

Sportsmen for Responsible Energy Development

Guidelines for Responsible Development of Renewable Resources to Sustain Hunting and Fishing Opportunities on Public Lands

Sportsmen for Responsible Energy Development (SFRED) is a coalition of more than 500 businesses, organizations and individuals working together to promote and support responsible energy development in the Rocky Mountain West. In recent years, energy development has become a dominant fixture on many western landscapes, threatening the long-term sustainability of fish, wildlife and water resources. Over the past few decades, drilling activity has increased significantly on federal public lands. Federal policies that lease public lands for energy development fail to adequately consider the consequences to fish and wildlife, habitats, and sporting recreation. SFRED provides credible, science-based solutions supported by a broad coalition of interests from across the nation.

Sportsmen support investments in cleaner, more secure, renewable sources of energy on public lands. A landscape vision is needed for renewable energy development that will maintain the fish and wildlife values sportsmen have fought to sustain. The future of our fish and wildlife heritage depends on proper stewardship of our public lands and waters. As our nation incorporates renewable sources into our national energy policy, we have an opportunity to address the problems of energy development past and make the process work better for balanced, responsible development.

Western public lands host a diverse array of important fish and wildlife habitats and unmatched hunting and fishing opportunities. More than half of the nation's blue-ribbon fisheries flow through national forests and more than 80 percent of important elk habitat is found on public lands in the West. Abundant populations of fish and wildlife, clear, clean waters and breathtaking vistas define the West. These resources belong to all Americans. While we as a nation seek to reduce our reliance on fossil fuels, we must learn from the success and mistakes of past energy development on public lands. The development of our renewable energy resources on public lands is a welcome addition to the Western economic landscape, but this development must be approached with learned caution, especially where important fish and wildlife habitats and hunting and fishing opportunities are concerned.

Sportsmen support responsible energy resource development on public lands. Future energy development on public lands - including renewable energy development, transformer stations, transmission lines, and distribution facilities - must consider the many uses and values of public lands to Western landscapes, local economies and local communities.

Sportsmen strongly support the following guidelines for development of renewable energy resources on public lands:

- 1. Hunters and anglers should have a voice in the decision-making processes for renewable energy development on public lands. Open and transparent processes that encourage public input on important decisions, such as siting of renewable energy projects and transmission lines, are essential.**
- 2. Roadless backcountry lands, National Parks, National Wildlife Refuges, and other local and state public conservation lands should be protected from the impacts of renewable energy development. Already-disturbed lands - where existing energy infrastructure might already be in place - should be prioritized for development of renewable energy.**
- 3. Important and fish and wildlife habitat must be adequately protected. game-bird habitat, trout streams, deer and elk winter range, migration corridors, and fragile riparian habitats should not be inordinately sacrificed for renewable energy development projects.**
- 4. Development and permitting decisions affecting fish, wildlife, and sporting recreation federal public lands should be made in formal and documented consultation with state fish and wildlife agencies.**
- 5. All decisions on renewable energy development projects should utilize the best-available scientific information on fish, wildlife and water resources. Emerging science on impacts to critical fish and wildlife resources must be utilized to reach sound development decisions.**
- 6. An improved permitting/leasing process should be developed for renewable energy projects. Existing processes using right-of-ways or special use authorizations fall short - leasing and permitting for renewable projects should be an open process that protects public land, considers the cumulative effect of development, and keeps public lands in public hands.**
- 7. Monitoring impacts to fish, wildlife and water resources is critical. An essential component of developing renewable energy projects on public lands is a well-designed and adequately funded monitoring program that can determine if impacts are occurring as expected and make adjustments when effects to fish, wildlife and water resources exceed thresholds.**
- 8. Mitigation and reclamation of impacts to fish, wildlife and water resources must be an important component of the development of renewable energy projects. A fund established from permit revenues shall be established to ensure that damages to fish and wildlife habitats are appropriately addressed and mitigated.**
- 9. Compliance with all pertinent bedrock environmental legislation including National Environmental Policy Act, Federal Land Policy and Management Act, National Forest Management Act, Clean Water Act, Safe Drinking Water Act and Resource Conservation Recovery Act, and other law and policy where applicable is essential to protect public-lands resources.**

10. Industry should be accountable for the costs of developing renewable energy on public lands. In the past, public-lands energy development has taxed the federal government's ability to manage lands and resources in a balanced manner under multiple-use guidelines.

Fishing and hunting on public lands is a way of life for people in the West. For generations, people have used public lands to learn about fish and wildlife, to camp, to stalk trout and hunt elk. The SFRED coalition has defined a better way to ensure fish, wildlife, air and water resources on public lands are sustained while our nation's varied resources are developed to meet our country's needs. Sportsmen are relying on America's leaders to develop a new future for energy development and to do it without repeating mistakes of the past.

American Sportfishing Association
American Fly-Fishing Trade Association
Federation of Fly-Fishers
National Wildlife Federation
North American Grouse Partnership
Quality Deer Management Association
The Wildlife Society
Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership
Trout Unlimited
Wild Sheep Foundation