

Administrative judge recommends three new power lines but rejects conditions that would aid wind power

Written by

Thursday, 05 March 2009 17:53

An administrative law judge has recommended that three new power lines be built in Minnesota, but rejected conditions suggested by environmental and renewable energy groups to ensure the lines would carry wind energy.

The recommendation by Beverly Jones Heydinger now goes to the Public Utilities Commission. A number of utilities, led by Xcel Energy and Great River Energy, are seeking approval for the CapX 2020 proposal to build three 345 kilovolt power lines by 2020. Those lines, which terminate in the Twin Cities, would stretch to Lacrosse, Fargo and Brookings.

Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy, which also represented Fresh Energy, the Izaak Walton League of America-Midwest Office and Wind on the Wires, agreed with the utilities that there is a need for the new lines to help provide the Twin Cities with thousands of megawatts more renewable electricity by 2020

Because the Fargo and especially the Brookings lines go through some of the most productive wind farms in the region, MCEA argued that conditions should be placed on the certificate of need to make sure renewable electricity, such as wind, would be at the head of the line for these wires.