

Oregon Columbia Plateau Ecoregion Wind Energy Siting and Permitting Guidelines

Guidelines finalized September 29, 2008

NW Wind Energy and Wildlife Workshop
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Sara McMahon Parsons, Iberdrola Renewables



Agenda



- Impetus for Guidelines
- Parties Involved
- Components of Guidelines
- Recommendations/Future Steps
- Lessons Learned/Feedback

Impetus for OR Wind Power Siting and Permitting Guidelines



Why create state siting guidelines for wind power development?

- Significant growth in wind power development in the CPE
- Desire to balance future development of wind energy with environmental protection
- Need to establish a *consistent* and *predictable* siting approach across regulatory jurisdictions
- Clarify expectations for developers, regulators and interested stakeholders

Multi-stakeholder Taskforce

- We were part of a multi-stakeholder collaborative to develop state siting and permitting guidelines
- Participants included:
 - Resource Agencies: USFWS, ODFW, ODOE, WDFW
 - Counties: Sherman, Morrow, Klickitat
 - Environmental Organizations: RNP, Audubon, TNC
 - Wind Developers: IRI, Horizon
 - Utilities: PGE, EWEB
 - Stoel Rives



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Good Model for Developing Guidelines



- Collaborative Process
- Broad stakeholder agreement
- Voluntary structure facilitated a more robust set of guidance
- Acknowledges the environmental and economic benefits of wind power and the need to achieve RPS and climate change targets
- Provides guidance for siting wind projects in a manner that supports conservation of important wildlife and habitat resources
- Template that can be adapted to other areas of the state
- Makes recommendations for future steps



Steps to Follow OR Guidelines

Phase	Timing	Task
1 - Macrositing	Early evaluation of potential wind project site	Information/desktop review of habitat, wildlife, plants, and cumulative impacts; review of regulatory requirements; preliminary scoping of potential issues with resource agencies and permitting authorities
2- Pre-Project Assessment	During preparation of permit application	Identification of macrositing corridors, habitat mapping; early coordination with resource agencies regarding survey protocols; undertake raptor surveys; avian use surveys; T/E species and other wildlife surveys; assessment of project impacts; presentation of habitat mitigation proposal and initial calculation of habitat mitigation acreages to resource agencies.
Submit Permit Application for Agency and Public Review		
	Permit application review	Review of application by resource agencies and permitting authority for completeness. Scoping/public comment period. Wind project developers are encouraged to engage stakeholders with wildlife expertise.

Steps to Follow OR Guidelines (cont.)

Phase	Timing	Task
Permit Issued		
3 - Micrositing	Can occur prior to or after permit issuance, and continues through construction.	Initial micrositing to minimize habitat and wildlife impacts. Continuation of discussions with resource agencies.
4- Construction	After permit is issued, prior to and during construction.	Identification of key compliance staff; environmental training; flagging and micrositing to avoid sensitive resources; implementation of construction best management practices (BMPs).
5- Operation	After construction, during operations.	Implementation of habitat mitigation prior to wind project operation start date; site revegetation; operational monitoring; engagement with the TAC; determine potential additional mitigation with resource agencies and permitting authority as necessary.



Recommendations/Future Steps

- Develop guidelines for other regions with tailored examples of mitigation ratios, species/habitats of concern, etc. and for <10 MW projects
- Ensure funding for agencies to adequately review applications.
- Integrate guidelines into County model siting ordinance
- Conduct education/training outreach
- Create statewide map of wind energy potential, transmission lines and conservation priorities
- Study cumulative impacts
 - Fund/designate an entity to maintain a data repository for fatalities/habitat impacts from wind projects
 - Conduct a cumulative impact analysis to study population dynamics, status of key species, trends, “impact thresholds of concern,” and develop a comprehensive mitigation plan for impacts above threshold of concern
- Study impacts from temp met towers
- Study potential wildlife displacement

Stakeholder Feedback

Pros

- Broad stakeholder agreement
- Balances need for renewable energy with resource protection
- Voluntary, does not increase regulation

Cons

- Guidelines have not been expanded to other regions in the state
- Guidelines not always followed (for ex, habitat mitigation not always implemented for projects permitted through Counties)
- Voluntary, no regulatory teeth



Thank You!



Sara McMahon Parsons
Senior Business Developer
Iberdrola Renewables
1125 NW Couch St., Suite 700
Portland, Oregon, 97209
Telephone (503) 796-7732
Cellular (503) 709-3541
Sara.Parsons@Iberdrolaren.com

