



	Hi	Low	Prec.
Jan. 16	25	10	
Jan. 17	15	-11	
Jan. 18	15	-8	
Jan. 19	0	-21	
Jan. 20	4	-16	
Jan. 21	8	-6	
Jan. 22	11	-11	

(From Brick Propane Records)

County In Wind Plans

Wind energy is continuing to become a bigger player in the national energy picture, and a Minneapolis company is hoping to make northeast South Dakota a part of that wind energy growth.

National Wind announced last week its launch of South Dakota's first utility-scale community-owned wind project, Dakota Wind Energy, LLC. The wind development is located in Marshall, Day, and Roberts counties, and the company hopes to bring the regional community together in local ownership of the wind farms.

The intent is to develop up to 750 megawatts of wind projects in the area spread out over 700 square miles, and the company would do that in stages. A 300-megawatt project, for example, would require over 100 wind turbines, and one megawatt is capable of providing power for 250-300 homes.

National Wind is the leader in the development of over 2,000 megawatts of community-owned wind projects located in Minnesota, Iowa, North Dakota, and South Dakota, according to the company's Director of Communications Erin Edholm.

Edholm said the next step would be to hold area meetings to give landowners opportunities to get involved in the project, and on-site studies will be done.

"We would like to get some towers up as soon as possible to obtain wind data, and we will be responding to utilities' requests for proposals to see if we can get their interest in the project," noted Edholm.

The Dakota Wind Energy LLC was originally conceived by South

Dakota landowner Gerry Fisher. National Wind, the project's manager, local landowners, and community leaders have capitalized the company.

An advisory board has been formed which includes nine of the landowners/co-founders. They include Donald Erickson, Dennis Fagerland, Blair Healy, and Don Ogren, Langford; Walt Johnson, Britton; Tim Hofer and Curt Samson, Eden; Bob Metz, Peever; and Gerry Fisher, Sisseton.

Additional landowners and local community members will become owners as the project develops.

"For community-wind projects, such as Dakota Wind Energy, size does matter," said Patrick Pelstring, co-chair of National Wind. "Utilities and institutional investors prefer larger community-owned wind projects because they have the local support needed to move smoothly through permitting, site control, and power line siting.

"This increases their likelihood of completion and gives projects such as Dakota Wind Energy, a competitive advantage," added Pelstring. "Large community wind projects also have the capital available to afford the high costs related to wind developments of any size, including building a private trans-

mission line, which can cost millions of dollars."

South Dakota has the wind potential to power 50 percent of the nation's electrical demands. According to the American Wind Energy Association the state ranks fourth in the nation with the greatest wind potential. However, when compared to other states, South Dakota's current installed wind power capacity is very low.

The northeast South Dakota project, when all phases are complete, could produce enough electricity to power more than 20,000 homes and displace almost 2,000 tons of greenhouse gas emissions annually.

"As a South Dakota landowner, I wanted to institute a wind development program that provides my family with the best benefits," said Fisher. "After much research, I discovered that a community-wind development approach is a great option, offering landowners and their communities multiple ways to participate and own a significant share of a wind project's economic benefits. Landowners have the opportunity to become partners in the project, not simply lessees."

There are a lot of wind developers out there," concluded Edholm. "But few do it on a community-based ownership level."

