

January 17, 2020

VIA E-MAIL

Katrina Hapka, Environmental Review Planner
Environmental Quality Board
520 Lafayette Road North
Saint Paul, MN 55155

RE: Petition for an Environmental Assessment Worksheet for Freeborn Wind

Dear Ms. Hapka:

The Public Utilities Commission (Commission) is in receipt of your January 3, 2020 letter referring a petition to the Commission as the Responsible Governmental Unit requesting that an Environmental Assessment Worksheet be prepared for the Freeborn Wind Project.

As you may know, before issuing a decision on the Association of Freeborn County Landowners (AFCL's) petition, the Commission must first develop a record, analyze that record, provide at least a 10-day notice of its meeting to discuss the matter, provide an opportunity for oral argument as necessary, deliberate on the subject matter, and prepare a written order. Commission orders are also subject to petitions for reconsideration under Minnesota Rule 7829.3000 which necessitates additional time to bring the matter back before the Commission for additional consideration.

Because of these requirements, the Commission requests an additional 15 working days to have the matter come before the Commission (tentatively scheduled for the February 6, 2020 Agenda Meeting). Per point 6 of your letter, the Commission will prepare a record of decision as part of its order in Commission Docket Number E002/WS-17-410, and provide notification as provided in Minnesota Rule 4410.1000.

It is our understanding that representatives of Xcel Energy have discussed the petition with the staff of the Environmental Quality Board and have indicated that no construction activities will commence until the AFCL Petition for an EAW has been addressed.

Sincerely,

Ryan Barlow, Acting Executive Secretary

Cc: PUC Docket 17-410 and Official Service List