

# **CONVERSE COUNTY, WYOMING**



## **WIND ENERGY SITING REGULATIONS**

**RESOLUTION No: 10-10**  
**Converse County Board of Commissioners**

**A RESOLUTION ADOPTING**  
**CONVERSE COUNTY WIND ENERGY SITING REGULATIONS**

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to Wyoming Statutes §18-5-501 through §18-5-513, the Converse County Commissioners have promulgated the Converse County Wind Energy Siting Regulations for all lands located outside the corporate limits of municipalities in Converse County; and

**WHEREAS**, the adoption of Wind Energy Siting Regulations shall promote public health, safety, convenience and general welfare within Converse County, and

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, by the Board of County Commissioners, Converse County, Wyoming, that the Converse County Wind Energy Siting Regulations be approved and adopted.

**PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED THIS** 15<sup>th</sup> day of November 2010.

BOARD OF CONVERSE COUNTY  
COMMISSIONERS

/s/ Ed Werner  
Ed Werner, Chairman                      Aye - ~~Nay~~

/s/ Mike Colling  
Mike Colling, Vice-Chairman              Aye - ~~Nay~~

/s/ Dave Edwards  
Dave Edwards, Member                      Aye - ~~Nay~~

/s/ Tony Lehner  
Tony Lehner, Member                      Aye - ~~Nay~~

/s/ James H. Willox  
James H. Willox, Member                      Aye - ~~Nay~~

ATTEST: Lucile K. Taylor   
Lucile K. Taylor, Converse County Clerk

Approved and adopted by the Converse County Board of Commissioners November 15, 2010

Approved and adopted as amended May \_\_, 2019.

All references to Wyoming State Statute are current as of the date of adoption

**APPLICATION FOR WIND ENERGY  
CONVERSION SYSTEM (WECS) USE PERMIT**

*(PURSUANT TO W.S. 18-5-501 THROUGH 18-5-513)*

**FOR FACILITIES WITH GROSS GENERATION OF 0.5 MEGAWATTS OR GREATER**

(FOR OFFICE USE ONLY)

CASE NAME/NO. \_\_\_\_\_  
DATE RECEIVED: \_\_\_\_\_ FEE/AMOUNT PAID: \_\_\_\_\_  
PLANNING COMM. DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ RECOMMENDATION BY PLANNING COMM.: \_\_\_\_\_  
COUNTY COMM. DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ TIME: \_\_\_\_\_ DECISION BY CO. COMM.: *APPROVED DENIED*  
CHAIRMAN: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE SIGNED: \_\_\_\_\_

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**NOTE: Each addition or phase of a project must receive separate approval and a separate application for each addition or phase must be submitted for consideration.**

1. Name of Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax #: \_\_\_\_\_  
Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
Relationship of Applicant to Property: \_\_\_\_\_  
(*Owner, Tenant, Lessee, Other*)
2. A description of the Applicant, Owner and Operator, including their respective business structures  
  
Name of Authorized Agent: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Legal Description of the location the proposed WECS Project (please use additional sheets if necessary)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Submit map of project boundary
5. The following items shall be submitted as a project summary with all WECS Project applications.
  - a. Certification that demonstrates reasonable efforts have been undertaken by the applicant to provide notice, in writing, to all owners of land within one (1) mile of the proposed WECS project boundary, and to all cities and towns located within twenty (20) miles of the WECS project boundary. Notice shall include a general description of the project including its location, anticipated dates for commencement of construction and operations, projected number of turbines and the likely routes of ingress and egress.

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Certification that landowners along the path of any new transmission lines have been notified in writing.

Additionally the following shall be submitted:

- i. The name(s), address(es), phone number(s) and email(s) of the Applicant(s), Owner(s) and Operator(s), and names and addresses of all participating property owner(s) owning land included in the project;
- ii. The name(s), address(es), and phone number(s) of all non-participating adjacent property owner(s) within one (1) mile of the WECS project site boundary;
- b. ~~Certification that notice of the proposed wind energy facility will be published in a newspaper of general circulation in Converse County at least twenty (20) days prior to the public hearing with the Converse County Commissioners as required by W.S. 18-5-506. The notice shall include a brief summary of the wind energy facility, invite the public to submit comments and identify the time and date of the hearing. Provide a copy of the publisher's affidavit following publication. (Moved to section detailing Commissioners' processes)~~
- c. Certification that the proposed wind energy facility will comply with all the standards required by W.S. 18-5-504.
- d. Certification that the proposed wind energy facility will comply with all the applicable zoning and county land use regulations, which regulations shall be no less stringent than the standards required by these regulations.
- e. Certification that a written emergency management plan has been submitted for review and comment to the Converse County Fire Warden, the Converse County Emergency Management Coordinator and the Converse County Sheriff.

