

**STATE OF MINNESOTA
BEFORE THE
PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION**

Nancy Lange
Dan Lipschultz
Matthew Schuerger
Katie J. Sieben
John A. Tuma

Chair
Commissioner
Commissioner
Commissioner
Commissioner

Docket No. IP-6997/CN-18-699

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

**CERTIFICATE OF NEED
NOTICE PLAN
APPROVAL REQUEST**

**Public Comments on this Notice Plan proposal can be submitted to
the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission until
4:30 p.m. on November 29, 2018.**

**Replies to Comments can be submitted to the
Minnesota Public Utilities Commission until
4:30 p.m. on December 19, 2018.**

**The Commission's address is: Minnesota Public Utilities Commission, 121 7th Place East,
Suite 350, Saint Paul, MN 55101-2147.**

INTRODUCTION

Plum Creek Wind Farm, LLC ("Plum Creek") submits this notice plan for approval by the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission ("Commission") pursuant to Minn. R. 7829.2550. Plum Creek intends to file an application for a Certificate of Need ("CN") for a new 345 kilovolt ("kV") transmission line and associated facilities ("Transmission Line") to be located in Redwood and Cottonwood Counties, Minnesota in the first quarter of 2019. The Transmission Line will be approximately 25 miles long and will connect Plum Creek's up to 414 megawatt ("MW") wind farm located in Cottonwood, Murray and Redwood Counties, Minnesota (the "Wind Farm"), to the existing Brookings to Hampton 345 kV transmission line in Redwood County, Minnesota. A project substation will be constructed to connect the Wind Farm to the proposed Transmission Line. A switching station will also be constructed to connect the proposed Transmission Line to the existing Brookings to Hampton 345 kV transmission line. Although the exact location of the switching station has not yet been determined, it will be

located within or near where the identified corridor meets the Brookings to Hampton 345 kV transmission line. The general location of the proposed Transmission Line is identified on the enclosed map. A Certificate of Need and a Route Permit will be required for the Transmission Line.¹

The proposed routes for the Transmission Line will start from the Wind Farm's project substation, located approximately 5 miles southwest of the town of Revere, and terminate approximately 3 miles northwest of the town of Lucan. Plum Creek proposes to use 100- to 140-foot tall steel structures with spans of approximately 750 to 1,000 feet.

Plum Creek is planning to obtain a 150-foot wide permanent right-of-way, supporting the path of the 345 kV transmission line. Plum Creek is currently acquiring easements from landowners in order to secure the right-of-way required for the Transmission Line.

The initial step in the Certificate of Need application process is approval of a Notice Plan to be implemented by Plum Creek. Through implementation of the Notice Plan, potentially interested persons will be notified of the opportunity to participate in the regulatory process.

NOTICE PLAN PROPOSAL

Plum Creek proposes to provide notice to landowners within the corridor as required by Minn. R. 7829.2550.

As discussed in more detail below, Plum Creek's Notice Plan consists of four parts:

- Direct mail notice to landowners with property within or adjacent to the proposed transmission line corridor;
- Direct mail notice to others with mailing addresses within or adjacent to the proposed transmission line corridor;
- General notice by publishing ads in local newspapers serving those within or adjacent to the proposed transmission line corridor; and
- Direct mail notice to local units of government in and around the proposed transmission line corridor.

Included with this filing are examples of the notices Plum Creek plans to mail or publish.

- A. Direct Mail Notice to Landowners with Property in Proposed Corridor: Minn. R. 7829.2550, Subp. 3(A) requires that direct mail notice be provided to "landowners reasonably likely to be affected by the proposed transmission line." As required by Minn. R. 7829.2550, Subp. 3(A), Plum Creek plans to review the county tax assessment rolls and other relevant county records to determine the names and addresses of those landowners who own property within or adjacent to the proposed transmission line corridor.

¹ Plum Creek plans to file an Application for a Site Permit for the Wind Farm (MPUC Docket No. IP-6997/WS-18-700) and an Application for a Route Permit for the Transmission Line (MPUC Docket No. IP-6997/TL-18-701).

