



Nebraska Wind Energy and Wildlife News

February 12, 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 **hearings** have been scheduled. Please let me know if I have missed any relevant bills. The [Nebraska Legislative Bills](#) are listed at the end of the message.

[NPPD to host public meetings on generation resource mix](http://www.nppd.com/2013/nppd-to-host-public-meetings-on-generation-resource-mix/). What generation resources provide Nebraskans with low-cost and reliable electricity? The public is invited to attend any of a series of four public meetings that Nebraska Public Power District is hosting in early and mid-February to roll out its draft Integrated Resource Plan (IRP). The IRP is a comprehensive analysis of the types of energy resources NPPD may use to meet future electrical energy needs of its customers.

(<http://www.nppd.com/2013/nppd-to-host-public-meetings-on-generation-resource-mix/>).

[Company eyes wind energy tests in Cherry County](http://journalstar.com/news/state-and-regional/nebraska/company-eyes-wind-energy-tests-in-cherry-county/article_6882467e-aba6-565a-b9ae-ab8200e26811.html). A company wants to check the potential for a wind farm in Nebraska's Cherry County. Bluestem Sandhills LLC is awaiting approval from the Cherry County Board of Commissioners before setting up four monitoring towers.

(http://journalstar.com/news/state-and-regional/nebraska/company-eyes-wind-energy-tests-in-cherry-county/article_6882467e-aba6-565a-b9ae-ab8200e26811.html).

[Wind test towers could be head for Sandhills](http://www.nptelegraph.com/news/wind-test-towers-could-be-headed-for-sandhills/article_4d7dea50-94b0-52c2-a6c1-38af3ba1fa82.html). Developers are hoping to tap into the wind energy potential in Cherry County. (http://www.nptelegraph.com/news/wind-test-towers-could-be-headed-for-sandhills/article_4d7dea50-94b0-52c2-a6c1-38af3ba1fa82.html).

[Growing jobs, one wind turbine at a time](http://www. Kearneyhub.com/news/opinion/growing-jobs-one-wind-turbine-at-a-time/article_14201008-6cfe-11e2-a19f-001a4bcf887a.html). Citing a study by the Sierra Club, Crabtree believes that being more aggressive with wind generation could create 14,000 new jobs, mostly in rural counties. Those jobs are permanent operations and maintenance roles associated with wind farms.

(http://www. Kearneyhub.com/news/opinion/growing-jobs-one-wind-turbine-at-a-time/article_14201008-6cfe-11e2-a19f-001a4bcf887a.html).

[Wind power equals jobs, economic benefits](http://rapidcityjournal.com/news/local/communities/chadron/cfra-wind-power-equals-jobs-economic-benefits/article_b9b1e826-6fdc-11e2-b257-001a4bcf887a.html). An increased focus on wind energy development and energy efficiency improvements could add 14,000 jobs statewide by 2030.

(http://rapidcityjournal.com/news/local/communities/chadron/cfra-wind-power-equals-jobs-economic-benefits/article_b9b1e826-6fdc-11e2-b257-001a4bcf887a.html).

[Wind for Schools Project Enters 2013 with 124 Turbine Installations and Lessons to Share: A Wind Powering America Success Story](#). Wind for Schools project states had a productive year in 2012. The Wind Applications Centers helped to install 30 small wind turbines at schools across the country, resulting in a total of 124 installations in the project's fifth year. Nebraska, one of the original six Wind for Schools states, installed seven turbines, increasing the state's total to 25 public school installations since 2008. (http://www.windpoweringamerica.gov/filter_detail.asp?itemid=3792).

Around the Nation & World...

Wind and Wildlife

[Power Struggle](#). Wind turbines and wildlife don't have to be in conflict. In a case study of a university campus, researchers found that keeping turbines out of areas with a lot of birds would cause only a modest drop in power generation. (<http://www.conservationmagazine.org/2013/02/power-struggle/>).

The complete article, **[Optimizing Wind Power Generation while Minimizing Wildlife Impacts in an Urban Area](#)**, by Gil Bohrer et al, is available in PLOS ONE (<http://www.plosone.org/article/info%3Adoi%2F10.1371%2Fjournal.pone.0056036>).

