

September 12, 2017

Rodney A. Christman

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Clark SD 57225
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Re: CROCKER WIND FARM PROJECT

Dear Madam Chairperson and members of the SD Public Utility Commission,

My name is Rod Christman. I live and farm inside of the project area and I support the Crocker Wind Farm Project for many reasons, some of which include:

- Wind is a renewable, environmentally safe form of energy and reduces CO2 emissions (which have been proven to contribute to illnesses and death) creating cleaner air for us to breathe. It reduces overall water usage, (as compared to traditional energy sources), which means local water sources remain pure and clean to drink.
- We all like electricity! Wind is cost effective. I am a retired pipefitter-welder and have worked on power plants over 40 years. I can even envision the possibility of a combined cycle plant such as Deer Creek Station, (located near White SD), built in the area to aid in carrying the load when the wind doesn't blow. We also have Northern Border Pipe Line running through northern Clark County. Construction and maintenance provide more people to the area and good paying jobs.
- As a landowner, farmer and rancher, I look at the lease I signed with Geronimo as a cash crop which is **stable**. Bankers prefer that! The added crop and land values could keep farms in families for generations.
- The community benefits from this project cannot be ignored. Income to townships, our county and state will provide improvements beyond measure, including a huge tax relief. An added Community Fund, controlled by a board of **local** residents, will provide a guaranteed income to be used in various ways. Our schools will benefit not only through funding, but by increased enrollment.

Unfortunate repercussions have resulted from the illegal decision of our county commissioners to change the ordinance setback requirement in mid-stream of this wind project without reasoning or basis in fact. This issue is now in the court process. Geronimo offered to **double** the legally required setback of 1000 feet to 2000 feet. This meant asking local residents/landowners if they would be willing to drop turbines (and therefore sacrifice income). The offer wasn't even seriously considered. Eight turbines were dropped and one moved. Despite Geronimo's many, sincere efforts, there seems to be no satisfying the opposition to work together for the betterment of everyone.

The strongest local opponents have moved here in recent years and do not make their living off the land. They have done that elsewhere. Yet, they are trying to dictate how we, as landowners, farm and

secure our income sources! I have personally heard comments such as "I just don't want to look at them" and "we want to see the sunrises". I feel our community's and landowners' welfare, income and economic vitality is being sacrificed for the opponents' own personal preferences. Our private property rights are at stake!

Back in 2003, the county made a decision to set conditions requiring people interested in building a house in rural areas to sign an easement in order to protect rural landowners from the new homeowner attempting to limit the landowner's ability to use his rural property for income and agricultural purposes. The new home site owners signed agreements that they wouldn't attempt to stop us from using our land for legal purposes and they were made aware that there is dust, noise and other realities in the rural area that isn't always *perfect* just for their enjoyment! The county should be doing more to enforce these easements to protect rural landowner rights. This is **not** a residential area. These are working lands!

I am enclosing copies of Agricultural Easements from five of the opponents who signed with full knowledge they were moving to and/or building homes in an agricultural area. This easement is in accordance with the conditions set forth in the decision of Clark County, dated July 1, 2003.

I recently noticed a book entitled, "Pride in Our Hometowns", laying on a table in our local bank. The section, "Portraits of Clark, Growing Together" states that growing together is an important concept in the new millennium in NE South Dakota. **"Growing Together" is the Clark Area Mission Statement!** As regional centers get larger, the smaller, rural communities are faced with many tough challenges, especially in the economic sector. Let **us** fix that!

My thanks to each of you, commissioners, for your time and consideration. Please approve and welcome the Crocker Wind Farm Project for the benefit of Clark County.

Sincere regards,



Rodney A. Christman