

Final Scoping Report

for the Environmental Impact Statement for an
Eagle Take Permit for Phase I of the
Chokecherry and Sierra Madre Wind Energy Project

April 2014



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Mountain-Prairie Region



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List of Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Definition
ACP	Advanced Conservation Practice
APP	Avian Protection Plan
BBCS	Bird and Bat Conservation Strategy
BGEPA	Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act
BLM	Bureau of Land Management
BLM FEIS	BLM's Chokecherry and Sierra Madre Wind Energy Project Final Environmental Impact Statement
BLM ROD	BLM's Record of Decision for the Chokecherry and Sierra Madre Wind Energy Project and Approved Visual Resource Management Plan Amendment on Public Lands Administered by the Bureau of Land Management Rawlins Field Office, Carbon County, Wyoming
CCSM Project	Chokecherry and Sierra Madre Wind Energy Project
CDNST	Continental Divide National Scenic Trail
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
DEIS	Draft Environmental Impact Statement
EA	Environmental Assessment
ECP	Eagle Conservation Plan
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
ETP	Eagle Take Permit
FEIS	Final Environmental Impact Statement
FR	<i>Federal Register</i>
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act of 1969
NGO	non-governmental organization
NHPA	National Historic Preservation Act of 1966
NOI	Notice of Intent
PCW	Power Company of Wyoming LLC
ROD	Record of Decision
ROW	Right-of-Way
USFWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

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Section 1.0 Introduction

1.1 Project Overview

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) is preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for an Eagle Take Permit (ETP) for Phase I of the Chokecherry and Sierra Madre Wind Energy Project (CCSM Project) in Carbon County, Wyoming. The EIS will analyze the environmental impacts associated with an application for a programmatic ETP for Phase I of the CCSM Project and other reasonable alternatives.

As proposed by the permit applicant, Power Company of Wyoming LLC (PCW), Phase I of the CCSM Project would consist of approximately 500 wind turbines, capable of producing 1,000 to 1,500 megawatts of wind energy, and a variety of supporting infrastructure. Some bald and golden eagles that inhabit or migrate through the CCSM Project area may be killed or otherwise adversely affected by CCSM Project development and operation. PCW has indicated that it will apply to the USFWS for an ETP under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (BGEPA) for the potential take of golden eagles from Phase I of the CCSM Project.

The Phase I Wind Development would occur in the western portions of both the Chokecherry and the Sierra Madre areas. The northern portion of the application area, termed Chokecherry, is situated entirely east of State Highway 71. Under the development scenario proposed by PCW, the Chokecherry area would be divided east-west by a haul road that would be built to serve construction and operation of the CCSM Project. The southern portion of the application area is termed Sierra Madre. Sierra Madre is divided by State Highway 71, and the majority of the wind development acreage would be located west of this highway.

The CCSM Project would be situated on a “checkerboard” area of land-ownership in south-central Wyoming, where alternating sections of land are privately owned and federally administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), with a small amount of State land interspersed. As a result, approximately half of the CCSM Project would be located on federal lands and would require Right-of Way (ROW) Grants from the BLM. The BLM review under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) for ROW Grants for the CCSM Project consists of two stages of review: in 2012, the BLM completed a Final Environmental Impact Statement (BLM FEIS) and Record of Decision (BLM ROD) for the full project (BLM FEIS and ROD), and in 2014, the BLM is conducting detailed NEPA review of PCW’s site-specific plans of development for Phase I of the CCSM Project.

Phase II of the CCSM Project, which could be applied for at a later date, would consist of an additional 500 wind turbines. The USFWS intends to address impacts of Phase II of the CCSM Project as a reasonably foreseeable future action in the cumulative impacts section of its EIS. Additionally, the USFWS would conduct further NEPA review of Phase II if and when an ETP application for Phase II is submitted.

1.2 Purpose of the USFWS Action

The purpose of the USFWS' action is to consider issuing a permit for Phase I of the CCSM Project under BGEPA for programmatic take of eagles. Under BGEPA, "take" is defined as to "pursue, shoot, shoot at, poison, wound, kill, capture, trap, collect, destroy, molest or disturb." Under the final Eagle Permit Rule published on September 11, 2009 (74 Federal Register [FR] 46836–46879; 50 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] 22.26 and 22.27), the USFWS can issue permits that authorize individual instances of take of bald and golden eagles when the take is associated with, but not the purpose of, an otherwise lawful activity and cannot practicably be avoided. The regulations also authorize permits for "programmatic" take, which means that instances of "take" may not be isolated, but may recur.

The USFWS' consideration of whether to issue an ETP to PCW for Phase I of the CCSM Project is a federal action that triggers the need for compliance with NEPA.

The process for implementing NEPA is codified in 40 CFR Parts 1500–1508, Regulations for Implementing the Procedural Provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act. The regulations specify that an EIS be prepared when a federal agency is proposing a major action (such as issuing the ETP) with potential to "significantly affect the quality of the human environment" (40 CFR 1501). Significance is determined by evaluating the context and intensity of the impact. The USFWS has determined that several factors pertaining to the context and intensity of potential impacts of the CCSM Project are "significant" (as defined in 40 CFR 1508.27) and warrant the preparation of an EIS for an ETP for Phase I of the CCSM Project. These factors include, but are not limited to, the context of impacts on the local and regional eagle populations, the intensity in terms of the degree to which the effects are likely to be highly controversial, the degree to which effects may establish a precedent and represent a decision in principle for future consideration, and whether the action may contribute cumulatively to significant impacts on environmental resources.

As part of PCW's application for an ETP, PCW is preparing a detailed Eagle Conservation Plan (ECP). The ECP will identify measures that PCW proposes to avoid, minimize, and compensate for potential impacts on bald and golden eagles in the future. In addition, PCW is preparing a Bird and Bat Conservation Strategy (BBCS)¹ containing measures that PCW proposes to implement in order to avoid or minimize impacts of Phase I of the CCSM Project on other migratory birds. The USFWS will consider information presented in the ECP and BBCS in the EIS.

In responding to the request for a permit, the USFWS must ensure that its actions comply with the BGEPA goal of no net loss (currently defined as "maintaining stable or increasing breeding populations") to bald and golden eagle populations.

¹ As mentioned in several scoping comments, the BLM FEIS and ROD discussed the preparation of an Avian Protection Plan (APP). PCW is developing a BBCS instead, which will serve the same general purpose of an APP while keeping in step with evolving policy and management guidance.

1.3 Scoping Overview

The first formal step in the NEPA process is the scoping phase, a process used by federal agencies in the early stages of preparing an EIS. Scoping gives individuals and organizations the opportunity to comment and offer input on alternatives, issues, concerns, and opportunities that should be considered in a NEPA document.

This report summarizes comments, feedback, and input received from the public, agencies, and federally recognized Native American tribes during the 60-day scoping period for the EIS for an ETP for Phase I of the CCSM Project. The scoping period for this effort began on December 4, 2013, and closed on February 3, 2014.

Section 2.0 Scoping Activities

During the scoping phase for the EIS for an ETP for Phase I of the CCSM Project, the USFWS used a variety of outreach methods to the public, agencies, and federally recognized Native American tribes in order to raise awareness of the EIS and solicit comments for the USFWS' consideration. Copies of all outreach documents are included in the appendices to this report.

2.1 Scoping Announcements

The scoping period for the USFWS' EIS for an ETP for Phase I of the CCSM Project was announced through a Notice of Intent (NOI) in the *Federal Register*, a press release, and newspaper notices, as detailed below.

2.1.1 Notice of Intent

The USFWS published an NOI to prepare an EIS for an ETP for Phase I of the CCSM Project in the *Federal Register* on December 4, 2013 (78 FR 7296-7298), provided in **Appendix A**. The NOI provides background on the CCSM Project, the need for and general focus of the USFWS' EIS, and details of the USFWS' scoping period.

2.1.2 Press Release

A press release announcing the scoping phase of the EIS for an ETP for Phase I of the CCSM Project was developed and published on the USFWS' Mountain-Prairie Region website on December 3, 2013, and is provided in **Appendix B**. The press release announced two public meetings to discuss the proposed ETP for Phase I of the CCSM Project. The press release also provided relevant background about Phase I of the CCSM Project; the USFWS' responsibilities under NEPA; the dates, times, and locations of both public meetings; and information regarding the public comment period and how to comment.

2.1.3 Newspaper Notices

Newspaper notices were published in two local and two regional newspapers of record to provide awareness of the USFWS' intent to prepare an EIS for an ETP for Phase I of the CCSM Project and the associated scoping phase. These newspaper notices are included in **Appendix B**. The newspapers were strategically chosen based on their proximity to the CCSM Project in order to raise a strong local awareness of the open comment period. Table 1 identifies each newspaper in which notices were published and their corresponding publication dates.

Table 1. Newspaper Notice Publication Details

Newspaper of Record	Notice Publication Date(s)
Rawlins Daily Times	January 21–23, 2014
Casper Star-Tribune	January 21–23, 2014
Saratoga Sun	January 21, 2014
Wyoming Tribune-Eagle	January 19–21, 2014

2.2 Project Website and Social Media

A website for the USFWS' EIS, providing background information and documents regarding the USFWS' consideration of whether or not to issue an ETP for Phase I of the CCSM Project and the associated NEPA analysis, has been created on the USFWS' Mountain-Prairie Region website. The EIS website offers contact information for public comment, information on the two public scoping meetings held, and links to all published information at the scoping meetings, specifically the NOI, press release, fact sheet, and a copy of the poster boards from the public scoping meetings. A link to the BLM FEIS and ROD is also available on the website. Publicly released EIS-related documents will be provided on the website as they are completed. The website can be found at <http://www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie/wind/chokecherrySierraMadre/>.

In addition to the website, the USFWS used social media to raise awareness of the public comment period. Approximately 15 Tweets were published on Twitter advertising the public comment period with an accompanying link to the USFWS EIS website. These Tweets were Retweeted by several followers.

2.3 Public Scoping Meetings

Two public scoping meetings for the USFWS' EIS were held, on December 16 and 17, 2013, in conjunction with the BLM's scoping meetings for an Environmental Assessment (EA) of Phase I of the CCSM Project. The meetings were organized in an open house format during the scoping period. Brief formal presentations were given by representatives of the BLM, PCW, and the USFWS at each meeting to provide general information on Phase I of the CCSM Project, as well as the respective roles of the BLM and the USFWS in considering issuing permits for Phase I of the CCSM Project. The purpose of these meetings was to provide information to the public, as well as answer questions regarding the NEPA process and the agencies' roles, and to receive input regarding any issues and alternatives recommended for evaluation in the USFWS' EIS.

The public scoping meetings were held at the locations identified in Table 2. The number of attendees listed for each meeting does not include the staff from the BLM, the USFWS, PCW, or their contractors who were present at the meetings.

Table 2. Public Scoping Meeting Details

Date and Time	Location	Attendees
Monday, Dec. 16, 2013 4:00–6:30 p.m. <i>Presentations at 4:30 p.m. and 5:30 p.m.</i>	Jeffrey Center 315 West Pine Street Rawlins, Wyoming 82301	Public – 21 Agency – 7
Tuesday, Dec. 17, 2013 4:00–6:30 p.m. <i>Presentation at 4:30 p.m.</i>	Platte Valley Community Center 210 West Elm Street Saratoga, Wyoming 82331	Public – 29 Agency – 8

A fact sheet was provided at the public scoping meetings, and poster boards were on display in the meeting locations, explaining the CCSM Project background and the need for the USFWS' EIS for an ETP for Phase I of the CCSM Project. Copies of the meeting materials, as well as photos from the public scoping meetings, are provided in **Appendix C**. The USFWS's EIS team members were available for personal, one-on-one interaction during the meetings to answer questions or clarify project details.

2.4 Stakeholder Coordination

On January 21, 2014, the USFWS mailed letters regarding the EIS to 115 federal, state, and local agencies and other potentially interested parties. The letters included information on the CCSM Project, the EIS scoping period, and how to provide comments. A copy of the letter is included in **Appendix D**. Stakeholders and other interested parties were also encouraged to stay current on the status of the USFWS' EIS by visiting the USFWS' website (<http://www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie/wind/chokecherrySierraMadre/>).

2.5 Cooperating Agency Coordination

A cooperating agency is defined as any agency that has jurisdiction by law or has special expertise with respect to any environmental issue that should be addressed in the EIS. Formal notification of the EIS planning process and subsequent public comment period was sent to 19 federal, state, and local agencies at the beginning of the scoping period. The USFWS also extended an invitation to these agencies to become a cooperating agency on the USFWS' EIS for an ETP for Phase I of the CCSM Project. As of March 31, 2014, three agencies had been recognized as cooperating agencies on the USFWS' EIS: the BLM, Carbon County Board of County Commissioners, and Wyoming Game and Fish Department. A copy of the letter sent to cooperating agencies is included in **Appendix D**.

2.7 Tribal Coordination

The USFWS recognizes that tribal governments are sovereign nations located within and dependent upon the United States. Because of this, the USFWS has a responsibility to tribes when considering its actions that may affect tribal rights, resources, assets, and traditions. Specifically, the USFWS recognizes that bald and golden eagles are of great spiritual and cultural importance to many tribes. These species have migratory ranges extending well outside of the local CCSM Project area in Carbon County, Wyoming. As a result, the USFWS has identified Bird Conservation Regions as an appropriate scale for addressing many migratory bird populations. The USFWS provided notification to tribes with land located in the boundaries of Bird Conservation Regions 10, 16, 17, or 18, which are the regions through which potentially affected golden eagles may migrate.

Consistent with the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA) and Executive Order 13175, Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments, the USFWS sent letters to 51 Native American tribes. The letter and fact sheet that were sent from the USFWS to the tribes and tribal organizations inviting input and notifying them of the scoping process is provided in **Appendix D**. As of April 28, 2014, three tribes, the San Felipe Pueblo, the Eastern Shoshone, and the Northern Arapahoe, have requested further information or consultation in regard to the USFWS' consideration of issuing an ETP for Phase I of the CCSM Project.

Section 3.0 Summary of Comments Received

During the scoping period, 48 comment letters were received from project stakeholders and agencies. These letters contained information and input that was sorted into 35 topic categories that the USFWS will consider in the EIS process. This section of the scoping report provides a general summary of the comments received, organized by comment topic. **Appendix E** contains a detailed compilation of individual scoping comments received, organized by comment topic.

3.1 NEPA and EIS Processes

Eight commenters provided feedback regarding the overall NEPA process for CCSM; these comments, in large part, focused on a desire for increased transparency by, and coordination among, agencies involved in the NEPA process. Additionally, several commenters expressed the desire for a joint NEPA process between the BLM and the USFWS so that the review and analysis of the Phase I Wind Development, ECP, APP, and ETP are combined in one document.

Regarding the USFWS' EIS, multiple commenters noted that the data and analysis contained in the EIS should be accurate and transparent, and available for review by the public as soon as it is generated. Additional comments ranged from encouraging the USFWS to conduct a speedy and focused EIS review to urging the USFWS to complete a Regional Conservation Plan or similar analysis for use in the EIS.

3.2 Statements of Opposition and Statements of Support

Eighteen commenters submitted statements of opposition that indicated that an ETP should not be issued and the CCSM Project, as proposed, should not be allowed to be constructed and operated. Four commenters submitted statements of support for construction and operation of the CCSM Project.

3.3 Purpose and Need

Four comments were received regarding the purpose and need for the USFWS' EIS. These comments all indicated a preference that the USFWS define its purpose and need broadly to reflect the statutory authorities and goals applicable under BGEPA, rather than narrowly framed as whether to “approve or deny” the ETP, in order to allow the agency latitude to consider alternatives outside of the current plan of development for Phase I of the CCSM Project.

3.4 Alternatives

Fifteen commenters provided scoping comments regarding the range of alternatives to be analyzed in the USFWS' EIS. These comments included suggestions on the ETP duration, mitigation measures, monitoring protocols, adaptive management strategies, and CCSM Project development and siting specifications (including CCSM Project location and size). Comments on alternatives included the following:

- Consider bird-friendly turbines and additional bird deterrents.
- Concentrate on localized creation of green energy development, such as solar panels and small turbines on buildings, and using thermal energy.
- Consider the permit duration. General concern was expressed over the length of 30-year permits. Some commenters suggested that permit tenure should not exceed 5 years until critical uncertainties regarding risk prediction are addressed and effectiveness of both conservation practices and mitigation measures are proven.
- Consider alternatives that include a range of development scenarios, incorporating alternatives outside of the current Phase I plan of development and adjustments to turbine numbers and layouts.

In addition to the comments received on a broad range of alternatives, as described above, specific comments regarding avoidance and minimization, siting, mitigation, monitoring, and adaptive management strategies were also received. These comments are summarized in the following subsections.

3.4.1 Avoidance and Minimization

Four commenters noted that priority should be given to additional strategies for avoiding and minimizing eagle take during operations and to measures for excluding specific areas from development. Suggested avoidance strategies included configuring wind turbines to avoid high avian use areas and buffers around known eagle nests and breeding areas, as well as removing especially hazardous turbines that cause repeated mortality or overlap with high avian use areas. Suggested minimization strategies included operational curtailment and an increased “cut-in” speed to minimize impacts on bats and migratory birds.

3.4.2 Siting

Several commenters noted that development should occur in previously disturbed areas and areas with the fewest environmental impacts, and that turbines should not be located in areas with high avian use, near known raptor nests, near breeding areas, near abundant prey areas, within core habitat for sage-grouse, or near sage-grouse leks. Additional specific comments received on siting included the following:

- Move the CCSM Project to Bolten Flats.
- Avoid Miller Hill.
- Avoid the Atlantic Rim located to the west of the CCSM Project area.
- Use State Highway 71 as the haul road.
- Avoid turbines along the southern border of Chokecherry and the southwestern boundary of Sierra Madre.
- Avoid development of 0.5 mile on either side of the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail (CDNST).
- Avoid all sage-grouse core areas and use a buffer of 0.6 mile to protect habitat integrity near any lek.
- Consider an alternative that shields this wind farm from the CDNST and the Overland Historic Trail.

3.4.3 Mitigation

Many comments urged the USFWS to develop a full suite of mitigation options to avoid eagle take before it has occurred; specific mitigation measures designed to avoid or minimize take are discussed in Section 3.4.1. Suggested mitigation measures intended to be implemented as a result of unavoidable take included the following:

- One commenter suggested that fee schedules for eagle takes should increase so that more eagles killed would result in a higher fee per eagle. Similar comments stated that specific thresholds for mortality that trigger additional mitigation should be defined, as well as defining what the additional mitigation measures will be.
- Several commenters indicated that retrofitting transmission lines is not adequate mitigation; however, one commenter indicated support of the use of this mitigation measure.
- The viability of a number of mitigation measures should be examined, including habitat improvements or protective measures for foraging and nesting habitat, carcass removal, additional wind project operational controls or curtailment, funding for habitat restoration or minimizing activities with a demonstrated negative effect on golden eagle populations, funding of programs to use rehabilitated eagles for Native American ceremonies instead of taking healthy eagles, and lead abatement programs.
- Mitigation money should be spent on eagle replacement, including stocking and giving eagles a safe zone in which to restock.
- A state repository should be implemented for tribal communities with a timely retrieval of killed birds from the CCSM Project area by traditionally qualified people.
- Mitigation measures planned outside the immediate CCSM Project area should not be considered.

3.4.4 Monitoring

Comments received on monitoring included the following:

- Incorporate detailed monitoring prescriptions and protocols in the ETP and the ECP, including stringent reporting requirements.
- Use avian radar technology for monitoring during and after construction.
- Monitor nesting success.
- Have monitoring be conducted by an independent third party of qualified observers.
- Require pre-construction monitoring to extend 10 miles outside the CCSM Project boundary and include a sufficient number of observation points to ensure that the entire CCSM Project area is evaluated.
- Require 3 years of post-construction mortality monitoring for 50 percent of turbines.
- Make monitoring and analysis data publicly available in real time.
- Develop a publicly available wildlife incidental reporting system that would include incidental reporting of eagle mortalities on the CCSM Project site.

3.4.5 Adaptive Management

Several commenters encouraged the USFWS to require, as part of an ETP, a robust adaptive management plan that incorporates the most recent and best techniques available for reducing eagle mortalities during the lifetime of the CCSM Project. Specific comments received on adaptive management strategies included the following:

- Establish a Technical Advisory Committee to oversee the adaptive management framework and implementation of Advanced Conservation Practices (ACPs). ACPs are defined in 50 CFR 22.26(a)(2) to mean “scientifically supportable measures that are approved by the [USFWS] and represent the best available techniques to reduce eagle disturbance and ongoing mortalities to a level where remaining take is unavoidable.”
- Specific thresholds for mortality that would trigger additional adaptive management should be defined. The additional adaptive management measures also should be defined.
- Measures should include observer- or radar-triggered temporary turbine shutdown, seasonal curtailment, operational curtailment, and decommissioning of specific turbines.
- In the event that turbine designs that have significantly lower impacts on birds and bats or other minimization measures become available, the CCSM Project proponents should be required to change out old turbine designs or otherwise incorporate new lower-impact technologies.

3.5 Eagle Conservation Plan and Eagle Take Permit

Many commenters expressed their desire to review the ECP as soon as it is available. Additional comments on the ECP included the following:

- The conservation plan should include the following, at a minimum:
 - Requirements for discontinued operations of specific turbines during migration seasons to reduce mortalities
 - Adequate conductor-to-conductor and conductor-to-ground space to prevent avian electrocution
 - Installation of overhead transmission structures with anti-perching devices to reduce perching by avian predators and prevent avian electrocution
 - Relocation of development to less-sensitive areas
- The ECP should include a list of risk factors and adaptive management thresholds.
- Regional analysis must be incorporated into the documents.
- [The ECP] should consider requiring other experimental ACPs up front to help fill priority data gaps and identify more effective mitigation measures.

Regarding the ETP itself, comments included the following:

- The document should provide a mechanism as to how information on future eagle mortalities will be documented and disclosed.
- The ETP should be based in science and must incorporate adaptive management strategies that continually use ongoing monitoring information; specific guidelines must be outlined to address consequences for activities outside of the scope of the permit.

- USFWS must commit to take an active enforcement and oversight role in the issuance of authorizations for programmatic eagle take.
- USFWS must provide greater clarity on expectations for reaching a net benefit and ongoing management actions to ensure that a sustained reduction in eagle take is occurring throughout the life of the CCSM Project.
- Any final permit should be designed with the expectation that the associated terms and conditions will result in net benefits to eagles.

3.6 Eagles and Eagle Data

Several commenters noted that robust, scientifically accurate, and objective eagle baseline data need to be collected both on the CCSM Project site and regionally to adequately characterize the affected eagle population. Many commenters noted that these data should be made publically available to help the public make more informed comments.

Comments received regarding what eagle data and analysis need to be considered in the EIS included the following:

- Site assessments must examine CCSM Project impacts on eagle foraging habitat, nesting sites, roosting sites, wintering habitat, migratory stopover sites, migratory corridors, and defended eagle territories.
- The prey base within the footprint of the development must be considered in the analysis.
- Direct impacts include collisions with the turbines, stabilizing wires, transmission lines, communication lines, and meteorological towers. Other impacts, such as that of the railroad spur, quarry, power facilities, and access roads, will further contribute to the decline of the local population by degrading habitat and increasing habitat loss and fragmentation, which will move eagles out of their preferred habitat and into marginal habitat.

3.7 Wildlife

In addition to the potential impacts of the CCSM Project on eagles, several commenters noted that the EIS needs to analyze the CCSM Project's impacts on, and mitigation measures for, other birds; bats; elk, mule deer, and pronghorn (that is, "big game"); and aquatic resources. Several comments proposed specific monitoring and mitigation measures to protect sage grouse.

3.8 Additional Resource Areas

Comments on several resource areas were received, including the following:

- Assess in the EIS the impacts on Pine Grove Stage Station and other historic and cultural properties and resources.
- Include analysis of visual, recreational, and cultural impacts on the CDNST and the Overland Trail.
- Consider Carbon County's Conditional Use Permit for the CCSM Project as well as the County Comprehensive Land Use Plan in the EIS.

- Consider, as soon as it is available, the draft BLM EIS covering the Rawlins Resource Area.
- Assess impacts of CCSM Project development on adjacent lands, on public access and use of the CCSM Project site's federal lands, and on Special Recreation Management and Wildlife Habitat Management Areas.
- Detail the long-range impacts, both primary and secondary, of displacing lands that have been traditionally used for grazing and wildlife habitat.

Comments received on tribal resources included mitigation suggestions for eagle take impacts on tribes, including establishing a state repository of eagles for tribal communities and a timely retrieval of killed birds by traditionally qualified people. A newspaper article was submitted that further discussed mitigation for eagle take impacts on tribes. Mitigation measures suggested in the article included establishing a state coordinator and/or state eagle center, ceremonial handling of injured or killed eagles, establishing an in-state eagle repository, ensuring active and timely retrieval and monitoring of killed birds, and directly increasing eagle numbers by opening an eagle hatchery.

Finally, eleven commenters provided considerations for the cumulative impacts assessment in the USFWS' EIS. Climate change, other sources of eagle take, Phase II of the CCSM Project, and projects such as area transmission lines (including the TransWest Express Transmission Project) and oil and gas drilling and associated infrastructure (including the Atlantic Rim Natural Gas Project as well as the proposed Continental Divide-Creston Natural Gas Development Project) were encouraged to be cumulatively assessed for their impacts on wildlife, habitat, and visual and recreational resources.

3.9 Construction and Decommissioning

Regarding construction and decommissioning activities, one comment on each was received during the scoping period:

- The construction disturbance area and intensity should be minimized to the maximum extent possible.
- Plans for the demobilization of turbines at the end of the CCSM Project's life, and associated impacts with such demobilization, should be disclosed.

Section 4.0 Next Steps in the Planning Process

The USFWS, with input from cooperating agencies, will determine which modifications of, and alternatives to, the Proposed Action and No Action should be carried forward for full analysis in the EIS. For each of the viable alternatives carried forward for full analysis, potentially affected resources will be identified and potential impacts on each of those resources will be assessed. If needed, measures to mitigate resource impacts will be included in the EIS.

When the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) is completed, the USFWS will notify the public, agencies, and tribes of the availability of the DEIS for review and comment via publication of the Notice of Availability of the DEIS in the *Federal Register*, newspaper advertisements, press releases, and letters sent to those on the project mailing list. A comment period of no less than 45 days will follow the publication of the DEIS and will include public and agency meetings. Following the comment period, the DEIS may be modified based on the public, agency, and tribal comments received. Similar to this scoping report, all comments and responses will be summarized in a Comment Analysis Report and ultimately incorporated into the USFWS' Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS).

When complete, the USFWS' FEIS will be made available to the public, agencies, and tribes for a minimum 30-day review period. The publication of the FEIS will be announced in the *Federal Register* and advertised through media sources similar to those used for the DEIS. A Record of Decision (ROD) will be issued by the USFWS following the review period of the FEIS.

Appendix A

Notice of Intent

Notice of Intent



72926

Federal Register / Vol. 78, No. 233 / Wednesday, December 4, 2013 / Notices

the time of application to the program in accordance with TSA-approved payment methods. TSA will not issue fee refunds once vetting services have commenced. Further, TSA will not refund the fee, in whole or in part, to individuals who are not approved for participation in the program based upon the results of TSA's assessment. The TSA Pre✓™ Application Program KTN, and the underlying security threat assessment, are valid for a maximum of five years or until a disqualification occurs. Travelers have the option to renew their enrollment through the TSA Pre✓™ Application Program at the end of the five years by submitting an application and paying the fee.

Dated: November 19, 2013.

John S. Pistole,
Administrator.

[FR Doc. 2013-29007 Filed 12-3-13; 8:45 am]
BILLING CODE 9110-05-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

[FWS-R6-MB-2013-N241; FP06M01000-145-FXMB1231060000]

Bald and Golden Eagles; Migratory Birds; Phase I Development of the Chokecherry-Sierra Madre Wind Energy Project

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of intent; announcement of public comment period.

SUMMARY: We, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), announce our intent to prepare a draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for Phase I of the Chokecherry-Sierra Madre Wind Energy Project. Our draft EIS will analyze the environmental impacts associated with our decision on whether to issue a permit authorizing take of eagles for Phase I of the project. Programmatic eagle take permits are authorized under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (BGEPA), and its implementing regulations. We are requesting public comments on issues that should be addressed in our draft EIS.

DATES: This notice initiates the public scoping process. To ensure consideration in developing the draft EIS, we must receive your electronic or written comments by the close of the scoping period on February 3, 2014. The public is invited to submit comments and resource information by mail or in person, and identify issues or concerns to be considered in the National

Environmental Policy Act (42 U.S.C. 4231-4347) (NEPA) compliance process.

The Service will host public scoping meetings, where you may discuss issues with Service staff. The time, date, and specific locations for these meetings will be announced through the Service's Web site: <http://www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie/wind/ChokecherrySierraMadre/index.html> as well as via press releases, local newspapers, radio announcements, and other media, at least 10 days prior to the event.

If you require reasonable accommodations to attend the meeting, contact the person listed under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** at least one week before the meeting.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments in writing by one of the following methods. At the top of your letter or in the subject line of your message, please indicate that the comments are "Chokecherry-Sierra Madre Wind Energy Project Comments."

- **Email:** Comments should be sent to: CCSM_EIS@fws.gov.

- **U.S. Mail:** Written comments should be mailed to Chokecherry-Sierra Madre EIS, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Mountain-Prairie Region, P.O. Box 25486 DFC, Denver, CO 80225.

- **Hand-Delivery/Courier:** Chokecherry-Sierra Madre EIS, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Mountain-Prairie Region, 134 Union Blvd., Lakewood, CO 80228.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: David Carlson, (303) 236-4254 (phone); [Dave E. Carlson@fws.gov](mailto:Dave.E.Carlson@fws.gov) (email); or Mike Dixon, (303) 236-8132 (phone); [Michael D. Dixon@fws.gov](mailto:Michael.D.Dixon@fws.gov) (email).

Persons who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 1-800-877-8339 to contact the above individuals during normal business hours. The FIRS is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to leave a message or question with the above individuals. You will receive a reply during normal business hours.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

- I. The Federal Action
- II. Background on the Project
- III. Intergovernmental and Interagency Coordination
- IV. Alternatives and Related Impacts Under Consideration
- V. Public Comment Procedures
- VI. Authorities

I. The Federal Action

The Service is considering a decision whether to issue a programmatic permit authorizing take of eagles under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act for Phase I of the Chokecherry-Sierra Madre Wind Energy Project (CCSM

Project or Project) in Carbon County, Wyoming. The Federal decision by the Service whether to issue a permit to take eagles triggers the need for compliance with the NEPA.

The Service intends to gather information and prepare a draft EIS. Our draft EIS will analyze the direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts of Phase I of the Project to support a Service decision to approve or deny an eagle take permit (ETP). The draft EIS will also analyze a reasonable range of alternatives, including a no-action alternative, for the potential issuance of a programmatic ETP.

The Project would be situated in an area of alternating sections of private, State, and Federal lands administered lands by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) commonly referred to as the "checkerboard," and, in 2012, the BLM completed a final EIS (FEIS) to evaluate whether the Project area would be acceptable for development of a wind facility. The Service intends to incorporate by reference information from the BLM FEIS into our environmental analysis in order to avoid redundancy and unnecessary paperwork. Council for Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations authorize incorporation by reference (40 CFR 1502.21, CEQ 40 Most Asked Questions #30; see also 43 CFR 46.135). The decision to incorporate by reference sections from the BLM FEIS into the draft EIS will be based on our evaluation of the BLM FEIS and our consideration of public comments.

II. Background on the Project

A. Power Company of Wyoming proposal. As proposed by the Power Company of Wyoming, the CCSM Project will consist of two phases of development. When both phases are completed, the CCSM Project will consist of up to 1,000 wind turbines capable of generating a total of 2,000 to 3,000 megawatts (MW).

Phase I of the CCSM Project, to which this notice primarily pertains, would consist of approximately 500 wind turbines, a haul road, a quarry to supply materials for road construction, access roads, a rail distribution facility, underground and overhead electrical and communication lines, laydown areas, operation and maintenance facilities, and other supporting infrastructure needed for Phase I to become fully operational. For Phase I, PCW is preparing a detailed eagle conservation plan (ECP) that it intends to submit to the Service to support its application for an ETP. The ECP will identify measures that PCW proposes to undertake to avoid, minimize and

compensate for potential impacts to bald and golden eagles. To help meet requirements of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, PCW is also preparing an avian protection plan containing measures that PCW proposes to implement to avoid or minimize impacts of the Project on other migratory birds. The Service will consider the information presented in the ECP and avian protection plan when we analyze environmental impacts in our draft EIS.

PCW has indicated it will submit a separate plan of development for CCSM Phase II, which will consist of about 500 additional wind turbines (roughly 1500 MW), at a later date. At this time PCW has not determined when development of Phase II of the CCSM project would occur. The Service intends to address impacts of CCSM Phase II (a reasonably foreseeable future action) as cumulative impacts in the draft EIS for Phase I, and will conduct further NEPA review of Phase II if and when a take permit application for Phase II is submitted.

The CCSM Project has a proposed life of 30 years, after which, subject to market conditions, the CCSM Project may be repowered as necessary to continue its operations.

B. Migratory Birds and Eagle Protections. Raptors and most of other birds in the United States are protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (16 U.S.C. 703–711). The President's Executive Order 13186 directs agencies to consider migratory birds in environmental planning by avoiding or minimizing to the extent practicable adverse impacts on migratory bird resources when conducting agency actions, and by ensuring environmental analyses of Federal actions required by NEPA or other established environmental review processes.

