



Nebraska Wind Energy and Wildlife News

January 29, 2013

Around Nebraska...

It is **Legislative Session** time again! The first day of the 2013 session was on January 9, 2013. Several bills related to energy and transmission have been introduced and one has a hearing scheduled. Please let me know if I have missed any relevant bills. The [Nebraska Legislative Bills](#) are listed at the end of the message.

[LES eyes more wind energy.](#) The Lincoln Electric System is exploring the possibility of adding up to 50 megawatts of wind power to its generation portfolio. (http://journalstar.com/news/local/les-eyes-more-wind-energy/article_51a440dc-1e2b-58dc-b3cb-5503df46df39.html).

[Letter, 1/23: Wind energy in Sandhills.](#) *Letter to the editor* - The development of wind energy in the Sandhills should pose an environmental dilemma for green-minded Nebraskans. Now would be the time for Nebraskans to have a conversation as to the placement of these wind farms. (http://journalstar.com/news/opinion/mailbag/letter-wind-energy-in-sandhills/article_7833d94c-04b8-5ff3-a405-8b26f4b7ce33.html).

[More bald eagles being seen in Central Nebraska.](#) Residents at the Grand Island Veterans Home have been visited by a national symbol recently as a bald eagle has been spotted at the pond on the property in northern Grand Island. The noble visit shouldn't come as too big of a surprise, however. Mick Bresley, wildlife biologist for the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission in Kearney, said bald eagles are doing "really well." (http://lexch.com/news/regional/more-bald-eagles-being-seen-in-central-nebraska/article_1c644590-618c-11e2-9df4-0019bb2963f4.html).

[Clean Line Energy touts economic benefit of wind.](#) A representative from Clean Line Energy appeared before the Plymouth County Board of Supervisors Tuesday to give an update on a billion dollar project that would carry wind farm energy from northwest Iowa all the way to Northern Illinois. (<http://m.ktiv.com/default.aspx?pid=4025&wnfeedurl=http://www.ktiv.com/story/20653215/2013/01/22/clean-line-energy-touts-economic-benefit-of-new-project?clienttype=rssstory>).

Around the Nation & World...

Wind and Wildlife

[Supervisors OK wind project with condor-protection requirements.](#) Kern County supervisors approved the Alta East wind energy project near Mojave Tuesday, including a requirement that it use high-tech tools to protect

condors. (<http://www.bakersfieldcalifornian.com/business/x1055277295/Supervisors-OK-wind-project-with-condor-protection-requirements>).

Feds decide Goodhue County wind project's eagle toll is OK. A bitterly contested wind farm proposed for Goodhue County got the go-ahead Wednesday to pursue a permit that would allow it to legally kill or injure eagles, in what could be the first case of federal authorities issuing a license to kill the protected national symbol. (<http://www.startribune.com/local/187232171.html?refer=y>).

Prairie Chickens vs. Wind Turbines. This is a video of an interview of Jay Lininger, an ecologist for the Center for Biological Diversity, conducted by Fox Business. (<http://video.foxbusiness.com/v/2103790718001/>).

Wind turbine in bird region skirts scrutiny: Absence of zoning laws ties hands of Erie Twp. Officials. A wind turbine project in Ottawa County's Erie Township breezed past most regulatory steps as it whipped up opposition from bird enthusiasts. (<http://www.toledoblade.com/local/2013/01/29/Wind-turbine-in-bird-region-skirts-scrutiny.html>).

New western Maryland wind energy project in works: Turbines generate power, tax revenue, but also environmental concerns. While Maryland lawmakers debate whether to subsidize a large wind energy project in the Atlantic Ocean off [Ocean City](#), an Annapolis company is moving ahead with plans for the state's third land-based wind "farm." But the proposal is renewing concerns raised by some western Maryland residents about the state's first two wind projects, in particular the towering windmills' proximity to homes and their potential to kill birds and bats, including one listed as endangered in Maryland. (<http://www.baltimoresun.com/features/green/blog/bs-gr-garrett-wind-project-20130128,0,5847771.story>).

