

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA

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HP 22-002

IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION :
OF NAVIGATOR HEARTLAND :
GREENWAY, LLC FOR A PERMIT UNDER :
THE SOUTH DAKOTA ENERGY :
CONVERSION AND TRANSMISSION :
FACILITIES ACT TO CONSTRUCT THE :
HEARTLAND GREENWAY PIPELINE IN :
SOUTH DAKOTA, :

**DIRECT TESTIMONY OF
BRIAN BRINKMAN**

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1. Please state your name, business address, and present position.

Answer: My name is Brian Brinkman. My business address is One Valero Place, Aurora, South Dakota 57002. I am currently the Plant Manager for the Valero Aurora Plant, an ethanol plant located in Aurora, South Dakota and owned by Valero Renewable Fuels Company, LLC (“VRF”).

2. What are your duties and responsibilities as Plant Manager of the Valero Aurora Plant?

Answer: I oversee the daily operations and management of the ethanol plant.

3. For how long have you worked with VRF?

Answer: I have worked with VRF for 14 years, 10 of those years as the Plant Manager of the Valero Aurora Plant. I have 15 years of experience in the ethanol industry.

4. What is the business of the Valero Aurora Plant?

Answer: The Valero Aurora Plant makes ethanol using approximately 52 million bushels of corn bought from area farmers, a radius of about 60 miles from the plant.

5. What products are produced at the Valero Aurora Plant?

Answer: The Valero Aurora Plant produces fuel ethanol, as well as other products such as dried distillers grains and corn distillers oil. To produce these products, the Valero Aurora Plant grinds approximately 52 million bushels of corn per year.

6. What is the purpose of your direct testimony in this proceeding?

Answer: I am testifying in support of the request of Navigator Heartland Greenway LLC (“NHG”) to the South Dakota Public Utilities Commission (“PUC”) for a permit to construct a carbon dioxide transportation pipeline, the Heartland Greenway Pipeline (the “Pipeline”), in South Dakota. Specifically, I am testifying to inform the PUC why the Valero Aurora Plant support the Pipeline.

7. Why does the Valero Aurora Plant support the Pipeline?

Answer: Many low carbon programs measure the carbon intensity of transportation fuels. A carbon intensity score from a program typically represents the life cycle Greenhouse Gas emissions calculated for the transportation fuel and includes each step of the process, including those emissions associated with the fuel production. The Pipeline is a low carbon project that will lower the carbon intensity of the Valero Aurora Plant’s fuel ethanol production process by allowing carbon dioxide from the plant to be transported to a carbon sequestration site for permanent storage. This low carbon project results in an ethanol fuel product with a lower carbon intensity score. Low carbon intensity fuel products are desired both nationally and

internationally. Thus, every gallon produced at our plant becomes even more valuable, helping us to remain economically competitive.

8. Why does VRF believe that the Pipeline is good for South Dakota?


Answer: A thriving market for ethanol ensures a strong demand for corn, including the 52 million bushels we buy from area farmers each year. Since 2009, VRF has been committed to supporting the Brookings County area. VRF is proud to annually contribute \$125,000 to local charities, such as Brookings Backpack, Brookings County Food Pantry, Brookings County Mentoring Youth Program, and local fire departments. In addition, our employees contribute over 1,000 volunteer hours to some of these local causes, along with others in our area. Investments in carbon management technology, such as NHG's Pipeline, will help ensure that VRF can continue these valuable partnerships for years to come. With every gallon produced by the Valero Aurora Plant, VRF is working to bring that value back to the local rural communities that I, as well as the plant's average of 74 employees, call home.

9. Do you have a recommendation for the PUC?

Answer: Yes, I recommend that the PUC grant NHG's application for a permit to construct a carbon dioxide transmission pipeline.

10. Does this conclude your prepared direct testimony?

Answer: Yes, it does.

Signature: 
Brian Brinkman, Plant Manager
Valero Aurora Plant

Date: 5/25/23