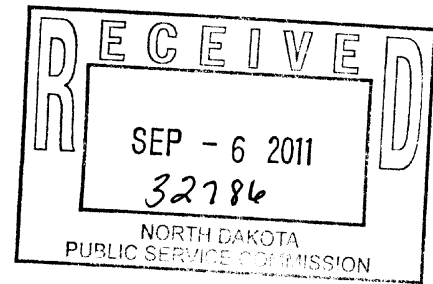


August 31, 2011



North Dakota Public Service Commission
600 East Boulevard Ave., Dept. 408
Bismarck, ND 58505-0480

RE: South Heart Coal LLC Surface Coal Mining Permit No. SHSH -1001

Dear Public Service Commissioners:

We the undersigned are formally requesting that the North Dakota Public Service Commission (PSC) schedule an informal public hearing in Fargo, ND concerning the request by South Heart Coal LLC for a surface mining permit application to mine coal near South Heart, ND. Although the PSC did hold an informal hearing on this mining permit application on June 28, 2011 in Dickinson, ND, this is an issue that affects the entire state of North Dakota.

Because of the potential negative impacts this project could have on Theodore Roosevelt National Park, North Dakotans in the eastern part of the state have a very real stake in the final decision regarding the project. Since the June 28th hearing was held during the work week and 300 miles from Fargo it was unreasonable to expect interested North Dakota citizens from the eastern half of the state would be able to attend without undue hardship. The opportunity exists to remedy this disenfranchisement from the process since the informal hearing process for the South Heart project is being held open until deficiencies in the permit application are corrected. The PSC should schedule an additional informal hearing in the Fargo area in order to assure that all North Dakotans have had an equal chance to fully comment on this important project. This in turn will aid the PSC in making an informed decision regarding the South Heart project.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Mark Trechock
Dakota Resource Council

Carrie La Seur
Plains Justice

Nathan Miller
National Parks Conservation Association

Wayde Schafer
Sierra Club

Mary Hodell
Neighbors United