



**Department of Energy**  
 Western Area Power Administration  
 Upper Great Plains Customer Service Region  
 P.O. Box 35800  
 Billings, MT 59107-5800

**RECEIVED**

**JUN 22 2015**

**SOUTH DAKOTA PUBLIC  
 UTILITIES COMMISSION**

**JUN 17 2015**

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Dear Customers and Interested Parties:

The Western Area Power Administration (Western), a power-marketing agency of the Department of Energy, has received a request from Wind Quarry LLC to interconnect the proposed Willow Creek Wind Project (Project) with Western's Maurine-Rapid City 115-kV Transmission Line. Western is announcing the scoping period for the Project Environmental Assessment (EA). The Project involves the potential construction of an approximate 103-MW wind farm generating facility that includes up to 45 turbines, an underground power collection system, substation, access roads, and a maintenance and operation center. The Project will be located approximately ten miles northeast of Newell in Butte County, South Dakota. The 39,000 acre wind farm site legal description includes parts of:

County	Township	Range	Sections
Butte	10 N	7 E	1-4, 10-14
	10 N	8 E	5, 7-8
	11 N	7 E	15, 19-22, 26-28, 30, 32, 35

The location of the Project is reflected in the enclosed figure. The proposed Project would interconnect with Western's Maurine to Rapid City 115-kV Transmission Line within the Project boundary. Western is preparing an EA in order to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), which requires Western to take into account the environmental impacts that could result from an action. NEPA also requires that Federal agencies seek public input on proposed projects.

The wind farm is sited on private land holdings. The land does include Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) contract lands. Wind turbines are anticipated to be installed on land with CRP contracts. The land has traditionally been used for agricultural fields and cattle grazing and, except for the contracted CRP land, will continue as grazing lands and agricultural fields.

The scoping period provides an opportunity for the public and Federal, state, local agencies, and tribal governments to identify issues or alternatives that help define the scope of the EA. The public scoping period begins on July 8, 2015, and ends on August 7, 2015. One public scoping meeting will be held to provide an opportunity for the public to submit scoping comments on the proposal in person, and talk to staff working on the Project. The scoping meeting will be held on July 8, 2015, between 5:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. in the Multipurpose Room at the Newell School, 501 Dartmouth Avenue, Newell, SD 57760.

Comments will be accepted at the scoping meeting, by letter to me at the above address, by phone at (406) 255-2811 or by e-mailing me at [reuber@wapa.gov](mailto:reuber@wapa.gov). Please refer to the Willow Creek Wind Project in your correspondence. Send all comments by close of business August 7, 2015.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Micah K. Reuber". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Micah K. Reuber  
NEPA Coordinator

Enclosure

# 2013 BUTTE COUNTY SOUTH DAKOTA

Published by County-Wide Directory, L.L.C.® 1751 Beech Avenue, Larchwood, Iowa 51241  
(712) 477-2400 (800) 597-2035

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