



August 4, 2009

Illona A. Jeffcoat-Sacco
Executive Secretary
North Dakota Public Service Commission
600 E. Boulevard Ave., Dept. 408
Bismarck, North Dakota 58505-0480

RE: Minnesota Power’s Letter of Intent to Construct Transmission Facility and Request to Shorten the One-Year Time Requirement for Filing Application

Dear Ms. Jeffcoat-Sacco:

Minnesota Power¹ is pleased to announce its plans to construct a 230 kV transmission line near Center, North Dakota that will serve as a generator outlet for the 75.9MW Bison I Wind Project² in Oliver and Morton counties.³ The purpose of this letter is to: (1) notify the North Dakota Public Service Commission (“Commission”) of Minnesota Power’s intent to construct the transmission facility as required by N.D.C.C. § 49-22-07.1 and (2) request the Commission shorten the one-year waiting period between this notification and when applications for a Certificate of Corridor Compatibility and a Route Permit can be submitted as established by N.D. Admin. Code 69-06-03-01 to one day. This request is made pursuant to N.D.C.C. § 49-22-07.2.

Specifically, Minnesota Power is proposing to request Commission approval for a transmission facility to be located in and along an approximately 22 mile corridor that will interconnect the new substation at the Bison I Wind Project and the Square Butte Substation. N.D. Admin. Code 69-06-03-02(1). Attachment A is a map of the proposed 230 kV transmission line route. N.D. Admin. Code 69-06-03-02(2). Minnesota Power anticipates initial site work construction to commence by spring 2010, contingent on obtaining all necessary approvals from the Commission and local governments, and be completed prior by early fall 2010, prior to commissioning of the initial phase of the Bison I Wind Project. N.D. Admin. Code 69-06-03-02(3).

¹ Minnesota Power is an operating division of ALLETE, Inc. ALLETE’s Certificate of Good Standing issued by the North Dakota Secretary of State was provided to the Commission in a letter dated October 31, 2008 in Case Nos. PU-08-847 and PU-08-848.

² Minnesota Power’s application for Certificate of Site Compatibility for the Bison I Wind Project is under review by the Commission in Case No. PU-09-151.

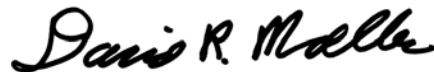
³ On November 5, 2008, the Commission acknowledged Minnesota Power’s letter of intent for a separate proposed 125MW wind energy conversion facility (See Case No. PU-08-848) in Oliver County, North Dakota on reclaimed land previously mined by BNI Coal and an associated 230 kV transmission line (See Case No. PU-08-847). Minnesota Power is still planning on submitting applications for this site.

All of the wind energy generated and delivered by the new transmission facility to the Square Butte 230 kV Substation will be transmitted to Minnesota Power's system via the existing 250kV DC Line and existing AC transmission system as available and will be used to meet Minnesota Power's State of Minnesota renewable energy requirements. N.D. Admin. Code 69-06-03-02(1). Minnesota Power estimates that the 230 kV transmission line will cost approximately \$13 million, depending on final project design. N.D. Admin. Code 69-06-03-02(4).

Minnesota Power expects to file the applications in fall 2009 in order to obtain Commission approval in spring 2010. Therefore, Minnesota Power respectfully requests pursuant to N.D.C.C. § 49-22.07.2 that the Commission shorten the one-year waiting period between filing this letter of intent and the siting application to one day. N.D. Admin. Code. 69-06-03-01. The original and ten copies of this waiver application are being filed with the Commission as required by N.D. Admin. Code 69-06-06-01.2.

