



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

# Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement for MidAmerican Energy Company Habitat Conservation Plan

Public Scoping Meeting



Healthy Fish and Wildlife

Healthy Habitat

Healthy People

Healthy Economy



## Proposed Action

- Issuance of incidental take permit(s) (ITPs) based on the MidAmerican Energy Company's (MEC) Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP)
- The MEC HCP will address both the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (BGEPA)
- The MEC HCP will cover 22 wind energy facilities – 20 operating and 2 currently under construction – and provide a framework to address MEC's future wind developments within the state of Iowa





## Why is the program needed?

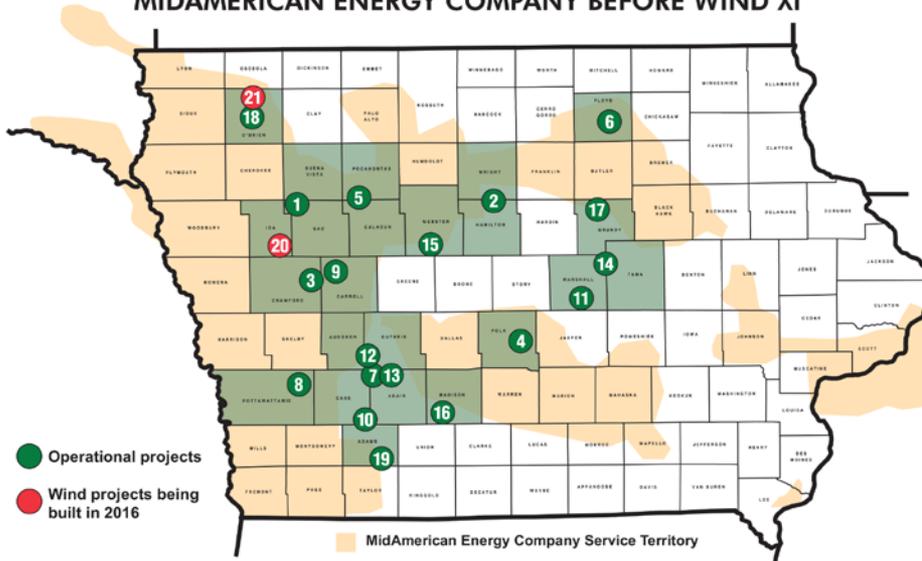
- MEC's vision is to generate clean, renewable energy equivalent to 100% of its customers' needs while ensuring the conservation of federally-listed bird and bat species
  - By the end of 2016, MEC will own and operate nearly 4,050 MW of wind generation capacity in Iowa – or approximately 5% of total U.S. installed capacity
  - In April 2016, MEC announced its Wind XI project, which, if approved by the Iowa Utilities Board, would add 2,000 MW to its Iowa wind energy portfolio
- MEC has partnered with USFWS (Service) and the State of Iowa through an ESA section 6 conservation funding grant to support monitoring efforts and develop a programmatic HCP for its Iowa wind energy portfolio





## Plan Area and Covered Lands

WIND PROJECTS OWNED BY MIDAMERICAN ENERGY COMPANY BEFORE WIND XI



MidAmerican Energy Wind Generation Added by Year (MW)		
Year	MW Installed	In-Service Investment (\$000)
2004	160.5	\$ 165,054
2005	200.0	\$ 224,337
2006	99.0	\$ 178,679
2007	213.5	\$ 369,921
2008	611.3	\$ 1,314,552
2009	-	-
2010	-	-
2011	593.4	\$ 971,761
2012	406.9	\$ 661,014
2013	44.6	\$ 64,026
2014	511.4	\$ 823,657
2015	608.0	\$ 971,155
2016	599.6	\$ 954,654
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,048.2</b>	<b>\$6,698,810</b>

