

News Release

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For Immediate Release

Industrial Commission Approves R&D Projects

Governor Edward T. Schafer, Attorney General Heidi Heitkamp and Commissioner of Agriculture Roger Johnson approved funding of three North Dakota lignite projects on August 24, 2000. The three North Dakota Industrial Commission members approved \$267,500 from the Lignite Research, Development and Marketing Program for the projects, and also approved grant application deadline dates for 2001 (January 1, May 1 and September 1).

The Lignite Research Council, which makes recommendations on project funding to the three Industrial Commission members, voted on July 26, 2000, to recommend that the Industrial Commission approve the three projects:

Lignite Vision 21 Project Phase II Transmission Studies: As part of the Lignite Vision 21 Project, the Lignite Energy Council, Bismarck, North Dakota, will hire a contractor to evaluate the technical feasibility of transmitting electricity from a proposed new lignite-fired power plant. Funding of \$140,000 was approved for the six-month project. The Industrial Commission is partnering with the Lignite Energy Council on the Lignite Vision 21 Project, a state/industry partnership to encourage construction of the next "state-of-the-art" baseload power plant in North Dakota during the next eight to ten years.

Reclaimed Grassland Management for Increased Plant Diversity: The North Dakota Agricultural Experiment Station, Fargo, will evaluate livestock grazing and haying strategies to help improve plant diversity and seasonal balance on native grasslands reclaimed after completion of lignite mining. Funding of \$32,250 was approved by the Industrial Commission for this three-year small research project, which has a total cost of \$111,720.

Mercury Control Options Evaluation at Coal Creek Station, Underwood, North Dakota & Stanton Station, Stanton, North Dakota: Great River Energy (GRE), Elk River, Minnesota, will evaluate options for minimizing and controlling mercury air emissions from GRE's Stanton Station and Coal Creek Station. In addition, GRE and the Electric Power Research Institute will evaluate the use of low-cost North Dakota lignite-derived carbon as a mercury sorbent. Funding of \$95,000 was approved for the six-month project, which has a total cost of \$190,000.

The Lignite Research Program is overseen by the North Dakota Industrial Commission, consisting of Governor Edward T. Schafer, Attorney General Heidi Heitkamp and Commissioner of Agriculture Roger Johnson. The program is a cooperative state/industry effort concentrating on near-term, practical projects to enhance development of the state's abundant lignite resources.

For more information, contact Clifford R. Porter, Director of the Lignite Research, Development and Marketing Program, at (701) 258-7117, fax (701) 258-2755, or e-mail: cporter@lignite.com. Visit the following web site for information about the Lignite Research, Development and Marketing Program: www.lignite.com/ResDev/index.html

-30-

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