Muskegon County Wastewater Management System Seeks Utility Scale Wind Developers

Muskegon County, Michigan, January 25, 2011 – The law firm of Howard & Howard Attorneys represents the Muskegon County Wastewater Management System (MCWMS) – one of the nation’s most progressive wastewater treatment facilities. MCWMS announced today that it is seeking proposals from utility-scale wind developers interested in siting a project on 11,000 acres of MCWMS property near Lake Michigan.

Rodger Kershner and Jon Kreucher of Howard & Howard, who both specialize in the firm’s energy and utilities practice, were selected by the MCWMS to solicit proposals from reputable wind developers. Kershner and Kreucher will offer advice and guidance during subsequent deliberations.

“The site offers several features that could be of interest to wind developers. For example, the acreage is contiguous and under common ownership, which should help speed the land acquisition and development process,” said Kershner. “There are no homes on the site, which means that more area can be used for development than in the typical project. Plus, additional acreage adjacent to the site is believed to be interested in a wind project.”

“There has been great support within the local community for a wind farm and the Muskegon County area is increasingly acknowledged as one center of renewable energy activity in Michigan,” said Kreucher. “Additionally, with the recent extension of federal renewable energy grants for projects that begin construction in 2011, this might be a project that could launch within the qualification period.”

The MCWMS operates an environmentally-conscious wastewater treatment facility on the large tract located less than 15 miles from the eastern shore of Lake Michigan. While the treatment
facility occupies some of the property, the majority of the approximately 11,000 acres is devoted to farming operations using water and by-products from the facility. The board and management of the MCWMS have envisioned a wind farm being compatible with its current operations and placed a unit that measures wind speed on the site in April, 2010. Initial data suggests that wind resources are compatible with a commercially-viable project. According to Mark Eisenbarth, the Director of the MSWMS, “this will be an opportunity to reduce our carbon footprint and will support the operation of our regional wastewater treatment facility. We have great support from our Commissioners and sincere involvement from our local industries to make this project a win-win opportunity for the right developer and our community.”

Wind developers who want to receive more information about the Muskegon County opportunity can contact attorney Rodger Kershner through www.howardandhoward.com. Analysis of proposals received, negotiation with finalist candidates, and selection of the successful developer is currently expected to be complete later this year.

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**About the Muskegon County Wastewater Treatment System:** Near the end of the 1960’s, forward-looking community leaders recognized the need for a large wastewater treatment facility to prevent inadequately-treated wastewater from being discharged into the County’s three main recreational lakes. Several thousand acres were subsequently acquired for a facility that was designed to serve communities and industries throughout Muskegon County. For more than 35 years the treatment plant has demonstrated a remarkable dedication to the environment and progressive thinking. The County’s Wastewater Treatment System has successfully treated wastewater from the pulp and paper industry, organic chemical manufacturing, plastic molding businesses, foundries, and many others. The facility generates power from a hydroelectric plant, and a landfill on site pumps its methane gas 6.5 miles to local industries for direct burning.

**About Howard & Howard Attorneys PLLC:** Howard & Howard Attorneys PLLC is the most experienced law firm Michigan in the area of renewable, alternative and independently produced power. Howard & Howard’s Energy and Utilities attorneys represent independent developers, renewable and alternative energy generators, landowners, and local governments in all types of energy-related matters, including lease negotiations, regulatory issues, project development, and incentives available under federal and state law. Information about Howard & Howard’s Energy and Utilities practice is available at [http://www.howardandhoward.com/practice/area.asp?id=50](http://www.howardandhoward.com/practice/area.asp?id=50).