

**STATE OF MINNESOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION**

**SITE PERMIT FOR A  
LARGE WIND ENERGY CONVERSION SYSTEM**

**IN  
COTTONWOOD, MURRAY, AND REDWOOD COUNTIES**

**ISSUED TO  
PLUM CREEK WIND FARM, LLC**

**PUC DOCKET NO. IP-6997/WS-18-700**

In accordance with the requirements of Minnesota Statutes Chapter 216F and Minnesota Rules Chapter 7854 this site permit is hereby issued to:

**Plum Creek Wind Farm, LLC**

Plum Creek Wind Farm, LLC is authorized by this site permit to construct and operate a Large Wind Energy Conversion System of up to 414 megawatts (MW) consisting of up to 74 turbines. The Large Wind Energy Conversion System and associated facilities shall be built within the site identified in this permit and as portrayed on the site maps and in compliance with the conditions specified in this permit.

This **amended** site permit shall expire on September 23, 2051, thirty (30) years from September 23, 2021, the date this site permit was first approved.

Approved and adopted this 5th day of July, 2023

BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION

 for

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Will Seuffert,  
Executive Secretary

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## ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – Complaint Handling Procedures for Permitted Energy Facilities

Attachment 2 – Compliance Filing Procedure for Permitted Energy Facilities

Attachment 3 – Site Maps

## **1 SITE PERMIT**

The Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (Commission) hereby issues this site permit to Plum Creek Wind Farm, LLC (Permittee) pursuant to Minnesota Statutes Chapter 216F and Minnesota Rules Chapter 7854. This permit authorizes the Permittee to construct and operate the Plum Creek Wind Farm, an up to 414-megawatt (MW) nameplate capacity Large Wind Energy Conversion System (LWECS) and associated facilities in Cottonwood, Murray, and Redwood counties. The LWECS and associated facilities shall be built within the site identified in this permit and as identified in the attached site maps, hereby incorporated into this document.

### **1.1 Preemption**

Pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 216F.07, this permit shall be the sole site approval required for the location, construction, and operation of this project and this permit shall supersede and preempt all zoning, building, and land use rules, regulations, and ordinances adopted by regional, county, local, and special purpose governments.

## **2 PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The Plum Creek Wind Farm will be an up to 414 MW nameplate capacity LWECS in Cottonwood, Murray, and Redwood counties, Minnesota. The LWECS will consist of either 74 Vestas V162 5.6 MW turbines or 67 Siemens Gamesa SG170 6.2 MW turbines. The project also includes up to six alternate turbine locations for the Vestas model and 11 alternate turbine locations for the Siemens Gamesa model that can be used should any of the primary turbine locations be determined not adequate for construction or operation.

The project area includes approximately 73,000 acres of land. The Permittee currently holds easements and participation agreements on up to 53,223 acres of land within the project area. Upon completion of project construction and restoration, the project site will include no more than 113.1 acres of land converted to wind turbines and associated facilities approved by this site permit.

### **2.1 Associated Facilities**

Associated facilities for the project will include the following:

- aboveground and belowground electric collection and communications lines;
- aboveground electrical feeder lines;
- two collector substations;
- four permanent meteorological towers;
- a sonic detection and ranging unit or light detection and ranging unit;

- two aircraft detection lighting system radars;
- an operation and maintenance building;
- new gravel access roads; and
- up to three laydown areas and two temporary batch plant areas.

## 2.2 Project Location

The project is located in the following:

| County     | Township Name    | Township | Range | Sections                    |
|------------|------------------|----------|-------|-----------------------------|
| Cottonwood | Germantown       | 108      | 36    | 7, 18                       |
|            | Highwater        | 108      | 37    | 1-14, 16-18, 20, 21, 24, 25 |
|            | Ann              | 108      | 38    | 1-36                        |
|            | Westbrook        | 107      | 38    | 2-9                         |
| Murray     | Holly            | 108      | 39    | 1, 2, 11-15, 21-28, 30-36   |
|            | Dovray           | 107      | 39    | 1-16, 19-24, 28-33          |
|            | Murray           | 107      | 40    | 1, 12, 23-26, 36            |
|            | Des Moines River | 106      | 39    | 4, 5                        |
| Redwood    | North Hero       | 109      | 38    | 27-36                       |
|            | Lamberton        | 109      | 37    | 31-36                       |

## 3 DESIGNATED SITE

The site designated by the Commission for the Plum Creek Wind Farm is the site depicted on the site maps attached to this permit. The project area encompasses approximately 73,000 acres. Upon completion, the project will occupy no more than 113.1 acres of land converted to wind turbines and associated facilities approved by this permit. Within the project boundary, the LWECS and associated facilities shall be located on lands for which the Permittee has obtained wind rights.

### 3.1 Turbine Layout

The preliminary wind turbine and associated facility layouts are shown on the site maps attached to this permit. The preliminary layout represents the approximate location of wind turbines and associated facilities within the project boundary and identifies a layout that seeks to minimize the overall potential human and environmental impacts of the project, which were evaluated in the permitting process.

The final layout depicting the location of each wind turbine and associated facility shall be located within the project boundary. The project boundary serves to provide the Permittee with the flexibility to make minor adjustments to the preliminary layout to accommodate requests by landowners, local government units, federal and state agency requirements, and unforeseen conditions encountered during the detailed engineering and design process. Any modification to the location of a wind turbine and associated facility depicted in the preliminary layout shall be done in such a manner to have comparable overall human and environmental impacts and shall be specifically identified in the site plan pursuant to Section 10.3.

#### **4 SETBACKS AND SITE LAYOUT RESTRICTIONS**

##### **4.1 Wind Access Buffer**

Wind turbine towers shall not be placed less than five rotor diameters on the prevailing wind directions and three rotor diameters on the non-prevailing wind directions from the perimeter of the property where the Permittee does not hold the wind rights, without the approval of the Commission. This section does not apply to public roads and trails.

##### **4.2 Residences**

Wind turbine towers shall not be located closer than 1,000 feet from all residences or the distance required to comply with the noise standards pursuant to Minn. R. 7030.0040, established by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA), whichever is greater.

##### **4.3 Noise**

The wind turbine towers shall be placed such that the Permittee shall, at all times, comply with noise standards established by the MPCA as of the date of this permit and at all appropriate locations. The noise standards are found in Minnesota Rules Chapter 7030. Turbine operation shall be modified, or turbines shall be removed from service if necessary to comply with these noise standards. The Permittee or its contractor may install and operate turbines as close as the minimum setback required in this permit, but in all cases shall comply with MPCA noise standards. The Permittee shall be required to comply with this condition with respect to all homes or other receptors in place as of the time of construction, but not with respect to such receptors built after construction of the towers.

##### **4.4 Roads**

Wind turbines and meteorological towers shall not be located closer than 250 feet from the edge of the nearest public road right-of-way.

#### **4.5 Public Lands**

Wind turbines and associated facilities including foundations, access roads, underground cable, and transformers, shall not be located in publicly-owned lands that have been designated for recreational or conservation purposes, including, but not limited to, Waterfowl Production Areas, State Wildlife Management Areas, Scientific and Natural Areas or county parks, except in the event that the public entity owning those lands enters into a land lease and easement with the Permittee. Wind turbines towers shall also comply with the setbacks of Section 4.1.

#### **4.6 Wetlands**

Wind turbines and associated facilities including foundations, access roads, underground cable and transformers, shall not be placed in public waters wetlands, as shown on the public water inventory maps prescribed by Minnesota Statutes Chapter 103G, except that electric collector or feeder lines may cross or be placed in public waters or public waters wetlands subject to permits and approvals by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), and local units of government as implementers of the Minnesota Wetlands Conservation Act.

#### **4.7 Native Prairie**

Wind turbines and associated facilities including foundations, access roads, collector and feeder lines, underground cable, and transformers shall not be placed in native prairie, as defined in Minn. Stat. § 84.02, subd. 5, unless addressed in a prairie protection and management plan and shall not be located in areas enrolled in the Native Prairie Bank Program. Construction activities, as defined in Minn. Stat. § 216E.01, shall not impact native prairie unless addressed in a Prairie Protection and Management Plan.

The Permittee shall prepare a Prairie Protection and Management Plan in consultation with the DNR if native prairie, as defined in Minn. Stat. § 84.02, subd. 5, is identified within the site boundaries. The Permittee shall file the plan 30 days prior to submitting the site plan required by Section 10.3 of this permit. The plan shall address steps that will be taken to avoid impacts to native prairie and mitigation to unavoidable impacts to native prairie by restoration or management of other native prairie areas that are in degraded condition, by conveyance of conservation easements, or by other means agreed to by the Permittee, the DNR, and the Commission.



#### 4.8 Sand and Gravel Operations

Wind turbines and all associated facilities, including foundations, access roads, underground cable, and transformers shall not be located within active sand and gravel operations, unless otherwise negotiated with the landowner.

