

**BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA**

IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION)	NOTICE OF APPLICATION; ORDER
BY MERIDIAN WIND PROJECT, LLC FOR)	FOR AND NOTICE OF PUBLIC
A PERMIT OF A WIND ENERGY FACILITY)	INPUT MEETING; NOTICE OF
AND A 345-KV TRANSMISSION FACILITY)	OPPORTUNITY TO APPLY
IN HYDE COUNTY, SOUTH DAKOTA)	FOR PARTY STATUS
)	
)	EL20-013

On April 23, 2020, the South Dakota Public Utilities Commission (Commission) received an Application for a Facility Permit (Application) from Meridian Wind Project, LLC (Meridian or Applicant), a wholly-owned, indirect subsidiary of ENGIE North America, Inc. Meridian proposes to construct a wind energy conversion facility and an 8.9-mile, 345-kV transmission line to be located in Hyde County, South Dakota (Projects). The Projects would be situated within approximately 15,043-acres in the townships of Van Order, Eagle, Chappelle, Highmore, and Holabird, South Dakota (Project Area). The total installed capacity of the Project would not exceed 175 megawatts (MW) of nameplate capacity. The proposed Project includes up to 64 wind turbine generators, access roads to turbines and associated facilities, underground 34.5-kilovolt (kV) electrical collector lines, underground fiber-optic cable, a 34.5-kV to 230-kV collection substation, and one permanent meteorological tower. The Project will interconnect to the high-voltage transmission grid via a 345-kV interconnection switch station (Chappelle Station) located at the western end of the Project's transmission line. Chappelle Station is owned and operated by Basin Electric Power Cooperative and is under construction in conjunction with the Triple H Wind Project. The power produced by the Project will be injected at the Chappelle Creek Substation and into Basin Electric Power Cooperative's existing electrical infrastructure. The Project, at the time of filing this application, has not executed a PPA. The Project is expected to be completed in 2021. Applicant estimates the total cost of the Project to be \$220 million.

The Commission has jurisdiction over this matter pursuant to SDCL Chapters 1-26 and 49-41B and ARSD Chapter 20:10:22.

Pursuant to SDCL 49-41B-15, 49-41B-16, and Executive Order EO2020-16, **the Commission will hold a telephonic public input meeting on the Application on Wednesday, June 10, 2020, at 6:30 p.m., CDT. Call-in information: Number: 1 (866) 410-8397, Conference Code: 3224480315#.**

The purpose of the public input meeting will be to hear public comments regarding the Application and the Projects. At the meeting, Meridian will present a brief description of the Project, after which interested persons may present their views, comments, and questions regarding the Application. A copy of the Application is on file with the Hyde County Auditor pursuant to SDCL 49-41B-5.2 and at the Commission's office in Pierre. The Application and all other documents in the case, including detailed maps of the Project, may be accessed on the Commission's website at www.puc.sd.gov under Commission Actions, Commission Dockets, Electric Dockets, 2020 Electric Dockets, EL20-013 or by contacting the Commission by phone at (605) 773-3201 or (800) 332-1782.

Pursuant to SDCL 49-41B-17 and ARSD 20:10:22:40, the parties to this proceeding are currently the Applicant and the Commission staff. Each municipality, county, and governmental agency in the area where the facility is proposed to be sited; or any person residing in the area where the facility is proposed to be sited, or any directly interested person, may be granted party status in this proceeding by making timely written application to the Commission. Applications for party status will be available at the public input meeting or may be obtained from the Commission's website or by contacting the Commission. **Applications for party status must be filed with the Commission**

on or before 5:00 p.m., CDT, June 22, 2020. The Commission will also be accepting comments in writing from anyone, either by mail, personal delivery, or e-mailing the Commission right up until the time of the decision. You only need to apply for party status if you want to participate formally in the case by putting on actual testimony or other factual evidence, conducting discovery, cross-examining witnesses, making legal arguments, and to preserve your right to appeal to the courts if you do not believe the Commission's decision is legally correct.

Following the public input meeting, the Commission may schedule a formal evidentiary hearing conforming to SDCL Chapter 1-26 to consider any issues raised by any intervening party, the Commission's staff, or the Commission itself. At such a formal hearing, all parties will have the opportunity to appear, present evidence, cross-examine the other parties' witnesses, and exercise all other rights afforded by SDCL Chapters 1-26, 49-1, and 49-41B and ARSD Chapters 20:10:01 and 20:10:22, including rights of appeal to the courts.

For approval, Meridian must show that the proposed Projects will comply with all applicable laws and rules, will not pose a threat of serious injury to the environment nor to the social and economic condition of inhabitants or expected inhabitants in the siting area, will not substantially impair the health, safety or welfare of the inhabitants, and will not unduly interfere with the orderly development of the region with due consideration having been given to the views of governing bodies of affected local units of government. Based upon these factors, the Commission will decide whether a permit to construct should be granted, denied, or granted upon such terms, conditions, or modifications of the construction, operation, or maintenance as the Commission finds appropriate. It is therefore

ORDERED, that the Commission will hold a telephonic public input meeting on the Application and Projects on Wednesday, June 10, 2020, at 6:30 p.m., CDT. Call-in information: Number: 1 (866) 410-8397, Conference Code: 3224480315#. It is further

ORDERED, that pursuant to SDCL 49-41B-17 and ARSD 20:10:22:40, applications for party status must be filed on or before 5:00 p.m., CDT, on June 22, 2020.

Dated at Pierre, South Dakota, this 27th day of April 2020.

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE
The undersigned hereby certifies that this document has been served today upon all parties of record in this docket, as listed on the docket service list, electronically.
By: <u>Adam deHueck</u>
Date: April 27, 2020
(OFFICIAL SEAL)

BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION:

Gary Hanson
GARY HANSON, Chairman

Chris Nelson
CHRIS NELSON, Commissioner

Kristie Fiegen
KRISTIE FIEGEN, Commissioner