

Western Renewable Energy Zones
Environment & Lands Work Group Meeting
September 22 - 23, 2008
Denver, CO

MEETING SUMMARY – E&L BREAKOUTS

Action Items & Next Steps

Decision Items:

- E&L agreed that all land types previously referred to as Box 1 will be added to a list of avoidance areas and sent to NREL/Black & Veatch for mapping as avoidance areas.
- E&L agreed that some land types previously referred to as Box 3 lands would also be added to the list of avoidance areas and sent to NREL/Black & Veatch for mapping as avoidance areas.
- Remaining Box 3 lands will be added to a list of sensitive lands and will be sent to NREL/Black & Veatch for mapping as sensitive areas.
- E&L decided to work with specific categories for lands and do away with references to “boxes.” The categories are as follows, however the labels for each category may be further refined.
 - Avoid (includes statutory/regulatory exclusions as well as consensus avoid areas)
 - Sensitive (these will be further categorized in the process)
 - Avoid
 - Minimize impacts
 - Mitigate impacts
- E&L will move forward to collect information on sensitive lands and species from sources other than the states.
- E&L developed a draft, brainstorm list of sensitive lands/species and will begin collecting data for items on the list. Species-specific data will be sent to the Western Governors’ Wildlife Council’s (WGWC) State Task Group (STG).

Next Steps:

- WGA will coordinate with NREL, Black & Veatch and NatureServe to see what data they already have to map avoidance and sensitive areas, and when they can be mapped.
- WGA will update the list of avoidance areas and sensitive land areas for mapping. These lists will be sent to NREL, Black & Veatch for mapping, as well as work group members, and posted on the E&L website for public review.
- Sue Bonnyman will follow-up with a recommendation for how to categorize British Columbia’s National Marine Conservation Areas, and will update the mapping list to include items specific to British Columbia that should be mapped as sensitive.
- WGA will type up the brainstormed list of sensitive lands-species that members generated on Day 2 of the meeting. This list will be sent to the work group for further additions and information on data sources. WGA will also post the list on the E&L website to solicit public comments, particularly additions to the list and information on data sources.
- Work Group members and observers will provide additional items to the sensitive lands/species list, including any know sources of data. Work group members are also asked to circulate the list within their constituencies for comment.
- Work Group members may volunteer to participate in a small subgroup to work with NREL and Black & Veatch on the mapping process.
- Co-chairs will meet with ZITA co-chairs to begin discussing additional coordination among the work groups and specific questions E&L outlined for ZITA.
- Co-chairs will work with WGA and the Coordinating Group to make sure E&L questions for the

Technical Committee are considered.

- WGA will revise the E&L work plan timeline based on meeting conversations.
- WGA will develop an approach for clear coordination between E&L and the STG.

Identify Sensitive Lands/List of Data

Work Group members began by discussing land types that had been previously identified on conference calls as lands where development is precluded by statute or regulation, and lands where development is not legally precluded but where conflicts to development may exist. After some conversation, members agreed to send those land types to NREL and Black & Veatch for mapping. Statutory and regulatory exclusions will be mapped as avoidance areas on the WREZ maps, as well as some non-statutory land types where the group was able to reach consensus that the land type warranted exclusion from REZs. The remaining non-statutory lands identified will be sent to NREL and Black & Veatch to be mapped initially as “sensitive.” Later in the zone identification process the work group will categorize these sensitive areas further into areas where development should be avoided, where impacts from development should be minimized and where impacts from development should be mitigated. The work group decided that they would no longer try to fit land types into “boxes” and developed the following broad categorization for lands. There was an understanding that these categories may be refined further throughout the process.

- Exclude/Avoid
 - o Regulatory/statutory exclusions
 - o Areas agreed to avoid by consensus
- Sensitive (lands, resources and/or species)
 - o Avoid
 - o Minimize
 - o Mitigate

The work group will work with NREL, Black & Veatch and NatureServe to determine what data is already available and what additional data will need to be collected. The primary focus will be to display maps of avoidance areas to the Technical Committee at their meeting on October 15-16 in Denver. Following that deadline, the priority will be placed to identify and map additional avoid and sensitive areas by December 31 for the Technical Committee to consider in developing proposed REZs.

