



United States Department of the Interior



FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE Mountain-Prairie Region

IN REPLY REFER TO:
FWS/R6/ARD/MBSP

MAILING ADDRESS:
Post Office Box 25486
Denver Federal Center
Denver, Colorado 80225-0486

STREET LOCATION:
134 Union Boulevard
Lakewood, Colorado 80228-1807

Dear Tribal Leaders and Department Heads:

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is offering federally-recognized Indian Tribes the option to consult with us on a government-to-government basis regarding our review of an eagle take permit application that we expect to receive from Power Company of Wyoming for Phase 1 of the Chokecherry and Sierra Madre Wind Energy Project in Carbon County, Wyoming. When fully constructed, the project may consist of up to 1,000 wind turbines. Its operation may result in the death of eagles. We published a Notice of Intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Chokecherry-Sierra Madre eagle take permit in the Federal Register on December 4, 2013. That document, as well as other relevant information about the project, is available at <http://go.usa.gov/Zbbw>.

We recognize that bald and golden eagles are of great spiritual and cultural importance to many American Indian tribes. These species have migratory ranges extending well outside of the local project area in Carbon County, Wyoming. We have identified Bird Conservation Regions as an appropriate scale for addressing many migratory bird populations. We are providing notification to tribes with land located within the boundaries of the Bird Conservation Regions 10, 16, 17 or 18 whose eagles may be impacted by this project. Therefore, we encourage you to comment on how the issuance of permits for the take of these birds will affect your tribe. **Comments may be submitted by one of the following methods:**

By email:	By U.S. Postal Service:	By hand delivery/courier:
CCSM_EIS@fws.gov	Chokecherry-Sierra Madre EIS U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Mountain-Prairie Region P.O. Box 25486 DFC Denver, Colorado 80225	Chokecherry-Sierra Madre EIS U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Mountain-Prairie Region 134 Union Boulevard Lakewood, Colorado 80228

If you have questions about the project, please contact Mike Dixon by email at Michael_D_Dixon@fws.gov, or by phone at 303-236-8132.

If you wish to engage in consultation with us on this topic, please contact Ivy Allen, Mountain-Prairie Region, Native American Liaison, by email at Ivy_Allen@fws.gov, or by phone at 303-236-4575.

We look forward to working with you to promote the conservation of the bald and golden eagles while ensuring the protection of tribal lands, trust resources, rights, and cultural and religious values.

Sincerely,

Noreen Walsh

Regional Director

Enclosures:

1. Project Map with BCRs
2. Project Fact Sheet

Courtesy copies sent by *email* to:

Tribal Fish, Wildlife and Parks Director
Tribal Environmental Director
Tribal Historic Preservation Officer
Tribal Cultural Resources Director
Bureau of Indian Affairs, Regional Director

Chokecherry and Sierra Madre

Wind Energy Project



Photo by Scott Covington / USFWS

The Power Company of Wyoming LLC (PCW) has proposed to build the Chokecherry and Sierra Madre Wind Energy Project (CCSM) in south central Wyoming. When fully constructed, the CCSM Project may be the largest wind farm in the United States, with up to 1,000 turbines and the capacity to generate enough electricity for up to 1 million homes.

There may be eagle mortality due to the operation of the CCSM Project. Take, including killing, of eagles is prohibited by the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act. However, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) has been delegated the authority to issue eagle take permits, including programmatic permits such as for a wind farm. A programmatic take permit authorizes the take of eagles where the take is compatible with the preservation of eagles. The USFWS will issue programmatic permits for such take only after an applicant has committed to undertake all practical measures to avoid and minimize such take and mitigate anticipated take to the maximum extent achievable. We expect to receive an application for a programmatic eagle take permit from PCW for Phase I Wind Turbine Development (500 turbines).

In 2012, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) signed the Record of Decision for the CCSM Project in which the BLM determined that more than 200,000 acres within the CCSM Project site are suit-

able for wind energy development subject to the requirements described under the Selected Alternative. The USFWS has an independent statutory responsibility under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) to evaluate its own actions related to the CCSM Project namely the possible issuance of an eagle take permit. We will review BLM's 2012 FEIS and may incorporate by reference the applicable portions of it as part of our EIS.

We would like your input as we conduct scoping for our NEPA review. After reviewing the BLM FEIS, are there additional topics that you would like us to consider related to the issuance of an eagle take permit? We will use your input to help craft our draft EIS.

