



Industrial Wind Action Group

facts, analysis, exposure of wind energy's real impacts

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ENVIRONMENTAL AND WILDLIFE GROUPS CHARGE INDUSTRY BIAS IN KEMPTHORNE'S SELECTION OF MEMBERS FOR HIGH-LEVEL COMMITTEE ON WIND POWER AND WILDLIFE

Membership of Wind Turbine Guidelines Advisory Committee violates FACA

WASHINGTON D.C. (January 17, 2008) – [In a letter submitted today](#), environmental and wildlife groups¹ called on Secretary of the Interior Dirk Kempthorne to revamp the membership of the Wind Turbine Guidelines Advisory Committee of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. The current membership violates the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), which governs the establishment of federal advisory committees.

“Secretary Kempthorne has clearly skewed the composition of the committee in favor of the industry representatives while ignoring leading experts on critical wildlife impacts,” said Eric R. Glitzenstein of Meyer Glitzenstein & Crystal, the law firm representing the groups. “This is precisely the kind of committee composition that the Federal Advisory Committee Act was designed to prohibit,” he added.

The Wind Turbine Guidelines Advisory Committee was formed to provide advice and recommendations to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service in developing effective measures to avoid or minimize impacts to wildlife and their habitats related to land-based wind energy facilities (see Fed. Reg. 72:11373 (March 13, 2007)). Secretary Kempthorne announced the appointment of 22 people to the committee on October 24, 2007.

¹[Center for Biological Diversity](#); [The Humane Society of the United States](#); [Hawk Migration Association of North America](#); [Industrial Wind Action Group](#); [D. Daniel Boone](#); Maryland Conservation Council; [Save Our Allegheny Ridges](#); [Friends of Blackwater Canyon](#); [Protect the Flint Hills](#); Chautauqua County Citizens for Responsible Wind Power; [Green Berkshires, Inc.](#); [Juniata Valley Audubon](#); Ripley Hawk Watch; [Alliance to Protect Nantucket Sound](#); and [Wildlife Advocacy Project](#).

Under FACA the committee must have balanced points of view represented and the functions to be performed, and will not be inappropriately influenced by any special interest. In their letter, the groups assert that the committee's overall composition clearly violates FACA in several ways.

- No committee members possess research expertise or publication record regarding bats, nor direct knowledge or experience involving bat interactions with wind turbines.

This is a glaring omission in light of [recent reports](#) and [Congressional testimony](#) on the issue of massive bat mortality at wind energy facilities. For example, [a recent study estimated that up to 111,000 bats may be killed](#) every year should only 3,868 MW of wind turbines be constructed within the Mid-Atlantic Highlands regions of VA, WV, MD, and PA. As of today, in those states, there are over 6,300 MW of wind turbines under study for interconnection to the regional electricity grid.

- The committee lacks the requisite expertise regarding bird impacts, especially with respect to effects on migratory birds using the Appalachian mountain ridges in the eastern U.S., despite the fact that dozens of planned wind projects are slated for this part of the country.
- No committee members have significant research, scientific, or regulatory experience with wind energy development and associated wildlife impacts resulting from onshore wind projects in the eastern U.S.

According to the letter, these scientific and technical omissions are especially troubling in light of the many individuals on the committee who either expressly represent or are clearly aligned with the interests of the wind industry.

The groups call on Secretary Kempthorne to appoint appropriate experts to the committee who are experienced in wind energy development in the eastern U.S., where thousands of industrial wind turbines are proposed, and many are already in operation. Several highly-qualified candidates who applied for committee membership but were not appointed are listed in the letter. Their expertise includes both bats and birds and extensive knowledge of nocturnal migration. In addition, the groups encourage the appointment of experts with research experience in forest fragmentation impacts, particularly in the eastern forest region.

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