
Appendix A

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Appendix A

Scoping Materials

- Interagency and Scoping Meeting Materials
- Interagency Meeting Invitation Letters and Recipients
- Local Newspaper Notices
- Native American Tribe Letter and Recipient List
- Notice of Intent
- Post Card Scoping Advertisement
- Scoping Comment Summary

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South Dakota PrairieWinds Project Environmental Impact Statement

The NEPA Process

An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is being prepared under the direction of the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), Western Area Power Administration (Western) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Rural Utilities Service (RUS) for the South Dakota PrairieWinds Project . The project proponent seeks an interconnection with Western and financing from RUS, and thus an EIS will be developed in accordance with National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements and agencies' implementing regulations.

Public involvement is part of the NEPA environmental review process. The public participation effort focuses on providing information to and gathering input from the public. You will have numerous opportunities to participate in the decision-making process as shown on the figure to the right.

How you can participate

- Attend a public meeting. The meeting will provide the opportunity to ask questions, express concern, and submit written comments.
- Participate and provide comments during scoping as well as during the public review of the EIS. The availability of the Draft EIS and Final EIS will be announced. If requested, you will be provided the Draft EIS and Final EIS for review when completed.
- Designate on a comment form that you would like to be kept informed of the ongoing progress of this project and be included on the mailing list.



For more information on the proposed project:

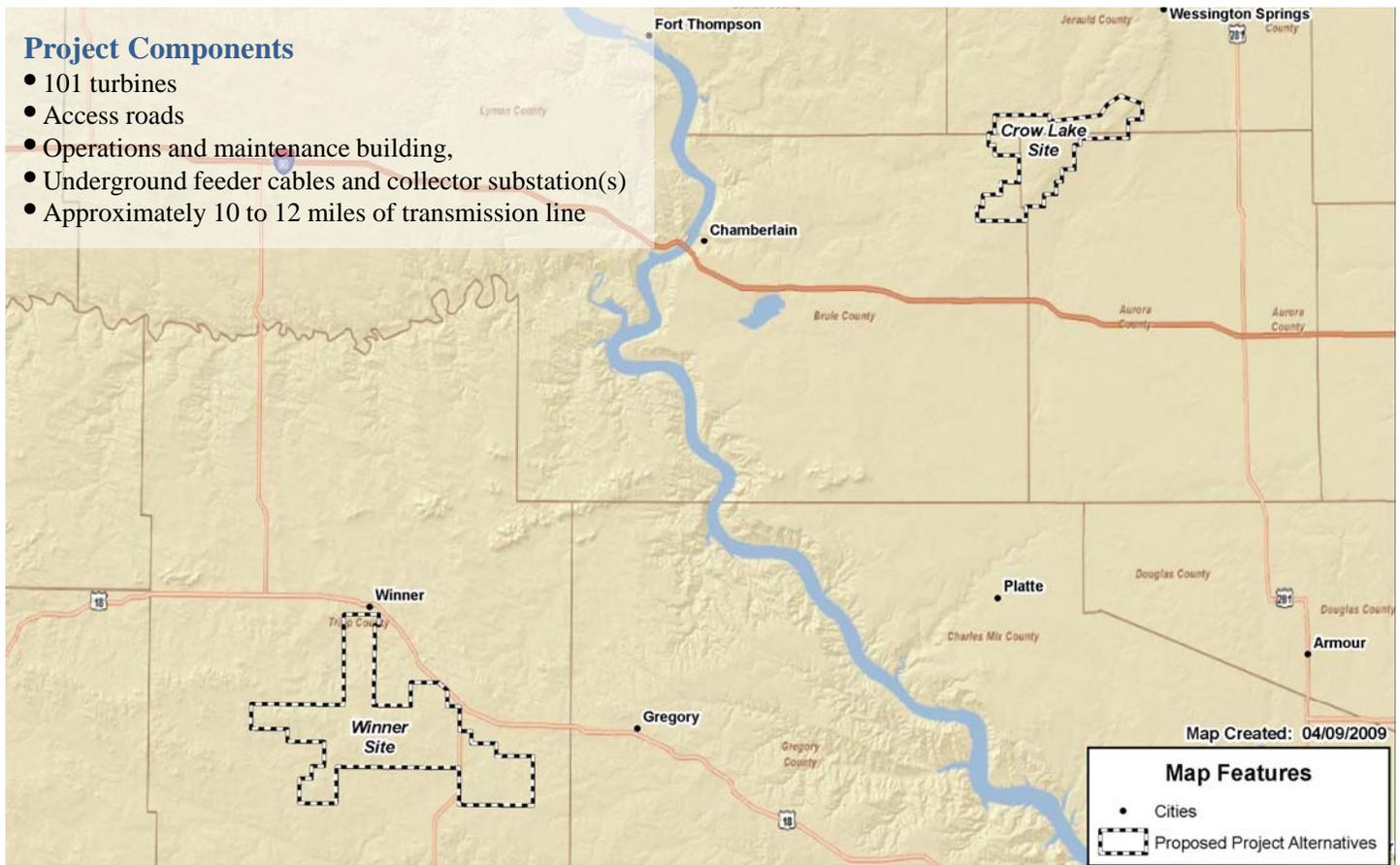
Call the Project Phone Number: (800) 336-7288

Send an e-mail to the Project E-mail: sdprairiewinds@wapa.gov

Visit the Project Website: <http://www.wapa.gov/sdprairiewinds.htm>

Project Components

- 101 turbines
- Access roads
- Operations and maintenance building,
- Underground feeder cables and collector substation(s)
- Approximately 10 to 12 miles of transmission line



Project Description

PrairieWinds SD1, Inc. (PrairieWinds), a wholly owned subsidiary of Basin Electric Power Cooperative (Basin Electric), is proposing to construct a new 151.5-megawatt (MW) wind energy facility at one of two locations in south-central South Dakota (see map to the right). Project components would include:

Power from the facility would be supplied to Basin Electric's customers through an interconnection with Western's transmission system. RUS is considering financing the project. Once environmental permitting is complete, and if the agency decisions are to go forward with the project, construction would begin Fall 2010/Winter 2010. Facility commercial operation is anticipated to begin in late 2010 or early 2011.

Project Purpose and Need

Incentives and regulations to encourage or require the generation of power from renewable or low environmental impact resources are being actively considered and/or implemented within the Basin Electric member service areas. A number of proposals for national Renewable Portfolio Standards (RPS) are pending in Congress.

Basin Electric's Participation: With members in nine states, Basin Electric recognizes the need for additional renewable energy capacity to service forecasted member load growth demands and to meet state mandated RPS. A 151.5-MW wind energy facility was determined to be the least-cost renewable resource option to satisfy these requirements.

PrairieWinds's Participation: A subsidiary of Basin Electric, and the project applicant. To be the owner and operator of the proposed project.

RUS's Participation: Co-lead agency for the EIS process, providing oversight of the NEPA process and preparation of the EIS. They are also considering granting financing assistance.

Western's Participation: Co-lead agency for the EIS process, providing oversight of the NEPA process and preparation of the EIS. They are also considering approval of an interconnection request.

Note, that consultation is occurring and Native American Tribes and agencies with jurisdiction or special expertise have been invited to be cooperating agencies



South Dakota PrairieWinds Project Environmental Impact Statement Scoping Process

What is Scoping?

The Council on Environmental Quality's scoping definition (Sec. 1501.7) states:

There shall be an early and open process for determining the scope of issues to be addressed and for identifying the significant issues related to a proposed action. This process shall be termed scoping.

Scoping is the process by which Federal agencies invite other agencies, organizations, and the public to provide input on the scope of a project. More specifically, it is the process that Federal agencies utilize to get input on the issues and effects related to a proposed action and alternatives. The items identified are then addressed in an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The EIS is addressed in accordance with National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements and agencies' implementing regulations.

Scoping and the South Dakota PrairieWinds Project:

Western Area Power Administration (Western), an agency within the U.S. Department of Energy; Rural Utilities Service (RUS), an agency within the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA); are conducting scoping for the proposed South Dakota PrairieWinds Project. Throughout the scoping period, written comments may be submitted to the address below. As a part of the scoping process, two scoping meetings are being held for this project. At these meetings, Western, RUS and PrairieWinds SD1, Inc. (PrairieWinds, the Applicant) representatives will be available for one-on-one discussions, to provide information about the proposed project, answer questions, and take verbal and written comments from interested parties.

Ways to Provide Comments:

We would appreciate any comments you have concerning the proposed project. We would like to ensure that important environmental concerns are addressed and that natural resources and places of interest within the project area are considered in the EIS. Comments on the project scope and alternatives should be received by **May 15, 2009**, to be considered in defining the scope for the Draft EIS. This is not your only opportunity to submit comments on the EIS. There will be additional opportunities for the public to provide input during the development of the EIS. Comments could be submitted through the project's web address, or sent by letter, fax or e-mail. Written comments on the scope of the EIS should be addressed to **Ms. Liana Reilly**, at the address listed below.

Ms. Liana Reilly
Document Manager
Western Area Power Administration
Corporate Services Office, A7400
P.O. Box 281213
Lakewood, Colorado 80228-8213
Fax: (720) 962-7263

Call the Project Phone Number: (800) 336-7288
Send an e-mail to the Project E-mail: sdprairiewinds@wapa.gov

Visit the Project Website: <http://www.wapa.gov/sdprairiewinds.htm>

How to Receive Additional Information:

For more information about the project, or if you would like to be included on the Project mailing list and/or to receive copies of the Draft and Final EIS, please provide your contact information to Ms. Liana Reilly, at the address above. For information on RUS financing please contact Mr. Dennis Rankin, Project Manager, Engineering and Environmental Staff, Rural Utilities Service, Utilities Program, 1400 Independence Ave. SW, Mail Stop 1571 Washington D.C. 20250-1571 telephone: (202) 720-1953, fax: (202) 720-0820 or e-mail: dennis.rankin@wdc.usda.gov.

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Please fold in thirds and staple

Affix
postage
here

Ms. Liana Reilly
Western Area Power Administration
Corporate Services Office, A7400
P.O. Box 281213
Lakewood, Colorado 80228-8213



analysis

alternatives

better decisions

environmental protection

public participation

National Environmental Policy Act

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) prepared this brochure to encourage and help you to participate in the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process. All Federal agencies must comply with NEPA, but their procedures vary. This brochure describes DOE's NEPA process, focusing on your role in DOE's preparation of Environmental Impact Statements (EISs).

What is NEPA?

NEPA is a Federal law that serves as the Nation's basic charter for environmental protection. It requires that all Federal agencies consider the potential environmental impacts of their proposed actions. NEPA promotes better agency decisionmaking by ensuring that high quality environmental information is available to agency officials and the public before the agency decides whether and how to undertake a major Federal action. Through the NEPA process, you have an opportunity to learn about DOE's proposed actions and to provide timely information and comments to DOE.

