1707 North 9th Street
PO Box 5523
Bismarck, ND 58506-5523
Phone: (701) 328 – 2800
Fax: (701) 328 – 3650

https://land.nd.gov

DEPARTMENT OF
ND TRUST LANDS
INVESTING FOR EDUCATION

Jodi A. Smith, Commissioner

February 7, 2019

RECEIVED
FEB 11 2019
NORTH DAKOTA
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

ND PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
600 E BOULEVARD AVE
BISMARCK ND 58505-0480

RE: PROPOSED AURORA WIND PROJECT, LLC (CASE NO. PU-18-351 AND PU-18-352) ON ND SCHOOL TRUST LAND (ROW#7930) IN WILLIAMS COUNTY:
Township 158 North, Range 96 West Section 16: E½ and Section 36: N½
Township 158 North, Range 97 West Section 16: NE¼
Township 159 North, Range 97 West Section 16: ALL and Section 36: S½

Dear Commissioners:

Aurora Wind Project, LLC has proposed to include North Dakota School Trust Lands (Trust Lands) within its pending request to the North Dakota Public Service Commission (NDPSC) for a wind farm permit for the proposed Aurora Wind Farm, in Williams County, which was authorized by the Board of University and School Lands (Board). The primary responsibility of the North Dakota Department of Trust Lands (NDDTL) is to manage the permanent educational trust funds and assets under the control of the Board, as outlined in the North Dakota Constitution. These assets include 1.8 million mineral acres and 631,805 surface acres that are managed to provide revenue to schools (grades K-12) through the Common Schools Trust Fund.

In September of 2018, Tradewind Energy, Inc. and NDDTL surface division staff met in the field to site turbine locations, access roads, wind collector line locations, permanent power performance tower and wind electric transmission line locations. Although the Trust Lands tracts within the proposed Aurora Wind Farm are unbroken grassland, these grassland tracts are positioned in a fragmented landscape (non-contiguous grassland) surrounded by cropland. The siting of the proposed wind farm infrastructure was conducted in a manner to address NDDTL's concerns and minimize potential environmental impacts, while maximizing NDDTL's ability to generate revenue for the Trust.

Although NDDTL is in preliminary negotiations with Aurora Wind Project, LLC, no agreement has been reached. The Board prefers to wait until all local and state approvals have been granted before completing easement negotiations and therefore, has not considered any request for approval. NDDTL is authorized to negotiate with Aurora Wind Project, LLC. and submit a recommended easement and terms for Board consideration should the NDPSC approve the project.

Please contact me at (701) 328-2800 or Michael Humann at mhumann@nd.gov, if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Jodi Smith

Jodi Smith,
Commissioner of University and School Lands

60 PU-18-352 Filed 02/22/2019 Pages: 1
Copy of North Dakota Department of Trust Lands Correspondence
Aurora Wind Project, LLC

cc: Dave Iadarola
Tradewind Energy, Inc.
16105 West 113th Street, Suite 105
Lenexa, Kansas 66219

60 PU-18-351 Filed 02/22/2019 Pages: 1
Copy of North Dakota Department of Trust Lands Correspondence
Aurora Wind Project, LLC