RECEIVED
OCT 06 2025
SOUTH DAKOTA PUBLIC
UTILITIES COMMISSION

10-03-2025

To: The South Dakota Public Utilities Commission

I am writing in NON Support, regarding the proposed plan to install and construct a series of wind power towers in northern Haakon County. This is egregious decision.

Some research suggests that certain green energy projects may have inefficiencies and could result in additional environmental impacts. These systems do not require water or fossil fuels to operate. However, the negative impacts outweigh the benefits. The cost of manufacturing these towers is high. The cost of making the material, mining of raw materials, making the blades and support infrastructure have an impact. Manufacturing still relies on raw materials such as copper, silicon, aluminum, and iron ore which leads to more land degradation.

The construction of these towers in this area of the Missouri River and Cheyenne River flyways may affect migrating birds, including waterfowl.

Let's discuss Wildlife and Birds (Raptors, Waterfowl and Bats)

I examined the avian studies that Philip Wind Partners LLC submitted to the PUC; the majority consisted primarily of observational data. I would think they would have to have at least one tower to do a before and after comparison study.

1) There was no mention of **Candain Geese.** The wind tower locations will obstruct their migratory route. This a major flyway of their migration to and from North Dakota and Canada. Putting these towers on farmland is ineffective—the geese still land, feed, and rest there. I can support this evidence by photos or invited observations if necessary. Canadian Geese fall under the protection of **the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918.**

2) **Blue Herons** also move through the proposed sites I saw only observations for Whooping cranes and a very incomplete contingent plan if they are present during construction. Who will enforce this—the construction team under a tight deadline?

3) A 240-acre **active prairie dog** town is located across Highway 34, north of the northernmost tower sites. On any given day one can observe Golden and Bald eagles on this large active dog town.

The height of most wind turbines aligns with the altitude many bird species fly at (Bowden 2015). **Birds of prey— raptors—are of particular concern because of their slow reproductive cycles and long lifespans relative to other bird species** (Kuvlesky 2007). (1) (2) (3)

1. Two elk herds have been observed in the area, but no research has assessed their habitat or the potential effects of the proposed wind tower farm.

4) I saw no studies on the **South Dakota State Bird**, the **Meadow Lark**?

5) There is sufficient evidence regarding the safety and vulnerability of **bat** populations to determine whether wind towers pose a risk to this species.

- **The wind tower company has not yet examined or responded to these significant concerns.**

Let's talk about Residents (Farmers and Ranchers) living and worker near proposed wind Farm.

Many wind farm owners are not local(absentee owners), while people living near proposed sites may have to deal with unsightly towers and possible health concerns for years. If they all resided in the proximity of the wind towers, I am certain their participation would be rethought. Why should they, the few that live and that actively farm, and ranch be subject to looking at these horrific monstrosities for 20 years or longer?

Haakon County Voters and residents and taxpayers have not had access to full disclosure of project so that a county decision can be obtain to allow such a project to go forward.

Let's talk about South Dakota's tourism industry, which is the state's second largest.

(1) Kuvlesky et al · Wind Energy and Wildlife. The Journal of Wildlife Mgmt.
(2) Lauren C. Naylor Bone with the Wind Applied Biodiversity Science
(3) 6 studies show wind turbines destroy habitat Sept. 20, 2023

South Dakota prides itself on a tourist destination, this is going to affect my Agro Tourism business. For years, I have hosted hunters on my farm and ranch, drawn by the beauty of South Dakota and its wildlife. Photographers often take pictures of my ranch and surrounding area for publications or social media. South Dakota Beautiful does not include wind towers.

SD Highway 34 serves as a primary route for attendees of the Sturgis Motorcycle Rally, presenting them with views along their journey. SD Highway 34 and 73 are also pathways to the Badlands National Park and the Black Hills. Tourists and visitors do not come here to western South Dakota to look at Wind Towers and Power Lines.

Lets talk about Native American History

Native American History and Cultural Considerations

The proposed wind farm project is situated remarkably close to, or may even encompass, the route of the BIG FOOT Ride of the Sioux Indians. This commemorative ride traces the path taken during their historic flight across the Cheyenne Indian Reservation to Wounded Knee. It is essential to consider whether any artifacts or culturally significant sites have been evaluated by the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe in the area affected by the development. Furthermore, it is important to ask if the opinions and perspectives of the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe have been formally sought regarding the proposed wind farm. Their insights and historical connections to the land should be a central part of the project's evaluation process.

Let's Address Weather and the environment.

- Tackle droughts in northwest Haakon County. My property is adjacent to the wind tower project area. I typically experience severe drought every three years. For drought information, visit the Haakon County FSA office and make an inquiry. But researchers from Harvard have shown the following:

  In two papers — published today in the journals *Environmental Research Letters* and *Joule* — Harvard University researchers find that the transition to wind or solar power in the U.S. would require five to 20 times more land than

previously thought, and, if such large-scale wind farms were built, would warm average surface temperatures over the continental U.S. by 0.24 degrees Celsius.

For your information 0.24 degrees Celsius is the equivalent of 32.43 degrees Fahrenheit. That is unquestionably something that concerns me more than anything.

The Harvard researchers found that the warming effect of wind turbines in the continental U.S. was actually larger than the effect of reduced emissions for the first century of its operation. This is because the warming effect is predominantly local to the wind farm, while greenhouse gas concentrations must be reduced globally before the benefits are realized.

A full meteorological study must be conducted to assess the effects of down wind warming caused by wind turbine blades.

- Based on the summary included in this letter about my non-approval of the Philip Wind Partners LLC project, I request that the South Dakota Public Utilities Commission review my perspective and support evidence before a decision regarding the approval of this project.

Sincerely,

Kristine H. Smith

Kristine H. Smith
Smith Cattle LLC
[redacted]
Milesville, SD 57553