Bald eagles and golden eagles are provided further protection under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (16 U.S.C. 668–668d) (BGEPA), which prohibits anyone, without a permit issued by the Secretary of the Interior, from "taking" eagles, including their parts, nests, or eggs. An eagle take permit authorizes the take of live eagles and their eggs where the take is associated with, but not the purpose of, a human activity or project. The regulations pertaining to eagle take permits can be found in the Code of Federal Regulations at 50 CFR 22.26.

A programmatic take permit authorizes the take of eagles where the take is compatible with the preservation of eagles; where it is necessary to protect an interest in a particular locality; where it is the associated with but not the purpose of an activity; and

where take is unavoidable even though advanced conservation practices are being implemented. The Service 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 to be compatible with the preservation of eagles.

C. The BLM's FEIS. In July 2012, BLM published its FEIS for the Project. The BLM action evaluated in the FEIS was to decide whether the area identified in PCW's proposal would be acceptable for development of a wind facility in a manner compatible with applicable federal laws. The BLM FEIS included an evaluation of the impacts of issuing the requested rights-of-way (ROW) grants on golden eagles and other raptors and migratory birds based on available data and concluded that the estimated number of raptor fatalities, as well as the impacts of reduced use by passerine birds within the project area, would exceed significance criteria. (pages 4.14–26).

On October 9, 2012, BLM published a Record of Decision (ROD) determining that the portions of the area for which PCW seeks ROWs grants "are suitable for wind energy development and associated facilities and that design features and mitigation measures must be incorporated into any future CCSM wind energy development authorizations." As explained in the ROD, the BLM's decision does not authorize development of the wind energy project; rather, it allows BLM to accept and evaluate future right-of-way applications subject to the requirements of all future wind energy development described therein (ROD at 6–1).

Prior to issuing ROW grants, BLM will prepare additional environmental analyses of site-specific plans of development submitted by PCW. The BLM ROD sets forth a framework for conducting additional detailed NEPA review of PCW's site-specific plans of development (ROD appendix C).

III. Intergovernmental and Interagency Coordination

Federal, tribal, State, and local agencies, along with other stakeholders who may be interested in or affected by the Service's decision on Phase I wind development of the Project, are invited to participate in the scoping process and, if eligible, may request or be requested by the Service to participate as a cooperating agency.

The Service will conduct consultation with Native American tribes in accordance with applicable laws,

regulations, and Department of the Interior policy, and tribal concerns will be given due consideration, including Indian trust assets and cultural or religious interests.

Interested persons may view information about our environmental review of Phase I of the Project on our Web site, at <http://www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie/wind/ChokecherrySierraMadre/index.html>. The Web site contains information concerning the comment period, during which persons may submit comments, and the locations, dates, and times of public scoping meetings.

IV. Alternatives and Related Impacts Under Consideration

Our draft EIS will address action alternatives, and direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts of the action. Alternatives for the Project will, at a minimum, include:

- (a) An action alternative whereby the Service issues the programmatic take permit with conditions;
- (b) A no-action alternative, which would result in an eagle permit not being issued; and
- (c) Any environmentally preferable alternatives that may be identified in accordance with 40 CFR part 1500.

The Service's draft EIS will consider the predicted magnitude of eagle take within the context of regional eagle populations (Bird Conservation Regions, or BCRs). The analysis also will take into account other factors that may warrant protection of smaller or isolated eagle populations within a region. In addition, our draft EIS will consider:

- Comprehensive analysis of impacts to eagles that addresses not only the predicted take under BGEPA, but also the individual and cumulative habitat (including foraging and roosting) and prey base impacts that may have adverse population impacts but may not constitute take under the BGEPA;
- Potential impacts to migratory birds and their habitats (including thorough fragmentation analysis), and review and analysis of the applicant's avian protection plan;
- Cumulative impacts analyses of eagles and other migratory birds at the local area population scale and at the BCR scale;
- Analysis of effects to wintering golden eagles;
- Analysis of climate change effects, including effects on eagles, their habitat and their prey, and the effect on other migratory bird resources;
- Analysis of effects to eagles and other species as sacred species and as cultural resources. Some tribes and tribal members may consider eagle nests

and other areas where eagles are present to be sacred sites addressed in the American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978 (42 U.S.C. 1996).

The purpose of the public scoping process is to determine relevant issues that could influence the scope of the environmental analysis, including alternatives, and guide the process for developing the EIS and related compliance efforts. The final range of reasonable alternatives and mitigation to be analyzed in the draft EIS will be determined in part by the comments received during the scoping process.

V. Public Comment Procedures

Request for Comments

In accordance with the CEQ's regulations for implementing NEPA and the DOI's NEPA regulations, the Service solicits public comments on the scope of the draft EIS, including alternatives, mitigation, cumulative impacts that should be considered, and issues that the draft EIS should address.

We request data, comments, new information, or suggestions from the public, other concerned governmental agencies, the scientific community, Tribes, industry, or other interested parties on this notice. Timely comments will be considered by the Service in developing a draft EIS.

Written comments, including email comments, should be sent to the Service at the addresses given in the ADDRESSES section of this notice. Comments should be specific and pertain only to the issues relating to the proposals. The Service will include all comments in the administrative record.

If you would like to be placed on the mailing list to receive future information, please contact the person listed under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**, above.

If you require reasonable accommodation to attend one of the meetings, please contact the person listed under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** at least one week before the meeting.

Availability of Comments

The Service will make comments, including name of respondent, address, phone number, email address, or other personal identifying information, available for public review during normal business hours.

Before including your address, phone number, email address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment—including your personal identifying information—will be publicly available. While you can ask

us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so. All submissions from organizations or businesses and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses will be available for public review to the extent consistent with applicable law.

VI. Authorities

This notice is published in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, the Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ) regulations for implementing NEPA, 40 CFR parts 1500 through 1508; and the Department of the Interior's NEPA regulations, 43 CFR part 46.

David McGillivray,

Acting Assistant Regional Director—
Migratory Birds, Mountain-Prairie Region,
Denver, Colorado.

[FR Doc. 2013-29005 Filed 12-3-13; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-55-P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Indian Affairs

[AAK6006201 134A2100DD
AOR3B3030.999900]

Notice of Intent To Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for the Proposed Wilton Rancheria Fee-to-Trust and Casino Project, Sacramento County, California

AGENCY: Bureau of Indian Affairs,
Interior.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: This notice advises the public that the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) as lead agency intends to gather information necessary for preparing an environmental impact statement (EIS) in connection with the Wilton Rancheria's (Tribe) application requesting that the United States acquire land in trust in Sacramento County, California, for the construction and operation of a gaming facility.

DATES: Written comments on the scope of the EIS must arrive by January 6, 2014. The public scoping meeting will be held on December 19, 2013, from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m., or until the last public comment is received.

ADDRESSES: You may mail or hand-deliver written comments to Amy Dutschke, Regional Director, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Pacific Region, 2800 Cottage Way, Sacramento, California 95825. Please include your name, return

address, and "NOI Comments, Wilton Rancheria Project" on the first page of your written comments. The scoping meeting will be held at the Chabolla Community Center, 600 Chabolla Ave., Galt, California 95632.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: John Rydzik, Chief, Division of Environmental, Cultural Resource Management and Safety, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Pacific Regional Office, 2800 Cottage Way, Sacramento, Room W-2820, California 95825, telephone (916) 978-6051, email john.rydzik@bia.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Tribe has submitted an application to the Department requesting the placement of approximately 282 acres of fee land in trust by the United States upon which the Tribe would construct a gaming facility. Accordingly, the proposed action for the Department is the acquisition requested by the Tribe. The proposed fee-to-trust property is located within the City of Galt Sphere of Influence Area in unincorporated Sacramento County, California, north of Twin Cities Road between State Highway 99 and the Union Pacific Railroad tracks. The Sacramento County Assessor's parcel numbers (APNs) for the site are 148-0010-018, 148-0041-009, 148-0041-006, 148-0041-004, 148-0041-001, 148-0031-007, and 148-0010-060. The purpose of the proposed action is to improve the economic status of the Tribal government so it can better provide housing, health care, education, cultural programs, and other services to its members.

The proposed action encompasses the various Federal approvals which may be required to implement the Tribe's proposed economic development project, including approval of the Tribe's fee-to-trust application. The EIS will identify and evaluate issues related to these approvals, and will also evaluate a range of reasonable alternatives.

Areas of environmental concern identified for analysis in the EIS include land resources; water resources; air quality; noise; biological resources; cultural/historical/archaeological resources; resource use patterns; traffic and transportation; public health and safety; hazardous materials and hazardous wastes; public services and utilities; socioeconomic; environmental justice; visual resources/aesthetics; and cumulative, indirect, and growth-inducing effects. The range of issues and alternatives to be addressed in the EIS may be expanded or reduced based on comments received in response to this notice and at the public scoping

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Appendix B

USFWS Press Release, Newspaper Advertisement, and Newspaper Affidavits

USFWS Press Release

U.S. Fish and Wildlife to Hold Public Meetings Regarding Eagle Take Permitting on the Chokecherry-Sierra Madre Wind Energy Project

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

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News Release

U.S. Fish and Wildlife to Hold Public Meetings Regarding Eagle Take Permitting on the Chokecherry-Sierra Madre Wind Energy Project

For Immediate Release
December 3, 2013

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Rawlins, WY. – On December 16th and 17th, 2013, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), will hold public meetings focused on the proposed Chokecherry-Sierra Madre Wind Energy Project in Carbon County, Wyoming. The Service anticipates receiving an application for an eagle take permit for Phase I of the project, and invites public input in advance of review of the potential environmental impacts associated with issuing such a permit.



The Chokecherry-Sierra Madre project, when fully built, may consist of up to 1,000 wind turbines, although the proposed Phase I of this project would consist of up to 500 turbines in the western portion of the project area. Construction and operation of Phase I could result in the death of golden eagles. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the Service are currently working with the project proponent, the Power Company of Wyoming, to develop strategies to minimize the impacts of these turbines on eagles and other wildlife.

Under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the federal government is obligated to review the impacts of its actions on the natural and human environment. While the BLM conducted an initial NEPA review of the Chokecherry-Sierra Madre project which culminated in their 2012 final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS), the Service has an independent statutory responsibility to analyze the impacts of issuing a permit for take of eagles which are protected under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act.

We will hold public scoping meetings in Rawlins and Saratoga, WY. During public

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Office of External Affairs
Mountain-Prairie Region
134 Union Blvd
Lakewood, CO 80228
303-236-7905
303-236-3815 FAX
www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie/

Contacts

Dave Carlson
(303) 236-4254
dave_carlson@fws.gov

Dr. Mike Dixon
(303) 236-8132
mike_dixon@fws.gov

Steve Segin
(303) 236-4578
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U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region

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Invasive Asian carp are out-competing native fish like the endangered pallid sturgeon (pictured) in the

http://www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie/press/2013/1232013_sierraMadreWind.php[2/27/2014 8:50:36 PM]

Scoping Report for the EIS for an Eagle Take Permit for Phase I of the CCSM Project
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

April 2014
Page B-1

U.S. Fish and Wildlife to Hold Public Meetings Regarding Eagle Take Permitting on the Chokecherry-Sierra Madre Wind Energy Project

scoping, we request input as to which issues we should consider as we review the 2012 BLM FEIS and develop an EIS for the potential eagle take permit. The meetings are considered informal. We encourage the public to arrive between 4:00 and 6:30 pm for an open house where you can meet with personnel, learn about the NEPA and permitting process, and provide input. We will solicit public comments following the presentation. Public scoping meetings will be held at the following locations:

Monday, December 16, 2013
Jeffrey Center
315 W. Pine St.
Rawlins, WY

Tuesday, December 17, 2013
Platte Valley Community Center
Great Hall
210 W. Elm Ave.
Saratoga, WY

[Click here to read the rest of this story. »](#)

If you are unable to attend these meetings, we still want to hear from you! Scoping comments will be accepted from December 4, 2013, to February 3, 2014. Information about the project, requests to be added to the project mailing list, and physical and email addresses to which comments can be submitted are found on the project website <http://www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie/wind/ChokecherrySierraMadre/index.html>

Federal Register:
NOI: <https://www.federalregister.gov/articles/2013/12/04/2013-29005/phase-i-development-of-the-chokecherry-sierra-madre-wind-energy-project-bald-and-golden-eagles>

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/mountain-prairie. Connect with our [Facebook page](#), follow our [tweets](#), watch our [YouTube Channel](#), and download photos from our [Flickr page](#).

Missouri and Vermillion rivers.

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Last modified: February 19, 2014

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http://www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie/pressrel/2013/12/2013_sierraMadreWind.php[2/27/2014 8:50:36 PM]

Newspaper Advertisement

USFWS NOTICE OF PUBLIC SCOPING FOR EAGLE TAKE PERMIT FOR PHASE I OF CCSM WIND PROJECT

The Power Company of Wyoming LLC (PCW) is proposing to develop the Chokecherry and Sierra Madre Wind Project (CCSM Project) in Carbon County, Wyoming. The CCSM Project would be situated on private, state-owned lands and lands administered by the BLM. Phase I of the CCSM Project development would consist of about 500 turbines and associated land, arterial and access roads, power lines, power transfer facilities, construction staging areas and other project infrastructure.

Construction and operation of Phase I could result in the death of golden eagles. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) is currently working with PCW to develop strategies to minimize the impacts of the turbines on eagles and other wildlife.

PCW is requesting from the USFWS a programmatic permit to take eagles. Programmatic eagle take permits are authorized under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (BGEPA) and its implementing regulations. The consideration by the USFWS of whether to authorize take of eagles is a Federal action that triggers the requirement of environmental impact analysis under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The USFWS has an independent statutory responsibility to analyze the impacts of issuing a permit for take of eagles which are protected under BGEPA.

On Dec. 16 and 17, 2013, the USFWS held public scoping meetings focused on the proposed Project. The USFWS encourages public input in advance of review of the potential environmental impacts associated with issuing a programmatic permit to take eagles.

If you were unable to attend these meetings, we still want to hear from you! Scoping comments will be accepted through February 3, 2014.

WE WANT YOUR INPUT!



Written comments are encouraged and will be accepted via:

U.S. Mail: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service | Chokecherry-Sierra Madre EIS
Mountain Prairie Region
ATTN: Mike Dixon
P.O. Box 25486 DFC | Denver, Colorado 80225

Hand Delivery/Courier: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service | Chokecherry-Sierra Madre EIS
Mountain Prairie Region
134 Union Boulevard
Lakewood, Colorado 80228

E-mail: CCSM_EIS@fws.gov

The comment deadline is Feb. 3, 2014



For additional information about the project and requests to be added to the project mailing list, visit the project website at:

<http://www.fws.gov/mountain-prarie/wind/ChokecherrySierraMadre/index.html>

Newspaper Tear Sheets and Affidavits

IN BRIEF: WYOMING

Jackson airport traffic hit near records in 2013

JACKSON (AP) — The Jackson Hole Airport served almost 300,000 passengers last year, a 7 percent increase over 2012 that's attributed in part to new winter flights to the West Coast and the East Coast.

The Jackson Hole News & Guide reports 296,369 people boarded a plane at the airport in 2013, up from 278,000 passengers in 2012.

Airport manager Roy Bishop says new winter flights to Seattle and New York City are part of the picture, as are several other improvements at the airport, which is Wyoming's busiest.

The airport's busiest year was in 2008, when the passenger count hit 305,566.

2 Alpine men cited for trapping violations

JACKSON (AP) — Wildlife officials have cited two Alpine men for setting game traps that caught two pet dogs near Jackson last November.

The Jackson Hole News & Guide reports 51-year-old Harold Buckner and 48-year-old Richard Permann were accused of setting the traps along Fall Creek Road southwest of the city.

Buckner was charged with trapping while his hunting privileges were suspended, as well as trying to take wildlife from a public roadway. Permann was charged with trying to take wildlife from a public roadway and with being an ac-

cessory to "trapping under suspension."

Because trapping a pet isn't illegal, the men didn't face charges related to the dogs, which weren't seriously injured. Trappers who accidentally catch and injure a game animal must notify law enforcement, but pets aren't listed in the rule.

Payments from Indian trust settlement on the way

RIVERTON (AP) — The second set of payments stemming from a settlement between the federal government and Native American land trust beneficiaries is due to be distributed to members of the Eastern Shoshone and Northern Arapaho tribes within a few weeks.

Laet Castaneda, vice president of operations for The Garden City Group, which administers the settlement, tells The River-ton Ranger the minimum award that class members will receive is estimated at \$800. The total award for the 6,728 members in the second set is more than \$10 million.

Eloise Cabell was the lead plaintiff in the Indian Trust Settlement that aimed to bring justice for the trust funds, assets and tribal land mismanaged by the federal government. In 2010, President Obama signed off on the distribution of \$3.4 billion for tribes across the United States.

Highway Patrol gets new in-car computer program

CHEYENNE (AP) — Wyoming Highway Patrol

troopers can now run nationwide driver's license checks, check vehicle registrations and issue citations right from their in-car computer.

Troopers have had in-car touchscreen computers in their patrol vehicles for a while, but the new system extends the reach of critical information. That includes a statewide road map and other features such as two-way messaging and state and nationwide warrant searches.

The program also uses GPS technology so any trooper or dispatcher can open a map in a real-time display to see where other patrol vehicles are anywhere in the state.

Yellowstone seeks volunteer winter planners

JACKSON (AP) — Yellowstone National Park is seeking volunteers to fill five working groups that will help come up with a winter adaptive management plan.

The Jackson Hole News & Guide reports the groups are set to meet at least three times by phone or in person over the next six months and will discuss park soundscape and air quality, wildlife, the non-commercially guided snowmobile access program, winter-use operations and technology, and the visitor experience.

Participants will then be asked to submit verbal and written comments to the National Park Service on the development of a monitoring strategy for

their assigned topic.

Plane with infrared tech helps with SAR ops

CODY (AP) — The Park County Sheriff's Office now has access to a Wyoming Civil Air Patrol plane that's equipped with infrared technology to help crews during search-and-rescue operations.

The plane, based in Jackson, uses imaging technology that senses infrared radiation typically emitted from a heat source and displays it on a video screen. The cameras can be used to help pilots and drivers steer their vehicles at night and in fog, or to detect warm objects against a cooler background.

Sheriff Scott Steward says the technology could mean the difference between life and death because infrared radiation sources such as body heat can be detected in complete darkness, meaning SAR operations can continue after sunset.

Another Civil Air Patrol plane with the same technology is based in Casper.

Snowmobiler survives being buried by avalanche

BILLINGS, Mont. (AP) — Officials with the Gallatin National Forest Avalanche Center say a snowmobiler was lucky to have survived being buried under 4 feet of snow after triggering an avalanche near Cooke City.

The GNFAC says the man triggered the slide on Friday. Avalanche specialist Doug Chabot (aka BOHF) says fellow

snowmobilers were able to dig the man out within 10 minutes and revive him with CPR. His Monday morning avalanche report notes successful revival is "very, very rare," and he told The Billings Gazette it was "an incredible story of companion rescue."

The man was able to ride back to Cooke City on his snowmobile. His name was not released.

The GNFAC says the avalanche broke 4 to 12 feet deep, was 500 feet wide and ran 300 feet.

234 Jackson Hole bison harvested in 2013-14 hunt

JACKSON (AP) — Wildlife officials say nearly 30 percent of Jackson Hole's 850 bison were harvested during the 2013-14 hunt, which ended last Sunday.

By the time the five-month-long season came to a close, 234 bison had been reported killed to the Wyoming Game and Fish Department. That total — which could still increase a bit as the last reports come in — is the highest in five years.

The Jackson Hole News & Guide reports that's a sizable step toward managers' population objective of 500.

A 2007 plan for Jackson Hole's elk and bison herds called for reducing bison numbers in the valley to 500 by 2022. A smaller population is desirable because it will bring the herd size more into alignment with natural forage production on the National Elk Refuge, where the bison also winter.

The fastest growing drug problem in Wyoming may be in your medicine cabinet



Come take part in a community discussion about prescription drug use. We want your input to determine how we can work together in Carbon County to prevent prescription drug abuse, by providing a constructive, positive dialogue on the issue. Expect presenters include:

Robyn Thompson, MHCC
Dr. Steve Parker, Pharmacist
Eric Ford, DCl

Paul Zamora, Carbon County Coroner
David Dingman, Licensed Substance Abuse Counselor
Troy Palmer, Rawlins Chief of Police

Thursday, Jan. 23 • 6 - 8 p.m.
 CCHC Main Campus, 705 Rodeo Street
 Refreshments provided
Anyone can help; everyone is needed.



USFWS NOTICE OF PUBLIC SCOPING FOR EAGLE TAKE PERMIT FOR PHASE I OF CCSM WIND PROJECT

The Power Company of Wyoming LLC (PCW) is proposing to develop the Chokecherry and Sierra Madre Wind Project (CCSM) Project in Carbon County, Wyoming. The CCSM Project would be situated on private, state-owned lands and lands administered by the BLM. Phase I of the CCSM Project development would consist of about 500 turbines and associated sand, gravel and access roads, power lines, power transfer facilities, construction staging areas and other project infrastructure.

Construction and operation of Phase I could result in the death of golden eagles. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) is currently working with PCW to develop strategies to minimize the impact of the turbines on eagles and other wildlife.

PCW is requesting from the USFWS a programmatic permit to take eagles. Programmatic eagle take permits are authorized under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (BGEPA) and its implementing regulations. The consideration by the USFWS of whether to authorize take of eagles is a Federal action that triggers the requirement of environmental impact analysis under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The USFWS has an independent statutory responsibility to analyze the impacts of issuing a permit for take of eagles which are protected under BGEPA.

On Dec. 16 and 17, 2013, the USFWS held public scoping meetings focused on the proposed Project. The USFWS encourages public input in advance of review of the potential environmental impacts associated with issuing a programmatic permit to take eagles.

If you were unable to attend these meetings, we still want to hear from you! Scoping comments will be accepted through February 3, 2014.

WE WANT YOUR INPUT!

Written comments are encouraged and will be accepted via:

U.S. Mail: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service | Chokecherry-Sierra Madre ES
 Mountain Prairie Region
 ATTN: Mike Olson
 P.O. Box 25486 DFC | Denver, Colorado 80225

Hand Delivery/Courier: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service | Chokecherry-Sierra Madre ES
 Mountain Prairie Region
 134 Union Boulevard
 Lakewood, Colorado 80226

E-mail: CCSM_ES@fw.gov
The comment deadline is Feb. 3, 2014.

For additional information about the project and requests to be added to the project mailing list, visit the project website at:
<http://www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie/wind/ChokecherrySierraMadre/index.html>

BEGINNING LINE DANCE



Starts Tuesday, Jan. 28
11 a.m.
every Tuesday & Thursday

Daily admission to the Recreation Center or membership
Judy Justesen, instructor

For more information,
contact Patti Hays

Call 324-PLAY (7529)
www.rawlinswy.org




COMMUNITY CALENDAR

We want your event. Submit your event to the Daily Times by dropping it off at our office, emailing us at calore@rawlinstimes.com or calling 307-324-3411. Make sure submissions include name, place and date of event, and a contact number. Contact Cali O'Hare for more information.

Wednesday, Jan. 22

Prayer Shawl Ministry
9 a.m., Rawlins Senior Center, Rawlins; 307-324-4265

9:30 a.m. Saratoga Presbyterian Church Fellowship Hall, Saratoga

Prayer and Share
10 a.m., Trinity Assembly of God, 604 9th St., Rawlins; use side entrance

Caregivers Support
10 a.m., Rawlins Senior Center, 545 15th St., Rawlins; 307-328-0520

Story Time
11 a.m., Hanna Library, 303 Third St., Hanna
11:15 a.m., Saratoga Library, 503 W Elm St., Saratoga
4 p.m., Encampment/Riverside Library, 202 Rankin St., Encampment

Duplicate Bridge
1 p.m., Rawlins Senior Center, 545 15th St., Rawlins; all players welcome; lessons to be given upon request; 307-324-2049

Rawlins-Carbon County Chamber of Commerce Business After Hours
5-7 p.m., food, door prizes, networking opportunities and you can participate in the 50/50 raffle

Relay For Life Volunteer Meeting
6 p.m., Hampton Inn, Rawlins; free and open to the public; 1-800-227-2345

Thursday, January 23



Featured Event

Relay For Life Volunteer Meeting
6 p.m., Hampton Inn, Rawlins; free and open to the public; 1-800-227-2345

Rawlins Lions Club Meeting
12:10 p.m., Cactus Jacks, 1602 Inverness Blvd., Rawlins

Story Time
1:30 p.m., Medicine Bow Library, 314 Sage St., Medicine Bow
3:30 p.m., Sinclair Library, corner of Seventh and Lincoln Streets, Sinclair

CCSDI Board Meeting
5 p.m., 615 Rodeo St., Rawlins; Executive Session will be held in

the Board Room

Al-Anon Support Meeting
5:30-6:30 p.m., Kraft Hall, corner of Pine and 3rd streets, Rawlins

Black Out Poetry
5:30-6:30 p.m., Rawlins Library, 215 W Buffalo St., Rawlins; ages 11 and older are welcome

Square and Round Dancing
6:30-9 p.m., Jeffrey Center, Rawlins; all experience levels are welcome to attend; no partner necessary; for more information contact Yancy Allison at 307-321-2546

Friday, January 24

COVE Women's Group
Noon-1 p.m., main office, 415 W Buffalo St., Rawlins; 307-324-7071

Bridge Lessons
1 p.m., Carbon County Senior Citizens Center, 545 15th St., Rawlins; no charge

Pass the Popcorn: Movie Matinee: Smurfs 2
2:30 p.m., Rawlins Library, 215 W Buffalo St., Rawlins; showing of Smurfs 2, rated PG, 105 minutes long

Teens to Mommies
2:30-3:30 p.m., vocational campus, Carbon County Higher Education Center, 812 E. Murray St., Rawlins; 307-328-2607

Duplicate Bridge
6 p.m., Rawlins Senior Center, 545 15th St., Rawlins; all players welcome; lessons to be given upon request; 307-324-2049



CARBON COUNTY CHILD DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

Now Enrolling

FREE CHILD DEVELOPMENT SERVICES FOR ELIGIBLE FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN AGES 3-4.

- Serving Children with Special Needs
- Qualified, Nurturing teaching staff
- Nutritious Meals & Snacks
- Health Screening
- Family Services
- Habla Espanol



Pick up child pre-enrollment packet at the following locations:
1801 Edinburgh
1705 Edinburgh

Phone: 307-324-9571 or 307-324-4951
*This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

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WE WANT YOUR INPUT

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U.S. Mail: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service | Chokecherry-Sierra Madre ES, Mountain Pike Region, ATTN: Mike Glavin, P.O. Box 25486 DFC, Denver, Colorado 80225

Hand Delivery/Courier: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service | Chokecherry-Sierra Madre ES, Mountain Pike Region, 134 Union Boulevard, Lakewood, Colorado 80226

E-mail: CCSM_ES@fws.gov
The comment deadline is Feb. 3, 2014

For additional information about the project and requests to be added to the project mailing list, visit the project website at: <http://www.fws.gov/mountain-pike/wind/ChokecherrySierraMadre/index.html>

DAINGEROUS IDEAS

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Tuesday, January 28

Many of the potential dangers posed by Artificial Intelligence are familiar to our modern culture, even bordering on cliché. Hollywood and Science Fiction have repeatedly rehearsed various ways that self-aware computers might run amok and threaten mankind. But there might also exist a subtler and, perhaps, more sinister danger looming in the shadows. And unlike the familiar sort of danger, this potential threat does not exist solely in the science-fictional realm of machines possessing full-fledged self-awareness.

Adam J. Arico, Ph.D., Department of Philosophy, University of Wyoming

7:00-8:30 pm
CCREC Main Campus
705 Rodeo Street, Rawlins
Free to the public





Dan Cepeda, Star-Tribune
 UW's Dominic Rufran is embraced by quarterback Brett Smith after Rufran's touchdown in the 3rd quarter against Idaho.

Smith putting in the work to make NFL a reality

LARAMIE (AP) — Former Wyoming quarterback Brett Smith is only the third player in UW history to forego his senior season and declare himself eligible for the NFL Draft.

UW's career leader in total offense, touchdown passes and touchdowns responsible for is training in California and has hired an agent.

Smith tells the Wyoming Tribune: Eagle that his training is tough and a lot of work, but he loves it.

The next step is the NFL Scouting Combine in Indianapolis on Feb. 22-25. Invitations have not been issued, but Smith is hopeful he will get one.

If he doesn't, there are regional scouting combines and UW's pro day later in the spring.

The last UW quarterback drafted was Wheatland High graduate Casey Bramlet, a seventh-round pick by the Cincinnati Bengals in 2004.

White to pass on Winter X Games

ASPEN, Colo. (AP) — Shaun White is out again for the Winter X Games.

After making the trip to Aspen, even making a practice run or two, the 13-time X Games snowboarding trislist decided against competing this week.

He had originally said he was out, then changed his mind and entered. Then, on Wednesday,

he pulled out again.

He says the schedule wouldn't allow him to train the way he wants to for the Olympics, where he'll compete in slopestyle qualifying Feb. 6 — the day before the Opening Ceremony.

"It's an incredibly tough decision for me and it's not something I take lightly," White says, noting the key influence the X Games has had on snowboarding's popularity. "But I have to make sure I'm prepared for the Olympics."



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Mountain Prairie Region

ATTN: Mike Dixon

P.O. Box 25486 DFC | Denver, Colorado 80225

Hand Delivery/Courier: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service | Chokecherry-Sierra Madre ES

Mountain Prairie Region

134 Union Boulevard

Lakewood, Colorado 80228

E-mail: CCSM_ES@fws.gov

The comment deadline is Feb. 3, 2014.



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<http://www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie/wind/ChokecherrySierraMade/index.html>

NEW LISTINGS



701 Birch • \$169,900

- 3 bedrooms
- 1 1/2 bath
- 2-car detached garage
- Many upgrades throughout this home
- Located on a corner lot

Patty Armenta

621 MacFarlane, Encampment

\$250,000

Many uses for this property. Could be used for a residential home, restaurant and bar or a bed and breakfast. Many upgrades with beautiful interior log siding and an enclosed nook. Main structure was built in 1920 but addition was added in 2000s.

Patty Armenta



PRICE REDUCTION



207 Highland, Hanna
\$35,000
 Patty Armenta

SOLD



537 W. Davis
 Patty Armenta

UNDER CONTRACT



104 E. Walnut
 Patty Armenta



922 14th
 Patty Armenta



1612 Nevada
 Patty Armenta

COLDWELL BANKER

Sue Hewitt, Broker, GRI
 Henry Hewitt, Associate Broker

Hewitt & Associates
 303 West Spruce Street
 Rawlins, WY 82301
 307-328-0621



Patty Armenta, Associate Broker, GRI

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Mountain Prairie Region
134 Union Boulevard
Lakewood, Colorado 80228
E-mail: CCSM_EIS@fws.gov
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For additional information about the project and requests to be added to the project mailing list, visit the project website at: <http://www.fws.gov/consultation/wy/chokecherry-sierra-madre-eis/>
Published: January 21, 22 & 23, 2014
Legal No: 976451

CASPER Star Tribune
Wyoming's News Source

P.O. Box 80 • Casper, WY 82602-0080 • (307) 266-0500

AFFIDAVIT OF PUBLICATION

STATE OF WYOMING)
COUNTY OF NATRONA)

I, the undersigned, being a person in the employ of the **Casper Star-Tribune**, a newspaper published in CASPER, NATRONA COUNTY, WYOMING, and knowing the facts herein set forth do so solemnly swear that a copy of the notice as per clipping attached was printed and published

daily weekly

in the regular and entire issue of said newspaper, and not in any supplement thereof, for

3 consecutive days weeks

commencing with issue dated

January 21, 2014

ending with issue dated

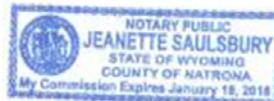
January 23, 2014

Shawn Mills
Signed

Subscribed in my presence and sworn to before me this

3rd day of March 2014

Jeanette Saulsbury



The Saratoga Sun

Our military shouldn't fight other countries' wars

People join the military to fight for our country. We could not put our military at risk by sending them to fight someone else's war. Many soldiers in the military have a strong point of view on fighting other countries' battles. A lot of them join the military to fight for our country. Going to fight for countries that did nothing to us is defeating the purpose of joining the military in the first place.

As for those of us who actually have a family member in the military to worry about, my family personally thinks that if we send our troops overseas, it would be a waste of money. It's not like the 9/11 attack where they hurt our people and a war was started. It's completely different when it involves a country that didn't do anything to us. If we decide to intervene, it needs to be the United States' decision as a whole, not what our current



Eye of the Tiger

By Taylor Pedersen

risk their lives for our country, not every other country in the world. As it states in the military's mission statement, "It is the intent of Congress to provide an Army that is capable, in conjunction with the other armed forces, of preserving the peace and security, and providing for the defense, of the United States, the Territories, Commonwealths, and possessions, and any areas occupied by the United States; supporting the national policies; implementing the national objectives; and overcoming any nations responsible for

January 22, 2014, Page 7

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Lakewood, Colorado 80228

E-mail: CCSM_ES@fws.gov

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<http://www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie/wind/ChokecherrySierraMadre/index.html>

Your ad lasts longer in newsprint than any

Proof of Publication

THE STATE OF WYOMING)
County of Laramie) ss.

