

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

October 11, 2012

The **Nebraska Wind and Wildlife Working Group** meeting will be held at the Cornhusker Hotel in Lincoln, NE on October 22, 2012 at 5:15 p.m. in Arbor 2. Anyone interested in working towards minimizing the potential impacts of wind energy development on Nebraska's wildlife resources is welcome to attend.

The **Nebraska Wind Conference Wind- Wildlife Session** is featuring five presenters who will share their expertise on eagles, cranes, and the wind – wildlife coordination in Nebraska. Check out the speaker's bios on the attached handout or at

<http://snr.unl.edu/renewableenergy/download/NE%20wind%20conference%20W-W%20Speakers%202012.pdf>. For more information on the conference, see announcement below.

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

#### Wind and Wildlife

**Suit claims Cape Wind violates endangered species law.** The Cape Wind project targeted for Nantucket Sound violated federal protections for threatened and endangered species, including the North Atlantic right whale, project opponents and conservation groups argue in a brief filed Wednesday in U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia. (<http://www.patriotledger.com/news/x493268917/Suit-claims-Cape-Wind-violates-endangered-species-law>).

**Wind turbines take steep toll on birds and bats.** Wind power is key to efforts to produce clean, limitless energy and to slow global warming. It's one of the world's fastest-growing energy industries. But there is mounting evidence that expanding "wind farms" are taking a toll on airborne wildlife. (<http://www.voanews.com/content/wind-turbines-take-steep-toll-on-birds-and-bats/1524387.html>).

**Group: Bat care plan is unsound.** Multiple conservation organizations, including Save Western Maryland, an Oakland-based, grassroots community act-ion group, have filed comments in response to the Criterion Wind project's Habitat Conservation Plan, which outlines Criterion's proposed minimization measures to reduce harm to an endangered bat species. (<http://times-news.com/local/x1939589599/Group-Bat-care-plan-is-unsound>).

**Judge tosses out suit against Ocotillo Wind Project.** One of seven lawsuits prompted by Pattern Energy's 315 megawatt Ocotillo Express Wind Energy Project, in western Imperial County, was dismissed last week by a U.S. District Court judge who maintained the plaintiff had not shown it had standing to sue. (<http://www.kcet.org/news/rewire/wind/judge-tosses-out-suit-against-ocotillo-wind-project.html>).

**Nature groups warn turbines kill birds.** The turbines are proposed to be located in areas of high traffic for migrating birds. Some of these species are considered a species at risk. (<http://www.wind-watch.org/news/2012/09/29/nature-groups-warn-turbines-kill-birds/>).

## Bat News

**Lunar phobic bats dodge the moonlight.** Scientists in Mexico collated studies of bat behaviour from all over the world and analysed them for evidence of "lunar phobia" or "fear of the moon". The study found that the activity of bats in moonlit habitats decreased on bright nights compared with bats that live and forage in darker places. (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/nature/19719986>).

For the complete study, check out the article by Romeo A. Saldaña- Vázquez and Miguel A. Munguía-Rosas, "**Lunar phobia in bats and its ecological correlates: A meta-analysis**" published in Mammalian Biology. (<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1616504712002571>).

**Endangered Indiana bats battered by bat-killing disease.** A new study finds that one of the first bats ever listed as endangered lost 10 percent of its population every year between 2006 and 2009 to white-nose syndrome, the bat disease that has already wiped out nearly 7 million bats in North America. (<http://www.eneaspf.com/latest-news/science-a-environmental/37001-endangered-indiana-bats-battered-by-bat-killing-disease.html>).

**Special protection sought for Florida's largest bat.** The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service have proposed Endangered Species Act protection for the Florida bonneted bat, the largest, rarest bat in the state. The decision is part of a historic **settlement agreement** signed with the Center for Biological Diversity that requires expedited decisions on protection for 757 plants and animals around the country. (<http://thesop.org/story/20121004/special-protection-sought-for-floridas-largest-bat.html>).

**Bats left off Pennsylvania endangered species list.** On Thursday, Pennsylvania Game Commission officials announced that the agency will not be moving forward to draft regulatory changes to place three species of bats on the state's endangered species list. ([http://www.phillyburbs.com/my\\_town/palisades/bats-left-off-pennsylvania-endangered-species-list/article\\_187e3391-e64a-56b3-b10b-c7734d5f88d2.html](http://www.phillyburbs.com/my_town/palisades/bats-left-off-pennsylvania-endangered-species-list/article_187e3391-e64a-56b3-b10b-c7734d5f88d2.html)).

## Wind

**Washington: Salazar authorizes landmark Wyoming wind project site, reaches President's goal of authorizing 10,000 megawatts of renewable energy.** Advancing President Obama's all-of-the-above strategy for expanding domestic energy resources, Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar today announced that the Department has reached the President's goal of authorizing 10,000 megawatts of renewable power on public lands with the approval of the Chokecherry and Sierra Madre Wind

## 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](#)**. The Nebraska Wind Conference, organized by the Nebraska Wind Conference Committee (NWCC), will be conducted October 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.nebraskawindconference.com/index2.html>). The **Draft Agenda** has been updated! Check it out at:  
<http://www.nebraskawindconference.com/program.pdf?v=9>

The **[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. (<http://www.nationalwind.org/issues/wildlife/researchmeetingix.aspx>). The **Draft Agenda** is available at:  
[http://www.nationalwind.org/assets/research\\_meetings/NWCC\\_Research\\_Meeting\\_Agenda\\_Draft\\_09-21-12\\_.pdf](http://www.nationalwind.org/assets/research_meetings/NWCC_Research_Meeting_Agenda_Draft_09-21-12_.pdf)

## Around Nebraska...

**[Nebraska energy provider to buy California wind farms](#)**. MidAmerican Energy has agreed to buy two wind projects under construction about 120 miles north of Los Angeles from the wind developer Terra-Gen Power. (<http://www.1011now.com/news/headlines/Nebraska-Energy-Provider-to-Buy-California-Wind-Farms-172073011.html>).

**[Nebraska's power future still tied to coal, nuclear](#)**. There's a reason that 90 percent of U.S. electricity is produced from coal, natural gas and nuclear resources. "They're popular because they are economical and reliable," Pope, NPPD'S president and chief executive officer, said. Pope said NPPD officials support a diverse mix of energy resources and set a goal to have 10 percent of production from renewable resources by 2020. ([http://www.kearneyhub.com/news/local/nebraska-s-power-future-still-tied-to-coal-nuclear/article\\_b95de5ae-08cc-11e2-bfaf-001a4bcf887a.html](http://www.kearneyhub.com/news/local/nebraska-s-power-future-still-tied-to-coal-nuclear/article_b95de5ae-08cc-11e2-bfaf-001a4bcf887a.html)).

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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