



**Department of Energy**  
Western Area Power Administration  
Upper Great Plains Customer Service Region  
P.O. Box 35800  
Billings, MT 59107-5800

B0400.BL

Dear Interested Parties:

Western Area Power Administration (WAPA) has completed the Final North Bend Wind Energy Environmental Assessment (Final EA) (DOE/EA-2161). This document has been prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act and its implementing regulations.

North Bend Wind Project, LLC proposed to construct and operate the North Bend Wind Project (Project) and enter into a generator interconnection agreement (GIA) with WAPA and the Southwest Power Pool (SPP) to connect the Project to WAPA's Upper Great Plains transmission system (the Proposed Action alternative). The Project would interconnect to WAPA's existing Fort Thompson-Oahe 230-kilovolt (kV) #2 transmission line at a new WAPA owned switchyard (the Point of Interconnection [POI]). The Project would consist of an approximately 200-megawatt (MW) wind farm in Hughes and Hyde counties, South Dakota, and include 71 wind turbine generators, 35 miles of new access roads, 68 miles of underground power collection system, a meteorological tower, a Project substation, up to 500 feet of 230-kilovolt (kV) overhead transmission line (gen-tie line) from the substation to the POI, a 10-acre temporary laydown/staging area and concrete batch plant, a fiber optic communications system, and use of an existing, adjacent five-acre operations and maintenance facility.

WAPA considered a No Action alternative to the Proposed Action alternative in the final EA. The No Action Alternative assumed the proposed Project would not be constructed and the GIA would not occur with WAPA and the SPP. The Final EA describes the alternatives, discusses potential environmental impacts, and identifies design features that would help minimize impacts.

WAPA issued the Draft EA for public comment on March 15, 2023. The 30-day public comment period extended through April 14, 2023. WAPA has considered all comments in preparing this Final EA and incorporated both the comments and WAPA's responses in the document.

WAPA has issued a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) and selected the Proposed Action alternative, including all environmental commitments and minimization measures described in the Final EA, for implementation. The final EA, FONSI, and other Project-related documents can be found on WAPA's website at:

<https://www.wapa.gov/regions/UGP/Environment/Pages/NorthBendWind.aspx>

For further information on the North Bend Wind Project Environmental Assessment, please call me at (406) 255-2810 or email me at [jrussell@wapa.gov](mailto:jrussell@wapa.gov).

Sincerely,

John Russell  
Environmental Manager