AFFIDAVIT

L.D. Catalano of said County of Laramie, being first duly sworn, deposes and says that he is Controller; or Faith Vroman, of said County of Laramie, being first duly sworn, deposes and says that she is the Secretary of the

Wyoming Tribune-Eagle

a newspaper printed and published in said County and State, and in the Capitol of said State; that the notice of which the annexed is a true copy, has been published in the said newspaper.

For Three
Times, to wit:
January 19, 20, 21, 2014

and that the first publication of said notice was made in said paper bearing date

January 19, A.D. 20 14

and that the last publication of said notice was made in said paper bearing date

January 21, A.D. 20 14

Subscribed in my presence and sworn to before me by the aforesaid L.D. Catalano, Controller or Faith Vroman, Secretary.

this 23rd

Day of January, 20 14

My commission expires:

August 31, 2014
NOTARY PUBLIC
STATE OF WYOMING
COUNTY OF LARAMIE
MY COMMISSION EXPIRES AUG 31, 2014
Notary Public

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Chokecherry-Sierra Madre
EIS
Mountain Prairie Region
ATTN: Mike Dixon
P.O. Box 25496 DFC
Denver, Colorado 80225

Hand Delivery/Courier:
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Chokecherry-Sierra Madre
EIS
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Lakewood, Colorado 80228
E-mail: CCSM_EIS@fws.gov

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Appendix C

Scoping Meeting Materials and Photographs

Project Fact Sheet



Chokecherry and Sierra Madre Wind Energy Project

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Fact Sheet

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 100,000 acres within the CCSM Project site are suitable 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, >>



Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) Process



Mountain Prairie Region – Migratory Birds Program



(continued)

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 will be holding two scoping meetings (see right) to provide you an opportunity to learn about the project, provide comments, and help us identify potential issues. We encourage you to submit your ideas and concerns to us at one of the scoping meetings or through emails or letters to:

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Migratory Birds Program
Dr. Michael Dixon, Assistant NEPA Project Manager
P.O. Box 25486, DFC
Denver, CO 80225
Email: ccsm_eis@fws.gov
Website: <http://www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie/wind/ChokecherrySierraMadre/index.html>

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

Public Scoping Meetings

**Monday
December 16, 2013**

Jeffrey Center
315 W. Pine St.
Rawlins, WY

**Tuesday
December 17, 2013**

Platte Valley
Community Center
210 W. Elm Ave.
Saratoga, WY

Meetings will be held
from 4-6:30 p.m.
with presentations
at 4:30 and 5:30 p.m.



Chokecherry and Sierra Madre
Wind Energy Project
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Migratory Birds Program
P.O. Box 25486, DFC
Denver, CO 80225

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Scoping Boards

Chokecherry and Sierra Madre
Wind Energy Project

**Welcome to the Public
Scoping Meeting**

for the Environmental Impact Statement for
Eagle Take Permitting for the Chokecherry
and Sierra Madre Wind Energy Project Phase I
Wind Turbine Development

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Mountain Prairie Region - Migratory Birds Program

Chokecherry and Sierra Madre Wind Energy Project

Assessing Potential Impacts to Eagles

Analysis of how Phase I Wind Turbine Development of the proposed Chokecherry and Sierra Madre Wind Energy Project (CCSM) will affect eagles is governed by the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act implementing regulations, and involves a number of interrelated considerations.

Eagle Use Data

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) uses available information to assess eagle presence in the CCSM Project Area, and what eagle activities occur, such as breeding, foraging, or migrating. On-site surveys contracted by Power Company of Wyoming (PCW) constitute a vital component of this information.



Avoidance and Minimization



To be eligible for a programmatic permit authorizing a specific level of take over the permit's timeframe, the project must demonstrate that impacts to eagles have been avoided and minimized, and that any remaining take of eagles is unavoidable. Using available eagle data, the USFWS has been working with PCW to identify measures to avoid and minimize impacts to eagles. Potential measures to avoid risk may include relocating turbines, eliminating some proposed turbine locations, or curtailing turbine operations during specified seasons or times.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Mountain Prairie Region - Migratory Birds Program



Chokecherry and Sierra Madre Wind Energy Project

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Estimate of Eagle Take

The USFWS uses a statistical fatality model to estimate the likely number of eagle fatalities due to wind project operations. The model incorporates data including eagle use patterns, turbine number and location, and turbine size. The model's accuracy depends on the quality of data used in the model. If the USFWS decides to issue a permit for this project, the level of unavoidable take of eagles authorized under the permit will be based on the estimates derived from this fatality model.

Compensatory Mitigation

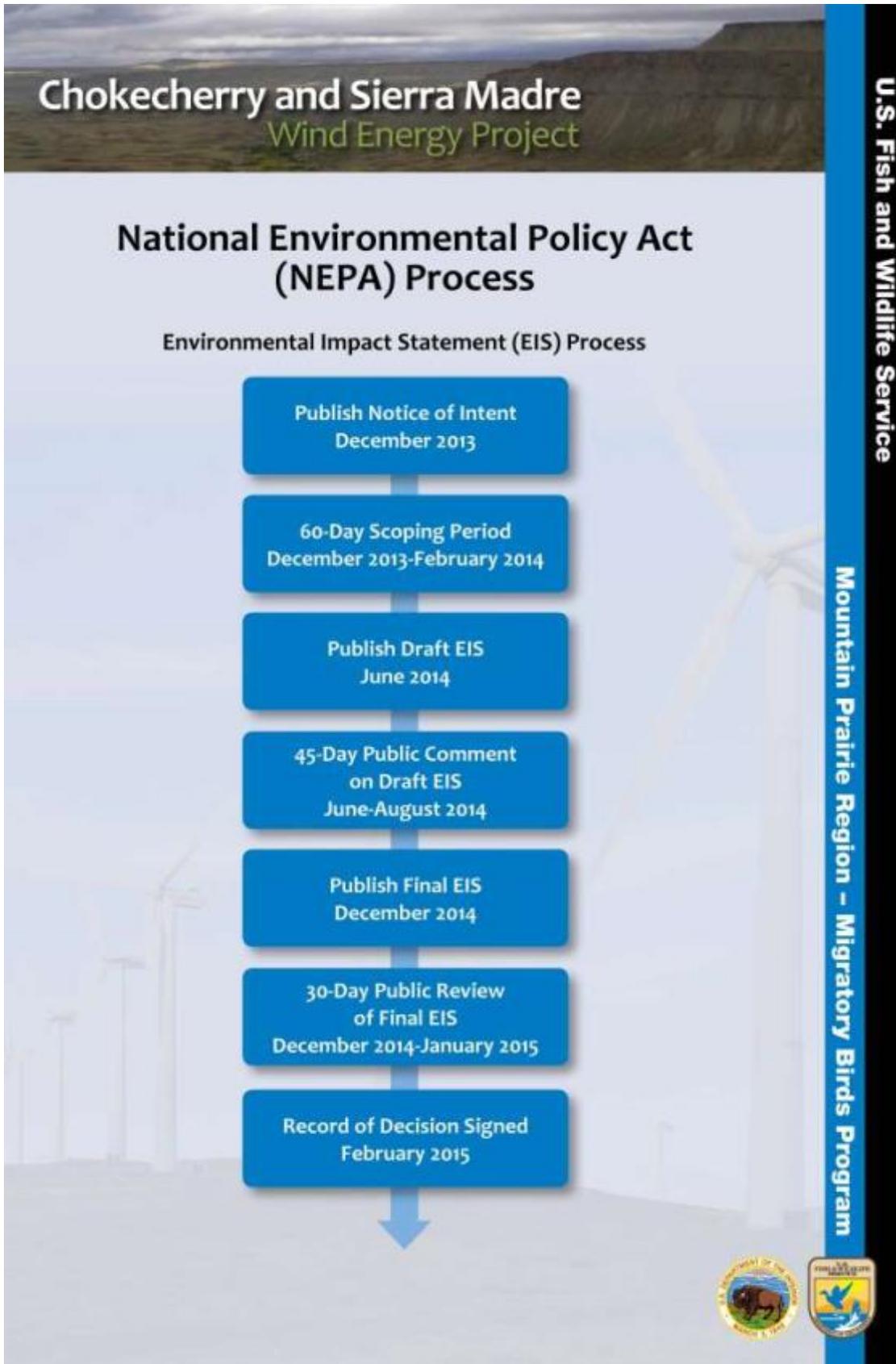


By regulation, not only must any eagle take authorized by a programmatic permit be unavoidable, the project must also provide compensatory mitigation to offset the authorized take of golden eagles. In practice, this is intended to ensure that for every eagle killed, one eagle is added, so that the net impact to the eagle population is zero. The most likely compensatory mitigation requirement is to retrofit older power poles so that eagle deaths may be prevented.

The USFWS will consider all of these factors in its Environmental Impact Statement for the Chokecherry and Sierra Madre Wind Energy Project eagle take permit. Comments or questions on this process are encouraged and welcomed.

Mountain Prairie Region – Migratory Birds Program





Chokecherry and Sierra Madre Wind Energy Project

Chokecherry and Sierra Madre Wind Energy Project (CCSM) Phase I Wind Turbine Development

Surface Ownership

- Private
- State
- U.S. Forest Service

CCSM Wind Energy Project (2012)

- Bound of District Boundary
- CCSM Wind Energy Project - Phase I Wind Turbine Development Area
- CCSM Wind Energy Project - Phase II Wind Turbine Development Area
- Wind Road and Roadless for Phase I (State Resource Phase II not shown)

Wind Turbine Footprints

- Wind Turbine Footprint
- Wind Road Corridor
- Wind Road Right-of-Way

Other Features

- SR 221
- SR 141
- SR 141

Scale

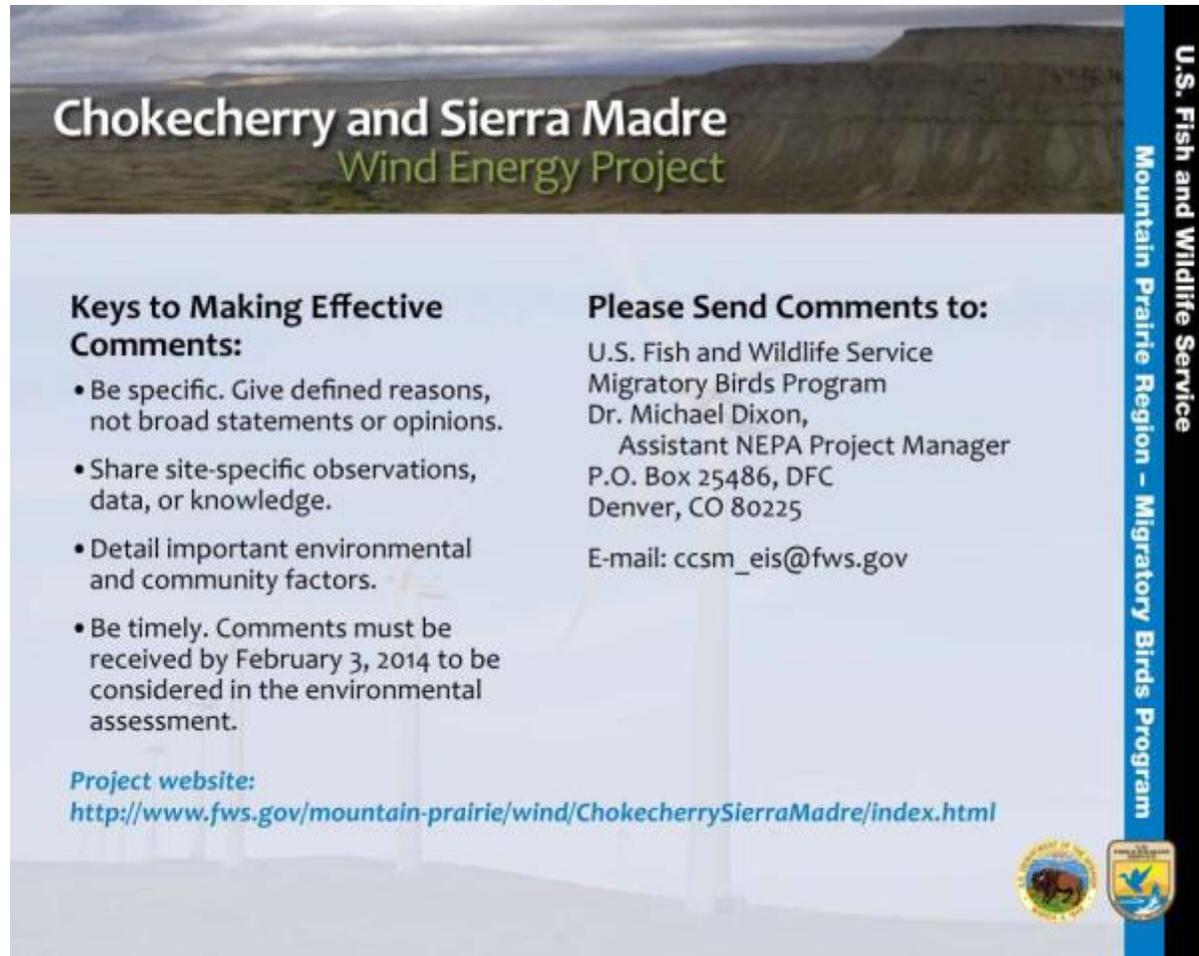
North Arrow

Inset Map

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Mountain Prairie Region - Migratory Birds Program





The slide features a background image of a landscape with wind turbines. The title 'Chokecherry and Sierra Madre Wind Energy Project' is at the top. A vertical blue bar on the right contains the text 'U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Mountain Prairie Region - Migratory Birds Program'. The main content is divided into two columns: 'Keys to Making Effective Comments' with a bulleted list, and 'Please Send Comments to:' with contact information. At the bottom left is the project website URL, and at the bottom right are two circular logos.

Chokecherry and Sierra Madre Wind Energy Project

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Mountain Prairie Region – Migratory Birds Program

Keys to Making Effective Comments:

- Be specific. Give defined reasons, not broad statements or opinions.
- Share site-specific observations, data, or knowledge.
- Detail important environmental and community factors.
- Be timely. Comments must be received by February 3, 2014 to be considered in the environmental assessment.

Please Send Comments to:
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Migratory Birds Program
Dr. Michael Dixon,
Assistant NEPA Project Manager
P.O. Box 25486, DFC
Denver, CO 80225
E-mail: ccsm_eis@fws.gov

Project website:
<http://www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie/wind/ChokecherrySierraMadre/index.html>



Scoping Meeting Photographs





Appendix D

Stakeholder, Cooperating Agency, and Tribal Consultation Letters

Stakeholder Outreach Letter



United States Department of the Interior



FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Mountain-Prairie Region

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

MAILING ADDRESS:
P.O. Box 25486, DFC
Denver, Colorado 80225-0486

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

Name, Title
Organization
Program
Address
City, State, Zip

Dear XXX,

On Dec. 4, 2013, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region (Service) issued a Notice of Intent in the Federal Register announcing a draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) related to the proposed development of Phase I of the Chokecherry and Sierra Madre Wind Energy Project in Carbon County, Wyoming. Phase I would include the installation of approximately 500 wind turbines as well as overhead and underground electrical and communication lines, a haul road for construction and other access roads, a quarry for road material, a railroad spur, electrical power transfer facilities and other supporting infrastructure.

The Service's draft EIS will analyze potential environmental impacts associated with our decision on whether to issue a programmatic eagle take permit (ETP) to Power Company of Wyoming LLC., the project proponent. More information on the EIS process is available at:
<http://www.fws.gov/mountainprairie/wind/ChokecherrySierraMadre/index.html>

As someone identified with potential interest in this EIS, we encourage you to keep informed through visiting the website, which will be updated as the EIS is developed. The website has links to factsheets, contact information, and other Project information, and will have links to EIS documents as they become available. If you have not yet done so, we encourage you to review the material at the link above during the scoping period, which closes on February 3, 2014. The Service will continue to coordinate with the public and stakeholders throughout the EIS process, and there will be further opportunities for input. We anticipate that the draft EIS will be out for public comment in summer or fall 2014.

You can also request to be kept informed of the EIS process by e-mail, at CCSM_EIS@fws.gov or by mail (to the address in header above, ATTN: Mike Dixon).

If you have questions regarding the project being proposed or the Service's action, please contact Dr. Dixon at (303) 236-8132 or Michael_D_Dixon@fws.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Clinton Riley".

Clinton Riley
Assistant Regional Director
Migratory Birds and State Programs

Cooperating Agency Letter



United States Department of the Interior



FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE Mountain-Prairie Region

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

MAILING ADDRESS:
P.O. Box 25486, DFC
Denver, Colorado 80225-0486

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

Name, Title
Organization
Program
Address
City, State, Zip

Dear XXX:

On December 4, 2013, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region (Service) issued in the Federal Register a Notice of Intent to prepare a draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) related to the proposed development of Phase I of the Chokecherry-Sierra Madre Wind Energy Project, in Carbon County, Wyoming. Phase I would include approximately 500 wind turbines as well as overhead and underground electrical and communication lines, a haul road for construction and other access roads, a quarry for road material, a railroad spur, electrical power transfer facilities and other supporting infrastructure.

The Service's draft EIS will analyze potential environmental impacts associated with our decision on whether to issue a programmatic eagle take permit to Power Company of Wyoming, LLC., the project proponent. The Service's Notice of Intent is available at:
<http://www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie/wind/ChokecherrySierraMadre/78FR72926.pdf>

The Council on Environmental Quality's regulations emphasize agency cooperation in the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process, and I invite your agency's input in the EIS scoping process. Scoping comments are due to this office by February 3, 2014.

In addition, if your agency wishes to participate in the EIS based on jurisdiction by law or special expertise in accordance with NEPA's provisions for cooperating agencies (40 CFR § 1506.01), please inform this office in writing. Please reply to: Dr. Mike Dixon/Chokecherry-Sierra Madre EIS, at the mailing address for this office provided in the letterhead.

If you have questions regarding the project being proposed or the Service's action, please contact Dr. Dixon at (303) 236-8132 or Michael_D_Dixon@fws.gov.

Sincerely,

Regional Director

Tribal Outreach Letter & Fact Sheet



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

Name, Title
Tribe
Address
City, State, Zip

Dear XXX:

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. Based on the response received, we will engage with you on a level that meets your Tribe's needs.

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,

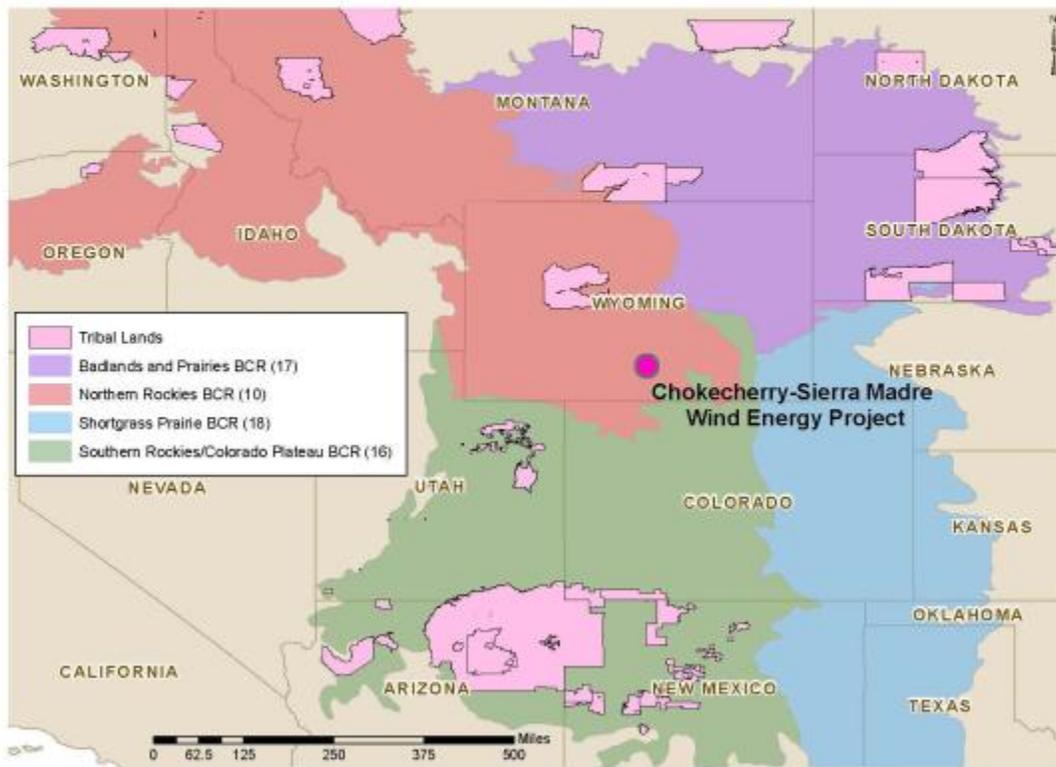
Regional Director

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



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>.





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.



Region 6

Mountain Prairie Region

Appendix E

List of Scoping Comments

All comment letters received during the scoping period will be considered during preparation of the EIS by the USFWS. Comments contained within each letter were coded and organized by the type of issue for further consideration, and were also coded by author. Comments were received from members of the public; non-governmental organizations (NGOs); and local, state, and federal agencies. Comments are presented by issue type in alphabetical order. In some cases, comments were coded as containing more than one issue type; in such instances, these comments appear more than once in the scoping comment table. In certain cases, comments received by the BLM during their EA scoping period are also being considered by the USFWS in its EIS; those comments are indicated with an “X” in the appropriate column in the table below.

Table E-1. Scoping Comments

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Adaptive Management	Agency-State		We recommend an adaptive management approach be included to insure the best and most recent available techniques at reducing eagle mortalities can be implemented during the lifetime of this project.
Adaptive Management	NGO	X	Increases in mitigation should be automatically triggered as needed. However, it must also be clearly articulated in the permit terms that the applicant is required to incorporate any new mitigation measures that are recommended by FWS to address mortality associated with the permit based on the latest science. If visually or radar triggered operational curtailment is justified by eagle use or mortality survey results and determined to be effective to prevent mortality, it should be specified as an option that could be potentially required, as could relocating or decommissioning turbines.

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Adaptive Management	NGO	X	The proposed project continues to lack an adequate long-term solution to the impacts that wind energy development has on both birds and bats. The proponents should be encouraged to move forward with and participate in priority research and development into project design, turbine design, turbine placement, and mitigation efforts that will reduce the impacts that the project has on wildlife populations. Modification and implementation of curtailment strategies developed during the three years of post-construction monitoring including considerations of possible other technologies should be considered. In the event that turbine designs which have significantly lower impacts on birds and bats or other minimization measures become available, the project proponents should be required to change out old-turbine designs or otherwise incorporate new lower-impact technologies.
Adaptive Management	NGO	X	Require that turbine location be adjusted or turbines taken down if for example the impacts to avian and bat populations are greater than expected or more wildlife friendly turbine locations are determined.
Adaptive Management	NGO		Specific guidelines should be outlined to address consequences for activities outside of the scope of the permit. Regulation 50 CFR §22.26 (c)(7) states; “[t]he Service may amend, suspend, or revoke a programmatic permit issued under this section if new information indicates that revised permit conditions are necessary, or that suspension or revocation is necessary, to safeguard local or regional eagle populations.” Though specific language associated with the federal regulation offers little guidance, the Service has the opportunity to implement a higher level of oversight and planning for unintended eagle deaths. The Service should outline specific guidelines to identify and implement actions based on soft and hard targets to protect eagle and other avian populations at risk from wind turbines. These guidelines should hold PCW accountable and provide guidance should unforeseen takes occur.

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Adaptive Management	NGO		We support the Service’s adaptive management approach to authorizing wind farms in a manner that minimizes their impact to wildlife. Because resulting impacts often are unanticipated and because the study of wind energy’s impact on wildlife is a relatively new field of research, new information often necessitates changing management approaches or actions. Periodic reviews should occur between PCW, the Service, and other entities to review operations, recommend adjustments, and help implement additional measures as necessary once the project has been developed. Adaptive management should be a required component of any action alternative outlined in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement issued by the Service for this project.
Adaptive Management	NGO		...It must also be made clear in the permit terms that the applicant is also required to incorporate new mitigation measures based on the latest science.
Adaptive Management	NGO		Include observer-triggered or radar-triggered temporary wind turbine shutdown, as well as seasonal curtailment. ...Observer-triggered or mechanically triggered temporary turbine shutdown measures have already shown promise in reducing eagle mortality at other wind project facilities and should be implemented as an upfront conservation measure. Seasonal curtailment of turbines, based on results from monitoring both seasonal avian use and trends in mortalities throughout the year, should further be examined as a percentage of the total annual operating hours of the facility and must be of sufficient time to result in actual minimization of eagle mortality.
Adaptive Management	NGO		Include a clear strategy for monitoring the effectiveness of specific strategies in reducing eagle mortality, as well as a process for formal review, public input and permit revisions.
Adaptive Management	NGO		We fully support the concept of a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) to oversee the adaptive management framework and implementation of ACPs. This strategy has been used at other wind facilities and Wind Resource Areas to guide implementation of management actions to minimize mortality. However, any TAC composed should include, and would benefit greatly by, third party scientists and members of the public.

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Adaptive Management	NGO		FWS acknowledges the need for implementation of an adaptive management framework to guide conservation practices during operation of wind facilities and describes adaptive management as “a decision process promoting flexible decision making that can be adjusted in the face of uncertainties as outcomes from management actions and other events become better understood.” Integral to the success of such a process will be providing a fully transparent and defined process for monitoring the effectiveness of the ACPs, including public input and future revisions of the ACPs where warranted. While the concept of ACPs is a key element of an adaptive management framework, it needs to be developed more fully to include a clear process for effective monitoring of measures.
Adaptive Management	NGO		FWS must incorporate clearly defined expectations and options for addressing needed changes, based on the latest science, stemming from adaptive management prescriptions and compensatory mitigation throughout the range of alternatives. As we continue to encourage industry to pursue research and development that focuses on reducing impacts on birds and bats, we must ensure that as turbine technology improves in blade, powertrain and tower technology, outdated turbines are replaced with newer models that minimize wildlife impacts.
Adaptive Management	NGO		Clearly incorporate a net conservation benefit into the analysis and permit terms, including adequate mechanisms for ensuring a sustained reduction in take throughout the life of the project as well as procedures for engaging in applied research activities to fill priority data gaps.
Adaptive Management	NGO		As part of [the] net benefit calculation, we recommend established requirements and procedures for engaging in applied research activities to leverage permit issuance and help us fill priority data gaps, identify more effective mitigation measures, and generally inform our limited toolbox for addressing eagle interactions at wind farms.

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Adaptive Management	NGO		The infancy of impacts avoidance, minimization, and mitigation practice with respect to incidental take of eagles at this time precludes the possibility of long-term planning for eagle conservation with a high degree of certainty. In this context, an adaptive management approach using shorter duration performance assessment terms, flexibility for modifying the site’s ECP, a high degree of transparency and opportunity for expert and stakeholder input is needed.
Adaptive Management	NGO		Members of the public should be given the opportunity to comment on the effectiveness of specific measures and, in cases where take thresholds are met or exceeded, provide comment on new permit terms or conditions including revocation.
Adaptive Management	NGO		Processes for the amendment, suspension, revoking of specific permits should be delineated within the decision documents and permit terms.
Adaptive Management	NGO		Specific, clear monitoring thresholds, with associated required management changes if thresholds are exceeded, are critical to successful plans. Without these elements, while mitigation and monitoring may be ongoing, a failure to actually change management (e.g. by requiring additional mitigation measures, or stopping, decreasing or slowing the amount of additional development in an area) will result in continued declines in ecosystem health or failures to meet other management goals.
Adaptive Management	NGO		There must be clear expectations for adaptive management requirements when mortality thresholds are exceeded The permit must also include clearly defined mortality thresholds that the monitoring data will be measured against and clear expectations for required permittee action if such thresholds are exceeded.
Adaptive Management	NGO		The Conservation Plans and any final permit terms must identify an adaptive management framework to ensure BGEPA compliance during the long-term operation of Phase I development. This framework must include a defined transparent process for ongoing evaluation of the effectiveness of mitigation measures and a process for formal review by the TAC and members of the public and corresponding opportunities for public comment to allow for future revisions of the Conservation Plans and permit where warranted.

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Adaptive Management	NGO		FWS must have the flexibility to require additional compensatory mitigation obligations throughout the permit duration regardless of post-construction impacts. While requiring upfront mitigation is a necessary positive step towards achieving net conservation benefits, there are very limited options currently available due to current scientific uncertainty with respect to the effectiveness of mitigation options. Thus, it must be made clear in the permit terms that the applicant may be required to incorporate new mitigation measures based on the latest science, post-construction monitoring results (for Phase I and potentially the mitigation itself), and as new proven compensatory mitigation techniques become available. FWS should ensure permit terms offer FWS broad flexibility to require additional compensatory mitigation when necessary to ensure compliance with BGEPA.
Adaptive Management	NGO		FWS must take an active enforcement and oversight role in authorizations for programmatic eagle take, including other separate but related actions and a commitment to require and revise permit conditions as new information becomes available and dictates needed action.
Adaptive Management	NGO		FWS must identify specific, clear monitoring thresholds for wildlife impacts and define a process to require mandatory, robust management changes if thresholds are exceeded.
Adaptive Management	NGO		Levels of mortality that will trigger adaptive management have not been identified. The developer of this wind energy project would need to implement compensatory mitigation that numerically offsets predicted fatalities to result in net zero-take in order to receive a programmatic take permit. Such measures need to be disclosed and fully evaluated during this NEPA process.
Agency Coordination	Agency-Local	X	Carbon County requests that the conditions it has imposed on this project, contained in the above referenced Conditional Use Permit, be considered by the BLM in its ongoing analysis and any decision made with regard to this Environmental Assessment or the Right of Way Grant.

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Agency Coordination	Agency-Local		The County Comprehensive Land Use Plan is one method of documenting Carbon County’s position concerning federal land management issues and in this regard, Carbon County encourages an intergovernmental framework that fully considers the local impacts of proposed federal actions to the social, economic, physical and cultural environment as part of your decision making and permitting process.
Agency Coordination	Agency-Local		On behalf of the Board of County Commissioners of Carbon County, Wyoming, I would ask that this letter serve as our written request to participate as a Cooperating Agency in the preparation and development of your anticipated draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) related to the proposed Phase I development of the Chokecherry/Sierra Madre Wind Energy Project.
Agency Coordination	Agency-State		The Wyoming Game and Fish Department would like to participate as a cooperating agency on the Environmental Impact Statement being prepared for the Phase I of the Chokecherry-Sierra Madre Wind Energy Project.
Agency Coordination	Agency-State		The document should provide a mechanism as to how information on future eagle mortalities will be documented and provided to WGFD and other appropriate entities. We currently learn of eagle mortalities through the Technical Advisory Committee which consists of Wyoming state agencies and is provided for by direction of the ISC permit.
Agency Coordination	Agency-State		In addition, our Wind Recommendations fulfill our obligation for providing wildlife input to the permitting process administered by the Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality Industrial Siting Council (ISC). An ISC permit will be required for the Chokecherry/Sierra Madre Wind Project.

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Agency Coordination	Agency-State		The Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality, Industrial Siting Division (Division) hereby requests to participate as a cooperating agency on the development of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s Environmental Impact Statement on the Chokecherry Sierra Madre wind energy generation facility. The Division asserts that it qualifies as a cooperating agency due to its jurisdiction by law over the proposed facility. The Division has jurisdiction by law due to the requirements of Wyoming Statute 35-12-106 which requires all large industrial facilities planned in Wyoming to receive a permit under the Industrial Siting Act prior to construction. Pursuant to W.S. 35-12-102, the Chokecherry Sierra Madre project would qualify as an industrial facility subject to the Division’s jurisdiction.
Agency Coordination	NGO	X	Most importantly, we highly encourage the review teams to continue to engage with CDTC and to identify these key areas and potential mitigation when the CDNST and its unique resources can not be avoided.
Agency Coordination	NGO	X	Further, Sweetwater County will likely experience spillover from housing issues in Carbon County and the BLM should coordinate with all of the appropriate local governments to ensure that the project does not boom, then bust, the region. Id. at 4.8-19-4.8-23. Because the impacts will occur within a short period of time, the local governments must be included in any proposals considered for housing solutions early in the planning process to accommodate those needs.
Alternatives/Project Description	Agency-Local		As described in detail in the BLM-Final EIS, PCW has committed to timing stipulations for the protection of numerous wildlife species. Seasonal closures or the temporary shutting down of selected tower sites should be considered in the eagle take permit as an alternative to permanent site prohibitions.
Alternatives/Project Description	NGO	X	To be viable, alternatives must avoid designated core habitat for the grouse. A more environmentally sound alternative is one that avoids previously mentioned sensitive wildlife areas, minimizes disturbances, and focuses more on amount of generated energy instead of number of turbines. This would encourage the use of science and the most advanced technology to build wind projects that successfully coexist with wildlife.

