



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Black Oak Getty Wind Project

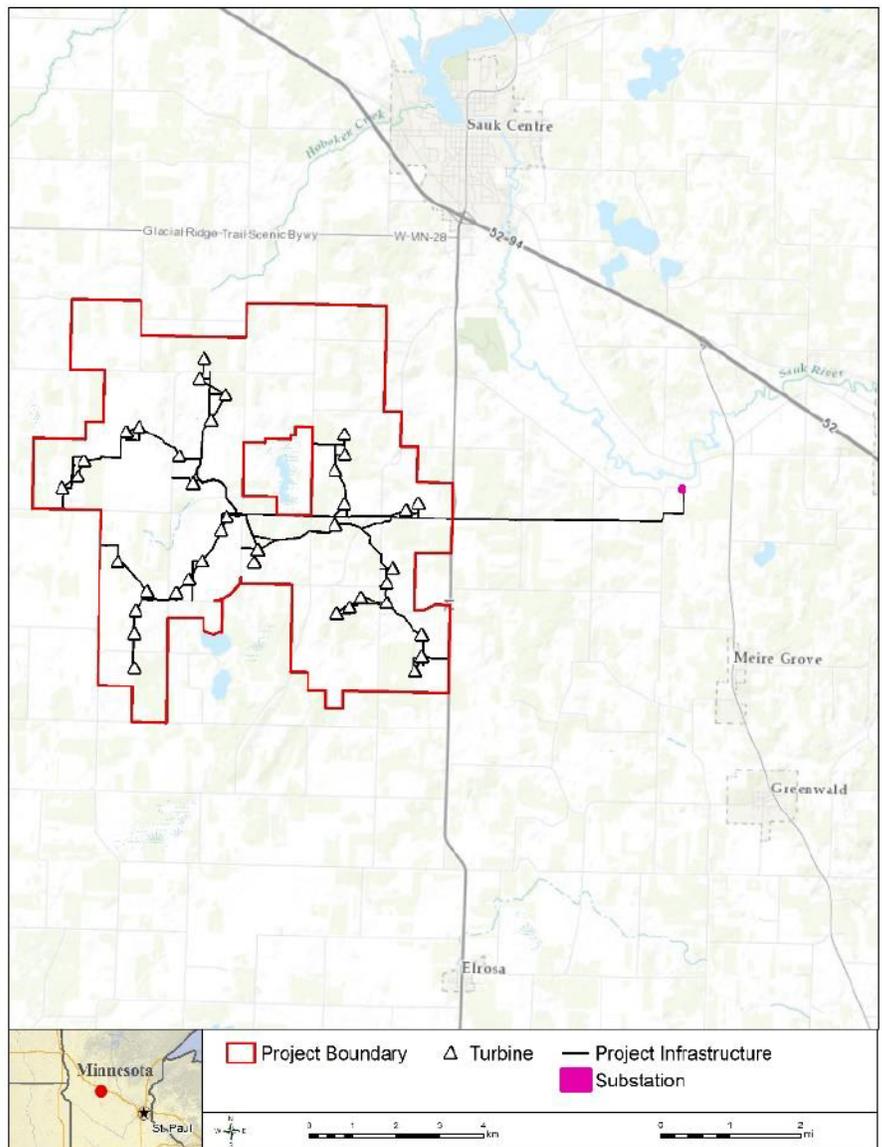
Project Description

Black Oak Wind, LLC, a company held under AEP Renewables, (Applicant) has constructed and is currently operating the Black Oak Wind Farm and Getty Wind Project (collectively, the Black Oak Getty Wind Project, or the Project) located about 2 miles southwest of the city of Sauk Centre in Stearns County, Minnesota. The Project consists of 39 turbines, producing up to 82 megawatts of electricity. The Project area contains approximately 14,700 acres. The Project interconnects to the Great River Energy Black Oak substation, located approximately 4.3 miles southeast of Sauk Centre, via an approximately 6.8-mile-long 69-kilovolt overhead transmission line and transmits power into the Midwest Independent System Operator grid.

Potential Eagle Impacts

There may be incidental bald eagle injury and/or mortality due to the operation of the Project. Take, including killing of eagles, is prohibited by the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act without a permit. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) has the authority to issue eagle take permits, where the incidental take is associated with but not the purpose of an otherwise lawful activity and is determined to be compatible with the preservation of eagles. The Service will issue incidental take permits for such take only after an applicant has committed to undertake all practical measures to avoid and minimize such take and mitigate anticipated take in accordance with the regulations.

