U.S. Department of Energy
Categorical Exclusion Determination Form

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Proposed Action Title: Removing the 50 MW average annual production limit in the interconnection agreement for Basin Electric Power Cooperative's (Basin Electric) Prairie Winds ND 1 wind generation facility (Facility).

Program or Field Office: Western Area Power Administration, Upper Great Plains Region

Location(s) (City/County/State): The facility is located approximately 15 miles south of Minot, ND.

Proposed Action Description:

The facility is currently operating under a 50 MW average annual limit as an operational condition of the Basin Electric interconnection agreement with Western. Basin Electric is requesting that Western remove the 50 MW annual average production limit for the facility.

Eliminating the 50 MW annual average operating limit will allow Basin Electric to continue to provide low-cost electricity to its membership while increasing the role that renewable electricity fulfills in Basin Electric's energy portfolio. Annual average production at the facility was 49.82 MW in 2012 and 47.70 MW in 2013. Average production for 2014 through August was 51.17 MW.

Western proposes to eliminate the 50 MW average annual limit in their interconnection agreement for Basin Electric's Prairie Winds ND 1 wind generation Facility.

Categorical Exclusion(s) Applied:

B4.1 - Contracts, policies, and marketing and allocation plans for electric power

For the complete DOE National Environmental Policy Act regulations regarding categorical exclusions, including the full text of each categorical exclusion, see Subpart D of 10 CFR Part 1021.

Regulatory Requirements in 10 CFR 1021.410(b): (See full text in regulation)

✔ The proposal fits within a class of actions that is listed in Appendix A or B to 10 CFR Part 1021, Subpart D.

To fit within the classes of actions listed in 10 CFR Part 1021, Subpart D, Appendix B, a proposal must be one that would not: (1) threaten a violation of applicable statutory, regulatory, or permit requirements for environment, safety, and health, or similar requirements of DOE or Executive Orders; (2) require siting and construction or major expansion of waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment facilities (including incinerators), but the proposal may include categorically excluded waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment actions or facilities; (3) disturb hazardous substances, pollutants, contaminants, or CERCLA-excluded petroleum and natural gas products that preexist in the environment such that there would be uncontrolled or unpermitted releases; (4) have the potential to cause significant impacts on environmentally sensitive resources, including, but not limited to, those listed in paragraph B(4) of 10 CFR Part 1021, Subpart D, Appendix B; (5) involve genetically engineered organisms, synthetic biology, governmentally designated noxious weeds, or invasive species, unless the proposed activity would be contained or confined in a manner designed and operated to prevent unauthorized release into the environment and conducted in accordance with applicable requirements, such as those listed in paragraph B(5) of 10 CFR Part 1021, Subpart D, Appendix B.

✔ There are no extraordinary circumstances related to the proposal that may affect the significance of the environmental effects of the proposal.

✔ The proposal has not been segmented to meet the definition of a categorical exclusion. This proposal is not connected to other actions with potentially significant impacts (40 CFR 1508.25(a)(1)), is not related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(7)), and is not precluded by 40 CFR 1506.1 or 10 CFR 1021.211 concerning limitations on actions during preparation of an environmental impact statement.

Based on my review of the proposed action, as NEPA Compliance Officer (as authorized under DOE Order 451.1B), I have determined that the proposed action fits within the specified class(es) of action, the other regulatory requirements set forth above are met, and the proposed action is hereby categorically excluded from further NEPA review.

NEPA Compliance Officer: MATTHEW MARSH Digitally signed by MATTHEW MARSH DN: c=US, o=U.S. Government, ou=Department of Energy, cn=MATTHEW MARSH, 0.9.2342.19200300.100.1.1=89001000334842 Date: 2014.10.14 13:28:57 -06'00'

Date Determined: October 14, 2014

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