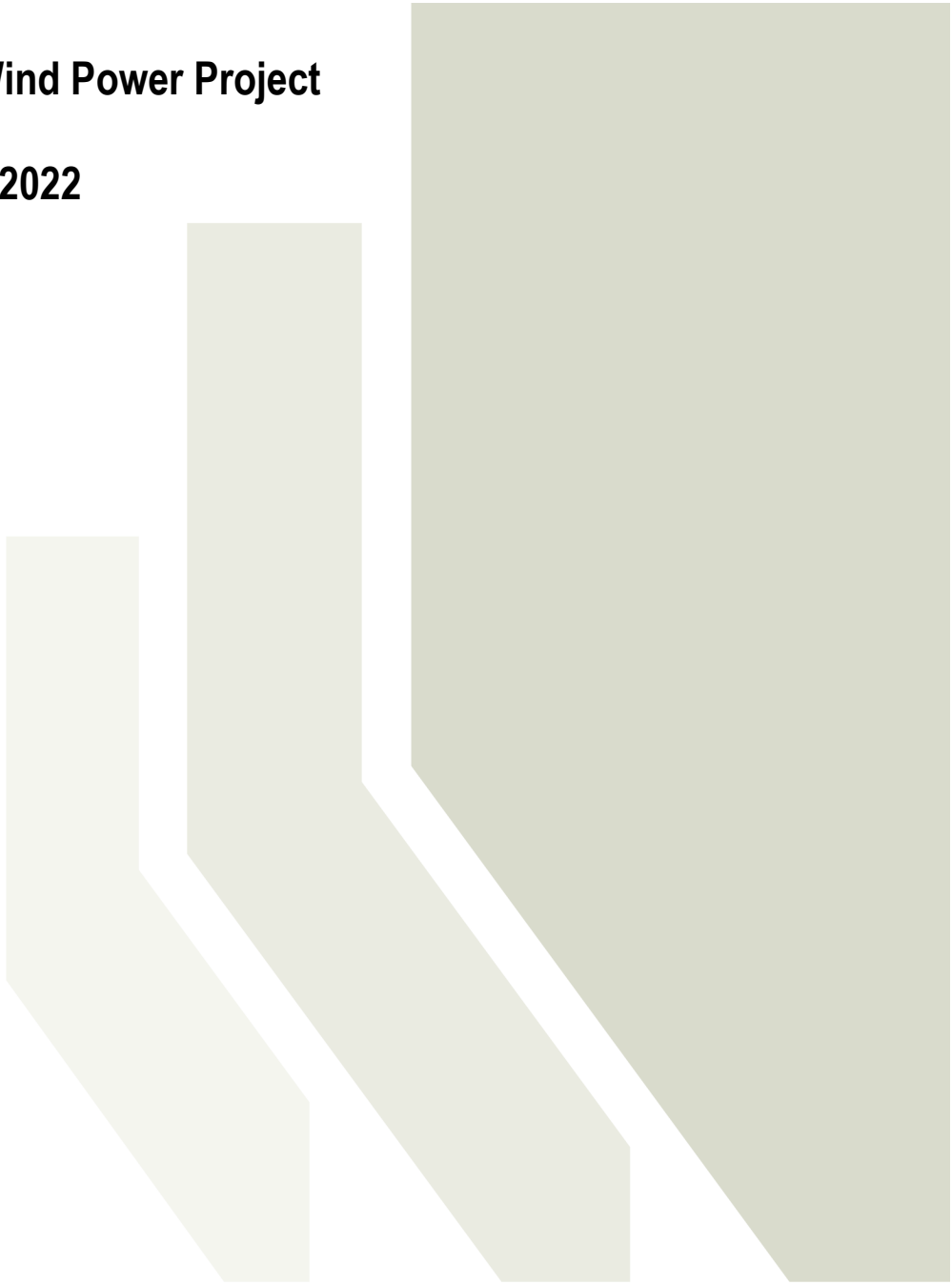




**Enerfin Energy Company of Canada Inc.**

**Winnifred Wind Power Project**

**February 4, 2022**



**Alberta Utilities Commission**

Decision 26504-D01-2022

Enerfin Energy Company of Canada Inc.

Winnifred Wind Power Project

Proceeding 26504

Applications 26504-A001 and 26504-A002

February 4, 2022

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The Commission may, within 30 days of the date of this decision and without notice, correct typographical, spelling and calculation errors and other similar types of errors and post the corrected decision on its website.

