

# Nebraska Wind Energy and Wildlife News

January 16, 2013

## Around Nebraska...

### [PUBLIC NOTICE](#)

The Board of Directors of Omaha Public Power District (OPPD) will hold a public hearing during its regular January meeting in order to provide an opportunity for comment regarding the Application of Prairie Breeze Wind Energy, LLC to construct a wind generation facility and sell the output of this facility to OPPD. The time and place of the hearing will be as follows:

Thursday, **January 17, 2013, 10:00 a.m. CST**  
Omaha Public Power District  
Energy Plaza Auditorium  
444 South 16<sup>th</sup> Street  
Omaha, Nebraska

A copy of the proposed Application and related information is available for public inspection in the office of the District's corporate secretary in Room 800 of OPPD's Energy Plaza West at the above address and also may be found at [www.oppd.com](http://www.oppd.com).

[Wind projects can proceed after Congress extends tax credit](#). Two large wind farm projects in Nebraska will proceed as planned now that Congress has extended a production tax credit for the wind industry. The Nebraska and Omaha public power districts gave conditional approval last month to their respective wind projects and waited anxiously for Congress to renew the tax credit while it edged toward the so-called fiscal cliff. ([http://journalstar.com/news/state-and-regional/nebraska/wind-projects-can-proceed-after-congress-extends-tax-credit/article\\_8500f809-912a-5945-b8b9-78d6a7c17d34.html](http://journalstar.com/news/state-and-regional/nebraska/wind-projects-can-proceed-after-congress-extends-tax-credit/article_8500f809-912a-5945-b8b9-78d6a7c17d34.html)).

## Around the Nation & World...

### Wind and Wildlife

**One article**, in particular, has been ruffling feathers this month. Since its publication on January 5, 2013, it has been reprinted and reinterpreted by many news sources. Here it is:

[Wind farms vs wildlife: The shocking environmental cost of renewable energy](#). Wind turbines only last for 'half as long as previously thought', according to a new study. But even in their short lifespans, those turbines can do a lot of damage. Wind farms are devastating populations of rare birds and bats across the world, driving some to the point of extinction. (<http://www.spectator.co.uk/features/8807761/wind-farms-vs-wildlife/>).

[Energy Industry Awaits U.S. Ruling on Prairie Chicken](#). The United States [Fish and Wildlife Service](#), acting under the [Endangered Species Act](#), will decide by the end of September whether to put the birds on its list of threatened species. Such a move could have serious repercussions for [wind farms](#), as well as [oil](#) and gas drilling, conceivably halting activity in some

areas. ([http://www.nytimes.com/2013/01/13/us/oil-gas-and-wind-industries-await-ruling-on-prairie-chicken.html?\\_r=1&](http://www.nytimes.com/2013/01/13/us/oil-gas-and-wind-industries-await-ruling-on-prairie-chicken.html?_r=1&)).

**[REGION: Controversial wind farm plan scrapped.](#)** The application for a commercial-scale wind farm project proposed for two scenic mesas northwest of Joshua Tree National Park has been withdrawn, Bureau of Land Management officials said Friday, Jan. 11. Critics said 400-foot turbines would ruin the unique, flat-top mesas that rise from a boulder-strewn valley. They also complained that construction of the wind farm would damage rare plants and the habitat of endangered animals and destroy Native American cultural sites that include nearly 1,000 petroglyphs. (<http://www.pe.com/local-news/breaking-news-headlines/20130111-region-controversial-wind-farm-plan-scrapped.ece>).

**[WWF Statement on Wind Power Tax Credit Extension.](#)** “By extending tax incentives that support the development of new sources of renewable wind energy, including the Production Tax Credit (PTC) and the offshore wind Investment Tax Credit (ITC), Congress and the Obama Administration are not only protecting the American wind industry and the tens of thousands of clean energy jobs it provides -- they are also helping to reduce our nation’s dependence on fossil fuels and the resulting carbon emissions that are driving catastrophic climate change. ([http://worldwildlife.org/press\\_releases/wwf-statement-on-wind-power-tax-credit-extension](http://worldwildlife.org/press_releases/wwf-statement-on-wind-power-tax-credit-extension)).

