

Proposed China Mountain Wind Power Project Environmental Impact Statement June 2008

Bureau of Land Management Scoping Notice.
Jarbidge Field Office, Twin Falls District, Idaho – Bulletin 1.

SCOPING NOTICE

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) intends to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the proposed China Mountain Wind Power project. China Mountain Wind, LLC proposes to develop an approximately 425 megawatt (MW) wind energy facility consisting of up to 185 wind turbines on approximately 30,700 acres in the Jarbidge Foothills. Each wind turbine would have a capacity between 2.3 and 3.0 MW. The project would be located southwest of the town of Rogerson in Twin Falls County, Idaho and west of the town of Jackpot in Elko County, Nevada (see map). The public scoping process to identify specific issues started April 21, 2008. The initial scoping period has been extended to be most helpful for identifying issues to be addressed in the EIS. Comments should be received by July 21, 2008.

The proposed project area includes: approximately 15,300 acres of public land administered by the BLM Twin Falls District, Jarbidge Field Office; 4,700 acres of public lands administered by BLM Elko District, Wells Field Office; 2,000 acres of land managed by the State of Idaho; and 8,700 acres of private land in Idaho. The exact location of the proposed wind turbines, roads, and transmission interconnect line(s) to be analyzed in the EIS will be finalized once wind resource data analyses have been completed, project area construction constraints have been determined (refined contour data and soils analysis), and the BLM identifies the location of sensitive cultural, tribal, or environmental resources, if any, that are to be avoided.



View Northwest from the Nevada/Idaho State Line (Photo by Eric Hollingstad).



ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW PROCESS

The EIS will analyze the potential environmental impacts of the China Mountain Wind Power project. The EIS process will comply with the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA) and the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA). The BLM will work closely with interested parties to identify the management decision that is best suited to the needs of the public. This collaborative process will take into account local, regional, and national needs and concerns.