We received an application for a 30-year incidental take permit from Black Oak Wind, LLC for the Project. The Applicant has provided an Eagle Conservation Plan that summarizes project design, construction, and operational measures taken to avoid and minimize impacts to eagles. The Service has evaluated risks to eagles at the Project, and estimates that up

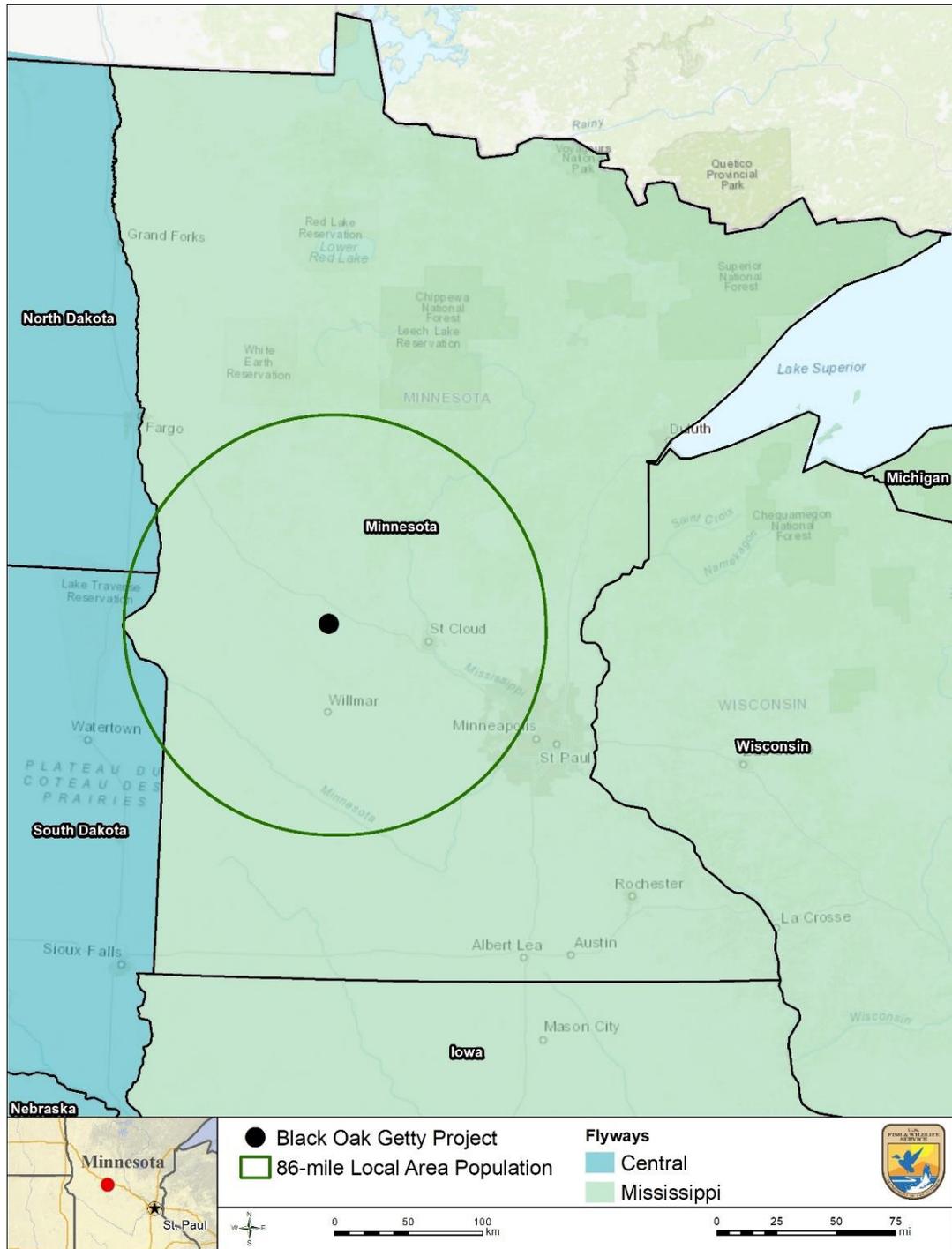


to 32 bald eagles may be taken over the 30-year duration of the incidental take permit (based on an estimated annual take rate of 1.06 eagles per year). This take estimate will be revisited at 5-year intervals and updated with relevant monitoring information.

Project Review

The Service has an independent statutory responsibility under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) to evaluate its own actions related to the Project, namely the possible issuance of an incidental take permit. A draft Environmental Assessment (EA) has been prepared to analyze the impacts associated with the proposed action. The EA evaluates the impact of issuing (and not issuing) an eagle take permit for the existing Project. We are providing the opportunity to comment on the EA; no permit decision will be made until after the NEPA process is complete.

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service



Should additional information be needed, please contact us at:

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The ECP and draft EA are being posted on-line to allow for public comment on this process. Both documents can be found at <https://www.fws.gov/midwest/eagle/permits/ea.html>.