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NEWS

Ship carrying Minnesota Power wind components expected in Duluth Port Tuesday

Duluth, Minn.— When the *BBC Ems arrives in the Port of Duluth Tuesday, August 10, it will mark a significant milestone for Minnesota Power's wind development project that spans two states.

The BBC Ems is carrying wind turbine equipment destined for the company's 76-megawatt Bison 1 Wind Energy Center now under construction near New Salem, North Dakota. On board the ship are 16 nacelles and 16 rotor hubs that are integral components of the first phase of Bison. Manufactured at a Siemens facility in Brande, Denmark, the equipment was shipped from the port of Aarhus.

The Bison 1 project consists of 33 wind turbines to be installed in the project by the end of 2011. Sixteen wind towers will be assembled and scheduled for activation by the end of this year. The remaining 17 will be installed in 2011. Each nacelle supports a rotor and encloses a wind turbine plant's major components for electric power generation -- the gearbox, drive train and control electronics. A rotor hub fits on the front of the nacelle and contains large holes where the blades will be fitted. Each set of blades, rotor hub, and nacelle weighs 144 tons.

Construction of this $178 million wind farm follows the company's $70 million purchase of a 465-mile transmission line to bring wind energy from North Dakota to its customers in northeastern Minnesota. When coupled with Minnesota Power's existing wind, hydro and biomass assets across Northeastern Minnesota, Bison will enable the company to meet Minnesota's 25 percent renewable standard by 2025 in a timely and cost effective manner.

"Developing cost effective wind resources in North Dakota benefits our customers, and utilizing the Duluth Port for the delivery of this large equipment also enables us to contribute to a green jobs economy in our own back yard," said ALLETE President and CEO Alan R. Hodnik.

The nacelles and hubs will be securely stored at the Clure Public Marine Terminal until needed at the project site; specialized trucks will later be dispatched to transport the heavy components to North Dakota.

"The Port of Duluth has handled nearly a million freight tons of wind turbine components in the past five years," noted Adolph Ojard, executive director of the Duluth Seaway Port Authority. "We've begun to see an uptick in wind shipments this year, signaling that sector is starting to rebound. While we have established relationships with manufacturers and developers in Europe and across North America, we are especially pleased to be handling this shipment for Minnesota Power, a company headquartered here in Duluth and committed to northeastern Minnesota."

Most wind turbine components shipped through the Port of Duluth since 2005 were inbound from manufacturers in Germany, Denmark and Spain for delivery to major projects in the Upper Midwest. The Port has also served wind farm projects as far away as Montana, Missouri, Oklahoma and Wyoming, and handled *outbound* shipments of blades manufactured in North Dakota to Spain, Brazil and Chile.

The blades for Bison 1 will be fabricated in a Siemens facility in Fort Madison, Iowa and trucked to the construction site. Towers for the wind turbines will be built in West Fargo, N.D.

The BBC Ems is scheduled to arrive around 11:30, August 10, with the unloading of the cargo to begin at 1:00 p.m. These times may vary.

Minnesota Power provides retail electric service within a 26,000-square-mile area in northeastern Minnesota to 144,000 customers and wholesale electric service to 16 municipalities. More information can be found at www.mnpower.com.

The statements contained in this release and statements that ALLETE may make orally in connection with this release that are not historical facts, are forward-looking statements. Actual results may differ materially from those projected in the forward-looking statements. These forward-looking statements involve risks and uncertainties and investors are directed to the risks discussed in documents filed by ALLETE with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

* *The BBC Ems is a 469-foot Antigua/Barbuda-flagged vessel*

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