To implement NEPA, all Federal agencies follow procedures issued by the President's Council on Environmental Quality in the Code of Federal Regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508). DOE also follows its own supplementary procedures, found in 10 CFR Part 1021.

How Does DOE Prepare an EIS?

The EIS process consists of several steps, each with opportunities for you to be involved.

- **Notice of Intent.** First, DOE publishes a Notice of Intent to prepare an EIS in the *Federal Register* and makes local announcements. This notice states the need for action and provides preliminary information on the EIS scope, including the

alternative actions to be evaluated, the kinds of potential environmental impacts to be analyzed, and related issues. The Notice of Intent also serves as the beginning of the next step, the "scoping process."

TIP: The Notice of Intent explains how you can participate in the scoping process and provides information about dates and locations of public meetings.

- **Scoping Process.** DOE requests your comments on the scope of the EIS. What alternatives should be evaluated? What potential environmental impacts should be analyzed? DOE's scoping process will last at least 30 days, with at least one public meeting.

TIP: During the scoping process, tell DOE what EIS information you would like to receive (e.g., a summary of the EIS or the full document on CD or on paper).

- **Draft EIS.** DOE considers scoping comments in preparing a Draft EIS. An EIS (Draft or Final) analyzes and compares the potential environmental impacts of the various alternatives, one of which is always a "no action" alternative. The EIS also discusses ways to avoid or reduce adverse impacts. A Draft EIS will identify DOE's preferred alternative(s) if known at the time.

TIP: DOE EIS schedules and related NEPA information are available at <http://www.eh.doe.gov/nepa>. DOE often has EIS-specific Web sites as well.

- **Public Comment on the Draft EIS.** After DOE issues a Draft EIS, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) publishes a Notice of Availability in the *Federal Register* to begin the public comment period, which will last at least 45 days. DOE also will announce details regarding how you may comment on the Draft EIS, either orally at a public hearing (at least one must be held) or in writing.

TIP: Check your local paper, the DOE NEPA Web site (<http://www.eh.doe.gov/nepa>, click on "What's New" or "NEPA Public Participation Calendar"), or other DOE notices for information about public hearings and ways to submit comments.

- **Final EIS.** DOE considers all timely public comments on the Draft EIS in preparing the Final EIS, which must respond to such comments. The Final EIS identifies DOE's preferred alternative(s). After DOE issues the Final EIS, EPA publishes a Notice of Availability in the *Federal Register*.
- **Record of Decision.** DOE must wait at least 30 days after the EPA Notice of Availability of the Final EIS before issuing a Record of Decision. A Record of Decision announces and explains DOE's decision and describes any commitments for mitigating potential environmental impacts.

TIP: DOE publishes Records of Decision in the *Federal Register* and makes them available on the DOE NEPA Web site. You may also ask DOE to send you a copy.



How Does NEPA Work?

Early in its planning process for a proposed action, DOE considers how to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The appropriate level of review depends on the significance (i.e., the context and intensity) of the potential environmental impacts associated with the proposed action. There are three levels of NEPA review:

- **Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)** – For major Federal actions that may significantly affect the quality of the human environment, NEPA requires preparation of an EIS. An EIS is a detailed analysis of the potential environmental impacts of a proposed action and the range of reasonable alternatives. Public participation is an important part of the EIS process.
- **Environmental Assessment (EA)** – When the need for an EIS is unclear, an agency may prepare an EA to determine whether to prepare an EIS or to issue a Finding of No Significant Impact. An EA is a brief analysis. DOE's procedures provide notification and comment opportunities for host states and tribes. DOE also may provide notification and comment opportunities for other interested people. DOE then considers any comments received, makes revisions as appropriate, and issues the EA.
- **Categorical Exclusion** – DOE's NEPA regulations list classes of actions that normally do not require an EIS or an EA because, individually or cumulatively, they do not have the potential for significant environmental impacts. Examples are information gathering activities and property transfers when the use is unchanged.

How Can I Learn More?

We encourage you to learn more about NEPA, the EIS process, and DOE's current NEPA activities by visiting or contacting the following:

- DOE's NEPA Web site at <http://www.eh.doe.gov/nepa> – to learn about upcoming opportunities to participate in DOE's NEPA process, download DOE NEPA documents, and find requirements and guidance that DOE follows for NEPA implementation.
- DOE's Office of NEPA Policy and Compliance at 1-800-472-2756 (toll-free) – to leave a message regarding EIS-specific or general NEPA information.
- The Council on Environmental Quality's NEPAnet at <http://ceq.eh.doe.gov/nepa/nepanet.htm> – for government-wide NEPA information.



Office of NEPA
Policy and Compliance



Printed on recycled paper

DOE, NEPA, and You

A Guide to Public Participation



South Dakota PrairieWinds Wind Energy Project



Outline of Presentation

- Basin Electric Information
- Proposed Project Purpose and Need
- Proposed Project Details
- Permitting Process and NEPA Schedule
- Comparison of Wind Speed and Energy Generation
- Example Photos
- Additional Considerations
- Scoping Meeting Format

South Dakota PrairieWinds Wind Energy Project

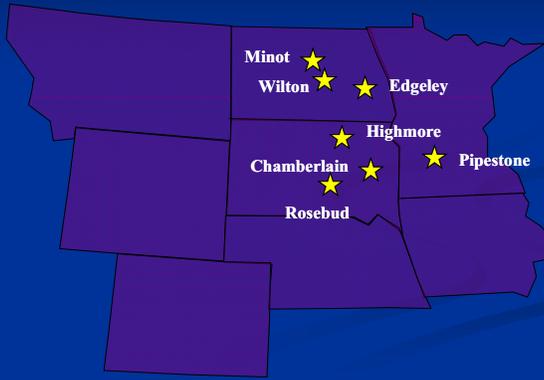
Basin Electric Information

Basin Electric Information:

- Wholesale power supplier to 126-member rural electric systems
- Serves 2.6 million consumers
- Formed in May, 1961 as supplemental power supplier
- Consumer-owned; consumer-controlled

Basin Electric's Wind Portfolio

Existing Wind Energy Generation – 136 MW



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South Dakota PrairieWinds

Wind Energy Project

Proposed Project

Purpose and Need

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Purpose and Need

- Current incentives/regulations encourage or require power from renewable or low environmental impact resources
- Proposals in Congress for national Renewable Portfolio Standards (RPS)
- Basin Electric needs additional renewable energy capacity to serve forecasted growth demands and meet state-mandated RPS
 - A 150 MW wind project was determined to be the best alternative to satisfy these requirements
 - Applicant – PrairieWinds SD1, Incorporated, a wholly owned subsidiary of Basin Electric

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Agencies Involved

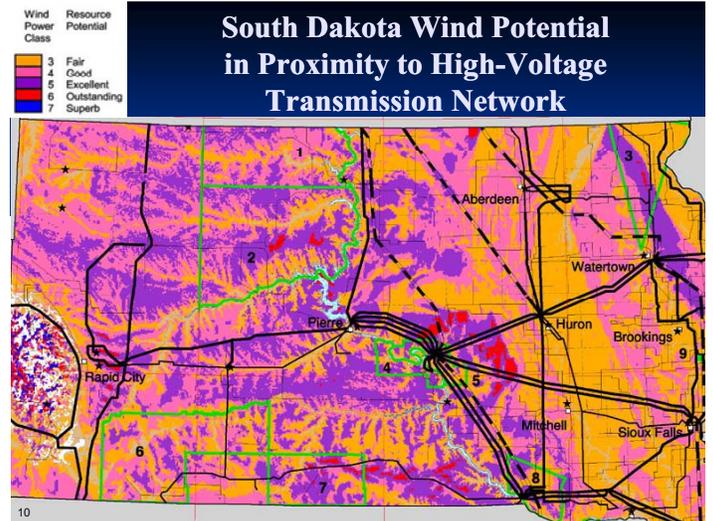
- Western's Action – Basin Electric has requested to interconnect the proposed Project with Western's transmission system
- RUS's Action – PrairieWinds has requested financing for the proposed Project from the RUS
- Both agencies intend to jointly prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) for the Project

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South Dakota PrairieWinds Wind Energy Project

Proposed Project Details

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Proposed Project Alternatives



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Project Details

- Will generate approximately 150 MW
- 2 site alternatives - Project components:
 - 101 turbines,
 - Access roads,
 - O&M building,
 - Underground feeder cables and collector substation(s),
 - Approximately 10 to 12 miles of transmission line
- Fall 2010/Winter 2010 – commercial operation

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GE 1.5sle Turbine Specifications

- Variable speed – blades rotate at 12 to 23 RPM
- Start-up wind speed: approximately 7 to 8 MPH
- Shut-down wind speed: approximately 56 MPH
- Optimum wind speed: 26 to 55 MPH
- Operational temperature range: - 20° to 104° F
- Variable pitch blades
- High tech electronic controls
- 3 fiberglass blades (14,000 lbs per blade)
- Hub height: 262 feet
- Blade length: 135 feet

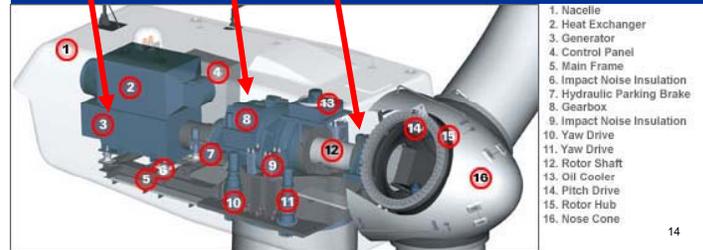
13

3 Major Components of Turbines

Generator

Gearbox

Rotor/Blades/Main Shaft



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South Dakota PrairieWinds Wind Energy Project

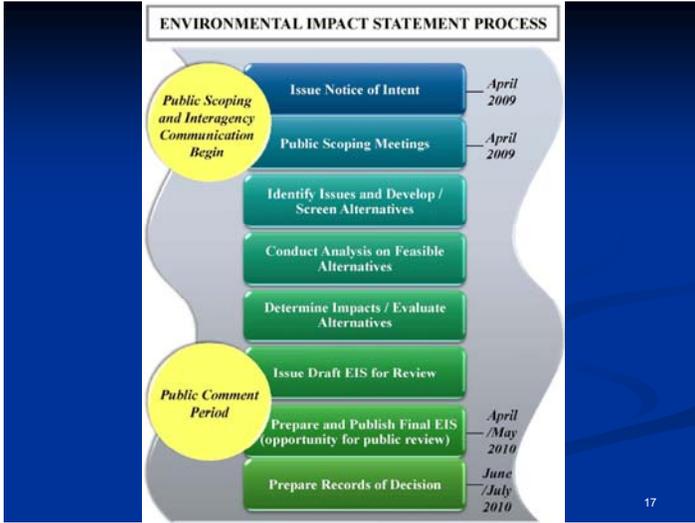
Permitting Process and NEPA Schedule

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Permitting Process – Scoping and environmental analysis

