

For Immediate Release
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**MINNESOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
RE-OPENS THE GOODHUE WIND PROJECT
IN LIGHT OF CHANGES**

St. Paul, Minnesota - The Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (Commission) today decided to re-examine the Goodhue Wind project given the changes in the ownership structure, financing, date of service, and operating elements of the project. The Commission determined that there are sufficient questions to re-open the matter to consider additional evidence and legal arguments. There will be further proceedings at the Commission to consider the legal issues or whether to refer the matter to the Office of Administrative Hearings for fact-finding hearings.

The Commission issued a Certificate of Need and granted a Site Permit for the project by Orders dated August 23, 2011, with an in-service date of December 31, 2011.

The current project owner, New Era (formerly AWA Goodhue), had requested a delay in the in-service date. New Era and Xcel Energy, the power purchaser, are currently re-negotiating the project milestones, including the in-service date.

There are also questions surrounding the ownership structure of the project. In 2012 the Commission became aware of possible ownership changes in the project. By means of responses to Information Requests of the Commission, by mid-December of 2012, the responding parties had confirmed changes in the project developer and the sale of Limited Liability Company (LLC) membership interests in AWA Goodhue.

One of the key questions is whether the project qualifies for designation as a Community-Based Energy Development (C-BED) project. A C-BED project is, under Minnesota law, one intended to “optimize local, regional, and state benefits from renewable energy development, and to facilitate widespread development of community-based renewable energy projects throughout Minnesota.”

The Commission also considered whether it should approve the Avian and Bat Protection Plan (ABPP) submitted by the developer. Among several conditions contained in the Site Permit is a requirement that the developer prepare an ABPP in consultation with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The Commission must approve an

ABPP before construction may begin on the project. The Commission tabled consideration of this issue until the developer has addressed numerous public comments on the ABPP filed with the Commission.

The Goodhue Wind project is a proposal to build a 78-megawatt wind facility in Goodhue County. The project would be located just west of the city of Goodhue.

A final written Order formally documenting today's Commission decisions will be issued within a few weeks. The Order will be filed in the appropriate Dockets: Docket Numbers IP6701/CN-09-1186, E002/M-09-1349, E002/M-09-1350, and IP6701/WS-08-1233. These Dockets are accessible at the Commission's website via the Commission's e-Dockets system.