



Spearfish
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
"IMPROVING LIVES BY CREATING ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES"

May 27, 2011

Dear Commissioner Hanson:

By way of introduction, my name is Bryan Walker, Executive Director of Spearfish Economic Development Corporation (SEDC). I am submitting this letter in support of the Black Hills Power Wind Project which is proposed to be built north of Belle Fourche. Wind is a proven source of renewable energy that can play a critical role in diversifying Western South Dakota's power portfolio and will help grow our region's economy.

No single energy source can alone meet the nation's electricity needs, however wind is making a real and steadily growing contribution to our electricity supply, already powering the equivalent of 9.7 million American homes. South Dakota boasts some of the best wind resources in the country with enough accessible kinetic energy to produce 1,030 billion kilowatts of electricity annually. As a state, we need to support policies which encourage companies like Black Hills Power to harvest this potential and utilize this resource to our advantage.

Beyond the environmental benefits of wind energy, wind energy presents an enormous economic opportunity for the Northern Black Hills region. Today, over 400 American manufacturing plants build wind components, towers and blades. In South Dakota alone, there are over 30 manufacturing companies which produce products for the wind industry. These companies provide good quality, high-paying jobs for hundreds of families in rural communities throughout the state.

Over the years, Black Hills Power has been committed to providing safe, reliable and affordable energy to customers throughout the region. They have also demonstrated unbridled support for economic development and have always been a leader in corporate social responsibility.

I welcome the wind power project being proposed by Black Hills Power and would encourage the Public Utility Commission to favorably support this project.

Thank you for this opportunity.

Sincerely,

Bryan K Walker