- NEPA
 - Scoping to gain agency, organization, and public input
 - Environmental Impact Statement
 - Agency involvement:
 - financing – RUS
 - interconnection – Western
- South Dakota Public Utilities Commission – siting approval
- Local zoning
- Other pre-construction permits and authorizations

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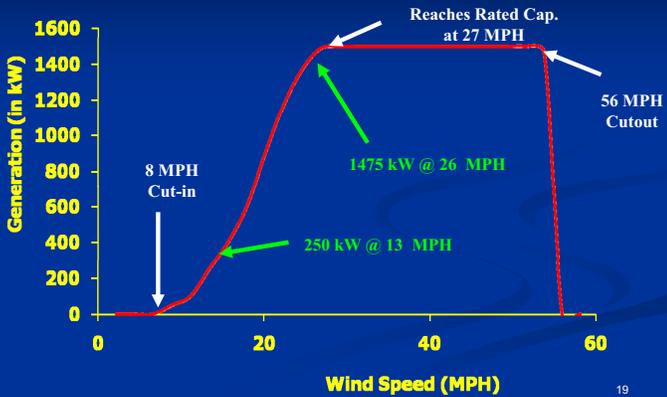


South Dakota PrairieWinds Wind Energy Project

Comparison of Wind Speed and Energy Generation

Power Curve:

A 1 MPH change in annual average speed can change production by 15%



South Dakota PrairieWinds Wind Energy Project

Example Photos:

- Turbine Construction
- Collector Substation
- Transmission Structures
- Facility Layout

Initial Construction Step: Complete Foundation



Construction of Turbines



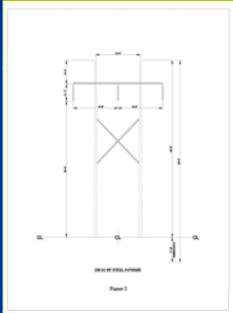
Completed Turbines



Collector Substation (Example Only)



Typical Transmission Structure



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Facility Layout

(Example Only)



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South Dakota PrairieWinds Wind Energy Project

Additional Considerations:

- Potential Local Benefits
- Schedule and Cost

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Potential Local Benefits

- Project construction
 - Increase demand for local lodging, meals and construction materials
 - 225 - 250 temporary jobs
- Project operation
 - 10-12 permanent jobs
- Increase tax base
- Increase renewable energy capacity, and system reliability

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Proposed Schedule/Cost

- Obtain permits/approvals – ongoing
- Summer 2010 – begin construction
- Fall 2010/Winter 2010 – commercial operation
- Project cost estimate = \$350 million

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South Dakota PrairieWinds Wind Energy Project

Scoping Meeting Format

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Open House Scoping Meeting

- Please sign in at the registration table
- Feel free to visit the various stations around the room
- Ask questions
- Provide input
- Your comments are important to this process

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Thank You

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Welcome to:

South Dakota PrairieWinds Project

Scoping Meeting



Outline of Presentation

- Basin Electric Information
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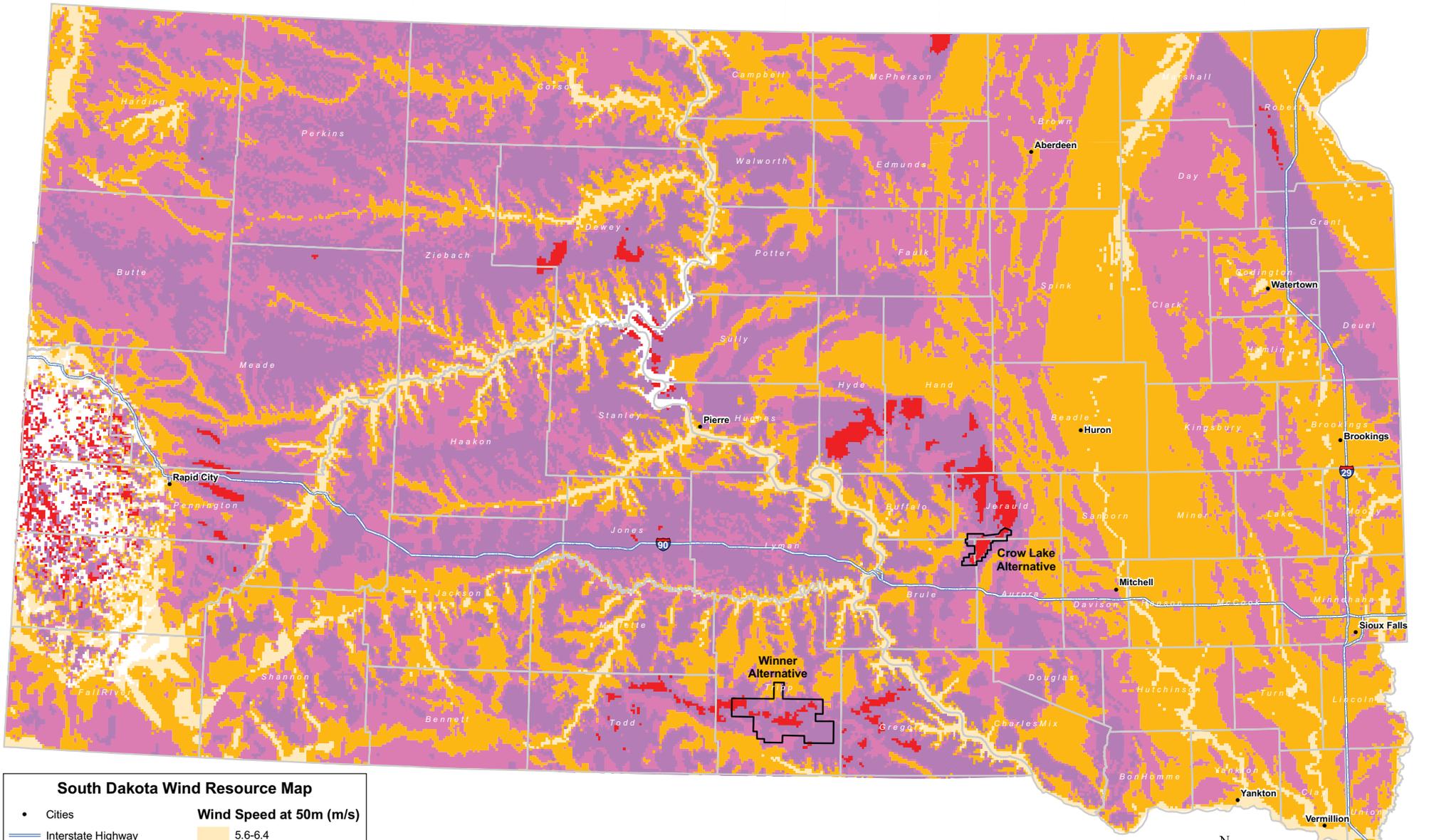


Basin Electric's Project Objectives

Renewable Energy Goals

- **Meet current incentives/regulations that encourage or require power from renewable or low environmental impact resources**
- **Conform with proposals in Congress for national Renewable Portfolio Standards (RPS)**
- **Basin Electric needs additional renewable energy capacity to serve forecasted growth demands and meet state-mandated RPS**
 - **A 150 MW wind project was determined to be the best alternative to satisfy these requirements**
 - **Applicant – PrairieWinds SD1, Incorporated, a wholly owned subsidiary of Basin Electric**





South Dakota Wind Resource Map

- Cities
- Interstate Highway
- ▭ Proposed Project Alternatives
- ▭ Counties

| Wind Speed at 50m (m/s) | |
|-------------------------|---------|
| | 5.6-6.4 |
| | 6.4-7.0 |
| | 7.0-7.5 |
| | 7.5-8.0 |
| | 8.0-8.8 |

Wind Data Source: NREL

Map Created: 04/22/2009

0 30 60 120 Miles



Preliminary siting parameters for turbine locations:

- Wind potential and topography
- Ability to lease contiguous parcels of land
- Minimum distance of 400 feet from section lines or existing roads
- Minimum distance of 1000 feet from occupied residences
- Minimum distance of 400 feet from existing transmission line
- Avoidance of hydric soils areas
- Siting on USFWS grasslands easements was near edges to minimize impact
- 1000 to 2000-foot minimum between turbine locations within the predominant wind direction
- Avoid siting within existing micro-wave paths

Preliminary siting parameters for transmission line locations:

- Minimization of transmission line length
- Consider right-of-way requirements and availability of contiguous parcels of land
- Land use considerations (i.e., potential visual impacts, proximity to residences, potential impact to agricultural activities, and existing/future land use)
- Environmental resource considerations such as potential impacts to sensitive resources (i.e., cultural resources, wildlife, vegetation, and wetlands)
- Jurisdiction and regulatory considerations
- Consider airport height restrictions

Further siting analysis through EIS process:

- Geology, Soils, Paleontology, and Seismicity
- Water Resources
- Climate Change and Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Wetlands/Riparian Areas
- Cultural Resources
- Land Use
- Transportation
- Recreation
- Visual Resources
- Noise
- Socioeconomics
- Environmental Justice
- Health and Safety



ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT PROCESS

Public Scoping and Interagency Communication Begin

Issue Notice of Intent

April 2009

Public Scoping Meetings

April 2009

Identify Issues and Develop / Screen Alternatives

Conduct Analysis on Feasible Alternatives

Determine Impacts / Evaluate Alternatives

Public Comment Period

Issue Draft EIS for Review

Prepare and Publish Final EIS (opportunity for public review)

April /May 2010

Prepare Records of Decision

June /July 2010



Western's Role and Need for Agency Action

Who is Western?

- Agency within the USDOE
- Owns, operates and maintains transmission lines including lines near the proposed PrairieWinds project
- Markets federal hydroelectric power including power from power plants on the Missouri River

Why is Western involved?

- Evaluate interconnection request per its generator interconnection procedures
- Evaluate involvement
- Co-lead for NEPA process



RUS's Role and Need for Agency Action

Who is RUS?

- Formerly the Rural Electrification Administration
- Agency within the USDA
- Delivers USDA's Rural Development Utilities Programs
- Makes loans/loan guarantees for electric distribution, transmission and generation facilities, telecommunication facilities and water and waste water facilities

Why is RUS involved?