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Alternatives/ Project Description	NGO	X	The alternatives section is “the heart of the environmental impact statement” (40 C.F.R. § 1502.14)... A full range of alternatives would present a varied scope within a range of development scenarios, taking a hard look at more environmentally protective scenarios. ...An agency violates NEPA by failing to “rigorously explore and objectively evaluate all reasonable alternatives” to the proposed action (City of Tenakee Springs 1990 (quoting 40 C.F.R. § 1502.14)). This evaluation extends to considering more environmentally protective alternatives and mitigation measures (See, e.g., Kootenai Tribe of Idaho 2002 (and cases cited therein)).
Alternatives/ Project Description	NGO	X	The FWS has recognized the importance of adjusting turbine numbers and layouts to provide effective buffers for eagle and other raptor nest sites, as well as areas with high bird and bat utilization. BLM must therefore also provide an adequate environmental analysis of a full range of alternatives that will include a range of development scenarios including alternatives outside of the current Phase 1 plan of development, as well as various adjustments to turbine numbers and layouts.
Alternatives/ Project Description	NGO	X	Before BLM makes final decisions regarding pieces of CCSM, including the location of the turbines in Phase 1, we believe BLM must first determine whether the entire project site truly can accommodate 1,000 wind turbines. We believe the agency cannot and should not do so without a complete understanding of how or whether the impacts to sage-grouse and eagles can be mitigated.
Alternatives/ Project Description	NGO	X	BLM should consider an alternative that shields this wind farm from the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail and the Overland Historic Trail, especially with the Overland Trail under consideration for National Scenic Trail designation by Congress. BLM should consider an alternative that would preserve the features of the Overland Trail as they currently exist and not authorize action while the feasibility study for Congressional designation is underway. BLM should consider alternatives that use intervening topography to shield these trails and other viewsheds of sensitive areas for visual resource management. Such alternatives are fully reasonable and within NEPA’s range of alternatives requirements.

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Alternatives/ Project Description	NGO	X	We ask the BLM to consider a reasonable range of alternatives in this Phase I Development EA that includes more than just a no action and single action alternative with one set number of wind turbines. In order to take into account the various impacts to BLM sensitive species, raptors, other wildlife, and scenic and recreation resources, a full range of alternatives should be considered. Further, requirements included in a take permit from FWS may also warrant consideration of various numbers of turbines, as well as a reasonable range of array and siting alternatives. The BLM must serve a multiple-use mandate, and is not constrained to the project proponent’s preference in this matter.
Alternatives/ Project Description	NGO	X	While the FWS considers whether a permit should be issued, the BLM should disclose and evaluate additional mitigation measures such a take permit might require, including modifications to the project design, location of turbine arrays (including overall siting area), equipment specifications, number of turbines, and other features of the project that could substantially alter the nature of the project and accordingly alter the magnitude of environmental impacts for bald and golden eagles, as well as other affected wildlife and resources.
Alternatives/ Project Description	NGO		We do not support the extended permit length and do not believe it should be considered for this project or any future projects. The study of avian interactions with wind turbines is a dynamic and relatively new field that may yet yield technological advances that could reduce the impact of wind turbines on birds. However, if the Service were locked into 30-year take permits, its ability to require operational, technological, or other changes to reduce eagle impacts might be severely constrained; hampering resolutions to what may become resolvable problems. A 5-year permit offers the greatest ability to adapt to changing science and policy and offers the greatest oversight for protecting migratory birds and eagles.

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Alternatives/ Project Description	NGO		<p>The issuance of this permit must implement a maximum threshold that still retains sustainability of the local population. The Service should only issue the take permit on the condition that PCW utilizes the most recent technologies and information available to reduce the risk to eagles and other raptors. PCW should also adhere to all guidelines and recommendations in the 2012 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Land-Based Wind Energy Guidelines. Regrettably as of submission of these comments, PCW’s Eagle Conservation Plan (ECP) was not available. We urge a thorough and complete analysis of PCW’s ECP when drafting alternatives for this DEIS to ensure recent, scientifically peer-reviewed research and literature is being used to determine the management practices necessary to allow an eagle-take permit to be granted.</p>
Alternatives/ Project Description	NGO		<p>The FWS has previously recognized the importance of adjusting turbine numbers and layouts to provide effective buffers for eagle and other raptor nest sites, as well as areas with high bird and bat utilization. The EIS must therefore provide an adequate environmental analysis of a full range of alternatives that include a range of development scenarios, incorporating alternatives outside of the current Phase 1 plan of development as well as various adjustments to turbine numbers and layouts. Similarly, alternatives should include consideration of various permit durations, explicitly including a five-year permit term, as well as all available avoidance and minimization strategies including those not currently incorporated into site specific design to ensure compliance with BGEPA. This latter examination will further help to determine whether the applicant has avoided and minimized impacts to eagles to the “maximum degree achievable,” as required for programmatic permit issuance.</p>
Alternatives/ Project Description	NGO		<p>As FWS is well aware, there is still incredible uncertainty with respect to short and long-term impacts from wind energy development to eagles. Combined with lack of complete information on regional and local eagle population and demographics, this uncertainty makes it incredibly difficult to accurately predict direct, indirect and cumulative impacts to eagles from wind energy projects. It is therefore of the utmost importance that FWS ensures consideration of a robust range and scope of various alternatives.</p>

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Alternatives/ Project Description	NGO		Any permit application must include a full range of development scenarios at different location and of varying sizes to allow for a reduced number of turbines or locating turbines only in low-risk areas.
Alternatives/ Project Description	NGO		Additional avoidance/minimization strategies should be considered in FWS' alternative analysis. At a minimum, FWS must incorporate the following upfront avoidance and minimization measures in its NEPA alternatives analysis and any final permit terms and conditions: FWS must fully evaluate the potential impacts of alternative permit term lengths given the lack of information regarding predicted mortality, regional population data, and the availability of effective compensatory mitigation. FWS must require upfront operational minimization strategies such as seasonal curtailment during periods of high avian use and observer or mechanically triggered shutdowns when a golden eagle is within a specified distance of a wind turbine. These temporary turbine shutdown measures have already shown promise in reducing eagle mortality at other wind project facilities and must be implemented as a baseline upfront avoidance measure. FWS must consider requiring an increased "cut-in" speed to minimize impacts to bats and migratory birds. FWS must consider measures to deter eagles from turbine locations including deterrents (e.g., visual, acoustic, etc.) and measures to reduce prey abundance in the area. FWS should also consider requiring other experimental ACPs upfront to help fill priority data gaps, and identify more effective mitigation measures. Given the high risk nature of the CCSM area, we believe experimental ACPs are warranted from the on-set of operation.
Alternatives/ Project Description	NGO		Substantial project redesign is likely required to meet BGEPA permit eligibility standards. The FWS has previously recognized the importance of reducing turbines and revising site design to provide effective buffers around eagle nest sites and other areas utilized by eagles to avoid mortality to the maximum extent achievable. However, based on available data, PCW will have difficulty showing that the proposed scope and scale of Phase I could appropriately avoid eagle impacts.

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Alternatives/ Project Description	NGO		Under NEPA and BGEPA, FWS must evaluate a broad range of potential environmentally preferable alternatives beyond the size and scope of the proponent’s current proposal. The alternatives section is the “heart of the environmental impact statement” and “should present the environmental impacts of the proposal and the alternatives in comparative form, thus sharply defining the issues and providing a clear basis for choice among options by the decision maker and the public.”
Alternatives/ Project Description	NGO		Given the current uncertainty regarding the effectiveness of the suite of available avoidance, minimization, or compensatory mitigation measures, as well as the lack of data or understanding on regional eagle populations, FWS must retain its discretion to decline to issue a permit or to issue a permit for less than 30 years (including issuing a permit for the minimum permit duration of 5-years).
Alternatives/ Project Description	NGO		Common sense, business sense and scientific integrity all demand that the Service first establish a pilot eagle take permitting program, specific to wind energy generation facilities. Such a pilot program, involving only small wind energy generation facilities is needed to assess “on-the-ground” (true, as opposed to theorized or speculated) effectiveness of eagle take permitting.
Alternatives/ Project Description	NGO		...an eagle take permit requires modifications to the project design, location of turbine arrays (including overall siting area), equipment specifications, number of turbines, and other features of the project that could substantially alter the nature of the project and accordingly alter the magnitude of environmental impacts for bald and golden eagles, as well as other affected wildlife and resources.
Alternatives/ Project Description	Public		The DEIS’s preferred alternative should include the stipulation that the company employ any and all ‘best management practices’ and use the most current science in putting into place mitigation that minimizes the potential for bird-turbine collisions, as a condition for the issuance of the take permit.

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Alternatives/ Project Description	Public		Eagle kills would be severally reduced if project were moved to Bolten Flats: not the potential for the abundant wind and less money for the developer; however, this is more than mitigated by the few eagles and other wildlife impacts (sage grouse, elk, deer, etc. plus the wind mills would be farther from the oil/gas development from the Atlantic Rim project.
Alternatives/ Project Description	Public		As long as the scope stays focused on keeping the natural order of the health involved with wildlife which doesn't have options as we do all involved should be able to benefit without harm to the other. Man can have options, animals don't.
Alternatives/ Project Description	Public		If our country truly wants to be green, we need to localize energy creation instead of transporting it in pipelines or power lines. We have the technology to side buildings with solar panels, attach small turbines to commercial buildings and homes and utilize thermal energy throughout the country.
Avoidance and Minimization	NGO	X	Given the growing concern for these majestic birds, especially related to mortalities associated with wind farms, any development decisions that will impact Golden Eagles must be placed within a regional population context much larger than the area immediately surrounding any proposed wind energy facility, ...the USFWS' stated preference for avoidance over compensatory mitigation is most appropriate.
Avoidance and Minimization	NGO	X	A wind project of this size in an area that provides important habitat for sage-grouse, eagles, and other species will have significant direct and indirect impacts despite mitigation steps taken. The projected impacts must be recognized and every effort made to avoid and minimize impacts, beginning with appropriate micro-siting and assurances of monitoring and adaptive management throughout the life of the project, as well as offsite mitigation.

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Avoidance and Minimization	NGO	X	Potential minimization options must include observer-triggered or mechanically triggered (e.g., radar) temporary shutdown of turbines when a golden eagle is within a specified distance of a wind turbine. These temporary turbine shutdown measures have already shown promise in reducing eagle mortality at other wind project facilities and must be implemented as an upfront avoidance measure. Considering the size of the project and the significant projected impacts, implementing temporary shutdown measures could also be warranted. None of these options can be left off the table if needed to prevent eagle mortality; prevention, not mitigation for mortality after it occurs, must be the highest priority.
Avoidance and Minimization	NGO		Our organizations strongly support implementation of the mitigation hierarchy: avoidance, minimization and then compensatory mitigation. Therefore, we believe that every effort should be made to avoid impacts to golden eagles first and foremost. Avoidance strategies include configuring wind turbines to avoid high avian use areas and buffers around known eagle nests and breeding areas, as well as removing especially hazardous turbines that cause repeated mortality or overlap with high avian use areas. Minimization strategies include seasonal curtailment during known periods of high avian use, as well as observation-based or mechanically-triggered temporary shutdown of turbines when an eagle is within a specified distance of a wind turbine.
Avoidance and Minimization	NGO		Permittees must be required to aggressively pursue targeted measures to avoid and minimize collision fatality at individual turbine locations where monitoring data (e.g., GPS flight path data or carcass search data) indicate problems. Every effort should be made to avoid further unanticipated impacts to golden eagles and migratory birds first and foremost before FWS allows even the consideration of additional compensatory mitigation. Avoidance strategies should include reconfiguring wind turbines by removing and/or relocating turbines based on mortality data, high avian use areas and identified eagle nests and breeding areas.

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Avoidance and Minimization	NGO		<p>Emphasis should be given to incorporation of additional minimization and site avoidance measures. The preservation benefits of avoidance and minimization are more assuredly matched to the take threats at a site than are compensatory mitigation measures. Hence, the FWS’s preservation obligations are more conclusively achieved when the best available avoidance and minimization are employed. We must underscore this primary emphasis on measures to avoid and minimize take, as such a requirement is cornerstone to the well-accepted mitigation hierarchy and is necessary to meet the regulatory standard of “unavoidable” take pursuant to BGEPA regulations. We place extreme importance on continuing to incorporate sound, smart from the start planning and siting, which include avoidance measures and the best available minimization measures, prior to addressing the standard for and requirements stemming from the actual “take” of the species.</p>
Avoidance and Minimization	NGO		<p>BGEPA regulations require applicants to show that they have avoided and minimized impacts to eagles to the “maximum degree achievable” to be eligible for a programmatic Eagle Permit. Notably, programmatic permits are subject to a higher eligibility standard than the “cannot practicably be avoided” standard imposed on individual permits. This is because programmatic permits authorize more take on a larger scale than individual permits.</p>
Birds (other than eagles)	NGO		<p>Requirements imposed regarding turbine siting, facility operations, and project mitigation should also reflect other avian species likely to be adversely affected by this facility.</p>
Birds (other than eagles)	NGO		<p>We appreciate FWS’ intent to also address potential impacts to other migratory birds and their habitats (including a thorough fragmentation analysis) in the context of reviewing and analyzing the applicant’s APP. Given the high probability of significant adverse impacts to avian and bat species and the current uncertainty regarding mitigation, it is imperative that FWS work with PCW to ensure that the Conservation Plans address the project’s long-term compliance with the MBTA.</p>

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Birds (other than eagles)	NGO		Although not directly relevant to the take permit issue, ferruginous hawks are known to build and use, quite unpredictably, several nests over time. The use of multiple nests is known to reflect changing locations of more favorable prey availability over time. Because competition and territoriality is an integral ecological component of the ecosystem shared by the proposed project area, eagles, ferruginous hawks and other competitors, the permit cannot consider only eagle behavior, nesting habits, and flight patterns as if existing in a vacuum.
Birds (other than eagles)	Public		There are other species that use the North Platte Valley as a migration corridor that could also come in contact with the wind farm ... especially in it's second phase that puts the turbines closer to the river..... turkey buzzards, waterfowl, blue herons, Sandhill Cranes (and on one occasion sighted on the Sanger Ranch, north and west of Pick Bridge, a pair of Whooping Cranes, I believe?? bigger with a lot more white ??) night hawks, peregrine falcons and other raptors.
Construction	NGO	X	Efforts should be made to minimize disturbance during pre-construction and the area and intensity of disturbance should be minimized to the maximum extent possible during construction. Impacts should be monitored through the continued use of the avian radar technology in combination with traditional ground surveys.
Cultural Resources	NGO	X	There are significant segments of the [CDNST] trail and adjacent trails that were used by early-day Indians, ancient cliff-dwelling tribes, Spanish explorers and mountain men in their travels within and through the Continental Divide area. Little visible evidence is left of these activities; however, through interpretative signing, trail users will be alerted to the cultural significance of the area (Study Report page 101). Historic Qualities: Many signs of historical activity are within the vicinity of the trail and throughout its entire length. Thus, any person visiting the area may have some advance knowledge of the historical significance of the area to make the visit more meaningful (Study Report page 103).

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Cultural Resources	NGO	X	BLM must disclose impacts to historic and cultural properties and resources in the Phase I Development area, and disclose what steps have been taken to inventory resources for National Register of Historic Properties-eligible sites and trails and to comply with the National Historic Preservation Act. Without identification of such sites, BLM cannot properly evaluate impacts under NEPA’s “hard look” requirement.
Cultural Resources	NGO	X	BLM should evaluate and seek ways to protect recreation experiences dependent on visual resources and natural settings, including backpacking, hunting, fishing, photography, geologic and nature study, and hiking. Portions of the project area have a high visual sensitivity, including areas visible from the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail and the Overland Trail. Final EIS Vol. 2 at 3.12-2, 3, and 5. BLM must clarify how this project complies with the organic legislation for the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail, and does not preclude designation of the Overland Trail by Congress. BLM should fully consider impacts to these trails and recreation experiences, and consider alternatives to avoid or minimize such impacts. On its face, the Chokecherry/Sierra Madre Project will interfere with the nature and purposes of the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail. The trail was designated by Congress for its scenic qualities. Turbine visibility will be “high” for the trail, as well as the Overland Trail. Final EIS Figure 3.12-6. The visual contrast will be “strong.” Final EIS Vol. 2 at 4.12-13. BLM must clarify how this project complies with the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail Comprehensive Plan and the Rawlins RMP direction for the trail. BLM must also disclose and consider impacts to any wilderness characteristics found in the Phase I Development area, and ways to mitigate impacts to those characteristics.

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Cultural Resources	NGO	X	<p>AHW would note our dismay that the proposed siting of the turbines in the Sierra Madre area of Phase I are situated so close to the Pine Grove Stage Station, one of the most significant sites in the entire project area. This is of great concern to us since the BLM has still taken no steps to address our concern about the eligibility of listing the Pine Grove Stage Station on the National Register as a Rural Historic Landscape or similar landscape designation. Pine Grove itself is currently listed on the National Register but its landscape status has not been determined. In the last couple of years, the BLM and SHPO have made much of their intention to pay more attention to landscape issues and eligibility.</p>
Cultural Resources	NGO	X	<p>We continue to believe that the scope of this project precludes it from being adequately addressed by the National Historic Preservation Act alone. As the PA for this project acknowledges, NHPA can only address those properties that are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. For a project such as CCSM, this is simply insufficient. The scale of this project will fundamentally alter the historic nature of Rawlins, Sinclair and the surrounding area, impacting cultural attributes that are not eligible for NRHP listing.</p>
Cumulative Impacts	Agency-Local		<p>The cumulative effects on the local eagle population with four transmission lines being planned adjacent to the proposed project area should be considered in the EIS.</p>
Cumulative Impacts	Agency-State		<p>We recommend the EIS should contain a current disclosure of eagle mortalities at each existing wind farm in Wyoming and a peer reviewed evaluation of these data to determine mortality rate per year, sex and age structure of the mortality and any effect on productivity as this constitutes the basis for a cumulative effects analysis on eagles.</p>

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Cumulative Impacts	NGO	X	<p>While this existing project configuration involves CCSM, the TransWest Express transmission line is also being proposed to carry power from the wind farms. Our support of a project of this size and scale, especially in high quality habitat, is subject to fulfillment of recommended improvements and assurances that adjacent lands will not be available for new energy development. Additional future projects could threaten the viability of this landscape as habitat for sensitive wildlife populations. Regarding sage-grouse, additional projects could present unacceptable risks for local populations and habitat. Accordingly, the FEIS should recognize that future energy development would be incompatible with 1) other multiple use goals, and 2) the overarching commitment of BLM and the USFWS to implementing protective management strategies designed to obviate the need for listing the grouse when its status is reconsidered in 2015. If CCSM and TransWest are approved, no additional energy development should be allowed on this landscape. The cumulative impacts of additional operations would be unacceptable. This applies to both 1) additional wind farms and associated transmission, and 2) oil and gas drilling and associated road, pipeline and related infrastructure. Recommendation: The FEIS should explicitly describe how additional project-specific information will be incorporated in compliance with the requirements of NEPA and incorporate assurances that adjacent lands will not be available to new energy development activities.</p>
Cumulative Impacts	NGO	X	<p>Development Projects like wind energy farms already cross the Trail in many locations. These sites are, by nature, intensive, high profile land uses. The visual impacts and, in some cases, the audible impacts of these facilities detracts from the primitive recreational experience provided by the Trail. These developments often can be seen for miles from the trail, disrupting an otherwise undisturbed scene (or scenery) found in these unique environments for many miles. Adverse impacts also include lights, access roads, cleared swaths of land, off-road vehicle access on utility right-of-ways, guy wires, chain link fences, and chemical treatments of the vegetation in the corridor. These ancillary impacts are often more intrusive than the sites themselves. Furthermore, the cumulative impacts of the expansion and development of utility corridors and facilities upon the CDNST environment are substantial.</p>

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Cumulative Impacts	NGO	X	<p>The potential impact of CCSM extends well beyond the boundaries of the project area and even the State of Wyoming. The economic viability of CCSM depends upon selling the power generated to distant load centers, including California. BLM and the Western Area Power Administration (Western) are co-lead agencies in preparing an EIS for the TransWest Express Transmission Project. The TransWest Express Transmission Project would provide transmission infrastructure and capacity to deliver approximately 3,000 megawatts (MW) of electric power from renewable and other energy resources in south-central Wyoming to a substation hub in southern Nevada. The proposed project would consist of a 725-mile-long, 600-kilovolt (kV), direct current (DC) transmission line, a northern terminal located near Sinclair, Wyoming, and a southern terminal approximately 25 miles south of Las Vegas, Nevada. The proposed transmission line (and alternatives) would cross Wyoming, Colorado, Utah, and Nevada, and encompass lands owned or administered by BLM, U.S. Forest Service (USFS), National Park Service, Bureau of Reclamation, various state agencies, Native American tribes, municipalities, and private parties. Greater sage-grouse may be found along more than 95 percent of the proponents proposed route (Alternative I-A) through Carbon and Sweetwater counties, Wyoming and Moffat County, Colorado. Moffat County, Colorado contains the largest population of greater sage-grouse in Colorado. Forty-one occupied/active leks occur within 4 miles of Alternative I-A (i.e., 28 occupied leks in Wyoming and 13 active leks in Colorado). The cumulative impact of the TransWest Express Transmission Project and CCSM as connected activities must be addressed.</p>

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Cumulative Impacts	NGO	X	<p>NWF and WWF continue to be concerned about the cumulative impacts of CCSM and other development in the area. Because of the proximity of CCSM to the Atlantic Rim Natural Gas Project as well as the proposed Continental Divide-Creston Natural Gas Development Project (CD-C Project) and the fact that many animal species use the entire landscape surrounding these projects throughout the course of a year, the impacts of the projects will combine to create biologically significant and potentially devastating effects on resident wildlife populations. Where gas development and wind development are not compatible with wildlife habitat, avoidance of energy development will reduce the distribution of certain wildlife species and will result in population declines if density-dependence, competition, or displacement into poor-quality habitats lowers survival or reproduction among displaced wildlife. Although the CCSM FEIS documents the Atlantic Rim energy play, for example, it does not address how BLM will handle the cumulative impacts of these two energy productions on wildlife, habitat and recreation. The CCSM FEIS does not discuss potential CD-C Project impacts.</p>
Cumulative Impacts	NGO	X	<p>The Coalition and LSRCD support wind energy development, when it does not preclude other land uses or adversely impact other economic uses of the land. The CCSM may disturb substantial portions of the surface near the LSRCD and Sweetwater County. This may result in destruction of sage-grouse habitat, which contributes to its need to be listed, the spread of invasive and noxious weeds, which also impacts sage-grouse habitat as well as the livestock grazing industry, and may result in soil and water quality impacts. All of these concerns must be addressed in the EA, because the impacts extend far beyond the immediate project area.</p>
Cumulative Impacts	NGO		<p>While still a relatively minor threat to most wildlife populations, wind energy development is a significant additive mortality factor that threatens to increase dramatically over the coming decades.</p>

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Cumulative Impacts	NGO		<p>Climate Change and Associated Eagle Deaths Have Not Been Considered by Project Proponents and Permitting Agencies. In nearby Utah alone, 29 (to date) bald eagles have died from the West Nile virus so far this winter. Five other West Nile infected bald eagles have been treated. West Nile virus infections are typically associated with warmer seasons. Taking into consideration climate change and the already demonstrably associated shorter and warmer winters in Wyoming (thus the recent mountain pine beetle epidemic in the nearby Medicine Bow-Routt National Forest and coniferous forests throughout the Rocky Mountains from British Columbia to New Mexico). Climate change impacts are a matter of history, not predictions. These concerns must be considered in the issuance of eagle take permits. Recent report in LA Times Newspaper by John M. Glionna January 3, 2014, Utah wildlife experts believe they have solved the mystery of what killed at least 29 bald eagles over the last month: West Nile virus. The majestic birds, the national symbol of the United States, apparently became infected after eating smaller birds with the disease, according to the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources. In December, hunters and farmers across five counties in northern and central Utah began finding the normally skittish raptors lying, listless, on the ground. Many suffered from seizures, head tremors and paralysis in the legs, feet and wings.</p>
Cumulative Impacts	NGO		<p>Wildlife across the U.S. face a host of stressors that fragment and destroy habitat and lead to declining populations.</p>
Cumulative Impacts	NGO		<p>Establishing a regional framework is an essential prerequisite to sound mitigation regimes and proper estimation of cumulative impacts.</p>

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Cumulative Impacts	NGO		<p>Given the large number and diverse sources of potential impacts to eagles regionally, including the high predicted mortality from the CCSM alone, FWS cannot reasonably estimate cumulative impacts to regional populations, and in turn, adequately protect such populations, without developing a science-based Regional Conservation Plan or similar regional analysis. As part of this exercise, area-specific risk assessment information should be used to establish development risk zones, paralleling the risk categories in the ECP Guidance to assess landscape-level conditions. To ensure that Phase I is based on smart planning and avoids significant migratory concentration areas, predicted risk zones should then be overlaid with proposed turbine locations to guide more focused field studies to confirm actual risk to ensure better turbine siting.</p>
Cumulative Impacts	NGO		<p>FWS must ensure that its analysis considers all present and reasonably foreseeable sources of take within the region. In addition to cumulative impacts from the full CCSM development, FWS must also evaluate other present and reasonably foreseeable sources of impacts in the region. There are several wind energy facilities already in operation near the CCSM and several others have been proposed and are undergoing the approval process. This region is also attractive for other energy-related development projects. According to the Carbon County Economic Development Corporation, as of August 2012, there were 17 pending and/or approved Industrial and Natural Resource Development Projects (in addition to the CCSM) for Carbon County alone, including e.g., uranium mining operations, transmission projects, natural gas development projects. FWS must also consider other sources of regional impacts beyond those directly related to land development, including, but not limited to, illegal hunting, lead poisoning, collisions with automobiles, loss of habitat, etc.</p>

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Cumulative Impacts	NGO		<p>BGEPA also requires FWS to evaluate cumulative impacts when determining whether a project is eligible for an Eagle Permit under BGPEA. Specifically, under FWS’ regulations “[i]n evaluating whether predicted take is compatible with the preservation of eagle, [FWS] must consider cumulative effects...[to] help ensure adverse impacts are not concentrated in one locality.” Accordingly, BGEPA regulations require that FWS analyze cumulative impacts within the entire BCR, not just the area immediately surrounding the CCSM. As FWS has acknowledged, “whatever the cause, in order to ensure that take is compatible with the preservation of the bald or golden eagle, [FWS] will not issue permits for take within a regional eagle population without sufficient data indicating the take will not result in a population decline.”</p>
Cumulative Impacts	NGO		<p>FWS must thoroughly evaluate cumulative impacts within the entire BCR. We are encouraged by FWS’ explicit commitment in the Notice of Intent to complete a cumulative impacts analysis that incorporates all phases of the CCSM development with respect to both direct and indirect impacts to eagles and other migratory birds. We also commend FWS for acknowledging that this cumulative impacts analysis must comprehensively evaluate other impacts to migratory bird habitat and prey (including impacts from climate change), which may not constitute take under BGEPA. When completing this cumulative impacts analysis, FWS must thoroughly evaluate all cumulative impacts from the full CCSM development (i.e., Phase I, Phase II, roadways, transmission facilities, etc.) as well as all other unrelated current and foreseeable sources of impacts to local and regional eagle populations , including other proposed or operating wind development on public and private land in the BCR. Unless FWS considers all cumulative impacts to local and regional populations, it will be unable to properly evaluate permit eligibility criteria and establish sufficient compensatory mitigation requirements to ensure that any and all permitted take is equally compensated for in advance of mortality.</p>

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Cumulative Impacts	NGO		<p>Cumulative, connected, similar and other impacts to eagles have not been adequately addressed at any stage of the project design and permitting process. The BLM must fully evaluate the cumulative impacts of the Phase I Development with nearby oil and gas developments, the TransWest Express transmission line and any other proposed or potential transmission infrastructure projects. Further, BLM must fully evaluate the cumulative impacts the Phase I Development will have on habitat, recreation, and visual resources along with oil and gas drilling impacts. Lacking this information, the USFWS cannot issue an informed eagle take permit that will effectively meet the need stated to provide “specific” guidance to help make wind energy facilities compatible with eagle conservation and the laws and regulations that protect eagles. Consideration of connected, cumulative, and similar existing and potential actions including general growth trends is required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The Service is obligated to assess the BLM’s FEIS for compliance with NEPA requirements and to evaluate its scientific integrity and lack thereof prior to issuing an eagle take permit.</p>
Cumulative Impacts	Public		<p>Has the impact of Atlantic Rim been factored into wintering elk at Red Rim (and their lichen deaths) with the Sierra Madre windmills? A recent BLM, WY Game and Fish, and University of WY study on pronghorn study notes the Atlantic Rim gas field development’s impact on deer and elk: http://wyofile.com/kelsey-dayton/pronghorn-study/.</p>
Cumulative Impacts	Public		<p>Nowhere has the impact of the Atlantic Rim gas development been factored into this wind project’s analysis; these two projects are within 15 - 20 miles from each other. A 2007 Record of Decision authorized multiple operators to develop the 270,000 acres of approximately 2,000 gas wells south of Rawlins, Wyo. Site-specific environmental assessments are conducted for each new development; however this wind project’s proximity is not factored. The gas project taken along with the wind project will have everlasting negative impacts to the area’s wildlife: sage grouse, wintering deer & elk herds; eagles; and birds of prey in one concentrated area.</p>

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Cumulative Impacts	Public		In the area of the CCSM wind farm the second phase just seems to be more in conflict with birds and other wildlife the closer you get to the river ... it is a very attractive area for birds and wildlife in our arid desert ecosystem. I'm hoping that the first 500 turbines would be a viable enough of a business for PCOW and that they could cancel the second phase of 500 turbines that encroach on the North Platte River. I believe the river and the surrounding areas (I don't know size wise what would be reasonable or what size would be needed to protect wildlife in the area 3 miles???) should be reserved as a buffer zone, if you will, for the wildlife that depend so much on it.
Decommissioning	NGO		BLM should also disclose plans for the demobilization of turbines at the end of the project's life, and associated impacts with such demobilization.
Eagle Conservation Plan	NGO	X	There is also an urgent need for an overarching national eagle conservation management plan with corresponding regional management plans to guide implementation of the Eagle Conservation Plan Guidance. The lack of clarity in the absence of this guiding framework impedes all stages of site assessment and mitigation planning. As part of the Regional Conservation Plan, area-specific risk assessment information should be used to establish risk-zones—paralleling the risk categories described in the Guidance, but assessing landscape-level conditions. This would be a logical extension of the risk categorization framework delineated in the Guidance and would create a management tool more consistent with the population-level obligations imposed by the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (BGEPA). Given the definition of take and disturbance under BGEPA, site assessments must examine project impacts on eagle foraging habitat, nesting, roosting sites, wintering habitat, migratory stopover sites, migratory corridors, and defended eagle territories.

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Eagle Conservation Plan	NGO	X	<p>We understand that the Final Eagle Conservation Plan Guidance is being reviewed by field staff. We strongly encourage that this document be finalized and released to the public prior to proceeding with site-specific plans of development for CCSM. Notably, we support and agree with many of the principles outlined in the draft guidelines, specifically: early and regular industry consultation with FWS and other experts, consideration of eagle activity through all seasons, attention to cumulative impacts at the population level, and an adaptive management framework. We hope that the final Guidance will provide detail on survey protocol and analysis techniques, as CCSM illustrates the wide range of protocols and techniques currently being employed on public lands.</p>
Eagle Conservation Plan	NGO	X	<p>Conservation plans (Eagle, Avian and Bat) are extremely important in terms of identifying specific measures that will be used to avoid, minimize and mitigate impacts. These plans must be developed with public participation prior to the authorization of specific projects. They should include the following at a minimum: requirements for discontinued operations of specific turbines during migration seasons to reduce mortalities, adequate conductor-to-conductor and conductor-to-ground space to prevent avian electrocution, installation of overhead transmission structures with anti-perching devices to reduce perching by avian predators and prevent avian electrocution, and relocation of development to less sensitive areas. The Eagle Conservation Plan should include a listing of risk factors, as noted in the USFWS’ Draft Golden Eagle Conservation Plan Guidance, and a discussion of these factors for the this project. As individual Plans of Development move forward, these should include updated and specific conservation plans. Thresholds of wildlife impact requiring management response need to be determined, especially for high profile species as Greater Sage-grouse and Golden Eagles. Thresholds, such as a selected percent decline in populations or in the amount of undisturbed habitat needed to sustain a certain population, need to be set before development starts. Furthermore, there must be a firm commitment to enacting management actions in response to reaching the threshold and opportunity for public accountability throughout. We recognize that all necessary data may not be readily available and would thus require establishment of a formal monitoring program to complement any known historical data, combined with population modeling efforts.</p>

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Eagle Conservation Plan	NGO	X	A Science-based Regional Conservation Plan for golden eagles must be developed to guide implementation of the ECP. As part of this effort, area-specific risk assessment information must be used to assess landscape-level conditions and establish risk zones within the project area to ensure turbines are not sited in high-risk locations. BLM must ensure that pre-construction monitoring of golden eagles is sufficient to detect concentration areas and important flight paths that must be avoided. This type of regional analysis ultimately informs whether predicted take is compatible with the preservation of eagles and whether take may be approaching levels that are unsustainable or which cannot be reasonable offset through compensatory mitigation.
Eagle Conservation Plan	NGO		FWS must make every effort to ensure baseline ecological data and draft conservation plans are publically available as early as possible and in a manner that allows stakeholders to provide meaningful review of take risk and remedial options.
Eagle Conservation Plan	NGO		The FWS should provide specific guidelines for designing BACI studies in connection with monitoring requirements The monitoring protocol should facilitate an appropriate evaluation of experimental ACPs employed by the facility. One of the main reasons why many of the ACPs are still experimental is due to the lack of before-after-control-impact studies (BACF) that are designed to specifically look at conservation practices and their effect on eagle mortalities. The FWS should provide specific guidelines for designing BACI studies before and after a certain conservation practice is implemented. The results from these studies could provide significant utility by filling current data gaps and informing more effective permitting decisions in the future.
Eagle Conservation Plan	NGO		FWS should also consider requiring other experimental ACPs upfront to help fill priority data gaps, and identify more effective mitigation measures. Given the high risk nature of the CCSM area, we believe experimental ACPs are warranted from the on-set of operation.

