



CHIEF WASHAKIE

**SHOSHONE & ARAPAHO TRIBES
ENERGY COMMISSION
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CHIEF BLACK COAL

March 11, 2009

Western Governors' Association
1600 Broadway, Suite 1700
Denver, CO 80202
Phone: (303) 623-9378
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RE: Comments on Western Renewable Energy Zones Draft Documents and Maps

The Shoshone Tribe of the Wind River Indian Reservation in Wyoming submits these comments regarding the Western Governors' Association (WGA) Western Renewable Energy Zones (WREZ) draft documents and maps. We support the overall efforts by the WGA to extend the power grid into geographically constrained areas in order to reach valuable renewable resources. We ask that tribal sovereign and energy resource interests be given thorough consideration throughout the WREZ development process.

In addition to our oil and gas, sand and gravel, and water resources, the Wind River Indian Reservation has abundant renewable resources, including world class wind that has been proven through tribal feasibility studies, solar resources, abundant world class geothermal resources, and existing dams with additional hydroelectric power opportunities. However, our reservation is not located within one of the WGA's Renewable Energy Zones or Qualified Resource Areas. Because we are not designated as an official Qualifying Resource Area we are concerned that we will not be considered for needed upgrades to transmission lines to permit our full development of resources. We therefore ask that you reconsider the location of Qualifying Resource Areas and Zones in Wyoming.

We notice that the zones in the state of Wyoming are particularly focused on wind energy potential in the southeast part of the state. Particularly, your map does not seem to appropriately consider the huge potential on our reservation for large-scale hydroelectric development. We have six existing reservoirs on our reservation with potential for upgrading existing facilities to improve water storage possibilities and to add approximately 500MW of generation potential. We also have a number of rivers that are suitable for small-scale hydroelectric development.

In addition, the huge geothermal potential of Wyoming seems to not be appropriately considered. Our state hosts world famous geothermal sites such as Yellowstone National Park and the city of Thermopolis. Our reservation lies between

these two famous geothermal sites and has many areas of undeveloped thermal water pools. Many of our oil and gas wells produce hot water as a byproduct of oil and gas development.

The well-known wind resource of the reservation also seems to be discounted. We feel that not only the excellent resources of our area should count toward our status but also the diversity of many resources in one area should provide an incentive to inclusion as a zone. None of these important resources will be developed if transmission is not available to move power resources out of the area.

We appreciate the WGA's invitation to comment. Since we see that tribal energy, renewable energy integration and transmission issues are in need of considerable immediate attention, we encourage WGA to continue communicating and inviting our participation in the WREZ process. Should you have any questions or comments, please contact me at (307) 349-7650.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Orville St. Clair', written over a faint circular line.

Orville St. Clair
Energy Commission Chairman

Cc: Energy Commission
 File