- Evaluate financing request
- Evaluate engineering and technical aspects of the project
- Co-lead for NEPA process





April 09, 2009

Gail Arnott
President
Wessington Springs Area Development Corporation
P.O Box 132
Wessington Springs, SD 57382

Dear Gail Arnott:

The purpose of this letter is to inform you of a proposed project and to provide notice that Western and RUS intend to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) addressing their respective Federal actions. This letter also serves as an invitation for your agency to participate in our interagency meeting on April 28th and to attend scoping meetings for the project.

PrairieWinds SD1, Incorporated (PrairieWinds), a subsidiary of Basin Electric Power Cooperative (Basin Electric), has proposed to develop a wind-powered generating facility in south-central South Dakota, either near Wessington Springs or near Winner. Basin Electric has requested to interconnect the proposed project with Western Area Power Administration's (Western) transmission system. PrairieWinds has requested financing for the proposed project from the Rural Utilities Service (RUS), an agency within the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

Basin Electric's generator interconnection request and PrairieWinds's financing request triggers a National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) review process of the proposed project by Western and RUS, respectively. Western and RUS are serving as co-lead Federal agencies for preparation of the EIS. Western will serve as the lead Federal agency for consultations with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service under section 7 of the Endangered Species Act and for consultations with the South Dakota State Historic Preservation Office under section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

Western and RUS invite you to attend an interagency meeting occurring on April 28, 2009, to provide you input on the proposed project's scoping process. During the meeting we would like

to discuss the project component details, obtain input to understand any issues that your Agency believes are important in the EIS analysis, and review the project schedule. The interagency meeting details are as follows:

Best Western Ramkota Hotel
920 W Sioux Ave
Pierre, South Dakota 57501-1800
Tuesday, April 28, 2009
9 a.m. to 11 a.m.

Western and RUS are conducting scoping, including open-house public scoping meetings, to ensure that interested members of the public, potentially affected landowners and lessees, and Federal, state, local, and tribal agencies have an opportunity to provide input on the scope of the EIS and the alternatives that will be addressed in the EIS. Western, RUS, and PrairieWinds representatives will be available at the scoping meetings for one-on-one discussions, to provide information about the proposed project, answer questions, and take verbal and written comments from interested parties. Information for each alternative wind generating site will be available at two public scoping meetings as follows:

Holiday Inn Express and Suites
1360 East Highway 44
Winner, South Dakota 57580
Tuesday, April 28, 2009
4 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Commerce Street Grille
118 North Main Street
Plankinton, South Dakota 57368
Wednesday, April 29, 2009
4 p.m. to 7 p.m.

The proposed PrairieWinds project would involve the installation and operation of a 150-megawatt (MW) wind energy facility that would feature 101 wind turbine generators. Each turbine generator would have a hub height of 262 feet and a turbine rotor diameter of 252 feet. The total height of each wind turbine would be 389 feet with a blade in the vertical position. The towers would be constructed of tubular steel, approximately 15 feet in diameter at the base, with internal joint flanges. The color of the towers and rotors would be standard white or off-white. During construction, a work/staging area at each turbine would include the crane pad and rotor assembly area, temporarily disturbing an area about 190 feet by 210 feet.

Each wind turbine would be connected by a service road for access and a 34.5-kilovolt (kV) buried electrical collection system that would ultimately route the power from each turbine to a central collector substation, where voltage would be stepped up for interconnection to Western's transmission system. About 30 to 40 miles of new access roads would be built to facilitate both

construction and maintenance of the turbines. Approximately 25 to 35 miles of existing roads would be used and, where appropriate, improved.

Two sites for the wind-powered generation facility are under consideration (see enclosed map). One site is located on about 37,000 acres and is approximately 15 miles north of White Lake, South Dakota, within Brule, Aurora, and Jerauld counties. The other alternative site would be located within an area about 83,000 acres, and is about 8 miles south of Winner, South Dakota, and is entirely within Tripp County.

The site that is approximately 37,000 acres near White Lake, South Dakota, would require a new 230-kV transmission line to deliver the power from the collector substation(s) to a new 230-kV Western interconnection point at Western's Wessington Springs Substation, located in Jerauld County. The Wessington Springs Substation is located approximately 9 to 12 miles from the proposed collector substation(s). The proposed line would be built using wood or steel H-frame (two pole) structures or steel single-pole structures. The structures would be about 85 to 95 feet high and span about 800 feet.

The other alternative site, approximately 83,000 acres near Winner, South Dakota, would require a 34.5-kV to 115-kV collector substation(s) as well as a 115-kV transmission line to interconnect to Western's existing 115-kV Winner Substation. Other facilities necessary for this site would be similar to those described for the site above.

The no action alternative will also be considered.

There is a chance that the final interconnection studies will conclude that other transmission facilities, such as network upgrades remote from the project site, would be required. If the project moves forward and it is determined that other facilities are needed to support the interconnection request, Western and RUS will complete the appropriate level of environmental review.

We want to ensure that any important environmental concerns and natural resources and/or places of interest for your Agency within the project area are considered and addressed in the EIS. At this time, we would appreciate receiving any information that you would be willing to share with us on any unique or special resources or areas in or near the proposed project. If you are aware of any other individuals or affiliated organizations that should be consulted regarding this project, please let us know. A full list of all other agencies and individuals receiving this letter is enclosed.

If any additional agency representatives wish to be added to the project's mailing list and/or receive a copy of the Draft and Final EIS, please contact Ms. Liana Reilly or Mr. Dennis Rankin

at the phone numbers or addresses listed below. Comments on the project scope and alternatives should be received by May 15, 2009, to be considered in defining the scope for the Draft EIS. Comments on the proposed project will be accepted and considered throughout the NEPA process.

During this scoping phase, we would like to obtain input to understand any issues that your Agency believes are important. Western and RUS request that you comment on the proposal, offer suggestions to improve the proposal and suggest alternative actions. Please identify any issues of concern about potential environmental impacts. Please address comments, questions or concerns to Ms. Liana Reilly or Mr. Dennis Rankin at the addresses below.

Ms. Liana Reilly
Document Manager
Western Area Power Administration
Corporate Services Office - A7400,
P.O. Box 281213
Lakewood, Colorado 80228-8213
Phone: (720) 962-7253 or (1-800) 336-7288
Fax: (720) 962-7263
E-mail: sdprairiewinds@wapa.gov

Mr. Dennis Rankin
Project Manager
Engineering and Environmental Staff
Rural Utilities Service, Utilities Program
1400 Independence Ave. SW, Mail Stop 1571
Washington D.C. 20250-1571,
Phone: (202) 720-1953
Fax: (202) 720-0820
E-mail: dennis.rankin@wdc.usda.gov

We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nicholas J. Stas". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Nick Stas

Environmental Manager
Upper Great Plains Region
Western Area Power Administration

Enclosures

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April 09, 2009

Natalie Gates
US Fish and Wildlife Service
Federal Wildlife Regulations
420 South Garfield Ave, Suite 400
Pierre, SD 57501

Dear Natalie Gates:

The purpose of this letter is to inform you of a proposed project and to provide notice that Western and RUS intend to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) addressing their respective Federal actions. This letter also serves as an invitation for an interagency meeting as well as provides information to you about our scoping process.

PrairieWinds SD1, Incorporated (PrairieWinds), a subsidiary of Basin Electric Power Cooperative (Basin Electric), has proposed to develop a wind-powered generating facility in south-central South Dakota, either near Wessington Springs or near Winner. Basin Electric has requested to interconnect the proposed project with Western Area Power Administration's (Western) transmission system. PrairieWinds has requested financing for the proposed project from the Rural Utilities Service (RUS), an agency within the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

Basin Electric's generator interconnection request and PrairieWinds's financing request triggers a National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) review process of the proposed project by Western and RUS, respectively. Western and RUS are serving as co-lead Federal agencies for preparation of the EIS. Western will serve as the lead Federal agency for consultations with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service under section 7 of the Endangered Species Act and for consultations with the South Dakota State Historic Preservation Office under section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

Western and RUS invite you to attend an interagency meeting occurring on April 28, 2009 to provide you input on the proposed project's scoping process. During the meeting we would like

to discuss the project component details, obtain input to understand any issues that your Agency believes are important in the EIS analysis, and review the project schedule. The interagency meeting details are as follows:

**Best Western Ramkota Hotel
920 W Sioux Ave
Pierre, South Dakota 57501-1800
Tuesday, April 28, 2009
9 a.m. to 11 a.m.**

In addition, this letter serves to invite your agency to become a cooperating agency in the EIS process for the proposed project. The Council on Environmental Quality NEPA Implementing Regulations (40 CFR part 1501.6) emphasizes agency cooperation and authorizes the designated lead Federal agency to request that other Federal agencies with jurisdiction by law be a cooperating agency. Additionally, the lead Federal agency may request that any other Federal agency with special expertise with respect to any environmental issue to be addressed in the EIS also be a cooperating agency. Designated cooperating agencies have certain responsibilities to support the NEPA process, as specified in 40 CFR 1501.6 (b). The benefits of becoming a cooperating agency include disclosure of relevant information early in the EIS process and establishment of a mechanism to address any intergovernmental issues. Should your agency decide not to become a formal cooperating agency for the EIS, you will continue to be kept informed of project developments through the project mailing list, and you will receive the draft and final EIS documents. Any concerns or comments your agency provides to us during the NEPA process, and in a timely fashion, will be fully considered in finalizing the EIS and our Records of Decision (RODs).

The proposed PrairieWinds project would involve the installation and operation of a 150-megawatt (MW) wind energy facility that would feature 101 wind turbine generators. Each turbine generator would have a hub height of 262 feet and a turbine rotor diameter of 252 feet. The total height of each wind turbine would be 389 feet with a blade in the vertical position. The towers would be constructed of tubular steel, approximately 15 feet in diameter at the base, with internal joint flanges. The color of the towers and rotors would be standard white or off-white. During construction, a work/staging area at each turbine would include the crane pad and rotor assembly area, temporarily disturbing an area about 190 feet by 210 feet.

Each wind turbine would be connected by a service road for access and a 34.5-kilovolt (kV) buried electrical collection system that would ultimately route the power from each turbine to a central collector substation, where voltage would be stepped up for interconnection to Western's transmission system. About 30 to 40 miles of new access roads would be built to facilitate both

construction and maintenance of the turbines. Approximately 25 to 35 miles of existing roads would be used and, where appropriate, improved.

Two sites for the wind-powered generation facility are under consideration (see enclosed map). One site is located on about 37,000 acres and is approximately 15 miles north of White Lake, South Dakota, within Brule, Aurora, and Jerauld counties. The other alternative site would be located within an area about 83,000 acres, and is about 8 miles south of Winner, South Dakota, and is entirely within Tripp County.

