

Preamble to CRCC Best Management Practices

Approved December 17, 2010

Background

The Colorado Renewables and Conservation Collaborative (CRCC) is an informal group of representatives from the renewable energy industry and the conservation community whose purpose is to constructively and proactively address conservation concerns related to renewable energy development in Colorado. The CRCC agreed upon the following Best Management Practices (BMPs) to further responsible renewable energy development.

CRCC supports the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Wind Turbine Recommendations as developed by the Federal Advisory Committee (FAC recommendations). The CRCC BMPs are intended to enhance and be a Colorado-specific complement to these recommendations and not to replace them. To this end, certain concepts and specific statements from the draft FAC have been incorporated directly into various BMPs where the CRCC agreed these reflected best practices applicable to Colorado. These concepts and statements are not meant to be comprehensive with regard to the draft FAC. The CRCC does not make any representation as to the level of applicability or detail that may be included in the entire draft FAC recommendations as approved or modified. CRCC will continue to review the FAC recommendations as they are updated or approved.

Applicability

The BMPs are science-based and address high-priority Colorado resource concerns. They are widely applicable to diverse projects in various settings in Eastern Colorado. They are also flexible enough to allow multiple approaches for conservation and mitigation actions associated with wind energy development specific to individual development projects. The BMPs must be accompanied by scientific surveys for the user to both understand unique site conditions and to successfully implement BMP measures.

The CRCC encourages the use of these BMPs by prospective wind energy developers, non-government stakeholders, landowners, and government agencies in all phases of siting wind projects. They apply to new utility-scale wind energy projects using current commercial technologies, but not necessarily to operating wind generation facilities or to projects in an advanced stage of development. The BMPs are designed to address wind turbine project areas including but not limited to the turbine string or array, access roads, ancillary buildings, and the above- and below- ground electrical collection lines. They are not intended to specifically address high-voltage transmission generation tie-lines nor transmission beyond the point of interconnection to the transmission system.

Authority

The use of these BMPs is voluntary; they are not legally binding or regulatory in nature. The BMPs are not themselves law; prospective project developers must comply with all applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations. They do, however, aid developers in conforming with the language of the Colorado Code of Regulations (4 CCR 723-3) that developers, in consultation with the Colorado Division of Wildlife, “avoid, minimize, and/or mitigate” impacts using “good faith efforts.”

Process

The BMPs reflect the best available science at the time of consensus approval and will be periodically updated as new consensus, science, or technology emerges. The BMPs developed by the CRCC during this collaborative process will be subject to ongoing discussion and modification and are intended to be dynamic documents.

User Guide

Each BMP document contains the following sections:

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1. **BACKGROUND AND IDENTIFICATION OF INTERACTION WITH WIND DEVELOPMENT:** This section describes the conservation resource and its known or potential interaction with wind energy development. It specifically addresses only the interaction with wind energy development; it does not provide detailed natural history information.
2. **STATE OF THE SCIENCE:** This section describes the availability of scientific knowledge regarding the interaction between wind energy and the resource. This section may address, for example: How many studies are available that analyze collision mortality risk? Are those studies investigating the resource specifically? Do the studies extrapolate potential interactions based on similar systems?
3. **BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES:** This section provides information on survey recommendations. It also describes conservation measures and is then subdivided into three sections which are presented in order of preference:
 - a. **Avoid:** Describes practices that are predicted to avoid adverse effects to the resource.
 - b. **Minimize:** Discusses alternative practices predicted to minimize adverse effects to the resource.
 - c. **Conservation Offsets (Mitigation):** Provides a list of suitable conservation options that are predicted to restore or mitigate adverse effects.
4. **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND RESOURCES CONSULTED:** References cited and other sources for natural history information are listed in this section. Users should bear in mind that the citations only refer to the facts cited.