

BLM WIND ENERGY PROGRAM POLICIES AND BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES (BMPS)

The BLM has established a number of policies and BMPs, provided below, regarding the development of wind energy resources on BLM-administered public lands. The policies and BMPs are applicable to all wind energy development projects on BLM-administered public lands. The policies address the administration of wind energy development activities, and the BMPs identify required mitigation measures that will be incorporated into project-specific Plans of Development (PODs) and right-of-way (ROW) authorization stipulations. Additional mitigation measures will be applied to individual projects, in the form of stipulations in the ROW authorization as appropriate, to address site-specific and species-specific issues.

Policies

- The BLM will not issue ROW authorizations for wind energy development for areas in which wind energy development is incompatible with specific resource values. Specific lands excluded from wind energy site monitoring and testing and wind energy development include designated areas that are part of the National Landscape Conservation System (NLCS) (e.g., Wilderness Areas, Wilderness Study Areas, National Monuments, National Conservation Areas¹, Wild and Scenic Rivers, and National Historic and Scenic Trails). Additional areas may be excluded from wind energy development based on resource impacts that cannot be mitigated and/or conflict with existing and multiple-use activities or land use plans. Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) are not universally excluded from wind energy site monitoring and testing or wind energy development, but will be managed consistent with the management prescriptions for the individual ACEC.
- To the extent possible, wind energy projects shall be developed in a manner that will not prevent other land uses, including minerals extraction, livestock grazing, recreational use, and other ROW uses.
- Entities seeking to develop a wind energy project on BLM-administered lands shall consult with appropriate Federal, State, and local agencies regarding specific projects as early in the planning process as appropriate to ensure that all potential construction, operation, and decommissioning issues and concerns are identified and adequately addressed.
- The BLM will initiate government-to-government consultation with Indian tribal governments whose interests might be directly and substantially affected

¹ Wind energy development is permitted in one NCA, the California Desert Conservation Area (CDCA), in accordance with the provisions of the *California Desert Conservation Area Plan 1980, as Amended*.

by activities on BLM-administered lands as early in the planning process as appropriate to ensure that construction, operation, and decommissioning issues and concerns are identified and adequately addressed.

- Entities seeking to develop a wind energy project on BLM-administered lands shall consult with the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD), in conjunction with BLM Washington Office and Field Office staff, regarding the location of wind power projects and turbine siting as early in the planning process as appropriate. This consultation shall occur concurrently at both the installation/field level and the Pentagon/BLM Washington Office level. The consultation process is outlined in an interagency protocol agreement.
- The BLM will consult with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) as required by Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (ESA). The specific consultation requirements will be determined on a project-by-project basis.
- The BLM will consult with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) as required by Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA). The specific consultation requirements will be determined on a project-by-project basis. If programmatic section 106 consultations have been conducted and are adequate to cover a proposed project, additional consultation may not be needed.
- Existing land use plans will be amended, as appropriate, to (1) adopt provisions of the BLM's Wind Energy Development Program, (2) identify land considered available for wind energy development, and (3) identify land that will not be available for wind energy development.
- The level of environmental analysis to be required under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) for individual wind power projects will be determined at the field office level. For many projects, it may be determined that a tiered environmental assessment (EA) is appropriate in lieu of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). To the extent that the Programmatic EIS (PEIS) addresses anticipated issues and concerns associated with an individual project, including potential cumulative impacts, the BLM will tier based on the decisions embedded in the PEIS and limit the scope of additional project-specific NEPA analyses. The site-specific NEPA analyses will include analyses of project site configuration and micrositing considerations, monitoring program requirements, and appropriate mitigation measures. In particular, the mitigation measures discussed in chapter 5 of the PEIS may be consulted in determining site-specific requirements. Public involvement will be incorporated into all wind energy development projects to ensure that all concerns and issues are identified and adequately addressed. In general, the scope of the NEPA analyses will be limited to the proposed action on BLM-administered public lands; however, if access to proposed development

on adjacent non-BLM-administered lands is entirely dependent on obtaining ROW access across BLM-administered public lands and there are no alternatives to that access, the NEPA analysis for the proposed ROW may need to assess the environmental effects from that proposed development. The BLM's analyses of ROW access projects may tier based on the PEIS to the extent that the proposed project falls within the scope of the PEIS analyses.

