
Southeast

The Southeast is Tennessee, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi and Kentucky.

The Southeast has the poorest onshore wind resources of any region, although offshore potential is considerable. Tennessee is the region's only state with commercial-scale wind facilities. Policy there has focused on an emerging industry tax credit. Policy in North Carolina has centred on permitting for onshore and offshore wind, while South Carolina concentrates on offshore policy. In Florida the focus is on creating an RPS. Renewable energy policy is nascent in Kentucky and near nonexistent in Georgia, Alabama and Mississippi.

South Central

South Central is Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas and Louisiana.

South Central is the top wind energy producing region, and Texas is the nation's top state. Arkansas, however, has low wind energy potential and Louisiana has none at all. A major initiative in this region and in the Lower Midwest is an effort by the Southwest Power Pool (SPP), a regional transmission organisation, to connect load centres to expected areas of generation expansion. The policy focus in Texas is accordingly on transmission. In Oklahoma, the emphasis is on incentives to attract parts of the wind industry. Policy efforts in Arkansas and Louisiana are embryonic.

Upper Midwest

The Upper Midwest is Iowa, Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wisconsin and Michigan.

This region has the second-highest wind capacity, and Iowa is the second-largest wind energy producer in the country. A program called the Upper Midwest Transmission Development Initiative has started to identify priority zones for wind facilities and transmission lines. Iowa and North Dakota, in particular, emphasise transmission in their policy development. Primary concerns in Minnesota are changes to the state's RPS; in Wisconsin, the RPS and siting; in South Dakota, siting and interconnection. Michigan is seeking to identify priority zones for wind development and create offshore siting criteria.

Lower Midwest

The Lower Midwest is Illinois, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, Indiana and Ohio.

Wind energy potential in the Lower Midwest far exceeds installed capacity. Initiatives in this region include the SPP's transmission project (see South Central). Renewable energy policy in Illinois has focused on sales and tax use exemptions. In Kansas, Missouri and Ohio, the biggest policy issue by far has been the creation of RPSs. In Nebraska the focus is on exporting energy. Indiana has done little renewable energy policy work.

Mountain States

The Mountain States comprises Colorado, Wyoming, Montana and Utah.

The Mountain States have the second-highest potential of any region, after the Upper Midwest. A major area of policy development in Wyoming and Colorado is transmission, especially the Western Renewable Energy Zones, an initiative to export energy to California and Arizona. Policy in Montana focuses on the state's RPS, while Utah's policy efforts include priority zones for renewable energy development.

Northwest

The Northwest is Washington, Oregon and Idaho.

Washington and Oregon have both have built capacity far outperforming the states' ranks for wind energy potential. Washington this year extended a sales tax exemption for turbines, and defeated a bill to water down the state's RPS. In Oregon major policy issues include the state's RPS and zoning laws. Areas of policy evolution in Idaho include transmission and the creation of renewable energy priority zones.

Southwest

The Southwest is California, New Mexico, Nevada and Arizona.

California has the third-highest capacity of any state but wind development has slowed in recent years. Policy activity in California has focused on the governor's call to increase the state's RPS, streamline permitting processes and accelerate identification of the best areas for renewable energy development.

New Mexico has carried out policy work on the issues of siting, energy export and transmission. In Nevada, areas of policy emphasis include the state's RPS, energy export, financial incentives, siting and permitting. Arizona policy-makers devoted little time to renewable energy in 2009.

Alaska and Hawaii

High electricity prices make these states attractive to wind farm developers, but both states have small energy markets. Hawaii's high-priority policy areas include the use of state lands and the construction of a state-assisted inter-island cable. The state raised its RPS target in 2009, making that standard the highest in the US. In Alaska, areas of policy concern include cuts to a renewable energy grant fund.