

## **Nebraska Wind Energy and Wildlife News**

June 19, 2012

### **Around the Nation & World...**

**Wind turbines planned for northwest Illinois generate controversy.** The hognose, ornate box turtle and regal fritillary butterfly that slither, burrow and flit in Whiteside, Lee and Bureau counties do so with a certain privilege. It's their habitat, and all three species are considered threatened in Illinois. The predicament is that the first phase of the Green River Wind Farm project probably will harm that habitat, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources contends. (<http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/local/ct-met-turbine-endangered-species-20120619,0,1439624.story>).

**Wind farm proposed near bald eagle habitats to be delayed.** Chicago-based wind farm developer Invenergy will indefinitely delay building an industrial-scale wind farm proposed near a wildlife refuge in eastern North Carolina because it poses a mortal threat to bald eagles that hunt in the area and nest nearby. (<http://www.newsobserver.com/2012/06/15/2139779/wind-farm-proposed-near-bald-eagle.html>).

**Florida wind farm's antagonists: environmentalists.** Although the Sugarland Wind Project has won approval from the County Commission, it still faces a number of obstacles. The company needs state and federal environmental permits to proceed. There's also the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. And it's a given that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will take a closer look at the impact on wildlife. (<http://www.miamiherald.com/2012/06/09/v-fullstory/2841589/florida-wind-farms-antagonists.html>).

**Gamesa scraps wind farm project.** "Because of a combination of factors, including uncertainty surrounding federal policies, Gamesa has decided to halt development plans for its proposed Shaffer Mountain Wind Farm in Somerset County." (<http://tribune-democrat.com/local/x1318683220/Gamesa-scaps-wind-farm-project>).

**Commercial wind turbines are killing endangered bats.** Two species of bats considered federally endangered are being killed by commercial wind turbines in north-eastern B.C. (<http://www.vancouversun.com/technology/Commercial+wind+turbines+killing+endangered+bats/6767632/story.html>).

### Wind

**Global investment in renewable energy powers to record \$257 billion.** This year it shows that despite an increasingly tough competitive landscape for manufacturers, total investment in renewable power and fuels last year increased by 17% to a record \$257 billion, a six-fold increase on the 2004 figure and 94% higher than the total in 2007, the year before the world financial crisis. (<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2012/06/120611092347.htm>).

**WINDPOWER 2012 drew thousands to Atlanta, with impressive participation of Southern manufacturing sector.** The American Wind Energy Association's first-ever WINDPOWER Conference and Exhibition in the South succeeded in drawing 11,000 participants and 920 exhibiting companies to Atlanta June 3-6, including 120 exhibitors from the region. ([http://www.awea.org/newsroom/pressreleases/120612WINDPOWER\\_attendance.cfm](http://www.awea.org/newsroom/pressreleases/120612WINDPOWER_attendance.cfm)).

## Action Items

The Wildlife Society [\*\*Renewable Energy Working Group\*\*](#) is soliciting candidates who would like to run for office. The Renewable Energy Working Group will focus on wildlife and ecological issues associated with the siting, construction, and operation of renewable energy generating facilities. As the U.S. moves toward energy independence the growth of wind, photovoltaic, and other solar technologies will require large areas for energy production. Along with the growth, comes multiple issues for wildlife management. If you are interested in running for an officer position, contact Brenda Beatty ([Brenda.Beatty@nrel.gov](mailto:Brenda.Beatty@nrel.gov)). If you are interested in the working group, check out: <http://www.wildlife.org/subunits/working-groups>.

[\*\*Wind Wildlife Research Meeting IX, Call for Abstracts.\*\*](#) The National Wind Coordinating Collaborative and American Wind Wildlife Institute [\*\*Wind Wildlife Research Meeting\*\*](#) will be held on November 27-30, 2012 in Denver, CO. Topics of interest for the meeting include assessing direct and indirect effects on wildlife and their habitats, evaluating approaches used to avoid and minimize impacts, testing the efficacy of mitigation and conservation measures, and considering the context of wind energy development among other energy choices. Because the USFWS recently released the [\*\*Land-based Wind Energy Guidelines\*\*](#), they will be a central theme in the conference. (<http://www.nationalwind.org/issues/wildlife/researchmeetingix.aspx>).

[\*\*Service Extended the Comment Period to Revise Eagle Permit Regulations.\*\*](#) The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has extended the comment period on the proposed rule, published on April 13, 2012, to revise the regulations governing permits for nonpurposeful take of Golden Eagles and Bald Eagles where the take is associated with, but not the purpose of, an activity. The comment period for Changes in the Regulations Governing Eagle Permitting will now close **July 12, 2012**. For more information visit: <http://www.fws.gov/migratorybirds/BaldAndGoldenEagleManagement.htm>

## Tools

[\*\*AWWI's Research Information System: Leveraging the data, improving wind-wildlife analysis.\*\*](#) AWWI's Research Information System (RIS) is a first-of-its kind initiative that will expand the availability of data and advance wind energy development while protecting wildlife and wildlife habitat. When completed, this comprehensive information management tool will improve risk analysis, minimize impacts, enhance permit review, and lower siting and operational costs. The system is currently being developed. ([http://awwi.org/uploads/files/RIS\\_Fact\\_Sheet-June2012.pdf](http://awwi.org/uploads/files/RIS_Fact_Sheet-June2012.pdf)).

## Upcoming Events

[\*\*The Wildlife Society Annual Conference\*\*](#) is taking place in Portland, Oregon, October 13-18, 2012. There are two symposia dedicated to wind-wildlife studies: 1) Mitigating Impacts of Wind Energy Development on Golden Eagles, 2) Bats and wind energy: Ecology, behavior, and methodology. Registration for the conference is open. (<http://wildlifesociety.org/>).

[\*\*Fifth annual Nebraska Wind Conference set for October.\*\*](#) The Nebraska Wind Conference, the fifth annual wind conference organized by the Nebraska Wind Conference Committee (NWCC), will be conducted Oct. 22-23, 2012 in Lincoln at the Cornhusker Marriott Hotel. The two-day conference will

focus on Nebraska's future wind energy development challenges and opportunities.  
([http://www.theindependent.com/news/ag\\_news/fifth-annual-nebraska-wind-conference-set-for-october/article\\_ff928fd5-bc66-5b66-988e-00bde5e50a13.html](http://www.theindependent.com/news/ag_news/fifth-annual-nebraska-wind-conference-set-for-october/article_ff928fd5-bc66-5b66-988e-00bde5e50a13.html)).

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### Around Nebraska...

**Huge crane putting tops on first turbine towers.** Men in hard hats and fluorescent yellow vests seemed ant size from a distance Friday afternoon as they assembled parts of a wind turbine in the rolling hills of a pasture east of Broken Bow. ([http://www.kearneyhub.com/news/local/huge-crane-putting-tops-on-first-turbine-towers/article\\_057c89d2-ac74-11e1-a784-001a4bcf887a.html](http://www.kearneyhub.com/news/local/huge-crane-putting-tops-on-first-turbine-towers/article_057c89d2-ac74-11e1-a784-001a4bcf887a.html)).

### Featured Webpage

The **Nebraska Energy Office** has a very comprehensive **Wind Resources** website that includes information on policy, transmission, economic development, wind potential, and more. It is a great resource I recommend you check out. (<http://www.neo.ne.gov/renew/wind.htm>).

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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