and that's why we have these public
22 meetings. And we will certainly take your concerns
23 into consideration and we will be addressing
24 property values in the environmental report.

25 MS. TOREY: It's not going to do us any

1 good.

2 MS. BJORKLUND: Okay. The next speaker
3 is Kenneth Schafer, Schefers.

4 MR. SCHEFERS: Schefers, S-C-H-E-F-E-R-S.
5 I remembered that, that's pretty good.

6 There's certainly a lot of things we
7 could say tonight. The first thing I'm going to
8 tell you is I hope this doesn't turn into a fight
9 amongst neighbors. Initially, this started pretty
10 much as a friendly project. In fact, the initial
11 project was between landowners, ourselves, and some
12 of those landowners in that group now are trying to
13 stop this from happening. So I don't quite
14 understand that, but they'll get an opportunity to
15 explain that later.

16 I was one of the group that was
17 originally with the move to start the process to
18 have a landowners' wind farm. We apparently didn't
19 move fast enough on that and at this point Geronimo
20 is developing it.

21 And we reviewed that at great length and
22 decided that it was a good thing for us and our
23 community. If I thought it would in any way, shape,
24 or form hurt our neighbors or us, I would not have
25 done it, without a doubt. That is first priority.

1 I was introduced to what I call the
2 extreme point of view of all the health aspects,
3 property values and all that type of thing at a
4 meeting at St. Nick's Church basement in January of
5 2009. My wife and I were the only people from this
6 area there and I've heard all of this before, that
7 we decided to enter into the project.

8 When we got into the church basement,
9 they had sound waves of a wind turbine swishing
10 sound before the meeting ever started, a video of a
11 wind turbine up there. And I pretty well determined
12 that this was going to be a pretty biased and
13 one-sided program, and I was not wrong about that.

14 So the rest of the program was all about
15 extreme points of view found on websites of people
16 that don't like wind farms. And at that point,
17 after that was all presented, then Geronimo and
18 people like myself were supposed to be given an
19 opportunity to present the other point of view. But
20 the moderator of that meeting kept interrupting to
21 the point where any sort of meaningful discussion
22 could not take place.

23 So I learned a couple of things from that
24 meeting. One, you're going to have to verify
25 everything you hear. I won't go through it, but I

1 have a pile of documents in here that tells you, you
2 know, it's not going to lower land values. Document
3 after document says no health issues. There's no
4 such thing as wind turbine syndrome. That's what I
5 learned from that, you've got to check that stuff
6 out.

7 The other thing I learned was that, you
8 know, when we came in there and heard that turbine
9 swishing over the intercom in the church basement in
10 the video, I definitely would not put a wind turbine
11 in a church basement, okay, and I don't think that's
12 in the plans.

13 I won't go through all the health issues.
14 Maybe if we're talking later I can kind of show you
15 where the research on that is -- far outweighs any
16 of the research that says there are all these health
17 issues.

18 I'm just going to answer just a few of
19 goodies that, you know, I've been reading.
20 Snowmobile trails, you know, that's just -- you
21 know, pardon the expression, a lot of this long list
22 of things that's wrong with it -- and I can say this
23 word because we're in a bar and I'm dairy farmer --
24 but it's just throwing crap at the wall hoping
25 something sticks.

1 The snowmobile trail thing, we own a mile
2 and a quarter of snowmobile trail on our property.
3 I've already discussed that with the current people,
4 I've discussed it with Geronimo, I've discussed it
5 with the DNR, and we're going to work around this,
6 okay.

7 It's not that big a deal. They work
8 around my alfalfa fields, they've rerouted because a
9 neighbor decided to pasture a certain area, we work
10 around them things. The people that do the
11 snowmobile trail thing do not want to stop a wind
12 farm and they don't even want to influence where
13 they go.

14 I was seeding barley this morning in the
15 northwest corner of our farm and I saw something
16 shiny at the end of the road kind of by the meadow
17 there. I went to pick it up and it's one of them
18 seven-ounce Miller Lite cans. And it's right by the
19 snowmobile trail, so I pretty well figured out where
20 that came from. And I thought, well, that's kind of
21 a good point. You know, if we're worried about
22 snowmobile safety, that probably has a bigger impact
23 on snowmobile accidents than a wind turbine does.
24 And we're probably not going to outlaw that stuff,
25 they tried that in this country once and it didn't

1 go over real big.

2 The line right here, about we must be
3 concerned about our children and our future
4 generations because of the harm that wind turbines
5 might cause, that really annoys me. We are doing
6 this for our future generations, clean, renewable
7 energy.

8 This morning on the AP news, out in
9 Pennsylvania they found some good supply of gas,
10 natural gas. The neighbors are trying to stop that
11 because it's going to commercialize the area. It's
12 on farm land, the farmers want to develop, they
13 don't want them to do that.

14 I've seen other places where wind farms
15 are trying to be stopped. There's an area where
16 some damming wants to be done to generate
17 electricity, people are opposed. You know, energy
18 production is going to have take place in somebody's
19 backyard, but we're saying not in ours. So what are
20 we saying, in North Dakota? There are people out
21 there, too, and it isn't magically going to get
22 there -- from there to here without a power line.
23 We've got a power line right out here that was very
24 controversial to get the power on a coal plant from
25 North Dakota to where it needed to go.

1 So we've got to think about this not in
2 my backyard syndrome. Not in my backyard. I'm
3 going to use this, I want power, but the coal plant,
4 the wind farms, all that's going to be in somebody
5 else's backyard, and we will pay that price too.

6 You guys, some of you must remember Ross
7 Perot, Texas, running for president. He talked
8 about the giant sucking sound of the money going
9 from the Midwest to Texas because they had the oil,
10 they were doing the wind farms. And in Minnesota,
11 we are very energy-poor, and this is an excellent
12 opportunity to change that.

13 So I've got another page of notes, but
14 maybe my five minutes is up, okay. Thank you.
15 Let's keep the peace, you guys.

16 MS. BJORKLUND: Thank you so much. And
17 with those comments, I'll just say something about
18 the siting permit process again. The State of
19 Minnesota, the Office of Energy Security, we make
20 recommendations to the Public Utilities Commission
21 on setbacks from things like snowmobile trails and
22 other -- there's waterfowl production areas in the
23 area, same with wildlife management areas, setbacks
24 to homes. A lot of these issues that are -- people
25 have concerns about. The setbacks will be addressed

1 in the draft site permit and at this time, at this
2 meeting, is when we consider issues that you might
3 have concerns of in this area that we might want to
4 consider in dealing with these setbacks that are
5 unique to this site.

6 With that, we'll go to Ralph Klossen,
7 Klossom (phonetic), I'm not sure.

8 MR. KLOSSEN: Close enough.

9 MS. BJORKLUND: My last name is
10 Bjorklund, by the way, people get that one wrong all
11 the time.

12 MR. KLOSSEN: I'm not going to speak for
13 or against wind, Geronimo, except that we have an
14 ordinance in Lake Henry Township that requires a
15 public hearing and a permit from the planning
16 commission of our township, and that has not been
17 held yet.

18 And the only other question, especially
19 dairy farmers should be asking themselves is, what's
20 the shielding being used for the underground wire?
21 I don't have dairy cows no more, but that is an
22 issue with the current power lines that are
23 underground, because we have one next to our farm.

24 That's my questions. Thank you.

25 MS. BJORKLUND: Well, thank you. We'll

1 take those issues under consideration.

2 MR. KLOSSEN: But that permit, that's
3 registered at the Stearns County Courthouse.

4 MS. BJORKLUND: What permit are you
5 referring to?

6 MR. KLOSSEN: You have to have a
7 conditional use permit from the township in order to
8 build a tower in Lake Henry Township.

9 UNIDENTIFIED: I've got a copy of the
10 zoning right here from Lake Henry.

11 MS. BJORKLUND: Okay. Thank you. I
12 really appreciate that.

13 UNIDENTIFIED: If you just want to read
14 just the top line and this line. It'll become a
15 commercial district if they are put up, and right
16 here (indicating), read this line and all of this
17 line, and then people know what --

18 MS. BJORKLUND: Wait, the first one was
19 right here (indicating), commercial district? Okay.
20 We're looking at Section 7 of the Lake Henry
21 ordinance, commercial districts. It says microwave
22 towers, television towers, transmission towers, or
23 other towers used for any other purpose needs a
24 conditional use permit. Overhead or underground
25 electrical transmission, gas transmission lines. In

1 transmission line, I believe you're going through a
2 local review and one substation that needs a
3 conditional use permit with the county, am I getting
4 that right?

5 MR. PICKAR: I'm not exactly sure of the
6 question, but Patrick, our environmental planner,
7 might have a better answer for it.

8 MR. SMITH: We do have a transmission
9 line and substation, those are over in Paynesville
10 Township, and those will require permitting at the
11 local level, so either at the county or at the
12 township level or both.

13 MS. BJORKLUND: Thank you.

14 So, as I said, it's a combination of some
15 items have to go through a local permit, but the
16 project has to go through the state permitting
17 process.

18 Now we have Chris Garding, is the next
19 speaker.

20 MR. GARDING: I'm actually a local
21 farmer's son. And I know that this project was
22 actually very important to him, so I've made some
23 notes from discussions that I've made with him in
24 the last, well, year and a half now from the
25 project.

1 But I'm here in support of the
2 Paynesville Wind project. My family's been
3 landowners in the area of the project for five
4 generations. And because of this, we take any
5 changes to the land like this extremely seriously.

6 A couple of points I'd like to make. I'm
7 from this area. I'm proud to say that Stearns
8 County farmers are some of the biggest skeptics I've
9 ever met. My dad, Mike Garding, was on the top of
10 this list. He lived by the saying if it sounds too
11 good to be true, it probably is. It's because of
12 this that you can sure that after nearly two years
13 of working on this project that the landowners
14 involved have asked and commented on every detail.

15 My dad talked it over with landowners in
16 and out of the project. He toured wind farms to
17 check out noise and blade flicker concerns for
18 himself. The project's effect on the land at this
19 point -- have been beaten to death at this point.
20 And after all this research, my dad had become a
21 huge supporter of this project.

22 A big note would be to add that Geronimo
23 has been nothing but fair and equitable through
24 throughout this whole process. Every question has
25 been addressed in full and, to be quite frank, if

1 this were a fly-by-night scheme as some actually
2 describe, we would have actually smelled a rat a
3 long time ago.

4 Economic benefits to the area have been
5 talked about many times over before. Millions of
6 dollars added to the tax base, real jobs added, but
7 ultimately for our farm, you have to look at the
8 effects of the area on a small scale. Leasing
9 agreements that the group have negotiated allow for
10 substantial increases in land income. Every example
11 would be different, but to use our family farm as an
12 example, the money gained from yearly wind lease
13 payments has the potential to add nearly double to
14 my mom's land rent, which is the bulk of her
15 retirement. This allows our family to try to keep
16 the small farm that's been in the family for
17 136 years.

18 It sounds somewhat cliché, but farmers
19 are stewards of the land. A critic's comment once
20 said that this issue is extremely important because
21 the leases will last for decades. I happen to agree
22 with that. It's because of this that we landowners
23 have taken this project extremely seriously. No
24 responsible landowner would put their land and, more
25 particular, their neighbor's land at risk for a

1 so-called quick buck.

2 Thank you.

3 MS. BJORKLUND: Thank you.

4 And now we'll move on to Julie Jimenez, I
5 just --

6 MS. JIMENEZ: Jimenez, J-I-M-E-N-E-Z,
7 Julie.

8 MS. BJORKLUND: Thank you.

9 MS. JIMENEZ: Well, actually, I have --
10 hi. I'm not sure if you've heard the term shadow
11 flicker before and I didn't know what it meant, but
12 I just believe that a picture's worth a thousand
13 words.

14 And I am not against windmills or
15 renewable energy, but I have some concerns. And, I
16 guess, I want those concerns to be known and that's
17 all I have a comment on. So I'd like to show a
18 quick clip of what shadow flicker is, that it does
19 exist.

20 And I was wondering, Justin, what are the
21 setbacks for people that have signed contracts? I
22 mean, I tried to go through this, but you read so
23 much you get a headache. So people that have
24 contracts and people that don't have contracts, what
25 the setbacks are. Thanks.

1 MS. BJORKLUND: Go ahead.

2 MR. PICKAR: Go ahead.

3 MS. BJORKLUND: Setbacks are something
4 that the state establishes in the site permit,
5 Stearns County also has passed an ordinance dealing
6 with setbacks as well. Stearns County has a setback
7 of 1.1 times the total turbine height from property
8 lines, and Justin maybe can talk about what that
9 translates to.

10 We also at the state typically go by a
11 three-by-five rotor diameter distance from the
12 nonparticipating property owners, and that would be
13 three rotor diameters in the nonprevailing wind and
14 a five-rotor diameter distance in the prevailing
15 wind, which tends to be kind of more north/south.
16 So Justin might be able to talk specifically about
17 what distance amounts to.

18 MR. PICKAR: So the question was for
19 participating landowners inside the project. You
20 know, if you have a contiguous neighbor and you have
21 a neighbor here (indicating), there is no setback to
22 that property line. So you could actually put a
23 turbine, with a fall-down easement, of course, right
24 here (indicating), and so that -- actually, as close
25 to that property line as possible.

1 Nonparticipating, the state law requirement is the
2 same, three by five, three rotor diameters on the
3 east and west, five rotor diameters on the north and
4 south.

5 So five rotor diameters, I believe the GE
6 is 134 -- 153 feet, so if you take that by two for
7 the diameter--

8 MR. SMITH: Oh, sorry, you're looking for
9 1,353 on the north/south.

10 MR. PICKAR: Thank you.

11 MR. SMITH: And 812 on the east/west.

12 MR. PICKAR: Okay. 812 on the east/west
13 and --

14 MR. SMITH: And 1,353.

15 MR. PICKAR: And 1,353 on the north and
16 south, and that's given a what sized turbine?

17 MR. SMITH: GE 1.5.

18 MR. PICKAR: GE 1.5 XLE, okay. So that's
19 an example of what you might find as far as
20 setbacks.

21 MS. JIMENEZ: Okay. And from residents'
22 houses?

23 MR. PICKAR: Oh, the residents, Geronimo
24 has gone above and beyond as far as the setback away
25 from home sites or dwellings inside the project

1 footprint, which is 1,000 feet.

2 MS. JIMENEZ: Okay. Can I --

3 MS. BJORKLUND: And, to clarify, the
4 1,000-foot for residents, if that does not comply
5 with the noise standards, they have to comply with
6 the noise standards as well. So that could be
7 greater than 1,000, it often is, depending on which
8 is --

9 MS. JIMENEZ: It's just a visual.

10 MS. BJORKLUND: Just to be clear -- and
11 we're going to show -- she would like to show a
12 quick video for everybody, but, just so you know,
13 because there is no dialog associated with the video
14 that it's hard for this to become part of the
15 record, so you might want to describe it.

