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August 9, 2021

Patricia Van Gerpen
Executive Director
SD Public Utilities Commission
500 E. Capitol Ave.
Pierre, SD 57501

RE: Docket EL19-003, Staff's Response to Intervenor Amber Christenson's *Motion to Amend Mitigation Plan of the Sound Study Protocol of Crowned Ridge Wind, LLC, Fall 2021*

Ms. Van Gerpen,

On July 29, 2021, intervenor Amber Christenson filed a *Motion to Amend Mitigation Plan of the Sound Study Protocol of Crowned Ridge Wind, LLC, Fall 2021* (Motion). In the Motion, Ms. Christenson asks the Commission to include her residence in the Fall 2021 sound study protocol and that Crowned Ridge Wind II be required to shutdown turbines during the wind turbine on/off tests. On August 3, 2021, Crowned Ridge Wind LLC (Crowned Ridge) filed an Answer to the Motion that opposed Ms. Christenson's request to add her residence to the sound study.

Based on the results of the sound testing completed at Ms. Christenson's property line, Staff finds that there is no technical reason to include Ms. Christenson's residence in the Fall 2021 sound study. Even though Crowned Ridge's consultant (Epsilon) and Staff's consultant (Hessler Associates, Inc.) acknowledged the interference from vegetation in the shelter belt located on Ms. Christenson's property line, both consultants were able to review enough valid samples to conclude that the sound levels were compliant with the permit conditions. Epsilon concluded that the wind turbine only L_{eq} sound levels ranged from 37 to 43 dBA.¹ Hessler Associates, Inc. concluded "... throughout the entire survey at Positions 4 through 6 there is no evidence of non-compliance and, in fact, every reason to believe the project's sound emissions are below the applicable maxima."²

Staff discussed Ms. Christenson's Motion with Mr. David Hessler and he agreed that there is no technical reason to include Ms. Christenson in the study; however, he was supportive of including Ms. Christenson in the sound study in the interest of community relations. Mr. Hessler further suggested that Crowned Ridge could run the test in the same manner as the prior tests, without the frequent site visits that were added for the Fall 2021 study. This would prevent the dilution of observations at the other monitoring locations.

¹ Sound Level Compliance Evaluation Report, January 15, 2021, Table 8-1.

² Crowned Ridge Wind Final Operational Sound Test Data Review and Assessment, February 8, 2021, pg. 33.

In conclusion, Staff finds that the inclusion of Ms. Christenson's residence in the Fall 2021 sound study is not necessary since permit compliance has already been demonstrated through the past tests. However, should the Commission choose to include Ms. Christenson's residence in the interest of community relations, there may be ways to accommodate such without impacting the data collected at the other monitoring locations.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Darren Kearney", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Darren Kearney
Utility Analyst
SD PUC Staff