



Control Number: 38825



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Addendum StartPage: 0

APPLICATION OF WIND ENERGY §
TRANSMISSION TEXAS, LLC TO AMEND ITS §
CERTIFICATE OF CONVENIENCE AND §
AND NECESSITY FOR THE LONG DRAW TO §
SAND BLUFF, SAND BLUFF TO DIVIDE, AND §
SAND BLUFF TO BEARKAT 345-KV CREZ §
TRANSMISSION LINE IN BORDEN, COKE, §
GLASSCOCK, HOWARD, MITCHELL AND §
STERLING COUNTIES §

BEFORE THE STATE OFFICE

OF

ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS

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MICHIGAN PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
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DIRECT TESTIMONY OF WESLEY HODGES

January 24, 2011

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ATTACHMENTS

(NONE)

1 I. INTRODUCTION AND QUALIFICATIONS

2
3 Q. PLEASE STATE YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS.

4 A. My name is Wesley Hodges. I reside at 801 Oak, Sterling City, Texas 76951. My
5 mailing address is Post Office Box 1005, Sterling City, Texas 76951.
6

7 Q. ON WHOSE BEHALF ARE YOU TESTIFYING IN THIS PROCEEDING?

8 A. I am testifying on behalf of myself and my spouse, Karen Hodges, who could be directly
9 and adversely affected landowners depending on where the PUC orders the transmission
10 line to be routed in PUC Docket No. 38825, which is the Application of Wind Energy
11 Transmission Texas, LLC (WETT) to amend its Certificate of Convenience and
12 Necessity for the Long Draw to Sand Bluff, the Sand Bluff to Divide, and the Sand Bluff
13 to Bearkat 345-KV CREZ Transmission Line in Borden, Coke, Glasscock, Howard,
14 Mitchell and Sterling Counties (the "Sand Bluff Transmission Line" or the "transmission
15 line").
16

17 Q. PLEASE DESCRIBE YOUR INTEREST IN THIS PROCEEDING.

18 A. I own property in Sterling County, Texas described as follows:

19 My primary residence is located within less than one mile east of the segment CE6 and
20 approximately one mile south of the segment CL6 proposed transmission lines. My

1 residence is located in the northwest city limits of the City of Sterling City, Texas (the
2 “Residential Property”).

3
4 I also have a 960 acre ranch located in eastern Sterling County, Texas which is located
5 one mile south of the southeast corner of the CF6 segment line. (the “Ranch Property”).
6

7 Q. WILL THE PROPERTY BE DIRECTLY AFFECTED BY THE SAND BLUFF TO
8 DIVIDE SEGMENT OF THE TRANSMISSION LINE?

9 A. Depending on where the Public Utility Commission orders the line to be routed, the
10 Property could be affected.
11

12 Q. DESCRIBE BRIEFLY YOUR EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND AND
13 PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE.

14 A. I have a Bachelor of Science degree in animal science from Angelo State University in
15 San Angelo, Texas. I am a rancher.
16

17 Q. HAVE YOU EVER TESTIFIED IN A PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION OF TEXAS
18 PROCEEDING?

19 A. No.
20

21 Q. ARE YOU INTERVENORS IN THIS PROCEEDING?

22 A. Yes, I am an intervenor in this proceeding.

1 II. PURPOSE OF TESTIMONY

2
3 Q. WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF YOUR TESTIMONY IN THIS PROCEEDING?

4 A. The purpose of my testimony is to describe my property and to explain the negative
5 effects which would result if proposed alternative routes CE6, CL6, and CF6 or a
6 combination of these links were chosen.

7
8 Q. DO YOU SPONSOR ANY EXHIBITS TO YOUR TESTIMONY? IF SO, PLEASE
9 DESCRIBE THOSE EXHIBITS.

10 A. No.

11
12 Q. ARE ANY OTHER WITNESSES FILING DIRECT TESTIMONY IN THIS CASE ON
13 YOUR BEHALF?

14 A. No.

15
16 Q. ARE YOU IN FAVOR OF THE PREFERED ROUTE FOR THE SAND BLUFF
17 TRANSMISSION LINE?

18 A. Yes.

19
20 Q. ARE YOU IN FAVOR OF ANY ROUTES OTHER THAN THE PREFERRED
21 ROUTE?

22 A. No.

1 Q. DO YOU OPPOSE ANY ROUTES?

2 A. Yes, I oppose any alternate routes which contain line segments CE6, CL6 and CF6.

3

4 III. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPERTY

5

6 Q. PLEASE DESCRIBE YOUR PROPERTY.

7 A. The Residential Property consists of my primary residence and a livestock barn which is
8 located within the city limit boundaries of the City of Sterling City, Texas. The
9 alternative transmission lines would be visible from my property. Undoubtedly the CE6
10 and CL6 lines will have a substantial negative impact on the aesthetics and market value
11 of my residence.

12

13 The proposed alternate Line CF6 will not cross my Ranch Property, but will be located
14 approximately one mile to the north. There are no wind turbines or related wind energy
15 appurtenances on the ranch. This property is used for farming, ranching, hunting and
16 recreation.

17

18 Q. WHAT SEGMENTS ADVERSELY AFFECT YOUR PROPERTY?

19 A. CE6, CL6 and CF6.

20

21

22

23

1 IV. LAND USE

2
3 Q. PLEASE DESCRIBE THE CURRENT USES OF YOUR PROPERTY.