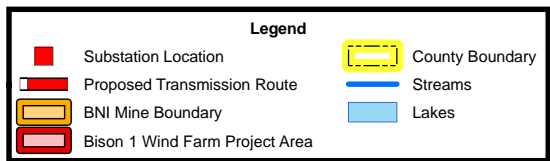
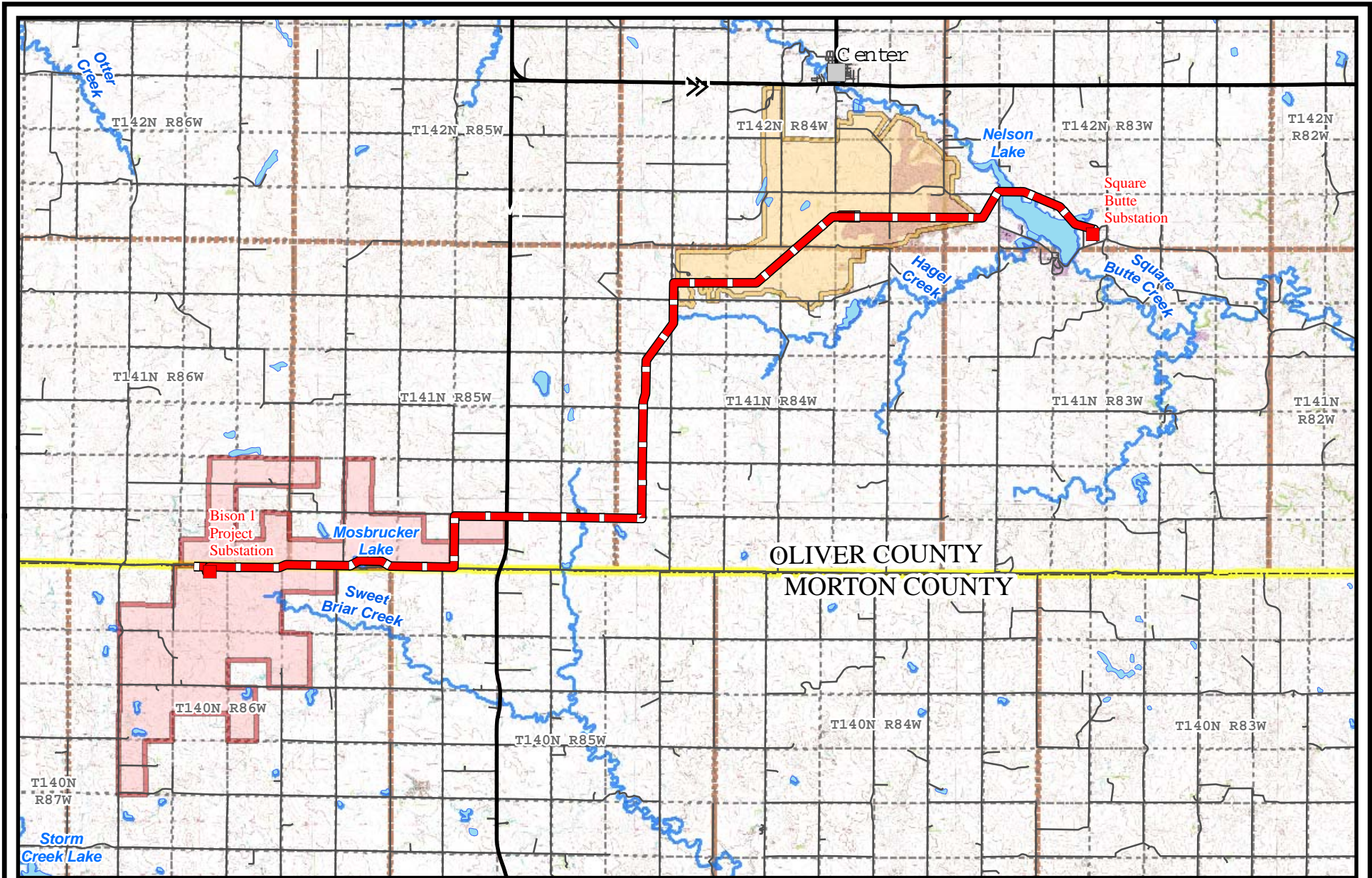
If you have any questions, or need additional information, please contact me at the above-listed number.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David R. Moeller". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

David R. Moeller

c: Eric Norberg, Minnesota Power
Margaret Hodnik, Minnesota Power
Ron Gullicks, Minnesota Power
Jim Atkinson, Minnesota Power



Proposed Transmission Route Bison I Wind Project, Minnesota Power Morton & Oliver Counties, ND