#### 4.9 Wind Turbine Towers

Structures for wind turbines shall be self-supporting tubular towers. The towers may be up to 125 meters (410 feet) above grade measured at hub height. The wind turbine specifications in the table below were provided in the Permittee's *August 28, 2020 Supplemental and Amended Site Permit Application for a Large wind Energy Conversion System*.

| Design Feature                     | Turbine     |                      |
|------------------------------------|-------------|----------------------|
|                                    | Vestas V162 | Siemens Gamesa SG170 |
| Capacity (MW)                      | 5.6         | 6.2                  |
| Total Height (m)                   | 200         | 200                  |
| Hub Height (m)                     | 119         | 115                  |
| Rotor Diameter (m)                 | 162         | 170                  |
| Cut-in Wind Speed (m/s)            | 3           | 3                    |
| Rated Capacity Wind Speed (m/s)    | 12          | 11                   |
| Cut-out Wind Speed (m/s)           | 24          | 25                   |
| Maximum Sustained Wind Speed (m/s) | 52.5        | 52.5                 |
| Wind Swept Area (m <sup>2</sup> )  | 21,520      | 22,698               |
| Rotor Speed (rpm)                  | 4.3 – 12.1  | 3.8 – 8.5            |
| Primary Turbine Positions          | 74          | 67                   |
| Alternate Turbine Positions        | 6           | 11                   |

#### 4.10 Turbine Spacing

The turbine towers shall be constructed within the site boundary as shown on the site maps. The turbine towers shall be spaced no closer than three rotor diameters in the non-prevailing wind directions and five rotor diameters on the prevailing wind directions. If required, up to 20 percent of the towers may be sited closer than the above spacing, but the Permittee shall minimize the need to site the turbine towers closer.

#### 4.11 Meteorological Towers

Permanent towers for meteorological equipment shall be free standing. Permanent meteorological towers shall not be placed less than 250 feet from the edge of the nearest

public road right-of-way and from the boundary of the Permittee's site control, or in compliance with the county ordinance regulating meteorological towers in the county the tower is built, whichever is more restrictive. Meteorological towers shall be placed on property the Permittee holds the wind or other development rights.

Meteorological towers shall be marked as required by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). There shall be no lights on the meteorological towers other than what is required by the FAA. This restriction shall not apply to infrared heating devices used to protect the wind monitoring equipment.

#### **4.12 Aviation**

The Permittee shall not place wind turbines or associated facilities in a location that could create an obstruction to navigable airspace of private and public airports (as defined in Minn. R. 8800.0100, subp. 24(a) and 24(b)) in Minnesota, adjacent states, or provinces. The Permittee shall apply the minimum obstruction clearance for private airports pursuant to Minn. R. 8800.1900, subp. 5. Setbacks or other limitations shall be followed in accordance with the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) Aeronautics and Aviation and the FAA. The Permittee shall notify owners of all known airports within six miles of the project of the project's anticipated construction start date at least 14 days prior to the pre-construction meeting. The Permittee shall obtain the necessary permits for structures that are considered to be an obstruction to safety of flight from MnDOT Aeronautics and Aviation and the FAA, as applicable, at least 14 days prior to the pre-operation meeting.

#### **4.13 Footprint Minimization**

The Permittee shall design and construct the LWECS so as to minimize the amount of land that is impacted by the LWECS. Associated facilities in the vicinity of turbines such as electrical/electronic boxes, transformers, and monitoring systems shall, to the greatest extent feasible, be mounted on the foundations used for turbine towers or inside the towers unless otherwise negotiated with the affected landowner.

### **5 GENERAL CONDITIONS**

The Permittee shall comply with the following conditions during construction and operation of the LWECS and associated facilities over the life of this permit.

## **5.1 Permit Distribution**

Within 30 days of permit issuance, the Permittee shall send a copy of the permit and the complaint procedures to any regional development commission, county auditor and environmental office, and city and township clerk in which any part of the site is located.

Within 30 days of permit issuance, the Permittee shall provide all affected landowners with a copy of this permit and the complaint procedures. In no case shall the landowner receive this site permit and complaint procedures less than five days prior to the start of construction on their property. An affected landowner is any landowner or designee that is within or adjacent to the permitted site.

## **5.2 Access to Property**

The Permittee shall contact landowners prior to entering the property or conducting maintenance within the site, unless otherwise negotiated with the affected landowner.

## **5.3 Construction and Operation Practices**

The Permittee shall comply with the construction practices, operation and maintenance practices, and material specifications described in its *August 28, 2020 Supplemental and Amended Site Permit Application for a Large Wind Energy Conversion System* and the record of the proceedings unless this permit establishes a different requirement in which case this permit shall prevail.

### **5.3.1 Field Representative**

The Permittee shall designate a field representative responsible for overseeing compliance with the conditions of this permit during construction of the project. This person shall be accessible by telephone or other means during normal business hours throughout site preparation, construction, cleanup, and restoration.

The Permittee shall file with the Commission the name, address, email, phone number, and emergency phone number of the field representative 14 days prior to commencing construction. The Permittee shall provide the field representative's contact information to affected landowners, residents, local government units and other interested persons 14 days prior to commencing construction. The Permittee may change the field representative at any time upon notice to the Commission, affected landowners, local government units and other interested persons.

### **5.3.2 Site Manager**

The Permittee shall designate a site manager responsible for overseeing compliance with the conditions of this permit during the commercial operation and decommissioning phases of the project. This person shall be accessible by telephone or other means during normal business hours for the life of this permit.

The Permittee shall file with the Commission the name, address, email, phone number, and emergency phone number of the site manager 14 days prior to commercial operation of the facility. The Permittee shall provide the site manager's contact information to affected landowners, residents, local government units and other interested persons 14 days prior to commercial operation of the facility. The Permittee may change the site manager at any time upon notice to the Commission, affected landowners, local government units and other interested persons.

### **5.3.3 Employee Training and Education of Permit Terms and Conditions**

The Permittee shall inform and educate all employees, contractors, and other persons involved in the construction and ongoing operation of the LWECS of the terms and conditions of this permit.

### **5.3.4 Public Services and Public Utilities**

During construction, the Permittee shall minimize any disruption to public services and public utilities. To the extent disruptions to public services or public utilities occur these will be temporary, and the Permittee will restore service promptly. Where any impacts to utilities have the potential to occur the Permittee will work with both landowners and local agencies to determine the most appropriate mitigation measures if not already considered as part of this permit.

### **5.3.5 Topsoil Protection**

The Permittee shall implement measures to protect and segregate topsoil from subsoil on all lands unless otherwise negotiated with the affected landowner.

### **5.3.6 Soil Compaction**

The Permittee shall implement measures to minimize soil compaction of all lands during all phases of the project's life and shall confine compaction to as small an area as practicable. Soil decompaction measures shall be utilized on all lands utilized for project construction and

travelled on by heavy equipment (*e.g.*, cranes and heavy trucks); even when soil compaction minimization measures are used.

### **5.3.7 Soil Erosion and Sediment Control**

The Permittee shall implement those erosion prevention and sediment control practices recommended by the MPCA Construction Stormwater Program. If construction of the facility disturbs more than one acre of land, or is sited in an area designated by the MPCA as having potential for impacts to water resources, the Permittee shall obtain a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System/State Disposal System (NPDES/SDS) Construction Stormwater Permit from the MPCA that provides for the development of a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) that describes methods to control erosion and runoff.

The Permittee shall implement reasonable measures to minimize erosion and sedimentation during construction and shall employ perimeter sediment controls, protect exposed soil by promptly planting, seeding, using erosion control blankets and turf reinforcement mats, stabilizing slopes, protecting storm drain inlets, protecting soil stockpiles, and controlling vehicle tracking. Contours shall be graded as required so that all surfaces provide for proper drainage, blend with the natural terrain, and are left in a condition that will facilitate re-vegetation and prevent erosion. All areas disturbed during construction of the facilities shall be returned to pre-construction conditions.

### **5.3.8 Wetlands and Water Resources**

Construction in wetland areas shall occur during frozen ground conditions to minimize impacts, to the extent feasible. When construction during winter is not possible, wooden or composite mats shall be used to protect wetland vegetation. Soil excavated from the wetlands and riparian areas shall be contained and managed in accordance with all applicable wetland permits. Wetlands and riparian areas shall be accessed using the shortest route possible in order to minimize travel through wetland areas and prevent unnecessary impacts.

Wetland and water resource areas disturbed by construction activities shall be restored to pre-construction conditions in accordance with the requirements of applicable state and federal permits or laws and landowner agreements. All requirements of the USACE, DNR, Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources, and local units of government shall be met.

### **5.3.9 Vegetation Removal**

The Permittee shall disturb or clear vegetation on the project site only to the extent necessary to assure suitable access for construction, and for safe operation and maintenance of the project. The Permittee shall minimize the number of trees removed in selecting the site layout

specifically preserving to the maximum extent practicable windbreaks, shelterbelts, living snow fences, and other vegetation, to the extent that such actions do not violate sound engineering principles.

#### **5.3.10 Application of Pesticides**

The Permittee shall restrict pesticide use to those pesticides and methods of application approved by the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA), the DNR, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Selective foliage or basal application shall be used when practicable. All pesticides shall be applied in a safe and cautious manner so as not to damage adjacent properties including crops, orchards, tree farms, apiaries, or gardens. The Permittee shall contact the landowner or designee to obtain approval for the use of pesticide at least 14 days prior to any application on their property. The landowner may request that there be no application of pesticides on any part of the site within the landowner's property. The Permittee shall provide notice of pesticide application to affected landowners and known beekeepers operating apiaries within three miles of the project site at least 14 days prior to such application.