16 MS. JIMENEZ: Yeah, I will.

17 MS. BJORKLUND: Okay. Thank you.

18 MS. JIMENEZ: This is just off of
19 YouTube, and it's just a video of what shadow
20 flicker is. If I know how to run it. I was so
21 nervous that this was going to happen, and guess
22 what.

23 MS. BJORKLUND: While she's trying to
24 figure that out, why don't we move on to the next
25 speaker, in the interest of time, and that would be

1 Betty Lutgen.

2 MS. LUTGEN: Hi. I have a couple
3 questions, and I'll see what I get to here. When
4 you decide the certificate of need, is that where
5 you look at where the electricity goes, does it stay
6 local, does it get shipped to another state, does it
7 go down to the Cities, is that where that's looked
8 at?

9 MS. BJORKLUND: That's correct. The
10 certificate of need process looks at those very
11 issues. Our role -- our staff at the Energy
12 Facility Permitting only looks at the environmental
13 review part of the certificate of need.

14 Another part of the Office of Energy
15 Security comments and also the Public Utilities
16 Commission comments on the rest of the issues for
17 the certificate.

18 MS. LUTGEN: Okay. So there's really not
19 an expert here on how much electricity is generated
20 already in the state from renewable energy?

21 MS. BJORKLUND: That's not a part of our
22 process here tonight.

23 MS. LUTGEN: Okay. So when did that get
24 done, or when does that part get done?

25 MS. BJORKLUND: That part is already

1 ongoing through the certificate of need process.
2 There are comments and replies that have already
3 started.

4 I don't know if anybody from the project
5 can speak to where the process -- the status of the
6 process is on the certificate of need? I think we
7 might have someone that can speak on where they're
8 at in the process.

9 MS. LUTGEN: That's a big thing, because,
10 you know, of course rumors are all over the place
11 but people have said, well, we have enough turbines
12 in the state to generate that 25 percent renewable,
13 you know, like the plan that will be enacted in two
14 thousand --

15 MS. BJORKLUND: I can clarify that, okay.
16 We do not have enough energy in the ground to meet
17 the 25 percent renewable energy standard by 2025.
18 However, we do have -- there are certain milestones
19 that utilities have to meet prior to 2025. 2012 I
20 think is one of them, 2016 is another. My
21 understanding, in general, most utilities have
22 enough electricity to meet their milestone of 2016.

23 Now, the certificate of need permit must
24 be issued before a site permit. The site permit
25 cannot be issued unless a certificate of need permit

1 has been issued.

2 MS. LUTGEN: Right.

3 MS. BJORKLUND: And further, unless
4 there's a power purchase agreement or another
5 enforceable mechanism, they cannot start
6 construction on the project even if they've been
7 issued a site permit.

8 And so something else I'd like to make
9 very clear about our role here at the state, we
10 follow this project and our state stays involved,
11 our office stays involved beyond -- even if a site
12 permit is issued, we don't know if one is going to
13 be issued, but if one is, we stay involved in every
14 step of the way. And there will be another meeting
15 even after a site permit when they start to gear up
16 to do construction, there will be a preconstruction
17 meeting.

18 MS. LUTGEN: Okay. A follow-up question
19 to that, when you said that you thought the utility
20 companies had met their threshold for 2016.

21 MS. BJORKLUND: It's not certain, but
22 it's --

23 MS. LUTGEN: Okay. But that's what
24 you're thinking, okay. So who would buy the power
25 from this farm if that threshold's already met by

1 the utility?

2 MS. BJORKLUND: Utilities are often
3 looking at --

4 MS. LUTGEN: I mean, are they going to
5 look at --

6 MS. BJORKLUND: So the utilities can do
7 whatever they choose to do. They can buy wind power
8 beyond the milestones, they might buy wind power
9 because they find it less expensive than other
10 sources of power.

11 It's difficult to build a new coal plant
12 in Minnesota, they still cannot build a nuclear
13 plant in Minnesota. They might be looking at wind
14 as additional sources of energy beyond the renewable
15 energy standard.

16 So I think Christy can speak to a little
17 bit on the certificate of need process.

18 MS. BRUSVEN: Sure. So this is Christy
19 Brusven again.

20 The initial set of comments for the
21 certificate of need were due April 5th. And so the
22 Office of Energy Security did file comments based on
23 the information that was in our application and then
24 the other information that was provided from the
25 public. And they commented on some of these issues

1 of regional and state need.

2 So I would encourage anyone interested in
3 that topic to review these comments. But then,
4 importantly also, there's a reply comment period
5 that goes through April 30th. So that's coming up
6 quickly, but certainly if you review their comments
7 in the application and want to submit additional
8 information on those, they would be due April 30th.

9 MS. LUTGEN: So you don't have any
10 comments on -- or you don't know -- you don't have
11 anything in the report as far as what they've come
12 up with or did you just say that --

13 MS. BRUSVEN: Yeah. Excuse me, they are
14 posted and so I have them here, but they're also
15 available on the website for anyone to take a look
16 at.

17 MS. LUTGEN: On the energy -- the Office
18 of Energy --

19 MS. BRUSVEN: Yes. So Ingrid has the
20 docket numbers and it's 09-1110, and again,
21 April 5th they were posted.

22 MS. BJORKLUND: Yes.

23 MS. LUTGEN: Okay. One last question. I
24 know the one gal back there had brought up property
25 diminution, and I guess how many do you guys -- you

1 probably know by now, how many landowners are in the
2 footprint that have less than, let's say, ten acres
3 that live in this footprint and, excuse me, have a
4 home on ten acres or less?

5 MS. BJORKLUND: Justin.

6 MR. PICKAR: That's a really good
7 question. I'll have to get back to you with an
8 exact answer on that. I know it's few, very few.
9 This is primarily ag land in this area.

10 MS. LUTGEN: Right. And how close is
11 Lake Henry to the footprint, the city of Lake Henry
12 here, how close are they to the edge of your
13 footprint?

14 MR. PICKAR: The southern boundary of
15 Lake Henry butts up to the footprint.

16 MS. LUTGEN: Okay. I just have, and I
17 hope, you know, the -- your office looks at all this
18 here, but, you know, when you comment on the
19 Lawrence Berkeley property studies, you know, and
20 that's through the Department of Energy, to me
21 that's a little bit of a conflict of interest. And
22 so I'd find property diminution reports from people
23 that are real estate appraisers. To me, that would
24 lend more credence to what they find than somebody
25 who's doing it for the Department of Energy.

1 And I do have four right here, and I can
2 leave you a copy of those, if you wouldn't mind.
3 You know, anywhere from, you know, 25 percent that
4 people are losing value on their property. And I'm
5 not saying it's large landowners, it is people who
6 live out in the country, have purchased that small
7 acreage, built a home on that, like this gal, I
8 think, back here probably did.

9 Also, that Lake Henry, what is that going
10 to do to, you know, all the homes in Lake Henry?
11 You know, that kind of thing. Like I said, I have
12 four right here, I know there's more than that on
13 the Internet, and these are slowly coming west.
14 Some of them are in -- one's in Ontario, there's one
15 in Texas, and that shows that you even lose value on
16 the land if there's turbines on the land. But
17 that's all ranch land, too, that maybe wouldn't
18 compare with up here.

19 So those are things I might just submit
20 in a comment letter to you.

21 MS. BJORKLUND: Oh, please do. We
22 encourage that and we would very much like to have
23 that data.

24 MS. LUTGEN: Okay. Thank you.

25 MS. BJORKLUND: Thank you.

1 Okay. I think we have the video going.

2 MS. JIMENEZ: Sorry.

3 MS. BJORKLUND: Okay. Could you state
4 your name again?

5 MS. JIMENEZ: Yes, Julie Jimenez,
6 J-I-M-E-N-E-Z. And I just took this off of YouTube
7 and it's what shadow flicker is and that it does
8 exist and that we need to be concerned what the
9 setbacks are to make sure we don't have this from
10 turbines on our property, or people that are in the
11 boundaries but are next to turbines.

12 MR. PICKAR: Could I lift it up?

13 MS. BJORKLUND: Yeah. Could we lift this
14 up?

15 MS. JIMENEZ: Oh, there we go. Don't you
16 love technology? Okay. And this is a wind --

17 MR. PICKAR: I'll lift it up. Could we
18 help you?

19 MS. JIMENEZ: I know, but it might not
20 work if you lift it up.

21 MR. NIXON: How about you hold your
22 machine, we'll get it. Team action here.

23 MS. BJORKLUND: No, it's there, it's
24 there.

25 MS. JIMENEZ: This is just in Wisconsin,

1 a farmer that had shadow flicker and he videotaped
2 it. Only now it's not working again. I'm so sorry.

3 MS. BJORKLUND: Would you like to
4 describe what's on the video?

5 MS. JIMENEZ: Yeah, it's a shadow that
6 happens within your house and it's a constant
7 shadow. Goll dang it. That's not what's on there.

8 All right. You know, I encourage you to
9 look on the Internet. Kids, family members,
10 somebody that you could look on to see what shadow
11 flicker is. But it's a shadow that's cast in your
12 house. If the sun is behind you and the turbine is
13 in front of you and your house is in front of that,
14 the sun will cast a shadow from the turbine going
15 around like this (indicating) and can cause shadows
16 in your house or around your whole farm.

17 And so that -- and they did address a
18 letter -- Geronimo did address a letter that I
19 obtained from people that actually are in -- that
20 have signed contracts, which I have not, and it says
21 that Geronimo will try to minimize flicker. And I
22 think that's great that you're, you know, trying to
23 minimize flicker, but that any type of flicker --
24 and this was at 1,000-foot setback, and that's why I
25 guess I have a concern about it. Because it was

1 very apparent, the flicker in here, it was like
2 turning the lights on and off at 1,000 feet. So I
3 just think that that should definitely be a concern.

4 MS. BJORKLUND: Well, thank you so much.
5 And flicker is something we are hearing a lot about,
6 as you can imagine. In the site permit sometimes we
7 include a flicker -- we require a flicker analysis
8 in some site permits, not all site permits.

9 But this is something that, again, we
10 will consider in preparing the draft site permit.
11 And then, again, people can comment on the issue on
12 the issue of flicker while we're going through the
13 draft site permit process. And if you would like
14 you also can submit written comments during this
15 comment period and include in the comments the link
16 to the video and therefore anybody here who really
17 wants to see it can look for your comments and then
18 find the link.

19 MS. JIMENEZ: Okay. I also had another
20 question, since this didn't work very good.
21 Actually, it's about the letter. I read a lot of
22 this (indicating) and it's about the letters that
23 Geronimo and the Department of Natural Resources
24 were kind of writing back to one another.

25 And I just -- in appendix A in your book,

1 it talked about the concerns that the DNR had
2 because of all the wildlife management areas and the
3 wildlife protection areas we have within this
4 project. And on page 512 it talks about what the
5 wildlife management areas and what the wildlife
6 protection areas actually are.

7 And I think it's very -- I think it
8 should be a major concern that we all have, because
9 these areas were actually set aside to provide
10 habitat, improve wildlife production, and provide
11 public hunting and trapping opportunities, and they
12 were set aside actually by hunting license fees.

13 And the projects in these areas are the
14 Zion Wildlife Management, Miller Springs Farm, Salem
15 (phonetic) Community Prairie Wildlife, Spirit
16 Prairie Wildlife, Roseville Wildlife Management
17 Area, Partners Wildlife Management Area, Regal Flats
18 Wildlife Management Area, Stearns Prairie Heritage
19 Wildlife Management Area, Tribute Wildlife
20 Management Area, and Paynesville Sportsmen's Club
21 Wildlife Management Area.

22 Then there's also projects that are
23 adjacent and actually touch the boundaries of this
24 windmill project, which there are five. So five
25 wildlife or wildlife protection areas touch the

1 boundaries of this project.

2 And you can read in here, the Department
3 of Natural Resources were actually concerned and
4 actually asked Geronimo to try to find another site.
5 The exact words were: We also encourage you to
6 consider alternate locations.

7 And I also have the document that
8 Geronimo actually sent out to the people that signed
9 contracts that said -- wildlife was the heading, and
10 it said that to receive a permit to build the wind
11 farms, we must prove that the impacts will be
12 minimal.

13 Now, these letters from the DNR actually
14 say that they are very concerned about the wildlife
15 management areas and the wildlife protection areas.
16 Now, it says Geronimo has been engaged with the
17 Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and the
18 U.S. Fish and Wildlife for over a year, gathering
19 their concerns and input on the siting of the
20 project. Additionally, for the past eight months we
21 have been working with HGR, an independent, well
22 respected consultant, to study ways that birds and
23 bats use the area with sophisticated equipment.

24 Now, to me, the DNR's job is to manage
25 our wildlife and to keep track of the endangered

1 species. So why would they have HGR, a consultant
2 that's with Geronimo, say that there aren't going to
3 be any concerns, which is what they say. It says,
4 based on what we've seen, which will ultimately be
5 submitted to the Minnesota Public Utilities
6 Commission, we expect that the impacts will be
7 minimal to none.

8 Now, I'm not against wind turbines. I'm
9 saying that these areas are set aside for our kids
10 to see wildlife, for habitat to grow, prairie
11 grasses to grow, birds to migrate, you know, which
12 their migrations will change with these wind
13 turbines going around. I'm just saying that this is
14 an issue and a concern that the DNR has, the Fish
15 and Wildlife has, and I have because we live next to
16 some wildlife areas.

17 Thank you.

18 MS. BJORKLUND: Thank you so much.

19 MS. JIMENEZ: And I also have one more
20 thing, which this report -- Justin, I'll address
21 this to you --

22 UNIDENTIFIED: Time limit.

23 MS. JIMENEZ: -- it says Wind Turbine
24 Guidelines Advisory Committee, this just came out
25 last week. Do you have a copy of this? Because

1 they suggest for you guys, it's a 162-page report,
2 to look at this as guidelines to where you're
3 putting your turbines.

4 Thank you.

5 MS. BJORKLUND: Thank you very much. The
6 wildlife concerns --

7 MS. JIMENEZ: This is just part of it,
8 and I just got it off the Internet. Thank you.

9 MS. BJORKLUND: The U.S. Fish and
10 Wildlife Service also has had some comments on the
11 project which are raised in the application as well.
12 This is something that the State of Minnesota takes
13 a very close look at and this is something that also
14 will be addressed in the draft site permit.

15 And we thank you very much for your
16 comments on those issues tonight, this is the type
17 of feedback that we look for, and thank you.

18 And we're going to move on to Gary Reeck.

19 MR. REECK: My name is Gary Reeck, and we
20 live in Zion Township, Stearns County, in Section
21 20, right in the middle of the wind project. We're
22 nonparticipating landowners, and we have been dairy
23 farming in this -- on our farm for over 125 years
24 with continuous cows in there.

25 One of the other unique things about this

1 area is Stearns County is number one in the state
2 and number 16 in the nation in dairy. My first
3 concern that I would like to address -- I should
4 mention that originally I was probably the first guy
5 that heard about these windmills. I talked to Ken
6 and we discussed this. And as time went on, I got
7 educated and I don't like them anymore. But my
8 first concern that I would like to address is for
9 the ag and dairy industry of our county if this wind
10 project is allowed to proceed. Dairy has a long and
11 traditional history and the economic impact is well
12 recognized by county and state and local businesses.