- Covered Lands includes lands where Covered Activities would occur

- Plan Area generally includes the State of Iowa

- 1 Intrepid Project (175.5 MW)  
Buena Vista and Sac counties
- 2 Century Project (200 MW)  
Wright and Hamilton counties
- 3 Victory Project (99 MW)  
Crawford and Carroll counties
- 4 Iowa State Fair Wind Turbine (0.5 MW)  
Polk County
- 5 Pomeroy Project (286.4 MW)  
Pocahontas and Calhoun counties
- 6 Charles City Project (75 MW)  
Floyd County
- 7 Adair Project (174.8 MW)  
Adair and Cass counties
- 8 Walnut Project (153 MW)  
Pottawattamie County
- 9 Carroll Project (150 MW)  
Carroll County
- 10 Rolling Hills Project (443.9 MW)  
Adair, Adams and Cass counties
- 11 Laurel Project (119.6 MW)  
Marshall County
- 12 Eclipse Project (200.1 MW)  
Audubon and Guthrie counties
- 13 Morning Light Project (101.2 MW)  
Adair County
- 14 Vienna Project (150.2 MW)  
Marshall and Tama counties
- 15 Lundgren Project (251 MW)  
Webster County
- 16 Macksburg Project (119.6 MW)  
Madison County
- 17 Wellsburg Project (140.8 MW)  
Grundy County
- 18 Highland Project (502 MW)  
O'Brien County
- 19 Adams Project (154.3 MW)  
Adams County
- 20 Ida Grove Project (301 MW)  
Ida County
- 21 O'Brien Project (250.3 MW)  
O'Brien County





## Covered Activities and Permit Term

MEC is seeking incidental take coverage associated with the operation of its Iowa wind energy facilities over a 30-year period

- The MEC HCP will describe avoidance and minimization measures where necessary for construction, maintenance, operation, and decommissioning of wind energy facilities
  - Such measures would be implemented at MEC's operating, under construction and future projects
- The proposed permit term is commensurate with the operational life of the 22 wind energy facilities currently in operation or under construction
- Other activities in the plan include:
  - Management of minimization and mitigation activities
  - Compliance monitoring and reporting activities



## Endangered Species Act

- Section 9 of the ESA prohibits “take” (without a permit) of threatened or endangered fish and wildlife. Take under the ESA means to “harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture or collect, or attempt to engage in any such conduct”.
- Endangered species are animals and plants that are in danger of becoming extinct.
- Threatened species are animals and plants that are likely to become endangered in the foreseeable future.
- Section 10(a)1(B) of the ESA allows the Service to issue permits to authorize “Incidental Take”



## ITP Issuance Criteria

- The Service may issue permits to authorize “Incidental Take” under section 10(a) of the ESA provided the following criteria are met:
  - The taking will be incidental to an otherwise lawful activity;
  - The applicant will, to the maximum extent practicable, minimize and mitigate the impact of such taking;
  - The applicant will develop a proposed HCP and ensure that adequate funding for the plan will be provided;
  - The taking will not appreciably reduce the likelihood of the survival and recovery of the species in the wild; and
  - The applicant will carry out any other measures as required by the Secretary of the Interior.



## Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act

- The Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (BGEPA) prohibits take and disturbance of eagles and their nests.
- The Service may extend take authorization through an ESA permit provided the applicant meets the terms of the ITP and is in full compliance with BGEPA.





