

REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE

**Environmental Assessments and Environmental Impact Statements
Prepared between July 1, 2019, and June 30, 2020
by the**

PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF WISCONSIN

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

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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, 2019, and June 30, 2020.

Environmental Assessments

Commission staff prepared an EA for seven proposed actions to determine whether an EIS was necessary under the Wisconsin Environmental Policy Act (WEPA), Wis. Stat. § 1.11. 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 these actions, it was determined that preparation of an EIS was not warranted.

The city of Waukesha applied for a project to construct a water transmission main, a booster station, reservoirs, and a water supply control building. The project has been years in the planning and regulatory application and approval stages as Waukesha has been needing to address its water supply concerns.

Two merchant plant developers, Badger State Solar and Point Beach Solar, applied for and were granted approvals to construct new 149 MW and 100 MW solar electric generating facilities, respectively. Utility scale solar developments are still a relatively new occurrence on the energy infrastructure landscape.

Northern States Power Company applied and received approval to construct approximately 19 miles of new 34.5 transmission line, a substation, and a switching station in Bayfield County. The project was intended to address aging infrastructure.

American Transmission Company applied for and was granted approval to rebuild 21 miles of existing 69kV transmission line to a double-circuit 138 kV line between two substations in Brown and Oconto Counties.

Superior Water, Light, and Power Co. applied for and received approval for a project to construct a new, approximately seven-mile natural gas pipeline to serve the proposed Nemadji Trail Energy Center in Superior, WI. This EA was prepared and was part of the larger project for which an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) was prepared, shown below in the EIS section.

Wisconsin Power & Light Company filed and received approval to construct a natural gas pipeline, approximately 12 miles long that would connect to the Northern Natural Gas system near Tomah, WI and continue into the WP& L distribution system to reinforce their system.

Environmental Impact Statements

Commission staff prepared two Environmental Impact Statements during this time period. South Shore Energy LLC, Superior Water, Light, and Power Company, and Dairyland Power Cooperative (together, applicants) received approval to construct and place in operation a natural gas combined cycle power plant and associated facilities, and to construct, operate, and relocate natural gas lines and transmission lines to power the facility and transmit generated power to the electric grid.

Wisconsin Electric Power Company – Gas Operations received approval to construct natural gas transmission facilities, including a primary pipeline of approximately 46 miles, starting at the existing Bluff Creek gate station in the town of Whitewater, Walworth County, and ending at

the Lakeshore Capacity Improvement project regulator station in the town of Paris, Kenosha County. The applicants stated purpose of the project is to reinforce its regional supply system in that area to support increasing demand.

Ongoing Activities

Commission staff is currently reviewing a series of utility-scale solar developments proposed to be located in various portions of central to southern Wisconsin. The first of these kind were processed and approved over the course of the last year and a half and continue to be prevalent in the Commission's application queue. Commission staff is continually learning about the impacts and potential impacts associated with these facilities, and the high level of public interest. There are currently four of these projects in process, proposed by merchant developers, as CPCN applications. Commission staff is preparing EAs for all four.

One additional docket is a request for a Certificate of Authority from Wisconsin Power & Light Company to acquire and construct three of the four merchant plant projects mentioned previously, along with an additional three sub-100 MW solar developments in other parts of southern WI. Commission staff is preparing an EA for the three sub-100 MW projects that are part of the docket.

Wisconsin Electric Power Company and Wisconsin Gas LLC, filing jointly, are requesting to construct two new Liquefied Natural Gas facilities – one near Ixonia in Jefferson County and one near Bluff Creek, east of Whitewater, in Walworth County. Commission staff is preparing an EA for this docket, which will include both of the proposed LNG facilities. The project also includes an approximately seven mile electric distribution line to power the proposed Ixonia facility.

The city of Manitowoc is requesting a Certificate of Authority to construct a water main extension project in the city. The purpose of the project is to deliver clean safe drinking water to multiple properties that currently obtain their drinking water from private potable wells impacted with chronic contaminant compounds above their respective Wisconsin Administrative Code, Chapter NR 809 Maximum Containment Level standards or are in imminent risk of contamination by chronic contaminants. Commission staff is currently preparing an EA for the water main extension.

Environmental Assessments Completed July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020

- 6240-CW-117 City of Waukesha project to construct water transmission main, a booster station, reservoirs and a water supply control building in the cities of Waukesha, West Allis, Greenfield, New Berlin, and the town of Waukesha, Waukesha County and in the city of Milwaukee, Milwaukee County. 10/31/2019
- 9800-CE-100 Badger State Solar, a wholesale merchant plant, to construct a new 149 MW solar electric generation facility, to be located in Jefferson County. 10/17/2019
- 9802-CE-100 Point Beach Solar, a wholesale merchant plant, to construct a new 100 MW solar electric generation facility, to be located in Manitowoc County. 10/8/2019
- 4220-CE-182 Northern States Power Co. project to construct a new 19-mile 34.5 kV transmission line, a new 115/34.5 kV transmission substation and a new 34.5 kV transmission switching substation, to be located in Bayfield County. 10/16/2019
- 137-CE-190 American Transmission Company project to rebuild 21 miles of Existing 69kV transmission line to a double-circuit 138 kV line Between the Bayport and Pioneer substations in the villages of Howard and Suamico in Brown County and in the towns of Abrams, little Suamico, and Stiles, in Oconto County. 1/6/2020
- 5820-CG-105 Superior Water, Light, and Power Co. project to construct a new, Approximately seven-mile natural gas lateral to serve the Nemadji Trail Energy Center, to be located in portions of the city of Superior, The town of Superior, and the town of Parkland, within northeast Douglas County. 10/11/2019
- 6680-CG-168 Wisconsin Power & Light Company project to construct natural Gas distribution facilities in the towns of Adrian, Greenfield, La Grange, Oakdale, and Tomah, in Monroe County, by connecting Into Northern Natural Gas transmission facilities 3/26/2020

Environmental Impact Statements Completed July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020

9698-CE-100 and 101	South Shore Energy LLC, Dairyland Power Cooperative, and Superior Water, Light, and Power Company project to construct Natural gas combined cycle power plant facilities, and to construct, Operate, and relocate natural gas lines and transmission lines to Power the facility and transmit generated power to the Transmission grid	Draft EIS 7/2019
		Final EIS 9/2019
6630-CG-138	Wisconsin Electric Power Company – Gas Operations project to To install natural gas transmission facilities, including a primary Pipeline of approximately 46 miles in length, starting at the Existing Bluff Creek gate station in the town of Whitewater, Walworth County, and ending at the Lakeshore Capacity Improvement project regulator station in the town of Paris, Kenosha County.	Draft EIS 10/2019
		Final EIS 1/2020