

North Dakota Public Service Commission

DE-OE0000151

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Progress Report for July 1, 2012 – September 30, 2012
October 13, 2012

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

1. Accomplishments with the Goal and Objectives:

The siting rules revisions prepared by the ARRA funded Public Utility Analyst was sponsored by staff at the Commission's rules hearing on July 12, 2012, with no objections from other witnesses or by commissioners. The revisions were a collaborative effort with all major stakeholders in the state. The revisions to existing rules were long overdue and made possible through this fund. The new rule is being reviewed by the Attorney General's Office and will not become effective until after legislative approval to occur no earlier than December 15, 2012.

The ARRA analyst assisted with the review and writing of the proposed order in case number PU-12-24, Otter Tail Power Company's 2012 Renewable Resource Cost Recovery Adjustment Factor.

The ARRA analyst developed a worksheet with critical information concerning all producing wind farms in the state including, names, owners, locations, sizes, in-service dates, current contact information for plant operators, power point charts for presentations etc.

The ARRA analyst proposed rule revisions to eliminate the master meter rules prohibiting master meters for electric applications. The rule prohibiting the installation of electric meters included an exception clause that made overcoming the prohibition quite easy. As a result, the current rule created an administrative burden and little substance. The new rule is being reviewed by the Attorney General's Office and will not become effective until after legislative approval to occur no earlier than December 15, 2012.

The ARRA analyst proposed a rule to require that utilities regulated by the commission respond to interrogatories within 10 business days rather than the 30 days allowed by the North Dakota Rules of Civil Procedure. There was no opposition to the rule and it is being reviewed by the Attorney General's Office and will not become effective until after legislative approval to occur no earlier than December 15, 2012.

2. **Discussion of Accomplishments:**

3. **Cost Status:**

The cost incurred through September 30, 2012 is \$290,070.

ARRA Budget

	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Expenditure</u>	<u>Budget to Date</u>
Personnel	\$189,068	\$137,885	\$51,183
Fringe Benefits	44,005	32,446	11,559
Travel	49,450	34,228	15,222
Supplies	4,000	2,218	1,782
Other	56,328	23,936	32,392
Indirect cost	<u>81,359</u>	<u>59,356</u>	<u>22,003</u>
Totals	\$424,210	\$290,070	\$134,141

4. **Schedule Status:**

The ND Public Service Commission is on schedule.

5. **Significant Changes:**

The ARRA utility analyst submitted her resignation effective June 1, 2012. The commission has decided to not fill this position along with 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 is little reason to fill the positions.

The Commission requested and has been authorized to extend the grant period for one additional year ending December 31, 2012 and reducing the grant amount initially requested.

The commission does not anticipate spending much of the remaining grant amount. Any further expenditures from now until the end of the year will be geared towards continuing education of its staff.

6. **Problems or Delays:**

See above discussion.

7. **Personnel Updates:**

See above discussion.

8. **Product or Technology Production:**

None