## Covered Species

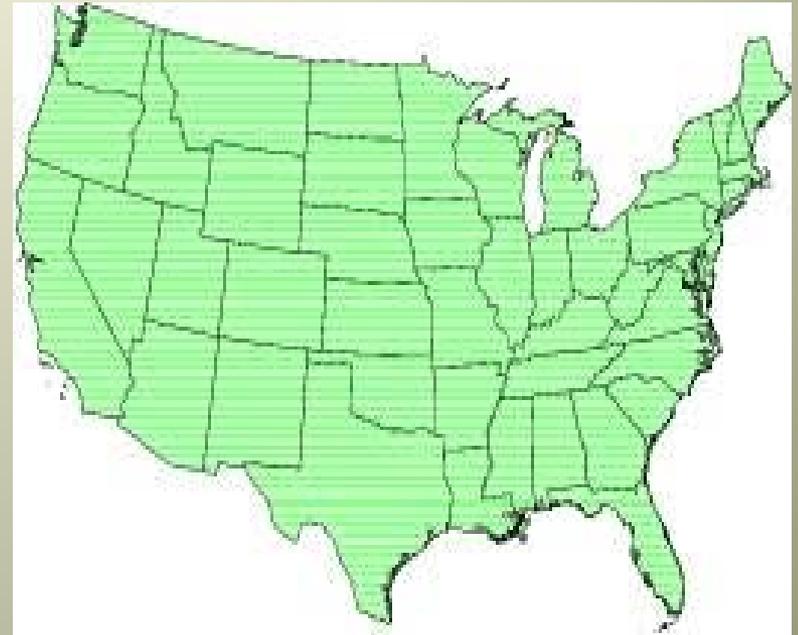
- The following species may be impacted by the covered activities and the Service is considering issuing incidental take permits for:
  - Bald eagle (protected by BGEPA)
  - Indiana bat (endangered)
  - Northern long-eared bat (threatened)
  - Little brown bat (species of concern)





## Bald Eagle

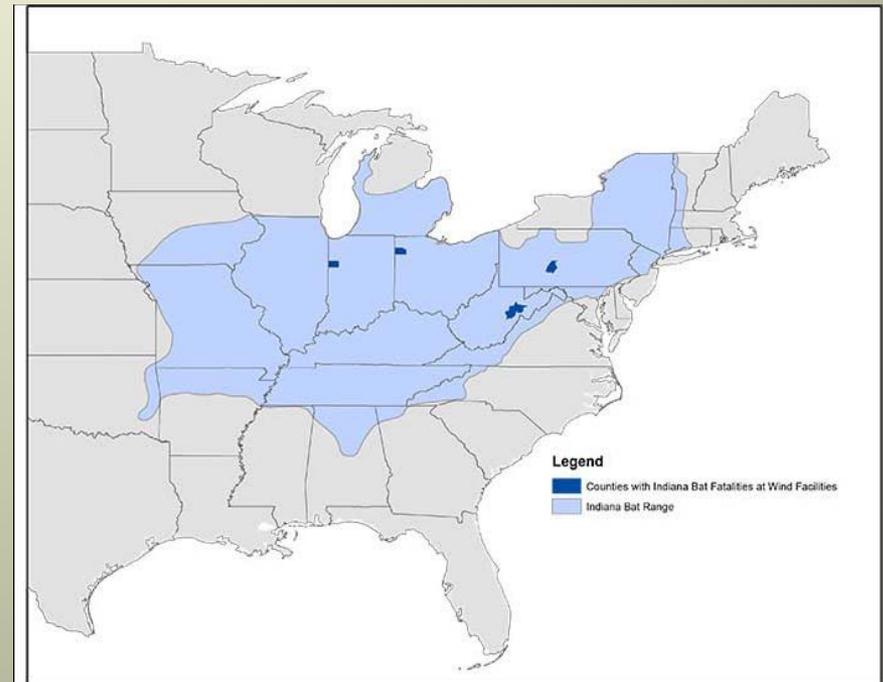
- Bald eagles can live 15 to 25 years in the wild, and even longer in captivity. Most are capable of breeding at 4 or 5 years of age.
- In the winter, eagles that nest in northern areas often migrate south to gather in large numbers near open water areas where fish and other prey are plentiful.
- Bald eagles are opportunistic feeders. Fish comprise much of their diet, but they also eat waterfowl, shorebirds/colonial waterbirds, small mammals, turtles, and carrion (often along roads or at landfills).





## Indiana Bat

- Indiana bats hibernate during the winter in caves or, occasionally, in abandoned mines (hibernacula). During the summer, they stay under the peeling bark of dead and dying trees. Indiana bats eat a variety of flying insects found along rivers or lakes and in fields.





