



# NEWS RELEASE

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## Sierra Club Commends PSC for Permitting Highland Wind Farm

**Madison, WI** – Today the Wisconsin Public Service Commission (PSC) voted 2-1 to permit the Highland Wind Farm, a proposed 102.5 mw wind project with 41 turbines in the Town of Forest, in St. Croix County. This is a huge step forward for clean energy and clean energy jobs in Wisconsin.

“The Highland Wind Farm will provide huge benefits to the Town of Forest. The project will create over 100 jobs during construction and up to 8 permanent jobs. Over the next 30 years, it will provide \$4.8 million in revenue to Forest Township, and over \$6.8 million to St. Croix County. The most significant commercial activity in the Town of Forest is farming. The 25 host landowners will benefit from lease payments offered by the Highland Wind Farm, and this income is critical for anchoring the many family farms in this area,” said Carol Johnson, local Town of Forest Resident, who has been steadily pushing for the farm.

Wisconsin’s current energy generation is heavily reliant upon coal-fired power plants. Our overreliance on coal is dangerous to our health and costly to Wisconsin ratepayers. Wisconsin spends \$12.5 billion every year on out-of-state fossil fuels. Unexpected costs and cost overages at Wisconsin’s newest coal plant, the Elm Road Generating Station, has increased costs for ratepayers. Wisconsin’s coal reliance is also costing us our health. Mercury from coal-fired power plants has led to fish advisories in every lake and river in Wisconsin. Asthma strikes nearly 1 out of every 10 school children in the United States and is the number-one health issue that causes kids to miss school. In Wisconsin, over 123,000 children and over 400,000 adults struggle with asthma. Asthma alone costs Wisconsin over \$1 billion each year. Burning coal is the only cause of toxic coal ash, which is finding its way into drinking water all over the state.

“All forms of energy have downsides, including wind power, but the immense economic, health, safety, and environmental benefits of wind energy make this project a win-win for Wisconsin,” said Elizabeth Ward, Conservation Programs Coordinator for the Sierra Club-John Muir Chapter, “Wisconsin overwhelmingly wants clean energy and Sierra Club applauds the PSC for giving Wisconsinites what they want.”

Wisconsin has the opportunity to create thousands of clean energy jobs, from energy efficiency to clean transportation options to recycling to tourism. This is one of those projects and we look forward to more clean energy projects in Wisconsin.

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*Founded in 1892 by John Muir, the Sierra Club is America’s oldest, largest and most influential grassroots environmental organization. The Sierra Club’s mission is to explore, enjoy, and protect the wild places of the earth; to practice and promote the responsible use of the earth’s ecosystems and resources; to educate and enlist humanity to protect and restore the quality of the natural and human environment; and to use all lawful means to carry out those objectives. The Sierra Club – John Muir Chapter is made up of 15,000 members and supporters working to promote clean energy and protect water resources in Wisconsin.*