

## **SUMMARY OF COMMENTS/RECOMMENDATIONS**

**PROPONENT:** Sequoia Energy Inc.  
**PROPOSAL NAME:** Meridan Wind Energy Project  
**CLASS OF DEVELOPMENT:** 2  
**TYPE OF DEVELOPMENT:** Energy Production  
**CLIENT FILE NO.:** 5235.00

### **OVERVIEW:**

The Proposal was dated October 30, 2006 and was received on November 8, 2006. The advertisement of the Proposal read as follows:

“A Proposal for the Meridian Wind Energy Project has been filed by Sequoia Energy Inc. for the construction and operation of a 99 megawatt (MW) net electrical generation capacity commercial wind energy facility in the Rural Municipalities of Rhineland, Morris and Montcalm north of the Town of Altona and near the Town of Rosenfeld. The Project Site Layout for between 35 and 70 wind turbine generators will be placed within approximately 30 sections of land within a Project Study Area comprising approximately 76 sections of land. An Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) prepared by TetrES Consultants Inc has been filed in support of the Environment Act Proposal. Site preparations and initial construction is expected to begin in October 2007 with the final in-service date targeted for December 2008.”

The Proposal was advertised in the following newspapers:

Winkler Times – November 17, 2006;

Altona Red River Valley Echo – November 17, 2006

The Proposal was made available for public review at the following locations:

Main Registry/Winnipeg Public Library/Manitoba Eco-Network (Wpg);

South Central Regional Library (Killarney)

It was also distributed to the "Energy Production" TAC members for comment. All comments were requested by January 10, 2006.

## **PUBLIC RESPONSE**

The following letter in support of the proposal was received in response to the advertisement:

Chris Hagen  
Transportation and Maintenance Supervisor  
Red River Valley School Division  
233 Main Street  
P.O. Box 400  
Morris, MB R0G 1K0

- letter dated January 18, 2007

- The Red River Valley School Division fully endorses and encourages the proposal because it would be a positive venture for the area and it coincides with the Educational Strategic Plans for the Division.

## **COMMENTS FROM THE TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE:**

**Historic Resources** No concerns with regard to the project's potential to impact heritage resources.

**Agriculture, Food & Rural Initiatives** Agricultural impacts are generally considered to be minor and well understood and addressed by the proponent in the EAP .

**Infrastructure and Transportation (MIT)** Comments are as follows:

- Permits are required from MIT under The Highways and Transportation Act to construct or modify access driveways onto Provincial roadways and for the placement of any structures within adjacent control areas (125' from the edge of Provincial road 332 right-of-way) and a 500' control circle at the junction of PTH 3 and PTH 18.
- Permits are required from the Highway Traffic Board (under The Highways Protection Act) for any accesses or structures within the control area adjacent to them. (i.e. 125' of edge of PTH 14 right-of-way and 1000; control circle at its intersection with PR332/PTH 30).
- Agreements will be required from MIT for any underground installations within PR/PTH right-of-way.
- existing drainage patterns along Provincial highway right-of-way should be maintained.
- detailed design drawings for works proposed adjacent to PTH 18 and PTH 3 should be forwarded to Departmental staff for review and approval.
- provide MIT staff to be contacted with regard to MIT requirements.

Disposition: This information will be forwarded to the proponent for direct follow up with MIT.

