



INDUSTRIAL COMMISSION OF NORTH DAKOTA

John Hoeven
Governor

Wayne Stenehjem
Attorney General

Roger Johnson
Agriculture Commissioner

News Release

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For Immediate Release

WESTMORELAND COAL CO. WITHDRAWS FROM LIGNITE VISION 21 PROGRAM

BISMARCK, - The North Dakota Industrial Commission announced today that Westmoreland Coal Company has withdrawn from the Lignite Vision 21 Program. The Company is returning \$562,500 in matching funds it received from the program for development of a proposed 500-megawatt power plant near Gascoyne.

“We strongly believe in the value of the Gascoyne project and have been actively pursuing the approval of an air permit for a 500 MW generating facility,” said Keith Alessi, the company’s former President and current Executive Chairman of the Board, in a letter to the Commission. “Westmoreland does intend to continue development of the Gascoyne site. We cannot guarantee that this will take place in any time soon. Therefore, we have decided to withdraw from the LV 21 Program.”

Alessi cited uncertainty in the utility sector with the timing of future carbon regulations. He said this uncertainty has slowed the development of coal-based power plants and that the Company cannot predict when a long-term customer can be found or when plant construction could commence.

“Westmoreland has decided to put their Lignite Vision 21 project on hold due to uncertainty over the requirements for carbon management,” Governor John Hoeven said. “Other projects like Great Northern Power Development are moving forward with good carbon management plans, and we need to continue to find ways to help them capture and sequester CO₂.”

“Westmoreland has been a good partner with the Commission in promoting this location and we are hopeful that we can go forward with a project at Gascoyne within the next few years,” said Attorney General Wayne Stenehjem. “We appreciate Westmoreland returning the funding so that it can be used for further research and development of carbon capture technology.”

“The Lignite Vision 21 Program focuses on developing the best clean-coal technology available for the development and utilization of our coal reserves,” said Agriculture Commissioner Roger Johnson. Partnering with industry, North Dakota will be a leader in the use of that technology.”

The Lignite Research Program is overseen by the Industrial Commission of North Dakota, consisting of Governor John Hoeven as Chairman, Attorney General Wayne Stenehjem, and Agriculture Commissioner Roger Johnson.

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