

October 1, 2010

Department of Defense notifies Federal Aviation Administration - wind turbine development plans in Northern Oregon and Southern Washington pose no additional risk to national security

The Department of Defense (DoD) today notified the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) that plans by developers to build and operate more than 1100 wind turbines at eight sites in Northern Oregon and Southern Washington will not pose an additional risk to national security. DoD had previously raised concerns about two of the eight proposed wind farms, including a 225-turbine project planned for the Montague site, leading the FAA to issue a Preliminary Notice of Presumed Hazard.

In March, DoD objected to a proposed 338-turbine project at Shepherds Flat, Oregon, because of the potential for electromagnetic interference with the long-range surveillance radar at Fossil, OR. DoD withdrew its objection in April, based on early indications that Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Lincoln Laboratory would be able to identify ways to mitigate the interference. The Lincoln Lab study, released in June, identified two near-term mitigation measures based on actual data collected on the Fossil radar. DoD and FAA recently implemented the first measure, an adjustment of the radar settings to optimize performance with existing technology, at Fossil, OR. They are working to pilot-test the second measure as well, which involves the addition of an auxiliary processor and an "adaptive clutter map" to edit out false targets.

DoD's announcement today reflects its determination that, in light of the mitigation measures being taken, the risks to the Fossil radar from the eight proposed wind farms are manageable. The operational risk assessment was carried out by the North American Aerospace Defense Command and the U.S. Northern Command and reviewed by the Joint Staff. The assessment cautioned that these measures might not provide adequate mitigation for future projects, which DoD will review on a case by case basis.

DoD has pledged to work with industry to develop additional technical mitigation solutions to keep pace with renewable energy growth across the nation. DoD is also establishing an Energy Siting Clearinghouse to better coordinate with developers on the choice of sites for wind turbines and solar towers. According to Dr. Dorothy Robyn, the Deputy Undersecretary of Defense for Installations and Environment, the Department of Defense must minimize the occurrence of incidents where DoD's mission needs conflict with plans to build wind turbines and other forms of renewable energy. "Although individual conflicts may be unavoidable, the country should not have to choose between national security and the development of clean energy."

DoD has approved more than 90 percent of all the turbines that developers have proposed to the FAA, which manages the federal government's obstruction evaluation process.

Oregon and Washington Wind Turbine Projects for Which DoD Has Made a Determination of No Hazard

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Developer and FAA Tracking Numbers	Site	Number of Turbines	Locality
Horseshoe Bend Wind LLC/Caithness 2010-WTW-8135 to 8148 & 8151 to 8168 & 8171 to 8174-OE	Horseshoe Bend	36	Arlington Oregon
Horseshoe Bend Wind LLC/Caithness 2010-WTW-9639 to 9641-OE	Horseshoe Bend	3	Arlington Oregon
WLAB 2010-WTW-7986 to 8970 -OE	WLAB at Hardman	85	Hardman Oregon
Baseline Wind LLC 2010-WTW-8235 to 8460-OE	First Wind	226	Arlington Oregon
Horizon Wind Energy 2010-WTW-7234 to 7448-OE	NKA and NKB	294	Arlington Oregon
Iberdrola 2010-WTW-2666 to 2890-OE	Montague	225	near Shepherds Flat Oregon
Iberdrola 2010-WTW-7617 to 7762-OE	Juniper Canyon 2	146	Roosevelt Washington
Horizon Wind 2010-WTW-7453 to 7565-OE	Heritage Wind	113	Brickleton Washington

The total number of turbines under these determinations is 1128.

Based on DoD concerns, the FAA had previously issued a Preliminary Notice of Presumed Hazard on the 225-turbine Montague project and on 14 of the Horseshoe Bend turbines.

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