

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

IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION) BY WILD SPRINGS SOLAR, LLC FOR A) PERMIT OF A SOLAR ENERGY FACILITY) IN PENNINGTON COUNTY, SOUTH) DAKOTA))))	NOTICE OF APPLICATION; ORDER FOR AND NOTICE OF PUBLIC INPUT MEETING; NOTICE OF OPPORTUNITY TO APPLY FOR PARTY STATUS EL20-018
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On May 15, 2020, the South Dakota Public Utilities Commission (Commission) received an Application for a Facility Permit (Application) from Wild Springs Solar, LLC (Wild Springs or Applicant), a wholly-owned, subsidiary of Geronimo Energy, LLC. Wild Springs proposes to construct a solar energy facility to be located in Pennington County, South Dakota, approximately one-half mile south of New Underwood, South Dakota (Project). The Project would be situated within approximately 1,499-acres on privately-owned land in the Rapid City East and East Central Pennington Unorganized Territories; where civil township data is not available (Project Area). The proposed Project will have an output of up to 128 megawatts (MW) of nameplate solar energy capacity. The proposed Project includes solar modules, inverters, tracking racking, fencing, access roads, a substation, an operations and maintenance building, a parking lot, electric collection lines, and up to three weather stations. The Project will interconnect to the New Underwood Substation, which is owned and operated by Western Area Power Administration. Wild Springs has entered into a Power Purchase Agreement with Basin Electric Power Cooperative, who is taking the entire output of the Project for 15 years, starting in 2022. The Project is expected to be completed in 2022. Applicant estimates the total cost of the Project to be \$190 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, July 1, 2020, at 6:30 p.m. MDT / 7:30 p.m. CDT. Call-in information: Number: 1 (866) 410-8397, Conference Code: 3224480715#.**

The purpose of the public input meeting will be to hear public comments regarding the Application and the Project. At the meeting, Wild Springs 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 Pennington 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 puc.sd.gov under Commission Actions, Commission Dockets, Electric Dockets, 2020 Electric Dockets, EL20-018 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, July 14, 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, Wild Springs must show that the proposed Project 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 on Wednesday, July 1, 2020, at 6:30 p.m. MDT / 7:30 p.m. CDT. Call-in information: Number: 1 (866) 410-8397, Conference Code: 3224480715#. 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 July 14, 2020.

Dated at Pierre, South Dakota, this 22nd day of May 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 or by mail.
By: <u>Adam Detrick</u>
Date: <u>05/22/2020</u>
(OFFICIAL SEAL)

BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION:

Gary Hanson
GARY HANSON, Chairman

Chris Nelson
CHRIS NELSON, Commissioner

Kristie Fiegen
KRISTIE FIEGEN, Commissioner