



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

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FEB 05 2010

**SOUTH DAKOTA PUBLIC
UTILITIES COMMISSION**

Subject: Distribution of Draft Environmental Impact Statement, Deer Creek Station Energy Facility Project, Brookings County, South Dakota

Dear Interested Party:

The Western Area Power Administration (Western) has prepared a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on Basin Electric Power Cooperative's (Basin Electric) proposal to interconnect their proposed Deer Creek Station Energy Facility Project (Project) to Western's power system at the existing White Substation in Brookings County, South Dakota. Basin Electric is proposing to construct, own, operate, and maintain a 300-megawatt natural gas-fired, combined cycle generation facility, a 13.2-mile-long natural gas pipeline, two water wells and a 1.25-mile-long water pipeline, a 0.75-mile-long 345-kilovolt transmission line, and associated access roads and interconnection facilities near White, South Dakota. Enclosed is a copy or copies of the Draft on this proposed Project, in hard copy or CD form as you have requested. The Draft EIS is available for review at: <http://www.wapa.gov/transmission/deercreek.htm>

Western is very interested in any comments you might have on this proposed Project or the Draft EIS. Comments may be submitted by letter, e-mail, orally at public hearing scheduled in the proposed Project area, or in writing at that hearing. The public comment period will close at midnight on March 22, 2010. To ensure consideration, please submit your comments by that time. Comments received after the deadline will still be considered to the extent practicable.

Written comments may be mailed to:

Mr. Matt Marsh
NEPA Project Manager
Western Area Power Administration
Upper Great Plains Customer Service Region
P.O. Box 35800
Billings, MT 59107-5800

E-mail comments should be sent to: DeerCreekStationEIS@wapa.gov

A public hearing has been scheduled in White, South Dakota. The hearing will be preceded by an informal open house, where Western and Basin Electric representatives can answer your questions about the proposed Project. The formal hearing will be for the purpose of taking oral comments from interested parties. The place, time, and date for the public hearing is:

Thursday, February 25, 2010, 6-8 p.m.
McKnight Community Hall
228 West Main Street
White, SD

The informal open house will be from 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. with the formal hearing beginning at 7 p.m. and concluding about 8 p.m.

Thank you for your continued interest in this proposed Project. Your comments will help us focus on issues and concerns that are important to you, identify any inaccuracies or missing information, and prepare a complete and comprehensive Final EIS. It does not matter what method you choose to deliver your comments to us; all comments are considered equally regardless of format. Just take care that your comments reach us by midnight, March 22, 2010.

Sincerely,

The Deer Creek EIS Team

Enclosure