



Department of Energy

Golden Field Office
1617 Cole Boulevard
Golden, Colorado 80401-3393

September 9, 2009

DOE/EA 1584

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT FOR THE SAND POINT WIND INSTALLATION PROJECT SAND POINT, ALASKA

AGENCY: U.S. Department of Energy, Golden Field Office

ACTION: Finding of No Significant Impact

SUMMARY: In accordance with the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) implementing regulations, DOE evaluated the potential environmental impacts that would likely result from the construction and operation of the Sand Point Wind Installation Project in Sand Point, Alaska.

Based on an action by the U.S. Congress, the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) has funding available to support the Alaska Energy Authority (AEA)'s Alaska Wind Energy Program. AEA proposes to provide funding received from DOE to Aleutian Wind Energy, LLC (AWE) to support the installation of a high penetration wind system, consisting of two 500 kilowatt (kW) Vestas V39 wind turbines, at the existing Tanadgusix Corporation (TDX) Power generation facility in Sand Point, Alaska. The proposed project would provide a cost effective and clean source of electricity for the City of Sand Point, reduce overall diesel fuel consumption, and decrease air emissions associated with the consumption of diesel fuel. All discussion, analysis and findings related to the potential impacts of the proposed project are contained in the Final EA. The Final EA is hereby incorporated by reference.

The proposed turbine sites are located at a similar elevation of approximately 164 ft, approximately 0.3 miles from marine waters, and adjacent to Sand Point residential and commercial areas. Turbine 1 would be located in a vacant lot currently owned by Trident Seafoods. Turbine 2 would be located approximately 335 ft southeast of Turbine 1. The turbine locations are accessible via the Sand Point local service road. Each wind turbine would be mounted on a 131 ft (40 m), free-standing, monopole unsupported by guy wires. The towers would be approximately 335 ft apart. Each turbine has three blades with a rotor diameter of 128 ft (39 m), producing a rotor-swept area of 12,852 square feet (ft²) (1,194 square meters [m²]). The wind turbines would be integrated with the existing



diesel generator into the power distribution system so no new power transmission lines or other support structures would be needed.

The EA contains information on contacts and correspondence with Federal, state, municipal, borough, tribal, and regional organizations. Individuals and organizations contacted were provided with proposed project information and an opportunity to comment. The Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association, with funding from the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), conducted elements of the scoping process on behalf of DOE. Information regarding the proposed project and EA process was presented to the public via door-to-door visits and public information meetings in Sand Point. Posters referencing the proposed project were displayed at several public places in Sand Point.

Fifty-three comments were collected in support of the proposed project during the scoping process. DOE has consulted with Federal, State and Tribal organizations regarding the potential environmental impacts associated with the proposed project. DOE sent consultation letters to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) of Alaska, and the Department of Defense (DOD), including the Department of the Air Force, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), and the Alaska Department of Natural Resources (regarding the Alaska Coastal Management Program [ACMP]). The Tribal organizations consulted on the proposed project include the Qagan Tayagungin Tribe, Pauloff Harbor Tribe and the Unga Tribe. Copies of the correspondence received from these agencies and Tribes are included in the EA.

The EA was released to the public for a 30-day comment period, which ended on August 3, 2009. This allowed interested individuals to provide comments for DOE's consideration prior to any final decision on the proposed project. DOE received no comments from State or Federal agencies, tribes or the public during this 30-day comment period.

DETERMINATION: Based on the information in the Final EA (DOE/EA-1584), DOE determines that funding the Sand Point Wind Installation Project does not constitute a major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment, as defined by the National Environmental Policy Act.

The applicant-committed environmental protection measures identified in the Final EA shall be incorporated and enforceable through DOE's funding award to AWE/TDX. The measures include:

- Areas of bare soil would be revegetated with native plant materials after construction to minimize soil erosion. Silt fences would be used as necessary to prevent runoff from disturbed areas from affecting adjacent areas.
- AWE/TDX will conduct post-construction surveys to assess the potential for bird collisions with the wind turbines and notify the USFWS immediately if any Endangered Species Act (ESA)-listed species are found during the post-construction mortality surveys and will consult with them regarding the need for any additional applicant committed measures.

- Anti-perching devices will be placed on each turbine nacelle (if necessary) to discourage perching or nesting on the turbines, which would greatly increase the potential for bird collisions.
- Anti-perching devices will be installed on electric poles in adjacent areas to discourage perching and reduce the potential for electrocution, especially for bald eagles.
- The turbine towers will not have external ladders or other structures that would allow birds to perch anywhere near the turbine blades.
- AWE/TDX would remove the old Harry Foster towers at the time of construction, thus removing one of the well-used perches for bald eagles and other resident birds in the area.
- Structures with guy wires will be avoided. The turbine towers will be self-supporting monopoles.
- Electric transmission lines from the wind turbines to the TDX power plant will be buried below ground.
- Lighting on the turbine towers will be limited to what is necessary for aviation safety, as determined by the FAA.
- A post-construction monitoring plan will be implemented for one year, starting immediately after construction, to determine if birds are killed by collisions with the turbines.
- If any historical or cultural resources are identified which have potential conflicts with the project, applicant committed measures will be developed to minimizing the potential impacts.
- All construction operations would occur during normal working hours.
- The construction and operation of the Proposed Action will comply with all required regulatory statutes set forth by federal, state, and local regulatory agencies, including FAA Advisory circular 70/7460-1K.

The preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement is not required, and DOE is issuing this Finding of No Significant Impact.

Copies of the Final EA are available at the DOE Golden Field Office Public Reading Room website at http://www.eere.energy.gov/golden/Reading_Room.aspx, or from:

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