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## **1 Decision summary**

1. In this decision, the Alberta Utilities Commission approves applications from Enerfin Energy Company of Canada Inc. to construct and operate a 122.32-megawatt wind power plant, designated as the Winnifred Wind Power Plant and a collector substation, designated as the Holsom 1054S Substation.

## **2 Applications**

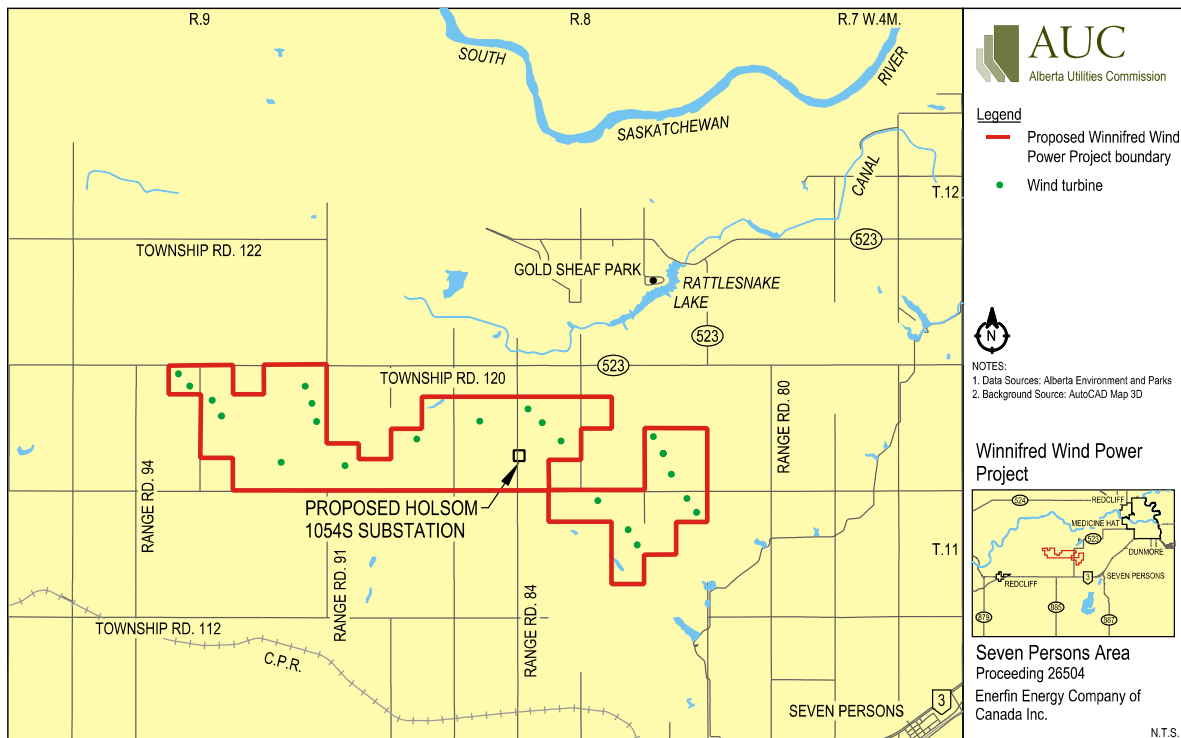
2. Enerfin Energy Company of Canada Inc. filed applications with the Commission on April 30, 2021, for approval to construct and operate (i) a 122.32-megawatt (MW) wind power plant, designated as the Winnifred Wind Power Plant; and (ii) a collector substation, designated as the Holsom 1054S Substation (collectively, the Winnifred Wind Power Project or the project).

3. The wind power plant would consist of 22 Enercon E-160 5.56-MW wind turbines, with a hub height of 114 metres and a rotor diameter of 160 metres. The wind power plant would also include access roads, an underground collector system, an operations and maintenance building and a permanent meteorological tower.

4. The substation would consist of one 138-kilovolt (kV) circuit breaker, one 138/34.5-kV, 80/106/132-megavolt ampere transformer, five 34.5-kV circuit breakers, one 34.5-kV capacitor bank and other substation equipment as described in the applications.

5. The project would be sited on approximately 7,440 acres of privately owned land, approximately 5.5 kilometres north of the hamlet of Whitla, in the County of Forty Mile and Cypress County. The substation would be located in the northwest quarter of Section 28, Township 11, Range 8, west of the Fourth Meridian and the wind power plant's turbines would be located as shown on the map in Figure 1:

Figure 1. Proposed Winnifred Wind Power Project boundary



6. On November 9, 2021, Enerfin submitted minor application updates as a result of comments received from Alberta Environment and Parks Fish and Wildlife Stewardship (AEP) and ongoing engagement with stakeholders, which included minor adjustments to the project layout and infrastructure.

