

North Dakota Public Service Commission

DE-OE0000151

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Progress Report for October 1, 2011 – December 31, 2011

January 30, 2012

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY NATIONAL ENERGY TECHNOLOGY LABORATORY State Electricity Regulators Assistance Grant

1. Accomplishments with the Goal and Objectives:

The ARRA supported Public Utility Analyst, has been researching and writing a document on wind energy conversion siting factors to include: siting authorities in each state, siting thresholds, and best practices for setbacks, sound, shadow flicker, and other items related to wind turbines.

The ARRA supported Public Utility Analyst is looking into annual lease payments for transmission lines, apparently there has been testimony at siting hearings where landowners are unhappy with the lump sum payment option.

The ARRA supported Public Utility Analyst has been invited to the North Dakota Association of Counties annual convention in October, 2011 and is preparing a booth and presentation on wind energy conversion facilities and electric transmission.

Siting rule revisions are ongoing. These revisions include necessary changes due to changes in legislation and additional changes that need to be made to make the rules more practical and efficient for energy conversion and transmission facility siting. Initial rule drafts for energy efficiency and demand side management programs have been completed and the rulemaking process is and will continue to be ongoing.

The ARRA supported Public Utility Analyst continues to serve as a point of contact for local officials and has provided guidance and review to local government units that are drafting electrical energy regulations. The staff member continues to serve on a task force of industry and government entities who are revising siting rules for the State of North Dakota.

The Public Utilities Division has increased its efforts to train staff in electric matters as time permits.

2. Discussion of Accomplishments:

3. Cost Status:

The cost to this point has primarily been wage and benefits, and operating expenses related to the one position and the Transmission Conference mentioned above. The approximate cost incurred through June 30, 2011 is \$149,857.

4. **Schedule Status:**

The ND Public Service Commission is on schedule.

5. **Significant Changes:**

As stated in previous quarterly reports the commission has decided to not fill the two remaining positions authorized under the grant. Given the temporary nature of this grant and the unlikelihood that state funding could be procured for extending the positions, there was little reason to fill the positions as initially proposed.

The Commission requested and has been authorized to extend the grant period for one additional year ending December 31, 2013 and reducing the grant amount initially requested.

6. **Problems or Delays:**

See above discussion.

7. **Personnel Updates:**

See above discussion.

8. **Product or Technology Production:**

None