**Conservation (Policy Coordination Branch)** Recommend the following:

- All reasonable effort should be made to avoid degrading remaining wetlands, streams and drains and turbines should not be located near wetlands and areas of native vegetation.
- Recommend that baseline bat surveys should be conducted to confirm that bats do not use the project area.
- Recommend that data from locally conducted breeding bird surveys (BBS) should be used to quantify and strengthen the accounts of the breeding bird species diversity and composition in the study area.
- Recommend that a qualified environmental/biological environmental inspector examine potential bird breeding areas prior to construction. Any species at risk found must be reported to the local natural officer or the Biodiversity Conservation in Winnipeg.
- Note that as an observation and point of clarification, the reported observation of the ferruginous hawk, listed as threatened by Manitoba's Endangered Species Act, is very unlikely due to location, habitat and timing. Red tailed hawks (not reported) are the common raptor in the area and some of its colour forms could have been mistaken as a ferruginous hawk.
- The proponent should inspect the site for the presence of any rare and endangered species of concern prior to and during construction in accordance with the Manitoba *Endangered Species Act* and the federal *Species at Risk Act*. If species of concern are present, the proponent is required to contact the Biodiversity Conservation Section of the Wildlife.
- As a general observation the Wildlife and Ecosystem Protection Branch commends TetrES for responding to previous concerns regarding the EA's of wind energy projects and for providing more of the information in the Meridian EA that was lacking in previous wind energy impact assessments.

Disposition: The Proposal EIA states that the proponent intends to develop an Environmental Protection Plan (EPP) for the development. The requirement to provide an EPP will be included as a condition of the Licence. The recommendations to undertake bat survey and the avian survey including identification of migratory routes can be accommodated as specific requirements of the EPP. A copy of the detailed comments have been provided to the consultant for consideration in developing appropriate survey methodology and mitigation in the EPP.

The remaining requirements can be accommodated as separate conditions in the Licence.

**Water Stewardship** Recommend the following:

- Any construction dewatering will require authorization under The Water Rights Act.

- The proposed activities should not degrade the surface and groundwater quality on adjacent properties.
- Note that the specific water crossings location for road access, the electrical collector system and the transmission line will be provided with the EPP.
- The regional fisheries manager should be consulted in the final determination of crossing locations, timing and types of crossings for temporary vehicle access and for any trenched crossings required for the electrical collector system as indicated in the EAP. Recommend that crossings with a defined channel and water throughout the year or sufficient spring runoff to provide spawning and nursery habitat be directional drilled (Buffalo Creek, Deadhorse Creek, Knopf and possibly the Kronsgart Drain).
- Recommend that the Manitoba Stream Crossing Guidelines be followed including no instream occur between April 1 and June 15<sup>th</sup> and if outside this timeframe it is preferable to work when the stream is dry to prevent erosion.
- Where possible temporary crossings should be removed prior to spring melt to prevent erosion.
- Metal transmission towers are preferred in or near wetlands.

#### Disposition:

The Environmental Protection Plan (EPP) should describe the proposed environmental practices to be employed to mitigate adverse effects on groundwater and local wells in the event of accidental contamination during construction and a description of the methods to be used to collect baseline data to assess changes to water quality during operation.

Other comments can be accommodated as conditions of licencing.

#### **Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency (CEAA)**

Transport Canada reviewed the proposal with respect to areas of their mandate, specifically the Navigable Waters Protection Act (NWPA) and Aerodrome Safety. Recommend that:

- An application under the NWPA should be submitted to determine approval requirements
- An Aeronautical Obstruction Clearance form should be submitted to Transport Canada.

Fisheries and Oceans Canada advises that information provided in the proposal is not sufficient to enable a determination for authorization.

Health Canada disagrees with the proponent's assertion that the operation of the project will not produce pollution. Health Canada asserts that the operation will be emitting or disposing of pollutants including paints, resins, solvents, lubricants, coolants, batteries, packaging materials, domestic/office waste, sewage, electronic/electrical/mechanical components, noise, light, road/off road/ aerial/other vehicle and equipment

fuel/consumables, pesticides etc. Additionally, off site energy will be used to power some operations.

Disposition: Federal comments have been forwarded to the project proponent for follow-up, as appropriate, and in accordance with the requirements of the Canada – Manitoba Agreement on Environmental Assessment Cooperation.

### **PUBLIC HEARING**

A public hearing is not recommended for this project on the basis that only one letter in support of the proposal was received in response to the Environment Act advertisement of the Proposal.

### **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION:**

The comments received from the technical review of the Proposal can be accommodated as conditions of licencing. It is recommended that the project be licenced pursuant to the Environment Act in accordance with the terms and conditions described in the attached draft Environment Act Licence.

### **PREPARED BY:**

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