

Nebraska Wind Energy and Wildlife News

May 2, 2012

Around the Nation & World...

In the News

A new research paper was published in Nature Climate Change on April 29, 2012. The paper, ***Impacts of wind farms on land surface temperature***, by Zhou et. al, reports that wind turbines modify the surface atmosphere exchanges and the transfer of energy and moisture within the atmosphere (<http://www.nature.com/nclimate/journal/vaop/ncurrent/full/nclimate1505.html>). Night-time temperatures in west Texas increased as wind farms were built in the area, and could affect the local (microclimate). Discovery News's article, ***Wind Farms Warming Texas***, provides an overview of the scientific paper (<http://news.discovery.com/earth/hot-wind-farms-120429.html>).

New Bill Proposes To Extend Wind Energy PTC, Slash Oil Subsidies. The bill, Investing to Modernize the Production of American Clean Energy and Technology (IMPACT Act) proposes an eight-year extension to the production tax credit for several forms of renewable energy while stripping subsidies for fossil fuels. (http://www.nawindpower.com/e107_plugins/content/content.php?content.9777)

Action Items

Service Proposes to Revise Eagle Permit Regulations, Seeks Public Comment on Future Improvements to Permit Program

(http://us.vocuspr.com/Newsroom/Query.aspx?SiteName=fws&Entity=PRAsset&SF_PRAsset_PRAssetID_EQ=129930&XSL=PressRelease&Cache=). On April 12, 2012, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service proposed to revise eagle permit regulations to facilitate development of renewable energy and other projects, while ensuring that those operations minimize and avoid impacts to bald and golden eagles. The proposed changes would extend the maximum term for programmatic permits from 5 to 30 years, if the permits incorporate specific adaptive conservation measures that may be necessary to ensure the preservation of eagles. The Service has also proposed to increase the fees associated with the review and issuance of permits in order to cover its true costs and ensure effective monitoring of projects over the extended permit terms. The Service is seeking comments – deadline of May 14, 2012. For more information about the proposed rule changes and the ANPR process, visit: <http://www.fws.gov/migratorybirds/>

Energy Department Launches Online Tool to Help Consumers Save Money on Energy Bills. The Energy Department has launched the Utility Data Access Map tool, an interactive Web platform that enables electric utilities across the country to show customers, in a simple way, the data they can access on their electricity use. (http://apps1.eere.energy.gov/news/progress_alerts.cfm/pa_id=720)

Tools

Wind-Wildlife Impacts Literature Database (WILD). WILD is a searchable bibliographic database of documents that focuses on the effects of wind energy development on wildlife. The database includes documents from journal articles, conference proceedings, government publications, books, and utility company reports. WILD is searchable by a number of parameters, including keyword, title, author, and publication date. (<http://www.nrel.gov/wind/wild.html>)

Around Nebraska...

In the News

Edison Mission Group and Nebraska Public Power District Announce Construction of New Nebraska Wind Farm. Construction on the Crofton Bluffs project has started; the wind project is capable of producing enough energy to meet the needs of about 14,000 homes in Nebraska. (<http://www.nppd.com/2012/edison-mission-group-and-nebraska-public-power-district-announce-construction-of-new-nebraska-wind-farm/>)

Wind-Powered Traffic Lights to Get Real-World Testing. A solar and wind powered traffic light project at the University of Nebraska – Lincoln is in its final testing phase. (<http://www.govtech.com/technology/Wind-Powered-Traffic-Lights-Real-World-Testing.html>)

Lincoln's two wind turbines targeted for replacement. Lincoln Electric System plans to ask interested companies to submit proposals to decommission or tear down the old wind turbines on the northeast edge of Lincoln and replace them with newer, larger models capable of generating more power. (http://journalstar.com/news/local/lincoln-s-two-wind-turbines-targeted-for-replacement/article_62ed0bda-ee8a-5fae-895e-928a9d405e27.html)

NPPD pressed to expand wind power. A coalition of Nebraska environmental and farm groups called on the state's largest utility to develop more wind power to address future energy needs instead of relying on coal-fired power plants. (<http://www.omaha.com/article/20120427/NEWS01/704279892>)

Legislative Updates

LB 741: Indefinitely postponed on April 18, 2012.

More information: http://nebraskalegislature.gov/bills/view_bill.php?DocumentID=15709

LB 742: Approved by Governor on April 10, 2012.

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

LB 828: Approved by Governor on March 7, 2012.

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

LB 1033: Indefinitely postponed on April 18, 2012.

More information: http://nebraskalegislature.gov/bills/view_bill.php?DocumentID=16023

Action Items

Behind the Outlet – NPPD looks at its options for generating power for future generations. Every five years, NPPD reviews its “Integrated Resource Plan,” a portfolio of generation resources needed to serve its Nebraska-based customers electricity for 20+ years. In the fall of 2011, NPPD began an intense study, called a generation options analysis, to determine what environmental equipment, if any, should be installed on our fossil-fueled facilities in order to meet certain environmental regulations and still keep the plants maintained well and available for meeting customers’ needs. They also wanted to know how much it would cost to replace our fossil-fueled units with other, more carbon-friendly resources, such as nuclear, gas, wind, etc. Public events for McCook, South Sioux City, and Columbus are coming up. (<http://www.nppd.com/behindtheoutlet>)

Project Updates...

The **Nebraska Wind and Wildlife Working Group meeting summary** is posted at <http://snr.unl.edu/renewableenergy/wind/workinggroup.asp#meetings>

A large informational Nebraska Wind and Wildlife Working Group 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>
