

Grant Round Application LRC-LXXIV (74) – B

**INDUSTRIAL COMMISSION EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S SUMMARY and
RECOMMENDATION**

LRC-LXXIV (74) - B

“Annual Lignite Energy Council Education Seminar: Energy, Economics & Environment”

Submitted by Lignite Energy Council

Request for: \$80,000 per year for 2 years; Total of \$160,000

Total Project Costs: \$160,000 per year for 2 years; Total of \$320,000

Principal Investigator: Lignite Energy Council, Renee Walz;

Project Duration: 24 months

Objective and Description of Project: The objective of the Lignite Energy Council’s Annual Teachers Seminar is to educate teachers from North Dakota and neighboring states about the economic benefits, career opportunities and operations of the lignite industry, enabling them to educate their students about the industry. The four-day Seminar, which is held each June, includes tours of mines and coal conversion facilities along with presentations and panel discussions on a number of relevant issues including history, geology, mining and reclamation, converting lignite to electricity, converting lignite to synthetic natural gas, economics, career opportunities, environmental, transmission and research and development topics. Approximately 125-135 educators attend annually.

Technical Peer Reviewers’ Key Comments:

Both Reviewers:

- Objectives: Clear
- Achievability: Most likely achievable, Certainly achievable
- Background: Exceptional

Reviewer 01-01:

Additional information should be included detailing specific components of the planned curriculum. More measurable success standards should be incorporated.

Recommendation: Fund

Reviewer 01-02:

The program lacks an instrument to measure its effectiveness. Follow-up should be made down the road, months after the seminar has been completed, to ask how the attendee has incorporated the material into their lesson plans. If they are not using the material, find out why?

Recommendation: Fund

Executive Director’s Recommendation: Fund (Small research funds)

These seminars have been conducted for many years and are being updated each year to reflect current issues impacting the lignite industry. The suggestions from the Reviewers for the development and implementation of a method to measure success are good. I would encourage the LEC to incorporate these suggestions into their management of the project and to include the results in their reports to the Commission. However, I am not recommending that it be a requirement for funding.

Conflict of Interest: Lignite Energy Council, Members of the Council that provide both cash and in-kind contributions to the Teachers Seminar.