Bat threatens a \$500m Victorian wind farm project. A \$500 million Victorian wind farm is at the mercy of a bat found throughout northern Australia and listed as of "least concern" on a threatened species scale. The yellow-bellied sheath-tail bat has contributed to a ruling to delay the 89-turbine Dundonnell project, in the state's southwest, until a detailed environmental study is done. (<https://www.wind-watch.org/news/2013/01/26/bat-threatens-a-500m-victorian-wind-farm-project/>).

Endangered wading bird key to giant island development case. An endangered wading bird is central to a legal action opening at the Court of Session tomorrow against a giant island wind farm. (<https://www.wind-watch.org/news/2013/01/28/endangered-wading-bird-key-to-giant-island-development-case/>).

Wind farm in Lesotho could cause the local extinction of vultures. BirdLife South Africa and BirdLife International are very concerned that the proposed development of a wind farm at Letseng in Lesotho could have severe impacts on the already declining populations of Cape Vultures and Lammergeiers. (<http://www.birdlife.org/community/2013/01/wind-farm-in-lesotho-could-cause-the-local-extinction-of-vultures-2/>).

Wind

An Automated Approach to Wind Energy Siting. The same sophisticated computer process that has been used to engineer the structure of a space satellite antenna or formulate financial trading strategies

through multiple scenarios is being utilized by the wind industry to site wind farms and turbines. (<http://theenergycollective.com/dailyenergyreport/177986/automated-approach-wind-energy-siting>).

Wildlife

[Deadly syndrome hits Mammoth Cave park bats](#). Federal officials report that a deadly syndrome killing bats nationwide has now reached iconic Mammoth Cave National Park in Kentucky. (<http://www.usatoday.com/story/tech/2013/01/16/mammoth-bats-white-nose/1839655/>).

[Bats Have Surprisingly Complex Family Life](#). Group living has many benefits, but it also comes at a cost. A study of insect-eating bats in England finds that females and males often live at different altitudes, but can have surprisingly diverse mating behaviors. (<http://news.yahoo.com/bats-surprisingly-complex-family-life-163539196.html>).

Check out the article by Ruth L. Angell et. al in PLOS ONE, **[Sexual Segregation and Flexible Mating Patterns in Temperate Bats](#)**. (<http://www.plosone.org/article/info%3Adoi%2F10.1371%2Fjournal.pone.0054194>).

[Safari Club cannot intervene in endangered species settlements](#). The D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals has ruled that the Safari Club lacks standing to challenge settlements setting deadlines for listing decisions on species that club members hunt. (<http://www.lexology.com/library/detail.aspx?g=4a09ca9a-b77d-4424-a37f-4c822505779b>).

Action Items

[The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is inviting input on draft guidelines and protocols](#) for determining whether endangered Indiana bats (*Myotis sodalis*) are present or likely absent at a given site during the summer, from May 15 to August 15. **[Deadline for comments is February 8, 2013](#)**. The draft survey guidelines are available at <http://www.fws.gov/midwest/Endangered/mammals/inba/inbasummersurveyguidance.html>.

[Renewable Energy Technologies Deployment and Migratory Species – Request for Proposals \(PL/RFP/2013/O/003\)](#). The International Renewable Energy Agency, located in Abu Dhabi, UAE, released this RFP on January 22, 2013. The deadline for submission is February 28, 2013. (<http://www.irena.org/DocumentDownloads/Procurement/RFP%20RE%20Technologies%20deployment.pdf>).

Other

The **[Restoration Design Energy Project \(RDEP\)](#)** is a BLM Arizona initiative to identify lands across the State that may be suitable for the development of renewable energy. The BLM has amended eight land use plans across Arizona to identify areas that are considered to be most suitable for renewable energy projects. The RDEP does not eliminate the need for further environmental review of individual sites. (http://www.blm.gov/az/st/en/prog/energy/arra_solar.html).

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/>).