#### **5.3.11 Invasive Species**

The Permittee shall employ best management practices to avoid the potential introduction and spread of invasive species on lands disturbed by project construction activities. The Permittee shall develop an Invasive Species Prevention Plan to prevent the introduction and spread of invasive species on lands disturbed by project construction activities and file with the Commission 14 days prior to the pre-construction meeting.

#### **5.3.12 Noxious Weeds**

The Permittee shall take all reasonable precautions against the spread of noxious weeds during all phases of construction. When utilizing seed to establish temporary and permanent vegetative cover on exposed soil, the Permittee shall select site appropriate seed certified to be free of noxious weeds. The Permittee shall consult with landowners on the selection and use of seed for replanting. To the extent possible, the Permittee shall use native seed mixes.

#### **5.3.13 Public Roads**

At least 14 days prior to the pre-construction meeting, the Permittee shall identify all state, county, or township roads that will be used for the project and shall notify the Commission and the state, county, or township governing body having jurisdiction over the roads to determine if the governmental body needs to inspect the roads prior to use of these roads. Where practical, existing roadways shall be used for all activities associated with the project. Where practical,

all-weather roads shall be used to deliver cement, turbines, towers, assembled nacelles, and all other heavy components to and from the turbine sites.

The Permittee shall, prior to the use of such roads, make satisfactory arrangements (i.e., approved permits, written authorizations, road use agreements, or development agreements) with the appropriate state, county, or township governmental body having jurisdiction over roads to be used for construction of the project, for maintenance and repair of roads that may be subject to increased impacts due to transportation of equipment and project components. The Permittee shall notify the Commission of such arrangements upon request.

#### **5.3.14 Turbine Access Roads**

The Permittee shall construct the least number of turbine access roads necessary to safely and efficiently operate the project and satisfy landowner requests. Access roads shall be low profile roads so that farming equipment can cross them and shall be covered with Class 5 gravel or similar material. Access roads shall not be constructed across streams and drainage ditches without required permits and approvals. When access roads are constructed across streams, drainage ways, or drainage ditches, the access roads shall be designed and constructed in a manner so runoff from the upper portions of the watershed can readily flow to the lower portion of the watershed. Any access roads that are constructed across streams or drainage ditches shall be designed and constructed in a manner that maintains existing fish passage. Access roads that are constructed across grassed waterways, which provide drainage for surface waters that are ephemeral in nature, are not required to maintain or provide fish passage. Access roads shall be constructed in accordance with all necessary township, county or state road requirements and permits.

#### **5.3.15 Private Roads**

The Permittee shall promptly repair private roads or lanes damaged when moving equipment or when obtaining access to the site, unless otherwise negotiated with the affected landowner.

#### **5.3.16 Archaeological and Historic Resources**

The Permittee shall make every effort to avoid impacts to identified archaeological and historic resources when constructing the facility. In the event that a resource is encountered, the Permittee shall consult with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and the State Archaeologist. Where feasible, avoidance of the resource is required. Where not feasible, mitigation must include an effort to minimize project impacts on the resource consistent with SHPO and State Archaeologist requirements.

Prior to construction, workers shall be trained about the need to avoid cultural properties, how to identify cultural properties, and procedures to follow if undocumented cultural properties, including gravesites, are found during construction. If human remains are encountered during construction, the Permittee shall immediately halt construction at such location and promptly notify local law enforcement and the State Archaeologist. Construction at such location shall not proceed until authorized by local law enforcement and the State Archaeologist.

#### **5.3.17 Interference**

At least 14 days prior to the pre-construction meeting, the Permittee shall submit to the Commission an assessment of television and radio signal reception, microwave signal patterns, and telecommunications in the project area. The assessment shall be designed to provide data that can be used in the future to determine whether the turbines and associated facilities are the cause of disruption or interference of television or radio reception, microwave patterns, or telecommunications in the event residents should complain about such disruption or interference after the turbines are placed in operation. The Permittee shall be responsible for alleviating any disruption or interference of these services caused by the turbines or any associated facilities.

The Permittee shall not operate the project so as to cause microwave, television, radio, telecommunications, or navigation interference in violation of Federal Communications Commission (FCC) regulations or other law. In the event the project or its operations cause such interference, the Permittee shall take timely measures necessary to correct the problem.

#### **5.3.18 Livestock Protection**

The Permittee shall take precautions to protect livestock during all phases of the project's life.

#### **5.3.19 Fences**

The Permittee shall promptly replace or repair all fences and gates removed or damaged during all phases of the project's life unless otherwise negotiated with the affected landowner. When the Permittee installs a gate where electric fences are present, the Permittee shall provide for continuity in the electric fence circuit.

#### **5.3.20 Drainage Tiles**

The Permittee shall take into account, avoid, promptly repair or replace all drainage tiles broken or damaged during all phases of the project's life unless otherwise negotiated with the affected landowner.



### **5.3.21 Equipment Storage**

The Permittee shall not locate temporary equipment staging areas on lands under its control unless negotiated with affected landowner. Temporary equipment staging areas shall not be located in wetlands or native prairie as defined in Sections 4.6 and 4.7.

### **5.3.22 Restoration**

The Permittee shall, as soon as practical following construction of each turbine, restore the areas affected by construction to the condition that existed immediately before construction began, to the extent possible. The time period to complete restoration may be no longer than 12 months after the completion of construction, unless otherwise negotiated with the affected landowner. Restoration shall be compatible with the safe operation, maintenance and inspection of the project. Within 60 days after completion of all restoration activities, the Permittee shall advise the Commission in writing of the completion of such activities.

### **5.3.23 Cleanup**

All waste and scrap that is the product of construction shall be removed from the site and all premises on which construction activities were conducted and properly disposed of upon completion of each task. Personal litter, including bottles, cans, and paper from construction activities shall be removed on a daily basis.

### **5.3.24 Pollution and Hazardous Waste**

All appropriate precautions to protect against pollution of the environment shall be taken by the Permittee. The Permittee shall be responsible for compliance with all laws applicable to the generation, storage, transportation, clean up and disposal of all wastes generated during construction, restoration, and operation of the facility.

### **5.3.25 Damages**

The Permittee shall fairly restore or compensate landowners for damage to crops, fences, private roads and lanes, landscaping, drain tile, or other damages sustained during construction.

### **5.3.26 Public Safety**

The Permittee shall provide educational materials to landowners adjacent to the site and, upon request, to interested persons about the project and any restrictions or dangers associated with the project. The Permittee shall also provide any necessary safety measures such as warning

signs and gates for traffic control or to restrict public access. The Permittee shall submit the location of all underground facilities, as defined in Minn. Stat. § 216D.01, subd. 11, to Gopher State One Call following the completion of construction at the site.

#### **5.3.27 Tower Identification**

All turbine towers shall be marked with a visible identification number.

#### **5.3.28 Federal Aviation Administration Lighting**

Towers shall be marked as required by the FAA. There shall be no lights on the towers other than what is required by the FAA. This restriction shall not apply to infrared heating devices used to protect the wind monitoring equipment. The Permittee shall install and employ an FAA-approved lighting mitigation system, such as an aircraft detection lighting system (ADLS), light intensity dimming solution (LIDS), or other FAA-approved mitigation method. The Permittee shall describe the lighting mitigation system used for the project in its site plan.

### **5.4 Communication Cables**

The Permittee shall place all communication and supervisory control and data acquisition cables underground and within or adjacent to the land necessary for turbine access roads unless otherwise negotiated with the affected landowner.

### **5.5 Electrical Collector and Feeder Lines**

Collector lines that carry electrical power from each individual transformer associated with a wind turbine to an internal project interconnection point shall be buried underground. Collector lines shall be placed within or adjacent to the land necessary for turbine access roads unless otherwise negotiated with the affected landowner.

Feeder lines that carry power from an internal project interconnection point to the project substation or interconnection point on the electrical grid may be overhead or underground. Feeder line locations shall be negotiated with the affected landowner. Any overhead or underground feeder lines that parallel public roads shall be placed within the public rights-of-way or on private land immediately adjacent to public roads. If overhead feeder lines are located within public rights-of-way, the Permittee shall obtain approval from the governmental unit responsible for the affected right-of-way.

Collector and feeder line locations shall be located in such a manner as to minimize interference with agricultural operations including, but not limited to, existing drainage patterns, drain tile, future tiling plans, and ditches. Safety shields shall be placed on all guy

wires associated with overhead feeder lines. The Permittee shall submit the engineering drawings of all collector and feeder lines in the site plan pursuant to Section 10.3.

## **5.6 Other Requirements**

### **5.6.1 Safety Codes and Design Requirements**

The LWECS and associated facilities shall be designed to meet or exceed all relevant local and state codes, Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, Inc. (IEEE) standards, the National Electric Safety Code (NESC), and North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC) requirements. The Permittee shall report to the Commission on compliance with these standards upon request.

### **5.6.2 Other Permits and Regulations**

The Permittee shall comply with all applicable state rules and statutes. The Permittee shall obtain all required permits for the project and comply with the conditions of those permits unless those permits conflict with or are preempted by federal or state permits and regulations. A list of the permits known to be required is included in the permit application.

