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To: U. S. Department of Energy/Western Area Power Administration Joint Outreach Team;  
Ms. Anita Decker, Acting Administrator, Western Area Power Administration

From: Thomas J. Heller, P.E., MBA   
Chief Executive Officer

Date: October 17, 2012

RE: **Extension Request on the Comment Period on the Joint Outreach Team's (JOT's)  
Draft Recommendations to the Secretary of Energy regarding the Future of the  
Power Marketing Administrations (PMAs)**

I am writing you on behalf of Missouri River Energy Services (MRES), an organization that represents and provides supplemental power supply to 59 municipalities in Minnesota, Iowa, North Dakota, and South Dakota that receive fixed allocations from Western Area Power Administration (WAPA). We respectfully request that the 30-day public comment period currently set aside for the JOT's recommendations regarding the future of the federal PMAs be expanded to 90 days.

MRES members rely heavily on WAPA for power supply, and have an interest in the process initiated by Secretary of Energy Steven Chu's March 16 memorandum on the future of the PMAs. The draft recommendations will represent a critical milestone in this process. The JOT's draft recommendations will provide us with the first chance to review concrete proposals and evaluate their potential impact.

Our request for extending the comment period on the JOT's draft recommendations reflects our desire to provide the Department of Energy with informed, thoughtful feedback its representatives have openly solicited. As things stand, we are expected to conduct our assessment of the JOT's potentially wide-ranging recommendations and draft thoughtful comments over a 30-day period that is likely to include the Thanksgiving holiday.

Accordingly, we respectfully request that the JOT provide a 90-day comment period on its draft recommendations rather than the 30 days currently allotted. Doing so will provide all stakeholders in this process with a meaningful opportunity to review the JOT's recommendations, analyze their implications, and offer well-considered comments.

c: U.S. Representative Kristi Noem (SD)  
U.S. Senator Tim Johnson (SD)  
U.S. Senator John Thune (SD)  
Ms. Lauren Azar, Senior Advisor to U.S. Secretary of Energy Steven Chu