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South Dakota

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

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VIA EMAIL

March 26, 2019

Mr. Brian Walsh
Environmental Scientist Manager, Ground Water Quality
SD DENR
Joe Foss Building
523 E Capitol
Pierre, SD 57501

Subject: Request for DENR Comment on Deuel Harvest North Wind Farm

Dear Mr. Walsh,

The South Dakota Public Utilities Commission Staff (PUC Staff) is reviewing a wind farm siting application for the Deuel Harvest North wind farm, located in Deuel County SD. Several concerned residents with homes near the project area intervened in the docket to raise their concerns before the Commission for consideration. One of the concerns raised by these individuals is the impact that wind farm construction and operation may have on aquifers and springs.

Concerns raised regarding aquifers and springs include the following:

- 1) the potential adverse impacts to the environment due to oil and chemical spills used during wind turbine construction or operation;
- 2) the potential for the project to contaminate, disrupt the flow, or disturb aquifers/springs due to the concrete in wind turbine foundations;
- 3) the potential for the project to contaminate, disrupt the flow, or disturb aquifers/springs during construction of the project;
- 4) the potential for the project to contaminate, disrupt the flow, or disturb aquifers/springs during wind turbine operation as a result of ground vibration; and
- 5) the request for a hydrogeological study to demonstrate that aquifers/springs will not be adversely impacted by the construction or operation of the project.

Through this letter, PUC Staff is reaching out the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) for comment on the concerns listed above. Specifically, PUC Staff would like the DENR to provide an opinion on the concerns and identify if, in the DENR's opinion, the requested hydrogeological study is necessary to understand potential impacts to aquifers/springs as a result of wind turbine construction and operation.

Sincerely,

Darren Kearney
Utility Analyst
SD PUC

Cc: Jon Thurber, Amanda Reiss, Kristen Edwards