

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FNSI) UTAH ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION AND OPERATION OF A 2.0 TO 2.9 MEGAWATT WIND TURBINE

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Introduction

The Utah Army National Guard (UTNG) has prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) to address the site-specific impacts from the proposed construction and operations of a 2.0 to 2.9 megawatt (MW) Wind Turbine at Army Garrison Camp Williams, Bluffdale, Utah (AGCW). This EA summarizes results of analyses conducted in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 United States Code [USC] Sections 4321 through 4370), and in accordance with Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations implementing the procedural provisions of NEPA (Title 40, Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] Parts 1500-1508 [40 CFR 1500-1508]). This EA was also prepared in accordance with 32 CFR 651, *Environmental Analysis of Army Actions*, and the Army National Guard (ARNG)'s NEPA Handbook (ARNG 2011). The proposed construction would take place on State of Utah property within the boundaries of AGCW.

1. Description of the Proposed Action and Alternatives

Proposed Action. The Proposed Action is the installation and operation of a 2.0 to 2.9 MW wind turbine at AGCW and includes construction of the necessary appurtenance structures (base, access roads, underground power lines). The project site is located in the northern portion of the Cantonment area, a heavily developed area consisting of logistical support buildings, maintenance buildings, emergency power generation generator, and heated and cold storage buildings.

Through an investigation of energy needs, wind turbine construction requirements, and land availability at AGCW, a 2.0 to 2.9 MW wind turbine was identified as suited to the energy requirements of the facility. A 2.0 to 2.9 MW wind turbine can be tied in to the facility's electrical grid, and when the wind is blowing with corresponding production of electricity, the wind turbine would help supply the facility's electrical loads.

The above ground permanent footprint for the proposed project is approximately 0.25 acre. This footprint includes a reinforced concrete base for the turbine, a gravel access road to connect the turbine to Transportation Avenue, and a new transformer, smart switch, and fiber pull box. The concrete base will be built on a 1.19 acre below ground pad made of engineered fill. The temporary disturbance footprint is approximately 1.7 acres. This includes 1.19 acres of excavation for pad construction, and use of another approximately 0.51 acres for materials and fill staging, assembly of the wind turbine, and new underground electrical and communication lines.

Purpose and Need. The purpose of the Proposed Action is to make the AGCW commercial electrical power grid utility system more efficient with the use of wind power by replacing an aging 225-kilowatt (kW) wind turbine with a 2.0 to 2.9 MW wind turbine. The existing 18-year-old 225 kW wind turbine is an out of date component of the AGCW commercial electrical power grid utility system, and has been operating infrequently since summer 2018. Maintenance costs of that turbine exceed the cost savings it generates.

The 225-kW wind turbine is no longer manufactured, making it very difficult to find replacement parts, and requires extensive man power/servicing to keep producing power. A 2.0 to 2.9 MW wind turbine, and the other existing renewable sources of energy (660 kW wind turbine and 1.1 MW solar panels) will give AGCW the ability to use wind energy more efficiently and accounting for 64% of AGCW energy needs. Therefore, the use of these renewable energy sources would significantly help offset its \$775,000 annual power bill for the facility.

The Proposed Action is needed to enable the National Guard Bureau (NGB) and UTNG to achieve specific goals regarding the use of renewable energy while supporting ongoing mission requirements. These goals have been set by Executive Orders (EOs), legislative acts, and agencies including the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), the Department of Defense (DoD), and the Army National Guard (ARNG). These energy goals seek to increase the efficiency of energy production, delivery and usage, reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, and expand the use of renewable energy. For AGCW, wind has been identified as a readily available, economically feasible source for renewable energy production. Under the Proposed Action, this upgrade will increase onsite wind power producing capabilities to approximately 2.8 times what it is now. Historical energy demand at AGCW is 9,300 megawatts-hours (MWh) per year. AGCW energy needs cost the UTNG approximately \$65,000 per month or \$775,000 per year. Construction of a 2.0 to 2.9 MW wind turbine at AGCW would contribute approximately 4,740 MWh per year to the AGCW power grid, which could offset current power requirements by 63.8%. This level of production would help meet the goals of EO 13834, Regarding Efficient Federal Operations to meet statutory requirements relating to the consumption of renewable energy and electricity.

