

**BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA**

**IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION BY PHILIP WIND PARTNERS, LLC FOR
ENERGY FACILITY PERMITS OF A WIND ENERGY FACILITY AND A 230 KV
TRANSMISSION FACILITY IN HAAKON COUNTY, SOUTH DAKOTA FOR THE
PHILIP WIND PROJECT**

SD PUC DOCKET EL25-____

**PRE-FILED DIRECT TESTIMONY OF BRIANNA GRIES
ON BEHALF OF PHILIP WIND PARTNERS, LLC**

August 15, 2025

1 **I. INTRODUCTION AND QUALIFICATIONS**

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3 **Q. Please state your name, employer and business address.**

4 A. My name is Brianna Gries. I am a Senior Associate, Renewable Development at
5 Invenergy LLC (Invenergy). My business address is 1001 17th Street, Suite 1900,
6 Denver, CO 80202.

7
8 **Q. On whose behalf are you providing this testimony?**

9 A. I am providing this testimony on behalf of Philip Wind Partners, LLC (Philip Wind)
10 in support of its Facility Permit Application (Application) to the South Dakota Public
11 Utilities Commission. The Application is for a permit to construct and operate a
12 wind energy facility which will have a nameplate capacity of up to 333 megawatts
13 (MW) and deliver up to 300 MW to the point of interconnection (Wind Energy
14 Facility), and a transmission facility which will operate at 230 kilovolts (kV) and be
15 approximately 7 miles in length (Transmission Facility). The Wind Energy Facility
16 and the Transmission Facility are collectively referred to as the Project.

17
18 **Q. Briefly describe your educational background and professional experience.**

19 A. I have a Bachelor of Science in economics and environmental studies from the
20 University of Wisconsin-Madison. Prior to joining Invenergy, I was a remote
21 operations control center operator for Scout Clean Energy, where I was
22 responsible for monitoring the performance of real time operations for wind power
23 generation sites to comply with regulations and to optimize site performance. I
24 joined Invenergy in 2022 as a senior analyst on the renewable energy team, and I
25 assumed my current role in 2025 where I am responsible for project development
26 of various renewable energy projects. My resume is attached as **Exhibit 1**.

II. PURPOSE OF TESTIMONY

Q. What is your role with respect to the Project?

A. I am responsible for project managing the Application drafting and post-Application submission permitting process for the Project. I coordinated with multiple teams that assisted in the Application drafting process, as well as teams who conducted studies, analyses, and evaluations for the Project.

Q. What is the purpose of your Direct Testimony?

A. The purpose of my Direct Testimony is to support the Application for facility permits for the Wind Energy Facility and the Transmission Facility.

Q. Identify the sections of the Application that you are sponsoring for the record.

A. I am sponsoring the following portions of the Application:

- Section 1: Introduction
- Section 11.2: Public Lands and Facilities
- Section 12: Local Land Use Controls
- Section 13: Water Quality
- Section 14: Air Quality
- Section 15: Community Impact
- Section 20: Information Concerning Wind Energy Facilities
- Section 21: Information Concerning Transmission Facilities
- Section 22.1: Permits and Approvals
- Section 22.4: Applicant's Burden of Proof

Q. What exhibits are attached to your Direct Testimony?

A. I am sponsoring the following exhibit:

- **Exhibit 1:** Brianna Gries Resume

III. LOCAL LAND USE AND COMMUNITY IMPACTS

Q. Describe the existing land use in the Project Area.

A. Land cover in the Project Area located in Haakon County consists predominantly of herbaceous and planted/cultivated land. Approximately 27,107 acres (40.5%) of the Project Area were identified as grassland. The remaining land use classifications in the Project Area include land used primarily for row and non-row crops in rotation, pasturelands and rangelands, haylands, potentially unbroken grasslands, rural residences and farmsteads, family farms, and ranches, residential, and noise sensitive land uses.

Q. Does Haakon County have any local regulations regarding wind generation projects?

A. No Haakon County is unzoned.

Q. Is Philip Wind working with local Haakon County personnel regarding the Project?

A. Yes. Haakon County is unzoned and has no ordinances relating to wind energy facilities or transmission lines at the time of submittal of this testimony and the Application. Philip Wind has been engaged with Haakon County personnel, including presenting to the Haakon County Commissioners, Board of Adjustment, and Haakon County Highway Department, and entered into a Road Use Agreement (RUA) with Haakon County in 2024. Philip Wind will continue to work with Haakon County throughout construction and operation of the Project. For example, final haul routes will be selected in consultation with the Haakon County Road Department.

Q. Is the Project compatible with existing land uses and future development in and around the Project Area?

A. Yes. The Project Area was selected following a review of regional land use and environmental constraints. The Project is compatible with the existing primarily

agricultural land uses in the Project Area. Wind energy facilities are particularly compatible with agricultural land because crops can be grown, and livestock can graze, up to the turbines, transmission structures, and other aboveground Project Facilities. Wind energy facilities enable agricultural operators to diversify their operations with minimal disruption to existing agricultural uses.

Q. Will the Project alter local land use?

A. Construction of the Project will result in conversion of a small portion of the land within the Project Area. Approximately 1,199 acres of temporary ground disturbance is expected to result from Project construction, of which 771 acres is agriculture. Approximately 115 acres will be impacted long-term for the operational life of the Project (approximately 0.2% of the Project Area) to host aboveground Project Facilities. Only 68 acres of agriculture will be impacted long-term for the operation life of the Project (approximately 0.1% of the Project Area, 0.02% of agriculture land within Haakon County). Following completion of construction, all temporary construction workspaces will be restored to pre-construction conditions, which primarily consist of cultivated croplands and pastureland/grassland, pursuant to the lease and easement agreements.

IV. WIND AND TRANSMISSION FACILITY INFORMATION

Q. Describe the Wind and Transmission Facility information contained in the Application.

A. Sections 20 and 21 of the Application contain information regarding the Wind Energy Facility and the Transmission Facility portions of the Project, respectively. These Sections contain tables which indicate the location of specific data about the Project. These Sections satisfy the content requirements of ARSD 20:10:22:33.02 and ARSD 20:10:22:35.

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117 **Q. Will Philip Wind obtain all local, state, and federal permits required for the**
118 **Project?**

119 A. Yes. Philip Wind or its contractors will obtain all permits required for the Project.

120

121 **V. CONCLUSION**

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123 **Q. Does this conclude your testimony?**

124 A. Yes.

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126

127 Dated this 15th day of August, 2025

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129

130 /s/ Brianna Gries

131 Brianna Gries