

Hamre, John G.

From: Eberl, Stacy L.
Sent: Monday, April 27, 2020 1:22 PM
To: Hamre, John G.
Subject: FW: Northern Divide Wind Project (PU-19-376) and Transmission Line (PU-19-377)

John, please docket the comments below for PU-19-376 and PU-19-377. Thanks!

From: Tony <tony@jarikuma.com>
Sent: Monday, April 27, 2020 12:10 PM
To: -Info-Public Service Commission <ndpsc@nd.gov>
Subject: Northern Divide Wind Project (PU-19-376) and Transmission Line (PU-19-377)

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REF: Northern Divide Wind Project (PU-19-376) and Transmission Line (PU-19-377)

Dear Commissioners,

First, please accept my heartfelt thank you for your service. I'll be forever impressed with the careful unwavering consideration and attention you have all invested throughout the proceedings around our wind development opportunities.

I am Tony Pandolfo, and I reside in Bowbells, Burke County, ND.

I have the honor of being the Mayor of Bowbells, as such, I have a seat on Burke County Planning and Zoning Committee and a seat on Souris Basin Planning Council. I have lived in Bowbells since 1984, and have farmed, ranched and lived in this area all of my life. I do not own land or property directly affected by Northern Divide Wind and do not stand to gain directly in any way from it. I am addressing the Commission on my own behalf, not in representation of any of the above entities.

I am now and always have been in favor in the development of wind energy in Burke County. I do not claim to have a full understanding of the USA federal policy incentives that are obviously key to the recent growth of the wind industry. But we in Burke County and North Dakota should accept where we are in the fray and accept the things we cannot change and manage to our best ability those for which we can participate in, which is why we are in this discussion today.

As a member of Burke County Planning and Zoning (BCPZ) I participated in the writing of our revised Comprehensive Land Use Plan – which did envision and accommodate wind energy development – which was then adopted by the Burke County Commission in 2017. As member of BCPZ, I motioned and voted in favor of NextEra's first Burke County wind project application, Burke Wind LLC, which was approved by Burke County Commission, and, as you know, denied by PSC. I also motioned and voted in favor of the present revised NextEra project, Northern Divide Wind, which also has been approved by Burke County Commission and is now before you.

For me, land owners' rights are my first concern. I do not know of one land owner who does not hold the best interests of their land and family first in their mind. This includes the interests the community in which they live. To maintain the land requires both proper stewardship and sound financial and economic judgement. Stewardship considerations, among other things, include present and future effects on the environment and productive capacity of the land. I do not see the wind farm development as creating an unmanageable impact on the environment or land productivity.

Specifically regarding habitat for birds and game animals – from my own land ownership experience, I've seen bird populations and flight patterns change markedly with no influence from energy development at all, and in discussions with land owners with wind development I've never heard one say the birds and game animals have been forced to stay away or move out.

Regarding watershed and erosion control problems from the road and site construction – I have direct experience since the late 1960's with oil development in this area. I'll be first to admit that the early oil developers had little or no consideration for how much of a mess they left in their wake. I also have direct experience now that current developers do, and must, practice and adhere to the strictest environmental controls or they cannot exist. With all of the information, technology, communication, equipment and regulation available and in force in the construction and operation of any developments today, I'm confident the likelihood of repeating the mistakes of the past need not be a concern. I have personally talked to a number of North Dakota landowners who have wind development, some have NextEra wind development, and all express very high respect for the construction and reclamation practices they've seen, and ongoing relations they've had, regarding their wind developments.

Regarding economic considerations, the benefits of gaining any long term revenue source to a business of any kind must be considered, and weighed against current and long term costs. These are both personal and community benefits and costs. I don't think I need to preach about how any NET enhanced economic activity and financial resources can benefit a family or community. I do consider wind development in Burke County as a NET enhancement. I have discussed with others in wind developed communities regarding the true economic benefit they've experienced from it, and have yet to hear from any that the economic results are anything other than positive.

I can hear and understand the views of the opposition to this wind development, some regrettably will bear more of the physical burden of being in close proximity to the wind towers than I or a lot of others, and I hope they are able to achieve some level of comfort or accommodation to alleviate that. But I also wish to state I have not heard any alternate options for Burke County from any source that might bring the kind of net gain, financially or otherwise, to our communities that this wind development will.

I feel that with local economic gain comes greater local control and the ability and the voice to direct our own destiny. Today we are experiencing truly tumultuous times with the double whammy of COVID-19 and the aftermath on our energy industry that the Saudis and Russia have added to the calamity. We are also reliant on the global economy and at the mercy of global politics, both of which are showing us presently how little control we have in some respects. We have the good fortune of being in North Dakota. We have energy, lots of it – and a diversity of sources of energy, a net clean source to North Dakota, in particular, I think is a good thing. And we have a very strong economic base on our own to the point which most other cities and states cannot compare. And we can feed ourselves. I'm of the opinion, that to stay strong and maintain as much control of our destiny as possible, we must not only keep up, but grow and diversify.

I see I'm well over one page in my response, so I'm losing impact. To close, I always remember the response in the late 1980's in this a region when the mind trusts of the population centers were proposing the "Buffalo Commons" approach. That nothing out here in the Midwest amounts to much anyway, so it should just be let to go back to its native state and carry on.

I guess we could have tried to find a way to survive in New York or Chicago or Los Angeles or Seattle. But I'm glad I'm in Burke County

I know and trust you will all follow your sound judgement in deciding our wind development future.

Best regards,

Tony Pandolfo



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