As such, this renewable energy project will further reduce dependency on fossil fuels and increase energy security and efficiency of AGCW. It will also provide added public relations benefit demonstrating the governments awareness and effort to use new technologies to produce clean energy and renewable resources.

Alternatives Considered. The UTNG considered the Preferred Action Alternative and No Action Alternative along with a reasonable range of alternatives including alternative locations for the action as well as alternative means to accomplish the same objectives. These alternatives were measured against the following siting and design screening criteria:

- Availability of grounds suitable to construct (i.e. previously disturbed)
- Proximity to residences and office buildings
- Site location & design compatible with FAA requirements
- Proximity to existing wind resources
- Project consolidates infrastructure needs
- Generation does not exceed AGCW's energy needs
- Avoids effects to wetlands / wildlife
- Avoids effects to Migratory Birds, Bald and Golden Eagles
- Avoids effects to cultural resources
- Minimizes effects from noise, visual, shadow flicker, and safety concerns
- Potential for future growth

The Preferred Action Alternative would provide the best combination of land resources to sustain quality military training and to maintain and improve unit readiness.

Under the No Action Alternative, UTNG would not pursue the installation of a 2.0 to 2.9 MW wind turbine at AGCW, Bluffdale, and would continue to rely on the electrical grid for purchase of electricity needs at this facility. Analysis of the No Action Alternative is required under CEQ regulations (40 CFR 1502.14[d]). However, the No Action Alternative is not a viable option because it does not meet the purpose of and need for the Proposed Action. This alternative is carried forward to provide a comparative baseline against which to analyze the effects of the Proposed Action, as required under the CEQ Regulations (40 CFR Part 1502.14).

The alternatives listed below meet the purpose and need; however, they were eliminated based on the alternatives screening criteria.

- Alternative Locations at Camp Williams
- Multiple and/or Larger Wind Turbine(s)
- Construction of Other Renewable Energy Facilities
- Alternative Tower Designs

2. Environmental Analysis

The potential environmental impacts associated with implementation of the Proposed Action are described in the EA. The EA identifies the environmental resources that could be affected by the Proposed Action, and determines the significance of the impacts, if any, to each of these resources. Based on analyses presented in the EA, the UTARNG has determined that known and potential adverse impacts from the Proposed Action on land use, air quality noise, , geological resources, water resources, biological resources, cultural resources, visual resources, socioeconomics (including human health and safety), environmental justice, infrastructure, airspace, and hazardous and toxic materials/waste would not be significant. Additionally, there would be no cumulatively significant adverse impacts associated with the implementation Proposed Action or related actions at Camp Williams.

3. Mitigation

No project-specific mitigation measures would be necessary to reduce adverse environmental impacts to below significant levels. UTNG would continue to implement appropriate Best Management Practices (BMPs), and would obtain all necessary permits and construction site approvals prior to implementation of this action.

4. Regulations

The Proposed Action would not violate procedural provisions of NEPA, CEQ Regulations Implementing the Procedural Provisions of NEPA, 32 CFR Part 651, or other Federal, State, or local environmental regulations.

5. Commitment to Implementation

The National Guard Bureau (NGB) and the UTNG affirm their commitment to implement the Proposed Action described in this EA in accordance with NEPA. Implementation of the Proposed Action is dependent on funding. The UTNG and the NGB's Environmental Programs, Training, and Installations Divisions will ensure that adequate funds are requested in future years' budgets to achieve the objectives set forth in this EA.

6. Public Review and Comment

The EA and draft FNSI were made available for public review and comment from July 5, 2020 to August 5, 2020, following the publication of a public Notice of Availability in the *Salt Lake Tribune* and *Deseret News* newspapers. The EA and draft FNSI were available for review on the UTARNG website at <https://ut.ng.mil/Resources/Environmental-Resources-Management/> and a copy could have been requested directly from the UTNG. Comments regarding these documents were to be directed to:

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7. Finding of No Significant Impact

After careful review of the EA, I have concluded that implementation of the Proposed Action will not generate significant controversy or have a significant impact on the quality of the human or natural environment. This analysis fulfills the requirements of NEPA, the CEQ implementing regulations, and the Army implementing regulations. An Environmental Impact Statement will not be prepared and the National Guard Bureau is issuing this Finding of No Significant Impact.

Date

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