

Comment Period Reopens for Midwest Wind Energy Conservation Plan

Written by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Wednesday, 03 October 2012 13:38

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The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has reopened the comment period for accepting information and ideas from the public on a proposal to develop a Habitat Conservation Plan for wind energy facilities in the Midwest. The new comment period ends Dec. 3, 2012.

The Service is leading development of a Habitat Conservation Plan for the Midwest that will conserve endangered species, such as the Indiana bat, and promote development of clean energy. Partners in the development of this plan are eight Midwestern states, the American Wind Energy Association, representing a consortium of wind energy companies, and The Conservation Fund. The Service is asking the public to help identify issues that are important to them as the plan is developed. The incidental take permit(s) will cover participating wind energy facilities in Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio and Wisconsin.

While it is well known that some species of bats are particularly vulnerable to striking turbines at wind energy facilities, the purpose of the plan is to develop conservation measures such as siting of turbines or facilities, minimizing adverse effects from construction and operations, and mitigation of adverse impacts through the development of a strategic mitigation strategy for the long-term conservation of species. The Endangered Species Act makes it illegal to “take” – harm, harass or kill -- animals on the Endangered Species List; therefore a permit is needed if take is expected to happen. The proposed plan is required to obtain an incidental take permit(s) for participating wind energy facilities in the Midwest.

The Service is requesting information and comment concerning the planning process, permitting approach, the interaction of wind facilities and species, scientific data that may help inform the plan or monitoring of impacts, and any other information that interested parties would like to offer. Comments may be mailed to: Regional Director, Attn: Rick Amidon, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Ecological Services, 5600 American Blvd. West, Suite 990, Bloomington, MN 55437-1458; faxed to: [612/713-5292](tel:6127135292) (Attn: Rick Amidon); or E-mailed to: midwestwindhcp@fws.gov

. The deadline for receiving comments is December 3, 2012.

More information on habitat conservation plans and endangered wildlife can be found at: www.fws.gov/midwest/endangered

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. Information about the role that the Service plays in wind energy development and the impacts of wind energy development on wildlife can be found at www.fws.gov/midwest/wind

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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. Connect with our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/usfws, follow our tweets at www.twitter.com/usfwshq, watch our YouTube Channel at <http://www.youtube.com/usfws> and download photos from our Flickr page at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/usfwshq>