

# NEWS RELEASE

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## Three Wyoming Wind Projects Prioritized by BLM for Review

December 8, 2011 – The United States Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has issued its 2012 list of “[Renewable Energy Priority Projects](#)” that will be subjected to priority review by the agency. Three Wyoming wind energy projects are on BLM’s priority list.

The three Wyoming wind projects are among 17 various renewable energy projects chosen in Arizona, California, Nevada and Wyoming. It is the first year that Wyoming renewable energy projects have been chosen for the BLM’s priority review process, which named over two dozen projects in [2010](#) and [2011](#). Proposed infrastructure projects involving federal land require federal environmental analysis and review under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), before any rights-of-way are granted to developers.

On this year’s priority status list from Wyoming:

- The [Chokecherry and Sierra Madre Wind Energy Project](#), proposed by Power Company of Wyoming LLC in central Carbon County south of Rawlins. It will have up to 3,000 MW of output.
- The [Sand Hills Wind Farm Project](#), proposed by Shell Wind Energy in western Albany County. It will have up to 50 MW of output.
- The [White Mountain Wind Energy Project](#), proposed by Teton Wind LLC northwest of Rock Spring in Sweetwater County. It will have up to 360 MW of output.

With a combined generation capacity of up to 3,410 megawatts, these Wyoming wind projects have nearly as much nameplate capacity as all of the other 14 wind, solar and geothermal priority projects, combined. Information on all 2012 priority projects is at

[http://www.blm.gov/wo/st/en/prog/energy/renewable\\_energy/2012\\_priority\\_projects.html](http://www.blm.gov/wo/st/en/prog/energy/renewable_energy/2012_priority_projects.html)

“Wyoming’s top-ranked wind resources and high capacity factors in the 40-percent-plus range mean these wind projects will generate very cost-effective, very reliable supplies of renewable energy to help meet demands in California and other Western states,” said Loyd Drain, Executive Director, Wyoming Infrastructure Authority. “With two Wyoming export transmission lines also [recently selected](#) for acceleration through accelerated federal permitting processes – TransWest Express and Gateway West – Wyoming is well poised to continue its leadership in generating and delivering energy resources to power America.”

The 725-mile TransWest Express Transmission Project is a 600 kV, 3,000 MW direct current (HVDC) transmission line to deliver high-capacity, cost-effective Wyoming wind energy to utility customers in the California-Nevada-Arizona market. It is being developed by TransWest Express LLC, an independent transmission developer, and Western Area Power Administration, part of the U.S. Department of Energy.

Gateway West includes 1,100 miles of new 230 kV and 500 kV AC lines between the Windstar Substation near Glenrock, Wyoming, and the Hemingway Substation near Melba, Idaho. It is being developed by Idaho Power and Rocky Mountain Power to address long-term native-load needs and federal open transmission system access obligations. Any capacity on the Gateway system that is used by third parties will be paid for by those third parties and the revenue credited back to Rocky Mountain Power’s retail customers thereby reducing their costs.

“Wyoming appreciates BLM’s efforts to accelerate the responsible use of federal lands for new energy infrastructure investments that our electrical grid needs, which also will bolster economic development and job creation. These are high-quality jobs in the manufacturing and construction sectors of the economy”, Drain added

[In September](#), the Western Electric Coordinating Council (WECC), which coordinates the bulk electric system across the Western U.S. and Canada, released a U.S. Department of Energy-funded study highlighting the value of Wyoming wind. The study made clear that using high-capacity Wyoming wind energy would significantly help in meeting a portion of California’s renewable energy demand and would cost California ratepayers far less than using some local solar energy.

#### **Contact Information:**

For more information, contact Loyd Drain, Executive Director, Wyoming Infrastructure Authority at 307.635.3573 or [loyd.drain@wyo.gov](mailto:loyd.drain@wyo.gov). Visit the Wyoming Infrastructure Authority website at [www.wyia.org](http://www.wyia.org) to learn more about the transmission activity in Wyoming.

#### **About the Wyoming Infrastructure Authority:**

The WIA, an instrumentality of the State, was created by the State Legislature in 2004 to diversify and expand the Wyoming economy through improvements in the state’s electric transmission infrastructure and to facilitate the consumption of Wyoming energy. The authority is governed by a Board of Directors composed of five members appointed by the Governor, with the advice and consent of the Senate. It is responsible for promoting the planning, development and financing of transmission facilities in the State including associated generation. In addition, the WIA has \$1 billion in bonding authority relative to the financing of transmission infrastructure in Wyoming.