

# Feds move to speed Upper Great Plains wind projects

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BILLINGS, Mont. (AP) — Federal officials say they are trying to cut in half the time it takes to review wind projects across six states in the Upper Great Plains.

The proposal from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Western Area Power Administration would cover projects in Montana, Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska and the Dakotas.

The agencies said companies installed more than 12 gigawatts of wind energy generation capacity in the states since 2000.

As that growth continues, Western Area Power Administration spokeswoman Jennifer Neville said the hope is to reduce the duration of environmental reviews from two years to one.

That would be done by providing site-specific information to developers about potential impacts from wind projects on wildlife including bald and golden eagles.