

CALIFORNIA ENERGY COMMISSION

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONERS
1510 NINTH STREET
SACRAMENTO, CA 95814-5512



June 29, 2006

The Honorable Don Maben
Kern County Board of Supervisors
1115 Truxtun Avenue, Room 502
Bakersfield, CA 93301

DOCKET	
06-011-1	
DATE	JUN 29 2006
RECD.	JUL 3 2006

**RE: Statewide Guidelines for Reducing Wildlife Impacts from Wind Development
(Docket 06-011-1)**

Dear Supervisor Maben:

Thank you for writing to the Energy Commission with your concerns about the development of guidelines for wind energy projects. The purpose of this proceeding is to work with the California Department of Fish and Game, local governments, wind developers, and environmentalists to develop voluntary guidelines to reduce the impacts of wind development on birds and bats. The voluntary guidelines would lessen regulatory uncertainty during the environmental review of new projects. Given that wind resources are likely to play an important role in meeting California's Renewable Portfolio Standard, our goal is to encourage wind energy development in the state while minimizing the impacts to wildlife.

We agree that it is essential to consider site-specific differences in this proceeding. One of the issues we will address in developing the guidelines is the kind of information needed to adequately identify, assess, mitigate and monitor the impacts of developing new wind energy projects and re-powering existing facilities. The Energy Commission will also review data and guidelines from numerous different studies, not only in various areas of California, but also in other states and countries. We are proposing to develop voluntary guidelines that are sufficiently flexible to accommodate local concerns and biological resources while providing consistent, science-based methodologies for assessing and mitigating the effects of wind development on wildlife. Please be assured that it has never been our intention or desire to employ a "one size fits all" approach.

This collaborative process is designed to create workable guidelines, such as pre- and post-construction monitoring protocols, and suggested mitigation strategies that can be implemented at the local level. The Renewables Committee held its first hearing on June 9, 2006. Energy Commission staff will be holding a series of workshops this summer and fall to address specific issues. We invite you and your staff to join us whenever possible. Rick York, Biological Resources Unit Supervisor, would be happy to talk with you further. He can be reached at (916) 654-3945. Once again, we appreciate your continued input.

Sincerely,

JOHN L. GEESMAN
Commissioner and Presiding Member
Renewables Committee

JACKALYNE PFANNENSTIEL
Chairman and Associate Member
Renewables Committee