Nebraska Legislative Bills

[LB 104](#) - Provide tax incentives under the Nebraska Advantage Act for renewable energy projects. Introduced by Lathrop on January 10, 2013; Referred to Revenue Committee on January 14, 2013. A BILL FOR AN ACT relating to the Nebraska Advantage Act; to amend section 77-5708, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, and sections 77-5715, 77-5723, 77-5725, and 77-5727, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2012; to provide tax incentives for renewable energy projects as prescribed; to define and redefine terms; to harmonize provisions; and to repeal the original sections. (http://nebraskalegislature.gov/bills/view_bill.php?DocumentID=17967).

[LB 150](#) – Change provisions relating to the sale of natural gas by metropolitan utilities districts and exempt certain purchases of energy and fuel from sales tax. Introduced by Nordquist on January 11, 2013; Referred to Revenue Committee on January 15, 2013. A BILL FOR AN ACT relating to natural gas; to amend sections 14-2138, 14-2139, and 77-2704.13, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska; to change provisions relating to the retail sale of natural gas by metropolitan utilities districts; to exempt sales and purchases of energy or fuel used in the compression of natural gas from sales and use taxes as prescribed; to eliminate obsolete provisions; to provide operative dates; and to repeal the original sections. (http://nebraskalegislature.gov/bills/view_bill.php?DocumentID=18659).

[LB 184](#) – Appropriate funds for the Nebraska Wind Applications Center. Introduced by Haar on January 14, 2013; Referred to Appropriations Committee on January 16, 2013. A BILL FOR AN ACT relating to appropriations; to state intent; and to appropriate funds for the Nebraska Wind Applications Center. (http://nebraskalegislature.gov/bills/view_bill.php?DocumentID=18633).

LB 388 – Change provisions relating to public power and provide for construction of certain transmission lines. Introduced by Natural Resources Committee on January 18, 2013; Referred to Natural Resources Committee on January 23, 2013; Notice of hearing for February 1, 2013. A BILL FOR AN ACT relating to public power; to amend sections 16-901, 17-1001, 70-101, 70-301, 70-304, 70-305, 70-306, 70-307, 70-408, 70-409, 70-1002, 70-1002.01, 70-1002.02, 70-1004, 70-1005, 70-1007, 70-1008, 70-1009, 70-1010, 70-1011, 70-1012, 70-1012.01, 70-1017, and 70-1018, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, and sections 70-1001, 70-1001.01, 70-1003, 70-1013, 70-1014.01, 70-1014.02, and 70-1015, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2012; to define and redefine terms; to provide for construction of electric transmission lines by an incumbent owner as prescribed; to harmonize provisions; and to repeal the original sections. (http://nebraskalegislature.gov/bills/view_bill.php?DocumentID=18236).

LB 402 – Change power purchase agreement provisions relating to rural community-based energy development. Introduced by Mello on January 22, 2013; Referred to Natural Resources Committee on January 24, 2013. A BILL FOR AN ACT relating to the rural community-based energy development; to amend section 70-1904, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, and sections 70-1903 and 77-2704.57, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2012; to redefine terms; to change provisions relating to power purchase agreements; to harmonize provisions; and to repeal the original sections. (http://nebraskalegislature.gov/bills/view_bill.php?DocumentID=18295).

LB 411 – Change a renewable energy tax credit. Introduced by Nordquist on January 22, 2013; Referred to Revenue Committee on January 24, 2013. A BILL FOR AN ACT relating to revenue and taxation; to amend section 77-27,235, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2012; to change a renewable energy tax credit; and to repeal the original section. (http://nebraskalegislature.gov/bills/view_bill.php?DocumentID=18625).

LB 567 – Change provisions relating to approval of electric generation facilities and transmission lines. Introduced by Haar on January 23, 2013; Referred to Natural Resources Committee on January 24, 2013. A BILL FOR AN ACT relating to public power; to amend section 70-1014, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2012; to change provisions relating to approval of facilities and lines as prescribed; to harmonize provisions; and to repeal the original section. (http://nebraskalegislature.gov/bills/view_bill.php?DocumentID=18704).

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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