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Eagle Conservation Plan	NGO		...any permit application must include a full range of development scenarios at different location and of varying sizes to allow for a reduced number of turbines or locating turbines only in low-risk areas. The application must also identify a robust menu of minimization measures including seasonal curtailment and observer or mechanically triggered temporary shutdown measures. Additionally, the application must include all available effective mitigation options.
Eagle Conservation Plan	NGO		It is not clear how the ECPG serves to offer specific in-depth guidance “in the course of siting.” The Wyoming Industrial Siting Council (ISC) approved the CCSMP possessing and considering virtually no sound scientific data regarding impacts to eagles, other raptor and birds. Sound data on the impacts of the project on migrating birds did not exist when the ISC issued its permit. To date, no meaningful data has been collected on the impacts of the project on migrating eagles, other raptors and other birds. Resident populations of eagles have been monitored but resident eagles and other raptors exhibit movement behaviors that cannot be predicted.
Eagle Data	Agency-Local		Power Company of Wyoming’s has invested a tremendous amount of time and money into the eagle conservation plan and avian radar data that should be available to help the public make more informed comments.
Eagle Data	Agency-State		The proponent for this project has collected eagle and raptor data for several years. We recommend the Service utilize these pre-construction data in the preparation of this EIS. Where data may not be adequate or lacking for the analysis to be conducted by the Service, we recommend the Service provide guidance and clarification to the proponent so that data collection can be augmented or modified to meet the needs of the NEPA analysis.

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Eagle Data	NGO	X	We propose that the Scientific Committee: Be composed of five experts in raptor biology, selected by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and approved by the proponent; Be given a defined scope of work with a timeline and defined product; Be compensated by the proponent (average rate \$120-150/hr); Meet via webex or other electronic media paid for by the proponent; Be transparent in all materials and deliberations; Have access to all data and materials developed on the CCSM wind project; Be facilitated by an entity selected jointly by the proponent, BLM, and USFWS; Be composed of scientists specializing in raptors in the Western U.S. (see Appendix A for proposed list); Prepare a publically-available report of their findings, prior to the issuance of the Record of Decision.
Eagle Data	NGO	X	Given the definition of take and disturbance under BGEPA, site assessments must examine project impacts on eagle foraging habitat, nesting, roosting sites, wintering habitat, migratory stopover sites, migratory corridors, and defended eagle territories. In order to comply with FWS regulations, BLM must ensure additional analysis and data collection are conducted within the project boundaries and the resultant information provided to interested parties consistent with NEPA’s requirements.
Eagle Data	NGO	X	Immediate Need for Baseline Eagle Population Data. The ability for the public and our conservation organizations to understand the impacts of this project is severely hampered by the lack of baseline data on eagle populations in the region. Understanding of the regional eagle population must also include efforts to understand level of decline that is sustainable to the population. These thresholds, whether the percent decline in population or the amount of undisturbed habitat needed to sustain a population, are fundamental and must be established before development starts. If data shortfalls are not resolved, then management decisions must err on the side of being more, rather than less, protective for both Bald and Golden Eagles.

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Eagle Data	NGO	X	The USFWS’ own Inventory and Monitoring Protocol (Pagel et al. 2010) suggests conducting surveys of Golden Eagle nest sites in eagle territories that occur within 10 miles of the project site. The DEIS’ single aerial survey, which occurred in May 2008, extended only 1 mile beyond the application area (DEIS p. 3.14-19). The fixed point survey locations also inadequately documented used of the area by Golden Eagles and other raptors because no survey points were located in either eastern Chokecherry or eastern Sierra Madre, both of which are projected for development (DEIS Figure 3.14-7). Too few and poorly located observation points, along with a single aerial survey year with limited scope, draw concerns of failure to adequately document nest activity, concentration areas and important flight paths.
Eagle Data	NGO	X	Preconstruction monitoring must extend 10 miles outside the CCSM boundary and include an adequate number of observation points to ensure the entire project area is evaluated.
Eagle Data	NGO	X	The more studies that are done on wind turbines and bird kills, the more definitive proof we have that the machines are killing lots of birds. In March, a peer-reviewed study published in the Wildlife Society Bulletin estimated that 573,000 birds per year are killed in the U.S. by wind turbines, including some 83,000 birds of prey. The latest study’s numbers are significantly higher than an official estimate published in 2008 by USFWS that put bird kills by wind turbines at 440,000 per year.

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Eagle Data	NGO	X	<p>With migrants from more than a thousand miles away regularly visiting Wyoming, wind development could make Wyoming a mortality sink for eagles across half a continent. Even though California turbines seem to kill more eagles, according to a recent study in the Journal of Raptor Research, Wyoming turbines seem to be far deadlier to eagles than California's, killing about one eagle for every 40-45 megawatts of wind turbine generating capacity between 2009 and June 2012. California's equivalent figure for 2009 to June 2012, with 13 eagle deaths recorded (excluding Altamont) by about 4,973 megawatts' worth of turbines at the end of 2012 (excluding Altamont), turns out to be one dead eagle recorded for every 380 megawatts of capacity. The real numbers could be much higher. According to an Associated Press (AP) story published May 14, 2013, the wind industry reports bird kills only on a voluntary basis, and "the Obama administration in many cases refuses to make the information public, saying it belongs to the energy companies or that revealing it would expose trade secrets or implicate ongoing enforcement investigations." The AP story also shows that the extent of eagle kills by wind turbines is more widespread that was previously known. AP found that wind projects in Wyoming have killed four dozen golden eagles since 2009. One site, Duke Energy's Top of the World wind project, has killed ten golden eagles in its first two years of operation. Duke has "repeatedly sought a permit from the federal government to kill eagles legally," AP reports, "but was told it was killing too many to qualify."</p>
Eagle Data	NGO		<p>FWS cannot reasonably make these determinations without first examining the authorization and affected eagle population within a regional context, including up-to-date baseline regional population information, threats to eagles from all sources, efficacy of avoidance, minimization and compensatory mitigation measures, appropriateness of regional take caps, and conservation goals and objectives that ensure the stability of local and regional eagle populations. As stated in previous comments, establishing a regional framework is a prerequisite to sound mitigation regimes and proper estimation of cumulative impacts.</p>

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Eagle Data	NGO		BGEPA’s preservation standard ensures the continued protection of the species while allowing some impacts to individual eagles. In its 2009 regulations on the take of eagles under BGEPA, FWS stated that it would not issue permits for take within a regional eagle population without sufficient data indicating that the take would not result in a population decline. The issuance criteria for individual programmatic eagle take permits further includes identifying the project-level effects together with cumulative effects of other permitted take and additional factors affecting eagle populations, as well as identifying whether the permit issuance will preclude higher priority permit issuance.
Eagle Data	NGO		Although full information about survey effort related to raptors has not been made publicly available, it seems unlikely that the bi-weekly and monthly raptor surveys described in the FEIS would adequately capture isolated use of the area by individual eagles, particularly during migration when greater numbers of eagles are likely to pass through to during short periods of time. Given that migration route fidelity is unknown for golden eagles, particularly at fine spatial scales, continuing visual and radar surveys that focus on golden eagle use of the project area and surrounding areas are required for multiple years prior to construction as well as postconstruction, and these surveys must have sufficient frequency and spatial extent to firmly establish eagle use and associated collision risk. Rather than having radar and visual surveys that do not overlap in space, visual surveys must be used to “train” the radar data set to make radar data more useful for distinguishing eagles. Given that this is the largest proposed wind project in North America to date and that it is located in an area with relatively high eagle use, it is imperative that golden eagle survey efforts are rigorous and leveraged to maximize the ability to predict eagle take from wind turbine collision.
Eagle Data	NGO		Adequate pre-construction surveys are necessary to appropriately estimate the local area population and in turn accurately predict direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts associated with the CCSM. These surveys should be designed such that they sufficiently capture migrating eagles and floaters - not just resident eagles and nests.

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Eagle Data	NGO		Currently there is very little reliable data for golden eagle populations and many states have little to no resources for population surveys. Acknowledging the necessity of additional population data, in 2009, FWS indicated that it “would work with states and tribes to develop monitoring and research adequate to both resolve current uncertainties in the data and to provide enhanced ability to detect the effects of the permit program.” Unfortunately, sufficient population data for golden eagles is still severely lacking for most BCRs, including the Northern Rockies BCR (BCR 10). Until better population data is available, FWS cannot properly evaluate whether they are managing for stable or increasing populations within the BCR.
Eagle Data	NGO		FWS must ensure sufficient information is available for public review on regional population size and how this information interplays with the net conservation benefit.
Eagle Data	NGO		Information on eagle populations and patterns is scarce and is a major impediment to the issuance of a scientifically defensible programmatic golden eagle permit. With respect to the CCSM, the lack of understanding of the regional population, and how much take it can withstand in light mitigation uncertainty, calls into serious question how any determination on net benefit could be made.
Eagle Data	NGO		Obtaining baseline data on regional populations is a necessary component of any long-term planning necessary for a thorough permit evaluation; however at this time, this data does not appear to be available.
Eagle Data	NGO		Continued survey effort is required to establish golden eagle use of proposed turbine locations and surrounding areas and to assess collision mortality risk.
Eagle Data	NGO		BLM must be required to disclose radar baseline information, collected by a contractor, that has describes raptor flight patterns, particularly for ingress and egress to nest sites. If the Power Company of Wyoming (PCW) or other private entities has this information, it should be shared with the BLM and the public before further proceeding with the Chokecherry/Sierra Madre Project.

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Eagle Data	NGO		Flight and nesting patterns change both within a single year and over years. The flight patterns and behaviors of each new brood is virtually unpredictable. Inexperienced fledglings are at least as likely to collide with blades as are their adult parents. We do not see any evidence that the proponent, the ISC or the BLM has considered this aspect of risk imposed upon resident birds.
Eagle Data	NGO		To date, no meaningful data has been collected on the impacts of the project on migrating eagles, other raptors and other birds. Resident populations of eagles have been monitored but resident eagles and other raptors exhibit movement behaviors that cannot be predicted.
Eagle Data	NGO		The project proponents have not properly monitored migrating eagles. Bald eagle migration is both sporadic and unpredictable, depending on annual weather conditions and longer-term climatic changes. No monitoring period long enough to address this fact has occurred. Sufficient eagle presence/absence and long-term movement information, upon which to base an eagle take permit, has not been provided by the project proponent.
Eagle Data	NGO		WEST states, Two of the most difficult challenges in wildlife and environmental research are modeling change and testing for trend in data (Edwards 1998). To further complicate issues of designing and analyzing surveys over time the researcher has the choice of estimating net change (e.g., aggregate level) between two points in time, estimating gross change (e.g., element level) between two points in time, or estimating the average net change over time (e.g., average trend) (Duncan and Kalton 1987). We believe that estimation of a net change between two points in time, for example the difference between Golden Eagle population sizes in 2003 and 2013, and estimation of the average net change, for example the average trend in Golden Eagle population sizes from 2003 to 2013, are the primary objectives of the Golden Eagle survey, and so we designed our computer simulation to estimate necessary minimum sample sizes for both types of analyses (trend and net change) for detecting a population decline with 80% power.

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Eagle Data	NGO		<p>According to the Service, two important points should be considered for future surveys: 1) the effects of cyclic fluctuations on population estimates and trend detection and 2) investigating the magnitude of availability bias on population estimates. We do not believe the above two points have been adequately addressed. According to Western EcoSystems Technology, Inc. (WEST), "...golden eagle populations in portions of the U.S. are thought to cycle on a 10-year basis with jackrabbit populations (Kochert and Steenhof 2002). WEST claims, "Our estimates of power to detect population trends are based on linear population trends (log scale). Thus, a cycling Golden Eagle population may complicate our predictions of sample sizes required to detect population trends with the stated USFWS's power and precision requirements. The impact of population cycling on our estimates will depend largely on the sample units studied. It is unlikely that jackrabbit populations across the entire study area cycle on a similar schedule due to differences in regional climate, habitat and resulting jackrabbit populations. Thus estimates of Golden Eagle trends across the entire study area may not be greatly impacted by cycling Golden Eagle populations. Jackrabbit and Golden Eagle populations are more likely to fluctuate on a more regional basis. If the scale of cycling populations matches that of the Bird Conservation Regions in our project area, then the impacts to our trend and power estimates may be greater. The second point of consideration involves availability bias. The proportion of Golden Eagles available to be seen on or near the transect line are not known, thus population estimates are considered conservative. A telemetry study could be conducted in the future to try and determine the extent of this availability bias, allowing a more complete population estimate to be calculated."</p>

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Eagle Data	NGO		<p>While migration counts are invaluable to monitoring population trends, they are unable to reveal the cause of changing trends. With that in mind, CBS biologists saw an opportunity to continue the research started almost 50 years ago on Golden Eagle nesting demographics in South-Central Montana, to collect information that could potentially help mitigate the decline of Golden Eagles in the Rocky Mountain west. Beginning in 2010, personnel from Craighead Beringia South embarked on the third phase of the Golden Eagle nesting project. The entire study site was revisited in the spring, during the early nesting period, and locations of current territories and active nest sites were documented. During this initial visit, we were able to document the use of nest sites that dated all the way back to the original survey period -- this means that Golden Eagles had been nesting in the same area for at least 50 years! After their initial visit, the crew went back on two additional occasions in order to assess productivity. The number of young entering the population (i.e. productivity) is potentially the most critical factor affecting the population decline and is a missing piece of the puzzle that managers need to make informed decisions. Our goals are to develop seasonal distribution models based on aerial surveys for eagles, and to describe important overwintering areas for sub-adult eagles. The project also seeks to understand the dispersal and movements of juvenile eagles in contrast to sub-adults that originate farther north from Canada and Alaska. Data collection will continue for at least one more year through aerial surveys and satellite tracking.</p>
Eagle Data	NGO		<p>Golden eagle populations are considered by some to be on the decline rangewide. Several studies have recently indicated decreasing population estimates for migrant and wintering Golden Eagles in the western US. Of the few long-term studies on breeding populations of Golden Eagles in the continental United States, there are also concerns of population declines. In order to slow these apparent declines, it is first necessary to understand the current migration routes, important stopover areas, winter range movements, and potential hazards within both summer and winter ranges. Movements and important use areas of the nonbreeding portion of the population (i.e., sub-adults and floaters) are also critical to the perseverance of this long-lived species through maintained recruitment into the breeding population. To date, this information is woefully lacking.</p>

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Eagle Data	Public		The last statewide comprehensive Golden Eagle count was in 1980. How, then, can we properly assess the impacts the wind farm community has on the Eagle?
Eagle Data	Public		The data for Bald eagles is very incomplete because winter migration varies so much year to year there is no average in migration assessable.
Eagle Data	Public		Last year’s Powder River eagle survey, fifty-nine volunteers counted 310 eagles total, with 179 bald eagles. Since 2006, surveys began, a total of 2,042 eagles have been counted in that study area. In the late 1970’s a national eagle study and survey was established by the National Wildlife Federation in order to develop the bald eagle winter population baseline for the continental US and to find additional winter habitats previously unknown. Since then this survey has been performed by the USGS and BLM. Has this type of analysis been performed to date for CCSM? Furthermore, the Cody BLM Office has been coordinating surveys in the Bighorn Basin since the late 1980s. Given how long the CCSM project has been on the drawing board, how many Rawlins BLM Office studies have been conducted at CCSM; if so, where and when have the comprehensive results been announced?
Eagle Data	Public		Require independent and verifiable eagle counts in the proposed area similar to the national survey by the BLM in Buffalo, WY, who has volunteers assisting with eagle counts.
Eagle Data	Public		I asked one of the speakers at the meeting if they have identified the differences and numbers of local birds (non migratory) vs migratory birds ... and they had no answer and they said they were just now collaring Eagles to collect that data ... if I heard right and you don’t have that data, how can a take permit be issued without a more precise number of Eagles that use, nest, stay or migrate through the area? Is it just based on locally nesting birds and historic nesting sites?

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Eagle Take Permit	NGO	X	FWS [should] address eagle permitting and conservation issues in a comprehensive, coordinated and fully transparent manner—including finalization of the Eagle Conservation Plan Guidance, as well as National and Regional Eagle Conservation Plans. With this in mind, we suggest that BLM and FWS consider creating a protocol to delineate how the agencies will deal with scientific uncertainty and incorporate eagle surveys, monitoring, mitigation measures and analysis at the proposed project into a comprehensive framework addressing eagle permitting and conservation issues. The protocol could build off of the findings and recommendation of the scientific review committee and potentially identify a path forward in the interim. Not only could this help to demonstrate how a project will or will not comply with eagle conservation priorities, but it could also serve to guide future eagle take permit actions and conservation measures.
Eagle Take Permit	NGO	X	Our recommendations can be summarized as: Need for aggregate baseline data on eagle populations in the region in order to provide the requisite context for assessing likely impacts from the proposed project; Development of a scientific review committee, funded by the project proponent, to offer recommendations and assess the scientific validity of datasets and conclusions underlying the project proponent’s and the Department’s analysis; Creation of a protocol to address scientific uncertainty and incorporate eagle surveys, monitoring, proposed mitigation measures and analysis at the proposed project into a comprehensive framework addressing eagle conservation issues for this and future projects; and Development of provisions for additional environmental review, monitoring, and adaptive management so as to ensure protection of public lands and resources.
Eagle Take Permit	NGO		At this time, the 5-year review of the 30-year permit does not offer the clarity or certainty necessary to adequately address adaptive management or consequences for mortality counts above what is allowed in the permit. An appropriate precedent of a successful 5-year permit issued for a wind project should be the first step to considering a longer-term permit.

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Eagle Take Permit	NGO		<p>The decision of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) to issue eagle-take permits will continue to be highly scrutinized, as was the West Butte Wind Power, LLC application for an eagle-take permit for a wind farm near Bend, OR and the more recent application from Shiloh IV Wind Project, LLC, in Solano County, CA, due to the controversial nature of allowing a sensitive and widely recognized species to be legally killed. The process for determining a decision to issue an eagle take permit to the Power Company of Wyoming (PCW) for Phase I of development must be clearly based in science, must incorporate adaptive management strategies which continually utilize ongoing monitoring information, and specific guidelines must be outlined to address consequences for activities outside of the scope of the permit.</p>
Eagle Take Permit	NGO		<p>FWS must commit to take an active enforcement and oversight role in the issuance of authorizations for programmatic eagle take. This includes full accommodation for the robust and unimpaired enforcement capability of FWS—with a clear articulation of how FWS will ensure the continuing validity of all actions stemming from the proposed authorization and any actions that may affect it. Processes for the amendment, suspension, revoking of specific permits should be delineated within the decision documents and permit terms. We urge FWS to acknowledge that eagle conservation actions cannot be considered in isolation, on an arbitrary project-by-project basis. Enforcement and oversight must begin to address similar activities within the local and regional population boundary. FWS should further consider and ensure increased agency capacity to administer eagle take permits, through program and enforcement staff as well as dedicated resources targeted for golden eagle conservation; this would be a prospective step to address a foreseeable area of much expected need.</p>

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Eagle Take Permit	NGO		<p>FWS must provide greater clarity on expectations for reaching a net benefit and ongoing management actions to ensure that a sustained reduction in eagle take is occurring throughout the life of the project, especially considering the current uncertainty surrounding fatality models, baseline data, ACPs and mitigation measures. As part of this net benefit calculation, we recommend established requirements and procedures for engaging in applied research activities to leverage permit issuance and help us fill priority data gaps, identify more effective mitigation measures, and generally inform our limited toolbox for addressing eagle interactions at wind farms. This is particularly important given the role this proposed permit and associated analysis may have in informing subsequent permits.</p>
Eagle Take Permit	NGO		<p>FWS is bound by the preservation standard set forth in BGEPA, which endeavors to achieve and maintain stable or increasing breeding populations of bald and golden eagles and thus ensure the conservation of the species. With respect to programmatic permits in particular, the 2009 final rule states that, “programmatic permits are designed to provide a net benefit to eagles by reducing ongoing unauthorized take.” We believe that in issuing programmatic permits for the lethal take of eagles, FWS must address and provide assurances that permit issuance will produce a net conservation benefit to affected eagle populations. Because population data and impacts to eagle populations are extremely uncertain, requiring a net conservation benefit and/or setting take limits at rates that at least allow for population growth, is the only way to ensure that there is no net loss to eagle populations.</p>
Eagle Take Permit	NGO		<p>Set forth a specified timeline for completing and incorporating regional information, including baseline local area population information, and/or demonstrate how new information justifies that this is a sustainable take rate for the local area population.</p>

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Eagle Take Permit	NGO		This type of regional analysis ultimately informs whether take is compatible with the preservation of eagles and whether take may be approaching levels that are unsustainable or that cannot reasonably be offset through compensatory mitigation. Lack of a regional framework is a fatal flaw in the fundamental basis for programmatic permit issuance, without which we will continue to hit significant biological and legal barriers in the piecemeal project-by-project approach. Relying on a regional framework for eagle permit issuance would not only provide requisite conservation assurances for issuing individual permits, as mandated by BGEPA, but it would also afford an essential bridge as we work together to fill the critical gaps in knowledge surrounding overall impacts to eagle populations.
Eagle Take Permit	NGO		Permit issuance must proceed within a conservation-driven process and FWS must provide assurances that permit issuance will produce a net conservation benefit to affected eagle populations. The permit process must consider a full range of alternatives.
Eagle Take Permit	NGO		Permit tenure should not exceed 5 years until critical uncertainties regarding risk prediction are addressed and effectiveness of both conservation practices and mitigation measures are proven.
Eagle Take Permit	NGO		From the onset, we must reiterate the urgent need for a more comprehensive and fully transparent approach to eagle permitting—this includes meaningful analysis and management on a regional population scale, which must include analysis of up-to-date baseline data, as well as guaranteed opportunities for the public to understand and engage on monitoring, mitigation and adaptive management prescriptions throughout the life of the permit. A wind project of this size in an area that provides important habitat for sage-grouse, eagles, and other species will have significant direct and indirect impacts despite mitigation steps taken.

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Eagle Take Permit	NGO		We urge FWS to acknowledge that conservation actions cannot be considered in isolation, on an arbitrary project-by-project basis. Enforcement and oversight must begin to address similar activities within the local and regional population boundary. FWS should further consider and ensure increased agency capacity to administer eagle take permits, through program and enforcement staff as well as dedicated resources targeted for golden eagle and other migratory bird conservation; this would be a prospective step to address a foreseeable area of much expected need.
Eagle Take Permit	NGO		Given the size and precedential nature of the project, the CCSM provides an excellent opportunity for FWS to establish and pilot a system where accurate information is collected by third parties such as biological consultants retained by agencies and reported directly to FWS and stakeholders so they can continually evaluate whether any authorized take is consistent with BGEPA requirements and results in overall net benefits for regional golden eagle populations.
Eagle Take Permit	NGO		According to peer-reviewed modeling data, Phase I constitutes a high risk project under both FWS' Wind Energy Guidelines (WEG) and the ECP Guidance. Deductive models of migratory bird concentration areas developed by Wyoming Natural Diversity Database and The Nature Conservancy (referred to herein as the WYNDD/TNC Models) show a large number of proposed Phase I turbine locations coincide with areas that are in the 80th to 100th percentile in terms of their predicted use during raptor migration, the highest category in the dataset. (See enclosed map for specific areas of proposed Phase I turbine locations that overlap with predicted high raptor use during migration). At a minimum, these modeling results place the proposed Phase I development in Category 2 under the ECP Guidance, and due to the high risk to golden eagles and the limited availability of effective compensatory mitigation, it is possible that this project falls under Category 1. As stated in the ECP Guidance, projects in Category 1 will likely not meet BGEPA permit eligibility standards and substantial redesign will be required before a permit can be issued.

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Eagle Take Permit	NGO		<p>In addition to compliance with BGEPA’s preservation standard, FWS’ regulations require programmatic permit applicants to avoid eagle impacts to the “maximum degree achievable.” This avoidance standard is higher than the “practicable” standard imposed on individual Eagle Permit applicants as programmatic permits generally authorize more take on a larger scale. Hence, regardless of prior investment, FWS must focus its evaluation solely on whether the project truly meets permit eligibility standards.</p>
Eagle Take Permit	NGO		<p>Because population data and impacts to eagle populations are extremely uncertain, requiring a net conservation benefit and/or setting take limits at rates that at least allow for population growth, is the only way to ensure that FWS is managing for stable or increasing breeding populations. FWS must provide greater clarity on expectations and assurances for reaching a net benefit and ongoing management actions to ensure that a sustained reduction in eagle take is occurring throughout the life of the project, especially considering the current uncertainty surrounding fatality models, baseline data, ACPs and effective mitigation. As part of this net benefit calculation, we recommend established requirements and procedures for engaging in applied research activities to leverage permit issuance and help us fill priority data gaps, identify more effective avoidance, minimization and mitigation measures, and generally inform our limited tool-box for addressing eagle interactions at wind farms. This is particularly important given the role this proposed permit and associated analysis may have in informing subsequent permits.</p>
Eagle Take Permit	NGO		<p>Any Final Permit Decision Should Result in Net-Benefits to Eagles. Any final permit should be designed with the expectation that the associated terms and conditions will result in net benefits to eagles. FWS is bound by the preservation standard set forth in BGEPA, which endeavors to achieve and maintain stable or increasing breeding populations of bald and golden eagles and thus ensure the conservation of the species. With respect to programmatic permits in particular, FWS has acknowledged that “[p]rogrammatic permits are designed to provide a net benefit to eagles,” and “[a]ccordingly, programmatic permit conditions will be designed to provide ongoing long-term benefits to eagles.” This permit design goal must be clearly articulated and accounted for throughout all decision documents.</p>

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Eagle Take Permit	NGO		<p>At the onset, we note the lack of information regarding regional population demographics and trends, the significant uncertainty regarding the extent any experimental ACPs or other best management practices will minimize take and significant concerns that there is not an adequate level of effective mitigation available in the region to fully offset the predicted level of take over the operational lifespan of Phase I. Given the level of uncertainty and potential unmitigatable impacts associated with this project, FWS must exercise extreme caution in deciding whether a permit is appropriate. The FWS and the applicant must provide a significant amount of scientifically credible information to show that the terms and conditions of any final permit will result in net conservation benefits to regional eagle populations and will comply with all applicable BGEPA regulations over the entire anticipated duration of the permit and operation of the facility.... Without sufficient information to show how this permit will result in support a net conservation benefit for eagles, FWS must exercise its authority to decline a permit of this kind.</p>
Eagle Take Permit	NGO		<p>FWS must clearly incorporate a net conservation benefit into the EIS analysis and any final permit terms, including adequate mechanisms for ensuring a sustained reduction in take throughout the life of the permit, a robust toolbox of avoidance and minimization measures, an adequate level of compensatory mitigation, and procedures for engaging in applied research activities to help fill priority data gaps.</p>

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Eagle Take Permit	NGO		<p>Pursuant to its statutory authority, FWS has a vital role to play in ensuring that wind projects like the CCSM are sited and operated responsibly and properly mitigated. FWS must also safeguard against what are potentially unmitigable impacts, especially in the face of noted scientific uncertainty. Consideration of an Eagle Permit to thoroughly evaluate and address potential impacts associated with Phase I prior to construction represents an important and necessary step forward in this regard. As one of the first programmatic permits for eagle take at a wind project, the response to this application will likely influence the standard for future permits to follow. Given the precedential nature of this permit, as well as the vast scale and potential impacts of the CCSM project, FWS must approach its analysis of this permit application with extreme caution and attention to the uncertainties and significant potential impacts of the proposed project.</p>
Eagle Take Permit	NGO		<p>Detailed scientific information is being asked of the public, in terms of input on the eagle take permit. We ask the Service to clarify to explain, at least to the same level of detail, how the eagle take permit will help Phase I Development will comply with the Endangered Species Act, the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act and other policies and regulations aimed at species protection and conservation.</p>
Eagle Take Permit	NGO		<p>Permit to Kill Bald Eagles is Premature. Bald eagles, in relative terms, have only recently been removed from the list of species protected under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). While technically no longer protected under the ESA the act of permitting the killing of a species that our nation has spent countless dollars and human resources to bring back from the brink of extinction is disconcerting to say the least. Delisted in 2007, it makes no sense to permit the killing of the species only seven years later, especially when the permit allows a rapidly growing wind energy industry to kill the birds. Once a precedent setting permit is issued, mounting pressure will inundate the Service to issue more permits resulting in more eagle “take.” (emphasis added)</p>

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Eagle Take Permit	NGO		Common sense, business sense and scientific integrity all demand that the Service first establish a pilot eagle take permitting program, specific to wind energy generation facilities. Such a pilot program, involving only small wind energy generation facilities is needed to assess “on-the-ground” (true, as opposed to theorized or speculated) effectiveness of eagle take permitting.
Eagle Take Permit	NGO		At the heart of the permitting question is whether its issuance is appropriate and warranted. The science bar for protecting eagles and all species under the Endangered Species Act is a high bar. The science bar to permit the killing of eagles and all species should be at least as high.
Eagle Take Permit	Public		The Department of The Interior has a compelling interest to preserve Eagles. We are worried about how they can issue 30-year kill permits without sufficient research.
Eagle Take Permit	Public		I don’t think permission should be granted until we know what is included in: “PCW intends to design and implement conservation measures to reduce potential impacts of the Project. These measures include an eagle conservation plan and an avian protection plan and other measures that PCW will prepare to accompany its application for a take permit.”
Eagle Take Permit	Public		For detailed community factors appropriate dollar (relative to the size, scope, and cost of this project) donations should be required and not the dollar menu type of donations for a pet shelter or hot dogs for the high school prom. Estimated \$2 billion dollar project requires a representative contribution back to the public from the developer before selling the developer an eagle kill permit.
Eagle Take Permit	Public		Discussions/meetings underway concerning the wind industry’s eagle kill permit plan; tough issue to hear a symbol of the nation maybe has a price tag attached to it in the pursuit of profits and energy; however, as part of this discussion include a resolution of the sage grouse Endangered Species listing or their non-listing.

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Eagle Take Permit	Public		Fish and Wildlife application processing and administration fees to be based upon the tax valuation of the project at inception with an annual assessment levied based upon the total revenues, including tax rebates/credits, etc. (local/county/state(s) and federal) provided from the project over its operation and its existence. If towers/lines/roads (improvements) are removed then tax basis ceases. If project is abandoned, orphaned, or bankrupt then fees collected go to offset the deconstruction of the towers and lines killing eagles, etc.
Eagle Take Permit	Public		Independence is needed as now the developer's environmental person says the 45-60 projected annual eagle deaths is overstated which invalidates the perception that the developer is willing to work for lowering eagle kills. What is the bottom line number to be accepted by the developer and government agencies, and at what price tag?
Eagle Take Permit	Public		If the Eagle take permit is issued is this just for the first phase or does this give PCOW blanket coverage going on to the second phase?
Eagle Take Permit	Public		I believe as part of your terms of the Eagle take permit, if issued, should have F&WS select the monitoring company and that PCOW should pay that company. There would be a conflict if PCOW had in-house monitoring or if they hired the contractor to monitor Eagle mortality due to the wind farm. I would suggest that monitoring also be concerned with nesting success.
Eagles	Agency-Local		Allowing eagle take permits on a project of this size will have detrimental effects on the local eagle population. Direct impacts include collisions with the turbines, stabilizing wires, transmission lines, communication lines and meteorological towers. Other impacts such as the railroad spur, quarry, power facilities, and access roads, will further contribute to the decline of the local population degrading habitat and increasing habitat loss and fragmentation which will move eagles out of their preferred habitat and into marginal habitat.
Eagles	Agency-State		We recommend the Service appropriately consider the prey base within the footprint of the development in their analysis as this effects eagle foraging behavior and locations.

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Eagles	NGO	X	Raptor migration counts and Christmas Bird Counts have indicated a decline in Golden Eagle populations in western North America since the 1980s, especially in recent decades (Farmer et al. 2007).
Eagles	NGO	X	The proposed project areas contains important raptor habitat, as supported by the BLM's own designation of Key Raptor Areas (KRAs). Two clearly overlap project areas - #205: Bolten Rim (southern portion of Chokecherry) and #212: Muddy Creek (western portion of Sierra Madre). KRA #203: Atlantic Rim, located directly west of the project areas boundaries, is also likely utilized by raptors within the project areas. These three KRAs were among 223 identified by BLM field offices in the 1998 Raptor Research Report, because they contained unusually high raptor nesting, migration, or wintering concentrations that deserved special consideration during decision making (Olendorff et al. 1989). ... All three KRA's identify Golden Eagle, Ferruginous Hawks, and Prairie Falcon as priority species (Olendorff et. al. 1989). Survey results reported in the DEIS supports the use of the project area by Golden Eagles, Ferruginous Hawks, and Prairie Falcons. In fact, raptors were observed at all 19 observation points (DEIS p. 3.14-11). Additionally, nests for Cooper's hawks, Bald Eagles, American Kestrels, Swainson's Hawks, Great Horned Owls, Burrowing Owls, and Long-Eared Owls. Most of these nests were located along the cliffs on the southern border of Chokecherry and the southwestern boundaries of Sierra Madre (DEIS Figure 3.14-8). Though some of these nests were inactive, they still identify areas containing quality combinations of nesting and foraging habitats that should be protected for use by future nesting raptors.
Eagles	NGO	X	Until mitigation with proven efficacy and established equivalency to impacts is established, the focus must be on avoiding impacts to the target species and preventing high quality habitat from being developed.

