

**From:** [REDACTED]

**Sent:** Wednesday, June 5, 2019 8:09 PM

**To:** PUC-DOCKET FILINGS <[PUCDocketFilings@state.sd.us](mailto:PUCDocketFilings@state.sd.us)>; Edwards, Kristen [REDACTED]

**Subject:** [EXT] Docket EL 19-003

Hello,

My name is Brittany Jacobson. I would like to share with you our story on how wind energy development impacted our housing search. Please post this to the docket of EL 19-003.

My husband and I started our search for an acreage 3 years ago around the Watertown and Brookings areas. We both grew up living in the country in central Minnesota and desired to find a place to call home for our growing family. Knowing that acreages are in high demand, we knew it would be a challenge to find a quality property in the budget we had in mind. In the first 2 years of our search, we were fortunate to tour a couple of potential options (for sale and for auction). My husband and I consider ourselves fairly open minded to properties of varying quality; however, due to different reasons, these properties didn't meet our needs.

Our search became stagnant for several months, until the late spring/early summer of 2018. I came across a posting on Facebook for an acreage for sale by owner outside of Brandt. From the posting, it appeared to be a decent property well within our budget. I messaged the owner and my husband, son, and myself were able to see the property within a few days. Making our way up the driveway, we both agreed the setting was breathtaking. Perched on a hill, the house overlooked a small creek and farm fields where you could see for miles. The house and property were exactly what we were looking for. We imagined the rest of our lives there- having coffee on the front patio with the scenery set all around us and seeing our son and other future children running around the yard.

While we were touring the property, my husband had asked the owner what he knew about wind energy development in the area. My husband had become increasingly aware of wind energy projects that were being approved and developed all around Codington and Deuel counties. The owner said he had heard of a development in the area, but nothing close to the property.

With excitement and nervousness that evening, we offered full asking price for the property and the owner accepted, indicating he would be in touch with his lawyer to draw up the paperwork. We were beyond ecstatic to have found exactly what we were looking for for our family!

In the following couple of days my husband started feeling uncertain about the information the owner shared about wind turbine development and he wanted to do our due diligence before signing any

paperwork. I called the Deuel County Zoning department and spoke to a woman who informed me there was, in fact, permits that were submitted to the county that were pending approval for a development surrounding our future home. She sent me an email with attachments showing the 3 proposed layouts for the development, indicating that the exact layout would be approved in the upcoming months. Reviewing the information later that evening with my husband, we were devastated to see that all 3 layouts showed several wind towers and power lines in close proximity to the property and the surrounding area.

We had an emotional decision to make- continue with the offer and purchase the property or withdraw our offer. My husband has strong feelings about the inefficiencies of wind energy and the damage these developments cause to our country's landscape, property values, and health. Even though we imagined making this place our home, our feelings on being engulfed by wind towers weighed heavily on our hearts and we decided to withdraw our offer on the property, letting the owner know that after learning more about the proposed development, we were not comfortable proceeding. The property that we saw and fell in love with would not be the same property in a few years once the towers were built. This then made me wonder- how did this property fit so comfortably in our budget with everything it offered? Did the owner price it competitively knowing full well about the development?

Shortly after our experience, we read about a proposed wind energy development in Codington County that would possibly erect several hundred wind towers north east of Watertown. As my husband I considered resuming our search efforts for an acreage, we had feelings that no matter where we looked, we couldn't escape these visual eye sores. We since suspended our search for an acreage and purchased a lovely home on a 1 acre lot in a small town outside of Watertown. We know that by living here we would do not have to be worried about being surrounded by wind towers.

To say that there is no impact from wind energy developments on property values, current homeowners, and home buyers is underestimated. This is our example and the impact it had on us.

Thank you,

Brittany Renee Jacobson

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