7. Enerfin's applications and application updates included:

- A participant involvement program, which detailed consultation with stakeholders within 800 metres of the project and notification to stakeholders within 2,000 metres of the project.
- A noise impact assessment<sup>1</sup> and noise memorandum concerning the project updates,<sup>2</sup> which concluded that the project would be in compliance with Rule 012: *Noise Control*.
- A shadow flicker assessment,<sup>3</sup> which concluded that there would be minimal potential shadow flicker effects from the project.

<sup>1</sup> Exhibit 26504-X0013, Appendix L - Winnifred Wind Power Project Noise Impact Assessment.

<sup>2</sup> Exhibit 26504-X0054, Appendix G - 20211109 RWDI 2004702 RFP MemoWinnifredTurbineMoves.

<sup>3</sup> Exhibit 26504-X0018, Appendix Q - Winnifred Wind Power Project Shadow Flicker Analysis.

- An initial renewable energy referral report<sup>4</sup> and an updated renewable energy referral report<sup>5</sup> issued by AEP, which concluded that the project would result in moderate risk to wildlife and wildlife habitat.
- An environmental effects assessment,<sup>6</sup> which concluded that any potential adverse effects of the project can be effectively mitigated.
- *Historical Resources Act* approval for the project<sup>7</sup> dated January 21, 2021.

8. Enerfin expects the project's in-service date to be September 30, 2023, but indicated that this in-service date does not include contingency for unplanned delays. As such, Enerfin requested that the expiry date of the approval occur one year later, on September 30, 2024, to account for any unforeseen delays.

9. The project would be connected to the Alberta Interconnected Electric System (AIES) via the existing AltaLink Management Ltd. Bullshead 523S Substation. The Commission approved the need for the connection in Approval 26620-D01-2021.<sup>8</sup> Enerfin has applied in a separate proceeding to construct and operate a new, approximately 25-kilometre, 138-kV transmission line, to be designated as 498L, to connect the project to the AIES. The transmission line is still under review by the Commission in Proceeding 26707.

10. The Commission issued a notice of applications that included notice issued to three Indigenous communities. The Commission received a statement of intent to participate from Jason and Jody Pancoast and granted them standing. Subsequently, the Pancoasts withdrew their objection to the project<sup>9</sup> and the Commission proceeded with its consideration of the applications.

11. The Commission also received a statement of intent to participate from Bowen McDonald-Lee, which was filed approximately five months after the deadline set out in the notice of applications. The Commission denied standing to Bowen McDonald-Lee but granted limited participation rights by allowing for a brief written submission setting out concerns with the proposed project.<sup>10</sup> Bowen McDonald-Lee did not file any additional submissions and the Commission considered the process for this proceeding to be complete as of January 24, 2022.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Exhibit 26504-X0009, Appendix H - Winnifred Wind Power Project AEP Referral Report.

<sup>5</sup> Exhibit 26504-X0048, Appendix A - AEP Referral Report\_ Winnifred Wind\_Enerfin\_2021-11-03.

<sup>6</sup> Exhibit 26504-X0010, Appendix I - Winnifred Wind Power Project EEA.

<sup>7</sup> Exhibit 26504-X0011, Appendix J - Winnifred Wind Power Project HRA Clearance.

<sup>8</sup> Needs Identification Document Approval 26620-D01-2021, Proceeding 26620, Application 26620-A001, June 28, 2021.

<sup>9</sup> Exhibit 26504-X0044, Letter of withdrawal requesting the AUC to withdraw submission from Proceeding 26504.

<sup>10</sup> Exhibit 26504-X0063, AUC additional ruling on standing.

<sup>11</sup> Exhibit 26504-X0064, AUC letter - Close of record.

### 3 Discussion and findings

12. For the reasons outlined below, the Commission finds that approval of the project is in the public interest having regard to the social, economic, and other effects of the project, including its effect on the environment.

13. The Commission has reviewed the applications and has determined that the information requirements specified in Rule 007: *Applications for Power Plants, Substations, Transmission Lines, Industrial System Designations, Hydro Developments and Gas Utility Pipelines* have been met for both the wind power plant and the collector substation.

14. The Commission finds that Enerfin's participant involvement program satisfies the requirements of Rule 007. Details of the participant involvement program reflect that Enerfin consulted with stakeholders as required.