After deciding on lands to map as avoid and sensitive, the work group had a brainstorming session to begin to identify additional sensitive lands, resources and species that should be considered in the REZ identification process. An initial list was documented and data sources were listed when possible. Next steps for the work group are to determine a strategy for enhancing the brainstormed list and collecting available data. This strategy may include outreach to stakeholder groups and opportunities for public comment. The work group will map sensitive land areas and will funnel species-specific data to the State Task Group – a subgroup of the Wildlife Corridor initiative’s Western Governors’ Wildlife Council – for consideration.

Status of Western Governors’ Wildlife Council (WGWC) – formerly WWHC

The Western Governors’ Wildlife Council has been formed and held its first conference call on September 18. The Council is still in the process of reviewing and adopting its work plan, which includes many follow-up activities from the Wildlife Corridors initiative, including mapping state crucial habitat and impacted species for inclusion in the WREZ project. The Council also still needs to identify representatives for the State Task Group (STG). The STG will be the liaison body coordinating wildlife mapping efforts between the WREZ Environment & Lands Work Group and the Council. The E&L work

group will work primarily with the STG in their mapping effort, however the Council will ultimately approve the STG's work.

The E&L work group is planning to be closely involved with the work of the STG in identifying crucial habitat and impacted species. The STG is responsible for collecting and reviewing data from the state wildlife agencies and from outside sources recommended by E&L. Work group members discussed the importance of coordinating with work previously done in the Wildlife Corridors initiative and decided to begin their effort of identifying sources for wildlife data outside of state agencies and, when possible, collecting that data and funneling species-specific information directly to the STG. As the STG forms, WGA will work to identify specific ways to increase the coordination between E&L and the STG.

Questions for WREZ Technical Committee ZITA Work Group

Throughout the meeting work group members identified the important topics to address with the WREZ Technical Committee as well as the ZITA work group. The E&L co-chairs and WGA staff will bring issues to the Technical Committee for consideration, and co-chairs for each work group will meet to begin addressing the work group issues.

For Technical Committee:

- The possibility of ranking or rating REZs based on environmental impact. This would be in addition to the cost curve ranking.
- The role of E&L in Phase II conceptual transmission planning.
- How to address gaps in data collected.

For ZITA:

- How avoidance areas will influence the REZ boundaries. How to avoid the “doughnut” effect where a REZ surrounds a major avoidance area. And how to treat smaller avoidance areas that may be located inside a REZ.
- How will E&L data be reflected on the maps (i.e. reflecting sensitivity categories of avoid, requiring minimization of impacts and requiring mitigation of impacts)?
- How can cost curves consider mitigation costs? Costs associated with minimization of impacts?
- How will transmission impacts be considered? What is the analytical envelope?
- Should E&L provide a detailed list of assumptions on the scale of impacts?
- Identify strategy to refine interaction between E&L and ZITA.

Revised Work plan

Towards the end of the two-day meeting work group members reviewed the upcoming project milestones for developing candidate study areas and proposed REZs, and identified the following work group milestones:

- Between September 24 and October 15
 - Work with consultants to map agreed upon avoidance areas and sensitive areas.
 - Post list for public comment.
- Between September 24 and December 31
 - Add to brainstorm sensitive resources/species list and work to identify additional data sources.
 - Solicit data from other sources and send species-specific data to STG.
 - Work with consultants to accurately map avoidance areas and sensitive areas – focusing on avoidance areas to help influence the boundaries of the proposed REZs.

WGA will prepare more detailed revisions to the existing work plan and circulate to work group members (see attached).

Public Comment Process

Work group members raised the importance of incorporating public comments into the E&L process, starting with the list of avoidance and sensitive areas sent to consultants so that the public is aware of decisions E&L is making. Members also will make the brainstorm list of sensitive resources/species and know data sources available for public comment on the WREZ website. The intent is to encourage transparency for the E&L process so that the public understands the thought process behind excluding some areas or categorizing them as sensitive, but to also solicit feedback and relevant data from those outside of the work group. Posting materials on the WREZ website for public comment is meant to enhance the outreach that individual work group members are making to their constituencies. The work group decided a necessary next step is to outline a process for public comment, including how the comments are collected, synthesized and brought back to the work group for consideration.