- B. Direct Mail Notice to Mailing Addresses: Minn. R. 7829.2550, Subp. 3(B) requires that direct mail notice be provided to “all mailing addresses within the area reasonably likely to be affected by the proposed transmission line.” Plum Creek intends to mail notice to all mailing addresses within or adjacent to the proposed transmission line corridor. The addresses will be gathered from mailing lists maintained by the United States Post Office or from bulk mailing firms. The list of landowners from part A above and the list of mailing addresses generated for part B will be merged and notification letters will be sent to those persons on the resulting list.
- C. Direct Mail Notice to Local Governments: Minn. R. 7829.2550, Subp. 3(C) requires that direct mail notice be provided to “tribal governments and to the governments of towns, statutory cities, home rule charter cities, and counties whose jurisdictions are reasonably likely to be affected by the proposed transmission line.” Plum Creek proposes to provide direct mail notice to the Lower Sioux Indian Community, Counties of Redwood, Cottonwood and Murray, Cities of Lucan and Walnut Grove, and Townships of Granite Rock, Gales, Johnsonville, Springdale, North Hero, Ann and Holly.
- D. Newspaper Notice: Minn. R. 7829.2550, Subp. 3(D) requires that notice via newspapers be given to “members of the public in areas reasonably likely to be affected by the proposed transmission line.” Plum Creek plans to publish a notice in the following newspapers:

Cottonwood County

Cottonwood County Citizen
260 10th St, P.O. Box 309
Windom, MN 56101

Murray County

Murray County Wheel-Herald
2734 Broadway Ave
Slayton, MN 56172

Redwood County

Lamberton News
P.O. Box 308
Lamberton, MN 56152

The published notice will include a copy of the enclosed map depicting the proposed transmission line corridor.

- E. Notice Content: Minn. R. 7829.2550, Subp. 4, identifies the information that must be included in the notices. Plum Creek has incorporated the required information into draft direct mail notice letters and a newspaper ad copy, examples of which are enclosed. A copy of the enclosed map depicting the proposed transmission line corridor will be provided with each direct mail notice letter.
- F. Distribution of Notice Plan Filing: As required by Minn. R. 7829.2550, Subp. 1, Plum Creek served copies of its notice plan filing on the Department of Commerce, the Residential and Small Business Utilities Division of the Office of the Attorney General, and all persons on the “General List of Persons Interested in Power Plants and Transmission Lines” administered by the Department of Commerce (*see* enclosed Affidavit of Service).
- G. Compliance Filing: Within 30 days of the approval of the Notice Plan, Plum Creek will implement the plan. Thereafter, Plum Creek will prepare and submit to the Commission

a filing showing compliance with the Notice Plan. The compliance filing will provide sample copies of the materials distributed, copies of Affidavits of Publication, and copies of Affidavits of Service with accompanying lists of landowners/residents and local officials receiving direct mail notice letters.

CONCLUSION

Plum Creek respectfully requests that the Commission approve its Notice Plan, submitted in preparation for its filing of a Certificate of Need application for a 345 kV transmission line and associated facilities in Redwood and Cottonwood Counties, Minnesota.

Dated: November 9, 2018

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Christina K. Brusven

Christina K. Brusven (# 0388226)

Lisa M. Agrimonti (#0272474)

FREDRIKSON & BYRON, P.A.

200 South Sixth Street, Suite 4000

Minneapolis, Minnesota 55402-1425

Telephone: (612) 492-7000

Fax: (612) 492-7077

Attorneys for Plum Creek Wind Farm, LLC

65145747

_____, 20__

«Name»

«Address»

RE: Notice of Certificate of Need Application for an up to 414 MW Large Wind Energy Conversion System and 345 kV Transmission Line in Cottonwood, Murray and Redwood Counties, Minnesota

Dear [Landowner]:

As you may be aware, Plum Creek Wind Farm, LLC (“Plum Creek”), an affiliate of Geronimo Energy, LLC (“Geronimo”), is currently developing an up to 414 megawatt (“MW”) Plum Creek Wind Farm (“Wind Farm”) in Cottonwood, Murray and Redwood Counties, Minnesota. You are receiving this letter because Plum Creek is proposing to build a new 345 kilovolt (“kV”) transmission line and associated facilities in Cottonwood and Redwood Counties, Minnesota to connect the Wind Farm to the existing Brookings to Hampton 345 kV transmission line in Redwood County, Minnesota, and your property may be affected by the proposed transmission line. This letter outlines the regulatory process involved in determining if the proposed transmission line is needed and, if so, where the line should be located. We welcome your involvement in this process and look forward to working with you.

Typically, 345 kV transmission lines are built using steel monopole structures, 100 to 140 feet in height on a 150 foot-wide right-of-way. Plum Creek will work with landowners to purchase property rights, called easements, along the transmission line route if the proposed line is approved by state permitting agencies.