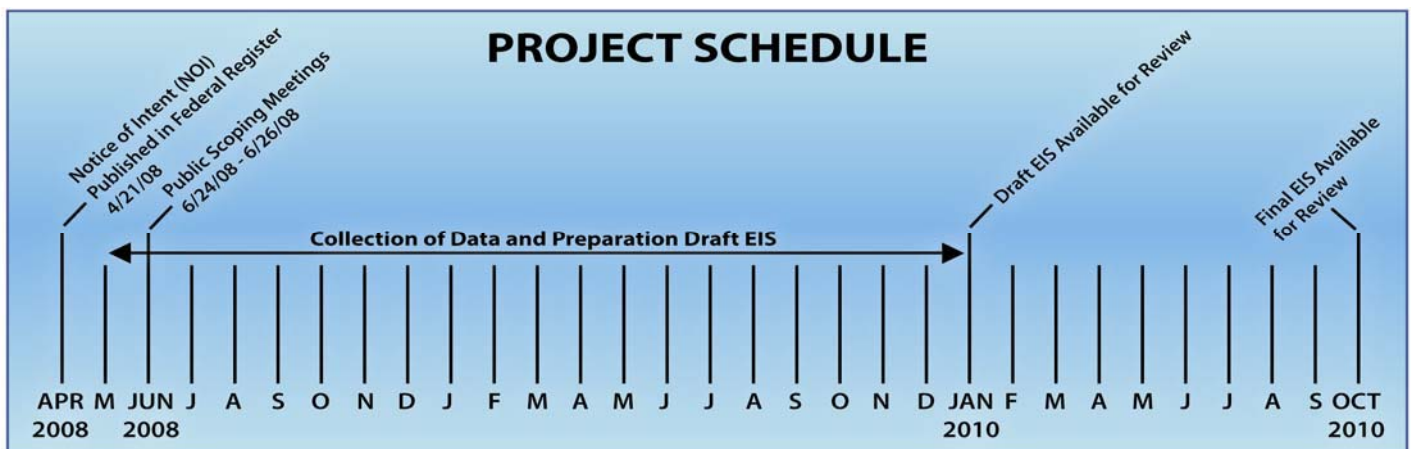
Typical View within the Project Area

PROPOSED PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed wind turbines would have tower heights ranging from 200 to 250 feet and rotor diameters ranging from 250 to 300 feet. Each turbine would be set on a concrete foundation. Turbines would be connected by underground electrical cable to one or two substations. Each substation would be sited on a two-acre area and would consist of a graveled, fenced containment with transformer and switching equipment and space to park utility vehicles. Up to 15 miles of new three-phase 138 kV or 345 kV overhead transmission circuits would be constructed from each substation to a switching station at the point of interconnection with an existing transmission line. The transmission line would be supported by single steel or double wood poles with a distance of 400 to 500 feet between poles. Other required facilities would include: one or two fenced, graveled switching stations of approximately two acres each; one or more Operations and Maintenance buildings; approximately 40 miles of new access roads; approximately 30 miles of improved existing roads; and a temporary concrete batch plant in an area of approximately five acres that would operate during project construction. The proposed project would disturb up to 540 acres on a temporary basis and up to 180 acres on a permanent basis, following reclamation of construction disturbance. Approximately 60% of both the temporary and permanent impacts would be on lands under administration of the BLM and approximately 40% would be on State of Idaho and private lands. The proposed project would operate year-round for a minimum of 30 years.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW SCHEDULE

A range of reasonable alternatives, including an alternative considering No Action, as required by NEPA, will be developed and analyzed in the EIS. The potential impact of the alternatives will be assessed and the results of the analysis will be documented in the Draft EIS. The Draft EIS, which is scheduled for completion in early 2010, will be provided to the public for review and comment. Comments on the Draft EIS received from agencies and the public will be considered and incorporated into the Final EIS. The Final EIS is expected to be published in late 2010.



OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

The first opportunity for you to participate will be the upcoming public scoping meetings. These meetings will be of an "open house" format and will include displays providing project information and an overview of the EIS process. Details of the time and location of the meetings are provided below. The meetings will also be announced through prior media releases. You are invited to attend one or more of the three scoping meetings or send us your written comments on the enclosed pre-addressed comment form. To be most helpful, please submit comments before July 21, 2008.

ELKO, NEVADA
Tuesday, June 24, 2008
4-7:30 p.m.
BLM Elko Field Office
3900 Idaho Street
Elko, NV 89801

JACKPOT, NEVADA
Wednesday, June 25, 2008
4-7:30 p.m.
Jackpot Community Recreation
Center/Tourist Information
2395 Progressive Road
Jackpot, NV 89825

TWIN FALLS, IDAHO
Thursday, June 26, 2008
4-7:30 p.m.
College of
Southern Idaho
Taylor Building
Room 276
315 Falls Avenue
Twin Falls, ID 83303

IDENTIFICATION OF ISSUES

During the scoping period, BLM will consult with affected tribes on the scope of the EIS. Landowners, concerned citizens, special interest groups, local governments, and any other interested parties are also invited to comment on the scope of the EIS. Scoping will help the BLM identify the full range of issues and alternatives that should be addressed in the EIS.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT ON DEIS

BLM will provide other opportunities throughout the process to discuss the status of the project, and BLM will ask you to review the Draft EIS, which will be released to the public for comment. During the comment period, the BLM may conduct public meetings to accept comments on the draft document. Written comments also will be accepted at that time.

CONTACT WITH THE BLM

A mailing list will be maintained throughout the entire process. Your name will remain on the mailing list unless you inform us otherwise.

Comments regarding the proposed China Mountain Wind Power project should be sent to:

Project Manager
China Mountain Wind Power Project EIS
Bureau of Land Management
Jarbidge Field Office
2536 Kimberly Road
Twin Falls, Idaho 83301



Foot Creek Wind Power Project, Arlington, WY

Comments via email may be sent to: id_chinamtn_eis@blm.gov

For additional information, contact Ester McCullough, Project Manager, Jarbidge Field Office at (208) 735-2072, or visit the website at http://www.blm.gov/id/st/en/prog/planning/china_mountain_wind.html



China Mountain Project Area Vicinity

Bureau of Land Management
Jaridge Field Office
2536 Kimberly Road
Twin Falls, ID 83301





JARBIDGE FIELD OFFICE

CHINA MOUNTAIN WIND PROJECT

Comments specific to the Proposed China Mountain Wind Power Project Environmental Impact Statement should be sent to:

Ester McCullough, Project Manager
China Mountain Wind Power Project EIS
Bureau of Land Management
Jarbidge Field Office
2536 Kimberly Road
Twin Falls, ID 83301

Comments may be faxed to: (208) 736.2375 or (208) 735.2076
Comments may be emailed to: id_chinamtn_eis@blm.gov

Comments including names and street addresses of respondents, will be available for public review at the above address during regular business hours, 7:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays, and may be published as part of the EIS.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT CONSIDERATIONS: Before including your address, phone number, email address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment—including your personal identifying information—may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

I wish to withhold my name or address from public review or from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act: [] Yes [] No

Please Print

Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

E-Mail (optional): _____

Comments: _____

Multiple horizontal lines for writing comments.

Further comments may be written on additional sheets attached to this page.