

**U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Rawlins Field Office**

May, 2011

Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI)

Shell Wind Energy
Sand Hills Wind Farm

Lease Number WYW-166407

Environmental Assessment No.: DOI-BLM-WY-030-2009-0314-EA

Finding of No Significant Impact:

Based on the analysis of potential environmental impacts contained in the attached Environmental Assessment (DOI-BLM-WY-030-2009-0314-EA) (EA); dated May, 2011), I have determined that Alternative 1 to the Proposed Action will not cause significant impacts to the environment. Significant impacts were disclosed during completion of the environmental analysis for this EA, under the proposed action and Alternative 2. Alternative 1 to the Proposed Action, which incorporates Bureau of Land Management (BLM) measures recommended by Tribal Governments would not have sufficient context and intensity, as defined in section 7.3 of the BLM National Environmental Policy Act Handbook (Manual H-1790-1, page 70), to be considered significant.

The considerations listed in 40 CFR 1508.27(b) (1-10) were used to evaluate the intensity of the effects described in the EA:

1. There would be no significant effects as a result of approving Alternative 1 to the proposed action. Alternative 1 would result in both beneficial and adverse impacts.
2. The public's health and safety would not be adversely affected. Minimal risks in the form of induced voltage may occur during operation of the project; however these impacts would not approach significance.
3. Neither the Rawlins Resource Management Plan review nor interdisciplinary review found any new unique characteristics in the geographic area or ecologically critical areas which would be adversely affected.
4. There are no circumstances where a substantial dispute exists as to the environmental consequences of Alternative 1.
5. The effects of construction, operation and maintenance of Alternative 1, as described in the EA, are well known. There would not be a high uncertainty of the effects, nor any new unique or unknown risks.

6. Alternative 1 does not set a precedent for future actions with significant effects and does not represent a decision in principle about a future consideration.
7. Alternative 1 is not related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts.
8. Alternative 1 will not adversely affect districts, sites, highways, structures or objects listed in the National Register of Historic Places.
9. There would be no effects to habitat for threatened or endangered species. Construction timing restrictions, design features and additional mitigation measures through development of an Avian Protection Plan (APP) would minimize or prevent adverse effects to other wildlife species and their habitat.
10. Approving Alternative 1 would not violate any Federal, State, or local laws or regulations imposed for the protection of the environment.

Authorized Official:

Dennis Carpenter
Rawlins Field Manager

Date