We are providing this notice at an early stage in the permitting process so that those persons who may be affected have every opportunity to participate in meetings and hearings. We have not yet determined our two proposed routes for the transmission line. Instead, we are notifying all potentially affected parties who are within or adjacent to the shaded corridor on the enclosed map. A switching station will also be constructed to connect the proposed transmission line to the existing Brookings to Hampton 345 kV transmission line in Redwood County, Minnesota. Although the exact location of the switching station has not yet been determined, it will be located within or near where the identified corridor meets the existing Brookings to Hampton 345 kV transmission line.

Once a final route is identified, you may not be directly affected by the line. Nonetheless, we hope you will take the time to be involved in this process to examine the need and routing of our proposed line. Please do not rely on others to represent your interests.

How to get involved

Before the line can be built, the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (“Commission”) must determine whether the Project is needed (Certificate of Need) and where the Project should be located (Route Permit). As part of the Certificate of Need and Route Permit processes, the Minnesota Department of Commerce, Energy Environmental Review and Analysis unit will prepare an Environmental Impact Statement. The routing process will consider environmental, land use and other potential routing impacts. The Certificate of Need and Route Permit processes are governed by Minnesota law, including Minnesota Statutes, Section 216B.243 and Chapter 216E, and Minnesota Rules, Chapters 7829, 7849 and 7850.

Each of the permitting processes described above provides an opportunity for public input and comment, and you are encouraged to participate. You can get involved by submitting comments or attending public meetings and hearings. Watch local newspapers for notice of such opportunities. Please keep in mind that “need” issues should be raised in the Certificate of Need process and issues concerning the route of the line should be raised during the routing process.

To learn more about the regulatory process or to join the mailing lists regarding the proposed transmission line, you can contact:

Certificate of Need

[PUC contact]

Minnesota Public Utilities Commission
121 Seventh Place East, Suite 350
St. Paul, MN 55101
(651) 201-2236
E-mail:
Website: www.puc.state.mn.us

Routing and Environmental Review

[DOC-EERA contact]

Minnesota Department of Commerce
Energy Environmental Review & Analysis
85 7th Place East, Suite 280
Saint Paul, MN 55101
E-mail:
Website: www.mn.gov/commerce

Also, please feel free to contact Plum Creek with any questions. Questions can be sent to:

Jenny Monson-Miller
Geronimo Energy, LLC
7650 Edinborough Way, Suite 725
Edina, MN 55435
(952) 988-9000

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We encourage you to get involved in this process and look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

Jenny Monson-Miller
Project Developer

_____, 20__

«First» «Last»

«Title», «Township»

«Street»

«City», «State» «Zip»

RE: Notice of Certificate of Need Application for an up to 414 MW Large Wind Energy Conversion System and 345 kV Transmission Line in Cottonwood, Murray and Redwood Counties, Minnesota

Dear [LGU]:

Plum Creek Wind Farm, LLC (“Plum Creek”), an affiliate of Geronimo Energy, LLC (“Geronimo”), is currently developing an up to 414 megawatt (“MW”) Plum Creek Wind Farm (“Wind Farm”) in Cottonwood, Murray and Redwood Counties, Minnesota. You are receiving this letter because Plum Creek is proposing to build a new 345 kilovolt (“kV”) transmission line and associated facilities in Cottonwood and Redwood Counties, Minnesota to connect the Wind Farm to the existing Brookings to Hampton 345 kV transmission line in Redwood County, Minnesota. This letter outlines the regulatory process involved in determining if the proposed transmission line is needed and, if so, where the line should be located. We welcome your involvement in this process and look forward to working with you.

Typically, 345 kV transmission lines are built using steel monopole structures, 100 to 140 feet in height on a 150 foot-wide right-of-way. Plum Creek will work with landowners to purchase property rights, called easements, along the transmission line route if the proposed line is approved by state permitting agencies.

We are still in the process of identifying two proposed routes for the transmission line, but the enclosed map shows the corridor in which we propose that the routes be located. A switching station will also be constructed to connect the proposed transmission line to the existing Brookings to Hampton 345 kV transmission line in Redwood County, Minnesota. Although the exact location of the switching station has not yet been determined, it will be located within or near where the identified corridor meets the existing Brookings to Hampton 345 kV transmission line.

Before the line can be built, the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (“Commission”) must determine whether the Project is needed (Certificate of Need) and where the Project should be located (Route Permit). As part of the Certificate of Need and Route Permit processes, the Minnesota Department of Commerce, Energy Environmental Review and Analysis unit will prepare an Environmental Impact Statement. The routing process will consider environmental, land use and other potential routing impacts when determining where the line will be located. The Certificate of Need and Route Permit processes are governed by Minnesota law, including Minnesota Statutes, Section 216B.243 and Chapter 216E and Minnesota Rules, Chapters 7829, 7849 and 7850.