[Industry works to avoid listing of prairie grouse](#). Oil, gas and wind energy producers are working to persuade federal wildlife officials not to enact protections for the lesser prairie chicken, a move that could force them to halt or significantly alter their operations to protect the species' dwindling grassland habitat. (http://www.mywesttexas.com/editors_picks/article_f0c8e3ce-7418-11e2-b455-001a4bcf887a.html#editor's_picks).

[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>).

[Altamont Pass turbines kill fewer birds](#). The number of eagles, kestrels, burrowing owls and red-tailed hawks killed each year by flying into the wind generators at Altamont Pass in Alameda County has fallen roughly 50 percent since 2005, a study shows. (<http://www.sfgate.com/business/article/Altamont-Pass-turbines-kill-fewer-birds-4230640.php>).

[First Wind takes steps to protect Hawaiian seabirds on Maui](#). **[First Wind](#)** officials said Tuesday that they have started work on a program to preserve the population of threatened or endangered Hawaiian seabirds in West Maui, several miles from the company's Kaheawa Wind project. (<http://www.bizjournals.com/pacific/news/2013/01/29/first-wind-takes-steps-to-protect.html>).

[Bird group says ND wind farm needs tougher review](#). A bird advocacy group says a proposed North Dakota wind farm should undergo a stricter environmental review of threats posed to the endangered whooping crane. (<http://www.sfgate.com/news/science/article/Bird-group-says-ND-wind-farm-needs-tougher-review-4263317.php#ixzz2KhVXLvpp>).

[Deepwater Wind Adjusts Offshore Wind Farm Development Plan In Order To Minimize Wildlife Impacts](#). Offshore wind developer **[Deepwater Wind](#)** and nonprofit organization Conservation Law

Foundation (CLF) have formed an agreement designed to protect endangered North Atlantic right whales during the construction of the Block Island Wind Farm, a 30 MW demonstration-scale offshore wind project proposed in state waters about three miles off the Block Island coast.

(http://www.nawindpower.com/e107_plugins/content/content.php?content.11077#.URpqBKVgt8F).

[Feathers fly in Shetland wind farm development row.](#) A RARE bird has landed at the heart of a legal challenge involving the Scottish Government's decision to grant the go-ahead for a wind farm project.

(<http://www.scotsman.com/news/environment/feathers-fly-in-shetland-wind-farm-development-row-1-2764256>).

[Wind Power: What is it we are trying to save?](#) Luke Dale-Harris questions whether our concern over climate change is actually driving us to invest in renewable technologies that negatively impact the very natural wonders we are aiming to preserve.

(http://www.theecologist.org/News/news_analysis/1786872/wind_power_what_is_it_we_are_trying_to_save.html).

[4 Reasons Why it's a Bad Argument to Say Cats Kill More Birds Than Wind Turbines.](#) A recent Nature article offered up some shocking statistics about the number of wild animals likely killed by outdoor domestic cats each year, and it's gotten a lot of buzz. Some people, prominent environmentalists among them, are citing these truly shocking numbers to argue that the threat wind turbines pose to birds and bats is numerically far smaller, and thus not a big deal. (<http://www.kcet.org/news/rewire/wildlife/4-reasons-cats-bird-kills-dont-excuse-wind-turbine-bird-kills.html>).

Wind

[US wind energy breezes past 60GW mark in record year.](#) US wind energy developers added a record 13.1GW of capacity during 2012, trumping gas capacity to become the largest source of new power generation for the first time, industry figures show. (http://www.businessgreen.com/bg/news/2240430/us-wind-breezes-past-60gw-mark-in-record-year?WT.rss_f=Home&WT.rss_a=US+wind+energy+breezes+past+60GW+mark+in+record+year).

[Wind-farm efficiency examined at UW.](#) Worldwide, the low efficiency of wind farms is a mystery that one UW professor is working to solve with new models and access to the NCAR-Wyoming supercomputer. (<http://www.wyomingbusinessreport.com/article.asp?id=64541>).