- Site-specific environmental analyses will tier from the PEIS and identify and assess any cumulative impacts that are beyond the scope of the cumulative impacts addressed in the PEIS.
- The Categorical Exclusion (CX) applicable to the issuance of short-term ROWs or land use authorizations may be applicable to some site monitoring and testing activities. The relevant CX, established in the BLM NEPA Handbook, H-1790-1, Appendix 4, Section E. 19 (January 30, 2008), encompasses "issuance of short-term (3 years or less) rights-of-way or land use authorizations for such uses as storage sites, apiary sites, and construction sites where the proposal includes rehabilitation to restore the land to its natural or original condition." The CX for "nondestructive data collection, inventory, study, research, and monitoring activities" may also be applicable to wind energy site testing and monitoring activities.
- The BLM will require financial bonds for all wind energy development projects on BLM-administered public lands to ensure compliance with the terms and conditions of the rights-of-way authorization and the requirements of applicable regulatory requirements, including reclamation costs. The amount of the required bond will be determined during the rights-of-way authorization process on the basis of site-specific and project-specific factors. A minimum bond will be required for site monitoring and testing authorizations.
- Entities seeking to develop a wind energy project on BLM-administered public lands shall develop a project-specific Plan of Development (POD) that incorporates all BMPs and, as appropriate, the requirements of other existing and relevant BLM mitigation guidance, including the BLM's offsite mitigation guidance. Additional mitigation measures will be incorporated into the POD and into the ROW authorization as project stipulations, as needed, to address site-specific and species-specific issues. The POD will include a site plan showing the locations of turbines, roads, power lines, other infrastructure, and other areas of short- and long-term disturbance.
- The BLM will incorporate management goals and objectives specific to habitat conservation for species of concern (e.g., sage-grouse, raptors, bats), as appropriate, into the POD for proposed wind energy projects.

- The BLM will consider the visual resource values of the public lands involved in proposed wind energy development projects, consistent with BLM Visual Resource Management (VRM) policies and guidance. The BLM will work with the ROW applicant to incorporate visual design considerations into the planning and design of the project to minimize potential visual impacts of the proposal and to meet the VRM objectives of the area.
- Operators of wind power facilities on BLM-administered public lands shall consult with the BLM and other appropriate Federal, State, and local agencies regarding any planned upgrades or changes to the wind facility design or operation. Proposed changes of this nature may require additional environmental analysis and/or revision of the POD.
- The BLM's Wind Energy Development Program will incorporate adaptive management strategies to ensure that potential adverse impacts of wind energy development are avoided if possible, minimized, or mitigated to acceptable levels. The programmatic policies and BMPs will be updated and revised as new data regarding the impacts of wind power projects become available. At the project-level, operators will be required to develop monitoring programs to evaluate the environmental conditions at the site through all phases of development, establish metrics against which monitoring observations can be measured, identify potential mitigation measures, and establish protocols for incorporating monitoring observations and additional mitigation measures into standard operating procedures and project-specific stipulations.

Best Management Practices (BMPs)

The following BMPs will be adopted as required elements of project-specific PODs and/or as ROW authorization stipulations. They are categorized by development activity: site monitoring and testing, development of the POD, construction, operation, and decommissioning. The BMPs for development of the POD identify required elements of the POD needed to address potential impacts associated with subsequent phases of development.

1. Site Monitoring and Testing

- The area disturbed by installation of meteorological towers (i.e., footprint) shall be kept to a minimum.
- Existing roads shall be used to the maximum extent feasible. If new roads are necessary, they shall be designed and constructed to the appropriate BLM road design standards.
- Meteorological towers shall be located to avoid sensitive habitats or areas where ecological resources known to be sensitive to human activities (e.g., prairie grouse) are present. Installation of towers shall be scheduled to

avoid disruption of wildlife reproductive activities or other important behaviors, and shall be consistent with sage grouse management strategies.