This plan should include information regarding whether there is a high likelihood for communication interference with local emergency services or local broadcast of residential television, including possible measures for mitigation of potential communication issues if there is a high likelihood for such communication services to be adversely affected.

If the permit is granted, the plan shall be supplemented and revised following construction of the facility and prior to its operation if there are any variations in the facility's construction which would materially impact the original emergency management plan.
- f. Provide a waste management plan that includes an inventory of estimated solid wastes, and a proposed disposal program for the following:
  - i. The construction and operation of the proposed wind energy facility.
  - ii. The eventual decommissioning of the proposed wind energy facility.

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- g. Provide evidence sufficient for the Converse County Commissioners to determine if the proposed wind energy facility has adequate legal access for the following:
  - i. Roads
  - ii. Transmission lines
  - iii. Any other ingress or egress
- h. The application also shall describe how private roadways within the facility will be marked as private roadways and shall acknowledge that Converse County will not accept any dedication of the private roadways to the public use, nor is Converse County responsible for any repairs or maintenance of the private roadways. The application also shall include a current traffic study utilizing traffic count data collected within the last six months, stamped by a Wyoming Professional Engineer, of any public roadways leading to and away from the proposed facility and the Converse County Commissioners shall require the applicant to enter into a reasonable road use agreement for the use of County roads prior to construction of the facility;
- i. Provide a project plan indicating the proposed roadways, tower locations, substation locations, transmission, collector and gathering lines and other ancillary facility components whether inside or outside the project boundary. If the application is granted, the Converse County Board of Commissioners shall require that the project plan be revised to show the final location of all facilities. The project plan should include the following:

A site plan for the installation of a WECS project showing the planned location of each WECS tower, primary structure(s), property lines (including identification of adjoining properties), setback lines, public & private access roads and turnout locations, substation(s), electrical cabling from the WECS tower to the substation(s), ancillary equipment, transmission lines, existing transmission corridor(s), and layout of all significant structures within the geographical boundaries of any applicable setback and any designated Greater Sage Grouse Core Population Areas\*;

\* The current Wyoming Governor's Executive Order 2015-4(WYSGEO 15-4) does not recommend wind development in Greater Sage Grouse Core Population Areas.

A general description of the project, including its approximate total name plate generating capacity; the potential equipment manufacturer(s) and type(s) of WECS(s), number of WECS, and name plate generating capacity of each WECS; the maximum height of the WECS tower(s) and maximum diameter of the WECS rotor(s);

If this permit is granted, it will be for the equipment described within this permit.

- j. Certification that there shall be no advertising or promotional lettering on any tower, turbine, nacelle or blade beyond the manufacturer's or the applicant's logo on the nacelle of the turbine;
- k. Provide a site and facility reclamation and decommissioning plan which indicates the planned life of the wind energy facility and the means by which the facility and its site will be decommissioned and reclaimed at the end of the facility's life and which certifies that any owner of land within the wind energy facility and its site who is not the applicant has been consulted in development of the reclamation and decommissioning plan. Such plan shall comply with all requirements adopted by the Industrial Siting Council under W.S. 35-12-105 (d). If the permit is granted, the plan shall be updated every five (5) years until site reclamation and decommissioning is complete;
- l. For wind energy facilities not meeting the definition of a facility as defined in W.S. 35-12-102 (a)(vii), provide a detailed summary of any significant adverse environmental, social or economic effects that the proposed wind energy facility may have together with any preliminary plans developed to alleviate any of the adverse effects.
- m. A wind energy facility subject to these regulations shall meet the requirements adopted pursuant to W.S. 35-12-105 (d) and (e) regardless of whether the facility is referred to the Industrial Siting Council pursuant to W.S. 18-5-509 or is otherwise subject to the Industrial Siting Act.

