

March 6, 2009

TO: Parties to the case of Buffalo Ridge II, S.D. P.U.C filing docket # EL08-031.

FROM: Ralph Terrell Spence and Catherine D. Carter, parties to the above case.
Residents of Argo Township (part of Section 11), Brookings County, S.D.

RE: Concerns and questions regarding the proposed Buffalo Ridge II project.

We believe that the development of alternative energy resources is essential to the future. At the same time, we hope that all factors in the physical development of those resources are given due consideration, e.g. the environment, wildlife, interests of the developer, public benefit, effect on people who live in the development area, etc. It is the trade-offs in balancing those factors that come most into play when people living in the area of a development have concerns with the development.

It is good that entities such as the Public Utilities Commission exist and have expertise to review and help mitigate concerns that might arise in balancing all of the interests that are involved with a development proposal such as Buffalo Ridge II.

Our relationship to the Buffalo Ridge II case is that we will be directly affected by some of the wind turbines that are proposed to be erected directly to the south of our acreage and appear to be at or close to the minimum distance of 1000 feet from us. We do not own the property where the proposed turbines would be located. The proposed design also shows turbines to be erected to our northwest, north, northeast, and east though not as close as the ones to the south. We would be left with a small unencumbered sight window to our southwest as would be our neighbor across the road.

We purchased and moved to our small acreage and residence over 19 years ago. We have improved the property and enjoy the attributes of our home and the surrounding shared environment.

While we have concerns with over-saturation of wind farms in this area of eastern South Dakota, we will try to limit our comments to our more immediate situation which may also have implications for other people who live in the proposed area of Buffalo Ridge II.

From our point of view, we will be making a major sacrifice in our environmental quality of life should the turbines appear along the south border of our property. We are referring to sight/visual incursion/pollution, night light incursion/pollution, and sound pollution. These are things of intrinsic value to which one cannot apply a dollar amount. The other turbines near us would have some impact as well but not nearly so much as those to our south. Yes, we are trying to protect our self-interests to the degree that we can, as we think most residence owners would.

We have examined the map layouts submitted by the developer and are wondering why a map layout showing the proximity of residences relative to turbines and other structures was not included. Perhaps this was done but not published.

In our immediate “neighborhood”, by examining the Argo Township Directory map, it can be seen that a minimum of 6 residences are affected by the turbines proposed to be at our south. There is also one additional occupied residence of some years not shown on the directory map.

We suggest that the turbines to our south in Section 11 of Argo Township go instead into Section 12, directly to our east. There are already turbines proposed to go in at the north and south borders of Section 12 and there appears to be room to shift the 5 turbines proposed for Section 11 eastward to the middle of Section 12. There are no residences in section 12 or 13 and no residences would be further affected any more than they already are by the developer’s proposed design. There may well be other similar instances in the developer’s proposed placement design for Buffalo Ridge II.

Also, we wonder why placement of the 5 turbines to our south and going east, were placed substantially closer to us than our next neighbor to the south. It seems that splitting the distance between the two of us would be the equitable thing to do. Topography doesn’t seem to be a factor on the surface but we don’t have the expertise to make that determination.

In summary, while we do not look forward to seeing our area of beautiful shared environment (the edge of the Couteau Plateau) occupied with wind turbines, we do recognize the need for alternative energy resources, however, we ask that our proposal of shifting the 5 wind turbines from Section 11 of Argo Township to the middle of Section 12 be taken into consideration and request a response to this proposal from appropriate parties.

Thank you,

Ralph Terrell Spence and Catherine D. Carter
19714 – 476th Ave.
Toronto, SD 57268

Brookings County, SD
Argo Township, Section 11 (portion)