[Novel Designs Are Taking Wind Power to the Next Level.](#) Superficially, wind turbines haven't changed much for decades. But they've gotten much smarter, and considerably bigger, and that's helped increase the amount of electricity they can generate and lower the cost of wind power.

(<http://www.technologyreview.com/news/510481/novel-designs-are-taking-wind-power-to-the-next-level/>).

Transmission

[NW Iowa Economic Development gets wind transmission update.](#) At its annual Northwest Iowa Community College partners meeting in Sheldon on January 23, 2012, Northwest Iowa Economic Development heard an update from Rock Island Clean Line officials regarding their proposed wind energy

transmission line project slated to begin in O'Brien County and impact several area counties, including Cherokee. (<http://www.chronicletimes.com/story/1938384.html>).

[Gateway West transmission line environmental review slowed over routing issue](#). The U.S. Bureau of Land Management is holding its final environmental impact statement for the 1,000-mile Gateway West transmission project in Wyoming and Idaho pending final review. (<http://www.snl.com/Interactivex/article.aspx?CdlId=A-16862531-12590>).

Wildlife

[Study: Climate Change Could Push Indiana Bats Out Of State](#). Rising summer temperatures in the Midwest could push the Indiana bat to cooler climates in the Eastern United States, a study predicts. (<http://indianapublicmedia.org/news/study-climate-change-push-indiana-bats-state-44337/>).

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 has been extended to March 11, 2013](#)**. The Federal Register information is available at <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2013-02-08/pdf/2013-02889.pdf>.

[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>).

Tools

[Normandeau Rolls Out Wind-Wildlife Collision-Risk Model](#). [Normandeau Associates Inc.](#) says it has developed a spatial avian- and bat-collision-risk model for wind resource areas in the central U.S. Wildlife managers, government agencies and wind energy developers can use this tool to conduct large-scale pre-construction studies and assist with federal and state regulatory compliance, the company says. Normandeau created and tested this empirical collision-risk model during a two-and-a-half year project funded by the U.S. Department of Energy. (http://www.nawindpower.com/e107_plugins/content/content.php?content.11085#.URpjKaVgt8F).

[Renewable Energy Wind \(Best of the Web\)](#). This webpage was recently recommended to me as a good source of information for wind energy developers. (<http://botw.org/top/Science/Technology/Energy/Renewable/Wind/>).

Other

[Wind-Powered Car Travels 3,000 Miles Across Australia for \\$15.](http://cleantechnica.com/2013/02/09/nbc-news-wind-powered-car-travels-3000-miles-across-australia-for-15-video/) A lightweight car called the Wind Explorer recently traveled a whopping 3,000 miles across Australia with the assistance of wind power at a cost of only \$15. (<http://cleantechnica.com/2013/02/09/nbc-news-wind-powered-car-travels-3000-miles-across-australia-for-15-video/>).

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>).

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

Nebraska Legislative Bills

[LB 104](http://nebraskalegislature.gov/bills/view_bill.php?DocumentID=17967) - Provide tax incentives under the Nebraska Advantage Act for renewable energy projects. **Notice of hearing for February 14, 2013.** 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 184](http://nebraskalegislature.gov/bills/view_bill.php?DocumentID=18633) – 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](http://nebraskalegislature.gov/bills/view_bill.php?DocumentID=18236) – 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; Date of Hearing: February 1, 2013.

Statement of Intent: LB 388 would provide incumbent electric transmission owners, who belong to a Regional Transmission Organization, the "right of first refusal" to complete transmission projects in Nebraska that have been approved by the Regional Transmission Organization. The purpose is to clarify that public power entities in Nebraska have the first right to construct, own, and maintain an approved transmission line. The bill also standardizes the definition of "electric supplier" in several statutes. (http://nebraskalegislature.gov/bills/view_bill.php?DocumentID=18236).

Fiscal Note: No fiscal impact.

LB 402 – Change power purchase agreement provisions relating to rural community-based energy development. **Notice of hearing for March 1, 2013.** 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. **Notice of hearing for March 6, 2013.** 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. **Notice of hearing for March 1, 2013.** 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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