



## Colorado Association of Conservation Districts

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Senator Isgar & Members of the Committee,

I appreciate the chance to speak on behalf of the ACRE (Advancing Colorado's Renewable Energy) program. It is a granting program that is intended to help fund renewable energy projects that are agricultural related. The grants are judged by and administered by the Colorado Agriculture Value Added Board, which is the same as the Colorado Agricultural Development Authority (CADA).

In the last three years the ACRE program has distributed 1.5 million dollars in renewable grants to rural Colorado. There has been many on the ground projects funded. Just as important, a plethora of feasibility studies have been funded and completed. Many of these feasibility studies are now moving on to the implementation stage and receiving ACRE funds for project implementation.

Baca County CD was a partner in a project to put up various sized windmills on ranches and farms, the size dependent on energy need. The ACRE program also helped fund the sunflower oil plant that is near Dove Creek. Currently a feasibility study is being conducted on a mustard variety that is intended for dry land practices and can be crushed for biodiesel. A greenhouse study near Boulder was approved for funding this year. This study is going to assess energy efficiency of greenhouses and the best way to insulate the greenhouses and the most efficient method to heat the greenhouse. Insulated curtains for the glass, earth coupling and subterranean heat pumps are a few examples of what they will study.

This is only a small list of projects that the ACRE program has helped fund. It is a very exciting time for renewable energy, and it is our future. The ACRE program isn't just a small success story. Here is a link that might be of interest: <http://www.ag.state.co.us/acre/counties.htm> The map in the link was last updated in June of 2008. That accounts for only two years of the program. This year's grants aren't listed yet.

Colorado agriculture is in the unique position to ensure a sustainable environment and economy through renewable energy, and the ACRE program is one of the tools that will be used in that pursuit.

Thank you for your time.

Brian Neufeld  
CACD Director