**[Bye Bye Birdie...Hello Wind Turbine?](#)** Recent government approvals, in Canada, are allowing the dismantling of the homes and habitat of birds in favour of wind turbine construction. (<http://www.canadafreepress.com/index.php/article/52235>).

**[Wind turbines: Birds at risk from growing wind power in Indiana.](#)** Indiana has avoided extensive bird kills, but lack of regulations may add to risk. ([http://www.indystar.com/article/20130113/NEWS/301130364?sf8588858=1&nclick\\_check=1](http://www.indystar.com/article/20130113/NEWS/301130364?sf8588858=1&nclick_check=1)).

## Wind

**[Apple to harness stored wind energy via new on-demand system.](#)** Apple's system of patent FIG. 1 above may store energy from the wind turbine and subsequently generate electricity from the stored energy based on electric demand. (<http://www.greenbiz.com/news/2013/01/10/apple-harness-stored-wind-energy-new-demand-system?page=0%2C1>).

**[Leading environmental groups slam proposed moratorium on renewable wind energy.](#)** A proposed three-year moratorium on renewable wind energy development in Vermont was roundly criticized recently by some of Vermont's leading environmental organizations. (<http://www.mountaintimes.info/news/breaking-news/2013/01/leading-environmental-groups-slam-proposed-moratorium-on-renewable-wind-energy/>).

## Wildlife

**[Daily Bat Facts - USFWS Midwest Region.](#)** Interested in learning fun facts about bats? You can sign up to receive daily emails with a “Bat Fact” from the USFWS. (<http://www.fws.gov/midwest/widget/BatWidget/>) The “Bat Facts” are also available on the Nebraska Wind Energy and Wildlife Project webpage (<http://snr.unl.edu/renewableenergy/wind/moreinformation.asp>).

**[Bats do it, bonobos do it \(share food, that is\).](#)** The common vampire bat (*Desmodus rotundus*) is a famous example of non-human sharing of resources. In a study recently published by the [Proceedings of the Royal Society B](#), scientists spent two years working with captive\* vampire bats to sort out who was barfing up blood for whom. (<http://earthsky.org/earth/bats-do-it-bonobos-do-it-share-food-that-is>).

Check out the complete article, "Food sharing in vampire bats: reciprocal help predicts donations more than relatedness or harassment," by Gerald G. Carter and Gerald S. Wilkinson, published in the Proceedings of the Royal Society B, at <http://rspb.royalsocietypublishing.org/content/280/1753/20122573.full>

#### Other

**[Actions By Feds Cut Annual Bird Deaths In Oil And Gas Fields By Half: Actions Saving Over One Million Birds From Grisly Death.](#)** According to a recently-released policy document from the Interior Department's Bureau of Land Management (BLM), migratory bird deaths at oil and gas operation waste pits have been reduced by 50 -75 percent in the last 15 years, saving an estimated one to one and a half million birds from grisly deaths caused by their landing in chemical-laden waste water pits associated with oil and gas operations. The policy document says that bird mortality has been reduced from about two million per year in 1997 to between 500,000 and 1,000,000 per year today. (<http://www.chattanooga.com/2013/1/3/241441/Actions-By-Feds-Cut-Annual-Bird-Deaths.aspx>).

#### Upcoming Events

**[2013 State Habitat Meeting, February 1 & 2, 2013, Kearney, NE.](#)** This meeting is open to anyone interested in attending. Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever members, chapter officers, landowners, resource professionals and wildlife students will all find interesting and informative sessions to attend! Registration includes a noon meal and access to more than 25 presentations on various topics. (<http://www.nebraskapf.com/Default.aspx>).

**[Rainwater Basin Joint Venture Informational Seminar, February 6, 2013, Hastings, NE.](#)** The one-day seminar is an opportunity for landowners, agriculture producers, natural resource professionals, and other interested individuals to learn about conservation issues, research, and habitat programs in the Rainwater Basin region. (<http://rwbjv.org/2013/01/rwbjv-info-seminar-registration-is-open/>).

**[AWEA Wind Project Siting Seminar](#)**, 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>).

**[The Nebraska Chapter of the Wildlife Society Annual Meeting](#)**, March 14, 2013, Chadron, NE. Call for papers now open. (<http://joomla.wildlife.org/Nebraska/>).

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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