13 Allowing these projects will impact ag
14 and dairy and, in particular, much the same as
15 non-zoned housing would. Up to 63 turbines and
16 14 miles of gravel roads, as per the application,
17 built into the middle of farm fields will
18 fragmentize and fracture them to further increase
19 costs and inefficiency, especially for dairy where
20 the sheer volume of harvest and manure application
21 would be rewarded by having little obstruction in
22 the field whenever possible.

23 The economic of this is that four or five
24 well-managed 50- to 60-cow herds lost in the future
25 because of the presence of projects like this would

1 offset the 700,000 to one-and-a-half-million dollar
2 economic impact that Paynesville Wind says it will
3 have on the local economy. And it wouldn't take a
4 \$200 million taxpayer-assisted funding to let the
5 dairy farms prosper in Stearns County.

6 Another concern for dairy was mentioned
7 in the site application by HGR. It was noted that
8 electromagnetic fields and the distribution and
9 transmission can cause stray current. Stray current
10 is a topic that is very controversial, but it does
11 exist. It does affect some farms and it's
12 devastating to a farm that has it.

13 I feel that the applicants should be
14 responsible for monitoring and measuring this
15 potentially devastating condition because of the
16 severe hardship it causes on a dairy farm. The
17 monitoring should be available to everyone in and
18 around the project footprint before and after the
19 potential construction starts so that it cannot be
20 claimed that the stray current was there before the
21 project. If stray current is found, the applicants
22 should mitigate the problem.

23 But the true cost of this project is the
24 devastating change to the landscape. Relatively few
25 people will be compensated for that. Some in the

1 footprint had a chance to at least say no, so
2 construction could not happen on our property. But
3 these towers are so large that our property and for
4 miles around is affected anyway.

5 Common sense says that nonparticipating
6 landowners in and around the project and some
7 participating landowners are not going to find them
8 attractive. And the noise and flicker and the
9 ugliness is going to be over the land at least, and
10 more than likely a health and safety issue.

11 Many of those that signed the leases
12 don't live here, they just signed for the money.
13 Many signed because they were not informed that the
14 final deadline was near. Many signed because they
15 were told that everyone else had already signed.
16 More signed because the final deadline was here
17 again, and some signed because they believed in free
18 wind energy.

19 In the end, we all pay dearly through
20 taxes to supplement this project and the large
21 corporation that promotes them. I ask the
22 Commission to deny the need and the site
23 application. Thank you.

24 MS. BJORKLUND: Well, thank you so much
25 for your comments. Those are very important

1 comments and livestock is something that we are
2 looking at more and more and incorporate that more
3 and more into our reviews. So thank you so much.

4 Carolyn Reeck.

5 MS. CAROLYN REECK: Hello. My name is
6 Carolyn Reeck. I guess we have an abundance of
7 Reecks here tonight.

8 I'm probably one of the oldest people
9 here in this room, so I speak to the younger
10 generation. I ran this -- my notes past my
11 daughter, who said it's way too schmaltzy. And I
12 said, well, we're a bunch of Germans, so I'm going
13 to be schmaltzy. And I speak to the younger
14 generation who are committed to taking all the
15 necessary steps to question if this wind energy
16 project is what is really needed and if this is
17 really good, not only for our townships, but for the
18 county, for the state, and for our nation.

19 Potentially, this could help some
20 landowners get more revenue for their retirement.
21 But potentially we may also be subjected to health
22 problems and certainly the 60-plus huge turbines
23 will change our open spaces, our landscape forever,
24 even though our zoning ordinance number 209 ensures
25 us open spaces, and I'm going to read just a

1 sentence from that ordinance. And I am clerk of
2 Zion Township, but I am speaking in the capacity of
3 a landowner. Excuse me. Townships are faced with
4 mounting problems in providing means of guiding
5 future development of land use so as to ensure a
6 safer, more pleasant environment, to preserve
7 agricultural and other open land, and to promote
8 public health, safety, and other general welfare.

9 So I'm asking that we take a look at what
10 we are doing. I urge you to stand up, stand up and
11 keep making a little noise. Those of us who are not
12 in favor of this is have done our homework also, and
13 it seems to me those that are for it are prejudiced
14 toward their viewpoint and those of who are against
15 it are prejudiced toward our viewpoint.

16 We've all done a lot of background work
17 and we're just looking for the truth. And we are
18 committed to taking all the necessary steps to
19 question if this wind energy project is what is
20 really needed and what is not good only for our
21 townships, but for our nation, as I mentioned
22 before.

23 To be sure, there won't be a flicker from
24 these massive turbines that will impact our
25 population, but that flicker cannot compare to the

1 flicker of hope that is shining bright. This hope
2 stems from state, county, and township officials who
3 will have the courage to carry out the penance of
4 ordinance 209.

5 We do have health concerns, we do have
6 wildlife concerns, we have property value concerns,
7 we have visual concerns, money concerns. Is this
8 the way we want our tax dollars used if it's true
9 that the project is relying on stimulus dollars?

10 I'm almost done here.

11 Finally, we need to look at the broader
12 issues, not only the setbacks, not only the view out
13 our windows, some say back yard -- not in my back
14 yard, I say not in my front yard. The cost, the
15 wildlife, the health issues, but also changes we
16 need to make as consumers of energy.

17 Are these huge monstrosities planted all
18 over our land the answer to our energy needs? I
19 would ask for more science, more good study. The
20 HGR study for me was totally unconvincing and full
21 of holes. There is a sense of urgency about this,
22 so stand up, stand up, stand up, and keep making a
23 little noise -- a lot of noise, and don't let your
24 flicker of hope die out. Each of us has to make
25 sure our land is preserved as outlined in our zoning

1 ordinance under 209. Our minds, our souls, and our
2 hearts are committed to this.

3 Thank you.

4 MS. BJORKLUND: Thank you very much for
5 your comments. That ordinance that you refer to,
6 209, what local government is that ordinance from?

7 MS. CAROLYN REECK: It's for the County
8 of Stearns, but many of the townships are in a
9 memorandum of understanding and go along with the
10 ordinance.

11 MS. BJORKLUND: Oh, thank you very much.
12 That's very helpful.

13 MS. CAROLYN REECK: And Ingrid, I have
14 sent you a letter, so I -- some of my more
15 scientific viewpoints are expressed in that.

16 MS. BJORKLUND: Well, thank you so much.

17 MS. CAROLYN REECK: You're welcome.

18 Thank you.

19 MS. BJORKLUND: Now we're moving on to
20 Scott Weidner. I guess I pronounced that last name
21 incorrectly.

22 MR. WEIDNER: No, you got it right,
23 nobody else does.

24 MR. HARTMAN: Unusual.

25 MR. WEIDNER: Okay. First of all, I'd

1 just like to say I came here, I'm just trying to get
2 educated. I'm a little on the fence, I can see good
3 and bad for both things. But one thing that I
4 thought of, with the technology the way it is
5 nowadays, these huge wind turbines, do you think in
6 five to ten years, if we wait, there would be a lot
7 smaller wind turbines and they'd still be able to do
8 the same thing or something? Do you know what I
9 mean by that? I know it's hard to say.

10 And then the second thing is, out of this
11 \$200 million investment, how much is the government
12 putting into this and how much of -- where is all
13 this \$200 million coming from, what part is the
14 government putting into this, can you explain that
15 to me, please?

16 MS. BJORKLUND: Yes. I'll take a stab at
17 this, and then I might ask the company. But the
18 stimulus dollars are available for certain projects
19 that I believe have to begin construction in the
20 year 2010. I don't believe that is the case for
21 this project. So I doubt they're relying on
22 stimulus dollars, but I'll ask them that question.

23 The aspect in terms of technology, yeah,
24 it's hard to say what's going to come down the road.
25 But the technology -- the turbines, boy, they're

1 even producing bigger turbines now, those
2 offshore --

3 MR. WEIDNER: They're not getting
4 smaller, they're getting bigger.

5 MS. BJORKLUND: Yeah. But here's Justin,
6 if you want to address the stimulus dollars.

7 MR. PICKAR: Yeah. I'm probably not the
8 right person to respond to this, but luckily I have
9 Blake Nixon, our president, to discuss how money
10 comes into the project.

11 MR. NIXON: Hey, Scott. Good to meet
12 you. There are stimulus dollars available to wind
13 farms, you have to start your construction in 2010
14 to qualify for those stimulus dollars. And those
15 stimulus dollars come through a tax credit up to
16 30 percent of the value of your project or through
17 what's called the treasury grant process, which the
18 U.S. Treasury will write you a check back for
19 roughly 30 percent of the cost of your project.

20 Outside of that stimulus bill, there has
21 been for the better of part of two decades now
22 what's called a production tax credit, which goes to
23 wind farms or any other renewable generation that,
24 you know, produces actual energy in the form of
25 roughly 2.2 cents per kilowatt hour.

1 And to give you a sense for how that adds
2 up to supporting a wind farm, it's quite a
3 complicated answer, so I can't probably answer it
4 very well. But investors put in 100 percent of the
5 money and then those investors get portions of the
6 cash flow plus the tax benefits, and then they use
7 the tax benefits themselves.

8 So there is actually \$200 million that
9 are going to be invested in the project by
10 investors, including ourselves and our strategic
11 partner, as well as financial investors such as
12 banks. And the return we get is from the cash flow
13 from selling the power to the utility plus the tax
14 credits.

15 MR. WEIDNER: Okay. What's the life
16 expectancy of one of these, can they run for
17 20 years, 50 years, what's the life expectancy on
18 something like this? I'm just worried, you know,
19 when they get old, you have these big ugly things
20 standing there, what are you going to do with it?
21 How much is that going to cost to bring down or, you
22 know?

23 MR. NIXON: Right. We expect the project
24 to last at least 20 years, we hope longer. At this
25 point that's not known in this generation of

1 turbines because they're, you know, depending on the
2 model, seven to ten years, even some are one or
3 two years old in terms of the technology.

4 In terms of decommissioning, we set up
5 funds and set aside capital to take them down at the
6 back end of the projects.

7 MR. WEIDNER: That wouldn't be any cost
8 to the landowners or anything, that's all part of --

9 MR. NIXON: No, it's not, and we return
10 the soil to its existing condition -- preexisting
11 condition.

12 MR. WEIDNER: Okay. That's all I have.
13 Thank you.

14 MS. BJORKLUND: Thank you. Also, the
15 decommissioning is addressed in the draft site
16 permit as well, and if a site permit is issued it
17 will be addressed in the site permit as well.

18 Moving on to LuAnne Reeck.

19 MS. LUANNE REECK: I kind of don't even
20 know where to begin. Why don't we start with what
21 was last said, you said that you did not think that
22 this 30 percent cash upfront, economic grant was
23 part of the project, but it's buried in your dockets
24 in October of 2009 as one the --

25 UNIDENTIFIED: We can't hear.

1 MS. LuANNE REECK: It was buried in one
2 of their dockets in 2009 as a reason for a variance
3 to speed up the process, because usually the
4 certificate of need is done before the site. So
5 could you address that, please?

6 MS. BJORKLUND: Yes, I'm happy to address
7 that. The certificate of need, usually the process
8 starts before the site process -- excuse me, the
9 site permit process, but they often run at the same
10 time.

11 MS. LuANNE REECK: Okay. Another
12 question, why is the Baumann Wildlife Protection
13 Area within the boundaries of this project and why
14 is the no-fly zone between the Zion and the Baumann
15 and the Lake Henry and Zion Wildlife Protection
16 areas, why are there turbines in that area?

17 MS. BJORKLUND: The setbacks to these
18 areas have yet to be determined. I mean, we
19 typically have setbacks, we suggest that back to the
20 Public Utilities Commission for these areas. And,
21 again, that's why we're taking comments from
22 everybody here tonight, is to take this type of
23 input into our process on setbacks to these
24 sensitive land areas.

25 MS. LuANNE REECK: Another question is

1 keep saying there's this time line, when is the
2 earliest that the certificate of need can be
3 permitted and when is the earliest that the site
4 application can be permitted, a date -- with a date.

5 MS. BJORKLUND: Well, we don't like to
6 give a date because we want to allow enough time for
7 the process to work, we want to make sure there's
8 enough time --

9 MS. LuANNE REECK: The earliest.

10 MS. BJORKLUND: Typically the average is
11 six months.

12 MS. LuANNE REECK: So, but when the
13 comments close on May 10th, how long will they be
14 reviewed and what is the date that they can say,
15 okay, you're approved?

16 MS. BJORKLUND: Oh, this is only the
17 first comment period, there will be another one. So
18 on May 10th, after that point, I will be reviewing
19 the comments and we'll be using the comments.

20 Again, the purpose of tonight's meeting
21 is twofold. We have the certificate of need
22 process, in which we'll be taking in your comments
23 to develop a scope or outline for the environmental
24 report. And that's called the scoping decision,
25 which will be issued -- well, sometime after the

1 comment period ends, probably in a month or two, I
2 imagine. And then an environmental report has to
3 come after that. That's on the certificate of need
4 side.

5 On the site permit side, this comment
6 period on issues to be considered for the draft site
7 permit is not even a part of the rules or statutes
8 that are required, so we're not required by law to
9 do this. We add this step in because we feel it's
10 very important to find out some of the issues that
11 people are really concerned about here in the area
12 before we even begin to draft the draft site permit.

13 So, with that, I will be taking into --
14 the comments into consideration and then I will
15 begin to draft -- to write the draft site permit.
16 Then that will be going before the Public Utilities
17 Commission. Oh, the time line would be maybe a
18 month. It's hard to say, it depends on workload and
19 everything. Then the PUC will make a decision on
20 whether or not to even issue a draft site permit.

21 Once that decision is made, if they
22 choose to issue a draft site permit, that would go
23 out, then, for a public comment. Again, there will
24 be another meeting, another public meeting and there
25 will be another comment period. That comment period

1 will be a minimum of 30 days and there'll be at
2 least ten days after the public meeting is held that
3 that comment period will be held open.

4 After that comment period closes, then we
5 take that into account and then we have to -- all
6 those comments into consideration and then we go
7 before -- our staff makes a recommendation to the
8 Public Utilities Commission on a final site permit,
9 and then the Public Utilities Commission makes the
10 final decision.

11 There are a number of steps, as I just
12 described. There are not certain time lines around
13 those, the comment periods and how long they have to
14 be open. The next comment period, that is governed
15 by rule, but we can open it for a longer period of
16 time. And that is the time line for the process.

17 Again, a site permit can't be issued
18 until the certificate of need has been issued. So,
19 therefore, that's why typically that process starts
20 a couple of months in advance of the site permitting
21 process.

