

BLM Nevada News

ELY DISTRICT OFFICE NO. 2011-16

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BLM to Begin EIS for Wilson Creek Wind Project

Ely, Nev. –The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has published a Notice of Intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for the proposed Wilson Creek Wind Project to be located about 20 miles northeast of Pioche, Nev. Publication of the notice in the *Federal Register* on Friday, May 27, 2011, opens a 60-day public scoping period that will end July 29, 2011. The BLM has scheduled four public scoping meetings during July.

The public is being asked to identify relevant issues on the Wilson Creek Power Partners, LLC, proposal which is to construct, operate and maintain a wind energy generation project on approximately 31,000 acres of the public lands in the Wilson Creek Range that includes Mt. Wilson, Table Mountain, White Rock Mountain and Atlanta Summit. The BLM has identified the following preliminary issues: threatened and endangered species, wildlife, particularly avian species visual resource impacts, recreation impacts, and socioeconomic effects.

The proposed project could consist of up to 350 wind turbines and generate up to 990 megawatts of electricity. Other project components would include buried power collection lines and communication cables, access roads, meteorological towers, substation(s) and switchyard(s), 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 proposed to be developed in multiple phases and this EIS will analyze Phase I, which is the development of the Wilson Creek Range and Table Mountain areas. Phase I would consist of up to 195 turbines and up to 500 MW of generation capacity. Atlanta Summit will comprise Phase II and White Rock Mountain will comprise Phase III. Phases II and III together would consist of up to 155 wind turbines generating up to 490 MW of electricity and would be analyzed and developed based on the verification of wind resources and energy market demand. Additional site specific environmental analyses would be conducted in the future for Phase II and III.

The BLM has scheduled three public scoping meetings in Nevada and one public scoping

meeting in Utah, from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Dates and locations are:

- Monday, July 11, BLM Southern Nevada District Office conference room, 4701 N. Torrey Pines Drive, Las Vegas
- Tuesday, July 12, Springhill Suites conference room, 1477 South Old Hwy 91, Cedar City
- Wednesday, July 13, Pioche Elementary School gymnasium, 95 Airport Road, Pioche
- Thursday, July 14, Prospector Hotel & Casino conference room, 1501 E. Aultman Street, Ely

Interested individuals should address all written comments to the BLM Ely District Office, HC 33 Box 33500, Ely, NV 89301, ATTN: Dan Netcher or fax them to Netcher at (775) 289-1918. Comments may be submitted electronically to wilsoncreekwind@blm.gov. Comments will be made available to the public; therefore, personal identifying information such as addresses, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses may be withheld.

Additional information is available online at <http://www.blm.gov/nv/>. Click on the Ely District map and then click on the Wilson Creek Wind Project under “In the Spotlight.”

For more information, contact Dan Netcher, BLM Ely District, at (775)289-1872 or dnetcher@blm.gov.

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