

News Release



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Service Transmits Wind Turbine Guideline Advisory Committee Recommendations to Interior Secretary

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service today transmitted a set of final recommendations on how to minimize the impacts of land-based wind farms on wildlife and its habitat to Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar.

These recommendations represent the consensus of the 22 diverse members of the Wind Turbine Guidelines Federal Advisory Committee and were reached during a more than two-year process. Secretary Salazar plans to review the recommendations and take them under advisement as he directs the Service to develop guidelines for evaluating wind energy development on public and private lands.

“The Interior Department strongly supports the development of renewable and sustainable energy, including wind generated electricity,” said Acting Fish and Wildlife Service Director Rowan Gould. “On behalf of the advisory team, I am pleased to present Secretary Salazar these recommendations aimed at responsibly producing wind power on our public lands while protecting our nation’s wildlife resources.”

The document contains both policy recommendations and recommended voluntary guidelines for siting and operating wind energy projects in order to avoid or minimize potential impacts to wildlife and habitat. After the Interior Secretary’s review, the Service will use the Committee’s

recommendations to develop and publish its revised guidelines in the *Federal Register* and open them for public comment. The document, as well as a complete list of Committee members, is available for download at:

http://www.fws.gov/habitatconservation/windpower/wind_turbine_advisory_committee.html.

Highlights of the Committee's recommendations include:

- A decision-making framework that guides all stages of wind energy development;
- Reliance on the best available science when assessing renewable energy projects and their potential environmental impact; and
- Use of landscape-scaled planning that recognizes the need to think long-term about protecting our nation's economic and natural resources.

“Congratulations to the Committee for successfully completing the two year-effort to identify, evaluate and recommend approaches to assessing the risk of impacts to wildlife associated with wind energy development,” said Dave Stout, Chief of the Service's Division of Habitat and Resource Conservation and the Committee's Chairman and Designated Federal Officer.

Wind Turbine Guideline Advisory Committee members were selected by the Secretary from a large pool of candidates to represent a balance of stakeholder groups with the necessary policy, technical and scientific expertise.

The group was created in accordance with the Federal Advisory Committee Act and represents the varied interests associated with wind energy development as well as wildlife management professionals. The Committee did not address off-shore wind energy development.

During its chartered term, the Committee reported to the Secretary of the Interior through the Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. It functioned solely as an advisory body, providing recommendations on effective measures to protect wildlife resources and coordinated the review and evaluation of facilities by state, tribal, local and federal agencies.

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.

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife, plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. We are both a leader and trusted partner in fish and wildlife conservation, known for our scientific excellence, stewardship of lands and natural resources, dedicated professionals and commitment to public service. For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit www.fws.gov.

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