22 MS. LuANNE REECK: Well, following on the
23 certificate of need, I'm puzzled. I mean, I think
24 wind could be interesting as a renewable energy, but
25 the problem is it's not really steady. And that the

1 coal companies or any other natural gas power
2 companies have to power up and power down, and
3 we're all farmers around here, so we kind of know
4 what happens to your fuel economy when you're
5 powering up and down, which is basically carbon
6 credits. There's a study from Colorado that the
7 carbon credits -- the carbon emissions go up and
8 down.

9 My other question is, American Electric
10 Power just last week asked for employee buyouts,
11 1,000 jobs, because the power consumption is down by
12 six percent. Which, you know, as fine as wind is,
13 can't we probably do better conserving?

14 Another question people have been asking,
15 land values. We've heard of the Lawrence Berkeley
16 study, this study only included homes on 25 acres or
17 less. So if you're wondering about your rural farm
18 acreage, that study didn't address it. The biggest
19 issue with that study is they won't release the data
20 so no one can really review it. Yes, it's been peer
21 reviewed, but peer reviewed means that it can be
22 published. It doesn't really validate it.

23 As far as ice throw, I know that it's
24 unlikely it will happen, but that's kind of a
25 sketchy, scientific mathematical term. That's like

1 saying when two cars come to an intersection, it's
2 unlikely they're going to run into each other, but
3 we'll put a stop sign up just in case.

4 That one has been reviewed by a professor
5 from Rutgers, Professor Terry Matilsky. And he
6 claims that ice throw is easily 1,750 feet. If you
7 just say, well, you know, the ice drops off the
8 turbines and it's only 100 feet, that doesn't make
9 it scientifically impossible.

10 The other question is, is when the ice
11 forms on the blades, it becomes the shape of the
12 propeller, which moves through the air quite easily.
13 Also, the turbines are spinning, so they can fling
14 it like a frisbee. Yes, the turbines are supposed
15 to shut off, but according to the companies that run
16 the turbines themselves, rim ice formation appears
17 to occur with remarkable symmetry on all turbine
18 blades, with the result that no imbalance occurs and
19 the turbines continue to operate. That's just
20 another question. To mention about setbacks, is
21 250 feet enough?

22 Someone mentioned -- I heard talking
23 about emergency helicopters. Life Link III is our
24 service. People, they're not too familiar with
25 turbines. So I called Mayo and their service is

1 Mayo One. The pilot down there said we cannot do
2 anything in a careless or reckless manner. They
3 will not land within the boundaries. They are
4 working to have some sort of system that maybe if
5 the proper channels are followed, a phone call can
6 be made and then someone in Texas can send a signal
7 to shut the turbines off.

8 But anyway, because it's helicopters, not
9 an airplane, they still feel that they will not land
10 them in amongst the blades. They will get as close
11 to the boundary as they can, especially depending on
12 the wind, you know, if they're trying to land on the
13 east side and the wind is coming from a direction
14 that works well for them, they'll get in as close as
15 they can.

16 So -- and then they said that the biggest
17 fear is if there's a large accident and they need
18 multiple helicopters to come in, like a bus accident
19 or something. Of course, that would hardly happen
20 here, but multiple helicopters, they said you're
21 pulling in 'coptors from other areas and they're not
22 familiar. At this point, no turbines have any
23 markings for latitude and longitude, they're working
24 on that, too. They hope that might happen.

25 I guess my time is probably up, but I did

1 want to talk about the health studies. Everyone
2 knows that there's been a large report from the
3 Minnesota Department of Health. You can go online,
4 it's pretty easy to find, it's 42 pages. They talk
5 about a lot of things, they didn't really come down
6 to, like, well, this is what we have to do, but
7 there's a lot of things in here.

8 And I don't know if you can even let me
9 go this far, but the biggest problem is the
10 low-frequency noise. They know that the noise comes
11 inside. Low frequency doesn't seem to get dampened
12 by house walls or windows, and it comes inside. The
13 50-decibel ratings just doesn't address that.

14 The other thing is that I found that
15 people with low-noise studies (sic) can be more
16 irritating than louder noises that just come and go.
17 That's why a lot of people say they really have a
18 problem because it sounds like a helicopter that
19 just doesn't get there or a train that just doesn't
20 get there, they would rather have the train come,
21 get loud, and go, than to put up with the long
22 noises.

23 In Germany, they want 25 and 35 dBAs.
24 There's just a lot things about this. 50 dBAs is a
25 very old standard and it doesn't address all the

1 issues of the noise. A lot of people have problems
2 with it, and it should be at least down into the 35
3 dBAs.

4 The final recommendation, I'll make this
5 short, I'm sure you're all bored by now. The wind
6 turbine life estimates should include cumulative
7 impacts of 40 to 50 dBA isopleth of all wind
8 turbines. Isopleths for dBC minus dBA greater than
9 10 dB should be determined to evaluate low-frequency
10 noise. Potential impacts from shadow flicker and
11 turbine visibility should be evaluated.

12 They're talking about a half mile from
13 homes. And I think if you're a nonparticipating
14 landowner we should have a half a mile from every
15 boundary on our property. If I want to build a
16 house on another part of my land, I don't want to
17 have a turbine that is so close to the property that
18 I have to pick and choose where I can build. These
19 leases are 50 years, and that's a long time.

20 MS. BJORKLUND: Thank you very much for
21 your comments. That will become part of the record,
22 and that's the type of thing we look for. So thank
23 you so much.

24 We are moving on to Byron Christoffer.

25 MR. CHRISTOFFER: Good evening. I am

1 Byron Christoffer. I'm here with my wife, Cathy,
2 and we are from rural Worthington, Minnesota.

3 Now, Geronimo asked me to come up and
4 answer some questions and tell you what I think of
5 the wind business. We have been in the wind
6 business for about seven to eight years now. The
7 first project I developed with my cousins and that
8 was six one-megawatt towers. And that went quite
9 well, so Cathy and I decided that we would, on our
10 own, develop a 20-megawatt project. And, of course,
11 this project is located on our ground and some of
12 our neighbor's ground. And then my cousins
13 developed four towers at the same time, and that's
14 on some of the other neighbors' ground there.

15 And this all went quite well, except it
16 was the hardest thing we'd ever done in our life to
17 develop a wind project. But I can tell you right
18 now that these guys are working their buns off to
19 develop this wind project.

20 There are so many things that are
21 unanswerable and you don't know until the last
22 minute if the project's going to go and if it isn't.
23 And, I mean, we had hundreds of thousands of dollars
24 out of our pocket in this thing. We'd sit across
25 the desk and just about kill each other once in a

1 while. But it's a very hard thing to do.

2 But what I wish I could have done was
3 answer just about every question that was asked here
4 tonight except a few of the technical ones, because
5 I've got an opinion on every one of them. And
6 first, I've got to say that I don't think these
7 turbines are ugly. I think they're beautiful and
8 they're awesome. They're awesome. Maybe it's
9 because I do have them, I don't know. But I've
10 never seen any turbine that's ugly. So, I don't
11 know.

12 As far as all the questions that were
13 brought up here tonight, I can't think of them all.
14 But on shadow flicker, I happened to bring that word
15 up on the way up here. My wife says, what is shadow
16 flicker? I've never heard of that.

17 I says, haven't you ever seen it? No.
18 She says, I've been around them towers for seven
19 years and I've never seen a shadow flicker. No,
20 it's there. If you look for it, you can find it.
21 Not every day, not all the time, no. And it's -- I
22 mean, she's been there seven years and never seen
23 it. Not saying that you won't see it.

24 But as far as sound goes and being too
25 close to the turbine, the turbine as it turns and if

1 the wind's in the right direction, you'll hear a
2 whoosh, whoosh, whoosh (phonetic). And a lot of
3 times you won't hear it, because if the wind's not
4 blowing at you, directly at you, it blows the sound
5 the other way. So it's -- you don't hear that sound
6 all the time.

7 As far as being a detriment out in the
8 field, they're there. You do have to farm around
9 them. If you're a farmer, you will enjoy them
10 immensely in the fall. The road is hard, it's
11 gravel, you can take your equipment out there and
12 you can take your trucks out there. There's no mud
13 all the way up to the yard, you don't have to park
14 your trucks, stop your combines. It's great in the
15 fall.

16 Some of the other things like
17 environmental, I've had ten, 12 myself, and my
18 cousins, we have 20 all together, turbines. I have
19 never once saw a dead bird. Not to say that that
20 can't happen. Out in California, the
21 environmentalists tried to stop all the turbines
22 because by Palm Springs, California, if you've ever
23 been through there -- I've been out there many
24 times -- them turbines are so thick and so close
25 together I will guarantee you that anything flying

1 shadow flicker or sound or anything like that from
2 any of my neighbors, and we've got 20 of them there.
3 You know, and --

4 UNIDENTIFIED: How many neighbors?

5 MR. CHRISTOFFER: Huh?

6 UNIDENTIFIED: How many neighbors?

7 MR. CHRISTOFFER: Oh, we have a lot of
8 neighbors. They're all over the place, but we're
9 set back, you know, in Jackson County they're set
10 back 750 feet from a residence. So, you know, we're
11 closer than you're talking about putting them up
12 here to a residence. You're talking 1,000 feet up
13 here or something like that. The law in Jackson
14 County is 750 feet, so that's the way we positioned
15 ours when we put them up there, and a lot them are
16 further apart than that.

17 Go ahead.

18 MR. MUELLER: Is your house in the middle
19 of those 20 or is it outside of it?

20 MR. CHRISTOFFER: My son-in-law's
21 house -- or my daughter's house is right beside the
22 closest one and --

23 MR. MUELLER: Are they all around on the
24 back side of it?

25 MR. CHRISTOFFER: Yeah, they're all

1 around it on the back side. We have a grove back
2 there.

3 MS. BJORKLUND: Would you mind stating
4 your name for the record.

5 MR. MUELLER: John Mueller.

6 MR. CHRISTOFFER: Yeah. Our closest one
7 to anything is the one closest to our house. And
8 I'm not going to say how close that is, it might be
9 too close, I don't know. But I'm not saying you
10 can't hear that either, but at 1,000 feet I think
11 that you would not hear the noise that you're
12 thinking you're going to hear. A lot of times the
13 wind don't blow and a lot of times the wind's in a
14 little different direction and then it's not a major
15 thing.

16 If you're working right underneath the
17 tower -- you know, I never work there too long and
18 I'm usually in a tractor, but you know, if you're
19 outside picking up rocks under the tower or
20 something, you can hear the swish, you know. It's
21 like a wind blowing through a grove. If you didn't
22 have no trees, there wouldn't be much noise. But
23 when you've got a tree, you hear that whistling in
24 the grove.

25 Yes.

1 UNIDENTIFIED: How tall are your towers?

2 MR. CHRISTOFFER: What?

3 UNIDENTIFIED: How tall are your towers?

4 MR. CHRISTOFFER: Our towers are -- to
5 the tip of the blade, they're 406 feet when the
6 blade's straight up in the air. They're
7 two-megawatt towers.

8 MR. HARTMAN: Do you have a Suzlon S88?

9 MR. CHRISTOFFER: We have the Suzlon S88
10 towers out there, and after they got the bugs out of
11 them, they run great now, so.

12 MS. BJORKLUND: All right. Go ahead, if
13 people have questions for him because he has
14 turbines on his property. Can you state your name,
15 please.

16 MR. REECK: Yes. Gary Reeck. You talk
17 about that they're beautiful, but that's strictly an
18 opinion.

19 MR. CHRISTOFFER: That's my opinion.

20 MR. REECK: I know. So wouldn't you
21 agree that someone could think they're ugly and if
22 they, you know, don't want them on their landscape
23 that that could be a problem?

24 MR. CHRISTOFFER: I would agree, yes.
25 You know, I can't imagine that somebody would think

1 that. But if I didn't have one and I didn't like
2 them and they looked ugly to me, I guess I would
3 probably have an opinion, like yours, you know.

4 MS. BJORKLUND: If I might just chime in,
5 the aesthetics is another concern that we hear at
6 the state quite a bit. It is something that is
7 very, very difficult to measure, particularly when
8 we're putting together the environmental report.
9 But it is something we hear an awful lot.

10 And there's something I'd to say on the
11 turbine spacing when you referenced California and
12 they're very close together. The spacing between
13 turbines, again, that's something that is addressed
14 in the site permit. And we play -- excuse me, we
15 pay very close attention to the spacing between
16 turbines so we do have setbacks, typically a
17 three-by-five rotor diameter setback between the
18 turbine spacing.

19 Is there anything else you'd like to add?

20 MR. CHRISTOFFER: Well, I'd like to say
21 that, you know, Geronimo had nothing to do with my
22 turbines. I mean, they didn't put them up, they
23 didn't finance them or anything like that. I put
24 them up myself and got the financing from John Deere
25 (phonetic), so that's the way we did ours.

1 MS. BJORKLUND: Well, thank you.

2 MR. CHRISTOFFER: Any other questions?

3 Yes.

4 MR. STANG: My name is Brandon Stang, and
5 we're here representing Stang Dairy Farms in my area
6 and my neighbor is Gary Reeck.

7 A question for you, what type of land --
8 space do you put yours on? Because I know if you
9 put a windmill, like I have 40-acre fields, 10-acre
10 fields, you put a 40 -- or a windmill right there on
11 my 40, you put a road down the middle, I come in
12 there and try to plant around it, that doesn't seem
13 feasible for us. I mean, I'm just curious, what
14 type of land are you putting them on?

15 MR. CHRISTOFFER: It depends on, you
16 know, if you've got 40 acres here or if you've got a
17 half section or if you've got three-quarters
18 connected or if you have a section connected, you
19 know, that makes a big difference on how you
20 distribute them turbines.

21 We have a full section that I put these
22 on, and I put seven turbines in that section. Now,
23 Geronimo tells me they're too close and I say
24 they're not, but I haven't had any problems. I've
25 seen the wind blow from one direction and the

1 turbine behind the first turbine does not move any
2 slower than the first turbine does. Geronimo says
3 it does, but I've never seen it. I've watched them
4 for ten, 15 minutes and you just can't tell that the
5 back one's going slower. So I do have seven in
6 one -- on 640 acres.

7 Another place we put the other three, and
8 that's on a quarter. So I put one toward one
9 corner, one toward the other corner, and then about
10 halfway in the middle on the other side of the
11 quarter so that they're in a triangle like this
12 (indicating), and I've never seen any problems with
13 them.

14 On 40 acres, yeah, you're going to have a
15 road going down there, there's no doubt about it.
16 And it's not as hard to farm around them -- because
17 I'm farming around ten of them -- as you'd think.
18 Because we don't cultivate anymore, we just spray.
19 So once we get that corn in there, it's not so --
20 you don't cultivate it out going around the blade
21 and stuff. But I like I said, you wouldn't realize
22 an advantage when you come to take the crop out and
23 you're on a nice hard road and stuff like. That
24 does help.

25 MS. BJORKLUND: Thank you. We probably

1 should move on to some of the other speakers, but if
2 you're around if people want to ask questions,
3 Byron, if you're -- because you have turbines on
4 your land, I'm sure you could always ask him
5 afterwards. But I think we should move on.