At least 14 days prior to the pre-construction meeting, the Permittee shall submit a filing with a detailed status update of all permits, authorizations, and approvals. The detailed status update shall include the permitting agency or authority, the name of the permit, a description of the authorization or approval being sought, contact person and contact information for the permitting agency or authority, application submittal date, and the date the permit, authorization, or approval was issued or is anticipated to be issued.

The Permittee shall demonstrate that it has obtained all necessary permits, authorizations, and approvals by filing an affidavit stating as such, prior to commencing project construction for that portion of the project. The Permittee shall provide a copy of any such permits, authorizations, and approvals upon Commission request.

The Permittee shall comply with all terms and conditions of permits or licenses issued by the counties, cities, and municipalities affected by the project that do not conflict with or are not preempted by federal or state permits and regulations.

## **6 SPECIAL CONDITIONS**

Special conditions shall take precedence over other conditions of this permit should there be a conflict.

### **6.1 Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) and Landowner Review of Plans**

The Permittee, prior to finalization and installation, shall provide the local SWCD and participating landowners with the opportunity to review and comment on access road plans and all other infrastructure plans and designs in order to minimize the potential for water ponding, gully erosion, and damage or failure to existing conservation practices, such as terraces, sediment control basins or diversions. The Permittee shall file documentation that this condition has been complied with at least 14 days prior to the pre-construction meeting.

### **6.2 Henslow's Sparrow**

To avoid impacts to the state-listed Henslow's sparrow, no construction may take place within undisturbed mesic and dry prairie areas between May 15 and July 15 unless presence/absence studies have been performed during the same nesting season as the construction activities and ruled out the actual presence of the Henslow's sparrow.

### **6.3 Archaeological Assessment**

The Permittee shall complete a Phase 1a archaeological assessment due to the nature and location of the project as recommended by SHPO. The Permittee shall complete a Phase I archaeological survey if the Phase 1a archaeological assessment determines that such a survey is needed or otherwise required. If performed, the Phase archaeological I survey must meet the requirements of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Identification and Evaluation and should include an evaluation of National Register eligibility for any properties that are identified.

## **7 SURVEYS AND REPORTING**

### **7.1 Biological and Natural Resource Inventories**

The Permittee, in consultation with the Commission and the DNR, shall design and conduct pre-construction desktop and field inventories of existing wildlife management areas, scientific and natural areas, recreation areas, native prairies and forests, wetlands, and any other biologically sensitive areas within the project site and assess the presence of state- or federally-listed or threatened species. The results of the inventories shall be filed with the Commission at least 30 days prior to the pre-construction meeting to confirm compliance of conditions in this permit. The Permittee shall file with the Commission, any biological surveys or studies conducted on this project, including those not required under this permit.

## **7.2 Shadow Flicker**

At least 14 days prior to the pre-construction meeting, the Permittee shall provide data on shadow flicker for each residence of non-participating landowners and participating landowners within and outside of the project boundary potentially subject to turbine shadow flicker exposure. Information shall include the results of modeling used, assumptions made, and the anticipated levels of exposure from turbine shadow flicker for each residence. The Permittee shall provide documentation on its efforts to avoid, minimize and mitigate shadow flicker exposure. The results of any modeling shall be filed with the Commission at least 14 days prior to the pre-construction meeting to confirm compliance with conditions of this permit.

The Permittee shall develop a project wide Shadow Flicker Management Plan that reduces shadow flicker exposure to less than 30 hours per year for all occupied residences. The Permittee may exclude from the Shadow Flicker Management Plan residences that exceed 30 hours per year by providing documentation that the landowners have reached an alternative agreement as it relates to shadow flicker. If agreement is reached with a landowner regarding shadow flicker after the pre-construction meeting the Permittee may remove that residence from coverage under the plan.

Commission staff and EERA staff will be responsible for the review and approval of the Shadow Flicker Management Plan. The Shadow Flicker Management Plan shall contain annual reporting filing requirements to monitor compliance and receipt of notices of any later agreements.

## **7.3 Wake Loss Studies**

At least 14 days prior to the pre-construction meeting, the Permittee shall file with the Commission the pre-construction micro-siting analysis leading to the final tower locations and an estimate of total project wake losses. As part of the annual report on project energy production required under Section 10.8 of the permit the Permittee shall file with the Commission any operational wake loss studies conducted on this project during the calendar year preceding the report.

## **7.4 Noise Studies**

The Permittee shall file a proposed methodology for the conduct of a post-construction noise study at least 14 days prior to the pre-construction meeting. The Permittee shall develop the post-construction noise study methodology in consultation with the Department of Commerce (Department). The study must incorporate the Department's Noise Study Protocol to determine the operating LWECs noise levels at different frequencies and at various distances from the turbines at various wind directions and speeds. The Permittee must conduct the post-

construction noise study and file with the Commission the completed post-construction noise study within 18 months of commencing commercial operation.

## **7.5 Avian and Bat Protection**

### **7.5.1 Operational Phase Fatality Monitoring**

The Permittee shall utilize a qualified third party to conduct a minimum of two full years of avian and bat fatality monitoring following the commencement of the operational phase of the facility. Monitoring activities and results will be coordinated directly with the DNR, the USFWS, the Department, and the Commission. Detailed monitoring protocols, agency coordination, and any avoidance and minimization measures will be detailed in the Avian and Bat Protection Plan (ABPP).

### **7.5.2 Avian and Bat Protection Plan**

The Permittee shall comply with the provisions of the most recently filed and accepted version of the ABPP. The initial version of the ABPP submitted for this project as part of the *August 28, 2020 Supplemental and Amended Site Permit Application for a Large wind Energy Conversion System*, and all necessary revisions that occur during the permitting process will be incorporated into a permit version. The permit version of the ABPP shall be filed with the Commission 14 days before the pre-construction meeting, and revisions must include any updates associated with final construction plans and site plans.

The ABPP must address steps to be taken to identify and mitigate impacts to avian and bat species during the construction phase and the operation phase of the facility. The ABPP shall also include formal and incidental post-construction fatality monitoring, training, wildlife handling, documentation (*e.g.*, photographs), and reporting protocols for each phase of the project.

The Permittee shall, by the 15th of March following each complete or partial calendar year of operation, file with the Commission an annual report detailing findings of its annual audit of ABPP practices. The annual report shall include summarized and raw data of bird and bat fatalities and injuries and shall include bird and bat fatality estimates for the project using agreed upon estimators from the prior calendar year. The annual report shall also identify any deficiencies or recommended changes in the operation of the project or in the ABPP to reduce avian and bat fatalities and shall provide a schedule for implementing the corrective or modified actions. The Permittee shall provide a copy of the report to the Department, the DNR, and the USFWS at the time of filing with the Commission.

### **7.5.3 Quarterly Incident Reports**

The Permittee shall submit quarterly avian and bat reports to the Commission. Quarterly reports are due by the 15th of January, April, July, and October commencing the day following commercial operation and terminating upon the expiration of this permit. Each report shall identify any dead or injured avian and bat species, location of find by turbine number, and date of find for the reporting period in accordance with the reporting protocols. If a dead or injured avian or bat species is found, the report shall describe the potential cause of the occurrence (if known) and the steps taken to address future occurrences. The Permittee shall provide a copy of the report to the DNR and to the FWS at the time of filing with the Commission.

### **7.5.4 Immediate Incident Reports**

The Permittee shall notify the Commission, the Department, the USFWS, and the DNR within 24 hours of the discovery of any of the following:

- (a) five or more dead or injured birds or bats, at an individual turbine location, within a five day reporting period;
- (b) twenty or more dead or injured birds or bats, across the entire facility, within a five day reporting period;
- (c) one or more dead or injured state threatened, endangered, or species of special concern;
- (d) one or more dead or injured federally listed species, including species proposed for listing; or
- (e) one or more dead or injured bald or golden eagle(s).

In the event that one of the four discoveries listed above should be made, the Permittee must file with the Commission within seven days, a compliance report identifying the details of what was discovered, the turbine where the discovery was made, a detailed log of agencies and individuals contacted, and current plans being undertaken to address the issue.

### **7.5.5 Turbine Operational Curtailment**

The Permittee shall operate all facility turbines so that all turbines are locked or feathered up to the manufacturer's standard cut-in speed from one-half hour before sunset to one-half hour after sunrise of the following day from April 1 to October 31 of each year of operation. All

operating turbines at the facility must be equipped with operational software that is capable of allowing for adjustment of turbine cut-in speeds.

## **8 AUTHORITY TO CONSTRUCT LWECS**

### **8.1 Wind Rights**

At least 14 days prior to the pre-construction meeting, the Permittee shall demonstrate that it has obtained the wind rights and any other rights necessary to construct and operate the project within the boundaries authorized by this permit. Nothing in this permit shall be construed to preclude any other person from seeking a permit to construct a wind energy conversion system in any area within the boundaries of the project covered by this permit if the Permittee does not hold exclusive wind rights for such areas.

