

Appendix B

## **Scoping Meeting Materials**

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**Scoping Meeting Materials – Presentation**

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# Environmental Impact Statement for the

## Midwest Wind Energy Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan



# Scoping Meeting for the Midwest Wind Energy Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan Environmental Impact Statement

# Environmental Impact Statement for the

## Midwest Wind Energy Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan



# Proposed Action Overview

**Rick Amidon**

Project Manager

Region 3, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

# Environmental Impact Statement for the

## Midwest Wind Energy Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan



## Proposed Action

- Issuance of incidental take permit(s) (ITPs) based on the MSHCP
- The MSHCP is being prepared by the Midwest Region of the Service and their planning partners for wind energy development within an eight-state Plan Area
- The planning partners include the state wildlife agencies for seven of the eight states, the American Wind Energy Association, a consortium of wind energy companies, and The Conservation Fund
- The MSHCP addresses both Endangered Species Act (ESA) and Eagle Act permit requirements (bald eagle only)



# Endangered Species Act

- Section 9 of the ESA prohibits “take” of federally-listed fish and wildlife
  - Take means to “harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect, or attempt to engage in any such conduct” (16 U.S.C. 1532(19))
- The Service may issue permits to authorize “incidental take” under Section 10(a) of the ESA.
  - Incidental take is defined as take that is incidental to, and not the purpose of, carrying out an otherwise lawful activity
  - The Service may issue an ITP provided certain criteria are met

# Environmental Impact Statement for the

## Midwest Wind Energy Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan



# Incidental Take Permit Issuance Criteria

- Section 10(a)(1)(B) of the ESA outlines criteria for issuing an ITP:
  - The taking will be incidental;
  - The applicant will, to the maximum extent practicable, minimize and mitigate the impact of such taking;
  - The applicant will develop an 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 that the Secretary of the Interior may require as being necessary or appropriate for the purposes of the HCP.
- Monitoring and reporting in compliance with the Service's Five Point Policy must also be provided

# Environmental Impact Statement for the

## Midwest Wind Energy Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan



# Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act

- Bald and golden eagles are protected under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (Eagle Act), which prohibits take and disturbance of individual eagles and their nests
  - “Take” includes actions that pursue, shoot, shoot at, poison, wound, kill, capture, trap, collect, destroy, molest, and disturb eagles
  - “Disturbance” includes activities that agitate or bother eagles to a degree that results in injury, a decrease in productivity (including nest abandonment), or substantial interference with normal breeding, feeding, and sheltering behavior
- The Service may extend Eagle Act take authorization through an ESA Section 10(a) permit provided the permittee meets the terms of the ITP and is in full compliance with the Eagle Act

# Environmental Impact Statement for the



## Midwest Wind Energy Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan

### Plan Area and Covered Lands

- The *Plan Area* encompasses all lands within the Services' Midwest Region
- *Covered Lands* are a subset of the Plan Area where incidental take authorization would be allowed
- The following areas are excluded from Covered Lands:
  - Lands within a 20 mile radius of selected bat hibernacula
  - Lands within 3 miles of the shores of the Great Lakes
  - Lands within 1 mile of the edges of selected rivers supporting bird migration corridors and/or wintering waterfowl areas
  - Floodplain areas along the Mississippi and Illinois Rivers
  - High bat concentration areas in southern Indiana
  - Bird migratory areas in Illinois and large lakes in Minnesota



# Environmental Impact Statement for the



## Midwest Wind Energy Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan

### Covered Activities

- *Covered Activities* reflect activities for which the Service is considering incidental take authorization for Covered Species
- Covered Activities in the MSHCP include:
  - Construction, operation, maintenance and repair, decommissioning and reclamation, and repowering of commercial multi-turbine wind energy projects within Covered Lands
    - Maximum build-out of new wind development – 33,000 megawatts
    - Existing facilities may “opt in” – currently ~ 18,000 megawatts
  - Management of compensatory mitigation lands
  - Monitoring and reporting

# Environmental Impact Statement for the

## Midwest Wind Energy Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan



## Permit Term

- Proposed permit term is 45 years
  - Existing and proposed commercial multi-turbine wind energy projects may apply for take authorization under the MSHCP during first 15 years of the permit term
  - Take authorization would generally last 30 years from the time the permit is issued

# Environmental Impact Statement for the



## Midwest Wind Energy Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan

### Covered Species

➤ *Covered Species* include species that may be affected by Covered Activities and that the Service is considering issuing incidental take permits for