6 MR. CHRISTOFFER: I may be a little
7 prejudiced, but I'll tell you, our neighbors -- if
8 this project was in ours -- I could sell this
9 project down there in two weeks.

10 MS. BJORKLUND: Well, thank you.

11 UNIDENTIFIED: Take it.

12 MS. BJORKLUND: Well, let's move on to
13 the next commenter here. Thank you so much.

14 The next speaker, someone who wants to
15 speak is Chris Weber, is Chris Weber still here?

16 MR. WEBER: Yeah, I'm coming.

17 MS. BJORKLUND: Oh, great.

18 MR. WEBER: My legs don't move too fast.

19 Thank you.

20 I live outside the project and my concern
21 is noise. I have a piece of paper here given to
22 me -- well, sent to me through the mail, it's the
23 noise levels of these 1.5 wind turbines, put out by
24 Geronimo.

25 My land, of course, is not in the

1 project, but my house is painted green as far as the
2 noise level. I don't know how many of you have seen
3 this, but that says I'm in the decibel rating of 40
4 to 45. Now, my question is, what is 40 to 45
5 decibels of noise? What is that? What is that,
6 Justin?

7 MS. BJORKLUND: I'm going to have the
8 company answer this question.

9 MR. PICKAR: Chris, that's a very good
10 question. Do we have an answer, Patrick?

11 MR. SMITH: 45 decibels of noise varies
12 to a certain extent with how much or what sort of
13 noise it is, but I would assume that it's a little
14 bit more than a whisper or a little bit quieter than
15 me talking right now, you know.

16 But it's, again, not -- it's not a tone,
17 it's just white noise. It's not something that's
18 going to stand out above everything else, or at
19 least personally I wouldn't expect it to stand out.

20 MR. WEBER: So it's like us talking to
21 each other?

22 MR. SMITH: Probably quieter than that
23 because we've got microphones.

24 MR. WEBER: Okay. And now this survey,
25 was that done at what speed, wind speed to develop

1 you on that one. I'm not exactly sure, Chris.

2 MR. WEBER: You don't have any number
3 that says how far this travels?

4 MR. PICKAR: I currently don't, no.

5 MR. WEBER: Okay.

6 MS. BJORKLUND: The company has done a
7 noise analysis and that is something that we can
8 incorporate as part of the record of this process as
9 well.

10 MR. WEBER: Well, my second and final
11 question would have been, if that number's correct
12 or it's if around 3,000 feet and these turbines are
13 within -- that are sited on this plan, there would
14 have been some within the range of 1,500 feet from
15 my home.

16 If it would be possible for the company
17 to consider moving these turbines out further back
18 so that I wouldn't have that wind at my place, is
19 that a possibility or is it not?

20 MS. BJORKLUND: Well, from the permitting
21 standpoint, they do have to comply with the noise
22 standard at a minimum. Whether the company chooses
23 to go beyond that or we require something beyond
24 that in the permit is another matter.

25 MR. WEBER: What would be the minimum

1 you're talking about?

2 MS. BJORKLUND: The minimum standard in
3 the rules, I don't even know if I can quote it
4 accurately, but I think that's 50 dBA nighttime.

5 MR. WEBER: So this survey here,
6 according to this, is under that?

7 MS. BJORKLUND: They do have to comply by
8 the noise standard as a minimum. And, again, we're
9 just starting the permitting process and so we'll be
10 looking more closely at noise as we move forward in
11 this proces. And they have done a noise analysis
12 and now we'll be taking a closer look at that noise
13 analysis, our staff will. And we can also -- if it
14 is a concern of people, we can have them submit the
15 noise analysis as part of the record.

16 MR. WEBER: Is it the same for those in
17 the project as those outside of the project?

18 MS. BJORKLUND: Absolutely.

19 MR. WEBER: So if we're outside of the
20 project, our noise level is the same as those
21 inside?

22 MS. BJORKLUND: No. The noise standard
23 applies equally to all residences, whether you're
24 inside the project boundaries or not.

25 MR. WEBER: Okay. So whether or not I

1 have a lease won't decide my noise level?

2 MS. BJORKLUND: That's correct.

3 MR. WEBER: Okay.

4 MS. BJORKLUND: I think Justin wants to
5 add something.

6 MR. PICKAR: Chris, can we get a source
7 for that information so that we can respond
8 accordingly?

9 MR. WEBER: You know, I can't -- are you
10 talking about the footage?

11 MR. PICKAR: Yes.

12 MR. WEBER: I don't have the source for
13 this, I just got the letter, that's why I asked you
14 whether it was true or not. I don't know. I don't
15 know, but I think if we knew exactly how far these
16 noises carry we could do a lot better job in siting.
17 We wouldn't have the problems of people -- you know,
18 you've got noise and they have noise, you know,
19 because if there's a standard number then we could
20 set these where they're supposed to be set. We
21 shouldn't set these turbines where it's going to
22 annoy people, is my thinking, you know. If you have
23 the room to move these turbines so they don't affect
24 people, I think that's what should be done.

25 Thank you.

1 MS. BJORKLUND: Well, thank you so much
2 for your comments.

3 We have one more that's signed up on the
4 speaker cards, and that is Russell Moss.
5 Russel Moss, oh, here we go.

6 MR. MOSS: You are probably like who's
7 this guy? But I just bought my house here right
8 down the street last month, and I actually have
9 several questions.

10 In your flyer there it says it's going to
11 provide 100 construction jobs, and my question is,
12 is that for any of us or do you guys have a certain
13 company that you always go with to build these?

14 MS. BJORKLUND: I will turn that over to
15 the applicant.

16 MR. PICKAR: In this regard, local
17 contractor preference is something that we
18 definitely consider. Of course, the skills and
19 trades that you come from is key to any job that --

20 MR. MOSS: Well, I understand that. But
21 I know a lot of major companies -- or they generally
22 stick to the same builders. So you are going to
23 offer local companies the job over, say, the lowest
24 bidder from South Dakota or --

25 MR. PICKAR: I don't make the vendor

1 decisions at our firm, nor -- I'm going to defer
2 this one. Hold on.

3 MR. NIXON: Hey, Russell. Both Geronimo
4 or our strategic partner will do a multiple bidder
5 process for selecting the general contractor. We're
6 blessed in the state of Minnesota to have the top
7 two wind general contractors in the country,
8 Mortinson and Blatner.

9 MR. MOSS: Yeah, I actually work for
10 Mortinson.

11 MR. NIXON: Okay. Well, there you go.
12 Then you have a good chance of getting hired if they
13 were the general contractors. You know, so the
14 reality of the situation is that we will select a
15 general contractor and part of that selection
16 process will be their ability to show a willingness
17 and actually a desire and, you know, path toward
18 hiring local contractors. But like Justin said, it
19 has to do with the ability to have the skill,
20 experience in the trade.

21 MR. MOSS: Okay. Then another major
22 thing. I'm actually somewhat educated on this, I
23 just completed a class on energy and environmental
24 physics down at St. Cloud State here. And I
25 understand that it is good for the environment and

1 everything like that, but something you said
2 earlier, when someone asked you where the power's
3 going, your response was talking about utility
4 companies like to buy up extra energy, and that
5 right now our need is already being met.

6 So my question is, is if we're buying
7 extra energy and not eliminating some of the energy
8 needed -- that is needed to be provided by these
9 coal-burning plants, aren't we just adding to and
10 not -- I guess I don't know how to say it.

11 Basically we're just creating energy that
12 doesn't need to be created anyway, so aren't we just
13 damaging the environment?

14 MS. BJORKLUND: Well, that's a tough
15 question for me to answer. That's more of a
16 certificate of need docket. However, my
17 understanding is that it does go beyond just what
18 the customers demand, the utility have to -- they're
19 required to have so much energy online beyond what
20 customers are using, because they can't anticipate
21 who's going to run the washing machine when. So
22 they have to have reserves and whatnot. And how
23 they make their decisions in terms of purchasing
24 energy is up to them and --

25 MR. MOSS: So basically what you're

1 saying is this not going to eliminate any
2 coal-burning plants, you know, it's not going to
3 eliminate them burning the same amount of coal that
4 they would?

5 MS. BJORKLUND: I think Larry would like
6 to respond to that one.

7 MR. HARTMAN: I'll give it a shot. Under
8 state statute, obviously, utilities have to take
9 every kilowatt hour of renewable energy that's
10 generated. Now, for example, they have different
11 standard requirements. Xcel Energy has a higher
12 renewable standard than, for example, Great River
13 Energy.

14 For example -- let's say, for example,
15 when Xcel buys green energy, let's say, I believe in
16 the state of Minnesota there's about 1,800 megawatts
17 of wind energy, Xcel is the off-taker for about
18 1,100. So if all these turbines are spinning and
19 they're producing 1,100 megawatts of energy, that
20 means they back off other things.

21 For example, they have a hierarchy.
22 Let's say in the Upper Midwest area they might have
23 57 generate facilities, for example. It's going to
24 take awhile to ramp up your coal, so you might back
25 off your diesel fuel, you might back off something

1 sudden the wind comes up, you'd back off other
2 stuff. That's the same whether it's Xcel, GRE,
3 Minnesota Power, Minnesota Municipal Power, or
4 anybody else.

5 MR. MOSS: Okay. And I also have a
6 question for -- I don't have land, I'm not going to
7 be the one signing any contract, but I do have a
8 question. What happens when a farmer or someone
9 signs up for this and, okay, here's the big wind
10 turbine, now everything that was promised to him,
11 well, it'll only be like a whisper, let's say that
12 gentleman that was just up here, he was told, okay,
13 it was a whisper.

14 Now, what happens when this thing is up
15 and going and all these promises made to him aren't
16 kept? Now, is it just too bad?

17 MS. BJORKLUND: Again, the lease
18 agreements, the easements that are entered into are
19 between the applicant -- in this case, Geronimo --
20 and the landowner. And the state does not get
21 involved in legal issues between the landowner and
22 the applicant, in this case, Geronimo.

23 MR. MOSS: Well, I'm -- my main concern
24 is, it's like, big corporation here, dairy farmer,
25 who's going to be there to stand up for him or what

1 are you guys going to do for him?

2 MS. BJORKLUND: Well, everybody's
3 entitled to have their own legal representation.

4 MR. MOSS: Well, I understand that, but I
5 think you're going to get the better lawyer here
6 (indicating).

7 MS. BJORKLUND: That all depends.

8 MS. BRUSVEN: Do you want to mention the
9 complaint process?

10 MS. BJORKLUND: Oh, yeah, actually we do
11 have a complaint process, as well. Thank you so
12 much, Christy.

13 MR. HARTMAN: Actually, I was going to
14 come back to that point. If, for example, let's say
15 you have a turbine on your land, for whatever
16 reason, and say Mortinson didn't do a good job,
17 there's another guy from Mortinson over there, Todd.
18 You know, generally they warranty their work for two
19 years, I believe, the work of subcontractors for two
20 years.

21 Now, for example, there's a noise
22 complaint down the road, whether you own the
23 property, your grandmother owns the property, your
24 daughter owns the property some day, they're still
25 held to that noise standard.

1 Under the permit -- we can either revoke,
2 suspend, or modify the permit. We can also order
3 them to shut down the turbine, fix the problem, or
4 they can also find a way to operate through the
5 SCADA system so they're in compliance with the
6 permit conditions.

7 MS. BJORKLUND: Thank you. And
8 information on how to complain about a project is on
9 our website and it will also be in the site permit
10 itself as well.

11 MR. MOSS: Okay. Well, I assumed that
12 you guys did have a complaint process and everything
13 like that, and I guess there's no real answer to my
14 question. But at the same time, I just feel like
15 it's the big man just holding their foot over the
16 little guy, and if you have something to say you
17 guys also have a complaint process that just kind of
18 sweeps them away.

19 I mean, I don't think you're going to go
20 out and fix it. You're going to send somebody from
21 your company out there to test the decibels who
22 works for you. So for some reason, I just don't
23 think that that guy's going to go out there and make
24 a bad report about the company that signs his
25 paycheck, just, it doesn't make much sense to me.

1 Also, like I said, I just moved right
2 down the street here and we have six kids. And I
3 came from St. Cloud, and I love it here, I
4 absolutely love it here. I go outside to smoke a
5 cigarette on my front porch, 800 birds fly away.
6 Yeah, they poop on my truck and I'm not real happy
7 about that, but I like it. I like that there's
8 birds. I like to have my kids go, Dad, where's all
9 the houses? When I come driving down 16 -- and I
10 love it, and I love the fact that I get to raise my
11 kids here. But how many birds are going to die from
12 this? I mean, is it substantial? Is it going to be
13 like real minimal or is it going to be huge?

14 MS. BJORKLUND: HGR, the consultant for
15 the Paynesville project, is conducting a study right
16 now and I think it will be completed this fall.

17 MR. MOSS: Who's conducting?

18 MS. BJORKLUND: HDR, they are a
19 consultant hired by the company, they're conducting
20 a study.

21 MR. MOSS: So you guys also sign their
22 checks?

23 MS. BJORKLUND: The state takes an
24 independent view when we take in -- we take in the
25 information from the study, we will very likely ask

1 that they publish the study. We also look at other
2 studies that have been done. The state does take a
3 very serious look at impacts to wildlife, and
4 particularly in siting these turbines.

5 MR. MOSS: Who informs the state? You
6 say the state, actually one of my other questions
7 written on here is, I hear a lot of comments about
8 studies. There was a study and I don't know her
9 name, like I said, I don't know nobody, give it a
10 month.

11 But a lady back there as I was standing
12 there was the first person I heard talking when I
13 came in. And a comment was made, well, there was a
14 study once about land property values, it didn't
15 really show any correlation and stuff like that.
16 Who's doing the studies, when were they done, how
17 many people were surveyed?

18 I mean, the word study gets thrown around
19 a lot. You see commercials on TV for drugs that
20 come out, and six months later you see a commercial
21 by a lawyer saying if you're suffering from this,
22 this, and this -- well, they had a lot of studies
23 done, too. So my question is, is who is really
24 doing these studies, are any of them truly
25 independent?

1 MS. BJORKLUND: We take a good look at
2 these studies and we are trained to analyze studies.
3 In terms of the other aspects of the wildlife
4 impacts, it's our office that does the environmental
5 review. The application itself serves as the
6 environmental document for the site process. That's
7 another reason why we're here tonight, is to
8 determine whether the -- if you have any questions
9 or issues about the application, now is a great time
10 to bring it up. And you have until May 10th to
11 comment on that, because that does stand as the
12 environmental document. We also work with other
13 agencies on the wildlife issues, federal and state
14 agencies.

15 MR. MOSS: And you've also -- you just
16 said something right there, you said -- about my
17 question about the birds, I don't know, many of you
18 have probably lived here for years and just assume
19 that's the way it is. But if you move out here,
20 it's awesome. But when will all the questions be
21 fully addressed? Like how soon will this all be
22 addressed before people actually can sign contracts
23 and stuff like that? Because I assume you guys are
24 going to be building this year because that's with
25 the tax credits, so don't all these questions need

1 to be addressed first?

