

Public Comment: Marin County Local Coastal Program Update Presentations  
Point Reyes Station, July 18, 2011

Proposed amendments to Energy policy in Marin County's Local Coastal Program will allow industrial-scale wind turbines in West Marin. Amendments such as "streamlined planning and development rules, codes, processing, and other incentives" to support renewable energy technologies weakens environmental protections and opens the door to industrialization of the coast.

If WECS are permitted in West Marin where NextEra Energy, Inc., a multi-billion dollar energy corporation, has proposed to erect meteorological towers to collect wind data, 400 to 700-foot-high turbines will be visible from the historic town of Tomales and Highway One, a National Scenic Byway.

All of the County's State and federal parklands are in West Marin. Flashing red aircraft warning lights from steel towers would be seen for up to fifty miles at night, impacting the viewshed from Point Reyes National Seashore, Golden Gate National Recreation Area, and coastal communities such as Point Reyes Station, Inverness, and Marshall.

NextEra's proposed project near Estero de San Antonio is located in the Pacific Flyway and a designated Important Bird Area. Over one hundred species of birds have been identified in the esteros north of Walker Creek. Tomales Bay is listed as a Wetland of International Importance as defined by the Ramsar Convention.

A 200-turbine industrial wind facility will result in high bird mortality from blade strikes, including rare and endangered species. Furthermore, it would blight the coast with its accompanying infrastructure of roads, transmission lines, and substations.

West Marin/Sonoma Coastal Advocates objects to the level of environmental review and approval of NextEra's proposed meteorological towers. We support energy conservation and small-scale local solutions as an alternative to industrial-scale wind development. The unique coastal resources in West Marin must be protected and preserved for future generations.

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