

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**

**Rural Development**

**Dairyland Power Cooperative:** Notice of Finding of No Significant Impact

**AGENCY:** Rural Development, USDA

**ACTION:** Notice of Finding of No Significant Impact

**SUMMARY:** Notice is given that the Rural Utilities Service (RUS) has made a finding of no significant impact (FONSI) with respect to a request for possible financing assistance for the Nemadji Trail Energy Center (NTEC) Project in Douglas County, Wisconsin.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION OR FOR COPIES OF THE EA AND FONSI, CONTACT:**

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The documents can be accessed at USDA's website at:

<https://www.rd.usda.gov/environmentalstudy/nemadji-trail-energy-center-wisconsin>

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** Dairyland Power Cooperative proposes to participate with South Shore Energy, LLC, a subsidiary of ALLETE Inc., in a one-on-one combined cycle natural gas generation plant (NTEC facility) with an in-service date in 2025. The NTEC facility is a cornerstone enabling Dairyland's Sustainable Generation Plan which is weighted very heavily with renewable sources. This Project will be capable of operating in peaking and intermediate load modes to fulfill energy and capacity requirements for Dairyland.

The Project includes a combined cycle natural gas turbine electric generating unit consisting of one H-Class gas turbine generator with a fired output of approximately 625 megawatt, a 1x1 heat recovery steam generator with duct firing, and one steam turbine generator. NTEC will burn natural gas with the capability to be retrofitted to use fuel oil as a backup fuel. NTEC facility will be approximately 26 acres for the selected site and would be located near Superior, Wisconsin. The Project will use dry cooling by finned heat exchangers. Development of the NTEC facility also requires the development of associated electricity infrastructure. The new facility would require a new electric transmission line to connect to a new switching station located southeast of the site. The switching station would then be connected to the electricity grid to deliver the power generated to the bulk power system. The switching station would be built by the Project participants and owned by American Transmission Company.

The availability of the EA for public review was announced via notice in the Superior Telegram on October 30th and November 6th, 2020. The comment period was announced in the newspaper notices and ended on November 30th, 2020. The EA was also available for public review at the following libraries:

- Superior Public Library, 1530 Tower Avenue, Superior, WI 54880 (715-394-8860)
- Jim Dan Hill Library, University of Wisconsin – Superior, 907 N. 19th Street, Superior, WI 54880 (715-394-8343)
- La Crosse Public Library, 800 Main Street, La Crosse, WI 54601 (608-789-7100)
- Murphy Library Resource Center, University of Wisconsin – La Crosse, 1631 Pine Street, La Crosse, WI 54601 (608-785-8505)

RUS received one set of comments from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on the EA. A copy of EPA's comments and RUS responses are attached to the FONSI.

RUS is satisfied that the environmental impacts of the proposed project have been adequately addressed. RUS's federal action would not result in significant impacts to the quality of the human environment, and as such it will not prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for its action related to the proposed project.