

Nebraska Wind Energy and Wildlife News

April 12, 2012

Around the Nation & World...

On April 9, 2012, the National Wind Coordinating Collaborative (NWCC) and America Wind Wildlife Institute (AWWI) hosted a briefing on the recently-released **U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service “Land-Based Wind Energy Guidelines.”** The briefing included a presentation by U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service staff David Cottingham, Senior Advisor to the Director, and Christy Johnson-Hughes, National Energy Coordinator, followed by questions and answers. To access the webinar, go to: <http://www.nationalwind.org/issues/wildlife/briefings.aspx>

A new research paper was published in the Journal of Applied Ecology. The paper, ***Greater impacts of wind farms on bird populations during construction than subsequent operation: results of a multi-site and multi-species analysis***, reports on wind farm sites located on unenclosed upland habitats with more than 5 turbines in the UK. James W. Pearce-Higgins and coauthors used post construction bird monitoring and other surveys at the wind farms and reference sites to evaluate the densities of 10 different bird species. Their results varied depending upon the species, but in general, they found that greater weight should be given to the effects of construction on wildlife in impact assessments than at present and that mitigation measures during construction should be considered and tested to reduce negative effects. Check out it at: <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1365-2664.2012.02110.x/pdf>

A newly released Gallup poll found that the majority of U.S. adults back mandatory controls on greenhouse gas emissions and support spending more federal money to develop wind and solar power, but levels of support vary between Democrats and Republicans. The article also addresses other energy/fuel issues. Check out the article, ***Poll shows majority support for carbon controls, but partisan split persists***, at: <http://thehill.com/blogs/e2-wire/e2-wire/220615-poll-shows-majority-support-for-carbon-controls-but-partisan-split-persists>

April 8 - 14 is **bat appreciation week**. Here are some **bat fun facts**: there are more than 1, 200 species of bats which comprise about 1/5 of all the mammal species, the smallest mammal is a tiny bumblebee bat that weighs less than a penny, giant flying foxes have 6-foot wingspans, 3 species of bats are vampires all of which contain an enzyme in their saliva that is among the most potent blood-clot dissolvers known and is used to treat stroke victims (Bat Conservation International - All About Bats, <http://www.batcon.org/index.php/all-about-bats/intro-to-bats/subcategory.html?layout=subcategory>). A recent study found that the loss of the insect eating bats of North America could lead to agricultural losses estimated at more than \$3.7 billion/year (Boyles et al., <http://www.fort.usgs.gov/Products/Publications/23069a/23069a.pdf>).

Upcoming Events

BatsLIVE is hosting three web seminars for teachers, non-formal educators, and adults as part of BatsLIVE: A Distance Learning Adventure. The webinars are being offered in partnership with the National Wildlife Federation. The first webinar is on April 18. For more information on all of the webinars, go to <http://batslive.pwnet.org/resource/webinars.php>

Turbine Cowboys - Braving the Elements, will premiere on April 17 @ 9/8 central on The Weather Channel. About the show: Mother Nature is a powerful force and taming her is nearly impossible. Wind turbine workers risk their lives building, maintaining, and repairing these monolithic, modern day windmills – the wind turbines. We follow two teams: the would-be “wind techs” from their hardcore boot camp training through their first year in the field, and the seasoned veterans who are still challenged every day.

They all face extreme weather, dizzying heights, and possible electrocution. We find out who is attracted to this job and why and follow them as they push the envelope to wrestle electricity from the wind.
<http://www.weather.com/tv/tvshows/braving-the-elements>

Around Nebraska...

In the News

Nebraska Utilizes a Supplemental Environmental Program to Fund Wind for Schools Turbines: A Wind Powering America Success Story. The Nebraska Wind for Schools project team has 24 turbine installations in various stages of development. Twelve of these installations were funded through grant funds from the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality's Supplemental Environmental Program (SEP). http://www.windpoweringamerica.gov/filter_detail.asp?itemid=3522

Transmission Boosts Nebraskan Wind, by Paul Mansoor, Center for Rural Affairs, Journal Democrat.com. Wind development in Nebraska is on the upswing. The Southwest Power Pool (SPP) has begun planning the 345,000 Volt Nebraska R line. http://www.journaledemocrat.com/ag_news/x493665609/Transmission-Boosts-Nebraskan-Wind

Hands-on Wind Power Training Coming to Chadron, Nebraska, by Dan Fink, Buckville Energy Consulting, Yahoo! News. Award-winning Colorado renewable energy authors and educators Dan Bartmann and Dan Fink will be teaching a series of intensive, hands-on wind power classes for home and business owners from April 30 through May 10, 2012 in Chadron, Nebraska. <http://news.yahoo.com/hands-wind-power-training-coming-chadron-nebraska-070328396.html>

Correction to Legislative Update

LB 828: Introduced by Dubas.

Statement of Intent: LB828 clarifies existing statutes on landowner agreements related to the development of wind and solar facilities. Harmonizes language of "decommissioning security" and "wind easement" between Chapters. Clarifies the items in an abstract needed to publish. Allows for renewals of agreements beyond forty years.

AM1729, Adopted on February 3, 2012.

Explanation of amendment: AM 1729 further clarifies some of the statutes related to wind and solar energy by harmonizing language, striking duplicative language, and makes a correction between two contradicting statutes. By adding references to resources related to wind and solar development in those sections, unintended effects on other types of resources (such as minerals) may be avoided.

Enrollment and Review ER172 adopted on February 15, 2012.

Placed on Final Reading on April 2, 2012. -- **CORRECTION - February 16, 2012**

Dispensing of reading at large, Passed on final reading with emergency clause 48-0-1, President/Speaker signed, Presented to Governor on March 1, 2012.

Approved by Governor on March 7, 2012.

More Information: http://nebraskalegislature.gov/bills/view_bill.php?DocumentID=15708

Project Updates...

On April 10, 2012, the **Nebraska Wind and Wildlife Working Group**, a consortium of representatives from state and federal agencies, nongovernmental conservation organizations, public utilities, environmental consultants, wind energy developers, and other stakeholders, met at UNL. The group started meeting a couple years ago to develop the *Guidelines for Wind Energy and Wildlife Resource Management in Nebraska*. A large meeting was held in October 2010 to discuss the *Guidelines* and several people (many of you) attended. The current Nebraska Wind and Wildlife Working Group consists of **representatives** of a variety of stakeholder groups, is smaller in size, and is an advisory group. **Meeting minutes** will be posted at <http://snr.unl.edu/renewableenergy/wind/workinggroup.asp#meetings> approximately one week following the meetings. A large informational meeting will be held the same week as the **Nebraska Wind Power Conference** scheduled October 21-23, 2012, in Lincoln. It would be great if all of you could join us for the conference and the annual Nebraska Wind and Wildlife Working Group informational meeting.

Check out the **Nebraska Wind Energy and Wildlife Project website** at: <http://snr.unl.edu/renewableenergy/wind/> and **Wind Energy and Wildlife news** at: <http://www.scoop.it/t/wind-energy-and-wildlife>

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