- Guy wires on permanent meteorological towers shall be avoided, however, may be necessary on temporary meteorological towers installed during site monitoring and testing. If guy wires are necessary, the meteorological towers shall be periodically inspected to determine whether permanent markers (bird flight diverters) attached to the guy wires are necessary to increase visibility.
- Meteorological towers installed for site monitoring and testing shall be inspected periodically (at least every 6 months) for structural integrity.
- A study design strategy shall be required for any environmental studies initiated or baseline data collected during the site testing and monitoring period. The operator shall submit the study design strategy to the BLM authorized officer for review.

2. Plan of Development Preparation

General

- The BLM and operators shall contact appropriate agencies, property owners, and other stakeholders early in the planning process to identify potentially sensitive land uses and issues, rules that govern wind energy development locally, and land use concerns specific to the region.
- Available information describing the environmental and sociocultural conditions in the vicinity of the proposed project shall be collected and reviewed as needed to predict potential impacts of the project.
- The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)-required notice of proposed construction shall be made as early as possible to identify any required air safety measures.
- To plan for efficient use of the land, necessary infrastructure requirements shall be consolidated wherever possible, and current transmission and market access shall be evaluated carefully.
- The project shall be planned to utilize existing roads and utility corridors to the maximum extent feasible and to minimize the number and length/size of new roads, lay-down areas, and borrow areas.
- A monitoring program shall be developed to ensure that environmental conditions are monitored during the construction, operation, and decommissioning phases. The monitoring program requirements, including adaptive management strategies, shall be established at the project level to

ensure that potential adverse impacts of wind energy development are mitigated. The monitoring program shall identify the monitoring requirements for each environmental resource present at the site, establish metrics against which monitoring observations can be measured, identify potential mitigation measures, and establish protocols for incorporating monitoring observations and additional mitigation measures into standard operating procedures and BMPs.

- “Good housekeeping” procedures shall be developed to ensure that during operation the site will be kept clean of debris, garbage, fugitive trash or waste, and graffiti; to prohibit scrap heaps and dumps; and to minimize storage yards.

Wildlife and Other Ecological Resources

- Operators shall review existing information on species and habitats in the vicinity of the project area to identify potential concerns.
- Operators shall conduct surveys for Federal and/or State-protected species and other species of concern (including priority wildlife and special status plant and animal species) within the project area and design the project to avoid, minimize, or mitigate impacts to these resources.
- Operators shall identify important, sensitive, or unique habitats in the vicinity of the project and design the project to avoid, minimize, or mitigate impacts to these habitats (e.g., locate the turbines, roads, and ancillary facilities in the least environmentally sensitive areas; i.e., away from riparian habitats, streams, wetlands, drainages, or critical wildlife habitats).
- The BLM will prohibit the disturbance of any population of federally listed plant species under the Endangered Species Act.
- Operators shall evaluate avian and bat use of the project area and design the project to minimize or mitigate the potential for bird and bat strikes (e.g., development shall not occur in riparian habitats and wetlands). Avian and bat use surveys consistent with current methodologies and standards shall be conducted; the amount and extent of ecological baseline data required shall be determined on a project basis.
- Turbines shall be configured to avoid landscape features known to attract raptors if site studies show that placing turbines there would pose a significant risk to raptors.
- Operators shall determine the presence of bat colonies and avoid placing turbines near known bat hibernation, breeding, and maternity/nursery colonies; in known migration corridors; or in known flight paths between colonies and feeding areas.

- Operators shall determine the presence of active raptor nests (i.e., raptor nests used during the breeding season) and design the project to provide for spatial buffers and timing restrictions for surface disturbing activities. Measures to reduce raptor use at a project site (e.g., minimize road cuts, maintain either no vegetation or plant species that are unattractive to raptors around the turbines) shall also be identified.
- A habitat restoration plan shall be developed to avoid, minimize, or mitigate negative impacts on vulnerable wildlife while maintaining or enhancing habitat values for other species. The plan shall identify reclamation, soil stabilization, and erosion reduction measures that shall be implemented to ensure that all temporary use areas are restored. The plan shall require that restoration occur as soon as possible after completion of activities to reduce the amount of habitat converted at any one time and to speed up the recovery to natural habitats.
- Procedures shall be developed to mitigate potential impacts to special status species and other priority wildlife species. Such measures may include avoidance, relocation of project facilities or lay-down areas, and/or relocation of biota.
- Facilities shall be designed to discourage their use as perching or nesting substrates by birds. For example, power lines and poles shall be configured to minimize raptor electrocutions and discourage raptor and raven nesting and perching.

