

Chokecherry and Sierra Madre Wind Energy Project



Alternative Development

Alternatives are considered the “heart of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).” Alternatives to an action are developed through discussions among the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Interdisciplinary team, cooperating agency concerns, and input from the public. The BLM is required to:

- Explore and evaluate all reasonable alternatives, and eliminate alternatives considered as unreasonable from detailed study.
- Provide equal treatment to each alternative analyzed to provide an objective comparison for reviewers.
- Include the alternative of “no action”.
- Identify the agency's preferred alternative or alternatives in the final EIS.

Reasonable Range of Alternatives

A range of alternatives explores alternative means of meeting the purpose and need for the action to address unresolved conflicts and concerns raised by the agencies and public. Reasonable alternatives include those that are practical or feasible from the technical, economic, and common sense standpoint.

Alternatives Eliminated from Detailed Study

Some alternatives considered may not be carried forward for further analysis, based on the following rationale:

- It is ineffective or would not respond to the purpose and need.
- It is technically or economically infeasible to implement given past and current practice and technology.
- It is inconsistent with the basic policy objectives for the management of the area.
- Its implementation is remote or speculative.
- It is substantially similar in design to an alternative that is analyzed.
- It would have substantially similar effects to an alternative that is analyzed.

No Action Alternative

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires the alternatives analysis in the EIS to “include the alternative of no action.” “No action” means that the proposed project would not take place. The environmental effects from taking no action provide a useful baseline for comparison of environmental effects (including cumulative effects) and demonstrate the consequences of not meeting the need for the action.

Preferred Alternative

The preferred alternative is the alternative that the BLM believes would fulfill its statutory mission and responsibilities, giving consideration to economic, environmental, technical, and other factors. The designated BLM official responsible for preparing the EIS and assuring its adequacy is responsible for identifying BLM's preferred alternative.

