



Bureau of Land Management
 Las Vegas Field Office
 4701 N. Torrey Pines Drive
 Las Vegas, NV 89130-2301



PUBLIC MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT

Please attend one of the following scoping meetings to help identify the range, or scope, of issues related to the Searchlight Wind Energy Project. The issues identified during the scoping process will be considered and addressed during preparation of the Environmental Impact Statement. All meetings will be held in an open house format with a brief presentation.

SEARCHLIGHT

Tuesday, January 27, 2009
 4 pm – 7 pm;
 presentation at 4:30 pm
 Searchlight Community Center
 200 Michael Wendell Way
 Searchlight, NV 89046

LAUGHLIN

Wednesday, January 28, 2009
 6 pm – 9 pm;
 presentation at 6:30 pm
 William G. Bennett
 Elementary School
 2750 South Needles Hwy
 Laughlin, NV 89029

BOULDER CITY

Thursday, January 29, 2009
 5 pm – 8 pm;
 presentation at 5:30 pm
 Boulder City Library
 701 Adams Blvd
 Boulder City, NV 89005

Participants will have the opportunity to submit verbal or written comments at all meetings.



INTRODUCTION

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the proposed Searchlight Wind Energy project. Searchlight Wind Energy, LLC has submitted an application for the construction, operation, and maintenance of a wind energy generation site on public lands adjacent to the town of Searchlight, Nevada. The first step in the EIS process is public scoping to identify issues and concerns that should be addressed in the EIS. The 60-day public scoping period for the Searchlight Wind Energy Project was initiated on December 16, 2008. This newsletter is being provided to potentially interested parties to describe the project, announce public scoping meetings, and provide opportunities to comment on the project.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Searchlight Wind, LLC is proposing to develop an approximately 370 megawatt (MW) wind energy facility consisting of up to 161 wind turbine generators. The project is located on 24,383 acres of public lands east of Searchlight, Nevada (see attached map on page 3). The facility, depending upon the wind, would have the capacity to generate enough electricity to power over 100,000 households. This assumes an average household use of approximately 9,000 kilo watt hours per year.

The proposed wind turbine towers would be up to 262 feet tall from the ground to the hub with blades extending up to an additional 153 feet. The total height of each turbine would be up to 415 feet.

In addition to the wind turbines, the proposed project would require the construction of new access roads, an overhead transmission line, two electrical substations, an electrical interconnection facility/switchyard, an operations and maintenance building, and temporary and permanent laydown areas. Five permanent meteorological masts would be installed on the site to measure the wind speed and direction across the site over the life of the project. The exact areas of each component are subject to change as the project design develops and the EIS process proceeds.



THE EIS PROCESS

The proposed facilities would be on public land managed by the BLM; therefore, the project is considered a Federal action requiring review under and compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA). Under NEPA, actions such as the Searchlight Wind Energy Project must consider the potential effects on the environment including human, natural, and cultural resources.

Human

Environment – land use, social and economic conditions, environmental justice, visual characteristics, noise

Natural

Environment – air, geology, soils, water, vegetation, wildlife, special status and avian species

Cultural

Environment – prehistoric and historic archaeological sites, and traditional cultural lifeways and resources



The NEPA process for the proposed project is anticipated to occur within a 24-28 month timeframe and consist of several steps depicted in the flow chart below.

At this early stage in the process, BLM (the lead Federal agency) will identify the range or scope of public and agency issues through comments received in meetings and discussions with relevant agencies and the public.

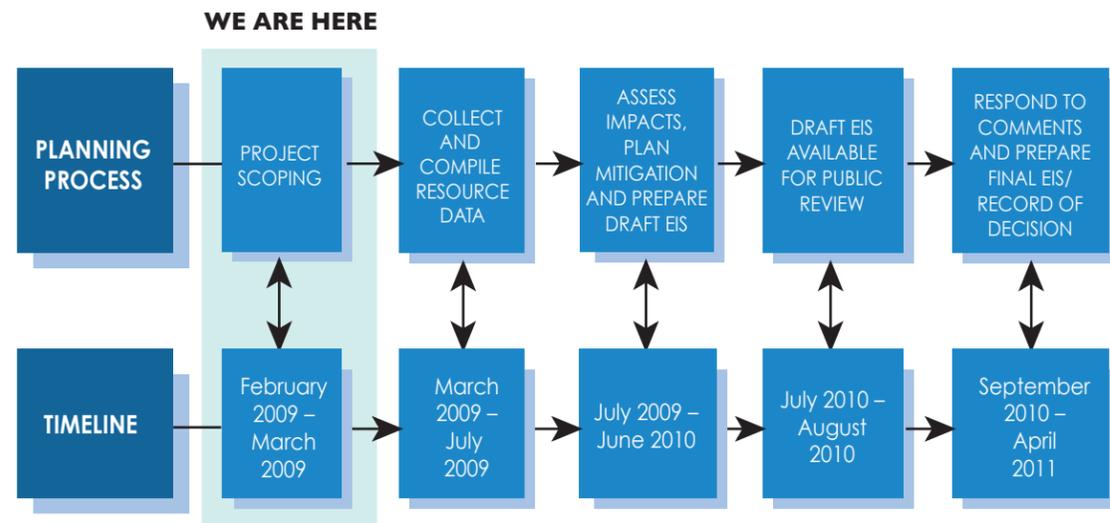
Once the BLM has an understanding of the issues, the study team will begin to gather data on resources within the study area. Based on the description of the proposed project and any alternatives to be evaluated; issues identified; and resource data, the EIS team will assess potential impacts that could result from the project and identify measures to mitigate, or reduce those impacts.

PUBLIC SCOPING

BLM understands the importance of involving the public and agencies in the planning process. During public scoping, BLM encourages comments to identify issues and concerns that are important in the region and that need to be addressed in the EIS.

The first opportunity for you to participate will be the upcoming public scoping meetings. These public meetings are planned for **Boulder City, Searchlight, and Laughlin, Nevada** in January of 2009 as noted on the back of this newsletter. These meetings also will be announced in local newspapers and at www.nv.blm.gov/vegas/default.html. Comments can be submitted orally or in writing at the public meetings, as well as by mail, fax or e-mail. Comments will be most helpful in the preparation of the Draft EIS if they are submitted by February 17, 2009.

The scoping meetings will be held in an open house format, with a brief presentation to provide an overview of the project and EIS process. Project team members will be available at display stations to answer questions and take note of your comments.



BLM will provide opportunities to comment on the status of the project throughout the EIS process. Preliminary work on the Draft EIS has already started; the scoping process will help BLM identify issues not already considered in the Draft and help in the formulation of the alternatives to be presented in the Draft. A Notice Of Availability (NOA) will be published by the BLM and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in the Federal Register when the Draft EIS is published. The EPA-NOA starts the 45-day public review and comment period where BLM will conduct public meetings to accept comments on the draft document. Written comments will be accepted during that time.

If you have questions, would like to be on the mailing list, or would like to speak to a project representative, please use the contact information below.

HOW TO SUBMIT WRITTEN COMMENTS

Remember, comments will be most helpful if submitted in writing by February 17, 2009.

E-mail: Searchlight_Wind_Energy_EIS@blm.gov
 Fax: 702-515-5010
 Mail: BLM Las Vegas Field Office,
 4701 North Torrey Pines Drive,
 Las Vegas, NV 89130-2301
 Phone: 702-515-5000