We encourage you to submit your ideas and concerns to us through emails or letters to:

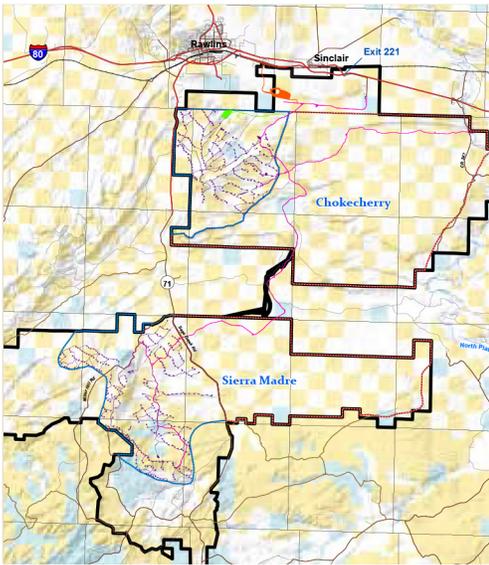
By email: ccsm_eis@fws.gov

**U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Migratory Birds Program
Dr. Michael Dixon, Assistant NEPA
Project Manager
P.O. Box 25486, DFC
Denver, CO 8022**

Before including your address, phone number, email, or other personal identifying information in your comment, please be aware that your entire comment includ-

ing that information may be publicly available. While you may request that we withhold your personal information from public view, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

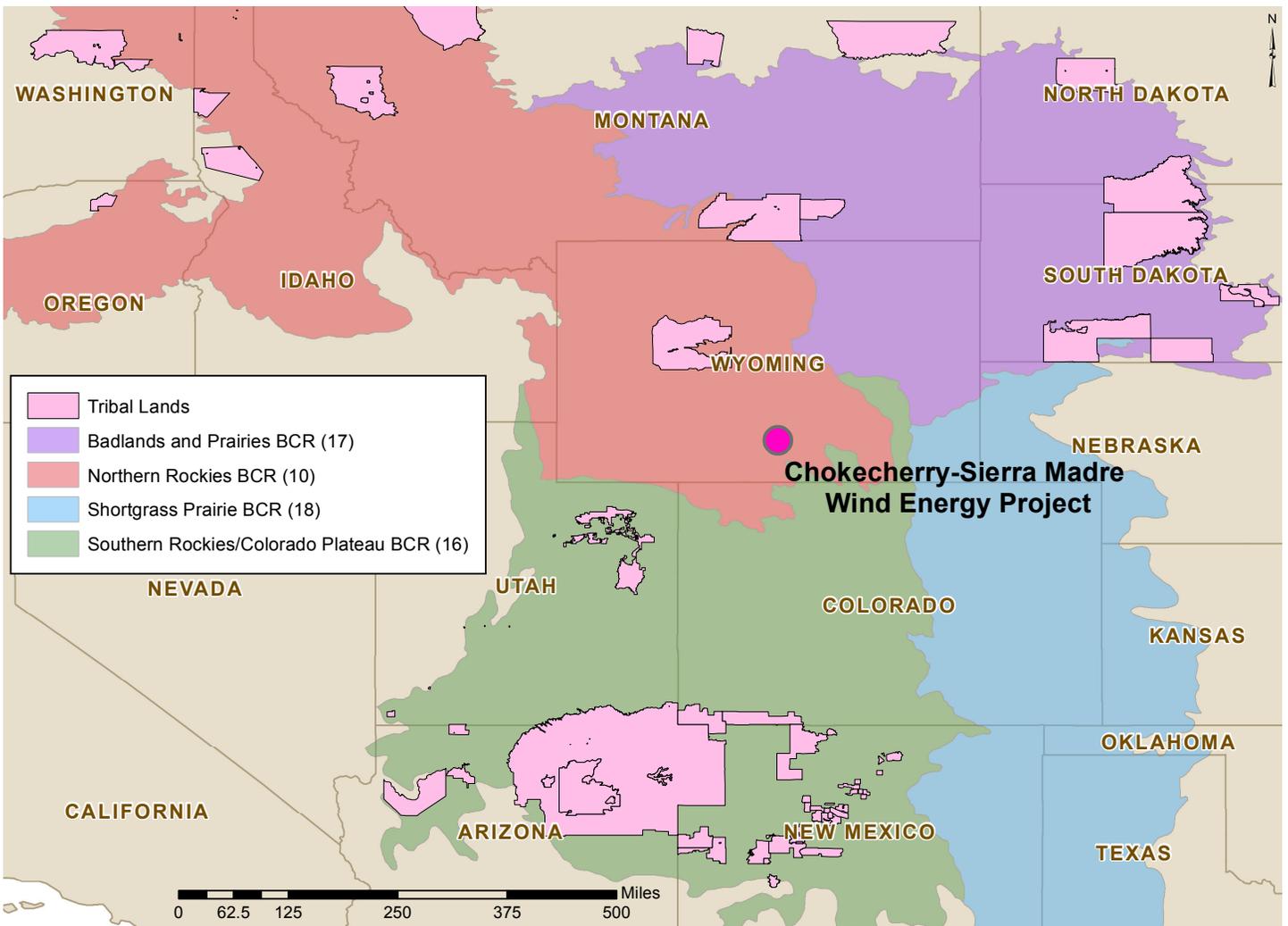




U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Chokecherry and Sierra Madre

Wind Energy Project



We published a Notice of Intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Chokecherry-Sierra Madre eagle take permit in the Federal Register on December 4, 2013. The Notice of Intent for the EIS, as well as other relevant information about the project, is available at <http://go.usa.gov/Zbbw>.