The site that is approximately 37,000 acres near White Lake, South Dakota, would require a new 230-kV transmission line to deliver the power from the collector substation(s) to a new 230-kV Western interconnection point at Western's Wessington Springs Substation, located in Jerauld County. The Wessington Springs Substation is located approximately 9 to 12 miles from the proposed collector substation(s). The proposed line would be built using wood or steel H-frame (two pole) structures or steel single-pole structures. The structures would be about 85 to 95 feet high and span about 800 feet.

The other alternative site, approximately 83,000 acres near Winner, South Dakota, would require a 34.5-kV to 115-kV collector substation(s) as well as a 115-kV transmission line to interconnect to Western's existing 115-kV Winner Substation. Other facilities necessary for this site would be similar to those described for the site above.

The no action alternative will also be considered.

There is a chance that the final interconnection studies will conclude that other transmission facilities, such as network upgrades remote from the project site, would be required. If the project moves forward and it is determined that other facilities are needed to support the interconnection request, Western and RUS will complete the appropriate level of environmental review.

We want to ensure that any important environmental concerns and natural resources and/or places of interest for your Agency within the project area are considered and addressed in the EIS. At this time, we would appreciate receiving any information that you would be willing to share with us on any unique or special resources or areas in or near the proposed project. If you are aware of any other individuals or affiliated organizations that should be consulted regarding this project, please let us know. A full list of all other agencies and individuals receiving this letter is enclosed.

If any additional agency representatives wish to be added to the project's mailing list and/or receive a copy of the Draft and Final EIS, please contact Ms. Liana Reilly or Mr. Dennis Rankin

at the phone numbers or addresses listed below. Comments on the project scope and alternatives should be received by May 15, 2009, to be considered in defining the scope for the Draft EIS. Comments on the proposed project will be accepted and considered throughout the NEPA process.

At this time, Western and RUS are conducting scoping, including public scoping meetings, to ensure that interested members of the public, potentially affected landowners and lessees, and Federal, state, local, and tribal agencies have an opportunity to provide input on the scope of the EIS and the alternatives that will be addressed in the EIS. Western, RUS, and PrairieWinds representatives will be available at the scoping meetings for one-on-one discussions, to provide information about the proposed project, answer questions, and will take verbal and written comments from interested parties. Information will be available at two public scoping meetings as follows:

**Holiday Inn Express and Suites
1360 East Highway 44
Winner, South Dakota 57580
Tuesday, April 28, 2009
4 p.m. to 7 p.m.**

**Commerce Street Grille
118 North Main Street
Plankinton, South Dakota 57368
Wednesday, April 29, 2009
4 p.m. to 7 p.m.**

During this scoping phase, we would like to obtain input to understand any issues that your Agency believes are important. Western and RUS request that you comment on the proposal, offer suggestions to improve the proposal and suggest alternative actions. Please identify any issues of concern about potential environmental impacts. Please address comments, questions or concerns to Ms. Liana Reilly or Mr. Dennis Rankin at the addresses below.

Ms. Liana Reilly
Document Manager
Western Area Power Administration
Corporate Services Office - A7400,
P.O. Box 281213
Lakewood, Colorado 80228-8213
Phone: (720) 962-7253 or (1-800) 336-7288
Fax: (720) 962-7263
E-mail: reilly@wapa.gov

Mr. Dennis Rankin
Project Manager
Engineering and Environmental Staff
Rural Utilities Service, Utilities Program

1400 Independence Ave. SW, Mail Stop 1571
Washington D.C. 20250-1571,
Phone: (202) 720-1953
Fax: (202) 720-0820
E-mail: dennis.rankin@wdc.usda.gov

We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nicholas J. Stas". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Nick Stas
Environmental Manager
Upper Great Plains Region
Western Area Power Administration

Enclosures

--This page left intentionally blank--

Agencies and Individuals who Received the Invitations

** Those with an asterisk were invited to be a cooperator*

* Aurora County Weed Supervisor
* Brule County Weed Supervisor & Highway
* Bureau of Indian Affairs
* Commission Chairperson for Chamberlain, South Dakota
* Commission Chairperson for Plankinton, South Dakota
* Commission Chairperson for Wessington Springs, South Dakota
* Commission Chairperson for Winner, South Dakota
DOE - South Dakota State NEPA Contact
Ducks Unlimited
Environmental Protection Agency, Region 8
* Farm Service Agency
Federal Emergency Management Agency
* Federal Highway Administration
* Highway Superintendent for Wessington Springs, South Dakota
* Jerauld County Weed Supervisor
Mayor of Wessington Springs, South Dakota
Mayor of Winner, South Dakota
Natural Resource Conservation Service
Nature Conservancy
Plankinton City Hall
Sierra Club
South Dakota Aeronautics Commission
South Dakota Department of Health
* South Dakota Department of Transportation
South Dakota Dept of Agriculture
South Dakota Dept of Environment and Natural Resources
South Dakota Forest Service
* South Dakota Game, Fish, and Parks
South Dakota Governor's Office
South Dakota Highway Patrol
South Dakota Indian Affairs Commission
* South Dakota Public Utilities Commission
South Dakota Senator
South Dakota State Historic Preservation Office
South Dakota State Historical Society
South Dakota State Land Department
South Dakota State Representative
South Dakota Transmission Authority
* Tripp County Weed Supervisor
* US Army Corps of Engineers
* US Fish and Wildlife Service
USGS Northern Prairie Wildlife Research Center
USGS South Dakota State University
Wessington Springs Area Development Corporation

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YOU ARE INVITED! TO A PUBLIC MEETING

The USDA Rural Utilities Service (RUS) and Western Area Power Administration (Western) are hosting two open-house public meetings to discuss a new 150-megawatt wind energy project.

PrairieWinds SD1, Inc., (PrairieWinds), a subsidiary of Basin Electric Power Cooperative, proposes to construct 101 wind turbines in one of two alternate locations.

One location would be south of Wessington Springs, approximately **10 miles**

north of the town of White Lake, in Aurora, Jerauld and

Brule counties in South Dakota. The other location would be approximately **15 miles south of the town of Winner**, in Tripp County, South Dakota.



Representatives from RUS, Western and PrairieWinds will be available to answer your questions, offer more information about the proposed project and take your comments. Your comments will help define the scope of the Environmental Impact Statement.

PLEASE JOIN US

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April 29, 2009, 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Commerce Street Grille

118 S Main Street

Plankinton, SD 57368

NEED MORE INFORMATION?

Liana Reilly

Western Area Power Administration

Corporate Services Office

A7400 P.O. Box 281213

Lakewood, Colorado 80228-8213

email: sdprairiewinds@wapa.gov

Phone: 1-800-336-7288



Or visit the Project Web site at:

www.wapa.gov/transmission/sdprairiewinds.htm

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NEED MORE INFORMATION?

Liana Reilly

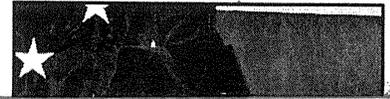
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Earth Day messages



...The variety of... comparing and installing energy-efficient appliances and light bulbs in their homes.

In addition, beef producers ap-

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Dismissed on motion

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Department of Energy
Western Area Power Administration
Upper Great Plains Customer Service Region
P.O. Box 35800
Billings, MT 59107-5800

SEE ATTACHED LIST

Dear Honorable Chairperson, Mr. Lester Thompson:

Western Area Power Administration (Western), a power-marketing agency of the U.S. Department of Energy, has received a request to interconnect its transmission system near Wessington Springs, South Dakota with a wind generating facility that has been proposed by PrairieWinds, SD1, Incorporated (PrairieWinds), a subsidiary of Basin Electric. PrairieWinds has applied for financial assistance for the proposed project from the Rural Utility Service (RUS), an agency which administers the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Rural Development Utilities Programs. Western and RUS are considering these respective requests thereby making the project an undertaking subject to review under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) and its implementing regulations (36 CFR Part 800). In accordance with 36 CFR § 800.2(a)(2), Western will serve as the lead agency for the purposes of Section 106 review.

The purpose of this letter is to inform you of the proposed project and to provide notice that Western and RUS intend to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) addressing their respective Federal actions. This letter also serves to initiate Government-to-Government consultation. With this letter, Western and RUS invite your participation in the reviews conducted under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Section 106 of NHPA..

The proposed PrairieWinds project would involve the installation and operation of a 150 megawatt (MW) wind energy facility that would feature 101 wind turbines (WTG). Each turbine generator would have a hub height of 262 feet and a turbine rotor diameter of 252 feet. The total height of each wind turbine would be 389 feet with a blade in the vertical position. The towers would be constructed of tubular steel, approximately 15 feet in diameter at the base, with internal joint flanges. The color of the towers and rotors would be standard white or off-white. During construction, a work/staging area at each turbine would include the crane pad and rotor assembly area, temporarily disturbing an area about 190 feet by 210 feet.

Each wind turbine would be connected by a service road for access and a 34.5 kilovolt (kV) electrical collection system that would ultimately route the power from each turbine to a central collector substation, where voltage would be stepped up for interconnection to Western's transmission system. About 30 to 40 miles of new access roads would be built to facilitate both construction and maintenance of the turbines. Approximately 25 to 35 miles of existing roads would be used and, where appropriate, improved.

Two sites for the wind generation facility are under consideration (see enclosed map). One site is located on about 37,000 acres about 15 miles north of White Lake, South Dakota, within Brule, Aurora, and Jerauld counties, South Dakota. Under this alternative, a new 230-kV transmission line would be required to deliver the power from the collector substation(s) to a

new 230-kV Western interconnection point at Western's Wessington Springs Substation, located in Jerauld County. The Wessington Springs Substation is located approximately 9 to 12 miles from the proposed collector substation(s). The proposed line would be built using wood or steel H-frame (two pole) structures or steel single-pole structures. The structures would be about 85 to 95 feet high and span about 800 feet.

The other alternative site, near Winner entirely in Tripp County, South Dakota, would be located within an area about 83,000 acres and require 34.5-kV to 115-kV collector substation(s) as well as a 115-kV transmission line to interconnect to Western's existing 115-kV Winner Substation. Other facilities would be similar to those described for the first alternative site above.

There is a chance that the final interconnection studies will conclude that other transmission facilities, such as network upgrades remote from the project site, would be required. If it is determined that other facilities are needed to support the interconnection request, Western will complete the appropriate level of environmental review.

Western and RUS are serving as co-lead Federal agencies under NEPA for preparation of the EIS. With this notice, you are invited to be cooperating agency. Designated cooperating agencies have certain responsibilities to support the NEPA process, as specified at 40 CFR 1501.6 (b).

Cultural resources are among the important environmental resources that will be addressed during the planning and the preparation of the EIS for the proposed project. We want to ensure that any important cultural and natural resources and/or places with traditional cultural significance for your Tribe within the project area are considered and addressed in the NEPA and Section 106 reviews. At this time, we would appreciate receiving any information that you would be willing to share with us on any unique, special, ethnographic, or archaeological resources or areas in or near the proposed Project. If you are aware of any other Tribes, individuals, or tribally affiliated organizations that should be consulted regarding this project, please let us know. A list of the other Tribes receiving this invitation to government-to-government consultation is enclosed.

