

Nebraska Wind Energy and Wildlife News

December 18, 2012

Greetings! This newsletter, I would like to highlight a study, ***Comparison of Full-Spectrum and Zero-Crossing Automated Bat Call Classifiers***, conducted by Donald Solick, Matthew Clement, Kevin Murray, Christopher Nations, and Jeffery Gruver (Western EcoSystems Technology, Inc.). Acoustic surveys for bats are recommended at most wind energy development sites and can also be used to monitor bat species threatened by white-nose syndrome. Solick et al. used reference calls from a number of bat species to test the ability of full spectrum and zero-crossing classifiers to classify bat calls. Check out the attached pdf for more information.

Around Nebraska...

Bat News - The [Nebraska Natural Legacy Project](#) recently updated their list of at-risk bat species. Of the thirteen bat species found in Nebraska, **seven** are now listed as at-risk species.

Tier I At-Risk Species: fringed myotis (*Myotis thysanodes pahasapensis*), northern myotis (*Myotis septentrionalis*), tricolored bats (*Perimyotis subflavus*), and little brown myotis (*Myotis lucifugus*).

Tier II At-Risk Species: Townsend's big-eared bats (*Corynorhinus townsendii*), long-legged myotis (*Myotis volans*), and evening bats (*Nycticeius humeralis*).

For more information about the Nebraska Natural Legacy Project, a science-based blueprint for conserving Nebraska's biological diversity using voluntary, non-regulatory opportunities, check out: <http://outdoornebraska.ne.gov/wildlife/programs/legacy/legacy.asp> and <http://snr.unl.edu/renewableenergy/wind/windandwildlife.asp#legacy>.

OPPD and NPPD approve wind farms. The state's two largest electric utilities are proceeding with large wind energy projects. OPPD would start receiving power by Jan. 1, 2014, from the 120 wind turbines to be built on 25,000 acres in Antelope, Boone and Madison counties. The wind power NPPD agreed to buy will come from an as-yet-unspecified wind farm, spokesman Mark Becker said. Previously, the utility was looking at buying power from Prairie Breeze or a project near Steele City in Jefferson County that hasn't been built yet. A decision on its provider could be made as soon as next week, he said. (http://journalstar.com/news/local/oppd-and-nppd-approve-wind-farms/article_d7d89c28-4915-5350-8978-7c8233553d36.html).

Wind projects eyed near Steele City, Elgin. Two large wind energy projects are up for a vote this week by the boards of the state's two largest electric utilities. On Thursday, the Omaha Public Power District Board will vote on whether to buy 200 megawatts from Prairie Breeze Wind Farm near Elgin in northeast Nebraska. OPPD would buy the electricity through a 25-year agreement with developer Invenergy of Chicago, with an option to buy the farm itself after 10 years. (http://journalstar.com/news/local/wind-projects-eyed-near-steele-city-elgin/article_47a076be-ca68-599b-bcf9-34b4f2a88397.html).

OPPD aims to double its wind energy. The Omaha Public Power District is looking to nearly double its wind energy producing power with a new project near Elgin, Neb. (<http://www.omaha.com/article/20121211/MONEY/712119907/1685>).

Around the Nation & World...

Wind and Wildlife

[Could anonymous reporting produce better wind-wildlife data?](http://www.midwestenergynews.com/2012/12/11/could-anonymous-reporting-produce-better-wind-wildlife-data/) A new wildlife fatality reporting tool for the wind industry aims to give researchers more data on bat and bird deaths — without publicly identifying the wind farms where they occurred. (<http://www.midwestenergynews.com/2012/12/11/could-anonymous-reporting-produce-better-wind-wildlife-data/>).

The [America Wind Wildlife Institute](http://www.awwi.org) (AWWI) is developing the data tool. A fact sheet, **[AWWI's Research Information System: Leveraging the Data, Improving Wind-Wildlife Analysis](http://www.awwi.org/uploads/files/RIS_Fact_Sheet-June2012.pdf)**, can be found at: http://www.awwi.org/uploads/files/RIS_Fact_Sheet-June2012.pdf.

[Feds look other way as wind farms kill birds -- but haul oil and gas firms to court](http://www.foxnews.com/politics/2012/12/17/us-wind-farms-under-fire-for-bird-kills/#ixzz2FQuUJyb8). The disconnect demonstrates what critics call a blatant double standard that has to change. While the federal government aggressively pursues oil and gas companies for wildlife deaths, it often gives wind producers a pass. (<http://www.foxnews.com/politics/2012/12/17/us-wind-farms-under-fire-for-bird-kills/#ixzz2FQuUJyb8>).

