

Wind Energy Fact Sheet

The BLM manages 20.6 million acres of public lands with wind potential. The BLM has authorized 35 wind energy development projects with a total approved capacity of 3,284 megawatts, enough to supply the power needs of nearly 2 million homes. In addition, the BLM has authorized hundreds of wind energy testing sites. These totals include connected-action projects that include right-of-way (ROW) authorizations for transmission lines to support wind projects on state, private, and tribal lands.

The BLM completed a Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) relating to the development of wind energy on public lands in June 2005. This EIS provides an analysis of the development of wind energy projects on public lands in the West. In conjunction with the publication of this EIS, the BLM amended 52 land use plans to allow for the use of applicable lands for wind energy development. BLM offices are able to use this EIS to analyze anticipated impacts from individual wind ROW applications.

In addition, the BLM issued a wind energy policy in December 2008 to provide guidance on best management practices (BMPs). These BMPs include measures to mitigate the potential impact of wind energy development on birds, wildlife habitat, and other resource values, as well as guidance on administering wind energy authorizations.

For more than a decade, wind energy has been the fastest growing energy technology worldwide, achieving an annual growth rate of over 30%. In the United States, wind energy [accounts for 6%](#) of total U.S. utility-scale net generation. Laws enacted in most of the western states require energy companies to provide a portion of their energy from renewable energy sources. As a result, the BLM anticipates a continued interest in the use of public lands for renewable energy development.

The BLM continues to conduct studies necessary to evaluate and process ROW applications for the siting of wind energy projects and supporting electric transmission lines. The BLM has approved ROWs for wind energy projects in Arizona, California, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, and Wyoming.

The BLM's wind energy program is part of an "all-of-the-above" strategy to improve the management of energy resources found on Federal lands in a balanced way to ensure the Nation's economic and energy security and quality of life.

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