

The Commission met on **Thursday, July 10, 2025**, with Chair Sieben and Commissioners Ham, Sullivan, and Tuma present.

The following matters were taken up by the Commission:

IP-7119/GS-23-477

In the Matter of the Application of Birch Coulee Solar LLC for a Site Permit for the up to 125 MW Birch Coulee Solar Project in Renville County, Minnesota

This matter was pulled from the agenda.

IP-6997/CN-18-699; IP-6997/WS-18-700; IP-6997/TL-18-701

In the Matter of the Applications of Plum Creek Wind Farm, LLC for a Certificate of Need, Site Permit, and Route Permit for an up to 414 MW Large Wind Energy Conversion System and 345 kV Transmission Line Cottonwood, Murray, and Redwood Counties

Commissioner Tuma moved that the Commission:

1. Approve Plum Creek's request to amend the Certificate of Need for the Plum Creek Project to extend the date by which construction of the Wind Project and the associated 345 kilovolt (kV) high voltage transmission line (HVTL Project), herein collectively referred to as the Plum Creek Project, to September 25, 2027 or two years from the issuance of the site permit amendment, whichever is later, and extend the in-service date to December 31, 2028, to allow adequate time for construction activities to be completed.
2. Amend the site permit for the Plum Creek Project as follows:
 - A. Adopt the following site permit amendments as proposed in Appendix A to Plum Creek's March 12, 2025, reply comments and the March 17, 2025, supplemental comments of EERA:
 - i. Permit Cover
 - ii. 2.1, Associated Facilities
 - iii. 4.9, Wind Turbine Towers, including information on the turbine cut-in speed
 - iv. 5.3, Construction and Operation Practices
 - v. 5.3.4, Independent Third-Party Monitor
 - vi. 5.3.17, Archaeological and Historical Resources
 - vii. 8.2, Power Purchase Agreement
 - viii. 8.3, Failure to Commence Construction
 - ix. 10.6, Prevailing Wages
 - x. 11.1, Decommissioning Plan

- B. Adopt the following site permit amendments as modified in EERA's March 5, 2025, comments:
 - I. 2, Project Description
 - II. 3, Designated Site
- C. Adopt amended or new site permit sections on the following topics as proposed in EERA's March 5, 2025, comments:

- I. 5.3.15, Turbine Access Roads
- II. 10.4, Status Reports
- III. Biodegradable netting and mulch products
- IV. Substation lighting
- V. Non-chloride-based dust control methods
- VI. Filing SHPO recommendations
- VII. Unanticipated Discoveries Plan

3. Amend the route permit for the Plum Creek Wind Project as follows:

- A. Adopt the following route permit amendments as proposed in Appendix B to Plum Creek's March 12, 2025, reply comments:

- I. Permit Cover
- II. 1, Route Permit
- III. 2.1, Project Location
- IV. 3, Designated Route
- V. 5.3.3, Independent Third-Party Monitoring

- B. Adopt the following new route permit conditions as proposed by EERA:

- I. Requiring biodegradable netting and mulch products
- II. Requiring non-chloride-based dust control methods
- III. Requiring the permittee to file SHPO recommendations in the record
- IV. Requiring Plum Creek to survey the route width in Section 6 of Ann Township and develop a mitigation plan in cooperation with DNR and impacted landowners that addresses construction and operation of the transmission line through this area.
- V. Requiring Plum Creek to work with the impacted landowners where the Preferred Route Segment crosses Cottonwood County Road 7 and heads north parallel to that road to determine if a corner can be designed using two approximately 45° structures as opposed to a 90° structure at this corner while maintaining the structures on the property lines for the purpose of creating more distance from the residence at 20562 County Road 7 (Parcel ID 030050300). The Commission finds that the alignment for the Preferred Route Segment is appropriate as it follows existing rights-of-way and agricultural field lines, but such angle structures would be an appropriate mitigation for the above mentioned residence if the impacted landowners consent to the field crossing of the overhead powerlines at an angle for this short distance.

- C. Amend section 3 of the route permit as follows:

“The route is generally described as follows:

From Collector Substation 2 (northeast corner of 240th Street and 300th Avenue) the route proceeds north along 300th Avenue for one mile before turning east along 230th Street for 0.5 mile. The route then turns Appendix B north and continues for about 2.5 miles, crossing 220th Street and 210th Street. About 0.5 mile north of 210th Street, the route turns to the east, crosses over CSAH 7, parallels the county road for another 0.5 mile, the turns east again and travels along the southern side of CSAH 45 before connecting to the new Revised Collector Substation 1, in Township 108N, Range 38W, Section 5, Ann Township, Cottonwood County, just south of the Cottonwood County border. The route follows Eagle Avenue north for two miles to U.S. Highway 14 and then turns east for one mile to County Highway 10. The route turns north on County Highway 10 for ~~six miles to 160th Street~~ where the route turns west for half mile to a private driveway on the north side of the road. The route then follows the private driveway for one quarter of a mile before turning back east along the field edge for half mile to County Highway 10. The route follows County Highway 1 north for 1.75 eight miles to 180th Street . . .”

And

Remove the expanded route width and all requirements in the permit and the September 23, 2021 order related to the route width expansion to the west one quarter of a mile along County Road 10 north of 160th Ave. while maintaining the ordered alignment along County Road 10.

- D. Amend section 3 of the route permit to clarify that the alignment on the map is the route selected and Plum Creek has flexibility within the 1000 feet to move the alignment.
4. Delegate authority to the Executive Secretary to modify the Site and Route Permit to correct any typographic and formatting errors and to ensure consistency with the Commission’s order.

The motion passed 4–0.

E,G-999/PR-25-2

In the Matter of Utility Cold Weather Rule and Residential Customers Status Data

This matter was pulled from the agenda.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

APPROVED BY THE COMMISSION: July 30, 2025



Mike Bull, Acting Executive Secretary