



# USDA Forest Service Update

## August 2011

### Subject: Forest Service Wind Energy Directives

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**Issue:** The Forest Service received comments on draft wind energy directives from OMB, DOI-FWS, CEQ, and DOE regarding being consistent in policy development and implementation in the Federal community.

#### **Key Points:**

- The draft directives were modified to reflect the substantial and editorial concerns.
- Comments received were both substantial and editorial in scope.
- Comments received from the Department of Energy (DOE), Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ), the Interior, US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB).
- The final draft wind energy directives were published on August 4, 2011 in the Federal Register.

The Forest Service Wind Energy directives describe the processing of wind-energy applications under special use regulations and policies (36 CFR 251.50). The new directives:

- Add a new chapter 70 “Wind Energy Use” to Forest Service Handbook (FSH) 2709.11
- Add a new chapter 80 “Monitoring at Wind Energy Sites” to FSH 2609.13
- Make minor revisions to Forest Service Manual 2709, “Energy Generation and Transmission”
- Make minor revisions to FSH 2709.11 Chapter 40, “Special Uses Administration”

#### **Background:**

Wind energy is often better suited to large landscapes with consistent windy conditions. The US Forest Service recognizes that all energy production and transmission is an appropriate use of USFS lands. An assessment performed by the DOE’s National Renewable Energy Laboratory indicated approximately 8 million acres of USFS lands with a maximum development potential of approximately 139,000 megawatts of wind energy.

The draft agency directives were published in the Federal Register in September of 2007 for a 60-day public comment period. In response to requests for extension, the public comment period was extended from November to January 23, 2008. The Forest Service received 5,640 comments. After performing an analysis of the comments, the Forest Service responded to approximately 100 specific issues generated from the comments.

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