2 MS. BJORKLUND: The commercial operation
3 date is the third quarter of 2011. So it's not
4 clear whether they're going to be starting
5 construction here -- they cannot start construction
6 unless they have the permits in hand and have a
7 power purchase agreement.

8 The record -- we're just starting the
9 permitting process and there will be information
10 added to the record on these types of issues. And
11 then our staff does the analysis and we make
12 recommendations to the Public Utilities Commission
13 on setbacks and whatnot from sensitive lands in the
14 site.

15 But we take a very serious look at birds
16 and bats and other wildlife.

17 MR. MOSS: And another question, what
18 about damage to the roadways, is that in the budget
19 to repair the roads from the heavy traffic or
20 whatever you guys got going out there? I assume
21 you're going to bust up that little 16 road or
22 wherever you've got to go.

23 MS. BJORKLUND: Typically, the permits
24 are required from the local units of government
25 to -- on the road and I'm sure they probably have

1 not started the process yet, it's a little early for
2 that. Again, the construction side of it is
3 something that our office also oversees.

4 MR. MOSS: Then another question is, is
5 what benefits does Lake Henry see from this other
6 than the fact that we can say our town's going
7 green? I am not sure. So the jobs don't directly
8 come from here, so everyone who is in Lake Henry
9 laid off right now is going to be laid off when this
10 is built. We're going to have less birds, we don't
11 know how many we're going to kill. We're going to
12 have a whisper, I didn't move here for a whisper. I
13 moved here to look at the goats across the street
14 and to listen to the birds, and that's about it.
15 There's going to be a flicker -- and I don't care,
16 I'll go ahead and say it. I was in the United
17 States Army and I have PTSD from the war. And I
18 know damn well if there's a flicker coming in my
19 house all the time, I ain't going to be too happy
20 about that.

21 And I mean, that's the truth. I mean, so
22 I've got -- let's just say, I get all the symptoms,
23 I've got to hear the noise, I've got the flicker,
24 I've got less birds, I'm still laid off. I don't
25 see any benefit. My electric bill's still going to

1 feel like rape every time I get it.

2 So I -- could you tell us one benefit
3 that we will see right here in our town?

4 MS. BJORKLUND: There will be a
5 production tax that the company's required to pay
6 and property taxes. I don't know if they've
7 crunched the numbers of what they expect is going to
8 be going to the county. And then a certain portion
9 of that, I think it's 20 percent of that gets
10 dedicated to the local governments in the area here.

11 Is there somebody from the project that
12 can speak to that?

13 MR. PICKAR: Yeah. Local communities and
14 townships receive 76,000 per year from this benefit,
15 so --

16 MR. MOSS: So they receive 76,000 --

17 MR. PICKAR: The communities and
18 townships in the area, which adds to the
19 infrastructure. Businesses like Cindy's here will
20 see business from construction folks coming to eat
21 lunch.

22 MR. MOSS: I mean, I guess you're
23 probably right, somebody will stop in because
24 they've got damn good burgers. But I don't think
25 Cindy's going out and buying a new RV or anything

1 here. I mean, I don't believe that she's really
2 going to see that big of an increase in business.
3 What, while they're building it and then after that,
4 then what do we got?

5 And you did say you get, like, tax
6 credits or help with whatever you said, I can't
7 remember now, tax breaks. And the only thing I
8 think that this is going to help as far as taxes go
9 is, yeah, some farmers might have to pay less taxes
10 because their property value went down and that's
11 about it.

12 MS. BJORKLUND: Well, thank you so much
13 for your comments here, we really appreciate it.

14 We're approaching 9:30 here and we are
15 either going to take a break or move on, if -- well,
16 first, are there other speakers, anybody else
17 that wants -- we do. Why don't we take a short,
18 five-minute break.

19 MR. BERKE: Could I get mine in, my card
20 must have got lost.

21 MS. BJORKLUND: Okay. Sure.

22 MR. BERKE: I'm Dwayne Berke, is it on?
23 I'm Dwayne Berke, chairman of the Zion Town board.
24 And then being we have all the dignitaries here
25 tonight, and I've talked to Justin Pickar before

1 about what happens to the roads during the
2 construction period. And Justin has always
3 reassured me we will take of it, but if myself and
4 my two supervisors come with a contract, will I get
5 a signature on that about the roads? It costs us
6 anywhere from 50 to 100,000 a mile to build a gravel
7 road in Zion Township. Will I get a signature on my
8 contract?

9 MR. SMITH: Thanks, Dwayne. We are
10 working with a group of folks down in southwestern
11 Minnesota and maybe we can put you in touch with
12 them, township board officials, county officials
13 that are trying to put together a standard agreement
14 for wind developers. And they're looking
15 specifically at how to deal with roads and what
16 standards roads should be returned to, how to assess
17 the standards before the project starts.

18 So why don't we put you in touch with
19 those folks. And I don't want to say that -- well,
20 the answer is that we want to contract with you, we
21 want to make sure that it's a fair contract, that
22 you guys are getting what you need. And so, yeah,
23 I -- once we come up with a contract together, we'll
24 be in it.

25 MR. BERKE: I'm here as a neutral

1 observer. I'm not 100 percent for it, I'm not
2 100 percent against it. I'm all for alternative
3 energy. But my concern is the Zion Township roads,
4 and we're probably getting the majority of the
5 towers right in Zion Township.

6 MS. BJORKLUND: Thank you so much.

7 MR. BERKE: Thank you.

8 MS. BJORKLUND: Thank you. Are there
9 other people that want to comment? Okay. If so, we
10 were going to take a short, very short break.

11 UNIDENTIFIED: That's fine.

12 MS. BJORKLUND: Okay. So just -- we'll
13 reconvene in five minutes.

14 (Break taken.)

15 MS. BJORKLUND: Okay. We are now going
16 to be taking additional comments from the audience.
17 We have just finished the comments from people
18 who've filled out speaker cards. We are now moving
19 on to people who have not yet spoken but have not
20 filled out a speaker card.

21 So is there anybody in the audience who
22 would like to speak who has not yet spoken?

23 Yes, go ahead. Please state your name
24 for the record, and I think we have a microphone up
25 here for you.

1 MS. MUELLER: I have a card filled out,
2 but I didn't give it to the man.

3 MS. BJORKLUND: Yeah. We can take your
4 card, actually. Thank you.

5 MS. MUELLER: Hi. My name is
6 Colleen Mueller, and I do have some questions. In
7 particular, I would like to have the health issues
8 addressed. That is on the site permitting book,
9 it's 5.8 is the section that addresses that.

10 If you want to page to that, you can see
11 it says human health and safety, and it goes into a
12 description of resources. 5.8.11, it says air
13 traffic -- that's the first thing that's addressed
14 for human health and safety, it talks about the
15 local airport.

16 And that moves along, the next thing, it
17 does address the electromagnet field a little bit,
18 5.8.12 and then 5.8.13, it says to carry, one
19 sentence, I'll read that, the proposed wind farm
20 site is located in an area that has a low population
21 density. Construction and operation of the project
22 will have minimal impact on the security and safety
23 of the local populus.

24 Then it addresses traffic and impacts of
25 the air traffic and a little bit more on

1 electromagnetic fields. What I would like to know
2 is where does it address shadow flicker, low
3 frequency, vibrations, problems with the vesicular
4 (phonetic) system, low-level frequency, driver
5 distractions, where is any of that addressed?

6 MS. BJORKLUND: Shadow flicker is
7 typically under the visual section.

8 MS. MUELLER: Well, let me -- let's go
9 there and see what it says.

10 MS. BJORKLUND: Yeah, I can't --

11 MS. MUELLER: Well, a couple pages back,
12 it's got visual, I see.

13 MS. BJORKLUND: The noise, because this
14 is such a concern of -- for this project, I will
15 likely have the applicant submit additional
16 information on their noise analyses.

17 MS. MUELLER: Which brings me to the fact
18 that I would like to see a noise analysis done by an
19 acoustical engineer with the exact models at the
20 exact atmospheric levels that the wind speeds are,
21 with the correct models in place, not a computer
22 simulation or anything of the sort. On the exact
23 models, because that's the only way we'll know what
24 the data is and how it's interpreted correctly.

25 MS. BJORKLUND: I'm not sure if that's

1 possible, but I will have them submit exactly what
2 they have done.

3 MS. MUELLER: Could I ask why is it not
4 possible?

5 MS. BJORKLUND: I don't know --

6 MS. MUELLER: An acoustical engineer is
7 what we want.

8 MS. BJORKLUND: I don't know if it's
9 possible to get on the existing turbine, I'm not
10 sure if it's on --

11 MS. MUELLER: Simulations don't tell it
12 like it is. The models are the only thing that
13 will.

14 MS. BJORKLUND: Okay. We'll take that
15 into consideration here.

16 MS. MUELLER: And then I just wanted to
17 go back for just a minute where it says we have a
18 low-density population. Let's just go back to 5.5
19 where it says here, the project is located in a
20 moderately populated rural area in central
21 Minnesota.

22 Well, which are we, are we low, are we
23 high, are we middle? I mean, come on, what is it?
24 We're a little over ten people per square mile out
25 here, that's not low population anymore. With 25

1 miles in the boundary, that makes 250 people,
2 roughly. That's a lot of people it's affecting.

3 But I'd like that question answered about
4 why the other issues are not addressed.

5 MS. BJORKLUND: The population density or
6 the shadow flicker?

7 MS. MUELLER: No. Not that one, the one
8 about the health issues or the lack thereof.

9 MS. BJORKLUND: The issues -- the health
10 issues typically are coming from the noise impacts
11 and the flicker impacts, and that's something that
12 we look at in the permitting process. And that's
13 something that will be addressed in the draft site
14 permit, if the PUC decides to issue a draft site
15 permit. And they will also be addressed on kind of
16 a big-picture scale in the environmental report.

17 Do we have any other people in the
18 audience who want to comment?

19 Yes.

20 MR. NOSBUSH: Do I have to go up there?
21 Dan Nosbush.

22 MS. BJORKLUND: Could you spell your last
23 name?

24 MR. NOSBUSH: N-O-S-B-U-S-H.

25 MS. BJORKLUND: Thank you.

1 MR. NOSBUSH: You're welcome. Lake Henry
2 Township, Dan.

3 First, we borrowed the money from the
4 Chinese for the stimulus money and the Chinese are
5 building a lot of turbines. And somebody said Italy
6 owns 49 percent of Geronimo, I haven't found that
7 part on the net yet.

8 And our green energy rates are about to
9 go up because where we used to live down by Brown
10 County you have to pay 2 cents more if you want
11 juice from the wind turbines down at Pipestone. So
12 I was just wondering where the average Joe Plumber
13 comes out ahead here?

14 MS. BJORKLUND: Well, I'm not sure if I
15 can answer that, but we will take your comments
16 under consideration as we move forward in this
17 process.

18 MR. NOSBUSH: Okay. Thank you.

19 MS. BJORKLUND: Thank you.

20 MR. NOSBUSH: Come up with something
21 good.

22 MS. BJORKLUND: Are there other comments?
23 Yes, sir.

24 MR. DAHL: Jeff Dahl. I'm on the zoning
25 board for Lake Henry Township, and I was wondering

1 how much is each tower estimated to run at, how much
2 to put up, is it going to be a million dollar tower,
3 3 million?

4 MS. BJORKLUND: I'll turn this over
5 to the company to answer. Mr. Pickar.

6 MR. PICKAR: On average, it's 2 million
7 per megawatt.

8 MR. DAHL: And how many megawatts are
9 there going to be?

10 MR. PICKAR: We're looking at models
11 right now of 1.5 to 2.3 megawatts.

12 MR. DAHL: Okay. So I was just -- I got
13 my nice little property tax statement the other day,
14 so if you figure it out it's \$.075 per dollar that
15 you're going to pay in property tax if anything goes
16 up.

17 So now if a farmer has it on his land and
18 it costs \$3 million to put up, are they going to be
19 paying the property tax on that land, because then
20 their property tax should go up \$2,250 per tower on
21 their land because they're putting up a usable
22 building or structure, or who pay the property taxes
23 on it?

24 MR. PICKAR: On the tower itself?

25 MR. DAHL: Yeah.

1 MR. PICKAR: The landowner does not pay
2 the excess property tax on that piece of land.

3 MS. BJORKLUND: The landowner is not
4 involved in the property taxes for the project, the
5 company pays a production tax instead of paying
6 property taxes.

7 MR. DAHL: Okay. So they pay that, so if
8 you take two acres to put it in, so that's going to
9 come out of our tax value, you know, so there's
10 still going to be a property tax on that, on where
11 the tower sits?

12 MS. BJORKLUND: No, they do not pay
13 property taxes.

14 MR. DAHL: Right. So then it comes
15 off -- so everybody else in the township is going to
16 be paying the property tax.

17 MS. BJORKLUND: No, no, no, no. Because
18 there's -- instead of paying property tax, the
19 company pays a production tax instead of property
20 taxes, and the landowner is not affected by this
21 process.

22 MR. DAHL: So they're still going to be
23 paying their property tax on that piece of land even
24 though they're not farming it, and then it's going
25 to come out of green acre land?

1 MS. BJORKLUND: You know, Larry, because
2 I can see the question that he has and he's talking
3 about the parcel literally where the turbine sits on
4 and theoretically, you know, before the project
5 they're paying property taxes on the entire acreage
6 and then the actual land the turbine's on.

7 MR. HARTMAN: As Ingrid had mentioned,
8 the company will be paying a production tax and,
9 again, that's in lieu of property taxes. I don't
10 know what their estimate is for taxes on this.
11 Generally assuming, say, a capacity factor between
12 35 and 40 percent, a 100-megawatt project might pay
13 upwards of \$300,000 per year in production taxes.

14 Now, that \$300,000 or whatever that
15 number is -- and, again, that depends on the energy
16 produced -- that money goes to the county, and then
17 the county gets 80 percent of that money. Let's say
18 the figure's \$300,000, the county gets 80 percent,
19 the hosting township gets 20 percent, that's a
20 yearly number. So it's going to vary a little bit
21 from year to year depending on production.

22 Now, the landowner that's hosting the
23 turbines will obviously get the annual payment from
24 the company. And again, I don't if it's a flat fee
25 or if it's based on a flat fee plus a percent of

1 production. I'm assuming the landowner's still
2 liable for property taxes on his property.
3 Obviously, the income will more than offset that.

4 My experience with pipelines, for
5 example, another -- I've been doing some pipelines
6 up in northern Minnesota. And in some cases the
7 question has also come up, the developer -- or,
8 excuse me, the owner of the pipeline company will
9 still pay property taxes. Some landowners have
10 argued because they can't use it, that should lower
11 their property tax. Now, again, that's up to the
12 county assessor to make that determination and you'd
13 have to take up with the assessor for the county of
14 St. Cloud (sic).

15 Now, as I mentioned, they pay a
16 production tax. Originally they were taxed as a
17 property tax. Well, because of accelerated
18 depreciation, the project might have paid, say,
19 three or four hundred thousand dollars, by year ten,
20 maybe they were paying 50, 60,000 dollars.