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Eagles	NGO	X	Wyoming, including the CCSM project area, is turning out to be crucial habitat for eagle populations across a wide stretch of western North America. The state has a number of eagles who are resident year-round. It hosts wintering eagles from as far away as Alaska and the Canadian Far West. The state is also a prime location for eagles from more southern territories fleeing their increasingly warm traditional territories in the wake of climate change.
Eagles	NGO		Researchers have documented declines in Golden Eagle nesting populations and data from raptor migration observation sites also suggest population declines in the western U.S. (Kochert and Steenhoff, 2002; Hoffman and Smith, 2003).
Eagles	NGO		In addition to range-wide declines, it is important to consider impacts to local populations.
Eagles	NGO		Our wind report, backed by other similar reports, show the Chokecherry/Sierra Madre Wind Farm to be located in one of the most important wildlife areas in the entire state. Raptors and eagles are cited as the most important segment of wildlife placed at risk by wind energy development in the project area.
Eagles	NGO		The Service must require the BLM and eagle take permit proponent to disclose how Phase I will affect the viability of the area’s golden eagle population. Golden eagles are the single most common raptor using the area, according to BLM. FEIS Vol. 2 at 3.14-11. Losing 46-64 eagles per year in such a slow-reproducing (lacking fecundity), territorial species that is already thinly distributed across the landscape could have major impacts on the local breeding population, as well as the population of migrants traveling seasonally through the project area. We are concerned the project area could turn into a population sink, killing more eagles than the area is able to replace.
Eagles	NGO		There is a great deal of raptor activity in the project area, including 23 known active raptor nests and 158 inactive nest sites in 2011. FEIS Vol. 2 at 3.14-21. Even more raptor nests have been mapped by BLM in the area since 1980. FEIS Vol. 2 at 3.14-19.

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Eagles	NGO		According to the American Wind and Wildlife Institute, “Generating electricity from wind can wound or kill eagles when they collide with turbine blades, and can also disturb eagles during construction and operation of the wind energy facility resulting in nest abandonment or displacement from breeding territories.” BLM considers the potential impact to raptors as modest, a speculation at best, on a per-turbine basis, but there are an unprecedented number of turbines in this project, such that 150 to 210 raptor mortalities per year are forecast, including 46-64 golden eagle mortalities. FEIS Vol. 2. at 4.14-20 and 4.12-23. We are concerned that the actual mortality level may be even higher.
Eagles	Public		We have seen firsthand the changes in population do to the addition of the Duke Energy wind farm very near to us. In just a few years of operation we have noticed the eagles diminish in numbers significantly. This is troubling for us. We feel the trend could continue until none are left.
Eagles	Public		Estimates of eagle deaths from wind turbines vary. A study published in 2013, six Fish and Wildlife Service researchers counted 85 bald and golden eagle deaths from 32 wind farms between 1997 and 2012 but said the number underrepresented the true total.
Eagles	Public		What is the expected impact to the environment without those 500 eagles over 10 years - will other eagles move in to replace or will they not locate in that area since the population is decreased? What other bird killing estimates are projected for this project?

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Eagles	Public		Recent article notes Fish and Wildlife Service, project lead, Dave Carlson says goal is to have not net loss; however, whatever number of eagles killed by this developer won't be replaced in the same area. The CCSM will incur a net loss and so will the surrounding area. This ecosystem will be negatively impacted by, BLM estimated, 46-64 eagles PER year. Developer proposes to offset these killings by reducing deaths elsewhere; where within a 100 mile radius of this project are 50 eagles killed per year? If such a place exists then why hasn't it been retrofitted or mitigated? In a decade, one could expect 500 eagle kills for this wind farm on the Sierra Madre project alone: with 500 new eagles introduced/saved where? What is the expected impact to the environment without those 500 eagles over 10 years - will other eagles move in to replace or will they not locate in that area since the population is decreased? What other bird killing estimates are projected for this project?
Eagles	Public		The area where the windmill farm is proposed is not prime Eagle habitat because it is too dry for critters for Eagle dinners. The vast swath of land along the North Platte River is where these birds reside in season, where they raise their young, and where they travel. This is an open and protected area free of virtually all hazards.
Eagles	Public		Many know that Raptors continue to die by electrocution on millions of power poles, with an estimated mortality of 10,000 raptors each year.
EIS Process	NGO		Determinations of specific unavoidable take levels are the product of modeling assumptions regarding both avian risk as well as ACP effectiveness. Since the critical estimates in this process hinge on both the magnitude and type of expected effects at the site, the reliability of both models is central to the future success of the entire eagle conservation plan. To the degree that the underlying assumptions remain obscured from public view, stakeholders such as our organizations will be impeded from meaningful review of take risk and remedial options.
EIS Process	NGO		Golden eagles, other avian species and wildlife, in general, all belong to the public trust. Impacts to wildlife at wind facilities should be documented and reported in the most accurate, honest and transparent manner to agencies and the public.

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
EIS Process	NGO		To ensure BGEPA compliance, FWS must establish new resources for eagle monitoring within the BCR and promptly publish all regional and local population monitoring information once available in an easily accessible manner, thus allowing stakeholders to provide meaningful comment early in the permit application process and to help fill needed gaps in information and data.
EIS Process	NGO		This risk assessment will also ultimately inform FWS whether the cumulative predictive take is compatible with the preservation of eagles, and whether the predicted take from Phase I can even be effectively offset within the BCR through compensatory mitigation.
EIS Process	NGO		FWS must develop a Science-Based Regional Conservation Plan or similar analysis.
EIS Process	NGO		We fully support FWS’ explicit commitment in the Notice of Intent to consider the “predicted magnitude of eagle take within the context of regional eagle populations (Bird Conservation Regions).” FWS cannot reasonably make BGEPA permitting decisions without first examining the authorization and affected eagle population within a regional context, including up-to-date baseline regional population information, threats to eagles from all sources, efficacy of avoidance, minimization and compensatory mitigation measures, appropriateness of regional take caps, and conservation goals and objectives that ensure the stability of local and regional eagle populations.
EIS Process	NGO		Ongoing information on eagle use and mortality must be provided to the public as part of any permitting regimen, with the opportunity for the public to provide input on adaptive management and mitigation, as well as potential revocation if take thresholds are met.
EIS Process	NGO		FWS must make every effort to ensure baseline ecological data and draft conservation plans are publically available as early as possible and in a manner that allows stakeholders to provide meaningful review of take risk and remedial options.
EIS Process	NGO		To ensure a fully transparent process, the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) formed for the CCSM must include third-party scientists and members of the public with expertise on issues related to golden eagles in Wyoming.

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
EIS Process	NGO		<p>Data and analysis must be made available to the public as soon as it is acquired by the FWS. The avian use assessments which have been undertaken, but not yet released, have an obvious bearing on the programmatic take permit. Because that information is being withheld during the time of this comment period, stakeholders are obstructed in providing informed input pertinent to the solicitation of comments on the scope of the draft EIS, including alternatives, mitigation, cumulative impacts and issues to address. The public must be provided with information on project impacts, with the opportunity for robust participation and comment at regular intervals as part of any permitting regimen, and if the CCSM moves forward, this is a necessary component. We suggest the FWS make more data available earlier in the public comment process, as a matter of policy, and provide more information regarding underlying considerations, analysis and coordination that has occurred between FWS and PCW thus far as this preliminary analysis (along with the associated discussions) has likely been influential in shaping the current site-specific plan for which FWS is currently seeking comment.</p>
EIS Process	NGO		<p>FWS must commit to a comprehensive and fully transparent approach with guaranteed opportunities for the public to understand and engage on monitoring, minimization/avoidance strategies, mitigation, and adaptive management prescriptions. Transparency and the chance for ongoing public comment and participation are key to any successful eagle permitting regimen. As further described herein and in our previous comments, it is alarming that the CCSM has progressed this far in BLM’s regulatory approval process with little opportunity for stakeholders to fully understand the project’s impacts to golden eagles and other migratory birds.</p>
EIS Process	NGO		<p>Our primary comment is to request that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) complete this layer of federal environmental permitting as quickly and as efficiently as possible.</p>
EIS Process	Public		<p>This process should be limited to the scope of the permit and that is about Eagles.... At this point that is the issue and it should not be opened up to all birds.</p>

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Energy	Public		Clean energy, in the form of wind and solar will help bring back our environment! Don't let anyone say it can't be done-use the modern automotive world for example! Profits can still be handsomely made with clean air machines! We only wish that monies spent opposing these projects could be properly directed to re-develop the big picture as a whole process. We are a small energy producer using hybrid wind/solar to power our home! If we save one coal miner, alleviate one pipeline leak or explosion, our goal will be accomplished!
Hunting	Public		Was hunting allowed these past seasons? Given that access has been limited to only the couple of public roads on the Sierra Madre side - how can legitimate public comments be made to site specific areas?
Infrastructure	Public		Building of the transmission line will help insert a new, strong segment into the weak, fragile and outdated national grid. Most of these power companies are in business for the shareholders and have pushed maintenance and updates to the back burner in turn for instant, monetary gratification. If the Federal Government really focused on updating and maintaining the lines already in place- there would be absolutely no room to debate building new facilities!

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Land Use, Ownership, Management	Agency-Local	X	Carbon County, as the local permitting authority, has issued a Conditional Use Permit for this project in accordance with Section 5.11-Wind Energy Facilities of the Carbon County Zoning Resolution. The County Wind Energy Facility Regulations were adopted in accordance with Wyoming statutory authority and are intended: 1) To permit and encourage carefully planned and compatible Wind Energy Facilities throughout the County; and, 2) To assure that any development and production of wind-generated electricity in Carbon County is safe and consistent with the Comprehensive Land Use Plan; and, 3) To acknowledge that these facilities are clearly visible and cannot be hidden from view, however, design consideration should include minimizing the degradation of the visual character of the area; and, 4) To facilitate economic opportunities for local residents; and, 5) To promote the supply of wind generated electricity in support of Wyoming’s goal of increasing energy production from renewable energy sources. As the BLM continues progress towards the Right of Way Grant, we would request that you continue to strive to maintain general conformance with the locally adopted Land Use Plan and the approved Carbon County Conditional Use Permit.
Land Use, Ownership, Management	NGO	X	BLM must also provide assurances that adjacent lands will not be available to other significant development activities, as the size and nature of the CCSM development will cause considerable strain on the ability of the area’s habitat to support healthy wildlife populations.

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Land Use, Ownership, Management	NGO	X	FLPMA also requires BLM to consider more environmentally protective alternatives when evaluating a ROW under the statute’s multiple-use management mandate. The multiple-use management mandate provides equal standing to the many uses and values of the public lands, including fish and wildlife and wilderness characteristics. One of the Act’s enumerated purposes is that: the public lands be managed in a manner that will protect the quality of scientific, scenic, historical, ecological, environmental, air and atmospheric, water resource, and archeological values; that, where appropriate, will preserve and protect certain public lands in their natural condition; that will provide food and habitat for fish and wildlife and domestic animals; and that will provide for outdoor recreation and human occupancy and use. . . 43 U.S.C. § 1701(a)(8).
Land Use, Ownership, Management	NGO	X	The Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) requires federal agencies, while performing their land use and project planning duties, to keep apprised of State and local government land use plans, consider those State and local government land use plans which are germane to the development issues at hand, and to resolve, to the extent practical, inconsistencies between Federal and non-Federal land use plans. FLPMA, 43 U.S.C. §1712(c)(9) (1976). “Land use plans of the Secretary under this section shall be consistent with State and local plans to the maximum extent he finds consistent with Federal law and the purposes of this Act.” Id.

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Land Use, Ownership, Management	NGO	X	<p>The economy of southern Wyoming is dependent on public land use and access to all types of natural resources. Other users of the public and private lands within and near the CCSM project must not be denied access to lands where those users hold permits or valid existing rights. Livestock grazing is one such use that exists throughout the CCSM area. The EA must address how the CCSM project will be constructed and operated throughout the project life without interfering with grazing permits and allotments. The immediate and obvious concern is the four to five year construction period that will disrupt more than 4,000 acres. The BLM must fully develop a strategy to minimize local grazing operations that addresses access, vegetation, water sources, erosion, sage grouse and other wildlife habitat, and the combined effect the turbines will have on these factors. Less obvious are the impacts on rangeland conditions over the course of the project since approximately 435 acres will be permanently disturbed. The BLM must detail the long range impacts, both primary and secondary, of displacing lands that have been traditionally used for grazing and wildlife habitat. In that vein, all grazing permit holders and private land owners within the CCSM area should be included in planning meetings and notified of changes to plans. This would be consistent with the management objectives listed in the socioeconomics section on page 4.8-2 of the FEIS regarding working cooperatively to maintain and promote cultural, economic, ecological, and social health and maintaining other resource objectives.</p>
Land Use, Ownership, Management	NGO		<p>This important energy development project has been under federal permitting review now for over 6 years. Please consider the fact that only 39% of the land in 7,964-square-mile Carbon County is owned by private landowners, with the federal government (mostly BLM) controlling 54% and the state controlling 7%. Our county's and our citizens' economic survival and success therefore depends on the ability to leverage certain federally owned land for multiple uses, including for responsible wind energy development such as that proposed by PCW.</p>

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Land Use, Ownership, Management	NGO		We ask Service to analyze and disclose any impacts to Special Recreation Management and Wildlife Habitat Management Areas within the Phase I Development area. We also ask the Service to detail how mitigation measures proposed for those areas, and assured effectiveness will serve to “meet a need for specific guidance to help make wind energy facilities compatible with eagle conservation and the laws and regulations that protect eagles.”
Land Use, Ownership, Management	Public		Presently, a large portion of this project is on the taxpayers land (BLM) which has had access denied from the checker-board ownership pattern. If the developer/owner desire use the public’s ground for roads, transmission lines, and wind towers which will kill the public’s wildlife, including eagles; then the developer/landowner should provide like kind exchange opportunities and funding. These viewsheds and wildlife will be impacted forever.
Land Use, Ownership, Management	Public		Additionally, government needs to change the focus on how public lands are used. The use needs to be visionary instead of political before these lands are completely transformed.
Land Use, Ownership, Management	Public		Using the multiple use concepts BLM has justified “any and all” multiple uses. But they haven’t addressed how one use eliminates others. View sheds, grazing allotments, wildlife habitat, and recreational uses have been compromised or eliminated for a single use in. This has occurred throughout the state. For instance it is obvious shooting will not be allowed near turbines, nor will the public we encouraged to travel the new roadways.
Mitigation	Agency-Local		Mitigation measures planned outside the immediate area should not be considered as it will do little to effect the local eagle population.

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Mitigation	NGO	X	BLM has published a Draft Regional Mitigation Manual which includes requirements and guidance on off-site mitigation. This manual offers valuable tools for continuing to improve the conservation outcomes for mitigation for project impacts, and should be used to inform mitigation for CCSM. More specifically in regards to eagles, given the extreme uncertainty surrounding fatality estimates, Advanced Conservation Practices and mitigation measures in general, the BLM and FWS should take steps to provide immediate and upfront mitigation that does not hinge on the verification of eagle mortality.
Mitigation	NGO	X	CDTC would suggest that as part of mitigation, that the planning team consider relocation of portions of the CDNST along the areas south of Rawlins, in particular along the Bridger Pass Road and Muddy Creek Areas. In these cases, there are opportunities where relocation of the current CDNST would afford opportunities to use vegetation to screen impacts from the Sierra Madre Wind Farm project area all together, as well as create a better more highly desirable trail location.
Mitigation	NGO	X	We recommend that the EA address mitigation to help alleviate direct, ancillary and cumulative impacts to the CDNST in identification of this potential wind energy development project. The section should address the need for both on-site and offsite enhancements to benefit the unavoidable scenery and Recreation Opportunity Spectrum setting effects on the CDNST and other National Scenic and Historic Trails. Potential mitigation to minimize impacts could be both on site and off site strategies and might include the following: 1. Funding for CDNST trail development and maintenance, corridor management, rights-of-way acquisition, and trailhead developments; 2. Removal of facilities that are no longer needed; 3. Relocation of existing smaller capacity transmission lines to the corridors identified by the EIS, and reclamation of those sites back to a natural state; 4. Careful review of the height and type of power line towers; 5. Careful location of power line towers so as to minimize their impacts; 6. Color and reflectivity of facilities; and 7. Landscape treatment within the right-of-way and at other places that screen structures.

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Mitigation	NGO	X	<p>As part of the Section 106 consultations for CCSM, the working group has agreed that the Pine Grove landscape should be evaluated for potential listing and has included this as proposed mitigation. However, discussions to finalize the mitigation plan have been in limbo for some time now. Without an agreed-upon mitigation plan in effect, and with proposed siting that would seriously compromise the setting of Pine Grove, AHW is very concerned that this siting plan has not properly or thoroughly considered this much discussed issue. Therefore, we urge you to reconsider the impacts this siting will have on the Pine Grove Stage Station and its landscape, especially in light of the general agreement to include this evaluation as mitigation but the on-going lack of an agreed-upon and finalized mitigation plan for this project.</p>
Mitigation	NGO		<p>Develop a full suite of mitigation options that will fully offset take before it has occurred and ensure ongoing incorporation into the permit terms and conditions.</p>
Mitigation	NGO		<p>FWS must take the lead in developing appropriate new compensatory mitigation measures. Other options are urgently needed, as power pole retrofits currently represent the only quantified and verifiable form of golden eagle mortality mitigation. Power pole retrofits are an inappropriate long-term mitigation strategy for wind projects because they are not additive—they are preventing electrocutions at power poles but not directly addressing take from wind projects, and it should be noted that FWS already has the authority to compel owners of power poles to retrofit them if eagle mortality has occurred. FWS must clearly articulate additional mitigation options that would not only offset eagle mortality at wind projects but also provide a net conservation benefit to the species. FWS should examine the viability of habitat improvements or protective measures for foraging and nesting habitat, carcass removal, additional wind project operational controls or curtailment, funding for habitat restoration or minimizing activities with a demonstrated negative effect on golden eagle populations, funding of programs to use rehabilitated eagles for Native American ceremonies instead of taking healthy eagles, or lead abatement programs if accompanied by a scientifically defensible analysis of the population benefits to eagle populations in the local or regional area of the mortality.</p>

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Mitigation	NGO		...unavoidable impacts must be off-set with compensatory mitigation to ensure protection of wildlife, wild lands and other natural resources.
Mitigation	NGO		<p>FWS must consider mitigation techniques beyond power pole retrofits. Given the significant level of predicted take associated with the CCSM’s operation, FWS must identify compensatory mitigation options beyond power pole retrofits to adequately offset eagle mortality from the project and provide a net conservation benefit to the species. Overall, the exclusive use of retrofits for compensatory mitigation and continued lack of a true basis for defining equivalency for those retrofits provides little certainty that impacts are truly being compensated for. Power pole retrofits are an inappropriate long-term mitigation strategy for wind projects because they are not additive—they are preventing electrocutions at power poles but not directly addressing take from wind projects, and it should be noted that FWS already has the authority to compel owners of power poles to retrofit them if eagle mortality has occurred. b. Any approved power-pole retrofits must be supported by a robust risk assessment. However, we recognize that retrofits currently represent the only approved method of golden eagle mortality mitigation. Hence, if FWS chooses to approve power pole retrofits as compensatory mitigation to offset authorized take associated with Phase I, this decision must be supported by a robust utility electrocution risk assessment of the specific power poles to be retrofitted. This assessment should include the criteria used to select the poles to retrofit with sufficient detail regarding why such poles are considered “high risk” to golden eagles, and why these risks are regionally significant. In order to show additionality, FWS must also include a rationale why this retrofit would have not occurred if not for compensatory mitigation requirement. FWS must also include a rationale why eagles in the locality where retrofits prevent mortality are connected to those predicted to be taken by Phase I. Sound science, not convenience, should be the basis for approving compensatory mitigation and FWS’ rationale for approving any specific compensatory mitigation must be transparent and well-supported....</p>

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Mitigation	NGO		Ensuring the additionality of mitigation is imperative and FWS must provide evidence that the mitigation does more than require private wind developers to fulfill requirements that the wind developer or a third party (e.g., federal agency, utility, etc.) would be otherwise legally required to perform.
Mitigation	NGO		Any compensatory mitigation approved to offset take that is truly unavoidable must provide upfront net conservation benefits to the regional population in advance of any mortality it is intended to compensate for. Reliance on mitigation options for which it will be impossible to document a net conservation benefit is unacceptable and insufficient to show compliance with BGEPA’s preservation standard.
Mitigation	NGO		FWS must develop a full suite of mitigation options that will fully offset take before it has occurred and ensure ongoing incorporation into the permit terms and conditions. This suite of mitigation options should be augmented as new mitigation options become available.
Mitigation	NGO		No proven methods of compensatory mitigation exist that can “replace” golden eagles lost to the Chokecherry/Sierra Madre wind turbines. While prevention of bird deaths by retrofitting existing bird-killing transmission lines is a desired action, this action only helps mitigate existing bird deaths due to electrocutions and collisions with transmission lines. Such action cannot be construed to mitigate bird deaths caused by collisions with wind turbine blades and related infrastructure. “Take” includes the actions pursue, shoot, shoot at, poison, wound, kill, capture, trap, collect, destroy, molest, or disturb. The guidance (which, unfortunately, does not bear force of law) provided in the eagle take permit does virtually nothing to “mitigate” the aforementioned actions. Published literature contains little information or data to support the possibility of avoiding or minimizing impacts on golden and bald eagles from wind turbines once they are constructed. Avoidance remains the best first step, according to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service raptor experts.

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Mitigation	NGO		FWS should incorporate additional terms to help provide mitigation assurances, such as the utility electrocution risk assessment used to identify the specific power poles to be retrofitted, an implementing agreement to ensure that power pole retrofits will not be redundant, and bonds to ensure that funds will be available. FWS should also clarify a standard and criteria for identifying power pole retrofits suitable for future mitigation.
Mitigation	Public		We would like to see a state repository for our tribal communities, with a timely retrieval of killed birds by traditionally qualified people.
Mitigation	Public		To talk about killing Eagles is easy. To replace these Eagles sheds a new light on this kill issue. We would like to see money better spent on Eagle replacement. Stocking actually produces more Eagles. Giving Eagles a safe zone to restock into would be preferable to restocking dangerous locations.
Mitigation	Public		An increasing payment schedule for the killing of eagles, more killed the higher the price paid per kill with punitive damages assessed after double or triple the expected kills happen on an annualized basis, these damages shared between local area wildlife conservation and environmental conservation groups for habitat restoration projects only; areas/towers incurring higher eagle kills, as independently confirmed, are idled during peak eagle killing season(s); if such site records a maximum number of kills the structure is relocated or removed from the landscape.
Mitigation	Public		Miller’s plan of mitigation by setting aside land along the North Platte River requires review as that area has a Rochelle Fishing Easement designation of some fishing maps. If a fishing easement exists for access, can the area be considered “set-aside” for an eagle refuge?
Mitigation	Public		Presently, a large portion of this project is on the taxpayers land (BLM) which has had access denied from the checker-board ownership pattern. If the developer/owner desire use the public’s ground for roads, transmission lines, and wind towers which will kill the public’s wildlife, including eagles; then the developer/landowner should provide like kind exchange opportunities and funding. These viewsheds and wildlife will be impacted forever.

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Mitigation	Public		Identify the periods of most intense Eagle use in this migration corridor and curtail operations until the birds have left the area. This would have to be monitored and times chosen during each migration period as they change based on weather, food sources etc.
Mitigation	Public		A person shared with me a technology ... radar showing incoming birds, that would turn the propellers into the wind and stopping them ... sounds great if it indeed exists???? Should that also be a part of PCOW's cost of doing business if it does exist??
Mitigation	Public		It seems the technologies exist already to mitigate eagle kills due to electrocution via power lines??? I would hope that part of the terms of the permit, if granted, would insist on that technology being installed.
Mitigation	Public		There are bird friendly wind turbines already developed.
Monitoring	NGO	X	Our organizations applaud the proponent's use of latest technology to improve our collective understanding of avian use and movement patterns, especially the use of the avian radar technology in combination with traditional ground surveys. The information gained from this technology will hopefully provide information that will minimize siting conflicts. ...the avian radar should also be used for monitoring during- and post-construction. This needs to be a requirement in the FEIS.
Monitoring	NGO	X	The BLM should set forth a detailed and robust monitoring protocol to monitor impacts from development authorized under the EA for the purpose of analyzing the accuracy of the impacts that were predicted, making necessary and timely adjustments, and informing future development and implementation of adaptive management prescriptions. The analysis should include, but not be limited to impacts on sage-grouse, raptors, and other sensitive species. The results of this monitoring and analysis should be made publicly available in real-time, as BLM acquires it, and guide use of adaptive management to make changes in the conditions for and other aspects of the development including: changes to assumptions regarding potential impacts; placement of turbines and associated infrastructure to limit impacts; number of turbines to limit impacts; best management practices; and mitigation requirements.

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Monitoring	NGO		<p>Incorporate detailed monitoring prescriptions and protocols in the permit and the ECP, including stringent reporting requirements to ensure effectiveness of ACPs, mitigation measures and adaptive management.</p>
Monitoring	NGO		<p>Post-construction monitoring protocols should also be clearly defined to include a transparent process to determine the effectiveness of the mitigation measures. One of the main reasons why many of the ACPs are still experimental is due to the lack of before-after-control-impact studies (BACI) that are designed to specifically look at conservation practices and their effect on eagle mortalities. The FWS should provide specific guidelines for designing BACI studies before and after a certain conservation practice is implemented. Given the paucity of data about eagles and the interaction between eagles and wind development, in general, it is in the public’s best interest to ensure that all the data at wind facilities is collected correctly and reported accurately. This information can be used to inform future permitting decisions. The best way to ensure this information is available is to establish a system whereby wind facility monitoring is conducted by an independent third party of qualified observers. Permit terms should further require submission and release of any raw data collected on-site.</p>
Monitoring	NGO		<p>At a minimum, eagle permits should include a measure to conduct intensive monitoring during the first year of operation in order to detect any potential eagle take. The intensity and frequency protocol of monitoring should remain at this level until FWS determines based on findings that appropriate adjustments should be made—at no time, though, shall there be no monitoring throughout the duration of this permit—and all monitoring results should be made publicly available. We recommend that initial post-construction monitoring protocols incorporate 3 years of mortality monitoring of 50% of the turbines, avian use surveys to determine where potentially hazardous turbines are located, disturbance monitoring of nearby nest sites and breeding areas and a wildlife incidental reporting system that would include incidental reporting of eagle mortalities on the project site.</p>

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Monitoring	NGO		At a minimum, the APP and BPP must incorporate a level of pre- and post-construction monitoring consistent with WEG requirements. If pre-construction monitoring data are deemed insufficient, more intensive study must be conducted until sufficient data are available to make a decision to modify the project, proceed with the project, or abandon the project consistent with the MBTA and other applicable law.
Monitoring	NGO		FMS must require robust post-construction monitoring requirements At a minimum, FWS should require the following post-monitoring requirements: Three years of post-construction mortality monitoring of 50% of turbines, with continuation for additional years based on a review of the results and TAC consultation; Avian use surveys to determine where potentially hazardous turbines are located; Disturbance monitoring of nearby nest sites and breeding areas within at least a 10-mile radius of the project area; and The development of a publically available wildlife incidental reporting system that would include incidental reporting of eagle mortalities on the project site.
Monitoring	NGO		Monitoring results should be collected by independent parties and made publically available FWS must ensure that all data gathered from operating wind facilities is collected correctly, reported accurately, and published for public review to meet its preservation obligations under BGEPA and provide for an adequate public review process. The best way to ensure this information is accurate and publically available is to establish permit terms that require wind facility monitoring to be conducted by an independent third party of qualified observers and released for public review. Currently, wind facility developers hire biological consultants to collect data, monitor the facility and report directly to the company, with the resulting information the property of the company. Non-disclosure agreements can limit the extent to which consultants can share information with agencies. This can lead to situations in which a full suite of data on public trust resources is not reported to agencies nor shared with the public. To the extent that biological consultants are employed they must be contracted with the agencies, not the developer, and non-disclosure agreements cannot limit information shared with agencies or the public.

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Monitoring	NGO		The scope and details of required post-construction monitoring and reporting should be well defined in the EIS and any final permit requirements and include a transparent process to determine the effectiveness of the mitigation measures.
Monitoring	NGO		Any issued permit must include robust post construction monitoring and reporting requirements The permit and Conservation plans must include a comprehensive strategy for monitoring the effectiveness of specific mitigation requirements and avoidance and minimization measures in reducing mortality to eagles and other migratory birds. Monitoring is also important to capture any future migration of eagles or other migratory birds due to climate change or changes in prey abundance.
Monitoring	NGO		Pre-construction monitoring must extend 10 miles outside the CCSM boundary and include a sufficient number of observation points to ensure the entire project area is evaluated.
Monitoring	Public		Provide a strict and completely independent, highly qualified and trained third party (subject to frequent reviews and evaluation) for monitoring this whole project for eagle kills and other wildlife impacts with unfettered access or restrictions.
Monitoring	Public		I would suggest that monitoring also be concerned with nesting success. Birds killed by propellers makes for more exciting news but ... if the stress added to the birds that nest in the area is such that their nesting success is compromised or is markedly down in numbers, that's a missing Eagle just as sure as one hit by a blade or electrocuted on a power wire.
NEPA Process	Agency-Local		Carbon County has been a cooperating agency with the BLM-EIS process and has been engaged with the applicant and a multitude of State and Federal agencies since 2008. Due to the extensive work that has been accomplished by the applicant and BLM, we encourage the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) to incorporate by reference the pertinent information found within the BLM 2012 FEIS and focus this EIS effort on eagle take permitting.

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
NEPA Process	NGO	X	<p>Issuance of the notice to proceed should be conditioned upon compliance with the following provisions: completion of the FWS Eagle Take Permit EIS; incorporation into the Phase I turbine siting EA of any changes in turbine location and number of turbines as stipulated in the FWS Eagle Take Permit EIS; and inclusion of wildlife survey and monitoring data in further NEPA analysis. The detailed data collected by the project proponent on greater sage-grouse, raptors, and other species of concerns should be fully considered in the EA. Stakeholders should be provided opportunities to engage in any further EAs, including scoping and draft EAs, as well as an opportunity to comment on any DNA that may be necessary.</p>
NEPA Process	NGO	X	<p>FWS' NEPA analysis must be robust to fully assess ETP impacts before authorizing eagle take and determining that the ECP is sufficient to ensure preservation of eagles, and this shall be done in accordance with their recently issued final Eagle Conservation Plan Guidance.</p>
NEPA Process	NGO	X	<p>The BLM has committed to issuing a Determination of NEPA Adequacy (DNA) to change the EA/FONSI in the event that adjustments to turbine locations are necessary based on the ETP EIS. Such a process will not remedy the limitations of the proposed bifurcated review process, but in the event that a DNA is utilized, interested stakeholders and the public must be provided a clear, formal, and meaningful opportunity to engage in and comment on the adequacy and substance of the DNA and consideration of the potential need for a supplement to the environmental analysis should be fully considered.</p>

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
NEPA Process	NGO	X	BLM’s 2012 Final EIS stated that the FWS determined that developing an APP was an appropriate option for the project to address long term wildlife monitoring and to demonstrate avoidance and minimization of the potential for golden eagle take. The 2012 Final EIS also stipulated that the BLM shall not authorize a Notice to Proceed until the FWS has evaluated the APP, which is to include the ECP, and determined adequacy to conserve sensitive species and ensure the preservation of eagles. Any determination of adequacy cannot be made prior to the full environmental review of significant components of the APP and the ECP (and it should be noted that drafts of these documents have yet to be provided to the public), and it is therefore unacceptable to propose finalization of the Phase 1 turbine layout environmental review in advance of the FWS’s review of the ETP.
NEPA Process	NGO	X	We appreciate the proactive work taken on the part of Power Company of Wyoming (PCW) to engage with stakeholders in the environmental community. Additionally, we recognize the work the applicant has done to support analysis of impacts to habitat and species if CCSM is constructed. This proactive approach can help to reduce impacts and conflicts because issues can be addressed early, however, we encourage the applicant, the BLM, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) to remain actively engaged as micro-siting decisions are made and to commit to a fully transparent process that includes making reports and data publicly available.
NEPA Process	NGO	X	Under BLM’s contemplated NEPA process for Phase I, there is the potential that the ITP will impose certain conditions on development (e.g., reconfiguration of turbine placement, reduced number of turbines, etc.) that were never evaluated in BLM’s NEPA Analysis.