### **8.2 Power Purchase Agreement**

In the event the Permittee does not have a power purchase agreement or some other enforceable mechanism for sale of the electricity to be generated by the project at the time this permit is issued, the Permittee shall provide notice to the Commission when it obtains a commitment for purchase of the power. This permit does not authorize construction of the project until the Permittee has obtained a power purchase agreement or some other enforceable mechanism for sale of the electricity to be generated by the project. In the event the Permittee does not obtain a power purchase agreement or some other enforceable mechanism for sale of the electricity to be generated by the project within four years of the issuance of the September 23, 2021 site permit, the Permittee must advise the Commission of the reason for not having such commitment. In such event, the Commission may determine whether this permit should be amended or revoked. No amendment or revocation of this permit may be undertaken except in accordance with Minn. R. 7854.1300.

### **8.3 Failure to Commence Construction**

If the Permittee has not completed the pre-construction surveys required under this permit and commenced construction of the project within four years of the issuance of the September 23, 2021 site permit, the Permittee must advise the Commission of the reason construction has not commenced. In such event, the Commission shall make a determination as to whether this permit should be amended or revoked. No revocation of this permit may be undertaken except in accordance with applicable statutes and rules, including Minn. R. 7854.1300.



## **9 COMPLAINT PROCEDURES**

At least 14 days prior to the pre-construction meeting, the Permittee shall submit to the Commission the procedures that will be used to receive and respond to complaints. The procedures shall be in accordance with the requirements of Minn. R. 7829.1500 or Minn. R. 7829.1700, and as set forth in the complaint procedures attached to this permit.

Upon request, the Permittee shall assist the Commission with the disposition of unresolved or longstanding complaints. This assistance shall include, but is not limited to, the submittal of complaint correspondence and complaint resolution efforts.

## **10 COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS**

Failure to timely and properly make compliance filings required by this permit is a failure to comply with the conditions of this permit. Compliance filings must be electronically filed with the Commission.

### **10.1 Pre-Construction Meeting**

Prior to the start of any construction, the Permittee shall participate in a pre-construction meeting with Department and Commission staff to review pre-construction filing requirements, scheduling, and to coordinate monitoring of construction and site restoration activities. Within 14 days following the pre-construction meeting, the Permittee shall file with the Commission, a summary of the topics reviewed and discussed and a list of attendees. The Permittee shall indicate in the filing the construction start date.

### **10.2 Pre-Operation Meeting**

At least 14 days prior to commercial operation of the facility, the Permittee shall participate in a pre-operation meeting with Department and Commission staff to coordinate field monitoring of operation activities for the project. Within 14 days following the pre-operation meeting, the Permittee shall file with the Commission, a summary of the topics reviewed and discussed and a list of attendees.

### **10.3 Site Plan**

At least 14 days prior to the pre-construction meeting, the Permittee shall provide the Commission, the Department, and the environmental services and public works departments of Cottonwood, Murray, and Redwood counties with a site plan that includes specifications and drawings for site preparation and grading; specifications and locations of all turbines and other structures to be constructed including all electrical equipment, collector and feeder lines,

pollution control equipment, fencing, roads, and other associated facilities; and procedures for cleanup and restoration. The documentation shall include maps depicting the site boundary and layout in relation to that approved by this permit. The Permittee shall document, through GIS mapping, compliance with the setbacks and site layout restrictions required by this permit, including compliance with the noise standards pursuant to Minnesota Rules Chapter 7030. At the same time, the Permittee shall notify affected landowners and city and town clerks that the site plan is on file with the Commission and the environmental services and public works departments of Cottonwood, Murray, and Redwood counties. The Permittee may submit a site plan and engineering drawings for only a portion of the project if the Permittee intends to commence construction on certain parts of the project before completing the site plan and engineering drawings for other parts of the project.

The Permittee may not commence construction until the 30 days has expired or until the Commission has advised the Permittee in writing that it has completed its review of the documents and determined that the planned construction is consistent with this permit. If the Permittee intends to make any significant changes to its site plan or the specifications and drawings after submission to the Commission, the Permittee shall notify the Commission, the Department, the environmental services and public works departments of Cottonwood, Murray, and Redwood counties, city and town clerks, and the affected landowners at least five days before implementing the changes. No changes shall be made that would be in violation of any of the terms of this permit.

In the event that previously unidentified human and environmental conditions are discovered during construction that by law or pursuant to conditions outlined in this permit would preclude the use of that site as a turbine site, the Permittee shall have the right to move or relocate turbine site. Under these circumstances, the Permittee shall notify the Commission, the Department, the MPCA, the DNR, the environmental services and public works departments of Cottonwood, Murray, and Redwood counties, city and town clerks, and the affected landowners of any turbines that are to be relocated, and provide the previously unidentified environmental conditions and how the movement of the turbine mitigates the human and environmental impact at least five days before implementing the changes. No changes shall be made that would be in violation of any terms of this permit.

#### **10.4 Status Reports**

The Permittee shall file status reports with the Commission on progress regarding site construction. The Permittee need not report more frequently than monthly. Reports shall begin with the commencement of site construction and continue until completion of restoration. Reports shall describe construction activities and progress and activities undertaken in compliance with this permit. Reports shall include text and photographs.

### **10.5 Labor Statistic Reporting**

The Permittee shall file quarterly reports with the Commission within 45 days of the end of the quarter regarding construction workers that participated in the construction of the project. The reports shall (a) detail the Permittee's efforts and the site contractor's efforts to hire Minnesota workers, and (b) provide an account of: (i) the gross number of hours worked by or full-time equivalent workers who are Minnesota residents, as defined in Minn. Stat. § 290.01, subd. 7; (ii) the gross number of hours worked by or full-time equivalent workers who are residents of other states, but maintain a permanent residence within 150 miles of the project; and (iii) the total gross hours worked or total full-time equivalent workers. Permittee shall work with its contractor to determine the suitable reporting metric. The report may not include personally identifiable data.

### **10.6 In-Service Date**

At least three days before the facility is to be placed into service, the Permittee shall notify the Commission of the date on which the facility will be placed into service and the date on which construction was completed.

### **10.7 As-Builts**

Within 90 days after completion of construction, the Permittee shall submit copies of all final as-built plans and specifications developed during the project.

### **10.8 GPS Data**

Within 90 days after completion of construction, the Permittee shall submit to the Commission, in the format requested by the Commission, geo-spatial information (*e.g.*, ArcGIS compatible map files, GPS coordinates, associated database of characteristics) for all structures associated with the LWECS.

### **10.9 Project Energy Production**

The Permittee shall, by February 1st following each complete or partial year of project operation, file a report with the Commission on the monthly energy production of the project including:

- (a) the installed nameplate capacity of the permitted project;
- (b) the total monthly energy generated by the project in MW hours;

- (c) the monthly capacity factor of the project;
- (d) yearly energy production and capacity factor for the project;
- (e) the operational status of the project and any major outages, major repairs, or turbine performance improvements occurring in the previous year; and
- (f) any other information reasonably requested by the Commission.

The permittee shall file this information in a format recommended in the Department's guidance on energy production reporting. This information shall be considered public and must be filed electronically.

#### **10.10 Wind Resource Use**

The Permittee shall, by February 1st following each complete or partial calendar year of operation, file with the Commission the average monthly and average annual wind speed collected at one permanent meteorological tower during the preceding year or partial year of operation. This information shall be considered public and must be filed electronically.

#### **10.11 Emergency Response**

The Permittee shall prepare an Emergency Response Plan in consultation with the emergency responders having jurisdiction over the facility prior to project construction. The Permittee shall submit a copy of the plan, along with any comments from emergency responders, to the Commission at least 14 days prior to the pre-construction meeting and a revised plan, if any, at least 14 days prior to the pre-operation meeting. The Permittee shall provide as a compliance filing confirmation that the Emergency Response Plan was provided to the emergency responders and Public Safety Answering Points (PSAP) with jurisdiction over the facility prior to commencement of construction. The Permittee shall obtain and register the facility address or other location indicators acceptable to the emergency responders and PSAP having jurisdiction over the facility.

#### **10.12 Extraordinary Events**

Within 24 hours of discovery of an occurrence, the Permittee shall notify the Commission of any extraordinary event. Extraordinary events include but shall not be limited to: fires, tower collapse, thrown blade, acts of sabotage, collector or feeder line failure, and injured worker or private person. The Permittee shall, within 30 days of the occurrence, file a report with the Commission describing the cause of the occurrence and the steps taken to avoid future occurrences.

## **11 DECOMMISSIONING, RESTORATION, AND ABANDONMENT**

### **11.1 Decommissioning Plan**

The Permittee shall comply with the provisions of the most recently filed and accepted decommissioning plan. The initial version of the decommissioning plan was submitted for this project as part of the August 28, 2020 Supplemental and Amended Site Permit Application for a Large wind Energy Conversion System. The Permittee shall file an updated decommissioning plan, incorporating comments and information from the permitting process and any updates associated with the final construction plans, with the Commission 14 days before the pre-construction meeting. The decommissioning plan shall be updated every five years following the commercial operation date.

The decommissioning plan shall provide information identifying all surety and financial securities established for decommissioning and site restoration of the project in accordance with the requirements of Minn. R. 7854.0500, subp. 13. The decommissioning plan shall provide an itemized breakdown of costs of decommissioning all project components, which shall include labor and equipment. The plan shall identify cost estimates for the removal of turbines, turbine foundations, underground collection cables, access roads, crane pads, substations, and other project components. The plan may also include anticipated costs for the replacement of turbines or repowering the project by upgrading equipment.