## Northern Long-Eared Bat

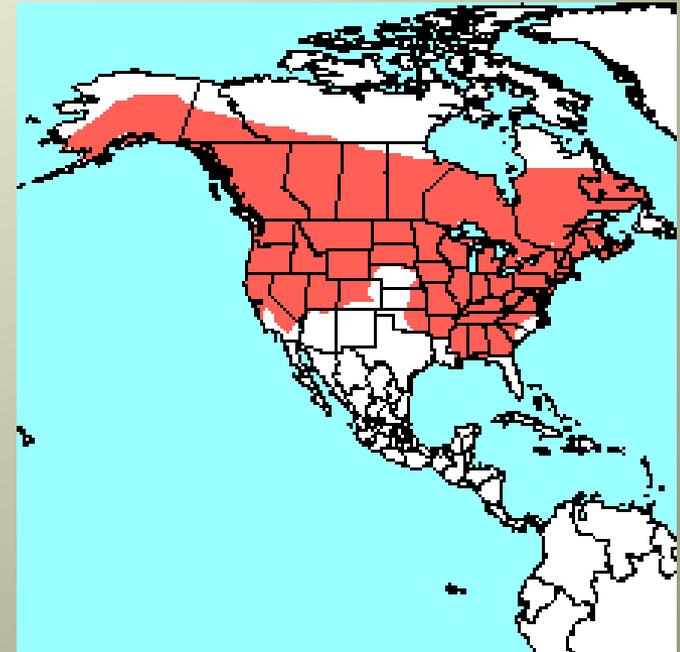
- Northern long-eared bats spend winter hibernating in caves and mines. They use areas in various sized caves or mines with constant temperatures, high humidity, and no air currents.
- During the summer, northern long-eared bats roost singly or in colonies underneath bark, in cavities or in crevices of both live trees and snags (dead trees)





## Little Brown Bat

- The little brown bat is a wide-ranging species found throughout North America.
- During the summer, they roost underneath cavities and crevices of live trees and snags, man-made structures, and caves.
- During the winter, they hibernate in caves and abandoned mines.





# Environmental Review Process





# National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

- Purpose – maintain environmental quality by requiring all federal agencies to respond to the same policy
- Intended to help federal agencies make decisions based on an understanding of potential environmental consequences
  - Federal Action: issuance of Incidental Take Permit (ITP)
  - Federal Agency: USFWS
- The Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will evaluate the environmental impacts of issuance of the ITP, including a process to assess the need for subsequent NEPA review of ITP issuance for future MEC wind projects
  - Will allow the Service to rely on initial NEPA review or supplement the NEPA review by tiering the review of future projects to the initial review



