

**APPENDIX A:**  
SCOPING NOTICE

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## SCOPING NOTICE

### TETON WIND, LLC. WHITE MOUNTAIN WIND ENERGY PROJECT BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT Rock Springs Field Office

#### DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT

Teton Wind, LLC, has filed an application for a wind energy project located within the jurisdictional boundary of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Rock Springs Field Office area. The project is known as the White Mountain Wind Energy Project. The project area, where turbines would be located, comprises approximately 13,145 acres of private, state, and public lands managed by the BLM (see attached map). The project area is located on top of an escarpment known as White Mountain, which lies west-northwest of the City of Rock Springs in west-central Sweetwater County, Wyoming (Townships 19 and 20 North, Ranges 105 and 106 West, 6<sup>th</sup> P.M.).

The phased development could result in a maximum build out of a 350 megawatt (MW) electrical generating facility consisting of up to 240, 1.5 MW turbines. Associated facilities required by the project entail access roads, staging areas, operation/maintenance building, underground collection system, and a substation to connect the power generated to an existing 230 kV powerline (national electric grid). The project will utilize newly constructed roads in addition to existing roads.

The project would be constructed in several phases over a 3-5 year period. The project will operate continuously, except for maintenance shutdowns on individual wind turbine generators, with a projected 40-year life.

#### RELATIONSHIP TO EXISTING PLANS AND DOCUMENTS

**Record of Decision and Associated Land Use Plan Amendments for the Wind Energy Development Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement on BLM-Administered Lands in the Western United States (2005)** - The Record of Decision (ROD) amended land use plans including the Green River Resource Management Plan (1997). The decision implements a comprehensive wind energy development program to administer the development of wind energy resources on BLM-administered public lands. The decision established policies and best management practices for the administration of wind energy development activities and established minimum requirements for mitigation measures. BLM released wind energy policy for implementing the ROD and guidance for processing right-of-way applications for wind energy projects on public lands (WO IM 2006-216).

**Green River Resource Management Plan (1997)** - The Green River Resource Management Plan (RMP) provides management direction for resources contained within the Rock Springs Field Office area. The objectives applicable for this proposal include managing public land to support the goals and objectives of other resource programs and respond to public demand for land use authorizations. Public lands will be made available for rights-of-way with the exception of defined exclusion and avoidance areas. The project proposal does not fall within any exclusion or avoidance areas.

**Sweetwater County Wind Farm Zoning Regulations** - The purpose of these regulations to promote safe, effective, and efficient use of commercial and non-commercial wind farms. Sweetwater County finds that wind energy is abundant, renewable, and non-polluting and its conversion to electricity will reduce dependence on nonrenewable energy and decrease air and water pollution from conventional energy resources. These regulations

consider commercial wind farms to be classified as large-scale industrial use, are considered a conditional use in Agricultural (A) zoned districts, and portions of the project could fall within Sweetwater County's Scenic Overlay District.

**Use Authorizations** - Use authorizations (i.e., rights-of-way) for the wind project area, and off-project access roads and transmission lines will be processed in accordance with the Federal Land Policy Management Act, Title V (43 U.S.C.1761), regulations at 43 CFR 2800, and the BLM wind energy policy instruction memorandum/s.

### **COOPERATING AGENCIES AND COORDINATING STATE AND LOCAL PERMITTING**

Several agencies having jurisdiction by law and/or special expertise have elected to become cooperating agencies. These agencies include Sweetwater County, the City of Rock Springs, Sweetwater County Conservation District, and a number of State of Wyoming agencies working under the direction of the Governor's Office. Besides the Governor's Office other state agencies participating as cooperators include Wyoming Game and Fish Department, State Historic Preservation Office, Department of Environmental Quality – Industrial Siting Division and Water Quality Division, and the Wyoming Department of Agriculture.

Additionally, it is the objective of the agencies that have elected to participate and that have permitting authority to coordinate processing of the permit to the extent possible. Meeting this objective will entail coordinating public meetings/hearings and assuring the analysis meets the agencies permitting requirements. Additionally, it is the objective of the agencies having permitting authority to coordinate permit processing to the extent possible. Coordination efforts are intended to assure that there will not be any conflicts with agencies permitting requirements.

### **NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT (NEPA)**

Based on a review of the proposal submitted by Teton Wind LLC, and applicable BLM policy including a review of the programmatic EIS/ROD, implementing policy (IM 2006-216), the BLM has determined an environmental assessment (EA) will be prepared that will tier to and incorporate applicable sections of the programmatic EIS. The EA will address the proposed action and reasonable alternatives including a no action alternative. The EA will analyze the impacts of issuing rights-of-way for the wind energy project and associated facilities mentioned above.

