

R001-D
“Blue Flint Ethanol E85 Blending Facility”
Submitted by Blue Flint Ethanol
Principal Investigator: Jeff Zueger
Request for \$50,000; Total Project Costs \$100,000

Technical Advisor’s comments:

- The reviewers have extremely different views of this project.
- One feels it would have significant benefit to the ND renewable energy industry.
- The other feels it does not meet the mission of the Renewable Energy Council (REC) and would be “corporate welfare” which would result in very little value to North Dakota as a whole.
- Both reviewers comment that it was difficult to evaluate the proposal with the information and format the applicant has provided.
- The applicant responded to the reviewers’ comments by submitting a revised proposal and this revision appears to include significant new information.
- Due to time constraints, submitting the revised proposal for outside technical review within this funding cycle was not feasible.
- The cash match is in accordance with REC Policy, and the project qualifies for higher priority due to 50% of the funding coming from private industry.

Technical Advisor’s recommendation:

Technical Advisor feels this proposal does qualify for funding under the marketing aspect of the REC Mission Statement. However, given the obvious difficulty in evaluating the original proposal and the wide disparity in the reviewers’ evaluations, I can not recommend approval of the initial application. If the Council wishes to base a decision primarily on the peer-reviewed material, they should probably request and encourage the applicant to amend their proposal and resubmit it for the funding round commencing in May 2008.

If the Council wishes to allow the supplemental material to weigh more heavily into their evaluation, it would likely become somewhat easier to arrive at a favorable funding decision. If this is the case, I suggest adding a requirement for reports due at six months and one year after project completion to follow up on price impact, market expansion & penetration, customer satisfaction with “blended” vs. “splash” product, quality control issues, etc.