Visual Resources

- The public shall be involved and informed about the visual site design elements of the proposed wind energy facilities. Possible approaches include conducting public forums for disseminating information, offering organized tours of operating wind developments, and using computer and visualization simulations in public presentations.
- Visual resource management (VRM) considerations shall take place early in the project planning phase in accordance with BLM VRM manual and handbooks. Operators shall utilize digital terrain mapping tools at a landscape/viewshed scale for site planning and design, visual impact analysis, and visual impact mitigation planning and design. Visual mitigation planning and design shall be performed through field assessments, applied GPS technology, photo documentation, use of computer-aided design and development software, and visual simulations to reflect a full range of visual resource best management practices. The digital terrain mapping tools shall be at a resolution and contour interval suitable for site design and accurate placement of proposed developments into the digital viewshed. Visual

simulations shall be prepared and evaluated in accordance with BLM Handbook H-8432-1, or other agency requirements, to create spatially accurate depictions of the appearance of proposed facilities. Simulations shall depict proposed project facilities from Key Observation Points and other visual resource sensitive locations.

- Turbine arrays and turbine design shall be integrated with the surrounding landscape. Design elements to be addressed include visual uniformity, use of tubular towers, proportion and color of turbines, nonreflective paints, and prohibition of commercial messages on turbines.
- Other site design elements shall be integrated with the surrounding landscape. Elements to address include minimizing the profile of the ancillary structures, burial of cables, prohibition of commercial symbols, and lighting. Regarding lighting, efforts shall be made to minimize the need for and amount of lighting on ancillary structures.

Roads

- An access road siting and management plan shall be prepared incorporating existing BLM standards regarding road design, construction, and maintenance such as those described in the BLM 9113 Manual and the *Surface Operating Standards and Guidelines for Oil and Gas Exploration and Development* (revised 2007).

Ground Transportation

- A transportation plan shall be developed, particularly for the transport of turbine components, main assembly cranes, and other large pieces of equipment. The plan shall consider specific object sizes, weights, origin, destination, and unique handling requirements and shall evaluate alternative transportation approaches. In addition, the process to be used to comply with unique state requirements and to obtain all necessary permits shall be clearly identified.
- A traffic management plan shall be prepared for the site access roads to ensure that no hazards would result from increased truck traffic and that traffic flow would not be adversely impacted. This plan shall incorporate measures such as informational signs, flaggers when equipment may result in blocked throughways, and traffic cones to identify any necessary changes in temporary lane configuration.

Noise

- Proponents of a wind energy development project shall take measurements to assess the existing background noise levels at a given site and compare them to the anticipated noise levels associated with the proposed project.

Noxious Weeds and Pesticides

- Operators shall develop a plan for control of noxious weeds and invasive species, which could occur as a result of new surface disturbance activities at the site. The plan shall address monitoring, education of personnel on weed identification, the manner in which weeds spread, and methods for treating infestations. The use of certified weed-free mulch and certified weed-free seed shall be required. If trucks and construction equipment are arriving from locations with known invasive vegetation problems, a controlled inspection and cleaning area shall be established to visually inspect construction equipment arriving at the project area and to remove and collect seeds that may be adhering to tires and other equipment surfaces.
- If pesticides are used on the site, an integrated pest management plan shall be developed to ensure that applications will be conducted within the framework of BLM and DOI policies and entail only the use of EPA-registered pesticides. Pesticide use shall be limited to nonpersistent, immobile pesticides and shall only be applied in accordance with label and application permit directions and stipulations for terrestrial and aquatic applications. Any applications of herbicides will be subject to BLM herbicide treatment standard operating procedures. Only herbicides on the list of approved herbicide formulations (updated annually) will be used on public lands.

