

Energy Development Planning Amendments

2026 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Chief Sponsor: Doug Owens

Senate Sponsor:

LONG TITLE**General Description:**

This bill requires consultation with the Division of Wildlife Resources before approval of utility scale solar and wind power plants.

Highlighted Provisions:

This bill:

- defines terms;
- requires consultation with the Division of Wildlife Resources (division) as part of local government approval of utility scale solar and wind power plant projects;
- specifies consultation requirements; and
- provides rulemaking authority to the division.

Money Appropriated in this Bill:

None

Other Special Clauses:

None

Utah Code Sections Affected:

ENACTS:

54-17-1201, Utah Code Annotated 1953

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the state of Utah:

Section 1. Section **54-17-1201** is enacted to read:

Part 12. Utility Scale Renewable Energy Facility Wildlife Review

54-17-1201 . Wildlife consultation required for utility scale renewable energy facilities.

(1) As used in this section:

(a) "Division of Wildlife Resources" means the Division of Wildlife Resources created in Section 23A-2-201.

(b) "Solar power plant" means a facility that:

- 31 (i) has a nameplate generating capacity in excess of one megawatt; and
32 (ii) converts sunlight into electricity for the primary purpose of wholesale or retail
33 sales of generated electricity.
- 34 (c) "Utility scale renewable energy facility" means a solar power plant or wind power
35 plant.
- 36 (d) "Wind power plant" means a facility that:
37 (i) has a nameplate generating capacity in excess of one megawatt; and
38 (ii) converts wind energy into electricity for the primary purpose of wholesale or
39 retail sales of generated electricity.
- 40 (2) As part of an application for a permit to the appropriate local jurisdiction, an owner or
41 operator of a utility scale renewable energy facility shall consult with the Division of
42 Wildlife Resources regarding potential impacts to wildlife and wildlife habitat.
- 43 (3) The consultation described in Subsection (2) shall include:
44 (a) submission by the owner or operator to the Division of Wildlife Resources of project
45 location, layout, timeline, and any wildlife surveys conducted;
46 (b) a meeting between the owner or operator and Division of Wildlife Resources
47 personnel; and
48 (c) the Division of Wildlife Resources' recommendations for avoiding, minimizing, or
49 mitigating potential impacts to wildlife and wildlife habitat.
- 50 (4) The Division of Wildlife Resources shall:
51 (a) within 30 days after the day on which the Division of Wildlife Resources receives a
52 complete consultation request, provide the owner or operator with written
53 recommendations; and
54 (b) make rules, in accordance with Title 63G, Chapter 3, Utah Administrative
55 Rulemaking Act, establishing consultation procedures and standards.
- 56 (5) An owner or operator shall include with an application to the appropriate local
57 jurisdiction proof of consultation with the Division of Wildlife Resources and a
58 description of measures the owner or operator will implement to address the Division of
59 Wildlife Resources' recommendations.
- 60 (6) The appropriate local jurisdiction shall consider the Division of Wildlife Resources'
61 recommendations when evaluating a permit application for a utility scale renewable
62 energy facility.
- 63 (7) This section does not:
64 (a) grant the Division of Wildlife Resources authority to approve or deny a permit

65 application;
66 (b) require an owner or operator to implement the Division of Wildlife Resources'
67 recommendations; or
68 (c) limit local jurisdiction authority to approve or deny a permit application.
69 Section 2. **Effective Date.**
70 This bill takes effect on May 6, 2026.