Each of the permitting processes described above provides an opportunity for public input and comment, and you are encouraged to participate. You can get involved by submitting comments or attending public meetings and hearings. Watch local newspapers for notice of such opportunities. Please keep in mind that “need” issues should be raised in the Certificate of Need process and issues concerning the route of the line should be raised during the routing process.

To learn more about the regulatory process or to join the mailing lists regarding the proposed transmission line, you can contact:

Certificate of Need

[PUC contact]

Minnesota Public Utilities Commission

121 Seventh Place East, Suite 350

Saint Paul, MN 55101

(651) 201-2236

E-mail:

Website: www.puc.state.mn.us

Routing and Environmental Review

[DOC-EERA contact]

Minnesota Department of Commerce

Energy Environmental Review & Analysis

85 7th Place East, Suite 280

Saint Paul, MN 55101

[phone]

E-mail:

Website: www.mn.gov/commerce

We have sent a similar notice to residents and landowners within or adjacent to the corridor outlined on the enclosed map, and have placed an ad in the local newspapers. As you can see from the map, notice is being provided to a broader group of individuals than may ultimately be affected by the final transmission line route. However, we have provided broad notice because it is important to us that all potentially affected parties have an opportunity to participate in the regulatory process.

If you or your constituents have any questions, we would be happy to meet with you and others to discuss our proposal. Again, we encourage your involvement in this process and look forward to working with you.

Also, please feel free to contact Plum Creek with any questions. Questions can be sent to:

Jenny Monson-Miller

Geronimo Energy, LLC

7650 Edinborough Way, Suite 725

Edina, MN 55435

(952) 988-9000

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We encourage you to get involved in this process and look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

Jenny Monson-Miller
Project Developer

—Notice—

Plum Creek Wind Farm, LLC Proposes to Build a New High Voltage Transmission Line in Redwood and Cottonwood Counties, Minnesota

Plum Creek Wind Farm, LLC (“Plum Creek”) proposes to build approximately 25 miles of new 345 kV high voltage electric transmission line and associated facilities in Redwood and Cottonwood Counties, Minnesota. The proposed transmission line will connect Plum Creek’s up to 414 megawatt (“MW”) Plum Creek wind farm located in Cottonwood, Murray and Redwood Counties, Minnesota (the “Wind Farm”), to the existing Brookings to Hampton 345 kV transmission line in Redwood County, Minnesota.

Typically, 345 kV transmission lines are built using steel monopole structures, 100 to 140 feet in height on a 150 foot-wide right-of-way. Plum Creek will work with landowners to purchase property rights, called easements, along the transmission line route if the proposed line is approved by state permitting agencies.

Plum Creek has not yet determined its two proposed routes for the transmission line, but the accompanying map shows the corridor in which it proposes that the routes be located. A switching station will also be constructed to connect the proposed transmission line to the existing Brookings to Hampton 345 kV transmission line in Redwood County, Minnesota. Although the exact location of the switching station has not yet been determined, it will be located within or near where the identified corridor meets the existing Brookings to Hampton 345 kV transmission line.

How to get involved

Before the line can be built, the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (“Commission”) must determine that the line is needed and issue a Certificate of Need. As part of the Certificate of Need process, the Minnesota Department of Commerce, Energy Environmental Review and Analysis unit, will prepare an Environmental Report. The Commission must also determine where the line will be located and issue a Route Permit. The routing process will consider environmental, land use and other potential routing impacts. These proceedings are governed by Minnesota law, including Minnesota Statutes, Section 216B.243 and Chapter 216E and Minnesota Rules, Chapters 7829, 7849 and 7850.

Each of the permitting processes described above provides an opportunity for public input and comment, and you are encouraged to participate. You can get involved by submitting comments or attending public meetings and hearings. Watch local newspapers for notice of such opportunities.

To learn more about the regulatory process or to join the mailing lists regarding the proposed transmission line, you can contact:

Certificate of Need

[PUC contact]

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121 Seventh Place East, Suite 350
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Please feel free to contact Plum Creek with any questions. Questions can be sent to:

Jenny Monson-Miller
Geronimo Energy, LLC
7650 Edinborough Way, Suite 725
Edina, MN 55435
(952) 988-9000

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Jenny Monson-Miller
Project Developer