**Minimum Standards. (W.S. 18-5-504)**

**NOTE: For all references to tower height, the height shall be measured from the base of the tower to the tip of the blades at the highest height.**

- ~~1. Certify that the base of any tower is located at a distance of no less than one hundred ten percent (110%) of the maximum height of the tower from any property line contiguous or adjacent to the facility, unless waived in writing by the owner of every property which would be located closer than this minimum distance. If waivers are obtained, supply copies of these waivers.~~
- ~~2. Certify that the base of any tower is located at a distance of no less than one hundred ten percent (110%) of the maximum height of the tower from any public road right-of-way. Provide this information on your site plan.~~
- ~~3. Certify that the construction of any tower or other structure, other than underground structures, transmission lines, roadways and structures appurtenant to roadways, at a distance of no less than five and one half (5.5) times the maximum height of the tower, but in no event no less than one thousand (1,000) feet from any platted subdivision unless this restriction is waived in writing by the owners of all land included within the distance specified in this paragraph. If waivers are obtained, supply copies of these waivers.~~

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- ~~4. Certify that the base of any tower is located at a distance of no less than ten (10) times the maximum height of the tower, but in no event less than one thousand (1,000) feet from a permanent residential dwelling or occupied structure, unless waived in writing by the person holding title to the residential dwelling or occupied structure. If waivers are obtained, supply copies of these waivers. In no case shall the distance from the base of any tower be located less than 110% of the maximum height of the tower from a residential dwelling or occupied structure.~~
- ~~5. Certify that the base of any tower is located at a distance of no less than ten (10) times the maximum height of the tower from the limits of any city or town.~~
- ~~6. Certification that notice as required by Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality, Rules and Regulations of the Industrial Siting Council, Chapter 1, Section 9 (e) has been provided to the record owners and claimants of mineral rights located on and under lands where the wind energy facility will be constructed.~~
- ~~7. It is understood that apparatus and construction changes may be implemented after the WECS Use Permit is issued. The Applicant shall notify Converse County of any changes to the information provided in the application summary that occur while any approval of the WECS Use Permit application is pending. Notification of any changes to the information provided in the application during or post construction must be provided to the County for review and approval by the Board of County Commissioners. For purposes of this section, a "change" is defined as any alteration to the scope, purpose, size, or scheduling of the project which would result in different impacts not within the scope of the permit as issued. Within six months of commissioning of any permitted project, the applicant shall submit to the Converse County Board of Commissioners a revised project plan showing the final location of all facilities, including the GPS locations for all towers.~~

(a) The Converse County Board of Commissioners shall not issue a permit for a wind energy facility if that facility:

- (i) Does not comply with standards properly adopted by the Converse County Board of Commissioners for the construction of wind energy facilities, which standards shall not be less stringent than the standards required by W.S.S.18-5-501 through 18-5-513;
- (ii) Would locate the base of any tower at a distance of less than one hundred ten percent (110%) of the maximum height of the tower from any property line contiguous or adjacent to the facility, unless waived in writing by the owner of every property which would be located closer than the minimum distance;
- (iii) Would locate the base of any tower at a distance of less than one hundred ten percent (110%) of the maximum height of the tower from any public road right-of-way;
- (iv) Would construct any tower or other structure, other than underground structures, transmission lines, roadways and structures appurtenant to roadways, at a distance of less than five and one-half (5.5) times the maximum height of the tower, but in no event less than one thousand

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(1,000) feet from any platted subdivision unless this restriction is waived in writing by the owners of all lands included within the distance specified in this paragraph;

- (v) Would locate the base of any tower at a distance of less than five and one-half (5.5) times the maximum height of the tower, ~~but in no event less than one thousand (1,000) feet~~ from a residential dwelling or occupied structure, unless waived in writing by the person holding title to the residential dwelling or occupied structure. If waivers are obtained, supply copies of these waivers. In no case shall the distance from the base of any tower be located less than two (2) times the maximum height of the tower from a residential dwelling or occupied structure.
- (vi) Would locate the base of any tower at a distance of less than one-half (1/2) mile from the limits of any city or town.