21 By going to production tax, it gives the
22 hosting community an annual revenue stream so
23 there's no depreciation if energy falls off. Now,
24 again, in some counties in Minnesota, the wind
25 developers tend to be the largest taxpayers in the

1 county right now. I know, for example, in Mower
2 County they pay about 15 percent of all property
3 taxes within the county. Wind developers last year
4 paid over \$2.1 million to the State of Minnesota,
5 those are based on 2008 numbers. Those numbers will
6 probably take a fairly significant pop again next
7 year for the wind farms that will be built this
8 summer. There are couple of them in southern
9 Minnesota and probably some others we haven't been
10 involved with.

11 Now, assuming the county doesn't raise
12 taxes, assuming the company -- let's say it's paying
13 300,000, just for discussion purposes, in essence
14 that lowers everyone else's mill rate, then.

15 MR. DAHL: So they still qualify for
16 green acres because they're going to be -- this is
17 an agricultural community, so now they just --

18 MR. HARTMAN: Well, green acres has a
19 definition under Minnesota statute, I don't know if
20 you mean green acre, per se, as defined in the metro
21 area?

22 MR. DAHL: Or as rural, because now
23 our -- as Lake Henry Township got notice that they
24 will become a commercial property if they put these
25 towers on it, so that means they couldn't qualify

1 for green acres in that one acre or two acres, so
2 then they'll be taxed in a different tax bracket.

3 MR. HARTMAN: I believe that would be
4 handled at the local level, not the state level, but
5 I'd have to check on that to be sure.

6 MR. DAHL: I mean, just so people know
7 when they're getting into it, because it's kind of
8 one of those catch-19s where all of a sudden, oh, I
9 guess now you're going to be taxed different or
10 you're not going to qualify no more.

11 MR. HARTMAN: And to my knowledge -- and
12 again, I can't speak to Stearns County or the
13 township, I know that in a lot of counties the
14 classification of the land, if it's zoned
15 agriculture, it doesn't change. So that would be
16 whoever makes that determination as to what they
17 choose to do, and I'm assuming that's more at the
18 local level.

19 MR. DAHL: All right. Thank you.

20 MS. BJORKLUND: I think Patrick would
21 like to address this issue, too.

22 MR. SMITH: I just wanted to note that
23 our lease requires us to take on any added tax
24 associated with the development of the project. So
25 if there is something that occurs with the road and

1 turbine pad area being rezoned into a commercial
2 district, we take on that additional cost.

3 MS. BJORKLUND: Thank you.

4 Are there other comments? Anybody who
5 hasn't spoken before? Does anybody else have any
6 comments? Anyone?

7 Yes, go ahead.

8 MS. MUELLER: Well, I just want to read
9 this and then I have a list of questions that I'd
10 like to ask. First 5.4.2.

11 UNIDENTIFIED: We can't hear you.

12 MS. MUELLER: Okay. I'll just take that
13 right out of there, 5.4.2, flip it over, just near
14 the end it says, while it may be true to some extent
15 that the ability to see turbines in the background
16 intrudes upon the purity of that experience, the
17 same can be said of any human habitation or activity
18 in the vicinity, and the presence of the turbines
19 may be less intrusive than many such activities.

20 I'm sorry, I cannot agree with that
21 statement. I don't know how anything that any of us
22 would be doing would be considered more intrusive.

23 But that being said, then I'd like to go
24 to the questions. First, I would like to invite
25 you, Geronimo Wind, to thoroughly explain and

1 publically share the clauses that are built into your
2 legal documents between yourselves and the
3 landowners.

4 MS. BJORKLUND: Well, that's not really
5 part of the permitting process here. If the company
6 chooses to do so, I mean, that's their decision.
7 But it's not part of the permitting process.

8 MS. MUELLER: Well, there's a lot of
9 questions about that and some of it does, in a
10 roundabout way, pertain, I think, to the permitting,
11 but we'll give you some time to ponder that thought.

12 I would like to know what is the cost per
13 kilowatt hour and how much maintenance do the
14 structures require?

15 MS. BJORKLUND: The maintenance is
16 typically governed by the warranty, there's a
17 warranty for the turbines that usually runs from two
18 to five years.

19 MS. MUELLER: Typically doesn't mean much
20 to me. I want to know -- I want figures because
21 typically can be, you know, anything.

22 MS. BJORKLUND: Well, then after the
23 warranty ends, then the company is responsible for
24 operation and maintenance.

25 MS. MUELLER: Well, how much would that

1 be, what's the estimate?

2 MS. BJORKLUND: I believe that's
3 addressed in the application.

4 MS. MUELLER: Could you tell me where?

5 MS. BJORKLUND: Yeah. There is a
6 section, it's in the table of contents for the
7 operation and maintenance costs.

8 MS. MUELLER: And that is what section,
9 and I'll review that, then.

10 MS. BJORKLUND: 1.1.5.

11 MS. MUELLER: Okay. My next question is
12 how many local individuals are actually employed,
13 not who might be, how many will actually be
14 employed?

15 MS. BJORKLUND: For the long term or just
16 for the construction?

17 MS. MUELLER: Both during the
18 construction and after.

19 MS. BJORKLUND: The company might want to
20 address that. I think they already addressed the
21 construction part of it, but I think they can
22 address how many long-term --

23 MS. MUELLER: Locally, I mean, how many
24 jobs will be created --

25 UNIDENTIFIED: Talk into the mic.

1 MS. MUELLER: I'm sorry.

2 MR. PICKAR: Locally, eight to ten jobs,
3 full time.

4 MS. MUELLER: And what's that pay scale?

5 MR. PICKAR: Well, it depends on what
6 jobs we hire for.

7 MS. MUELLER: Well, what are the job
8 positions and what pay scale do they go by?

9 MR. PICKAR: That would be determined by
10 our director of operations at that time for this
11 project.

12 MS. MUELLER: Okay. When can we ask that
13 question that we can get an answer?

14 MR. PICKAR: Once the project's up and
15 running.

16 MS. MUELLER: You don't have any
17 projections for the pay scale before that?

18 MR. PICKAR: It probably would be
19 available first quarter of 2011, would be my best
20 guess.

21 MS. MUELLER: What is the amount of money
22 that the facility actually pays in taxes to
23 community, local, state, and federal governments?

24 MR. PICKAR: Are you talking specifically
25 to the tax revenues?

1 MS. MUELLER: Or what is the amount of
2 money that the facility as a whole actually will pay
3 in taxes for the local -- the community, local,
4 state, and federal governments? I mean, what are
5 your taxes going to be and how much are you going to
6 pay? I mean, that's all I want to know.

7 MS. BJORKLUND: Well, we talked about the
8 production taxes they pay, that is governed by
9 statute and I can't remember that rate.

10 MR. PICKAR: \$1.20 per megawatt.

11 MS. BJORKLUND: \$1.20 per megawatt, and
12 that is paid to the county.

13 MS. MUELLER: Per megawatt, okay.

14 UNIDENTIFIED: Per megawatt hour.

15 MS. BJORKLUND: Per megawatt hour of
16 energy generated, I apologize. Thank you.

17 MS. MUELLER: And who in particular is
18 reaping the benefits from our local community?

19 MS. BJORKLUND: That is determined by the
20 county.

21 MS. MUELLER: The county determines who's
22 going to get the benefits from that?

23 MS. BJORKLUND: Well, I mean, they take
24 the revenue in, what they do with the tax revenue is
25 up to the county.

1 MS. MUELLER: Well, I think it's
2 important to know where it goes.

3 And exactly how much does this facility
4 produce in comparison with any other source of clean
5 energy?

6 MS. BJORKLUND: Well, in terms of
7 comparing it to other wind projects, it seems pretty
8 comparable in terms of looking at the estimated net
9 capacity factor of the area, it seems that this is
10 going to be in line with other wind projects.

11 MS. MUELLER: So no other alternative has
12 been compared to see that this is the best decision?

13 MS. BJORKLUND: Well, what we do --

14 MS. MUELLER: I mean, we need a
15 comparison.

16 MS. BJORKLUND: Well, what we do, our
17 staff, the Energy Facility Permitting staff, we look
18 at -- as part of the certificate of need process, we
19 do the environmental review portion of it. And we
20 look at environmental and human impacts of this wind
21 farm compared to a biomass plant or compared to not
22 building a plant or some other form of renewable
23 energy or whatever they happen to put in their
24 certificate of need as alternatives.

25 MS. MUELLER: Well, I'm not opposed to

1 green energy, but I know there are other sources
2 beside just wind. I think we need to explore that
3 before any final decisions can even be made in order
4 to give it a correct assessment.

5 MS. BJORKLUND: Well, we look at
6 alternatives in terms of the environmental impacts
7 as part of this process. But just to make a note on
8 that, it's hard to get the scale with other
9 renewable energy sources as wind, which is why the
10 renewable energy standard in Minnesota tends to be
11 made up mostly of wind projects fulfilling that
12 obligation.

13 MS. MUELLER: Which brings me to the
14 environmental study. I think we need a complete
15 environmental study, the same kind that's done when
16 a chemical plant is proposed for an area. It's no
17 less important here.

18 MS. BJORKLUND: Well, we do have the
19 environmental review and that's what our office
20 conducts. It's not the same as a federal EIS,
21 environmental impact statement, or anything to that
22 extent, but we do do the environmental review on it.

23 MS. MUELLER: But internally, it's not
24 anybody that's outside the agency?

25 UNIDENTIFIED: Come on, we need to adhere

1 to the five minutes.

2 MS. MUELLER: Excuse me, I just want my
3 questions answered.

4 UNIDENTIFIED: Yeah, well, there's a
5 five-minute limit.

6 MS. MUELLER: I would like that question
7 addressed. I don't need to stay up here any more,
8 but I do want an answer.

9 MS. BJORKLUND: And that was on the
10 environmental?

11 MS. MUELLER: Yes.

12 MS. BJORKLUND: Our office does do the
13 environmental review. As I stated before, the
14 application itself serves as the environmental
15 document that we can -- in which we conduct our
16 review. We also ask information to be submitted to
17 the record from the applicant to assist us with our
18 review. Sometimes we ask for information from the
19 applicant that is not submitted to the record
20 because that might be proprietary or trade secret
21 but is necessary for our staff to conduct an
22 environmental review.

23 So we take into consideration a full
24 range of environmental concerns, and we base a lot
25 of our assessment off of what we hear from the

1 public as well, in addition to what we know out
2 there are environmental concerns.

3 Patrick would like to add something.

4 MR. SMITH: I just wanted to clarify that
5 there is an examination of the alternative renewable
6 energy generation sources that was performed for the
7 certificate of need document. It walked through a
8 number of different options from solar to biomass,
9 and I believe that was on the CD that was also sent
10 to everybody in the project area, so I'd encourage
11 you to look it up. It's on page -- it starts on
12 page 23 of the certificate of need --

13 MS. BJORKLUND: Application.

14 MR. SMITH: -- application, and is also
15 reviewed by the Commission, however, not by the
16 folks here from the Office of Energy Security.

17 MS. BJORKLUND: Thank you so much for
18 that addition, Patrick.

19 And again, the alternatives from the
20 environmental aspect will be addressed in the
21 environmental report, which our office does conduct.

22 Other questions? Yes.

23 MR. STANG: I can say mine pretty loud.
24 Brandon Stang, I was wondering, your job is to file
25 for the permits and stuff, or go through the

1 research and then figure out if you can file for a
2 permit, if it's good or not, is that --

3 MS. BJORKLUND: No.

4 MR. STANG: Are you actually from
5 Geronimo, then?

6 MS. BJORKLUND: No, absolutely not. I'm
7 a part of the state, I work for the State of
8 Minnesota. We are -- we review these projects
9 independently, in an unbiased manner.

10 MR. STANG: I have another question.

11 MS. BJORKLUND: They submit the
12 application and we review it.

13 MR. STANG: No, I kind of caught on to
14 that. But how come all the questions that get
15 asked, how come you have to answer them? I mean,
16 aren't you -- shouldn't you be sitting there just
17 kind of listening and taking everything in? Like,
18 the guy next to you, he should be answering that.
19 Every time you go to him for a question, I don't
20 know. I don't know. I don't have the information
21 on me. I don't know.

22 You go out and do a lot of studies on
23 anything else you buy, well, you want it down to
24 nuts and bolts, everything. I mean, this is a big
25 investment for everybody in this room. I mean, you

1 give up your farmland, sure you're getting money out
2 of it, but I know like for us, I'm third generation,
3 maybe fourth if I can start talking a little bit
4 more. But I mean, we paid for that land three
5 times, we're going to sign it over to you, and all
6 the information, I don't have it on hand, I don't
7 know, pass it on to somebody else.

8 And I felt like tonight you had answered
9 90 percent of the questions for -- and you're not
10 even the --

11 MS. BJORKLUND: The reason why --

12 MR. STANG: You're not supposed to.

13 MS. BJORKLUND: -- I answered most of the
14 questions, this meeting is put on by the State of
15 Minnesota, it is run by the State of Minnesota, and
16 we are gathering comments to become part of the
17 record in the permitting process. So the meeting is
18 not put on by Geronimo.

19 MR. STANG: I know. I mean, I feel bad
20 for you. I mean, you're getting pounded with
21 questions and you're supposed to sit there and take
22 all the information in. But instead you're standing
23 and answering questions and you just -- I mean, I
24 feel like everybody else sitting around you should
25 be answering the questions and you should be

1 sitting -- now, does this make sense and write a
2 note.

3 I mean, I feel bad for you. I mean,
4 you're answering -- yeah, 500 questions maybe
5 tonight and you answered 499, maybe.

6 MS. BJORKLUND: Well, first, I don't need
7 to take notes, we have a court reporter, which is
8 wonderful. But most of the questions I can address
9 and I try to bring it back to the process. This is
10 the process, the permitting process.

11 I realize a lot of people have a lot of
12 questions, and part of this meeting is about
13 information and information sharing. But the main
14 purpose of the meeting is about gathering comments
15 for the scoping decision and for the issues to be
16 considered when I start writing the draft site
17 permit, and that's the main purpose of the meeting.

18 MR. STANG: Because we're not even big
19 farmers. I mean, we milk 120 cows, 550 acres of
20 land, just a family farm, three -- two uncles, my
21 grandpa's 73 years old, he comes out and drives a
22 tractor and tells me what to do, you know how that
23 goes if anybody's been there.

24 And then for us to invest in something
25 like this and turn around our land. I mean, that's

1 kind of hard. I mean, I want us to get bigger, I
2 want to milk more cows, I want more land. But
3 you're turning your land over to windmills. I mean,
4 I'm all for renewable energy. I mean, I don't know.
5 Some people know me, I do truck pulling. I go down
6 south to Worthington. I mean, I see them all over,
7 but I just don't see them in a big group like we've
8 got around here. I mean, I look out my -- just out
9 my front window, I can see what every neighbor
10 around me is doing, and then you're wanting to put
11 windmills up right there and it just make sense to
12 us.

