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February 5, 2009

Senator Jim Isgar
200 East Colfax
Denver, CO 80203

Senator Isgar:

Southeast Colorado Resource Conservation & Development Council would like to voice our support for Senate Bill 124. We are unable to attend the hearing next week in Denver, but want to champion continued funding for agriculture related renewable energy projects. If possible, we would request our comments in support of SB124 be entered into testimony at the hearing.

In light of Governor Ritter's "New Energy Economy" renewable energy projects are yet another way Colorado's agriculture producers can become part of the solution for powering our State with clean, green energy. These types of projects are good for the environment, as well as good for the local agriculture economy, creating new markets and revenue streams for agriculture producers. In the small town of Springfield the newly emerging agriculture wind generation market has already spawned a new business: a distributor/installer for small wind turbines. Renewable energy grant dollars directly fostered this new business.

In 2008 Southeast Colorado Resource Conservation & Development and partners were the recipients of an Advancing Colorado's Renewable Energy (ACRE) implementation grant from the Colorado Department of Agriculture. This demonstration project is funding five wind turbines of various sizes on a diverse set of agriculture applications across the Eastern Plains of Colorado. These projects will become the template for other agriculture producers to use as more farmers and ranchers step into the brave new world of farm-scale wind generation. In light of the current economy, these projects would not have been possible without access to funding through the ACRE program, which is administered by the Colorado Department of Agriculture in cooperation with the Colorado Agriculture Value-Added Development Board.

The Eastern Plains of Colorado has a wealth of natural resources to be harvested for renewable energy projects: wind, solar, biofuel crops, carbon sequestration, etc. There is still much work to be done to fully develop agriculture's potential relating to renewable energy development. As such we strongly support SB124 and encourage the Colorado legislature to continue to invest in Colorado's agriculture industry.

Thank you,

Misty George
Project Manager
Southeast Colorado RC&D Council

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