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
NEPA Process	NGO	X	BLM’s California State Office recently executed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with FWS’ Pacific Southwest Region regarding an agreed-upon framework for undertaking a joint NEPA process for renewable energy projects that require both a ROW from the BLM and an ITP from the FWS. In the MOU, BLM’s California Office explicitly acknowledges the importance of a joint NEPA approach with FWS for renewable development projects where an ITP is applied for under BGEPA: It is in the interest of the Parties to share in the preparation of an environmental analysis of renewable energy projects applying for a take permit under BGEPA in a public process to avoid duplication of staff efforts, share staff expertise and information, promote intergovernmental coordination, and facilitate public review by providing a joint document and a more efficient environmental review process.
NEPA Process	NGO	X	As proposed, CCSM will impose substantial adverse impacts on the Greater sage-grouse, a species already on the verge of extinction. CCSM may also have significant impacts to raptors and migratory birds, including both bald and golden eagles. ...Before BLM makes final decisions regarding pieces of CCSM, including the location of the haul road, we believe BLM must first determine whether the site truly can accommodate 1,000 wind turbines. We believe the agency cannot and should not do so without a complete understanding of how or whether the impacts to sage-grouse and eagles can be mitigated.
NEPA Process	NGO	X	In this instance, we believe that many of the potential impacts of CCSM have not yet been fully analyzed. The construction and operation of 1,000 turbines, ancillary facilities and almost 500 miles of roads on lands currently occupied by Greater sage-grouse, raptors, mountain plovers, and mule deer will come at a cost to wildlife habitat and populations. The only real question is how severe the cost will be and whether effective actions can be taken to reduce wildlife impacts. Unfortunately, an honest discussion of the true nature of that cost is not included in the CCSM FEIS. The FEIS glosses over the potential for harm with vague promises of mitigation resulting from as yet to be developed wildlife protection plans and suggestions that BLM may require additional mitigation measures if some undisclosed level of impact occurs.

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
NEPA Process	NGO	X	Before BLM makes final decisions regarding pieces of CCSM, including the location of the haul road, we believe BLM must first determine whether the site truly can accommodate 1,000 wind turbines. We believe the agency cannot and should not do so without a complete understanding of how or whether the impacts to sage-grouse and eagles can be mitigated.
NEPA Process	NGO	X	While NWF and WWF recognize that the project proponent has indicated a willingness to adopt measures to mitigate some of the potential impacts, there simply may not be measures available to mitigate the loss of eagles, a federally protected species, or the loss of Greater sage-grouse, a species which is on the brink of listing pursuant to the Endangered Species Act. For a badly sited wind farm, no amount of mitigation may be sufficient to reduce the level of impact to acceptable levels. At the very least, both DOI and the public should know what mitigation measures will be required and the level of wildlife losses that can be expected and tolerated before the agency commits public lands and resources to this project. Being “smart from the start” requires a full and transparent analysis of the potential environmental impacts of renewable energy projects. NWF and WWF are concerned that the effort to fast-track the nation’s largest wind energy project may have jeopardized both DOI’s and the public’s opportunity to understand the full impact of the CCSM project.
NEPA Process	NGO	X	The draft environmental impact statement (EIS) covering the Rawlins Resource Area, however, has not yet been released for public comment. We urge BLM to complete this sage-grouse EIS before making additional commitments to permit CCSM.
NEPA Process	NGO	X	We would also note that your timing on the release of this document and your public meetings to discuss it -- a week before Christmas -- hardly seems designed to maximize public input. We find that deeply regrettable, considering both the overwhelming scope and controversial nature of the project in question.
NEPA Process	NGO		We strongly urge that the environmental review of the Phase 1 turbine siting, ECP, APP, and ETP be combined into one single NEPA process, with all draft documents and proposals examined simultaneously in one Environmental Impact Statement.

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
NEPA Process	NGO		<p>...the current environmental review process adopted by the BLM and FWS is procedurally problematic. The proposed process creates a bifurcated review of the Phase 1 EA and the eagle take permit (ETP) application, likely providing for finalization of the Phase 1 environmental review ahead of the complete analysis of: the ECP, significant components of the Avian Protection Plan (APP) and the ETP. This will result in a severely deficient and limited review of avian impacts and mitigation measures in the Phase 1 environmental review. There is similarly little guarantee that the mitigation measures proposed by FWS’s ETP review will be fully analyzed, incorporated, or even contemplated by the Phase 1 environmental review, as well as little assurance of a full public process throughout the decision-making process.</p>
NEPA Process	NGO		<p>FWS’ cumulative impacts analysis must incorporate BLM’s FEIS by reference and fully consider and evaluate the impacts predicted in the FEIS for the full CCSM development. While we acknowledge that BLM should have waited for the finalization of the Conservation Plans prior to finalizing the FEIS, this does not allow FWS to dismiss the significant magnitude and extent of the predicted impacts to bats, eagles and other migratory birds described in the FEIS. Hence, if FWS’ EIS predicts lower mortality than BLM’s FEIS it must provide a detailed explanation based on credible science supporting why FWS is confident that their lower estimates are more accurate.</p>

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
NEPA Process	NGO		<p>Our concerns increased dramatically once we learned that BLM and FWS would conduct separate NEPA analyses without formal concurrence after BLM had already granted the ROW. Structuring the process in this way ensures that, while the Eagle Conservation Plan (ECP), Avian Protection Plan (APP), and Bat Protection Plan (BPP) (collectively referred to herein as the Conservation Plans) remain under development, PCW, BLM and other federal, state and local agencies will continue to invest in the CCSM despite significant uncertainty regarding the project’s direct mortality impacts on golden eagles, the availability of sufficient mitigation options, and, most importantly, whether PCW’s current plans for Phase I are even eligible for an Eagle Permit under BGEPA. Given the mortality estimates for golden eagles in BLM’s FEIS, it is unclear whether unavoidable take can even be reduced to levels low enough such that adequate compensatory mitigation is available in the area to offset take — especially considering that there are currently very limited options for compensatory mitigation for golden eagles. Based on the potential unmitigatable impacts associated with Phase I, it is imperative that BLM and FWS conduct a joint NEPA analysis to ensure that BLM adequately considers impacts to eagles and other migratory birds as well as BGEPA permit eligibility of Phase I before completing any additional NEPA analyses or issuing a ROW for Phase I. Key Recommendation: Rather than moving forward with an independent NEPA Analysis, FWS should conduct a joint NEPA analysis with BLM that results in the issuance of one EIS that collectively evaluates both the ROW and the Eagle Permit.</p>
NEPA Process	NGO		<p>BLM adopted the Final EIS without possession of information that will be disclosed only after a permit application is made by the proponent and evaluated by the Service. BLM must wait to see if the USFWS issues a take permit before it finalizes any further NEPA documents, like an EA for the Phase I development, in order to take a true “hard look” at the environmental impacts of proceeding with the Chokecherry/Sierra Madre Project.</p>

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
NEPA Process	NGO		The Final EIS for the Chokecherry/Sierra Madre Project did not indicate a take permit had been issued for the project. While the FWS considers whether a permit should be issued, the BLM should disclose and evaluate additional mitigation measures required by a take permit. While details of the actual permit are not known or at least undisclosed at this stage an eagle take permit requires modifications to the project design, location of turbine arrays (including overall siting area), equipment specifications, number of turbines, and other features of the project that could substantially alter the nature of the project and accordingly alter the magnitude of environmental impacts for bald and golden eagles, as well as other affected wildlife and resources.
NEPA Process	NGO		We submitted our Wyoming placed wind energy development analysis earlier in the NEPA process for the programmatic EIS for the Chokecherry/Sierra Madre Wind Energy Project and, more recently, for the Phase I Wind Turbine Development of the Chokecherry/Sierra Madre Wind Energy Project. We remain concerned that the Chokecherry/Sierra Madre Project does not meet the Smart from the Start criteria, and we reiterate the concerns expressed in our protest of the Final EIS for the Chokecherry/Sierra Madre Wind Energy Project and the Phase I Wind Turbine Development of the Chokecherry/Sierra Madre Wind Energy Project and hereby incorporate them and into these scoping comments by reference.
NEPA Process	Public		Given that the BLM has already authorized the location as suitable for wind energy development of the scale described for this project, it appears that inadequate consideration was given to the impact on Golden Eagles and other migratory birds, hence the need for issuing a take permit.
NEPA Process	Public		The federal government and the State of Wyoming studies of this project are flawed, biased for the developer and not independent.
Permits (other than ETP)	Agency-Local	X	Prior to any tower construction associated with this project, Carbon County, as the local permitting authority, will be requiring building permits. As part of the building permit application review, Carbon County will be evaluating the permit applications to insure continued compliance with the previously issued Conditional Use Permit.

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Permits (other than ETP)	Agency-Local	X	Carbon County, as the local permitting authority, has issued a Conditional Use Permit for this project in accordance with Section 5.11-Wind Energy Facilities of the Carbon County Zoning Resolution. The County Wind Energy Facility Regulations were adopted in accordance with Wyoming statutory authority and are intended: 1) To permit and encourage carefully planned and compatible Wind Energy Facilities throughout the County; and, 2) To assure that any development and production of wind-generated electricity in Carbon County is safe and consistent with the Comprehensive Land Use Plan; and, 3) To acknowledge that these facilities are clearly visible and cannot be hidden from view, however, design consideration should include minimizing the degradation of the visual character of the area; and, 4) To facilitate economic opportunities for local residents; and, 5) To promote the supply of wind generated electricity in support of Wyoming’s goal of increasing energy production from renewable energy sources. As the BLM continues progress towards the Right of Way Grant, we would request that you continue to strive to maintain general conformance with the locally adopted Land Use Plan and the approved Carbon County Conditional Use Permit, as promulgated in County Commissioner Resolution 2012-43 (recorded in book 1227, page 42) and in the Opinion of the Board of County Commissioners, Carbon County Wyoming Regarding the Decision to Approve the Conditional Use Permit-Commercial Wind Energy Facility, C.U.W. Case File #2012-01, rendered October 2, 2012.
Purpose and Need	NGO		We suggest that the purpose and need statement state, “the purpose of the federal action is to facilitate the preservation of eagles through issuance of a permit that ensures consistency with our Eagle Act regulations, and in this particular case, may enable the Chokecherry-Sierra Madre Wind Energy Project to continue to generate renewable energy in compliance with the Eagle Act.” The environmental review and all associated decision documents and analyses should reflect, guarantee and explain how permit issuance prioritizes the conservation of eagles above all else. Thus, the “Purpose and Need” section should reflect the statute’s principal goal of conserving eagles.

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Purpose and Need	NGO		<p>We suggest that the purpose and need statement state, “the purpose of the federal action is to facilitate the preservation of eagles, through issuance of a permit that ensures consistency with all applicable laws and regulations, and in this particular case, may enable the generation of renewable energy in compliance with BGEPA.” A wind project of this size in an area that includes important habitat and migration pathways for eagles and other migratory birds is likely to have significant environmental impacts as illustrated in BLM’s FEIS. Accordingly, the purpose and need must facilitate FWS’ consideration of alternatives beyond the confines of PCW’s site-specific Phase I proposal and the CCSM to ensure that the final plans for development appropriately prioritize strategies to avoid and minimize impacts to eagles.</p>
Purpose and Need	NGO		<p>FWS must frame the purpose and need statement broadly. The “Purpose and Need” statement in the EIS should be written broadly to reflect the statutory authorities and goals applicable to FWS under BGEPA. Conserving eagles is the top priority for any authorization under BGEPA and absent this outcome, any “take” authorization is inappropriate. This goal must be clearly articulated and accounted for throughout all decision documents and the analysis that follows. Courts have cautioned, “[o]ne obvious way for an agency to slip past the structures of NEPA is to contrive a purpose so slender as to define competing ‘reasonable alternatives’ out of consideration (and even out of existence.)” <i>Davis v. Mineta</i>, 302 F.3d 1104, 1119 (10th Cir. 2002) (quoting <i>Simmons v. United States Army Corps of Eng’rs</i>, 120 F.3d 664, 669 (7th Cir. 1997).</p>

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Purpose and Need	NGO		<p>The Service’s stated purpose for the permit is to “meet a need for specific guidance to help make wind energy facilities compatible with eagle conservation and the laws and regulations that protect eagles.” This guidance has no basis in fact or i.e., absolutely no experiential data to back up the effectiveness of the eagle take permit requirements to “make wind energy facilities compatible with eagle conservation and the laws and regulations that protect eagles.” It should be noted, too, that “guidance” issued through the permitting process is to make wind energy facilities compatible with eagle conservation rather than to alter eagle conservation measure to be compatible with eagle conservation. In fact the eagle take permit, as it currently exists, alters eagle conservation measures and The Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (16 U.S.C. 668-668d) (Eagle Act or BGEPA) which prohibits take of bald eagles and golden eagles by otherwise lawful activities, except pursuant to Federal regulations. The Eagle Act regulations at title 50, part 22 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), define the “take” of an eagle to include the following broad range of actions: “pursue, shoot, shoot at, poison, wound, kill, capture, trap, collect, destroy, molest, or disturb” (§ 22.3).</p>
Reclamation	NGO	X	<p>The Coalition has worked diligently to minimize the detrimental impacts of several natural resource development projects in the area and continued experience has highlighted the detailed nature necessary in site specific plans of development (PODs) to streamline reclamation. When selecting sites, the BLM must consider the layout of the entire site in order to locate roads, soil piles, transmission lines, and the actual turbine in a consolidated manner. See FEIS, App. D-8. For example, sites for stockpiling soil should be located near the area of disturbance to prevent unnecessary reclamation. The Coalition also notes the critical importance of maintaining the biological, chemical, and physical characteristics of suitable soils for reclamation. During the completion of the EA, the BLM must characterize “suitable” and “unsuitable” soils to prevent confusion by operators and contractors and thereby enhance reclamation efforts. The BLM should also allow for transporting suitable soils to different sites if necessary.</p>

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Reclamation	NGO	X	<p>The BLM, CCSM Wind Energy Project FEIS (CCSM FEIS), App. D (June 2012) provides the Master Reclamation Plan for the CCSM project. Pursuant to the CCSM FEIS, reclamation begins immediately with “site stabilization” and continues through interim reclamation measures and is complete when specific sites will not be redisturbed during operations and maintenance. See FEIS, App. D-2. The Coalition and LSRCDC have several specific concerns with regards to the Reclamation Plan. At a minimum, turbine site reclamation must meet the requirements of Appendix D of the FEIS with regards to soil stability, revegetation, and preventing the spread of invasive and noxious weeds. See also CCSM FEIS at 4.11-1-4.11-14. Further, and as discussed above, the BLM must coordinate with conservation districts and local counties, including members of the Coalition, to ensure that the specific sites as determined during the EA are reclaimed appropriately. However, the BLM must closely coordinate with local governments and conservation districts during the critical site characterization stage discussed in the Appendix D. See FEIS, App. D-4. The BLM should utilize the LSRCDC and local governments to complete a pre-disturbance survey that accounts for both site-specific characteristics as well as larger regional concerns.</p>

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Recreation	NGO	X	<p>Some general findings from the CDNST Study Report that assist in describing these terms include: a) “Designation and establishment of a 3,100 mile Continental Divide Trail...would provide the American people with recreational opportunities of national significance and that trail users would wind their way through some of the most spectacular scenery in the United States and have an opportunity to enjoy a greater diversity of physical and natural qualities than found on any other extended trail.” (Study Report; page 4) b) The Study Report also “advocates that the most minimal development standards consistent with these circumstances be employed...the trail should be regarded as a simple facility for the hiker-horseman.” (Study Report; page 8) c) The Study Report describes the trail experience as an “intimate one, where one can walk or ride horseback across vast fields of wildflowers and contemplate a story dating from the dawn of earth’s history...along the way the tranquility of the alpine meadows, verdent forests and semi—desert landscape overwhelms anyone who passes that way. The Trail would provide the traveler his best encounter with the Continental Divide—its serenity and pure air—and would supply for every trail traveler some of the world’s most sublime scenes.” (Study Report; page 18)</p>
Recreation	NGO	X	<p>This special area retains a natural healthy forested and alpine landscape character shaped by both natural processes and humans. Visitors will experience diversity of native plant and animal species. This corridor traverses a range of ROS classes. The CDNST setting will either be consistent with or complement the primitive and semi-primitive non-motorized Recreation Opportunity Spectrum Class.</p>

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Recreation	NGO	X	Development Projects like wind energy farms already cross the Trail in many locations. These sites are, by nature, intensive, high profile land uses. The visual impacts and, in some cases, the audible impacts of these facilities detracts from the primitive recreational experience provided by the Trail. These developments often can be seen for miles from the trail, disrupting an otherwise undisturbed scene (or scenery) found in these unique environments for many miles. Adverse impacts also include lights, access roads, cleared swaths of land, off-road vehicle access on utility right-of-ways, guy wires, chain link fences, and chemical treatments of the vegetation in the corridor. These ancillary impacts are often more intrusive than the sites themselves. Furthermore, the cumulative impacts of the expansion and development of utility corridors and facilities upon the CDNST environment are substantial.
Recreation	NGO	X	CDNST desired conditions should include a “recreation experience not materially different in quality than that extended by a bona fide hiking and equestrian trail and one that is”: 1. quiet; 2. in a wild and primitive setting; 3. with a natural surface single track (18-36 inches wide); 4. harmonizes and compliments the surrounding landscapes; 5. travel is at a slow pace.
Recreation	NGO	X	The “visitor” of the proposed route of the CDNST would encounter a great variety of terrain, geology, climate, and plant and animal life. This would include the unique and unusual character of Glacier, Yellowstone and the Rocky Mountain National Parks and the back-country solitude of 16 (now 25) National Forest Wilderness and primitive Areas, as well as the living quality of the Red Desert of Wyoming. Certain plants, trees, and animals that may be observed along the Trail are unique to the area traversed. (Study Report page104, as modified)

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Recreation	NGO	X	<p>The nature and purposes of the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail are to provide for high quality, scenic, primitive hiking and horseback-riding, non-motorized recreational experiences and to conserve natural, historic, and cultural resources along the Continental Divide. As stated in the CDNST Study Report (page 14) “One of the primary purposes for establishing the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail would be to provide hiking and horseback access to those lands where man’s impact on the environment has not been adverse to a substantial degree and where the environment remains relatively unaltered. Therefore, the protection of the land resource must remain a paramount consideration in establishing and managing the trail. There must be sufficient environmental controls to assure that the values for which the trail is established are not jeopardized.”</p>
Recreation	Public		<p>Grazing allotments, wildlife habitat, and recreational uses have been compromised or eliminated for a single use in. This has occurred throughout the state. For instance it is obvious shooting will not be allowed near turbines, nor will the public be encouraged to travel the new roadways.</p>

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Sage Grouse	NGO	X	<p>While we understand that the goal in non-core areas is to sustain lek persistence over the long term, with sufficient proportions of sage-grouse populations to maintain connectivity and movements, the ¼ mile buffer is an inadequate protective measure to maintain lek activity (Holloran 2005, Walker et al. 2007). Instead, we encourage use of at least a 0.6 mile buffer in non-core areas. Colorado’s Division of Wildlife has proposed a buffer of 0.6 miles to protect habitat integrity of the lek. Communication with BLM personnel, state agency personnel, and the proponents all indicate that a Habitat Equivalency Analysis (HEA) will be developed specifically for sage-grouse. ...the mitigation approaches identified in the HEA could be applied in improving siting of future wind farms. However, steps must be in place to evaluate the proposed mitigation measures where effectiveness is based on number of sage-grouse (Doherty et al. 2010). Mitigation for unavoidable impacts should rely on science-based processes that quantify what is being lost and replace those losses on-site or nearby when possible. Off-site mitigation is necessary in some instances but should be used with emphasis placed on scientifically defensible habitat improvements and strict development activity restrictions in important habitats.... we understand that there is an important movement corridor in the northwest corner of Chokecherry. Turbines and associated project infrastructure, including roads, should be located away from the identified corridor. These structures and associated activities are likely to result in their avoidance of the areas because of noise, visual disturbance, pollutants, and predators. Recommendation: The actual footprint of the project should be adjusted in a manner that clearly avoids core areas, thus ensuring that this high value area is inappropriate for and off limits to wind development activities. Where development does occur, the best available science should be used in developing protective measures and stipulations. Ongoing research and monitoring results should be used to influence siting decisions to avoid conflict areas, such as the movement corridor in the northwest corner of Chokecherry.</p>

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Sage Grouse	NGO	X	Specifically pertaining to sage-grouse, we are concerned about the haul road traveling across Smith Creek and Hugus Creek (Figure 4.10-1). These areas support a majority of the sagegrouse broods in Chokecherry and careful consideration should be given to these. We suggest that both the haul road and internal transmission line should follow existing linear features (WY 71, roads, pipelines), to reduce the overall disturbances and minimize the total amount of habitat loss and fragmentation. The collection lines connecting one turbine to the next and to the project substation should be buried underground, adjacent to the interior turbine access roads.
Sage Grouse	NGO	X	Due to the size of the project and value of this area to sage-grouse, we continue to urge caution, vigilance, and a collaborative commitment to adaptive management as this project moves forward. Phase I contains multiple sage-grouse leks within the project area that are close to proposed turbine locations. Again, we stress the need for continued monitoring to determine the impacts on sage-grouse. Given the uncertainty of the impacts of wind development on sage-grouse we recommend siting the turbines the farthest distance possible from leks. Furthermore, spatial and seasonal buffers should be implemented to protect individual nest sites/territories and/or roost sites during construction, such as maintaining a buffer between activities and nests/communal roost sites and keeping natural areas between the project footprint and the nest site or communal roost by avoiding disturbance to natural landscapes.

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Sage Grouse	NGO	X	<p>The BLM should avoid siting turbines in sensitive wildlife habitat. The project will have long-term adverse effects on high priority wildlife species resulting from construction and operation of this expansive wind project. For key species such as the Greater Sagegrouse, the goal should be to configure the project to result in a net-environmental benefit for the sage-grouse and its habitat. Given the inevitable impacts of the project, enduring and effective off-site mitigation and habitat protection or reclamation in conservation agreements and other management frameworks will likely be required. Efforts should be made to minimize disturbance during pre-construction and the area and intensity of disturbance should be minimized to the maximum extent possible during construction. Impacts should be monitored through the continued use of the avian radar technology in combination with traditional ground surveys.</p>
Sage Grouse	NGO	X	<p>BLM must publish data from PCW’s sage-grouse monitoring program and any other available data collected from the project area so stakeholders can evaluate sage-grouse activities and habitat use in the area. BLM must incorporate the specific mitigation recommendations for sage-grouse that are identified above. Until effective mitigation methods to offset sage-grouse habitat loss and disturbance are developed, avoidance of high quality habitat and identification and preservation of offsite, high quality sage-grouse habitat must be prioritized over the active management methods mentioned above.</p>
Sage Grouse	NGO	X	<p>Appendix N of the ROD details sage-grouse conservation measures such as high-resolution vegetation mapping and habitat evaluation, elimination of grazing and other land uses in nonproject areas, no development in core areas, sage-grouse monitoring, fence marking, road removal, water improvement projects, agricultural field enhancement, noxious weed control, and predator control. Some of these measures, such as avoidance of core areas and sage-grouse monitoring, are or must be required. Others, like habitat improvement and fence marking, likely have value but have unknown equivalence to the effects of habitat lost and cannot be counted as mitigation until equivalence is proven and quantified. Still others, like predator control, are likely more destructive than productive and must be avoided altogether.</p>

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Sage Grouse	NGO	X	We (along with the American Bird Conservancy and WildEarth Guardians) submitted a comprehensive Sage-Grouse Recovery Alternative for consideration in the National Sage-Grouse Conservation Strategy, which identified important mitigation measures for development near sage-grouse habitat. BLM must incorporate several of these mitigation measures into BLM’s NEPA Analysis for Phase I including: BLM must prohibit development in core/priority sage-grouse habitat that is not subject to a valid existing ROW; Where development is unavoidable in core/priority sage-grouse habitat due to valid existing rights, BLM must protect “active” and/or “unknown status” sage-grouse leks and associated nesting habitat with a 4-mile No Surface Occupancy (NSO) buffer requirement; BLM must protect “active” and/or “unknown status” sage-grouse leks in noncore/general habitat with a 1-mile NSO buffer.
Sage Grouse	NGO	X	The CCSM has the potential to significantly impact sage-grouse habitats and leks throughout the project area. Based on the FEIS, 127,465 acres of sage-grouse core area and 37 sage-grouse leks would lie within 4 miles of CCSM project facilities. We appreciate PCW’s commitment to avoid any development in core sage-grouse areas. However, there is currently some uncertainty regarding sage-grouse activities and habitat use within the project area. We understand that PCW continues to collect information through its sage-grouse monitoring program.
Sage Grouse	NGO	X	Until effective mitigation methods to offset sage-grouse habitat loss and disturbance are developed, avoidance of high quality habitat and identification and preservation of offsite, high quality sage-grouse habitat must be prioritized over the active management methods mentioned above.

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Sage Grouse	NGO	X	<p>Once seen in great numbers across the West, Greater sage-grouse populations have declined over the past century because of the loss of sagebrush habitats essential for their survival. Because of a court-ordered settlement, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) has until 2015 to make a final determination on listing the Greater sage-grouse under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). State wildlife management agencies, along with BLM and USFS, which administer most federal lands in the West, are taking steps to ensure the conservation of the Greater sage-grouse on public lands. BLM, working jointly with USFS, is preparing EISs to address the effects of implementing Greater sage-grouse conservation measures on the lands they manage. The draft EIS covering the Rawlins Resource Area, however, has not yet been released for public comment.... NWF and WWF anticipate that the draft sage-grouse EIS will rely on efforts to ensure the protection of sage-grouse on a “landscape scale,” through the protection of “priority habitats.” In 2008, the Governor of Wyoming released an Executive Order outlining needed protections for sage-grouse. The key element of Wyoming’s sage-grouse conservation plan is to recognize and protect core breeding areas or “core areas.” Both BLM and USFWS have indicated a willingness to rely on the Wyoming core-area designation and protection as an effective strategy for sagegrouse conservation in the state. The Record of Decision for the Chokecherry and Sierra Madre Wind Energy Project and Approved Visual Resource Management Plan Amendment (ROD) proudly states that CCSM’s proponent, Power Company of Wyoming (PCW) has committed to avoid siting wind turbines within Wyoming’s sage-grouse core areas. ROD Appendix C, Table C-2. However, CCSM, as currently configured, intrudes on outstanding sage-grouse habitat that was gerrymandered out of lands classified as key Wyoming sage-grouse cores areas specifically so this project could be built. BLM should ensure that its approval of CCSM does not degrade or destroy this habitat. This would be contrary to its sensitive species manual, the Wind Energy Programmatic Final Environmental Impact Statement, and the original Wyoming Executive Order and could lead to listing under ESA.</p>

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Sage Grouse	NGO	X	<p>CLG members have worked hard in recent years to prevent the sage grouse from being listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). The CCSM project avoids sage-grouse core habitat areas, but the EA must still address methods to mitigate impacts on sage grouse, as almost all of the CCSM project still lies within sage-grouse habitat. BLM, CCSM FEIS at 4.15-12. Specifically, the BLM must evaluate the effects of added human presence in the area, the sage-grouse’s adversity to tall vertical structures, increased predation from raptors that perch on power lines, increased habitat fragmentation and decreased forage. Id. Indeed, the USFWS recognizes these impacts as major threats to sage-grouse viability. Sage-grouse core habitat areas surround the CCSM project and sage grouse use the CCSM project area as well. BLM, CCSM Wind Energy Project: Greater Sage Grouse Map, available at http://www.blm.gov/wy/st/en/info/NEPA/documents/rfo/Chokecherry/pub-mtg-docs.html. Moreover, the BLM must consider the indirect consequences of disturbing sage-grouse habitat such as the incidental effects on grazing, other important wildlife species, and landscape scale management efforts.</p>

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Sage Grouse	NGO	X	<p>Virtually all of the project area is in sage-grouse habitat. Final EIS Vol. 2 at 4.15-11. BLM must clarify the extent to which sage-grouse core area designations changed in order to accommodate this project. The proposed project was originally inside core areas. We remain concerned that despite the change in core area boundaries made at PCW’s request, the habitat is just as valuable and crucial for sage-grouse population viability. This project will displace sage-grouse from the area and decimate local populations. Sagegrouse are intolerant of tall structures and other wind farms have displaced sage-grouse, resulting in a net loss on sage-grouse because other suitable habitats are already occupied. Displaced sage-grouse must then compete with those resident birds and the population declines in the process. Other displaced sage-grouse are pushed into unsuitable or less suitable habitat, which cannot support the same level of sage-grouse population, also resulting in a decline. BLM should gather and disclose full baseline information from lek counts and radio-telemetry outfitted birds, and then use that information to inform its NEPA process and analysis. Only then can the BLM properly develop and evaluate alternatives and impacts, and any specific mitigation measures and their effectiveness. The Rawlins RMP requires BLM to “[m]aintain, restore, or enhance designated BLM State Sensitive Species habitat in order to prevent listing under the ESA.” Final EIS Vol. 2 at 4.14-2. The Rawlins RMP also directs BLM to “sustain and optimize distribution and abundance of all native, desirable non-native, and Special Status species,” as well as to “[m]anage or restore habitat to conserve, recover, and maintain populations of native, desirable non-native, and Special Status species.” Final EIS Vol. 2 at 4.14-3. BLM must explain how this project meets these requirements for the sage-grouse, a sensitive species. On its face, it does not appear possible for the level of impacts from the Phase I Development to meet these requirements.</p>
Sage Grouse	Public		<p>Sage grouse issues and concerns have been glossed over by Wyoming Game and Fish: see the nesting grounds on Chokecherry project’s wind development. Prior Wyoming Governor’s office re-drew the grouse habitat area to exclude a significant portion of the Sierra Madre part of this project then (Wyoming Game and Fish headquarters in Cheyenne) had local wardens remain silent on the proposed boundaries impact to the sage grouse. Contact prior area game wardens and habitat managers for verification.</p>

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Sage Grouse	Public		Leverage the eagles and sage grouse for the Fish and Wildlife Service to resolve together and forever. Why propose an eagle kill plan and limitations without resolving the potential listing of the sage grouse?
Sensitive Species	NGO	X	BLM failed to survey for pygmy rabbits or Wyoming pocket gophers before adopting the Final EIS. Final EIS Vol. 2 at 4.15-2, 3, and 9. Both species are BLM sensitive species with suitable habitat throughout the project area. Id. at 3.15-7 and Figure 3.15-2. Bridger Pass, immediately north of the project area, is an important stronghold for the Wyoming pocket gopher. BLM must analyze data on the known distribution of the Wyoming pocket gopher from the Wyoming Natural Diversity Database and undertake field surveys throughout the project area. BLM has undertaken such surveys for other projects, including the Lost Creek In Situ Recovery Uranium Project. In order to satisfy NEPA, BLM must gather baseline information on the distribution of these species in order to properly evaluate impacts that will occur to them, and disclose mitigation measures and their effectiveness.
Siting	Agency-Local		PCW has worked with BLM, WGFD and the USFWS, to discuss BMPs and to develop mitigation measures that will avoid or reduce avian and eagle loss. As a result of the ongoing avian studies, large areas of potential turbine sites with extremely favorable wind characteristics have been avoided.
Siting	NGO	X	Wind development should not be permitted along the southern border of Chokecherry and the southwestern boundary of Sierra Madre.

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Siting	NGO	X	<p>Areas that should be designated as unavailable to energy development because of wildlife concerns include the southern border of Chokecherry (see description in raptor section), Red Rim-Grizzly Wildlife Habitat Management Area (WHMA), and the western section of Sierra Madre (including Miller Hill). Red Rim-Grizzly WHMA was identified as a potential Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC). Specifically, raptors are identified as priority wildlife species within the Red Rim Grizzly WHMA (DEIS p. 4.14.17). The western section of Sierra Madre is noted for having high avian use, high recreational value, and providing important late brood-rearing habitat for sage-grouse. This area also contains the bulk of the application area’s wetland and riparian zones (Figure 3.11-3), as well as two units identified as possessing wilderness characteristics: Sage Creek Basin West and Sage Creek Basin East (Figure 3.4-3). Miller Hill was highlighted in the DEIS as being a “highly sensitive area for wildlife, specifically greater sage-grouse, mule deer, elk, and raptors based on its proximity to the Grizzly WHMA” (DEIS p. 2-12). It is utilized by deer and elk as winter range, serving as end points for migration routes for both important big game species. Although the DEIS proposes that the conceptual designs would avoid known migration routes, it also states “the development threshold at which mule deer will no longer move through an area is unknown” (DEIS p. 4.14-10). Similarly the majority of the active and inactive raptor nests were located along the “steep, wooded slopes that lead away from the area on the north and east face of Miller Hill” (DEIS p. 3.14-19). The displacement impact, though harder to quantify, is a very real concern with a project of this magnitude. Displacement may have a greater impact on populations than collision mortality on birds (DEIS p. 4.14-21).</p>
Siting	NGO	X	<p>The following important wildlife habitat areas should be designated as off-limits to all development: Wild Cow Creek (VRM concerns); Grizzly Wildlife Habitat Management Area page (multiple wildlife concerns); Southern border of Chokecherry (raptor concerns); Western section of Sierra Madre, including Miller Hill (multiple wildlife concerns, water concerns and lands with wilderness characteristics).</p>

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Siting	NGO	X	Energy generation should occur foremost in areas already disturbed, in areas with the fewest environmental impacts, as close to the target load centers as possible, and in a manner that reduces impacts to the area’s natural resources.
Siting	NGO	X	...turbines should not be sited in areas where eagle prey species are abundant and turbines should avoid areas where active raptor nests have been identified.
Siting	NGO	X	Given the uncertainty of the impacts of wind development on sage-grouse we recommend siting the turbines the farthest distance possible from leks. Furthermore, spatial and seasonal buffers should be implemented to protect individual nest sites/territories and/or roost sites during construction, such as maintaining a buffer between activities and nests/communal roost sites and keeping natural areas between the project footprint and the nest site or communal roost by avoiding disturbance to natural landscapes.
Siting	NGO	X	The turbines and transmission infrastructure should be sited away from high avian use areas and the flight zones between them. No lattice or structures that are attractive to birds for perching should be included in the facility designs.
Siting	NGO	X	we encourage the following guidelines to identify areas, where when necessary to cross, parallel or otherwise include the CDNST, utility lines and facilities may be located as to reduce their impacts to the CDNST: 1. Locating at a site where the CDNST crosses an existing state or federal highway or highway intersection. In these instances, through applying sound sighting procedures, many of these crossings may only be visible at the point of intersection; 2. Locating at a site where the CDNST crosses areas that are already developed, and classified as Rural or Urban by the USFS Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS); 3. Upgrading or co-aligning a new corridor with existing lines, or relocating existing lines into new single corridors, and the subsequent decommissioning of replaced or relocated utility lines; 4. Utilization of an underground route through open areas for natural gas pipelines; and 5. Passage through an area where Trail values, such as a sense of remoteness, would not be compromised. Most importantly, we highly encourage the review teams to continue to engage with CDTC and to identify these key areas and potential mitigation when the CDNST and its unique resources can not be avoided.