One element of NEPA is public scoping. Public scoping is done to assist BLM in determining the scope of the analysis, including-

- Identify reasonable alternatives to the proposal.
- Identify cumulative (foreseeable) actions within and adjacent to the project area.
- Identify preliminary issues for consideration and those issues that meet the criteria defined in the Handbook 1790-1 (see <http://www.blm.gov/wo/st/en/info/nepa.2.html>) shall be analyzed in the analysis.
- Identify potential mitigation.

This scoping notice has been prepared to enable government agencies, interested parties, and the general public to participate in and contribute to, the analysis process. Public input is important in establishing the scope of issues for analysis. The BLM encourages public participation.

### **IDENTIFIED RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ISSUES AND CONCERNS**

Wind energy is a new program to local residents and the RSFO area. We are seeking the public's help in determining preliminary issues and have provided some examples to help you think about what is important for

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you. These examples are not meant to be all-inclusive, but rather to serve as a starting point for determining potential issues. Once potential issues have been identified, the BLM will consider them as outlined above.

What would be the potential impact (effect) of the proposal/alternatives on –?

#### Wildlife

- Crucial winter range for pronghorn antelope
- Crucial winter range, parturition, and yearlong range for elk
- Key/core habitat for sage-grouse
- Pygmy rabbit habitat
- Raptor nesting and hunting habitat
- Mortality to raptors, migrating passerine birds, and bats
- Low level flights for census counts

#### Wild Horses

- Viewing wild horses
- Gathering wild horses to comply with appropriate management levels/court order requirements
- Low level flights for census counts/gathering

#### Socio-Economics

- Employment (job creation or displacement)
- Effects on the communities at large – little/no benefit but subject to impacts of the proposal
- Traffic and transportation requirements
- Vandalism

#### Air Quality/Health

- Dust
- Increased dust on health of individuals sensitive to dust
- Emissions of air pollutants from concrete batch plants
- Increased winter access
- Turbine icing or failure (falling debris)

#### Viewshed and Recreation

- Turbines on the community views (turbine simulation)
- BLM Class III and IV visual resource management class
- Sweetwater County scenic overlay
- Recreation (e.g., scenic wild horse loop tour, hunting, sightseeing, etc.)

#### Grazing/Rangeland

- Loss of vegetation
- Vegetation quality due to dust
- Fire

#### Transportation

- Surface disturbance required to transport/construct turbines and associated facilities
- Winter and year round maintenance of County Road 4-53
- Public access to area due to winter maintenance

#### Cultural/Native American Resources

- Cherokee Trail North
- Native American concerns
- Eligible historic/prehistoric sites

Paleontology

- Vertebrate fossils

Other

- Cathodic protection on pipelines or other existing facilities
- Electromagnetic interference with existing radio towers and microwave reflector facility
- Aeronautical hazards

**INTERDISCIPLINARY TEAM**

Based upon current understanding of issues, concerns, and opportunities, an interdisciplinary team made up of the resource specialists within the Rock Springs Field Office/Wyoming State Office, and cooperating agencies have been identified.

**MEETINGS AND COMMENTING TIME LINES**

Open House/Presentation

The BLM will host an open house. Additionally, those agencies having permitting authority may have representatives available to take comments on the proposal.

Date: Thursday, December 11, 2008

Place: Pilot Butte Conference Room, Rock Springs Field Office (address below)

Time: 3:30 pm to 7:00 pm - two presentations on the proposal at 4:00 pm and 5:30 pm

Commenting

Government agencies, the public, and other interested parties are encouraged to participate during the environmental analysis process to help in identifying alternatives to be considered, issues or concerns that should be assessed, mitigation opportunities, and any other comments or ideas to help ensure that the analysis process is comprehensive. The BLM has set up a website for the public to view documents related to the project. The address for the website is <http://www.blm.gov/wy/st/en/info/NEPA/rsfdocs/whitemtnwind.html>.

Written comments must be postmarked or submitted via email by December 22, 2008. Any comments postmarked after this date will not be given consideration. The BLM will not accept faxed comments. Before including your address, phone number, email address, or other identifying information in your comment, please be advised that your entire comment – including your personal identifying information – may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask the BLM to withhold your personal identifying information in your comment, we cannot guarantee we that will be able to do so.

Please submit your scoping comments to:

Bureau of Land Management, Rock Springs Field Office  
Attn: White Mountain Wind Energy Project  
280 Highway 191 North  
Rock Springs, Wyoming 82901  
Email: [WMWEP\\_WYMail@blm.gov](mailto:WMWEP_WYMail@blm.gov)

If you have questions, or if you want to be added or removed from our mailing list, please contact the Rock Springs Field Office at 307-352-0256 or email us at the address above.