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October 28, 2013

Burl W. Haar, Executive Secretary
Minnesota Public Utilities Commission
127 7th Place East, Suite 350
St. Paul, MN 55101-2147

In the Matter of the Application of Stoneray Power Partners, LLC for a Large Wind Energy Conversation System Site Permit for the 105 MW Stoneray Wind Project in Pipestone and Murray Counties (PUC Docket No. IP-6646/WS-13-216)

Re: Updating Availability of a Draft Site Permit

Dear Dr. Haar:

The Draft Site Permit recommendations for the Stoneray Wind Project (Project) have been necessarily postponed due to Stoneray Power Partners, LLC (Applicant) delay in filing their Bird and Bat Conservation Strategy (BBCS).

Commission staff's briefing paper[1] for application acceptance for the site permit included a tentative schedule anticipating Department of Commerce Energy Environmental Review and Analysis (EERA) staff would recommend language for a Draft Site Permit by the end of October 2013. This was predicated on the Applicant filing its BBCS by the end of the public comment period which closed on August 31, 2013.

The Commission's Order[2] accepting the site permit application anticipated "a draft avian and bat protection plan[3] will be filed by Stoneray by the end of the public meeting comment period and prior to the Commission's decision on a draft site permit."

EERA has communicated with the Applicant on the subject. The Applicant has relayed the current status[4] as, "The BBCS is still in progress and the consultants are taking a little longer than expected to pull all comments together. We have made a few turns of the document and expect to have something to you shortly. Additionally, we have drafted document detailing the bat passes/night detection as requested by the MN DNR."

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[1] "Staff Briefing Paper," July 3, 2013, eDocket no. 20137-88851-01
[2] "Order Finding Application Complete Conditionally and Referring Matter to the Office of Administrative Hearings," July 24, 2013, eDocket no. 20137-89511-01
[3] Applicant is filing a BBCS in place of an ABPP.
[4] Email Communication, Melissa Peterson, October 27, 2013

Once received, EERA will need to review the BBCS, and to the immediate point, determine what impact the plan will have on permit conditions for the Commission's review of the Draft Site Permit. EERA will make every effort to make this evaluation in a timely manner, but staff's comments will depend on when the document is received and a reasonable amount of time to review the document and formulate permit conditions.

EERA staff is available to answer any questions the Commission may have.

Sincerely,

David Birkholz, Environmental Manager

CC: Tricia DeBleeckere, PUC EFP Staff
Bret Eknes, PUC EFP Director
Deborah Pile, DOC EERA Director
Melissa Peterson, EDF-RE Development Manager