➤ The MSHCP addresses eight Covered Species:

- Kirtland's warbler
- Least tern – Interior population
- Piping plover – Great Lakes population
- Piping plover – Northern Great Plains population
- Indiana bat
- Northern long-eared bat
- Little brown bat (species of concern)
- Bald eagle



# Environmental Impact Statement for the

## Midwest Wind Energy Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan



# Environmental Review Process

**April Zohn**

Project Manager

ICF International, Third Party Contractor

# Environmental Impact Statement for the

## Midwest Wind Energy Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan



# National Environmental Policy Act Compliance

- Issuance of incidental take permits by the Service under the MSHCP is a federal action subject to review under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)
- NEPA requires federal agencies to prepare an EIS for major federal actions
- The EIS will consider the direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Service's federal action, including alternatives, on the human environment

# Environmental Impact Statement for the



## Midwest Wind Energy Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan

# Environmental Review Process

- Step 1 – Scoping (now)
  - 8 scoping meetings
  - 1 online scoping meetings, July 28, 2015, 1 p.m. CT
  
- Step 2 – Draft EIS (March 2016)
  
- Step 3 – Final EIS (December 2016)
  
- Step 4 – Record of Decision (February 2017)

# Environmental Impact Statement for the

## Midwest Wind Energy Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan



# Public Comment Submittal

The Service encourages you to provide comments on the following topics:

- **Scope of the EIS Analysis** – Specific topics or resources that should be considered in the EIS
- **Alternatives** – Alternatives to the proposed action that should be evaluated in the EIS
- **Data or Information** – Suggestions on data or information that should be considered in the EIS

# Environmental Impact Statement for the

## Midwest Wind Energy Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan



# Keys to Making Effective Comments

- Focus your comments on reasonable alternatives and potential environmental issues
- Identify environmental and community factors you consider important for analysis in the Draft EIS
- Suggest methods for analysis of environmental impacts
- Submit comments that are clear, concise, and relevant to the project
- Provide constructive solutions with documentation or resources to support your comments or recommendations
- Comments that provide specific examples are more effective than comments simply stating opposition or support for the proposed action, or making other broad statements

# Environmental Impact Statement for the

## Midwest Wind Energy Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan



# Comment Submittal

➤ **Please send written comments to:**

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Ecological Services  
Attn: Rick Amidon  
5600 American Blvd. West, Suite 990  
Bloomington, MN 55437-1458

➤ **Electronically** by visiting the Federal eRulemaking Portal: [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov).  
In the search box enter (Docket Number FWS-R3-ES-2015-0033).

➤ Comments submitted electronically will be given the same weight as mailed comments.

➤ For additional information, visit: [www.midwestwindenergyhcpeis.org](http://www.midwestwindenergyhcpeis.org).

***Scoping comments must be received  
or postmarked by August 11, 2015 to be considered in the Draft EIS.***

# Environmental Impact Statement for the

## Midwest Wind Energy Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan



# Adjourn

Thank you for your interest in the environmental review process and for participating in this online scoping meeting.

**Scoping Meeting Materials – Large Display Boards**

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# Environmental Review Process Overview

As required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to evaluate alternatives relating to Endangered Species Act incidental take permits that the Service may issue under the Midwest Wind Energy Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan.

## Scoping

Issue Notice of Intent in Federal Register

June 2015

Conduct Public Scoping Meetings

July 2015



Compile Scoping Comments

August 2015

Data Collection and Analysis to Evaluate Alternatives

June 2015 through February 2016

## Draft EIS

Prepare and Release Draft EIS

March 2016

Hold Public Meetings

April – May 2016

## Final EIS

Respond to Comments on Draft EIS

June – September 2016

Prepare and Release Final EIS

December 2016

## Record of Decision

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service makes Final Decision

February 2017



## Public Comment Process

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service encourages you to provide written comments on the following topics:

- **SCOPE OF THE EIS ANALYSIS** – Specific topics or resources (e.g., water quality, traffic) that should be considered in the EIS.
- **ALTERNATIVES** – Alternatives to the proposed action that should be evaluated in the EIS.
- **DATA OR INFORMATION** – Suggestions on data or information that should be considered in the EIS.

