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Mr. Shaw,

Developing wind energy in Wyoming makes sound economic and environmental sense. During this current downturn in the U.S. economy costing thousands of citizens their jobs and with consideration to the controversy surrounding greenhouse gases, it seems a logical conclusion to begin developing clean energy alternatives that will provide employment, revenue and clean energy production to the state and nation. The greater good of the environment and economy cannot be dismissed over the sage grouse.

Much like the surveying process that is involved with drilling rigs, numerous studies have been conducted regarding the placement of wind turbines in Wyoming. Simply stated, a wind turbine cannot be erected anywhere the wind might blow, it has to be an area where wind volume is consistent without being too fast or too slow. These studies have found that premium wind locations are based in Carbon County.

Unfortunately, core sage grouse areas have also been established throughout Carbon County and effectively mark the county as well as the majority of the rest of the state off of the map for wind development. Based on current available information, insufficient data exists to determine if indeed wind power has any impact on sage grouse within the core areas. Yet, the Fish and Wildlife Service was somehow capable of making such a determination without first conducting studies. Reliable sources (outside the department) impacting the decision have yet to be released from Fish and Wildlife. They have gone even further to state that, "Constructing wind farms in core areas, even for research purposes, prior to demonstrating it can be done with no impact to sage grouse, negates the usefulness of the core area concept...and brings into question whether adequate regulatory mechanisms are in place to protect the species."

This statement is in direct contrast to another statement made within the same news release from Fish and Wildlife that "...robust populations of the [greater sage grouse] currently exist across the state (Wyoming)." Additionally, it is unreasonable to expect any development, whether it is for housing, infrastructure or energy to have "no impact", but these industries have been developing for years and through properly instituted reclamation, have left as small of a mark as possible. There is absolutely no cause to believe wind energy will be any different. It is also unreasonable to make wind energy the whipping boy of the sage grouse issue. Clearly, roads, oil and gas, free range grazing, recreation and the years of drought caused by global warming have been encroaching on sage grouse habitat for years and have had far more negative impact to the species than wind energy. Furthermore, there is no way to make a "prior demonstration" of

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the effects of a study without conducting said study. In essence, the Fish and Wildlife is demanding a hypothesis be assumed and scrap the rest of the pesky details involved with conducting a properly researched study.

Additionally, reports released by the Global Wind Energy Council show the leading cause of death to bird species in the U.S. is cats, with an approximated one billion deaths per year attributed. In contrast, wind turbines across the entire globe account for less than 10,000 bird deaths per year. The report further states, "As a general rule, birds notice that new structures have arrived in their area, learn to avoid them, especially the turning blades, and are able to continue feeding and breeding in the location." The Fish and Wildlife Service may consider teaming with local and national animal shelters to control the feral cat population, rather than punishing an environmentally friendly energy source.

The potential of wind development is undeniable. Wind energy is a renewable resource that will be permanently available. Climate changing greenhouse gases including carbon dioxide and other air pollutants are never emitted from wind turbines and within 3 – 6 months of operation, a wind turbine has offset all emissions caused by its construction and will run cleanly for the remainder of its 30 year life expectancy. Every kilowatt/hour generated by wind power has the potential to displace fossil fuel imports, which is of particular importance to the U.S. which spends more than half a trillion dollars a year out of country to pay its oil bill, funds which could certainly be better utilized within the borders to offset the stimulus package. Wind farms can also begin generating power in months rather than the 10 to 12 years it takes to connect conventional power plants to the grid.

In 2008, according to the Global Wind Energy Council, the U.S. topped the markets in both new wind energy installations and total wind generation capacity, with Germany and China at a close second. However, due to the current American economic situation, progress has slowed, which again puts us in danger of foreign energy dependence. Despite these concerns, developers are still interested in considering Wyoming as a potential participant in the wind industry, which allows the U.S. to continue their goal of reducing carbon emissions 20% by 2030 and helping America remain a global wind energy leader.

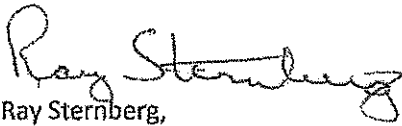
35,000 new jobs were created in the U.S. as a result of wind energy projects last year and this number does not account for sectors outside of wind energy that are indirectly affected by the process. Employees involved with erection of wind turbines are paid on average between \$25 and \$60 per hour. Beyond that, full-time maintenance crews are required for the lifetime of operations and make comparable wages to the erection crews. Additionally, industries such as lodging, food service, residential development and public schools to name a few will also benefit from the projects.

Wyoming could easily create hundreds of jobs within the wind energy sector and thousands of jobs across all sectors. Also, the potential for revenue into the state is in the billions of dollars. Considering the sales tax that would need paid on any equipment purchased for the project, the lodging and housing that would be required, the food consumption that would occur as well as the increased school enrollment numbers, it is easy to understand the real costs to the state if sage grouse are allowed to exterminate wind energy development.

In closing, there is no need to choose between protecting the environment and growing the economy. Wind energy is clearly the answer to each choice. Wyoming has the capability of producing a clean,

renewable energy resource that will not only positively impact the economy but protect the global interests of the environment for millennia to come. Mother Nature created animals with the ability to adapt to their surroundings and it is highly unlikely that sage grouse will do much more than notice the new presence of structures. The process by which Wind Energy has been excluded from potential development in areas of Wyoming where wind is most suitable for energy production stands in direct opposition to the needs of the nation and the planet. Careful consideration of pilot studies and future development based on those studies is, in fact, the correct and unbiased way to determine if wind energy should or should not be permitted in Wyoming's core sage grouse areas.

Sincerely,



Ray Sternberg,
Co-Owner, R&R Rig Service



Randy Woodward,
Co-Owner, R&R Rig Service