(b) No rule, regulation or law promulgated or applied by any county in this state shall adopt a standard less stringent than the minimum standards established in subsection (a) of this section. The minimum standards stated in subsection (a) of this section shall be incorporated into every existing or future county permitting or licensing process to which they are applicable so that no applicant for a permit under this article is required to submit more than one (1) application addressing these standards to any county.

(c) Converse County shall not issue a permit under W.S. 18-5-502(a) until Converse County has adopted rules and regulations governing the notice that the application for a permit must provide to the record owners and claimants of mineral rights located on and under lands where the wind energy facility will be constructed. The rules shall conform to rules adopted by the industrial siting council for the same purpose pursuant to W.S. 35-12-105.

### **Procedure for Processing**

1. The permit application and corresponding fees must be received in the Converse County Special Projects Office.
2. The applicant shall submit twelve paper copies of the permit application as well as one (1) file of the permit in PDF format.
3. The Converse County Special Projects Office will forward the permit application to the Converse County Planning & Zoning ~~Board~~ Commission members.
4. The Converse County Planning & Zoning ~~Board~~ Commission will meet to review the completeness of the submitted permit application.
5. A public hearing with the Converse County Planning & Zoning Commission may be scheduled.
6. If the permit is determined to be incomplete, the Converse County Planning & Zoning ~~Board~~ Commission will outline the additional information which is required.
7. The Converse County Planning & Zoning ~~Board~~ Commission will forward the permit application to the Converse County Board of Commissioners with a recommendation of approval or a recommendation of denial.

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### **Complete applications; notice. (18-5-505)**

Upon receipt of an application, the Converse County Board of Commissioners shall conduct a review of the application to determine if it contains all the information required by W.S. 18-5-503 and any applicable rules and regulations. If the Converse County Board of Commissioners determines that the application is incomplete, it shall within thirty (30) days of receipt of the application notify the applicant of the specific deficiencies in the application. The applicant shall provide the additional information necessary within thirty (30) days of receipt of a request for additional information from the Converse County Board of Commissioners. When the Converse County Board of Commissioners determines that the application is complete it shall notify the applicant that the application is complete and shall provide notice of the date and time at which the hearing required by W.S. 18-5-506 will be conducted.

### **Hearing and public comment. (18-5-506 and 18-5-503(a)(ii))**

The Converse County Board of Commissioners shall hold a public hearing to consider public comment on the application to permit a wind energy facility no less than forty-five (45) days and not more than sixty (60) days after determining that the application is complete. Written comment on the application shall be accepted by the Converse County Board of Commissioners for not less than forty-five (45) days after determining that the application is complete.

The applicant shall provide certification that notice of the proposed wind energy facility will be published in a newspaper of general circulation in Converse County at least twenty (20) days prior to the public hearing with the Converse County Commissioners as required by W.S. 18-5-506. The notice shall include a brief summary of the wind energy facility, invite the public to submit comments and identify the time and date of the hearing. Provide a copy of the publisher's affidavit following publication.

### **Decision of the Board of Commissioners; findings necessary. (18-5-507)**

1. Within forty-five (45) days from the date of completion of the hearing required by W.S. 18-5-506, the Converse County Board of Commissioners shall make complete findings, issue an opinion, render a decision upon the record either granting or denying the application and state whether or not the applicant has met the standards required by these regulations. The decision shall be subject to the remedies provided in W.S. 18-5-508. The Converse County Board of Commissioners shall grant a permit if it determines that the proposed wind energy facility complies with all standards properly adopted by the Converse County Board of Commissioners and the standards required by these regulations.
2. No permit shall be granted if the application is incomplete or if all notices required by W.S. 18-5-503 have not been timely given.
3. A copy of the decision shall be served upon the applicant.

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**Remedies. (W.S. 18-5-508)**

1. Any party aggrieved by the final decision of the Converse County Board of Commissioners may have the decision reviewed by the district court pursuant to Rule 12 of the Wyoming Rules of Appellate Procedure.
2. When a decision is issued after hearing on an application for a permit under these regulations, the decision is final for purposes of judicial review.

