

Thank you for coming!

I would like to read statements from 4 letters in the application, from Game Fish and Parks and the Fish and Wildlife Service.

Game Fish and Parks describes the wind farm area as: "Wetlands that form a dense chain of lakes in the ecoregion, increasing habitat and wildlife diversity." "The majority of the project lies within the Prairie Coteau ecoregion, and is unique to South Dakota. The hilly landscape has abundant, semi-permanent wetlands."

"The Prairie Pot Hole region, is a major waterfowl production area in North America." "Turbines should not be placed in or near wetland basins, and special care should be made to avoid areas with a high concentration of wetlands."

"Native prairie tracts are found in the Prairie Coteau and have high conservation value." "Every effort should be made to avoid placement of turbines and service roads on untilled native prairie." "Native prairies are of particular importance due to their increasing rarity, and the continued loss imperils many species." "True restoration of these areas is highly difficult, if not impossible, and the impacts cannot be fully rectified."

Some ground nesting birds are known to avoid a 300 meter area around turbines, so every turbine placed on prairie grassland has the potential to eliminate 70 acres of nesting habitat.

In 2010, Geronimo contacted the Fish And Wildlife Service regarding the project. They respond: "The Service holds numerous easements and fee title properties in the project, a testament to the high wildlife value of the area and relatively greater environmental impacts that may be anticipated if the project is constructed." "Numerous wetlands exist within the project, including several relatively large water bodies." "If the project may impact wetlands or other important fish and wildlife habitats, the Service, recommends complete avoidance of these areas."

quote "Currently, the best means of avoiding impacts to wildlife is to avoid placing wind farms within high wildlife use areas."

The project will definitely impact these large bodies of water---especially during migration.

Baileys Lake, Cottonwood Lake, Mallards Slough, and Lily Lake

Reid Lake Wildlife Refuge--- Sherwood Game Production Area--and--Round Lake merge to cover 17 hundred acres. This wildlife production area is surrounded on three sides by the project, turbines within a half mile. Tens of thousands of ducks and geese stop here during their spring and fall migration accompanied by large numbers of eagles preying on sick and injured waterfowl.

7 Game Production areas will be negatively affected."

May 2016, The project moves forward. Again, Agency response points out the large number of easements and fee title properties, the high wildlife value of the area and greater environmental impacts that may be anticipated if the project goes forward.

November 2016. Project expands significantly, north of Hwy 20. The Fish and Wildlife Service holds easements on nearly all of this area. There are currently 68 turbines proposed on easement land.

“Grassland nesting species, including species identified in Fish and Wildlife Service publication: **2008 Birds of Conservation Concern** will be directly and indirectly impacted by placement of turbines, access roads and other project facilities on the landscape.”

They again state, “The area is a grassland/wetland complex used by numerous grassland nesting species, and has been identified as a high-use area for waterfowl with more than 100 breeding birds per square mile.”

quote: **“In some cases it is appropriate to abandon project areas due to high risk to wildlife.”**

Do you think Geronimo cares about the effects a large industrial windfarm will have on the environment! Geronimo contacts these agencies for the permitting process. In the end, they do what costs them the least and offers them the greatest profit, no matter what the cost to the environment. It's the way Big Wind operates. Come into an area, visually pollute and tear up the land, chase off the wildlife, rake in tax credits, sell the project, and move on to the next community.

This application should be denied. From the very first contact, our State and Federal Agencies have advised of the negative impact a windfarm will have on the wildlife and the habitat of the area.

This windfarm will harm the environment

SDCL 49-41B-22

#2 will not pose a threat of serious injury to the environment-----

This application should be denied for this reason

Jean Stevens