

UPPER MISSOURI

POWER COOPERATIVE

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March 2, 2015

North Dakota Public Service Commission Hearing
Ernie French Center of North Dakota State University
14120 Highway 2
Williston, ND 58801

RE: Pioneer Generation Station Phase III

Commissioners: Brian P. Kalk, Julie Fedorchak & Randy Christmann

I am here to offer support of the Pioneer Generation Station Phase III Project (12 reciprocating internal combustion engine/generation systems) planned by Basin Electric Power Cooperative (Basin Electric).

Upper Missouri Power Cooperative (Upper Missouri) is a Class A Member System of Basin Electric. Upper Missouri provides transmission services to ten electric cooperatives; five in Western North Dakota and five in Eastern Montana. All ten of Upper Missouri's member cooperatives are experiencing electric load growth due to oil and gas exploration, discovery and development.

In 2014, Upper Missouri's reached a peak of 987 MW (more than the capacity of both Antelope Valley Station generators) and sold 5,927 GWhs of energy; 27% growth over 2013. Upper Missouri represented 24.6% of Basin Electric's member sales in 2014, and expects to represent 31% of Basin Electric's sales in 2015. Even as oil prices soften, the 2015 Load Forecast for Upper Missouri projects another 1,231 MW of growth over the next twenty years. We are still playing catch up; there is oil well growth, new pipeline load and continued gas plant expansion to address flaring.

Growth continues and new generation and transmission is needed to provide reliable energy for the security, safety and comfort of business, industry, ranchers, farmers and residents of the region. The addition of incremental generation protects the reliability of the electric system, while avoiding potential overbuilding of assets.

Upper Missouri strongly supports the development and expeditious construction of this vital generation project.

Sincerely,

/s/

Claire Vigesaa

Attachment: 2015 Upper Missouri Power Cooperative Load Forecast

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Exhibit UM1

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