



ENVIRONMENTAL & STATISTICAL CONSULTANTS

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MEETING NOTES

SUBJECT: Potential grassland and wetland impacts and mitigation	
PROJECT: Aurora Wind Project	MEETING LOCATION: NDGFD Office
MEETING DATE: January 22, 2019	NOTES BY: K. Moratz and C. Derby

ATTENDEES

Steve Dyke, NDGFD
Elisha Mueller, NDGFD
Sandy Johnson, NDGFD
Jennifer Dean, Aurora

Dave Iadarola, Aurora (by phone)
Clayton Derby, WEST
Katherine Moratz, WEST

TOPICS DISCUSSED

Project Overview

Jennifer Dean, Aurora Wind Project, LLC (Aurora) provided a brief update on the Aurora Wind Project (Project). Aurora thanked North Dakota Game and Fish Department (NDGFD) for their letter from January, 2018. Based on survey results and analysis, Aurora continues to work towards minimizing impacts to wildlife. A Public Service Commission (PSC) hearing date has been set for February 25, 2019.

Grasslands

Aurora has taken steps to reduce the number of turbines on unbroken grasslands within the Project boundary. In the turbine array provided to NDGFD in October 2018 there were approximately 9-10 turbines in unbroken grasslands; however, Aurora has since conducted further micrositing and have reduced that number to approximately 6 turbines on unbroken grasslands owned by North Dakota Department of Trust Lands (NDDTL). NDGFD was encouraged that changes were still possible and was aware of the turbines on NDDTL property. Aurora noted that the turbines on NDDTL property were pushed to the edge while maintaining North Dakota Public Service Commission and Williams County setbacks to reduce potential impacts.

The group discussed general options and concepts for a voluntary offset effort and how as well as where to invest any funds. NDGFD stated that unbroken grassland impacts are a priority in North Dakota and that Aurora should consider using 55% of the impacted unbroken grassland acres as a starting point for calculating the grassland offset package. The North Dakota Natural Resources Trust may be an option as an entity for working with Aurora in the voluntary offset package.

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Wetlands

Wetland offsets were discussed in relation to potential wetland impacts and duck displacement. NDGFD indicated that Loesch's GIS tools for waterfowl displacement should be consulted for the best available science. Aurora expressed some concern about the final dollar amount that could potentially be calculated from the current formulas. Again, NDGFD stated there was room for improvement in the current formula and encouraged Aurora to use it as a starting point for offset calculations. NDGFD also indicated that combining grassland and wetland offset final dollar amounts would be acceptable.

Aurora indicated it would not be able present a company-approved voluntary offset package before the February 25th PSC hearing; however, Aurora hopes to meet with the North Dakota Natural Resources Trust in the next 30 days to explore that avenue as a potential recipient to any designated offset package.