

WBR ARTICLE

Conference to focus on wind energy

By Staff

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CHEYENNE — Gov. Dave Freudenthal will convene stakeholders next month to examine the complex issues surrounding wind energy development in Wyoming, focusing on economic, physical and cultural impacts on the state's landscape, its wildlife and the people who live here.

Members of the public, civic leaders, industry representatives and others interested in wind energy development are encouraged to attend the conference at the University of Wyoming's Union Ballroom on Aug. 13-14.

"As this boom in wind development unfolds in Wyoming, our state is balanced on the 'razor's edge' with respect to sage grouse and other sensitive wildlife species and our economic sustainability and private property rights," the governor said. "I encourage the public and state and local leaders to engage in this important discussion."

Among the topics to be examined in depth at the Wyoming Wind Symposium are the implications of federal policy, project siting and development strategy, transmission development and the impacts on Wyoming's natural resources including its land and water, wildlife and cultural and historic sites.

Highlights of the conference include a keynote address by Freudenthal, who will discuss the broader issues posed by wind development and transmission infrastructure. Steve Black, counselor to the Secretary of the U.S. Dept. of the Interior, will follow the governor's address with a discussion of the federal government's perspective on wind energy development.

In a session focused on the impact of wind energy infrastructure on state and local revenues, presentations will be offered by Wyoming Sen. Jim Anderson, who chairs the Legislative Wind Task Force; Ed Schmidt, director of the Wyoming Dept. of Revenue; Lynne Boomgaarden, director of the Office of State Lands and Investments and Converse County Commissioner Ed Werner.

The key role of transmission development will be the focus of a panel discussion.

Addressing the impacts to wildlife and in particular, sage grouse, will be addressed by another panel moderated by Bob Budd, executive director of the Wyoming Wildlife and Natural Resource Trust.

Sessions will also focus on the impact of wind energy development on Wyoming's open spaces and cultural resources.

The conference's second day will begin with a discussion on the economics of wind energy project development to be moderated by Indy Burke, director of the Haub School and Ruckleshaus Institute of Environment and Natural Resources. The final session will include discussion about the future of wind development in Wyoming.

To view a complete agenda and for registration information, visit the Wyoming Wind Symposium Web site:

<http://www.uwyo.edu/ENR/IENR/info.asp?p=12721>.

For more information, call Temple Stevenson, 307-777-2817.