The Permittee shall also submit the decommissioning plan to the local unit of government having direct zoning authority over the area in which the project is located. The Permittee shall ensure that it carries out its obligations to provide for the resources necessary to fulfill its requirements to properly decommission the project at the appropriate time. The Commission may at any time request the Permittee to file a report with the Commission describing how the Permittee is fulfilling this obligation.

### **11.2 Site Restoration**

Upon expiration of this permit, or upon earlier termination of operation of the project, or any turbine within the project, the Permittee shall have the obligation to dismantle and remove from the site all towers, turbine generators, transformers, overhead and underground cables and lines, foundations, buildings, and ancillary equipment to a depth of four feet. Any agreement for removal to a lesser depth or no removal shall be recorded with the county and shall show the locations of all such foundations. To the extent feasible, the Permittee shall restore and reclaim the site to pre-project conditions, including topography and topsoil conditions. All access roads shall be removed unless written approval is given by the affected landowner requesting that one or more roads, or portions thereof, be retained. All such agreements between the Permittee and the affected landowner shall be submitted to the

Commission prior to completion of restoration activities. The site shall be restored in accordance with the requirements of this condition within 18 months of termination.

### **11.3 Abandoned Turbines**

The Permittee shall advise the Commission of any turbines that are abandoned prior to termination of operation of the project. The project, or any turbine within the project, shall be considered abandoned after one year without energy production and the land restored pursuant to Section 11.2 unless a plan is submitted to and approved by the Commission outlining the steps and schedule for returning the project, or any turbine within the project, to service.

## **12 COMMISSION AUTHORITY AFTER PERMIT ISSUANCE**

### **12.1 Final Boundaries**

After completion of construction, the Commission shall determine the need to adjust the final boundaries of the site required for this project in accordance with Minn. R. 7854.1300, subp. 1.

### **12.2 Expansion of Site Boundaries**

No expansion of the site boundaries described in this permit shall be authorized without the approval of the Commission. The Permittee may submit to the Commission a request for a change in the boundaries of the site for the project. The Commission will respond to the requested change in accordance with applicable statutes and rules.

### **12.3 Periodic Review**

The Commission shall initiate a review of this permit and the applicable conditions at least once every five years. The purpose of the periodic review is to allow the Commission, the Permittee, and other interested persons an opportunity to consider modifications in the conditions of this permit. No modification may be made except in accordance with applicable statutes and rules.

### **12.4 Modification of Conditions**

After notice and opportunity for hearing, this permit may be modified or amended for cause, including but not limited to the following:

- (a) violation of any condition in this permit;
- (b) endangerment of human health or the environment by operation of the project; or

- (c) existence of other grounds established by rule.

### **12.5 More Stringent Rules**

The issuance of this permit does not prevent the future adoption by the Commission of rules or orders more stringent than those now in existence and does not prevent the enforcement of these more stringent rules and orders against the Permittee.

### **12.6 Right of Entry**

The Permittee shall allow Commission designated representatives to perform the following, upon reasonable notice, upon presentation of credentials and at all times in compliance with the Permittee's site safety standards:

- (a) To enter upon the facilities easement of the property for the purpose of obtaining information, examining records, and conducting surveys or investigations.
- (b) To bring such equipment upon the facilities easement of the property as is necessary to conduct such surveys and investigations.
- (c) To sample and monitor upon the facilities easement of the property.
- (d) To examine and copy any documents pertaining to compliance with the conditions of this permit.

### **12.7 Proprietary Information**

Certain information required to be filed with the Commission under this permit may constitute trade secret information or other type of proprietary information under the Data Practices Act or other law. The Permittee must satisfy requirements of applicable law to obtain the protection afforded by the law.

## **13 PERMIT AMENDMENT**

This permit may be amended at any time by the Commission in accordance with Minn. R. 7854.1300, subp. 2. Any person may request an amendment of the conditions of this permit by submitting a request to the Commission in writing describing the amendment sought and the reasons for the amendment. The Commission will mail notice of receipt of the request to the Permittee. The Commission may amend the conditions after affording the Permittee and interested persons such process as is required.

## 14 TRANSFER OF PERMIT

The Permittee may request at any time that the Commission transfer this permit to another person or entity. The Permittee shall provide the name and description of the person or entity to whom the permit is requested to be transferred, the reasons for the transfer, a description of the facilities affected, and the proposed effective date of the transfer. The person to whom the permit is to be transferred shall provide the Commission with such information as the Commission shall require to determine whether the new permittee can comply with the conditions of the permit. The Commission may authorize transfer of the permit after affording the Permittee, the new permittee, and interested persons such process as is required. The Commission may impose additional conditions on any new permittee as part of the approval of the transfer.

At least 14 days prior to commercial operation, the Permittee shall file a letter describing its ownership structure, identifying, as applicable:

- (a) the owner(s) of the financial and governance interests of the Permittee;
- (b) the owner(s) of the majority financial and governance interests of the Permittee's owners; and
- (c) the Permittee's ultimate parent entity (meaning the entity which is not controlled by any other entity).

The Permittee shall immediately notify the Commission of:

- (a) a change in owner(s) of the majority\* financial or governance interests in the Permittee;
- (b) a change in owner(s) of the majority\* financial or governance interests of the Permittee's owners; or
- (c) a sale which changes the parent entity of the Permittee.

*\*When there are only co-equal 50/50 percent interests, any change shall be considered a change in majority interest.*

The Permittee shall notify the Commission of:

- (a) the sale of a parent entity or a majority interest in the Permittee;



- (b) the sale of a majority interest of the Permittee's owners or majority interest of the owners; or
- (c) a sale which changes the entity with ultimate control over the Permittee.

## **15 REVOCATION OR SUSPENSION OF PERMIT**

The Commission may take action to suspend or revoke this permit upon the grounds that:

- (a) a false statement was knowingly made in the application or in accompanying statements or studies required of the Permittee, and a true statement would have warranted a change in the Commission's findings;
- (b) there has been a failure to comply with material conditions of this permit, or there has been a failure to maintain health and safety standards;
- (c) there has been a material violation of a provision of an applicable statute, rule, or an order of the Commission; or
- (d) the Permittee has filed a petition with the Commission requesting that the permit be revoked or terminated.

In the event the Commission determines that it is appropriate to consider revocation or suspension of this permit, the Commission shall proceed in accordance with the requirements of Minn. R. 7854.1300 to determine the appropriate action. Upon a finding of any of the above, the Commission may require the Permittee to undertake corrective measures in lieu of having this permit suspended or revoked.

## **16 EXPIRATION DATE**

This permit shall expire 30 years after the date this permit was approved and adopted.

**ATTACHMENT 1**

Complaint Handling Procedures for Permitted Energy Facilities

**MINNESOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION  
COMPLAINT HANDLING PROCEDURES FOR  
PERMITTED ENERGY FACILITIES**

**A. Purpose**

To establish a uniform and timely method of reporting and resolving complaints received by the permittee concerning permit conditions for site or route preparation, construction, cleanup, restoration, operation, and maintenance.

**B. Scope**

This document describes complaint reporting procedures and frequency.

**C. Applicability**

The procedures shall be used for all complaints received by the permittee and all complaints received by the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (Commission) under Minn. R. 7829.1500 or Minn. R. 7829.1700 relevant to this permit.

**D. Definitions**

**Complaint:** A verbal or written statement presented to the permittee by a person expressing dissatisfaction or concern regarding site or route preparation, cleanup or restoration, or other permit conditions. Complaints do not include requests, inquiries, questions or general comments.

**Substantial Complaint:** A written complaint alleging a violation of a specific permit condition that, if substantiated, could result in permit modification or suspension pursuant to the applicable regulations.

**Unresolved Complaint:** A complaint which, despite the good faith efforts of the permittee and a person, remains unresolved or unsatisfactorily resolved to one or both of the parties.

**Person:** An individual, partnership, joint venture, private or public corporation, association, firm, public service company, cooperative, political subdivision, municipal corporation, government agency, public utility district, or any other entity, public or private; however organized.

## **E. Complaint Documentation and Processing**

1. The permittee shall designate a representative responsible for filing complaints to the Commission's eDocket system. This person's name, phone number and email address shall accompany all complaint submittals. The name and contact information for the representative shall be kept current in eDockets.
2. A person presenting the complaint should, to the extent possible, include the following information in their communications:
  - a. name, address, phone number, and email address;
  - b. initial date of the complaint;
  - c. tract, parcel number, or address of the complaint;
  - d. a summary of the complaint; and
  - e. whether the complaint relates to a permit violation, a construction practice issue, or other type of complaint.
3. The permittee shall document all complaints by maintaining a record of all applicable information concerning the complaint, including the following:
  - a. docket number and project name;
  - b. name of complainant, address, phone number and email address;
  - c. precise description of property or parcel number;
  - d. name of permittee representative receiving complaint and date of receipt;
  - e. nature of complaint and the applicable permit condition(s);
  - f. summary of activities undertaken to resolve the complaint; and
  - g. a statement on the final disposition of the complaint.

