

REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE

**Environmental Assessments and Environmental Impact Statements
Prepared between July 1, 2012, and June 30, 2013
by the**

PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF WISCONSIN

As provided for by Wis. Stat. § 1.11(2)(j)

August 31, 2013

Submitted by: Kathleen J. Zuelsdorff
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Background

1991 Wisconsin Act 273 created Wis. Stat. § 1.11(2)(j), which requires the submission of annual reports to the legislature regarding an agency's preparation of environmental assessments (EA) and environmental impact statements (EIS). The statute requires that all agencies of the state shall:

Annually, no later than September 15, submit a report to the chief clerk of each house of the legislature for distribution under s. 13.172(2), including the number of proposed actions for which the agency conducted an assessment of whether an impact statement was required under par. (c) and the number of impact statements prepared under par. (c).

This report covers activities by the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin (Commission) between July 1, 2012, and June 30, 2013.

Environmental Assessments

Commission staff prepared EAs on six proposed actions to determine whether an EIS was necessary under the Wisconsin Environmental Policy Act (WEPA), Wis. Stat. § 1.11. In one case, some additional information received late in the project review process led to the preparation of a supplemental environmental assessment. Most of these environmental documents were prepared cooperatively with staff of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Office of Energy, as required under Wis. Stat. § 196.025(2m)(b). For each of the six actions, it was determined that preparation of an EIS was not warranted. A brief description of the cases for which an EA was prepared follows:

- One project application from Wisconsin Gas LLC for replacement of existing natural gas facilities in Adams and Waushara County. Thirty-seven miles of new natural gas distribution mains were proposed to be replaced mostly within an existing 50-foot wide right-of-way.
- One application from Wisconsin Electric Power Company (WEPCO) for construction of a new hydroelectric powerhouse at the site of its Twin Falls Electric Generating Plant in the town of Florence, Wisconsin. The existing aged hydroelectric facilities across the Menominee River in the town of Breitung, Michigan, would be removed following construction of a new powerhouse on the Wisconsin side of the river.
- Two applications from American Transmission Company LLC (ATC) for electric transmission facilities. One application was for constructing two new 138 kilovolt (kV) transmission lines through the cities of Wauwatosa and Milwaukee to a new WEPCO distribution substation near the Milwaukee Regional Medical Center. The other application was for authority to rebuild a 138 kV transmission line between the Waukesha, Concord and St. Lawrence Substations in Waukesha, Dodge, and Jefferson Counties, respectively.

- One application from Northern States Power Company-Wisconsin (NSPW) for authority to rebuild an existing 69 kV and add a new 161 kV transmission line from the Couderay Substation in Sawyer County to the Osprey Substation in Rusk County.
- An application from Emerging Energies LLC to construct a large-scale wind farm called the Highland Wind Farm Project in the towns of Forest and Cylon in St. Croix County. The project area includes approximately 41 2.5 megawatt turbines scattered throughout an area approximately 26,500 acres in size.

In December 2012 after the initial technical and public hearings were held, the Shirley Report, a report investigating infrasound and low frequency noise (ILFN) at a recently constructed wind farm in Wisconsin was completed and submitted to the Commission. A supplemental EA was prepared on the results of the report.

Environmental Impact Statements

The Commission did not review any project actions that automatically required the preparation of an EIS during the period of July 1, 2012, and June 30, 2013.

Ongoing Activities

Commission staff is currently reviewing an application from Wisconsin Gas LLC for a 75-mile natural gas pipeline that would interconnect with an existing Viking natural gas pipeline and run through Eau Claire, Clark, Jackson, and Monroe Counties to Tomah, Wisconsin. The Commission expects to issue a draft EIS for this project in October 2013 with a final EIS issued in early 2014.

Also, ATC and NSPW are planning to file a joint application in October 2013 for a 345 kV transmission line extending from the city of Holmen in La Crosse County to Middleton in Dane County. This project will also require the preparation of a draft and final EIS.

Additionally, another application from ATC is expected in early 2014 for a project that would construct a new 345 and 138 kV transmission line from the North Appleton Substation in Outagamie County to the Morgan Substation in Oconto County.

KJZ;jlt:DL: 00852741



Public Service Commission of Wisconsin

Phil Montgomery, Chairperson
Eric Callisto, Commissioner
Ellen Nowak, Commissioner

610 North Whitney Way
P.O. Box 7854
Madison, WI 53707-7854

September 11, 2013

Mr. Patrick Fuller, Chief Clerk
Wisconsin State Assembly
17 West Main Street, Room 401
Madison, WI 53703

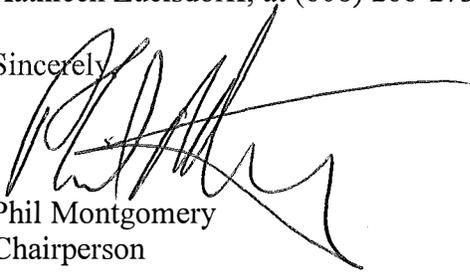
Re: Public Service Commission of Wisconsin Annual Report to
the Legislature Regarding the Preparation of Environmental
Assessments and Environmental Impact Statements

Dear Mr. Fuller:

Enclosed is a copy of the annual report the Public Service Commission (Commission) shall submit to the legislature as provided for in Wis. Stat. § 1.11(2)(j). It reports on the number and type of proposed actions requiring the preparation of an environmental assessment or an environmental impact statement by the Commission between July 1, 2012, and June 30, 2013.

If you have any questions about this report, please contact our Environmental Coordinator, Kathleen Zuelsdorff, at (608) 266-2730.

Sincerely,



Phil Montgomery
Chairperson

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Enclosure:
2013 Annual Report to the Legislature