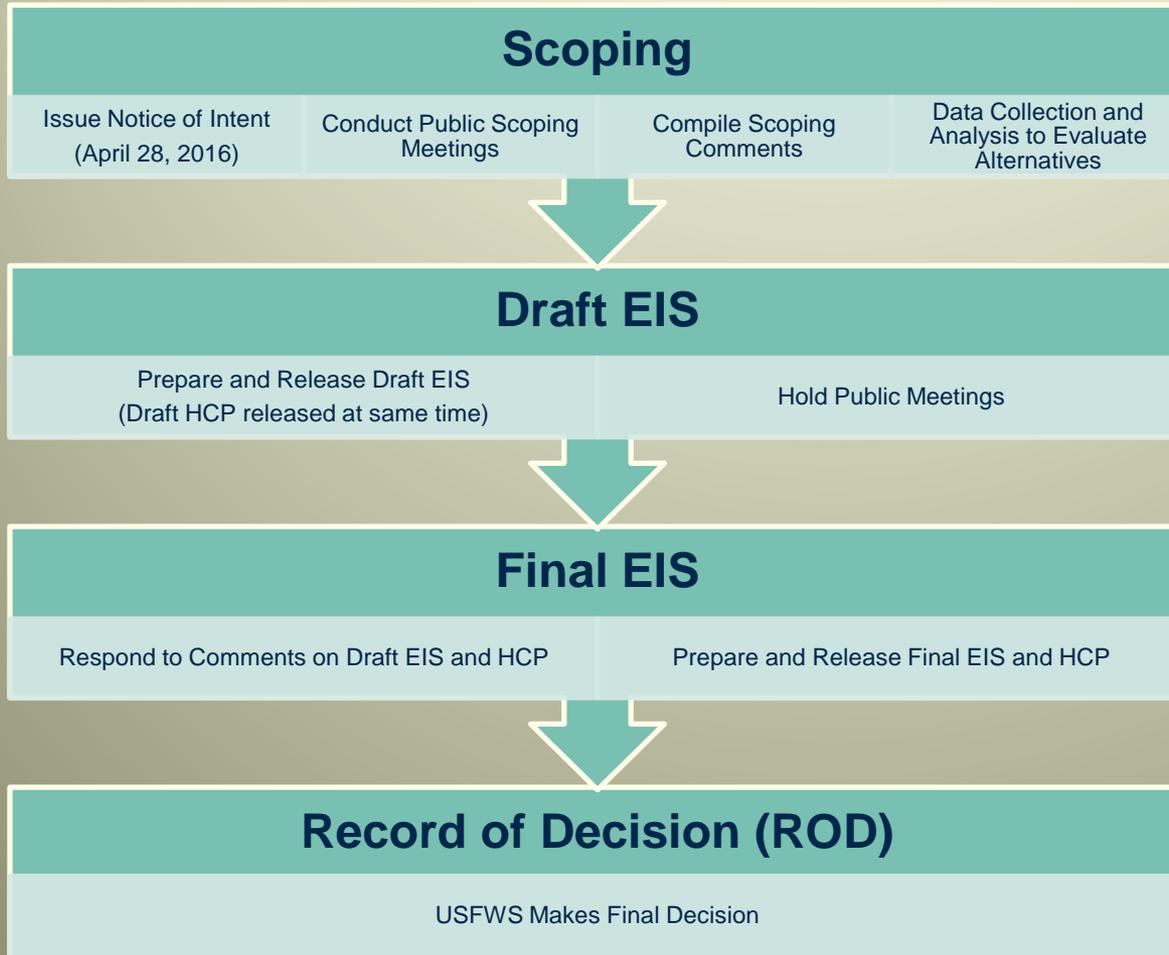
# National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

EIS will cover:

- Direct Effects - effects caused by the action and occur at the same time and place
- Indirect Effects - effects caused by the action and are later in time or farther removed in distance, but are still reasonably foreseeable
- Cumulative Effects - effects that result from the incremental impact of the action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable actions



## Environmental Review Process



### Public Scoping Meetings

**Tuesday, May 17, 2016**

**5:30 to 7 pm**

Council Bluffs Public Library

400 Willow Ave.

Council Bluffs, IA 51503

**Wednesday, May 18, 2016**

**5:30 to 7 pm**

FFA Enrichment Center

1055 SW Prairie Trail Parkway

Ankeny, IA 50023



# Public Comment Submittal

- The Service encourages you to provide written comments on the following topics:
  - Reasonable alternatives (what could MEC or the Service do to avoid or minimize environmental impacts)
  - Mitigation measures (what should be done to offset the impacts to covered species)
  - Likely significant adverse impacts (what important issues should be analyzed in the EIS)
  - Any other data or information that should be included in the EIS



# Public Comment Submittal

- Please send written comments to:  
Kraig McPeck, Field Supervisor  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Rock Island Ecological Services Field Office  
1511 47th Avenue  
Moline, Illinois 61265
- Email comments to: [rockisland@fws.gov](mailto:rockisland@fws.gov) with the subject “MidAmerican EIS Scoping”
- Comments submitted electronically will be given the same weight as mailed comments. All comments received will become part of the record.
- Scoping comments must be received by May 31, 2016 to be considered in the Draft EIS.