## **F. Reporting Requirements**

The permittee shall commence complaint reporting at the beginning of project construction and continue through the term of the permit, unless otherwise required below. The permittee shall report all complaints to the Commission according to the following schedule:

**Immediate Reports:** All substantial complaints shall be reported to the Commission the same day received, or on the following working day for complaints received after working hours. Such reports are to be directed to the Commission's Public Advisor at 1-800-657-3782 (voice messages are acceptable) or [publicadvisor.puc@state.mn.us](mailto:publicadvisor.puc@state.mn.us). For e-mail reporting, the email subject line should read "PUC EFP Complaint" and include the appropriate project docket number.

**Monthly Reports:** During project construction, restoration, and operation, a summary of all complaints, including substantial complaints received or resolved during the preceding month, shall be filed by the 15th of each month to Will Seuffert, Executive Secretary, Public Utilities Commission, using the eDockets system. The eDockets system is located at: <https://www.edockets.state.mn.us/EFiling/home.jsp>. If no complaints were received during the preceding month, the permittee shall file a summary indicating that no complaints were received.

If a project has submitted twelve consecutive months of complaint reports with no complaints, monthly reports can terminate by a letter to eDockets notifying the Commission of such action. If a substantial complaint is received (by the company or the Commission) following termination of the monthly complaint report, as noted above, the monthly reporting should commence for a period of one year following the most recent complaint or upon resolution of all pending complaints.

If a permittee is found to be in violation of this section, the Commission may reinstate monthly complaint reporting for the remaining permit term or enact some other commensurate requirement via notification by the Executive Secretary or some other action as decided by the Commission.

#### **G. Complaints Received by the Commission**

Complaints received directly by the Commission from aggrieved persons regarding the permit or issues related to site or route preparation, construction, cleanup, restoration, or operation and maintenance will be promptly sent to the permittee.

The permittee shall notify the Commission when the issue has been resolved. The permittee will add the complaint to the monthly reports of all complaints. If the permittee is unable to find resolution, the Commission will use the process outlined in the Unresolved Complaints Section to process the issue.

#### **H. Commission Process for Unresolved Complaints**

Complaints raising substantial and unresolved permit issues will be investigated by the Commission. Staff will notify the permittee and appropriate persons if it determines that the complaint is a substantial complaint. With respect to such complaints, the permittee and complainant shall be required to submit a written summary of the complaint and its current position on the issues to the Commission. Staff will set a deadline for comments. As necessary, the complaint will be presented to the Commission for consideration.

## **I. Permittee Contacts for Complaints and Complaint Reporting**

Complaints may be filed by mail or email to the permittee's designated complaint representative, or to the Commission's Public Advisor at 1-800-657-3782 or [publicadvisor.puc@state.mn.us](mailto:publicadvisor.puc@state.mn.us). The name and contact information for the permittee's designated complaint representative shall be kept current in the Commission's eDocket system.

## **ATTACHMENT 2**

### **Compliance Filing Procedures for Permitted Energy Facilities**

**MINNESOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION  
COMPLIANCE FILING PROCEDURE FOR  
PERMITTED ENERGY FACILITIES**

**A. Purpose**

To establish a uniform and timely method of submitting information required by Commission energy facility permits.

**B. Scope and Applicability**

This procedure encompasses all known compliance filings required by permit.

**C. Definitions**

**Compliance Filing:** A filing of information to the Commission, where the information is required by a Commission site or route permit.

**D. Responsibilities**

1. The permittee shall file all compliance filings with Will Seuffert, Executive Secretary, Public Utilities Commission, through the eDockets system. The eDockets system is located at:  
<https://www.edockets.state.mn.us/EFiling/home.jsp>

General instructions are provided on the eDockets website. Permittees must register on the website to file documents.

2. All filings must have a cover sheet that includes:
  - a. Date
  - b. Name of submitter/permittee
  - c. Type of permit (site or route)
  - d. Project location
  - e. Project docket number
  - f. Permit section under which the filing is made
  - g. Short description of the filing



3. Filings that are graphic intensive (e.g., maps, engineered drawings) must, in addition to being electronically filed, be submitted as paper copies and on CD. Paper copies and CDs should be sent to: 1) Will Seuffert, Executive Secretary, Minnesota Public Utilities Commission, 121 7th Place East, Suite 350, St. Paul, MN 55101-2147, and 2) Department of Commerce, Energy Environmental Review and Analysis, 85 7th Place East, Suite 500, St. Paul, MN 55101-2198.

The Commission may request a paper copy of any electronically filed document.

## PERMIT COMPLIANCE FILINGS<sup>1</sup>

PERMITTEE: Plum Creek Wind Farm, LLC

PERMIT TYPE: LWECS Site Permit

PROJECT LOCATION: Cottonwood, Murray, and Redwood Counties

PUC DOCKET NUMBER: IP-6997/WS-18-700

| Filing Number | Permit Section | Description of Compliance Filing   | Due Date                                      |
|---------------|----------------|--|---|
|               | 4.7            | Prairie Protection and Management Plan   | 30 days prior to submitting the site plan     |
|               | 4.12           | Notification to Airports   | 14 days prior to pre-construction meeting     |
|               | 5.1            | Notification of Permit and Complaint Procedures  | 30 days after permit issuance                 |
|               | 5.3.1          | Field Representative   | 14 days prior to commencing construction      |
|               | 5.3.2          | Site Manager   | 14 days prior to commercial operation         |
|               | 5.3.10         | Application of Pesticides  | Notice 14 days prior to pesticide application |
|               | 5.3.11         | Invasive Species Prevention Plan   | 14 days prior to pre-construction meeting     |
|               | 5.3.13         | Identification of Roads  | 14 days prior to pre-construction meeting     |
|               | 5.3.17         | Assessment of Television and Radio Signal Reception, Microwave Signal Patterns, and Telecommunications | 14 days prior to pre-construction meeting     |

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<sup>1</sup> This compilation of permit compliance filings is provided for the convenience of the permittee and the Commission. It is not a substitute for the permit. The language of the permit controls.

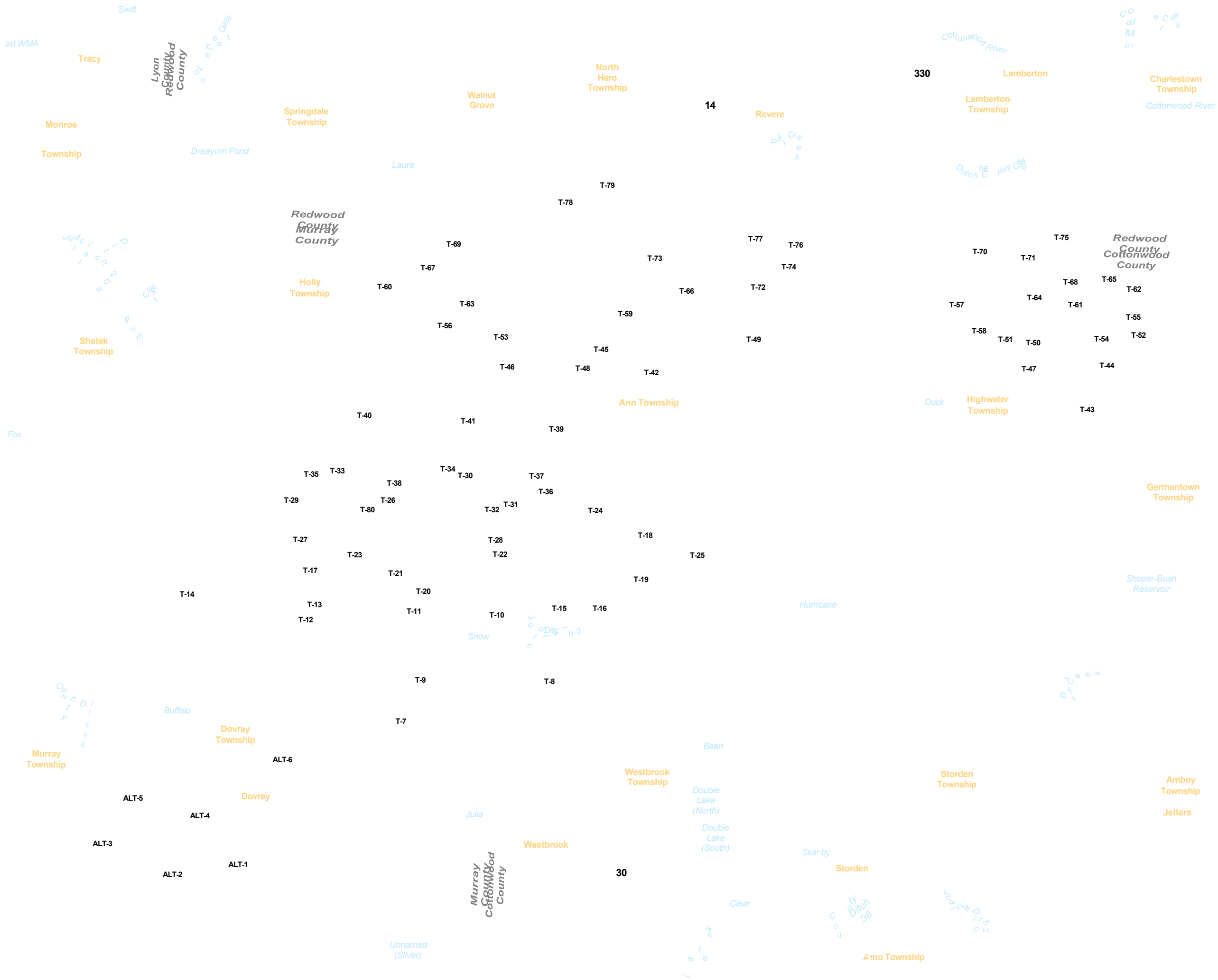
| Filing Number | Permit Section | Description of Compliance Filing                  | Due Date   |
|---------------|----------------|---|--|
|               | 5.3.22         | Site Restoration Report                           | 60 days after completion of all restoration activities                 |
|               | 5.3.26         | Public Safety and Education Materials             | Upon request   |
|               | 5.3.28         | FAA Lighting                                      | Submit with site plan  |
|               | 5.5            | Engineered Drawings of Collector and Feeder Lines | Submit with site plan  |
|               | 5.6.2          | Other Required Permits                            | 14 days prior to pre-construction meeting                              |
|               | 6.1            | SWCD and Landowner Plan Review                    | 14 days prior to pre-construction meeting                              |
|               | 7.1            | Biological and Natural Resource Inventories       | 30 days prior to pre-construction meeting                              |
|               | 7.2            | Shadow Flicker Management Plan                    | 14 days prior to pre-construction meeting. Annual updates.             |
|               | 7.3            | Wake Loss Studies                                 | 14 days prior to pre-construction meeting and as part of annual report |
|               | 7.4            | Post-construction Noise Study Methodology         | 14 days prior to pre-construction meeting                              |
|               | 7.4            | Post-construction Noise Study                     | 18 months of commencing commercial operation                           |
|               | 7.5.2          | Permit version of ABPP                            | 14 days prior to pre-construction meeting                              |

