



Gary Hanson, Chairman  
Chris Nelson, Vice Chairman  
Kristie Fiegen, Commissioner

*South Dakota*

**PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION**

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February 25, 2020

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

**RE: EL19-027, In the Matter of the Application by Crowned Ridge Wind II, LLC for a Permit of a Wind Energy Facility in Deuel, Grant, and Codington Counties**

Ms. Van Gerpen,

On February 4, 2020, through February 6, 2020, the Commission held an evidentiary hearing regarding whether a wind energy facility permit should be granted in the above referenced matter. During the hearing, Chairman Hanson questioned Commission Staff witness Hilary Morey whether the South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks (South Dakota GF&P) has the authority to require Crowned Ridge Wind II, LLC, to allow site access to Crowned Ridge Wind, LLC, to implement the post-construction grouse lek monitoring plan as ordered in Docket EL19-003. On February 7, 2020, Ms. Morey filed a letter in Docket EL19-027 stating that the South Dakota GF&P does not have the authority to require site access, and site access would need to be a condition of a potential permit issued by the Commission.

To address the concerns regarding grouse lek monitoring site access and subsequent ownership changes, Crowned Ridge Wind II, LLC and Commission Staff have agreed to the following condition for Commission consideration:

Applicant shall allow Crowned Ridge Wind, LLC, access to the Project Area to conduct a pre- and post-construction study to evaluate the potential effect of the Crowned Ridge Wind II Project on the local prairie grouse populations. Crowned Ridge Wind, LLC plans to conduct studies in the Crowned Ridge Wind II Project Area in accordance with the plan submitted on December 18, 2019, in Docket EL19-003.

Enclosed is a letter from Northern States Power Company regarding its commitment to cooperate with Crowned Ridge Wind, LLC, to conduct grouse lek monitoring in the Crowned Ridge Wind II Project Area.

Sincerely,

Kristen N. Edwards  
Staff Attorney