Western and RUS are conducting scoping, including public scoping meetings, to ensure that interested members of the public, potentially affected landowners and lessees, and Federal, state, local, and tribal agencies have an opportunity to provide input on the scope of the EIS and the alternatives that will be addressed in the EIS. Western, RUS, and Project representatives at the scoping meetings will provide information about the proposed project, answer questions, and will take comments from interested parties. Western and RUS request that you comment on the proposal, offer suggestions to improve the proposal and suggest alternative actions. Please identify any issues of concern about potential environmental impacts. Written comments may be left with one of the Western or RUS representatives at the scoping meeting, or may be provided by fax, e-mail or the U.S. Postal Service to Ms. Liana Reilly or Steve Tromly, or by mailing the enclosed addressed response sheet.

Western will coordinate its compliance with Section 106 and its implementing regulations (36 CFR Part 800) with the steps taken to meet the requirements of NEPA. As part of this effort, Western will

use its NEPA procedures for public involvement to meet its responsibility to seek and consider the views of the public in Section 106 review, pursuant to 36 CFR § 800.2(d).

The open-house public scoping meetings will be held at the Holiday Inn Express and Suites, 1360 East Highway 44, in Winner South Dakota, on April 28, 2009, and the Commerce Street Grille, 1218 North Main Street, in Plankinton, South Dakota on April 29, 2009. You may attend a meeting of your choosing at any time between 4 and 7 p.m. You will have the opportunity to view the proposed project and NEPA process displays and other information.

If you wish to be added to the project's mailing list and/or receive a copy of the Draft EIS, please return the response sheet or contact Ms. Liana Reilly at the phone number or address listed below. Comments on the project scope and alternatives should be received by May 15, 2009, to be considered in defining the scope for the EIS. Comments on the proposed project will be accepted and considered throughout the NEPA process.

We would like to obtain input to understand any issues that you or your Tribe believes are important. We will also follow up with a telephone call to discuss issues and, if requested, arrange a site visit. Please address comments, questions or concerns to Ms. Liana Reilly or Mr. Steve Tromly, at the addresses below.

Ms. Liana Reilly
NEPA Document Manager
Western Area Power Administration
Natural Resource Office
12155 West Alameda Parkway
Lakewood, CO 80228-8213
Phone: (720) 962-7253
Fax: (720) 962-7263
E-mail: reilly@wapa.gov

Mr. Steve Tromly
Native American Liaison
Western Area Power Administration
Natural Resource Office
12155 West Alameda Parkway
Lakewood, CO 80228-8213
Phone: (720) 962-7256
Fax: (720) 962-7263
E-mail: tromly@wapa.gov

We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



Nick Stas
Environmental Manager

Enclosures

cc:

Mr. Dennis Rankin
Project Manager
Engineering and Environmental Staff
Rural Utilities Service, Utilities Program
1400 Independence Ave. SW, Mail Stop 1571
Washington D.C. 20250-1571

N. Stas, B0400
R. O'Sullivan, B0400
D. Kluth, B0400
L. Reilly, A7400, Lakewood, CO
S. Tromly, A7400, Lakewood, CO
D. Swanson, A7400, Lakewood, CO

South Dakota PrairieWinds Project Nation-to-Nation Consultation List
(list of recipients in random order)

Mr. Kevin Jensvold, Chairperson
Upper Sioux Indian Community

CC

Mr. Scott Larson
Upper Sioux Indian Community

Ms. Jean Stacy, President
Lower Sioux Indian Community

CC

Ms. Pamela Halverson, THPO
Lower Sioux Indian Community

Ms. Myra Pearson, Chairwoman
Spirit Lake Tribal Council

Mr. Mike Salvage, Chairman
Sisseton-Wahpeton Dakota Nation

CC

Ms. Dianne Derosiers, THPO
Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate

Mr. Joshua Weston, President
Flandreau Santee Sioux Executive Committee

Mr. Robert Cournower, Chairperson
Yankton Sioux Tribal Business and
Claims Committee

CC

Faith Spotted Eagle
Cultural Resources

Mr. Roger Trudell, Chairman
Santee Sioux Tribe of Nebraska

CC

Mr. Robert Campbell, Councilman
Santee Sioux Tribe of Nebraska

Mr. Rodney Bordeaux, President
Rosebud Sioux Tribe

CC

Mr. Russell Eagle Bear, THPO
Rosebud Sioux Tribe of Indians

Mr. Lester Thompson, Jr., Chairman
Crow Creek Sioux Tribe

Mr. Harold Frazier, Chairman
Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe

CC

Mr. Albert LeBeau, THPO
Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe

Mr. Michael B. Jandreau, Chairman
Lower Brule Sioux Tribe

CC

Scott Jones, Director Cultural Resources
Lower Brule Tribe

Mr. Ron His-Horse-is Thunder
Standing Rock Sioux Tribe

CC

Mr. Tim Mentz, THPO
Standing Rock Sioux Tribe

Mr. Curley Youpee, THPO
Ft. Peck Tribes

Tex Hall, Chairman
Three Affiliated Tribes Business Council

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Web site at <http://www.ferc.gov/docs-filing/elibrary.asp>. Enter the docket number (P-13357) in the docket number field to access the document. For assistance, call toll-free 1-866-208-3372.

Kimberly D. Bose,
Secretary.

[FR Doc. E9-7768 Filed 4-6-09; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6717-01-P

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Western Area Power Administration

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Rural Utility Service

Proposed PrairieWinds Project, South Dakota

AGENCIES: Western Area Power Administration, U.S. Department of Energy; Rural Utilities Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture.

ACTION: Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement and to Conduct Scoping Meetings; Notice of Floodplain and Wetlands Involvement.

SUMMARY: The Western Area Power Administration (Western), an agency within the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), and Rural Utilities Service (RUS), an agency within the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), intend to jointly prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) for the proposed PrairieWinds Project (Project) in South Dakota. Western is issuing this Notice of Intent (NOI) to inform the public and interested parties about the proposed Project, conduct a public scoping process, and invite the public to comment on the scope, proposed action, alternatives, and other issues to be addressed in the EIS.

The EIS will address the construction, maintenance and operation of the proposed Project, which would include a 151.5-megawatt (MW) nameplate capacity wind-powered generating facility consisting of wind turbine generators, electrical collector lines, collector substation(s), transmission line(s), communications system, and service roads to access wind turbine sites. The EIS will also address the proposed interconnection with existing Western substations. The proposed Project would be located within portions of Brule, Aurora, and Jerauld counties, South Dakota or entirely within Tripp County, South Dakota.

Portions of the proposed Project may affect floodplains and wetlands, so this NOI also serves as a notice of proposed

floodplain or wetland action. Western and RUS will hold public scoping meetings near the proposed Project areas to share information and receive comments and suggestions on the scope of the EIS.

DATES: Open house public scoping meetings will be held on April 28, 2009, at the Holiday Inn Express and Suites, 1360 East Highway 44, Winner, South Dakota, 57580, from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. CDT; and on April 29, 2009, at the Commerce Street Grille, 118 N. Main Street, Plankinton, South Dakota, 57368, from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. CDT. The public scoping period starts with the publication of this notice in the **Federal Register** and will continue through May 15, 2009. To help define the scope of the EIS, written comments should be submitted through the project's Web address: <http://www.wapa.gov/sdprairiewinds.htm>, or sent by letter, fax, or e-mail no later than May 15, 2009.

ADDRESSES: Written comments on the scope of the EIS should be addressed to Ms. Liana Reilly, Document Manager, Western Area Power Administration, Corporate Services Office, A7400, P.O. Box 281213, Lakewood, Colorado 80228-8213, fax (720) 962-7263, or sent by e-mail to sdprairiewinds@wapa.gov. Comments may also be submitted through the project's Web address: <http://www.wapa.gov/sdprairiewinds.htm>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For information on the proposed Project, the EIS process, and general information about interconnections with Western's transmission system, contact Ms. Reilly at (800) 336-7288 or the address provided above. Parties wishing to be placed on the Project mailing list for future information, and to receive copies of the Draft and Final EIS when they are available, should also contact Ms. Reilly.

For information on RUS financing, contact Mr. Dennis Rankin, Project Manager, Engineering and Environmental Staff, Rural Utilities Service, Utilities Program, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., Mail Stop 1571, Washington, DC 20250-1571, telephone (202) 720-1953 or e-mail dennis.rankin@wdc.usda.gov.

For general information on DOE National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), 42 U.S.C. 4321-4347 review procedures or status of a NEPA review, contact Ms. Carol M. Borgstrom, Director of NEPA Policy and Compliance, GC-20, U.S. Department of Energy, 1000 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20585, telephone (202) 586-4600 or (800) 472-2756.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Western, an agency within DOE, markets Federal hydroelectric power to preference customers, as specified by law. These customers include municipalities, cooperatives, public utilities, irrigation districts, Federal and State agencies, and Native American Tribes in 15 western states, including South Dakota. Western owns and operates about 17,000 miles of transmission lines.

RUS, an agency that delivers the USDA's Rural Development Utilities Program, is authorized to make loans and loan guarantees that finance the construction of electric distribution, transmission, and generation facilities, including system improvements and replacements required to furnish and improve electric service in rural areas, as well as demand side management, energy conservation programs, and on-grid and off-grid renewable energy systems.

Basin Electric is a regional wholesale electric generation and transmission cooperative owned and controlled by its member cooperatives. Basin Electric serves approximately 2.5 million customers covering 430,000 square miles in portions of nine states, including Colorado, Iowa, Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wyoming.

PrairieWinds, SD1, Incorporated (PrairieWinds), is a wholly owned subsidiary of Basin Electric.

Project Description

PrairieWinds proposes to construct, own, operate, and maintain the South Dakota PrairieWinds Project, a 151.5-MW nameplate capacity wind-powered generation facility, including wind-turbine generators, electrical collector lines, collector substation(s), transmission line, communications system, and service access roads to access wind-turbine sites.

There are two possible locations for the proposed Project. One site is located on about 37,000 acres about 15 miles north of White Lake, South Dakota, within Brule, Aurora, and Jerauld counties, South Dakota. For this alternative, the requested interconnection is with Western's electric transmission system at Wessington Springs Substation, located in Jerauld County, South Dakota. The other site is located on about 83,000 acres about 8 miles south of Winner, South Dakota, entirely within Tripp County, South Dakota. If this alternative is selected, the interconnection request will be with Western's electric transmission system at Winner Substation, located in Tripp County.

