

Chokecherry and Sierra Madre Wind Energy Project

Toward a safe, clean energy future: The approved Chokecherry and Sierra Madre Wind Energy Project site could include up to 1,000 wind turbines—which would make it the largest wind farm in North America.

VITALS

Location: Carbon County, WY

Technology: Wind Turbine Generators

Electricity production capacity: 2,000-3,000 megawatts

Company: Power Company of Wyoming, LLC (A wholly owned [affiliate](#) of [The Anschutz Corporation](#))

Land ownership: Land ownership in the area is a checkerboard which is alternating sections of public, private, and state lands



Chokecherry Sierra Madre siting simulation

BY THE NUMBERS – the project is expected to:

- ✓ Generate enough electricity to power approximately 1,000,000 homes
- ✓ Create about 1,000 construction jobs (peak construction) and 114 new permanent operations and maintenance jobs
- ✓ Generate an estimated \$300 million of tax revenue in the first 20 years in property taxes paid to Carbon County, WY
- ✓ Generate approximately \$232 million in sales tax, of which 53% would remain in Carbon County, WY
- ✓ Generate about \$150 million in Wind Electricity Tax to be distributed to the State of Wyoming

The Current (October 2012) BLM Action

Today's action authorizes parameters for which future ROW applications may be submitted by PCW. With this action, the BLM is: determining that the area identified in PCW's proposal is appropriate for wind energy development; identifying the requirements for future wind development in the area; and amending the visual resource management (VRM) class decision portions of the 2008 Rawlins RMP for the designated Decision Area.

BLM has determined that the project site could accommodate the following proposed project components:

- A 2,000 to 3,000-MW wind farm project consisting of up to 1,000 wind turbine generators with a nameplate capacity ranging from 1.5- to 3-MW each;
- Development of step-up transformers, underground and overhead electric collection and communication lines, electric substations, rail distribution facility, operations and maintenance facilities, and laydown areas;
- Haul road and transmission connection between the two sites;
- Construction of new roads and upgrading of existing roads; and
- Overhead electric transmission lines that would connect power from the wind farms to a new substation in the Application Area.

Subsequent anticipated actions

- BLM will complete environmental reviews for both the Sierra Madre and Chokecherry portions of the project.
- BLM and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will work to recommend further eagle mitigation strategies. These subsequent NEPA analyses will incorporate additional requirements developed through the Eagle Conservation Plans (ECPs) and Avian Protection Plans (APPs) in addition to any mitigation measures identified in the site specific NEPA documents.
- BLM will continue to provide opportunities for stakeholder engagement as additional environmental reviews are completed.

A SMART, COLLABORATIVE PROCESS: In April 2009, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) committed to helping the nation reach its clean energy future by guaranteeing coordinated processing, full environmental analysis and public review for specific renewable energy projects where the companies involved had demonstrated they were ready to advance to the formal environmental review and public participation process.

STRONG ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW AND MITIGATION: The BLM worked closely with federal, state and local partners, members of the environmental and conservation communities and interested stakeholders to advance environmentally sound projects. Environmental review and mitigation includes:

- ✓ Minimal disturbance: The overall long term disturbance associated with the project is approximately 1,500 acres.
- ✓ Smart Siting: The project avoids critical sage-grouse habitat identified as Sage-Grouse Core Areas.
- ✓ Avian Protection Plan: The BLM and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service are working closely with the project applicant to develop strategies to minimize impacts to bald and golden eagles as well as other raptor species.
- ✓ Cultural Resources Protection: Collaborative involvement with five federally recognized tribes, the Wyoming State Historic Preservation Office, Advisory Council on Historic Properties and numerous interest groups has resulted in a Programmatic Agreement to mitigate impacts to historic and Native American resources.

THE BIG PICTURE: The Chokecherry and Sierra Madre Wind project is one of the projects that will help achieve the Administration and Interior initiative to make a rapid and responsible move to large-scale

production of renewable energy.