

1 DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

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3 Department of Navy, United States Marine Corps

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5 Finding of No Significant Impact (FNSI) for the Wind Energy
6 Program at United States Marine Corps Forces Reserve Center,
7 Syracuse, New York

8

9 AGENCY: United States Marine Corps Forces Reserve (MARFORRES)

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11 ACTION: Finding of No Significant Impact

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13 SUMMARY: Pursuant to Section (102)(2)(c) of the National
14 Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, and regulations
15 implemented by the Council on Environmental Quality (40 Code of
16 Federal Regulations [CFR] Parts 1500-1508), Department of the
17 Navy (DoN) NEPA regulations (32 CFR Part 775), and United States
18 Marine Corps (USMC) NEPA directives (Marine Corps Order
19 P5090.2A, changes 1 and 2), MARFORRES gives notice that an
20 Environmental Assessment (EA) has been prepared for the proposed
21 installation and operation of a small-scale wind energy system
22 at the MARFORRES Center at Syracuse, New York. This EA is tiered
23 from the Programmatic EA for the USMC Wind Energy Program (May
24 2011) which identified siting and design criteria, best
25 management practices (BMPs), and general conservation measures
26 (GCMs) that would be implemented at individual project sites to
27 avoid or minimize impacts on the natural and human environment.
28 Based on the analysis provided in the EA, implementing the
29 action will not have a significant impact on the human
30 environment.

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32 FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Chauncey D. Elston, NEPA
33 Coordinator, Marine Corps Support Facility, 2000 Opelousas Ave.,
34 Bldg. 1, Rm. 2W2100, New Orleans, LA 70114; by telephone at
35 (504) 697-9835, or fax at (504) 697-9739; or by email at
36 Chauncey.elston.ctr@usmc.mil.

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38 PURPOSE AND NEED: The purpose of the proposed action is to
39 reduce the consumption of fossil fuels and increase energy
40 security and efficiency through development of a small-scale
41 wind energy system at the MARFORRES Center at Syracuse, New
42 York. The action is needed to meet statutory, Executive Order,
43 and Department of Defense (DoD) goals for the use of renewable
44 energy while contributing to the sustainment of mission
45 requirements. The proposed action will support the attainment of
46 DoD renewable energy goals through the on-installation
47 production of wind energy at the MARFORRES Reserve Center,

1 Syracuse. Wind has been identified as a readily available,
2 economically feasible source for renewable energy production at
3 this facility.

4
5 PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES: The Proposed Action is to
6 install and operate either two (Alternative 1) or three
7 (Alternative 2, preferred) 50-kilowatt (kW) wind turbines at
8 MARFORRES Center, Syracuse. Each of the proposed turbines has a
9 hub height of approximately 80 feet and would have a maximum
10 height of 113 feet to the tip of the rotor.

11
12 Multiple alternative locations and heights for the proposed
13 turbines were considered but rejected due to potential conflicts
14 with ongoing activities or environmental concerns. Several
15 alternative locations and turbine heights were submitted to the
16 Federal Aviation Agency (FAA) for review before the proposed
17 turbine design at each of the three locations identified in the
18 EA received FAA's "Determination of No Hazard to Aviation" dated
19 25 April 2012. Under Alternative 1, the Proposed Action would
20 temporarily impact approximately 2.31 acres of land, most of
21 which is wooded, during construction; however, the area of
22 permanent vegetation removal would only be 0.26 acre. Under
23 Alternative 2 (preferred), 3.41 acres would be temporarily
24 impacted and 0.34 acre of vegetation would be permanently
25 removed. The No Action alternative, in which MARFORRES would
26 continue to use the existing electrical utility system at the
27 Reserve Center, is also analyzed.

28
29 MARFORRES consulted with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
30 (USFWS) and obtained relevant information from the New York
31 State Department of Environmental Conservation to ensure that
32 the requirements of the Endangered Species Act, Bald and Golden
33 Eagle Protection Act, and Migratory Bird Treaty Act/Executive
34 Order 13186, as well as concerns over bats, were appropriately
35 addressed in the EA. In compliance with Section 106 of the
36 National Historic Preservation Act, MARFORRES requested comments
37 on the proposed action from the New York State Historic
38 Preservation Office (SHPO), and the SHPO concluded 5 June 2012
39 that the project would have no effect upon cultural resources in
40 or eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic
41 Places. MARFORRES also requested comments on the proposed
42 action from the Onondaga and Oneida Native American tribes and
43 did not receive a response from either tribe.