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Siting	NGO	X	<p>CDTC encourages avoiding the following resources whenever possible in siting utility corridors and facilities near the Trail: 1. Wilderness areas and their adjacent buffer zones; 2. Semi-primitive non-motorized areas and other special management or natural areas; 3. Areas of significant cultural, historic and natural value; 4. The Foreground Zone (1/2 mile on either side of the CDT) as determined by Visual Resource Management system, and as seen from prominent viewpoints and key scenic features such as rock outcrops with large expansive vistas, or open landscape, sub alpine, alpine areas where the landscape is uninterrupted by man’s influence or development; 5. Wetlands and other important natural features; and 6. Any other special area where important Trail values, such as a sense of remoteness, would be compromised.</p>
Siting	NGO	X	<p>CDTC suggests the consideration of CDNST management direction in siting any structures in the areas seen from the CDNST: 1. protect the significant experiences and features that exist along the CDNST; 2. establish the best location for a non-motorized CDNST through the most primitive, scenic, diverse and undeveloped landscapes on or near the CDNST that will provide a wide range of experiences and challenges; 3. foster communication, participation and partnership along the CDNST; 4. require monitoring and evaluation of the conditions on and around the CDNST; 5. assure proper and sensitive standards pertaining to establishment, operation and maintenance of the trail. Further, it would provide common objectives and means to coordinate the efforts of many agencies and interests having responsibility for implementation. (Study Report; page 5)</p>
Siting	NGO	X	<p>The turbine layout must be configured to avoid landscape features known to attract raptors. In particular, development plans must ensure that turbines are sited a sufficient distance away from the Atlantic Rim located to the west of the project area.</p>

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Siting	NGO	X	We continue to encourage the project proponent and BLM to consider using Highway 71 as the haul road. Although using Highway 71 will increase traffic on a road popular to recreationists, it will minimize disturbance to mule deer winter range that already is in reduced condition in the Platte Valley according to the Platte Valley Habitat Partnership. While it is true that current Wyoming Game and Fish Department (WGFD) regulations do not consider summer range as a limiting factor for big game, BLM should review recent research by Tollefson et al. (2010) in order to implement proactive management. In fact, the Platte Valley Habitat Partnership and WGFD are using this idea as a basis for restoration of habitat improvements within the Platte Valley. We continue to urge less development of the Sierra Madre portion of the project because of its high percentage of use in the spring/summer/fall by big game. WWF and NWF continue to recommend removing Miller Hill from development because of its importance to both big game and hunting opportunities.
Siting	NGO	X	We ask BLM to fully consider the impacts of roads and access points necessary for various numbers of wind turbines and arrays, and make efforts to minimize such impacts on species habitat.
Siting	NGO		Require the applicant to reconfigure the project layout by removing and/or relocating turbines in high avian use areas, near known eagle nests and breeding areas—and explain such changes in the decision documents and environmental review.
Siting	NGO	X	BLM should consider moving turbine arrays away from areas of concentrated raptor use, such as rims and canyon walls. A 50m setback is inadequate to prevent elevated levels of raptor mortality, as borne out in BLM’s estimates of projected annual deaths. BLM should also consider keeping wind turbine arrays away from areas with abundant eagle and raptor prey such as pronghorn fawns, livestock newborns, prairie dogs, ground squirrels, and sage-grouse to name a few.
Siting	Public		We would like to know about PCW’s willingness to relocate problematic towers. We want no more wind farms in prime Eagle habitat.

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Siting	Public		In the area of the CCSM wind farm the second phase just seems to be more in conflict with birds and other wildlife the closer you get to the river ... it is a very attractive area for birds and wildlife in our arid desert ecosystem...I believe the river and the surrounding areas (I don't know size wise what would be reasonable or what size would be needed to protect wildlife in the area ... 3 miles???) should be reserved as a buffer zone, if you will, for the wildlife that depend so much on it.
Socio-economics	Agency-Local		Decisions regarding this proposed wind energy project and its implementation will have a significant impact the residents of Carbon County.
Socio-economics	NGO	X	Some of the potentially affected environmental aspects identified and so effectively discussed in Chapter 3 of the FEIS do not receive comparable treatment in Chapter 4, Environmental Consequences, and are not discussed at all in the ROD. Therefore some of the issues, particularly socioeconomic issues, that have been raised by residents of the Upper North Platte Valley (UNPV) and (on their behalf) by Voices of the Valley, we believe have not been fully addressed. For example, the FEIS generally assumes that housing for incoming workers on the project can largely be provided by surplus temporary housing, including hotels, motels and parking units. However, there is no discussion in FEIS Chapter 4 of the potentially severe consequences this could have on the number one industry in the UNPV - tourism. Currently, the surplus in temporary housing counted on when the FEIS was completed has largely been consumed by other developments, creating an even larger problem for the project and residents in the affected area. This is only an example of socioeconomic issues that have been raised about the CCSM project, almost none of which receive any redress in Appendix D, BLM Environmental Constraints, Applicant Committed Measures, Applicant Committed Best Management Practices, and Proposed Mitigation Measures.

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Socio-economics	NGO	X	<p>The LSRCD, Land, Water and Natural Resource Management Plan (LSRCD Plan) (Dec. 2010), requires that any decision-making process for future resource and land management decisions incorporate a “careful and meaningful evaluation of potential economic consequences that are associated with proposed resource and land management actions.” LSRCD Plan at 20, Sec. 2(j)(iv)(A) (2011). Carbon County relies on its abundance of natural resources, such as range land, minerals, timber, fish and wildlife, and water, and access to such resources for “continued opportunity to strengthen and expand the existing economic base.” Id. The goal of LSRCD is to coordinate and cooperate with the ongoing planning and management of federal and state managed lands and natural resources, and to provide assistance to private land owners in the management of their lands and natural resources. Id. at 23, Sec. 3(g)(I).</p>
Socio-economics	NGO	X	<p>All grazing permit holders and private land owners within the CCSM area should be included in planning meetings and notified of changes to plans. This would be consistent with the management objectives listed in the socioeconomics section on page 4.8-2 of the FEIS regarding working cooperatively to maintain and promote cultural, economic, ecological, and social health and maintaining other resource objectives.</p>

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Socio-economics	NGO	X	<p>The FEIS identifies significant housing shortfalls during the construction phases of the CCSM project, including turbine construction and site development. BLM, CCSM FEIS at 4.8-14-4.8-19. Southwest Wyoming is experience significant population oscillations due to natural gas development and as a result, the BLM must appropriately analyze the on-the-ground issues such as available housing for the work force necessary to complete the first phase of the development. The BLM’s EA should consider temporary and permanent housing development. Relatedly, the BLM should also consider impacts on schools and public works, and the longevity of the local economies after the workforce has receded upon completion of the construction phase. Further, Sweetwater County will likely experience spillover from housing issues in Carbon County and the BLM should coordinate with all of the appropriate local governments to ensure that the project does not boom, then bust, the region. Id. at 4.8-19-4.8-23. Because the impacts will occur within a short period of time, the local governments must be included in any proposals considered for housing solutions early in the planning process to accommodate those needs. These services will be needed prior to any tax benefits from increased growth and development, if any, are realized.</p>
Socio-economics	NGO	X	<p>Though LSRCD supports the CCSM project, LSRCD and BLM must ensure that impacts to other land and resource uses are minimized to the extent practical. Much of the economy and livelihoods of the people in southern Carbon County and surrounding areas depend on a thriving natural ecosystem and access to natural resources. This must continue as the CCSM project is developed and ultimately operated.</p>
Socio-economics	NGO		<p>Every day that you delay in making a decision on this eagle permit application means you are delaying vital private investment in our county that will lead to critical new jobs, new tax revenues, and new economic development for Carbon County. There are other proposed retail businesses and housing developers who will invest further in Rawlins and other Carbon County communities if they see big opportunities for growth come to fruition, like the CCSM Project. Our rural area should not be denied equal access to economic development and growth opportunities simply because we are surrounded by so much federally controlled land, or simply because various wildlife species might choose to live here too.</p>

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Statement of Opposition	Agency-Local		We do not support an eagle take permit for the CCSM Wind Project at this time. The avian radar research data has not been published in peer reviewed journals or available to the public. The USFWS’s model has not been run to predict the number of eagle deaths. The only eagle mortality numbers have come from anecdotal evidence from the BLM EIS.
Statement of Opposition	NGO	X	The largest wind energy project in the country should not serve as the test facility for collecting...data. Moreover, what is already well known about the impact of human activity, roads, and vertical structures on Greater sage-grouse and the impact of turbines on eagles is more than sufficient to raise serious concerns that the CCSM project is the wrong project in the wrong place.
Statement of Opposition	NGO		If an eagle take permit is to “help make [this] wind energy facility compatible with eagle conservation and the laws and regulations that protect eagles” it must not allow a range of numbers or number of eagles to be “taken” equal to that predicted will be taken by the proponents. To do so would do nothing to meet the stated need for the permit or to conserve eagles.
Statement of Opposition	NGO		Departing from scientific rationale for opposing the eagle take permit is a concern shared by millions of patriotic Americans. The Bald Eagle is our national bird and our symbol freedom. The bald eagle, unlike our national flag, is a living, flesh and blood symbol of patriotism. Most American citizens deplore the burning or otherwise desecration of our national flag... typically a patch of screen-printed nylon or other synthetic fabric. The issuance of a permit by a federal agency to kill, desecrate or otherwise “take” our living symbol of freedom and patriotism is, to millions, far more deplorable than the desecration of our national flag.
Statement of Opposition	NGO		We also oppose issuance of the eagle take permit due, but not limited, to the following bulleted reasons: Project Size Renders First Eagle Take Permit Ill-advised. Given that no active eagle take permit exists for wind farms it would be irresponsible of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (hereafter, USFWS or Service) to grant an eagle take permit to a facility that could become the nation’s largest of its kind. Common sense, business sense and scientific integrity all demand that the Service first establish a pilot eagle take permitting program, specific to wind energy generation facilities.

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Statement of Opposition	NGO		Our wind report, backed by other similar reports, shows the Chokecherry/Sierra Madre Wind Farm to be located in one of the most important wildlife areas in the entire state. Raptors and eagles are cited as the most important segment of wildlife placed at risk by wind energy development in the project area. It is upon this basis we oppose its location and, in particular, the density of turbines being proposed.
Statement of Opposition	Public		While we understand the need for “clean” fuel production such as wind power, we object to the idea that it’s okay to kill eagles in the process. The promise of “no net loss of eagles” is not good enough. If plans for wind farms involve the killing of eagles, those plans need to be changed.
Statement of Opposition	Public		Eagles are too important in every way to put them at such risk for our own selfish gain.
Statement of Opposition	Public		I would like to go on record that both bald and golden eagles are protected under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act, as well as the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. I am concerned about and against the potential permit, which would authorize the death and injury to many dozens of eagles each year.
Statement of Opposition	Public		Simply issuing a take permit to the Power Company of WY for phase I of this project does nothing to mitigate the danger it would pose to Golden Eagles and other birds.
Statement of Opposition	Public		Please deny the permit authorizing the deaths and injuries of many dozens of Bald and Golden Eagles. These beautiful, noble birds are protected by the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and their protection should be an immediate reason for the denial of the permit. There is no viable reason to remove their protection! Please allow these birds to survive and live their lives in their native habitat.

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Statement of Opposition	Public		There should be no eagle take permit. This project on public land is expensive electricity, public subsidized and waste of visual resources. The practicable measures are impossible to prevent take without expense cage around each turbine. Citizens without government connections couldn't get away with this proposal to kill eagles. The data for Bald eagles is very incomplete because winter migration varies so much year to year there is no average in migration assessable.
Statement of Opposition	Public		The federal government and the State of Wyoming studies of this project are flawed, biased for the developer and not independent.
Statement of Opposition	Public		Until the recent eagle deaths in Utah are solved and mitigated do not issue a permit to kill eagles in the intermountain west, or anywhere.
Statement of Opposition	Public		Bald and Golden Eagles are protected by the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act AND the Migratory Bird Treaty Act with a no-take limit. We urge you to demand that these wind energy companies do just that. There must be a way to have both wind energy and no deaths of eagles at our wind farms. The wind energy company must find those measures necessary to comply with the law.
Statement of Opposition	Public		This is highly inappropriate, And Violates The Eagle Protection And Migratory Bird Act. Do your job, Protect Our Public lands, waters, wildlife, future & health! You work for citizens - Not industry!
Statement of Opposition	Public		This project is a hoax! The taking of these birds is unacceptable!
Statement of Opposition	Public		Eagle take permit is unacceptable - go kill a bird and you get a fine and jail time. Tell the rich people pushing Chokecherry & Sierra Madre to go to the bird friendly turbines as we tax payers are going to be the heavy with all the "incentive packages." I don't want any "killer turbines" on my public property.
Statement of Opposition	Public		Please don't let the power mongers take even more eagles and others for sake of wind energy.

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Statement of Opposition	Public		If PWC is allowed to “take” bald and golden eagles, each year dozens of eagles will be killed or injured. Bald and golden eagles are protected under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act, and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.
Statement of Opposition	Public		I am very concerned over the potential for unacceptable levels of deaths of raptors including bald and golden eagles as well as other species such as bats and birds of all kinds that are caused by wind farms across the West. The Chokecherry Wind Farm seems to be particularly dangerous in this regard. I strongly urge you to deny this project any approval until and if the project sponsors can prove conclusively that they can modify the project to eliminate the deaths of raptors and other species from the wind turbines.
Statement of Opposition	Public		Until a methodology can be found to protect Eagles and other raptors from flying into these turbines, I would vote to restrict their installation and to deny all permits to the Power Company to erect them, until Wyoming’s eagles can fly safely past these devices.
Statement of Opposition	Public		My comments can be summed up as opposition to the whole concept of wind farms #1 and #2 complete and horrified dismay that one of our prime wildlife habitats and crucial winter ranges is going to be destroyed, especially in the Sierra Madre/Miller Hill complex.
Statement of Opposition	Public		All the studies and sleight of hand tricks that money can buy or on the ground experts can conjure will not negate the huge loss of wildlife and their habitat.
Statement of Opposition	Public		For fifty years, I have lived within the eagle range of this project. Most of those years a pair of goldens have hatched chicks in a sandstone cliff on our property.... The wing impressions in the snow during breeding season, the comings and goings of the parents, the anticipated first flight of the young around the 4th of July are all part of our “natural” calendar. The thought of a silent spring on our cliff brings to mind a quotation from another context, “After the first death there is no other.”

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Statement of Support	Agency-Local		Carbon County is confident that the BLM-FEIS identified appropriate areas and restrictions for development of the CCSM wind energy facilities and that PCW is developing the project in a manner to avoid, minimize and mitigate the potential loss of eagles during construction and operation. We, therefore, would encourage an expedient timeline for the USFWS-EIS review and approval of the eagle take permit.
Statement of Support	NGO		Please apply your best resources, prioritize the completion of this EIS, and issue an eagle permit as soon as possible so that the Phase I Wind Turbine Development for the CCSM Project can move forward. We've been waiting a long time for this, and we are excited for construction to begin.
Statement of Support	Public	X	I support this project and hope it is built soon.
Statement of Support	Public		Please give this project a huge GO! All of the naysayers COMBINED, have produced very little in concrete terms against this project. Also regarding future permitting - look at the aviation industry and compare the deaths created by that body compared to aviary destruction by the wind farms - not even close.
Tribal	Public		<p>...the requirement for the Federal Fish and Wildlife Service to consult with the tribes about their cultural practices relating to eagles has begun to burn with some Native traditionalists. "The public sees how [the Department of] Interior is talking about how many [eagles] are going to be killed, even in prime habitat, and these wind farm outfits, they'll talk about how many are going to be killed ... we wouldn't want the public to think these things should be treated this way. There's a true sacredness [to the eagle], the most important thing around your [religious] ceremonies, and here people just throw these numbers around nonchalantly. That's not the way you deal with these things,"</p> <p>"...understand the significance of these eagles. You're talking ancient religious ceremonies that still maintain their connection with everything in nature."</p> <p>The eagle is a significant part of many Northern Plains tribes' ceremonies.</p> <p>To the Arapahos on the Wind River Indian Reservation, the eagle is considered "essential to</p>

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
			<p>the survival and wellbeing of the tribe and its members,” according to its Tribal Council. Crawford White, a member of the Arapaho’s Council of Elders, explained the eagle’s unique place in their spiritual traditions.</p> <p>“It’s very sacred, very sacred ... pretty high (raising his arm over his head),” White said. “Sometimes we pray to it, we talk to it. We ask it for healing. We ask for good things. It’s a messenger to the Creator, and I don’t know how to really explain how high it is to us. It’s supreme.”</p> <p>...White added that some matters concerning the eagle in particular were too sacred to discuss publically and by Arapaho tradition are only conveyed through direct instruction and experience.</p> <p>“Over here, it’s really pretty sacred,” White explained. “There are some unwritten laws that we have to go by ... unwritten laws have been handed down to us. We have to go by those things, so this limits what we can say and what we can do, because it’s so sacred. That’s the best way I can put it of why we use it. We use it in our ceremonies, all of our ceremonies, not just one. It’s with us all the time, that’s the best way I can put it.”</p> <p>..Bald and golden eagles are federally protected because of significant declines in historical numbers, and their value as the symbol of the nation. Their possession is closely monitored and restricted and it is illegal to have an eagle or eagle parts without a permit, a lengthy and sometimes uncertain process and an issue for many native American tribes concerning their traditional and spiritual practices. With few exceptions, Native Americans must now acquire all their eagles, or parts such as feathers, through federal repositories.</p> <p>“So we look at that, and we say, ‘What can we do with these situations where something decent can happen around this?’” You would not be rushing to give 30-year kill permits to wind farms, that’s not Interior being compelled to preserve.”</p> <p>Weber said a number of ideas have emerged on how to begin to work with the situation at the local, state and federal levels, including a state coordinator.</p> <p>“Some of the elements of this that we’ve discussed concerning these eagles are long-range management, ceremonial handling of eagles, an in-state repository, active and timely</p>

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
			<p>retrieval and monitoring of killed birds, and we’ve talked about directly increasing eagle numbers,” Weber said, adding, “The traditional people that are working with the birds have a vested interest in them. They need to have a seat at the table.</p> <p>“The thoughts are, we need an in-state repository, [where] the people that have the ceremonial rights to handle the birds handle the birds.</p> <p>..another thing we’ve talked about is a program of, kill an eagle, replace an eagle. Open an eagle hatchery. If you directly produce more eagles, guess what? You’ll have more eagles....</p> <p>“We’ve looked at rehabilitation. There are some eagles that are going to be hurt in all these wind projects. Rehabilitate those eagles, save their lives, do something with them,” Weber added, saying many of these activities could be coordinated through an eagle center in the state, which would also offer cultural and educational opportunities.</p> <p>“...there might be solutions out there that no one has seen yet but really are just the thing that helps industry, helps Interior, helps the state, helps conservation groups, helps us in our ceremonies. That’s the ideal thing, and everybody wins.”</p>
Tribal	Public		<p>Live Eagles visit our ceremonies to help and inspire us. When they are gone, how will we continue our ancient relationship with them as part of our spiritual path? We would like to see a state repository for our tribal communities, with a timely retrieval of killed birds by traditionally qualified people. We are concerned about the handling process, much as you might be when a family member or close relation dies.</p>

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Visual Aesthetics	NGO	X	<p>Development Projects like wind energy farms already cross the [CDNST] Trail in many locations. These sites are, by nature, intensive, high profile land uses. The visual impacts and, in some cases, the audible impacts of these facilities detracts from the primitive recreational experience provided by the Trail. These developments often can be seen for miles from the trail, disrupting an otherwise undisturbed scene (or scenery) found in these unique environments for many miles. Adverse impacts also include lights, access roads, cleared swaths of land, off-road vehicle access on utility right-of-ways, guy wires, chain link fences, and chemical treatments of the vegetation in the corridor. These ancillary impacts are often more intrusive than the sites themselves. Furthermore, the cumulative impacts of the expansion and development of utility corridors and facilities upon the CDNST environment are substantial.</p>
Visual Aesthetics	NGO	X	<p>We recommend that the EA address mitigation to help alleviate direct, ancillary and cumulative impacts to the CDNST in identification of this potential wind energy development project. The section should address the need for both on-site and offsite enhancements to benefit the unavoidable scenery and Recreation Opportunity Spectrum setting effects on the CDNST and other National Scenic and Historic Trails. Potential mitigation to minimize impacts could be both on site and off site strategies and might include the following: 1. Funding for CDNST trail development and maintenance, corridor management, rights-of-way acquisition, and trailhead developments; 2. Removal of facilities that are no longer needed; 3. Relocation of existing smaller capacity transmission lines to the corridors identified by the EIS, and reclamation of those sites back to a natural state; 4. Careful review of the height and type of power line towers; 5. Careful location of power line towers so as to minimize their impacts; 6. Color and reflectivity of facilities; and 7. Landscape treatment within the right-of-way and at other places that screen structures.</p>

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Visual Aesthetics	NGO	X	This special area retains a natural healthy forested and alpine landscape character shaped by both natural processes and humans. Visitors will experience diversity of native plant and animal species. This corridor traverses a range of ROS classes. The CDNST setting will either be consistent with or complement the primitive and semi-primitive non-motorized Recreation Opportunity Spectrum Class.
Visual Aesthetics	NGO	X	Some general findings from the CDNST Study Report that assist in describing these terms include: a) “Designation and establishment of a 3,100 mile Continental Divide Trail...would provide the American people with recreational opportunities of national significance and that trail users would wind their way through some of the most spectacular scenery in the United States and have an opportunity to enjoy a greater diversity of physical and natural qualities than found on any other extended trail.” (Study Report; page 4); b) The Study Report also “advocates that the most minimal development standards consistent with these circumstances be employed...the trail should be regarded as a simple facility for the hiker-horseman.” (Study Report; page 8); c) The Study Report describes the trail experience as an “intimate one, where one can walk or ride horseback across vast fields of wildflowers and contemplate a story dating from the dawn of earth’s history...along the way the tranquility of the alpine meadows, verdent forests and semi-desert landscape overwhelms anyone who passes that way. The Trail would provide the traveler his best encounter with the Continental Divide—its serenity and pure air—and would supply for every trail traveler some of the world’s most sublime scenes.” (Study Report; page 18)
Visual Aesthetics	NGO	X	CDTC would suggest that as part of mitigation, that the planning team consider relocation of portions of the CDNST along the areas south of Rawlins, in particular along the Bridger Pass Road and Muddy Creek Areas. In these cases, there are opportunities where relocation of the current CDNST would afford opportunities to use vegetation to screen impacts from the Sierra Madre Wind Farm project area all together, as well as create a better more highly desirable trail location.

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Visual Aesthetics	NGO	X	CDTC encourages avoiding the following resources whenever possible in sighting utility corridors and facilities near the Trail: 1. Wilderness areas and their adjacent buffer zones; 2. Semi-primitive non-motorized areas and other special management or natural areas; 3. Areas of significant cultural, historic and natural value; 4. The Foreground Zone (1/2 mile on either side of the CDT) as determined by Visual Resource Management system, and as seen from prominent viewpoints and key scenic features such as rock outcrops with large expansive vistas, or open landscape, sub alpine, alpine areas where the landscape is uninterrupted by man’s influence or development; 5. Wetlands and other important natural features; and 6. Any other special area where important Trail values, such as a sense of remoteness, would be compromised.
Visual Aesthetics	NGO	X	CDTC supports the CDNST Comprehensive Plan direction that states the USFS Scenery Management System (SMS) is the framework for integrating all scenery management data into all levels of forest planning. The SMS identifies the existing landscape character, visual sensitivity, and scenic integrity, and how actions may affect and alter those resources. We encourage values of Very High or High whenever possible to meet the nature and purpose of the CDNST. CDTC remains concerned that the project proposal risks the loss of protection of resources central to the Trail experience. We recommend the mapping of visual resources and the impacts to these resources should be done in a manner consistent with the Visual Resource Management System to adequately protect the integrity and quality of the scenic resources in the areas traversed or impacted by the identified project location. We also recommend that no changes be made to the visual resource management classes around the CDNST until the BLM VRM for Rawlins is amended to incorporate the CDNST Management Corridor.
Visual Aesthetics	NGO	X	Spectacular Scenery of the quality and magnitude along the proposed CDT route is not available anywhere in the Continental United States. The trail traverses a variety of terrain, including high desert, forests, geologic formations, and mountain meadows. Flora abounds in the near views, while distant views of major valleys and maintain peaks are exceptional. (Study Report page 98)

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Visual Aesthetics	NGO	X	The location of the CDNST corridor bisects the southern portion of the Sierra Madre Project Area, because the CDNST is recognized as a special area, CDTC strongly encourages a review of the treatment of the CDNST to ensure the protection of the scenic qualities and visual resources in the affected project area (Sierra Madre Project Area).
Visual Aesthetics	NGO	X	BLM should evaluate and seek ways to protect recreation experiences dependent on visual resources and natural settings, including backpacking, hunting, fishing, photography, geologic and nature study, and hiking. Portions of the project area have a high visual sensitivity, including areas visible from the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail and the Overland Trail. Final EIS Vol. 2 at 3.12-2, 3, and 5. BLM must clarify how this project complies with the organic legislation for the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail, and does not preclude designation of the Overland Trail by Congress. BLM should fully consider impacts to these trails and recreation experiences, and consider alternatives to avoid or minimize such impacts. On its face, the Chokecherry/Sierra Madre Project will interfere with the nature and purposes of the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail. The trail was designated by Congress for its scenic qualities. Turbine visibility will be “high” for the trail, as well as the Overland Trail. Final EIS Figure 3.12-6. The visual contrast will be “strong.” Final EIS Vol. 2 at 4.12-13. BLM must clarify how this project complies with the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail Comprehensive Plan and the Rawlins RMP direction for the trail. BLM must also disclose and consider impacts to any wilderness characteristics found in the Phase I Development area, and ways to mitigate impacts to those characteristics.
Visual Aesthetics	Public		The Sierra Madre rim has been locked for a number of years going overlooking Atlantic Rim and Bridger Pass; how can specific comments be made concerning that area if no access? How many windmills proposed on or just off the rim overlooking Bridger Pass, Atlantic Rim, Ferris/Green Mountains to the far North, the mountains in Northern Colorado, Elk Mtn/Snowy Range? A significant negative impact from that view point for the panoramic vistas.

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Wildlife	Agency-State	X	We recommend the BLM support and consider the findings of on-going monitoring programs for sage-grouse, mule deer, raptors, aquatic resources, and other species as they develop site specific proposals for turbine placement throughout the Chokecherry/Sierra Madre proposal area defined in the EIS.
Wildlife	NGO	X	NWF and WWF are also concerned about impacts to other wildlife on the proposed CCSM site. The Rawlins Resource Management Plan (RMP) identifies much of the CCSM project area as being crucial yearlong habitat for mule deer. RMP FEIS at Map 2-54. The Chokecherry and Sierra Madre Wind Energy Project Final Environmental Impact Statement (CCSM FEIS) states that this area provides crucial habitats for elk, mule deer and pronghorn as well as important travel routes for big game seeking winter ranges or parturition areas outside the project area. In the CCSM FEIS, however, BLM admits that little is understood about the location and use of these big game migration corridors. Still, the site of the haul road identified in the Preferred Alternative (Alternative 1R) of the CCSM FEIS cuts in half a known mule deer migration route. Before permitting this road, BLM must collect sufficient data regarding big game use of the project area and their migration through the area in order to determine whether the proposed location for the haul road is appropriate.
Wildlife	NGO	X	The construction and operation of 1,000 turbines, ancillary facilities and almost 500 miles of roads on lands currently occupied by Greater sage-grouse, raptors, mountain plovers, and mule deer will come at a cost to wildlife habitat and populations. The only real question is how severe the cost will be and whether effective actions can be taken to reduce wildlife impacts. Unfortunately, an honest discussion of the true nature of that cost is not included in the CCSM Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS). The FEIS glosses over the potential for harm with vague promises of mitigation resulting from as yet to be developed wildlife protection plans.

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Wildlife	NGO	X	BLM must fully consider the impacts to other species, including bats, which are particularly susceptible to wind turbine mortality. Impacts to big game, mountain plovers, prairie dogs, and other native species must also be fully considered and addressed, along with associated mitigation measures and those measures' effectiveness. Overall, we ask the BLM to clarify how the Phase I Development will comply with the Endangered Species Act, the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act, and other policies and regulations aimed at species protection and conservation.
Wildlife	NGO		Our wind report, backed by other similar reports, shows the Chokecherry/Sierra Madre Wind Farm to be located in one of the most important wildlife areas in the entire state. Raptors and eagles are cited as the most important segment of wildlife placed at risk by wind energy development in the project area.
Wind Development	NGO	X	Renewable energy is not appropriate everywhere and must be managed in such a way that protects, to the maximum extent possible, wildlife, wild lands and other natural resources and ensures full compliance with all applicable laws.
Wind Development	NGO	X	NWF and WWF are aware that impacts to wildlife from wind energy facilities have not yet been rigorously studied especially indirect impacts, cumulative impacts and population-level impacts. However, Wyoming is home to dozens of existing wind energy facilities that could provide BLM and cooperating agencies with opportunities to conduct longer-term studies on wind-wildlife interactions and to determine whether wind energy development has unacceptable impacts on sensitive species including Greater sage-grouse, bald eagles and golden eagles and on species of importance to Wyoming and other western economies like big game. The largest wind energy project in the country should not serve as the test facility for collecting that data. Moreover, what is already well known about the impact of human activity, roads, and vertical structures on Greater sage-grouse and the impact of turbines on eagles is more than sufficient to raise serious concerns that the CCSM project is the wrong project in the wrong place.

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Wind Development	NGO	X	USFWS Director, Dan Ashe, told AP that his agency is more concerned about climate change than bird kills. “Climate change is really [the] greatest threat that we see to species conservation in [the] long run,” Ashe said. “We have an obligation to support well-designed renewable energy.” NWF and WWF urge BLM to ensure that wind energy projects on public lands are truly “well-designed” and avoid eagle kills.
Wind Development	NGO	X	The more studies that are done on wind turbines and bird kills, the more definitive proof we have that the machines are killing lots of birds. In March, a peer-reviewed study published in the Wildlife Society Bulletin estimated that 573,000 birds per year are killed in the U.S. by wind turbines, including some 83,000 birds of prey. The latest study’s numbers are significantly higher than an official estimate published in 2008 by USFWS that put bird kills by wind turbines at 440,000 per year.
Wind Development	NGO	X	We recognize that the production of traditional fuels such as oil, gas and coal have resulted in significant impacts to fish and wildlife populations and their habitats and the continued use of these fuels could threaten the future of many species. We have encouraged DOI, however, not to repeat the mistakes of its onshore oil and gas program and the agency has vowed that its approach to renewable energy generation will be truly “smart from the start.” Being “smart from the start,” however, means authorizing the right projects in the right locations to ensure that vital fish and wildlife habitats will not be sacrificed. This is particularly critical for wind energy projects where siting is perhaps the most important factor for wildlife outcomes.
Wind Development	NGO	X	At the outset, we state our support for development of renewable energy sources. However, we believe it is crucial to ensure that these projects not create severe or unneeded environmental impacts in their own right.

Issue Type	Commenter	To BLM?	Issue Text
Wind Development	NGO		<p>BCA and ABC support the development of clean, renewable sources of energy such as wind power, but like other forms of energy development, it has to be done responsibly. The BLM and USFWS have in their possession BCA’s in-depth analysis of where and how to responsibly develop wind power projects, titled <i>Wind Power in Wyoming: Doing It Smart from the Start</i>. BCA’s <i>Wind Power in Wyoming: Doing It Smart from the Start</i> analysis has been virtually replicated by former Wyoming Governor Dave Freudenthal’s office and by other independent groups such as The Nature Conservancy. Our wind report, backed by other similar reports, shows the Chokecherry/Sierra Madre Wind Farm to be located in one of the most important wildlife areas in the entire state.</p>
Wind Development	Public		<p>The places where wind farms can generate the most power seem to coincide with areas used by wild birds of many kinds for migration and other activities necessary to their lives.</p>
Wind Development	Public		<p>I believe we can have both sustainable energy and maintain our areas very special wildlife...and not have to choose one at the expense or loss of the other.</p>
Wind Development	Public		<p>Wind farms have been promoted and mistakenly seen as green energy. Instead they just create another industrial zone. This can easily be noted by adding up the impacts. These include all the access and collector roads, a new train line, a new power line and the manufacturing impacts of 1000 turbines. Once the sites are altered with roads and concrete pads, they will be permanently transformed and rendered useless for any other multiple uses.</p>

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Appendix F

**Confidential:
Stakeholder, Agency, and Tribal Mailing Lists**

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