

MONTANA-DAKOTA UTILITIES CO.

Before the Public Service Commission of North Dakota

Case No. PU-25-____

Direct Testimony
of
Joseph E. Geiger

1 **Q. Please state your name and business address.**

2 A. My name is Joseph E. Geiger and my business address is 400
3 North Fourth Street, Bismarck, North Dakota 58501.

4 **Q. By whom are you employed and in what capacity?**

5 A. I am the Director of Generation in the power production department
6 of Montana-Dakota Utilities Co. (Montana-Dakota).

7 **Q. Please describe your duties and responsibilities with Montana-**
8 **Dakota.**

9 A. I have overall responsibility for the day-to-day operation of
10 Montana-Dakota's electric generation facilities, represent Montana-
11 Dakota's interests in joint owned generation facilities operated by other
12 companies, and I am also responsible for new generation development.

13 **Q. Please outline your educational and professional background.**

14 A. I hold a Bachelor's Degree in Electrical Engineering from the
15 University of North Dakota. My work experience includes six years of
16 experience as a plant engineer, nine years of experience in varying roles
17 of plant supervision/management, and five years of generation

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Montana-Dakota Utilities Co.

1 development and operational responsibilities in my current position which
2 includes coal-fired, gas-fired, and renewable generation.

3 **Q. What is the purpose of your testimony in this proceeding?**

4 A. I provide support for the Company's request for an Advance
5 Determination of Prudence for its purchase of a 49% undivided interest
6 in the Badger Wind Project (Project) as a generation resource for the
7 Company's integrated electric system, specifically providing a general
8 project overview along with purchase and ownership structures.

9 **Q. Please describe the Badger Wind Project.**

10 A. Badger Wind is a fully permitted and sited wind project located in
11 Logan and McIntosh Counties, in south-central North Dakota, adjacent to
12 the western side of the City of Wishek under a Certificate of Site
13 Compatibility issued by this Commission in Case No. PU-22-086. The
14 siting certificate was amended in Case No. PU-24-087 to reflect an
15 increase in the number of turbines and the reduced turbine size which
16 allows for a maximum of 262.62 megawatts (MW) of installed generation
17 capacity. It should be noted the generator interconnection agreement
18 limits the total project output onto the grid of 250 MWs. The additional
19 turbine MWs are installed to account for electric losses within the project
20 and turbine outages.

21 The Project will consist of 92 General Electric (GE) 2.82-127 (2.82
22 MW) wind turbines with an 89-meter hub height and an estimated capacity
23 factor of 52 percent. The Project will interconnect via an approximately
24 0.25-mile transmission line extending from the project substation to the

1 Wishek Junction 230 kilovolt (kV) Substation owned by Montana-Dakota,
2 providing up to 250 MW to the grid per the interconnect request. The
3 Project has all of the necessary land agreements and interconnection
4 rights to accommodate a project with a total size of 250 MW.

5 The Project will require new gravel access roads and improvement
6 to existing roads, a collector substation, underground collection and
7 communication lines, up to three meteorological towers, an ADLS light
8 mitigation system, and an O&M facility. The Project is projected to have a
9 35-year life. The long life can be attributed to GE provided extreme cold
10 weather packages, blade protection, corrosion protection, and an
11 extended-life design package. The extended-life design package provides
12 guidance and additional action to take related to component inspection,
13 maintenance or replacement recommendations to reach the extended life
14 period.

15 **Q. Can you describe the full-service agreement (FSA) included in the**
16 **purchase option for the Badger Wind Project?**

17 A. The FSA is a long-term agreement with the turbine manufacturer
18 which includes all maintenance and replacement parts over the term of the
19 agreement, excluding events of force majeure, along with an annual
20 availability guarantee for the associated performance of the Project. The
21 FSA arrangement reduces the unknown cost of future maintenance
22 including major maintenance costs and components. Montana-Dakota will
23 still be responsible for additional maintenance costs associated with force
24 majeure events.

1 At the end of the FSA with the turbine manufacturer the Project
2 owners will either self-perform the operation and maintenance functions or
3 contract with a third party.

4 **Q. What is the status of the Project's major contracts and agreements?**

5 A. Badger Wind, LLC has secured wind turbines from GE for the
6 Project and is working under a limited notice to proceed with a contractor
7 who will perform all of the civil, mechanical, electrical, and commissioning
8 work for the Project. The Project schedule is to have full general contract
9 agreement in place by spring so that civil work and construction can
10 continue.

11 All of the Project lease agreements are in place as well as the
12 interconnection agreement with MISO.

13 **Q. What is the construction schedule for the Project?**

14 A. The Project began in 2024 under the limited notice to proceed with
15 the general contractor and the project is expected meet a December 1,
16 2025 Commercial Operation Date.

17 **Q. Please describe the local benefits of the Project.**

18 A. Overall, Badger Wind Project is expected to provide annual
19 landowner lease payments of approximately \$2,000,000 and generation
20 production tax payments of approximately \$1,200,000.

21 **Q. Does this conclude your direct testimony?**

22 A. Yes, it does.