**Referral. (W.S. 18-5-509)**

1. If the Converse County Board of Commissioners receives an application to permit a wind energy facility which does not meet the definition of a facility as defined in W.S. 35-12-102 (a)(vii), they may refer the facility to the Industrial Siting Council for additional permitting consistent with the requirements of the Industrial Development Information and Siting Act, W.S. 35-12-101 through 35-12-119, but the provisions of W.S. 39-15-111 and 39-16-111 shall not apply. A referral shall be made only when the Converse County Board of Commissioners find there are potentially significant adverse environmental, social or economic issues which the Converse County Board of Commissioners does not have the expertise to consider or authority to address.
2. Any facility referred to the Industrial Siting Council under this section may apply to the council for a waiver of permit application pursuant to W.S. 35-12-107.
3. Upon receiving a referral pursuant to this section and within fifteen (15) days after receipt of the referral, the director of the department of environmental quality may reject the referral by giving written notice of the rejection to the county making the referral and the applicant. No appeal from the decision of the director under this subsection shall be allowed.
4. A referral made pursuant to this section shall not relieve the Converse County Board of Commissioners from its obligation to consider whether the proposed wind energy facility should be permitted under the standards required by these regulations.
5. A referral made pursuant to this section shall be made no later than thirty (30) days after an application is deemed complete pursuant to W.S. 18-5-505.

**Binding effect. (W.S. 18-5-510)**

Upon referral of a facility to the Industrial Siting Council pursuant to W.S. 18-5-509, the facility shall not be withdrawn from the council's consideration without consent of the council. Any decision by the Council shall be final except as provided in these regulations or pursuant to the remedies provided to other facilities permitted by the council.

### **Revocation or suspension of permit. (W.S. 18-5-511)**

A permit may be revoked or suspended for:

1. Any material false statement in the application or in accompanying statements or studies required of the applicant, if a true statement would have warranted the refusal to grant a permit;
2. Failure to comply with the terms or conditions of the permit after notice of the failure and reasonable opportunity to correct the failure;
3. Violation of these regulations, the rules and regulations adopted pursuant to these regulations or valid orders of the Converse County Board of County Commissioners or the Industrial Siting Council;
4. Failure of the proposed wind energy facility to receive a required permit from the Industrial Siting Council pursuant to the Industrial Development Information and Siting Act, W.S. 35-12-101 through 35-12-119; or
5. Failure of the permitted wind energy facility to:
  - a. Transmit electricity created by wind energy for a period of two (2) consecutive years or more;
  - b. Maintain land rights necessary to operate the wind energy facility.

### **Penalties for violations. (W.S. 18-5-512)**

- (1) No person shall:
  - a. Commence to construct a wind energy facility on or after July 1, 2010 without first obtaining a permit required by these regulations;
  - b. Construct, reconstruct, operate, locate, erect, maintain, enlarge, change or use a wind energy facility, after having first obtained a permit, other than in specific compliance with the permit; or
  - c. Cause any of the acts specified in this subsection to occur.
- (2) Any person violating subsection (1) of this section is liable for a civil penalty of not more than ten thousand dollars (\$10,000.00) for each violation. Each day of a continuing violation constitutes a separate offense.
- (3) Any wind turbine tower or wind generator erected in violation of these regulations shall subject the owner of the tower or generator to a penalty of seven hundred fifty dollars (\$750.00) per day for every tower or generator so erected.

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(4) Any penalties collected pursuant to this section shall be paid and credited as provided by W.S. 8-1-109.

**Fees. (W.S. 18-5-513)**

The Converse County Board of Commissioners upon receipt of an application under these regulations for the permitting of a wind energy facility shall charge the applicant a fee of \$5,000 minimum or \$250 per tower whichever is greater. The Converse County Board of Commissioners shall charge the applicant these permit fees to cover the anticipated administrative costs of processing and considering the application, conducting public hearings, issuing any building permit and overseeing compliance with the permit conditions and requirements.

**Severability.**

If any part, term, or provision of these regulations shall be held void, illegal, unenforceable, or in conflict with any law of a Federal or State government having jurisdiction over these regulation, such part, term, or provision thereof shall be severed from these regulations and the other provisions shall remain in full force and effect.

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