Comments may be submitted using one of the following methods:

### Hard Copy – Submitted by U.S. Mail:

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Ecological Services  
Attn: Rick Amidon  
5600 American Blvd. West, Suite 990  
Bloomington, MN 55437-1458

### Electronically:

Visit the Federal eRulemaking Portal: [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov).  
In the search box enter (Docket Number FWS-R3-ES-2015-0033).

Comments must be postmarked by August 11, 2015 to be considered in the Draft EIS.

### For More Information:

Contact Rick Amidon at the mailing address provided above, call (612) 713-5164, or visit the Service-sponsored project website at <http://www.midwestwindenergyhcpeis.org>

## Keys to Making Effective Comments

- 1** Focus your comments on reasonable alternatives and potential environmental issues.
- 2** Let us know what environmental and community factors you consider important for analysis in the Draft EIS.
- 3** Suggest methods for analysis of environmental impacts.
- 4** Submit comments that are clear, concise, and relevant to the project.
- 5** Provide constructive solutions with documentation or resources to support your comments or recommendations.
- 6** Comments that provide specific examples are more effective than comments simply stating opposition or making broad statements.

## Overview

The Midwest Wind Energy Multi-Species HCP is being prepared by the Midwest Region of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and their planning partners, in compliance with the Endangered Species and Eagle Acts, for wind energy development within an eight-state plan area. The planning partners include the state wildlife agencies for seven of the eight states within the plan area, the American Wind Energy Association, a consortium of wind energy companies, and The Conservation Fund.

- **COVERED SPECIES** – The multi-species HCP addresses incidental take of eight bird and bat species.
- **COVERED ACTIVITIES** – Activities covered under the multi-species HCP include construction, operation, maintenance, and decommissioning of existing and future wind energy facilities within limited portions of the plan area, monitoring activities, and management of mitigation lands.
- **INCIDENTAL TAKE PERMIT TERM** – The proposed permit term under the multi-species HCP is 45 years.
- **IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY** – The multi-species HCP may be implemented as both a “template” HCP and a “programmatic” HCP.



## Plan Area and Covered Lands

### Plan Area

The Midwest Wind Energy Multi-Species HCP *plan area* encompasses all lands within the Midwest Region of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which includes eight states: Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio, and Wisconsin.

### Covered Lands

The geographic area where incidental take authorization would be allowed under the multi-species HCP—the *covered lands*—are a subset of the plan area.

**EXCLUDED FROM COVERED LANDS:** The following areas are excluded from *covered lands* to avoid impacts to *covered species*:

- 20 miles of sensitive bat hibernacula identified by the Service and state wildlife agencies
- 3 miles of the shores of the Great Lakes
- 1 mile of the edges of rivers supporting bird migration corridors and/or concentrations of wintering waterfowl
- Floodplain areas along the Mississippi and Illinois Rivers
- High bat concentration areas in southern Indiana
- Bird migratory areas in Illinois and around large lakes in Minnesota

Mitigation measures may occur throughout the plan area.



## Covered Activities

The planning partners have requested incidental take authorization for eight bird and bat species from activities described in the Midwest Wind Energy Multi-Species HCP, referred to as *covered activities*.

### Covered Activities

- Construction, operation, maintenance and repair, decommissioning and reclamation, and repowering of commercial multi-turbine wind energy projects within covered lands.
  - The maximum build-out of new wind development projects anticipated under the multi-species HCP is 33,000 megawatts. New wind energy development would vary by state.
  - Existing commercial multi-turbine wind facilities may “opt in” to the multi-species HCP if they meet requirements and implement avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures.
- Management of compensatory mitigation lands, including:
  - Service-approved mitigation sites managed by a Mitigation Implementing Entity and funded through applicant paid fees; or
  - Project-specific mitigation lands, after review and approval by the Service, and in compliance with species-specific mitigation ratios provided in the multi-species HCP.
- Monitoring including:
  - Site, design, and construction monitoring
  - Operations monitoring
  - Mitigation monitoring
  - Effectiveness monitoring





### Covered Species

The Midwest Wind Energy Multi-Species HCP addresses incidental take of eight *covered species*, including six federally-listed species, one species that is not currently listed but that may be listed in the future, and the bald eagle.

