



BLM Ely District Office  
 HC 33 Box 33500  
 Ely, NV 89301



# Wilson Creek Wind Project

NEWSLETTER #1

June 2011

## Introduction

This is the first newsletter regarding the Wilson Creek Wind Project (Wilson Creek Project), a proposed wind energy generation project planned in Lincoln County, Nevada. Wilson Creek Power Partners, LLC has submitted a right-of-way application to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) for the Wilson Creek Project. The BLM will prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 for the Wilson Creek Project. The EIS will provide a detailed analysis of the potential environmental impacts of the proposed action and a range of reasonable alternatives, including any mitigation measures. Amendments to the BLM land use plans may also be required.

As part of this process, the BLM will conduct public scoping meetings to request public input and identify possible issues and concerns that may result from the Wilson Creek Project.

## Participants

The BLM is the lead federal agency for the EIS. EPG, as the third-party consultant, will prepare the EIS under BLM direction. Cooperating agencies will be invited to participate in the EIS and may include the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of Defense, Federal Aviation Administration, Nevada Department of Wildlife, Lincoln County, and the N4 Grazing Board. Other state and local governments will be invited to participate in the process, and consultation will occur with federal, state, local, and tribal governments.

## Project Description

Wilson Creek Power Partners is proposing the development of a multi-phase wind generation project on approximately 31,000 acres of BLM administered public lands in Lincoln County, Nevada. The project area is located approximately 110 miles northeast of Las Vegas, on the contiguous Wilson Creek and Table Mountain range of mountains. The range is located about 20 miles northeast of the town of Pioche, Nevada. The project area contains the Wilson Creek, Table Mountain, White Rock, and Atlanta Ridge subareas (see project area map inside). The actual disturbance from wind projects generally ranges from 2-5% of the leased area.

The fully constructed project would consist of up to 373 wind turbines to be located along the ridgeline of the

Wilson Creek Range. In addition to the wind turbines, other project components are expected to include buried power collection lines and communication cables, access roads, meteorological towers, substation(s) and switchyard(s), an operation and maintenance building, a single- or double-circuited 120- to 230-kilovolt overhead transmission line, and portable cement batch plants and rock-crushing facilities. The project is anticipated to be developed in multiple phases, with the Wilson Creek Range and Table Mountain sites composing Phase I. Phase I would consist of up to 195 wind turbines, producing 500 megawatts (MW) of electricity, depending on the selected wind turbine manufacturer. The Atlanta Summit site would compose Phase II, and the White Rock site would compose Phase III. The later phases of the project would be considered for development if the wind resources in the Atlanta Summit and White Rock areas are found to be sufficient. Additional environmental analyses would be conducted for Phases II and III of the project and any associated land use plan amendments.

## Purpose and Need

According to a recent Department of Energy Annual Energy Outlook report (2009), nearly three-quarters of electricity produced in the United States comes from fossil fuels. However, in recent years, the majority of states in the southwest have passed regulations or guidelines that require utilities to generate a specific percentage of their energy portfolio from renewable resources, such as wind, solar, biomass, and geothermal. A summary of renewable energy standards in the southwest are shown in the table below.

Wilson Creek Power Partners is proposing to construct and operate a utility-scale wind energy generating facility that is tied into the regional grid, so that the energy produced can be marketed to utility companies in Nevada and other western States to meet their state portfolio standards and energy requirements.

RENEWABLE ENERGY STANDARDS		
<i>The percentage of a regulated utility's retail sales that must be generated by renewable energy sources. The RES must be met by a certain year.</i>		
State	RES	Year
AZ	15%	2025
CA	33%	2020
NM	20%	2020
NV	20%	2015

## ATTENTION: PUBLIC SCOPING MEETINGS IN YOUR AREA

All meetings will be in an open house format from 5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.

**Monday**  
**July 11, 2011**

5:30 pm to 7:30 pm  
 BLM Las Vegas Field Office  
 4701 N. Torrey Pines Drive  
 Las Vegas, NV 89130

**Tuesday**  
**July 12, 2011**

5:30 pm to 7:30 pm  
 Springhill Suites Conference Room  
 1477 South Old Hwy 91  
 Cedar City, UT 84720

**Wednesday**  
**July 13, 2011**

5:30 pm to 7:30 pm  
 Pioche Elementary School Gym  
 95 Airport Road  
 Pioche, NV 89043

**Thursday**  
**July 14, 2011**

5:30 pm to 7:30 pm  
 Prospector Hotel Conference Room  
 1501 Aultman Street  
 Ely, NV 89301

## Project Contact

Dan Netcher  
BLM Ely District Office  
HC 33 Box 33500  
Ely, NV 89301  
(775) 289-1872



## Comment Submittal

Opportunities to submit written public comments during the 60-day public scoping period are available by:

Attending a public scoping meeting and registering comments in person (see the Public Scoping Meeting schedule on back cover)

• **Emailing comments to:**  
[wilsoncreekwind@blm.gov](mailto:wilsoncreekwind@blm.gov)

• **Mailing comments to:**  
BLM Ely District Office  
Attn: Dan Netcher  
HC 33 Box 33500  
Ely, NV 89301

## Project Mailing List and Newsletter

Throughout the course of the project, updates will be sent to individuals on the mailing list. To receive newsletters or request to be placed on the mailing list, forward your information to: [wilsoncreekwind@blm.gov](mailto:wilsoncreekwind@blm.gov) or the address above.

The Applicant's objectives include the following:

- To construct, own, operate, and maintain an efficient, economic, and reliable, utility-scale wind generating facility that would help achieve State and/or regional renewable energy standards
- To develop the wind energy generating facility on a site with an excellent wind resource
- To interconnect to an electrical transmission system with available capacity that ties into the regional electric grid
- To be consistent with the goals of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, which seeks to support home-grown renewable energy for economic recovery
- To be consistent with federal, Western Governors' Association, state and local goals for clean renewable energy and sustainable economic development

## Public Comment Sought for Environmental Analysis

The EIS will address the construction, operation, and maintenance of the Wilson Creek Project. Additional studies undertaken as part of this EIS process will determine the final configuration and location of the proposed project. Potential environmental issues to be addressed in the EIS analysis include:

- Land use and recreation resources
- Visual resources
- Biological resources, including special status species
- Cultural and historic resources
- Air, soil, and water resources
- Social and economic resources

The BLM invites you to comment on specific issues and concerns relating to the proposed Wilson Creek Project, alternatives, and potentially affected resources, or to suggest other topics that should be evaluated in the EIS.

See sidebar (left) for project contact and comment submittal information.

## PROJECTED PROJECT TIMELINE



## WILSON CREEK WIND PROJECT AREA

