



February 4, 2011

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PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

Darrell Nitschke  
Executive Secretary  
North Dakota Public Service Commission  
600 E. Boulevard Ave., Dept. 408  
Bismarck, North Dakota 58505-0480

**RE: Minnesota Power's Bison 2 Wind Project  
Letter of Intent to Construct Energy Conversion Facility and Request to Shorten  
the One-Year Time Requirement for Filing Application**

Dear Mr. Nitschke:

Minnesota Power<sup>1</sup> is pleased to announce its plans to construct a wind energy conversion facility ("Bison 2 Wind Project") in Oliver and Morton counties. The purpose of this letter is to: (1) notify the North Dakota Public Service Commission ("Commission") of Minnesota Power's intent to construct the wind energy conversion 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 an application for a Certificate of Site Compatibility can be submitted as established by N.D. Admin. Code 69-06-03-01 to two months. This request is made pursuant to N.D.C.C. § 49-22-07.2.

Specifically, Minnesota Power is proposing to request Commission approval for the 105 MW Bison 2 Wind Project to be located in Oliver and Morton counties. Attachment A is a map of the proposed Bison 2 Wind Project. N.D. Admin. Code 69-06-03-02(2). Minnesota Power anticipates initial site work construction to commence by spring 2012, fall 2011 if conditions merit, contingent on obtaining all necessary approvals from the Commission and local governments. N.D. Admin. Code 69-06-03-02(3)

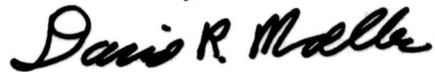
The Bison 2 Wind Project will interconnect with the 230 kV Bison Substation and then be delivered to the Square Butte Substation. The wind energy will then be transmitted to Minnesota Power's system via the existing 250kV DC Line and existing AC transmission system as available and is intended to be 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 this 105 MW project will cost approximately \$160 million depending on final project design. N.D. Admin. Code 69-06-03-02(4).

<sup>1</sup> 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.

Minnesota Power expects to file the site permit application in early April 2011 in order to obtain Commission approval by August 2011. Therefore, Minnesota Power respectfully requests pursuant to N.D.C.C. § 49-22.07.2 that the Commission shorten the one-year waiting between filing this letter of intent and a siting application to two months. 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,



David R. Moeller

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Enc.

c: Margaret Hodnik, Minnesota Power  
Dave Schmitz, Minnesota Power  
Frank Frederickson, Minnesota Power  
Jim Atkinson, Minnesota Power

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