

BEFORE THE MINNESOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

Katie J. Sieben
Hwikwon Ham
Audrey C. Partridge
Joseph K. Sullivan
John A. Tuma

Chair
Commissioner
Commissioner
Commissioner
Commissioner

In the Matter of the Application of Benton Solar, LLC for a Route Permit for a 115 kV High-Voltage Transmission Line associated with the Benton Solar Project in Benton County, Minnesota

SERVICE DATE: March 4, 2025

DOCKET NO. IP-7115/TL-23-425

The above-entitled matter has been considered by the Commission and the following disposition made:

Authorized the Department of Commerce, Energy Environmental Review and Analysis (EERA) to solely include in the scoping decision for the environmental assessment (EA) the route for the project identified by Benton Solar, LLC in its route application.

This decision is issued by the Commission's consent calendar subcommittee, under a delegation of authority granted under Minn. Stat. § 216A.03, subd. 8 (a). Unless a party, a participant, or a Commissioner files an objection to this decision within ten days of receiving it, it will become the Order of the full Commission under Minn. Stat. § 216A.03, subd. 8 (b).

The Commission agrees with and adopts the recommendations of the Department of Commerce, which are attached and hereby incorporated into the Order.

BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Will Seuffert".

Will Seuffert
Executive Secretary

To request this document in another format such as large print or audio, call 651.296.0406 (voice). Persons with a hearing or speech impairment may call using their preferred Telecommunications Relay Service or email consumer.puc@state.mn.us for assistance.

February 7, 2025

Mr. Will Seuffert, Executive Secretary
Minnesota Public Utilities Commission
127 7th Place East, Suite 350
Saint Paul, MN 55101-2147

RE: Alternatives Identified During Scoping Comment Period
Benton Solar Project
Docket Nos. IP-7115/GS-23-423, ESS-24-283, TL-23-425

Dear Mr. Seuffert,

Department of Commerce, Energy Environmental Review and Analysis (EERA) staff has completed the environmental assessment scoping process in the following matter:

In the Matter of the Application of Benton Solar, LLC for a Site Permit for the 100 MW Solar Energy Generating System for the Benton Solar Project in Benton County, Minnesota;

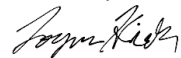
In the Matter of the Application of Benton Solar, LLC for a Site Permit for the 100 MW Battery Energy Storage System for the Benton Solar Project in Benton County, Minnesota; and

In the Matter of the Application of Benton Solar, LLC for a Route Permit for a 115 kV High-Voltage Transmission Line associated with the Benton Solar Project in Benton County, Minnesota.

The scoping period for the environmental assessment (EA) was open from December 26, 2024, through January 31, 2025. Public meetings for the project were held on January 14 and 15, 2025. Oral and written comments were received from the public during the scoping period.¹ While we received many comments adamantly requesting the solar project be placed elsewhere, no specific sites were identified. Additionally, none of these comments suggested an alternative route for the associated 115 kV transmission line. Accordingly, EERA staff recommends that the Commission authorize EERA to include in the scoping decision for the EA solely the site and route for the project identified by Benton Solar, LLC in its joint site permit and route applications.

EERA staff is available to answer any questions the Commission may have.

Sincerely,



Logan Hicks
Environmental Review Manager

¹Oral Comments on the Scope of the Environmental Assessment, eDockets No. [20252-214999-01](#); Written Comments on the Scope of the Environmental Assessment, eDockets No. [20252-214999-02](#).

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I, Hannah Olson, hereby certify that I have this day, served a true and correct copy of the following document to all persons at the addresses indicated below or on the attached list by electronic filing, electronic mail, courier, interoffice mail or by depositing the same enveloped with postage paid in the United States mail at St. Paul, Minnesota.

Minnesota Public Utilities Commission ORDER

Docket Number IP-7115/TL-23-425

Dated this 4th day of March, 2025

/s/ Hannah Olson

#	First Name	Last Name	Email	Organization	Agency	Address	Delivery Method	Alternate Delivery Method	View Trade Secret	Service List Name
1	Generic	Commerce Attorneys	commerce.attorneys@ag.state.mn.us		Office of the Attorney General - Department of Commerce	445 Minnesota Street Suite 1400 St. Paul MN, 55101 United States	Electronic Service		No	23-425Official CC Service List
2	Sharon	Ferguson	sharon.ferguson@state.mn.us		Department of Commerce	85 7th Place E Ste 280 Saint Paul MN, 55101-2198 United States	Electronic Service		No	23-425Official CC Service List
3	Adam	Gracia	adam.gracia@nexteraenergy.com	NextEra Energy Resources		700 Universe Blvd Juno Beach FL, 33408 United States	Electronic Service		No	23-425Official CC Service List
4	Logan	Hicks	logan.m.hicks@state.mn.us		Department of Commerce	85 7th Place East Suite 280 Saint Paul MN, 55101 United States	Electronic Service		No	23-425Official CC Service List
5	Mark R.	Johnson	mark.r.johnson@nexteraenergy.com	NextEra Energy Resources		700 Universe Blvd Juno Beach FL, 33408 United States	Electronic Service		No	23-425Official CC Service List
6	Megan	McKenzie	megan.mckenzie@state.mn.us		Office of Administrative Hearings	PO Box 64620 St Paul MN, 55164 United States	Electronic Service		Yes	23-425Official CC Service List
7	Kevin	Pranis	kpranis@liunagroc.com	Laborers' District Council of MN and ND		81 E Little Canada Road St. Paul MN, 55117 United States	Electronic Service		No	23-425Official CC Service List
8	Generic Notice	Residential Utilities Division	residential.utilities@ag.state.mn.us		Office of the Attorney General - Residential Utilities Division	1400 BRM Tower 445 Minnesota St St. Paul MN, 55101-2131 United States	Electronic Service		No	23-425Official CC Service List
9	Micah	Revell	micah.revell@stinson.com	Stinson LLP		50 South Sixth St Ste 2600 Minneapolis MN, 55402 United States	Electronic Service		No	23-425Official CC Service List
10	Will	Seuffert	will.seuffert@state.mn.us		Public Utilities Commission	121 7th PI E Ste 350 Saint Paul MN, 55101 United States	Electronic Service		No	23-425Official CC Service List
11	Janet	Shaddix Elling	jshaddix@janetshaddix.com	Shaddix And Associates		7400 Lyndale Ave S Ste 190 Richfield MN, 55423 United States	Electronic Service		Yes	23-425Official CC Service List
12	Charles	Sutton	charles@suttonconsultingllc.com			1389 Hoyt Ave W Falcon Heights MN, 55108 United States	Electronic Service		No	23-425Official CC Service List

#	First Name	Last Name	Email	Organization	Agency	Address	Delivery Method	Alternate Delivery Method	View Trade Secret	Service List Name
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