15. The Commission finds that the noise impact assessment and subsequent noise memorandum concerning the project updates submitted by Enerfin meets the requirements of Rule 012. The Commission accepts the conclusion that noise from the project would comply with the permissible sound levels established by Rule 012, for all receptors.

16. Enerfin's shadow flicker assessment considered the project's potential effects at 21 dwellings, which were identified as receptors. The assessment demonstrated that there would be minimal potential for shadow flicker effects from the project. The Commission accepts Enerfin's shadow flicker assessment and its conclusion that there would be minimal potential for shadow flicker effects on all receptors.

17. AEP's updated renewable energy referral report concluded that the project was sited to avoid known wildlife features; however, the risk to raptor nests, sharp-tailed grouse leks and burrowing owl dens was assessed as high due to outdated surveys. Enerfin stated that it intends to update its raptor nest, sharp-tailed grouse lek and burrowing owl surveys during the next survey season (spring of 2022) and confirmed that it would submit an updated environmental protection plan that incorporates any additional mitigations proposed as a result of the new surveys, at least 60 days prior to the start of construction.

18. Having regard for the factors highlighted by AEP in its updated renewable energy referral report, summarized above, the Commission accepts Enerfin's commitments and imposes the following condition of approval for the Winnifred Wind Power Plant:

- a) No later than 60 days before construction is scheduled to begin, Enerfin shall either submit an updated environmental protection plan to the Commission that incorporates any additional mitigations proposed as a result of the new surveys, or provide confirmation that no new wildlife features were identified by the new surveys and no additional mitigation is required.

19. Rule 033: *Post-approval Monitoring Requirements for Wind and Solar Power Plants* requires approval holders to submit to AEP and the AUC annual post-construction monitoring survey reports. Consequently, the Commission imposes the following condition of approval for the Winnifred Wind Power Plant:

- b) Enerfin shall submit a post-construction monitoring survey report to Alberta Environment and Parks (AEP) and the Commission within 13 months of the project becoming operational, and on or before the same date every subsequent year for which AEP requires surveys pursuant to subsection 3(3) of Rule 033: *Post-approval Monitoring Requirements for Wind and Solar Power Plants*.

20. The environmental effects assessment report concluded that with adherence to applicable guidelines and diligent implementation of the mitigation measures identified in the report, the residual environmental effects of the project will be limited. The Commission expects that Enerfin will honour its commitments to implement the mitigation measures identified in the report and, with the addition of the conditions stipulated above, the Commission is satisfied that the residual environmental effects of the project will be limited.

21. Based on all of the above, the Commission considers the applications to be in the public interest in accordance with Section 17 of the *Alberta Utilities Commission Act*.

#### **4 Decision**

22. Pursuant to sections 11, 14, 15 and 19 of the *Hydro and Electric Energy Act*, the Commission approves applications 26504-A001 and 26504-A002 and grants Enerfin Energy Company of Canada Inc. the approvals set out in Appendix 1 – Power Plant Approval 26504-D02-2022, to construct and operate the Winnifred Wind Power Plant and Appendix 2 – Substation Permit and Licence 26504-D03-2022, to construct and operate the Holsom 1054S Substation.

23. The appendices will be distributed separately.

Dated on February 4, 2022.

#### **Alberta Utilities Commission**

*(original signed by)*

Vera Slawinski  
Panel Chair

*(original signed by)*

Neil Jamieson  
Commission Member



## Appendix A – Summary of Commission conditions of approval in the decision

This section is intended to provide a summary of all conditions of approval specified in the decision for the convenience of readers. Conditions that require subsequent filings with the Commission will be tracked as directions in the AUC's eFiling System. In the event of any difference between the conditions in this section and those in the main body of the decision, the wording in the main body of the decision shall prevail.

The following are conditions of Decision 26504-D01-2022 that require subsequent filings with the Commission and will be included as conditions of Power Plant Approval 26504-D02-2022:

- No later than 60 days before construction is scheduled to begin, Enerfin shall either submit an updated environmental protection plan to the Commission that incorporates any additional mitigations proposed as a result of the new surveys, or provide confirmation that no new wildlife features were identified by the new surveys and no additional mitigation is required.
- Enerfin shall submit a post-construction monitoring survey report to Alberta Environment and Parks (AEP) and the Commission within 13 months of the project becoming operational, and on or before the same date every subsequent year for which AEP requires surveys pursuant to subsection 3(3) of Rule 033: *Post-approval Monitoring Requirements for Wind and Solar Power Plants*.