| Filing Number | Permit Section | Description of Compliance Filing         | Due Date  |
|---------------|----------------|--|---|
|               | 7.5.2          | ABPP Annual Report                       | March 15th each year or partial year  |
|               | 7.5.3          | Quarterly Avian and Bat Incident Reports | 15th of January, April, July, and October commencing the day following commercial operation             |
|               | 7.5.4          | Immediate Avian and Bat Incident Reports | 24 hours of the discovery and a compliance report within seven days                                     |
|               | 8.1            | Demonstration of Wind Rights             | 14 days prior to pre-construction meeting   |
|               | 8.2            | Proof of Power Purchase Agreement        | Prior to construction or notification to Commission if not obtained within two years of permit issuance |
|               | 8.3            | Failure to Construct                     | Notification to Commission if construction has not commenced within two years of permit issuance        |
|               | 9              | Complaint Procedures                     | 14 days prior to pre-construction meeting   |
|               | 10.1           | Pre-construction Meeting Summary         | 14 days following meeting   |
|               | 10.2           | Pre-operation Meeting Summary            | 14 days following meeting   |
|               | 10.3           | Site Plan                                | 14 days prior to pre-construction meeting   |
|               | 10.4           | Construction Status Reports              | Monthly through restoration   |

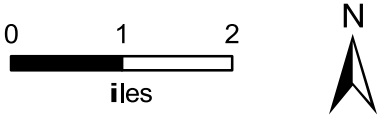
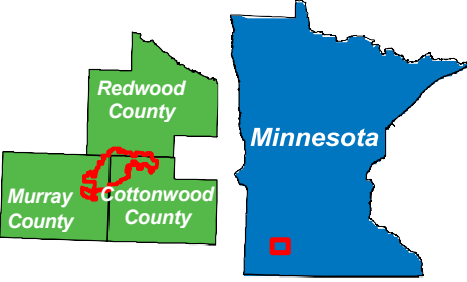
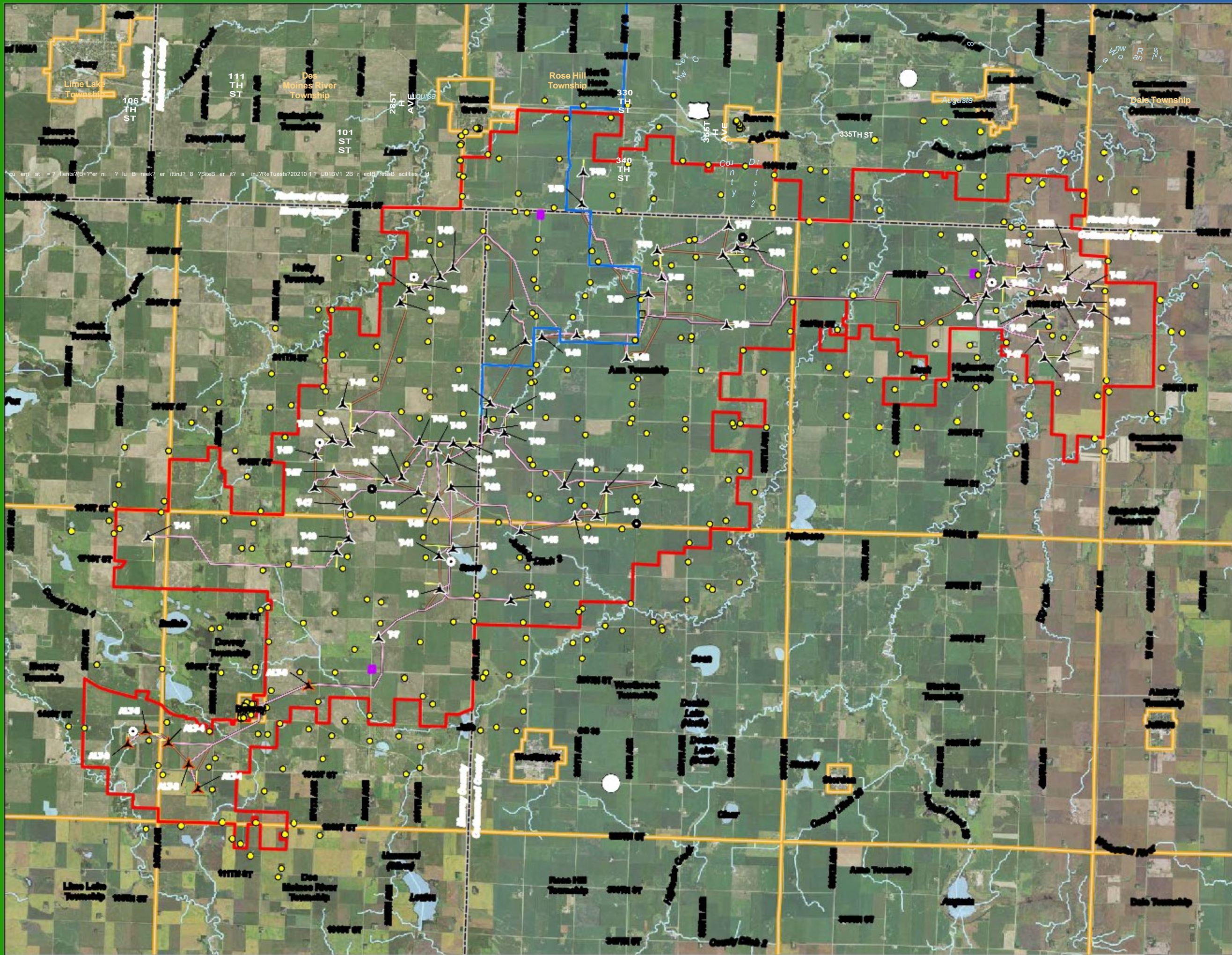
| Filing Number | Permit Section | Description of Compliance Filing | Due Date   |
|---------------|----------------|----------------------------------|--|
|               | 10.5           | Labor Statistic Reporting        | Quarterly within 45 days of the end of each quarter  |
|               | 10.6           | In-Service date                  | Three days prior to commercial operation   |
|               | 10.7           | As-Builts                        | 90 days after construction is complete   |
|               | 10.8           | GPS Data                         | 90 days after construction is complete   |
|               | 10.9           | Project Energy Production        | February 1st each year or partial year   |
|               | 10.10          | Wind Resource                    | February 1st each year or partial year   |
|               | 10.11          | Emergency Response Plan          | 14 days prior to pre-construction meeting and revisions 14 days prior to pre-operation meeting   |
|               | 10.12          | Extraordinary Events             | 24 hours of the discovery or occurrence  |
|               | 11.1           | Decommissioning Plan             | 14 days prior to pre-construction meeting and updated every five years   |
|               | 11.2           | Site Restoration                 | Within 18 months after expiration of this permit or upon earlier termination of operation or decommissioning of any turbine within the project |
|               | 11.3           | Abandoned Turbines               | Per occurrence   |

| Filing Number | Permit Section      | Description of Compliance Filing | Due Date   |
|---------------|---------------------|----------------------------------|--|
|               | 14                  | Ownership Structure              | 14 days prior to commercial operation                  |
|               | Complaint Reporting | Monthly Complaint Reports        | See Site Permit Attachment 1                           |
|               | Complaint Reporting | Immediate Complaint Reports      | By the following day throughout the life of the permit |

**ATTACHMENT 3**  
Site Maps







Service Layer Credits: MNGeo, FSA 2017  
Data Source: Geronimo Energy, US Census, ESRI,

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**Figure 1**  
**Site Map**  
**Vestas V162**  
**Configuration**

**Plum Creek Wind Project**

**Docket No. IP-6997/WS-18-700**



