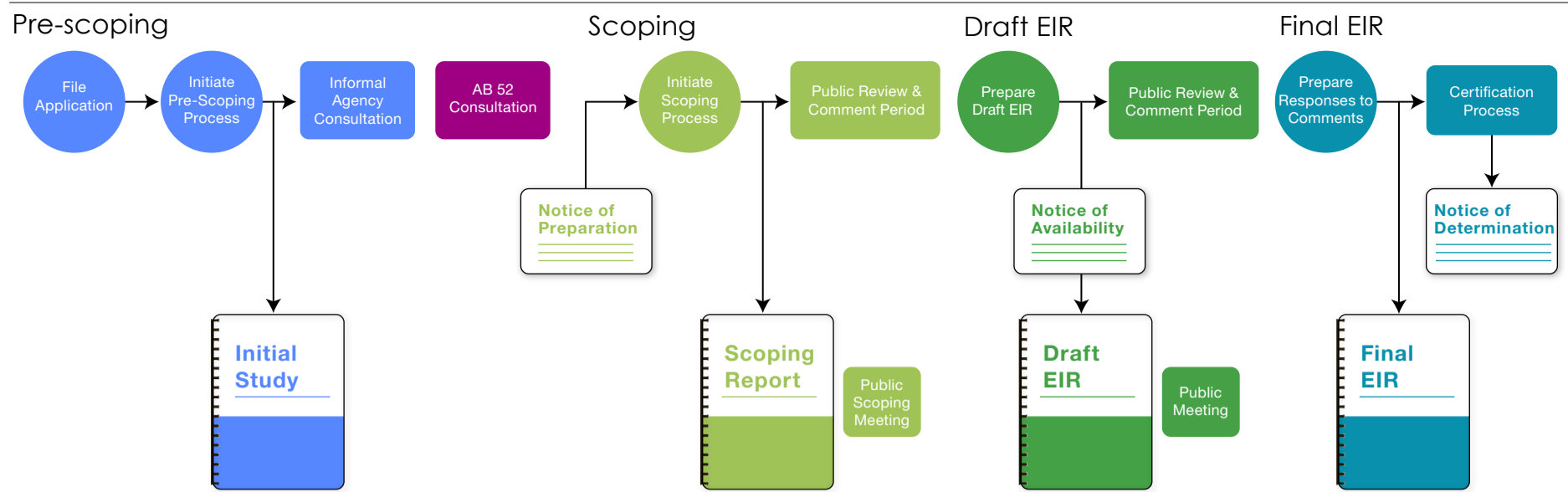


Use Permit 16-007: Fountain Wind Project CEQA Process



Background

Pacific Wind Development, LLC, in its application for Use Permit 16-007, requests County authorization to construct, operate, maintain, and decommission the Fountain Wind Project (Project), which would consist of up to 100 wind turbines and associated infrastructure and facilities. Including transformers, lay-down areas, access roads, underground and overhead collector lines, an operation and maintenance building, and substation components. The Project would be located on 76 assessor parcels and would have a nameplate generating capacity of up to approximately 347 megawatts (MW).

The proposed project is subject to CEQA review because the County has been presented with a discretionary action to approve or deny the requested application. Before making a decision about the application, the County is required to analyze potential environmental impacts of the project, and to present the findings in an environmental document for public review and comment.

This website provides access to public documents and information relevant to the CEQA review process. The CEQA process for this Project generally falls into five phases: Pre-scoping, Scoping, preparation of the Draft EIR, preparation of the Final EIR, and the decision-making process. Information about each phase and associated documents is provided below.

Pre-scoping

Pre-scoping takes place after an applicant has submitted an application for a project. It involves the initial review of the application by the County, including a review for application completeness and a determination of what level of environmental review will be needed for the project. Documents produced during Fountain Wind Project pre-scoping period include the project application submitted by the applicant, an update to the application based on the County's preliminary review of the project application, and notification of the project to the Native American tribe that requested notice of proposed projects in the project area (AB52 Consultation).

An Initial Study was also prepared during the pre-scoping period. The Initial Study includes a detailed project description and initial analysis of the potential environmental impacts of the project. The Initial Study identified one or more potential significant adverse impacts, therefore the County determined an EIR would be needed for the Fountain Wind Project. Because the Initial Study is also used as a scoping tool, it is included with the Scoping documents.

Scoping (January 15 to February 14, 2019, extended to February 22, 2019)

Scoping is initiated after it is determined that an EIR will be prepared for a project and a Notice of Preparation is filed with the State Clearinghouse. The scoping process takes place early in the environmental review process. It is intended to identify the range of environmental considerations pertinent to the proposed project and feasible alternatives or mitigation measures to avoid or reduce potentially significant environmental effects. For the Fountain Wind Project, the process includes inviting Responsible, Trustee, and other interested agencies, as well as members of the public, to provide input about the scope of the EIR and to attend a public scoping meeting. Documents produced during the scoping process include the Notice of Preparation, public notifications, scoping meeting materials, and a Scoping Report that will include all input received by the County during the scoping period, including written and oral comments received at the scoping meeting. All input –written or oral– will be considered in the preparation of a Draft EIR for the project.

Draft EIR

A Draft EIR is an informational document that provides a detailed analysis of the potential environmental consequences of approving a proposed project. The Draft EIR for the Fountain Wind Project will: describe the applicant's proposed project; evaluate potential significant direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts to the environment; and discuss ways to avoid or reduce potential significant impacts, including mitigation measures and alternatives to the project as proposed. As an environmental disclosure document, the Draft EIR will inform one factor among several to be considered as part of the County's overall decision-making process. Documents produced during the Draft EIR process include the Draft EIR and project-specific or site-specific technical studies that will be considered as part of the analysis. The County will release the Draft EIR for a 45-day comment period, during which agencies and members of the public will be invited to review the Draft EIR and provide comments.

Final EIR

Before the County may approve a project for which an EIR has been prepared, it must prepare and certify a Final EIR. The most important aspect of a Final EIR is the responses it provides to significant environmental points made in comments received from agencies and members of the public during the Draft EIR review period. The Final EIR for the Fountain Wind Project will consist of the Draft EIR or revisions to it, comments and recommendations received during the comment period, a list of all who provided input during the Draft EIR review period, and the County's responses to comments.

County Decision-making Process

The County's decision-making process for the Fountain Wind Project will be a two-step process: a decision whether to certify (accept) the EIR followed by a decision whether to approve the requested use permit (UP16-007). Approval of the use permit would allow the applicant to move forward with construction and operation of the proposed Fountain Wind Project. The Shasta County Planning Commission will make these decisions based on the whole of the record and proceedings for the application, including: all presentations and testimony taken during public hearing(s) called for the purpose of making a decision on the project, the analysis, public comments, and findings presented in the EIR, and the County required findings for approval or denial of a use permit.

Advance notice of the Planning Commission's intent to hold a public hearing(s) to deliberate and decisions on the project will be made in accordance with CEQA, other State laws, and the Shasta County Code. Any decision the Shasta County Planning Commission makes on the project, whether to approve or deny, may be appealed to the Shasta County Board of Supervisors within 10 business days after the Planning Commission's decision.