Species	Listing Status	Critical Habitat	Range in Plan Area
<b>Kirtland's warbler</b>	Federally Endangered	Not designated	Michigan, Wisconsin
<b>Least tern</b> Interior population	Federally Endangered	Not designated	Illinois, Indiana, Missouri, Iowa
<b>Piping plover</b> Great Lakes population	Federally Endangered	Units within all states within species range in plan area	Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, Wisconsin
<b>Piping plover</b> Northern Great Plains population	Federally Threatened	Not within plan area	Iowa, Missouri, Minnesota
<b>Indiana bat</b>	Federally Endangered	Specific hibernacula (caves and mines) in Illinois, Indiana, and Missouri	Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Missouri, Ohio
<b>Northern long-eared bat</b>	Federally Threatened	Not designated	Plan area-wide
<b>Little brown bat</b>	None	Not designated	Plan area-wide
<b>Bald eagle</b>	None. Protected under Eagle Act.	Not designated	Plan area-wide



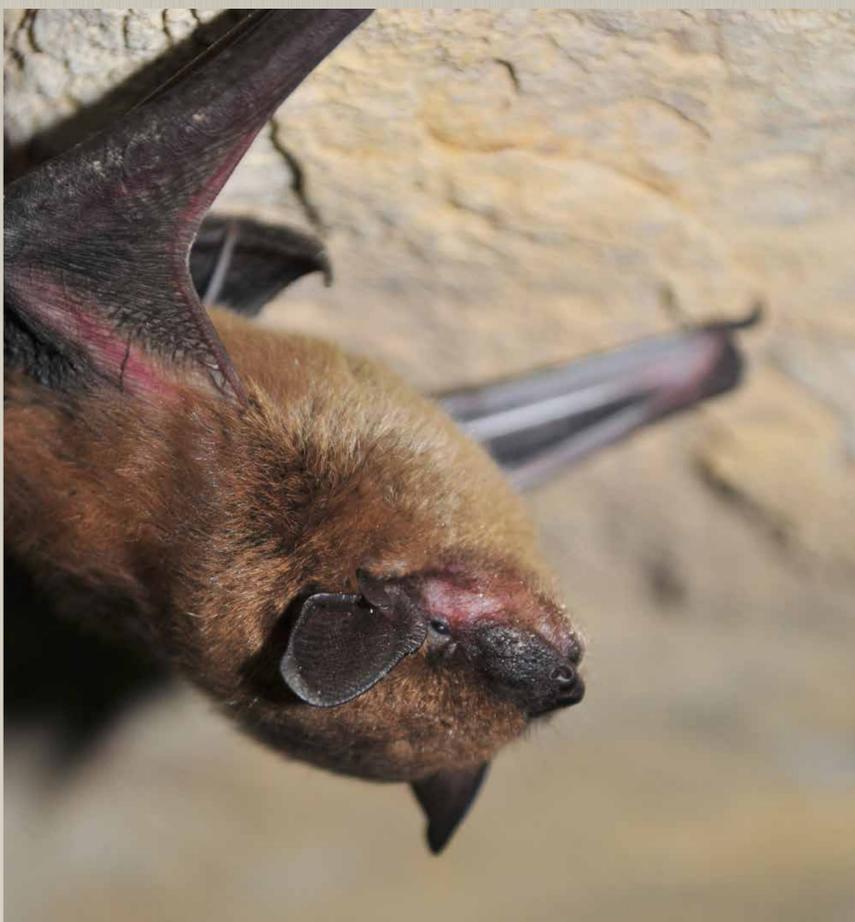
## Endangered Species Act and Incidental Take Permits

Section 9 of the federal Endangered Species Act prohibits “take” of federally-listed fish and wildlife.

- Take means to “harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect, or attempt to engage in any such conduct” (16 U.S.C. 1532(19)).

The Service may issue permits to authorize “incidental take” of listed fish and wildlife species under Section 10(a) of the Endangered Species Act. Incidental take is defined by the Endangered Species Act as take that is incidental to, and not the purpose of, carrying out an otherwise lawful activity. The Service may issue an incidental take permit provided the following criteria are met:

- The taking will be incidental;
- The applicant will, to the maximum extent practicable, minimize and mitigate the impact of such taking;
- The applicant will develop a proposed Habitat Conservation Plan 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.



