

DES 05-23

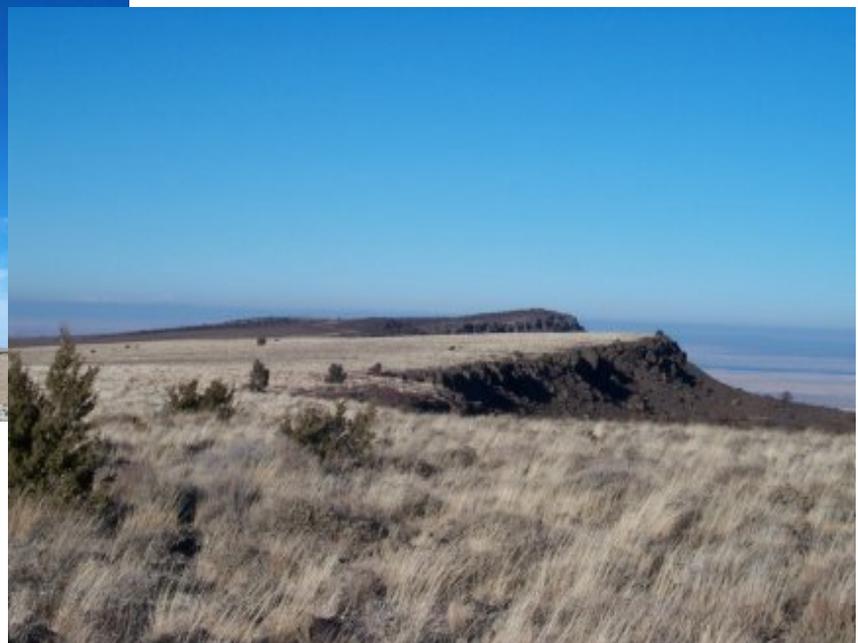


**U.S. Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management  
Twin Falls District  
Burley Field Office  
Cassia County, Idaho**

**May 2005**



**DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT  
FOR THE PROPOSED COTTEREL WIND  
POWER PROJECT  
AND DRAFT RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN AMENDMENT**





**DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT FOR THE  
PROPOSED COTTEREL WIND POWER PROJECT AND  
DRAFT RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN AMENDMENT**

*Prepared for*

U.S. Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management  
Twin Falls District  
Burley Field Office  
Cassia County  
15 East, 200 South  
Burley, Idaho 83318

Serial Number IDI-33676

DES 05-23

*On behalf of*

Windland, Inc  
Suite 804A  
10480 Garverdale Court  
Boise, ID 83704

*and*

Shell WindEnergy, Inc.  
Suite 1042  
910 Louisiana  
Houston, TX 77002

May 2005





# United States Department of the Interior



## BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Burley Field Office  
15 East 200 South  
Burley, Idaho 83318  
(208) 677-6641

<http://www.id.blm.gov/offices/burley>

Reply to: 2800, IDI-33676 (ID220)

June, 2005

Dear Interested Reader:

Enclosed for your review and comment is the *Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Proposed Cotterel Wind Power Project and Draft Resource Management Plan Amendment* (DEIS). The Applicant, Windland, Inc., in partnership with Shell Wind Energy, Inc. (a subsidiary of the Royal Dutch/Shell Group), has submitted a right-of-way application to the Bureau of Land Management, Twin Falls District, Burley Field Office (BLM), requesting to build a 190-240 megawatt, wind-powered electrical generation facility on the ridgeline of Cotterel Mountain, roughly 15 miles east of the city of Burley, and situated between the towns of Albion and Malta, located in Cassia County, Idaho.

A Draft Resource Management Plan Amendment is included in this DEIS. The proposed project and action alternatives are not in conformance with the BLM *Cassia Resource Management Plan, 1985* (Cassia RMP), which does not allow the granting of rights-of-way in the proposed project area. Therefore, the Cassia RMP must be amended if an action alternative is selected.

Based on the analysis of the proposed action and alternatives to the proposed action, the reader is being informed that the **agency preferred alternative at this time is Alternative C, Modified Proposed Action**. A complete description of Alternative C and all other alternatives can be found in this DEIS.

This DEIS was prepared in accordance with the *National Environmental Policy Act, 1969* (NEPA) and with applicable laws and regulations passed subsequent to NEPA. It is intended to provide the public and agency decision makers with a complete and objective evaluation of impacts, beneficial and adverse, resulting from the Proposed Action and all reasonable alternatives.

To ensure a complete analysis, we are asking you to help by reviewing this DEIS and providing comments. The comment period for this document will close 90 days following the publication of the Notice of Availability by the Environmental Protection Agency in the Federal Register. Three public meetings will be scheduled, one in Boise, one in Burley, and one in Albion, Idaho during the comment period to discuss the findings disclosed in this DEIS. The dates, times and exact location of the public meetings will be announced through one or more sources (project newsletter, local news papers, or via website at [www.id.blm.gov/planning/cotterel](http://www.id.blm.gov/planning/cotterel)). A copy of the DEIS will be posted to this website.

Please send your written comments to: via mail      Scott Barker, Project Manager  
Bureau of Land Management  
15 East, 200 South  
Burley, Idaho 83318

via fax:      (208) 677-6699

via email: [id\\_cotterelwind@blm.gov](mailto:id_cotterelwind@blm.gov)  
hyperlink: [id\\_cotterelwind@blm.gov](mailto:id_cotterelwind@blm.gov)

The BLM will review and analyze the comments received and will then publish a Final EIS/Proposed Plan Amendment and Record of Decision in 2006. Those who do not comment on the DEIS, or otherwise participate in this EIS process, may have limited options to appeal or protest the final decision. Federal court decisions have ruled that environmental objections that could have been raised at the draft stage may be waived if not raised until after completion of a Final EIS. This is to ensure substantive comments and objections are made available to the BLM when they can be meaningfully considered and responded to in the Final EIS.