Cultural/Historic Resources

- The BLM will consult with Indian tribal governments early in the planning process to identify issues regarding the proposed wind energy development, including issues related to the presence of cultural properties, access rights, disruption to traditional cultural practices, and impacts to visual resources important to the tribe(s).
- The presence of archaeological sites and historic properties in the area of potential effect shall be determined on the basis of a records search of recorded sites and properties in the area and/or, depending on the extent and reliability of existing information, an archaeological survey. Archaeological sites and historic properties present in the area of potential effect shall be reviewed to determine whether they meet the criteria of eligibility for listing on the *National Register of Historic Places* (NRHP).

- When any right-of-way application includes remnants of a National Historic Trail, is located within the viewshed of a National Historic Trail's designated centerline, or includes or is within the viewshed of a trail eligible for listing on the NRHP, the operator shall evaluate the potential visual impacts to the trail associated with the proposed project and identify appropriate mitigation measures for inclusion as stipulations in the POD.
- If cultural resources are present at the site, or if areas with a high potential to contain cultural material have been identified, a cultural resources management plan (CRMP) shall be developed. This plan shall address mitigation activities to be taken for cultural resources found at the site. Avoidance of the area is always the preferred mitigation option. Other mitigation options include archaeological survey and excavation, and monitoring. If an area exhibits a high potential, but no artifacts were observed during an archaeological survey, monitoring by a qualified archaeologist may be required during all excavation and earthmoving in the high-potential area. A report shall be prepared documenting these activities. The CRMP also shall (1) establish a monitoring program, (2) identify measures to prevent potential looting/vandalism or erosion impacts, and (3) address the education of workers and the public to make them aware of the consequences of unauthorized collection of artifacts and destruction of property on public land.

Paleontological Resources

- Operators shall determine whether paleontological resources exist in a project area on the basis of the sedimentary context of the area, a records search for past paleontological finds in the area, and/or, depending on the extent of existing information, a paleontological survey.
- If paleontological resources are present at the site, or if areas with a high potential to contain paleontological material have been identified, a paleontological resources management plan shall be developed. This plan shall include a mitigation plan for collection of the fossils; mitigation may include avoidance, removal of fossils, or monitoring. If an area exhibits a high potential but no fossils were observed during survey, monitoring by a qualified paleontologist may be required during all excavation and earthmoving in the sensitive area. A report shall be prepared documenting these activities. The paleontological resources management plan also shall (1) establish a monitoring program, (2) identify measures to prevent potential looting/vandalism or erosion impacts, and (3) address the education of workers and the public to make them aware of the consequences of unauthorized collection of fossils on public land.

Hazardous Materials and Waste Management

- Operators shall develop a hazardous materials management plan addressing storage, use, transportation, and disposal of each hazardous material anticipated to be used at the site. The plan shall identify all hazardous materials that would be used, stored, or transported at the site. It shall establish inspection procedures, storage requirements, storage quantity limits, inventory control, nonhazardous product substitutes, and disposition of excess materials. The plan shall also identify requirements for notices to Federal and local emergency response authorities and include emergency response plans.
- Operators shall develop a waste management plan identifying the waste streams that are expected to be generated at the site and addressing hazardous waste determination procedures, waste storage locations, waste-specific management and disposal requirements, inspection procedures, and waste minimization procedures. This plan shall address all solid and liquid wastes that may be generated at the site.
- Operators shall develop a spill prevention and response plan identifying where hazardous materials and wastes are stored on site, spill prevention measures to be implemented, training requirements, appropriate spill response actions for each material or waste, the locations of spill response kits on site, a procedure for ensuring that the spill response kits are adequately stocked at all times, and procedures for making timely notifications to authorities.

Storm Water

- Operators shall develop a storm water management plan for the site to ensure compliance with applicable regulations and prevent offsite migration of contaminated storm water or increased soil erosion.