44
45 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES: The Proposed Action would have
46 negligible or less-than-significant (depending on the resource)
47 direct or indirect impacts on the environment, as summarized in

1 the following paragraphs. In all cases, the impacts of
2 Alternative 2 would be incrementally greater than those of
3 Alternative 1, but not significant.

4
5 The Proposed Action would be compatible with the ongoing
6 military mission of the Reserve Center and with local land uses.
7 The proposed turbine locations are well inside of the
8 installation boundary such that neighboring land uses and
9 sensitive receptors would not be adversely affected by noise
10 from the turbines.

11
12 Pursuant to coverage under the State's General Permit for Storm-
13 water Discharges from Construction Activity (GP-0-10-001), BMPs
14 will be incorporated into a storm-water pollution prevention
15 plan (SWPPP) to minimize erosion and sediment transport. There
16 would be no discharges or effects to geologic resources, surface
17 or groundwater, floodplains, or wetlands.

18
19 No protected habitats or species occur on the project site. In
20 compliance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, the
21 Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act, and the Migratory Bird
22 Treaty Act, MARFORRES consulted with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife
23 Service (USFWS) on the project's potential effects on protected
24 wildlife. The USFWS concurred with MARFORRES' conclusion that
25 the endangered Indiana bat is unlikely to occur on the site and
26 not likely to be adversely affected by the action. No
27 interactions with eagles are anticipated. Owing to the small
28 number and size of the turbines, the incidence of collision
29 mortality to birds and bats is expected to be relatively low,
30 and would likely accrue to common species. Nevertheless,
31 MARFORRES will implement a post-construction monitoring program
32 to document fatalities that do occur and will share the results
33 with state and federal wildlife agencies.

34
35 The Proposed Action will have no effect on Native American
36 cultural resources or other historic or prehistoric cultural
37 resources. The turbine will not have a significant impact on
38 views from surrounding areas.

39
40 Apart from a small economic benefit due to the purchase,
41 installation, and operation of the turbines, there will be no
42 socioeconomic impact from implementing the Proposed Action.

43
44 Temporary, non-significant emissions will occur during
45 construction, whereas operation of the turbines will replace the
46 consumption of fossil fuels, thereby having a beneficial impact
47 on air quality. A Record of Non-Applicability for Clean Air Act

1 General Conformity requirements has been prepared (refer to
2 Appendix A of the EA). No disruption of local utilities or
3 adverse impact to the use of airspace by aircraft or by
4 electronic media such as radar will occur.

5
6 There will not be any disproportionately high or adverse human
7 health or environmental effects from the Proposed Action on
8 minority or low-income populations; nor will there be any
9 impacts associated with the protection of children from
10 environmental health and safety risks. No hazardous materials
11 will be generated by the Proposed Action, and no impacts to the
12 local transportation system will occur.

13
14 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS: The Proposed
15 Action will have minor to negligible, localized impacts that are
16 unlikely to interact or combine with the impacts of other
17 actions. As a result, no cumulative impacts will occur. The
18 Proposed Action entails a small commitment of natural or finite
19 resources but, in the long term, will contribute to the reduced
20 use of those resources and will enhance productivity. The new
21 turbines will be monitored to document bird and bat fatalities
22 resulting from collisions with the turbines.

23
24 CONCLUSION: After careful consideration of the purpose and the
25 need for the proposed action, the analysis contained in the
26 Final EA, and comments received on the final EA from Federal and
27 State agencies, I have decided to proceed with the selected
28 alternative to construct three wind turbines at the MARFORRES
29 Center, Syracuse, NY. The selected alternative allows the
30 MARFORRES Center Syracuse to reduce its dependence on fossil
31 fuels and lower its energy costs.

32 

28 Nov 2012

33
34 Bart L. Pester

Date

35 Lieutenant Colonel, United States Marine Corps
36 AC/S Facilities, Marine Forces Reserve