Comments received on the DEIS, along with comments received during scoping or at other stages of this process, will be placed into the Administrative Record, where they will be available for public review. **Please be aware that information, such as addresses and phone numbers, may be viewed and copied by anyone with access to these public files in this open process.**

To be most helpful, comments on the DEIS should be specific, mentioning particular pages or chapters where appropriate. Comments may address the adequacy of the DEIS, the merits of the alternatives, or the procedures followed in the preparation of this document as called for under NEPA and its implementing regulations.

For a comment to be considered to have substance, it should:

- Provide new information pertaining to the proposed action or an alternative;
- Identify a new issue or expand upon an existing issue;
- Identify a different way to meet the underlying need;
- Provide an opinion regarding an alternative, **including the basis or rationale for the opinion;**
- Point out a specific flaw in the analysis; or
- Identify a different source of credible research which, if used in the analysis, could result in different effects.

For further information regarding this proposal, you may contact Scott Barker at (208) 677-6678; fax (208) 677-6699; or email [scott\\_barker@blm.gov](mailto:scott_barker@blm.gov).

Thank you for your interest and participation in this analysis.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Wendy Reynolds". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Wendy Reynolds  
Field Office Manager



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**DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT  
FOR THE PROPOSED COTTEREL WIND POWER PROJECT AND  
DRAFT RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN AMENDMENT  
BURLEY, CASSIA COUNTY, IDAHO**

**Lead Agency:** U.S. Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management  
Twin Falls District  
Burley Field Office, Burley, Idaho

**Cooperating Agencies:** U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service  
Bonneville Power Administration  
Idaho Department of Lands  
Bureau of Reclamation  
Cassia County Commissioners

**Participating Agency:** Idaho Department of Fish & Game

**Tribal Governments:** Shoshone-Paiute Tribes  
Shoshone-Bannock Tribes

**Responsible Official:** Assistant Director  
Bureau of Land Management  
Washington, D.C.

**Further Information:** Wendy Reynolds, Field Office Manager or  
Scott Barker, Project Manager  
BLM Burley Field Office  
15 East, 200 South  
Burley, Idaho 83318  
(208) 677-6641  
e-mail: [wendy\\_reynolds@blm.gov](mailto:wendy_reynolds@blm.gov)  
[scott\\_barker@blm.gov](mailto:scott_barker@blm.gov)

**ABSTRACT:** Windland, Inc., a Boise-based, private wind energy development company has submitted a right-of-way application to construct, operate and maintain a wind energy facility along the Cotterel Mountains near the towns of Albion, Malta, and Burley, in Cassia County, Idaho. Windland, Inc. is in partnership with Shell WindEnergy, Inc., a subsidiary of the Royal Dutch/Shell Group. The proposed wind energy facility would occupy approximately 16 miles of ridgeline along Cotterel Mountain, consist of a single linear north-south string of turbines situated primarily on public lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management, Burley Field Office, Burley, Idaho. There is a small amount of Idaho State land and privately-owned land associated with the proposed project.

This Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) has been completed which analyzes four alternatives in detail: Alternative A (No Action); Alternative B (Proponent's Proposed Action); Alternative C (Modified Proposed Action); and Alternative D (Minimum turbine string action). Other agencies may tier to this analysis for any decisions they may make associated with this proposed project.

At this time, Alternative C has been identified as the preferred alternative after having considered the environmental impacts to public lands and the opportunities for use of those lands, which would benefit the most people over the longest term.

This Draft EIS also contains a proposed amendment to the Cassia Resource Management Plan, 1985, that could amend this plan to allow for the granting of a right-of-way for the development of a wind energy facility. Both the analysis disclosed in the DEIS and the proposed plan amendment are available for comment.

**DISCLAIMER**

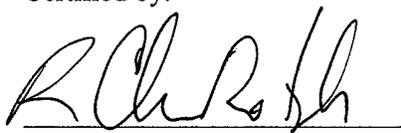
National Environmental Policy Act Disclosure Statement  
Bureau of Land Management Draft Environmental Impact Statement  
Cotterel Mountain Wind Power Project

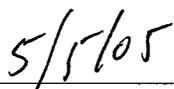
The President's Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations at 40 CFR 1506.5© require that consultants preparing an environmental impact statement (EIS) execute a disclosure specifying they have no financial or other interest in the outcome of the project. The term "Financial interest or other interest in the outcome of the project" for the purposes of this disclosure is defined in the March 23, 1981, guidance "Forty Most Asked Questions Concerning CEQ's National Environmental Policy Act Regulations," 46 FR 18026-18038 at Questions 17a and b.

"Financial or other interest in the outcome of the project" includes "any financial benefits such as promise of future construction or design work in the project, as well as indirect benefits the contractor is aware of (e.g., if the project would aid proposals sponsored by the firm's other clients)." 46 FR 18026-18038 at 18031.

In accordance with the above-referenced regulatory requirements, URS Group, Incorporated has prepared this Draft EIS on behalf of the Bureau of Land Management and declares no financial or other interest in the outcome of the proposed project.

Certified by:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Glenn Roberts, Vice President

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

URS Group, Incorporated  
1750 Front Street, Suite 100  
Boise, Idaho 83702