**Scoping Meeting Materials – Small Display Boards**

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U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

# Environmental Impact Statement for the



## Midwest Wind Energy Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan

Please  
Sign In

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

# Environmental Impact Statement for the



## Midwest Wind Energy Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan

# Comment Area

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

# Environmental Impact Statement for the



## Midwest Wind Energy Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan

Please  
Place Your  
Comments  
Here

# Environmental Impact Statement for the



## Midwest Wind Energy Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan

### Keys to Making Effective Comments:

- Focus your comments on reasonable alternatives and potential environmental issues.
- Let us know what environmental and community factors you consider important for analysis in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).
- Suggest methods for analysis of environmental impacts.
- Submit comments that are clear, concise, and relevant to the project.
- Provide constructive solutions with documentation or resources to support your comments or recommendations.
- Comments that provide specific examples are more effective than comments simply stating opposition or making broad statements.

# Environmental Impact Statement for the



## Midwest Wind Energy Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan

### Please Send Comments to:

Hard Copy – Submitted by U.S. Mail:

Regional Director, Attn: Rick Amidon  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Ecological Services  
5600 American Blvd. West, Suite 990  
Bloomington, MN 55437-1458

Electronically:

Visit the Federal eRulemaking Portal: [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov).  
In the search box enter (Docket Number FWS-R3-ES-2015-0033).

**Comments must be postmarked by August 11, 2015 to be considered in the Draft EIS.**

# Environmental Impact Statement for the



## Midwest Wind Energy Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan

### For More Information:

Contact Rick Amidon at the mailing address provided,  
call (612) 713-5164,  
or visit the Service-sponsored project website at  
<http://www.midwestwindenergyhcpeis.org>

Appendix B-4

**Scoping Meeting Materials – Frequently Asked  
Questions**

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## Midwest Wind Energy Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan Scoping for the Draft Environmental Impact Statement *Questions and Answers*

### ***1. What action is the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service taking?***

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is preparing a draft environmental impact statement (EIS), as required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), to evaluate alternatives relating to Endangered Species Act incidental take permits that the Service may issue under the Midwest Wind Energy Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan. We are in the scoping phase of the NEPA process as we begin preparation of the EIS. Therefore, we published a Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement in the June 12, 2015, *Federal Register*. The purpose of the Notice of Intent is to let interested parties and the public know that we would like to receive input, suggestions and information on the scope of the EIS. The Notice of Intent opens a 60-day public comment period that will close on August 11, 2015.

The following questions and answers summarize the habitat conservation planning process and the Midwest Wind Energy Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan proposal, describe the NEPA process, and outline ways in which the public can participate in the preparation of the EIS.

### ***2. What is a Habitat Conservation Plan?***

Section 9 of the Endangered Species Act prohibits the "take" of listed wildlife species through direct harm or habitat destruction. However, the Act also allows the Service to issue permits for the "incidental" take of endangered and threatened wildlife. Permit holders can proceed with an activity that is legal in all other respects, but that may incidentally take listed wildlife.

To receive a permit, applicants must design, implement and secure funding for a conservation plan that avoids, minimizes and mitigates harm to wildlife impacted by their activity. That plan is commonly called a habitat conservation plan, or HCP. HCPs are legally binding agreements between the Secretary of the Interior and the permit holder.

### ***3. What is the Midwest Wind Energy Multi-Species HCP?***

The *Midwest Wind Energy Multi-Species HCP* (multi-species HCP) is being prepared by the Midwest Region of the Service and their planning partners for wind energy development within an eight-state *plan area* encompassing the states of Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio and Wisconsin. Activities covered under the multi-species HCP include construction, operation, maintenance and decommissioning of existing and future wind energy facilities within limited portions of the plan area, and monitoring activities and management of compensatory mitigation lands. These activities are referred to as *covered activities*. The multi-species HCP addresses incidental take of six federally-listed bat and bird species, one bat species that may be listed in the future, and the bald eagle. These species are referred to as *covered species*. Additional information on plan area, covered activities, and covered species is provided below.

#### **4. Who are the Service's planning partners for this multi-species HCP?**

The planning partners include state conservation agencies from seven of the eight states within the plan area, as well as the American Wind Energy Association and The Conservation Fund. The American Wind Energy Association represents a consortium of wind energy companies. The Conservation Fund is a non-profit organization that helps plan mitigation and manages mitigation funds.

#### **5. What species are covered by the multi-species HCP?**

The multi-species HCP addresses incidental take of eight species that could be affected by wind energy activities (referred to as *covered species*). Six of the covered species are listed as endangered or threatened under the Endangered Species Act, including Kirtland's warbler, least tern (interior population), piping plover (Great Lakes and Northern Great Plains populations), Indiana bat, and northern long-eared bat. One of the covered species, little brown bat, is not currently listed under the Endangered Species Act but may be listed in the future. Bald eagle, which is protected under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act, is also a covered species.

