

Office of the Secretary  
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## **Interior Secretary Kempthorne Names Members for Committee to Address Wildlife Impacts of Wind Turbines**

Secretary of the Interior Dirk Kempthorne today named 22 individuals to serve on a special Wind Turbine Guidelines Advisory Committee, formed under the Federal Advisory Committee Act. The members will advise the Secretary and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on measures to avoid or minimize impacts to wildlife and their habitats from land-based wind energy facilities.

“By some estimates, wind power could provide clean and renewable electricity to meet up to 20 percent of the nation’s energy needs,” said Secretary Kempthorne. “This committee will help examine issues, such as site selection and turbine design, so we can develop wind resources while protecting wildlife.”

Members of the Committee named today represent the varied interests associated with wind energy development and wildlife management. Members representing governmental agencies include Kathy Boydston from the Texas Parks and Wildlife; John Geesman from the California Energy Commission; Greg Hueckel from the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife; Jeri Lawrence from the Blackfoot Nation; Steve Lindenberg from the Department of Energy; James Russell Mason from the Nevada Department of Wildlife; Keith Sexson, the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies; Mark Sinclair, the Clean Energy States Alliance; and Dave Stout, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Stout will serve as the Committee’s designated federal officer.

Members representing wildlife conservation interests include Taber Allison from the Massachusetts Audubon Society; Clait Braun, Grouse, Inc.; Michael Daulton, National Audubon Society; Amy Delach, Defenders of Wildlife; Rob Manes, The Nature Conservancy; and Robert Robel from Kansas State University’s Division of Biology.

Representing wind energy development interests are Michael Azeka from AES Wind Generation; Andrew Linehan, PPM Energy; Winifred Perkins, Florida Power & Light Co. Steven Quarles, Crowell & Moring, LLP; Richard Rayhill, Ridgeline Energy; Patrick Traylor, Hogan & Hartson, LLP; and Troy Vickers, British Petroleum Alternative Energy.

The Committee will function in accordance with the Federal Advisory Committee Act and report to the Secretary of the Interior through the Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. It will function solely as an advisory body, providing recommendations on effective measures to protect wildlife resources and coordinating the review and evaluation of facilities by state, tribal, local, and federal agencies.

In 2003, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service developed the “Interim Voluntary Wind Turbine Guidelines” and advertised their availability for a two-year public comment period, which closed in July 2005, in the *Federal Register*. The guidelines were to assist the wind energy industry in avoiding or minimizing impacts to wildlife and their habitats when developing wind energy facilities.

After reviewing the comments received and evaluating advances in the science of wind turbine siting and design, the Department of the Interior determined that additional input would be valuable in developing a revised product, which will also be made available for public review and comment.

In May 2007, the Department announced its intent to form the committee and sought nominations. The Service used criteria to evaluate nominees with the intent to achieve full and balanced representation on the committee. These criteria were that members be senior representatives of their respective constituent groups, able to represent the varied interests associated with wind energy development and its potential impacts to wildlife species and their habitats. The criteria also require that nominees have knowledge of the following fields: wind energy facility location, design, operation, and transmission requirements; wildlife species potentially affected and the potential positive and negative impacts; wildlife survey techniques; applicable laws and regulations; and current research on wind/wildlife interactions.

The Committee is expected to meet about four times per year. The Service will provide the necessary support services. All meetings will be open to the public, and a notice announcing each Committee meeting will be published in the *Federal Register* at least 15 days prior to it being held. The public will have an opportunity to comment and make suggestions during all meetings.

The Federal Advisory Committee Act, also known as FACA, was enacted by Congress in 1972 to ensure that advice rendered to the executive branch by advisory committees, task forces, boards and commissions formed by Congress and the President, be both objective and accessible to the public. The Act formalized a process for establishing, operating, overseeing, and terminating these advisory bodies. The General Services Administration is responsible for implementing FACA.

To learn more about the Interior Department’s wind initiatives, please see <<http://www.doi.gov/initiatives/wind.html>>. To review the *Service’s Interim Guidelines on Avoiding and Minimizing Wildlife Impacts from Wind Turbines* as well as links to the Energy Department’s National Renewable Energy Laboratory, please see <<http://www.fws.gov/habitatconservation/wind.htm>>.

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