The proposed Project is subject to the jurisdiction of the South Dakota Public Utilities Commission (SDPUC), which has regulatory authority for siting wind generation facilities and transmission lines within the State. PrairieWinds will submit an application for an Energy Conversion Facility Permit to the SDPUC. The SDPUC permit would authorize PrairieWinds to construct the proposed Project under South Dakota rules and regulations. Western's Federal action is to consider Basin Electric's interconnection request under Western's Open Access Transmission Service Tariff and make a decision whether to approve or deny the interconnection request. If the decision is to approve the request, Western's action would include making necessary system modifications to accommodate the interconnection of the proposed Project. PrairieWinds has requested financial assistance for the proposed Project from RUS. RUS' Federal action is whether to provide financial assistance; accordingly, completing the EIS is one requirement, along with other technical and financial considerations in processing PrairieWind's application.

Western and RUS intend to prepare an EIS to analyze the impacts of their respective Federal actions and the proposed Project in accordance with NEPA, as amended, DOE NEPA Implementing Procedures (10 CFR 1021), the CEQ regulations for implementing NEPA (40 CFR 1500–1508), and RUS Environmental Policies and Procedures (7 CFR 1794). While Western's and RUS' Federal actions would be limited to the approval or denial of the interconnection request, any modifications to Western's power system necessary to accommodate the interconnection, and providing financial assistance for the proposed Project, the EIS will also identify and address the environmental impacts of the proposed Project. The EIS will evaluate in detail the two alternatives, any other viable alternatives identified during the public scoping process, and the No Action Alternative.

Regardless of the site selected, the proposed Project would consist of four main facilities: Turbines, collector system, roads, and transmission lines. PrairieWinds plans to install 101 General Electric 1.5-MW wind turbines for the proposed Project within one of the alternative generation sites. Fifteen additional turbines may be installed within the selected site, pending future load, transmission availability, and renewable production standard requirements. Each generator would have a hub height of 262 feet and a turbine rotor diameter of 252 feet. The

total height of each wind turbine would be 389 feet with a blade in the vertical position. The towers would be constructed of tubular steel, approximately 15 feet in diameter at the base, with internal joint flanges. The color of the towers and rotors would be standard white or off-white. During construction, a work/staging area at each turbine would include the crane pad and rotor assembly area. This area would measure about 190 feet by 210 feet. The turbine foundations would typically be mat foundations (inverted T-foundations) or a concentric-ring-shell foundation. The area excavated for the turbine foundations would typically be no more than 70 feet by 70 feet (approximately 0.1 acre). Pad mounted transformers 74 inches by 92 inches by 70 inches would be placed next to each turbine. In some cases, for step-and-touch voltage compliance, an area around a turbine may be covered in 4 inches of gravel, river rock or crushed stone.

Each wind turbine would be interconnected with underground power and communications cables, identified as the collector system. This system would be used to route the power from each turbine to a central collector substation(s) where the electrical voltage would be stepped up from 34.5 kilovolt (kV) to 230-kV. The collector substation(s) would be enclosed in a fence with dimensions about 350 feet by 140 feet. The underground collector system would be placed in one trench or two parallel trenches and connect each of the turbines to a central collector substation. The estimated trench length, including parallel trenches, is 317,000 feet (60 miles).

The fiber optic communication lines for the proposed Project would be installed in the same trenches as the underground electrical collector cables and connect each turbine to a proposed operations and maintenance (O&M) building and collector substation(s). It is anticipated that a 5,500-square foot (50 feet by 110 feet) O&M building would be built within the vicinity of the collector substation. The final location would be determined in consultation with future operations personnel.

New access roads would be built to facilitate both construction and maintenance of the turbines. This road network would be approximately 70 miles of new and/or upgraded roads. These roads would be designed to minimize length and construction impact. Initially, turbine access roads would be built to approximately 25-foot wide, to accommodate the safe operation of construction equipment.

Upon completion of construction, the turbine access roads would be reclaimed and narrowed to an extent allowing for the routine maintenance of the facility. Existing roads, including state and county roads and section line roads, would also be improved to aid in servicing the turbine sites. Approximately 30 to 40 miles of new turbine access roads would be built and 25 to 35 miles of existing roads would be used and, where appropriate, improved.

Under one alternative, a new 230-kV transmission line would be required to deliver the power from the collector substation(s) to a new 230-kV Western interconnection point at the existing Wessington Springs Substation. The Wessington Springs Substation is located approximately 9 to 12 miles from the proposed collector substation(s). The proposed line would be built using wood or steel H-frame (two pole) structures or steel single-pole structures. The structures would be about 85 to 95 feet high and span about 800 feet.

The other alternative site, near Winner, would require 34.5-kV to 115-kV collector substation(s) as well as a 115-kV transmission line to interconnect to Western's existing 115-kV Winner Substation. Other facilities would be similar to those described for the proposed Project. Because the proposed Project may involve action in floodplains or wetlands, this NOI also serves as a notice of proposed floodplain or wetland action, in accordance with DOE regulations for Compliance with Floodplain and Wetlands Environmental Review Requirements at 10 CFR 1022.12(a). The EIS will include a floodplain/wetland assessment and, if required, a floodplain/wetland statement of findings will be issued with the Final EIS or Western's and RUS' Records of Decision.

Agency Responsibilities

Western and RUS are serving as co-lead Federal agencies, as defined at 40 CFR 1501.5, for preparation of the EIS. With this notice, Native American Tribes and agencies with jurisdiction or special expertise are invited to be cooperating agencies. Such tribes or agencies may make a request to Western to be a cooperating agency by contacting Western's NEPA Document Manager. Designated cooperating agencies have certain responsibilities to support the NEPA process, as specified at 40 CFR 1501.6(b).

Environmental Issues

This notice is to inform agencies and the public of Western's and RUS' Federal actions, and the proposed Project, and to solicit comments and suggestions for consideration in preparing the EIS. To help the public frame its comments, this notice contains a list of potential environmental issues that Western and RUS have tentatively identified for analysis. These issues include:

1. Impacts on protected, threatened, endangered, or sensitive species of animals or plants;
2. Impacts on avian and bat species;
3. Impacts on land use, recreation, and transportation;
4. Impacts on cultural or historic resources and tribal values;
5. Impacts on human health and safety;
6. Impacts on air, soil, and water resources (including air quality and surface water impacts);
7. Visual impacts; and
8. Socioeconomic impacts and disproportionately high and adverse impacts to minority and low-income populations.

This list is not intended to be all-inclusive or to imply any predetermination of impacts. Environmental issues associated with Western's action, RUS' action, and PrairieWinds' proposed Project will be addressed separately in the EIS. Western and RUS invite interested parties to suggest specific issues within these general categories, or other issues not included above, to be considered in the EIS.

Public Participation

Public participation and full disclosure are planned for the entire EIS process. The EIS process will include public scoping open house meetings and a scoping comment period to solicit comments from interested parties; consultation and involvement with appropriate Federal, State, local, and tribal governmental agencies; public review and a hearing on the draft EIS; publication of a final EIS; and publication of separate Records of Decision by Western and RUS, currently anticipated in 2010. Additional informal public meetings may be held in the proposed Project areas, if public interest and issues indicate a need.

The public scoping period begins with publication of this notice in the **Federal Register** and closes May 15, 2009. The purpose of the scoping meetings is to provide information about Western's Federal action, RUS's Federal action, and the proposed

Project, display maps, answer questions, and take written comments from interested parties.

Western and RUS will hold open house public scoping meetings in Plankinton, South Dakota and Winner, South Dakota as noted above. Attendees are welcome to come and go at their convenience and to speak one-on-one with Project representatives and agency staff. The public will have the opportunity to provide written comments at the meeting. In addition, attendees may provide written comments by letter, fax, e-mail, or through the project's Web address.

To be considered in defining the scope of the EIS, comments should be received by the end of the scoping period. Anonymous comments will not be accepted.

Dated: March 30, 2009.

Timothy J. Meeks,
Administrator.

Dated: March 26, 2009.

Mark S. Plank,
Director, Engineering and Environmental Staff, Rural Utilities Service.

[FR Doc. E9-7813 Filed 4-6-09; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6450-01-P

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

[FRL-8789-8; EPA-HQ-OEI-2007-1152]

Amendment to the Toxic Substances Control Act Confidential Business Information Records Access System, EPA-20

AGENCY: Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to the provisions of the Privacy Act of 1974 (5 U.S.C. 552a), the Office of Pollution Prevention and Toxics is giving notice that it proposes to amend the "Toxic Substance Control Act Confidential Business Information Records Access System" to "Confidential Business Information Tracking System (CBITS)" to correct the official name of the system of record notice (SORN), system location and system manager.

DATES: Persons wishing to comment on this system of records notice must do so by May 18, 2009.

ADDRESSES: Submit your comments, identified by Docket ID No. EPA-HQ-2007-1152, by one of the following methods:

- <http://www.regulations.gov>: Follow the online instructions for submitting comments.

- *E-mail:* oei.docket@epa.gov
- *Fax:* 202-566-1752.
- *Mail:* OEI Docket, Environmental Protection Agency, Mailcode: 2822T, 1200 Pennsylvania Ave., NW., Washington, DC 20460.

- *Hand Delivery:* OEI Docket, EPA/DC, EPA West Building, Room B102, 1301 Constitution Ave., NW., Washington, DC. Such deliveries are only accepted during the Docket's normal hours of operation and special arrangements should be made for deliveries of boxed information.

Instructions: Direct your comments to Docket ID No. EPA-HQ-OEI-2007-1152. EPA's policy is that all comments received will be included in the public docket without change and may be made available online at <http://www.regulations.gov>, including any personal information provided, unless the comment includes information claimed to be Confidential Business Information (CBI) or other information for which disclosure is restricted by statute. Do not submit information that you consider to be CBI or otherwise protected through <http://www.regulations.gov>. The <http://www.regulations.gov> Web site is an "anonymous access" system, which means EPA will not know your identity or contact information unless you provide it in the body of your comment. If you send an e-mail comment directly to EPA without going through <http://www.regulations.gov> your e-mail address will be automatically captured and included as part of the comment that is placed in the public docket and made available on the Internet. If you submit an electronic comment, EPA recommends that you include your name and other contact information in the body of your comment and with any disk or CD-ROM you submit. If EPA cannot read your comment due to technical difficulties and cannot contact you for clarification, EPA may not be able to consider your comment. Electronic files should avoid the use of special characters, any form of encryption, and be free of any defects or viruses. For additional information about EPA's public docket visit the EPA Docket Center homepage at <http://www.epa.gov/epahome/dockets.htm>.
Docket: All documents in the docket are listed in the <http://www.regulations.gov> index. Although listed in the index, some information is not publicly available, e.g., CBI or other information for which disclosure is restricted by statute. Certain other material, such as copyrighted material, will be publicly available only in hard copy. Publicly available docket materials are available either

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Ms. Liana Reilly
Document Manager
Western Area Power Administration
Corporate Services Office - A7400
P.O. Box 281213
Lakewood, Colorado 80228-8213

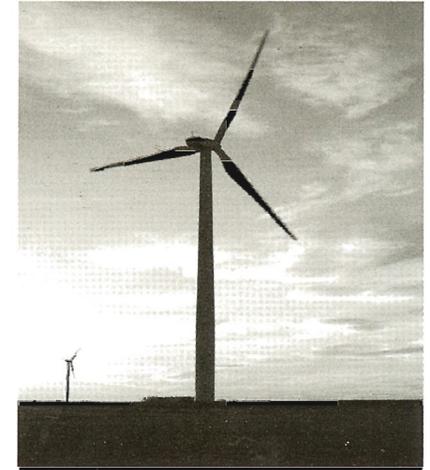
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YOU ARE INVITED!