Human Health and Safety

- A safety assessment shall be conducted to describe potential safety issues and the means that would be taken to mitigate them, including issues such as site access, construction, safe work practices, security, heavy equipment transportation, traffic management, emergency procedures, and fire control.
- A health and safety program shall be developed to protect both workers and the general public during construction, operation, and decommissioning of a wind energy project. Regarding occupational health and safety, the program shall identify all applicable Federal and State occupational safety standards; establish safe work practices for each task (e.g., requirements for personal protective equipment and safety harnesses; Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) standard practices for safe use of explosives and blasting agents; and measures for reducing occupational electric and magnetic

fields (EMF) exposures); establish fire safety evacuation procedures; and define safety performance standards (e.g., electrical system standards and lightning protection standards). The program shall include a training program to identify hazard training requirements for workers for each task and establish procedures for providing required training to all workers. Documentation of training and a mechanism for reporting serious accidents to appropriate agencies shall be established.

- Regarding public health and safety, the health and safety program shall establish a safety zone or setback for wind turbine generators from residences and occupied buildings, roads, rights-of-ways, and other public access areas that is sufficient to prevent accidents resulting from the operation of wind turbine generators. It shall identify requirements for temporary fencing around staging areas, storage yards, and excavations during construction or decommissioning activities. It shall also identify measures to be taken during the operation phase to limit public access to hazardous facilities (e.g., permanent fencing installed only around electrical substations, and turbine tower access doors locked).
- Operators shall consult with local planning authorities regarding increased traffic during the construction phase, including an assessment of the number of vehicles per day, their size, and type. Specific issues of concern (e.g., location of school bus routes and stops) shall be identified and addressed in the traffic management plan.
- If operation of the wind turbines is expected to cause significant adverse impacts to nearby residences and occupied buildings from shadow flicker, low-frequency sound, or EMF, site-specific recommendations for addressing these concerns shall be incorporated into the project design (e.g., establishing a sufficient setback from turbines).
- The project shall be planned to minimize electromagnetic interference (EMI) (e.g., impacts to radar, microwave, television, and radio transmissions) and comply with Federal Communications Commission (FCC) regulations. Signal strength studies shall be conducted when proposed locations have the potential to impact transmissions. Potential interference with public safety communication systems (e.g., radio traffic related to emergency activities) shall be avoided.
- The project shall be planned to comply with Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) regulations, including lighting regulations, and to avoid potential safety issues associated with proximity to airports, military bases or training areas, or landing strips.

- Operators shall develop a fire management strategy to implement measures to minimize the potential for a human-caused fire and respond to natural fire situations.

3. Construction

General

- All control and mitigation measures established for the project in the POD and the resource-specific management plans that are part of the POD shall be maintained and implemented throughout the construction phase, as appropriate.
- The area disturbed by construction and operation of a wind energy development project (i.e., footprint) shall be kept to a minimum.
- The number and size/length of roads, temporary fences, lay-down areas, and borrow areas shall be minimized.
- Topsoil from all excavations and construction activities shall be salvaged and reapplied during reclamation.
- All areas of disturbed soil shall be reclaimed using weed-free native grasses, forbs, and shrubs. Reclamation activities shall be undertaken as early as possible on disturbed areas.
- All electrical collector lines shall be buried in a manner that minimizes additional surface disturbance (e.g., along roads or other paths of surface disturbance). Overhead lines may be used in cases where burial of lines would result in further habitat disturbance.
- Operators shall identify unstable slopes and local factors that can induce slope instability (such as groundwater conditions, precipitation, earthquake activities, slope angles, and the dip angles of geologic strata). Operators also shall avoid creating excessive slopes during excavation and blasting operations. Special construction techniques shall be used where applicable in areas of steep slopes, erodible soil, and stream channel crossings.
- Erosion controls that comply with county, State, and Federal standards shall be applied. Practices such as jute netting, silt fences, and check dams shall be applied near disturbed areas.

Wildlife

- Timing restrictions for construction activities may be implemented to minimize impacts to wildlife.

- In accordance with the habitat restoration plan, restoration shall be undertaken as soon as possible after completion of construction activities to reduce the amount of habitat converted at any one time and to speed up the recovery to natural habitats.
- All construction employees shall be instructed to avoid harassment and disturbance of wildlife, especially during reproductive (e.g., courtship and nesting) seasons. In addition, pets shall not be permitted on site during construction.