#### **6. What geographic area is covered by the multi-species HCP proposal?**

The geographic area covered by the multi-species HCP is referred to as the *plan area* and encompasses all lands within the Midwest Region of the Service, which includes eight states: Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio and Wisconsin.

However, incidental take of covered species would only be allowed within a subset of the plan area, referred to as the *covered lands*. We developed covered lands in response to public comment on the multi-species HCP and specifically excluded lands that are within:

- 20 miles of sensitive bat hibernacula identified by the Service and state wildlife agencies
- 3 miles of the shores of the Great Lakes
- 1 mile of the edges of rivers supporting bird migration corridors and/or concentrations of wintering waterfowl
- Floodplain areas along the Mississippi and Illinois rivers
- High bat concentration areas in southern Indiana
- Bird migratory areas in Illinois and around large lakes in Minnesota

Wind energy projects are not precluded outside of covered lands, but those projects would not be eligible for participation in this multi-species HCP.

Mitigation measures under the multi-species HCP (e.g., habitat protection and restoration) may occur throughout the plan area, as appropriate to conserve covered species.

#### **6. What activities would the Service issue an incidental take permit for under the multi-species HCP?**

The planning partners have requested incidental take authorization for the following activities, referred to as covered activities.

- Construction, operation, maintenance and repair, decommissioning and reclamation, and repowering of commercial multi-turbine wind energy projects within covered lands. This includes both existing commercial multi-turbine wind facilities and potential new wind development projects.
- Management of compensatory mitigation lands, designed to offset the effects of covered activities on covered species.
- Monitoring, including site, design, and construction monitoring, operations monitoring, mitigation monitoring and effectiveness monitoring.

The multi-species HCP also includes general and species-specific avoidance and minimization measures to reduce the effects of covered activities on covered species.

***7. What permit term is the Service considering under the multi-species HCP?***

The proposed permit term is 45-years. During the first 15 years, proposed and existing commercial wind energy projects may apply for and receive take authorizations under the multi-species HCP. Take authorizations would generally last 30 years from the time the project commences (for new facilities) or from the time a permit is issued (for existing facilities).

***8. What is the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)?***

NEPA is a federal law that serves as the nation’s basic charter for making major federal decisions and determining how those decisions affect the human environment. NEPA requires that all federal agencies consider the potential environmental impacts of their proposed actions. NEPA promotes better agency decision-making by ensuring that the best available information is provided to agency officials and the public before the agency decides whether and how to undertake a major federal action. Through the NEPA process, the public has an opportunity to learn about proposed federal actions and to provide timely information and comments.

An HCP is a planning document required as part of an application for an Endangered Species Act incidental take permit. Issuance of the permit by the Service is a federal action subject to review under NEPA.

***9. Why is an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) needed?***

NEPA requires federal agencies to consider and disclose the environmental impacts of their proposed actions. Due to the scope of this project, the Service determined that an EIS should be prepared to analyze the potential effects of the proposed federal action and alternatives to that proposed action. The analysis provided in the EIS will be used to inform the Service’s decision on whether or not to issue incidental take permits under the multi-species HCP.

***10. Where are we in the NEPA process?***

The Service is in the scoping phase of the NEPA process, which is the first step in preparing an EIS. The purpose of scoping is to ask for early input from the public, other concerned government agencies, the scientific community, Tribes, industry and other interested parties. We want to hear from others about what resource areas, topics and alternatives they would like evaluated in the EIS, as well as suggestions on data or information that should be considered in

the EIS analysis. During the scoping period, you can learn about the proposed action and the EIS process, attend one of eight public meetings and talk with representatives of the Service, participate in an online webinar, and provide written comments on the scope and approach for completing the EIS.

**11. When is scoping and what type of input does the Service need?**

The scoping period for this EIS is 60 days, from June 12, 2015 to August 11, 2015, during which time a public comment period is open. Comments should be postmarked by August 11, 2015, to be considered in the Draft EIS.

