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# ***NEWS***

## **Minnesota Power wins project of the year for wind energy at international conference**

Duluth, Minn.—Minnesota Power’s Bison Wind Energy Center near New Salem, N.D. was voted the best wind project of the year at the 2013 POWER-GEN International Conference and Exhibition awards banquet in Florida.

Sponsored by Power Engineering magazine and RenewableEnergyWorld.com, the award is considered the industry’s top honor for a new wind generation project. Projects of the year were announced in eight different categories at a gala awards banquet last night at the Universal Resort in Orlando, Fla.

“It’s gratifying to be honored by your peers for conceiving and completing a world-class renewable energy project,” said Al Hodnik, chairman, president and CEO of ALLETE Inc., (NYSE: ALE) the parent company of Minnesota Power. “The renewable energy experts who voted the Bison project as the best wind project understood the interstate networking required, the creative asset swap that made transmission possible, and the innovation our people and partners demonstrated,” Hodnik added. “Wind generation is a critical component in achieving our EnergyForward resource strategy of an energy mix that is one-third renewable, one-third coal and one-third natural gas as we help transform the nation’s energy landscape.”

BrightSource Energy’s Marble River Wind Farm in Clinton, N.Y. was the other finalist in the “best wind project” competition. The 229-megawatt (MW) wind farm is owned by Horizon Wind Energy and EDP Renewables, a subsidiary of Energias de Portugal. It consists of 72 Vestas turbines, which, at 3MW each, are the largest ever approved for use in New York.

Minnesota Power was honored for phases 2 and 3 of the Bison Project, whose capacity of 292 MW includes 85 state-of-the-art direct-drive Siemens 3MW turbines. Bison is located in an area with some of the highest quality wind in North America. The energy is delivered to customers using a repurposed direct current transmission line, originally built in the 1970s to send coal-based power from Center, N.D. to Duluth, Minn.

The Bison project features a unique arrangement with Manitoba Hydro whereby wind energy from the Bison project can be stored in hydroelectric reserves in Canada, essentially providing a battery storage mechanism when wind is high or customer demand is low. Bison’s wind blades also utilize patented “dino tail” technology that operates more quietly and efficiently.

“The Bison project crossed utility boundaries and state jurisdictions to bring affordable, carbon-free energy to our customers,” said Al Rudeck, Minnesota Power vice president of strategy and planning. “And we’re proud to have tapped a world-class generation source by selecting Siemens to provide the latest in innovative turbine technology.”

When building the Bison turbines, Minnesota Power right-of-way agents corresponded with 270 landowners, instilling a mutual sense of trust that the project would only have positive effects for all involved. Minnesota Power completed construction in an accelerated time frame in order to capitalize on federal Production Tax Credits expiring in 2012.

On Aug. 1, Minnesota Power announced it was moving ahead with phase 4 of the Bison project pending regulatory approval, a 205MW addition that will make it the largest wind farm in North Dakota at nearly 500 MW of capacity.

The project of the year awards recognize the world's best power projects, honoring excellence in design, construction and operation of power generation facilities. The award winners are nominated by industry professionals and selected by a panel of judges from Power Engineering magazine, the voice of the power generation industry with more than 70,000 readers.

Minnesota Power provides retail electric service within a 26,000-square-mile area in northeastern Minnesota to 143,000 customers and wholesale electric service to 16 municipalities. More information can be found at: [www.mnpower.com](http://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.*

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