13 I mean, it's just the way it is. I mean,
14 if they go through -- the way it sounds to me, it's
15 money. Money's going to push this through and the
16 ones that didn't sign, well, we're out of it. Now
17 if my neighbor gets it, puts a windmill up, if some
18 day I want to buy his farm, then I've got that thing
19 there and I'd just prefer not to have it there.

20 UNIDENTIFIED: You can't buy the farm.

21 MR. STANG: Yeah. Then I don't get
22 bigger and then I don't make money. It's just -- I
23 don't understand. I mean, if you guys want them up,
24 if my neighbors want them, I don't want to fight
25 with my neighbors. They belong -- that's their

1 land, they've paid for their land.

2 But I'm just saying, because we're
3 getting those phone calls, well, why aren't you
4 signing, why don't you come to these meetings? And
5 I've got four people at home and they didn't want to
6 come tonight, so I sent me.

7 MS. BJORKLUND: Well, we're glad that
8 you're here.

9 MR. STANG: So I mean, if you guys want
10 to put windmills up and stuff, I mean, I see them.
11 Willmar's got -- Willmar's college runs two of them,
12 I believe, I'm not sure, to my knowledge. And stuff
13 like that works. I mean, these windmills will work,
14 but they just seem like right in our area, if they
15 could go somewhere a little bigger where people that
16 got sections of land where you can put them in, like
17 that guy -- I can't remember his name, he came and
18 talked where he's got seven or eight of them, I
19 mean, if that works for him, good.

20 Just right now, it just don't seem like
21 it would work for us for the little bit of land
22 we've got. I mean, I've worked every Sunday since
23 snow was gone. I mean, everybody says you're not
24 opposed to work Sundays, but I mean, you've got to
25 do it. I'm just trying to make a little bit of

1 money.

2 So, I mean, windmills, they go up, they
3 go up around here. But it just doesn't make sense
4 then for you for answering all the questions. My
5 hat's off to you because I kind of felt like the
6 rest of them should have answered a little more of
7 the questions than you should have.

8 MS. BJORKLUND: Well, thank you so much
9 for your comments. You're also welcome to ask --
10 I'm sure the applicants are going to be sticking
11 around a little bit after the meeting, and you're
12 welcome to talk with them and ask them questions.

13 Are there others -- yes, we do have --
14 the applicant would like to speak.

15 MR. NIXON: At Geronimo, we're all about
16 openness, sharing, communicating. This isn't our
17 forum, that's why we haven't answered most of the
18 questions. But I'll make a promise to everybody
19 here and everybody that was here, you can tell them,
20 we'll come to the community and we'll hold an open
21 house and invite everybody. Okay? You can ask any
22 question you want of us, you know, we'll bring as
23 many educated folks on all these issues that you can
24 think of and you can spend good, quality time with
25 them, get your questions answered.

1 Everybody has their right to their own
2 opinion, I respect that. I hope everybody else
3 respects everybody else's right to their opinion. I
4 think you said it well, you know, you respect your
5 neighbor's rights on their own land.

6 MR. STANG: I don't want to fight. They
7 paid for their land, so they can do what they want.

8 MR. NIXON: It's not our forum. Poor
9 Ingrid had to take all the -- you know, not all, but
10 most of the heat. We'll come back, we'll take the
11 heat, we'll take your questions. We'll invite
12 everybody in the community, we're happy to have a
13 good, open, honest discussion about the facts.
14 That's my word.

15 MS. BJORKLUND: Well, thank you so much.
16 Are there others? There is someone else
17 in the audience who would like to comment.

18 There is a mic right there (indicating).

19 MS. LuANNE REECK: LuAnne Reeck. I'd
20 like to know, the \$200 million project, how much of
21 that money stays local?

22 MS. BJORKLUND: I think we addressed that
23 when we talked about the production tax and jobs.

24 MS. LuANNE REECK: No, no. I'm talking
25 about just the \$200 million, where does most of the

1 cost go, like the turbines, the engineers, the
2 lawyer?

3 MS. BJORKLUND: The turbines are a big
4 part of the project.

5 MS. LuANNE REECK: Okay. What
6 percentage?

7 MS. BJORKLUND: Would you like to answer
8 that, Geronimo, Justin?

9 MR. NIXON: Your typical wind farm,
10 roughly 70 percent of the cost is the turbines.

11 MS. LuANNE REECK: Okay. If they're
12 Vestas, where will they be built?

13 MR. NIXON: Colorado.

14 MS. LuANNE REECK: If they're Siemens,
15 where will they be built?

16 MR. NIXON: Iowa.

17 MS. LuANNE REECK: All of the turbines
18 for Siemens are built in Iowa?

19 MR. NIXON: That's where they build them
20 themselves, they make their towers throughout
21 different places in America. It makes no sense to
22 send a tower across the ocean. And their blades, I
23 believe -- I'm trying to think if Siemens makes
24 their own or if Elem makes them in Fargo, North
25 Dakota.

1 MS. LuANNE REECK: So why was the project
2 in New York that was created ended up going to
3 Germany?

4 MR. NIXON: I have no idea what you're
5 referring to.

6 MS. LuANNE REECK: It was a project in
7 New York and the turbines were made in Germany.

8 MS. BJORKLUND: The Siemens factory in
9 Iowa has been around three years, something like
10 that.

11 MS. LuANNE REECK: And is that the one
12 that they say the average pay scale is \$8 to \$15?

13 MS. BJORKLUND: I cannot speak to what
14 Siemens pays their employees.

15 MS. LuANNE REECK: Okay. And another
16 question is, I've heard a lot of the environment --
17 and we're going to do an environmental review. Is
18 it true that wind is exempt from the normal rules of
19 an environmental impact study as you would have in,
20 like, an oil pipeline?

21 MS. BJORKLUND: The rules are different,
22 that's correct.

23 MS. LuANNE REECK: So instead of the
24 usual, normal environmental impact study that you
25 would have if you had a highway bypass go through or

1 an oil pipeline, basically wind is exempt and so
2 what you review is all that's done?

3 MS. BJORKLUND: I would say that it's not
4 exempt, I would say that the review is different.
5 It's a different type of energy facility than other
6 types of energy facilities. It's different than a
7 pipeline, it's different than a transmission line,
8 which also has a different review. It's certainly
9 different than a coal plant or an nuclear plant.

10 That's why the legislature sets the --
11 the legislature sets the statute and it was the
12 legislators that wrote the statute that governs the
13 wind rules of our environmental review.

14 MS. LuANNE REECK: I just wanted to
15 clarify, because I think a lot of people think,
16 well, they'll do that environmental impact study,
17 but that is not the scope of the study that you do.

18 MS. BJORKLUND: If there is a desire to
19 have the rules changed, then, again, the forum for
20 that would be the Minnesota Capitol and write to
21 your legislators to request that the environmental
22 review be -- standard be different. But we follow
23 the Minnesota Chapter 216F.

24 MS. LuANNE REECK: Um-hmm.

25 MS. BJORKLUND: And the rules that --

1 MS. LuANNE REECK: My other question is,
2 in the last three years how many projects that have
3 applied have you approved?

4 MS. BJORKLUND: Larry has more history
5 there, but I know one was recently not approved,
6 that was New Ulm.

7 MS. LuANNE REECK: I know that there's
8 one that has been denied, how many have been
9 approved?

10 MS. BJORKLUND: Do you have a ballpark on
11 it, Larry, in the last couple of years?

12 MR. HARTMAN: In the last three years --

13 MS. LuANNE REECK: How about just say
14 pretty much all of them except for New Ulm?

15 MR. HARTMAN: Within the last three
16 years, the projects we've permitted, all have been
17 approved, not all of them built, with the exception
18 of the New Ulm project which was denied a draft site
19 permit.

20 MS. LuANNE REECK: And what size was
21 New Ulm?

22 MR. HARTMAN: Eight megawatts, I believe.

23 MS. LuANNE REECK: Eight. So, I mean,
24 that answers my question. One denied, all the rest
25 approved, and the only one denied was eight

1 megawatts, okay.

2 MS. BJORKLUND: Well, thank you.

3 Are there other comments from the --
4 okay. We have one more.

5 MS. LUTGEN: Betty Lutgen, again. I was
6 just looking through this booklet, the permitting
7 booklet, and I'm confused. And I heard, you know, a
8 rumor a week ago again. When Geronimo has to put a
9 plan in to decommission the towers, is that plan
10 from day one of operation or year 15? Because I'm
11 reading -- I don't know if I'm reading this right.

12 MS. BJORKLUND: Well, if a site permit is
13 issued, it will be addressed in the site permit.

14 MS. LUTGEN: So what you have in here is
15 not --

16 MS. BJORKLUND: What this is, is an
17 application, and what ends up in the site permit
18 could be very different than the application.

19 MS. LUTGEN: Okay. So this says that
20 they don't have put money away until year 15 to
21 decommission a tower, is that what this says or not?
22 Am I reading that wrong?

23 MS. BJORKLUND: I can't recall the
24 specifics in the application.

25 MR. PICKAR: In the application itself it

1 says Paynesville Wind will review and update the
2 cost estimate of decommissioning for the project
3 15 years after project's commissioning.

4 MS. LUTGEN: Right. But what year zero
5 to 14, do they have the \$58,000 in escrow and, say
6 you guys go bankrupt and their funding falls apart
7 at year ten, is there money to decommission those
8 towers? Or what happens to those towers if nobody
9 wants them and they're shut down for a year?
10 Because once they're shut down for a year, doesn't
11 the state say they have to be taken out?

12 MS. BJORKLUND: Again, that's going to be
13 addressed in the site permit, and I don't know what
14 that language will look like yet. But I will start
15 to draft the -- the first draft of the draft site
16 permit after May 10th.

17 MS. LUTGEN: Okay. But does the statute
18 say that they have to have money in escrow from year
19 zero?

20 MS. BJORKLUND: I don't think so. I
21 don't recall that, I don't think so.

22 MS. LUTGEN: Because that's kind of a big
23 thing, you know, if the thing goes belly up. I'm
24 not say it will or it won't, and if they can't sell
25 it to somebody, now the farmer has that on his land,

1 it's not running for over a year and the state says
2 they have to take it out, who takes it out if it's
3 before year 15?

4 MS. BJORKLUND: Yeah. You know, that is
5 a very serious concern and it's something we are
6 hearing more and more about, is decommissioning.

7 MS. LUTGEN: I guess my -- I guess until
8 last week I heard -- I thought that they always had
9 to have money in escrow and the magic dollar we
10 heard was \$40,000, now it says 58, but, you know --
11 which is fine, whatever. But it just confused me
12 when I read through this and I kind of wanted to get
13 it straight so that I know --

14 MS. BJORKLUND: Again, that's what the
15 applicant is planning on at this time, but the site
16 permit will also address decommissioning.

17 MS. LUTGEN: So they're planning on only
18 offering money at year 15 in escrow?

19 MS. BJORKLUND: That's what they have in
20 their application, but that's --

21 MS. LUTGEN: And not saying that the
22 state will okay that, all right.

23 MS. BJORKLUND: Correct.

24 Other comments? Yes, someone who hasn't
25 spoken before, I think.

1 MS. AGNES LIESER: No, I haven't. Saved
2 the best until last.

3 I'm Agnes Lieser, L-I-E-S-E-R. And I
4 just came on board recently when I got the last
5 letter about two weeks ago that we are in the
6 project, and I was very upset at the time. But I
7 have a couple of questions.

8 I have been -- or statements. I have
9 been down through the Marshall area many, many times
10 in the last 20 years, and I see these turbines
11 sitting there, doing absolutely nothing. And that
12 is my concern, what happens when the wind doesn't
13 blow, why aren't they turning?

14 MS. BJORKLUND: Wind is an intermittent
15 source, it only produces electricity when the wind
16 is blowing. Sometimes people see the turbines not
17 turning when the wind is blowing, and that could be
18 due to problems on the transmission. The
19 transmission can't accept the energy and it's called
20 curtailment, that's something else. Also, a turbine
21 could be down for maintenance.

22 MS. AGNES LIESER: That frequently, I
23 really question it. I've seen them many, many times
24 on my way down Highway 23.

25 My other question is, if this is so

1 green, why is there not carbon dioxide displacement
2 at 171 tons per year?

3 MS. BJORKLUND: I think what they meant
4 in their application was displacement, that instead
5 of using coal or some other source, that it's using
6 wind. So it's using a resource without producing
7 any type of carbon emission instead of using a
8 source like a coal plant that produces more --
9 natural gas also produces carbon.

10 MS. AGNES LIESER: Okay.

11 MS. BJORKLUND: Okay. Thank you.

12 MS. AGNES LIESER: But I'm still upset
13 that I wasn't onboard earlier.

14 MS. BJORKLUND: Well, thank you so much
15 for your comments. We really appreciate that.

16 Other comments from the audience? Other
17 comments? It's 10:30, okay. It looks like we're
18 about to wrap it up.

19 I just want to add a few closing
20 statements. Just to remind everybody, there are the
21 pale yellow comment sheets on the table in back. If
22 you would like to comment on this process during
23 this comment period right now, please fill out a
24 yellow sheet and you can turn it into the box, you
25 also can mail it in, it folds up, put a stamp on it,

1 mail it in.

2 You also can send me comments by my
3 e-mail address, which is also in the information --
4 I think on just about everything out there. We
5 have -- you also can provide comments on our
6 website, and I think the notice tells you how to do
7 that. I do --

8 Do you have a question?

9 UNIDENTIFIED: Yes, I do. We've been
10 told it takes ten days for any letters we send to
11 clear security, does it take that long for them to
12 clear for you to get them as well?

13 MS. BJORKLUND: I think I tend to get
14 them in a couple of days.

15 UNIDENTIFIED: Well, I just want to know,
16 because that ten days might make a difference.

17 MS. BJORKLUND: You know, you bring up an
18 important point, though. The deadline is May 10th.
19 If we get something in May 12th, do we disregard it?
20 Absolutely not.

21 UNIDENTIFIED: How can we be sure that
22 you don't?

23 MS. BJORKLUND: I promise you we won't.

24 UNIDENTIFIED: I know, but I don't
25 believe a lot of that stuff anymore.

1 MS. BJORKLUND: And then the pale blue
2 cards out there, that is to get on the State of
3 Minnesota, the Office of Energy Security, Energy
4 Facility Permitting project mailing list. This is
5 where you can follow this permitting process, in
6 which you will be notified every time we send
7 something out and it becomes part of the docket,
8 you'll be notified. So that's if you want to keep
9 track of this process. Again, this is not the
10 company's project list, this is our project list.

11 That about summarizes the information
12 that you can get at the end there. You can also
13 leave those blue cards here if you want to fill out
14 the project mailing list.

15 And so, with that, I'll call the meeting
16 to a close. And thank you very much for coming. We
17 really appreciate your comments. And, again, this
18 is the first step of the process so we have a ways
19 to go. Thank you.

20 (Public comment concluded.)
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