During the scoping period, the Service requests your comments on the scope of the EIS, including the following topics:

- Scope of the EIS analysis – Specific topics or resources (e.g., water quality, traffic) that should be considered in the EIS
- Alternatives – Alternatives to the proposed action that should be evaluated in the EIS
- Data or information – Suggestions on data or information that should be considered in the EIS

Comments may be submitted using one of the following methods:

- Hard Copy – Submitted by U.S. Mail:  
Regional Director, Attn: Rick Amidon  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Ecological Services  
5600 American Blvd. West, Suite 990  
Bloomington, MN 55437-1458
- Electronically: Visit the Federal eRulemaking Portal: [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov). In the search box enter (Docket Number FWS-R3-ES-2015-0033).

**12. Where are public scoping meetings being held?**

Eight public scoping meetings will be held to allow the public the opportunity to talk with representatives of the Service, learn more about the process, and provide written comments. The meetings will be held at the following dates and locations:

<b>Date and Time</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Date and Time</b>	<b>Location</b>
Monday July 13, 2015 5 to 7 p.m.	Elliot Recreation Center 1000 E 14 <sup>th</sup> Street Minneapolis, MN	Monday July 20, 2015 5 to 7 p.m.	Letts Community Center Gymnasium 1220 W. Kalamazoo St. Lansing, MI
Tuesday July 14, 2015 5 to 7 p.m.	Warner Park Community Recreation Center 1625 Northport Dr. Madison, WI	Tuesday July 21, 2015 5 to 7 p.m.	Columbus Downtown High School Commons 364 South 4 <sup>th</sup> St. Columbus, OH

<b>Date and Time</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Date and Time</b>	<b>Location</b>
Wednesday July 15, 2015 5 to 7 p.m.	Iowa State University Memorial Union, Campanile Room 2229 Lincoln Way Ames, IA	Wednesday July 22, 2015 5 to 7 p.m.	World Sports Park Ballroom 1313 South Post Rd Indianapolis, IN
Thursday July 16, 2015 5 to 7 p.m.	Battle High School Commons 7575 East St. Charles Rd. Columbia, MO	Thursday July 23, 2015 5 to 7 p.m.	Illinois Wesleyan University Memorial Center Young Main Lounge 104 E. University Ave Bloomington, IL

Additionally, an online webinar will be held on July 28, 2015 at 2:00 p.m. EST (1:00 p.m. CST). Visit the project website at <http://www.midwestwindenergyhceis.org> for information on how to attend the online webinar.

### ***13. What are the Next Steps?***

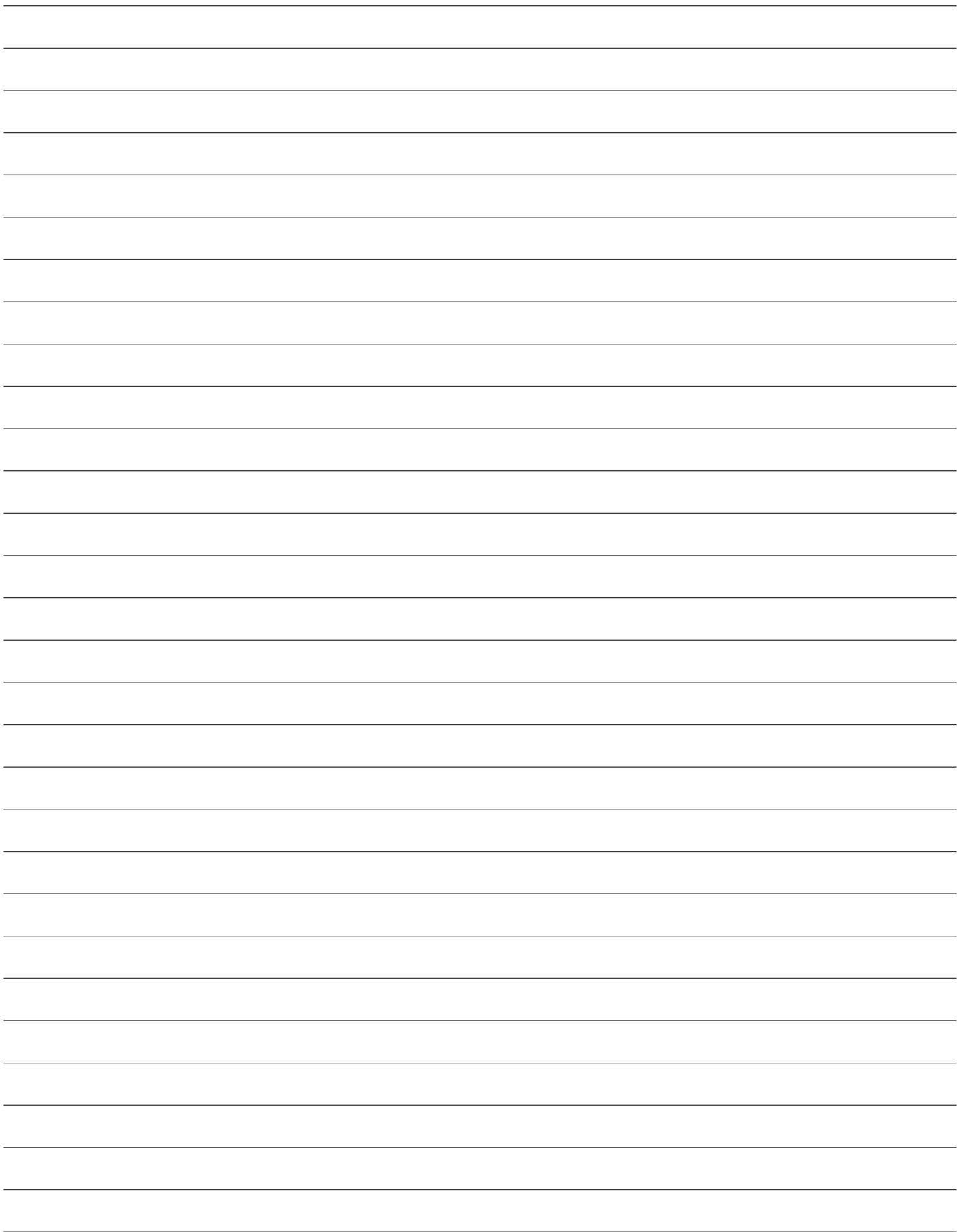
After the scoping period closes, the Service will prepare a draft EIS that evaluates the effects of the multi-species HCP and any alternatives identified during scoping. A second opportunity for public comment will be provided when the draft EIS is completed. The Service anticipates a Draft EIS will be ready for public review in the spring of 2016.