Visual Resources

- Operators shall reduce visual impacts during construction by clearly delineating construction boundaries and minimizing areas of surface disturbance; preserving vegetation to the greatest extent possible; utilizing undulating surface disturbance edges; stripping, salvaging and replacing topsoil; contoured grading; controlling erosion; using dust suppression techniques; and restoring exposed soils as closely as possible to their original contour and vegetation.

Roads

- Existing roads shall be used, but only if in safe and environmentally sound locations. If new roads are necessary, they shall be designed and constructed to the appropriate BLM road design standards and be no higher than necessary to accommodate their intended functions (e.g., traffic volume and weight of vehicles). Excessive grades on roads, road embankments, ditches, and drainages shall be avoided, especially in areas with erodible soils. Special construction techniques shall be used, where applicable. Abandoned roads and roads that are no longer needed shall be recontoured and revegetated.
- Access roads and on-site roads shall be surfaced with aggregate materials, wherever appropriate.
- Access roads shall be located to follow natural contours and minimize side hill cuts.
- Roads shall be located away from drainage bottoms and avoid wetlands, if practicable.
- Roads shall be designed so that changes to surface water runoff are avoided and erosion is not initiated.
- Access roads shall be located to minimize stream crossings. All structures crossing streams shall be located and constructed so that they do not decrease

channel stability or increase water velocity. Operators shall obtain all applicable Federal and State permits.

- Existing drainage systems shall not be altered, especially in sensitive areas such as erodible soils or steep slopes. Potential soil erosion shall be controlled at culvert outlets with appropriate structures. Catch basins, roadway ditches, and culverts shall be cleaned and maintained regularly.

Ground Transportation

- Project personnel and contractors shall be instructed and required to adhere to speed limits commensurate with road types, traffic volumes, vehicle types, and site-specific conditions, to ensure safe and efficient traffic flow and to reduce wildlife collisions and disturbance and airborne dust.
- Traffic shall be restricted to the roads developed for the project. Use of other unimproved roads shall be restricted to emergency situations.
- Signs shall be placed along construction roads to identify speed limits, travel restrictions, and other standard traffic control information. To minimize impacts on local commuters, consideration shall be given to limiting construction vehicles traveling on public roadways during the morning and late afternoon commute time. Consideration shall also be given to opportunities for busing of construction workers to the job site to reduce traffic volumes.

Air Emissions

- Dust abatement techniques shall be used on unpaved, unvegetated surfaces to minimize airborne dust.
- Speed limits (e.g., 25 mph [40 km/h]) shall be posted and enforced to reduce airborne fugitive dust.
- Construction materials and stockpiled soils shall be covered if they are a source of fugitive dust.
- Dust abatement techniques shall be used before and during surface clearing, excavation, or blasting activities.

Excavation and Blasting Activities

- Operators shall gain a clear understanding of the local hydrogeology. Areas of groundwater discharge and recharge and their potential relationships with surface water bodies shall be identified.

- Operators shall avoid creating hydrologic conduits between two aquifers during foundation excavation and other activities.
- Foundations and trenches shall be backfilled with originally excavated material as much as possible. Excess excavation materials shall be disposed of only in approved areas or, if suitable, stockpiled for use in reclamation activities.
- Borrow material shall be obtained only from authorized and permitted sites. Existing sites shall be used in preference to new sites.
- Explosives shall be used only within specified times and at specified distances from sensitive wildlife or streams and lakes, as established by the BLM or other Federal and State agencies.

Noise

- Noisy construction activities (including blasting) shall be limited to the least noise-sensitive times of day (i.e., daylight hours only or specified times) and weekdays.
- All equipment shall have sound-control devices no less effective than those provided on the original equipment. All construction equipment used shall be adequately muffled and maintained.
- All stationary construction equipment (i.e., compressors and generators) shall be located as far as practicable from nearby residences.
- If blasting or other noisy activities are required during the construction period, nearby residents shall be notified in advance.