TO A PUBLIC MEETING

The USDA Rural Utilities Service (RUS) and Western Area Power Administration (Western) are hosting two open-house public meetings to discuss a new 150-megawatt wind energy project.

PrairieWinds SD1, Inc., (PrairieWinds), a subsidiary of Basin Electric Power Cooperative, proposes to construct 101 wind turbines in one of two alternate locations. One location would be south of Wessington Springs, approximately **10 miles north of the town of White Lake**, in Aurora, Jerauld and Brule counties in South Dakota. The other location would be approximately **15 miles south of the town of Winner**, in Tripp County, South Dakota.



Representatives from RUS, Western and PrairieWinds will be available to answer your questions, offer more information about the proposed project and take your comments. Your comments will help define the scope of the Environmental Impact Statement.

PLEASE JOIN US

April 28, 2009, 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.
Holiday Inn Express & Suites
1360 E Highway 44
Winner, SD 57580

April 29, 2009, 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.
Commerce Street Grille
118 S Main Street
Plankinton, SD 57368

NEED MORE INFORMATION?

Liana Reilly
Western Area Power Administration
Corporate Services Office
A7400 P.O. Box 281213
Lakewood, Colorado 80228-8213
email: sdprairiewinds@wapa.gov
Phone: 1-800-336-7288



Or visit the Project Web site at:
www.wapa.gov/transmission/sdprairiewinds.htm

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South Dakota PrairieWinds Environmental Impact Statement Scoping Comment Summary

| Issue | Comment | Treatment / Response |
|--|--|---|
| Air quality | Protection of air quality should be addressed. | Comment will be addressed in the EIS. |
| | Dust particulates from construction and on-going project activities are a concern; EIS should include dust control methods. | Comment will be addressed in the EIS. |
| Alternatives | Preference for the proposed Crow Lake Alternative to be approved for the Proposed Project. | Comment noted. |
| | Preference for Crow Lake Alternative to be approved for the Proposed Project; also noted that site may cost less to build due to smaller acreage, and have higher wind potential. | Comment noted. |
| | Map request of the Crow Lake Alternative. | Map was provided. |
| | Summarize criteria and process used to develop Proposed Project alternatives, disclose reasoning used to eliminate alternatives. | Comment will be addressed in the EIS. |
| | Proposed Project alternatives map request. | Map was provided. |
| Aviation safety | Request for all project turbines to be lit at night as mitigation. | Comment will be addressed in the EIS. |
| Biological resources | USFWS formally accepted invitation to participate as a cooperating agency. | Cooperating agency status confirmed. |
| | USFWS provided a list of Federally-protected species that may occur in the project area(s). | Species impact analysis will be provided in the EIS. |
| | USFWS provided wind turbine guidelines and considerations for meteorological towers and power lines with respect to sensitive species. | Comment will be addressed in the EIS. |
| | USFWS provided discussion on wind energy and wildlife. | Comment noted. |
| | USFWS provided information on avian and bat protection plans, including the MBTA, or BGEPA, and information on birds of conservation concern, and U.S. Geological Survey avian research. | Avian and bat impact analysis will be provided in the EIS. |
| | South Dakota Game, Fish, and Parks (SDGFP) supports development of alternative sources of energy. | Comment noted. |
| | SDGFP suggested considering impacts, including mortality, from turbine strikes, habitat alteration, and behavior modification from improperly sited wind power projects. | Avian and bat impact analysis will be provided in the EIS. |
| | SDGFP noted previous correspondence with project representatives and information provided including SDGFP Natural Heritage Program data and information on unique and/or special resources or areas in the Proposed Project areas. | Comment noted; species impact analysis will be provided in the EIS. |
| | Identify endangered species potentially affected by the project. | Endangered species impact analysis to be included in the EIS. |
| | Disclose and evaluate effects of project activities on area ecology, vegetation, and wildlife and habitats. | Comment will be addressed in the EIS. |
| | Identify critical habitat and impacts on species and critical habitat. | Comment will be addressed in the EIS. |
| | Describe how project will meet ESA requirements. | Comment will be addressed in the EIS. |
| | Analyze migration corridors and flyways. | Comment will be addressed in the EIS. |
| Disclose potential toxic hazards associated with pesticide or herbicide use. | Comment will be addressed in the EIS. | |

South Dakota PrairieWinds Environmental Impact Statement Scoping Comment Summary

| Issue | Comment | Treatment / Response |
|--|--|---|
| Cultural resources | Identify potential cultural impacts. | Follow-up discussion with the commenter was conducted by project representatives. Comment will also be addressed in the EIS. |
| Cumulative impacts | EIS should examine cumulative impacts, including direct and indirect effects, including past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future activities. | Comment will be addressed in the EIS. |
| Environmental Justice | Include potential impacts on low income, minority, and/or tribal communities. | Comment will be addressed in the EIS. |
| Greenhouse gases and climate change | The EIS should include an estimate of annual greenhouse gas emissions expected during operations and describe the emissions in terms of carbon dioxide (CO ₂) equivalents in metric tons per year per MW hour produced; then compare to regional or State estimated emissions. | Comment will be addressed in the EIS. |
| NEPA process | Request that the environmental process be expedited. | Comment noted. |
| | National energy policies and national security in general are impacted by excessive oil import. | Comment noted. |
| | Commented that wind and other renewable projects are time sensitive, and should be implemented more quickly. | Comment noted. |
| | Support for wind energy development; noted that USFWS is an impediment to wind development; compliance with the USFWS approval process is a moving target and should be more easily acquired for wind energy projects. | Comment noted. |
| | Request to be added to project mailing list. | Information added to mailing list. |
| | Welcomed project representatives to the City of White Lake. | Comment noted. |
| | Provided encouragement for the project to move forward. | Comment noted. |
| | Representative from KWYR requested radio interview. | Follow-up discussion with the commenter was conducted by project representative. |
| Out of scope | Other developers have prompted individuals to sign land agreements. Commenter requested clarification on right-of-way details and easement compliance, requested information on land agreement expirations and payment guarantees. | Applicant responded to commenter. |
| | Encouraged upgrading transmission lines through the areas to provide power access for other wind farm projects interested in the area. | Comment noted; the project as proposed is to build a wind-powered electric generation facility in central South Dakota, as such this comment is beyond the scope of this EIS. |
| | Request for transmission line upgrades in Gregory County to support wind energy development. | Comment noted; the project as proposed is to build a wind-powered electric generation facility in central South Dakota (not within Gregory County), as such this comment is beyond the scope of this EIS. |
| | Interest in supplying services/facilities during construction of the project. | Comment noted; information provided to Applicant. |
| | Volunteered land for wind turbine development. | Comment noted; information provided to Applicant. |

South Dakota PrairieWinds Environmental Impact Statement Scoping Comment Summary

| Issue | Comment | Treatment / Response |
|---|---|--|
| Out of scope <i>(continued)</i> | Supports Proposed Project, and suggests improving local transmission infrastructure. | Comment noted. The project as proposed is to build a wind-powered electric generation facility in central South Dakota; as such this comment is beyond the scope of this EIS. |
| Project description | Request for information on the size, and height of the wind testers, number of testing sites in the study areas, acres of study areas, size and MW of proposed substation. | Much of this information was available in the scoping meeting materials and on the project website. Follow-up discussion with the commenter was conducted by project representatives. Comment will also be addressed in the EIS. |
| | Include construction, design, and operation practices that will be incorporated to protect water quality from erosion. | Comment will be addressed in the EIS. |
| | Inquired about the substation component of the Proposed Project. | Comment noted. Substation information can also be found in the NOI and will be included in the EIS. |
| Scoping | Welcomed the Proposed Project and was pleased with the presentation during the meetings. | Comment noted. |
| | Request project information. | Follow-up e-mail provided project information. |
| | Support for the Proposed Project, and would have preferred a formal presentation during the scoping meeting. | Comment noted; follow-up phone call with the commenter was conducted by project representatives. |
| | Bureau of Land Management (BLM) appreciates the opportunity to review and provide comments on the project, but that the agency does not have expertise or information relevant to the project. | Comment noted. |
| | Appreciated the meeting, found it interesting. | Comment noted. |
| | <i>South Dakota Mail</i> representative requested scoping meeting notice to be included in the local newspaper. | Comment noted and notice was included in <i>South Dakota Mail</i> . |
| | Request information regarding the scoping meetings. | Comment noted, information provided. |
| Section 106 process | Are government agencies participating in Government-to-Government discussions with local Native American Tribes? | Follow-up discussion with the commenter was conducted by project representatives. Comment noted; the lead agencies have initiated the Government-to-Government consultations. |
| | Concern about notification to tribes regarding the scoping meetings. | Tribes were notified of the EIS scoping meetings in a letter dated April 13, 2009; Government-to-Government consultation will continue through the Section 106 process; tribal meetings began in August 2009. |
| | Northern Arapahoe Tribal Consultants offered archaeological services for the Proposed Project EIS analysis and Section 106. | Comment noted. |
| Visual resources | Provided information on the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail (NHT); requested that the EIS include analysis of the potential visual resource effects for both the Proposed Project alternatives in regards to the Lewis and Clark NHT. | Comment will be addressed in the EIS. |

South Dakota PrairieWinds Environmental Impact Statement Scoping Comment Summary

| Issue | Comment | Treatment / Response |
|----------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| Water resources | Clearly describe water bodies within the analysis area which may be impacted by project activities; analysis of area's geology, topography, soils and stream stability may be necessary. | Comment will be addressed in the EIS. |
| | Provide information on Clean Water Act (CWA) Section 303(d) impaired waters in project area, if any. | Comment will be addressed in the EIS. |
| Wetlands / riparian areas | Identify potential wetlands both jurisdictional and non-jurisdictional, potential impacts, and least damaging practicable alternative for avoiding wetlands. | Comment will be addressed in the EIS. |