Specific sources for public outreach that were mentioned include:

- British Columbia Ministry of Energy's contact list for NGOs in British Columbia
- Contacts from the Joint Ventures program
- Show why lands are mapped as they are to make thought process transparent

Meeting Attendees:

Work Group Members:

Jim Bartridge	California Energy Commission
Sue Bonnyman	British Columbia Ministry of Energy, Mines & Petroleum Resources
Patrick Crist	NatureServe (<i>for Mary Klein</i>)
Pam Eaton (<i>co-chair</i>)	The Wilderness Society
Celia Greenman	Colorado Division of Wildlife
Arthur Haubenstock	BrightSource
Tom Hurshman	BLM (<i>for Kate Winthrop</i>)
Shay LaBray	PacifiCorp (<i>proxy for Brian Weber</i>)
Ron Lehr	AWEA (<i>for Laurie Jodziejewicz</i>)
Julia Levin	National Audubon Society
Mary Murray	Tri-State Generation
Amelia Orton-Palmer	USFWS (<i>for Stefanie Stavrakas</i>)
Brian Rutledge	Audubon WY Office (<i>proxy for Julia Levin</i>)
Janine Van Norman	USFWS (<i>for Stefanie Stavrakas</i>)
Brian Weber (<i>co-chair</i>)	PacifiCorp
Carl Zichella	Sierra Club

Observers:

Kevin Everett	Power Engineers, Inc.
Mark Lausten	U.S. DOE Solar/Sentech
Steve Lindenberg	U.S. DOE
Erik Molvar	Biodiversity Conservation Alliance
Tim Sullivan	The Nature Conservancy
Ron Helinski	American Wind Wildlife Institute
Ed Higginbottom	British Columbia Transmission Corp.

WGA Staff/Facilitation:

Madeleine West	WGA
Will Singleton	Singleton Strategies

WREZ E&L Workplan Timeline

Timeframe	Who	Activity
July 15 – Sept 24	E&LWG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and apply initial criteria for excluding lands based on statutory or regulatory designations.
Sept 24 – October 15		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with NREL and Black & Veatch to map avoidance areas for the Technical Committee meeting October 15 - 16. Post avoidance areas and sensitive lands list for public comment.
Sept 24 – Oct 31	E&LWG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop draft list of “sensitive areas” – including lands and species. Identify other potential sources of data for sensitive lands and species e.g., federal agencies, conservation groups, universities, industry, etc. Solicit data from other sources and funnel wildlife information to STG.
Sept 24 – Nov 1	E&LWG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with NREL and Black & Veatch to map sensitive lands (as data becomes available). Prioritize sensitive lands/species list – focusing discussion and data collection to areas that may be categorized as avoid.
Dec 31		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Present Technical Committee with maps of as many avoidance areas as possible and sensitive areas.
Nov 15 - 30	E&LWG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comment on STG wildlife data request and provide other sources for data collection.
Early 2009	E&LWG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide input to the STG on criteria determining critical habitat and important wildlife corridors.
Early 2009	E&LWG & STG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and comment on draft wildlife overlay maps characterizing wildlife “avoidance” areas.
Early 2009	E&LWG & STG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submit initial wildlife overlay maps that characterize the wildlife values in the REZs, including areas to avoid.
Jan 1 – April 15	E&LWG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop criteria for determining further characterization of the REZs based on lands considerations, namely, areas to “avoid”, areas to “minimize” impacts and areas to “mitigate” impacts. Further categorize non –species specific sensitive lands within REZs based on above criteria. If STG data available use information to further categorize wildlife/crucial habitat areas based on above criteria. Develop guidance for “minimizing” and “mitigating” impacts. These recommendations should assist in developing accurate cost curves to reflect the sensitivities of the land.
April 15	E&LWG & STG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Present WREZ Technical Committee & Steering Committee with final maps categorizing avoid, minimize and mitigate categorization, as well as specific guidance.