Cultural and Paleontological Resources

- Unexpected discovery of cultural or paleontological resources during construction shall be brought to the attention of the responsible BLM authorized officer immediately. Work shall be halted in the vicinity of the find to avoid further disturbance to the resources while they are being evaluated and appropriate mitigation measures are being developed.

Hazardous Materials and Waste Management

- Secondary containment shall be provided for all onsite hazardous materials and waste storage, including fuel. In particular, fuel storage (for construction vehicles and equipment) shall be a temporary activity occurring only for as long as is needed to support construction activities.

- Wastes shall be properly containerized and removed periodically for disposal at appropriate offsite-permitted disposal facilities.
- In the event of an accidental release of hazardous materials to the environment, the operator shall document the event, including a root cause analysis, appropriate corrective actions taken, and a characterization of the resulting environmental or health and safety impacts. Documentation of the event shall be provided to the BLM authorized officer and other Federal and State agencies, as required.
- Any wastewater generated in association with temporary, portable sanitary facilities shall be periodically removed by a licensed hauler and introduced into an existing municipal sewage treatment facility. Temporary, portable sanitary facilities provided for construction crews shall be adequate to support expected onsite personnel and shall be removed at completion of construction activities.

Public Health and Safety

- Temporary fencing shall be installed around staging areas, storage yards, and excavations during construction to limit public access.

4. Operation

General

- All control and mitigation measures established for the project in the POD and the resource-specific management plans that are part of the POD shall be maintained and implemented throughout the operational phase, as appropriate. These control and mitigation measures shall be reviewed and revised, as needed, to address changing conditions or requirements at the site throughout the operational phase. This adaptive management approach will help ensure that impacts from operations are kept to a minimum.
- Inoperative turbines shall be repaired, replaced, or removed in a timely manner. Requirements to do so shall be incorporated into the due diligence provisions of the rights-of-way authorization. Operators will be required to demonstrate due diligence in the repair, replacement, or removal of turbines; failure to do so may result in termination of the right-of-way authorization.

Wildlife

- Employees, contractors, and site visitors shall be instructed to avoid harassment and disturbance of wildlife, especially during reproductive (e.g., courtship and nesting) seasons. In addition, any pets shall be controlled to avoid harassment and disturbance of wildlife.

- Observations of potential wildlife impacts, including wildlife mortality, shall be reported to the BLM authorized officer immediately.

Visual Resources

- Operators shall monitor and maintain visual mitigation measures for the approved project in accordance with a visual monitoring and compliance plan. The operator shall maintain revegetated surfaces until a self-sustaining stand of vegetation is reestablished and visually adapted to the undisturbed surrounding vegetation. No new disturbance shall be created during operations without completion of a VRM analysis and approval by the authorized officer.

Ground Transportation

- Ongoing ground transportation planning shall be conducted to evaluate road use, minimize traffic volume, and ensure that roads are maintained adequately to minimize associated impacts.

Monitoring Program

- Site monitoring protocols defined in the POD shall be implemented. These will incorporate monitoring program observations and additional mitigation measures into standard operating procedures and BMPs to minimize future environmental impacts.
- Results of monitoring program efforts shall be provided to the BLM authorized officer.

Public Health and Safety

- Permanent fencing shall be installed and maintained around electrical substations, and turbine tower access doors shall be locked to limit public access.
- In the event an installed wind energy development project results in electromagnetic interference (EMI), the operator shall work with the owner of the impacted communications system to resolve the problem. Additional warning information may also need to be conveyed to aircraft with onboard radar systems so that echoes from wind turbines can be quickly recognized.

5. Decommissioning

General

- Prior to the termination of the right-of-way authorization, a decommissioning plan shall be developed and approved by the BLM. The decommissioning plan shall include a site reclamation plan and monitoring program.
- All management plans, BMPs, and stipulations developed for the construction phase shall be applied to similar activities during the decommissioning phase.
- All turbines and ancillary structures shall be removed from the site.
- Topsoil from all decommissioning activities shall be salvaged and reapplied during final reclamation.
- All areas of disturbed soil shall be reclaimed using weed-free native shrubs, grasses, and forbs.
- The vegetation cover, composition, and diversity shall be restored to values commensurate with the ecological setting.