[Offshore Tiree Wind Farm Paused to Protect Birds and Marine Life in Scotland](http://inhabitat.com/offshore-tiree-wind-farm-paused-to-protect-birds-and-marine-life-in-scotland/). Scottish Power Renewables has announced plans to temporarily halt progress on the Tiree Wind Farm off the coast of Scotland. Activists warn that dolphins, killer whales and basking sharks populate the waters surrounding the proposed site and that various bird species could be harmed as well. (<http://inhabitat.com/offshore-tiree-wind-farm-paused-to-protect-birds-and-marine-life-in-scotland/>).

[Offshore Wind Developers, Environmental Groups Reach First-of-Kind Agreement to Protect Endangered Right Whales](http://www.nwf.org/news-and-magazines/media-center/news-by-topic/global-warming/2012/12-12-12-offshore-wind-developers-environmental-groups-reach-agreement-to-protect-right-whales.aspx). In a first of its kind collaboration, a coalition of leading environmental organizations and offshore wind developers has agreed to a series of voluntary measures that will protect critically endangered North Atlantic right whales, while helping to expedite responsible offshore wind development, in the Mid-Atlantic. (<http://www.nwf.org/news-and-magazines/media-center/news-by-topic/global-warming/2012/12-12-12-offshore-wind-developers-environmental-groups-reach-agreement-to-protect-right-whales.aspx>).

Wind

[Head of wind energy industry group resigns](http://www.washingtonpost.com/business/economy/head-of-wind-energy-industry-group-resigns/2012/12/14/b7b2a43e-4629-11e2-8061-253bccfc7532_story.html?tid=sm_btn_twitter). Anticipating a major tax reform effort next year, Denise Bode stepped down Friday as head of the American Wind Energy Association to work as a private lobbyist on tax issues next year. (http://www.washingtonpost.com/business/economy/head-of-wind-energy-industry-group-resigns/2012/12/14/b7b2a43e-4629-11e2-8061-253bccfc7532_story.html?tid=sm_btn_twitter).

[WindMade Label Expands](http://domesticfuel.com/2012/12/05/windmade-label-expands/). The WindMade organization announced the development of a new consumer label for companies and products made using renewable energy. (<http://domesticfuel.com/2012/12/05/windmade-label-expands/>).

Wildlife

[Deadly fungus outlives bats, Wisconsin study finds](http://www.jsonline.com/news/wisconsin/deadly-fungus-outlives-bats-wisconsin-study-finds-m281t10-183719031.html). The deadly fungus decimating bat populations across a growing swath of North America appears to be a more hardy foe than previously thought, able to live in the soil of caves long after all of the bats have died, according to a new study by Wisconsin researchers. (<http://www.jsonline.com/news/wisconsin/deadly-fungus-outlives-bats-wisconsin-study-finds-m281t10-183719031.html>).

For the complete study, **[Distribution and Environmental Persistence of the Causative Agent of White-Nose Syndrome, Geomyces destructans, in Bat Hibernacula of the Eastern United States](http://aem.asm.org/content/early/2012/12/10/AEM.02939-12.full.pdf+html?sid=d08c9533-2513-4630-bd0f-504572007020)**, by Jeffery M. Lorch et al., check out: <http://aem.asm.org/content/early/2012/12/10/AEM.02939-12.full.pdf+html?sid=d08c9533-2513-4630-bd0f-504572007020>.

[Wild Colorado: New virus could protect Colo. bat colonies](http://www.summitdaily.com/article/20121216/NEWS/121219865/1078&ParentProfile=1055). A disease impacting bat colonies in North America has yet to surface in Colorado. However, a new study is giving hope to local wildlife biologists on the look-out for potential outbreaks. (<http://www.summitdaily.com/article/20121216/NEWS/121219865/1078&ParentProfile=1055>).

[Millions of bats are dying from White-nose Syndrome](http://storymaps.esri.com/stories/2012/whitenose/). As the disease rapidly spreads across North America, more and more populations are threatened. This story map put together by ESRI illustrates the spread of WNS and highlights some affected species. (<http://storymaps.esri.com/stories/2012/whitenose/>).

Upcoming Events

[AWEA Wind Project Siting Seminar](http://www.awea.org/events/AWEA-Wind-Project-Siting-Seminar.cfm), February 20, 2013, Portland, OR. The AWEA Wind Project Siting Seminar provides a deep examination of the development of wind energy facilities, the potential for impacts to both the natural and human environments resulting from these activities, and ways to avoid and minimize any adverse effects. (<http://www.awea.org/events/AWEA-Wind-Project-Siting-Seminar.cfm>).

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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In the Message Field (NOT Subject): UNSUBSCRIBE wind_wildlife