

**STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA  
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION**

**Meadowlark Wind I, LLC  
New Frontier Wind Energy Project–McHenry County  
Siting Application**

**Case No. PU-11-69**

**INFORMAL HEARING**

**February 7, 2017**

**Summary:** On November 22, 2016, Meadowlark Wind filed a Certification of Continuing Suitability, certifying that the designated site continues to meet the conditions upon which Certificate of Site Compatibility Number 29 was issued. Meadowlark Wind plans to begin construction between the second quarter of 2017 and spring of 2020.

The Commission issued Certificate of Site Compatibility Number 29 to Meadowlark Wind I, LLC (Meadowlark Wind) on April 25, 2012 designating a site in McHenry County, North Dakota for a 102 MW New Frontier Wind Energy Project consisting of up to 63 wind turbine generators and associated facilities. A copy of the Commission's Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law and Order is attached.

**Discussion:** When the site certificate was issued Meadowlark was considering turbine models ranging between 1.6 and 2.3 MW with hub heights between 78 and 80 meters and a rotor diameter of up to 113 meters. Meadowlark still has not made final turbine selections and the models now under consideration range from 2.0 to 3.45 MWs with hub heights between 87 and 90 meters and a rotor diameter between 100 and 126 meters.

The new site plan shown in figure 1 is mostly unchanged except now there will be no more than 49 turbines so several of the approved sites have been abandoned. Of the remaining 49 sites, 9 have been shifted slight distances between 3 and 107 feet, primarily to accommodate setback requirements (see table 9) for the tallest turbine heights under consideration. Additionally, the project area is being reduced slightly to remove some areas that are not being used.

No new exclusion or avoidance areas are affected. A Class III historical survey was completed for previously un-surveyed areas affected. A new class I literature search and Class II architectural survey were also completed. Meadowlark informs that SHPO has concurred with a no historic properties affected recommendation.

Noise and shadow flicker studies have been rerun. Noise modeling (Appendix C) indicated five participating landowners may experience noise levels of 50 dB or more at a distance of 100 feet from their residence. All five have provided written waivers (see Appendix D). There are also five participating residences that provided waivers for

shadow flicker impacts modeled at greater than 30 hours per year (See Appendix H, Receptors 2,3,5,12 and newly constructed 44) Of these, the worst is about 90 hours per year. The closest turbine to a non-participating residence is 2,469 feet/ (T-01, Residence #11) and the closest to a participating residence is 1,423 feet (T-24, Residence #3).

New surveys for wildlife, including avian and raptor nest surveys, were conducted during spring and summer of 2016 with results discussed in section 3.7 and 3.8 on pages 3-8 thru 3-17 of the application.

**Prepared by:** Jerry Lein