



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

B0401.BL

JUL 15 2005



Commissioners
c/o Ilonna Jeffcoat-Sacco
Executive Secretary
ND Public Service Commission
600 E. Blvd
Bismarck, ND 58505-0480

Dear Commissioners:

With this letter, we invite you to become a cooperating agency in the environmental assessment (EA) process for the Burleigh County Wind Energy Project (Project). Western Area Power Administration (Western), a power marketing agency within the U.S. Department of Energy, has received a request for interconnection for the Project.

FPL Energy Burleigh County Wind, L.L.C. (Burleigh County Wind) proposes to construct a wind generation facility with an output of no more than 50 megawatts (MW), averaged annually, and approximately 4.4 miles of 230-kilovolt (kV) transmission line. The proposed Project is located in Burleigh County, North Dakota, and consists of no more than 66 wind turbines. The proposed 230-kV transmission line and associated structures, equipment, and facilities would be constructed, owned, and operated by Central Power Electric Cooperative, Inc. The new transmission line would run west from the proposed Burleigh County Wind Collector Substation and interconnect to the Western/Basin Electric Power Cooperative/Heartland Consumers Power District Integrated System (IS) at Western's existing Garrison-Bismarck 230-kV transmission line, located 3 miles south of the town of Wilton, North Dakota, near State Highway 83.

The interconnection application triggers a National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) review process of the Project. Western is the lead Federal agency for the preparation of an EA for this proposed Project and will be the lead agency for consultations with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service under section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, the North Dakota State Historic Preservation Office, under section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, tribes, and other interested parties.

The Council on Environmental Quality NEPA Implementing Regulations (40 CFR part 1506.2) require Federal agencies to cooperate with state and local agencies to the fullest extent possible to reduce duplication between NEPA and state and local

permitting requirements. We invite you to become a cooperating agency to ensure that all your requirements are appropriately addressed in the EA. The benefits of becoming a cooperating agency include disclosure of relevant information early in the EA process and establishment of a mechanism to address any intergovernmental issues. Should you decide not to become a formal cooperating agency for the EA, we will still continue to keep your agency informed of Project developments and you will receive the draft EA for pre-approval review. Any concerns or comments you provide to us during the NEPA process will be fully considered in finalizing the EA and Finding of No Significant Impact, if no significant impacts are found. We anticipate the draft EA for pre-approval review will be distributed at the end of July.

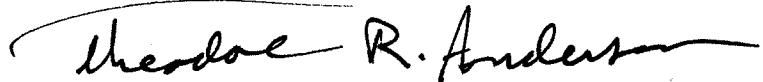
We are available to discuss the proposed Project and your participation. If you would like to be a cooperating agency or if have any questions, please contact either of the following individuals.

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We look forward to hearing from you in regards to the proposed Project.

Sincerely,



for Nicholas J. Stas
Environmental Manager