



Executive Secretary
North Dakota Public Service Commission
600 E. Boulevard, Dept. 408
Bismarck, ND 58505

January 14, 2020

Dear Commissioners:

As you know, Basin Electric Power Cooperative (**Basin Electric or Basin**) is a regional, consumer-owned, generation and transmission cooperative formed in 1961 to supply supplemental power to a consortium of rural electric distribution cooperatives. Basin Electric's core business is generating and delivering electricity to wholesale customers, primarily our member systems. As of 2019, Basin Electric operates 7,051 MW of electric generating capacity including coal, wind, natural gas, and nuclear. Basin Electric supplies 141 rural electric member cooperative systems with wholesale electric power who in turn serve approximately 3 million consumers in a nine-state area.

The purpose of this letter is to provide an update on Basin Electric's compliance with North Dakota Administrative Code Chapter 69-06-11-Wind Energy Conversion Facility Lighting Systems. This rule would retroactively apply to the PrairieWinds ND 1 owned by Basin Electric located south of Minot. This project went online in late 2009 and consists of 77 turbines that generate approximately 120 MW of wind energy. The deadline for compliance for PrairieWinds ND 1 as directed under the administrative rules would be December 31, 2021.

Since 2017, Basin Electric staff have been in the process of gathering information for the possible installation of the Aircraft Detection Lighting System. Basin has spent considerable effort researching potential technology solutions and investigating how they may integrate into PrairieWinds ND1. Basin staff has reached out to multiple vendors and others in the industry to gain as much understanding as possible on the current technologies. This work will enable Basin to install a system as quickly and efficiently as possible, if and when a permit from the Federal Aviation Administration is received.

As you also know, further complicating this process for Basin Electric is the fact that the PrairieWinds ND 1 project surrounds a ballistic missile command center that includes a helicopter pad, and is within close proximity to the Minot Air Force Base (MAFB), therefore changing the lighting system on this project also requires approval from the U.S. Air Force (USAF).

The following contacts have been made to date with the MAFB:

July 31, 2019 - Basin sent a letter to the MAFB requesting a meeting to discuss a potential lighting change.

Aug 5, 2019 - Basin received a call from MAFB officials indicating the letter was received and a response would be available after review of the issue.

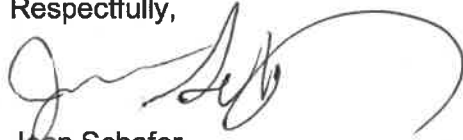
Oct. 1, 2019 - Basin staff contacted USAF attorney Mike Toomer. All requested information was sent to Lt Col. Toomer. Lt. Col. Toomer indicated that the USAF was working on a global solution and would not be making determinations on a per project basis. Basin was instructed to wait for further direction from the MAFB.

Currently, approval of this technology for PraireWinds 1 now rests with the USAF and would be submitted to the FAA following that determination. If the USAF does not approve the installation of this technology it is very likely that the FAA will not approve it as well. Basin will continue to engage the MAFB on this issue.

Basin Electric owns two small wind projects- Minot Wind (known as Willy and Wally), which consists of two 1.3-MW turbines, and Minot Wind 2 which consists of three 1.5 MW turbines, with a separate interconnection into Verendrye Electric's distribution system. Both projects would be eligible for a waiver under 69-06-11-02 (3) as they are not capable of generating more than 5 MW. Once Basin Electric has further direction and resolution from the MAFB, Basin Electric will provide further information to the Commission on Basin Electric's compliance with North Dakota Administrative Code Chapter 69-06-11 for these small projects.

Basin Electric appreciates the opportunity to provide a status update and welcomes additional dialogue and conversations with the Commission regarding this and any other administrative issues.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jean Schafer', with a large, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Jean Schafer
Senior Legislative Representative