4 A. The Residential Property, as described previously, is my primary residence. This
5 Residential Property is used for our personal enjoyment as well as a central location to
6 our Sterling County ranches. The Ranch Property affected by the proposed CF6 line is
7 currently used for farming, ranching, hunting and recreation.

8
9 Q. BRIEFLY DESCRIBE HOW YOUR FARMING OPERATIONS WILL BE AFFECTED
10 BY A TRANSMISSION LINE OF THIS MAGNITUDE?

11 A. The proposed CF6 line will not directly affect my farming operations since it does not
12 show to cross the Ranch Property. It shows to cross my adjoining neighbor's ranchland.
13 Likewise, the proposed CE6 and CL6 lines will not affect any farming operations on the
14 Residential Property since it is my primary residence.

15
16 Q. BRIEFLY DESCRIBE HOW YOUR HUNTING OPERATIONS WILL BE AFFECTED
17 BY A TRANSMISSION LINE OF THIS MAGNITUDE?

18 A. My hunting operation is a large income enterprise for my ranch. My hunters hunt deer,
19 turkey, quail, and dove. Today most hunters are from the urban areas. They mainly
20 desire to escape the urban environment. Hunting is all about recreation, relaxation and
21 being away from the stress of the city and daily jobs. Hunters enjoy the rural
22 environment and scenery. Adding a transmission line with the clear cutting of a right of

1 way, in addition to any additional transmission line road traffic, will simply bring more of
2 the urban environment to the rural countryside. These transmission lines also emit a
3 noise and interfere with an important part of the hunting experience, that being the peace
4 and quiet of the countryside. I doubt that hunters will be hunting near the power lines.
5 The power lines will not add to the hunting experience. I am also concerned as to how a
6 transmission line will affect the wildlife.

7
8 Q. BRIEFLY DESCRIBE HOW YOUR RANCHING OPERATIONS WILL BE
9 AFFECTED BY A TRANSMISSION LINE OF THIS MAGNITUDE?

10 A. As discussed, the proposed CF6 line will not directly affect my ranching operations since
11 it does not show to cross the Ranch Property. It shows to cross my adjoining neighbor's
12 ranchland. Likewise, the proposed CE6 and CL6 lines will not affect any farming
13 operations on the Residential Property since it is my primary residence.

14
15 Q. WHAT FEATURES DOES LINK CE6 FOLLOW OR PARALLEL ON YOUR
16 PROPERTY?

17 A. According to the maps, this alternative route line will cross US Highway 87 west of the
18 City of Sterling City, Texas. This alternative route line is located less than one mile from
19 my Residential Property and does not cross my land.

1 Q. WHAT FEATURES DOES LINK CL6 FOLLOW OR PARALLEL ON YOUR
2 PROPERTY?

3 A. According to the maps, this alternative route line runs parallel to US Highway 87 north of
4 the city limit boundaries of the City of Sterling City, Texas. It is approximately one mile
5 north of my Residential Property and does not cross my land.
6

7 Q. WHAT FEATURES DOES LINK CF6 FOLLOW OR PARALLEL ON YOUR
8 RANCH?

9 A. According to the maps, the southeast corner of this alternative route is one mile north of
10 the northwest corner of my Ranch Property. This alternative route does not cross my
11 land.
12

13 Q. WHAT OTHER CONCERNS DO YOU HAVE ABOUT THE TRANSMISSION LINE?

14 A. I am concerned about the construction of the transmission lines within one mile of the
15 city limits of the City of Sterling City, Texas, and the unknown potential health risks they
16 could pose to the general population. Also, I am concerned about the potential for
17 disruption of wildlife habitat, erosion and/or hydrological damage to my Ranch Property.
18

19 Q. DO YOU HAVE A PREFERENCE AS TO WHAT KIND OF UTILITY POLES ARE
20 USED ON THIS PROJECT, THAT BEING SINGLE POLES OR LATTICE
21 STRUCTRES?

22 A. Yes. If the proposed alternative routes of CE6, CL6 and CF6 are approved, I prefer that

1 WETT construct the power lines using single poles instead of lattice-type structures since
2 they will be very visible from my properties. Single poles would be better for not only
3 the viewscape, but also the narrower right of way utilized for single poles will reduce the
4 acreage to be clear cut.

5
6 Q. IF ANY LINK CROSSES OR IS OTHERWISE LOCATED ON OR NEAR YOUR
7 PROPERTY, ARE YOU SPECIFICALLY REQUESTING THAT MONOPOLES BE
8 USED INSTEAD OF LATTICE TOWERS?

9 A. Absolutely

10
11 V. CONCLUSIONS

12
13 Q. WILL YOU PLEASE SUMMARIZE YOUR TESTIMONY?

14 A. I am a fifth generation rancher feeling violated by the number of CREZ transmission
15 lines which were proposed to be built within view of my properties. I regret the loss of
16 privacy, the interference with my primary residence as well as to the agricultural and
17 recreational activities and the aesthetic impact of the lines. I endorse the preferred route
18 in this case solely because it appears to meet more of the PUC routing priorities. I
19 believe there are currently existing compatible corridors and other factors which make the
20 preferred route a better place for a transmission line. On the other hand, many of the
21 alternate routes for this project will require the clear cutting and fragmentation of virgin
22 ranch lands, some of which are historic ranches. As to my ranch, all of the alternate links

1 crossing near us will directly affect my hunting activities.

2

3 Q. DOES THIS CONCLUDE YOUR TESTIMONY?

4 A. Yes. However, I reserve the right to supplement my testimony should additional issues
5 need to be addressed in this proceeding.

6