For more information about the Midwest Wind Multi-Species HCP and the NEPA process, contact Rick Amidon at the mailing address provided above, or by phone at (612) 713-5164. You can also visit the Service-sponsored project website at <http://www.midwestwindenergyhceis.org>.

**Scoping Meeting Materials – Comment Form**

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**Scoping Meeting Materials – Registration Card**

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# Environmental Impact Statement for the

## Midwest Wind Energy Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan

### Public Meeting Registration Card

MEETING LOCATION AND DATE (CHECK ONE):

- July 13, 2015 Minneapolis, MN
- July 14, 2015 Madison, WI
- July 15, 2015 Ames, IA
- July 16, 2015 Columbia, MO
- July 20, 2015 Lansing, MI
- July 21, 2015 Columbus, OH
- July 22, 2015 Indianapolis, IN
- July 23, 2015 Bloomington, IL

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ORGANIZATION \_\_\_\_\_

MAILING ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP CODE \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL \_\_\_\_\_

Yes, please include my name and address on the mailing list so I can receive information on the project. Please indicate your preferred method of correspondence:  Mail or  E-mail

# Environmental Impact Statement for the

## Midwest Wind Energy Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan

### Public Meeting Registration Card

MEETING LOCATION AND DATE (CHECK ONE):

- July 13, 2015 Minneapolis, MN
- July 14, 2015 Madison, WI
- July 15, 2015 Ames, IA
- July 16, 2015 Columbia, MO
- July 20, 2015 Lansing, MI
- July 21, 2015 Columbus, OH
- July 22, 2015 Indianapolis, IN
- July 23, 2015 Bloomington, IL

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ORGANIZATION \_\_\_\_\_

MAILING ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP CODE \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL \_\_\_\_\_

Yes, please include my name and address on the mailing list so I can receive information on the project. Please indicate your preferred method of correspondence:  Mail or  E-mail

# Environmental Impact Statement for the

## Midwest Wind Energy Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan

### Public Meeting Registration Card

MEETING LOCATION AND DATE (CHECK ONE):

- July 13, 2015 Minneapolis, MN
- July 14, 2015 Madison, WI
- July 15, 2015 Ames, IA
- July 16, 2015 Columbia, MO
- July 20, 2015 Lansing, MI
- July 21, 2015 Columbus, OH
- July 22, 2015 Indianapolis, IN
- July 23, 2015 Bloomington, IL

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